

Research Note

THE MOTHERLAND IS CALLING Views of Homeland among Russians in the Near Abroad

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INTRODUCTION

MORE than a decade has passed since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the independent states in the Eurasian region, but relations between Russia and the countries of the near abroad continue to evolve. Most recently, the declared war against terrorism and the alignment of many post-Soviet countries with a coalition including the United States introduces a new dynamic to the relationship between Russia and its successor states. Given the renewed global importance of Eurasia, particularly Central Asia, it is more important than ever to understand how Russians outside the Russian Federation view Russia and its role in the internal affairs of the other successor states. The Russian diaspora, a central concern of those who study Eurasia, has been considered in numerous articles and several books.¹ Because Russian officials perceive Russia to be the “external national homeland” of these Russians, it is said, Russia has claimed a right and even a duty to monitor their treatment and status in other post-Soviet states.

*We would like to thank the National Science Foundation for its financial support of this project (Grant No. SBR-9710208). In addition, we greatly appreciate the assistance in the collection of the data for this project by Polina Kozyreva and others at the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences and Volodymyr Paniotto and others at the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology. Finally, we would like to thank John Lyle for his research assistance and the anonymous reviewers for their suggestions. None of the individuals or organizations mentioned is responsible for the analyses or interpretations contained in this article.

¹See, for example, Vladimir Shlapentokh, Munir Sendich, and Emil Payin, *The New Diaspora: Russian Minorities in the Former Soviet Republics* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1994); Anatoly Khazanov, *After the USSR: Ethnicity, Nationalism and Politics in the Commonwealth of Independent States* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995); Pål Kolstø, *Russians in the Former Soviet Republics* (London: Hurst and Company, 1995); Neil Melvin, *Russians beyond Russia: The Politics of National Identity* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1995); Klaus Segbers and Stephan De Spegeleire, eds., *Post-Soviet Puzzles: Mapping the Political Economy of the Former Soviet Union* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1995); Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Jeff Chinn and Robert Kaiser, *Russians as*

The concept of the external national homeland was brought to the center of postcommunist ethnic studies by Rogers Brubaker.² Although other scholars have picked up the idea that the Russian Federation is the homeland for the near-broad Russians, they have failed to examine whether ethnic Russian minorities actually consider Russia to be their homeland and how uniform these Russians are in their views.³ The answer to this question has important implications for the ability of Russia to mobilize the near-abroad Russians, the support of these Russians for the government, regime, and independence of their state of residence, and the decision by Russians remaining in the near abroad about whether to migrate to the Russian Federation.

Do Russians outside Russia see Russia as their homeland? Do they want Russia to defend their interests? How united are they in their views? What explains variation in responses to these questions at the individual level? This article examines these questions through the analysis of survey data from four post-Soviet states—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, and Ukraine—as well as focus-group data from Ukraine and Kazakhstan. The surveys in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Belarus were conducted in the spring and summer of 1998; the survey in Ukraine was administered in late fall 1998.⁴

the New Minority: Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Soviet Successor States (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1996); Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras, eds., *New States, New Politics: Building the Post-Soviet Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Valery Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame* (London: Sage Publications, 1997); David Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998); Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia and Ukraine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Edwin Poppe and Louk Hagendoorn, "Types of Identification among Russians in the Near Abroad," *Europe-Asia Studies* 53 (January 2001).

²Rogers Brubaker, "National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External National Homelands in the New Europe," *Daedalus* 124 (Winter-Spring 1995); Brubaker (fn. 1).

³Smith and Wilson consider the possibility that many ethnic Russians outside Russia would consider their state of residence to be their homeland, something that our analysis indicates is quite prevalent; see Graham Smith and Andrew Wilson, "Rethinking Russia's Post-Soviet Diaspora: The Potential for Political Mobilisation in Eastern Ukraine and North-East Estonia," *Europe-Asia Studies* 49 (July 1997).

⁴Technical note on surveys: The surveys in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan were directed by Dr. Polina Kozyreva of the Institute of Sociology, Russian Academy of Sciences. The data from Ukraine are based on a block of questions in the Ukraine Fall 1998 Omnibus Survey conducted by Dr. Volodymyr Paniotto of the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology. The samples in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan were designed as representative samples of Russian speakers in those countries. While most of the respondents were self-identified as Russians, many belonged to other nationalities. In Ukraine the sample was a nationally representative sample, of which Russian speakers (and specifically Russians) were only a randomly selected part. The numbers of respondents and Russians (given in parentheses) in the four surveys are Belarus 803 (765), Kazakhstan 798 (619), Kyrgyzstan 800 (685), and Ukraine 1,600 (329). The interviews were conducted face-to-face, and in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan almost all were conducted in Russian. In Ukraine the interviews were conducted in Russian or Ukrainian, according to the respondent's wishes. There was very little item nonresponse in the survey. For this reason, for the sake of completeness of the interpretation, in much of the tabular analysis we include those who responded "difficult to say" ("don't know") or who did not answer the question (NA or refused) in the reported percentage distributions; however, ex-

These cases provide the advantages of both a “most similar” and a “most different” comparative approach. As post-Soviet states with significant ethnic Russian populations, they share many important features. As a result, any variation in homeland attitudes among these states poses an interesting puzzle. Nevertheless, the four states also constitute two distinct pairs: Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan and Belarus/Ukraine. The first two are Central Asian states in which there is significant cultural distance between majority and minority ethnic groups. The latter two are Eastern European states in which the majority groups share an overarching Slavic identity with ethnic Russians. Thus, one can fairly generalize findings that hold across all four of these states, at least to the remaining states of Eurasia.⁵

The analysis of this article focuses on ethnic Russian respondents to these surveys. The samples were large enough to allow both a reliable representation of the views of ethnic Russians on these questions and an individual-level statistical analysis of the factors that influence the views of the members of the Russian minorities. These data call into question the assumption of a strong bond between near-abroad Russians and the Russian Federation. More important, they challenge the way the concept of homeland is understood by scholars of ethnicity and nationalism in the postcommunist states.

THE CONCEPT OF “HOMELAND”

HOMELANDS: EXTERNAL, INTERNAL, MIXED, AND STATE OF RESIDENCE

While national identity may or may not be based on ethnicity, it always contains a territorial component. An ethnic group becomes “national” when it recognizes a particular territory as one that it has a right to control politically. The development of a sense of homeland and an emotional attachment to that homeland coincides with the development of national self-consciousness. Scholars have asserted that “for a nation to exist, it must have some place that it can claim as its own”⁶ and “nations

cluding such responses would not have appreciably changed our interpretations. The focus groups in Kazakhstan were held in Astana on April 6, and in Almaty on April 7, 1999. They were conducted under the direction of the Institute of Sociology (Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow) and with the assistance of the Public Opinion Foundation. The Ukrainian focus groups took place on September 20, and September 22, 1999, in Kiev (Kyiv) and Lviv, respectively, and were also supervised by researchers from the Institute of Sociology. In both countries there were ten participants per group, with variation within the groups in terms of gender, age, education level, and ethnic identity of the participants.

⁵ It is important, however, to submit this proposition to empirical analysis in future research.

⁶ Robert Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 8.

cannot be conceived without a specific territory or homeland."⁷ Thus, to understand a particular group's idea of homeland one must understand its political and social conduct and its relations with a national "other."

An individual or group can have several possible homelands. The first is an *external* homeland, in which case a minority does not consider any part of its state of residence to be its homeland but instead views some region or state outside its country of residence as the group's true homeland. This is the focus of Brubaker's work on the role of homeland in postcommunist ethnic relations.⁸ Such a situation would not ordinarily fuel secessionist claims, though it could lead the government of the external homeland to intervene on behalf of the minority group. If there is a legitimate basis for claims of discrimination, the external homeland may put diplomatic, economic, or military pressure on the minority's state of residence to protect the minority from discrimination.

The second possible homeland is *internal*—a part of the state of residence. This perception of homeland is generally associated with a state that contains a sizable and concentrated ethnic minority. The minority considers a region to be its national homeland and desires political control over that territory. Such situations fuel secessionist drives and are at the heart of many ethnic conflicts around the world⁹ because what is seen as a homeland by the minority is also often the perceived homeland of the majority group. This situation of overlapping homelands is common in the former Soviet Union, especially where regions within the existing successor states are named for a particular ethnic minority (for example, Chechnya within Russia and Abkhazia within Georgia).

The third type of homeland is best called the *mixed* (internal-external) homeland. In this situation, members of a minority in one state see the homeland as comprising both a part of the state of residence *and* an external region or state. Such views of homeland can result in irredentism, in which members of an ethnic minority support the secession of a region of their state of residence and its joining with a neighboring state.¹⁰ An oft-mentioned example is Kazakhstan, where Russians consider both the northern part of the country and Russia as their homeland. In such

⁷ Guntram H. Herb, "National Identity and Territory," in G. H. Herb and David H. Kaplan, eds., *Nested Identities: Nationalism, Territory, and Scale* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999), 17. For another discussion of the interaction between territory and national identity, this one on the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, see Nora Dudwick, "The Cultural Construction of Political Violence in Armenia and Azerbaijan," *Problems of Post-Communism* 42 (July-August 1995).

⁸ Brubaker (fn. 2).

⁹ See, for example, on secessionism in South Asia, Raju G. C. Thomas, "Competing Nationalisms: Secessionist Movements and the State," *Harvard International Review* 18 (Summer 1996).

¹⁰ For analysis of causes of irredentism, see Stephen M. Saideman and R. William Ayers, "Determining the Causes of Irredentism: Logit Analyses of Minorities at Risk Data from the 1980s and 1990s," *Journal of Politics* 62 (November 2000).

situations, nationalist claims take the form of a desire to break part of the state of residence away and to join with the rest of the homeland group.¹¹

The fourth homeland option is also internal but with different implications from those of the internal variant discussed above. Members of an ethnic minority may see their entire *state of residence* as their homeland. This possibility is rarely discussed in works on the intersection of minorities, identity, and territory.¹² Since it is assumed that to be a nation requires a homeland different from that which another nation can claim, it follows that by definition “national minorities” would not consider their state of current residence to be their homeland. Whereas *national* minorities (as the term is understood by scholars of nationalism) may not accept their state of residence as their homeland, *ethnic* minorities may.

An important assumption of Brubaker’s framework, examined further below, is that ethnic minorities in the postcommunist states are also *national* minorities, with a particular national identity and attachment to an external homeland. In reality, however, large portions of these minorities may not consider themselves members of a national minority. Or if they do, they may nonetheless view their state of residence as their homeland, perhaps differentiating between the homeland where they now reside and their (external) national homeland, or between homeland (*rodina*) and fatherland (*otechestvo*)—the eternal or ancestral homeland.¹³

EXTERNAL NATIONAL HOMELANDS: ARE THEY AS IMPORTANT AS COMMONLY THOUGHT?

Of the four homeland options for minorities mentioned above (external, internal, mixed, state of residence), Western researchers have tended to ignore state of residence as homeland, seizing instead upon the external homeland concept.¹⁴ Many scholars of nationalism imply that when an external homeland is available to a minority, the minority will view its homeland in terms of either the external or the mixed op-

¹¹ As Table 1 indicates, however, there is almost no empirical support for the idea that ethnic Russians in Kazakhstan think of their homeland in this way.

¹² Kaiser, for example, discusses the way in which the migration of “nonindigenes to another nation’s homeland has served to heighten the perception among indigenes that the nation and its primordial claim to homeland is under attack”; see Kaiser (fn. 6), 24. What he does not discuss in this section, however, is whether new residents may over time come to think of their new area as their homeland.

¹³ This distinction can be found in a work by Dmytri Kornilov, the leader of the International Movement of Donbass (Ukraine), cited in Stephen Shulman, “Competing versus Complementary Identities: Ukrainian-Russian Relations and the Loyalties of Russians in Ukraine,” *Nationalities Papers* 26 (December 1998), 621. However, most participants in focus groups in Ukraine did not make distinctions between “homeland” and “fatherland,” noting that the two words employed were synonymous. Focus groups in Kazakhstan did not discuss the terminology for “homeland” at all.

¹⁴ Smith and Wilson (fn. 3) emphasize both the external homeland idea of Brubaker and the idea that some in the ethnic minority may consider their homeland to be in their state of residence. They

tions. As Brubaker puts it, the external homeland is the one “to which they belong, or can be construed as belonging.”¹⁵

Brubaker does not go so far as to say that the national minority must actually perceive the external homeland as its only homeland. Rather, he emphasizes that elites within the external national homeland are typically the ones pushing the homeland idea.¹⁶ But the combination of two of Brubaker’s assumptions (that external national homelands are crucial to understanding ethnic relations in the postcommunist states and that ethnic minorities are national minorities) can be interpreted to mean that the ethnic (national) minorities—or at least a large portion of a given minority—see an external state as their homeland.¹⁷ (If they did not view a part of the state of residence as an internal homeland that they hoped someday to control, they would not be national minorities.) Brubaker’s two assumptions might also imply that these minorities would want the external homeland to act on their behalf,¹⁸ a proposition we examine in detail later in the article.

The first implication of the Brubaker framework—that large portions of the ethnic minority population consider the external homeland to be their homeland—is not supported by the surveys of ethnic Russians in four non-Russian successor states of the Soviet Union. Table 1 summarizes the responses to the open-ended question: *What do you consider to be your homeland?*¹⁹ The results bear directly on the homeland options discussed in the previous section.

also mention, however, that there is no reason to assume that diaspora Russians would perceive of Russia as their homeland. Poppe and Hagendoorn (fn. 1) approach the issue differently. Rather than focusing on the identification of homeland, they classify forms of ethnic self-identification among Russians in the near abroad. Poppe and Hagendoorn divide respondents into six categories based on their responses to closed-ended questions about citizenship and draw conclusions about the likelihood of national integration based on the dominant subtypes present in a given state.

¹⁵ Brubaker (fn. 2), 108.

¹⁶ Ibid., 110. This point is echoed by Melvin (fn. 1), who argues that the search by officials in Russia for a term to describe the ethnic Russians outside the Russian Federation was based on the assumption that Russia was, in fact, the homeland (*rodina*) of these Russians (p. 16).

¹⁷ This is certainly how those who have not given Brubaker’s article a close reading have come to think of the “external national homeland” field; see Brubaker (fn. 2).

¹⁸ The assumptions imply that even if these first two ideas are not true, the external national homeland would be a pivotal actor, adopting policies that affect the ethnic minority in their state of residence. As Brubaker (fn. 2) claims, the national minorities must “contend” with the “‘homeland’ nationalisms” of the external national homelands with which they share an ethnic bond, and the relationship between the national minorities and external national homelands is (like the other relationships in the nexus) “responsive and interactive” (pp. 109, 119–20, emphasis in original). For further discussion, see Lowell Barrington, “Rethinking the Triadic Nexus: External National Homelands, International Organizations, and Ethnic Relations in the Former Soviet Union” (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, New York, April 15–17, 1999).

¹⁹ The word *rodina*, rather than *otechestvo*, was used in the survey to designate “homeland.” Evidence from focus groups suggests that respondents may not distinguish an important difference between the two words. See fn. 13.

TABLE 1
 VIEWS OF HOMELAND BY RUSSIANS IN BELARUS, KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYZSTAN,
 AND UKRAINE^a

	<i>Belarus</i>	<i>Kazakhstan</i>	<i>Kyrgyzstan</i>	<i>Ukraine</i>
Belarus	29.7	0.0	0.1	0.0
Belarus and City or Region	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Belarus City	7.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Belarus Region	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kazakhstan	0.3	52.5	3.2	0.0
Kazakhstan and City or Region	0.1	2.1	0.0	0.0
Kazakh City	0.1	3.8	0.3	0.0
Kazakh Region	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.0
Kyrgyzstan	0.1	0.4	57.8	0.0
Kyrgyzstan and City or Region	0.1	0.0	0.7	0.0
Kyrgyz City	0.1	0.0	2.3	0.0
Kyrgyz Region	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ukraine	2.0	1.0	0.6	38.0
Ukrainian City	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0
Ukrainian Region (except Crimea)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Crimea	0.3	0.0	0.0	2.7
Russia	21.3	18.1	18.0	16.4
Russia and City or Region	1.3	0.6	0.5	0.0
Russian City	5.4	1.3	0.8	0.0
Russian Region	7.7	2.4	1.4	2.0
USSR/Former USSR	6.5	3.9	4.1	14.3
Where things are good	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.0
The place where I was born	5.1	6.8	2.5	7.6
The place where I live	1.4	0.8	2.5	3.6
None	0.3	0.5	1.0	0.0
Other	3.3	3.1	2.1	3.0
Difficult to say	1.2	1.9	0.3	5.8
No answer	0.8	0.3	1.0	4.9
Base N	765	619	685	329

^aThe question for Ukraine is (P14, A15): "What do you consider to be your homeland?" For Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan (B9NUM), it is: "Tell me, please, what do you consider to be your homeland?" Values do not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

Several of these findings are quite surprising. First, few Russians in these states consider a *part* of their state of residence to be their homeland. This was unexpected in the cases of Kazakhstan and Ukraine, states where scholars have emphasized the sharp ethnoregional divides (northern Kazakhstan versus the rest of the country, and the east of Ukraine and Crimea versus the rest of Ukraine). Second, surprisingly few Russians living outside the Russian Federation consider Russia to be their homeland: *fewer than one-quarter of the ethnic Russian respondents in the four states offered Russia as their homeland*. Third, few designate a part of the current state of residence and Russia in combination as a homeland; hence, the internal-external variant is simply not a consideration of the Russians in these four countries. Instead, a substantial proportion of these Russians identify their current states of residence as their homeland. These include majorities in both Kazakhstan (52.5 percent) and Kyrgyzstan (57.8 percent).²⁰ And although the percentages in Belarus and Ukraine are smaller (29.7 percent and 38.0 percent, respectively), they are still much larger than any other response given by Russians residing in these two states.

Many of the responses did not refer simply to Russia as a whole or to the state of residence as a whole. In some cases, Russia or the country of residence was combined with a city or region, a finding consistent with a multilevel homeland idea. In other cases, however, a nonexistent country (the USSR) was still seen as the respondent's homeland.²¹ And for some of the respondents, no specific territorial unit was mentioned at all; rather, statements were given such as "where I was born," "where I live," and "where I am happy."²² Thus, many respondents perceived the concept of "homeland" in ways that do not fit neatly into one of the categories outlined above. It would seem therefore that this concept is

²⁰ It is surprising, given the tendency of ethnic Russians in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to show greater attachment to Russia in other ways, that so many in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan chose to identify their state of residence as their homeland.

²¹ This idea of the USSR remaining as a homeland after its collapse is pointed to in the literature on post-Soviet ethnic relations; see, for example, Smith and Wilson (fn. 3).

²² It is tempting to take those who said "where I live" and throw them into the category of the state of residence or to combine those who said "where I was born" with specific country answers based on their response to the country-of-birth question. To do so would be to assume that when respondents make a general statement "where I was born," they are thinking of the *state* where they were born rather than the region or city. To assume that respondents have *country* in mind when thinking about homeland is risky. However, it may be reasonable to classify the "where I was born" or "where I live" responses with the set of responses, including multilevel identities, that are associated with the country of current residence or the country of birth. In this way, we can distinguish those who identify their homeland as "Russia" or "Moscow" or "where I was born" (if the person was born in Russia) as a more generic "Russian homeland"; and we can classify those who give a homeland as "Kazakhstan" or "Almaty" or "where I live" as a generic "Kazakhstan homeland." Thus, we can distinguish those who have an *internal* homeland from those who have an *external* homeland. But caution is still in order about assuming that these homelands are necessarily at the country level.

more problematic for the ethnic minorities themselves than it has been for many scholars and politicians.

ETHNIC MINORITIES AND HOMELAND: DO “NATIONAL MINORITIES”
THINK OF THEMSELVES AS NATIONAL MINORITIES?

If Russians living outside of Russia do not tend to view Russia as their homeland and if what they do see as their homeland is not consistent with the idea of a *national* identity, should they nonetheless be considered a *national* minority? Brubaker had contended that it was “predictable” that “successor state Russians would tend to represent themselves as a national minority,”²³ but how accurate is that prediction? The term national minority is an important one, as it implies that these minorities are more than just ethnic minorities, involved in “ethnic politics” and interested in “minority rights.” It means that they have a *national* identity and see themselves either as (1) a nation within their state of residence and thus desire political control of a particular part of that state or as (2) part of a larger nation that already has its own territory (the external national homeland).

Certainly, some ethnic minorities in the postcommunist region see themselves as national minorities desiring political control over territory (for example, Russian speakers in Transdnestrria, the Abkhaz in Abkhazia, and Chechens in Chechnya). But many neither desire political control of a part of their state of residence nor perceive the supposed external national homeland (Russia) as their homeland. Thus, one would suspect that ethnic Russians outside Russia would *not* see themselves as national minorities. In fact, the survey data support this surmise in two of the cases for which we have data, but challenge it in the other two. Table 2 reports the responses to the question, *Do you consider yourself a national minority?* In Belarus and Ukraine very small percentages of the respondents claimed to be part of a national minority (9.2 percent and 18.8 percent, respectively). In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, by contrast, most of the ethnic Russian respondents felt this way (59.3 percent and 67.0 percent, respectively).

This would seem to imply that Russians in these Central Asian states either are attached to an external homeland (Russia) or desire control of a part of their state of residence. While the latter may be true of the northern part of Kazakhstan, it is certainly not the case in Kyrgyzstan. Few Russians in these states identified Russia as their homeland, but instead most identified their current state of residence as their homeland.

²³ Brubaker (fn. 2), 127.

TABLE 2
 SENSE OF BELONGING TO A "NATIONAL MINORITY" BY ETHNIC RUSSIANS IN
 BELARUS, KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYZSTAN, AND UKRAINE^a

	<i>Belarus</i>	<i>Kazakhstan</i>	<i>Kyrgyzstan</i>	<i>Ukraine</i>
Yes	9.2	59.3	67.0	18.8
No	87.5	32.3	28.5	65.7
Difficult to say	2.6	8.1	4.4	12.2
No answer	0.8	0.3	0.1	3.3
Base N	765	619	685	329

^aThe question for Ukraine (P28, A26), and for Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan (B14) is: "Do you consider yourself part of a national minority in [name of country]?"

More likely, then, the term "national minority" does not mean to ethnic Russians what it means to some scholars. Seemingly recognizing the distinction between ethnic minority and national minority, Davis and Sabol discuss the Russians in Kazakhstan as an ethnic minority but one that is well "rooted" in the country²⁴—the Russians in Kazakhstan accept the state as their homeland, have a certain degree of loyalty to it, and do not wish to emigrate to Russia.²⁵ While this is true of many of the Russians in Kazakhstan, our data indicate that it is not true of all, and it is of course not true of the many hundreds of thousands of Russians who left Kazakhstan for Russia over the last decade.²⁶

In Ukraine and especially in Belarus most ethnic Russians are not made aware of their distinctive "Russianness" on a daily basis. The cultural distance between Russians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians is small. In contrast, in the Central Asian states Russians have a sense of otherness that reinforces a feeling of belonging to a national minority. In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, they *feel* Russian.²⁷ Some of this is due to

²⁴ Sue Davis and Steven O. Sabol, "The Importance of Being Ethnic: Minorities in Post-Soviet States—The Case of Russians in Kazakhstan," *Nationalities Papers* 26 (September 1998).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 475.

²⁶ See Melvin (fn. 1); Galina Vitkovskaya, "Potential Migration of Russian-Speaking Populations from Central Asia to Russia," in George J. Demko, Grigory Ioffe, and Zhanna Zaionchkovskaya, eds., *Population under Duress: The Geodemography of Post-Soviet Russia* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1999).

²⁷ Shulman (fn. 13) claims that such a heightened sense of identity would waken the "internal national pull" of the minority in question (in this case the Russians) and lead the minority to reach out to the external homeland. While the data do show a greater tendency for Russians in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to reach out to Russia, they also show that for most Russians living there these Central Asian states are their homelands. Thus, while a greater ethnic distance between the majority and minority (and policies by the state that emphasize ethnicity) may make members of the minority more likely to look for help from coethnics in a neighboring state, it does not seem to be enough to overcome the sense of homeland. Indeed, as we show below, country of birth seems to be the decisive factor in determining choice of homeland by the Russians in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, and Ukraine.

the large ethnic difference between Russians and titular Central Asian nationalities.²⁸ In Kazakhstan it is also probably reinforced by the nativization policies that President Nursultan Nazarbaev has, at times, pursued.²⁹

Another possible explanation of the difference between the way that Russians in Central Asia and Ukraine and Belarus feel about themselves has to do with the groups' sense of historical ties to their state of residence. Because Russians have lived in Ukraine for centuries, for example, there is a sense of "legitimate" belonging.³⁰ In presenting this argument, Shulman claims that Russians in Ukraine do not even like to think of themselves as an ethnic minority, because the term implies a limited historical link to the territory.³¹

WHICH RUSSIANS CHOOSE AN EXTERNAL HOMELAND AND WHICH CHOOSE AN INTERNAL HOMELAND?

In none of the four countries under consideration here does the empirical evidence support key assumptions about the attachment to homeland posited in most of the Western social science literature. Identifying oneself as Russian by "nationality" (*natsional'nost'*) does not represent a declaration of affiliation or a sense of shared historical fate with Russia. Still, the Russian populations in these countries are not homogeneous in their choice of homeland. We now turn to the question why some choose an internal homeland and some an external one and then explore several factors that could determine that choice.³²

If the designation of homeland by Russians in our surveys is not determined by self-identified nationality or ethnicity itself but instead more often corresponds to the country of residence at the time of the survey, an important question is whether the responses reflect deep emotive ties to the current country or whether they reflect a pragmatic

²⁸In the cases of Belarus and Ukraine such a large ethnic difference does not exist between the titular populations and the ethnic Russians. As Szporluk puts it, "Ukrainians and Belarusians are commonly perceived in Russia as being Russian"; Roman Szporluk, "Introduction: Statehood and Nation Building in Post-Soviet Space," in Szporluk, ed., *National Identity and Ethnicity in Russia and the New States of Eurasia* (Armonk, N.Y.; M. E. Sharpe, 1994), 9.

²⁹See Melvin (fn.1), 109–10; Davis and Sabol (fn. 24), 481–82.

³⁰Shulman (fn. 13), 621.

³¹Ibid.

³²We recognize of course that many Russians emigrated from Central Asia in the 1990s and thereby "voted with their feet." Yet these emigration decisions may well be based largely on pragmatic grounds—a sense of both the economic and social situations in Central Asia compared with Russia or other alternative locations. They do not necessarily reflect a "call to the homeland." Given that we conducted our surveys during a period of continued heavy emigration of Russians from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, our finding that only a minority of Russians defined Russia as their homeland is especially instructive.

or instrumental judgment. In general, because of its symbolic importance, homeland should not be expected to be mainly determined by instrumental factors but rather should be expected to reflect the degree to which an individual is rooted in a given country, territory, or society. We conducted a multivariate probit analysis to assess the determinants of homeland.

We reclassified responses from Table 1 into two categories. Respondents who stated that their homeland was the current state of residence or a portion thereof were coded as choosing an internal homeland. In addition, respondents who said that their homeland was "where I was born" were coded as identifying an internal homeland if they were born in the current country of residence.³³ Otherwise, respondents were coded as selecting an external homeland. Those who identified a state (or portion of a state) that was not the current state of residence were coded as selecting an external homeland.³⁴ The dependent variable was coded 1 if the respondent selected an external homeland and 0 if the respondent selected an internal homeland.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Our first independent variable is *country of birth*. Whether people emigrated freely or were uprooted forcibly from their native country, they could still be expected in most cases to maintain emotional ties to it. If, however, they currently reside in their native country, they can be expected in most cases to identify their country of residence as their homeland. We therefore expect to find a close correspondence between self-designated homeland and the respondents' country of birth.

At the same time, a myth emphasizing "return" to the homeland can be nurtured or maintained in many circumstances by refugees and emigrants, even among people who have never lived in the ancestral home. This is typical of diasporic populations such as Jews and Armenians but also of many Ukrainians, Balts, and other ethnic groups that lived abroad during the period of Soviet "occupation" of their homeland. Thus, myths about Russia as the true home or mother country can be expected to appeal to a certain percentage of Russians and draw them to identify Russia as their homeland even if they were not born there.

Responses by ethnic Russians in focus groups held in Kazakhstan and Ukraine reinforce the primacy of nativity in perceptions of home-

³³ Respondents who indicated that their homeland was "where I live" were also classified as selecting an internal homeland.

³⁴ This includes respondents who selected "USSR," "CIS," "Former Soviet Union," and "Outside FSU."

land. Participants repeatedly identified place of birth as the key to defining homeland. One female survey respondent in Kazakhstan stated: "Your homeland, I think, is where you were born, where you grew up, where you have your circle of friends, where you are supported, where people know you." This perception was supported by a male respondent: "A homeland is the city where I was born. I can't say that it's just the city. It's the streets on which you love to walk, it's the places where I hang out. . . . It's just what I'm used to, what I love." Another female respondent specified her homeland through nativity: "Where I was born, in Russia."

These perceptions were echoed in focus groups held in Ukraine. A participant defined homeland in the following way: "It . . . simply seems . . . that, who was born where. Home. That street, that house. Yard. Some definite, small place. Where you were. It's yours." Another respondent provided a more detailed definition:

Into the concept of homeland I put an essential concept—and my own, and all those surroundings that were there before, all my ancestors, and that left their marks on their fates, and on their thoughts, and on their language. . . . I don't remember which one of the philosophers said it: where you were born, there you should live . . . that only this place, only this language, only this way of thought specifically in this setting can uncover the fullness of a man. . . . We are results of those settings and even that food, those sounds which we hear. *This* is homeland. That, which gave birth to me. That what I am today, all this created me: yes, the Kharkov land, on which I was born. Exactly like this.³⁵

In our analysis of the survey data, two variables represent place of birth. The first is a binary variable for respondents who were born in Russia. The second is a binary variable for those who were born in their state of residence. Respondents who were born elsewhere are the comparison category. Both variables are coded 1 if the respondent was born in the specified state; 0 if the respondent was born in another state. As place of birth was not included in the Ukrainian 1998 omnibus survey, the quantitative analysis in this section omits Ukraine. However, the focus group responses demonstrate that place of birth should be an important determinant of respondents' definitions of homeland in Ukraine.

We also conjecture that *length of residence* may influence homeland designations, independent of nativity. To address this issue we calculated the proportion of each respondent's lifetime that he or she had lived in the current country of residence. The proportions ranged from less than .05 (5 percent) to 1.0 (100 percent). Almost all of those who

³⁵For details of the discussion groups, see fn. 4.

had been born in their current country of residence had lived there 100 percent of their lifetimes, but some had lived there for fewer years.

Age cohort is another factor to consider. At first glance, we might expect younger Russians in the near abroad to name their country of residence as their homeland because they are more adaptable and accommodating to circumstance. However, such a finding would run counter to evidence in our own data that younger persons are more likely to have emigrated previously from the near abroad to Russia and hence that they are more likely to respond to the changing political and economic environment by exiting the scene.³⁶ We examine the relation between age and choice of homeland in our analysis using five age cohorts: 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, and 60–69; respondents age 70 and above are the comparison category.

We also include a number of control variables that could affect the identification of homeland. These include education, urban residence, and gender. Education is represented by a single dichotomous variable, coded 1 if the respondent has some higher education; otherwise 0. Urban dwellers are coded 1; rural residents are coded 0; gender is coded 1 for males, 0 for females.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 3 shows the results of a multivariate probit analysis. Our model assesses individual choice well, correctly predicting outcomes in 81 percent of the cases.³⁷ Individual coefficients also conform with our expectations.

Place of birth is a powerful explanatory factor. Respondents born in Russia are more likely to select an external homeland than those born elsewhere. The coefficient is statistically significant and negative in sign. The “marginal effect” shown in the last column in Table 3 indicates the influence of the given variable on the probability that the respondent designated an external homeland. For dummy variables in this analysis, the marginal effect can be interpreted as the percent change in likelihood of selecting an external homeland. Thus, respondents born in Russia are 14 percent more likely to identify an external

³⁶ It would also counter evidence from a survey in Estonia in 1991 which showed that the younger generation of both Estonians and Russians was much less accommodating toward the other nationality than was the older generation. See Barbara A. Anderson, Brian D. Silver, Mikk Titma, and Edward D. Ponarin, “Estonian and Russian Communities: Ethnic and Language Relations,” *International Journal of Sociology* 26 (Summer 1996).

³⁷ Reduction in error was calculated by comparing the percent correctly predicted with the percentage of cases labeled 1 on the dependent variable.

TABLE 3
 PROBIT RESULTS FOR DETERMINANTS OF "EXTERNAL" HOMELAND^a

	<i>Coefficients (with Robust Standard Errors)</i>	<i>Marginal Effects</i>
Constant	1.048*** (0.193)	
Born in Russia	0.381*** (0.108)	0.140 (0.040)
Born in state of residence	-1.142*** (0.128)	0.395 (0.039)
% of life in state of residence	-1.818*** (0.182)	0.661 (0.067)
Age 18-29	0.011 (0.143)	0.004 (0.052)
Age 30-39	0.373*** (0.131)	0.141 (0.051)
Age 40-49	0.176 (0.124)	0.065 (0.047)
Age 50-59	0.237* (0.125)	0.089 (0.048)
Age 60-69	0.059 (0.126)	0.021 (0.047)
Higher education	0.444*** (0.086)	0.168 (0.033)
Urban	-0.204** (0.089)	-0.076 (0.034)
Male	0.188*** (0.073)	0.069 (0.027)
KZ resident	0.362*** (0.091)	0.135 (0.035)
KG resident	0.139 (0.094)	0.051 (0.035)
% correctly predicted	81.3	
Pseudo R ²	.376	
N	1958	

* $p \leq .10$; ** $p \leq .05$; *** $p \leq .01$

^aDependent variable is: internal homeland (0)/external homeland (1).

homeland than those born outside Russia. Respondents born in the country of residence are 40 percent more likely to identify that country as their homeland. The coefficient is significant and negative; the marginal effect is -0.40. Thus, nativity is a strong predictor of what people designate as their homeland.

The proportion of the lifetime spent in the current state also strongly

influences the designation of homeland. The larger a proportion of their life the people have lived in their current state of residence, the smaller the likelihood that they designate an external homeland. The coefficient of the proportion of life in state of residence variable is highly statistically significant.

The parameter value for one age cohort is statistically significant at the $p \leq .05$ level.³⁸ Respondents aged thirty to thirty-nine are 14 percent more likely to identify an external state as their homeland. This outcome is not surprising. Younger people should be expected to be more “mobile”—and potentially more externally oriented—especially if they have higher education and can compete in the modern economy. The coefficient for the youngest age cohort is not statistically significant, but it is likely that the youngest cohort includes many who (if they have not left to study abroad) are currently in school and may never have lived anywhere else. The cohort aged thirty to thirty-nine, by contrast, includes people who have completed schooling, are in the labor market, and potentially exhibit geographic mobility. That is, they do not feel connected to their current location as much, and they are likely to be relatively ambitious about their future careers and not tied to a given location.

Among the control variables, higher education and gender are significant at the .01 level; urban residence is significant at the .05 level. Respondents with higher education are 17 percent more likely to identify an external homeland than are respondents with lower levels of education (*ceteris paribus*). Individuals with higher education may be more cosmopolitan than their less-educated peers and thus more outwardly oriented. Men are 7 percent more likely than women to select an external homeland. Urban dwellers, by contrast, are 8 percent more likely than rural residents to identify an internal homeland.

CHOICE OF HOMELAND AND OTHER ATTITUDES

While the designation of homeland is predictable to a remarkable degree on the basis of immutable characteristics (that is, country of birth and gender), we do not wish to leave the impression that “homeland” is fixed at birth and unaffected by later experiences. We bear in mind the asymmetry of the relationship: while most Russians who were born and still reside in the near abroad identify their homeland as their country of residence, Russians who were born in Russia divide their choices. Roughly one-fourth to one-third designate their country of residence

³⁸ Another coefficient is significant at $p \leq .10$.

as their homeland, while the majority designate their country of birth as their homeland. Hence some other factors are at work. While it is likely that an important part of the story is length of residence, it is especially interesting to determine whether the conception of a homeland is related to other attitudes. One possibility is that an individual's judgments about political community, system, or politics of the government of the country of residence are related to homeland choice.

We first analyze the relationship between nativity, homeland identification, and the level of national pride. The national pride measure is a mean score based on whether the respondents asserted that they were "proud" of various achievements of the country of residence in science, the economy, sports, and culture. If an individual is proud of a given achievement, he or she receives a score of 100; if not proud, the score is 0 on that item. The mean score based on the ratings of each item also ranges from 0 to 100.

In Figure 1 respondents in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan are classified according to both their country of birth and their designated homeland. Respondents' designation of their country of residence as their homeland is correlated with their level of national pride. Those who claim a country as homeland tend to have higher levels of national pride—both among persons who were born in the country and among those who were not.

In all three countries the respondents who manifest the highest levels of national pride are those Russians who were *not* born in the current country of residence but who designate this country as their homeland. At first it may seem odd that Russians who are nonnatives manifest higher pride in country than Russians who were born in the country of residence. However, we would conjecture that since Russians who were born outside the country are precisely the ones who are most likely to have a choice of homelands, those who choose their country of residence do not do so randomly but because they have a psychological attachment to the country—as reflected in our measure of national pride. Although Russians who are born outside the country of residence and who claim that country as homeland are in the minority, their choice of homeland appears to be deliberate and consistent with at least one key indicator of their attachment to their country of residence.

We found analogous results when we examined the degree of confidence in major political institutions.³⁹ Although confidence in such institutions is low, again those Russians who identified their homeland as

³⁹ We assessed confidence in parliament, the courts, government, and the presidency. Results are available upon request from Lowell Barrington (lowell.barrington@marquette.edu).

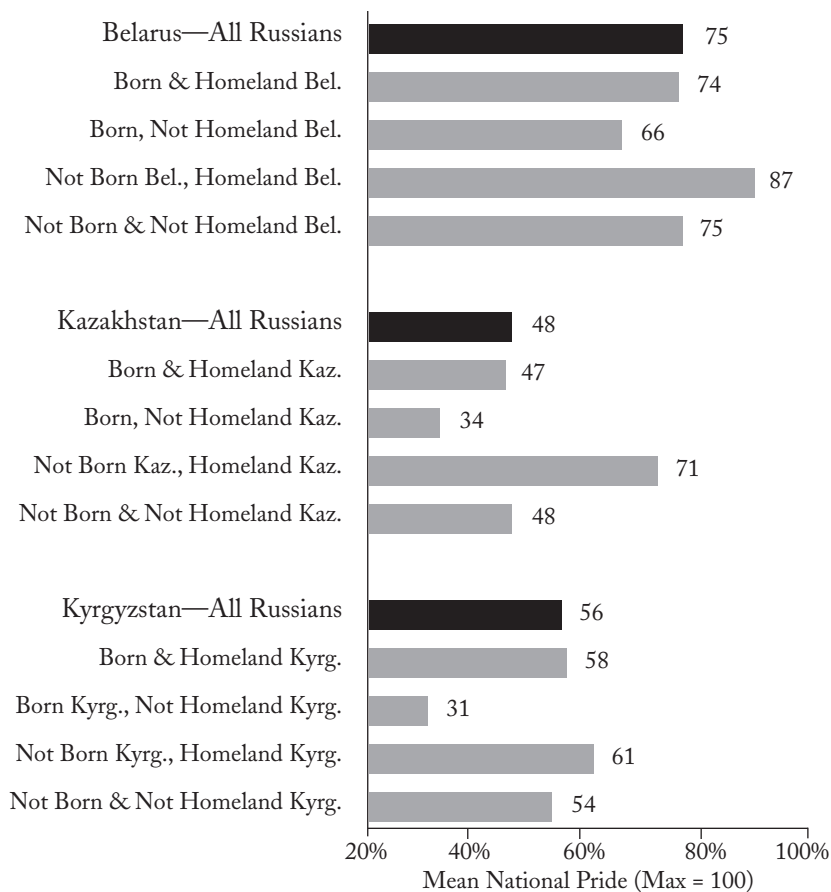


FIGURE 1
PRIDE IN COUNTRY, BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH AND SELF-IDENTIFIED
"HOMELAND"^a

^aData are based on answers to the question: "Are you proud of [country name's] achievements in sports, science, culture and arts, economics?" A "yes" to each was scored as 100; a "no" as 0. Scores in the chart represent the mean across the four items. Thus, for example, among all Russians in Belarus on average 75 percent were "proud" of all four areas of achievement.

the country of residence expressed greater confidence in political institutions. Those who were born outside of the country of residence but who designated this country as their homeland were the most supportive of political institutions. Such findings are consistent with the claims of Easton that an overarching sense of "political community" is crucial to the support for and the stability of the political system.⁴⁰

⁴⁰David Easton, "An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems," *World Politics* 9 (April 1957).

Further confirmation comes from an analysis of emigration intentions. The respondents were asked: *What is your attitude toward the idea of leaving [Belarus]? Would you prefer to stay and live here, would you like to leave, or have you not decided what to do?*⁴¹ Although the percentage distributions should not be interpreted as literally representing how many Russians plan to stay or to leave, they are probably indicative of a general attitude toward the country (and toward possible alternative places to live). In Figure 2 we see that a much larger proportion of the Russians in Belarus (94 percent) than in Kazakhstan (62 percent) and Kyrgyzstan (75 percent) intend to remain in their country of residence.⁴² Moreover, those who identify the country as their homeland are more likely to plan to remain in the country; indeed, whether one identifies the country of residence as homeland makes more of a difference than nativity in differentiating between those who intend to remain in the country and those who intend to leave. Lastly, *the Russians who most often say they intend to remain in the country are those who were born outside the country but designate the country of residence as their homeland.* This is the very pattern of relationships that we observed in the analysis of national pride.

The association between self-identified homeland and attitudes toward the country of residence (national pride, confidence in political institutions, intention to remain in the country) indicates the meaningfulness of the choice that the respondents are exercising when they designate a particular country as homeland. It is especially those Russians who were born in Russia but who did *not* designate Russia as homeland for whom the choice of homeland in the survey is a conscious one. These Russians in the near abroad manifest the greatest national pride, support for political institutions, and commitment to remaining in their country of residence. These Russians are probably least susceptible to mobilization to the Russian nationalist cause by political entrepreneurs in Russia or abroad.

This conclusion is strengthened by the evidence in Figure 3, which shows that although those Russians in the four countries who regard Russia as their homeland expressed a more positive view of efforts of mobilization than Russians who regarded their country of residence as their homeland, only small percentages of either group of Russians viewed the actions of Russian politicians as having a positive effect on the status of Russian speakers.

Similarly, Figure 4 reveals that although those who regarded Russia

⁴¹ For this analysis, we divide the responses into two categories: persons who intend to leave the country and those who intend to stay or who are undecided.

⁴² The analogous figure in our survey for Russians in Ukraine is 81 percent.

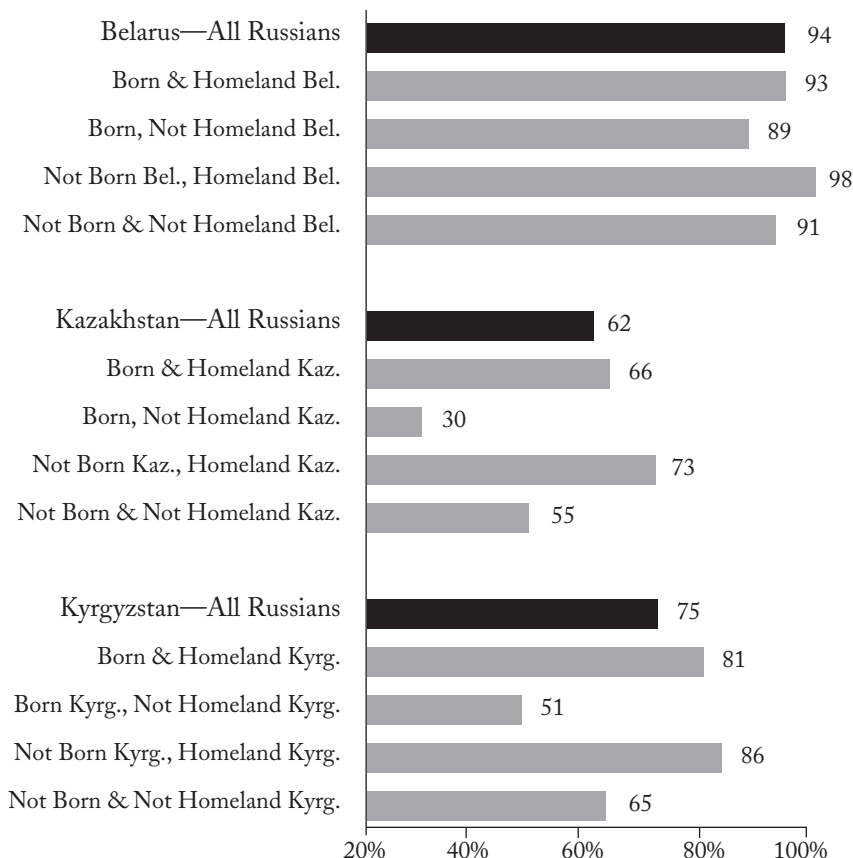


FIGURE 2

PERCENTAGE WHO INTEND TO REMAIN IN COUNTRY, BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH AND SELF-IDENTIFIED "HOMELAND"^a

^aPercentage who answer "Stay and live" or "Undecided" to question: "What is your attitude toward the idea of leaving [country]? Would you like to stay and live here, would you like to leave, or have you not decided where to live?"

as their homeland were more likely to say that Russian authorities should defend the interests of Russian speakers than those who considered their country of residence to be their homeland, neither group of Russians in the near abroad looked to Russian authorities to defend their interests. Instead, they viewed their own government as having the main responsibility for defending the interests of Russian speakers in their country of residence.⁴³

⁴³We obtain similar results to those in Figures 3 and 4 if we use country of birth in place of homeland. However, as noted earlier, the two variables are highly correlated with one another, and so we use "homeland" here because we have information on this variable from all four countries in our study.

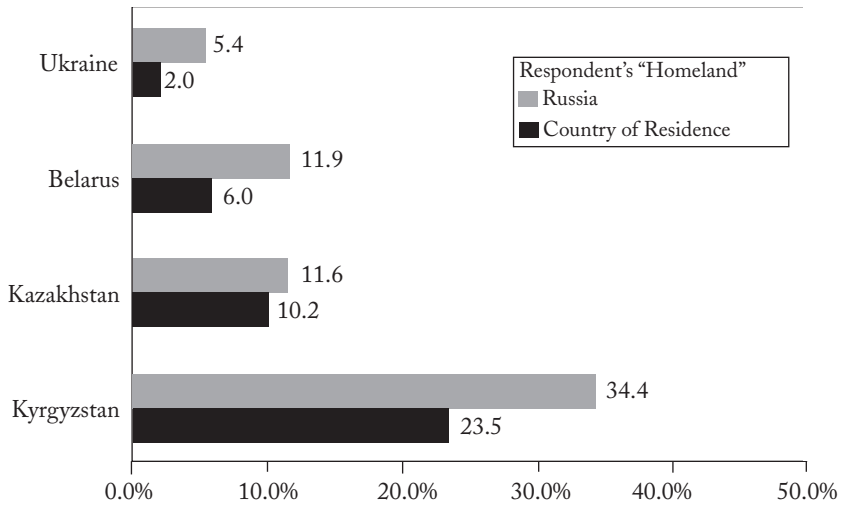


FIGURE 3
PERCENTAGE WHO VIEW PRESSURE FROM MOSCOW AS HAVING A POSITIVE
EFFECT ON RUSSIAN SPEAKERS^a

^aThe question posed was: "Many politicians in Moscow demand the defense of the rights of the Russian-speaking population in the former republics of the Soviet Union. Tell me, how have these declarations affected the status of Russian speakers in [Belarus]—have they improved the status of the Russian-speaking population, worsened its status, or have they not affected its status?" Based on respondents who said pressure from Moscow had either "positive," "negative," or "no effect." "Hard to say" and "NA" are treated as missing values.

Thus, while emigration has been an option selected by many Russians, especially in regions and periods of civil conflict in the Transcaucasus, North Caucasus, and Central Asia, those who have remained in the near abroad do not necessarily look to Russia for solutions to local problems. Furthermore, the potential mobilizability of segments of the Russian population outside Russia by activists or politicians in Russia is likely to depend not only on the general political and economic climate in the country of residence but also on individual characteristics of the Russians abroad.

CONCLUSION

Our evidence from surveys and focus groups conducted in several post-Soviet countries is damaging to theories that assume that Russians in neighboring countries feel a strong identification with Russia as a homeland. To be sure, from 1992 through 1997, an estimated 5.1 mil-

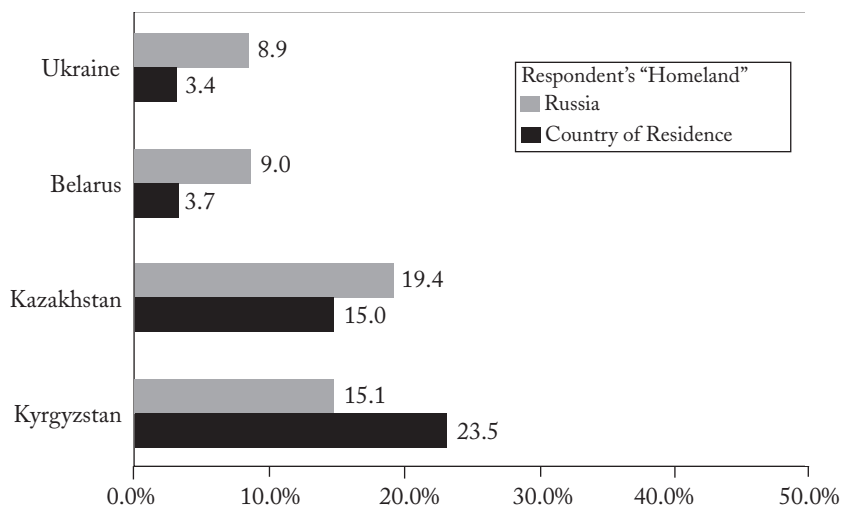


FIGURE 4
PERCENTAGE WHO SAY THAT RUSSIAN FEDERATION AUTHORITIES SHOULD DEFEND THE INTERESTS OF RUSSIAN SPEAKERS^a

^aThe question posed was: “Who, in your opinion, primarily ought to defend the position of Russians and other Russian speakers in [Belarus]? [Belarusan] authorities, Russian authorities, international organizations, social and political organizations of Russian speakers, the Russian-speaking population of [Belarus], or the entire population of [Belarus]?” “Hard to say” and “NA” are treated as missing values.

lion people, most of them ethnic Russians, migrated from the near abroad to the Russian Federation.⁴⁴ In recent years Central Asia has been the largest contributor to the flow of migrants.⁴⁵ For this reason, our surveys are subject to a selection effect: Russians who remained in the neighboring countries seven years after the end of the Soviet Union are more likely to be committed to the state of residence than those who left for Russia.

⁴⁴This is the number of registered forced migrants and refugees, according to the head of the Federal Migration Service in Russia. See Eurasia Foundation, *Tatiana Regent: Migration from Former Soviet Republics to Russia Has Reduced* (www.eurasia.org.ru/english/july/Eng0008.html).

⁴⁵Net outmigration from Central Asia and Transcaucasia to Russia is not, however, a post-Soviet invention. It had been going on for at least two decades prior to the demise of the Soviet Union. See Barbara A. Anderson and Brian D. Silver, “Demographic Sources of the Changing Ethnic Composition of the Soviet Union,” *Population and Development Review* 15 (December 1989); idem, “Population Redistribution and the Ethnic Balance in Transcaucasia,” in Ronald G. Suny, ed., *Transcaucasia, Nationalism, and Social Change: Essays in the History of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996). But without question emigration accelerated rapidly in the 1990s. For recent analysis of this trend in Kazakhstan, see Richard H. Rowland, “Regional Population Change in Kazakhstan during the 1990s and the Impact of Nationality Population Patterns: Results from the Recent Census of Kazakhstan,” *Post-Soviet Geography and Economics* 42 (December 2001).

Yet well after the collapse of the Soviet Union, some observers suggested that Russian ethnonationalism—engaging the Russian state and Russians in the near abroad in an effort to reunify ethnic Russians by altering existing borders—could become a dominant approach in Russian relations with newly independent states. Moreover, Zevelev argued that Russian national identity among members of the diaspora became more salient after 1991 and that the emergence of independent states with large Russian minority populations “ruptures the centuries old tradition of Russians grouping themselves around the state.”⁴⁶ Others claimed that Russians in the near abroad might engage in “counter-hegemonic nationalism” in response to policies designed to give advantages to titular nationalities, manifested by Russian diaspora members choosing Russian citizenship or advocating the redrawing of boundaries to incorporate Russian majority regions into Russia.⁴⁷ But our evidence challenges the notion that ethnic Russians in Russia’s neighboring countries are a potential fifth column, or even that they are positively disposed toward Russian political intervention in the near abroad.

Moreover, the personal history and attitudes of diaspora Russians are heterogeneous,⁴⁸ and this heterogeneity appears to influence views of homeland. The heterogeneity of the Russian population living in the near abroad is most apparent in one very crucial respect: some were born in Russia and some were born in their current state of residence. For Russians who were born outside of Russia, their designated homeland is overwhelmingly the country in which they currently reside. But place of birth is not the entire story. The importance of length of residence in shaping views about homeland may surprise many scholars. Even with the root of the Russian word for “homeland” (*rodina*) implying place of birth,⁴⁹ our evidence indicates that one’s sense of homeland and sense of attachment to the state of residence are shaped by the

⁴⁶ Igor Zevelev, “Russia and the Russian Diasporas,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 12 (July 1996), 280.

⁴⁷ Robert Kaiser and Jeff Chinn, “Russian-Kazakh Relations in Kazakhstan,” *Post-Soviet Geography* 36 (May 1995), 270.

⁴⁸ Smith and Wilson (fn. 3).

⁴⁹ When this article was first presented as a conference paper, one audience member asked whether the finding of a strong effect of place of birth was simply the result of the word *rodina* having such an implication. The individual suggested that if *otechestvo* (fatherland) were used instead, the results might differ. This concern is a valid one, but one that we answer in two ways. First, as mentioned above, the fact that the root of *rodina* does somewhat imply place of birth makes the finding about length of residence all the more surprising. But second, we examined this question in some detail in the focus groups in Ukraine. The respondents generally stated that it did not matter whether one was discussing *rodina* or *otechestvo* (fatherland); the implication was similar in both cases (though in the Kiev discussion there was mentioned the opinion that fatherland is a wider concept than homeland). For the focus group participants, the most important issue in choice of homeland was where one was born, though many respondents discussed the idea of homeland as the place where one feels happy and secure.

amount of time one has lived in that state. Homeland, it seems, is not a given at birth. Rather, it is a perception, susceptible to change over time.

As a result, those who were born in Russia do not all regard Russia as their homeland. The Russian-born Russians who have chosen their current state of residence as their homeland tend to score high on pride in their country of residence, have confidence in its political institutions, and show a commitment to remaining in the country. Even those Russian-born Russians who consider Russia to be their homeland do not look positively on the Russian Federation's intervention in local affairs. Our results suggest that while the motherland may be calling,⁵⁰ Russians who remain in the near abroad are not answering the call.

⁵⁰This reference and our title come from the classic World War II poster with the slogan "Rodina-Mat' Zovet!"