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Factors and Threats of Migration Processes Affecting Economic Security

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Abstract: The influence channels of migration processes on national economic security and the system of threats were studied theoretically and methodologically. Mechanisms of influence of migration on the labor market, employment, income, human capital, territorial distribution of labor resources, remittances and demographic stability are disclosed. The channels of positive and negative effects of migration are systematized, and the outflow of labor resources and qualified personnel, demographic disparity, dependence on external income and imbalances in the labor market are based as the main threats.

Keywords: economic security, national economic security, labor migration, migration threats, migration risks, labor market, labor resources, human capital, employment, remittances, demographic stability

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1. Introduction

In the context of contemporary globalization, migration processes are becoming one of the key factors influencing the socio-economic development of countries. The internal and international mobility of labor resources directly affects the balance between supply and demand in the labor market, employment and household incomes, human capital, demographic processes, as well as the redistribution of economic resources across regions. From this perspective, migration processes should be regarded not merely as the territorial movement of the population, but as a multifaceted economic phenomenon that affects the stability and economic security of the national economy.[1]

On the one hand, migration can contribute to the efficient allocation of labor resources, reduce unemployment pressures, increase household incomes and the volume of remittances, and promote human capital development. On the other hand, the excessive outflow of the working-age population, the migration of highly skilled professionals, growing labor shortages in certain sectors and regions, and increasing dependence on external labor markets may pose significant risks to economic security.

Presidential Decree No. PD-21 of the Republic of Uzbekistan, dated February 16, 2026, "On Additional Measures to Consistently Continue Reforms and Advance Them to a New Stage within the Framework of the Priority Areas of the Country's Development through 2030," sets out a separate Goal 95 aimed at "improving the external labor migration system and providing comprehensive support to citizens engaged in employment abroad."

Furthermore, Annex 4 to the Decree, which contains the list of strategic planning documents to be developed during 2026 within the framework of the "Uzbekistan – 2030" Strategy, assigns the Ministry of Poverty Reduction and Employment, the Ministry of

Economy and Finance, and the Migration Agency the task of developing the “Labor Market Development Strategy through 2030” by the end of the current year.[2]

Within the framework of this goal and the strategy currently being developed to regulate internal migration processes, it is envisaged that performance indicators will be established for the gradual regulation of migration processes through 2030 and for the provision of comprehensive support to citizens engaged in employment abroad. The strategy aims to achieve these indicators and regulate internal migration through the development and improvement of the labor market.

The impact of migration on economic security can primarily be observed through the labor market channel. Labor migration can contribute to balancing labor supply and demand, reducing unemployment, and ensuring the efficient allocation of labor resources.[3]

The impact of migration processes on economic security is also significant through the regional channel. Population movement toward regions offering greater employment opportunities and higher incomes leads to the interregional redistribution of labor resources. On the one hand, this can promote the efficient utilization of labor resources; on the other hand, the excessive concentration of population and labor resources in certain regions may result in a decline in labor potential in other regions.

Furthermore, the decline in agricultural production, the closure of social infrastructure facilities in rural areas, widespread unemployment, and insufficient employment opportunities are driving labor migration among the working-age rural population, thereby contributing to “demographic erosion”.

Furthermore, uncontrolled or imbalanced migration processes may generate a number of threats to economic security. These include the excessive outflow of labor resources abroad, the increasing migration of highly skilled workers, the decline in labor potential in certain regions, a high degree of dependence on migrant remittances, the vulnerability of the economy to changes in external labor markets, as well as the adverse family and demographic consequences of migration.[4]

From this perspective, systematizing the factors through which migration affects economic security and comprehensively assessing the resulting threats are of considerable scientific and practical importance. On the one hand, such an approach makes it possible to effectively harness the positive economic effects of migration; on the other hand, it contributes to improving public policy aimed at the early identification, prevention, and mitigation of its potential adverse consequences.

2. Materials and Methods

When examining the impact of migration processes on economic security, it is essential, first and foremost, to clearly identify the key factors through which this impact occurs. This is because the effects of migration on the national economy are not direct; rather, they are transmitted through the labor market, household incomes, remittances, human capital, demographic processes, regional development, and investment activity. In this regard, it is appropriate to systematize the principal channels linking migration to economic security into six categories: the labor market, income and remittances, human capital, demographic, regional-economic, and investment channels.[5]

Accordingly, the factors through which migration processes affect economic security are classified into six main categories (Figure 1).[6]

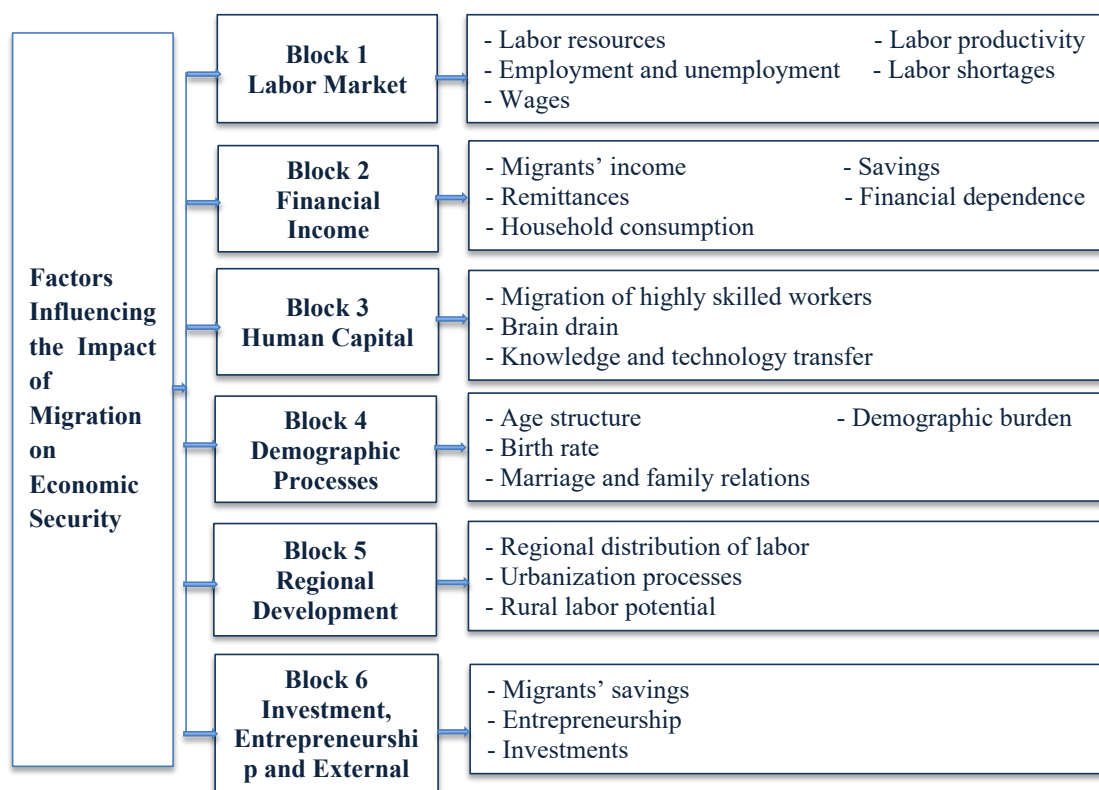


Figure 1. Factors Influencing the Impact of Migration on Economic Security

As can be seen from Figure 1, each factor influencing economic security is divided into several specific areas. The study of these areas is of particular importance in the current era of globalization.

From the perspective of a country's economic security and potential threats, the factors through which migration processes affect economic security require, on the one hand, effective regulation and, on the other hand, appropriate support and development.

3. Results and Discussion

The main groups of factors through which migration processes influence economic security are examined below.

1. Labor migration through the labor market channel is one of the most important mechanisms through which migration affects economic security. The movement of labor resources across regions and countries leads to a redistribution of labor supply and demand. World Bank studies regard migration as an important mechanism for reallocating labor resources from low-productivity activities to higher-productivity employment opportunities.[7]

From the perspective of economic security, a positive aspect of this process is that the movement of labor resources toward regions with greater employment opportunities and higher labor productivity can reduce unemployment pressures and increase household incomes.

However, this process may also have adverse effects. If labor migration becomes long-term and primarily involves the economically active, working-age, and skilled population, it may lead to a decline in labor supply in the domestic labor market.

Furthermore, a high proportion of skilled professionals within labor migration flows may give rise to an even more significant challenge to economic security—the loss of human capital. Therefore, in addition to assessing the scale of migration flows, it is

essential to analyze their composition in terms of age, educational attainment, occupation, and skill level.

2. The second major channel through which migration affects economic security is remittances sent by migrants to their home country. Remittances increase the incomes

of migrant households and expand their capacity for consumption, education, healthcare, housing, and savings.[8]

According to the World Bank, officially recorded remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries amounted to approximately USD 656 billion in 2023. This indicates that migration has a significant impact not only on the labor market but also on national income and household welfare.

3. Another important channel through which migration affects economic security is associated with human capital. In the course of migration, people transfer not only their labor potential but also their knowledge, skills, professional experience, and technological competencies from one region or country to another.

One of the positive outcomes of labor migration is that migrants may acquire new professional skills abroad and subsequently apply them in the national economy after returning to their home country.[9]

However, the permanent international or interregional migration of highly skilled professionals increases the risk of brain drain. In particular, the growing outflow

of qualified personnel in such fields as healthcare, education, information technology, engineering, finance, and other highly skilled professions may reduce the innovative and technological potential of the national or regional economy.

4. Migration is closely interconnected with demographic processes and influences the age and sex composition of the population, fertility rates, family relations, and the future formation of labor resources. International migration is one of the key drivers

of demographic change, particularly because the age and sex composition of migrants affects the demographic structure of both origin and destination regions.

The fact that migration processes predominantly involve young and working-age individuals leads to changes in the demographic composition of regions with high levels of migration. In particular, the long-term external migration of young people may weaken the natural reproduction of labor resources in such regions.[10]

Another important dimension of this process is family demography. The temporary or long-term separation of family members as a result of migration directly affects marital relations, child-rearing, and the distribution of social functions within the family.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) views migration as a complex process in which economic, social, and security dimensions are closely interconnected.

5. Migration also affects regional development through the redistribution of labor resources across different territories. Population movement toward regions with greater employment opportunities and higher income levels leads to a concentration of economic activity in those areas.

On the one hand, this process contributes to the more efficient use of labor resources; on the other hand, it may create the risk of declining economic activity in regions experiencing labor outflows. In particular, the intensification of permanent migration from rural areas to large cities and major economic centers may lead to a reduction in labor potential and the size of the domestic consumer market in certain regions.[11]

The World Bank identifies differences in income and employment opportunities, inequality, demographic imbalances, and environmental change among the key drivers

of migration. Therefore, significant socio-economic disparities between regions can simultaneously act both as a factor generating migration flows and as a condition influencing economic security.

Accordingly, the assessment of this channel may appropriately rely on such indicators as the regional migration balance, population density, the level of urbanization, the distribution of labor resources, regional disparities in unemployment, differences in household incomes, and imbalances in gross regional product.

6. The impact of migration on economic security is also manifested through the transformation of remittances into investment. If the funds sent by migrants are directed not only toward consumption but also toward entrepreneurship, small business development, education, and professional advancement, migration-related income can directly contribute to strengthening the productive capacity of the national economy.

In this regard, the entrepreneurial experience acquired by migrants abroad, as well as their exposure to new technologies and business networks, is of particular importance. Thus, migration becomes not only a process associated with the outflow of labor resources, but also a mechanism for the return and reintegration of financial, intellectual, and entrepreneurial resources into the national economy.[12]

With regard to the second part of the study, the threats posed by migration to economic security are closely associated with the redistribution of labor resources, the formation of household incomes, the movement of human capital, demographic changes, and regional development. Therefore, from the perspective of economic security, migration should

be viewed not only as an economic opportunity, but also, under certain conditions, as a factor capable of adversely affecting the stability of the national economy.

Migration processes may also manifest themselves in the form of the following threats to a country's economic security:

1. Decline in Labor Supply. One of the most significant threats to economic security is the decline in labor supply in the domestic labor market resulting from the long-term external migration of the working-age population.

From this perspective, high levels of migration may lead to a reduction in labor supply, labor shortages in certain sectors, increased production costs, and a slowdown in the rate

of economic growth.[13]

2. Brain Drain and Loss of Human Capital. The long-term or permanent emigration of highly skilled professionals gives rise to the problem of "brain drain." In this case, the country loses not only part of its skilled labor force but also, to some extent, the returns on educational and social investments made in developing these professionals.

In particular, the outflow of qualified personnel in healthcare, education, engineering, information technology, finance, and research may have a significant adverse impact on the qualitative composition of the country's human capital.

3. Excessive Dependence on Remittances. Remittances generated by labor migration can support household incomes and consumption. However, excessive dependence of the economy and household incomes on this source may increase vulnerability to external economic conditions and deepen external economic dependence.

4. Demographic Risks. The long-term migration of young and working-age people may affect the demographic potential of the country or individual regions. Imbalances in the age and sex composition of migration flows may lead to changes in the future reproduction of labor resources, fertility rates, and the age structure of the population.[14]

In particular, a declining share of young people in regions characterized by high levels of migration may pose a risk to the future formation and replenishment of labor resources.

5. Increasing Regional Economic Disparities. The concentration of migration flows toward large cities and major economic centers may widen economic disparities between regions. The movement of labor resources and the economically active population toward relatively more developed regions can, on the one hand, stimulate economic activity

in receiving regions while, on the other hand, reducing labor potential in regions experiencing population outflows.

As a result, migration may lead to the spatial redistribution of labor resources, the concentration of economic activity in particular centers, and the widening of interregional disparities.

6. Structural Imbalances in the Labor Market. A high concentration of migration flows among certain occupations and sectors may exacerbate structural imbalances in the domestic labor market by creating a mismatch between the supply of labor resources and the actual demand for labor across different sectors of the economy.

7. Limited Productive Use of Remittances. If a substantial share of remittances is directed toward consumption rather than invested in production, entrepreneurship,

and human capital development, the long-term economic benefits of the financial resources generated through migration may remain limited.

8. Family and Social Consequences of Migration. Long-term labor migration may result in the prolonged separation of family members and changes in child-rearing arrangements and the distribution of family responsibilities.

Although these factors do not constitute direct economic threats, in the long term they may indirectly affect economic security through their impact on the quality of human capital, labor productivity, and social stability.[15]

4. Conclusion

Migration processes constitute an important component of the modern economy, and their impact on economic security is multifaceted and dual in nature. The findings of the study indicate that migration itself does not constitute a direct threat to economic security. Rather, depending on its scale, direction, duration, as well as the age, educational, and skill composition of migrants, it may generate either positive economic effects or certain risks and threats.

While labor migration can facilitate the redistribution of surplus labor resources, reduce unemployment pressures, and increase household incomes, the long-term outflow of skilled and working-age individuals may increase the risk of labor shortages in the domestic labor market and lead to the loss of human capital. Similarly, although increased migrant remittances contribute to higher household incomes and improved welfare, excessive dependence on such inflows may heighten vulnerability to external economic and financial conditions.

The demographic and regional effects of migration are also of particular importance from the perspective of economic security. The long-term migration of young and working-age people may affect the future formation and reproduction of labor resources. At the same time, it may lead to a decline in economic activity in regions experiencing labor outflows, while contributing to the excessive concentration of population and economic activity in receiving regions.

Overall, the primary objective of effective migration management should not be to restrict migration flows, but rather to maximize their positive economic effects while

minimizing potential threats. To achieve this, it is advisable to improve comprehensive mechanisms aimed at diversifying and optimizing the structure of migration flows, strengthening mechanisms for retaining and attracting back highly skilled professionals, channeling remittances into investment and entrepreneurship, facilitating the reintegration of returning migrants, and reducing imbalances in regional labor markets

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