SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND

CAUSES AND MOTIVES OF RADICALIZATION AMONG CENTRAL ASIAN LABOR MIGRANTS IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

A COUNTRY REPORT

ON THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN
This report is principally authored by the National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan in person of Abdunabi Sattorov. The overall project was delivered in cooperation with Search for Common Ground, Institute of Oriental Studies under the Russian Academy of Sciences (IOS RAS), Royal United Services Institute of Great Britain (RUSI), National Academies of Sciences of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, as well as independent researchers from Central Asia, who all had some input into the different versions of the report, but ultimately each one is responsible for their iteration. IOS RAS is the principal author of the Russian one, RUSI for the English one, the Central Asians each respectively for theirs.

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Preface

Dear reader,

Welcome to the findings of a unique research around the causes and motives of Radicalization among Central Asian Labor Migrants in the Russian Federation!

Migration, particularly economic migration, has emerged as an important factor in increasing Central Asians’ susceptibility to radicalization and recruitment into extremist groups. There also exists a group of experts who believe that isolation, discrimination, and resentment might even play a greater role in radicalizing labor migrants in Russia, rather than strong or extreme religious beliefs. The study also considered the resiliency factors in these communities that prevent individuals from becoming radicalized. In order to better understand the causes and motivations of radicalization amongst migrant workers from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan currently residing in Russia, including drivers and recruitment methods, Search, in collaboration with key research and think tank institutions, conducted this unique research.

The research was conducted in 13 different cities across Russia. A team of Central Asian researchers collected 218 interviews from labor migrants, diaspora leaders, imams, local officials and others to gain an understanding of the factors that play a role in the radicalization of labor migrants in Russia. Our special thanks is extended to the teams of Central Asian researchers (from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), who were on the ground for over a month speaking with respondents, as well as to the team of two world-known think tank institutions – the Institute of Oriental Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences (IOS RAS) and the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (RUSI). RUSI helped design the research questionnaire and train the research teams, while IOS RAS provided support on the ground in Russia and contributed to the analysis of the data.
We, the team at Search for Common Ground, believe the findings of the research will contribute to filling the research gap regarding the radicalization of Central Asian labor migrants in Russia and will be used to inform policymakers, academics and practitioners and improve their understanding of the nature and extent of the violent extremist threat linked to Central Asia.

The project team also believes that the research base will seek to identify potential areas of strategic cooperation around PVE/CVE among state and non-state actors in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Russia, building an appropriate programmatic response.

Once again, thank you to our partners for working to sustain peace in Central Asia!

Yours truthfully,

Keneshbek B. Sainazarov
Central Asia Program Director
Search for Common Ground
Introduction

Labour migration from Central Asia, including from the Republic of Tajikistan to the Russian Federation, has become a notable phenomenon of social, political, and economic life over the past two decades. According to the authorities of the Russian Federation, as of 1 June 2017, there were 1.92 million Uzbek citizens in the Russian Federation, 1.06 million Tajik citizens and 622,000 Kyrgyz citizens registered with the Migration Service.

The unique results of this joint study by the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IOS RAS), the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), the international non-governmental organization Search for Common Ground (SFCG) and a team of researchers from the academies of sciences of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have dispelled many myths and biased speculative judgments of individual experts, politicians and heads of official structures about the process of labour migration from Central Asia to Russia. One such belief is that labour migrants from the CIS, including from Central Asian republics, allegedly form the basis of terrorist groups in Russia. Another is that labour migrants from Central Asia have radicalised in Russia and thus became potential targets and an important resource to recruit and dispatch to Syria, Iraq, and other hot spots of the world, to fight in the ranks of extremist and terrorist organizations. Another opinion was that Russia was a more conducive environment for spreading and adopting radical and extremist ideas than the countries of Central Asia. However, we must also recognize the fact that people from Central Asian countries, including labour migrants from Russia, have been fighting for IS and other terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq.

The research team has also tried to establish the causes and origins of the radicalisation of labour migrants from Central Asia in Russia and to develop mechanisms for preventing and combating it.
It is also notable that the joint study has shown a real picture of the current state, problems, and prospects of the process of labour migration from Central Asia to Russia. This should allow heads of applicable government agencies in the Russian Federation and Central Asian republics to find acceptable and appropriate mechanisms to resolve the long-standing problems of labour migration.

The authors of the study hope that labour migration from Central Asia to Russia will continue as a controllable and civilized process since, as confirmed by the results of this joint research, such labour migration is beneficial for both the countries of Central Asia and the Russian Federation. It allows Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to solve serious problems with unemployment and thus contributes to the mitigation the severity of domestic social and economic problems. Russia uses the migrants to fill the demand for labour within the country, mostly in jobs which native residents would not do for various reasons.

For the sake of justice, it should be noted that the Government of Tajikistan and its missions, including in the Russian Federation, take significant efforts to solve existing problems related to Tajik labour migrants. As a result, in recent years there have been significant changes in this area. As reported by Tajik Ambassador to Russia, Mr. Sattorov, in his interview to the newspaper “Migrants Today” in May 2017, the changes affected migration policy, legislation, the integration of labour migrants, their employment and other issues. From March 25 to April 24 2017, a campaign was conducted for the legalization of citizens of the Republic of Tajikistan who were banned from entering the Russian Federation; because of the campaign, 102,000 Tajik citizens obtained permission to enter Russia.

However, there are still unresolved problems which require more efforts from Central Asian countries and Russia. This joint study, which was conducted in all the federal districts of Russia, with a focus on places with the highest concentration of labour migrants from Central Asia: Far Eastern (Khabarovsk), Siberian (Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk, Novosibirsk), Urals (Ekaterinburg), Privolzhsky (Samara, Saratov), Southern (Astrakhan, Krasnodar, Sochi), Central (Moscow and Moscow Region), North-West (St. Petersburg and Leningrad Region) districts confirms this.
Chapter 1

Main topics, objectives, methods and challenges of the research

The Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Royal United Services Institute and the international non-governmental organization Search for Common Ground as well as a group of researchers from the national academies of sciences of the Central Asian states conducted this research jointly. The overall management and coordination of the project was implemented by the SFCG Office in Kyrgyzstan.

The research team is fully responsible for the content of the report. This document is the result of the efforts of an international team of scholars and reflects their opinions, assessments, and views, which do not necessarily correspond to the official positions of state authorities in Russia, the UK, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

The study was conducted in several stages. The first stage consisted of determining the objectives of the research and necessary steps for its completion. To implement them, the SFCG Office in Kyrgyzstan recruited experts from among the scholars of the national academies of science and political analysts of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to conduct interviews with labour migrants in the regions of Russia.

In the second stage, the researchers gathered for an orientation seminar from 29 May to 1 June of 2017 in Moscow at the Institute of Oriental Studies. The first part of the gathering, the team discussed the scope of labour migration from Central Asia, pertinent factors, problems existing in this area, the importance of labour migration from Central Asia to the Russian economy and socioeconomic stability of Central Asian countries, and labour migration trends in the short and medium terms. The IOS also shared official data with participants on the
participation of Central Asian nationals in fighting in Syria and Iraq in the ranks of the Islamic State and other organizations that share the ideology of Al-Qaeda, on reasons for radicalization of Central Asian citizens and emergence of extremist ideas, and on motives of Central Asian citizens’ departure to the battle fields in the Middle East.

RUSI representatives led the second part of the seminar, who led a discussion on the research methodology and content of a questionnaire they had developed for the use of field researchers. The questionnaire is an adapted version of the basic questionnaire developed by J. Khalil and M. Zeuthen in 2016, routinely used in the RUSI research projects and programs related to radicalization. For the convenience of processing primary information, four “baskets” of factors were identified that, in the opinion of the British researchers, influence the radicalization of individual labour migrants: Individual incentives are specific personal factors that can attract people to radical ideas or groups. For example: adventurism, the need for belonging, status, financial incentives, fear of the consequences of violent extremist actions, expected rewards in the afterlife, etc.

Structural motivators are the environment of a person that can sometimes push people toward radicalisation. These include repressions, corruption, unemployment, social inequality, discrimination, a history of hostility between groups with different identities, external interference in the affairs of countries. Enabling factors are circumstances that facilitate but do not motivate an individual to accept violent extremism. For example: the presence of mentors with radical views (including religious leaders, people from social networks, etc.), access to “radical” online communities, social networks, access to weapons or similar materials, relatively insufficient state control, lack of family support, etc.

Resilience is the ability of individuals, groups and communities to refute and reject proponents of terrorism and their ideology. On an individual level, this includes: personal experience, personality, relationships, beliefs and values, family and friends, access to resources, personal qualities such as confidence and self-esteem, work, religion, etc. At the community level, this could be ties between families and friends, “trust”.

Together, project participants developed a base version of the questionnaire, while the implementers could make necessary adjustments during surveys and interviews with respondents. At the end of the meeting, necessary organizational and logistical issues were reviewed under the guidance of the SFCG Kyrgyzstan
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Office. The Institute of Oriental Studies coordinated obtaining permission from the appropriate executive authorities of the Russian Federation for field work, which allowed the international teams of experts to conduct the research smoothly in all eight federal districts of Russia.

The primary information, which is the basis for this report, was obtained through the surveys (individual interviews, focus groups) conducted in all federal districts of Russia in places with the highest concentration of labour migrants from Central Asia. This report is also based on materials about labour migration from the government bodies of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan as well as public and non-governmental organizations.

From 1 June to 28 June, two groups of scholars simultaneously conducted field research. Each group included representatives of the Institute of Oriental Studies (they acted as group leaders, coordinated logistics and liaised with local authorities) as well as representatives of the national academies of sciences and political analysts from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, who conducted the interviews.

On average, each researcher conducted at least 21 interviews and focus groups. In total, 232 people participated in the surveys. However, the field researchers provided the full data suitable for the analysis of just 218 people (34 of them are women). They included 96 citizens of Kyrgyzstan (15 women), 67 from Tajikistan (9 women), 55 from Uzbekistan (10 women). Respondents included heads of diasporas, job foremen, imams and their assistants, employees of consulates and official missions of the Central Asian countries in Russia, staff of non-governmental organizations, who shared not only their personal stories but also told about their fellow countrymen. By interviewing a diverse group, field researchers were able to expand the covered range of respondents and, thus, create a more complete picture about their compatriots in Russia, their problems, interests, aspirations and hopes.

The respondents included migrants from Central Asian countries who have obtained Russian citizenship and work permanently in the Russian Federation, seasonal labour migrants, and students studying in Russian universities. Some respondents were willing to participate openly because they considered it important to communicate their views on the issue. Others agreed to participate only on the condition that their personal data and data of their family members be kept anonymous.

All three groups of respondents are representatives of different cultures and languages. This factor certainly shaped respondents' answers. Therefore, it is not
possible to speak of any generalized portrait of a typical labour migrant from Central Asia in Russia.  

Given the factors of subjectivity, bias of respondents, as well as the limited time allocated for the field research, this document does not claim that the information received during the surveys is objective.

In addition, we must admit that the evidence base is limited for a detailed, comprehensive and methodologically verified assessment of the radicalisation that leads to violent extremism among labour migrants from Central Asia in Russia. A low number of incidents and a relatively small number of persons involved in violent extremism mean that the empirical and causal explanation for the radicalisation of some labour migrants from Central Asia in Russia cannot be certain.

This final report is the result of joint efforts of the IOS RAS, RUSI and SFCG with the active participation of scholars from the Central Asian countries who conducted field studies and took part in discussing almost all parts of the final report. The team of researchers extends their deep gratitude to all officials from the government bodies of the Russian Federation whose collaboration made possible such a large-scale research in Russia, as well as to the labour migrants, community leaders, imams of mosques, representatives of consulates and missions of the respective Central Asian states who confided in members of our team and agreed to participate in this study. Without their cooperation, this research project would not have been possible.
Chapter 2
Results of the surveys of labour migrants from Tajikistan

During the field research, representatives of the Republic of Tajikistan (RT) interviewed 66 people in total, including 9 women. Their distribution by age is as follows: 20 years and younger – 1 person, from 20 to 30 years - 26 people; from 30 to 40 years - 15 people; from 40 to 45 years - 9 people; from 45 to 50 years - 4 people; from 50 to 55 years - 5 people, from 55 to 60 years - 5 people; older than 60 years - 1 person.

The total number of surveyed people included 63 Tajiks and 3 Uzbeks (by ethnicity).

The distribution of respondents by education: higher or incomplete higher education - 33, vocational school or college - 4, secondary - 29. Marital status of respondents: married - 48 people; unmarried - 15 people; divorced - 1, widowed - 2.

Seasonal workers from Tajikistan, as a rule, come to Russia alone without families.

The survey participants represented all regions of Tajikistan: Dushanbe - 9 people, Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region - 7, Sughd Region - 12, Khatlon Region - 11, Districts of Republican Subordination - 21 people.

Respondents are involved in various areas of activity in Russia. However, the most popular sectors are construction, services and trade in markets, where seasonal labour migrants are most often employed. Those who have lived extensively in Russia and received citizenship, or a residence permit have managed to find decent work and take esteemed job positions. As a rule, such people are those who were educated in the USSR and whose professional skills allowed them to be competitive with native Russian citizens in the local labour market. Tajiks, who have been granted Russian citizenship, also serve in the Russian army, including as officers and command staff in law enforcement agencies.

Most labour migrants from Tajikistan surveyed noted that one can always find a job in Russia, while education background will be helpful for finding a well-paid job.

We can summarize that most respondents were young people between 20 and 30 who have higher or incomplete higher education. One can infer from this
that the shortage of jobs at home forces the most active and skilled population to move out of places of their residence and seek employment in Russia.

Most labour migrants from Tajikistan come to Russia because of unemployment or low wages at home. These labour migrants stay in Russia to earn money to provide for their own families, as well as their parents, younger brothers and sisters or sick relatives (A respondent working at a construction site in the Moscow Region: “I have been working in Russia for 8 years, I provide for my wife and two children, parents, my brother’s family, and younger sister. I purchased a used Volkswagen Passat two years ago in Russia, and then drove it to Tajikistan along with four fellow countrymen who also bought used cars. Now I’m saving up to pay for my sister’s wedding.” A respondent from Irkutsk: “Compared to Tajikistan, the salaries are good in Russia. You can earn enough for your own needs and send money home.” A respondent from Krasnoyarsk: “If you have professional skills and education, you can find a good job. Sometimes the salary is small, but they pay without delay. I also support my family in Tajikistan”).

Some respondents said that they are generally satisfied with their life in Russia, and they would like to acquire Russian citizenship. Respondents in Khabarovsk and Novosibirsk from among those who came to Russia long ago and have since become Russian citizens, noted that their children were well educated in Russian universities and were able to find well-paid jobs.

Labour migrants from Tajikistan are more interested in the economic issues affecting their lives, the cooperation between Russia and Tajikistan for improving the conditions for Tajik citizens in Russia and their employment, and the situation at home. They carefully follow all the CIS summits to figure out what benefits they can obtain from the agreements signed at the high-level meetings, and they also follow changes in the exchange rate of the Rouble, Dollar, and Somoni. They believe that the Western sanctions against Russia painfully hit labour migrants from Tajikistan (respondents from Khabarovsk, Krasnoyarsk, Moscow: “There are less jobs than before, while wages become smaller in US dollars because of the depreciation of the Rouble”). They envy citizens of Kyrgyzstan, who, as Tajiks believe, are provided with much better employment opportunities in Russia under the EAEU agreements.

As for the events in Syria and Iraq, as well as in the Middle East generally, most respondents believe that interested Western states and their puppets from the countries in the region are waging a deliberate war to destroy Muslims, to defend their geopolitical interests in a region with rich reserves of
energy resources. To this end, they pit the Sunnis against the Shiites, so that they kill each other and thus free up territories for others. In their opinion, those who commit the murders of Muslims have no right to call themselves defenders of Islam. Violence and Islam are incompatible.

Labour migrants from Tajikistan obtain information from interpersonal communication (in work collectives, at the market, during visits to the mosque, during holidays with relatives and friends, at weddings), the Internet, electronic and print media, social networks. Young people actively use social media as they create networks of like-minded people, which are most often based on kinship relations or connections between people from the same area. Almost all migrants note that access to information is much easier in Russia than at home.

Among the individual vulnerabilities (Individual Incentives - II), which include factors that pull people to radical or extremist actions, most respondents referred to:

- Individuals’ (respondents from Khabarovsk, Krasnoyarsk and Moscow) - especially from among young people, as well as those who have just arrived from Tajikistan) desire to earn money in illegal ways, including through violence against others, and to impose their vision of Islam and call for unconstitutional actions, both in Russia and in Tajikistan.

- Skilful use of frustrated people by radical preachers, including by Tajiks who have studied abroad in private Islamic schools.

- Aggressive propaganda of violence through the Internet under the guise of protecting Islam and Muslims.

In all regions where the field surveys were conducted, respondents pointed out young people under the age of 20 with poor general education who did not have families and professional skills and did not know Russian well, as the most problematic group. Such people most often bring discord to migrant communities, argue over religious issues, and they are more prone to recruitment.

Respondents believe that the main motives for recruitment, not only in Russia but also in Tajikistan, are as follows: financial motives (noted by 60.8% of the total number of respondents), religious motives (25.3%), hopeless situations (7.6%), adventurism and predisposition to violence (3.7% of respondents).

As respondents said, natives from the North Caucasus and, in one case, Dungans organize recruitment (respondent from Samara), while Tajiks carry it
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out. According to most, recruiters earn good money for each recruit. For them, this is just a business, but in reality, it is a form of human trafficking.

The enabling factors (EF) of radicalisation included:
- Citizens of Tajikistan which came under the influence of the Salafi and currently live in Russia (A respondent from Moscow “After the terrorist attack in the subway, they prayed not for the souls of the victims, but for the terrorist, calling him a Shakhid.” A respondent from Irkutsk: “Recruiters use Salafi sermons to attract people unsatisfied with their conditions”).
- Young people lack basic knowledge about Islam, therefore they are susceptible to the influence of preachers with radical views.
- Difficulties with applying for permits, especially when combined with poor knowledge of Russian language and lack of relatives who would have lived in Russia for a long time and could have aided.
- Failures at work, debts.
- The prejudiced attitude of some employees of migration authorities and police to labour migrants (a respondent from Samara).
- Cheating by some employers (a respondent from Irkutsk: “It may happen that they do not pay when the work is done, so it turns out that you worked for nothing for a whole month”).

The main structural motivators (SM), i.e. general factors and events leading to marginalization, are:
- Unemployment, low wages, social stratification and inequality in Tajikistan.
- Poor general education and lack of knowledge of the Russian language.
- Violation by some young people of the rules of behaviour in Russia, which they would not dare to do at home (respondents in almost all regions where the surveys were conducted: “Disrespect of the elders, riotous lifestyle, a desire to earn quickly without much thought about possible legal consequences.
- The legally allotted time is not enough for people to prepare necessary permits to stay in Russia and work (respondents from Irkutsk, Moscow, Samara: “People do not know why Russia has introduced a system of patents for citizens of Tajikistan and do not know the basics of Russian migration law”).
- A welfare mentality (a respondent from Moscow: “Some labour migrants believe that Russian authorities should ease requirements when issuing necessary permits”).
- Competition within communities of labour migrants, including among Tajiks, for well-paid work.
- Mistrust of labour migrants in some places (a respondent from Krasnoyarsk)

- Citizens of Central Asia, including from Tajikistan, who make money off labour migrants by serving as intermediate agents for obtaining legal permits.

In general, as analysis of the surveys shows, this process begins in Tajikistan.

Most respondents named the following factors which they believe help migrant workers resist and prevent radicalisation (resilience - R):

- The organization of Tajiks in communities under the leadership of a respected person based on kinship relations or connections between people from the same area (a seller in a market in Khabarovsk: “Migrants gather in groups based on kinship relations or connections between people from the same area, choose a leader who solves problems with local authorities.” A seller in a market in Irkutsk: “Migrants from every region of Tajikistan have established their own communities and have their leaders who find work for them and solve all organizational issues.”)

- Fellow countrymen who have obtained Russian citizenship and achieved success in Russian society (entrepreneurs, doctors, teachers, lawyers) and who can protect the rights of labour migrants and helping those who find themselves in difficult situations (most often they are businessmen). Most respondents said that these types of people have respect in their communities (Khabarovsk, Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk, Moscow). Other influential people include elder relatives who have lived in Russia extensively, have Russian citizenship, and know Russian laws.

- Competently prepared documents issued through official structures (a respondent from Khabarovsk: “When all documents are in good order, you can work freely and there will not be any problems”).

- Compliance with the Russian legislation, respect for the culture, customs and traditions of the host country (respondents from Moscow, Novosibirsk).

- Responsibility for a family, an awareness that your wife and children rely on you and only you will support them, and that elderly parents need your help (a respondent from Moscow).

Respondents (a leader of the association of labour migrants from the Gorno-Badakhshan region in Khabarovsk, a representative of the migration mission in Irkutsk, a leader of Tajik students in Krasnoyarsk, an entrepreneur in Novosibirsk) note that, from communication with their fellow countrymen,
they heard of instances of recruiting Tajiks from among migrant workers for IS and al-Qaeda, not only in Russia, but also in Tajikistan. Most of such talk was circulating in 2014 - 2015. The main transit route was via Turkey.

A respondent from Moscow said that his brother had travelled to Syria via Turkey in 2015. He died there in 2016. According to the respondent, his brother was targeted by recruiters through the Internet in Tajikistan. Another respondent from Moscow admitted that one of his sons (a native of Khatlon region) was recruited and left for Syria to join the IS. He did not know (or did not want to disclose) how his son was recruited and by whom, but he said that the son led a comfortable life, went to the gym where he used to chat with people from the North Caucasus, as well as Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. After his son disappeared, he visited this gym but could not find anyone. He is still unaware of the fate of his son.

Also, a well-known athlete and member of the Russian national wrestling team, Suleiman had a comfortable life but eventually left Novosibirsk for Syria.

Initially, recruited Tajik citizens travelled to Russia under the guise of labour migration. Then it became much easier for them to travel from Russia to Turkey on a tourist visa, since such Russian travellers cannot be detained without special reason.

Recruiters are usually Tajiks trained in Islamic schools in Arab countries and Pakistan, who carry out their destructive activities in their homeland, Russia, and via the Internet (respondents from Khabarovsk, Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk, Moscow). Those labour migrants whose relatives left for Syria believe that recruiters are good psychologists. They skilfully manage to find weak points of their victims, gradually involving them in a virtual world with no way out.

Almost all respondents agreed that the number of people wishing to travel to the Middle East has begun to decline sharply since Russia began military operations in Syria on 30 September 2015, as well as after seeing frequent reports of Tajik fighters dying in the ranks of various terrorist groups, and after the active preventive work locally of Russian and Tajik authorities, Islamic theologians, and the public. As a market seller from Khabarovsk noted, now most Tajiks have a real idea of what is happening in Syria and Iraq and believe that this has nothing to do with religion. Respondents from Krasnoyarsk, Novosibirsk, Moscow, Astrakhan noted that the Tajik community feels sorry for the families of those who left for the Middle East and died there, fighting in a
war foreign to them. Relatives were deprived of a breadwinner, which further worsened their economic and social positions.

A respondent from Irkutsk said that he knew of the fact that Tajiks had joined the ranks of extremists already in 2015 when he was still in Tajikistan. During his time in Russia he allegedly has not come across such events.

In general, respondents from among migrant workers - citizens of Tajikistan and Tajiks who obtained Russian citizenship - were more open in interviews than labour migrants from Uzbekistan. At least five respondents named specific cases of recruitment of relatives and their departure (or attempts to leave) to Syria and Iraq.

Labour migrants from Tajikistan believe that Russia is and will remain, at least for the foreseeable future, the only country where Tajiks can find stable employment and where their rights are protected by legislation. If one has professional skills and knowledge of the Russian language, then he can get a permanent job and earn a stable income.
Conclusions and recommendations

Most labour migrants from Tajikistan come to Russia to earn money to solve the financial problems of their families, relatives, and friends. Most of them are men. A significant portion of labour migrants noted that in Russia one can always find a job, and even when the salary is low it is at least stable. Russian language ability and professional skills allow them to secure a well-paid job. While in Russia, some labour migrants from Tajikistan develop new professional skills, including those in high demand from employers.

Many migrants from Tajikistan come to Russia for seasonal work. Some of them plan to stay in Russia permanently.

Most of the Tajik migrants who have obtained Russian citizenship successfully integrate into a new environment. Their children receive good education and opportunities to achieve success. However, there are also those who prefer to live on their own and interact primarily with people in their own circle. These are a minority. This model of behaviour requires a separate study to learn to avoid the mistakes of the migration to the EU countries, when children of migrants in third and fourth generations, including those from well-off families, begin to share radical views.

Labour migrants from Tajikistan are hardworking and independent. They do not usually have such qualities as arrogance and selfishness. Employers value this about them.

Tajik citizens first come alone and then bring their families.

Most labour migrants from Tajikistan learn news from electronic media and the Internet. In social networks, there are communities of relatives and fellow countrymen.

The processes of radicalisation in the modern world which often lead to large-scale armed clashes and even civil wars in several countries of the Middle East have also affected labour migrants from Tajikistan. This process is complex and being shaped by many objective and subjective factors. However, despite the claims of several Russian political analysts and journalists, there is no mass
radicalisation of labour migrants from Tajikistan in Russia. At the same time, this often becomes a topic of ideological disputes, even a tool to put overt pressure on a country or a topic for speculations aimed at specific political goals in the struggle for power, and emerges most often in the pre-election period in a country, or as an attempt to slow the integration processes in the post-Soviet space.

The most vulnerable group is young people under the age of 20, with no families, with a low level of general and religious education, who strive to have everything immediately, without giving much thought to moral norms and principles. It is such youth who most often become targeted for recruitment.

The main reasons for radicalisation are: poverty, social stratification, the inability to find a job at home for a decent family income. This is further facilitated by: a mass decline in the level of general education, the emergence of socio-cultural barriers within the country, destructive activities of religious groups of preachers promoting radical views.

During interviews, Tajik labour migrants repeatedly noted that so called “Caucasians” organize the recruitment, while their fellow countrymen most often implement the recruitment on the ground. The mechanism and methods of recruitment, resources and means involved, financial component, connections with intelligence services and organized crime, which turned the supply of volunteers for terrorist organizations into a lucrative business, require a separate comprehensive study.

We recommend the following measures to help Tajik labour migrants more easily adapt to new living conditions in Russia. First, Russian language courses must be organized. Due to the lack of language ability, labour migrants cannot protect their rights during encounters with the police, prepare permit applications and legal documents for labour relations with the employer in a proper manner, integrate into Russian society, while their children find it difficult to communicate with their Russian peers, attend preschool and educational institutions.

The courses must also include teaching the basics of Russian migration laws, procedures and rules for issuing permits to potential labour migrants from Tajikistan. The ignorance of the laws forces migrant workers to seek assistance from various illegal intermediaries who defraud migrants and profit off their problems. As a result, deceived migrants become illegal immigrants or, if detained with false documents, get deported and banned from visiting Russia for a certain period.
Labour migration from Tajikistan to Russia should take place in an orderly manner, including the process of registration, obtaining a work permit or a patent, etc. The appropriate government bodies of the Republic of Tajikistan should be actively involved, and we recommend that they work in close cooperation with the federal and regional authorities of the Russian Federation. Tajikistan should cooperate with other Central Asian countries and the Russian Federation to prevent radicalisation and effectively combat violent extremism, and to develop a strategy for managing the return of foreign fighters.

Social and economic aspects play a major role in preventing the radicalisation of labour migrants from the Republic of Tajikistan. Many left their homeland for economic reasons. In this regard, we recommend that the Government of Tajikistan has a clear plan for the national economic development aimed at ensuring a decent life for its citizens.

Relating to the fight against terrorism, in addition to combating poverty, social stratification, and corruption, it is also necessary to coordinate the work of the state authorities of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Russian Federation, civil society institutions and non-governmental organizations to purposefully destroy the financial basis of recruitment which organized gangs have turned into a lucrative business, and to ensure that recruiters and their accomplices are punished severely and unavoidably.
Executive Summary for Implementers

Labour migration from Central Asia, including from the Republic of Tajikistan to the Russian Federation, has become a notable phenomenon of the social, political and economic life over the past two decades. According to the authorities of the Russian Federation, as of 1 June of 2017, there were 1.92 million Uzbek citizens in the Russian Federation, 1.06 million Tajik citizens and 622,000 Kyrgyz citizens registered with the migration service.

The unique results of this joint study by the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IOS RAS), the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), the international non-governmental organization Search for Common Ground (SFCG) and a team of researchers from the academies of sciences of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, have dispelled many myths and biased speculative judgments of individual experts, politicians and heads of official structures about the process of labour migration from Central Asia to Russia.

The research team has also tried to establish causes and origins of radicalisation of labour migrants from Central Asia in Russia and to develop mechanisms to effectively prevent and combat it.

It is also important that the joint study has shown a real picture of the current state, problems and prospects of the process of labour migration from Central Asia to Russia, which should allow heads of the pertinent structures of the Russian Federation and Central Asian republics to find acceptable and appropriate mechanisms for resolving the long-standing problems of labour migration.

Labour migration from Tajikistan to Russia, which is experiencing serious demographic problems, allows the host country to fill the demand for labour. Migrants work primarily in construction, manufacturing and mining, agriculture, and public utilities sectors.

During the field research, representatives of the Republic of Tajikistan interviewed 66 people in total, including 9 women. Their distribution by age is as follows: 20 years and younger – 1 person, from 20 to 30 years - 26 people; from 30 to 40 years - 15 people; from 40 to 45 years - 9 people; from 45 to 50
Years - 4 people; from 50 to 55 years - 5 people, from 55 to 60 years - 5 people; older than 60 years - 1 person.

The total number of surveyed people included 63 Tajiks and 3 Uzbeks (by ethnicity).

The distribution of respondents by education: higher or incomplete higher education - 33, vocational school or college - 4, secondary school - 29. Marital status of respondents: married - 48 people; unmarried - 15 people; divorced - 1, widows - 2.

Seasonal workers from Tajikistan, as a rule, come to Russia alone without families.

The survey participants represented all regions of Tajikistan: Dushanbe - 9 people, Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region - 7, Sughd Region - 12, Khatlon Region - 11, Districts of Republican Subordination - 21 people.

Respondents are involved in various areas of activity in Russia. However, the most popular sectors are construction, services, and trade in a market, where seasonal labour migrants are most often employed. Those who have lived extensively in Russia and received citizenship, or a residence permit have managed to find decent work and take esteemed job positions. As a rule, such people are those who were educated in the USSR and whose professional skills allow them to be competitive with native Russian citizens in the labour market. Tajiks who have been granted Russian citizenship also serve in the Russian army, including as officers and command staff in law enforcement agencies. In general, almost all surveyed labour migrants from Tajikistan noted that one can always find a job in Russia, while education background will be helpful for finding a well-paid job.

We can summarize that most respondents were young people between 20 and 30 who have higher or incomplete higher education. One can infer from this that the shortage of jobs at home forces the most active and skilled population to move out of places of their residence and seek employment in Russia.

Most labour migrants from Tajikistan come to Russia because of unemployment or low wages at home. Their main reason for staying in Russia is to earn money to provide for their families, as well as their parents, younger brothers and sisters, and sick relatives.

Conclusions and recommendations

Labour migration from the Republic of Tajikistan to the Russian Federation is mutually beneficial, at least for the foreseeable future. For
Tajikistan, it allows solving serious problems with unemployment and thus contributes to mitigating the severity of domestic social and economic problems. Russia uses migrants to fill the demand for labour within the country, mostly for the jobs which native residents would not do for various reasons.

Most labour migrants from Tajikistan come to Russia to earn money to solve the financial problems of their families, relatives, and friends. Most of them are men. A significant portion of labour migrants noted that in Russia one can always find a job, and even when the salary is low it is at least stable. The Russian language ability and professional skills allow them to secure a well-paid job. While in Russia, some labour migrants from Tajikistan develop new professional skills, including those in high demand from employers.

Many migrants from Tajikistan come to Russia for seasonal work. Some of them plan to stay in Russia permanently.

Most of the Tajik migrants who have obtained Russian citizenship successfully integrate into a new environment. Their children get good education and opportunities for social mobility to achieve success.

Labour migration from Tajikistan to Russia should take place in an orderly manner, including the process of registration, obtaining a work permit or a patent, etc. The appropriate government bodies of the Republic of Tajikistan should be actively involved, and we recommend that they work in close cooperation with the federal and regional authorities of the Russian Federation. Tajikistan should cooperate with other states of Central Asia and the Russian Federation to prevent radicalisation and struggle effectively against violent extremism, and to develop a strategy for managing the return of foreign fighters.

Social and economic aspects play a major role in preventing the radicalisation of labour migrants from the Republic of Tajikistan. Many left their homeland for economic reasons. In this regard, we recommend that the Government of Tajikistan has a clear plan for the national economic development aimed at ensuring a decent life for its citizens.

As far as the fight against terrorism is concerned, in addition to combating poverty, social stratification and corruption, it is also necessary to coordinate the work of the state authorities of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Russian Federation, civil society institutions and non-governmental organizations to dismantle the financial basis of recruitment, which organized crime has turned into a profitable business, and to ensure that recruiters and their accomplices are severely and unavoidably punished.