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LABOUR MIGRATION FROM TAJIKISTAN

July 2003

Saodat Olimova
Igor Bosc

IOM International Organization for Migration

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Tel.: +992 372. 21 03 02
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E-mail: iomdushanbe@iom.tajnet.com

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FOREWORD

Over the past decade, Tajikistan has seen a rapid rise in cross-border seasonal migration. As the dominant feature of the country's modern history, this trend affects all aspects of Tajik society, the national economy and government policy.

The vast majority of Tajik labour migrants work irregularly in Russia and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), where they are vulnerable to exploitation and suffer considerable hardship. At the same time there are substantial benefits. Tajik migrant workers acquire new experiences, skills and contacts, and their remittances are crucial to the survival of many households in Tajikistan. It is worth examining the nature and dynamics of such an extensive migratory flow in order to assess its impact, together with other internal trends, on the future of the country.

This International Organization for Migration (IOM) report is an independently conducted qualitative research study on contemporary labour migration from Tajikistan. It is the first and so far only publication to comprehensively describe and analyze these trends. It covers a broad range of issues, including profiles of the different types of migrants, their motives for going abroad to work, their living conditions, the problems they face and the networks they establish, and the legislative framework for their integration in the host country, as well as the economic and social ramifications of labour migration. The report contains a number of recommendations aimed at policy makers.

The statistics provided in the report are the result of independent surveys and do not reflect the intentions of any governments or political parties. It is my hope that this report will serve as a useful tool for academics, politicians, migrants and other interested readers and enhance their understanding of the realities of migration, the problems that exist and opportunities for solutions.

The report was made possible by Dr. Saodat Olimova, a social scientist with the Sharq Scientific Research Center, and her dedicated research team. IOM thanks Dr. Olimova for her fine work on this project and for all the time she spent answering IOM's questions.

Igor Bosc
Chief of IOM Mission
in Tajikistan

9 June 2003, Dushanbe

1. INTRODUCTION

Migration of the labour force from one country to another is a global phenomenon which became widespread in the second half of the twentieth century. Like all other former Soviet republics, Tajikistan saw large-scale labour migration flows only following the break-up of the USSR in 1991. Labour migration surged in 1994 and 1995 as the result of hardship caused by the country's civil war and the collapse of previous areas of employment during the transition to a market economy. Today it is the largest and most dynamic migratory flow from Tajikistan. No sector of society has remained untouched by it.

Labour migration from Tajikistan includes the following flows: a) the "brawn drain," or exodus of unskilled or semi-skilled labour for a limited period of time; b) the "brain drain," i.e. the emigration of highly skilled specialists; c) migration by commercial traders, or "shuttles"; d) replacement migration, i.e. when migrants from Tajikistan replace Russians who migrate to the West.

Labour migration has an unequal impact on the economies of the countries sending and receiving the labour. The import of labour resources is known to contribute to the economic development of the receiver country, and it is often assumed that the sending countries are benefiting to nearly the same extent.

Labour migration plays a special role in transition countries like Tajikistan by helping to absorb and ease social discontent. When the economy fell apart and masses of people were thrown out of work, for many Tajik citizens taking a job abroad offered the only alternative to going hungry. As a means of solving the problem of unemployment, labour migration became an important tool for adapting to the new economic and social situation. Moreover, migrant labour helped rebuild consumer demand, which had been destroyed during the transition period.

Experience has shown that labour migration can enhance workers' qualifications.

Labour migration leads to social changes in the receiving and sending countries. Governments and societies may assess these changes in different ways, resulting in the rise of various myths and prejudices which hinder a proper understanding of the issues raised by migration and identification of appropriate solutions.

Despite being a key issue for today's Tajikistan, labour migration in Tajikistan receives insufficient attention in public life. There have been few academic studies, and media coverage tends to focus on the hardships faced by migrants. Such articles convey the impression that labour migration can only be seen as an extreme response to the country's civil war and economic crisis, rather than as part of the normal life of a society. Many economic, social and political aspects of this phenomenon have therefore been neglected. This report attempts to address the gaps in our knowledge.

1.1 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Some of terms used in this report need to be explained.

Under the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in resolution 45/158 on 18 December 1990, the term "migrant worker" applies to a person who does not hold

citizenship of the state where he/she will be engaged, is engaged or was engaged in a remunerated activity (UN, 1997: 33). Labour migration is the temporary emigration to another country in order to earn money, with the expectation of returning to the country of origin. As time goes by, some migrant workers settle permanently in the country in which they are working. Nevertheless, labour migration is aimed not at resettlement but at earning money abroad.

This is the basis for the following definition by the International Labour Organization (ILO): "*Migrant workers* are people who are permitted to be engaged in economic activity in a country other than the country of their origin" (Billsborrow et al., *Statistics on International Migration*, 1999: 35).

The ILO goes on to define separate categories of migrant workers:

(a) *Seasonal migrant workers* work in a country other than their country of origin only during a certain period of the year, as the work they perform is directly related to seasonal conditions.

(b) *Migrant workers working under an employment contract* work in a country other than their country of origin based on a contractual agreement specifying the limitations on the duration of employment and the type of work the migrant will be engaged in. After admission to the country, the migrant worker is not allowed to change jobs and must leave the country after completion of the contract even if the work itself has not been completed. Though in some cases it is possible to extend the contract, the worker is still supposed to leave the country before the contract is renewed.

(c) *Temporary migrant workers* are admitted to a country other than the country of their origin to perform certain work or activities within a limited period of time. Temporary migrant workers can change employers and extend their work permit without leaving the country of employment. This ILO definition is similar to the category specified in the Convention, where they are defined as "self-employed workers". This term "refers to a migrant worker who is engaged in a remunerated activity otherwise than under a contract of employment and who earns his or her living through this activity normally working alone or together with members of his or her family, and to any other migrant worker recognized as self-employed by applicable legislation of the State of employment or bilateral or multilateral agreements" (Convention: 35).

The majority of labour migrants from Tajikistan fall into this category, including shuttle traders.

Opinions differ as to whether commercial migration, the so-called "shuttle" trade, should be considered a type of labour migration. Here is the definition of "shuttle":

(d) *Shuttle migrants ("shopping tour" migrant, "shop tourist", "shuttle")* are traders whose commercial activity is related to regular departures and returns to the country of permanent residence. The frequency and duration of trips may vary. The purpose is to make a profit. Shuttles exploit inter-regional or international differences in prices and availability of goods. Thus shuttles meet the Convention's definition of "self-employed workers". Current research on labour migration accepts this classification (O. D. Vorobyova, Ed., *Labour Migration in Russia*, 2001: 5).

(e) *Settled migrant workers* are granted permission to stay and work in the country without any significant limitations, after they have resided for several years in the country of employment. Settled migrant workers are not obliged to leave the country of employment when they are out of work, and they are usually granted the right to family reunification if the family members are provided with employment and housing (Billsborrow et al., 1999: 35).

Illegal labour migration has become a constant subject of debate in the media and at government level in some CIS countries. But international legal documents distinguish between "illegal" and "irregular" migrants. There is legal and illegal labour migration. A "regular" migrant, if he or she is a foreigner, must have an entry permit, permission to stay in the country within a proscribed period of time, and a work permit. If one of these requirements is violated, the migrant is considered "irregular" but not illegal. As Tajikistan has a visa-free regime with a number of countries attracting Tajik migrant workers, notably the Russian Federation, they enter these countries on a legal basis. But there are many irregular migrants among the migrant workers from Tajikistan. Sometimes they are violating the rules of registration on place of residence. More often, they are not signing contracts with their employers. While the rules on registration are violated for objective and subjective reasons, the breach in labour relations registration is largely the result of the specific nature of the labour market in the CIS countries.

In spite of efforts made by the member states to regulate labour relations, the labour market in the CIS region remains largely linked to the shadow economy. Illegal employment is widespread not only among workers from abroad but also among the countries' own citizens. The number of illegal workers among the migrant workers is higher than among citizens because employers pressure them to take jobs in the shadow economy. In any case, the definition of "illegal worker" is distinct from "illegal migrant". Therefore, this report suggests using the ILO definition "migrants with undetermined status" to describe "people who are staying in a state other than their own and who do not fully meet the requirements of this state regarding entry, stay or economic activity on the territory of the given state." In analyzing illegal employment, the term "undocumented worker" is used for a regular migrant who works without a work permit and/or without an employment contract.

1.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on field research carried out by Dr. Saodat Olimova and her team at the Sharq Scientific Research Center, an independent research institute in the Tajik capital, Dushanbe, and on population data from the State Statistical Committee of Tajikistan. Sharq conducted two focus groups, the first in Dushanbe in August 2002 and the second in Isfara in October 2002. Sharq also conducted two nationwide surveys, one in February and March 2002, and the second in January and February 2003.

The focus groups were held with Tajik migrant workers; recruitment intermediaries who organize migrant groups; employees of travel agencies that organize employment abroad; and Tajik community activists in Russian cities.

The first national survey was a short questionnaire. The selection was structured as a random probability sampling based on the computer processing of the personal accounts of Gorelectroenergo power company customers, and records of the rural *jamoats* (sub-district administration). The aim of the survey was to identify migrant households and estimate the extent to which the country's population is involved in labour migration. The interviewers conducted face-to-face interviews with 2,000 respondents in their homes, located in all regions and districts of Tajikistan. Households with one or several migrant workers were targeted.

In the second phase, migrants were asked to respond to a detailed questionnaire which included three sections enabling in-depth analysis of the three main flows of labour migration: a) individual commercial migration; b) hired labour under contract; and c) individual migration for construction and renovation work. 365 people were interviewed during this phase. The applied

methodology was influenced by international research studies conducted as part of a European Economic Commission project on external migration from Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland. Similar research studies conducted in Russia, Moldova, Kazakhstan and Armenia in 2000 and 2001 were also taken into consideration.

In February 2003, Sharq conducted an omnibus survey in which 4,000 people in all regions of the country were interviewed using a short questionnaire. The purpose of this survey was to verify the data obtained during the previous research, and obtain reliable information on the scale of migration from Tajikistan between 2000 and 2003.

In the final stage of the project, the preliminary findings from all the surveys were submitted to IOM for review and publication. These results were presented at a round table held by IOM, Sharq and Tajik and Russian government officials on 27 November 2002. Policy recommendations included in this report were drafted during the round table.

1.3 LABOUR MIGRATION BEFORE 1990

Historically, the population inhabiting the territory of present-day Tajikistan was highly mobile. The main types of migration were merchant migration, movements by mountain-dwellers, nomadic migration, educational migration (to Bukhara to attend the largest *madrasah*, or religious school, in the Islamic world), and pilgrimages to Mecca and other spiritual centres. There were also substantial population movements caused by war. The most significant migration trend, however, was the movement of inhabitants of the mountainous regions of Karategin and Mastchoh, as well as Baldjuvan, Kulab and Gissar, to lower regions, in particular the Fergana Valley, in search of work. The main areas of employment for highland Tajiks were construction, working as a porter, and the cotton gin plants (S. Gubayeva, *The Population of the Fergana Valley…,*1991: 60-63).

On the eve of the twentieth century, from 25% to 70% of the adult male population were leaving the villages near the upper Zeravshan River to look for work (V. V. Dynin, "Sketch of the Lives of Mountain Dwellers of Zeravshan," 1914: 72).

Today, traditional labour migration patterns have revived in these same regions and involve similar areas of employment.

Merchant migration, an important tradition among valley Tajiks, especially in the north of Tajikistan, underwent a revival following the collapse of the USSR. It is most evident now in the Fergana Valley, where local markets have been reestablished. The shuttle migration that unites the countries of Central Asia is based on this tradition.

During the Soviet period, population flows to Tajikistan from the European part of the USSR consisted of people sent to work in Tajikistan, the unorganized resettlement of factory workers and mill hands, the organized resettlement of deported nations, the evacuation of populations during the Second World War, and the mobilization of young people for all-union shock construction projects.

Flows from Tajikistan consisted of local youth who went to Russia and Ukraine for vocational training and higher education. In addition, many conscripts from Tajikistan settled in Russia after completing their military service there.

In the 1970s and 1980s, migratory flows from Tajikistan were due to educational migration, young people's participation in All-union shock construction projects (such as the Baikal-Amur railway), the development of Russia's Nechernozemye region, the organized resettlement of Tajiks in the Khabarovsk region and Russia's far east, and organized recruitment for the oil and gas fields in eastern Siberia.

1.4 THE ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

Table 1: Socio-economic indicators

Gross domestic product	US$ 168,1 per year
	US$ 14 per month
Inflation	159% per year, 8.6% per month
Birth rate	3.7 pro mil
Average income	US$ 8.3
Consumer budget	US$ 37.6
Effective nutrition rate	US$ 50.5
Average monthly salary	US$ 9.9

Sources: State Statistical Committee of Tajikistan, UNDP, WB: 2002 and 2003

Tajikistan embarked on economic reforms shortly after the republic gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, but the reform process was stymied by the outbreak of civil war in 1992. Production fell sharply in virtually every area of the economy, accompanied by a drastic decline in living standards.

The peace agreement signed in 1997 gave new impetus to reforms, but the consequences of war and economic imbalances continue to slow implementation of the government's economic restructuring programme.

The reforms are supported by a 1998 agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on an Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (renamed in 1999 Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility Arrangement), and a structural adjustment credit from the World Bank. Progress on establishing a free-market environment and providing a legislative framework has been quite rapid. The privatization process, including public auctions, is under way. Land reform has been undertaken with the transformation of collective and state farms *(sovkhoz)* into joint-stock companies and *dekhan* (private) farms. Monetary reform was completed in April 2001.

At the same time, economic development has been slowed by sluggish administrative reforms. The private sector is still in the early stages, hampered by informal obstacles. Inertia prevails at local level. Deindustrialization, disurbanization and disinvestment of its major branches now characterize the national economy. The social impact has been severe. The gap between rich and poor is widening. The vulnerable population groups are excluded from the benefits of the economic development achieved over the last few years.

Demographics

The primary factors stimulating labour migration from a sending country are a relatively high population density compared to economic capacities, and the existence of traditional contacts with the receiver country. The latter typically has a relatively low population density, rich natural resources and a high level of production capacity. These differences explain why migration processes usually involve resettlement from the world's overpopulated regions to less populated ones (Marianskiy, 1969: 13-15).

The gap between rich and poor and rapid population growth in the sending countries play an even greater role in encouraging mobility than population density.

The demographic factor is particularly influential in the case of Tajikistan, with its high rate of population growth.

The permanent population of Tajikistan as of 1 January 2002 was 6.38 million, up 125,600 over the previous year (State Statistical Committee, 2002: 14). From 1999 to 2002, the total

population increased by 1,014.6 thousands. During the period between the 1989 and 2000 censuses, the working-age population rose 124.1%, or 2.1% annually (State Statistical Committee, 2001: 43).

Over the last decade, population growth has slowed due to a low birth rate and increased external migration. The average annual population growth rate in the period from 1981 to 1990 was 3%, from 1991 to 2000 1.85% and in 2001 2% (State Statistical Committee, 2002: 14).

Natural Population Fluctuations

The population of Tajikistan is growing due to natural increase. In recent years, birth and death rates have declined both in urban and rural areas. The birth rate fell by 29.8% from 1990 to 2001 (State Statistical Committee, 2002: 24). This trend is linked to deteriorating living conditions, the effects of the civil war, ongoing political and economic instability, propagation of family planning, improper birth registration and male labour migration.

Despite the drop in the birth rate, the predominance of young people in the population age structure helps keep the birth rate high and the death rate low. As a result of runaway population growth in previous decades, the average age today is 22.8. Young people make up 46% of the population, of which only 7% is over 60 (State Statistical Committee, 2001: 65-66).

Rural population density also keeps up the birth rate. Disurbanization (declining urban population) has become a hallmark of the past few decades. The urban population is decreasing as a result of substantial emigration of the non-indigenous (non-ethnic Tajik) population which had largely settled in cities and urban-type communities, and the lower natural increase of the urban population compared with the rural population. The rural population's share of the overall population grew from 67.5% in 1990 to 73.5% in 2000, while that of the urban population declined from 32% to 26.55% *(ibid.)*.

As the population increases, so does the need for food, housing, cultivated areas, water supply, electricity and jobs. However, especially in the rural areas, population growth is worsening access to all these resources. Mountains cover 93% of Tajikistan's territory. The majority of the population is settled on the remaining 7%, in the river basins. Population density varies, ranging from 0.4 persons per square kilometre in the Murgabek district of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast to 288 persons in the industrial Sughd (formerly Leninabad) region. It continues to increase in oases and valleys.

The high proportion of young people increases competition for jobs while putting pressure on living standards. As a result, population growth has indirectly promoted labour migration.

1.5 THE LABOUR MARKET IN TAJIKISTAN

The labour market has changed drastically with the country's painful transition to a market economy. A sharp drop in production led to massive job losses in the state sector. As the demand for labour declines, the supply of manpower grows in response to rising unemployment and population growth. Demographic trends have boosted demand for jobs. The proportion of the working-age population grew from 47.0% in 1991 to 51% in 2001, while that of the non-working age population decreased from 53% in 1991 to 49% in 2001 (State Statistical Committee, 2001: 43).

The labour market in post-Soviet Tajikistan is characterized by the following:

- Declining public sector employment (50% by 2000);

- Rise in private sector employment, primarily in agriculture (private subsidiary plots attached to corporate farms and *dekhkan* farms);
- Growing disproportion between existing manpower and demand for it;
- Rising unemployment;
- Low social protection;
- Wage growth controls.

The size of the economically active population declined throughout the decade since independence, as did the level of economic activity among the population. The total number of labour resources grew by 12.4% and made up 48.5% of the population. The total number of employed persons decreased to 12.1%, reflecting the decline in economic activity among the population and the increase in the number of people of working age who were not seeking work. These people enter the group of the economically inactive population, settle in housekeeping or choose labour migration. The Khatlon and Sughd regions have the highest employment rates, while the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast has the lowest.

In late 1997, the size of the economically active population was 1,839.7 thousands, or 30.4% of the overall population. The public sector was hardest hit by the decline in employment, due to privatization and the departure of highly skilled specialists as a result of low salaries.

Private subsidiary plot farming, private farming *(dekhkan)* and housekeeping increased. Employment in industry, construction, transport and communication as well as in unpaid sectors has decreased since 1992. In addition to the growing number of jobless, there is considerable underemployment (9% of those employed in 1999). In 2001, the economically active population began to increase for the first time since independence, yet jobs remain scarce.

The main reasons for unemployment are stagnating economic production and industrial sectors, and in particular the irregular distribution of industrial production sites across the country.

The number of persons working in agriculture (including private subsidiary holdings), a mainstay of the Tajik economy, is steadily increasing. This is attributable not so much to the labour intensiveness of agricultural production as to the preponderance of manual labour.

73% of the country's population live in rural areas, where the chances of finding a job are very low. Though a traditional employment sector in Tajikistan, agriculture is unable to provide sufficient jobs for the rapidly growing, youth-dominated rural population. Arable land is in short supply and the rate of new land reclamation has declined. Slow development of the non-agricultural sector exacerbates the problem of employment. The relatively redundant rural population is still growing. As the demand for labour decreases, the hidden form of overpopulation turns into overt unemployment.

Unemployment

Unemployment and underemployment are among the key push factors for labour migration. According to a public opinion poll conducted by Sharq in December 2001, the population sees unemployment as the most urgent problem confronting Tajikistan. Slow economic development is considered the second most pressing problem, followed by unpaid salaries and pensions (Sharq, 2002).

Over the last five years, the official unemployment rate has risen from 1.7% to 3.2%. Only three-quarters of those registered as unemployed receive unemployment benefits, which amount to US$ 1.5 per month. Given the fact that most of the unemployed are not registered, World Bank estimates puts the real scale of unemployment at about 30% (UNDP, 1999: 18).

The tradition of *mardikori* – unemployed persons gather near the city markets to offer daily services – has been revived.

The problem of unemployment is most critical for youth and women. More than 120,000 young people enter the labour market each year.

Most of those who apply to the Employment Centres or are registered as unemployed are members of the most active segment of the population: Nearly 52.5% of the total number of unemployed are aged between 18 and 29. Secondary school graduates make up the largest percentage (68.9%) of the unemployed. Most are supported by their families. Unemployment deprives young people of self-confidence, initiative and the ability to plan their future. They have no choice but to live as dependants of their parents or other relatives for a long period of time. Their situation is hardly conducive to the development of maturity, social skills and self-sufficiency. Anxiety about the future is common, and many young people are resentful of adults whom they hold responsible for creating a society in which the youth feel unwanted.

The appearance of this new group of socially excluded youth with no job experience and dim employment prospects has spurred labour migration. 14.5% of the migrants interviewed for this report had never worked before leaving the country. For many young people, migration is the only alternative to entering the drugs trade.

Poverty

According to official data, 86% of the population in Tajikistan live below the poverty line. A public opinion poll conducted by Sharq in 2002 showed that 34% of families spend from 50 to 100 somoni (US$ 18-40) per family each month. The same number of families spend from 100 to 250 somoni (US$ 40-100). Only 9% of families spend from 250 to 375 somoni (US$ 100-150). Poverty is on the increase. During 2001, the financial situation of 18% of families improved, while for 29% of families they worsened and for 52% they remained unchanged (Sharq, 2002).

Agricultural regions were hit by a severe drought from 1999 to 2001. A study by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) found cases of acute malnutrition. In central Tajikistan 16.1% of the population faced acute food shortages, 20% in Kurghan Teppa and 17.6% in Kulab ("Assistance to the Starving in Tajikistan," *ASIA-Plus,* 6-12 December 2001).

There was a drought for two years and the wheat crop wasn't good. The family was close to starvation. Being the oldest son, I had to leave to look for work. We were not paid by the kolkhoz *during the last few years.*

Unskilled labourer, 22, Khovaling district

Lack of income means lack of opportunities: not only loss of access to food, health care and education, but also the loss of the ability to choose and control one's own life. Poverty destroys human capital and has an adverse impact on social relations, leading to violence and instability.

In order to improve social conditions, in 2001 the Tajik government developed a poverty-reduction strategy in cooperation with the World Bank.

Income

Until 1990, wages were the main source of income, accounting for almost 80% of the total family budget. This proportion then plunged from 77% in 1992 to 40% in 1995, and became even lower in

the following years. In 2002 the minimum monthly wage was 4 somoni (a little over $US 1). The average monthly salary in all economic sectors in the first six months of 2002 was 28.29 somoni ($US 9) (State Statistical Committee, 2002: 52). The proportion of non-salary income (income from private subsidiary holdings, commercial activity, the sale of real estate and personal property, and migratory earnings) in household budgets increased.

Wages are state-controlled. The minimum wage and average incomes, salaries and other payments remain very low. Tajikistan has the lowest average monthly wage within the CIS.

Payment of salaries is regularly delayed. The biggest arrears were observed in agriculture (46.4%), industry, construction and education (*idem*: 54). One consequence is that purchasing capacity is reduced by inflation. Prices are rising faster than wages. In 2002, the cost of the consumer basket with basic foodstuffs went up 6% against a 3.7% rise in the minimum wage.

A proposed minimal wage law has not yet been adopted. Price liberalization in parallel with wage control has led to a devaluation of labour. It reduces the motivating function of the salary and throttles consumer demand for goods and services, leading to a decline in production.

Thus the main reasons why Tajiks enter labour markets elsewhere in the CIS, particularly in Russia, are the negative conditions they face at home: high levels of unemployment and poverty, especially among youth (30%); the collapse of former sources of employment caused by structural changes; low salaries and disruptions of payment; and social stratification (growing gap between rich and poor). These factors have produced large groups of excluded people who have no place in their native country. They are young and dynamic. They choose the migration strategy.

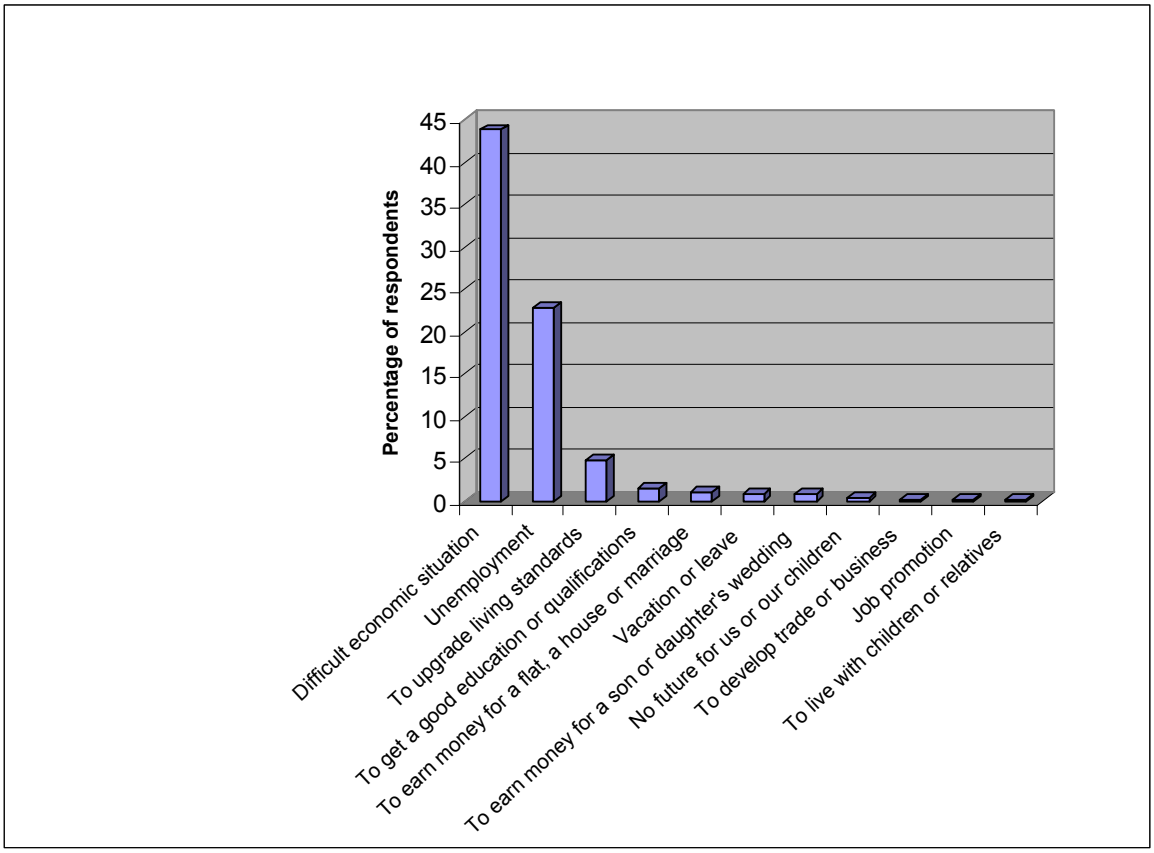
In the last year we haven't seen any money at all. We were not paid. I borrowed money, bought a ticket and left for Russia to seek work. I found a job in Moscow and was very surprised to discover that Russians were not cheating us and we were paid fairly.

I have to return to my mother, get married and start a family. But there is no chance of finding a paid job at home.

Road worker, 21, Vakhsh district

43.8% of respondents surveyed for this report cited the difficult economic situation and poverty as the main reason for their planned migration. The second most frequently given reason was unemployment (22.8% of respondents).

Table 2: Reasons for going abroad



1.6 MIGRATION DYNAMICS IN TAJIKISTAN AND THE REGION

Migration after 1990

For most of the Soviet period Tajikistan was a country of immigration. The gradual transition from a positive to a negative migration balance began in the late 1970s as part of an emerging systemic crisis in Central Asia that extended to all areas of public life.

With the collapse of the USSR and in the face of the many challenges accompanying the process of achieving sovereignty, Tajikistan was drawn into wide flows of migration with sweeping social, economic and political impacts. The civil war from 1992 to 1993 and the period of political instability which lasted until 1997 produced waves of forced migration. In 1992 and 1993, every fifth citizen of Tajikistan became a refugee or internally displaced person (IDP). Between 1991 and 1995, 284,600 people emigrated from Tajikistan.

Over the last five years, internal migration increased proportionally while external migratory flows declined relative to the total scale of migration. In spite of the rise in internal migration, the absolute scale of migratory flows decreased, with the notable exception of temporary labour migration. The lower emigration figures were the result of:

- The signing of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord by the government and the Tajik opposition on 27 July 1997, which led to the

repatriation of Tajik refugees from CIS countries and Afghanistan, and the return of hundreds of thousands of IDPs to their homes;
- Decrease of the migration potential of the Russian-speaking population;
- Anti-immigration measures taken by the other CIS countries.

The lowest rate of migration was marked in 2000, when 15,100 immigrants entered the country and 29,500 left, amounting to a total migration of 44,600. But migration has been on the increase since 2001, when 17,000 immigrants arrived and 31,100 left. Net migration from Tajikistan was 14.100, and the total scale of migration was 48,100 (State Statistical Committee, 2002: 36).

Migration activity among the rural population can also be observed. But although the proportion of the rural population rose from 32.1% of total migration in 1990 to 33.7% in 1998, the urban population still predominates.

Russia has received the lion's share of immigrants from Tajikistan. According to an IFES public opinion poll conducted in December 1996, 53% of potential emigrants were planning to leave for the Russian Federation, compared with 24% who intended to move to Uzbekistan. In 1997, 82.9% of emigrants actually left for Russia, up from 71.3% in 1995 (IFES).

Religion and regional origin played a key role in choosing the country of destination. Devout Moslems with ancestral roots in Uzbekistan preferred to move to that neighbouring country. While all nationalities living in Tajikistan are represented among the emigrants to Russia, the majority are Russians.

Migration exchange with countries other than Russia was as follows: 10.3% (16.6%) with Uzbekistan; 2.9% (4.0%) with Ukraine; 1.6% (4.2%) with Kyrgyzstan; and 1.1% (1.9%) with Kazakhstan. Thus the migration exchange with Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan was relatively low. The exchange with the South Caucasus and Moldova was even lower. Almost no migration exchange took place with the Baltic states.

Migration exchange with almost all CIS countries except for Russia has been on the decline since 1995. Russia draws most of the migrants from Tajikistan. The most striking drop in migration exchange occurred with Uzbekistan, when efforts to repatriate citizens of Tajikistan with ancestral roots in Uzbekistan came to an end in 1995 and 1996, and anti-immigration measures were imposed by Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan closed its borders with Tajikistan in 1999 and introduced a visa regime for Tajik citizens in 2001.

Basic Migration Trends

Since achieving independence, Tajikistan has experienced the following large-scale migratory flows (IOM-a, 1999; IOM-b, 2001):

- Ethnic emigration of the non-indigenous population: Germans, Jews, Crimean Tatars, Russians, Ukrainians, Kazakhs and others, who left for their historical homelands;
- Flows of refugees and IDPs;
- Rural/urban migration;
- External labour migration.

There were also other, smaller-scale migration trends. One of the most stable flows before 2002 was the arrival of refugees, asylum seekers and emigrants from neighbouring Afghanistan. Tajikistan became a refuge for thousands of Afghans owing to a lengthy common border and similarities between the countries' ethnic culture and religion. Because Afghan refugees and asylum

seekers continually entered and exited Tajikistan, it is very difficult to determine the numbers involved. Afghans constitute the majority of illegal migrants in Tajikistan. In 1997, the worsening of the situation in northern Afghanistan led to a sharp rise in the number of Afghan refugees entering Tajikistan and transiting illegally to other countries. From then on Tajikistan became the main transit centre for Afghans migrating to CIS countries, Western Europe, the United States and Canada. Since the overthrow of the Taliban regime, Afghan refugees are being repatriated from Tajikistan.

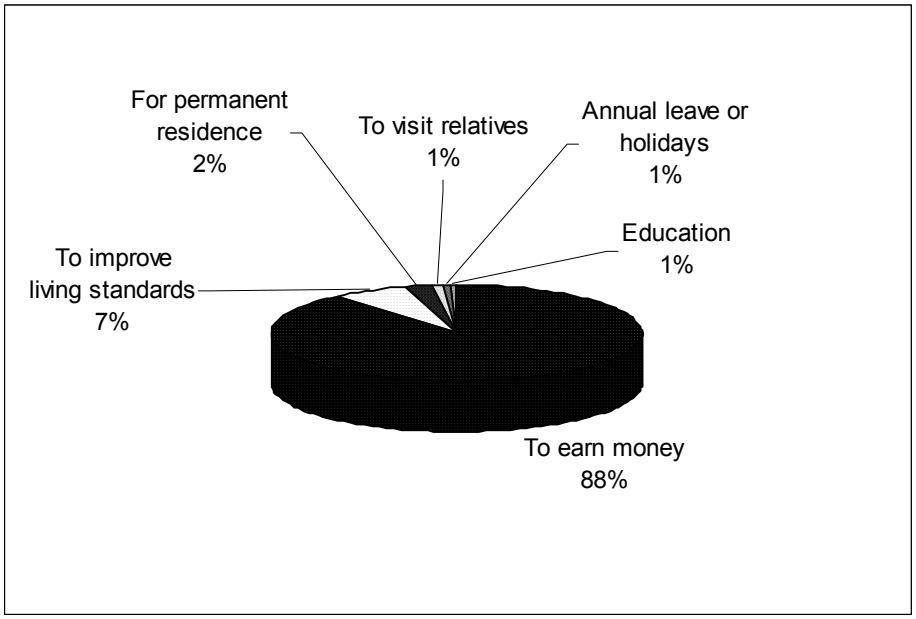
"Ecological migration" is a further small but growing trend. The main recurring natural disasters which annually inflict extensive damage, particularly in the mountainous regions, are mudflows, snow avalanches and earthquakes. According to the State Meteorological Service, most of those forced to leave homes and villages destroyed by natural disasters are from the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (the Khorog, Roshtkalin and Vanch districts), and the highland areas of central Tajikistan (the Verzob and Rasht [formerly Garm] districts) and northern Tajikistan (the regions surrounding the upper Zarovshan River).

A numerically small but stable trend is educational migration, which accounts for 1.5% of all migrants.

Very difficult to trace and quantify are the movements of the highly mobile Central Asian Gypsies (Lulli, Jugi and Gissar Parya), who try to evade government control. In Tajikistan their traditional occupations were ritual and professional begging, fortune-telling and making baskets, mats and jewellery. Having lost their sources of income during the country's civil war and economic collapse, they left for Russia and other CIS countries, where they earn money by begging. Their migration strategies and behaviours defy efforts to study them as Central Asian Gypsies generally avoid contact with members of other ethnic groups, Tajiks included.

While other migration trends remained relatively static in recent years, labour migration grew by leaps and bounds. In 2002 it represented by far the largest flow, just as it had done for the past five years, with emigration now confined to a minor role. 88.7% of 675 respondents interviewed for this report who planned to leave the country were going to do so to look for work; 6.8% hoped to live under better conditions abroad; 2.2% intended to take up permanent residence abroad; and 1% wished to visit relatives, 0.6% to take a vacation and another 0.6% to study or undergo training.

Table 3: Potential migrants' reasons for leaving



1.7 LABOUR MIGRATION IN STATISTICS

The actual total migration from Tajikistan far exceeds official figures because its dominant feature, temporary labour migration, is extremely difficult to track. Labour migration flows are dynamic and flexible, reacting rapidly to changing conditions in both the sending and the receiving country. Tajikistan's registration system has all but broken down as the result of the weakening of the state and mass involuntary displacements. Government statistics are highly erratic. According to the Ministry of Labour and Employment, net emigration in 1995 was 5,618 persons (3,209 persons from urban areas and 2,409 from rural regions). However, the ministry's Department of External Migration estimated that over 250,000 migrants from Tajikistan were staying in other CIS countries in 1997. According to the State Border Committee, some 1.2 million Tajik citizens were working abroad in 2001.

In October 1999, Sharq conducted a national survey for a Carnegie Foundation project on the migration of indigenous Central Asian populations. 29% of respondents in Tajikistan had left the country between 1992 and 1999 to earn money, and 38.8% were planning to do so in the coming year.

Sharq's first survey in the framework of this report, which was conducted as a representational sampling nationwide, showed that 927,000 adults (aged 15 and up) are living in migrant households in which the main source of income is derived from a family member working abroad. The second survey a year later showed that 26.4% of all households have one or more members working abroad. According to the latter survey, which Sharq conducted in January and February 2003 to determine the number of labour migrants, 18% of the adult population (aged 15 and up), or 632,000 people, had left the country to look for a job from 2000 up to the time of the survey.

This does not mean that all these people are working outside the country at the same time. The figure includes seasonal workers; people who work abroad for several years and visit their

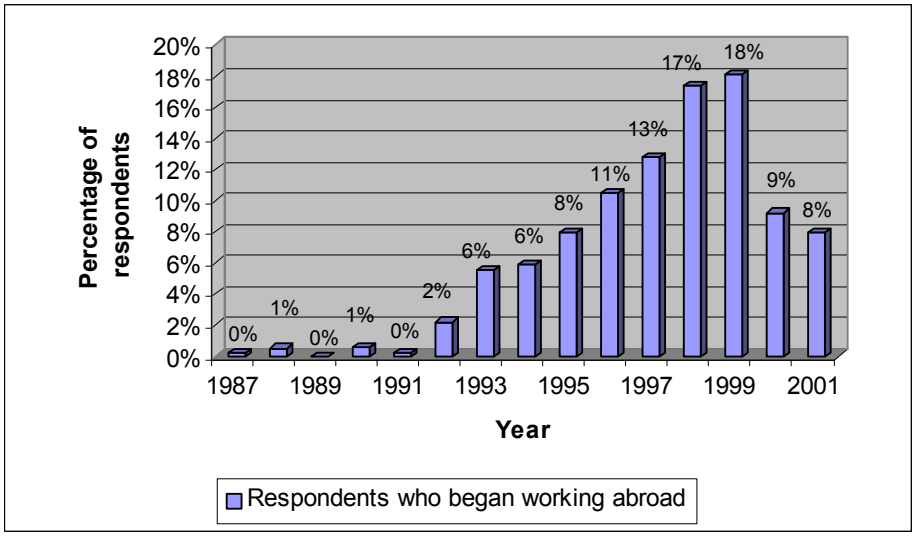
families infrequently; "pendulum migrants" who travel to neighbouring regions of Uzbekistan or Kyrgyzstan in order to work or trade; traders who undertake short-term shuttle tours four or five times a year; and other types of labour migrants.

As Table 4 shows, labour migration began to rise in 1992, soared in 1993 and has continued to grow ever since.

Refugees who sought asylum in other CIS countries during Tajikistan's civil war of 1992 and 1993 played a significant role. Over the years they settled down in their host countries and engaged in economic activity. Tajik refugees in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan were primarily involved in the sale of fruits and vegetables. The many refugees in the Volgograd, Astrakhan and Krasnodar regions of southern Russia worked in agriculture and rural construction. Refugees who had settled down acted as a magnet for other labour migrants and this became a key factor in determining migratory flows, including labour migration.

In 1995, the population of Tajikistan found itself struggling to survive as the socio-economic situation sharply deteriorated. Labour migration increased dramatically, peaking in 1999. The numbers fell in 2000 when the socio-economic situation began to improve to some extent.

Table 4: The year in which respondents 1st went abroad to work



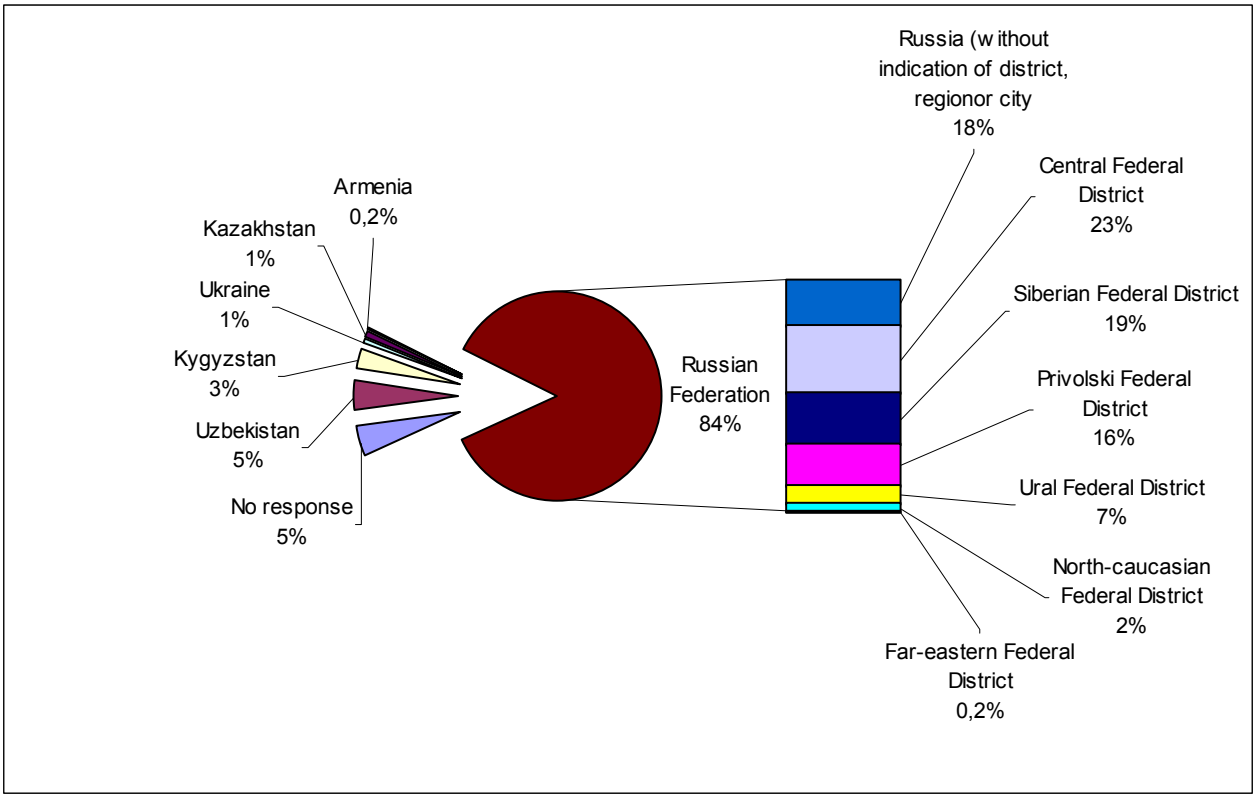
Labour migration not only provides income for the unemployed but also spurs job creation. For example, shuttle traders have succeeded in independently creating a trade infrastructure without outside investment or government assistance. They promote the development of transport, communications and trading depots, support middlemen and marketing specialists, and set up their own catering services.

As Zh. A. Zayonchovskaya, a leading expert on post-Soviet migration, has noted, "Labour migration is a means of mobilizing of society's potential for self-organization which enables it to survive severe crisis, maintain relative stability and avoid hunger…. The creation of alternative and widely accessible areas of employment based on the population's own initiative is the most important public function of labour migration in a period of crisis and economic transformation" (Vorobyova, Ed., 2001: 11).

1.8 DESTINATIONS

The Russian Federation, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan attract the majority of labour migrants from Tajikistan. The motivating factors for targeting CIS countries include: common recent history; lack of visa requirements; the role of Russian as the lingua franca across the former Soviet Union; and the presence in the receiving country of a Tajik diaspora community, relatives and friends. These advantages enhance mobility and make it easier to find work and settle into the new environment.

Table 5: Destinations of labour migration from Tajikistan



However, the migrants' chief motivation for choosing a destination country is the expectation of higher earnings potential. In early 1996, the average monthly salary in Russia was 30 times higher than in Tajikistan. 48.3% of Tajik migrants cited low salaries and pensions as the main reason for leaving the country. It is therefore not surprising that Russia became the most popular target country for Tajiks eager to earn higher wages than at home.

The second most important pull factor for the labour migrants is a favourable labour market in the receiving country, i.e. stable demand for foreign labour.

The basic criteria used by Tajik migrants for selecting a destination are:

- Job opportunities: Demand for foreign labour, job availability.

- Established links: 1) The presence of a Tajik community or ethnic Russians from Tajikistan in the target country. 2) Contacts dating back to the Soviet period between similar or partner enterprises in Tajikistan and the receiving country. In some cases, managers of Tajik plants that ceased production have used their contacts to help their laid-off workers find employment in similar enterprises in Russia. 3) Soviet-era contacts established through the organized recruitment of shift and non-shift workers. Tajiks are now working in the fuel and energy complex in Tumen because in Soviet times they had already been employed there as shift workers.

- Transport routes: One of the largest Tajik migrant worker communities has emerged in Volgograd, the end point of a rail line from Dushanbe and a transit hub on the Dushanbe-Moscow line. Many migrants have also congregated in Astrakhan, the end point of another rail line from Dushanbe. As the number of communities is increasing the special routes are opened to meet the needs of migrants. There are bus routes between Dushanbe and Krasnoyarsk, Khujand and Novosibirsk, Isfara and Ekaterinburg, etc.

In addition to Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Tajik labour migration extends to Belarus, China, the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey. Some Tajiks earn money in European countries such as Germany or Poland, or work overseas in the United States, Canada or Australia.

Pull Factors for Tajik Labour Migration to Russia

With 84% of all labour migrants from Tajikistan – 530,000 in the period from 2000 to 2003 – working in Russia, this receiving country must be looked at in depth.

Russia became an important international labour market in the 1990s. Structural reforms launched in the second half of the decade were accompanied by the lifting of controls on labour relations and wages and the creation of a housing market. Russia's lack of demographic resources as a result of the low birth rate and high death rate, combined with insufficient mobility on the part of some groups within the local population, led to the need for foreign labour (Moiseenko et al., *The Moscow Region: Migration Trends and Policy,* 1999: 22).

The role of the extractive and processing industries in the Russian economy was not only maintained but even strengthened. The second half of the 1990s was further marked by the revival of the construction industry. All these industries require large numbers of male workers. As the research results for this report show, the professional level of the labour migrants from Tajikistan has largely conformed to labour demands in Russia. Around two-thirds of the vacancies announced through the job placement service in the second half of the 1990s were for industrial workers (Vorobyova, Ed., 2001: 83). The main flow of Tajik migrants was directed at the construction, metallurgical, engineering, oil and gas industries, which were experiencing an acute labour shortage.

In addition, with the rise of labour migration from Russia to Western Europe, Tajik labour migrants have started to fill the resulting vacancies. They are also replacing Ukrainians, Moldovans and Armenians as the migratory flow to Russia from other CIS countries declines.

Where Tajiks Work in Russia

Nearly one-quarter of Tajik labour migrants traveling to Russia move to the capital. The Moscow urban agglomeration is the most powerful magnet for migrants from all over Russia and the CIS in general. At present this agglomeration comprises nearly the whole Moscow region, which in 1998 consisted of 74 cities and towns, 111 townships and 39 rural administrative regions. The population of the agglomeration is over 15 million (Moiseenko et al., 1999: 4). Moscow experienced labour shortages even back in the Soviet era. Demand for labour remains strong in the transport, construction and some other industries. Moscow used to draw on labour resources from central Russia but this influx has decreased in recent years. Central Russia itself began to receive foreign labour.

In the course of the transition process, Moscow's economy began to approach that of the most developed countries. The city is attracting increasing investment, the construction industry is booming and many new jobs have been created. Thanks to the progress of the reforms, Moscow offers a more favourable environment for business development than the country as a whole. In 2002, salaries rose by 40%, unemployment was only 0.7% and 37,000 jobs were created, one-third of them in small and medium businesses (*Vesti.ru*, 24 December 2002).

In light of the ongoing demand for foreign workers in both the formal and informal sectors of Moscow's economy, it is far easier for Tajik migrants to find a job and earn higher wages in and around the capital than anywhere else in Russia. Most work in construction and the production of building materials, in trade and services, in the food industry, in market infrastructures and in industrial enterprises.

Besides Moscow, Tajik migrants can be found in industrial centres such as St. Petersburg, Ekaterinburg, Novosibirsk, Novokuznetsk, Magnitogorsk, Chelyabinsk, Krasnoyarsk, Nizhnekamsk, Sterlitamak, Kazan and Ufa. In these cities and surrounding areas they usually work on construction sites, are employed in engineering and chemical plants, sell fruits and vegetables, are involved in the shuttle trade and work in services and the catering trade.

19% of Tajik labour migrants are drawn to areas of western Siberia, such as Tumen, Nizhnevartovsk and Surgut, that are experiencing a labour shortage. Here they mainly work in oil and gas fields and in construction.

About 16% of Tajik labour migrants work in the Volga region (Samara, Volgograd, Astrakhan and Saratov), where they are employed in rural and housing construction, agriculture (cultivation of vegetables, watermelons and other crops), and in the shuttle trade.

Pull Factors for Tajik Shuttle Migration to Russia

Russia is also the primary destination of Tajik shuttle traders. Most of them stay in Russia for a year or two or longer. The shuttles bring goods from one region of the country to another for resale. The majority are engaged in the fruit and vegetable trade, a field in which Tajiks have long experience in Russia. Growing communities of Tajik traders have formed in some Russian cities. The main pull factor is the existence of large, well-established markets with a powerful informal trade infrastructure. Being mobile and dynamic and generating a small turnover, shuttles from Tajikistan can easily become part of this structure. The existence of Tajik diaspora communities encourages the growth of shuttle networks.

Impact of Foreign Labour on the Russian Job Market

With an ageing population, Russia is dependent on foreign labour (UN-b, 1998-P.3). Russia attracts migrant workers from throughout the CIS region, including Tajikistan. Russian media have stoked fears that foreign workers are taking jobs away from Russian citizens and boosting unemployment. Yet so far labour migration from abroad has had no significant impact on the domestic job market. The percentage of foreign workers has not risen above 1% of the total number of employed, and Russian labour markets remain unaffected by migration pressure even in regions saturated with migrants, such as Moscow, St. Petersburg, western Siberia, especially the Khanti-Mansiysk and Yamalo-Nenetsk autonomous regions, and the Rostov and Belgorod regions (A. N. Kamenskiy, *Problems of the International Labour Exchange and Moscow,* 1999: 80-81).

Pull Factors for Labour Migration to Central Asia

Most of the Tajik migrant workers who opted to remain in Central Asia have gone to Uzbekistan (4.7% of the total number of Tajik labour migrants), although the figures have dropped since Uzbekistan imposed visa requirements on Tajik citizens in 2001. (Turkmenistan also has a visa regime with Tajikistan.) A substantial number of Tajik labour migrants in Uzbekistan work as shuttles, sellers and manual workers in the trade infrastructure. Others are employed as seasonal farmworkers. Traditional artisans are also leaving for Uzbekistan with their apprentices. They are hired to build traditional houses made of *pahsa* (cob), and as carpenters, *ganch* (alabaster) carvers and *kundal* masters (mural and ceiling painters).

Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan have visa-free regimes with Tajikstan. 3.2%. of Tajik labour migrants are in Kyrgyzstan, where the majority work as shuttles or in the trade infrastructure. The primary destination is the capital, Bishkek, the leading centre in Central Asia for wholesale and retail imports of Chinese goods. The strong trade network that has grown up around the Bishkek markets has meant increased transport links between the city and most Tajik communities, new warehouses, hotels and catering establishments, and a rising number of middlemen and dealers.

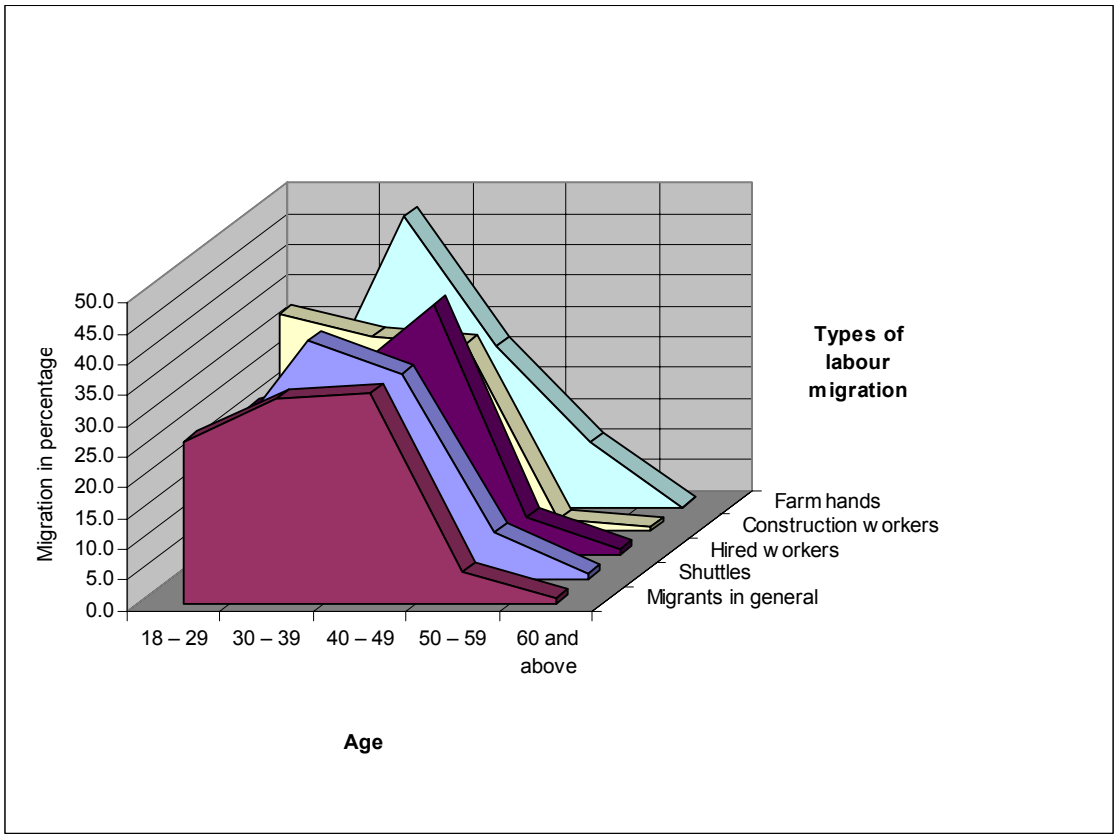
Muslim mullahs also travel to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. Usually these are recent graduates of a *madrasah* (religious school) or the Islamic Institute in Dushanbe.

2. PROFILE OF TAJIK MIGRANT WORKERS

2.1 AGE

The working-age population is the most active when it comes to migration.

Table 6: Age of migrants



Steep rises in migration levels can be seen in two age groups, the 20-29 group and the 40-49 group. This can be explained by the traditional Tajik life cycle. The first group are the "sons", whose purpose in going abroad is to earn money so that they can marry, build a house or buy a flat, and start a family.

If you want to marry, you'll need so much money that even the sale of a house won't be enough. Parents often go into debt to finance a son's wedding. So there's no chance of getting married. Besides the wedding itself, one has to think about other aspects of family life: how to feed your family and provide clothes and shoes. It is not right to be a burden on your parents. You have to earn money first and then think about marriage.

Construction worker, 21, Isfara

The second group, people in their forties, can be called “fathers”. Their motivation is to buy a house or flat for their children, finance family celebrations such as a wedding, *sunnat-tuy* (circumcision), buy a plot of land, renovate the home or set up a small business.

The age structure of migration flows varies according to type of employment. Young people usually seek jobs in construction. The 18-29 group makes up 35% of the migrant construction workers, while the proportion of those over 50 is very small. The high percentage of young people is due to the fact that construction jobs require few skills other than physical strength, robust health and endurance.

The 40-49 age group is numerically the largest among the hired workers, accounting for 40.7% of the overall flow. These people have very high qualifications, language knowledge and professional skills, which enable them to seek positions in a variety of state and private enterprises in the country they enter.

At 15.7%, the percentage of people under 30 among the migrant farmworkers is relatively low: less than half the number of young people working in the construction industry. Farmworkers include more people in their fifties than any other area of employment (10.5%), but the most highly represented is the 30-39 age group (43.7%). This group is dominated by farmers recruited as farmhands for seasonal agricultural enterprises in Uzbekistan, seasonal workers for harvesting, and those renting land in the southern regions of Russia.

The 30-39 age group predominates among the shuttles, which is not surprising given that at this age people usually have families and therefore economic obligations. They already have life experience, a good educational background, professional skills and adequate health. Older people are deterred from getting involved in the shuttle trade by the intense physical and psychological stress involved. Men under 30 usually work in simple market service jobs, e.g. as loaders, cleaners and auxiliary workers.

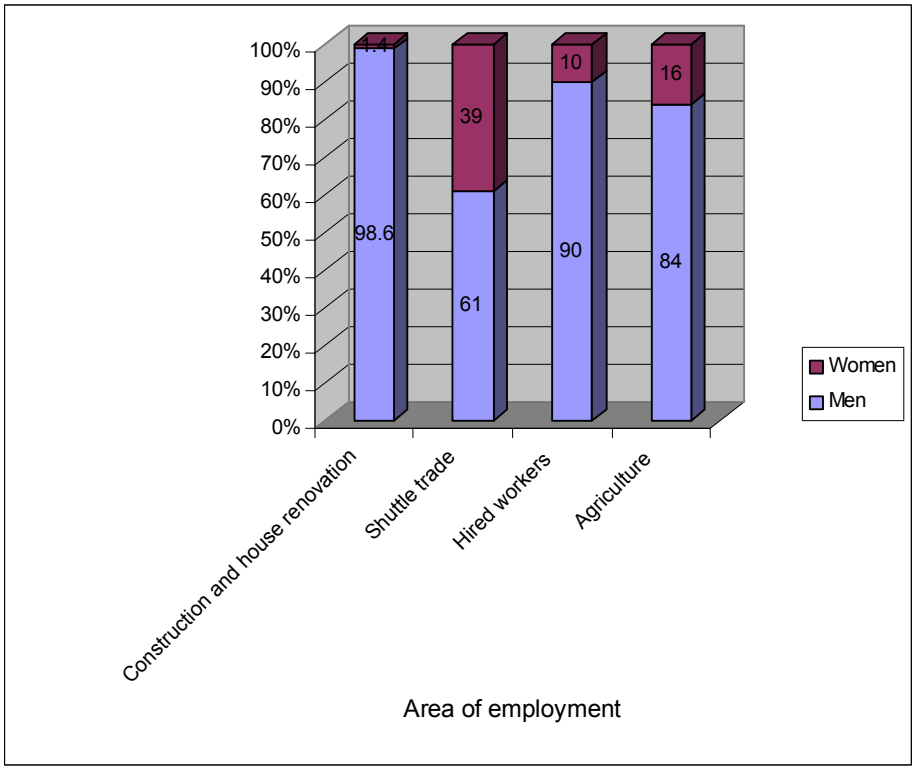
2.2 GENDER

The gender structure of labour migration from Tajikistan is characterized by a predominance of males. According to the research for this report, 85% of those who left the country to look for a job in 2002 were male and 15% female. About 44% of women from migrant households left Tajikistan as family members and were episodically involved in the work of male family members.

Recently, however, there has been a considerable increase in the number of hired female migrant workers and those employed in the Russian trade infrastructure.

Women are highly represented in the shuttle trade, accounting for 39% of Tajik shuttles. 74.5% of all female Tajik labour migrants work as shuttles.

Table 7: Men and women working abroad



16% of all Tajik migrants engaged in agriculture are women. 5.5% of all female migrants are working in agriculture, usually in seasonal jobs and harvesting. Entire families leave home to work as farmhands.

Women usually obtain jobs in retailing, the catering trade or services, and sometimes work as medical personnel. 10% of all hired workers and 14.5% of all female migrants work in these areas**.** The fewest number of women are employed in construction (1.4% of all migrants and 3.6% of female labour migrants).

2.3 EDUCATION

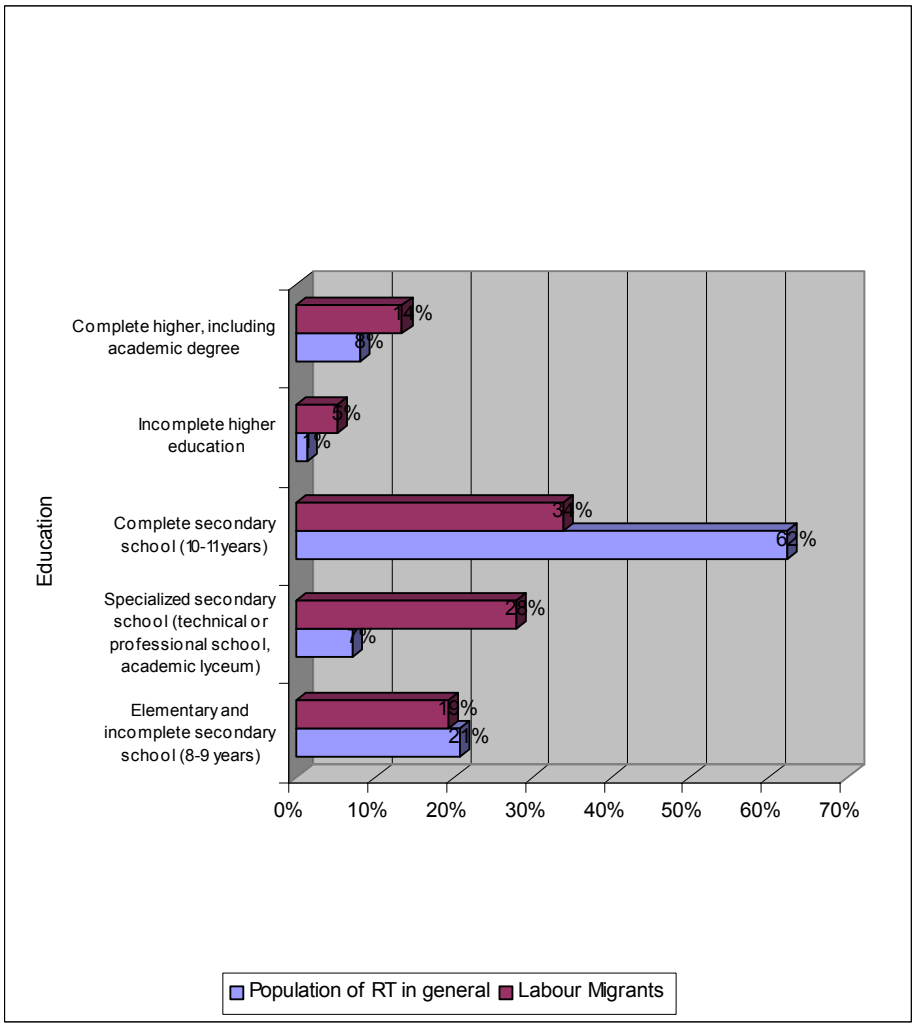
The educational level of migrants is somewhat higher than among the general population in Tajikistan. 34% of migrants have attended general secondary school, 27.9% have attended specialized secondary school, 19.3% have elementary and incomplete secondary education, and 18.8% of migrants have higher or incomplete higher education.

In terms of education, labour migrants fall clearly into two groups. The first and most numerous group comprises young people who have secondary or incomplete secondary education (9-11th form), and who rarely have attended specialized schools.

The second group is made up of middle-aged or older qualified workers and specialists. The percentage of those who have attended specialized secondary schools (technical or professional school, academic lyceum), is almost four times higher among the migrants than among the general population (27.9% compared with 7.1%). This means that qualified workers, technicians and mid-level information technology (IT) specialists are more active in the migration process. The collapse

of industrial enterprises in Tajikistan threw trained personnel onto the international labour market, where demand for their skills is greater.

Table 8: Educational level of migrants compared with the general population



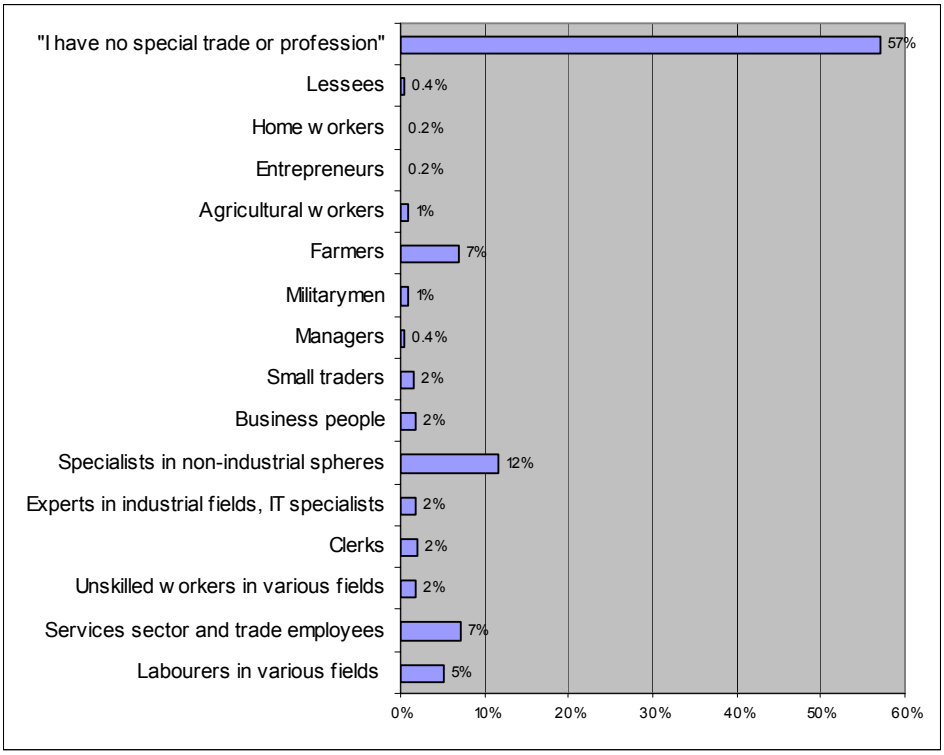
The number of migrants with incomplete higher education is also high at 5.3%, compared with 1.4% of the overall population. It reflects the fact that students are often forced to interrupt their studies and leave the country to earn money.

Qualifications

The most striking feature of Tajik labour migration is that more than the half the migrants have no qualifications. 57% of respondents say they left the country without having a profession or skills. Young people who had never worked before make up the overwhelming majority of this group.

Those migrants who do have qualifications are a highly heterogeneous group. They include engineers, doctors, managers, teachers, farmers, clerks, construction workers, entrepreneurs and actors.

Table 9: Occupation/employment at home



Migrants with qualifications can be divided into the following groups:

- Specialists working in non-industrial areas, such as education, science, culture and health (12%). They leave to work abroad six times more often than high-level engineers and technicians (2%).
- The second group (7.2%) consists of skilled workers in trade and services. In most cases they continue to work in their profession abroad.
- Farmworkers make up the third group (7%). The expression "Tajik labour" arose in connection with the hard work they perform.

2.4 EMPLOYMENT

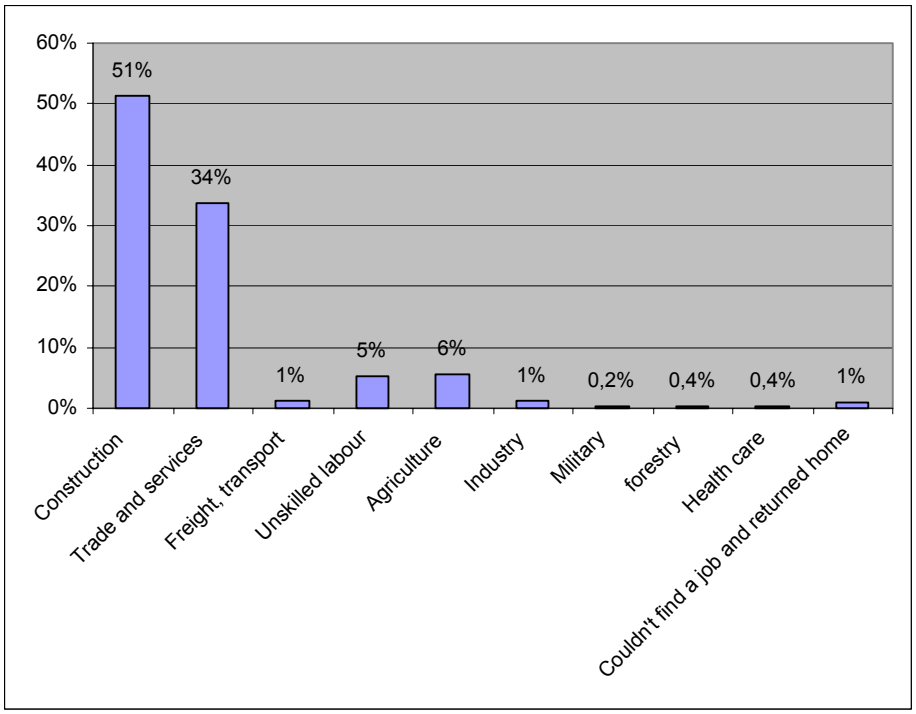
At the time of the first survey, 57.1% of migrants who had returned to Tajikistan were not employed. 42.9% were officially employed. Of these 20% worked for government institutions.

Areas of Employment Abroad

Migrant workers from Tajikistan are mainly employed in rural and housing construction, oil and gas production, motor vehicle and machinery manufacturing, the sale of fruits and vegetables,

catering, agriculture (vegetable-growing, watermelon plantations, cattle breeding), shuttle trading and the trade and market infrastructure.

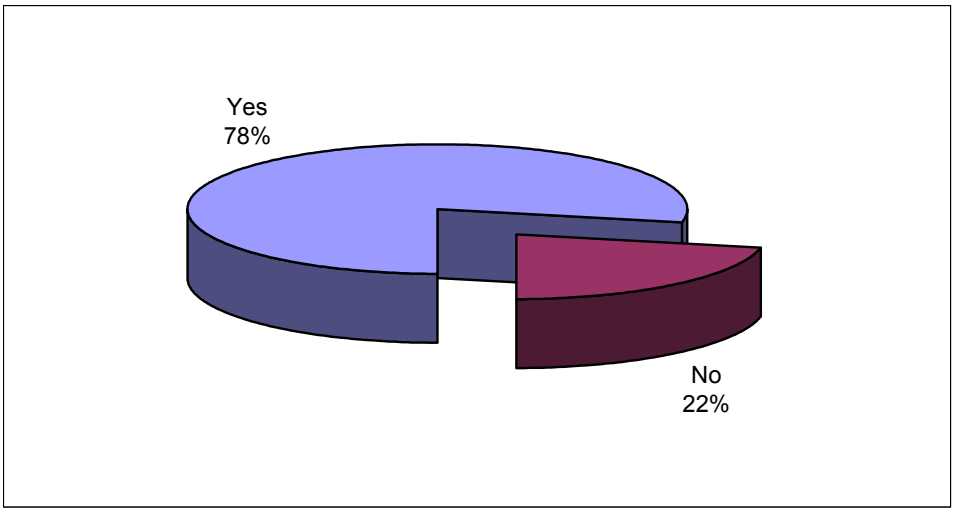
Table 10: "Did you leave Tajikistan in search of work between 1998 and the present? If so, in which field did you work?"



2.5 LANGUAGE SKILLS

On the whole, migrant workers from Tajikistan have good language skills. 78.4% speak Russian in addition to their native language (Tajik or Uzbek). 14.6% of the migrants speak Uzbek. Most of the Uzbek-speakers are women from the Sughd region and shuttles. Knowledge of a second or third language is more common among older people than the younger generation. The younger the migrant worker, the lower the level of language skills. Young people and women made up the overwhelming majority of interviewed migrant workers who do not speak a second language (21.6%).

Table 11: "Do you speak a language other than your native tongue?"



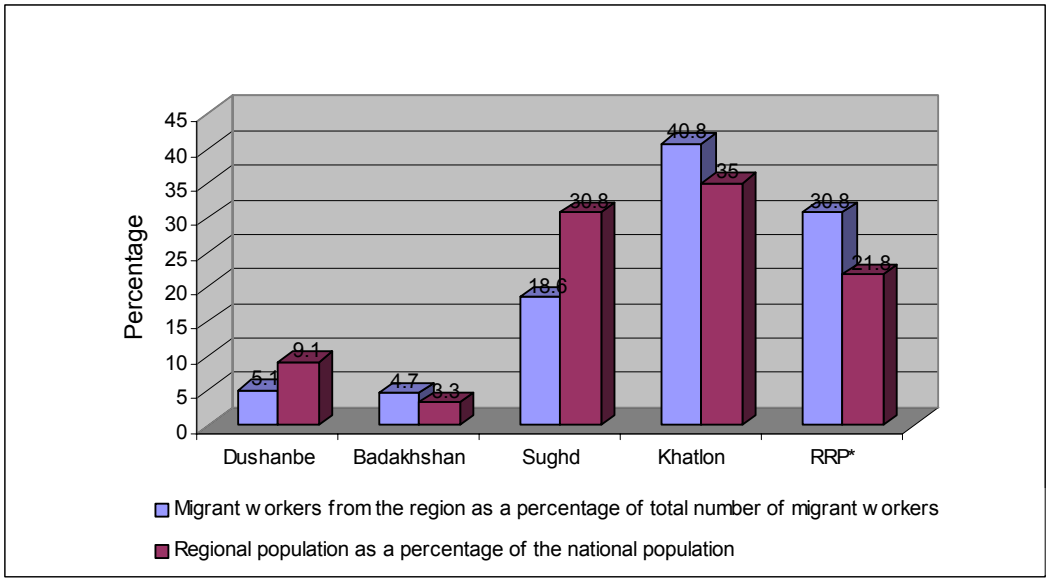
2.6 GEOGRAPHIC AND ETHNIC ORIGIN

Geographic Origin

The largest number of migrants come from the Khatlon region (40.8% of the total number of migrants), in particular the Kurghan Teppa area. People living in the Districts under Republican Subordination (RRP) are also strongly represented in labour migration (30.8%). 4.7% of all migrants are from the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast, a very high rate of migration.

There are rural districts in Tajikistan from which virtually the entire male population leaves to work abroad. These are the Isfara, Kanibadam, Asht, Aini, Penjikent and Shakhristan districts of the Sughd region bordering Uzbekistan; the Bokhtar, Vakhsh and, to a lesser extent, Farkhor districts of the Khatlon region, as well as the Lenin, Kofarnikhon and Varzob areas in the RRP.

Table 12: Origin of migrant workers by region



* Districts under Republican Subordination (RRP)

Ethnicity

The ethnic composition of labour migration from Tajikistan largely correlates with the ethnic structure of the population. Ethnic Uzbeks are an exception: they seldom leave to work abroad. The reasons are social and cultural. In contrast to Tajiks, ethnic Uzbeks lack a migratory tradition. They prefer to earn income from tillage and small trade. Those who do migrate are usually engaged in shuttle trading, catering and agriculture. Only impoverished Uzbeks will consider seeking work abroad in the construction sector.

Table 13: Breakdown by ethnicity

Tajik	85.4 %
Russian	1.3 %
Uzbek	12.3 %
Belarusian	0.2 %
Tatar	0.4 %
Afghan	0.2 %
Other	0.2 %

2.7 CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRANTS' HOUSEHOLDS

Household Size

Migrants' households vary in size from 1 to 30 persons, but families with between 4 and 11 members predominate.

Marital Status

Most of the migrant workers have families (68.5%). The older group (over 60) has a high percentage of widowed persons. A small number are officially divorced (3.8%), and 1.9% are separated. Another group consists of persons who have not been officially registered in a civilian registrar's office but are cohabitating or have a *shariat* (religious) marriage. This group (22.6%) comprises people aged 15 to 19.

Table 14: Marital status

Married	68.5 %
Divorced	3.8 %
Married but separated	1.9 %
Widow/ widower	3.0 %
Living with somebody but not registered	22.6 %
Single and was never married before	0.2 %

2.8 DURATION OF STAY ABROAD

How long a migrant stays abroad is primarily determined by the season when he or she can earn money. In Russia, this is the agricultural and construction season, which starts in April and ends in October. The second determining factor is how much money the migrant wants to earn. Most of the migrants surveyed said they were leaving in February or March, spending one season abroad and returning home in October or November. 54.2% of migrants left between February and March 2001. Young migrants without a family work for two to three seasons in industrial enterprises and market infrastructures that operate all year round.

2.9 CONCLUSIONS

The survey results show that labour migration mainly involves men from the cities, suburban areas, border regions, mountainous regions, and territory affected by the civil war. More than half the migrants have no profession before departure. Every fifth migrant cannot speak a second language. The younger the migrant, the lower the level of his education, professional training and language skills. As a result, these migrants take on only the toughest, least prestigious jobs in the receiver countries. Migrants from Tajikistan are employed in labour-intensive industries with difficult working conditions. They do jobs which the local population finds unattractive or that are located in regions experiencing a manpower shortage or with severe climatic conditions.

A new type of migrant is emerging, for whom labour migration becomes a lifestyle: 51.8% of migrants go abroad on an annual basis.

In the past, migrants who had a job at home tried to hang on to it, covering their absence by taking vacation time or calling it a business trip. At the time, managers were interested in keeping their workers. It was widely believed that the economic crisis was only temporary.

Now the situation has changed. Some domestic enterprises shut down, while others were privatized and changed their activities. Layoffs soared between 1997 and 2001. In 2001, 27% of survey respondents had lost their jobs in Tajikistan. At the time of the survey, only 27.1% were still

employed at their old workplace. 72.9% did not work and were not registered as unemployed. Only 1.5% were registered as unemployed.

70% of those who continued to hold jobs in Tajikistan between trips abroad work for state enterprises or institutions. The rest get jobs in the private sector if they stay at home over the winter, usually contract work for a set period of time.

Responding to the question, *"Would you return to your former job if your enterprise started up again?"*, 57% of the migrants said no, 22% were unsure and only 20% said yes. Therefore more than half the migrants had chosen labour migration as their basic life strategy.

3. TYPES OF LABOUR MIGRATION

The main types of labour migration from Tajikistan are as follows:

- Migration of hired workers, i.e migrants who work abroad at a state enterprise or private company under an official or informal contract;
- Migration of construction workers who undertake construction or renovation work, individually or in brigades, under an official or informal contract;
- Individual commercial migration (shuttle trading);
- Agricultural workers and tenant farmers who rent land abroad for cultivation.

3.1 HIRED WORKERS

Standing out among the general flow of labour migration are the migrants who are hired on a permanent basis by foreign state enterprises or private companies. 22.2% of all interviewed migrant workers fall into this category. Most are employed in Moscow, Tumen, Samara and Volgograd.

21.1% of the hired workers surveyed work in construction and municipal services as sanitary technicians (engineers), masons and handymen.

Trade is the second leading area of employment for hired workers after construction and municipal services (18.1%). Migrants are employed as sellers, forwarding agents and security guards in markets, trading bases and shops, and as porters and cleaners in the markets. They work for private commercial firms, in tents and containers, and as forwarding agents in state-owned produce and commercial warehouses. Many female hired workers are involved in trade.

Agriculture is the third major area (17.3%). Farmers are seasonally employed by collective farms and other agricultural enterprises in Russia or, more rarely, in Kazakhstan. They are involved in vegetable and melon cultivation. Almost one-third of agricultural workers work in cattle breeding, usually as shepherds, cattlemen and livestock specialists. Many of the migrants working in agriculture are employed as machine, tractor and combine operators, or as garage mechanics. Seasonal agricultural workers are hired under contract to harvest crops, predominantly fruits and vegetables, particularly melons, in southern Russia, and occasionally wheat harvesting in Russia and Kazakhstan.

14.9% of hired workers are electrical assemblers. Hired workers are employed in building maintenance as mechanics, sanitary technicians, electricians, manual workers, boiler repairmen and yardkeepers

11% work as loaders in the markets, produce warehouses, ports and terminals.

9.4% are manual workers, masters and technicians in industrial enterprises and the public sector. They are chisel masters and workers in the gas and oil fields, electric welders, mechanics, crane operators, blacksmiths, road workers in road operational departments and seamstresses in textile firms.

7.8% are drivers for transport companies or in public transport, and taxi drivers in taxi pools. A slightly lower percentage (7%) work in public catering as waiters, cooks, dishwashers, bakers, confectioners and street food vendors.

Small but stable fields of employment are auto repair shops (3.1%) and domestic services (3.1%).

1.5% of hired workers work in high schools as teachers and sports trainers.

Table 15: Areas of employment for hired workers

Seller, forwarding agent, security guard in trade enterprises	18.1 %
Agricultural worker	17.3 %
Electrical assembler	14.9 %
Loader	11.0 %
Qualified worker/technician (mechanic, electric welder, crane operator, chisel master, blacksmith, road worker, seamstress)	9.4 %
Driver	7.8 %
Cook, confectioner, baker	7.0 %
Construction (sanitary engineer, mason, handyman, master for wells)	6.2 %
Auto repair worker (mechanic, car washer)	3.1 %
Services (photographer, shoemaker, dishwasher)	3.1 %
Teacher, trainer	1.5 %

Intermediary Services

As a rule, employment and travel arrangements for the hired workers are handled by official and unofficial intermediaries. These may be private job placement agencies or human smugglers from northern Tajikistan. The practice of payment for job placement abroad is accepted by the migrants, who say they are required to pay middlemen about one-quarter of their total earnings.

Although the majority are willing to pay for the services of legal companies, private or state-owned, which arrange for legal employment in a receiver country and organize travel and registration, there are regional differences in the attitude towards these firms. Migrants from northern Tajikistan and Dushanbe generally appreciate their services, while migrants from the Khatlon region and the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast prefer to depend on the support and solidarity of their fellow countrymen, friends and relatives, rather than pay for intermediaries whether legal or illegal.

Working Conditions

Three times as many hired workers work in private companies as in state enterprises. 45% of hired workers are working under an official contract, while 54.4% have an oral agreement, i.e. are illegal workers.

Migrants face a tough work schedule, often working two to three shifts for 12 to 15 hours, sometimes without days off. This applies above all to the agricultural and construction sectors, where work schedules are dictated by weather conditions and the short Russian summer.

Employers may force workers to accept inconvenient schedules and difficult working conditions. Migrants do not protest for fear of losing their job.

In Moscow I did very heavy physical work but I was paid well. This money has saved my family from starvation. I would agree to any type of heavy labour as long as it pays good money.

Handyman, 31, Shughnon region

While a small group of migrants find well-paid jobs, the majority earn modest wages and are often compelled to take on supplementary employment.

It is very difficult to work abroad but one can bear everything for the sake of the children. My husband earns very little and spends everything on drink. My daughter should get married and I need to prepare her dowry. My sons are out of work. Fortunately, my daughter-in-law earns money from sewing and baking bread. I also want to bring my son here. Our friends promised to find him a job. I work in a privately run canteen and receive US$ 200 per month. On my days off I earn additional income as a nurse in a hospital. I try to send money home as often as possible. I shall help my family as long as my health permits.

Dishwasher in a canteen, 50, Dushanbe

Migrants who work in schools in Russia are forced by low teachers' salaries and delays in payment to seek additional employment. These poorly paid jobs are offered to migrants because they would otherwise be hard to fill, and migrants take them in order to be legally registered.

In the summer we pick and dry apricots. In the autumn I go to Russia, where I work as a chemistry teacher in Arkhangelsk. I like my job very much but the salary is small, so in addition I have to work as a seller in a trading tent. I am respected at school.

Chemistry teacher, 36, Chorky *kishlak*, Isfara district

According to the survey, 37% of the hired workers are working in their profession or in a related line of work. The rest are not working in their profession. But 56% say the work they do is in line with their education and experience.

As a rule, job migrants try to keep the jobs they get abroad. 54% never changed their workplace, 14% changed jobs once, 24% changed jobs two or three times, and 8% frequently changed jobs.

The main reason given for changing jobs was low earnings (50%), followed by difficult working conditions (20%). The latter include heavy physical labour, often outdoors during cold Russian winters, rare or no days off, a working day that lasts from 12 to 15 hours or longer (every tenth respondent who had changed jobs said his working day had lasted more than 17 hours), and poor labour safety. Physical exhaustion and disability force migrants to give up jobs involving such adverse conditions.

Family reasons constituted the third most common reason for leaving a job (11%). Migrants return home for several months either for a specific reason or simply to spend time with their families.

Living and working abroad are not that easy, but you have to put up with everything for the sake of earning money. Here in Tajikistan there is no opportunity to earn that kind of money. I shall live for a while with my family and then leave again.

Loader, Bokhtar district

9% stopped working when the season ended, and 4% were let go upon completion of the construction project. 2% were forced to quit and move elsewhere due to a lack of housing. 2.5% left because they found a better job.

Employers often cheat hired workers. The incidence is higher among workers who are not officially employed. Half the hired workers said they had to wait two to six months to receive their wages. 20% were not paid the correct amount or received no payment at all.

Hired workers receive more social benefits than other categories of migrants, such as shuttles and self-employed construction workers who usually receive none. 17% of hired workers have paid holidays, 19% paid sick leave, 25% fully or partially paid medical care and 34% free meals.

State enterprises provide more social benefits than private companies. However, due to the absence of bilateral labour agreements between Tajikistan and the CIS countries in which Tajik migrant workers are employed, many problems remain unresolved. There are practically no laws covering the right to pensions for hired migrant workers.

Legal Status

Local residence permits are a serious problem for hired workers who spend years abroad. 68% of those surveyed register, 22% do not and 10% sometimes do. Employers often help migrants register.

After I finished my studies in physics and mathematics at Tajik State National University in 2000, I couldn't find a job and left with my friends to work in Moscow. For two years I've been working at a ferroconcrete factory. We live in a hostel. I was registered by our production manager when I came to look for a job. When migration cards were introduced, he helped us get registered in the new system, though we had to pay some additional money. There are a lot of Tajiks, Ukrainians and Armenians at our workplace. Working conditions are good, we work eight hours a day with two days off, but we don't have employment agreements.

Concreter, 25, Muminabad district

Migrants who rent a flat, room or bed, look for ways of registering independently. This requires paying significant sums to intermediaries, on average between 600 and 800 roubles to register for three months.

It is particularly hard for Tajiks to get registered. I was paying too much for registration. Now I need to re-register every three months. If you are not registered, you can get into big trouble. Any militiaman can arrest and beat you.

Commercial firm administrator, 28, Khujand

Living Conditions

The housing problem is acute. Living conditions are seldom satisfactory. 40.4% rent a room or share a flat with several other people. Migrants spend between one-thirtieth and one-sixth of their earnings on rent.

It is very difficult to rent an inexpensive room or bed. Rent is very high and must be paid several months in advance. Four or five people have to split it. It's cheaper that way.

Seller, 24, Kanibadam district

36.6% live in employee housing, including factory hostels. The premises tend to be cramped and dirty. 6.9% live with relatives or friends. 3.5% rent a bed. 73% live without their family, 4% with their wife, 5% with wife and children, and 3.5% live with their second, Russian wife. 11% live in a family group headed by the worker's father, or, more rarely, his mother, and the worker's working sons or brothers.

8% live under conditions unfit for human habitation.

Our fellow countrymen are forced to live in cellars, containers, attics, sheds. Once I lived directly in a boiler house without any conveniences.

Mechanic, 28, Dushanbe

The hired workers spend on average 2.5 to three years abroad. During this time most of them seldom see their families. They find the separation difficult.

I am very happy that I've gone abroad to work. It is possible to earn good money in Russia. But it is hard being so far away from home. It's bad without the children.

Electrical assembler, 32, Kafarnikhon district

The vast majority (76%) return home only once or twice a year. This group also includes seasonal workers who work from March to November and then go home, and shift workers who work for 15 days straight, followed by 15 days off.

I've been working in Russia for a few years already. I come to Tajikistan once a year to visit my family and bring them money. Now, thank God, we have everything because of the money I earn in Russia.

Forwarding agent and loader in a vegetable warehouse in a Moscow suburb, 35, Khorog

4% make two or three trips home per year. Another 4% can visit their family only once every three years. 8% lacked the financial means to visit their family for several years.

Communication with the family is an acute problem, and migrants suffer from the absence of news from home and the inability to convey news about themselves. 22% have no contact with their families in between visits home on annual leave. But 48% call home once a month or more often. Due to the lack of telecommunications in rural areas of Tajikistan, migrants call their friends in cities and these pass on information about the migrants' families. In a number of areas with a high level of migration, inhabitants have paid for the restoration of the telephone system, and in each *kishlak* (village) they have established long-distance phones.

Many workers say they would call home more frequently if it were less expensive. Another inhibiting factor is that they have to call from a public phone booth, and in the street there is always a risk of running into a policeman who will extort a bribe from the foreign worker.

The malfunctioning Tajik postal service makes matters worse. 17% send letters through relatives and friends.

Relations with the Local Population

The issue of adaptation to the host society is very important for hired workers, who are in close contact with the local population not only in the workplace but in everyday life. Migrants try to establish relations with their fellow workers and neighbours. However, insufficient knowledge of Russian, cultural differences and sometimes religious differences can hamper integration. Adaptation is easier in the countryside than in the cities, especially if the migrants form a substantial group at work.

We try to find a common language with the local population. They are good people, but they drink too much.

Factory blacksmith, 34, Faizabad district

25% of respondents said the local population treated them in a friendly manner. 40% said the locals were indifferent to them. 25% said it was difficult for them to build relations with local residents because the latter believe that migrants "are taking bread away from them". 10% said the local population treated them badly and used derogatory expressions such as "black-heads" or "Asians".

We are insulted, thrown out of the country and called "blacks". People get angry and ask us why we are coming there. One has to put up with it all. We don't have any protection.

Car wash attendant, 23, Gazimalik district

3.2 CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

Tajik construction workers began to migrate en masse abroad in 1994. Refugees and IDPs were returning home following the end of the civil war. Faced with ruined houses, unemployment, lack of food and other necessities of life, they set off for Russia in droves. In the Soviet period, Russia had drawn student construction groups and private brigades of moonlighting construction workers from Tajikistan. State-run construction enterprises from Tajikistan had operated in Russia. Past experience of working in Russia, existing contacts and the awareness of the booming demand for construction workers all played a role in motivating Tajiks to join construction brigades in Russia.

Initially, the bulk of the construction workers from Tajikistan had low qualifications, which earned the brigades a bad reputation. Employers gave them the least prestigious, hardest and worst paid jobs. A brigade typically comprised one qualified builder and four to five beginners. In some cases, two or three brigades shared one *usto* (master), on whom all the trainees depended for advice. Skills have improved over the years, but construction brigades from Tajikistan still include many untrained young men just starting out. This lack of experience explains why Tajik labour remains the cheapest in the building industry.

Moscow is the most popular destination for the construction workers, attracting 36.8% of them, followed by Tumen with 28.4%. Tajik workers also work on building sites in Novosibirsk (6.1%), Ekaterinburg (5.5%), Samara (5%), and St. Petersburg (4.4%). Smaller numbers go to Kazan, Novokuznetsk or Khabarovsk.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of the construction brigades and the brigades engaged in renovating flats work eight or nine months out of the year. As a rule, they arrive in spring and working throughout the summer, leaving in the late autumn. The fact that there is no need for warm accommodation in summer mitigates the housing problem. 22% of construction workers work all year round. 4% leave to work abroad during vacations. These are mainly teachers.

I am a teacher. I have a very low salary and I am glad my rare trips help me bolster my family's financial position.

House painter and plasterer, 31, Penjikent district

Construction Brigades

65% of construction workers travel abroad in brigades, as opposed to 23% who seek work alone, 9% with relatives, and 4% in groups of friends. The brigades vary in size and consist of fellow countrymen, who may include friends, relatives and neighbours. They are headed by a brigade leader, who is usually a qualified construction worker, older and experienced. He contacts the middleman, if there is one, and finds the jobs, handles the employer and the police, rents flats and deals with registration. He manages the financial issues for the whole brigade. A brigade will usually have a common budget and the brigade leader distributes the money earned, allocating operating expenses and remittances. As a rule, he is responsible for sending money home to brigade members' families.

I've been going to Tumen with my father and older brother for two years now. My father is a brigade leader. He is very good mechanic, sanitary technician and welder. I don't have any problems. All problems are solved by my father and brother.

Mechanic, 19, Dushanbe

Working Conditions

Tajik construction workers build private houses, summer residences, rural construction projects and, less often, multi-room housing and large-scale industrial and administrative buildings. Brigades with between two to five members will work on renovating a flat. There are some family brigades.

Construction teams face significant difficulties looking for clients. 3% of brigades advertise their services regularly, 16% occasionally. The rest try to find work independently or through their friends.

Informal labour markets operate in Russian cities. In Moscow this black market is located at the intersection of the Moscow ring motorway and the Yaroslavl highway. Every day, even on the coldest winter days, about 300 Tajik migrants, not only individual workers but also whole brigades, enter this market in search of work.

Using the services of middlemen is a widely accepted practice.

If the customer is found through a middleman, the latter takes most of the money and we don't get much.

Concreter, 21, Kolhozabad district

Often, the construction supervisor act as middlemen, taking the project contract and hire several construction brigades as subcontractors. They may work regularly with the same construction brigades. In recent years, Tajiks are increasingly acting as contractors because they have many relatives and fellow countrymen among "their" builders. They will hire anywhere from two to 18 brigades. Sometimes they form small civil engineering firms, which prefer not to increase the number of workers as needed but rather to subcontract brigades. In most cases such contracts are not made out properly and the construction workers may be cheated and swindled.

Employers often fictitiously employ Russian citizens for the full working week, using such "dead souls" in the reporting and during building site inspections, when in fact they have hired Tajik construction brigades. It is difficult enough to reveal illegal workers on a construction site. Nobody will check the documents of all the workers on the site, inspectors judge according to the number, and if the checking is meticulous, the employer agrees to a bribe that is insignificant compared to money saved by using unregistered foreign workers. Despite their low cost, the Tajik illegal workers are frequently cheated out of their wages. They may be paid less than agreed, or partly in goods, or, if the contract was in dollars, at an underestimated dollar exchange rate. In some cases the employer refuses to pay at all.

Clients often cheat us. They don't pay on time or they give less money, knowing there is nothing we can do.

Electrician, 31, Asht district

Tajik brigades work at least 14-16 hours straight with no days off and no social benefits, and undercut the local competition by working for two or three times less pay. Russian construction companies cannot offer such low prices because they pay taxes and invest in costly equipment and tools. Illegal construction brigades use the most primitive tools. They almost never use electrical equipment or even simple mechanical tools. Even if equipment is used it is old, left over from Soviet times. As a result, productivity is low but the work is cheap.

Local firms resent the foreigners for luring customers with dumping prices. The chances of the work being of poor quality does not always put the client off as long as the price is right: for example, an interior may cost US$ 35-40 per square metre using local workers, but only US$10 using Tajiks. Foreigners working without a licence bear no official responsibility for the quality of their work. They don't give any guarantees and it is impossible to seek redress in the courts for unsatisfactory work.

Racketeering has been encountered by 23.7% of the construction workers interviewed.

Racketeers exist. They engage in extortion and set up a "roof" [criminal group]. We had problems too, but basically we try to maintain good relations with them, in other words. we pay them off.

Brigade leader, 42, Lenin district

Living Conditions

It is quite rare that construction workers can afford to rent a whole flat. Several people may share a cheap room rented from people with low income, such as pensioners or alcoholics. 23.8% rent a room or flat, 9% rent a bed, 12% live with friends and relatives, and 1% live with the second, Russian wife. More commonly, however, workers live on or near the construction site. This can be a basement, a trailer, a shed or premises that are not suitable for accommodation. They may even live without a roof over their head in the forest.

It is very difficult to find suitable accommodation. It's happened that we slept in the forest.

Brigade leader, 51, Faizabad district

54.2% of workers live in accommodation provided by the employer, who rents out one or two floors in a hostel to them or creates temporary trailer camps for both registered and illegal workers. The workers pay a minimal rent of US$ 4-8 and monthly kickbacks to the local police (about US$ 20 per trailer).

Even year-round workers are usually separated from their families and seldom go home. This applies to 83% of the construction workers surveyed. 8% live with the second, Russian wife, and 6% live as incomplete family groups (father with sons, or brothers). Very few construction workers bring their families with them: 3% are accompanied by their wife, 2% by their wife and children. It is the qualified workers – the brigade leader and contractors – who live with their wives and children. They are well settled and can afford a better standard of accommodation. They spend more money on daily expenses, while most of the workers spend hardly anything on themselves, trying to save as much as possible to send home to their families.

Food is very expensive. In order to save money we buy something cheap and eat modestly. Sometimes we eat tinned food for cats and dogs. And we're grateful for it.

House painter and plasterer, 29, Bohtar district

Almost all migrants send home part of their earnings in the form of money and another part in the form of consumer goods. They buy durable goods, medicines, clothes, items for school, household linen and toiletries. Relatives or friends may be enlisted but for the most part they transport the purchases themselves when they go home to visit their families.

Legal Status

Most of the problems that arise in regard to legal status are related to registration. Since the majority of construction workers live on the building site in trailers or on unsuitable premises or in the flats which they are renovating, registration offices will not register them at a place of residence. They are also refused registration at their workplace address. When workers succeed in obtaining registration, the employer has usually handled it.

Nobody is registering people like us, and without registration you can have problems everywhere.

Plasterer, 26, Darband district

The basic problems faced by migrants, such as detention by the police, and payoffs to avoid it, are related to registration. Not surprisingly, the workers try to not leave the construction sites. When they have to be away from the construction site – upon departure or arrival, for a visit to the doctor, or to call from a public phone booth – they try to order a taxi to avoid contact with the police. If the police catch sight of them, the police consider them fair game whether they are registered or not.

If you are Tajik you have to hide from the police. They detain us and demand their cut. Even if you are registered, they will ask for money anyway, although the sum will be lower.

Auxiliary worker, 19, Kurghan Teppa

The construction workers find themselves in a legal vacuum in the workplace as well. Practically no one is working under licence. It is too expensive and time-consuming.

Construction brigades, artels or individual masters sign an official or informal turnkey contract with their employer. If a brigade is small it usually does not sign a turnkey contract, and manages only with an oral arrangement that deprives them of any legal protection.

On the whole, the financial benefits of construction work may not justify the effort. 64% of all the Tajik labour migrants surveyed regard construction as the most difficult and riskiest way to earn money abroad. As the main reason for this view 89% of respondents cited poorly paid, excessively heavy physical labour requiring strength and health. The second reason given was the risk of being cheated out of their earnings.

Among the negative consequences of working in construction abroad, respondents most frequently named loss of health, deteriorating relations with or disintegration of the family, and lack of contact with one's children.

3.3 COMMERCIAL MIGRATION (SHUTTLES)

Traveling commercial traders, or shuttles, represent one of Tajikistan's largest labour migration trends and a major socio-economic phenomenon. Based on our research, shuttles make up 28.5% of Tajik labour migrants. They are entrepreneurs who regularly buy goods in one region and sell them in another. The key characteristics of this thriving business are a limited quantity of transported goods and the direct participation of the shuttle in their purchase, delivery and sale.

"Shopping tourism" developed on the ruins of the state-run trade and distribution system. It will continue to flourish until economic stability is established. If shuttle activity were to decline, prices would rise.

Shopping tours bring income into the republic and provide work for hundreds of thousands of people. Business people work at their own risk. They bring currency and goods, provide jobs and keep prices down. I think it would be impossible to close down shopping tourism. On the contrary, it should be further developed until an organized trade model emerges.

Travel agency owner, 48, Dushanbe

This type of trade originated in the "shadow" economy of the Soviet Union's final decade, when Tajiks took vegetables, citrus and other fresh fruits, as well as dried fruits, to market in Russia and brought back manufactured goods to satisfy local demand. This activity became possible as the result of a new, liberalized Soviet policy towards agricultural production, which allowed subsidiary private farming. Cheap transport within the Soviet Union and the very low cost of Tajik produce made this business highly profitable.

The independent cultivation of fruits and vegetables for export to Russia became a hugely successful business. Every third lemon in the former Soviet Union was said to come from Tajikistan. This shadow economy was particularly widespread in the Kurghan Teppa area, the Kàrategin Valley and northern Tajikistan. The powerful economic groups that emerged here retained their markets even after the collapse of the USSR. Therefore people from these regions are still overrepresented among shuttle migrants.

Reflecting the historical development, a very small but influential segment in today's shuttle trade comes from the small and medium-sized businesses formed at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. These people had established good relations with Russian entrepreneurs. A second group are former members of the power structures who have contacts in Russia. These two groups tend to set up trading companies registered under the names of Russian partners.

However, the majority of shuttles entered the business in the wake of the civil war, in response to the economic crisis. Most of them, especially women, began by selling off their personal belongings in the lean years from 1993 through 1995. The survey shows that shuttle trading did not become a mass phenomenon until 1995. From then on it developed rapidly, peaking in 1998.

Shuttle trading has attracted the most active and mobile segments of the Tajik population. Typically they are well-educated: former scientists, doctors, teachers and people who worked in cultural fields. This may be related to the fact that a high educational level helps people adjust to the challenges of the business, understand supply and demand, and establish contacts with suppliers, the police and customs officials.

Three groups can be distinguished:

- Small-time shuttles who leave Tajikistan for short-term trips to the nearest shopping centre or to trading centres in border regions. Mostly these are retailers who buy a small consignment of goods on the wholesale or retail markets. They supply small towns, settlements and *kishlaks* (villages) with consumer goods.
- Shuttles who travel to large trade centres abroad. They live in Dushanbe and regional trade centres such as Khujand and Kurghan Teppa. In most cases they are involved in both retail and wholesale trading, although some are active in retailing alone. As a rule, they book their shopping tours through travel agencies.
- Seasonal shuttles who travel to Russia, more rarely to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, for half a year (from April through November), returning home for the winter.

The majority of respondents are not newcomers to the shuttle business. 75% of them have been involved in it for anywhere from two to six years. They cover a diverse geographic area which includes the major trading centres of Central Asia (Bishkek, Almaty, Tashkent, Samarkand, Kokand); settlements over the border with neighbouring countries, such as Sari-Osiye in Uzbekistan); and cities in Russia and other CIS counties. Moscow is the most attractive purchasing centre in the CIS, but goods are also bought in Novosibirsk, St. Petersburg, Ekaterinburg, Kazan, Volgograd, Astrakhan and Samara. Outside Russia, Moldova is another popular destination.

Outside the CIS, shuttles travel to Mashhad and Teheran in Iran, Urumchi in China, Turkey, Pakistan, India, and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

At the beginning of 2002, one-fifth of the shuttles were traveling to Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan, to buy goods. Moscow came in second and the Uzbek capital, Tashkent, third.

Geography determines the frequency and duration of the shopping trips. The average trip will last one day. 13% travel once a week. These are mainly people from the Sughd region who buy goods in Bishkek, Tashkent and the markets of Fergana Valley, especially in Kokand. Some Dushanbe residents also travel once a week, usually to Sari-Osiye. But it is more usual for Dushanbe-based traders to undertake long journeys, either to Russia or beyond CIS borders to Iran, Pakistan, the UAE, India, Turkey,and China. Those traveling to remote countries prefer to buy goods once a month (38%), or once every three months (14%), and to stay for four or five days (27%) or a week (19.5%).

About 25% of the shuttles interviewed travel outside the CIS. They travel on shopping tours organized by travel agencies that specialize in these trips. Very few people have private invitations from the target country.

13% of the shuttles work in Russian markets during the "migrant" season (from spring until the cold weather sets in), and spend winters back home in Tajikistan.

It is common for people to undertake the trips together with friends or acquaintances (72,3%). Rarely do they go with family members or alone.

An Increasingly Organized Business

Based on the results of the survey, shuttle trading has clearly developed into an organized business. The majority of qualified, successful shuttles are ready to move into full-fledged trade. Unfavourable conditions for business expansion in Tajikistan, however, prevent them from doing so. Thus they continue to travel with their chequered shopping bags.

In terms of organization, shuttle migration can be divided into two main forms:

- Highly organized "shopping tourism" with specialized travel agencies;
- Small-scale shuttle activity conducted by merchants working independently under licence.

Shopping trips were originally organized by state-run travel agencies. As the volume grew, private agencies were established and charter flights and special bus lines were introduced.

Commercial tourism appeared in the 1990s. Our economic situation led people to turn to entrepreneurial activity using the tourism channel. Why? Because tourism is more organized and less risky than individual activity.

Department head, Tajik Federation of Trade Unions Council on Tourism

Be they state-owned or private, the travel agencies operate in the same way. The agency forms a group of commercial tourists (shuttles), buys everybody tickets and provides transportation, accommodation, visas, full information and translation services if needed (for example in China). They can also handle the shipment of purchased goods so that the shuttles don't need to carry back everything themselves.

To take the example of commercial tourists traveling to China: The travel agency will organize a chartered flight to Urumchi in China's Xinjiang Uigur Autonomous Region. Upon

arrival shuttles are provided with accommodation and sometimes food and interpreting services. There are two ways for shuttles to buy goods: independently, which requires a lot of time and effort and can be fraught with cheating and theft; or via the "firm". "Firms" are associations of Chinese merchants which locate and select desired goods. In some cases shuttles can order the goods by telephone. Licensed state and private travel agencies generally ensure a high level of organization for the trips. Competition for clients is intense.

We rent the plane and the agency pays the cost of flights for a specific period. Then we start looking for shopping tourists. They don't come to us; we go to the shops and markets to look for clients.

Travel agency employee, 45, Dushanbe

Procurement and Sale

Two-thirds of the shuttles buy goods wholesale. 24% buy goods both wholesale and retail. Only 4% of shuttles buy only retail.

52% depend on regular suppliers, from whom they order the goods in advance. Nearly half agree in advance on when the shuttle will arrive in the country, 10% do so occasionally and 39% do not inform their suppliers beforehand. The geographic location of the suppliers almost coincides with the geography of the trips.

While most shuttles buy goods either wholesale or wholesale and retail, they prefer the combination of both when selling their goods (51%). 41% are engaged in the retail trade only and 8% deal only with the wholesale trade.

Transport

57% of shuttles have buyers who order goods in advance. 45% have a preliminary agreed date when their customers will come to pick up the goods.

They have customers throughout Tajikistan, but the majority are in Dushanbe, Kurghan Teppa, Kulab, Tursun-zade, Gissar, Kanibadam and Khorog. Shuttles who work in Russia on a permanent or seasonal basis cater to customers in Russian cities.

The type of transport shuttles use to transport goods depends on the travel destination. 44% prefer to transport goods by train, while 8% of those who go to far-away countries like China, the UAE, India, Pakistan and Malaysia travel by air. 36% use rented freight transport and buses to take them from cities and settlements in the Sughd region to markets in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. 26% use regular bus lines for short-term journeys. Private transport is rarely used (2%). Some people use a combination of several means of transport to ship their goods. In some cases, shuttles fly home while their purchased goods are sent by train.

Working Conditions

The business's high degree of organization is evident from the frequent hiring of workers, including loaders**.** 60% of the shuttles often employ loaders, while 40% of small-time shuttles working under licence (in Russia) carry bags and bales themselves. Shuttles prefer to sell the goods themselves

(27%) or through relatives (6%) rather than employ sellers (8%). The most numerous group (48%) sells the goods in cooperation with relatives. Other shuttles sell the goods through partners and by the wholesale. Thus, shuttle trading is primarily a family business.

Trade outlets are a weak point. Only 5% of those engaged in commerce have their own shop, and 7% rent a shop. 2% have their own retail outlet or trailer and 6% rent a trade outlet or trailer. The majority have a permanent market stall, while 36% do not and sell their goods in the street, from folding beds or spread out on the ground. 2% sell from home. The shuttles believe the periodic reorganization of the markets is a disincentive to buy or build shops or other outlets in them.

Living Conditions Abroad

The shuttles' living conditions abroad depend on the distance and duration of the journey. Participants in organized shopping tour to far-away destinations such as Turkey, China, Iran or the UAE can count on good living conditions. They are provided with accommodation, usually a hotel or rented flat.

Shuttles who undertake four-day, five-day or weeklong commercial trips to Moscow and other Russian cities, or to Almaty or Bishkek, rent a room or stay in the hotels attached to the markets.

Shuttles with seasonal or year-round business in Russia tend to have worse living conditions than other groups, with the exception of the small-time ones working under licence. They rent a flat or a room where four or five people will stay.

Accommodation is very expensive so we rent a room for a group of people. It is very crowded in the room.

Female shuttle, 26, Dushanbe

In general, 25% of shuttles rent a flat, 20% live in hotels, 20% rent a room, 13% stay with friends and 8% stay with relatives. For the rest it depends on the circumstances.

The small-time shuttles who work under licence and undertake short trips have the most difficult living conditions as they cannot afford even the cheapest hotels and rooms. They have to sleep in the buses and cars that bring them to the markets.

It is very difficult to find overnight lodging due to the high cost. That's why we sleep in the bus, under inadequate sanitary conditions.

Female shuttle, 35, Kanibadam

We spend the night in the car and sleep by turns. Of course we don't get enough sleep.

Female shuttle, 46, Hujand

If they have traveled by train, for example to Sari-Osiye in Uzbekistan, shuttles sleep in the railway stations. The total number of those who spend the night in railway stations, buses and cars is 14%.

We have no fixed place to spend the night. As we don't have relatives or friends in Uzbekistan, we sleep in the train station.

Female shuttle, 53, Gissar

Profitability

Shuttles give highly contradictory assessments regarding the profitability of their activities. 40% of all migrants consider the shuttle trade the most profitable means of earning money abroad. 5% say it is the most difficult and unprofitable type of work, citing the problems connected with crossing borders, the police and racketeering.

How much money one makes depends in part on the season, the shuttle's experience and market conditions. By minimizing the costs of accommodation, meals, auxiliary workers, loaders and trading outlets (36% sell from the street), shuttles offer goods at lower prices and with considerably shorter lead times.

They do most of their selling in the open markets, from stalls and on the streets. Working conditions are far from comfortable. In trying to save money, shuttles frequently bargain away their own health. While abroad, they have no time for the cultural attractions of the countries they visit. They are too busy hunting for the cheapest goods.

We are commercial tourists; we are not going abroad for relaxation. I don't need to relax. I would rather work and earn some money. We run around like dogs the whole week, from early morning till twelve o'clock at night, in order to find cheap goods for our customers. Our people can't buy expensive goods! We also think of how to return the money we borrow at interest and not to burn through with the goods. There were cases when we had to sell the goods for less than what we paid. In Dubai it cost 12 somoni, and here we sold it for 8 somoni. The market forced us to. People were just not paying more than 8 somoni. Many tourists have gone bankrupt.

Female shuttle, 46, Dushanbe

The weak legal framework governing commercial activity encourages shuttles to circumvent the law. So do inadequate legal protection and high levels of corruption among officials.

Their mobility and dynamism enables shuttles to react quickly to changes in consumer demand and pricing.

As the data show, the most successful shuttles are those with the most experience.

When my friends started to work in our business, they asked me what they should do. I answered, "In the beginning you have to figure out how much turnover to aim for." Then they say, "We'll come back home with the goods and sell them, but who can say whether we'll be able to justify the trip?" It is very difficult to answer this question. Previously there were no bankruptcies as the result of the unsuccessful selection of goods, sudden price fluctuations or market events such as a sudden slump in the exchange rate, but now it happens. Then they ask what to bring, for example from Dubai. And you don't know what to say. You have to keep an eye on the market and changing demand. Those who are doing well usually have good analysts.

Female shuttle, 52, Dushanbe

Shuttles assess the profitability of their work higher than other categories of migrants do. The majority are able to support their families, in particular by providing good meals, clothes and expensive goods such as electric appliances. Some shuttles bought cars and flats for their children. Some shuttles have invested profits into developing their business or that of their relatives. A very small number of these had gradually turned into highly successful business people, reaping large profits and squeezing the competition in the markets. But most of the shuttles surveyed had no plans to expand their business. After covering their expenses, they spent any profit on consumption.

Despite their generally positive attitude to their work, shuttles regard it as difficult and not respected by society.

There are a lot of problems with the purchase and sale of goods. But the most insulting aspect is the way we are treated at home. Each time we come home, we undergo humiliations in order to bring our goods through. In fact we are providing the country with goods. Instead of gratitude, we are treated as the lowest class of people. I often told myself to get out of this business. But life forces me to continue working.

Female shuttle, 46, Dushanbe

What Shuttles Worry About Most

Shuttles experience high levels of not only physical but also mental stress. They worry constantly about whether they selected the right goods, whether these will be safely delivered and whether they can repay the money they borrowed. The main sources of anxiety, however, are customs and passport control, which 92% of the shuttles regard as their greatest burden.

We have major problems with the customs house at the airport. Although the documents are in order, customs officials illegally detain us and extort money. They think we have such huge profits that we should pay for everything, including the living expenses of customs house employees.

Shuttle, 42, Dushanbe

Corrupt Tajik, Uzbek and Kazakh customs officials cause particular concern.

Our customs officials are very rough. We constantly have to deal with suspicion, insults and humiliations. During their inspections the officials confiscate part of the goods.

Shuttle, 35, Kurghan Teppa

Uzbek customs officials treat Tajiks with hostility. They complain and take a lot of money. So much harassment! We give a cut to Uzbek customs officials and after crossing the border another one to the Tajiks. Sometimes they confiscate the goods and we come back with nothing.

Female shuttle, 54, Dushanbe

Kazakh customs officials see a criminal in every Tajik. Tariffs are high and a great deal of bribery goes on.

Shuttle, 42, Dushanbe

47% are most concerned about passport control and visas. This anxiety is felt particularly by shuttles who cross the territory of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

While traveling through several republics, we pass plenty of border, customs and militia posts. Customs and passport checks are very exhausting. If we arrive at the border in the evening, border guards and customs officials will keep us there till morning unless we pay what they demand. It's not a life, it's a nightmare.

Shuttle, 44, Khojend

Shuttles also face police harassment. The overwhelming majority of shuttles who identified this problem worked seasonally or permanently in Russia. Relations with the police are also a problem for shuttles who buy goods in Russian cities.

Police officers are constantly complaining and checking our documents. They can detain us, the Asians, at any time without any reason. If they find money, they can take part of it, with the threat that otherwise we'll not get out of there alive. There is no way out of it, we have to pay up.

Shuttle, 36, Gissar

If you are detained by the police, all your goods can be taken away. You will remain with nothing. We are living in constant fear.

Female shuttle, 34, Dushanbe

A further source of worry is the transport of goods. The majority of respondents pointed to the lack of safety on the roads. The first problem is the need to cross a number of border, customs and militia posts, at each of which shuttles face extortion and confiscation. The second problem is extortion from organized criminal gangs that control certain areas along the road.

It would be good if the roads were safe and it would be possible to come and go easily, without being afraid for your life and the goods.

Shuttle, 38, Dushanbe

Another problem is that various law enforcement bodies stop the shuttles in order to check their cargo. If the shuttle is transporting fruits, vegetables or other perishable foodstuffs in a motor vehicle or railway carriage, the long delays can result in damage to the goods.

Transport of goods is very difficult. There are frequent roadchecks, transport is detained and the goods spoil. You have to pay at each railway station, otherwise the carriage will be stopped.

Shuttle, 42, Dushanbe

The need to carry large sums of money around makes the shuttles nervous. Bank transfers are prohibitively expensive and they have to pay for the goods they buy in cash. This causes problems with customs officials and exposes them to the constant risk of robbery.

A number of shuttles cited deterioration of relations within the family among the negative consequences of their business. Shuttle trading comes to dominates their life to the exclusion of all else, including family matters. Therefore many shuttles complain about dissension in the family and the alienation of their children.

Gender Aspects

More men than women are involved in shuttle migration (61%). At the same time, at 39% the proportion of women is far higher than in other types of labour migration.

Women in the shuttle business are slightly older than the men. This can be explained by the fact that women bear the basic responsibility for child care. Women with small children cannot leave on long trading trips. They enter the business at a later age.

Tajik women turned to shuttle trading before men did. During the civil war and the subsequent long period of instability, only women could transport goods on the roads of Tajikistan. Moreover, elsewhere in the CIS region, male Tajiks have always attracted attention from law enforcement bodies, who suspect them of drug trafficking and terrorism. Recourse to stereotyping gives border, customs and militia posts an added opportunity to extort money from Tajik shuttles: if the shuttle complains, one can always accuse him of being a drug courier or terrorist. This doesn't work with women, so male shuttles hand over their money to female partners or fellow travelers.

The young guys can't carry the money themselves. Their money is always with us women. Businessmen have the right to carry money, but men can't independently transport money without women. They undergo too much harassment from border guards, customs officials and the police. Our men would have a lot of problems traveling abroad if it were not for us. We intercede for them and protect them.

On the road it's easier now for women to pass through border posts, customs and police cordons.

[In addition to attracting less attention from the authorities,] women are better at judging quality when selecting goods, they have more patience and stamina. They are usually more highly motivated to deal with a tough business like this.

Female shuttle, 52, Dushanbe

Comparing male and female involvement in the shuttle trade, one can see that men have managed to set up larger, more organized businesses than their female counterparts. Men work with far greater sums of money and more often employ loaders, auxiliary workers and sellers. They prefer wholesaling: the 8% of shuttles who are engaged exclusively in the wholesale trade are men. Men have their own shops and stalls, or they rent out their trading premises. Women are usually active on the retail end, selling goods from their homes or door to door, as well as to tradespeople in the markets**.** Women predominate among shuttles working under licence. The short-term trips they take are more compatible with their family responsibilities, but they also generate lower profits than longer stays abroad.

Among the many problems they face, women shuttles have to deal with sexual harassment, especially at border and militia posts. To some extent this is reinforced by the disapproval in Central Asian Muslim society that is directed towards women working in areas regarded as a male prerogative.

Anything can happen. I went to Iran with my girlfriend. When we were in Turkmenistan, we were stopped at night by Turkmen traffic police. I left the car with the driver. One of the Turkmen said to me, "Come over and sit here." I told him, "What are you talking about! I am a human being and you are a human being. God created us. Why are you treating me like this?" He said, "So why you are here if not for this purpose?" I answered, "My work is in trade, and you'll pay for your comments!" Many people think that if women are working in business, they're all engaged in prostitution. But we are working fairly. Yes, there are some women of different nationalities who are engaged in dirty business. But we are not that kind! I addressed a complaint to our ambassador in Turkmenistan. After the trial this *GAI (traffic police) post was removed. I can stand up for myself.*

Female shuttle, 46, Dushanbe

Prospects

Trading migration has a very long tradition in Tajikistan and is an integral part of the culture. Over the centuries Tajiks formed trading communities outside their territories. Thus one can be confident that Tajik trading will continue to exist in future. The shuttle business of the past decade, however, is likely to undergo changes. These will be determined primarily by the direction and pace of economic reform in Tajikistan.

The prospects for shopping tourism will depend on how the market in the republic develops. Commercial tourism will disappear if organized market and state structures is set up to supply the republic with goods and foodstuffs. If not, shop tourists will go on supplying the population with goods. They will receive export and import licences. They will work in groups but still in a non-civilized way, meaning that in order to earn money, people work in small competing groups like in the jungle. They keep prices high instead of increasing their turnover. To boost turnover it is necessary to develop a market infrastructure, to cooperate and to achieve stable, reliable partner relations. It is not like that yet.

Travel agency owner, 40, Dushanbe

The current trend is towards a reduction in the number of small-time shuttles working under licence. Too many obstacles combine to make their activities unprofitable. Cross-border trade is still viable, but competition will eventually thin the ranks of the larger-scale shuttle traders: Only the strongest will survive. As the Tajik market develops, the individual shuttle trade will inevitably come under the control of big trading companies.

3.4 AGRICULTURAL MIGRATION

Seasonal agricultural migration, i.e. migration of agricultural workers and tenant farmers, is closely linked to the exodus of refugees from Tajikistan during the civil war in 1992 and 1993. Refugees traveling on the Dushanbe-Moscow rail line disembarked at various stations in southern Russia. Among them were large numbers of farmers. Thus Tajik rural settlements in the Volgograd and Saratov regions were formed. Many of the refugees refused to be repatriated after the end of the war for fear of persecution and due to the ongoing economic instability back home. As the job market in Tajikistan deteriorates, more and more farmers come to the districts of the south of Russia settled by Tajiks for an agricultural season, rent land and grow agricultural products. Starting from 2001, tenants from frontier areas of Tajikistan started to migrate to southern areas of Kyrgyzstan where access to land was easier and taxes were lower.

Now even "business" people from Isfara who used to bring large consignments of flour and wheat have left the business because of high taxes. They went to Kyrgyzstan, leased land are now engaged in grain cultivation. They sell the crops here in Isfara, but it is very expensive. Sometimes they sell the grain in Kyrgyzstan, and we lose money – grain and flour prices are rising.

Tenant farmer, 31, Isfara

3.5 MIGRATION OF MUSLIM CLERGY

One of the oldest traditions common to all the Tajik ethnoregional groups is the numerically small but stable migration of Muslim clergy beyond Tajikistan's borders in order to perform religious functions in Turkic tribal communities across Central Asia. This tradition has been restored in the post-Soviet period. Today, however, in addition to Central Asia, mullahs are being appointed to Tajik diaspora communities in various parts of Russia, including Bashkortostan, Tatarstan, western and eastern Siberia, Altai and the Volga region.

4. LABOUR MIGRATION NETWORKS

Tajik labour migration networks cover not only established partner relations but also sources of information and steady migrant bases in receiver countries. In many respects the networks are rooted in the traditional structure of Tajik society, which is based on close-knit communities. This background has determined the dominant features of labour migration: a high degree of organization, rapid formation of far-reaching migrant networks, and the growth of migrant communities with their own institutions, such as associations and funds, in the receiver countries.

Labour migration has created its own systems of support, adaptation and social protection of migrants without any help from the state, neither at home nor in the receiver countries. Only after labour migration emerged as one of the key socio-economic phenomena of the post-Soviet era did the Tajik authorities turn their attention to the issues involved. The government has recently begun to undertake regulatory measures.

Migrant networks have grown up out of traditional Tajik social institutions like the *avlod*. They also derive from a tradition of trading and going abroad to work that goes back centuries.

4.1 *AVLOD*, THE BASIC ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT

The influence of the *avlod* on Tajik labour migration is difficult to overestimate. In Tajik society, an *avlod* (also known as *qaymi or toyfa)* is a patriarchal community of blood relatives who have a common ancestor and common interests, and, in many cases, shared property and means of production, and consolidated or coordinated household budgets. The institution is still widespread in rural areas. Vestiges are also present in the cities.

In a 1996 nationwide poll carried out by Sharq for the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), 68.3% of the 1,500 respondents said they belonged to an *avlod* (Stephen Wagner, *Public Opinion in Tajikistan*, IFES, Washington, 1997). A Sharq survey of 4,000 respondents in January and February 2003 yielded similar results (67.5%) (Sharq, 2003).

There are considerable regional differences: 82.2% of adult inhabitants in the Kulab district are members of an *avlod*, 78% in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) and the Kurghan Teppa area, 75% in the Districts under Republican Subordination (RRP), 55% in the Sughd region, and 42.4% in Dushanbe (*ibid*.).

The *Avlod* and Migration

Because the *avlod* wields enormous authority over the behaviour of its individual members, this institution determines the internal structure of labour migration. Here, the influence of the *avlod* starts with the decision-making process: The possibility of migration is debated within the family or, if the potential migrant is very young, first with friends and then with the family. Once a decision has been reached, it is discussed and confirmed by the *avlod* elders. Like all major decisions about the *avlod* members' lives, the choice of migratory strategy must be approved by the powerful head of the *avlod*.

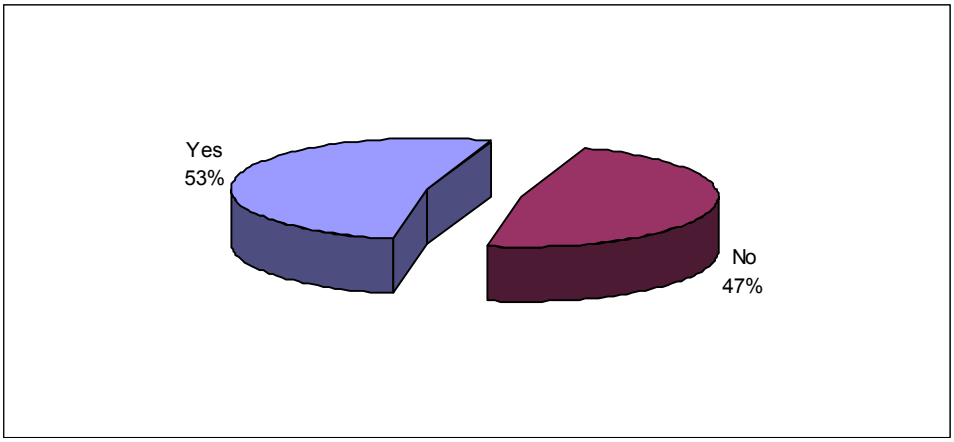
The head of the *avlod* enjoys a high level of trust. In response to the question, "Who among the following [head of the *avlod*, head of the *mahalla*, chairman of the *jamoat*, the local imam,

national and local political representatives] do you trust most?", 25% of those surveyed in the IFES/Sharq poll cited the head of their *avlod*, following 28% who trusted the president of Tajikistan most and 27% who did not trust any of the leaders mentioned. Regional differences were apparent, with the highest degree of trust in the head of the *avlod* expressed in the GBAO (42%), followed by the Kurghan Teppa area (30%), the Sughd region (28%), Kulab (24.4%), central Tajikistan (17.5%), and Dushanbe (17%).

In addition to agreeing on whether a member should go abroad to work and where, and raising money to finance the journey, the *avlod* decides where the migrant's immediate family will live in his absence and distributes his responsibilities among *avlod* members. The latter tradition dates back to the nineteenth century. If there are several men of working age in an *avlod*, they go abroad by turns. One stays behind to look after the crops and help the families of those who left. This custom allows migrants to work abroad for several seasons. If there is only one man in the family, he leaves for only one season, during which his wife and children tend the land. He returns home by November.

The close ties between relatives and fellow countrymen provide mutual support, facilitate migration and the formation of migrant networks, and enable the transfer home of money earned abroad. When migrants who have established themselves in the receiver country visit their families, they take several relatives with them when they leave again. An "experienced" migrant, i.e. someone who has been working abroad for two or three years, does all he can to provide these relatives with employment, accommodation, residence permits and money. More than half (52.6%) of the migrants interviewed for this report said they helped relatives find jobs abroad.

Table 16: "Did you help relatives look for work abroad?"



Members of the *avlod* generally receive part of the migrant's earnings in the form of gifts or as funding for specific communal purposes, such as family celebrations or the purchase of agricultural tools, cattle, etc.

Avlod StructuresAbroad

In the countries where they work, migrants tend to establish insular groups exclusively made up of relatives and fellow villagers. However, family ties are weakened by the trend towards individualism and personal freedom, combined with the marginalization of former farmers in an urban workplace. Cases of deceit and fraud between members of the family group are starting to become common.

Nevertheless, the *avlod* continues to be the basic unit of migrant networks and institutions. It is so highly developed and its internal structure is so complex that it has been able to adapt well to the conditions of labour migration. Even second, Russian wives and their relatives are integrated into the community. While the Russian wives are not actual members of the *avlod*, in the eyes of the migrants they act as a bridge between the *avlod* and the surrounding society.

It is standard practice for construction brigades and artels (associations) of agricultural workers to live under the laws of the *avlod*. The foreman plays the role of the head of the *avlod*. He exercises undisputed authority over the brigade.

Thus, Tajik migrant communities function as self-managing collectives and prefer to avoid contact with state institutions as much as possible. Migrants know that any contact with the authorities can be fraught with trouble. At the same time, they do not require state interference in their affairs because they are used to solving their problems independently. 50% of adults surveyed in the IFES/Sharq poll said their lives were not influenced by the national government, local administrative bodies, the police or the armed forces.

It seems to me that the state bodies in Moscow are too busy with their own problems. They don't have time for us Tajiks. We should solve our people's problems by ourselves.

Construction worker, 32, Isfara

4.2 ETHNOREGIONAL SOLIDARITY

In Tajikistan, the strong horizontal bonds that exist between family *avlod*s unite them into clans and the clans into ethnoregional groups. All survey respondents confirmed the importance of regional self-identification. It is impossible to exaggerate the role of ethnoregional solidarity *(makhalgaroi)* in Tajik political and social life. It is also the basis for the formation of migrant networks, which in turn lead to supportive regional communities in receiving countries.

Makhalgaroi *is the division of people according to region, local district and even* kishlak*. Everyone supports his region of origin.*

Young migrants, 21 to 25, Isfara

Ties That Bind

The interests of the group take precedence over those of the individual. The rights of the individual are subordinated to the rights of his family, clan and native region. The safety and rights of the individual are linked first and foremost to those of the *avlod*, hence also to those of the regional group.

This traditional Tajik phenomenon was further strengthened by the aftermath of the civil war, when ethnoregional groups were consolidated. In the post-war environment of weak government control, political instability and lawlessness, people sought refuge and protection in their own ethnoregional group. To a certain extent ethnoregional solidarity makes up the gap in social services in Tajikistan since the collapse of the education, public health and social welfare systems.

Only your fellow [regional] countrymen can help if somebody dies, gets married or falls ill. Support from people from your region is the only thing that helps you survive.

Construction worker, 18, Kofarnihon district

Young Tajiks consider regional solidarity a natural and universal feeling. They believe members of the same ethnoregional group have an obligation to help one another by all possible means.

For example, I'll go to work in Russia and I'll go to a person from my region. If I have asked him for help, he is obliged to support me because I am his fellow countryman. This is a very big advantage. In my opinion, makhalgaroi *is a natural feeling that exists in everyone.*

Concreter, 21, Farhor district

These ties intensify when people go abroad. Networks and interest groups are formed along local and regional lines. The lack of cohesion among Tajik migrant communities reflects the multilayered nature of self-identification on the part of Tajiks (and some Uzbeks). To give an example of this complexity: Migrants who are natives of the Shughnon district in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO), identify themselves according to the *kishlak* they come from, using the terms *Porshnevzi* ("people from Porshnev"), *Tishorzi*, *Pashorzi*, *Midenshorzi*, etc. When they go to the regional centre of Khorog, they prefer to call themselves *Shughnoni*. In Dushanbe they refer to themselves as *Pamiri* ("people from the Pamir region"). When asked to describe their nationality, the overwhelming majority say "Tajik", in line with their passport data.

Ethnoregional Associations

When planning to go abroad to earn money, a would-be migrant will rely on assistance from his immediate family and the *avlod*. He is likely to be joining relatives who have already settled in the target country. If not, he turns to migrants from his *kishlak* (village), for help in arranging his trip and employment.

If a migrant has a problem which cannot be solved by relatives or neighbours from the *kishlak*, he approaches representatives of his ethnoregional group. Communities are formed on an ethnoregional basis in all foreign cities with a sizeable number of Tajik migrants. Back home, such associations might be of minor importance, but abroad they provide invaluable support. For example, there is a migrant organization in Moscow which assists people from the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) in finding work, registering and renting accommodation. There are three other Tajik communities in Moscow as well. They all compete with one another to some extent.

Only if there are few Tajiks in a particular area will they come together as a group irrespective of their ethnoregional affiliation. This rarely occurs in cities with large Tajik migrant populations, but there are exceptions such as Abakan and Magnitogorsk where cross-regional communities have developed.

Recruitment runs along ethnoregional lines. Whether in the construction industry or in the oil and gas fields, foremen will form brigades exclusively with people from their native region.

Everyone forms workteams with the people from his region. For example, when I recruit staff I'll take people from my region. Because it helps at work. I can punish them or give them any assignment and I know that they will support and protect me no matter what.

Security employee, 25, Vanch district

The following example illustrates how quickly networks develop based on family and local ties. A physical education teacher named Sultan lived in Hosa *kishlak* in the Shughnon district of the GBAO. His wife, Zoya, was Belarusian. After Sultan died in his mid-80s, his widow continued living in Hosa along with their three grown-up sons and a daughter and their families. Then Zoya fled the civil war, joining her relatives in Minsk, where she found a job and a flat. One year later she went back to Tajikistan to pick up one of her sons. Within a year she had taken the rest of her children to Belarus and they all settled down there. Subsequently, people from Hosa began to arrive in Belarus looking for work. Now there is a small but growing migrant community of *Shughnoni* in Belarus.

Other Mechanisms

Another traditional institution that influences migration are clientelistic, or patronage, networks. These networks are common in the large Tajik diaspora communities in Russian cities, where they function differently than in their traditional rural context.

In addition to the networks formed by family and regional allegiances, some migrant workers can draw on international links formed during the Soviet period. Although migration activity from Tajikistan was low in those days, other factors promoted familiarity and personal ties with the other republics. Chief among these were obligatory military service, educational migration and the All-union Komsomol shock construction projects. Marriages across republic borders also played a role. People with this kind of direct experience with another former Soviet republic have gone back there to work.

Contacts with managers of enterprises where migrants used to work in Soviet times have been somewhat effective. Thanks to these networks, some Tajik plant managers, notably in the Sughd region, have been able to place their former employees in jobs in similar enterprises in CIS countries. Nowadays, however, the importance of these networks is much reduced.

As time passes, the sources of information about the receiving countries also change. Whereas in the past people chose to work in a CIS country which they knew from Soviet times, today young people know little about their destinations in advance. They just follow the advice of their elders.

4.3 STATE-REGULATED LABOUR MIGRATION

Tajikistan has a liberal policy on the departure of its citizens, be it for purposes of temporary employment or permanent residence. The country is keen to expand migratory ties. However, the process must be legally regulated.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment's External Relations Department oversees the organized export of labour. In 1998, 1,622 experts from Tajikistan were sent abroad under the organized recruitment system. The ministry's External Labour Migration Department was set up in 2000. At this time work began on drafting a Concept of Labour Migration, Regulations on Licensing of Labour Activity Abroad and other normative and legal acts. These documents are expected to provide a regulatory framework for external labour migration.

Tajik labour is not competitive on foreign markets due to lack of foreign language skills and low qualifications. This discourages countries that have shown interest in contracting Tajik workers, such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iran.

The government's External Labour Migration Programme for 2003-2005 was authorized by parliament in 2002.

The Law on Migration was amended on 10 May 2002. Under Article 8, the government can render assistance to the organized external migration of workers with their consent and only to countries where their rights are protected.

Tajik citizens who plan to take a job abroad need to have a signed contract, an international passport and an entry visa, if required.

Organized Recruitment for Jobs in Russia

Of all the countries receiving Tajik labour, labour migration to the Russian Federation is the best regulated. As the stream of Tajik migrant workers to Russia grows, the two countries' government employment agencies have started to sign an increasing number of contracts with each other.

The Tajik and Russian ministries of trade and social security have prepared an agreement on cooperation in the field of labour migration. The bilateral agreement, which is expected to be signed in 2003, will ensure the legal stay of migrant workers from Tajikistan on Russian territory.

The Employment Centres run by Tajikistan's Ministry of Trade and Social Security cooperate with non-governmental employment agencies in Russia. Under a signed agreement, the centres can dispatch accompanied groups of Tajik migrant workers to a specified Russian city.

There are also ten employment agencies in Tajikistan that are licensed to recruit foreign labour for Russian enterprises. They are contracted to supply workers to employers in Moscow, Novosibirsk, Barnaul and the Altai republic.

Potential migrants who apply to these agencies are charged a lump sum of 20 somomi (about US$ 7). The agency is supposed to assign the worker to a Russian organization, enterprise or farm that has contracted for foreign labour. The worker is to sign a contract, undergo a medical exam for HIV-AIDS and other diseases, and buy insurance. All his data are entered into the computer. The worker is invited to a meeting with the employer's representative, who provides legal information on working abroad and phone numbers for the Russian State Migration Service. Once all the required workers have been recruited, the representative accompanies the group to the destination. Some Russian companies that hire Tajik workers have legal counsel who can help the migrants if necessary.

In 2002, 12,180 Tajik citizens were recruited through Tajik employment agencies. The maximum contract was eight months, the minimum contract four months. The jobs are predominantly in construction and agriculture. Depending on education and qualifications, wages range from RUB 6,000-12,000 a month (US$ 195-400) (*Vecherniy Dushanbe*, 22 January 2003).

A further recruitment practice is for Russian regions and cities to sign employment agreements directly with Tajik authorities. Regional authorities in Volgograd and Isfara sign agreements on the seasonal employment of Tajik migrant farm workers during the summer harvest. In 2002, agreements were signed between Saratov and the Tajik labour export agency Tajikkhorejakar (Tajikvneshtrud). Such agreements can have a negative side: the receiving party does not always fulfil its contractual obligations, and agreements signed at the official level may not be implemented on the ground.

Of the migrants surveyed for this report, only 8% found work abroad through governmental structures.

Regulating Shuttle Migration

As soon as shuttle migration achieved major proportions, the issue of regulation arose. At the beginning, shuttle trading was highly profitable. Consequently, state travel agencies, such as the Tajik Federation of Trade Unions Council on Tourism, were quick to reorient their services to commercial tourism. In 1996, the Sayekh national travel agency was established

Although a new law on the tourist trade was passed in January 2001, a full regulatory framework for commercial tourism is still pending. There are no instructions on licensing tourism-related activities. Some respondents said that legal persons have to pay US$ 5,000 for a licence. Others were sure that a licence costs US$ 1,000.

Our enterprise used to be the state body in charge of tourism until January 2001, when our functions were transferred to the Ministry of Economy and Trade. Now the ministry has the authority to regulate and manage commercial tourism activities and to issue licences. As a state enterprise, we work for the ministry on a contractual basis. Other companies are private and work at their own risk. They will only survive if they can handle the competition. There are now about 13 or 14 companies in Tajikistan that are dealing with shopping tourism. 11 travel companies have official licences. The number is small primarily because of the high cost of a licence. Today a legal person has to pay the equivalent of 50 minimum salaries to obtain a licence. When the new law on tourism was introduced in January 2001, the existing normative regulations on the licensing of tourist trade activities were abolished. Physical persons can also be engaged in tourism, but no regulation is in place yet to ensure the licensing of physical persons. This is due to a lack of coordination in various quarters: Every ministry and department has its own point of view. So that's why companies that managed to get a licence before 2001 are working and those that would like to apply for one now are not able to work legally. There is a legal vacuum in this area. Shopping tours and commercial tourists are not protected by law. The state ought to grant privileges to business people engaged in shopping tourism and solve the visa problem.

Travel agency employee, 45, Dushanbe

The large travel agencies are not interested in more competition and are trying to block new legislation.

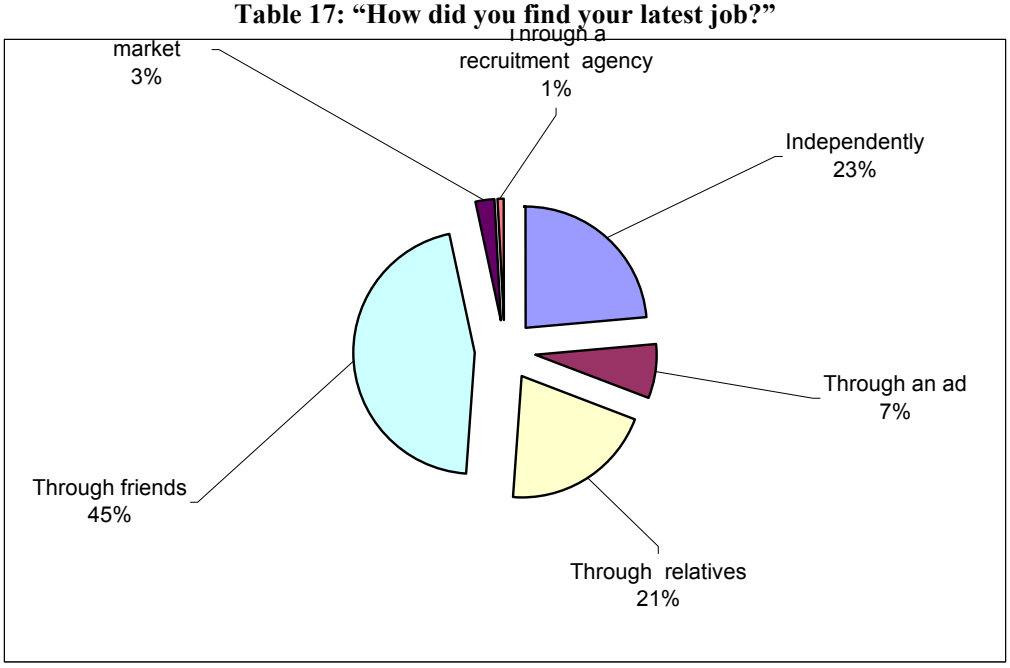
A lot of agencies apply for a licence, but at the end of the required six-month waiting period, they still haven't received an answer. I think the state should be interested in our activity. We have to develop travel agencies in order to meet the tourists' needs.

Shuttle, 35, Dushanbe

4.4 INTERACTING NETWORKS

The various types of migrant networks actively interact with one another in the course of the migration process. Though the research for this report shows that the majority of migrants seek work independently (23.6% found a job on their own and 7.1% through an advertisement), migrants rely heavily on the support of their networks. Friends, both Russian citizens (45.5%) and fellow countrymen (20.5%), provide assistance.

Table 17: "How did you find your latest job?"



The migrant receives crucial start-up aid from his *avlod.* The *avlod* funds his journey and initial living expenses, takes responsibility for his family back home, and supplies addresses of contacts who can help with travel arrangements and employment.

Migrants from the countryside survive on *avlod* solidarity during their stay in the capital while awaiting transport out of the country. If the rail lines to Russia are closed down at the height of the annual mass exodus of Tajik migrant workers in April and May, the disruption creates a massive backup of travelers stuck in Dushanbe. In 2002, people were waiting for more than two months for rail service to be restored. They lived with relatives, who also provide them with food.

I have only one problem now: how to reach Russia. It is already two months that I haven't been able to leave. I live at my relatives'. I'm sitting in the Dushanbe railway station every day.

Mason, 32, Shaartuz district

From the family network, the migrant moves on to ethnoregional solidarity networks. Here authoritative older migrants, who have lived in Russia for a long time, are the key figures. They have high status and help organize the migration and employment of younger fellow countrymen, whose status is lower.

The migrant may also enter the network of professional middlemen who place migrants for a fee. Bakhtior Valiev described them in his article "Gastarbeiter, or Inhospitable Russia" (*ASIA-Plus*, 5 December 2002):

The migrant worker has obtained from his relatives the address of someone who is in the business of finding employment for Tajik migrants in Russia. This person helps migrants get a job and takes 20% of the migrant's earnings for his services.

This network blankets the Sughd region, where the trade of informal migration organizer originated. The *korvonbashi* (caravaneers) are also a component in the wide-ranging ethnoregional migrant networks. *Korvonbashi* arrange the employment of migrants from their region. It is extremely rare for *korvonbashi* to enter into criminal networks involved in the sale of labour.

Public employment services or individual employers often cooperate with ethnoregional migrant networks. This is the case with contractors who organize the migration of six or seven brigades or 100-500 workers. For a number of specialized areas, such as the oil and gas fields and the petrochemicals industry, there are informal employment bureaus that recruit workers from individual settlements for Russian industrial enterprises. Chartered flights take workers from Karakchikum *jamoat* to Surgut once a week in season (April to November). Migration is also organized this way in Nefteabad and other industrial centres in Tajikistan.

5. MIGRATION LAWS IN RECEIVING COUNTRIES

5.1 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Tajik labour migrants can come into conflict with the laws of the countries in which they live and work. In most cases that country is the Russian Federation, which has strict laws on the entry and stay of foreign citizens. More than a decade after Tajikistan gained independence from the then Soviet Union, for some Tajiks it is still hard to get used to the fact that in today's Russia they too are subject to the laws on foreigners. Migrants often regard ignoring Russia's rules on registration of foreigners – migrants still use the old Soviet term for residence permit, *propiska* – as a pardonable offence, in part because back home in Tajikistan the registration requirement is no longer enforced. A tiny minority (1.8%) of surveyed migrants, mostly agricultural workers, were not even aware that they had to be registered in Russia.

Foreign nationals (i.e. citizens of a foreign state who are not in possession of Russian citizenship) fall under the Federal Law "On the Borders of the Russian Federation", the 1996 Law "Regulating Departure from and Entry into the Russian Federation", and the international agreements signed by Russia. The Constitution of the Russian Federation (Art**.** 62, para. 3) gives foreign citizens equal rights and duties with those of Russian citizens on the country's territory, except for cases specified under Russian law or international agreements.

The registration requirement is regulated under the Federal Law. Citizens of non-CIS countries require a visa for Russia, which must be registered within 72 hours of arrival in the country. Like other CIS citizens, Tajik citizens do not require a visa to enter Russia, but they must register at the passport office of their local police station.

Failure to register is not subject to criminal prosecution. It is an administrative offence with penalties ranging from 0.1% to 0.5% of the Russian minimum wage (Administrative Code of the Russian Federation, January 1998, Art. 184).

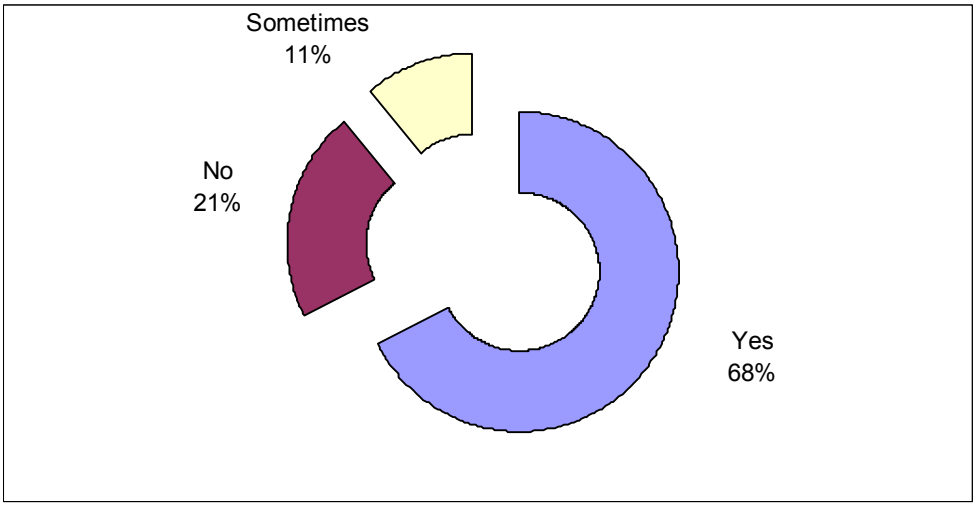
Nevertheless, all the migrants who were interviewed stressed the difficulty of living in Russia without being registered, because of the risk of police harassment.

More than two-thirds of Tajik migrants have gone through the registration process (68%), 22% do not register and 10% register occasionally. Shuttles who have a seasonal or permanent job in a receiving country usually register. The majority of those migrants who fail to register, and are therefore in the country illegally, work in the construction industry and agriculture.

Migrants who stay in hostels have an advantage as the hostel will generally handle the registration for them. However, the process can take up to a month and a half, during which time the migrants are vulnerable to police harassment.

67.6% of the migrants surveyed had paid to obtain registration, although the procedure in itself is officially free of charge. Migrants cite numerous problems associated with registration: the process is time-consuming; applications can be rejected; bribery may be required; a great deal of bureaucracy is involved; one has to deal with different institutions; and the procedure varies from region to region. In the past, they migrants used the services of landlords, often low-income pensioners, who sought to earn money by temporarily registering dozens of migrants in their flats. They are gradually being replaced by new companies offering registration services, which they advertise in newspapers, for a fee.

Table 18: "Did you have to pay for registration?"



When you go to Russia on a work contract, you can live there for 45 days. It's good. But within the 45 days you have to register all over again. You can register if you can make friends with someone in the passport office before the time is up; if not, you'll be in trouble. That's the law in Krasnodar. In Moscow you can register for three months, and before the three months are up you have to re-register.

Carpenter, 38, Kànibadam

Every fourth unregistered hired worker claimed that it was senseless to register because migrants still had to bribe the police to leave them alone, particularly in rural areas. An equal number of respondents said the cost of registering was too high. Many migrants explained that their application for registration had been rejected because they did not have Russian citizenship and the minimum cost of obtaining it via informal channels was US$ 1,000, which was prohibitively expensive for them.

Every tenth unregistered worker reported that he did not need to be registered because he lived at his workplace and never left it. For the most part these workers were employed in industrial enterprises and canteens. Employers often encourage their workers' isolation by providing them with transport on their arrival and departure, as well as for trips to the market or the doctor, thereby enabling migrants to avoid unwanted contact with the police.

Citizenship

The most coveted means of legalizing one's stay in Russia, Kazakhstan or Kyrgyzstan is to obtain citizenship of the country.

A Tajik with a Russian passport won't have any trouble. He has freedom of movement. There's a green light for citizens of the Russian Federation. Many Tajiks who live in Russia or in one of the Central Asian countries are prepared to do anything and pay any price for Russian citizenship.

In Kazakhstan you can get an identity card which allows you to move freely around the country. The cards are issued in a passport office because they're for migrants. But you can't leave

the country with this document. So the Tajiks all want to get a Kyrgyz, Kazakh or Russian passport. With a Russian passport you are king. It's easier to get one if you already have a Kyrgyz or Kazakh passport. If you have a Tajik passport, it's very difficult to get Russian citizenship.

Head of a Tajik migrant community in Russia, 43, Vakhsh district

In Russia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, forged passports can be bought through middlemen. The passports themselves are real but the personal data, including place of registration, are fictive. The cost of a fake passport varies widely. In Russia it ranges from US$ 400 in the Samara region to US$ 2,000 in Moscow.

Even if you don't have any connections, money can solve everything. Starting with the passport. For example, I know someone who can make a Russian passport for US$ 2,000 dollars. It doesn't matter when you arrived. If you have money you can become a Russian citizen, with registration. "Please, work wherever you want, no problem." That's what I know.

Carpenter, 36, Kànibadam

Some Tajik migrants who have lived in Russia since 1992 or 1993 have neither Tajik nor Russian citizenship. They have the old Soviet passport but not the current Russian one, having missed the 1997 deadline for exchanging the old passports. As a result, these persons are stateless.

Tajiks who came to Russia around 1993 have the old Soviet passport. They are not granted citizenship because they were registered under their Soviet passports until 2002 and are now considered stateless. I think they can apply for Russian citizenship. I don't know why they are rejected. It's tough for them now. 5% out of 100 are lucky beggars who manage to get hold of a passport through some connection.

Head of a Tajik migrant community in Russia, 43, Vakhsh district

Marrying a Local Citizen

One way to solve the problem of obtaining residence registration and employment is through marriage, real or fictitious, to a local citizen.

Let's say I'm a Tajik living and working in Kazakhstan. First off, I have to find a way to get a Kazakh passport. I'll meet a young woman and in due course I'll suggest to her that we get married in the registry office.

Tajiks who meet and marry a girl from Kazakhstan are lucky. It's the only way to get a Kazakh passport. I can submit an application for Kazakh citizenship as my spouse is a Kazakh citizen. I go to the passport office, where they tell me how hard it is to get a passport. Let's assume I have a lot of money. I give them whatever they want so that I can get the passport. All my problems are solved. They may tell you that you have to be removed from the list of Tajik passport-holders: "Write to your relatives and have them get you off the list." If it can't be done, they'll solve the problem through their companies. You wait six months and in one year you can pay the money and all your problems are solved. You are a citizen of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Then with this passport you go to Russia. There Kazakh citizens are one step above the Tajiks. You have to

start all over again: you meet a young woman, etc. The same procedure as in Kazakhstan. And thus the problem is solved. But now it's become very difficult to get a Russian passport, because the new laws are in force and they check. After the wedding you have to live with your wife for three years in order to be granted citizenship.

Canteen manager in St. Petersburg, 45, Dushanbe

In view of the bribes that accompany the process, migrants need considerable resources to apply for citizenship through marriage. Moreover, the migrant assumes financial obligations towards his spouse.

Marrying women in different countries with the aim of gaining multiple citizenship remains an exceptional phenomenon, not only due to the expense involved but also because it requires a certain type of adventurous character.

Fictitious marriages for payment are also limited to migrants who can afford the high cost:

For 500 dollars you can get married fictitiously and obtain registration.

Forwarder, 43, Kànibadam

Sometimes a fictitious marriage can turn into a real one:

I had to get married fictitiously in order to be registered. Now I'm living with my wife.

Mason, 32, Vakhsh district

5.2 LABOUR MIGRATION LAWS

Russia's New Law on Foreigners

Citizens of other CIS countries are unequivocally defined as foreigners under Art. 1 of the Federal Law "On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation" (No. 115-FZ, 25 July 2002), which went into force on 1 November 2002. Art. 1 further regulates the status, rights and obligations of foreign visitors and temporary and permanent residents.

Under Art. 2, all foreign citizens entering Russia must fill out a migration card. The duration of stay may not exceed 90 days.

Under Art. 5, if the foreign citizen has signed a work contract, his/her stay can be extended for the duration of the contract, but only up to one year. Art. 6 sets a quota for the number of foreign citizens granted temporary residence. The temporary residence permit is valid for three years. If an application is turned down, the applicant can reapply but no earlier than one year after the first application was rejected. According to Art. 11, foreign citizens temporarily residing in the country have no right to change their place of residence at will.

Foreign citizens must register their stay within three working days of their arrival in Russia. They must submit a written application either in person or through an inviting organization to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. If the temporary residence permit is cancelled, the foreign citizen is obliged to leave the country within 15 days. Those who fail to meet the conditions will be deported at their own expense.

Art. 13 specifies the conditions under which foreigners can work in Russia. Employers must have official permission to recruit and use foreign labour, and foreign citizens are allowed to work only if they have a work permit.

New ways of circumventing the law have appeared. Companies that used to specialize in registering migrant workers switched the focus of their services to legalizing the migrants' stay in Russia. But the cost of legalization has risen. New legal regulations and procedures are constantly being introduced. The more complicated the process becomes, the higher the cost to the migrant.

Illegal Employment of Migrants

The Russian labour market is in transition. This impacts on migrants' strategies and behaviours.

Until 2002, illegal workers made up a considerable part of the labour market. According to estimates by the State Statistics Committee (Goskomstat), production in Russia's shadow economy amounted to one-quarter of GDP and employment in that sector accounted for 15-30% of the total number of employed (Vorobyova, Ed., 2001: 7).

Employers who recruit foreign workers often do not have a licence to employ them. Sometimes they do not even have a licence for the activity they are engaged in. Usually they hire workers based on oral agreements. To evade taxes, many employers fail to report the real size of their workforce. At the end of 1998, the real number of employees in small enterprises was 70% higher than the official one (G. G. Sillaste, "Changes in Social Mobility and Economic Behaviour of Women," 2000: 32).

Only 22.5% of the Tajik migrants surveyed for this report have a work permit in Russia; 77.5% do not.

The illegal employment of Tajik labour migrants includes the following basic types:

- Employment without the required permits and confirmation of the right to work;
- Labour activity contradicting the obtained permit or executed with expired or fictitious permits;
- Entrepreneurial or independent labour activity without corresponding permits, licences and appropriate registration in the state bodies (tax, social security, etc.), and also under false or expired documents;
- Involvement in illegal activities such as the organization of prostitution, human trafficking, arms trafficking, the drugs trade, etc.

Although illegal employment does not depend on the legality of one's stay in the country, the reality is that migrants who are in Russia illegally cannot find legal work.

The migrants themselves are ambivalent about the issue of obtaining a work permit. On the one hand, they recognize that legal employment is safer than working on the basis of an oral agreement with an employer. They cite advantages such as job security, guaranteed wages, ability to register, ability to find accommodation, legality and the absence of problems with law enforcement bodies.

But on the other hand, migrants see negative aspects to registration: the procedure is long, complicated and subject to delays, and one has to re-register after a specified period of time. Furthermore, a major consideration is that undocumented migrant workers earn more money. For example, more than half of the respondents who work in Moscow and have an oral agreement with their employer are paid upwards of RUB 5,000 RR, while only 27.4% of respondents who are

working in Moscow legally earn comparable wages. Moreover, those working legally have to pay 20% income tax (Vorobyova, Ed., 2001, 113-14).

The new legislation has caused problems for Tajik migrants who decide to seek work after they arrive in Russia, usually to visit relatives and friends. When they enter the country as visitors, they can remain for up to 90 days. As visitors they do not have the right to work, and they can apply for a work permit only after they have found a job. State enterprises will employ foreigners only for the most difficult and lowest-paid jobs. Even highly qualified experts whose skills are in demand can obtain a good job only if they have Russian citizenship. Since the introduction of the new law, private companies are afraid to officially employ foreigners for fear that registering them will invite an investigation by tax and other authorities.

Hiring illegal workers is cost-effective for employers because they save on wages, taxes and social welfare payments. It also provides opportunities for greater exploitation (long working hours, poor or dangerous working conditions, etc.). The new migratory legislation has made it even more costly and complicated for employers to hire foreigners legally.

A Russian employer who wants to hire a foreigner has to submit more documents than before. Under the old regulations, in Moscow an employer applying for permission to hire a foreign citizen had to submit a minimum of eight documents to the municipal departments of various federal authorities (V. Mukomel, E. Pain, *Forced Migration in Central Russia*, 1999: 227-32). Now 12 documents are needed.

RUB 3,000 must be paid to obtain permission from the Federal Migration Service to recruit foreign workers. The employer pays RUB 200 for the issuance of an official invitation giving the foreigner the right to enter the country. In addition, the employer pays RUB 400 for a temporary residence permit and RUB 1,000 for a work permit. The employer is obliged to deposit a sum of money in a special bank account for use by the foreign worker to buy a ticket to his country of origin in case of deportation. The employer must also notify the tax authorities.

All these requirements are both expensive and highly time-consuming for the employer. In addition to the various fees, bribes to officials are also involved.

State control over the use of foreign labour is inefficient because monitoring and penalties are in the hands of different departments. The Federal Migration Service, which is now subordinate to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, is responsible for checking work permits. Various Ministry of Internal Affairs departments carry out workplace inspections to determine illegal employment of foreigners. Penal sanctions under Article 41 of the Administrative Code are imposed by the Federal Labour Inspection.

The following conclusions may be drawn about the high rate of illegal employment of Tajik migrants in Russia: first, opportunities for legal employment are limited; second, legal employment is less attractive because in effect it means lower earnings; third, there is a conscious desire on the part of many migrants to evade contact with state bodies, which the migrants mistrust.

Russia's new migration law has increased the barriers labour migrants face. They will have to invest time and effort to overcome these obstacles. Individual success may often depend on having the right contacts and the resources to pay higher bribes. It is fair to assume that one effect of the law will be to boost the level of corruption in the official bodies supervising the migration and employment of foreign workers.

Migration Laws in Kazakhstan

The number of Tajik migrants working in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan is small but stable. With the exception of seasonal agricultural workers, they usually try to legalize their stay in these countries. However, they are often working illegally.

Labour activity of foreign workers in Kazakhstan is governed by the following legislation:

- Law No. 204-1 "On Migration," 13 December 1997, including Art. 7 "Cooperation Agreement on Labour Migration and Social Protection of Migrant Workers."
- Decree No. 2,337 of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, "On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Republic of Kazakhstan," effective 19 June 1995, amended under No. 134-I (19 June 1997); No. 160-II (1 March 2001); and N 164-II (16 March 2001).
- Decree No. 136 of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, "On Issues Related to the Legal Residence of Foreign Citizens in Kazakhstan," effective 28 January 2000, amended under Decree No. 956 of the Government (27 June 2000).
- Decree No. 862 of the Government of Kazakhstan, "On the Ratification of Rules on Recruitment of Foreign Labour and the Export of Labour from the Republic of Kazakhstan," effective 25 June 1999. Under Ch. 2, para. 4, foreign citizens have the same rights and duties in labour relations as citizens of Kazakhstan.
- Decree No. 55 of the Government of Kazakhstan, issued 20 January 2003, established conditions, procedures and quotas for granting permission to employers seeking to recruit foreign labour.

Foreign citizens may engage in labour activity in Kazakhstan on the basis of a labour agreement signed with the employer (Decree No. 862, Ch. 2, para. 2). The agreement must contain basic information about the employer, conditions, terms of payment, working hours and time off, life and health insurance, occupational accident insurance, the obligations and liabilities of the parties, and means of labour dispute resolution. Validity, cancellation and other terms are determined by the parties (para. 6). The employer guarantees the signatory's departure from the country upon expiration or cancellation of the agreement (para. 2,18).

Foreign citizens and stateless persons who enter Kazakhstan as migrant workers and do not intend to apply for Kazakh citizenship must have a permanent place of residence outside Kazakhstan, if no other rules established under international agreements pertain. At the time they receive permission to work in Kazakhstan, a recruited foreign worker may be no younger than 23 and no older than average personable age as determined under Kazakh law. Foreigner engaged in unauthorized labour activity must be deported, if no other rules established under international agreements pertain (Law on Migration, Art. 7).

Migration Laws in Kyrgyzstan

Labour activity of foreign workers in Kyrgyzstan is governed by the following legislation:

- Law No. 61 "On External Migration," passed 17 July 2000.

- Decree No. 631 of the Government of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, "On the Activity of Physical and Legal Persons in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan Engaged in Employment of Kyrghyz Citizens Abroad," effective 12 October 2001.
- Regulation "On the Labour Activity of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons in Kyrgyzstan." , October 12, 2001, # 631
- Law No. 1297-11 "On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan," effective 14 December 1993, 1,297-11.

Art. 7 of the Law "On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens" states that "foreign citizens temporarily staying in the country may engage in labour activity if it is compatible with the aim and duration of their stay in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, or if they have the required permission from the internal affairs bodies." It also states that "foreign citizens have the same rights and obligations in labour relations as citizens of the Republic."

Under Art. 27 of the Law on External Migration, recruitment of foreign labour requires permission from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs's Department of Migration.

5.3 RELATIONS WITH THE POLICE

In their interviews, the majority of Tajik labour migrants complained of encountering occasional or constant harassment from law enforcement officials.

Most of us Tajiks have the same problems: our documents are endlessly checked and the Russian police and racketeers insult us.

Concreter, 28, Gazimalik district

97% of the construction workers interviewed called relations with law enforcement agents the worst problem they faced while abroad. It can be very difficult for members of this group to adapt to the receiving country. Construction workers have little education, low or no qualifications, and poor knowledge of the laws and customs of the host country. 16% specified Russian-language skills as a key factor in their relations with the police.

It's easier to get rid of the police if you know Russian well.

Handyman, 19, Vakhsh district

The construction workers' run-ins with the police occur primarily when officers attempt to extort money from unregistered migrants.

Hired workers are somewhat less frequently harassed by the police than construction workers – 91 % said they had constant problems – but they too have to bribe police officers who stop them in the street or on public transport to check their documents.

When we go into the city, we inevitably fall into the hands of the police. As soon as they see us "black heads," they try to intimidate us and demand money. The divisional police chief will often

come to your flat and boldly demand money. If you don't give them money, they can plant drugs on you and throw you into prison. Money solves the problem.

Baker, 29, Êànibadam

Like the construction workers, hired workers are vulnerable to police shakedowns because so many are not registered.

You have to re-register every three months. If you miss the deadline even by one day, the police will fine you. Problems with the police arise when you can't show that you're registered.

Trainer in a sports school for children, 32, Dushanbe

As a group, shuttles have comparatively less trouble with the police. 77.6% of them periodically encounter problems, which can occur in any of the CIS countries but are particularly likely in Russia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. These usually involve repeated document checks, accompanied by extortion attempts and insults. A slightly less common complaint is that the police confiscate some of the shuttle's goods or money, usually in the course of travel. Shuttles rarely have to deal with local police in the markets, because as a rule the latter are integrated into the protection-money rackets. Therefore the police will only check the documents of merchants and market workers under certain circumstances, such as mass round-ups or in pursuit of wanted criminals.

Police Attitudes Towards Tajik Migrants

Most of the law enforcement bodies in the CIS countries have remained little changed since Soviet times. The reputation of the police has even deteriorated in many respects. It suffers from a lack of resources and qualified employees, and corruption is on the increase. There is little political supervision and virtually no public control of the police, which has become increasingly isolated from the general population. People fear the police (À. Y. Kosals, R. V. Ryvkina, *Sociology of the Transition to a Market Economy in Russia*, 1998: 260-62; 2002: 1-2).

Foreign migrant workers mistrust the police even more. Due to the nature and circumstances of their activities, they come into conflict with the law by failing to register or by working illegally.

For their part, law enforcement agents are convinced that labour migration is closely linked to criminal migration, all migrant workers are potential offenders, and "ethnic mafias" dominate the criminal underworld.

Police attitudes towards migrants are also affected by moods and stereotypes prevailing in society. The Chechen war has fueled xenophobia and hatred of Islam in Russia. The police frequently confuse Tajiks with Chechens.

We have lots of problems. It's cold and sometimes we're hungry. The attitude of the local population isn't always friendly. Sometimes they take us for Chechens, especially after every terrorist attack. Until they figure out we're Tajiks, we get beaten up by the police.

Electrician, 27, Dushanbe

Tajikistan's own negative image abroad plays a major role in how its citizens are perceived. Over the past decade, Tajikistan has become linked in the minds of many people in neighbouring countries with civil war, drug trafficking and terrorists. In Russia these stereotypes are reinforced

by the news media: Tajikistan is usually mentioned in the context of Russian border troops combating drug smugglers on the Tajik-Afghan border. Tajikistan-related media coverage in Uzbekistan, Kyrghyzstan and Kazakhstan often focuses on the threat of terrorism and terrorist groupings in Afghanistan. The police are influenced by such negative stereotypes and treat Tajik migrants accordingly.

Every Tajik is seen as a drug dealer. It's highly insulting. Employers are afraid of us.

Waiter, 26, Dushanbe

The police in Uzbekistan despise and abuse us. I guess it's because of the drug trade. It's so insulting but there's nothing we can do, we just have to put up with it all.

Shuttle, 34, Khojend

A further problem in the eyes of Tajik migrants is that police are unable to distinguish them from Central Asian Gypsies who migrated from Tajikistan to other CIS countries over the past decade. They come into conflict with the law through their traditional occupations of future-telling, begging, petty thievery and fraud, their nomadic or seminomadic way of life, and their lack of documents.

In Russia, Tajik migrants are taken for Central Asian Gypsies – Moli, Jugi and Mazang, who support themselves by begging. There are a lot of them in Russia. We earn our living from honest work, but unfortunately we are mistaken for Gypsies. It's offensive and insulting.

Electroassembler, 32, Lenin district

Summary of Harassment of Tajik Migrants by Russian Police

- **Registration of foreigners:** Russia's introduction in 2002 of new migratory legislation put a further strain on relations between Tajik migrant workers and law enforcement bodies. Registration, while simple from a legal standpoint, became a long, complicated process which takes nearly two weeks. Both registration and the new migration card are issued for a period of three months. The new regulations have led to increased corruption on the part of officials of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs.

- **Document checks:** Under Russia's Law on the Police, law enforcement agents have the right "to check identification documents of civilians and officials if there are sufficient reasons to suspect them of a crime or administrative infringement." As Russian police tend to treat any Tajik migrant as a potential offender, they constantly check the documents of all persons whose appearance, manners and clothes they regard as typical for Tajik citizens.

- **Periodic detention:** Migrants who cannot show proof of registration when the police check their documents often put RUB 300-500 in their passport. If a migrant has no money for a bribe, the worst that can happen is that he will be taken to the nearest police station, where his identity will be established within a few hours. It is unlikely that he will be deported. According to State Duma deputy Alexander Barannikov, "A person who is detained for not having a passport with

him has the traditional choice of spending two or three hours in the police station … or paying the police off on the spot" (Tatyana Ivzhenko, Elena Bajkova, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 11 February 2003: 5).

- **Violation of human rights:** Migrants frequently face verbal and physical abuse during document checks and detention. They rarely file an official complaint.

- **Corruption and abuse of power:** When checking a migrant's documents, a police officer may threaten to destroy the registration document or even do so, and demands a sum of money, usually RUB 500 near the markets and RUB 250 in the street. Then he lets the migrant worker go. Following the Moscow theatre hostage-taking in October 2002, the price demanded by the police shot up to RUB 1,000, but later stabilized at RUB 500 ("On the Choice: Deportation or *Hazor* Sum," *Izvestiya*, 14 November 2002).

- **Danger of traveling in the city:** The likelihood of a run-in with the police make traveling in a city extremely dangerous for migrants. They try not to leave their flat and workplace unless absolutely necessary. Fear of venturing outside these limited confines contributes to migrants' slow adaptation to conditions of life in the receiving countries.

- Transfer of responsibility for migration affairs to the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs has worsened relations between migrants and law enforcement bodies.

6. VULNERABILITY TO ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

Tajik labour migrants often work in the informal economy of the destination country. The lack of legal protection in this employment sector and insufficient information on the part of the workers make them extremely vulnerable to exploitation and abuse from various quarters. This chapter discusses the most common risks. For a full methodical review of the types of exploitation and abuse which migrant workers face and legal definitions, further research is required.

According to the research for this report, Tajik migrant workers have been the victims of the following criminal activity:

- Extortion (violence, threats, abuse of power);
- Forced labour;
- Forced participation in illegal activity (drug-smuggling, illegal workshops, grand larceny, etc.);
- Sexual exploitation (prostitution) or other forms of sexual violence.

The following persons are directly linked to the risk of the above-mentioned crimes: recruitment agents in Tajikistan; border and customs officials; police; leaders of tourist groups; business people and their agents; criminal racketeers; and law enforcement agents in the destination country.

6.1 VULNERABILITY FACTORS

Three interrelated factors related to their typical profile combine to make Tajik labour migrants highly vulnerable to exploitation:

- ***Unqualified migrant workers have no choice but to work in the informal sector.*** The educational level and skills of most Tajik migrant workers fall short of the requirements of the legal labour market. But the cheap labour the migrants offer meets the needs of the informal market, where the priority is to make a profit without paying taxes and social security for the workers. Since the migrants can earn much more in this sector than they could at home in either the formal or the informal economy, almost all migrants willingly perform all types of work without observance of formalities. But this means working illegally, with no recourse to legal and social protection.

- ***The migrants are ill-informed about laws and norms in the host country.***? As described in Chapter 2, Tajik labour migrants have little knowledge of the society to which they migrate. In the absence of a legal protection framework, in order to understand their situation and safeguard their rights Tajik migrants unconsciously seek refuge in their own traditional systems of values and rules. Although such rules may work within the Tajik diaspora, they have little or no relevance in the official legal and judicial system of the destination country. Because the migrants display a lack of knowledge about the surrounding society in their contacts with local citizens, they become extremely vulnerable to exploitation.

- ***Economically desperate migrants are ready to accept any working conditions.***? Due to their desperate need to earn a living to support their families back home, as well as their poor understanding of an unfamiliar society, Tajik migrants rarely question exploitative working and living conditions and may not even recognize them as such.

6.2. THE ROLE OF INTERMEDIARIES

Labour migrants often employ the services of informal intermediaries**.** These are based in every city in the country. Very few of them work through legal, official channels. Even agencies that are licensed to send workers abroad seldom provide legal work with payment of official taxes in the destination countries. The recruitment activities of intermediaries are profit-motivated.

The typical intermediary is a middle-aged man or woman who enjoys the protection of at least one important local official, has been abroad and has several contacts in the transit country or countries and in the country of destination. In addition, the intermediary usually has good contacts within Tajikistan who can help would-be migrants obtain travel documents, tickets which may otherwise be hard to come by and, if necessary, false papers. The intermediary also has contacts with travel agents. Traveling abroad is no simple matter due to periodic disruption of transport links, border restrictions and other obstacles.

Intermediaries rely on members of the *mahalla* (neighbourhood community) market sellers to spread information about job opportunities abroad.

While most intermediaries keep to their agreements with the migrants using their services, in some cases migrants are misled by their promises, for example that the intermediary will accompany them on the journey, or meet them upon arrival, or pay for the trip. There are also cases where the promised job has not materialized.

Under the contract signed between the administration of the Russian city Saratov and the Tajikkhorejakar (Tajikvneshtrud) labour export agency, Tajik migrants who left Isfara for Saratov in 2002 were to be given employment and housing, but it all remained on paper. On arriving in Saratov people received neither jobs nor housing, nor were they registered.

Employment Centre employee, Isfara

We are facing major problems when we leave to work abroad. There are firms that promise to provide people with highly paid work and accommodation abroad. Guys pay these firms for guaranteed employment but when they get to the city of destination, nobody is waiting for them. What's more, there are no jobs for them. There were many such cases in Russia.

Technical engineer, 36, Isfara

6.3 IDENTITY CHECKS BY CORRUPT OFFICIALS

Tajikistan's national borders are a legacy of the Soviet regime. They also reflect the territorial distribution and interaction of the country's main ethnic groups. Since the collapse of the USSR, the crossing of borders within and from Central Asia has become increasingly complicated, particularly for Tajik citizens. Visa regimes were introduced to protect the sovereignty of the newly independent Soviet republics. Attention has focused on preventing illegal migration and drug

trafficking. However, unrealistic control measures and insufficient state funding have both weakened effectiveness and promoted corruption among poorly paid Central Asian border and customs officials and police. They exploit travelers' ignorance of complex formal procedures and document requirements, and demand payment "for travel assistance" from defenceless migrants. This occurs at border checkpoints and on rail and road transit routes. Refusal to hand over the illegal payments can lead to threats and even violence. Such offences are defined as extortion. Their incidence is well-documented and has been highly publicized in the media.

Prevailing subjective social, ethnic and gender factors and tensions influence the frequency and size of extorted "travel payments". Citizens of Tajikistan are forced to pay more often than other travelers because, unlike citizens of other Central Asian countries, they are required to carry additional travel documents such as international passports and visas to enter neighbouring states. They are also the most stigmatized by national stereotyping. Men, who can be more easily pulled out of a car without attracting attention, are subjected to the risk of violence more often than women.

Tajik migrants face the risk of abuse and extortion at every stage of their migration: on the journey to their destination, during their stay in the receiving country and on the way home.

Tajiks' rights are infringed starting in Uzbekistan. We can be detained there for days, even though we have the proper documents. Our documents are in order but our rights are infringed everywhere. When border guards or police officers who are checking passports see that there are Tajiks among the passengers, they say, "Collect the money or all Tajiks have to get off".

Female shuttle, 46, Dushanbe

Extortion on the Train

In July and August 2002, a group made up of three observers from IOM offices in Central Asia, a member of the Kazakh NGO "Legal Aid to Migrants", and a reporter for the Kazakh weekly *Megapolis* took the train from Dushanbe to the Russian city of Astrakhan. The following is an excerpt from their report on the trip:

Train no. 213-224 from Dushanbe to Astrakhan is well known in Central Asia because it crosses all the countries in the region except Kyrgyzstan. This is the train which migrant workers from Tajikistan who can't afford to fly take to get to Russia. The train is designed for 958 persons. Yet there are so many people who want to leave that, for a fee, conductors will let passengers board without a ticket. They can sit on the luggage racks and in the corridors. It is practically impossible to purchase a ticket at the railway station. They are bought from secondhand dealers for double or triple the price.

Boarding is a major hassle. Police surround the station and let the passengers into the building one by one, creating bottlenecks. Inside the station there are lengthy document and luggage checks. Women are forced to undergo a gynaecological exam by a nurse without proper equipment somewhere in the station. In an effort to avoid this procedure, women pay her 1 somoni (half a dollar). If they pay another 200 rubles to the customs official, he will let their luggage go through.

After these interminable tortures, passengers boarded the train, where sanitary conditions were unsatisfactory. There was no hot water and toilets were closed for a long time. There was no air-conditioning and half the windows would not open. There was no dining car and there were no

refrigerators in the carriages. Passengers had food with them but it was rapidly spoiling in the heat.

Endless border controls and customs inspections began at the Tajik-Uzbek border, starting from the first station in Uzbekistan, Sari-Asiya. They were accompanied by roughness, insults and extortion by border guards, customs officials and police who were entering the carriages at the stations. Uzbek border guards threatened women with gynaecological examinations. On its way the train crosses many state borders across Central Asia, but only the border between Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan is crossed four times, and passengers and their luggage are checked each time. The passengers can't sleep the first night because they are checked every hour. Most of the customs officials and representatives of other law enforcement bodies (we couldn't establish which ones exactly) in all the countries the train from Tajikistan passed through (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Russia),were carrying out their activity without uniforms and badges of rank. It was impossible to find out the name and positions of border guards, customs officials or police officers. The train takes three days and crosses the territory of five countries.

In an interview with a reporter in early 2003, Amonhudji Hodzhibekov, deputy head of Tajik Railways, confirmed that the train to Russia "enters Uzbekistan four times and Turkmenistan three times along the way. At every border-crossing passengers are subjected to passport and customs control and their passports are stamped. In total, passengers are subjected to checks at 22 official checkpoints on the Dushanbe-Astrakhan line" (*ASIA-Plus*, 16 January 2003).

When you travel by train you have a lot of problems. Especially with passport control. It is inexplicable. They check your documents and extort money every time you cross the Tajik-Uzbek border. Even the city police enter the carriages at Karshi and Bukhara stations to check the passengers and extort money from them.

Welder, 42, Isfara

Extortion on the Road

Migrants regularly report extortion by officials along the roads, including border guards, customs officials and GAI (state traffic police) officers.

Once I became a witness to and participant in an incident. It was in winter. I was accompanying a group of young men from Êanibada, who were traveling to Russia to work. We were going through Kazakhstan. The weather was very cold. We were stopped at every GAI post. I stood on the steps of the bus when the next check began. Suddenly I saw someone who had already checked our bus and collected money from our guys at the previous post! I was dumbfounded. How had he managed to leave us behind and get to the next post before us? I couldn't help myself, I gave the bag with the passports to the driver of our bus, Rahmatullo from Leninabad [now Sughd], and grabbed this policeman. We found ourselves on the ground. I jumped on the policeman and started banging him with my fists. "How long must we Tajiks suffer from you and bear humiliations and insults! We will never have enough money to satisfy you! No matter how much money we pay, nothing is enough for you!" The whole group had to come and separate us.

Guide, 43, Kànibadam

Migrants from the Sughd region spend from 20 to 25 days traveling to Russia by bus. Including food and bribes that have to be paid along the way, the trip used to cost RUB 1,300. But payments demanded by corrupt officials soared in 2002, pushing up the cost of bus travel to RUB 4,000 (US$ 130).

The first time I took a group of people to work in Russia, 1,000 rubles was enough to get us there. Each person spent another 200 to 300 rubles on minor expenses. Some time after that, the guys began to take 2,000 to 3,000 with them. And now 4,000 rubles isn't enough. However much money my clients would take with them, it wouldn't be enough even for 20 days. Before we used to reach Russia in 17 or 18 days. Now it takes us 24 or 25 days.

Guide, 48, Khujand

Skyrocketing costs have thus forced many migrants to switch to air travel, which is easier and safer but also more expensive.

Consequences of Refusing to Pay Bribes

Migrants are also harassed when they return to Tajikistan with the money they have earned abroad. A refusal to pay "for travel" can result in abuse and ill-treatment from border guards, customs officials and police officers. In some cases officials may plant drugs among the migrant's personal belongings to incriminate him.

They have this custom at the border. When a group of Tajik migrants passes through border control, border guards set aside the young guys' passports. I ask them, "How much should I give for each of these guys?" If the border guards do not agree with the sum we can offer them, the guys are checked separately, during which time the border guards can place drugs in the pockets of our guys and accuse them of trafficking. They think all Tajiks are dealing in drugs. Because of these problems we are usually detained for three or four hours at the border checkpoints. It can happen that we sit there for a whole day. This is how they extort money. If you refuse to pay off the border guards, they can plant drugs. Sometimes it comes to blows. I fought with police several times. I told them, "Where should our guys get the money for you?! They are only going for work and still they've earned nothing." But they don't get it and I'm forced to give them everything I have. When I come back from Russia, I bring some gifts for the border guards and customs officials, for example expensive blankets, so that they won't complain and search our bags for hours. In fact they can take anything they like.

Guide, 43, Kanibadam

It has been reported in the Russian press that when migrants would or could not pay a demanded bribe, police tore up the migrants' documents on the pretext that they were false ("A Choice: Deportation or '1,000 Dollars'," *Izvestiya*, 14 November 2002).

We have no protection against the arbitrariness of the police. Russian police officers are racketeers with shoulder straps. One of our countrymen was beaten to death because he refused to pay them a bribe. I was detained by police once. I had proof of registration but they told me it was false and I was fined a large sum. If you refuse to pay, they can put you in prison.

Auto mechanic, 28, Lenin district

In a case that occurred during 2002, brutal treatment of Tajik migrants by Russian law enforcement agents ended in death. One night seven policemen showed up at a summer residence in Mitishi, near Moscow, where Tajik construction workers who were renovating the house were living, and tried to extort money. When the workers refused to pay, they were beaten. One of the workers died of his injuries. The police admitted to the beating only after a protest by the Tajik government (Anatoliy Velednitzky, "Endless Hassles," *Trud*, 5 June 2003).

6.4 TRANSPORT PROBLEMS

The hardest part of the whole migration process is the actual journey abroad and back.

If the travel problem is solved, if the person can reach his destination without obstacles, the other issues can be resolved in due course. People know there is work in Russia. There is a lot of work in Moscow. The main thing is to get there.

Migrant worker, 32, Dushanbe

Demand far outstrips the limited supply of public and private transport services available to Tajik travelers, especially during the months of massive external migration in the spring and the return migration in the early winter. The perennial shortage of airline and railway tickets forces people to buy them through informal channels at inflated prices. Despite the high cost, trains and airplanes are hugely overcrowded. Border checkpoints are traffic bottlenecks. Badly paid border guards and traffic police extort bribes for providing "assistance" to travelers who are prepared to pay extra.

In an interview on 11 April 2003, the head of the Tajik Public Prosecutor's Office on Transport, Kurbonali Mukhabbatov, acknowledged that the public transport services could not cope with the huge external flows of seasonal workers. He put the capacity of the national airline carrier, Òojikiston, at 40,000 passengers per month, and that of Tajik state railways at about 11,000.

Mr. Mukhabbatov said that an investigation into the railways had shown that, despite strict measures taken by management to impose order, some employees and law enforcement agents had siphoned off tickets to ticket-brokers for sale at inflated prices. A similar situation had been uncovered at Òîjikiston airlines. Since the beginning of 2003, he said, one Tajik railway employee and six ticket-brokers had been arrested and charged with speculation (*ÀSIA-Plus*, 11 April 2003).

There are three standard transport options for getting to Russia, largely influenced by the traveler's point of departure: road travel for Sughd region residents, rail transport for people living in central and southern Tajikistan, including Dushanbe; and air travel. When no trains are available, migrants go by road. This can be time-consuming and fraught with considerable expense, so for some taking the plane turns out to be safer and cheaper. According to Tajik transport service sources, the number of flights to Russia is increasing and there are plans to open new airlines to different parts of Russia, including Novosibirsk, Samara and St. Petersburg.

Group Travel

The increasingly burdensome nature of foreign travel – complicated visa, border-crossing and customs procedures and the need to bribe officials at the various borders as well as police officers and criminal gangs – gave rise to a special type of occupation: *korvonbashi* (caravan-owner or "caravaneer"). This report uses the term "guide". They accompany groups of migrant workers to their destination, hire drivers, carry everyone's travel documents, negotiate with officials, and act as guides. They are skilled travelers and effective intermediaries. They know the officials at the different posts and they are better informed about visas and other required documents, as well as customs regulations. They apply both their experience and the rules of conflict resolution.

Because border guards are less likely to interview or abuse women, guides are usually female.

... border guards, customs officials and the police more or less take women's opinions into consideration. Women can defend the rights of group members. They are treated with more respect than men, and the police don't beat them up. As for the men, nobody feels sorry for them and they are usually severely beaten….

Once I was feeling unwell. I dozed off on the way and couldn't go out to the policemen when the bus stopped at the next checkpoint in Kazakhstan. The driver came to me and said, "The Kazakhs are beating your guys. If you don't go, they won't stop and could beat them to death." It turned out that the checkpoint, which had always received 200 sums, was asking for 10 million rubles [over US$ 3,000].

Guide, 48, Khujand

Group travel can save migrants money. A skilled guide can reduce the payoffs to a minimum by using her established contacts or through negotiation.

Guides also organize air travel to countries outside the CIS, such as the UAE (Sharjah/Dubai), China (Urumchi), Turkey (Istanbul), and Pakistan (Karachi).

A guide describes her job as follows: Every time the bus carrying her group crosses Kazakhstan's borders, the guide hands over RUB 10,000 (over US$ 300). She also leaves cash behind at the police checkpoints. On the trip back to Tajikistan, she brings presents for the police in the hope of securing their cooperation in future.

The guide is responsible for her client's safety. In addition to establishing good relations with border officials and highway police, she can protect the migrants' rights with her knowledge of legislation in all the countries they are traveling through.

If you are traveling with a group, all travel expenses and contacts with border guards and police are the responsibility of the organizer or the person in charge of the trip. If you go by yourself, you will be asked to show visas and registration, and the police can detain you under any pretext. If you can pay everywhere you will not have problems. But it will be more expensive than a trip with a group.

Journalist, 38, Isfara

The leader is responsible for the group. If somebody in my group gets hurt, I make a row. I keep all the passports and I am responsible for each client. If I don't protect the rights of group members, border guards, especially in Kazakhstan, will take all kinds of liberties. Once, after a conflict at a checkpoint, we came to Jambul and I went straight to the main police department and told them about the abuses. I said, "Now I will go to our ambassador and complain about your police

officers." They tried to calm me down and let us go without any problems. It's not right to let them push you around. We have to protect our rights.

Guide, 48, Khujand

Most of the guides work the Sughd region. According to participants in the focus group in Isfara, guides collect migrants in Isfara and promise them employment in a specific Russian city, usually Ekaterinburg. Almost always there is someone who wants to look for work in Orenburg, so the guide takes the workers by bus to Ekaterinburg and the same bus then continues on to Orenburg, provided there is a minimum of ten passengers. If there are fewer than ten, the guide sends them on to Orenburg by train.

Besides arranging transport, the guides help the migrants get settled, providing them with the necessary contacts. To this end they lodge new arrivals with fellow countrymen who have been in Russia for a long time. It is also the responsibility of the guide to ensure initial employment and assist with registration. The guide will have extensive contacts with employers who "order" the required number of workers, specifying qualifications, gender and age. Guides help migrants obtain registration, using their contacts with passport office, visa department and registration office staff. Employers play an important role in this process, although since passage of the new laws on labour migration, Russian employers have avoided registering foreign workers. Bribes have gotten bigger and "roofs" were created, criminal groups which provide cover for illegal recruitment of foreign workers in Russia.

You have to have a roof; it is impossible without a roof. I bring the people to Russia. I arrange with my clients that they will be split up into small groups and lodged with friends and fellow countrymen. One can take three people to his flat, another takes two and so on. The rest stay with me. We provide them with initial employment. We also arrange their registration. Because it is very difficult without registration. One fine alone can be as much as 500 rubles. At first I was bringing men, but now I am asked to bring women.

Guide, Dushanbe

Disreputable Guides

Migrants can sometimes be treated badly by intermediaries because of the latters' lack of experience.

But there are also con artists among the intermediaries. A man named Ibraguim reportedly collected two groups, all together 100 people, and took US$ 100, in some cases more, from each person. He promised to take them to the place of employment. Half way there he left them on their own, saying he had to go back because he had left the money at home. People waited for him for about ten days until they realized it was a swindle. He defrauded them out of US$ 22,000 in total.

They say that this year one Uzbek woman put together a group of people from Kanibadam and promised to take them to Russia. When they crossed the Uzbek border she disappeared and left the group to their fate.

Hokumat employee, 36, Isfara district

In an incident in spring 2003, in Unibay-Ata village in southern Kazakhstan, Kazakh border guards and police detained 67 Tajik citizens who had no documents on them after having been robbed and abandoned by their guide (*ASIA-Plus*, 15 April 2003).

The frequency of fraud and theft undermines trust in informal migration organizers. Potential migrants are increasingly compelled to search for alternatives, including legal means of traveling to foreign countries for employment. At the same time, the intermediaries are prepared to legalize their activity.

Sometimes people are collected to be taken to some city to get work but then they're left to the mercy of fate and none of the promises are kept. People sell their property and cattle to buy tickets to go work in Russia. As a result, they are left without a job, place to live or food. They wander around hungry, shoeless and hopeless. Nobody will give them their money back. Therefore people don't trust the organizers, and the organizers also lose interest in taking people abroad.

Guide, 36, Dushanbe

6.5 EXPLOITATION BY EMPLOYERS

Exploitative employment practices are widespread in Russian industries like construction and agriculture which heavily depend on unskilled labour. The collapse of the Soviet system eliminated many economic and social regulatory functions of the state, including labour protection structures. Mass unemployment and an ongoing influx of illegal economic migrants have encouraged an increase in exploitative and even slave conditions for workers in certain sectors. These include undocumented employment, the absence of legal employment contracts, very low wages, unpaid working hours, limited social benefits and termination of employment without prior notice.

Illegal migrant workers are attractive to cost-conscious employers because they agree to work for the lowest wages and are poorly informed about local labour standards.

In Russia, national security concerns, aggravated by domestic and foreign policy, and xenophobia create an unfavourable environment for the integration and legalization of foreign workers. A common complaint of Tajik labour migrants is that a tacit agreement exists between employers and police to keep Tajik workers in exploitative conditions, especially in the construction industry.

For three weeks of 12-hour labour on plaster and painting works they pay 120 dollars.

Bahtier Valiev. Gastarbayter or inhospitable Russia. ASIA-plus, December 5, 2002

Almost every migrant worker - constructor, his friends and relatives were facing the cases of deceit from the part of employers who were using the absence of the labour contract to underpay or not to pay the workers at all.

Tadjik migrants are the cheap and sometimes even absolutely free-of-charge labour for the Russian employers. We are frequently deceived, and there is no place for us to turn for the help, we'll be accused in any case.

Constructor , 27 years, Aini region

Nearly every migrant construction worker surveyed, as well as his friends and relatives, had encountered chicanery on the part of employers who used the absence of work contracts as an

excuse to underpay workers or not pay them at all. "For three weeks of 12-hour days of plastering and painting work they pay US$ 120," a construction worker told a journalist (Valiev, "Gastarbeiter, or Inhospitable Russia").

Migrant workers in Russia are the least protected members of the workforce. Although workers who are brought to Russia under a licence for the use of foreign labour are protected under the country's labour laws, they too experience unfair and discriminatory practices. They can face incomplete payment of wages (no annual or quarterly bonuses or bonuses for long-term service), and unresolved social security issues, in particular pension provision. They have no health insurance and, often, neither paid sick leave nor paid holidays. Temporary work abroad and seniority are not taken into account and workers have no claim to severance pay, disability insurance, etc.

Tajik migrant workers resent having to take the worst-paid jobs and being treated badly by supervisors. They feel deprived of their civil rights, insulted and humiliated.

However, the bulk of the complaints expressed by those interviewed concerned the difficult working conditions and problems with payment of wages.

The migrants described working under far worse conditions than local workers: a less convenient work schedule, no days off, a long working day, outdated technical equipment, heavier and less attractive work and low pay. 45.3% of hired workers who had quit their jobs cited intolerable working conditions as the reason. Of these, 9.4% said they worked an 18-hour working day (from 6 a.m. to midnight), and no days off.

The migrants also complained about low wages, delayed payment of wages and the absence of guarantees for the payment of wages.

Guys from Khujand, Isfara, Karakchikum and Nefteabad work in the oilfields as drillers. People from Nefteabad work in towns like Langipase, Radujniy, Megion, Surgut and Tumen. Our experts are more profitable for the Russians. They do the same work as the locals but get paid three to four times less, because they don't have registration and citizenship. A local citizen gets 30-35,000 rubles and the Tajik 8-10,000. Maybe our workers are even better experts than Russians. They're skilled. Oil has been extracted in Nefteabad for over a century.

Master chiseler, 42, Isfara

By and large, young Tajik labour migrants feel they have no alternative but to accept unfavourable working conditions. Poverty deprives them of individual choice.

Trafficking in Persons

Some Tajik migrants fall into the hands of "labour dealers" who "resell" individual workers as well as entire brigades**.** Most vulnerable are undocumented, unregistered recent arrivals with no money to live on while they scout around for work. They are usually young and poorly educated, and cannot speak the local language. These migrants are often deployed to dig building foundations and ditches. They live in places allocated by their "owner," with no freedom of movement.

In two cases that came to light during the research for this report, intermediaries "sold" Tajik workers to the shop manager at a large factory. The workers lived on the premises without being registered and worked without a licence or labour contracts. ("The employer was against our registration." "Why do we need registration? We lived in the factory. In any case we were not allowed to leave the workshops."). Working hours ranged between 12 and 16 hours a day. Days off

were rare. The workers lived directly in the shop without any conveniences and were given food three times a day. They had no access to medical services and had to take care of themselves if they were sick or injured. But several workers who had suffered serious accidents were transferred to the factory hospital. Workers had neither health nor social insurance and could not join local trade unions. On average, for eight to nine months of work they received payment ranging from US$ 200 to US$ 500. On the other hand, when migrants demanded to be allowed to leave after nearly a year, their employers paid for their trip home.

Table 19: Trafficking of Women from Tajikistan

According to research of IOM, which has been lead carried out in 2001 under the name " The Deceived migrants from Tadjikistan, research on traffic of women and children », at least 1000 women from Tadjikistan have been taken out in 2001, mainly in the countries of Persian gulf and to the Russian Federation with the purpose of sexual exploitation and keeping in domestic bondage.

The ministry of national security pays special attention to this issue and has already registered more than 900 women who have left from Tadjikistan before 2000 and became victims of sex - trade. (The information is based on statements about the women potentially inclined to prostitution, deported, about those who was accused in change of age under the documents and who was accused in prostitution abroad).

In addition, according to the information received from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, more than 350 women from Tadjikistan in 2000, were compelled to be engaged in prostitution. (The information is based on a number of investigations on forced prostitution inside the country). Anyway, both sources emphasize, that the information which they have, concerns only the registered cases, and that the real number of commercial sex - workers and the women, who are probably exposed to sexual exploitation abroad, can be higher.

Women, more often in the age of from 24 to 29 years, having at least one child and being the head of the family, are frequently deceived. They were given false promises to get the job abroad, such for example as saleswomen in jewelry shop, cleaners, maids or sellers, or promised profitable shop tours to make good business by resale of the purchased goods in Tadjikistan. Examples of exploitation are the cases of confiscation of documents, debt dependence, violence, rape and forced prostitution, compulsion to performance of domestic work, narcotic dependence and threat of exposure and blame.

According to an IOM study, "The Deceived Migrants from Tajikistan: Research on the Trafficking of Women and Children" (2001), at least 1,000 women from Tajikistan were taken out of the country in 2001 and transferred primarily to countries in the Persian Gulf and to the Russian Federation for purposes of sexual exploitation and domestic bondage.

Tajikistan's Ministry of National Security has identified more than 900 women who left Tajikistan before 2000 and became victims of the sex trade.

According to several investigations by the Ministry of Internal Affairs into forced prostitution inside the country, in 2000 more than 350 women from Tajikistan were forced to work as prostitutes.

Both ministries emphasize that the information they have concerns only registered cases; the real number of commercial sex workers and women exposed to sexual exploitation abroad is much higher.

Women who are duped into going abroad are most likely to be between the ages of 24 and 29, to have at least one child and to be the head of the family. They are lured by false promises of a job in a jewelry store or other sales staff positions, or as a cleaner or maid, or by an offer to undertake a profitable shuttle tour. Examples of exploitation include confiscation of travel documents, debt dependence, violence, rape, forced prostitution, forced domestic work, narcotic dependence and threats to expose the victim to denunciation back home.

6.6 VICTIMS OF RACKETEERING

Labour migrants who were interviewed for this report identified racketeering as a major problem. Criminal groups that demand protection money from businesses are known as "roofs". They operate in various industrial sectors, trade and transport. Shuttle traders are particularly affected, as roofs play an important role in the infrastructure of their business, with its closely linked legal and illegal aspects.

In every market throughout the CIS region, there is a stable system of shadow "taxation" of merchants and all the other workers in the market, including cleaners and porters. Anyone who has not handed over a required sum risks being roughed up at the end of the day.

The markets are divided into zones, each controlled by a different criminal gang. The division can be along ethnoregional lines in the markets where Tajiks work. Thus, according to the testimonies of fruit and vegetable sellers in St. Petersburg, natives of the Faizabad district trade at the Neva market, people from Kofarnihon trade at the Ladoga market and people from Dushanbe and Hissar trade at the Zvezdniy market. Unlike construction workers, ethnoregional merchant communities do not usually have a recognized leader.

Local police are not only informed about the activity of the roofs but in some cases actively participate in it by watching over the collection of the protection money and resolving any incidents that may arise.

Shuttles are also the targets of outright robbery by criminal gangs who keep track of where they live, their daily routine and how much money they make. Once the gangs have established all this they rob the shuttle they have been observing.

Construction brigades are also vulnerable to extortion attempts by roofs. Every fourth construction worker has had to pay protection money. 75% have never experienced racketeering. The surveyed construction workers felt it was better to pay up than to face the consequences of not doing so. 2.8% said they worked under the "protection" of Tajik roofs. 2.1% of construction workers noted that racketeers are less of a problem nowadays than before.

Racketeering Growth Factors

Racketeering thrives in a legal vacuum, in the absence of law and order and as the result of the lack of effective state control over labour migration.

Government tax laws are what drive shuttles into the arms of criminal organizations, which help them evade payment. Taxes and import duties are so high, the documents and procedures regulating migration so complicated and expensive, that it is cheaper for shuttles to pay off roofs and bribe border and customs officials than to follow the letter of the law.

Drug Trafficking

Table 20: Number of Tajik citizens arrested for drug-related crimes

Place and year of arrest	1999	2000	2001	2002
Kazakhstan	135	166	75	8
Kyrgyzstan	11	23	-	4
Uzbekistan	384	572	188	106
Russian Federation		1,031	801	785
Total	530	1,792	1,064	903

Source: *Review of the Drugs Situation in the Republic of Tajikistan in 2002*, Tajik Drug Control Agency, Dushanbe, 2003: 35-36

These criminal statistics reflect the fact that Tajikistan, by virtue of its proximity to Afghanistan, the world's leading source of heroin, is a transit country for illicit drugs. But that does not imply a connection between drug trafficking and labour migration. Contrary to popular belief, labour and commercial migrations are not compatible with criminal activities such as the drugs trade. The migrant worker's goal is to find a job and keep it. They fear the police and the risk of deportation too much to undertake criminal actions.

Allegations of migrant worker involvement in the drugs trade are therefore controversial. According to the Coordination Council of Public Associations for the Tajik Diaspora in Moscow, a significant number of drug crimes purportedly committed by Tajik migrants are in fact falsifications provoked by the refusal of the accused to pay bribes demanded by law enforcement agents.

Criminal migrations, including those connected with drugs and assassinations, are specific, limited and isolated migratory trends that function under their own laws.

Drug trafficking is a vast operation with numerous executors at its various stages. Drugs produced in neighbouring Afghanistan reach the West by one of three routes: 1) Afghanistan – Tajikistan – Uzbekistan – Azerbaijan – Turkey – the Balkans – Western Europe; 2) Afghanistan – Tajikistan – Uzbekistan – Moscow – Baltic states – Western Europe; 3) Afghanistan – Kyrgyzstan – Moscow – Western Europe**.**

Of course, some migrants do get involved in the drugs trade. They tend to be in desperate need of money, for example after having fallen heavily into debt. Casual drug shuttles, who are sometimes women, carry drugs in small quantities and only once. Often they serve as cover for the larger transports: Law enforcement agents are tipped off about them and as they are being detained and searched, the real drug consignment passes through unchecked.

Recently three people from Isfara were caught with drugs. They were carrying the drugs on their bodies. They say that one of them was really engaged in the drugs trade, but the other two were going to Russia to earn money. Maybe they fell into the wrong line of work. There are a lot of Chechens in Moscow, who came after the war. They offer big money for drugs: US$ 10-20,000. As you know, not all Tajiks have a definite job waiting for them, not everyone has accommodation. In Russia they don't have much time to reflect. They wander around without work, a place to live or a piece of bread, and when someone offers them big money, they're trapped and they agree to transport drugs.

Dried-fruit vendor, 32, Isfara

The second group of Tajik migrants linked to the drugs trade handle consignments on the second and third drug-trafficking routes through Russia. They have lived in Russia for anywhere between two and seven years. Some of them are recruited from among merchants working in the markets.

In very rare cases, labour migrants were drawn into the drugs trade without their knowledge. In 1999, large shipments of drugs reached Krasnoyarsk, Novosibirsk, Chita and other Russian cities in vehicles transporting dried fruit that was later sold at the local markets. The consequences for Tajik produce vendors in those cities, who were unaware of the illicit cargo, were severe. Many went bankrupt. Such incidents have increased migrant wariness towards organized criminal activities like the drugs trade.

7. HEALTH CONDITIONS OF MIGRANT WORKERS

The bottom line is that migrants cannot afford to be sick. People who are planning to migrate understand that strong health is vital to be able to cope with the rigours of the journey, the job search and the living conditions that await them.

I've gone abroad to work five times already and I'm planning to leave again. Working abroad requires good health, knowledge of Russian and literacy. You also need to register, then you'll have fewer problems.

Construction worker, 32, Faizabad

Heavy, dangerous work and poor living conditions can lead to disease, injury and even death. Some migrants return home as invalids. The accident rate is high in the employment areas where most Tajik labour migrants are concentrated: construction, oil and gas extraction, the retail trade in the markets, and public catering.

7.1 INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

According to the Federal Labour Inspection service of the Russian Federation, over a nine-month period in 2002, 179 workers died and 723 were seriously injured in Moscow alone as the result of non-observance of safety regulations. 61 group accidents occurred during this period.

The majority of workplace accidents occur on construction sites. In 2001, nearly 40% of deaths in the workplace occurred in the construction industry (Alla Tuchkova, "The Most Fatal Trades," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 4 November 2002). The research conducted for this report confirms that the most dangerous occupations are construction work and unskilled labour. More than half of interviewees named construction the heaviest and most dangerous type of work performed by migrants working abroad (51%).

Many supervisors are unaware of or ignore occupational safety precautions. Foreign migrant workers are especially at risk. The Federal Labour Inspection's investigation determined that very few workers from Tajikistan, even those who are skilled, are familiar with safety regulations.

The most dangerous occupation in construction is that of assembler. Assemblers are the victims of 12% of severe or fatal work accidents. Nearly the same percentage is true for carpenters working at heights, electric welders and related occupations.

According to the Moscow division of the labour inspectorate, industry takes second place after construction in terms of accident statistics. The largest number of severe and fatal injuries were reported at mechanical engineering and metalworking enterprises. Often these factories have resumed production after having stood idle for a long period of time. Their equipment is outdated and faulty. Migrant workers recruited for such enterprises are at risk of injury due to their ignorance of safety regulations and lack of familiarity with the faulty equipment.

Moreover, in all CIS countries, occupational health and safety inspectorates have been subject to cutbacks, resulting in a sharp reduction in the number of safety inspectors.

The accident rate is also high among migrants working in trade and public catering. Inexperienced loaders suffer injuries because no one bothers to give them proper instructions.

Cooks are at risk if they fail to observe safety standards in the kitchen or work with faulty equipment.

Accidents happen because cost-conscious employers cut corners on worker safety. They recruit cheap, unskilled labour and are reluctant to offer work contracts. Even if they do, they rarely provide medical insurance and bear no responsibility for work accidents. It is not unusual for employers to have a false legal address, making it impossible to track them down in case of injury (Tuchkova, "The Most Fatal Trades").

Shuttles also face health problems as a result of physical and mental strain and difficult working conditions: 40% of interviewed shuttles do not employ loaders and move their goods themselves, and many trade in the open air during the cold, dark Russian and Kazakh winters (34.7% sell on the street or in underground stations). The most common illnesses contracted by shuttles are upper respiratory disease, radiculitis, kidney disease and cardiovascular disease.

The bad living conditions under which the majority of Tajik migrants work also have an adverse effect on their health. Construction workers, loaders, cleaners and other workers in the markets are worst off. Living on the building site has become the norm, and inspectors have uncovered cases of construction brigades spending winter nights in a nearby forest. Some market cleaners and loaders have to sleep in the garbage collection area.

7.2 ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE

According to the research results, shuttles rarely seek medical care abroad, preferring to wait till they get home to see a doctor. 62.2% of the interviewed shuttles generally do not require urgent medical attention. The rest occasionally have health problems while working abroad. 4.2% said they were unable to receive medical aid when they needed it. 12.6% complained of the high cost of medical services and medicines.

If we need medical care we have to pay double. They charge us very expensive rates.

Female, 46, Dushanbe

53.1% of the surveyed hired workers and 48% of construction workers had no health problems while abroad. The others had undergone medical treatment. Respondents explained that medical insurance, which they lack, is required for a visit to the doctor. They therefore opt for self-treatment. In serious cases they go to a polyclinic. However, the majority say the cost of treatment is very high and they can't afford it. Construction workers acknowledge that they worry constantly about injury, illness or frost-bite, as they have no opportunity to seek medical care. They have no insurance, they are not registered, many of them are not allowed to leave the building site, or they are afraid of running into the police, and they cannot afford doctor's fees and medicines. Some hired workers said their Russian girlfriends had arranged for them to visit their own doctors, who then treated the Tajiks for a modest payment. Migrants described cases where doctors had been generous and humane.

I got sick a week after I arrived. My friends brought me to the hospital. I was surprised that the Russian doctors treated me very well.

Construction worker, 28, Vakhsh district

In cases of serious illness or injury, friends or fellow countrymen usually collect money to pay for a patient's medical care and medicines, and if necessary his return home. In case of death, friends, fellow countrymen or fellow brigade members cover the costs of transporting the body home as well as the funeral arrangements.

7.3 SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES AND HIV-AIDS

According to the results of survey, the importance of sexually responsible behaviour is not widely understood in Tajik migrant worker circles. Sex outside marriage has traditionally been a taboo for Tajiks and Uzbeks. Social disapproval continues to inhibit public and private discussion and therefore the dissemination of accurate information. When people engage in non-marital sexual relations, they fail to use methods of contraception and safe sex, thereby increasing the risk of unwanted pregnancy, infections, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV-AIDS.

Migrants recognize that many lonely men and women who are cut off from their families will engage in casual sexual contact, have multiple sex partners or pay for sexual services that expose them to the risk of contracting STDs and HIV-AIDS.

Our citizens who work in Russia have sexual contact with prostitutes, but they are unable to protect themselves so they end up spreading various STDs in our republic.

Female shuttle, 35, Dushanbe

The survey results indicate that a migrant worker typically will have two to three sexual partners over the course of an eight- or nine-month work season. Virtually no one uses condoms due to lack of knowledge about safe sex as well as the high cost of condoms and other means of contraception. Casual sexual contact is more prevalent among young migrants; older migrants prefer to have a steady girlfriend or wife. The majority of the migrants interviewed believe that older fellow countrymen or senior brigade members are responsible for STD prevention because it is their obligation to supervise the behaviour of younger members of the group. Older people are thought to have a duty to instruct young people in disease prevention as well as advising them on the choice of a partner. At the same time, young people feel uncomfortable talking to the older generation about sexual matters.

Tajik labour migrants are abysmally informed about HIV-AIDS. They have some general information, sometimes from television, about how AIDS is transmitted, but they know practically nothing about the disease itself and very little about how to protect themselves from it.

Nor do most of the surveyed migrants understand STDs, frequently confusing them with AIDS.

STDs and AIDS are incurable. They are transmitted sexually and by needles that have been used by an infected person.

Young men, 15 to 19, Isfara

None of those interviewed was able to distinguish between the various STDs and identify their causes and symptoms. Even more alarming, they were unaware of the means of preventing transmission.

Migrant workers who contract an STD or HIV-AIDS are in an extremely difficult situation. Not only are medical services and medicines financially out of reach for many, but a strong fear of stigmatization prompts them to conceal the fact of their disease. Respondents reported that many migrants who had contracted an STD abroad would not visit a doctor or clinic on their return home. Instead, they either treated themselves or consulted a traditional practitioner *(tabib)*, under the guarantee of anonymity.

Many people won't go to the doctor. There are lots of quack doctors now. People go to them for treatment. You have to see a doctor but young people are reluctant to visit them for fear of attracting attention. But the quacks will make you sick in no time.

Young men, 22 to 25, Dushanbe

Most respondents think that improved knowledge about preventative measures could slow the spread of STD and HIV-AIDS.

You can get AIDS as the result of chaotic sexual contact without the use of contraception. We're not informed about it. If we were, it would be possible to avoid infection. They should broadcast TV programmes and publish articles on sexual relations and prevention methods. You hesitate to buy such magazines because you're afraid people will laugh at you. But if somebody reads one of those magazines, he can apply what he learns from it; it will prove useful to him. By the time people regret something it's too late.

Young men, 18 to 21, Dushanbe

8. ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF LABOUR MIGRATION

8.1 REMITTANCES

The most acute problem confronting the Tajik labour migrants interviewed for this report was how to transfer their hard-earned wages securely to their families back home.

In 2002 alone, the total amount of rubles, U.S. dollars and euros transferred to Tajikistan through the country's banks amounted to the equivalent of US$ 78.3 million (calculated at the official exchange rate in January 2003). In addition, vast sums of money entered the country through informal channels. The international experience is that foreign exchange inflow through informal channels is equivalent to one-quarter of the amount entering through official cross-border currency transactions (V. Y. Arhipov, *The International Labour Migration in Asia*, 1997: 50). Lack of public trust in the banking system remained strong until more favourable conditions for international money transfers were introduced at the start of 2003. Informal foreign exchange flows into Tajikistan are estimated at nearly equal the volume of transfer through official channels.

Migrant workers also bring foreign goods into the country on their visits home. The value of these goods, which include expensive home appliances, clothing and textiles, and medicines, is estimated at half the value of the money the migrant bring or send home. The combined value of money and goods flowing into the country through its migrant workers, including shuttle traders, was estimated at somewhere between US$ 200-230 million in 2002.

For years the government neglected the issue of migrant remittances. One reason was that labour migration was initially linked to the streams of refugees who fled Tajikistan during and after the civil war. Leaving the country for lengthy periods of time was considered forced migration and therefore undesirable.

A further reason for the delayed government response lay in the spontaneous nature of labour migration. State agencies were caught unaware. Financial institutions too were slow to react to the new mass phenomenon. At first the migrants had no legal means of remittance that were acceptable to them. When Tajik banks finally began to handle money transfers from abroad, the procedures involved were so complex and inadequate that people simply refused to use the banks' services. The greatest obstacle of all was a 30% tax on foreign-exchange transfers. The tax was levied from 1993 until mid-2001.

The Riskiest Method

Thus, instead of sending money through the banks, migrant workers in most cases either take their earnings with them when they return to Tajikistan or use relatives or friends as couriers. But transiting countries while carrying large sums of money exposes the migrants to a high risk of extortion, theft, intimidation and physical abuse.

The biggest problem is sending remittances or bringing the money home with you. The whole time you're afraid someone will take away everything you've earned. Customs officials, border guards and police in all the countries we pass through take money away from us. Racketeers extort money from you. They rob, beat or even kill you.

Hired worker, 31, Dushanbe

Tajik migrants report being subjected to humiliating treatment, forced detention for the purposes of extortion, and beatings at border-crossings and police posts. Money and goods may be confiscated from them at any time, by any official. These incidents occur on trains and on the road in Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Recently we were on our way back from a commercial trip to Bishkek and passed through Osh [both Kyrgyzstan]. Traveling with us were some young guys returning home from working in Russia. They were afraid of everybody. They paid the sum "for travel" demanded by the driver of the van, but unlike the other passengers, who were seated inside the van, they were forced to sit off with the baggage. When I tried to protest, the driver told me, "And you shut up or I'll kick you out of the van and you'll be worse off than they are." Whenever the van stopped at a police post or at the border, the driver said to the officers, "I have Tajiks in the van who are coming back from Russia and they've got loads of money on them." At each post the guys were required to pay a lot of money. The poor guys were so scared they agreed to pay. On the way we stopped off at the driver's home. The owners of the house took away all the gifts the guys were bringing home for their relatives. When we approached the Uzbek border, they were asked again to pay for crossing the border. At the last post, the guys were asked to hand over their last remaining money. They refused and were beaten up, badly injured and allowed to go home.

Shuttle, 52, Dushanbe

The system before was that people were transiting Uzbekistan by road and hiding, at their own risk, up to 1.5 million Russian rubles on their bodies or in their socks or elsewhere. Sometimes they traveled with the money by plane. But of course customs officials or border guards have to get their share.

Construction worker, 30, Isfara

Illegal Money Transfer Networks

I want to describe one means of money transfer. For example, I need to send money home. I know guys from Uro-Teppa [now Istaravshan] *who work in Russia. I have an agreement with these guys that I give them money in Russia and they will give this sum through their people to my relatives. This is an illegal way of transferring money.*

Master chiseler, 38, Isfara

Increased labour migration was accompanied by the development of underground remittance networks known in Russian as *perekid* or *perekidka* ("throwing"). These trust-based networks are most highly developed in Dushanbe, Istaravshan and Khojend.

For example, my partner is in Russia. He calls me and says, "I need cash to buy the goods." I have money in Isfara but I can't transfer it to my partner. There are guys who can deliver money for you. I'll find such guys and say, "Let's make a deal. I'll give you some money here, and you will give this money to my friend in Russia." They ask for the money in advance. I give them the money. After that people in Russia will give the required amount to my partner. It's called "throwing".

Seller of dried fruits, 43, Isfara

Survey respondents noted that "throwing" is reserved for substantial sums in rubles or dollars, ranging from US$ 1,000-3,000 or more. Shuttles and large-scale merchants use such services, but also ordinary migrants who need to transfer money quickly in the event of a family emergency.

Bank Transfers

The Tajik government could no longer ignore the issue of migrant remittances. On 25 September 2001 it abolished the 30% state tax on cross-border bank transactions by physical persons (Decree No. 445 amending Decree No. 587 from 1993).

Migrant workers can now transfer funds through 14 Tajik commercial banks without maintaining a current account**.** Agroinvestbank and Orienbank are used most frequently. Other banks include Kafolatbank, Tajprombank, Tojiksodirotbank and Bank Eshata.

The U.S. company Western Union also handles remittances to Tajikistan.

The basic procedures are the same at all the banks authorized to handle foreign exchange transactions for customers without a current account. The remitter or beneficiary must be a physical person or his/her representative and show identification. The beneficiary presents a declaration containing his/her name and identification document, the sum and purpose of the remittance, and the date and signature. A representative must bring the document conferring power of attorney. The transferred money can be paid out in cash or deposited in the beneficiary's account in the bank if the beneficiary has one. Payment is made in the currency of the remittance or, if preferred, in the Tajik national currency at the official rate of exchange. In the case of cash payment, or upon request, the bank gives the beneficiary a currency export permit (form no. 377).

Table 21: Note on Tajik commercial banks

Agroinvestbank currently has arrangements only with Russian banks on foreign exchange transactions for Tajik migrants, but it is negotiating with a bank in Kazakhstan. Agroinvestbank conducts remittance transfers with the Moscow-based Avtobank, which has branches in most large Russian cities. Agroinvestbank charges a 1.5% commission on the transferred sum and Avtobank charges for telex costs. In October 2002, Agroinvestbank signed a contract on migrant remittances with Slavic bank in Russia, which charges the customer a 3% commission, of which 1.5% is the fee for Agroinvestbank's services.

Agroinvestbank set up a special department for remittances. Agroinvestbank advertises its services widely. Its ads, which include Tajikinvestbank's correspondent account number, can be found in the print media and at railway stations and airports in Tajikistan, in Moscow's Domodedovo International Airport, and in the Moscow and Astrakhan railway stations. Agroinvestbank branches provide information on transaction procedures and list current foreign exchange rates.

When migrants intend to remit funds, they inform the recipient by phone. Although remittances are also paid out in Agroinvestbank branches in the Khatlon and Sughd regions, and in the Districts under Republican Subordination (RRP), beneficiaries in those areas prefer to receive the money in the capital. This is because all branches except those in the GBAO have limited amounts of foreign exchange on hand and in the case of large sums the branch manager may have

to travel to Dushanbe to pick up the money. In addition, many customers distrust the regional bank branches.

Funds are accepted by Avtobank in Moscow for transfer to Agroinvestbank without advance payment of bank charges. In other Russian cities Avtobank charges US$ 10, irrespective of the transferred sum.

The transaction is completed in two to three days. Agroinvestbank pays out the amount in rubles, U.S. dollars or euros in accordance with the currency in which it was transferred. If the customer agrees to receive the money in the Tajik national currency, exchanged at the market rate, the bank waives the 1.5% commission.

The volume of remittances is increasing, as are the sums involved, reflecting growing public confidence in Agroinvestbank's services. The low rate of commission is a further factor.

In the first half of 2002, Agroinvestbank handled 3,482 transfers from various Russian cities with a combined volume of RUB 3.4 million. Seasonal fluctuations reflect the typical migration pattern. The first quarter of 2002 saw a monthly rate of some 200 transfers in U.S. dollars and up to 200 ruble transfers. Starting in April, the transfers doubled both in number and the volume of money involved. In July, at the height of the season for migrant labour, the number of transfers was ten times higher than in February. Agroinvestbank's main branch in Dushanbe received between 50 and 80 transfers in U.S. dollars and rubles every day. That month there were a total of 1,170 dollar transfers amounting to US$ 1.2 million, and 1,049 ruble transfers amounting to RUB 9.8 million.

Source: Agroinvestbank

Orienbank's partner banks for migrant remittances are Neklisbank for Moscow, Vneshekonombank for all of Russia and other CIS countries, and Citybank for worldwide transfers. Remittances from Neklisbank in Moscow are carried out within one day. During the money transfer, customers can send a message to the recipient free of charge. The bank charges 3% of the remitted sum, of which 1% is Neklisbank's commission and 2% is Orienbank's, payable upon delivery of the money in Tajikistan. Vneshekonombank also charges 3% for its services.

Payment of the transferred amount is possible at all 30 Orienbank branches in the original currency. Orienbank provides an information booklet on its remittance system. It includes a map showing Neklisbank's location in Moscow. When transferring money from Russia or other CIS countries, the customer needs to know the correspondent account number of Vneshekonombank in Tajikistan, available from any Vneshekonombank branch in Russia and other CIS countries. The remitter must specify the name, patronymic and passport details of the beneficiary. The customer should inform the beneficiary by phone. The transfer takes one to two days, at the most three.

Approximately 2,000 money transfers totaling US$ 2.5 million were made through Orienbank branches in August 2002. On 15 August alone, the main branch in Dushanbe received 150 transfers from Russian cities amounting to a total sum of US$ 120,000, and 21 transfers totaling RUB 314,000.

Source: Orienbank

Why Migrants Still Avoid Banks

The type of international bank transfer described above, where the customer is not required to maintain a current account in a Tajik bank, is not an option for entrepreneurs. Under the law, to remit funds self-employed physical persons must have a current account. The same applies to transactions related to entrepreneurial or investment activity and real estate purchases. For the most part, however, shuttles are in no hurry to open a bank account. Even though Tajik banks have recently seen an increase in the number of current accounts, in foreign currencies as well as in the national currency, lack of faith in the banking system continues. Shuttles still rely on cash operations and the "throwing" system.

The use of informal channels to send money home has been rising again since the beginning of 2003. There are several reasons for this development. The main one is the problem of proving the legal origin of one's income in Russia. Migrants wishing to send remittances from a Russian bank must present either proof of wages or a document from the exchange office. But many Tajik migrants, in particular construction workers, are working in Russia illegally and thus are unable to document the origin of their income. The standard practice of construction brigades is to ask the Russian employer to transfer through the bank all the money earned by the brigade in one lump sum. The money is then distributed in Tajikistan. On the one hand, this system unites the brigades, but on the other it leads to conflicts over how the money is shared.

Russia's new migration law created additional barriers. Russian banks will not accept remittances from foreigners without a migration card, and not every migrant has one.

Many of the problems migrants face stem from illegal illiteracy. Lack of awareness of money-transfer regulations and procedures is common among the migrant workers. They may know the rules at the Tajik banks but not those of the Russian partner banks. They are mistrustful of everyone yet at the same time they make easy targets for dishonest bank employees and tricksters who offer to send migrants' savings home for them – at a 10-15% commission.

Furthermore, migrants are often unaware of the currency laws in the country they work in. Many assume that receiving wages in U.S. dollars is perfectly legal, whereas in fact employers in Russia, for example, are only allowed to pay out wages in the national currency.

Finally, Russia's efforts to crack down on money-laundering through bank transfers have encouraged migrants to seek alternative channels.

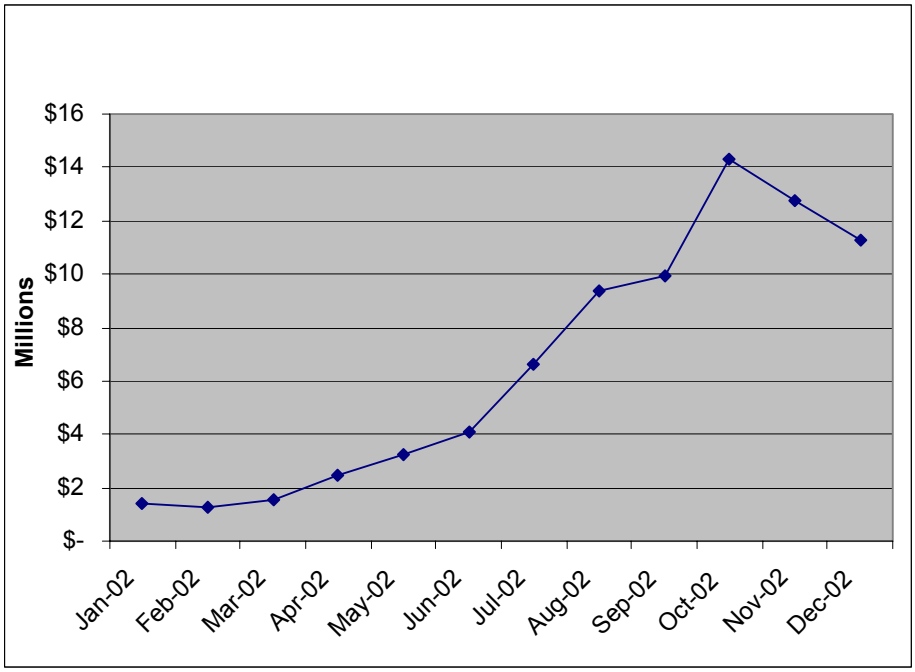
Because the Russian authorities regard Tajiks in general as potential drug traffickers, Tajik migrants can encounter suspicion and discrimination when they go to a bank to send money out of the country.

While the possibility of some drug traffickers using bank transfers for money-laundering purposes cannot be excluded, the remittance system is not suited to their requirements. In the drugs trade, financial assets have to cross borders quickly and discreetly, and the sums involved are very large. The drugs trade therefore has its own channels and the remittance system is probably used only by individual traffickers in exceptional circumstances.

Impact of Remittances on the Tajik Economy

Most Tajik labour migrants try to send home the lion's share of their earnings. In line with the seasonal nature of migrant labour, the remittance curve peaks from September to November. The volume of money transfers declines from December when migrants return to Tajikistan for the winter.

Table 22: Monthly remittances via bank transfer in 2002



Sum total: US$ 78.2 million

The greatest number of transfers are made in Ekaterinburg, Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Surgut and Tumen. The list correlates with the survey data on where the migrants are concentrated and the fields in which they work. These Russian cities and surrounding regions have the biggest Tajik migrant communities and the largest number of the highest earners among the various migrant groups: shuttles, people working in the markets and workers in the oil and gas industry. Far smaller sums are remitted from southern Russia, where migrants are employed for comparatively low wages as agricultural labourers and construction workers in the Volgograd and Saratov areas.

The following conclusions are based on remittances to banks in the Sughd region only. (Residents of the Khatlon region, the RRP and the GBAO generally have remittances sent to a bank in Dushanbe.) The geographic areas that receive the most remittances can be broadly divided into three groups. The first group consists of large urban cores such as Dushanbe, Khujand and Istaravshan (formerly Uro-Teppa). The majority of migrants who work in trade and services come from cities. Some of their earnings from abroad are invested in small and medium businesses in these traditional urban trading centres. Without a proper legal framework this sector is not growing as fast as it could, however.

The second group comprises poor, usually mountainous districts with the lowest per capita income, including Asht, Penjikent, Aini, Shahristan and Kuhiston-i Mastchoh. By providing much-needed income the remittances help to even out regional imbalances.

The third group is made up of industrial areas where hydrocarbonic raw materials are extracted and processed. Migrant workers from districts like Asht, Kanibadam or Isfara tend to be highly qualified. Since they have the skills that are in demand in Russia, they have little trouble finding well-paid jobs in that country's energy sector.

Migrant remittances have become vital to the Tajik economy. The country's balance of payments improved in 2002 thanks to foreign-currency remittances. Tajik importers, including

large distributors with bank financing, gain access to foreign currency. Remittances stimulate consumer demand and fill gaps in the supply of goods.

It should be noted that when Tajik migrants use official channels to send money home, Russia's banking system also benefits.

Labour migration has its negative effects on the Tajik economy, for example by retarding the growth of domestic manufacturing. Nevertheless, migrant remittances have clearly contributed to economic stabilization, and will continue to do so in the coming years.

8.2 IMPACT ON HOUSEHOLD BUDGETS

The family plays a key role in labour migration everywhere. The migrant worker relies on the help of relatives in arranging an opportunity for him to leave the country and during his stay abroad. He supports his family with his remittances. As studies have shown, migrants create a special type of family community that is separated by time and space but closely interconnected and interdependent (Zayonchkovskaya, 2001: 21).

In all post-Soviet countries, external labour migration is a survival strategy for households struggling to overcome crisis conditions. By working abroad, migrants can feed their families and meet their other basic needs. Migrant households are much better equipped with durable goods, expensive home appliances and motor vehicles than non-migrant households.

In the case of Tajikistan, the family aspect is all-encompassing. Nearly all migrant households are integrated into both family and ethnoregional networks. Almost three-quarters of migrant households provide assistance to or support several related households, either directly or indirectly. Precisely because the income it generates must be shared, migration does not lead to rapid improvement in the well-being of individual families. It barely increases the wealth disparities within society. Migration has neither led to the individual accumulation of wealth nor accelerated the pace of domestic small and medium business development.

Nevertheless, as the survival strategy of the entire society, labour migration has emerged as a crucial stabilizing factor to offset the effects of economic crisis. It has also produced a broad segment of the population that is highly motivated, active and mobile. In addition to bettering the financial situation of their families and related groups, they have started to invest in housing construction, their children's education, small and medium business, *dekhan* farms, and the purchase of agricultural machinery and equipment and new seed grades.

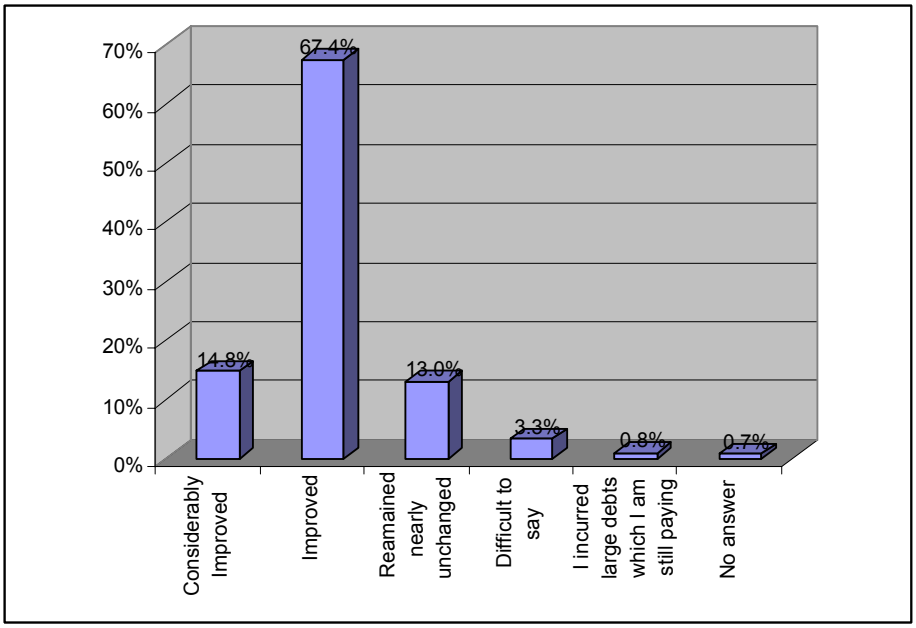
At the same time, the temporary migration of young men has mixed consequences for the country's development. On the one hand, their absence promotes the involvement of Tajik women in economic activity. But the outflow of the most dynamic and better-educated members of society leads to less efficient domestic agriculture, an increase in low-paid manual labour and the spread of subsistence farming.

Living Standards

Migrant households in Tajikistan have higher than average living standards. In terms of subjective assessment, 30.1% of migrant households regard themselves as poor, compared to over 65% of the overall population, according to the State Statistical Committee. For the overwhelming majority of migrants, working abroad was the only opportunity open to them that would enable them to feed their families. 67.4% of the migrants interviewed for this report confirmed that their earnings had improved the financial position of their families, with a further 14.8% claiming considerable

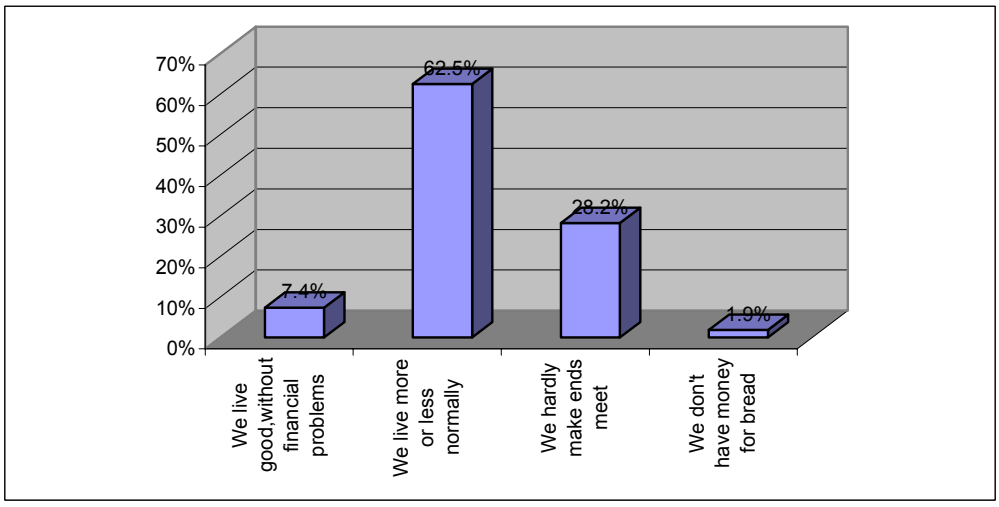
improvement. 16.3% said their financial situation had remained nearly unchanged, and a mere 0.8% indicated that it had worsened.

Table 23: "How has your family's financial position changed as the result of your working abroad?"



For most migrant households, the issue of survival has become less acute: 62.5% live more or less normally, and 7.4% have no financial worries. Yet 28.2% of migrant households can just barely make ends meet on the income earned abroad. Labour migration is their only hope of averting poverty and hunger. There is also a small group of migrant households (1.9%) that do not have enough to eat.

Table 24: Migrant assessments of the financial position of their households



Migrants' earnings put food on the table. Only 5.2% of those surveyed said their families had too little to eat. The other respondents did not face the direct threat of hungers.

Table 25: "How well does your family eat?"

We eat as we wish	8,2 %
We eat well but can't afford delicacies	26,3 %
We eat modestly and try to buy cheaper products	60,3 %
We eat poorly and under eat	5,2 %

Migrant households can afford basic clothing: 58.6% dresses modestly; 26.8% are satisfied with the quantity and quality of their clothes but the clothes are not fashionable; 7.4% can afford whatever clothes they like; and 7.1% are badly dressed and are forced to wear the same garment for a long period of time.

Much lower is the level of satisfaction with the quantity and quality of their household possessions: 47.7% say they need to replace household goods, and 16.2% urgently need new goods. 1.9% have nearly everything they want and 33.2% have nearly everything they need.

Table 26: Household Goods

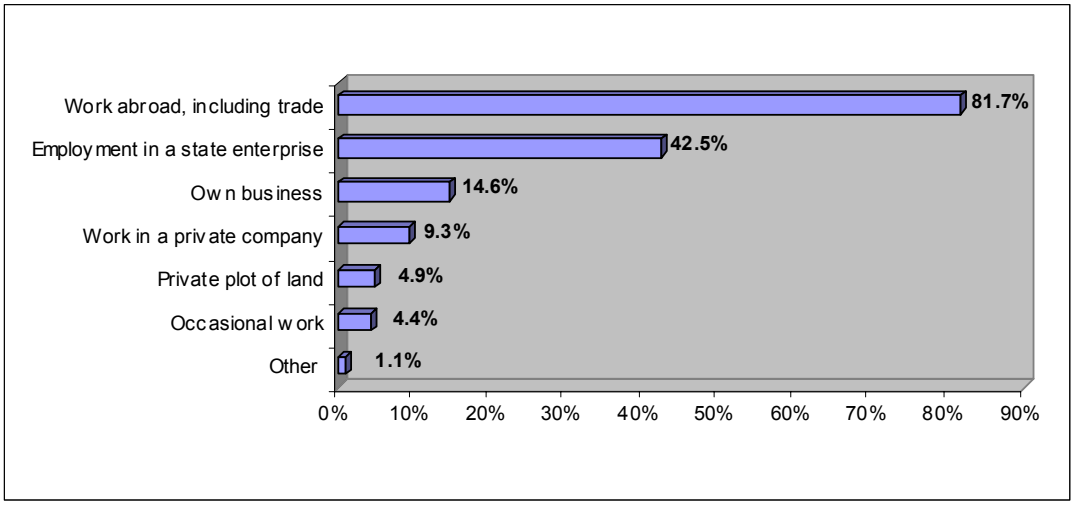
We have nearly everything we want, our possessions are new and modern	1.9 %
We have nearly everything we need, all our possession are in good condition	33.2 %
All our possessions are old and need to be replaced	47.7 %
What we have is not enough, everything is in bad condition	16.2 %
We have few things but they are in good condition	0.8 %
We have few new things	0.3 %

Migrant households are better provided with durable goods than the population as a whole. More than one-third own a vehicle: 23.8% have a car, 2.2% have a lorry or minibus, and 8.2% have a motorcycle or moped. Migrant households own electronic appliances: 97% have a TV, 37.8% have a video recorder, 10.1% have a home audio system, and 1.4% have a computer.

Income Structure

In 81.7% of cases the migrants' earnings constitute one of the basic sources of income for their households. 42.5% of migrant households depend on wages from a state enterprise as one of the basic sources of the family's income.

Table 27: Basic Sources of Income for Migrant Households



State Statistical Committee data show that for the highest-income segment of the Tajik population, wages are the primary source of income (42% of income). The sale of personal belongings and cattle takes second place (15%). Then come migrant remittances (12%), followed by the sale of crops and foodstuffs. Humanitarian aid makes up 4% of income and social welfare payment 5%.

If these figures are compared to those for migrant households, it can be seen that wages remain the most important source of income for both migrant and middle-income families. But otherwise the income structure for these two groups differs sharply. If middle-income families mainly derive 15% of their income from the sale of personal belongings and 10% from the sale of agricultural products, migrant households receive 0.3% and 4.9% respectively (from private holdings). Aside from the income from migration earnings and from wages, which are the second important source of income, migrant households derive basic income from their own businesses (14.5%) and employment in the private sector (9.3%). This means that labour migration stimulates entrepreneurial initiative and creates opportunities, albeit small, for the development of small and medium business.

A further indication of the dynamism of migrant households is the fact that for 4.4% of them occasional work becomes a basic source of income in addition to working abroad. Business experience obtained by working abroad makes it easier for migrants to find jobs in future. It also strengthens their independence. They can react to changing demand for specific services. On the other hand, when they are at home during the winter months, they have no opportunity to start their own business.

Migrant Expenditures

Income from migration secures the welfare of migrant families and increases investment capacity. It is worth mentioning that there are differences between the use of funds that are remitted or sent via friends or relatives, and the use of cash savings which the migrants bring with them when they visit their families. In the first case, the money is mainly spent on consumption of foodstuffs or basic goods. In the second case, the savings are likely to be used for major purchases, such as flats or houses, or family celebrations such as a wedding or *sunnat-tuy* (circumcision ceremony).

The research conducted for this report reveals that migrants have begun to invest in various types of property. The most successful migrants choose to invest in real estate, including flats, houses, land rights and real estate development. But the most popular purchases are luxury consumer goods, primarily expensive home appliances and electronics (60% of respondents). 9.9% bought a car and 1.9% bought a lorry or a Gazel minibus. 6.8% bought new furniture. 24.7% organized a *sunnat-tuy* or other family celebration, and 14% saved up for a *sunnat-tuy*.

A comparatively insignificant number of migrants bought expensive gifts for their relatives, purchased jewellery, paid off their debts, took their families on vacation, or paid for high-cost medical services. Only 0.3 % bought dairy cattle.

25.2% of the migrants interviewed were able to afford only the most essential necessities, i.e. providing family members with food, clothing and basic goods.

A substantial amount of money goes towards financial assistance for relatives. 25.8% of the migrants are permanently supporting their relatives from the money they earn abroad, and 46.3% provide occasional support. 27.9% render no financial assistance to relatives.

Family Agriculture

The increase in income does not result in migrant families working less. On the contrary, rural families not only continue cultivating their land but even step up their agricultural activity. If necessary, they hire workers to replace absent family members. Sufficient manpower is available in the villages. The workers are paid at standard local rates.

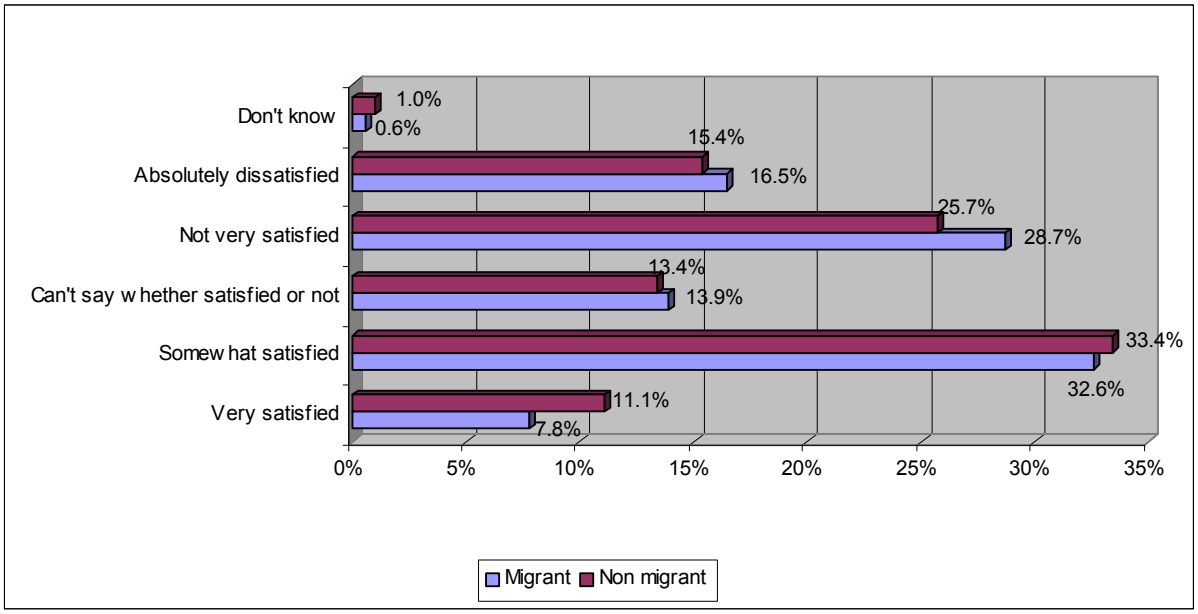
It is more common, however, for relatives to help out with the ploughing or other activities. The role of the community has been greatly strengthened in the regions with high migration. In the GBAO, for example, every migrant household owns a farm bull. In spring the whole community ploughs the land collectively.

Rural women are increasingly contributing to the household budget through income generated from growing crops on private plots, breeding cattle and raising poultry. They also earn money from sewing, knitting and selling foodstuffs such as flat cakes, sour-milk products, etc.

How Migrants Perceive Their Financial Situation

Despite their positive attitude towards labour migration, migrants are less satisfied with their financial position than non-migrants, and the more they earn the greater the dissatisfaction.

Table 28: Satisfaction Levels in Migrant and Non-migrant Families



Most migrant households have successfully raised their living standards through labour migration, but the improvements are mainly related to the provision of food, clothing and basic goods. They have been less able to purchase durable and luxury consumer goods. The third major area of spending is helping relatives financially and holding *sunnat-tuy* celebrations.

Labour migration clearly does not produce wealth. Even migrants who improved their families' financial position are just relatively better off. The only real estate they own is the place where they live, and they have neither accumulated substantial capital nor created means of production.

8.3 IMPACT ON SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESS

Tajikistan's chief financial benefit from the export of its labour is the favourable effect of migrant earnings on the country's balance of payments. However, when migrant income is used exclusively for consumption, a sudden, rapid inflow can stimulate inflation. For example, the price of a flat in Dushanbe doubled in response to a surge of migrant activity on the property market from August through October 2002. Yet migrant earnings have not contributed significantly to domestic inflation because migrants usually purchase cars and high-priced durable goods, such as electronics and home appliances, while they are abroad.

Despite the increase in purchasing power, labour migration clearly does not produce wealth. Even migrants who improved their families' financial position are just relatively better off. The only real estate they own is the flat or house where they live, and they have neither accumulated substantial capital nor created means of production. Migrant earnings have not had a significant effect on small business development.

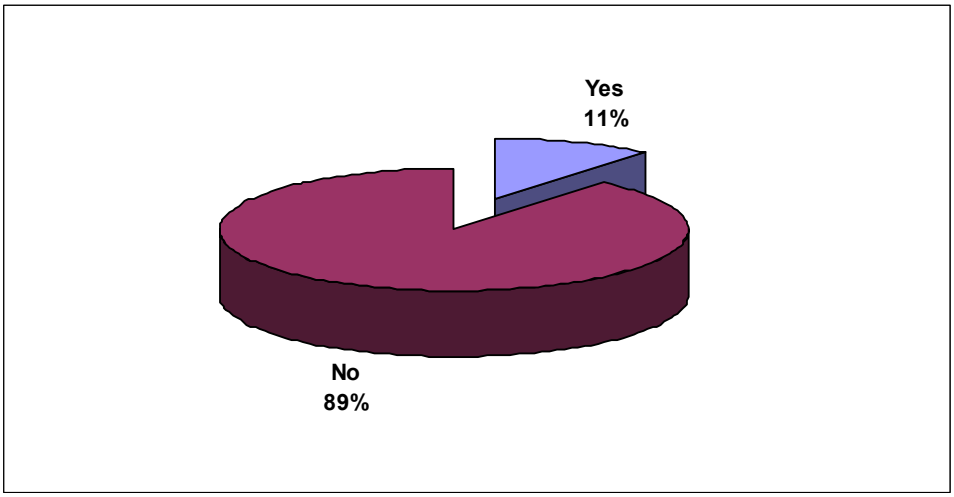
The survey results indicate that migrants would like to save up enough money to start their own business. But not much investment is taking place yet. A mere 3.8% of the migrants interviewed had actually started a business, and only 16.1% managed to save money in order to do so. 1.4% hired additional employees, and 5.2% provided assistance to their children or other relatives to enable them to start a business.

Table 29: "Did you succeed in starting or supporting your own business?"

I put aside initial funds for starting up a private business	16.2 %
I started up a private business	3.8 %
I hired employees for my business	1.6 %
I helped my children or other relatives start up a private business	5.2 %
No	73.2 %

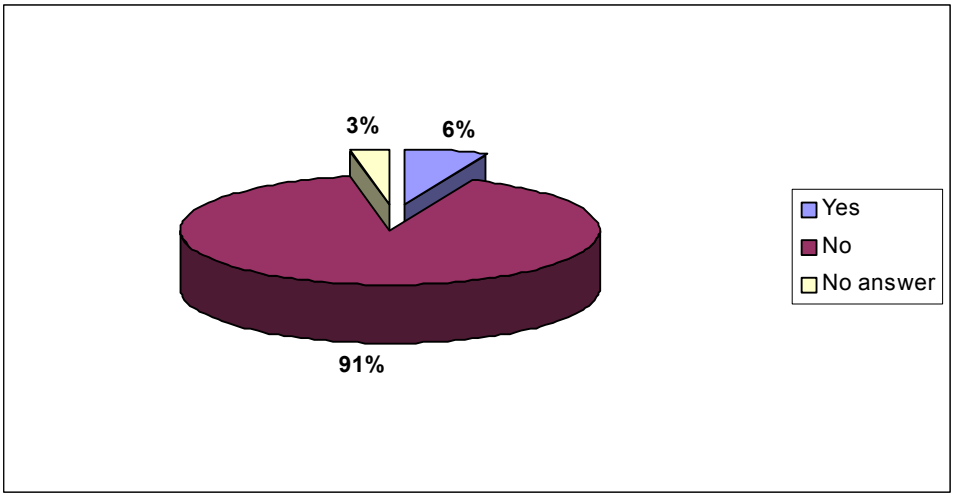
11.2% of migrants provided organizational and consulting assistance to children or other relatives who were founding a business.

Table 30: "Did you support (through funding or logistics) your children or other relatives who were starting their own business?"



6.3% of the migrants had either bought or started up a small business**.** These private enterprises include shops, canteens, cafés, bars, construction firms, furniture-making workshops and, in one case, a company manufacturing sidewalk tiles. The number of employees can vary between one and a dozen. Nearly all the businesses employ close relatives of the owner. In one case, a migrant opened a business with 70 employees.

Table 31: "Do any members of your household have their own company (shop, café, etc.)?"



9. SOCIAL IMPACTS OF LABOUR MIGRATION

9.1 THE CHANGING STRUCTURE OF MIGRANT HOUSEHOLDS

Traditional societal institutions have undergone a resurgence in the regions of Tajikistan that have seen armed conflict and/or mass labour migration. The archaization of society originated in response to crisis. In the aftermath of the civil war from 1993 to 1995, living conditions in most parts of the country were desperate. Transition to a subsistence economy was one of the adaptation strategies people employed in order to survive. Thus traditional economic relationships and social institutions were revived. The process was accelerated by the outflow of the young, less conservative, more educated and mobile segment of the population.

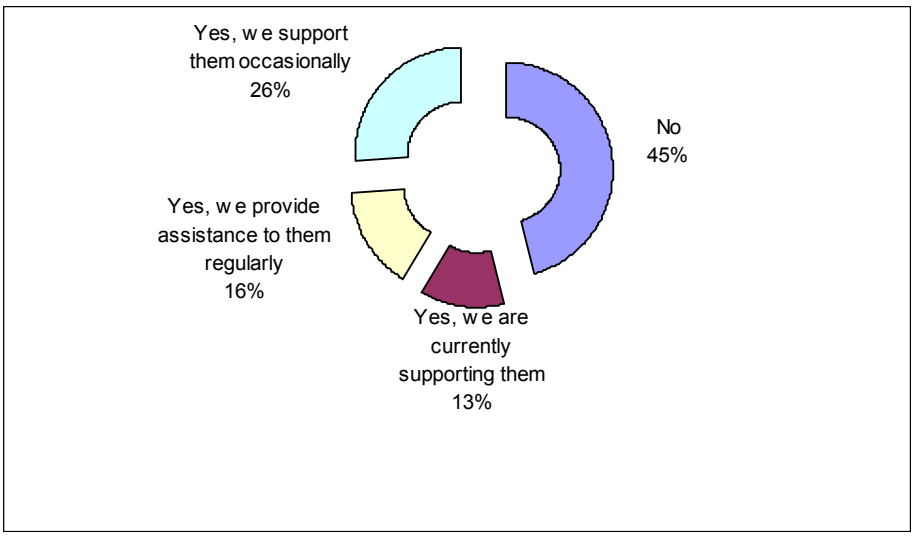
In some of the regions worst affected by the war, the *avlod* replaced the functions of all other social institutions.

Labour migration has changed the nature and composition of the family. Over the past eight or nine years, the role of the nuclear family has diminished in nearly every region of the country while at the same time the number of large patriarchal families has grown. The research for this report shows that 28.8% of migrant households comprise two or more conjugal units. According to the last Soviet census in 1989, one-fifth of all families in Tajikistan consisted of two or more conjugal units.

Table 32: Number of families in migrant households

1 family	71.2 %
2 family	22.2 %
3 family	5.5 %
4 family	0.8 %
8 family	0.3 %

Table 33: "Do members of your household have any relatives living separately to whom your household provides subsistence?"



Multi-generational migrant households are common in rural areas. These families are made up of a male migrant's wife and children and his aged parents, and may also include a brother and his wife with their children. In regions affected by war and high levels of labour migration, migrant households may unite three or four generations of families consisting solely of women and children.

54.2% of migrants provide financial assistance to relatives who live in separate households. Almost 13% of the migrants surveyed support several related households. Others provide substantial support either on an ongoing basis or occasionally, i.e. usually when the migrants return home with their earnings.

Negative Effects on the Family

Table 34: "Has working abroad negatively affected the life of your household?"

Yes	18.9 %
No	72.3 %
Don't know	8.8 %

Table 35: "If your family was affected by migration, how?"

Problems with bringing up the children – the children got out of hand	36.2 %
My health was impaired by heavy work and injury	13 %
While I was away, one of my parents became ill and died due to emotional stress caused by lack of contact with me and worry	10.1 %
It is very difficult for my wife without the head of the family	8.6 %
I miss my relatives: children, parents, wife	7.2 %
Until I came back my family was in a very bad situation – they were starving	5.8 %
My marriage collapsed – I've divorced my wife	2.8 %
I started drinking	2.8 %
Other	13 %

When asked about the negative effects of their migration, migrants most often cited the weakening of control over their children. In regions with high migration activity, child-rearing becomes the sole responsibility of women. For 36.6% of respondents, problems arose as a result of children being raised in the father's absence.

Many husbands left for Russia. Women were entrusted with bringing up the children. 25-30% of our women are in this situation. The men spend five or six years in Russia.

Teacher, 35, Bokhtar district

Women who are the permanent or temporary head of their families divide their time between working to earn money and managing the household. With no child care facilities available, children of working mothers are left on their own.

Damaged health was the second most frequently cited negative consequence of labour migration, cited by 13% of respondents. 10.1% said a parent had become seriously ill and died as a result of the emotional stress caused by lack of contact with the absent son.

7.2% of migrants said they suffered from being separated from their families. 5.8% said their families were starving while the father was working abroad. 8.6% said their wives suffered from the absence of the head of the family.

9.2 CHANGES IN SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

Large-scale labour migration leads to changing social norms and values. Changes that originate in the migrants' immediate environment gradually spread to the rest of society.

In recent years, migration-related changes can be observed in the sexual behaviour of Tajik youth. Like society as a whole, the majority of young people accept the traditional Islamic prohibition on sexual relations outside marriage. However, contact with different value systems and morals and the expansion of personal freedom can result in liberalized attitudes towards sex.

Most respondents noted that Tajiks have their own customs and traditions, and it would be wrong to adopt foreign ways or a Western lifestyle.

It is generally accepted in our republic that there should be no sexual relations before marriage. That's why I subscribe to this idea.

Young men, 18 to 21, Dushanbe

Rural residents tend to be strongly opposed to premarital sex, believing that it can result in punishment and misfortune in the afterlife.

Relations before marriage are a crime. Everything has to be legal and must take place after the nikkaah *[Muslim] wedding ceremony.*

Young men, 18 to 21, Isfara

Nevertheless, communities with a high level of labour migration are witnessing a slow evolution in sexual ethics.

I can't speak for others, but I have nothing against sex before marriage. Because young people now have their own life, which differs from the life of their parents. People abroad are having sex starting from the age of 12 or 13, but in Tajikistan there are people of 20 or 25 who don't know what a gift of nature it is. People should have sex. One should satisfy natural needs.

Market vendor, 23, Dushanbe

There has always been a certain amount of tacit acceptance that in practice sexual behaviour does indeed deviate from the prescribed norms. Migrants who received a traditional education and support Islamic values are negative towards premarital sex, but at the same time they agree that a strong sexual urge can force people to violate recognized social rules. Young people regard casual sexual relations as immoral, but if they occur under certain circumstances, such as rape, they can be considered a forgivable sin and the couple is not obliged to marry.

The changes that are currently taking place cannot be acknowledged by society because sexual issues are still not openly discussed. Young people who engage in sexual behaviour that is

not socially sanctioned conceal their actions and they themselves are unaware of how widespread their behaviours may be.

Most affected by changes in sexual behaviours are rural areas with high migration. Young migrants from the Isfara district may serve as an example. Poverty is a major factor behind the decision to have premarital sexual relations. Young people are forced to postpone marriage until they earn enough money for the wedding.

We have a big family of ten people. I have to help my sisters and parents and I also have to think about my own marriage. I'm young and I need to earn money for everything. It is difficult to live in Russia, but I have to keep on working.

Market loader, 23, Kofarnikhon district

Many people from Isfara work in Russia and Kazakhstan. They return from abroad not only with money but also with the experience of free sexual relations. Despite social disapproval of sexual relations before marriage, the real practice in Isfara includes prostitution and paid cohabitation, i.e. kept women.

The living conditions are very difficult. A young men of 22 or 23 can't marry because he doesn't have money. That's why he has to use the services of prostitutes or to live temporarily with young women whom he pays.

Young man, early to mid-twenties, Isfara

Young women agree to paid cohabitation because they are poor and have no marital prospects. Labour migration removes many eligible bachelors from the marriage market, not all of whom return home. The gender imbalance is rising. A young woman who is unable to marry and who has little chance of employment becomes a burden to her family. If the family cannot afford to support her, paid cohabitation may be her only option.

Nowadays you can do everything if you have money. Just show the money and the young woman will go wherever you want her to go.

Young man, early to mid-20s, Isfara

The standard practice for a young woman who is not wanted in her family is to become the kept woman of a young single migrant who comes home for three or four winter months. Within the period of cohabitation, the young man pays for her accommodation, food, clothing and other needs, and may give her presents. In some cases the young man lives with the same woman for several years, but usually she goes to another migrant. As a rule there are no children in such temporary families.

Cohabitation outside marriage is not regarded as a *nikkaah* marriage, which entails financial and other obligations. At the same time it is not as strictly condemned by society as prostitution.

Young men and women do fall in love. But only one couple in ten will decide to get married. The others will just spend time together for six months or a year and then break up. Some young women have to live with men for money.

Young man, early to mid twenties, Isfara

9.3 THE CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN

Women's earning power has been redefined as a result of male labour migration. Women from migrant households have to work to support the family in the husband's absence.

About 80-85% of men from our kishlak *left to earn money in Russia. And who is doing their work? Of course it's the women who plough the soil and sow the grain and plant the cotton. Women do everything.*

Woman from the Bokhtar district

Family agriculture is not a traditional female activity in Tajikistan, but it has become the women's responsibility as a result of male labour migration. The country's food production is now in female hands. Women grow crops on private or rented plots both to meet their family's needs and for sale. They use relatives to transport fruit and vegetables to market in Tajikistan and other CIS countries.

There are no fixed working hours or cash earnings. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the feminization of agricultural work strengthens the economic position of women in Tajikistan.

Female Heads of Families

Due to the pronounced gender imbalance in regions with mass labour migration, a growing number of migrant households are headed by women. These women fall into one of three categories: 1) women who head their households during the migrant husband's absence; 2) women who were abandoned by their migrant husbands; and 3) women whose migrant husbands return to see the family once every few years.

In all three cases, the households are usually poorer than those headed by men. During a father's absence, most households comprising of several migrant families under male authority, be it the head of the *avlod*, a grandfather or a brother, are financially better off than migrant households consisting only of women and children.

The majority of husbands from our state farm left to work in Russia. Some women's husbands go abroad for four or five years. The families have lots of children. Our husbands don't send us money and aren't interested in our problems. The families have to survive on one-tenth of a hectare. They're cultivating the land, sowing and harvesting the crops. The collective farm doesn't pay them. The children are hungry and go barefoot. Almost every day we wonder how to go on living.

Woman, 40, Vakhsh district

Reduced family welfare benefits, including the children's allowance, hit women hardest. With little or no social protection from the state, many families headed by women are in desperate straits.

We are also from the "Turkmenistan" state farm. Our family is in more or less good shape, but the situation of our neighbours is very difficult. I live between two neighbours who have nothing. One neighbour's husband is in Russia. They have seven children. He hasn't sent anything for eight

years. The second neighbour had a sick daughter who was a year old. She couldn't scrape together the money to take the child to the hospital and began to treat her by herself. But she failed to cure her and the child died. The girl was brought home. The mother was too poor to buy a shroud for the dead child. Her husband works in Russia. He sold a cow and bought a ticket. He came back after nine months, stayed for a month, bought the family a bag of grain and left again. Nine months later he sent them 500 rubles.

Forewoman, 45, "Turkmenistan" state farm, Bokhtar district

Some women whose husbands are abroad are driven to commit suicide.

I know one women who wanted to commit suicide even though she is educated and is a teacher by profession. I asked her why and she answered, "I have nine children. My husband abandoned me and left for Russia. He married another woman there. Our son has to go to school this year but he has nothing, neither clothes nor the things he needs for school. I can't stand to see our children crying. How long will it last? This is the only way I can solve these problems."

We must bring the women together and explain to them that this is not the way out. What would happen to their children? They would be blamed for their mother's suicide.

Doctor, 41, Bokhtar district

Gender Bias

Not all female-headed households are impoverished. There are many examples of women who develop effective survival strategies and overcome the obstacles in their way. They achieve success in subsidiary farming. They seek better jobs and increased responsibility. They try to acquire land to set up a private farm.

Contributing to the family budget can strengthen a woman's hand when it comes to household decision making. Yet women encounter male resistance to their growing independence. Conflicts over household budgets are particularly common in *avlods* in central Tajikistan and near the Pamir Mountains. In these regions women are not allowed to sell their crops on their own. Men usually sell the crops or cattle. In the large migrant households consisting of several related families, selling is generally the responsibility of the male relative who was left in charge of the family by the men of the *avlod* who are working abroad. Disputes often arise between him and the women who raise the crops or breed the cattle regarding the sale of the products or the sharing of the proceeds.

Women face discrimination outside the family as well. Tajik society is not ready to accept women as in positions of authority.

I think rural women have the right to work on the same level as men. We had a male brigade leader for five years. Recently all the women got together and organized a meeting. The men and the women separated. We selected a woman as the brigade leader. The men refused to recognize her. As soon as we had handed over the wheat crops, a new chairman of the state farm was appointed. There was a meeting and he said, "I am a very demanding person, and I don't need women as brigade leaders." Our forewoman said, "You may be demanding but I'm even more demanding and I refuse to leave." The man became indignant and said that a man, not a woman, should be the brigade leader. Several old men were also present at that meeting, and they said, "Give this woman a chance. Let her work for a year."

State farm worker and migrant's wife, 35, Bokhtar district

Gender socialization within the family increased over the past decade. Parents and close relatives prepare boys and girls for different social roles and levels of power and influence. Young women have few prospects of employment after marriage. Even as more and more women become the sole supporter of their families while their husbands work abroad, changing reality does little to shake the widespread prejudice that men's work is more valuable than women's. Which is which is still subject to stereotyping.

The most devastating inequalities which women suffer are related to land acquisition and farming. Women are at a severe disadvantage when it comes to obtaining plots of land from privatized corporate farms. They rarely have sufficient resources or access to credit to pay either the purchase price or the bribes necessary to influence the allocation of property. Survey respondents reported cases in 2002 where female heads of households in the Rasht district were given the most remote plots. When they could not get to their plots and stayed home, men stole their crops.

Most women farmers cannot afford farm machinery, means of transport, high-quality grain, chemicals and fertilizers. Hence agricultural efficiency and crop yields are low. Women face major problems processing, selling and exporting what little they can produce through their manual labour. Respondents emphasized the difficulty of adapting to the tough rules of a modern economy, where competition and coercion prevail.

Reproductive Decision Making

For most women in migrant households, the tradition of bearing many children has become a heavy economic burden. They want smaller families. But the decision-making power lies with the husband. For that reason it is essential that family planning campaigns target men.

Women themselves may be uninformed about contraceptives or unwilling to use them. Some continue having children as a way to hang on to their migrant husbands.

The husband of one woman comes home from Russia once a year. This woman has a new baby every year. She says that if she did not, her husband would leave her. "I give birth every year, that's why my husband comes back. My neighbour didn't and her husband left her."

Woman, 46, Bokhtar district

But when the husband leaves again and his wife finds herself burdened with another child, her financial position worsens. She is unable to work. It becomes harder to feed the family, and all outlays, including medicines, have to be cut back. The children cannot go to school for lack of proper clothes and shoes.

In addition to contraception, some men reject abortion under any circumstances.

There are men who have ten or 12 children. They leave and abandon their families. I witnessed one case where a woman who already had three children was pregnant again. She had kidney stones. She was examined in Kara-bolo hospital and advised to have an abortion. When the doctors asked her husband to give his approval, he said, "She can die, but let my child be born."

Doctor, 39, Vakhsh district

9.4 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN MIGRANT HOUSEHOLDS

Tajiks of all educational backgrounds and job qualifications are working abroad. Whether highly qualified or unskilled, virtually every participant in the migration process acquires new knowledge, skills and life experience along the way.

Initially it was the most dynamic and mobile members of the labour force who left the country to find work. As migrant networks expanded, those pioneers were later joined by a much wider variety of social groups.

All labour migrants leave behind familiar cultural surroundings and their own language for the challenges of a new environment. Some switch occupations and enter an entirely new field. Migrants learn how to develop a life strategy, form the tools needed to achieve their goals, and cast aside the unsuccessful variants. Meanwhile, members of their households back home are developing their own life strategies.

Non-migrant households prefer to depend on relatives, fellow members of their ethnoregional group and work colleagues, i.e. on their social environment. They spend considerable sums of money on the organization of celebrations aimed at cementing relations with the supporting group. As a result, they usually follow the common strategy of this social environment.

Migrant households also seek the support of relatives and fellow countrymen. But from their experience they know that above all they must rely on themselves. Almost all migrant households allocate part of their income to an informal "insurance fund" for use in the event of illness, accident or social upheaval. Some money is also put away in case the migrant is unable to go abroad later in the year.

Migrants would like to invest their earnings in the domestic economy, but there are still many obstacles to small and medium business development. Nevertheless, 26.8% of the migrants surveyed had undertaken practical steps to organize and/or support their own private business (e.g., allocated initial funds, bought or started up a business, hired additional workers), or that of a relative.

Both the state and the migrant's neighbours benefit from the money earned in Russia. If a migrant has money, he can provide a loan to his neighbour which the neighbour can then invest and find a way to survive. Or take children's education. Let's say someone wants his son to study hard and become good at math. If he has money, he can hire a tutor for the child.

Market vendor, 34, Isfara

Communal initiative and organizational skills have increased enormously. Migrant groups independently form associations in the towns where they work and set up community centres. These associations help individuals with such problems as travel arrangements and money transfer.

All the male inhabitants of Karakchikum kishlak *in Kanibadam left to work in Surgut, where they established a Tajik community association. Through this association they rented a plane from Khujand Airlines, which flies them back and forth between Karakchikum and Surgut and is also used to bring their earnings home. This village manages not only to fill the pockets of its population but also to fulfil the tax plan for the entire region. No one is in debt because everybody pays taxes from the money earned in Russia. The* jamoat *representative announced that in 2000, 65% of the*

taxation plan was fulfilled and by 2001 it was already 110%. Revenue comes into the region and the problems of the families are being solved.

Market vendor, 34, Isfara

The vast majority of Tajik labour migrants express some degree of satisfaction with the migrant way of life. 60.6% said they were satisfied with it, 29% were partly satisfied, and only 8.5% were completely dissatisfied. 81.4% of respondents planned to continue working abroad in future.

The migrants have good reasons to take a positive view. Aside from the income earned, they increasingly appreciate the opportunity to change their environment, to see the world and establish new contacts. Asked about the positive effects of migration, 55.6% of the migrants pointed to an improvement in the family's financial situation. 20.5% said it allowed them to make ends meet. 14.5%,"saw the world" and nearly the same number said they gained business experience and professional skills, thereby improving their chances on the job market. 2.2% started up their own business.

Table 36: "What positive impact did working abroad have on the life of your family?"

My family bettered its financial situation	55.6 %
Working abroad enables me to make ends meet	20.5 %
I saw the world	14.5 %
I've gained positive business experience and professional skills, making it easier for me to find a job now	14.2 %
Thanks to the trips I succeeded in starting my own business (firm, shop, etc.)	2.2 %
Now my family is provided with everything it needs	5.2 %
I've made a lot of Russian friends	0.3 %
No positive impact	3.3 %

Migrant workers are actively absorbing various innovations. For example 1.4% of migrant households have a computer.

On the whole, the research results demonstrate that the key success factor in adaptation is education. Educational level correlates closely with migration success: the higher the level of education the less strenuous the job, the better it pays and the more effective the use of savings. Education and in particular language skills facilitate interaction with governmental authorities and law enforcement bodies in the receiving country as well as contact with the society at large.

Since labour migration brings home the advantages of education, 30% of migrants invest in their children's schooling. For others, the issue of education is overshadowed by the higher priority of meeting basic needs (food, clothing and health care) to ensure the family's survival.

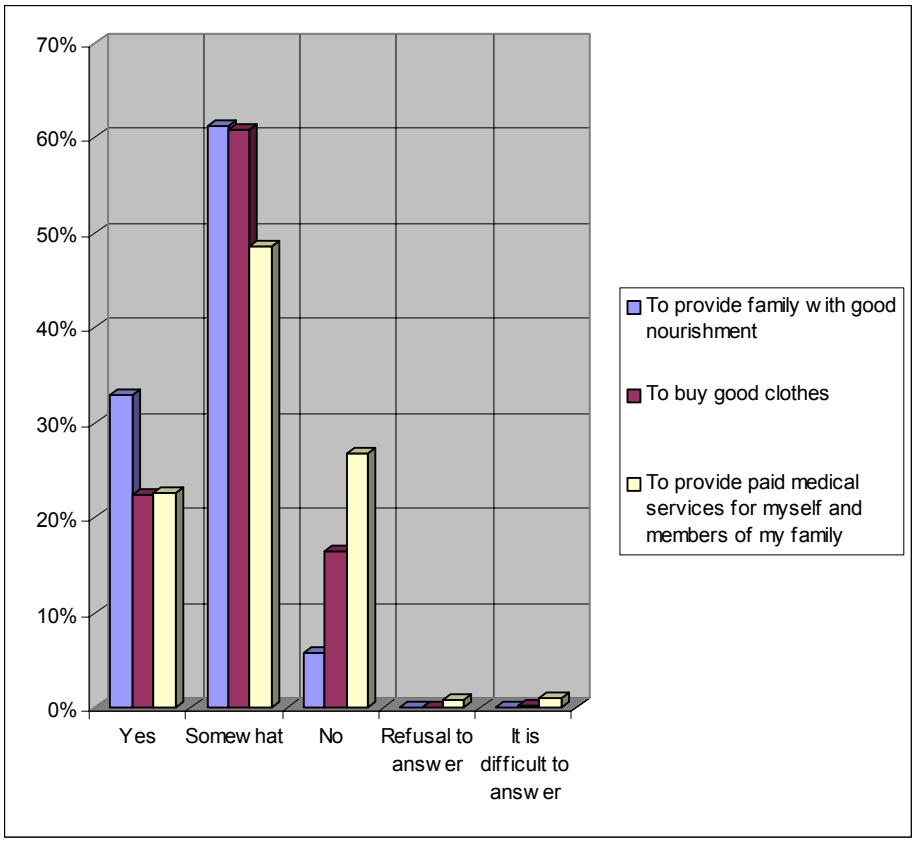
Table 37: "Did you manage to solve the problem of education for your children?"

I sent my to a good school	10.4 %
I hired tutors	2.5 %
I paid for my children to attend a public institution of higher education	7.7 %
I paid for my children to attend a private institution of higher education	4.1 %
I succeeded in sending my children abroad to study	0.3 %
I succeeded in paying for my children's education in an ordinary school	2.2 %
I bought my children good school uniforms and items for school	0.6 %
No need as the children are small	1.9 %
No	70.3 %

9.5 IMPROVED LIVING STANDARDS

Migrant workers use their earnings to upgrade their families' living standards and quality of life. 32.9% of respondents were able to ensure that their families were properly fed, 22.5% purchased clothing, and 22.7% paid for medical services for themselves and family members.

Table 38: "What kind of problems were you able to solve by working abroad?"



To a lesser extent migrant earnings were used to improve the family's housing conditions. 37.2% of interviewed migrants refurbished a house or flat, 5.5% bought or built a better flat or

house for the whole family, and 5.2% bought a flat or flats for their grown children. Out of the 50.8% of migrant households that did not improve their housing conditions, 35.6% had already solved their housing-related problem prior to the migrant's departure abroad. For the rest, housing-related problems became the main impetus to seek work abroad. 14.1% of migrants couldn't earn enough money to improve the family's housing conditions.

Table 39: "Have you succeeded in improving your housing conditions?"

Completely renovated the house or flat	37.2 %
Bought or built a better house or flat for the whole family	5.5 %
Bought a flat or flats for the children	5.2 %
Fixed up the house or flat	1 %
Bought land	0.3 %
No	50.8 %

Migrants' quality of life varies widely according to the kind of work they do. Shuttles are considered the most successful. Their activities can be more profitable, they themselves are more independent as they are not dependent on an employer, and they buy more and better-quality consumer goods.

Construction workers are regarded as the least successful because they have low incomes and, since they usually work without a contract, are completely at the mercy of their employers. They run a high risk of suffering a work accident or being cheated, and therefore have to put money aside to pay for medical care, bribes or other unforeseen expenses. They often save on consumption and invest their money in land, housing, durable goods, large family celebrations and gold.

Migrant income and exposure to life in other countries further the modernization of local infrastructure, especially in rural areas.

We can see the development of infrastructure that we didn't have before. For instance, long-distance phone lines. Now every region, town and kishlak *in our area has them. To take another example, the problem of drinking water is being solved. In the past people were fetching water themselves. Now that they have money, they've organized regular delivery of water by water truck.*

Market vendor, 31, Isfara

One can argue whether the allocation of income between consumption and savings is optimal. Nevertheless, the research presented here shows that for Tajikistan, labour migration is highly effective in regard to enhancing the welfare of the family and improving quality of life for individuals and the communities affected by migration.

10. THE FUTURE OF LABOUR MIGRATION FROM TAJIKISTAN

The sociological research data collected for this report point to a number of trends in the future development of labour migration from Tajikistan.

Tajikistan will experience continued sluggish economic growth and low levels of investment and job creation. The effect of this negative scenario, which will be accompanied by an increase in the working-age population, will be to boost labour migration.

The Russian Federation will continue to be the primary destination country, even though the number of Tajik migrants seeking work there has fallen since the Federal Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens went into effect in November 2002. Aimed at protecting the domestic labour market, the new legislation tightened the rules of entry for labour migrants from the CIS. It usually takes labour migrants about a year to find ways of bypassing "inconvenient" laws.

In addition to temporarily slowing labour migration to Russia, the law is likely to lead to a rise in illegal employment, which in turn will increase the risk of exploitation of migrant workers.

The Changing Migrant Worker Profile

Our research enables us to predict the following changes in the profile of migrant workers from Tajikistan.

The average age at which people go abroad to work for the first time will decline. There will be fewer migrants in the 15-to-19 age group, and more first-time migrants will be in their twenties.

There will be a decrease in the number of migrant workers with only elementary or incomplete secondary education, and an increasing number of migrants who have attended a specialized secondary school or an institution of higher education. Many students will interrupt their studies and go abroad to look for work.

Because migrants who repeatedly work abroad improve their qualifications, the percentage of qualified workers in the migration flow will rise. The skills and educational level of first-time migrants will be lower.

Foreign language skills are on the decline. Few young migrants can communicate easily in Russian, the lingua franca of the former Soviet Union.

There will be a slight increase in the migration of women.

The regional distribution has shifted since 2001: While migration flows from the Sughd region to Dushanbe and abroad have increased, those from the Khatlon region are declining. The migration potential from Kurghan Teppa and the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (Region) (GBAO) appears to have been exhausted.

Shuttle trading will be affected by the future course of domestic economic reforms, as well as by any travel and trade restrictions introduced by neighbouring countries.

The Tajik government will undertake efforts to regulate labour migration. It will also seek ways to promote the investment of income earned abroad into the domestic economy.

More Female Migrants

Although demand on the Russian job market is highest for cheap, low-skilled male labour, the number of female migrant workers has been on the increase in recent years.

Largely accounting for this growth are women with higher levels of education; middle-aged and older women; and women working in customer services.

Women with higher levels of education are more mobile and dynamic, and can adapt to the receiving society more easily. As surveys show, education is one of the main success factors for labour migration.

The majority of female migrants will continue to be married women with adult children, single women with children, and young women who were unable to find a marriage partner. The wish to earn money to help their children is the standard motivation for older women, and it will continue to be a key contributing factor in female labour migration.

I've been working in Moscow for several years. My husband gave up and let me go. I hope to earn money for our son's wedding.

Confectioner, 44, Dushanbe

The departure to Russia of educated men aged 18 to 30 has led to a shortage of marital partners for young women in some rural areas. Many women over the age of 30 are left "on the shelf". Young, better-educated women have begun to seek work in Russia themselves.

Female migration from the Sughd region and the GBAO will rise substantially.

Men from Porshnev usually work at seasonal jobs, mainly as unskilled construction workers. Young women work in canteens and laundries, where they are paid more. Women now make up 10% of migrants from Porshnev. Experience shows that women are more successful: they find a job more easily and earn more money.

Deputy head, Porshnev *jamoat*, Shughnon district, GBAO

Shuttle migration will still play the central role in the structure of female labour migration.

We have to work in the shuttle trade, bringing goods from Uzbekistan, in order to survive. Our industrial enterprises have closed and my husband has been out of work for several years. So I have to support the family, though it's very hard.

Female shuttle, 37, Hudjand

Female migrants from Tajikistan are also in demand for the least prestigious and lowest-paid jobs in trade, customer services and market infrastructure in Russia's regional capitals and large industrial centres.

I worked at the Vikhino market in Moscow. Almost all the women of Isfara are sitting there. They perform simple work, selling onions, tomatoes and carrots. Our women sort vegetables for Azeris, Armenians and Georgians. They are paid US$ 200 for sorting. There are many of our women at the other markets as well, sorting and packaging vegetables.

Market vendor, 43, Isfara district

Part of the reason for the increase in female labour migration is the unmet demand in Siberia and Russia's northern regions for female as well as male labour. Employers in these regions have begun to encourage the arrival of migrants' wives and women from Tajikistan in general.

Recently I was in Khujand. There is a company there called Rohi Abreshim that sends people to Russia. I talked to a woman who taught Tajik language and literature for seven years. Now she is a guide. When I asked about her job, she said she had a shortage of men. There are almost no working-age men in Khujand who want to go abroad to work. Now she is taking the wives and sons of migrants. There is strong demand for manpower in Russia. A lot of workers are needed in Krasnoyarsk. When guides bring the next group of workers, the employers who ordered them ask them to bring their wives and children.

Journalist, 42, Dushanbe

The Effect of Land Reform

The Tajik government is actively pursuing reform of the agricultural sector through the break-up of corporate farms. The 1996 Land Code, the Law on *Dekhan* Farms of 10 May 2002, and Government Decree No. 385 of 1 October 2002 ("On the Reorganization of Agricultural Enterprises and Organizations for the Period 2002-2005"), provide for the privatization of state and collective farms and the creation of small private holdings (*dekhan*).

Competition for the land being allocated for *dekhan* farming is intense. Many labour migrants are eager to put their savings into land ownership. Bribes accompany all stages of the land transfer process, especially the determination of property size and location. Non-migrant families are at a financial disadvantage, as a result of which farmers are losing access to land. The growing number of landless farmers is already spurring migration to the cities. This exodus from rural areas could lead to an increase in the share of low-qualified workers in the migration flow abroad.

Increasing Marginalization Abroad

Social and psychological adaptation to the receiving countries is very difficult for many Tajik migrants. This is explained by the fact that the majority come from rural areas. They are exposed to two distinct types of socialization: first, the socialization of adult rural migrants in an urban environment; and second, adaptation to a society from which the migrants are separated by a considerable cultural gap, by language and by religion.

The absence of the strict social control that prevails in Tajik rural communities has a negative impact on migrant behaviour, in particular that of young people. It can be difficult to replace social control with a sense of individual responsibility.

Moreover, expanded personal freedom, in combination with the self-confidence instilled by the basic traditional values which the majority of migrants accept, encourages aspirations to individual success. The conflict of values causes serious disagreements between generations.

Living and working in close contact with the local population, hired workers and independent construction workers are the migrant categories most exposed to the influence of the receiving society. Construction brigades have less contact with the receiving society than hired workers or shuttles. They create a semi-isolated microsociety which largely precludes the possibility of adaptation to the receiving society.

Migrant workers of all categories are too busy working to get to know a new culture. They have hardly any time to maintain their own.

Yet there are signs that specific aspects of their own culture take on special significance during the migrants' stay abroad. While working in Russia, many migrants rediscover Islam. It is not surprising that religious values are beginning to play an increasingly important role. Communist ideology was discarded and liberalism has been slow to take root; so people turn to religion for answers. 94% of the migrants interviewed called themselves Moslems.

Table 40: "Which religion do you belong to or feel close to?"

Islam	96.4 %
Orthodoxy	2.1 %
Buddhism	0.2 %
I don't feel close to any religion	0.8 %
Difficult to answer	0.4 %
No answer/refusal to answer	0.1 %

Religious values provide people who feel uprooted with a sense of belonging. For the migrants, Islam remains an integral component of national identity. At the same time, under the difficult conditions of adaptation, Islam can become a means of rejecting integration into the public life of the receiving country.

Some migrants, on the other hand, seek to overcome social exclusion and alienation by celebrating their own migrant subculture through cultural centres and associations.

In any case, the marginalization process, the violation of traditional behavioural norms and rising criminality can be expected to continue.

In addition, the migrant environment may prove to be fertile ground for radical Islamic movements**.** As migrants find it difficult to integrate, over a generation some gradually seek ways of explaining their problems and differences by idealizing their national and religious roots in opposition to the surrounding society, a process that could lead to extremism.

In order to mitigate the negative effects of labour migration on the destination country, the integration of migrants must be facilitated and migrants need to prepare themselves adequately in terms of language skills and knowledge of the culture and laws of the host society. Migrants should feel that they are integrated into the community, and that they have the means to protect their rights like any other member of society. Policy makers should support migrant cultural centres and associations.

10.1 CONCLUSIONS

Labour migration from Tajikistan has steadily expanded to include both men and women and all age groups, occupations, social and ethnoregional groups.

In the early stages of labour migration, from 1994 to 1998, migrants were generally male, ethnic Tajik heads of families from Karategin, the Vakhsh Valley and the GBAO, and female shuttles. Since then the number of young people and women has risen. Regional differences continue: Share in the migratory flow and rates of migration growth vary by region, and specific destinations and areas of employment are favoured by certain ethnoregional groups.

A contradictory process can be observed: on the one hand the number of migrants with qualifications is rising, but at the same time more young people with a low educational level and no job skills are participating in migration.

A new type of migrant is gradually emerging, for whom labour migration has become a way of life and the only area of professional activity.

Labour migration has altered the demographic structure of the population and affected every aspect of social, economic and political life of Tajikistan. It is also responsible for significant changes in gender roles.

Benefits of Labour Migration

Labour migration has had both positive and negative effects. It saved the country from mass starvation and contributed to the peace process. Other benefits include higher living standards for many, lower unemployment and opportunities for individuals to gain new experience, upgrade their qualifications and acquire commercial skills.

Communities that are strongly represented in the migratory flows have developed substantial organizational skills. Migrants have created wide-ranging networks. Self-confidence grows. Migrants are gradually adapting to the conditions in the receiving countries. They become familiar with the labour markets in various countries. They master new job skills and learn how to avoid diverse obstacles.

Migration has not led to an accumulation of capital, however. Even migrants who have significantly raised the living standards of their families are just slightly better off. Migrants primarily rate the effectiveness of their migration in terms of improvement of the family's well-being and survival of the society as a whole. Migrant savings have had little impact so far on small and medium business development in Tajikistan, let alone industrial growth. Although migrants are actively looking for investment opportunities, the conditions are not yet favourable. Nevertheless, one can be confident that labour migration is a serious school of business and market relations.

Negative Effects

There is also a negative side to labour migration. The outflow of labour resources slows domestic development by reducing the size of the economically active population. The social impacts include marginalization of a considerable part of the population, gender disproportion and conflict, and archaization, to name just a few.

Overall, Tajiks can be said to have adapted to existing social and economic conditions by choosing migration as their main survival strategy.

Yet neither Tajik society nor the state has a clearly defined attitude towards the migration phenomenon. A widely held view among government officials is that the export of manpower must be constrained and government intervention is required to achieve this objective. To discourage migration, the government should focus its efforts on implementing reforms aimed at spurring domestic economic development and job creation. It should promote small and medium businesses, support the fight against corruption, weaken wage controls, etc.

A minority view is that the current level of labour migration is satisfactory and indeed positive for Tajikistan at this stage in its development. Thus what is needed is a soft labour export support policy.

Despite the differences of opinion, few dispute the fact that the export of labour has become a stable trend which brings the state considerable revenue and has a welcome impact on the country's balance of payments. Government awareness of the dependency of the Tajik economy on labour export is already leading to efforts to regulate the migration process.

Meanwhile, the majority of Tajik migrants remain vulnerable to exploitation and abuse in the receiving countries. In the wake of the events of 11 September 2001, heightened security

concerns in the countries in which the migrants work have undermined hopes of improving the status of foreign migrant workers through legalization and integration into the host society. Tajik migrants are subjected to even greater harassment by law enforcement officials than before.

To counter some of the negative effects of labour migration, the Tajik government needs to conduct a far more pragmatic policy than it has in the past. First of all, it should organize information campaigns for potential migrants to provide them with all the facts they need to know to make their migration a success and reduce the chances of exploitation. In addition, the government should take measures to further skills development in line with the labour requirements of the destination countries. Third, the government should invest more resources in its embassies and consulates abroad to enable better monitoring of the establishment of links and contacts between employers and migrants.

12. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Labour migration abroad is the dominant feature of Tajikstan's external economic activity. In future it will continue to play a key role in the country's economic ties with other countries, in particular the Russian Federation, as well as impacting the domestic economy, labour market and society.

A focused government policy is needed to ensure access by Tajik workers to the international labour market and to protect their interests. Therefore the government of the Republic of Tajikistan should consider the measures proposed below.

Recommendations for Tajik Labour Migration Policy

- The Tajik government should design and implement a long-term programme to develop the export of Tajik labour. It should be based on an awareness of the enormous impact of labour migration on migrant household budgets, on the country's balance of payments and on the domestic economy, which will ultimately benefit from migrant remittances. A system of guarantees for these transfers must be introduced.

- In its handling of economic ties with receiving countries, the government should prioritize labour-export issues.

- International labour markets should be studied to monitor changes in demand for foreign workers.

- The country's laws on foreign exchange and taxation should provide favourable terms for labour export.

- The state should increase protection of migrants' rights and economic interests.

- The establishment of labour unions and other interest groups should be encouraged.

- Local and foreign banks should not only eliminate the current obstacles to the transfer of migrant remittances to Tajikistan but encourage these transfers by lowering charges and providing full explanations of the procedures. The government should initiate an awareness campaign to promote bank transfers of money earned abroad and in general upgrade migrants' understanding of financial and currency exchange issues.

- The government should assist the economic reintegration of returning migrants.

- There should be incentives to invest foreign currency income earned abroad in the domestic economy, for example through provision of priority access to bank credits and subsidized government housing.

- Social security protection should be extended to migrants working abroad, and recruitment agencies should be given incentives to provide migrants with social security benefit..

- Recruitment agencies that operate fairly should receive tax breaks, and licensing procedures should be improved.

- ***Information campaign*** A coordinated migration information policy should be pursued by the Tajik government, governments of the destination countries, in particular Russia, and development experts in government agencies, international organizations and NGOs. The aim should be to provide potential labour migrants with qualitative information and practical advice on all areas related to migration. These include relevant laws, the risks involved, migrant health issues, secure earnings transfer, etc.

- ***Skills development*** The Tajik government and development officials should support development of the job skills that are and will be in demand on the labour market in order to increase the qualifications of Tajik migrant workers and enhance their protection.

Recommendations for Countries Receiving Tajik Labour

- State bodies and NGOs need to establish information channels aimed at providing migrants with clear, comprehensive and accessible information on legal entry, registration, work permits, etc. Advice must also be available to migrants and their family members regarding relevant laws, working and living conditions, medical services, returning to the country of origin, etc.

- In the case of the Russian Federation, registration (residence permit) procedures must be simplified. The authorities should be obliged to register migrants and not obstruct their applications. The need to register in person with a visa and registration department should be replaced by the placement of an insert or a stamp in the applicant's passport. The practice of linking residence registration with employment should be abolished.

- Tajik labour migrants must be assured of fair treatment by state border and customs officials and law enforcement agents, and their civil rights are to be respected.

- Application procedures for a permit to recruit foreign labour should be streamlined.

- An amnesty should be introduced for illegal migrants already in the receiving country and their status legalized.

- The receiving country should promote the integration of foreign migrant workers into the host society. Labour migrants should have access to education and job training.

- Media awareness of labour migration issues should be enhanced through targeted information and seminars.

ANNEXES

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Abbreviations

CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
GID BUREAU	(UNDP) Gender in Development Bureau
GBAO	Gorno-Baakhshan Autonomous Oblast (Region)
ICG	International Crisis Group
ILO	International Labour Organization
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODIHR	(OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSI	Open Society Institute
STD	Sexually transmitted disease
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Tajik Migrant Community Associations in Russia

Among the Tajik community associations in Moscow catering to the needs of migrant workers from Tajikistan are *Inson*, *Nur, Osmon*, *Somonien*, *Tajikistan* and *Vatan*. Their umbrella organization is the Coordination Council of Tajik Diaspora Associations.

The *Tajikistan* and *Inson* associations are the most active**.** Headed by Gavkhar Djuraeva, the *Tajikistan* foundation has achieved widespread popularity since it was set up in 1996. *Inson*, run by Muzaffar Zaripov, was established in fall 1999. Since April 2002, the two associations have co-published a monthly information bulletin devoted to Tajik migrant issues, *Migration and Law*, funded by the Open Society Institute (OSI) in Moscow. The bulletin includes articles about migrant experiences, information on migration-related laws, legal advice and a regular feature on the risks to which migrants are often exposed and how to avoid them.

Since 2002, *Tajikistan* and *Inson* have also run a legal information centre with the same name as the bulletin, "Migration and Law". Here Tajik migrants in Russia can seek advice on their legal rights and counseling on employment and social issues (Ismailovskoe shosse 3, Office 5, Moscow, 105218**,** Tel./Fax: 369-36-14, E-mail: inson@mail.ru, inson@ru).

Contacts of Tajik Migrant Community Associations and Tajik Ministerial Representatives in Russia

(as of January 2002)

Name	Position	Tel. No.
Alimov Haydar Kurbanovich	Chairman, *Payvand* Tajik Cultural Centre (Krasnoyarsk)	(3921) 23-83-89
Aliyev Abdykodir	Chairman, *Vatan* (Moscow)	(095) 517-07-62
Bekov Saygufron	Representative of the Tajik Ministry of Labour and Social Security in Novosibirsk	(383) 38-29-61
Djuraeva Govkhar	Chairman, *Tajikistan Foundation* (Moscow)	(095) 280-94-71 913-13-85
Khakimov Safarali	Representative of the Tajik Ministry of Labour and Social Security in Volgograd	(844) 95-33-38
Khamrakulov Abdyhalik	Chairman, Sughd Centre for Tajik and Uzbek Culture; Chairman, Hakassiya Community Association	(39022) 01998, 54848
Kodirov Ziyeratsho	Chairman, *Somonien* (Moscow)	(095) 945-77-55
Lashkarbekov Bogsho	Chairman, *Nur* (Moscow)	(095) 362-99-97
Mukhammadnazir Mirzoda	President, *Somonien* Tajik-Russian Friendship Association, St. Petersburg	(812) 951-41-74
Muminov Karamatullo Islomovich	Chairman, Tajik Society in Saha Republic, Yakutiya (Yakutsk)	(4112) 433040
Rahimov Ramazon	Representative of the Tajik Ministry of the Interior in the Russian Ministry of the Interior	(8095) 500-21-08 239-61-56
Sharipov Karamatullo Bakayevich	Chairman, "Support for the Tajik Diaspora in the Russian Federation" Foundation" (Moscow)	(095) 465-94-66 506-45-83
Syrkhanov Abdymadjid	Representative of the Tajik Ministry of Labour and Social Security in Moscow	(8095) 219-76-37, (8-903) 57002-19
Zaripov Muzaffar Sharipovich	Chairman, *Inson* (Moscow)	(095) 151-86-05 933-13-85
Zukhurov Bek Soburovich	Chairman, Cultural Centre for the Establishment of National and Cultural Autonomy in Russia (Moscow; Chairman, *Osmon* (Moscow)	130-22-59, 433-51-11, 109-94-20, 448-92-83