

Sociological Assessment of the Success of Reintegration of Migrants Returning from Russia to Kyrgyzstan



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Abstract. The relevance of the research is due to the fact that the phenomenon of reintegration of migrants returning from Russia to Kyrgyzstan has not been sufficiently studied. Little research has been done on the problems migrants face when reintegrating into the society of their country of origin; such problems include, for example, economic and social situation, the socio-psychological well-being of migrants and the level of reintegration. The aim of the study is sociological assessment of the sustainability of reintegration of migrants returning from Russia to Kyrgyzstan. Scientific novelty consists in the concretization of the term “reintegration” as a multidimensional process that allows migrants to restore the economic, social and psychosocial relationships necessary to move forward in life; and the term “sustainable reintegration”, as the returnees achieve a certain level of economic self-sufficiency, social stability and psychosocial well-being; in the development of empirical indicators of sustainable reintegration, such as the ability of a

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returned migrant to provide for themselves and their family, participate in economic activities, housing, build strong social relationships and be involved in the local community, psychological well-being, the ability to use basic services, and the absence of migration plans after return. We provide a sociological assessment of the sustainability of reintegration of migrants returning from Russia to Kyrgyzstan, based on the results of a questionnaire survey of 515 return migrants, and focus group interviews with 37 return migrants in Kyrgyzstan in October – November 2022. It has been revealed that the reintegration of return migrants from Russia to Kyrgyzstan is quite sustainable in all spheres: economic, social and socio-psychological. At the same time, the returnees have certain problems reflected in the insufficiently high level of justification of expectations from the return and in possible intentions to migrate again to Russia or other countries.

Key words: return migration, voluntary return, reintegration, sustainable reintegration, indicators.

Introduction

Return migration is becoming increasingly important for Kyrgyzstan, being a certain resource for the development of the state and society. Since the end of February 2022, there has been an outflow of labor migrants from Russia to Kyrgyzstan¹. Voluntary return² and reintegration have many aspects that are important for the provision of effective assistance to migrants, implementation of voluntary return and reintegration programs. In this regard, the problem of migrants' reintegration returning to national labor markets has recently received more and more attention³. It has become evident that there are problems faced by returning migrants (Kazmierkiewicz, 2017; Susan, 2012). However, reliable information and knowledge on the reintegration of returnees is still rather limited, fragmented and sometimes contradictory. Within the framework of this article we will consider the processes of reintegration sustainability of migrants

who have returned to Kyrgyzstan, as this country is one of the main suppliers of labor migrants to Russia.

In Kyrgyzstan, there is a growing awareness of the need to make reintegration sustainable and beneficial to returnees and their families, as well as to the country of origin as a whole⁴. Sustainable reintegration is achieved in the absence of re-emigration. In addition, understanding the multi-dimensional and multi-level nature of the reintegration process accompanying return migration is necessary for the development of programs and the provision of successful assistance to returnees.

Due to the impossibility of statistical study of reintegration of returnees to Kyrgyzstan, the lack of official data on the level of reintegration sustainability, many aspects of this topic remain understudied, which requires additional attention from researchers.

The aim of our work is to assess the sociological reintegration sustainability of migrants returning from Russia to Kyrgyzstan. Objectives of the study

¹ There is an outflow of labor migrants in Russia. *Vedomosti*, March 28, 2022. Available at: <https://www.vedomosti.ru/society/articles/2022/03/28/915601-ottok-trudovih-migrantov> (accessed: May 10, 2023).

² The concept of "voluntary return" is used in relation to those who return to their country of origin of their own free will and at their own expense.

³ IOM Report. Mapping Kyrgyz diasporas, compatriots and migrants abroad (2022). Available at: https://kyrgyzstan.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11321/files/documents/Mapping-of-Kyrgyz-Diaspora-RU_0.pdf

⁴ Assessment of local authorities' attitudes toward return migration and their readiness to reintegrate returning migrants. (2021). UNDP in the Kyrgyz Republic, IOM in the Kyrgyz Republic. Available at: https://kyrgyzstan.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11321/files/documents/IOM-UNDP%2520seed-funding_Ru_27_10_21_2%2520%25281%2529.pdf

are: to clarify the concepts of “reintegration” and “sustainable reintegration”; to develop empirical indicators of sustainable reintegration; to identify the features of reintegration of return migrants, sociological assessment of economic and social situation of return migrants and their socio-psychological well-being; to identify the problems that return migrants face during reintegration.

The research results can be used in creating political, institutional, economic and social conditions for the sustainable reintegration programs in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, taking into account the dynamics of return migration and the propensity of the population to return home.

Theoretical aspects of the research

J.-P. Cassarino (Cassarino, 2004) is one of the first to attempt to scientifically explain the variety of factors that shape the reintegration patterns of migrants in the country of origin. Continuing the analysis of migrants’ integration patterns in another work, the author argues that reintegration patterns are related to the following points: first, the attitude toward reintegration problems of returned citizens in the country of origin (reintegration environment); second, the duration and type of migration experience; conditions and reasons motivating return both in the country of origin and in the host country, i.e. “circumstances both before and after return” (Cassarino, 2008, p. 97). He also notes that readiness to return provides a response to different reintegration forms that depend on how resources, if at all, can be mobilized before and after return (Cassarino, 2008).

Earlier, R. King reasoned that the duration of the migration experience abroad should be optimal for migrants to be able to invest their human and financial capital acquired abroad when they return (King, 1986). Later, C. Dustmann also proposed to take into account factors or conditions (favorable or not) in host and origin countries that induce return, i.e. pre- and post-return conditions (Dustmann, 2001).

The issues concerning success or failure of reintegration of returned migrants began to be substantiated by F. Cerase (Cerese, 1974). The author proposed a typology of returnees, which can be seen as an attempt to show that situational or contextual factors in countries of origin should be taken into account as a precondition for determining whether reintegration is successful or unsuccessful. It means that he proposed to analyze the success or failure of reinsertion by comparing the “real” economy and society in the home country with returnee’s expectations, showing how complex the links between these expectations and the social and economic context in the country of origin are.

There is no doubt that A. Cerase’s conclusions are crucial for the formation of approaches to the analysis of reintegration problems in return migration in the future. A few years later, J. Gmelch (Gmelch, 1980) developed A. Cerase’s typology, emphasizing the need to correlate migrants’ intentions to return with the motives for return and the reintegration success.

We should mention another important factor influencing the reintegration process of return migrants. According to R. Rogers (Rogers, 1984), reintegration depends significantly on the motivation for return. This point of view was supported by a large number of researchers. Their research works concern the return motives of study migrants (Glaser, Habers, 1974), labor migrants (Kubat, 1984), highly skilled migrants (Lowell, 2001; Cervantes, Guellec, 2002); returnee entrepreneurs (Cassarino, 2000), as well as refugees and asylum seekers (Al-Ali et al., 2001; Ammassari, Black, 2001).

Reintegration issues were further developed in the work of K. Kuschminder (Kuschminder, 2017), in which reintegration strategies were linked to the following parameters: migrant’s cultural orientation in relation to the host and home country; inclusion in social networks; self-identification and sense of belonging to the country of origin, as well as access

to rights, institutions and labor resources in the market in the country of origin. The paper shows that the reintegration process is multidimensional and intersectional, perceived differently by men and women, depends on the social and professional status of returnees, and is linked to the structural and cultural context of return.

Consequently, there are different approaches to the definition of this concept in the modern literature devoted to the problems of reintegration⁵. In the Russian and Kyrgyz scientific segment, the analysis of repatriation of return migrants has been analyzed only recently and, as a rule, at the empirical level. Such works include the studies of S.V. Ryazantsev (Ryazantsev, Gnevasheva, 2021), L.F. Delovarova (Delovarova, 2020), S.Y. Sivoplyasov, S.M. Voinov, E.E. Pis'mennaya (Sivoplyasova et al., 2022), G.I. Osadchaya (Osadchaya et al., 2023) and a number of other authors.

We assume that reintegration is “a multi-dimensional process that enables individuals to re-establish the economic, social and psychosocial relationships necessary to sustain life, livelihood and dignity and achieve inclusion in civilian life”⁶. Therefore, a comprehensive approach to analysis is needed, which encompasses three aspects of reintegration: 1) the economic dimension, which looks at reintegration as a way for returnees to return to economic life and sustainable livelihoods; 2) the social dimension, i.e. from the perspective of returnees' access to public services and infrastructure in countries of origin, including access to health, education, housing, justice and social protection systems; 3) the psychosocial dimension,

which includes the reintegration of returnees into personal support networks (friends, relatives, neighbors) and civic organizations⁷. It is important to note that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in its comprehensive approach to reintegration includes the needs of migrants not only at the individual level, but also at the level of local communities and within the general structures of states. In addition, there are no rigid boundaries between the aspects; they can overlap, as they are interconnected by nature. They can also influence each other, sometimes at different levels.

In addition, a comprehensive approach to reintegration should address important issues such as the promotion of migrants' rights, gender equality, partnerships and cooperation, and improve data collection, monitoring and evaluation of reintegration. Such an approach tends to be the responsibility of many different stakeholders: national and local authorities in host and origin countries, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs) and other civil society organizations that play different roles in reintegration activities⁸.

In the framework of the study, we focus only on the individual level of reintegration of migrants who returned from Russia to Kyrgyzstan, i.e. the extent to which reintegration enabled returned migrants to resume and revitalize economic, social and psychosocial relations necessary for life support, livelihood and integration into public life.

The concepts of “return” and “reintegration” are closely linked to the concept of “sustainability”. While there is currently no unified approach to the category of “sustainable reintegration”, as part of an integrated approach, IOM defines sustainable

⁵ *Return Migration: International Approaches and Regional Peculiarities in Central Asia: Studies Aid (2020)*. International Organization for Migration (IOM) – UN Agency on Migration. Almaty. 242 p. P. 142; *Handbook on Migration Terminology. Russian-English. IOM (2011)*. International Migration Law. Glossary on Migration. P. 82.

⁶ IOM. International Migration Law 34 (2019). In: *Glossary on Migration*. Available at: <https://publications.iom.int/books/international-migration-law-ndeg34-glossary-migration>

⁷ *Reintegration Handbook. Practical Guidance on the Design, Implementation and Monitoring of Reintegration Assistance*. (2019). International Organization for Migration (IOM).

⁸ *Ibidem*.

reintegration as follows: “Reintegration can be considered sustainable when returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions as a matter of choice, rather than necessity”⁹. It is worth noting that this approach does not establish a direct correlation between successful reintegration and further migration after return. A subsequent migration act can take place regardless of whether reintegration is successful, partially successful or unsuccessful. On the other hand, return migrants will be interested in reintegration if they believe that re-migration or reliance on a family member abroad would be the best option for their continued physical or socio-economic survival and well-being¹⁰.

Thus, returned migrants should fully participate in economic and social life, and having a sense of psychosocial well-being upon return is crucial for their sustainable reintegration. Therefore, the sustainability of reintegration depends not only on the returnee, but also on the local community and the structural situation characterizing the return environment.

In our opinion, empirical indicators of sustainable reintegration can be the ability to provide for oneself and one’s family; participation in economic activities with certain benefits; availability of housing; strong social relations and involvement in the local community; positive impact of return on the family and other actors; psychological well-being (sense of security, positive

attitude to lifestyle); the ability to use basic services (education, healthcare, etc.); absence of migration plans.

Methodology and methods of the research

Sociological assessment of reintegration sustainability of migrants returning from Russia to Kyrgyzstan is based on the results of the research on “Return migration from Russia to Kyrgyzstan” conducted by the Institute for Demographic Research of the FCTAS RAS and the Kyrgyz Russian Slavic University (Kyrgyz Republic, Bishkek). The project leader was G.I. Osadchaya. The methodological strategy of the research included quantitative and qualitative surveys: 515 return migrants (questionnaire survey; targeted selection on one attribute: labor migrants who returned from Russia), 37 return migrants (focused interview; snowball method on one attribute: labor migrants who returned from Russia;) in Kyrgyzstan in October – November 2022.

The aim of the questionnaire survey was to identify the reintegration features of return migrants from Russia into Kyrgyz society, including assessment of their economic and social situation; socio-psychological well-being, as well as to identify the problems that return migrants face during reintegration. The purpose of the focused interviews was to concentrate on reintegration problems faced by respondents after their return to Kyrgyzstan.

We selected the respondents in Kyrgyzstan for the questionnaire survey by non-random sampling using the method of purposive selection on one attribute: labor migrants who returned from Russia; 515 returning labor migrants who worked in Russia were interviewed, including men – 59.2%, women – 40.8%, Kyrgyz citizens – 72.4%, Russian citizens – 26.6%. By age, they were the following: 14–25 years old – 44.1%, 26–45 years old – 50.1%. To select the respondents for the focused interview, we used the “snowball” method based on one attribute: labor migrants who returned from Russia. Interviews were conducted with 37 returning Kyrgyz labor migrants

⁹ IOM. *Towards an Integrated Approach to Reintegration in the Context of Return* (2017). International Organization for Migration (IOM). Geneva. Available at: https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1486/files/our_work/DMM/AVRR/Towards-an-Integrated-Approach-to-Reintegration.pdf

¹⁰ *Reintegration Handbook. Practical Guidance on the Design, Implementation and Monitoring of Reintegration Assistance*. (2019). International Organization for Migration (IOM).

who worked in Russia: 22 men, 15 women, 36 Kyrgyz citizens, and 1 Russian citizen.

We analyzed the data obtained from the quantitative survey using mathematical and statistical methods (statistical package SPSS 22.0): frequency analysis, conjugation table analysis.

The survey results showed that migrants, returned to Kyrgyzstan, settled in Bishkek (78.6%), in Osh (11.3%) and other settlements (10.1%).

Main research results

Assessing the economic situation of migrants returning from Russia to Kyrgyzstan

The employment issue is the basic foundation for sustainable reintegration of returned migrants. The economic aspect of reintegration is the re-inclusion of migrants in the economic system of Kyrgyzstan, giving them the opportunity to earn a living for themselves and their families¹¹ and to participate in economic activities for their own benefit.

The quantitative study showed that 82.7% of returned migrants work in various sectors of the Kyrgyz economy, which is 8.1% less than they worked in Russia. We can assume that this figure

combines those who have not yet managed to find a job and those who came to Kyrgyzstan as Russian citizens and students.

In terms of shares, the distribution of those working in Russia and Kyrgyzstan by economic sectors did not change significantly. However, among the returnees the share of those working in cab and service sectors was smaller (*Tab. 1*).

More than half of the respondents (53.3%) noted that their work in Kyrgyzstan was “well” and “mostly well” paid. Such opinion was typical for 53.5% of men and 53.0% of women. At the same time, 64.2% of returned respondents answered that their work in Kyrgyzstan now corresponds to their knowledge, abilities and opportunities, but women were more pessimistic when answering this question (59.7% of women vs 67.4% of men).

Quite a high share of respondents, positively assessed the level of payment for their work and the relevance of work to their knowledge and abilities, was associated with a high assessment of the level of satisfaction with work in general after return: 62.4% of interviewed return migrants were “fully satisfied” or “mostly satisfied” with their jobs. Only every

Table 1. In which economic sector did you work in Russia and do you work now in Kyrgyzstan?, % of respondents

Economic sector	In Russia	In Kyrgyzstan	Difference
1. Industry	5.8	7.2	+1.4
2. Building	8.9	6.8	-2.1
3. Transport, taxi	11.3	6.8	-4.5
4. Agriculture	3.3	3.5	+0.2
5. Trade	19.6	19.8	+0.2
6. Education, science	4.1	7.4	+3.3
7. Healthcare	4.1	3.1	-1.0
8. Service sector	22.7	18.6	-4.1
9. Information technology sector (IT)	5.2	6.2	+1.0
10. Housing and utilities sector	1.7	0.6	-1.1
11. Delivery, courier service	4.1	2.7	-1.4
12. Do not work	8.0	16.1	+8.1
Other	1.2	1.2	0

According to: The results of the research on “Return migration from Russia to Kyrgyzstan” conducted by IDR FCTAS RAS and Kyrgyz Russian Slavic University (Kyrgyz Republic, Bishkek). We interviewed 515 respondents. The project leader was G.I. Osadchaya.

¹¹ IOM. International migration law 25 (2011). In: *Glossary on Migration*. 2nd edition. Available at: https://documentation.lastradainternational.org/Isidocs/Inernational%20migration%20law_25.pdf

tenth respondent among both men and women was completely dissatisfied with their job (Tab. 2, 3).

In our opinion, high job satisfaction can also be explained by the fact that return migrants from Russia had no special difficulties in finding a job and employment. Characteristic answers of the majority of interviewees were: *“No, I have not experienced such difficulties”*; *“No, everything is great”*. Although the work did not always suit the respondents completely and was considered by some of them as temporary: *“No, I found a job quickly, so far everything suits me, but it is not my permanent favorite job – it is just an income”*. Only two respondents out of 37 said that they had problems with employment: *“Yes, as I said before it is very hard*

with work. There are few vacancies, the salary is low”; *“Yes, I don’t know where to work here. I don’t want to go to the labor exchange. I sometimes drive a taxi”*.

The availability of work after returning to Kyrgyzstan and the level of its payment affected a fairly high assessment of material security: 47.6% of respondents assessed their material security, and 44.1% – the security of their family as good; 48.6 and 39.0% (respectively, their own and their family’s) – as satisfactory. Only 5.8% of return migrants believe that they are materially well off. It is worth noting that there are three times more of those who assess the possibilities of providing for their families as low (bad). In our assessments, men are in solidarity with women (Tab. 4).

Table 2. Do you think that your work in Kyrgyzstan now corresponds to your knowledge, abilities and opportunities?, % of respondents

Respond option	For all those interviewed	Male	Female
Yes	28.3	30.7	24.9
Mostly yes	35.9	36.7	34.8
Yes + mostly yes	64.2	67.4	59.7
No	14.2	14.3	13.9
Mostly no	21.6	18.3	26.4
No + mostly no	35.8	32.6	40.3
According to: research results on “Return migration from Russia to Kyrgyzstan”.			

Table 3. Do you think that your work in Kyrgyzstan now generally satisfies you?, % of respondents

Respond option	For all those interviewed	Male	Female
Yes	25.7	28.4	21.7
Mostly yes	36.7	33.4	41.4
Yes + mostly yes	62.4	61.8	63.1
No	11.4	12.0	10.3
Mostly no	26.3	26.1	26.6
No + mostly no	37.7	38.1	36.9
According to: research results on “Return migration from Russia to Kyrgyzstan”.			

Table 4. Material security of respondents (own and their family) after returning from Russia to Kyrgyzstan, % of the number of respondents

Question	Respond option	For all those reviewed	Male	Female
What opportunities do you have in Kyrgyzstan now to provide for your family?	Bad	5.8	6.6	4.8
	Satisfactory	46.6	45.2	48.6
	Good	47.6	48.2	46.7
At present, after your return to Kyrgyzstan, how are you financially secure?	Bad	16.9	16.7	17.1
	Satisfied	39.0	36.7	42.4
	Good	44.1	46.6	40.5
According to: research results on “Return migration from Russia to Kyrgyzstan”.				

Assessing the social situation of migrants returning from Russia to Kyrgyzstan

The social aspect of integration, as we have noted above, concerns returning migrants' access to public services and infrastructure in Kyrgyzstan, including access to housing, healthcare, education, adequate food and clothing, vacation opportunities, physical education and sports, and social protection systems.

It is necessary to have a place of living to return. Returned migrants usually have no problems with housing conditions; 62.3% of respondents assess their housing conditions as good, 33.4% – as satisfied.

Usually, all respondents live with their family: *“We live in Bishkek. There are three of us living together: my husband, me and our son”*; *“I live with my wife and children in Bishkek, I have my own apartment near the center”*; some live with their parents: *“We live in the house of my husband’s parents. We live with my husband’s parents and my daughter”*; *“I live in Bishkek, I live with my parents and my wife”*; *“I live in Bishkek in Kyzyl-Asker, there are four of us in the family: mom, dad, sister and me”*. Two respondents rented an apartment at the time of the survey: *“I live in Bishkek. At the moment I live alone, but there is a brother and sister in the family”*;

“I live with a friend, we rent an apartment. We both work, the rhythm of life is fast, I work all the time, I only sleep at home”.

The assessment of educational opportunities is somewhat lower. Only 44.7% consider them good, and 38.6% – satisfactory. Almost every fifth migrant who returned from Russia evaluates them as bad.

Taking into account rather high material security, returned migrants (both men and women) assess their food and clothing as good. Only 1.9% of respondents noted that they have poor nutrition and 3.7% – that they dress poorly.

In order for life to be full after returning to Kyrgyzstan, there should be possibilities for free time, vacations, physical training and sports. This opportunity should be facilitated by a good environmental situation. The lowest assessment was given to the environmental situation: only 37.9% of respondents assessed it as good, 22.9% – as bad. Every fifth gave a negative assessment of opportunities for vacation. More than a half of respondents positively assessed the opportunities for physical training and sports (55.1%), for spending free time (53.2%; *Tab. 5*).

The interviews show that returned migrants usually spend their free time with their families: *“In our free time we try to spend more time with our*

Table 5. Respondents' assessment of social conditions of their life in Kyrgyzstan after returning from Russia, % of respondents

Question	Respond option	%
What is your current environmental situation in Kyrgyzstan?	Bad	22.9
	Satisfactory	39.2
	Good	37.9
What opportunities do you have in Kyrgyzstan now to spend vacations, vacations?	Bad	19.2
	Satisfactory	37.1
	Good	43.7
What opportunities do you have in Kyrgyzstan now to spend your free time?	Bad	8.5
	Satisfactory	38.3
	Good	53.2
What opportunities do you have in Kyrgyzstan now for physical training and sports?	Bad	11.1
	Satisfactory	33.8
	Good	55.1
According to: research results on “Return migration from Russia to Kyrgyzstan”.		

families”; *“Family composition: sister and nephews. In our free time we walk around the city”; “We like to walk with our family, visit places, with children, go to playgrounds”; “We try to go to new places that have opened in Bishkek, because we were away for a long time”.*

Respondents without family, as a rule, spend their free time with friends: *“I spend my free time with friends”; “Everything is fine, in my free time I can do sports, meet friends”.*

Assessing the socio-psychological well-being of migrants who returned from Russia

In addition to problems with work, migrants who have been abroad for a relatively long period of time face the loss of personal and professional networks, which leads to psychological discomfort. Therefore, the socio-psychological aspect of migrants’ reintegration includes restoring or creating a circle of communication at work, with friends, relatives, neighbors, and sometimes in the family¹².

During their stay in Russia, family relations among returning migrants, both men and women,

as a rule, did not deteriorate: 72.2% of respondents assess them as good. Women are a little more demanding (Tab. 6).

The socio-psychological aspect of reintegration also includes the establishment of at least satisfactory and better good relations with colleagues and workmates: two out of three respondents managed to establish good relations. Only every second returnee managed to establish good relations with their immediate supervisor (Tab. 7).

The psychological aspect of reintegration also includes the revival of values, traditions and way of life in the country of origin. As the results of the interviews showed, the majority of interviewees during their stay in Russia did not move away from the national traditions of their country: *“My culture is Kyrgyz, only the language has changed – it has become more literate”; “Since I lived with girls from Kyrgyzstan, lived and worked mainly at home, I retained my mentality”; “I follow the norms of Kyrgyz culture”; “I am Kyrgyz by nationality, and from childhood I was instilled with Kyrgyz mentality and culture”.*

Table 6. What are your current family relations in Kyrgyzstan?, % of respondents

Respond option	For all those reviewed	Male	Female
Bad	3.5	4.3	2.4
Satisfactory	24.3	22.3	27.1
Good	72.2	73.4	70.5

According to: research results on “Return migration from Russia to Kyrgyzstan”.

Table 7. Assessment of relations of migrants who returned from Russia at work in Kyrgyzstan, % of respondents

Questions	Respond option	For all those reviewed	Male	Female
What is your relationship with your direct supervisors at work in Kyrgyzstan now?	Bad	7.7	8.2	7.0
	Satisfactory	38.5	37.2	40.3
	Good	53.8	54.6	52.7
What is your relationship with your colleagues, workmates at work in Kyrgyzstan now?	Bad	7.5	7.5	7.4
	Satisfactory	24.6	23.5	26.1
	Good	67.9	68.9	66.5

According to: research results on “Return migration from Russia to Kyrgyzstan”.

¹² IOM. International migration law 25 (2011). In: *Glossary on Migration*. 2nd edition. Available at: https://documentation.lastradainternational.org/Isidocs/Inernational%20migration%20law_25.pdf

However, staying in Russia, especially for a long time, has brought elements of Russian culture into the lives of returned migrants. We should note that this interaction is not conflictual, but sometimes it is not fully accepted by those around them: *“Of course, I borrowed the norms and morals of Russian culture”, “I definitely borrowed elements of Russian culture; we try to combine them, but some people do not understand”; “Because I lived in Russia for a long time, I borrowed their culture too and I combine them”.*

Integral assessment of reintegration sustainability

As we have noted above, the achievement of sustainable integration is determined by the fact that returned migrants will be able to make further migration decisions as a matter of choice rather than necessity. Every fifth man and every fourth woman are planning to return. The share of those who found it difficult to answer this question is 29.1% of all the interviewed respondents (Tab. 8). In our opinion, this is primarily due to the stability of the socio-economic situation in Kyrgyzstan. The main motives that may influence the decision to migrate to Russia again in this case are the following: *“The need for labor activity in life, as it was not very active in Bishkek”; “Unstable situation in the state, unemployment in the country”; “If unemployment starts in the KR, then repeated migration”; “Unstable politics in the country, unemployment”; “If there is unemployment, one can migrate”.* Repeated migration to Russia is also conditioned by the motives of more profitable work: *“Good earnings and stable work”, “If suddenly there is an invitation for a good job, with good earnings”, “Bankruptcy and good working conditions in Russia, or some very good job offer”, “If there is a job offer, of course, permanent*

or not, it makes no difference”, “Good salary”. Those who have dual citizenship and can be mobilized, say the following statements: *“The end of the war, it is scary to return, in case we are called up”; “If the situation in Russia improves, perhaps we will come back, we will return to earn money”; “Well, if there is some destabilization in Kyrgyzstan again, and Russia is calm, then it is quite possible”.*

A number of returnees think about possible repeated migration, but not to Russia, but to other countries: *“I would like to visit Tashkent or Europe, I would like to work in both of those places”; “Yes, I would like to visit European countries”; “Yes, if I move, then to Europe”; “I want to go to the USA, I filled out a green card”; “To Europe, I want to see something new”; “I would like to go to Germany”; “I am considering the possibility of migration to Korea, England, Japan”; “I would like to go to Germany to work as a doctor”; “I can see America”; “I would like to go to other countries, for example to Georgia”; “Maybe to Greece”; “I would like to go to Arab countries to earn money”.* These reflections do not show a clear attitude toward repeated migration.

A factor influencing repeated migration is also the fulfillment of expectations of returning to Kyrgyzstan from Russia. Only every fourth returnee fully met their expectations. Despite the fact that the share of those whose expectations were not fully met is small and amounts to only 8.0%, another 23.3% of respondents are pessimistic about their return to Kyrgyzstan. Fluctuations in assessments between men and women are insignificant. Every tenth interviewed man and every tenth woman found it difficult to give an answer regarding justified expectations from their return (Tab. 9).

Table 8. Plans for repeated migration to Russia, % of respondents

Question	Respond option	For all those reviewed	Male	Female
Are you planning to migrate to Russia again in the next three months?	Yes	22.1	19.3	26.2
	No	48.7	50.5	46.2
	Hesitate to respond	29.1	30.2	27.6
According to: research results on “Return migration from Russia to Kyrgyzstan”.				

Table 9. Justification of expectations from returning to Kyrgyzstan from Russia, % of respondents

Respond option	For all those reviewed	Male	Female
Yes	25.8	29.5	20.5
Rather yes, than no	32.2	29.5	36.2
Yes + rather yes, than no	58.0	59.0	56.7
Rather no than yes	23.3	22.3	24.8
No	8.0	7.9	8.1
No + rather no than yes	31.3	30.2	32.9
Hesitate to respond	10.7	10.8	10.5
According to: research results on "Return migration from Russia to Kyrgyzstan".			

Conclusion

Based on the research results, we suppose that the reintegration of return migrants from Russia to Kyrgyzstan is quite sustainable in all spheres: economic, social and socio-psychological. The vast majority of returnees are not planning to migrate again in the near future. At the same time, the returnees have certain problems, which affected the insufficiently high level of justification of their expectations from returning to Kyrgyzstan and possible intentions to migrate again to Russia or other countries.

We should say that in Kyrgyzstan in recent years the issues of reintegration of returning migrants have begun to be reflected in the strategic documents of the state. However, as soon as the decision points regarding the return of migrants and their reintegration are rather abstract and do not reflect specific measures, there are no targeted reintegration programs. This issue is also insufficiently recognized in other spheres of state policy, for example, in the general strategy of social protection of the population. In our opinion, a systematic monitoring

is needed to assess the reintegration sustainability of returnees at institutional, local and individual levels. Data collected through a monitoring of assistance to return migrants, including their feedback, is an important source of information on the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of reintegration measures. An ongoing monitoring will help to assess the impact of different types of reintegration support on the individual migrant and the local community as a whole. This measure should be taken into account in the design and implementation of reintegration programs, where assistance should include economic, social and psychosocial aspects and be designed and delivered in cooperation with return migrants themselves.

It is important to remember that reintegration is not an isolated process but part of a broader migration management strategy in Kyrgyzstan. Strengthening support for reintegration at the national level can contribute to more effective migration management in general and to the achievement of other development and governance goals.

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