

International Organization for Migration  
Vilnius office

## **Migration and transit as seen by Kaliningrad population**

Representative public opinion survey of the Kaliningrad population, 2005

Vilnius, 2005

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The International Organization for Migration is grateful to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland the Division of Neighboring States for their financial assistance to implement the project and prepare the book. This survey is an integral part of the project “*Kaliningrad transit: secure border, free movement*”.

ISBN 9955-697-00-8

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## Introduction

From a historical perspective the current status of the Kaliningrad region as an exclave is not unique. It may even be said that the disjuncture of the Kaliningrad region from the metropolis is a rule rather than an exception. Even when this region was not geographically isolated from metropolis, it was often unique and somewhat distinct (in political, economic or military terms).

Neither is the contemporary Kaliningrad a typical region of Russia. As an exclave (surrounded by EU) it has certain problems of communication with other regions of the mainland Russia. 2002 saw the adoption of the solution acceptable (compromise) to all the stakeholders concerned - EU, Russia and Lithuania – the valid procedure of facilitated transit through Lithuania. This solution called for exceptional flexibility of all the stakeholders concerned in order to match strict EU migration policy requirements with the right of citizens of Russia to travel to the Kaliningrad region without being subject to any artificial obstacles. Whilst politicians and experts admit this to be a good solution, it is very important to learn the attitudes of end users of this procedure, namely citizens of the Kaliningrad region.

Commissioned by the International Organisation for Migration, a representative public opinion survey of Kaliningrad region population (1.060 respondents) was carried out by Kaliningrad Sociology Centre. The objective of the survey was to identify the attitudes and feelings of the citizens of the Kaliningrad region related to migratory processes, namely the extent of mobility of the region's citizens, usual destinations and means of transport when travelling as well as problems experienced during trips, and the future of the Kaliningrad region as seen by its citizens. Of particular importance were opinions of the citizens on the valid procedure of transit through Lithuania, related problems and solutions proposed by Kaliningrad citizens. These questions which may seem to be of a rather general nature reveal not only migratory approach and methods of Kaliningrad citizens, it allows also to identify/define the limits between the emotional evaluation of the situation and real problems linked with trips.

The survey *Migration and Transit as Seen by the Kaliningrad Region Population* is part of the study *Kaliningrad Transit: Secure Borders, Free Movement* which complements the practical information provided in the study on the valid procedure of facilitated transit with personal judgements and actual travelling experiences. We hope this survey will help a reader to create a broader picture both of the valid Kaliningrad transit procedure and our neighbours, citizens of Kaliningrad.

## 1. How do you feel living in the Kaliningrad region?

By living in an exclave many citizens of the Kaliningrad region feel isolated from Russia and from Russia and the world. Descriptions of isolation vary depending on the age and major occupation of the respondents.

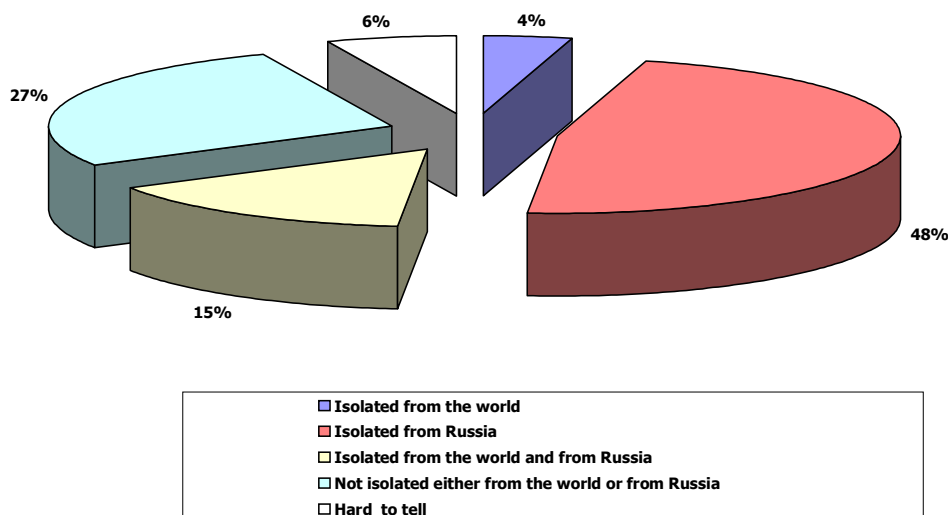
*A question of the questionnaire:* "Below is the list describing life in the Kaliningrad region. How do you personally feel living in this region?"

According to the findings of the survey almost every second citizen of the Kaliningrad region feels isolated from Russia (48%), another 15% feel isolated both from Russia and the world, while 4% of the respondents feel isolated from the world.

No isolation is felt by slightly more than one fourth of the respondents – 27% (whilst for 6% it was hard to tell). (Chart 1.1).

Men and women gave almost identical answers.

**Chart 1.1.** How do you feel being a citizen of the Kaliningrad region?



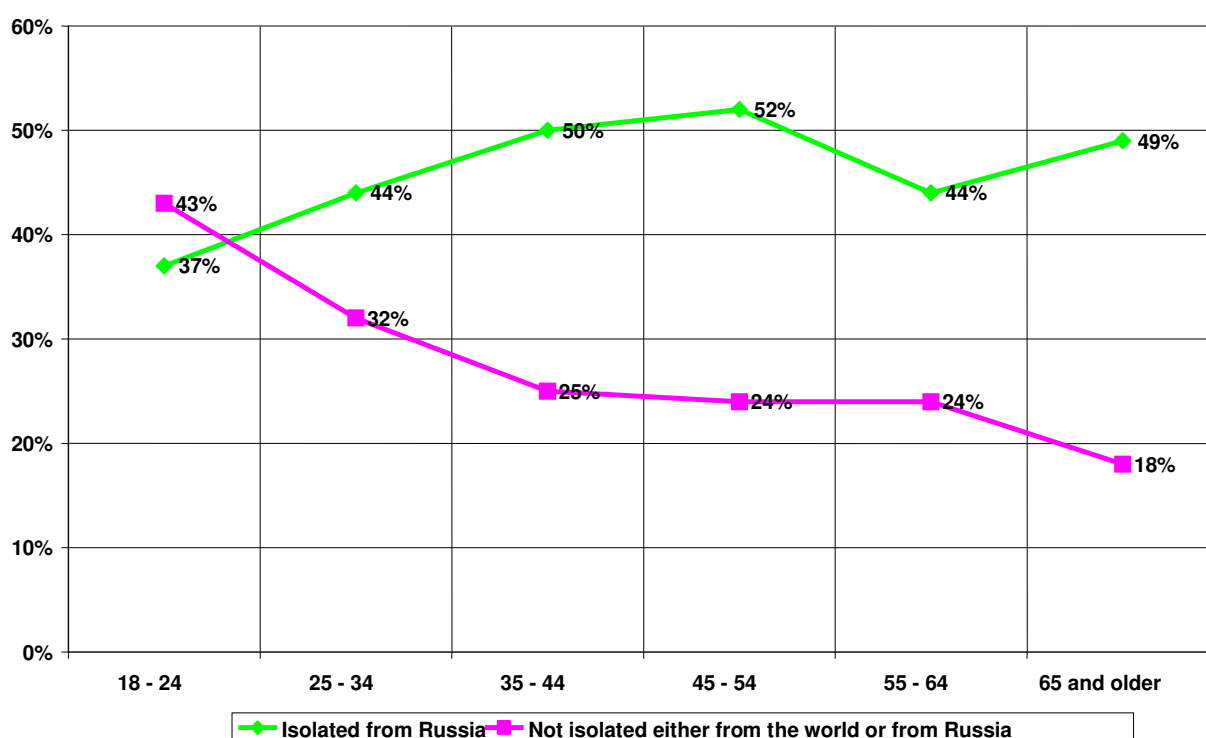
The group feeling least isolated are the youngest respondents (including the feeling of isolation from Russia and from the world), this difference growing with age.

Comparison of distribution of answers by major occupation has revealed that the feeling of less pronounced isolation is characteristic of socially active and educated respondents, namely business people and full-time students (Chart 1.1 and Tables 1.1 – 1.3).

**Table 1.1** How do you feel being a citizen of the Kaliningrad region? *Gender*

	Men	Women	In total:
Isolated from the world	3%	5%	4%
Isolated from Russia	47%	46%	47%
Isolated from the world and from Russia	15%	16%	15%
Not isolated either from the world or from Russia	28%	26%	27%
Hard to tell	6%	6%	6%
In total:	100%	100%	100%

**Chart 1.2** How do you feel being a citizen of the Kaliningrad region? *Age*



**Table 1.2** How do you feel being a citizen of the Kaliningrad region? *Age*

	18 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 – 64	65 and above
Isolated from the world	2%	7%	4%	3%	4%	5%
Isolated from Russia	37%	44%	50%	52%	44%	49%
Isolated from the world and from Russia	14%	11%	18%	14%	17%	21%
Not isolated either from the world or from Russia	43%	32%	25%	24%	24%	18%
Hard to tell	5%	6%	3%	6%	11%	8%
In total:	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Table 1.3** How do you feel being a citizen of the Kaliningrad region? *Major occupation*

	Employees	Self-employed, businessmen	Full-time students	Pensioners and disabled	Housewives	Temporarily unemployed, unemployed
Isolated from the world	4%	5%	3%	5%	5%	6%
Isolated from Russia	50%	37%	23%	48%	40%	46%
Isolated from the world and from Russia	14%	16%	12%	19%	19%	13%
Not isolated either from the world or from Russia	27%	34%	53%	19%	32%	25%
Hard to tell	5%	8%	8%	9%	3%	10%
In total:	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

## 2. Trips to other regions of the mainland Russia

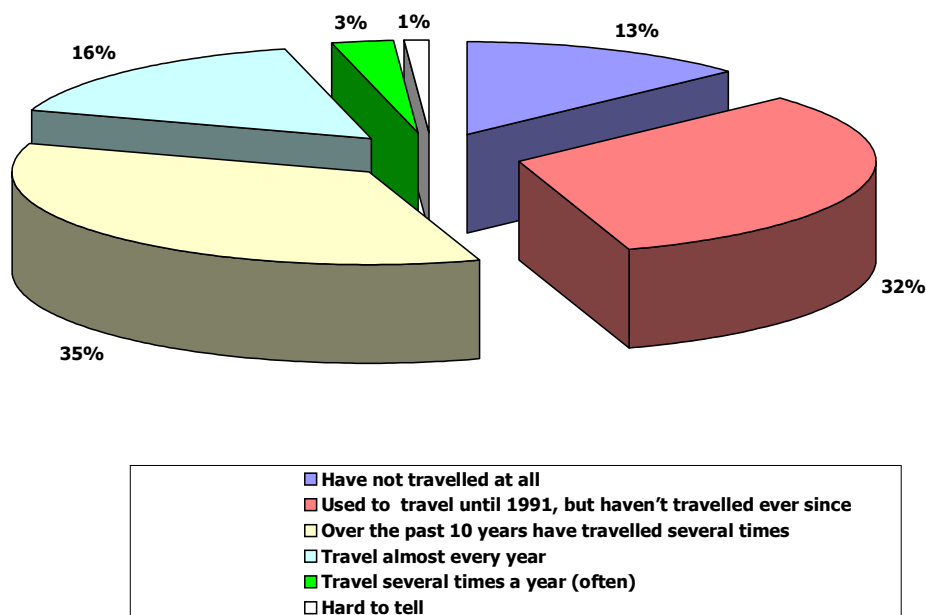
The migratory relations of the Kaliningrad region citizens with the mainland Russia are not very intense. The number of trips often depends on age, occupation and the place of residence.

*A question of the questionnaire:*

*How often have you travelled to other regions of the mainland Russia?*

The results of the survey illustrate that as many as 45 % of the Kaliningrad region citizens have not travelled from the exclave for the past 15 years, 13 % of them have not been to other regions of Russia at all. Another 15 % of the respondents have travelled from the exclave only several times over the past 10 years. The number of persons travelling every year is below one fifth of the total population, of which only 3% visit other regions of Russia on a frequent basis, i.e. several times a year (Chart 2.1).

**Chart 2.1** How often have you personally travelled to other regions of Russia?



The youngest respondents account for the largest share of the most mobile part of the population ("travel almost every year") and the least mobile group of population ("haven't travelled at all"). Respondents 45 years and older used to travel more (compared against the younger group of the respondents) before 1991 (Table 2.1).

Students (just as the previously mentioned group of the youngest respondents between 18 to 24 years of age) make up the largest group of those travelling almost every year. The majority of those who have not travelled at all or used to travel only until 1991 accounts

for individuals not actively participating in the labour market, namely pensioners and people with disabilities, housewives and unemployed or temporarily unemployed (Table 2.1).

Residents of Kaliningrad and other towns are more mobile than rural population (as many as 19% of rural population have not travelled outside the region at all). (Table 2.3).

**Table 2.1** How often have you personally travelled to other regions of Russia? *Age*

	18 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 – 64	65 and above
Have not travelled at all	25%	20%	8%	7%	9%	9%
Used to travel until 1991, but haven't travelled ever since	8%	21%	23%	35%	40%	60%
Over the past 10 years have travelled several times	38%	36%	44%	33%	35%	27%
Travel almost every year	23%	18%	19%	19%	13%	3%
Travel several times a year (often)	4%	5%	5%	3%	1%	1%
Hard to tell	2%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%
In total:	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Table 2.2.** How often have you personally travelled to other regions of Russia? *Major occupation*

	Employees	Self-employed, businessmen	Military officers, militia, Federal Security Council, tax inspectorate, etc.	Full-time students	Pensioners and disabled	Housewives	Temporarily unemployed, unemployed
Have not travelled at all	11%	11%	7%	18%	10%	23%	29%
Used to travel until 1991, but haven't travelled ever since	26%	21%	17%	5%	52%	31%	28%
Over the past 10 years have travelled several times	41%	32%	43%	40%	28%	29%	26%
Travel almost every year	19%	21%	20%	33%	8%	13%	10%
Travel several times a year (often)	3%	16%	13%	2%	1%	5%	3%
Hard to tell	1%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	3%
In total:	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Table 2.3.** How often have you personally travelled to other regions of Russia? *Place of residence*

	Kaliningrad	Other towns	Rural areas
Have not travelled at all	8%	15%	19%
Used to travel until 1991, but haven't travelled ever since	31%	29%	36%
Over the past 10 years have travelled several times	36%	35%	33%
Travel almost every year	20%	16%	7%
Travel several times a year (often)	3%	5%	2%
Hard to tell	1%	0%	2%
In total:	100%	100%	100%

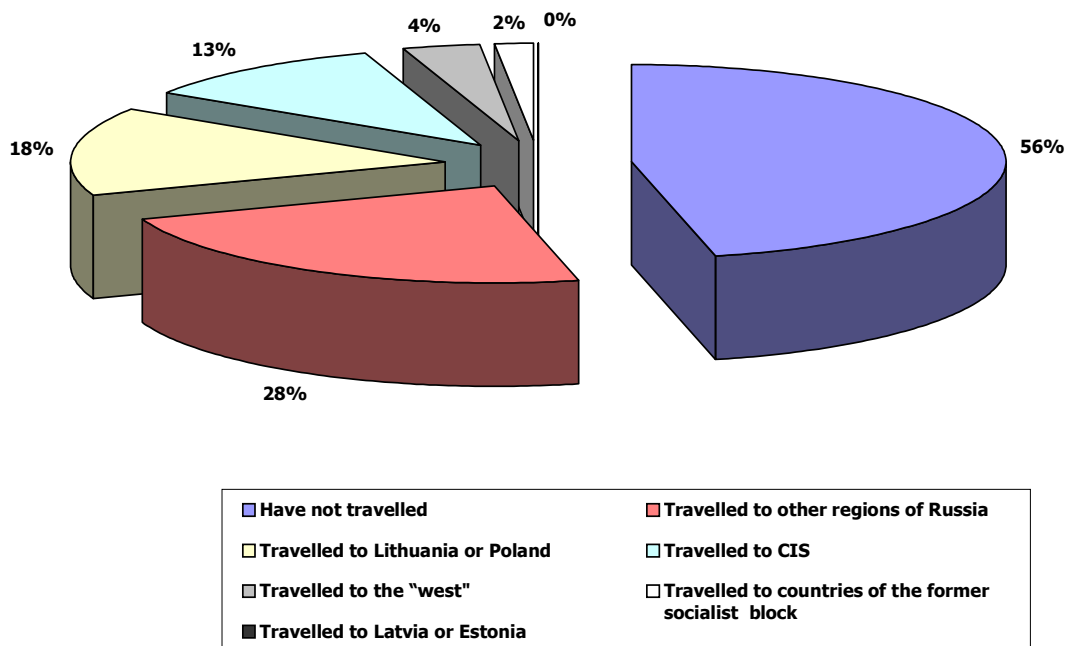
### 3. Mobility of the Kaliningrad region population over the past two years

Over half of the citizens of the region have not travelled from the territory of the Kaliningrad region. Those who have travelled over the past two years (a total of 44%) most often visited the Russian Federation or the neighbouring Lithuania and Poland.

*A question of the questionnaire:  
Have you travelled outside the borders of the Kaliningrad region over the past two years?  
If yes, what was your destination?*

Over half of the respondents (56%) have not travelled outside the borders of the region for the past two years. The majority of those who have travelled visited other regions in the mainland Russia (28%), 18% respondents visited the neighbouring Lithuania and Poland and the remainder 13% travelled to other CIS countries. A very small fraction of respondents have visited countries of western Europe (4%) and other countries of the former socialist block (2%). (Chart 3.1, Table 3.1)

**Chart 0.1** If you have travelled outside the borders of the Kaliningrad region over the past two years which country was your destination?<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> The sum total of percentages may exceed 100% because respondents could choose several answers.

**Table 3.1** If you have travelled outside the borders of the Kaliningrad region over the past two years which country was your destination?

Have not travelled	56%
Travelled to other regions of Russia	28%
Travelled to Lithuania or Poland	18%
Travelled to CIS countries	13%
Travelled to the “west”	4%
Travelled to countries of the former socialist block	2%

### **Reasons for abstaining from travelling**

*On the basis of the survey the key reasons behind abstaining to travel from the territory of the Kaliningrad region may be divided into four groups:*

- *financial problems (lack of cash)*
- *absence of the need to travel*
- *bureaucratic obstacles*
- *absence of a foreign passport*

**A question of the questionnaire:**

*If you have not travelled over the past two years, what were the reasons for abstaining from travelling?*

The questionnaire did not provide readymade answers; the most frequent or more interesting answers are listed below:

- Lack of cash for travels (“disability pension is too small to afford travelling”, “I don’t earn enough to afford travelling”, “240 roubles do not suffice for food, let alone travelling”, etc.)
- No inclination to travel (“what for and whom to visit”, “relationship have died away”, “I was born here, my parents live here”, “I have neither wish nor extra cash to afford this”, etc.).
- Bureaucratic obstacles for those wishing to travel (“it is difficult to start on a journey, one has to get many documents”, “problems with visas, too expensive”, “difficulties at the border”, etc. ).
- Doesn’t have a foreign passport
- Other (“health problems”, “military officers”, “small children”).

None of the above reasons was clearly predominant, but the most frequent combination was made up of financial difficulties and non-existent relationship in the mainland Russia, problems with a foreign passport

**4. Do they feel more isolated since the introduction of the new transit rules?**

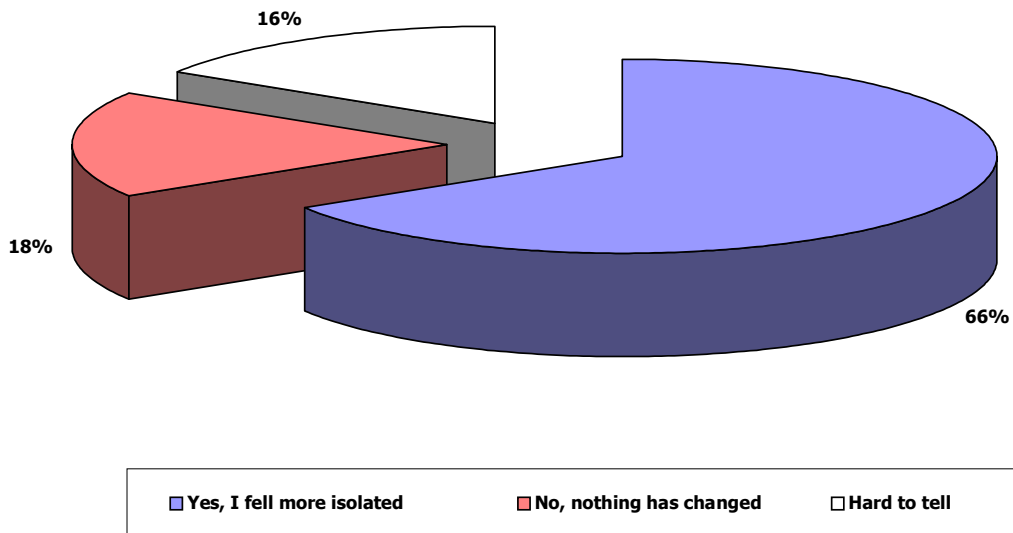
Since the introduction of the new transit rules in 2004, many citizens of the Kaliningrad region have been feeling more isolated. The sense of more pronounced isolation is felt among an older group of the population with smaller income.

*A question of the questionnaire:  
Do you feel more isolated since the introduction of the new transit rules?*

Since the introduction of the new transit rules in 2004 66% of the respondents have been feeling more isolated and 18% see no difference. (Chart 4.1).

The feeling of isolation is hardly linked to the frequency of journeys. The feeling of isolation is less pronounced among younger generation seeking higher education, namely 18 – 24 age group (59%) and full-time students (56%). Less acute feeling of isolation is directly linked to larger income, and vice versa (Tables 4.1 – 4.4).

**Chart 4.1. Do your feel more isolated since the introduction of the new transit rules in 2004?**



**Table 4.1.** Feeling of isolation and frequency of trips

	Haven't travelled at all	Used to travel until 1991, but haven't travelled ever since	Over the past 10 years have travelled several times	Travel almost every year	Travel several times a year (often)	Hard to tell
Yes, I feel more isolated	57% <sup>2</sup>	73%	68%	62%	54%	17%
No, nothing has changed	16%	11%	20%	27%	23%	25%
Hard to tell	27%	17%	13%	12%	23%	58%
In total:	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Table 4.2.** Do you feel more isolated since the introduction of the new transit rules in 2004? *Age*

	18 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 – 64	65 and above
Yes, I feel more isolated	59%	64%	69%	68%	67%	68%
No, nothing has changed	23%	22%	16%	18%	18%	10%
Hard to tell	18%	15%	14%	14%	16%	22%
In total:	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Table 4.3.** Do you feel more isolated since the introduction of the new transit rules in 2004? *Major occupation*

	Employees	Self-employed, Businessmen	Full-time students	Pensioners and disabled	Housewives	Temporarily unemployed, unemployed
Yes, I feel more isolated	67%	66%	56%	68%	66%	57%
No, nothing has changed	20%	11%	27%	12%	16%	21%
Hard to tell	13%	24%	17%	20%	18%	22%
In total:	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Table 4.4** Do you feel more isolated since the introduction of the new transit rules in 2004? *Cost of living*

	It is hard to make both ends meet, lack of funds for foodstuffs	Have enough funds for foodstuffs, but buying clothes poses financial difficulties	Have enough funds for foodstuffs and clothes, but purchasing durable goods is problematic	We can easily afford durable goods, but not really expensive ones	We can afford expensive goods	Hard to tell
Yes, I feel more isolated	73%	70%	62%	59%	67% <sup>3</sup>	55%
No, nothing has changed	9%	16%	21%	25%	0%	27%
Hard to tell	18%	14%	17%	16%	33%	18%
In total:	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

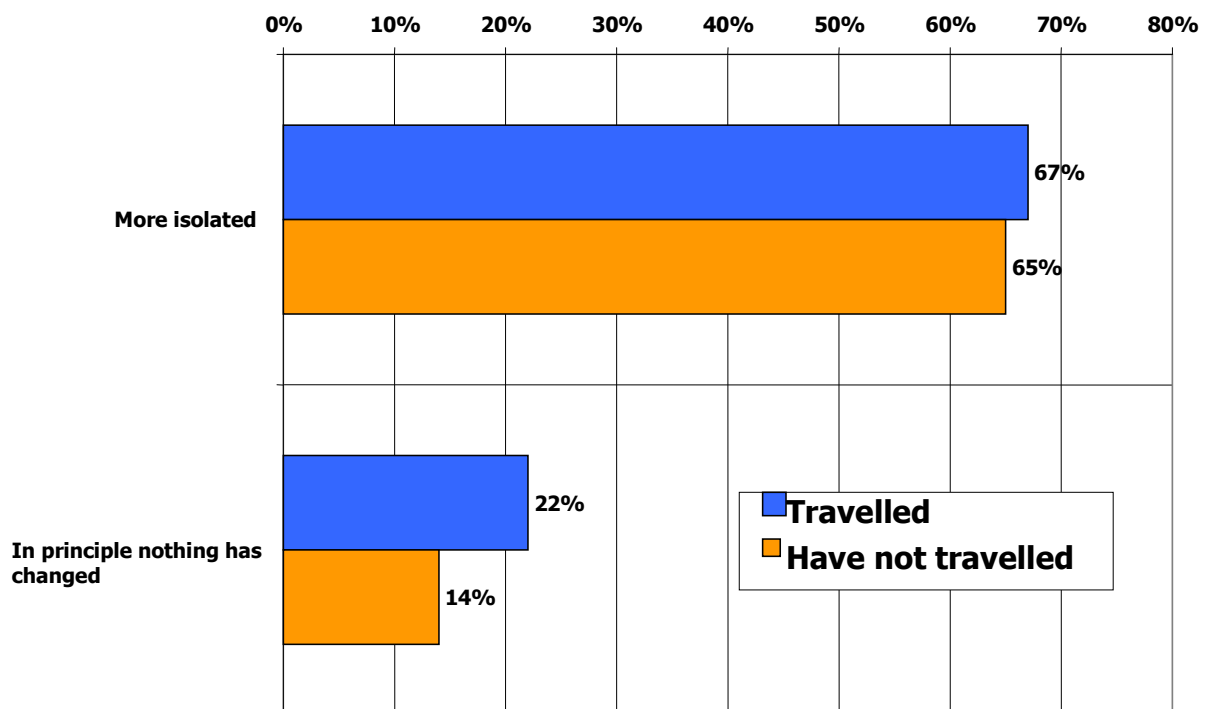
***Feeling of isolation is weakly linked with mobility.***

<sup>2</sup> Those who have not travelled at all having no basis for comparison can not rate the situation objectively.

<sup>3</sup> It is difficult to interpret this figure, since merely 0,3% of all the respondents have attributed themselves to this group (N=3).

Since a similar feeling of isolation is felt both by individuals who have and have not travelled at all over the past two years, it can therefore be assumed that "the feeling of isolation and exclusion" is more an emotional/psychological condition than a physical reality related to travel problems. More so, those respondents who travel or have travelled from the region claimed that nothing has changed in principle (22%) more often than those who have not travelled from the region over the past two years (14%). (Chart 4.2.)

**Chart 4.2.** Feeling of isolation and mobility (those who have travelled from the region over the past two years)



## 5. Most popular means of transport

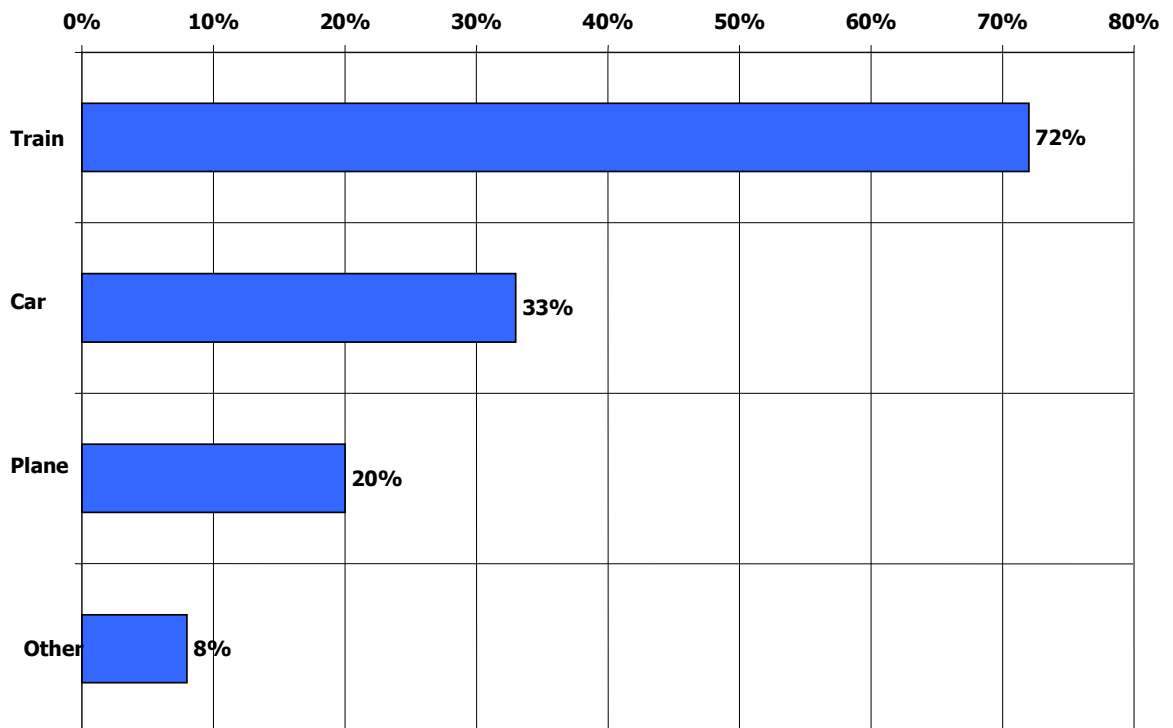
**An absolute majority of the citizens/respondents of the Kaliningrad region who travelled to Russia travelled by train.**

*A question of the questionnaire:*

*Which means of transport do you use for travelling to Russia and other countries of CIS?*

The most popular means of transport between the Kaliningrad region and the Russian Federation is train – this means of transport was used by as many as 72% of the respondents. One third of the respondents travelled by car in transit through Lithuania (33%), one fifth travelled from the Kaliningrad region to the Russian Federation by plane (20%). (Diagram 5.1, Table 5.1). An exceptional group is made up of the wealthiest citizens of the region (100 % of those who travelled to other regions of Russia travelled by plane).

**Diagram 5.1** Which means of transport have you used?<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> The sum total of percentages may exceed 100%, because the respondents could choose more than one answer.

**Table 5.1** Which means of transport have you used for travelling to Russia and other countries of CIS?

Train	72%
Car	33%
Plane	20%
Other	8%

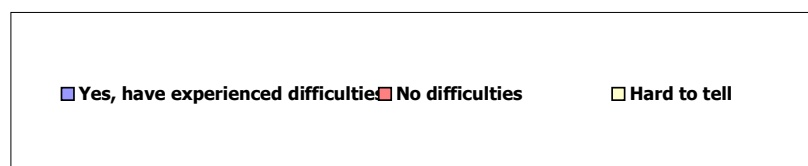
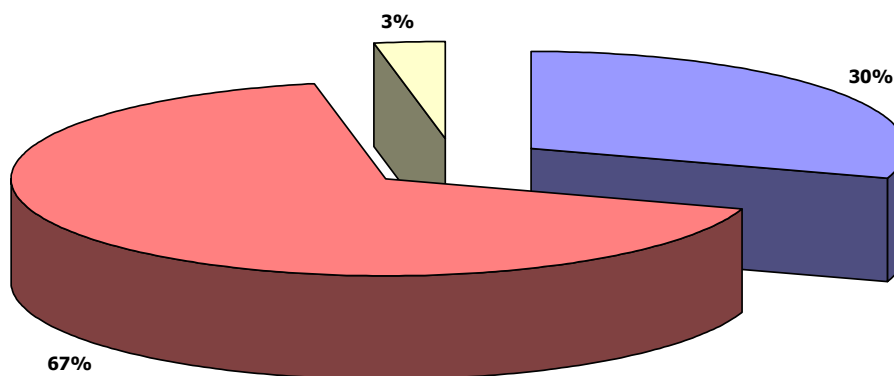
**6. Major sources of inconvenience experienced by the citizens of the Kaliningrad region travelling in transit through Lithuania**

Two thirds of the respondents have experienced no difficulties/ inconveniences when travelling in transit through Lithuania, although around every third respondent indicated one or other type of difficulties. The least of complaints were voiced by those who were using facilitated railway travel documents.

*A question of the questionnaire :*  
*Have you experienced difficulties/inconveniences while travelling to other regions of Russia in transit through Lithuania?*

When asked about difficulties during a journey, the answers of the respondents have distributed as follows: 67% of the respondents have not experienced any difficulties and 30% of the respondents have experienced some difficulties (Chart 6.1).

**Chart 6.1** Have you experienced any difficulties when travelling in transit?



Most of the difficulties when travelling by different means of transport were experienced when travelling by car (43%), least of difficulties – when travelling by plane (27%). Travelling by train, which is considered the most popular means of transport for trips between the Kaliningrad region and the Russian Federation, posed few difficulties similar to the number of those who travelled by plane (29%). A similar number of complaints from travellers by plane and by train illustrate that difficulties are more related to the trip itself rather than its means or procedure.

**Table 6.1** Means of travelling and difficulties during the trip

	By plane	By train	By car	Other
Yes, have experienced difficulties	27%	29%	43%	18%
No difficulties	68%	69%	52%	74%
Hard to tell	5%	2%	5%	9%
In total:	100%	100%	100%	100%

### ***6.1. Major problems identified by citizens of the Kaliningrad region when travelling in transit through Lithuania***

**Since, as has already been mentioned, most of the inconveniences were experienced by those travelling by car through Lithuania, this group of travellers listed the majority of facts that triggered their indignation. The key elements of inconvenience mentioned by the respondents were the length of queuing at the border, bureaucratic obstacles and disrespect for travellers.**

*A question of the questionnaire: (open-ended)  
Major difficulties/ sources of inconvenience when travelling in transit through Lithuania*

The underlying problems may be divided into the following groups: related to the waste of time, bureaucratic obstacles and problems related to the work of staff (border guards), other

- Waste of time (“car queues at the border, people waiting for several days, disorder”, “long queuing at the border prolongs the time of the trip”, “long checks at the border”).
- Bureaucratic obstacles (“he found fault with me for no apparent reason”, “completing questionnaires takes a lot of time”, “crowding, checks”, “keeping passport under one’s pillow all through the night”, “prohibitions, the need to fill in various papers, disembarkation for no reason”, “humiliation at the border, checks at night”).
- Problems with staff (“Lithuanians violate our rights as citizens”, “bad approach of Lithuanian border guards to Russian citizens”, “disrespect for citizens of the

- Kaliningrad region at the Lithuanian border, demanding a bribe”, “checks at night”, “when checking they rummage through personal bags and even laugh”).
- Other (“I'm travelling to Moscow – what right does Lithuania have to interfere”, “visas can be obtained only in thirty days”, etc.).

## **7. Evaluation of transit rules**

**Over half of the respondents disagree that the new transit procedure is an optimal solution. This opinion is connected with the respondents' mobility: those respondents who have travelled outside the borders of the exclave over the past two years have a much more favourable opinion about the new procedure than those respondents who have abstained from travelling and know about the procedure only from hearsay.**

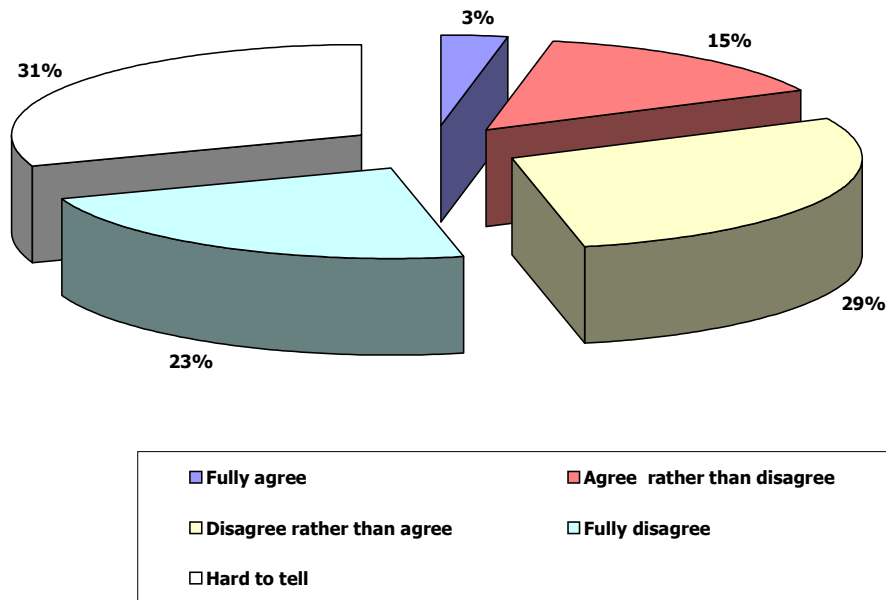
*A question of the questionnaire:*

*„The new transit procedure through the Republic of Lithuania has been operational for two years. According to some experts these rules ensure the security and convenience of travellers and is the best solution for all. How would you rate your agreement or disagreement with this opinion?”*

*\* The wording of the question, which defines the new procedure as “the best solution for all”, prejudices a rather negative response of the respondents; the interpretation of the answers can therefore be somewhat biased.*

One third of the respondents (31%) have no personal opinion on the issue. An unfavourable opinion accounted for a larger share of the respondents, i.e. 52% (29% of the respondents are more inclined to disagree rather than agree with a positive evaluation of the new transit procedure while 23% strongly disagree with such an opinion), a favourable opinion was common to mere 18% (of which 3% were strongly in favour with the positive evaluation and 15% more inclined to agree than disagree with it). (Chart 7.1 , Table 7.1)

**Chart 7.1** The new transit procedure through the Republic of Lithuania has been operational for two years. According to some experts these rules ensure the security and convenience of travellers and is the best solution for all. How would you rate your agreement or disagreement with this?



From those respondents who have travelled over the past two years a favourable opinion about the new transit procedure is shared by 22% (of which 3% fully agree with a positive opinion and 19% are more inclined to agree rather than disagree with it), while an unfavourable opinion is held by 54% (of which 32% are more inclined to disagree rather than agree with a favourable opinion on the new transit procedure and 22% fully disagree with it).

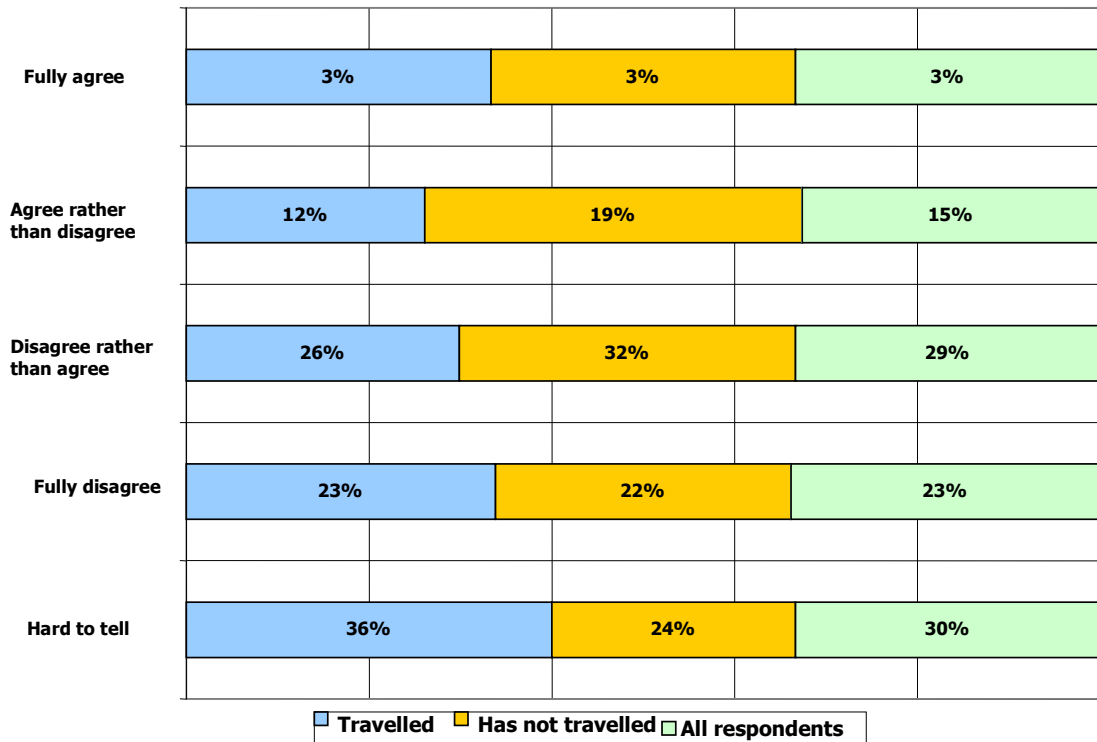
From those respondents who have not travelled over the past two years a favourable opinion about the new transit procedure is shared by 15% (of which 3% fully agree with a favourable opinion and 12% are more inclined to agree rather than disagree with it), while an unfavourable opinion is held by 49% (of which 26% are more inclined to disagree rather than agree with a favourable opinion about the new transit procedure and 23% fully disagree with it).

(Chart 7.2, Table 7.2).

**Table 7.1** The new transit procedure through the Republic of Lithuania has been operational for two years. According to some experts these rules ensure the security and convenience of travellers and is the best solution for all. How would you rate your agreement or disagreement with this?

Hard to tell	31%
Disagree rather than agree	29%
Fully disagree	23%
Agree rather than disagree	15%
Fully agree	3%

**Chart 7.2** The new transit procedure through the Republic of Lithuania has been operational for two years. According to some experts these rules ensure the security and convenience of travellers and is the best solution for all. How would you rate your agreement or disagreement with this?  
*Respondents who have and have not travelled over the past two years*



**Table 7.2** The new transit procedure through the Republic of Lithuania has been operational for two years. According to some experts these rules ensure the security and convenience of travellers and is the best solution for all. How would you rate your agreement or disagreement with this?  
*Respondents who have and have not travelled over the past two years*

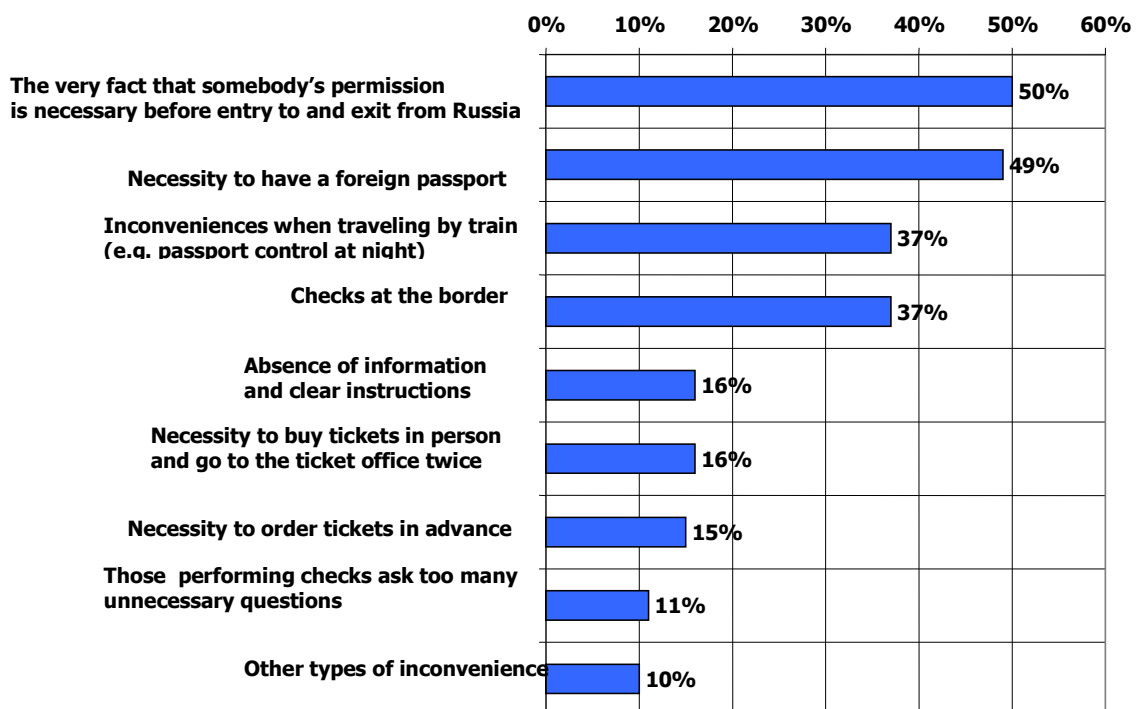
	Have not travelled	Have travelled	All respondents
Fully agree	3%	3%	3%
Agree rather than disagree	12%	19%	15%
Disagree rather than agree	26%	32%	29%
Fully disagree	23%	22%	23%
Hard to tell	36%	24%	31%
	100%	100%	100%

**8. The major problems of the existing transit procedure through the Republic of Lithuania as identified by Kaliningrad citizens**

The bulk of negative responses related to travelling in transit are linked not to technical matters (travel documents, purchasing of tickets), but rather to emotional factors, namely the very fact that somebody’s permission is needed to be granted for travelling from Russia to Russia.

*A question of the questionnaire: (open-ended)  
Please rate in the order of importance the given statements on the major problems experienced when travelling in transit through Lithuania (select the three most important problems).*

**Chart 8.1** Which of the following pose most of inconveniences (select the three most important ones)?<sup>5</sup>



*As can be seen from the findings of the survey, the largest source of discontent comes from the very fact that somebody's permission is necessary before entry to and exit from*

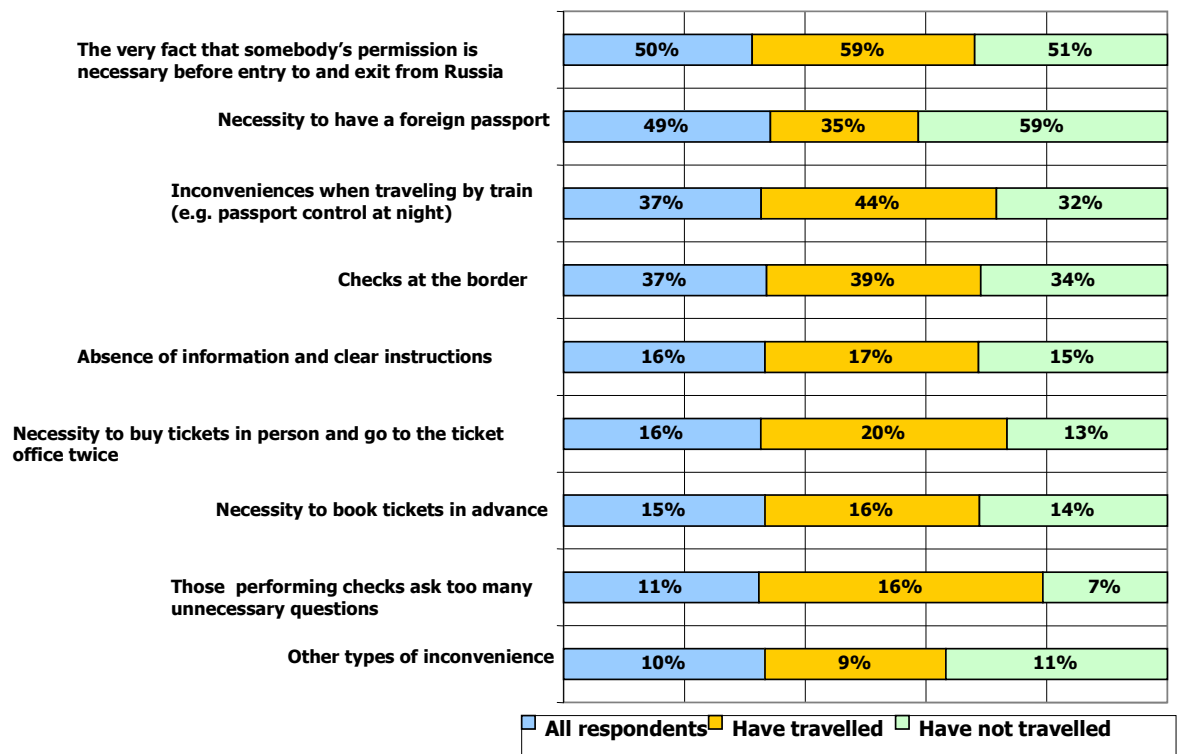
<sup>5</sup> The sum total of percentages may exceed 100%, because the respondents could choose more than one answer.

*Russia* – this question yielded positive response from 50% of the respondents, of which 59% travelled over the past two years and 50% of those who have not travelled. The second problem in terms of importance was *said to be the necessity for a foreign passport* (a total of 49%, of which 35% have travelled and 59% have not travelled), *inconveniences when travelling by train* (a total of 37%, of which 32% have travelled and 44% have not travelled) and *checks at the border* (a total of 37%, of which 39% have travelled and 34% have not travelled). *Communication with border guards* poses least of problems – this factor was singled out only by 11%, of which 16% have travelled and 7% - have not travelled over the past two years. (Chart 8.2, Tables 8.1-8.2).

**Table 8.1** Which of the following pose most of inconveniences (select the three most important ones)?

The very fact that somebody's permission is necessary before entry to and exit from Russia	50%
Necessity to have a foreign passport	49%
Inconveniences when travelling by train (e.g. passport control at night)	37%
Checks at the border	37%
Absence of information and clear instructions	16%
Necessity to buy tickets in person and go to the ticket office twice	16%
Necessity to book tickets in advance	15%
Those performing checks ask too many unnecessary questions	11%
Other types of inconvenience	10%

**Chart 8.2** Which of the following pose most of inconveniences (select the three most important ones) *Respondents who have and have not travelled over the past two years*



**Table 8.2.** Which of the following pose most of inconveniences (select the three most important ones)? *Respondents who have and have not travelled over the past two years*

	All respondents	Have travelled	Have not travelled
The very fact that somebody's permission is necessary before entry to and exit from Russia	50%	59%	51%
Necessity to have a foreign passport	49%	35%	59%
Inconveniences when travelling by train (e.g. passport control at night)	37%	44%	32%
Checks at the border	37%	39%	34%
Absence of information and clear instructions	16%	17%	15%
Necessity to buy tickets in person and go to the ticket office twice	16%	20%	13%
Necessity to book tickets in advance	15%	16%	14%
Those performing checks ask too many unnecessary questions	11%	16%	7%
Other types of inconvenience	10%	9%	11%

### ***8.1. Recommendations given by citizens of the Kaliningrad region on "What needs to be done to improve transit through Lithuania?"***

**The most frequently suggested options on how to improve border crossing were change of border guards' attitude (more respect), stricter Russian policy towards Lithuania and proposals for logistical improvements.**

*A question in the questionnaire: (open-ended)*

*"What needs to be done to improve transit through the Republic of Lithuania?"*

The replies can be divided into three groups: improved work of staff, politically radical answers and concrete logistical proposals.

- Work of staff ("be more polite", "show respect for the elderly, do not search them, unfortunate as they are", "change the attitude towards an individual").
- Politically radical ("assume a stronger position when negotiating with Lithuania", "close and isolate Lithuania", "treat Lithuanians as they are treat us", "intimidate Lithuanians", "return the former regime", "introduce a free crossing procedure", "abandon the visa regime", "lay a transit corridor through Lithuania that would belong to Russia").
- Concrete (and less concrete) proposals for logistical improvements ("more planes and ferries", "closed trains not stopping in Lithuania", special carriages with guards", "uniform European passport for all", "build an air bridge").

## 9. The future of the Kaliningrad Region as seen by its citizens

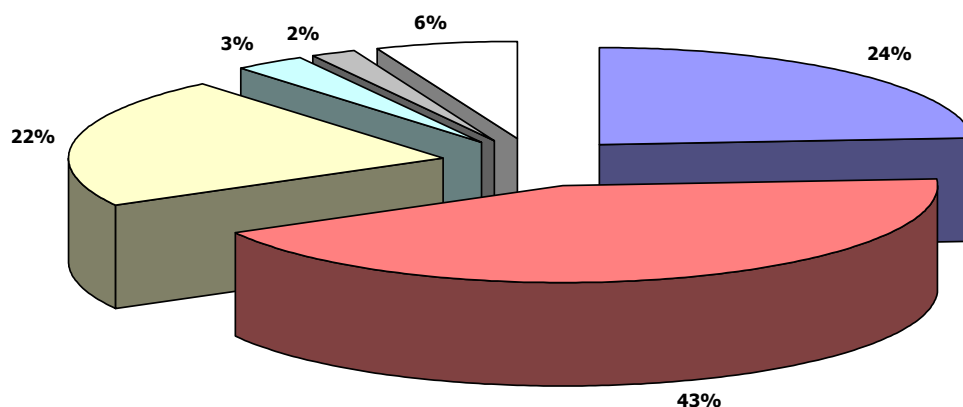
Many citizens of the Kaliningrad region perceive their region as politically inseparable from the Russian Federation, but somewhat special, exceptional. There is a small and almost stable number of citizens in favour of sovereignty.

*A question of the questionnaire:*

"Which of the given scenarios of the possible future of the Kaliningrad region is the most acceptable to you?"

According to the findings of the survey, the most frequently mentioned future prospect for the Kaliningrad region is that of remaining within the Russian Federation with an exceptional status (43%) or as part of Russia though governed under its own laws (22%); only 24% of the respondents picture the Kaliningrad region as any other Russian region. 3% of the respondents imagine the Kaliningrad region as an independent state, while 2% - as part of another state (for 6% found it hard to tell). (Chart 9.1)

**Chart 9.1** Which of the given scenarios of the possible future of the Kaliningrad region is the most acceptable to you?

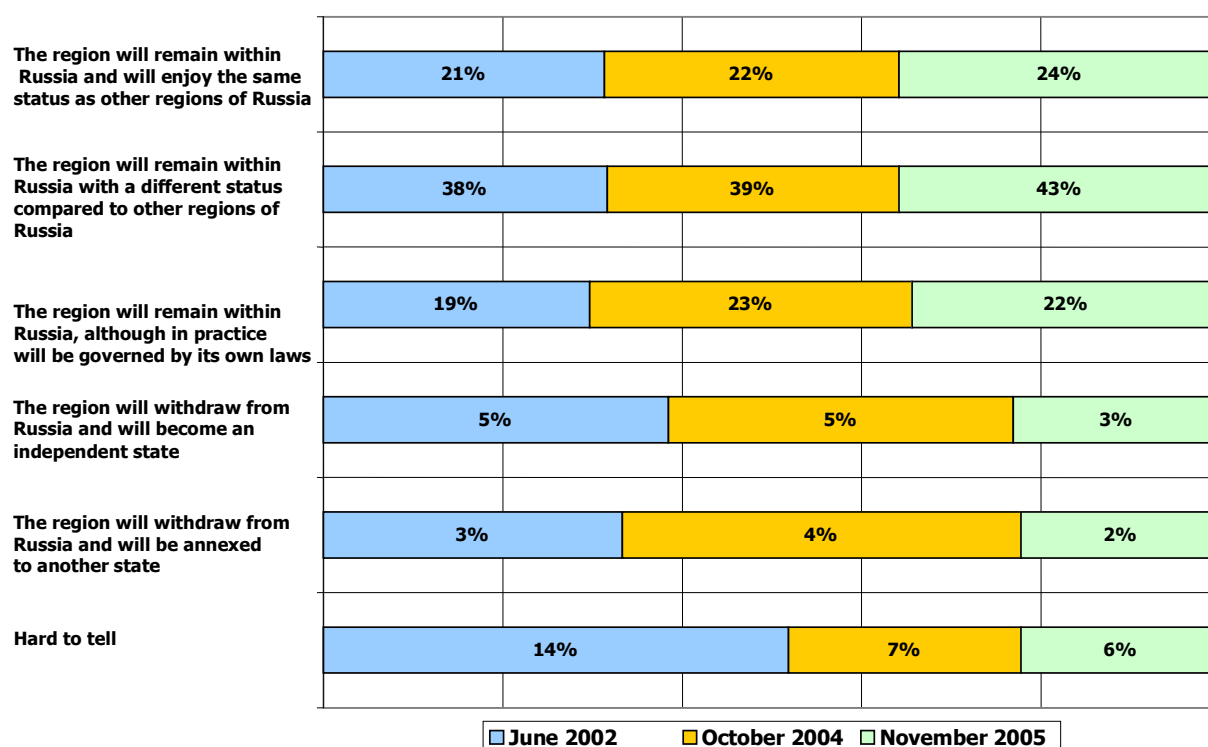


- The region will remain within Russia and will enjoy the same status as other regions of Russia
- The region will remain within Russia with a different status compared to other regions of Russia
- The region will remain within Russia, although in practice will be governed by its own laws
- The region will withdraw from Russia and will become an independent state
- The region will withdraw from Russia and will be annexed to another state
- Hard to tell

*The dynamics of perceiving the exceptional nature of the Kaliningrad region during recent years has remained rather stable.*

Compared to the findings of the surveys carried out in 2002–2005, it may be noted that the respondents of the region depict its future along similar lines, while changes in opinion remain within the statistical margin of error. The single noticeable change is the decrease in the number of undecided respondents (Chart 9.2, Table 9.1).

**Chart 9.2** Which of the given scenarios of the possible developments of the Kaliningrad region is the most acceptable to you? *Dynamics of opinion, 1992–2005*

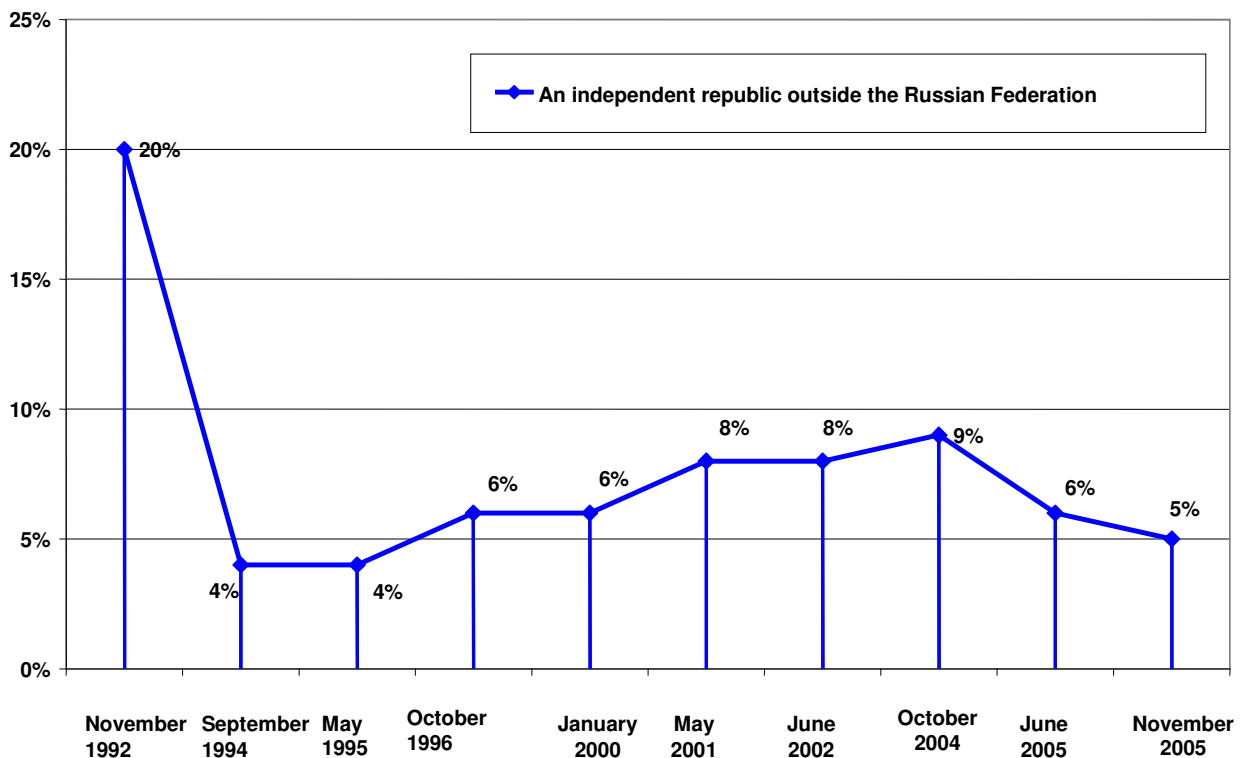


**Table 9.1** Which of the given scenarios of the possible prospects for the Kaliningrad region is the most acceptable to you?? *Dynamics of opinion, 1992–2005*

	June 2002	October 2004	November 2005
The region will remain within Russia and will enjoy the same status as other regions of Russia	21%	22%	24%
The region will remain within Russia with a different status compared to other regions of Russia	38%	39%	43%
The region will remain within Russia, although in practice will be governed by its own laws	19%	23%	22%
The region will withdraw from Russia and will become an independent state	5%	5%	3%
The region will withdraw from Russia and will be annexed to another state	3%	4%	2%
Hard to tell	14%	7%	6%
In total:	100%	100%	100%

Public opinion polls on the future of the region indicate that the number of supporters of independence (or "separatism" as it is more often called in Russia) is not large and is rather stable representing from 4 to 9% of the respondents. (The exceptional figure of 1992 can be explained by the overall enthusiasm about separatism in the early eighties, the so-called "sovereignty parade" in the neighbouring countries). Incidentally, since the introduction of facilitated transit scheme through Lithuania the number of separatists is gradually decreasing.

**Chart 9.3 Which status of the region would best reflect the expectations of its citizens? Dynamics of answers supporting sovereignty from 1992 to 2005**



The comparison of distribution of answers in terms of social-demographic characteristics yields a number of trends that may be pointed out. The exceptional nature of the region ("will remain within Russia with a different status compared to other regions of Russia") was mostly emphasised by respondents with higher educational background, of a younger age and urban dwellers. Respondents in a senior age group with a lower educational background and living in rural areas defined the status of Kaliningrad region "...within Russia and enjoying the same status as other regions of Russia". Men and women statistics have not pointed out any significant differences. (Tables 9.2-9.5).

**Table 9.2** Which of the listed prospects for the development of the Kaliningrad region are the most acceptable to you? *Gender*

	Men	Women
The region will remain within Russia and will enjoy the same status as other regions of Russia	24%	25%
The region will remain within Russia with a different status compared to other regions of Russia	46%	41%
The region will remain within Russia, although in practice will be governed by its own laws	20%	23%
The region will withdraw from Russia and will become an independent state	3%	3%
The region will withdraw from Russia and will be annexed to another state	1%	2%
Other	1%	0%
Hard to tell	5%	6%
In total:	100%	100%

**Table 9.3** Which of the listed prospects for the development of the Kaliningrad region are the most acceptable to you? *Education*

	Higher, interrupted higher education	Secondary, Technical and vocational secondary education	Interrupted secondary or primary education
The region will remain within Russia and will enjoy the same status as other regions of Russia	23%	23%	35%
The region will remain within Russia with a different status compared to other regions of Russia	50%	43%	34%
The region will remain within Russia, although in practice will be governed by its own laws	23%	23%	13%
The region will withdraw from Russia and will become an independent state	2%	3%	2%
The region will withdraw from Russia and will be annexed to another state	2%	2%	1%
Other	1%	0%	1%
Hard to tell	1%	6%	13%
In total:	100%	100%	100%

**Table 9.4** Which of the listed prospects for the development of the Kaliningrad region are the most acceptable to you? *Age*

	18 - 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 - 64	65 and above
The region will remain within Russia and will enjoy the same status as other regions of Russia	21%	20%	18%	24%	31%	34%
The region will remain within Russia with a different status compared to other regions of Russia	49%	44%	41%	47%	37%	41%
The region will remain within Russia, although in practice will be governed by its own laws	24%	26%	28%	20%	20%	13%
The region will withdraw from Russia and will become an independent state	2%	4%	6%	1%	1%	2%
The region will withdraw from Russia and will be annexed to another state	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	0%
Other	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Hard to tell	2%	5%	4%	5%	9%	9%
In total:	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Table 9.5** Which of the listed prospects for the development of the Kaliningrad region are the most acceptable to you? *Place of residence*

	Kaliningrad	Other towns in the region	Rural areas
The region will remain within Russia and will enjoy the same status as other regions of Russia	24%	24%	26%
The region will remain within Russia with a different status compared to other regions of Russia	47%	47%	30%
The region will remain within Russia, although in practice will be governed by its own laws	21%	20%	26%
The region will withdraw from Russia and will become an independent state	2%	2%	6%
The region will withdraw from Russia and will be annexed to another state	2%	1%	2%
Other	1%	0%	0%
Hard to tell	3%	7%	9%
In total:	100%	100%	100%

## **Conclusions**

*The majority of citizens of the Kaliningrad Region perceive their region as a somewhat exceptional, though an integral and inseparable part of the Russian Federation. Despite this perception, most of the citizens of the exclave feel isolated from Russia and the world. The group feeling least isolated are the youngest respondents aged 18-24. The feeling of isolation is more intense among older age groups. Only slightly over 27% of Kaliningrad Region citizens feel no isolation at all.*

*There is a weak link between the feeling of isolation and mobility. A similar feeling of isolation is felt both by individuals who have and have not travelled from the region over the past few years.*

*Travel of citizens of the Kaliningrad Region between the region and mainland Russia is not very intense. As many as 45 per cent of Kaliningrad Region citizens have not travelled from the region over the past 15 years, while 13 per cent have never been to other regions of Russia. The most active travellers come from among a younger generation seeking higher education, while the least active travellers are mostly those individuals who do not participate in the labour market, namely pensioners, housewives, the unemployed, and the temporarily unemployed.*

*Most citizens of the Kaliningrad Region visit the Russian Federation and the neighbouring countries (Lithuania and Poland), while the number of travellers visiting countries in western Europe and the former socialist block is rather small. The main reasons for abstaining from travelling beyond the borders of the region are lack of funds, fear of facing bureaucratic obstacles while arranging for travel documents and crossing the border, a lack of reason to travel, or no contacts and relatives in Russia.*

*The most popular means of transport between the Kaliningrad Region and the Russian Federation is train, while the popularity of cars is half as high, as has been pointed out by the survey findings.*

*Problems during journeys where travellers have transited through Lithuania have been experienced by every third respondent, most of whom indicated that they had travelled by car (considerably less problems were experienced when travelling by train or plane). On the other hand, the majority of negative responses related to travelling in transit were linked not with technical matters (such as travel documents or purchasing of tickets) but rather with emotional factors, i.e. the very fact that somebody's permission required to be granted entry to and exit from one region of the Russian Federation to another.*

*Respondents have emphasised the following inconveniences they have experienced during border crossing: long queuing, bureaucratic obstacles, and problems related to checks at the border.*

*According to respondents, communication with the Russian Federation could be improved by means of changing the attitude of border guards towards travellers (by showing more respect), by better management of the border crossing procedure, or even by a more rigid political position adopted by the Russian Federation towards Lithuania. However, this survey has pointed out that the feeling of isolation is caused not only by communication problems (67 per cent of respondents had not experienced any difficulties or inconvenience when travelling in transit through Lithuania) but also by emotional-psychological factors that have developed because of historical and geographical reasons.*

## **Annex**

### ***Description of the research***

*Objectives of the survey:* the key objectives of the survey was to identify citizens mobility trends, define key obstacles to mobility, problems when transiting Lithuania and foresee possible solutions for elimination thereof, identify the views of the Kaliningrad region citizens on the prospects for the region's development.

*The survey was commissioned by* International Organisation for Migration, Vilnius Office

*The survey was carried out by* KALININGRAD SOCIOLOGY CENTRE

*Targeted audience:* permanent residents of the Kaliningrad region aged 18 and above

*Survey method:* personal interview („face-to-face“) on the basis of the formalised questionnaire furnished by the contractor.

*Date:* the survey was conducted from **2** to **9** November 2005.

*Sample size:* 1.060 permanent residents of the Kaliningrad region have been polled (the sample size has been exceeded by 6%).

*Selection method:* respondents were selected on the basis of three-phase representative probability sampling, taking into account the distribution of permanent residents of the Kaliningrad region aged 18 and above in terms of the place of residence, age, gender, educational background and the purchasing power.

The report is based on general distribution of responses as well as comparisons of social – demographic groups (statistically significant).