

SMALL STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Russian-Polish cooperation among
residents of the Kaliningrad region
covered by the Local Border Traffic area



Warsaw 2014

Report on public opinion research



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Warsaw 2014

CENTRE FOR
POLISH-RUSSIAN DIALOGUE
AND UNDERSTANDING

Report on public opinion research

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Contents

■ Introduction	4
■ Research description	5
■ Key findings	7
➤ 1. Assessment of Polish-Russian relations	9
➤ 2. Attitudes to Poles	13
➤ 3. Local Border Traffic	17
➤ 4. Visits to Poland by residents of the Kaliningrad region	21
➤ 5. Visits to the Kaliningrad region by Poles	27

Introduction

Russian society shares a belief that Poland and Russia have a history of uneasy relationships. It is noteworthy that there are a number of pivotal points in the development of interstate relations between Russia and Poland that define the leit-motif of generally negative views of each other. Beyond doubt, these are events in the period up to 1917 (memory of some of them is often cultivated in public consciousness both by cinema and peculiarity of holidays in post-Soviet Russia) and, obviously, both in the Soviet period (especially the Katyn massacre) and post-Soviet period (the Smolensk crash, the situation with football fans during the 2012 UEFA European Championship, etc.)

For the moment one may acknowledge that in general Russians see Poland as a historically and geographically akin country, in addition, with common Slavic roots. However, the negative context of relations is still present at different levels of perception: thus, in the opinion of Russians, among the countries whose authorities and population have the most negative attitude to Russia Poland ranks the third. As regards associations among the population

of Russia, Poland is often seen as a malevolent neighbour.

Still, in the noughties, relations between the two states began to gradually improve, not least of all, thanks to the increase of personal interactions between people of both countries. Participants in both the all-Russian and all-Polish opinion polls admit that the attitude of ordinary Poles to Russia and Russians to Poland is more positive compared to the attitude between the states as such. Mutual personal rapprochement is in particular promoted by trade relations as well as cross-border contacts. In this regard, a separate study of border regions of both countries whereby the most intensive exchange of information about each other occurs, is of interest.

This report presents the research into the assessment of bilateral relations between Russia and Poland among the population of the Kaliningrad region together with the impact of simplified procedures of Local Border Traffic between the region and border areas of Poland since July 2012.

Research description

Research goals and objectives:

Attitudes of residents of the Kaliningrad region of Polish-Russian cooperation on the territory covered by Local Border Traffic:

- To assess the perception of Poland and its population by residents of the Kaliningrad region;
- To assess the perception of Polish-Russian relations by residents of the Kaliningrad region;
- To determine the frequency and purposes of crossing the border with Poland by residents of the Kaliningrad region under the terms of Local Border Traffic;
- To assess advantages, disadvantages and prospects for development of the existing mode of border-crossing.

The research method:

- Quantitative research – a representative survey among residents of the Kaliningrad region at the respondent's place of residence by means of a telephone interview (1000 questionnaires);
- Qualitative research – focus-group interviews with residents of Kaliningrad who are aware of Local Border Traffic and have come across Poles (6 focus groups).

The target group:

1. Quantitative survey, statistical error does not exceed 3.1%, the time of the survey – 20–23 January, 2014. Residents of the Kaliningrad region above 18 residing there for at least three years.

Type of settlement

Kaliningrad
City and urban-type settlement
Village

Number of respondents (%)

44
33
23

Gender of respondents

Male
Female

Number of respondents (%)

46
54

Education of respondents

Primary education or below
Incomplete secondary education
Secondary education (regular school or vocational school)
Post-secondary education (technical college)
Incomplete higher education (starting with the 4th year at the institution of higher learning), higher education

Number of respondents (%)

1
4
20
53
23

Age of respondents

18-24
25-34
35-44
45-59
60 and older

Number of respondents (%)

16
20
17
27
20

2. Focus-group interviews, conducted on January 17–24, 2014. Residents of the city of Kaliningrad aware of Local Border Traffic:

- ▶ Men and women aged 18 – 55;
- ▶ Respondents who came across Poles

City	Group No.	Gender of respondents	Age of respondents	Profile of respondents
Kaliningrad	1	50% – men, 50% – women (in every group)	18-24	Respondents aware of Local Border Traffic
Kaliningrad	2		25-34	Respondents aware of Local Border Traffic
Kaliningrad	3		35-44	Respondents aware of Local Border Traffic
Kaliningrad	4		45-55	Respondents aware of Local Border Traffic
Kaliningrad	5		18-34	Respondents aware of Local Border Traffic who came across Poles
Kaliningrad	6		35-55	Respondents aware of Local Border Traffic who came across Poles

Key findings

1. The analysis of qualitative and quantitative studies carried out in the Kaliningrad region gives ground for a conclusion about a positive context of interrelation between Russia and Poland. Attitudes of the authorities and population of Poland to Russia are assessed as rather friendly, whereas the proportion of respondents who indicate a positive attitude of Poles exceeds the number of respondents who report the same nature of attitudes among the authorities. Belarus, Germany, China and Poland are the countries with the most cordial attitude to Russia.
2. The dynamics of relations between the countries, as assessed by qualitative research participants, is positive in nature. Gradual improvement of the relationship between the countries following changes of the government in Poland was noted. Russian mass media that describe joint undertakings with Poland were mentioned as yet another reason for positive changes.
3. When analysing negative aspects of relations between Russia and Poland, the pragmatic economic interest on behalf of Poland as well as the pro-American policy of the state, which is a priori undesirable for Russia, are worth mentioning.
4. The level of tolerance among residents of the Kaliningrad region towards representatives of Polish nationality is elevated: the majority of the respondents can easily imagine being neighbours or friends with them, a fairly high proportion of respondents is not against marriage.
5. Respondents' associations with Poland are based, first of all, on the type of relations between the countries and experience from interpersonal contacts. Predominant images are related to trade – food and cheap goods. Another leitmotif in the association range is geographical belonging, namely – the border area. By no means unimportant factor that influences the formation of the image of the country is Poland as a tourist attraction for residents of the Kaliningrad region.
6. The population of Poland is perceived by respondents mostly in a positive way. When describing characteristics of Poles, they most frequently underline affability, amicability, industry and discipline. Negative traits of the Polish national character include deceit, venality and negative attitude towards Russians.
7. Awareness of the simplified procedures of crossing the Polish border operating since 2012 is quite high among residents of the Kaliningrad region. The overwhelming majority know about them.
8. Opinions of quantitative research participants as regards the issue of benefits from Local Border Traffic for both countries are divided: some of them believe that it is mutually beneficial and the same proportion believes that Poland profits most from it. The analysis of focus-group interviews demonstrates obvious attractiveness of the procedures for Poles in particular. The main advantage in their case: an economic benefit from the sale of goods.
9. As for Russia, the benefit from Local Border Traffic is limited only to savings by the low-income group of the population that crosses the border in search of high-quality goods and leisure at reasonable prices.
10. The frequency of visits to Poland among the population of the Kaliningrad region aware of the Local Border Traffic procedures is high. More than a third of respondents travelled

there at least once during the last month. Over two thirds of respondents visited Poland last year.

11. Purposes of Russians' trips to the neighbouring state are first of all tourist and economic in nature. The most widespread opinion expressed in focus groups was about combining shopping and leisure.

12. Travel to border areas in Poland by residents of the Kaliningrad region is fairly widespread. Thus, in accordance with respondent accounts, 82% personally know people who crossed the border with Poland in order to do shopping last year.

13. Travel to Poland is very attractive for residents of the areas bordering Poland. Research participants mostly shared a positive feedback on the experience of visiting this country. A high level of service and prices of both tourist facilities and urban as well as rural infrastructure mainly leave a positive impression. Hospitality and affability of people were also noted.

14. Negative impressions from visits to Poland are sparse. One should mostly note queues at the border as well as a negative attitude of Poles towards Russians, among others.

15. Research participants underline that the inflow of visitors from Poland to the Kaliningrad region is small. Compared to the 1990s and early 2000s the number of visitors decreased. The number of Poles increased only in the border settlements, which is related to their travel for fuel. According to the survey, the relative majority of respondents saw cars with Polish licence plates in their place of residence. Just over a quarter report that they saw visitors.

16. To attract Polish guests to the Kaliningrad region as well as improve bilateral relations between the states research participants suggest organising large-scale (theatre, music) festivals, fairs, the Days of Poland and sporting events. In the opinion of respondents, improvement of the level of service and revision of pricing policy are also an important condition to enhance attractiveness of the region.

1. Assessment of Polish-Russian relations

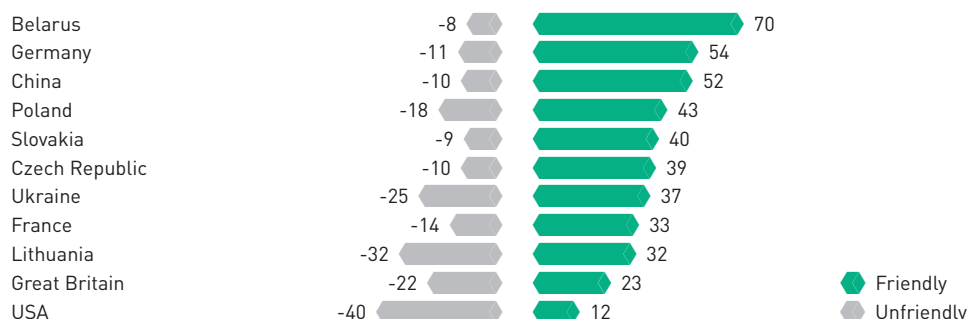
Results of the representative survey among residents of the Kaliningrad region have exhibited a fairly consistent picture of assessments of the attitude of the Polish authorities towards Russia.

According to respondents, Belarus (70% report a friendly attitude), Germany (54%), China (52%) and Poland (43%) are the countries whose

authorities show the most positive attitude to Russia.

On the contrary, residents of the Kaliningrad region mention the prevailing unfriendly nature of relations in the case of the authorities of such states as the USA (40%), Lithuania (32%), Ukraine (25%) and Great Britain (23%).

Diagram 1 Could you please describe the attitude of the authorities of the following states to Russia
% of all the respondents, one answer per line*



In the opinion of residents of the Kaliningrad region, the attitude of ordinary citizens of Poland to Russia is more of a friendly nature.

Among countries whose population has a friendly attitude to Russia, Belarus ranks first (76% of respondents stress a friendly attitude). Germans rank second in the opinion of respondents: 58%

note a positive attitude towards Russia, while Poles rank third (56%).

Lithuanians (21%), Americans (18%) and Ukrainians (14%), in the opinion of respondents, demonstrate the least friendly attitude to Russia.

* the answer 'Neither friendly nor unfriendly' is not presented in this diagram

Diagram 2 Could you please describe the attitude of ordinary citizens of these states to Russia?

% of all the respondents, one answer per line*

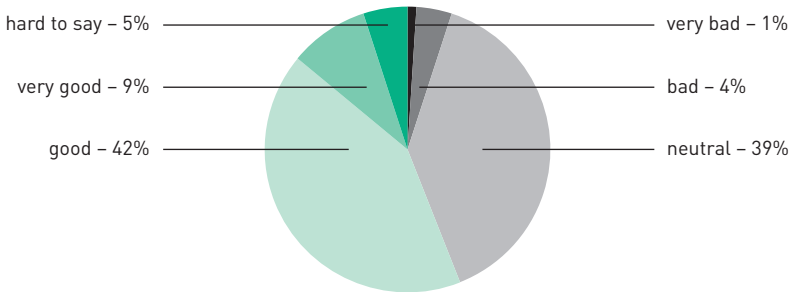


In general, residents of the Kaliningrad region assign 3.5 scores out of a five-score scale

when describing relations between Russia and Poland.

Diagram 3 Could you please describe current Polish-Russian relations?

% of respondents, one answer



In general, half of the respondents (51%) evaluate relations between the states as good and very good. Notably, one in ten believes they are very good. 39% of the respondents assess mutual relations as neutral. As little as 5% of the survey participants report their negative nature.

As the conducted research shows, female participants are more inclined to observe a positive tinge to the relations between the two countries: 55% of women versus 44% of men call them good or very good. The same assessment is typical of young people aged 18–24 (63%).

* the answer 'Neither friendly nor unfriendly' is not presented in this diagram

Table 1 Could you please describe current Polish-Russian relations?
% of all the respondents, one answer

	Total	Gender		Age				
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-59	60 and older
very bad	1	2	0	1	2	1	2	0
bad	4	5	4	5	4	6	2	4
neutral	39	44	35	27	35	36	44	48
good	42	37	45	57	44	43	38	32
very good	9	7	10	6	12	8	8	8
hard to say	5	5	6	3	3	6	6	8

Survey data are confirmed by the information collected during focus groups as regards the assessment of the nature of relations between the countries. Discussion participants noted their generally neutral and positive tinge as well as positive dynamics of their changes.

It is noteworthy that assessments of the trend in relations between Russia and Poland differ when looked at from different angles: assessments of interpersonal relations (from the standpoint of an ordinary person) are viewed positively and fairly softly, while at the interstate level the relations are more decisive and are considered rather negatively. Thus, discussion participants note that a positive development of the situation as regards interrelation between the states could be observed following changes in the office of the president. According to respondents, mass media which report on joint undertakings, cultural and sporting events are the catalyst for the improvement of the situation.

In the course of focus-group interviews one could clearly see differences in opinion on Russian-Polish relations in the older age group. Discussion participants aged 45–55 negatively assessed bilateral contacts explaining it, in the first place, by the fact that the Polish authorities carry out pro-American policy which is a priori targeted against Russia.

The viewpoint that interaction between the two countries is of purely pragmatic, economic nature, was repeatedly emphasized: Poland profits

from the sale of its goods while residents of the Kaliningrad region receive cheap goods.

► *I don't think this is some plus or minus in relations, it's just a cold calculation, that's it. (Male, 44 years old)*

► *They are definitely changing for the better. At least this is what they say from the screen, we are shown that, how everybody smiles and says that our relations are better, you see, cards are introduced, and other things, and they're coming to us. We meet, we forget some offences, we try to agree, a dialogue has started. (Female, 27 years old)*

► *It seems to me that there is no animosity among ordinary people. (Male, 38 years old)*

► *They're now neutral but in the days of Kaczynsky they were simply hostile. Now Kaczynsky is not in power and it's much better in this respect. (Male, 34 years old)*

To improve relations between Poland and Russia in the regional dimension the following measures were suggested by participants in discussions:

► To organise large-scale (theatre, music) festivals, fairs

► To promote the region (as a tourist destination)

► To organise 'The Polish Day'

- ▶ To celebrate the Midsummer Day which is present in cultures of both countries
- ▶ To organise exchanges in different areas: education, employment
- ▶ *To achieve the same level of tourism, service, so that they want to visit us. (Female, 45 years old)*
- ▶ *Employee exchange. Like sharing experience. To gain some experience and improve relations. In general, there will only be positive results. (Female, 19 years old)*
- ▶ *Some Russian-Polish fairs. To show them our culture. So that they show us their culture. Sharing traditions. (Male, 22 years old)*
- ▶ *To make good roads that you can really drive and to create hotels with normal prices. And the quality and prices of these hotels should be comparable with Polish hotels. (Male, 50 years old)*

2. Attitudes to Poles

The research has shown an elevated level of tolerance towards representatives of Polish nationality among residents of the Kaliningrad region. Compared to attitudes of respondents to Lithuanians and Ukrainians, Poles are in the middle. A high level of tolerance among respondents can be observed in relation to representatives of Ukrainian nationality.

As regards the detailed study of attitudes to representatives of Polish nationality among respondents, the majority of residents of the

Kaliningrad region (78%) would wish to see them as their friends. Nearly three quarters (70%) consider the possibility of being their neighbours, 69% do not see reasons why they should be refused a residence permit in Russia. 67% can well imagine a representative of Polish nationality as their family member and another 66% of respondents entertain a possibility of living in the same neighbourhood. 58% believe that Poles are entitled to the Russian citizenship. 59% of respondents regard them as guests, tourists.

Table 2 Could you please tell to what extent the following statements correspond with your view as regards representatives of Polish nationality?*

% of all the respondents, one answer

	Poles	Lithuanians	Ukrainians
I do not mind them holding a residence permit in Russia	69	63	74
I would like them to come to Russia only as guests, tourists	59	53	41
I do not mind them having the right to hold the Russian citizenship	58	59	71
I do not mind them living in our neighbourhood	66	66	76
I do not mind them being my neighbours	70	68	77
I do not mind them becoming my friends	78	73	79
I do not mind them becoming members of my family (e.g. via marriage)	67	63	75

* The question assumed an option 'hard to say' yet results calculated without a 'hard-to-say' option are provided in the above table

The analysis of focus-group interviews has shown that residents of Kaliningrad treat Poles benevolently but with caution. Thus, respondents can easily think of a representative of Polish nationality as their superior. However, the possibility of friendship or marriage with a Pole is not frequently considered. Some of the discussion participants hold a neutral position in this regard explaining that for them nationality is of no importance in such instances.

► *I believe it's essential since the countries are so close, they have to be in contact, go on somehow. (Man, 34 years old)*

► *You can, of course. Since, it seems to me, if a Pole is your superior, he could be better than your previous Russian boss. (Female, 18 – 24)*

► *It seems to me that to be friends with them – not really. In every country, in every city people, a native of Poland would have his/her own mindset. That is, us here, in Kaliningrad, we are raised in such a way that we look at certain things calmly and emotionally – at some other. In certain areas there will be not enough mutual understanding. (Female, 18 – 24)*

The most common associations that can be observed among residents of the Kaliningrad region when they hear the word 'Poland' are

related to trade in various goods. Thus, 'good products, shopping' were named by 13% of respondents (the most common association), 'cheap foodstuffs' – 10%, 'trade' – 3%. Tourist attractiveness of Poland for residents of the Kaliningrad region seems obvious, since 8% associate this country with 'leisure' and another 8% – with 'tourism'.

Associations based on the territorial proximity of the states are also quite popular. 9% of survey participants named 'neighbours' and 2% – 'the border state' as associated with the word 'Poland'.

Character traits of Poles were mentioned in such associations as 'friendliness' – 8%, 'industry' – 2%. Living conditions and urban infrastructure formed the basis for such analogies with the word 'Poland' as 'cleanliness and order' (6%), 'prosperity and better living conditions' (3%), 'good roads' (2%).

Common positive associations were expressed by 12% of respondents.

Common negative associations were reported by 1%. 'Treachery and deception' were mentioned by 3% while 'bad attitude to residents of Russia' – 2%.

Diagram 4 What associations do you have when hearing the word 'Poland'?**Name three associations.***% of all the respondents, any number of answers***Character traits of Poles as perceived by residents of the Kaliningrad region**

As the results of the qualitative research have shown, residents of Kaliningrad form their opinions about Poles mainly based on interpersonal relations or experience of family and friends. Stereotypical views or historically formed images were expressed only in a number of cases. Such traits as hospitality, industry and discipline were noted by almost all the participants in focus groups. Among positive character traits good manners, openness and determination were also indicated.

► *They're hard-working. Because they have really well-maintained houses and production, it is not like ours. (Female, 38 years old)*

► *They're law-abiding. Let's say you're crossing the street: you can cross it anywhere. And they can do it only in a clearly designated place on a pedestrian crossing. (Female, 23 years old)*

► *They're smiling and very sweet and nice people. (Male, 50 years old)*

► *Indeed, they've got a lot of positive traits. They behave very well on roads. All the roads are very clean. Everything's fine, and they*

make way. There's a lot of mutual politeness. (Male, 40 years old)

The most common opinion about Poles' negative traits is related to their negative attitude to Russians. Another negative characteristic of the Polish character mentioned by participants of focus groups – deceit and venality. Haughtiness and unwillingness to speak Russian even if they know the language were also mentioned.

► *They don't like Russians. As regards their attitude, it's a well-known fact, many people dealing with each other have deduced that they don't like Russians. They're aggressive towards them*

when we're on the territory of Poland and not here. (Female, 33 years old)

► *There are jokes that a Pole will buy and sell anything. That is, that he's so venal, and the words of Lenin are quoted that he is a political prostitute because he is siding with one or the other. This stereotype means that Poland and its people will always side with those who're stronger. (Male, 50 years old)*

► *There's a yet another stereotype about a Polish worker who goes to England or Italy to work and half of Poles are already working there. (Male, 40 years old)*

3. Local Border Traffic

The overwhelming majority of residents of the Kaliningrad region (86%) have heard about Local Border Traffic. Men (91%) as well as respondents aged 25–59 (91–92%) report that more often. The higher the level of education of respondents, the more they tend to emphasize that they are aware of Local Border Traffic: 52–59% of respondents with the low level of education versus 95% of the

highly educated. Young people aged 18–24 (77%) and pensioners (75%) are least knowledgeable about it.

95% of those who have heard about Local Border Traffic are aware of the simplified procedures of crossing the state border between Russia and Poland operating since July 2012.

Diagram 5 Have you heard about Local Border Traffic between Poland and Russia?
% of all the respondents, one answer

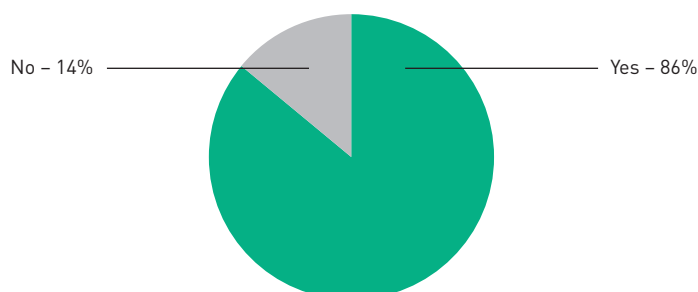


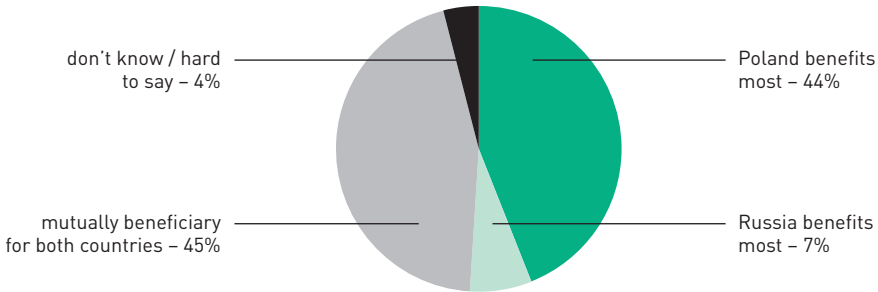
Table 3 Have you heard about Local Border Traffic between Poland and Russia?
% of all the respondents, one answer

	Total	Gender		Age				
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-59	60 and older
Yes	86	91	82	77	92	91	92	75
No	14	9	18	23	8	9	8	25

Opinions of survey participants as regards the fact who benefits more from Local Border Traffic – Russia or Poland – are divided: 45% of respondents believe that it is beneficiary for both

parties. 44% believe that Poland profits most from new regulations. As little as 7% present the viewpoint that it is beneficiary for Russia. One in twenty claims that it is hard to say.

Diagram 6 In your opinion, Poland or Russia benefits most from Local Border Traffic?
% of all the respondents aware of Local Border Traffic, one answer



The analysis of focus-group discussions has shown that the benefit from Local Border Traffic for Poland seems most obvious to respondents. The main advantage is economic development of the country since residents of the Kaliningrad region travel for the purpose of shopping in large numbers. The possibility to buy cheap fuel is considered yet another benefit for Poland.

As for Russia, it benefits from Local Border Traffic less compared to Poland. Almost all discussion participants stated that the Kaliningrad region experiences a large outflow of finance due to the new simplified procedures of border-crossing. This, in turn, damages the economy of the region.

► *The economy of Poland should grow at a pace of many-many percent while the economy of Kaliningrad should fall. (Female, 33 years old)*

► *The money goes – it's bad. I believe that everybody would buy products here if there were any. (Male, 30 years old)*

► *Let's say, since many people cannot afford the Schengen visa, they can afford these 'sau-sage' cards as they're called now. (Female, 42 years old)*

If we were to discuss specific advantages and disadvantages of Local Border traffic for Russia, focus-group participants outlined the following:

Advantages for Russia

- The possibility to buy cheaper foodstuffs
- Access to high-quality leisure for low-income categories of the population
- Contact with culture

Disadvantages for Russia

- Damage to the economy of the region

The results of the quantitative survey confirm this opinion. Residents of the Kaliningrad region told about the following positive aspects of Local Border Traffic for Russians: an opportunity to buy cheaper goods (65%), a simplified mode of tourist travel (36%), interactions between Poles and Russians (9%), contact with Polish culture (8%).

► *I save more than 300 bucks a month. Isn't this money? (Female, 37 years old)*

► *Indeed, of course, should you have no Schengen visa, you can at least travel around border areas of Poland as a tourist. (Female, 48 years old)*

► *Go to Gdansk over the weekend, take a walk, arrive, take a walk around Gdansk, stay*

overnight, go sightseeing and then go home, as simple as that. Excellent. (Female, 45 years old)

The most popular goods brought by residents of the region from Poland include foodstuffs (67%), fast moving consumer goods (20%), clothing and footwear (6%).

Diagram 7 In your opinion, how do Russians benefit from Local Border Traffic with Poland?
% of respondents aware of Local Border Traffic, any number of answers

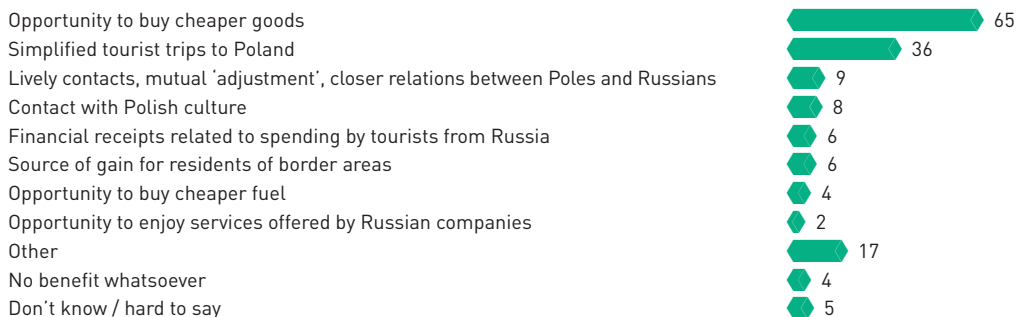


Diagram 8 What cheaper goods can Russians buy in Poland?
% of respondents who believe that Russians have the opportunity to buy cheaper goods, one answer



Benefits for Poles as regards Local Border Traffic in the opinion of residents of the Kaliningrad region include mainly financial receipts from Russian tourists (47%) and the opportunity to buy cheaper fuel in Russia (30%). A simplified mode of tourist trips to Russia is regarded an advantage by every fifth respondent (20%) while another 19% believe that residents of border areas in Poland have the opportunity to earn some money thanks to Local Border Traffic.

The same positive aspects for Poles party were mentioned by interviewees during focus-group discussions, too.

► *Their children are now visiting us for competitions and concerts and with dance performances, they participate in contests. Their relatives come here, too, to visit their relatives. (Female, 55 years old)*

► *This is a cognitive interest, since many were even afraid in the beginning to go to our region, as they thought that this was a country of drunk bears with balalaikas. And when they arrive they can see that normal people live here. (Male, 36 years old)*

► *It is very beneficial for Poland as we are bringing money there in flows. (Female, 55 years old)*

According to respondents, goods that are most popular among Poles include cigarettes (21%), alcohol (6%), petrol (5%). Another 4% indicated money.

Diagram 9 In your opinion, how do Poles benefit from Local Border Traffic with the Kaliningrad region?

% of respondents aware of Local Border Traffic, any number of answers

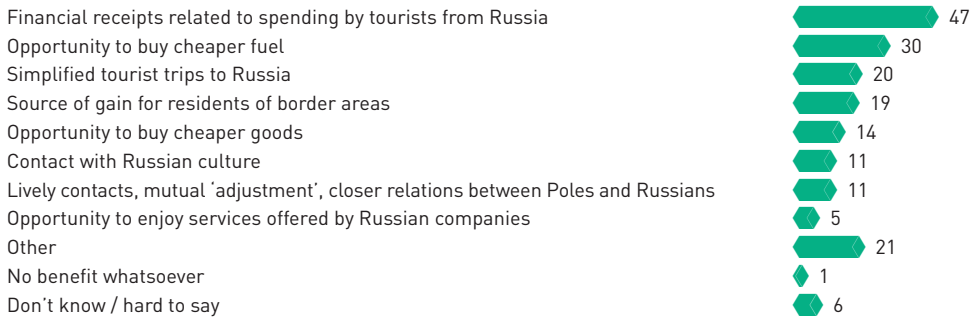


Diagram 10 What cheaper goods can Poles buy in the Kaliningrad region?

% of respondents who believe that Poles have the opportunity to buy cheaper goods, one answer



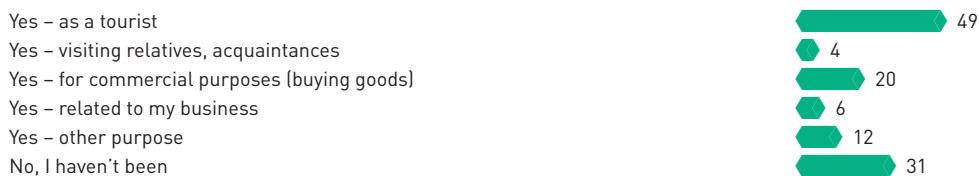
4. Visits to Poland by residents of the Kaliningrad region

The results of the survey among residents of the Kaliningrad region have shown that more than one third of respondents (69%) aware of Local Border Traffic have been to the border areas of Poland. Half of the survey participants aware of Local Border Traffic (49%) visited Poland as

tourists. Every fifth respondent (20%) visited this country for commercial reasons – to buy goods. 6% – for business, 4% – to visit relatives or acquaintances. 31% of respondents have never been to Poland.

Diagram 11 Have you ever been to the areas of Poland bordering Russia? If so, what was the purpose of the trip?

% of respondents aware of Local Border Traffic procedures, several answer options



Poland was visited by 36% of residents of the Kaliningrad region aware of Local Border Traffic during the last month (before the survey). This being said, one in ten went on such a trip during the last week before the survey. The most frequent visitors to the neighbouring state (who travelled for the last time within the last month) are men (38%) and respondents aged 25 – 44 (41 – 45%).

14% of survey participants crossed the Polish border within the last three months for the last time; 8% – within half a year, 11% – within the last year.

In total, 69% of residents of the Kaliningrad region aware of Local Border Traffic made at least one trip to Poland within the last year.

Diagram 12 When were you in the areas of Poland bordering Russia for the last time?
% of respondents who have visited Poland, one answer

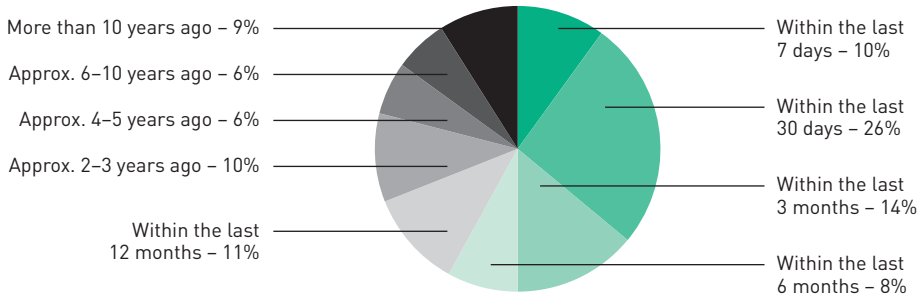


Table 4 When were you in the areas of Poland bordering Russia for the last time?
% of respondents, one answer

	Total	Gender		Age				
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-59	60 and older
Within the last 7 days	10	10	11	4	12	17	11	4
Within the last 30 days	26	28	23	32	29	28	25	10
Within the last 3 months	14	14	14	19	16	14	10	11
Within the last 6 months	8	6	10	3	11	11	7	9
Within the last 12 months	11	11	11	9	10	12	16	3
Approximately 2-3 years ago	10	12	8	13	10	7	7	17
Approximately 4-5 years ago	6	5	8	6	5	7	5	12
Approximately 6-10 years ago	6	6	6	6	4	3	6	14
More than 10 years ago	9	8	10	8	4	2	13	21

More than a half of respondents crossing the border with Poland during the last year went on a trip in line with the Local Border Traffic simplified procedures (55%). 45% of respondents

travelled under different terms. Village dwellers travelled under the Local Border Traffic terms more often (67%) compared to city inhabitants.

Diagram 13 Have you crossed the border with Poland in line with the simplified procedures of Local Border Traffic?
% of those aware of Local Border Traffic, one answer

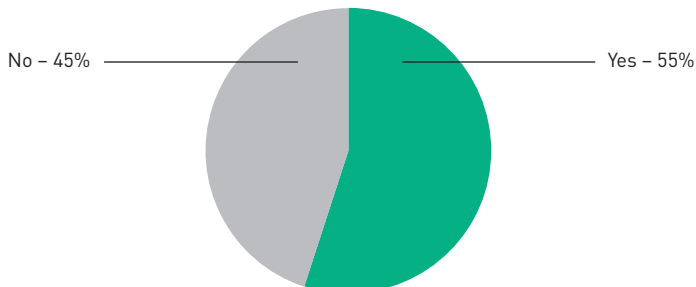


Table 5 Have you crossed the border with Poland in line with the simplified procedures of Local Border Traffic?
% of those aware of Local Border Traffic, one answer

	Total	Type of settlement		
		Kaliningrad	City and urban-type settlement	Village
Yes	55	51	51	67
No	45	49	49	33

Residents of the Kaliningrad region who visited Poland last year were most impressed by cleanliness and order, which was reported by 15% of respondents. Affability and benevolence of people were noted by 12% of respondents. Almost every tenth participant in the survey outlined such a positive characteristic of the country as high-quality service (8%), another 8% emphasized the beauty of architecture and cities. The country's culture was highly appreciated by 8% of respondents. Another 7% of respondents were satisfied with leisure, and 6% – with fast border-crossing. 13% of visitors enjoyed everything.

The analysis of focus-group interviews has also revealed a relatively high level of attractiveness of trips to Poland among residents of Kaliningrad. All focus-group participants gave a positive feedback on the experience of travel to this country. A positive impression is mainly cast by a high level of service as well as prices of both tourist facilities, urban and rural infrastructure. The attitude of Poles to newcomers, their hospitality and affability are quite highly appreciated by visitors. It is noteworthy that virtually all the respondents indicated a positive impact of an

experienced trip to the country on the image of Poland and Poles, together with an increased desire to go back there.

► *I really enjoyed it. When you're on a journey everybody smiles there. As if you didn't go somewhere far away but stayed at your place, here, in Kaliningrad. Everything is normal. Here people don't smile when you walk down the street. And there people smile at you as if you were at home. (Female, 20 years old)*

► *You leave and that's it, nature is totally different, different buildings. Everything is very clean, good, beautiful. There was nothing negative. All Poles speak in a friendly manner. (Female, 34 years old)*

► *Their fields are all sown. You come over here and there are bare fields and trees. They've got crops and they are harvesting. (Female, 19 years old)*

► *My attitude has only improved, the more I interact with them, they're all so nice, that's why you've got good impressions in the country, too. (Male, 51 years old)*

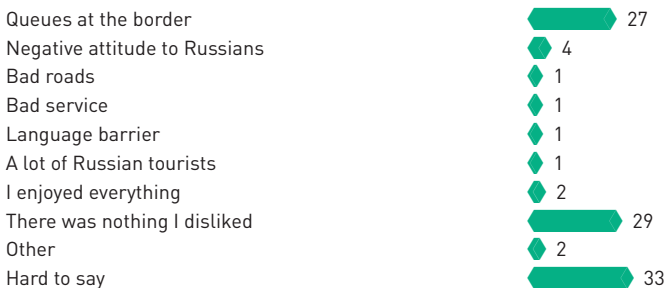
Diagram 14 What did you enjoy during your trip to Poland?
% of respondents who have ever travelled to border areas in Poland



Shortcomings noticed by residents of the region during their last trip to Poland include queues at the border (27%). 4% report a negative attitude to Russian citizens. In total, 29% of visitors could not notice anything negative.

► *The only thing it was bad attitude in grocery stores. They've had enough of us there. I wasn't there at 7 am at a grocery store at the border but our people would be sitting there, waiting for the store to open, and when Polish grannies from the local town come there, the shelves are already empty'. (Female, 42 years old)*

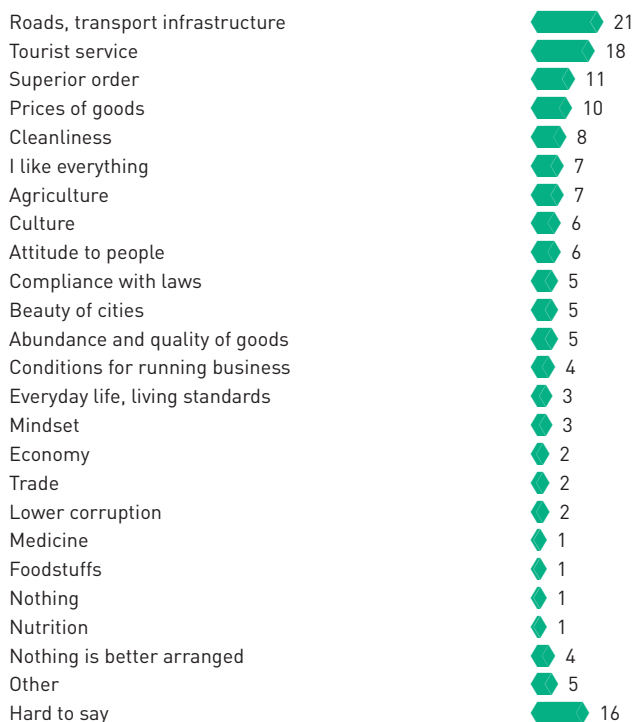
Diagram 15 What did you dislike during your trip to Poland?
% of respondents who have ever travelled to border areas in Poland



In the opinion of residents of Kaliningrad who travelled to Poland during the last year, transport infrastructure is most impressive (21%). A quarter note an obvious advantage of the Polish tourist service (18%). Another 11% of respondents indicate that order is superior in Poland compared to Russia, 10% outline the prices of goods.

Almost one in ten (8%) regards cleanliness as an advantage. 7% of respondents expressed their view that the development of agriculture is more advanced in Poland. 6% emphasized rich culture. 5% believe that compliance with laws is an important advantage.

Diagram 16 In your opinion, what is better arranged in Poland compared to Russia?
% of respondents who have ever travelled to border areas in Poland



In general, in the eyes of residents of the Kaliningrad region, Poland is most attractive in terms of consumer services: purchase of goods at competitive prices and catering. Thus, as a place where one can buy different goods at competitive prices, Poland was ranked high by 82% of respondents. As a place where one can have a good and tasty meal – 81%. Tourist attractions are highly appreciated by 75% of respondents, the level of cultural events – by 63%. As little as nearly one third of residents of the

region highly assessed Poland as a place to do business.

► *Some go fetch clothes, medicine, everything is cheaper there. (Female, 33 years old)*

► *I was there two months ago, too, and I also enjoyed it. I bought some items for myself, foodstuffs. I went around the old town. Elblag, it is made to resemble Gdansk. They're building houses in the old style. (Male, 44 years old)*

Table 6 From your own experience or experience of your family and friends could you please assess attractiveness of Poland from different angles?
% of respondents on each item, one answer

	Tourist attractions	A place where one can buy various goods at competitive prices	A place to do business	A place where you can have a good and tasty meal	A place where numerous cultural events take place
Very low attractiveness	2	1	3	1	2
Low attractiveness	1	1	3	2	2
Average attractiveness	14	5	12	5	9
Attractiveness above average	37	29	18	31	29
Very high attractiveness	38	53	12	47	34
Hard to say/ no answer	7	10	52	14	25

Travel to border areas in Poland by residents of the region is fairly widespread. Thus, as accounted by respondents, 82% personally know people who crossed the border with Poland to do shopping last year. Another three quarters told

that there were individuals among their family and friends who travelled there as tourists. 55% report having acquaintances who benefit from cheaper goods from this country. 53% travel to Poland with a different purpose.

Diagram 17 Do you personally know somebody who ... during the last 12 months?
% of respondents at each item, one answer



5. Visits to the Kaliningrad region by Poles

As the results of the conducted research have shown, that 43% of residents of the region saw cars with Polish licence plates last month. This is reported by an equal number of men and women, and there are no differences depending on age and level of education among those who state it.

A little more than a quarter of respondents (27%) came across guests from the neighbouring country. As little as 12% of respondents entered into interactions with Polish newcomers.

In the course of focus-group interviews a tendency towards a decrease in the number of newcomers from Poland to the Kaliningrad region was identified, compared to the 1990s and early 2000s. The main traffic of Poles in the region can be observed in border settlements visited only in order to buy inexpensive fuel. They relatively rarely travel to the region for tourist purposes. There is also a group of visitors from Poland who arrive for educational, sports and cultural reasons, yet this is a fairly narrow circle of people.

As for the age of visitors, virtually all the focus groups emphasized a high proportion of newcomers above 50, they visit tourist attractions and health resorts more often. The youth are quite often encountered, too, when they visit their friends or participate in educational or sporting events. People in their middle age (35–50) more frequently visit border settlements (for the purchase of petrol).

► *You could hear the Polish language here more in the past. (Female, 55 years old)*

► *Previously they used to buy vodka from us, too, but nowadays it is cheaper there than here (Male, 40 years old)*

► *I think there is simply no point for Poles to do business here, as it is easier for them to work in civilised countries of the European Union than in Russia where you pay huge taxes for small business. This is why all of our enterprises are closed down because of these huge taxes. This is why there is no point in bringing their commodities here. (Male, 36 years old)*

► *You can see them very rarely here, their number has shrunk. Mainly near the border. In the direction of Mamonovo, Bagrationovsk. (Male, 42 years old)*

► *So, in my opinion, they have no interest in our region nowadays. Back then, when in 1990 they came here, they bought sour cream in three-litre jars, honey, pots, kettles, if anybody remembers – the basic things like water-heaters. Then there was interest. Many of them can still remember Russian from those days. (Female, 34 years old)*

► *Let me put it this way: recently our prices have grown considerably. Poles are very thrifty, that's why there are fewer of them. (Female, 38 years old)*

► *A lot of our students study in Poland. They learn Polish for half a year intentionally and live in a Polish family in order to enter the university there in Warsaw or Gdansk because they can study there free of charge. (Female, 55 years old)*

If we compare the number of guests to the Kaliningrad region from different states, respondents most often come across elderly Germans who travel to historically German areas. There are a little more Poles in the region than Lithuanians, as assessed by discussion participants. However, nearly all the respondents notice a declining tendency in the number of guests from other countries.

► *And Germans come over here exactly because of historical sites. (Male, 34 years old)*

► *Previously you would be walking around Svetlogorsk and constantly running into elderly Germans. Every summer I am on vacation somewhere at our seaside. And now there are fewer of them and fewer and fewer. (Female, 38 years old)*

Reasons behind Poles' rare visits to the Kaliningrad region

When considering reasons for the diminishing number of visitors from the neighbouring state, discussion participants outlined, in the first place, high prices of everything (accommodation, meals, travel service), poor condition of historical monuments as well as a low level of service. It was somewhat suggested that Poles are afraid to cross the border with the region because of the risks related to criminality.

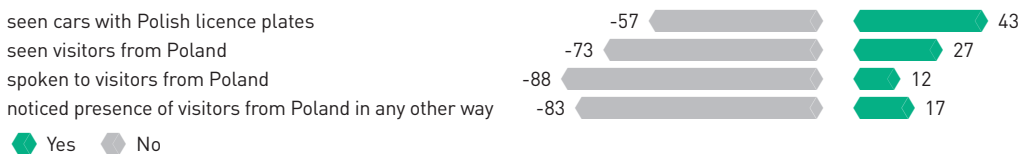
► *We have everything neglected, and all the monuments are neglected. (Female, 55 years old)*

► *I'd like to add, one of the reasons why they come here rarely, they're afraid of criminality. I spoke to a Pole. And he put it frankly: we're afraid of criminality. (Male, 44 years old)*

► *Here, starting with meals, going to a shop and taking a rest, the level of prices is much higher than there in Poland. (Female, 30 years old)*

► *Kaliningrad is totally unsettled, not ready but prices are as if you had everything built almost at the world level. In Europe prices are higher but service is higher there, too. (Male, 34 years old)*

Diagram 18 Have you ... over the last 30 days?
% of respondents at every item, one answer



Necessary measures to attract visitors from Poland

Discussion participants suggested quite a diverse array of measures to increase the number of guests from Poland. In particular, the most

important thing to be done is to increase the level and decrease the cost of tourist services (catering, hotels, visiting historic sites, etc.). Respondents also consider it important to restore the monuments of architecture and historical sites. Infrastructure of settlements also

requires modernisation, which covers the repair of roads, facades, putting arable areas in order.

► *The crux of the matter – to offer affordable prices. Because here in Svetlogorsk we've got really exorbitant prices in hotels. (Female, 45 years old)*

► *Should Poles decide to come to our Kaliningrad region all of a sudden as tourists, hypothetically you could imagine that it would be an incentive to restore all the abandoned ancient castles. However, it seems to me, that first of all you should renovate infrastructure and only then Poles are going to come to us. (Male, 36 years old)*

► *I believe you have to attract them, since in the area of tourism this would be advantageous for the Kaliningrad region one way or another, should you attract them, but what shall be the methods? Our legislation, it scares all countries. (Male, 34 years old)*

► *We have so many of these abandoned forts, the state doesn't allow to do anything there.*

Let's have a look at Lithuania, they have a museum made in such a fort. It is just like ours but here you're not allowed to arrange it. (Female, 42 years old)

► *Nothing. Because, let's say, it makes no sense whatsoever for them to invest in the Kaliningrad region. Here, as tourist business for them, there's really nothing for them to see, pure and simple. (Male, 28 years old)*

► *Something not for the older but for the younger generation in particular, so that they find it interesting here. Some entertainment complexes. (Female, 19 years old)*

► *I think that for elderly people it is necessary, first of all, to enrol smart guides who will be able to make this tour and answer all the questions in their native language so that they feel themselves more at ease. (Male, 20 years old)*

► *And all the agriculture has run wild, mind you. While you go from Bagrationovsk to Kaliningrad. Sheer wild grass. (Male, 42 years old)*

Notes

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This report attempts to answer the question of how the residents of the Kaliningrad region evaluate the Russian-Polish relations and what impact on this assessment had the introduction in June 2012 of simplified procedure of Local Border Traffic between the border areas of both

countries. Quantitative and qualitative studies have been conducted by a Russian public opinion research center WCIOM in January 2014 that is a year and a half after new rules for traveling were introduced.



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