Impact of COVID-19 on Migrants from Tajikistan in Russia*

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PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

- TO IDENTIFY THE KEY PROBLEMS OF MIGRANTS FROM TAJIKISTAN TO RUSSIA IN CONNECTION WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, CONSIDERING THE REGIONAL AND SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC SPECIFICS.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CONTRIBUTION OF LABOR MIGRANTS FROM TAJIKISTAN TO RUSSIA;
- TRANSFORMATION OF EMPLOYMENT AND THE FEATURES OF THE SITUATION IN THE RUSSIAN LABOR MARKET OF TAJIK LABOR MIGRANTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC;
- HIGHLIGHT THE PRACTICES OF SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR TAJIK MIGRANTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN RUSSIA;
- THE STRATEGIES OF FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC BEHAVIOR OF TAJIK MIGRANTS AND ASSESS THE VOLUME OF REMITTANCES FROM RUSSIA TO THE HOMELAND OF TAJIK MIGRANTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC;
- RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE SITUATION OF TAJIK MIGRANTS IN RUSSIA.
Contribution of Tajik migrants to the Russian economy

Key Facts

• In 2019, migrants from Tajikistan made about 1.3% of the Russian GDP.
• Tajik migrants contributed about 15 billion rubles (205 million USD) to the budget as monthly payments for a patent for work.
• About 25% of migrant workers and 1/3 of foreign construction workers in Russia are citizens of Tajikistan.
• In Russia, communities have formed, represented by ethnic Tajiks from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, who have lived permanently or for a long time on the territory of Russia, many of whom have received Russian citizenship.
• In 2020, more than 63 thousand immigrants from Tajikistan entered Russian citizenship (second place after citizens of Ukraine).
• In Russia there are about 1 million people from Tajikistan, including both migrants and their family members.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The number of migrants registered in Russia at the place of stay (registered for the first time or renewed registration)</th>
<th>The number of migrants (registered for the first time at the place of stay)</th>
<th>The number of labor migrants (registered for the first time at the place of stay)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL by country</td>
<td>18 951 004</td>
<td>9 340 798</td>
<td>13 863 521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Asia</td>
<td>9 504 176</td>
<td>6 409 267</td>
<td>5 396 597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>692 840</td>
<td>368 619</td>
<td>560 067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>1 039 374</td>
<td>722 880</td>
<td>583 717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>2 652 867</td>
<td>1 829 270</td>
<td>1 585 146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>121 848</td>
<td>83 838</td>
<td>83 460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>4 739 789</td>
<td>3 404 660</td>
<td>2 584 207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of Central Asian countries,%</td>
<td>50,1</td>
<td>68,6</td>
<td>39,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EMPLOYMENT TAJIK MIGRANTS IN RUSSIA BY SECTOR (2019, %)

- Construction: 43.1%
- Trade: 30.9%
- Industry: 11.6%
- Transport: 3.6%
- Hospitality and catering: 2.9%
- Agriculture: 2.5%
- Other sectors: 5.4%

EMPLOYMENT TAJIK MIGRANTS IN RUSSIAN HOUSEHOLDS BY ECONOMIC ACTIVITY (2019, %)

- Construction and repair: 66.7%
- Agriculture: 19.7%
- Cleaning: 5.7%
- Transport: 3.6%
- Caring for the elderly and the sick: 2.6%
- Other sectors: 1.5%

Migrant workers' distribution from Tajikistan, 2019
Трудящиеся-мигранты из Таджикистана, 2019

The size of the region corresponds to the number of registered employment contracts
Размер региона соответствует числу зарегистрированных трудовых договоров

Share of migrant workers in the total working population, %
Доля трудящихся-мигрантов в общей численности занятого населения, %

- more than 1.2
- 0.7 - 1.2
- 0.5 - 0.7
- 0.1 - 0.5
- less than 0.1
Migrants' distribution from Tajikistan, 2019
Мигранты из Таджикистана, 2019

Share of migrants registered at their place of residence, %
Доля зарегистрированных по месту жительства мигрантов в общей численности населения, %

- more than 0.2
- 0.15 - 0.2
- 0.1 - 0.15
- 0.05 - 0.1
- less than 0.05

Regions with the largest number of migrants
Регионы с наибольшим числом мигрантов
KEY PROBLEMS OF TAJIK LABOR MIGRANTS IN RUSSIA (APRIL 2020, % SURVEY)

- Couldn't pay for the patent: 1%
- Poor living conditions: 8%
- Police checks: 14%
- Didn't have money for food: 39%
- Lost or couldn't find a job: 40%
- Couldn't pay for housing: 57%

Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one answer.
“HOW HAS YOUR INCOME CHANGED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?” (FEBRUARY 2021), %

- **Income decreased**: 88%
- **Income has not changed**: 59%
- **Income increased**: 14%

April 2020: 11%  
February 2021: 27%  
April 2020: 1%  
February 2021: 14%
"HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE WITH YOU IN THE SAME ROOM (ROOM, APARTMENT, HOUSE)?" (APRIL 2020 AND FEBRUARY 2021), %

- Lived alone: April 2020 - 8%, February 2021 - 5%
- 1 person lives with me: April 2020 - 6%, February 2021 - 10%
- 2 people live with me: April 2020 - 13%, February 2021 - 23%
- 3 people live with me: April 2020 - 17%, February 2021 - 34%
- 4 people live with me: April 2020 - 22%, February 2021 - 18%
- 5 people (and more) live with me: April 2020 - 13%, February 2021 - 10%
- 6 people live with me: April 2020 - 10%, February 2021 - 10%
- 7 people live with me: April 2020 - 3%, February 2021 - 8%
- 8 people and more live with me: April 2020 - 6%, February 2021 - 10%

Average number of people in one apartment (house):
- February 2021: 3.8
- April 2020: 4
LIVING CONDITIONS OF MIGRANTS IN A HOSTEL IN THE VILLAGE OF NOVOSERGEEVKA, LENINGRAD REGION IN APRIL 2020
HAVE YOU BEEN SICK WITH COVID-19?” AND “HOW HAS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AFFECTED YOU?” (FEBRUARY 2021, %)

- Sick (confirmed by tests): 66%
- I think I was sick (not confirmed by tests): 23%
- Didn't get sick: 11%

Note: When answering the question “How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your immediate environment?” respondents could give several answers.
“DID YOU RECEIVE ASSISTANCE (MONEY, FOOD, MEDICAL SUPPLIES)? (APRIL 2020 AND FEBRUARY 2021, %)

- From the Embassy of Tajikistan: 0.23% (February 2021), 0.25% (April 2020)
- From relatives: 3% (February 2021), 5% (April 2020)
- From friends and neighbors: 5% (February 2021), 7% (April 2020)
- From the Russian authorities: 0.25% (February 2021), 7% (April 2020)
- From NGOs and volunteers: 1% (February 2021), 7% (April 2020)
- From the employer: 3% (February 2021), 11% (April 2020)
- From fellow countrymen: 5% (February 2021), 11% (April 2020)
- Did not receive: 57% (February 2021), 91% (April 2020)

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NUR VOLUNTEERS HELP TAJIK MIGRANTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN MOSCOW.
SITUATION OF TAJKIK LABOR MIGRANTS IN RUSSIA HAS REPEATEDLY BECOME THE SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL.

DURING THE OFFICIAL VISIT TO RUSSIA OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TAJKIKISTAN EMOMALI RAHMON IN MAY 2021 AT A MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION V.V. PUTIN DISCUSSED THE PROBLEM OF SHORTAGE OF WORKERS IN THE RUSSIAN LABOR MARKET.

IN PARTICULAR, THE RUSSIAN PRESIDENT SAID: “AN IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR LABOR MIGRANTS. I KNOW THAT THIS ISSUE IS SENSITIVE FOR TAJKIKISTAN. WE ARE DOING EVERYTHING TO MAKE PEOPLE FEEL COMFORTABLE, ESPECIALLY SINCE WE CURRENTLY DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH WORKING HANDS IN ENTIRE SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY”.

Recommended Measures

- Improving the mechanisms and infrastructure of regulated labor migration to transfer undocumented and unorganized labor migration into the form of an organized recruitment of labor through bilateral relations between government bodies and business of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan;

- Coordinate the actions of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, as well as transit countries (the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Kyrgyz Republic) in the restoration of transport links and air transportation, ensuring the possibility of movement of labor migrants to the place of work and safe return to their homeland after the completion of the labor contract.

- Conduct negotiations on the possibility of legalizing (amnestying) undocumented migrants from the Republic of Tajikistan in the Russian Federation by the end of 2021 after the termination of the special registration procedure from June 15, 2021.

- Governments, international organizations of the UN system and donors to provide direct support to Tajik labor migrants who lost their jobs and health during the pandemic, as well as families of labor migrants in Tajikistan, left without remittances and livelihoods due to the loss of breadwinners during the COVID-19 pandemic (food assistance, free food, medicines, protective equipment and hygiene products).

- Provide more complete access of migrants to medical care, testing for COVID-19, free vaccination for all migrants in Tajikistan and Russia, regardless of whether they have a policy. Conduct an information campaign among labor migrants about the need for vaccination against COVID-19.