



MIGRATION OBSERVATORY

Eastern Europe and Central Asia Factsheets

2020-2021



This selection of the country factsheets, produced under the Prague Process Migration Observatory, presents migration data for twelve Prague Process participating states: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus¹, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia², Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, covering the period of 2020-2021.

The factsheets offer concise and valuable insights in the migration landscape of these countries, providing data from both national and international sources. They also highlight key developments in migration policies and legislation. Updated regularly, the factsheets are accessible via the [interactive map](#) of the Prague Process website, with the data from international sources being refreshed automatically as it becomes available.

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¹ Cooperation with the Republic of Belarus has been halted in early 2022

² Cooperation with the Russian Federation has been halted in early 2022

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REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

General Information

Population	Immigration	Emigration
2 790 974 (World Bank 2021) 2 962 300 (ARMSTAT 2021)	190 349 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 15 800 (ARMSTAT Flow 2019)	958 190 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 31 200 (ARMSTAT Flow 2019)
Working-age population	Unemployment rate	GDP
1 865 265 (World Bank 2021) 1 287 300 (ARMSTAT 2021)	20 % (World Bank 2021) 15.5 % (ARMSTAT 2021)	13 878 908 628.9 current prices USD (World Bank 2021) 6 991 777 800 000 current prices AMD prices AMD (ARMSTAT 2021)
Refugees and IDPs	Citizenship	Territory
Refugees 34 728 (UNHCR 2021) 116 (ARMSTAT 2019; granted refugee status) Asylum Seekers 181 (UNHCR 2021) 248 (ARMSTAT 2019) IDPs 0 (UNHCR 2021)	By Birth No (GLOBALCIT) By Descent Yes (conditional) (GLOBALCIT) Years of Residency 5 (GLOBALCIT)	29 743 km ² (CIA World Factbook)

Description

The Republic of Armenia has one of the highest emigration rates in the world, amounting to nearly [one third](#) of its population. In the past, the considerable exodus occurred by virtue of various political and socioeconomic factors in the country, but 2018 saw some [positive migration](#) dynamics owing to the change of government with the policy focus slowly shifting to repatriation. The same year the national poverty rate fell to its lowest level since 2004, with [23.5% of the population](#) still living below the poverty line. In 2019, the economic growth also reached a significant 7.6%. According to the [Household Survey 2019](#), 95% of respondents did not intend to leave for another country. More recently, however, [the COVID-19](#) crisis has caused a compelling welfare loss and a sharp increase in unemployment, which may affect migratory flows.

Overall, labour migration constitutes a viable option for many Armenians. The [Russian Federation](#) remains the prime destination for Armenian migrants, most of whom move to the Russian urban areas for employment purposes and return home within a period of three to twelve months. The temporary and circular nature of Armenian labour migration to Russia was reinforced in 2015 when Armenia joined the Eurasian Economic Union. As a result, the number of Armenians working in Russia increased substantially from [123,228 in 2013 to 210,460 in 2019](#). Armenia largely benefits from the resulting remittances (amounting to [11.2% of the GDP](#), with over two thirds received from Russia), but this makes the country particularly dependent on labour migration to Russia. [The available evidence](#) shows that a large share of Armenian labour migrants would opt for the EU rather than Russia; however, the visa requirements and language barriers turn Russia into a more favourable destination.

Along with Russia, other post-Soviet countries, several EU Member States, the US and Canada are home to the largest ethnic Armenian communities within an estimated [7 million diaspora](#). Since 2016, Germany, France and Poland issued the lion's share of first-time residence permits to Armenians within the EU. In 2019, Poland granted most [residence permits](#) for work reasons valid for up to five months, France – for family reasons, and Germany – for other reasons. This

signifies a temporary nature of migration to Poland, and a longer-term nature of migration to France and Germany as also confirmed by the number of all valid residence permits at the end of 2019. To obtain legal status in the EU, some Armenians have also been applying for asylum. The peak in [applications](#) (8,565) occurred in 2016 with many applicants being Syrian of Armenian ethnic origin, thereby holding a dual citizenship. The asylum figures have declined ever since reaching 1,885 in 2020.

Immigration to Armenia is much smaller in scale. According to the recent [Migration Snapshot](#), 2,429 people immigrated in 2017-2018, most of whom were ethnic Armenians. The majority of immigrants (42.7%) moved for work reasons, 31% for education, 20% for family formation and reunification. In 2019, Armenia granted a [total 7,873](#) residence permits, with nationals of India, Iran and Russia representing the biggest immigrant groups. Among asylum seekers and recognised refugees in Armenia, Iranians and Syrians represent the top two nationalities. Irregular migrant flows to Armenia remain limited. In 2020, [3,762 foreigners](#), one third of whom were CIS citizens, violated the national migration law. Due to the armed conflict that erupted in 2020 in Nagorno-Karabakh, Armenia needs to accommodate over [90.000 people that fled](#) the conflict zone.

The substantial numbers of Armenians returning home ([over 85,000 in 2017-2018](#)) is primarily comprised of returning labour migrants. The [return rates](#) of irregular Armenian migrants from the EU have also increased from 21% in 2014 ([1105](#) out of [5195](#) persons who were ordered to leave actually returned) to 55% in 2019 ([2095](#) out of [3765](#) persons). A comprehensive national strategy – both for the reintegration of Armenian nationals and for integrating migrants, asylum-seekers, refugees and IDPs – still remains to be adopted.

Armenia endorsed the Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees and expressed its readiness to start a visa liberalisation dialogue with the EU. In recent years, [the Government](#) has prioritised the further migration policy development. In view of the changing migration dynamics, the new state migration concept 2021-2031 (still under development in March 2021) will focus particularly on immigration and the migration and development nexus. The [anticipated re-establishment](#) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, including a Migration Service, represents another important milestone.

Migration Authorities and Key Policy Documents

Responsible Ministry	Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure
Line Ministries	Office of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Labour and Social Issues Ministry of Justice Ministry of Health
Agencies	Migration Service under the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure State Employment Service Agency National Security Service Border Guard Troops Police Statistical Committee
Key Policy Documents	Armenia Transformation Strategy 2050 National Security Strategy Government Programme 2019 2017-2021 Strategy for Migration Policy 2017-2021 Action Plan for Effective Implementation of the Migration Strategy 2008 (2015) Law on Refugees and Asylum 2006 (2019) Law on Foreigners 2001 Law on the State Border 1995 (2010) Citizenship Law 2001 Law on Political Asylum Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Armenia on the facilitation of the issuance of visas

Relevant Publications

[Migration Profile Light 2014](#)

[Extended Migration Profile 2011](#)

[Policy Brief 'Armenia's migration cooperation with the European Union and Eurasian Economic Union'](#)

[Policy Brief 'Closing the policy gaps concerning an eventual mass influx of asylum seekers to Armenia'](#)

[Policy Brief 'Assessing Armenia's Migration Strategy for 2017-2021'](#)

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

General Information

Population	Immigration	Emigration
10 137 750 (World Bank 2021) 10 119 100 (STAT AZ 2021)	252 228 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 2 397 (STAT AZ Flow 2021)	1 163 922 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 570 (STAT AZ Flow 2021)
Working-age population	Unemployment rate	GDP
7 031 387 (World Bank 2021) 6 940 900 (STAT AZ 2021)	6.0 % (World Bank 2021) 7.2 % (AZ STAT 2020)	58 825 411 764.7 current prices USD (World Bank 2021) 93 203 200 000 current prices AZN (STAT AZ 2021)
Refugees and IDPs	Citizenship	Territory
Refugees 1 676 (UNHCR 2021) Asylum Seekers 34 (UNHCR 2021) IDPs 654 793 (UNHCR 2021) 753 000 (IDMC 2020)	By Birth No (GLOBALCIT) By Descent Yes (GLOBALCIT) Years of Residency 5 (GLOBALCIT)	86 600 km ² (CIA World Factbook)

Description

The Republic of Azerbaijan features [substantial cross-border movements](#), both from and into the country. For 2018, [the CIS portal](#) reveals an influx of 2,845,679 and outflow of 2,842,773 foreigners. In 2020, these [figures](#) decreased threefold, presumably owing to COVID-19. Meanwhile, the national statistics of Azerbaijan only reflect foreigners holding permanent residence permits. In 2019, there were [2,042 immigrants and 1,654 emigrants](#) according to the State Migration Service and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Among the post-Soviet countries, Azerbaijan had one of the highest [emigration rates of nearly 20 %](#) of its total population, resulting in over one million nationals residing abroad. Since 2010, this rate has been in decline, amounting to 10,6 % in 2020 (calculation is based on the [national population statistics and UN Migrant Stocks at mid-year](#)). This change largely occurred due to the growth in population, which surpassed the [ten-million-mark in 2020](#). Azerbaijan is one of few Prague Process countries experiencing population growth and [is projected](#) to remain the most populous country in the South Caucasus until 2045.

Emigration from Azerbaijan is mostly a regional phenomenon. Based on the UN migrant stocks 2019, the most [popular regional destinations](#) include Russia, Ukraine, Armenia and Kazakhstan. Altogether, these countries are home to nearly one million Azerbaijani nationals. Russia still represents the prime target. In 2019, [over one million Azerbaijani nationals](#) crossed the border with Russia in both directions with over 75 % coming for private purposes and some 11 % (over 138,000) for work reasons. Meanwhile, the number of work patents and other work permits issued to Azerbaijani nationals in Russia in 2019 exceeded [55,000](#). Neighbouring Armenia hosts the second largest albeit declining group of migrants born in Azerbaijan, which amounted to some [78,000 persons in 2019](#). It is ought to believe that many of them are [in fact ethnic Armenians](#). In recent years, Turkey also became one of the preferred destinations of Azerbaijani nationals, recording an increase in stocks and flows. In 2019, they reached over [22,000](#) and [over 26,000](#) respectively. Within [the EU](#), the main destinations are Germany, France, Poland, the Netherlands and Sweden, with the former issuing most first-time residence permits (2,690 in 2019), as well as hosting most Azerbaijani nationals with valid residence permits at the end of 2019 (13,338). While family reunification is the most common reason for granting residency, Poland has issued most permits for work reasons, and France – on international protection grounds.

On par with declining emigration, immigration to Azerbaijan has also decreased. Since 2010, the immigrant stock decreased significantly, reaching [252,228 in 2020](#). In 2016-2018, the flow remained rather stable with over [3,000 immigrants per year](#), although it shrank by one third in 2019. As of 2013, Georgians, Russians and Turks represent the three main groups of immigrants. Turkish nationals hold most [long-term work permits in Azerbaijan](#), followed by citizens of Ireland and India. [Irregular migration](#) has equally

declined from over 21,000 persons violating the national migration law in 2017 to some 7,300 persons in 2020. Over the same period, the annual number of asylum seekers fluctuated from [671 to 93 persons](#), most of whom were nationals of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. The recognition rate remains low and did not exceed ten persons over three years. However, due to the unresolved conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan hosts [the second largest](#) number of IDPs in Central Asia and Eastern Europe amounting to 753,000. Amongst them, [84,000 were displaced in 2020](#) due to the most violent flare up of conflict since 1994.

Assessing the regular return migration to Azerbaijan remains challenging due to statistical limitations. The number of returning emigrants from e.g. Russia can provide only a relative estimate: some [50,000 nationals of Azerbaijan](#) left Russia in 2017-2019. Meanwhile, the return rates of irregular Azerbaijani migrants from the EU increased twofold from 42 % in 2015 (out of [1,040](#) persons who were ordered to leave [445](#) actually returned) to over 97 % in 2019 ([1,340](#) returned out of [1380](#)).

Azerbaijan endorsed the Global Compact for Migration and recently developed the new [National Migration Strategy on Migration for 2020-2025](#) (adoption yet pending in August 2021) in compliance with relevant international legal frameworks. The country also performed a diaspora mapping, providing insights into the skills and demographic profiles of Azerbaijani diaspora communities. In May 2020, Azerbaijan [amended](#) its Migration Code by widening the options for temporary residence permits on education grounds. Meanwhile, in June 2020 the country amended its Criminal Code along with the Law on Citizenship by eliminating the prosecution of Azerbaijani citizens who have acquired the citizenship of a foreign state. On 17 March 2021, Azerbaijan signed the [Seat Agreement with ICMPD](#) on the status of the latter in the Republic.

Migration Authorities and Key Policy Documents

Responsible Ministry	State Migration Service
Line Ministries	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Labour & Social Protection Ministry of Internal Affairs Ministry of Health
Agencies	State Border Service State Security Service State Committee for Refugees and IDPs
Key Policy Documents	2013 Migration Code 1999 Law on IDPs and Stateless Persons 1998 Law on Citizenship 1996 Law on Legal Status of Foreigners and Stateless Persons 1994 Law about Exit, Entry, and Passports
Relevant Publications	PP Migration Profile Light 2014 PP Extended Migration Profile 2011 Policy Brief 'Armenia's migration cooperation with the European Union and Eurasian Economic Union' Policy Brief 'Closing the policy gaps concerning an eventual mass influx of asylum seekers to Armenia' Policy Brief 'Assessing Armenia's Migration Strategy for 2017-2021' Microsoft Word - Migration_Profile_2022 (reintegrationfacility.eu)

REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

General Information

Population	Immigration	Emigration
9 302 585 (World Bank 2021) 9 349 645 (BELSTAT mid-2021)	1 067 090 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 34 846 (BELSTAT Flow 2019)	1 483 626 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 20 976 (BELSTAT Flow 2019)
Working-age population	Unemployment rate	GDP
6 170 451 (World Bank 2021) 5 401 931 (BELSTAT mid-2021)	3.9 % (World Bank 2021) 4 % (BELSTAT 2020)	69 673 747 131.9 current prices USD (World Bank 2021) 78 927 900 current prices BYN (BELSTAT mid-2021)
Refugees and IDPs	Citizenship	Territory
Refugees 2 729 (UNHCR 2021) Asylum Seekers 114 (UNHCR 2021) IDPs 0 (UNHCR 2021)	By Birth No (GLOBALCIT) By Descent Yes (GLOBALCIT) Years of Residency 6-10 (GLOBALCIT)	207 600 km ² (CIA World Factbook)

Description

The Republic of Belarus is both a country of emigration and immigration. The [positive net migration](#) notwithstanding, the population of Belarus is slowly declining. Since 1996, it lost over 800,000 people including 60,000 persons in 2020 alone.

According to the [2019 population census](#), Belarus is home to some 764,000 immigrants most of whom originate from Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Over half of them came to Belarus for family reasons. In the past decade, migration flows to the country have been steadily increasing and reached [34,846](#) in 2019. Overall, international migrants constitute [10-15%](#) of the total population of Belarus. At the end of 2020, among the holders of temporary residence permits around 40% resided for studies, 24% for business reasons, and 24% due to family reunification.

Due to the [worsening labour shortages](#), the country has also been attracting more foreign labour migrants in recent years. In 2019, Belarus issued or extended [10,917](#) special permits for labour activities, with over half of them issued in the capital Minsk alone. However, the COVID-19 pandemic reduced migration considerably in 2020, both in terms of incoming labour migrants (from [20,862 to 16,368](#)) and of own nationals going abroad with the assistance of legal entities and individual entrepreneurs for employment abroad (from [9,061 to 4,723](#)).

Most migrant workers in Belarus originate from CIS countries – in particular Russia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan – but also from Ukraine and China. Belarus has a [comprehensive legal framework](#) regulating all aspects of migration, primarily based on the national Constitution, the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Code of Administrative Offences, as well as the laws listed above.

Migration from Belarus has been equally growing. The outflow in 2019 amounting to 20,976 doubled in comparison to 9,855 in 2015. While Russia still represents the top destination for Belarus nationals, the number of valid residence permits issued to Belarus nationals in the EU for work reasons has been growing by some [8,000-10,000 every year since 2016](#). In 2018, the total number of valid work permits amounted to over 36,000 with half of them issued by Poland, followed by Lithuania. Both countries have long been the main destination countries for Belarusian labour migrants in the EU. In October 2020, the Ministry of Interior of Belarus [announced](#) another spike in outflows with some 13,000 Belarus nationals leaving in just two months after the August 2020 Presidential elections.

Irregular migration to Belarus remains limited. In 2018, the country deported [2839 individuals](#) and a little over [1500 in 2020](#). However, Belarus is a transit country for irregular migrants aiming to reach the EU. Criminal transnational networks play a key role in [smuggling migrants](#), most on whom come to Belarus legally on a visa. In autumn 2021, [the situation with irregular migrants](#) on the Polish-Belarusian and Lithuanian-Belarusian borders particularly escalated causing strong reactions across the EU.

Since 1997, some [10,000 asylum seekers](#) from 71 countries have applied for refugee or humanitarian status in Belarus. The year 2020 saw 589 such applications, marking a 10% decrease as compared to 2019 (654 applicants). Nationals of Ukraine filed 75% of all applications in 2020 and 87.7% in 2019.

The beginning of 2020 saw the long-awaited signing of the Readmission and the Visa Facilitation Agreements with the EU that came into force half a year later. However, in June 2021, Belarus suspended the agreement and the cooperation with the EU has rapidly deteriorated since then.

In terms of recent policy updates, in December 2020, Belarus [amended](#) its Citizenship law, simplifying the related procedures and clarifying the rules for refusal. The amendment also introduced the restoration of Belarus' citizenship for persons returning to the country for permanent residence. The year 2020 also saw amendments to the Law «On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons in Belarus», which have further aligned the legislation to the actual application practice and the socio-economic needs of Belarus. The amendments also provide additional mechanisms for migration control, facilitating the use of coercive measures towards foreign nationals.

Migration Authorities and Key Policy Documents

Responsible Ministry	Ministry of Internal Affairs
Line Ministries	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
Agencies	Department of Citizenship and Migration State Border Committee State Security Committee
Key Policy Documents	2020 Amendments to the Law on Citizenship of Belarus 2019 Amendments to the Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons 2014 The Presidential Decree on the stay of Ukrainian citizens in Belarus 2010 Law on External Labour Migration 2010 (2016) Law on the Legal Status of Aliens and Stateless Persons 2008 (2016) Law on Asylum 2003 (2019) Code on Administrative Offences
Relevant Publications	Migration Profile Light 2013 UN DESA Migration Profile 2014 Migration Data Portal 2020 Policy Brief 'The EU-Belarus Mobility Partnership: The Way Forward' Analytical Report 'Combating irregular migration and human trafficking in the CIS countries' Background Note 'Migration and Mobility in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: What to expect in times of COVID-19?'

GEORGIA

General Information

Population	Immigration	Emigration
3 708 610 (World Bank 2021) 3 728 600 (GEOSTAT 2021)	79 368 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 74 008 (GEOSTAT Flow 2021)	861 077 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 99 974 (GEOSTAT Flow 2021)
Working-age population	Unemployment rate	GDP
2 386 451 (World Bank 2021) 1 533 600 (GEOSTAT 2021)	11.7 % (World Bank 2021) 20.6 % (GEOSTAT 2021)	18 853 115 588.8 current prices USD (World Bank 2021) 11 300 000 000 000 current prices GEL (GEOSTAT 2021)
Refugees and IDPs	Citizenship	Territory
Refugees 1 818 (UNHCR 2021) Asylum Seekers 1 229 (UNHCR 2021) 5 885 (IDFI 2017) IDPs 290 156 (UNHCR 2021)	By Birth No (GLOBALCIT) By Descent Yes (GLOBALCIT) Years of Residency 6-10 (GLOBALCIT)	69 700 km ² (CIA World Factbook)

Description

For the past two decades, Georgia has been facing a negative net migration. Political instability, security threats, but most importantly socio-economic challenges have continued representing key push factors for emigration. The propensity to emigrate remains high among the youth. According to the [National Statistics Office of Georgia](#), between 85.000 and 95.000 persons, half of whom were 15-39 years of age, left the country in 2013-2018 annually. The number of emigrants peaked at 105.107 persons in 2019, but then dropped by nearly a quarter to 74.264 in 2020, following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The most populous Georgian communities reside in Russia, Greece, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, the US and Armenia. In 2020, the total number of Georgians living abroad amounted to [861.077](#), representing approximately 22% of Georgia's overall population. It is expected that Georgia may lose another [150.000](#) in population by 2030 resulting from higher emigration rates among other reasons. Remittances constitute a significant 13% of Georgia's GDP (2019). Nevertheless, [studies suggest](#) that their impact on the country's economic development is rather limited. In terms of total volume, Russia, which still hosts close to [450.000 Georgian nationals](#), remains the largest source of remittances to Georgia. However, the share of remittances from across the EU has been on the rise.

Since the introduction of visa-free travel with the EU in 2017, the number of Georgian nationals in the Union has rapidly increased. In 2018-2020, Greece, Italy, Spain, Germany, France and Poland hosted the majority of Georgian nationals with [valid residence permits](#) issued for family, work and other purposes. Italy and Poland have been issuing most permits for remunerated activities. Moreover, Poland also attracted a substantial number of Georgian migrants within its [simplified circular migratory schemes](#), which allow Georgian citizens to work in Poland for six months within a 12-month period. Following the signing of the respective bilateral agreement between Germany and Georgia in 2020, Georgian labour migrants have also been coming to Germany for [seasonal employment in the agriculture sector](#). Outside the EU, another popular destination for Georgian seasonal migrants is Turkey.

While the gender composition of Georgian migrants is balanced, certain feminisation concerning EU destinations, i.e. Italy and Greece, has been observed. According to an OECD study, most Georgian migrants possess a higher-than-average education level. Migration for educational purposes, especially towards Germany, Ukraine, Armenia and the US, has been on the rise in recent years. Along with regular flows, irregular migration to the EU has also increased. The number of Georgian nationals refused entry, foremost at the border with Germany and Poland, increased from [875 in 2016 to 4.690 in 2019](#) (2.065 in 2020). The number of those illegally

present, especially in Germany, has doubled since 2016 reaching [10.165](#) persons in 2020. The return rate of irregular Georgian migrants from the EU exceeded 67 % in 2018, but declined to 52 % in 2020. In absolute terms, both the number of Georgians ordered to leave and those actually returned was the highest in 2019 (16.450 and 8.830 persons respectively). Germany and France implemented most returns. Overall, Georgia has been respecting the implementation of the readmission agreement with the EU, agreeing to over [95 % of readmission requests](#) received in 2018. The established AVRR programme supports returnees with various reintegration assistance, such as financial, medical or business development support. In addition to the EU, Georgia concluded readmission agreements with Ukraine, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Moldova, Montenegro, Belarus, and Iceland. Negotiations with other countries are ongoing.

The worldwide stock of refugees from Georgia has slightly increased in recent years to reach 7.562 persons in 2021, with half of them residing in France. Within the EU, France has also recorded a spike in [asylum requests](#) submitted by Georgians in 2018-2019, which followed the adoption of visa-free travel. To [stem unfounded asylum claims](#), many EU countries added Georgia to the list of safe countries of origin. Meanwhile, the Parliament of Georgia introduced amendments to the Criminal Code and launched an information campaign to combat the abuse of visa-free regulations.

Usually considered a source country of migration, Georgia has witnessed a significant inflow of foreign nationals. According to the [National Statistics Office](#), their number has amounted to 92.458 in 2013 as compared to approximately 90.000 in 2020. The newly established English-language certificate programmes have attracted many [international students](#), in particular from [India, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Iran and Nigeria](#). Other immigrant groups include labour migrants, family members, entrepreneurs, refugees, and former Georgian citizens who mostly come from Russia (37.267 persons in 2020) as well as Armenia, Ukraine and Azerbaijan.

Georgia hosts over [1.700 refugees](#) originating mostly from Iraq, Syria, Ukraine and Russia. Whereas the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan suggests a potential increase in the number of refugees coming to Georgia, it could represent a transit country rather than the final destination. Meanwhile, the unfolding Russia-Ukraine war may result in increased [migration and refugee flows](#) to Georgia from these two countries. Georgia also features some [260.000](#) internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the occupied regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Since the initiation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2003, Georgia has significantly progressed with developing and improving its migration policy framework and governance. This process was largely linked to the implementation of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan (VLAP) as well as the country's Migration Strategies 2013-2015 and 2016-2020. The newly released Migration Strategy for 2021-2030 builds on the previous documents and determines the key strategic directions in migration policy based on research, evidence and experience. Georgia's Migration Strategies also reflect and build on the [2015 European Agenda on Migration](#) and the [United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), highlighting Georgia's active role in regional and international cooperation on migration. Other strategic documents and agreements between Georgia and the EU provide additional guidelines on the further development of migration management and the competent institutions in Georgia.

Georgia endorsed the Global Compact for Migration in 2018. The country is actively cooperating with international organizations to continue the GCM implementation in compliance with all relevant national and international legal frameworks.

Migration Authorities and Key Policy Documents

Responsible Ministry	State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI)
Line Ministries	Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Ministry of Internally of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Health and Social Affairs (MoLHSA) Ministry of Justice (MoJ) State Security Service of Georgia (SSS)
Agencies	Department of Migration, Repatriation & Refugee Issues State Security Service
Key Policy Documents	Migration Strategy of Georgia 2021–2030 Migration Strategy of Georgia 2016-2020 Integrated Border Management Strategy for 2023-2027 Human Rights Strategy of Georgia for 2022-2030 2018 Law on Vocational Education 2016 Law on International Protection 2015 Law on Labour Migration

	2014 Law on the Legal Status of Aliens and Stateless Persons 2014 Organic Law on Georgian Citizenship Migration Strategy of Georgia 2013-2015 2013-2020 Vocational Education and Training Development Strategy 2011 Law of Georgia on Personal Data Protection 2011 Law on Compatriots Residing Abroad and Diaspora Organizations
Relevant Publications	ENIGMMA 2 Case Study: Profile of Georgian Diaspora and Migrant Communities Study: Georgian Diaspora and Migrant Communities in Germany, Greece and Turkey Policy Brief 'Circular migration schemes in Georgia' Georgia Migration Profile 2017 Georgia Migration Profile 2015 Georgia Extended Migration Profile 2013 Georgia Extended Migration Profile 2011 Brief Migration Profile Remittances: Georgia ENIGMMA Working Paper: Estimates for Georgian migrants in Turkey Report 'An overview of the Mobility Partnership in Georgia and Moldova' Report 'The state of migration in Georgia'

REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

General Information

Population	Immigration	Emigration
19 191 356 (World Bank 2021) 18 879 552 (STAT KZ 2021)	3 732 073 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 11 447 (STAT KZ Flow 2020)	4 203 899 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 29 110 (STAT KZ Flow 2020)
Working-age population	Unemployment rate	GDP
11 997 991 (World Bank 2021) 9 256 757 (STAT KZ 2021)	4.9 % (World Bank 2021) 4.9 % (STAT KZ 2021)	197 112 255 360.6 current prices USD (World Bank 2021) 70 714 083 600 000 current prices KZT (STAT KZ 2021)
Refugees and IDPs	Citizenship	Territory
Refugees 352 (UNHCR 2021) 425 (CIS annual data 2020) Asylum Seekers 305 (UNHCR 2021) 88 (CIS annual data 2020) IDPs 0 (UNHCR 2021)	By Birth No (GLOBALCIT) By Descent Yes (GLOBALCIT) Years of Residency 5 (GLOBALCIT)	2 724 900 km ² (CIA World Factbook)

Description

With an overall population of nearly 19 Mio, Kazakhstan is both a receiving and sending country of migrants. Over the past decade, the [net migration rate](#) has been negative with an overall 360,000 people leaving and some 230,000 entering the country. Since 2005, international migration to Kazakhstan has been steadily declining, reaching approximately [12,000](#) people in 2019 and 11,441 in 2020. Meanwhile, out-migration from Kazakhstan has been on the rise, amounting to [45,225](#) people in 2019. In 2020, the outflow dropped to [29,088](#), presumably owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Over 80 % of emigrants](#), the majority of whom statistics define as ethnic Russians go to Russia. Ethnic Germans and Ukrainians account for 7-8 % and 6-7 % of the emigration flow respectively. A similar trend of ethnic emigration, albeit much larger in scale, occurred in the 1990s following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. While reasons behind the accelerated ethnic exodus differ, [experts tend to agree](#) that socio-economic factors play perhaps the major role. This also explains the growing share of ethnic Kazakhs among migrants leaving mostly for Russia and Germany in search of better economic and educational opportunities. According to the Eurasian Economic Commission, in 2019, [over 136,000 citizens of Kazakhstan](#) came to Russia for employment purposes and [over 63,000 students](#) studied in Russian universities in the 2019/2020 academic year. 10 % of all Kazakh students are believed to study abroad and some [35 % may never return home](#).

Germany is the second most popular destination for migrants from Kazakhstan. For the past decade, the number of Kazakh citizens with valid residence permits in Germany has amounted to some [40,000](#) annually. Over two thirds of them received permits on family grounds valid for 12 months or more. The Czech Republic leads on first-time residence permits issued for educational activities valid for a year or longer. Meanwhile, shorter-term residence permits in the EU are mostly issued by Poland for educational or other purposes. There are not many Kazakh asylum-seekers in the EU. However, in 2019 their number suddenly exceeded [1,400 persons](#) representing a record figure for the past decade. Hosting over [600 recognised refugees](#) from Kazakhstan, France represents the prime destination within the EU. Worldwide, the number of Kazakh refugees slowly increased from [2,263 in 2015 to 2,766 persons in 2020](#), over 1,000 of whom are hosted by the US. At the same time, the number of Kazakh asylum-seekers grew substantially, from [2,235 in 2015 to 6,984 in 2019 and 5,974 in 2020](#). Most applications were submitted in the US and the Republic of Korea.

According to various estimates, Kazakhstan is home to some 3-4 million immigrants who mostly originate from Russia, Germany, Ukraine and Belarus. Immigration to Kazakhstan is also closely related to ethnic repatriation actively supported by the state. [Ethnic Kazakhs](#), which account for over 50 % of the overall flow, migrate to Kazakhstan from Uzbekistan (50.72 % in 2019), China (19%), Turkmenistan (12.6%) and Russia (6.8%). In recent years, ethnic immigration has declined along with the overall migration flows, foremost owing to the threefold depreciation of the flow from Uzbekistan.

[Statistics on labour migration](#) show two different trends. The number of migrant workers coming through the quota system – mostly from China, Uzbekistan, Turkey and India – have been on decline since 2016. Meanwhile, the number of migrant workers receiving work permits or patents – predominantly from Uzbekistan – grew remarkably from 141,000 in 2015 to 531,000 in 2019. [Labour migrants from the EAEU](#), who do not require a work permit in Kazakhstan, come mostly from Russia. Among others, Kazakhstan is an increasingly [attractive destination for students](#), the number of whom increased from a little over 9,000 in 2014 to nearly 40,000 in 2019. Most students originate from Uzbekistan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Given its geographical location, Kazakhstan is experiencing [significant irregular migration](#). By the end of 2019, 76,200 foreigners had administrative penalties, with 9,000 expelled from the country. Of the 90,000 migration violations recorded in 2018, more than 87,000 pertain to CIS nationals. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, each year over 100,000 foreign nationals are held administratively liable and over 10,000 are expelled from the country.

Kazakhstan endorsed the Global Compact for Migration and is a party to various regional migration dialogues. Acknowledging the growing role of labour migration for socio-economic development, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population [gradually overtakes various functions](#) in the area of migration from the Ministry of Interior. In particular, as of 2022, the latter will no longer issue work permits to labour migrants nor decide upon refugee status. In May 2020, Kazakhstan amended the designation of ethnic Kazakhs returning to the homeland from «oralman» (returnee, repatriate) to «andas» (tribesman) in its legislation. The same year, the country [launched the e-visa services](#) issuing electronic visas for business, tourist and medical purposes. In 2021, [Kazakhstan will develop](#) a new Concept of migration policy for 2022-2026.

Migration Authorities and Key Policy Documents

Responsible Body	Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population
Line Ministries	Ministry of Interior Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Agencies	Committee of labour, social protection and migration of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population Committee of migration service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs National Security Committee Border Service of the National Security Committee
Key Policy Documents	2011 Law on Migration 1995 (2021) Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners 2009 (2021) Law of Refugees
Relevant Publications	Advanced Migration Profile 2014-2019 Migration Profile Light 2015 Extended Migration Profile 2010 Analytical Report 'Combating irregular migration and human trafficking in the CIS countries' Background Note 'Asylum seekers from the Eastern Partnership and Central Asian Countries in the EU' Background Note 'Migration and Mobility in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: What to expect in times of COVID-19?' Policy Brief 'The EU Central Asia Strategy and Its Impact on Migration' Analytical Report 'China's «Belt and Road» Initiative and Its Impact on Migration Flows and Policies in Central Asia' Analytical Report 'Addressing the Challenges of Labour Migration within the EAEU'

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

General Information

Population	Immigration	Emigration
6 773 400 (World Bank 2021) 6 636 800 (STAT KG 2021)	199 011 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 8 229 (STAT KG Flow 2021)	774 377 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 8 998 (STAT KG Flow 2021)
Working-age population	Unemployment rate	GDP
4 141 945 (World Bank 2021) 4 113 295 (STAT KG 2021)	4.1 % (World Bank 2021) 5.3 % (STAT KG 2021)	9 249 133 946.3 current prices USD (World Bank 2021) 723 122 200 000 current prices KGS (STAT KG 2021)
Refugees and IDPs	Citizenship	Territory
Refugees 317 (UNHCR 2021) 425 (CIS annual data 2020) Asylum Seekers 681 (UNHCR 2021) IDPs 0 (UNHCR 2021)	By Birth No (GLOBALCIT) By Descent Yes (conditional) (GLOBALCIT) Years of Residency 5 (GLOBALCIT)	199 951 km ² (CIA World Factbook)

Description

The Kyrgyz Republic is predominantly a country of emigration. Over the past decade, however, both out-migration from and in-migration to the country declined considerably. While the net migration remains negative, the population of Kyrgyzstan is growing at 2 % per year due to high fertility rates, placing the country among the fastest growing in Asia, after Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Yemen.

According to the Statistical Committee of Kyrgyzstan, the number of persons who left the country for permanent residence abroad decreased from over 45,000 in 2011 to 5,822 in 2020. In ethnic terms, migration outflows are essentially comprised of Kyrgyz, Russians, Uzbeks and Germans. Russia and Kazakhstan continue to represent the two main countries of destination. Moreover, the two countries are home to the largest Kyrgyz communities abroad along with Germany, Ukraine and Tajikistan.

While permanent migration is less widespread, temporary labour migration flows from Kyrgyzstan remain considerable. Similar to the overall migration flows, labour migrants primarily target Russia (some 80 %) and Kazakhstan (up to 10 %; it attracted [more Kyrgyz labour migrants in 2020](#)). [Other destinations](#) include Turkey, the Republic of Korea, and the United Arab Emirates. According to the [Eurasian Economic Commission](#), the number of Kyrgyz migrant workers in Russia exceeds 300,000 persons since 2015. The only exception was the year 2020 when the flow dropped below 200,000. Moreover, 2015 and 2019 saw peak numbers surpassing 500,000 and 450,000 respectively. Almost 40 % of Kyrgyz [labour migrants in Russia are women](#) employed in the services, catering, textile and domestic sectors with many of them working informally. [Within the EU](#), Czechia and Poland were issuing the most first-time residence permits for remunerated activities to Kyrgyz nationals in 2017-2019. Meanwhile, Italy and Germany host the majority of Kyrgyz holders of residence permits issued for work purposes valid for one year or more.

Overall, labour migration is an integral part of the subsistence of many Kyrgyz families that rely heavily on remittances, which account for nearly [30 % of the country's GDP](#). Experts argue that [around one million Kyrgyz](#) nationals of working age support their families by working abroad. Their decision to migrate arises primarily from [economic motives](#) such as the lack of employment and low wages at home. Out-migration for other reasons is much smaller in scale. For comparison, over the past three years, only 5,000-6,000 Kyrgyz nationals received residence permits for family reunification inside the EU. [In the first half of 2021](#), only 79,000 Kyrgyz nationals entered Russia for purposes other than work, representing 17 % of the overall flow from Kyrgyzstan to Russia. Since 2015, neither the number of Kyrgyz [asylum-seekers nor the number of Kyrgyz refugees](#) exceeded 3,000 persons respectively, with the majority hosted by the US.

Immigration to Kyrgyzstan for permanent residence is insignificant. In 2020, it reached a historical minimum of 960 persons, mostly originating from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Russia. The same year, the number of [labour migrants who came to the Republic under the allocated annual quota](#) amounted to some 10,000 persons, of whom over 60 % came from China and 14 % from Turkey. As a rule, Chinese nationals make up the majority of labour migrants in Kyrgyzstan, working in the industry, construction, transport, energy, mining, and catering, as well as on joint Sino-Kyrgyz ventures. Immigration flows to Kyrgyzstan also include ethnic Kyrgyz whose return is supported through the [state programme 'Kairylman'](#) (returnee). In 2018, [the stock of kairylmans living in Kyrgyzstan](#) was estimated at over 35,000.

As of 1 January 2021, Kyrgyzstan also hosted 199 refugees, of whom 84 originate from Afghanistan. In view of the volatile situation in Afghanistan in summer 2021, Kyrgyzstan announced its [readiness to host over 1,000 Afghan refugees](#).

The volume of irregular migration in Kyrgyzstan is limited with less than [400 irregular migrants](#) deported in 2018. Most irregular migrants are CIS nationals violating entry, exit and stay regulations.

In 2021, Kyrgyzstan [reformed its state structures](#) and shifted most migration-related responsibilities to the newly formed [Ministry of Health and Social Development](#) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. While the former will be responsible for [refugees, ethnic Kyrgyz and victims of trafficking](#), the latter will deal with external migration from Kyrgyzstan and support Kyrgyz migrants abroad. In July 2021, the MFA launched a new website meant to assist Kyrgyz labour migrants.

In [May 2021](#), Kyrgyzstan adopted the new [Migration Policy Concept 2021-2030](#), identifying four priority areas. The first aims to improve conditions for citizens, compatriots, immigrants and stateless persons in Kyrgyzstan in educational, labour, professional and cultural terms. The second area aims to utilise the migration potential of the population, compatriots, immigrants and stateless persons for national development. The third area shall protect the rights of Kyrgyz nationals abroad, along with those of immigrants, compatriots and stateless persons inside the country. Finally, the fourth area will support the creation of a safe migration environment. The Concept will be implemented in two stages, each featuring a five-year implementation plan for 2021-2025 and 2026-2030.

Migration Authorities and Key Policy Documents

Responsible Body	Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration Ministry of Health and Social Development Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Line Ministries	Ministry of Justice Ministry of Interior
Agencies	State Border Service State Committee for National Security
Key Policy Documents	1993 Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals in the Kyrgyz Republic 2000 Law on External Migration 2002 Law on Internal Migration 2002 (2020) Law on Refugees 2005 Law on Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking 2006 (2020) Law on External Labour Migration 2007 (2016) Law on Citizenship 2007 (2015) Law on State Guarantees for Ethnic Kyrgyz Immigrating to the Kyrgyz Republic 2019 «Kairylman» Programme of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic for Providing Assistance to Ethnic Kyrgyz Immigrating to the Kyrgyz Republic 2019 National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040
Relevant Publications	Migration Profile Light 2013 Extended Migration Profile 2011 Policy Brief 'The EU Central Asia Strategy and Its Impact on Migration' Background Note 'Asylum seekers from the Eastern Partnership and Central Asian Countries in the EU' Background Note 'Migration and Mobility in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: What to expect in times of COVID-19?' Analytical Report 'Combating irregular migration and human trafficking in the CIS countries' Analytical Report 'China's «Belt and Road» Initiative and Its Impact on Migration Flows and Policies in Central Asia'

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

General Information

Population	Immigration	Emigration
2 595 809 (World Bank 2021) 3 542 708 (STAT MD 2019)	104 438 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 4 186 (STAT MD Flow 2021)	1 159 443 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 3 271 (STAT MD Flow 2021)
Working-age population	Unemployment rate	GDP
1 728 494 (World Bank 2021) 2 298 686 (STAT MD 2019)	0.8 % (World Bank 2021) 3.2 % (STAT MD 2021)	13 691 869 264.1 current prices USD (World Bank 2021) 242 078 629 000 MDL (STAT MD 2021)
Refugees and IDPs	Citizenship	Territory
Refugees 349 (UNHCR 2021) 435 (World Bank 2020) Asylum Seekers 56 (UNHCR 2021) IDPs 0 (UNHCR 2021)	By Birth Yes (GLOBALCIT) By Descent Yes (conditional) (GLOBALCIT) Years of Residency 6-10 (GLOBALCIT)	33 851 km ² (CIA World Factbook)

Description

Since 1990, the population of the Republic of Moldova has been steadily declining owing both to lower birth rates and, more importantly, to considerable emigration. In just two decades, the country has lost over 1 million people, accounting for a vast Moldovan diaspora. While the 1990s saw foremost an outflow of irregular migrants, the 2000s through enhanced legal channels saw a spike in regular labour migration, which continues until the present day.

According to [official data on border crossings](#), 155.322 persons left Moldova in 2019 as compared to 123.379 in 2014. Most of those leaving are [young people](#) below 40 years of age. In terms of stock figures, almost [800.000 Moldovans](#) resided abroad at the end of 2019. Some 45% of the [total number](#) were in the Russian Federation, 16% in Italy, 6% in the US, 5% in Poland, about 3% each in Portugal, Ukraine, and Germany.

Various studies reveal that socio-economic conditions (Moldova has one of the [lowest salary rates](#) in Europe) represent the main driver for emigration making labour migration an attractive solution. Over [350.000 Moldovans](#) were working or looking for a job abroad in 2018. The choice of the particular destination shows a strong gender dimension: while most male labour migrants go to Germany, Russia, France and the UK, the majority of female migrant workers migrate to Italy, Turkey, Portugal and Greece. Considerable out-migration has made the country dependant on [remittances](#). In 2019, Moldovan nationals remitted 1.88 billion US\$, corresponding to 16% of the country's GDP.

Immigration to Moldova is insignificant with a slight [upward trend](#), amongst others attributed to the simplified access for foreign nationals to higher education institutions. Out of [4.857 foreigners recorded in 2019](#), 41 % arrived for work reasons, 33.5 % to reunify with their families, 13 % for studies and 11 % for other purposes. About half of them came from Ukraine, Turkey and Russia. Foreigners represented [2.6%](#) of the total population of Moldova in 2020, with the majority originating from Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Italy. According to [UN data](#), the country hosted 400 refugees in 2020. Among the [77 asylum applications](#) registered that year, applicants from Turkey and Uzbekistan were most successful in obtaining refugee status.

Diaspora as well as return and reintegration policies are particularly important for Moldova, which has signed 13 readmission agreements - with several EU Member States, Switzerland, Norway, North Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Turkey, Albania, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. The Government is currently updating the National Strategy on Migration and Asylum for the new decade. Meanwhile, the National Development Strategy "Moldova 2030" and the National Strategy "Diaspora

2025” [address](#) a wide range of aspects covered by the Global Compact for Migration. Overall, Moldova’s migration policy focuses on enhancing legal migration, development (e.g. through diasporas) and the return of nationals. The 2014 EU visa liberalization marked an important step in this regard.

Migration Authorities and Key Policy Documents

Responsible Ministry	Ministry of Interior
Line Ministries	Foreign Affairs & European Integration Ministry of Health, Labour & Social Protection State Chancellery
Agencies	Bureau for Migration & Asylum National Employment Agency (ANOFM) Office for Diaspora Relations Security and Intelligence Service
Key Policy Documents	The National Strategy on Migration and Asylum for 2011-2020 The National Strategy ‘Diaspora 2025’ The National Development Strategy ‘Moldova 2030’ The National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for 2018-2023 The Integrated Border Management Strategy for 2018-2023 The Action Plan for 2017-2020 on the (re)integration of Moldovan citizens returning from abroad (GD 724/2017) The Mechanism for coordinating the state policy in the field of diaspora, migration and development 2011 Law on the Integration of Foreigners 2010 Law on the Regime of Foreigners
Relevant Publications	Moldova Extended Migration Profile 2008-2013 Moldova Migration Profile Light 2015 Moldova Extended Migration Profile 2010-2015 Interview with Tatiana Ciomas on the migration situation in Moldova Interview with Valeriu Mosneaga about Moldova’s challenges in the sphere of migration Report ‘An overview of the Mobility Partnership in Georgia and Moldova’ Handbook ‘A self-contained, systematic guide concerning the rights of migrants in Moldova’

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

General Information

Population	Immigration	Emigration
144 746 762 (World Bank 2021) 146 171 015 (STAT RU 2021)	11 636 911 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 594 146 (STAT RU Flow 2020)	10 756 697 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 487 672 (STAT RU Flow 2020)
Working-age population	Unemployment rate	GDP
95 527 233 (World Bank 2021) 82 279 385 (STAT RU 2021)	4.7 % (World Bank 2021) 4.6 % (STAT RU 2021)	1 843 392 293 734.4 current prices USD (World Bank 2021) 135 773 769 020 379 current prices RUB (STAT RU 2021)
Refugees and IDPs	Citizenship	Territory
Refugees 10 901 (UNHCR 2021) 455 (STAT RU 2021) Asylum Seekers 524 (UNHCR 2021) 2 512 (STAT RUS 2021) IDPs 0 (UNHCR 2021)	By Birth No (GLOBALCIT) By Descent Yes (conditional) (GLOBALCIT) Years of Residency 5 (GLOBALCIT)	17 098 242 km ² (CIA World Factbook)

Description

The Russian Federation is both a major destination and sending country of migrants. Overall, the net migration remains positive but no longer compensates for the natural population decline, amounting to nearly [1 million people between October 2020 and September 2021](#) and thereby marking the largest drop since 1999. Combined with the declining number of women in reproductive age and the rapidly ageing population, migration will play a major role in the enduring demographic shifts. According to [Rosstat](#), Russia's population will decline by another 3.6 million until 2036 under the condition of an annual migration surplus of 250.000 persons. Under the negative scenario, the loss will exceed 12 million.

As of 2014, the annual inflow of international migrants accounted for [600.000 persons on average](#). Nationals of Ukraine, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia held the most permanent residence permits at the end of [2019](#), [2020](#), as well as in the [first nine months of 2021](#). Moreover, over 400.000 Ukrainians and 63.000 Tajiks received Russian citizenship in 2020 (293.000 and 70.000 respectively in Jan-Sep 2021). This may relate to the recently amended [citizenship law](#) (2020) that simplified the pathway to naturalisation for nationals of Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, as well as all other nationals who live and work in the country for one year.

Before the coronavirus pandemic, the volume of [temporary migration](#) amounted to 9-11.5 million people per year. This number dropped to 7.1 million by the end of 2020 but the flow is again recovering in [2021](#). Most temporary and especially labour migrants originate from Central Asia, notably from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Both countries have also concluded bilateral agreements with Russia on the organised recruitment of labour migrants, although the overall share of workers mobilised through such schemes remains low. The number of Uzbek and Tajik nationals who indicated 'work' while crossing the border with Russia in the first nine months of 2021 amounted to [three and 1.6 million](#) respectively. Over the same period, [over 1.7 million migrants](#) were holders of valid work permits.

With the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in 2015, labour migrants from the EAEU member states – Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan – are entitled to work in Russia without a work permit and enjoy other benefits, including the retention of pension rights as per the agreement that came into force on 1 January 2021. In the first half of 2021, Russia hosted [738.000](#) labour migrants from the EAEU. Meanwhile, the share of labour migrants from Ukraine and Moldova has been declining in

favour of the EU. Some experts voice concerns that the potential for migration to Russia from many post-Soviet states is close to exhaustion and the country may soon need to explore other potential source countries.

Outmigration from Russia is equally substantial. It saw 14.5 times increase over the past ten years and has particularly accelerated since 2012. In 2018-2019, according to Rosstat, the international outflow exceeded [400,000 persons](#) of whom 73,000 were Russian citizens. In 2020, the outflow approached [500,000](#) including 65,000 Russian nationals. Combining the Rosstat data with those of destination countries, experts estimate that some [4 to 5 million Russian citizens](#) left the country since 2000. According to UN DESA, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Germany, Uzbekistan, Belarus and the US are home to the largest Russian emigrant communities. In 2019 and 2020, the number of Russians holding a valid residence permit in the EU at the year-end exceeded 700,000. Germany, Estonia, Latvia and France issued the vast majority of permits valid for 1 year or more. The volume of residence permits for work or education reasons is marginal, with most permits issued for family reasons or other uncategorized ones.

In 2018, Russia adopted the new [Concept of the State Migration Policy for 2019-2025](#) replacing the previous one from 2012. The accompanying [Action Plan for 2019-2021](#) was released on 22 February 2019. The Concept acknowledged the existing demographic and related socioeconomic problems, and the need to improve the attractiveness of the state for (skilled and high-skilled) migrants and compatriots living abroad. In addition, in 2020, Russia introduced [amendments](#) to the Action Plan placing a stronger emphasis on labour migration. The revised plan envisages the improvement of conditions for permanent residence and citizenship, the modernization of mechanisms for regulating labour migration, ensuring security and law and order in the migration sphere, as well as a comprehensive digitalisation of the migration administration.

In 2020, apart from amending its citizenship law, Russia introduced a [16-day e-visa as of 2021](#) that shall benefit nationals of [53 countries](#), including the EU Member States and Turkey. In 2021, President Putin signed [the law](#) on the creation of a unified federal sanitary and epidemiological database, which will contain information on the results of medical examinations of foreigners and stateless persons. The same year, Russia became a full member of the IOM. Finally, the country is working on a [new migration law](#) that shall come into force in 2024.

Migration Authorities and Key Policy Documents

Responsible Ministry	Ministry of Interior
Line Ministries	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Labour and Social Protection Ministry of Justice
Agencies	The Main Directorate for Migration of the Ministry of Interior Federal Labour and Employment Service of the Ministry for Labour and Social Protection Federal Agency for Nationalities' Affairs Border Service of the Federal Security Service The Government Commission on Migration Policy
Key Policy Documents	Concept of the State Migration Policy for 2019-2025 2002 (2020) Federal Law on Citizenship 1997 (2021) Federal Law on Refugees 1995 (2020) Federal Law on Forced Migrants 2002 (2021) Federal Law on the Legal Status of Foreign citizens 1996 (2021) Law on the Procedure of Exit and Entry 2006 (2021) Federal Law On Migration Registration of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons in the Russian Federation 2004 (2021) Law on the right of citizens of the Russian Federation to freedom of movement, choice of place of stay and residence within the Russian Federation 1999 (2013) Law on the State Policy of the Russian Federation in respect of compatriots residing abroad 2012 (2018) Strategy of the State National Policy of the Russian Federation until 2025 The Demographic Policy Concept of the Russian Federation until 2025 Russia's National Security Strategy

Relevant Publications

[Migration Profile Light 2013](#)

[Analytical Report 'Addressing the Challenges of Labour Migration within the EAEU'](#)

[Policy Brief 'Russia's Migration Policies after the dissolution of the Federal Migration Service'](#)

[Policy Brief 'Russian nationals looking for refuge in the European Union'](#)

[Analytical Report 'Combating irregular migration and human trafficking in the CIS countries'](#)

[Background Note 'Migration and Mobility in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: What to expect in times of COVID-19?'](#)

[Policy Brief 'Labour migration from East to West: The example of foreign workers in Austria'](#)

[Interview with Dmitry Poletaev 'Migration processes in the EAEU need more attention'](#)

[Policy Brief 'Changing Demographics in the Countries of the Prague Process: Implications for Migration'](#)

REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

General Information

Population	Immigration	Emigration
9 750 064 (World Bank 2021) 9 886 800 (STAT TJ 2021)	276 031 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 33 503 (STAT TJ Flow 2021)	586 851 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 40 826 (STAT TJ Flow 2021)
Working-age population	Unemployment rate	GDP
5 875 788 (World Bank 2021) 5 703 000 (STAT TJ 2021)	6.9 % (World Bank 2021) 2.1 % (STAT TJ 2021)	8 937 805 347.1 current prices USD (World Bank 2021) 101 076 300 000 current prices TJS (STAT TJ 2021)
Refugees and IDPs	Citizenship	Territory
Refugees 10 724 (UNHCR 2021) Asylum Seekers 3 046 (UNHCR 2021) IDPs 0 (UNHCR 2021)	By Birth No (GLOBALCIT) By Descent Yes (conditional) (GLOBALCIT) Years of Residency 5 (GLOBALCIT)	144 100 km ² (CIA World Factbook)

Description

For the past 30 years, Tajikistan's population has been prone to migration. The volume of international migration flows in both directions has increased in recent years. In 2019, [54,000 persons left the country, while 40,000](#) persons entered it. Whereas the 1990s saw major ethnic emigration and considerable forced migration resulting from civil war, the past decade has mainly been characterised by economic migration.

The poverty rate remains high with [over 26 %](#) of the population living below the national poverty line. The national labour market is [weak](#) and cannot provide employment for everyone. [Structural challenges](#) in the Tajik economy also weigh on the country's development prospects. In 2020, the unemployment rate increased to 7.5 % with some 52,000 unemployed registered by governmental employment services alone. Meanwhile, the national population continues to grow at a [2.3 % rate](#) owing to high fertility, notwithstanding the decade-long negative net migration. Over [half of the population](#) is under 25 years of age. Around [150,000 young people](#) enter the labour market every year but [20.5 %](#) of them remain without a job.

Tajikistan belongs to the most remittance-dependant countries in the world. In 2013, the [share of remittances](#) to the national GDP was 49%. In 2018, this indicator stood at [31%](#) placing Tajikistan third worldwide. About [70% of Tajik families](#) are believed to live off such transfers, generated by the almost [one million Tajik citizens](#) estimated to work abroad. Most Tajik labour migrants are [young men](#) working in construction, trade, housing and cleaning services, agriculture, and maintenance. Over 90% of them work in the Russian Federation on a seasonal and temporary basis. Their number amounted to more than [530,000 in 2019](#), according to Tajik sources. Meanwhile, [Russian sources](#) recorded twice as many that year. For comparison, only [9,000](#) Tajik nationals worked in Kazakhstan in 2019.

Permanent migration from Tajikistan to Russia has also been on the rise. Over 63,000 Tajiks obtained Russian citizenship and over 93,000 held permanent residence permits [in 2020](#). These figures amounted to 44,000 and 89,000 respectively [in the first half of 2021](#). Educational migration has also been growing: in 2000/01, less than 1,000 [Tajiks studied in Russia](#) but their number exceeded 18,000 in 2019/20. [A recent study](#) confirms that education and work represent the two main migration motives among youth from Tajikistan in particular and Central Asia as a whole. Even though more than 70% of the young migrant workers intend to return home, most of them also want to «gain a foothold» in a destination country.

Over the past decade, both the number of [first time and overall residence permits](#) issued to Tajik nationals inside the EU increased. The former rose from 251 permits in 2010 to 1,585 in 2019. The latter has nearly tripled from 1,432 in 2011 to 4,714 in 2019. In 2019, most residence permits in the EU were issued by Germany for refugee status (including subsidiary protection), followed by education and family reunification. Meanwhile, Poland issued most permits to Tajiks for remunerated activities. The number of [Tajik refugees](#) has doubled over the past five years but totals less than 2,500 worldwide. Germany, the US and Austria are the prime destinations for refugees and asylum-seekers from Tajikistan.

According to UN DESA, Tajikistan hosts over 276,000 immigrants, most of whom originate from Russia, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. These four countries also top the statistics in terms of short-term travellers entering Tajikistan. Overall, their number decreased from some [48,000 in 2018](#) to [17,000 in 2020, with most coming from Uzbekistan for private reasons](#). Tajikistan issued nearly 7,000 work permits to foreign nationals in 2018 and over 3,000 in 2020. Two thirds of them come from China. Tajikistan further continues to host over [6,000 stateless persons](#) but aims to end statelessness on its territory. Since 2014, [some 40,000 people](#) had their nationality confirmed. Finally, there are no accurate estimates of irregular migration in Tajikistan. [Reportedly](#), most irregular migrants are stateless persons and over-stayers entering visa-free from Uzbekistan.

In-migration to Tajikistan also features a considerable number of Tajik migrant workers returning home. Over [275,000 Tajik nationals](#) in Russia committed administrative violations, resulting in a re-entry ban. In response, Tajikistan developed an employment programme tailored to labour migrants prohibited from entering Russia and other countries. More generally, Tajikistan is actively supporting the reintegration of Tajik labour migrants.

Sharing a 1,300 km border with Afghanistan, Tajikistan has received a growing number of Afghan refugees and asylum seekers. Since 2015, their number tripled to [6,000 in 2020](#). Following the Taliban’s return to power in 2021, Tajikistan expressed its readiness to accommodate up to [100,000 Afghan refugees](#). With some 25% of the 37 million Afghan population being [ethnic Tajiks](#) – arguably [more than the ethnic Tajik](#) population of Tajikistan – many more might aim for Tajikistan given the volatile situation in Afghanistan. Moreover, the Tajik-Afghan border [remains permeable in some areas](#) with border outposts facing occasional attacks by Afghan smugglers. Already in 2015, Tajikistan adopted [an Action Plan](#) in the event of a mass arrival of asylum seekers, identifying possible locations of field camps along the Afghan border.

Tajikistan endorsed the Global Compact for Migration and is a party to various regional migration dialogues. In recent years, the country [revised a number of laws in the area of migration](#). In 2018, Tajikistan adopted the Law «On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons in the Republic of Tajikistan», allowing foreign citizens to stay in Tajikistan without registration for up to 10 working days. The same year, Tajikistan ratified a readmission agreement with Kazakhstan, two agreements with Uzbekistan and Armenia on mutual trips of their citizens, and another agreement with Kazakhstan concerning the stay of own nationals on each other’s territory. Meanwhile, the Amnesty Law of 2019 allows irregular migrants from the former USSR and stateless persons who entered the Republic before 31 December 2016 to legalize their status and obtain a residence permit. Finally, in 2020, two laws liberalised the Code of Administrative Offences and the Procedural Code, abolishing the requirement to extradite foreigners who violated national residence rules.

Migration Authorities and Key Policy Documents

Responsible Body	Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Population
Line Ministries	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Internal Affairs Ministry of Justice
Agencies	Migration Service
Key Policy Documents	1999 (2018) Law on Migration 2002 (2014) Law on Refugees 2014 (2019) Law on Combatting Human Trafficking 2015 Citizenship Law 2018 Law on the legal status of foreign citizens and stateless persons 2019 Amnesty Law National Development Strategy until 2030

Relevant Publications

[Migration Profile Light 2013](#)

[Extended Migration Profile 2010](#)

[Analytical Report 'Combating irregular migration and human trafficking in the CIS countries'](#)

[Background Note 'Asylum seekers from the Eastern Partnership and Central Asian Countries in the EU'](#)

[Background Note 'Asylum seekers from the Eastern Partnership and Central Asian Countries in the EU'](#)

[Background Note 'Migration and Mobility in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: What to expect in times of COVID-19?'](#)

[Policy Brief 'The EU Central Asia Strategy and Its Impact on Migration'](#)

[Analytical Report 'China's «Belt and Road» Initiative and Its Impact on Migration Flows and Policies in Central Asia'](#)

TURKMENISTAN

General Information

Population	Immigration	Emigration
6 341 855 (World Bank 2021) 6 200 000 (SMS TM 2021)	194 920 (UN DESA Stock 2020)	242 554 (UN DESA Stock 2020)
Working-age population	Unemployment rate	GDP
4 050 483 (World Bank 2021)	4 % (World Bank 2021)	50 007 428 571.4 current prices USD (World Bank 2021) 60 934 000 000 current prices USD (IMF 2020)
Refugees and IDPs	Citizenship	Territory
Refugees 15 (UNHCR 2021) Asylum Seekers 0 (UNHCR 2021) IDPs 0 (UNHCR 2021)	By Birth No (GLOBALCIT) By Descent Yes (conditional) (GLOBALCIT) Years of Residency 5 (GLOBALCIT)	488 100 km ² (CIA World Factbook)

Description

Turkmenistan features a growing and young population that surpassed 6 million in 2020. Over 60 % of the population is of working age with the median age projected to reach [35.2 years by 2040](#). [Unofficial reports](#) allude to a total population of only 2.7-2.9 million, resulting from substantial emigration and a declining fertility rate.

Turkmenistan is predominantly a country of emigration. In 2019, [media announced](#) that 1.9 million Turkmen had left the country in 2008-2018, mainly because of the deteriorating economic situation and for political reasons. The same year, more than [100,000 people](#) left the country, with the vast majority migrating to Turkey for employment. In 2019, over [133,000 Turkmen](#) resided in Turkey, with some [80,000](#) of them having first-time residence or work permits. By mid-2021, their overall number decreased to [125,000](#). However, given the visa-free regime between the two countries, the real number of Turkmen in Turkey is [assumed to be much larger](#). The overall volume of labour migration from Turkmenistan was estimated at [200,000-300,000 people in 2016](#).

Apart from Turkey, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and the Gulf countries represent further popular destinations for Turkmen nationals. In 2019, more than [14,000 people](#) moved to Russia – a record number not seen since 1997. In addition, [over 34,000](#) Turkmen students enrolled to higher education institutions in Russia in the 2019/2020 academic year, marking a tenfold increase over a decade. While media reports suggest that Turkmenistan is restricting the cross-border mobility of its nationals by imposing [travel restrictions on certain categories of the population](#), the [Law on Migration](#) stipulates that Turkmen can freely leave the country to study and work abroad. This makes student migration a viable option to emigrate in a regular manner. While most migratory movements remain temporary (some [12,000](#) Turkmen came to Russia and left again in 2020), a tendency towards permanent emigration can also be observed. For instance, the number of Turkmen acquiring Russian citizenship increased from [729 persons](#) in 2017 to [2,451 in 2020](#).

In the past, most Turkmen settled in Russia, Ukraine, Germany and Belarus. A [Turkmen diaspora](#) is present in nearly all post-Soviet countries, as well as in Iraq (about 3 million people), Syria (about 3 million), Afghanistan (about 2 million), and Iran (from 1.5 to 3 million). [Experts estimate](#) that some 10 million ethnic Turkmen live in countries beyond the post-Soviet space. Within the EU, Germany is by far the main destination for Turkmen citizens who held [over 1,000 valid residence permits at the year-end](#) in the last decade. Meanwhile, the number of irregular Turkmen migrants in the EU is [insignificant](#): for the past five years, around 100 illegal migrants were registered annually, about 60 ordered to leave and even fewer refused to enter the EU.

[The quest for international protection](#) primarily targets the US that hosts some 200 Turkmen refugees since 2017, followed by Germany hosting around 100 refugees. Turkey registered over 1,300 Turkmen asylum applications in 2017-2018, but has not recognised them as refugees.

According to the UN Population Division, Turkmenistan hosts almost 195,000 foreign nationals, most of whom originate from Russia, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, with the immigrant stock steadily decreasing. The country also hosts almost [4,000 stateless persons and some 20 refugees](#) from Afghanistan and Azerbaijan. Importantly, Turkmenistan undertakes steps to end statelessness on its territory. In 2020, it granted citizenship to [2,580 people](#). Over the past 15 years, [26,000 refugees and stateless persons](#) received Turkmen citizenship.

Turkmenistan is a participating state of the Prague, Budapest and Almaty Processes. It has endorsed the Global Compact for Migration, committing to establish regular, orderly and safe migration pathways as part of its 2017 Migration Concept, national plans and strategies, the Law on Migration and other legal acts. In recent years, the country amended some key national legislation including the Law on Refugees, the Law on Migration and the Law on Combatting Human Trafficking. In January 2019, the Government adopted the National Action Plan for the Elimination of Statelessness 2018-2024. In December 2019, Turkmenistan adopted a new National Action Plan for 2020-2022 on Combatting Human Trafficking and launched the National Referral Mechanism 2019-2021 focusing on identification of and assistance to trafficked persons.

Migration Authorities and Key Policy Documents

Responsible Body	State Migration Service
Line Ministries	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population Ministry of Education Ministry of Culture Ministry of Interior
Agencies	State Customs Service State Statistical Service State Frontier Service General Prosecutors' Office
Key Policy Documents	2021 (2023) Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners in Turkmenistan 2017 (2021) Law on Refugees 2013 Law on Citizenship 2012 (2021) Migration Law 2009 (2021) Law on Migration Service 2016 (2018) Law on the Employment of the Population 2016 (2018) Law on Combatting Human Trafficking
Relevant Publications	Migration Profile Light 2014 Analytical Report 'Combating irregular migration and human trafficking in the CIS countries' Background Note 'Asylum seekers from the Eastern Partnership and Central Asian Countries in the EU' Background Note 'Migration and Mobility in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: What to expect in times of COVID-19?' Policy Brief 'The EU Central Asia Strategy and Its Impact on Migration' Analytical Report 'China's «Belt and Road» Initiative and Its Impact on Migration Flows and Policies in Central Asia'

UKRAINE

General Information

Population	Immigration	Emigration
43 848 986 (World Bank 2021) 41 588 354 (UKRSTAT 2021)	4 997 387 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 41 724 (UKRSTAT Flow 2021)	6 139 144 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 22 587 (UKRSTAT Flow 2021)
Working-age population	Unemployment rate	GDP
29 544 595 (World Bank 2021) 27 927 758 (UKRSTAT 2021)	9.8 % (World Bank 2021) 9.9 % (State Employment Service 2021)	199 765 859 570.9 current prices USD (World Bank 2021) 1 008 562 current prices UAH (UKRSTAT IQ 2021)
Refugees and IDPs	Citizenship	Territory
Refugees 2 382 (UNHCR 2021) 1 276 (DMSU mid-2020) Asylum Seekers 2719 (UNHCR 2021) 859 (DMSU mid-2020) IDPs 854 000 (UNHCR 2021) 1 473 650 (MSP mid-2021)	By Birth No (GLOBALCIT) By Descent Yes (GLOBALCIT) Years of Residency 5 (GLOBALCIT)	603 550 km ² (CIA World Factbook)

Description

In migration terms, Ukraine is a country of origin, transit and destination. Various factors have influenced the national migration situation: the population decline by ten million people since 1993, socio-economic development, labour market situation, visa liberalization with the EU, the annexation of Crimea and the conflict in Eastern Ukraine. While the net migration rate has been positive since 2005, the population continues to decline, mostly due to natural decrease, and ages rapidly.

According to the [State Statistics Service of Ukraine](#), the outflow in 2020 amounted to 19,121 and the inflow to 26,361 persons. Most flows are regional, between Ukraine and neighbouring CIS countries to the East as well as EU Member States to the West. [CIS countries](#) (Moldova, Belarus and Russia), along with Turkey and India, constitute the top countries of origin of immigrants. Meanwhile, EU member states (i.e. Italy, Poland, Germany and the Czech Republic) along with Russia constitute the main countries of destination.

According to the [World Migration Report 2020](#), Ukraine is one of the top countries of origin of international migrants following India, Mexico, China, Russia, Syria, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Official sources estimate that over [3 million](#) Ukrainians work abroad on a permanent basis and [7 to 9 million](#) temporarily. Almost half ([45%](#)) of all emigrants leave for economic reasons. Ukrainian labour migrants have become the backbone of the Ukrainian economy contributing to some 8 % of the country's GDP through remittances. While there is no accurate data on the exact number of Ukrainians leaving the country, the number of Ukrainians residing in the EU is constantly growing. In 2019, [over 750,000](#) Ukrainian nationals received first-time residence permits in the EU, thereby constituting a record number. 87% of them were issued for remunerated activities with the lion's share issued by Poland for a period of three to eleven months. Migration flows to Russia, on the other hand, have been steadily declining from close to [1.8 million](#) in 2017 to [1.6 million](#) in 2019 and [790,000 in 2020](#). Meanwhile, the number of Ukrainian nationals who obtained Russian citizenship reached a maximum of [409,549 in 2020](#). The amendments to Russia's citizenship law passed in 2020 may in part explain this trend. Since 2014, Russia has also been hosting a considerable number of [Ukrainian refugees](#) but the number declined sharply from over 300,000 in 2015 to some 18,000 in 2020.

In 2020, Ukraine hosted over [290,000 immigrants](#). However, the annual number of new permanent residence permits reached a minimum of approximately [12,000](#) for the first time in the past decade. In 2020, some [150,000](#) foreigners stayed temporarily in the

country. These are mostly university students and temporary workers. Meanwhile, the number of foreigners and stateless persons officially working in Ukraine is increasing: from [12,400 in 2017 to over 23,400 in 2020](#). Labour migrants are mostly executives and managers with every third heading an enterprise.

Increased immigration, in particular from [Azerbaijan, India, Turkey, Morocco and Nigeria](#), has done little to compensate the significant demographic decline, and Ukraine still lacks a systematic integration policy. The country is equally home to the region's largest number of IDPs, amounting to over [734,000 persons](#) according to UNHCR and over [1.4 million](#) according to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine. To present, their situation remains an emergency as they continue facing [severe challenges](#), ranging from their socio-economic integration to properly addressing their political, legal or psychological needs.

A country of transit, Ukraine is bordering the EU and Schengen area. In recent years, the number of transit migrants crossing the country irregularly has been on the [rise](#). At present, Ukraine has concluded readmission agreements with [17 countries](#).

Ukraine's demographic decline and continued outflow of labour force create labour shortages and hinder economic growth. In response, the country has been constantly adjusting and improving its migration policies. Enhancing and facilitating the return and reintegration of Ukrainians is one important element of these efforts, as stipulated in the [Strategy of the state migration policy until 2025, adopted in 2017](#). The Strategy further identifies [tasks aimed at promoting legal immigration](#) to Ukraine through developing and setting up a quota system for employment, which shall respond flexibly to labour market needs.

Within the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development of GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova), Ukraine aims to combat irregular migration through proactive information exchange and joint efforts to identify human smugglers and traffickers. Ukraine contributed actively to the elaboration of the Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees but signed neither of them because they did not tackle the issue of IDPs critical to Ukraine.

Migration Authorities and Key Policy Documents

Responsible Ministry	Ministry of Interior
Line Ministries	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Social Policy Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories
Agencies	State Migration Service State Border Guard Service Security Service
Key Policy Documents	Strategy of the State Migration Policy until 2025 2021 - Legal database of IBM-related legislation 2016 - Law on Amendments to certain legislative acts of Ukraine concerning documents proving citizenship of Ukraine, identity certificate or special status, aimed at liberalization of the visa regime for Ukraine by the EU 2015 - Law on ensuring of rights and freedoms of internally displaced persons 2015 Law on external labour migration 2015-2020 Development strategy of the State Border Guard Service 2013 - On the unified state demographic register and documents confirming the citizenship of Ukraine, identity or special status 2012 - Law on the legal status of foreigners and stateless persons 2012 - Law on refugees and persons in need of subsidiary protection and asylum 2011 - Decree of the President of Ukraine on the Concept of State Migration Policy 2010 - Law on border control 2001- Law on citizenship of Ukraine 2001 - Law on Immigration

Relevant Publications

[Analytical Report 'Internal Displacement in Ukraine: Mapping the Flows and Challenges'](#)
[Analytical Report 'Ukrainian Labour Migration to the EU'](#)
[Analytical Report 'Combating irregular migration and human trafficking in the CIS countries'](#)
[Policy Brief 'Countering Human Trafficking: Identifying, Returning and Assisting Victims from Ukraine'](#)
[Policy Brief 'Ukraine: First visa-free year since introducing the visa-free regime'](#)
[Ukraine Extended Migration Profile 2011](#)
[Ukraine Migration Profile 2013](#)
[Interview with Katerina Ivaschenko on 'Security issues form and shape migration in Ukraine'](#)
[Interview with Tetiana Nikitina from the State Migration Service on Ukraine's involvement in the Prague Process](#)
[Background Note 'Migration and Mobility in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: What to expect in times of COVID-19?'](#)

REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

General Information

Population	Immigration	Emigration
34 915 100 (World Bank 2021) 35 079 200 (STAT UZ 2021)	1 162 007 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 1 875 (STAT UZ Flow 2021)	2 027 823 (UN DESA Stock 2020) 20 140 (STAT UZ Flow 2021)
Working-age population	Unemployment rate	GDP
22 676 383 (World Bank 2021) 22 684 542 (STAT UZ 2021)	5.3 % (World Bank 2021) 10.5 % (STAT UZ 2020)	69 600 614 987.4 current prices USD (World Bank 2021) 580 203 200 000 000 current prices UZS (STAT UZ 2020)
Refugees and IDPs	Citizenship	Territory
Refugees 13 032 (UNHCR 2021) Asylum Seekers 0 (UNHCR 2021) IDPs 0 (UNHCR 2021)	By Birth No (GLOBALCIT) By Descent Yes (conditional) (GLOBALCIT) Years of Residency 5 (GLOBALCIT)	447 400 km ² (CIA World Factbook)

Description

The Republic of Uzbekistan is a major migrant-sending country. Since the 2000s, external labour migration and sizeable internal migration have replaced outmigration for permanent residence – a defining feature of the 1990s. At present, the volume of permanent migration in both directions is insignificant. In 2020, only [1,105](#) persons immigrated while [13,648](#) persons emigrated from the country ([1,300 and 19,700](#) in the first 9 months of 2021 respectively).

With a fast-growing population of over [35 million in 2021](#) (58% of whom are of working age), Uzbekistan is the most populous in Central Asia. Since 2010, the population increased by more than 6 million, with a further growth of [8 million expected by 2035](#). Each year, some 600,000-700,000 people enter the domestic labour market, which is unable to absorb such considerable labour force. The unemployment rate increased from 9% in 2019 to [10.5% in 2020](#). It is even higher for the age group 16-30 ([17.1%](#)) and among women ([14.7%](#)). While recent reforms allowed decreasing the national poverty to [11%](#) in 2019 ([11.5% in 2020](#)), labour migration remains a necessity as manifested by its massive scale and the considerable remittances resulting from it, amounting to [4 billion U\\$ per year](#) or 7% of GDP (58 billion U\$).

In 2019, the Agency for External Migration of Uzbekistan estimated the number of migrant workers at [2.6 - 3 million](#) (about [1.7 million in 2020](#)). Some [1.6 million](#) of them worked in Russia and another [531,000](#) in Kazakhstan. Due to COVID-19, the latter number has declined to approximately [200,000 persons](#). Given the considerable volume of informal employment, the real figure is hard to assess. Russia remains the prime destination for Uzbek migrant workers. In the first nine months of 2021, their number exceeded [3.3 million](#) – a three-year record - according to Russian official sources. Over 3 million came for employment reasons, with [84,500](#) channelled through the bilateral labour agreement. While most remain in Russia only temporarily, a growing number has applied for Russian citizenship. The [80,000](#) applications registered in the first nine months of 2021 have set a new record.

Attempting to diversify the geography of labour migration, Uzbekistan concluded labour agreements with South [Korea \(2006\)](#) and [Japan \(2019\)](#), while also negotiating with [Poland, UAE and Saudi Arabia](#). Compared to Russia and Kazakhstan, the actual number of Uzbek labour migrants in these countries remains marginal. In 2019, South Korea set a quota of [3,400 Uzbek nationals per year](#), with many more coming through other channels. In 2019, the number of Uzbek residency holders in South Korea amounted to [26,000](#) (8,500 for visiting and employment; nearly 3,400 for unskilled employment). In 2020, [some 62,000](#) Uzbeks worked in South Korea,

many of whom presumably arrived before the pandemic, as their flow declined more than [three-fold in 2020](#) and has not recovered fully in [2021](#). In recent years, Turkey has also become a popular destination for Uzbek labour migrants, recording some [45.000](#) Uzbek residents in 2019, [30.500 – in 2020](#), and [over 66.000](#) in the beginning of 2021. According to estimates of the Uzbek Ministry of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction, some [43.000](#) Uzbek labour migrants resided in Tukey in 2020.

Within the EU, the number of Uzbek residence permit holders stood [at around 23.000](#) at the end of 2020, as in the previous three years. Some 26% were issued for remunerated activities, with the majority recorded in Poland and Czechia. Germany and Sweden issued 8.000 permits - mostly on family grounds. Meanwhile, Latvia issued most permits for studying. The number of Uzbek refugees in the EU did not exceed 1.000 in the past decade, albeit a slight upward trend. In 2021, there were some [3.000](#) Uzbek refugees and [5.200](#) asylum seekers worldwide, most of whom were hosted by the US and Sweden. The number of irregular Uzbek nationals in the EU is relatively insignificant, estimated at [900](#) in 2020, with some [1.500](#) ordered to leave and [215](#) refused entry.

In terms of immigration, Uzbekistan is home to over 1.1 million foreign nationals, most of whom originate from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Azerbaijan. However, the immigrant stock is steadily declining. The coronavirus pandemic considerably affected immigration to Uzbekistan, with some [2 million border](#) crossings recorded in 2020 as compared to [5.3 million](#) in the first half of 2019. Overall, 95% of foreigners come to Uzbekistan from the CIS countries. In 2020, [344.000](#) foreigners received a temporary residence permit, and some 3.000 permanent residence. The same year, 8.141 foreign nationals – mostly from Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine - received a work permit. In-migration to Uzbekistan also includes returning Uzbek migrants. In 2020, about 498.000 labour migrants returned to Uzbekistan, finding themselves with no fixed income. In response, the country’s labour authorities mobilised a set of short and mid-term measures, including the forthcoming National Employment Strategy 2030, which should consolidate the various efforts undertaken in response to the coronavirus impact.

In December 2021, the country still hosted almost [60.000](#) stateless persons. However, the country is undertaking significant steps to prevent and reduce statelessness. A [new provision](#) in the Citizenship law passed in April 2020 allows most stateless persons to obtain Uzbek citizenship. In recent years, Uzbekistan also conferred nationality to some 10.000 stateless people by amending its [birth registration practices](#). It introduced universal birth registration, also for children born to undocumented parents, and launched a nationwide campaign to identify and register all cases of unregistered births.

Over the past three years, Uzbekistan hosted only 13 refugees - all from Afghanistan - under the UNHCR mandate. The country has ratified neither the 1951 Refugee Convention nor the related New York Protocol of 1967. Consequently, there are no legal and administrative norms governing the status of refugees. There are currently [13,658 Afghan citizens](#) in Uzbekistan, with the vast majority – 13,032 – residing temporarily in the country. Given the Taliban’s return to power in 2021 and following [pressure](#) from international rights groups, the Uzbek government [committed](#) not to deport Afghans whose visas are expiring.

Uzbekistan endorsed the Global Compact for Migration and is a party to various regional migration dialogues. In July 2019, the [Decree](#) on “Additional measures to further improve the system of combating trafficking in persons and forced labour” transformed the Interdepartmental Commission of the Republic for Combating Human Trafficking into a National Commission under the guidance of the President of the Senate. In August 2020, the country’s [2008 law on human trafficking](#) was amended introducing new concepts, preventive measures, and a procedure to identify victims of human trafficking, including minors. Since 2018, the country has issued over a [dozen decrees and resolutions](#) to protect the rights and interests of Uzbek citizens and streamline the national system of labour migration. In particular, in October 2018 the country adopted the Law on Private Employment Agencies, which terminated the state monopoly on employment of citizens abroad. Moreover, the country has pledged to open representations of the Agency for External Labour Migration in key destination cities in Russia, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Turkey and UAE. In December 2020, Uzbekistan became [an observer to the Eurasian Economic Union](#).

Migration Authorities and Key Policy Documents

Responsible Body	Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations
Line Ministries	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Internal Affairs Ministry of Justice
Agencies	Agency for External Labour Migration under the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations The National Commission for Combatting Trafficking in Persons and Forced labour The Republican tripartite Commission on social and labour issues State Customs Committee State Statistics Committee

Key Policy Documents	1992 (2020) Law on Citizenship 2008 (2020) Anti-trafficking Law 2020 Law on Employment of Population 2018 Law on Private Employment Agencies 2021 Law on Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and stateless persons 1996 (2019) Regulation on the Procedure of Entry, Exit, Stay and Transit of Foreign Citizens and stateless persons 2017 Regulations on procedure for providing political asylum in the Republic of Uzbekistan The Strategy of Action on five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan In 2017 - 2021
Relevant Publications	Migration Profile Light 2015 Background Note 'Monumental Shifts in Uzbek Labour Migration Policy' Policy Brief 'Evaluating the Future of Uzbek Labour Migration' Policy Brief 'Impact of the Situation in Afghanistan on the Central Asian Countries: Implications for Migration' Analytical Report 'Combating irregular migration and human trafficking in the CIS countries' Background Note 'Asylum seekers from the Eastern Partnership and Central Asian Countries in the EU'

