Psychological adaptation of Russians in post-Soviet countries: the role of context

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper was to study psychological adaptation of ethnic Russians in various contexts of post-Soviet countries. To achieve this goal, a survey was conducted in the following seven post-Soviet republics: Estonia (N=314), Kazakhstan (N=179), Kyrgyzstan (N=300), Armenia (N=109), Tajikistan (N=284), Latvia (N=334), Georgia (N=312). The total sample size equaled to 1832 people. The study showed that in different contexts of post-Soviet republics, psychological adaptation of Russians differs. The authors have identified two contextual conditions that are important for successful adaptation in post-Soviet countries: the policy towards ethnic Russians, which can be either inclusive or restrictive, as well as subjective cultural distance. Accordingly, four contexts of the adaptation of Russians have been identified. With a combination of inclusive policies and a short subjective cultural distance (Kazakhstan), the conditions for psychological adaptation are favourable, ethnic boundaries are permeable, bridging (interethnic) social capital is formed. However, there is a downside to such a favourable context – there are assimilation tendencies out there. With a combination of inclusive policies and a long subjective cultural distance (Kyrgyzstan, Armenia), Russians have the opportunity to fully preserve their ethnic identity and integrate into the host society. Such a context shows the highest scores of self-esteem as one of the indicators of psychological adaptation. In the case of a combination of restrictive policies and a short subjective cultural distance (Estonia, Latvia), Russians make kind of a "request" for integration, that is, the preservation of their own culture along with inclusion in the culture of host societies. A context combining restrictive policies and a large subjective cultural distance (Georgia, Tajikistan) is the most unfavourable for the psychological adaptation of Russians. It is characteristic that in this context, Russians are forced to reduce, "conceal" their ethnic identity, since the degree of their ethnic identity is negatively associated with life satisfaction, that is, with successful adaptation.

Keywords

Introduction

The main part of modern research on acculturation and adaptation of representatives of various ethno-cultural groups is based on empirical data obtained from migrant respondents who have changed their place of residence. These migrants moved to a new environment and, finding themselves in a minority there, faced a new culture to which they were forced to adapt (Sam and Berry 2010). However, we know little about acculturation and adaptation to the changed socio-cultural and political realities of representatives of ethnic groups whose status has changed without moving to another country. Representatives of an ethnic group may turn out to be a minority in another culture due to historical or political events, in particular, the collapse of the former and the creation of new States. A unique example of such an ethno-cultural group are Russians living in former Soviet republics, now independent countries.

Before the collapse of the USSR, according to the 1989 census, about 25 million ethnic Russians lived in the Union republics (Ryazanov 2015). By the 2010s (depending on the year of the census, in some republics it was 2009, in others - 2010 or 2011), the number of ethnic Russians in post–Soviet countries had significantly decreased, and there were about 14.5 million of them left (Ryazanov 2015). However, despite this reduction, the number of Russians remaining in the former Soviet republics is still quite large. A population of 14.5 million people is approximately equal to the population of Norway and Sweden combined (according to the 2018 census). After the collapse of the USSR, the Russian population of the republics was forced to adapt to the changed political and cultural realities.

In most studies on migrant adaptation, there are three types of it: psychological, socio-cultural and intercultural (Ward 1996; Berry 2017), however, our study focuses only on psychological adaptation. This is because it would be pointless to consider the socio-cultural and intercultural adaptation of Russians, as since Soviet times they have lived in these republics almost all their lives (or even were born in these countries) and are very well familiar with the cultures of the countries in which they live. The main problem they faced was psychological adaptation to the social and political changes that had taken place, and, in particular, to the loss of their status as an ethnic majority and the status of the Russian language as the official language.

Currently, the main indicators of psychological adaptation in cross-cultural studies are life satisfaction and self-esteem of migrants and ethnic minorities (Lebedeva and Ryabichenko 2016; Berry 2017; Galyapina et al. 2021; Berry et al. 2022).

In this paper, we aim to study the psychological adaptation of Russians in various contexts of post-Soviet countries. In terms of the study design, the historical situation has provided us with a unique opportunity to study the psychological adaptation of representatives of the same ethnic group – Russians in various cultural and political contexts of post-Soviet countries. Accordingly, differences in the features of their adaptation can be explained by differences in the contexts. In this regard, the question arises about the parameters or characteristics based on which we can classify the contexts of adaptation of Russians in post-Soviet countries.

Contextual conditions of psychological adaptation of ethnic Russians in the post-Soviet space

The contextual conditions of the post-Soviet countries in which ethnic Russians found themselves after the collapse of the USSR were highly variable. Our empirical study was

conducted in six post-Soviet countries: Kazakhstan, Latvia, Georgia, Tajikistan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan. Table 1 below systematizes the main contextual characteristics of psychological adaptation of Russians in post-Soviet countries under study.

As Table 1 shows, the contexts of the countries in which Russians found themselves after the collapse of the USSR differ significantly in terms of policy towards the Russian population remaining in these countries. Accordingly, the question arises – how can we classify the policy towards Russians in post-Soviet countries?

Countries' policies towards ethnic minorities and migrants

The existing literature discussing various policy options in relation to non-cultural migrants, draws a demarcation line between *the host (inclusive) policy* and *the restrictive policy.* To designate these two types of policy, the authors use different, but essentially similar terms. In particular, the authors speak of "inclusive nationalism" and "exclusive nationalism" (Smith et al. 1998), describing intercultural relations in the post-Soviet space. Inclusive nationalism emphasizes the importance of shared political values, institutions, and legal rights. In this concept, national identity is open and inclusive, and people with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds can be part of the nation as long as they adhere to its political principles and institutional rules. The authors note that inclusive nationalism is characteristic of Western Europe (Smith et al. 1998). In general, this term is popular when discussing and researching various problems related to the inclusion of migrants in Western European countries (Moskal 2016).

Exclusive nationalism is a form of nationalism that emphasizes common cultural, linguistic or ancestral characteristics as the basis of national identity. This concept is considered as characteristic of the post-Soviet space and Eastern Europe (Smith et al. 1998). In this concept, national identity is exclusive and often **restrictive**, since it is based on a common ethnic or cultural heritage that may not be common to all residents of the country. The authors cite Georgia as an interesting example of a country characterized by exclusive nationalism. In Georgia, on the one hand, at the level of the official discourse shared by the intelligentsia, there is a myth about tolerance and interethnic harmony in Georgia. On the other hand, those "language myths" that are used to create the Georgian identity are of an exclusive rather than inclusive nature (Smith et al. 1998: 195). Speaking about these forms of nationalism, the authors often mention *language* as a criterion of separation between them. With exclusive nationalism, the language of the dominant group prevails, and the spread of other languages is limited. With inclusive nationalism, the use of other languages as a state language is acceptable. The problem of restrictive naturalization rules is reported by researchers in some European countries, in particular Denmark (Jensen et al. 2021). Denmark has very strict language proficiency requirements for immigrants wishing to obtain citizenship. As a result, migrants, even after 13 years of residence in this country, may not comply with these requirements (Jensen et al. 2021). A similar restrictive step to complicate the language requirements was introduced in the Netherlands, as a result, the number of people receiving citizenship decreased by 70% (van Oers 2008). *Therefore, strict language proficiency requirements are the clearest criterion of the country's restrictive policy towards migrants and minorities.* Similar strict restrictive requirements for obtaining citizenship are put forward in relation to Russians living in the Baltic States, in particular in Estonia and Latvia (Aptekar 2009).

Table 1. Contextual conditions of adaptation of ethnic Russians in post-Soviet countries

Country	The number of Russians and their share in the total population	Citizenship	Russian language	Intercultural relations	Russians are present in the government (an indicator of permeability of ethnic boundaries)	Number of Russian schools (2022-2023)
Kazakhstan	2,981,946 people or 15.54% (2021)	Automatically granted after the collapse of the USSR	Russian is the language of international communication, actively used in everyday life	In general, there is a positive attitude towards Russians, however, there is a rise in national patriotism, the representatives of which are oppressing the Russian language and culture	Deputy Prime Minister Roman Sklyar and Head of the Ministry of Emergency Situations Yuri Ilyin (2022)	1500
Latvia	454 350 people or 24.22% (2021)	It is necessary to undergo a naturalization procedure (as of January 1, 2022, 26.46% are non-citizens)	Russian has the status of a foreign language, it is not used in everyday life	There is discrimination against ethnic minorities	no	89
Estonia	306,801 people or 22% (2021)	It is necessary to undergo a naturalization procedure (in 2021 5.2% are non-citizens)	Russian has the status of a foreign language, it is not used in everyday life	There is discrimination against ethnic minorities	no	92
Georgia	26,453 people or 0.7% (2014)	Automatically granted after the collapse of the USSR	The status of the Russian language is not officially defined. Hardly used in everyday life	There is a negative attitude towards Russians	no	11

Country	The number of Russians and their share in the total population	Citizenship	Russian language	Intercultural relations	Russians are present in the government (an indicator of permeability of ethnic boundaries)	Number of Russian schools (2022-2023)
Tadjikistan	34,800 thousand people or 0.5%, (2010)	Automatically granted after the collapse of the USSR	Russian is the language of international communication, actively used in everyday life	There is some interethnic tension	no	26
Armenia	11,911 people or 0.39% (2011)	Automatically granted after the collapse of the USSR	Russian has the status of a foreign language, about 80% of Armenians speak Russian	There is a positive attitude towards the Russian ethnic minority	no	11
Kyrgyzstan	341,351 people or 5.14% (2021)	Automatically granted after the collapse of the USSR	According to the Constitution, Russian is recognized as the official language of interethnic communication	There is some interethnic tension, however, the attitude towards Russians is generally positive	In 2021, the acting Prime Minister was Timur Novikov	216

Sources: compiled by the authors based on data from open sources on the Internet.

The literature also describes the so-called civic nationalism and ethnocultural nationalism (Yaman and Kartal 2023). Civic nationalism, also known as Western nationalism, is the so-called "good" nationalism that originated in Western Europe. Oriental nationalism, also known as ethnocultural or ethno-symbolism, is observed in Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America and is considered as an example of the so-called "bad" nationalism.

According to Kohn (2005), a nation in Western nationalism is a voluntary association of individuals to live together on a plot of land with certain boundaries and a willingness to obey the same authority and law. On the other hand, the understanding of nationalism in Eastern Europe is based more on ethnic proximity rather than on the desire to live together. Civic nationalism, unlike ethnocultural, has formal characteristics and is not based on ethnic origin. A nation unites around certain common ideas and political ideals, rather than a certain ethnic origin.

However, civic nationalism and inclusive nationalism are not the same thing, because in countries with civic nationalism inclusivity may not always be present. In particular, in one large-scale study involving 41 European countries, it was shown that in the countries of Northern and Western Europe, civic **nationalism** is associated with greater antipathy to Muslims (Simonsen and Bonikowski 2020). In this region, Muslims were perceived as groups incompatible with European liberal values, which actually legitimized anti-Muslim sentiments in the prevailing political culture (Simonsen and Bonikowski 2020).

R.Brubaker in his work "Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany" (Brubaker 1992) discusses liberal and civic concepts of nationhood. He describes liberal nationhood as a political identity based on shared political values, individual rights and civic participation. In this concept, citizenship is open to all who accept political values and participate in public life, regardless of their ethnic or cultural origin. That is, in fact, an inclusive policy towards migrants and minorities, if we draw parallels with the terminology used above. Brubaker contrasts the liberal nation with the ethnic concept of the nation, which bases national identity on common cultural, linguistic or generic characteristics. In this concept, the right to citizenship has limitations, and obtaining it may be difficult for people from different cultures. Brubaker does not directly use the term "restrictive citizenship", but this concept follows from his description of the ethnic nationhood and related restrictions on citizenship rights for those who do not have certain ethnocultural characteristics.

Speaking about the policy towards immigrants, some authors (Akkerman 2012) directly use the dichotomy: restrictive policy vs liberal policy. In particular, it has been shown that in European countries the policy towards immigrants tends towards restrictive or liberal, depending on which parties dominate the parliaments of European countries: right- or center-left (Akkerman 2012. In fact, the term "liberal citizenship" is used similarly to the term "liberal policy" (Lewicki 2017; O'Sullivan 2019) and in contrast to it - the term "restrictive citizenship" (Jensen et al. 2021). Other authors (Sredanovic 2016), analyzing the legislation of European Union countries regarding immigrants, use the terminology "inclusive legislation" and "restrictive" legislation.

In our study, we focus on the types of policies regarding Russians in former Soviet republics. Based on a review of studies concerning the policy towards non-cultural migrants, mainly in European countries, we consider it appropriate to focus on the dichotomy: "inclusive policy" - "restrictive policy". As the criteria for distinguishing inclusive and restrictive policies of post-Soviet countries in relation to Russians are based on the analysis of contextual conditions of post-Soviet countries (Table 1), as well as the analysis of studies concerning the policy towards migrants, we propose the following factors: inclusion of the

Russian language in the number of state languages (or the use of Russian as the language of interethnic communication), requirements for obtaining citizenship by Russians after the collapse of the USSR, presence of Russians in the governments of countries, attitudes of the local population towards Russians and the number of Russian schools (table 2).

Table 2. Characteristics of inclusive and restrictive policies in the framework of this study

Criteria/Policy	Inclusive policy	Restrictive policy
Language	- Inclusion of the Russian language among state languages - Russian is the language of international communication	Russian is a foreign language
Citizenship	Automatically granted to Russians after the collapse of the USSR	requirement to undergo the naturalization procedure to obtain citizenship
Russians in governments	Russians are present in the governments	Russians are absent in the governments
Attitudes of the local population towards Russians	Positive	Ambivalent/negative
Number of Russian schools	1 per 1500-2500 Russians n	Less than 1 per 3,000 Russians

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Table 2 presents the characteristics of inclusive and restrictive policies. Based on the criteria we have identified (table. 2) and the characteristics of the countries (table. 1), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia are among the countries with the inclusive context among those participating in our study, while Estonia, Latvia, Tajikistan, Georgia are among the ones with the restrictive policies.

Subjective cultural distance as a characteristic of the adaptation context

In addition to the country's policy towards the Russian ethnic minority, which may either be inclusive or restrictive, an important contextual factor of adaptation is the cultural distance with the ethnic majority or the titular ethnic group of the country. First of all, we note that the cultural distance between the ethnic majority and minority can be long or short. Cultural distance can be conceptualized as a variable both at the country level and at the individual level (Suanet and van de Vijver 2009). In our study, we evaluate it as an individual level variable and use it in an aggregated form as a variable at the country level as a whole. Thus, using the example of seven cultures, we study the adaptation of the same ethnic group (Russians) in Estonia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Latvia, Georgia, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, which have different cultural distances with Russians.

Empirical studies show that cultural distance has a complex effect on acculturation. Its impact can be direct, indirect (mediative) or it can act as a moderator (Taušová et al. 2019). In general, a large cultural distance complicates the acculturation processes; the problems

faced by minorities in the acculturation process are usually more serious when the minority culture and the host culture are very different from each other (Galchenko and van de Vijver 2007).

Cultural distance can be of two types: objective and perceived or subjective (Suanet and van de Vijver 2009). In cross-cultural studies, it is the perceived (subjective) cultural distance that is used when the study participants compare their own culture and the culture of the ethno-contact group according to the following indicators: food consumption, family relations, parenting, attitude to women, religion, traditions and customs, social norms, appearance, values and beliefs, attitude to work, friendship, language (Suanet and van de Vijver 2009).

Existing empirical research conducted with the use of the concept of the perceived (subjective) cultural distance, convincingly show that a close cultural distance of ethnic minorities with the majority facilitates the adaptation processes of ethnic minorities (Melkonian et al. 2019; Suanet and van de Vijver 2009; Galchenko and van de Vijver 2007). Therefore, in our study, we consider the perceived cultural distance between Russians and representatives of the ethnic majority in post-Soviet countries as the second (along with the policies of society) key contextual factor of adaptation.

"Internal" factors of psychological adaptation of Russians in post-Soviet countries

In addition to contextual or "external" factors of psychological adaptation, "internal" factors, that is, the socio-psychological characteristics of the minorities themselves, are also of great importance. These "internal" factors may be related to the characteristics of the context and, in turn, be associated with the psychological adaptation of Russians in post-Soviet countries. The analysis of existing studies on the adaptation of migrants and minorities shows that the following socio-psychological factors are key: acculturation attitudes, various types of identity (civic, ethnic, local), individual social capital (connecting and binding) and the perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries. Let's consider these "internal" factors.

Acculturation attitudes. John Berry's Theory of Acculturation (Berry 2005) describes four main strategies for acculturation of migrants and minorities in society: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization. Integration is a strategy when a representative of an ethnic minority both maintain his or her culture of origine, and is eager to participate in the life of the host society and contacts with representatives of the ethnic majority. Assimilation is a strategy when a person focuses mainly on the host society, abandons his or her ethnic culture and minimizes contacts with compatriots. Separation – a representative of an ethnic minority focuses mainly on his or her culture of origin, contacts with its representatives, and avoids participating in the life of the host society. Marginalization is a strategy when a person abandons both his or her culture of origin and the culture of the host society as a whole.

According to the acculturation theory (Berry 1997), those individuals who prefer an integration strategy will have more positive adaptation results than those who try to use other acculturation strategies (assimilation, separation, marginalization). Despite the support of this hypothesis (Berry 1997), some data show that integration may have little or no effect on adaptation (Berry 2017; Berry et al. 2022; Bierwiaczonek and Kunst 2021).

Some other studies of the relationship between acculturation strategy and adaptation show that integration may not be the only strategy that promotes adaptation; there is also some evidence suggesting benefits of other strategies. An ethnic minority or a group of mi-

grants can successfully adapt using an assimilation strategy (Kosic 2002; Greenman and Xie 2008; Lepshokova and Tatarko 2016). On the other hand, there are studies that have shown that the choice of assimilation complicates the psychological adaptation of migrants (Berry et al. 2006).

Thus, the conclusions regarding the relationship between the preferred acculturation strategy and psychological adaptation seem ambiguous. It is likely that the preferred acculturation strategy and its effectiveness for adaptation may depend on contextual characteristics. From this point of view, the study of the psychological adaptation of representatives of the same ethnic group (Russians) in different contexts of post-Soviet countries gives us a unique opportunity to advance in understanding this issue.

Social identity. Social identity is a part of the Self-concept of personality (Tajfel 1978; Tajfel and Turner 1979), which helps to adapt to the current life situation. Studies using the example of migrants have shown that the clarity of the Self-concept of migrants, together with a clear idea of the prospects, leads to their more successful psychological adaptation (Szabó 2022). Social identity also carries adaptive functions, since the main function of social identity is to ensure adaptation to new social conditions, preserving the certainty and integrity of the "Self" (Ivanova 2001). The fact that people are looking for their self-identity in order to overcome chaos, internal entropy, to form their internal self-order, wrote the famous American futurist A. Toffler (Toffler 1980). Russians in the post-Soviet republics, after the change of status, found themselves in a situation of internal entropy along with external chaos, and various aspects of their social identity have been and remain the most important factor in managing this entropy and, as a result, psychological adaptation.

The identity of minorities and migrants is the most important factor related to their adaptation in general and psychological adaptation in particular. Using the example of foreign students in the USA, it was shown that the expressed ethnic identity of migrants is associated with their better psychological adaptation (Yuh 2005; Poyrazli 2003). Therefore, in our study, as one of the factors of psychological adaptation, we consider the expression of ethnic identity of Russians in post-Soviet countries. Along with ethnic identity, civic and local identities are also considered. Civic identity is a supra–ethnic identity that can be a kind of a "bridge" between Russians and representatives of the ethnic majority. Therefore, this social category of a higher order can contribute to a better adaptation in society. In addition to ethnic and civic identities, we also consider local identity, since it can also contribute to adaptation as a supra-ethnic identity, when civic or ethnic identities do not sufficiently perform this function due to any circumstances.

Individual social capital. Social capital is a characteristic of both society and individuals. At the societal level, when talking about social capital, they most often mean various types of trust in society (generalized, institutional, social). At the individual level, social capital is primarily a personal network of social relationships that an individual has. There are two forms of individual social capital: bonding social capital that characterizes relationships with members of a person's own ethno-cultural group; and bridging social capital that characterizes relationships with other people outside the individual's own ethno-cultural group. In this study, we use the concept of social capital as an individual-level variable and investigate both bonding and bridging social capitals (Heizmann and Böhnke 2016; Jun and Ha 2015). This enables assessing the respondent's social capital and its possible connections with indicators of psychological adaptation. In cross-cultural psychology, there are studies that convincingly show the relationship between the individual social capital of migrants and the success of their psychological adaptation (Amit and Litwin 2010; Berry and Hou

2016, 2017; Norstrand and Xu 2011). Accordingly, we also consider it important to analyze the indicators of bridging and bonding social capital of Russians in post-Soviet countries when studying their socio-cultural adaptation.

Perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries. In the theory of social identity, there are three important socio-structural variables that determine a person's perception of the intergroup context: the permeability of intergroup boundaries, stability and legitimacy (Tajfel and Turner 1979). *Permeability* is related to a person's subjective belief that individuals can act as independent agents who can move between groups within a given social system. While *stability* refers to a person's sense of the degree to which status relations between groups are fixed and unlikely to change; *legitimacy* refers to a person's sense that these relations are fair and justified by something. If people experience discrimination, they will rate the permeability of intergroup boundaries as low (Ramos et al. 2016). However, one should not lose sight of the fact that the perceived discrimination is usually defined as the perception that a negative attitude towards a person is due to belonging to a certain group (for example, Branscombe et al. 1999), while the perceived permeability of group boundaries is the perception of how much movement between groups is possible (Tajfel 1978). In relation to our study, we are talking about how much Russians living in post-Soviet countries feel that they are accepted by society, that they can be full members of groups consisting of representatives of the ethnic majority (for example, professional groups), to what extent they can participate in various types of joint activities with representatives of the ethnic majority, etc.

Purpose and objectives of this study

So, the **purpose** of this paper is to study the psychological adaptation of Russians in various contexts of post–Soviet countries. To achieve this goal, the following objectives have been set.

1. To conduct an empirical study in post-Soviet countries with different contextual characteristics: inclusive or restrictive policies towards Russians and a large or small cultural distance with Russians.
2. To compare factors (identity, social capital, acculturation attitudes, perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries) and indicators of psychological adaptation (life satisfaction, self-esteem) of Russians living in post-Soviet countries with different contextual characteristics.
3. To assess the relationship between factors and indicators of psychological adaptation of Russians living in post-Soviet countries and different contextual characteristics.
4. Based on contextual characteristics and statistical analysis results, to construct an integrated scheme of psychological adaptation of Russians in post-Soviet countries.

Methodology

Sample of the study

Table 3 shows characteristics of the samples of ethnic Russians surveyed in Estonia, Latvia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Tajikistan and Georgia. The surveys were conducted in these countries in the period from 2016 to 2021. The total number of the entire sample was 1,832 people (see Table 3).

Table 3. Sample of the study

Group	N	Age (M; σ; Me)	% men/women
Russians in Estonia	314	37.2; 16.9; 45.5	46.5/53.5
Russians in Kazakhstan	179	59.3; 32.07; 49.0	22.2/77.8
Russians in Kyrgyzstan	300	35.6; 17.4; 31.5	34.7/65.3
Russians in Armenia	109	40.4; 16.6; 37.0	40.4/59.6
Russians in Tajikistan	284	46.7; 8.4; 45.0	23.0/77.0
Russians in Latvia	334	43.2; 21.3; 42.0	13.9/86.1
Russians in Georgia	312	44.9; 5.94 45.0	21.2/78.8

Source: authors' estimates.

Research tools

1. To assess *individual social capital*, we used a modified version of the «resource generator» (Tatarko 2020). The number of friends, acquaintances from their ethnic group (bonding social capital) and among representatives of the ethnic majority (bridging social capital) who are ready to provide various types of assistance was estimated.

2. *Acculturation attitudes* of Russians were assessed using a questionnaire from the MIRIPS (Mutual Intercultural Relations in Plural Societies) project (MIRIPS Questionnaire 2017). In our study, we used only two scales (Integration and Assimilation) from the four scales of the questionnaire. The questionnaire items were translated and adapted into Russian in the course of previous studies carried out within the framework of this project (Lebedeva and Tatarko 2009).

3. The level of the *civic and ethnic identity of Russians* was assessed using questionnaire methods from the MIRIPS (Mutual Intercultural Relations in Plural Societies) project (MIRIPS Questionnaire 2017). The questionnaire items were translated and adapted into Russian in the course of previous studies carried out within the framework of this project (Lebedeva and Tatarko 2009).

4. *Local identity* (Droseltis and Vignoles 2010). The respondent was asked the question: "Please think about what [the name of the country] is for you if it is considered as your place of residence." And then a number of questions were proposed, the agreement with which had to be assessed in accordance with a 5-point scale. Examples of questions: "If I have to leave [country name], I will feel that I have lost a part of myself"; "I feel at home here"; I feel an emotional attachment to [country name].

5. *Perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries*. To assess the permeability of ethnic boundaries, the respondent was offered 4 statements that allow him or her to assess how easy or difficult it is for him or her to be accepted fully, on equal terms, by society as a whole and its representatives in particular. Examples of questions: «For a Russian person, in your opinion, to be accepted into [name] society ...»; «To become a full member of various groups in [name of the country] (friends, professional, etc.) for a Russian person ...»; «If a Russian person wanted to participate in social activities together with [name of the group], to do it for him of her would be...». The statements were evaluated using a 5-point scale from 1 - «Very difficult» to 5 - «Very easy»

6. *Life satisfaction*. In this study, life satisfaction (Diener et al. 1985) is considered as an indicator of the degree of psychological adaptation in society, which corresponds to the methodology of other cross-cultural studies conducted in this area (Berry 2017). We used the version of the questionnaire by E. Diner, which was adapted into Russian and validated by D.A. Leontiev and E.N. Osin (Osin and Leontiev 2020).

7. Self-*esteem*. In this study, self-esteem (Rosenberg 1973) is considered as the second indicator (along with life satisfaction) of psychological adaptation in society. To assess self-esteem, the M. Rosenberg's scale was used (Rosenberg 1973), which included 4 statements, for example: " I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with "; " I am able to do things as well as most other people."

8. *Subjective cultural distance*. The scale of subjective cultural distance was used in the study (Suanet and van de Vijver 2009). The respondents compared the Russian culture and the culture of the country of residence according to the following indicators: food consumption, family relations, parenting, attitude to women, religion, traditions and customs, social norms, appearance, values and beliefs, attitude to work, friendship, language. Respondents were asked the following question: "How similar or different are the following indicators in [country name] and Russia?". The scale consisted of 12 points, and the answers were given on a 5-point Likert scale, the answer options ranged from 1 (very different) to 5 (very similar).

Statistical analysis of empirical data

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with Bonferroni correction was used to assess the statistical significance of the variables considered in the study.

Multiple regression analysis was used to identify the relationships between factors (predictors) of psychological adaptation and indicators of psychological adaptation (subjective well-being, self-esteem).

Research results

First of all, using multivariate analysis of variance with Bonferroni correction (Nasledov 2013:171), we assessed the statistical significance of inter-sample differences in the mean values of all variables used in this study. In total, as previously indicated, Russians from 7 post-Soviet countries took part in the study. However, it should be noted that in Tajikistan, Latvia and Georgia, subjective cultural distance, local identity, perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries and social capital were not evaluated, since the study in these countries was conducted earlier than in Estonia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia. Variables such as ethnic identity, civic identity, strategies of "integration", "assimilation", life satisfaction and self-esteem were evaluated in all 7 countries. Table 4 shows average values of all indicators in all countries and shows statistically significant differences between countries, all scales used are 5-point ones. The estimation was performed using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with Bonferroni correction.

Psychological adaptation. First of all, we will touch upon the indicators characterizing psychological adaptation - life satisfaction and self-esteem. Table 4 shows that Russians' life satisfaction in all countries, with the exception of Georgia, does not have any statistically significant differences. In Georgia, Russians have the lowest level of life satisfaction among the

countries under consideration. As for self-esteem, in this case, the highest values of self-esteem are demonstrated by Russians living in Armenia and Kyrgyzstan, in other countries, the self-esteem indicators do not differ significantly.

Identity. Russians living in Armenia and Kyrgyzstan have the highest indicators of expression of ethnic identity. Russians living in Georgia and Tajikistan have the lowest rates. Russians in Kazakhstan, Estonia, and Latvia show an intermediate value.

Russians in Kazakhstan have the highest values of civic identity, while Russians in Armenia and Latvia have the lowest ones. Russians in the rest of the post-Soviet countries have intermediate values of civic identity. As for local identity, it is statistically significantly expressed among Russians living in Estonia. Russians living in the rest of the post-Soviet

Table 4. Comparison of the average values of all indicators of seven samples

Variable	Estonia	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Armenia
Ethnic identity	4.03 [kr,a,t]	4.13 [a,t]	4.29 [e,a,t,l,g]	4.55 [e,kz,kr,t,l,g]
Civic identity	3.77 [kz,kr,a,l]	4.05 [e,kr,a,t,l,g]	3.48 [e,kz,a,t,l,g]	2.53 [e,kz,kr,t,l,g]
Local identity	3.79 [kr,a]	3.54	3.51 [e]	3.39 [e]
Integration	4.30 [kz,kr,a,t,l]	3.92 [e,t,g]	3.98 [e,t,g]	4.06 [e,t,g]
Assimilation	1.75 [kz,kr,a,t]	2.05 [e,kr,a,t,l,g]	1.51 [e,kz,t,l,g]	1.48 [e,kz,t,l,g]
Life satisfaction	3.33 [g]	3.30 [g]	3.35 [g]	3.33 [g]
Self-esteem	4.07 [kr,a]	4.01 [kr,a]	4.31 [e,kz,t,l,g]	4.32 [e,kz,t,l,g]
Bonding SC	2.06 [kz]	2.35 [e,kr]	2.08 [kz]	2.24
Bridging SC	1.41 [kz,kr,a]	2.11 [e,kr,a]	1.79 [e,kz]	1.82 [e,short circuit]
Perc. Permeability of ethnic boundaries	2.88 [kz,a]	3.34 [e,kr]	2.85 [kz,a]	3.14 [e,kr]
Sub. Cultural distance (affinity)	3.03 [kr,a]	3.17 [kr,a]	2.64 [e,kz]	2.81 [e,kz]

Table 4. (continued)

Variable	Tadjikistan	Latvia	Georgia
Ethnic identity	3.75 [e,kz,kr,a,l]	4.09 [kr,a,t]	3.97 [kr,a,t]
Civic identity	3.74 [kz,kr,a,l]	3.01 [e,kz,kr,a,t,g]	3.75 [kz,kr,a,l]
Integration	3.52 [e,kz,kr,a,l,g]	3.99 [e,t,g]	4.34 [kz,kr,a,t,l]
Assimilation	2.40 [e,kz,kr,a,l,g]	1.80 [kz,kr,a,t,g]	1.67 [kz,kr,a,t,l]
Life satisfaction	3.46 [g]	3.22 [t,g]	2.73 [e,kz,kr,a,t,l]
Self-esteem	4.13 [kr,a]	4.12 [kr,a]	4.12 [kr,a]

Source: authors' estimates based on survey data.

[e] statistically significant differences with the Estonian Russians ($p < .05$)
[kz] statistically significant differences with the Kazakh Russians ($p < .05$)
[kr] statistically significant differences with the Kyrgyz Russians ($p < .05$)
[a] statistically significant differences with the Armenian Russians ($p < .05$)
[t] statistically significant differences with The Tajik Russians ($p < .05$)
[l] Statistically significant differences with the Latvian Russians ($p < .05$)
[g] statistically significant differences with the Georgian Russians ($p < .05$)

republics do not differ significantly in terms of local identity and by values roughly correspond to civic identity (except for Armenia, in which the civic identity of Russians is rather weakly expressed).

Acculturation strategies. The intensity of the integration strategy has relatively high values among Russians in almost all the republics considered, with the exception of Tajikistan. Tajikistan has the lowest values of this strategy. Russians in Estonia have the highest values of integration. Russians in Latvia, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, and Georgia also have high values of integration. In Kazakhstan, the commitment to integration is not as pronounced as in the above-mentioned countries. However, in Kazakhstan, as in Tajikistan, the assimilation strategy values are the highest compared to other countries. Russians in Kyrgyzstan and Armenia have the lowest values of commitment to assimilation among all countries.

Social capital. Bonding social capital, which reflects, in fact, intra-ethnic mutual support, is highest among Russians in Kazakhstan. In other republics (Estonia, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia), it is approximately the same. As for bridging social capital, reflecting how much Russians can count on support and assistance from their friends who are representatives of the ethnic majority, the differences between the republics are more pronounced. First, we see that bridging social capital of Russians in all republics has lower values than that of bonding social capital. Secondly, Russians in Kazakhstan have the highest values of bridging social capital, Russians in Armenia and Kyrgyzstan show an intermediate position, while the lowest values are registered among Russians in Estonia.

Perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries. According to the indicator of perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries, the four countries in which this indicator was evaluated were divided into the following two categories (Table 4). On the one hand, these are Kazakhstan and Armenia, where Russians highly appreciate the permeability of ethnic boundaries. On the other hand, Estonia and Kyrgyzstan, where Russians estimate the permeability of ethnic boundaries significantly lower compared to Kazakhstan and Armenia.

Then, a multiple regression analysis of the relationship between the predictors considered in the study and indicators of psychological adaptation of Russians in seven post-Soviet countries was carried out.

Table 5 presents results of the regression analysis of the relationship between a number of socio-psychological factors and the first indicator of psychological adaptation – life satisfaction.

The results in Table 5 show that in each country there is a certain set of factors that can contribute to the life satisfaction among Russians in the countries under study. In Estonia, these are ethnic, civic, local identities, as well as bridging social capital. In Kazakhstan - bridging social capital, perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries and local identity. In Kyrgyzstan - integration strategy, bonding social capital, perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries and local identity. In Armenia - perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries and local identity. In Tajikistan - civic identity, as well as integration and assimilation strategies. In Latvia - civic identity and lack of assimilation attitudes are associated with life satisfaction among Russians. Ethnic identity in Georgia is negatively related to life satisfaction among Russians, while it positively associated with integration strategy.

Table 6 shows similar relationships with the second indicator of psychological adaptation – self-esteem.

The results in Table 6 show that, as in the previous case, each country has a certain set of factors that can contribute to self-esteem among Russians in countries under study. These are ethnic and civic identities in Estonia; local identity in Kazakhstan; bridging social capital

Table 5. The relationship between various factors and "life satisfaction" indicator

Predictors	Est. β	Kaz. β	Kyrg. β	Arm. β	Taj. B	Latv. β	Georg. β
Ethnic identity	0.13*	0.09	0.05	-0.05	-0.08	0.05	-0.11*
Civic identity	0.17*	0.08	0.03	-0.02	0.15*	0.12*	-0.05
Local identity	0.16*	0.20*	0.26***	0.41**	-	-	-
Integration	0.05	-0.08	0.21***	-0.44	0.12*	-0.05	0.19**
Assimilation	0.08	0.01	0.02	-0.07	0.15*	-0.14*	0.00
Bonding SC	0.00	-0.10	0.37***	0.08	-	-	-
Bridging SC	0.17**	0.38**	-0.12	-0.01	-	-	-
Perc. perm-ty. of ethn. boundaries	0.01	0.26**	0.13*	0.31**	-	-	-
F	8.37***	8.03***	17.85***	3.63***	3.82**	2.34*	3.11*
R2	0.19	0.37	0.33	0.23	0.06	0.03	0.04

Source: authors' estimates based on survey data.

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 6. The relationship between various factors and "self-esteem" indicator

Predictors	Est. β	Kaz. B	Kyrg. β	Arm. β	Taj. B	Latv. β	Georg. β
Ethnic identity	0.13*	0.14	0.03	0.15	-0.01	0.12*	-0.03
Civic identity	0.25***	-0.08	-0.06	0.09	0.29***	0.06	0.01
Local identity	-0.06	0.31**	0.17*	0.13	-	-	-
Integration	0.09	0.00	0.06	-0.18	0.11	0.21***	0.19**
Assimilation	-0.14*	-0.37***	-0.13*	-0.21*	-0.08	-0.38***	-0.09
Bonding SC	-0.05	0.01	0.28***	0.11	-	-	-
Bridging SC	0.07	0.21	-0.02	-0.12	-	-	-
Perc. perm-ty. of ethn. boundaries	0.01	0.02	0.06	0.07	-	-	-
F	4.35***	4.18***	5.86***	1.94*	8.32***	28.99***	4.15***
R2	0.11	0.23	0.14	0.14	0.11	0.27	0.05

Source: authors' estimates based on survey data

**p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

and local identity in Kyrgyzstan; civic identity in Tajikistan; ethnic identity and integration strategy in Latvia; and integration strategy in Georgia. It is noteworthy that commitment to assimilation strategy has a statistically significant negative relationship with self-esteem among Russians in most of the republics under study: Estonia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, and Latvia.

Discussion of the study results

Note that the main purpose of the study was to analyze major peculiarities of psychological adaptation with due regard to the following two contextual parameters: the policy towards Russians and subjective cultural distance between Russians and representatives of the ethnic majority of the republics. Accordingly, proceeding from these two contextual conditions, we can distinguish four contexts of adaptation of Russians and countries characterized by these two parameters (Table 7). To determine the subjective cultural distance, the authors relied on its indicator and the significance of cross-country differences. We would like to draw attention to three aspects in this regard. Firstly, Kazakhstan, despite objective cultural differences (religion, traditions) with the Russian culture, has the closest *subjective* cultural distance in the perception of Russians, and this, apparently, may be due to some tendency towards assimilation of Russians in this region. This is confirmed by the fact that the commitment to acculturation assimilation strategy among Russians in Kazakhstan is the highest out of the seven countries under study (Table 4). Secondly, we did not measure subjective cultural distance in Latvia, but we put it in the same context in Estonia: in terms of context, these countries are very similar. Thirdly, we also did not measure subjective cultural distance in Georgia and Tajikistan, however, we assume that subjective cultural distance between Russians and indigenous populations of these countries will be as far as in Armenia and Kyrgyzstan (Table 7).

Specific features of psychological adaptation of Russians in each of the four contexts are specified below:

1) *Inclusive policies and a small subjective cultural distance.* On the one hand, such a context is quite favourable for psychological adaptation of Russians. In this context, Russians report a high perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries as well as both high bonding and bridging social capital. They also have a pronounced civic identity, which is not present in any of the other contexts. Psychological adaptation is facilitated by local identity, bridging social capital, perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries. In such conditions, Russians demonstrate a high commitment to assimilation acculturation strategy. Russians in Kazakhstan have one of the highest indicators of assimilation acculturation strategy among countries under study, it is second only to one in Tajikistan.

Thus, Russians in Kazakhstan are gradually becoming "Kazakh Russians" or Kazakhstanis. At the same time, it is important to note that Kazakhstan is the second, besides Russia, former Union republic, with the term denoting the entire people of the country as a supra–ethnic community - "Kazakhstanis". Russians, accordingly, can say that in Kazakhstan the conditions for psychological adaptation are good, however, with a mild assimilation pressure, which still has a negative effect on self-esteem of Russians.

2) *Inclusive policies and a large subjective cultural distance*

If we are to look at the average values of the factors of psychological adaptation of Russians in Armenia and Kyrgyzstan (Table 7), which are characterized by inclusive policies and a large cultural distance, we see that the profiles of Russians in these countries are almost identical, except for perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries, which is high in Armenia and low in Kyrgyzstan, and may be associated with religious closeness of the Armenian and Russian cultures. We see that in this context, Russians have high values of ethnic identity, the strategy of "integration" and self-esteem. At the same time, civic identity and the "assimilation" strategy have low values. The indicators of psychological adaptation in both republics are positively associated with: local identity, the strategy of "integration", and perceived permeability of ethnic boundaries. Russians are thus able to keep their culture, ethnic identity,

Table 7. Peculiar features of psychological adaptation of Russians in various contexts of post-Soviet countries

Subjective cultural distance/policy	Inclusive policy		Restrictive policy	
Small subjective cultural distance	**KAZAKHSTAN**		**ESTONIA**	
	Average:		*Average:*	
	Ethnic identity	≈	Ethnic identity	≈
	Civic identity	↑	Civic identity	≈
	Local identity	≈	Local identity	≈
	Integration	≈	Integration	↑
	Assimilation	↑	Assimilation	≈
	Life satisfaction	≈	Life satisfaction	≈
	Self-esteem	≈	Self-esteem	≈
	Bonding soc. capital	↑	Bonding soc. capital	≈
	Bridging soc. capital	↑	Bridging soc. capital	↓
	Perc. permeability of ethnic borders	↑	Perc. permeability of ethnic borders	↓
	Relationships:		*Relationships:*	
	Local Identity → (LS,SE)		Local Identity → (LS)	
	Bridging social cap. → (LS)		Bridging social cap. → (LS)	
	Assimilation (strategy) → (- SE)		Assimilation (strategy) → (- SE)	
	Perc. permeability of etn. b. → (LS)		Ethnic identity → (LS, SE)	
			Civic Identity → (LS, SE)	
			LATVIA	
			Average:	
			Ethnic identity	≈
			Civic identity	↓
			Integration	↑
			Assimilation	≈
			Life satisfaction	≈
			Self-esteem	≈
			Relationships:	
			Ethnic Identity → (SE)	
			Integration (strategy) → (SE)	
			Assimilation (strategy) → (- SE)	

Subjective cultural distance/policy	Inclusive policy	Restrictive policy
Large subjective cultural distance	**ARMENIA** *Average:* Ethnic identity ↑ Civic identity ↓ Local identity ≈ Integration ↑ Assimilation ↓ Life satisfaction ≈ Self-esteem ↑ Bonding soc. capital ≈ Bridging soc. capital ≈ Perc. permeability of ethnic boundaries ↑ *Relationships:* Local Identity → (LS) Integration (strategy) → (LS) Perc. permeability of ethnic boundaries → (LS) Assimilation (strategy) → (-SE) **KYRGYZSTAN** *Average:* Ethnic identity ↑ Civic identity ↓ Local identity ≈ Integration ↑ Assimilation ↓ Life satisfaction ≈ Self-esteem ↑ Bonding soc. capital ≈ Bridging soc. capital ≈ Perc. permeability of ethnic boundaries ↓ *Relationships:* Local Identity → (LS,SE) Integration (strategy) → (LS) Perc. permeability of etn. b. → (LS) Assimilation (strategy) → (- SE) Bonding social cap. → (LS, SE)	**GEORGIA** *Average:* Ethnic identity ↓ Civic identity ≈ Integration ↑ Assimilation ≈ Life satisfaction ↓ Self-esteem ≈ *Relationships:* Ethnic identity → (-LS) Integration (strategy) → (LS,SE) Assimilation (strategy) → (-SE) **TADJIKISTAN** *Average:* Ethnic identity ↓ Civic identity ≈ Integration ↓ Assimilation ↑ Life satisfaction ≈ Self-esteem ≈ *Relationships:* Civic Identity → (LS,SE) Integration (strategy) → (LS) Assimilation (strategy) → (LS)

Source: authors' estimates based on survey data.

Notes: LS – life satisfaction; SE – self-esteem; ↑ - statistically higher average than in most of the sample countries; ↓ - statistically lower average than in most of the sample countries; ≈ - the average value does not statistically differ from the one in most of the sample countries; → - vector of a statistically significant relationship between the predictor and the dependent variables.

and generally have a good psychological adaptation, which is indicated, in particular, by high values of self-esteem of Russians in both republics.

Restrictive policies and a small subjective cultural distance. In this context, the commitment to and request of Russians for integration are noted, that is, the preservation of their own culture along with inclusion in the culture of host societies. This is indicated by high values of the "integration" strategy, along with a positive relationship between this strategy and indicators of psychological adaptation in Latvia and Estonia. We can also see that in both Baltic republics, ethnic identity is positively associated with both indicators of psychological adaptation (life satisfaction and self-esteem), while the assimilation strategy demonstrates a negative relationship with self-esteem. Also, the bridging (interethnic) social capital measured in the Estonian Russians demonstrated a positive relationship with their life satisfaction. It is important to note that the number of Russians in the Baltic republics is quite large and, as experts note, this was mainly due to both lack of general interethnic tension in the Baltic countries and proximity to Europe and a relatively high level of socio-economic development. Officially, at the national level, the Baltic States do declare an integration policy towards ethnic minorities, in particular, the Russian population, which makes up a significant share of the population in these countries (Frolov 2019). However, the reality turns out to be more complicated. In particular, among researchers dealing with the situation of the Russian population in the Baltic States, an opinion has been formed that in fact the policy in relation to the Russian population should be considered as assimilation rather than integration (Frolov 2019; Skrinnik 2009; Musaev 2011). The main reason for this is the negative attitude towards the Soviet past, as well as a relatively large number of Russians, resulting in a higher perceived cultural threat and attempts to reduce this threat through implicit assimilation. As a result, a peculiar feature of the formation of nation-states in the Baltics is cultural and ethnic homogeneity of society proclaimed as the top priority (Skrynnik 2009), and this is essentially assimilation. Russians, however, mostly do not emigrate from the Baltic states, and the reason, according to experts, is that Russians have found their economic niche in these countries in the private sector and business (Commercio 2004). Relatively low corruption and standards of protection of private business that are to a certain extent close to the European ones allow Russians in these countries to successfully carry out economic activities.

3) *Restrictive policies and a large cultural distance.* This context is most unfavourable for psychological adaptation. This is quite well traced if we are to consider ethnic identity of Russians living in this context. We see that in countries with restrictive policies and a large cultural distance, Russians demonstrate statistically lower indicators of ethnic identity compared to other republics. Moreover, in Georgia, ethnic identity of Russians is negatively associated with life satisfaction. Russians have a pronounced ethnic identity, resulting in their inadaptation in this context, in which, for relatively successful psychological adaptation, Russians are forced to "conceal" their ethnic identity. Georgia was also the country with the lowest level of life satisfaction among Russians out of all countries under study. In Tajikistan, there are high values of the "assimilation" strategy and this strategy "works" for psychological adaptation of Russians, in particular, it is positively associated with life satisfaction. Thus, in a context that combines restrictive policies and a large cultural distance, Russians are forced to "conceal" their ethnicity for the purpose of psychological adaptation. At the same time, they also have a request for integration, as indicated by a positive relationship between the "integration" strategy and life satisfaction among Russians in Tajikistan and life satisfaction and self–esteem in Georgia.

Conclusion

Thus, the study shows that in different contexts, psychological adaptation of Russians can differ. The study has identified two contextual conditions that are important for successful adaptation of Russians in post-Soviet countries: the policy towards Russians, which can be either inclusive or restrictive, as well as subjective cultural distance. The study focused on subjective cultural distance rather than the objective one. The following four contexts of adaptation of Russians have been identified, and the countries under study have been distributed accordingly:1) inclusive policy – small subjective cultural distance (Kazakhstan); 2) inclusive policy – large subjective cultural distance (Kyrgyzstan, Armenia); 3) restrictive policy – small subjective cultural distance (Estonia, Latvia); 4) restrictive policy – large subjective cultural distance (Georgia, Tajikistan). The study shows that each of the four contexts has its own characteristic "scenario" of psychological adaptation. With a *combination of inclusive policies and a small subjective cultural distance*, the conditions for psychological adaptation are favourable, ethnic boundaries are permeable, bridging (interethnic) social capital is formed. However, there is a downside to such a favourable context – there are assimilation tendencies therein, and Russians in general do accept them. They fit themselves into a supra-ethnic community (in our case, Kazakhstanis), and their local identity within this community (the Kazakh Russians) is associated with their psychological adaptation in this context.

With a *combination of inclusive politics and a large subjective cultural distance*, we see that Russians have opportunities to fully preserve their ethnic identity and integrate into the host society. Such a context shows the highest values of self-esteem as one of the indicators of psychological adaptation.

In the case of a *combination of restrictive policies and a small subjective cultural distance*, there is a kind of a request from Russians for integration, that is, the preservation of their own culture along with inclusion in the culture of host societies. This is observed in the Baltic states, where Russians are generally satisfied with the socio-economic opportunities provided, however, the limiting context engenders a request for integration as opposed to assimilation.

The context combining *restrictive policies and a large subjective cultural distance* is the most unfavourable for psychological adaptation of Russians, and in this context, it is really low. It is characteristic that in this context Russians are forced to reduce, "conceal" their ethnic identity, an open expression of which is negatively associated with life satisfaction – which we did not observe in any of the other three contexts considered.

This study has attempted to understand to what extent psychological adaptation of Russians in the post-Soviet space may depend upon the context (policy towards Russians) and perceived cultural distance from the dominant ethnic group, and offer explanations of peculiar features of adaptation of Russians in different countries, with due regard to the impact of these factors. Research in this area is on.

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