National Living On-Line? Some aspects of the Russophone e-diaspora map

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e-Diasporas Atlas

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Abstract

The Russophone study puts digital communications of Russian-speaking migrants in the historical context of Russian and post-Soviet migration, and attempts to correlate the virtual data with findings of traditional (offline) sociological research. The author argues that the current contradictory warming in the government's "cold war" with emigrants is reflected in nodes that embody the current changes in official policy. At the same time, analysis shows that migrants position themselves as new minority groups in the host countries, and design their online activities and newsworthiness within the borders of the host state. The study further shows a disjunction between religious and cultural nodes, being bi- or multilingual, and political/ business communications. This suggests that migrants are excluded (self-separated?) from traditional channels of political and civic activities in the host countries. Uneven distribution of topics of communication in gendered analyses of the map was also noted. Despite active lifestyles of female migrants, they appear to meet serious difficulties in re-launching their careers after migration. The article also discusses sampling decisions and techniques.

Keywords

diaspora, migration, internet, web, Russophones, post-Soviet, Russia

Mots-clefs

diaspora, migration, internet, web, russophones, post-soviétique, Russie

The emergence of the Russian speaking Post-Soviet wave of migration almost coincided with the birth of the Internet as mass communication tool. Today both phenomena have a great impact on almost every aspect of contemporary life not only in the Post-Soviet space but globally. Yet, research in the area of post-Soviet digital communications involving migrant is still at the very early stage. In general monitoring systems of the Internet use and developments (such as Oxford Internet Institute or Berkman Centre for Internet and Society) tend to be Anglo- (in terms of language of communication) centred and do not pay much attention to such marginal digital spaces as internet communications of migrants. It was noted in some studies, that migrants represent the most locally and socially disengaged population in terms of off-line national public spheres, but at the same time they are actively engaged via electronic communication with in different public spheres (Helsper 2008)[1]. But none of the monitoring systems have developed this observation any further.

Some research has also been done on so-called Runet (communication through Russian registered and mainly, but not necessarily, Russian language) nods and networks (Schmidt et al, 2006)[2]. But this scholarship does not differentiate between diaspora and mainland players. At the same time it is clear that Russia registered nods represent only a small share of global communication of migrants from post-Soviet territories (and the findings of this mapping exercise support this statement). The mapping for e-atlas allows visualising the digital dimension of the post-Soviet Russophone migration. In this chapter I will firstly put the digital mapping in the historic context of the Russian emigration, and then I will describe the sampling techniques used and sampling decisions made. Then I will attempt to systematise the overpowering volume of information provided by the map and analyse some of the data that can be extracted from the map.

Building a diaspora or surviving in isolation? Historical context of Russophone migrations

Voluntary international migration of people from the Post-Soviet states is a relatively new phenomenon encouraged by globalising tendencies in the modern world and by the demise of the Soviet Union 20 years ago.

Contemporary migrations of former soviet citizens differ significantly from mass displacements of Russian citizens earlier in history. Sporadic waves of international migrations from Russia (as the Russian Empire and later the USSR) are more often conceptualised in connection with political (and religious), rather than economic situation in the country. Each wave was rather ideologically homogeneous but distinctively different from the next and the previous ones. The waves were also ethnically diverse and directed towards various regions of the globe. As a result chained migrations, temporary or circle migrations (colonial type of migrations) as well as sustained and passed through generations diasporic networks were not typical for emigrants from Russia. At the same time Russian remained the language of communication among emigrants for a significant period of time.

Post-Soviet international migrations differ from previous mass displacements from Russia. They follow global tendencies of international movements with migrations being mainly voluntary as well as economically and socially motivated. Geography of post-Soviet migration is clearly defined by migrants' motivations. But immigration policies of the host countries also play a significant role. National programmes of immigration in the countries such as Israel, Greece, Finland and Germany, where special flexible regimes of immigration were created for specific ethnic groups rather than social types of migrants, presupposed a high number of post-Soviet migrants there. In other countries the number of post-Soviet migrants has grown through immigration quotes for highly skilled migrants, spouse visas and in some cases asylum seekers (first of all for migrants from Caucasus).

The role of Russian language as a common language of communication remains very high. Russian- speaking migrants often keep constant

1. Helsper, E.J (2008) *Digital Inclusion: An Analysis of Social Disadvantage and the Information Society* , London: Department for Communities and Local Government, Queen's Printer and Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

2. Schmidt Henrike, Teubener Kati, Konradova Natalia (eds) (2006) *Public and Private Usages if the Russian Internet*, Norderstedt: Books on demand.

digitally mediated connections with the native culture by receiving news via digital tv channels, extensive use of the Internet resources, and private communication channels. Diasporic presence in digital space is extensive partly due to high percent of highly qualified specialists among migrants. Migrants represent a significant share of internet networks in the Russian language globally. According to statistics from Yandex (Russian search engine) two percent of blogs registered in the Runet specify that bloggers live outside of the post-Soviet space, but the share of migrants' blogs and groups communicating in Russian at the most popular platform Lifejournal.com is estimated at 30% of all blogs in Cyrillic.

Russian official policies have never been indifferent to compatriots living abroad with the spectrum of attitude ranging from declaring them "traitors of the Motherland" and banning any chances of communication with Russian citizens, to welcoming migrants, asking for their support in foreign affairs and promoting their "return". The current "warming" in the Russian government's "cold war" with emigrants have encouraged scholarly debates about the nature of Russian diasporic communities (for details see Byford forthcoming). A number of nods represent this "warming" policy in digital space.

Despite the fact that contemporary migrations are voluntary and economically driven, the idea of migration remains emotionally loaded in the Russian language public discourse. Political protest, nostalgia and cultural emancipation were at heart of public vision of émigré. Various communication channels such as publishing houses, periodicals, libraries, national school helped to preserve the national identity discourses and the language to the second generation of migrants. A significant part of cultural production in emigration was directed towards the native land, reflected on events and activities there. Romantic image of an émigré as a hermit, almost martyr praying for its native land in a distant place correlated with Orthodox imagery and still plays a special role in the identity discourse.

Contemporary economic migrations do not comply with such romantic vision of emigration. A romantic image of those living abroad as real émigrés "serving" its native land and a downgraded image of a pragmatic émigré leaving the Motherland in search for prosperity and success rather than due to spiritual or political reasons.

As a result there is still some ambiguity in the way migrants are depicted in public discourses on-line and off-line (Morgunova 2009)[3]. The above considerations were taken into account when I started working of the e-diaspora sample.

Light of Distant Stars: to the Question of Sample and Sampling Decisions

The Russophone sample consists of almost 500 web-sites serving Russian speaking migrants worldwide. The work on the sample was conducted in stages.

During the first stage, manual/ traditional search for relevant web-sites was conducted. The underlying hypothesis was that individuals that migrate to, stay, naturalise in a certain country would conceptualise their displacements in terms of new citizenship and position themselves digitally as such - for example Russians in Germany, Israel, India and etc. They might also see themselves within a city (London, Seattle) or a region (Benelux), and keep connection to the native place (Moscow, Baku, Kiev etc). I tested this hypothesis using several search engines (global as well as national including the Google and Yandex). The search contained a list of words, describing migration, settlement, native land, communication, as well as names of ethnic groups from post-Soviet space typed in Cyrillic as well as in Latin. At this stage I have also used virtual connections in social networks to inquire about the most popular web-hubs for migrants in different countries.

The initial list of web-sites was then sent to Paris based team that did extensive machine-assisted searches through the content of each nod in order to identify yet unknown migrants' digital "hubs" of communications. When I received the results, this new extended list of nods was again handchecked, additional nods were selected according to chosen criteria (see further). After several searchers the point of saturation seemed to be reached, and the sample then was categorised and presented in the form of a map.

It has to be acknowledged that I came as a late addition to the team of E-Diaspora atlas and "inherited" a certain number of web-places from a previous researcher therefore I am not able to

3. Макарова Наталья, Моргунова Оксана (ред) (2009) Русское Присутствие в Британии, Москва: Современная Экономика и Право.

claim that the whole list of web-places was collected using the same procedure, which might have had potentially an impact on actual findings.

There are several features of the map, related to sampling decisions. In general, post-Soviet territories were considered the "mainland". The map reflects diasporic/migrancy networks, connecting migrants settled outside post-Soviet space with the native land and with each other.

The use of the Russian language and script was the prerequisite for web-sites to be included in the sample. Extended searches and even initial search returned a number of web-places created and populated by migrants, writing in German, French, English, Czech and other languages, but these nods were excluded from the sample if there was no Russian script at all there. For example, web-pages of Orthodox parishes, where the Russian language was not used on any of the pages, were excluded although we know from off-line studies that post-Soviet migrants participate in the life of these congregations.

Popular Russian-language sites, quoted by migrants (such as "mainland" TV and news channels) were not included in the sample if they did not cater specifically for migrants or address their life. In addition to this, the decision was made to abstain from the sites, that use Cyrillic, were created outside of post-Soviet territories and (potentially) with participation of migrants, but do not refer to the process and experiences of migration (for example, travel sites or blogs).

A special comment shall be made about the temporality of the map. Internet is an extremely dynamic phenomenon and although it is possible to represent e-map of the diaspora as fixed and static at a given moment, it might not be possible to reproduce the results in the studies to follow. Whatever is examined online, it is already in the past – in the same way we look at distant stars on the sky, being aware that their light comes from the past. The nods and connections between them were correct at the time of search, but even at the time of writing up of the results some sites were blocked, or new connections between the sites established.

Several parameters such as the year when nods were created, internet traffic or forum activity were intentionally left outside of this study. Due to technological limitations it was also impossible to differentiate nods within social networks

and youtube channels. Some of the nods were passworded. The listed limitations contribute to this study being more qualitative and interpretative rather than quantitative in terms of both data and methods of analysis.

What do we See When We Look at this Map?

Metaphorically speaking the e-Russophone map resembles a road map where highways and local roads transcend state borders. The map is characterised by a high density of nods which signifies a high level of mutual awareness in digital space and possible information exchange. Strong nods are interwoven with smaller "hubs" on the map. It is almost impossible to correlate the e-diaspora map with a political map of the world. The most important web-hubs are connected to each other across continents. Such construction of the digital communication map alludes to the "global cities" perspective (Sassen 1991)[4], when big cities as business and communication hubs are better connected to each other, rather than to smaller settlements in proximity.

In order to make sense of the connected nods, several categories such as scale, representation, type, main content and use of languages were designed.

Scale of the nods refers to geographical scope (in terms of real geography) of activities and content of each web-site. Depending on that, the nods have been characterised as global, regional, national, specific to a part of a country and local.

Each nod was also categorised in terms of a body it represents: from an individual/family to an institution. The range of representations also includes business companies, community organisations and media outlets. Although media outlets could be business ventures, their on-line activities, goals and on-line representation are so different from the same characteristics of other types of business web-sites, that the decision was made to separate media and media outlets in a specially designed category in terms of representation. The same refers to community schools that in many cases also act as businesses, but were included in community organisation category. At the same time, official community web-places that clearly self - identified as outlets of the global network of

4. Sassen Saskia (2001, 1sr ed. 1991) *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*, Princeton University Press.

"compatriot committees", initiated and encouraged by the Russian government's "sootechestvenniky" programme, were categorised in this study as **nods of institutions**. It was also instructive for the purpose of research to identify types of web-sites, language, as well as to point out the main topics covered by each nod.

National vs Global

Although the national level search was fundamental at the stage of initial sampling (see sampling) the national (or, in general, territorial) construction of the map is not visible at the first glance (with some exceptions such as Russophone web-cluster registered and active in Finland), but a closer examination allows to notice that the national construction of communication is indeed well pronounced. Forty seven percent (47 %) of the nods, the largest share in the Scale category, act at the national level[5] (such as Russians in Germany, Finland, Norway, etc). Majority of such sites (**"national sites" here and further**) represent news producing bodies - 62 % of them are news bulletins and information portals. Thus the importance of newspapers in the national identity formation, highlighted by Benedict Anderson in his canonical book "Imagined communities"[6], is proved again - now in digital space - by migrants actively forming a network of news outlets and diasporic media during their naturalisation and settlement in host nation-states.

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5. Despite the fact that the collection of the sample was initially based on country to country search, only 10 percent of almost 500 websites were "hand picked" during this procedure. The rest of the sample was computer generated

6. Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. (1991). *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (Revised and extended. ed.), London: Verso

The biggest share of national sites is created by community organisations and the remaining 53% are almost equally distributed between other players: individuals, companies, institutions and media outlets. I would like to argue that the high number of national scope sites and such equal participation of different players at the national level of on-line communication prove that national level of identification remains the key one in the Russophone diaspora . The national and regional web-sites (12 % of the sample) combined help to correlate political mapping of the real world with its digital representation in the diaspora. For example, the most consistent group of sites in the regional category is associated with Benelux. Again, the biggest group of national and regional nods was formed by the news producing bodies (34%) and the analysis of the representation of nods shows even more equal participation of all types of players.

National sites serve as a place of reference, advice and source of information for migrants in the host country. The national nods are engaged in business activities, encourage or inform about cultural events, and serve as media hubs in the host countries. The following table demonstrates that national sites on the map appeared to be interconnected and demonstrate a high level of mutual awareness.

More than 68% of all connections covered by the map are done at the national level and more than one fifth of those (675 connections) exists between national nods themselves. National sites also "attract attention" of nods at other scales: more than a quarter of connections represent "external interests" – sites of other levels quoting national communication "hubs".

SUBGRAPH AUTHORITIES		SUBGRAPH HUBS	
Nodes *inside* one country that *are cited by* the most nodes *in one country*		Nodes *inside* one country that *cite* the most nodes *in one country*	
Node name	Inbound edges FROM one country	Node name	Outbound edges TO one country
http://germany.ru/	29	http://www.russianseattle.com/	35
http://russianamerica.com/	27	http://ruslink.de/	26
http://cursorinfo.co.il/	25	http://languages-study.com/	22
http://israelinfo.ru/	17	http://rusweb.de/	21
http://zahav.ru/	15	http://russiansinsweden.blogspot.com/	21
http://maxime-and-co.com/	14	http://russiansinsweden.se/	20
http://isra.com/	14	http://maxime-and-co.com/	13
http://www.russianseattle.com/	13	http://gazeta.rjews.net/	12
http://www.souz.co.il/	11	http://jerusalem-korczak-home.com/	10
http://infrance.ru/	10	http://autogid.co.il/	9

The global sites (18% of all sites) create a different perspective. The majority (more than 70%) of global sites are thematically focused on the issues of community building and the questions of culture. They are predominantly monolingual and use only Russian throughout the sites (72 %) – and in this way refer to the authority of native culture discourses and common experiences of migrants. Global nods seem to be well connected and fully interwoven in the networks. But if one takes a closer look at the connections, we can see that global sites usually quote the likes: for example, blogs quote other blogs. The space of global web-sites seems to be layered. It is also less "self-sufficient" and represents lesser authority for the other scales. Global sites have less inbound than outbound edges - in other words global nods are more orientated on establishing contacts with other players and represent lesser authority for them.

Local level sites comprise further 16 percent of nods (the third place in terms of the Scope category). They are created the level of neighbourhood and signify the existence of the grass –root migrants' community networking. Local sites are usually linked to off-line community and professional networks, civic initiatives at the place of residence, local collective activities. Bases on the fact that 70 % of local sites are multilingual, we can speculate that the local communities are not isolated from the host societies and intend to make migrants' communities more acceptable for the neighbourhood and partners in mixed families as well migrants of previous waves. 78% of local nods are organised as news bulletins or newsletters and publish information about local celebrations, church holidays, Russian school events etc. Further 8% are created to encourage local participation in some of these events or campaigns. This is the only scale where the digital presence of local parishes is salient and 22% of local sites are thematically focused on the questions of faith and church activities.

I would like to argue here that the national level of digital world remains the one where the process of migration, citizenship and belonging is conceptualised by the audience. National level nods in e-diasporas facilitate migrants' communication within the borders of the host state. National sites are associated with the new (and always host context dependent) conceptualisation of being Russian (a post-Soviet migrant, a Russian speaker) in a specific national state. Paradoxically the globalisation that according to Sassen is best understood as «denationalisation", continues to be shaped, enabled and channelled by networks originally developed with nations in mind, but now used by different actors (Sassen 2006)[7] and includes digital space.

Languages and politics of belonging

Assuming that the use of languages online is connected to the dynamics of belonging, it is instructive to identify how and what languages are used by diasporic Russophone web-sites. At the national level, web-space is almost equally divided between two types of nods: those that use only Russian language and the ones with multilingual content. The ratio of "Russian only" to multilingual sites at the national level nods (57:43) is only a bit higher than in the corpus in general (51:49). Predictably, regional web-sites, serving migrants communication in several countries, are even more multilingual than average. It was mentioned above that global nods are predominantly monolingual, while local nods are predominantly multilingual.

Such use of languages in the digital space supports my hypothesis that national and local scale nods promote collective discourses based both on migrants common roots (associated with the Russian language) and on a new collective destiny (associated with the country of migration, and migrants adaptation and settlement in it). Global nods allude to collective memories of migrants and probably strengthen their identities as Russian speakers, post-Soviet migrants without specific "rooting desire" (Naficy). We can also assume that the use of only the Russian language by a diasporic nod facilitates migrants' links with Russia-based media sources and inform public space of migrant community through the "mainland" Russian discourses.

The way monolingual and multilingual sites are interwoven in the system of digital traffic also differs. Multilingual sites appear to be more open to other players at the Russophone digital landscape. For example, bilingual sites are evenly quoted by other groups (multilingual and monolingual connections at 21%) and quote those (19% of connections). 18 % of connections are conducted within their own group. Monolingual

7. Sassen Saskia (2006), *Territory Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*, Princeton University Press.

sites are more "secluded" in the network – in a way, they are "introverted" - and 30% of their links exist within the same group of the "Russian only" speaking nods. Monolingual sites are still open to information exchanges, and the shares of incoming and out coming references are even.

What languages the nods "speak" when they are preoccupied with specific activities or themes? Blogs, individual or family web-sites are predominantly monolingual and designed to tell their former compatriots about experiences of emigration. Only a small number of personal web-pages in the sample use both Russian and the language of the host country. Usually in such cases the nods had a business component in the content: they were web-sites of artists, designers etc.

Nods representing institutions on the contrary tend to be multilingual. Only 27 % percent of them use "Russian only" as the language of their interface and/or content. Media and news outlets are even more multilingual and not more than 11% use solely Russian language. The latter does not straightforwardly imply that digital diasporic media are predominantly informed by local and host discourses. It also signifies that the diasporic mass media tend to inform the host population about events and developments in Russia.

The correlation between the use of languages and the content focus creates yet another interesting interplay. It has to be noted that I often had difficulties in identifying the main topics of nods: many sites were multi or mixed focused in terms of content, therefore I decided to define them as such. Among them 40% were bi- and multilingual sites. The remaining part of the sample contained business, politics, religion and culture focused sites.

Among the religious nods only 20% are monolingual, which is a rather predictable result assuming that Russian migrants form a part of existing congregations in many countries.

Business web-sites are predominantly monolingual: 64% of business directories and 69% of company websites use the Russian language only. Apparently these findings lead to the straightforward conclusion about well developed micro-economies in the Russian communities, which does not correlate with my field work and existing literature. In search for explanation of these findings I had to take a detailed look into the problem. It appears that the majority of business

sites included in the sample was travel and immigration companies, working for Russian clients both in the post-Soviet space and abroad. Other businesses web-sites created by Russian migrants did not see Russian as their competitive advantage, position themselves as local or national businesses and did not use the Russian language and Cyrillic script at all (and therefore they could not be included in the sample). At this stage one can only guess to what extend this situation is conditioned by existing discourses of organised crime in migrants' circles[8] and further research into anthropology of business relationships in the Diaspora online might be fruitful.

In the domain of cultural activities and information a significantly lower number of nods (41 %) used the Russian language only. And this digital feature signifies a new development in the Diaspora. During the twentieth century Russian communities and even earlier Russians outside of Russia tend to form isolated communities. After the revolution of 1917 Russian émigrés ignored political realities and cultivated cultural continuity and preservation in the Diaspora. There were cultural institutions and mass media organised to ensure this cultural self-isolation and consciously defy the host culture. This phenomenon was called "Russia abroad". The authority of native culture has historically played the major role as the unifying Grand Narrative in highly polarised communities of Russian emigrants, has ensured linguistic continuity and bridged generational gap in the diaspora.

Following the logic of such historical legacy, migrants' web places focused on culture should have been the "Russian only" places. But we observe the opposite tendency. Comparatively high proportion of multilingual "cultural" diasporic sites cannot be pre-conditioned historically. The current tendency to promote Russian culture through multilingual nods in the Diaspora can be both grass root and top to bottom attempts to exploit (allegedly) high-brow achievements of Russian culture and its prestige in the world. In the 21century societies outside

8. Varese, F. (2011) How Mafias Take Advantage of Globalization. The Russian Mafia in Italy. *British Journal of Criminology*. See also Varese, F. (2011) *Mafias on the Move: How Organized Crime Conquers New Territories* (Princeton University Press) or for the opposite opinion Finckenauer James and Waring Elin (1998), *Russian Mafia in America: Immigration, Culture and Crime*, Boston: Northeastern University Press

of Russia its culture has become associated with status and sophistication and gained the role of a token of acceptance into the host society for migrants (Morgunova 2010)[9].

Multilingualism of cultural web-places (as well as community nods) reflects yet another new tendency in the Russophone diaspora – a growing number of mixed marriages. "Cultural" web-places, promoting migrants' native culture at the local and family level, introducing migrants' practices to the host community become important digital hubs in the Russophone diaspora.

"Have you checked the rubbish bin, inspector?" – Some remarks about the method

Any researcher working with digital data and defining his/her sample has to cut through essential connections that lead away of the chosen research focus. And almost as in detective stories, such digital "rubbish bin" can become a source of essential data, supporting or defying our hypothesis. It may also provide data, expanding our research in new direction. I will briefly describe one of possible examples here.

The global tendency of feminisation of migration is widely accepted in literature. But it which way this tendency is expressed in the post-Soviet migrations is still under discussion. I have recently suggested that women represent some "hidden majority" in the post-Soviet migration (Morgunova, 2011)[10]. I have also suggested on the bases of my small scale field research in Britain that they represent the most socially engaged part of the communities (Morgunova, 2009). For example, a large number of schools, clubs conversation groups, informal libraries are set up by Russophone female-migrants. They also actively collaborate in Russian language media, organise and attend cultural events. But there was no proof of their digital engagements.

Working on my sample I have noticed that a significant number of rejected sites reflected specific "female" interests: fashion, cooking, bridal sites etc. These sites were not included in the sample,

but I traced their "lead" to forums and community sites, that were eligible for my sample. Combining macro (connections between sites) and micro perspective (sites quoted by a specific nod) I was able to separate this gendered public space and to analyse how it was informed. The method allowed correlating sources of information with the topic of discussions. The public space appeared to be informed by both native (represented first of all by nods registered in *.ru* domain) and global and host country media nod). For example, the discussion " I am missing home" at the web-forum Bratok (Rupoint) had 10 web-quotations, all registered in the *.ru* domain, while the discussions " What does it mean to be patriot", had 18 leads to other sites where 4 were registered in Russian digital space and 18 elsewhere, including major news bodies of the host country. The analysis of leads, not included in the main sample, gave further insights into the process of functional integration – into the active networking of female migrants outside of migrants' communities.

Using the method employed by the E-diaspora atlas, I was able to make some conclusions about gendered participation of migrants in the off-line activities. For example, female migrants were less interested in political debates, but actively participate in campaigning and community activities. There were a significant number of women in small businesses, created and advertised in migrants' communities. Female participation was extremely active in nods connected to educational activities, new language learning and native language preservation. In a way social and cultural dimension of many communities was defined by activities of female migrants.

Although these observations allow conclusion that Russian speaking women-migrants represent active subjects, creating possibilities and taking decisions in their own life, the study also highlighted significant absences in the gendered digital participation. The method allowed me to trace the non-existence of female professional networks and, apart from a very few exceptions (such as Russians in the city), I was not able to find any diasporic professional nods or networks with female participation. It appears that in the social space of the Russophone diaspora there is a disjunction between active lifestyle of female migrants and their professional and occupational disengagement which necessarily leads to de-skilling and psychological difficulties. This by-pass

9. Morgunova Oksana (2010) "Europeans live in Europe" *Identity Search in Russophone Internet Communities of Migrants bases in the UK, Diasporas* 1:10.

10. Morgunova Oksana (2011) *Post-Soviet Female Migrants in Europe: Social and Professional Engagements* Paper presented at III Women's Business Forum EU-Russia, Brussels, December 2011.

examination has helped me to realise how little is known about professional developments and career strategies of female migrants and to formulate a new line of research.

The method suggested by the e-Diaspora team not only expand our knowledge of digital social networks but also assist in verifying some of "assumed" or taken for granted findings in migration studies. The Russophone map of the e-diaspora atlas is the first attempt to connect the virtuality of displacements with physical geographical location of migrants and correlate offline community building with on-line networks. It sheds the light to so many aspects of Internet communication and social aspects of migrancy that any analysis of the map cannot be exhaustive, but opens up new data for researchers to come.

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