

Republic of Uzbekistan

Migration Profile Light

2015



PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND DISCLAIMER

After the adoption of the Building Migration Partnerships Joint Declaration in Prague in April 2009, the Building Migration Partnerships initiative (BMP) started to work on establishing the BMP Knowledge Base. The Knowledge Base, nowadays known as the Prague Process Knowledge Base, consists of a set of Extended Migration Profiles¹ elaborated and endorsed in 2010-2011 and the interactive online map (i-Map), which visualizes the available information.

The Prague Process Targeted Initiative (PP TI) is an EU-funded project, which builds upon the BMP initiative and implements selected priorities identified in the Prague Process Action Plan endorsed in Poznan in November 2011. One of the objectives of PP TI is to maintain the Knowledge Base, keep it up-to-date and develop it further.

While continuous attention to updating and developing Extended Migration Profiles remains, the PP TI has taken into account the feedback received from the Prague Process participating states and has proposed the concept of the Migration Profile Light. In comparison to the Extended Migration Profile, which from its name indicates that the information should be of thorough and detailed nature, the Migration Profile Light should be a handy tool with a limited number of pages clearly indicating the areas of interest. The Migration Profile Light should aim at key priorities and problems, easy annual updatability and standardized data for all countries involved.

The proposed Migration Profile Light (MPL) concept has been well received by the Prague Process participating states and Germany volunteered in testing the concept by filling in the template. The MPL on Germany has been developed and the process of its establishment has led to identification of gaps in the first template, which have been covered in cooperation with the PP TI Support Team at ICMPD. At the time of publication, MPLs were prepared by Germany (2013), Hungary (2014), Republic of Armenia (2014), Czech Republic (2015), and Republic of Kazakhstan (2015).

The aim of the PP TI is to establish the Knowledge Base as a useful tool consisting of state-owned migration profiles with standard and comparable data categories. While aiming at the seven leading states of PP TI and the PP TI non-EU participating states, the interest of the Prague Process is to collect national MPLs for all 50 Prague Process participating states.

The MPL is an exercise, which targets all states, believing that this will lead to mutual understanding of the migration situation in partner states, existing migratory flows, priorities, problems and interests. The MPL should serve as an informative but also policy making tool. In case of need, methodological and expert support is planned to contribute to development of MPL in states with limited experience with such exercise.

Ownership and responsibility of the content in terms of data provided in this Migration Profile resides solely with the country elaborating the report.

This MPL was approved by the Agency for Foreign Labour Migration Affairs of the Ministry of Labour of the Republic of Uzbekistan in April 2016.

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1 Albania (endorsed 2010), Armenia (2011), Azerbaijan (2010), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2010), Czech Republic (2010), Georgia (2011), Hungary (2011), Kazakhstan (2010), Kyrgyzstan (2011), Poland (2010), Romania (2010), Slovakia (2010), Tajikistan (2010), Ukraine (2011). Belarus, Russia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan continue working on their Extended Migration Profiles.

The PP TI Support Team within the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) is ready to help and can be contacted at ppti@icmpd.org. The Knowledge Base of the Prague Process is accessible at www.pragueprocess.eu and www.imap-migration.org, section Prague Process.

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNTRY

1.1. Size, population, bordering countries and length of borders

Official name	Republic of Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan
Capital	Tashkent
Territory	447,400 sq. km
Population	30,488,600 persons (as of October 1, 2013)
Neighboring countries	Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan
Length of borders	6,221 km (2,203 km with Kazakhstan, 1,621 km with Turkmenistan, 137 km with Afghanistan, 1,161 km with Tajikistan, and 1,099 km with Kyrgyzstan)

1.2. Short characteristics of the country

Upon gaining its independence on August 31, 1991, the Republic of Uzbekistan (UZ) became an active participant of international migration processes, predominantly as a sending country. In the first half of the 1990s, the Republic found itself amidst repatriation processes, with the share of the titular Republic population among the returnees reaching 37.0%. In the same period, the dominant trend was a continuous outflow of ethnic minorities from UZ, mainly Russians, Ukrainians, and Jews. The Uzbeks accounted for 40.0% of total immigration; and early in the new millennium, the Uzbek on the average made up 17-19%, and in some years up to 35%. The new developments were caused by changes in the country's external migration structure and continuing processes of repatriation and return migration.

On the whole, the external migration processes are characterized by predominant emigration, first of all the outflow of the Russian speaking and other non-titular population. Ethnic migrations to the historical homeland are the main migration trends in external migrations. The new millennium shaped a trend of the Republic titular population, i.e. the ethnic Uzbeks, exiting for permanent residence to foreign countries.²

² Draft *Republic of Uzbekistan Migration Policy Concept* available at <http://uz.denemetr.com/docs/694/index-15353-2.html>, last accessed on Apr. 1, 2015.

According to the State Statistics Committee, between 1991 and 2013, a total of 1.5 mln people left for permanent residence to CIS and non-CIS countries (1.2 mln Russians and Ukrainians, 300,000 Tatars, of which 25% were Crimean Tatars), and 500,000 representatives of other ethnic groups (Jewish, Armenian, German, Kazakh).³ The main emigration flow consisted of those exiting for permanent residence to Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Israel, and USA.

The country's main migration exchange occurs with the post-Soviet states, to which about 90% of UZ citizens go. The highest number of migrants traditionally head for the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan. Uzbekistan is peculiar in that its migration potential has not been exhausted compared to such countries, e.g., as Kyrgyzstan or Tajikistan. In comparison with earlier comparative data, the flow from Uzbekistan is growing gradually and prevails over the flows from other Central Asian countries. The new millennium witnessed a trend towards reduction in the migration outflow of the Republic population and a smaller inflow of population from foreign countries.

The permanent migration wave of the first half of the 1990s subsided and stabilized by the mid-1990s. In the 2000s, labour migration ousted migration for permanent residence abroad as a dominant migration form. In 2000-2014, the number of labour migrants was growing quickly and steadily. Experts assess that the total number of Uzbek migrants in the early 2000s varied between 600,000 and 700,000 persons, of which 550,000-600,000 persons migrated to Russia.⁴ The migrant profile changed (younger, lower level of education). The average duration of stay in Russia in the most important migration sphere increased. Migration became less seasonal. Among the new trends one may mention feminization of migration and a growth in family migration.

Due to high relevance of the migration issues, the UZ Migration Policy Concept was developed in June 2013, which is based on a long-term strategy of the country's social and economic development. The Concept determines the overall strategy for managing migration processes and the main priorities in ensuring rights and freedoms of citizens, country's national security, and observation of state interests. The Concept is a system of views on the goals and tasks of the UZ migration policy and determines the main state activity areas related to management of migration processes.

2. MIGRATION FLOWS AND STOCKS OF IMMIGRANTS AND EMIGRANTS

2.1. Migration Flows

External migration of Uzbekistan population is characterized by emigration considerably exceeding immigration, which results in the population migration outflow from UZ. This outflow is a steady trend of the past 30 years caused by peculiarities of the social and economic development and a growing demographic pressure on the labour market. During the transformation period, the emigration scale increased and the immigration scale decreased.

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³Toshpulat Yuldashev, *Labour Migrants from Uzbekistan*. Available at <http://www.proza.ru/2009/06/03/933>, accessed on Nov. 6, 2014.

⁴Available at <http://www.uz.undp.org/content/uzbekistan/en/home/ourperspective/ourperspectivearticles/2015/03/05/who-is-behind-remittances--a-profile-of-uzbek-migrants.html>, accessed on May 6, 2015.

The main external migration trend is ethnic migration of population to the historical homeland, therefore the external emigration flow is mainly of ethnic nature. In terms of UZ, a significant share is made up of Russians, and the predominance of the Russian emigration remains unchanged throughout the entire post-Soviet period. Representatives of other Slavic nationalities have a small specific weight, which corresponds to their relatively low share in the structure of the Republic's total population and, thus, their migration potential. According to preliminary calculations, the number of those who left the Republic during the entire post-Soviet period exceeded 1.5 mln persons. In the early 90s, emigration exceeded immigration 1.7-1.8 times, in the mid-90s – 4-5 times, and in the new millennium – over 15 times.

According to statistical data, emigration flows mainly head for the former USSR countries, of which the RF is the main receiving country for the emigration from UZ. According to official data, the intensity of emigration to the RF in the early 1990s varied in the range of 60-140 thous. persons a year. In the new millennium, the emigration flows to the RF amount to about 30-40 thous. persons a year. In total since 1991, the Russian Federation accepted about 900,000 UZ citizens, which translates to 60% of the total emigration volume during this period. The emigration flows from UZ to Russia is dominated by population of non-titular nationalities.

Another significant emigration flow is distributed between the Central Asian countries, accounting for about 20% of the total scope of emigration since 1991. Of these, Kazakhstan is the absolute leader and second largest country to accept migrants from UZ after the RF. The emigration from UZ to Kazakhstan almost doubled compared to the early 90s and its share in the total scope of emigration increased from 8.9% in 1991 to 25.2% in 2001, reaching 35% in 2014.

Table 1. Emigration of Population from the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2010

Item	Country	Number of migrants
1	Russia	940,540
2	Kazakhstan	269,361
3	Ukraine	236,448
4	Israel	50,754
5	US	40,257
Total		1,537,360

Source: EUROSTAT database

The early new millennium witnesses a decreasing trend in immigration, which manifested itself in relation to virtually all nationalities, including ethnic Russians, who shape this flow to a significant degree. The share of ethnic Russians dropped to 19-20% compared to 30-32% in mid-1990s. Similar trends can be traced in relation to the Russian-speaking population on the whole. In the structure of those arriving to UZ, there is a growing number of Kazakhs, who account for over 40% of all the immigration, as well as Tajiks and Kyrgyz, i.e. the Central Asian populations have become more active in the immigration flow. These trends impact the national structure of the entire Republic's population, in which a growing number of Central Asian titular nationalities is observed. According to preliminary evaluations, in the 15 years after the 1989 census (no new census was done in UZ), the number of Kazakhs in UZ increased by 169.6 thous. persons (by 21.0%), Kyrgyz – by 52.5 thous. (30%), Turkmen – by 30.7 thous.(25.2%), and Tajik – by 303.8 thous.(32.5%).

Table 2. Number of residence permits issued to Uzbekistan citizens in 2010-2013 as of December 31 of each year in Europe (flows)

Country	Years 2009	2010	2011	2012
Austria	:	:	45	37
Belgium	:	96	102	60
Bulgaria	:	:	:	33
UK	:	:	:	:
Czech Republic	888	141	105	153
Denmark	12	16	22	14
Germany	:	:	:	:
Estonia	5	0	5	3
Ireland	7	7	8	7
Greece	:	:	:	:
Spain	52	60	96	74
France	:	:	:	:
Croatia	:	:	0	0
Italy	110	126	67	62
Iceland	0	0	1	3
Cyprus	:	:	:	:
Latvia	:	:	:	:
Lithuania	9	3	2	9
Luxembourg	2	1	1	2
Hungary	11	15	8	16
Malta	:	:	:	:
Netherlands	29	26	38	24
Poland	:	:	:	:
Portugal	:	:	:	:
Romania	2	2	2	3
Slovenia	5	5	5	0
Slovakia	4	13	0	1
Finland	24	14	10	14
Sweden	231	307	400	343
Norway	19	26	39	36
Switzerland	70	77	62	75
Total	1480	935	1018	969

Source: EUROSTAT database

In 2014, the orbit of Uzbekistan's population migration relations added such countries as USA, Germany, Israel, Turkey, and Greece, immigrants from which make less than 2% of the total volume. The prevalent nationalities are Uzbeks, Jewish, Germans, and Turks. According to expert evaluations, such countries and regions of the world as Ukraine, USA, Europe, South Korea, Australia, Canada, Israel, Turkey, UAE, Iran, and some others have a total of at least 300,000 Uzbek labour migrants.

2.2. Migrant stocks

In terms of the total scope of external migrations, the former USSR accounts for 87%-90% of migration processes, whereas the rest of the world – for 10%-13%. The main migration partners for arrivals have traditionally included Russia, which yielded 1/3 of the total number of the persons arrived in the 2000s, Kazakhstan (14%), Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. These four countries account for over 2/3 of the total immigration scope. According to the World Bank, in 2013 the RF accounted for 86% of all the migrants from Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan accounted for 12%.⁵

According to the FMS of Russia data for 2014, the RF officially registered 2,570,000 Uzbek labour migrants;⁶ in 2013 2,342,884 Uzbek citizens were staying in Russia (22.3% of the total number of foreigners in the RF). Since the beginning of 2014, the number of people who entered Russia from UZ decreased by 204,000 persons (a 33.2% drop over the same period in 2013). The population coming to the RF from UZ is mostly of employable age and accounts for over 80% of the entire number.

In the new millennium, the migration exchange with Kazakhstan has intensified noticeably, accounting for over 1/4 of immigration; the RF accounts for over 40%; and Tajikistan – for about 10%. At the same time, the share of other countries decreased. Of the other post-Soviet countries, Ukraine accounts for 4-5% and Turkmenistan – for 3-4%. Uzbekistan's migration relations with other post-Soviet countries are insignificant.

Of all the Central Asian republics, Tajikistan stands alone in the nature of its migration relations with UZ, as in the migration exchange with it immigration (insignificantly) exceeds emigration. This is caused, *inter alia*, by a relatively larger number of Tajiks among other ethnic groups in the composition of Uzbekistan's population (4.9% of population; for comparison, ethnic Russians officially account for 3.3%). UZ has territories with historically dense Tajik communities, specifically in the Samarkand and Bukhara regions.

As of 2014, migration from Uzbekistan appreciably differed from the previous decades in the age composition. In the previous years a significant role was played by educational migration, and about half of the external migration flows were composed of the youth under 30, whereas the share of the employable-age population could reach up to 85%. Modern emigration is characterized by a relative reduction in the employable contingents to 70-75%, and in some years to 65%, with a simultaneous increase in the specific weight of children and pensioners. This evidences that migration has predominantly acquired a family aspect.

Because emigration exceeds immigration, UZ has a negative migration balance. In the past years there is a clear tendency towards reduction in the migration outflow from UZ. Whereas in the 1990s up to 140,000 would annually go for permanent residence to Russia, in 2007 the migration flow was 63,100 persons with a drop to 25-50 thous. in the ensuing years, which can be explained by reduced emigration potential of Uzbekistan's Russian population. Experts estimated that over the elapsed period, out of more than 1.6 mln Russians there are only about 500,000 remaining, out of 160,000 Ukrainians – 100,000, out of 600,000 Tatars (including 25% Crimean) – 300,000, etc. This trend is caused by a reduced migration potential among non-ethnic Uzbeks.

⁵ Available at <http://www.uz.undp.org/content/uzbekistan/en/home/ourperspective/ourperspectivearticles/2015/03/05/who-is-behind-remittances--a-profile-of-uzbek-migrants.html>, accessed on March 10, 2015.

⁶ Available at: <http://www.profi-forex.org/novosti-rossii/entry1008239686.html>, accessed on Dec. 27, 2014. As of March 3, 2014, there were 2,342,884 Uzbek citizens staying in Russia. Available at: <http://www.stanradar.com/news/full/14736-ofitsialnye-dannye-fms-oprovergajut-sluhi-o-massovom-vyezde-trudovyh-migrantov-iz-rossii.html>, accessed on Apr. 15, 2015.

3. LEGAL MIGRATION WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON LABOUR MIGRATION

3.1. Responsible state authorities

Agency for External Labour Migration is a state unitary enterprise with a status of a legal person and is subordinated to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan the Agency regulates activities related to labour migration, with the reliance on international legal norms and rules, taking into account the national interests of the Republic.

The principal tasks of the Agency are:

- participation in the development and implementation of international cooperation related to labour migration projects;
- cooperation with the competent foreign authorities on the issues of quotas and permits for the employment of the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan abroad and foreign nationals in the Republic of Uzbekistan;
- assistance to the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the implementation of their right to work abroad by providing for employment and carrying out preliminary adaptation activities with the candidates for employment abroad;
- coordination of employment of the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan abroad and foreign nationals in the Republic of Uzbekistan;
- coordination of activities of Regional Self-supporting Bureaus for the Employment of citizens abroad, as well as of the Pre-departure Training and Adaptation Centre for citizens traveling abroad;
- development of cooperation with foreign firms (enterprises, institutions, companies) engaged in recruitment of foreign workers;
- issuance (extension) of permits to citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan carrying out working activities abroad in accordance with the decisions of the Interdepartmental Commission for the selection of candidates among the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan for working in foreign countries;
- issuance (extension) of permits to legal entities for attraction of foreign labour, as well as of confirmation documents on the employment of foreign nationals on the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan. This is performed on the basis of the analysis of external labour migration situation, long-term and medium-term forecasts of the trends in labour migration of the population and in accordance with the proposals of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, General Directorates for labour and social protection of the population of Tashkent city and regional administrations.

Regional Self-supporting Bureaus for the Employment of citizens abroad in the cities of Tashkent, Bukhara, Nukus, Karshi and Fergana are state enterprises with legal personality and are subordinated to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan the Bureaus carry out activities on regulation of citizens' employment abroad, relying on international legal norms and rules and taking into account the national interests of the Republic.

The principal tasks of the Bureaus are:

- assistance to the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan in their employment abroad;
- providing citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan with information on possibilities and conditions of employment abroad;
- development of cooperation with foreign employers engaged in recruitment of foreign workers;
- acquisition and implementation of quotas given by foreign employers for the export of labour force from the Republic of Uzbekistan;
- selection of candidates meeting the requirements of international employers to be sent to work abroad;
- assistance to citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan in arranging travel documents, including visas and other documentation required for registration for employment purposes abroad.

Pre-departure Training and Adaptation Centre for citizens traveling abroad is a state unitary enterprise with a status of a legal entity under the jurisdiction of the Agency for External Labour Migration.

The principal tasks of the Centre are:

- on the agreements with the Agency for External Labour Migration and Regional Bureaus for employment of citizens abroad, carrying out of pre-departure adaptation and training of citizens;
- informing the citizens going to work abroad on the basics of legislation, traditions and norms of behavior in a country of entry;
- teaching the language of a country of entry at a level sufficient to communicate and perform job functions, as well as the rules of safety and occupational health at the enterprises, with which contracts are made;
- conducting, with the involvement of authorized medical institutions, comprehensive medical examination of the state of health of the citizens to be sent abroad for employment, taking into account the requirements of foreign employers.

3.2. Policy and policy documents

Conditions and procedure for carrying out labour activity by the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan abroad and by foreign nationals on the territory of The Republic of Uzbekistan are regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Labour Code, the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan №510-XII of 13.01.1992 "On Employment" (new edition approved by the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 616-1 of 01.05.1998 № 616-1), the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers № 408 of 19.10.1995, "On the employment of citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan abroad and foreign citizens in the Republic", the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers № 505 of 12.11.2003, "On measures to improve the organization of labour activity of citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan abroad", etc.

The procedure for employment of the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan abroad

In accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan have the right to travel abroad in order to perform working activities on the basis of intergovernmental, interagency treaties and agreements with the assistance of the Agency for External Labour Migration and Regional self-supporting Bureaus for employment of citizens abroad and in accordance with the procedure established by the Ministry of Labour and Social protection of Population of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Thus, for example, the Republic of Uzbekistan is a party to such international programs as the employment permit system of the Republic of Korea and the program of technical training in Japan.

In addition, given the migration processes in the Republic of Uzbekistan, in order to protect the rights and interests of citizens of Uzbekistan abroad and to prevent illegal migration and human trafficking, the Agency seeks to establish cooperation related to forming regulatory and legal framework in the field of labour migration, as well as to develop mutually beneficial positions on organized recruitment and sending of the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan to other foreign countries (Russia, Turkey, Poland, Oman and others.).

The citizens of Uzbekistan have the right to travel abroad in order to work according to private employment contracts having obtained permits issued by the Agency for External Labour Migration.

In this case, the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan search for a foreign employer independently, conclude a contract with the employer and then apply to the Agency for External Labour Migration.

The procedure for employing foreign labour force in the Republic of Uzbekistan

Appendix №2 Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers №408 of 19.10.1995 "On the employment of citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan abroad and foreign citizens in the Republic" defines the conditions and procedure for issuance (extension) of permits for employing foreign workers in the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as issuance (renewal) of confirmations of foreign citizens' right to work on the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Permits may be granted to Uzbekistan legal entities and enterprises with foreign investments operating on the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as private Uzbekistan and foreign individuals residing on the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan and employing hired labour force.

Confirmation of foreign citizens' right to work on the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan is issued to a particular foreign worker. In this case the duration of employment of a foreign worker should not exceed the period of validity of this authorization.

While issuing permits for the attraction and employment of foreign labour, the Republic of Uzbekistan relies on the principle of priority rights of the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan to vacant jobs and availability of on-site request for equivalent labour force.

3.3. Statistics

In the period from 2007 to June 2015, with the help of the Agency for External Labour Migration, 24 thousand citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan left for the Republic of Korea in accordance with the employment permit system, with the prevailing majority to be employed in industrial sector (about 98%) and services (about 1.2%).

Of these 98.3% were male and 1.7% female. Uzbekistan migrants moving to the Republic of Korea are predominantly aged as follows: 31 to 40 years (48%), 26 to 30 years (25%), 21 to 25 years (14%), over 41 years (12%) and 16 to 20 years (less than 1%).

Through private employment contracts under permits issued by the Agency for External Labour Migration, the citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan mostly travel to such countries as Saudi Arabia (27.5%), Israel (19.7%), Italy (17%), Turkey (11.1%), and others.

In the period from 2009 to 2014, the Agency for External Labour Migration prepared more than 43 thousand documents for carrying out work on the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan. These workers were primarily the citizens of such countries as Turkey (35.8%), China (26.2%), South Korea (7.3%), Russia (5.5%), Afghanistan (4.7%), India (3.3%), Pakistan (3.1%), Iran (2%), Ukraine (1.6%), Vietnam (1.2%) and others.

4. IRREGULAR MIGRATION IN THE COUNTRY

4.1. Responsible state authorities

The **MIA**, as part of the actions to prevent irregular migration, promotes development of immigration control posts at UZ State border crossing points.

To prevent irregular migration, the UZ **Prosecutor General's Office**, **MIA**, and **border authorities** carry out dedicated operations to prevent and stop irregular migration aimed at detecting individuals who stay in UZ without a legal basis.

4.2. Policy and policy documents

The geopolitical location of the country, specifically proximity to the South-East Asian countries, a visa-free regime with the CIS countries (except Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan), and a high population growth rate are among the main factors facilitating illegal migration from the country. Migrants from UZ arrive in destination countries legally, get employment without labour contracts, and become illegally employed or, according to ILO definition, migrants with an “irregular status”. Illegal migrants are also persons who had a labour contract through the Ministry of Labour, but who terminated it or did not return to Uzbekistan after contract expiration, as well as individuals who left on a visitor's visa and worked illegally. Such migrants usually work outside UZ for the duration of their visa or for a longer time, outstaying their visas.

Illegal labour activities are pursued outside the migrant social protection frameworks offered by UZ and are accompanied with cases of discrimination, human rights violations, and human trafficking.⁷ The monitoring and the audits performed by the Prosecutor General's office show that in the South-Kazakhstan region of the Republic of Kazakhstan there are special “pockets” for the Uzbekistan citizens who crossed the border illegally and who are subsequently “transferred” to be recruited by employers in Kazakhstan.

⁷ Draft *Republic of Uzbekistan Migration Policy Concept*, is available at <http://uz.denemetr.com/docs/694/index-15353-2.html>, accessed on Apr. 1, 2015.

On January 4, 2013, a new law came into effect, which amends the Criminal Code to impose harsher responsibility for illegal entry and exit from UZ, as well as crossing the border in violation of the established procedure. The amendment relates to officials, whose going abroad requires a special approval, and to foreigners, whose right of entering UZ is limited by the “Procedure for Entering UZ and Exiting UZ by Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons”, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers Resolution. A repeated illegal migration is punishable by 5 to 10 years of imprisonment.⁸

In 2014, the UZ cooperation with the CIS countries on illegal migration reduction was done in the framework of three actions of the “CIS Member State Cooperation Program to Counteract Illegal Migration for 2012-2014”, which were of practical interest for UZ, except the Program provisions providing for harmonization and unification of national legislation.

The Republic of Uzbekistan has a center for assistance to victims of human trafficking.

4.3. Statistics

Irregular migration is mainly characterized by illegal entry to the country and illegal employment without permits. Its scale is difficult to determine, as it is not subjected to any forms of accounting. Thus, according to indirect estimates, the USA annually issues at least 5,000 visitor visas to Uzbek citizens. Considering that 75-80% of those who entered on these visas are labour migrants, about 4,000 persons annually go to work to the USA, which is only part of unorganized foreign labour migration, directed, *inter alia*, to Germany, Greece, Turkey, and other countries.

Table 4: Uzbekistan citizens staying in Europe illegally and the number of Uzbekistan citizens court-ordered to leave (rounded data, persons), 2009-2013

Country	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014	
	Citizens	Decisions	Citizens	Decisions	Citizens	Decisions	Citizens	Decisions	Citizens	Decisions	Citizens	Decisions
Austria	30	15	10	10	25	10	20	30	35	15	35	:
UK	95	95	200	200	230	230	110	110	145	145	85	85
Belgium	5	20	0	20	5	30	5	40	5	40	5	20
Bulgaria	5	5	5	5	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Czech Republic	90	65	40	50	60	60	85	70	70	50	60	45
Denmark	0	:	0	:	0	5	0	0	0	5	0	5
Germany	45	15	60	10	80	15	80	10	75	10	70	5
Estonia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	10	10
Ireland	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Greece	20	20	10	10	5	5	5	10	5	5	10	10
Spain	15	20	15	15	10	15	5	15	5	5	10	5
France	10	25	20	30	10	20	10	30	10	35	15	25
Croatia	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	0	0	0	0
Italy	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cyprus	110	30	45	5	55	5	45	10	20	5	0	5

⁸ Available at: <http://www.profi-forex.org/novosti-mira/novosti-sng/uzbekistan/entry1008149189.html>, accessed on Apr. 28, 2015.

Latvia	0	5	10	10	0	40	5	85	0	110	5	75
Lithuania	15	15	25	25	45	45	35	35	30	25	:	15
Luxembourg	0	0	0	0	0	:	:	0	0	0	0	0
Hungary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malta	5	5	0	0	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Netherlands	10	55	10	35	5	30	:	40	:	50	:	:
Poland	35	70	20	30	30	30	50	50	50	40	55	50
Portugal	35	40	20	25	25	20	25	25	5	5	5	5
Romania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slovenia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slovakia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Finland	10	0	10	10	0	10	0	5	0	5	:	0
Sweden	290	415	240	400	405	300	310	340	280	260	:	215
Iceland	0	0	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Liechtenstein	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	:	:
Norway	0	:	:	:	20	165	35	215	40	225	60	:
Switzerland	5	:	0	:	0	:	5	0	10	0	5	0
EU 28	825	925	750	905	1,025	910	795	915	760	845	370	580
EU 27	825	925	750	905	1,025	910	795	915	760	845	370	580

Source: EUROSTAT database

In 2013 in Uzbekistan, 650 persons were brought to court for human trafficking related crimes. Over 1,000 persons passed through the Human Trafficking Victims Assistance Center.

5. RETURN, READMISSION AND REINTEGRATION

5.1. Responsible state authorities

The **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** facilitates development of links and contacts with the compatriots residing abroad; issues passport and visa documentation; follows up the cases on discovery and legalization of documents for local and foreign legal entities and citizens; and participates in review of applications on acceptance to citizenship of the persons entering UZ. The UZ diplomatic missions and consular posts abroad keep track of and register UZ citizens abroad on the territory of their consular precinct.

5.2. Policy and policy documents

UZ concluded readmission agreements with the Russian Federation (2007) and the Republic of Kazakhstan (2012).

Development of a system-based and consistent reintegration policy for return of the compatriots residing abroad is one of the priorities for 2014, however specific institutional mechanisms are at the development

stage. Specifically, for migrant reintegration purposes, commercial banks will be recommended to provide them with preferential loans for setting up a business. State and private employment agencies play a role in the process by providing information on vacancies, employment, and solutions to social issues.

Reintegration is mainly done on one's own and finding a job is mainly done through spontaneous labour markets and intermediaries. Underdeveloped legal institutes are compensated by "migrant networks", informal ties, and communal and family relations in migrant communities, which play a key role in organizing return to UZ and reintegration.

5.3. Statistics

Due to the economic crisis in Russian, the labour migrants are expected to return to UZ. To ensure their employment, the UZ Government intends to take steps to create 409.5 thous. jobs and provide assistance in setting up a business. In 2015 the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Protection of Population plans to create 987.5 thous. jobs, mainly in the regions. Of these, over 261.6 thous. will be created due to commissioning of new facilities, reconstruction and expansion of the existing companies; 115,7 thous. in the industry, 66.9 thous. in the service sphere, and 48.8 in the agriculture. The sphere of individual entrepreneurship will provide employment to 104.3 thous. persons, about 203.7 thous. will be employed at home, and 127.5 thous. will get work at farms. Additionally, through the development of small businesses and micro companies, there will be created 290.4 thous. jobs, and 30.2 thous. more will be created by restoring the activities of the temporarily idle enterprises.

6. INTEGRATION

6.1. Responsible state authorities

The UZ **MIA** is responsible for issuing UZ residence permits and temporary residence registration to foreigners and stateless persons, as well as for extension of visas for the foreigners and stateless persons who came to UZ and issuing of UZ non-citizenship certificates.

6.2. Policy and policy documents

Measures to adapt the immigrants who entered UZ are determined by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The **Program for Relocation of Compatriots from Uzbekistan to the RF** provides for resettlement of the compatriots wishing to move to Russia for permanent residence. An UZ citizen, legally staying in the RF at the moment of application submittal, also has a right to participate in the relocation program. According to the procedure, compatriots and their family members are to obtain a special temporary residence permit and a relocation program participant certificate. Decisions on issuing of the relocation program participant certificate in Russia are made by the migration authorities of the region where the program is implemented. The certificate is valid for 3 years. The Program for Relocation of Compatriots from

Uzbekistan guarantees to migrants and their family members relief from customs dues, a residence permit outside the quotas, and a simplified procedure for acquisition of the Russian citizenship. On the settlement territory, the program participants have a right for employment, personal farming, education, medical assistance and all the social safeguards to which a Russian citizen is entitled. The program participant certificate can be terminated if the returnee from UZ left Russia for more than half a year. The same measure applies to persons for committing crimes resulting in criminal punishment both in Russia and in other countries. To create favorable conditions for relocation of compatriots from Uzbekistan, the population is locally informed on the required procedures, employment possibilities and housing issues. The information is fully available on the Internet and posted by the program coordinator.

The Uzbekistan legislation not only prohibits dual citizenship of UZ with other countries, but also imposes criminal punishment for it.

6.3. Statistics

In the context of UZ citizens' integration in the RF, as of December 27, 2013, the RF Embassy received about 13,500 applications from the UZ citizens under the State Relocation Program, of which 7,200 applications for participation in the State Program were accepted. The total number of potential re-settlers, including their family members, was about 18,000 in 2013. The most attractive RF regions for relocating compatriots from UZ in 2013-2014 were the Voronezh, the Kaluga, the Lipetsk, the Novosibirsk, and the Tula Regions.

As of 2014, Uzbekistan had an about 10,000 Meskhetian Turk population, mainly engaged in agriculture.

The Association of Korean Cultural Centers cooperates with the Ministry of Labour to separately provide additional jobs in Korea (up to 500) to ethnic Koreans.

7. MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

7.1. Responsible state authorities

The **UZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs** facilitates maintaining links with the compatriots residing abroad. The policy of establishing direct contacts with communities abroad is implemented through diplomatic missions.

Considering the scale of “capital flight” from UZ through shadow and criminal schemes, the **Prosecutor General's Office**, on the Government instruction, strictly controls the activities of the Central Bank and the entire bank system of UZ.

7.2. Policy and policy documents

Since 99% of external migrations are done sporadically and irregularly, the draft Migration Policy Concept of UZ envisages improvement of the existing and development of brand new areas of migration management in UZ. The draft determines the fundamentals of migration regulation in the mid-term and

long-term perspective in the context of implementation of general national interests. The goal of the draft Concept is to reduce the negative effects of migration, while maintaining and developing the country's national identity and national security, by reducing illegal and developing selective migration. The main goal of emigration management is to curb the migration outflow from the country, first and foremost researchers and specialists, artists, qualified workers, businessmen and entrepreneurs. Specific measures to accomplish this goal include: higher wages for highly qualified specialists; guarantees of career development for scientists and highly qualified specialists regardless of their nationality and their improved social security; improved legislation on pensions to the Republic citizens with due regard for the actual contribution of scientists and specialists to the country's economic and social development, as well as the place and role of intellectuals in the Uzbek society; creating required conditions for employment of young specialists in the country and abroad, providing them with social and economic benefits for the starting period of their labour and family life; broader foreign educational migration of the Republic's youth with the aim of comprehensive training of highly qualified specialists in the countries of the world; facilitation in issuing the exit visa to UZ citizens with extension of its validity period and its cancellation in the long-term perspective.

The main priorities in the immigration policy include attracting migrants, whose qualification characteristics and professional experience meet the needs of the country's economy, investing foreign capital and creating new jobs based on it, and prevention of illegal migration flows.

The strategy of Uzbekistan's immigration policy proceeds from long-term goals of the country's social and economic development and provides for establishing a favorable climate for migrant to enter UZ based on their selection.

The main tasks of the Republic of Uzbekistan immigration policy include: attracting highly qualified foreign specialists, businessmen, and investors for temporary and permanent residence in the country; creating the required conditions for free migration of compatriots from abroad, first and foremost from the former USSR countries, for permanent or temporary residence in Uzbekistan; stimulating the return of emigrants who previously left the country for permanent residence, education or employment back to the Republic; broader educational migration of foreign students on a paid basis and on conditions of their self-support during the period of their stay in the country; prevention of illegal entry to the Republic of unwanted migrant categories.

According to the draft Concept, the main areas of activity of the State in the immigration policy sphere may include: establishing a favorable investment climate in the country for foreign businessmen and entrepreneurs, especially in the sphere of small and medium businesses; development of a mechanism for legal regulation of immigration which would establish the rights and responsibilities of immigrants, agencies charged with immigration processes, and employers; ensuring simplified entrance to the Republic to foreign specialists, businessmen, and entrepreneurs with the aim of organizing production or pursuing entrepreneurship; simplified procedure of granting citizenship to representatives of the former USSR who do not have the Republic of Uzbekistan citizenship and have been residing on its territory for a long time; creating acceptable living conditions for immigrants in the country in line with the international agreements of the Republic of Uzbekistan and generally accepted international law norms and principles; development of the mechanism and procedure to deport illegal migrants with identification of the funding sources; development of regulations imposing harsher responsibility of legal entities and natural persons who facilitate illegal migration and human trafficking.

Given a dramatic drop in the inflow of population to the republic, selective regulated immigration is considered an important factor of national economic development.

UZ also demonstrates a change in the gender roles, when women get involved in labour migrations. According to the 1999 survey, less than 2% of women labour migrants in UZ considered themselves heads of their families, whereas in the new millennium about 50% of women are “breadwinners for their families and relatives”. Labour migrations in UZ play a positive stabilizing role, mitigating tension on the local labour markets. Labour emigration is prevented by creation of jobs and development of small and medium businesses in Uzbekistan.

7.3. Statistics

According to the UZ National Bank, a total of 6 bln 632.6 mln USD were received from the Russian Federation through money remittance systems. Uzbekistan ranked first (Tajikistan second) in the volume of remitted amounts among the Central Asian countries. A lot of migrants transfer the money earned through an informal system “hawala”.⁹ According to the World Bank, remittances from about 12% of Uzbekistan's economy; in 2014 they reduced by 16%.¹⁰ According to the UN, the share of informal remittances exceeds 40% of the entire scope of migrants' remittances. The RF, China, and Kyrgyzstan account for the largest share of remittances. The larger part of the money earned abroad is spent to support the family. The smaller part is invested in starting up small businesses in UZ, with about half of them going bankrupt, and some businesses transferred to the neighboring countries.

On the whole, labour migration is a source of currency income to UZ and relaxes social tension, because labour migrants on average support 4-5 dependents at home, with at least one of them being an adult who has to stay home and cannot find a steady income job. As of 2007, one million migrants from UZ annually relieved the country budget from paying \$40 mln unemployment benefits and about \$25 mln poor family benefits. Foreign money remittances in the personal budget of Uzbek families maintain internal demand for goods and partly internal production.¹¹

8. ASYLUM AND INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

8.1. Responsible state authorities

The **UZ MIA** is responsible for granting asylum and the refugee status in Uzbekistan.

⁹ Elena Sadovszkaya, *International Labour Migration and Money Remittances in the Central Asian Republics: Survival Strategy or Development Strategy?* Available at: <http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2008/0315/analit03.php>, last accessed on May 7, 2015.

¹⁰ Available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/04/13/remittances-growth-to-slow-sharply-in-2015-as-europe-and-russia-stay-weak-pick-up-expected-next-year>, last accessed on Feb. 4, 2015.

¹¹ Available at: <http://www.fergananews.com/articles/5206>, last accessed on May 5, 2015.

8.2. Policy and policy documents

The Republic of Uzbekistan did not join the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. Following the closure of the UNHCR office in Uzbekistan in 2006, the protection of refugees in the country, mostly from Afghanistan, has been carried out in cooperation with the UNDP office in Tashkent. The UNDP refugee support department takes care of the refugee relocation procedures, and local NGOs provide some assistance to the staying refugees. Services to refugees continue to be provided under the UNDP project to find a solution. There are ongoing discussions the UZ Government of the possibilities to improve the stay conditions and the decision-making mechanism in relation to refugees. Previously the Uzbek Government allowed registered refugees on its territory. As of 2014, refugees are categorized as migrants. Under such approach relocation is the most common decision made in their respect.¹²

8.3. Statistics

Starting 2006, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) relocated 682 refugees to third countries and took on the responsibility for finding a solution for approximately 600 refugees remaining in Uzbekistan.

In terms of refugees from Uzbekistan, as of December 2014, the Ministry of Labour, Migration, and Youth of Kyrgyzstan, which reviews asylum applications, received submittals from a total of 44 UZ citizens. Kyrgyzstan has not passed a positive decision on any refugee status or asylum application.¹³

Table 4: Asylum seekers from Uzbekistan applying for asylum abroad: number of applications per year, 2005-2013¹⁴

Country	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Albania		1	0				1		
Argentina	1	0	0						
Armenia					1				
Australia	5	5	5	5	13	13	8	5	13
Austria	38	25	25	26	45	14	25	20	38
Azerbaijan					3	4	1		
Belarus			1		2	4	1		
Belgium	52	37	19	15	14	28	46	15	18
Brazil					1				
Bulgaria	5	0	0	0	1		3	1	*
Canada	31	30	20	20	20	44	28	23	13
Costa-Rica			2	0	0				
Croatia	3				1	1	1		
Cyprus	35	42	55	55	35	12	10		*

¹² UNHCR, Uzbekistan, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e487466>, last accessed on March 12, 2015.

¹³ Available at: <http://www.refworld.org.ru/topic.51dc06b54.51dc104a27e.549ad43c4.0..UZB.html>, last accessed on May 5, 2015.

¹⁴ UNHCR, Uzbekistan, http://popstats.unhcr.org/PSQ_RSD.aspx, last accessed on March 16, 2015.

Czech Republic	41	25	25	17	19	20	26	11	6
Denmark	10	4	5	3	8	17	3	17	*
Egypt		4	1	1	10	12	28	17	38
Estonia							3		
Finland	14	14	4	0	9	5	2	2	*
France	60	28	24	18	26	23	32	84	39
Georgia					2	3	1	1	*
Germany	38	24	10	14	15	19	31	34	22
Greece	22	5	6	7	6	12	3	4	5
Hungary	2	2	6	3					
Iceland		1	1	1				1	
India	3	0	0	0		3	4	3	5
Iran	113	49	30	0	10				
Ireland	4	6	4	5		2	2		*
Israel	1	2	0	1	0				
Italy		0	1	1	3			3	
Kazakhstan	104	177	167	75	195	305	6	9	*
Kyrgyzstan	1,061	294	353	358	50	414	172	45	68
Latvia			1	0	11	2	4		*
Lithuania		6	4	6	3	2	7	6	*
Luxembourg	1		1	4	0				
Malaysia		0				5	5		
Netherlands	57	51	10	11	12	16	18	17	6
New Zealand							1	1	
Norway	42	52	38	148	145	258	271	298	259
Pakistan	6	0	6		10				*
Poland	4	3	6	22	19	14	6	30	15
Portugal				2	0				
Republic of Korea	1	2	2	0	2	6	2	3	*
Moldova	2	2	4	0	2	5	1	3	8
Romania	5	2	1	0	0				
Russia	102	37	63	90	136	164	118	137	93
Saudi Arabia		7	0	6	0				
Serbia	1					1			
Slovakia	2	1	4	2	2	1			
Slovenia	7	0							
Spain	7	3	1	4	2			4	11
Sweden	349	446	416	741	298	525	658	366	585
Switzerland	10	17	15	8	15	15	14	20	17
Syria				5	0	2	4		
Turkey	24	24	42	35	38	108	152	160	249
Ukraine	23	84	48	60	80	169	78	113	56
UAE		4		1					
UK	20	30	20	25	15	14	38	26	32
US	256	312	261	236	191	254	252	201	308
Japan							3	6	
Total	1,503	1,859	1,707	2,031	1,470	2516	2069	1686	1904

Source: UNHCR Database, Data on Uzbekistan



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This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union and with the Support of the Prague Process Targeted Initiative. The ownership of the content in terms of data provided in this Migration Profile rests with the Republic of Uzbekistan. The text of this Migration Profile can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

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