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A. Kh. Rakhmonov<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Social Demography of FCTAS RAS. Moscow, Russia

## MIGRATION PROCESSES BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE ASIA-PACIFIC COUNTRIES: THE SANCTIONS CONTEXT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SITUATION OF RUSSIANS

**Abstract.** This article explores the most recent wave of emigration from Russia to key countries in the Asia-Pacific region, namely the United States, Canada, the Republic of Korea, and Japan. It focuses on the consequences of the Ukrainian crisis and Western-imposed sanctions, assessing their impact on migration trends and the socio-economic status of Russian emigrants. Based on statistical data and sociological surveys, the study demonstrates a general increase in emigration from Russia to the selected destinations, with the exception of Japan, where numbers have declined. The article also highlights how the Special Military Operation and media narratives initially led to a deterioration in public attitudes toward Russian-speaking communities, though by mid-2023, this negative sentiment had largely subsided. The analysis underscores that economic and social factors remain the primary drivers of emigration, despite external restrictions. Moreover, the article details the challenges faced by highly skilled Russian professionals abroad, particularly concerning labor market integration, often hindered by institutional and cultural barriers. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of ongoing emigration dynamics and offer relevant insights for decision-makers shaping migration policy and strategies for supporting Russian citizens abroad. The study enhances knowledge on how geopolitical shifts influence regional migration in the Asia-Pacific.

**Keywords:** migration, Russia, Asia-Pacific countries, Special military operation, economic and political sanctions, emigrants

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**Introduction.** After February 24, 2022, Western nations imposed a series of economic and political sanctions against Russia [1, p. 41]. In addition to the European Union and the United States, several Asia-Pacific countries — including Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Singapore — joined these sanctions [2, p. 17]. Beyond the direct economic and political measures, restrictions were placed on the export of equipment for oil and gas production, as well as on energy imports from Russia. Export controls also tightened for the Russian nuclear, oil and gas, metallurgical, shipbuilding, and aviation industries, along with the construction sector and various electrical equipment [3].

Meanwhile, Russia has sought to strengthen its cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region, primarily in trade and economic domains, though progress has been uneven. At the plenary session of the Eastern Economic Forum on September 12, 2023, it was

reported that trade turnover between Russia and the Asia-Pacific countries grew by 13.7% in 2022 and by 18.3% during the first half of 2023<sup>1</sup>. When factoring in global inflation, however, these rates appear modest and fall short of expectations for a broader shift away from Euro-Atlantic markets toward Asia. Notably, the majority of this trade growth stemmed from expanded commodity exchanges with China, which recorded a 24–32% increase during the first seven months of 2023<sup>2</sup>.

Migration also plays a significant role in Russia's relationship with the Asia-Pacific region, as approximately one million Russian citizens relocate to these countries annually. However, in addition to economic sanctions, the United States and its allies in the region have imposed visa restrictions on Russian citizens. Since the onset of the Special Military Operation (SMO), the status of Russian-speaking communities in the Asia-Pacific has changed dramatically. Governments in some host countries, alongside the Ukrainian diaspora and segments of the local population, have exerted pressure on Russian residents. Moreover, the United States and its allies in the region have restricted Russian information access for these communities, further complicating their situation.

**The purpose of research and methods.** The primary objective of this article is to examine the situation of the Russian-speaking population in the Asia-Pacific countries during the Special Military Operation in Ukraine, as well as to evaluate the impact of Western socio-political sanctions on the inflow of emigrants from Russia to this region.

The research followed a mixed-methods design that integrates macro-level statistical analysis with micro-level sociological insight. Official migration statistics issued between 2016 and 2023 by agencies such as the OECD, the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs, the Korean Statistical Information Service, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, and Japan Tourism Statistics were compiled into a single longitudinal dataset and subjected to descriptive trend analysis to measure changes in the scale and direction of Russian emigration after February 2022. To deepen interpretation of these numerical patterns, the study re-examined recent nationwide and destination-country surveys of Russian-speaking communities and re-coded fifteen semi-structured expert interviews conducted in 2023 with migrants, community leaders and analysts. The qualitative material was analyzed thematically to trace how sanctions, visa regimes and labor-market structures shape everyday adaptation, while the quantitative results provided a comparative baseline across the United States, Canada, the Republic of Korea and Japan. Triangulating these evidence streams enhanced internal validity and revealed convergent findings: economic motives remained dominant despite tighter external constraints, and perceived discrimination was episodic rather than systemic by mid-2023.

**Theoretical framework.** The contemporary out-migration from Russia in 2022–2024 can be comprehensively interpreted through an integrated theoretical model that fuses economic-sociological and politico-legal perspectives. The starting point is Everett Lee's classic push–pull framework [4]: international sanctions and domestic macro-economic instability strengthen the “push” factors, while predictable institu-

<sup>1</sup> Putin noted the growth of trade turnover between Russia and the Asia-Pacific countries // PRIME. September 12, 2023. Available at: <https://1prime.ru/20230912/841723019.html> (accessed: 02.04.2025).

<sup>2</sup> Lexyutina Ya. Russia's interaction with the Asia-Pacific countries has not yet been balanced // NG. October 2, 2023. Available at: [https://www.ng.ru/kartblansh/2023-10-02/3\\_8841\\_kb.html](https://www.ng.ru/kartblansh/2023-10-02/3_8841_kb.html) (accessed: 26.03.2025).

tional environments and broader career opportunities in destination countries amplify the “pull.” The sanctions regime functions not only as an economic constraint but also as a politico-legal shock, echoing Aristide Zolberg’s “political upheaval” model [5]: external pressure is transmitted into internal uncertainty, creating a “migration window” in which departure is seen as a rational risk-reduction strategy.

At the meso level, Stephen Castles and Mark Miller’s concept of a global migration system [6] clarifies flow dynamics: long-established academic and IT diasporas incorporate Russian migrants into professional clusters in the United States, Canada, South Korea, and Germany, lowering entry barriers and accelerating labor legalization. Alejandro Portes’s notion of social capital [7] is pivotal here: with formal financial channels restricted, horizontal network resources — professional communities and online mutual-aid platforms — provide essential information and peer credit.

Post-migration experiences are illuminated by John Berry’s cultural-adaptation framework [8] and Portes and Min Zhou’s segmented-assimilation theory [9]. Highly skilled specialists typically integrate swiftly into labor-market segments that value universal human capital, while often choosing to maintain some cultural distance. Less qualified groups, however, face a higher risk of downward mobility, confirming the idea of multiple adaptation trajectories. Access to housing, healthcare, and social services is well captured by Ager and Strang’s “integration domains” model [10]: sanctions-related payment checks and the difficulty of opening bank accounts can slow institutional integration, heightening the importance of volunteer organizations and diasporas as intermediaries.

Literature on compound shocks [11] shows that the simultaneous impact of sanctions and domestic socio-economic conditions generates a persistent migration impulse that endures even amid tighter visa and financial restrictions. By combining push–pull logic, the political-upheaval framework, a systemic view of transnational networks, and contemporary integration models, we obtain a holistic explanation of both the initial drivers of Russians’ emigration and the distinctive features of their socio-economic adaptation in destination countries during the ongoing crisis.

**Discussions.** Since the onset of the Ukrainian crisis in 2022, the implementation of far-reaching sanctions against Russia by Western countries and their Asia-Pacific allies has notably reshaped global economic and political landscapes<sup>3</sup>. In addition to the United States and the European Union — traditionally the leading architects of anti-Russian measures — Canada, New Zealand, Japan, and several Scandinavian nations also moved to impose punitive actions [12, p. 93]. By February 2024, a co-ordinated wave of further restrictions followed, targeting both governmental and private sectors. These measures included closing airspace to Russian aircraft, disconnecting major Russian banks from the SWIFT system, freezing the assets of the Central Bank of Russia, and imposing bans on the export and sale of foreign currency to Russian entities<sup>4</sup>.

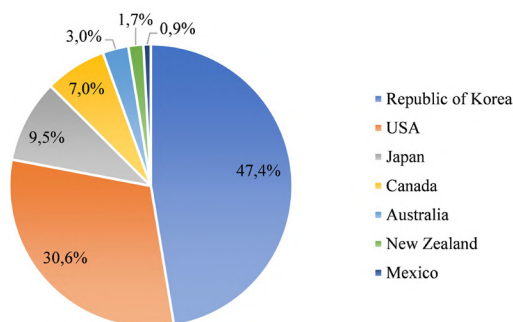
An important element of these sanctions has involved limiting cultural and scientific cooperation with Russia. The United States and many Asia-Pacific countries have restricted or entirely prohibited business relations with central Russian television networks, while several research institutions — particularly those linked to strategic industries—have been barred from international collaborations [13, p. 555].

<sup>3</sup> The history of US sanctions against Russia because of Ukraine // TASS. February 23, 2024. Available at: <https://tass.ru/info/19188151> (accessed: 31.01.2025).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Such restrictions have significantly curtailed the flow of information for Russian-speaking populations in the Asia-Pacific region, effectively limiting their access to Russian media and cultural content.

Despite these external pressures, it is noteworthy that the Asia-Pacific region has historically maintained robust migration links with Russia. Prior to the current crisis, approximately one million Russian citizens emigrated to Asia-Pacific countries annually. As OECD data for 2016–2021 indicate, the Republic of Korea attracted 47% of Russian emigrants heading to the region, followed by the United States at approximately 31%, Japan at 10%, and Canada at 7% (Fig. 1). The Republic of Korea's popularity is partly explained by its visa-free regime with Russia, which significantly eases entry for short-term stays and serves as a gateway for longer-term relocation.



*Figure 1. Share of Emigrants from Russia to Asia-Pacific Countries, 2016–2021, %*

*Source:* Compiled by the author based on OECD statistics<sup>5</sup>.

The escalation of sanctions, coupled with the Special Military Operation, has changed the dynamics of these migration flows in multiple ways. First, tighter visa rules and travel restrictions in some Asia-Pacific nations have made it more complicated for certain categories of Russian travelers – particularly high-profile businessmen and government officials – to enter. Second, freezing Russian bank assets and disconnecting many Russian financial institutions from SWIFT have limited emigrants' ability to transfer funds or conduct basic financial transactions in their new host countries. Third, negative sentiment, fueled by media reports, has at times affected the social climate for Russians abroad. While some have experienced pressure from host governments and local populations, many continue to migrate for economic or family-related reasons.

Considering the Asia-Pacific nations that have sanctioned Russia, the United States, Canada, Korea, and Japan represent the primary destinations for Russian emigrants. Consequently, these four countries were chosen for a detailed examination of migration inflows and the status of Russian-speaking populations in the region.

**Results.** The onset of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine triggered a new wave of emigration from Russia to the Asia-Pacific region. Among the emigrants, a significant proportion consists of young professionals who are now faced with the challenge of adapting to unfamiliar environments and rebuilding their lives under new socio-political and economic conditions.

<sup>5</sup> OECD statistics: [official page]. April 05, 2025. Available at: <https://stats.oecd.org/> (accessed: 17.01.2025).

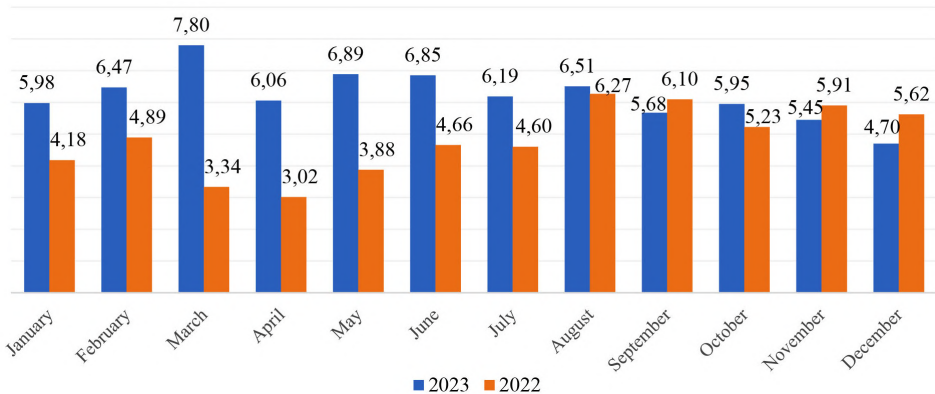
### USA

The Ukrainian crisis significantly influenced the situation of the Russian-speaking population in the United States, presenting new challenges and societal shifts. At the start of the Special Military Operation, public opinion in the U.S. became polarized. Political affiliations played a key role: Democrats tended to adopt a strongly anti-Russian stance, while many Republicans maintained a more neutral or cautious approach to the conflict [14, p. 44].

In 2022, political tensions even spilled into academia. For instance, U.S. Congressman Eric Swalwell (California Democrat) openly called for the expulsion of Russian students from American universities. Furthermore, anti-Russian narratives were widely disseminated in the Western media, particularly on television, on-line platforms, and social networks, shaping public perception. According to American citizen Gupta:

*“Unfortunately, American youth are very receptive to the information they receive in the media space. Negative things about Russia are being poured on television all day long... many Americans have never even met a Russian, yet they hold strong opinions”<sup>6</sup>.*

Despite these media-driven sentiments, the actual inflow of Russian emigrants to the United States has increased. In the first quarter of 2022, approximately 12.4 thousand Russians arrived in the U.S. This number rose to around 22.3 thousand in the first quarter of 2023 — an increase of 1.6 times (see Fig. 2). This trend indicates that geopolitical tensions have not prevented Russians from migrating to the United States.



**Figure 2. Monthly Inflow of Emigrants from Russia to the United States, 2022–2023, thousand persons**

Source: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs<sup>7</sup>.

Additionally, U.S. visa policy toward Russian citizens has remained relatively stable. U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland confirmed that the State Department has been working with Russian authorities to expand consular staff in Moscow to simplify the visa process for Russian citizens [14, p. 47].

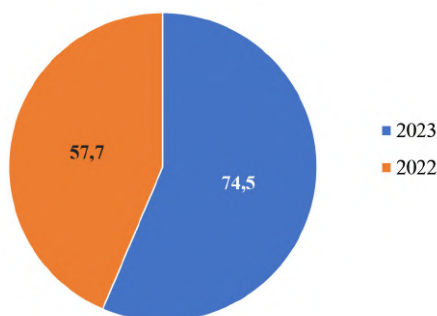
<sup>6</sup> An American who visited Yekaterinburg revealed the true attitude towards Russians in the United States // [URA.RU](https://ura.news/news/1052684210). September 11, 2023. Available at: <https://ura.news/news/1052684210> (accessed: 02.10.2024).

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs: [official page]. March 29, 2025. Available at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/visa-law0/visa-statistics.html> (accessed: 19.02.2025).

This policy continuity is reflected in official figures: from March to August 2023, approximately 40.3 thousand visas were issued to Russian nationals, 1.6 times more than during the same period in 2022.

As shown in Figure 3, the total number of Russian emigrants to the U.S. in 2023 reached 74.5 thousand people, compared to 57.7 thousand in 2022 — an increase of 1.3 times. This places the United States first among Asia-Pacific countries in terms of total Russian emigration during this period.

According to the scale of emigrants from Russia among the APR countries, it is the US that ranks first.



*Figure 3. Annual Inflow of Emigrants from Russia to the United States, 2022–2023, thousand persons*

*Source:* U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs<sup>8</sup>.

Interviews with 10 Russian emigrants currently residing in the U.S. further reveal that most reported no significant discrimination in everyday life. Negative attitudes and stereotypes largely remain confined to the media environment, while daily interactions with locals are generally neutral or even welcoming.

In conclusion, despite ongoing geopolitical tensions, the United States remains one of the most significant destinations for Russian emigrants, driven by consistent visa policies, relatively open migration channels, and diverse economic and social opportunities.

### *Canada*

Russian-speaking emigration to Canada has historically occurred in three major waves. The first wave followed World War II, the second consisted primarily of Jewish emigrants in the 1970s and 1980s, and the third wave has continued from the 1990s to the present. The motivations for emigration vary—ranging from ideological and political concerns to economic opportunity and personal safety. In recent years, the Ukrainian crisis has added a new dimension to Russian emigration, influencing both migration flows and public perceptions in Canada [15, p. 1421].

In the initial phase of the Special Military Operation, the Russian community in Canada faced increased scrutiny and cultural pressure. Some Russian writers, composers, and artists experienced professional and social challenges. However, Canada has not imposed a complete cultural embargo. Russian-language newspapers and books remain available, and Russian bookstores — such as Troika — continue to

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.



operate successfully. Russian cultural productions, including *The Nutcracker* and *Eugene Onegin*, have been performed by institutions like the National Ballet of Canada, and continue to enjoy public support<sup>9</sup>.

Public sentiment toward Russia has gradually shifted since 2022. While the early stages of the SMO were marked by strong anti-Russian narratives, by 2023 the tone of public discourse had softened. Several factors contributed to this change: declining media focus on the conflict, growing awareness of corruption in Ukraine, and general skepticism toward oversimplified media portrayals. As Russian-Canadian writer Mikhail Kerbel observed, *“If you hammer that Russia is the root of all problems... people begin to study the issue more deeply, and an understanding is being developed that not everything is so unambiguous”*<sup>10</sup>. Even local press has shown signs of fatigue with one-sided narratives, sometimes offering sarcastic commentary on the tendency to blame Russia for all economic and political woes.

According to the Canadian Journal of Immigration, the total inflow of Russian emigrants to Canada between 2018 and 2022 was approximately 9,500 people (Fig. 4). In 2022, 1,615 Russians arrived in Canada — an 11% decrease compared to 2021. Rosstat data also show that in the first ten months of 2023, only 141 Russian migrants moved to Canada. This significant decline can be attributed to several factors: stricter visa requirements imposed by the Canadian government in response to the Ukrainian crisis, limited diplomatic services, and the absence of direct flights from Russia<sup>11</sup>.

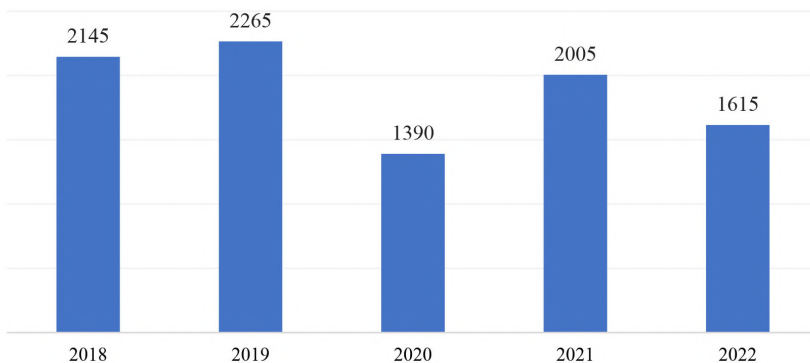


Figure 4. Inflow of Emigrants from Russia to Canada, 2018–2022, persons

Source: Data from the Canadian Journal of Immigration<sup>12</sup>.

Interestingly, a portion of the Russian intelligentsia who emigrated to Canada during the SMO have begun to consider returning home. This is partly due to the professional limitations they face abroad and the realization that Canadian life — though stable — is markedly different from the dynamic, socially rich lives they left behind. As Mikhail Kerbel colorfully described it:

<sup>9</sup> How do they perceive Russia and Russians in Canada now // Moskovsky Komsomolets. January 20, 2024. Available at: <http://www.mk.ru/social/2024/01/20/kak-v-kanade-seychas-vosprinimayut-rossiyu-i-russkikh.html> (accessed: 26.03.2025).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Rules of entry to Canada for Russians // Visa Guru. May 06, 2024. Available at: <https://visa-guru.ru/blog/kana-da/pravila-vezda-v-kanadu-dlya-rossiyan> (accessed: 09.02.2025).

<sup>12</sup> Canadian Journal of Immigration: [official page]. March 16, 2025. Available at: <https://canadaimmigrants.com/russian-immigrants-canada/> (accessed: 13.09.2024).

*"In the morning, I got up, washed my face, got in the car and went to work. On the way, I stopped at a café and, without leaving the car, bought my coffee and sandwich. I worked for eight hours, got into the car and drove home. On the way I bought a couple of cans of beer, a burger and fries. I ate at home in front of the TV, watched a movie, and went to bed. That's the romance"*<sup>13</sup>.

According to many recent emigrants, life in Canada, while secure, can feel monotonous compared to the cultural vibrancy they were accustomed to in Russia.

In summary, although Canada remains an important destination for Russian emigrants, especially professionals and cultural figures, recent developments—both geopolitical and societal—have slowed migration and raised questions about long-term integration. The combination of stricter immigration policies, reduced media attention to the crisis, and lifestyle adjustments has led to a nuanced and evolving experience for the Russian community in Canada.

### *Republic of Korea*

Following the escalation of the Ukrainian crisis, the Republic of Korea joined international sanctions against Russia, including a ban on the export of strategic materials [16, p. 39]. Despite these political measures, migration ties between Russia and South Korea remain active and significant. Over the years, various categories of Russian citizens — ranging from labor migrants and students to researchers and professionals — have chosen the Republic of Korea as a destination.

Historically, Korean society has maintained a cautious, and at times unwelcoming, stance toward foreigners. This is rooted not in hostility, but in Korea's historically closed society and limited long-term interaction with foreign populations. According to a Russian migrant from the Far East named Vadim:

*"The society here is too closed, disloyal to foreigners. Just because of your white skin, you will never become your own, even if you learn Korean at the level of native speakers"*<sup>14</sup>.

Such attitudes manifest in various spheres — career advancement, social inclusion, and everyday interactions.

From 1991 through the mid-2010s, the Korean public's perception of Russians remained largely neutral with a slight negative undertone. However, as Russia's economic development progressed in the 2010s, this perception began to shift. As TV presenter and translator Ilya Belyakov noted, the arrival of more diverse Russian migrants—students, engineers, academics, and professionals — has helped reshape the image of Russians in Korea, leading to a more balanced view<sup>15</sup>.

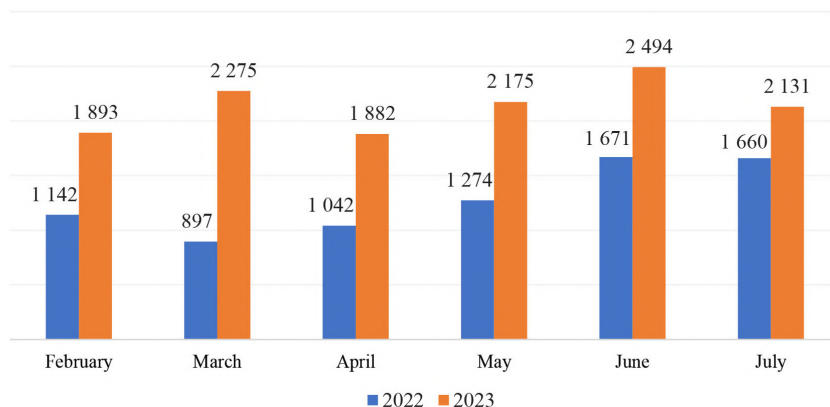
After the start of the Special Military Operation, data from the Korean Statistical Information Service show that the number of Russian emigrants arriving in the Republic of Korea in February 2022 was 1,142 persons — 1.5 times fewer than in July 2022, when the figure reached 1,660 (Fig. 5).

<sup>13</sup> How do they perceive Russia and Russians in Canada now...

<sup>14</sup> Aronova M. In 2023, a record number of Russians, mostly fleeing mobilization, sought asylum in South Korea. The stories of Vitaly, Samir and Vadim // CurrentTime. April 7, 2024. Available at: <https://www.currenttime.tv/a/ubezhische-v-yuzhnoy-koree-prosilo-rekordnoe-chislo-rossiyan-v-osnovnom-bezhavshih-ot-mobilizatsii-istorii-vitaliya-samira-i-vadima/32889263.html> (accessed: 10.03.2025).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.



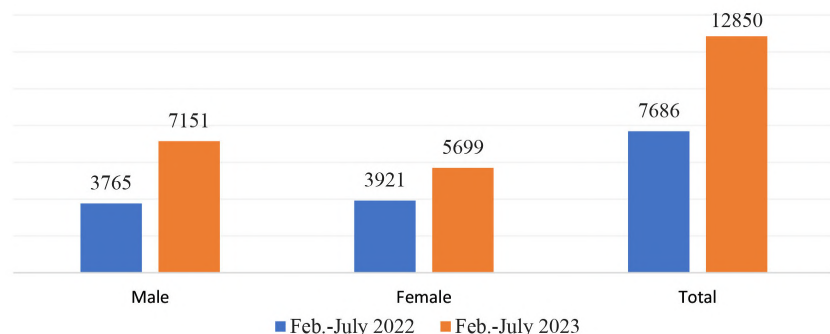


**Figure 5. Inflow of Emigrants from Russia to the Republic of Korea, February-July 2022-2023, persons**

Source: Korean Statistical Information Service<sup>16</sup>.

Following the start of the Special Military Operation, migration from Russia to Korea increased significantly. According to the Korean Statistical Information Service, 1,142 Russians entered Korea in February 2022. By July 2022, that figure had risen to 1,660. In contrast, the February–July 2023 period saw a total of 12,850 Russian migrants, representing a 1.7-fold increase over the same period in 2022 (Fig. 6). Notably, male migration almost doubled in 2023 compared to the previous year — rising from 3,765 to 7,151 — likely due to mobilization in Russia [17], as shown in Figure 6.

One of the key drivers of this migration surge is the visa-free regime between Russia and South Korea, which facilitates short-term stays and encourages long-term relocation among those seeking work, study, or refuge.



**Figure 6. Inflow of Emigrants from Russia to the Republic of Korea by Gender, February-July 2022-2023, persons**

Source: Korean Statistical Information Service<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Korean Statistical Information Service: [official page]. December 28, 2024. Available at: [https://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT\\_1B28022&conn\\_path=I2&language=en](https://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT_1B28022&conn_path=I2&language=en) (accessed: 05.11.2024).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

Despite South Korea's alignment with international sanctions, there has been no significant societal backlash against ordinary Russian citizens. While some Koreans expressed concern at the beginning of the conflict, public interest quickly waned. As Russian migrant Vitaly from Vladivostok noted in October 2023:

*"Koreans are busy with their problems now... They don't follow politics much. They're at work for 12 hours, and on weekends they'd rather go to the park than watch the news"*<sup>18</sup>.

Samir Akhmedov echoed this sentiment, stating:

*"The situation in Ukraine is of as much interest to locals as the average Russian is interested in the war in the Central African Republic"*<sup>19</sup>.

Nonetheless, life in Korea remains challenging for many Russian professionals. Even those with local education and fluency in Korean often face obstacles when seeking employment in their field. Opportunities for foreigners tend to be concentrated in lower-skilled sectors such as construction or factory work. These limitations discourage long-term settlement and influence many Russian specialists to consider Korea a temporary stop rather than a permanent home.

In summary, despite political tensions and cultural barriers, the Republic of Korea continues to serve as a major destination for Russian emigrants. The rise in migration—particularly among men—reflects both geopolitical push factors and structural pull factors such as visa-free access. Yet integration challenges and limited job opportunities in specialized fields remain key concerns for Russian migrants in the country.

### Japan

Japan has largely aligned itself with the European Union and the United States in imposing sanctions against Russia [18]. Alongside the Republic of Korea, Japan is one of Russia's key economic partners in Asia, and its sanctions have had a notable impact [19, p. 89].

These sanctions have also influenced migration trends. As shown in Figure 7, migration from Russia to Japan has experienced two significant declines. The first drop occurred in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which reduced the number of Russian migrants from 97.7 thousand in 2019 to just 2.9 thousand in 2021. The second and more recent decline is associated with the geopolitical fallout from the Ukrainian crisis. In 2022, the number of Russian migrants slightly rebounded to 11.1 thousand, but in 2023, it decreased again to just 3.3 thousand — a drop of more than threefold compared to the previous year.

This decline is primarily attributed to new visa restrictions imposed by the Japanese government<sup>20</sup>. Entry for Russian citizens has been significantly tightened: visas are now generally granted only for those traveling as part of organized tourist groups managed by Japanese travel agencies. Individual visa issuance has become more difficult. Nevertheless, the Japanese Embassy in Moscow has stated that there are currently no plans to either tighten or ease these restrictions. Visas continue to be issued under existing regulations<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> Aronova M. In 2023, a record number of Russians, mostly fleeing mobilization, sought asylum in South Korea. The stories of Vitaly, Samir and Vadim...

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Tokyo freezes the issuance of visas to Russians, the assets of Russian financial institutions, restricts exports // TASS. February 25, 2022. Available at: <https://tass.ru/ekonomika/13851285> (accessed: 29.01.2025).

<sup>21</sup> Proshina E. Japan has no plans to tighten entry requirements for Russians // Rambler. December 28, 2023. Available at: <https://news.rambler.ru/world/52026847-u-yaponii-net-planov-po-uzhestocheniyu-trebovaniy-k-vezdu-dlya-rossiyan/> (accessed: 17.03.2025).

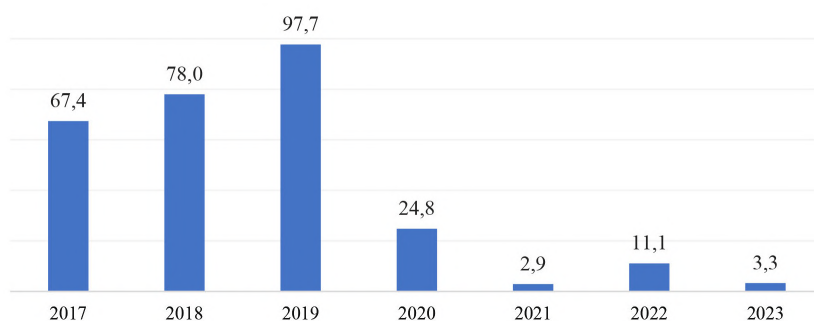


Figure 7. Inflow of Emigrants from Russia to Japan, 2017–2023, thousand persons

Source: Japan Tourism Statistics<sup>22</sup>.

Japan has also focused its sanctions on individuals and institutions associated with the Russian military-industrial sector. At a press conference following a National Security Council meeting, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announced measures such as freezing visas and financial assets, and restricting the export of goods to Russian organizations linked to the defense sector [20, p. 86].

In summary, Japan's firm position in support of international sanctions has led to a sharp decline in migration from Russia, compounded by stricter visa policies and reduced travel opportunities. As a result, Japan — once a more prominent destination for Russian travelers and migrants — has become significantly less accessible in the current geopolitical climate.

**Conclusion.** The analysis of emigration trends from Russia to Asia-Pacific countries (the United States, Canada, the Republic of Korea, and Japan) in the context of the Ukrainian crisis and international sanctions reveals a complex but resilient pattern of migration. Historically, Russian emigration to the Asia-Pacific has deep roots, with notable waves occurring as early as the 1920s–1930s. In the modern era, this trend has only intensified, especially in response to recent geopolitical developments.

The study shows that, despite the imposition of wide-ranging sanctions and visa restrictions by Western countries and their Asia-Pacific allies, the overall volume of Russian emigration to the region has not declined — on the contrary, it has increased in several countries. The most significant growth was observed in the United States and the Republic of Korea, where migration flows rose sharply in 2023, likely due to the effects of partial mobilization in Russia and the attractiveness of relatively accessible migration channels, such as Korea's visa-free regime.

Japan stands out as the only country among the four studied where migration from Russia has substantially decreased — by more than threefold in 2023 compared to 2022 — primarily due to new entry restrictions and tightened visa policies.

Importantly, the study also reveals that negative public attitudes toward Russians in host countries, which initially intensified under the influence of Western media, have largely subsided by mid-2023. While negative narratives persisted in the media space, everyday experiences of Russian-speaking communities in the United States, Canada, Korea, and Japan were mostly free from direct discrimination or systemic

<sup>22</sup> Japan Tourism Statistics: [official page]. February 01, 2025. Available at: <https://statistics.jnto.go.jp/en/graph/> (accessed: 16.13.2025).

hostility. In many cases, local populations have shown indifference rather than animosity, focusing more on domestic issues than on international conflicts.

In conclusion, the migration dynamics observed in 2022–2023 demonstrate that, despite political tensions and sanctions, the Asia-Pacific region remains a key destination for Russian emigrants. Economic motives, professional aspirations, and socio-political factors continue to drive emigration. At the same time, challenges related to labor market integration and cultural adaptation persist, especially for highly qualified specialists. These findings underline the importance of a balanced migration policy, both in Russia and in receiving countries, and call for deeper attention to the social and economic inclusion of Russian-speaking migrants in the Asia-Pacific.

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#### **Author information:**

**Abubakr Kh. Rakhmonov**, Candidate of Economics, Senior researcher, Institute of Social Demography of FCTAS RAS, Moscow, Russia.

[abubak.93@mail.ru](mailto:abubak.93@mail.ru)

ORCID: [0000-0001-9924-5857](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9924-5857)

**А. Х. Рахмонов<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Институт социальной демографии ФНИСЦ РАН. Москва, Россия

## **МИГРАЦИОННЫЕ ПРОЦЕССЫ МЕЖДУ РОССИЕЙ И СТРАНАМИ АТР: САНКЦИОННЫЙ КОНТЕКСТ И ПОСЛЕДСТВИЯ ДЛЯ ПОЛОЖЕНИЯ РОССИЯН**

**Аннотация.** Статья посвящена новому этапу эмиграции из России в ключевые страны Азиатско-Тихоокеанского региона — США, Канаду, Республику Корея и Японию. В центре внимания — последствия украинского кризиса и западных санкций, а также их влияние на миграционные потоки и социально-экономический статус российских эмигрантов. На основе статистических данных и социологических опросов показан общий рост эмиграции из России в указанные страны, за исключением Японии, где зафиксировано снижение числа выехавших. Отдельное внимание уделено изменению общественного отношения к русскоязычным общинам в первые месяцы после начала специальной военной операции, что было обусловлено антироссийской риторикой зарубежных СМИ. Однако к середине 2023 года уровень негативного восприятия заметно снизился, а случаи дискриминации стали носить единичный характер. Несмотря на внешние ограничения, основные причины эмиграции продолжают носить экономический и социальный характер. Кроме того, статья раскрывает трудности, с которыми сталкиваются высококвалифицированные специалисты из России при интеграции в зарубежные рынки труда, включая институциональные и культурные барьеры. Представленные результаты способствуют более глубокому пониманию текущих миграционных процессов и могут быть полезны для формирования миграционной политики и программ поддержки российских соотечественников за рубежом.

**Ключевые слова:** миграция, Россия, страны АТР, специальная военная операция, экономическо-политические санкции, эмигранты

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***Сведения об авторе:***

**Рахмонов Абубакр Хасанович**, кандидат экономических наук,  
старший научный сотрудник, Институт социальной демографии ФНИСЦ РАН.  
Москва, Россия.

[abubak.93@mail.ru](mailto:abubak.93@mail.ru)

Author ID РИНЦ: [1079276](https://elibrary.ru/1079276); ORCID: [0000-0001-9924-5857](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9924-5857)