

Unspoken Love in Kyrgyz South

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While people in Kyrgyzstan's urban centres celebrated Valentine's Day like everyone else, those in remoter areas were more reticent, fearing that expressing their feelings would transgress strongly-held traditional values.

Reporter Ulukbu Amirova asked men and women in the southern Batken region, where social attitudes are generally conservative, whether they would send Valentine's cards, and what their reaction would be if they received on.

"People round here would misinterpret it," said one young woman pondering whether to send a poem to the man she secretly admires. "They'd immediately think the worst. 'Preserve your honour from a young age,' the saying goes. Rumours can spread quickly."

Others agreed that a serious declaration of love could bring public shame on the sender, or that at best it would be laughed off as a joke.

Topic: [Kyrgyzstan](#)

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