

**The dynamics of relations between Russian society
and the Russian government/president in the
context of Positive Psychotherapy**

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The dynamics of relations between Russian society and the russian government

Purpose:

- to study the dynamics of relations between the Russian population and the government;
- to explore the value orientation of modern Russian society;
- to study the differences in the personal profiles betwine proponents and opponents of official policy

Methods

- Qualitative sociology (focus-groups)
- Projective tests
- Big five personality traits test (5PFQ)
- Wiesbaden Positive Psychotherapy Inventory (WIPPF)

Main sources of data

1st Round: April – May 2018, 10 focus groups, ~100 respondents

2nd Round: October-November 2018, 17 focus groups ~170 respondents

3rd Round: March-May 2019, 13 focus groups 129 respondents

Three stages of relations between Russian population and the authorities / president

I Stage – Incorporation

- 1999-2010 Request for strong autocratic political leadership (people associated possible improvements with the state or the strong autocratic leader)
- Firm belief in the ability and strength of Putin
- People are proud of the country



II Stage - Differentiation

- 2011-2013 - First signs of dissatisfaction - rallies for fair elections
- 2014 - Crimea's accession to the Russian Federation as an attempt made by authorities to gain popularity is not recognized by most of the international community and part of the Russians. However, the majority of Russians (67%) support the accession and consider it useful (we are strong); meanwhile 14% of Russians consider that the annexation of Crimea was supposed to distract the population from Russia's internal problems.

II stage – Differentiation Spring 2018



- disaffection with domestic policy
- transition from external to internal locus of control (“Nothing will help us unless we change our own mentality”)
- weakening expectations from strong autocratic political leadership (only 5 percent of respondents associated possible improvements with the state or the strong autocratic leader)
- growing appetite for risk taking and strong demand for change
- rising demand for justice

Hope for the help of the state all but evaporated

- Individuals no longer rely on the help from the state
- But they understand how hard is to survive alone
- Hence the growing desire to horizontal, non-hierarchical association with others
- This creates conducive environment for emergence of social movements
 - This environment creates a potential for emergence of social movements
 - However, this potential is offset by the forces of political fragmentation (see the next section)

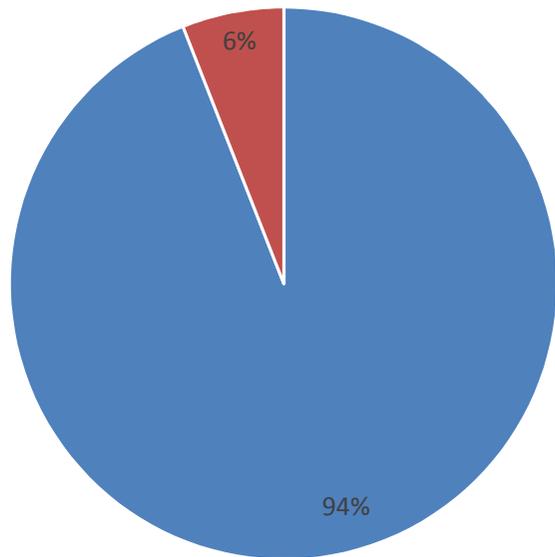
I and society



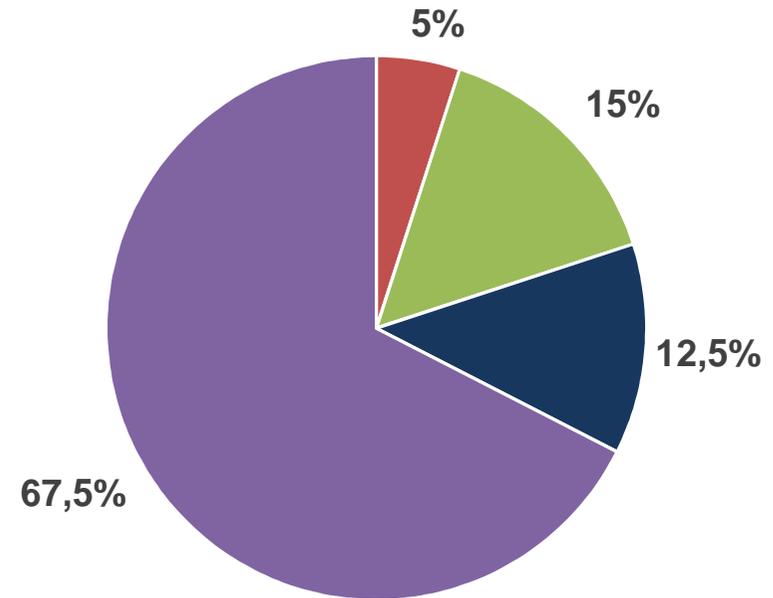
I and the state



Differentiation Fall, 2018: Self Reliance vs Reliance on Strong Leader



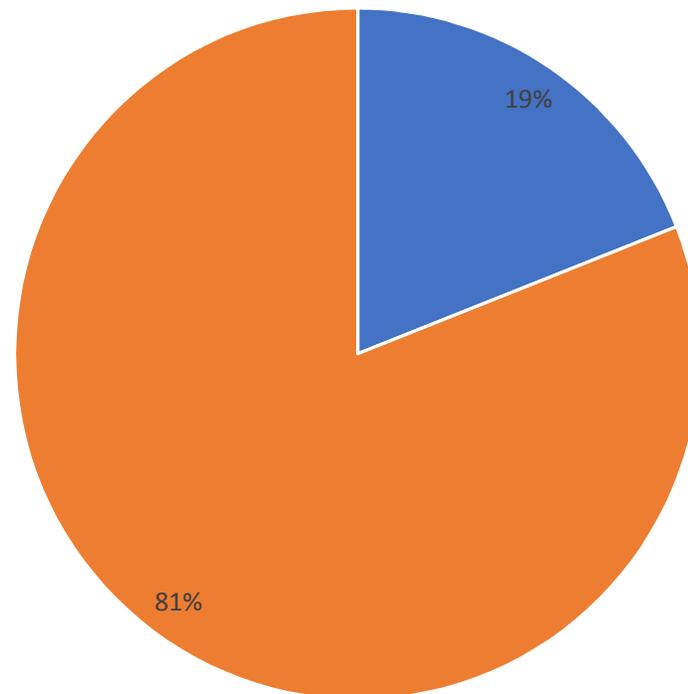
- rely on myself only
- hope for the help of the state



- strong authority
- national idea
- social policy
- (social) justice

October 2018: demand for equality before law

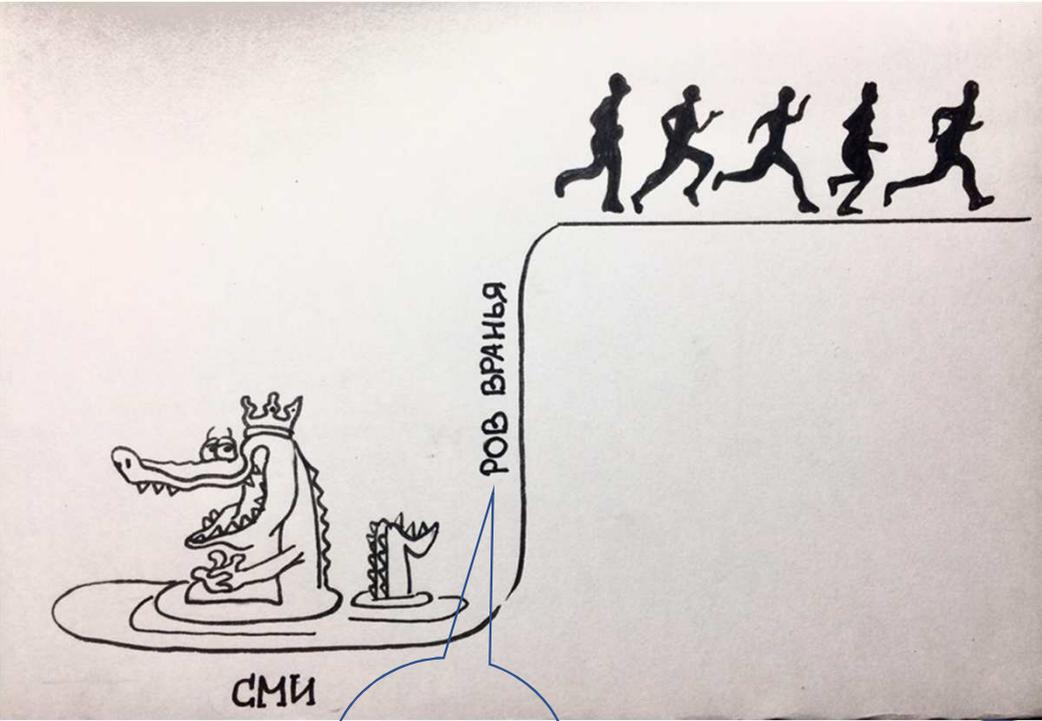
Preferable type of social justice



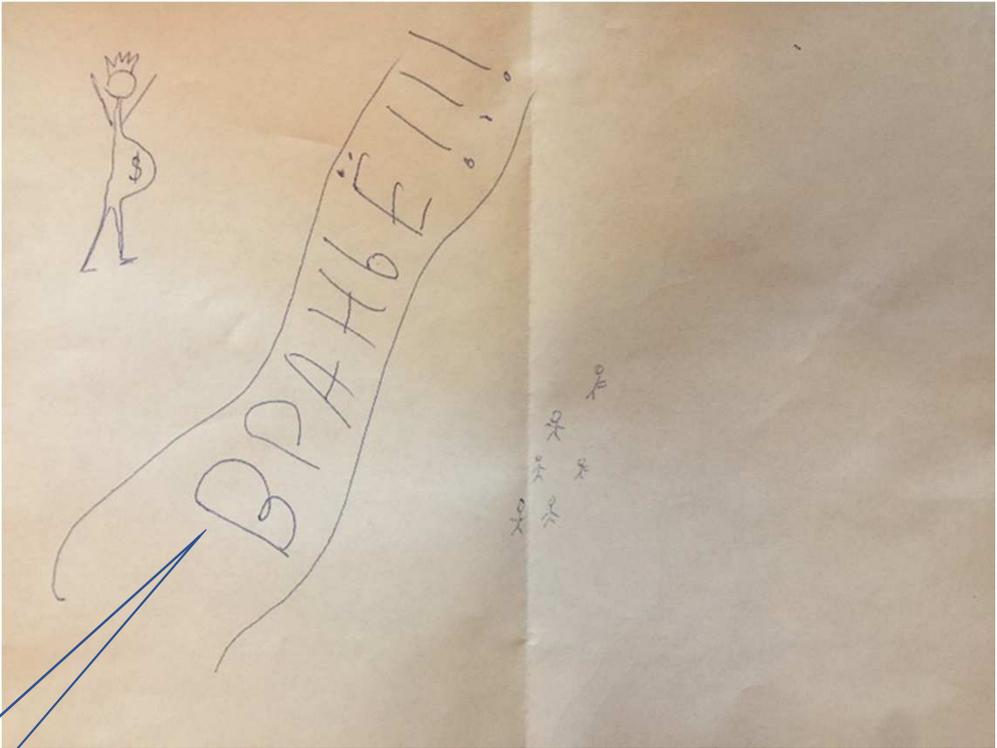
■ Distributive ■ Processual (equality before law)

October 2018: Authorities are perceived as dishonest

Drawing from projective tests



Ditch of lie



Lie !!!

October 2018: Demand for a new leader is associated with the growing role of self-expression values

The perceived qualities of a potential leader

- Respect the people
- Honesty
- Ability to openly acknowledge mistakes
- Acts in the interest of people, not the narrow elites
- Peaceful and capable to improve relations with other countries
- Capable to delegate
- Well informed on living conditions of the people
- Democratic
- Law-abiding
- Makes the government actions transparent

From the Stage II to the Stage III - Separation

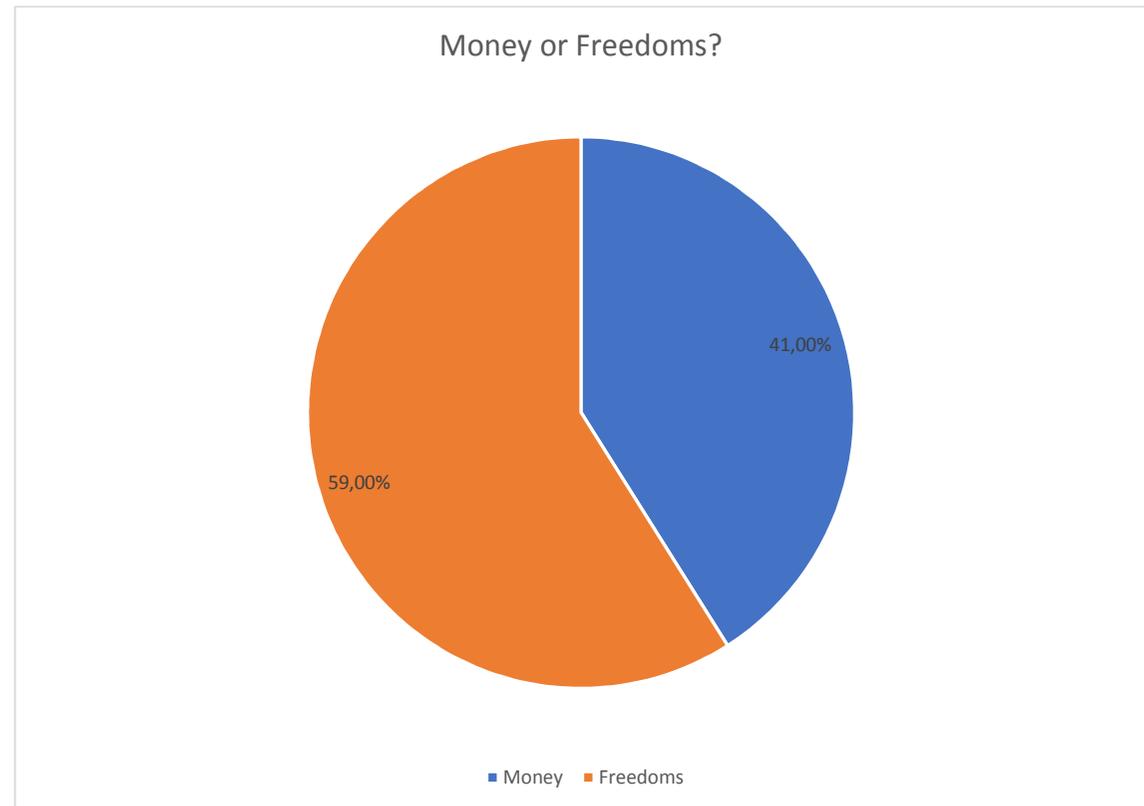
- A critical mass of convinced individuals who share the new-value framework and the conformist part of the public converge with this core
- The respondents become increasingly concerned both by economic conditions and by limitations of civic freedoms and the lack of respect by the authorities
- For the first time new kind of positive hero is being mentioned – civic activists who defend the rights and freedoms of the people

From the Stage II to the Stage III - Separation



Demand for freedom prevails over material needs

- The concerns about civic freedoms prevail over economic ones. The preference structure is amazingly close to the levels of early 1990s when the values of Perestroika period still retained their appeal



Deepening of democracy also becomes an issue

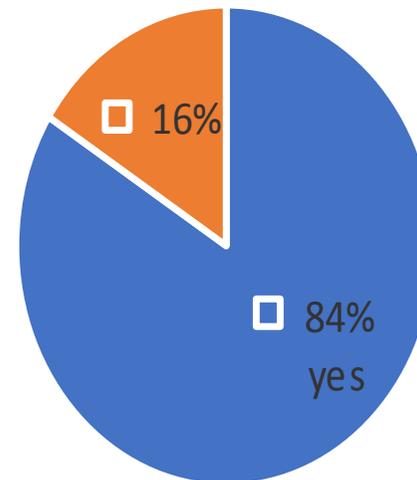
- Respondents readily discuss the possible choice between presidential and parliamentary republic and the preferences split almost evenly



Deepening of democracy also becomes an issue

- The sense of responsibility for situation the country has intensified
- Share of those who feel personally responsible went up by more than 20 percentage points since the 2nd round

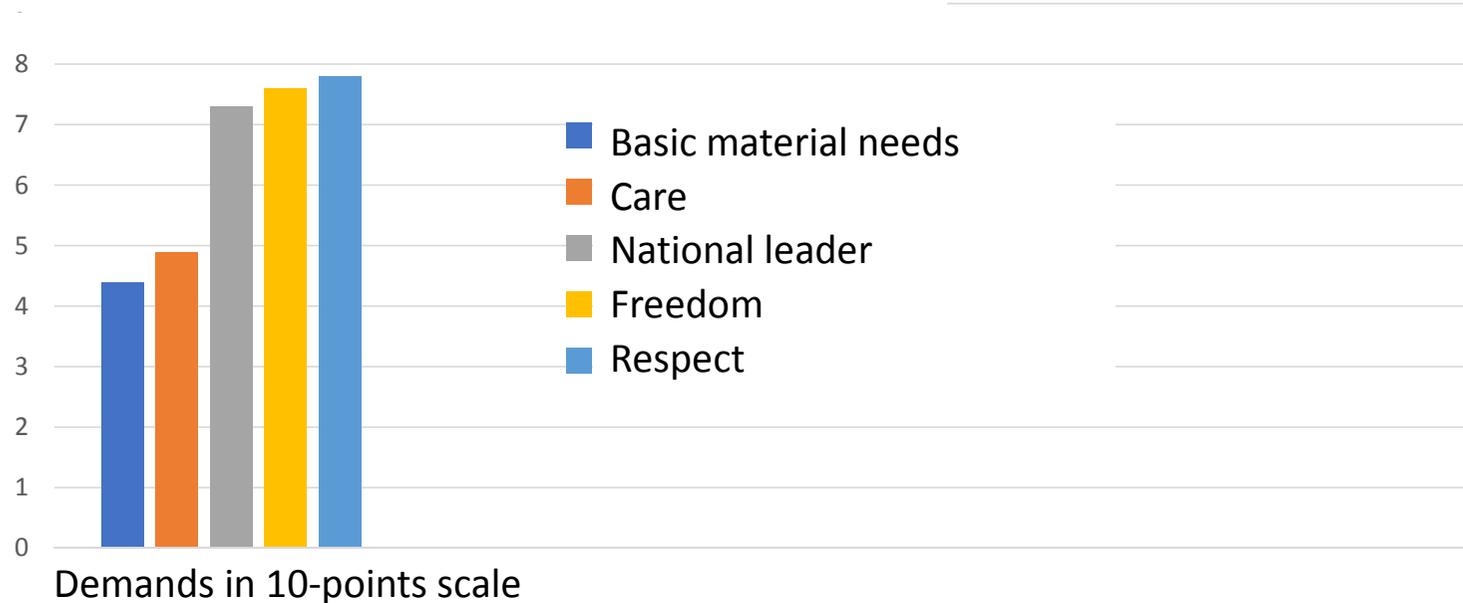
Do we feel personally responsible for situation in the country?



New attitude to Crimea: a landmark for the end of Crimean consensus

- As a symbolic landmark to the end of Crimean consensus, acquisition of Crimea is no longer mentioned by respondents as an achievement.
- Moreover, unthinkable until recently, there appear suggestions to return Crimea to Ukraine in order to improve international relations

Dynamics of change



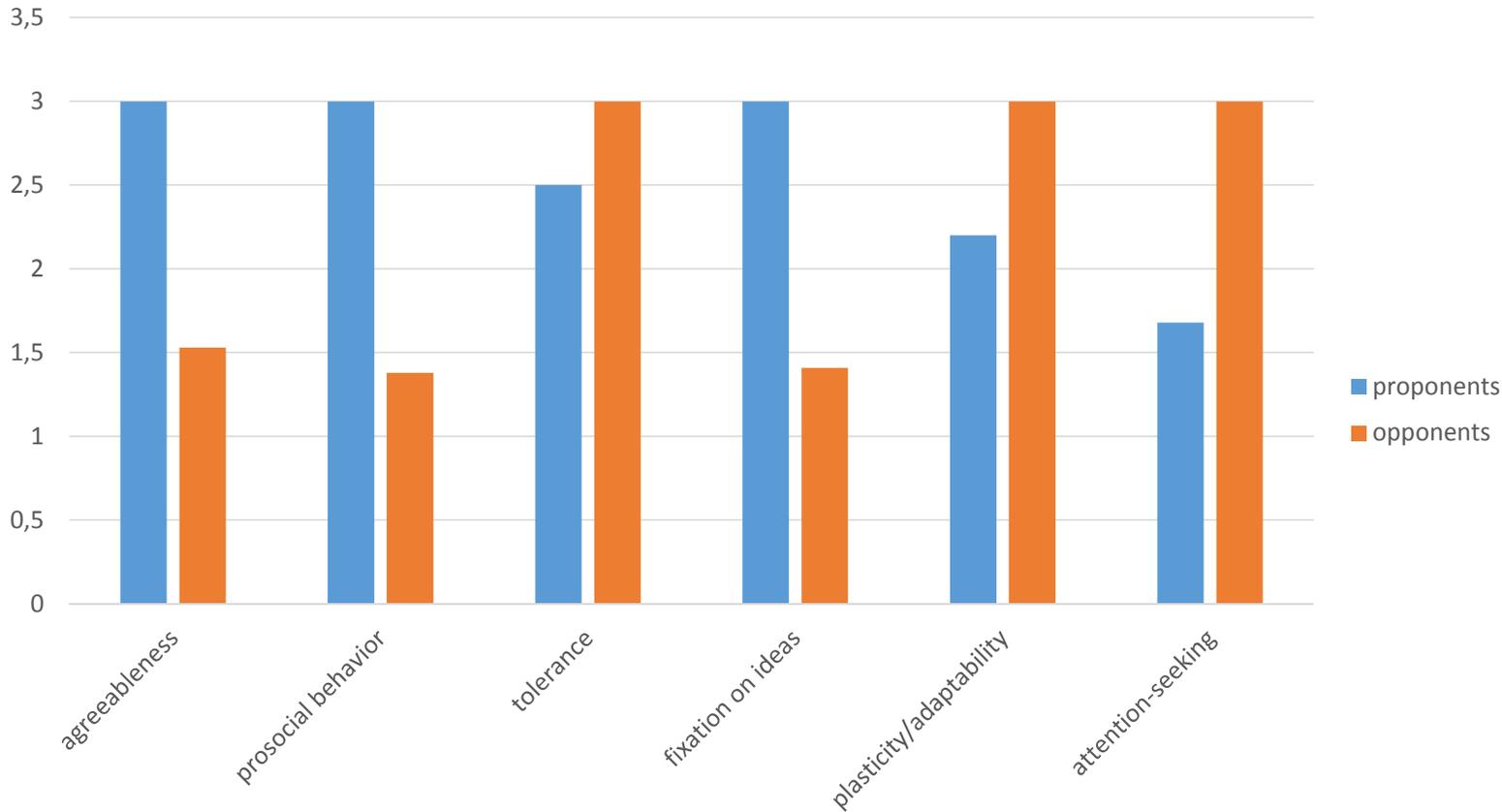
Types of psychological separation

- Emotional separation - the ability to make independent choices
- Value separation is the ability to have one's personal opinion based on one's own values and to voice it without fear.
- Functional department - the ability of a person to take care of himself (responsibility for own life)
- Conflict separation - the ability to actively defend one's interests and rights

Proponents and opponents of official policy

- 60 users of social media
- 29 Facebook users support official policy, 31 – criticize it
- Personality profiling was based on user-generated content, such as posts, likes, comments, photos, emoji etc.
- Profiling tools:
 - Big five personality traits test 5PFQ
 - Wiesbaden Positive Psychotherapy Inventory - WIPPF
- The survey revealed significant structural differences between the profiles of proponents and opponents of official policy

Structural differences between personality profiles of proponents and opponents of official policy



The main findings concerning opponents of official policy

Opponents of official policy:

- do not divide the world into “us” and “them”
- resilient to norms and ideology imposed from outside
- opened to new ideas
- not attached any established ideology (including liberal one) or well structured ideas about politics and society
- attention-seeking
- regard protests as a way of self-expression

Thank you for your attention!