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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Assessment of the migration processes on the example of Kazakhstan

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Abstract

Today's migration is a rather complex and controversial process. Having a number of advantages and positive results for the development of the receiving and sending countries, it also leads to negative consequences. The more a country's population is involved in migration processes, the more acutely its consequences manifest. The situation is also aggravated by the increasing economic and political crises, which negatively affect the ability of third countries to maintain internal stability. The issue does not exclude the Central Asian region in the context of the intensification of local armed conflicts in adjacent territories and current geopolitical aspects. The study purpose is to assess migration processes and their impact on the Republic of Kazakhstan as the one of the 'host' countries in Central Asia. A chronology of key economic events regarding strategic opportunities in the migration processes was carried out. Taking into account the current regional and global challenges, it has been established that the current trends in migration

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processes have a positive effect on the development of the labor market as an important component of the national economy, contributing to an increase in the welfare of the country. At the same time, the policy of Kazakhstan is also trying to pursue a pragmatic immigration policy to prevent the negative impact of immigrants on the local population.

KEYWORDS
Central Asia, host country, labor market, migration, national economy

JEL CLASSIFICATION
J01, R21

1 | INTRODUCTION

Migration is now a major political issue related to human rights, development, and geopolitics at the national, regional, and international levels. Historically, it has been recognized that migration and displacement occur in the context of social, political, and economic change. In this context, migration is understood as an ancient and natural way of human survival, a response to hunger, deprivation, persecution, war, and natural disasters (Nyangweso & Olupona, 2019). In addition, other reasons of migration are welfare and development disparities between different regions (Anghelache et al., 2017). The main reasons for migration of the vast majority of international migrants are work, family, and study, whereas other people leave their homes for life and food safety reasons, as well as compelling and sometimes tragic circumstances, such as conflict, persecution, or disaster (International Organization for Migration, 2019). Besides, there are beneficial reasons for migration related to better employment opportunities, social support, access to healthcare, and other benefits (Baldwin-Edwards et al., 2019). Wanner (2019) provided a more comprehensive list of reasons for modern migration in their study, such as professional, political, taxation, social network in a country of destination, to gain new experience, lifestyle, to accompany family, to start a family, educational, or study reasons.

Climate change is another reason for migration detected in climate vulnerable areas of the world (Jacobson et al., 2019). Migration impacts both receiving (host) and sending (source) countries and regions. Despite some positive aspects for receiving country on economic development, gross domestic product (GDP), demography, employment rate, labor productivity, new knowledge, skills and labor, and cultural diversity, migration adversely affects public spending, public service delivery, and the labor market (Bhagat, 2018; Cuevas et al., 2019; Gheasi & Nijkamp, 2017; Jaumotte et al., 2016; Kahanec & Pytliková, 2017; Manole et al., 2017; Mubangizi & Mwesigwa, 2018). In a sending country or region, migration creates gaps such as brain drain, skills shortages, employment problems, and a reduced working-age population (White, 2018; Zaiceva & Zimmermann, 2016). At the same time, sending countries/regions also benefit from return migration, remittances, information, and innovations that influence households and the population. Thus, generally migration is no longer only a one-way movement, but a process that binds the two countries or regions together (Bhagat, 2018; Veresha, 2016). Of course, this does not apply to the migration that was caused by hostilities in neighboring states. Their further stay depends on the capabilities of the host country, as well as on the situation in their homeland.

At the present stage, issues related to the study of migration processes and their impacts are very relevant. As of 2019, according to the Migration Data Portal (2020), the number of international migrants was 272 million, which is 14 million more than the statistics of 2017. The dominant group of migrants is people of working age (20–64 years) that make up 75% of the total number of migrants. The most migrants live in Asia (31%), followed by Europe (30%)

and North and South America (26%), while the least live in Africa (10%) and Oceania (3%). Thus, one of the most important problems of world politics and economics is international migration. There are a number of studies examining the impact of international and internal migration on host countries and regions. Jaumotte et al. (2016) found that recipient countries can reap long-term benefits from migration, such as an increase in GDP per capita. Migration also tends to have an indirect effect on the aggregate productivity of the host country's economy; besides, the already existing skill set of the native population is complemented by competence of both high- and low-skilled migrants.

It is important to note that with the end of the USSR, new sovereign states appeared in the world community and migration flows began. Thus, the Russian Federation, to a greater extent, and the Republic of Kazakhstan, to a lesser extent, have become the main host countries among other sovereign states such as Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine, which are donors of labor migrants. According to the research of Bilan and Strielkowski (2016), migration has a net positive effect on the United States, Visegrad group countries, and post-Soviet countries with economies in transition (as also stated in Borjas' framework). Sadovskaya (2016) studied the issues of international migration in Kazakhstan during the period of sovereignty. The input of labor migrants in the development of country's economy and competitiveness was indicated as one of the positive outcomes of migration. On the contrary, in the Russian Federation, the critical role of labor migrants in the labor market and production was identified according to a study by Vasilyeva (2017).

A study by Gheasi and Nijkamp (2017) found a positive and statistically significant relationship between international migration and foreign direct investment within developing countries. Investigating correlation between GDP per capita and the number of migrants in 28 EU countries, Manole et al. (2017) found a significant positive impact on economic development of a receiving country. One of the surveys (Kahanec & Pytliková, 2017) reveals that migration flows from Eastern EU member countries lead to a positive impact on GDP, GDP per capita, and the employment rate of Western Europe countries, and at the same time, has a negative effect on output per worker. On the contrary, migration from Eastern Partnership states has negative effect on GDP, GDP per capita, employment rate, and capital stock of receiving countries, but a positive impact on their capital-to-labor ratio. The employer will not suffer much from the resulting effect, who will have a choice of whom to hire and thereby optimize their costs. In some cases, as in Turkey, from the factor of migration and the availability of skilled labor, economic fitness increases, which has a positive effect on overall labor productivity, especially in industry (Çınar et al., 2022).

A characteristic feature of labor migration in sovereign states of the post-Soviet space, both in the sending and receiving states, is migration with an irregular status or illegal migration. On the one hand, labor migrants are important for developing countries (Russian Federation, Republic of Kazakhstan), since they have a positive effect on labor shortages in many sectors of the economy. On the other hand, illegal migration and informal employment among migrants lead to significant underpayment of taxes (Karabchuk & Salnikova, 2017; Tsindeliani & Mikheeva, 2022). Bhagat (2018) pointed out that migrants bring knowledge, skills, and labor to host countries, and fill gaps in demand and supply of the host country's labor market. Due to the increase in service consumers, migration has a negative effect on public service delivery in receiving countries (Mubangizi & Mwesigwa, 2018).

Migration affects the skill composition of the workforce and can create changes in the wage structure among native workers, since inflow of migrants tends to reduce the wages of native workers with competence similar to migrants' (Edo, 2019). Gabszewicz and Zanaj (2019) found that migration improves the welfare of the host country under the condition of flexible wages (this type of wage always adapts to new conditions in the labor market after migration). The host country also fills open vacancies with migrants, but only provided that there is no unemployment in the country. Thus, when economic conditions are favorable, countries with a high level of economic development are willing to accept migrants from poorer regions. On the contrary, during an economic recession, when there is unemployment, even the developed countries of the world do not want to accept migrants, due to the fact that they fill vacancies that are no longer available to indigenous people.

The research of Tolametova (2019) found that countries accepting foreign labor use it as an important factor in the development of production, especially industries that are not attractive enough for local workers. An increase of undeclared income of labor migrants and an increase in competition at the nonqualified labor market, resulting in a

drop in wages for local workers in the receiving country, were indicated as negative effects of migration (Tolametova, 2019). The study of Biavaschi et al. (2020) revealed that most receiving countries benefit from the skill bias in migration. Another positive impact detected by the survey is a reduction in differential between high- and low-skilled workers in receiving countries.

Among the states of the post-Soviet space, the Republic of Kazakhstan is the country with the most stable political and social system. For example, in the countries of Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and the Russian Federation, there are ethnic conflicts that negatively impact the economic and political life of independent states. Some conflicts in post-Soviet countries, such as the Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia are still in a situation of political and legal uncertainty, which may lead to the further development of intercultural and interstate clashes. A study by Kappassova (2018), dedicated to the migration policy of the regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan, showed that this is a country with a multinational population. The proportion of Kazakhs is 63.1% of the population, the proportion of Russians is 23.7% (tending to decrease), and the proportion of other populations is 13.2%. At the same time, the current situation in the state is characterized by a low level of ethnic tension. The study by Zhanbossinova et al. (2019) devoted to socio-cultural adaptation of repatriates in East Kazakhstan revealed that as a result of relocation to homeland, repatriates face problems such as adaptation, employment, interaction with local community, and self-awareness. At the same time, the Russian-speaking population still continues to decline, even in the regions bordering Russia, for example, in gas and oil-bearing Western Kazakhstan (Atyrau, Aktobe, and West Kazakhstan regions). Nowadays, the combined effect of the influx of the Kazakh population as a result of deliberate state policy and at the same time, the departure, aging, and high natural decrease of Russians has led to the considerable increase of cross-border ethnic contrast (Kolosov & Sebentsov, 2020). According to the results of studies based on the work of the Bureau of National Statistics, the share of the population migration balance for 2020 turned out to be negative and amounted to 17,700 people (Committee on Statistics of the Ministry of the National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020).

Nevertheless, despite the trends of the last 15 years, the most shocking for the migration situation for Kazakhstan was the war in Ukraine, or a special military operation in the Russian interpretation. Due to stubborn hostilities and the inability to complete the military campaign as soon as possible, partial mobilization was announced in Russia from September 21. However, a negative attitude towards this event was expressed among a part of the population, mainly among young people, and as a result, many of them urgently began to leave the country (Oxford Analytica, 2022). Since the geography of relocation significantly narrowed under the visa regime with the EU, the main migration flows were directed towards Georgia and Kazakhstan (Vorobeva, 2022). As for Kazakhstan, according to the Committee on Migration of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, since September 21, 837,000 Russians have arrived in the country and 780,000 have left. There are 298,000 Russians in the country, of which 30,000 of them work (Isaev, 2022). However, due to the transience of mobilization, the excitement has subsided and it can also be noted that every year about 245,000 Russians are in Kazakhstan for various reasons. Over the past year, approximately 167,000 Kazakhstanis worked in the Russian Federation (Isaev, 2022). Further dynamics will depend on the course of political events and the emerging economic situation.

As migration processes tend to increase, it will be interesting to assess the scale of the changes against the background of demographic data associated with migration. Thus, it will be possible to better understand the development of the migration environment and identify promising directions of the migration policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan to strengthen inter-ethnic relations within the framework of the national and civil unity of the population. This study has the following objectives:

- Investigating current and retrospective situation with international and inner migration processes in the Republic of Kazakhstan;
- Defining the effect of international and internal migration on the receiving country's economy and labor market.

This paper is organized as follows. The introduction provides the description and definition of migration as a notion together with the characteristics thereof and presents an overview of literature on migration and its

impact on various socio-economic aspects of sending and host countries at different levels; the section also defines the actual questions and objectives of the study. The materials and methods section contains information on data and sources, as well as details on methods and calculations used to analyze the data collected to achieve the objectives of the survey. This section also contains reference to ethical issues and limitations of the study. The results section provides a detailed description of the current and retrospective situation with international and inner migration processes in Kazakhstan, together with analysis of various factors influencing and accompanying migration. The discussion section presents and compares the results obtained in course of the study with findings of previous surveys. The conclusions section briefly describes the main results and implications of the research, together with recommendations, perspectives for further research, and applications of the study results.

2 | MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study focuses on the market space of the Republic of Kazakhstan, for a systematic assessment, for which it was decided to use open-source data from the Statistics Committee of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan (n.d.), World Migration Report 2020 of the International Organization for Migration (2019) and International Organization for Migration 2019 (United Nations, 2019) for the period from 1995 to 2019 to provide an assessment of international and internal migration processes. Moreover, the same data from the Statistics Committee for Kazakhstan make it possible to determine the main demographic indicators, since migration flows directly affect the demographic situation. Accounting for data from the International Organization for Migration indicates that Kazakhstan is actively cooperating with the United Nations (UN) institutions on issues of migration and other aspects in the field of population and humanitarian policy. Reports highlight the surge in internal displacement due to disasters, conflict, and violence at a time when global mobility is coming to a halt due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

The basis for the formation of population migration indicators is the movement of people (migrants) across the borders of certain regions with a change of residence. The number of persons arriving and departing is determined as a result of processing the receipts from the migration police of the internal affairs bodies, coupons for statistical registration of arrivals and departures, which are compiled during registration of the population at the place of residence. The authors of the study also considered the fact that in the current statistical records from national statistical services and reports from relevant international organizations under the UN (IOM, ILO), the number of arrivals and departures is recorded and either a positive or negative balance of migration is formed by the difference. Accounting for these trends enable the formation of preliminary forecasts of how these processes can have one or another impact on the labor market and the internal situation in the country as a whole.

Limitations of the study may relate to the reliability and relevance of statistical indicators. At the time of the study, indicators up to and including 2020 were taken into account, since some relevant data for 2021 and 2022 have not yet been published. As a result, the constraints may also include the difficulty of further forecasting the dynamics of the labor market, since, despite the actions taken by the Kazakh leadership, migration flows may increase due to unpredictable activities related to the political situation in the region. This can be either an influx of refugees from Kyrgyzstan due to the continuation of border conflicts with Tajikistan, or new waves of Russians leaving as a result of the continued mobilization in the Russian army to participate in the war on the territory of Ukraine. An additional limitation could be a statistical error of data, as well as historical inconsistencies in the survey of residents of Kazakhstan regarding their origin, namely the descendants of migrants who ended up in the country during the Soviet era against their will.

The study design is based on the chronology of key events and includes two stages:

Stage 1 – an overview of the current and retrospective situation in the framework of a brief discussion of key migration processes based on a spectrum of data, information, and analysis of international organizations

(International Organization for Migration, 2019; United Nations, 2019) and analysts (Kappassova, 2018; Shaukenova et al., 2017). At the same time, the following number of indicators on the topic of state management of migration was taken into account, namely:

- Law supremacy – the ability to regulate migration policy solely within the framework of the law;
- State migration policy consistency;
- Cooperation/partnership – effective interaction between migration authorities, as well as establishing communication between the migrant, state, and the relevant international agencies;
- Social and economic well-being of migrants;
- Crisis/natural disaster management – establishing operational communication and regulation of the issue in case of emergency;
- Integration of migrants to establish a balance in society – availability of extensive social programs for migrants (affordable language learning, benefits for children of migrants for learning opportunities, etc.).

At this stage, the focus of this study is on migration, the labor market, and governance of migrants.

Stage 2 – assessment of migration processes to take into account the dynamics of migration processes in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The quantitative indicators of national (Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2016) and international statistics were used (Migration Data Portal, 2020; United Nations, 2019). Attention was paid to specific migration issues such as the number of migrants arriving and leaving; the age structure of migrants; share of migrants in the total population; migrants by country of origin; ethnic composition of the population; the number of internal migrants by region.

This allows determining the consequences of migration in the context of the labor market for the Republic of Kazakhstan as a host country. Nevertheless, the material did not take into account the financial situation of migrants, since in each case this is individual and could not be generalized due to different social status and labor status.

Frequently encountered concepts in the study are based on a methodological explanation:

- 'Immigrant' refers to migrants of foreign origin living in the country;
- 'Emigrant' refers to people who were born in the country, but who during the analyzed period (1995–2019) lived outside the country of their birth;
- Balance of migration is defined as the difference between the absolute indicators of immigration and emigration. If the number of emigrants exceeds the number of immigrants, the migration balance is negative and reflects the migration outflow of the population.

$$S_m = P - V.$$

where:

S_m is the migration balance;

P is the number of immigrants;

V is the number of emigrants.

The main indicators of Kazakhstan Republic's population migration were calculated in accordance with the Order of the Committee on Statistics of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan 'On approval of "Methodology for calculating the main indicators of population migration"' (2016). As a result of the study, updated statistics on migration and migrants were obtained.

3 | RESULTS

According to the World Migration Report (International Organization for Migration, 2019) the number of international migrants is over 3.5% of the world's population and two-thirds of them are labor migrants. Kazakhstan took 8th place in the top 20 Asian migrant countries. In 2019, the population of the Republic of Kazakhstan was 18,395,500 people and the total aggregate population for the period 1995–2019 was 98,771,200 people. The country profile of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the context of the current and retrospective dynamics of the population and international migration is presented in Table 1.

As can be seen from Table 1, during the analyzed period, the largest increase in international migrants was observed in 2019 and amounted to 3,705,600 people, and the smallest was in 2000, of 2,874,2000 people; this year is also marked by the smallest number of the total population (14,900,000 people). It has been established that the dominant age group of migrants is the group of able-bodied workers (20–64 years). In addition, over the analyzed period, the number of international migrants slightly increased in proportion of the total population by 14.8% (19.4% in 1995 versus 20.1% in 2019), which indicates the relative and stable financial attractiveness of this territory in the context of the material well-being of migrants. Here it should be noted that the category of international migrants includes persons who arrive from abroad and stay in the country (permanently or seasonally), or use the territory of Kazakhstan as a transit corridor to other countries. This is very important to understand in the context of the difference from internal migrants, who annually participate in Kazakhstan for more than a million people, 88% in intra-regional and 12% in inter-regional migration (IOM, 2019).

As in other post-Soviet republics, Kazakhstan experiences all main types of migration movements, namely, international, domestic, permanent, temporary, legal, unregulated, illegal, voluntary, compelled, etc.

TABLE 1 Country profile of Kazakhstan (1995–2019).

Definitions	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019
Number of people	16,779,000	14,900,000	15,074,700	16,204,600	17,417,400	18,395,500
International migrants	3,252,000	2,874,200	3,103,000	3,334,900	3,546,100	3,705,600
International migrants as a share of total population (percentage)	19.4	19.3	20.5	20.6	20.3	20.1
International migrants by age group in years (percentage):	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019
0–19	14.2	13.1	13.7	13.1	12.1	11.7
20–64	70.4	71.1	69.7	70.3	71.4	72.4
65+	15.4	15.8	16.6	16.6	16.5	15.6
Migrants originating from the same SDG region (percentage)	5.6	6.9	8.2	9.3	9.3	9.3

Calculated according to the 'Methodology for calculating the main indicators of population migration' based on UNDESA (United Nations, 2019).

The flow of labor emigration makes up three main groups of Kazakhstanis[10]. The first group includes people leaving for permanent residence. The second group includes citizens traveling in search of temporary work abroad, generally, on a contractual basis, who after the expiration of the contract are obliged to return home (return migration, seasonal migrants). The third group includes people traveling abroad by private invitation, for education or internship, for example.

In terms of methodology, international migration has its own characteristics. One of them is that the main role in the process of migration is labor migration. In international movements of people, the determinant of labor is fundamental in the modern labor market. In turn, international migration is becoming a typical phenomenon in the socio-economic life of society. This process is constantly evolving. Workers from many countries are involved in global migration. Therefore, along with the capital market, goods, and technologies, an international labor market appeared, the basis of which is the process of labor migration. It is also possible to single out such factors that influence the effect of migration on societies, such as the significant increase in illegal migration and the share of highly qualified specialists in migrant flows.

The causes of labor migration are factors of both an economic and non-economic nature. The causal mechanism of labor migration is shown in Figure 1:

According to the labor migration mechanism shown in Figure 1, the excessive availability of labor in the labor market develops a situation in which there is an increase in the unemployment rate and, accordingly, a decrease in the level of wages, which entails an outflow of migrants from this market and, accordingly, the geographical territory. On the contrary, in a situation where the labor market has a low level of unemployment, which is characterized by the presence of open vacancies, arriving migrants can fill this niche in the country's market and receive a higher level of wages than in the country of origin.

Thus, the labor market under consideration through the prism of the national economy in the range of supply and demand, shows that within the framework of the equilibrium mechanism, the needs of all interacting participants (private/public sector, labor resources, households) are satisfied, thereby making this territory attractive both for international migrants and for internal movements. As a result, in two considered situations, migration almost always has a negative impact on the labor market of the country of origin – illegal employment, the creation of an unemployment deficit, the outflow of labor resources – while the host countries receive economic benefits for the welfare of the country to a greater extent.

The regulation of migration processes is carried out at the level of state policy and is a special sphere of social policy that regulates the following complexes: administrative–legal, organizational–economic, and informational. At the same time, state regulation of migration should take into account the processes and emerging trends of both internal and international migration. The mechanism of state regulation of migration is shown in Figure 2.

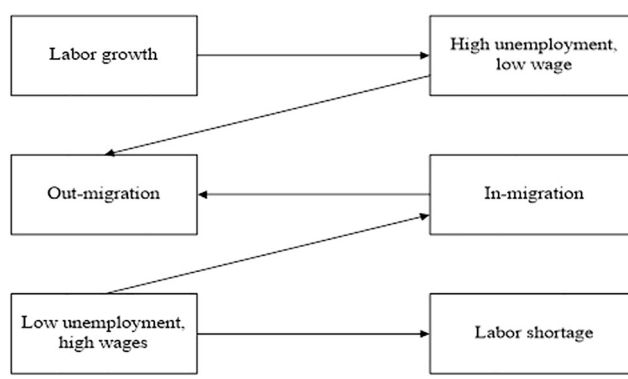

FIGURE 1 The causal mechanism of labor migration.

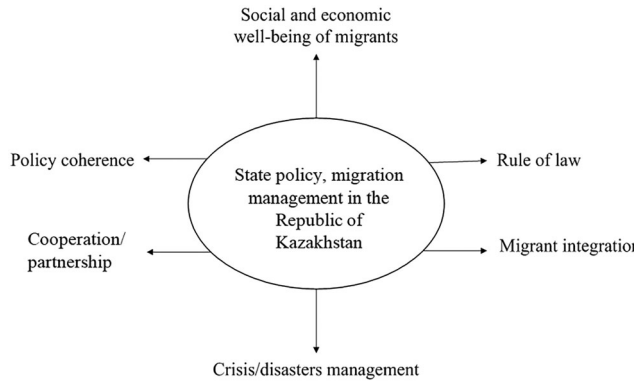

FIGURE 2 State management of migration in the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020.

The current state policy of migration management in the Republic of Kazakhstan identifies six areas (International Organization for Migration, 2019): the rule of law; policy consistency; cooperation/partnership; social and economic well-being of migrants; crisis/disaster management; integration of migrants. In turn, each of the directions has its own characteristics. Thus, from the point of view of the rule of law, Kazakh immigrants are guaranteed access to preschool, primary, and secondary education in public educational institutions. Then, local permanent immigrants and stateless persons have the right to free medical care in case of acute diseases listed by the Government, unless otherwise provided by international agreements (IOM, 2018). Then, migrants living in Kazakhstan are provided with favorable conditions for obtaining a long-term residence permit. Under the Migration Act 2011, a family reunification procedure is guaranteed for permanent residents and immigrants who own a business in the area. It should also be taken into account that since 2014, state-funded social services are available to repatriated Kazakhs, stateless persons, and foreign citizens who are victims of human trafficking in the country.

Further development potential includes accessibility of healthcare services within the framework of illegal migration and improvement of legislation in the field of social security for migrant workers to receive social benefits.

As for the realities of policy coherence, it has been declared that an availability of state structures responsible for the development and implementation of migration policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan and the existence of a valid legal framework for migration, based on the 2011 law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on migration, which regulates immigration and defines the categories of migrants, as well as establishes specific immigration procedures. There are departments in the country that keep records of data on migrants and the migration situation in general: Committee on Statistics, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Social Protection.

Further development potential includes strengthening policy coherence between different government bodies within the framework of national legislation regulating the mechanism of migration processes, and further development of national mechanisms for the protection of migrants' rights.

As for the cooperation/partnership being established, Kazakhstan is actively represented here at international platforms. Thus, Kazakhstan is a member of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) and two regional consultative processes: Almaty and Budapest, as well as a member of the International Organization of Migration (IOM). Moreover, Kazakhstan is a member of the Eurasian Economic Union, which gives it access to the common labor market of the Russian Federation, Belarus, Kyrgyz Republic, and Armenia; and is a party to agreements: 'Labor migration in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States' and 'Labor activity and social protection of labor migrants in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.'

Further development potential includes involving and increasing the participation of business and civil society organizations in the migration policy development. Nevertheless, Kazakhstani authorities can take a step towards

strengthening their migration policy in line with international norms, for example, by ratifying the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and ratification of the International Labor Organization (ILO) Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 or the ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975.

Speaking about social and economic well-being of migrants, here the authorities are trying to guarantee the protection of the rights and freedoms of migrant workers in accordance with the constitution, laws, and international agreements. The state regulates labor immigration by sectors of the economy and regions based on the demand and supply of local administrations. Moreover, the Republic of Kazakhstan is a party to a number of international conventions on the recognition of foreign academic degrees.

According to the mentioned legal-grounding factors, further development potential includes establishment of a quota for admission to universities of ethnic Kazakh students who are not citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan and developing measures to promote ethical recruitment of migrants.

Of course, situations are different, and migrants should also be guided by the help of the authorities in cases of crisis or emergency situations. So, according to crisis/disaster management, the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan grants the right to humanitarian assistance and access to emergency services to all immigrants, regardless of their legal status. Also, under the Committee for Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, there is a Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction in cooperation with the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic. In the event of a crisis or natural disaster, the Kazakh government is obliged to provide assistance in the evacuation of its citizens. Further development potential includes a strategy upgrading for the return of emigrants who left the country during the crisis.

Considering migrants' integration policy, it is represented both by support from within (relevant departments/committees) and in project activities from outside trained by specialists from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). This is about conducting trainings with the Border Guard Service of the Republic of Kazakhstan on border management – EU and OSCE programs. Then, within the framework of national protection, activities are carried out by the Interdepartmental Committee on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in tandem with the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Moreover, it should be noted that Kazakhstan has a state repatriation program for ethnic Kazakhs (oralmans) living abroad, which includes the provision of free adaptation and integration services: free accommodation, language lessons, and assistance in finding a job. Further development potential includes expanding digitalization within the framework of the availability of information on various types of visas and permits for migrants.

To assess the economic consequences of migration on the national economy in the context of the labor market, an analysis of quantitative indicators was carried out according to the data on international and internal migration of the Committee on Statistics of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

International migration: for the period 1995–2018 from the Republic of Kazakhstan, an average of 102,684 people emigrated, and 43,670 people immigrated. Besides, there was an increase in the negative balance of migration in the country, except for in 2005 and 2010. In general, the assessment of the migration process indicates a strong outflow (2.3 times) of labor resources from the country (Table 2):

Thus, in the Republic of Kazakhstan, migration can be divided into three stages, which are characterized by different indicators (Table 2):

TABLE 2 External migration of the population of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Indicator	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2018
Emigrants, people	309,632	155,749	52,139	26,541	30,047	42,000
Immigrants, people	71,137	47,472	74,807	42,057	13,755	12,795
Balance of migration, people	−238,495	−108,277	−22,668	−15,516	−16,292	−29,205

- Stage 1 (1995–2000): there was a sharp increase in emigration and a subsequent gradual decline in immigration, with the imbalance between emigration and immigration in favor of stage 2 of migration processes (2005–2010);
- Stage 2 (2005–2010): there was a stabilization and decrease in emigration processes. At this stage, there were more immigrants than emigrants. During this period, a positive migration balance was recorded. On average, the emigration outflow remained at the level of 30,000 people;
- Stage 3 (2015–2018): characterized by an increase in emigration and a decline in immigration with a disproportion towards emigration.

The main migration flows of Kazakhstan and neighbor countries are shown in Figure 3.

According to the United Nations report on International Migrant Stock 2019, the international migrants in Kazakhstan comprise 3.7 million people from more than 18 countries and make up 20% of the country's population. As shown in Figure 4, the absolute majority of immigrants came to Kazakhstan from the Russian Federation, and second and third places are taken by other former Soviet republics: Ukraine and Uzbekistan. At the same time, it should also be noted that some residents of Kazakhstan are not the descendants of migrants of the second and third generation, as a rule, these migrants did not come from neighboring republics of the USSR, but from neighboring countries, whose nations historically inhabited some territories of the former empire (Gerasimova et al., 2021). This means, for example, immigrants from Korea who previously lived in the Far East of Soviet Russia, Meskhetian Turks from Georgia, Chechens, and Crimean Tatars, as well as historically densely populated Jew and German diaspora. Many of these peoples ended up in Kazakhstan not by the good will of the representatives of these peoples themselves, since they were massively deported by the Stalin regime from their native lands to Kazakhstan in the 1930s (Oh, 2012). The consequences of these events were reflected in the subsequent national composition of the republic. Many of the descendants of migrants had a small ethnic origin and relevant lack of data, which is why they were noted as coming from the 'Other countries' category during the last Soviet censuses (Figure 4).

The main regions from which there is an outflow of the population abroad are the Northern, Central, and Eastern regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which is explained by the high percentage of the European ethnic component in the demographic structure of the population (Kappassova, 2018; Shaukenova et al., 2017). According to United Nations (2019), about 4 million people left the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2019 to 58 different countries of the world. The destination countries of Kazakhstani emigrants are shown in Figure 5.

FIGURE 3 Migration flows of Kazakhstan and neighbor countries.

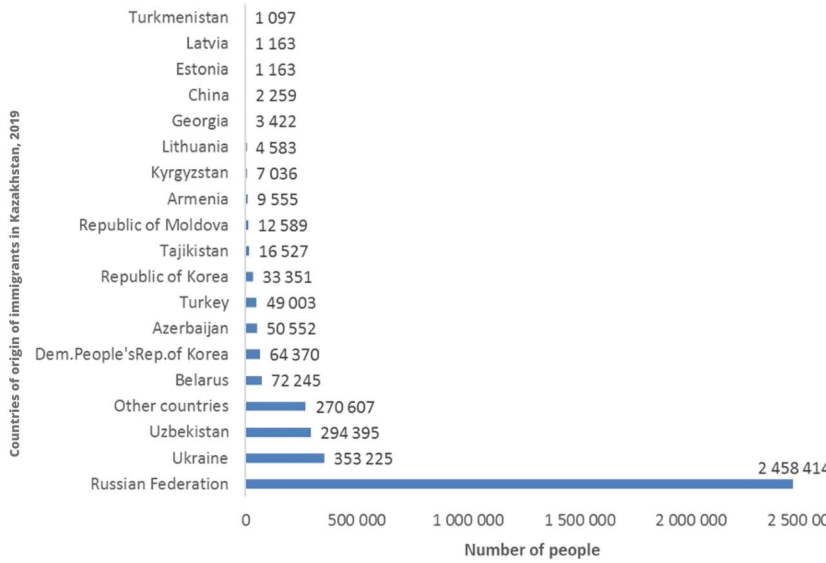

FIGURE 4 Countries of origin of immigrants in Kazakhstan.

As a rule, in most cases Kazakh migrants go to the Russian Federation. This is believed to be related to affordable and better higher education, and sometimes even for a guaranteed job after graduation. This is also facilitated by the legal framework in the field of simplified registration of residence, education, and employment, and doing business, which is provided for by membership in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). The second country of destination for emigrants is Germany. Considering the third destination country, Ukraine, it was leading in this context before the outbreak of hostilities on its territory. Moreover, the remaining destinations are Greece and the United States, and in some respects Turkey, if we are talking about highly qualified personnel.

Internal migration: as of 2018, the ratio of the urban and rural population of the Republic of Kazakhstan was 57:43. The distribution of immigrants by region is shown in Figure 6. It is important to note that in the northern regions of the country there is a problem of population decline (including due to emigration). Due to the population decline from emigration, this turnover occurs in terms of the distribution of migrants, in particular the labor force, who move to regions with the most favorable economic opportunities. While the main population will decrease, people from other, less attractive regions, including rural ones, will come to replace it. It is not excluded that, as a result of such a turnover, pendulum migration will also gain popularity. Nowadays, it is noteworthy that the largest number of immigrants is observed in Almaty (8.5%) and Kostanai regions (8.3%), and the smallest in Turkestan (1.9%) and Kyzylorda regions (2.4%). The limitation of the data including this percentage of population may lie in the extent to which the number of immigrants were actually officially able to change their registration.

The reasons for internal migration are as follows:

- Unfavorable socio-economic situation in places of former residence;
- Remoteness from cities;
- Lack of work and adequate infrastructure.

In general, it can be noted that, as of the first quarter of 2020 in the Republic of Kazakhstan (thanks to the introduction of state programs aimed at employment and social security), there are 8.8 million employed people (which is 0.7% more compared with the previous year) and the unemployment rate is 4.8%, which is lower than in developed

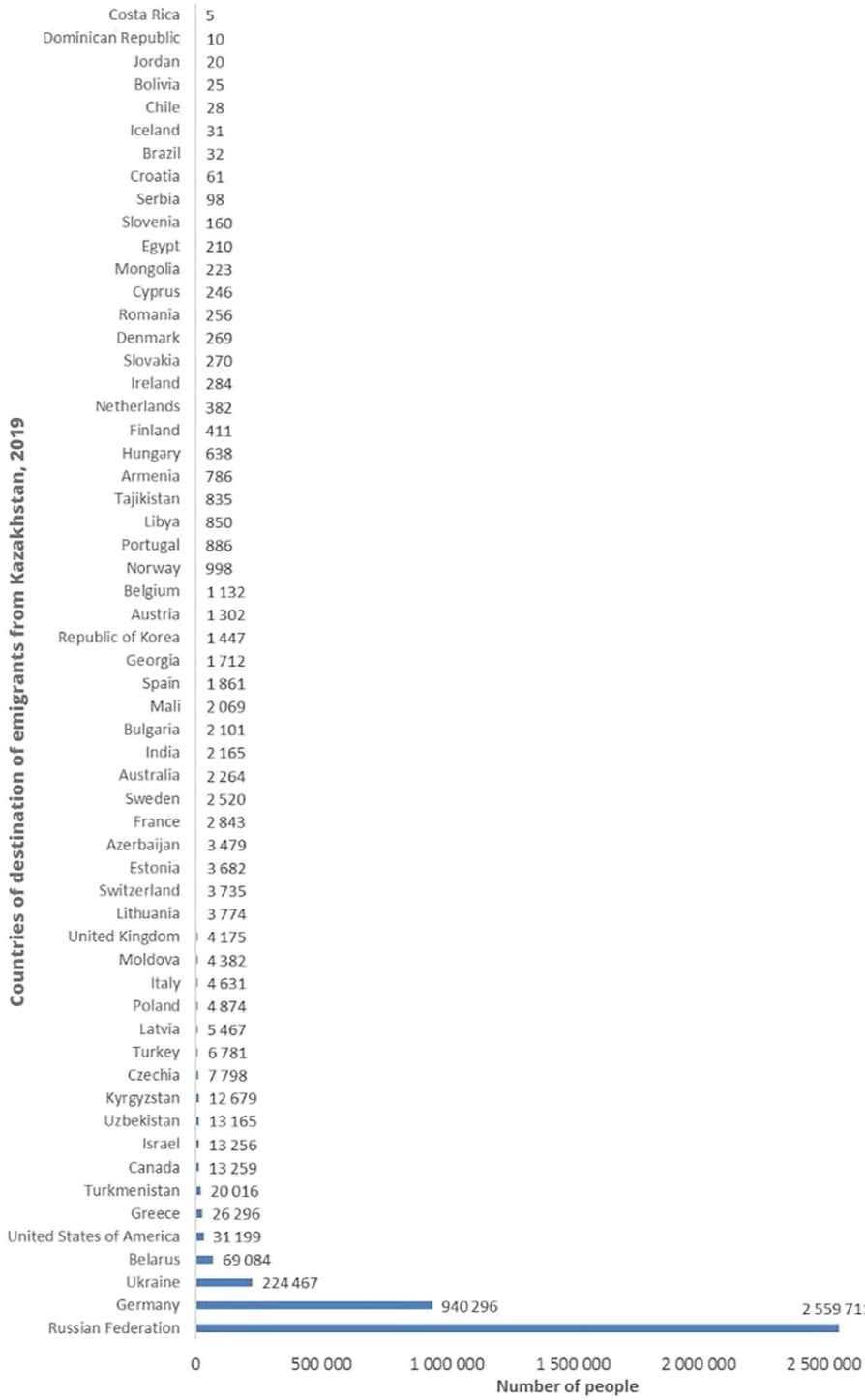

FIGURE 5 Countries of destination of Kazakhstani emigrants.

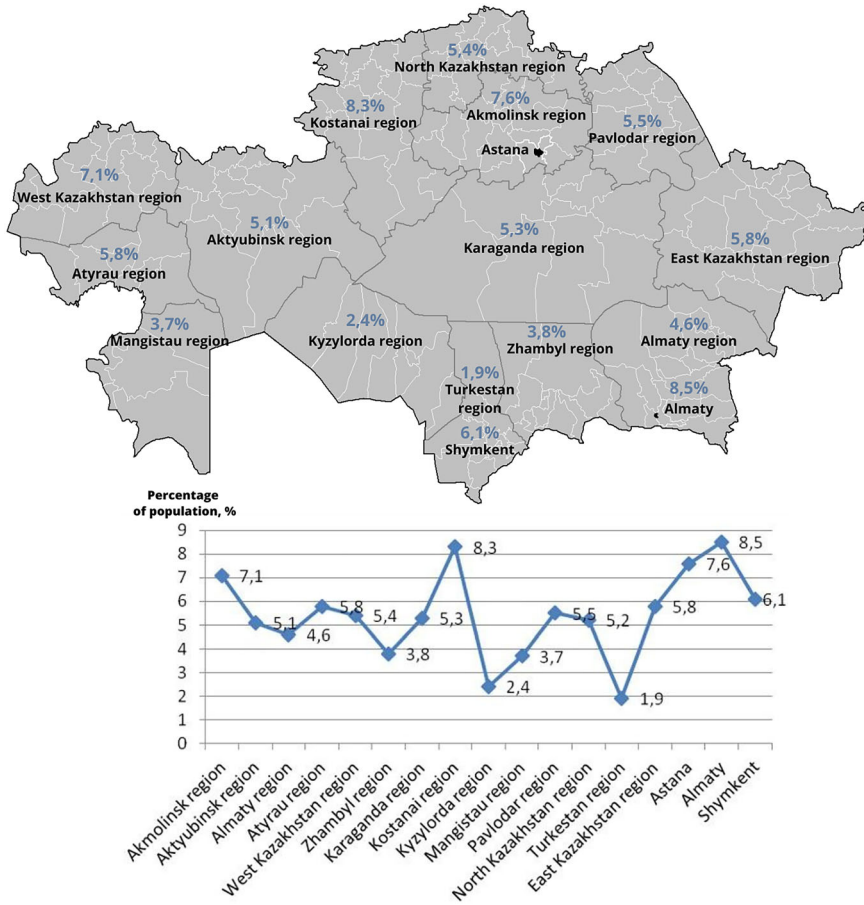

FIGURE 6 The turnover rate of labor movement in Kazakhstan by region for 2018, %.

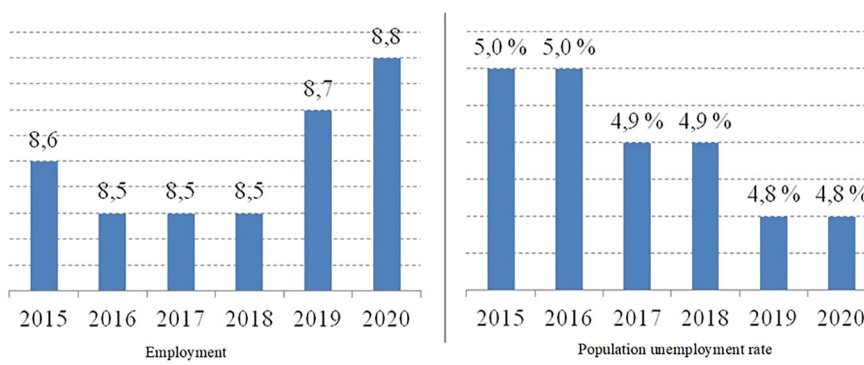

FIGURE 7 Labor market of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Calculated according to the 'Methodology for calculating the main indicators of population migration' based on the data of the committee on statistics of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan and UNDESA (2019).

countries such as Canada (5.7%), Sweden (6.8%), France (8.5%). The labor market of the Republic of Kazakhstan is shown in Figure 7:

Based on the chronology of key events regarding international and internal migration, it can be stated that the national economy in the context of the labor market of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in which migrants are active participants, has a positive impact and benefits from existing migration processes.

4 | DISCUSSION

An economic incentive remains the main one in the active movement of the population (International Organization for Migration, 2019). For external migration, political and socio-economic factors dominate, and for internal migration, the main factors are infrastructure development and the environment (Jacobson et al., 2019; Karpuntsov & Veresha, 2022). The causes of labor migration are factors of both an economic and noneconomic nature. The latter include political and religious reasons, the unification and disintegration of states, natural disasters, wars, environmental problems, and personal reasons. Each of these and many other noneconomic reasons lead to large interstate labor movements. The reasons of economic nature lie in various economic levels of development of individual countries (Anghelache et al., 2017). The need for migration appears objectively, due to national differences in wage levels (Baldwin-Edwards et al., 2019). It has been established that the presence of unemployment in countries with economies in transition is an important economic factor determining labor migration (Wanner, 2019).

Migration has a significant impact on the demographic structure of the population. Due to varying scales and intensities of migration, the immediate and long-term effects of the latter are significant on the dynamics of the population at the places of emigration or immigration. The impact of external factors on the formation of regional labor markets is largely determined by the geopolitical situation of the regions and infrastructure development, and is accompanied by the use of foreign labor, the outflow of highly qualified specialists from the country, the return of Kazakh-oralmans to their historical homeland, and illegal labor migration (Karabchuk & Salnikova, 2017).

Migration has a great influence on the social structure, population distribution, and ethnic composition (Mubangizi & Mwesigwa, 2018). Investigating inter-ethnic tensions in Kazakhstan, Kappassova (2018) found that migration together with demographic processes significantly impact the ethnic structure of the country, but the low index of ethnic tension in the country evidences that migration is not necessarily accompanied by the inter-ethnic tensions. The two above-mentioned studies are not comparable since the research of Kappassova (2018) is dedicated and limited to the ethnic structure of Kazakhstan, inter-ethnic relations and tensions between various ethnic groups, formed by both historical and recent migrations.

Thus, a detailed study of migration allows one to partially compose a picture of the economic, social, environmental, and infrastructural development of a particular region. In addition, a massive influx of migrants can be the cause of rising unemployment and strong pressure on social infrastructure (housing, health care, etc.), thereby population migration indirectly affects the standard of living of indigenous people (Tolametova, 2019). It can cause depopulation and economic regression in some areas and excessive concentration of the population in others. External migration of the population is often accompanied by discrimination of foreign labor and may cause the intensification of social conflicts (Edo, 2019). State intervention in the management of migration through regional and migration policies (especially in the field of international migration and influx to large cities) balances the spontaneity and the existing negative consequences of this process.

Besides, one should take into account the problems faced by migrants as a result of resettlement: adaptation, employment, interaction with the local community, search, and self-awareness. Similar problems were identified in a study on the socio-cultural adaptation of repatriates in East Kazakhstan (Zhanbossinova et al., 2019). However, the results here are not comparable to the research performed by Zhanbossinova et al. (2019), since the latter is mainly concentrated on the adaptation of a narrow migrant type; repatriates in the eastern part of Kazakhstan, but not on the impact of such repatriates on socio-economic aspects of the country or any part thereof. Despite a number of

negative effects on the receiving country or region, the study revealed the significant positive impact of migration on the host country or area. In terms of the labor market, migration inflows have a positive effect on employment rate and capital-to-labor ratio, and reduces the differential between high- and low-skilled workers (Biavaschi et al., 2020; Kahanec & Pytliková, 2017; Tsindeliani et al., 2022).

Another positive outcome is new knowledge and skills brought by immigrants to the country of destination (Bhagat, 2018). On the economy level, immigration tends to have a positive and significant impact on such economy parameters as GDP, GDP per capita, direct foreign investments (Gheasi & Nijkamp, 2017; Manole et al., 2017), and aggregate productivity (Jaumotte et al., 2016; Vasilyeva, 2017). On a country and global level in a long-term perspective, immigrants contribute to competitiveness and global welfare (Gabszewicz & Zanaj, 2019; Sadovskaya, 2016).

At the same time, more qualified labor migration brings more benefit to the host labor market and economy. Therefore, some high-income countries, when taking decision on country entrance permission, focus more on skills and education of potential labor migrants, choosing more qualified workers. Thus, today, migration processes are the engine of progress and development of humankind, and contribute to filling open niches in the labor market, promote the economy of the receiving party, and create feedback with the sending country in the form of foreign remittances. Alone, highly qualified personnel will stimulate even better improvements in the business climate, including the activity of densely populated metropolitan areas with greater labor market opportunities. Using the example of neighboring Russia, it was noted that an improvement in the business climate helps to attract highly qualified human capital (Barinova et al., 2022). On the other hand, in a crisis era of pandemics or during a period of political upheaval, many developed countries may be asked to reduce the flow of migration. In this case, measures to digitalize industries and services may reduce migration, which may be associated with the prospects and encouragement of remote work, which may become a characteristic feature of communication with highly qualified personnel. Further research may show the primary results of such policies, especially in Central Asia, where countries are only just taking the first steps in their independent agenda making.

5 | CONCLUSIONS

Migration processes have a significant impact on the state and quality characteristics of labor markets and labor force, contribute to leveling the economic development of regions and overcoming socio-economic differences between them. Kazakhstan, given its geostrategic position as a corridor between Europe and Asia, as well as large sparsely populated territories, has the basis for a flexible migration policy. In the present analysis, the impact of migration was investigated in the context of the labor market of the Republic of Kazakhstan. It is indicated that in most cases, migration is caused by the difference in income between the receiving and sending countries. Countries that offer flexible wages have an oversupply for labor.

With the support of a stable political regime and a multi-vector foreign policy, the socio-economic development of the Republic of Kazakhstan has a relative financial attractiveness for international migrants, without a shortage of labor in the domestic market, mainly due to public administration programs in the field of employment and social security. In general, the Republic of Kazakhstan, as a host country, shows moderation and rationality in determining its immigration policy, which allows it to avoid the negative impact of immigrants on the local population and the economy, on the one hand, and to enhance the positive impact from the use of migrant labor in the employment market to ensure the economic growth of the national economy, on the other hand. With large resources and vast expanses, Kazakhstan is best prepared for crisis moments of mass migration that can happen to its neighbors due to global challenges. At the same time, factors such as remoteness from large cities and a weak level of infrastructure development repel potential mass migrants, which is why they use Kazakhstan as a transit zone when relocating to other countries.

The practical value of this study is that the conceptually new results obtained will allow migration specialists to get acquainted with updated data on migration processes in the Republic of Kazakhstan. This study lacks quantitative data for 2 years on various aspects of migration since they do not have a single nature of origin and, given the current political situation, are extremely subjective for different subjects. Thus, there is room for further research (collection of real-time analytics for generating accurate forecasts) on the impact of immigration and emigration on socio-economic development in host countries and countries of origin.

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