RETURN MIGRANT WORKER SURVEY
ROUND 2 - TAJIKISTAN

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)
MOBILITY TRACKING MATRIX (MTM)

Co-funded by the European Union

IOM UN MIGRATION

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Disclaimer

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ABOUT MTM

The Mobility Tracking Matrix (MTM) is a system that tracks and monitors population mobility. MTM is adapted to the context in Tajikistan based on IOM's Global Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) methodology[1]. DTM is designed to regularly and systematically capture, process and disseminate information to provide a better understanding of the movements and evolving needs of mobile population groups, whether on site or en route. MTM completed its first round of the Returning Migrant Worker survey data collection in February 2023 and the second round of the survey in Tajikistan in November 2023. MTM enables IOM and its partners to maximize resources, set priorities, and deliver better-targeted, evidence based, mobility-sensitive and migration management programming.

METHODOLOGY

The surveys were conducted using IOM's MTM system in Tajikistan. Surveys were conducted with return migrant workers. The survey locations were selected based on the results of IOM's Baseline Assessment on returning migrant workers. The survey questionnaire was developed based on IOM's similar studies in Central Asia and in consultation with internal and external thematic experts. The questionnaire included questions on socio-economic profile, migration experience, employment and remittances, needs and vulnerabilities. The survey sample was calculated based on a Baseline Assessment on the presence of returning migrant workers in the selected locations. The interviews were conducted using mobile devices and the KoBo software. All interviews were anonymous and IOM's Data Protection Principles[2] were observed throughout the entire data cycle. Data collectors approached potential respondents using the snowball method to obtain their informed consent. Data collection was conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of Population of the Republic of Tajikistan and its regional offices.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

978
respondents interviewed

96%
respondents returned from the Russian Federation

56%
respondents intended to re-migrate to the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan

41%
of respondents returned due to short-term family visit/ issues

80%
reported being away for 7 months to 3 years before return

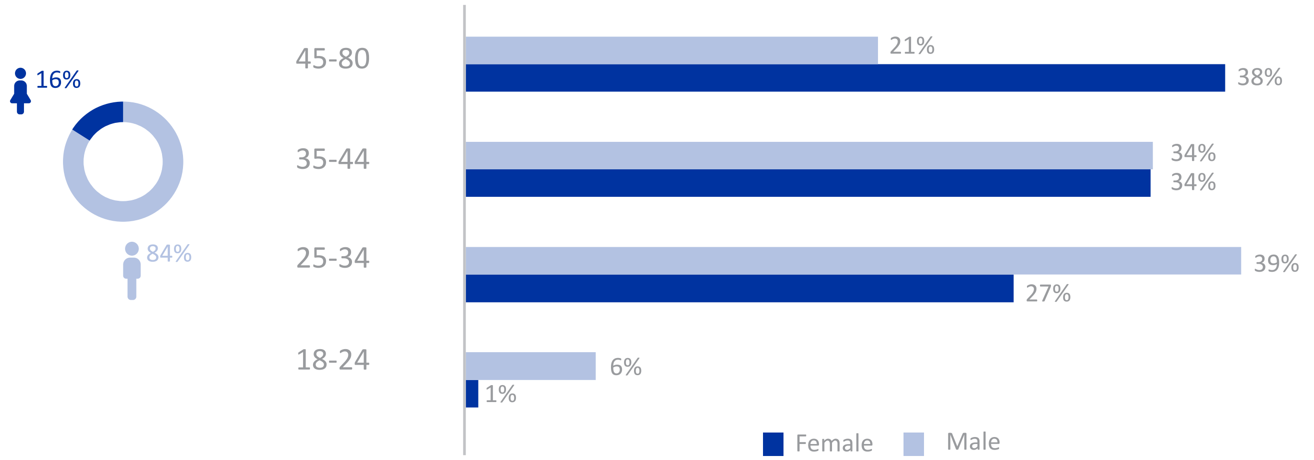
The return migrant survey was conducted with 978 return migrants. Based on the results, 96% of the respondents returned only from the Russian Federation. However, in response to re-migration intentions 56 per cent of the respondents mentioned the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan. Forty one per cent of the respondents mentioned short-term family visit and family issues as main reasons for return to Tajikistan. The vast majority of respondents (80%) mentioned that they have been away for either seven months to one year or one year to three years before returning to Tajikistan.

1. DTM Methodological framework. Retrieved from: https://dtm.iom.int/about/methodological-framework
2. DTM data protection principles: https://www.iom.int/data-protection

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF RETURN MIGRANT WORKERS

Sixteen per cent of the respondents were women while 84 per cent were men. The average age of respondents was 41 for women and 37 for men. Most respondents reported being married (84%) followed by those who were single (6%) and divorced (6%). The marriage rate was slightly higher among male participants (89%) in comparison to those of female respondents (57%). Women were more likely to report being divorced (25%) than men (2%).

AGE AND GENDER

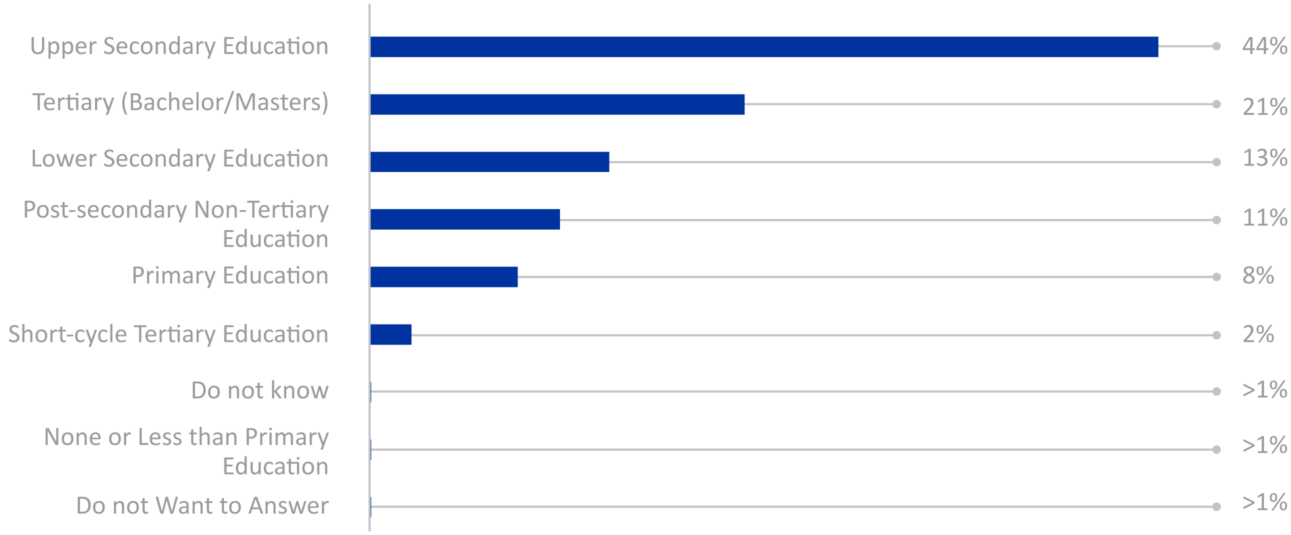


EDUCATION BACKGROUND

For a higher proportion of respondents (44%), the highest education achieved was upper secondary education, followed bylower than secondary education (13%), followed by 11 per cent who have completed post-secondary non-tertiary education, , and primary education (8%). However, 23 per cent in total reported having completed tertiary education, either short-cycle (2%) or bachelor/master (21%) degrees and less than one per cent reported none or less than primary education.

The reported fields of education varied, including natural sciences, mathematics statistics and computing (22%), engineering, manufacturing, construction and architecture (20%); education (15%); social sciences, journalism, administration and law (12%); services (e.g., personal, transport, environmental protection, security) (11%), health, welfare and social services (8%), generic programmes and qualifications (6%); a small part as arts and humanities (3%), followed by agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary (3%) and other (2%).

COMPLETED EDUCATION LEVEL



MIGRATION EXPERIENCE OF RETURN MIGRANT WORKERS

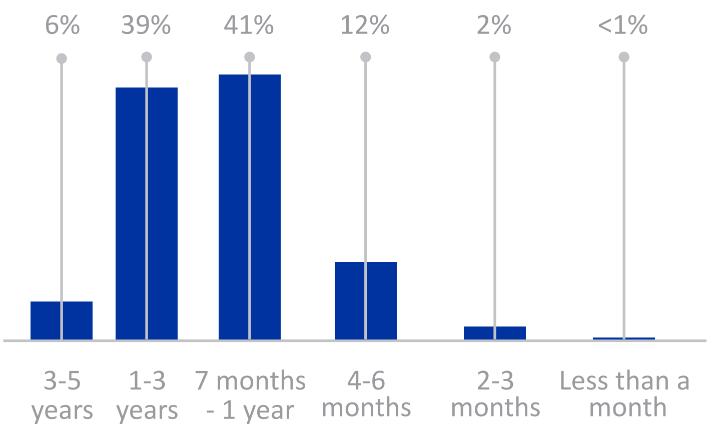
Similar to the previous round of data collection 98 per cent of respondents returned to Tajikistan from the Russian Federation, followed by those returning from Kazakhstan (1%). The rest returned from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Belarus.

TOP 5 COUNTRIES OF RETURN

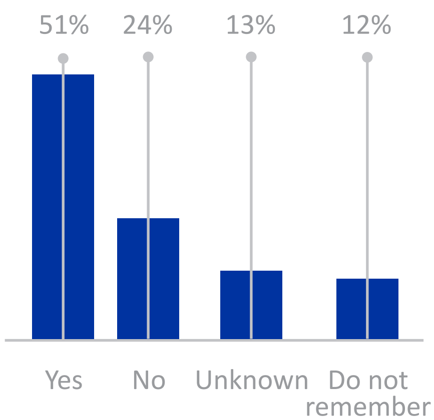
LENGTH OF STAY ABROAD

When asked about the duration of their stay in the countries they returned from, 41 per cent of the respondents reported between seven months and a year, 39 per cent between one and three years, 12 per cent between four and six months, 6 per cent between three and five years, two per cent between two and three months, and less than one per cent indicated less than a month. Roughly half of the respondents (51%) shared that this was the duration that they had intended to stay.

LENGTH OF STAY ABROAD



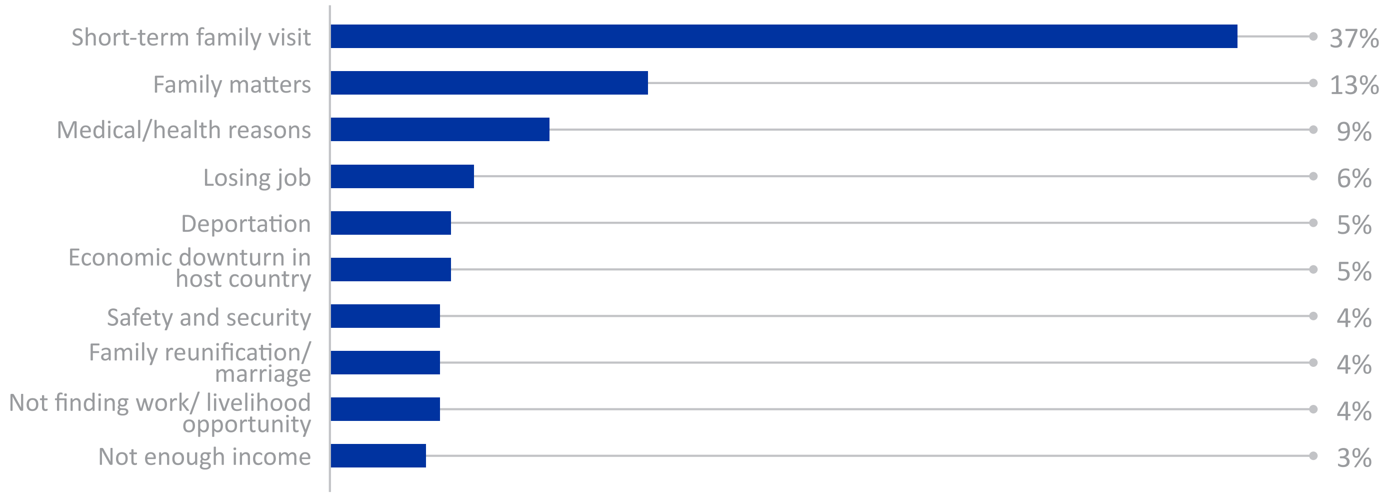
EXPECTED TIME AWAY



REASONS FOR RETURN

The top 10 main reasons for return were mentioned as short-term family visit (37%), followed by family matters (13%), medical/ health reasons (9%), losing the job (6%), deportation (5%), economic downturn in the host country (5%), safety and security (4%), family reunification/ marriage (4%), not finding work/ livelihood opportunity (4%), and income not being enough to fulfil immediate needs (3%).

PRIMARY REASONS FOR RETURN (top 10 answers)



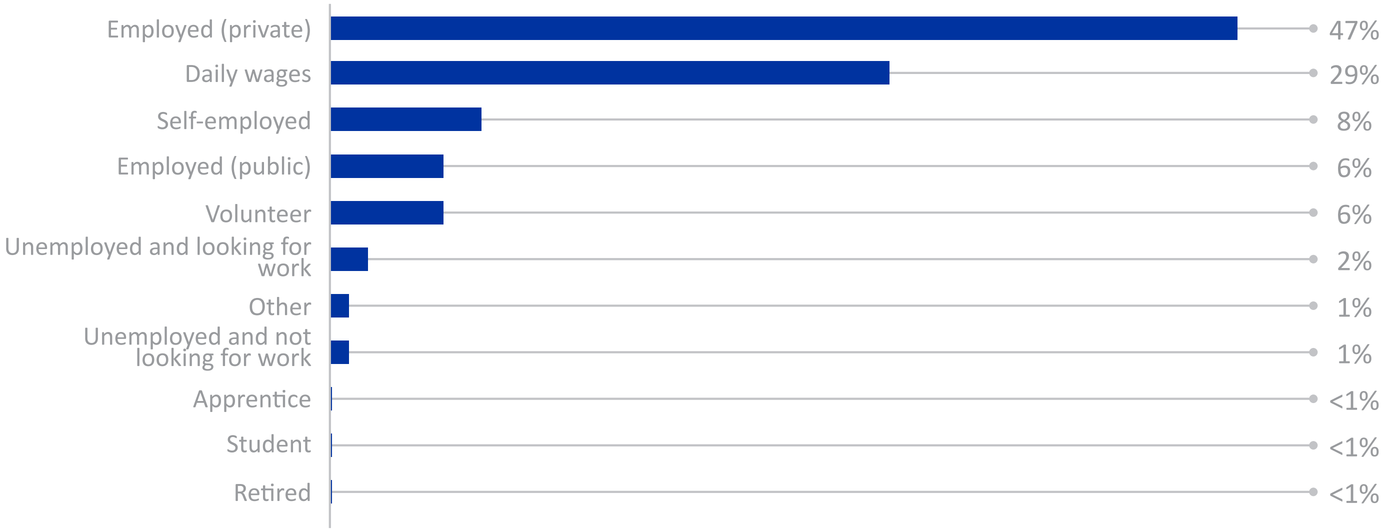
EMPLOYMENT (HOST COUNTRY)

Unlike the previous round of data collection, where daily wages was at the top of the list (37%), during this round most of the respondents (47%) were employed in private sector, followed by those who reported being daily wages workers (29%), self employed (8%), employed in public sector (6%), and volunteers (6%).

The sectors of employment most reported were construction (43%), followed by community, social, personal services (18%), transportation/storage and communication (11%), manufacturing (7%), and wholesale and retail trade (5%).

Similar to round one, women were more likely to report working in community, social and personal services (55%), manufacturing (17%), and wholesale and retail trade (9%) while men mainly worked in construction (51%), transportation /storage and communication (13%), and community/social and personal services (11%).

EMPLOYMENT STATUS IN HOST COUNTRY

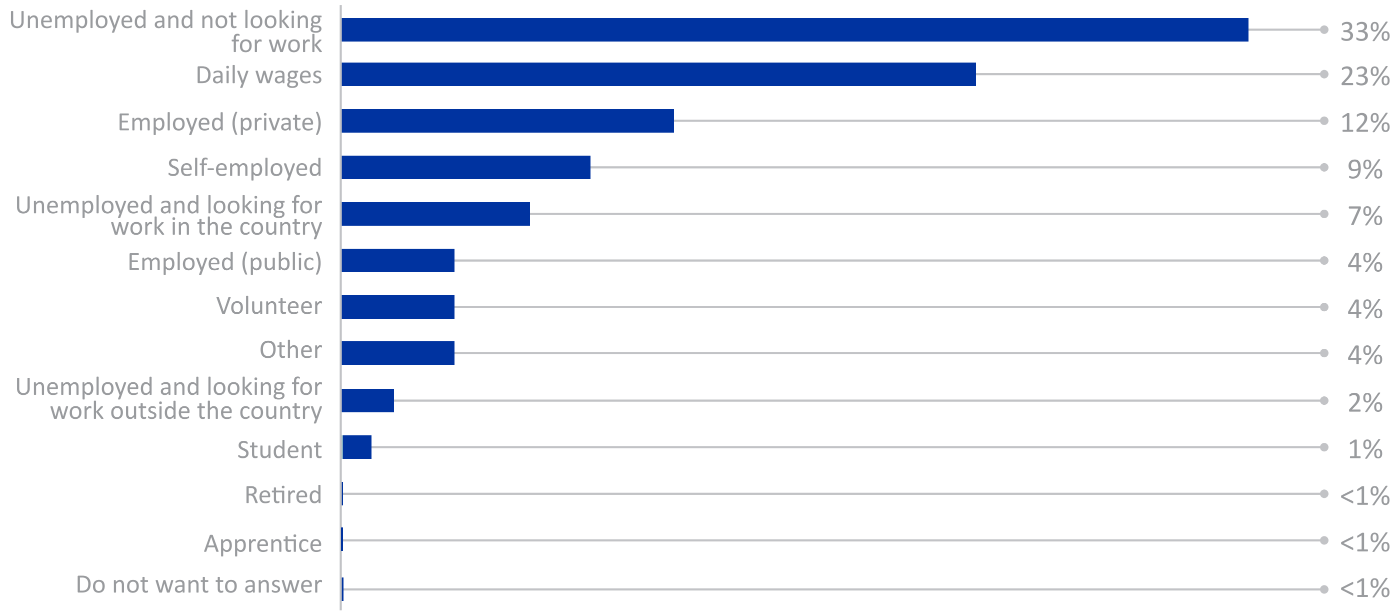


EMPLOYMENT IN TAJIKISTAN

When asked about current employment status, 42 per cent of respondents said they were unemployed. Among them, 33 per cent were not actively looking for a job, seven per cent were seeking jobs within the country, and two per cent were searching for jobs outside the country. Regarding employment types, 23 per cent mentioned working for daily wages, followed by 12 per cent in the private sector, nine per cent as self-employed, four per cent in the public sector, and four per cent as volunteers.
Among the unemployed respondents actively seeking jobs, 79 per cent said they would accept any job with adequate pay, 58 per cent prioritized job stability, and 27 per cent were willing to accept any job regardless of conditions. Only a small percentage (15%) sought jobs in their previous employment sector, while even fewer (12%) looked for positions requiring similar skills and qualifications.

Regarding the current employment sector, two in five (44%) of return migrant workers reported construction, followed by community, social, personal services (15%) and transportation, storage and communication (13%). Similar to round one of the data collection, women were more likely to work in community, social, personal services (46%) while more men reported working in construction (50%).

EMPLOYMENT STATUS IN TAJIKISTAN



Ninety per cent of respondents who were unemployed and were looking for jobs stated that they have not received any advice, help or assistance from employment services in Tajikistan. When asked about the reason why they thought they could not find employment, the highest majority listed education (37%); this was almost similar for women (32%) and men (38%). The rest of the group included those stated lack of employment opportunities (14%) and lack of work experience (11%).

Thirty-six per cent of the respondents reported that they wanted to change jobs in order to obtain better jobs or conditions. The vast majority of respondents (58%) said they found their jobs through personal connections including family and friends upon arrival.

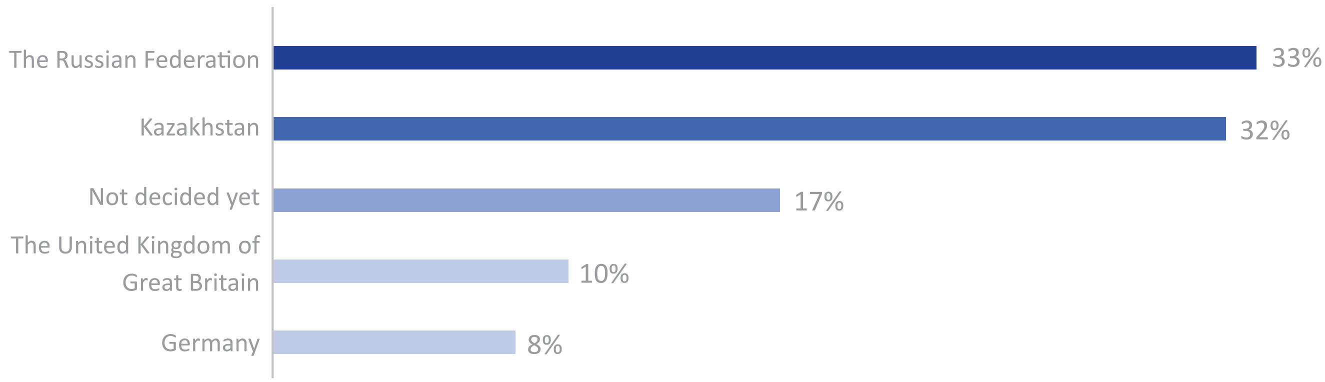
Only one per cent of the respondents reported that they had no personal income after they returned to Tajikistan. Forty-eight per cent of the respondents considered their monthly income sufficient; however, within the same group, 34 per cent said they did not make enough money to save. The reported income included remittances from other countries, remuneration gained through work in Tajikistan, social benefits and other financial support. One in three respondents (37%) reported working without a written contract. The majority did not have a pension scheme (79%) or benefit from annual leave or compensation instead of it (60%).

FUTURE INTENTIONS

Forty-six per cent of the respondents shared their intention to continue circular migration between Tajikistan and countries they returned from, another part of respondents (19%) intend to settle in the country they returned from, while 24 per cent intended to permanently stay in Tajikistan. A smaller percentage (10%) wants to migrate to another country.

The Russian Federation was the top country of destination among the return migrant workers who stated their intentions to migrate (33%), followed by Kazakhstan (32%), those who have not decided on a destination yet (17%), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (10%), and Germany (8%).

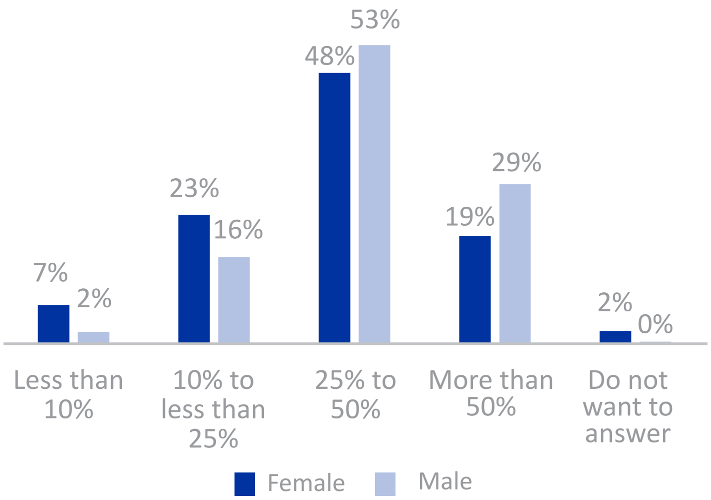
TOP 5 COUNTRY OF RE-MIGRATION



REMITTANCES

The majority (91%) of respondents reported that they sent money back to Tajikistan during their stay in the countries they returned from. Comparably more men (93%) said they sent remittances compared to women (81%). The biggest group among the respondents (53%) said they remitted from 25-50% monthly income, followed by those who remitted more than half (27%) and between 10-25% (17%). The largest group amongst men reported sending 25 to 50 per cent of their earnings to Tajikistan and this was similar amongst women as well. Respondents commonly said they remitted once a month (61%) through physical bank offices in the host country, with support from friends and relatives through bank account transfer, banks website or applications (of banks in Tajikistan); money transfer operator's website or application like Western Union, and money transfer operator's physical office like Western Union physical office. Most (65%) reported that the remittances were the main source of income for their families in Tajikistan. Men (68%) were more likely to report that remittances were the main income of their families than women (48%). This could relate to the fact that women usually make less money compared to men.

PERCENTAGE OF INCOME REMITTED



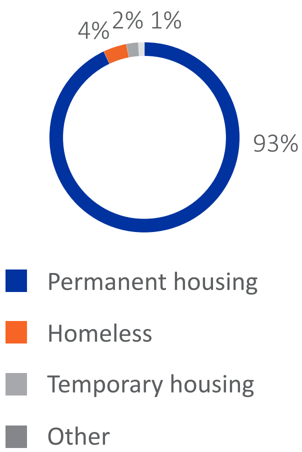
GENERAL WELL-BEING IN TAJIKISTAN

More than half (62%) of the respondents said the current state of economy in Tajikistan affected their willingness to live and work in the country. Half of respondents (50%) said that they experienced challenges in the last six months. Sixty-two per cent of those who responded positively to the previous question said that the challenges were economic. Increased prices (28%), lack of work (23%), debt (17%), and low wages (13%), were listed as common challenges. Moreover, almost three in five of the respondents (58%) reported being the sole/primary providers for their households. Men (65%) were much more likely to report being the main providers for their families than women (27%).

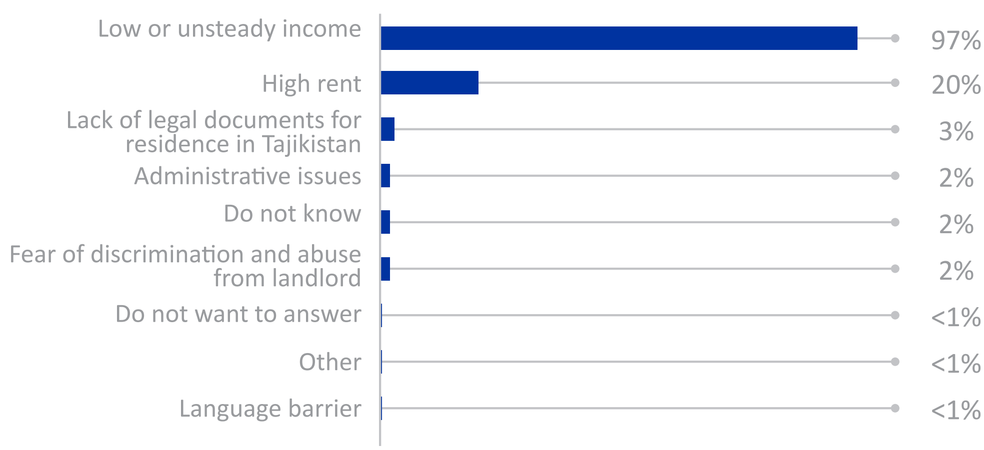
While a large majority (93%) stated that they lived in permanent housing, 4 per cent were homeless, and 2 per cent were living in temporary accommodation. The majority of respondents (97%) mentioned low or unsteady income as the main barriers to permanent housing.

Only 40 per cent of respondents felt informed of their rights regarding work, housing, education, personal safety, identity documents and legal status. Ninety-four per cent of respondents confirmed having good interaction with the local communities within their area of residence.

CURRENT HOUSING

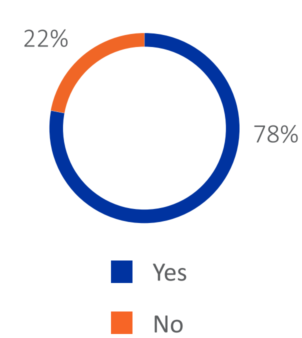


EMPLOYMENT STATUS IN TAJIKISTAN

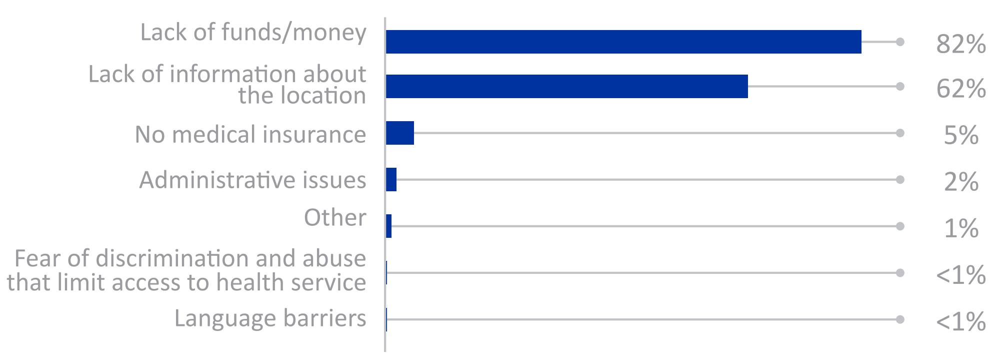


Twenty two per cent of respondents did not have access to health services. The top main barriers to accessing health services were lack of money to pay for health services (82%) and lack of information about the location of health care services (62%).

ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICE



BARRIERS TO ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES



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