

Survey of Russian Immigrants living in the US (age 20 to 40)
Conducted in May-June 2004

Survey Findings
August 2004

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About the survey and the sample

The whole thing started with an idea of surveying the circle of my friends and acquaintances – younger Russian Jewish immigrants (like myself) – who live and work in and around New York city. It seemed interesting to learn in a systematic way about who we are, where we came from, what we did back in the USSR, what we do now in the US, our attitudes towards our new home (the US), and our links to our old home. After all, I could not find this information anywhere. There might be some research done about us, some data collected, some dissertations written, but they do not seem readily available outside of academia.

Then came the question: Who is “us”? First I planned to use a very narrow convenience sample and send an invitation to the survey just to my personal friends and acquaintances. But then I wondered – why not send it to a larger sample to get a more representative picture of Russian immigrants who are – at least in some respects – like my friends? Hence, I decided to extend the invitation to take the survey to a larger sample of people who:

1. live today in the US
2. originally lived in the (former) USSR
3. were born between 1964 and 1984
4. are English-literate enough to be able to take a survey in English

Because of the way the survey was publicized and administered, two additional sample characteristics emerged:

5. survey participants have Internet access at home and/or at work and use it more or less actively
6. survey participants are most likely to have come to the US in 1987 or later (last wave of immigration from the (former) USSR)

As you can see, *this was not a scientific survey based on a random or stratified random sample from the population of interest!*

It was not my goal to survey and draw conclusions about ALL immigrants from the former USSR who live in the US. The sample characteristics allow me to merely make some observations about a relatively narrow stratum of the larger population, more specifically: *relatively young, relatively well established and well educated (mostly) professionals and students, the absolute majority of whom came to the US in 1987 or later.*

I would not be surprised if Jewish immigrants from Russia were overrepresented in this sample while non-Jews, immigrants from the former republics of Caucasus & Central Asia, and blue-collar workers were underrepresented. However, the final sample of 455 participants is large and, I am confident, quite representative of the younger soviet/post-soviet immigrants of the last immigration wave to the US many of whom (or their parents) belonged to the layer of the “Soviet Intelligentsia” back in the USSR.

Finally: No one sponsored this survey. I conducted it and analyzed its results in my free time. I am not planning to use the results of the survey for any commercial purposes.

Survey administration and data cleaning

The survey was administered on-line. It was open between May 10th and June 20th, 2004. I sent an e-mail invitation with the survey link to all “eligible” friends I knew (about 40 people) and asked them to forward the invitation to other Russian immigrants in the US they knew. My wife, who also came to the US from Russia, did the same.

Next, I posted a survey invitation with the link on my LiveJournal page <http://www.livejournal.com/users/shustrik/> as well as on the following LiveJournal Russian communities: Ru_dc, Ru_midwest, Ru_newyork, Ru_texas, Runet, Rusam, and Sfbayarea_ru.

Finally, I posted an ad with the survey invitation and link on the following Russian-American Internet forums¹:

groups.yahoo.com/group/ffcy (Friends & Family Club)
www.itsmypage.com (Russian DC) – Forums – Life in America
www.RussianAtlanta.net – Forums – General interests
www.russianamerica.com – Obyavleniya [Classifieds] – Raznoe/Misc.
www.russianny.com – Forum – Raznoe [Misc.]

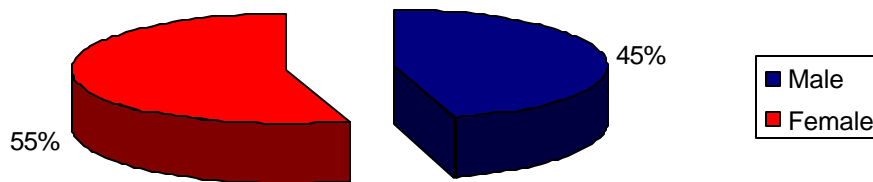
In all my postings I promised potential participants that I will make the survey results publicly available.

Overall, 644 people followed the survey link. Quite a few people (176) completed the survey only partially. Unfortunately, I had to exclude all the partially completed surveys from the analyses. I had to do it to avoid double-counting because several friends of mine told me that they started filling out the survey, abandoned it, then went back to it later, and completed it from scratch. As a result I had 468 fully valid responses. 13 respondents were older than 40. I excluded their responses from the analyses and I apologize for doing that. The final sample had 455 completed surveys.

¹ I am very sorry that the Russian community of Seattle, WA is underrepresented in this survey. I posted a survey invitation on a popular site RussianSeattle.com (<http://www.privet.com/forum/>) but my ad was banned from there by one Boris (boris@privet.com). When I asked him why he did it, he replied that a commercial ad costs \$20. He never replied to my question why he considered my invitation to a survey – which was very explicit about its non-commercial nature – to be a commercial ad. It’s a shame!

Participants' Sex

Of 455 respondents, 248 were females and 206 were males (see the chart below). One person did not indicate his/her sex.



Participants' Sexual Orientation

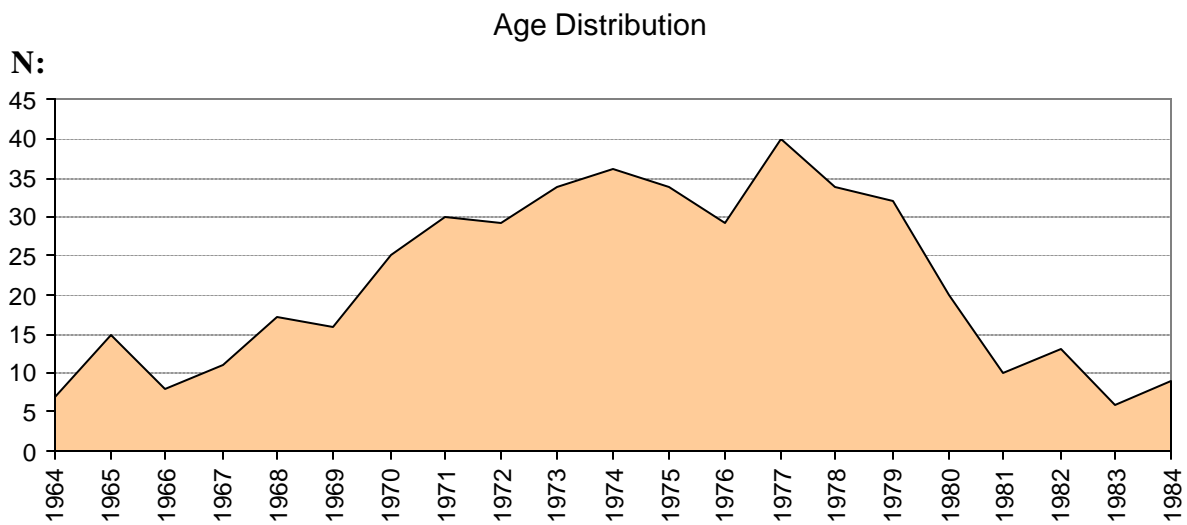
94% of the participants identified themselves as heterosexual (see the table below); 19 respondents (4.5%) see themselves as bisexual, while 8 (1.9%) identified themselves as openly homosexual. Interestingly, not a single participant picked the option “Homosexual, but not yet ‘out-of-the-closet.’”

Your sexual orientation (N = 421)	100%
Heterosexual	93.6%
Homosexual openly - 'out-of-the-closet'	1.9%
Bisexual openly - 'out-of-the-closet'	2.6%
Bisexual, but NOT yet 'out-of-the-closet'	1.9%

Participants' Age

I only considered the responses of 455 participants born between 1964 and 1984. The age distribution for the whole sample is shown in the table and the chart below. Almost two thirds of respondents were born between 1971 and 1979.

Year of birth	N	%
1964	7	1.5%
1965	15	3.3%
1966	8	1.8%
1967	11	2.4%
1968	17	3.7%
1969	16	3.5%
1970	25	5.5%
1971	30	6.6%
1972	29	6.4%
1973	34	7.5%
1974	36	7.9%
1975	34	7.5%
1976	29	6.4%
1977	40	8.8%
1978	34	7.5%
1979	32	7.0%
1980	20	4.4%
1981	10	2.2%
1982	13	2.9%
1983	6	1.3%
1984	9	2.0%
Total	455	100%



Where are we from?

As expected, the majority of the respondents (256 - 56.3%) came from Russia. Almost half of that number came from the Ukraine (117 – 25.7%). The table below shows the number of responses for each of the 14 former Soviet republics represented in the survey.

Where did you live in the (former) USSR?	N	%
Russia	256	56.3%
Ukraine	117	25.7%
Belarus	26	5.7%
Latvia	14	3.1%
Moldova	10	2.2%
Uzbekistan	10	2.2%
Lithuania	7	1.5%
Azerbaijan	5	1.1%
Estonia	3	0.7%
Kazakhstan	3	0.7%
Armenia	1	0.2%
Georgia	1	0.2%
Kyrgyzstan	1	0.2%
Tajikistan	1	0.2%
Total	455	100%

The next table shows in what cities lived those participants who indicated where in Russia they came from. Almost 80% of them came from Moscow and Leningrad (St. Petersburg).

Cities in Russia	N	%
Moscow	112	45.0%
Leningrad	86	34.5%
Nizhniy Novgorod	4	1.6%
Tver	3	1.2%
Novosibirsk	3	1.2%
Kaliningrad	3	1.2%
Rostov-on-Don	3	1.2%
Troitsk (near Moscow)	2	0.8%
Rostov	2	0.8%
Kazan	2	0.8%
Tomsk	2	0.8%
Ulyanovsk	2	0.8%
Other	25	10.0%
Total	249	100%

To category “Other” belong participants who came from the following Russian cities (one participant per city): Bryansk, Chernogolovka, Dzerginsk, Ekaterinburg, Irkutsk, Izhevsk, Kamensk-Uralsky, Kursk, Komsomolsk-na-Amure, Krasnoyarsk, Lipetsk, Lytkarino, Lyubertsy, Magadan, Nizhnevartovsk, Omsk, Protvino, Pyatigorsk, Saratov, Vilyuysk, Vladivostok, Volgograd, Vorkuta, Voronezh, and Yaroslavl.

The next table shows in what cities lived those who indicated where in the Ukraine they came from.

Cities in the Ukraine	N	%
Kiev	43	37.4%
Odessa	24	20.9%
Kharkov	15	13.0%
Dnepropetrovsk	12	10.4%
Lvov	5	4.3%
Chernovtsy	3	2.6%
Khmelnitsky	2	1.7%
Vinnitsa	2	1.7%
Other	9	7.8%
Total	115	100%

Participants in the “Other” category came from such Ukrainian cities (one person per city) as Alushta, Cherkassy, Kherson, Krasnoarmeysk, Nikolaev, Novograd Volinskiy, Simferopol, Sevastopol, and Vasilkov.

Out of 24 participants from Belarus who indicated their city, 22 came from Minsk, one from Bobruysk, and one from Borisov.

Out of 14 participants from Latvia, 10 were from Riga, 3 from Daugavpils, and one from Liepaja.

Out of 7 participants from Lithuania, 5 were from Vilnius and 2 from Klaipeda.

Out of 3 participants from Estonia, one was Tallinn, one from Tartu, and one from Kiviliy (=Kiviõli?).

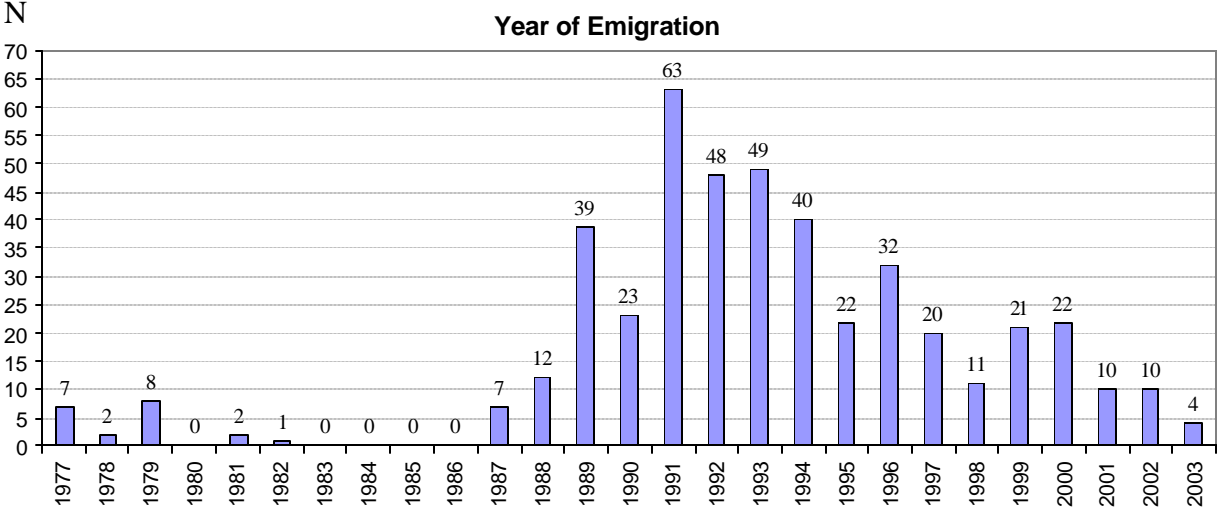
Out of 10 participants from Uzbekistan, 8 were from Tashkent and 2 from Samarkand.

Out of 3 participants from Kazakhstan, 2 were from Almaty and one from Astana.

All respondents from the other Soviet republics came from their respective capital cities.

When did we leave the (former) USSR?

Almost three quarters of survey participants left the (former) USSR between 1987 and 1996. We are truly the children of the emigration wave of the late 80s- 90s! The table below displays the breakdown by year.

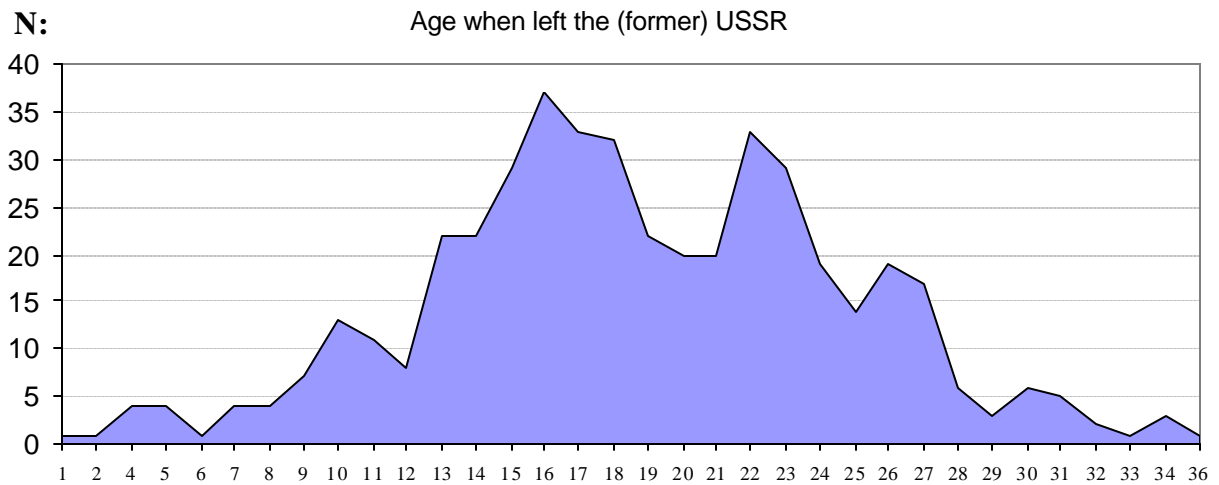


How old were we when we left the (former) USSR?

Quite a few of us left the USSR at the age of 16 to 18 (22.5% - see the table below and the chart on the next page). This age was a typical high school graduation age. And indeed, of those participants who *only* completed their middle education in the USSR, 69% left the country when they were between 16 and 18 years old, i.e., most likely, right or soon after graduation.

Another peak-emigration age is between 22 and 24 years (17.9%). This age is associated with graduation from an “institut”/university. Indeed, of those participants who *only* graduated from an “institute”/university (but nothing more), 48.4% emigrated when they were 22-24 years old.

Age when left	N	%
1	1	0.2%
2	1	0.2%
4	4	0.9%
5	4	0.9%
6	1	0.2%
7	4	0.9%
8	4	0.9%
9	7	1.5%
10	13	2.9%
11	11	2.4%
12	8	1.8%
13	22	4.9%
14	22	4.9%
15	29	6.4%
16	37	8.2%
17	33	7.3%
18	32	7.1%
19	22	4.9%
20	20	4.4%
21	20	4.4%
22	33	7.3%
23	29	6.4%
24	19	4.2%
25	14	3.1%
26	19	4.2%
27	17	3.8%
28	6	1.3%
29	3	0.7%
30	6	1.3%
31	5	1.1%
32	2	0.4%
33	1	0.2%
34	3	0.7%
36	1	0.2%
Total	453	100%



Where were we heading to when we left the (former) USSR?

The absolute majority of survey participants (427 out of 454) left the (former) USSR and came directly to the US (see the table below).

What country did you go to when you left the USSR? (N = 454)	100%
USA	94.1%
Israel	3.1%
Germany	0.7%
Canada	0.7%
Great Britain	0.2%
Ireland	0.2%
Belize	0.2%
New Zealand	0.2%
Spain	0.2%
Sweden	0.2%
The Netherlands	0.2%

What was our emigration status when we arrived in the US?

While the majority of participants arrived as political refugees (291 out of 452), quite a few came to the US on student visa (41), work visa (33) or visitor's visa (30) – see the table below.

Emigration status you had when you came to the US (N = 452)	100%
Political refugee	64.4%
Student visa	9.1%
Work visa	7.3%
Visitor's visa	6.6%
Won a green card lottery	4.4%
Spouse/fiancé of an American	3.5%
Parole	2.2%
H-4 Visa	1.1%
Family reunification	0.4%
Work for International Organization	0.2%
Other	0.7%

Our emigration status today

Almost 93% of survey participants (420) are either US citizens, permanent residents, or soon-to-be permanent residents – see the table below:

Your emigration status today (N = 454)	100%
US-citizen	68.9%
Green card	19.8%
Status: adjustment to Green Card	3.7%
Work visa	4.6%
Student visa	2.0%
Working for an International Organization ²	0.7%
Illegal resident	0.2%

Has being of Jewish descent/having a Jewish wife or husband helped us emigrate/stay in the US?

This was the case for 310 of the respondents (70.8%) – see the table below.

Has being Jewish helped you emigrate/stay in the US? (N = 438)	100%
Yes	70.8%
No	29.2%

² Such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, etc.

Is one of our parents Jewish?

This was the case for 77% of the respondents. This response, combined with the results displayed in the previous table, shows that several percent of Jewish respondents managed to stay in the US not through the traditional “Jewish” immigration channels.

Is at least one of your parents Jewish? (N = 451)		100%
Yes	77.2%	
No	22.8%	

Where in the US do we live?

The largest percentage of the respondents live in California (23.1%), New York (21.3%), and Massachusetts (14.7%). The table below shows the distribution for all US states represented in the survey.

State of residence	N	%
California	105	23.1%
New York	97	21.3%
Massachusetts	67	14.7%
New Jersey	41	9.0%
Illinois	36	7.9%
Minnesota	20	4.4%
Georgia	20	4.4%
Pennsylvania	10	2.2%
Virginia	10	2.2%
Maryland	7	1.5%
Colorado	6	1.3%
Washington	6	1.3%
Michigan	5	1.1%
Connecticut	3	0.7%
North Carolina	3	0.7%
Ohio	2	0.4%
Oregon	2	0.4%
Texas	2	0.4%
Utah	2	0.4%
Alabama	1	0.2%
Arizona	1	0.2%
DC	1	0.2%
Indiana	1	0.2%
Iowa	1	0.2%
Kentucky	1	0.2%
Missouri	1	0.2%
Nebraska	1	0.2%
Nevada	1	0.2%
Vermont	1	0.2%
Wisconsin	1	0.2%
Total	455	100%

I asked the respondents to identify the large city they live nearest to. The largest percentage of respondents (~29%) live in New York or its suburbs – see the table below. In fact, most of the survey respondents who live in the state of NJ (see the table on the previous page) live around New York City.

What large city do you live nearest to?	N	%
New York, NY	126	28.9%
San Francisco, CA	72	16.5%
Boston, MA	61	14.0%
Chicago, IL	36	8.3%
Minneapolis, MN	20	4.6%
Atlanta, GA	18	4.1%
Washington, DC	12	2.8%
Los Angeles, CA	11	2.5%
Philadelphia, PA	10	2.3%
San Diego, CA	7	1.6%
Seattle, WA	6	1.4%
San Jose, CA	5	1.1%
Denver, CO	4	0.9%
Princeton, NJ	3	0.7%
Detroit, MI	3	0.7%
Durham, NC	2	0.5%
Long Island, NY	2	0.5%
Sacramento, CA	2	0.5%
Santa Barbara, CA	2	0.5%
Springfield, MA	2	0.5%
Other	32	7.3%
Total	436	100%

The “Other” category includes participants who live in/close to the following cities (one respondent per city):

- Amherst, MA
- Ann Arbor, MI
- Baltimore, MD
- Boulder, CO
- Buffalo, NY
- Burlington, VT
- Colorado Springs
- Columbia, MO
- Cumming, GA
- Dallas, TX
- Gaithersburg, MD
- Hartford, CT
- Houston, TX
- Hudson, MA
- Indianapolis, IN
- Iowa City
- Irvine, CA
- Kansas City
- Las Vegas
- Louisville, KY
- Milford, CT
- Milwaukee, WI
- New Haven, CT
- Newport Beach, CA
- Omaha, NE
- Phoenix, AZ
- Portland, OR
- Raleigh, NC
- Reading, PA
- Red Bank, NJ
- Salem, MA
- West Chester, PA.

Where would we prefer to live?

I asked the question “If you had a choice and unlimited opportunities, where in the US would you live?” The distribution of responses to this question is shown in the table below. As a single city, New York is the unmistakable winner.

Where in the US would you prefer to live?	N	%
California	136	34.1%
New York, NY	114	28.6%
Boston (46) & Massachusetts (4)	50	12.5%
Chicago, IL	21	5.3%
Seattle, WA	11	2.8%
Florida	10	2.5%
New Jersey	8	2.0%
Washington, DC	4	1.0%
Oregon	4	1.0%
Minnesota	4	1.0%
Vermont	3	0.8%
Atlanta	3	0.8%
Colorado	3	0.8%
Hawaii	3	0.8%
Arizona	2	0.5%
Maine	2	0.5%
Montana	2	0.5%
New Orleans	2	0.5%
Outside the US	4	1.0%
Other	13	3.3%
Total	399	100%

The “Other” category includes such general or specific entries as: New England; Alaska; Birmingham, MI; Connecticut; Durham, NC; Long Island, NY; Louisville, KY; Madison, WI; North Carolina; Santa Fe; NM; Texas; Washington State; West Coast; Philadelphia.

The table below shows where exactly in California would like to live those participants who prefer this state. San Francisco is clearly the winner.

California	N	%
San Francisco	70	51.5%
California (in general)	34	25.0%
San Diego	15	11.0%
Los Angeles	12	8.8%
Santa Barbara	1	0.7%
Napa County	1	0.7%
Orange County	1	0.7%
San Jose	1	0.7%
Silicon Valley	1	0.7%
Total	136	100%

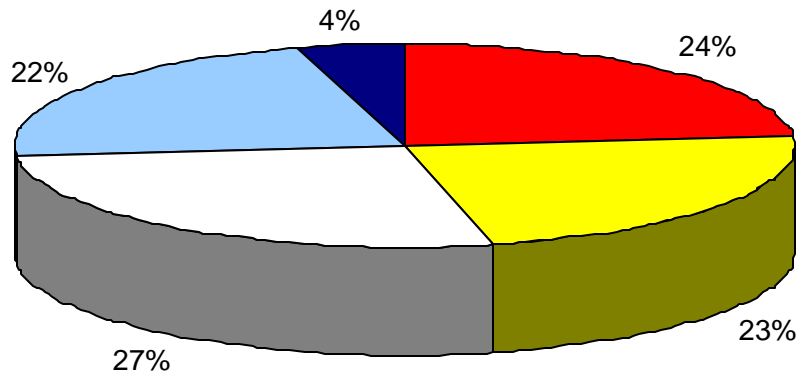
It should come as no surprise that many of us wish to live in those cities, in which or next to which we already live (see the table below). For example, 70% of New Yorkers would prefer to stay in New York. Similarly, 78% of Californians are committed to California, and 59% of respondents from Boston and Massachusetts prefer Boston & Massachusetts. Our participants from Chicago are a bit “torn” between Chicago (46%), California (39%) and New York (14%). Looks like they love their city but some are longing for a warmer Californian climate.

Currently live in:	Would prefer to live in:				Total N (100%)
	Boston	California	Chicago	New York	
Boston & MA	59%	14%	2%	24%	49
Chicago	0%	39%	46%	14%	28
New York	7%	22%	1%	70%	96
California (all respondents)	5%	78%	1%	16%	80
San Francisco	5%	77%	2%	17%	60

Do we live in “Russian” neighborhoods?

Almost half of the respondents live in neighborhoods with a large number of “Russian” immigrants (see the chart below).

How many Russian immigrants live in your neighborhood? (N = 455)

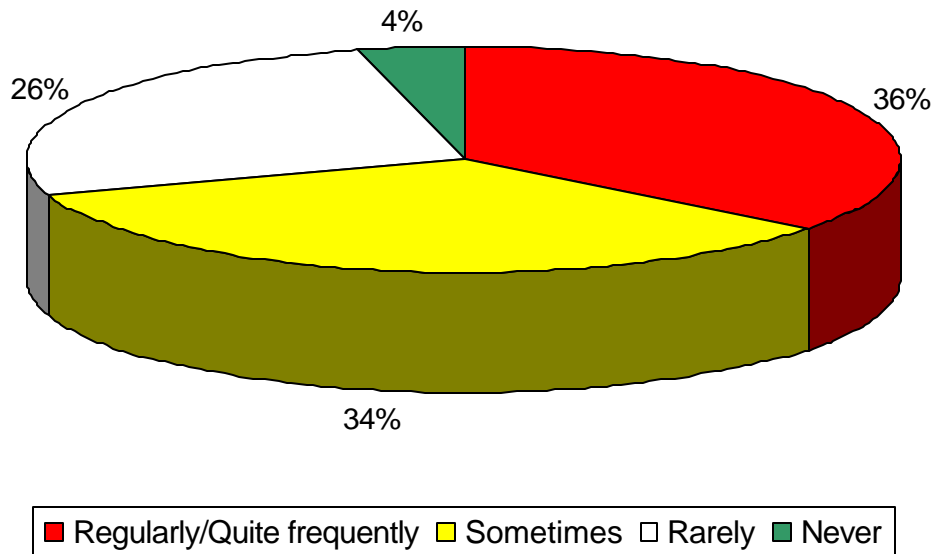


■ A lot
 ■ Quite a few
 ■ Some, but not too many
 ■ Very few
 ■ None (except for me/us)

How frequently do we buy groceries in a Russian food store?

Only 36% of participants frequently visit Russian food stores (see the chart below).

How often do you buy Russian food? (N = 453)



The participants who live in or close to New York and Philadelphia were more likely than others to chose the response “Regularly/Quite frequently” (see the second column in the table below).

	Regularly/ Quite frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total N (100%)
Boston	36%	46%	15%	3%	61
Chicago	31%	22%	42%	6%	36
New York	58%	26%	15%	1%	126
Philadelphia	60%	10%	30%	0%	10

Do we own or rent?

About 54% of us rent a place, while 46% own one (see the table below).

Rent or Own? (N = 449)	100%
I/we rent an apartment	48%
I/we rent a house	6%
I/we own an apartment	14%
I/we own a house	32%

What cars do we drive?

The table below shows what cars survey participants drive. Responses from men and women are kept separately to avoid double-count (e.g., sometimes husband and wife each of whom filled out the survey have only one car they both drive). It is very clear that our community prefers Japanese cars. Men are a bit more likely than women to drive German cars.

What car do you drive? (N = 381)	Men (N = 181)	Women (N = 200)
Japanese	61.9%	66.0%
American	17.7%	19.0%
German	17.7%	11.0%
Swedish	1.7%	2.5%
Korean	1.1%	1.0%
British		0.5%

In what sector do we work?

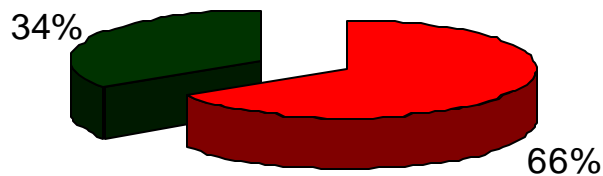
About three quarters of all participants work in private sector (see the table below). Women are more likely than men to work in public and non-profit sectors, although this difference was not statistically significant.

Sector you work for	Overall (N = 335)	Women (N = 164)	Men (N = 171)
private sector	76%	71%	81%
public sector	11%	14%	8%
'non-profit' sector	13%	15%	11%

Do we do volunteering work?

I was pleasantly surprised to see that over one third of survey participants volunteer their time (see the chart below).

Have you volunteered your time for anything in the last 12 months? (N = 434)



■ No (N = 285) ■ Yes (N = 149)

What follows is just an exemplary list of volunteering activities, which are very numerous:

- teaching inner city kids
- forking for Habitat for Humanity
- translation/interpreting/ language tutoring for recent immigrants
- multiple activities in support of Israel, Jewish organizations and synagogues
- work for NPR and for John Kerry campaign
- sports coaching
- running/contributing to film clubs or “Chto, gde, kogda?” competitions
- www.mothersoughttohaveequalrights.org
- soup kitchens
- Suicide Hotline
- Russian orphans seeking adoption in US
- work in hospitals and with elderly
- lobbying on behalf of [Organic Consumers.org](http://OrganicConsumers.org)
- daycare and school support
- work for Youth Hostelling International
- supporting local Police and Red Cross
- work for GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender) organization
- work for blood drives and hunger relief programs
- fundraising for the US Marines

How many of us are self-employed?

36 participants (about 8%) are self-employed full-time and 28 (6.5%) work independently in addition to their regular job.

Are you self-employed? (N = 433)		100%
No	85.2%	
Yes, the whole time	8.3%	
Only in addition to my regular job	6.5%	

How much do we make?

For the whole sample, the median salary fell into the \$51,000-60,000 range. 125 out of 323 respondents to this question (38.7%) said they earned \$50,000 or less in 2003, whereas 159 participants (49.2%) said they earned \$61,000 or more. 5.3% of respondents reported they earned over \$140,000.

82 out of 164 male participants (50%) said they earned \$80,000 or less and 50% said they earned \$81,000 or more.

For women, the median salary fell into the \$41,000-50,000 range. 64 out of 171 female respondents (37.4%) said they earned up to \$40,000, whereas 78 females (45.6%) reported they earned over \$51,000. The table below shows the distribution of self-reported 2003 salaries.

2003 Income	Overall N	Overall %	Men % (N = 162)	Women % (N = 171)
\$0-\$10,000	14	4.3%	2.6%	5.8%
\$11,000-\$20,000	14	4.3%	1.3%	7.0%
\$21,000-\$30,000	22	6.8%	3.9%	9.4%
\$31,000-\$40,000	33	10.2%	4.6%	15.2%
\$41,000-\$50,000	42	13.0%	8.6%	17.0%
\$51,000-\$60,000	39	12.1%	12.5%	11.7%
\$61,000-\$70,000	28	8.7%	5.3%	11.7%
\$71,000-\$80,000	28	8.7%	11.2%	6.4%
\$81,000-\$90,000	34	10.5%	13.8%	7.6%
\$91,000-\$100,000	23	7.1%	12.5%	2.3%
\$101,000-\$110,000	12	3.7%	5.9%	1.8%
\$111,000-\$120,000	13	4.0%	6.6%	1.8%
\$121,000-\$130,000	3	0.9%	2.0%	
\$131,000-\$140,000	1	0.3%	0.7%	
\$141,000-\$150,000	5	1.5%	3.3%	
\$151,000-\$200,000	7	2.2%	3.3%	1.2%
\$201,000-\$250,000	2	0.6%	0.7%	0.6%
\$251,000-\$300,000	2	0.6%	0.7%	0.6%
\$301,000-\$400,000	1	0.3%	0.7%	
Total	323	100%	100%	100%

Those participant who live in/around New York and San Francisco earned more than all others (see the table below). This difference is statistically significant for both New York and San Francisco. I guess, they have no choice – otherwise how would they afford those outrageous rents and mortgages? ☺

	New York	San Francisco	Others
Earned in 2003:	N = 102	N = 54	N = 158
0 - 50K	30%	26%	48%
51-100K	49%	54%	43%
101-150K	15%	19%	6%
151K or more	6%	2%	3%
	100%	100%	100%

Managers among us?

About 30% of us manage one or more direct reports (see the table below). Interestingly, the differences between men and women in this respect are negligible.

Number of direct reports	Overall (N = 361)	Overall %	Men % (N = 182)	Women % (N = 179)
None	250	69.3%	67.6%	70.9%
1	37	10.2%	10.4%	10.1%
2	27	7.5%	7.1%	7.8%
3	16	4.4%	3.3%	5.6%
4	7	1.9%	3.8%	0.0%
5	9	2.5%	2.2%	2.8%
6 to 10	7	1.9%	2.2%	1.7%
11 to 15	4	1.1%	1.6%	0.6%
16 to 30	2	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%
More than 30	2	0.6%	1.1%	0.0%

The next table shows the overall number of employees (i.e., direct reports and below) who work below those of us who are managers and who answered the question.

Total # of employees below you	N	%
1	20	19.8%
2	27	26.7%
3	13	12.9%
4	10	9.9%
5	7	6.9%
6 to 10	8	7.9%
11 to 15	4	4.0%
16 to 20	4	4.0%
21 to 30	3	3.0%
31 to 100	2	2.0%
more than 100	3	3.0%
Total	101	100%

What do we do?

The table below shows what those of us who are not full-time students do professionally. I arranged professional fields on a loose continuum from more exact/technical areas (top of the table) to less exact/technical ones (towards the bottom of the table). The overwhelming majority of respondents (almost 70%) work in exact/technical fields (from IT down to Investment Banking in the table). For men this percentage rises to 80%; for women it is still a considerable 60%.

Surprise! – almost 40% of all participants and over 50% (!) of male participants! work in Information Technology. Men – compared to women – are over-represented in IT and Engineering. Females, on the other hand, tend to be overrepresented in the fields of Web Design and Finance/Accounting. No men at all are involved in Education (teaching at school), Sales, Nursing, PR, Fashion, and Administrative Support.

What do you do professionally?	Overall N	Overall %	Men % (N = 138)	Women % (N = 165)
Information Technology/Computer Programming	119	39.3%	52.9%	27.9%
Web Design/Development	14	4.6%	2.2%	6.7%
Engineering	15	5.0%	10.1%	0.6%
Academic research and/or teaching	17	5.6%	5.1%	6.1%
Research for Industry	6	2.0%	2.9%	1.2%
Actuarial	3	1.0%	1.4%	0.6%
Finance/Financial Analysis/Accounting	24	7.9%	2.9%	12.1%
Investment Banking/Analysis/Trading	12	4.0%	2.9%	4.8%
Technician	2	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%
Marketing/Business Development	9	3.0%	3.6%	2.4%
Business Administration/Consulting/Analysis	11	3.6%	2.2%	4.8%
Sales/Customer Service	2	0.7%		1.2%
Medicine/Dentistry	5	1.7%	2.2%	1.2%
Nursing/Medical Support	3	1.0%		1.8%
Human Resources	4	1.3%	1.4%	1.2%
Public Relations (PR)	2	0.7%		1.2%
Law/Legal	8	2.6%	2.2%	3.0%
Education (teaching at school)	6	2.0%		3.6%
Interpreting/Translation	4	1.3%	0.7%	1.8%
Entrepreneur	5	1.7%	2.2%	1.2%
Real Estate	2	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%
Administrative Support	8	2.6%		4.8%
Fashion Design	2	0.7%		1.2%
Music	2	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%
Athletics	2	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%
Other	16	5.3%	2.2%	7.9%
Total	303	100%	100%	100%

In the “other” category fell the following professions (one respondent per profession): bank teller, book editor, cashier, executive, homemaker, hospitality sector (hotel) worker, industrial/organizational psychologist, co-worker of an International organization, producer/camera man, psychotherapist, and writer (the other few descriptions were not clear).

Participants who are academic researchers/professors work in the following fields: Astrophysics, Physics, Biochemistry, Biology, Medicine, Neurophysiology, Pharmacology, Psychology, Linguistics, and Russian (the others did not identify their field).

Those who do research in industry, work in: Physics, Biochemistry, Chemistry, Cryptography, Pharmacology, and Psychology.

Those classified in the table above as Entrepreneurs are: bookstore owner, car service driver, fish market retailer/owner, and a founder of a non-profit Russian Jewish identity renewal program.

What do our vacations look like?

I asked the following open-ended question: “How did you spend your last 3 vacations?” Each of 411 survey participants provided one to three responses to this question.

One thing strikes me when I look at the responses: virtually every respondent traveled outside of the continental US at least once – be it a trip to Canada, Mexico, Europe, Israel, Russia, Aruba, Hawaii, on an ocean cruise ship, or backpacking in exotic countries. There is also a lot of hiking and camping going on – following the good old Russian tradition of “wild tourism”. Further, one sees a lot of “family/relatives visits” – mostly within the US, in Israel and in Russia. In the US, Florida and San Francisco are the most popular destinations. Skiing is widely represented.

Overall, the “active” type of vacation is clearly prevalent. Cruises and typical “beach vacations,” although present, are the minority.

My personal favorite response to the vacation question is: “Plastic surgery in Russia”

Education level before leaving the USSR

Quite a large group of participants (27.1%) left the (former) USSR after having completed university education – see the table below. Similarly, quite a few (15.6%) left after having graduated high school or some other middle education institution (but nothing more). Overall, two thirds of respondents left the (former) USSR after having spent their formative years there (i.e., after having graduated high school).

Education level you attained before leaving the USSR:	N	%
Preschooler	14	3.1%
Out of primary school	19	4.2%
Unfinished middle education	118	26.0%
Completed middle education	71	15.6%
1 year at “institut”/”universitet” ³	28	6.2%
2 yrs. at “institut”/”universitet”	26	5.7%
3 yrs. at “institut”/”universitet”	17	3.7%
4 yrs. at “institut”/”universitet”	16	3.5%
5 yrs. at “institut”/”universitet”	22	4.8%
Graduated “institut”/”universitet”	96	21.1%
Some time in 'aspirantura' ⁴ but did not defend	20	4.4%
Defended dissertation ("Kandidatskuyu")	7	1.5%
Total	454	100%

³ “Institut”/”Universitet” = University (approximately Master’s level in the US)

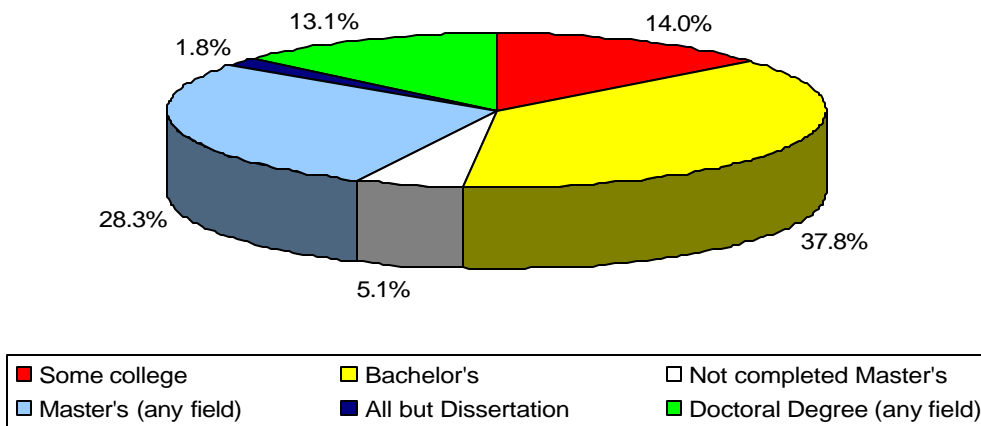
⁴ “Aspirantura” = post-graduate studies with a goal of writing and defending a dissertation

Highest education level achieved in the US

We are, indeed, a very well educated crowd! 86% of those 336 who have ever studied in the US have completed Bachelor's or above. Additional 43% have Master's or above, and 13% have completed their Doctorate⁵. In addition, 20 respondents of those 44 who completed their Doctorate in the US (45%) have held post-doc positions. 7 more held post-doc positions upon arriving from the (former) USSR.

Of those respondents who never studied in the US, 76 completed their university education in the USSR. This means that 80% of *ALL* survey respondents completed their higher education (either in the USSR or in the US). Finally, 437 respondents (96% of the sample) had been exposed to the higher education either in the (former) USSR or in the US but did not complete it.

Highest level of education achieved in the US (N = 336)



For comparison (see <http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/p20-550.pdf> - a US census bureau report), in 2003 in the US 86.5% of adults of 25-29 years of age reported they had completed at least high school, 57.4% had attended some college, and 28.4% had attained at least a bachelor's degree. See the table below for the same data for some specific US population subgroups.

Age Group	High school graduate or more	Some college or more	Bachelor's degree or more
25 to 29 years	86.5%	57.4%	28.4%
30 to 34 years	87.6%	58.6%	31.5%
35 to 39 years	87.6%	56.5%	29.8%
Everyone 25 years & over	84.6%	52.5%	27.2%
25 years & over (Asians only)	87.6%	67.4%	49.8%

⁵ This particular question was answered only by those participants who have ever been students in the US.

Overall, more male participants have attained higher US degrees than have females (see the table below). This difference was statistically significant.

Highest level of education achieved in the US (N = 336)	Women (N = 191)	Men (N = 145)
Some college	14.1%	13.8%
Bachelor's	42.9%	31.0%
Not completed Master's	5.8%	4.1%
Master's (any field)	24.1%	33.8%
All but Dissertation	3.1%	
Doctoral Degree (any field)	9.9%	17.2%

The breakdown for those who have received a Doctoral Degree is as follows:

Doctoral Degrees (N = 44):	100%
Ph.D.	68.2%
J.D.	13.6%
M.D.	9.1%
DDS	2.3%
Pharm.D.	2.3%
Doctor of Musical Arts	2.3%
Dr.Eng.Sc.	2.3%

What did we study back in the USSR?

I asked the participants who were university students back in the (former) USSR what they studied there. The distribution of their first responses⁶ to this question is shown in the table below. I arranged the subjects on a loose continuum from exact sciences (top of the table) to humanities (bottom of the table).

Two thirds of all respondents studied exact sciences (Mathematics through Biology in the table). For male respondents this percentage was almost 90%! Men were overrepresented in all the exact sciences, but especially in Electronic Engineering and Physics. Women were overrepresented in Economics and Foreign languages. Also, in most humanities-related fields men were not represented at all. Overall, based on these findings one could conclude that back in the USSR women tended to study almost everything while men focused mostly on exact sciences.

What field did you study in the USSR?	N	%	Men (N = 103)	Women (N = 103)
Mathematics	24	11.7%	14.6%	8.7%
Applied Mathematics/Computer Science	38	18.4%	21.4%	15.5%
Engineering	26	12.6%	16.5%	8.7%
Electronics/Electrical Engineering	18	8.7%	14.6%	2.9%
Physics/Biophysics	20	9.7%	16.5%	2.9%
Chemistry	4	1.9%	1.0%	2.9%
Biology	7	3.4%	4.9%	1.9%
Economics	18	8.7%	1.0%	16.5%
Finance	2	1.0%		1.9%
Business	2	1.0%		1.9%
Geography	1	0.5%		1.0%
Soil science	1	0.5%	1.0%	
Psychology	2	1.0%		1.9%
Education	2	1.0%		1.9%
Medicine	8	3.9%	4.9%	2.9%
Nursing	1	0.5%		1.0%
Law	1	0.5%		1.0%
Library Science	1	0.5%		1.0%
Linguistics	3	1.5%		2.9%
Foreign Languages	10	4.9%		9.7%
Russian/Russian Literature	4	1.9%	1.0%	2.9%
History	2	1.0%		1.9%
Oriental studies	1	0.5%		1.0%
Jewish Studies	1	0.5%		1.0%
Social work	1	0.5%		1.0%
Theater Critics	1	0.5%		1.0%
Music	7	3.4%	2.9%	3.9%
Total	206	100%	100%	100%

⁶ Some participants studied more than one subject

Students among us today

About one quarter of the participants (113) are attending US colleges/universities today. Of those, over 50% are pursuing graduate degrees:

Are you a student now? (N = 434)	100%
No	74.0%
Post-doc	1.4%
Full-time graduate	8.8%
Part-time graduate	4.8%
Full-time undergrad.	8.3%
Part-time undergrad.	2.8%

What graduate degrees are we pursuing today?

Of those participants who are graduate students today, almost half are working towards Master's degree and slightly over a half are pursuing doctoral degrees:

Graduate degree pursuing today (N=65):	100%
Master's (any field)	47.7%
Ph.D.	43.1%
J.D.	3.1%
M.D.	3.1%
Pharm.D.	1.5%
Doctor of Arts	1.5%

What do we study today?

The next table shows in what fields of study are those full-time students who participated in the survey. Although the sample is small, the main tendency is clear: *less than one third of all respondents study exact sciences* (from Mathematics to Biology). Even for male students, this percentage is merely 33.3%. Quite a difference to what the participants used to study back in the USSR! Today, many more of us study business-related disciplines, social sciences, and humanities.

What today's full-time students study:	N = 76	%	Women (N = 55)	Men (N = 21)
Mathematics/Computer Science/ Information Systems	11	14.5%	12.7%	19.0%
Physics/Biophysics	3	3.9%	1.8%	9.5%
Chemistry/Biochemistry	5	6.6%	7.3%	4.8%
Biology	5	6.6%	9.1%	
Psychology	6	7.9%	9.1%	4.8%
Sociology	3	3.9%	3.6%	4.8%
Geography	1	1.3%	1.8%	
Economics	2	2.6%		9.5%
Finance/Accounting	4	5.3%	5.5%	4.8%
Business	10	13.2%	16.4%	4.8%
Medical Field	2	2.6%	3.6%	
Neuroscience	3	3.9%	1.8%	9.5%
Pharmacology	1	1.3%		4.8%
Environmental Health	1	1.3%	1.8%	
International Relations	1	1.3%	1.8%	
Law	3	3.9%	1.8%	9.5%
Law Enforcement	1	1.3%		4.8%
Communication Sciences	1	1.3%	1.8%	
Linguistics	3	3.9%	5.5%	
English/English Literature	5	6.6%	5.5%	9.5%
Foreign Language Teaching	1	1.3%	1.8%	
Oriental Studies	1	1.3%	1.8%	
Photography/Theatre/Cinema	3	3.9%	5.5%	

The next table shows a similar breakdown for those participants who are part-time students. Most of them study either Computer Science or Business Administration.

What today's part-time students study:	N	%
Computer Science/Information Systems	10	29.4%
Graphic Design	1	2.9%
Biology	1	2.9%
Organizational Behavior	1	2.9%
Economics	1	2.9%
Finance	2	5.9%
Business Administration	9	26.5%
Library and Information Science	1	2.9%
Pre-med	1	2.9%
Veterinary field	1	2.9%
Political Science	1	2.9%
Linguistics	1	2.9%
Comparative Literature	1	2.9%
Education	1	2.9%
Modern Jewish History	1	2.9%
Film	1	2.9%
Total	34	100%

At what US schools did we spend most of our undergraduate years?

The table below shows in what US states survey participants spent most of their undergraduate years. New York, Massachusetts, and California are at the top of the distribution.

State	Number of Undergrad. Students	%
New York	66	25.4%
Massachusetts	53	20.4%
California	46	17.7%
Illinois	22	8.5%
Minnesota	14	5.4%
Georgia	7	2.7%
New Jersey	6	2.3%
Michigan	5	1.9%
Pennsylvania	5	1.9%
Washington	3	1.2%
Arizona	2	0.8%
Colorado	2	0.8%
Connecticut	2	0.8%
Florida	2	0.8%
Indiana	2	0.8%
Maryland	2	0.8%
Missouri	2	0.8%
Ohio	2	0.8%
Texas	2	0.8%
Wisconsin	2	0.8%
Arkansas	1	0.4%
DC	1	0.4%
Delaware	1	0.4%
Iowa	1	0.4%
Montana	1	0.4%
Oregon	1	0.4%
Rhodes Island	1	0.4%
South Dakota	1	0.4%
Tennessee	1	0.4%
Utah	1	0.4%
Virginia	1	0.4%
Unknown	2	0.8%
Total	260	100%

The next table shows at what specific colleges survey participants spent most of their undergraduate years. Most popular universities were New York University as well as State universities of: New York (CUNY - City University of New York and SUNY – State University of New York), California (UC), and Minnesota; and multiple Massachusetts schools (Brandeis, MIT, Northeastern, University of Massachusetts).

At what US college had you spent most of your undergraduate years?	N = 260
New York University	15
UC Berkeley	12
University of Minnesota	12
Brandeis University, MA	10
MIT	10
CUNY - Brooklyn College	9
Northeastern University, MA	9
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign	6
University of Massachusetts, Amherst	6
Boston University, MA	5
Polytechnic University, Brooklyn, NY	5
UC Davis	5
University of Illinois, Chicago	5
Cornell University, NY	4
DePaul, IL	4
Georgia Tech	4
San Francisco State	4
Suffolk University, MA	4
SUNY Binghamton	4
SUNY Stony Brook	4
CUNY - Hunter College	3
CUNY (City University of New York)	3
Loyola University, Chicago, IL	3
Pace University, NY	3
Rutgers University, NJ	3
University of Massachusetts, Boston	3
Yeshiva University, NY	3
College of San Mateo, CA	2
Columbia University	2
CUNY - Baruch College	2
Georgia State University	2
Golden Gate University, CA	2
Indiana University	2
Santa Clara University	2
Skyline College, CA	2
Tufts University, MA	2
UC (University of California)	2
University of Maryland	2
University of Michigan	2
University of Pennsylvania	2
University of Southern California	2
University of Texas, Austin	2
University of Wisconsin	2
Wayne State University, MI	2
Community College (not specified)	2

Each of the following colleges was attended by merely one survey respondent during his/her undergraduate years:

- Brevard Community College, FL
- Bryant College, RI
- California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
- California State University, Northridge
- Carnegie Mellon, PA
- City College/University of Phoenix
- Clark University, MA
- College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL
- CUNY - College of Staten Island
- Denison University, OH
- Drexel, PA
- Florida Atlantic University
- Framingham State College, MA
- George Washington University, DC
- Georgia Perimeter College, GA
- Harper Community College, IL
- Harvard Extension School
- Hofstra University, NY
- Holy Family University, NY
- Knox College, IL
- LA Valley College
- Lawrence Technological University, MI
- Metropolitan State University, MN
- Montana State University
- New Jersey Institute of Technology
- New School University, NY
- North Hennepin Community College, MN
- Pomona College, CA
- Portland State University, OR
- Rabbinical College of America, Morristown, NJ
- Ramapo College of NJ
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, NY
- Salem State, MA
- San Francisco Art Institute
- San Francisco City College
- San Jose State
- Seattle University, WA
- Skidmore College, NY
- Sonoma State University, CA
- South Dakota State University
- Southern Illinois University, Carbondale
- Stanford University
- SUNY - Fashion Institute of Technology
- SUNY Oswego
- Tacoma Community College, WA
- UC Irvine
- UC LA
- UC Santa Barbara
- Union University, TN
- University of Arkansas
- University of Cincinnati, OH
- University of Colorado, Denver
- University of Delaware
- University of Denver
- University of Hartford, Connecticut
- University of Iowa
- University of Missouri, St. Louis
- University of Missouri-Columbia
- University of Phoenix
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of Rochester, NY
- University of San Francisco
- University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- University of Washington
- Utah State University
- Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT.

At what US schools did we spend most of our graduate years?

The table below shows in what US states survey participants spent most of their graduate years. Once again, New York, Massachusetts, and California are at the top of the list.

<i>State</i>	<i>Number of Grad. Students</i>	<i>%</i>
New York	40	24.1%
Massachusetts	29	17.5%
California	23	13.9%
Illinois	14	8.4%
New Jersey	9	5.4%
Michigan	5	3.0%
DC	4	2.4%
Ohio	4	2.4%
Pennsylvania	4	2.4%
Connecticut	3	1.8%
Florida	3	1.8%
Arizona	2	1.2%
Colorado	2	1.2%
Georgia	2	1.2%
Maryland	2	1.2%
Minnesota	2	1.2%
Nevada	2	1.2%
North Carolina	2	1.2%
Oregon	2	1.2%
Tennessee	2	1.2%
Texas	2	1.2%
Delaware	1	0.6%
Indiana	1	0.6%
Iowa	1	0.6%
South Dakota	1	0.6%
Virginia	1	0.6%
Washington	1	0.6%
West Virginia	1	0.6%
Wisconsin	1	0.6%
Total	166	100%

The next table shows at what specific universities survey participants spent most of their graduate years. NYU, MIT, Northwestern, and Columbia ended up on the top of the list. Generally, State universities, although still quite well represented in this table, were attended by graduate students a bit less frequently than by undergraduate students.

At what US university/school had you spent most of your GRADUATE years?	N = 166
New York University	15
MIT	9
Northwestern University, IL	7
Columbia University	6
Brandeis University	5
Stanford University, CA	5
Ohio State University	4
Princeton University	4
Suffolk University, MA	4
Bentley College, MA	3
CUNY - City University of New York	3
Harvard University	3
Polytechnic University, NY	3
Rutgers University, NJ	3
SUNY Albany	3
UC Berkeley	3
University of Michigan	3
Yale University	3
Cornell University	2
Georgetown University, DC	2
Georgia State University	2
Pepperdine University, CA	2
Santa Clara University, CA	2
St. Thomas University, FL	2
SUNY Buffalo	2
SUNY Stony Brook	2
Tufts University, MA	2
University of Illinois, Chicago	2
University of Maryland	2
University of Minnesota	2
University of Pennsylvania	2
University of Texas	2

Each of the following colleges was attended by merely one survey respondent during his/her graduate years:

- American University, DC
- Boston University
- California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
- California Western School of Law
- Catholic University, DC
- Chicago Medical School, IL
- DePaul University, IL
- Duke University, NC
- George Mason University, VA
- Golden Gate University, CA
- Grand Canyon University, AZ
- Illinois Institute of Technology
- Loyola University Chicago
- Manhattan School of Music, NY
- Michigan State University
- New Jersey Institute of Technology

- New School University, NY
- North Carolina State University
- Oregon Health & Sciences University
- Oregon State University
- Pace University, NY
- Pacific Lutheran University, WA
- Samuel Merritt College, CA
- Scripps Research Institute, CA
- Simmons College, MA
- South Dakota State University
- SUNY Syracuse
- Temple University, PA
- UC - University of California
- UC Davis
- UC San Diego
- UC San Francisco
- UC Santa Clara
- Union University, TN
- University of Chicago, IL
- University of Colorado, Boulder
- University of Colorado, Denver
- University of Delaware
- University of Iowa
- University of Massachusetts
- University of Medicine & Dentistry of NJ
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- University of Nevada, Reno
- University of Notre Dame, IN
- University of Phoenix
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of San Francisco
- University of South Florida
- University of Tennessee
- University of Wisconsin
- Wayne State University, MI
- West Virginia University.

Our marital status

About half of the respondents are married and the other half are single, divorced/separated, or widowed.

What is your marital status? (N = 451)	100%
Single	41.2%
Married	51.9%
Divorced/Separated	6.4%
Widow(er)	0.4%

Who are our spouses and boy/girlfriends?

As the table below shows, only about 1 out of 10 married participants has a spouse who is a 2nd (or “older”) generation American. Generally, a higher percentage of men than women are married to their former compatriots. Women are more likely than men to have an American or a foreign spouse.

My Spouse is:	Overall (N = 235)	Men (N = 107)	Women (N = 128)
Immigrant from the USSR	86%	93%	79%
Immigrant from another country	5%	2%	8%
American (2nd generation or 'older')	9%	5%	13%

12 respondents (~5%) have spouses who came from the following foreign countries: Ireland (N = 2), India (N = 2), Israel, Italy, The Netherlands, Bulgaria, Brazil, Zimbabwe, and Japan.

Out of 141 participants who date, about three quarters date a former compatriot – still quite a high percentage. About one out of five dates an American.

My boy/girlfriend is:	Overall (N = 141)	Men (N = 56)	Women (N = 85)
Immigrant from the USSR	74%	77%	72%
Immigrant from another country	8%	9%	7%
1st generation American (NOT from the USSR)	5%	4%	6%
American (2nd generation or 'older')	13%	11%	15%

11 respondents (8%) date immigrants from other countries such as: Israel (N = 3), Macedonia, Kenya, India, Philippines, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Myanmar, and Japan.

How satisfied are we with our English?

The table below shows the degree to which the participants are satisfied with their English proficiency. About 11% of respondents chose “Somewhat satisfied” and only 1.5% chose “Not satisfied at all.” Generally, we seem to be quite satisfied with our English. Interestingly, the differences between male and female responses are quite small.

How satisfied are you with your English?	Overall (N = 452)	Men (N = 205)	Women (N = 247)
Completely satisfied	28.5%	28.8%	28.3%
Very satisfied	34.1%	35.1%	33.2%
Quite satisfied	24.6%	21.5%	27.1%
Somewhat satisfied	11.3%	12.2%	10.5%
Not satisfied at all	1.5%	2.4%	0.8%

What language do we speak with our “significant others”?

Only one out of five participants who answered this question reported that they speak English with their “significant others” (see the table below). About 57% speak Russian or some other language of the former USSR. About 23% speak a mix of Russian and English.

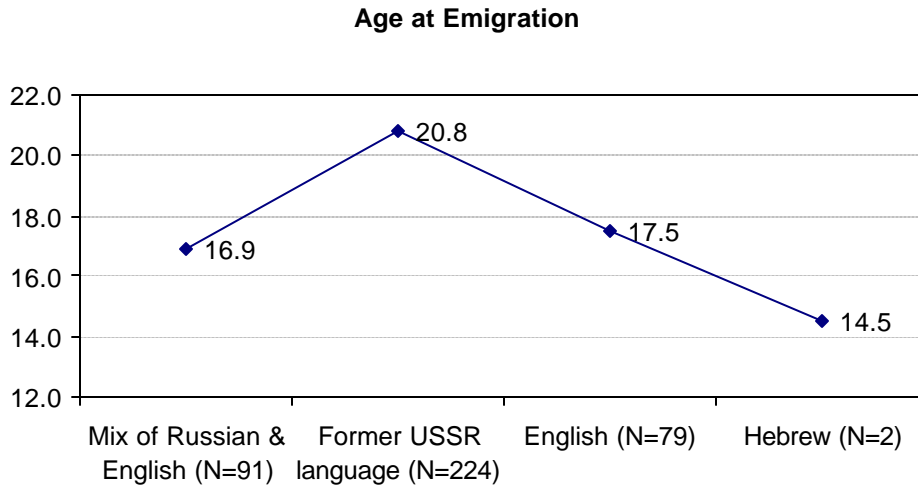
Men are more likely than women to speak Russian or another “soviet” language with their significant others. Women, on the other hand, are more likely than men to speak English. This difference is statistically significant and is due partly to the fact that women are more likely than men to be married to or date Americans or non-Russians (see the previous page).

Language your significant other and you speak with each other:	Overall (N = 398)	Men (N = 176)	Women (N = 222)
Russian	56.0%	62.5%	50.9%
A mix of Russian and English	22.6%	20.5%	24.3%
English	19.8%	14.8%	23.9%
Hebrew	0.5%		0.9%
A mix of Russian and Hebrew	0.3%	0.6%	
Latvian	0.3%	0.6%	
Belarusian	0.3%	0.6%	
Armenian	0.3%	0.6%	

The next table shows the same breakdown as above, but *only* for those participants who are married to/date our former compatriots. Quite a few of them (especially women) speak a mix of Russian and another language.

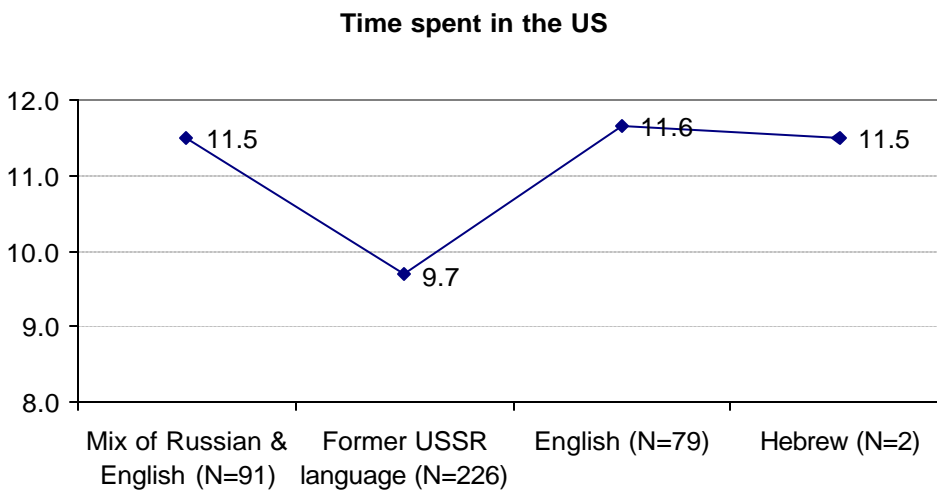
Language your significant other and you speak with each other:	Overall (N = 295)	Men (N = 139)	Women (N = 156)
Russian	68.1%	69.8%	66.7%
A mix of Russian and English	26.8%	22.3%	30.8%
English	3.7%	5.0%	2.6%
A mix of Russian and Hebrew	0.3%	0.7%	
Latvian	0.3%	0.7%	
Belarusian	0.3%	0.7%	
Armenian	0.3%	0.7%	

As one would expect, the average age at emigration is different for groups of respondents who prefer to speak different languages with their significant others. Those who speak Russian or another “soviet” language were on average about 4 years older when they emigrated than those who speak a mix of Russian & English and over 3 years older than those who speak English (both these differences are statistically significant) – see the chart below.



This finding might provide an additional explanation of the difference in language-related responses between men and women because, on average, men were 19.3 years old when they emigrated whereas women were 18.3 years old. Otherwise one can speculate that women are more flexible, learn languages faster, and/or are more willing than men to adjust to the new language environment.

The next chart shows that those participants who speak English or a mix of Russian & English have lived in the US longer than those who prefer to speak Russian or another “soviet” language.



Generally, participants who were younger when they came to the US and who spent more time in the US are more likely to date outside of the Russian community and to speak English with their significant others.

Who are our friends?

The table below shows with whom we prefer to hang out when we are not working. About three quarters of all respondents prefer to associate with their former compatriots. Only 15.6% prefer to hang out with Americans. Women are less likely than men to hang out with other Russians and are more likely to associate with other foreigners and Americans. These differences are statistically significant.

Who do you hang out/associate with most often when you are not working?	Overall (N = 443)	Men (N = 202)	Women (N = 241)
Immigrants from the (former) USSR	76.7%	82.2%	72.2%
Non-Americans/immigrants from other countries	7.7%	5.9%	9.1%
Americans	15.6%	11.9%	18.7%

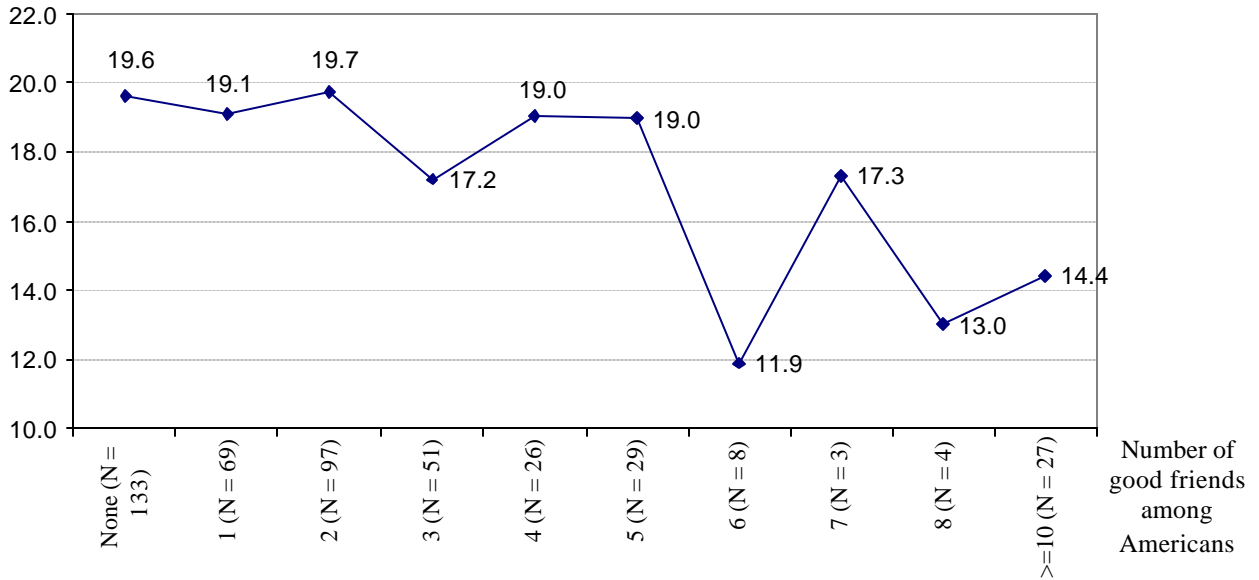
The next table shows how many Americans we could call “really good friends.” Male and female responses are quite different. 37% of males have no really good friends among Americans. Women are more likely than men to say that they have between one and nine “really good friends” among Americans.

Generally about 30% of the respondents have no good friends at all among Americans and 37% have one or two good friends among Americans. It seems that for many of us, especially men, it is not easy to make friends in the US after having spent our formative years in the USSR.

How many Americans you could call 'a really good friend(s)'?	Overall (N = 449)	Men (N = 203)	Women (N = 246)
None	29.6%	37.4%	23.2%
1 or 2	37.0%	32.0%	41.1%
3 or 4	17.6%	15.8%	19.1%
5 to 9	9.8%	7.4%	11.8%
10 or more	6.0%	7.4%	4.9%

As the next chart shows, those participants who have more American friends today were younger when they emigrated.

Age at Emigration



Who takes care of our kids?

As the next table shows, of those few participants who answered the question about babysitters, only about 3% (one man and one woman) said they have an English-speaking babysitter. The remaining 97% have either a Russian-speaking babysitter or another family member take care of their kids most of the time.

If you (both) work, who takes care of your child(ren) most of the time?	Women (N = 35)	Men (N = 28)
Russian-speaking babysitter	54.3%	53.6%
Grandparent(s)	37.1%	35.7%
Relative(s), but not grandparent(s)	5.7%	7.1%
English-speaking babysitter	2.9%	3.6%

What language do we speak with our kids?

Almost 90% of respondents speak to their kids in Russian or some other language of the former USSR. Only 12% address their kids in English.

What language do you personally speak with your children most often?	Overall (N = 165)	Women (N = 87)	Men (N = 78)
Russian	83.6%	81.6%	85.9%
English	12.1%	12.6%	11.5%
A mix of Russian and English	0.6%	1.1%	
Hebrew	1.2%	2.3%	
Latvian	0.6%		1.3%
Armenian	0.6%		1.3%
Other	1.2%	2.3%	

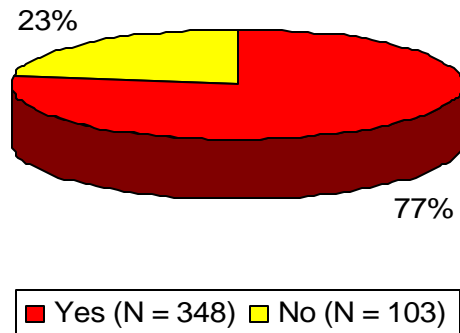
For those participants who answered both questions, the language they prefer to use with their kids is not necessarily the language they use with their significant others – see the table below.

	What language do you speak with your significant other?		
What language do you speak with your children?	A mix of Russian and English	English	Russian
A mix of Russian and English			1
English	3	9	6
Russian	20	11	106

How many of us are Jewish?

As the chart below shows, three quarters of survey participants have at least one Jewish parent.

Is at least one of your parents Jewish (N = 451)



What do we believe in?

As the table below shows, almost 70% of all respondents are REALLY not religious – they chose the top four response categories. Knowing a bit about the Russian emigrant milieu, I would suspect that most of those who self-categorized as Jewish Reformed and Christian Orthodox are also not very frequent visitors of synagogues and churches, which takes the percentage of not very religious people in this sample to 86%.

Quite a few participants chose “Agnostic” as their religious affiliation. I assume they subscribe to the following definition of an agnostic person: “One who is skeptical about the existence of God but does not profess true atheism.”

Your religious beliefs? (N = 438)	100%
Atheist	21.7%
"Agnostic"	5.3%
"Spiritual," no religious affiliation	4.6%
Jewish, not practicing	36.5%
Jewish Reformed	6.8%
Jewish Conservative	5.5%
Jewish Orthodox	1.6%
Christian Orthodox	11.4%
Christian Protestant	2.1%
Christian Catholic	0.7%
Christian – other	0.5%
Buddhist	1.4%
Other	2.1%

How often do we attend religious services?

I also asked the participants to approximate how many times they attended religious services last year. The table below shows the distribution of their responses.

How many times did you attend religious services last year? (N = 446)	100%
Never	52.0%
A few times	41.0%
About once a month	4.0%
About once a week	2.2%
About twice a week or more	0.7%

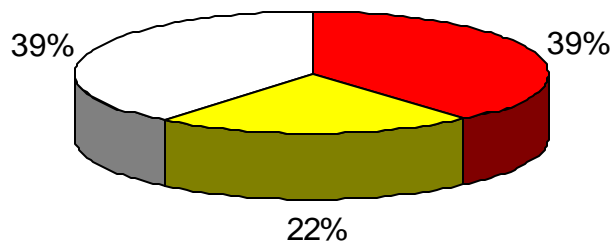
Over half of the respondents did not attend any services at all. Over 90% reported to have attended religious services just a few times a year. A friend has pointed out to me that many of those “few times” might actually be weddings, bar mitzvahs, and maybe one or two major holidays (like Yom Kippur and Passover for Jews or Christmas and Easter for Christians).

Generally, we seem to be an extremely secular group.

Do we keep our old passports?

As the chart below shows, about 60% of respondents do not care much for the passport of the country they came from (Russia, Ukraine, etc.). About 40% make sure it is valid.

Do you still keep your original passport? (N = 452)



Yes and it is valid
 Yes, but it is not valid ("prosrochen")
 No

How likely are we to visit our country of origin?

The distribution of responses to this question is shown in the table below:

How likely are you to go visit the former USSR in the next 10 years? (N = 441)	100%
At least once a year	11%
About once every two years	15%
About once every 3-5 years	23%
About once every 6-10 years	30%
Not likely at all	21%

Do we follow the news from the former USSR?

70% of respondents pay attention to the news from the former USSR (via Internet, newspapers, radio, TV) at least sometimes (see the table below).

Do you follow news from the former USSR? (N = 445)	100%
Very frequently	17%
Quite frequently	19%
Sometimes	34%
Rarely	24%
Not at all	6%

Do we attend cultural events from our country of origin?

Almost 30% of respondents attend Russian cultural events quite frequently, about 35% do it sometimes, and about 37% do not really care about them.

Do you attend Russian cultural events? (N = 443)	100%
Very frequently	10%
Fairly frequently	19%
Sometimes	35%
Rarely	29%
Not at all	8%

Do we listen to Russian music (on tapes, CDs, Internet)?

Russian music (on tapes, CDs, Internet) is still quite popular among survey respondents. Only about 20% of respondents said they listen to it rarely if ever (see the table below).

Do you listen to Russian music? N = 448)		100%
Very frequently	30%	
Fairly frequently	25%	
Sometimes	24%	
Rarely	14%	
Not at all	7%	

Do we read Russian books?

Russian books are still popular. Only 12% of respondents said they read them rarely and only 5% said didn't read them at all.

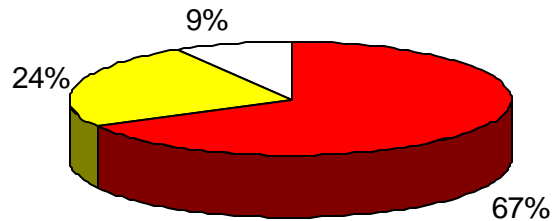
Women self report reading Russian books "very frequently" more often than men. Also, more men than women say they read no Russian books at all.

Do you read books in Russian?	Overall (N = 446)	Women (N =243)	Men (N = 203)
Very frequently	30%	35%	24%
Fairly frequently	26%	23%	29%
Sometimes	27%	27%	27%
Rarely	12%	12%	12%
Not at all	5%	3%	8%

Do we want to expose our children to Russian culture?

Two thirds or respondents reported they were making a conscious effort to expose their children to Russian culture (see the chart below). About one quarter of the respondents do it from time to time and only less than 10% do not really do it.

Do you make a conscious effort to expose your child(ren) to Russian culture? (N = 161)



■ Yes, absolutely ■ Yes, from time to time □ Not really

Interestingly enough, men tend to feel somewhat more strongly about exposing their children to Russian culture than women:

Do you make a conscious effort to expose your child(ren) to Russian culture?	Overall (N = 161)	Women (N = 86)	Men (N = 75)
Yes, absolutely	67%	64%	71%
Yes, from time to time	24%	28%	20%
Not really	9%	8%	9%

What do we miss about our life in the (former) USSR before emigration?

This question was answered by 300 participants who provided a total of 439 comments. The main response themes are listed in the table below. It is clear that we miss people – friends and family – more than anything else. And we miss – like everyone else – our youth that is now inextricably linked with our life back in the USSR.

Of course, being from Leningrad myself, I can't help but notice that quite a few of my fellow "Pitertsi" miss our city.

Theme	N	%	Exemplary Comments
Friends	139	31.7%	
Youth/Childhood	43	9.8%	My grandmother's place in the Ukraine; Playing in the construction zones; Xalyava, detstvo; My naiveté
Family/relatives	37	8.4%	
Culture in general/specific cultural events	36	8.2%	Tolkienist gatherings and role-playing games ('Hobbitskie igrischa'); Concerts at the Great Hall of Leningrad Phil harmony.
Life style (slow pace, Russian-style)	31	7.1%	Slow pace and simplicity of life; Tam bylo veselo! a zdes' vse ozabocheny delami; Walking instead of driving everywhere
Food	22	5.0%	Kvas & ice cream; Ponchiki s povidlom; Boyarka and rozmarin apples; Semechki; Pirozhki s myasom; Taste of natural food
Quality of interpersonal relationships	21	4.8%	'Kitchen Talk' :-)
Nature/opportunities to experience it	20	4.6%	Mushrooms picking ⁷ , black currant picking, Karelian forests, lakes with free swimming (no guards); Mimoza (flower) - it's not sold here
Leningrad (city)	18	4.1%	My home city; Progulki po Piteru; Metro in Leningrad
People	12	2.7%	
Feeling at home	9	2.1%	Feeling at home; Not questioning where I belong
Russian language	8	1.8%	
Mentality/Mindset	7	1.6%	European way of thinking; Russian way of thinking
Intelligentsia	6	1.4%	Intellectually stimulating company; cultural aptitude of my immediate social circle
Proximity to friends/family	6	1.4%	
Moscow (city)	5	1.1%	
Girls/Women	4	0.9%	Approachable women
Education	3	0.7%	Education was valued more than money
Sports	2	0.5%	Cross-country skiing in the winter
Other	10	2.3%	
Total	439	100%	

The following responses fell into the "Other" category of comments:

Job security; Kiev; Lack of constant social comparison; Lack of ghetto-effect; Landmarks; Changes/development; Childcare; Social equality; Unrealized aspirations ("My career as a dancer").

⁷ There were quite a few nostalgic comments about mushroom picking

What US political party best represents our views?

As the table below shows, overall the ratio of those survey participants who prefer Democrats to those who prefer Republicans is about 2 to 1 (quite a democratic crowd!). Interestingly, the same ratio is about 3.4 to 1 for female respondents and only 1.6 to 1 for male respondents: women are about twice as likely to favor Democrats over Republicans as are men. Overall, almost 80% of the sample prefer one of two leading US political parties.

What political party in the US comes closest to representing your views?	Overall (N = 396)	Women (N =217)	Men (N = 179)
Democrats	55.1%	60.8%	48.0%
Republicans	23.5%	18.0%	30.2%
Green Party	5.8%	5.1%	6.7%
Libertarian	3.5%	3.2%	3.9%
None	12.1%	12.9%	11.2%

What US political party would we vote for in 2004 elections?

If the whole country voted as our *male* survey participants would like to, the Republicans would not stand a chance. If the whole country voted as our *female* survey participants would like to, the Republicans would probably not participate in the elections at all because it would not be worth their while (see the table below).

If you would/could participate in 2004 elections in the US, what party would you vote for?	Overall (N = 385)	Women (N =208)	Men (N = 177)
Democrats	63.9%	70.2%	56.5%
Republicans	26.2%	21.6%	31.6%
Green Party	2.1%	1.4%	2.8%
Other	7.8%	6.7%	9.0%

How likely are we to vote in 2004 presidential elections?

The next table shows that the survey participants are quite an active group politically. Nearly half said they were almost 100% sure that they would participate in 2004 elections. Another 27% reported they were either “very” or “fairly likely” to participate.

How likely is it that you will participate in 2004 elections?	Overall (N⁸ = 313)	Women (N =176)	Men (N = 137)
Almost 100% sure	46.0%	48.3%	43.1%
Very likely	16.0%	11.9%	21.2%
Fairly likely	10.9%	9.7%	12.4%
Somewhat likely	11.8%	11.4%	12.4%
Not very likely	8.0%	10.2%	5.1%
Not likely at all	7.3%	8.5%	5.8%

⁸ Only US citizens were asked this question

What do we like *most* in the US?

325 participants provided responses to this open-ended question. Overall, they provided 911 comments. The next table shows the broader themes of these comments.

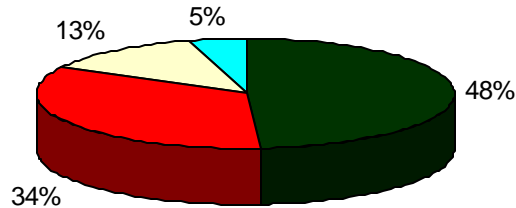
Theme	N	%
Freedom	133	14.6%
Opportunities (in general)	109	12.0%
Financial opportunities/stability	70	7.7%
Freedom to self-determine/availability of choices	67	7.4%
Convenience/comfort of daily life	58	6.4%
General prosperity/high standards of living	54	5.9%
Multiculturalism/diversity	51	5.6%
Professional/career/business opportunities	48	5.3%
People (friendly, open, tolerant, etc.)	37	4.1%
Law & Order	29	3.2%
Beautiful nature/good ecology	25	2.7%
Education ⁹ quality/education options	25	2.7%
Safety	24	2.6%
Great infrastructure (esp. roads)	15	1.6%
Access to cultural events/entertainment	13	1.4%
High quality of service(s)	13	1.4%
Equal opportunities/fairness/meritocracy	9	1.0%
Diverse/Ethnic food	9	1.0%
Ease of being Jewish/no anti-Semitism	9	1.0%
Climate/Weather	8	0.9%
Democracy/Pluralism	7	0.8%
Respect for individual & individual's rights	7	0.8%
Care for elderly, handicapped, etc.	6	0.7%
Friends	6	0.7%
New York City	6	0.7%
Respect for privacy	6	0.7%
Banking/credit system	5	0.5%
Support for scientific research	5	0.5%
Capitalism	3	0.3%
Cleanness	3	0.3%
Individualism	3	0.3%
Size of the country (lots of different places)	3	0.3%
Other	45	4.9%
Overall	911	100%

The “winners” are of general/abstract nature (i.e., Freedom, Opportunities, Freedom to determine one’s life) or of economic nature (i.e., Financial opportunities/stability, Comfort of everyday life, General prosperity, Career opportunities).

⁹ Especially Higher Education

The next chart shows the distribution of comments that fell into the Freedom category:

Breakdown for "Freedom" responses (N=133, 100%)



The "Other" category on the previous page contains the following comments (most of them – stand-alone), each of which is quite telling. And bear in mind – they were all listed under *"things I like most about the US"*:

- Easy going/laid-back attitude (N = 2)
- Less sexism than in Russia (N = 2)
- Optimism of the people (2)
- Liberal attitudes (N = 2)
- Health care system (N = 2)
- Smoking ban (N = 2)
- Family (N = 2)
- Upward mobility (N = 2)
- "Welcome home!" in the airport
- American Civil Liberties Union
- Being young
- Civil rights
- Clothes
- Current US foreign policy
- Husband
- Being far from parents
- Flexibility of the society
- High tech
- IT
- Less age discrimination
- Letters to editors
- Little bureaucracy
- Mobile workforce
- My home
- New experience
- New language
- No army draft
- Pragmatism
- Public transportation
- Raising children here
- Separation of state & religion
- Skiing
- Skyscrapers
- Support for Israel
- Upward mobility
- Variety
- Volunteerism
- Women.

What do we like *least* in the US?

306 participants provided responses to this open-ended question. Overall, they provided 805 comments. The next table shows the high-level categories of these comments.

Category	N	%
Culture/Education	161	20.0%
Society as a whole	108	13.4%
US Politics/Government	93	11.6%
People	80	9.9%
Work & Life Style	61	7.6%
Social System	33	4.1%
Food	27	3.4%
Money-related	24	3.0%
Cars/Driving	22	2.7%
Political system	21	2.6%
Media	19	2.4%
Legal system	18	2.2%
Being an immigrant	14	1.7%
Public Services	12	1.5%
Climate & Geography	11	1.4%
Minorities	7	0.9%
Physical environment	7	0.9%
Other	87	10.8%
Overall	805	100%

The next table shows a finer breakdown by specific themes.

Category	Theme	N	%
Work & Life Style	Stress/too much work/short vacations	53	6.6%
Culture/Education	General lack of culture/American mass culture	40	5.0%
Culture/Education	Ignorance/low level of education of general public	40	5.0%
US Politics/Government	Bush/current US administration (as of May-June 2004)	37	4.6%
Culture/Education	American narrow-mindedness & self-centeredness	33	4.1%
Culture/Education	Poor education system (schools)	32	4.0%
Society as a whole	Capitalism/Commercialism/Consumerism	32	4.0%
US Politics/Government	US imperialism/current foreign policy (as of May-June 2004)	30	3.7%
Food	American food/junk food	27	3.4%
People	Hard to find friends/shallow interpersonal relationships	25	3.1%
Social System	American Health Care System/lack of universal medical coverage	23	2.9%
Society as a whole	Religiousness/Religious conservatism	19	2.4%
Culture/Education	Americans' arrogance/conceit	16	2.0%
Legal system	Legal system/litigiousness/lawyers	15	1.9%
Being an immigrant	Being an immigrant (separated from home culture & language)	14	1.7%
Cars/Driving	Overdependence on cars	13	1.6%
Media	Low quality of TV and news coverage	12	1.5%
Taxes & Cost of living	Taxes	12	1.5%
Taxes & Cost of living	Cost of living	12	1.5%

Category	Topic	N	%
Society as a whole	Political correctness	12	1.5%
Society as a whole	Susceptibility of general population to propaganda/brainwashing	11	1.4%
US Politics/Government	Bureaucracy	10	1.2%
Cars/Driving	Traffic & commute to work	9	1.1%
People	Americans (in general)	9	1.1%
People	Individualism/Selfishness	9	1.1%
People	Prudishness & Puritanism	8	1.0%
Public Services	Poor public transportation	8	1.0%
Society as a whole	Liberalism, liberal media & liberal people	8	1.0%
Society as a whole	Crime & bad neighborhoods	8	1.0%
Climate & Geography	Climate/Weather	7	0.9%
Media	Mass media	7	0.9%
People	Hypocrisy & double standards	7	0.9%
People	Prejudice, Bigotry, & Racism	7	0.9%
Political system	Lack of true democracy & freedom	7	0.9%
US Politics/Government	INS & Immigration system	7	0.9%
People	Phony Americans	6	0.7%
People	Widespread obesity	6	0.7%
Society as a whole	Lack of community	6	0.7%
Political system	Conservatism	5	0.6%
Political system	Two-party political system	5	0.6%
Social System	Poor child care/limited maternity support	5	0.6%
Social System	Social inequality	5	0.6%
US Politics/Government	Federal Government	5	0.6%
Climate & Geography	Being far from Europe	4	0.5%
Minorities	Affirmative action	4	0.5%
Physical environment	Suburbia	4	0.5%
Political system	Republicans	4	0.5%
Public Services	Dirt in cities/graffiti	4	0.5%
Society as a whole	Too much freedom/too many choices	4	0.5%
Society as a whole	Isolation from the rest of the world	4	0.5%
Society as a whole	Wasteful society	4	0.5%
US Politics/Government	Police	4	0.5%
Work & Life Style	Uncertainty & Job insecurity	4	0.5%
Work & Life Style	Poor job market	4	0.5%
Legal system	Drinking age	3	0.4%
Minorities	African-Americans	3	0.4%
People	Clothes/the way people dress	3	0.4%
Physical environment	Architecture in the US	3	0.4%
Other	Other	87	10.8%
Overall		805	100%

Stressful life-style and short vacations were the single “winner” theme. However, the bulk of our discontent centers around ignorance, narrow-mindedness, and perceived lack of culture of the majority of the US population as well as poor education system (schools). Current US administration and its foreign policy at the time of the survey were also a big (negative) hit.

The “Other” category contains the following comments (mostly stand-alone, sometimes mentioned by 2 people). Some of these criticisms are very funny and some of them resonate with many of us all too well (like DMV, Time “on hold”, and Lack of sidewalks). Some comments (like annoyance with park rangers, swim guards or “No trespassing!” signs) would probably need to be explained to people who did not come from the (former) USSR:

- Hispanic immigrants (N = 2)
- Homeless people (N = 2)
- Illegal immigration (N = 2)
- Insurance companies (N = 2)
- Lack of history (N = 2)
- Lack of parking (N = 2)
- Lack of social mobility (N = 2)
- Problems with minorities (N = 2)
- Question “Where are you from?” (N = 2)
- Scandals in media (N = 2)
- Speed limits (N = 2)
- Weak social system (N = 2)
- Xenophobia (N = 2)
- Malls
- Lack of fairness
- Lack of diversity from one region to another
- Question "How are you?"
- Hard for relatives to get US visas
- Hate between ethnic groups
- Corporate protectionism
- Violation of gay couple rights
- Americans who can't drive
- Time “on hold” on the phone
- Overregulation of everything
- Lack of good Russian-speaking girls
- myself
- Anti-Semitism
- Little value is placed on children
- Low moral standards
- Low salary for teaching
- American women
- Obsession with TV and video games
- Loans
- Following the rules
- Pragmatism
- Boredom
- DMV
- Relationships at work
- Guns
- Russian and other immigrant communities
- Some Russian immigrants
- Lazy other immigrants
- Need to work during school
- Grocery stores
- "No trespassing!" signs
- Credit history system
- Feminists
- Spoiled kids
- Arabs
- Grandparents voting for democrats
- Stupid bosses
- English dialects I don't understand
- Park rangers
- Harder to blame the system
- Discussions of weight problems
- Garbage on a curbside
- Self-righteousness
- Gay marriage
- Difficult to trust people
- Can't drink beer on the beach
- Restrooms
- Patriot Act
- Over-ambitiousness
- Loose morals
- Decline of family values
- Lack of public spaces
- Urban sprawl
- Obsession with sports
- People from the 3rd world countries
- Swim guards
- Being far from the family/relatives
- Lack of sidewalks
- Poor soccer league
- Long distances.

About the Author of the Survey

My name is Dimitri Liakhovitski. I was born in 1969 in Leningrad, the USSR (today - St.-Petersburg, Russia). I emigrated to Germany in 1990 and lived and studied in Berlin until 1995 when I went to the US. I hold a Ph.D. in Industrial/ Organizational Psychology from the University at Albany (State University of New York) and have considerable experience conducting large-scale surveys. I live in New York and work in an internal consulting group (Organizational Effectiveness) of a large US pharmaceutical company.

If you have questions/comments about this survey, please send them to the following e-mail address: emigrant_survey@mail.ru