BLENDING ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRATION WITH ECONOMIC MIGRATION. THE CASE OF CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES

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Abstract: This text aims to identify environmental migration in Central Asia and point out that environmental migration is often confused with economic migration. The Central Asian region has specific geographical and socio-economic characteristics and is regularly exposed to environmental phenomena that affect migration. In the text, we analyze the environmental situation in this region. We conclude that environmental changes are an essential push factor for migration. However, we also point out that it is not easy to identify the exact numbers of environmental migrants based on existing statistics. The main reason for this situation can one find in the statistics of the destination countries of migration. These countries (in this case, the Russian Federation) do not register environmental migrants. We consider the bad environmental situation in the country as the primary push factor for migration. We can assume that the officially declared economic migration is, in fact, environmental migration. We discuss that poverty is often a direct result of climate change. We also note that the lack of data, the absence and inadequacy of legislation, and the lack of awareness and political attention paid to this issue in many countries are crucial obstacles to a more accurate analysis of environmental migration in the Central Asian region.

Keywords: environmental migration, Central Asia, climate change, pull and push factors, Russian Federation

1   INTRODUCTION

This article aims to analyze the assumptions for the emergence of environmental migration on research on migratory flows in the Central Asia region and explain why it can be difficult to distinguish between two categories of migration: environmental and economic. In the article, we would like to answer why this geographical area is considered climatically unstable, i.e., for a region that has all the prerequisites for the emergence of environmental migration (Blondin, 2019). Using

the situation analysis in the examined area, we want to clearly explain why it is complicated to differentiate between economic and environmental migration. We want to point out inaccuracies in identifying the push factors of migration because environmental migrants are often confused with economic migrants in the statistics of destination countries (Myers, 1993). Our reasoning is based on the assumption that it can be problematic to distinguish between environmental and economic migration, not least because the target countries do not have to include this category in their statistics. We also consider the lack of relevant resources, which would be based on qualitative research and could confirm this type of migration, to be significant (Agustoni and Maretti, 2019). As a rule, the destination countries of migration only state the pull factors of migration, i.e., the reasons that migrants say when applying for residence in the territory of the destination country, not the push factors, i.e., the factors that are the real reason for leaving the country of origin. In addition, even the subject of migration does not have to identify the environmental reasons if he considers, for example, poverty to be the subjective reason for leaving the country of origin. However, poverty in their region may be a direct consequence of climate change.

Research on environmental migration is gradually gaining increased attention from the scientific community in the context of global climate change. Research to date has deepened our understanding of the complex interactions between the environment, climate change, and migration dynamics, enabling us to develop and implement effective policies to mitigate the adverse effects of environmental-induced forced migration. However, little attention is paid to the issue of climate change in Central Asia and its impact on local migration (Piguet, Kaenzig, and Guélat, 2018). We see one of the reasons that the Central Asia region is not as geopolitically attractive as, for example, the region of South and South-East Asia, even though this geographical area is considered "a hot spot for climate change and a region prone to environmental migration" (Blondin, 2019, 275). The environmental change is regarded as a potential danger to future cooperation between the region's countries. As climate change limits access to natural resources, border conflicts are more intense. Climate change and adaptation to new conditions not only contribute to increasing tensions between these countries (WEF, 2019) but are also reflected, for example, in the migration of local populations (Blondin, 2019).

2   METHODOLOGY AND DATA

Regarding the fact that we will try to identify the conditions for the emergence of environmental migration in Central Asia, we will focus our attention on causal factors of migration; we will use the concept of pull factors (pull factors) and push factors. This concept is a popular and still frequently used way of explaining the various causes of migration (see, for example, Kerri, 1976; Kline, 2003; Blondin, 2019; Franco et al., 2020), although it is also often criticized. The essence of this concept lies in the assumption of an imbalance of certain factors between individual

regions (Lee, 1966). It is so accepted in migration research (Haug, 2000) that it can explain the causes of cross-border population movements in any geographical area. On the other hand, it is essential to note that some authors deny him his theoretical framework because, despite the precise definition of individual factors, these must be further supplemented by the theses of other theoretical models (Kröhnert, 2007). Critics blame him for failing at the moment when migration processes continue, even though the original factors – whether attraction or displacement – have disappeared. For example, labor migration persists despite rising unemployment in the destination country (Castles and Miller, 1993). In a similar case, however, it is necessary not to perceive the individual factors of attraction and extrusion in isolation but as a combination of one factor with others. Indeed, one attraction factor may be replaced by another, or a situation may arise where the attraction factor has already lost its effectiveness. Still, the intensity of the extrusion factor remains unchanged.

The decision to leave the country of origin is also determined by another group of factors, the accompanying obstacles and opportunities in the migration process. Migrants must consider the complications of leaving the country of origin and the circumstances of entering the country of destination. Spatial distance, cultural affinity with society in the target country, living conditions and education of children, infrastructure, or the total amount of information about the target country can also be decisive (Lee, 1966; Castelli, 2018). The final decision to settle in a country will also depend on the opportunities that that country offers (Stouffer, 1940). In the case of migrants from the countries of Central Asia, it will be understood that they will choose the Russian Federation as the destination country of migration. In this case, the decisive factors will include the spatial proximity, the shared history associated with the tradition of language (Russian as lingua franca in the post-Soviet space), and the cultural customs of the target state.

Our thinking about migration in the region under study is based on analyzing statistics that come from several sources. As we will point out several times in the text, the data on migration differ from one country to another, or some countries (primarily the countries of the Central Asia region) report them in a minimal form. Data on emigration from countries of origin may differ from data on immigration in the destination country of migration, as pointed out by Russian experts on international migration research (Aleshkovski, Grebenyuk and Vorobyeva, 2018). The data are primarily obtained from the Russian Statistical Office (Rosstat), the Federal Government and Statistical Agency (2020), the Central Asian research institute CABAR (Central Asian Bureau for Analytical Reporting), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the internationally recognized statistical portal Statista (2020). To avoid ambiguities, we compare them with data published in previous scientific studies. Combining data obtained from several sources allows us to get a more accurate picture of migration flows in Central Asia. In addition to data on international migration, we also use economic data and data on the environmental situation. We use the source data provided by the World Bank (including the PRO-FOR program – Innovation and Action for Forces) (2020), OSCE (Organization for

Security and Co-operation in Europe) (2010), and the World Economic Forum (WEF, 2019; Pison, 2019).

3 THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRATION

Climate and environmental change are reflected in the climate crisis, affecting the lives of millions of people worldwide. One of the consequences of environmental change is the migration of the inhabitants of the affected areas (World Bank, 2018). IDMC (2020a) reports that "in 2020, 30.7 million people were internally displaced by disasters, over three times more than conflict and violence (9.8 million people). Of those displaced by disasters, 98 percent faced weather and climate hazards".

Although environmental migration is sometimes referred to as a modern phenomenon, it is as old as other types of migration (Piguet, Pécoud and de Guchteneire, 2011). In his analysis, the pioneer of migration theory, Ernst Georg Ravenstein (1889, 286), places climate conditions in the group of reasons people migrate. Despite a relatively long history of perceiving environmental problems as reasons for migration, other factors prevailed in migration theories. The importance of the environment for migration was in a marginal position compared to them (Black et al., 2011). Piguet, Pécoud and de Guchteneire (2011) argue that the explanations for migration were in favor of sociology and economics. The economic factor was given a central role, whether in classical or neoclassical migration theories (Massey et al., 1993).

According to Piguet, Pécoud, and de Guchteneire (2011), understanding the role of the environment in migration dynamics means analyzing how and why people are vulnerable to climate change and examining the various strategies they develop to manage environmental stress. Migration, whether international or domestic, is one such strategy. Therefore, in this context, the term environmental migration or environmental migrants is used. One definition of migration, often cited in scientific texts, comes from the International Organization for Migration (IOM). This institution characterizes migration as the movement of an individual or a group from one country to another, for whatever reason, to settle down in another country for more than one year (IOM, 2019, 125). In the literature, we encounter various categories of migration (Haug, 2000). Spatial and causal features are essential for our thinking. In this article, we will rely mainly on causal factors, as they play a crucial role in addressing the causes of migration, which we can then examine from an economic, social, and political point of view. The causes of migration also include the circumstances of the emergence of migration flows or the question of whether migration occurs voluntarily or through coercion.

Migration is an effective way to diversify their income and build the resilience of those facing environmental change and constraints (Afriyie, Ganle and Santos, 2018). There is still a debate among the scientific community and experts whether

environmental migrants can be called refugees, as the Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees, adopted in Geneva in 1951 (UNHCR, 1951), defines the form of refugee legal protection social rights of refugees. Under international law, refugees have the opportunity to apply for international protection in another country. In migration, different entry and residence rights and levels of protection apply to each legal category. At present, the position of environmental migrants is not legally understood in the scientific discourse, whether environmental migration is voluntary economic migrants or displaced people – refugees (Marshall, 2016).

One of the first concepts discussed related to the issue of environmental migration is the environmental refugee. This term is used to identify people who have had to leave their country of origin for climate change. According to Kraler, Katsiaficas and Wagner (2020, 20) the term "environmental refugee" suggested two conclusions: first, that movement in response to environmental change was involuntary, and second, that the involuntary nature of movement gave rise to specific protection challenges. Some authors (Türk, 2014) disagree with the use of the term refugee in the case of environmental migration (Adamo, 2010) and argue with the Geneva Convention of 1951, which recognizes refugee status for a person who leaves their country of origin because of the fear of persecution. In the case of environmental migrants, it is not possible to talk about the risk of persecution because environmental migrants affected by a natural disaster cross their country's borders voluntarily. They prefer the term "environmentally displaced person" instead of "refugee" or "emigrant." The IOM (2019) defined three critical words about environmental migration:

1. We define environmental migrants as "persons or groups of persons who, due to sudden or gradual changes in the environment which adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their usual homes within or outside their country temporarily or permanently" (IOM, 2019, 64).

2. An environmentally displaced person is a term used for people who are displaced "within their country of usual residence or across national borders and for whom environmental degradation is the main cause of their displacement" (IOM, 2019, 51). "The term "disaster displacement" refers to situations where people are forced or obliged to leave their homes or places of habitual residence as a result of a disaster or in order to avoid the impact of an immediate and foreseeable natural hazard. Such displacement results from the fact that affected persons are exposed to a natural hazard in a situation where they are too vulnerable and lack the resilience to withstand the impacts of that hazard" (The Nansen Protection Agenda, 2015, 16).

3. The planned relocation concerns persons whose dwellings have been restored elsewhere (IOM, 2019).

Migration caused by the climate crisis usually occurs in areas that are marked by environmental problems, such as inland storms (wind, tornadoes), water scarcity (drought, crop fertility, fires), or coastal floods caused by rising sea levels and tropical hurricanes (Milan et al., 2015). Despite the original marginal lack of interest in exploring the link between migration and the environment, interest in researching this type of migration is gradually growing (Piguet, 2013). For example, Piguet, Pé-

coud and de Guchteneire (2011) analyzed the far-reaching effects of climate change that could lead to large migratory flows. Groisman et al. (2017) and Anisimov (2017) developed a critical review that analyzes the effects of climate change across ecosystems from deserts through the taiga to the Arctic. Although estimating the specific extent and impact of environmental change is challenging, water scarcity and resource depletion increase population migration levels and complexity (Ionesco, Mokhnacheva and Gemenne, 2017).

4 THE ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION IN CENTRAL ASIA

The region of Central Asia (Figure 1) has its specific geographical and socio-economic characteristics and is regularly exposed to environmental phenomena that affect both internal and international migration (Blondin, 2019). Central Asia is prone to earthquakes, landslides, floods, mudflows, droughts, avalanches, and extreme temperatures. Natural disasters lead to high economic losses every year. Natural disasters affect almost three million people in Central Asia each year, and nearly half of them live in Uzbekistan. Over the years, the governments of Central Asian countries have paid attention to the development of strategies that should respond more quickly to impending environmental disasters and implement better prevention plans. Examples are Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which have developed systems to help prepare for the coming disasters (Burunciuc, 2020). Sudden natural disasters, such as landslides and floods, as well as progressive phenomena such as degradation of agricultural land, deforestation, temperature rise and subsequent drying of the soil, salinization of soil (Achmadov, 2010) through over-irrigation are considered important push factors that lead the population to think about emigration.

The following Table 1 shows the estimated distribution of average annual losses and the number of people affected by the floods and earthquakes by Central Asian countries calculated by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (2019). Estimates were calculated in absolute numbers and relation to the country's population or GDP.

Table 1 Consequences of floods and earthquakes in the countries of Central Asia

Country	Number of people affected per year	Total population	Annual financial losses in $
Kazakhstan	500,000	18,51 million	4,000 million
Kyrgyzstan	280,000	6,457 million	270 million
Tajikistan	500,000	9,321 million	400 million
Turkmenistan	170,000	5,942 million	2,700 million
Uzbekistan	1,400,000	33,58 million	2,800 million

Source: own processing according to Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery data, 2019.

Figure 1 Political map of Central Asia (Source: iStock 2021)

Since 1990, land degradation has affected the lives of millions of people in Central Asia and caused considerable damage. In Kyrgyzstan, rain can trigger more than 5,000 potential landslides. Vulnerable communities in the region include residents of mountain villages in Tajikistan, who are threatened by frequent avalanches caused by climate change (OSCE, 2010) and who live in remote areas, do not have access to basic infrastructure and services, and are also often marginalized, leading to less political attention and less public investment (Agostini and Kull, 2020). Olimova and Olimov (2012) pointed out the population's excessive depletion of natural resources, which was relocated after the Soviet regime after 1990 as part of rehabilitation.

We identify the outlined environmental problems as an important push factor for the migration of the population of the countries studied. According to the IDMC (International Displacement Monitoring Center) (2020b), more than one hundred thousand people were relocated to Central Asia in 2020 by local governments' regulations for environmental reasons.

5   THE ISSUE OF IDENTIFICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRANTS FROM COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL ASIA TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The experience of the countries of Central Asia shows how complicated it is to identify the actors of environmental migration and distinguish them from economic migrants. The study of Olimova and Olimov (2012), who examined the perception of environmental conditions in rural areas and their impact on decisions to leave the country of origin, will help us to reflect on this. The authors found that more than 40 percent of respondents said that environmental conditions in their residence had deteriorated in recent years, which led to a migration decision. The Olimovs study has shown that sudden environmental disasters (e.g., landslides and floods) and gradual environmental changes (primarily drought) have influenced migration decisions. Thus, migration has often been used as an adaptation strategy to address the negative impacts of environmental processes. So, the nature of the environment influences the decision to migrate. People living in the studied areas face a complex dilemma between the possibility of migration, which leads to uncertainty, and the chance of staying in place, which could mean living under the threat of unpredictable dangers, health problems, and reduced income (Nasritdinov et al., 2010). Despite these clear conditions, it is complicated to identify environmental migrants without face-to-face meetings and surveys in a given country (Olimova and Olimov, 2012) because without a non-existent legal understanding of the term environmental migrant and push and pull factors, they mostly fall into the labor migration category.

As the Russian Federation is an important destination for migrants from Central Asia, we assume that a significant part of potential environmental migrants is heading to the Russian Federation. Russia offers several pull factors for the people of Central Asia: from geographical proximity, better economic conditions, through a shared history within the Soviet Union, and knowledge of Russia's cultural traditions, up to the command of the Russian language (Ryazantsev and Korneev, 2014; Nesterova, 2015). According to Nesterova (2015), migrants are influenced by five key factors when choosing a destination country. The economic situation of an immigrant country and a culturally-historical factor (the familiar territory of the Russian Empire and later the Soviet Union), a geographical element, means a relatively close distance and availability of transport to a particular country. The political factor includes stable political relations between Central Asia and the Russian Federation, the visa-free regime that affects migratory flows, and the joint labor market agreement between the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan (Nestorova, 2015). The last to be mentioned is the demographic factor and the fact that numerous Russian minorities still live in the countries of Central Asia from the times of the Soviet Union, which may be regarded as a potential opportunity for emigration to the Russian Federation (Buckley, 2008). Another vital pull factor for the people of Central Asia can be included in the pro-migration policy of the Russian Federation aimed at the people of the CIS countries, specifically, the countries of Central Asia, through

which the Russian Federation is trying to solve the demographic crisis, facing it now and shortly.

As part of our research, we came across another critical pull factor in the framework of foreign immigration to the Russian Federation, namely the social networks of migrants. According to JICA (2018), the social networks of migrants are one of the most important pull factors. Social networks of migrants in the destination country of migration have a significant impact on the size and direction of migration processes and the results of migrants' adaptation (Garip and Asad, 2015).

Approximately ten million economic migrants move within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) each year. Countries such as Armenia, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, or Tajikistan have many emigrants. The total volume of remittances also confirms this. The ratio of remittances to GDP varies within the region of Central Asia and the Russian Federation. The highest proportions are in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan (ranging from about 20 to 42 percent over the years) and the lowest in Turkmenistan and the Russian Federation (less than one percent) (Poghosyan, 2020). This confirms our reflections on the Russian Federation as a destination for labor migration from Central Asia. Figure 2 shows that the states of Central Asia are important source countries for migrants to the Russian Federation.
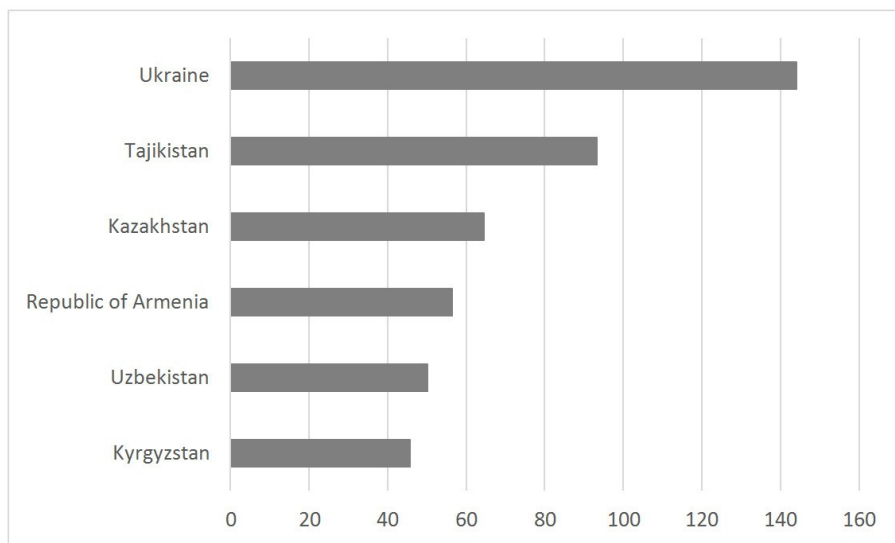

Figure 2 Immigrant inflows to the Russian Federation in 2020, by country of origin (in thousands) (Source: Statista, 2021)

The Russian Federation is one of the most common destinations for migrants from Central Asia (Chudinovskich and Denisenko, 2017), which is confirmed by data from the Migration Policy Institute (2021), according to which labor immigra-

tion to the Russian Federation comes mainly from the former USSR. In the years 2011-2015, the inhabitants of the CIS countries (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Ukraine) accounted for up to 90 percent of legal migration in Russia. In 2020, apart from Ukraine, Central Asian countries predominated in the number of immigrants to the Russian Federation. To curb illegal migration, the Russian Federation introduced a law in 2007 under which citizens of visa-free countries (citizens of the CIS countries) can apply for work without confirmation from the employer. After 2006, Russia adopted a pro-immigration policy to attract migrant workers from the CIS countries to address the demographic crisis. In April, the law on dual Russian citizenship came into force for foreigners from countries with significant Russian minorities (Federaľnyj zakon, 2020).

The Russian Statistical Office (Rosstat, 2020) regularly reports the numbers of migrants arriving in the Russian Federation. Figure 3 shows that the Central Asian countries surveyed are among the most frequent source countries for migrants heading to the Russian Federation. In addition to Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan was in the top ten for several years, but China overtook this state in 2019.
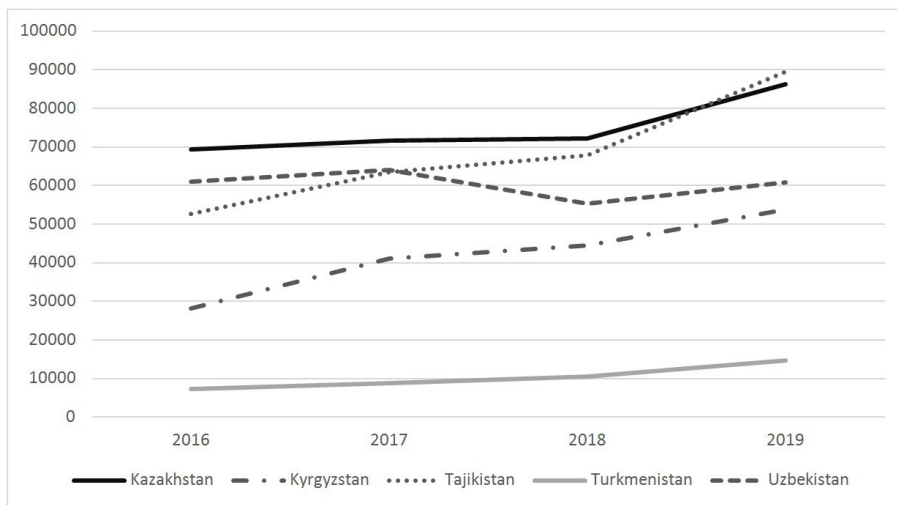
Figure 3 Number of migrants from Central Asian countries coming to the Russian Federation in 2016-2019 (Source: Rosstat, 2020).

The Russian State Statistical Office EMISS gives only nine reasons for joining the Russian Federation for all countries of the world, namely: business travel, work, study, tourism, private visit, transit, relocation to the permanent residence, the person operating the vehicle, military service. Environmental reasons or reasons for migration due to deteriorating living conditions due to persistent global warming and its consequences are not stated as a reason to enter Russia.

According to the above statistics, the most common reasons for the arrival of foreigners in the Russian Federation from Central Asian countries are labor migration from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, followed by labor migration from Kyrgyzstan. These are countries with an unfavorable economic situation, which is a significant push factor for migration in addition to the environmental problem. As mentioned in the previous section, two environmental migration studies from this region examined environmental migrants from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan (Olimov and Olimova, 2012), confirming our view that environmental migrants exist in the area. Still, it is difficult to identify them in the context of dominant labor emigration.

6   DISCUSSION

The assessment of the available data confirmed our assumption (similar to Myers, 1993; Blondin, 2019) that environmental and labor migration overlap. Therefore, it is difficult to identify the exact dividing line between the two categories of migration. Similarly to Piquet (2013), we also want to point out that many well-known theorists (Massey et al., 1993) did not initially reflect environmental migrants as a separate category, but now the debate on the relationship between migration and global environmental change has moved forward. What matters is how migrants themselves assess the reasons for leaving their country of origin. Research shows that migrants often refer to themselves as labor migrants because they cite economic factors as the main reason for migration (Olimova and Olimov, 2012). However, there are situations where economic push factors have the character of secondary causes, but migrants do not state the primary reason. In this context, we propose to examine the problem in more depth and note which factors we can identify as the cause of growing poverty in the studied geographical area. Poverty, accompanied by high unemployment, low living standards, and problems in the agricultural sector, may primarily result from a poor environmental situation (Blondin, 2019). For this reason, not economic but environmental reasons may be at the beginning of migration processes.

So far, we have tried to enrich the research by analyzing the push factors of migration from Central Asia. Still, we have also evaluated the approach of statistical institutions of the Russian Federation. The Russian Federation is an important destination for the migration of the Central Asian population. When using the concept of pull and push factors, it is essential to approach migration as a whole and not focus on just one factor. Migration usually occurs as a result of the assessment of both factor categories. However, it is also important to reflect on possible obstacles (Lee, 1966), including migration legislation. This approach has helped us identify the reasons why the category of economic reasons for migration predominates. However, the presumption that environmental problems are the primary reason cannot be ruled out. The Russian Federation does not refer to the environmental problems of the area of origin as a category of relevant reasons leading to migratory flows. In addition, there are significant differences in the migration statistics of several institutions of

the Russian Federation in the number of registered migrants. This discrepancy in statistics that we perceive as a vital factor complicates the exactness of scientific research on migration in the Russian Federation. It would certainly be easier for the scientific community if the relevant institutions unified the methodology for registering newcomers and included climate change as options that immigrants coming to Russia could identify as the primary reason for their emigration from their country of origin. However, we see a problem here, as migrants themselves gave the reasons can be subjective. A migrant can state economic reasons as the main ones, while financial problems may be caused by climate change. Thus, we agree with the view that qualitative methods, primarily semi-structured interviews with migration subjects (Blondin, 2019), proved to be suitable for research into the differences between economic and climate migration, as long as we have good knowledge of the geographical characteristics of the region.

In our paper, we have shown that even in this case, the model of push and pull factors is a suitable methodological concept for investigating the causes of migration. Our analysis of migration in the region of Central Asia confirmed that a uniform terminology reflecting the category of environmental migrants could simplify the identification of this type of migration and the subsequent categorization of forced environmental migrants or voluntary economic migrants. Currently, this possibility does not exist, and there is a possibility that the causes of migration from the region in the study may not always be adequately assessed.

7 CONCLUSION

We regard our study as a contribution to the consideration of international migration while discussing the cause, which is extremely difficult to identify since, immigration theories, it is marginalized or not included in the hypotheses by authors at all. The reason is climate change. The climate crisis is currently affecting virtually every continent. While it has been described as "urgent" by the scientific community, political leaders and activists have also referred to it recently.

Although we pointed out that natural conditions were already mentioned by pioneers of migration theories (Ravenstein, 1889) as a possible reason for migration, also economic reasons in previous causes of migration analyses usually prevail over the environmental ones. At the same time, poor environmental conditions can be the primary cause of migration. In the text, we have analyzed the region of Central Asia because it is in this geographical area that we observe significant climate change accompanied by migration processes. It was the example of migration in this region in which we pointed out the problem of precisely distinguishing between environmental and economic migration. As the article shows, some studies estimate the total number of environmental migrants in this geographical area. Still, this type of migrant does not appear in the statistics of the target countries.

In the context of our reflections, we assume that the ongoing climate crisis will be a significant push factor for the migration of the population of countries in Cent-

ral Asia to Russia. With its size, available language, geographical location, historical ties, and migration policy, the Russian Federation positively set on the people of Central Asia, along with networks of migrants living in its territory, offers enough pull factors for migrants from the region. Based on the arguments above, we also point out that it will be difficult to distinguish environmental refugees from labor migrants with the current categorization of migration.

The region of Central Asia is currently characterized by an increasing labor migration to the Russian Federation. While migrant workers consider the lack of finances and the difficult economic situation and professional goals the most crucial push factors, persistent environmental climate change shows that environmental change and the ongoing climate crisis can also be included in the relevant push factors. Therefore, it is appropriate to discuss the need to create a legally understood concept and the possibility of having the idea of environmental migrant (long-term, temporary, etc.) in the registration of the states in the world, followed by easier identification of this category migrants.

A practical solution to the adverse effects of environmental and climate changes on environmental migration does not exist. However, research on this issue brings an important step towards a gradual understanding that could increase the population's livelihood, well-being, and ability to adapt to changes in the environment and climate. However, a significant factor hindering this research's development and effective implementation is a poor understanding of the context-specific interactions between the environment and migration. Symptoms of this problem include a lack of data, the absence and inadequacy of legislation and policies, and a lack of awareness and political attention to the issue.

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Prelínanie sa environmentálnej migrácie s ekonomickou migráciou na príklade štátov Strednej Ázie

Súhrn

Cieľom nášho príspevku je identifikovať environmentálnu migráciu v regióne Strednej Ázie a poukázať na to, že napriek predpokladom pre existenciu tohto typu migračných procesov sa environmentálna migrácia v štatistikách údajov cieľových krajín (v našom článku Ruskej federácie) zamieňa s migráciou ekonomickou. Stredoázijský región má svoje špecifické geografické a sociálno-ekonomické charakteristiky a je pravidelne vystavený environmentálnym javom, ktoré ovplyvňujú medzinárodnú migráciu. V texte analyzujeme environmentálnu situáciu v tomto regióne a prezentujeme hlavné dôsledky klimatických zmien. Dospeli sme k záveru, že environmentálne zmeny sú dôležitým faktorom vzniku migračných procesov. Zároveň však upozorňujeme, že na základe existujúcich štatistík nie je vôbec jednoduché identifikovať presné počty environmentálnych migrantov. Hlavnú príčinu tohto stavu možno nájsť v štatistikách cieľových krajín migrácie. Aj na príklade Ruskej federácie sa snažíme dokázať, že tieto štáty vôbec neevidujú kategóriu environmentálnych migrantov. Preto je táto kategória migrantov často zamieňaná s kategóriou ekonomických migrantov. Posúdenie dostupných dát potvrdilo našu domnienku, že environmentálna a pracovná migrácia sa prelínajú, a preto je náročné identifikovať presnú deliacu líniu medzi obomi kategóriami migrácie. V článku poukazujeme na skutočnosť, že aj mnohí významní teoretici environmentálnych migrantov pôvodne vôbec nereflektovali ako samostatnú kategóriu, ale v súčasnosti debaty o vzťahu medzi migráciou a globálnymi zmenami životného prostredia reflektujú okolnosti spojené so zmenou klímy. Pri identifikovaní príčin migrácie považujeme za dôležité, ako samotní migranti posudzujú dôvody zmeny krajiny pobytu. Výskumy totiž ukazujú, že migranti často označujú samých seba ako pracovných migrantov, pretože ako hlavný dôvod migrácie uvádzajú ekonomické faktory.

Zlú environmentálnu situáciu v krajinách Strednej Ázie považujeme za hlavný faktor pre vznik migrácie v tomto regióne. Naše uvažovanie vychádza z predpokladu, že v štátoch Strednej Ázie veľa ľudí pracuje v poľnohospodárstve. Keďže klimatické zmeny majú negatívny vplyv na poľnohospodársku výrobu, mnoho ľudí žije v zlých sociálno-ekonomických podmienkach. Svoju situáciu potom riešia migráciou. Môžeme teda predpokladať, že oficiálne deklarovaná ekonomická migrácia má nielen ekonomické príčiny, ale dôležitou príčinou sú aj environmentálne zmeny. Sme presvedčení, že chudoba je priamym dôsledkom zmeny klímy. Poznamenávame tiež, že nedostatok údajov, absencia a nedostatočná legislatíva, ako aj nedostatočná informovanosť a politická pozornosť venovaná tejto problematike v mnohých krajinách sú jednou z kľúčových prekážok presnejšej analýzy environmentálnej migrácie v regióne Strednej Ázie. Na základe analýzy dostupných údajov tvrdíme, že jednotná terminológia, ktorá by reflektovala aj kategóriu environmentálnych migrantov, by zjednodušila identifikáciu tohto typu migrácie a následnej kategorizácie nútených environmentálnych migrantov alebo dobrovoľných ekonomických migrantov. V súčasnosti totiž táto možnosť neexistuje, a preto nemožno vylúčiť, že príčiny migrácie zo skúmaného regiónu nemusia byť vždy posúdené správne. Predpokladáme, že pretrvávajúca klimatická kríza bude dôležitým push faktorom migrácie obyvateľov krajín Strednej Ázie smerom do Ruska. Ruská

federácia svojou rozlohou, známym jazykom, geografickou polohou, historickými väzbami a migračnou politikou, pozitívne nastavenou práve na obyvateľov krajín Strednej Ázie, spoločne so sieťami migrantov, žijúcich na jej území, ponúka dostatok pull faktorov pre migrantov zo skúmaného regiónu. Na základe uvedených argumentov zároveň upozorňujeme, že pri súčasnej kategorizácii migrácie bude zložité rozlíšiť environmentálnych utečencov od pracovnej migrácie.