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## PUBLIC OPINION POLLS AND POLITICAL CULTURE

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## ANALYSIS

## Popular Support for Democracy and Autocracy in Russia

By Ellen Carnaghan, Saint Louis

### Abstract

The high levels of popular support for Putin have sometimes been interpreted as public acceptance of the moves toward greater autocracy that occurred during his first two terms as president and that continued when he served as prime minister. The results of some Russian public opinion surveys seem to confirm that impression, but these survey results may give an impression that there is less support for democracy than actually exists. Measuring support for democracy in societies where democratic institutions are not present, or do not function well, is a challenge. In societies moving either toward or away from democracy, the very meaning of “democracy” is often in question and institutions and practices that go by the label of “democratic” often vary widely from accepted norms. Interpreted in this light, survey results provide evidence of perhaps more passive support for democracy among ordinary Russians than is generally imagined, but little willingness to engage in political action.

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Vladimir Putin started his third term as president of Russia. Unlike the previous times that he took the oath of office—in 2000 and in 2004—this time he did so in the face of significant popular opposition. Huge demonstrations arose following accusations of vote-rigging in the December parliamentary elections, and reappeared around the March presidential election, continuing into Putin’s third term. Does this emergent opposition indicate a popular defense of democracy in the face of Putin’s increasingly autocratic tendencies? Or is the opposition just a small group at odds with dominant trends in popular political orientations? In this article, I use the results of public opinion surveys and interviews that I conducted with ordinary Russian citizens between 1998 and 2011 to show that, while ordinary Russians may be more supportive of democracy than generally imagined, at the moment few are willing to do much to advance it.

Putin’s first two terms—and his tenure as Prime Minister under President Dmitry Medvedev—saw a slow but steady contraction of democratic practice. The media—especially television—was brought increasingly under government control; elections became steadily less competitive as the regime learned how to manage outcomes; people bold enough to try to take a stand against these trends found themselves in exile, jail, or in the case of a number of unlucky journalists, dead. Putin developed what he called a “power vertical” that facilitated central government control over local politics and elections. This meant government officials could be counted on to do what the people above them demanded, not necessarily what citizens wanted. Though parts of the political system remain democratic in form, practices are increasingly autocratic. While there are many things that citizens might like about the Putin regime—economic expansion and the curtailment of the chaos of the Yeltsin years chief among them—Putin’s high levels

of popular support have sometimes been interpreted as public acceptance of the moves toward greater autocracy.

Some Russian public opinion surveys seem to confirm the impression that ordinary Russians see little use for Western-style democracy. According to polls conducted by the Levada Center, a respected Russian survey organization, only about 20 percent of respondents think Russia needs the kind of democracy found in Europe and America, and that percentage seems to be declining over time. Russians are quite a bit more likely to think that what is happening in Russia is the development of democracy than that it is the approach of dictatorship. They are more satisfied than not with the fairness of Russian elections. They tend to favor “order” and a ruler with a “strong hand.”

Public opinion surveys also indicate little popular interest in opposition politics. Polls conducted by the Russian public opinion organization *Fond Obshchestvennoe Mnenie* show minimal public recognition of the names of opposition leaders, and leaders who are better known tend to be regarded negatively. The population’s support for opposition activities is also limited. When asked whether fines for violating the government’s conditions for sanctioned demonstrations should be increased, only 12 percent of respondents defend the right to protest as an essential element of democracy. Few Russians are ready to join protest demonstrations. In their new consumer economy, many Russians have been willing to ignore political life and go shopping instead.

But such survey results may give an impression of less support for democracy than actually exists. Measuring support for democracy in societies where democratic institutions do not exist, or do not function very well, is a challenge. Even in stable societies in which citizens have considerable experience with democracy, survey respondents may not completely understand the meaning of the questions that they are asked, and researchers



may not accurately interpret the meaning of the answers that they receive. In societies moving either toward or away from democracy, the very meaning of “democracy” is often in question and institutions and practices that go by the label of “democratic” often vary widely from accepted norms. Having learned about their political institutions since they were schoolchildren, citizens of stable political systems are equipped with a set of words and concepts that they can use to understand and to talk about their government. In societies undergoing political change, citizens do not have that advantage. As a result, respondents are likely to interpret survey questions on democratic concepts in unpredictable ways, and their answers may miscommunicate the intended meaning. This tendency toward miscommunication is not merely a question of translation or interaction across cultures; it is an inherent by-product of the difficulty of talking about democracy in contexts where it does not fully exist.

This problem is particularly profound for questions containing the word “democracy.” As part of two different research projects, I have conducted a series of systematic, intensive interviews with ordinary Russians between 1998 and 2011. These were interviews in which the respondents were free to answer at length instead of fitting their opinions into pre-determined multiple choice responses. Their answers illustrate the variation of meaning that might be attached to the word “democracy.” Some people described what democracy had meant in their own experiences: leaders who evaded their responsibilities to the nation; closed factories and economic hardship. Others talked about democracy in terms of single pieces of a complex system—personal freedom, elections, or the observance of law. As a result, when Russians answer survey questions about the need for Western style democracy in Russia, it is hard to know what they have in mind.

Survey researchers are of course aware of this problem and try to avoid it to the degree that they can. One strategy to minimize the problems associated with variation in the meaning of the word “democracy” is to avoid using the word itself, asking instead about various aspects of democratic systems, usually elections, institutions, and individual liberty. My respondents show that even these less abstract questions rely on words that mean different things to different respondents. Survey questions sometimes ask about particular institutions—presidents, parliaments, elections, courts—that are the vehicles for the participation, competition, or the protection of individual rights that are at the heart of democracy. But this strategy depends on respondents recognizing the significance of specific institutions—for instance, that presidents are different than kings or that legislatures embody the principle of representation of diverse interests. It is not clear

that ordinary citizens can always do this, or that the differences they see are the same as the ones survey researchers have in mind. Some of my respondents, for instance, thought a tsar, a president, and a Soviet-era commissar were pretty much the same thing. It is not surprising, then, that Russians understand their own system to be more democratic than most outside observers think it is.

Another problem with questions about particular institutions is that respondents may answer in terms of the specific—and often flawed—institutions of their own experience, instead of in terms of how those institutions are supposed to work in the abstract world of perfect democracy. Polls show, for instance, that Russians are not very supportive of representative legislatures. Since the legislature is usually considered one of the lynchpins of democracy, Russians’ hostility to their State Duma can look like hostility to the principle of representation or to competition between various political forces. Yet it was clear in the interviews that I conducted that respondents’ complaints arose from the way their own State Duma operated. They labeled deputies “swindlers” and “parasites” and accused them of being only concerned with their own personal welfare, with feeding at the public trough. My respondents did not want to be without representation. They just wanted representative institutions to work better, to serve the needs of ordinary people like themselves.

Survey researchers use phrases like “a strong hand” or “strict order” as code words indicating authoritarian rule and limits on personal freedom, but it is not clear all respondents successfully crack the code. My respondents, for instance, were in favor of “strict order,” but they understood that to mean that everyone—including government officials—would be bound to obey the law. For many of my respondents, order was not the opposite of democracy or any practical concept of freedom. Rather, order—along with democracy—occupied a midpoint between autocracy on the one hand, and chaos, random violence, and social collapse on the other. As one young man explained, “order supports the majority of spheres. But nothing will come of anarchy, which is what you get without order.”

The upshot of all this is that survey responses probably underestimate the degree to which ordinary Russians favor democracy. In non-democratic or partly-democratic countries like Russia, real world referents for words like “democracy,” “freedom,” or “elections” are likely to be less than wholly savory and not what researchers have in mind. In political systems undergoing uncertain transitions, respondents may need a great deal of political knowledge to answer questions well, but these are just the places where knowledge acquired in the past may not help people understand the present.



And there is much in Russians' survey responses that indicates considerable support for many aspects of democracy. Although ordinary Russian citizens can be somewhat hazy about the expected organization of democratic institutions, they are much more consistent in their support for individual rights. This feeling may be most intense in regard to personal liberties—like the right to travel freely—but it also extends to political rights. Generally, citizens do not think the interests of the state take precedence over the rights of individuals. A large majority of citizens think opposition groups should exist, and they do not support the use of force against such groups, even though they do not personally expect to find themselves at a protest rally.

That only a very small proportion of Russians report themselves to be ready to join demonstrations or other forms of protest is not surprising. In most countries, that level of political activity is very much the province of the few, and it is probably something that individuals become ready for unexpectedly, in the face of quickly changing circumstances. To the degree that Russians rely on state-controlled media sources, they do not necessarily have the kind of information they would need in order to be able to articulate the sources of their dissatisfactions or to figure out how to turn dissatisfaction into action. Indeed, the state-controlled press tends to present all regime opponents as violent extremists, and local government officials loyal to (or dependent upon) Putin make it difficult for the opposition to organize events. But surveys show that internet usage has been

expanding steadily in Russia, and information that the official press does not provide is available to Russians on opposition websites and blogs. Indeed, polls indicate that some parts of the opposition's message are beginning to get through. Alexei Navalny, an anti-corruption blogger, led a campaign to link Putin's United Russia party with the slogan, "The Party of Swindlers and Thieves." Between April 2011 and January 2012, the percent of the population who agreed that the name fit rose nine percentage points. So far, however, the majority has not bought the opposition's claims that elections are rigged or that better government is possible.

Although the proportion of the population that believes the country is going in the wrong direction is down from its highs during the Yeltsin administration, at around 40 percent it is still substantial. It is possible that, during Putin's third term as president, these dissatisfied citizens will remain content to complain privately, convince themselves that the regime ultimately has their best interests in mind, and continue to provide active support neither to the government or its opponents. It is also possible that they will gradually find reasons to move into more active opposition. That opposition could come from many directions—communists and exclusive nationalists retain significant pockets of support—but supporters of the basic tenets of democracy probably outnumber either of these groups. What remains to be seen is whether these people will choose to defend democratic practices or, alternately, to mind their own business and go shopping as autocracy intensifies.

#### *About the Author*

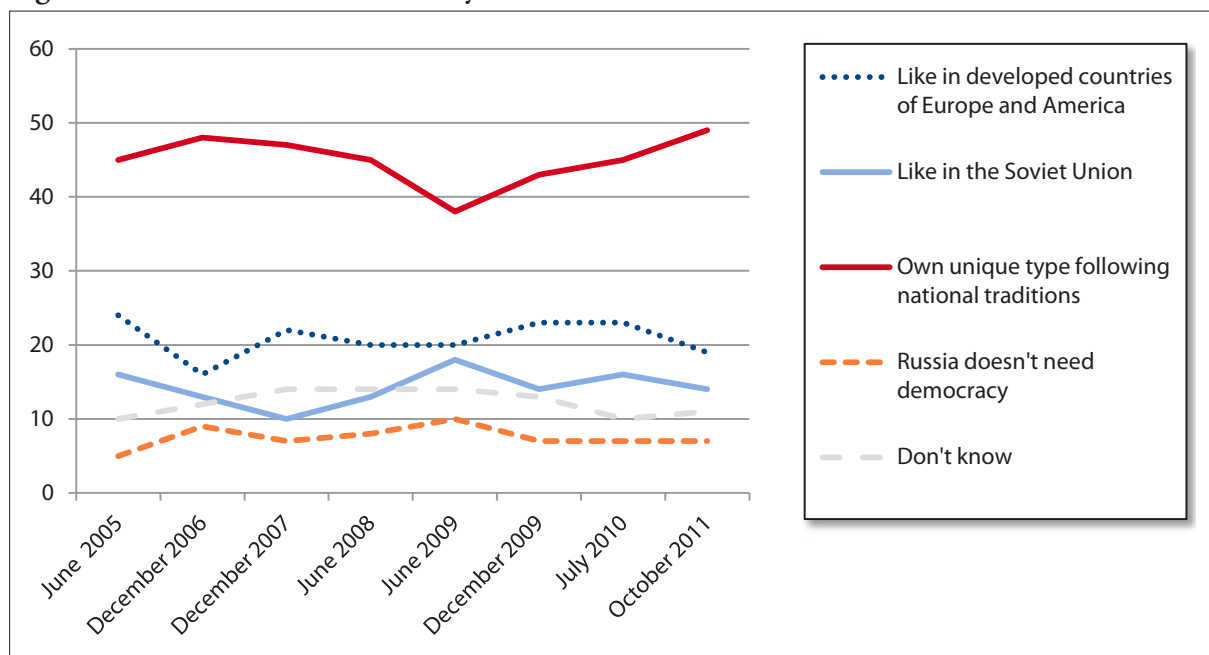
Ellen Carnaghan is Professor and Chair of the Political Science Department at Saint Louis University in Saint Louis, Missouri, USA. She has published articles on popular attitudes in Russia and Eastern Europe in *Comparative Politics*, *Democratization*, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, *P.S.: Political Science and Politics*, and *Slavic Review*. Her recent book, *Out of Order: Russian Political Values in an Imperfect World* (Penn State University Press, 2007) examines how the political values of Russian citizens have been shaped by the disorderly conditions that followed the collapse of communism.



## OPINION POLL

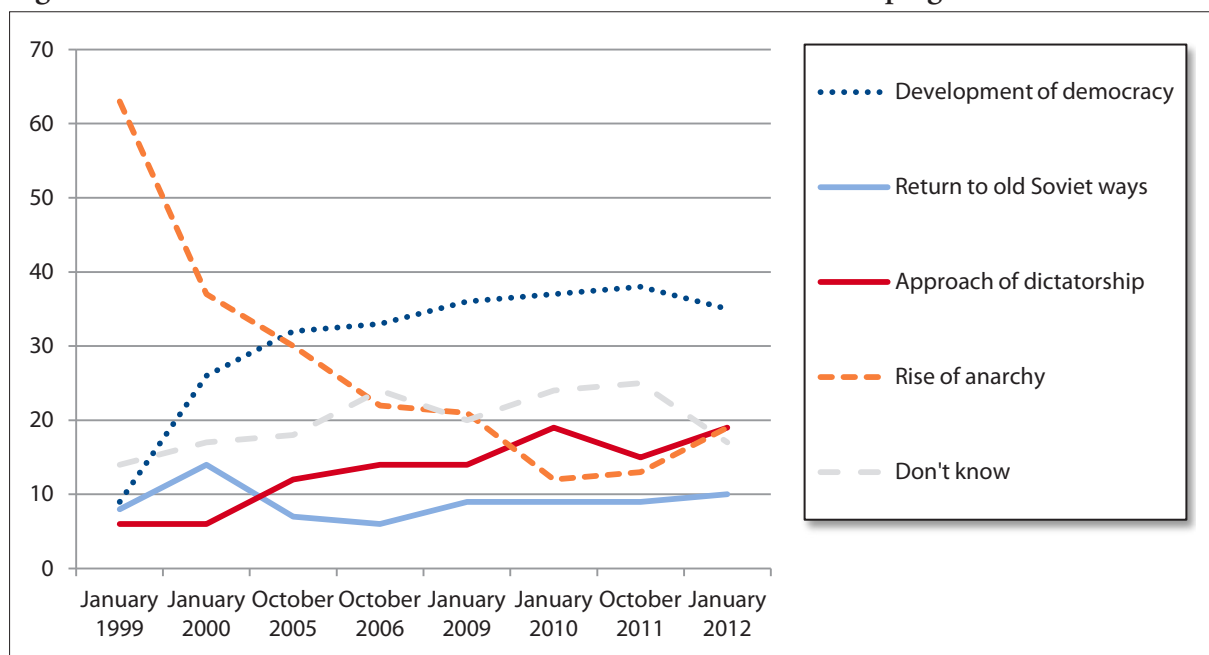
## Conceptions of Democracy

Figure 1: What Kind Of Democracy Does Russia Need?



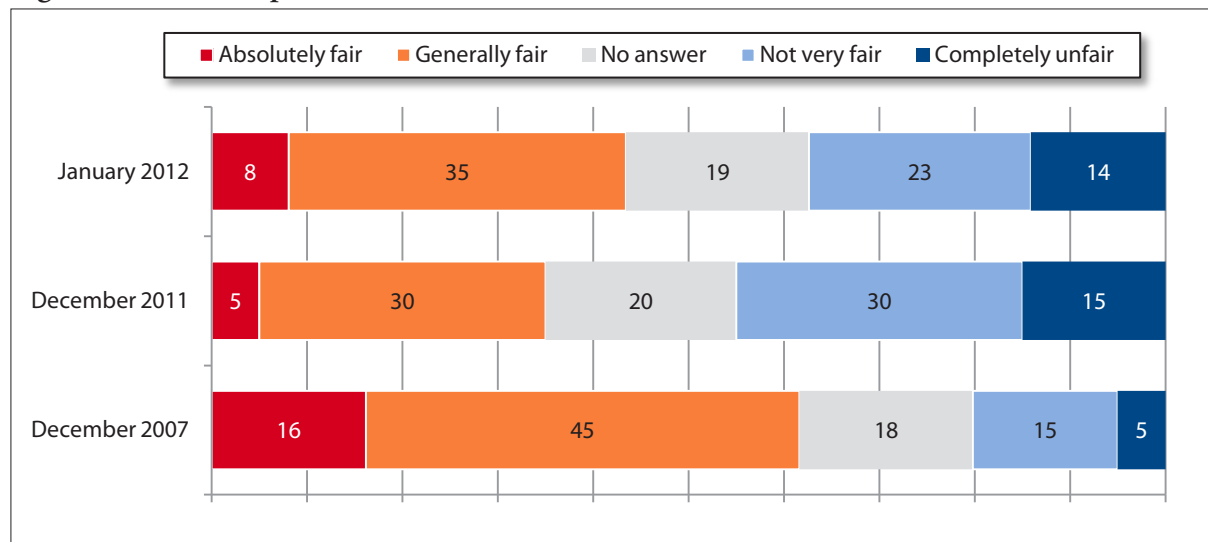
Source: representative opinion poll by Levada Center, [www.russiavotes.org](http://www.russiavotes.org)

Figure 2: On What Path Do You Think Events In Russia Are Developing?

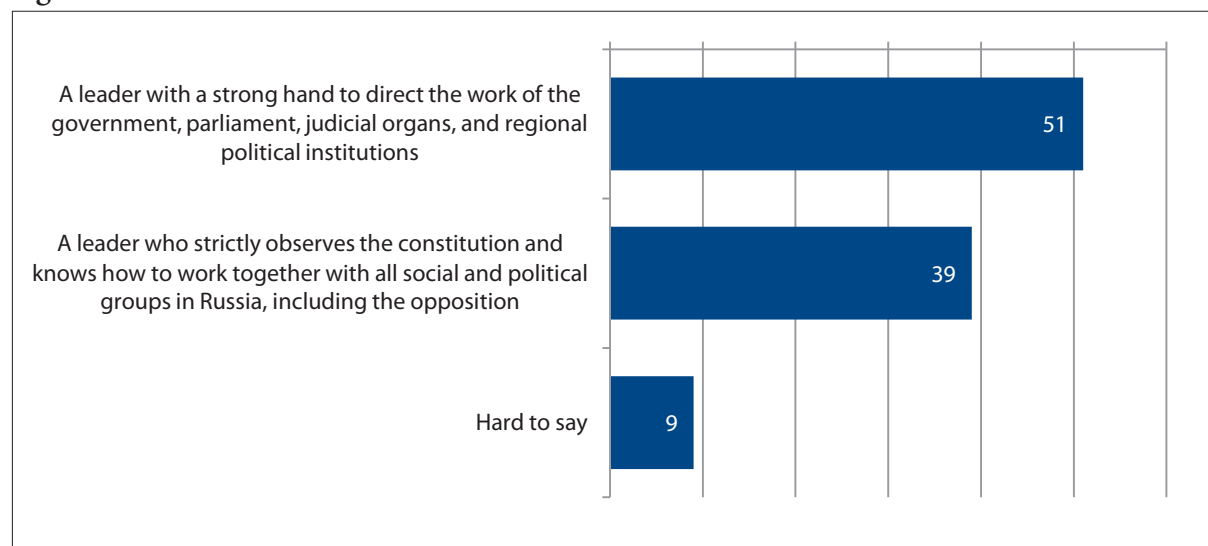


Source: representative opinion poll by Levada Center, [www.russiavotes.org](http://www.russiavotes.org)



**Figure 3: In Your Opinion, How Fair Were The Elections for the State Duma?**

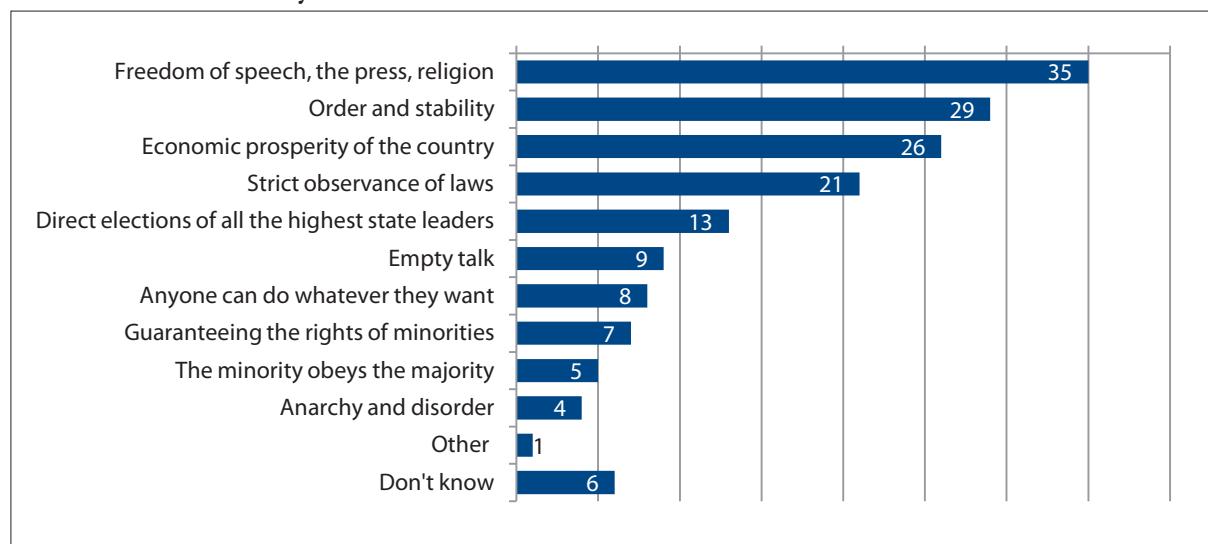
Source: representative opinion poll by Levada Center, N=1600, [www.levada.ru](http://www.levada.ru)

**Figure 4: What Kind Of President Does Russia Need Now?**

Source: representative opinion poll by Levada Center, [www.levada.ru](http://www.levada.ru)

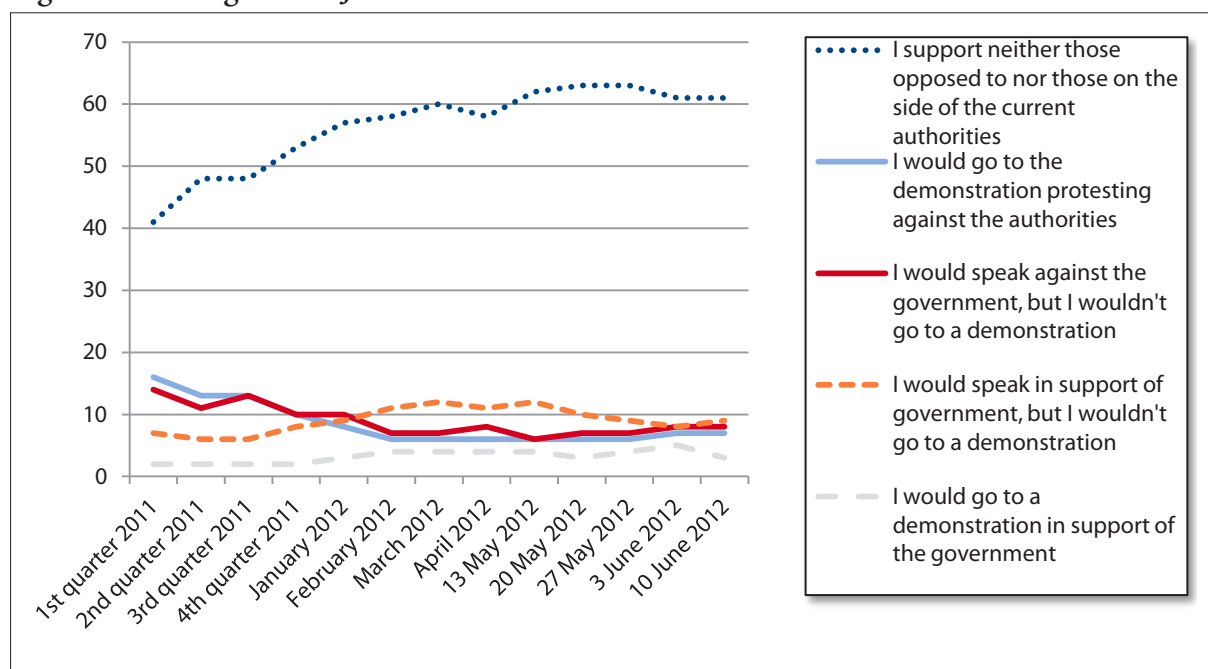


**Figure 5: What Do You Think Is Most Important To Be Able To Speak About Democracy In This Country?**



Source: representative opinion poll by Levada Center, 17–21 December 2010, N=1611, [www.russiavotes.org](http://www.russiavotes.org)

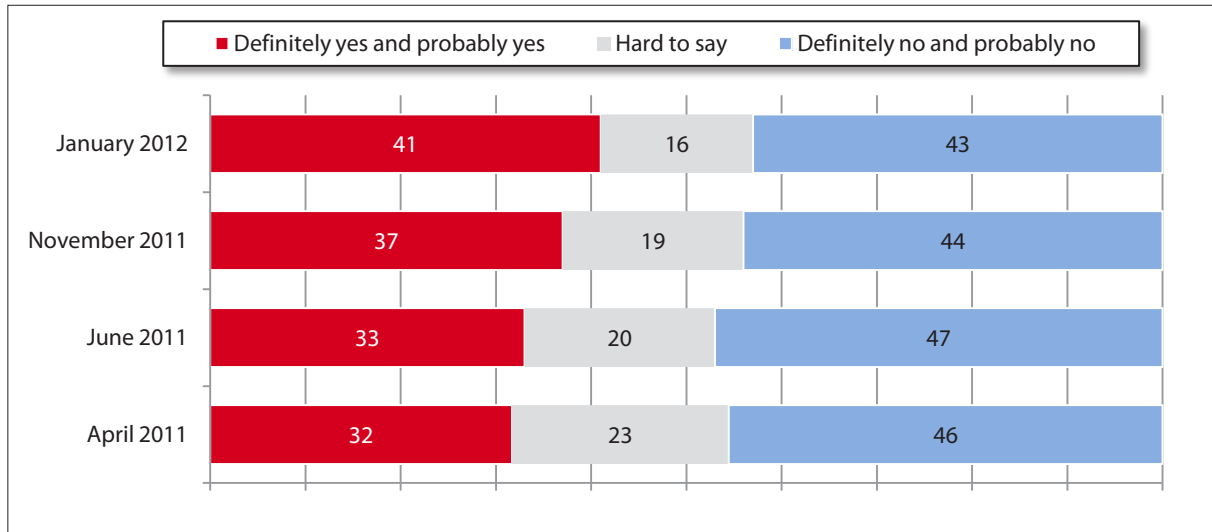
**Figure 6: Willingness To Join Demonstration**



Source: representative opinion poll by Fond Obshchestvennoye Mneniye, [www.fom.ru](http://www.fom.ru)



**Figure 7: Do You Agree Or Disagree With the Opinion That the United Russia Party Is the Party Of Swindlers and Thieves?**



Source: representative opinion poll by Levada Center, N=1600, [www.levada.ru](http://www.levada.ru)



## ANALYSIS

## Trends in Russian Views on Democracy 2008–12: Has There Been a Russian Democratic Awakening?<sup>1</sup>

By Henry E. Hale, Washington

### Abstract

With the surprising outbreak of the largest street demonstrations of the Vladimir Putin era against widely perceived election fraud in the December 2011 Duma elections, many observers have speculated that a democratic awakening might be afoot in Russia. Comparison of original public opinion surveys of the Russian citizenry just after the parliamentary-presidential election seasons of 2008 and 2012 reveals little evidence of an awakening and finds broad support for democracy to have remained steady during this period. Survey evidence also shows that the idea of an “awakening” might be misplaced, however, since the “democracy” that many Russians tend to support is fully compatible with a “strong leader” who rules without checks and balances. That is, they support what Guillermo O’Donnell famously called a “delegative democracy” where people freely and regularly elect leaders who are then expected to wield broad powers without constraints to solve problems and promote development.

### Russians and Democracy

A debate has long raged over what Russians think about democracy. The older view is that Russians are somehow culturally authoritarian, that they have long been conditioned to believe that autocracy is the optimal form of government for their particular land and people. Other scholarship has challenged this argument, condemning it as cultural determinism that essentially blames the people for the governments that have victimized them. Even these challengers, however, are divided on exactly what Russians do think of democracy. Some see them as democrats at heart who just do not think it can work in Russia at the present time. Others think of them as “contingent autocrats,” people whose hopes that democracy would usher in prosperity got too high as communism collapsed, setting them up for bitter disillusionment. Still others see them as little different from people in other countries, preferring democracy but willing to sacrifice some freedom for vital goods like overcoming collapse or restoring economic growth. A famous Russian pollster, Yury Levada, even articulated the idea that Russians themselves were essentially confused on the question.

Many of these positions can in fact be reconciled if one thinks of Russians as “delegative democrats.” That is, they do widely favor “strong hand” leadership that does not have to bother with checks and balances in order to solve problems, but they also want to collectively decide who this strong hand should be. I sought to test this idea using the 2008 wave of the Russian Election Studies (RES) survey, conducted just after the presidential election of that year. In an article published

in *Europe-Asia Studies* in October 2011, I reported confirmation that an overwhelming majority of Russians “think that to solve its problems Russia needs a head of state with a strong hand”—a finding that Pew Associates and others have interpreted in their surveys as an indicator of support for authoritarianism. But the RES survey did not stop there, and asked where people thought this “strong hand” should come from, and it turns out that all but 4 percent of those who supported a strong hand thought that “the people should have the right to choose who becomes this head of state,” and almost all of those (87 percent) thought that this should happen through “free and fair elections” among “several candidates with different views.”

This reconciles widely reported findings that Russians tend to support powerful and largely unconstrained leaders with equally consistent evidence that they also support democracy, want to choose their leaders in free and fair elections, think that political competition makes the state stronger, and do not think leaders should violate basic human rights—all of which was also confirmed in the 2008 RES survey.

### Fresh Survey Evidence from 2012

In the wake of the massive protest movement that began in December 2011 and continues to mobilize tens of thousands in the streets periodically to this day, many now say that Russians are less and less willing to accept Putin’s strong hand, increasingly able to see through the regime’s manipulations of the political system, and are more insistent on demanding change. Some have predicted that this will even lead to the regime’s demise in the near future. Are such suppositions correct, and has there been a significant change in Russians’ attitudes to democracy between 2008 and 2012?

<sup>1</sup> Numbers reported in the text might differ slightly from those in the following section of graphs due to rounding.



To help answer this question, we can turn to results that are just in from a new wave of the RES survey, this one conducted among a nationally representative sample of 1,682 adult citizens of the Russian Federation between April 1 and May 18, 2012, just after the 2011–2012 national election season concluded with the March presidential voting. Carried out by the Moscow-based Demoscope group of survey specialists based on their time-tested and academically rigorous methodology, the questionnaire was designed by myself and Timothy Colton, who has co-led every iteration of the RES since its inception in 1995.

### Support for “Democracy” in 2008 and 2012

First, let us examine findings when people are simply asked straight up: “Do you agree or disagree that Russia should be a democratic country?” As in 2008, we find in 2012 that approximately three quarters of the population supports democracy in Russia. While the percentage of “democrats” in 2012 (77 percent) is slightly higher than it was in 2008 (74 percent), so also is the share of people who disagree (up to 14 percent from 12 percent). What is happening here is that the share of Russians who were unable to give an answer has shrunk from 14 percent to 9 percent. What this suggests, then, is that there has been no significant net rise in the share of the population supporting democracy in Russia, and that on balance people who have only recently started to formulate opinions have been nearly as likely to break toward opposition to, as much as support for, democracy.

Of course, it is also well documented that the particular wording of survey questions can have a big effect on the answers one gets, so the survey also asked a number of related questions using different wording. Just to make sure that using the term “democracy” was not throwing things off, the RES also includes a number of questions that capture attitudes to core attributes of democracy without mentioning the term “democracy” itself. On balance, the evidence reveals no strong upsurge in support for democracy. In one case, there was a decline even as a majority still could be considered “democratic”: Asked whether they tend to agree or disagree that “competition among political parties makes our political system stronger,” the percentage of those agreeing went down from 60 percent in 2008 to 53 percent in 2012, with the share of people disagreeing rising from 29 percent in 2008 to 38 percent in 2012. Asked about whether regional governors should be elected, however, the answers seemed to reflect an upturn in democratic attitudes. In 2008, 45 percent had backed Putin in ending such elections while only 35 percent came out clearly for restoring them, with 9 percent expressing indifference and 10 percent unable to answer.

In 2012, 62 percent tended to agree that “gubernatorial elections should be restored” with only 14 percent being opposed. While the slightly different angles taken in wording these questions complicates direct comparison, the findings are consistent with a rise in support for electing provincial heads of state.

### Democracy and a “Strong Leader”

Another approach used in the RES surveys has been to ask people about different political systems and whether they were a “very good,” “fairly good,” “fairly bad,” or “very bad” way to govern Russia. Here we find what on the surface appears to be some evidence for an increase in support for democracy: In 2008, those generally thinking democracy was good for Russia outweighed those thinking it was bad by 58 percent to 23 percent, while in 2012, the share of democrats had bumped up to 63 percent while the share of their opponents held steady at 23 percent.

What complicates the simple “democratic awakening” interpretation here is the second political system that the RES asked Russians about: “a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections.” It turns out that the share of Russians telling survey researchers that this was generally a good idea also increased, from 49 percent in 2008 to 56 percent in 2012, with the share of those opposing it declining from 34 percent in 2008 to 30 percent in 2012.

Here, however, we must keep in mind what was mentioned above and documented more extensively in my *Europe-Asia Studies* article using 2008 data: Many Russians want both a strong leader operating without constraints for long periods of time and the right to determine who this leader will be in free and fair elections. Some other follow-on questions also show they want the right to remove such a leader should he or she start operating against the interests of the public. This is the logic of delegative democracy, and helps explain why a full 26 percent of the population in 2008 could actually support both a “democratic system” and a “strong leader” in the same survey. Interestingly, the share of such people rose to nearly 35 percent in 2012. This cautions that even where one might observe a rise in Russian support for democracy, the kind of democracy they actually want may not be of the ideal-typical Western variety.

### Trading Off Democracy

The RES also includes a series of questions, originally introduced more than a decade ago by Colton and Michael McFaul, designed to explore the extent to which people understand the tradeoffs involved in advocating democracy with regard to other high-priority values. Comparing answers in 2012 with those in 2008



reveals no clear evidence of a trend toward emphasizing democracy more with respect to other values like a strong state or economic growth.

When asked whether it is possible for Russia to be both democratic and have a strong state, 56 percent in 2008 and 53 percent in 2012 believe that they can have both, and only 33 percent in 2008 and 38 percent in 2012 think that one must choose. The distribution of priorities between these two values has hardly changed between 2008 and 2012: 43 percent in 2008 and 41 percent in 2012 would prioritize the strong state, while 10 and 11 percent (respectively) would opt for democracy and 43 and 42 percent aver that they are equally important. The share of people who thought that there was a tradeoff between these values and would choose a strong state over democracy has held fairly steady, but only at 22 percent of the population in 2008 and 23 percent in 2012.

Answers regarding perceived tradeoffs with economic growth are highly similar: 62 percent in both years think that they can have both, with 27 percent and 29 percent disagreeing in 2008 and 2012 respectively. As for how the population prioritizes these values, 49 percent in 2008 and 52 percent in 2012 would favor growth, 2 and 3 percent respectively would put democracy first, and 44 and 42 percent respectively

think growth and democracy should be equally valued. The share of Russian citizens who think that growth and democracy are not compatible and would choose growth was essentially unchanged between 2008 and 2012, rising only from 22 percent to 23 percent.

### Implications

Overall, this first cut into fresh findings from the April–May 2012 RES survey finds little evidence of a sea change in Russia regarding attitudes toward democracy. While responses to some questions show a slight rise in the share of supporters of democracy, others indicate either no change or even a slight decline in the prevalence of democratic values. Nevertheless, it at least appears to be the case in 2012 as much as in 2008 that a majority of Russian citizens can be considered supporters of some kind of democracy. Importantly, however, these “democrats” often tend to be “delegative democrats” rather than “liberal democrats” or Western-style democrats. This will make it harder for a strong leader ever to “go all the way” and completely eliminate opposition and elections. But at the same time, it will also tend to facilitate the acquisition by leaders of the power to do so and to promote the rise of leaders who display tendencies disregardful of the procedural niceties of liberal democracy.

### About the Author

Henry E. Hale is Associate Professor of Political Science and International Affairs at George Washington University and the author of *Why Not Parties in Russia? Democracy, Federalism, and the State* (2006) and *The Foundations of Ethnic Politics: Separatism of States and Nations in Eurasia and the World* (2008). He is currently finishing a new book manuscript, tentatively titled *Great Expectations: Eurasian Regime Dynamics in Comparative Perspective*.

### Further Reading

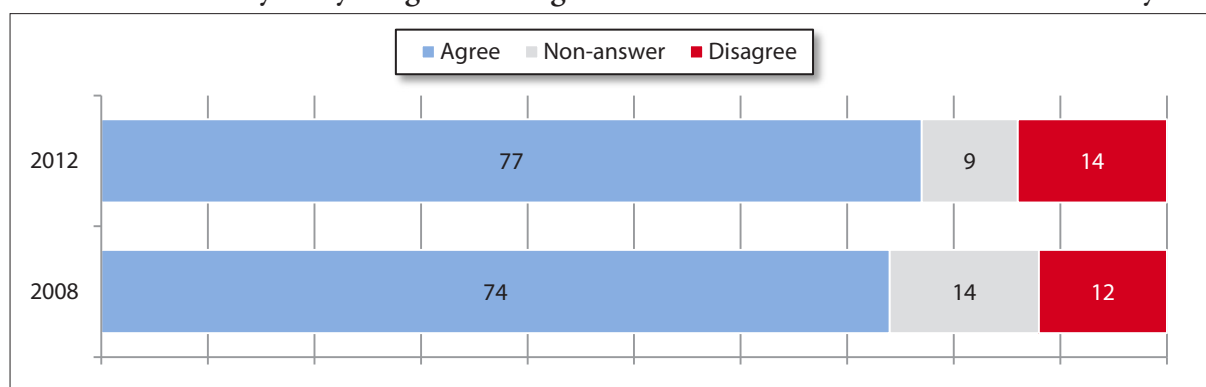
- Henry E. Hale, “The Myth of Mass Russian Support for Autocracy: Public Opinion Foundations of a Hybrid Regime,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, v. 63, no. 8, October 2011, pp. 1357–1375.
- Guillermo O’Donnell, “Delegative Democracy,” *Journal of Democracy*, v. 5, no. 1, January 1994, pp. 55–69.



## OPINION POLL

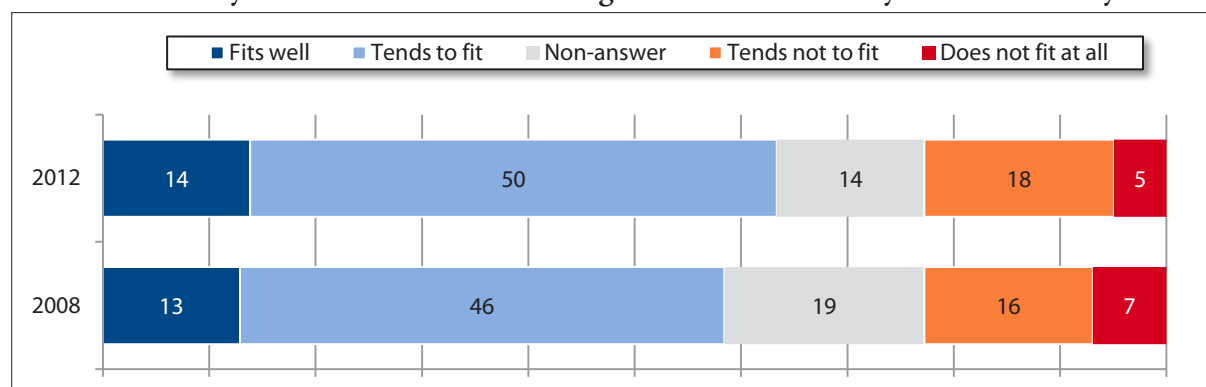
## Democracy and/or a Strong State?

**Figure 1: Distribution (percent) of answers to: “Many people in Russia today talk a lot about democracy. Do you agree or disagree that Russia should be a democratic country?”**



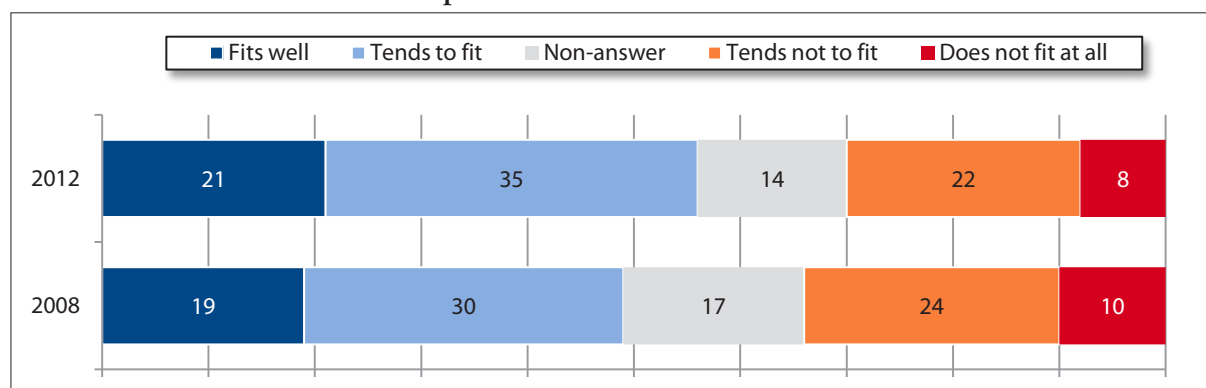
Source: Russian Election Studies (RES) surveys 2008 and 2012 (Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Sociology, Demoscope Group)

**Figure 2a: Distribution of answers (percent) to: “What do you think, to what degree are the political systems that I mention here a good fit for our country? A democratic system...”**



Source: Russian Election Studies (RES) surveys 2008 and 2012 (Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Sociology, Demoscope Group)

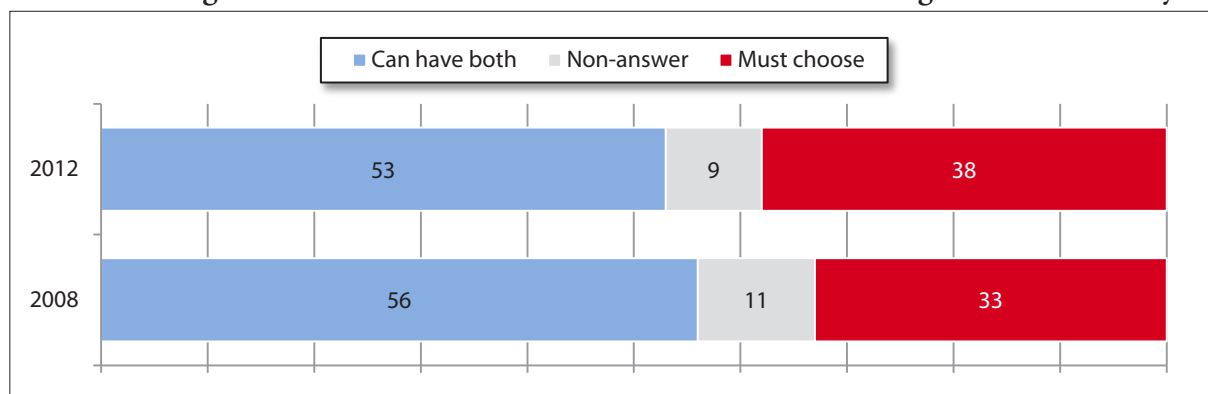
**Figure 2b: Distribution of answers (percent) to: “What do you think, to what degree are the political systems that I mention here a good fit for our country? A strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections...”**



Source: Russian Election Studies (RES) surveys 2008 and 2012 (Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Sociology, Demoscope Group)

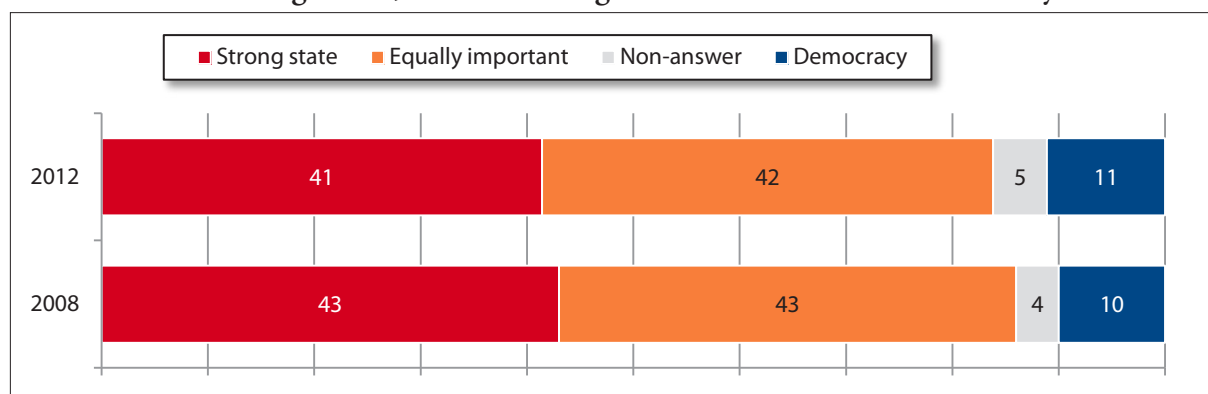


**Figure 3a:** Distribution (percent) of answers to: “What do you think, is it possible for Russia at the present time to be simultaneously a democratic country and a country with a strong state or must we choose one or the other: either a strong state or democracy?”



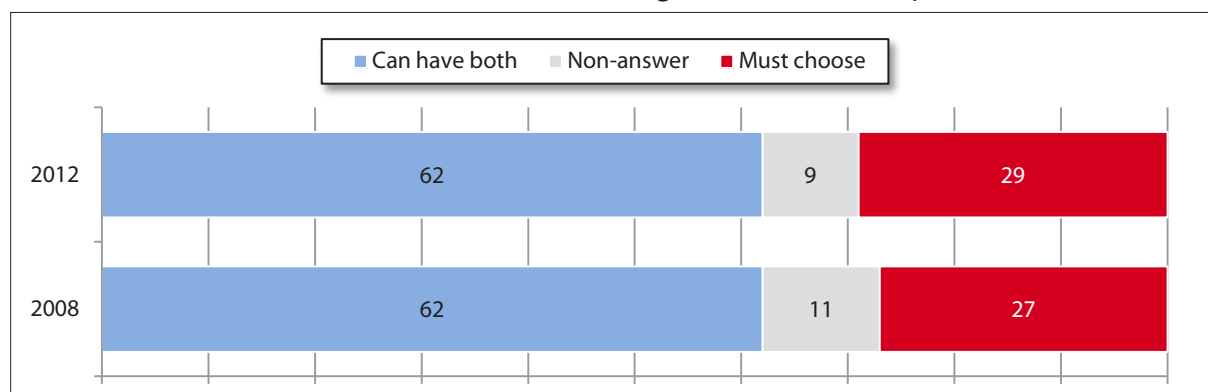
Source: Russian Election Studies (RES) surveys 2008 and 2012 (Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Sociology, Demoscope Group)

**Figure 3b:** Distribution (percent) of answers to: “And what, in your opinion, is more important for Russia right now, to have a strong state or to be a democratic country?”



Source: Russian Election Studies (RES) surveys 2008 and 2012 (Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Sociology, Demoscope Group)

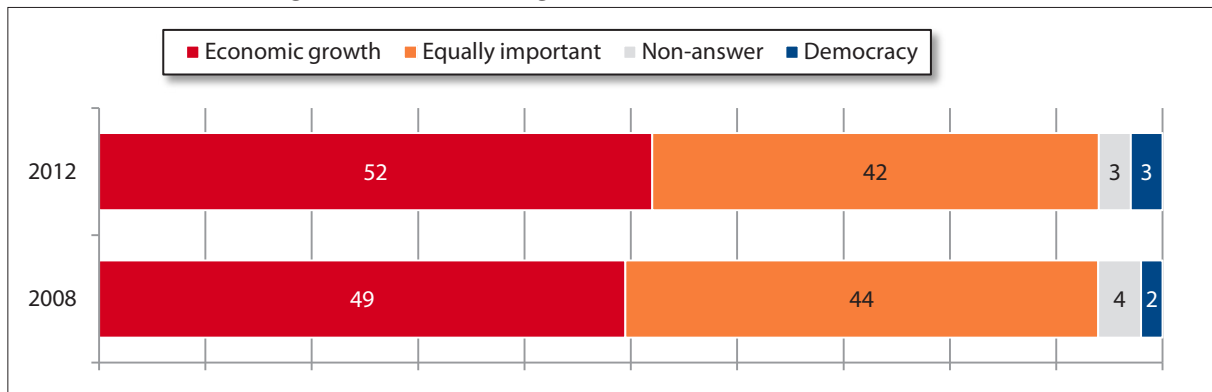
**Figure 4a:** Distribution (percent) of answers to: “What do you think, is it possible for there to be in Russia at the present time both democracy and economic growth, or must we choose one or the other, either economic growth or democracy?”



Source: Russian Election Studies (RES) surveys 2008 and 2012 (Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Sociology, Demoscope Group)



Figure 4b: Distribution (percent) of answers to: “And what, in your opinion, is more important for Russia right now, economic growth or democracy?”



Source: Russian Election Studies (RES) surveys 2008 and 2012 (Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Sociology, Demoscope Group)



## ABOUT THE RUSSIAN ANALYTICAL DIGEST

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The CSS runs the International Relations and Security Network (ISN), and in cooperation with partner institutes manages the Crisis and Risk Network (CRN), the Parallel History Project on Cooperative Security (PHP), the Swiss Foreign and Security Policy Network (SSN), and the Russian and Eurasian Security (RES) Network.

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The University of Zurich, founded in 1833, is one of the leading research universities in Europe and offers the widest range of study courses in Switzerland. With some 24,000 students and 1,900 graduates every year, Zurich is also Switzerland's largest university. Within the Faculty of Arts, the Institute of History consists of currently 17 professors and employs around a 100 researchers, teaching assistants and administrative staff. Research and teaching relate to the period from late antiquity to contemporary history. The Institute offers its 2,600 students a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in general history and various specialized subjects, including a comprehensive Master's Program in Eastern European History. Since 2009, the Institute also offers a structured PhD-program. For further information, visit at <http://www.hist.uzh.ch/>

#### Resource Security Institute

The Resource Security Institute (RSI) is a non-profit organization devoted to improving understanding about global energy security, particularly as it relates to Eurasia. We do this through collaborating on the publication of electronic newsletters, articles, books and public presentations.

Any opinions expressed in Russian Analytical Digest are exclusively those of the authors.

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