

The influence of the process of foreign labor migration on the demographic processes in Khorezm region during the years of independence.

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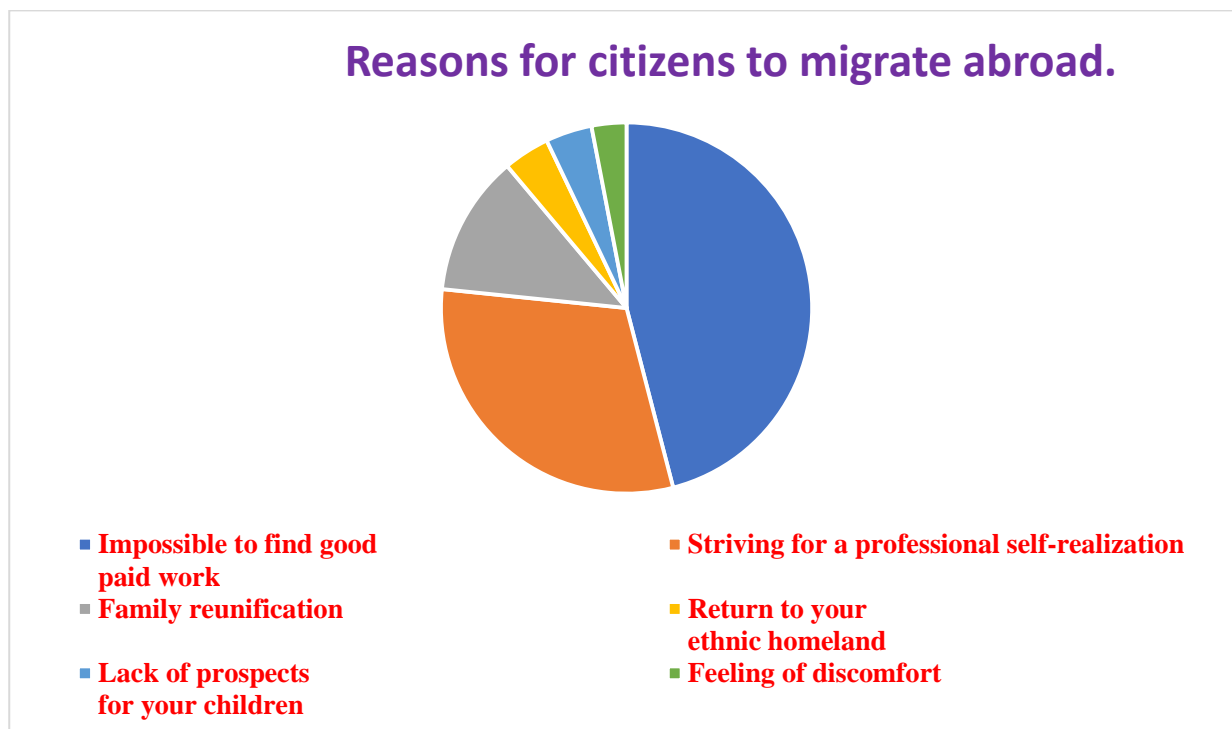
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Abstract: In this scientific article, the issues of foreign labor migration in Uzbekistan during 1997-2019 are studied from the point of view of historiography. By studying the processes of external labor migration, scientific conclusions are formed about the socio-economic situation of the country, the demographic situation and the state of social processes such as gender equality. In this scientific article, the trends of the historical development of labor resources and external labor migration, which arose as a result of the formation of the labor market, are shown on the example of Khorezm region, which is the northern region of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Key words: external labor migration, demographic processes, labor resources, political situation, transition period, privatization, labor force, Khorezm region, socio-political situation, jobs.

After gaining independence in Uzbekistan, objective study of history based on original and primary sources became one of the priorities of the state policy. Studying the history of population growth, demographic processes and labor migration processes is one of the urgent tasks of historiography. By studying the processes of labor migration, we will be able to analyze the demographic situation in the society and make a correct assessment of the socio-economic situation. The process of migration has become a comprehensive process of global importance throughout the world by the XXIst century. External migration processes can be initiated on the basis of various reasons. The process of external migration in Uzbekistan is detailed in the chart below:

Table.1.



If we analyze the data presented in Table.1., we can see the lack of high-paid jobs as the main factor of the process of external migration. We can consider this factor as the main cause of foreign labor migration. Currently, international migration processes are globalized and cover almost all regions and countries. External migration also has a significant impact on demographic changes in developed and transition economies. As a consequence of international migration of labor resources, a special quality commodity - labor force is being transported abroad. Its main difference from other types of goods is that the labor itself is the factor of the production of other products. A country that exports its labor force, as a rule, receives payment for such exports in the form of repatriation of part of the income of migrants. Given the relative growth of labor resources in many countries, their exports reduce unemployment and provide an influx of cash flows from abroad. However, on the other hand, the decline in the highly skilled labor force leads to a

decrease in the technological potential of the exporting countries, as well as their general scientific and cultural level.

Despite being the largest labor exporter in the Central Asian region, Uzbekistan has only recently identified migration as a key policy area, with a particular focus on diversifying labor migration flows and integrating migration into broader development planning. As part of this renewed focus on migration, Uzbekistan is expanding organized labor export schemes with third countries such as Russia, South Korea, Japan, and Poland as a safe and long-term alternative to unregulated and dangerous forms of migration. However, in their current form, these organized labor recruitment programs cannot adequately distribute the existing demand for labor migration within Uzbekistan and have not proven effective in protecting the rights of labor migrants.

The socio-economic development of countries that send foreign labor migrants is the main factor that seriously affects the country's labor market and demographic situation. According to the United Nations, "in 2019, the number of international labor migrants in the world reached 272 million. "International migrants make up 3.5 percent of the world's population."

LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE RESEARCH TOPIC

This issue has been deeply studied in the historical studies of Uzbek scientists such as Maksakova (2000), Isakov (2010), Ota-Mirzaev (2006), Kadirov (2016). Research also was conducted by economists, Abdurakhmonov, Khudayberdiev, Zakirova, Umirzakov (2019). Most of the scientific studies into the causes of migration (and re-migration) is devoted to research in Latin America (Chiquiar & Hanson, 2005), China (Giles & Yoo, 2007), Europe (Constant & Massey, 2003), while in Central Asia and the Caucasus, this topic has not yet been studied extensively due to existing restrictions on access to microdata. Nevertheless, here, among the existing studies on migration at the microlevel, it is necessary to single out a number of studies directly concerning the basic characteristics of migrants (Ahunov, 2015) and the very reasons for migration, in particular,—the role of culture and tradition (Isakulov, 2021) and migration networks (Elrick, 2005), the social significance of the family (Rahmonova-Schwarz, 2012), and changes in women's

behavior (Laruelle, 2007); etc. Migration Studies in Uzbekistan—a typical labor exporting country—are mostly based on aggregated macrodata (Bondarenko & Chepel, 2015). Empirical and analytical studies at the microlevel in Uzbekistan on the socioeconomic consequences of labor migration do not take into account the full range of problems associated with migration. Microlevel studies are limited: they mainly consider only the characteristics of migrants, the role of the family in the migration decision-making process, and the importance of remittances in household well-being, while other reasons for migration processes and their transformation are actually considered only superficially due to limited access to data. Meanwhile, foreign labor migration in Uzbekistan (both in rural and urban areas) has formed over the years as an integral part of a long-term strategy to ensure the well-being of individual families, which requires deeper analysis of the sociocultural factors that determine the decision to migrate.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

This research is based on an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. The main source of quantitative data is reports of specialized studies on foreign labor migration and employment conducted by the Uzbekistan Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations .7 At the moment, MELR does not provide deep retrospective information regarding migration processes. The above materials are substantially limited in terms of data presentation, since they are already published in an aggregated format. A significant problem is also compatibility of MELR annual and quarterly opinion polls and materials published in 1991–2021, which significantly complicates comparative analysis. Finally, given that the MELR publications did not aim to study and analyze the influence of the microcommunity on labor migration processes, a number of indicators important from the viewpoint of this study are missing. The existing limitations were partially compensated by analyzing in-depth interviews with migrants and their family members, conducted in from 1991 to 2017 by various research organizations in Uzbekistan, Russia, and Kazakhstan. It was the data of in-depth interviews that made it possible to reveal the cause-and-effect relationships and explain the influence of the microcommunity on foreign labor migration.

The aims and tasks of research work

The main directions of this scientific article are as follows:

Demographic situation in the Republic of Uzbekistan during the years of independence;

formation of labor migration processes in the republic and its main factors;

the impact of labor migration on the socio-economic situation of Khorezm region;

the historical significance of the state's policy on the regulation of international labor migration processes.

The results of the analytical approach show that external labor migration is a complex process that changes under the strong influence of many internal and external factors. Depending on the situation, it tends to increase and decrease at certain times.

Demographic situation in Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan is a country with a dynamically growing population. In terms of population, it ranks 3rd among the CIS countries after Russia and Ukraine (40th in the world). A relatively high birth rate, a high proportion of young families of reproductive age in the structure of the population, and a high proportion of children and young people in the structure of the country's population (more than 60%) determine the long-term trend of growth in the working-age population (Mukhammedov & Arabov, 2017). There are no risks of shortage of labor resources in Uzbekistan at the moment and in the near future. This raises the need for effective human capital management and the use of the “demographic dividend”. Table data. 1 show that over the past 30 years, positive demographic changes have occurred in Uzbekistan, despite the difficult period of socio-economic transformation of society and the transition to market relations, the outflow of part of the population and the decline in birth rates.

Dynamics of the permanent population in the Republic of Uzbekistan in 1991–2021.

Table.2.

Index	1991 y.		2021 y.		Dynamics of 1991–2021y.y.	
	Thousand. human	Share,%	Thousand. human	Share,%	Thousand. human	Share,%
Total population	20607,7	100,0	34559,1	100,0	13951,4	167,7
Men	10188,0	49,4	17378,8	50,3	7190,8	170,6

Women	10419,7	50,6	17180,3	49,7	6760,6	164,9
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(Isakulov, 2021).

Dynamics of indicators of natural movement of the population of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 1991–2020.

Table.3.

Index	1991		2001		2020	
	Thousan d	Per 1000 populatio n	Thousan d	Per 1000 populatio n	Thousan d	Per 1000 populatio n
Live births	723,4	34,5	513,0	20,4	841,8	24,6
Deaths	130,3	6,2	132,5	5,3	175,6	5,1
Natural growth	593,1	28,3	380,5	15,1	666,2	19,5
Marriage s	270,3	12,9	170,1	6,8	296,7	10,7
Divorces	33,3	1,6	15,7	0,6	28,2	1,06

Source: according to the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Statistics. URL: <https://www.stat.uz> (date of access: 09/01/2021)

Table 2 shows the indicators of the natural movement of the population of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the period between 1991–2020. It can be seen that at the end of 2020, the situation in terms of the natural movement of Uzbekistan was significantly different. Thus, in 2020, 841.8 thousand children were born in the republic, which is 100 thousand more than in 1991, but in relative terms, 1.5 times less. Similar figures are observed for natural population growth. At the same time, life expectancy at birth in Uzbekistan in 2020 was 73.4 years (women - 75.5 years, men - 71.2 years) - this is significantly longer than in 1991. In general, the processes of industrialization and a number of other demographic factors and trends indicate that Uzbekistan is entering the stage of "demographic transition" (Muhiddinov, 2019).

At the same time, within 1991–2020, there were significant changes in the age composition of the population of the republic. For example, in 1991, the population below working age (0-15 years) was 43.1% of the total population of the republic, at working age (men aged 16-59 years, women - 16-54 years old) - 49, 1%, older than working age (men aged 60 years and older, women - 55 years and older) - 7.8%. In 2020, this indicator was equal to 30.67%, 61.17% and 7.14%, respectively. This shows the high growth rates of labor resources entering the labor market. Uzbekistan currently has a “demographic window of opportunity” with a larger working-age population compared to dependents and older people.

In general, Uzbekistan is one of the most labor-sufficient countries among the countries of the world. Uzbekistan accounts for more than 40% of the labor resources of Central Asia, which determines the importance of the labor potential in the region. In recent years, about 500 thousand people a year enter the country's labor market¹⁰. In our opinion, this opportunity should be effectively used in the national interests, in first of all in the domestic labor market, and surplus resources should be optimally placed in highly productive markets of foreign countries, directed to building up the country's human capital in the process of temporary external labor migration to the industrialized countries of the world.

In 1989, there were 1014846 inhabitants, and as of January 1, 2005, the permanent population of the region reached 1453967. In 1989, the working population made up 23% of the total population, and in 2005, it reached 57.5%, which led to a sharp increase in external migration processes in the region (Statistical collection, 1995, p.26-47)

Trends in foreign migration to Uzbekistan

- There were specific serious aspects and deep reasons for the occurrence and sharp development of unemployment in Uzbekistan, which was more complicated than in the former allied republics. These include:
 - The heavy social sphere inherited from the former Union system;
 - The policy of the government of the former Union to ensure full employment of the population through the creation of artificially created and extremely cheap artificial jobs;
 - As a result of the disintegration of the former Union, the economic relations between the republics were destroyed and the economies of the allied countries were deeply interconnected;
 - The difficult demographic situation that arose in the republic by 1990.

Scientific views related to labor migration are formed within the framework of economic, geographical, historical, demographic, political and other approaches. The ability to analyze the history of labor migration development processes in Uzbekistan is considered very limited due to the lack of real information sources.

In the process of foreign labor migration, the situation in Khorezm region of the Republic of Uzbekistan is of special importance. This region, which is located in the northernmost part of Uzbekistan, is the most active region in terms of foreign labor migration.

Table.4.

	Tashkent	Kashkadarya	Namangan	Khorezm
<i>Indicators on gender classification of migrants</i>				
women	40,3	36,3	31,9	19,3
men	59,7	63,7	68,1	80,7
<i>Indicators on the place of residence of migrants</i>				
city	22,6	28,8	5,0	46,7
village	77,4	71,2	95,0	53,3

(Umarkulov, 2019)

From the data presented in Table.4, it can be concluded that the share of rural population is high in the process of external migration. We can see the lack of jobs in the countryside and the ineffectiveness of the land reforms carried out by the state.

According to the table given above, the share of women who went from Khorezm region among external migrants is quite small. Because it shows that the mentality of the local people and the attitude towards women in this area is different. It was much more difficult for citizens living in the countryside to adapt to the new society than citizens living in the city. Due to the sharp differences in the educational system in rural and urban schools, rural citizens are more likely to be unable to learn foreign languages and adapt to the advanced society of the host country.

According to official statistics, in 2019, 2.5 million or 7% of the population of Uzbekistan are labor migrants. About 2 million of them work in Russia.

According to research conducted in 2018, Khorezm region has the highest number of working-age population in Khorezm region. According to the results of the

study, 48.1 percent of migrants were from Khorezm region. 2/5 of labor migrants who went to work from Khorezm region were recognized as the most active layer who went abroad more than 3 times in 3 years. In the last 3 years, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Kazakhstan and South Korea have been recognized as the most active destinations for labor migrants of Khorezm region.

Information about the countries where migrants who left Khorezm region worked during 2012-2018.

Table.5.

Areas	2012	2013	2016	2017	2018
Russia	84,6	84,3	80,9	78,4	74,5
Kazakhstan	10,5	12,4	14,4	11,9	11,8
Turkey	0,8	0,9	2,0	5,4	7,8
South Korea	0,9	0,7	1	2,2	1,8
Other countries	1,4	1,7	1,6	2,1	4,1
	100	100	100	100	100

(Maksakova, 2000)

As of 2015, the total labor resources of Khorezm region made up 965,900 people, and those working outside the republic made up 96,596 people. Among regional districts, the highest rate of external migration in relation to the population was 12,200 people in Koshkopir district and 11,356 people in Shavat district. Analyzing the economic potential of these districts, it was revealed that there are serious delays in attracting foreign investment and creating new jobs in these areas. The unemployment rate in the region was 5.1% of the working population in 2015, 9.8% in 2018, and this indicator reached 10% by 2021, which had a great impact on the development of external labor migration (Masharipov, 2022).

We can see that factors of geographical location and knowledge of foreign languages played a major role in the formation of external labor migration directions of the region.

Information about regions and cities where labor migrants from Khorezm region worked during their last trip

Table.6.

№	Areas	2012-2013	2016-2017	2018
1	Moscow city	30.1	28.6	15,6
2	The city of Saint Petersburg	34,2	38.1	41.7
3	Istanbul city	0,4	4,5	6,2
4	Moscow region	6,4	5.9	5,2
5	Almaty city	4.4	3,1	3,6
6	Shymkent region	0,8	3,3	3,4
7	Krasnodar region	0,8	2,7	2,7
8	Volgograd region	0.9	3,7	12,6
9	Seoul, South Korea	0,2	0,9	1,5
10	Other cities	20,1	9,3	7,5

(Masharipov, 2022)

The above data shows that the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg are recognized as the most active destinations for Khorezm residents. The majority of migrants are the unemployed population or citizens who are employed in jobs that do not require high qualifications.

The list of countries that migrants from Khorezm region who went to work abroad would like to go if conditions are created by the state.

Table.7.

Russia	Kazakhstan	Turkey	South Korea	Japan	UAA	USA	Other countries	will not go to any country
50,7	4,0	16.7	26,7	2,7	4,7	6,7	8.7	13.3

(Abdullaev, 2008)

From the information given in Table.6. we can conclude that the most active destination for labor migrants from Khorezm is the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan. As the main reason for this, we can see geographical location and linguistic proximity. Due to the ease of legal requirements for labor migrants in the countries mentioned above, the visit of citizens to this country has increased.

Labor migration as the export of labor affects the economic potential of the republic. According to the Central Bank of the Republic, despite the pandemic and restrictions on movement under quarantine, the level of remittances in 2020 remained at the level of 2019 - \$6 billion or 10% of GDP. Transfers from Russia fell, but increased from Turkey, the USA, the Republic of Korea, Israel and a number of other countries. According to surveys, before 30-35% of transfers came to Uzbekistan in cash. In the context of the pandemic, the restriction of transportation has created the conditions for that cash to move into the form of remittances. As a result, there was no sharp decline in remittance statistics. Therefore, remittances did not have a debilitating effect on the economy, but the return of 500,000 migrants to the republic put pressure on the labor market and the social protection system. Today, about 1.7 million labor migrants have remained abroad, which is about 5% of the country's population.

Remittances are an additional source of income for families, especially in rural areas, since almost every fifth family has a labor migrant. According to scientists, the poverty rate could be higher by 2.6–7.2 percentage points in the absence of migration and remittances. Considering also that the working-age population in Uzbekistan will grow by 200,000–300,000 people per year (net) over the next two decades, it is likely that the number of migrants abroad could increase to 50,000 per year.

Table.7.

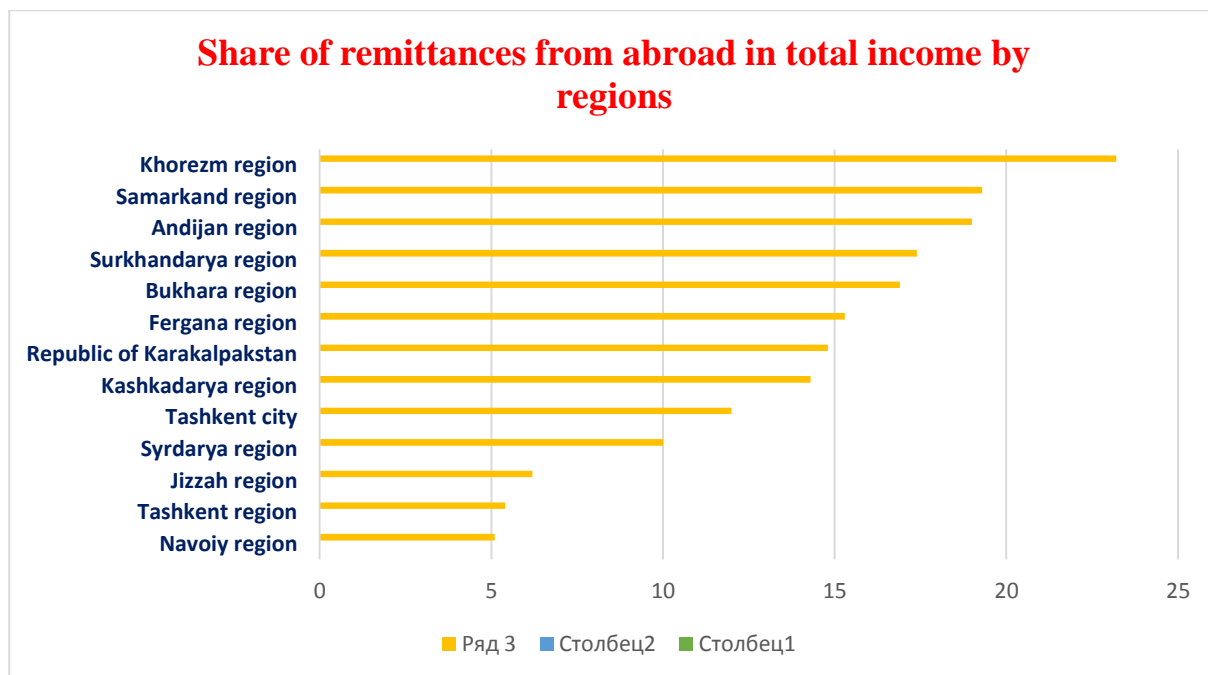


Table 7 provides information on remittances from foreign countries to the regions of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In 2018, remittances sent by labor migrants amounted to 5.1 billion. USD or about 10% of the country's GDP. Each migrant earned an average of 166.7 US dollars per month. According to this indicator, Khorezm region has the highest result, and for each migrant who left the region to work, 342.6 US dollars is allocated. From 2019, 177,790 people from the region went to work abroad, which made up 23% of the economically active population. These revenues are formed as the main factor that strengthens the purchasing power of the region's population.

CONCLUSIONS

Analyzing the above historical data, the following scientific conclusions were formed:

- The disintegration of the former Union and the gradual transition from the planned economy to the market economy at the level of the Republic led to a sharp reduction of jobs and an increase in the level of unemployment in Khorezm region;

- the development of irregular internal and external labor migration increased as a result of the sudden change in the demographic situation and the failure of the state to conduct a consistent policy on the management of labor resources;

- The most active labor migration routes from Khorezm region to foreign countries were formed on the basis of factors such as geographical location and proximity of common languages of communication;

- the intensification of the process of external labor migration has led to a steady increase in the flow of foreign currency to Khorezm region and a steady increase in the purchasing power of the region's population.

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