

KYRGYZSTAN

BASELINE MOBILITY ASSESSMENT (BMA)

ROUND 3 - APRIL 2024

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



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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 and displacement. MTM is adapted to the context in Kyrgyzstan based on IOM's Global Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) methodology¹. 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. From February to April 2024, MTM conducted the third round of its Baseline Mobility Assessment (BMA) in Kyrgyzstan to track mobility, provide information on population estimates, geographic distribution of migrant workers and return migrants, reasons for migration, countries of return, and periods of migration. MTM enables IOM and its partners to maximize resources, set priorities, and develop better-targeted, evidence-based, mobility-sensitive and sustainable migration policies and plans. For more information about MTM Kyrgyzstan please visit <https://dtm.iom.int/kyrgyzstan>.

METHODOLOGY

MTM implements the Baseline Mobility Assessment (BMA) in Kyrgyzstan to track mobility, provide information on population estimates, geographic distribution of migrant workers and return migrants, reasons for migration and countries of return. Data is collected at the village level from key informants and direct observations.

When MTM assesses a district, enumerators collect data through two rounds of two-layered assessments:

1. District-level assessment (B1): It aims to identify villages with high inflows and outflows of Kyrgyz nationals and provide estimated numbers of each target population category.
2. Village-level assessment (B2): Based on the results of B1, this assessment collects information on inflows and outflows of each target population category at each village, identified through B1. Additional villages are also identified and assessed, based on referrals from key informants.

FIVE TARGET POPULATIONS

Through the Baseline Mobility Assessment (BMA), MTM tracks the locations and population sizes of five core target population categories²:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 International Migrant Workers | Foreign nationals who have moved to Kyrgyzstan for the purpose of employment. |
| 2 Return Migrants | Kyrgyz nationals who have returned to Kyrgyzstan after spending at least three months abroad. |
| 3 Emigrants | Kyrgyz nationals who have crossed international borders and currently reside as migrants abroad. |
| 4 Internal Migrant | Residents of other locations in Kyrgyzstan currently residing as internal migrants in the assessed communities. |
| 5 Internal Out Migrant | Kyrgyz nationals from an assessed community who moved as an internal migrant to another location within Kyrgyzstan. |

1. DTM Methodological framework. Retrieved from: <https://dtm.iom.int/about/methodological-framework>

2. IOM Glossary. Retrieved from: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf



SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS



7 Oblasts
2 cities
45 rayons³
999 commu-
nities assessed



1,159
key informants
interviewed



44,391
internal
migrants



227,629
emigrants



128,661
return migrants



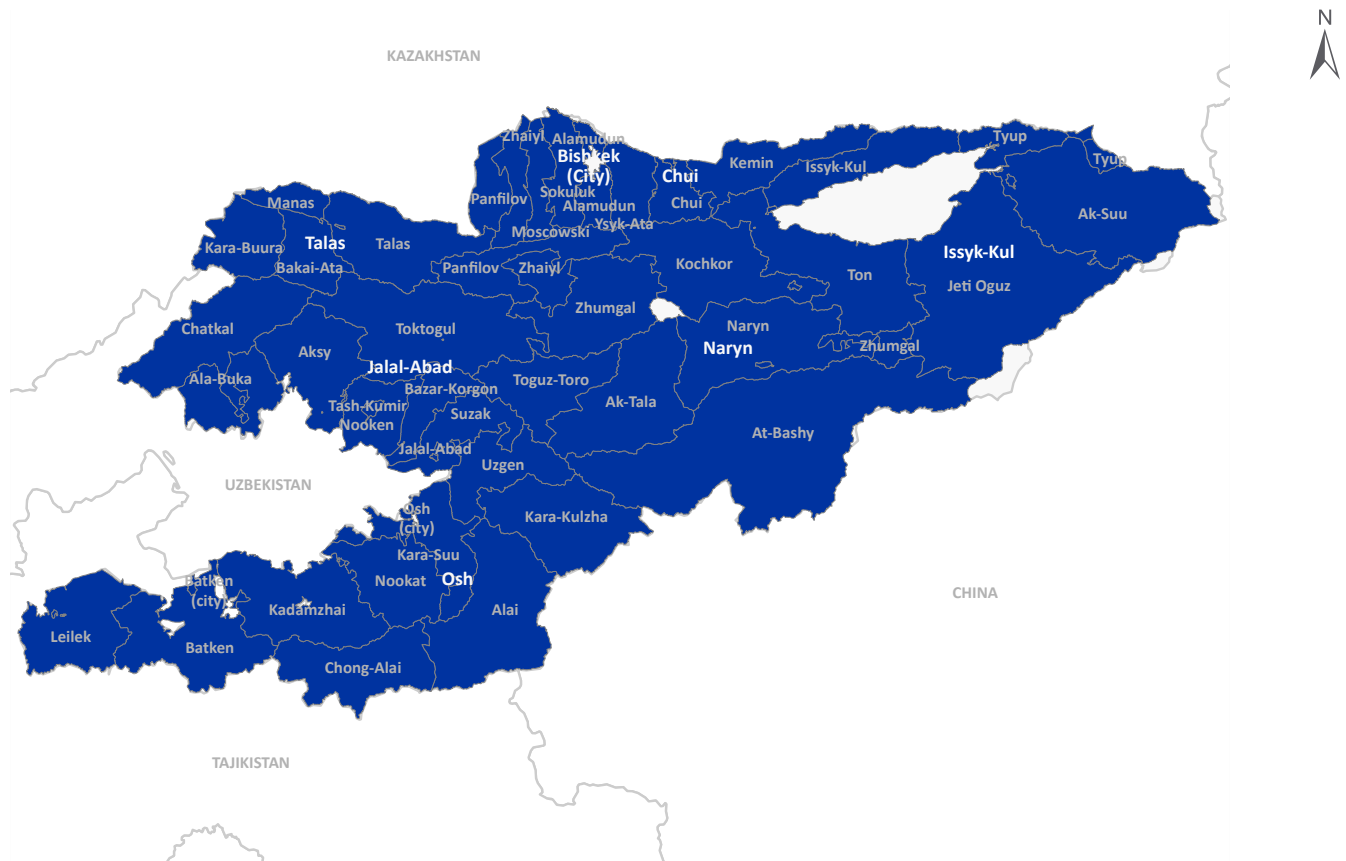
34,966
international
migrant workers



207,098
emigrants
moved to the
Russian
Federation

The Baseline Mobility Assessment (BMA) was conducted in all seven oblasts or provinces (Batken, Chui, Issyk-Kul, Jalal-Abad, Naryn, Osh, and Talas) including all 40 rayons or districts within these oblasts, and the two major cities of Kyrgyzstan (Bishkek city and Osh city). This assessment covered 999 communities through interviews with 1,159 key informants. Based on the key informants' estimates, 34,966 international migrant workers have been hosted in the assessed communities in Kyrgyzstan from 2020 to April 2024. Concurrently, 44,391 internal migrants are hosted in the assessed communities and 227,629 Kyrgyz nationals are reported to be residing abroad as emigrants. In addition, 128,661 migrants have returned from abroad. The Round three of the BMA is conducted in close coordination with The Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration (MLSSM) of the Kyrgyz Republic.

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE



Disclaimer: This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

Districts Covered

3. The 45 rayons include 40 rayons within the 7 oblasts, as well as Osh city and 4 rayons within Bishkek city.



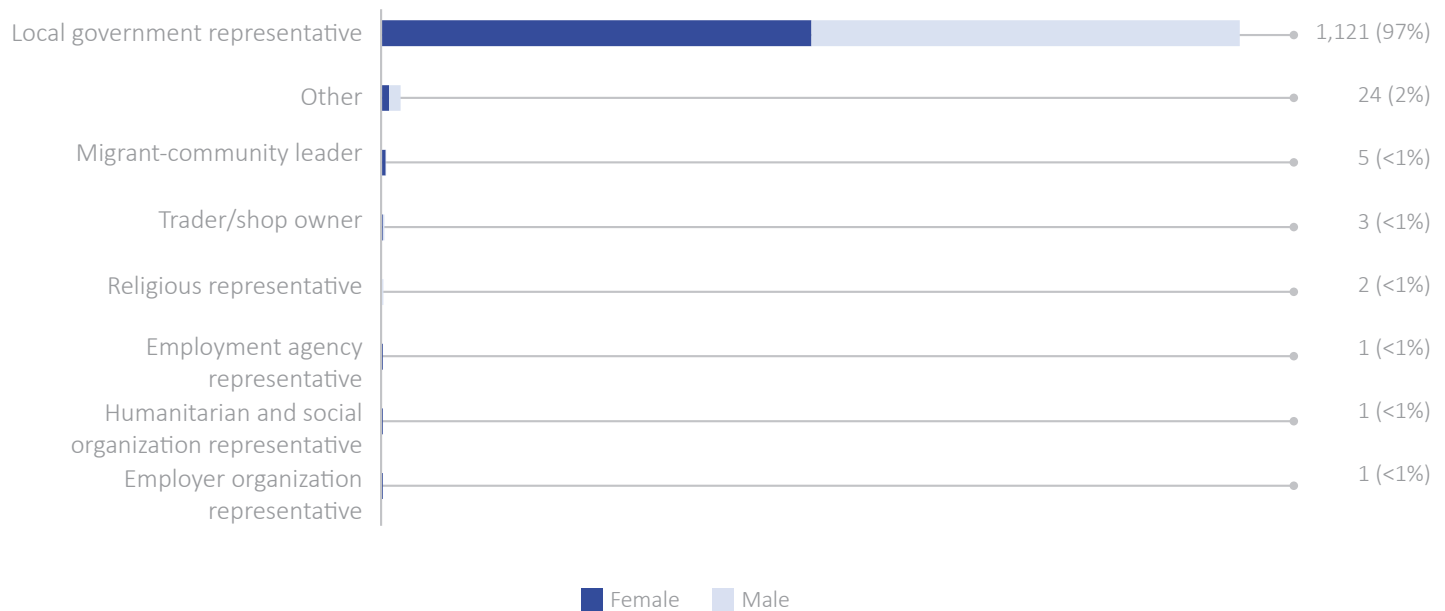
KEY INFORMANTS (KI)

Field enumerators collect data at the settlement level, predominantly through discussions with community key informants. Key informants were representatives from the community who had been referred by the members of the community who could give information concerning internal and international mobility in each community.

In round three of the data collection, 57 per cent of the key informants were men and 43 per cent were women ensuring a relatively balanced perspective from both genders. The majority of key informants were local government representatives, accounting 97 per cent. The "other" category, accounting for 2 per cent, included social activists, employees from house of culture, deputies of the village council, and representatives from medical and educational institutions. Additionally, there were less than 1 per cent migrant community leaders, traders/shop owners, religious representatives, representative from employment agency, humanitarian and social organization representative, and employer organization representative.

Key informants provided valuable insights into mobility patterns within the community, both internally and internationally. Their roles and positions within the community gave them access to critical information, significantly contributing to the data collection process. This approach ensured that the data reflected actual mobility trends and the factors influencing these trends.

Number and Percentage of Key Informants by Type and Sex



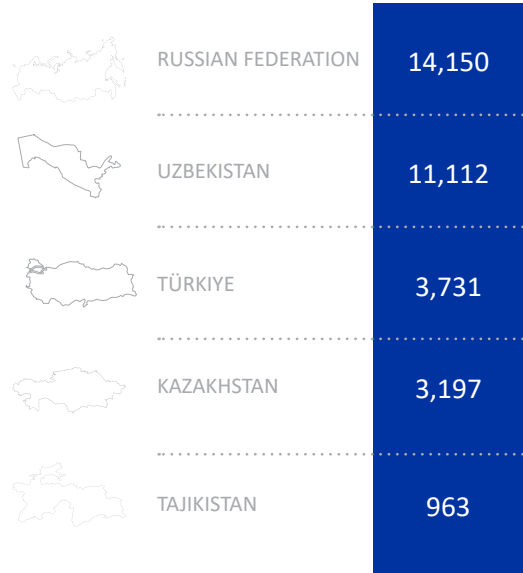
INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY





DEMOGRAPHICS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT WORKERS

TOP 5 NATIONALITIES



MTM key informants from 321 communities (32% of the assessed communities) confirmed the presence of international migrant workers in their communities.

Key informants confirmed the presence of 34,966 international migrant workers from more than 25 different countries who have arrived to the assessed communities from 2020 to April 2024. However, the vast majority of the migrant workers belonged to just five nationalities. The largest group was from the Russian Federation, accounting for 40 per cent of the international migrant workers in Kyrgyzstan. This was followed by Uzbek nationals at 32 per cent, Turkish nationals at 11 per cent, Kazakh nationals at 9 per cent, and Tajik nationals at 3 per cent.

These findings highlight the diverse yet concentrated nature of international migration to Kyrgyzstan. Understanding the nationalities and distribution of these migrant workers can aid in the development of targeted support and interventions.

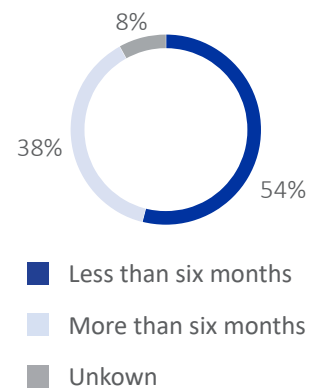
TYPE OF MIGRATION

In exploring the patterns of migration among international migrant workers coming to Kyrgyzstan, it is observed that the highest proportion of these workers engage in shorter duration of migration. Specifically, 54 per cent of migrant workers stay for less than six months. This trend suggests that many individuals may be coming to Kyrgyzstan for seasonal work, temporary projects, or short-term employment opportunities that do not require extended stays.

Following the migration for shorter periods, migration for longer periods is also significant, with 38 per cent of migrant workers staying in Kyrgyzstan for more than six months. These migrants might be seeking more stable employment opportunities, potentially looking to establish themselves more permanently within the local job market.

Additionally, there is a notable segment of the migrant population whose duration of stay in Kyrgyzstan is classified as unknown, comprising 8 per cent of the total. This category may include individuals whose length of stay is indefinite due to various factors.

Type of Migration by Percentage

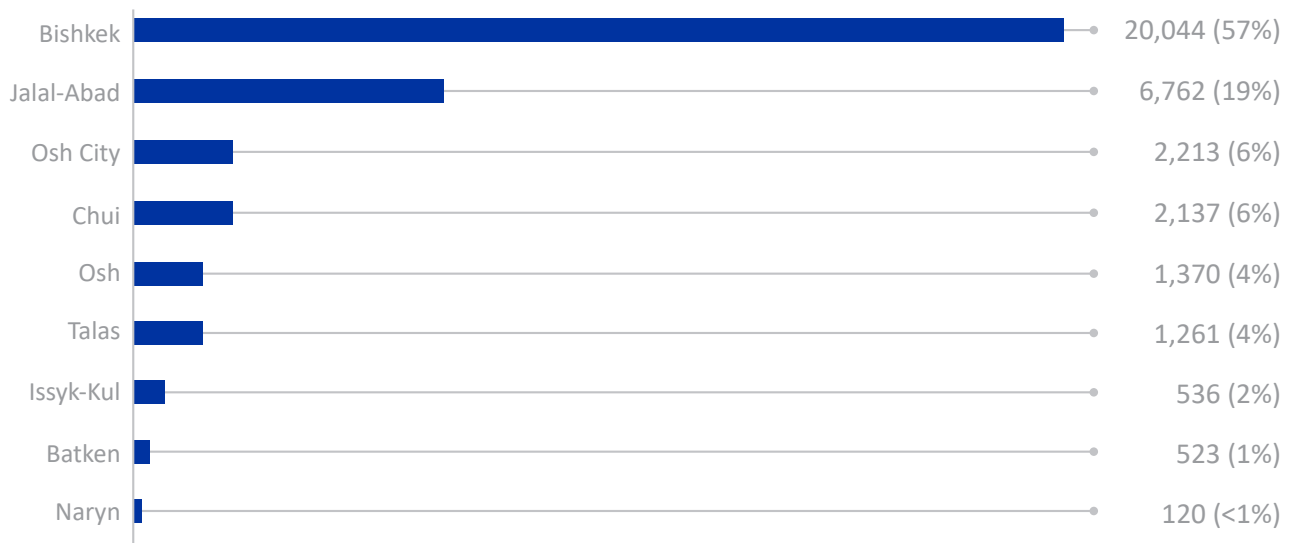




INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT WORKERS | BY PROVINCE OF ARRIVAL

Geographically, the distribution of international migrant workers was notably concentrated in Bishkek, which hosted 57 per cent of the total migrant worker population in the assessed communities. Jalal-Abad province followed with 19 per cent, Osh city (6%), Chui (6%), Osh (4%), Talas (4%), Issyk-Kul (2%), Batken (1%) and Naryn with less than 1 per cent.

Number and Percentage of International Migrant Workers from 2020 – April 2024 | By Province of Arrival



International Migrant Workers | Annual Trends

The aggregate number of migrant workers shows an increase of 70 per cent in 2021 compared to the preceding year, 2020. This upward trend continued with a further increase of 51 per cent in 2022 and an additional increase of 49 per cent in 2023.

The data for 2024, which includes figures up to April is expected to rise further by the end of the year and therefore cannot yet be compared to the previous year.

These consistent increases highlight a significant upward trend in international migration to Kyrgyzstan. Understanding the factors driving this growth is crucial for developing effective policies to manage and support the migrant worker population.

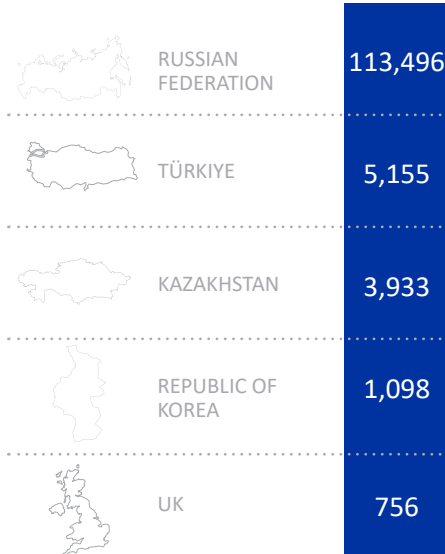
Number of International Migrant Workers from 2020 – April 2024 | Annual Trends





DEMOGRAPHICS OF RETURN MIGRANTS

TOP 5 COUNTRIES OF RETURN



MTM key informants from 939 communities (94% of the assessed communities) confirmed the presence of return migrants in their communities.

Key informants confirmed the presence of 128,661 return migrants who have returned from over 40 different countries from 2020 to April 2024 to the assessed communities. Notably, a substantial majority of these return migrants had returned from the Russian Federation, comprising 88 per cent of the total. Additionally, a smaller yet significant segment, constituting 4 per cent, had returned from Türkiye.

This concentration underscores the prevailing trend of return migration predominantly from the Russian Federation as the key host country, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of migration patterns within the assessed communities.

Kazakhstan ranked as the third highest country of return, accounting for 3 per cent of return migrants. This was followed by an "unknown" category, which comprised 1 per cent of return migrants. The Republic of Korea also accounted for 1 per cent, while the United Kingdom (UK) had less than 1 per cent of return migrants.

Reasons for Return

When asked to rank the importance of various reasons for return to Kyrgyzstan, on a scale from 0 ("not applicable") to 5 ("very important"), the family matters including family reunification or marriage emerged as the most significant reason, with an average ranking of 4.2. Next, the completion of work contracts or duties in the destination country was ranked as the second most important reason, with an average score of 3.5.

Expiration/high cost of work permit (patent), deportation, depreciation of currency (mainly Russian rouble) and partial mobilization of the Russian Federation were slightly important, with average scores of 3.1, 2.7, 2.6 and 2.5, respectively.

Other reasons, including returning to find better job opportunities in Kyrgyzstan, health conditions (mental health/disability), financial problems/debts, and economic sanctions (Russian Federation), each received an average ranking of 2.4, 2.3, 2.2 and 2, respectively.

Conflict and general security situation abroad (1.9), human rights violation abroad (1.8), low income in country of return (1.8), lack of economic opportunities abroad (1.6), natural disasters/climate change abroad (1.3) and other (0.1) were also noted as reasons, albeit with lower importance.



DEMOGRAPHICS OF RETURN MIGRANTS

Importance of factors in returning to Kyrgyzstan Since 2023 by ranking

0 = not applicable, 1= very unimportant, 2 = unimportant, 3 = slightly important, 4= important, 5 = very important



4.2

Family issues (family reunification, marriage, etc)



2.2

Financial problems/debts



3.5

Completion of work contract/duties in the destination



2.0

Economic sanctions (Russian Federation)



3.1

Patent (expiration/high cost of work permit)



1.9

Conflict and general security situation abroad



2.7

Deportation



1.8

Human rights violation



2.6

Depreciation of currency (mainly RFs rouble)



1.8

Low income in country of return



2.5

Partial mobilization of the Russian Federation



1.6

Lack of economic opportunities abroad



2.4

To find (better) job opportunities in home country



1.3

Natural disasters/climate change abroad



2.3

Health issues (mental health, disability)



0.1

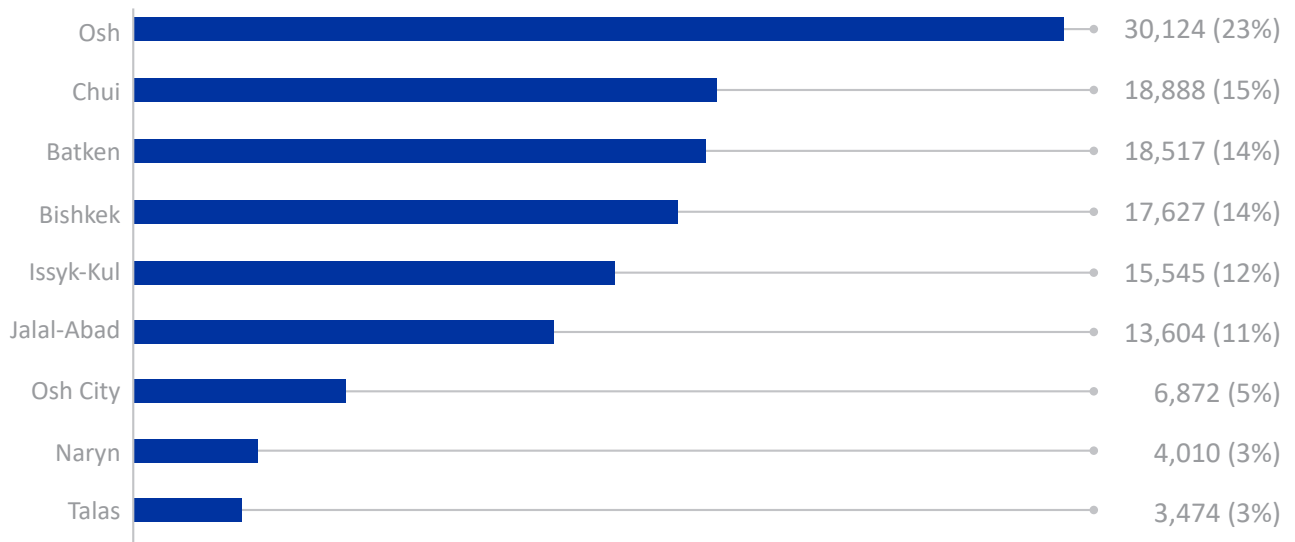
Other



RETURN MIGRANTS | BY PROVINCE OF ARRIVAL

Twenty three per cent of the return migrants from the assessed communities returned to Osh province, followed by Chui (15%), Batken (14%), Bishkek (14%), Issyk-Kul (12%), Jalal-Abad (11%), Osh city (5%), Naryn (3%), and Talas (3%) provinces.

Number and Percentage of Return Migrants from 2020 – April 2024 | By Province Of Arrival



Return Migrants | Annual Trends

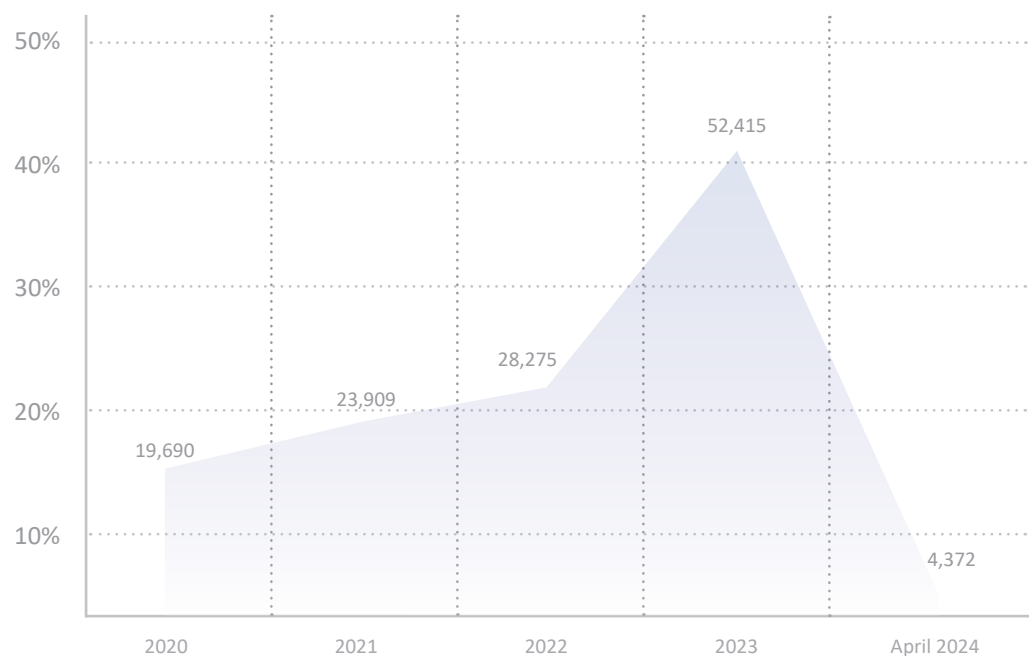
The overall number of return migrants witnessed a significant upswing, surging by 21 per cent in 2021 compared to the preceding year, 2020. Subsequently, in 2022, an increase of 18 per cent recorded. In 2023, the trend took a noteworthy

upturn, experiencing an 85 per cent increase compared to the previous year.

The observed increase in return migration from 2021 to 2023 highlights a significant shift in migration patterns, reflecting a notable rise in the number of individuals returning to Kyrgyzstan.

The data for 2024, which includes figures up to April is expected to rise further by the end of the year and therefore cannot yet be compared to the previous year.

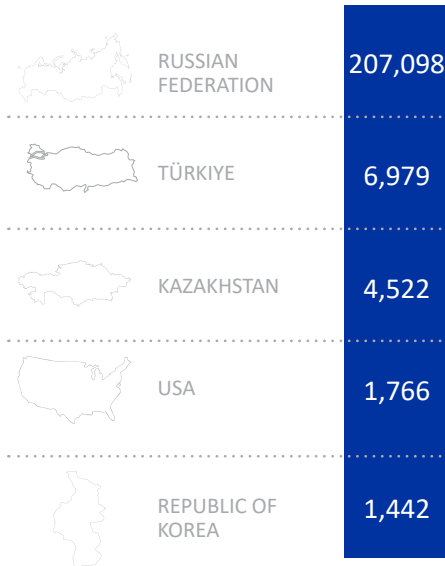
Number of Return Migrants from 2020 – April 2024 | Annual Trends





DEMOGRAPHICS OF EMIGRANTS

TOP 5 COUNTRIES OF MIGRATION



During the third round of BMA data collection, MTM key informants from 939 communities (94% of the assessed communities) confirmed the existence of Kyrgyz nationals who have left their communities and currently live abroad as emigrants.

Key informants indicated that 227,629 Kyrgyz nationals from the assessed communities have migrated to more than 45 different countries between 2020 and April 2024. The majority of these emigrants were in the Russian Federation, which hosts 91 per cent of the migrant population. Türkiye is the second most popular destination, accommodating 3 per cent of the emigrants, followed by Kazakhstan, which hosts 2 per cent. The United States of America (USA) and the Republic of Korea each host 1 per cent of the emigrants.

The data indicate that the top four countries of return (the Russian Federation, Türkiye, Kazakhstan, and Republic of Korea) are also among the top destinations for emigration. The overlap highlights a strong migration loop, suggesting that conditions in these countries strongly influence both emigration and return decisions. Consequently targeted policies and support measures are essential to manage and support Kyrgyz nationals in these major migration corridors.

Reasons for Migration

When asked to rank the importance of various reasons for emigration from Kyrgyzstan, on a scale from 0 ("not applicable") to 5 ("very important"), low income and lack of economic opportunities in Kyrgyzstan emerged as the first and second most significant reasons, with an average ranking of 4.5 and 4.4, respectively. Close behind, looking for (better) job opportunities and better living conditions in the destination country were ranked as the third and fourth most important reasons, with average scores of 4.1 and 4, respectively.

Financial problems/debts in Kyrgyzstan and obtaining a work contract or duties in the destination country were considered important, with average scores of 3.7 and 3.5 respectively. Other reasons, including economic situation/depreciation of currency in Kyrgyzstan and family matters (joining with family elsewhere, marriage) and education, each received an average ranking of 3.1, 2.3 and 2.3, respectively.

The remaining factors, including emigration for seeking medical treatment, economic sanctions (Russian Federation), conflict and general security situation, human rights violations in Kyrgyzstan, and natural disasters/climate change were generally ranked as unimportant or very unimportant.



DEMOGRAPHICS OF EMIGRANTS

Importance of factors in migration from Kyrgyzstan Since 2023 by ranking

0 = not applicable, 1= very unimportant, 2 = unimportant, 3 = slightly important, 4= important, 5 = very important



4.5

Low income in Kyrgyzstan



2.3

Family matters (joining family elsewhere, marriage, etc)



4.4

Lack of economic opportunities in Kyrgyzstan



2.3

Education



4.1

To find (better) job opportunities abroad



1.8

To seek medical treatment/health reasons



4.0

Better living conditions



1.3

Economic sanctions (Russian Federation)



3.7

Financial problems/debts



1.3

Conflict and general security situation in home country



3.5

Obtained work contract/work duties abroad



1.2

Human rights violations in home country



3.1

Poor economy/depreciation of currency in Kyrgyzstan



1.1

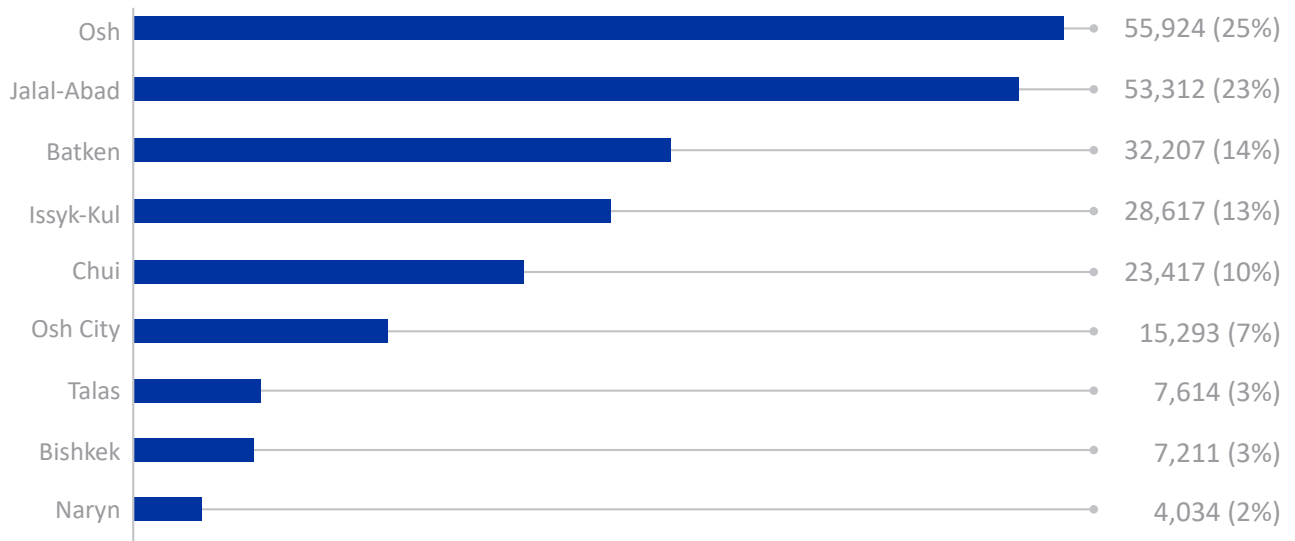
Natural disasters/climate change abroad



EMIGRANTS | BY PROVINCE

Twenty five per cent of the emigrants from the assessed communities are from Osh province. The second highest number of emigrants (23%) are from Jalal-Abad province, followed by Batken (14%), Issyk-Kul (13%), Chui (10%), and Osh City (7%). Only 6 per cent of the emigrants are from both Talas and Bishkek provinces and 2 per cent are from Naryn province.

Number and Percentage of Emigrants from 2020 – April 2024 | By Province

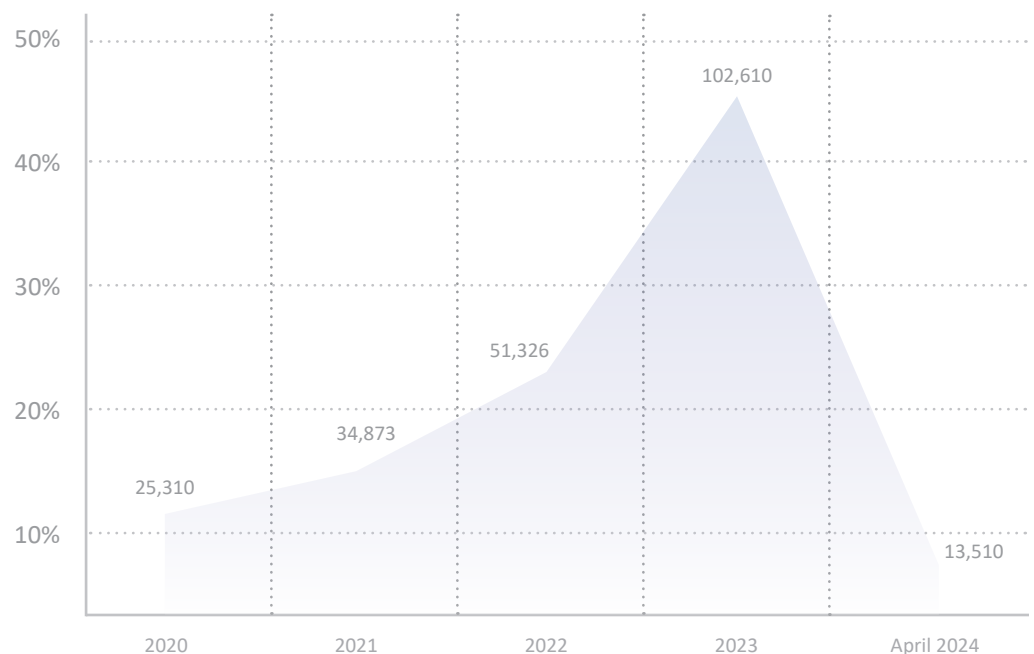


Emigrants | Annual Trends

The overall number of emigrants experienced a significant increase of 38 per cent in 2021 compared to the preceding year, 2020. Following this pronounced increase, there was an additional increase of 47 per cent in 2022 compared to 2021, and a subsequent rise of 100 per cent in 2023. The data for 2024, which includes figures up to April is expected to rise further by the end of the year and therefore cannot yet be compared to the previous year.

The fluctuation in emigrant numbers over the observed years underscores the complexity of migration dynamics. While the provided data offers valuable insights, there remains a need for more in-depth research to comprehensively understand the underlying reasons behind these fluctuations. Conducting additional research would enable a nuanced exploration of economic, social, and geopolitical factors that contribute to the varying trends in emigration, facilitating more informed policy decisions and interventions.

Number of Emigrants from 2020 – April 2024 | Annual Trends



INTERNAL MOBILITY





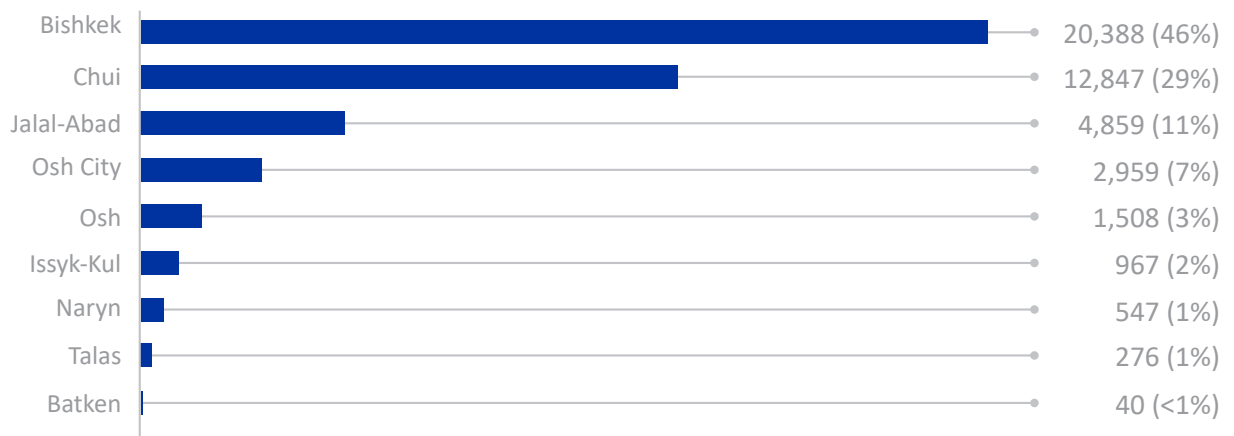
INTERNAL MIGRANTS

MTM key informants from 38 per cent of the assessed communities confirmed the presence of internal migrants in their communities.

Key informants indicated that 44,391 Kyrgyz nationals have internally migrated to the assessed communities during 2023. Twenty one per cent of the internal migrants had migrated within the same district. Almost half of the internal migrants (46%) moved to Bishkek, followed by Chui (29%), Jalal-Abad (11%), Osh City (7%), and Osh (3%) provinces.

Moreover, the highest numbers of internal migrants from the assessed communities were reported in Oktyabrskiy district (30%) located in Bishkek, followed by Sokuluk (22%) located in Chui, and Pervomaiskiy (15%) also located in Bishkek.

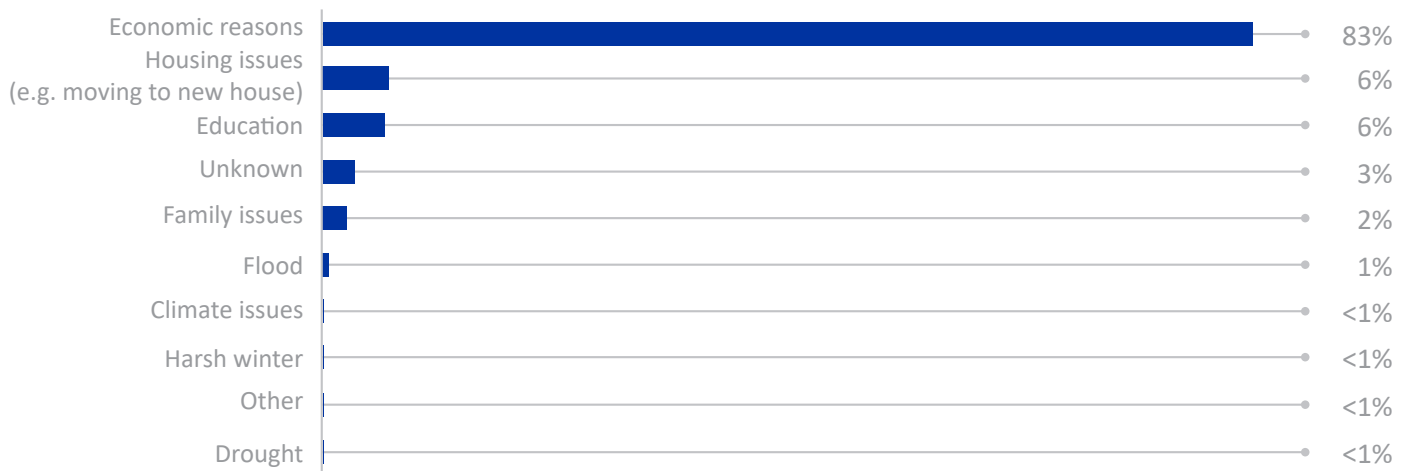
Number and Percentage of Internal Migrants in 2023 | By Province of Arrival



Reasons for Migration

When asked about the reasons for internal migration, the top first reason for internal migration was mentioned as economic reasons (83%), followed by housing issues including moving to a new house (6%), and education (6%). However, 3 per cent of the reasons for migration were unknown. Two per cent had family issues, and 1 per cent migrated due to environmental factors including climate issues, drought, flood and harsh winter conditions.

Percentage of Reasons for Migration in 2023





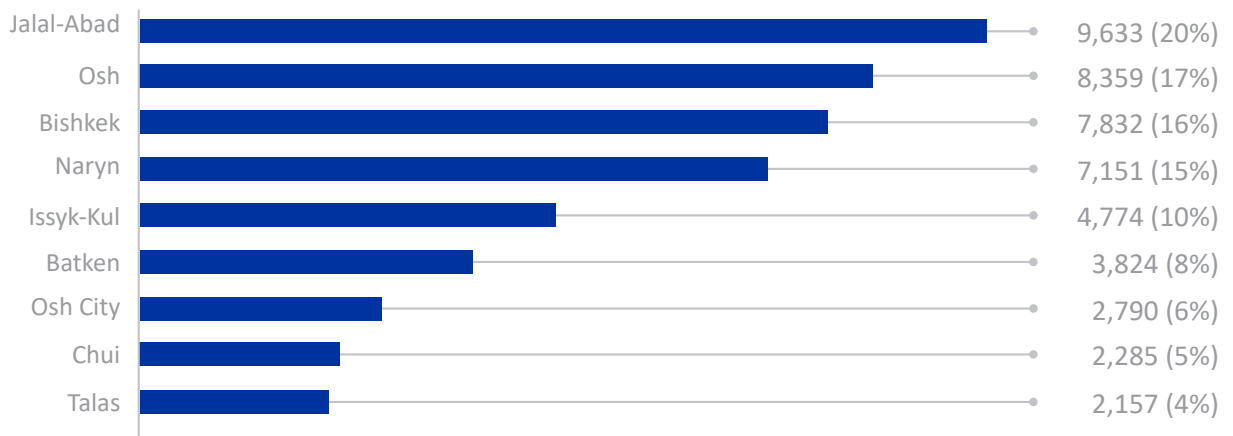
INTERNAL EMIGRANTS

During the third round of data collection, MTM key informants from 74 per cent of the assessed communities confirmed the existence of internal emigrants who moved from their communities and currently live somewhere else within Kyrgyzstan.

Key informants indicated that 48,805 Kyrgyz nationals have migrated internally from the assessed communities in 2023. Only 10 per cent of the internal migrants migrated within the same district. Twenty per cent of internal migrants had moved from Jalal-Abad province, followed by Osh (17%), Bishkek (16%), Naryn (15%), Issyk-Kul (10%), Batken (8%), Osh City (6%), Chui (5%), and Talas (4%) provinces.

Moreover, the top three districts of internal emigrants were Oktyabrskiy district (13%) located in Bishkek, followed by Toguz-Toro district (7%) located in Jalal-Abad province, and Osh district (6%) located in Osh City.

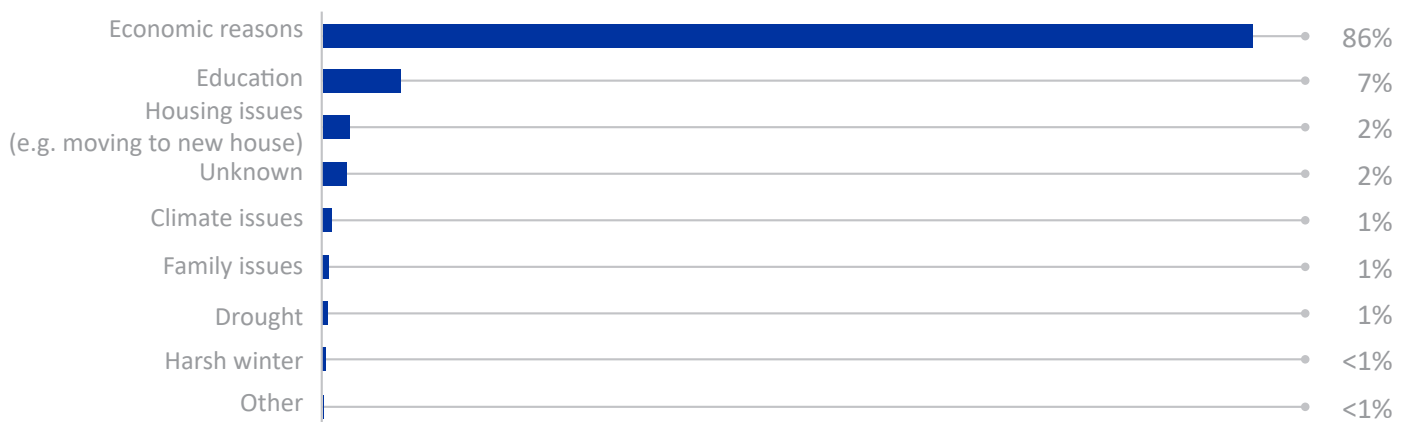
Number and Percentage of Internal Emigrants in 2023 | By Province



Reasons for Internal Emigration

When asked about the reasons for internal emigration, the top first reason for migration out of the assessed communities was mentioned as economic reasons (86%), followed by migration due to education reasons (7%), and housing issues including moving to a new house (2%). However, 2 per cent of the reasons for migration were unknown. One per cent of the reasons for migration were family issues. The remaining 2 per cent of the reasons were environmental factors including climate issues, drought, and harsh winter.

Percentage of Reasons for Internal Emigration in 2023





ANNEX: ACCESS TO SERVICES









In the third round of data collection, MTM enumerators interviewed key informants regarding the presence of essential services in their respective communities. The findings revealed significant gaps in infrastructure: 14 per cent of communities lacked clinics, 78 per cent lacked hospitals, 11 per cent were without markets, 7 per cent lacked access to safe drinking water sources, 12 per cent were without schools, 46 per cent did not have access to banks, ATMs or post offices in their communities and only 13 per cent had public service centers within their communities. However, there was 100% access to mobile internet recorded in the assessed communities.

Availability of Services within the Community		
Services	Yes	No
Clinic	86%	14%
Hospital	22%	78%
Internet	100%	0%
Market	89%	11%
Drinking Water	93%	7%
School	88%	12%
Employment Center	11%	89%
Bank, ATM, Post Office	54%	46%
Public Service Center	13%	87%

AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES BY DISTANCE

Key informants were asked to provide the travel distance to the nearest facility of services if they were unavailable within the communities. Based on key informant estimates, in 14 per cent of the communities that did not have clinics, 8,373 families (11%) had to travel for more than five kilometres to access health clinics elsewhere. In 78 per cent of the communities that did not have hospitals, 47,343 families (10%) have to travel for more than 25 kilometres to access hospitals elsewhere. In 11 per cent of communities that do not have markets, 17,339 families (35%) have to travel for more than 10 kilometres to access nearest market. In the 7 per cent of communities that do not have sources of safe drinking water, 17,173 families (55%) have to travel for three kilometres or more to access safe drinking water. In 12 per cent of the communities that do not have schools, 22,732 families (40%) did not have access to education facilities in less than three kilometer distance. In 89 per cent of the communities that do not have employment center in their communities, 78,266 families (13%) have to travel for 40 kilometer or more to access an employment center. In 46 per cent of the communities that do not have bank, ATMs or post, 20,609 families (10%) have to travel for more than 30 kilometers. Finally, in 87 per cent of the communities that do not have public services, more than 80,922 families (14%) have to travel for more than 30 kilometers to access public service centers.

DISTANCE TO NEAREST FACILITY AMONG COMMUNITIES WITHOUT FACILITIES

Travel Distance	 Clinic	 Hospital	 Market	 Safe Drinking Water	 School	 Employment Center	 Bank, ATM, Post	 Public Services
	Number of Households (HHs)							
0-5 KM	70,953	171,890	14,709	18,968	48,777	127,071	91,336	134,017
6-10 KM	6,248	126,050	17,210	5,871	5,436	136,903	51,962	146,088
11-15 KM	1,032	67,479	4,525	2,965	122	115,206	23,148	106,333
16-20 KM	755	45,069	4,892	1,405	2,951	64,797	14,009	58,211
21-25 KM	0	26,966	3,410	945	0	30,230	8,809	38,525
Over 25 KM	338	47,343	4,512	1,209	21	132,095	26,355	99,977
Total Households	79,326	484,797	49,258	31,363	57,307	606,302	215,619	583,151



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