

Forced Emigration and Family Adaptation: Psychological and Social Challenges of Russian Political Emigrants

Gulnara Idrisova

ORCID: 0009-0006-9996-3684

Abstract

The large-scale emigration of Russian citizens following the political developments of 2022 has attracted growing scholarly attention. While existing research has primarily focused on the legal, political, and institutional dimensions of forced migration, comparatively less attention has been devoted to the experience of family adaptation after relocation. This article examines politically motivated emigration as a family-centered social process rather than an individual act of migration.

Using a qualitative analytical approach, the study explores recurring patterns observed in the experiences of Russian political emigrant families during the initial stages of adaptation abroad. The analysis draws upon personal testimonies, interviews, legal materials, reports of international organizations, migration research, and observations from Russian-speaking emigrant communities available by the end of 2024. Rather than measuring the prevalence of particular experiences, the study identifies common mechanisms shaping psychological adjustment, changing family roles, children's adaptation, and the maintenance of transnational family relationships.

The findings suggest that adaptation following politically motivated emigration extends far beyond legal residence or economic integration. Families must simultaneously reconstruct everyday routines, redistribute responsibilities, support children's adjustment, maintain emotional connections with relatives remaining in Russia, and make long-term decisions under conditions of continuing uncertainty. Adaptation therefore emerges as a collective family process rather than a series of individual experiences.

The article argues that understanding politically motivated migration through the family provides a broader sociological perspective on forced migration and contributes to the study of long-term social integration under conditions of political displacement. The conceptual framework proposed here may also assist future comparative research examining family adaptation in other contexts of politically motivated migration.

Keywords

Forced migration; political emigration; family adaptation; Russian emigrants; psychological adaptation; social integration; transnational families; migration sociology; family sociology; qualitative research

1. Introduction

The large-scale departure of Russian citizens following the events of February 2022 has become one of the most significant migration processes in contemporary Europe. Although individuals left the country under different legal and personal circumstances, a considerable proportion of these departures shared one common characteristic: migration was not primarily motivated by economic opportunity but by the perception that remaining in Russia had become incompatible with personal safety, professional integrity, or deeply held political convictions. For many families, emigration was experienced not as a voluntary life choice but as an unavoidable response to rapidly changing political conditions.

Existing migration research has traditionally devoted substantial attention to labor migration, educational mobility, refugee movements, and long-term integration into host societies. These areas have generated an extensive body of scholarship describing economic adaptation, cultural integration, language acquisition, and identity formation. Considerably less attention, however, has been given to families whose migration was shaped by political uncertainty while occurring outside the formal framework of refugee camps or organized humanitarian resettlement. The experiences of such families often combine characteristics of forced migration and voluntary relocation without fitting comfortably into either category.

This distinction is particularly important because the social consequences of politically motivated emigration extend beyond the physical act of crossing an international border. Families frequently leave behind careers, property, professional networks, educational trajectories, elderly parents, and long-established systems of mutual support. The migration process therefore represents not a single event but the beginning of a prolonged period of institutional, psychological, and social adjustment during which nearly every aspect of everyday life must be reconstructed under unfamiliar conditions.

The family occupies a central position within this process. Decisions concerning migration are rarely made by isolated individuals. Parents consider the safety and education of their children. Adult children remain concerned about elderly relatives who continue living in Russia. Spouses frequently confront unequal opportunities for employment, language acquisition, and professional recognition. As responsibilities are redistributed, established family roles often

undergo significant transformation. Adaptation therefore becomes a collective rather than an individual process.

Political emigration also introduces forms of uncertainty that differ from those commonly associated with economic migration. Families must make long-term decisions while remaining uncertain about their legal status, future residence, financial stability, and the possibility of returning home. These uncertainties influence not only practical planning but also emotional well-being, interpersonal relationships, and perceptions of personal identity. Even when immediate physical safety has been achieved, psychological adaptation often continues long after relocation.

By the end of 2024, sufficient evidence had begun to emerge suggesting that the experiences of Russian political emigrants constitute a distinct field of sociological inquiry. Numerous personal accounts, legal proceedings, media interviews, and observations from migrant communities indicate recurring patterns extending across countries of destination and differing personal circumstances. Although individual experiences vary considerably, many families describe remarkably similar difficulties during the first stages of adaptation abroad.

This article examines forced emigration as a family-centered process rather than an individual act of relocation. It argues that successful adaptation depends not only upon legal status or economic resources but also upon the ability of families to reconstruct everyday social life under conditions of prolonged uncertainty. By focusing on the family as the primary unit of analysis, the study seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of how politically motivated migration reshapes interpersonal relationships, psychological resilience, and long-term social integration.

2. Research Design and Methodological Approach

Research examining politically motivated migration encounters methodological challenges that differ from those commonly associated with studies of labor mobility or refugee resettlement. Decisions leading to departure are often made under rapidly changing political circumstances, while many of the most significant consequences emerge only after relocation has already taken place. Family adaptation therefore cannot be understood solely through migration statistics, legal classifications, or demographic indicators. The most meaningful transformations occur within everyday social life, where changes in interpersonal relationships, emotional well-being, and patterns of responsibility gradually become visible over time.

For this reason, the present study adopts a qualitative analytical approach. Its objective is not to estimate the number of Russian political emigrants or to measure the prevalence of particular psychological conditions among migrant families. Rather, the study seeks to identify recurring patterns of adaptation that appear across different family experiences despite considerable variation in age, profession, destination country, legal status, and personal circumstances.

The family is treated as the principal unit of analysis. While migration decisions are often described through the experiences of individual applicants, political activists, journalists, or professionals, the consequences of relocation rarely remain confined to one person. Parents, spouses, and children continuously influence one another's decisions, emotional responses, and strategies of adaptation. Examining the family as an interconnected social system therefore provides a more comprehensive understanding of the long-term consequences of forced migration than focusing exclusively on individual biographies.

The analysis draws upon several complementary categories of material available by the end of 2024. These include personal testimonies published by Russian political emigrants, interviews appearing in independent media, legal documents prepared during asylum proceedings, reports produced by international organizations, publications addressing migration and social adaptation, and observations reported within Russian-speaking emigrant communities. No individual source is regarded as independently sufficient. Instead, attention is directed toward similarities that recur across different forms of documentation and different national contexts.

An important feature of this research concerns the distinction between adaptation as a legal process and adaptation as a social process. Legal procedures determine whether an individual receives permission to remain in a particular country. Social adaptation addresses a different question: how families gradually reconstruct everyday life after migration has already occurred. These processes frequently develop at different speeds. Some families achieve legal stability while continuing to experience considerable psychological or social difficulties. Others adapt socially despite prolonged legal uncertainty. Treating these dimensions separately allows for a more accurate interpretation of the migration experience.

The study also recognizes several important limitations. The available material primarily reflects families willing to describe their experiences publicly or within legal proceedings. Those who avoid public discussion, remain socially isolated, or continue fearing possible consequences for relatives in Russia are less likely to appear within accessible sources. Consequently, the present research does not claim statistical representativeness. Its purpose is analytical rather than quantitative: to identify mechanisms of family adaptation that repeatedly emerge across documented experiences and to develop a conceptual framework capable of explaining those recurring patterns.

This methodological perspective reflects the broader assumption that forced migration should not be understood as a single event marked by departure from one's country of origin. Rather, it represents the beginning of an extended process during which families repeatedly adjust to new institutional environments, reconstruct social relationships, redefine future expectations, and gradually establish new forms of everyday stability. It is this continuing process of adaptation, rather than the moment of migration itself, that forms the central object of the present study.

3. Forced Migration Beyond Individual Relocation

Migration is frequently described as the movement of individuals from one country to another. Statistical reports count migrants as separate persons, legal systems evaluate applications individually, and administrative procedures focus primarily on the status of each applicant. While this perspective is appropriate for many legal and demographic purposes, it provides only a partial understanding of politically motivated emigration. In reality, migration rarely represents an individual experience. It is more accurately understood as a process affecting an entire network of family relationships.

For families leaving Russia after February 2022, departure often required decisions extending far beyond the immediate question of personal safety. Parents considered the education and emotional well-being of their children, adult children worried about elderly parents remaining in Russia, and spouses frequently faced unequal professional opportunities after relocation. Practical decisions concerning employment, housing, language acquisition, financial resources, and legal status became inseparable from questions of family responsibility. Migration therefore transformed not only geographic location but also the internal organization of family life.

This distinction becomes particularly important when comparing politically motivated migration with more traditional forms of labor mobility. Economic migration is frequently associated with expectations of professional advancement, improved living standards, or educational opportunities. Although such migration may involve significant personal sacrifice, it is generally accompanied by identifiable long-term objectives. Political emigration presents a different situation. Families often leave without a clearly defined destination, without established employment, and without knowing whether return will ever become possible. Decisions are shaped less by anticipated opportunities than by the perceived impossibility of remaining under existing political conditions.

Another distinguishing feature concerns the role of uncertainty. In many migration processes uncertainty gradually decreases after relocation. Employment becomes more stable, legal status is clarified, children enter schools, and social networks slowly expand. Families forced to leave for political reasons frequently experience a different trajectory. Even after reaching physical safety, uncertainty often persists because future legal status, immigration procedures, financial security, and the situation of relatives remaining in Russia remain unresolved. Adaptation therefore unfolds under conditions in which the future itself remains difficult to predict.

This prolonged uncertainty influences family decision-making in subtle but significant ways. Choices that would normally be regarded as ordinary, such as renting permanent housing, changing employment, investing in education, or purchasing property, are frequently postponed because families cannot confidently estimate how long they will remain in their new country. Everyday planning increasingly becomes organized around temporary solutions. What initially appears to be a short transitional period may gradually evolve into a long-term pattern of living without clearly defined expectations.

At the same time, migration redistributes responsibility within the family. Individuals who previously occupied well-established professional or social positions often encounter situations in which language barriers, licensing requirements, or unfamiliar labor markets reduce their ability to perform traditional roles. Other family members may unexpectedly assume greater economic responsibility or become primary sources of emotional support. These adjustments rarely occur through deliberate planning. More often they emerge gradually as families respond to practical challenges encountered during everyday life.

Understanding forced migration through the experiences of the family rather than the individual also reveals an important sociological characteristic of political emigration. Adaptation is not achieved when one person successfully integrates into a new society. Instead, stability develops only when family relationships themselves acquire a new equilibrium capable of supporting everyday life under unfamiliar institutional and cultural conditions. The success of migration therefore depends not solely upon external opportunities provided by the receiving society but also upon the family's internal capacity to reorganize roles, expectations, and patterns of mutual support.

For this reason, politically motivated migration should be understood not simply as relocation across national borders but as the beginning of a long-term process of family reconstruction. The physical journey may be completed within days, yet the social journey often continues for years. Recognizing this distinction provides the foundation for examining the psychological dimensions of family adaptation considered in the following section.

4. Psychological Adaptation Under Conditions of Forced Emigration

Psychological adaptation following politically motivated emigration differs from many other forms of migration because the circumstances that prompted departure often remain unresolved after relocation. Families may reach physical safety while continuing to experience persistent uncertainty concerning legal status, financial stability, relatives remaining in Russia, and the possibility of future return. As a result, adaptation frequently develops alongside continuing psychological tension rather than after it has ended.

One of the most frequently reported experiences during the first months after emigration is the loss of predictability. Everyday routines that previously required little conscious attention must be reconstructed within an unfamiliar social environment. Finding housing, communicating in another language, enrolling children in school, understanding administrative procedures, and rebuilding professional careers become simultaneous challenges. Although each task may appear manageable in isolation, their accumulation often creates a persistent feeling that ordinary life has become unusually complex.

Another important feature concerns the coexistence of relief and anxiety. Many families describe an immediate sense of security after leaving Russia, particularly when departure followed fears

of criminal prosecution, political persecution, or other forms of state pressure. At the same time, this relief rarely eliminates emotional strain. Worry about relatives who remain in Russia, uncertainty regarding immigration procedures, financial insecurity, and the absence of familiar social networks continue to influence everyday decision-making. Psychological adaptation therefore does not follow a simple progression from fear to stability. Different emotional states frequently coexist throughout the adaptation process.

Parents often encounter an additional source of psychological responsibility. Their own emotional reactions become closely connected with the well-being of their children, who must simultaneously adjust to unfamiliar schools, languages, and social environments. Many parents consciously attempt to reduce visible signs of stress in order to preserve a sense of stability within the family. While this strategy may help children adapt during the initial stages of relocation, it can also postpone the adults' own emotional adjustment by encouraging the suppression rather than the discussion of personal difficulties.

Psychological adaptation also depends upon the gradual restoration of personal agency. During the period immediately preceding departure, many decisions are shaped by external circumstances that leave little room for long-term planning. Once relocation has occurred, families slowly begin to regain the ability to make choices based on future aspirations rather than immediate necessity. This transition often marks an important turning point in adaptation. The ability to plan education, employment, professional development, or children's future gradually replaces the constant focus on short-term survival.

These observations suggest that psychological adaptation should not be understood primarily as recovery from a single traumatic event. Rather, it represents a continuing process through which families reconstruct confidence in their ability to influence their own future despite prolonged uncertainty. Emotional stability emerges gradually through the restoration of everyday routines, social relationships, and a renewed capacity for long-term planning. Understanding this process provides the foundation for examining how forced emigration reshapes family roles and relationships, which is the focus of the following section.

5. Family Transformation After Emigration

Forced emigration rarely changes only the geographical location of a family. It also alters the internal structure of everyday life. Responsibilities that had developed gradually over many years often require rapid redistribution after relocation. Established routines disappear, familiar support networks become inaccessible, and family members must assume new roles in response to circumstances that few had anticipated before leaving their country.

One of the first transformations concerns the distribution of practical responsibilities. Tasks that were previously shared with relatives, friends, colleagues, or established institutions become concentrated within the immediate family. Parents who once relied upon grandparents for

childcare may suddenly find themselves without any external assistance. Everyday activities such as communicating with schools, visiting medical institutions, completing administrative procedures, or resolving legal matters demand significantly more time and emotional energy than before migration. As a result, ordinary household responsibilities often become a central element of the adaptation process.

Professional roles frequently undergo equally significant changes. Individuals who had established careers in Russia may temporarily lose the opportunity to work within their previous professions because of language barriers, licensing requirements, or differences in labor market conditions. In many families, one spouse enters the workforce sooner while the other assumes greater responsibility for children and household management. These arrangements are usually determined by practical necessity rather than personal preference and may differ considerably from the family's previous patterns of everyday life.

Such changes inevitably influence family relationships. Long-standing expectations concerning financial responsibility, decision-making, and mutual support often require reconsideration. For some families, these adjustments strengthen cooperation by encouraging greater flexibility and shared responsibility. For others, prolonged uncertainty, economic pressure, and the absence of familiar social support may increase interpersonal tension. Adaptation therefore represents not only an external process of integration into a new society but also an internal process of renegotiating family roles.

An additional challenge arises from the loss of informal social networks. Before migration, many families relied upon grandparents, siblings, neighbors, and close friends for practical assistance, emotional support, and childcare. Relocation frequently interrupts these relationships without providing immediate alternatives. The family consequently becomes more self-contained, relying primarily upon its own internal resources to solve problems that had previously been addressed collectively. While this increased interdependence may strengthen emotional bonds, it can also intensify the consequences of conflict because opportunities to seek support outside the household become more limited.

Children often accelerate these transformations. Their adaptation to new educational systems, languages, and social environments requires sustained parental involvement during the initial stages of settlement. Parents frequently postpone their own professional or educational goals in order to provide stability for their children, assist with language acquisition, and support the development of new social relationships. Family priorities therefore become increasingly centered on creating a predictable environment for younger members, even when adults themselves continue experiencing uncertainty about the future.

Despite these challenges, family transformation should not be understood solely as a process of loss. Many emigrant families gradually develop new forms of resilience through cooperation, flexibility, and shared problem-solving. Responsibilities become redistributed, new routines emerge, and confidence slowly returns as everyday life becomes more predictable. Adaptation

does not restore the family to its previous condition. Instead, it produces a different family structure shaped by new experiences, altered expectations, and the practical realities of life in another country.

This transformation provides an important foundation for understanding the experiences of children, whose adaptation often follows a different trajectory from that of adults. Their position between two linguistic, cultural, and social environments introduces additional challenges that deserve separate consideration.

6. Children Between Two Social Worlds

Among all members of politically emigrant families, children often experience adaptation differently from adults. While parents remain closely connected to memories of their previous lives, professions, and social environments, children are simultaneously engaged in two parallel processes. They must adapt to unfamiliar educational and cultural institutions while continuing to develop emotionally and socially at stages of life in which stability is particularly important. Their adjustment therefore cannot be understood simply as a consequence of migration. It is also shaped by the ordinary developmental challenges associated with childhood and adolescence.

One of the earliest difficulties concerns language. Even when children begin acquiring the language of the host country relatively quickly, language learning extends beyond vocabulary and grammar. It also involves new patterns of communication, classroom interaction, humor, cultural references, and everyday social expectations. During this period many children find themselves capable of participating in school activities while still feeling uncertain about informal communication with classmates. This distinction often influences the speed with which new friendships are established and a sense of belonging gradually develops.

Educational adaptation presents additional challenges. School systems differ not only in language but also in teaching methods, relationships between students and teachers, expectations regarding classroom participation, and approaches to assessment. Children frequently encounter unfamiliar educational norms at the same time that they are adjusting to a new social environment. Success in one area does not necessarily guarantee confidence in another. A child may perform well academically while continuing to experience social isolation, or may establish friendships relatively quickly despite initial academic difficulties.

Family relationships play a particularly important role during this period. Parents often become the primary source of emotional stability while simultaneously managing their own adaptation to a new country. Children, in turn, are frequently more sensitive to parental anxiety than adults realize. Even when political circumstances are not discussed openly within the household, uncertainty concerning legal status, employment, or the future may influence the emotional atmosphere of everyday family life. Adaptation therefore develops through continuous

interaction between the experiences of parents and children rather than through separate individual processes.

Many families also encounter the challenge of preserving cultural continuity while encouraging successful integration into a new society. Parents frequently wish their children to maintain the Russian language, family traditions, and relationships with relatives who remain abroad. At the same time, successful adaptation requires active participation in the linguistic and cultural life of the receiving country. These objectives are not inherently contradictory, yet they require families to balance continuity with change rather than choosing exclusively between them.

Over time, many children begin moving comfortably between different cultural environments. They acquire new linguistic skills, develop friendships, and gradually become familiar with educational institutions and everyday social practices in the host country. Adults often adapt more slowly because their professional identities, previous careers, and long-established social roles are more difficult to reconstruct after migration. This difference sometimes leads to an unexpected reversal within family life. Children become confident participants in the new environment while parents continue navigating unfamiliar institutional systems. Such changes may alter patterns of communication and authority within the household, requiring both generations to adjust to evolving family dynamics.

These observations suggest that the adaptation of children should not be evaluated solely through academic achievement or language acquisition. More fundamentally, it reflects the family's ability to create an environment in which continuity, emotional security, and openness to a new society can coexist. The long-term integration of politically emigrant families therefore depends not only upon the successful adaptation of individual children but upon the capacity of the family as a whole to support their development while reconstructing its own everyday life under unfamiliar conditions.

7. Maintaining Transnational Family Ties

For many politically emigrant families, migration does not mark the end of relationships with their country of origin. While everyday life gradually shifts to a new social environment, emotional, cultural, and family connections often remain closely linked to Russia. Parents, grandparents, siblings, and lifelong friends frequently continue living in the country, making complete separation neither possible nor desirable. As a result, many emigrant families develop patterns of life that extend across national borders.

Modern communication technologies make it possible to maintain regular contact despite physical distance. Video calls, messaging applications, and social media allow family members to remain involved in everyday events, celebrate important occasions, and provide emotional support. At the same time, these forms of communication also remind emigrants of the distance separating them from relatives who continue living under very different political and social

circumstances. Conversations that once occurred naturally within shared physical space increasingly become scheduled moments connecting two distinct realities.

Many families also experience a continuing sense of responsibility toward relatives who remain in Russia. Adult children often worry about aging parents whose health may deteriorate while international travel becomes increasingly complicated. Parents remain concerned about children who have established independent lives abroad. Geographic distance limits the possibility of providing practical assistance during illness, family emergencies, or other unexpected events. Emotional support therefore becomes increasingly important precisely when direct personal involvement becomes more difficult.

Political circumstances introduce additional complexity into these relationships. Families frequently avoid discussing sensitive public issues during conversations with relatives, particularly when there is uncertainty regarding possible surveillance, legal consequences, or differing political views. This tendency does not necessarily eliminate family communication, but it may gradually narrow the range of subjects discussed openly. Everyday conversations continue, while politically significant experiences often remain unspoken. Such self-restraint reflects not only concerns about personal safety but also a desire to preserve family relationships despite growing differences in political perception.

At the same time, prolonged separation may alter expectations concerning the future. Many families initially leave Russia believing that relocation will be temporary and that return will become possible within a relatively short period. As months pass, children begin adapting to new educational systems, adults establish professional relationships, and everyday life becomes increasingly connected to the receiving society. The longer adaptation continues, the more difficult it becomes to determine where the family's long-term future will ultimately unfold. This uncertainty creates an emotional tension between preserving attachment to the country of origin and investing fully in a new life abroad.

Despite these challenges, transnational family relationships frequently become an important source of resilience. Emotional continuity with relatives remaining in Russia helps many emigrants preserve a sense of personal identity during periods of rapid social change. At the same time, successful adaptation increasingly depends upon the ability to balance these continuing connections with the practical demands of everyday life in the receiving country. Rather than choosing between two separate worlds, many politically emigrant families gradually learn to exist within both simultaneously, maintaining meaningful relationships across borders while constructing a stable future in a new social environment.

8. Discussion

The analysis presented in this study suggests that politically motivated emigration should be understood as a long-term process of family transformation rather than a discrete act of

international relocation. While migration law necessarily focuses on the legal status of individual applicants, the lived experience of relocation demonstrates that adaptation unfolds primarily within the family as a social institution. The consequences of migration extend simultaneously across psychological, social, economic, and cultural dimensions, influencing everyday relationships long after the initial decision to leave has been made.

This perspective challenges a tendency found in portions of migration research to evaluate successful adaptation primarily through measurable indicators such as employment, legal residence, language acquisition, or educational attainment. These factors undoubtedly influence integration and remain essential for long-term stability. However, the findings discussed throughout this article indicate that they do not fully capture the experience of families whose migration was shaped by political circumstances. A family may achieve legal security while continuing to experience emotional instability, uncertainty regarding relatives who remain in the country of origin, or difficulties reconstructing established patterns of everyday life. Conversely, families facing prolonged legal uncertainty may nevertheless demonstrate considerable resilience through strong internal relationships and shared strategies of adaptation.

The study also highlights the importance of examining migration at the level of the family rather than the individual. Decisions concerning employment, education, childcare, financial planning, and social integration are rarely made independently. They emerge through continuous negotiation among family members whose opportunities, expectations, and rates of adaptation often differ substantially. Viewing migration through the experiences of a single individual therefore risks overlooking the complex interactions that shape long-term adjustment within the household.

Another observation concerns the role of uncertainty as a continuing social condition. In politically motivated migration, uncertainty frequently survives the act of relocation itself. Questions concerning immigration procedures, professional recognition, financial security, and future residence may remain unresolved for extended periods. Families therefore adapt not after uncertainty has disappeared but while uncertainty continues to influence everyday decisions. This distinction helps explain why adaptation often progresses unevenly and why periods of apparent stability may coexist with persistent emotional strain.

The findings further suggest that adaptation should not be interpreted as a process of replacing one social identity with another. Rather, politically emigrant families gradually construct forms of belonging that incorporate elements of both their country of origin and the society in which they establish a new life. Cultural continuity, family traditions, language, and emotional attachment to relatives remaining in Russia coexist with participation in new educational systems, labor markets, and local communities. Integration therefore emerges not through abandonment of previous identities but through their gradual reorganization within a different social environment.

Finally, this study demonstrates the value of interdisciplinary approaches to politically motivated migration. Legal analysis explains the institutional framework governing asylum and residence. Sociology contributes an understanding of changing family relationships and social roles. Psychology provides insight into adaptation under conditions of prolonged uncertainty. Examined together, these perspectives reveal dimensions of forced migration that remain less visible when considered separately. Future research may therefore benefit from extending family-centered approaches to other populations experiencing politically motivated displacement, allowing broader comparative analysis across different countries and institutional settings.

The family is often viewed as the primary source of stability during periods of social disruption. The evidence considered in this study suggests that this stability is not simply preserved after forced migration but actively reconstructed through everyday cooperation, flexibility, and mutual support. Understanding this process contributes to a more comprehensive interpretation of political emigration, demonstrating that adaptation is shaped not only by external institutions but also by the internal capacity of families to redefine their relationships under fundamentally changed circumstances.

9. Conclusion

The large-scale emigration of Russian citizens following the political developments of recent years has created new challenges for migration research. While considerable attention has been devoted to legal protection, asylum procedures, and the political causes of departure, considerably less emphasis has been placed on the everyday experience of family adaptation after relocation. This study has approached politically motivated emigration not as an individual event but as a continuing process that reshapes family relationships, social roles, and patterns of everyday life.

The analysis demonstrates that successful adaptation depends upon substantially more than legal status or economic integration. Families must simultaneously reconstruct routines, redistribute responsibilities, support children's adjustment, maintain relationships with relatives who remain in the country of origin, and make long-term decisions despite continuing uncertainty. These processes unfold gradually and often continue long after immediate questions of physical safety have been resolved.

Viewing forced migration through the family rather than the individual provides a broader understanding of political emigration as a social phenomenon. Family members adapt at different speeds, experience different forms of uncertainty, and assume changing responsibilities throughout the migration process. The stability eventually achieved by many emigrant families emerges not from the disappearance of uncertainty but from their growing ability to cooperate,

reorganize everyday life, and develop new forms of mutual support within an unfamiliar institutional and cultural environment.

The findings presented in this article also suggest that adaptation should be understood as an active process of social reconstruction rather than passive adjustment to external circumstances. Families do not simply accommodate themselves to a new country. They gradually create new patterns of interaction that combine continuity with change, preserving important elements of their previous lives while developing the practical and emotional resources necessary for long-term integration.

Although this study focuses on the experiences of Russian political emigrants during the period immediately following the large-scale migration that began in 2022, the conceptual framework proposed here may prove relevant for examining family adaptation in other contexts of politically motivated displacement. Comparative research involving different countries, legal systems, and migrant communities may help clarify which observed patterns are specific to the Russian experience and which reflect broader characteristics of forced migration as a family-centered social process.

Ultimately, politically motivated emigration represents far more than a change of residence. It marks the beginning of a profound reorganization of family life that extends across psychological, social, cultural, and institutional dimensions. Understanding this transformation contributes to a more comprehensive interpretation of forced migration and highlights the central role of the family in shaping both the immediate experience of displacement and the long-term prospects for successful integration into a new society.

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