

## ETHNIC RELATIONS AND MIGRATION

### HOW CAN MIGRANTS INFLUENCE DEMOCRACY IN THEIR COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN? CASE STUDY: CIS COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL ASIA

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37178/ca-c.20.2.12>

Alexey BRAGIN

*M.Sc. (Political Science), Junior Researcher,  
Institute of Socio-Political Research—Branch of  
the Federal Center of Theoretical and Applied Sociology of  
the Russian Academy of Sciences (ISPR FCTAS RAS)  
(Russian Federation)*

#### ABSTRACT

**T**his article investigates both migrant remittances and return migration as the possible factors for democratic demand occurrence in donor countries. We believe that one of the main elements of democracy emergence is the political structure and economic advantages of the recipient country. It is justified that if a migrant moves to a well-established democratic state his

satisfaction with how all the institutions work increases. Thus, most of the migrants might be dissatisfied with the effectiveness of their home countries' political management, but can they really influence democracy demand and does this process depend on the quality of the recipient country? In this connection, we argue that migrants can shape political atmosphere in their home country

via the scope of effects they produce by their remittances and social interaction. As an example, we analyze migration from CIS countries of Central Asia.

After the revision of theoretical framework and analysis of empirical data taken from the World Bank, the Central Bank of the Russian Federation and V-Dem data

version 9.0, we came to the conclusion that both migrant remittances and return migration can have an impact on democracy occurrence and thus are able to give impetus to democratic movements. However, the quality of a recipient country and domestic situation in a donor country play a determinant role in this process.

**KEYWORDS:** *democracy, skilled migration, remittances, economy, protest activity, labor immigrants, CIS, Central Asia.*

## *Introduction*

As a form of adaptation to the changing living conditions, migration has a significant impact on the structure and dynamics of the world's population, from individual human settlements and regions to entire countries and continents. Jean-Piere Cassarino<sup>1</sup> believes that today there is a growing recognition of the opportunities that migration offers for economic growth, development and stability in donor countries, as migrants play a role of a "bridge" between their country of origin and the place where they have migrated to. In this regard, we are interested in the effects which migrants can produce on their home country.

It should be noted that due to migration the intellectual sphere is developing on a global scale: as a rule, migration flows are directed to those countries where intellectual work and its results are more in demand than in donor countries, and where the best technical and institutional conditions for self-realization of its representatives are created.<sup>2</sup> In this connection, migrants become more culturally and intellectually educated, as they discover a different culture and acquire new knowledge which helps them to define living conditions in their home country. Furthermore, it is a fact that higher levels of knowledge are closely connected with a high level of political involvement.<sup>3</sup> In other words, those migrants who have migrated via academic sphere or a high-skilled job are more likely to become politically active with a strong level of support for their new country's system if it values democratic principles more than their motherland.<sup>4</sup> We believe that those factors can influence migrants to support democracy as the main form of government. In this connection, if the form of government in their country of origin differs from democracy, migrants can come to the conclusion that it is not effective and should be transformed.

When it comes to migration from CIS countries of Central Asia, its main flow is directed to Russia and is one of the most stable and numerous in the world.<sup>5</sup> The main factors stimulating labor migration are the difficult economic situation in Central Asian countries, the widening gap in living

<sup>1</sup> See: J.P. Cassarino, "Conditions of Modern Return Migrants—Editorial Introduction," *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> See: Li Xiaoyang, J. McHale, "Emigrants and Institutions," University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> See: G. Almond, S. Verba, *The Civic Culture Revisited*, SAGE, London, UK, 1989.

<sup>4</sup> See: A. Spilimbergo, "Foreign Students and Democracy," *American Economic Review*, No. 99 (1), 2009, pp. 528-543.

<sup>5</sup> See: S.V. Ryazantsev, *Trudovaia migratsiia v stranah SNG i Baltii: tendentsii, posledstviia, regulirovanie*, Formula prava, Moscow, 2007, 576 pp.

standards between the CA states and other countries, unclear prospects for the development of the region's economy and the low level of average monthly wages for any type of job, including high-skilled. The main source of labor migrants from the Central Asian region are Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.<sup>6</sup>

It goes without saying that migrant remittances and return migration can produce a lot of benefits to the donor country: the economy gains profit and the country gets back high-skilled specialists, but does this process really influence democracy occurrence in migrants' countries of origin?

## Theoretical Framework

Speaking about possible ways of migrants' influence on democratic development in their home country it is necessary to define the concept "influence" in its two main aspects: social (personal influence) and economic (remittances).<sup>7</sup>

As a rule, a lot of migrants maintain close ties with their home country (relatives, friends etc.). This creates a powerful mechanism of social influence on the moods of locals via conveying them the fact that living under democracy is much more profitable not only economically, but also in terms of their personal rights and freedoms.<sup>8</sup> In this regard, emigration can shape political institutions and convince locals for its necessity by creating substantial diaspora channels, which can influence political changes as well.<sup>9</sup> What is more, sometimes migration has a temporary character. Therefore, after returning from a well-established and economically prosperous democracy migrants can raise the demand for democracy in their country of origin by their own<sup>10</sup>.

In the article by Catia Batista and Pedro Vicente,<sup>11</sup> there is a research on the topic of raising demand for political accountability by return migrants, examining Cape Verde. In this research there was used a simple voting experiment to measure a behavioral demand for improving governance at home. A defining factor selected was a measure of the population's desire for better governance. There was used a data from a tailored household survey in order to analyze the core of behavioral dimension of requirement for political accountability and to insulate the positive impact of international emigration employing locality level variation. The alleged results are robust to the use of instrumental variables, as past migration and macro shocks in the countries to which migrants return. The findings indicate that migrants affect a demand for improving political accountability, and can only be applied to return migrants who moved to the democratic states.

To confirm a statement that return migration can influence democracy in migrants' country of origin only if this country is nondemocratic, we should refer to the article of Romana Careja and Patrick Emmenegger<sup>12</sup>, where the impact of return migration on political attitudes in Central and Eastern European countries is examined with the help of CCEB 2002.2 data received from 10,143

<sup>6</sup> See: S.V. Ryazantsev, N. Horie, *Modelirovanie potokov trudovoy migratsii iz stran Tsentralnoy Azii v Rossii: Ekonomiko-sotsiologicheskoe issledovanie*, Nauchnyi mir, Moscow, 2011, p. 192.

<sup>7</sup> See: F. Docquier, E. Lodigiani, H. Rapoport, M. Schiff, "Emigration and Democracy," *Working Paper 5557*, World Bank Policy Res. Ser., Washington, D.C., 2011.

<sup>8</sup> See: C. Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution*, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

<sup>9</sup> See: C. Batista, P.C. Vicente, "Do Migrants Improve Governance at Home? Evidence from a Voting Experiment," *The World Bank Economic Review*, 2011.

<sup>10</sup> See: S. Bălăţescu, "Central and Eastern European Migrants' Subjective Quality of Life: A Comparative Study," *Journal of Identity and Migration Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2007, pp. 67-81.

<sup>11</sup> See: C. Batista, P.C. Vicente, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> See: R. Careja, P. Emmenegger, "Making Democratic Citizens: The Effects of Migration Experience on Political Attitudes in Central and Eastern Europe," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 7, 2012.

respondents from 10 CEE countries investigated. The description of survey data reveals that migration experience diversifies the area of political behavior: however, migrants from selected countries more believe in EU democratic institutions and try to spread this point of view among their friends and relatives. However, the difference between their influence on domestic institutions and non-immigrants is not relevant. Careja and Emmenegger find out that migration experience has a noticeable influence only when there is a correlation with incensement of the material and cognitive status of migrants.<sup>13</sup>

When it comes to economic aspect (remittances), it can possess much more effectiveness rather than social due to its strong and direct impact on the economy of a donor country and the life of locals who receive them. Taking into account the research of Escribà-Folch, Meseguer, and Wright<sup>14</sup> we can see that due to migrant remittances, politics can be shaped in donor countries and all these countries have particular autocratic regimes. This article examines political consequences of migrant remittances in connection with their influence on the anti-governmental protest behavior among non-migrant citizens. This research gives cross-national data on a prospective measure of opposition political movements, and through these data it can be seen that remittances increase protest. To find out mechanism, which links remittances with protests, the individual-level data from eight non-democratic states in Africa were used to highlight that remittances increase protests in opposition regions but not in progovernment ones. The research states that remittances increase political protests in non-democratic countries by increasing existing financial resources of political opposition. What is more, dynamics should be higher in societies where the groups have limited access to resources due to state restrictions.

To add, according to Pfütze's research on the case of the Mexican democratization process, where the data from municipal electoral cycle (2000-2002) were used,<sup>15</sup> it is clear that migrant remittances are able to undermine a link between the government and its voters. As remittances increase a constituency available income, the necessary direct transfers paid in exchange for political support would grow as well. In this connection, remittances increase a household's disposable income, which makes recipients less dependent on government social payments and so weakens clientele networks. Due to households' disposable income incensement, we can notice the reduction in the whole utility of consumption of the members. What is more, remittances can also cause democratization in leading party autocracies by undermining electoral support for incumbent parties. All this leads to the fact that the amount of the material goods exchanged for political support is likely to be increased. Finally, this research comes to the conclusion that migrant remittances substantially increase an opposition party's chance of taking the first place in a municipal election for the first time.

Labor migration from CIS countries of Central Asia and its aspects were investigated by Sergey Ryazantsev and Norio Horie<sup>16</sup>. This is a mixed-methods research based on migrants' interviews and the analysis of empirical data. The authors of this investigation came to the conclusion that migration from CIS countries to Russia provided common benefits for both sides and it is an increasing feature. Firstly, due to migration, Russia gets positive growth of population. Secondly, migrant remittances solve a lot of problems in donor countries, such as economic aid for locals who desperately need money for food and medicine.

---

<sup>13</sup> See: R. Careja, P. Emmenegger, op. cit.

<sup>14</sup> See: A. Escribà-Folch, C. Meseguer, J. Wright, "Remittances and Protest in Dictatorships," *American Journal of Political Science*, 2018.

<sup>15</sup> See: T. Pfützte, "Does Migration Promote Democratization? Evidence from the Mexican Transition," *Journal of Comparative Economics*, Vol. 40, No. 2, 2012.

<sup>16</sup> See: S.V. Ryazantsev, N. Horie, op. cit.

## The Origin of Migrant Remittances

Remittances form a large, sustainable and counter-cyclical source of external financing for many poor countries. Remittances enable households to increase investment in education, health, real estate, and small business. All those factors positively stimulate the economy of the donor country, making it more open and developing.

The export of labor is an important source of income for the countries of emigration through remittances of foreign currency from migrants to support their families and relatives, which generally contributes to the improvement of their economic situation. Migrant remittances are included in the country's balance-of-payments "private transfers" and account for a large share of foreign exchange earnings in many of the world's labor exporters and sometimes are the only source of foreign exchange. Furthermore, when migrants return home, they can bring with them wealth and savings of about the same (or larger) amount as their remittances.<sup>17</sup>

The volume of annual remittances associated with international migration is quite comparable in scale with annual foreign direct investment. The currency efficiency of labor exports is fivefold higher than the efficiency of commodity exports. In addition, according to the World Bank, the inflow of foreign currency from abroad

- increases the level of income of the population, and therefore stimulates the domestic demand of the donor country, which means the growth of production and employment;
- improves the balance-of-payments and the state of the national currency.<sup>18</sup>

In Table 1 we can observe remittance inflows to GDP (%) by Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. As the period of time we take recent 10 years to see dynamics of their change. These data are formed by an average sum of three items defined in the fifth edition of the IMF's Balance of Payments Manual: workers' remittances, compensation of employees, and migrants' transfers. Remittances in this dataset are classified as private transfers from migrant workers in the recipient country who reside there for more than a year to recipients in their country of origin.

Table 1

Remittance Inflows to GDP (%)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Kazakhstan	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3
Kyrgyzstan	23.9	20.9	26.4	27.6	30.7	31.1	30	25.3	29.3	32.3
Tajikistan	49.3	35.1	35.8	41.8	42.2	43.8	37.1	28.8	26.9	31.2
Uzbekistan	10.2	6.15	7.3	9.3	11	11.6	7.6	3.7	3	—

Source: World Development Indicators (WDI), Global Financial Development, The World Bank, available at [<https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/remittance-inflows-gdp>].

As we can see, both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan economies are totally dependent on remittances, as they form up to 49% of annual GDP, which can be described as absolute subjection. On the con-

<sup>17</sup> See: P. Levitt, "Social Remittances: Migration Driven Local-Level Forms of Cultural Diffusion," *The International Migration Review*, Vol. 32, No. 4, 1998.

<sup>18</sup> "Migration and Remittances," Factbook 2011, Second Edition, The World Bank, available at [<https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLAC/Resources/Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf>].

trary, Kazakhstan is the most independent CIS state of Central Asia with a tiny proportion of 0.1-0.3%. Uzbekistan has a slight proportion that does not exceed 11% with a fall of up to 3%. What is more, Kyrgyzstan has outrun Tajikistan in 2016 and 2017 which can be conditioned by the increasing number of Kyrgyz migrants in the Russian Federation<sup>19</sup>.

According to the World Bank<sup>20</sup>, migrant remittances totaled about \$528 billion in 2018, exceeding the 1995 figure (\$101 billion) almost 5.5 times, so it has quite an increasing and impressive character in recent years. The cross-country analysis shows that a 10% increase in remittances per capita leads to a 3.5% decrease in the share of the poor in the country.

It is a fact that migrants are willing to help their families in the deteriorating political, social and economic situation at home. In this regard, remittances can be a rescue way for the crisis economy. One of the most obvious examples is the so-called Arab Spring in Egypt, when private investors and international "sponsors" hurried to withdraw their funds from the country and suspend the provision of assistance. Direct investment has almost evaporated, falling from \$9.5 billion to \$7.5 billion in 2009 to a negative value in 2011. On the contrary, the inflow of money from migrants increased almost threefold, from \$7.2 billion at that time in 2009 up to \$20.5 billion in 2012.<sup>21</sup> It is necessary to note that not all of the remittances are intended for individuals, but as donations for private organizations or opposition which promote democratic principles within a country. Thus, remittances can play a role of accelerator and increase the probability of forthcoming political change, because some amount of money can go for anti-governmental opposition support.

When it comes to migrant remittances to CIS countries of Central Asia, we should keep in mind that the main donor country of these remittances is the Russian Federation. For example, according to the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs, during 2013-2017, the number of Kyrgyz citizens working in Russia has increased fivefold. In 2012, only 79,375 migrants worked in the territory of the Russian Federation, however in 2017, there were already 376,863 people.<sup>22</sup> The main factor of Russia's attractiveness for residents of the CIS countries is the opportunity to find a job due to low unemployment. Low unemployment not only simplifies the search process, but also contributes to the growth of salaries and, as a result, disposable income.<sup>23</sup>

According to Table 2, Uzbekistan accounts for the largest scope of remittances with a peak of \$6,689 million in 2013, it is closely followed by Tajikistan with \$4,173 million in the same year. The Kyrgyz Republic has ups and downs from \$326 million to \$2,106 million. Kazakhstan possesses a least amount of transfers varying from \$90 million to \$577 million. However, if we compare these data with remittance inflows to the country's GDP (%), it is obvious that for some countries remittances are one of the main economic incomes. For example, Uzbekistan has the largest amount of remittances for selected period, however it has a low proportion of their inflow to GDP (3%-11%). At the same time, in 2016-2017, the Kyrgyz Republic has the 29%-32% remittance inflow to GDP with a total amount of transfers of just \$398-457 million.

We should note that during 2009-2010 and 2015-2016, there was a large decrease in all remittances, which can be described as an unstable economic period in Russia caused by the economic crisis and sanctions. What is more, the proportion of remittances to Kazakhstan and their inflow to GDP are not so big in comparison with other CIS countries, and can be described as the more friendly economic situation in the country and as a result, not so big flow of migrants.

<sup>19</sup> See: *Svodka osnovnykh pokazatelei deiatelnosti po migratsionnoi situatsii v Rossiiskoi Federatsii, 2012-2017*, Ministry of the Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, available at [<https://xn--b1aew.xn--p1ai/Deljatelnost/statistics/migracionnaya>].

<sup>20</sup> See: "Migration and Development Brief," The World Bank, Vol. 30, 2018, available at [<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/labormarkets/brief/migration-and-remittances>].

<sup>21</sup> See: "Migration and Remittances," Factbook 2011.

<sup>22</sup> See: *Svodka osnovnykh pokazatelei deiatelnosti po migratsionnoi situatsii v Rossiiskoi Federatsii, 2012-2017*.

<sup>23</sup> See: S.V. Ryazantsev, N. Horic, op. cit.

Transfers from Russia by Individuals (\$m)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Kazakhstan	297	217	90	123	461	561	577	514	140	127
Kyrgyzstan	1,211	925	326	476	1,859	2,106	2,062	1,383	457	398
Tajikistan	2,549	1,740	640	1,044	3,651	4,173	3,854	2,220	496	423
Uzbekistan	3,007	2,071	841	1,512	5,693	6,689	5,653	3,059	728	620

*Source:* "Transgranichnye perevody fizicheskikh lits (rezidentov i nerezidentov), Otchetnost kreditnykh organizatsii," Central Bank of the Russian Federation, 2012-2017, available at [[https://www.cbr.ru/statistics/macro\\_itm/tg/](https://www.cbr.ru/statistics/macro_itm/tg/)].

## Discovering Return Migration Aspects

Speaking about return migration and its effect on democracy, we should define it as the movement of a person returning to his or her country of origin or place of permanent residence, usually after at least one-year's stay in another country. This return may be voluntary or involuntary, as return migrants have different socio-economic and migration experiences. Types of return migrants can vary from highly skilled to unskilled: students, labor migrants, migrants who immigrated to permanent residence, persons who were denied asylum, illegal migrants and etc.<sup>24</sup>

On the whole, each migrant's experience can be a determinant in his future political participation. "Migration experience boosts one's own perception about accumulated knowledge and internal efficacy. This perception translates into increased interest in politics, manifested through consumption of political news and engagement in political discussions. We expect immigrants to be more likely than non-immigrants to vote in national elections and to try to convince their friends to change their political opinions."<sup>25</sup> On the whole, each migrant's experience makes him more politically active, even if it was one year low-skilled labor.

However, Cassarino<sup>26</sup> argues that models of the impact of migrants on political life in the country of return are shaped by three interrelated elements: the reintegration situation in the country of origin; the duration and type of migration experience; and the circumstances motivating return in both the country of origin and the host country. The motivation for emigration and return of migrants is crucial in calculating the likely outcome of migrants' political activity.

To conclude, when it comes to the analysis of return migration and its effect on democracy there are some main problems. First of all, it is an accurate calculation and determination of the number of return migrants, as sometimes, return migrants are not registered either at checkpoints or within the country as returned migrants. Thus, it is often not possible to have fully reliable statistics on the flow of return migrants. What is more, it is quite hard to determine the effects, which return migrants impose to improve democracy, as there are no official documents on this topic, rather than theory researches according to some polls, which sometimes cannot fully show the real situation.

<sup>24</sup> See: R. Perruchoud, *International Migration Law*, Glossary on Migration, International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2005.

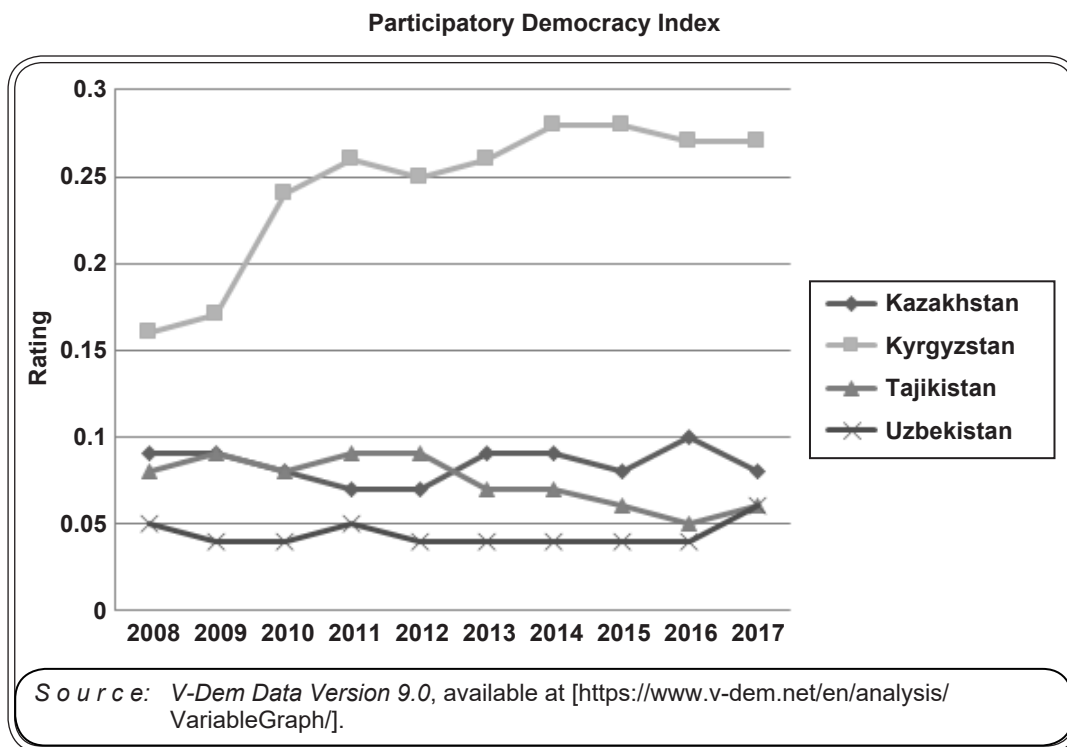
<sup>25</sup> See: R. Careja, P. Emmenegger, op. cit., p. 883.

<sup>26</sup> See: J.P. Cassarino, op. cit.

## Demand for Democracy

Speaking about remittances' effect on democracy in the migrant's country of origin, we can say that "international migration may be proxying for important local financial characteristics, so that international remittances may also matter as determinants of the desire for a better governance."<sup>27</sup> That means that if remittances positively stimulate economy they also improve the recipients' quality of life and that is why their desire for better governance increases. However, practically all the researches on this topic are made for well-established democratic states (Western Europe, North America and Australia). When we investigate Russia, we should keep in mind that it has a low democratic position and is marked as authoritarian regime<sup>28</sup>. In Fig. 1 we can observe to what extent the ideal of participatory democracy is achieved in CIS countries of Central Asia, from low to high (0-1).

Figure 1



The participatory principle of democracy emphasizes active participation by citizens in all political processes, electoral and non-electoral. It is motivated by uneasiness about a bedrock practice of electoral democracy: delegating authority to representatives. This model of democracy thus takes suffrage for granted, emphasizing engagement in civil society organizations, direct democracy, and subnational elected bodies.<sup>29</sup> It is clear that only Kyrgyzstan has a significant increase during 2009-

<sup>27</sup> See: C. Batista, P.C. Vicente, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>28</sup> See A. Maida, "Online and On All Fronts. Russia's Assault on Freedom of Expression," Human Rights Watch, 2017, available at [https://www.hrw.org/report/2017/07/18/online-and-all-fronts/russias-assault-freedom-expression].

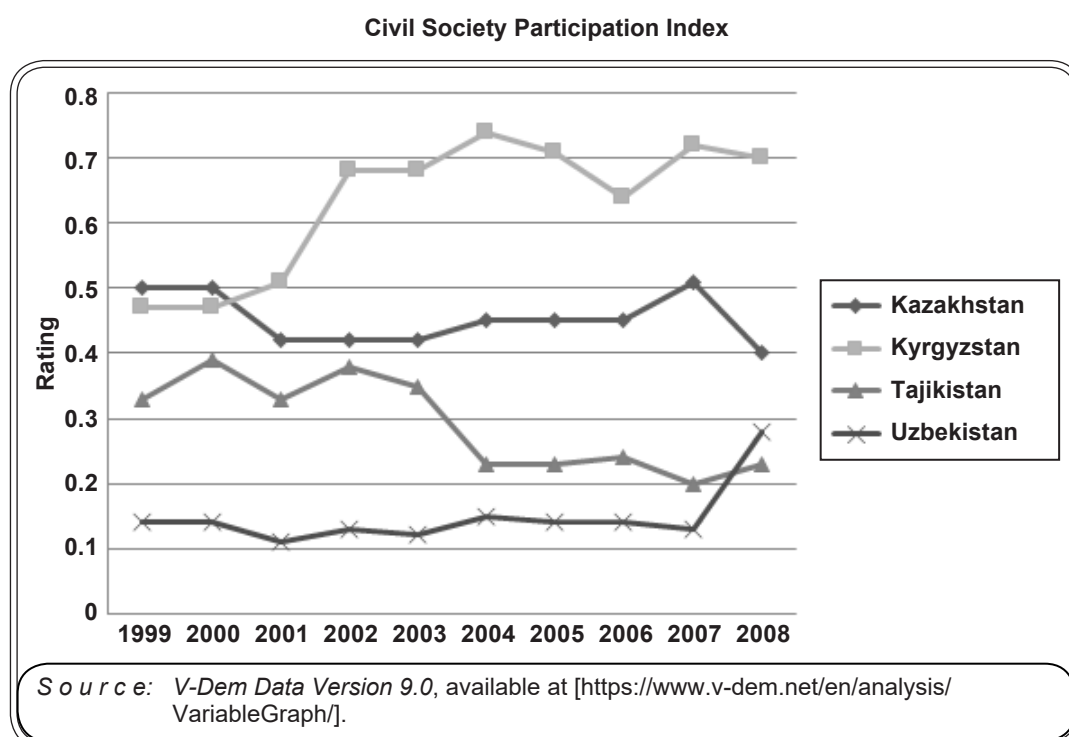
<sup>29</sup> See: M. Coppedge, J. Gerring, C.H. Knutsen, S.I. Lindberg, J. Teorell, D. Altman, M. Bernhard, M.S. Fish, A. Glynn, A. Hicken, A. Lührmann, K.L. Marquardt, K. McMann, P. Paxton, D. Pemstein, B. Seim, R. Sigman, S-E. Skaaning, J. Staton,



2010 up to 0.26. During this period Kyrgyzstan had the largest remittance inflow growth up to 6% of GDP (26%). However, there is no clear correlation with other countries, as their participatory democracy index remains stable, but their amount of transfers as well as remittance inflow to the country's GDP (%) was irrational with significant ups and downs.

To get a clear overlook we should refer to civil society participation index. The sphere of civil society lies in the public space between the private sphere and the state. Here, citizens organize in groups to pursue their collective interests and ideals. The core civil society index is designed to provide a measure of a robust civil society, understood as one that enjoys autonomy from the state and in which citizens freely and actively pursue their political and civic goals. The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for candidate selection—national/local, CSO consultation, CSO participatory environment and CSO women participation with interval, from low to high (0-1).<sup>30</sup>

Figure 2



On this chart we can notice that Kyrgyzstan has the highest values of civil society participation among other countries with a rapid soar in 2010-2011 from 0.5 to 0.7. What is more that increase emerged right after participatory democracy situation became better, so it can be its consequence. Also, Kyrgyzstan has a moderate fall from 0.74 in 2013 up to 0.64 in 2015 and then a slight climb

S. Wilson, A. Cornell, L. Gastaldi, H. Gjerløw, N. Ilchenko, J. Krusell, L. Maxwell, V. Mechkova, J. Medzihorsky, J. Pernes, J. Römer, N. Stepanova, A. Sundström, E. Tzelgov, Y. Wang, T. Wig, D. Ziblatt, "V-Dem [Country-Year/Country-Date] Dataset v9," Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project, 2019, available at [<https://doi.org/10.23696/vdemcy19>].

<sup>30</sup> See: D. Pemstein, L. Kyle, M.E. Tzelgov, Y. Wang, J. Medzihorsky, J. Krusell, F. Miri, J. Römer, "The V-Dem Measurement Model: Latent Variable Analysis for Cross-National and Cross-Temporal Expert-Coded Data," *V-Dem Working Paper* No. 21. 4th edition, University of Gothenburg: Varieties of Democracy Institute, 2019.

in 2016. This climb coincided with the growth of a remittance inflow to the country's GDP (%). It is interesting to note that Tajikistan had the biggest drop from 2011 until 2013 (from 0.38 to 0.23), but these years on the contrary were the wealthiest in terms of received transfers (\$1,044m-\$4,173m) and remittance inflows to the country's GDP (41.8%-43.8%), so we can say that in this case the more remittances people got the less they became politically active. Kazakhstan and Tajikistan have common ups and downs until 2017, when they had a contrary increase and decrease, largest in 10 years. What is more, during 2009-2010 Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have a slight grow of remittance inflows to the country's GDP (0.7%-1.1%), but their civil society participation index has a slow drop (0.05-0.1).

## *Conclusion*

To conclude, it is evidently that both return migration and migrant remittances can shape democratic situation in the donor country via multiple ways, such as

- *Relative ties; diaspora channels; return migration* (can raise the demand for improving political situation by influencing the moods of locals or undertaking democratization process by themselves).<sup>31</sup>
- *Private remittances* (undermining electoral support for incumbent parties and organizations; increasing existing financial resources of political opposition; improving local citizens' quality of life and their desire for better governance).<sup>32</sup>

However, remittances influence democratization process in a selective way. Despite the fact that remittances allow to maintain social stability in the country, they do not contribute to the development of the country. Undoubtedly, they help population to survive and avoid extreme poverty, but in the long-term vision do not lead to qualitatively new changes and economic development of the state. All these factors can start democratization and forthcoming changes of regime. What is more, if recipients of remittances are opposition organizations, activists or just democratic foundations which advertise democratic principles and fight for human rights and freedom of speech, they possess much more capability to start democratic movements.

When it comes to investigated CIS countries of Central Asia, there is no strong correlation between remittances and return migration, on the one hand, and democratic demands, on the other. The main reason for this can be an unsatisfactory position of the Russian Federation among democratic rankings,<sup>33</sup> which makes it more difficult for migrants to distinguish positive aspects of democracy in action. The other reason for this process is a low civil society participation index in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. However, Kyrgyzstan remains the only country with a visible correlation of variables where growth of remittances produces direct growth of civil society participation index as well as participatory democracy index, which is the strongest among all other countries. One of the main reasons for this process is the social mentality of the Kyrgyz ethnic group. It is determined by the nomadic way of life, which implies freedom of choice. This is the key difference of the Kyrgyz from Tajiks and Uzbeks, whose sedentary lifestyle predetermines the desire to accept any form of government imposed by the leader.<sup>34</sup> That is why, in Kyrgyzstan, protests are more likely to arise and develop.

<sup>31</sup> See: C. Batista, P.C. Vicente, op. cit.

<sup>32</sup> See: A. Escriba-Folch, C. Meseguer, J. Wright, op. cit.

<sup>33</sup> See: A. Maida, op. cit.

<sup>34</sup> See: O. Brusina, A. Asankanov, A. Zhaparov, *Kyrgyzy, Narody i kultura* Series, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 2016, 623 pp.

Finally, we can state that remittances and return migration can really influence democracy in migrants' country of origin via multiple ways, however, the quality of governance in the recipient country as well as domestic situation in a donor country play a crucial role in this process.

---