

# **Intercultural Marriage: Marriages between Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union and Native Israelis**

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## **Abstract**

To explore the internal dynamics of intercultural marriage, we conducted in-depth interviews with 18 married couples, in which one partner was born in Israel and the other had emigrated from the former Soviet Union. The interviews focused on the contentious issues of everyday life: self-identity, language use, cultural consumption, relations with families/friends, division of household labor, and childrearing. The findings point to a clear tendency among the immigrants to make most of the adjustments to the norms and expectations of their Israeli spouses and their social networks. This "Israelization" was expressed in the exclusive use of Hebrew in these homes, a preference for the Israeli spouse's friends and pastimes, and Israeli style in cooking and housekeeping. The findings are discussed in the light of gender differentials in power relations, the comparative status of Hebrew and Russian culture in Israel, and possible self-selection among individuals wishing to leave their culture of origin by means of out-marriage.