

MIGRATION SURVEY

MIGRATION AND SKILLS IN TAJIKISTAN



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PREFACE

The European Union (EU) has established a Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) for the period 2007–13 to assist with the eradication of poverty in the context of sustainable development in developing countries in Asia (including Central Asia) and Latin America. The aims include pursuing the Millennium Development Goals and the promotion of democracy, good governance and respect for human rights and the rule of law. In Central Asia it replaces the Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (Tacis) programme for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The EU has also engaged in the promotion of ‘decent work’ in its internal and external policies (including in neighbouring countries and in the development cooperation area), covering core labour standards, more and better jobs with social protection, equal opportunities and social dialogue.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection in Tajikistan requested a joint study of Tajik labour market and migration trends from the European Training Foundation (ETF). In line with the increasing importance of employment and migration issues in both Tajikistan and the EU’s external relations and in response to the special request from the Tajik authorities, a research project for a labour market review and migration survey was implemented by the ETF in 2008–09 in close cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, which needed evidence-based information to adapt employment policies and labour market measures to the socio-economic needs of the country, and design adult training programmes for the needs of the general population and migrants in particular. This report on migration and skills in Tajikistan includes key findings of the field survey which was conducted with 2,000 respondents, and is complementary to the report on labour market and related human capital issues. Therefore, the labour market is the first aspect of this project which has combined a desk-based labour market review with a field survey of migration and skills in Tajikistan.

A Tajik company, Socservice Information and Research Centre, was contracted to work with the ETF on the project. A draft report was prepared by Jamshed Kuddusov, Socservice director and labour market and migration expert, which was commented on by ETF experts. Based on the comments received, Franca Crestani and Ummuhan Bardak finalised the report together with Doriana Monteleone, statistical expert, who also provided an in-depth analysis of the data. The ETF and the team of local experts are very grateful to Subhon Ashurov, former Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Protection, for his continuing support; and to the Labour Statistics Department of the State Statistics Committee (SSC) for providing Labour Force Survey (LFS) data and information on methodological issues and potential uses and limitations. We also thank Umed Usoev, former Socservice director, who managed the project activities and provided excellent logistical support.

A national workshop was held in Dushanbe on 26 January 2010 in order to present the draft country report to the key national stakeholders and to discuss key findings. The report was finalised after this workshop on the basis of comments received from stakeholders during and after the workshop.

INTRODUCTION

Migration processes in Tajikistan reflect the sinuosity of the recent history of the country. In 1994–98, the main migration trends of the early 1990s – repatriation of ethnic groups and forced migration caused by the civil conflict – were replaced by labour migration which in the past ten years has become one of the key structural characteristics of the economic and social life of Tajikistan.

The early 1990s were characterised by a high level of ‘non-return’ migration with a change of permanent residence. The outflow mainly affected large industrialised cities where the share of non-indigenous people had been high. In general, the migration activity of the urban population during that period was several times higher than that of the rural population. Over the period 1991–2002, more than 467,000 people left the country of which over 85% were urban residents. The migration turnover of that period involved 6%–9% of the urban population and 1.5%–2% of the rural population (World Bank, 2004; Kislitsina, 2005, p. 131).

The reasons for the growth of non-return migration were the political instability, civil war and economic crisis. The outflow of well-qualified specialists has no doubt had an impact on the country’s socio-economic situation in recent years. After 1997, however, non-return migration decreased. Then in 2006 and particularly in 2007, the number of people wishing to move abroad permanently grew again. This can be explained by the fact that the main destination country for Tajik migrants, the Russian Federation, announced the launch of a Public Programme to assist the voluntary relocation to Russia of fellow citizens living abroad. Former USSR citizens having command of the Russian language, a suitable profession, and wishing to move to Russia for good together with their families can participate in the programme. The Russian government will provide financial assistance to those families, as well as jobs and housing, and they will receive citizenship in due course. Such programmes are being promoted particularly actively in some of the Russian regions most in need of a qualified labour force such as Kaliningrad, Lipetsk and Tver, among other regions. All in all, 12 regions were selected as pilots in the implementation of the Public Programme¹.

According to unofficial figures, over the period 2006–07 alone the number of Tajik families wishing to move to Russia for permanent residence increased several times and involved several thousand families. In December 2008 however, due to the global financial crisis, these programmes were suspended by Russia as a temporary measure.

Those leaving the country are mainly doctors, teachers and qualified blue-collar workers. In the meanwhile, the government of Tajikistan has not yet responded in any way to the incipient mass outflow of qualified specialists who are needed in Tajikistan. The salaries and wages for existing vacancies, particularly in such sectors as health and education, do not meet the expectations of the skilled labour force. This situation could result in irreparable damage to the quality of the labour force in Tajikistan.

Tajiks, who are traditionally sedentary people with a relatively low degree of migratory mobility, generally need very potent reasons to decide to move abroad together with their families for permanent residence. The limited employment opportunities and particularly low remuneration of labour coupled with steep increases in prices for goods and services, the energy crisis during the severe winter of 2007/08 when an overwhelming majority of the population (except for some areas within Dushanbe) had to live virtually without electricity and all industrial production was stopped for two months (January–February 2008) with the exception of the Aluminium Smelter and several other vital facilities, all of the above played a catalytic role in the non-return migration of Tajikistan’s indigenous population.

¹ See the official website of the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Tajikistan: <http://rusemb.tj/ru/index/index/pageld/138/>

1. GENERAL REVIEW OF LABOUR MIGRATION

1.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRATION FLOWS

The current socio-economic situation in the country would be incomplete without labour migration, which is the greatest social phenomenon as Tajikistan enters the 21st century. At present, labour migration is the determining factor influencing the lifestyle of the overwhelming majority of families in Tajikistan (Kuddusov, 2004, p. 103).

Information from the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, gathered by summarising the data of migration cards, indicates that during the period 2004–05 more than 420,000 Tajik citizens travelled abroad in search of work – about 11% of the active population of the country. In 2006, the number of labour migrants exceeded 460,000 (Olimova and Kuddusov, 2007, p. 30).

According to the 2000 census (conducted in January, i.e. when migrants are at home), there were some 200,000 labour migrants. According to the 2004 Labour Force Survey, at the time of the survey (July, when the maximum number of migrants are working abroad), a total of 317,900 people or 13% of the employed population (8.5% of the working-age population) were working outside Tajikistan as labour migrants.

The dynamics of the involvement of the Tajik population in labour migration can be seen in the results of the living standards surveys carried out in the country in various years. From 1997 to 1999, there were only 1.5% of migrants from all the households surveyed. By 1999, according to the Living Standards Survey for Tajikistan, the number of labour migrants had increased sharply. Then the migration situation stabilised somewhat, until 2004 when labour migration increased again (it is still increasing). If in 2003, 3.5% of respondents said that they had occasionally left the country and worked abroad for three months or more (Poverty Reduction Monitoring Survey 2003), two years later 10.1% of the population had lived and worked abroad for over three months – from May 1999 to 2005 according to the Living Standards Survey 2005 (IOM, 2006).

As of 1 July 2008, according to the household survey conducted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection², about 430,000 people were working abroad. Analysis has shown that the methodology applied in that survey was far from accurate, particularly regarding the number of migrants from urban areas, so the number of migrants may in fact be higher.

According to a study conducted by the Sharq Scientific Research Center in 2002/03, 26.4% of all Tajikistan households had one or several labour migrants, while the survey in January–February 2003 indicate that 18% (632,000) of adult residents of Tajikistan (aged 15 and older) had travelled to seek employment in the period between 2000 and the time of the survey. Out of this number, 84% (530,000) worked in the Russian Federation from 2000 to January 2003. Naturally, these figures bear no relation to the number of Tajik people who live and work in Russia, as they include seasonal migrants and those who have been in Russia longer than one year, and the earlier migrants who settled there and occasionally visit their motherland (Olimova and Bosc, 2003, p. 20).

There are other sources of information about Tajik migrants to Russia; for example, the number of people who obtained mandatory medical insurance, data from transport organisations, etc.

According to 2008 data from the Migration Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, 852,100 Tajik citizens were registered as migrants in the Russian Federation (*Asia-Plus*, 2009). However, according to Russian 2008 estimates, the number of labour migrants from Tajikistan amounted to 797,000 or 11.8% of the population (**TABLE 1.1**). More than 84% of labour migrants from Tajikistan leave seeking jobs in Russia which, in general, is common to all countries of the region.

² The survey was conducted throughout all regions by the State Agency for Social Protection, Employment of Population and Migration. The agency developed a questionnaire in order to determine the number of labour migrants, their sex, age, reasons for migration and countries of migration. Agency staff in rural areas, together with local *Jamoats*, identified families with migrants.

TABLE 1.1 DISTRIBUTION OF LABOUR MIGRANTS FROM CIS COUNTRIES

Country	Total number of labour migrants		Distribution by country of departure (%)			
	Thousands	% of population	Russia	Ukraine	Other CIS countries	Other countries of the world
Azerbaijan	1,365	15.9	70.6	8.8	12.6	7.9
Armenia	813	27.1	67.9	8.5	5.0	18.6
Georgia	1,025	23.3	70.0	9.2	5.8	15.0
Kazakhstan	3,710	24.0	78.4	8.8	6.6	6.3
Kyrgyzstan	615	11.7	84.1	6.3	2.5	7.1
Tajikistan	797	11.8	84.4	5.4	5.4	4.8
Turkmenistan	260	5.2	76.0	12.7	0.8	10.5
Uzbekistan	2,186	8.1	50.5	14.7	26.1	8.7
Total	10,771	14.3	70.9	9.7	10.7	8.8

Source: *Russia and the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Moscow, 2008, p. 30*

A large number of labour migrants from Tajikistan stay in Russia illegally and are not registered as migrants. There is no general system of registration of migrants in Tajikistan, so the exact number of labour migrants is unknown.

Labour migration from Tajikistan follows certain patterns. The key flow of labour migration is directed to CIS countries. The overwhelming majority of migrants go to the Russian Federation and the remainder to Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova and more distant countries (Islamic Republic of Iran, Persian Gulf states, Mongolia, Canada, United States, etc.).

Labour migration is characterised by the prevalence of the male population involved. According to the LFS 2004, of the total number of labour migrants men constitute 94.3% and women just 5.7%. In recent years, the share of women in migration declined further. Labour migration is mainly of a seasonal and returnable nature as family ties are traditionally strong in Tajikistan. Most migrants consider their work abroad as a temporary measure to address the financial problems of the family. However, in the last three to four years there has been an increase in migrants' duration of stay abroad and a higher differentiation based on professional qualifications. Thus, according to LFS 2004, based on the length of time spent abroad migrants can be divided as follows: 38% stay up to six months, 32% seven to twelve months, and 30% over twelve months.

Labour migration is equally dominated by young people aged 15–29 who account for about 53% of all migrants. The middle-aged (30–49) constitute 44.4% of the total number of labour migrants. The average age of labour migrants in 2004 was 30.6 years (SSC, 2005, p. 61).

According to the LFS 2004, approximately every third labour migrant (31.5%) has some professional training. This includes 7.9% of migrants with higher education, 7.5% of those with secondary specialised education and 13.4% of migrants with basic vocational training. More than 57% of migrants have complete secondary education. This is a large group that does not have any basic professional training, unlike those migrants who have done specialised work abroad in different professions. Those migrants have either mastered other working skills over the years of migration or are employed in low-paid jobs that do not require high qualifications.

A number of factors complicate the stay and work of labour migrants: lack of basic professional education, low level of technical culture and education, poor knowledge of the Russian language, poor knowledge of the needs of the labour market in Russia, absence of legal knowledge and unfamiliarity with the basic elements of labour relations. In their hopeless situation, they are both obliged and ready to do low-qualified, poorly paid work, and live in premises that are not fit for purpose.

1.2 LABOUR MARKET TRENDS

Various sources of data show that Tajikistan has a rapidly growing population, thus the labour market is affected by increasingly important socio-economic and demographic factors.

The analysis of official statistics shows that in Tajikistan the rate of growth of the working-age population considerably exceeds the rate of growth of the labour force. There is an annual need for a minimum of 150,000 jobs in order to preserve the level of employment and involve the growing working-age population in the labour market. This average annual increase in the number of employed should thus be no less than 7%, whereas it is still only 0.9%, almost eight times less than the required indicator.

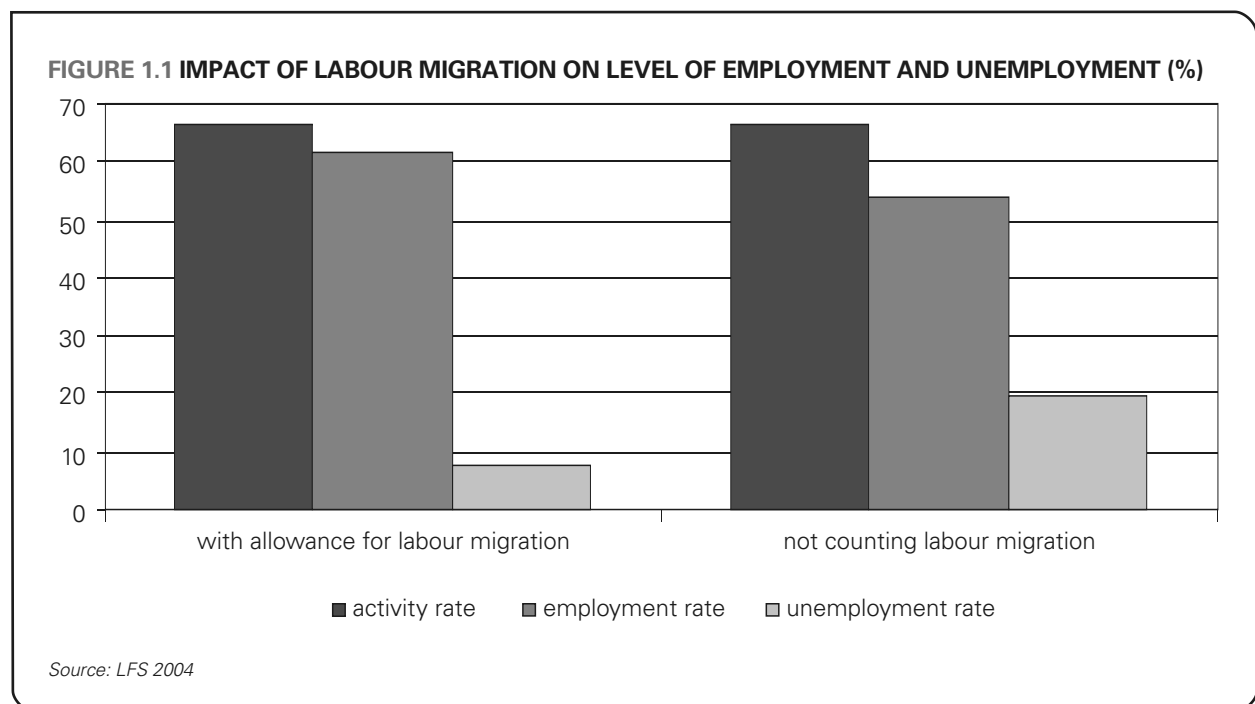
The level of general unemployment in Tajikistan (LFS 2004) is relatively low (7.4%) and is gradually declining, mainly because of the impact of labour migration on the labour market. At the same time the level of unemployment among the urban population (17.85%), youth aged 15–29 (19.2%) and women (8.5%) is much higher. The reason for the high level of unemployment among young people is their lack of work experience. They do not have work experience because the majority have no vocational training. Only 25.4% of the unemployed have vocational education, and among women only 15.8%.

The difficulties of the transition period had a negative impact on the quality of the labour force. In 2004 only 27.6% of the labour force received professional education.

During the period between 1989 and 2000 censuses the level of professional education fell 1.5 times. The current system of professional education can train annually only around 45% of young people entering the labour market. This incomplete coverage is a traditional problem of Tajikistan since Soviet times (1980s–90s). The problem has not yet been solved and is being further aggravated with the decline in the quality of education.

A certain imbalance has formed in Tajikistan regarding the vocational training of managers. The share of students in tertiary education has sharply increased and initial vocational training has decreased. The ratio of trained specialists with tertiary, secondary special and initial education in the country is 2:1:2.

The economic difficulties of the transition period, limited employment opportunities and low wages became the main motive for migration of those seeking work. Labour migration has become the key survival strategy in Tajikistan over the last 15 years. It adds to political stability, as extreme poverty could lead to increased socio-political tension. Thus the problem of unemployment and employment in the country has been softened thanks to labour migration (**FIGURE 1.1**).



Labour migration makes it possible to reduce the level of unemployment almost threefold and increases the level of employment of the working-age population by 15%. It has stimulated the market in construction services, aviation and road transport services, activated banking services, developed trade, and improved the labour culture and professional standards among migrants.

One example: the data analysis of specialist training through vocational education shows that in the period 1991–2007 the overall trend in specialist training fell to 45.8%; 100% in the fields of masonry and plastering (i.e. personnel turnout ceased), 61.4% in machine and motor operation, 61.3% in painting and plastering, 54% in joinery and carpentry, and 25.3% in bench-working and electrical mechanics. Simultaneously, specialist training in sewing and tailoring increased more than 16 times, about 8.5 times in automobile driving/operating, and over 3.5 times in metal machinery operation (Ashurov, 2008).

During the last 16 to 18 years the majority of specialists in the construction sector have reached retirement or pre-retirement age, or have emigrated. At the same time a construction boom could be observed in Tajikistan – blocks of flats, hotels, trade centres, business centres, power plants and other installations have been built and roads have been reconstructed. And the majority of builders for these construction sites are high-level local professionals. Almost all of them received professional education (most often without a corresponding certificate) while in labour migration. There is no doubt that the construction sector in Tajikistan is provided with specialists thanks to labour migration – a positive factor for the labour market, especially as the state has spent nothing on the training of managers.

Many migrants having acquired practical working skills abroad are now applying to the Tajik education authorities for certification of their professional skills. Unfortunately, no record is kept regarding such migrants, and the state has made the first steps to address this problem. In any case, the migrant can register with the Public Employment Service and, like an ordinary unemployed worker, receive vocational training during short-term courses together with a state certificate. The normative and legal basis for such professional migrants is missing.

Summarising the survival strategy, it is important to note that the Tajik active population would like to have appropriate jobs at home, and in the formal sector of economy. Not everyone can be a businessman. It is also important that economic activity among women grows, even among women with many children.

1.3 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND MIGRATION POLICIES

Labour migration in Tajikistan has been recognised as a strategy of the state employment policy. Although the phenomenon of migration among the active population in search of work began in 1993/94, the state only began to formulate its policy of regulating labour migration in 2000.

From 2000, various institutional measures have been taken to regulate and develop labour migration: a network of intermediary agencies was created to help Tajik citizens to find work abroad, and representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection were established in five Russian regions. In 2001, amendments were made to migration legislation, in part to regulate it, and the government approved the concept of labour migration of Tajik citizens. According to this concept, labour migration is a component of the employment policy (Kuddusov, 2004, p. 106).

In 2002, the Labour Migration Programme for 2003–05 was adopted, and a new programme was adopted in 2006 for 2006–09. In 2004, the government passed a resolution on regulating labour migration. In general, the objectives of state power and the direction of its efforts, as defined in these documents, demonstrate the formation of state policy in the field of labour migration.

Analysis of the content and results of the implementation of the concept of labour migration of Tajik citizens and the Labour Migration Programme shows that the activities envisaged in these documents are not financially supported. The definition of the programme itself implies streamlined actions, quantitative and qualitative changes, and efficiency. The implementation of a programme cannot be measured, however, unless it contains specific tasks – for example, the number of Tajik citizens prepared for labour migration in accordance with the requirements of the Russian market for professional qualifications. This is the most important part of the regulation of labour migration, and the first requirement for legalisation of labour migrants in Russia. In fact many points of the programme have not been fulfilled due to the lack of funds.

The implementation in 2001 of the system of bank money transfers after removal of the 30% state duty constituted an important breakthrough in the evolution of labour migration. In 2001, migrants' bank transfers amounted to slightly over USD 300,000. In 2003 the amount already exceeded USD 256 million, equal to 20% of the country's GDP (Kuddusov, 2004, p. 106). According to the National Bank of the Republic of Tajikistan, the bank transfers made by labour migrants in 2006 exceeded USD 1,127 billion, or 25% of GDP, whereas in 2007 remittances from private individuals (of whom migrants constitute the overwhelming majority) amounted to USD 1,774 billion or 47.6% of GDP. In 2008 the volume of bank transfers exceeded USD 2.5 billion, over 56% of GDP. Over 64% of migrants use bank transfers.

Labour migrants' remittances have not become a major source of investment in the economy, however. Less than 2% of migrants started a business or invested in enterprises (Fagan et al., 2005). Even though the National Bank notes (in its semi-annual surveys) a growth of labour migrants' savings, their revenues are largely spent on general consumption and living expenses.

Another successful breakthrough is a varied system of transport services for migrants. In 2000 the volume of passengers carried by all types of transport in Tajikistan did not exceed 200,000–250,000. This figure has now risen to over 650,000 a year (departures only), and these services could be further expanded. In 2000 only one Tajik air carrier, *Tajik Air*, was operating in the market of aviation services, and now there are over ten aviation companies. Competition with foreign aviation companies has had a positive impact on the cost of air tickets and quality of services. The number of rail and air routes has sharply increased. Now migrants have the opportunity to choose the type of transport and plan their trip by the most suitable route.

To help solve labour migration issues, Tajikistan strives to establish bilateral and multilateral relations with the countries receiving its migrants. In 1994 an agreement was signed on the protection of labour migrants' rights within the CIS. In October 2004 Tajikistan and the Russian Federation signed an intergovernmental agreement on the protection of labour migrants' rights. The following year a similar agreement was signed with Kazakhstan. All these agreements envisage general measures regarding labour activity and protection of labour migrants' rights. A very important aspect is that each party recognises (without a specific legalisation) diplomas, certificates of education, relevant documents on rank, grade, qualification and other documents required to carry out a temporary labour activity. However, these agreements do not solve the issues of professional training of migrants, their social insurance and provision of pensions.

Tajikistan has a dual citizenship agreement with the Russian Federation, and the practice of recent years shows that many migrants are more actively seeking the opportunity to obtain Russian citizenship. Labour migrants believe that obtaining Russian citizenship is the opportunity to protect their rights from various kinds of harassment and infringements. A dual citizenship agreement should be considered as a crucial and positive factor of the country's migration policy. Moreover, a special department has been set up under the Embassy of Tajikistan in Russia for working with migrants and general consulates have been established in several Russian regions.

In order to assist Tajik citizens seeking employment abroad, a series of intermediary licensed agencies has been set up. Until recently, the licences were issued for one year, on condition that the agency provides documents ensuring employment for a minimum of 30 people; the agency has to look for employers and select appropriate migrants meeting their requirements (such as specialism, qualifications, etc.), while the prospective employers should obtain permission for hiring foreign citizens. Due to the difficult nature of the work, and many other reasons, many of these intermediary agencies had taken to illegal methods of working. Out of 30 such agencies – holders of licences from the Ministry of Internal Affairs – only five to eight are still in existence and in 2009 they ensured employment for 1,600 workers only – 0.3% of the total number of labour migrants. Indicators for 2007/08 are similar.

Intermediary agencies in Tajikistan act as a link between the migrant and the foreign employer. They are not responsible for labour relations but simply provide informational support to migrants. Nor are they involved in issues such as vocational training and legal protection. In general, a labour migrant wishing to study for a profession which is currently in demand has nowhere to go to obtain good-quality training. At the same time, intermediary agencies, while having a long list of people wishing to work abroad, suffer from an acute shortage of skilled workers. This is largely explained by the fact that qualified migrants have already found jobs over the 15 years of the history of migration, whereas young people do not have the required labour skills.

On 30 November 2006, by Decree of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan No 9, the responsibility for labour migration was transferred to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Ministry of the Interior has established its own migration service and issues licences to the agencies dealing with export and import of the labour force, setting up a registration system for migrants, and keeping a record of foreign citizens arriving in Tajikistan. Meanwhile the issues of social protection of migrants and their vocational training remain under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Labour. The lack of coordination and frequent structural changes have a negative effect on the progressive evolution of state policy on labour migration.

The government has started to develop a cooperation strategy with the Tajik diaspora. The drafting of a separate law on labour migration as well as the national strategy for labour migration and other documents had the support of the World Bank and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

Since 2000 the government, along with various international organisations (including the IOM, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), USAID, the European Commission, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the Open Society Institute) have implemented donor projects in Tajikistan. These projects are mainly aimed at the institutional development of structures for migration management, and to a lesser extent at direct assistance to migrants. One of these projects is the first survey on migration conducted by the Sharq Scientific Research Center commissioned by the IOM in 2003 (Olimova and Bosc, 2003). Since then the

IOM, the World Bank, the ILO, the Asian Development Bank and other organisations have carried out various surveys on migration. This research work is ongoing.

In 2004, thanks to the support of the IOM and OSCE, an information centre for legal support of labour migrants was established with a support network in Russia.

In 2004–06 within the framework of the ILO sub-regional project ‘Combating human trafficking and forced labour outcomes in Central Asia and the Russian Federation’, supported by the Dutch government, a wide information and explanatory campaign was conducted among potential migrants, and jointly with the Tajikistan builders’ trade union five information centres for migrant builders were set up. The ILO initiated the signing of an agreement on dual membership between the builders’ trade unions of Tajikistan and Russia, which became an important element in the protection of migrants’ rights. A similar agreement was later signed with the Kazakh builders’ trade union.

The most important achievement of this project was the organisation of three-month courses for high-quality professional training and pre-departure orientation for 50 potential migrants in the skills of mason and welder. As a result 30% of graduates of these courses immediately found a good job in Tajikistan itself, and the remaining 70% found legal jobs abroad through the intermediary of the builders’ trade unions of Tajikistan and Russia. These were the first courses for professional and pre-departure orientation to provide quality training. After that similar courses were organised within the framework of the follow-up ILO project, supported by the Japanese government, in the Rasht district of Tajikistan, with the application of modular training technologies.

Within the framework of a small ILO project – ‘Social consequences of migration in Tajikistan’ – supported by the Finnish government in the Tavildara district of Tajikistan in 2006–09, jointly with the employers’ association, a centre for supporting beekeeping was set up to support labour migrants’ families. Its activities included courses on professional training in beekeeping and micro credits were allocated for business start-ups in this sector.

At present the ILO, the IOM, the World Bank and the European Commission are running several projects on migration in Tajikistan.

In practice, among the most effective projects are those aimed at working with migrants themselves and members of their families, the organisation of professional training and micro crediting. Unfortunately, not many projects of this kind have been carried out in Tajikistan.

2. METHODOLOGY OF THE SURVEY

The major issues of research are: (i) key drivers of migration; (ii) interaction between poverty and migration; (iii) effects on the domestic labour market; and (iv) education and skills features of migrant groups, i.e. Does this picture correspond to the national average indicator, or is it significantly diverse? Who are the most mobile workers and what are the routes of population movements? Are there other non-economic push factors (i.e. conflicts)? What is the role of remittances for households and for the national economy to cope with poverty and productive use of remittances (type of investment, business start-ups, education)?

2.1 SURVEY STAGES

The **first stage** of the survey was devoted to the selection of different information sources on the socio-economic situation in the country in the context of employment and migration. The survey used data from secondary information sources, and both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The **second stage** was devoted to the elaboration of the survey tools, including two questionnaires – for potential migrants and returning migrants – and instructions for supervisors and interviewers. As this type of survey had already been conducted by the ETF in Albania, Egypt, the Republic of Moldova, Tunisia and Ukraine in 2006 and 2007, the ETF provided the same methodology to IRC Socservice (including sample design, survey questionnaires and data analysis methods). These materials have been adapted for the conditions of Tajikistan. Fieldwork was carried out in December 2008. The survey was timed to coincide with the off-season when the majority of migrants had returned home and were planning their trips for the following spring.

The **third stage** was devoted to data processing, the creation of a database (SPSS), the analysis of collected materials and the preparation of an analytical report.

2.2 SAMPLE DESIGN

A two-stage cluster sample was selected: first-stage clusters included four regions chosen to represent the geographical diversity of the country and second-stage clusters included cities and districts, and then villages, communes or municipalities chosen to represent the geographical diversity of the selected regions.

TABLE 2.1 REGIONS OF THE STUDY

Region	Number of respondents	Share of total number of respondents (%)
Dushanbe and Republic subordinate districts		
Dushanbe city	315	15.75
Tursunzoda district	106	5.30
Vahdat district	125	6.25
Faizobod district	37	1.85
Rasht district	45	2.25
Khatlon region		
Kulyab district	210	10.50
Vakhsh district	173	8.65
Vose' district	203	10.15
Temurmalik district	68	3.40
Shuroobod district	58	2.90
Sughd region		
Khujand town	108	5.40
Ainy district	49	2.45
B. Ghafurov district	202	10.10
Istaravshan district	104	5.20
Panjakent district	133	6.65
Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous region		
Khorog town	20	1.00
Shughnon district	18	0.90
Darvoz district	26	1.30
Total	2,000	100.00

The details of this selection were agreed with local service providers, so that at both stages (selection of regions and selection of villages, communes or municipalities) areas with high and low levels of development, areas of high and low levels of international migration, and both rural and urban areas were included.

It was anticipated that all 2,000 interviews would be conducted within the chosen cluster sites. The procedure for selecting individual interviewees varied for potential migrants and returning migrants.

Potential migration survey

1. The first step was to calculate the number of households³ to be contacted in each cluster locality in a way that reflects the proportion of the population living in different regions and areas. Thus, for example, if 15% of the country's population lives in the capital city, 15% of interviews should be conducted in the capital city. Similarly, if 50% of the country's population is rural, then 50% of the interviews should be conducted in rural areas. Through this method, it is hoped to approximate a nationally representative sample survey.
2. On this basis, interviewers should be given a total number of households that need to be contacted in each locality. These households should be selected using a process that is either random, or performed in a systematic way that eliminates any potential bias. For example, a series of 'routes' for interviewers could be selected at random, along which interviewers systematically select households (e.g. every fifth household).
3. Selected households were first to be asked screening questions, to identify the presence of potential and returned migrants⁴.
4. If no returned migrant is present, the potential migration survey should be administered to one individual in the household aged 15–60. Respondents were selected on the following basis:
 - a. If one person only is present (and available for interview) aged 15–60, he or she is interviewed.
 - b. If more than one person is present (and available for interview) aged 15–60, the one whose month of birth falls soonest after the completion of the interview is selected.
 - c. If birth months are not known, individuals are chosen by lot.
 - d. If nobody aged 15–60 is present or available for interview, then the survey moves on to the next household, starting again with the screening questions in order to find a respondent aged 15–60.

In principle, once 1,000 interviews are completed across the country, the proportion of men and women interviewed and their distribution across different levels of education should accurately reflect proportions in the country as a whole for the 15–60 age group. It was anticipated that the margin of error of the potential migration survey would be 2%–3%.

Return migration survey

1. If the screening question reveals that a returned migrant is present, then both the potential migration and the return migration questionnaires should be used, i.e. two individuals are interviewed in the household.
2. Only one returned migrant was interviewed per household. If there is more than one returned migrant present, one person is selected as per (b) or (c) above.
3. If there is only one eligible interviewee in the household, who is a returnee, and aged 15–60, the return migration survey is used, and this interview is counted towards the quota of 1,000 interviews for both the potential and return migration surveys.
4. If no return migrant is present in the screened household, an additional interview is sought with another returned migrant within the locality in order to meet the quota of return migration interviews.

Some difficulties were encountered when it came to interviewing women in households. Men are usually the heads of households, and they tend to answer for all the members of their households. It took much time to explain to them that each interview is individual and that it is equally important to learn women's opinions. These problems mainly arose during the interviews with potential migrants, and female interviewers were involved to help resolve such problems.

Some 10% of questionnaires had gaps in answers, as the respondents did not always wish to answer some questions. So despite the total number of 2,205 interviewed respondents, 205 questionnaires were discarded during processing.

³ For the purposes of this study, a 'household' is defined as 'those who live together and have communal arrangements concerning subsistence and other necessities of life, plus those who currently live elsewhere but whose principal commitments to the household remain, and who expect to rejoin (or be joined by) the household in the future'. Thus, children or siblings who have moved away from the household can be considered part of the household but only if, on return, they can confidently be expected to live again within the original household. Sending remittances is not a sufficient condition to be considered part of the household.

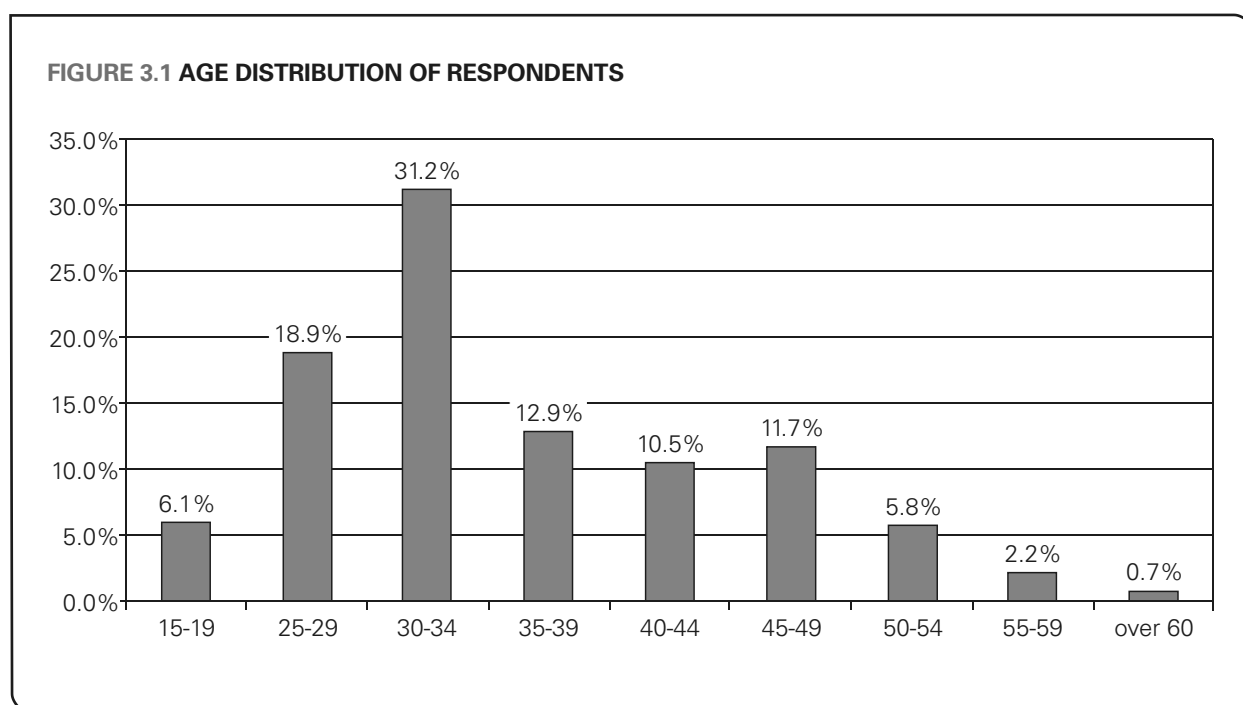
⁴ For the purposes of the survey a 'potential migrant' was defined as anyone aged 15–60, living in his/her country at the time of the interview, and a 'returning migrant' was defined as anyone who had left the country aged 15 or over, lived and worked abroad continuously for at least six months, and returned at least one month and less than ten years before the interview. Those who had returned over ten years ago or stayed abroad last time for less than six months were interviewed under the questionnaire for potential migrants. Such people constituted 26.4% of potential migrants.

3. POTENTIAL MIGRANTS

3.1 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Some 1,000 respondents were interviewed as potential migrants in this survey. Of these, 59% are male and 41% female. Some 33.9% of respondents are heads of households, 20.9% are husband and wife, 39.9% are children (son/daughter) to the heads of households, 1.7% are grandsons (or granddaughters) and 3.6% are other relatives to heads of households.

The age composition of the respondents is comparatively young, which corresponds to the age structure of the general population (**FIGURE 3.1**).



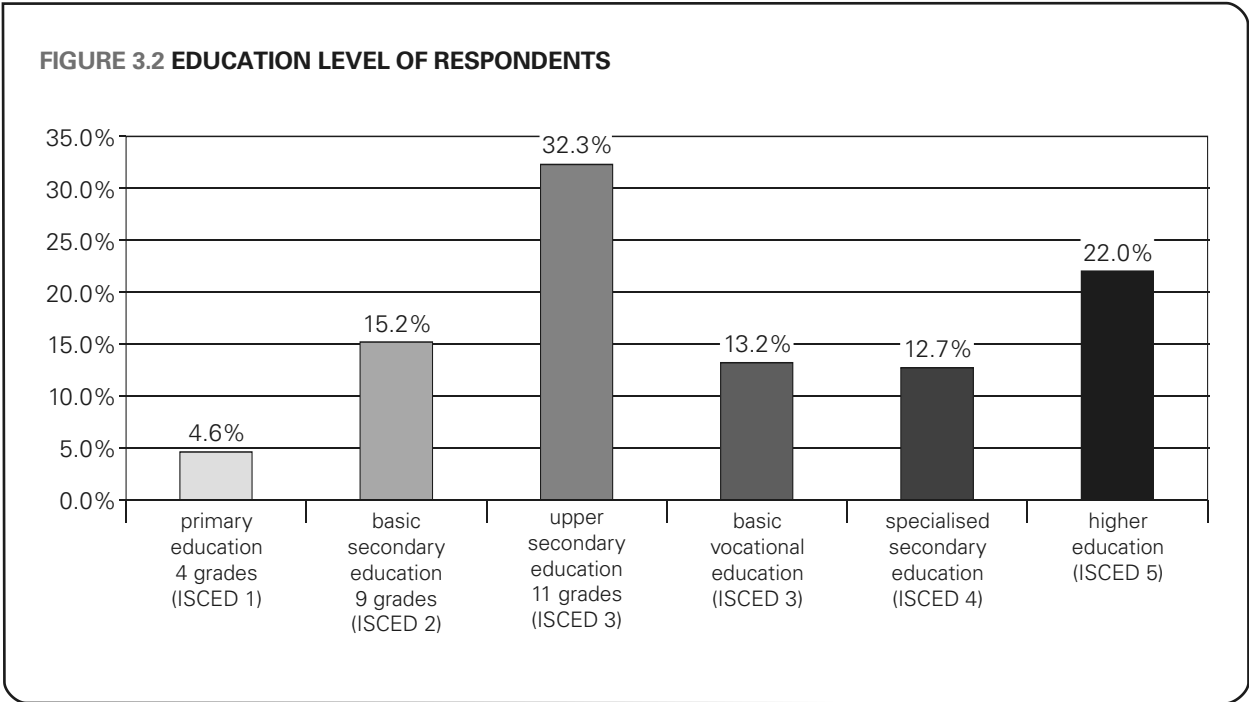
The predominant group of respondents (31.2%) are aged 30–34, while 25% are young people aged 15–29.

In Tajikistan the average age for marriage is traditionally low (27.3 years for men and 23.3 years for women). That is why, despite the young age, almost two-thirds (65.5%) of respondents have families, 9% more are engaged and plan to have families soon. Only 17.3% of respondents do not have their own families and have never been married before, 3.6% are widows or widowers, and 4.6% are divorced.

The survey showed that none of the respondents was living alone. It is usual for people to live in households of on average four to six people (44%), and families have many children, which is quite natural because the majority of them live in rural areas.

Almost all married respondents have children; 70% said they had children. The average number of children in respondents' families was three to five.

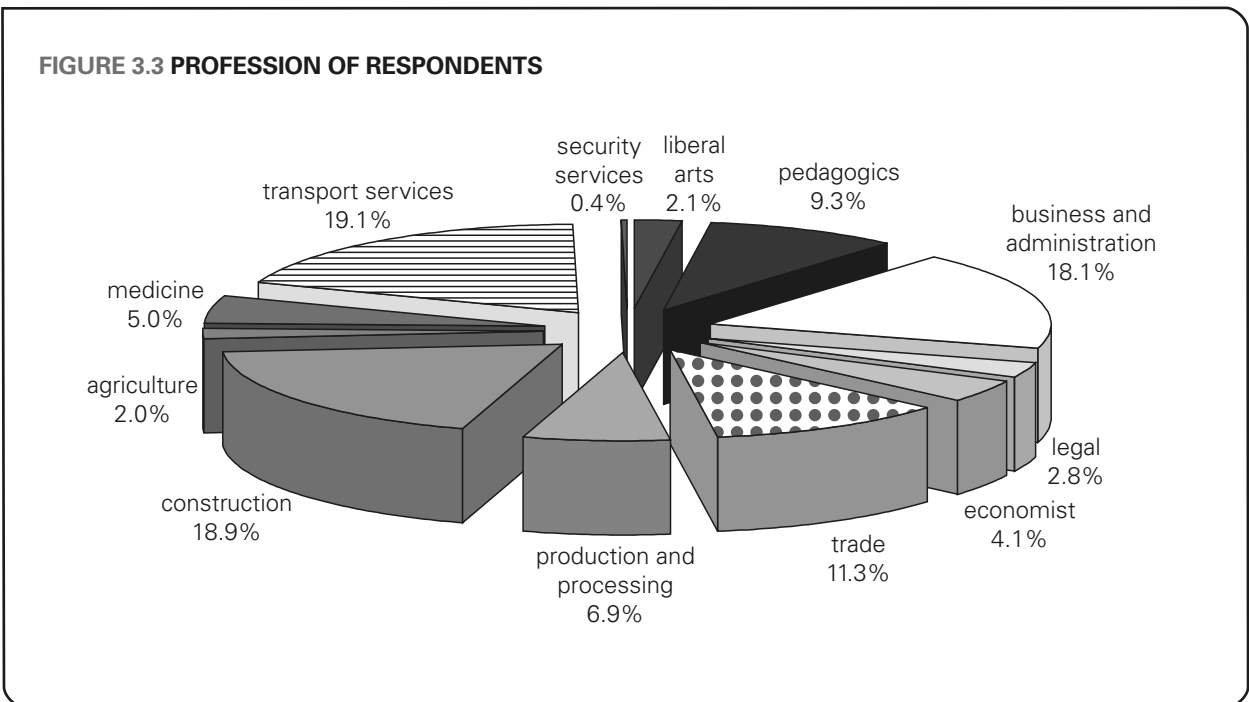
The survey showed that 47.9% of respondents had a professional education, which is twice as high as the nationwide indicator. Every third respondent (32.3%) had upper secondary education (**FIGURE 3.2**).



The level of professional education of men is one-third higher than women’s, which is characteristic of the population of the country as a whole.

More than half of respondents (52.1%) do not have professional education. However, along with this 73.9% declared that they had a specialism. This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that some of the respondents obtained professional qualifications through studying at short-term courses (not included in the classification of levels of education), or their skills were obtained through informal professional training. Besides, it is important to consider that a large proportion of respondents (around 19%) stated that they had a profession in transport services, i.e. they believe that once they have a driving licence, that document confirms their profession as drivers. Very often such people provide various types of transport services, mainly for passengers, although the profession of driver should be validated by a certificate (for short-term courses) or a state diploma.

The remainder of the respondents specialised in architecture and construction (18.9%), business (18.1%), trade (11.3%), teaching (9.3%), production and processing (6.9%) and health care (5%) among other sectors (**FIGURE 3.3**).



Respondents made a deliberate choice of profession; 46.8% choosing a future profession based on personal interest, 36% to find work and 4.3% for the opportunity to travel abroad.

Moreover, the education level is traditionally higher among those who specialise in the liberal and economic sectors, and is lowest among those who specialise in construction and transport.

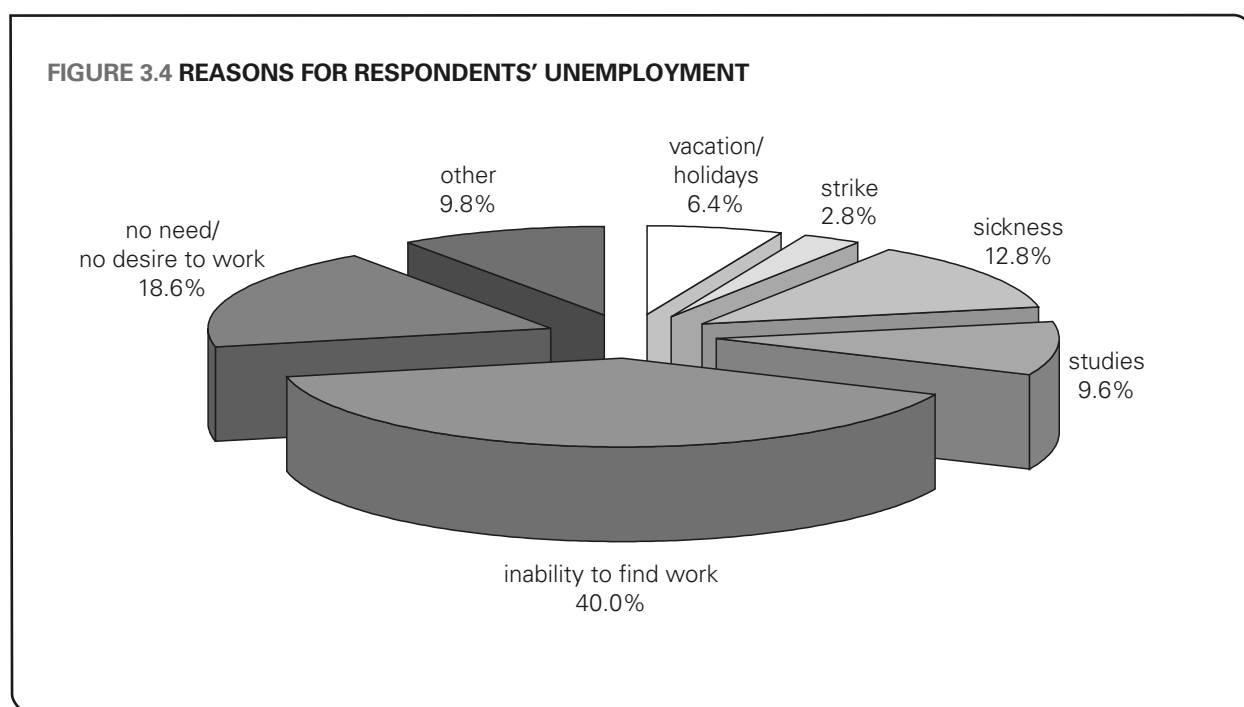
A majority of respondents (84.5%) think that education helps to improve the quality of life. A majority (78%) also stressed the importance of investing in education; however, only 32% were determined to continue their education. Awareness of the importance of investing in education is greater among respondents with a higher level of education, especially among educated women and older people.

Of the respondents who intend to continue their education, 27.3% said that they wanted to receive education in the business sector, 12.3% in pedagogics, 11.1% in medicine, and 9.9% in architecture and construction.

The Tajik language is the mother tongue for 90.2% of respondents. At the same time 73% of respondents know Russian and 21.6% Uzbek. Only 5.4% of respondents know English. Knowledge of foreign languages is mainly characteristic of those with a higher level of education.

3.2 EMPLOYMENT

The survey showed that 46.8% of respondents had not worked for at least an hour during the last seven days. There were many reasons for this but the largest number of respondents (40.0%) said that they had failed to find appropriate jobs (**FIGURE 3.4**).

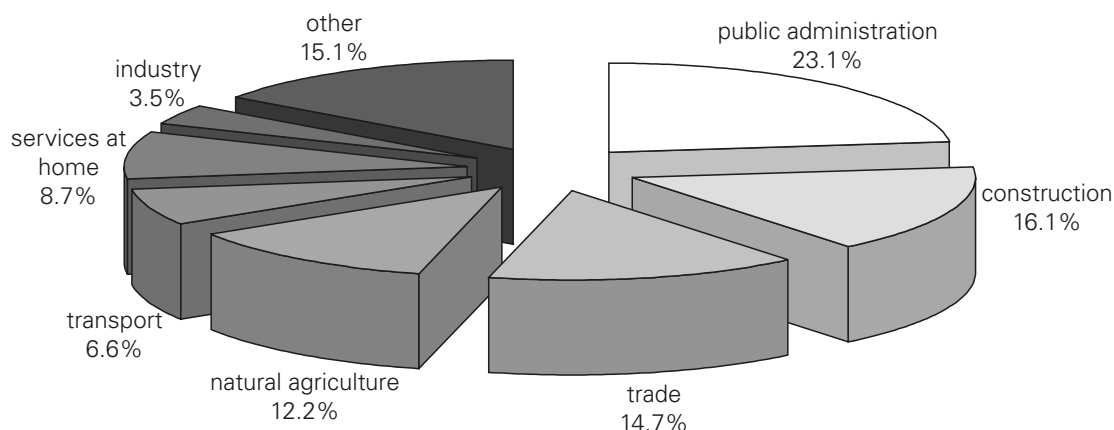


Among unemployed respondents, the number of women is 15% higher than the number of men. The level of unemployment is higher when the level of education is lower.

Of the unemployed respondents, 36.3% were seeking a job. It should be noted that the search for a job does not always depend on education level or gender distribution.

In general, the unemployment level among respondents based on the ILO methodology was 17%. More than 80% of respondents have previous work experience; however, every fifth respondent (19.2%) has neither worked before nor acquired labour skills, and these are mainly young people.

Out of the respondents who had worked, 23.1% had worked in public administration, 40.9% in production of goods and 12.2% in natural agriculture, while 8.7% were providing services at home (**FIGURE 3.5**).

FIGURE 3.5 EMPLOYMENT OF RESPONDENTS

Along with this, 27.8% were paid employees, 18.2% were working with no contract, 16.1% were employers themselves, 10.5% were self-employed, and 10.3% were unpaid family workers. There were no hired labourers. The level of independence among those with a higher level of education, i.e. among freelancers, is 12% higher than hired labourers. The education level among family workers, mainly women and young people working on farms, is very low.

Every third employed respondent (31.8%) was an unskilled worker and only 22.6% performed qualified work. Every fifth employed respondent (20.3%) was a professional in his/her field and 7.6% more were high- or mid-level managers. The level of professional education among those working as unskilled labourers is practically zero.

Of the working respondents, 16.9% had an additional job on top of the main one. In total 44.7% of respondents usually worked up to 40 hours a week, which complies with legal requirements (40-hour working week). However, 39.8% of respondents worked from 41 to 56 hours, and 15.3% more than 56 hours a week, which means, in general, a total workload that excluded the possibility of rest.

Most probably such employment of respondents relates to the low level of wages for basic work, which obviously does not provide for an acceptable level of well-being of the household. For example, only 12.6% employees receive decent wages of 501–1,000 somonis per month (USD 150–300). The survey showed that the salary level does not directly depend on the education level but relates to the type of activity. This is characteristic of Tajikistan.

3.3 INTENTION TO EMIGRATE

Limited opportunities for finding decent work at home made 41.8% of respondents reflect on the option of moving abroad for a job or permanent residence; these people are potential migrants. The desire to leave is slightly higher among respondents with a higher level of education, but all respondents want to seek a highly paid job abroad, irrespective of their education. The desire to migrate relates more to the status of employment, i.e. the desire to migrate prevails among respondents who have no job or are dissatisfied with the job they have.

The desire to migrate to a certain extent depends on the number of people in the family, not on the type of house or available land plot, but directly depends on the level of family income. The desire to seek a job abroad is often higher among those who are dissatisfied with the financial situation of their families.

More than half of respondents (58.2%) do not consider the option of going abroad. The reluctance to migrate probably relates to the Tajiks' traditionally settled way of life. For this reason, 46.2% do not want to leave their home country and 23.2% more do not want to live away from their families. Some 7.3% will miss home.

However, there are other reasons discouraging migration. Almost every tenth respondent (9%) of those reluctant to migrate highlighted the unfriendliness of citizens of a foreign state, a high level of discrimination and isolation from the community, 2.4% stated poor working conditions abroad as well as a low wage level, 2.3% spoke of the complexity of

finding a decent job abroad, and 9.6% of respondents did not want to go abroad as they were satisfied with their financial situation and income level in Tajikistan.

Generally, those unwilling to go abroad and those far from migration, irrespective of education level and status in the labour market, assess positively the impact of migration as such. Some two-thirds (67.2%) believe that those who return after working abroad are in a more advantageous position compared with those who have not been abroad. More advantageous conditions are motivated by the fact that the migrant knows more and has rich life experience, has acquired more skills and is better educated.

The survey showed that the overwhelming majority (86.1%) of respondents – not potential migrants – were unaware of the state programmes and agencies responsible for the employment of Tajik citizens abroad. The less informed and less educated respondents tend to come from rural areas.

As our objective was to analyse potential migrants' characteristics, the following paragraphs focus on the 418 respondents who expressed their intention to leave the country to work abroad (from now onwards referred to as 'potential migrants').

3.4 POTENTIAL MIGRANTS' CHARACTERISTICS

The main socio-demographic characteristics of potential migrants has been analysed by comparing two groups of respondents: 418 respondents who stated that they wanted to work abroad (potential migrants) and 582 respondents who wanted to remain in their own country ('non migrants').

Analysing the two groups, the following conclusions can be drawn.

- Males are more present among potential migrants, with 63% versus 56%.
- The two groups seem to have the same age distribution; however people aged 20–24 are predominant in the potential migrants' group. In particular, within this age group 66% intend to migrate compared with 34% who prefer to stay in Tajikistan.
- There are no relevant differences between the two groups according to marital status.
- A low number of children is a strong characteristic of potential migrants: about 75% have one to three children (compared with 53% of the other group).
- The education level of potential migrants is slightly lower than that of non migrants (40% with secondary vocational or higher level versus 54%).
- The difference in working status between the two groups is small (44% versus 49% of unemployed), therefore it cannot be considered as the main reason for leaving. The potential migrants are involved above all in the construction field (22.5% versus 11.3% of non migrants), and they are also less professionally skilled (21% are professionals or managers, while there are 33% of non migrants with the same characteristics).
- Potential migrants are obviously characterised by a lower income level.

3.5 POTENTIAL MIGRANTS' EXPECTATIONS

For 52.6% of potential migrants, going abroad is likely to happen in the following six months, and for every third of them the probability of the trip is very high.

The willingness to go abroad and the probability of the trip depend on several factors. The overwhelming majority of potential migrants wishing to go abroad within six months know the language of the receiving country, more than 80% have enough information before the trip, and every second potential migrant can finance the trip abroad independently. Only every second of them has the required set of documents for the trip, and one-third anticipates possible problems with obtaining documents.

In fact the willingness of potential migrants to go abroad does not depend on the level of familiarity with official bodies in charge of migrant employment or their readiness to deal with them. These potential migrants do not want to attend any training courses as they consider themselves to have been trained enough already.

Although the issue of available future workplace was not covered by the survey, the decision to go abroad is one of the most important ones. Generally, around 40% of potential migrants wishing to go abroad within months have the opportunity to do so.

For 50.5% of potential migrants, going abroad is a possibility in the following two years, and for every third of them the trip is very likely.

Potential migrants who mentioned the probability of their departure within two years, while knowing something of the language of the receiving country, have little information about the trip. Only every tenth potential migrant is ready to finance the trip. The level of knowledge about the required documents and their availability is very low. These potential migrants anticipate problems with obtaining the required documents and they want to learn more about the receiving country, language courses in particular. They also would like information on the state programmes assisting labour migrants or avail themselves of services provided by various employment agencies.

In general, potential migrants would like to reinforce their willingness to go abroad in the coming two years through upgrading the level of their knowledge and finding funding sources for their trip. That is why the probability of emigrating is really high only for every tenth potential migrant. Other factors that were not covered within the framework of the survey can also affect this decision.

The main reason for migration for a majority of potential migrants (50.2%) is a desire to improve their quality of life. Every fifth (20.6%) potential migrant wants to go abroad in order to find a better job and earn more, to resolve financial problems in the family, to pay off debts, and to cover the expenses of children's education, while 8.1% more want to leave due to unemployment.

Thus, we can note that 78.9% of potential migrants want to go abroad and find a decent job and only 2.1% want to go for studies. Only 6.5% will go to start a family or to accompany family members (spouse or parents). There are also other reasons for departure (12.5% of respondents).

During the last 16 years working abroad has become a traditional income source for a great number of families in Tajikistan. Members of potential migrant families realise that real opportunities for covering the needs of households by working in their home country are limited by the low wage level. For this reason, going abroad is supported by family members of potential migrants.

The survey showed that a potential migrant and his parents are key decision-makers with regard to the migration issue; 49.3% of respondents stated that they had decided themselves to go for labour migration, and 38.3% had made decisions jointly with others. This proves that the decision on seeking a job abroad, as a rule, is made collectively. Sometimes it is the parents themselves who decide that their son should seek work abroad, as stated by 56% of potential migrants. As a rule, this happens to the young men who after entering the labour market fail to find jobs at home. Generally, men are more independent in decision-making on migration compared with women.

Given the low level of wages and dissatisfaction with the employment in their home country, a majority of potential migrants (77.8%) have high expectations for migration and are sure that going abroad will help them improve their financial situation. This confidence is present irrespective of the education level and employment status of potential migrants.

The survey showed that in both long- and short-term perspectives Russia remains the most attractive country for potential migrants, as stated by 88.8% of respondents, while 3.6% more plan to leave for Kazakhstan.

A small number of migrants plan to go to countries beyond the CIS region due to visa regimes, strict limitations in migration policies of these countries as well as poor competitiveness of labour migrants from Tajikistan. For example, Austria or Germany is the planned destination of 0.7% of respondents, Turkey 0.5%, Spain, England and Canada 0.2% each, the United States 2.2%, i.e. migration to countries beyond the CIS is of a very limited nature and is mainly related to the opportunity of receiving a higher level of education. Willingness to leave for Russia does not on the other hand depend on the education level, type of work and professional performance back in the home country.

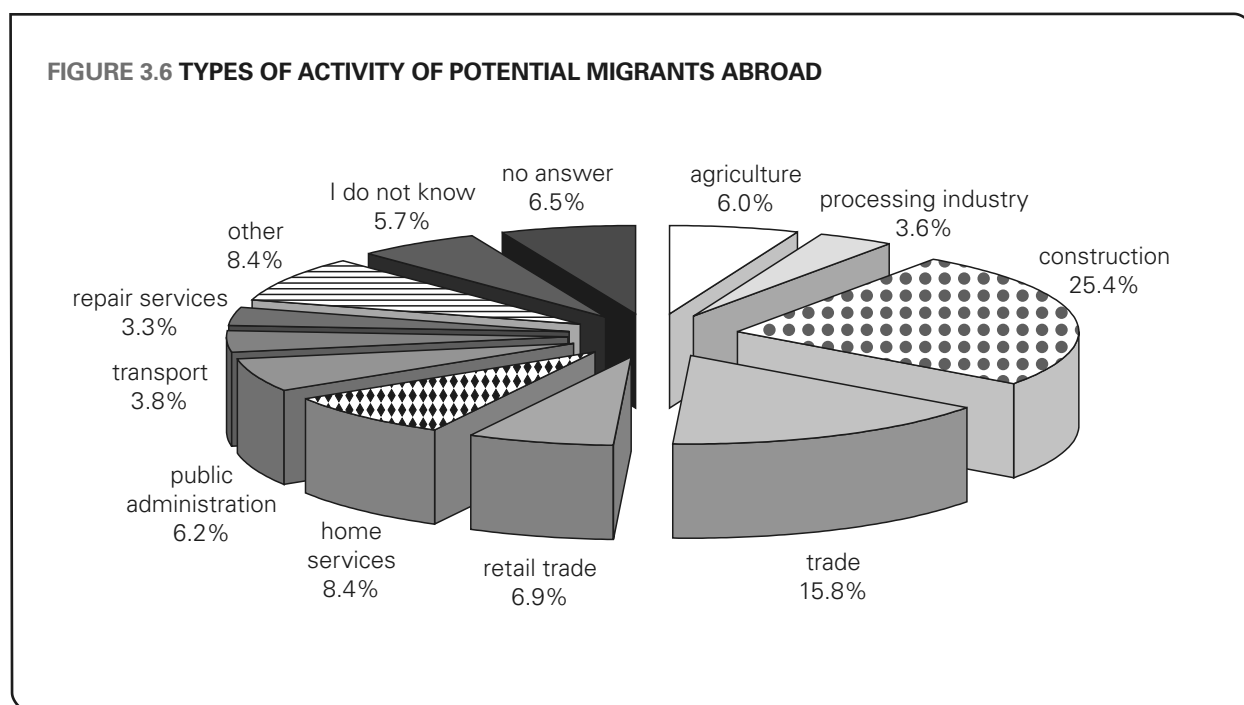
Some 58.6% of potential migrants mentioned as the main incentive for going to their chosen country, the opportunity to earn money and save it, 11% to start a family or to accompany a spouse, while 10% more know the language of the country or have friends and acquaintances there. Some 4.5% chose a country for studying. Young people mainly want to study abroad in order to continue education and receive higher education or upgrade their qualifications. People leave for labour migration irrespective of their education level, and to a larger extent irrespective of their employment status at home. Unemployed potential migrants are more motivated by the opportunity to earn money, and employed potential migrants basically want to save money to help them find more highly paid jobs abroad.

Only 12.7% of potential migrants replied that they were familiar with state programmes and intermediary agencies dealing with the employment of citizens abroad. More educated potential migrants are better informed about state programmes and tend to take more interest in information on intermediary agencies, while 56.6% of the better-informed potential migrants mentioned that they did not plan to participate in any state programmes nor use the services of private agencies, because these agencies do not offer jobs of interest to migrants. Reluctance to participate in these programmes and use agency services does not depend on the education level.

A majority (50.6%) of potential migrants with families plan to go abroad alone, without their spouse. The unwillingness of the majority of potential migrants with families, and they are mostly men, to travel abroad with their families is due to the seasonal character of their work. For most of them it is economically disadvantageous to take a family member (usually a wife) abroad. Besides, somebody has to take care of the family land plot (or family business) as the source of income for the family, and of the children and elderly parents.

Only 29% of potential migrants with families planned to undertake labour migration with a wife or husband. They made such a decision for the following reasons: 38.8% of respondents may need assistance from a family member abroad, 37.7% consider it to be financially advantageous, and 23.5% believe that family members should stay together. Their family members are already abroad in the case of 7.5% of potential migrants.

The survey showed that the largest share (25.4%) of potential migrants intended to work in the construction sector. This is due to the demand for construction specialists in the labour market of receiving countries. The second most attractive sector is trade (15.8%), while 0.7% to 8.4% of respondents are involved in other sectors (**FIGURE 3.6**).



Work planned in the construction sector does not depend on the education level, unlike employment in other sectors.

A majority of potential migrants (34.4%) plan to work as hired paid workers, every sixth (15.6%) as an employer, 8.9% as a self-employed worker and 2.6% as a family member worker. Every tenth (9.3%) potential migrant does not know what he will be doing abroad. The status of planned employment abroad almost matches the status of employment in the home country, with the exception of the construction sector.

It is alarming that 20.6% of potential migrants while leaving for abroad plan to work without a permanent contract, which creates conditions for infringement of migrants' labour rights and the possibility of being cheated. In practice, there have been numerous cases of either employers or middlemen breaking the conditions of verbal agreements. However, this widespread experience of dishonesty gained by Tajik migrants during 16 years of migration is not a subject for exploration nor is it shared with new potential migrants, in that every year a new wave of migrants fall prey to the same schemes that have worked for so long.

More than 50% of potential migrants intend to work as unskilled labourers. Every sixth (15.1%) potential migrant intends to work as a qualified labourer and 12% more as high-class professionals, while 3.6% plan to work as top- or mid-level managers. On the other hand, 11% of potential migrants are undecided on their future specialism. More qualified labourers are ready to carry out less-qualified work abroad than back in their home country. The disparity between jobs and in particular the characteristics of the foreign labour market account for this.

Of the potential migrants, only 22.7% have a fluent knowledge of the language of the country they are going to work in, 18.7% more know the language well enough, 48.8% have neither good nor poor knowledge of the foreign language,

7.7% have rather poor knowledge, and 2.2% do not speak the language at all. Fluency in a foreign language directly depends on education, a higher level of education implying greater fluency in a foreign language.

For every fourth potential migrant (26.4%), the most useful and accessible source of information on a foreign country is personal experience of staying there, for 24.2% it is TV and radio, and for 22.1% relatives and friends. The choice of information sources relates less to education level, as official sources and press do not deal with employment opportunities for migrants abroad except for some information about legal requirements.

In general, interviews with respondents showed that potential migrants mainly receive information on living and working conditions abroad through informal channels, from friends and relatives who already have previous experience of labour migration, and do not rely very much on middlemen. All this increases the risks to which migrants are exposed and makes them more vulnerable. On the other hand, such migrants have an undeveloped sense of justice and prefer either not to stand up for their rights or do so via the same informal (or, speaking plainly, criminal) dealers. This circumstance should attract the attention of appropriate state bodies as the development of infrastructure for providing services for those seeking a job abroad is a necessity in present conditions.

A majority of potential migrants (55.3%) believe that they have enough information about the country where they plan to work, and most of them (90.7%) do not intend to learn more about the country prior to departure.

Every fifth potential migrant (20.3%) plans to attend orientation courses for working and living abroad. The greatest demand concerns professional training courses (51.3%), courses for learning a foreign language (25%) and cultural orientation courses (11.2%). Potential migrants with lower levels of education want to receive training.

Most potential migrants are informed about the documents required for travelling abroad – only 10% being unaware of them – while 91.6% note the requirement to obtain a foreign passport, 29% the requirement to obtain a visa, 61.7% the requirement for medical insurance, 38.3% the requirement to sign a contract and 13.9% the requirement for an education permit. Considering that almost 90% of potential migrants are willing to go to Russia, where no entry visa is required, there is a notably high level of awareness among migrants of the documents required for going abroad. The level of knowledge about the required documents depends to a large extent on people's education level.

In the course of the survey it was found that not all potential migrants had the documents required for going abroad; only 56.5% had a foreign passport, 21.3% had a medical insurance, 20.6% had a visa and 10.3% had an employment contract. Furthermore, 60% of potential migrants among those who did not have the required documents believed that they would encounter difficulties in obtaining them, and 19.9% anticipated no difficulties.

The outcomes of the survey show that two-thirds (63.9%) of potential migrants do not plan to stay abroad for long and believe they will stay for less than one year, and 25.8% from one to two years. This can be explained not only by the seasonal character of work, for example in the Russian Federation, but also by the needs of sending households. Men who are seasonal workers, after returning home for winter, do the hardest work in their households. The length of time spent abroad depends on the type of work rather than on the education level.

Moreover, a high proportion (64.3%) of potential migrants state that they plan to return home if they go to work abroad. Probably, this is not only due to the seasonal character of labour in Russia but also because 65.5% of those interviewed are married and thus have a strong stimulus to return home to their families. Only 6.3% of respondents say that they will go to another country, and 29.4% do not know yet.

A majority of respondents (63.3%) also note that after working abroad they plan to return to Tajikistan for permanent residence, and 18.4% say they may return. This shows that potential migrants do not consider the possible perspective of permanent residence and naturalisation abroad. Migration from Tajikistan is mainly of a seasonal and return character.

The survey also shows that more than half (59.6%) of potential migrants believe that a foreign work experience will help people to find better working conditions on return. For this reason, a majority (41.9%) of respondents believe that those who return home after working abroad are in a more advantageous position compared with those who have not been abroad. In their opinion, migration creates additional stimuli for obtaining a qualification and additional skills, thus extending follow-up opportunities for finding a decent job in their home country. In this respect, a majority (68.2%) of potential migrants believe that their foreign experience will give them the opportunity to find a job on return. Moreover, experience and knowledge gained abroad will improve their position in the labour market, i.e. after migration it will be easier for them to find a well-paid job. This opinion does not depend on the education level of potential migrants.

While 77.8% of respondents hope to send money home if they go abroad, 95% of this number plan to spend earnings on covering the living expenses of household members. So the main goal of migration is provision for the basic needs of the family, such as buying food products and living essentials as well as purchasing a property (house or flat for the family). Another 36% intend to save money.

As for investing in business, the results turned out to be much more modest. Only 17.8% of the households with higher incomes plan to invest in business.

Some 67.7% of potential migrants believe that their family situation will improve after going abroad – 24.9% of respondents say that it will improve considerably. Only 7.4% say that it will remain the same. Such pessimistic opinions are mainly expressed by potential migrants who assess the current financial situation of their families as unsatisfactory.

3.6 POTENTIAL MIGRANTS' ECONOMIC AND LIVING CONDITIONS

Data on the level of the living conditions of potential migrants show that 75% own their houses (84% among non migrants).

Only 18.2% of potential migrants have hot water in their houses, which is in line with the general average among respondents. Two-thirds have an inside toilet and drinkable water; almost all have a TV and an oven, but the percentage falls when considering a refrigerator (65%) and falls dramatically for a washing machine (13%). Those indicators are almost the same for all respondents.

The sources of income for potential migrant households are basically linked to agriculture, pensions and work of other family members. The main difference between potential migrants and non migrants is their remittances as source of income: 17% against 8% for non migrants. This value shows that the presence of migrants in the family is an example for other members.

A majority of potential migrants (47%) declare that their income is not always sufficient to cover their basic needs, while for 15% income is insufficient. At the same time, they do not perceive their conditions to be better than their neighbours. This more or less reflects the situation of the whole sample of respondents.

4. RETURNING MIGRANTS

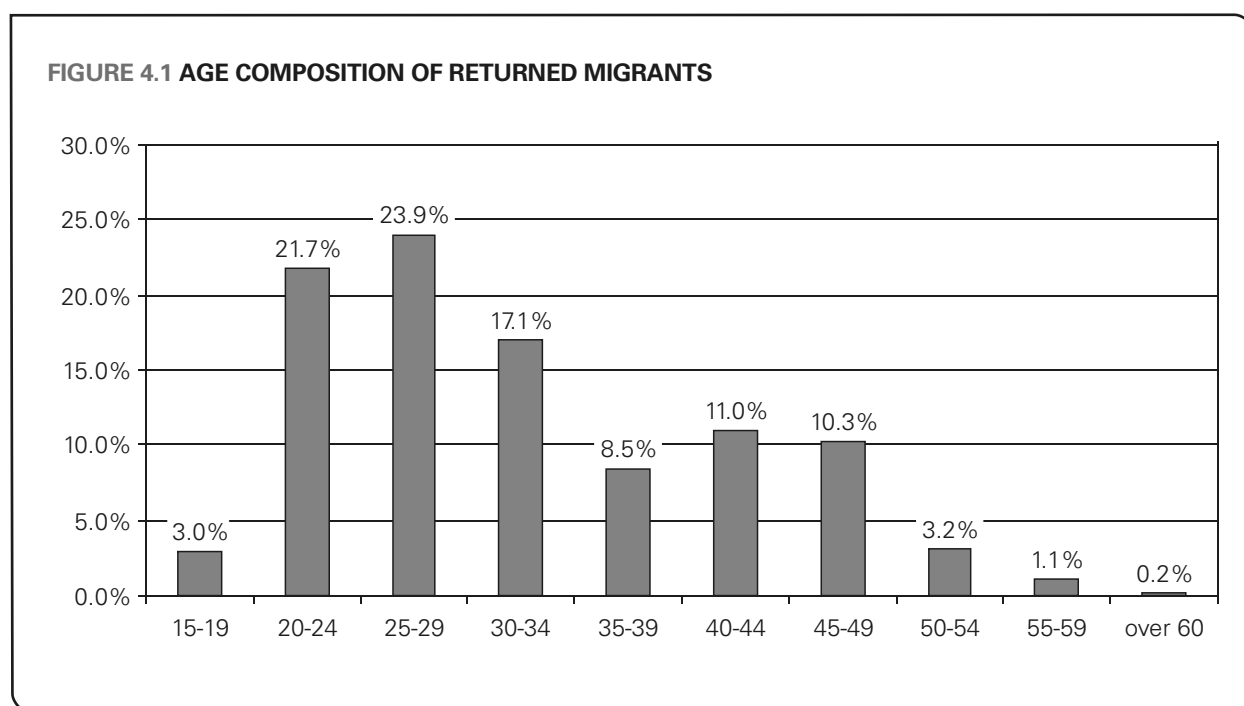
4.1 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

In the course of the survey 1,000 returned migrants were interviewed. The overwhelming majority of them (85%) were men (Olimova and Bosc, 2003).

The prevalence of men can be explained, first, by the demand in the labour market in the major receiving country; Russia, where labourers in 'men's' skills are in greatest demand, such as builders, drivers or industrial enterprise workers. Second, the absolute predominance of men in migration can be explained by gender stereotypes in Tajikistan itself, where the maintenance of the family is exclusively men's responsibility. That is why households prefer to send men abroad to seek paid work, and labour migration is perceived as part of a man's life, the sphere of male activity, a man's job.

The age composition of returned migrants is comparatively young. The dominant group is composed of young people aged 15–29 (48.6%), which is also confirmed by previous surveys. The share of young people under the age of 30 made up 46% of all interviewed migrants (Olimova and Kurbanova, 2006, p. 12).

Another large age group is composed of returned migrants aged 30–50 (46.9%) (**FIGURE 4.1**).



Surveys conducted in recent years show that, starting in 1999, there has been a clear tendency for younger age groups to take part in a first migration. The turning point came in 2001 when, among the migrants who went abroad seeking jobs, young people under 30 became the dominant age group. In 2005 among those who left for work there were 88% under 30 years old (IOM, 2006, p. 35).

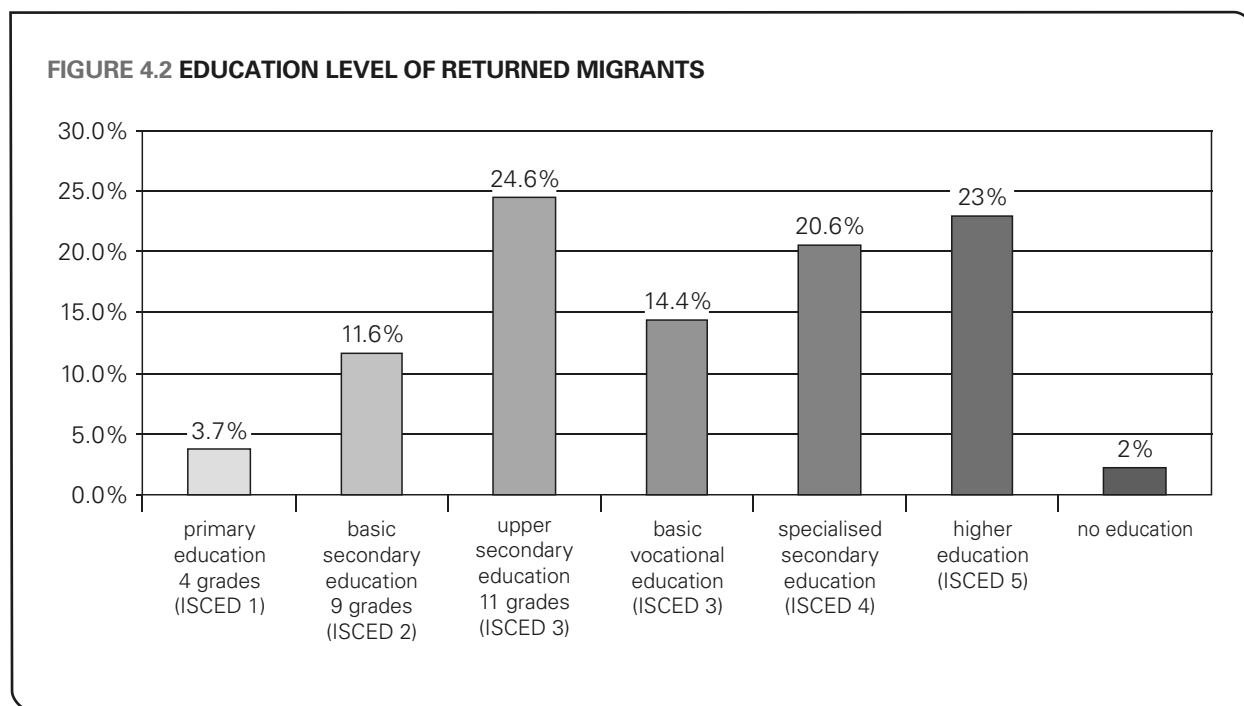
Generally, returned migrants are people of the most active able-bodied age groups. Two-thirds of returned migrants have families (61.6%), and 9.1% more intend to have a family. Every fourth (25.6%) does not have his own family yet and has never been married before. All family migrants have children.

Returned migrants most often than others have large families, in average four to six people (47.9%), and families with many children, which is quite natural because the majority of them live in rural areas. There are no 'lone persons' living in an isolated manner among interviewed returned migrants because extended families are common.

The average number of children in migrants' families is two to four; 25.9% of returned migrants have two children, 22.5% three children, 21.7% four children, while 15.7% of returned migrants have more than four children.

The demographic characteristics of returned migrants show that mostly 'sons' (very seldom daughters) are sent abroad to work by families (58%) and heads of households 'fathers' (31.5%); in particular, those members of households who leave bearing the full responsibility for providing for their households.

The survey showed that a majority of migrants (57.9%) had professional education. Every fourth (24.6%) migrant had upper secondary education, and 2% of migrants had no education (**FIGURE 4.2**).



The level of professional education of males is by one third higher than that of females.

The lack of profession is characteristic mainly of the overwhelming majority of young people for whom travelling abroad is the first chance of employment.

As for migrants who had professions in their home country, we can distinguish the two largest professional groups involved in labour migration: teachers (21.8%) and drivers (21%). Other large groups include people with technical education (18.1%) and specialists in psychology and social science (16.9%), followed by people in agriculture (7.9%), the healthcare system (3.8%), and architecture and construction (4.1%) (**FIGURE 4.3**).

Migrants made a deliberate choice of profession, 77.8% choosing a future profession based on personal interest, 18.4% to find work, and 0.7% for the opportunity to travel abroad.

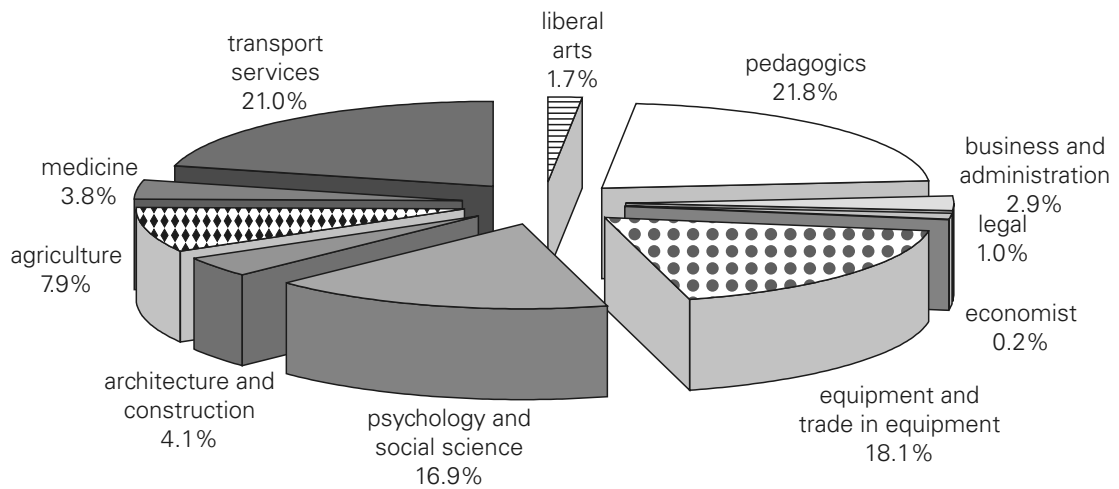
A majority of migrants (95.1%) think that education helps to improve the quality of life. A majority (93%) also stated the importance of investing in education. This understanding is found among all migrants irrespective of their education level.

Knowledge of the language of the receiving country also plays an important role in migrants' employment. The survey showed that the language fluency of returned migrants, in general, was rather high; 93.7% of respondents declared that they knew the Russian language. This perception is also found among all migrants irrespective of their education level.

However, it is a matter of concern that the younger labour migrants are, the less they know of other languages. Poor knowledge of the language of the receiving country is shown to be a serious barrier to employment.

Migrants' knowledge of other languages is negligible: 2% of respondents declared their knowledge of English, 0.7% French, 0.5% Arabic and 0.2% German. Knowledge of second and third languages is more characteristic of older and experienced migrants.

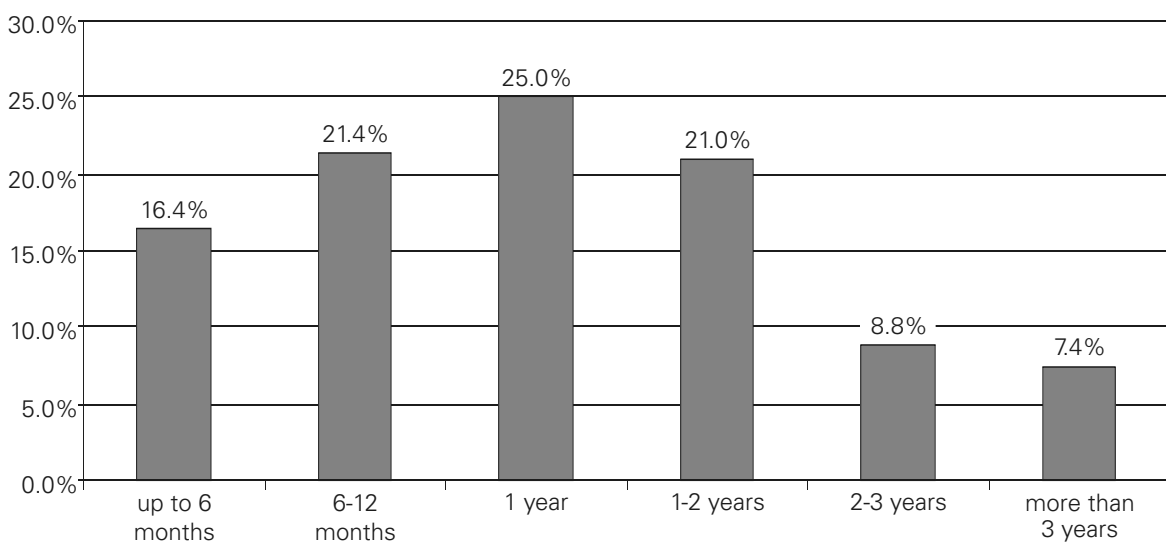
FIGURE 4.3 MIGRANTS' MAIN PROFESSION PRIOR TO DEPARTURE



4.2 MIGRATION HISTORY

During their last trip, almost half of migrants (46.4%) stayed abroad from six months to one year, and 21% more from one to two years (**FIGURE 4.4**).

FIGURE 4.4 DURATION OF MIGRANTS' LAST STAY ABROAD



Almost all migrants (98.2%) stayed in one country – the Russian Federation – which confirms the unidirectional nature of migration.

The reasons why 16.4% of migrants stayed abroad for less than six months on their previous trip are as follows: 48% could not find a job and were deceived regarding working conditions, 14.7% were deported and 10.4% found living conditions abroad difficult. They can be categorised as unlucky migrants.

The main impetus to go abroad, mentioned by the majority of respondents (50.1% during the last trip), is related to an improvement in their quality of life. The second factor concerns unsatisfactory working conditions in the home country (9.7%) and third comes the offer of a more highly paid job (8.7%). Another 7.3% of respondents mentioned the lack of work in the home country. Otherwise the reasons for departure are not related to migrants' level of education. To a certain extent the reasons were related to living conditions or availability of a plot of land. The impact of the size of the migrant's household was also a factor.

A majority of migrants (89.8%) did not attend any pre-departure orientation courses for living and working abroad. Only 10.2% of the migrants interviewed acquired additional qualifications and new skills before leaving, while only 69.2% of them received a qualification confirmed by a certificate. Before the trip, less-educated migrants attended foreign language courses (2.5%), as well as professional training courses (3.4%). Better-educated migrants attended no courses.

Those who received training before their trip abroad worked mainly in the construction and trade sectors as unskilled labourers. Some 80.8% of respondents declared that the courses had proved useful while seeking work abroad and 75.6% said that the courses were necessary.

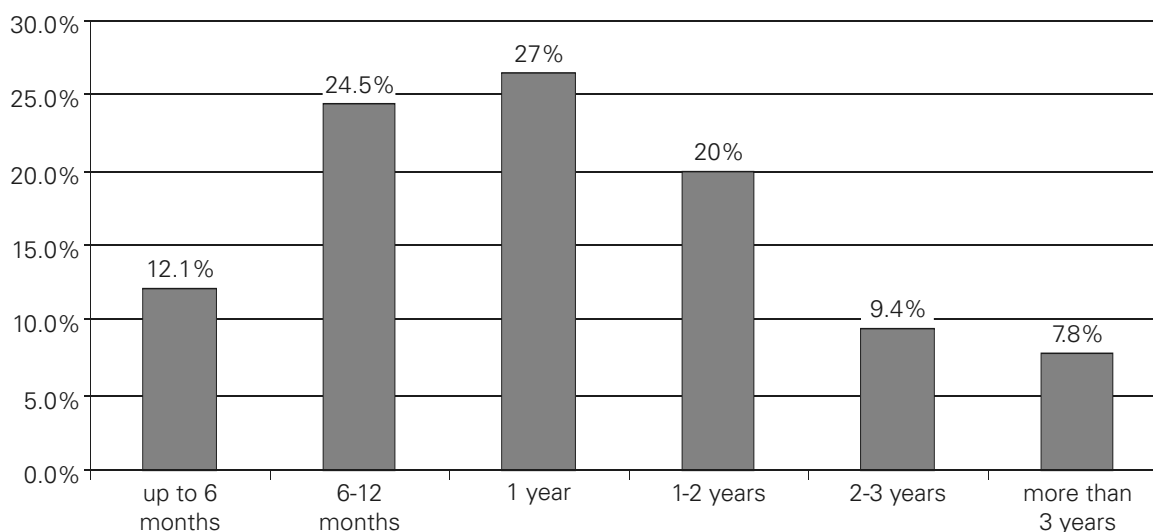
Some 97% of migrants state that during their first trip abroad they lived in the Russian Federation, as had been the case of migrants for many years, while 0.7% went to Ukraine and 0.5% to Kazakhstan.

Like other surveys, these interviews show that the Russian Federation is the most attractive territory for Tajik migrants. The survey showed that such countries as Germany, Turkey, Switzerland, Croatia, the United Arab Emirates, Australia, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea had hosted each 0.1% of migrants, i.e. migration to countries beyond the CIS is rather limited due to visa regimes, rigid restrictions in immigration policies or the poor competitiveness of Tajik labour migrants.

The age specific of motivation is most vividly manifested in the fact that young people under 25 years old are more oriented towards solving their own problems – wedding ceremony 4.8%, furthering education 2.2% – whereas older respondents more often have to provide for family needs. They are also more affected by the burden of debts and problems of treatment. For this reason, 37.6% of migrants went abroad for the first time to work and save money, 28.3% to find a job opportunity and only 7% to accompany a husband, wife or parents.

During their first trip, 36.6% of returned migrants had stayed abroad for less than one year (**FIGURE 4.5**). Comparison of the duration of stay between the first and the last trip shows no great difference between the two, which is accounted for by the fact that more and more young people are involved in the migration process, and the survey showed that their last trip was also their first trip.

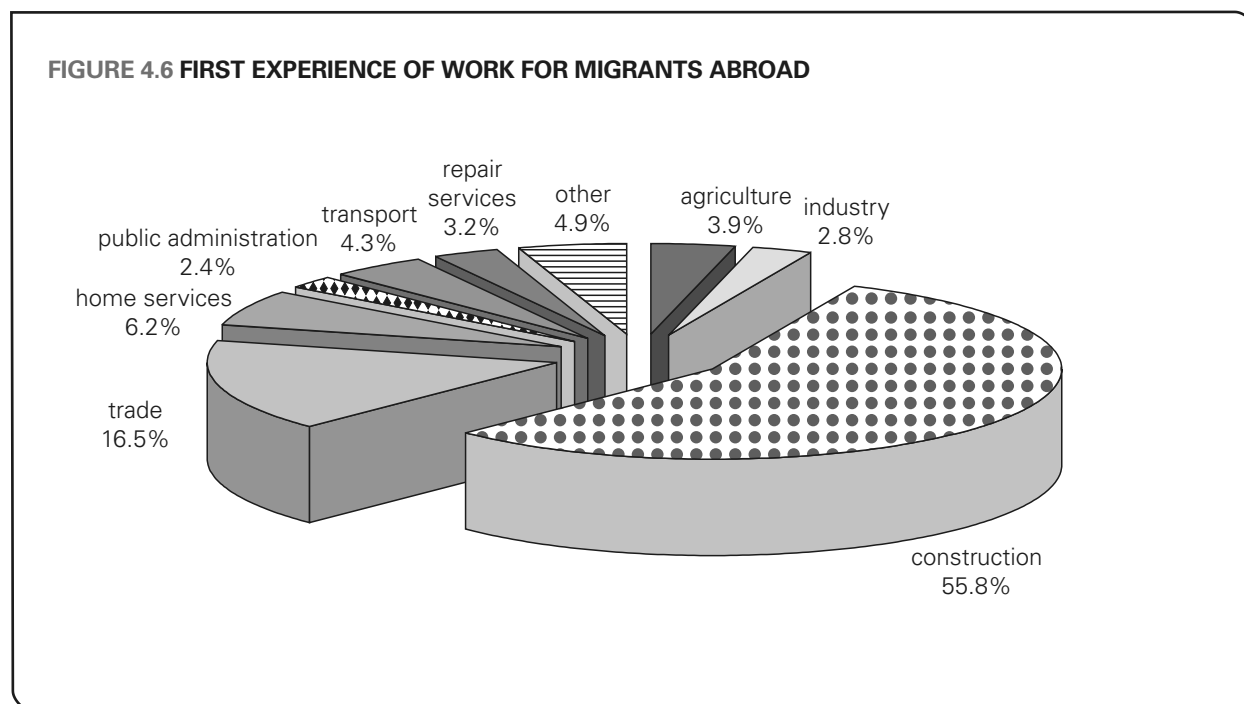
FIGURE 4.5 DURATION OF MIGRANTS' FIRST STAY ABROAD



The survey showed that certain groups of migrants had left to find work on several occasions: 0.1% of respondents had been travelling to earn money since 1995 (mainly from the senior age group), 24.2% went abroad to work for the first time in 2007, 21.7% in 2008 and 16.9% in 2006. Most common is a relatively young age composition of returned migrants. For them abroad became their first workplace and for 67.7% of migrants it also became the main income source.

However, despite a rather high level of professional education among migrants, the foreign market has its own needs where the professional skills are not in demand. The structure of demand in the labour market of the receiving country would make migrants with a high level of qualifications agree to low qualified jobs in other sectors.

Thus, the bulk of migrants (55.8%), while abroad for the first time, worked in the construction industry (**FIGURE 4.6**).



However, only 4.1% of migrants had previous experience of work in construction before going abroad (**see FIGURE 4.3**). Generally, only 28.8% of migrants worked in their specialism abroad. The rest of migrants gained skills while working in this sector abroad.

A majority of migrants (78.5%) were hired to work, and half of them were hired with no signed contract to account for the type of work they did, whether in construction, trade, home services or transport. The demand for hired labourers is highest in these sectors, and most labour contracts are not signed. Besides, unskilled labourers can find jobs in these sectors also, thus 62.3% of migrants performed unskilled work abroad during their first employment.

As regards their first trip abroad (to Russia), the reason for departure was a desire to find a job and earn money (28.3%), and also to save money (37.6%) for solving family problems such as education for children, construction of a house, family rituals, etc. The reason for departure does not depend on migrants' education level, but to a larger extent relates to the economic situation of their families, as every second migrant wants to improve their living conditions.

The survey showed that many returned migrants organised their trip themselves. The key figures in making a decision on migration are the migrant himself together with his parents. Some 74.7% of respondents mention that they decided to go abroad themselves. However, the decision to seek a job abroad, as a rule, is made collectively. Every fifth migrant (19.6%) sought assistance from other people. Sometimes parents decide on their own initiative to send a son to work abroad, according to 15.4% of respondents. As a rule, this happens with young people who are more subject to the influence of older members of the family. The role of a migrant's wife in making a decision about migration is limited. Every tenth migrant (10.9%) considered his wife's opinion.

Most often job-seeking was of an informal nature, without resorting to the services of any middlemen. Only 2.6% of respondents answered that they were aware of state programmes and 3.7% of migrants knew about the activity of private employment agencies.

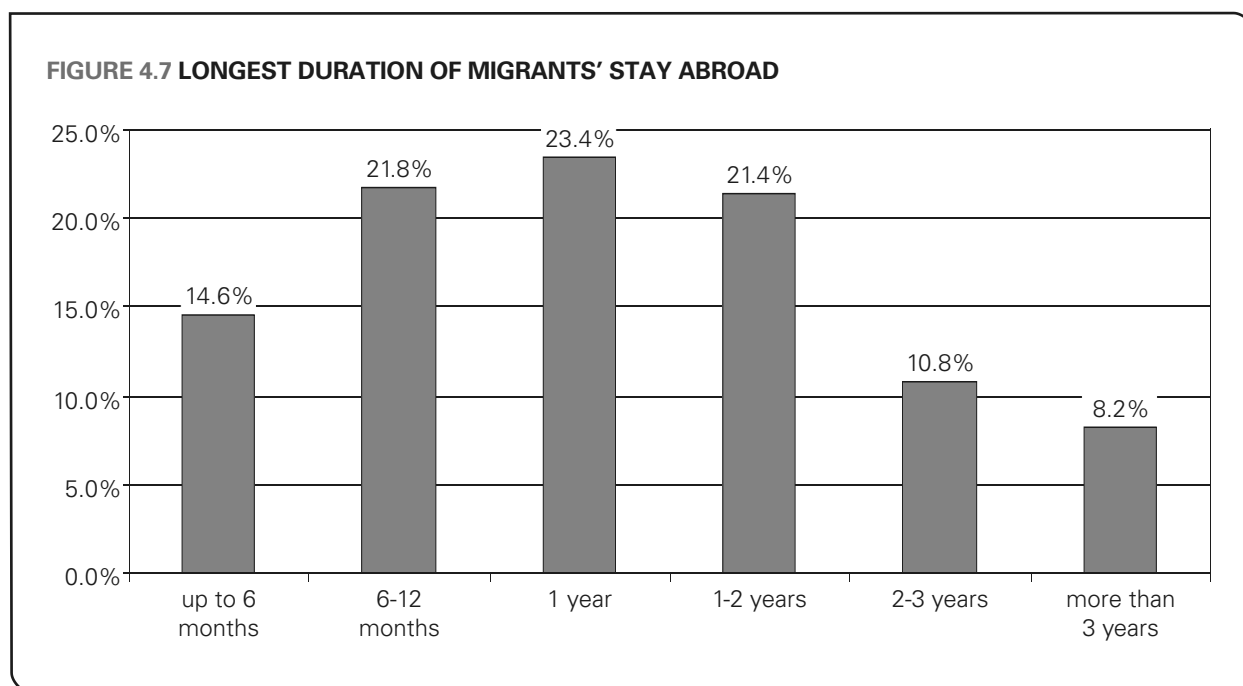
Out of the respondents who were familiar with these programmes and agencies, 44.2% used private services and 29.9% state programmes. In this respect, awareness of the programmes and official intermediaries to a large extent is affected by the lack of information about them, especially in rural regions. For this reason, every fifth migrant (22.1%) does not refer to special organisations or private middlemen at all. A majority (65.9%) say they did not refer to middlemen as they do not offer jobs that migrants want. The fact that migrants' qualifications do not correspond (51.2%) to vacancies offered also hinders referral to official programmes and intermediaries. More detailed analysis of the services offered to migrants reveals that intermediary agencies do not deal with professional training of migrants, and state programmes provide training services for migrants that have to be paid for. Moreover, the quality of the training does not always correspond to the requirements of the foreign labour market.

As a rule, married migrants leave their wives at home (79.1%), because most Tajik labour migrants work abroad seasonally and often do not have a regulated status. It is economically disadvantageous to take the family abroad. Earnings are not enough for providing for family needs in the receiving country but quite enough for providing for the family in their home country where the parity of purchasing capacity is considerably lower. Women are not keen to accompany their husbands for seasonal work either, as their obligation is to provide services for the everyday life of the household, children, and elderly family members; plus to maintain the family agriculture which plays an important role in providing households with food.

Only 12.9% of labour migrants took their wives with them. Such a decision was made for the following reasons: some help may be needed abroad, it is better for children and the family to be together, it is more advantageous financially, i.e. if migrants, who are mostly married men, were able to find jobs for their wives, the proportion of migrants leaving with their wives could be much higher. But travelling with family members is economically disadvantageous for migrants who go abroad for seasonal work or for a certain period.

An overwhelming majority (96.8%) of returned migrants worked in the Russian Federation. It was also the main receiving country during the first and the last trip of returned migrants.

The longest duration of migrants' stay abroad is from six months to two years with every fifth migrant (19%) staying abroad for more than two years (**FIGURE 4.7**).



Almost every third migrant (29.1%) changed workplace while working abroad, although this has nothing to do with the different types of occupation. In their new workplace migrants also worked mainly in construction as hired labourers, generally based on verbal agreements, or did unskilled work. The duration of a stable job abroad is longer among labourers with a higher level of education. Migrants who did unskilled work without a contract changed jobs more frequently or had to return home.

Analysis of the labour regime paves the way for discussing the high level of exploitation of migrants as well as neglect of the whole complex of labour rights on the part of employers. In particular, the average duration of work of returned migrants significantly exceeds the legal norm of 40 hours per week. Only 35.7% of migrants say that they worked an

average of 40 hours per week. A second group of migrants (32.3%) state that they worked on average 41–56 hours a week, i.e. up to 11 hours per day during a five-day working week and more than nine hours during a six-day working week. For 26.4% of returned migrants the working week lasted for more than 56 hours. This shows that generally the total workload almost excluded the possibility of any rest time for migrants. Almost every second migrant worked abroad at full stretch.

More than half of migrants (57.1%) lived in places where the majority of people were migrants, and 33.9% where half of them were migrants. Only every third migrant (34%) seldom made contact with the local population, and 4.2% of migrants never had contact with the local population, i.e. more than 38% lived in isolation at closed installations where they worked, often illegally. The choice of place of residence and the frequency of contact with the local population depend to a large degree on the migrants' knowledge of the language and, generally, on a higher level of education. Summing up, a less educated migrant, especially someone not knowing the language of the receiving country, is more isolated from the community and relies more on the services provided by better educated and informed co-workers/migrants.

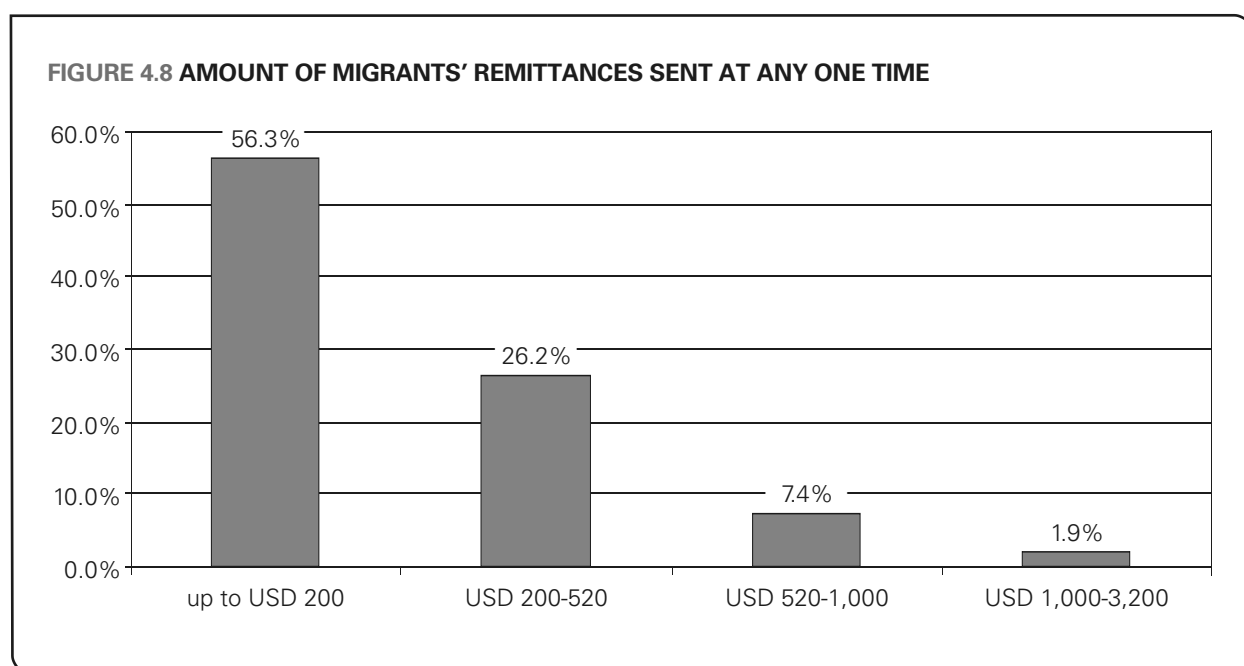
The survey showed that a small number of migrants (5.3%) were trained abroad. A majority attended professional training courses, including language (41.5%), adaptation (17%), and qualifications to local standards (9.4%). Moreover, 71.7% were trained at their workplace. Many surveys show that most often such training was provided without migrants obtaining a certificate. Only 69.2% of migrants trained abroad had documents certifying completion of their courses, mainly those who had studied languages.

The desire to study does not relate to migrants' education level, but largely depends on the type of work and knowledge of the language. Those who worked in the construction sector learned mainly during industrial practical sessions. Those who did not know the language attended classes.

Some 49% of respondents were seeking a job and had not found one, being unemployed on average for two months. The frequency of job-seeking and duration of unemployment are higher among migrants with a lower level of education and knowledge of the foreign language. In general, the duration of unemployment and job-seeking is not long. Such short periods of job-seeking indicate that Tajik labour migrants, living in places with a prevalence of migrants, use the services of the developed network of informal middlemen who are also migrants.

A majority of migrants (72.6%) sent money home during their stay abroad. Only with 41.8% of migrants were remittances systematically sent to households, at least once a month. For 38.3% of migrants the remittances sent home were less regular. They would send money when they had the opportunity to do so via banks or informally and when they had accumulated a certain sum, or households would ask them to send money for some acute need or emergency. Another 20% of migrants sent money home a minimum of once a year. Migrants who have a work contract or a higher employment status, i.e. employers or self-employed, send more money home more regularly. Migrants with a lower level of qualifications send less money less often. Qualifications for the work carried out to some extent depend on a migrant's education level, but to a greater extent on language fluency, communication skills and willingness to study.

A majority of migrants (56.3%) sent up to USD 200 on average at any one time **(FIGURE 4.8)**.



In this respect, 73.5% of migrants, despite having their own families, would send money to their parents as heads of households. Only 19.8% sent money to their wives, 2.3% to their children and 4.3% to brothers or sisters.

A majority of Tajik migrants (91.5%) leaving for abroad stay in touch with their families at home. Considering the seasonal character of work and costly travelling expenses, migrants seldom visit their families: 12.1% of respondents went back to their home country once only, 8.5% at least once a year, 5.7% seldom and 2.4% more than once a year.

The survey showed that households consider that the priority goal of migration is to provide for their basic needs, i.e. food and living essentials. Thus, 68.1% of migrants stated that remittances were used for household living expenses and 19.9% for renting a property, which means that received remittances are only enough for household consumption. This is why only 29.6% of migrants believe that the level of their family income is sufficient. With respect to spending on education, the results are much more modest at 17.8%. Only 5% of migrants invest in business. Those migrants who are satisfied with the financial situation of their families spend more money on children's education and invest in business.

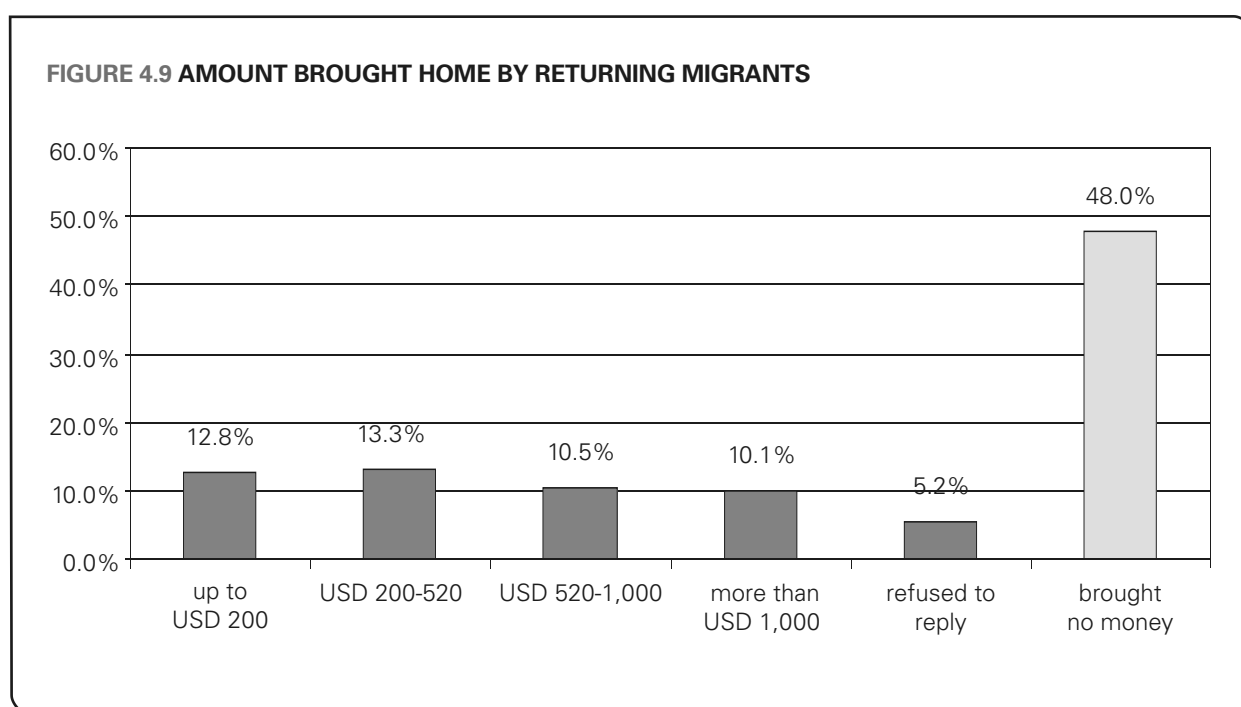
4.3 RETURNED MIGRANTS' EXPERIENCE

Among the main motives for ceasing work and returning to the home country was completion of seasonal work (33.4%), although 12.5% of migrants mentioned being fired by the employer on completion of their contract. Only 5.9% of migrants returned home because they had earned enough money, and they were the best educated and trained. The less educated migrants are more affected by seasonal employment.

Among migrants who returned due to the completion of seasonal work, most were hired with no signed contract and they also did unskilled work.

On return, almost all migrants (93.8%) were unaware of the official programmes and actions offering assistance to those returning to their home country from abroad. Lack of awareness of this type of programme is not linked to migrants' education level, but rather to the lack of such programmes or their limited scope. Only 45% of migrants availed themselves of such programmes out of the small number of informed migrants (6.2%). Migrants are looking for practical help, i.e. employment, and these programmes fail to provide it.

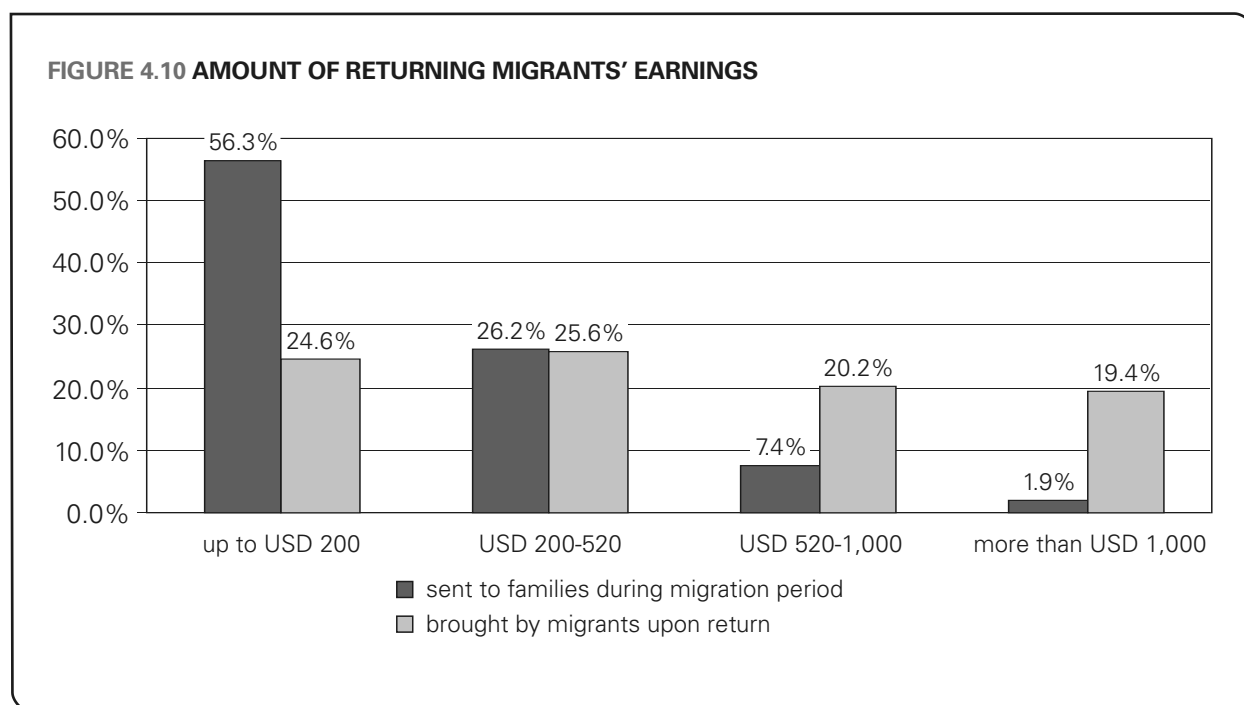
Despite the fact that bringing in money was very risky, a considerable number of returned migrants (52%) brought their savings home themselves. In average they brought about USD 500 (**FIGURE 4.9**).



The amount of money brought home by migrants depends on the employment status of migrants abroad; whether unhired labourers or leaders of migrants groups, those in the construction industry earned much money. In general, highly qualified labourers earn more, although this correlation is not as obvious as it might seem. Workers abroad, besides having good qualifications, must be able to find an employer and negotiate with him, so communication skills and language fluency also play an important role.

Young male migrants under 24 years old sent remittances home much less regularly compared with fathers, which is why they could spend their earnings on personal consumption in the receiving country. Among the few female migrants, the share of those who did not send money home is higher, at 15.2%. Another group of women migrants stayed in the receiving country with their husbands and sometimes with children. In this case they did not send remittances home, spending money on current consumption. A further group of women migrants were either unmarried or divorced. If they had children, their relatives agreed to look after them, often hoping that they would earn enough abroad to buy their own house.

In general, migrants were regularly sending money home – around 40% of earnings. These remittances were small, usually up to USD 200 per month. On average, based on the results of data received during the survey, migrants' remittances would make up to USD 360 per month, only enough for personal consumption (**FIGURE 4.10**).



Money brought home, as well as remittances, was mainly spent on covering everyday living expenses such as food, clothes, etc., followed by education and a relatively small part invested in business.

The survey showed that migration impacts positively on both the returned migrants and the quality of life of migrants' households. Remittances sent by migrants are the major source of income for many households. This is confirmed by the ADB survey which showed that households receiving remittances from migrants depend on them very much, and without remittances as a part of the cumulative income the level of poverty would increase almost threefold and the level of absolute poverty would increase ninefold. Calculations of the Gini coefficient prove that migrants' remittances have a positive impact on the reduction of inequality, because if remittances are excluded the Gini index increases from 0.37 to 0.53 (ADB, 2007).

Households involved in migration invest little in business, because their earnings are scarcely enough for everyday consumption. Only 5% of returned migrants invested their money in business. When migrants are away from their home country there is a negative effect on keeping up connections and acquaintances who could help to start up a business. Besides, migrant households prefer not to invest in business due to the limited opportunities in Tajikistan.

Generally, the experience gained by migrants abroad is not in demand in their home country. On return, only 19.1% of migrants found jobs. More than half of these employed migrants found a job quickly. The level of employment is linked to the skills gained abroad, mainly in the construction sector. In other sectors this link is less obvious. The level of employment of migrants in their home country depends neither on the time spent abroad nor on the type of training

abroad, because migrants do different types of work compared with that available in their home country. Besides, the number of migrants trained abroad is so small that it has no significant impact on their employment in their home country.

Therefore, of those who found a job on return to Tajikistan, 29.3% worked in construction, 25.1% in trade, 10% in transport, and 6.8% in public administration. Another 17.2% of returned migrants were employed in agriculture; however 82% of these became involved with the non-profit natural economy.

For this reason, 40.2% of migrants worked informally, i.e. they were labourers working without a contract (35%) and unpaid family labourers (5.2%). Only 23.6% worked as hired paid labourers, and 19.4% were self-employed, 13.6% were employers (hirers). The status of migrants who found jobs in their home country did not change compared with their foreign status and, in general, on return 80.9% of migrants either failed to find jobs or did not want to work in the home country.

Some 45% of migrants who found a job on returning home did unskilled work, 21% did qualified work, 10.5% were at various levels of management, and 18.8% were high-level professionals. These indicators are one-fourth higher compared with similar data concerning migrants working abroad, which is caused by a higher level of correspondence between migrants' education level and the work carried out in their home country.

The regime of work in the home country is much better in comparison to working abroad. Returned migrants who found jobs at home generally (68%) work up to 40 hours a week, and 24% work from 40 to 56 hours a week, while another 7.8% work more than 56 hours a week even in their home country.

According to respondents, they found jobs as follows: 38.2% offered by friends and relatives, 26.2% thanks to advertisements, 15.7% started up their own business, and 14.7% were employed in their former work place. A higher level of education helps in finding various sources of information. Good specialists are also in demand in their own countries, which is why every seventh migrant returned to his previous workplace.

Among the main benefits of migration are not only earnings but also knowledge, professional skills and life experience. Despite the fact that only 5.3% of migrants received training abroad, more than 80% of them noted that such training was useful and necessary for job-seeking.

The experience gained while working abroad helped the majority (60.7%) of migrants who found jobs on return to enjoy better working conditions in their home country.

Moreover, the experience gained abroad, in general (like life experience), proved useful for employment of 34% of migrants who found jobs in their home country. Some 16.2% benefited from skills gained while working abroad and 8.4% benefited from education and training courses provided abroad.

Migrants whose foreign experience was unhelpful give the reason that they were involved in a different type of activity abroad. Analysing the answers of those who declare that after return it became even more difficult for them to find a decently paid job, it is notable that returned migrants face the same problems they had before going abroad – unemployment and low level of salaries for offered vacancies. Besides, some of them have health problems or are simply older.

Furthermore, leaving for abroad interferes with the career development of migrants, because when abroad migrants seldom work in their specialism and, as a rule, lose skills they had prior to departure as well as useful acquaintances or necessary connections that could help them to find a decent job in their home country. Unfortunately, in Tajikistan influential acquaintances and plenty of money are helpful in finding a good job or starting up a business.

Returned migrants often have no opportunity to use their experience and qualifications gained abroad due to the low level of technical development of enterprises in Tajikistan.

For the majority of migrants, their initial expectations are fulfilled as regards improvement in the well-being of their households. For example, with 59.8% of migrants the situation has improved compared with how it was before going abroad. Only 37.8% of migrants note that the situation has remained the same. The situation worsened for 2.3% of migrants, probably those who were deported, deceived, fell sick, etc. This assessment does not depend on how long a migrant stayed abroad but rather on whether his work abroad was successful or not.

A trip abroad finds support among members of migrants' families. In general, family expectations of their relatives' trips are no doubt high, and highest among the families for which such trips are the only income-generating source (78.5%).

4.4 FUTURE INTENTIONS

Due to the limited employment opportunities in Tajikistan, the majority of migrants seriously assess the benefits of working abroad, which is why 79.9% of returned migrants consider the option of going abroad for a job or permanent residence. Along with this, the intention of going abroad does not depend on education level but on status in the labour market, as almost all those wishing to migrate again either failed to find or were not seeking a job at home.

Only 20.1% of returned migrants are sure that they will not go abroad, while 67% of them believe that they have to stay in their home country with their relatives and friends, 35.8% do not want to go abroad due to isolation, difficulties encountered while seeking a job and the unfriendly attitude of the local population, and 5% of migrants are dissatisfied with the low wages paid abroad. Of this number, 72.7% do not want to leave as they need to support their families, and 12.9% do not want to go abroad as they have earned enough money. The majority of those who do not want to go abroad again are older people or migrants who have found jobs in their home country. The decision to go abroad depends less on the level of education and more on the level of satisfaction with the family's financial situation.

Among those wishing to migrate, more than half (64.4%) are seasonal workers who plan to go abroad during the following six months, and 27% more of migrants have not made a final decision yet about going abroad. In this group almost every second migrant is prepared to finance the trip.

For 71% of respondents departure is possible during the next two years, and 21% have not yet made a final decision about going abroad. In this group only every third migrant is ready to finance the trip.

The main reasons for departure (61%) are to find a more highly paid job, to improve living conditions for the family, and to pay off debts. The motivation for departure is mostly the fact that a migrant will fail to find a decent job in his home country.

The overwhelming majority of respondents (97.3%) plan to leave for Russia, as they have already been there, i.e. the choice of receiving country is caused by the traditional direction of migration.

The motivation of 38.6% of respondents is the opportunity to work and earn money, 30.7% choose Russia as they know the language, and 15.1% are attracted by a non-visa regime. Every fifth migrant (19%) wishing to go abroad intends to leave for good.

Moreover, 61.4% of respondents, exclusively men, who are planning to leave for Russia are ready to work in construction, 11.5% intend to work in trade, 4.5% in home services, and 4.3% in transport. Of these migrants, 44.4% are prepared to be hired workers and 4.1% employers. The alarming fact is that 43.1% of migrants intend to work without a contract and be hired by individuals or companies, usually those with a lower level of education. The status of the majority of these migrants in the external labour market remains the same.

A majority (73.2%) will work as low-skilled workers, and only 14.5% will carry out work that requires qualifications. Around 6% will work as professional workers and managers. The availability of practical skills in professions that are in demand abroad is the major factor in choosing the type of work. Even those with higher education are ready to accept unskilled work as they realise that their skills are not in demand in the Russian labour market.

4.5 RETURNED MIGRANTS' ECONOMIC AND LIVING CONDITIONS

Traditionally, migrants' households are numerous: 47.9% of households have four to six people, and 39.3% have seven to ten. As the majority of these are rural residents, they usually own their houses (over 72%).

The majority of adult members of households stay in their home country; in 10.7% of households, although at the time of the survey some were away in CIS countries, mainly in the Russian Federation.

Data on the subjective level of well-being of households of returned migrants show that 85% have a house or a flat as private property, and 8.3% rent a house. But only 2.3% of respondents have hot water in the house, 27.3% have a bathroom, and 88.2% of households of returned migrants have such consumer durables as a TV set, 69.3% a refrigerator and, for example, only 3.1% a motorcycle.

It was revealed during the survey that the main sources of livelihood for labour migrants' families are incomes generated as a result of employment of other family members in Tajikistan (72.4%) as well as consumption of food products from subsidiary farming. Besides paid employment, another income-generating source is state support, which most often means pensions. However, the amounts are small.

In the course of the survey 28.6% of respondents mentioned ownership of a plot of land by their households, in average from 0.2 ha to 0.5 ha. But subsidiary farming, in its turn, is not a source of livelihood. It is mainly oriented towards the consumption of its own goods rather than the production of a commodity.

Migrants' remittances also play an important part in the budgets of migrants' families: 57.5% of households were receiving remittances from abroad from other family members. Of these, 16.3% were receiving money regularly every month, 61% more were receiving money several times a year, and 22.6% at least once a year. A majority of migrants' households (61%) received on average up to USD 520.

However, 57.5% of households cannot always cover their basic needs. Only 29.6% of respondents say they have sufficient means of subsistence, and 0.2% has more than enough. However, despite such statements, 48.8% of respondents believe that the economic situation of their families is better than that of neighbouring families.

5. ASSESSMENT OF SURVEY FINDINGS

5.1 MIGRATION PROFILE AND FACTORS DETERMINING MIGRATION

The survey showed that it is mainly men who go abroad seeking work: 84.8% of the total number of returned migrants. Data from the survey conducted by the Sharq Scientific Research Center in 2003 showed 85% of men among migrants (Olimova and Bosc, 2003)⁵, and under the LFS there were 94.3% men among labour migrants.

The prevalence of men can be explained, first, by the demand in the labour market in the major receiving country – Russia – where labourers in ‘men’s’ skills are in greatest demand, such as builders, drivers or industrial enterprise workers. Second, absolute predominance of men in migration can be explained by gender stereotypes in Tajikistan itself, under which maintenance of the family is exclusively men’s responsibility. That is why households prefer to send men abroad to seek paid work, and labour migration is perceived as part of a man’s life, the sphere of male activity, a man’s job. Mainly sons (very seldom daughters) are sent abroad for work from families (58%), and heads of households or fathers (31.5%). In particular, those men who leave bear full responsibility for providing for their households. Young people aged 15–29 years (48.6%) are involved in labour migration, which is also confirmed by the outcomes of previous surveys.

Labour migration remains unidirectional as the overwhelming majority of potential migrants (88.8%), as well as returned migrants (96.8%), prefer to seek work in Russia. Despite the toughening of rules for stay and employment since 1993, to date the Russian labour market remains the most attractive for Tajik labour migrants.

The survey showed that the duration of stay abroad tends to extend compared with the average indicator. For example, in 1999 almost one-third of all migrants would leave for jobs for one to two months. The majority had a job (or were nominally at work) in their home country but wanted to earn more during their vacation abroad (IOM, 2006, p. 35).

Gradually the nature of migration has changed. Labour migration is predominant in Tajikistan, which is why 32% of returned migrants say that they go abroad to work every year, i.e. for every third migrant employment abroad is a professional activity. For 78.5% of respondents it has also become the main source of income. Almost half of migrants (46.4%) stayed abroad from six months to one year, and 37% more than one year.

The duration of a stable job abroad is longer among labourers with a higher level of education. Migrants who did unskilled work without a contract changed jobs more frequently or had to return home.

Analysis of labour regime issues paves the way for discussing the high level of exploitation of migrants as well as neglect of the whole complex of labour rights on the part of employers. In particular, the average duration of work of returned migrants significantly exceeds the legal norm of 40 hours per week. Only 35.7% of migrants say that they worked an average of 40 hours per week. Almost every second migrant worked abroad at full stretch.

Labour migration has preserved its temporary nature, and the majority of migrants leave to seek work for a certain period of time, leaving behind a household, plot of land, and sometimes a family business to be taken care of by their parents, wives and children. Besides, men (79.1%) who leave for jobs without their wives believe that it is economically disadvantageous to take them.

A trip abroad finds support among members of migrants’ families. In general, family expectations towards their relatives abroad are no doubt high, and highest among families for whom such trips are the only income-generating sources (78.5%).

However the reasons for departure have changed during the past five years. In 2003 more than 43.8% of migrants would have left to seek work due to the poor economic situation of the families, poverty and misery, only 22.8% because of unemployment, and only about 5% to improve their quality of life (Olimova and Bosc, 2003).

At the end of 2008 (results of the research) the main reason for leaving to seek work abroad for 50.1% of migrants was improvement of living conditions, every tenth migrant (9.7%) being dissatisfied with jobs available in the home country, 8.7% wanting to find better-paid work, and 7.3% because of unemployment. Potential migrants share these opinions.

⁵ Hereafter the comparison with this survey will be made with regard to the scale and coverage of respondents so that it is comparable with the present survey.

No doubt, the changing reasons for migration are caused by economic growth in Tajikistan itself. The realisation of urgent measures helped to reduce the poverty level in the country from 87% to 53%, while a rather high growth in GDP as well as in the incomes of population could be observed. Despite the jobs available in the country, low wage levels remain a major problem. Large Tajik families are dissatisfied with incomes generated as a result of labour activity in their own country. And it was not by chance that 41.8% of respondents intended to leave for abroad to seek for jobs, i.e. this number of able-bodied population of the country can be considered as potential migrants. The desire to leave increases with the respondents' education level, however those with a university degree prefer not to migrate. Everybody wants to find a highly paid job abroad, irrespective of their education.

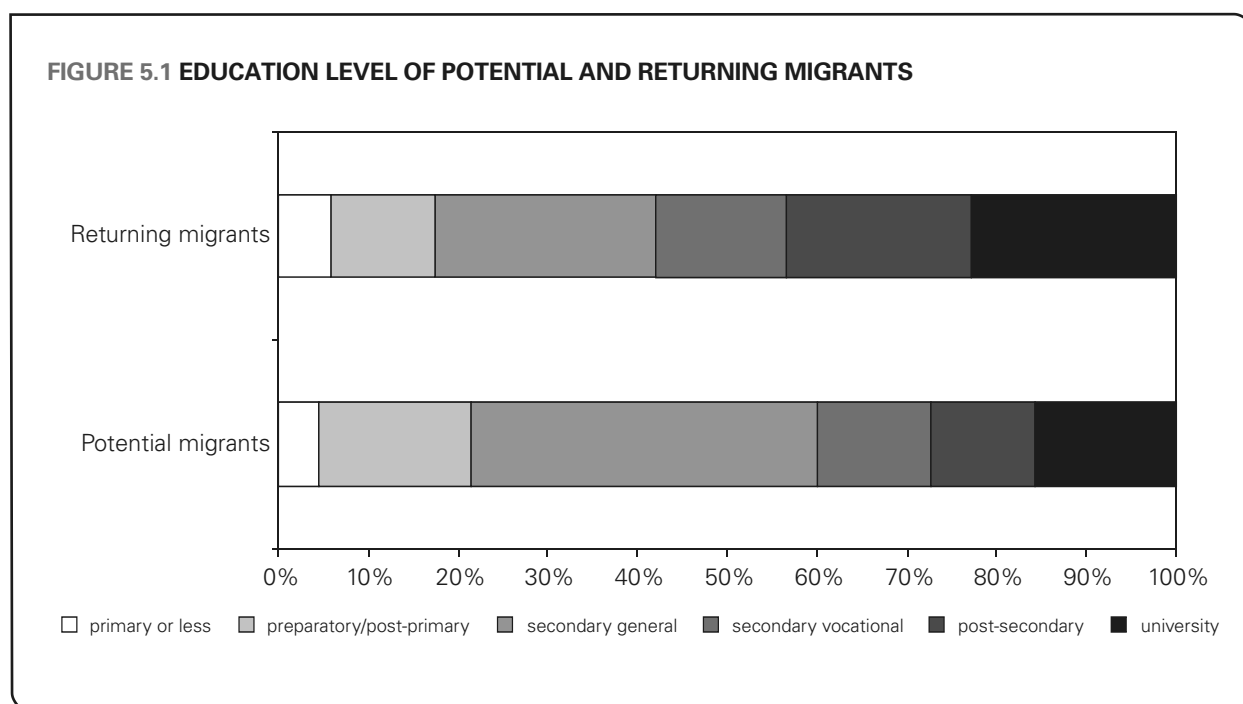
The desire to migrate relates more to the status of employment, i.e. the desire to migrate prevails among respondents who have no jobs or are dissatisfied with the ones they have.

The desire to migrate to a certain extent depends on the number of people in the family, but directly depends on the level of family income, not on the type of house or plot of land available. The desire to seek a job abroad is often higher among those who are dissatisfied with the financial situation of their families.

The majority of migrants work in the construction sector abroad. This result was confirmed both from the research conducted in 2003 (Olimova) and from our research in 2008, where also among potential migrants construction was the commonest sector for work abroad.

The survey proved that the most mobile and professionally trained part of the labour force leaves for labour migration. Over 57.9% of migrants have a professional education.

The comparison of survey data on the education level of potential and returning migrants shows that the potential migrants have a general rather than a vocational education, with a lower percentage having a university degree **(FIGURE 5.1)**.



The impact of labour migration on young people choosing a profession keeps growing. Based on the findings of the survey, 0.7% of returned migrants chose professions for further employment abroad, making their choice before 2007. At the end of 2008 there were already 4.3% of potential migrants choosing professions specifically for going abroad again. During the past decade young people from certain regions in Tajikistan have been oriented towards working abroad. A striking example is the Isfara area of north Tajikistan (IRC Socservice, 2009). Young people in this region want to gain experience in the mineral resources industry but at the same time most of them are drawn towards employment in the Russian Federation, where a labourer's wages in this industry is ten times higher than in Tajikistan. The majority of members of migrants' families in the Isfara area traditionally have sustainable links with Russia, go there to earn money regularly and are Russian citizens.

A high level of fluctuation of managers is also observed in the Tajikistan power industry when the best specialists seek and often find a job abroad. The national holding company Barki Tojik suffers from a lack of middle-level qualified personnel and is affected by the external labour market. This type of brain drain can be seen as a negative impact of labour migration on the internal labour market of Tajikistan.

Working abroad leads to the majority of labour migrants changing their qualifications. Generally, only 28.8% of labour migrants work in their specialism abroad (from the survey results). The rest of migrants gained skills for working in this sector abroad. Despite the fact that only 5.3% of migrants received training abroad, it is thanks to informal professional training (most often in-service) abroad that labour migrants upgrade their qualifications, learn new professions, and improve their work ethic.

The desire to study is not related to migrants' education level, but largely depends on the type of work and language fluency. Those who worked in construction mainly learned during industrial practical sessions. Those who did not know the language attended language classes.

A majority of migrants (71%) want to study and learn new professions for future employment. Most labour migrants (74%) would like to learn construction skills such as auto crane-operator, welder, decorator, mason, and plumber. The choice relates to labour migrants work practice. Around 9% of labour migrants would like to be a driver.

Along with these, returning migrants prefer studying at short-term courses (45.4%), and only 18.5% of labour migrants are ready to study for one year.

The survey showed that migration has a positive impact on both returning migrants and the quality of life of their households. Remittances sent by migrants were the major source of income for many households.

Households consider that the priority goal of migration is to provide for their basic needs, i.e. food and living essentials. Thus, 68.1% of migrants state that remittances are used for household living expenses and 19.9% for renting a property, which means that received remittances are only enough for household consumption. With respect to spending on education, the results are much more modest at 17.8%. Only 5% of migrants invest in business.

But among the main benefits of migration are not only earnings but knowledge, professional skills and life experience. Migrants who have a work contract or a higher employment status, i.e. employers or self-employed, send more money home more regularly. Migrants with a lower level of qualifications send less money less often. Qualifications for the work carried out to some extent depend on a migrant's education level, but to a greater extent on language fluency, communication skills and willingness to study.

At the same time migrants' experience has a positive impact on the services sector (migrants bring new effective and low-cost tools and technologies), construction (finishing works, new materials, work ethic, etc.), production, processing and storage of agricultural products, and small and medium-sized businesses (ILO, 2008, p. 62).

Returned migrants are better orientated in the labour market, can correlate their expenses with wage levels and working conditions, and realistically assess their labour skills.

Generally, the experience gained by migrants abroad is not in demand at home. On return, only 19.1% of migrants found jobs, and the experience gained abroad helped 60.7% of them to do so, including 26.7% skills gained at the work place abroad, and 13.8% education and training courses received abroad.

The level of employment is linked to the skills gained abroad, mainly in construction. In other employment sectors this linkage is less obvious. The level of employment of migrants in their home country depends neither on the time spent abroad nor on the type of training abroad. This is because migrants carry out different types of work abroad compared with that available in their home country. Besides, the number of migrants trained abroad is so small that it has no significant impact on migrants' employment in their home country.

Returned migrants face the same problems they had before going abroad – unemployment and low level of salaries for available vacancies. Some of them have health problems or are simply older.

Moreover, leaving for abroad interferes with career development of migrants, because when abroad migrants seldom work in their specialism and, as a rule, lose skills they had prior to departure as well as useful acquaintances or necessary connections that could help them find a decent job in their home country. Unfortunately, in Tajikistan influential acquaintances and plenty of money are useful in finding a good job or starting up a business.

Very often returned migrants have no opportunity to use their new experience and qualifications gained abroad due to the low level of technical development of enterprises in Tajikistan. Heads of enterprises, who work with outdated equipment and cannot afford new technologies, avoid hiring returned migrants (ILO, 2008, p. 62).

Neither do migrants make much impact on the sectors that require extensive modernisation or capital construction with the need to attract large investments.

Due to the limited employment opportunities in Tajikistan, the majority of migrants only seek jobs abroad, which is why 79.9% of returned migrants seriously consider the option of going abroad for a job or permanent residence.

Along with this, the intention to go abroad does not depend on education level but on status in the labour market, as almost all those wishing to migrate again either failed to find or were not seeking work at home.

An alarming trend has been identified. The number of people wishing to leave for abroad permanently keeps growing from year to year. In 2006 only 4.6% of returned migrants thought of going abroad for permanent residence, and at the end of 2008 every fifth migrant (19%) wishing to go abroad intended to leave for good (ILO, 2008, p. 23).

Only 20.1% of returned migrants are sure that they will not go abroad. For comparison with the data of the survey conducted by the Asian Development Bank, in 2006 only 9% of returned migrants made a decision to stop working abroad (ADB, 2007). The main motive for such a decision was the need to take care of the family. Such a decision was predominantly made by the older migrants. Young people opted for labour migration instead, very often having no experience, foreign language skills or profession.

Generally, the role of the state remains insignificant in the employment of migrants abroad as well as in helping returned migrants to find employment, despite the measures that have been undertaken. Migrants rely on themselves and personal connections, collect information from friends and acquaintances, or more experienced relatives. Only around 2.2% of potential migrants are familiar with official Tajik structures that provide services for migrants. Only about 10% of migrants received an additional qualification or skill prior to labour migration. A total of 6.2% of returned migrants were informed about the state employment programmes.

5.2 MIGRATION BENEFITS AND IMPACT

Summarising the findings of the survey, it is notable that labour migration from Tajikistan is important for the internal labour market. Analysis shows that the economy is incapable of providing jobs for the growing able-bodied population due to its limited capacities (Kuddusov, 2009b, p. 109).

Migrants have a high level of professional training. Labour migrants gained these professional skills while working abroad but on the whole they are not confirmed by any state-approved documents (diploma, certificate, etc.). Labour migrants need official documents certifying their professional skills.

The survey revealed that the higher the level of professional training, the more successful a migrant is in finding a decent job both abroad and in the home country. Work abroad, given the lack of demand at home, is a productive school for upgrading the professionalism of the workforce, which in turn has a positive impact on the development of the Tajik economy.

Returned labour migrants are more active in seeking work. The employment opportunities for labour migrants in their home country are limited by the low salaries of available vacancies. For this reason, the majority of labour migrants are oriented towards the external labour market and they are ready to wait until the crisis is over in their home country and, when the situation improves, go abroad again to work. For the majority of them, labour migration has become a professional activity.

The number of migrants wishing to leave the country permanently keeps growing. However, a high percentage of migrants return as Tajik family bonds remain strong.

Migrants' experience is not greatly in demand in their home country. The reasons are the low level of wages in Tajikistan itself as well as incompatibility between the types of employment available abroad based on professional skills and those offered at home.

Labour migration is unevenly distributed and predominantly oriented towards the Russian labour market. That is why the state of labour migration mainly depends on the policy of this state and the situation in its labour market.

The global financial crisis at the end of 2008 had a negative impact on the economy of Tajikistan. Labour migrants and their families turned out to be the most vulnerable population groups affected by the crisis. During four months in 2009, compared with a similar period in 2008, amounts of remittances from labour migrants fell by 33%. Migrants without high qualifications were affected most of all. They were the first to be fired by employers. Labour migrants in the construction sector were affected most. Moreover the reduced salaries of the remaining migrant workers made their life abroad economically disadvantageous. Interviews with 5,533 migrants who returned between November 2008 and

March 2009 showed that from 36% up to 50% of them were affected by the financial crisis (Kuddusov, 2009a). Despite the crisis, more than 61% of labour migrants still plan to work abroad in future.

Many labour migrants are ready and willing to stay in their home country, but they are dissatisfied with the level of salary of the job vacancies on offer.

As one of the possible options of employment in their home country, labour migrants prefer to acquire a plot of land and start farming. The entrepreneurship sector is also attractive to them. The choice of these types of activity is caused by labour migrants' desire to work for themselves and rely on their own capacities.

The crisis has already had a negative impact on the rates of economic growth and aggravated the employment situation. Opportunities for seeking work abroad have also sharply reduced.

In these conditions the government needs to develop specific measures conducive to the development of entrepreneurship and farming. These sectors could quickly provide jobs for the unemployed. In conditions of crisis, priority should be given to the development of home production and the creation of real and effective jobs.

It is important to develop an effective employment strategy that takes into account labour migration and the offer of professional training. The state has not yet defined the role of labour migration – whether it is a temporary phenomenon or has a permanent role, what the intentions of the government in connection with this are, what the policy on the labour market will be, and how the policy on professional training will take shape.

5.3 MIGRATION MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

In the current socio-economic situation in Tajikistan and the impossibility of creating a sufficient number of jobs in the near future, the country has to review its employment strategy, not in respect of the organisation and regulation of labour migration but in respect of exporting its labour force. That is, the state should move from the role of bystander and regulator to become an active participant, investing in labour migration. The examples of such active policies can be learned from the Philippines (ADB, 2006).

In developing a well-balanced policy, it should be kept in mind that the labour force and migrant labour is not a commodity – it is the country's asset, and measures aimed at organising labour export must be implemented in conjunction with measures for legalisation of migrants' status, the creation of decent working conditions, and an express condition stipulating migrants' return. A well-balanced employment policy must envisage the intensive involvement of the labour force in the legal employment sector, both in Tajikistan itself and linked to the policy of labour being exported.

A detailed analysis of the education system (at all stages) will be required under the state employment and migration services and of the attitude of all concerned governing bodies regarding cooperation and assistance, in order to ensure that their activities are in conformity with current conditions. This will help to focus their directions and goals.

This task becomes yet more important now that the intergovernmental agreements (Tajikistan–Russia and Tajikistan–Kazakhstan) on labour migration have been ratified and the legalisation of labour migrants is taking place in Russia, mainly on the selection principle (i.e. employment will be granted only to professionally prepared applicants).

Repatriation of a certain number of migrants (by deportation, administrative repatriation or financial crisis) might cause a deterioration in the social situation in Tajikistan. For a successful resolution of this problem, the Public Employment Service should first monitor the labour market in CIS countries, in order to determine the required amount of training of qualified workers and the range of their skills.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the current socio-economic conditions and the impossibility of creating adequate employment in the near future, Tajikistan should review its employment strategy, meaning not only the organisation and regulation of labour migration, but export of the labour force. That is, the state should change its role from bystander and regulator to active participant, and invest financial resources in labour migration. A balanced policy should take into account that the labour force and the work of migrants are not a commodity, but the assets of the country, and measures for organising the export of the labour force should be accompanied by measures for legalising migration and creating adequate conditions for work.

Bearing in mind the limited capacity of the labour market in Tajikistan, this policy must envisage a well-balanced strategy of external labour migration ensuring, as an essential condition, that migrants return to their home country and retain their links with their families. Taking into account the importance and role of labour migration, we deem it useful to consider reorganising the existing authorised bodies and establishing an independent public authority to regulate migration (for example with the status of a state committee under the Tajik government).

There is a need to create conditions for the development of entrepreneurship and legal self-employment in Tajikistan itself to mitigate the negative impact of the crisis on migrant workers. In view of the actual situation in the country's labour market, migrant workers have chosen the types of work that suit them best: entrepreneurship and farming. The economic and administrative conditions conducive to free development should be created in these sectors. Such measures could be realised in a short-term perspective and there are plenty of examples involving returned migrant workers in farming.

It is important to review the country's education policy, focusing on the needs of the labour market. Migrants need high-quality professional education combined with business training, as well as the legalisation of their professional skills. For this reason, the market for education services should be more flexible with consideration of the various needs of the labour force, including migrant workers. It is important to develop and extend the system of professional training through short-term courses, with the external attestation and certification of professional skills of migrant workers. The main requirement here should be the high quality of professional education services.

The negative practice of paying low salaries at enterprises should be revised. This issue requires comprehensive analysis and investigation of the reasons. It is unacceptable that the share of a worker's salary reflected in the cost of a product does not exceed 12%–16%. In cooperation with tripartite partners and ILO technical support, decent work in Tajikistan, where good work is correctly paid, needs to be expanded.

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