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LABOR MARKET ADAPTATION STRATEGIES OF REPATRIATES IN THE ZHETYSU REGION

Abstract. The labour market adaptation of ethnic Kazakh repatriates (*qandas*) in Kazakhstan has attracted growing scholarly attention, yet region-specific studies of employment integration remain scarce. This article investigates the labour market adaptation strategies of repatriates in the Zhetysu region, drawing on semi-structured interviews with *qandas* who migrated from China, Mongolia, and Uzbekistan. Thematic analysis of the qualitative data revealed three distinct strategies: entrepreneurial adaptation, characterised by self-employment and small business creation; professional adaptation, defined by employment in one's specialist field; and forced adaptation, involving entry into low-skilled or informal labour unrelated to one's qualifications. Adaptation outcomes are shaped by education level, language proficiency, Cyrillic literacy, social networks, and country of origin. Repatriates from Uzbekistan integrated most smoothly into formal employment, owing to a shared Soviet institutional heritage and Russian-language competence, whereas those from China faced the steepest barriers because of script incompatibility. Across all groups, kinship and compatriot networks were the primary channels for labour market entry. The entrepreneurial strategy emerged as the most prevalent response, not as a first choice but as a structural outcome of language barriers, credential non-recognition, and inadequate formal employment conditions.

Keywords: repatriate, *qandas*, Zhetysu region, labor market, adaptation strategies, migration, employment.

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Introduction

The political transformations of the late twentieth century triggered large-scale ethnic return migration across the post-Soviet space. Kazakhstan was among the first successor states to institutionalise a repatriation programme, launched in 1991, which encouraged ethnic Kazakhs from China, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, and other countries to return to their historical homeland (Zeveleva, 2014). At independence, ethnic Kazakhs formed only 40% of Kazakhstan's population. Driven by demographic and nation-building imperatives, the programme offered resettlement stipends, housing, employment assistance, and a simplified path to citizenship (Kuşçu, 2014; Zhang & Tsakhirmaa, 2022). Over one million repatriates have since settled in Kazakhstan.

Despite formal privileges, *qandas* have consis-

tently faced difficulties with socio-economic integration, particularly in the labour market (Kuşçu, 2014; Zeveleva, 2014; Werner et al., 2017). The scholarly literature has documented general adaptation patterns, but region-specific studies of labour market integration remain rare. This article addresses that gap by examining how repatriates adapt to the labour market in the Zhetysu region, one of Kazakhstan's primary repatriate-receiving areas, drawing on interview data with *qandas* from China, Mongolia, and Uzbekistan. Three objectives guide the study: to identify factors influencing repatriates' labour market adaptation; to analyse employment characteristics by country of origin; and to classify dominant adaptation strategies.

Comparative scholarship situates Kazakhstan's

repatriation policy within the broader context of post-Soviet nation-building. Zeveleva (2014) argues that a sustainable repatriation programme requires both ideological coherence and practical alignment with a state's demographic and labour market needs. Kazakhstan scores well ideologically; the programme is embedded in a „nationalising“ state agenda, but has faced persistent practical failures in housing, employment, and language. Kuşçu (2014) documents the contentious public debate surrounding the oralman programme, noting that critics emphasise the programme's socio-economic burdens while proponents frame repatriation as a form of national restoration. Crucially, unemployment and language barriers emerge as the most pressing integration obstacles in both scholars' analyses, particularly for those arriving from non-CIS states such as China and Mongolia.

Zhang and Tsakhirmaa (2022) offer a detailed analysis of Chinese Kazakh emigration dynamics, documenting a shift from socio-economically driven migration in the 2000s towards increasingly politico-culturally motivated movement since the late 2000s. Repatriates from China tend to be urban-based and cluster in restaurant management, small trade, and services, facing distinct barriers arising from a lack of Russian and Cyrillic literacy. The concept of „privileged exclusion“, in which formal state privileges coexist with social and professional marginalisation, captures a structural paradox central to labour market outcomes (Werner et al., 2017). Joo (2024) adds a political economy dimension: Kazakhstan's relatively permissive environment for migrants reflects a deliberate regime strategy under conditions of limited electoral competition rather than an ideological commitment to integration. Aumann and Titzmann (2018), studying diaspora migrants from the former Soviet Union in Germany and Israel, demonstrate that behavioural acculturation (language) lags behind ethnic identity maintenance, a pattern directly relevant to Chinese Kazakh repatriates, whose cultural identification with Kazakhstan far outpaces their functional linguistic integration.

Against this background, the present study investigates the labour market adaptation strategies of ethnic Kazakh repatriates (*qandases*) in the Zhetysu region of Kazakhstan, with particular attention to the structural conditions shaping their integration into the regional labour market. Three specific objectives guide the study: (1) to identify the key factors influencing repatriates' labour market adaptation in the Zhetysu region; (2) to analyse employment cha-

racteristics and adaptation pathways by country of origin (China, Mongolia, and Uzbekistan); and (3) to classify the dominant adaptation strategies employed by repatriates in response to linguistic, institutional, and structural barriers. By addressing these objectives, the study contributes to a growing body of region-specific research on repatriate integration and offers empirically grounded insights for policy development.

Materials and Research Methods

A qualitative methodology was employed, with semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection instrument. Informants were repatriates from China, Mongolia, and Uzbekistan residing in the Zhetysu region, selected to reflect variation in country of origin, professional background, employment type, and adaptation experience. Interview topics included employment trajectories, language barriers, occupational retraining, self-employment, and social network use. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns across respondents. An interdisciplinary approach, combining analysis, comparison, and interpretation of oral data, formed the methodological foundation.

Analysis

The findings confirm and extend patterns identified in the broader repatriation literature. The prevalence of the entrepreneurial strategy aligns with migration scholarship documenting migrants' tendency to opt for self-employment when adapting to a host country (Laruelle, 2013: 89). Compensatory entrepreneurship, in which professional qualifications are preserved but expressed through informal channels before formal institutional re-entry, emerges as a recurring structural response to blocked formal employment channels. That Cyrillic illiteracy compels repatriates into self-employment is well documented (Zhapakov et al., 2020: 149), and the inability to speak Russian is noted as excluding repatriates from competitive trade sectors. Domestic researchers note that differences in work organisation constitute a barrier to socio-psychological adaptation, even when the occupation itself remains the same (Duisenbekov, 2012: 106).

Comparative research indicates that most Kazakhstani repatriates are prepared for self-employment (Issaeva & Ki-Soo, 2025: 105). Policy proposals to support this trajectory include microfinance, tax incentives during the settlement period (Zhapakov et al., 2020: 153), and the proposed „*qandas* card“,

which would enable Kazakhs with established businesses abroad to expand into Kazakhstan before relocating (Khamzin, 2023: 91).

The professional adaptation pathway confirms Zeveleva's (2014) argument that a shared Soviet institutional heritage substantially eases integration. The Uzbekistani physician's experience illustrates the structural advantage conferred by Cyrillic literacy, common institutional frameworks, and mutual recognition of Soviet-era qualifications. The ultrasound specialist's case shows that professional adaptation can succeed through compensatory mechanisms within the labour collective: mastering Russian not only raises repatriates' educational level but also enables full membership of Kazakhstani society (Zhapakov et al., 2020: 149). Aumann and Titzmann's (2018) finding that behavioural acculturation (language) lags behind ethnic identity maintenance among diaspora migrants is directly illustrated here. This case illustrates internal migration as an enabling mechanism, with rural labour shortages driving urban relocation, a pattern documented by Zhapakov et al. (2020: 152).

The cases of forced adaptation extend Kurganskaya et al.'s (2024: 72) observation that over half of repatriates hold higher or vocational qualifications. Credentials without language and social capital are often insufficient for early integration. The trajectory from forced informal labour, through experience accumulation, to entrepreneurship illustrates the dynamic nature of repatriate adaptation. Policy literature recommends initial financial support and multi-year tax incentives to shorten this phase (Zhapakov et al., 2020: 153).

The "privileged exclusion" dynamic (Werner et al., 2017) is evident across all three strategies: formal ethnic privileges coexist with de facto professional marginalisation, particularly for Chinese Kazakhs. Joo's (2024) political economy perspective helps explain why this structural paradox persists: Kazakhstan's relatively permissive environment for migrants reflects a deliberate regime strategy, given limited electoral competition, rather than an ideological commitment to integration. Family networks that function as informal welfare systems when state support is insufficient represent a further structural feature consistent with the literature (Kuşçu, 2014).

The regional Employment and Social Protection Centre provided referrals to vacancies and facilitated access to specialist employment for those with recognised qualifications. The oblast's "Til" language centre, which offered Russian-language courses

until 2021, produced measurable outcomes; its graduates entered civil service, though the programme was discontinued due to low demand among repatriates. Strengthening language support, professional credentialing pathways, and targeted economic instruments for early-stage self-employment would shorten the period of forced adaptation and enable more *qandases* to realise their qualifications within the regional labour market.

Results

The Zhetysu region is among Kazakhstan's areas with the highest concentrations of repatriates. Repatriates' adaptation to the regional labour market is heterogeneous, shaped by professional qualifications, language proficiency, and economic resources. Three strategies emerged: entrepreneurial adaptation, professional adaptation, and forced adaptation. Respondents encountered language difficulties as the main obstacle upon arrival. One noted: „When I came to Kazakhstan, I saw Kazakhs speaking Russian. That made me wonder whether I needed to learn Russian too". A further barrier was literacy in Cyrillic: those using the traditional Kazakh script (*töte zhazu*) could not engage in written professional communication, directly impeding career entry. Shortages of vacancies in specialist fields and mismatches in work experience compounded these difficulties. These barriers align with findings by Kuşçu (2014) and Zhapakov et al. (2020), who identify language and unemployment as the two foundational challenges to integration.

Entrepreneurial Adaptation Strategy. The entrepreneurial strategy, oriented towards self-employment and small business creation, was the most prevalent among respondents. Despite professional qualifications, the majority engaged in small business, self-employment, or service provision: medical clinics, retail outlets, tutoring, furniture making, online trade, cargo services, beauty services, and home-based enterprises. Language barriers and illiteracy in Cyrillic were the primary reasons for being unable to secure specialist employment, a pattern documented in the literature (Kuşçu, 2014: 187). Unfavourable formal working conditions, excessive workloads, inflexible schedules, and low wages also pushed respondents towards self-employment.

The most vivid illustration came from a physician couple who had emigrated from China: „In China, I worked for 8 years as a paediatrician at a clinic in Kumul, and my husband worked as a general practitioner. But because we did not know

Russian or the Cyrillic alphabet, we could not get hospital jobs, and for 2 years, I sold polyethene bags by walking through the market. We could neither write in Russian nor in Kazakh; we only knew the traditional script. Eventually, other Kazakhs who had moved from China, not understanding the local healthcare system and facing language barriers, said to us: 'You are both doctors; sell us medicines from that side; we will come to you for treatment.' So, for 2 years, we sold medicines. Later, we opened our own private medical clinic. We treat with Chinese medicine. When we first opened, only qandas from China came. Now people of other nationalities come as well, and those who have moved back to their homeland bring local Kazakhs as interpreters".

This trajectory exemplifies compensatory entrepreneurship: professional qualifications are preserved but expressed through informal channels before formal institutional re-entry. That Cyrillic illiteracy compels repatriates into self-employment is well documented (Zhapakov et al., 2020: 149), and the inability to speak Russian is noted as excluding repatriates from competitive trade sectors. Work schedule constraints also prompted transitions. One respondent explained: „I left my specialist job because of an inconvenient work schedule. I had two young children to drop off and pick up from kindergarten, so I started bringing and selling clothes made from Mongolian wool. Now I have a store with a saleswoman".

Another respondent, a mathematics teacher, chose a different path in self-employment: „I left a business lycée due to an excessive workload and an inconvenient schedule. Now I rent a room in a business centre and work as a private mathematics tutor".

Domestic researchers note that differences in work organisation constitute a barrier to socio-psychological adaptation, even when the occupation itself remains the same (Duisenbekov, 2012: 106). Respondents without higher education typically engaged in livestock or crop farming as their primary economic activity. One respondent from Mongolia stated: „In Mongolia, we raised livestock. The first year, we bought 10 colts and left them with relatives who had already moved. The following year, our family moved to a rural area, and we tended our livestock. We sold the meat and milk".

Transitions from professional employment to entrepreneurship also took place. One respondent described moving from a colleague's clinic to independent practice: „I first worked at the clinic serving

people who had come from the same place as us. There were many clients. Later, I rented a room and registered as an individual entrepreneur. My wife and I are both in this field". These patterns align with the broader migration literature documenting migrants' tendency to opt for self-employment when adapting to a host country (Laruelle, 2013: 89). Comparative research indicates that most Kazakhstani repatriates are prepared for self-employment (Issaeva & Ki-Soo, 2025: 105). Policy proposals to support this trajectory include microfinance, tax incentives during the settlement period (Zhapakov et al., 2020: 153), and the proposed „qandas card", which would allow Kazakhs with established businesses abroad to expand into Kazakhstan before relocating (Khamzin, 2023: 91).

Professional Adaptation Strategy. The professional strategy identifies repatriates who secured employment in their field, enabling faster qualification development and labour market integration. This pathway was most accessible to education and healthcare specialists with recognised credentials. One physician from Uzbekistan described a seamless transition: „After moving, finding work in my specialty was not difficult. I was hired as a doctor at a city clinic even before receiving citizenship. They accepted my repatriate certificate. Since I graduated from Samarkand Medical University during the Soviet era, no credential recognition was required. I only attended professional development courses in the first two years and obtained 3 certificates. As a needed specialist, I was provided with a 2-room apartment by the city mayor".

This respondent's experience illustrates a structural advantage for repatriates from former Soviet republics: shared literacy in Cyrillic, common institutional frameworks, and mutual recognition of Soviet-era qualifications ease professional transition (Zeveleva, 2014).

A more complex case involved an ultrasound specialist trained in China. „I qualified as an ultrasound diagnostics specialist in China. After arriving, I first worked for a year at a private clinic. Then I heard that a city hospital needed a specialist and was hired as an ultrasound doctor. When I started, I could not write in Kazakh and could neither write nor speak Russian. At work, writing was not a problem. I am a doctor, and the nurse writes what I say. Now I have learned to write in Kazakh".

This case demonstrates that professional adaptation can succeed through compensatory mechanisms within the labour collective. Mastering Russian,

as noted in the literature, not only raises repatriates' educational level but also enables full membership of Kazakhstani society (Zhapakov et al., 2020: 149). Aumann and Titzmann's (2018) finding that behavioural acculturation (language) lags behind ethnic identity maintenance among diaspora migrants is directly illustrated here.

A primary school teacher from China followed a longer path: „I graduated from a university in China. In Kazakhstan, we first lived in a rural area with no school vacancies. I taught the children of fellow migrants and gradually learned the local curriculum. I sought out teachers who had arrived earlier and attended their courses. I had my diploma recognised in Astana. After 2-3 years, we moved to the city, where I was hired at a newly opened school”.

This case illustrates internal migration as an enabling mechanism, with rural vacancy shortages driving urban relocation, a pattern documented by Zhapakov et al. (2020: 152). The regional Employment and Social Protection Center provided referrals to vacancies, and the oblast's „Til” (Language) centre, operating until 2021, offered Russian courses, with graduates subsequently entering civil service.

Some respondents initially worked in their field before transitioning to entrepreneurship:

„I finished university in Almaty. But due to low salaries, I moved to Mongolia to join relatives, and we make furniture together. I am registered as an individual entrepreneur, pay taxes, and make pension contributions. Sometimes I want to find work in my specialty, but after so many years I worry it might be difficult”.

Forced Adaptation Strategy. The forced strategy characterises repatriates compelled to take up employment unrelated to their qualifications, driven by shortages of specialists, non-recognition of credentials, language barriers, and urgent income needs in the early years of settlement. This pathway is associated with unstable, informal, low-wage employment. Kurganskaya et al. (2024: 72) note that over half of repatriates hold higher or vocational education, with roughly a third having only secondary education, suggesting that language training alone would suffice for most. Yet the forced adaptation cases show that credentials without language and social capital are often insufficient for early integration.

One respondent described a decade of informal work before transitioning to formal employment: „I could not find work in my specialty, so I spent more than 10 years transporting passengers between two

cities. I learned about it from fellow villagers who had arrived before me. I bought a vehicle on credit because my mother worked at a state institution. But over time, noticing high demand for vehicle spare parts, I opened a shop selling auto parts”.

This trajectory, from forced informal labour through experience accumulation to entrepreneurship, illustrates the dynamic nature of repatriate adaptation. Policy literature recommends initial financial support and multi-year tax incentives to shorten this phase (Zhapakov et al., 2020: 153). Insufficient wages in formal employment also forced the adoption of supplementary strategies:

„I am a teacher, but due to the low salary and being the sole breadwinner, I do seasonal work”. Another respondent combined urban residence with rural employment: „We live in the city because our children attend school. We left our livestock with relatives in the village. My husband and I take on hired work tending livestock; sometimes I do cleaning work. My children have registered me as an individual entrepreneur and pay pension contributions on my behalf”.

These examples show that repatriates' labour market adaptation is driven by economic necessity and the need for social inclusion, with family networks serving as informal welfare systems when state support is insufficient.

Country of Origin and Adaptation Patterns. Marked differences emerged by source country. Repatriates from Uzbekistan, sharing Soviet institutional heritage, Cyrillic literacy, and Russian proficiency, were most likely to pursue professional adaptation, with compatriot networks facilitating entry into adjacent sectors when specialty vacancies were unavailable (construction, vegetable trade, services). Mongolian Kazakhs, generally Cyrillic-literate and Kazakh-speaking, faced fewer linguistic barriers, though wage dissatisfaction sometimes prompted entrepreneurial diversification.

Repatriates from China faced the most complex barriers. Töte zhazu literacy created a fundamental mismatch with Kazakhstan's Cyrillic-based institutional environment, acting as a structural disqualification across formal employment sectors. These repatriates concentrated in self-employment niches, including traditional medicine, massage, beauty services, hairdressing, and home-based enterprises, consistent with Zhang and Tsakhirmaa's (2022) documentation of Chinese Kazakhs clustering in urban services. This pattern also reflects the „privileged exclusion” dynamic (Werner et al., 2017): formal ethnic

privileges coexist with de facto professional marginalisation.

Across all groups, kinship and compatriot networks, rather than institutional actors, were the primary channels for labour market information. Co-ethnics from the same source country shared job leads, introduced employers, and provided start-up guidance, partially compensating for the absence of formal support structures (Kuşçu, 2014).

Conclusion

This study set out to identify the labour market adaptation strategies of repatriates in the Zhetysu region and to analyse the features of their socio-economic integration. The research confirmed that the adaptation process is heterogeneous, and three principal strategies were identified: entrepreneurial adaptation, professional adaptation, and forced adaptation.

The entrepreneurial strategy was the most common among respondents. Repatriates opened small businesses, registered as individual entrepreneurs, and entered self-employment across a range of sectors, including trade, services, beauty, medicine, tutoring, livestock farming, and home-based production. This strategy was chosen for a variety of reasons: inability to find employment in one's specialty due to language barriers and Cyrillic illiteracy, absence of suitable vacancies, low wages in formal employment, and inflexible work schedules. In many cases, repatriates who initially worked in hired or informal capacities, such as selling goods at the market, driving passengers, or tending livestock for others, gradually accumulated experience, observed local demand, and transitioned into independent enterprise. The willingness to independently find pathways into the labour market reflects a high level of adaptive capacity among qandases.

The professional strategy was characterised by repatriates securing employment in their specialty, enabling faster qualification development and labour market integration. This pathway was most accessible to those working in education and healthcare, where demand for qualified staff was stable. Country of origin played a decisive role: repatriates from Uzbekistan, who arrived with Cyrillic literacy, Russian proficiency, and Soviet-era credentials, integrated into formal employment most smoothly. Mongolian Kazakhs, fluent in Kazakh and literate in

Cyrillic, also adapted with fewer barriers. Repatriates from China faced the steepest obstacles, as literacy in their traditional script had no currency in Kazakhstan's institutional environment. Yet some managed to sustain professional practice through workplace compensation mechanisms and language acquisition over time. Internal migration from rural to urban areas was a recurring feature of the professional pathway, as city-based institutions offered more vacancies and better institutional support.

The forced adaptation strategy was applied to those who entered employment sectors unrelated to their qualifications, driven by shortages of specialist vacancies, non-recognition of credentials, language barriers, and the urgent need to provide for their families in the early years after arrival. Work in transportation, construction, seasonal agriculture, and general hired labour were the most common forms. This strategy was not always permanent: several respondents moved out of forced adaptation over time as language skills improved, social networks expanded, and economic resources accumulated.

The study also revealed that repatriates' labour market adaptation strategies are directly linked to their place of settlement. An urban location substantially increased the likelihood of professional integration, whereas rural placement was associated with agricultural self-employment or forced entry into the labour market. When professional adaptation was unavailable, individual capacity and kinship networks were the decisive factors. Across all groups, respondents relied primarily on compatriot networks rather than formal institutions to find employment and business opportunities.

The regional Employment and Social Protection Centre provided referrals to vacancies and facilitated access to specialist employment for those with recognised qualifications. The oblast's „Til" language centre, which offered Russian-language courses until 2021, produced measurable outcomes; its graduates entered civil service, though the programme was discontinued due to low demand among repatriates. Strengthening language support, professional credentialing pathways, and targeted economic instruments for early-stage self-employment would reduce the duration of forced adaptation and enable more qandases to realise their qualifications within the regional labour market.

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РЕПАТРИАНТТАРДЫҢ ЖЕТІСУ ОБЛЫСЫНЫҢ ЕҢБЕК НАРЫҒЫНА БЕЙІМДЕЛУ СТРАТЕГИЯЛАРЫ

Аңдатпа. Қазақстандағы этникалық репатриант-қазақтардың (қандастардың) еңбек нарығына бейімделуі ғалымдардың назарын көбірек аударады, алайда еңбек интеграциясы мәселелері бойынша өңірлік зерттеулер әлі де жеткіліксіз. Бұл мақалада Қытай, Моңғолия және Өзбекстаннан қоныс аударған қандастармен жартылай құрылымдалған сұхбаттар негізінде Жетісу аймағындағы репатрианттардың еңбек нарығына бейімдеу стратегиялары зерттеледі. Сапалы деректерді тақырыптық талдау үш түрлі стратегияны анықтады: өзін-өзі жұмыспен қамтумен сипатталатын кәсіпкерлік бейімделу және шағын бизнес құру; мамандығы бойынша жұмысқа орналасумен анықталатын кәсіптік бейімделу; және біліктілігімен байланысты емес, біліктілігі төмен немесе бейресми жұмысқа орналасуды көздейтін мәжбүрлі бейімделу. Бейімделу

нәтижелері білім деңгейі, тілді меңгеру, кириллицадағы сауаттылыққа, әлеуметтік желілерге және шыққан еліне байланысты. Өзбекстаннан келген қазақтар кеңестік институционалдық мұра мен орыс тілін білудің арқасында ресми жұмыспен қамтуға оңай бейімделді, ал Қытайдан келген репатрианттар жазудың сәйкес келмеуіне байланысты ең үлкен кедергілерге тап болды. Барлық топтар үшін туыстық байланыстар мен отандастармен байланыс еңбек нарығына шығудың негізгі арналары болды. Кәсіпкерлік стратегия ең кең таралған реакцияға айналды, бірақ алғашқы таңдау ретінде емес, тілдік кедергілердің, құжаттарды мойындамаудың және ресми жұмысқа орналасудың жеткіліксіз шарттарының құрылымдық нәтижесі ретінде байқалды.

Кілт сөздер: репатриант, қандас, Жетісу облысы, еңбек нарығы, көші-қон, бейімделу стратегиялары, жұмыспен қамту.

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СТРАТЕГИИ АДАПТАЦИИ РЕПАТРИАНТОВ К РЫНКУ ТРУДА ОБЛАСТИ ЖЕТЫСУ

Аннотация. Адаптация этнических казахов-репатриантов (кандасов) в Казахстане к рынку труда привлекает все большее внимание ученых, однако региональных исследований по вопросам трудовой интеграции по-прежнему недостаточно. В этой статье исследуются стратегии адаптации репатриантов в регионе Жетысу к рынку труда на основе полуструктурированных интервью с кандасами, которые мигрировали из Китая, Монголии и Узбекистана. Тематический анализ качественных данных выявил три различные стратегии: предпринимательскую адаптацию, характеризующуюся самозанятостью, и создание малого бизнеса; профессиональная адаптация, определяемая трудоустройством по специальности; и вынужденная адаптация, предполагающая трудоустройство на низкоквалифицированную или неформальную работу, не связанную с квалификацией. Результаты адаптации зависят от уровня образования, владения языком, грамотности на кириллице, социальных сетей и страны происхождения. Репатрианты из Узбекистана легче всего адаптировались к формальной занятости благодаря общему советскому институциональному наследию и знанию русского языка, в то время как репатрианты из Китая сталкивались с самыми серьезными препятствиями из-за несовместимости письменности. Для всех групп родственные связи и связи с соотечественниками были основными каналами выхода на рынок труда. Предпринимательская стратегия стала наиболее распространенной реакцией, но не в качестве первого выбора, а как структурный результат языковых барьеров, непризнания документов и неадекватных условий официального трудоустройства.

Ключевые слова: репатриант, кандас, область Жетысу, рынок труда, миграция, стратегии адаптации, трудоустройство.

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