

# TAJIKISTAN



## MIGRATION SITUATION REPORT JANUARY-JUNE 2024



Funded by  
the European Union



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
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and Cooperation SDC

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This report is part of the outputs under the European Union funded project “Regional Evidence for Migration Analysis and Policy (REMAP)” and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) project, "Labour Migration Programme - Central Asia". This document was produced with the financial assistance of the European Union and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the aforementioned donors.

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## MOBILITY TRACKING MATRIX

Mobility Tracking Matrix (MTM) is a system based on the IOM's Global Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)<sup>1</sup>, and aims to track and monitor displacement and population mobility. MTM collects and analyzes information about mobility and vulnerabilities of displaced and mobile populations. This system allows systematically grasp and disseminate the better context and information on the needs of these populations to key decision-makers. The MTM is adapted to Tajikistan context from the global Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) methodology during the COVID-19 pandemic (2020) and the MTM in Labour Migration Program - Central Asia, funded by The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) since 2022. It is designed to regularly and systematically capture, process, and disseminate information to provide a better understanding of the movements and evolving needs of migrants in Tajikistan. MTM initiatives in Tajikistan also co-funded with the European Union (EU) within the frame of "*Displacement Tracking Matrix and Regional Evidence for Migration Analysis and Policy (DTM-RE-MAP)*" since 2023.

## INTRODUCTION

The report aims to provide an overview of the migration patterns and mobility in Tajikistan, drawing upon data from the latest available sources between January to June 2024 from national and international datasets on migratory movements concentrating on the most recent migration situation in Tajikistan. This includes migration flow, number of residences permits and remittances, as well as reasons for migration. The report includes the continuing impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on traditional migration corridors in the region, changing labour migration flows, increase of climate change and migration concerns, the growing urbanization process, the social-economic circumstances, and other major events described as main contributing factors of the human mobility and migratory movements in the given period in the country. Additionally, the report also narrates the impacts of the tragic incident on the Crocus City Hall in Krasnogorsk near Moscow carried out on 22 March 2024 by Islamic State-Khorasan (ISIS-K), which involved Tajik migrants as perpetrators on migratory movements<sup>2</sup>.

## METHODOLOGY

The compilation report was done through desk research, literature review, and quantitative analysis of relevant primary and secondary sources available. The MTM team collected and processed the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of Population of Tajikistan (MoLMEP) data together with the January to June 2024 reports, including all those applicable to the analysis of mobility outflows and inflows to the country in the last six months (2024) including media sources. Further analysis from the Baseline Mobility Assessment (BMA), Return Migrants survey (RMS), and its findings presented and compared with the existing primary and secondary data sources. The following providers were the main data sources for this compilation report:

- Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan (NBSK)
- Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD)
- Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of Population of Tajikistan (MoLMEP)
- Ministry of Internal Affairs (Mol)
- Media sources
- State Committee for National Security (SCNS) of Tajikistan
- United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR)
- World Bank (WB)

<sup>1</sup> [Displacement Tracking Matrix \(iom.int\)](https://iom.int)

<sup>2</sup> [Terrorist attack happened in Crocus City Event Hall in Moscow on 22 March 2024.](#)



## LIMITATIONS

The research presented in this report does not aim to cover all migration topics, however, the report focuses on the most relevant migration topics for Tajikistan depending on the availability of data, including migration flow, number of residence permits and remittances, as well as reasons for migration. Furthermore, limited sources of migration data and its accessibility influence the overall quality, content variance, and official sources for concise data availability. Within this context, different sources of data have been used, some of which (1) may not have available data January – June 2024, (2) may not have disaggregation or breakdowns that are compatible with other data, or (3) may not have their methodology publicly available, (4) may have a discrepancy with other sources of data providers.

## GLOSSARY<sup>3</sup>

Emigrant:	national who moved from country of origin to another country, so that the country of destination;
Labour migration:	the movement of persons from one state to another, or within their own country of residence, for the purpose of employment;
Migrant flow:	the number of international migrants arriving in a country (or the number of international migrants departing from a country (over the course of a specific period;
Migrant worker:	a person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a national;
Return migrant:	the movement of nationals returning home after having moved away from country of origin and crossed an international border;

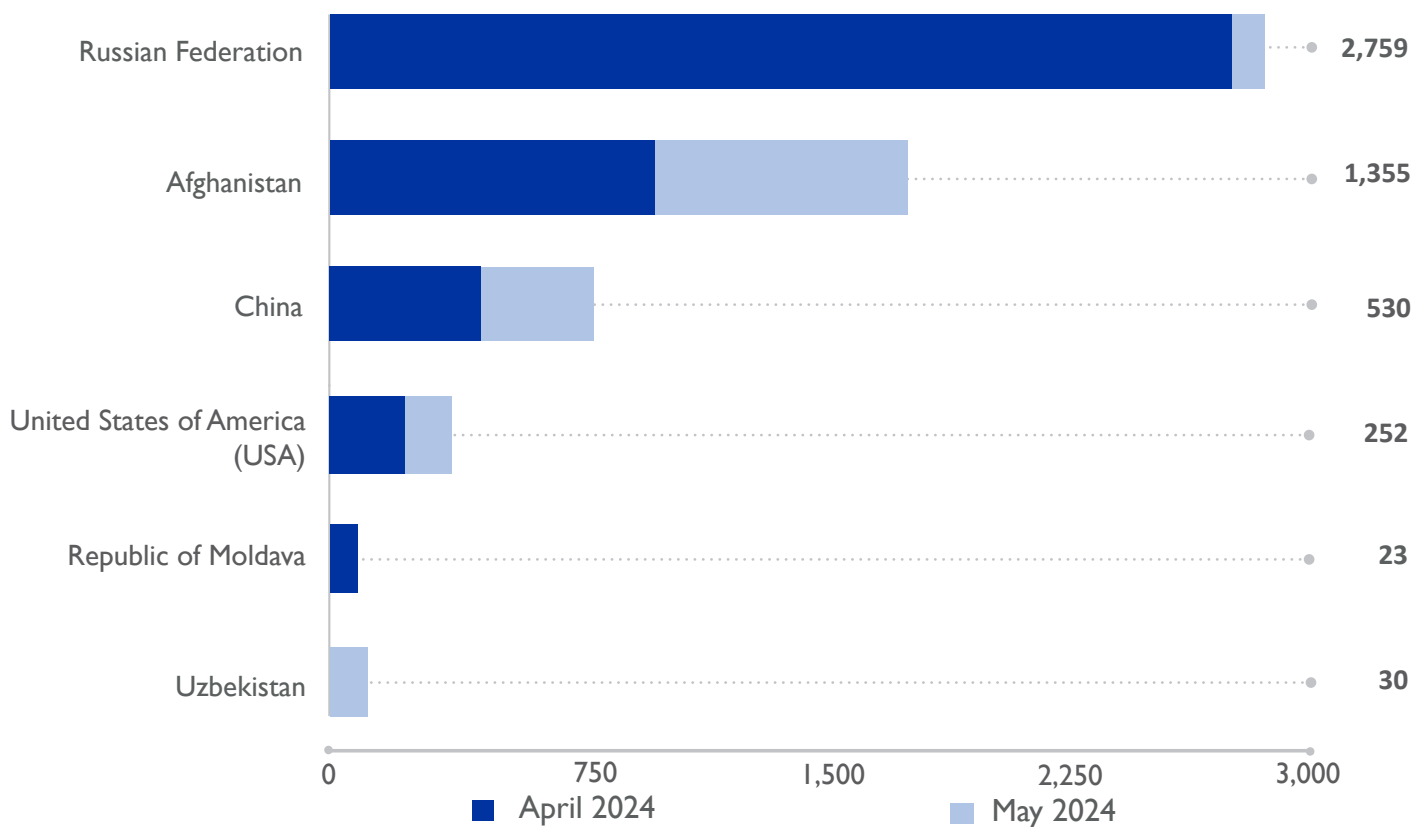
<sup>3</sup> IOM Glossary on Migration (2019)



## MIGRATION STOCKS AND FLOWS

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 Tajikistan. The Migration Service of the MoLMEP of Tajikistan is the main national authority for publishing migration data, and in the first half of 2024, there was no data available from the official authority related to international migrants residing in Tajikistan. However, according to the BMA conducted in April and May 2024, there were respectively 4,010 and 1,060 international migrant workers in five provinces and 12 districts of Tajikistan<sup>4</sup>. More specifically in April 2024, the Russian Federation (2,731), Afghanistan (714), China (313), the United States of America (166), and the Republic of Moldova (23) were the top five countries of origin of international migrant workers residing in Tajikistan. Comparatively in May 2024, the top five countries of origin were Afghanistan (641), China (227), the United States of America (86), Uzbekistan (30) and the Russian Federation (28) (IOM BMA, 2024). Overall, the inflow of international migrant workers showed 73.6 per cent decrease between the data collection in April and May 2024 in Tajikistan.

Figure 1: International migrant workers in Tajikistan, April and May 2024 (absolute numbers)



Source: IOM BMA R3 and R4, 2024

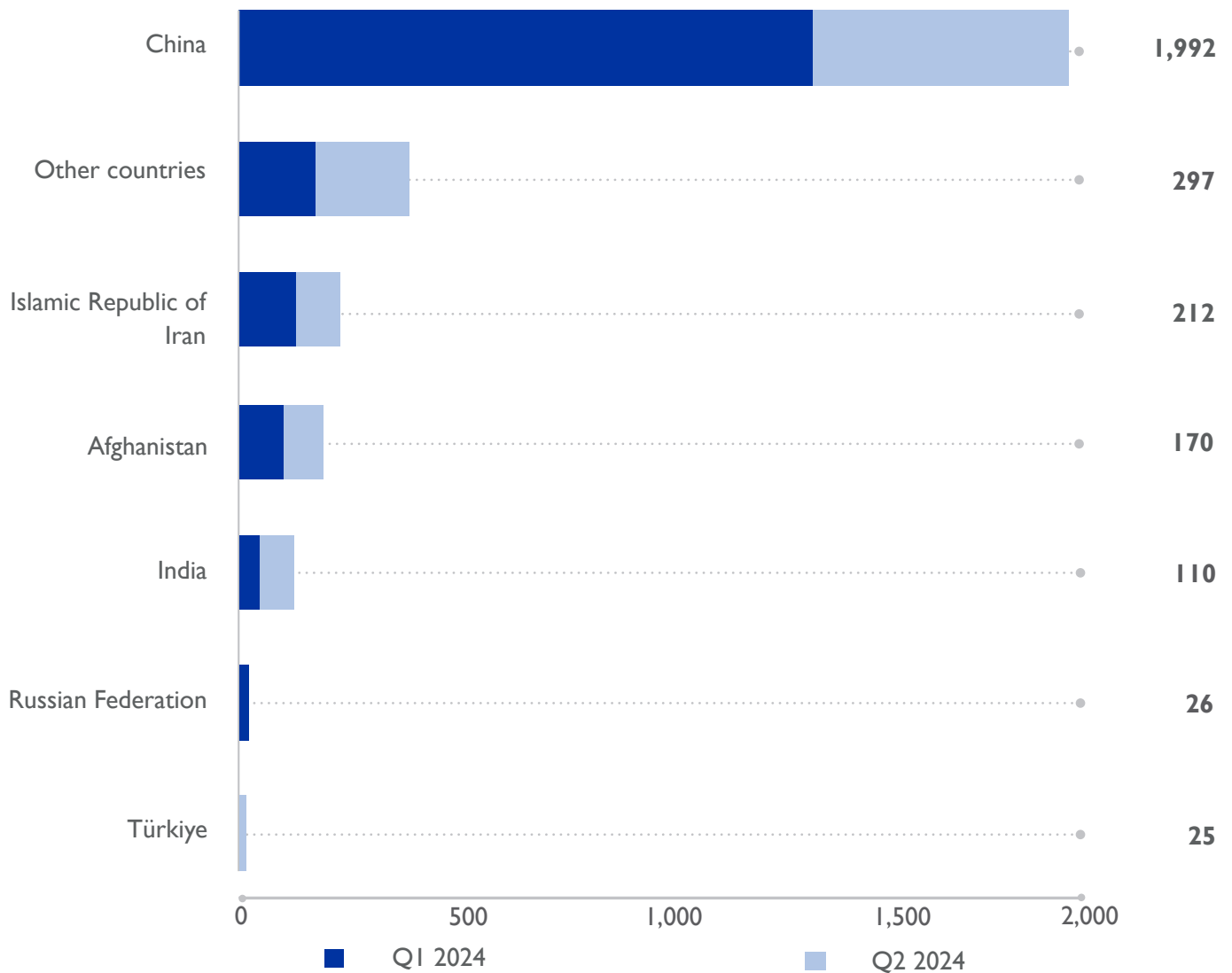
According to Asia Plus media group in Tajikistan, there are 6,500 work permit quotas provided in 2024 from the authorities to organizations executing priority projects under bilateral investment agreements in Tajikistan (7,500 provided in 2023) for hiring foreign labour mostly from China (4,440), followed by Afghanistan (400), Islamic Republic of Iran (350), and India (300), who predominantly work in the manufacturing (2,610) and construction (2,270) industries. One-third of the quotas (2,000) were given to companies in Dushanbe, followed by the Region of Republican Subordination (900), Sughd region (880), Khatlon region (600), and Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) (60).

<sup>4</sup> BMA data collection was conducted in Ismoili Somoni, Sino, Firdawsji, Shohmansur districts of Dushanbe city, Vahdat city, Rudaki district of Districts of Central Subordination, Khujand city of Sughd region, Bokhtar, Kulob cities and Panj district of Khatlon region, Khorugh city and Vanj district of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO).



As of June 2024, there were a total number of 2,832 work permits given to foreign nationals majority to citizens from China (1,992), the Islamic Republic of Iran (212), Afghanistan (170), India (110) and the Russian Federation (51) (MoLMEP, 2024). The main reason behind the increased number of migrant workers from China is related to ongoing projects (10) between China and Tajikistan under the Bilateral Investment Treaties (BIT), namely the construction of the Dushanbe Thermal Power Plant-2, the Juntai-Dangara-Sinsilu-Textile spinning mill, a metallurgical enterprise in the Sughd region, the Huaxin Gayur-Sogd Cement cement plant, the Vahdat-Yavan railway tunnel and enterprises for the production of aluminum fluoride and cryolite (KHOVAR, 2024).

Figure 2: Work permits given between Jan – June 2024 in Tajikistan (absolute numbers)



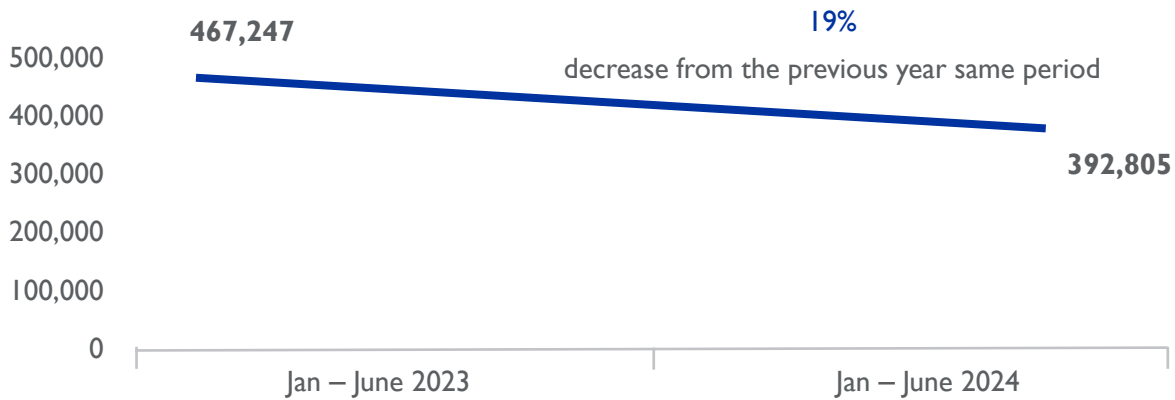
Source: MoLMEP, 2024

Within this reporting period, the MoLMEP of Tajikistan conducted the monitoring of compliance with the ratio of foreign specialists in companies that have permits to employ foreign labour in the country. Monitoring report highlights 31,457 Tajik citizens (compared to 29,415 in the first half of 2023) and 4,065 foreign citizens were employed and working in these companies with the ratio of averages 10 per cent foreign specialists to 90 per cent local employees.



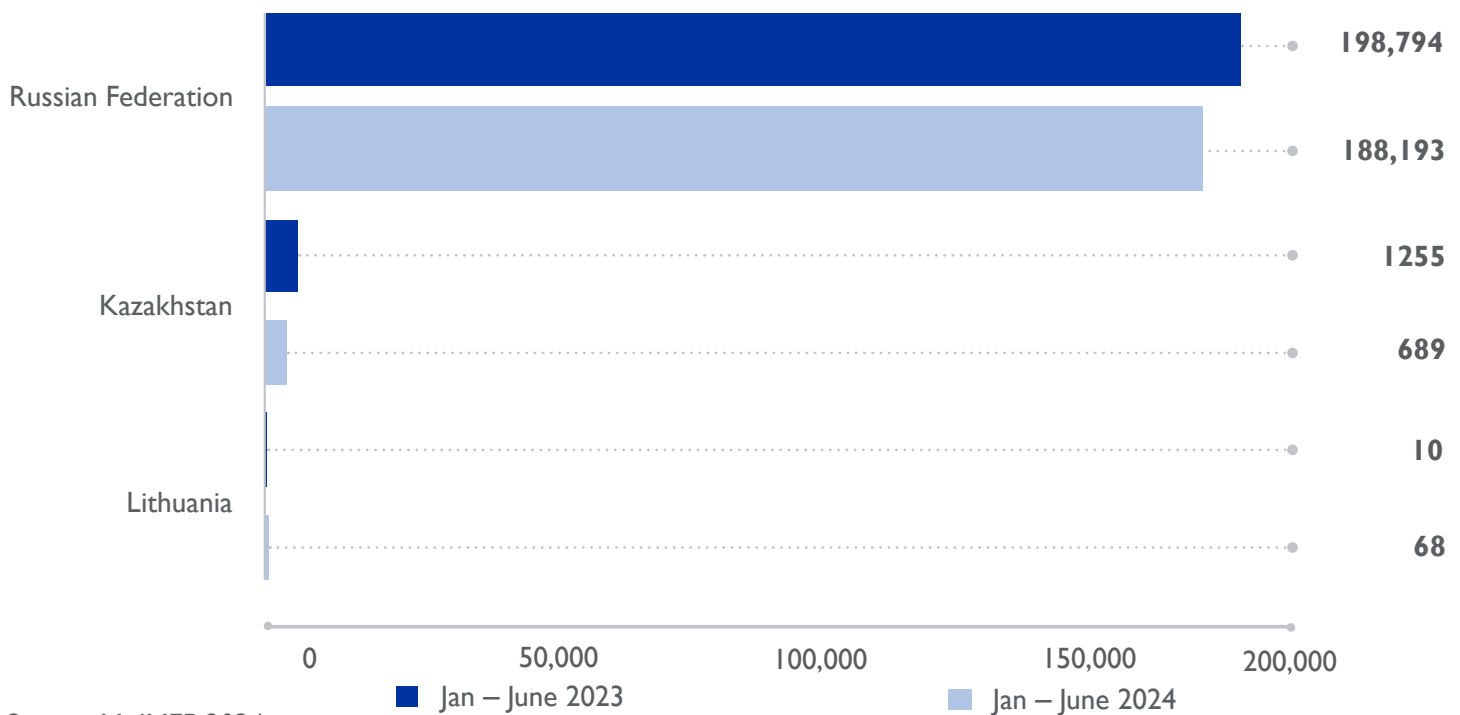
Migration outflow refers to a number of departures, consisting of those who moved out of an area in and from the country. In the first half of 2024, there were 392,805 emigrants registered (314,052 men, 78,853 women) and this number was 16 per cent less than the first half of the 2023 (467,247). Top destination countries for Tajik emigrants were the Russian Federation (386,987) and Kazakhstan (1,994). This number was respectfully low compared to the same period of 2023 numbers (454,257 in the Russian Federation, 8,805 in Kazakhstan). Number of emigrants to other countries was also significantly low (78 in Lithuania, 65 in Türkiye, 32 in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK)) comparing to those who departed to the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan.

Figure 3. Emigration flow, Jan – June 2023 and 2024 (absolute numbers)



Source: MoLMEP, 2023 and 2024

Figure 4. Top 3 destinations for emigration, Jan – June 2023 and 2024 (absolute numbers)



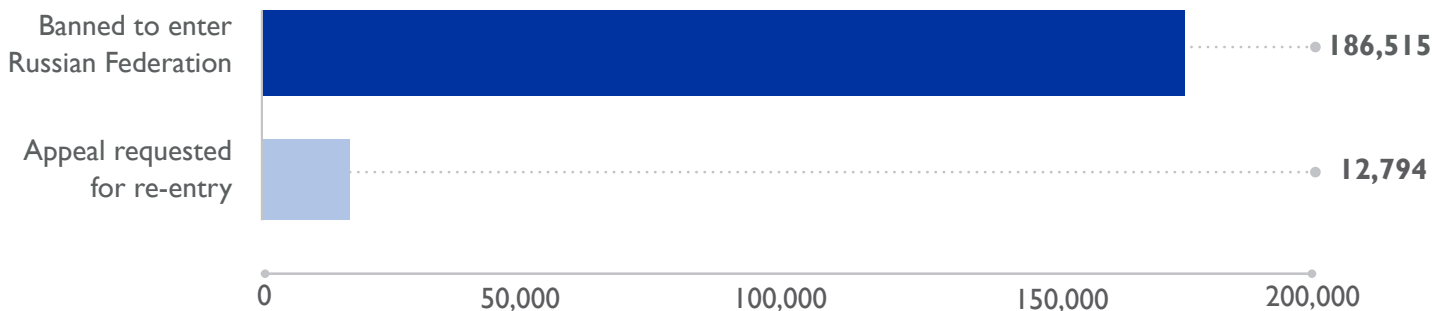
Source: MoLMEP, 2024





During this period, through 26 licensed public and private labour export agencies 5,158 individuals were provided with jobs abroad in a total of 17 countries, including the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania, Türkiye, United States of America, Poland, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Montenegro, Estonia, Canada, and Hungary (MoLMEP, 2024). Furthermore, during the reporting period a total of 186,515 citizens of Tajikistan held an entry ban to the Russian Federation and this number is 9 per cent higher than in the same period in 2023 (171,170). Within this, MoLMEP reported as receiving 12,794 appeals regarding the re-entry to the Russian Federation and resolving employment conflict issues in the first half of 2024. This number increased by 51 per cent from the same period in 2023 (8,460). At the same time Migration Service of the MoLMEP returned 4,731 individuals (4,163 men, 568 women) back to Tajikistan who were listed in the entry ban by the Russian Federation from the border. Of the total number, 1,487 individuals were advised to pursue vocational training and 679 were recommended for employment within the country. As a result, 776 people acquired their vocational skills, and 263 were provided with employment within the country. Furthermore, 17,706 official request received by the MoLMEP in the first half of 2024 from citizens requesting support with securing employment abroad, requests for advice and consultations regarding new destination countries for labour migration. Within this, there were 1,782 meetings conducted for 358,210 citizens (233,043 men, 125,167 women) to increase awareness for potential migrants on policy regulations labour migration, mandatory compliance with the legislation of the country of residence, ensuring safety, prevention of human trafficking, irregular migration acts, prevention of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis (TB), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).

Figure 5. Tajik citizens holding an entry ban to the Russian Federation, January – June 2024 (absolute numbers)



Source: MoLMEP, 2024

A total number of 286 unpaid salaries to Tajik migrant workers were resolved by returning over 18 million Russian roubles to the migrant workers and 1,035 Tajik citizens were provided with permanent jobs on the territory of the Russian Federation with the court decision finalized within this period (MoLMEP, 2024.)

According to the Bureau of National Statistics of Kazakhstan, there were 2,704 Tajik migrants who received permanent residence permits in Kazakhstan and, at the same time, 2,275 migrants whose permanent residence permits had expired and they had therefore departed from Kazakhstan between January to June 2024 (BNSK, 2024). A total of 2,270 Tajik citizens were recorded as internally migrated within Kazakhstan; of these, 1,100 migrated between different regions and 1,170 within the same region. Net migration for Tajik citizens reported as 429, and the top three locations for Tajik citizens in Kazakhstan were Almaty city (161), Almaty (101) and Karagandy (51) (BNSK, 2024).



## FORCED MIGRATION

As of June 2024, 1,471 disaster prone risk zones have been identified in Tajikistan by the authorities and approximately 860,000 people live in these areas. The Government of Tajikistan issued a resolution "On the medium-term plan for the organized resettlement of environmental migrants for 2024-2026" dated February 17, 2024, No. 69 (MoLMEP, 2024). The Government of Tajikistan has mandated the resettlement of 525 households from hazardous areas to safer regions between 2024 and 2026. These families are referred to as environmental migrants because their places of residence are vulnerable to natural hazards, and the authorities are providing them with land in other regions of Tajikistan (CABAR, 2024).

Tajikistan is one of the main country within the Central Asian region that receives a large number of refugees mostly from the neighboring country of Afghanistan. The country has its national law "On Refugees" and the Government implements the Refugee Status Determination Procedure (RSD) (UNHCR, 2024). As of January 2024, there are 7,094 refugees, 1,389 asylum seekers, and 3,827 known stateless persons living in Tajikistan (UNHCR, 2024).

## RETURN MIGRATION

The return of migrant workers during January to June 2024 amounted to 324,065 people comparing to the same period of 2023 (315,870), which shows an increase of 3 per cent. The absolute gender-disaggregated number of men was 243,546 in 2024 which was 3 per cent lower than the number in the same period of 2023 (251,853), while the number of women was 80,519 which was 25 per cent higher than the number in the same period of 2023 (64,017) (MoLMEP, 2024).

According to BMA round three data collection conducted in April 2024, a total of 299,834 individuals registered with the top five countries of return from the Russian Federation (297,104), Europe (798), Kazakhstan (729), the United States of America (394) and Germany (226). Comparatively in the round four data collection (334,299), the top five countries of return were the Russian Federation (331,360), Kazakhstan (1,077), Europe (578), United States of America (345) and the Germany (210) (IOM, BMA R3 and R4, 2024).

Figure 6. Top five country of return, April and May 2024 for Tajik migrants (absolute numbers)

Top five countries of return	2024 April	Top five countries of return	2024 May
Russian Federation	297,104	Russian Federation	331,360
Europe <sup>5</sup>	798	Kazakhstan	1,077
Kazakhstan	729	Europe	578
United States of America (USA)	394	United States of America (USA)	345
Germany	226	Germany	210

Source: IOM BMA, R3 and R4, 2024

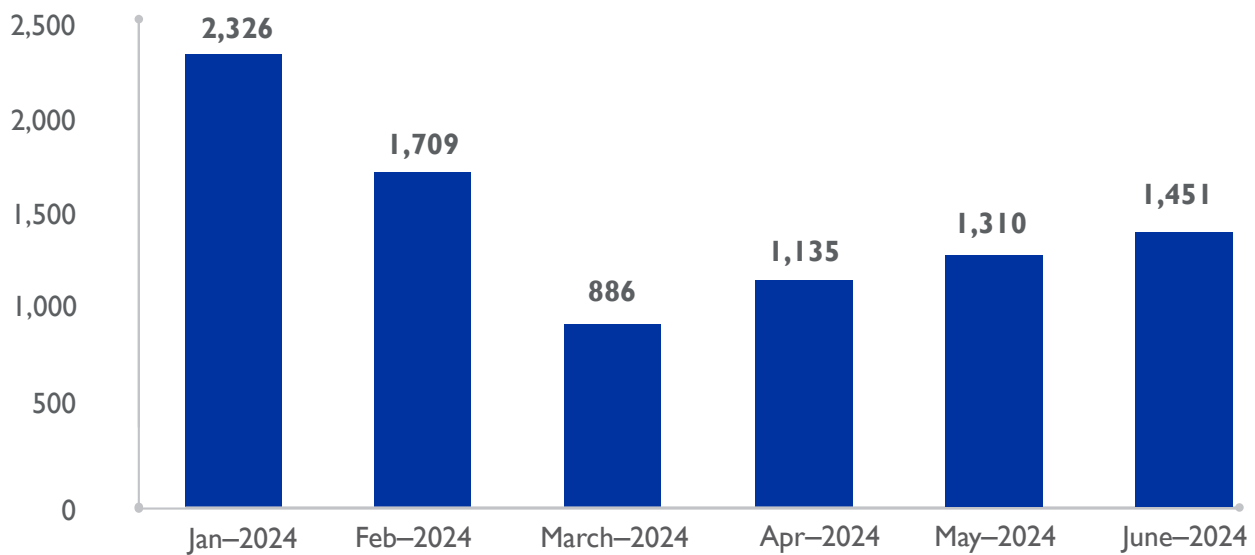
<sup>5</sup> In some cases the key informants were not aware of the specific country of return. As a result, they generally referred to "Europe" as the destination for return.



## REMITTANCES

Private consumption, investment, and net export slowed due to the remittance's inflow decreased in the first half of 2024 (WB, 2024). Remittance inflows are forecast to further slow, reflecting an anticipated economic deceleration in the Russian Federation from 3.6 percent in 2023 to 2.9 percent in 2024, driven by stringent monetary policies and adverse fiscal impulses (WB, 2024). No further data was available on the remittance inflow and outflow for Tajikistan from the World Bank and the National Bank of Tajikistan. However, according to Kazakhstan National bank there were total of 8,827,250 United States Dollars (USD)<sup>6</sup> transferred from Kazakhstan to Tajikistan in the first half of 2024 with over 22 thousand transactions. The total amount of remittance sent to Tajikistan was equal to 6.5 per cent of all remitted amount to abroad. More specifically, 2,326,074 USD in January 2024, 1,709,860 USD in February 2024, 886,573 USD in March 2024, 1,135,223 USD in April 2024, 1,310,175 USD in May 2024 and 1,451,356 USD in June 2024 (BNRK, 2024).

Figure 7. Remittance from Kazakhstan to Tajikistan in Jan – June of 2024, (USD million)



Source: BNRK, 2024

## MIGRATORY CHANGES OCCURRED

According to the Government of Tajikistan Resolution No. 1907, 25 new countries have been added to the list of the countries, whose citizens can enter Tajikistan under an unilateral visa-free regime for up to 30 days. Within the new government decision, a list of 16 foreign countries has been approved, whose citizens over the age of 55 can now take advantage of a unilateral visa-free regime to enter the Republic of Tajikistan (MFA, 2024) as well. This regime allows them to stay in the country and exit without a visa for up to 14 days. Additionally, the Resolution No. 188<sup>8</sup>, 14 countries have been included in the list of those whose citizens can obtain visas to Tajikistan under a simplified procedure (MFA, 2024). It is important to note that citizens of the listed countries entering Tajikistan for more than 14 or 30 days for work, study, permanent residence, or other non-tourist purposes must obtain the appropriate visa in advance. This measure came into force on 1 May 2024.

6. IOM Global Rate for January and June was used for calculation.

7. Dated 28 March 2024 and titled "On Amendments and Additions to the Government Resolution of the Republic of Tajikistan No. 464 of October 26, 2021".

8. Again dated 28 March 2024 and titled "On Amendments to the Resolution of January 25, 2017, No. 31".



Besides the initial amendments made to the Resolution No. 31, Tajikistan has revoked visa-free access for Turkish citizens starting from 20 April 2024, just after the decree was issued by the president of the Türkiye on 6 April 2024 and came in to force starting from 20 April 2024 reinstating the visa requirements for Tajik citizens traveling to Türkiye (MFA of Türkiye, 2024). Within this, citizens of both Tajikistan and Türkiye are required to apply for visas before entering the countries (KHOVAR, 2024). Tajik citizens holding ordinary passports are required to have a visa to enter Türkiye. Various diplomatic passport holders are exempt from visa request for up to 90 days. Service passport holders are exempt from visa for up to 60 days. Service passport holders who are appointed to the diplomatic, consular missions or representations of international organizations accredited in Türkiye, and their family members are exempted from visa for the period of their assignments.

Taking in to account the current situation related to the tragic incident happened in the Crocus City Hall Moscow, and the introduction of relevant changes in several regulatory legal acts of the Russian Federation related to migration including the Federal Law "On the legal status of foreign citizens in the Russian Federation" and the order<sup>9</sup> of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation", awareness-raising explanatory activities for Tajik migrants have been expanded both within the country and in the Russian Federation. More specifically in close cooperation with Tajik executive authorities and other relevant agencies, 1,639 (460 more than same period 2023) meetings organized involving 327,305 individuals. Additionally, officials conducting door-to-door assessments on labour migrants and engaging with their family members introducing the current changes that occurred with the migration legislation and legal acts in the Russian Federation. Furthermore, the Migration Service of the MoLMEP conducted several awareness-raising activities among the labour migrants and potential labour migrants who are planning to travel outside of Tajikistan, addressing the importance of compliance with the immigration laws both within the country, including at international airports, and in the Russian Federation (MoLMEP, 2024).

## THE IMPACT FROM THE CROCUS CITY HALL INCIDENT ON MIGRATION (MEDIA MONITORING)

During this reporting period, more specifically on 22 March 2024, the terrorist attack occurred in the Crocus City Event Hall in the Russian Federation involving Tajik citizens affiliated with the Islamic State-Khorasan group killing more than 140 people (Asia Plus, 2024). This incident had significant impact on the migration corridor from Central Asia to the Russian Federation, specifically it heightened the security measures towards migrants from Central Asian countries. At the same time, the media highlights the increased discrimination and the harassment in public spaces towards migrants residing in the Russian Federation (The Times of Central Asia, 2024).

The threat of being associated with or blamed for the attack created widespread fear among Tajik migrant workers, making it difficult for them to feel safe or secure in their work and living environments, feeling increasingly alienated from both the Russian community and even their own, as they navigated the heightened tension following the attack (The Times of Central Asia, 2024). In response to growing concerns over security in the Russian Federation, officials intensified the monitoring and verifying the validation of the documentation of residence in the country causing increased deportation for migrants with lack of documentation or proof of reasons for stay (Mosregtoday, 2024). Furthermore, media sources highlight that over 22 thousand foreign citizens were expelled from the Russian Federation, 669 people were deprived of Russian citizenship after the incident within the first half of 2024 (Current Time, 2024).

Within the rising issues with migration situation in the country, legislative changes, new acts, decrees introduced by the authorities to strengthen the control over migration and monitor the migration mobility in the territory of the Russian Federation (Kommersant, 2024). One of the important legal act introduced on 29 March 2024 by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation to the Government of the Russian Federation was the draft federal law<sup>10</sup> which provides for the expansion of legal grounds for the use of modern means and methods of control over the entry and stay of foreign citizens in the Russian Federation (MIA of RF, 2024).

<sup>9</sup>. Titled "On the establishment of the notification form for the implementation of labour activities by foreign citizens or stateless persons holding a patent and the procedure for submitting such notifications to the regional offices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) of Russian Federation that issued the patent".

<sup>10</sup>. Named "On the conditions of entry and exit from the Russian Federation of foreign citizens and stateless persons, as well as the conditions of their stay and residence on the territory of the Russian Federation".



The law introduced mandatory dactyloscopy registration, controlled stay, digital profile for a foreign citizen, mandatory registration for temporary stay, loyalty agreement, expulsion, administrative for resident stay (MIA of RF, 2024). Furthermore, media highlights the aftermath of the Crocus City Event Hall attack led to layoffs, particularly in sectors where Central Asian migrant workers are predominant, as employers responded to an unstable socio-political climate. Migrant workers, both temporary and settled, contribute about 10 per cent of the workforce in the Russian Federation (Re:Russia, 2024). Fear of being associated with terrorism prompted employers to avoid hiring workers from Central Asian countries, specifically Tajik migrant workers, affecting in increased labour shortage in the Russian Federation with a potential labour deficit estimated to reach 2 to 4 million in 2030 (Re:Russia, 2024). On the other hand, remittances constitute a significant portion of Tajikistan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (51.1%)<sup>11</sup>, disruption in employment for Tajik migrant workers started showing slowing down with downward pressure on economic growth and poverty. This form of economic ripple effect highlights the interconnectedness of labour migration and national economic health, underscoring the vulnerability of Tajikistan to external shocks (WB, 2024).

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