

UZBEKISTAN



MIGRATION SITUATION REPORT JANUARY-MARCH 2024



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Disclaimer

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I. ABOUT MOBILITY TRACKING MATRIX

Mobility Tracking Matrix (MTM) is a system based on the IOM's Global Displacement Tracking Matrix – (DTM)¹, and aims to track and monitor population mobility. MTM collects and analyzes information about mobility and vulnerabilities of mobile populations. This system allows systematically grasp and disseminate the better context and information on the needs of these populations to key decision-makers.

II. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the latest available data on recent trends concerning migration issues in Uzbekistan, drawing upon data available for January-March 2024 and providing relevant comparisons on migration trends based on information from national and international datasets that are available to the public. The report includes recent major global and regional events that are significantly impacting the migration situation in the country. The ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine has impacted traditional migration corridors in the region since 2022. Furthermore, the impact of the changing labour migration flows, the increase of migration related to climate change, the growing urbanization process, the social-economic circumstances, increased irregular migration trends and other major events are also described as main contributing factors of the human mobility and migratory movements in the given period in the country.

II.I METHODOLOGY

IOM compiled and processed statistical data and produced a narrative analysis based on the available data within Uzbekistan. Source selection for research and analysis included literature reviews, publications from national and international organizations, national research centres and from authors of relevance for the Central Asian region.

The following providers were the main data sources for this compilation report:

- Statistics Agency under the President of Republic of Uzbekistan (UzStat)
- Central Bank of Republic of Uzbekistan (CB)
- Reports of other relevant government agencies, including the agencies of the destination countries;
- Reports of relevant international organizations
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- World Bank Group (WBG).

II.II LIMITATIONS

The report continues to focus on the most relevant thematic topics related to migration trends in Uzbekistan, which were broadly covered in previous series of the compilation report. Previous thematic topics, such as international and internal migration flows, migration and emigration for permanent residence, labour migration flows from Uzbekistan, main destination countries for Uzbek international migrants, impact of climate change and migration issues, undocumented migration, and remittances are extensively covered in the report using available secondary sources for the given period, while it also draws consequent conclusions in relevant thematic areas for the whole year. Limitations in data may commence from (1) unavailability of some data for the indicated period, (2) incompatible disaggregation or breakdown with other data or (3) methodology not publicly available.

¹ [Displacement Tracking Matrix website, 2023](#)

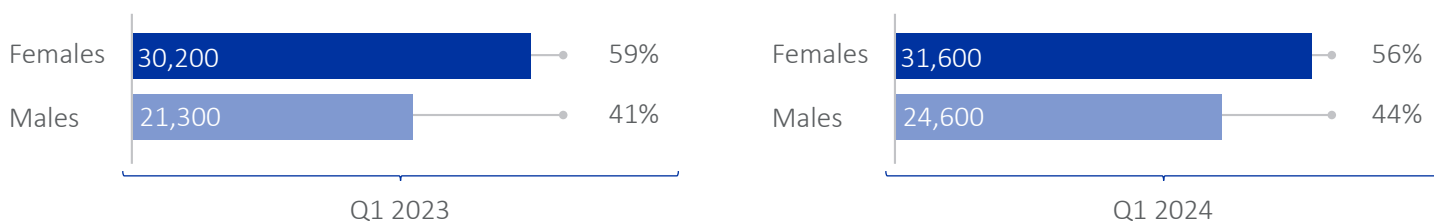


1. INTERNATIONAL AND INTERNAL MIGRANT STOCK AND FLOWS

As the main national authority for statistics in the country, UzStat provides the latest figures on both internal and international migration flows from and to the country. As mentioned in the previous series of the report, UzStat data presented in this report might differ from other indicated sources due to differences in applied methods and definitions in data collection process.

Migration inflow refers to the number of arrivals, consisting of those who moved into an area from outside the country and from other regions inside Uzbekistan. According to the preliminary data of UzStat, the total population of the country reached almost 37 million as of 1 April 2024. In the period of January-March 2024, the registered migration inflow was equal to 56,200 individuals, out of which 31,600 females (56.2%) and 24,600 males (43.8%). This was almost similar to the registered migration inflow in the same period (Q1) in 2023 (51,500 individuals) with a slight increase by 8.3 per cent. The majority of the registered migrants in Q1 of 2024 left from rural to urban areas with 42,100 individuals (75%), while only 14,100 individuals moved from urban to rural areas (25%) (UzStat, 2024; 2023).

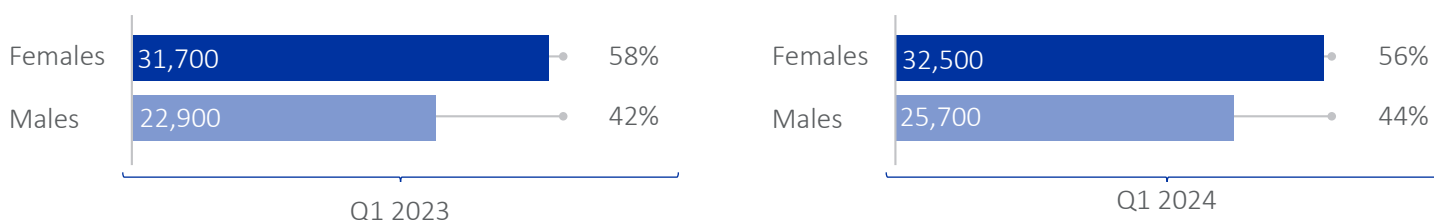
Figure 1. Migration inflows in Q1 2023 and Q1 2024 (absolute numbers and %)



Data source: UzStat, 2024

Migration outflow refers to number of departures, consisting of those who moved out of an area in and from the country. In Q1 of 2024, the registered migration outflow was estimated to have been 58,200 individuals – 32,500 females (55.9%) and 25,700 males (44.1%). This represented a nine per cent increase compared to the registered migration outflow in Q1 of 2023 (54,600 individuals). Most of the migration outflow in Q1 of 2024 took place from urban areas with 32,500 individuals (55.9%), while rural areas were left by 25,700 individuals (25.7%) (UzStat, 2024; 2023).

Figure 2. Migration outflows in Q1 2023 and Q1 2024 (absolute numbers and %)

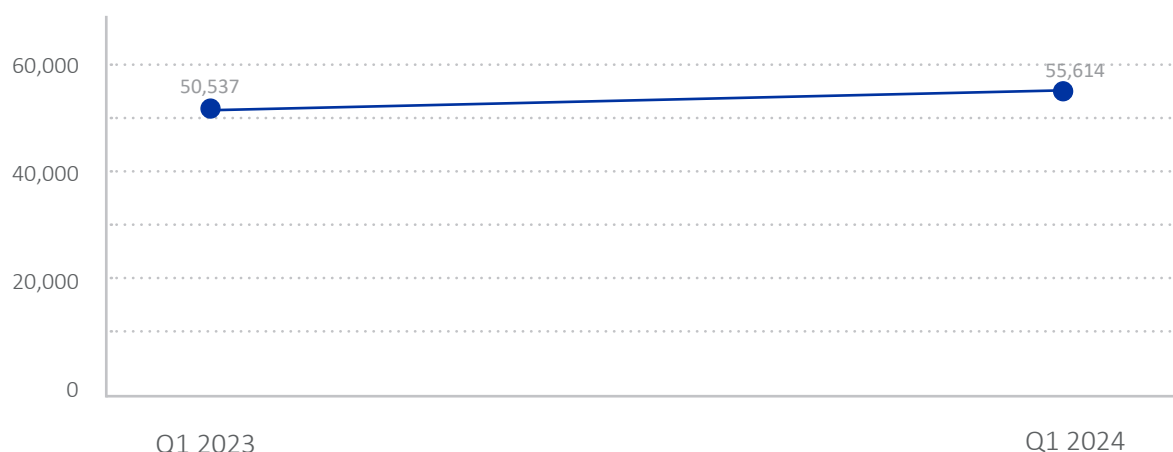


Data source: UzStat, 2024

As highlighted in the [previous series of the report](#), the systems for tracking internal migration still primarily rely on data of changes in permanent residences within the country. Based on preliminary information provided by UzStat, it can be estimated that 55,614 individuals changed their permanent residence from one place to another place within the country in Q1 of 2024. This indicated an increase of about nine per cent compared to the same period in 2023 (50,537 individuals) (UzStat, 2024; 2023).



Figure 3. Internal migration in Q1 2023 and Q1 2024 (absolute numbers)



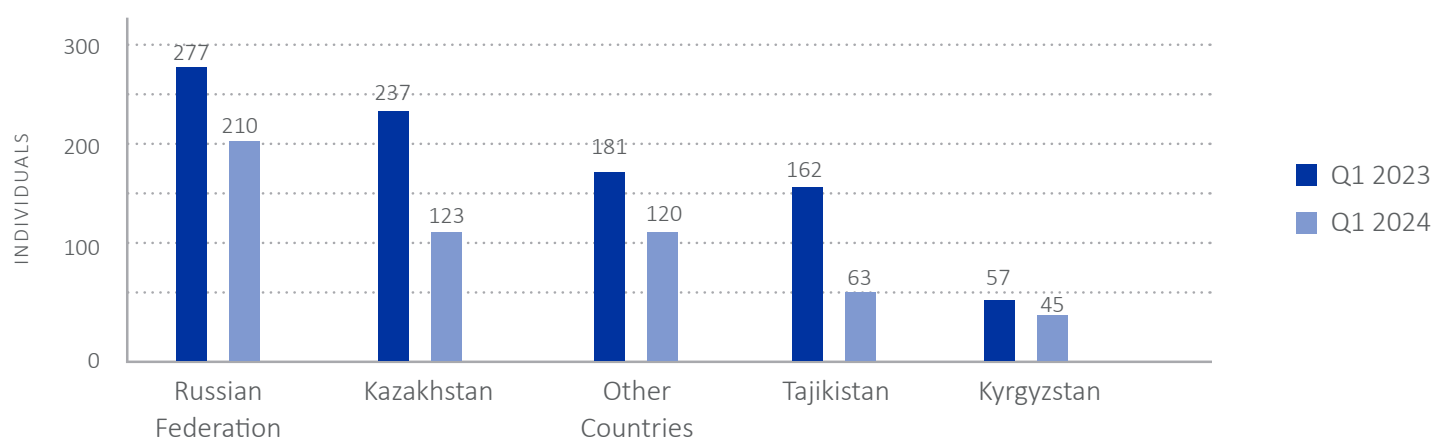
Data source: UzStat, 2024

According to UNHCR, as of the end of 2023 there were 9,405 refugees, mostly from Afghanistan and 22,496 stateless persons in Uzbekistan (UNHCR, 2024). As Uzbekistan is not a Member State of the UN Refugee Convention, Afghan citizens are not registered as refugees, but as temporary residents. However, according to the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Uzbekistan, as of March 2024 the actual number of Afghan refugees in the country might have decreased to around 3,000 individuals as most of them have already left Uzbekistan for third countries over the past period (UNCT, 2024).

2. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION TO UZBEKISTAN FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCE

In Q1 of 2024, the registered migration stock of individuals who came to Uzbekistan for permanent residence was only 561 individuals. This is almost 37 per cent lower compared to the number of migrants for permanent residence in the Q1 of 2023 (914 individuals). The majority of registered migrants, who came to the country for permanent residence during Q1 of 2024 were from the Russian Federation (210 individuals or 37.4%) followed by Kazakhstan (123 individuals or 21.9%), Tajikistan (63 individuals or 11.2%), Kyrgyzstan (45 individuals or 8%), and other countries (120 individuals or 21.5%). In terms of gender disaggregation, 52.6 per cent (295 individuals) were females and 47.4 per cent were males (266 individuals) (UzStat, 2024; 2023).

Figure 4. International migration stock to Uzbekistan for permanent residence by country of origin, Q1 2023 and Q1 2024 (absolute numbers)



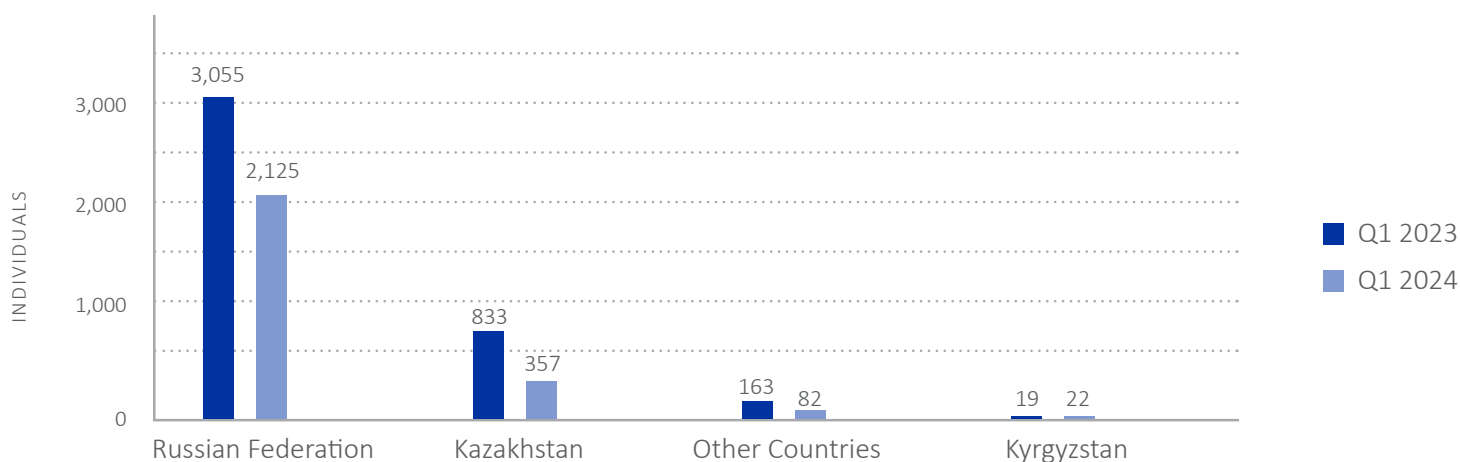
Data source: UzStat, 2024



3. EMIGRATION FROM UZBEKISTAN FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCE ABROAD

The number of individuals who emigrated from Uzbekistan to abroad for permanent residence in Q1 of 2024 was 2,586 individuals. This marked an almost 36 per cent decrease compared to the number of emigrants in the same period of 2023 (4,063 individuals). Most registered emigration from Uzbekistan in the Q1 of 2024 was to Kazakhstan (2,125 individuals or 82.2%), followed by the Russian Federation (357 individuals or 13.8%), Kyrgyzstan (22 individuals or 0.9%), the Republic of Korea (20 individuals or 0.8%), Turkmenistan (8 individuals or 0.3%) and other countries (54 individuals or 2%). In terms of gender disaggregation, a balanced ratio between male and female emigrants was observed with 1,323 men (51.2%) and 1,263 women (48.8%) (UzStat, 2024; 2023).

Figure 5. Emigration for permanent residence by country of destination, Q1 2023 and Q1 2024 (absolute numbers)



Data source: UzStat, 2024

Note: In Q1 2023 data disaggregation for the Republic of Korea as in Q1 2024 data disaggregation for Tajikistan are not available, therefore both countries are reported under "Other countries" in the graph.

4. LABOUR MIGRATION FROM UZBEKISTAN

Labour migration continues to be a main factor for migration in the country as the Government of Uzbekistan is continuing its efforts to ensure safe, regular and orderly labour migration for Uzbek citizens wishing to work abroad. In January 2024, the President of Uzbekistan gave order to the Agency for External Labour Migration (AELM) functioning under the Ministry of Employment and Poverty Reduction (MEPR) of Uzbekistan to capacitate 100,000 workers and skilled professions with foreign languages for organized external labour migration in 2024 (Press Service of President, 2024). Following this, AELM announced that they will conduct a selection for 50,000 available jobs in Germany in partnership with foreign job providers in 2024, including job positions for nurse, truck driver, truck and agricultural machinery maintenance, hotel management, restaurant, work, tourism, craftsmanship, mechatronics, construction and other fields (AELM, 2024a). Later in March 2024, AELM declared that around 100,000 people would be involved in competitive selection for around 37,000 job positions in the Republic of Korea in 2024. The recruited migrant workers will be provided jobs in the field of production (22,248 individuals), agriculture (6,858 individuals), service sector (5,403) and construction (2,898 individuals) (AELM, 2024b).



5. MAIN DESTINATION COUNTRIES FOR MIGRANTS FROM UZBEKISTAN

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The Russian Federation continues to be the main destination country for migrant workers from Uzbekistan despite the economic challenges and sanctions imposed against the Russian Federation due to its military aggression in Ukraine since February 2022. Although the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation (Rosstat), the main statistics authority of the country, has not been publishing the official statistics on migrants for the last year and half, some estimated numbers are available in media sources. In the beginning of 2024, the migrant stock from Uzbekistan was estimated to have reached almost two million individuals, which was the biggest group of migrants originating from Central Asia in the Russian Federation (Vedomosti, 2024).

In this reporting period, the situation of foreign migrant workers in the Russian Federation has changed significantly, mainly due to the tragic incident that happened on 22 March 2024 in the Crocus City Hall of Moscow region. A group of immigrants originating from Tajikistan were accused of committing this terror, which negatively affected overall conditions of not only Tajik migrants, but also all migrants from Central Asian countries. Following the incident, there have been media reports on cases of discrimination against migrants from Central Asian countries in major cities of the Russian Federation (Diplomat, 2024).

KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan remains the second most popular migration destination for Uzbek nationals. According to the local media agency that reported based on the data provided by the National Security Committee of Kazakhstan, from 1 January to 10 May 2024, 1,598,656 Uzbek citizens entered the county being the biggest group of arrivals in the given period (Tengri, 2024). According to the Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of Kazakhstan (KazStat), 2,137 individuals came to Kazakhstan from Uzbekistan for permanent living purpose in Q1 2024, which was 8.8 per cent more than the number of individuals (1,948 individuals) who came to Kazakhstan with the same purpose in Q1 of 2023. Migrants from Uzbekistan represented 28.6 per cent of all foreign nationals (7,471 individuals), who were residing in Kazakhstan with a permanent living purpose in the Q1 of 2024 (KazStat, 2024).

Figure 6. Number of Uzbek migrants with permanent residence permits in Kazakhstan, Q1 2023 and Q1 2024 (absolute numbers and %)



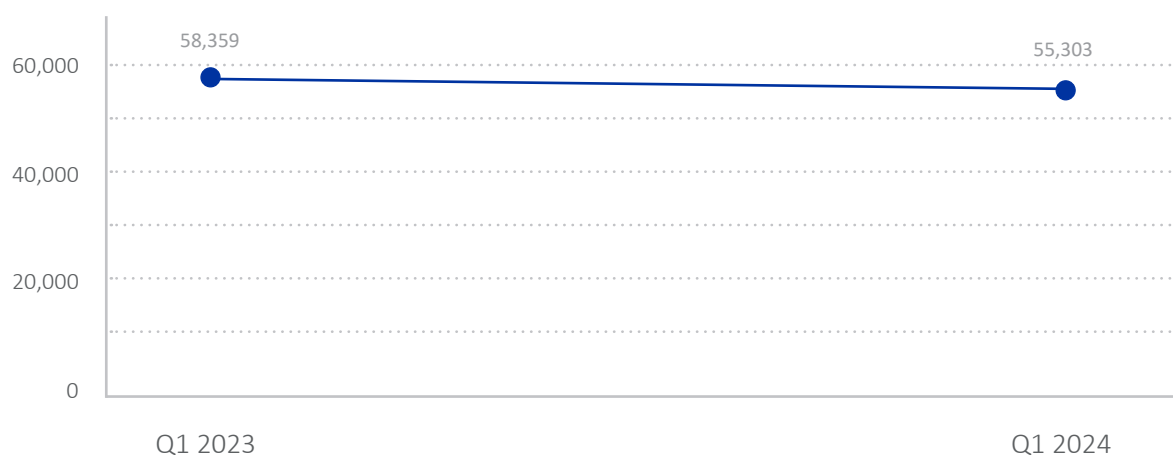
Data source: KazStat, 2024



REPUBLIC OF TÜRKIYE

As of March 2024, the number of Uzbek migrants with residence permits in the Republic of Türkiye was equal to 55,303 individuals as reported by the Presidency of Migration Management (PMM) of the Republic of Türkiye. This represents a 5.2 per cent decrease compared to the number of Uzbek migrants with residence permits in the same period of 2023 (58,359 individuals) (PMM, 2024). Despite the slight decrease in the number of residence permit holders, Uzbek migrants are still in the top ten nations sharing 4.9 per cent of all migrants with residence permits. Residence permits include short-term residence permit, family residence permit, student residence permit, long-term residence permit, humanitarian residence permit and residence permit for victims of human trafficking (PMM, 2024a).

Figure 7. Number of Uzbek migrants with permanent residence permits in Republic of Türkiye, Q1 2023 and Q1 2024 (absolute numbers)

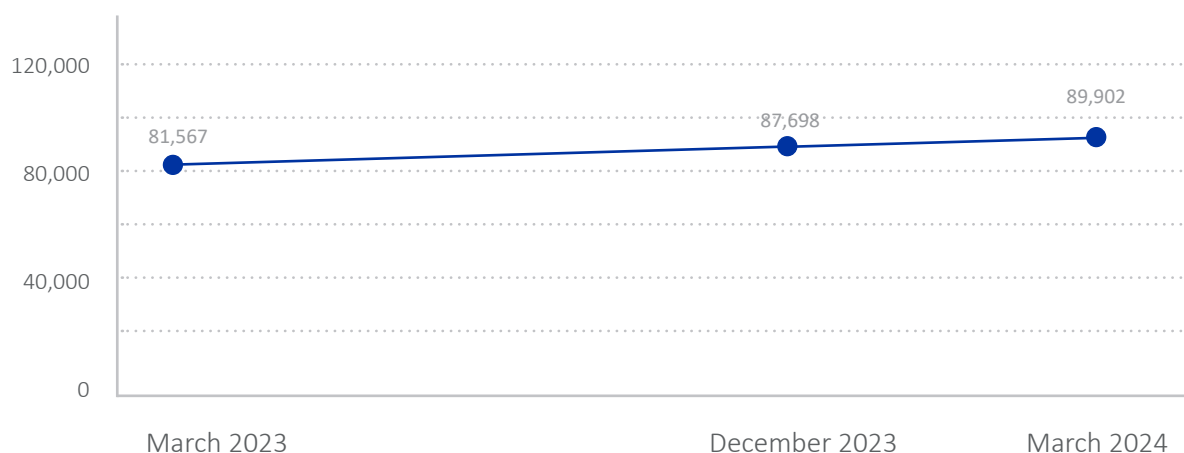


Data source: PMM, 2024

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

According to the Immigration Office of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea (KIS), as of March 2024, the number of Uzbek nationals residing in the Republic of Korea was equal to 89,902 individuals being in top five with 3.5 per cent out of all foreign nationals (2,594,936 individuals) in the country. This indicated an almost 9.3 per cent increase in the number of Uzbek nationals in the country compared to the number at the end of March 2023 (81,567 individuals) (KIS, 2024).

Figure 8. Number of Uzbek migrants living in the Republic of Korea, March 2023-March 2024 (absolute numbers)



Data source: KIS, 2024



Meanwhile, as of March 2024, the number of Uzbek migrants with residence permits was equal to 56,408 individuals or 62.7 per cent of all Uzbek migrants in the country. This marked an almost 11 per cent increase compared to the same period of 2023 (50,351 individuals). At the same time, the number of Uzbek migrants with short-term permits were 5,716 individuals, which represents a 3.2 per cent decrease of Uzbek migrants with short-term permits in March 2023 (5,903 individuals) (KIS, 2024).

Furthermore, as of March 2024 the number of ethnic Koreans with Uzbek nationality reached 43,335 individuals or 48.2 per cent of all Uzbek migrants in the country. This was almost 18 per cent increase in the number of ethnic Koreans with Uzbek nationality compared to the end of March 2023 (35,493 individuals) (KIS, 2024).

Figure 9. Resident permit holders and ethnic Koreans with Uzbek nationalities residing in the Republic of Korea, March 2024 (%)



Data source: KIS, 2024

As of end of March 2024, the number of students from Uzbekistan in the country was equal to 13,442 individuals, which made up 5.5 per cent of all international students (241,513 individuals) in the country. This represents an 8.9 increase in the number of Uzbek students studying in the Republic of Korea compared to the same period of 2023 (12,251 individuals) (KIS, 2024).

EUROPEAN UNION (EU) COUNTRIES

According to the latest available information on the number of Uzbek nationals with residence permits in EU countries, it was equal to 40,406 individuals as of 31 December 2022, and it has still not been updated for 2023 and the first quarter of 2024 (Eurostat, 2023a).

The number of Uzbek nationals in EU countries, who were ordered to leave the territory of the EU reached 3,790 individuals as of the end of 2023. Most of them were residing in Sweden (895 individuals) and Latvia (840 individuals) in this period (Eurostat, 2023b). In the first months of 2024, the number of asylum applications by Uzbek nationals in EU countries was estimated to have been 310 applications, and most of them (225 applications or 75%) were received in Sweden. Meanwhile, the total number of asylum applications by Uzbek nationals in 2023 was equal to 1,165 applications and a major part of these applications (700 applications or 60%) had been also registered in Sweden (Eurostat, 2024).



6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION

In early 2024, the Migration Data Portal (MDP) dashboard showcased future global projections of six mobility-related climate hazards: heatwaves, droughts, wildfires, river floods, tropical cyclones, and crop failures. The high warming projections show that by 2030 the number of individuals in Central Asia exposed to risks of heatwaves was 322 thousand, crop failure is considered a risk to 68.3 thousand, 16.3 thousand to river floods and 149 thousand to wildfires. The impact of these projections includes the territory of Uzbekistan. The implications of these changes would increase migration outflows from the country (MDP, 2024).

Central Asia and Uzbekistan have experienced a significant rise in air temperature over the past three decades surpassing the global average by twice the margin. The region has experienced a 30 per cent reduction in glacier surface in the last 50 years. Climate change threatens not only agricultural production, but also public health, potentially leading to issues such as malnutrition and increased susceptibility to infectious disease according to a statement given by Suna Park, the Advisor to the Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection, and Climate Change to local media (Kursiv, 2024).

Considering climate factors, it becomes more important to build safe, regular and orderly migration routes in the country. External migration might surpass internal migration, and through green technologies migrants can help adapt to climate change as stated by Zeynal Hajiyeu, the IOM Chief of Mission in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan during his interview to the local media in January 2024 (Gazeta, 2024).

7. UNDOCUMENTED MIGRATION

As reported in the previous reports, the number of international irregular migrants in Uzbekistan is not available in official sources. Meanwhile, some cases of irregular migrants from Uzbekistan were observed in destination countries in Q1 of 2024.

According to the PMM, the number of irregular migrants from Uzbekistan in the Republic of Türkiye, who have been captured by the police since the beginning of 2024 until 4 April 2024 has reached 2,503 individuals. This is almost a doubled increase in the number of Uzbek irregular migrants in the Republic of Türkiye compared to Q1 of 2023 (1,204 individuals) (PMM, 2024b)

As reported by Eurostat, the number of Uzbek nationals, who have been found to be irregularly present in EU countries has reached 3,425 individuals by the end of 2023. However, the data for the Q1 of 2024 is not available yet. Most of them were in Germany (345 individuals), Latvia (635 individuals) and Poland (485 individuals) (Eurostat, 2023c).

According to the last yearly report of KIS, the number of irregular migrants from Uzbekistan in the territory of the Republic of Korea were equal to 8,812 individuals as of the end of 2023, and the data for Q1 2024 is not available yet (KIS, 2023a).

According to the Customs and Border Protection service, in the period of October 2023- May 2024, 57,200 undocumented migrants attempted to cross the southern border of the United States of America (USA) and around five per cent (2,900 individuals) of them were Uzbek nationals. At the same time, the USA Embassy in Uzbekistan reported that 74 irregular migrants from Uzbekistan, who crossed the USA-Mexico border irregularly and were detained by border guards were deported from the USA to Uzbekistan in March 2024 (USA Embassy, 2024).

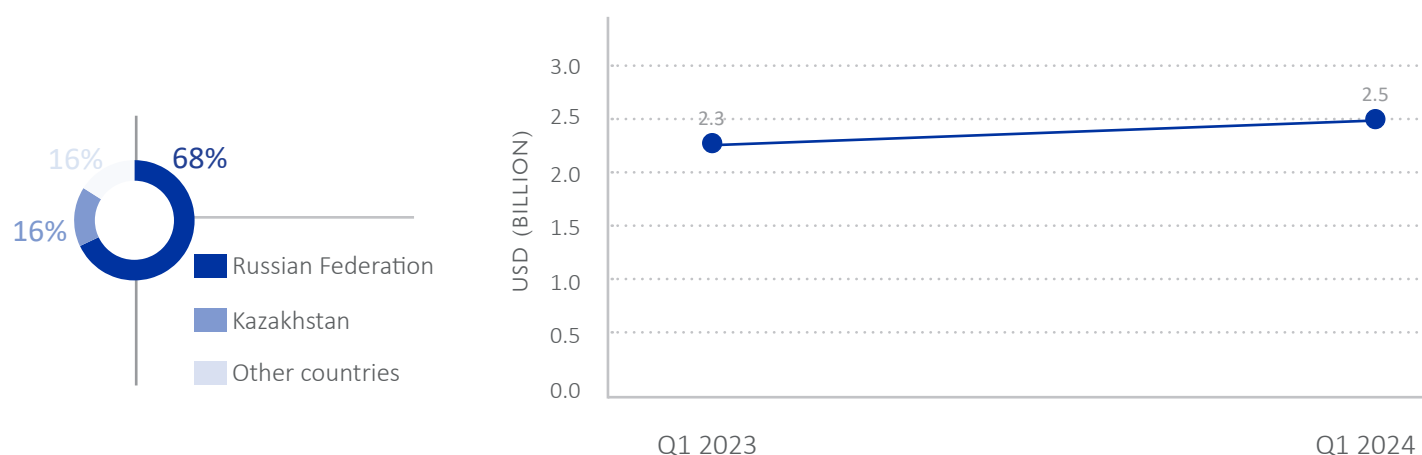


Lately, the cases of irregular migrants from Uzbekistan in Latin American countries, who are heading to the USA have also been reported in Q1 of 2023. As reported by the National Institute of Migration of Honduras (NIH), 256 Uzbek irregular migrants (185 males and 71 females) who were crossing the country, were detained in the country in Q1 of 2024. This was significantly lower compared to the same period of 2023, when 1,408 irregular migrants (1,232 males and 176 females) from Uzbekistan were registered in Honduras (NIH, 2024). Meanwhile, the Migration Policy Unit of the Mexican Statistics Office (MPU) reported 1,079 irregular migrants from Uzbekistan, who were detained in Mexico in Q1 of 2024. This almost doubled the number of Uzbek irregular migrants registered in the country compared to the same period in 2023 (563 individuals) (MPU, 2024).

8. REMITTANCE INFLOWS TO UZBEKISTAN

According to the Central Bank (CB) of Uzbekistan, the remittance inflows to the country in the first quarter of 2024 was equal to 2.5 billion United States dollar (USD), which was 8.6 per cent higher compared to the remittance inflows in the same period of 2023 (2.3 billion USD remittance inflow). At the same time, the combined share of the money transfers from the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan decreased to 84 per cent among the total money transfers to Uzbekistan, while the remittance inflows from the Russian Federation itself decreased to 68 per cent out of all remittance transfers. It should be noted that the share of the remittance inflows to Uzbekistan from the Russian Federation in the total remittance inflows has been decreasing in recent years with 87 per cent in 2022 and 78 per cent in 2023 (CB, 2024).

Figure 10. Remittance inflows to Uzbekistan and share of money transfers' source by country, Q1 2023 and Q1 2024 (USD billions and %)



Data source: CB, 2024

9. IOM SESSIONS ON MIGRATION DATA

At the beginning of 2024, IOM completed its Human Mobility Data Mapping Exercise in Uzbekistan. This one-off data ecosystem mapping exercise took place in 2023 to identify existing and available human mobility information data in country. This included mapping of relevant government information sources, development actors as well as UN Agencies in Uzbekistan. This exercise specifically focused on migration data gap identification, aiming to pinpoint areas where information is lacking or incomplete. Following the completion of the mapping exercise, on 27 February 2024, IOM organized the consultation meeting with the relevant government agencies in Uzbekistan to present and consult on its key findings, encouraging a consultative dialogue to obtain recommendations and collectively strategize and refine the approach towards addressing the identified data gaps for improved data quality and governmental decision-making. The report of the mapping exercise has been finalized based on the recommendations by the relevant national stakeholders and submitted to the Government of Uzbekistan.



III. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

IOM	International Organization for Migration
AELM	Agency for External Labour Migration of the Republic of Uzbekistan
CB	Central Bank of the Republic of the Republic of Uzbekistan
EU	European Union
Eurostat	European Union Statistics Platform
KazStat	Bureau of National Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan
KIS	Korea Immigration Service, Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea
KNOMAD	Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development
MEPR	Ministry of Employment and Poverty Reduction of the Republic of Uzbekistan
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan
MTM	Mobility Tracking Matrix
MPU	Migration Policy Unit of Mexican Statistics Office
NIM	National Institute of Migration of Honduras
PMM	Presidency of Migration Management of the Republic of Türkiye
Q1	First quarter of the year
Rosstat	Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
USA	United States of America
USD	United States dollar
UzStat	Statistics Agency under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan
WBG	World Bank Group



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