



**Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan**



**Anti-Discrimination Centre Memorial Brussels**

**Submission by Civil Society to the UN Universal Periodic Review  
49th Session of the UPR Working Group of the Human Rights Council**

**KYRGYZSTAN**

**Insufficient Efforts of the State  
in Protection of the Rights of Kyrgyzstani Migrants Working Abroad  
and  
in Creating Conditions for Employment in the Country**

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1. Anti-Discrimination Centre (ADC) Memorial and Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan made this submission on the problems of violations of the rights of migrants from Kyrgyzstan working in Russia, insufficient reaction of Kyrgyzstan authorities on these violations and insufficient efforts of the state in creating conditions for efficient employment within Kyrgyzstan and overcoming the dependence of Kyrgyzstan's economy on the labour migration.
2. [Anti-Discrimination Centre \(ADC\) Memorial Brussels](#) is a Human Rights NGO defending the rights of minorities and vulnerable groups (such as representatives of ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples, migrants, stateless persons, LGBTI+ and others) and fighting against any form of racism, sexism, homophobia and xenophobia in the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia through advocacy, litigation assistance, Human Rights education, research and publications.
3. [Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan](#) is a non-governmental organization registered in Kyrgyz Republic aimed at promotion of civil, political, cultural and economic rights, using monitoring and analysis tools for human rights evaluation in Kyrgyzstan.

### **1. Recommendations on migration and labour rights in the previous UPR cycle and positive aspects**

4. During the previous UPR cycle, Kyrgyzstan supported/noted 3 specific recommendations related to the rights of migrants, namely: 140.230 Further promote and protect the rights of migrant workers and members of their families, particularly with regard to extending consular assistance to migrant workers abroad and access to medical services (by Indonesia, supported); 140.231 Consider further bilateral and multilateral agreements to ensure better protections for migrant workers (by Niger, supported); 140.232 Develop a human rights-based national implementation plan for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (by Portugal, noted).
5. During the previous UPR cycle, Kyrgyzstan supported/noted 16 recommendations related to the labor rights of vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, children at risk of exploitation, as well as to the strengthening the role of women in the labor market (the supported recommendation by Haiti, 140.151 Remove the legal obstacles which contribute to the low and decreasing participation of women in the labour market).
6. In the context of this submission, it should be noted that, in addition to the already ratified UN Conventions and regular reporting and communications with the respective UN Committees, in 2024 Kyrgyzstan ratified ILO Convention No. 190 "On the Elimination of Violence and Harassment at Work". Certain steps have been taken to prepare an anti-discrimination law that has not yet been adopted, but is being discussed and elaborated with the participation of civil society.
7. Among the positive examples of the state's work to protect the rights of migrant workers abroad, it should be noted the activities of the representative office of the Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Migration of Kyrgyzstan in Moscow (the office was opened in November, 2022). It is reported that hundreds of Kyrgyzstan citizens are assisted annually in obtaining illegally unpaid wages (publication of the press service of the Ministry of Labor, November 2024). The advisory assistance of the representative office is in high demand: the press service reported more than 5,000 requests only for the period January - August 2023 (September 5, 2023). However, the mandate of the representative office is limited to issues of mediation between migrants and employers, job search, consultations on migration legislation of Russia, and repatriation issues.
8. In September, 2023, the Umai-ene Charity Center was opened in Moscow under the the Ministry of Labor of Kyrgyzstan for migrant women in difficult situation, their children and people with disabilities. It is reported that the facility is designed for 17 people; women and children in need are provided with accommodation, food and medical care.
9. It is not yet possible to assess the impact of the recent opening of representative offices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Kyrgyzstan in the Russian Federation (within the framework of the intergovernmental Agreement on the mutual establishment of representative offices of competent authorities in the field of migration, signed on June 20, 2017 in Moscow.). In November 2024, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Kyrgyzstan announced the opening of representative offices in 4 large cities of the Russian Federation: Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg and Novosibirsk. At the same time, the Russian and Kyrgyzstan sides describes the mandate of the new structures and their subordination in different ways. Thus, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Kyrgyzstan officially [announced](#) the appointment of "representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the Russian cities"

in order to "assist in protecting the rights and interests, taking measures to prevent crimes, prevent illegal actions by our compatriots" (November 5, 2024, the official website of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Kyrgyzstan). In Russia, this news caused a negative reaction in public opinion, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation denied media reports about the powers of these agencies in crime prevention and protection of the rights and interests of citizens of Kyrgyzstan and the work of Kyrgyz policemen in the local departments of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia Federation. The official message of the press service of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs states that officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Kyrgyzstan are accredited in the diplomatic rank of advisers and secretaries as part of the Embassy of Kyrgyzstan in the Russian Federation, and their main function is to assist in matters of resettlement from the Russian Federation to Kyrgyzstan and from Kyrgyzstan to the Russian Federation, while the counteracting crimes is not within their competence (message The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, November 8, 2024).

## **2. Insufficient efforts of the State on protection of Kyrgyzstani migrants abroad from discrimination and violation of their rights**

### **2.1. The scale of labor migration and economic dependence of Kyrgyzstan on migrant labor**

10. Over the past decades, the unfavorable economic situation in Kyrgyzstan has caused conditions for huge labor migration, which has maintained its scale even against the background of the COVID19 pandemic. Thus, as of February 2022, 1 million 118 thousand Kyrgyzstanis worked abroad ([data](#) from the Center for Employment of Citizens Abroad under the Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Migration). Most of them worked in Russia (1 million 63 thousand); significantly less in Kazakhstan (about 30 thousand), in Turkey (about 20 thousand), and other countries.
11. The combination of factors related to Russia's war against Ukraine affected the statistics of labor migration from Kyrgyzstan to Russia, causing an essential return of Kyrgyzstanis to their homeland, but in general, labor migration remains huge even in these conditions. Thus, as of December 2023, the migration flow to Russia amounted to 870,304 Kyrgyz citizens; at the same time, 328.5 thousand have been constantly in migration since 2020, 79% of them are in Russia (the international number indicator – international migrant stock – is an estimated indicator of the total number of migrants present in a given country at a certain moment) – [IOM, situational report for the end of 2023](#).
12. The Kyrgyzstan economy is extremely dependent on the earnings of migrant workers. In 2021, the share of money transfers from the Russian Federation amounted to about \$ 2,677 million (98% of the total volume of money transfers), in 2022 – \$ 2,938.5 million (95%), and in 2023 – \$ 2,531.5 million (94%) ([data](#) from the National Bank of Kyrgyzstan, February 2022; [IOM, situation report for the end of 2023](#) with reference to the National Bank).

### **2.2 Lack of effective response of Kyrgyzstan authorities to mass violations of the rights of Kyrgyzstani migrants working in Russia**

13. In Russia, migrant workers from Kyrgyzstan suffer from numerous violations of their rights, although they have preferences due to Kyrgyzstan's membership in the Eurasian Economic Union. The migrants face ethnic profiling, anti-migrant raids and special police operations, mass expulsions for minor violations, deception by employers, non-payment or partial payment of wages, forced labor, difficulties with renting housing, lack of medical care, lack of real access of their children to school education and preschool institutions, various manifestations of racism and xenophobia.

#### **2.2.1 Seeking small privileges instead of general measures**

14. Russia's migration policy is invariably escalating and harsh, which is in contradiction with the real need and interest of the Russian public and private sector in migrant labor. In this regard, Kyrgyzstan does not persist in systemic improving migration rules for its citizens, preferring to seek only small privileges and temporary measures (such as amnesty for those migrants who have been blacklisted and cannot enter Russia for this reason – as of February 2022, an entry ban was imposed on about 76 thousand people; by the end of 2023 – about 52 thousand people (data from the Center for Employment of Citizens Abroad under the Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Migration)).
15. Another example of cautious criticism, instead of demanding a change in Russia's general policy towards migrants from Kyrgyzstan, is the reaction to stricter rules for medical examinations of

foreigners. At the end of December 2021, an unenforceable requirement for medical examinations of foreigners (including children from 6 years old) every 3 months came into force in Russia (as amended on 12/29/2021, paragraph 18 of Article 5 of Federal Law No. 115-FZ of 07/25/2002 "On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation"). After a short time, the requirement of "every three months" was replaced by "every 12 months", but the change in the law itself managed to provoke [criticism](#) from Kyrgyzstan parliamentarians and a [note](#) from the Kyrgyzstan Embassy to the Russian Foreign Ministry. But the Kyrgyzstan side did not ask for general effective measures (combating xenophobia and police brutality, refusing to deprive migrants of their freedom in the deportation centers under the conditions of a pandemic, easing migration legislation), but for "assistance in opening a separate corridor for citizens of the Eurasian Economic Union member states" to undergo medical examinations, photographing and fingerprinting at the migration center in Sakharovo (the main center for processing migration documents for migrant workers in Moscow and the Moscow region).

### **2.2.2. Poor protection of HIV-positive migrants**

16. According to the Federal Law of the Russian Federation dated March 30, 1995 No. 38-FZ "On preventing the spread of the disease caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV infection) in the Russian Federation", HIV-positive foreign citizens are still criminalized in Russia. If HIV is detected, they receive the status of undesirable for staying in Russia, their residence permits are cancelled, they are prohibited from entering Russia, they may be deported. The exception is, within the framework of the right to protection of family life, HIV-positive migrants with close relatives in Russia.
17. The above-mentioned change in the rules on medical examinations obliges foreigners older than 6 years old staying in Russia to undergo mandatory HIV testing annually. The continuation of repressive measures against HIV-positive migrants will lead to the fact that they will hide their HIV-status and lose their legal migration status. According to the [Republican AIDS Center](#), as of 01.01.2022, 10535 people with HIV were registered in Kyrgyzstan, and 45% of new cases of HIV infection in the country are detected at late stages, when treatment is no longer effective. This shows the insufficiency of government measures to support HIV-positive citizens who are in migration in Russia.

### **2.2.3 Lack of protection measures during the COVID19 pandemic**

18. Insufficient attention to the fate of Kyrgyz citizens in migration was shown by the country's authorities during the COVID19 pandemic, when many countries closed borders and restricted international air traffic. Thousands of migrant workers, including Kyrgyzstan citizens, have been stuck at Russian borders, railway stations and airports for a long time. Thus, near the Russia-Kazakhstan border in the Orenburg region in May 2020, for a long time there were more than 100 Kyrgyzstan citizens who left several Russian cities by car trying to reach Kyrgyzstan through Kazakhstan, but could not cross the border due to quarantine measures, as Kazakhstan did not give permission for the transit of these citizens through its territory.
19. At the end of March 2020, about 200 migrants from Kyrgyzstan, who were stuck at airports in Moscow and Novosibirsk, demanded from Kyrgyzstan authorities to organize their transportation to Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstanis who had been at the Novosibirsk airport for more than two weeks even went on hunger strike protesting against the inaction of the authorities. Some of those who were waiting for the flight were accommodated in hotels, the rest stayed in the transit area of the airport. Deputy Prime Minister Kubatbek Boronov stated that the authorities would take out all those having tickets, but the Kyrgyzstan authorities failed to organize an evacuation flight, and all Kyrgyzstanis waiting for the flight were kicked out of the airport building on April 2. The evacuation took place only on April 22, when 176 Kyrgyz citizens left Novosibirsk.
20. On April 9, 2020, the Kyrgyzstan authorities (First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Nurlan Niyazaliyev) officially [announced](#) their refusal to evacuate Kyrgyzstanis who were abroad at the time of quarantine.
21. The cessation of air traffic and the closure of borders also led to overcrowding in temporary detention centers in Russia, where foreigners, including Kyrgyzstan citizens, were awaiting deportation. Only a month after the closure of the borders, in mid-late April 2020, Kyrgyzstan citizens detained in the temporary detention centers were able to be sent home on organized charter flights. As far as is known, the Kyrgyzstan authorities have not made efforts to prevent migrants from being deprived of their liberty in deportation centers due to the risk of a pandemic.

#### **2.2.4. The risks related to the Russia's war against Ukraine: escalation of xenophobia in Russia**

22. Having overcome the difficulties of the acute phase of the pandemic, in 2022, migrant workers faced new challenges in connection with Russia's military aggression against Ukraine: a catastrophic economic crisis, the risks of martial law and border closures. Russia's military propaganda against the background of the crisis creates conditions for chauvinistic and xenophobic sentiments, which leads to escalation of racist violence against migrant workers from Central Asia.
23. Despite the real need for migrant labor, the Russian authorities have consistently pursued an anti-migrant policy over the past decades; on the background of the war against Ukraine, its scale has grown significantly. The Russian authorities, often represented by the most senior officials, condone manifestations of racism and support xenophobes. Law enforcement agencies that regularly conduct anti-migrant raids are willing to invite activists of nationalist movements, delegating them the right to violence.
24. Recent years, the migration legislation of the Russian Federation has undergone a new phase of tightening. In 2024, Russia legislatively introduced a special regime for the expulsion of migrants, which significantly restricts their rights. In the first half of 2024, the courts decided to expel about 86 thousand foreigners from Russia; 124 thousand administrative cases of violation of migration rules were submitted to the courts – which is close to the data for the whole of 2022 (data from the Judicial Department at the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, "[Important Stories](#)", October 21, 2024).
25. These trends did not cause a proper reaction from the Kyrgyzstan authorities, who are limited to punctual statements about the preferences of migrants from Kyrgyzstan related to the country's membership in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) that should be maintained (for example, the speech of the Prime Minister Akylbek Dzhaparov at a meeting of the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council (Yerevan, October 2024).
26. The very reasonable recommendation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan not to travel to Russia “without good reason”, addressed to Kyrgyzstan citizens on September 5, 2024 (against the background of increased anti-migrant sentiment in Russia, frequent anti-migrant raids by law enforcement agencies, xenophobic speeches by politicians) is in fact impossible to be implemented, since hundreds of thousands of Kyrgyzstanis are constantly on the territory of the Russian Federation, unable to earn sufficient money at home.

#### **2.2.5. Serious violation of migrant children's rights in the context of the war**

27. Over the past decades, migrant children in Russia have been restricted in their right to education (the authorities put obstacles in school admission, did not create special measures for integration, put migrant children into special classes for the retarded).
28. In 2024, this trend took legislative forms: a bill is being prepared to ban the admission of migrant children to school without proving their competence in the Russian language and legal status. The bill was [announced](#) by the chairman of the lower house of the State Duma, Alexander Volodin; the State Duma Control Committee submitted a draft resolution of the State Duma to the Prime Minister "on the implementation of systemic measures to combat illegal migration" (November 18, 2024, No.3.22-5/403).
29. Such initiatives grossly violate not only the Law on Education of the Russian Federation, but also the UN Convention on the rights of the child. They need a clear and decisive reaction from the Kyrgyz authorities and must be stopped.
30. Migrant children become hostages in the situation when anti-migrant sentiments are articulated by both the authorities and nationalist activists on the ground and result in open violence, hate speech, and harassment.

A [typical example](#) from the Novosibirsk region, 2024: a Kyrgyz child, a 2nd grade student, was bullied by classmates on the ground of his ethnicity. The conflict of children escalated into aggression of Russian parents against Kyrgyz parents; activists of the ultra-nationalist organization "Russian Community" intervened on the side of the Russian parents. Despite the fact that local residents supported the Kyrgyz family, and the police refused to prosecute the Kyrgyzstanis, a criminal case was opened against them only because the fact that the activists of the "Russian Community" published a video message and tagged the accounts of the Prosecutor General's Office and the head of the Investigative Committee, Alexander Bastrykin, who is known for anti-migrant and radically xenophobic views. He reacted immediately and demanded to open a case. The local prosecutor's office finally closed the case, but the family was forced to leave the village.

### 2.2.6. Coercion to serve in the Russian army and private military companies in relation to the Russian citizenship

31. The issue of mercenary activity of citizens of Kyrgyzstan in the Russian army and private military companies should be considered in connection with the problem of citizenship. In recent decades, hundreds of thousands of Kyrgyzstan citizens have acquired Russian citizenship. The main reason for this is the intention to avoid the following Russian migration rules that are practically impossible for implementation and are constantly changing for bad, not to pay for bureaucratic procedures, not to be victims of the arbitrariness of the police and other law enforcement agencies. Another reason for the mass acquisition of Russian citizenship is the intention to escape discrimination and persecution in Kyrgyzstan, therefore representatives of ethnic minorities (in particular, Uzbeks from the south of the country), LGBTI+ and other groups often see naturalization in the Russian Federation as a de facto form of refugee status. However, after Russia's invasion to Ukraine, Russian citizenship not only does not create additional protection for naturalized citizens – recent migrant workers, but also promises them the risk of physical extermination.
32. Upon receiving Russian citizenship, newly naturalized citizens of the Russian Federation are not required to renounce Kyrgyzstan citizenship, that's why so many people have two passports. The authorities of both states consider such people as citizens of their country. Accordingly, new citizens of the Russian Federation have an obligation to serve in the Russian army, even if they have already served in their country of origin (Russia and Kyrgyzstan do not have a special agreement on accounting for service).
33. After the outbreak of the full-scale war in February 2022, Russian citizenship became a means of coercion to participate in the war against Ukraine. There is evidence that representatives of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation [threatened](#) natives of Central Asia having Russian citizenship, both young and older than military age, to take away their acquired citizenship in case of evasion from service.
34. At the beginning of 2023, [cases of bans](#) on leaving the Russian Federation for natives of Kyrgyzstan having Russian passports became known. They were informed about being on the mobilization lists as a reason for the ban on leaving the territory of Russia.
35. Those who were just planning to obtain Russian citizenship were also lured into the army. Back in December 2021, the President of Russia submitted to the State Duma a [bill](#) that simplifies obtaining Russian citizenship for military personnel under contract in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. Even before the official adoption of the law (September 2022), recruiters [promised](#) migrants to give them the Russian citizenship within three months after signing the contract. Representatives of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation [placed advertisements](#) in Russia and Central Asian countries, promising salaries of up to 200 000 rubles per month (almost \$3,000). The private military company Wagner also conducted an advertising [campaign](#) on social networks in Central Asia.
36. Not only recent citizens of the Russian Federation are forced to serve in the Russian army, but also migrants serving sentences in Russian prisons, including through ill-treatment and torture. There are evidence from imprisoned citizens of Central Asian countries that they are being persuaded to renounce their citizenship, apply for Russian citizenship and sign a contract with the Russian army (appeal of prisoners from a colony near Moscow, media publication "[Current Time](#)", October 14, 2024).
37. After the mobilization was announced (autumn 2022), media reports appeared that migrants working in the Russian Federation, including of Kyrgyzstan origin, received summonses, despite the fact that they did not have Russian citizenship. In Moscow, the authorities have [opened](#) a recruitment center on the premises of the Sakharovo migrants' documentation center.
38. High-ranking Russian officials often call for mobilizing migrants to the army as a priority; the racist background of such statements is obvious, as well as the presumption that "proper" citizens of the Russian Federation are more "valuable". At the same time, there is often no distinction between naturalized citizens of the Russian Federation and migrants having foreign citizenship. Sending migrants and new citizens to war, from the point of view of nationalist actors, is a means of reducing migration. For example, the head of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, Alexander Bastrykin, lobbies to limit the number of migrants, often calling already naturalized citizens of the Russian Federation "migrants". At the legal forum in St. Petersburg (summer 2024), Bastrykin [said](#) that thanks to the efforts of his department, about 10 thousand naturalized citizens joined the Russian army, while those who did not want to serve in the army left Russia.

39. The Kyrgyzstan authorities warned citizens of the country against mercenary activities and participation in armed conflicts abroad, including in Russia's war against Ukraine, and reminded them of criminal liability for such actions (cf. The Appeal of the Embassy of Kyrgyzstan in the Russian Federation to compatriots, September 21, 2022). There are few examples of criminal prosecution of Kyrgyzstan citizens for mercenary activities, however, there is a typical case of Askar K., sentenced to 7 years in prison, then released from custody for probation supervision. He violated it and left again to fight on the side of Russia. Askar K. received great support from the Russian authorities and propaganda media (thus, the official representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Maria Zakharova, stated that the issue of granting him Russian citizenship was being considered; the official representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, Irina Volk, promised to grant him temporary asylum).

### **2.2.7. The risk of statelessness for Kyrgyzstanis having Russian passports**

40. It is not possible to estimate the number of Kyrgyzstan natives who have only one, Russian citizenship. They are under the risk of statelessness in the event of their refusal to participate in military aggression against Ukraine. In recent years, amendments have been made to the legislation of the Russian Federation establishing such grounds for deprivation of citizenship as "non-registration for military service", "desertion", "voluntary surrender", "discrediting the army". These repressive norms are directed against anti-war-minded naturalized citizens and aim, on the one hand, to drive recent migrants, and now Russian citizens, into the Russian army, and on the other hand, to suppress all dissent and prevent anti-war protest.
41. Besides, recent amendments to the Law on Citizenship of the Russian Federation (2023) have significantly expanded the grounds for stripping of acquired Russian citizenship. Among them, there are sentences under 64 articles of the Criminal Code; some unspecified "actions that pose a threat to national security" – in existing formulations, the new law provides the widest field for arbitrariness and illegal decisions.
42. In the first six months after the new version of the Law on Citizenship of the Russian Federation is in force, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia terminated the acquired Russian citizenship of 398 people because of the crimes they committed (official [response](#) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to a request from TASS, April 2024). In the period from January to July 2024, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia deprived about 1000 people of citizenship for the same reason (a [statement](#) of an official representative Ministry of Internal Affairs, July 31, 2024).

### **2.2.8. The risk to die at the war**

43. According to open data, at least 51 Kyrgyzstan natives died in Ukraine, 25 of them definitely were Kyrgyzstan citizens ([Azattyk and Mediazona investigation](#), October 30, 2024). These data cannot be considered exhaustive, and the actual death toll may be much higher.
44. As far as can be learned from open sources, the Kyrgyzstan authorities do not have full information about the citizens of the country involved in the war against Ukraine, including those who died at the war.

## **3. Insufficient efforts of the State in creating condition for effective employment in Kyrgyzstan and reduce dependance of the economy on labour migration**

45. The cessation of mass labor migration of Kyrgyzstanis and the development of the domestic labor market was one of the points of the election campaign of the current President of Kyrgyzstan (2021). Over the past years, certain positive developments have taken place, but the situation has not changed dramatically yet. At the same time, Russia's war against Ukraine provoked not only the return of a significant number of migrant workers to Kyrgyzstan, but also, according to some analysts, the growth of the national economy (in particular, international business is developing other locations, including Kyrgyzstan, due to sanctions against Russia). In September 2024, the press secretary of the Presidential Administration of the Kyrgyz Republic appealed to compatriots working abroad to return to the country and promised jobs with decent wages.

### **3.1 Insufficient protection of the rights of migrant women working abroad and insufficient measures to support the employment of women in Kyrgyzstan**

46. The level of feminization of labor migration from Kyrgyzstan is quite high: according to various sources, from 45% to 60% of the migration flow are women. Unlike migrants from other Central Asian countries, Kyrgyzstani women more often go to work independently, with friends or relatives and acquaintances, rather than following their husband or as part of a family. Migration opens up opportunities for the emancipation of many women, playing a significant role in their social advancement and growth. But this is not always a free choice and a desire for emancipation: women and girls often sacrifice their interests for the sake of the family (they go to migration to pay off family debts or earn money for the existence of a family in Kyrgyzstan).
47. In addition to the usual hardships of migration faced by all migrant workers, regardless of gender, women experience specific difficulties: increased risks of gender-based violence, forced labor and various forms of exploitation; specific problems related to the health of mothers, newborns and children (frequent pregnancies and childbirth in migration, against the background of low literacy in the field of reproductive health and contraception, and taboo topics of sexual education; a high proportion of migrant women (70%) in maternal mortality statistics in Kyrgyzstan (data from the Ministry of Health, Head of the Department of Organization of Medical Care and Drug Policy, speech in Parliament, September 2023); abortions in illegal clinics; abandonment of newborns in maternity hospitals); an increase in the incidence of tuberculosis and HIV among women in the context of migration (sexual contact has become the main method of transmission of the virus – more than 70% of cases (doubled since 2008 — [data](#) from the Republican AIDS Center of the Ministry of Health of Kyrgyzstan, 2019); Stigmatization of migrant women due to the patriarchal attitudes of Kyrgyz society.
48. The full-fledged employment of women within the country is hampered, among other things, by the existence of legislative prohibitions on women's work (the so-called list of prohibited professions). Since 2017, civil society has been fighting for the abolition of such lists in the region with the advocacy campaign #AllJobs4AllWomen; human rights defenders, trade unions and government agencies such as the Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Migration have conducted a constructive dialogue in recent years and prepared proposals to improve the situation. The UN CEDAW made [recommendations](#) on the revision of the list of prohibited professions and the amendment of the Labor Code (80<sup>th</sup> session, 2021).
49. Only in 2024, a draft of a new Labor Code was submitted for consideration of the Parliament. It is planned to revise the list of 446 prohibited professions and leave the temporary restrictions only for pregnant women and nursing mothers. At the time of submission of this report, the draft was adopted by the Parliament in the first reading (October 2024); its final form has not yet been presented to the public.

## **4. Recommendations**

- Adopt comprehensive antidiscrimination legislation.
- Take effective legislative and practical measures to protect the rights of migrant workers abroad, paying special attention to ensuring the right of children to education without discrimination. In particular, counteract the adoption of laws in Russia that violate the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and restrict access to schooling for migrant children.
- Take effective measures to prevent the participation of Kyrgyzstan citizens in armed conflicts abroad, in particular, in Russia's war against Ukraine.
- Create better conditions for non-discriminative employment of women in Kyrgyzstan, in particular:
  - = Repeal all professional bans for women. and ensure gender equality in employment, at the same time providing temporary protective measures for pregnant and lactating women workers;
  - = Open education and job opportunities for women who want to be employed on previously forbidden jobs, promote gender equality in employment through wide information campaigns.