



Toshkent davlat
sharqshunoslik universiteti

XXI ASR: FAN VA TA'LIM MASALALARI

ilmiy elektron jurnali

ISSN: 2181-9874



EDUCATION

2026

O‘ZBEKISTONDA TALABALAR MIGRATSIYASI: TENDENSIYALAR, SABABLAR VA OQIBATLAR

Kadirova Zulayho

PhD, dotsenr

“Iqtisodiyot va menejment” kafedrasi mudiri,

Toshkent davlat sharqshunoslik universiteti

E-mail: zulayxo_kadirova@tsuos.uz

Khamidullaeva Mumtozabegim

Toshkent davlat sharqshunoslik universiteti talabasi

E-mail: mumtozahamidullayeva@gmail.com

Annotatsiya: *Xalqaro talabalar migratsiyasi O‘zbekistonning xalqaro mehnat bozoriga integratsiyalashuvi jarayonlarini rivojlantirishda muhim rol o‘ynaydi. Ushbu maqola O‘zbekistondan akademik mobillikning hozirgi holatini SWOT tahlili asosida o‘rganadi. Tadqiqot talabalar migratsiyasining ijobiy ta’sirlarini, jumladan ta’lim salohiyatini oshirish, xalqaro universitetlar hamkorligini rivojlantirish, gender tengligini targ‘ib qilish va iqtisodiy foyda keltirishni, shuningdek, “aqliy salohiyat oqimi”, milliy identiklikning zaiflashuvi va vaqtinchalik ishchi kuchining qisqarishi kabi salbiy muammolarni tahlil qiladi. Hukumat dasturlari va xalqaro sherikliklar talabalar mobilligi uchun mustahkam asos yaratadi, biroq chet el ta’lim tizimlariga bog‘liqlik va ijtimoiy barqarorlikning ehtimoliy xavflari ham mavjud. Tadqiqot natijalari shuni ko‘rsatadiki, strategik boshqaruv, maqsadli investitsiyalar va malakali bitiruvchilarni saqlash choralari orqali talabalar migratsiyasi O‘zbekistonda ijtimoiy, iqtisodiy va ta’limiy barqaror rivojlanishning drayveriga aylanishi mumkin.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *barqaror rivojlanish, SDG, xalqaro talabalar migratsiyasi, akademik mobillik, oliy ta’lim, “aqliy salohiyat oqimi”, gender tengligi, xalqaro universitetlar hamkorligi.*

МИГРАЦИЯ СТУДЕНТОВ В УЗБЕКИСТАНЕ: ТЕНДЕНЦИИ, ПРИЧИНЫ И ПОСЛЕДСТВИЯ

Кадырова Зулайхо

PhD, доцент

Зав.кафедрой “Экономика и менеджмент”

ТГУВ,

E-mail: zulayxo_kadirova@tsuos.uz

Хамидуллаева Мумтозабегим

Студент ТГУВ

E-mail: mumtozahamidullayeva@gmail.com

Аннотация: Международная миграция студентов играет значительную роль в развитии процессов интеграции Узбекистана в международный рынок труда. В данной статье анализируется текущее состояние академической мобильности из Узбекистана на основе SWOT-анализа. Исследование рассматривает как положительные эффекты, такие как повышение образовательного потенциала, развитие международного сотрудничества университетов, содействие гендерному равенству и экономические выгоды, так и проблемы, включая “утечку мозгов”, ослабление национальной идентичности и временное сокращение рабочей силы. Государственные программы и международные партнерства создают прочную основу для мобильности студентов, однако остаются риски зависимости от зарубежных образовательных систем и возможной социальной нестабильности. Результаты исследования показывают, что при стратегическом управлении, целевых инвестициях и мерах по удержанию квалифицированных выпускников, миграция студентов может стать драйвером устойчивого социального, экономического и образовательного развития в Узбекистане.

Ключевые слова: устойчивое развитие, SDG, международная миграция студентов, академическая мобильность, высшее образование, “утечка мозгов”, гендерное равенство, международное сотрудничество университетов.

STUDENT MIGRATION IN UZBEKISTAN: TRENDS, CAUSES, AND CONSEQUENCES

Kadirova Zulaiho

PhD, Associate Professor

Head of department “Economics and management.”

Tashkent state university of oriental studies

E-mail: zulayxo_kadirova@tsuos.uz

Khamidullaeva Mumtozabegim

Student of Tashkent state university of oriental studies

E-mail: mumtozahamidullayeva@gmail.com

Abstract: *International student migration plays a significant role in the development of integration processes of Uzbekistan into the international labor market. This paper analyzes the current state of academic mobility from Uzbekistan on the basis of the SWOT analysis framework. The study examines both the positive impacts, such as enhancing educational potential, fostering international university cooperation, promoting gender equality, and generating economic benefits, and the challenges, including “brain drain”, weakening of national identity, and temporary workforce reductions. While government programs and international partnerships provide a strong foundation for student mobility, risks such as dependence on foreign educational systems and potential social instability remain. The findings indicate that with strategic management, targeted investments, and measures to retain skilled graduates, student migration can become a driver of sustainable social, economic, and educational development in Uzbekistan.*

Keywords: *sustainable development, SDG, international student migration, academic mobility, higher education, brain drain, gender equality, international university cooperation.*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a steady increase in academic mobility among Uzbek youth, which has become an important indicator of social and economic changes in Uzbekistan. Many students aim to study abroad, focusing on the quality of educational programs and the opportunities for study and career development abroad.

Studying abroad provides students with advanced knowledge, experience in diverse international settings, and modern professional skills, which contribute to the development of Uzbekistan’s education system and economy. Their exposure to new ideas and practices also encourages innovation and entrepreneurial thinking, helping to strengthen the private sector and improve professional standards.

However, studying abroad for extended periods may affect students’ connection to their national identity and cultural traditions. Moreover, the tendency of many graduates to remain abroad after completing their studies can reduce the returns that were invested in their education by the government.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

According to UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2023 the total number of Uzbek students studying abroad reached 150.5 thousand, representing an annual increase of almost 24 thousand students. The main countries hosting Uzbek students were Kazakhstan (78,300), Ukraine (76,800), Russia (63,600), and Turkmenistan (60,900)¹. Until 2022, Russia was the primary destination for Uzbek students. However, since

¹ <https://stat.uz/en/>
www.sharqjurnali.uz

2022, changes in the national policies of both countries and growing geopolitical tensions appear to have caused a 25% decrease².

The processes of educational internationalization and the expansion of opportunities for studying abroad are considered by researchers as key factors driving the growth of international student mobility. According to I. P. Tsapenko, the alignment of educational standards and the development of cross-border academic programs significantly increase the number of students seeking education outside their home countries, making student migration one of the most dynamic forms of contemporary mobility.³

Contemporary research emphasizes that the drivers of academic migration, its impact on both sending and receiving countries, as well as the mechanisms for managing these flows, attract significant attention from the academic community and education policy specialists. Recent studies highlight that analyzing these processes is essential for understanding their social, economic, and institutional implications.

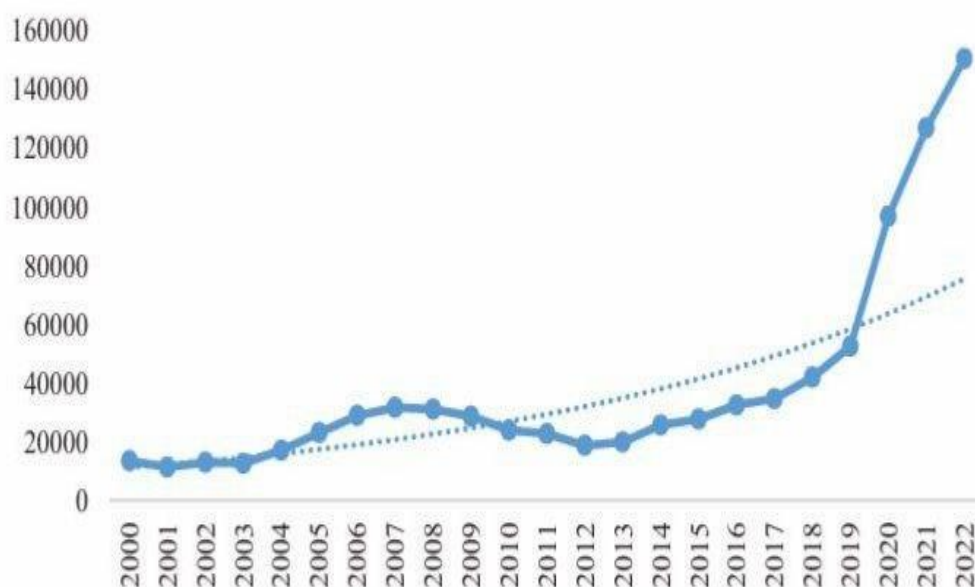


Figure 1. Dynamics of international student migration from Uzbekistan, 2000-2022⁴

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics

Within our research, we decided to analyze the strong and weak effects of student migration according to Swot analyze.

² Golomidova, P. S (2024). Features of international student migration from the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Russian Federation (on the example of Northern (Arctic) Federal University, 2009–2024) [in Russian].

³ Tsapenko, I. P. “International Student Migration” [in Russian].

⁴ Golomidova, P. S (2024). Features of international student migration from the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Russian Federation (on the example of Northern (Arctic) Federal University, 2009–2024) [in Russian].



Figure 2. SWOT Analysis of the impact of student migration on Uzbekistan⁵

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The strengths of student migration can be highlighted in several aspects, including increasing the country's educational potential, developing international university cooperation, economic benefits for participating countries, enhancing gender equality and women's opportunities, and government support for academic mobility.

⁵ Authors development
www.sharqjurnali.uz

Regarding the increase in the educational potential of the country, it is crucial to highlight that student migration contributes to the development of human capital and the overall level of education. Graduates from foreign universities return to Uzbekistan with modern knowledge, international standards, and a new vision for professional growth. This influences the modernization of the national economy, governance, and education systems.

In terms of developing international university cooperation, the growing number of Uzbek students studying abroad contributes significantly to strengthening academic collaboration between Uzbek and foreign universities. This contributes to the exchange of scientific resources, joint research projects, and participation in international grant programs. It also stimulates the development and expansion of university international offices and encourages the launch of joint educational initiatives such as double degree programs and summer schools. In Uzbekistan, such initiatives are already in practice. In addition, transnational higher education has become an important component of international university cooperation in Uzbekistan. The country has expanded partnerships with foreign higher education institutions through international branch campuses and joint educational programs. As of August 2023, a total of 37 transnational higher education providers were operating in Uzbekistan, enrolling around 30,000 students. These initiatives promote the integration of international academic standards, support joint degree formats, and strengthen long-term institutional cooperation between Uzbek and foreign universities.⁶

From economic benefits for participating countries, international students in host countries generate substantial revenue for the education and service sectors. Upon returning home, they contribute to the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises by applying international entrepreneurial practices. This results in a dual economic impact: financial benefits abroad and long-term advantages from the skills and knowledge repatriated.

With respect to enhancing gender equality and women's opportunities, an increasing number of Uzbek girls and women are participating in academic mobility, contributing to the dismantling of gender barriers and challenging traditional stereotypes. By receiving education abroad, they are more likely to take on leadership positions, become role models for future generations, and promote gender equality. National and international programs actively encourage women to apply, with some scholarships providing quotas or additional incentives, making international education a tool for social transformation. This trend is reflected in scholarship competitions and the growing number of girls and women successfully securing placements, including through programs such as El-Yurt Umidi and Turkiye Burslari.

Considering government support for academic mobility, the El-Yurt Umidi program plays a vital role in fostering the development of a new generation of national specialists. It provides talented students with the opportunity to study at top 300 universities abroad while maintaining ties to their homeland. Upon returning,

⁶ Bobir Muratov & Stephen Wilkins (2024) The development of Uzbekistan as a transnational higher education hub: government and institution rationales, and early outcomes

scholarship recipients become driving forces for reform and innovation in government and business.

Weaknesses of student migration can be identified in several key areas, including brain drain and loss of skilled people, weakening of national and cultural identity, and demographic decline and decrease in the workforce.

With regard to the first aspect brain-drain and loss of skilled people – a considerable number of graduates decide to stay abroad after completing their education, which leads to the loss of highly qualified professionals. This reduces the capacity of the national workforce, especially in areas such as science, education, and public administration. According to recent data, Uzbekistan’s Brain Drain Index stands at 4 out of 10.⁷

According to Shmeleva (2020), one of the main causes of brain drain is the unfavorable working environment for specialists in their home country. This includes unstable funding for research, a lack of suitable job positions for qualified professionals, and weak mechanisms for innovation and commercialization of scientific work.⁸ As Z.Kadirova considers that student mobility represents a fundamental driver in establishing a substantial reservoir for high-skilled migration within the context of Uzbekistan⁹

Concerning the second aspect - weakening of national and cultural identity- long-term study abroad can reduce students’ sense of national identity. In a foreign academic environment, they are exposed to different cultural norms and values, which may lead to the formation of a hybrid or cosmopolitan identity.¹⁰ This process of cultural adaptation can weaken cultural cohesion within the sending society. However, a paradox remains: global exposure also increases the interest of some students in preserving their national traditions and cultural values.

Regarding the third aspect - Demographic decline and decrease in the workforce- mass academic migration of young people leads to a temporary reduction in the share of the working-age population. Survey data show that 76% of Uzbek students would prefer to remain abroad after completing their studies, which intensifies the outflow of young professionals.¹¹ This trend creates an imbalance between labor supply and demand in the domestic market and may increase pressure on social and pension systems. Research on the youth labor market also indicates that if the share of students studying abroad remains high, the government will need to create additional jobs to prevent new waves of youth unemployment. Moreover, the rapid expansion of digital education, which allows citizens to study at foreign universities without leaving the

⁷ <https://worldpopulationreview.com>

⁸ Shmeleva, Yu. V. (2020). “Brain Drain: Causes, Trends, and Consequences in the Context of the Globalized Economy” [in Russian].

⁹ Kadirova, Z. A. (2025). *Xalqaro intellektual migratsiya jarayonlari rivojlanishining zamonaviy xususiyatlari* (Modern features of the development of international intellectual migration processes) [In Uzbek]

¹⁰ Alieva, O. G. (2016). *The Problem of National Identity in a Globalizing World* [in Russian].

¹¹ «Новый Узбекистан» на пути решения миграционных проблем <https://nuz.uz/2024/02/21/novyj-uzbekistan-na-puti-resheniya-migratsionnyh-problem-chast-vtoraya/>

country, may further strengthen this tendency by increasing the number of students who plan to build their careers abroad.

Opportunities of student migration can be observed in several key areas, including development of entrepreneurial and global competencies, and enhancement of academic standards in domestic universities. Regarding development of entrepreneurial and global competencies- studying abroad fosters entrepreneurial thinking and a global perspective among students. Returning graduates often apply international management practices and business approaches, establishing new enterprises and stimulating the growth of small and medium-sized businesses. They also transfer advanced knowledge, professional skills, and technological innovations, including modern management methods and educational practices. Collectively, these contributions strengthen the private sector, enhance investment attractiveness, and improve the overall efficiency of the national economy.

In relation to enhancement of academic standards in domestic universities-active participation in international programs allows universities to update their educational programs and implement modern pedagogical approaches and technologies. Joint research projects, exchange of experience, and the use of online platforms strengthen the educational potential of universities and improve the quality of specialist training. This dynamic stimulates innovation and the emergence of new business projects in the country.

Threats of student migration can be noted in several dimensions, including increased dependence on foreign educational systems and political transformation and the risk of social instability. Concerning increased dependence on foreign educational systems- the raising role of foreign educational systems could create a structural dependency, forcing domestic educational institutions to adapt to foreign standards. Under such an approach, educational programs may increasingly overlook national specificities, which hinders the development of locally relevant professional competencies.

In terms of political transformation and the risk of social instability, returning students educated abroad often bring new ideas, values, and political views, which can contribute to the reform and democratization of society. Furthermore, recipient countries can use international students as a tool of soft power, influencing public opinion and shaping a favorable image of their country in the eyes of future elites. Such external influence can have an indirect impact on the domestic politics of the sending country, potentially threatening its ideological independence.

CONCLUSION

International student migration offers significant benefits for Uzbekistan, including increased educational capacity, international university cooperation, economic gains, gender equality, and government-supported programs. Challenges also remain, including brain drain, weakening of national identity, and temporary workforce reductions.

Key recommendations:

- Strengthen domestic education and create local opportunities for highly skilled youth;
- Expand scholarships (increasing the quotas of the El-Yurt Umidi fund) and exchange programs while encouraging graduates to return;
- Support youth entrepreneurship and investment to generate jobs and retain talent;
- Develop policies to manage migration flows and mitigate social or economic risks;
- Promote the use of skills and innovations brought back by returning students.

With strategic implementation, Uzbekistan can transform student migration into a tool for sustainable educational, economic, and social development.

REFERENCES

1. Golomidova, P. S (2024). Features of international student migration from the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Russian Federation (on the example of Northern (Arctic) Federal University, 2009–2024) [in Russian].
3. Tsapenko, I. P. “International Student Migration” [in Russian].
4. Bobir Muratov & Stephen Wilkins (2024) The development of Uzbekistan as a transnational higher education hub: government and institution rationales, and early outcomes
5. Shmeleva, Yu. V. (2020). “*Brain Drain: Causes, Trends, and Consequences in the Context of the Globalized Economy*” [in Russian].
7. Kadirova, Z. A. (2025). *Xalqaro intellektual migratsiya jarayonlari rivojlanishining zamonaviy xususiyatlari* [Modern features of the development of international intellectual migration processes]. Tashkent: Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies. [In Uzbek]
8. Alieva, O. G. (2016). *The Problem of National Identity in a Globalizing World* [in Russian].
9. Al-Shahdani, S. A. H. (2025). Studencheskaya migratsiya: Demograficheskiye transformatsii i protsess sotsializatsii (Student migration: Demographic transformations and the process of socialization). *Molodoy uchenyy*, (27), 254–259. [In Russian].
10. <https://stat.uz/en/>
11. <https://worldpopulationreview.com>
12. «Новый Узбекистан» на пути решения миграционных проблем
<https://nuz.uz/2024/02/21/novyj-uzbekistan-na-puti-resheniya-migratsionnyh-problem-chast-vtoraya/>
13. <https://tsue.uz/en/structure/>
14. <https://tsul.uz/en/>