



IOM International Organization for Migration

FORMER SOVIET UNION (FSU) STATES

ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN, BELARUS, KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYSTAN, MOLDOVA,
TURKMENISTAN, TAJIKISTAN AND UZBEKISTAN

MAPPING EXERCISE
LONDON, JUNE - SEPTEMBER 2008

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The aim of this Mapping Report is to guide IOM's outreach activities and communications strategies. The report does not purport to be exhaustive. The mapping consultant who conducted the exercise and wrote the report on behalf of IOM has taken every effort to ensure accuracy in his/her reporting and the views expressed in this report are his/hers. IOM cannot be held responsible for any omissions or inaccuracies.

INTRODUCTION

AIM OF THE MAPPING EXERCISE, TARGET GROUP AND METHODOLOGY

The aim of the mapping exercise carried out by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) was to identify the main channels of information used by potential beneficiaries of IOM's voluntary return programmes, which are open to asylum seekers and irregular migrants. The aim was also to identify the location of their communities in the UK. The ultimate goal of the mapping exercise is to help IOM to improve its communications with diaspora communities in the United Kingdom through media articles, advertisements, and presentations to community groups.

The first mapping exercise was undertaken in December 2005. It looked at the Brazilian community in the UK. Subsequently, more than thirty exercises have been carried out by IOM. A few are still being completed. In 2007, the Russian, Ukrainian and Georgian communities were covered in separate studies. This survey covers the citizens of the other former Soviet Union (FSU) states that have been independent since 1991. They are: Armenia; Azerbaijan; Belarus¹; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Moldova; Turkmenistan; Tajikistan; and Uzbekistan. For the purpose of the survey, their citizens living in the UK are referred to as "FSU citizens". Their community is similarly referred to as the "FSU community". This is a collective term employed solely for clarity in the report, although neither technically nor legally correct. The mapping exercise for the FSU community in the UK was completed between June and September 2008.

Like previous projects, this mapping exercise aimed to establish:

- the approximate size and geographical spread of the FSU diaspora communities in the UK;
- their preferred media, such as TV networks, radio stations, newspapers and magazines, as well as the role of Internet-based information sources;
- in which languages FSU citizens prefer to receive IOM information materials;
- what institutions, such as libraries, religious centres, and shops could be used for publicising information about IOM's voluntary return programmes; and
- what community organisations exist and who the community leaders are to whom members of the public most often turn for advice.

The FSU mapping exercise used a questionnaire which was divided into two sections and contained twenty-five questions. The first section focused on media sources and other channels of information available to members of the FSU diaspora in the UK. It also asked about the community organisations and institutions that they used in order to meet their compatriots. The second section of the questionnaire requested baseline data from each respondent about their age, gender and length of residence. It should be emphasised that the anonymity of the respondents was fully protected. No personal information, such as name and address, was collected.

A consultant, who is a national of one of the FSU states, was recruited to carry out the mapping exercise and compile a report. The consultant's inside knowledge of the community and established contacts with its members in the UK proved to be an essential resource for this exercise.

¹ Otherwise, Byelorussia or Belorussia,

The first phase of the project involved translating the questionnaire template into Russian and adapting its contents to the specific characteristics of the communities being surveyed. A number of approaches were used to collect the information. In addition to distributing questionnaires, qualitative fact-finding and in-depth interviews with multipliers² was undertaken to provide further information. Talks were held with representatives of the different diasporas and with community organisations, media and consulate staff.

Extensive networking was carried out to identify media, organisations, churches and individuals that interact with FSU citizens. The field work took place between June and August 2008. During this period, 80 questionnaires were collected. These completed questionnaires represent the consensus views of various groups and communities, as well as the responses of 80 individuals .

The mapping exercise was mostly conducted in the Greater London area because it became obvious at an early stage of the research that this is where most FSU nationals live. However, it was not limited to the capital because there are also growing numbers of FSU citizens in other major cities. The consultant travelled to Oxford, Cambridge and Bristol, where he met with representatives of the FSU expatriate community, with members of British-FSU organisations and visited several places frequented by FSU citizens. Several phone interviews with members of the diasporas in Glasgow, Birmingham and Manchester were also undertaken. This enabled IOM to create a more complete and comprehensive view of the existing networks and made questionnaire answers more accurate and representative.

This report includes charts and tables based on the information obtained from the questionnaires. Additionally, an extensive list of contacts has been created, which merges data gathered directly from completed questionnaires with the results of the consultant's own fact-finding as well as with information provided by the multipliers during in-depth interviews. This resource will be used by the Information team at IOM in its outreach activities.³

It is important to emphasise that the mapping exercise relied on networks and that the questionnaire was completed by those who selected themselves to be part of this small study. It is not possible to draw general conclusions from this data about the population of FSU nationals in the UK. However, the range of individuals who helped to facilitate the mapping exercise does constitute a wide and diverse sample.

² This term is used to indicate individuals or organisations that are well known among diaspora groups and could therefore play a key role in delivering information.

³ This document is confidential and does not form part of this report.



1 FORMER SOVIET UNION (FSU) CITIZENS IN THE UK

1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE FSU COMMUNITY IN THE UK

History and background

In December 1991, twelve former Soviet Republics reached an agreement to dissolve the Soviet Union and to start a new life as independent countries. In addition to Russia and Ukraine, these countries were Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The Former Soviet Union is not a political entity and the FSU diasporas in the UK have a varied history of migration. Some groups have very deep roots and a well-established position in Britain. For example the first Armenians arrived more than a hundred years ago fleeing genocide and unrest in the Caucasus. Nowadays, Armenians have several well-established community organisations, a couple of churches and their own media outlets. They have been in the UK for many generations and a significant new wave of migrants arrived in the 1990s, fleeing new wars and conflicts on their doorstep.

By contrast, migration from the newly-independent states in Central Asia is a new phenomenon. Citizens of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have very rarely been seen by the British immigration authorities until very recently. This could be explained by the fact that these countries are remote and that some of their societies remained relatively closed until the mid 1990s. Moldova and Belarus are in the middle of this spectrum. Cultural and geographical proximity has meant that more of their citizens have been living in the UK.

The number of nationals who come to Britain from the individual FSU states varies significantly depending on the size of the nation, its proximity to Britain and on historical factors. More importantly, these countries cannot be viewed as a single body because they represent very different and distinct cultures and societies. Belarus and Moldova, for example, are typical Eastern European countries similar to Russia, Poland or Ukraine. Armenia and Azerbaijan are in the Caucasus and they are culturally more akin to Iran or Turkey. The five others, on the other hand, are in Central Asia and would bear more resemblance to Afghanistan or Mongolia than to a typical European society.

Nonetheless, there are almost as many things that they have in common as separate them. They have all been part of another large entity, the USSR. To the present day, they represent a unique blend of cultural and social norms that were typical of the old country. There is a common cultural heritage, to which these new nations can relate. The Russian language is still a significant factor. Many FSU citizens still speak Russian, even if they grew up after the demise of the USSR. It is more important than English as a medium of communication, even in the UK. Some of the FSU states also have a significant minority of ethnic Russians. Almost all non-Russian respondents stated that they speak Russian on a daily basis with other migrants from the FSU.

Migration to the UK started at the beginning of the last century as a result of the political changes in the region and ongoing civil unrest. The first people to settle in Britain were Armenians and Belarussians. The first generations integrated completely into British society or became part of a bigger Russian diaspora. In the first 80 years of the 20th century the influx of new migrants from the region was next to nothing. The Soviet Union was a closed country with almost no opportunity for its citizens to leave freely.

The number of FSU citizens living in the UK therefore remained relatively low until the end of 1980s. This, however, began to change in the 1990s, a transitional and tumultuous decade for the former Soviet Union states. With the political and economic changes in the East, culminating in the break up of the USSR in 1991, the number of newcomers from the newly independent states started to increase rapidly. In fact, it is fair to speak of a snowball effect developing. It still does not seem to have reached its fullest extent. Recent estimates conclude that nearly 600,000 East European migrants have come to the United Kingdom in the past two years: more than 20% are FSU nationals⁴.

Several particular wealthy entrepreneurs and famous artists have caught the public's eye. However, they represent a small overall percentage of FSU citizens in Britain. The Home Office estimates that most FSU citizens currently living in the UK are either labour immigrants or have been granted visas on family reunion grounds. There are some asylum seekers as well, particularly from the regions of the Caucasus and Central Asian states.

Structure and Groupings in this Report

This report covers nine different states. It takes into account what they have in common but also the differences between them. First, there are obvious cultural and linguistic differences. It is also a central factor that the sizes of the diasporas in the UK vary a lot. Another aspect is how well-established these communities are in the UK. These factors affected the outcomes of the exercise. It would not be correct to deal with all nine of them together as an entity.

It was very soon apparent that three main groups in the answers could be distinguished.

- The Armenian community stands alone because it is relatively large and well organised. It also has more community organisations and media outlets compared to the other diasporas.
- The answers given by the Belarus and Moldovan nationals were very similar as regards media consultation.
- There are many fewer diaspora associations and local media available to the citizens of the Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) and Azerbaijan. When possible, this distinction was maintained in the report. However, in some respects, other groupings were more appropriate, depending on the answers of the respondents. It needs to be stressed that these distinctions were made solely to achieve a better structure for the report. They were based only on the answers given in the questionnaires and during the interviews.

⁴ Independent Immigration Advice "Work Permit", *UK Immigration News*, 23 March 2008.

1.2 APPROXIMATE SIZE OF THE COMMUNITY

Asylum Seekers

Figure 1: Asylum Statistics: FSU Nationals (Former USSR except Baltic States, Russia and Ukraine) in Home Office Statistics.⁵

STATUS	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Asylum applications made	615	520	315	265	220	155
Leave to remain (recognised as refugees)	55	25	25	20	20	25
Leave to remain on other grounds	15	20	10	5	-	10
Refusals	540	630	515	245	160	150

NB: Figures for applications, refusals, and approvals do not agree. The "refusals" category applies to all negative decisions in that year, including refusal of applications made in previous years.

Gathering accurate information and statistics about the number of FSU nationals in the UK has proved as difficult as it did in previous mapping exercises., There is generally a lack of up-to-date information on the number of foreign nationals in the UK. There is no doubt in anyone's mind that the number of migrants from the FSU has risen significantly during the last few years but there are no accurate figures that confirm this.

2001 Census

The 1991 UK census only listed citizens of the former USSR as one undifferentiated group. According to the 2001 Census, there were 8,843 FSU citizens living in Britain but Russia, Ukraine and the Baltic States must be distinguished from the rest of the "former USSR", as has been done for the asylum statistics in figure 1.⁶

Figure 2: Breakdown according to age

AGE	NUMBER OF CITIZENS
0-14	565
15-29	2,523
30-44	2,924
45-59	2,371
59-74	348
75 or over	112
Total	8,843

⁵ *Asylum Statistic*, Home Office, United Kingdom 2007, pp.29-40.

⁶ http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/get_facts.asp

Other Estimates

The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) estimates that around 35,000 nationals of former Soviet states (excluding Russia, Ukraine and Georgia) now live in Britain. Citizens of Kazakhstan (around 1,5000 nationals) are the largest group, followed by Armenians (around 10,000). However even these figures are already severely out of date given developments in recent years.⁷ The Armenian case is complicated by the fact that some Armenians come from Armenia proper or from other parts of the FSU. Others were born in Turkey or in the Middle East. They were not technically covered by this survey but are nonetheless relevant to the IOM programmes. Armenian diaspora organisations estimate that there are around 20,000 Armenians in London alone, with a total number in the UK of around 35,000.

Another approximate estimate is based on indicative statistics such as the International Passenger Survey (IPS) and the issue of National Insurance Numbers.⁸ The most up-to-date figures from National Insurance Neighbourhood Statistics support the sources above. However, their most recent figures are from 2005.⁹

The gathering of information was also complicated because until relatively recently the countries in question were part of a different state. One of the main challenges was to establish the formal nationality of respondents to the questionnaire. Russia was dominant both in terms of population and territory in the FSU. Russian was the prevailing language and the ethnic structure of the old society was complex. In the minds of outsiders, many people are still seen as “Russians” although technically they could be citizens of Belarus or Armenia. There are many ethnic Russians living in all nine of the FSU countries. They might not have Russian citizenship but they consider themselves to be Russian and they may not participate in the Belarus or Armenia diaspora. Rather, they participate in Russian community life and consult Russian media. Similarly there are many ethnic Kazakhs, Armenians and Azerbaijanis etc. who live in other former Soviet states and have a passport for those countries. They would not technically be covered by the survey. It is worth pointing out, however, that, regardless of their citizenship, respondents’ answers to questions about information channels and community organisations were still useful.

Unofficial estimates indicate that approximately 50,000 FSU citizens currently live in the UK. A significant increase of approximately 30,000 occurred in the last three years. These numbers are very approximate, however, and not formally confirmed by any authority, including the Home Office. The estimates are produced on the basis of statistics relating to other aspects of migration. They include, for example, an analysis of numbers of issued visas, approximate numbers of FSU citizens returning to their countries (giving a rough estimation of how many have overstayed) and the number of asylum applications approved and refused. In 2000, for example, 15,000 visas were granted to FSU citizens. By 2003, the number had increased by 72%. Some official figures confirm this trend. 934, 1,121 and 1,193 FSU citizens settled in the UK in 2002, 2003 and 2004 respectively.¹⁰

Further relaxation of their rules on foreign travel in the countries of origin have been the main reason for the increase in migration to the UK, as well as increased trade and cooperation in other fields. In addition, the number of people coming to Britain on family reunion grounds is constantly increasing. Citizens of Belarus, Azerbaijan and Central Asian countries are fleeing their internal political situation, conflict, or unresolved territorial disputes. By contrast, citizens of Moldova have been arriving in considerable numbers as well, but they mostly come to the UK to work. At the end of 2005, it was estimated that there were 40,000 FSU citizens and FSU-speaking people lived in the United Kingdom. By December 2007, there were projected to be about 50,000.¹¹

⁷ James Rather, *Counting the Uncountable*, IPPR Publications, March 2007 (Appendix).

⁸ http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/tabtools/nino_allocations_0708.pdf, IPPR

⁹ http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/Mothers_country

¹⁰ National Statistics Acceptances for Settlement by Nationality, 2000-2002, Annual Abstract of Statistics.

¹¹ Independent Immigration Advice ‘Work Permit’, *ibid.*

Information held by the Embassies

None of the FSU embassies in London gave figures that were anywhere near the ones set out above. To say that their numbers were considerably lower is an understatement. No officials could say exactly how many of their nationals actually are in Britain. There are several reasons for that. First, in most cases people who come to Britain to seek asylum or to work illegally do not turn to their embassy unless there is a personal crisis or they want to return. Most of the estimates offered by the embassies are, in fact, taken from the community organisations affiliated to them and could be classed as hearsay or second hand. Information is also partly based on registrations with the embassy. Far from everyone does register, however, and if they do, it often reflects that they have settled in the UK. Furthermore, whatever statistics the embassies do have include everyone regardless of their status and length of stay. They do not differentiate between overstayers, students, family reunion cases, asylum seekers or people who have been given British citizenship. Finally, the data which is directly available from the embassies represents trends and tendencies, rather than current information.

Figure 3: FSU Citizens in the UK as Estimated by National Embassies or Diplomatic Missions

FSU COUNTRY	PERSONS
Armenia	7,100
Azerbaijan	2,000 (approx)
Belarus	12,000
Kazakhstan	2,237
Kyrgyzstan	500 (approx)
Moldova	4,700
Turkmenistan	300
Tajikistan	1,000
Uzbekistan	2,500

1.3 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION AND SPREAD OF THE FSU COMMUNITY

Embassies

There is a similar lack of adequate information about the exact location of FSU communities across the UK. All diplomatic missions estimate that around 40,000 have settled in London, followed by 3,000 in Manchester, approximately 2,000 in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and 1,000 in Liverpool. The rest are spread across other areas of the UK. In London, the boroughs of Hackney, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Brent, and Tower Hamlets were mentioned most often during interviews. Like the Ukrainian and Russian diasporas, there are no areas in any city or region in Britain where a minority of migrants from the FSU is particularly noticeable. They tend to blend well with local people or with other migrants and do not form “Little Armenias” or “Little Moldovas”. Generally, most migrants from the FSU tend to settle in areas with a higher proportion of local residents who were born outside the UK. Migrants from Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) often choose areas with a higher concentration of the Asian population, such as Tower Hamlets or Finsbury Park in London.

Mapping Questionnaire Data and Other Sources

Respondents were asked whether they knew areas with significant numbers of their countrymen anywhere in the UK. 34 of the questionnaires did not give any answer to this question. The rest largely confirmed the information above. Most were answers like “Whitechapel”, “Ealing”, “Hackney”, and “Tottenham”. There was also a clear view that the vast majority of FSU nationals live in the capital. This is consistent with the information from the Home Office and the 2001 Census. The respondents, and others involved in the FSU and the Russian-speaking community, confirmed that there are almost no examples of areas with a noticeable concentration of their countrymen. It is rather more appropriate to speak about certain parts of Greater London where you are more likely to meet people from the countries in question or to hear their languages. There would also perhaps be a shop there or a social centre frequented by them. However, the existence of such establishments is sporadic and does not depend on the fact that many FSU citizens actually reside in a particular neighbourhood. This is in sharp contrast to many other ethnic groups and is perhaps partly a consequence of their size and because their history of residence in Britain is much longer. The composition of the FSU Diaspora in territorial and geographical terms is thus rather loose.

Geographical Spread of the FSU Community in the UK, 2006



The above are rough estimates. Additionally, there is an estimated 4,000 members of the FSU community scattered in the rest of the UK

2 MAPPING EXERCISE OUTCOMES

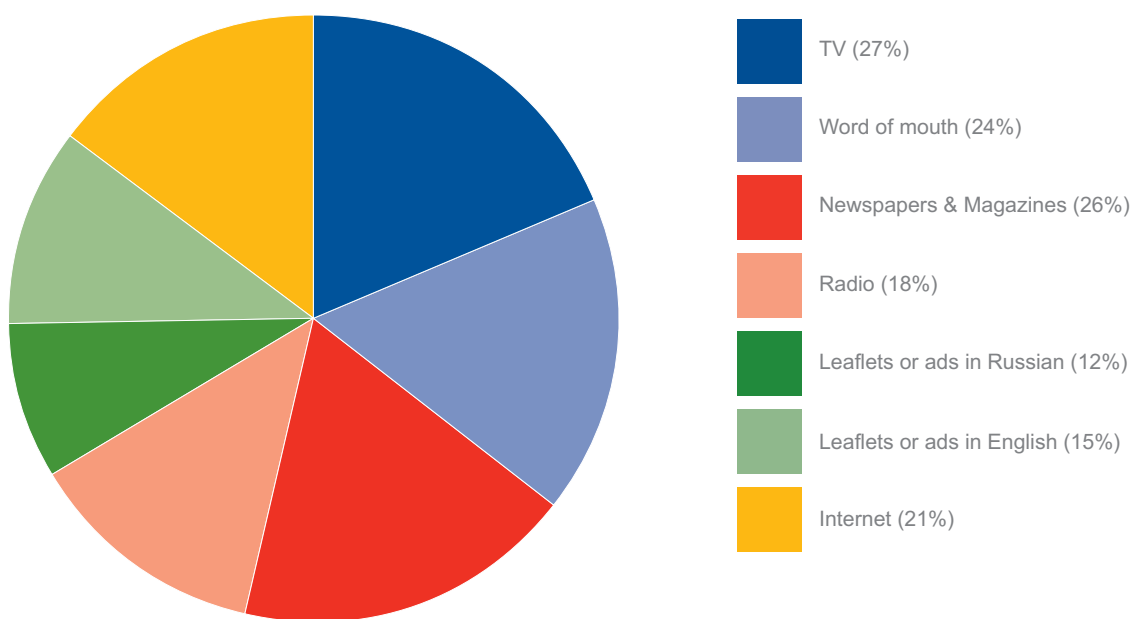
INFORMATION CHANNELS

2.1 PREFERRED SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Information Sources

Participants were asked how they normally obtain information on political, social, cultural and entertainment matters. In this section, the countries covered by this report are divided into three groups. The first group is Belarus and Moldova, two distinctly Eastern European communities. The second is Armenia and Azerbaijan, from the Caucasus region. The third is formed by the Central Asian communities. The respondents' responses are shown in the following charts.

Figure 4: Preferred Sources of Information for Citizens of Belarus and Moldova (29 questionnaires)



Local Services and Organisations

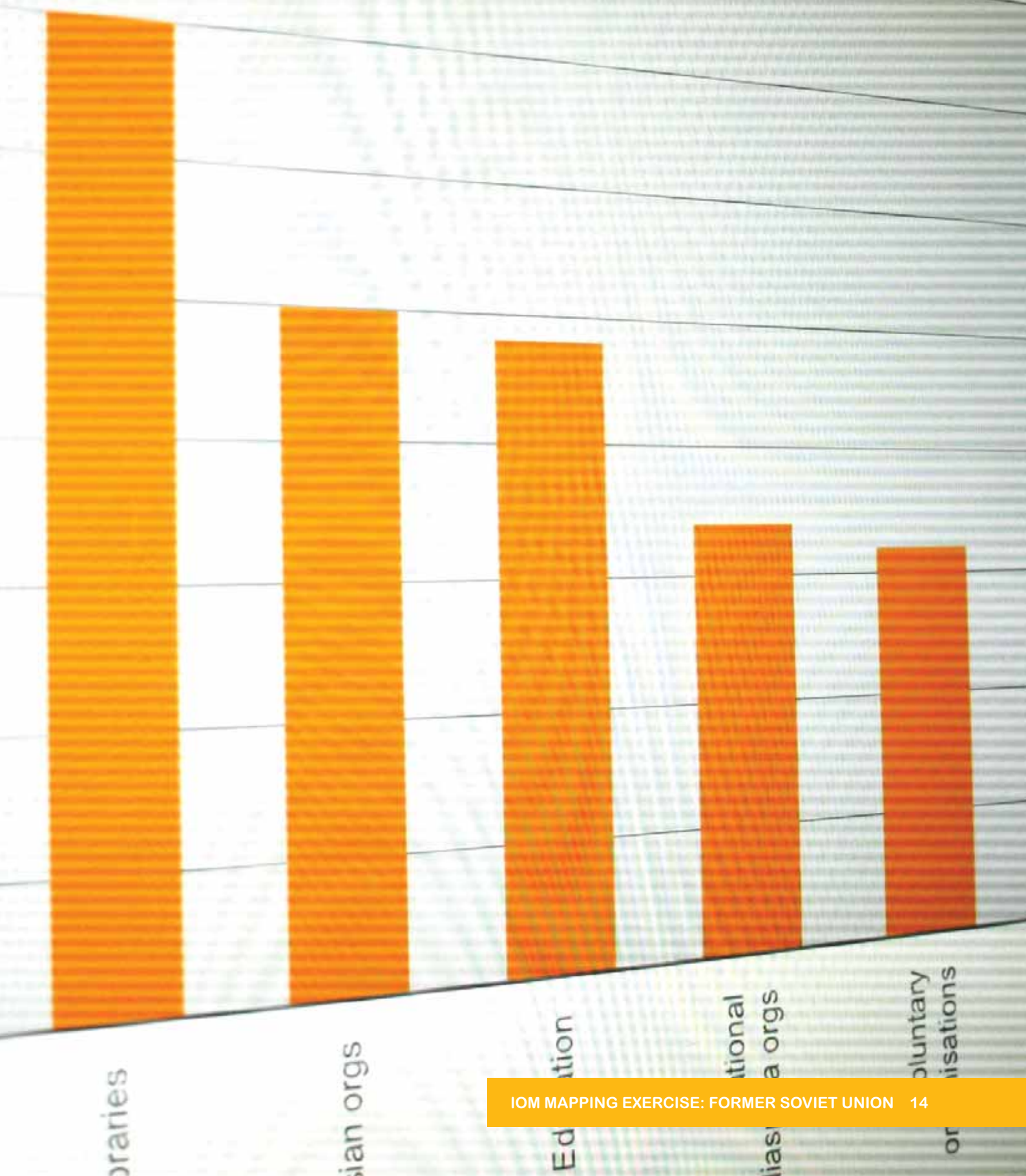


Figure 5: Preferred Sources of Information for Citizens of Armenia and Azerbaijan (27 Questionnaires)

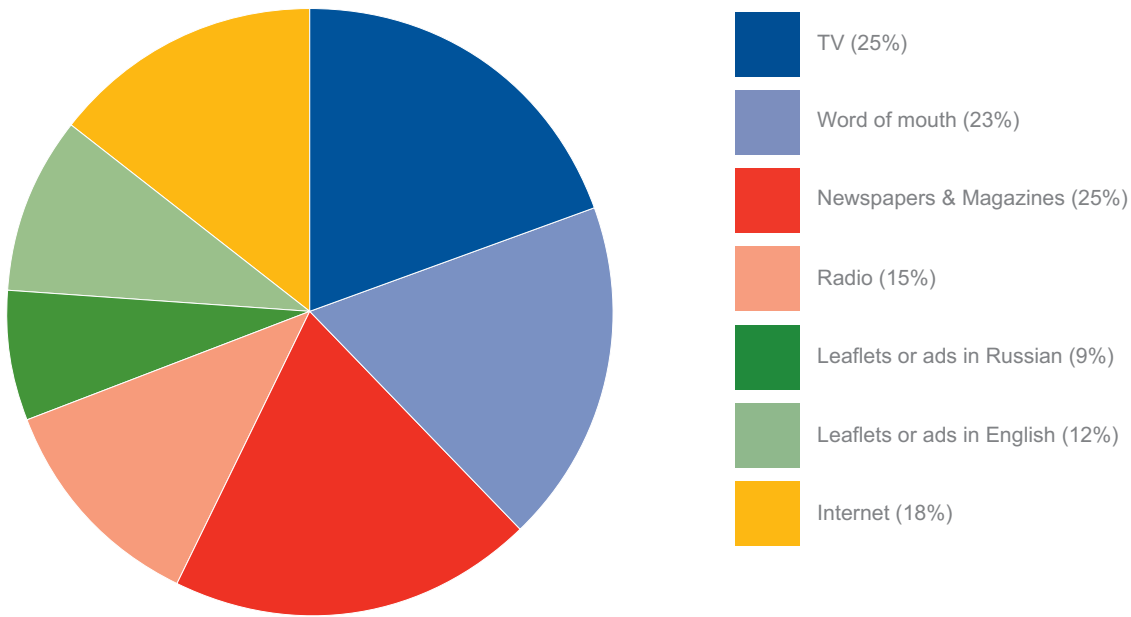
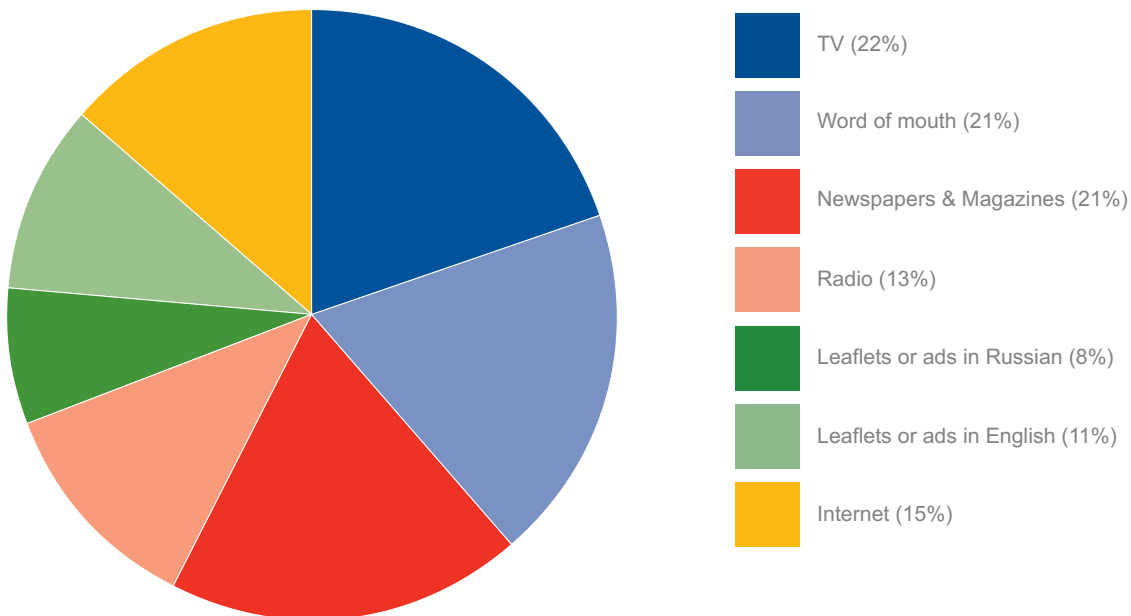


Figure 6: Preferred Sources of Information for Citizens of the Central Asian Republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) (24 questionnaires)



Print and TV appear to be favoured by the respondents. The preference for newspapers and magazines is probably because there is a selection of free newspapers in Russian, in some of their native languages and, of course, in English. These newspapers are widely available to the public through shops, libraries and community organisations. They are distributed at most of the major community events and can be picked up outside some of the main Underground stations in London. Another reason for the popularity of printed media is tradition. Newspapers and magazines have always played a prominent role in the FSU countries. Until very recently, they rivalled the electronic media in popularity. Publications have often been more diverse and independent than TV and radio. This tradition affects people’s preferences even today and in a different environment. A few respondents cited communal billboards in shops and work places. These entries are covered here as “others”.

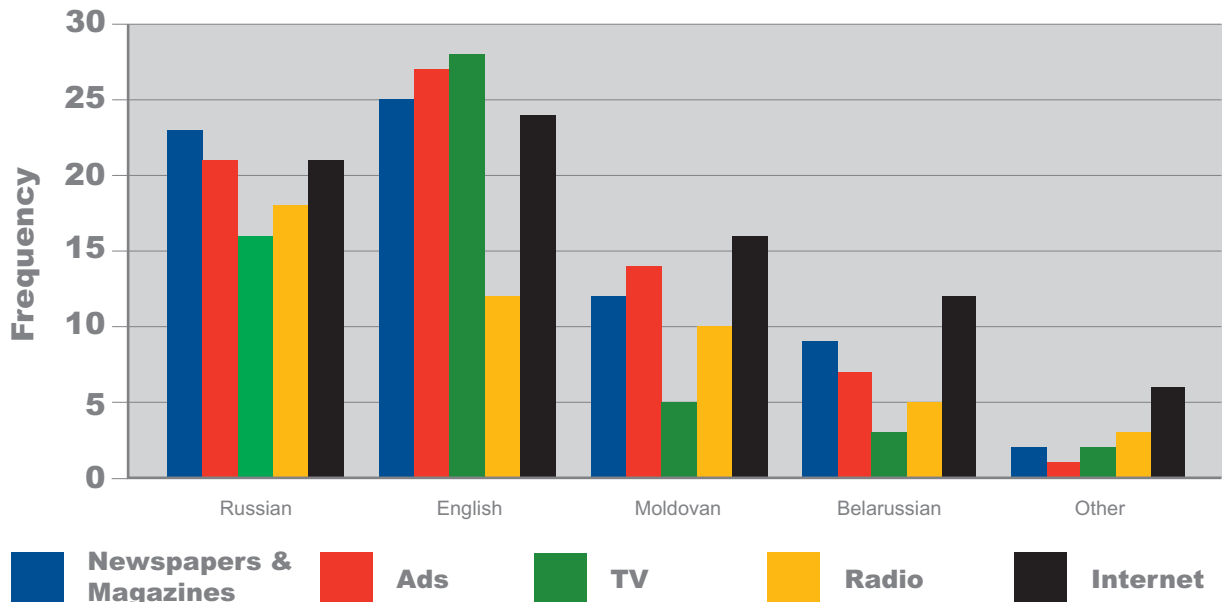
2.2 MEDIA

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to identify the main channels of information used by the citizens of the FSU living in Britain. It was divided into three main categories: media; other sources of information; and community groups and organisations. All relevant information, including contact details provided by the respondents and the interviewees was included in the confidential list of contacts already mentioned. It is not designed to be an exhaustive register of media and organisations since new newspapers and organisations are started all the time, especially given the rapid growth of the FSU communities in Britain.

Media Comprehension

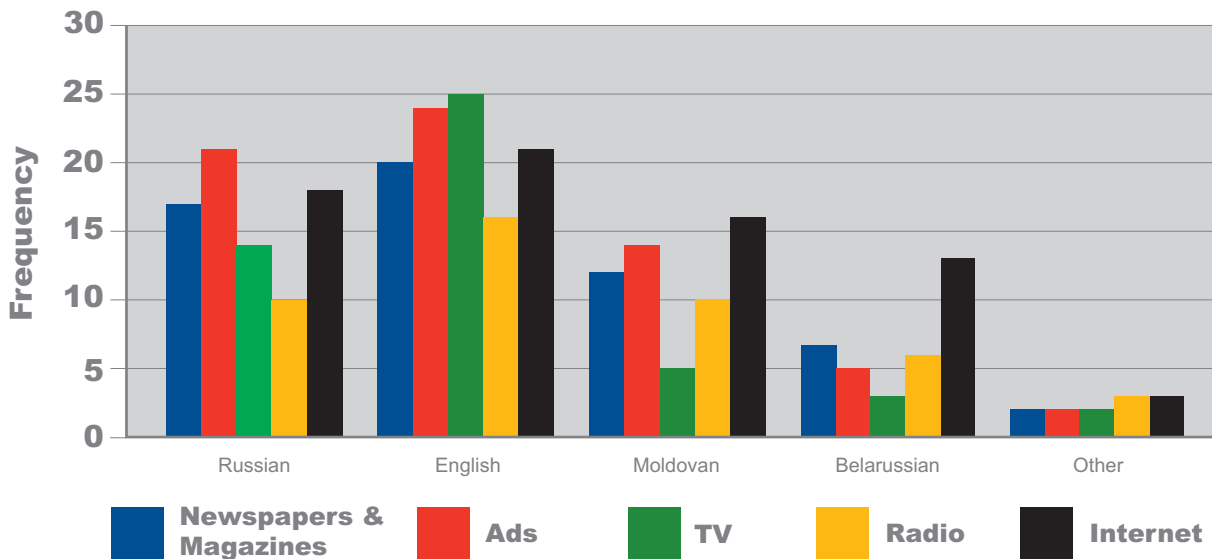
Respondents were asked in which language they could best understand information from TV, radio, publications, advertisements and the Internet. Figure 7 below presents the outcome.

Figure 7: Citizens of Belarus and Moldova (29 questionnaires)



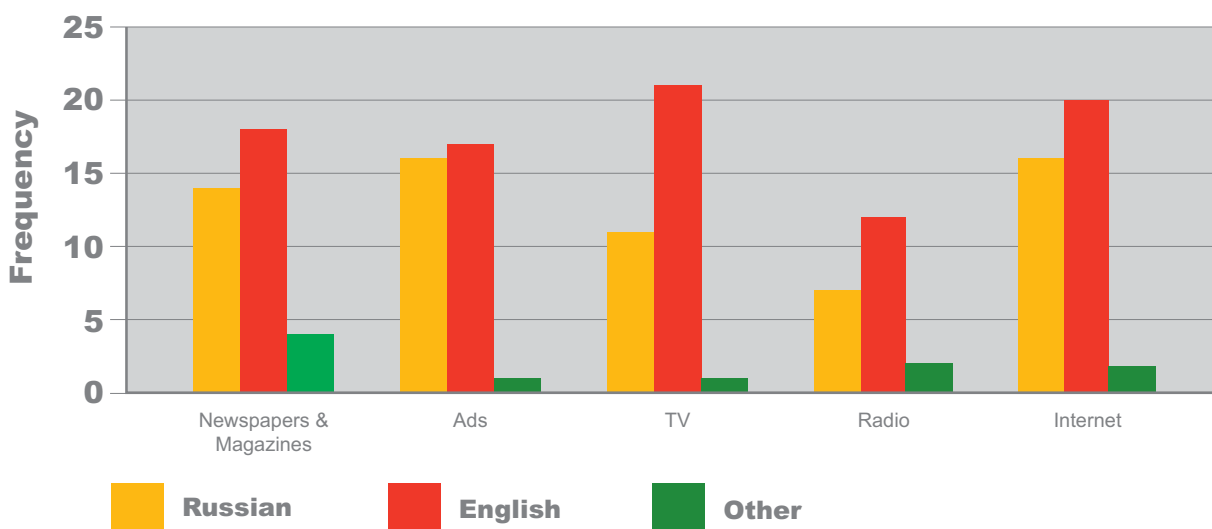
There were 15 Moldovan and 14 Belarus respondents. English is the most prevalent language. Belarus respondents listed German and Ukrainian under “other”. Moldavians listed “Romanian” as their single “other” choice. It is identical to Moldovan: calling it by either name has been a controversial political issue. The answers to the questionnaires refer to the fact that most of the press available in this language in Britain actually comes from Romania. Among all nine diasporas targeted by this mapping exercise, Belarussian showed the biggest interest in Russian-language media. There is a linguistic and cultural proximity between those nations. The Moldavian community comes second in this respect.

Figure 8: Citizens of Armenia and Azerbaijan (29 questionnaires)



There were 15 responses from Armenians and 12 from Azeri (i.e. Azerbaijani) respondents. English is again the most favoured language. Russian, in contrast with the previous group, is less popular. There are two reasons. First, the Armenian Diaspora has a long history in Britain and has had its own local press for some time. Secondly, those communities are more distant from Russia culturally and linguistically. Azerbaijanis also gave Turkish as their other language of choice.

Figure 9: Citizens of Central Asian Republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (24 questionnaires)



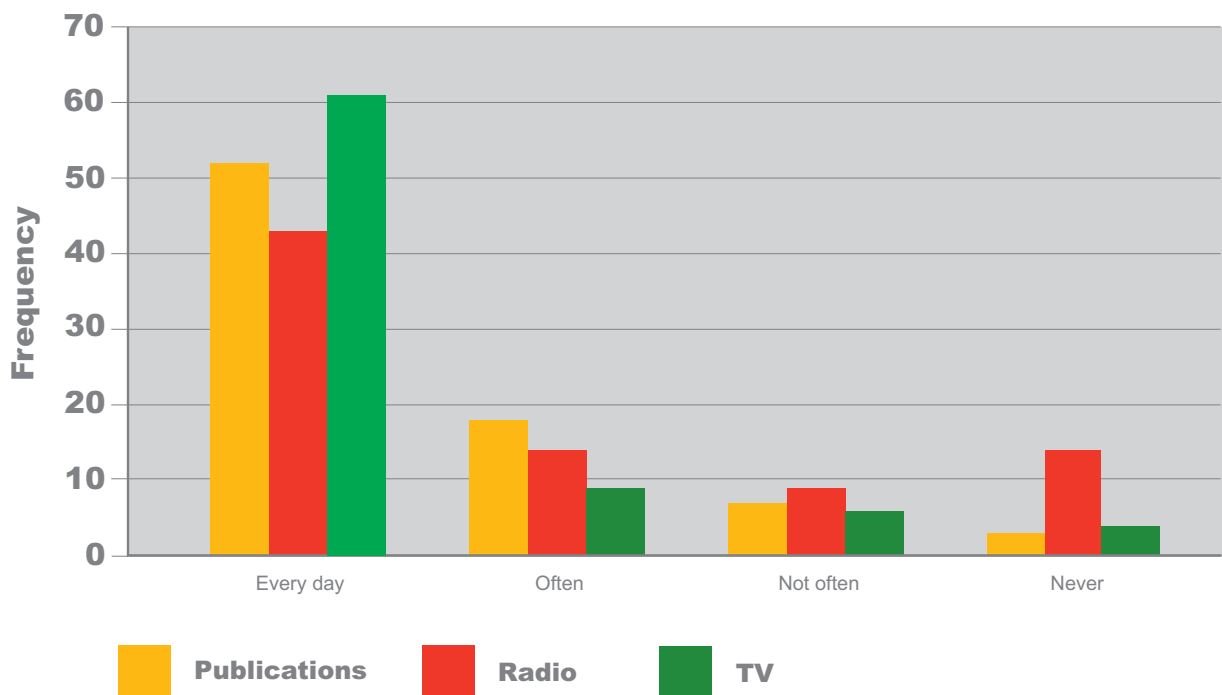
There is a lack of media products in each of the languages spoken in the Central Asian states. This was clearly indicated in the answers from this group of respondents. In fact, they listed their own languages as “other”. The publications they referred to were the newspapers and magazines they brought from the home country. Otherwise, Russian and English are the languages of choice. Some respondents were actually ethnic Russians.

What is common to all nine communities is the fact that Russian and English-language media seem to be the preference. Citizens from the Central Asian states are the least likely to consult media in Russian. Nevertheless, the difference compared to the other FSU communities is small. Most of the respondents do understand Russian wherever they came from, There is also a remarkable absence of media products in their native languages. Most of the respondents from all the FSU communities consult English-language media frequently as well.

Frequency of Media Consultation

Most respondents answered that they watched TV, listened to the radio, and used the Internet daily. The great majority of people said that they read daily free newspapers such as *Metro*, or *The London Paper*, which are handed out on the streets and on public transport in London. Most of the respondents pointed out that it is the English media that they consult every day . People who read daily and weekly publications or listen to radio stations in their own language or in Russian tend to do so only “often”.

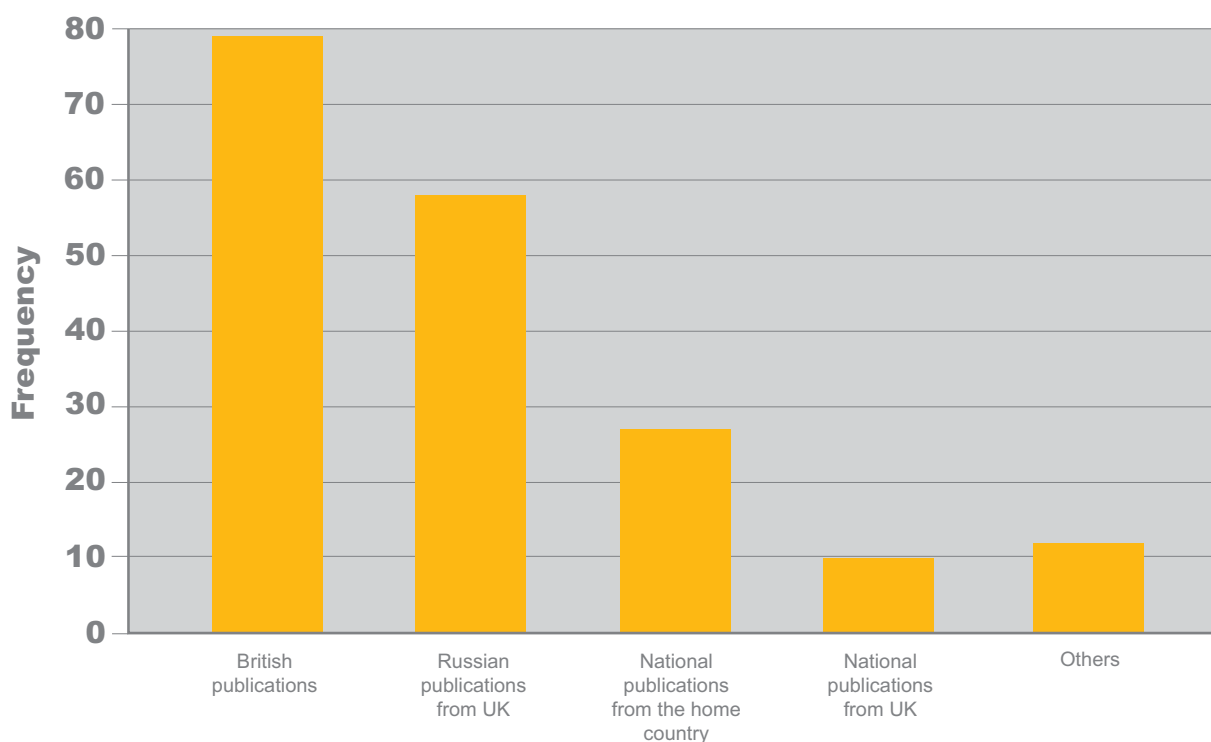
Figure 10: Frequency of Media Consultation



Many respondents pointed out that they normally look to newspapers for news and community information whilst their TV viewing is typically about entertainment. Equally, when they do consult national publications, they are much more inclined to read the news and useful information. When they read British newspapers and watch British TV most of them turn more to entertainment content.

Newspaper Readership

Figure 11: Preferred Newspapers

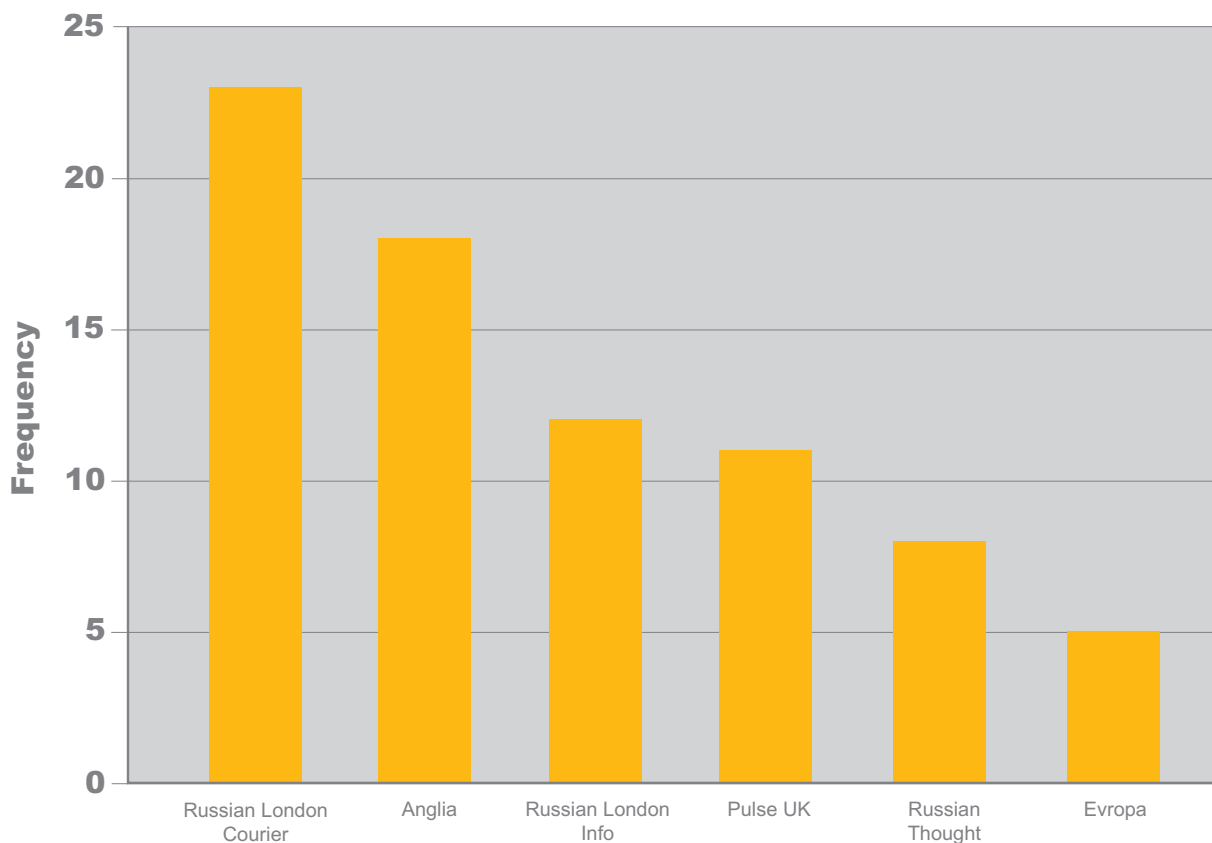


Many respondents pointed out that their preference for British and Russian newspapers is partly the result of a lack of alternatives in their mother tongue. Nine respondents out of ten who said they read national newspapers published in the UK were Armenian. Only the Armenian community can boast their own regular publications. It has a much longer history in Britain than other FSU states and it has established several newspapers and leaflets in the native language. The Tekeyan Cultural Association publishes *Erobouni*, a bi-weekly Armenian-English newspaper. *Gotchnag* is another Armenian publication. It is published by the Nor Seround cultural association. The Centre for Armenian Information publishes *Armenian Voice* quarterly. One respondent was from Belarus and said that he read a bulletin called *The Belarusian Chronicle*. It has been published since by Anglo-Belarussian Society but it does not appear regularly and is virtually unknown outside this organisation.

It is perhaps not surprising that the prevalence of newspapers and magazines in Russian is high, given the substantial ethnic Russian presence in all nine FSU communities. London supports four Russian-language newspapers: *Russian London Courier*; *Russian London Info*; *Pulse UK*; and *Anglia*. Only two of these newspapers existed two years ago but the demand for printed media in Russian in the UK is said by the publishers to be constantly increasing. There is also *Russian Thought*, a newspaper published and distributed in all EU states.

Belarussian, Moldovan or Armenian citizens are likely to be the most frequent readers of Russian newspapers. Citizens of the Central Asian states, who are not ethnic Russians, would be the least interested. The following publications were listed by the respondents.

Figure 12: Newspapers in Russian



The Times and the *Guardian* were the most popular British periodicals, with 21 and 27 responses respectively in their favour.

Other Publications

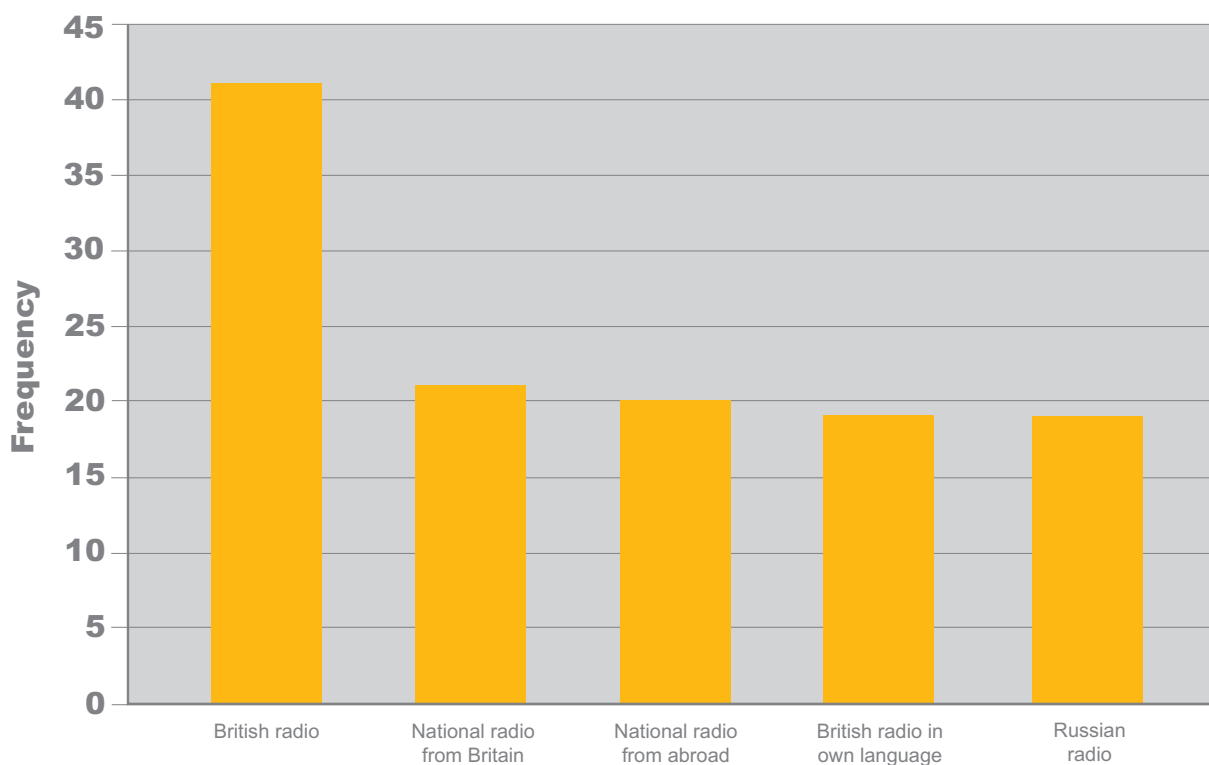
The mapping exercise did not learn of any weekly or monthly periodical magazine in either Russian or any other language used in the FSU that is being published in Britain. Almost without exception, all the magazines listed in the survey were either English-language ones, or are published in the home country. There are several specialised medical magazines produced by Rila Publications. There is also a glossy Russian-language magazine *Europe* that advertises luxury products and brands. *Russian London* produces luxury guides, which encompass exclusive advertisements and tips about what to do and where to go in London. Printable versions can be downloaded from their website.



Radio

Once again, the choices of respondents followed two different patterns, in line with their country of origin. This is illustrated in figure 13.

Figure 13: Preferred Radio Stations (Citizens of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Moldova)



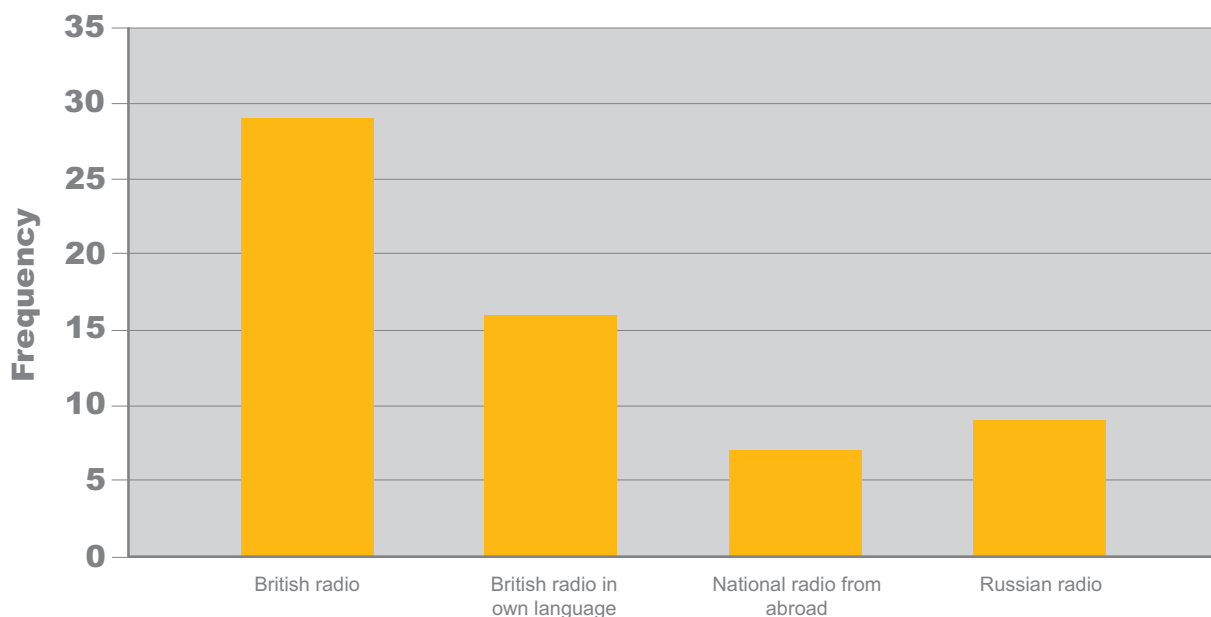
British radio is the most accessible and many respondents tuned in to it. They usually listened to music programmes and the news.

National radio stations from respondents' home countries had a number of listeners, mostly Armenians. Twelve respondents regularly listened to broadcasts from their home country. Four Moldovans said they often tuned in to Romanian stations. The language is similar and there are close cultural and social ties between these two nations. Three Belarussians frequently listened to their home stations. Most of the participants said that they listened to their national radio online.

"National radio from Britain" refers to local stations or programmes produced by the national diasporas in the UK. There are also BBC services in Armenian, Moldovan and Belarussian. They are said to be relatively popular but a little limited. *Armenian British Radio* is clearly the most popular in this group (11 responses). Three Moldovans listened to Romanian radio channels in Britain. The consultant also identified three online services. One is *Kazakh News*, a small Internet radio website broadcasting a few hours a day at the end of the week. *Hanaink* is an Armenian station produced by the Armenian diaspora in the UK. Finally, there are Moldovan programmes on Romanian Internet radio sites in the UK, such as *Radoromania.net* and *Chisinau Hour*.

Russian radio is preferred by Belarus citizens, for whom the language is easy to understand (9 responses), and Kazakh nationals (7), who are ethnic Russians.

Figure 14: Preferred Radio Stations (Citizens of Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan)



These communities are grouped together because of their limited access to radio programmes in their native language. English stations dominate here as well, but fewer respondents actually listened to them. There are no stations broadcasting in their own language from this country, apart from BBC services in Azeri (8 responses), Uzbek (5 responses) and Kyrgyz (3 responses). A few respondents occasionally listened to their country's stations online.

Radio stations like *Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe* and *Voice of America*, all in Russian, were also cited. They were established a few decades ago to broadcast to the former USSR from the West. Their main audience is people in their forties and older. The main other Russian network that was mentioned was the *BBC Russian Service*, which has excellent coverage of events and news from all the former Soviet states, as well as a diverse cultural agenda. *1st Russian Radio (Pervoe Russkoe Radio)*, *Pulse* and *Ckomorox* are online radio stations with a focus on entertainment and popular material, which are listened to by younger members of the Russian-speaking community.

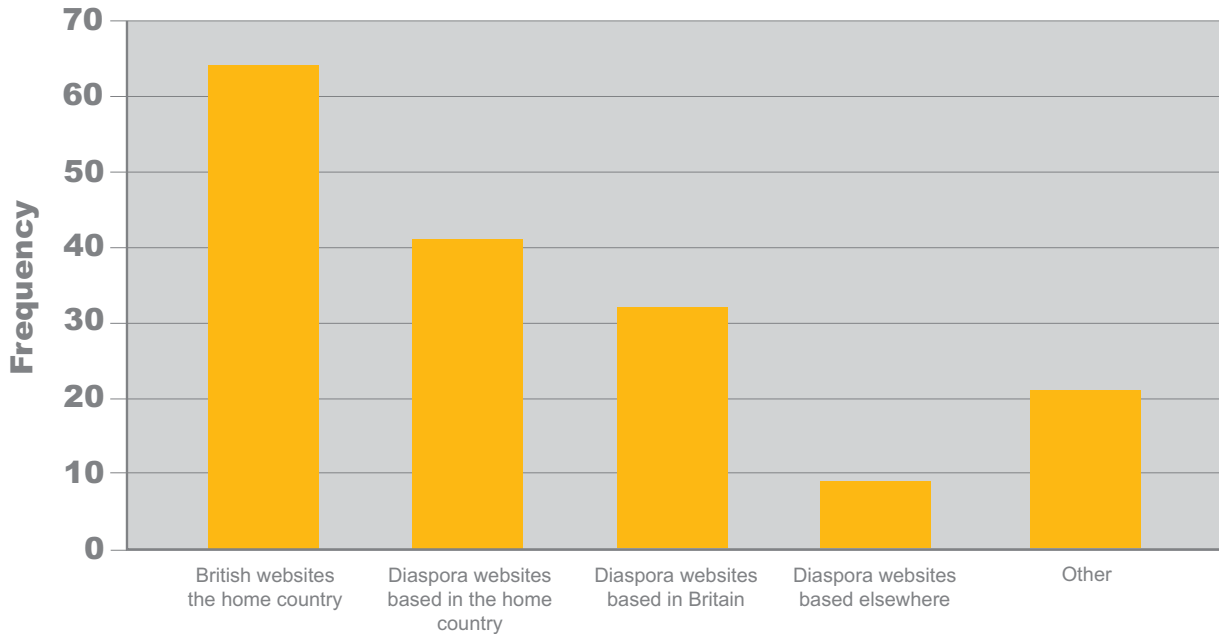
Television

The vast majority of FSU citizens in this country watch British TV channels regularly (73 respondents). Only 17 respondents said that they had access to TV stations from their home countries. They are simply much less common in subscription packages than, for example, Russian or Ukrainian channels. Some members of the diasporas are living in the UK only temporarily and some live in shared accommodation. Some simply cannot afford satellite dishes or digital boxes. However, all the main TV networks from the FSU countries have offices in London. All but Kyrgyz, Turkmen, Tajik and Uzbek TV companies broadcast abroad and these broadcasts are specifically designed for citizens living outside their country of origin. Advertisements on these networks are therefore adapted to the external audience, focusing on goods and services one can obtain abroad. For example, a Moldovan TV network broadcasting in Germany ran information about visas and legal services in relation to immigration.

Internet

More than 80% of the respondents use the Internet on a regular basis at home or at work for business or leisure. It is the only medium which permits daily access to news for many people, especially younger people. Two thirds of them regularly consult UK portals and national information networks.

Figure 15: Use of internet



Most of the respondents that use the Internet consulted websites based in their countries of origin. But, unlike other media, there is a better choice of British-based Internet resources. There is a wide range of sites covering everything from entertainment and dating to the cultural agenda and community life.

- nine Armenian respondents listed www.acc.org.uk, <http://www.caia.org.uk>, and <http://www.agbu.org.uk>.
- seven Belarus citizens go to <http://www.belarusians.co.uk>.
- seven Moldavians use www.moldova-uk.com/forum.
- eight respondents from Kazakhstan use <http://kaz-uk.com>
- one respondent from Kyrgyzstan consults www.kyrgyz-uk.com

Most of the communities thus have active British-based forum websites. This is the best way to reach out to them, especially to young people. All the sites listed above produce news and events bulletins which are e-mailed to those who are registered.

The most prominent Russian forums are BBCRussian.com, Russianquarter.co.uk, RussianCourier.com and, especially, RussianLondon.com, as well as the more entertainment-oriented Doska.co.uk, and Russiansabroad.com. The greater number of participants and subscribers to the Russian-language forums mean that they are more active and professionally designed. They carry a wide variety of information: news; vacancies; legal aid advertisements; information about sports, cultural events and entertainment; and about schools, grocery shops, etc. Community life linked to the Russian community is more vibrant and many of those who participate in it come from the FSU states as well as Russia itself. Russian-speaking Internet sites and forums, like other Russian media, are essential for reaching out to other FSU nationals.

Conclusions and Recommendations

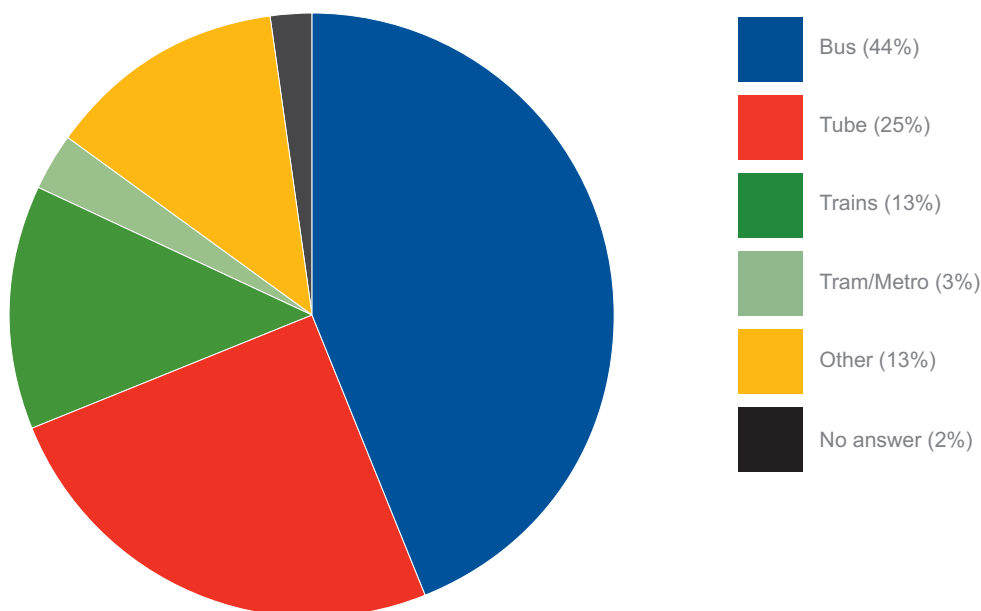
The number of newspapers, magazines, radio stations and Internet networks in the languages of the FSU states remains very limited. This is due to the fact that the diasporas in question are relatively small and newly established. Azeri, Uzbek, Tajik and Turkmen communities do not appear to have any media, forums or information networks at all. By contrast, the Armenian community has its own newspapers, radio stations and TV networks. These services are satellite or web-based and originate mostly in the USA but they are relevant to the entire diaspora.

A further reason for the scarce media resources enjoyed by the rest of the FSU communities is that there are already similar programmes, products and facilities in Russian. These are readily accessible to all FSU citizens because of their knowledge of Russian and their common cultural background. There are growing numbers of Russian publications in the UK, particularly in London. All these newspapers and Internet portals have an extremely versatile content, which ranges from the political and social agenda to advertisements about social events, shops and nannies. Some of the newspapers are free and available outside major transport links, as well as in FSU institutions and organisations in the UK. IOM should continue its outreach activities with the Russian media, possibly modernising the content of its advertisements to accommodate the issues and demands of other FSU nationals. IOM should engage in working with existing information networks and media that are dedicated to particular FSU states. IOM should advertise in those countries' languages. There is no doubt that the media of the FSU communities are interested in such co-operation and ready to respond.

2.3 USE OF SERVICES

Means of Transport

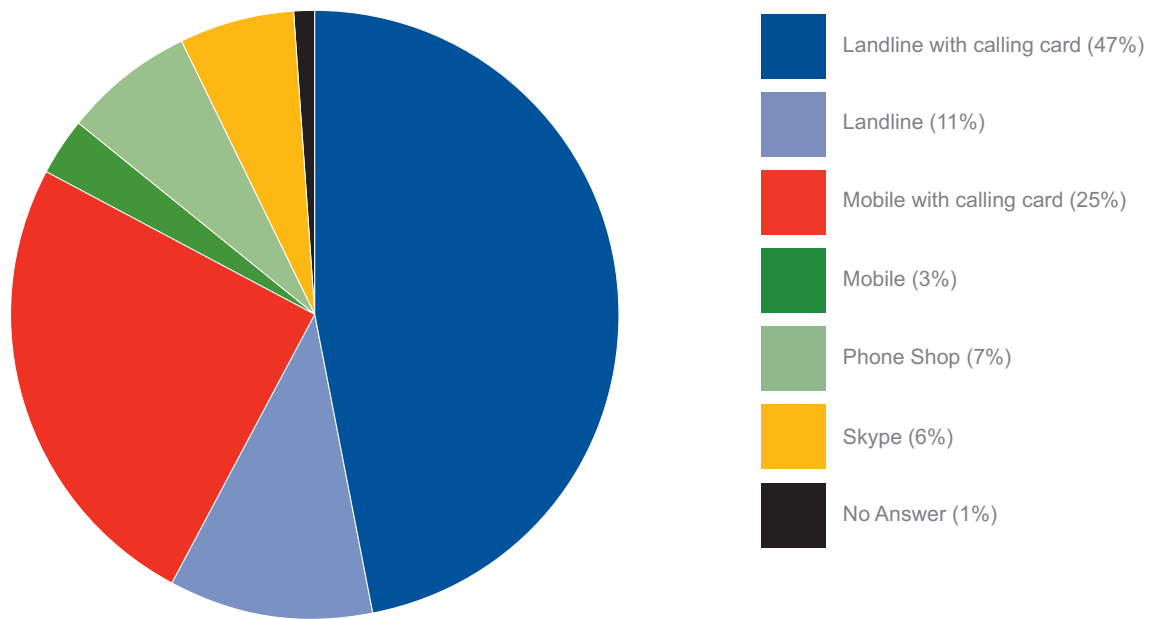
Figure 16: Preferred Means of Transportation (%)



Most respondents lived in London and their daily means of transport was predominantly by bus or Underground. Many lived away from the centre and used mainline trains if they lived in the outskirts of London and Manchester. Most of the respondents worked, legally or not. They were predominantly employed in the agricultural sector, construction, residential care, cleaning or in the catering industry. People normally used trains to get to remote areas of the South East. "Other" generally referred to using their own car or, sometimes, worker transport services. Workers are sometimes picked up by a lorry or van at a certain meeting point, taken to a work site and returned after the working day. Bikes were also mentioned and were often used by asylum seekers or destitute migrants.

Phone Calls

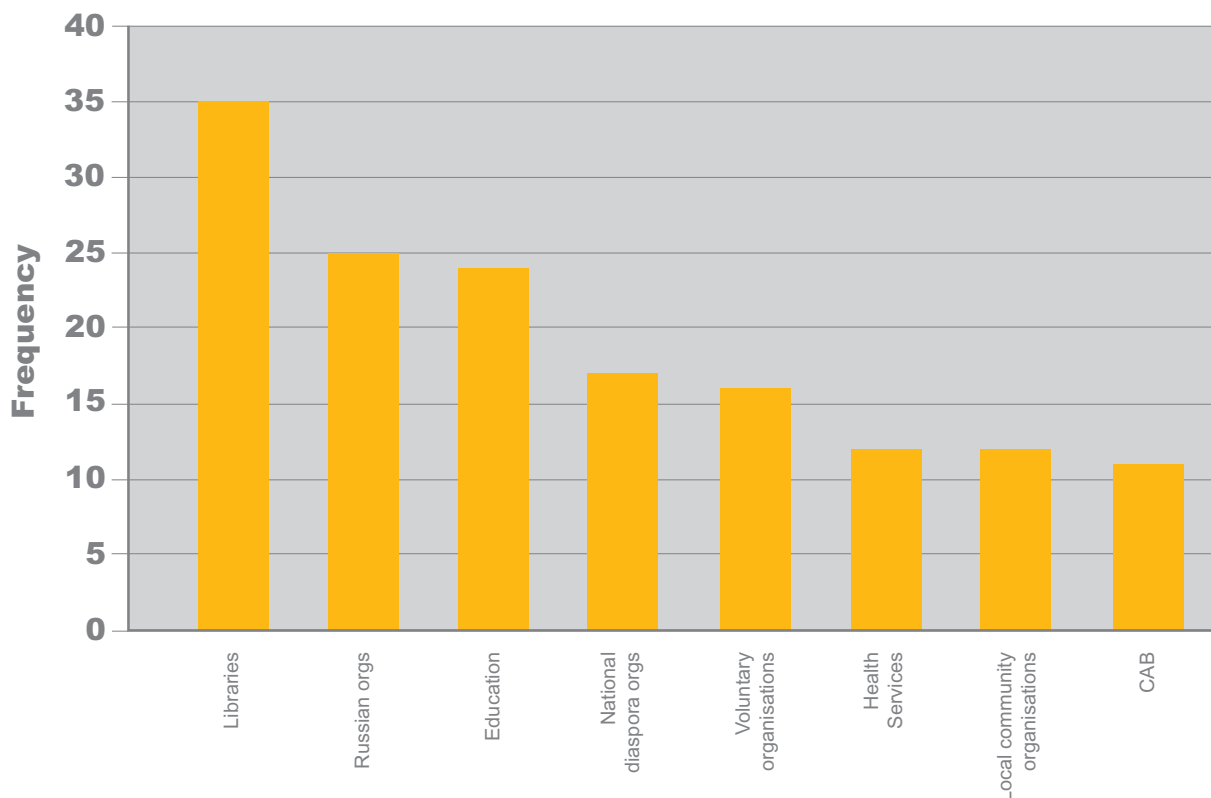
Figure 17: Calling abroad (%)



The survey clearly indicated that most people used calling cards to minimise their costs. Most respondents pointed out that if they do not use a calling card, it is most likely to be because they do not have one in their pocket at the time. Some people manage to call from work or elsewhere for free. There are several specialised calling cards, for example *IDT Eastern Europe*, *Eastern Tel* or *Tele-Tsar*, with preferential rates on calls to Eastern Europe and with the Russian language as a menu option. They are sold in most convenience shops, kiosks and markets. Many young people use *Skype* to call more cheaply.

Local Services

Figure 18: Local Services and Organisations



The question, “Do you visit your national organisations?” was mostly answered: “What societies?” There is a scarcity of community organisations for people from the FSU other than Russians or Ukrainians. Armenians are the most likely to visit community groups, churches, schools and cultural establishments (10 respondents). Three Belarussian, two Moldovan and two Kazakh citizens also referred to their involvement in national associations. The rest left the question unanswered — something that only confirms that national associations are few and far between. The level of interest in the ones that do exist is low. As with media resources, this also explains the popularity of Russian diaspora organisations and forums. The Russian mapping exercise established that they involve all FSU citizens¹². Russian community organisations are thus the best way of reaching out to other FSU citizens. This outreach should, however, still be adapted to their interests.

Figure 18 suggests that many FSU citizens in the UK enjoy cultural activities and frequently use libraries. The latter is more the case with older respondents. Much communal activity is connected with arts and entertainment. Many FSU associations revolve around cultural events or undertakings. At the same time some migrants are destitute and turn to social services or voluntary organisation for help and advice. The numbers here are actually higher than in previous mapping exercises on Russia and Ukraine. This can partly be explained by the fact that a higher percentage of respondents in this report were asylum seekers or refugees who had recently been granted leave to stay in Britain.

¹² IOM, Mapping Exercise Russia, Chapter 2.4



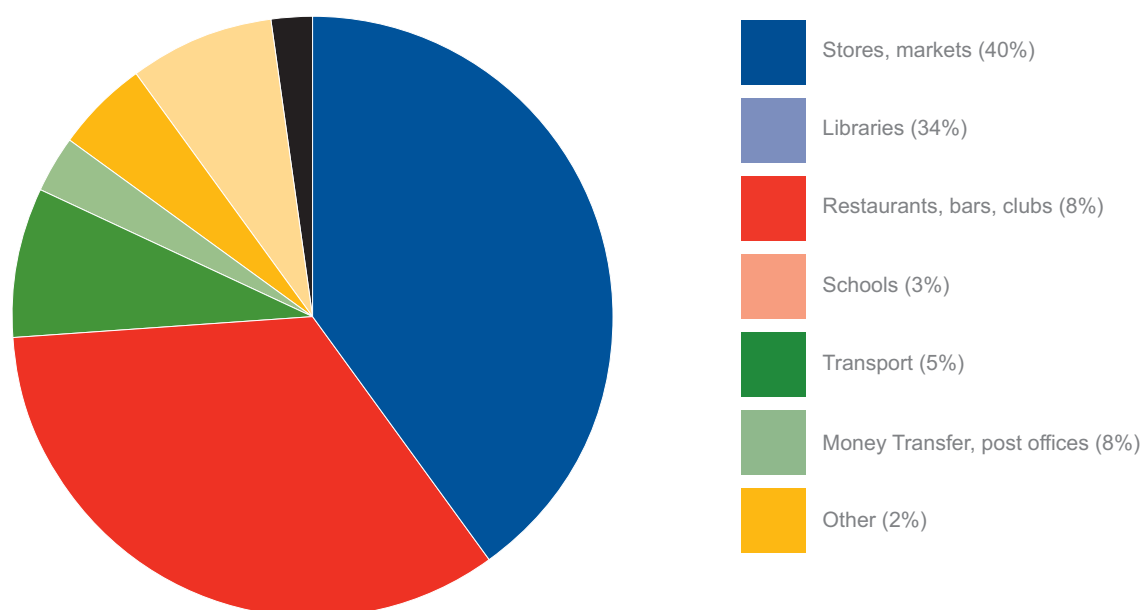
ian

English

M...

Figure 19: Places to Advertise (%)

Respondents were asked where they think IOM materials should be displayed.



All the options received some support. Stores and libraries were most strongly supported, perhaps because people visit them often and stay for longer. Community organisations, restaurants, bars etc. were rarely mentioned. Many diasporas do not have them or they are not well-known in the community.

Conclusions

There are still few community organisations for FSU nationals. Their activities are irregular and not widely known; they tend to focus on organising occasional events. But, despite their irregular nature, they attract a large number of visitors and tend to be a focal point of contact for many. These events present a real opportunity for establishing communication networks and promoting ideas. The Azerbaijani, Uzbek, Tajik, and Turkmen diasporas are still so small that they do not even have a community building. Only Armenians can boast an extensive and developed network of groups, media and services.

Russian community organisations present another opportunity for outreach activities. Their agendas are normally designed to accommodate the cultural demands of the whole FSU community because it is often seen as sharing a common cultural heritage. Events and gatherings are attended by all FSU nationals, not just Russians. IOM should continue its outreach activities among this group and perhaps diversify its information material and outreach approach to be relevant to all FSU nationalities.

Phone card companies reported that Armenia, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Belarus are the main destinations among the countries covered by the mapping exercise. Phone cards are the most common means of telephone communication. There are several cards from different companies that are designed for calls to Eastern Europe, with distinct Eastern European and Russian symbols and images on them. IOM should approach the producers and distributors of such cards and advertise either on the cards or by setting up promotions as part of the calling arrangements.

Buses and the Tube are the most common means of transport and, therefore, an obvious choice for advertisements. However, there are no concentrations of FSU citizens in particular areas and it is not possible to identify specific transport routes along which IOM advertisements could be placed. It could be more productive to advertise in a number of languages, including Russian and the main languages of the FSU diasporas, in areas with a higher proportion of residents who were born outside the UK.

Libraries and shops selling household goods, books, music and DVDs from Eastern Europe, the FSU and Russia are immensely popular with members of the FSU diaspora. The number of grocery stores selling Eastern European foods is increasing rapidly. IOM should consider advertising in these places. The effort should be kept up, however, since the turn-over of advertisements in those places is high.

2.4 COMMUNITY GROUPS AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The fact that, despite soaring levels of immigration to the UK from the FSU states in recent years, their associations are still very few has been discussed above. This is the case even if all the organisations for the citizens of all nine FSU states are added together. The mapping exercise did not learn of any significant functioning associations for Azeri, Uzbek, Tajik or Turkmen citizens. There appear to be no groups whatsoever for the last two nationalities. The first two nationalities do have some small community organisations but they are informal and resemble a network of friends more than an official association.

On closer inspection, the groups are very different in terms of their levels of establishment and organisation in the UK, as well as their sizes. The Armenian diaspora is the most numerous and well-established of them all. Armenians have their own churches, media, schools, youth organisations, information forums, and cultural and social events. Armenians live in several other countries in the Middle East and Asia, and have a huge and influential diaspora in other Western countries, so they are less focused on the FSU agenda and their activities have a more particularly national character. There is considerable scope for outreach activities to this community, which is organised and accessible.

The Belarus, Kazakh and Moldova communities represent another group. They have some community organisations, student societies, small-scale media projects, forums and events. The number of members is growing and the work of the societies is increasingly formalised and is becoming more professional. But, these communities also use other channels for getting their message across, primarily other bigger national associations. The Moldovan community uses Romanian websites, infrastructure and media to advertise and organise their own social events. Linguistically and culturally these nations are close. The Belarus and Kazakh communities are still relatively small but they already have associations, websites and social forums. They tend to co-operate with Russian networks and media to promote their agenda since many Kazakh nationals are ethnic Russians. Belarus people are culturally similar to Russians and their language is similar too. Some of the outreach work for these nationalities should be done directly with their diaspora associations and media but this needs to be complemented with outreach to Romanian and Russian organisations in order to be more effective and far-reaching.

The Azeri, Kyrgyz and Uzbek diasporas are still tiny but there are some groups that are proactively working to bring their countrymen and women together and to formalise some community structures. These groups revolve around student organisations, shops, restaurants and small interest groups. Their impact is still rather peripheral but they continue to develop and already organise occasional events.

There are barely any Tajik and Turkmen citizens in the UK. These countries were closed societies until very recently and their citizens had only limited opportunities to go abroad. The consultant is not aware of any major Turkmen or Tajik organisations.

Despite these differences, there are some common characteristics. The formation and structure of these social networks and organisations appears to be quite loose and informal. Their countrymen have often not heard of them and they do not have many members. Some FSU citizens are affiliated to these organisations and participate in their activities but far fewer subscribe to full membership or become

actively involved in them. Existing social events tend to be irregular and relatively low key. They are predominantly linked to the cultural agenda or to faith celebrations. The absence of effective media outlets means that word of mouth or Internet-based forums are essential. Many of the events are advertised at similar activities organised by another FSU community. Outreach activity should therefore rely on informal contacts and connections, as formal ones are few and far between.

Answers in questionnaires and in-depth interviews with community leaders and the general public confirmed this view. One main issue is, of course, that there are not that many members to approach: each diaspora, taken separately, is still quite small. The length of stay in Britain is also a factor. Another explanation for the lack of community structures is that, unlike many other ethnic groups, FSU citizens have so far been reluctant to organise themselves into formal societies. In fact, some of those groups have more British members than Uzbeks or Azeri! It is simply less usual for people from the FSU to unite in voluntary organisations: they rely on individual contacts and smaller, more informal, networks. People seem to build mini-communities of friends, acquaintances, and colleagues but avoid becoming involved more wholeheartedly in larger associations. Sixty-eight respondents gave friends and colleagues, or simply people they know, as their first point of contact if help or consultation were needed.

The mapping exercise confirmed that, although these states have been independent for seventeen years, a “post-soviet” solidarity and affiliation remains. Most people that took part in the exercise were born in, and grew up in, one unified country, the Soviet Union. They share a certain social and cultural heritage, which is profound and has affected their life in enduring ways. There are still very close social and economic ties between some of the nations. There are examples of people pursuing their own national agenda alone but they do not appear to be a majority. It is far more common for people to mix and participate in the community life of other diasporas as well. In this respect, the findings of this exercise are to the same as the ones made in the Russian and Ukrainian surveys.

The Russian language is even more of a common denominator than the customs, traditions, heritage and mentality of the FSU. The vast majority of people in their twenties or older speak or understand some Russian. The Russian diaspora in Britain is better organised and has more media outlets but “Russian” is often a collective term for anything that originates in the FSU as a whole. One does not have to be a Russian citizen to participate in Russian community life. Many of the users of Russian information networks, consumers of media products, and visitors to Russian events are in fact from other FSU states. Outreach and advertising in Russian media or through Russian organisations is therefore bound to be the most effective and far-reaching way of communicating.

The number of advice centres, legal practices and charities that assist people from the FSU, or even specialise in working with them, is growing rapidly. The number of establishments, such as book and video stores, restaurants, social clubs, schools, nurseries, music schools and cultural associations is also increasing. Often, they are not listed in information directories yet because they are so new. A comprehensive listing of community organisations, institutions and enterprises that were identified during the survey has been included in the list of contacts, together with recommendations for action.

3 MAPPING EXERCISE OUTCOMES

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The second section of the questionnaire collected baseline data from the respondents about their age, gender, and length of stay in the UK. Its aim was to establish the characteristics of the mapping exercise's sample. The information here is more personal but confidentiality was respected and no data that would allow individuals to be identified was collected.

3.1 GENDER

33 respondents were women and 47 were men. Six of the nine countries have a predominantly Muslim population, which affected the number of people available for interviews. Nonetheless, the mapping exercise achieved a good balance between the genders.

3.2 AGE

Figure 20: Age

TOTAL 79 RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Under 18	2
18-24	18
25-34	32
35-44	11
45-54	9
55-64	5
65 or over	2

Figure 20 illustrates the range of ages among the representatives of the diasporas. It largely confirms both the empirical impression drawn from discussions with the members of FSU community and some well-known facts. It supports the observation that a considerable proportion of the FSU community is of working age. Most of the members of the communities in question are fairly new to the country and came here on their own initiative. Figure 21 underlines this conclusion.

3.3 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Figure 21: Length of Residence in the UK

TIME	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Less than 12 months	11
1 year to less than 3	38
3 years to less than 5	17
5 years to less than 10	10
10 years or more	3

4 CONSTRAINTS

The mapping exercise did not encounter any major difficulties and experienced no obstacles from either private individuals or from the representatives of any organisation. A key factor in this was giving a detailed explanation of IOM's background and role, the purpose of the exercise and, of course, its methodology. Most of the people who were approached agreed to take part when complete anonymity was stressed and guaranteed. Some were a little cautious or reluctant and a few did decline to participate in the survey. Lack of time or interest was to blame in most cases. But, open suspicion and mistrust were rare. Most of the questions that raised suspicions were about preferred media and personal data (age and length of stay). There is no doubt that willingness to participate in the survey was higher among respondents whose personal situation in this country was settled and secure. In addition, people in London tended to be busier and more sceptical than people in other places.

The consultant had an informal discussion with each respondent about the questions in order to ensure that the sessions went smoothly. He filled in their answers personally, rather than leave it to them. This was somewhat more time-consuming but it helped to generate discussion and ensured that most of the questions were actually answered and that the responses were more precise. The respondents were able to return to a particular issue and elaborate on it. Interesting explanations or nuances relating to the questions were noted separately and are reflected in this report if they represented a common view.

Research was important in the beginning but the results were limited by the informal nature of community life and the fact that many organisations are new and operate on a small scale. Discovering societies and organisations in general was best achieved through interviews.

One or two comments were made about the fact that the mapping consultant did not belong to a particular nationality covered by this report. However, the explanation about the need to investigate smaller societies as a group was considered satisfactory. People who live abroad are perhaps more comfortable with the involvement of foreigners in their community life.

Some complaints related to the questionnaire as a whole. For example, it was objected that the questionnaire was long and some questions repetitive. This applies mainly to the media section. Some respondents thought that many of the questions about community organisations were self-evident: everyone goes to the bank or post office now and then; and almost everyone in London uses different modes of transportation. IOM should look into how this criticism can be addressed.

Finally it needs to be stressed that, although the number of FSU organisations in the UK is rapidly growing, many of them have only just been established. This may have affected how much people knew about them, if anything. Some British student societies and associations, which aim to learn the languages spoken in FSU and study their culture, were visited and interviewed. It soon became apparent that the British often have a better knowledge of national networks than FSU citizens themselves. They often look for them proactively, hoping to meet some citizens of the FSU or participate in their community life. The consultant believes that this situation is changing and even FSU citizens have become more aware of their own associations.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Specifics of the FSU Diaspora

The FSU communities in Britain are growing and developing rapidly. A few years ago there were hardly any. Today, some have developed extensive information networks, forums and media. Nonetheless, they are relatively small and atypical in how they are set up and function compared to some other ethnic groups. It is important to bear this in mind in developing an outreach and communication strategy for this group of migrants.

The number of groups, societies, and organised social networks among the citizens of the FSU does seem limited compared to that their growing population in the UK. The mapping exercise has established that many of them engaged in such community activity only occasionally and in an impromptu manner. They do not normally dedicate a substantial part of their time to communal activity and they certainly do not often see such associations as a place where they can get advice and assistance.

Size is the key factor. A few respondents pointed out that a critical mass of potential members must be reached before nationality-based societies can take off. Moreover, the vast majority of FSU citizens are new to the UK and have simply not yet had a chance to organise themselves in a traditional way.

Another important factor is that many migrants from the FSU states have more in common with the British, in terms of customs and way of life, than other ethnicities. They are often not visibly different from the locals and are therefore less likely to experience racism and xenophobia if they live in a smaller place. Most of them settle down in London or big cities and blend in well with the local British or migrant population. Most FSU citizens who come to the UK are well-educated and speak at least a bit of English. As a rule, they have no problems integrating into British society and participating fully in the domestic social and economic environment. There is simply less need to rely on each other. They also have a more individualistic way of life and rely on smaller networks of friends and families rather than on big organisations.

It is strongly characteristic of FSU citizens and migrants from the old Soviet countries that their links to the home country are to a very great extent based on culture and the arts. The mapping exercise established that libraries, bookstores and video stores are extremely popular. Most of the associations and societies are either formed on the basis of some cultural activity or organise many events of that kind. Many respondents emphasised that expressions of cultural identity are something that people from the FSU have in common. Films, books, concerts, exhibitions, and the role of faith organisations and festivals unite them more than any formal affiliation and bring them together with others who come from the FSU.

Finally, it is worth repeating that, although many FSU citizens are at first sight reluctant to engage in communal activity, they normally have extensive sub-networks of FSU friends and relatives. In effect these substitute for more formal and organised ways of community building. Many admitted privately that they keep track of what is happening in their old country by regularly reading various FSU news web pages in preference to British news sources. Many visit FSU websites based in the UK and receive weekly e-mails about forthcoming events. These types of forums clearly fulfil a social networking function. Many use Russian forums and organisations which serve as a meeting place for everyone from the FSU.

Recommendations of the Mapping Exercise

The aim of establishing the structure and characteristics of the FSU community in the UK was achieved. IOM has also been provided with information about the size and geographical spread of the FSU population in the UK. The following practical recommendations have emerged from the implementation of the exercise.

- IOM should follow the recommendations included in the list of contacts which constitutes an action plan for outreach activities within the FSU community in the UK, and should liaise with the main multipliers. It should continue working with Russian organisations and associations to extend its outreach.
- IOM should initiate contacts with all community newspapers and newsletters currently produced in the UK to advertise in them and in their Internet editions. It should continue engaging with Russian-language media in order to target everyone from the FSU.
- IOM should approach existing web-based forums and informal information networks and discuss placing advertisements there, especially in the circular e-mails that are sent out to subscribers.
- IOM should approach existing societies and organisations and discuss the possibility of participating in their events, whether having a stand or handing out relevant material. The key annual event is the Russian New Year celebrations in Trafalgar Square in January, which attracts many migrants from the entire FSU.
- IOM should look into the possibility of engaging FSU religious institutions in talks about co-operation with IOM.
- Communication with the public should be in the languages spoken in the communities and in Russian, which itself will help in reaching out to other FSU-speaking nationals of the former USSR.
- IOM should contact commercial establishments, such as shops, restaurants, and bars and discuss the possibility of displaying posters and leaving flyers and leaflets.

These recommendations should be taken into consideration soon because the mapping exercise has raised awareness about IOM and its programmes among community leaders and the general public. IOM should take advantage of these strengthened relationships.

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