

Botagoz Rakisheva

**ILLEGAL**  
**MIGRATION**  
**OF KAZAKHSTANIS**  
**TO SOUTH KOREA**

Nur-Sultan

2020

Botagoz Rakisheva

**ILLEGAL  
MIGRATION  
OF KAZAKHSTANIS  
TO SOUTH KOREA**

Nur-Sultan, 2020

---

UDC 325.1

LBC 67.7

R 20

R20. Botagoz Rakisheva. Illegal migration of Kazakhstanis to South Korea. – Kazakhstan Council on International Relations (KCIR) – Nur-Sultan, 2020.- p. 60

ISBN 978-601-80774-5-6

The book includes the results of a study of illegal migration from Kazakhstan to South Korea. Based on official statistics, the results of sociological research, interviews with illegal migrant workers, marriage migrants and observations, the author reveals the peculiarities of the formation of labor youth migration, adaptation and integration of migrants in South Korean society.

The presence of 10 thousand Kazakhstanis - undocumented migrant workers illegally working in South Korea, requires attention and government regulation.

Recommended for the experts in the field of migration, international relations, diasporology.

ISBN 978--601-80774-4-9

UDC 325.1

LBC 67.7

© Botagoz Rakisheva, 2020

©Kazakhstan Council on International Relations (KCIR), 2020

# CONTENT

<b>GLOSSARY</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 FOREIGNERS IN SOUTH KOREA: HISTORY OF MIGRATION, TYPES AND FEATURES</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<i>Employment Policy in South Korea for foreign workers</i> .....	11
<i>Historical overview of migration to and from Korea</i> .....	11
<i>Marriage migration</i> .....	13
<i>Foreigners in South Korea</i> .....	15
<b>CHAPTER 2_YOUTH IN CENTRAL ASIA: MIGRATION POTENTIAL AND MOOD</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<i>Migration mood of Central Asian youth</i> .....	16
<i>Motives and reasons for migration</i> .....	18
<b>CHAPTER 3_YOUTH OF KAZAKHSTAN: MIGRATION TENETS</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<i>Share of youth in the total population</i> .....	20
<i>Situation of Kazakh youth in the labor market</i> .....	21
<b>CHAPTER 4. UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANT WORKERS. STATISTICS. CHARACTERISTIC. WORKING CONDITIONS</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<i>Statistics, socio-demographic characteristics, areas of activity</i> .....	25
<i>Refugees: statistics, status, situation</i> .....	32
<i>Settlements where migrants live</i> .....	34
<i>Methods of Entry to South Korea</i> .....	38
<i>Social networks</i> .....	39
<i>Islam in South Korea</i> .....	41
<i>Money transfers</i> .....	44
<i>Green corridor (2018-2020)</i> .....	45
<i>Criminal situation</i> .....	46
<i>Official position of government bodies and expert assessment of the situation</i> .....	48
<i>Coronavirus</i> .....	50
<i>Push/Pull factors of the migration process</i> .....	51
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>55</b>
<b>SOURCES USED</b> .....	<b>57</b>
<b>INFORMATION ABOUT THE KAZAKHSTAN COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (KCIR)</b> .....	<b>59</b>
<b>INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHOR</b> .....	<b>60</b>



---

# GLOSSARY

**Refugee (mandate)**

A person who meets the criteria of the Statute of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and qualifies for the protection of the UN. Such protection is provided by the High Commissioner, regardless of whether or not he/she is in a state that is party to 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention or 1967 Protocol, and whether or not he/she has been recognized by the host state as a refugee under either of these instruments.

**Refugee (recognized)**

A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the state of his nationality and is unable to avail himself of the protection of that state or is unwilling to" (1951 Geneva Refugee Convention, Art.1A (2), as amended by 1967 Protocol).

**Visa**

An endorsement by a consular officer (in passport or ID) that the employee, at the time of issuance, considers the holder of the passport or ID to fall within a category of non-nationals who can enter the state in accordance with its legislation. The visa establishes the criteria of admission into the state. International practice is moving towards issuance of machine-readable visas which comply with ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) standards, as well as printed on labels with security features.

**Return migration**

Movement of a person returning to his country of origin or place of permanent residence, usually after at least one year's stay in another state. Such return can be voluntary or involuntary. Return migration can also be made through voluntary repatriation.

**Country of origin**

The State of which the person concerned is a national (Art.6 (a), International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990).

**Money transfer**

Money earned or received by non-citizens in the host country and transferred to their country of origin.

**Deportation**

The act of a State in the exercise of its sovereignty in removing an alien from its territory to a certain place after refusal of admission or termination of permission to remain.

**Diaspora**

Refers to any people or ethnic population that leaves their traditional ethnic homelands, being dispersed throughout other parts of the world.

<b>Asylum seeker</b>	Persons seeking to be admitted into a country as refugees and awaiting decision on their application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In case of a negative decision, they must leave the country and may be expelled, as may any alien in an irregular situation, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other related grounds.
<b>Undocumented migrant workers/migrant workers staying in violation of the law</b>	Migrant workers or members of their families who are not authorized to enter, to stay or to engage in employment in a State.
<b>Irregular / illegal migration</b>	Movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries. There is no clear or universally accepted definition of irregular migration. From the perspective of destination countries, it is illegal entry, stay or work in a country, meaning that the migrant does not have the necessary authorization or documents required under immigration regulations to enter, reside or work in a given country. From the perspective of the sending country, the irregularity is for example seen in cases in which a person crosses an international boundary without a valid passport or travel document or does not fulfill the administrative requirements for leaving the country. There is, however, a tendency to restrict the use of the term "illegal migration" to cases of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons.
<b>Irregular migrant / illegal migrant</b>	A person, who, due to illegal entry or expiration of his/her visa, does not have legal status in the transit or destination state. The term applies to migrants who violate the rules of entry into the state, as well as to any other person who does not have the right to continue to stay in the host country (secret/illegal/undocumented migrant, or migrant staying in violation of the law).
<b>Refugee status determination</b>	Процедура, проводимая УВКБ ООН и/или государством, с целью определения, может ли человек быть признан беженцем в соответствии с национальным или международным правом.

Source: "Handbook of Migration Terminology (Russian-English)", Moscow: International Organization for Migration, 2011  
[https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/handbook\\_on\\_migration\\_terminology.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/handbook_on_migration_terminology.pdf)

---

# ABBREVIATIONS

L.N.Gumilyov ENU	Eurasian National University named after L.N.Gumilyov
Al-Farabi KazNU	Al-Farabi Kazakh National University
MF SRC RK	State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan
MFA RK	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan
MNE RK	Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MLSPP RK	Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Youth RC	Youth Research Center
NCPT	National Council of Public Trust under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan
UN	United Nations
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

# INTRODUCTION

Global migration is a natural social phenomenon affecting a large number of individuals, families, states, which was especially actualized in last years. According to the UN, about 272 million people live outside their states of origin (2019)<sup>1</sup>. In recent years, due to increased mobility of the population, increased transport facilities for international movements, the abolition of visas, the facilitation of procedures for obtaining entry documents, a colossal scale of migration movements occurs.

These and other factors also affect the expansion of illegal migration, which is difficult to prevent, control and much more to regulate. The methodological difficulty also lies in the fact that it is difficult to determine the scale, volume, structure and strategy of irregular migration. The study of this type of migration requires a multifaceted approach, consideration of demographic, political, economic, cultural and other factors. Making a decision to go abroad in search of work independently or in a family, a potential migrant, without knowing it, is included in the system of international relations, becoming one of the elements of diplomatic activity.

In this report, an attempt is made to study the process of illegal migration of Kazakhstanis to South Korea, the reasons and motives of young able-bodied people to seek work outside their country. This migration phenomenon is new for Kazakhstan, requiring comprehensive study.

In the terminology of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), *undocumented migrant workers/migrant workers staying in violation of the law are migrant workers or members of their families who are not allowed to enter, stay or to engage in employment in the State*<sup>2</sup>. In Kazakhstani discourse, the term “illegal migrant” is used more often, while in Korean – “Illegal” or “undocumented migrants”.

This report will use the term “illegal migrant” to prevent the focus of the study being shifted due to the infrequent use of the term “*undocumented migrant worker*” in the expert environment.

In a number of official documents in South Korea<sup>3</sup>, the term “undocumented migrants” means “*a non-national who enters or stays in a country without the appropriate documentation. This includes, among others: a person (a) who has no legal documentation to enter a country but manages to enter clandestinely, (b) who enters or stays using fraudulent documentation, (c) who, after entering using legal documentation, has stayed beyond the time authorized or otherwise violated the*

---

<sup>1</sup> UN web site / <https://www.un.org/ru/un75/shifting-demographics>

<sup>2</sup> *Migration Terminology Handbook (Russian-English)*. - M.: International Organization for Migration, 2011

<sup>3</sup> *Migration profile of the Republic of Korea. The IOM Migration Research and Training Centre. January, 2012.* [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mp\\_korea.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mp_korea.pdf)

---

*terms of entry and remained without authorization. Also called clandestine/irregular migrant or migrant in an irregular situation”.*

Kazakh illegal migrant workers in South Korea are more often young people aged 18 to 30, with higher or secondary education, who come from the southern regions of Kazakhstan. This youth group is actively involved in internal and external migration. Holders of the “golden visa”<sup>4</sup> have been arriving in the state mostly as tourists since 2014 and remain for employment.

### **Bilateral relations**

The Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Korea have a 28-year history of bilateral relations. On January 28, 1992, diplomatic relations were established between the countries. In 1993, the Embassy of the Republic of Korea was opened in the Republic of Kazakhstan. In 1996, the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the Republic of Korea was opened.

According to the data of the SRC of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the trade turnover between Kazakhstan and the Republic of Korea in 2019 amounted to USD 6,5 billion, of which imports - USD 3,4 billion and exports - USD 3,1 billion. These indicators are 1,6 times higher than the trade turnover in 2018 (USD 3,9 billion)<sup>5</sup>.

South Korea’s interaction with the states of Central Asia takes place within the framework of the “New Northern Policy” program.

### **Research methodology**

**Research objective** is to study the process of illegal migration from Kazakhstan to South Korea.

The project **chronological framework** is related to the time of introduction of a visa-free regime to Korea for Kazakhstan citizens from November 2014 to the present (May 2020). This determines the statistical data and results of sociological research provided in the Report.

**Data collection method:** interview (face-to-face).

---

<sup>4</sup> “Golden Visa” means absence of visa for migrant workers

<sup>5</sup> Official website of the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the Republic of Korea  
<https://www.gov.kz/memleket/entities/mfa-seoul/activities/2130?lang=ru>

### **The following were carried out during the research:**

- survey of Kazakhstanis - illegal migrants living in South Korea,
- survey of Kazakhstanis planning to enter the South Korea for work,
- survey of South Korean employers,
- survey of Kazakhstanis - marriage migrants,
- survey of Kazakh and Korean experts in the field of migration, international relations,
- survey of South Korean experts - researchers of Central Asia,
- survey of journalists.

### **The data of the following were also analyzed:**

- Data of Committee on Statistics of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan,
- Korea immigration service statistics,
- Reports of international organizations,
- Results of sociological surveys.

### **Content of the following were analyzed:**

- Social networks and messengers,
- Mass media of Kazakhstan,
- Mass media of South Korea.

**Geography of research:** cities of South Korea (Seoul and Gwangju).

**Survey time:** May 2016, May-June 2017, September 2018, February, December 2019.

### **The author is grateful for the help in preparing and publication of the Report:**

- **Kazakhstan Council on International Relations (KCIR)**
- **Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Republic of Korea,**
- **Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the Republic of Kazakhstan,**
- **Askar Bagibayev**, founder of the Goju Ryu Karate School in Gwangju (Gwangju, South Korea),
- **Caress Schenk**, Professor of the School of Sciences and Humanities of Nazarbayev University (Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan),
- **German Kim**, Professor, Director of the Institute of Asian Studies, Al-Farabi KazNU (Almaty, Kazakhstan),
- **Sangcheol Kim**, Professor at the Institute of Central Asian Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (Seoul, South Korea),

- 
- **Svetlana Kozhirova**, Head of Center for China and Central Asia Studies International Science Complex “Astana”, Professor, Doctor of Political Science (Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan),
  - **Sanat Kushkumbaev**, Deputy Director of the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies, Doctor of Political Science (Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan),
  - **Olga Liang**, employee of the Khabar Agency in South Korea (Seoul, South Korea),
  - **Olzhas Rayev**, Special Adviser for Investment of the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Republic of Korea (Seoul, South Korea),
  - **Diana Sagiyeva**, a Kazakh citizen who is the spouse of a South Korean citizen, blogger (Gwangju, South Korea),
  - **Aigul Sadvokassova**, Deputy Director of the Institute of Applied Ethnopolitical Research, Doctor of Sociological Science (Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan),
  - **Son Young-Hoon**, Professor, Director of the Institute of Central Asian Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (Seoul, South Korea),
  - **Sung Dongki**, Assistant Professor, Inha University (Incheon, South Korea),
  - **Vladislav Tsoy**, staff correspondent of the Khabar Agency in South Korea (Seoul, South Korea),
  - **Chu Young Min**, Ph.D. candidate of L.N. Gumilyov ENU (Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan),
  - **Zoya Shin**, Head of the Center for Ethnic Koreans (Gwangju, South Korea).

# Chapter 1

## **FOREIGNERS IN SOUTH KOREA: HISTORY OF MIGRATION, TYPES AND FEATURES**

### **Employment Policy in South Korea for foreign workers**

The Korean government is pursuing a policy of attracting migrant workers from 15 states participating in the EPS agreement: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, East Timor, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the Philippines, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

The Employment Permit System (EPS) provides for the issuance of visas (E-9) to foreign workers for certain types of temporary employment in Korea.

### **Historical overview of migration to and from Korea**

A brief overview provided in the Migration profile of the Republic of Korea<sup>6</sup> reflects the essence of labor migration from a historical perspective: “Until the late 1980s, Korea was a migration sending country, and within Korean society, the term “immigration” generally stood for overseas migration... However, from the late 1980s, the immigration of foreigners rapidly increased, and the number of foreigners immigrating into Korea presently exceeds the number of Koreans migrating overseas.

Overseas migration of Koreans started from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Due to the loss of sovereignty of Korea to surrounding powerful nations, and the political/economic chaos of the time, a large number of people lost their homes, communities and livelihood. Many of them migrated to China, Russia or Hawaii to search for better life. Following Japan’s colonization of Korea in 1910, Koreans continued to migrate overseas. Korea’s independence in 1945 changed the nature of the outward movement, and encouraged many returns, yet the outward trend continued for some time.

The overseas Koreans currently residing in China, Japan and in the CIS – they are those who migrated during the turbulent period before 1945 independence. Overseas migration of Koreans increased as miners and nurses were dispatched to Germany in the early 1960s, followed by a large-scale labor migration to the Middle East to service that region’s construction boom in the 1970-1980s. Another important factor influencing outward movement of Koreans was the amendment of Immigration Act of the United States in 1965, through which the US began to accept large number of migrants from Asia. As a result, the number of Korean migrants to the United States rose significantly.

---

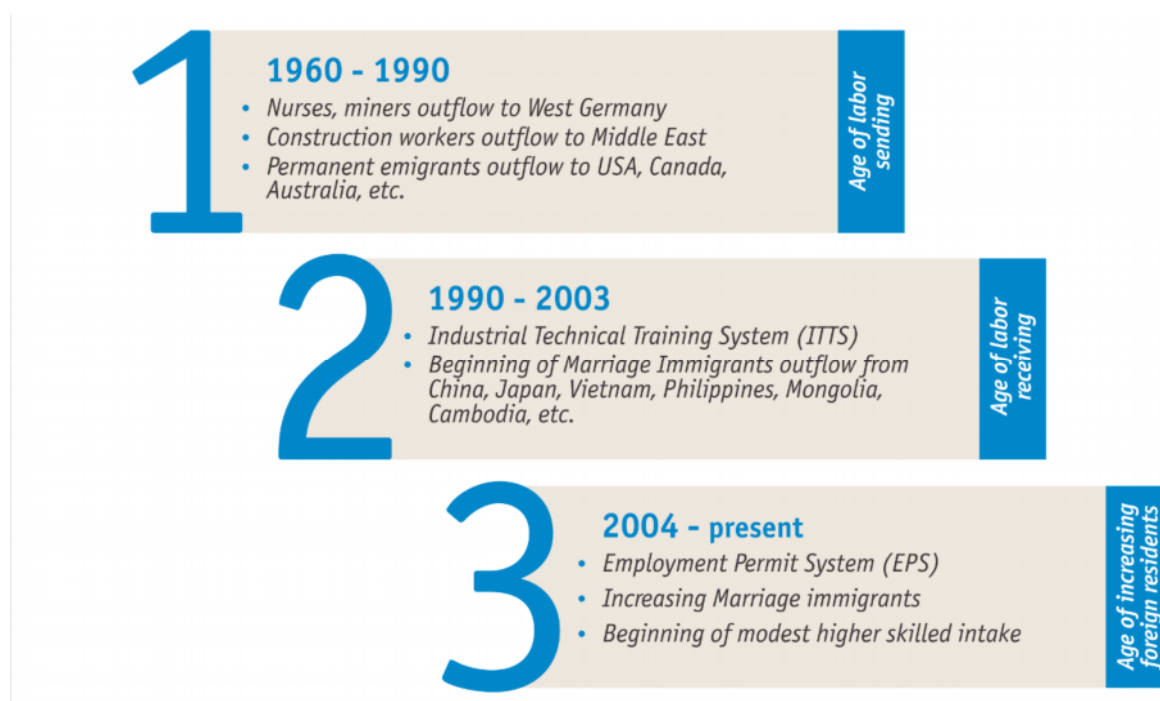
<sup>6</sup> *Migration profile of the Republic of Korea. The IOM Migration Research and Training Centre. January, 2012*



Overseas migration of Koreans decreased greatly in the late 1980s, as Korea developed economically and as political anxiety within Korea diminished. At the same time a new phenomenon, which is immigration of foreign workers into Korea, began to develop. The movement of foreigners into Korean society began with the influx of Chinese Koreans in the late 1980s. As diplomatic relations between Korea and China improved, the influx of Chinese Koreans to visit their ancestral country increased sharply. At that time, domestic construction companies were going through a shortage of labor, and Chinese Koreans could easily find employment in Korea, where wages are relatively higher than those in China. This combination of ancestry and work opportunity caused the number of Chinese Koreans to continually rise.

Also, in 1993 the Korean government introduced the 'Industrial Trainee System' and officially invited foreign trainees from fifteen countries in Asia to become a special part of the Korean workforce. One result was the diversification of nationalities of foreign workers, and foreigners generally, in Korea.

Figure 1. **Migration Trends in Korea from 1960 to the present**



Source: Migration profile of the Republic of Korea.  
The IOM Migration Research and Training Centre. January, 2012.

## Marriage migration

Socio-demographic changes in South Korea, including active urbanization, made starting a family in rural villages more difficult due to the smaller number of women. To solve this problem, a new initiative has been launched – **marriage migration**, primarily from the nearest countries - China, Indonesia, Mongolia, etc. At the moment, there is a stable growth of marriage migrants mainly from China, Vietnam, Japan, the Philippines. From the countries of Central Asia, the citizens of Uzbekistan entered the top ten countries - the exodus of foreign brides and grooms. The majority of marriage migrants are ethnic Koreans (*koryo-saram*).

Table 1. **Number of marriage migrants (2014-2018)**

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total number	150,994	151,608	152,374	155,457	159,206
China	60,663	58,788	56,930	57,644	58,706
Vietnam	39,725	40,847	41,803	42,205	42,460
Japan	12,603	12,861	13,110	13,400	13,738
Philippines	11,052	11,367	11,606	11,783	11,836
Cambodia	4,618	4,555	4,473	4,459	4,496
USA	3,006	3,192	3,354	3,471	3,658
Thailand	2,675	2,821	3,182	3,671	4,411
Mongolia	2,394	2,384	2,381	2,396	2,438
Uzbekistan	2,219	2,244	2,302	2,367	2,425
Russia	1,308	1,305	1,182	1,367	1,494
Canada	1,300	1,295	1,318	1,345	1,320
Taiwan	740	823	929	1,072	1,213
Nepal	1,138	1,081	1,032	974	901
Others	7,404	7,953	8,765	9,303	10,110

Source: Korea immigration service statistics. Ministry of Justice, 2018

According to official statistics, in 2018 international marriages were registered with 159 206 foreigners, women – 83.2%, men – 16.8%. The majority of international marriages are marriages of Korean (*hankuk*) men and foreign women, except for unions between men from the United States (73.3%) and women from South Korea (26.7%). International marriage agencies and social media (online dating) play an important role in creating multicultural families.

Table 2. **The number of marriage migrants - gender aspect (2018)**

Country	Marriage migrants		Men		Women	
	Total number	%	Total number	%	Total number	%
Total number	159,206	100	26,815	16.8	132,391	83.2
China	58,706	36.9	12,710	21.7	45,996	78.3
Vietnam	42,460	26.7	2,182	5.1	40,278	94.9
Japan	13,738	8.6	1,231	9.0	12,507	91.0
Philippines	11,836	7.4	419	3.5	11,417	96.5
Cambodia	4,496	2.8	217	4.8	4,279	95.2
Thailand	4,411	2.8	96	2.2	4,315	97.8
USA	3,658	2.3	2,683	73.3	975	26.7
Mongolia	2,438	1.5	147	6.0	2,291	94.0
Uzbekistan	2,425	1.5	114	4.7	2,311	95.3
Russia	1,494	0.9	109	7.3	1,385	92.7
Canada	1,320	0.8	218	16.5	1,102	83.5
Taiwan	1,213	0.8	94	7.7	1,119	92.3
Nepal	901	0.6	172	19.1	729	80.9
Others	10,110	6.4	6,423	63.5	3,687	36.5

Source: Korea immigration service statistics. Ministry of Justice, 2018

The countries of Central Asia, in which ethnic Koreans (Koryo-saram or Goryeoin) live, the descendants of those deported in the 30-50s of the XX century, are traditionally *donor countries* of international marriage migration. Important issues – the adaptation and integration of Russian-speaking ethnic Koreans in South Korean society often become a subject of scientists’ research.

**Natalya Yem**, Head of the Far East Department, Al-Farabi KazNU, PhD in History, Associate Professor, believes that *“Russian-speaking married women migrants experience significant difficulties due to their psychological characteristics, difference in mentality, adherence to the system of Soviet and post-Soviet education and environment of origin. Having a positive attitude towards family and social values in Korea, Russian-speaking women do not feel emotionally comfortable in this environment. Their ideas about marriage do not match reality. At the same time, it is not so much about the problems of the Korean society and the Korean family*

(marked generally positively), but about themselves – in their moods and states (marked negatively)”<sup>7</sup>.

## Foreigners in South Korea

In general, it should be noted that the number of foreigners in the Land of the Morning Calm is increasing every year - in 2019 it amounted to 4.9% of the total population.<sup>8</sup> The largest part of them are Chinese citizens, including ethnic Koreans – 1,101,782, then Vietnamese – 224,518, Thais (209,909), Americans (156,982), Japanese (86,196), Uzbeks (75,320), Philippines (62,398), Russians (61,427), Indonesians (48,854), Mongols (48,855) and Cambodians (47,565).

Table 3. **Number of foreign residents in South Korea (2014-2019)**

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1,797,618	1,899,519	2,049,441	2,180,498	2,367,607	2,524,656

Source: Korea immigration service statistics. Ministry of Justice, 2018. 76 p.

<sup>7</sup> Yem Natalia. *Survival Patterns: Marriage Migration of Women from the CIS in South Korea*/PRZEGLĄD WSCHODNIOEUROPEJSKI IX/1 2018: 143–152  
URL: [http://www.uwm.edu.pl/cbew/2018\\_9\\_1/10\\_Yem.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu.pl/cbew/2018_9_1/10_Yem.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> *Number of foreign residents in Korea tops 2.5 million*//  
URL: <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20200217003000315>

## Chapter 2

# YOUTH IN CENTRAL ASIA: MIGRATION POTENTIAL AND MOOD

### Migration mood of Central Asian youth

Youth in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan) is a dynamically developing demographic group, constituting from 20 to 30% of their societies: 20.8% of the population of Kazakhstan is youth aged 14 to 29 (in 2014 – 25%), youth aged 15 to 29 in Kyrgyzstan make up 26.8%, in Tajikistan – 29.2%, in Uzbekistan – 28% of the total population (data of 2016)<sup>9</sup>.

Table 4. **Are you considering migrating from your country?**  
(Sample of 1000 respondents in each country aged 14 to 29,  
survey period 2014-2016)

Answer options	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Uzbekistan	Tajikistan
Yes, I'm going to move in the very near future	2.7	2.4	1.1	2.7
Not now, but will likely move to another location in the future	7.9	11.7	5.4	6.3
So far, there have been no thoughts about moving, but everything will depend on the circumstances of life: I may move, but may not	20.6	26.6	8.7	11.1
No, in no case am I going to move anywhere	66.9	56.1	84.2	78.5
Don't know	1.9	3.2	0.6	1.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

<sup>9</sup> *Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: a statistical portrait/CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. - M., 2018*

Table 5. **Intercountry population migration**  
 (number of persons registered with the internal affairs authorities  
 upon change of permanent residence, persons)

	Number of people who left the country				Migration balance of the population aged 15 to 29	The intensity of migration of the population aged 15 to 29 (balance of interstate migration per 10 000 population of the corresponding age)
	Subtotal	Including aged 15 to 29				
		Subtotal	To the CIS states	To other countries of the world		
<b>Kazakhstan</b>						
2005	52,139	19,300	15,380	3,920	7,925	18.9
2010	26,541	8,940	8,429	511	6,914	15.3
2016	34,900	8,816	7,972	844	-3,461	-16.3
<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>						
2005	30,741	10,883	10,460	423	-9,582	-62.0
2010	54,531	27,107	26,983	124	-25,430	-153.6
2016	7,125	2,576	2,512	64	-1,394	-16.0
<b>Tajikistan</b>						
2005	7,275	-	-	-	-	-
2010	5,379	2,339	-	-	-1,903	-8.0
2016	2,757	976	-	-	-844	-3.3
<b>Uzbekistan</b>						
2005	104,991	38,458	37,792	666	-35,717	-44.5
2010	44,420	16,732	16,506	226	-15,131	-16.9
2016	28,069	8,363	8,142	221	-7,855	-8.7

Source: *Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: a statistical portrait/*  
 CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. - M., 2018.

The migratory mood is traditionally inherent in young people. The results of a sociological research of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Representative Office "Youth of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan)"<sup>10</sup> demonstrate a high potential for migration mobility. Only 84.2% of Uzbekistanis, 78.5% of Tajikistanis, 66.9% of Kazakhstanis and 56.1% of Kyrgyzstanis will never move anywhere, the rest can leave the state depending on the circumstances (table 4).

<sup>10</sup> B. Rakisheva. *Youth in Central Asia. Comparative review. Representative office of F. Ebert Foundation. /Under the supervision of prof. Klaus Hurelmann and Peer Teschendorf (Germany, Berlin). - Almaty, 2017. -- 90 p. //*  
 URL: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/kasachstan/14109.pdf>

---

This migratory mood is expressed in statistical data. Interstate migration of the population from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to other countries in the period 2010-2016 shows a negative balance of migration, that is, there were more young citizens who left the state than those who entered (table 5).

### Motives and reasons for migration

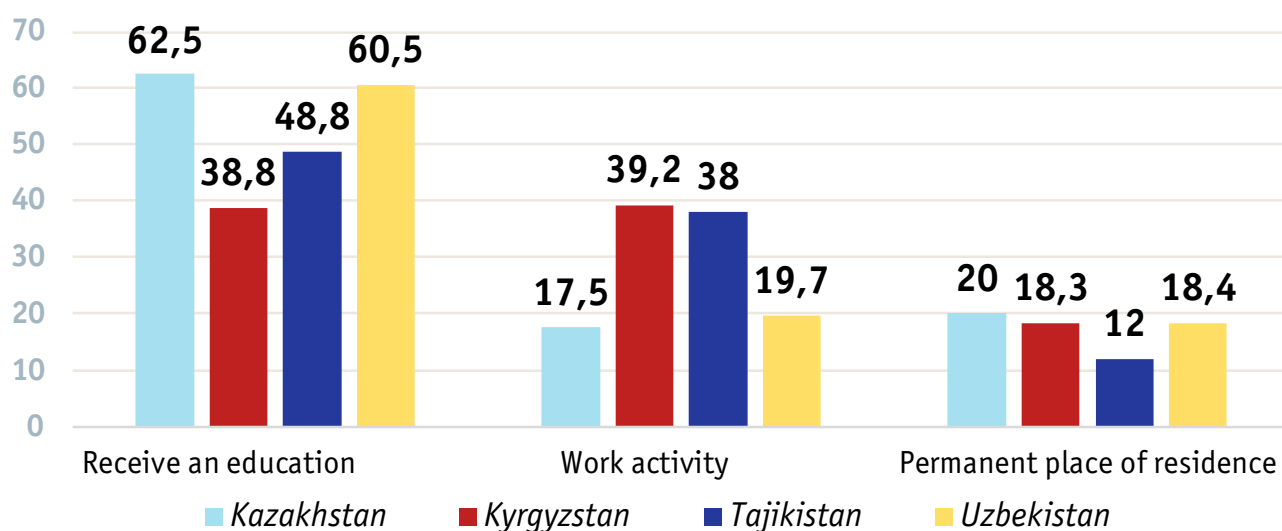
The authors of the project “External youth migration in Central Asian countries: risk analysis and minimization of negative consequences”<sup>11</sup>, based on the results of field research (online survey, in-depth interviews, focus groups), identified the following **motives for migration** of Central Asian youth:

- 1. Economic situation.** The first factor in the rating of importance, consisting of the following positions: systemic poverty and material crisis in the family, lack of work opportunities, difficulties with employment (the need for work experience, patronage or bribes), low wages, the prevalence of jobs in the labor market that involve drudgery, seasonal lull in the labor market. For Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the following reasons are characteristic: the need to raise funds for purchasing housing, a car, payment for a wedding/study, maintenance of family, accumulation of initial capital for opening a small business in their homeland. For Kyrgyzstan: financial assistance to the family.
- 2. Socio-psychological factor.** Due to the fact that in a number of Central Asian countries the flow of labor migration began after the Union collapse, at the moment several generations of migrants have already formed, the second and third generations leave for the countries of destination already with their families or to reunite children with their parents, spouses, marriage partners. There are also many cases of leaving abroad due to a spontaneous and unmotivated decision (“everyone goes and I will go too”).
- 3. The situation in the field of education.** Receiving higher and secondary professional quality education in other countries of the world. Corruption of the education system, incompetence of the teaching staff, low quality of education.
- 4. Group of political factors.** People’s perception of the political system in their country and public services (education, health care, social protection) and the resulting attitude towards their capabilities, including the level of confidence in the future, the ability to plan their lives and the lives of their children. The political factor also means corruption. Migrants complain of high levels of corruption at all levels and point to the lack of meritocracy as another important factor pushing them out of the state.
- 5. Interest to see another country, travel.** Visiting historical sites, broadening of personal outlook, raising the level of culture.

---

<sup>11</sup> *External youth migration in Central Asian states: risk analysis and minimization of negative consequences //International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Kazakhstan - Subregional Coordination Office for Central Asia. Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019 //*  
URL: [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/external\\_youth\\_migration\\_ru.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/external_youth_migration_ru.pdf)

Figure 2. **Goals for staying of young people abroad**  
(online survey of people living abroad, %)



Source: “External youth migration in Central Asian states: risk analysis and minimization of negative consequences.” International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Kazakhstan - Subregional Coordination Office for Central Asia. Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019

### The motives of *Kazakhstanis* - young people - participants in the online survey:

- corruption, bureaucracy at all levels, impunity and irresponsibility of officials, ineffective governance,
- professional absence of demand, no prospects for self-realization and career,
- low level of the country development, archaization and re-traditionalization of society,
- sense of insecurity in their future and the future of their children,
- high unemployment, low wages, no social guarantees,
- deterioration in the quality of medicine and education,
- frequent human rights violations<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> External youth migration in Central Asian states: risk analysis and minimization of negative consequences. International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Kazakhstan - Subregional Coordination Office for Central Asia. Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic. – Kazakhstan, 2019.



## Chapter 3

# YOUTH OF KAZAKHSTAN: MIGRATION TENETS

### Share of youth in the total population

According to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On National Youth Policy”, citizens aged 14 to 29 are categorized as “youth”<sup>13</sup>. According to the Committee on Statistics of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the number of youth aged 14 to 28 was **3,830,536 people** (2019). The share of young people over the past six years has decreased from 25% to 20.8% of the total population.

Table 6. **Share of youth in the total population of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2014-2019)**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total population, people	17,160,855	17,415,715	17,669,896	17,918,214	18,157,337	18,395,567
aged 14 to 28, people	4,293,194	4,206,037	4,099,272	3,995,896	3,900,834	3,830,536
% of youth of the population	25.0%	24.2%	23.2%	22.3%	21.5%	20.8%

Source: Committee on Statistics of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan

If we consider in the regional context, a high percentage of young people accounts for the southern regions of the country – Turkestan, Almaty, Zhambyl and Karaganda regions, city of Almaty.

In general, the share of young people in the total population is from 16.1% to at least 27.8% of the maximum of the total population of the regions and cities of Nur-Sultan, Almaty and Shymkent.

<sup>13</sup> Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On State Youth Policy” // URL: [https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc\\_id=31661446#pos=64;-54](https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=31661446#pos=64;-54)

Table 7. **The number of youth in the Republic of Kazakhstan (2014-2019)**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Republic of Kazakhstan	4,293,194	4,206,037	4,099,272	3,995,913	3,900,900	3,830,526	3,765,383
Akmola	169,554	165,147	162,704	152,538	148,992	145,846	142,491
Aktobe	219,324	213,857	205,977	198,482	191,790	185,468	178,712
Almaty	486,683	450,754	432,459	418,074	408,211	401,098	392,855
Atyrau	146,251	144,135	140,852	137,752	135,403	134,041	133,130
West Kazakhstan	153,932	149,595	145,879	140,413	136,016	132,376	128,527
Zhambyl	265,913	260,621	253,607	245,934	240,221	239,148	237,900
Karagandy	322,427	314,956	304,260	291,441	281,406	273,382	266,081
Kostanay	208,280	201,435	194,535	185,077	177,101	169,920	161,897
Kyzylorda	191,793	189,625	185,674	180,394	177,644	176,740	175,728
Mangystau	153,919	152,656	150,567	147,728	145,657	146,162	147,462
Pavlodar	170,434	164,433	157,722	150,350	144,072	139,213	134,726
North Kazakhstan	120,677	116,204	112,364	107,497	104,056	102,011	100,548
Turkestan*	729,191	723,853	715,303	480,051	473,046	457,047	465,699
East Kazakhstan	316,585	304,957	292,094	277,473	264,952	254,565	244,005
city of Nur-Sultan	218,590	213,350	199,296	224,069	225,774	221,186	222,334
city of Almaty	419,641	440,459	445,979	437,769	423,809	407,381	393,845
city of Shymkent	-	-	-	220,871	222,750	244,942	239,443

\* South Kazakhstan region was transformed into the Turkestan region in 2018 (the regional center is the city of Turkestan), the city of Shymkent received the status of a city of a national significance in 2018.

Source: Statistics Committee of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

### Situation of Kazakh youth in the labor market

Finding a job in Kazakhstan for young people can be problematic. Most employers hire employees with seniority and experience that young professionals do not have. When forced to reduce the staff, young people are most often laid off. An important factor affecting employment is oversaturation of the labor market with proposals with low demand, overpopulation of regions, unregulated employment, etc.

---

*Lack of work experience (42.6%), low wages (37.4%), lack of work opportunities in the area of residence (27.8%), bribery, corruption of employers (25.5%), inconsistency of the received education and functional requirements of vacancies (17.6%), low competitiveness of young specialists in the labor market (16.1%) are the main reasons that hinder youth employment according to the sociological survey of the Youth Research Center (sample: 2000 respondents, aged 14 to 29, 14 regions and cities of Astana, Almaty, 2017)<sup>14</sup>.*

The maximum concentration of young people is traditionally recorded in the southern region of Kazakhstan, which is characterized by a high number of self-employed (52.8% – Zhambyl, 42.9% – South Kazakhstan regions, 2016) and unemployed youth (12.6 thousand people in South Kazakhstan, 9.8 thousand in Almaty, 5.3 thousand in Zhambyl regions, city of Almaty – 18.5 thousand, 2016)<sup>15</sup>.

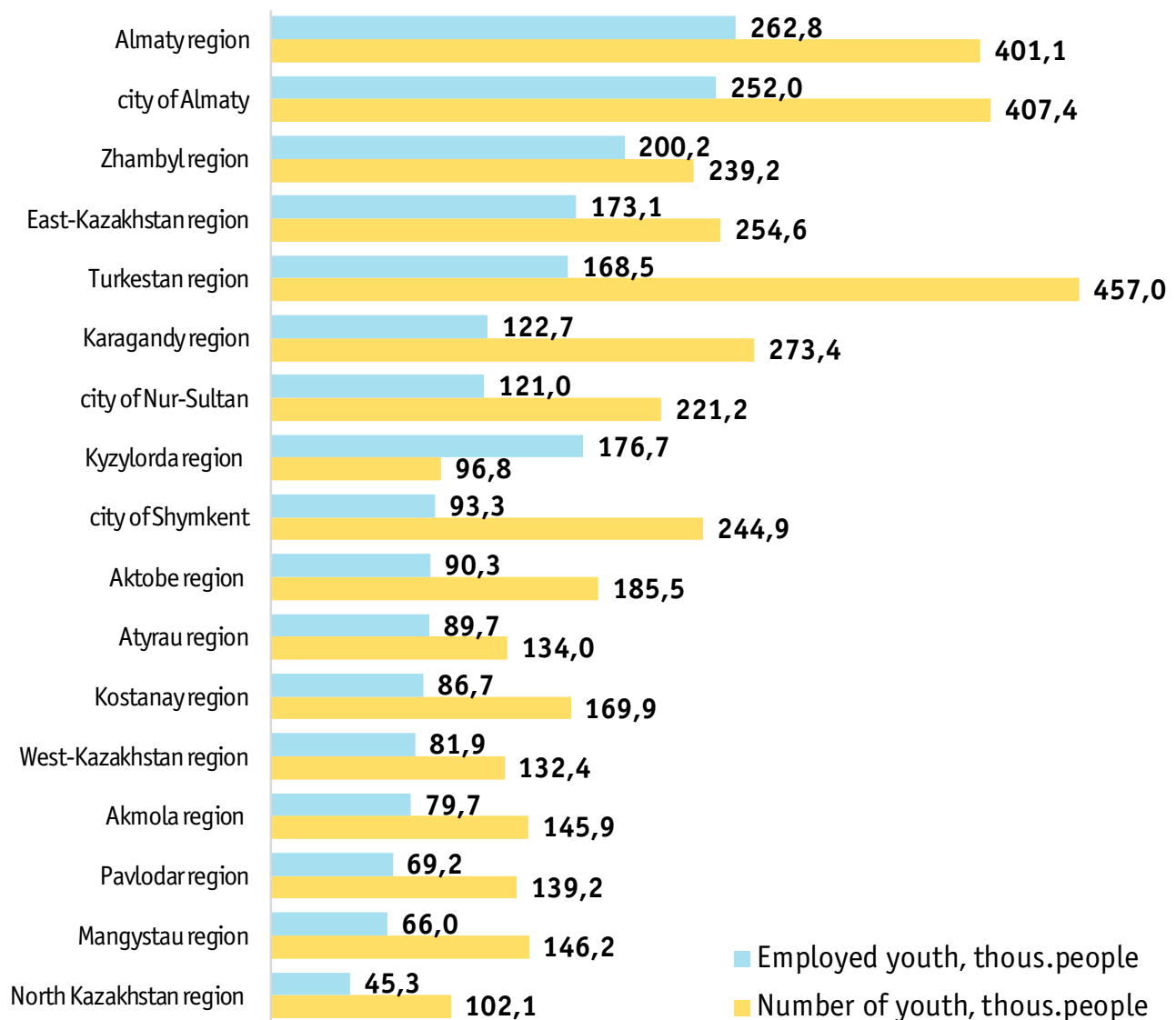
The distribution of youth employment by regions of Kazakhstan demonstrates a low level of youth employment, especially in the southern regions, where the majority of young people live: Turkestan, Almaty, Zhambyl regions and the cities of Almaty and Shymkent.

---

<sup>14</sup> *D. Ashimkhanova, O. Kaldybaeva. Employment of Kazakhstan youth: barriers and opportunities (based on the results of sociological research)/Materials of the republican scientific-practical conference on topical issues of youth with foreign experts involved "Professions of the future: what to prepare for generations Y, Z" - Astana, 2018 – p.92.*

<sup>15</sup> *The current state of the labor market in Kazakhstan/Ed. Z.K. Shaukenova. - Astana: Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2017. – p. 34. URL: <http://www.kaziss.kz/uploads/33/files/DxunOPeD.pdf>*

Figure 3. **Distribution of employment by regions of Kazakhstan**



Source: National report "Youth of Kazakhstan – 2019", Youth Research Center

Another criterion reflecting the situation of young people is the proportion of NEET<sup>16</sup> young people who do not want to work or study. In Kazakhstan, this indicator is equal to 7.2% of the total number of youths<sup>17</sup> (second quarter of 2019). The highest rates are demonstrated by Karaganda (12.7%) and Turkestan (10.7%) regions.

An important indicator influencing the decision to migrate is **the level of income**. In Kazakhstan, wages are different regionally. The chronological interval of 2014-2019 considered in this research, the years of expansion of the channel of illegal migration from Kazakhstan to South Korea, is a time when wages in the southern agricultural regions were much lower than in the western regions from the mining or oil industries. The largest number of the population with incomes

<sup>16</sup> NEET – Not in Employment, Education or Training

<sup>17</sup> National report "Youth of Kazakhstan – 2019". Youth Research Center // URL: <http://eljastary.kz/articles/70/2>

---

below the value of the intermediate minimum in the regional context, again falls on the densely populated South Kazakhstan region – 6.1% of residents (2014), while the average for the entire state was 2.8%<sup>18</sup>.

It should also be noted that among the illegal migrants from Kazakhstan there are often residents of **single-industry towns**, in particular from the city of Kentau (Turkestan region, till 2018 was South Kazakhstan region). Single-industry towns in Kazakhstan, apart from economic backwardness, are also distinguished by a low standard of living of their population, according to the authors of the report “Neither here, nor there: the problem of the youth informal employment in single-industry towns of Kazakhstan”<sup>19</sup>. Researchers point to another important characteristic – **the pronounced migration tenets of youth**, the reasons for which are the low quality of higher education, underdeveloped infrastructure, and lack of opportunities for modern leisure, etc.

Youth unemployment, redundant labor resources, high competition in the labor market, lack of jobs are the reasons why young people from southern regions remain outside the labor market and are forced to look for job in other regions or countries.

---

<sup>18</sup> A. Zhusupova. *Dynamics of social inequality in Kazakhstan. Institute of World Economy and Politics (IMEP) under the Foundation of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Leader of the Nation. - Astana-Almaty, 2016. – p.22.*

<sup>19</sup> S.Beisembaev, S.Insebaeva, D.Moldokanov. *Neither here, nor there: the problem of the youth informal employment in single-industry towns of Kazakhstan. Report on the results of a research conducted with the support of the Soros Kazakhstan Foundation, 2017. – p. 30.*

## Chapter 4

# UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANT WORKERS. STATISTICS. CHARACTERISTIC. WORKING CONDITIONS

### Statistics, socio-demographic characteristics, areas of activity

In South Korea, **355,126 people** are illegally employed, according to the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea. Countries from which illegal immigrants came: Thailand, China, Vietnam, Mongolia, the Philippines, Kazakhstan, Russia, etc.

The number of Kazakhstan citizens illegally staying in South Korea, as of March 2020, amounted to **about 12 thousand people**<sup>20</sup>. According to the official statistics of South Korea<sup>21</sup>, since 2014, the period of visas abolition for Kazakhstanis, the number has grown from 359 people (2014) to 11,413 people (2018).

Most of them are men, women make up about 10-15%. Most of the migrant workers are young people, aged 20 to 30, Kazakhs. Also, among Kazakhstani migrants there are Azerbaijanis, Uzbeks and representatives of other ethnic groups.

Most of the illegal immigrants are representatives of all regions of the country, but the majority is residents of the southern regions: Turkestan (cities of Turkestan and Kentau) and Almaty regions, cities of Almaty and Shymkent.

---

<sup>20</sup> Briefing of the official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan A.S. Smadiyarova, Nur-Sultan, February 27, 2020 // URL: <https://www.gov.kz/memleket/entities/mfa/press/news/details/briefing-oficialnogo-predstavatelya-mid-kazahstana-as-smadiyarova-nur-sultan-27-fevralya-2020-goda?lang=ru>

<sup>21</sup> Korea immigration service statistics. Ministry of Justice, 2018

Table 8. **The number of undocumented migrants from various countries in South Korea (2014-2018)**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	% of the total population
Total number	208,778	214,168	208,971	251,04,	355,126	100%
Thailand	44,283	52,519	56,099	68,449	138,591	39.0%
China	70,311	67,333	55,831	62,827	71,070	20.0%
Vietnam	26,932	26,563	27,862	31,691	42,056	11.8%
Mongolia	7,409	8,274	10,146	12,719	15,919	4.5%
Philippines	12,814	12,358	11,295	11,954	13,020	3.7%
Kazakhstan	359	1,337	2,914	7,214	11,413	3.2%
Russia	1,165	1,600	3,849	8,533	10,906	3.1%
Indonesia	7,237	7,269	7,181	7,626	8,110	2.3%
Uzbekistan	4,627	4,680	4,452	5,241	6,162	1.7%
Cambodia	3,115	3,556	3,886	4,715	5,897	1.7%
Sri Lanka	4,232	4,460	4,580	4,823	5,100	1.4%
Others	26,294	24,219	20,876	25,249	26,882	7.6%

Source: Korea immigration service statistics. Ministry of Justice, 2018

The main areas of work of *pulpop*<sup>22</sup> - men: construction, agriculture, field work, harvesting, collection, drying seaweed (miyeok), work in production in factories and plants, industrial climbing, etc. *Women* mainly work as cleaners, dishwashers, laundresses, do packing and cleaning of shells, dry seaweed, etc. There are frequent cases of prostitution among young girls.

#### From an interview with illegal migrants:

“...there is a city I., a small town, there she works in Korean cuisine, where she washes dishes, makes vegetable carvings, helps. Housing, food – everything is free ...she works and lives there”;

“people find job, of course ... it depends on the person. Sometimes, some people break down immediately. Then they leave ... there stay only those, whoever gets used to it. Only after a year people are back on their feet and then they can find a job by themselves, they see the job ads, they can arrange themselves. They already understand the language”;

<sup>22</sup> *Pulpop* (Korean) is an illegal worker.

“Men are mostly at construction sites and women are the same, they work in different cities with residence included. The same Korean cafes ... Men at construction sites, on the seas, in the field. Who works, he works”.

*Couples* also work: cleaning motels, houses, working in restaurants, cafes, etc.

Depending on the working conditions, the daily earnings for men range from \$100 or more, and for women, from \$50 or more. Rates depend on the shift – night or day. The night rate is higher than the day rate. Often, hired workers live and feed at the expense of the employer.

Workers are especially in demand in spring and autumn, when planting and harvesting of agricultural crops begins. In winter there is less work to do. The work schedule is strictly rationed, except for the day and night shifts, workers go to 12-hour job. Some employers provide free food and housing.



Table 9. **Job advertisements for migrant workers**

*(original text retained – translation from Russian and Kazakh languages)*

<p>Work for men and women in the city of Yanggu Men as Construction Workers, Salary 100,000 won/day Fieldwork for Women, salary 65,000 won per day. The salary is paid in cash every 2 weeks. Comfortable accommodation worth 100,000 won per month. Meals are provided for breakfast and lunch; dinner must be prepared by yourself. Experience, <b>visa and language skills do not matter</b></p>	<p><b>URGENTLY!</b> A fish farm requires 1 guy NO AGENCY SALARY – 2 million. Accommodation and meals are free. Sajan (employer) is reasonable. Your task is to feed on time, change the water in the pools, look after the fish. The work is calm, not hard. Employment through Samushil (employment center) - only to proven entrepreneurs. We guarantee payment. No out. <b>It is possible without a visa.</b> City of VANDO</p>	<p><b>URGENTLY!</b> For arbit in Samushil (employment center), men are required - 100 thous/day and women - 80 thous/day. Salary is once a week. The work is different, mainly at construction sites from 7.00am to 7.00 pm. Housing 100 thous/month. Meals at work are free, outside of work by yourself. Employer is adequate. The team is Russian-speaking. <b>A visa is not required.</b> Commission fee – 100 thous. from the salary. Gangwon-do. First, please write to WhatsApp. I will send the working conditions</p>
<p>2 guys are required to the plant, <b>illegals</b> are allowed. Plant at Gimhae. Work with angle grinder, rental. Salary is 2.400.000</p>	<p>Daejeon. 1 married couple required (2 persons). Number of rooms - 34. <b>Visa doesn't matter!</b> 10.00am -10.00 pm. 3,800,000. Knowledge of the Korean language is mandatory. At least 1 year of experience. The average daily cleaning volume is 30 rooms. A person who can immediately go to work. Prepayment of 250,000 for employment.</p>	<p>The industrial climbing brigade requires men (with and without experience). <b>Visa doesn't matter!</b> Out - 25 days. Start 120 ... with an increase ... Incheon. Hardy men are required to the post office; <b>absence of visa is allowed.</b> Work schedule 5/2 for 12 hours. Work at night, pay 125000Won every morning. Paid service!</p>
<p>One girl is required for a cosmetics factory in the city of Jincheon. Schedule: 5/2 from 8.00am - 5.00pm. Salary 60.000 per day + extra work. Every additional hour - 10.000 <b>Visa: does not matter</b> Employer provides an apartment, but will be deducted from his salary. They take to work and back. They feed only at work. For other questions, please call the number CONSTRUCTION - city of Yangyang (Gangneung). Essence: cleaning construction sites of system forests. There is a video of the work. Wanted: 10 men Required: 100,000 Salary - on the 11th day of each month. Russian-speaking brigade Schedule: 07.00am to 4.30pm Conditions: accommodation and meals are provided. Day off: in the rain. <b>Without a visa.</b> Without experience. Work all year round</p>	<p>FIELDS – city of Gangneung Essence: fieldwork There is a photo of the work Required: men and women Wage M: 80,000 - 120,000 Wage W: 65,000 - 75,000 Daily salary Schedule: from 07.00am to 5.00pm If the weather is hot there is no work during the day Day off: rainy days Conditions: accommodation and meals are provided <b>Visa is not mandatory</b> Without language skills Commission: 100,000 For a married couple: 150,000 for two. For all questions, call or write in Direct messages or WhatsApp.</p>	<p>CHIKEN - city of Hanam (Seoul) Essence: washing dishes and helping with the kitchen There is a video of work Required: 2 women aged 28 to 50 Payment: 1 800 000 – 2 300 000 With the wage increase Chanob (extra work) - 8000/hour Schedule: from 5.00pm to 01.00am Extra work after 01.00 am Conditions: free accommodation There is a photo of housing Meals: at own expense Day off: 2 times a month <b>Without a visa</b> Without experience Without language skills</p>

It should be noted that the work of migrant workers is described as **three-D jobs: Dirty, Dangerous, Difficult**. The work of migrants is accompanied by numerous risks, there is no medical insurance, and sometimes migrants remain defenseless in front of employers. Many are returning to Kazakhstan due to difficult conditions.

Dangerous conditions in which migrants work, the lack of the usual meat and dairy products (beef is very expensive in South Korea) lead to various diseases. Young people can't keep up with the pace and volume of work. Hard work led to the death of several Kazakhstanis, whose organisms could not cope with physical exertion: *"I want to inform you of the recent unpleasant news. Already seven illegal migrants from Kazakhstan died on the territory of South Korea. The reason is that they work all day on heavy rough work, come home in the evening, go to bed and never wake up again. They are aged 30 to 40. Organism cannot withstand stress and it turns out to be fatal. The heart cannot withstand the stress,"* said Official Representative of MFA RK **Aibek Smadiyarov** during MFA briefing<sup>23</sup>.

Due to the lack of knowledge of the Korean language, many migrants do not understand that they are working in hazardous chemical industries.

#### **From an interview with illegal migrants:**

"... but here you get used to it. Nobody worked like that at home. When I've arrived, I started to work on the plant. I have never stood on my feet when I worked. I went to work on the plant - the first week I worked for 8 hours, my legs swelled. This is so weird. The neck - that's how it gets numb, worked sitting - didn't feel numb. But standing in one place ... every 2 hours for ten minutes only (about a break) and during these 10 minutes you will smoke, or you go to the toilet, or you will drink coffee. And then that's it, the organism gets used to it - many young girls work - and they can manage their time for going out, for a job and have time to do make up. You get used to everything. There are women here, for example, even those over 50, who were sitting at home and preparing themselves for old age, because they have arterial pressure, osteochondrosis, because they did not move there, did not work. They come here and go out to the fields, to the gardens, climb trees and forget about arterial pressure and osteochondrosis. Because people work and move outdoor. And they even get younger";

"it can be very hard physical work, not everyone is able to cope with it".

---

<sup>23</sup> Seven Kazakhstanis died in South Korea in six months - RoK MFA // URL: [https://www.inform.kz/ru/sem-kazahstantsev-pogibli-v-yuzhnoy-koree-za-polgoda-mid-rk\\_a3512821](https://www.inform.kz/ru/sem-kazahstantsev-pogibli-v-yuzhnoy-koree-za-polgoda-mid-rk_a3512821)

Table 10. **Publications in the Kazakhstan media on the situation of labor migrants in South Korea**

Date of issue	Article title	Source
September 22, 2018	12 thousand illegal immigrants from Kazakhstan face with hefty fines in South Korea	<a href="http://today.kz/news/kazakhstan/2018-10-22/771198-krupnyie-shtrafyi-grozyat-12-tyisyacham-nelegalov-iz-kazahstana-v-yuzhnoj-koree/">http://today.kz/news/kazakhstan/2018-10-22/771198-krupnyie-shtrafyi-grozyat-12-tyisyacham-nelegalov-iz-kazahstana-v-yuzhnoj-koree/</a>
October 31, 2018	Four illegal immigrants from Kazakhstan have died in South Korea since the beginning of the year	<a href="https://informburo.kz/novosti/chetyre-kazahstanskih-nelegala-pogibli-v-yuzhnoy-koree-s-nachala-goda.html">https://informburo.kz/novosti/chetyre-kazahstanskih-nelegala-pogibli-v-yuzhnoy-koree-s-nachala-goda.html</a>
November 5, 2018	Million a month and bonuses every week. Kazakhstani told about work in Korea	<a href="https://tengrinews.kz/article/million-mesyats-premii-kajduyu-nedelyu-kazahstanets-929/">https://tengrinews.kz/article/million-mesyats-premii-kajduyu-nedelyu-kazahstanets-929/</a>
February 4, 2019	“I Work in Korea Illegally”: Three Anonymous Stories of Kazakhstanis	<a href="https://www.the-village.kz/village/people/howtobe/4621-mama-ya-v-koree">https://www.the-village.kz/village/people/howtobe/4621-mama-ya-v-koree</a>
April 2, 2019	Seven illegal migrants from Kazakhstan died in Korea	<a href="https://eadaaily.com/ru/news/2019/04/02/sem-nelegalnyh-migrantov-iz-kazahstana-umerli-v-koree">https://eadaaily.com/ru/news/2019/04/02/sem-nelegalnyh-migrantov-iz-kazahstana-umerli-v-koree</a>
April 14, 2019	“Illegal Kazakhstanis earn up to 25 thousand dollars yearly in South Korea” - confession of a labor migrant	<a href="https://astanatv.kz/ru/news/47772/">https://astanatv.kz/ru/news/47772/</a>
December 30, 2019	Kazakhstanis illegally working in South Korea are leery of returning to their homeland	<a href="https://24.kz/ru/news/social/item/364530-kazahstantsy-nezakonno-rabotayushchie-v-yuzhnoj-koree-ne-speshat-vozvrashchatsya-narodinu">https://24.kz/ru/news/social/item/364530-kazahstantsy-nezakonno-rabotayushchie-v-yuzhnoj-koree-ne-speshat-vozvrashchatsya-narodinu</a>
January 4, 2020	What awaits a Kazakhstani in South Korea What are the working hours and wages.	<a href="https://kursiv.kz/news/obschestvo/2020-01/chto-ozhidaet-kazahstanca-v-yuzhnoy-koree">https://kursiv.kz/news/obschestvo/2020-01/chto-ozhidaet-kazahstanca-v-yuzhnoy-koree</a>
January 5, 2020	An Almaty resident spoke frankly about work at a plant in South Korea	<a href="https://newtimes.kz/nashi-lyudi/103199-almatinets-otkrovenno-rasskazal-o-rabote-na-zavode-v-yuzhnoj-koree">https://newtimes.kz/nashi-lyudi/103199-almatinets-otkrovenno-rasskazal-o-rabote-na-zavode-v-yuzhnoj-koree</a>
April 6, 2020	“Foreigners do the most harmful work”. The story of illegal migrant from Kazakhstan in South Korea	<a href="https://rus.azattyq.org/a/kazakhstan-south-korea-labour-migration/30517432.html">https://rus.azattyq.org/a/kazakhstan-south-korea-labour-migration/30517432.html</a>
April 21, 2020	Illegal from Kazakhstan was nominated for a state award in South Korea	<a href="https://24.kz/ru/news/social/item/390338-nelegala-iz-kazahstana-predstavili-k-gosudarstvennoj-nagrade-v-yuzhnoj-koree">https://24.kz/ru/news/social/item/390338-nelegala-iz-kazahstana-predstavili-k-gosudarstvennoj-nagrade-v-yuzhnoj-koree</a>

Date of issue	Article title	Source
April 22, 2020	19 illegal migrants from Kazakhstan were detained in South Korea. They participated in a brawl.	<a href="https://kursiv.kz/news/proisshestviya/2020-04/v-yuzhnoy-koree-zaderzhany-19-kazakhstancev-nelegalov">https://kursiv.kz/news/proisshestviya/2020-04/v-yuzhnoy-koree-zaderzhany-19-kazakhstancev-nelegalov</a>
May 2, 2020	38 people died in a fire at a warehouse in South Korea. There are two Kazakhstan citizens among the dead.	<a href="https://inbusiness.kz/ru/last/38-chelovek-pogibli-iz-za-pozhara-na-sklade-v-yuzhnoj-koree">https://inbusiness.kz/ru/last/38-chelovek-pogibli-iz-za-pozhara-na-sklade-v-yuzhnoj-koree</a>

In hospitals, migrants, without medical insurance, are forced to pay for expensive medical services, asking their relatives and friends for money. Often employers (“*sajan*”) pay for these services. There are also frequent cases of fraud on the part of employers who do not pay for the work of migrants knowing that illegal workers have no protection.

Undocumented labor migration from Kazakhstan to South Korea is mostly **return**<sup>24</sup>. Most young people work for 3-5 years and after they earn a certain amount of money, they return home.

#### From an interview with illegal migrants:

“I have been working for the third year, from home I go to work, from work I come back home again, I don’t go anywhere else, I have already earned some money, I’ll earn a certain amount and go back home”;

“Many have their own clear plan - to earn money and leave”;

“I’ll leave, earn money and leave, I learned a lot here. Something you can use in real life. I want to start up my own business in Kazakhstan”;

“Some come already having a certain plan ... to earn money on a house, car or initial capital in order to start a business;

“...they want to do field work in Kazakhstan. In the southern region, plant melons, watermelons. And so people came with a purpose (to Korea). They achieve and they succeed. There must be a motivation”.

<sup>24</sup> *The movement of a person returning to his/her country of origin or habitual residence usually after spending at least one year in another country. This return may or may not be voluntary (IOM definition)*

## Refugees: statistics, status, situation

Migrants with “refugee” status are not the subject of research, and below only general information will be provided on the situation of Kazakhs applying for this status.

Most often, illegal migrant workers become refugees, applying for “refugee status” or “temporary asylum” (humanitarian status). **Type of refugee visa** in South Korea:

**G-1-5:** Refugee applicants

**G-1-6:** Persons granted temporary asylum after being denied refugee status (humanitarian status).

According to the IOM Migration Terminology Handbook<sup>25</sup>, a **refugee** (recognized) is a person who, “owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country” (Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Art. 1 A (2), 1951 as modified by the 1967 Protocol).

The Republic of Korea began accepting refugees in 1994. On July 1, 2013, the law on refugees came into force in Korea, which increased the number of applications for this status already in the next 2014 by almost 2 times (2013 – 1574 people, 2014 – 2896 people).

Table 11. **Number of applications for G1 visa (1994-2018)**

Total	1994-2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
48,906	1,087	717	364	324	423	1,011	1,143	1,574	2,896	5,711	7,541	9,942	16,173

Source: Korea immigration service statistics. Ministry of Justice, 2018

From 1994 to 2019, a total of 48,906 refugee visa applications were submitted, of which 4,306 people were Kazakhs (8.8% percent). In 2018, 2,496 applications from Kazakhstan citizens were submitted.

<sup>25</sup> “Handbook of terminology in the field of migration (Russian-English)”. - Moscow: International Organization for Migration, 2011//  
URL: [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/handbook\\_on\\_migration\\_terminology.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/handbook_on_migration_terminology.pdf)

Table 12. Number of G1 visa applications by countries

Total	Total	Pakistan	China	Kazakhstan	Egypt	Russia	Others
	48,906	5,388	4,839	4,306	4,114	2,984	27,275
2018	Total	Kazakhstan	Russia	Malaysia	China	India	Others
	16,173	2,496	1,916	1,236	1,199	1,120	8,206

Source: Korea immigration service statistics. Ministry of Justice, 2018

It is very difficult to obtain refugee status in South Korea. According to statistics, during the period of 1994-2018, 48,906 applications were submitted for obtaining the status of “refugee” and only 936 people received a visa (1.9%). 20,284 applicants were refused<sup>26</sup>.

Foreigners can also obtain temporary asylum - “humanitarian status”, in which case they are not subject to forced deportation and can obtain a work permit. During this period, 1,988 people obtained humanitarian status.

Table 13. Number of applications for G1 visa (1994-2018)

	Total applications submitted	The process of considering the applications is complete		Refusal	Under consideration		Those who voluntarily withdraw the application
		Obtained G1 visa	Obtained “humanitarian status”		Submitted for the first time	Appeal	
Quantity	48,906	936	1,988	20,284	17,159	2,772	5,767
%	100%	1.9%	4.0%	41.5%	35.1%	5.7%	11.8%

Source: Korea immigration service statistics. Ministry of Justice, 2018

Refugee status is granted only if a citizen proves that he is being persecuted in his homeland because of his religious, political, national or sexual convictions. The whole procedure lasts about 3-6 months; this process can be extended in this way: the person who made the request (“asylum seekers”<sup>27</sup>) can stay for some time in the state.

<sup>26</sup> Korea immigration service statistics. Ministry of Justice, 2018 .94 p.

<sup>27</sup> Persons seeking to be admitted into a country as refugees and awaiting decision on their application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In case of a negative decision, they must leave the country and may be expelled, as may any alien in an irregular situation, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other related grounds.



---

Previously process of considering documents and obtaining a visa took about 8-9 months, the appeal took a year, that is, the applicant could have been in South Korea for about two years. Many migrants know that most likely they will not receive refugee status and take advantage of the fact that, while waiting for a response to a request, they can stay in the state and not be subject to deportation.

It should also be noted that there is a very developed mediation system (brokers) that provide illegal services when applying for a refugee visa<sup>28</sup>.

Mediators who help to complete the application for a refugee visa receive money for this, inventing a story of persecution, suggesting how to behave during an interview.

## Settlements where migrants live

In general, migrants live in different regions of South Korea, but there is a large concentration in the cities of Ansan, Gwangju, Busan, Incheon. The centers of attraction are the settlements in which representatives of Koryo-saram live – ethnic Koreans from Central Asia, the core of which are former citizens of Uzbekistan. Uzbekistanis, mainly ethnic Koreans and ethnic Uzbeks migrants, are the foundation for the formation of labor migration from the CIS states to South Korea. Today, according to official data, 75,320 Uzbekistanis live in South Korea.

Professor German Kim<sup>29</sup>, Director of the Institute of Asian Studies, Al-Farabi KazNU believes that *“the upward trend in the number of Korean migrants from Uzbekistan, according to experts, will continue. The share of Russian Koreans who arrived in their ethnic homeland is about 15 percent of the total number in Russia. Koreans from Kazakhstan still have the smallest share of people who went to South Korea – 10 percent of the total. However, this unexpected phenomenon, that every tenth of the Koreans of Kazakhstan migrated from the country, suggests that many are no longer satisfied with the current economic situation and other living conditions in Kazakhstan.”*

In Korea, there are two centers of attraction founded by Koryo-saram: **Ansan** (650,000 inhabitants) and **Gwangju** (1,500,000 inhabitants). These cities are attractive for many reasons. Ansan is located near Seoul and the country's main airport, Incheon. Gwangju has a developed industrial infrastructure. An important factor in the attraction of migration are settlements with industrial enterprises or farms.

Migrants try to live in densely populated cities to be less conspicuous for the migration police, which regularly conduct raids to identify illegal immigrants. Migration inspectors usually arrange checks at employment centers, in areas where foreigners live and work, factories, construction sites or fields.

---

<sup>28</sup> *Kazakhstani helping illegal immigrants to obtain refugee status detained in South Korea//*  
[https://baigenews.kz/news/pomogavshiy\\_nelegalam\\_poluchit\\_status\\_bezhentsa\\_kazakhstane\\_ts\\_osuzhden\\_v\\_yuzhnoy\\_koree/](https://baigenews.kz/news/pomogavshiy_nelegalam_poluchit_status_bezhentsa_kazakhstane_ts_osuzhden_v_yuzhnoy_koree/)

<sup>29</sup> *Kim German. How Koryo Saram became Koreins //Russian Koreans//*  
URL: [http://gazeta.korean.net/index.php?mid=column&document\\_srl=85340](http://gazeta.korean.net/index.php?mid=column&document_srl=85340)

There are several types of institutions in Korea that perform the function of detaining immigrants. These include special immigration detention centers – “processing centers”, detention cells in immigration offices and transit points at ports of entry. These institutions are part of the Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Justice<sup>30</sup>.

Mostly migrant workers live compactly in certain areas or city quarters (Dongdemun, Itaewon in Seoul, “pyanka”, “pozharka” quarters in the Wolgokton area in the city of Gwangju, Tekol in the city of Ansan, Sadanji in the city of Incheon), which have already formed their own infrastructure. Part of migrant workers in search of work move from one city to another.

### **From an interview with ethnic Koreans (koryo-saram):**

“every year there are more and more illegal immigrants from Kazakhstan, this is very noticeable”.

The migration network is stable due to the established infrastructure, which plays an important role in the adaptation of migrants. The infrastructure consists of shops with products from the CIS, cafes with Central Asian cuisine, translation bureaus, phone stores, beauty salons, training courses, sports clubs (a karate section was opened in Gwangju by a Kazakh who arrived in the state due to an interethnic marriage). There are also taxis, freight transport services, service stations, logistics and transport companies, lending agencies, etc.

If there are problems with non-payment of wages, migrants address to lawyers through intermediaries who help to deal with the situation.

Strong migrant networks, compactness of residence, ethnic solidarity environment, comfortable working conditions and infrastructure formed a large labor migration to South Korea from the CIS, Central Asian states, including illegal migration from Kazakhstan. Citizens of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan mostly work in a legal format, in accordance with existing laws and bilateral agreements in the field of labor migration.

The meeting places of Kazakhstanis are cafes, restaurants of Kazakh cuisine. So, in March 2020, in the “Shyraily Shymkent” cafe in the city of Yensan, Kazakhstanis celebrated Nauryz<sup>31</sup>. Saule Kosakayeva<sup>32</sup>, who was born in Shymkent, has been living in South Korea (the city of Yonsan) for two years, she opened this cafe.

---

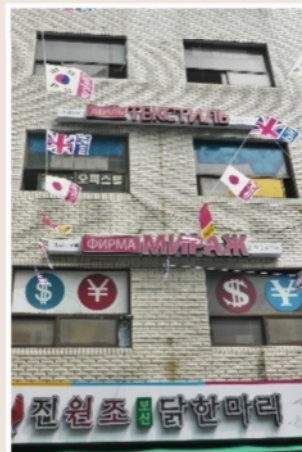
<sup>30</sup> *Country report. Immigration detention in the Republic of Korea: Penalizing people in need of protection. The Global Detention Project, February 2020*

<sup>31</sup> *Nauryz was celebrated in South Korea // [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1\\_RSpWx0ts4&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR3vfTt2yxfQ2Uoqw3pqUIC0pQPxcIOIYUobkA02OIKyM6d5gJDqzT\\_pebM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_RSpWx0ts4&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR3vfTt2yxfQ2Uoqw3pqUIC0pQPxcIOIYUobkA02OIKyM6d5gJDqzT_pebM)*

<sup>32</sup> *A piece of Shymkent in South Korea - a Kazakh woman spoke about life and business abroad // [https://baigenews.kz/news/kusochek\\_shymkenta\\_v\\_yuzhnoy\\_koree\\_-\\_kazakhstanka\\_rasskazala\\_o\\_zhizni\\_i\\_biznese\\_za\\_rubezhom/](https://baigenews.kz/news/kusochek_shymkenta_v_yuzhnoy_koree_-_kazakhstanka_rasskazala_o_zhizni_i_biznese_za_rubezhom/)*



**South Korea, Seoul**  
*(quarters where migrants live)*



Source: author's archive (2018)



## South Korea, Gwangju

(quarters where migrants live: "pyanka", "pozharka")



Source: author's archive (2019)

---

## Methods of Entry to South Korea

Taking advantage of the fact that Kazakhstanis can stay in the country for 30 days without a visa (the visa-free regime was introduced in November 2014), many remain to work illegally. Most of the illegal migrants came in the period from 2014 to 2018. The flow of illegal immigrants is growing every year, despite the fact that migration rules have been tightened at the border. At the border, upon arrival in South Korea, the border services may refuse entry and deport back to the country of origin those who have not passed passport control. This preventive measure was introduced to reduce the entry of illegal migrants into the country.

Many migrant workers take out travel and initial loans or borrow money from relatives and friends.

Entry into the state is carried out mainly through the Incheon airport, Kazakhs come as tourists both by Kazakhs aircraft and by flights from Uzbekistan. In the past 2-3 years, entry has been tightened at the border, and many potential migrants arrive in the state through the city of Busan, where entry requirements are not so strict, also they arrive through Russia.

There is also information that a number of Kazakhstan citizens “buy” passports of ethnic Koreans and thus have the right to work and live in South Korea.

Another channel of influx of migrants is marriage agencies, which actively work with potential marriage migrants from the CIS countries. Marriage migration is mainly formed from citizens of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Some migrants enter into fictitious marriages with ethnic Koreans after obtaining a family visa to find permanent or temporary employment. When entering into marriage, ethnic Kazakhs take Korean surnames.

There are also cases when Kazakhstan citizens arrive in the state for the purpose of treatment in medical clinics, agree with clinics about consultations with doctors, but after arrival in the country, they do not visit a medical clinic. There are isolated cases when patients of medical clinics after treatment remain in the state and get a job.

An important role in the formation of illegal migration is played by intermediary organizations or individual intermediaries, among whom fraudulent operations are common. Cases have become more frequent when swindlers - intermediaries, having agreed with the employer, hire illegal migrants, promising wages at the end of a certain period (usually a month) and at the end of the term they send the migration police, which deport these migrants.

A group of realtors organizes a supply channel for migrants, promising some conditions, but in fact, illegal migrant work in hard conditions without protecting their labor right: *“According to the Korean side, there is a group of black realtors who illegally recruit these people and send them to work in Korea. Up to the point that a stable channel for the supply of people is organized, after which they work in very difficult, inhuman conditions. Moreover, their labor rights are absolutely not protected, there are no medical insurance. There have been cases when, after they are injured there, they do not return to their homeland, they still remain there, are*

*engaged in vagrancy,”* said **Ardak Madiyev**, Director of the Consular Service Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, on December 14, 2017<sup>33</sup>.

In Korea, there are Employment centers (“samushil”) that help migrants get a job, including illegal ones. Mostly offer daily/weekly or hourly work. These centers begin work at 5-6 in the morning, collecting employees in certain places.

Usually workers are paid daily. In the language of migrants, this work is called “arbeit”, translated from German as “work” in this context it means Korean temporary work.

Some migrants have permanent jobs, which are influenced by the seasonality – there is less work in winter, it is easier to find a job in spring, summer, and autumn. The types of work depend on the industry and the region.

## **Social networks**




An important element of the migration process is social networks in which blogs of Russian-speaking residents of Korea are active. Telegram, WhatsApp, Viber, Facebook, Instagram, VKontakte are the main sources of information. Through these social networks, migrants share their experience of working in South Korea, methods of survival, etc. There are special blogs, like the “Black List of Employers and Intermediaries” (VKontakte), where migrants publish data about back-alley employers and intermediaries.

---

<sup>33</sup> *From vagrancy to murder. What is known about Kazakh illegal immigrants in South Korea*  
[December 14, 2017 //  
URL: [https://tengrinews.kz/kazakhstan\\_news/brodyajnichestva-ubiystv-izvestno-kazahstanskih-nelegalah-333287/](https://tengrinews.kz/kazakhstan_news/brodyajnichestva-ubiystv-izvestno-kazahstanskih-nelegalah-333287/)



Table 14. **Social networks**

Facebook		Number of subscribers
	82 авеню - Наши в Корее (82 Avenue - Ours in Korea)	117,778
	Понаехали тут! (Южная Корея) (Bridge-and-tunnel crowd! (South Korea))	82,799
	База вакансий Work in Korea (Work in Korea job base)	78,691
	Работа в Южной Корее (Work in South Korea)	57,186
	Мы в Кванджу 광주광역시 (We are in Gwangju 광주광역시)	24,593
	Работа в Южной Корее (Work in South Korea)	18,482
	Работа и отдых в Корее (Work and leisure in Korea)	15,074
	KOREANLIFE (Жизнь и работа в Корее) (KOREANLIFE (Living and working in Korea))	11,360
	Work in South Korea- Работа в Южной Корее	10,382
	Работа по Корее без визы (Work in Korea without a visa)	9,842
	Южная Корея. Сеул. Пусан. Работа Вакансии. Услуги (South Korea. Seoul. Busan. Job Vacancies. Services)	8,785
	Южная Корея на русском (South Korea in Russian)	5,685
	Корея. Инчхон, р-н Саданжи и не только...! (Korea. Incheon, Sadanji district and more ...!)	5,209
	Корея жаналыктары (News of Korea)	4,644
	Казахстанцы в Южной Корее (Kazakhstanis in South Korea)	3,044
	Ттэколь самгори. Ансан. Теколь. Тэколь. Сонбудон (Ttekkol samgori. Ansan. Tekol. Sunbudon)	2,524
	Казахи в Корее (Kazakhs in Korea)	1,124
Telegram		Number of subscribers
	Вся Корея (All Korea)	29 500
	Корейдағы QAZAQSTANDIKTAR: 1001 Сұрақтар жауаптар жұмыс вакансии разное (KAZAKHSTANIS in Korea: 1001 Questions answer, jobs vacancies, others)	403
	Казахи в Корее. Группа для объединения земляков (Kazakhs in Korea. Group for uniting fellow countrymen)	18
	Шымкент-Корея Viza vstrecha trudoustroystva est Garant (Shymkent-Korea Visa meeting, employment, guarantee))	2 (channel is inactive now)
Instagram		Number of subscribers
	Казахи в Корее (Kazakhs in Korea)	3,943
	Kazakhi.V.Koree (Kazakhs in Korea)	218
	Wolgoktonskie (Wolgokton inhabitants)	1,450

## Islam in South Korea

An important factor of adaptation in the Korean environment, in addition to the established infrastructure, is the presence of Islam in the country.

South Korea today is home to 35 000 Muslims, ethnic Koreans. In total, the Ummah is 150 000 people, mostly foreigners.

Korea's first acquaintance with Islam occurred in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and is associated with the expansion of trade routes.

Islam ingrained during the Korean War of 1950-1953, when the Turkish army arrived on the peninsula as part of the UN mission, which included imams, whose main duty was to conduct religious rites. Islamic postulates attracted the local population's attention and some of the visitors to the tent mosques converted to Islam.

Another factor in the spread of Islam was the expansion of economic ties between Korea and the states of the Arab world in the 70-80s of the 20th century, when Korean specialists went to work in the Middle East, some of them converted to Islam.

Due to the expansion of contacts with the Islamic world in recent years, cases of young Koreans converting to Islam have increased.

## Seoul Cathedral Mosque



*Source: author's archive (2018)*

The Korea Muslim Federation, formed in 1967<sup>34,35</sup>, operates in South Korea. The main mosque – *Seoul Cathedral Mosque* is located in Itaewon district in Seoul. Itaewon is Seoul’s most multicultural area, where the American base is located, which has given this part of the city a multicultural experience. There are cafes, restaurants, bars with Russian, American, European, Japanese, Arabic, Vietnamese, Argentinean, Spanish, French and other cuisines. The *Seoul Cathedral Mosque* was opened in 1976, there is a madrasah nearby, where training in Arabic, Korean, English is held. The main parishioners of this mosque are the representatives of the Middle East, Central Asia and South Koreans (hanguks).

Korea has 16 mosques (branches of the Korea Muslim Federation) and 50 prayer centers. There are large mosques in the cities where Muslim migrant workers live: Busan, Gwangju.

### Meeting of the Imams, 2019



Source:  
<http://www.koreaislam.org/en/muslim-archives/?uid=4734&mod=document>

### Korea 50 Years Islam Gallery



Source:  
[http://www.koreaislam.org/kislam\\_home/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/056.jpg](http://www.koreaislam.org/kislam_home/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/056.jpg)

<sup>34</sup> Official site of the Korea Muslim Federation //  
 URL: <http://www.koreaislam.org/> 전국성원-및-지회안내//

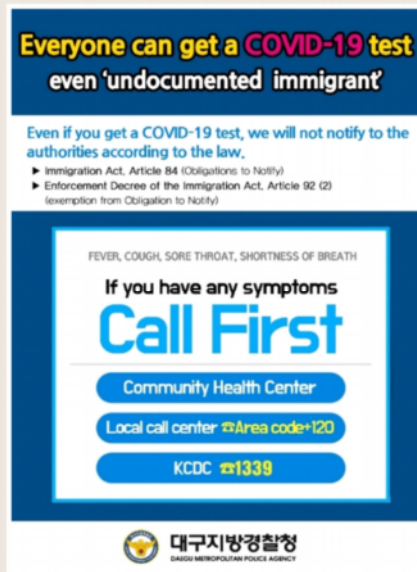
<sup>35</sup> YouTube Korea Muslim Federation //  
 URL: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiK0ksilK01wc3M19ELa0Gg/featured>

### Ramadan calendar, 2020



Source:  
<http://www.koreaislam.org/en/muslim-archives/?pageid=1&uid=5055&mod=document>

### Memo for illegal migrants stating that they can get a COVID-19 test and will not be arrested



Source:  
<http://www.koreaislam.org/en/notice-3/?uid=5087&mod=document>

In Gwangju, in the Wolgokton area, there is also a prayer room at the “Turkestan” cafe, where Muslims can read namaz (prayer).

### “Turkestan” restaurant, South Korea, Gwangju (preparation for Iftar (evening meal), photo from Facebook page, May 2020)



The presence of Muslims in the country, as well as the growing number of tourists from Indonesia and Malaysia, according to estimates by tourism organizations, up to 800 000 people arrived from these countries, prompted the Korean authorities to develop infrastructure for Muslims - opening primarily halal cafes and restaurants.



## Money transfers

One of the indicators of the presence of migrant workers from Kazakhstan in South Korea is demonstrated by the volume of money transfers entering Kazakhstan through various monetary systems. Any migrant can open a bank account and make money transactions. The well-developed sphere of money transfer services is also popular.

A large volume of money transfers to Kazakhstan traditionally came from the Russian Federation, but in April 2020 South Korea became the first country in terms of money transfers.

Table 15. **Money transfers received from abroad, country-specific**  
(January-April, 2020)

State	January, 2020		February, 2020		March, 2020		April, 2020	
	Amount (mln. tenge)	Share of the total amount, in%	Amount (mln. tenge)	Share of the total amount, in%	Amount (mln. tenge)	Share of the total amount, in%	Amount (mln. tenge)	Share of the total amount, in%
The Republic of Korea	4,620.0	20.6% (2 <sup>nd</sup> ,place)	3,775.0	17.4% (2 <sup>nd</sup> ,place)	4,845.8	20.0% (2 <sup>nd</sup> ,place)	3,091.5	24.6% (1 <sup>st</sup> ,place)
Russian Federation	6,475.6	28.9% (1 <sup>st</sup> ,place)	7,142.5	32.9% (1 <sup>st</sup> ,place)	5,894.6	24.4% (1 <sup>st</sup> ,place)	2,887.0	23.0% (2 <sup>nd</sup> ,place)
Kyrgyzstan	2,372.2	10.6%	2,306.1	10.6%	3,270.6	13.5%	1,992.0	15.9%
Uzbekistan	2,526.1	11.3%	2,370.1	10.9%	3,144.7	13.0%	1,109.0	8.8%
United States of America	1,472.2	6.6%	1,432.8	6.6%	1,657.1	6.9%	835.3	6.7%
Germany	931.0	4.2%	833.0	3.8%	1,131.8	4.7%	665.2	5.3%
Turkey	637.0	2.8%	683.3	3.1%	808.4	3.3%	376.5	3.0%
Turkmenistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	179.3	1.4%
United Arab Emirates	269.3	1.2%	278.7	1.3%	347.5	1.4%	121.2	1.0%
Ukraine	-	-	217.2	1.0%	255.7	1.1%	99.4	0.8%
Georgia	231.7	1.0%	261.4	1.2%	273.0	1.1%	-	-
Israel	228.9	1.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	2,642.9	11.8%	2,422.4	11.2%	2,547.9	10.5%	1,195.2	9.5%
Total	22,406.8	100.0%	21,722.6	100.0%	24,177.2	100.0%	12,551.5	100.0%

Source: National Bank of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
<https://nationalbank.kz/?docid=1191&switch=russian>

## Green corridor (2018-2020)

One of the solutions to the problems of illegal migration, adopted by the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Employment and Labor of the Republic of Korea, is the regular operation *Green Corridor* - which means voluntary departure for illegal migrants. This action allows migrant workers to voluntarily leave the country within a certain period of time, avoiding fines and further bans on entering the state. Over the past 2 years (2018-2020), two **Green Corridors** have been operated. First – from October 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019.

**The second Green Corridor** was opened from December 11 to June 30, 2020. The peculiarity of this action is reflected in the following: “This time, foreigners who leave the country will be given the opportunity to return to the state after a certain period of their departure. It is stated that foreigners who voluntarily left the country during the specified period will be issued a short-term visa (C-3) when a certain period of time after the issuance of a “certificate of voluntary departure” is complete”.

If a migrant is deported, then he will be banned from entering the country for up to 10 years and be sentenced to a fine.

**On September 16, 2019**, in the South Korean city of Changwon, a 20-year-old Kazakhstani hit a 7-year-old child with the car and left the scene of an accident.<sup>36,37</sup> After the accident, he bought an air ticket and flew to Kazakhstan. The South Korean authorities have announced a crime detection. Having arrested him a few months later, he was sentenced to a term of 2 years 6 months. Later an appeal was filed and the term was reduced to 1 year 6 months.

Due to this case, on October 6, 2019, the South Korean Ministry of Justice announced that from now on, the country’s authorities will ban illegal foreigners from leaving South Korea without prior notice. According to the new rules, migrants will have to report the date of departure from the state 3-15 working days before leaving.

---

<sup>36</sup> *Kazakh man suspected of hit-and-run extradited to Korea//*  
URL: <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20191014000685> [Oct 14, 2019].

<sup>37</sup> *The terms of sentence for the Kazakhstani convicted of road accident in South Korea was reduced //*  
URL: <https://vlast.kz/novosti/38164-osuzdennomu-za-dtp-v-uznoj-koree-kazahstancu-sokratili-srok-nakazania.html> [26.03.2020]

## Memo for migrants

**PERIOD OF VOLUNTARY DEPARTURE FOR ILLEGAL FOREIGNERS - TILL THE END OF JUNE**

- The period of voluntary departure of illegally residing foreigners which has begun on December 11, 2019, will end at the end of June, as was previously announced.
- Starting from July 1, even with voluntary departure, a fine will be charged.


**IT IS POSSIBLE TO APPLY FOR A VOLUNTARY DEPARTURE WITHOUT A TICKET**

- Due to the difficulties in obtaining a ticket to leave the country due to Covid-19, starting from April 20, it is allowed to submit an application for voluntary departure without a ticket

To apply for voluntary departure without a ticket, you need to visit the immigration office at the place of residence, provide documents: passport, application for voluntary departure and the obligation to leave voluntarily.

**RE-ENTRY PERMISSION IS GIVEN TO THOSE WHO APPLY FOR VOLUNTARY DEPARTURE BEFORE THE END OF JUNE**

- Taking into account the absence (reduction) of flights due to COVID-19, when declaring voluntary departure until the end of June of this year, in special cases, even if the departure is carried out after June, the possibility of re-entry into the country is provided (but must leave the country after the resumption of flights)

 법무부 출입국·외국인정책본부  
KOREA IMMIGRATION SERVICE

## Criminal situation

The introduction of the Green Corridor and the strengthening of migration control as a measure to reduce the number of illegal migrants was introduced by the Korean government due to the growth of crime in the migrant environment. Labor migration in general, illegal migration in particular, is mainly formed from the youth environment, which is characterized by migration mobility. Migrants from Kazakhstan formed a large community in South Korea, transferring traditional forms of coexistence to this community. According to the respondents, in Gwangju, among Kazakhstanis, conflicts are widespread both with representatives from other countries and among themselves. This situation is typical both for Koryo-saram and for migrant workers from other countries (on June 20, 2020, a fight broke out in a parking lot in the city of Gimhae, in which 30 ethnic Koreans from Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, who were legally in the country, participated)<sup>38</sup>.

Illegality leads to a closed lifestyle, the circle of contacts is mostly the same people with whom they work and spend their leisure time. All of these provoke social conflicts.

Several “rape” cases were opened<sup>39</sup>.

---

<sup>38</sup> *Appeal of the Koryo-saram Association in the Republic of Korea //*  
URL: <https://koryo-saram.ru/obrashhenie-assocziaczii-koryo-saram-v-respublike-koreya-대한고려인협회/>

<sup>39</sup> *The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has commented on the case of a Shymkent resident who raped a girl in South Korea //*  
URL: <https://kaz.zakon.kz/4888752-o-t-st-k-koreyada-yz-zorla-an-shymkentt.html>

There are frequent road accidents with the participation of Kazakhstanis, who, due to the absence of police regulating traffic on the roads, drive cars without a license, violating traffic rules.

According to **Ardak Madiyev**, Director of the Consular Service Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan (press conference on December 14, 2017), *“using the visa-free agreement, a lot of Kazakhstan citizens are currently engaged in illegal work in Korea. If in the middle of this year there were about 5,5 thousand of them, then at the end of this year, it exceeded 6 590 citizens. That is, there is a very rapid growth in the number of illegal migrants. They get into a mess, commit crimes, and become disabled. Or they commit crimes of a different nature, from arson, theft, vagrancy to murder. It is very difficult”*<sup>40</sup>.

Table 16. **Cases related to Kazakhstanis - illegal migrants (2019-2020)**

Date	Case description	Government action
September 16, 2019	In Changwon, a 20-year-old Kazakhstani hit a 7-year-old boy with the car	Convicted (1 year 6 months)
September 23, 2019	In Gwangju, a Kazakhstan citizen crashed his car into a taxi	Detained by the police
October 2, 2019	In Cheonan, a Kazakhstan citizen crashed into a truck	Receives medical treatment
January 16, 2020	The body of Kazakhstani citizen was found in the city of Ansan. Suicide	-
March 23, 2020	In the city of Yanyan, Aliakbar (Ali) Yuldashev, a citizen of Kazakhstan, saved 10 Korean citizens from a fire	A visa for treatment (6 months) was presented. He was honored at the Yanyang City Hall (Gangwon Province)
April 10, 2020	A 22-year-old Kazakhstan citizen tried to get on a flight to her homeland at Incheon airport without a ticket. It turned out that the girl had lost her memory.	-
April 18, 2020	A scuffle with the participation of Kazakhstan citizens took place in the city of Gwangju. Dias Mirzaliyev suffered as a result of blow-ups between Kazakhstan citizens	Detained 19 citizens The investigation is ongoing
April 29, 2020	In the city of Incheon, South Korea, a fire broke out at the construction site of a logistics warehouse, which killed 38 people and injured 10. According to local authorities, 29 of the 38 killed were identified, including two citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan	-

<sup>40</sup> From vagrancy to murder. What is known about Kazakhstani illegal immigrants in South Korea// URL:[https://tengrinews.kz/kazakhstan\\_news/brodyajnichestva-ubiystv-izvestno-kazahstanskih-nelegalah-333287/](https://tengrinews.kz/kazakhstan_news/brodyajnichestva-ubiystv-izvestno-kazahstanskih-nelegalah-333287/) [14.12. 2017].

---

## Official position of government bodies and expert assessment of the situation

At the official level, the problem of illegal labor migration was raised on **July 12, 2017** at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan at a joint press conference of **Ardak Madiyev**, Director of the Consular Service Department and **Kim Daesik**, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea on the topic **“Problems of illegal labor migration to the Republic of Korea from Kazakhstan”** for representatives of the media.

From the information on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan<sup>41</sup>: “During the press conference, **A. Madiyev** spoke about the main provisions of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Government of the Republic of Korea on the mutual cancellation of visa requirements up to 30 days, which entered into force on November 29, 2014. He emphasized that, according to the agreement, Kazakhstan citizens, with valid travel documents (foreign passport), can visit the Republic of Korea without first applying for a visa and stay there for no more than 30 days only for the purpose of tourism, recovery or treatment, for private affairs or for business purposes. Citizens wishing to work, study in the Republic of Korea or visit the country for a missionary purpose or for permanent residence are required to apply for the appropriate visa.

Along with this, it was noted that with the entry into force of this agreement, cases of **illegal migration** have significantly increased – according to some data, as of the end of June 2017, about 5 700 Kazakhstan citizens are on the territory of South Korea illegally (in 2016 – 3 198). In order to prevent an increase in illegal migration from Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, together with the competent government bodies, is working on the issue of taking appropriate measures within its competence.

**Kim Daesik**, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Republic of Kazakhstan, in turn, noted that since 2009, Kazakhstan and Korea have been strategic partners, and measures are now being taken to reduce refusals to Kazakh citizens to enter Korea, including extensive explanatory work. He also named the main reasons for denying entry to Kazakhstan citizens, including the lack of confirmation of treatment in a Korean clinic; lack of information about relatives, acquaintances or travel agencies accompanying Kazakhstan citizens during their stay in Korea; lack of data or specific indications about the host organization, partners in Korea, work projects, etc.

**On February 1, 2019**, the 5<sup>th</sup> two-day consultations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea with representatives of government agencies of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic

---

<sup>41</sup> *Official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan // URL: <https://www.gov.kz/memleket/entities/mfa/press/news/details/v-mid-rk-razyasnil-prichiny-deportacii-kazahstanskih-grazhdan-vezzhayushchih-v-respubliku-koreya?lang=ru> [12.06.2017]*

of Kazakhstan, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan, National Security Committee)<sup>42</sup> were held in Seoul. The main question is the fate of Kazakhstan citizens illegally staying in South Korea. According to the latest data, there are more than 11 thousand illegal migrants in the country, 1200 Kazakhstan citizens have applied for asylum.

**Taubaldy Umbetbayev**, Director of the Consular Service Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan: *“We asked them “Did you find out why citizens are asking for asylum?” But we did not get a clear answer to this question either. We explained to them that the main reason for applying for asylum is not that these citizens are persecuted for any reason, they are not refugees. I think they cannot find another way to work here and return home safely, so they go for it.”*

Also, the Kazakhstan side initiated the issue of signing an agreement on the allocation of quotas for migrant workers from Kazakhstan.

**Yerlan Raiganiyev**, Deputy Chairman of the Committee of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan: *“Since they already have enough migrant workers who work under a quota, this agreement was not supported. If the citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan find appropriate companies that are ready to hire them here in Korea, they have the right to apply to the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Kazakhstan and this issue will also be considered, resolved and regulated by legislation”.*

The issue of irregular labor migration was raised in the expert environment of Kazakhstan. **Marat Shibutov**, political scientist, member of the Public Council of the city of Almaty, member of the National Council of Public Trust at the expert council of the analytical group KIPR “Emigration from the Republic of Kazakhstan: the human capital outflow”, held on February 14, 2019 in Almaty, noted that *“the labor market lacks jobs with high and constant wages. The education system does not meet the requirements of the labor market. This leads to legal labor migration of Kazakhstan citizens to Russia and illegal labor migration to South Korea”*<sup>43</sup>.

**Murat Abenov**, public figure, Member of the NCPT on his Facebook page<sup>44</sup> (January 12, 2020) shared the following information: *“Yesterday we met with Bakyt Dyusenbayev, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to South Korea. We discussed a number of issues related to labor migration of citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan. No matter how hard the authorities of both countries try to reduce the flow of illegal work of Kazakhstanis, in Korea their number remains at a fairly high level - about 10 thousand ... I, for example, want our citizens to be free to travel abroad, including*

---

<sup>42</sup> The problem of “illegal immigrants” from Kazakhstan was discussed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea // URL: <https://24.kz/ru/news/in-the-world/item/293708-problemu-nelegalov-iz-kazakhstana-obsudili-v-mid-yuzhnoj-korei>

<sup>43</sup> Marat Shibutov: We are not like Uzbeks yet, but already close // [https://total.kz/ru/news/zhizn/marat\\_shibutov\\_v\\_kazahstane\\_derzhitsya\\_stereotip\\_o\\_tom\\_cho\\_hvataet\\_raboti\\_date\\_2019\\_02\\_13\\_22\\_05\\_53](https://total.kz/ru/news/zhizn/marat_shibutov_v_kazahstane_derzhitsya_stereotip_o_tom_cho_hvataet_raboti_date_2019_02_13_22_05_53)

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/abenov.online/photos/a.598423943967660/775924076217645/>



---

*let them go to work ... It's okay if the world knows that we have unemployment. The Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan should ask the Korean authorities to allow legal labor migration, as they allow the citizens of Uzbekistan.*

*Last year, this issue has partially moved off the ground. The Korean side allowed, under a small quota, to invite to work from Kazakhstan for seasonal jobs in limited areas."*

In the article "Trends of Modern Labor Migration in Central Asia" (February 13, 2020), **Zulfiya Raissova**, the research journalist also raises the issue of labor emigration from Kazakhstan<sup>45</sup>.

## Coronavirus

The coronavirus has not spread in a number of cities where illegal immigrants live. The measures taken by government agencies have minimized the risks of a large-scale spread of the virus throughout the country. Due to this factor, most illegal migrants remained in the country during the spread of the coronavirus. It should be noted that according to official data, among those infected with the coronavirus there are no illegal migrants (information as of May 1, 2020).

At the moment (May 2020), Korea has temporarily canceled operations to identify undocumented migrant workers. This measure is aimed at ensuring that illegal immigrants can fearlessly pass tests for the coronavirus COVID-19.

*"Undocumented migrants still do not know that they can go to the clinic to be tested for coronavirus and receive treatment. They still think they will be deported if they want to get tested or go to hospitals,"* said **Kim Yong Chul**, consultant director at Daegu-based Sungseo Industrial Complex labor union, highlighting the need to better advertise policies in migrant languages<sup>46</sup>.

Despite the fact that the work in South Korea is difficult and, in some cases, dangerous, the flow of labor migration from Kazakhstan does not decrease. Moreover, the economic crisis triggered by the coronavirus may give an additional impetus to the outflow of labor force to South Korea. The demand for cheap unskilled labor in the country is urgent.

South Korea has now introduced visas to enter the state for Kazakhstan citizens. This was in response to the closure of Kazakhstan's border to South Koreans during the March 2020 pandemic outbreak. This will temporarily stop the flow of migrants. If a visa-free regime is introduced again in the future, this will open up an opportunity to increase the number of Kazakhstanis who will illegally work in South Korea.

---

<sup>45</sup> "Trends in modern labor migration in Central Asia" // URL: <https://cabar.asia/ru/tendentsii-sovremennoj-trudovoj-migratsii-v-tsentralnoj-azii/>

<sup>46</sup> Telegram channel. All Korea // [https://t.me/s/vsya\\_korea/6101](https://t.me/s/vsya_korea/6101) (29500 subscribers)

## Push/Pull factors of the migration process

Based on the above material, the following features of the process of illegal migration from Kazakhstan to South Korea can be distinguished:

**first:** the main reason for going to work in Korea: economic,

**second:** mainly migrants are young people aged 20 to 30, who have good health, for work in difficult conditions,

**third:** migration is temporary in nature, most of the migrant workers plan to return to Kazakhstan,

**fourth:** diasporization is not inherent for migrants, i.e. migrants travel on their own or with their relatives/friends, do not bring families or do not plan to bring, do not settle for a long time in the country of destination,

**fifth:** marriages with the local population are not concluded, this is also an indicator of return migration,

**sixth:** unskilled migrant workers do not have the opportunity to improve their qualifications due to lack of knowledge of the Korean language,

**seventh:** work experience in Korea will affect labor values and attitudes towards labour, employment, work.

It should be noted that young people working in South Korea do not feel much discomfort in Korean society due to resemblance between appearances, similarity of Asian mentality and traditions. The popularity of the Korean wave (*hallyu*) in Kazakhstan, the prevalence of K-pop, television series (dramas), cosmetics (K-beauty) among the youth allowed them to get to know the country, get acquainted with the culture and customs while still in Kazakhstan. For some, this has become a decisive factor in deciding whether to go to work. Migrants who are in Korea for a long time study the Korean language, thereby integrating into society.

A well-developed system of government and public assistance for the adaptation and integration of migrants, including marriage ones, allows their early entry into Korean society. Educational centers, adaptation centers, cultural centers, NGO sector, church, charitable foundations, etc. - an incomplete list of organizations constantly participating in this process.

An important role is assigned to Christian churches, which help the Koryo-saram to a greater extent, but also support illegal migrants with legal advice, medical care, and psychological support.

Koryo-saram cultural centers, which play an important role in the adaptation and integration of ethnic Koreans, also help migrant workers in many ways. The common Russian-speaking environment allows for building relationships with former Kazakhstani ethnic Koreans who currently live in Korea as part of the policy of ethnic repatriation. Due to the fact that more than 100,000 ethnic Koreans live in multiethnic Kazakhstan, who have the image of hardworking, educated, enterprising citizens, Korean culture, cuisine and traditions are not alien to Kazakhstanis.

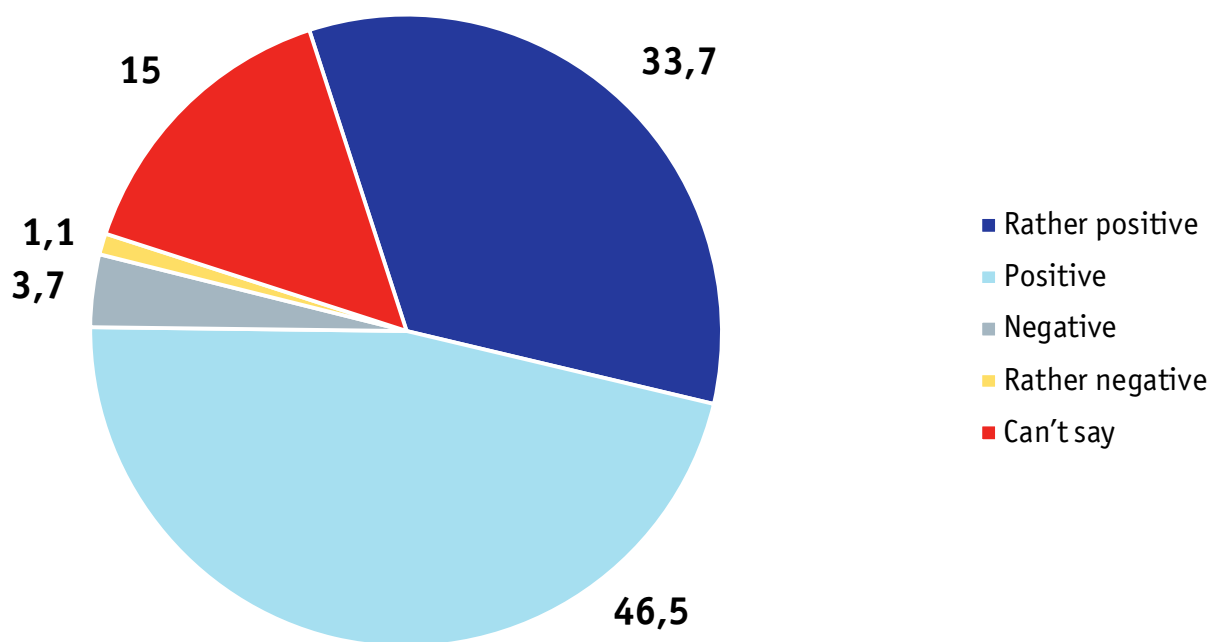


In general, the Kazakhstan society has a very positive attitude towards South Korea. Public Opinion Research Institute conducts regular sociological measurements, which investigate the attitude of Kazakhstanis towards various countries, including South Korea<sup>47</sup>.

In a sociological survey conducted in 2017, **80.2% of respondents** noted a positive image of South Korea.

Figure 4. **Please tell me, in your personal opinion, what is the image of South Korea?**

(2017, sample - 1200 respondents, 14 regions, Astana, Almaty, respondents aged 18 and older, %)

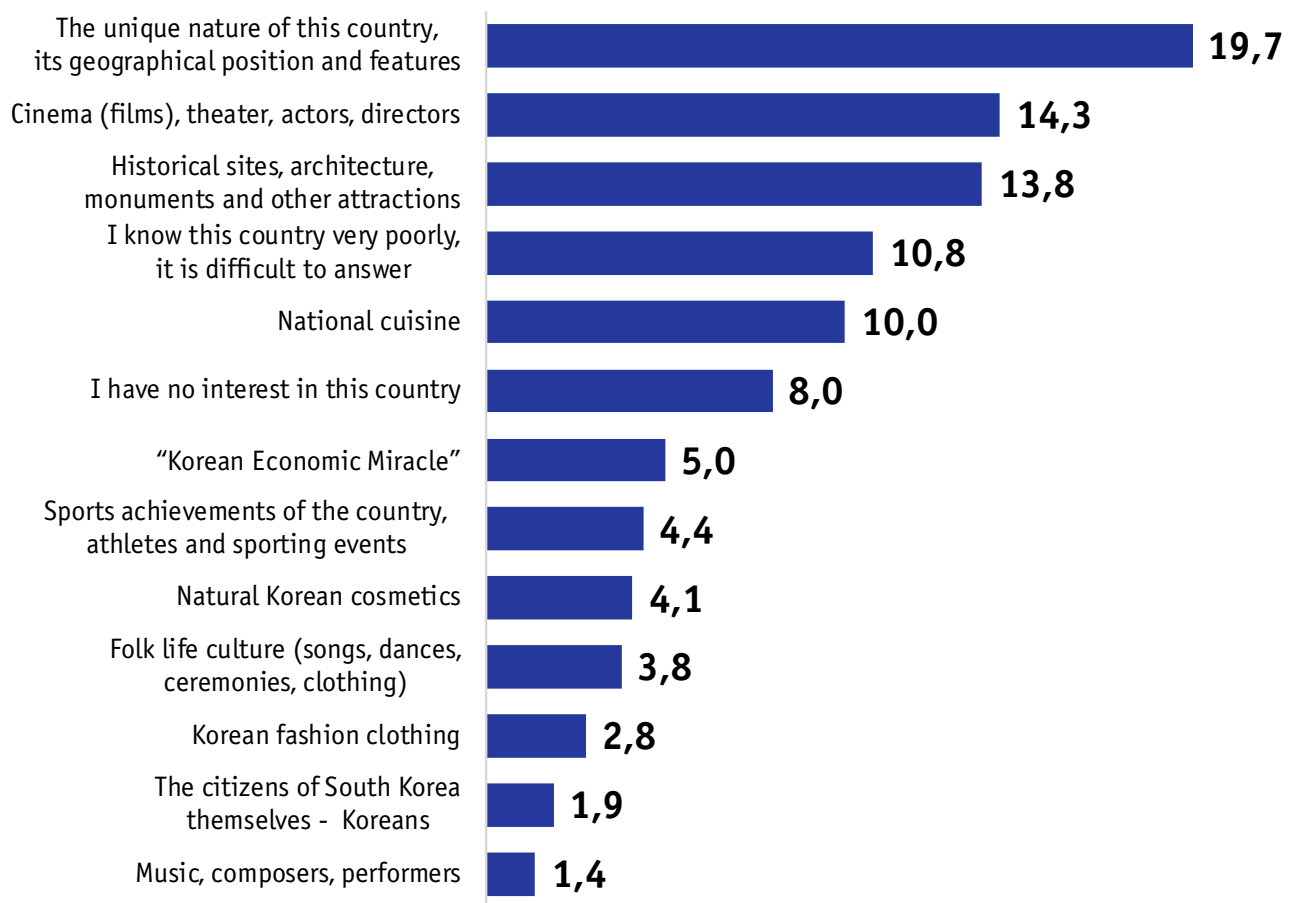


South Korea is interesting for Kazakhstanis: unique nature and its geographic location – 19.7%, cinema, theaters, artists, etc. – 14.3%, historical places and sights – 13.8%, national cuisine (10%). At the same time, 10.8% of respondents found it difficult to answer this question due to incomplete knowledge about the country.

<sup>47</sup> *South Korea and Kazakhstan: Peculiarities of Cultural and Humanitarian Cooperation // Chu Young Min, Ph.D. candidate at L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (Astana, Kazakhstan), Kalamkas Yessimova, analyst at the Public Opinion Research Institute (Astana, Kazakhstan), Botagoz Rakisheva, Candidate of Sociological Sciences, Director of the Public Opinion Research Institute (Astana, Kazakhstan) //CENTRAL ASIA AND THE CAUCASUS. - 2018. - Volume 21. – No. 3*

Figure 5. **Please tell me, what is interesting for you in South Korea?**

*Which of the following list is the most attractive to you in this country? (%)*



\* The amount is not 100%, because respondents could mark several answers

Favorable political and social conditions, political stability in South Korea are also important factors for migration to the country.

The theoretical basis of this work was the classical theory of migration – the economic model of E. Lee (Push/Pull factors)<sup>48</sup>, developed by the author in the 60s of the XX century. E. Lee identifies three groups of factors - *retaining, pulling, pushing*, influencing the motives of migrants and, in general, migration processes.

Based on the above, the factors that determined the departure of Kazakhstanis to work in Korea are allocated. The main reasons have economic nature - the lack of employment opportunities and the inability to receive high wages. In Kazakhstan, migrants did not have a stable income and permanent job.

<sup>48</sup> Lee E. S. *A Theory of Migration //Demography. 1966. No. 3. Pp. 47–57*

---

### **Pull factors for labor migration to South Korea:**

- high earnings,
- no entry visa,
- having a variety of jobs that do not require qualifications and knowledge of the Korean language,
- the presence of a migrant network that allows for a softer process of physical and psychological adaptation and integration,
- proximity to community members,
- favorable political and social conditions,
- tolerant attitude of the population towards migrant workers,
- security in South Korea,
- inexpensive housing (sometimes employers provide housing for free)
- presence of Islam,
- availability of air communication (before quarantine, there were 7 flights to Seoul from Almaty every week, from Nur-Sultan - 2 flights).

### **Push factors for labor migration from Kazakhstan:**

- low incomes, drop in actual incomes of the population,
- youth unemployment, lack of jobs,
- availability of loans, mortgages, debts,
- impossibility of self-realization, lack of prospects,
- high population density in the southern regions,
- weak social elevators, etc.

### **Restraining factors:**

- high cost of the flight,
- risks associated with the refusal to enter the country and further deportation,
- farness of the country,
- cuisine (soy-rice cuisine instead of meat and dairy cuisine),
- lack of knowledge of the Korean language,
- the need for change in previous behavior, habits,
- lack of work experience in another country.

## CONCLUSION

The situation of Kazakhstan citizens engaged in illegal labor activity requires regulation of this process by the country. It is necessary to consider the possibility of legalizing migrant workers (establishment of a quota for labor activity), providing the possibility of obtaining health insurance, ensuring the rights and well-being of migrant workers. Legal status can fulfill a protective function both for the migrant, protecting him/her from abuse, and the employer, protecting his rights. Regulation of this issue, legalization of labor migration will entail inclusion in the tax system and will become an additional source of taxes for the budget of Kazakhstan. On the other hand, it is necessary to form retaining mechanisms for the departure of labor from the country, dilution of human capital, by creating conditions for work and development within the country.

Kazakhstan is a country of arrival and departure of labor resources, and therefore it is important to resolve the issues of international labor migration by synchronizing the work of state structures, possibly by focusing these functions in a single government body (department, committee, agency). This government body would teach, including, if necessary, the language, negotiate with foreign companies, accompanying workers from the beginning to the end of their employment.

To adapt migrant workers to South Korean society, it is necessary to conduct orientation trainings, programs, including language courses before leaving for South Korea, which will explain the basic laws, traditions, conditions. Consulting centers will facilitate the early integration of migrants into the economic, social, and cultural life of the country.

It is necessary to develop a legal framework regulating the legal status of an international migrant, as flows of labor migration from Kazakhstan to other countries, in particular to the USA and Western Europe, are beginning to form. The global crisis may contribute to the expansion of labor migration channels. Since the majority of migrants are young people, this group is the most mobile and able to respond to the demand for labor both within the country and abroad.

The concentration of migrants based on the country of origin or a specific region is an important sign of self-reproduction. This is indicated by the way's migrants find work - through relatives, friends, acquaintances and from those who have already worked or are working in Korea. That is, information is distributed from the immediate environment, which is more trusted.

An important factor is the influence of illegal labor migration on interstate relations and on the formation of the country's image. Problems associated with illegal migrants from Kazakhstan affect the image of Kazakhstan. Korean society is poorly aware of Kazakhstan and when criminal cases arise, as was the case with the guy who hit the child (September 16, 2019), the Korean society was very actively involved in discussing this case and condemning the offender. But the case of "Ali" – the guy who saved 10 Korean citizens during the fire

---

(March 23, 2020) – was also actively discussed in the society. Petitions in support of illegal migrant were collected.

The problems associated with illegal migrants are regulated by the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in South Korea and this is an additional burden on diplomats. Among the problems that diplomats solve are: finding funds for treatment, resolving issues with sending the bodies of the dead citizens to Kazakhstan, contacts with the police when Kazakhstan citizens commit crimes, searching for missing citizens, etc. It may be necessary to consider the possibility of expansion - opening the Consulate General in Busan, the second largest city after Seoul, in which investment potential is concentrated. Also, Kazakhstan labor migrant live and work in Busan and in a number of nearby cities.

South Korea has extensive experience of working in other countries; in troubled years, South Korean citizens went to work in Western Europe and the USA. The experience they gained while working abroad, they brought to their country, introducing it into the states' economy. Including technology transfer. This effect can be repeated in the case of migrants from Kazakhstan, who gain invaluable experience in the course of their work in the form of technology, modernization of economic methods, Korean attitudes towards work, style and way of life, and compliance with laws.

Today it is difficult to assert about the formation of a diaspora of Kazakhstanis in South Korea, however, an increase in the number of families who have left for work may become the beginning of diasporisation, since there are many factors contributing to this process. Today, in the context of a pandemic, illegal workers are in great demand, since their number has decreased, the borders are closed, sowing work has begun and now is a favorable time to earn money.

This study is an overview and intended to outline, show trends in the formed Kazakhstan - South Korea migration corridor. Further in-depth studies of the motives, reasons, strategies of international youth migration, understanding the scale, structure and prospects of this migration flow are needed.

## SOURCES USED:

1. D. Ashimkhanova, O. Kaldybayeva. Employment of Kazakh youth: barriers and opportunities (based on the results of sociological research)/Materials of the republican scientific and practical conference on topical issues of youth with the participation of foreign experts "Professions of the future: what is preparing for generations Y, Z". - Astana, 2018
2. S.Beisembayev, S.Insebayeva, D.Moldokanov. Neither here, nor there: the problem of the youth informal employment in single-industry towns of Kazakhstan. Report on the results of a research conducted with the support of the Soros Kazakhstan Foundation// URL: <https://eljastary.kz/articles/52/0>
3. External youth migration in Central Asian states: risk analysis and minimization of negative consequences. International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Kazakhstan - Subregional Coordination Office for Central Asia. Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019 // URL: [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/external\\_youth\\_migration\\_ru.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/external_youth_migration_ru.pdf)
4. German Kim. How Koryo Saram became Goryeoins //Russian Koreans // [http://gazeta.korean.net/index.php?mid=column&document\\_srl=85340](http://gazeta.korean.net/index.php?mid=column&document_srl=85340)
5. A.Zhussupova. Dynamics of social inequality in Kazakhstan. Institute of World Economy and Politics (IMEP) under the Foundation of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Leader of the Nation. - Astana-Almaty, 2016.
6. Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On State Youth Policy" // URL: [https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?Doc\\_id=31661446#pos=64;-54](https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?Doc_id=31661446#pos=64;-54)
7. Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: a statistical portrait / Statistical Committee of the CIS, UNFPA. - M., 2018.
8. Natalya Yem. Survival patterns: marriage migration of women from CIS countries to South Korea/PRZEGLĄD WSCHODNIOEUROPEJSKI IX/1 2018: 143-152. // URL: [http://www.uwm.edu.pl/cbew/2018\\_9\\_1/10\\_Yem.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu.pl/cbew/2018_9_1/10_Yem.pdf)
9. National report "Youth of Kazakhstan – 2019". Youth Research Center// URL: <http://eljastary.kz/articles/70/2>
10. B. Rakisheva Youth of Central Asia. Comparative review. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Representative Office/Under the supervision of prof. Klaus Hurelmann and Peer Teschendorf (Germany, Berlin). - Almaty, 2017 - 90 p. // URL: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/kasachstan/14109.pdf>
11. The current state of the labor market in Kazakhstan /Ed. Z.K. Shaukenova. - Astana: Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2017. // URL: <http://www.kaziss.kz/uploads/33/files/DxunOPeD.pdf>

- 
12. Handbook of terminology in the field of migration (Russian-English). - Moscow: International Organization for Migration, 2011. // [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/handbook\\_on\\_migration\\_terminology.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/handbook_on_migration_terminology.pdf)
  13. South Korea and Kazakhstan: Peculiarities of Cultural and Humanitarian Cooperation //Chu Young Min, Ph.D. candidate at L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (Astana, Kazakhstan), Kalamkas Yessimova, analyst at the Public Opinion Research Institute (Astana, Kazakhstan), Botagoz Rakisheva, Candidate of Sociological Sciences, Director of the Public Opinion Research Institute (Astana, Kazakhstan) //CENTRAL ASIA AND THE CAUCASUS. - 2018. - Volume 21. – No. 3.
  14. Country report. Immigration detention in the Republic of Korea: Penalising people in need of protection. The Global Detention Project, February 2020
  15. Korea immigration service statistics. Ministry of Justice, 2018
  16. E. S. Lee. A Theory of Migration //Demography. 1966. No. 3. Pp. 47–57
  17. Migration profile of the Republic of Korea. The IOM Migration Research and Training Centre. January 2012  
URL: [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mp\\_korea.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mp_korea.pdf)

# **INFORMATION ABOUT THE KAZAKHSTAN COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (KCIR)**

The Kazakhstan Council on International Relations (KCIR) was established as a non-profit analytical organization on the 10th of May, 2017. The President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev serves as a Honorary Chairman of the Council, while Assistant to the President of Kazakhstan Erlan Karin is the acting Chairman of KCIR.

The Advisory Board of the Council is comprised of many political dignitaries and experts in the field of foreign policy and security such as the Chairperson of the Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan Maulen Ashimbayev, Head of the Chancellery of the President of Kazakhstan Nurlan Onzhanov, Foreign Minister, former ambassadors and directors of the leading think-tanks of Kazakhstan.

## **Contacts**

The Republic of Kazakhstan  
010000, Nur-Sultan, Dostyk st., 16  
Talan Towers Executive Hub Business Center, 22 floor  
+7 702 274 71 36, +7 776 282 62 66  
kazakhstancouncil@gmail.com  
www.kazcouncil.kz



---

# INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Botagoz Rakisheva**, PhD in Sociology, Director / Scientific consultant of the Public Opinion Research Institute ([www.opinions.kz](http://www.opinions.kz)).

**Sphere of interests:** methodology of sociological research, international comparative research, Kazakh diaspora, diasporology, ethnic identity, interethnic and interfaith relations, migration, socio-political processes in Central Asia.

## **Labor activity:**

from 2017 to the present – Director / Scientific consultant of the Public Opinion Research Institute,

from 2016 to 2017 - Deputy Director of the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan,

from 2013 to 2016 - Founder/Director of the Public Opinion Research Institute,

from 1997 to 2013 - Institute for Comparative Social Research CESSI-Kazakhstan (General Manager, Deputy Director, Director).

**Membership in professional organizations:** Scientific and Expert Council of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (Kazakhstan), ESOMAR (European Society for Market and Public Opinion Research), WAPOR (World Association for Public Opinion Research), European Society for Central Asian Studies (ESCAS).

**Field research:** Kazakhstan, Central Asia, CIS, PRC, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Western and Northern Europe (France, Germany, UK, Austria, Norway, Denmark, Sweden), etc.

**Publications:** author of over 110 scientific publications published in Kazakhstan, Russia, China, Turkey, South Korea, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Great Britain.

## **Contacts**

The Republic of Kazakhstan  
010000, Nur-Sultan, A.Bekturov st. 3/1-83  
+7 7172 78 35 59, 78 35 49  
[opinions@opinions.kz](mailto:opinions@opinions.kz)  
[www.opinions.kz](http://www.opinions.kz)

---

Technical editors: Assel Aizhanova,  
Aizhan Zhanzakova  
Proofreader: Mainura Buribayeva

Design and layout: "ARTFXKZ" polygraphy  
☎ +7 (705) 580 333 8  
✉ [artfxkz@mail.ru](mailto:artfxkz@mail.ru)  
📷 [artfxkz](https://www.instagram.com/artfxkz)