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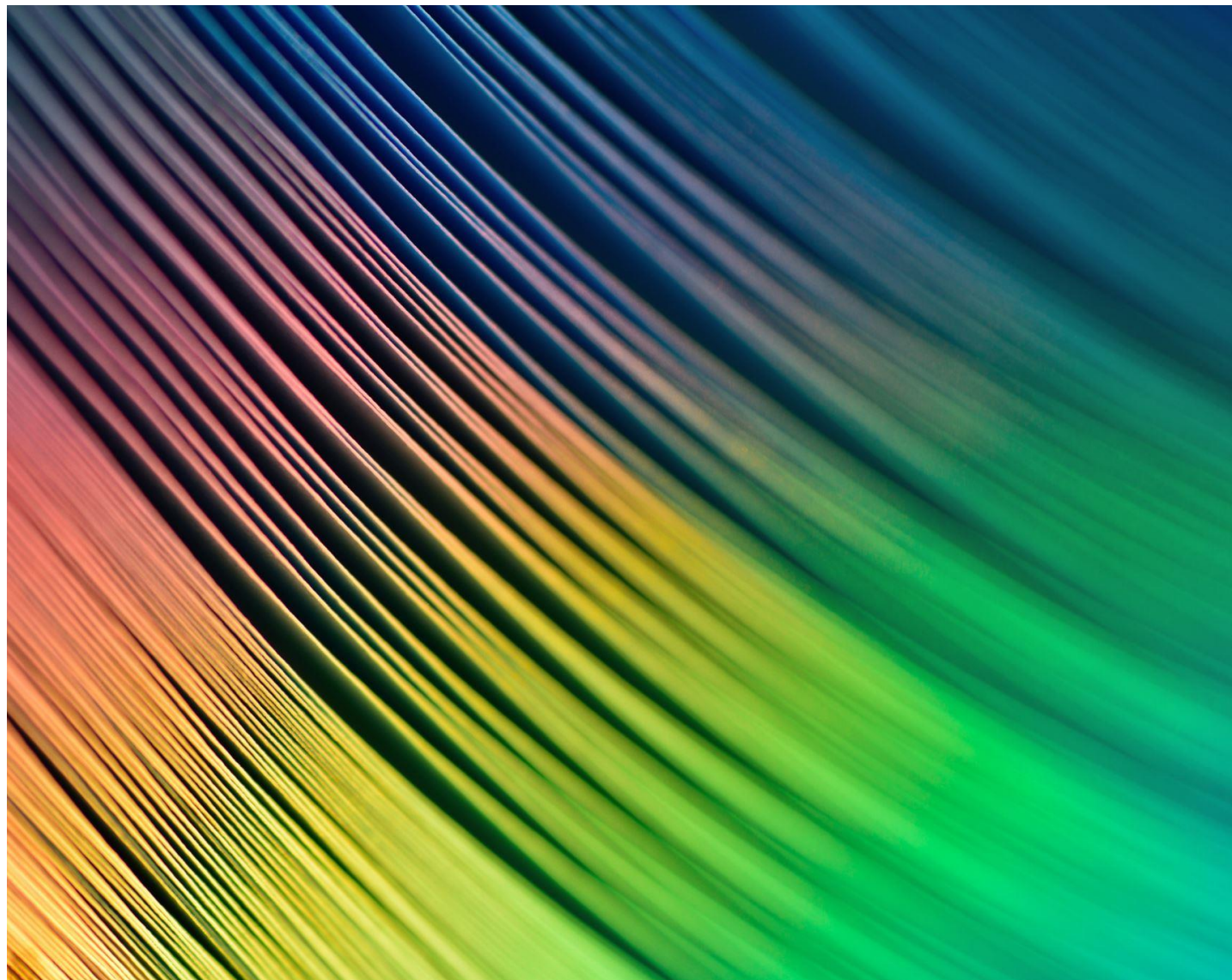
Language ideologies and attitudes towards Russian in Pridnestrovie

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What is Pridnestrovie?

- Pridnestrovie (also called *Transnistria*) was founded in 1990.

It is a **multi-ethnic country** mainly comprised of:

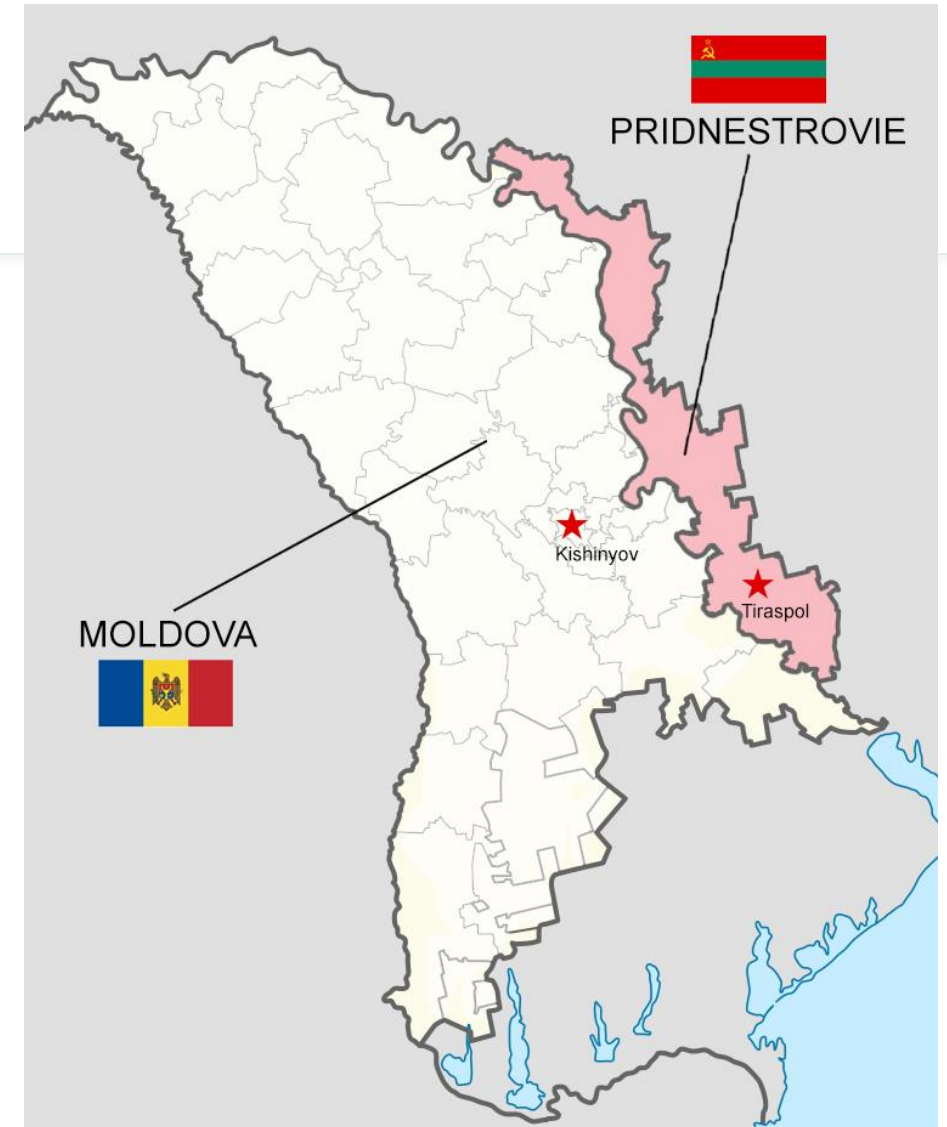
Moldovans 34%,

Russians 33%,

Ukrainians 26% ,

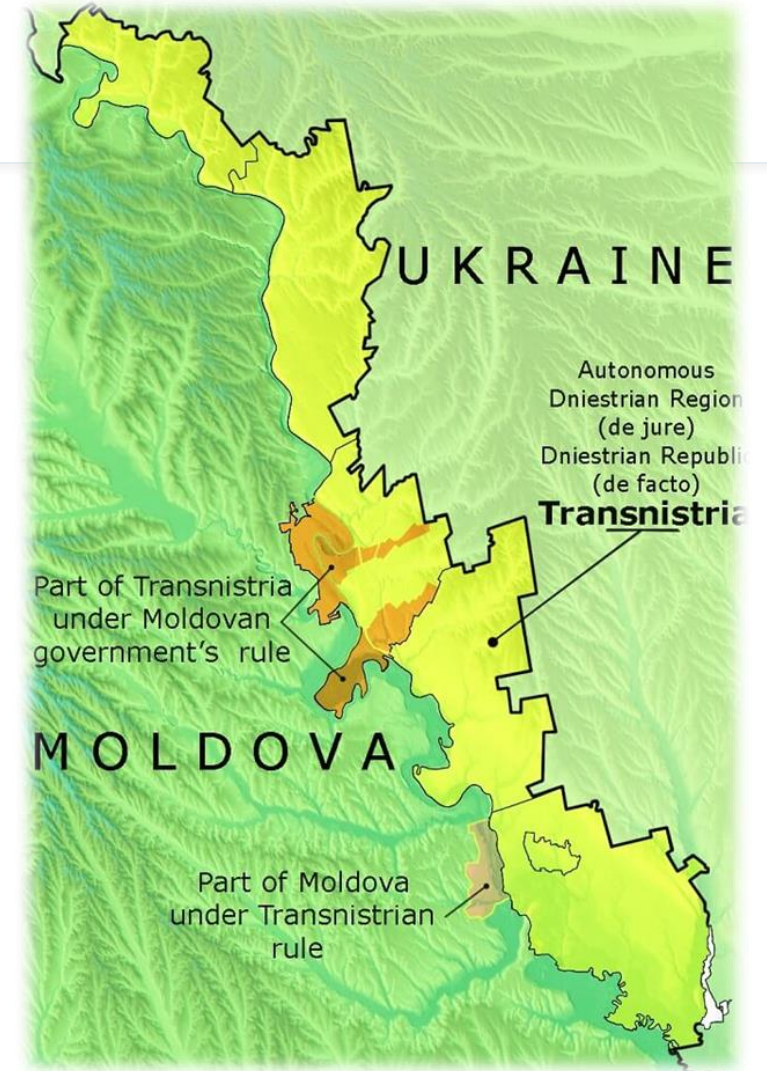
and others, Bulgarians, Gagauz, Jews. (PMR Census, 2015)

- Three **official languages** – Russian, Moldovan, Ukrainian.



Aims of the study

- 1) To examine the role the Russian language has played (past and present) in the formation of the current language situation in Pridnestrovie;
- 2) To unveil language ideologies and their influence on ethnic self-identification of Pridnestrovians.



Theoretical framework

Silverstein (1979: 193) first offered the term "*language ideologies*":

'any sets of beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use.'

Further, his idea was developed by **Irvine (1989: 255)**, who defined them as

'the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests.'

As a result, language policy of any country can be seen as in terms of one or several language ideologies.

In this paper, *multilingualism*, as a language ideology described by **Ricento (2013)**, is used since its main postulates correspond to the core principles of the Pridnestrovian statehood.

In addition, the notion of "*language attitudes*" will be applied in the data analysis as a supplementary concept. **Garrett (2007)** argues that *attitudes to languages are developed through human socialization, therefore, the earlier they developed, the less amenable to changes in later life they are.*

To deal with them as a mental construct, he suggests applying the three key approaches: the *societal treatment approach*, the *direct approach*, and the *indirect approach*.

Methods



135 Questionnaires



Statistical data analysis



Historical background

the Treaty of Jassy (1791)

the Second Partition of Poland (1793)

the Treaty of Bucharest (1812)



Historical background

The first general population census of the Russian Empire in 1897

Mother tongue	Tiraspol district	Bender
Russian	17%	35%
Ukrainian	30%	20%
Moldavian	25%	7%
Jewish	10%	33%

Literate people	Tiraspol district	Bender
Total	27%	29%
In Russian	20%	24%

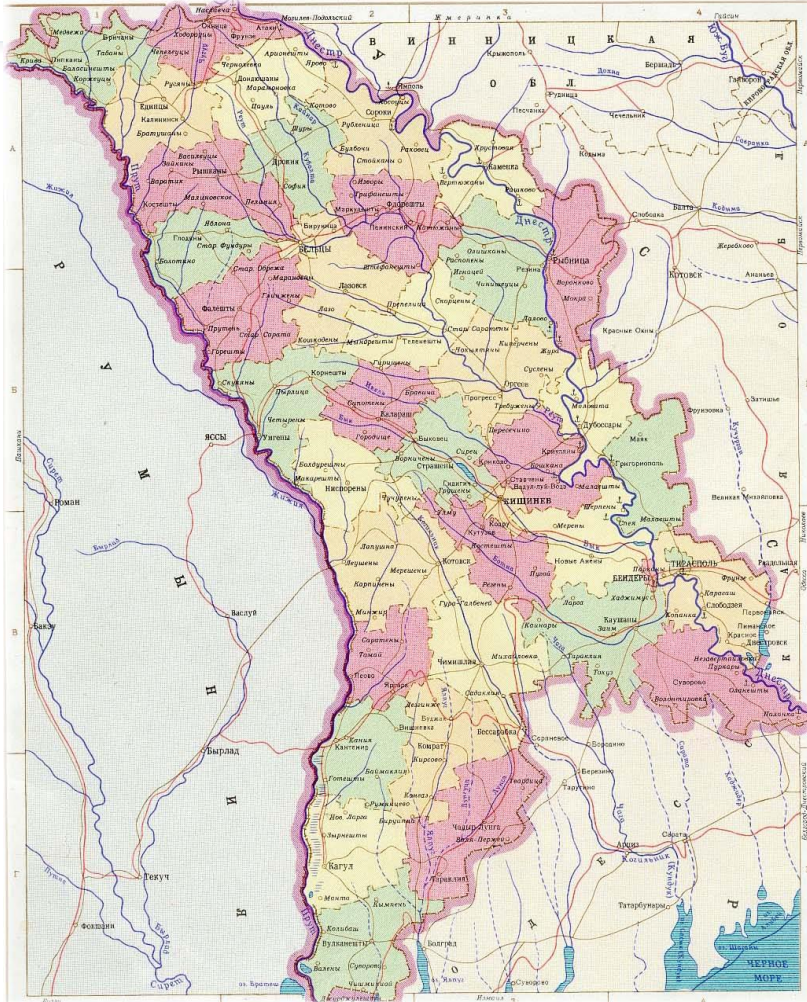
Source: Central Statistical Committee of the Ministry of the Interior. 1904.

Language situation and language policy under the Soviet rule

The creation of the Moldavian *Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic*



Language situation and language policy under the Soviet rule



From 1959 to 1979, **142.2 thousand ethnic Russians** moved to the **Moldavian SSR**, and their total number during this period increased from **292 930** to **505 730**.

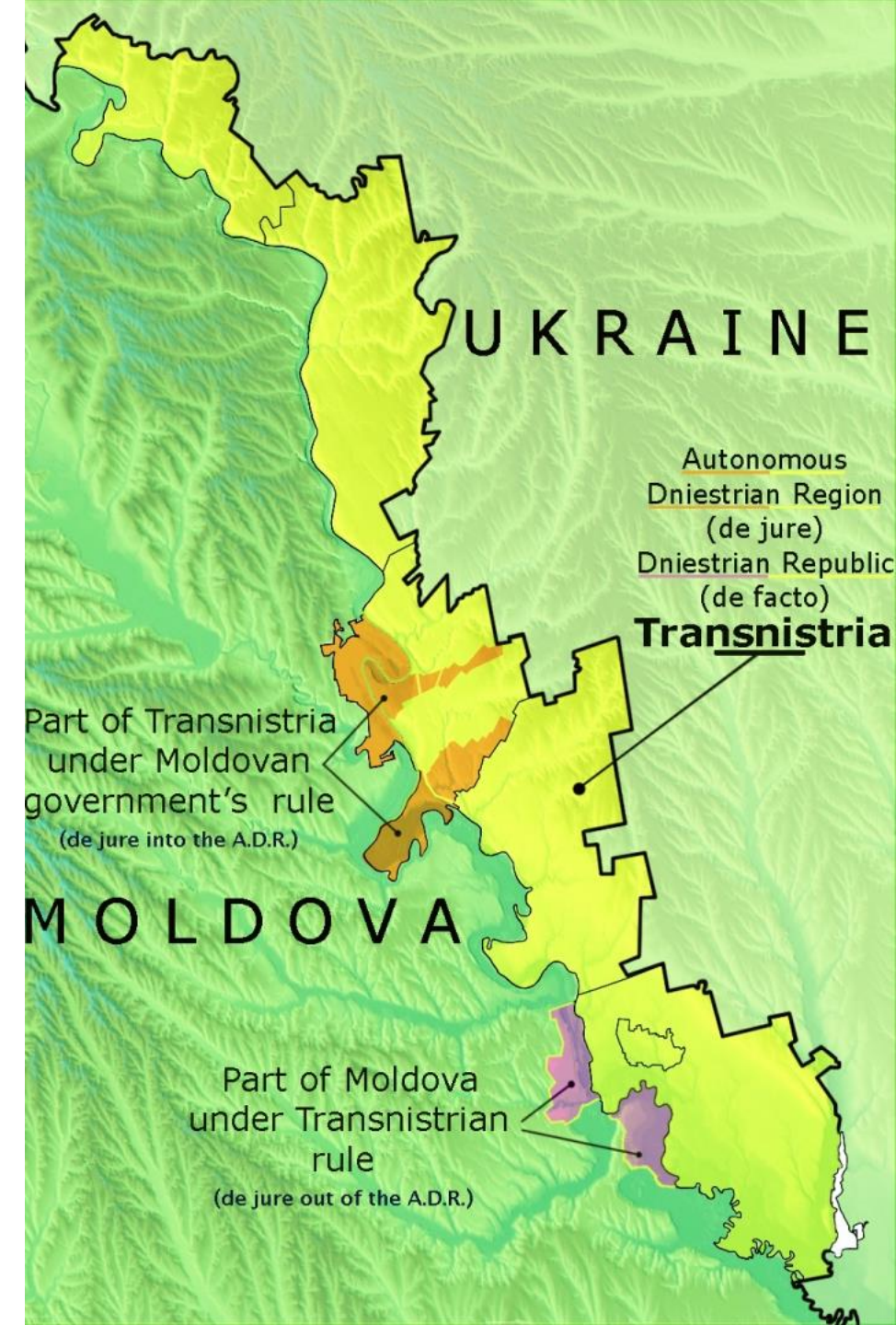
But the peak was reached in **1989**, when **Russians constituted 562,069 residents**, or **13% of the total population** of the republic.

By **1979**, about **60%** of the total non-Russian population of the MSSR was **fluent in Russian**, along with their first language, whereas only **10,6%** of Russians, **12,9%** of Ukrainians, **14,9%** of Jews, **6,3%** of Gagauz, **7,3%** of Bulgarians **knew Moldovan**. (Tabak 1990: 104-105)

The current language situation and language policy in Pridnestrovie (1990 – present)

The creation of Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic

- Law *'On the functioning of languages on the territory of the Moldavian SSR'* (1989);
- *The equality of the Russian, Moldovan and Ukrainian languages* as the fundamental principle of the Pridnestrovian statehood;
- the *linguistic legislation* of Pridnestrovie as one of the most *liberal* in the post-Soviet space.



The current language situation and language policy in Pridnestrovie (1990 – present)

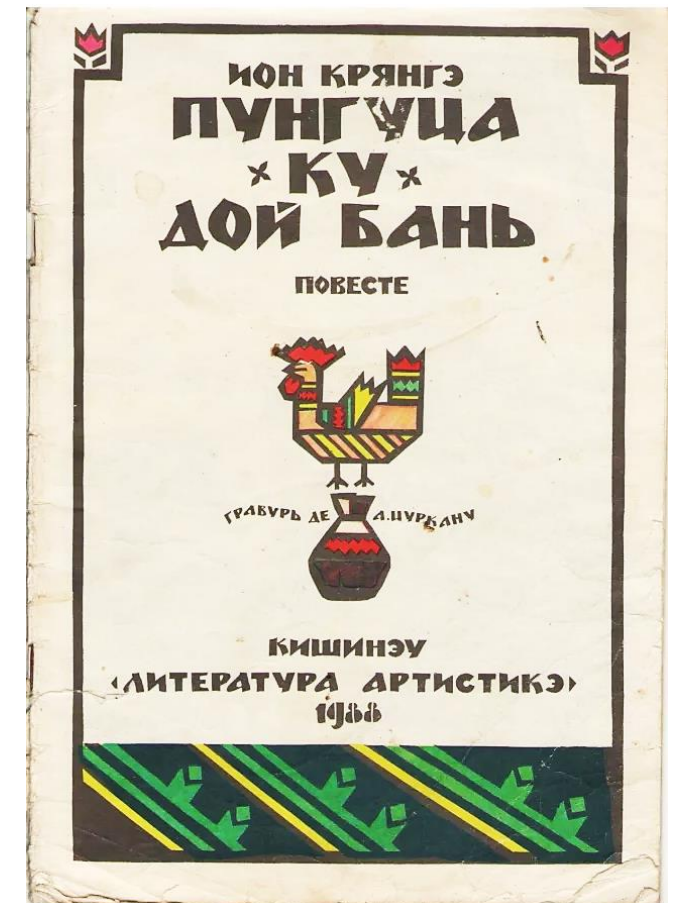
Some peculiarities

- Russian, which 96.3% of the population speaks fluently, dominates in almost all spheres;

	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Number of state schools, by the language of instruction:	154	150	150	151	151
Russian	110	108	110	112	114
Moldovan	28	26	26	25	25
Russian and Moldovan	11	12	11	11	9
Ukrainian	3	3	3	3	3
Russian and Ukrainian	2	1	-	-	-

Source: State Statistics Service of the PMR. 2020.

- the problem of the Moldovan language.



Survey «Language ideologies and attitudes towards Russian in Pridnestrovie»

Questionnaire design

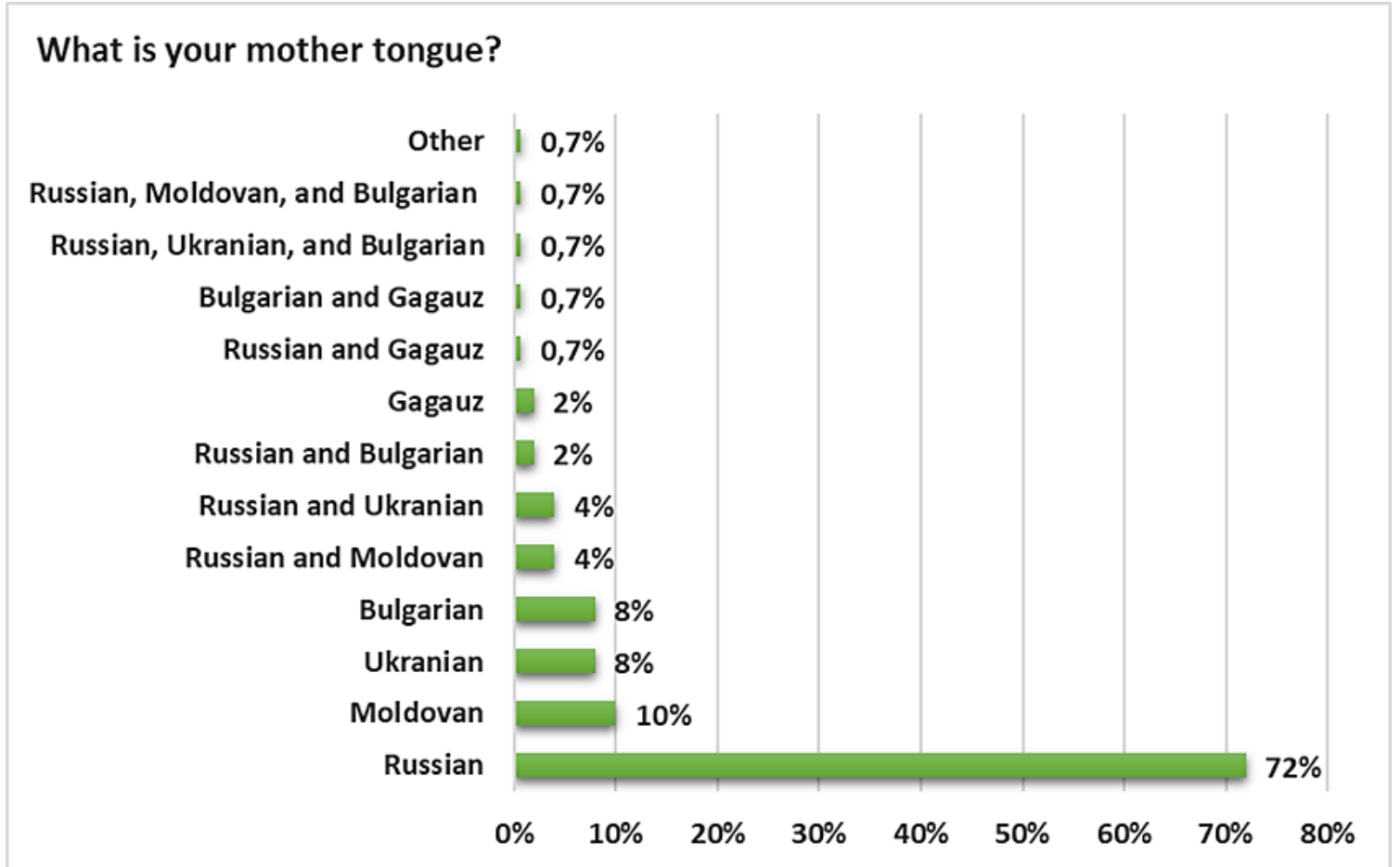
- 17 questions eliciting:
 - a) Questions 1-4 – demographic information about a respondent;
 - b) Questions 5-8 – language background of a participant;
 - c) Questions 9-17 – linguistic behavior of a respondent.



Survey «Language ideologies and attitudes towards Russian in Pridnestrovie»

Results and discussion

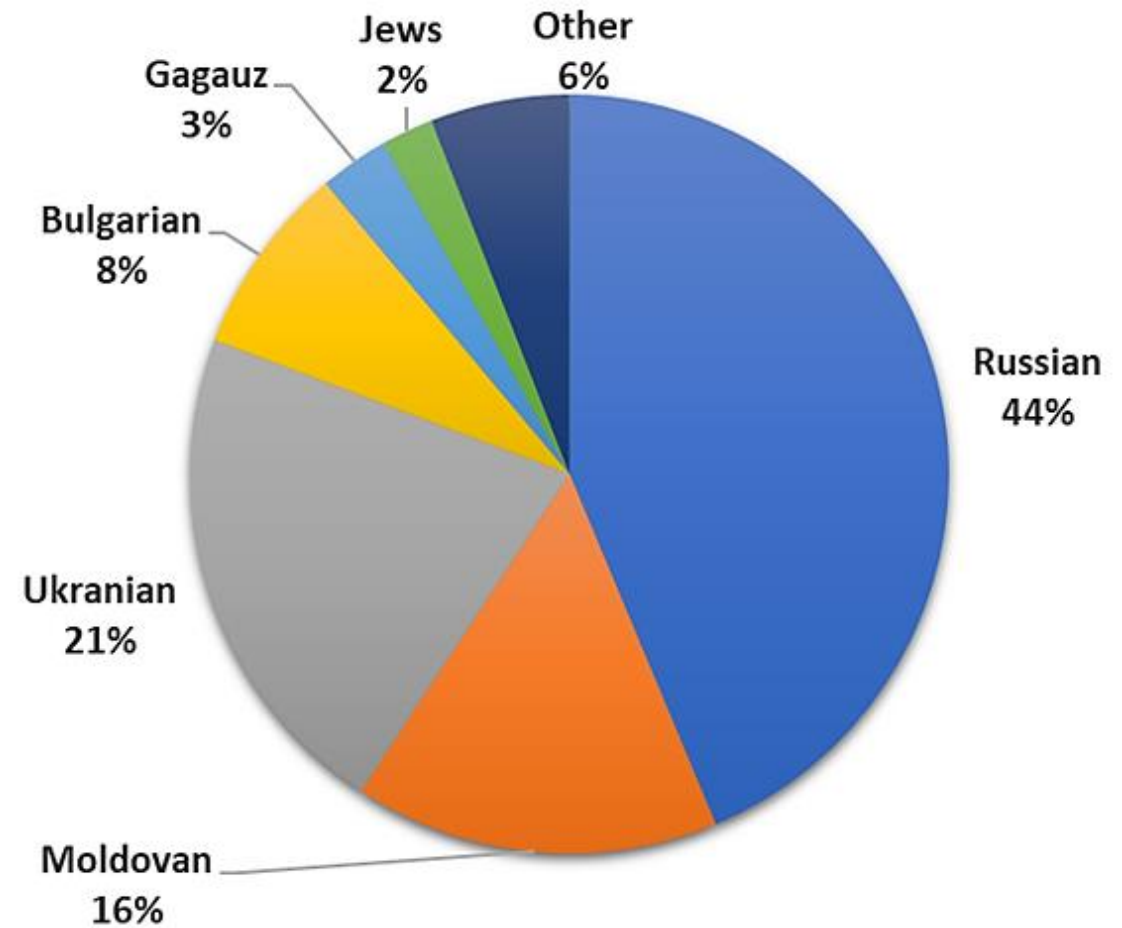
Respondents' self-reported mother tongue(s)



Survey «Language ideologies and attitudes towards Russian in Pridnestrovie»

Results and discussion

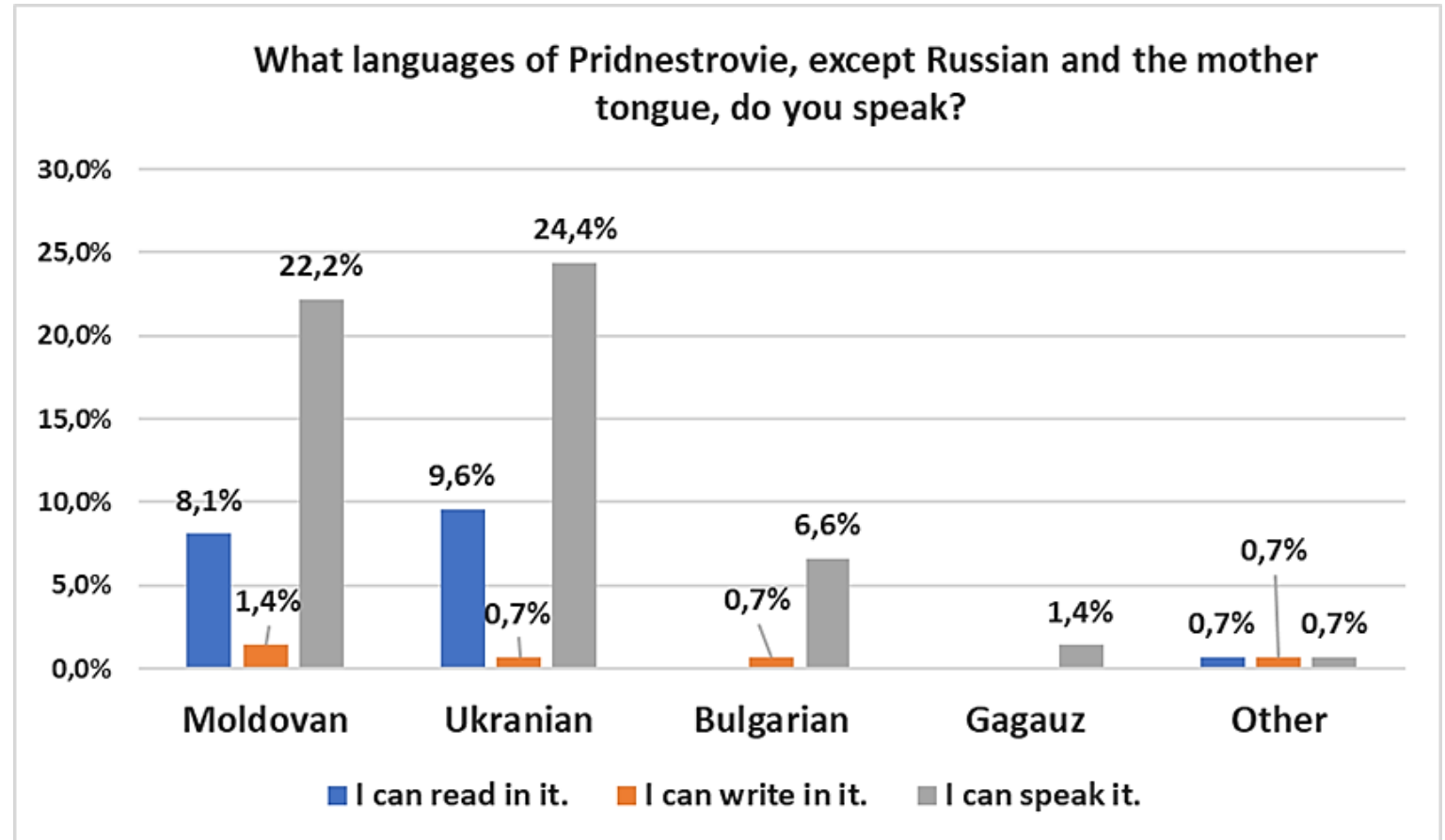
Self-reported nationality of the respondents



Survey «Language ideologies and attitudes towards Russian in Pridnestrovie»

Results and discussion

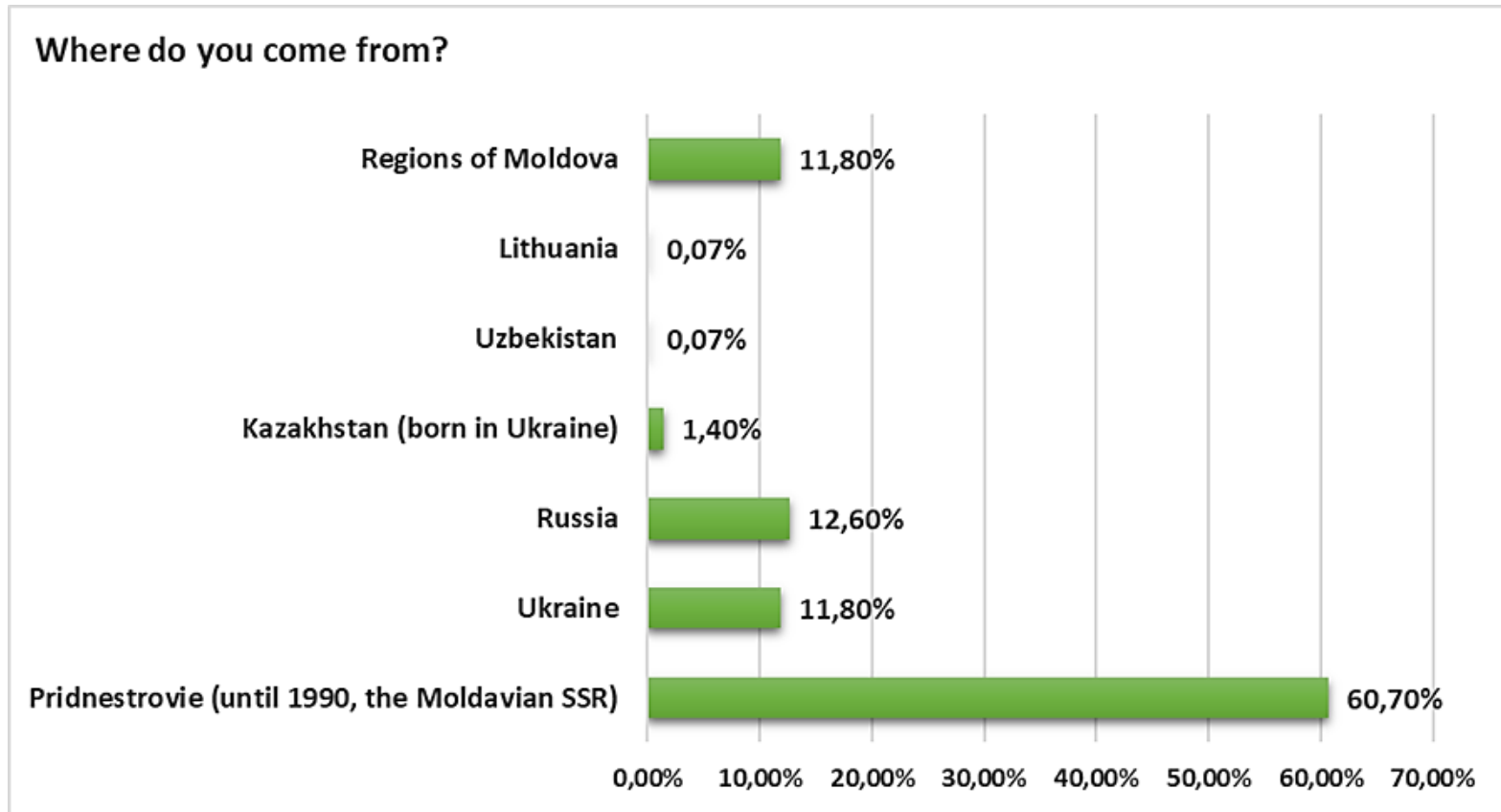
The distribution by language and the degree of self-reported proficiency



Survey «Language ideologies and attitudes towards Russian in Pridnestrovie»

Results and discussion

The distribution by country of origin



Survey «Language ideologies and attitudes towards Russian in Pridnestrovie»

Results and discussion

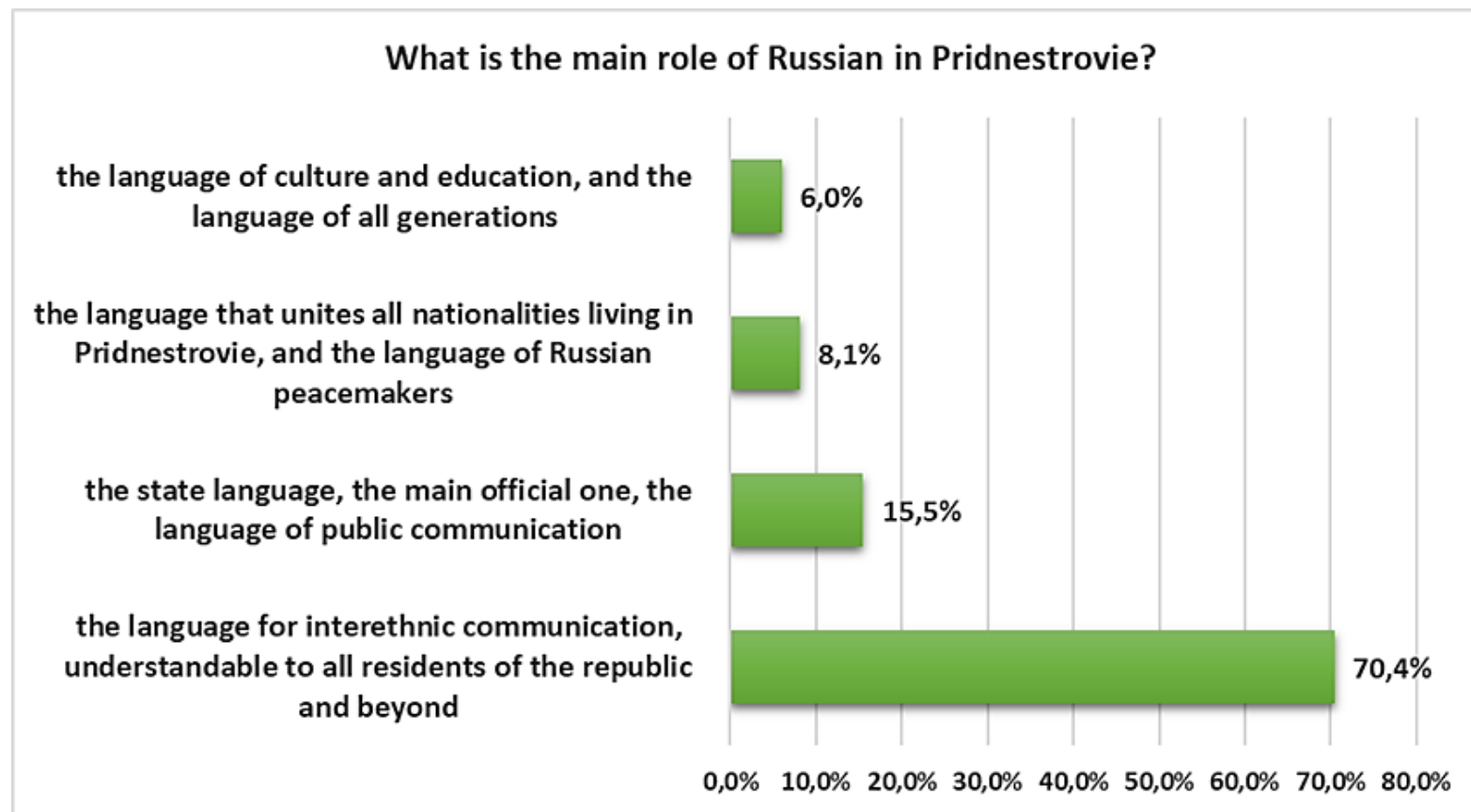
- **26%** of the participants, who were born in Pridnestrovie (the Moldavian SSR), reported that they **did not speak any other language, other than Russian**;
- **38%** of the participants confidently stated that **children in Pridnestrovie should be taught exclusively in the Russian**;
- **62%** of the respondents are in favor of offering their children **the right to choose the medium of instruction at school**;
- Nonetheless, almost **40%** noted that **the Russian language should remain a compulsory subject for everyone**.



Survey «Language ideologies and attitudes towards Russian in Pridnestrovie»

Results and discussion

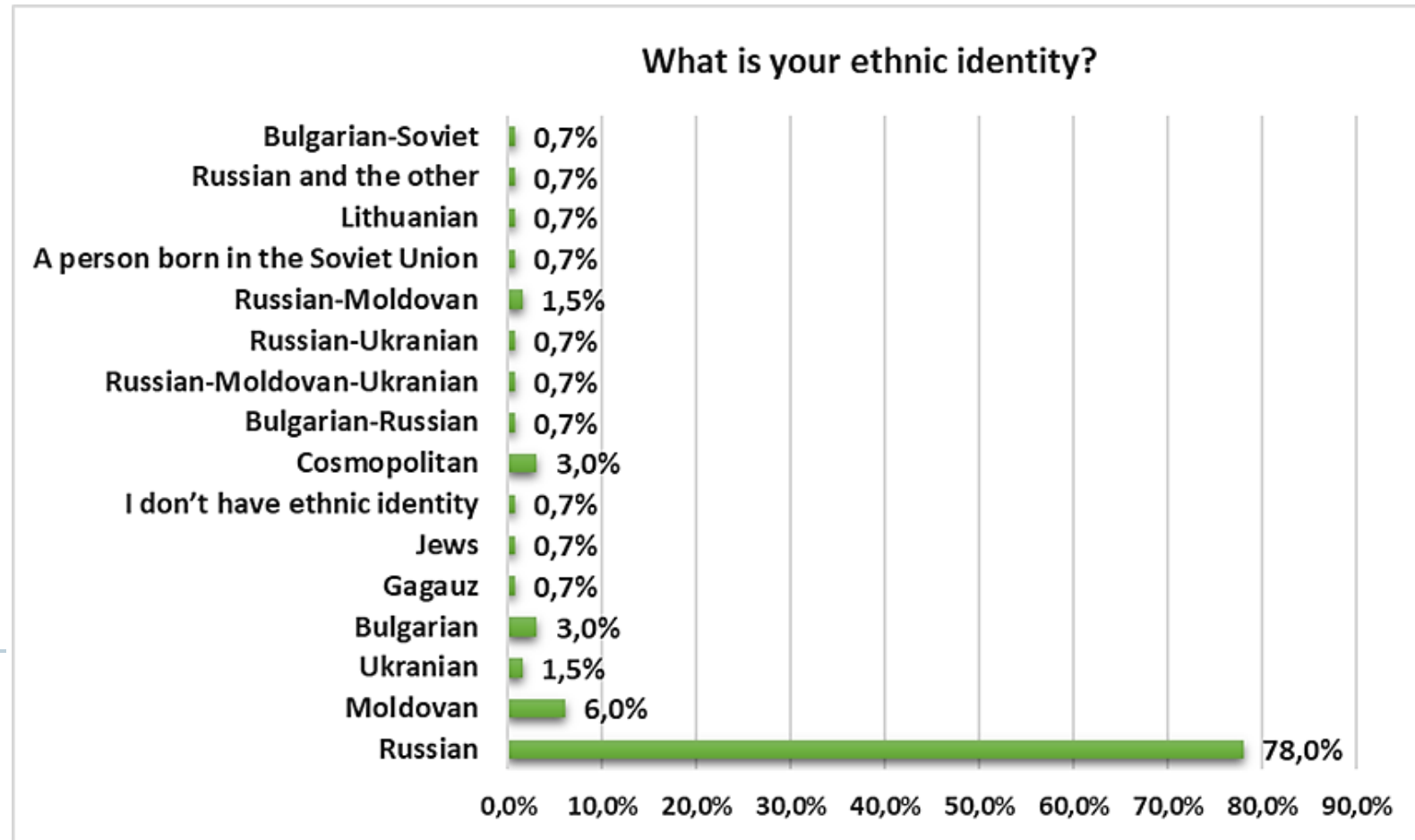
Attitudes to the Russian language in Pridnestrovie



Survey «Language ideologies and attitudes towards Russian in Pridnestrovie»

Results and discussion

Self-reported ethnic identity



Concluding remarks

Pridnestrovie is the only state in the region where **linguistic pluralism** is officially proclaimed at the state level and where **the high official status of the Russian language** is secured.

Though, one of the main obstacles to the linguistic pluralism in Pridnestrovie is **the language shift** in favor of Russian, *towards which people hold mainly positive attitudes associating their lives and the lives of their children with this language.*

This is mostly because of **its considerable prestige** and **the role of language for the inter-ethnic communication** in the region.





Thank you for your attention!



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