

5.2 (08.00.00) ЭКОНОМИКА

5.2 ИҚТИСОДИЁТ

5.2 ECONOMICS

5.2.1 (08.00.01) ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКАЯ ТЕОРИЯ

5.2.1. НАЗАРИЯИ ИҚТИСОДИ

5.2.1. ECONOMIC THEORY

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**EMIGRATION FROM
TAJIKISTAN TO NAFTA
COUNTRIES: TRENDS AND
DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS**

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**МУҲОЦИРАТ АЗ
ТОҶИКИСТОН БА
КИШВАРҲОИ НАФТА:
ТАМОЮЛ ВА ДУРНАМОИ
РУШД**

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**ЭМИГРАЦИЯ ИЗ
ТАДЖИКИСТАНА В
СТРАНЫ НАФТА:
ТЕНДЕНЦИИ И
ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ РАЗВИТИЯ**

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The article examines the new direction of migration from Tajikistan to NAFTA countries, trends and new channels of emigration from Tajikistan to the United States, the scale and settlement of Tajik migrants in Canada, as well as Mexico as a new channel of illegal emigration from Tajikistan to the United States. Migrants from Tajikistan after the collapse of the USSR considered Russia as the main channel of emigration. Every year, million citizens of Tajikistan come to work in Russia. But various crises in Russia, including the deterioration of Russia's economic situation due to the imposition of new economic sanctions by the EU countries and the United States, after the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis, forced part of migrants from Tajikistan to seek a new direction of labor emigration.

These new directions became the countries of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), primarily the United States and Canada. Over the past thirty years, the USA and Canada are attracting emigrants around the world with a high standard of living and social protection, including from CIS countries. Highly skilled Tajik migrants mainly migrate to the USA and Canada, but the situation of labor migrants in Russia has led to the migration of low-skilled Tajik citizens to these countries, including through illegal means. In recent years, there has been an increase the inflow of illegal migrants from Central Asian countries to the United States. Illegal emigration through the Mexico to the United States is becoming popular among citizens of Central Asian countries. Due to the low standard of living in origin-countries, citizens of Central Asian countries are looking for any way to get to the United States through Mexico, despite the threat of arrest and death. The purpose of the article is to identify new channels of emigration from Tajikistan to the USA and Canada, as well as factors and channels of illegal emigration from Tajikistan to NAFTA countries.

Keywords: *Tajik labor emigrants, NAFTA countries, Russia, illegal migration, emigration channels, USA, Canada, Mexico*

Масоили зерин баррасӣ шудаанд: самти нави муҳоҷират аз Тоҷикистон ба мамлакатҳои НАФТА, тамоюл ва каналҳои нави муҳоҷират аз Тоҷикистон ба ИМА, миқёс ва масқуншиавии муҳоҷирони тоҷик дар Канада, ҳамчунин Мексика чун канали нави муҳоҷирати ғайриқонунӣ аз Тоҷикистон ба ИМА. Қайд шудааст, ки муҳоҷирон аз Тоҷикистон баъди фурупоиши ИҚШС Русияро ба ҳайси канали асосии муҳоҷират баррасӣ мекарданд. Ҳар сол миллион шахрванди Тоҷикистон барои кор ба Русия меоянд. Вале бухронҳои мухталиф дар Русия, аз ҷумла бадшавии вазъи иқтисодии он ба сабаб қорӣ намудани муҷозоти нави иқтисодӣ аз ҷониби ИА ва ИМА баъди оғози бухрони Украина як қисми муҳоҷиронро аз Тоҷикистон водор сохт, ки самти нави муҳоҷирати меҳнатиро ҷустуҷӯ кунанд. Мамлакатҳои Созишномаи Амрикои Шимолӣ дар бораи савдои озод (НАФТА), дар навбати аввал ИМА ва Канада самтҳои нав гардиданд. Дар тӯли сӣ соли охир ИМА ва Канада тавассути сатҳи баланди зиндагӣ ва ҳифзи иҷтимоӣ диққати муҳоҷиронро аз тамоми мамлакатҳои ҷаҳон, аз ҷумла мамлакатҳои ИДМ ба худ ҷалб мекунад. Таъкид шудааст, ки ба ИМА ва Канада асосан муҳоҷирони баландихтисоси тоҷик ҳиҷрат мекунад, вале вазъи муҳоҷирони меҳнатӣ дар Русия боиси муҳоҷирати шахрвандони пастихтисоси Тоҷикистон ба ин мамлакатҳо гардид. Солҳои охир афзоиши маҷрои муҳоҷирони ғайриқонунӣ аз мамлакатҳои Осиёи Марказӣ ба Иёлоти Муттаҳида шудааст. Муҳоҷирати ғайриқонунӣ аз Мексика ба ИМА дар байни шахрвандони мамлакатҳои Осиёи Марказӣ хеле вусъат ёфтааст. Ба сабаби пастии сатҳи ҳаёт дар ватанашон онҳо роҳҳои мухталифи тавассути Мексика ба ИМА гузаитанро ба хавфи ҳабсу марг нигоҳ накарда ҷустуҷӯ менамоянд. Мақсади мақола ошкор сохтани каналҳои нави муҳоҷират аз Тоҷикистон ба ИМА ва Канада, ҳамчунин омилҳо ва каналҳои муҳоҷирати ғайриқонунӣ аз Тоҷикистон ба мамлакатҳои НАФТА аст.

Калидвожаҳо: *муҳоҷирони меҳнати тоҷик, мамлакатҳои НАФТА, Русия, муҳоҷирати ғайриқонунӣ, каналҳои муҳоҷират, ИМА, Канада, Мексика*

Рассматриваются: новое направление миграции из Таджикистана – в страны НАФТА, тенденции и новые каналы эмиграции из Таджикистана в США, масштабы и расселение таджикских мигрантов в Канаде, а также Мексика как новый канал нелегальной эмиграции из Таджикистана в США. Отмечено, что мигранты из Таджикистана после распада СССР рассматривали Россию как основной канал эмиграции. Ежегодно миллион граждан Таджикистана приезжает на работу в Россию. Но различные кризисы в России, в том числе ухудшение её экономического положения из-за введения новых экономических санкций странами ЕС и США после начала украинского кризиса, вынудили часть мигрантов из Таджикистана искать новое направление для трудовой эмиграции. Новыми направлениями

стали страны Североамериканского соглашения о свободной торговле (НАФТА), в первую очередь Соединенные Штаты и Канада. На протяжении последних тридцати лет США и Канада привлекают эмигрантов со всего мира высоким уровнем жизни и социальной защиты, в том числе из стран СНГ. Подчеркнуто, что в США и Канаду в основном мигрируют высококвалифицированные таджикские мигранты, но положение трудовых мигрантов в России привело к миграции низкоквалифицированных граждан Таджикистана в эти страны, в том числе нелегальным путем. В последние годы наблюдается рост притока нелегальных мигрантов из стран Центральной Азии в Соединенные Штаты. Нелегальная эмиграция из Мексики в Соединенные Штаты становится популярной и среди граждан стран Центральной Азии. Из-за низкого уровня жизни на родине они ищут любые способы попасть в Соединенные Штаты через Мексику, несмотря на угрозу ареста и смерти. Цель статьи – выявить новые каналы эмиграции из Таджикистана в США и Канаду, а также факторы и каналы нелегальной эмиграции из Таджикистана в страны НАФТА.

Ключевые слова: таджикские трудовые эмигранты, страны НАФТА, Россия, нелегальная миграция, каналы эмиграции, США, Канада, Мексика

Introduction

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is a free trade agreement between Canada, the United States and Mexico [14]. In recent decades, the migration flow of youth from Tajikistan to the developed countries of the NAFTA, primarily to the United States and Canada, has increased significantly.

The United States attracts migrants from Central Asian countries with a high standard of living, high wages, business opportunities, a comfortable political environment, etc.

For several decades, Canada has been deliberately encouraging the influx of new residents to the country to continue the grow up its population and economy [7]. At the expense of immigrants, the government expects to compensate the Canadian economy for the shortage of labor, aggravated by the aging of the population and mass retirement [1]. Thus, Canada's active policy of attracting migrant workers may lead to Russia losing a significant part of the migration potential in Tajikistan.

Also, among the NAFTA countries, Mexico were a new illegal migration destination in recent years [8]. Mexico became a transit country for illegal migrants from Tajikistan to the United States. Low-skilled migrants from Tajikistan are looking for any emigration channels to get to the United States. Mexico and its neighboring countries have become such a channel [13].

Relations between NAFTA countries and Tajikistan

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of Tajikistan and the United States of America were established on February 14, 1992. In March of the same year, the US Embassy in Tajikistan (with residence in Kazakhstan) was opened. In 2006, a new building of the US Embassy was built in Dushanbe. The Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan in Washington has been functioning since 2002¹.

Diplomatic relations were established between the Republic of Tajikistan and Canada on March 28, 1992. The Embassy of Canada in the Republic of Tajikistan is located in the city of Nur-Sultan of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Canada to the Republic of Tajikistan is Mr. Alan Hamson (March 1, 2022)².

¹ Relations between the Republic of Tajikistan and the United States of America. // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://mfa.tj/ru/main/view/175/otnosheniya-tadzhikistana-s-soedinennymi-shtatami-ameriki> (Accessed: 26.12.2022)

² Tajikistan's relations with Canada. // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://mfa.tj/ru/main/view/176/otnosheniya-tadzhikistana-s-kanadoi> (Accessed: 26.12.2022)

Military-technical cooperation

Military assistance from the United States intensified in the 2000s, but remained small: in 2005-2006, about \$ 40 million was allocated for the reconstruction, repair and equipping of 15 outposts on the Tajik-Afghan border, in 2011 the United States opened a training center for the Armed Forces of Tajikistan in Tursunzade [3].

When in October 2001, the US military, Canada and other NATO countries launched an offensive against the Taliban (banned in Russia) in Afghanistan, Tajikistan granted the US military the right to fly through its airspace. In 2007, a bridge over the Panj River was built on the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan at the expense of the United States at a cost of \$ 36 million.

Tajikistan's cooperation with USAID¹

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has been cooperating with Tajikistan since 1992 and through various projects contributes to the development of the economy, health, education and agriculture.

The USAID Food for the Future program has helped farmers increase the production of nutritious crops.

In the health sector, since 2003, USAID has been supporting a program to combat the HIV epidemic/AIDS in Tajikistan and the National Tuberculosis Control Program. USAID is helping Tajikistan to implement a renewable energy program and, for example, in cooperation with the Government of Tajikistan, a 200 kilowatt solar power plant was built in Murghab district.

USAID pays special attention to the development of education and contributes to Tajikistan's efforts in the development of the industry. In 2022, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan and the US Agency for International Development signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of the "Learning Together" program.

Trade and economic cooperation

Over the past 20 years, the United States has invested over \$ 1 billion in the Republic of Tajikistan². The annual trade turnover between the countries has grown from 10 million in the early 90s to about 270 million US dollars.

Tajikistan's cooperation with Canada is developing through the programs of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and covers the fields of agricultural production, health and education. CIDA works in Tajikistan with the assistance of the Aga Khan Foundation.

Although Tajikistan and the United States of Mexico do not have any diplomatic agreements, Tajikistan has been establishing closer relations with Mexico in recent years. On November 22, 2022, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan hosted a meeting of the First Deputy Minister of Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan with the Ambassador of the United States of Mexico with a residence in Tehran of the Islamic Republic of Iran³, which became the first shalom for establishing diplomatic relations.

Trends and channels of emigration from Tajikistan to the USA

An increasing number of Central Asians, including Tajikistan, are moving to the United States for permanent residence. Millions of residents of the Central Asian region leave their countries every year in search of earnings [7].

¹ Relations between the Republic of Tajikistan and the United States of America. // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://mfa.tj/ru/main/view/175/otnosheniya-tadzhikistana-s-soedinennymi-shtatami-ameriki> (Accessed: 26.12.2022)

² Tajikistan–United States relations // Wikipedia [Electronic resource] Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tajikistan%E2%80%93United_States_relations (Accessed: 02.02.2023)

³ Days of Tajik culture will be held in Mexico // Sputnik Tajikistan [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://tj.sputniknews.ru/20221123/mexico-tajikistan-dni-kultury-1053017834.html> (Accessed: 14.03.2023)

In 2018-2022, the inflow of Tajik citizens to the United States amounted about 24.2 thousand people (Table 1). In 2020, the coronavirus pandemic had a big impact on the growth of the inflow of migrants from Tajikistan. According to the US Department of State, in 2020, 915 people from Tajikistan migrated through immigration and non-immigration channels of emigration, which is 3 times less than in 2022 (2.7 thousand people).

Table 1.

The scale and channels of emigration from Tajikistan to the USA for 2018 – 2022, people.

	Refugees/Asylum-seekers	Green card	Nonimmigrant visas	Immigrant visas
2018	731	1171	1864	793
2019	806	1401	1672	1067
2020	848	2332	711	204
2021	1008	2122	688	444
2022	1140	2485	1710	959

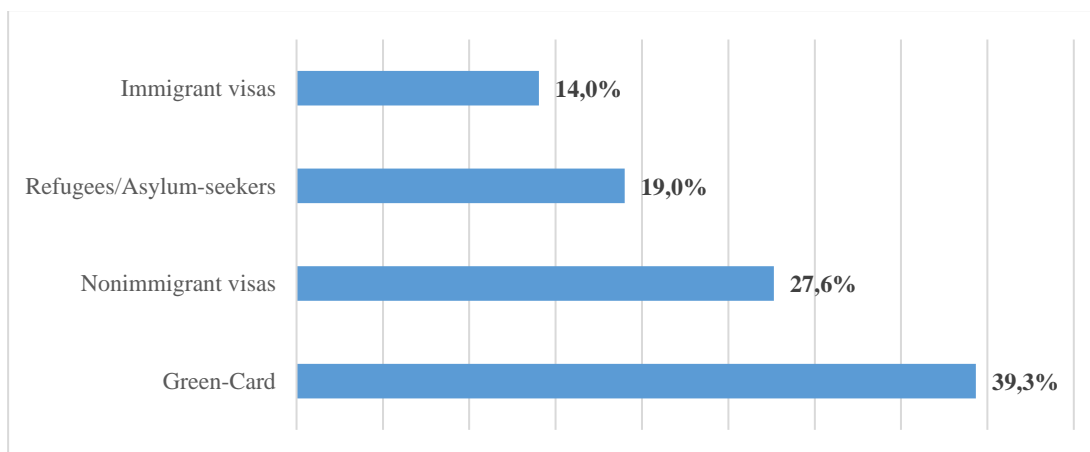
Sources: compiled by author based on data: U.S. Department of Homeland Security¹; U.S. Department of Homeland Security²; UNHCR³; The U.S. Department of State⁴

According to our research data, Tajik migrants for 2018-2022 migrated to the United States most of all using a Green Card – 39.3%. Then migrated via “Nonimmigrant visas” - about 28%, “Refugees/asylum seekers” – 19% and “Immigration visas” – 14% (Fig. 1).

The popularity of the “Green Card” among citizens of Tajikistan is growing every year [12].

Figure 1.

Channels of emigration from Tajikistan to the USA for 2018 – 2022, %



Source: compiled by author based on tab. 1.

Tajik migrants are primarily helped by other compatriots and Tajik diasporas in adapting and integrating into the United States [10]. In addition to helping with adaptation and integration, another of the functions of the diaspora is instant response to emergencies. For example, the issue of sending the bodies of deceased people to their homeland, which is difficult and expensive to

¹ U.S. Department of Homeland Security [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://www.dhs.gov/>

² U.S. Department of Homeland Security [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://www.dhs.gov/>

³ UNHCR [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/ru/>

⁴ The U.S. Department of State [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/visa-law0/visa-statistics.html>;

solve this problem alone for citizens of Tajikistan.

Also, Tajik diasporas in the United States annually support the economy of Tajikistan. They are engaged in charity work, regularly raise funds for various purposes, help in some emergency situations in the Republic of Tajikistan. For example, in 2018, a group of Tajiks regularly helped an entire village in Tajikistan¹. This proves that the majority of American Tajiks maintain close ties with Tajikistan. First of all, because many people have relatives and families there.

Many Tajik citizens in the United States raise their children within the framework of national traditions so that they know their language and their history, and the diaspora plays a big role in this.

Among the US states, migrants from Tajikistan mainly live in such states as Colorado, New-York, Washington, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, etc.²

The scale and settlement of migrants from Tajikistan in Canada

Tajiks migrated to Canada in the 1970s from the USSR, and in the 1980s, after the Soviet troops entered Afghanistan, and during restructuring (perestroika). But the majority of Tajiks came to Canada from Tajikistan after 1991 (Table 2), when the civil war began, and from Afghanistan, when the Taliban came to power there in 1996, which led to a flow of Tajik refugees.

From Tajikistan migrate to Canada most of all via immigration visas. According to table 2, the number of Tajik migrants for the period 1991-2021 amounted about 1.6 thousand people. In 2001-2010, the number of migrants from Tajikistan to Canada reached 750 people, which is 1.4 times more than in 2011-2021 (Table 2).

Table 2.

Statistics of migrants from Tajikistan to Canada for 1980 – 2021, by age, people.

	Total-Immigrant status and period of immigration	Non-immigrants	Immigrants	Before 1980	1980 to 1990	1991 to 2000	2001 to 2010	2011 to 2021	2011 to 2015	2016 to 2021	Non-permanent residents
Total	1670	10	1590	30	10	255	750	540	255	285	70
0 to 14 years	160	0	145	0	0	0	15	135	30	105	0
15 to 24 years	325	0	305	0	0	0	210	90	30	60	20
25 to 54 years	910	0	865	15	0	150	405	295	180	110	45
55 to 64 years	180	0	180	10	0	55	100	10	10	0	0
65 years and over	90	0	90	15	0	45	20	10	0	0	0

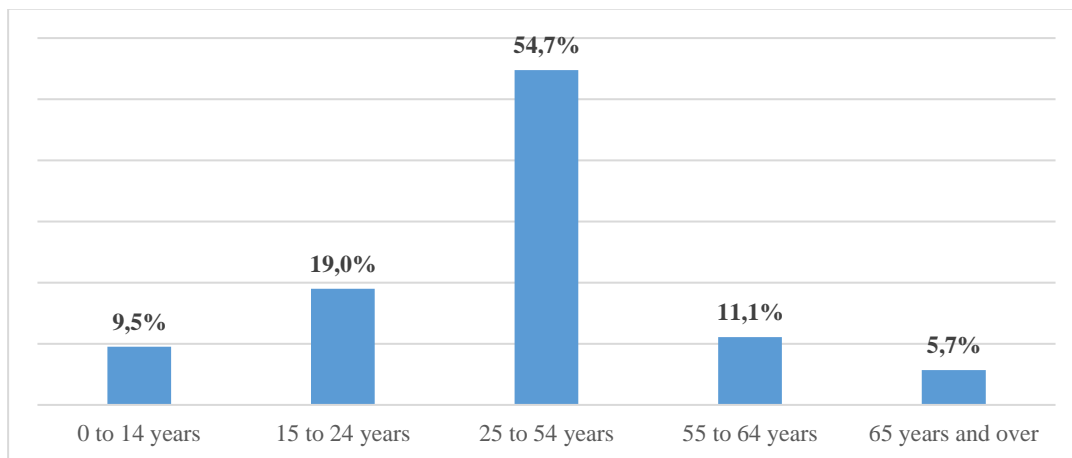
Source: compiled by author based on data of the Canadian National Statistical Agency³

The age structure of migrants from Tajikistan to Canada is presented as follows: the young and middle age structure prevails - about 55%, the most active and in-demand of any economy. Then there is the youth (19%) and the elderly (11%) structure (Fig. 2).

¹ Abdulloev Z. Tajiks of the USA create their own diaspora // Radio Ozodi («Radio Ozodi» is included by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation in the register of media-foreign agents) [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://rus.ozodi.org/a/29529180.html> (Accessed: 18.01.2023)

² Mukhtorov F. How Tajiks do business in America // Asia-Plus [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://asiaplus.tj.info/news/tajikistan/society/20171207/tadzhikskie-vstrechi-v-amerike> (Accessed: 07.02.2023)

³ The Canadian National Statistical Agency [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca>

The age structure of Tajik migrants in Canada for 1980 – 2021, %

Source: compiled by author based on tab. 2.

There is no discrimination against migrants in Canada. According to a native of Tajikistan, Zarina Dododzhanova, who has been living and working in Canada since 2010: *“People in Canada are very open, kind, tolerant. Due to the great cultural diversity, there are practically no manifestations of intolerance to behavior, appearance, political, religious or other views. Any company employs employees of various nationalities, with varying degrees of physical limitations. Although, some claim that Canadians have fake strained smiles. In my opinion, this is not the case, at least, I have not encountered this”*¹.

In Canada, there are two official languages – English and French. It is easier for Tajik citizens to migrate to Canada through French language than English language. Those citizens of Tajikistan who will not be able to get a sufficient score on the English test to move to an English-speaking province, there is another alternative - immigration to a French-speaking province under the Federal Skilled Worker program².

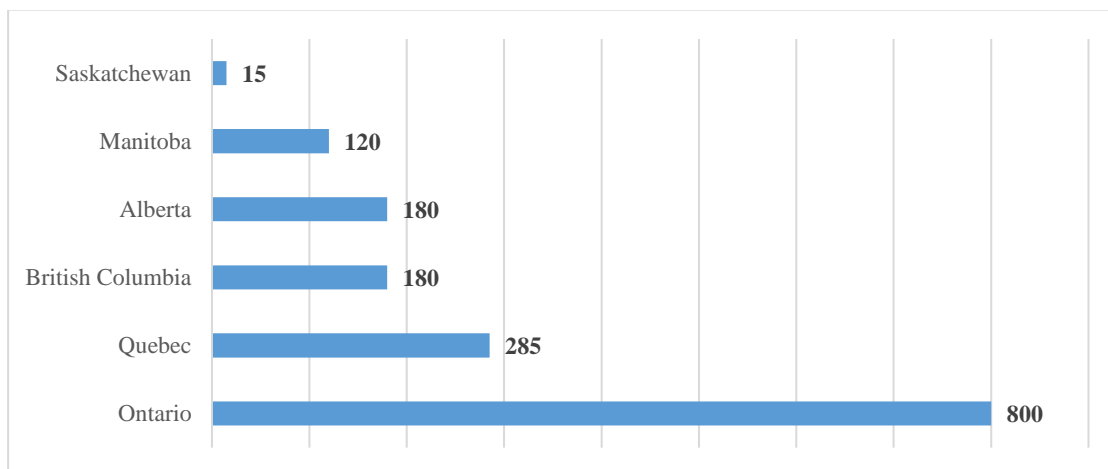
According to the Canadian National Statistical Agency, in 2021, among the provinces of Canada where Tajik citizens were the most, about 51% accounted for the province of Ontario, 18% - Quebec, 11% - British Columbia, 11% - Alberta, etc. (Fig. 3).

¹ Matveev D. The path of a native of Tajikistan from Dushanbe to Montreal // Sputnik Tajikistan [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://tj.sputniknews.ru/20171205/urozhenki-tadzhikistan-dushanbe-monrealya-kanada-1024070044.html> (Accessed: 29.01.2023)

² Matveev D. The path of a native of Tajikistan from Dushanbe to Montreal // Sputnik Tajikistan [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://tj.sputniknews.ru/20171205/urozhenki-tadzhikistan-dushanbe-monrealya-kanada-1024070044.html> (Accessed: 29.01.2023)

Figure 3.

The number of migrants from Tajikistan in the provinces of Canada in 2021, people.



Source: compiled by author based on data of the Canadian National Statistical Agency¹

Tajik citizens easily adapt and integrate in Canada. Since the newly arrived Tajik migrants receive an allowance, which is enough to rent an apartment and not starve. Language courses are paid for by the state, as well as medical insurance. It takes a family a year to adapt and get a job, sometimes two or one and a half. And all this time, until the family has received its sources of income, the state pays them an allowance². During this time, Tajik migrants will be able to learn the language and find a job.

Tajik diasporas doing everything to familiarize Canadians with the histories of Tajikistan and with culture of Tajik people. According to journalist Ravshan Temirov who lives in Canada: “Previously, in Canada, practically nothing was known about Tajiks and Tajikistan. But we have already held several conferences and seminars on the topics “Tajiks and Ancient Iran”, “History and Culture of Tajiks”, “Navruz and Tajiks” at Concordia University, the Nimo Yushidj Iranian Library and the Zoroastrian Culture Center. But Tajikistan became a known for Canadians by the Tajik dance performed by our young compatriot Tovus Navruz-Zurobekova at the Navruz parade in Montreal. This dance was played dozens of times by all Canadian TV channels”³.

For Tajik migrants, emigration and moving to Canada is not an easy matter, since it is associated with large monetary costs, problems with settling in a new place and a language barrier. There is no embassy and consulate of Canada in Tajikistan. To submit documents, citizens of Tajikistan need to go to Kazakhstan and submit documents there. Despite all the difficulties, the influx of migrants from Tajikistan to Canada is growing every year, which suggests that in the near future Canada may become new destinations for labor emigration from Tajikistan.

¹ The Canadian National Statistical Agency [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca>

² How do Tajiks live in Canada // CentrAsia [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://centrasia.org/newsA.php?st=1252482480> (Accessed: 30.02.2023)

³ How do Tajiks live in Canada // CentrAsia [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://centrasia.org/newsA.php?st=1252482480> (Accessed: 30.02.2023)

Mexico as a new direction of illegal emigration from Tajikistan to the USA: factors and channels of emigration

In recent years, citizens of Central Asian countries have been looking for any ways to migrate to the United States through Mexico.

Among the main factors of illegal emigration from Tajikistan to the United States through Mexico are the following: - the situation of Tajik labor migrants in Russia after the implementation of new economic sanctions by the EU and the United States against Russia [11]; - popularization of the United States through the media among citizens of Tajikistan; - reduced earnings in the Russian Federation; - difficulties obtaining a US visa; - deportation in the Russian Federation, etc.

Despite the threat of arrest and death, some migrants are trying to find asylum in the United States through Mexico. Mexico has simplified entry to its territory for citizens of Russia, Turkey and Ukraine. In this way, the Mexican authorities planned to attract more tourists. Due to the difficulties in obtaining an American visa, the number of people trying to achieve the "American dream" through Mexico is growing every year.

The channel of illegal emigration from Tajikistan to the USA appears as follows: "Tajikistan – Turkey", "Turkey – Mexico", "Turkey – Ecuador – Mexico", from Mexico through the border wall in the Yuma sector in neighboring US cities.

Consider each channel separately.

From Turkey to Mexico

Recently, cases have become more frequent when many citizens of Tajikistan are trying to fly to Mexico through Turkey, and from there to move to the United States.

Previously, mostly migrants from Central and South America tried to get to the United States through Mexico. Now they have been joined by migrants from Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asia. In most cases, this is done through Turkey. Because citizens of Central Asian countries will have to go to Kiev, Moscow, Istanbul or Tehran for a visa, there are no other Mexican consulates in the region. And also in Turkey there is very weak control over the flow of illegal migration¹. There are various recruitment agencies from CIS countries in Turkey which help Tajik citizens with a Mexican visa.

According to the OECD, the inflow of Tajik citizens to Turkey in 2021 amounted to 2.3 thousand people². Most of these migrants use Turkey as a channel of emigration to a third country, including Mexico. The Dushanbe – Istanbul – Amsterdam– Cancun flight is a common tourist destination to Mexico.

From Ecuador to Mexico

It is not always possible for migrants from Tajikistan to obtain a visa to Mexico, so they are looking for an alternative like Ecuador.

The number of Central Asian migrants trying to enter Mexico illegally from Ecuador is growing every year. In 2021, about 30 citizens of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan from Ecuador went to Mexico³.

Also, another way to reach Mexico from Ecuador, first need to go to Colombia. The transit time from Ecuador to Colombia for migrants takes more than 10 hours. With the support of intermediaries, migrants reach the Colombian cities of Medellin and Necocli. Further to Panama, thousands of migrants make their way through the dense jungle, a road that sometimes leads to death. According to

¹ Kemal Eker: The problem of illegal migration in Turkey. [Electronic resource] Available at: <http://acikerisim.deu.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/20.500.12397/6615/226690.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> (Accessed: 13.02.2023)

² World Bank data [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://stats.oecd.org/> (Accessed: 20.03.2023)

³ Tajiks who enter America through Mexico // Parviz Tv. («Instagram» is included by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation in the register of media-foreign agents) [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cn9oTLRj9GX/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY> (Accessed: 09.03.2023)

the migrant who survived all these difficulties: *"On the way, we prepared food supplies for ourselves and took rubber boots. The jungle, it turns out, is called the "road of death", as thousands of people overcome mud, off-road and a stormy river. Other migrants told me that there were people who died on the road. I saw the body of a man in the river with my own eyes. And you have to go through a river where the water reaches your chin. There were thousands of people in this jungle at the same time. I had two Kyrgyz guys with me, but most of them were Venezuelans. We rested for about 5-10 minutes, and for almost three days we walked without stopping"*¹.

Then, to reach Mexico, migrants will pass through Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala. Migrants from Guatemala to Mexico are floating on water. In general, the road from Ecuador will take more than 20 days to get to the forests of Mexico².

In Mexico, Tajik migrants immediately need to obtain a special humanitarian visa after crossing the border. If the migrant is alone, he is granted it for a week, and if with his family, then for 11-12 days [6]. Obtaining this visa is also not easy for illegal migrants.

Through Russian citizenship to Mexico

Another of the channels of emigration from Tajikistan to Mexico is dual citizenship (Russian-Tajik). In Mexico, there is an electronic permit for Russian citizens, which replaces a visa and gives the right to enter the country³. The government website for issuing an electronic permit to Mexico allows anyone to issue such a permit, as long as the country of citizenship corresponds to one of the three (Russia, Turkey, Iran). There have been cases when citizens of Central Asian countries with fake Russian passports were detained in Mexico.

Also, to Mexico can migrate those citizens who have visas of the Schengen countries [9].

From Mexico to USA

According to the US Customs and Border Protection Service, up to 1.3 thousand migrants are registered daily through Yuma between Arizona and Mexico. According to the US border guards: *"Although most of the detained migrants in Yuma are from Central American states, such as Mexico, El Salvador and Guatemala, there is an increase in arrivals from Central Asia"*⁴.

Persons who have illegally entered the territory of the United States are usually sent to jail, or sent back to the country from whose territory they entered the American territory, that is, to Mexico [2]. In the USA, there is a program for illegal migrants from Mexico "Stay in Mexico".

Some Tajik citizens, after being caught and deported in Mexico, apply from Mexico for asylum in the United States under the "Stay in Mexico" program. The program assumes that those wishing to obtain asylum in the United States are required to wait for the decision of the immigration court while in Mexico⁵. According to the migrant, from Tajikistan: *"Migrants deported to Mexico are being held in difficult conditions and can wait up to a year and a half for*

¹ Tajiks who enter America through Mexico // Parviz Tv. («Instagram» is included by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation in the register of media-foreign agents) [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cn9oTLRj9GX/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY> (Accessed: 09.03.2023)

² "A journey of three months and 13 thousand dollars spent." How did Aizhamal get to the USA // Radio Azattyk («Radio Azattyk» is included by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation in the register of media-foreign agents) [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://youtu.be/8J64Sdrq7Yw> (Accessed: 06.01.2023)

³ Electronic visa to Mexico // Coral Travel [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://www.coral.ru/main/mexico/visa/visa-elektronnaya/> (Accessed: 15.02.2023)

⁴ Babadzhanov H. In search of the "American dream". In recent years, Uzbekistanis have been looking for any ways to get to the United States through Mexico // Radio Ozodlik («Radio Ozodlik» is included by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation in the register of media-foreign agents) [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://rus.ozodlik.org/a/31609151.html> (Accessed: 02.02.2023)

⁵ CBS News: The US will force migrants to stay in Mexico, as in the time of Trump // RT [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://russian.rt.com/inotv/2021-12-04/CBS-News-SSHA-zastavyat-migrantov> (Accessed: 09.03.2023)

a decision on a US asylum application"¹.

According to the US Customs and Border Protection Service, in 2021, 4.1 thousand illegal migrants from Russia came into contact with American border guards on the southern border of the United States, which is almost ten times the number of such contacts last year². The US Border and Customs Service has little statistical data on Tajiks, this may be due to the fact that many Tajiks go to Mexico with Russian passports.

The expenses of migrants from Tajikistan to reach the United States through Mexico range from 5 to 27 thousand US dollars, and in most cases they do not manage to get to the United States³.

Many migrants take great risks to get to the United States. For example, according to the migrant: "*Before coming to the USA, I worked in Moscow for five years. I know the situation there. I really wanted to go to America. After getting married and having two children, he began to fulfill his dream. I needed money for travel and a visa. To do this, I borrowed from relatives and relatives, mortgaged my father's house and got a loan. So, with two children and a spouse, the four of them went on the road. We lived in Istanbul for about three months to get a visa to Mexico. In the city of Tijuana on the border of Mexico and the United States, we stayed for a month and a half, waiting for our turn. After crossing the border into Mexico, it took another week to interrogate and decide on asylum at the border from the United States. So my family and I passed. To be honest, if I had known about it, I wouldn't have gone. We are lucky, because some migrants from Tajikistan stay in such a center for a year. Therefore, I would not advise others to go this way*"⁴.

It is very difficult for citizens of Central Asian countries to obtain a US visa. In most cases, more than half of the citizens of Central Asian countries who applied for an American visa are refused. Because of this, they are looking for any other illegal channels to migrate to the USA.

Conclusion

After the collapse of the USSR, the situation in Tajikistan was aggravated by the civil war, because of which more than half a million citizens of the country were forced to leave their homeland and start a new life in dozens of countries around the world [4], including the United States.

Migration from Tajikistan to NAFTA countries is gradually gaining growth. Among the main reasons for the reorientation of Tajik migrants to a new direction of migration to the NAFTA countries can be considered the active policy of the NAFTA country to attract migrants, the spread of English among Tajik citizens, the high standard of living in the United States and Canada, information factors, support for the diaspora, etc.

¹ Babadzhanov H. In search of the "American dream". In recent years, Uzbekistanis have been looking for any ways to get to the United States through Mexico // Radio Ozodlik («Radio Ozodlik» is included by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation in the register of media-foreign agents) [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://rus.ozodlik.org/a/31609151.html> (Accessed: 02.02.2023)

² The number of migrants from Russia on the southern border of the United States has increased tenfold // Radio Svoboda («Radio Svoboda» is included by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation in the register of media-foreign agents) [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://www.svoboda.org/a/31531322.html> (Accessed: 27.01.2023)

³ "A journey of three months and 13 thousand dollars spent." How did Aizhamal get to the USA // Radio Azattyk («Radio Azattyk» is included by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation in the register of media-foreign agents) [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://youtu.be/8J64Sdrq7Yw> (Accessed: 06.01.2023)

⁴ Kenenbayeva E., Budaichieva E. Suffering from entering the USA through Mexico // Radio Azattyk («Radio Azattyk» is included by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation in the register of media-foreign agents) [Electronic resource] Available at: <https://www.azattyk.org/a/31606950.html> (Accessed: 19.02.2023)

Among the NAFTA countries, the main migration channels for Tajik citizens are the United States and Canada, and Mexico has become new destinations for Tajik migrants to illegally migrate to the United States.

In the adaptation and integration of migrants from Tajikistan to NAFTA countries, other compatriots and diasporas primarily help. For Tajiks, Persian is considered their native language. Thus, in addition to the Tajik diasporas in the USA and Canada, there are also many Persian-speaking diasporas in which Tajik citizens participate. Every year in the USA and Canada, Tajiks celebrate the Navruz holiday together with the Iranian and Afghan communities.

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