

Poll: Facebook Lures Lonely Russians

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Facebook Inc. and other social network operators are luring increasing numbers of Russians online, many of them to meet new people, a survey found.

Fifty-three percent of Russians now use the Internet, up from 39 percent last year, state-run research center VTsIOM said Thursday in an e-mailed statement. The number of daily users has risen 31 percent, up from 5 percent in 2006.

DST Global, a Russian Internet investment fund led by billionaire Yury Milner, has been expanding its interests in Russian and global social networks, including a recent \$400 million stake in San Francisco-based Twitter Inc. The holding also owns a stake in Facebook Inc.

The number of Russian-language Twitter users passed 1 million last month, Yandex NV, the operator of Russia's largest search engine, said in separate statement Thursday. President Dmitry Medvedev and his economic aide, Arkady Dvorkovich, are among the country's regular users.

Forty-six percent of those surveyed by VTsIOM said social networks such as Facebook, the world's largest, and domestic rivals Vkontakte and Odnoklassniki are the best places to meet new people online. Thirty-six percent said they have already met people through the Internet, the survey showed.

Almost one-third of respondents, 32 percent, said the Internet was "no place for meeting people." Only 6 percent preferred specialized dating sites, VTsIOM said.

The survey, conducted July 16 and 17, included 1,600 people and had a margin of error of 3.4 percentage points.

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