

Central and East European Ethnicity in Canada:

Adaptation and Preservation



**CENTRAL AND EAST EUROPEAN ETHNICITY IN CANADA:
ADAPTATION AND PRESERVATION**

T. Yedlin, Editor

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

W.S. Tarnopolsky, University of Ottawa, <i>The Effect of Section 27 on the Interpretation of the Charter</i>	1
Leszek A. Kosiński, University of Alberta, <i>Immigration from East Central Europe to Canada, 1956-80</i>	9
Richard Baird, University of Alberta, <i>The State and Value of Central and Eastern European Groups and Cultures in Canada</i>	25
Bernard Rochet, University of Alberta, <i>Psycholinguistic Implications of Teaching Heritage Languages at Home and at School</i> ,	35
Robert L. Busch and Alexander Tumanov, University of Alberta, <i>Edmonton's Elderly Soviet Immigrants</i>	43
Martin L. Kovacs, University of Regina, <i>New Settlers on the Prairie Problems of Adaptation</i>	63
Alexander J. Matejko, University of Alberta, <i>Polish Canadians in the 1980's: Issues and Problems</i>	87
Warren E. Kalbach and Madeline A. Richard, University of Toronto, <i>Ethnic-Connectedness: How Binding is the Tie?</i>	99
John de Vries, Carleton University, <i>Explorations in the Demography of Language and Ethnicity: The Case of Ukrainians in Canada</i>	111
Robert H. Keyserlingk, University of Ottawa, <i>Which Fatherland in War? The Canadian Governments View of German Canadian Loyalties in World War Two</i>	133

EDMONTON'S ELDERLY SOVIET IMMIGRANTS:

Organization and Follow-up Study

Robert L. Busch and Alexander Tumanov

University of Alberta

I. Organization

Research has shown that immigrants from the Soviet Union who came to Canada and the United States recently are not a homogeneous group. In spite of the commonality of their background, they can be differentiated by a whole series of features: education, age, geographical provenience, the reasons for emigrating from the USSR, religious aspirations; and so on.¹ This probably explains why efforts to create a more or less stable permanent organization for recent Soviet immigrants have, as a rule, failed.

There is but one group of immigrants for whom the above-mentioned features do not appear to have any overriding importance. These are the senior citizens or those close to being so, a group of Soviet immigrants who have been almost totally ignored by scholarly literature devoted to the latest wave of Soviet immigration. This paper is intended to contribute to redressing the situation. It focuses on: 1) the organization of a Senior Citizens' club for the Soviet elderly; 2) the results of confidential questionnaires completed by club members some 15 months later; 3) the results of interviews with the same group at approximately the same time.

Soviet immigrants aged 60 years or more can be distinguished by the following common characteristics and needs:

1. *Special, age-related needs connected with the learning of English.* Here, one is often confronted with a complete inability to communicate in English.²
2. *A sharp drop in activity-level compared with life in the USSR.* This reduction in activity, which is often tied to the cessation of work and previous routine social activities, can be painfully magnified by the inability to use English.
3. *The loss of economic independence.* As a rule, elderly Soviet immigrants to Canada turn out to be dependent on their children, regardless of whether or not they actually live with them. Feelings of inadequacy relatable to the absence of personal income are apt to develop.³
4. *Isolation from the world at large.* This is forcefully brought home by the senior immigrants' radical break with circles of close friends and companions of a similar age. Unlike the case with seniors under normal circumstances, elderly immigrants do not experience a gradual narrowing of their circle of friends and companions of a similar age, but rather a sudden sense of emptiness.

The general needs and problems of the elderly Soviet immigrants serve to erase or reduce sharply the cultural and social differences which existed prior to their emigration. In part, this encouraged the authors of this study to pursue the idea of creating a club for Edmonton's elderly Soviet immigrants.

The idea first arose in the fall of 1982 and stemmed from the "Over 50" club which had been founded in the late 1970s for an analogous group of Soviet immigrants in Toronto. The Toronto club started with just 10 members, but within a five year period some 300 people participated in its activities. The need for a similar Edmonton club was experienced by younger Soviet immigrants who had elderly parents living with them. Their parents had shown how difficult it was for older immigrants to adapt meaningfully to their new environment under ordinary circumstances. Notwithstanding healthy relationships within their families and a materially wholesome environment in Canada, the elderly members of the household were too confined and inactive.

From the outset, a fundamental idea for the seniors' club was that it not be created and managed by younger people, but rather that it be formed and managed by the elderly themselves. The activity of the club was envisaged as a series of undertakings demanded by the club's own pro-active membership.

At first, the idea of founding a club which was to be supported by the overall Jewish community in Edmonton met with a considerable amount of scepticism both among recent Jewish immigrants and among Canadian Jews. Younger Soviet immigrants gave it little or no chance. Their scepticism was presumably based upon unsuccessful attempts at forming all-inclusive associations for other Soviet-Jewish immigrants. Some members of Edmonton's Jewish community considered that the formation of a Russian club would hinder the integration of its participants into the life of the community, thereby setting back their adaptation still further. Fortunately, experience has shown such scepticism to be groundless.

After preliminary consultations with groups who could help support the activities of the club (e.g., The Jewish Federation, the Department of Slavic and East European Studies at the University of Alberta),⁴ the principles governing the work and the structure of the future club were elaborated. Its structure calls for a managing body headed by a president. Seven coordinators are chosen to assure close communication with the club members regarding all activities under preparation. Coordinators are expected to maintain personal contacts in order to ascertain the needs of individual members. The overall concept calls for the work to be distributed among members of a management group who, by working through the coordinators, attempt to get as many regular club members as possible directly involved. During the founding process, the fundamental focus was on the actual composition of the club's activities which were to be held either at the Jewish Citizens' Drop-in Centre or at the Jewish Community Centre.

These included:

1. English lessons
2. Lectures on:
 - a) International events
 - b) Events in Canada
 - c) Literature and art
3. Amateur concerts
4. Films
5. Excursions in Edmonton and Alberta at large
6. Expansion of the existing library at the Jewish Citizens' Drop-in Centre
7. Celebration of birthday parties
8. Dances

In the late fall of 1982 this plan for the creation of the club was presented to an assembly of elderly people who then took over the initiative for founding the club. Jewish Family Services provided the organizers with a list of some 30 names, addresses, and telephone numbers which was subsequently augmented considerably. The first major organizational meeting was attended by 50 prospective members who, after proposing additional activities⁵, enthusiastically adopted the plan for organizing the club.

It was then decided to send to potential participants letters announcing a formal organizational meeting involving:

1. The further elaboration of the proposed club's activities
2. Election of the club's executive board
3. Naming of the club
4. A concert

On Sunday, December 5, 1982 about 50 elderly people named the new organization "Club Shalom" and elected its Executive Board. A concert was given by younger members of the Russian-Jewish community, thus serving to emphasize that "Club Shalom" could become a bridge between "fathers and sons".⁶

At the organizational meeting many of those present named other parties who had not yet heard about the proposed club, so that 79 members enrolled at the club's grand opening in mid-January, 1983, an event celebrated by members of the Jewish community of Edmonton, by representatives of the provincial and federal governments, and by representatives of the University of Alberta.

Some 17 months later, "Club Shalom" is no longer a "gleam in the eye" but a reality which meets weekly. Membership currently stands at 87. The club applied for and received a grant of \$11,300 from the federally funded *New Horizons* program which provides seed monies to groups of elderly people who are organized for a common purpose.

"Club Shalom's" success enabled the authors to conduct a follow-up study focusing broadly on the immigration experiences of the elder Soviet immigrants in Edmonton. Additionally, we were able to obtain an evaluation of "Club Shalom's" activities. Our study used a pool of 43 immigrants with whom we conducted personal interviews in Russian. These lasted approximately thirty minutes each. The interviewees were also given questionnaires (in Russian) to complete confidentially before handing them in to an outside party for eventual return to the authors.

In assessing their findings, the authors have not felt obliged to comment on each question. A copy of the questionnaire, including the statistical results, is appended to the article. Where duplication between the questionnaire and the interviews existed (eg. the evaluation of "Club Shalom"), it was felt preferable to rely on the questionnaire which allowed time for greater reflection.⁷

II. Follow-up Study

Age, Education, Cultural Background

The group of émigrés from the Soviet Union who responded to the questionnaires consisted of 42 people (29 f, 12 m, and one person who did not indicate his/her sex) ranging in age from 50 to 75 years and older.⁸ The predominant age group was over 61 years — 33 people (23 f, 10 m) who made up 78% of all those surveyed. Of these, a large number (64% — 18 f, 9 m) were over pension age according to both Canadian and Soviet law, i.e. 66 years or older. Taking this group of old-age pensioners as a whole, the following distribution of age categories is obtained:

66–70 years old — 41%

71–75 years old — 26%

76 and over — 33%

Thus, the focus of our study was, for the most part, aged Soviet émigrés who have passed pension age, as well as a smaller group of men and women approaching this age.⁹

From the questionnaire it became clear that a significant number of the informants led an active life in the Soviet Union despite their advanced age.

The informants can be divided into two groups according to their level of education:

1. 43% (14 f / 4 m) completed secondary school only, so they are without a specialized education.
2. 50% (13 f / 8 m) have post-secondary specialized education.¹⁰

Of those surveyed 38% (14 f / 2 m) worked in the areas of teaching, medicine, science, or art, while 76% (17 f / 14 m) worked in one or more of the fields of industry, trade, or services.

The high percentage of people possessing a general secondary education, and particularly the large number of specialists, would indicate that before going on pension (and often right up to their very coming to Canada) the participants led an active working life from which they possibly derived satisfaction.

Almost half of those questioned (43% — 11 f / 7 m) were still working up to the time of emigration, while the remainder (57%) were receiving pension. Thus, it is possible to conclude that, when living in the USSR, all the informants were financially independent. Upon coming to Canada their financial situation abruptly changed: 83% questioned (27 f / 8 m) do not work and are dependent on help from their children or from the government. It is noteworthy here that to come to Canada all the elderly émigrés had to have their own children as guarantors, so for a period of 10 years they do not have the right to receive a Canadian pension.¹¹

An overwhelming number of the informants (90%) lived in Ukraine (57%), the RSFSR (21%), or in Belorussia (12%) — i.e. in republics where the Russian culture is predominant. Since the Russification of Ukraine and Belorussia is great, especially in the cities, it is not surprising that Russian language and culture are common to the whole group. However, 70% of the informants (the majority of these being from Ukraine or Belorussia) know Yiddish, which has probably helped to facilitate their relations with representatives of Edmonton's Jewish community.

Reasons for Leaving

Out of a whole number of reasons for leaving (economic, political, ethnic, religious, emigration of children and other relatives, etc.) the most compelling reason was emigration of children. Although 13 people indicated more than one reason for their departure, for 90% of the informants, emigration of children and other relatives was behind their decision to emigrate.

The predominance of familial reasons for emigrating was even greater in the *interviews* — 93%. Some insisted that this was indeed the sole reason, e.g.: "That was the only reason we left. We lived well in the USSR."

It is important to note here that for younger Soviet émigrés, the motivation for leaving was different. According to the data of I. Levkov, about 88% of younger émigrés, all of whom had job prospects, left the USSR in large part for political reasons: "The desire to live in a free country and to escape from Soviet antisemitism, especially in its official forms."¹² This type of motivation made the departure of the "young" an active step, while according to our investigation the emigration of the "elderly" usually involves passively following after their children.¹³ Only 14% of the elderly people interviewed named political reasons, 21% ethnic reasons, and all of 5% religious reasons. In most cases these reasons were given in combination with emigration of children and relatives. Thus, one could say that for the majority of those surveyed in this investigation, emigration lacked much personal impetus. It would seem likely that this, together with the

financial dependency caused by ineligibility for old-age pension, would significantly influence our group's evaluation of the immigration experience. However, both the questionnaires and interviews show their perception of their new way of life to be significantly more positive than might be expected.

Arrival in Canada

Upon arriving in Edmonton, the informants received help in settling down from one or more of various sources: 31% received help from children or relatives, while 57% were helped by Jewish Family Services, and 24% by federal and provincial organizations such as Canada Manpower and Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (EISA).¹⁴

For the majority (57%) this assistance continued for over one year during which there begins a gradual and often painful adaptation process. We will examine several aspects of the new living conditions to which immigrants must adapt, a very important one of these being housing.

Housing

According to the *interviews* 58% of those questioned live apart from their children. To the question "Would you like to rent an apartment separately from your children?", 64% of the questionnaire respondents answered affirmatively, 22% negatively, and 14% declined to answer (which almost certainly signifies a desire to live separately). Thus, it may be assumed that about 75% would like to live on their own, which means that 20-25% are not currently doing so for what are most likely financial and psychological reasons.

In the *interviews* the informants were asked how they participated in family life. Most of those who live with their children focused on their doing domestic chores, which sometimes involves looking after grandchildren and shopping. While the majority said they were comfortable, there were occasional signs of dissatisfaction and alienation (e.g. "Sometimes we go to the movies together, but I feel like I'm the odd man out.").

Medical Condition

Medical services are another important aspect of the living conditions of an elderly person. When asked in the *interviews* about the state of their health, only 30% answered that their health had deteriorated, while 42% saw no deterioration and 28% found an improvement in their health.

It is interesting to view the foregoing health picture in the light of questionnaire results. These show that over half of our informants have been hospitalized. Furthermore, they utilize medical services more often in Canada than they did in the USSR. Does this mean that they have a greater need for medical help? This is possible when one considers the amount of "stress" which is associated with emigration. One wonders if the general state of health of 28% of

the informants is really better. If so, it would be nice to think that it results from more effective medical aid combined with healthier living conditions.

Integration within the Local Jewish Community

Since the majority of the informants did not leave the USSR for ethnic or religious reasons, it is possible to surmise that a large number of them have experienced difficulties integrating within the local Jewish community. The questionnaires have shown the validity of such an assumption. When asked: Do you associate with *a*) immigrants from other countries? *b*) native Canadians? The majority (69%) answered "seldom" or "sometimes" to question *a*, while 26% declined to respond and 67% answered "seldom" or "sometimes" to question *b*, while 17% declined to respond. Upon arriving, the social contacts of the newcomers must have included, for the most part, members of Edmonton's Jewish community, i.e. those people who greeted Soviet émigrés and who took part in settling them. Questionnaire results make it equally clear that these contacts have not been significantly sustained at the personal level.

The English language obviously presents a very serious barrier to integration within the Jewish community. But additionally, one may surmise that even for those Soviet Jews who have sufficiently assimilated, being Jewish did not serve as a solid basis for the process of integration. While a knowledge of Yiddish is met sufficiently often among elderly Soviet émigrés (69%), and while a sense of ethnicity was heightened by the anti-semitism encountered in the USSR by 81%, the practice of religion in the USSR was minimal. Only 19% (7 f / 1 m) ever attended a synagogue before emmigration. In Canada 86% (25 f / 11 m) attend a synagogue sometimes, but only 7% (3 f) attend one regularly.

One may argue that the Soviet elderly's insufficient sense of religious community and its ignorance of both the English language and of North American culture have posed largely insurmountable obstacles to integration within the Jewish community.

Relations with Fellow Soviet Émigrés

In response to the question "Do you associate with immigrants from the USSR?" 12% answered negatively, 21% said "rarely", and 64% said "often". With whom do the elderly immigrants associate? Of those questioned 83% associate with their peers. It can be said with certainty that Club Shalom serves as a major source for these social contacts.

Club Shalom

Club Shalom is not only a place for weekly gatherings. Many people are indebted to the club for the starting up of personal friendships and contacts which are actively maintained within the club, for example, the interviewee who stated: "Until Club Shalom we were isolated from each other."

An evaluation of Club Shalom was an important objective of the questionnaires. In all of the responses to them there was not one negative evaluation of Club Shalom (although one person did perhaps express dissatisfaction by abstaining). A high evaluation of the club is given by the overwhelming majority of the informants: 83% gave the work of the club a "high/very high" rating, while 14% rated it as satisfactory. At the *interviews* one respondent spoke of being disenchanted with Club Shalom, but that view was heavily offset by positive remarks, e.g.: "I could not do without it. It's my sole source of contact with others." "Without it we'd all be lost." "It's been a bright spot in my life."

Further to the evaluation process club members were asked at the *interviews* to name the club functions they attended. Five respondents named diverse activities — birthday celebrations, talks on the international situation, concerts, etc. All but one of the remainder said they attend everything. When club members were asked which activities they preferred: 46.5% stated they liked everything about the same, but several types of activity were singled out in meaningful numbers: literary readings (31%); concerts (31%) and reports on the international situation (31%). A desire for increased activity in these and other areas (e.g. films)¹⁵ was expressed by a significant number.

Cultural Orientation

1. *Preservation of Ties with Russian Life and Culture*

Ties with Russian life and culture are maintained through many of Club Shalom's activities. However, the ties go much further. According to the questionnaire 83% are interested in events taking place in the USSR — these being followed on television by 50%, through the western press and mostly in Russian by 31%, on Russian-language radio by 22%, and through letters from the USSR by 19%. Only 12% find out about events through English-language radio. According to the *interviews* the relaying of news about international events within Club Shalom has become a very popular and important source of information about the 'Soviet Union.'¹⁶

2. *Familiarization with North-American Life and Culture*

One can assume that shopping, chance encounters, links with neighbours, and visits to the doctor and to government institutions help the elderly Soviet immigrants to become acquainted with the North-American way of life. According to the data gathered, television also plays a major role since 41% watch it for more than three hours a day, 33% for approximately two hours a day. On the average, each of those questioned spends a little over two hours a day in front of the t.v. set. The greatest popularity is enjoyed by the news 52% and by concerts, films and specials 69%. Besides familiarizing these émigrés with their new environment, t.v. also serves as a way to learn English.

Responses to questions about other forms of entertainment reflected a preference for concerts and movies, with relatively infrequent Russian films being watched 2-1 over their North-American counterparts. Since 38% gave no answer at all to these questions, one assumes that their only source of entertainment is television.

3. *Knowledge and Study of English*

The questionnaire responses overall indicate both a tendency to lean towards Russian culture, and a relatively limited knowledge of North-American culture. These result from a very poor command or no command at all of the English language.

Of all those surveyed, only one person knew a little English before leaving the Soviet Union. After arriving in Canada, 48% attended English lessons prior to the formation of Club Shalom. Currently, 60% study English — most of these through Club Shalom. This is undoubtedly an important step in the right direction, especially if one considers that many, perhaps most, of those who had previously studied English were no longer doing so. One may connect renewed interest in the study of English to Club Shalom's providing lessons conducted by a Russian-speaking instructor. Typically, many of those who began studying English upon arriving are continuing to do so now, but the number of people reporting no study of English has decreased from 38% to 26%.

How do those who have attended or who are attending English lessons evaluate their studies? Only two people were positive about the way they speak English ("fairly well"); 55% saw themselves as speaking it "poorly", and 36% "very poorly".

This generally negative self-evaluation by those questioned about their English sounds especially pessimistic if one takes into account the fact that 43% of the informants have already lived in Canada for more than three years, and 28.5% have been here for more than five years.

One is compelled to seek the reason for this sad state of affairs in the advanced age of the informants together with its attendant difficulties, limitations, and, often, insurmountable obstacles to the mastering of a new language. It was not by mere chance that in the *interviews* one could often hear: "I regret that I didn't come here twenty years earlier."

Results of Leaving the USSR

In the *interviews* we asked the Soviet elderly to evaluate the results of their leaving the Soviet Union. Most found these good or better — 16% finding the results very positive, 53% viewing them as positive. Some found them so-so — 9%, and one characterized them as ambivalent. The remaining 21% characterized the results as negative. Some sample commentaries: "I've lost everything and I miss my homeland where I was very secure." "I miss being

home where I knew the language." "I miss my son." "We lived better in the USSR."

Another question asked of our immigrants was whether they regretted leaving the USSR. Understandably, there was a very strong correlation between answers here and a positive evaluation of the results of leaving the Soviet Union. Overall, 77% said they did not regret leaving the USSR; 16% felt ambivalently about leaving and 7% regretted it. It was somewhat surprising to have respondents say they did not regret leaving the USSR when they assessed the results of their emigration negatively. Health factors and the feeling that, in spite of everything, it was best to be near their children can help explain the discrepancy. Besides, it is one thing to evaluate an immigration experience negatively, and something altogether different to wish one were back in the USSR.

While in consonance with the Russian saying "old age is no joy" (*starost' ne radost'*), the elderly Soviet immigrants can appear grim at times, yet one should not over-emphasize this. We asked our interviewees what their plans were for the future. While a few denied they had any, most, usually with some prodding from the interviewers, admitted they did. The question invited multiple responses and to list them all would be cumbersome. Those shared by five or more respondents were: To live apart from the children (4 f / 1 m); to obtain pension (5 f / 2 m); to be healthy (5 m / 4 m); to enjoy a command of English (7 f / 4 m); to travel (18 f / 8 m). Seven of the latter (2 f / 5 m) hope to travel to Israel. Whatever their destination, this response seems encouraging in that it shows that for many of these elderly immigrants the horizons appear to be healthily broad.

FOOTNOTES

¹See, for example: Roberta Lander Markus, *Adaptation: A Case Study of Soviet-Jewish Immigrant Children in Toronto, 1970-1978*, Toronto: Permanent Press, 1979; Dan N. Jacobs and Ellen Frankel Paul (eds.), *Studies of the Third Wave: Recent Migration of Soviet Jews to the United States*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1981; Zvi Gitelman, "Recent Emigres and the Soviet Political System: A Pilot Study in Detroit", *Slavic and Soviet Series*, II (Fall, 1977) pp. 40-60; R. L. Busch, "Edmonton's Recent Soviet Immigrants", in Martin L. Kovacs (ed.), *Roots and Realities Among Eastern and Central Europeans* (CEESAC, Edmonton, 1983) pp. 99-128.

²See, in particular, questions 11 and 16 of the appended questionnaire.

³On this see Penina Frankel and Maya Golant, "A Family Life Education Program for Soviet Jewish Seniors", *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, p.224.

⁴SEES has assisted in providing lectures, films and programs in Russian, and also serves to bring club members together with students studying at the University. An example of the latter is a gathering (in April of 1984) where students and Club members together presented a concert for a large audience consisting of students as well as members of the Russian community. The show included a play written by University of Alberta graduate student Boris Briker (himself a recent émigré) and performed by SEES students.

⁵Culinary classes involving the sharing of experience in preparing national dishes and also the arranging of meetings with people willing to recount experiences of particular interest.

⁶Indeed, a few Club "Shalom" members are far from being of pension age. These are people who find it interesting and rewarding to lend assistance.

⁷Two questions relating to work experience in Canada had to be discarded in that some respondents clearly related them to their jobs in the USSR. Unless otherwise explicitly indicated, the statistical data used in the paper comes from the questionnaires.

⁸Of the 43 interviewees, 30 were female (f) and 13 were male (m).

⁹In the 55 to 65 year old age group there were 13 people, some of whom according to Soviet law could be considered as pensioners.

¹⁰The remaining 7% comes from non-respondents. Failure of percentages to total 100 results from non-responses or from multiple responses.

¹¹On this, see Erica Rosenfeld, "Soviet Sorrow," *The Globe and Mail*, July 3, 1984.

¹²Il'ja Levkov, "Novyje amerikancy v anfas i v profil," *Vremja i my*, No. 68, p. 109. Cf. *ibid.*, No. 69, 1982, p. 135. Data gathered from a study of the sponsoring children of the Edmonton group tend to support the prominence of a political factor in their decision to emigrate. See Busch, op. cit. . . . Some of the Soviet elderly stressed a combination of political and ethnic factors: "myself was not persecuted, but I found the overall political atmosphere sickening." "Until 1953 the year of the antisemitic invention of a so-called doctors' plot against Stalin, RLB/AT I agreed with Soviet policies and favored its program for ethnic groups."

¹³Curiously, this is slightly higher for the *interviews* than the questionnaires.

¹⁴Sometimes this help came from more than one source, e.g.: from Canada Manpower and children.

¹⁵The desire to have more films was based on the club's experience. For example, in 1982, after a lecture given on Pushkin's "Evgenij Onegin" by the authors of this study, the club members attended a film-opera of the same name. Another example of this is the film festival "Masterpieces of Literature in Soviet Culture" organized in 1983 by SEES in cooperation with Club Shalom.

¹⁶Besides regular reports on International events, there were specific lectures concerning Soviet-related topics, e.g.: the lecture "Where Does Andropov Lead?" given by University of Alberta professors M. Mote and T. Yedlin (1983).

APPENDIX

ABOUT OUR QUESTIONNAIRE

You have in front of you a questionnaire which will serve as an important source of information for an investigation into the subject: "Problems of adaptation for elderly Russian-speaking emigrants from the Soviet Union in the social, economic, and cultural conditions of Canada".

Any questionnaire has, by its very nature, definite limitations due to the fact that it utilizes the principles of uniformity and standardization in the statistical analysis of the data obtained. These principles form the basis of our questionnaire.

Thus, in order to avoid possibly missing something (i.e. so that not a single unique experience of any of our informants escapes the attention of the investigators), a personal interview will be conducted with each of the participants in addition to the questionnaire itself. We also welcome any initiative taken by those who wish to express (anonymously) in written form those facts, observations, and problems from personal experience which have, for one reason or another, been missed by the questionnaire or interview.

HOW TO FILL IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. *As a rule*, one answer (out of a possible two or more) is assumed for each question. However, some questions permit more than one answer (no. 2, for example).
2. Mark each answer you have chosen with an 'X'.
3. If a particular question does not relate to you, leave it unanswered.
4. We are hoping that the participants will answer as many questions as possible, since the completeness and veracity of our questionnaire depends upon this. However, *answering the questions is purely voluntary*.
5. Anonymity is an important ethical principle, as well as a guarantee of the objectivity of the present questionnaire. Therefore, please do *not* indicate your name.

We would like to thank in advance all the participants who have so generously agreed to give their time and consideration to our investigation which, we hope, will provide an objective picture of the adaptation of elderly Soviet emigrants in Canada, thereby helping to improve the circumstances of such an adjustment both for those who have already emigrated, as well as for future emigrants.

Professor Robert L. Busch
Professor Alexander Tumanov

1. In the USSR you lived mainly in:

21.42%	[9]	6/3	the RFSFR
57.14%	[24]	15/8	the Ukraine
11.90%	[5]	4/1	Byelorussia
9.52%	[4]	3/1	the Baltic Republics
4.76%	[2]	1/1	the Caucasus
2.38%	[1]	1/0	some other republic
2.38% 1/0 N.R., 3/1 M.R.			

2. The reason for your departure from the Soviet Union was:

4.76%	[2]	1/1	economic
14.28%	[6]	2/4	political
21.42%	[9]	4/5	ethnic
4.76%	[2]	1/1	religious
83.33%	[35]	25/10	the emigration of your children
7.14%	[3]	3/0	the emigration of other relatives
2.38%	[1]	1/0	other
2.38% 1/0 N.R., 6/7 M.R.			

3. Have you lived in Israel before you came to Canada?

2.38%	[1]	1/0	yes
88.09%	[37]	27/10	no
9.52% 3/1 N.R.			

4. You came to Canada:

9.52%	[4]	1/3	before your children / relatives
38.09%	[16]	11/5	after your children / relatives
53.38%	[22]	17/5	together with your children / relatives

5. You arrived in Canada:

69.04%	[29]	19/10	with your family / husband / wife
21.42%	[9]	7/2	alone
9.52% 3/1 N.R.			

6. The reason you came to Canada and not another country:

78.57%	[33]	24/9	children
7.14%	[3]	1/2	close relatives
2.38%	[1]	0/1	close friends
11.9%	[5]	4/1	other reasons
2.38% [1] 0/1 N.R., 1/1 M.R.			

7. You have lived in Canada:

0%	[0]	0/0	less than a year
0%	[0]	0/0	1-2 years
28.57%	[12]	8/4	2-3 years
42.85%	[18]	13/5	more than 3 years
28.57%	[12]	8/4	more than 5 years

8. Who in Canada helped you with housing, English instruction, finances, etc.:

26.17%	[11]	7/4	children
4.76%	[2]	1/1	relatives
19.04%	[8]	7/1	Canada Manpower
57.14%	[24]	17/7	Jewish Family Services

4.76%	[2]	2/0	Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (EISA)
0%	[0]	0/0	other

9. How long did you receive help from the above-mentioned sources?

2.38%	[1]	1/0	less than 3 months
9.52%	[4]	3/1	3-6 months
7.14%	[3]	2/1	6-12 months
57.14%	[24]	18/6	more than a year

28.57% [12] 7/5 N.R., [1] 1/0 M.R.

10. You correspond regularly with:

16.66%	[7]	6/1	children in the USSR
54.76%	[23]	13/10	relatives in the USSR
33.33%	[14]	9/5	friends in the USSR
11.9%	[5]	4/1	none

2.38% [1] 1/0 N.R., [12] 5/7 M.R.

11. Before arriving from the USSR you knew English:

90.47%	[38]	27/11	not at all
2.38%	[1]	1/0	a little
0%	[0]	0/0	fairly well
0%	[0]	0/0	extremely well
7.14%	[3]	1/2	N.R.

12. You attend English lessons:

38.09%	[16]	11/5	day time classes
9.52%	[4]	2/2	evening classes
38.09%	[16]	12/4	not at all

16.6% [7] 4/3 N.R., 0/1 M.R.

13. Right now you attend:

7.14%	[3]	3/0	day time classes
4.76%	[2]	1/1	evening classes
47.61%	[20]	13/7	classes through the club (on Sundays)
26.19%	[11]	10/1	not at all

16.66% [7] 3/4 N.R., 1/0 M.R.

14. For you, English lessons were:

21.42%	[9]	7/2	very helpful
38.09%	[16]	11/5	helpful
7.14%	[3]	2/1	not very helpful
7.14%	[3]	1/2	useless
26.19%	[11]	8/3	N.R.

15. In your life, having a command of English:

11.9%	[5]	3/2	plays no role
11.9%	[5]	3/2	is not very important
30.95%	[13]	8/5	is useful
45.23%	[19]	16/3	is essential

4.76% [2] 1/1 N.R., 0/3 M.R.

16. At the present time, you know English:

35.71%	[15]	10/5	very poorly
54.76%	[23]	17/6	poorly
4.76%	[2]	1/1	fairly well
0%	[0]	0/0	very well
0%	[0]	0/0	extremely well
4.76%	[2]	1/1	N.R.

17. Do you speak Yiddish?

69.04%	[29]	19/10	yes
28.57%	[12]	10/2	no
2.38%	[1]	0/1	N.R.

18. Besides Russian and English you know:

33.33%	[14]	9/5	1 other foreign language
0%	[0]	0/0	2 other foreign languages
7.14%	[3]	3/0	3 other foreign languages
2.38%	[1]	1/0	more
57.14%	[24]	17/7	N.R.

19. You meet with immigrants from the USSR:

11.9%	[5]	4/1	never
21.42%	[9]	9/0	rarely
64.28%	[27]	16/11	often
2.38%	[1]	0/1	N.R.

— with immigrants from other countries:

26.19%	[11]	10/1	never
42.85%	[18]	12/6	rarely
4.76%	[2]	1/1	often
26.19%	[11]	6/5	N.R.

— with native Canadians:

19.04%	[8]	5/3	never
47.6%	[20]	15/5	rarely
16.66%	[7]	5/2	often
16.66%	[7]	4/3	N.R.

20. You meet with immigrants from the USSR who are:

83.33%	[35]	24/11	of the same age as you
35.71%	[15]	10/5	significantly younger than you
14.28%	[6]	4/2	significantly older than you
28.57%	[12]	8/4	M.R.

21. In the Soviet Union you completed:

42.85%	[18]	14/4	secondary school
21.42%	[9]	4/5	technical school
2.38%	[1]	0/1	vocational school
26.19%	[11]	9/2	an institute / university / academy
7.14%	[3]	2/1	N.R.

22. In the USSR you worked in the area of:

19.04%	[8]	7/1	teaching
4.76%	[2]	2/0	scientific research
23.80%	[10]	9/1	trade and commerce
19.04%	[8]	5/3	services
33.33%	[14]	4/10	industry
9.52%	[4]	4/0	medicine
4.76%	[2]	1/1	art

2.38% [1] 1/0 N.R., 3/3 M.R.

23. Before your departure from the USSR you were:

42.85%	[18]	11/7	still working
57.14%	[24]	17/7	not working

24. Are you working at the present time?

14.28%	[6]	2/4	yes
83.33%	[35]	27/8	no
2.38%	[1]	0/1	N.R.

25. Right now you live in:

14.28%	[6]	3/3	a single room
28.57%	[12]	10/2	a 1 bedroom apartment
19.04%	[8]	3/5	a 2 bedroom apartment
2.38%	[1]	1/0	a 3 bedroom apartment
26.19%	[11]	8/3	a condominium
7.14%	[3]	3/0	your own home
2.38%	[1]	0/1	N.R.

26. If you were to move, you would want to rent an apartment:

64.28%	[27]	19/8	separate from your children
21.42%	[9]	5/4	together with your children
14.28%	[6]	5/1	N.R.

27. In the USSR you used medical services:

19.04%	[8]	5/3	rarely
47.6%	[20]	13/7	sometimes
33.33%	[14]	11/3	often

28. In Canada you use medical services:

16.66%	[7]	4/3	rarely
35.71%	[15]	9/6	sometimes
47.6%	[20]	16/4	often

29. In Canada you have been in the hospital:

21.42%	[9]	6/3	once
11.9%	[5]	5/0	twice
9.52%	[4]	0/4	three times
7.14%	[3]	3/0	more
45.23%	[19]	14/5	never
4.76%	[2]	1/1	N.R.

30. Did you have your own car in the USSR?

14.28%	[6]	4/2	yes
83.33%	[35]	24/11	no
2.38%	[1]	1/0	N.R.

31. Do you have your own car here in Canada?

16.66%	[7]	4/3	yes
78.57%	[33]	23/10	no
4.76%	[2]	2/0	N.R.

32. You get around the city by means of:

71.42%	[30]	20/10	public transit
11.9%	[5]	2/3	your own car
28.57%	[12]	10/2	your childrens' car
9.52%	[4]	4/0	your friends' car
0%	[0]	0/0	taxi
2.38% [1] 1/0 N.R., 8/2 M.R.			

33. Are you interested in events in the Soviet Union?

83.33%	[35]	25/10	yes
9.52%	[4]	2/2	no
7.14%	[3]	2/1	N.R.

34. You follow events in the USSR:

21.42%	[9]	5/4	on Russian language radio
11.9%	[5]	4/1	on English radio
50.0%	[21]	14/7	on television
30.95%	[13]	10/3	through the Western press
23.8%	[10]	7/3	through the Soviet press
19.04%	[8]	8/0	through letters from the Soviet Union
7.14% [3] 2/1 N.R., 12/5 M.R.			

35. You follow Canadian political events:

16.66%	[7]	5/2	seldom
30.95%	[13]	7/6	sometimes
38.09%	[16]	13/3	regularly
14.28%	[6]	4/2	N.R.

36. You follow international political events:

14.28%	[6]	4/2	seldom
28.57%	[12]	9/3	sometimes
47.61%	[20]	14/6	regularly
9.52%	[4]	2/2	N.R.

37. You find out about world events through:

16.66%	[7]	5/2	the Canadian press
4.76%	[2]	1/1	any Western press
78.57%	[33]	22/11	the Russian language émigré press
4.76%	[2]	1/1	the Soviet press
21.42%	[9]	7/2	other sources

4.76% [2] 1/1 N.R., 7/4 M.R.

38. You subscribe to:

9.52%	[4]	3/1	Western journals and newspapers
33.33%	[14]	9/5	the émigré press
7.14%	[3]	3/0	the Canadian press
2.38%	[1]	1/0	the Soviet press

54.76% [23] 16/7 N.R., 2/0 M.R.

39. Do you have a T.V. set?

95.23%	[40]	28/12	yes
2.38%	[1]	0/1	no
2.38%	[1]	1/0	N.R.

40. You watch television:

19.04%	[8]	4/4	about 1 hour a day
33.33%	[14]	11/3	about 2 hours a day
40.47%	[17]	12/5	more than 3 hours a day
4.76%	[2]	1/1	not in general
2.38%	[1]	1/0	N.R.

41. On television you regularly watch:

52.38%	[22]	16/6	the news
26.19%	[11]	5/6	sports broadcasts
69.04%	[29]	21/8	concerts/films/special presentations

6/1 N.R., 15/5 M.R.

42. You go to:

45.23%	[19]	14/5	the movie theatre
38.09%	[16]	11/5	concerts
0%	[0]	0/0	theatre

38.09% [16] 11/5 N.R., 9/2 M.R.

43. You watch:

26.19%	[11]	10/1	North American films
50.0%	[21]	?/?	Russian films

28.57% [12] 6/6 N.R., 4/1 M.R.

44. You go to concerts for:

14.28%	[6]	3/3	the general public
80.95%	[34]	22/12	the Jewish community

16.66% [7] 7/0 N.R., 2/2 M.R.

45. Did you go to the synagogue in the Soviet Union?

19.04%	[8]	7/1	yes
73.8%	[31]	20/11	no
7.14%	[3]	2/1	N.R.

46. Do you go to the synagogue in Canada?

7.14%	[3]	3/0	never
85.71%	[36]	25/11	sometimes
7.14%	[3]	1/2	regularly

47. Have you travelled around:

38.09%	[16]	12/4	Alberta?
19.04%	[8]	5/3	Canada?
26.19%	[11]	7/4	the U.S.?
42.85%	[18]	13/5 N.R., 5/2 M.R.	

48. Do you have any desire to become acquainted with Canada, its history, culture, geography, etc.?

66.66%	[28]	18/10	I very much want to
23.80%	[10]	8/2	I am somewhat interested
2.38%	[1]	1/0	I do not wish to
7.14%	[3]	2/1	N.R.

49. How would you evaluate the work of Club Shalom?

42.85%	[18]	12/6	very highly
40.47%	[17]	13/4	highly
14.28%	[6]	3/3	so-so
0%	[0]	0/0	unfavourably
2.38%	[1]	1/0	N.R.

50. In Canada you have found what you had hoped for:

35.71%	[15]	8/7	materially
28.57%	[12]	7/5	spiritually
2.38%	[1]	1/0	not at all
19.04%	[8]	??/?	you had quite a different conception of life in the West
4.76%	[2]	1/1	you regret leaving the USSR
16.66%	[7]	5/2 N.R., 4/5 M.R.	

51. Did you ever encounter antisemitism in the USSR?

50.0%	[21]	13/8	often
30.95%	[13]	10/3	rarely
7.14%	[3]	3/0	no
11.9%	[5]	3/2	N.R.

52. Have you ever encountered antisemitism in Canada?

0%	[0]	0/0	often
19.04%	[8]	3/5	rarely
61.9%	[26]	22/4	no
19.04%	[8]	4/4	N.R.

53. Your age:

2.38%	[1]	1/0	46-50
4.76%	[2]	1/1	51-55
11.9%	[5]	4/1	56-60
14.28%	[6]	5/1	61-65
26.19%	[11]	10/1	66-70
16.66%	[7]	5/2	71-7
21.42%	[9]	3/6	over 75
2.38%	[1]	0/1	N.R.

54. Sex:

69.04% [29]
 28.57% [12]
 2.38% [1]

female
 male
 N.R.

55. Age of your children:

16.66% [7]
 52.38% [22]
 40.47% [17]

6/1
 16/6
 11/6

20-30
 30-40
 over 40

4.76% [2] 1/1 N.R., 5/1 M.R.