



STUDY ON LABOUR MIGRANTS IN THREE CITIES OF KAZAKHSTAN – ALMATY, ASTANA AND SHYMKENT

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AUGUST 2022

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union
ESOMAR	European Society for Opinion and Market Research
IIN	Individual Identification Number
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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This publication is the result of a highly collaborative effort involving a team of international and national experts from Kazakhstan. The overall direction and coordination of the study were carried out by the IOM Sub-regional Coordination Office for Central Asia in Kazakhstan, represented by Senior Project Assistant Aliya Kozhakhmetova and former National Programme Officer Yevgeniy Khon.

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The results of the study and the interpretations and conclusions presented in the report do not necessarily reflect the views of IOM or its member countries. The designations employed and the presentation of material in the report do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of IOM concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city, or area, or of its authorities or concerning the regulatory and institutional and governing documents in force in the countries of Central Asia.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

This report highlights key findings from an analysis on the sociodemographic profile, migration journey and intentions, experiences on the workplace and general well-being of labour migrants living and working in three cities of Kazakhstan, namely Almaty, Astana, and Shymkent at the time of the survey. The report also calls attention to their general well-being.

METHODOLOGY

Data on labour migrants in Kazakhstan were collected through the administration of a survey questionnaire in three cities, Almaty, Astana and Shymkent using the tools of the International Organization for Migration (IOM)'s Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM).¹ A stratified sampling strategy by city and gender was adopted. The fieldwork to survey labour migrants was conducted by a survey company from the 6 June to the 6 July 2022. In total, 2,000 labour migrants participated in the study.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Sociodemographic profile

Labour migrants in Kazakhstan who participated in the survey were 69 per cent male and 31 per cent female. They were based in Astana (52%), Shymkent (34%) or Almaty city (14%) and 44 per cent were aged between 25 to 44 years old at the time of the survey. Most respondents were nationals of a neighbouring country: Uzbekistan (69%), Kyrgyzstan (20%) and the Russian Federation (4%). Forty-four per cent of the respondents reported being married while 42 per cent was single. Of those who reported having children (40%), 69 per cent reported having left them behind in the country of origin. Data indicate that 43 per cent of respondents were the main or sole provider for the household. Majority of the respondents had an upper secondary level (40%) of education, and specialized mainly in the sector of construction, manufacturing, engineering, and architecture (14%), services including personal, transport, and security (14%), and sector of education (10%). Gender differences show that female respondents tended to be more educated than male - 45 per cent had at least a post-secondary non-tertiary education compared to 30 per cent of their male counterparts. The field of education is also gendered as female respondents most frequently specialized in teacher training (14%) whilst male respondents cited mostly (15%) engineering, manufacturing, construction, and architecture.

¹ The Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) is a system to track and monitor displacement and population mobility, provide critical information to decision-makers and responders during crises, and contribute to better understandings of population flows. DTM was first conceptualized in 2004 to monitor internal displacement in Iraq and has since been adapted for implementation in over 100 countries, including in contexts of conflict, natural disaster, complex emergencies and protracted crises. <https://displacement.iom.int/sites/default/files/public/Methodological%20Framework%20used%20in%20DTM%20Operations%20for%20Quantifying%20Displacement%20and%20Mobility.pdf>

Migration experiences and intentions

Data show that most respondents (90%) resided in their country of origin before migrating to Kazakhstan. Those who were Uzbek respondents coming from the Russian Federation (5%), Uzbek respondents coming from Kyrgyzstan (2%) and Kyrgyz respondents coming from Uzbekistan (1%). For 52 per cent of respondents, their migration journey started more than one year ago. Before migrating to Kazakhstan, most respondents (57%) were employed in the private sector and most (51%) worked in the construction sector.

Furthermore, 65 per cent of respondents reported having arrived in Kazakhstan in 2022, used an international passport (74%) and migrated for employment purposes (92%). Of those who did not migrate for employment purposes (8%), family and friends' visit and reunification was the most frequent cited reason (36 per cent), especially among female respondents (49%). These respondents were still considered labour migrants as they reported having worked, currently working, or looking for a job in Kazakhstan at the time of the survey. The reasons for choosing Kazakhstan were various: incomes are higher here than elsewhere cited by 27 per cent of respondents, migrants are treated better here than elsewhere cited (14%), language is close to that of respondent's (12%), country is geographically close to origin country (12%). In terms of migration intentions, approximately half (49%) of respondents reported intending to circulate between their country of origin and Kazakhstan whilst 29 per cent to return permanently to their country of origin.

Experiences as labour migrants working in Kazakhstan

Respondents mainly worked on a full-time basis (93%), were either employees (64%), independent workers without employees (15%) or dependent contractors (13%). Half of them worked in the construction sector and most of them had at least one year experience in their sector of activity (97%). Their job was mainly found via personal connections upon arrival in Kazakhstan (60%) or before departure (26%) with no gender differences. Recruitment agencies' services were only used by approximately 2 per cent of respondents. The reason cited by 75 per cent of those who did not use the services of recruitment agencies was the lack of knowledge that they could rely on recruitment agencies to find a job in Kazakhstan.

Furthermore, data indicate that most (80%) respondents had an income higher than the average minimum wage set in Kazakhstan² but 15 per cent did not want to answer the question on income. From their monthly income, many (60%) respondents could buy and make savings whilst 19 per cent could buy but not make savings. Approximately one-third (34%) reported remitting. Also, 50 per cent reported not remitting and 17 per cent did not want to answer the question.³ Of those who reported remitting, about half (49%) remit at least 50 per cent of their monthly income, 57 per cent considered remittances the primary source of income of family members left behind and 79 per cent remitted once a month. Modalities to remit were diverse: 33 per cent used money transfer operator's website or application and/or banks office in Kazakhstan (26%). The reasons behind the use of these modalities were safety (for 56% of respondents who remit) and fastness (30%) with no gender differences. The motivation for remitting was to support family and friends to meet basic needs for 82 per cent of participants.

² The minimum wage is 60,000 Tenge which is approximately USD125.

³ Data enumerators in the field explained that respondents were generally reluctant to share information related to money.

General well-being

When asked about general well-being, 79 per cent had a permanent housing and of those who did not, low, or unsteady income was the most cited reason (21%). Data show that knowledge about access to health services, education and financial services was gendered: women knew more about access than men.



1.

INTRODUCTION



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Labour migration is an important characteristic of the Kazakh economy. It influences the dynamics on the labour market, increasing the demand for labour and relieving unemployment tensions. According to recent estimates (Bureau of National Statistics, n.d.), most international migrants come through the quota system from Uzbekistan, China, Republic of Türkiye, or India, or through the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) common labour market with the Russian Federation, Belarus, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan where work permits are not required.⁴

Nonetheless, there is a lack of official data, in quantity and quality on the profile, experience, behaviour and intentions of labour migrants located in Kazakhstan. For instance, the statistics provided by UN DESA (n.d.) on stock of migrants in the country are not available by grounds for stay. Thus, specific information on labour migrants in Kazakhstan remains scarce (IOM, 2020) and understanding on the labour migration phenomenon in the country is limited.

Hence, IOM decided to use DTM tools as a way of enhancing existing data collection methodologies and contributing to generate more consistent, granular, and internationally comparable data sets in labour migration. The present report compiles and analyses the information collected during the Spring 2022 through the administration of a questionnaire to labour migrants based in Kazakhstan at the time of the survey. Ultimately, the findings will be used to build evidence for further programmatic interventions, advocacy, and awareness-raising campaigns.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The present research aims to gather evidence on labour migrants living in Kazakhstan for at least one month at the time of the survey and on:

- the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of labour migrants including their employment status, education, skills, and competency background
- the migration decision making processes including migration intentions and relevant experiences of labour migrants during the phase of recruitment, including incidents of unethical recruitment practices
- the financial and social impact of migration on individual labour migrants and their families
- the general well-being with regards to access to services, relationship with Kazakhs and other communities and level of social inclusion/exclusion.

⁴ www.eaeunion.org

2.

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS



2. METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

2.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND TARGET POPULATION

The research study was done by using the IOM's DTM tools so that it will enhance existing data collection methodologies and help generate interoperable data on key locations assessed.

In this research, a labour migrant is defined as: "as a person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State [Kazakhstan] of which he or she is not a national and has been living in the country for at least one month."⁵ The variables and inclusion criteria are displayed in table 1.

Table 1
Variables and inclusion criteria for the target population

	Variable	Inclusion criteria
1	Age	18 years of age or more
2	Nationality	Not Kazakh
3	Employment status in Kazakhstan	Has worked, is working, or is actively looking for a job in Kazakhstan
5	Interview with IOM	Has not been interviewed by IOM before
6	Length of stay	Has arrived in Kazakhstan within the past month or before

2.2 GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

The research study focuses on three cities in Kazakhstan with highest concentrations of labour migrants, namely Almaty, Shymkent and Astana.⁶ It assesses all the districts in each city: 8 districts in Almaty, 4 in Shymkent and 4 Astana for a total of 16 districts (figure 1).

Figure 1
List of districts by key city

Almaty	Astana	Shymkent
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Alatau districtAlmaly districtAuezov districtBostandyk districtMedeu districtNauryzbay districtTurkisib districtZhetisu district	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Almaty districtBaikonyr districtEsil districtSaryarka district	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Abay districtAl Farabi districtEnbekshi districtKaratau district

5 The following groups are excluded from the definition: students and trainees; refugees and stateless persons. The list is not exhaustive. Please refer to IOM (2019a) Glossary on Migration.

6 See data from the Bureau National of Statistics (n.d) available at <https://stat.gov.kz/official/industry/61/statistic/5>.

2.3 DATA COLLECTION METHOD AND FIELDWORK

A questionnaire was developed to collect quantitative information on labour migrants in Kazakhstan. It consisted of five modules (table 2) including closed-end questions and conditional paths.

Table 2
Questionnaire modules

No	Module title
A	Coding and screening questions
B	Migrant sociodemographic profile
C	Migration experience and intentions
D	Employment and remittances
E	General well-being in Kazakhstan

The data collection fieldwork was conducted from the 6 June to the 6 July 2022. A survey company called LLP Public Opinion Research Institute⁷ and based in Kazakhstan was hired to collect the data. The fieldwork team consisted of:

- 2 supervisors and 12 interviewers in Almaty
- 2 supervisors and 14 interviewers in Astana
- 1 supervisor and 19 interviewers in Shymkent

The research team in consultation with the survey company set up a data quality management during the fieldwork. Several means of control were used to ensure the quality of data collected. They included:

- An in-person one-day training of the working group in Almaty on the 29 March 2022 with an intensive work on the terminology and sequence of the questionnaire, and ethics of the research. The training was attended by representatives of the survey company's network from Almaty, Nu Sultan, and Shymkent
- The provision of an enumerator guide in English and Russian to the field team
- A briefing organized by the survey company conducted by the Head of the Field Department with each interviewer by telephone. During the briefing, the enumerator guide was introduced and questions about the questionnaire and ethics of the research were considered, among other elements
- A monitoring data quality involving a weekly communication and reporting on the survey progress by the field manager to the research team as well as a field monitoring and regular data quality checks by the field manager

⁷ <https://opinions.kz/en/>

2.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Data collected for this study are personal data, in reference to any information relating to an identified or identifiable data subject recorded electronically or on paper, data protection is fundamental. Deriving from the right to privacy, data protection is the systematic application of a set of institutional, technical, and physical actions that preserve the right to privacy regarding the collection, storage, use, and disclosure of personal data.

Thus, international ethical standards, including those established by the European Society for Opinion and Market Research⁸ (ESOMAR) and those of IOM developed in the IOM Data Protection Manual (IOM, 2015)⁹ were followed throughout the process and presented during the training seminar on the 29 March 2022.

To achieve data protection before and during data collection, ethical considerations included:

- Respect of the privacy and dignity of participants
- Non-discrimination of participants
- Voluntary participation
- Confidentiality of personal data
- Informed consent of participants before starting data collection
- Gender balance with enumerators: both male and female enumerators were hired to not make respondents uncomfortable especially when they are interviewed alone
- Do no harm: the participation to the survey should not have any unintended negative effects on the participants.

The survey was conducted using tablets and the KoBo software. To achieve data protection regarding storage, use, and disclosure of data, ethical considerations included:

- No personal information was or will be transferred to third parties not related to this study.
- The database of completed interviews was stored electronically in the personal account of the head of data processing of the survey company. The access to the database requires a login and password. Only one employee has access to the personal account and all data are encrypted. After the completion of data processing, the database was handed over to the research team.
- The data will be stored for 7 years on the computer of the head of data processing under a password, and at the end of the storage period, the data will be permanently deleted.

8 <https://esomar.org/codes-and-guidelines>

9 The Data Protection Manual comprises three parts: (i) IOM data protection principles as informed by relevant international standards, (ii) comprehensive guidelines on each principle, consideration boxes, and practical examples, and (iii) generic templates and checklists to ensure that data protection is considered when collecting and processing personal data. For more information, see <https://publications.iom.int/books/iom-data-protection-manual>.

2.5 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

The coding of questions and data entry were carried out by a full-time experienced operator of the survey company. The merging of the different data files, data cleansing and control of the data were implemented by a data scientist using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows (version 21).

To analyse the data collected, descriptive statistics were used. Descriptive statistics summarize the characteristics of the dataset using cross-tabulations, maps, and visualisations. The findings were organised by broad topics anchored on the modules of the questionnaire. Besides, the information was disaggregated by city, gender, and citizenship for a detailed analysis of the patterns.

2.6 METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY

■ ***Labour migrants: a hard-to-reach population***

There were a series of limitations pertaining to the profile of the respondents. (Labour) migrants are a hard-to-reach population. The term refers to a subgroup of the population that may be difficult to reach and involve in research studies. In this case, labour migrants in Kazakhstan are hard to identify and rare to record. They may not wish to disclose information because they lack trust¹⁰ or their situation or behaviour may be irregular, in reference to their legal status. The survey company hired by IOM had the experience to collect data on hard-to-reach populations in Kazakhstan. Thus, all data enumerators hired by the company had experience in the field, and knew migration dynamics in the country.

■ ***Principles of ethical assessment, safe management, and referral system***

During the fieldwork, some protection-related incidents may be disclosed or brought to the attention of data enumerators. These incidents refer to gender-based violence, cases of exploitation or trafficking, or any other serious concerns about the rights and safety of individuals and life-threatening incidents. In reference to the IOM guidance on referral mechanisms for the protection and assistance of migrants vulnerable to violence, exploitation, and abuse (IOM, 2019b),¹¹ a protocol was set and explained during the training. It was also described in the enumerator guide. The protocol included the following recommendations to the data enumerators: do not engage into case management, act only with informed consent, provide information on available services and referrals with relevant contact detail. A list of contact details by city was prepared by the research team and provided to the field team.

■ ***Weather conditions and working hours***

Weather conditions (high air temperature) especially in the south of Kazakhstan made it challenging to survey labour migrants and slowed down the data collection process. Besides, as most interviews took place during the day, data enumerators reported a general lack of availability of labour migrants who were working at that time.

¹⁰ See the study of De Vroome et al. (2013) who show that migrants often score lower for generalized trust. Study available at <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jct018>.

¹¹ Available at <https://publications.iom.int/books/iom-guidance-referral-mechanisms>.

Thus, data enumerators experienced frequent refusals to participate in the survey. To cope with these challenges, interviewers started to work after 5 pm, especially on days when the weather was too hot.

■ ***Self-reported data***

There were also traditional methodological limitations pertaining to the data collection method adopted. Questionnaires are a simple way to collect data. However, by relying on self-report techniques -respondents report directly on their own experience, behaviour or intentions-, data collected are subject to potential biases such as social desirability, selective memory, or introspective ability.¹² Data enumerators reported a lack of willingness of respondents to answer questions about their income, housing and how they would send money to their home country. They also reported the fact that participants who did not work officially and/or were irregularly staying in Kazakhstan, stated during the interview that they were working officially. Besides, data enumerators mentioned a general feeling of fear among labour migrants. These latter feared that employers may send back to their country of origin and that they would be left without work and payment if they talked too much during the interview. Such feelings affected the way respondents answered the questions. The fact that all enumerators were Kazakh citizens might also have played a role in the way respondents answered questioned. To minimize these biases, the respondents were repeatedly given a reminder about confidentiality and anonymity of the study, informed about their right to refuse to answer questions, and that the data collected were used in a generalized form as a part of a scientific project.

■ ***Understanding of the survey questions and answers***

Two elements limited the understanding of the survey questions and answers by the respondents. Data enumerators reported first a general limited level of knowledge of Kazakh and/or Russian languages by labour migrants, and second a difficulty in understanding the questions and/or answers. To overcome these challenges, data enumerators re-read the question/answers. If the respondent did not understand the second time, they showed the questions/answers on the tablet so that the respondents could independently read and understand.

¹² Social desirability means that the respondents select the more socially acceptable answer rather than being truthful, while selective memory describes the fact to remember or not experiences and events that occurred at some point in the past. Introspective ability refers to the fact that the respondents may not be able to assess themselves accurately.

3.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

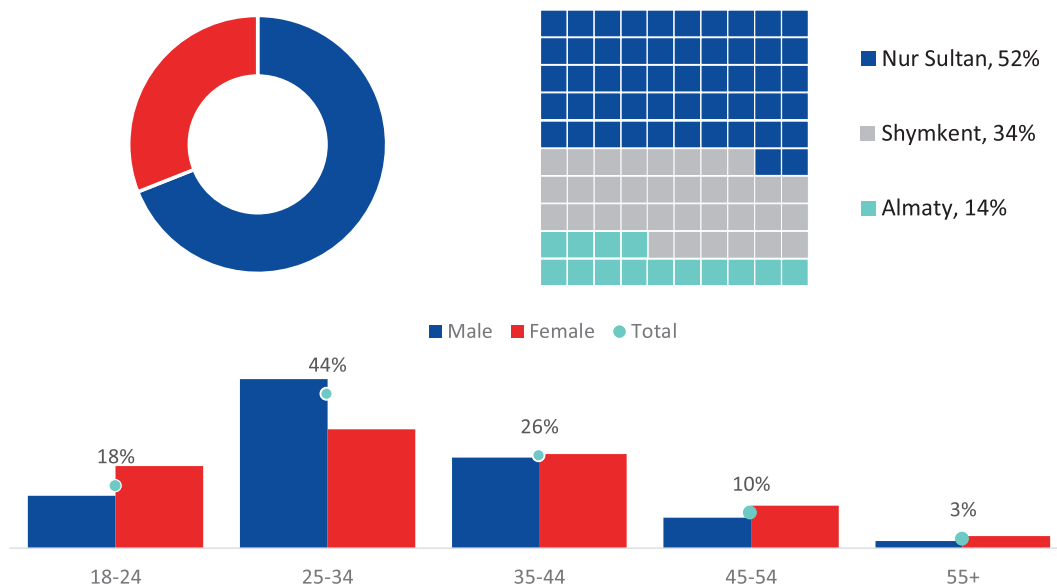


3. OCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

3.1 SEX, CITY OF RESIDENCE AND AGE RANGE

Of the 2000 respondents, 69 per cent were male and 31 per cent were female (figure 2). Besides, 52 per cent were in Astana, 34 per cent in Shymkent and 14 per cent in Almaty city. In terms of age range, 44 per cent of respondents were aged 25 to 34 years old. There were gender differences as 24 per cent of female respondents were 18 to 24 years old compared to 15 per cent of male respondents. Besides, 48 per cent of male respondents were aged 25 to 34 years old compared to 34 per cent of female respondents.

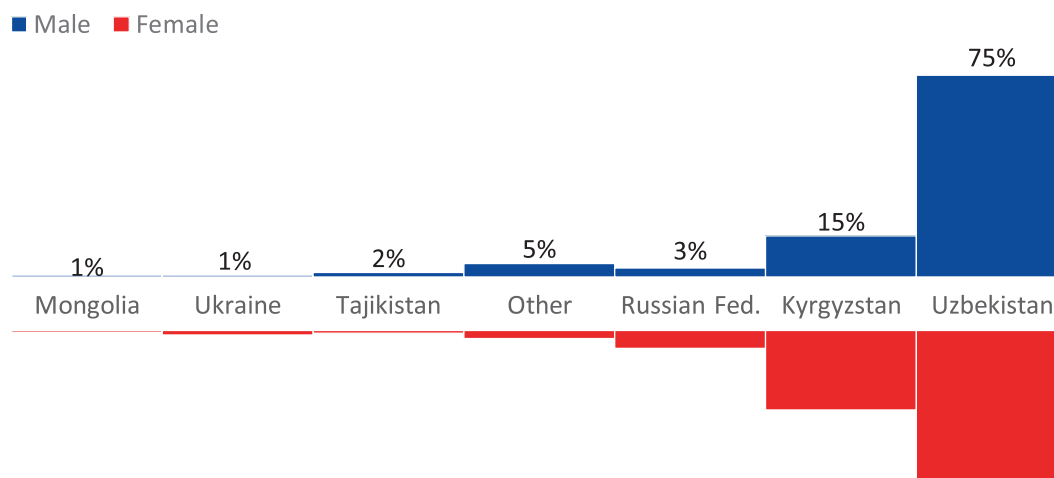
Figure 2
Sex, city of interview and age range by gender (2,000 respondents)



3.2 COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP

When asked about their country of origin, 69 per cent of respondents (figure 3) reported being Uzbek nationals followed by 20 per cent of respondents who reported being Kyrgyz nationals. There were gender differences as 3/4 (75%) of male respondents were Uzbek nationals compared to 58 per cent of female respondents. Furthermore, 30 per cent of female respondents were Kyrgyz citizens compared to 15 per cent of male respondents. Other top nationalities were Russian (4% of respondents), Tajik (1%), Ukrainian (1%) and Mongolian (1%).

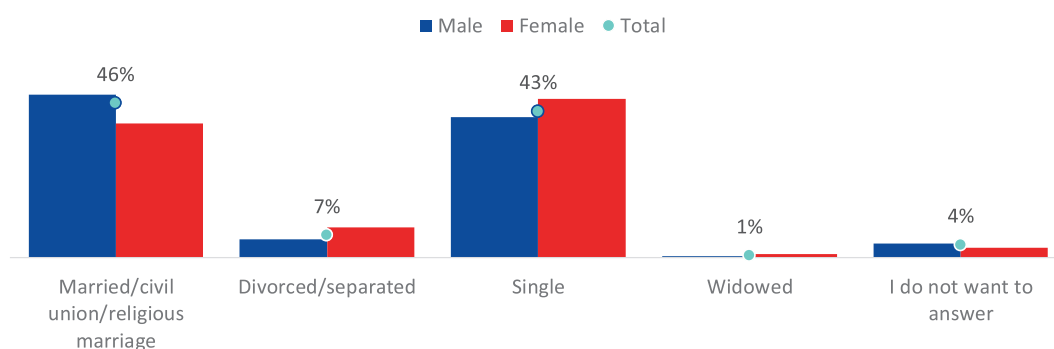
Figure 3
Country of origin, by gender (2,000 respondents)



3.3 MARITAL STATUS AND CHILDREN

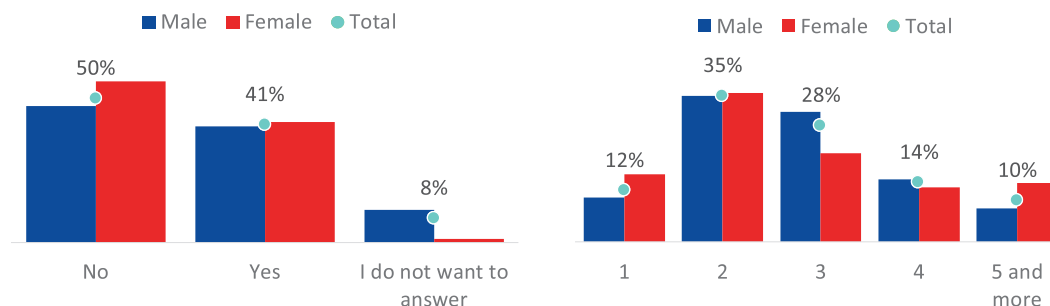
The question on the marital status of respondents led to the following findings (figure 4). First, the majority (46%) of respondents was either married, in civil union or religious marriage (46%) or single (43%). A low proportion of respondents was divorced, separated (7%), widowed (1%) or did not want to answer (4%). Second, there were gender differences. Female respondents were more either single (47%) or divorced (9%) than in couple (40%). On the contrary, male respondents were more in couple (48%) than single (42%) or divorced (5%).

Figure 4
Marital status, by gender (2,000 respondents)



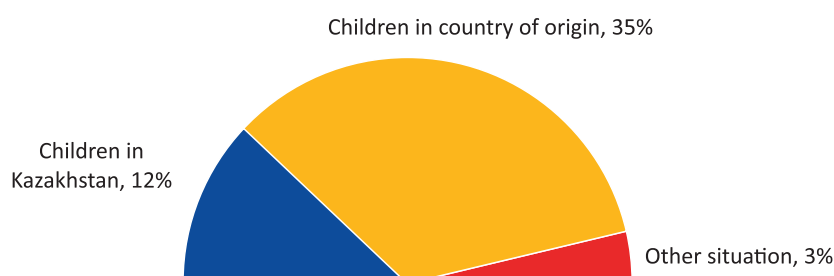
Of those who reported having children (41%), 35 per cent (figure 5) reported having two children and 28 per cent reported having three children. In terms of gender, there were some noticeable differences. When asked whether they have children, 8 per cent of male respondents did not want to answer, a proportion much more important than for female respondents (1%). Besides, 56 per cent of female respondents reported not having children compared to 48 per cent of male respondents. Of those female respondents who reported having children (42%), 14 per cent had five children or more compared to 8 per cent of male respondents.

Figure 5
Having children and number of children, by gender
(2,000 respondents and 824 respondents, 41% of the sample)



Respondents who reported having children (824 respondents, 41% of the sample) were also asked about the number of children who were with them in Kazakhstan, left behind in the country of origin and elsewhere. In 69 per cent of the cases, the children were in the country of origin of the respondent and in 24 per cent of the cases they lived with the respondent in Kazakhstan (figure 6). Other situation includes children living elsewhere, and some children left behind in the country of origin and some in Kazakhstan or elsewhere.

Figure 6
Location of respondents' children
(824 respondents, 41% of the sample)

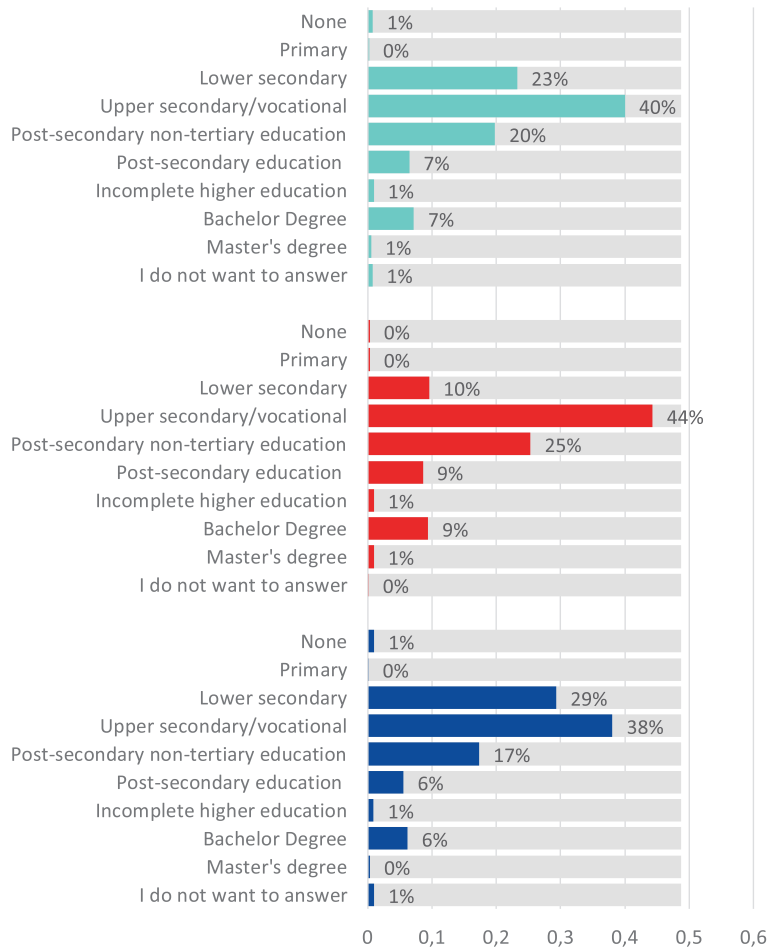


3.4 EDUCATION: LEVEL AND FIELD

The questions on the level and field of education of respondents were consistent with the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED).¹³ The options were adapted to the regional context. When asked what their level of education was, 40 per cent of respondents (figure 7) reported having an upper secondary or vocational level. Female respondents tended to be more educated than male: 45 per cent reported having at least a post-secondary non-tertiary education level compared to 30 per cent of their male counterparts.

¹³ <https://uis.unesco.org/en/topic/international-standard-classification-education-isced>

Figure 7
Level of education, by gender (2,000 respondents)

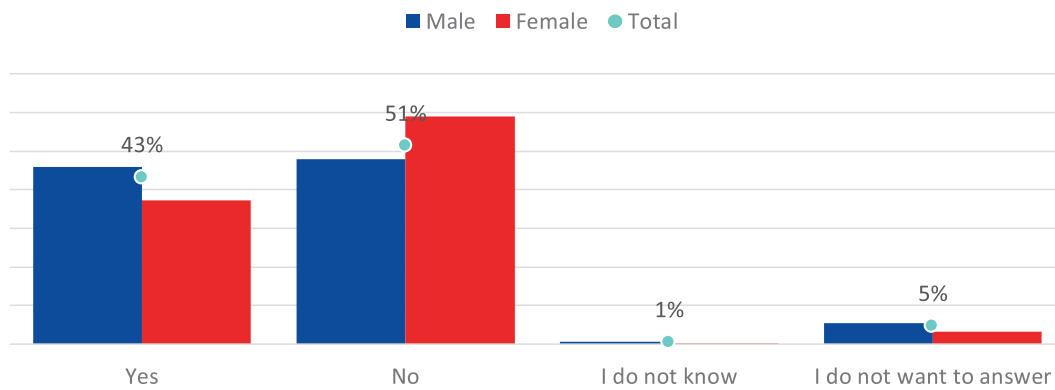


When asked about the field of education, gender differences were important. Fourteen per cent of female respondents studied education in reference to teacher training compared to seven per cent of male respondents. The first field of education (15%) among male respondents was engineering, manufacturing, construction, and architecture compared to 11 per cent of female respondents.

3.5 PROVIDER OF THE HOUSEHOLD

The respondents were asked whether they were the sole or primary providers for their household/family in reference to the person responsible for the family programme included childcare and managing the administrative aspects of home. Most (51%) respondents reported not being the sole or primary provider for the household or family with a difference between male and female (figure 8). Fifty-nine per cent of female respondents reported not being the person responsible for the family programme compared to 48 per cent of male respondents.

Figure 8
Respondents being the sole or primary providers for their households
(2,000 respondents)



4.

MIGRATION EXPERIENCE AND INTENTIONS OF RESPONDENTS

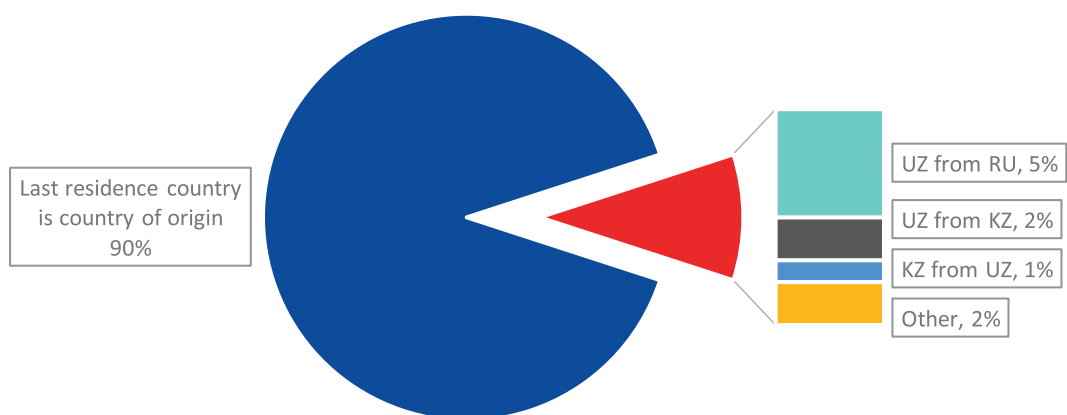


4. MIGRATION EXPERIENCE AND INTENTIONS OF RESPONDENTS

4.1 COUNTRY AND STARTING DATE OF THE MIGRATION JOURNEY

The question about last country of residence gave information about the migration journey of the respondents. Most (90%) of respondents reported residing in their country of origin (figure 9). Other respondents resided in a third country. Findings show that five per cent were Uzbek nationals who resided in the Russian Federation before moving to Kazakhstan. To a lesser extent, it also comprises Uzbek nationals who resided in Kyrgyzstan (2%), Kyrgyz nationals who resided in Uzbekistan (1%) and other situations (2%). Besides, most (52%) respondents reported having started their migration journey more than one year ago with no notable gender differences.

Figure 9
Migration journey (2,000 respondents)

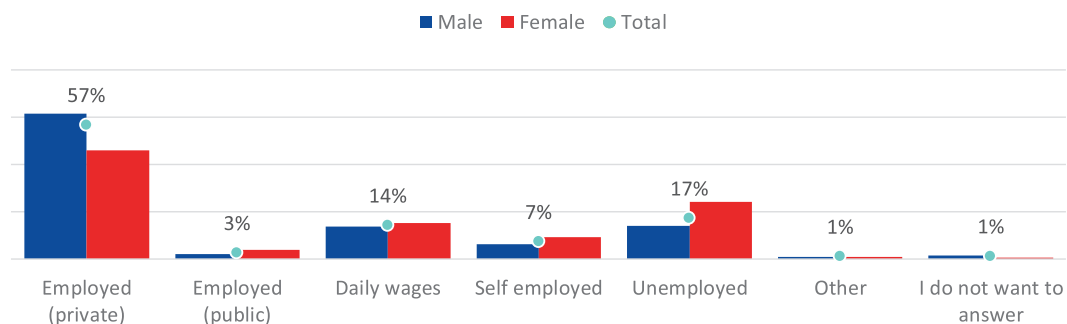


Note:
UZ = Uzbekistan, RU = Russian Federation, KZ = Kyrgyzstan. UZ from RU refers to Uzbek nationals who resided in the Russian Federation before migrating to Kazakhstan.

4.2 EMPLOYMENT STATUS IN THE LAST PLACE OF RESIDENCE INCLUDING COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

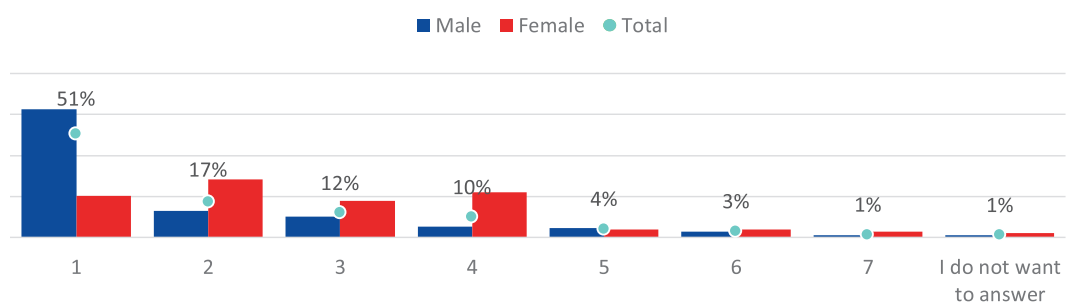
When asked about their employment status in the last place of residence including country of origin, data indicate that 57 per cent of respondents (figure 10) reported being employed in the private sector. The proportions of respondents being unemployed (17%) and working daily (14%) suggest a precarious professional situation. Gender differences were particularly important. Most (62%) male respondents reported being employed in the private sector compared to 46 per cent of their female counterparts. Besides, 14 per cent of male respondents reported working on a daily wage, a proportion comparable to female ones (15%). Whilst 14 per cent of male respondents reported being unemployed, this was the situation of approximately one fourth (24%) of their female counterparts.

Figure 10
Employment status in the last place of residence, by gender
(2,000 respondents)



Of those who reported working in the last place of residence (1,616 respondents, 81% of the sample), a majority (51%) mentioned the construction sector as their sector of activity (figure 11), followed by wholesale and retail trade (17%) and accommodation and food service activities (10%). Gender differences revealed that 63 per cent of male respondents worked in the construction sector compared to 20 per cent of female respondents. Besides, they indicated that 28 per cent of female respondents worked in the wholesale and retail trade sector compared to 13 per cent of male respondents and that 18 per cent of female respondents worked in the accommodation and food service activities compared to 10 per cent of their male counterparts.

Figure 11
Working sector of activity in the last place of residence, by gender
(1,616 respondents, 81% of the sample)

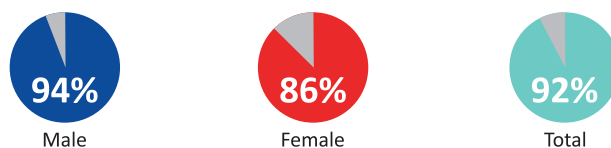


- 1 = construction;
- 2 = wholesale and retail trade, repair of vehicles;
- 3 = other;
- 4 = accommodation and food service activities;
- 5 = agriculture, forestry, and fishing;
- 6 =
- 7 = manufacturing..

4.3 REASONS FOR MIGRATING TO KAZAKHSTAN

When asked if they originally left their country of origin for employment purposes, 92 per cent of the respondents said yes (figure 12). Gender difference was noticeable as 86 per cent of female reported that they left for employment purposes compared to 94 per cent of their male counterparts.

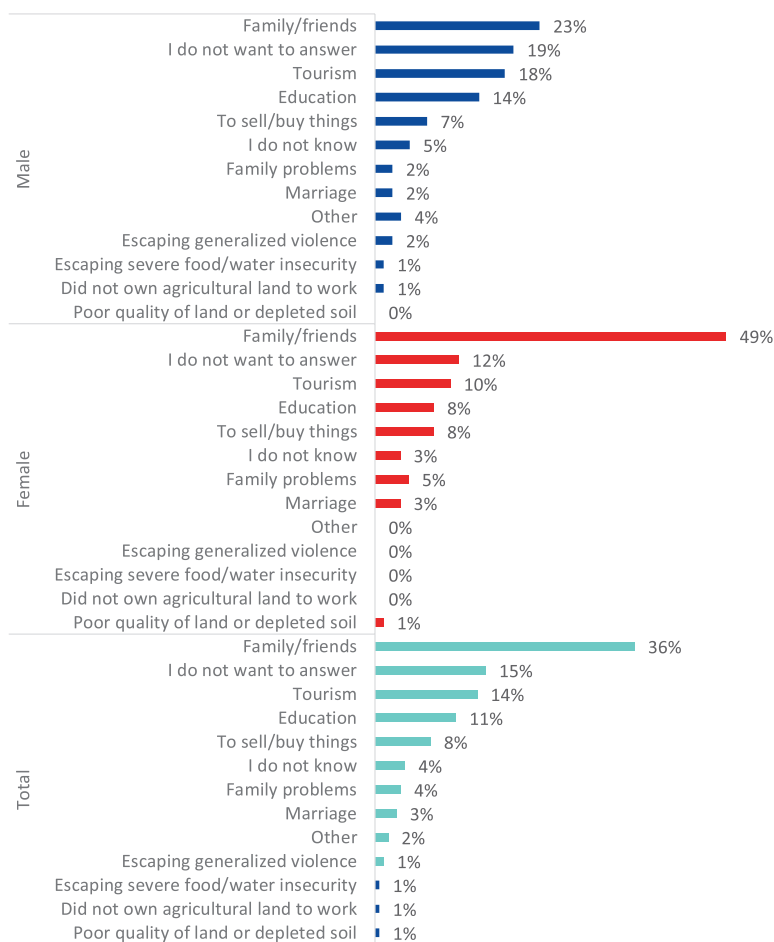
Figure 12
Proportion of respondents who migrated for employment purposes, by gender (2,000 respondents)



Of the respondents who reported having migrated for employment purposes (1,831 respondents, 91% of the sample), 93 per cent mentioned that this decision was for themselves and 6 per cent mentioned that it was for both (themselves and spouse, if accompanied). Such proportion reached 14 per cent among female respondents compared to 3 per cent among their male counterparts.

Of those who did not migrate for employment purposes, 36 per cent reported that family and friends visit, or reunification was the main driver and 15 per cent did not want to answer (figure 13). These respondents were still considered labour migrants as they reported having worked, currently working, or looking for a job in Kazakhstan at the time of the survey. Gender differences were important. Forty-nine per cent of female respondents reported having migrated for family and friends visit or reunification compared to 23 per cent of male ones. The reasons for male respondents are more diverse: 18 per cent mentioned tourism and 14 per cent cited education.

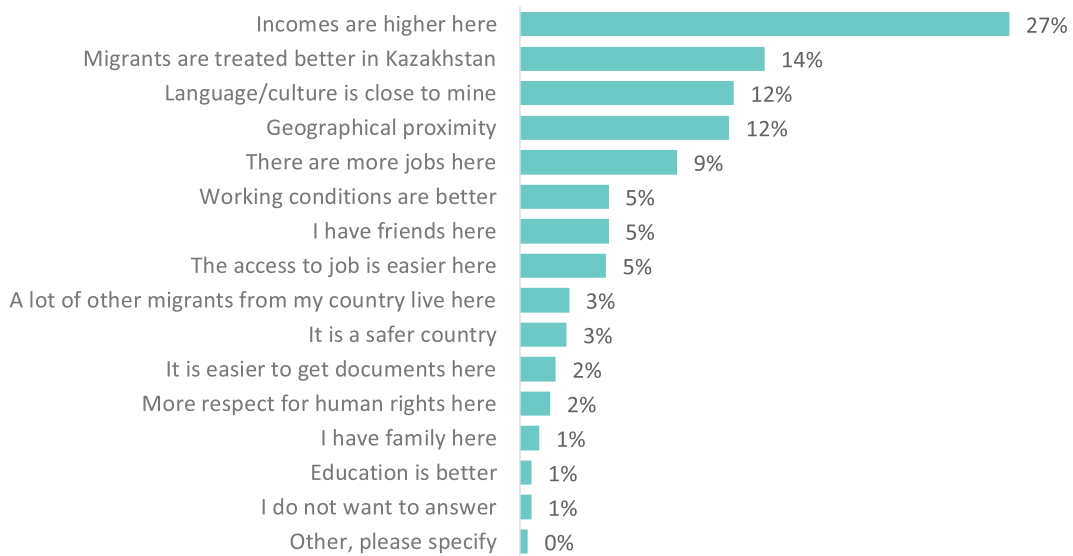
Figure 13
Reasons for leaving the origin country of respondent other than employment, by gender (169 respondents, 8% of the sample)



Note: Multi-select question up to three options.

When asked about the reasons for choosing Kazakhstan as the destination country, 27 per cent of respondents mentioned higher incomes here than in the country of origin (figure 14). Other main reasons included the fact that migrants were treated better in Kazakhstan than in other countries (14%), language and culture were close to the respondents' (12%) and geographical proximity (12%).

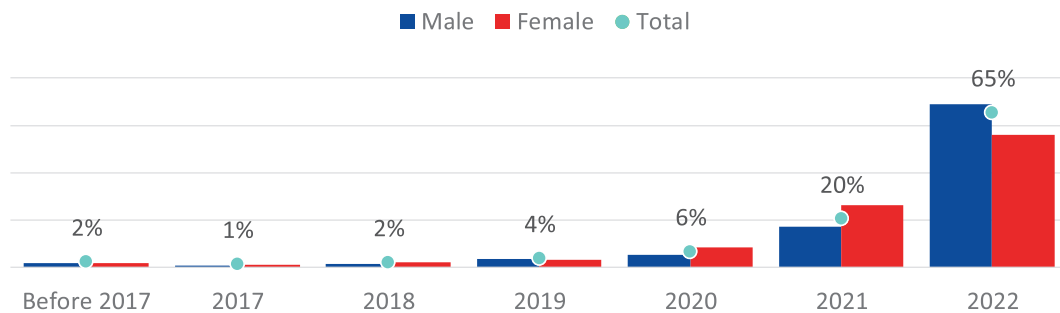
Figure 14
Reasons for migrating to Kazakhstan (2,000 respondents)



Note: Multi-select question up to three options.

When asked about the arrival year in Kazakhstan, most (65%) respondents reported having arrived in 2022 (figure 15). In terms of gender, this was the case of 69 per cent of male respondents and 56 per cent of female ones.

Figure 15
Arrival year in Kazakhstan, by gender (2,000 respondents)

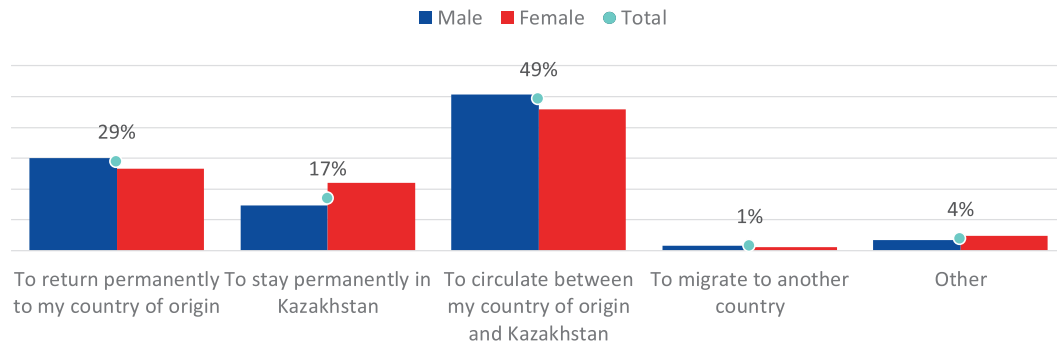


4.4 MIGRATORY INTENTIONS

Migration intentions of respondents are displayed in figure 16. Approximately half (49%) of respondents reported willingness to circulate between their country of origin and Kazakhstan. An intention shared by 51 per cent of male respondents and 46 per cent of female ones. The second most cited migration intention (29%) was to return

permanently to the country of origin whilst the third most cited one (17%) was to stay permanently in Kazakhstan. Such intention was particularly mentioned by female respondents (22%) in contrast to 15 per cent among their male counterparts.

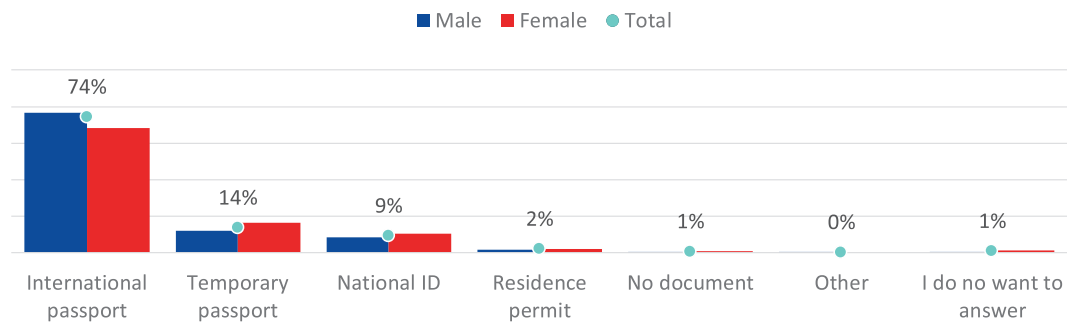
Figure 16
Migration intentions of respondents, by gender (2,000 respondents)



4.5 DOCUMENTATION

To enter Kazakhstan,¹⁴ three quarters (74%) of respondents reported using an international passport (figure 17). Other options such as temporary passport or national ID were also mentioned (14% and 9%, respectively).

Figure 17
Documentation of respondents, by gender (2,000 respondents)



¹⁴ Citizens of the EAEU who enter Kazakhstan under their foreign passport and under the condition that their stay does not exceed 30 days, are exempt from the obligation of filling in a migration card. However, if citizens stay on the territory of Kazakhstan for more than 30 days from the date of entry shall be required to register in accordance with the legislation of Kazakhstan, if such a requirement is determined by the legislation of the state of entry. Besides, citizens from eight neighbouring countries (Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and Mongolia) can enter up to 90 days without a visa. See <https://korgan-zan.kz/en/obtaining-iin-and-bin-in-kazakhstan/>.

5.

EXPERIENCES AS LABOUR MIGRANTS IN KAZAKHSTAN OF RESPONDENTS



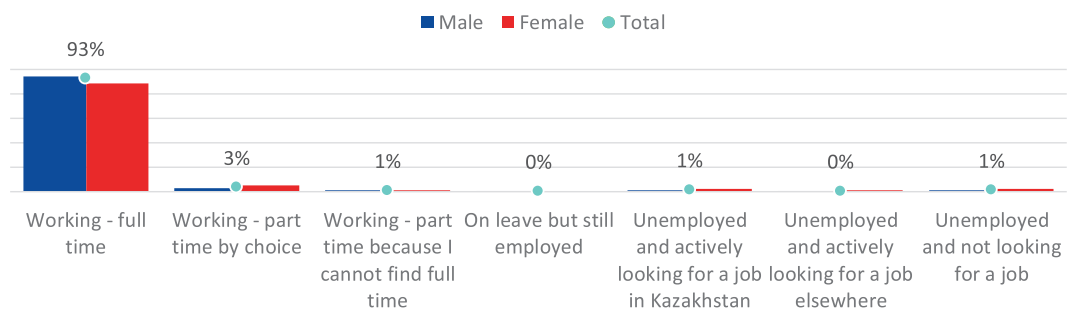
5. EXPERIENCES AS LABOUR MIGRANTS IN KAZAKHSTAN OF RESPONDENTS

5.1 CURRENT EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

When asked about their current employment status, 93 per cent of respondents reported working on a full-time basis (figure 18). The other respondents reported working on a part-time basis by choice (3%), on a part-time basis because they could not find a full-time job (1%), being unemployed and actively looking for a job in Kazakhstan (1%) or being unemployed and not looking for a job (1%).

The patterns were comparable between male and female respondents. However, female respondents more often mentioned working on a part-time basis by choice (5%) than their male counterparts (1%). Besides, a higher proportion of male respondents (95%) reported working on a full-time basis than female ones (89%).

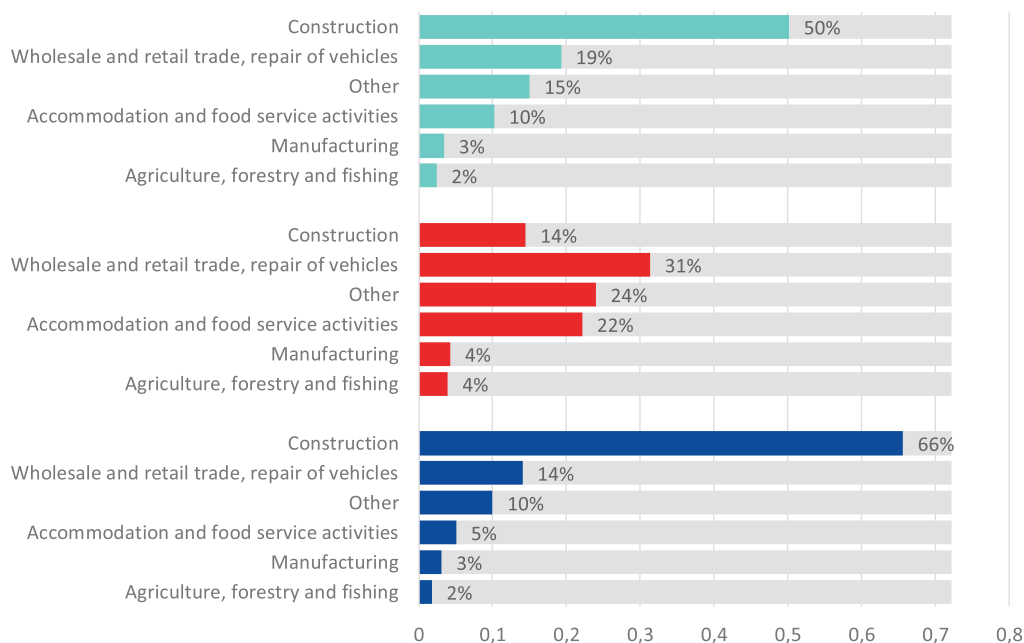
Figure 18
Current employment status, by gender (2,000 respondents)



The status in employment of those who reported currently working (1,945 respondents, 97% of the sample) varied across employee (65%), independent work without employee (15%), dependent contractor (13%) and employer (8%). Gender differences were present. The proportion of female respondents who mentioned being a dependent contractor was lower than for their male counterparts (7% versus 16%, respectively).

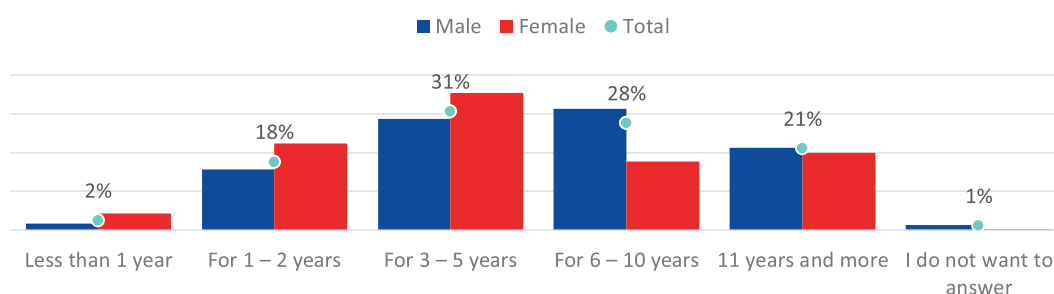
The sector of employment cited by 50 per cent of the respondents was construction (figure 19), followed by the sector of wholesale and retail trade, and repair of vehicles mentioned by 19 per cent of the respondents. Disparities between male and female were noticeable. Female respondents cited first the wholesale and retail trade and repair of vehicles' sector (31%) compared to 14 per cent of male respondents. Besides, data show that 66 per cent of male respondent reported working in the construction sector compared to 14 per cent of their female counterparts. The findings were consistent with the field of education and sector of employment in the last place of residence.

Figure 19
Sector of employment (1,945 respondents, 97% of the sample)



Respondents were also asked whether they had experience working in their current sector of activity. Eighty-four per cent of them reported that they did have such experience (figure 20). Of them (1,648 respondents, 82% of the sample), 31 per cent had from 3 to 5 years of experience, 28 per cent had from 6 to 10 years of experience and 21 per cent had at least 11 years of experience.

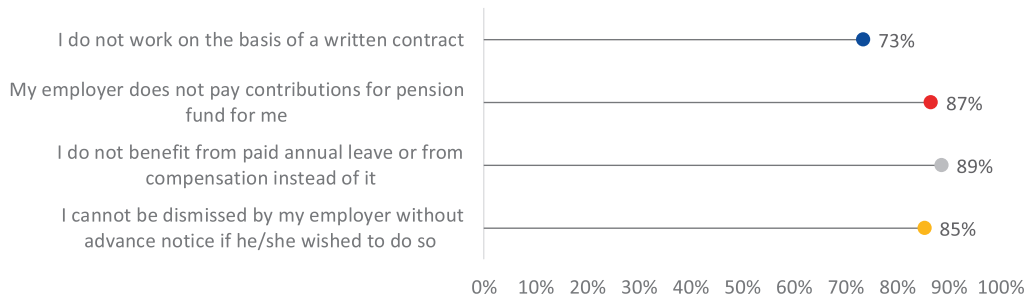
Figure 20
Experience in the sector, by gender (1,648 respondents, 82% of the sample)



Informality was evaluated through a series of questions whose findings are displayed in figure 21.¹⁵ These findings suggest a high level of informality among participants in the survey. Data indicate that 73 per cent of respondents reported not working based on a written contract, 87 per cent reported that their employer did not pay contributions for pension fund and 89 per cent reported not benefiting from paid annual leave or from compensation instead of it. On the contrary, 85 per cent of respondents reported that they could not be dismissed by their employer without advance notice if their employer wished to do so.

¹⁵ The set of questions is inspired by the ILO examples of possible survey questions to measure informal employment. See Hussmanns, R. (2004) Defining and measuring informal employment available at <https://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/download/papers/meas.pdf>.

Figure 21
Evaluating the degree of informality
(1,945 respondents, 97% of the sample)



5.2 ROLE OF RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

When asked how they found their job, 60 per cent of the respondents (figure 22) cited the role of personal connections upon arrival in Kazakhstan. The second most cited reason (26%) was personal connections before departure. Very few respondents (less than 1% each) used the services of a public or private recruitment agency in their home country to find a job in Kazakhstan.

Figure 22
Modalities to find a job in Kazakhstan
(1,960 respondents, 98% of the sample)

The most cited reason for not using the services of recruitment agencies was the lack of information in the country of origin. 75 per cent of the respondents reported not being aware that this service was available in their origin country (figure 23). The second most cited reason (16%) was the lack of need as respondents reported being able to find work through their connections.

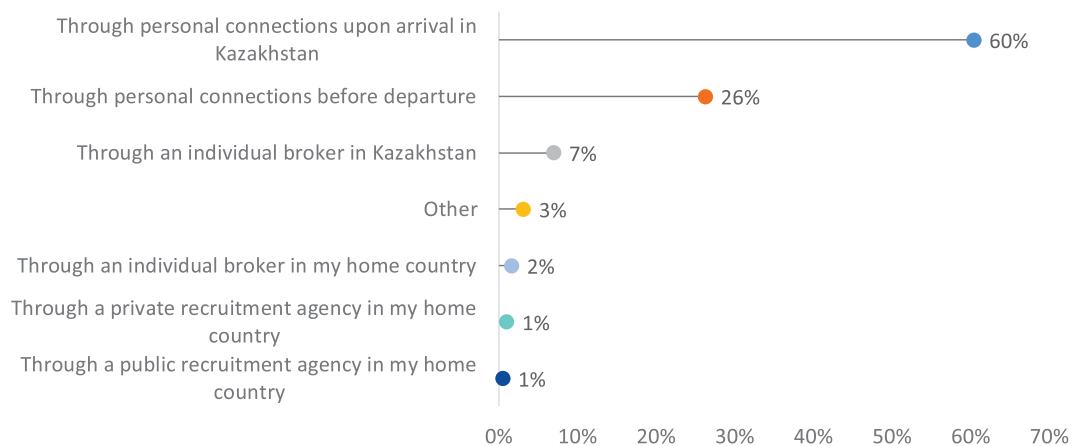
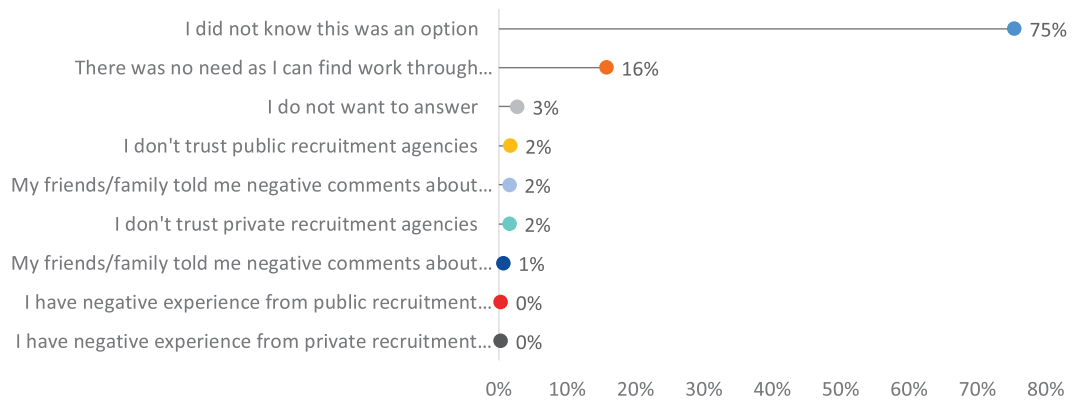


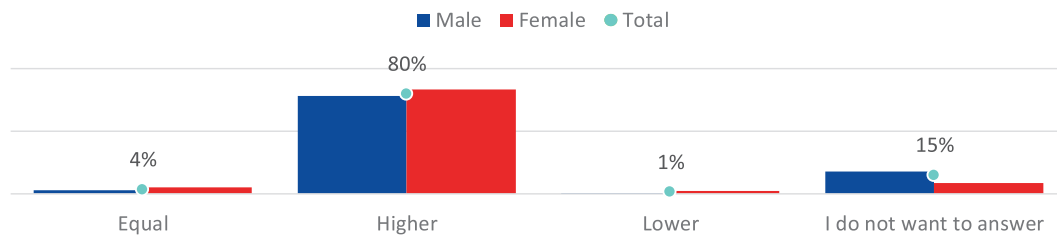
Figure 23
Reasons for not using a recruitment agency
(1,930 respondents, 96% of the sample)



5.3 INCOME AND REMITTANCES

Among respondents who reported working in Kazakhstan (1,945 respondents, 97% of the sample), 80 per cent reported getting a monthly income higher than the minimum wage in Kazakhstan¹⁶ and 15 per cent did not want to answer (figure 24).

Figure 24
Wage compared to minimum wage in Kazakhstan
(1,945 respondents, 97% of the sample)



In relative terms, respondents were asked whether their household average income was sufficient to meet monthly expenses in Kazakhstan. Sixty per cent of them reported being able to buy what they need and make savings whilst 19 per cent reported being able to buy what they need but not being able to make savings (figure 25). Besides, 15 per cent did not want to answer. Data disaggregated by gender revealed that the patterns were comparable between male and female and that 24 per cent of female respondents could buy what they needed but could not make savings compared to 17 per cent for their male counterparts. Furthermore, 20 per cent of male respondents refused to answer the question whilst only 5 per cent of female ones did.

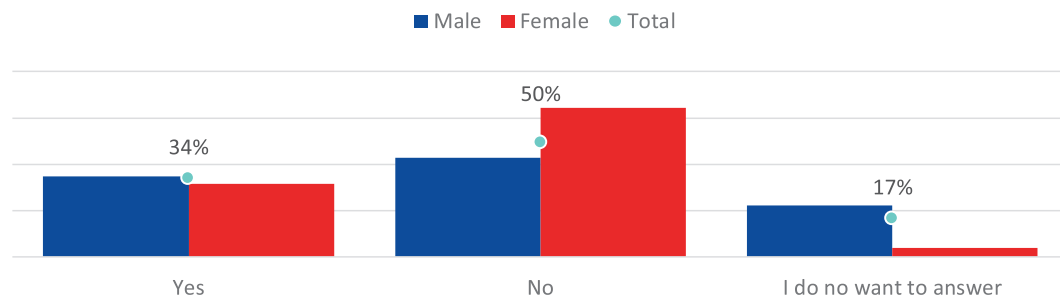
¹⁶ The minimum wage in Kazakhstan in August 2022 is 60,000 Tenge which is approximately USD125.

Figure 25
Income compared to necessity (2,000 respondents)



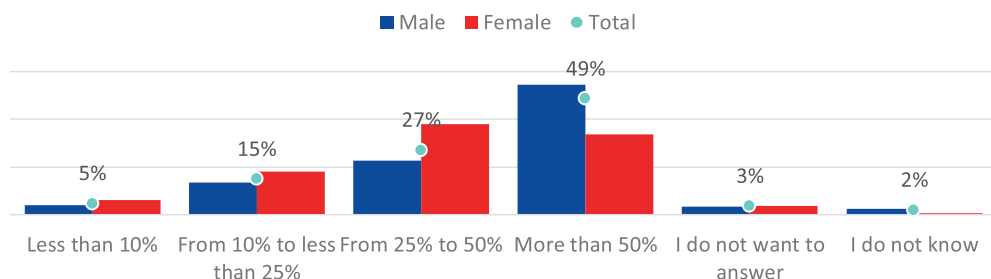
When asked whether they sent money to their country of origin, half of the respondents said no and 17 per cent refused to answer (figure 26). Thus, 34 per cent of respondents reported remitting to their origin country. Data enumerators reported a general reluctance to answer this question among the respondents, especially among male (22% against 4% for their female counterparts)¹⁷.

Figure 26
Remitting to the country of origin (2,000 respondents)



Among those who reported remitting (678 respondents, 34% of the sample), 49 per cent remitted more than 50 per cent of their monthly income, 27 per cent remitted between 25 and 50 per cent of their monthly income and 25 per cent remitted less than 25 per cent of their monthly income (figure 27). Answers between male and female varied. Most (54%) male respondents reported remitting more than 50 per cent of their monthly income whilst this was 34 per cent for female respondents. Rather, 38 per cent of female respondents reported remitting between 25 and 50 per cent of their monthly income.

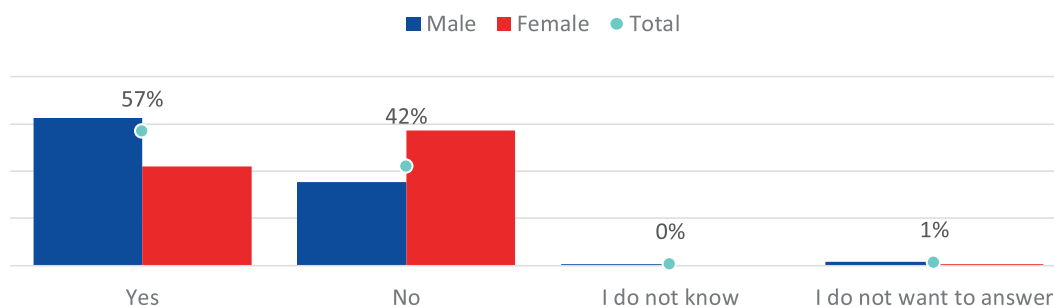
Figure 27
Monthly income's proportion remitted (678 respondents, 34% of the sample)



¹⁷ Discussing money with strangers may be culturally sensitive which can explain the reluctance to respond.

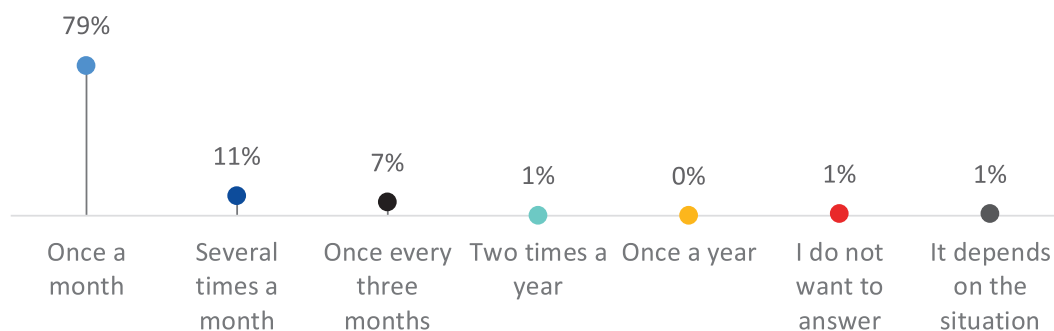
A majority (57%) of respondents considered remittances the primary source of income of family members left behind (figure 28). Gender differences indicated that this was especially true for male respondents (63%) and less for female (42%).

Figure 28
Role of remittances in the household left behind
(678 respondents, 34% of the sample)



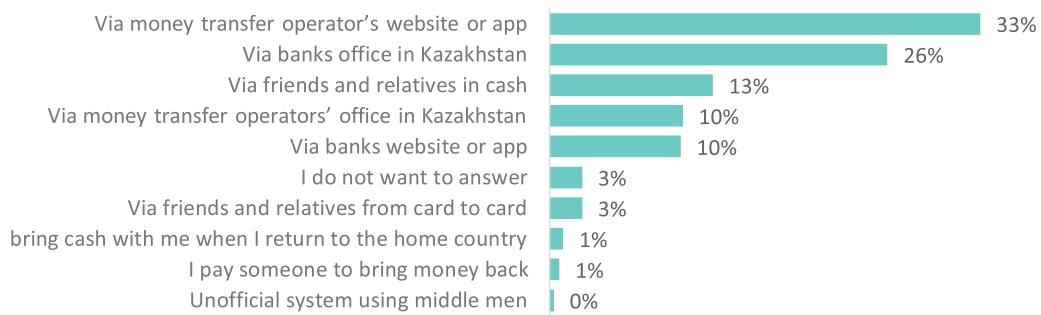
In terms of frequency, of those who sent money to the origin country (678 respondents, 34% of the sample), 79 per cent reported remitting once per month (figure 29). Besides, 11 per cent reported remitting several times a month whilst 7 per cent only once every three months. Findings did not show notable gender differences.

Figure 29
Frequency in remitting (678 respondents, 34% of the sample)



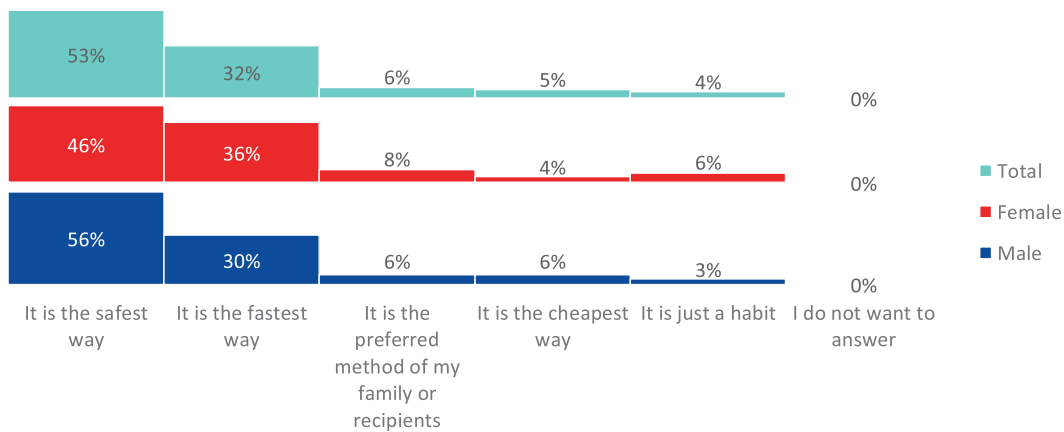
Modalities for remitting varied. Respondents who sent money to their country of origin (678 respondents, 34 per cent of the sample) reported using money transfer operator’s website or application (33%) and banks office in Kazakhstan (26%) (figure 30). Other modalities cited less frequently were friends and relatives in cash (13%), money transfer operators’ office based in Kazakhstan (10%) and banks website or application (10%).

Figure 30
Modalities for remitting (678 respondents, 34% of the sample)



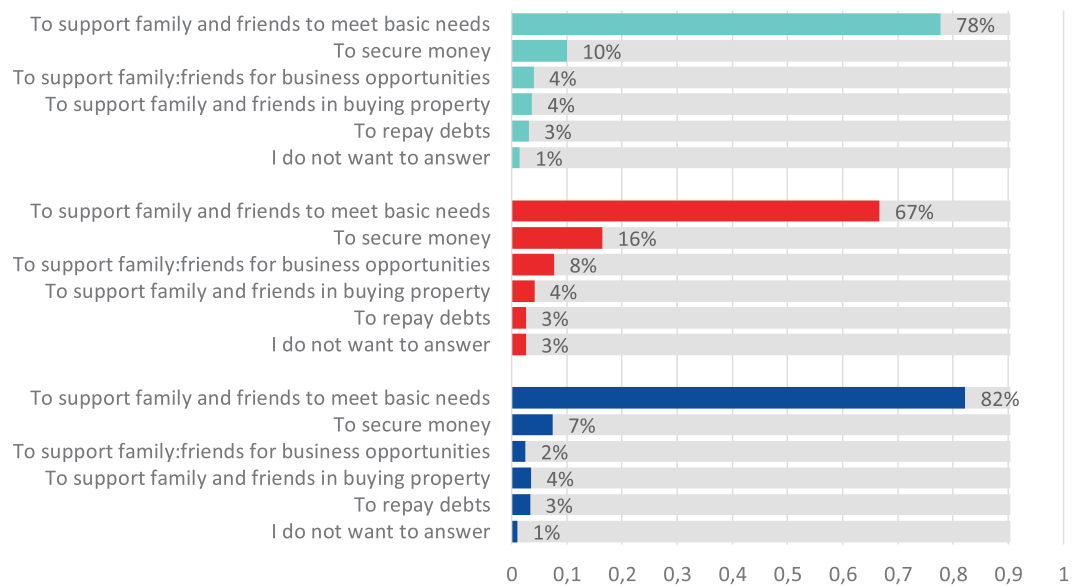
The most frequent reason for using the modalities for remitting was safety mentioned by 53 per cent of the respondents who remitted (figure 31). The fact that the modalities used was the fastest way was mentioned by 32 per cent of the respondents. Other modalities were barely cited by the respondents.

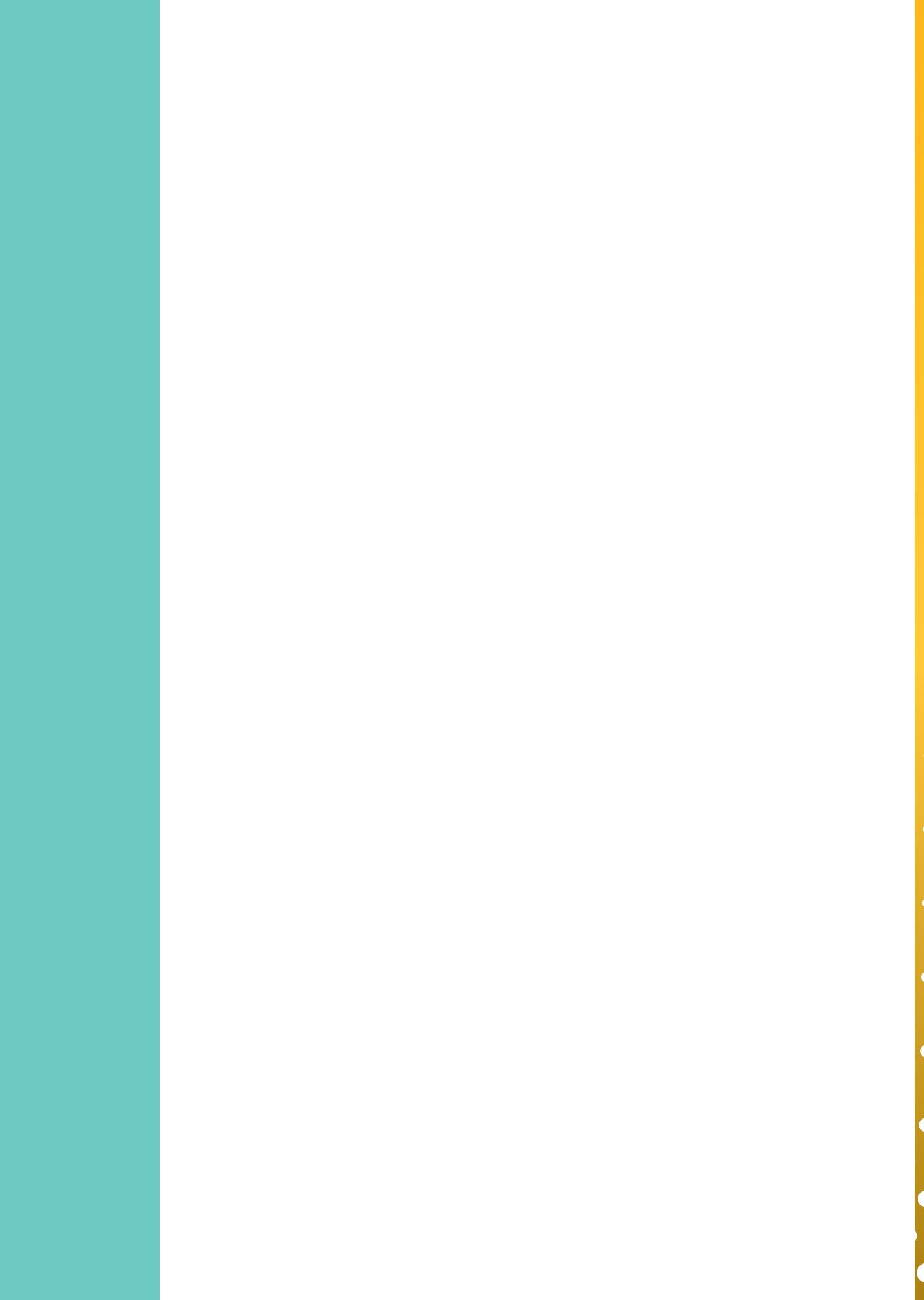
Figure 31
Reasons for choosing the modalities for remitting (678 respondents)



Remitting was a way to support their family and friends to meet basic expenses for 78 per cent of the respondents (figure 32). Other reasons that were mentioned less often were to secure money (10%), to support family and friends in creating business opportunities (4%) or in buying property (4%) and to repay debts (3%). Male respondents mainly remitted to support family and friends to meet basic needs, a reason mentioned by 82 per cent of them. Female respondents had more diverse responses than their male counterparts. They cited first supporting family and friends to meet basic needs (67%), then to secure money (16%) and support family and friends in creating business opportunities (8%).

Figure 32
Reasons for remitting (678 respondents, 34% of the sample)





6.

GENERAL WELL-BEING OF RESPONDENTS

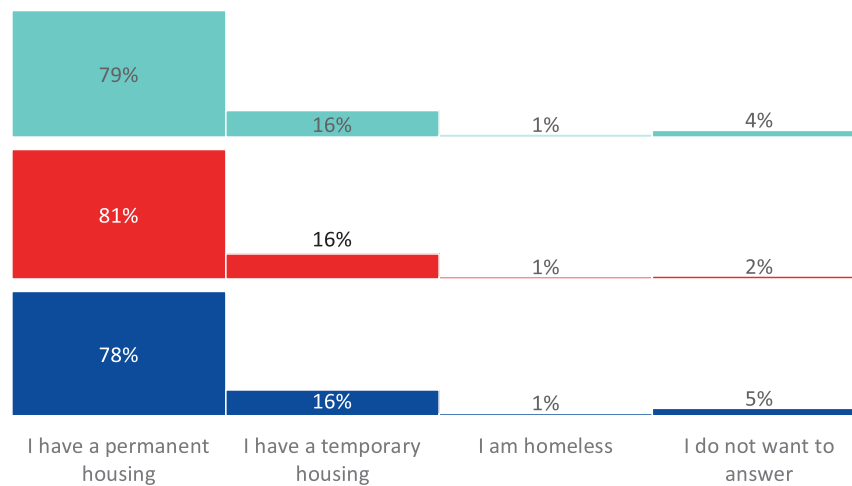


6. GENERAL WELL-BEING OF RESPONDENTS

6.1 ACCESS TO HOUSING

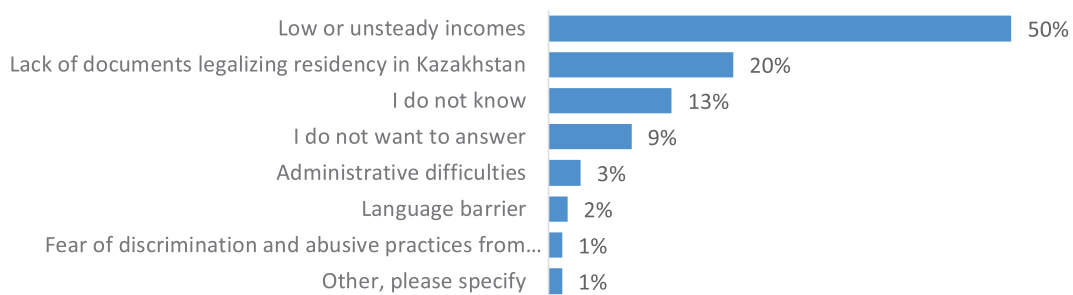
Respondents were asked what described best their housing situation. Data indicate that 79 per cent of them mentioned having a permanent housing, defined as a place where they sleep every night, and 16 per cent mentioned having a temporary housing (figure 33).

Figure 33
Access to permanent housing (2,000 respondents)



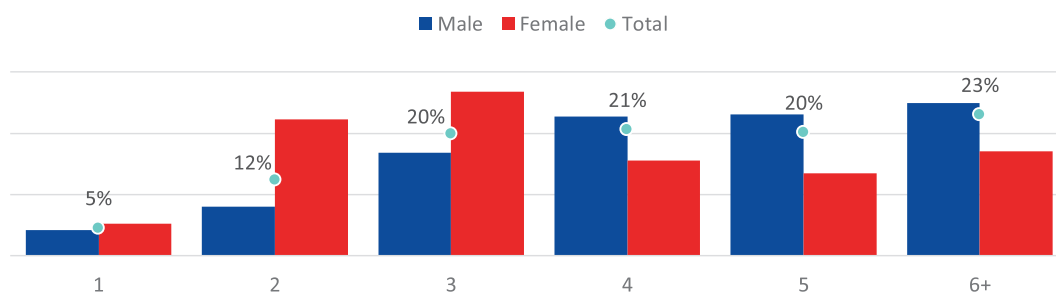
Of those with no permanent housing (348 respondents, 17% of the sample), respondents most frequently cited low or unsteady incomes (50%) and a lack of documents legalizing residency in Kazakhstan (20%) (figure 34).

Figure 34
Barriers to permanent housing (348 respondents, 17% of the sample)



When asked with how many people they lived with, patterns were complex and gendered (figure 35). Most (54%) female respondents reported living with up to three persons whilst a majority (71%) of male respondents reported living with four or more persons.

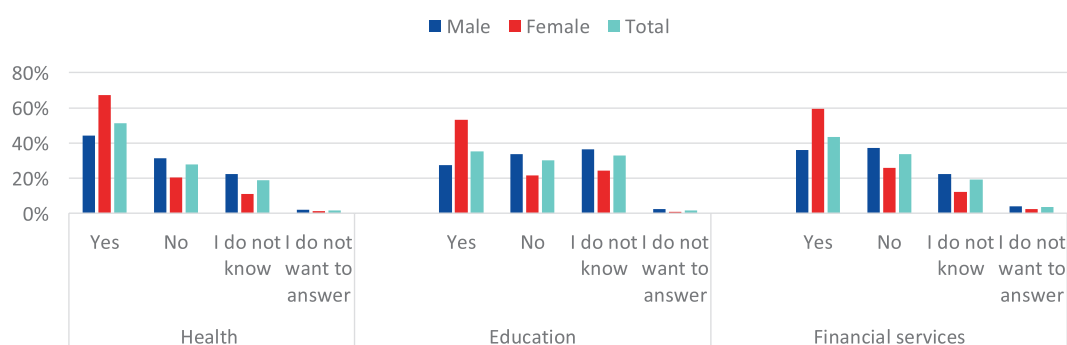
Figure 35
Number of persons living with the respondent (2,000 respondents)



6.2 ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES, EDUCATION, AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

Respondents were asked about access to other services. Answers were gendered. Findings suggested that female respondents were more knowledgeable about their access to different services (figure 36). Most female respondents reported knowing having access to health services (67% compared to 44% of male respondents), to education (53% compared to 27% of male respondents) and to financial services (59% compared to 36% of male respondents). Proportions of male who reported not knowing whether they had access to the different services were 22 per cent for health services, 36 per cent for education and 22 per cent for financial services.

Figure 36
Access to health services, education, and financial services (2,000 respondents)



Of those who reported not knowing having access to health services (558 respondents, 28% of the sample), 77 per cent cited the fact that they did not know where to go for health care (figure 45). Other reasons mentioned less frequently were the lack of an Individual Identification Number (IIN)¹⁸ (7%) and the lack of money to pay for health services (5%).

¹⁸ The IIN is a 12-digit number that is issued to everyone upon his first registration in the information and production system to create documents. The IIN is generated automatically, considering the concepts of uniqueness and immutability. See <https://korgan-zan.kz/en/obtaining-iin-and-bin-in-kazakhstan/>.

6.3 AFFORDABLE ITEMS

When asked about specific items that they have or could afford if they did not have them, a minority of respondents reported having them or affording them without gender differences (figure 37).¹⁹ Thus, material deprivation seems to be important among the respondents. Data reveal that 27 per cent had or could afford a mobile phone, 25 per cent were able to cope with unexpected expenses, 16 per cent were able to avoid arrears and 12 per cent had or could afford a personal car. Furthermore, 6 per cent of respondents mentioned being able to keep the home adequately warm and the same proportion mentioned having or affording a meal with meat, chicken, or fish every two days. Three per cent of respondents reported having or affording a colour television set and 3 per cent reported going or affording going on holiday once per year.

Figure 37
Affording specific items (2,000 respondents)



¹⁹ These findings do not contradict those in the income section. The items listed in this question are those used to measure material deprivation and elaborated at the EU level. They are considered by most people to be desirable or even necessary to lead an adequate life. For more information, check the glossary https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Material_deprivation&oldid=534275.



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