

## РАЗДЕЛ 2

# СОЦИАЛЬНАЯ СТРУКТУРА В УСЛОВИЯХ МОДЕРНИЗАЦИИ: СОЦИОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ, ПОЛИТОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ И ЦИФРОВЫЕ ГУМАНИТАРНЫЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ

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### СОЦИАЛЬНАЯ МОБИЛЬНОСТЬ В МОНГОЛИИ В ПЕРВОЙ ДЕКАДЕ XXI ВЕКА: НАПРАВЛЕНИЯ, ФОРМЫ И КАНАЛЫ

Социальная мобильность стала одной из наиболее отличительных черт мирового сообщества, но в каждой стране имеются свои отличительные особенности. В статье рассматриваются политические, экономические и социальные изменения начала 21 века Монголии, которые формируют направления, каналы социальной мобильности современных монголов, особое внимание уделяется пространственной и профессиональной мобильности в качестве специфических форм. Пространственная и профессиональная мобильность стала стратегией выживания монголов в быстро меняющемся глобализирующемся обществе. Мы стремимся выявить особенности социальной мобильности монголов посредством изучения направлений миграций, денежных переводов, трудоустройства, проживания, образования монголов.

**Ключевые слова:** социальная мобильность; Монголия; каналы и формы социальной мобильности.

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### SOCIAL MOBILITY IN MONGOLIA IN FIRST DECADE OF 21TH CENTURY: DIRECTIONS, FORMS AND CHANNELS

Increasing of social mobility due to various reasons has become the significant traits of global society, but every country has own peculiarities. This paper examines how political, economic and social changes in Mongolia have shaped social mobility, with particular attention to spatial and occupational mobility as its most notable forms. Spatial and occupational mobility has become a survival strategy for Mongolians in a rapidly transforming society. We seek to identify peculiarities of social mobility of Mongolians outside of the homeland. More detailed lookup of examining external migration, the role of remittances, and the current structure of mobility channels will help to understand employment, residence, educational choices of Mongolians.

**Keywords:** Social mobility, Mongolia, channels and forms of social mobility

Urbanization in Mongolia has developed sharply since the second half of the last century due to industrialisation. Solongo (2007) analysed economic and development policies of the government, namely industrialization, the building of railroads and the expansion of the crop industry since the 1960s, as the causes of a visible change in population resettlement. From 1956-1969, the urban population increased three times while the rural population grew by only 10 percent. Around 44 percent of the total population of Mongolia lived in urban areas in 1969. By the mid-1970s, the urban population exceeded the rural population; in 1989, it constituted 57 percent of the total (Solongo 2007). According to the relevant census data, the average rate of population increase per annum was 9.5 percent (its highest) between 1956-1963, 3.0 percent from 1963-1969, 4.2 percent between 1969 and 1979, 3.1 percent from 1979-1989, 3.0 percent between 1989-2000, 3.8 percent from 2000-2008 and 4.2 percent from 2008-2012 (Tsetsenbileg and Purev, 2014).

The population increase in Ulaanbaatar greatly exceeds that of other cities (MOSWL 2009). The cancellation of the capital city registration fee for migrants in late 2003 has played a significant role in increasing their numbers. The population and housing census of 2010 (NSO 2011) counted around 544,813

citizens, 47.2 percent of Ulaanbaatar's population, that had been born in the city and had never lived elsewhere. The remaining 52.8 percent (or 609,477) had moved to the capital; of these, 19,078 people or 3.1 percent were born in Ulaanbaatar city, had moved to another place for a while, and then moved back to the city (NSO 2011). There are two directions in the social mobility patterns, like outbound and inbound migrations.

#### A. Outbound mobility

The freedom to choose one's place of residence and to travel abroad, brought about by the democratic changes of 1990, opened the doors to migration. Initial massive relocations occurred in 1990-1993, when 50,000 Mongolians of Kazakh nationality crossed the Mongolian-Kazakhstan border to settle permanently in Kazakhstan.

Mongolians started to move outside of the country in search of higher paid foreign jobs and more income opportunities for themselves and families. According to 2006 figures, official sources estimated that there are approximately 120,000 Mongolians residing abroad; however, unofficial sources in 2008 state that this figure might be as high as 250,000 (IOM 2012). According to the Population and Household Census from 2010 Mongolia has 107,410 citizens who have lived abroad for more than six months (NSO 2011) (Table 1).

Table 1.

## Number of Mongolians living abroad and reason for emigration

Country of destination	Number of people	Purpose to go abroad (%)			
		Study	Work contract	Work on own	Other
South Korea	29,534	22	40	22	16
USA	17,036	44	4	20	33
Czech	7,274	9	52	19	21
China	7,273	71	4	8	17
Japan	5,401	48	11	14	27
Russia	5,008	67	3	10	19
Germany	3,852	48	4	13	35
England	3,701	55	4	17	24
France	2,859	18	9	30	43
Turkey	2,645	54	8	30	8
Kazakhstan	2,523	57	6	20	18
Hungary	1,615	15	39	20	26
Other	18,419	36	8	23	33
	107,140	37	19	20	24

Source: NSO (2011)

South Korea, Japan and Czech Republic are the three countries that extend official contracts to workers from Mongolia; South Korea leads the list of Mongolian labour-receiving countries. On the South Korean embassy webpage, the Ambassador Lee Tae Ru has mentioned a total of 25,000 Mongolians currently residing and working in Korea (Lee 2015). Korean scholar Jin-Young Kim (2015) refers to 1,830 Mongolians in 2009 as marriage immigrants (98 percent female). There were 4,952 Mongolian students in Korea as of December, 2012, according to the Korea Immigration Service (Kim 2013).

According to a survey by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Mongolian Population and Development Association (MPDA) (2005), migrants' reasons for emigrating vary according to the country of destination. For migrants to the Republic of Korea, 84.5 percent answered that their poor

economic condition and unemployment motivate them to emigrate. Family and personal matters were the key motives for 73 percent of the migrants to the Czech Republic and 77.5 percent of the migrants living in the United States. A substantial proportion of respondents in the United States also cited poor economic conditions at home and unemployment. The percentage of migrants (27.4 percent) in the United States stating that they had emigrated in pursuit of higher education was higher than that of the other two study countries (UNFPA and MPDA 2005).

Profiles on work engagement of those living in the USA and Czech Republic appear in Table 2, which draws on surveys conducted in 2005 and 2007 by the Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Law of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences\* (Tsetsenbileg and Batjargal, 2014).

\* The study "The Mongols abroad" was conducted by Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Law (IPSL) of Mongolian Academy of Sciences among Mongolians living in America (2005, 2008) and in the Czech Republic (2007). In 2005 and 2008 were surveyed 138 and 151 people living in the Washington, DC, and Chicago at the age of 16 to 60 years. In 2007, in the Czech Republic were interviewed 196 people from 19 to 57 years living in 32 towns and villages (IPSL 2009).

Table 2: Mongolian immigrants' employment status: USA and Czech Republic (%)

	Mongols living in USA		Mongols living in Czech Republic
	2005	2008	2007
In general, physical labour /blue collar/	32.8	48.3	58.7
Intellectual labour /white collar/	10.4	2.6	5.3
Combination of both	14.2	11.9	26.5
Organization, service	38.0	35.1	6.3
Personal	-	-	0.5
I don't work	3.7	0.7	1.1
Total	100	100	100

Source: IPSL (2009)

Table 2 reveals that up to two-thirds of Mongolian migrants were engaged in manual or service jobs, generally on a lower pay scale. Office workers accounted for approximately 10 percent of Mongolians in the US in 2005, around 5 percent of those in the Czech Republic in 2007, and not quite 3 percent of those

in the US in 2008. As the author concluded after the survey interviews if Mongolian university-educated migrants in pursuit of higher pay only find "dirty, difficult and demanding" jobs in foreign countries, they actually lose social status with this downshift by losing professional touch with their fields of training; after five

to ten years of manual work, they would find it extremely difficult to restore former occupational skills. Should they seek to do so, they face re-training and competition with young job seekers. In addition, the interviewees mentioned age as a problem for job-seekers upon return: few jobs exist in Mongolia for “people of 45 plus,” unless acquaintances and friends offer vacancies. That issue raises another question: what are the long-term intentions of outbound migrants?

Most Mongolian migrants in the USA seek employment, although around a quarter of them pursue education as a personal investment. They usually intend to bring that knowledge back to Mongolia to create businesses or other gainful employment, and so earn higher incomes. On the other hand, the Czech-settled Mongolian migrants work mostly on labour contracts. Regarding their intentions for future residency and employment, most respondents answered that they would return to Mongolia sometime in the indefinite future. Less than 10 percent of them would likely choose the USA or Czech as permanent homes once they fulfil their migration goals would fulfil).

In the last five years, the outbound migration has slowed, due to new developments in mining, construction, and better work prospects at home. A reverse human cross-border movement began to develop.

#### A. Inbound migration

The Mongolian economy’s outstanding performance over the last decade, and its rapidly growing mining sector, make Mongolia an increasingly attractive destination for high-, semi-, and low-skilled migrants from abroad. Due to expansion in construction, roads, mining sectors the demand for workforce is on rise. Since the adoption of “Law of Mongolia on Dispatching Workforce Abroad and Bringing Workforce and Specialists from Abroad” dated April 12, 2001 (GOM 2001) there were as many as 5,626 in 2001, 8,075 in 2002, 7,532 in 2003, 7,250 in 2004, 8,221 in 2005, 12,577 in 2006, 18,504 in 2007, 12,180 in 2012 foreign nationals who were granted work permit in Mongolia (IOM 2012).

In 2012, 10,060 foreigners from 102 countries worked in Mongolia. In 2014, this number was decreased to 8,000 persons from 87 countries. Compared to the previous year, these figures went down by 892 people and 14 countries (NSO 2015). Those who came on labour contract to Mongolia were 34.6 percent from China, 22.9 percent from Kazakhstan, 7.4 percent from the Russian Federation, 6.4 percent from South Korea,

5.7 percent from Vietnam, 4 percent from the United States, 19 percent from other countries (NSO 2015).

In 2014, the foreign contract workers were working mostly in construction sector (1,724 or 21.6 percent), mining and quarrying (1,624 or 20.4 percent: compared to 2007 it was 44.4 percent), wholesale and retail, vehicle and motorcycle repair service (1,118 or 14 percent), education (908 or 11.4 percent), transportation and warehouse (477 or 6 percent), other sectors (1,064 or 13.4 percent) (NSO 2015).

#### Remittances inflows and out flows\*

As discussed above, one of the major reasons for working abroad is the goal of earning money and sending some of it to alleviate family poverty, purchase apartments and so on. This gives us another potential lens on migration: an attempt to expose the outcome of economic mobility for the country’s population or identify the remittances sent back home by in and out of the country flows of migrants.

According to a survey calculating remittances from Mongols living in Czech Republic (conducted by the Bank of Mongolia [2013]), there were 5,338 Mongolians registered as of November 2012; of these, 427 persons or 8 percent participated in the survey. The respondents replied that 85 percent of them regularly send remittances home; on average, the yearly remittance averaged \$2,041. Out of this amount, 50 percent went back through other channels than banking. The total estimated informal transfers of Mongolians in absolute value at the end of 2012 would amount to \$4.5 million, extrapolating from the survey sampling to the total migrant population remittances. (Bank of Mongolia 2013). Remittances spending covered the following: 50 percent to meet family needs, 20 percent to pay back loans, 11 percent to deposit into saving accounts, and 17 percent to invest in business and purchase apartments. (Bank of Mongolia 2013).

Numbers given by the Central Bank of Mongolia show the significant share of remittances the national economy: at its peak in 2004, the remittance amount transferred through the banking system (i.e., formal transfers) constituted 10 percent of GDP of the country. In 2012, remittances totalled about \$280 million (Bank of Mongolia 2014a). The remittances value from abroad and remittances from foreign workers in Mongolia appear in Table 3 as “in-flows” and “out-flows.” Table 3 shows that remittances inflows outweigh foreign workers’ outflows; however, the difference has dropped from 65 percent in 2009 down to 12 percent in 2013.

\* Remittances data improved and World Bank data is available for Mongolia from 2005 to 2013. (website)

**Table 3. Mongolia’s remittance flows from Mongolians abroad and foreign workers in Mongolia from 2011 to 2014 (USD 000s)**

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
In-country flows	191.5	247.9	249.3	286.2	211.0
Out-of-the country flows	71.4	118.5	190.8	245.3	185.6

Source: Bank of Mongolia (2014b).

Over the recent years the amount of money remittances coming from abroad is closing the gap between the amount of money remittances sending by foreign workers to their families from Mongolia. While employers especially in mining prefer better skilled technical expertise of foreign workers the improving programs of vocational technical schools provide more opportunities for Mongolians to work and live at home country rather than going abroad. Another untapped potential for utilizing a demographic window would be stimulating new private businesses across all economical sectors and regional centres.

### **Occupational mobility**

The rapid expansion of the economy and investment followed by the rapid growth of the mining, construction and service sectors made high rates of social mobility possible in the 2000s and the 2010s. These have resulted in transformations in several sectors of development and, overall, a vibrant economy.

Ronnas (2011) analysed the differentiation of the labour market into winners and losers, into those who attain productive employment and those who do not, and concluded that it is largely an issue of poor and unequal employability and labour market access. He identified a number of contributing factors, such as poorly functioning markets (not least credit markets), corruption and rent-seeking among governmental and private employees, poor geographic, vocational and social mobility; all these constrain the working poor and unemployed to move to more dynamic regions and sectors of the economy. He also signals that group membership may add further constraints: "Cultural and social stereotypes may result in a fragmentation of the labour market along gender, ethnic or other lines, thus confining large parts of the labour force to specific segments of the labour market" (Ronnas 2011: 19).

There are a severe sector imbalance between economic and employment growth. The agricultural sector accounted for nearly one-half of the labour force in 2000; however, since the mid-2000s some of the service sectors — in particular trade, hotel and restaurants — have become the main source of new jobs: for example, the number of workers in wholesale and retail trade and in motor vehicle and motorcycle repair has almost tripled, from 64,800 in 2000 up to 162,200 in 2007. Perhaps the most worrying aspect of this growth pattern has been the lack of reconstruction in the manufacturing sector. Manufacturing accounted for less than 3 percent of the GDP growth between 2003 and 2007, while employment in this sector continued to fall (NSO 2014a).

The high economic growth of the past decade did not result in sufficient creation of new jobs and did not result in any significant decrease of poverty (Ronnas 2011, p. 11). The sector composition of growth largely explains this pattern of rapid economic growth with little employment expansion. The mining sector comprised 32.9 percent of GDP in 2012 while employing only 46,700 people or 4.76 percent of the entire labour force, in contrast to the 31.12 percent employed as agriculture workers in the same year (World Bank 2014). Booming

mining's higher wages although it spurred its spinoff supply sectors and affected many livelihoods finally showed limitations and became more evident when political discourse chased out foreign mining investments and economy fell back to its one digit growth. The sobering reality still has not fully embraced neither by policymakers neither by ordinary citizens who wonder why crisis hit so heavily in 2014. The last year witnessed public demonstrations of teachers, medical workers, bus drivers, taxi drivers, and science workers demanding to take measures against job losses and low wages. The government literally dried out its coffers when the pensions and government salaries were late at the end of 2014. As Ronnas warned, overheated mining development would deteriorate other economic sectors crowding out domestic competitive developments in other sectors of economy and impeding regional initiatives.

### **Channels of social mobility**

The transition period destroyed the former channels of social mobility — military service, massive youth mobilizations channelling of talented individuals via education and upward career advancement, and party affiliation (Dash-Endon 2013). No new state-initiated, country-wide workforce recruitment and relocation has taken place since 1990s. The higher education system has undergone changes: tertiary education now consists of a handful of state-owned universities and private institutions (including foreign, jointly-established or domestic ones).

Literature on social mobility identifies education in a meritocracy as the main determinant of an individual's relative occupational and social mobility (Ham et al 2010). Mongolia is one of the countries with the most educated people and the highest educational achievement for the small size of its population. Higher education underwent its most rapid enrolment expansion in the years of transition, which ended strict and limited university enrolment systems and created freedom of choice in study specialties, occupations, and locations (Dash-Endon 2013). The number of higher education institutions increased dramatically in one decade, from 14 in 1991 to 178 in 2002, of which 136 are private. Enrolment in higher education institutions has enlarged. Table 5 summarizes the past two decades of growth.

In 1994, the Government began requiring public higher education institutions to charge tuition at levels sufficient to cover the entire cost of academic staff salaries, yet the number of students did not decrease and remains very high. ADB (2008) has estimated that 80 percent of secondary school graduates continue into postsecondary education (ADB 2008). Mongolia now has over 100 higher education institutions, but while most concentrate on the humanities, recent years have seen the establishment of private technical institutes. Education remains highly valued, and people consider it a direct route to upward mobility. (Tsetsenbileg and Batjargal, 2014) This emphasis on education seems to support Marshall's (1997) argument that it has displaced social class as the main driver of upward social mobility.

Table 4.

## Growth of the Higher Education Institutes (HEI) Sector in Mongolia, 1995-2015

	1995-1996	2005-2006	2014-2015
<b>Number of HEIs</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>101</b>
public	29	49	16
private	41	125	85
<b>Number of students</b>	<b>20.000</b>	<b>137.600</b>	<b>178,300</b>
public	29.167	91.800	
private	8.930	45.800	
<b>Number of vocational schools</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Number of students</b>	<b>7.987</b>	<b>23.200</b>	<b>42.800</b>

Source: Basic education indicators, 1996-2007(NSO 2015)

### Conclusion

The paper has demonstrated that socioeconomic changes and developmental policy possess strict links to social mobility in Mongolia. The country's heritage, its nomadic history and culture as well as its socialist legacy encourage spatial or horizontal mobility as an economic

choice. We have also seen that reasons for migrating reflect inequalities among different regions and between urban and rural areas, as well as unequal opportunities — for markets, jobs and income, education, and better living environments.

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