

Labour Migration Policies in Central Asia

**Expert Group Meeting on Strengthening Capacities
for Migration Management in Central Asia,**

UN ESCAP

Bangkok, September 20-21, 2010

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Introduction

Driving forces of labour migration in the sub-region

- Disparities in economic development
- Availability of work
- Historical legacy

1.4 million work permits issued in 2009 in Russia

80% issued to CIS visa free countries

Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Ukraine – top 3 origin countries

Impact of financial crisis

Kazakhstan has transited from a country of labour migration origin to a country of destination;

Introduction

- The countries of origin for labour migration in the CIS, states in Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), and the South Caucasus (Armenia and Azerbaijan) are relative newcomers to organized labour migration;
- Most of the labour migration takes place spontaneously or with the help of informal networks

1. Countries of Destination

Kazakhstan: the main destination country in Central Asia
31,886 work permits issued in 2009, UNESCO/OSCE Survey – 38% working without authorization. Regularization in 2006 found 165,000 irregular workers.

1. Admission Policy

- Visa free regime with CIS countries for entry and personal visit up to three months
- Temporary labour migration policy – work permits issued to employer for period of up to one year based on labour market requirements
- Protection of jobs for nationals – quotas and labour market test. Four categories of foreign workers of which three are highly skilled or skilled.
- Fourth category – seasonal agricultural workers under BLAs

Kazakhstan

2. Post admission policies

- Equal treatment with nationals in employment and working conditions with some important exceptions:
 - Employment contract for less than one year
 - No provision for pension and mandatory social insurance
 - Do not have the right to establish a trade union (but may join a registered trade union)
- Good practice: Recognizes the right of legal migrant worker to stay in the country for period of work permit in case of job loss
- Large number of irregular migrant workers – regulation challenge and issues around rights

Kazakhstan

3. Administration of labour migration

Ministry of Labour: Policy development and labour market

Ministry of Internal Affairs: Internal control and removals

Regional administration: issuing of work permit

4. Bilateral and Regional Agreements and Consultations

Kazakhstan

5. Good Practices

- Legislative review of rights of legal and irregular migrant worker in relation to international standards
- Drafting of a new law on migration currently underway
- Training of legal advisers in NGO resource centres on rights of migrant workers
- Study of employment of labour migrants in the informal economy
- Engagement of trade unions in the protection of migrant workers
- Development of a manual for activists on how to involve migrant workers and training
- Training of trainers and farmers seminars on occupational safety and health in farms employing migrant workers
- Employers organisation – information resource centre
- Bilateral and regional forums

2. Countries of Origin

Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan

- Kyrgyzstan

Destination countries: Russia and Kazakhstan

340,000-500,000 labour migrants; most migrants from the South. Most migrants are in the 20-40 age group and are about 30% women

Seasonal workers

Remittances were 31% of GDP in 2008

- Tajikistan

Mainly to Russia, 500,000 to 800,000 labour migrants

12% women migrants, young and from rural areas

Very few used registered intermediaries, Seasonal migration

Construction – 74% (ADB 2007)

Remittances were 50% of GDP in 2008

Skills shortages

Countries of origin (cont.)

1. Policy Responses

- Legislation on Migration and State Programme on regulating migration processes
- Concept Note on Engaging the Diaspora as development partners (Tajikistan)
- On-site support for migrant workers- Information, advice, placement
- Institutional framework-structural changes and inter-ministerial commission
- Bilateral and regional cooperation

Countries of origin (cont.)

2. Good practices

- Unified policy development and implementation structure in KR
- Tajik (Armenian and Russian) banks have pioneered low cost remittance services in enabling environment
- On-site services, particularly of KR resource centers in Moscow
- Information dissemination by resource centre in RT
- Construction trade union, RT – information dissemination, registration and referral and inter-country agreements
- Skills registers (Armenia and Tajikistan)
- Ratification of ILO Conventions 97 and 143 and UN Convention 1990
- Regional and bilateral forums

3. Regional and bilateral cooperation

Bilateral Agreements and Consultations

RK – Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan

RT- Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan

KR- Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, South Korea

Regional Agreements and Consultations

On Cooperation in the Sphere of Labour Migration and Social Protection of Labour Migrants in the CIS countries (1994)

Convention on the Legal Status of Labour Migrants and their Families

The Agreement On establishing the Council of the CIS Migration Authorities Heads (5 October, 2007)

Declaration on coordinated migration policy (adopted by a decision of the CIS Council of the Heads of States on 5 October, 2007, Dushanbe)

**Thank you for your
attention**