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INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE AND SOCIAL VALUES IN RUSSIA

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Author: Elena Denisova-Schmidt

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1. Introduction

This report focuses on corruption practices in Russia and presents the results of a survey that was conducted between July and November 2013.

The questionnaire was translated into Russian and was adapted slightly after the first five interviews. The interview was time consuming (from 1 to 3 hours)¹ and many respondents became tired very quickly; hence, some coffee/tea breaks were integrated whenever it was possible. The interviews were conducted in such places as homes, workplaces, at a café, and sometimes in a car during a long drive. Some of the questions were not interesting from the viewpoint of respondents, such as the questions about social norms and values (more comments in the text). Some respondents had difficulties in attributing scores to the work of public institutions and the government, especially less educated and/or retired respondents. Moreover, some believed that it is important to maintain distance from institutions:

‘Any mentally sane person tries to distance himself from the authorities – it is better not to want anything from them, and not to want anything from anyone. If this works out, then it’s good. Then there won’t be any questions to the authorities – well, they are the way they are, but power in principle cannot be good, so we will somehow do without them. The most important thing is to have nobody standing on one’s way.’

The most interesting part of the survey was the evaluation of the different scenarios that took place in other countries around the world (question 19). Many respondents noted, however, that they wanted to have more details of the situation in order to judge adequately, which emphasizes a ‘particularist’ mode of thinking². Most of their concerns are described below.

One of the main comments was that the survey questions were formulated to require specific a ‘yes’ or ‘no’, ‘good’ or ‘bad’ response, but that there are many in-between options and ambivalent situations. In the questions pertaining to gifts (questions 17 and 18), one respondent, a lecturer, emphasized that the causal relationship articulated in these questions is not necessarily manifested so clearly, and that a gift does not necessarily precede an improvement in services. Sometimes this is the case, but often this is not – and very often it depends on subjective characteristics, such as doctor’s personality:

‘Sometimes you come across such a doctor that it becomes clearly necessary to find another doctor right away. And sometimes vice versa – from the first appointment, a doctor will treat you in such a great way that it is not even necessary to ask for anything; and then just out of the warmest gratitude, you give a present’.

Another respondent, an engineer, had actually bribed a doctor before the interview, and he assumed that the survey implied that this was bad, but it had to be done for a good purpose: to get out of a bad situation. The respondent was invited to become the production director of a company. He accepted the offer, but when he joined the company, he saw the departments, the equipment, the attitude of the general director toward safety issues and other things, and he realized that this company would not last long. He decided to leave it right away during the probationary period, i.e. in the first six months. Nobody

¹ The interviews lasted about one hour if the respondents gave only short answers without any explanations or comments.

² Particularism, for Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, means that there are some rules and laws, but their application might be selective (cf. Hampden-Turner, M. and Trompenaars, F. 2000. Building Cross-Cultural Competence. New Haven & London: Yale University Press).

wanted to let him leave. He wrote a letter of resignation and took a sick leave, so the employer would not spoil his service record and future career. He was granted this sick leave by bribing a doctor. Moreover, this respondent gave gifts to a teacher in order to enroll both of his children in an enrichment program. Only in this way his daughters were able to get access to a good teacher and to receive necessary training for elementary school.

Similar comments can be found for most questions, which made the codification of the data very difficult. As a result, where essential for understanding the context, I introduced the third – ambivalent – category. It includes ‘yes and no’ answers, where ‘good and bad’ cannot be clearly differentiated by the respondent. Many of the qualitative results received during interviews were incorporated in the analysis of the quantitative part of the survey.

The survey encompasses 115 adult respondents (45% male and 55% female) from five different regions: Moscow (22%), St. Petersburg (22%), Yekaterinburg (17%), Novosibirsk (17%) and Khabarovsk (22%) and their suburbs³. The necessity to include different federal districts is linked to the size of Russia, its heterogeneity and span over 10 time zones from west to east⁴.

At the time of the survey, Russia consisted of eight federal districts: the Central Federal District (capital: Moscow), Southern Federal District (capital: Rostov-on Don), Northwestern Federal District (capital: St. Petersburg), Far Eastern Federal District (capital: Khabarovsk), Siberian Federal District (capital: Novosibirsk), Ural Federal District (capital: Yekaterinburg), Volga Federal District (capital: Nizhniy Novgorod) and North Caucasian Federal District (capital: Pyatigorsk). It was not possible to include North Caucasian Federal District due to its political instability and the high level of terrorism, especially in Chechnya. The Southern Federal District was also excluded because the 2014 Olympics was held in Sochi (Krasnodar): the Games were surrounded with an unprecedented scale of corruption⁵, which might have influenced the study outcomes. The economic parameters of the Southern Federal Region and the Ural Federal District are very similar and hence only one district – the Urals – was chosen. Where possible, we made effort to sustain a relevant ratio of urban/rural population, data was collected in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, Novosibirsk and Khabarovsk, representing five federal districts, and their provinces.

The majority of respondents (76%) have a college degree (Table 1). Higher education is very popular among the Russian population. Every year almost 80% of all school graduates go into higher education, a number that has remained constant since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991⁶. It is not customary to provide numerical parameters of qualitative surveys, yet the following characteristics might be needed for comparative purposes.

³ Moscow is the capital of Russia with a population with more than 12 million. The population of St. Petersburg is about 5 million. Yekaterinburg is the biggest city in the Urals with a population of more than 1 million. Novosibirsk is the biggest city in Siberia, also with a population of more than 1 million. Khabarovsk is situated in the Russian Far East and has more than 600,000 people. Respondents from towns near these five cities were also approached.

⁴ This is a very common approach for many sociological surveys in Russia, and is also used by the Levada Center. Their sampling complements our results, but has a statistical sampling basis.

⁵ Cf. Russian Analytical Digest No 143, The Sochi Olympics, Müller, Martin, ed. 2013. “Sochi and the 2014 Olympics: Game Over?” *Euxeinos* 12: 1–47. Available online from www.euxeinos.ch, Müller, Martin, ed. 2014. “Sochi 2014: Great Games for a Great Power?” *East European Politics*, in press, Müller, Martin. 2014. “(Im-)mobile Policies: Why Sustainability Went Wrong in the 2014 Olympics in Sochi.” *European Urban and Regional Studies* 21: in press.

⁶ Philip G. Altbach, Gregory Androushchak, Yaroslav Kuzminov, Maria Yudkevich, and Liz Reisberg: ‘The Global Future of Higher Education and the Academic Profession: The Brics and the United States’ (Palgrave, 2013).

Table 1: Basic Characteristics of Survey Areas

Gender	%	n
Male	45	52
Female	55	63
Age		
15-25	14	16
25-35	30	35
35-45	30	34
45-55	10	12
55-65	13	15
65 +	3	3
Education level		
Primary	0	0
Middle school	3	3
High school	7	7
College	76	87
Technical	18	17
Occupation		
Civil servants in the public sector	8	9
Blue-collar employees	8	9
White-collar employees	31	36
Homemakers	3	3
Professional occupations (doctors, engineers, teachers, etc.)	32	37
Other self-employed occupations (barber, mechanic, real estate, etc.)	6	7
Students	5	6
Unemployed	1	1
Pensioners	6	7
Region		
Moscow and surroundings	22	25
St. Petersburg and surroundings	22	25
Yekaterinburg and surroundings	17	20
Novosibirsk and surroundings	17	20
Khabarovsk and surroundings	22	25

Survey interviews were conducted face to face by the following researchers: Dr. Anna Ivanova in Moscow, Dr. Irina Matvienko in St. Petersburg, Dr. Elena Denisova-Schmidt in Yekaterinburg, Dr. Svetlana Bratyushchenko in Novosibirsk, and Professor Elvira Leontyeva in Khabarovsk. All of the scholars have professional expertise and experience in ethnographic research. With exception of Elena Denisova-Schmidt, the ethnographers are local residents that enabled better access to different social groups. Elena Denisova-Schmidt is originally from Russia, but works abroad. Anna Ivanova studied abroad. Such marginal experience has proved beneficial for the research: respondents were more than happy to explain what is going on in Russia to someone with no recent experience. All of the respondents were found by ‘snowballing’ technique. Informal introductions were combined with formal approaches to respondents, but in all cases necessary disclaimers were made as appropriate and in advance of interviews. Confidentiality was granted to all interviewees. All interviews were conducted in Russian, the native language of all of the field researchers and participants. The respondents were notified about the possibility to be informed of the survey’s results.

2. Local Institutions

2.1 Trust in institution

Trust is one of the most important indicators in the evaluation of institutions. The first sets of questions dealt with institutions, and the first question of this set pertains to trust in institutions.

In order to measure trust in institutions, the following question was asked:

‘How much do you **trust** the following institutions’ (from 1: lowest, to 5: highest trust).

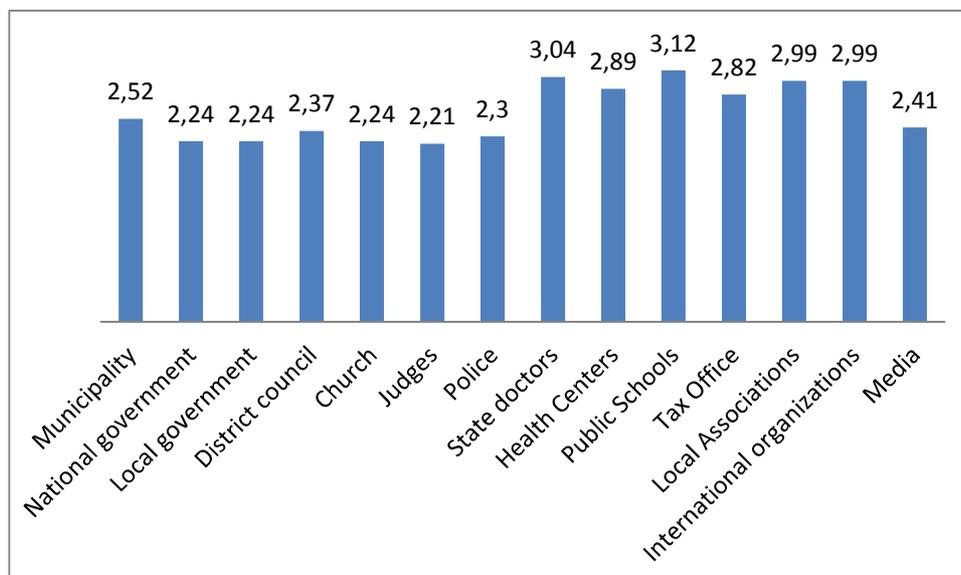


Figure 1: Trust in institutions

The judicial branch seemed to have the lowest trust among survey participants. Similar results have been shown in the sociological surveys regularly conducted by the Levada Center, one of the best-known Russian opinion research institutes: only 10% of the Russian population believes that the Russian judiciary really functions independently (Table 2), and 27% think that ordinary people can expect fair court decisions (Table 3):

Table 2:

Question: ‘Do you think the executive exercises control over the judiciary in your town or district?’⁷

	2006	2010
It is fully independent	8%	10%
It is controlled by the Russian government	12%	17%
It is controlled by the local government	18%	20%
It is corrupt and anyone who has money can get a favorable decision in court	37%	34%
Hard to say	31%	27%

N = 1600 respondents

⁷ <http://www.levada.ru/archive/sudebnaya-sistema/kak-vy-schitaete-kontroliruetsya-li-organami-ispolnitelnoi-vlasti-deyateln>

Table 3:**Question: ‘Can an ordinary person in Russia expect a fair court?’**

	2006	2007	2009	2011	2013
yes	4%	3%	3%	5%	2%
rather yes	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%
rather no	39%	40%	42%	42%	40%
no	22%	23%	19%	18%	21%
hard to say	11%	9%	12%	10%	12%

N =1600 respondents

The lack of trust was usually explained by multilevel, sometimes unknown motivation behind every action made by institutions and/or its personnel. One respondent asked in return: ‘Where did you see that people do something for the ‘thank you’?’ The other respondent described a situation that happened recently to her 14-year-old daughter. The girl had a medical examination at school⁸, and the gynecologist suggested that she had a serious illness, which could result in infertility. To confirm the diagnosis, they gave the girl a referral to a private clinic for a more detailed ultrasound. Her parents were alarmed. The ultrasound did not confirm the diagnosis, and now both parents think that the doctor just wanted his colleague to make some extra cash at their expense.

One respondent complained about the work of the traffic police:

‘The Road Patrol Service works according to a certain plan. For example, every month they have to issue 10 fines. When a driver violates the traffic rules, he can try to negotiate. For example, if there is an 800 RUB [~20 EUR] fine, it is possible to issue the two fines with a value of 400 RUB [~10 EUR] each, which will be beneficial to a police officer, or two fines with a value of 300 RUB [~7 EUR] each, which will be beneficial to a driver as well.’

Surveys conducted on a regular basis by the Lavada Center show similar results (Table 4 and Table 5).⁹

Table 4: To what extent do the following institutions deserve trust?:

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
media											
fully	22	26	24	24	25	28	28	29	25	26	24
not fully	46	45	45	43	39	40	49	51	47	50	50
not at all	22	18	18	21	22	18	16	15	21	16	19
hard to say	10	11	13	12	14	14	7	5	6	7	8
church											
fully	40	43	44	40	41	40	48	54	49	50	48
not fully	20	22	23	21	19	25	21	24	23	29	25
not at all	10	8	11	11	12	10	10	6	9	10	10
hard to say	31	27	22	28	27	25	20	17	18	12	17

N =1600 respondents

⁸ Children and youth regularly receive free medical examinations at schools (=preventative examinations).

⁹ Obshchestvennoe mnenie 2013.

Table 5: Do you trust or distrust police officers in your community?¹⁰

	11/2010	03/2011	10/2011	04/2012	02/2013
fully trust	5	5	5	3	4
trust	28	30	36	30	34
rather distrust	42	43	40	45	43
fully distrust	17	17	11	16	13
hard to say	7	6	8	6	7

N =1600 respondents

According to the Levada Center, Russians' trust in important social institutions looks as follows: the president (~159), the government (~125), the regional authorities (~130), the parliament (~120), the army (~148), the FSB (~138), judges (~120), the Office of the Public Prosecutor (~128), the police (~115)¹¹.

When analyzing Russia, the following institutions and actors should be considered:

Table 6: In the life of Russia, what role is played by ...?

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
President	3.96	4.11	3.92	3.99	4.25	4.22	4.51	4.11	4.17	3.87	4.17
President's Administration	3.1	n.a.	3.28	3.42	3.63	3.55	3.96	3.81	3.69	3.51	3.71
Oligarchs, bankers, financiers	3.80	3.89	3.64	3.71	3.74	3.64	3.58	3.71	3.63	3.63	3.84
Media	3.53	3.48	3.39	3.49	3.48	3.53	3.43	3.48	3.45	3.36	3.46
Government	3.38	3.48	3.22	3.41	3.56	3.45	3.84	3.87	3.78	3.61	3.65
Governors	3.29	3.32	3.14	3.23	3.34	3.26	3.47	3.39	3.25	3.18	3.3
Armed Forces	3.29	3.26	3.21	3.21	3.5	3.47	3.62	3.61	3.36	3.42	3.49
FSB ¹²	3.31	n.a.	3.41	3.50	3.74	3.65	3.78	3.73	3.36	3.61	3.68
CEOs of large corporations	3.15	3.40	3.12	3.11	3.18	3.17	3.27	3.30	3.01	3.10	3.23
Office of the Public Prosecutor	2.97	n.a.	3.13	3.14	3.36	3.28	3.43	3.39	3.22	3.26	3.48
Judges	2.91	n.a.	3.01	3.06	3.25	3.11	3.27	3.29	3.18	3.17	3.31
Sovet Federatsii (upper chamber of parliament)	2.93	3.10	2.93	3.11	3.23	3.09	3.41	3.33	3.22	3.10	3.32
Church	2.74	2.92	3.06	2.89	3.26	3.00	3.04	3.42	3.04	3.04	3.09
State Duma (lower chamber of parliament)	2.86	3.01	2.85	2.95	3.07	2.89	3.29	3.18	3.09	3.06	3.29
Intelligentsia	2.44	2.52	2.42	2.47	2.59	2.43	2.67	2.56	2.54	2.42	2.58
Political parties	2.60	2.82	2.61	2.75	2.73	2.64	3.04	2.84	2.81	2.81	2.87
Trade unions	1.91	1.97	1.91	1.91	1.89	1.93	2.01	2.05	1.92	1.91	1.96
Police	n.a.	2.86	3.10	3.21							

¹⁰ <http://www.levada.ru/04-03-2013/indeks-doveriya-politsii>

¹¹ The data is presented in form of graphs. While the visibility of the data is high, the exact number is difficult to determine. The data was calculated as a sum of 'fully trusted' plus half of 'not fully trusted' minus 'not trusted' in % plus 100.

¹² FSB – *Federal'naia Sluzhba Besopasnosti* (Federal Security Service).

2.2 Experience with institutions

The next question in the survey was about the respondents' experiences with institutions:

“With which of the following institutions have you or members of your family recently encountered cases of **good service** or of **bad service**?”

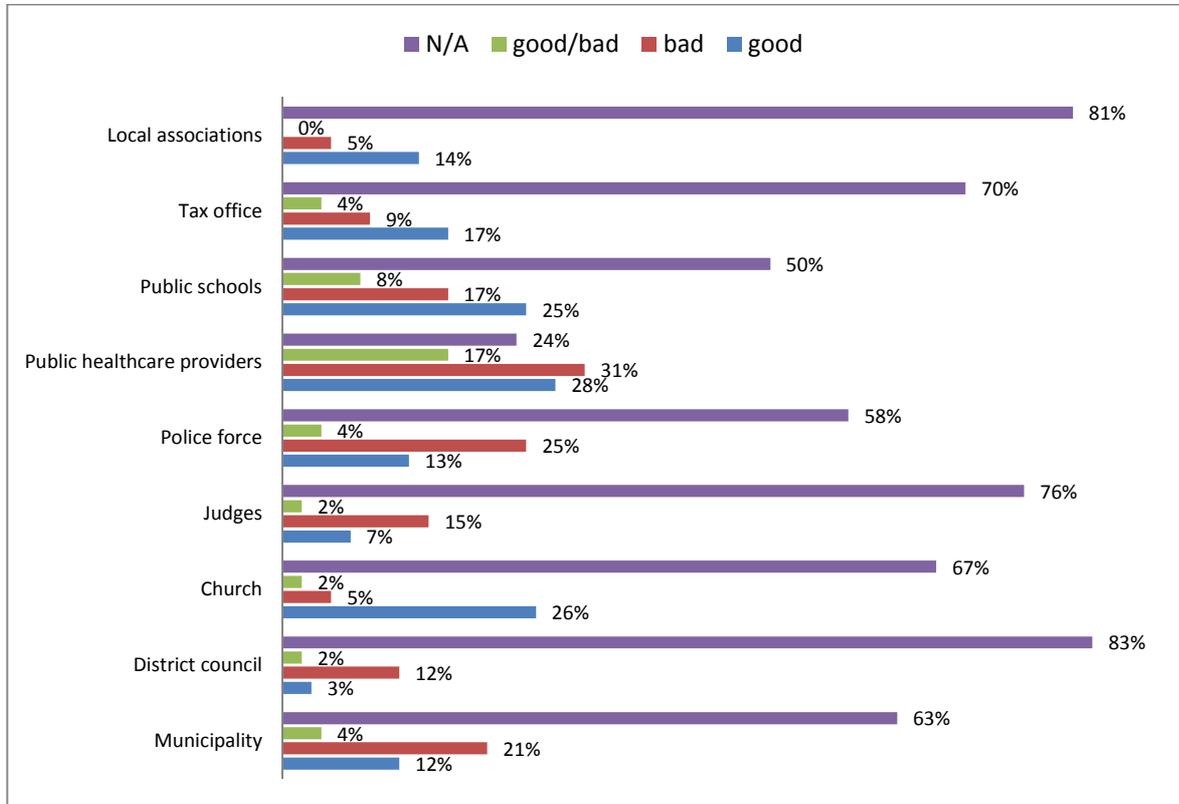


Figure 2: Experience with institutions

The results here showed not only institutions that offered good or bad services, but also institutions that might be good and bad at the same time. One respondent explained:

‘I’m not ready to break everything down into good or bad only, not at all! How is it possible to say, for example, that there is good or bad service at a school? My daughter came home today – she was happy with a teacher, who was up to the mark and it was engaging in class – she exuded “undying love for a teacher.” Tomorrow my wife will go to a meeting and will return upset because of some unclear initiatives at the school, as if parents have nothing to do. This seems to be bad. And I assure you – there is a similarly ambiguous situation everywhere, at a school or at a hospital, especially when you deal with them repeatedly. It is necessary to use a finer gradation here.’

In giving low scores to certain institutions, respondents often note the lack of a ‘polite’ and ‘professional’ approach. Talking about the church, one said: ‘There is a lack of an individual approach. I once baptized a child, and all children were baptized at once, sort of like a “wholesale”.’

One respondent told about one of her daughter’s classmates at school X. The girl has low grades in English and the teacher recommended that she talk outside of class to a teacher from school Y. But the girl decided to study on her own and after a while she has shown good results that have been noticed by her classmates and the teacher herself.

Nevertheless, the teacher continues to give her low grades because the girl did not take extra classes she recommended to her. It turned out that the two teachers just 'exchange' their pupils for extra classes.

There were a few schoolchildren among the respondents. A few years ago, one of them gladly did homework and wrote essays for her classmates – for which she received material compensation. She claimed that 'it was interesting for her.' Another respondent still does it, explaining that that is 'his business.'

3. Local Issues

3.1 Serious problems in community

The following question was asked in order to learn about the problems that are considered to be important within society by the survey participants, and to understand the importance attributed to local problems.

‘What in your view are the most serious **problems** in your community? List at least three starting from the most important.’

The results can be clustered into the following groups: education, healthcare, transportation, urban infrastructure, security, employment, cost of living, the environment, corruption, migration and leadership.

In the most cases, the survey participants complained about low quality and ineffective management with regard to the following issues:

Education: ‘the ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to all children’, ‘few qualified teachers’ ‘consolidation of schools’, ‘shortage of places in the kindergartens and schools’, ‘the unprecedented decline of educational standards, teacher authority and their requirements (at all levels of secondary, higher and vocational schools)’.

Healthcare: ‘the bureaucracy, the low qualification [of doctors]’, ‘the poor level of medical service (doctors’ rudeness)’, ‘few clinics – it is difficult to find the way to a doctor’, ‘the deterioration of the medical service (everything is now paid)’, ‘the inability to get an appointment on time – there is always a long wait. The quality of service is low (they diagnose incorrectly)’; ‘doctors ... have increased their workload and the quality of their work has deteriorated (a doctor in our clinic once burst into tears – she had 20 consecutive patients and she did not even have time to go to the bathroom)’.

Transportation: ‘traffic jams’, ‘parking’, ‘road congestion’, ‘the work of road services’, ‘unregulated traffic’, ‘transport accessibility’, ‘the quality of the roads and their surfaces, their permanent and sluggish repairs, the traffic controllers standing in wrong places’, ‘the lack in the quantity and quality of public transportation’, ‘senseless urban work (laying asphalt, for example) which makes moving around the city uncomfortable’, ‘rudeness on the roads – a bad driving culture, resulting in high mortality on the roads’.

Urban infrastructure: ‘uncontrolled construction (first, without considering the historic image of the city; second, they erect large buildings and do not develop the infrastructure), ‘the reconstruction of the area where I live, against the will of its residents (reconstruction of Lenin Avenue in Moscow)’, ‘few public welfare homes are being built’, ‘they provide amenities only in the city center; there are not even sidewalks in the other areas’ (Khabarovsk).

Security: ‘The high crime rate (it is dangerous to walk on the streets in the evening)’, ‘too many policemen; security guards are everywhere – this gives the feeling of suppression, discomfort, and humiliation; the policemen induce threats instead of protection, as well as rudeness and disrespect’, ‘the lack of contact between police and citizens, the unwillingness to help them [citizens].’

Employment: ‘Some jobs are very popular; there are many specialists, good salaries, hence, a lot of people get the corresponding education. Of course, they cannot get those jobs because there are too many people applying. At the same time, other jobs have many vacancies, because they are not that popular. Some jobs are important, but are not paid well.’

Cost of living: ‘few benefits, and they are cut (for example for single mothers)’, ‘very expensive housing and no possibility to buy an apartment; mortgage interest is very high’,

'the high and constantly increasing price of food', 'wild prices for utility services, poor quality of services, and the complete inability to change anything', '(unreasonably) high housing prices connected with the unsatisfactory development of network construction (electricity, water supply, etc.) and a lack of access to construction sites by land developers (there is monopoly on access by officials).'

Environment: 'air pollution', 'few cultivated lands', 'it is dirty – the utility services do not work well and the people litter and park their cars in prohibited areas', 'the green areas are being reduced in favor of construction sites'.

Corruption: 'Terrible corruption in the area of urban improvement (kickbacks, low quality of construction work)', 'Corruption at all levels'.

Migration: while all of the aforementioned issues refer to all regions, this problem is more pronounced in Moscow and St. Petersburg: 'a large number of un-adapted migrants from the culturally alien regions', 'illegal migrants (disrespect toward our culture)' 'illegal migration – ethnic tensions, fraught with outbreaks of violence', 'a large number of people from Caucasus in the city', 'too many migrants in the city – it is not safe to walk on the streets in the evening'. The respondents call for 'good leadership in this matter and want more regulations and policies'.

Leadership, especially at the higher levels, was mentioned explicitly:

'Indecisiveness, inactivity (or inconsistency) of authorities in making important decisions for the city.'

'The lack of independence of the authorities, the lack of professionalism and insecurity, hence, stupid bureaucracy.'

'The excessive control of various government agencies over their 'subordinate' units (e.g., police, district board, medicine) as a result: formalism, both at the top and the local levels.'

'Repressive government (e.g. persecution on political grounds in particular)'

'The state does not respect its citizens; officials always want to ban everything. If there is something they can avoid doing, they will avoid it; they do not think they must somehow help people and improve our lives.'

'Krugovaia poruka: everyone is interconnected and exercises preferences based on personal connections, social proximity, and membership in a common circle. This is bad in everyday life – when applying for a job, etc. – but also at the state level: everything is based on personal assurances and the idea that everyone owes one another.'

3.2 Ability to obtain service from institutions relying exclusively on one's own means

Another question asked the respondents to evaluate their relations with the listed institutions. For this question, it was expected for the respondents to present their ideas and experiences about whether they can obtain service on their own.

“With which of the aforementioned institutions do you feel that you are not able to settle a matter/obtain a service using **your own resources?**” (multiple choices possible).

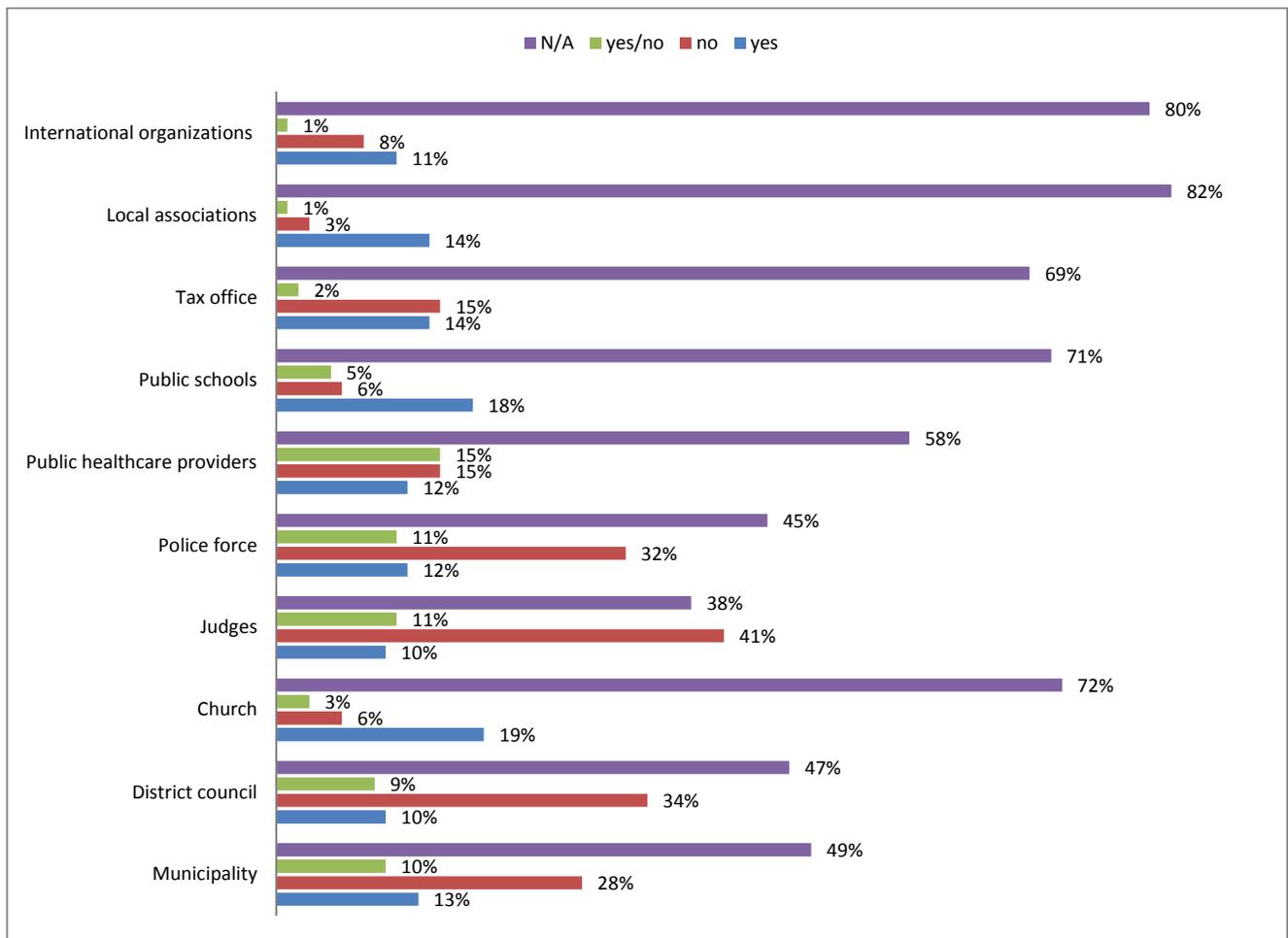


Figure 3: Ability to obtain service from institutions relying exclusively on one's own means

One respondent said that he needed to use his connections with a local deputy in order to solve a problem for his wife:

‘My wife got into an accident. In order to compensate for the damage, the insurance company required a certificate that would prove that the driver (my wife) was not intoxicated. The RPS (Road Patrol Service) did not issue such a certificate, without explaining any reasons. A letter was drafted on behalf of a local deputy with a request to issue a certificate. The certificate was issued.’

Another respondent, a mother of a 17-year-old son, was concerned about the future career of her child. He wants to serve in the army, but he has an illness (a mild allergy) that can be a reason for refusal. At the time of his initial entry into the army, he had a severe skin rash. The respondent went to military registration office and asked for recommendations.

She was told that her son should just calm down and wait; in two years, everything could change. When the respondent was asked why her son wants to serve in the army, she answered that it is impossible to find a good job without higher education or without army experience¹³.

¹³ Many Russians try to avoid military service because of the '*dedovshchina*', the physical and psychical abuse of new recruits.

3.3 Preferred problem resolution techniques

‘How would you advise a person who can’t successfully deal with institutions to **resolve** his problem?’ (More than one answer is possible):

I would advise him to:

- Ask for intervention from a friend
- Ask for intervention from a relative
- Ask for intervention from an important person
- Pay a fee
- Give a small gift
- Denounce the disservice to the relevant authorities
- Try several times until you get a good result
- Avoid dealing with that institution in general
- Don’t know

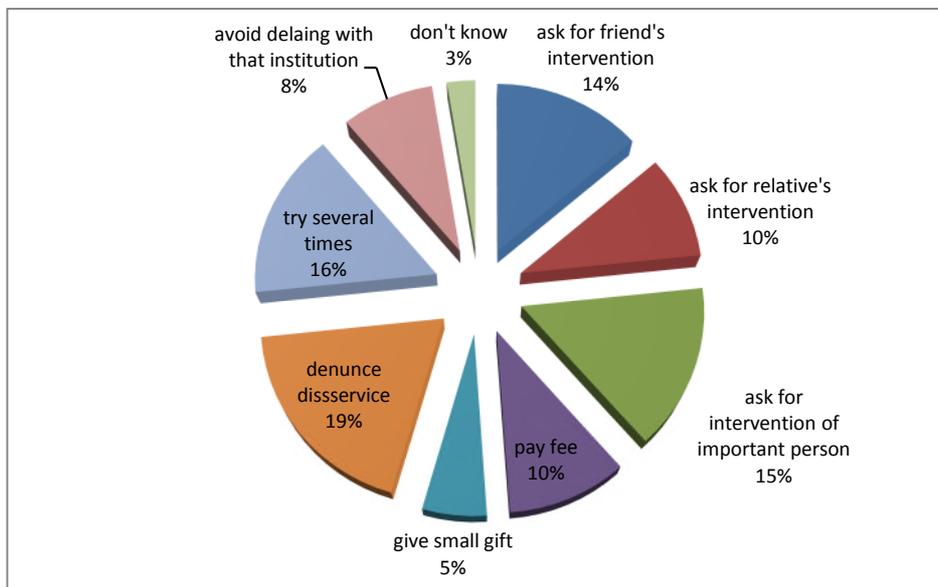


Figure 4: Preferred problem resolution techniques

The majority of the respondents (54%) suggested using informal tools for solving problems: to ask for intervention from a friend (14%), ask for intervention from a relative (10%), ask for intervention from an important person (15%), pay a fee (10%)¹⁴, give a small gift (5%). Some, however, recommended formal approaches: denounce the disservice to the relevant authorities (19) and try several times until you get a good result (16%). The suggestion ‘avoid dealing with that institution in general’ was also mentioned by 8% of the survey participants, the majority of whom added ‘if there is an alternative’ or ‘if possible’.

¹⁴ It is interesting to note there are some agencies in Russia that offer such services – dealing with authorities on difficult issues. These services are provided officially for Russian people, but determining if the authorities involved in these transactions are paid, or if their intercessions are made officially or not, is another research question.

3.4 Institutions important for improving social well-being

The question, which aims at gathering the views of the interviewees about the institutions that could help improve the general well-being of their society, is worded as follows:

“Who do you think could help to improve the general well-being of your community?”

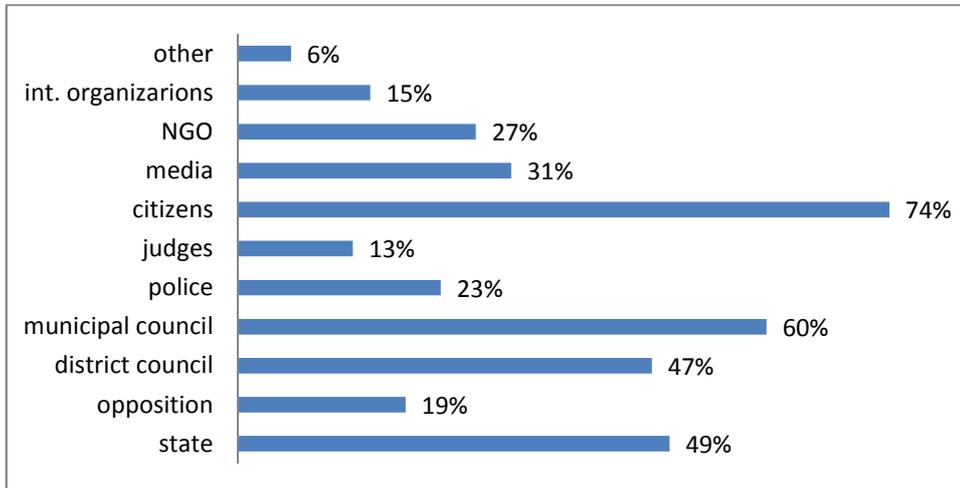


Figure 5: Institutions that might help to improve social well-being

The results showed that citizens (74%) and authorities on the local (60%), regional (47%) and federal (49%) levels can influence the wellbeing of the communities. They have the resources in theory, but whether or not they could use them in practice was one of the main concerns of many respondents. One respondent mentioned: ‘People do not feel themselves as a single community – they do not treat public spaces as their own, they cannot get together and solve problems jointly, they are not able to defend their group interests.’ Another participant answering this question read the abbreviation ‘NGO’ as ‘UFO’ (in Russian the two look very similar – ‘NGO’ vs. ‘NLO’). ‘Yeah, only UFOs can make a difference’, she said, laughing, but with a little sadness in her voice.

3.5 Practices against good society

A question was asked to obtain the views of survey participants about some practices that are incompatible with the development of society:

“In general, which of the following practices, in your opinion, spoil the good development of a society?” (Multiple choices possible.)

- Buying votes during elections
- Giving jobs to friends or relatives instead of people who deserve them
- Bringing gifts to obtain access to health services
- Bringing gifts to be accepted at a good school
- Exchanging confidential information to get tenders and public construction bids
- Paying fees to have documents sorted out quickly
- Convincing journalists not to publish sensitive articles
- Using scandals to get rid of political opponents
- Using development funds for private purposes

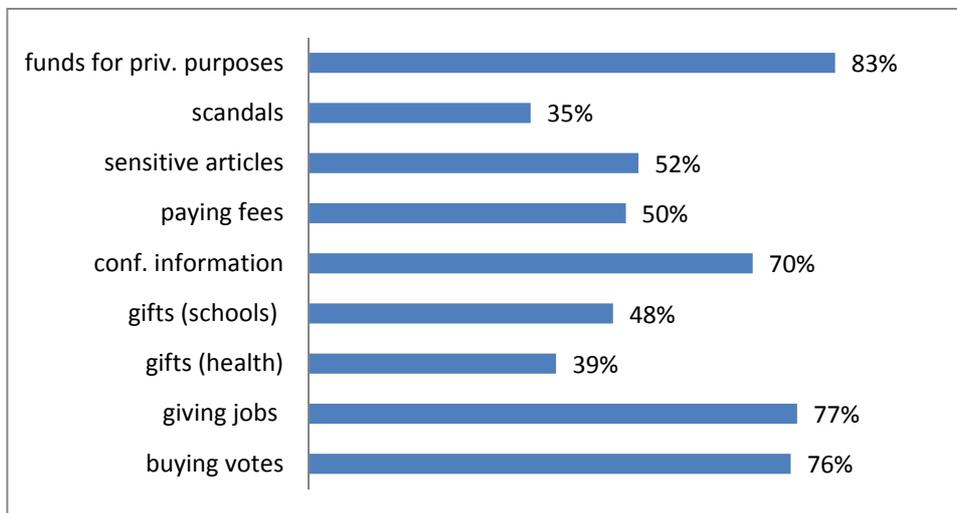


Figure 6: Practices incompatible with good social development

In some cases, the respondents do consider these practices as ‘spoiling the good development of a society’, while some of these practices might ‘somehow depend on a situation’.

‘Buying votes during elections’ is certainly ‘a violation of the canons of democracy. It is crucial to avoid such practices, because an adequate competition should stimulate political rivals’, but ‘generally speaking, this does not shift the balance of power; simply more expressive figures are forged’. Moreover ‘they [the practices] do not interfere, because there is “no one” out there to choose from’.

‘Giving jobs to friends or relatives instead of people who deserve them’ is ‘nepotism’ and might lead to ‘unprofessionalism, incompetence and, as a consequence, to mistakes’. However, ‘friends and relatives can also deserve it!’ One respondent suggested expanding question and adding ‘comfortable, loyal and controllable people’. This might be worse: ‘The number of outright fools (albeit suitable ones) in the power structures begins to go off-scale’.

'Gifts to obtain access to health services' are often given afterwards, post-factum 'in order to thank, and it is normal and very human.' Gifts might be seen as 'a sign of gratitude, considering public awareness of the doctors' low salaries', as a kind of 'mutual aid to needy people'. This becomes a bad situation only if doctors are not professional enough and no gifts might influence that: 'What if a doctor is an incompetent idiot and the gifts will be useless?'

'Bringing gifts to be accepted at a good school' might be also very situational: '[My friend and her daughter] are registered in one place, but live in another. Their child must attend a school based on their registered address, but the child attends the school in the neighborhood his family actually lives in'. A gift to a principal helped to solve the problem. 'This is the world practice of private/elite schools', some respondents consider.

'Exchanging confidential information to get tenders and public construction bids': 'Well, yes and no – imperfection in the federal law leads to "cheating" during tenders for the sake of good results'; 'This problem is very twofold. No doubt, it exists, and it is very corruption-based. Very. But very often (well, very often, especially when we deal with small amounts) "violation of rules and laws" is linked to a simple desire of a tender customer to obtain the product he really needs, and with a quality that satisfies him. The 94th law is not only cursed by a lazy person. There are more incidents of the delivery of absolute crap in full compliance with the "law," instead of quality products, than the incidents of corruption and theft. Alas..."

'Paying fees to have documents sorted out quickly' might be wrong, 'but otherwise, it is sometimes impossible.' Many survey participants believe 'it is a bribe, but ... it does not hurt anyone.' One respondent stated: 'Why is it informal? Now you can pay for it all officially, and they will do everything instantly. Most importantly – pay!'

'Convincing journalists not to publish sensitive articles' 'does not have any effect on the development of the society, and sometimes prevents all the garbage which is poured on us sufficiently enough'. One journalist said: 'There are no freely publishing journalists today. Those who exist (or call themselves free) are not persuaded by anyone any longer. They are ordered to do something. And they do it. Period.' One high-profile policeman added that he does it occasionally by himself: 'In the interest of the investigation.'

'Using scandals to get rid of political opponents': 'Of course for the one who is exposed, this is bad, but for society, it might be good – well then there was something to expose in the first place.' However, it depends on the scandals: 'If this scandal is related to one's personal life, then yes, but if to the fact that he is a dishonest person, then no'. Some respondents even believe: 'this is actually necessary for the rise in the competitiveness and self-control of politicians, so they would be afraid of exposure.'

'Using development funds for private purposes' seems to be the worst practice: 'this is called by the Russian word "theft".' 'In all other cases, the consequences might not be all bad; it all depends on the situation. Sometimes there are even benefits, 'but not in this situation'. It appears frequently: 'Constantly, everywhere and with a huge splash of fantasy'.

4. Social Norms

4.1 Importance of customs

In the next stage of the survey, participants were asked to evaluate the importance of the customs below on the scale of “Not important”, “Fairly important” and “Very important”.

Table 7: Customs and their importance

Custom		not important	fairly important	very important
Provide hospitality to guests	n	3	43	65
	%	3%	39%	58%
Enjoy meals with other people	n	25	52	34
	%	22%	47%	31%
Give presents during festive celebrations	n	10	50	51
	%	9%	45%	46%
Reciprocate received gifts	n	30	39	42
	%	27%	35%	38%
Reciprocate received gifts in time	n	73	25	11
	%	67%	23%	10%
Reciprocate received gifts in same value	n	73	32	5
	%	66%	29%	5%
Satisfy a personal request of favor	n	1	53	57
	%	1%	48%	51%
Know who is the best person to ask a favor to	n	12	38	59
	%	11%	35%	54%
Protect a person if I am in the position to do it	n	9	40	62
	%	8%	36%	56%
Be on good terms with important persons	n	22	49	39
	%	20%	45%	35%
Avoid bureaucracy because it is inefficient	n	14	48	45
	%	13%	45%	42%
Keep a secret not to harm another person even if this is not legal	n	13	54	41
	%	12%	50%	38%
Be cautious when talking of politics in public	n	53	41	14
	%	49%	38%	13%
Spend time with friends outside the home	n	24	54	32
	%	22%	49%	29%

Almost all of the respondents (97%)¹⁵ believe that ‘providing hospitality to guests’ is an important custom in Russian society. Some Moscow participants commented on this question, however: one respondent argues that ‘generally everyone is on his own’, and another adds ‘this concept is more suitable to a village; while in the case of a city it is better to say to be ‘benevolent’ [*blagozelatel’nyi*]. Most Russians understand ‘enjoying meals with other people’ as a part of Russian hospitality: the majority of respondents (78%) support this statement. It might be, however, selective: ‘Depending with whom’, mention some respondents. ‘Enjoy meals with other people’ might be also understand as an invitation to someone’s place. One respondent, 60 years old retiree, was even confused: ‘After all, the guests are first invited to one’s house and then treated’.

¹⁵ The sum of ‘fairly important’ and ‘very important’

Only 9% state that 'giving presents during festive celebrations' is not important. One respondent explains: 'Some believe it is mandatory. Unfortunately.' According to the Levada Center, for example, flowers and candies are the most important potential presents among men for the International Women's Day, celebrated on March 8. The choice of a present might be related to financial stability. Only 41% were planning to buy flowers in 1997, while this number increased to 53% in 2014. The same is true about candies: only 9% in 1997, rising to 19% in 2014¹⁶. 27% of the survey participants consider 'reciprocating received gifts' to be not important. 67% also think that 'reciprocating received gifts in time' is not important. One respondent explains: 'If this is a gift for the 8th of March, than it is a gift for the 8th of March, and the next holiday will be only a year away.' 'Reciprocating received gifts in same value' is also deemed not important (66%). Respondents justify this with 'It depends on the financial capability' or 'Whatever one can afford to give'. 'For example, my mother used to buy me tourist vouchers (abroad), and now I buy tours for her', tells one participant. This might be selectively applied, however: it is important 'when it is necessary to turn to an important person' and 'with close friends it is not like this, but with strangers it is'.

99% of respondents believe it is important to 'satisfy a personal request of favor'. This might also be selective: 'It depends on who is asked' and 'there should be a balance between the time spent and altruism'. The majority of respondents are sure that is important to 'know who is the best person to ask for a favor' (89%). Again, this might also be ambivalent: 'it is important sometimes, but not always', 'not every person' and especially 'If he is hurt unfairly, then yes, but in all other cases, no'. Only 20% of respondents think that is not important to 'be in good terms with important persons'. 'Although it is not good from a moral standpoint' comments one respondent.

87% think it is important to 'avoid bureaucracy because it is inefficient'. Many respondents complain that this is difficult, however. 'It is necessary to understand the system' and 'there are situations when it is impossible to avoid this' add other participants. 79% are sure that it is important to 'keep a secret so as not to harm another person, even if this is not legal'. 'It might depend on the secret' explain some participants. Many survey participants argue that it is important to 'be cautious when talking about politics in public'. Some respondents elucidate: 'I talk about politics only in a circle of trust', 'it is not dangerous, but there is such a trend nowadays' and 'only an older generation thinks this way'. Many respondents (78%) state that it is important to 'spend time with friends outside the home'. 'Yes, *dacha* and winter hikes' explains one retiree.

¹⁶ <http://www.levada.ru/05-03-2014/podarki-k-mezhdunarodnomu-zhenskomu-dnyu>

4.2 Statement: Gift giving for better treatment or service

At this point in the survey, two questions were asked about the effect of gifts on the quality of service in institutions. The question was asked as follows:

Do you agree with the following statement: “Gift giving creates a bond where people know they will receive better treatment/service the next time they visit the clinic/office?”

Besides ‘agree’ and ‘disagree’, respondents also answered ‘agree/disagree’ by arguing that it might work, but it might not, and not in all situations. It might depend on many factors. The status of the recipient or the method of giving the gifts might influence the expected results. Moreover, one gift may lead to one service, and some respondents believe some that the gifts should be repeated:

‘Not always. The status of a person in the institution and a value of a gift are also important’.

‘Not necessarily. My aunt is a doctor and she says that some give gifts in such a humiliating way that it only spoils her attitude toward them’.

‘No, next time one needs to do it all over again’.

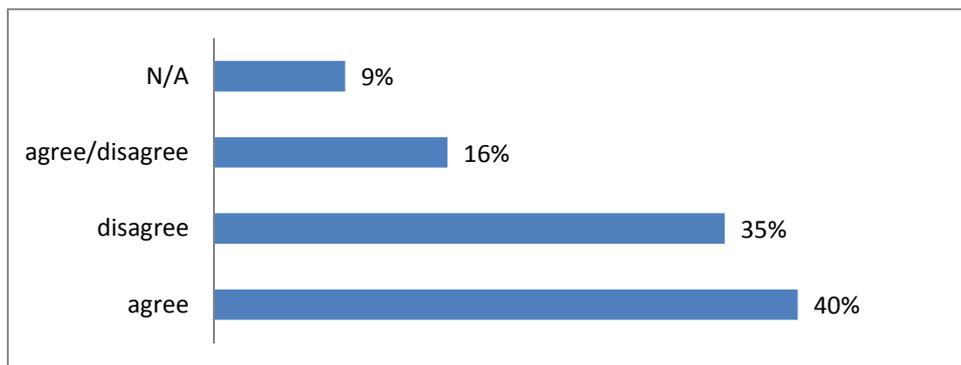


Figure 7: Gift giving related to better treatment/service

People who agreed with this statement said: ‘Often – yes, because the gift is not a bribe, but a “friendly” gesture’. One respondent referred to personal experience: ‘100% true... My daughter was hospitalized with a serious diagnosis. We paid 30,000 RUB [~750 EUR] to a department head, and he personally visited my daughter every day, bought and acquired medicines for her, accompanied her to examinations. Others were not treated like that’. Respondents who did not share this view explained: ‘Sometimes a gift backfires – it imposes certain responsibilities and inconveniences in a relationship. It is not always clear how to respond adequately to a gift’, ‘Our system does not work in such a way. They will act in accordance with their capabilities, regardless of the gift’.

4.3 Statement: Personal relationships affect quality of service

Another question was about the link between personal relationships with people in positions in institutions and the quality of service from those institutions. The question was stated in the survey as follows:

Do you agree with the following statement: “the quality of the services obtained is associated with the patient’s/citizen’s personal relationship with the service provider?”

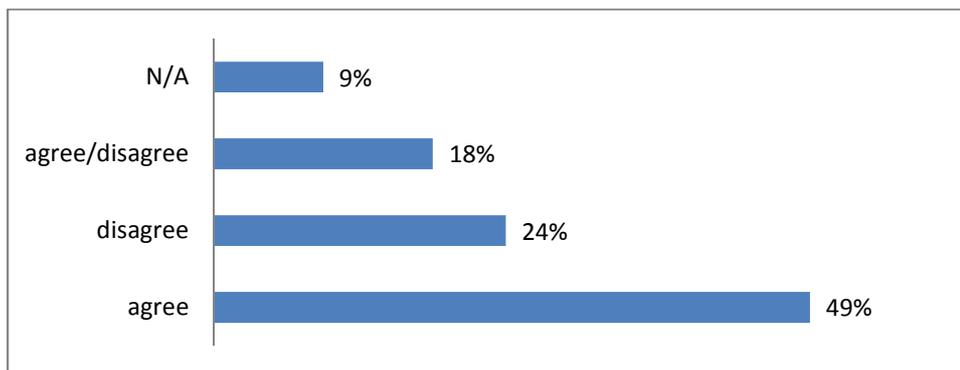


Figure 8: Personal relations affect quality of service

This question also resulted in a third group of ‘agree/disagree’ responses: ‘Yes and no, depends’, ‘in public institutions – yes, in private – no’. Respondents believe that ‘for a loved one or a friend, we are ready to press other people we do not know’. By acknowledging this practice, respondents do not necessarily like it: ‘This practice exists, although I certainly do not approve it’, ‘in our country, this is true, unfortunately’.

4.4 Agreement/disagreement with different scenarios

Participants in the survey were asked to judge some hypothetical scenarios on a scale of from 1 ('strongly disagree') to 6 ('strongly agree'):

'The following stories have happened in other countries around the world. Please indicate if you would in principle agree with the behavior of the characters'.

The names in these stories were not changed to Russian names so that the respondents would not identify with the characters. Three of the five stories might not be applicable to the Russian context, as some of the comments on story 'a' proved: 'This is a fantasy!', 'nonsense' [*glupost' kakaia-to*], 'this is a made-up situation' and 'this is obviously made-up gibberish' [*iavno pridumannyi bred*]. Only after referring to the introductory line 'stories that happened in *other* countries around the world' did the respondents start to think about the given scenarios.

A similar 'problem' was encountered with story 'c': Russian villages are dying out, living in a village is considered unpopular and not prestigious among Russian people – with the possible exception of the VIP estates near the big cities. The reasons for this vary and include undeveloped infrastructure.

Story 'd' is also somehow separated from the Russian reality. The decisions discussed in the scenario are usually made on a different level and include more actors. One respondent explained: 'Peter is a fool. A normal person, who believes that he prepares good sandwiches/breakfasts, would go and get acquainted with the school principal. And if the breakfasts are bad, then Peter must understand that in our reality the principal does not decide anything in terms of these issues. This is a problem at a different administrative level. And if he won the tender, he would know exactly who to see and how much to bring.'

Story a.

In the district council, a new person has recently been appointed. This person is very hard-working and loves to do things transparently. He would never accept any fees or gifts from citizens to sort out problems. Because of this, he avoids people and lives a lonely life all by himself, so that he will not be put under pressure for demands of favors. Thus, the local people avoid him.

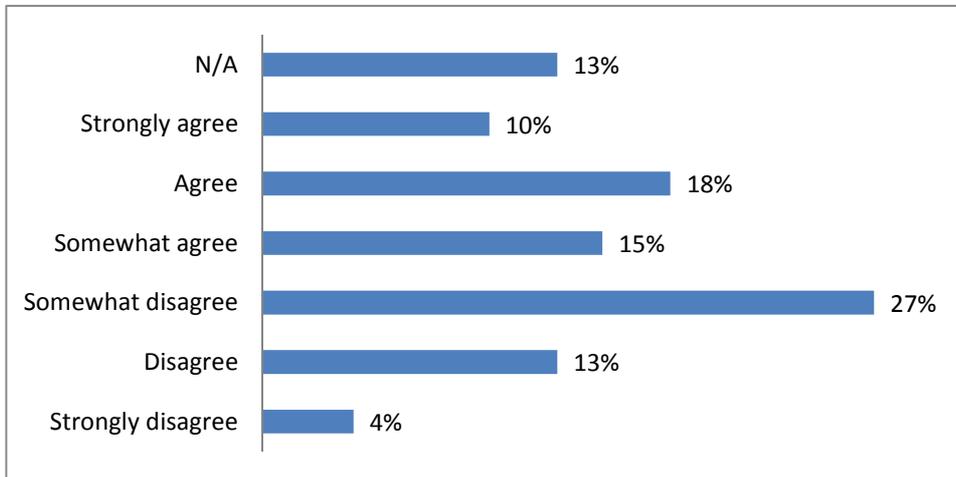


Figure 9: Story a

Respondents who disagreed on this scenario had doubts in the district councilor's professional competency: 'If the councilor avoids people, then he does not know their real problems. Therefore, he is ineffective', 'It is impossible to be a good official without contacts with the local population' and 'I find the publicity of politicians annoying myself, but on the other hand, people need it – so, it is necessary to have some contact with them'.

Respondents who agreed with this argued: 'Everything is right! This is the cost of his job', 'It is okay to avoid people; after all the most important thing is to work well', 'He is open, but fair, he does not divide people into close acquaintances and others' and 'extremes should be avoided. But this case is clearly positive'.

Some respondents pointed out, however, that the story provides different aspects to judge: the behavior of the official and the behavior of the local residents: 'I do not agree with the behavior of the local residents, but I agree with the behavior of the official' and 'the first part of the story impressed me, while the second was rather alarming'. In addition, this story was difficult for some respondents to follow: 'This is a strange story... What should I agree or disagree with? Well, let it be option 3 in nobody's favor. I simply do not understand.'

Story b.

Mario is a very resourceful person; he does what he can to help his friends and relatives and he knows a lot of people. When he needs a favor, he always finds someone to turn to, because he has always helped out. Unfortunately, last week, he was jailed for fraud and corruption. Most of the people who know him, however, still esteem and care for him.

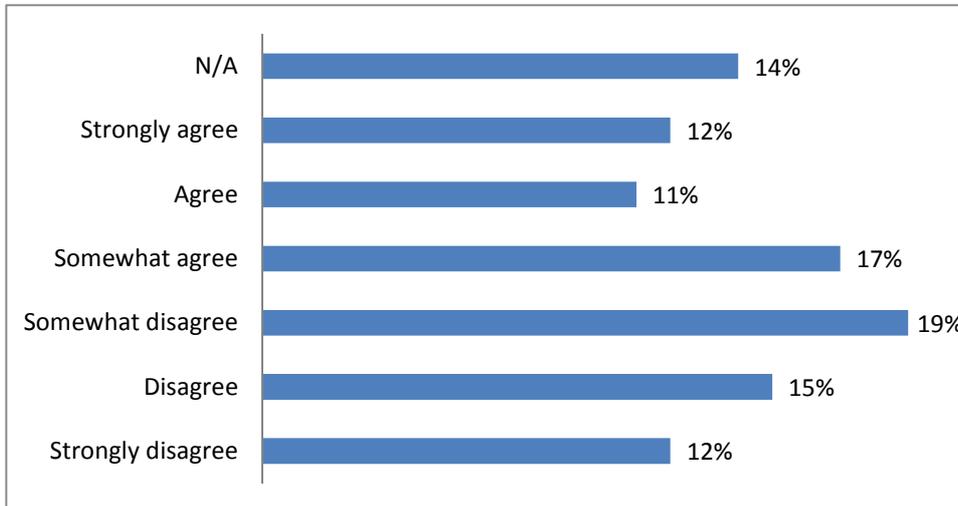


Figure 10: Story b

Participants who supported this scenario explained their position as follows: ‘Yes, one deed cannot erase all human life’, ‘This is a normal situation. If Mario did nothing wrong to people, nothing prevents them from loving, respecting and feeling sorry for him. It hardly correlates with the people’s attitude toward his “misdemeanor”. Moreover, many respondents believe that social competences may prevail over professional misbehavior: “If he steals, but does good things for people, then I don’t care”, ‘There is a difference between personal respect for somebody and for his professional activity, which may not impact you.’ Many respondents mentioned that they even knew similar characters in their lives, and a few respondents recognized Mario Puzo’s Don Corleone in this character. Participants who did not support this scenario said: ‘I disagree because he is a scammer’, ‘I understand him, but do not approve’, “quid pro quo” is always good, but cheating is bad’ and ‘I would not respect and love such a person’.

Many respondents mentioned, however: ‘This is a twofold situation’. People wanted more context and more detail in the scenario; they doubted the fairness of the jurisdiction and pointed out that this story again provides different aspects to discuss: Mario’s behavior and behavior of his friends:

‘It all depends on who he is. If he is an official, then option 2; if he is just an ordinary person, then 5’

‘We don’t know whether he was jailed fairly – i.e. can we trust the jurisdiction?’

‘The fact that the people he helped continue to respect him is good, and that Mario turned out to be a crook – is not’.

Many respondents had difficulties evaluating this story: ‘I find it difficult to express my attitude. Such is the image of a modern businessman’, ‘It is widely accepted in our country: the law is nothing; personal connections are everything’.

Story c.

A family has plans to build a new house in another village. They have asked what the official procedure is, and are ready to follow it carefully. After some months, everything starts to become difficult and they realize they will not be able to resolve it without paying some fee to the right person. They decide to leave the village and look for another where things go according to the rules.

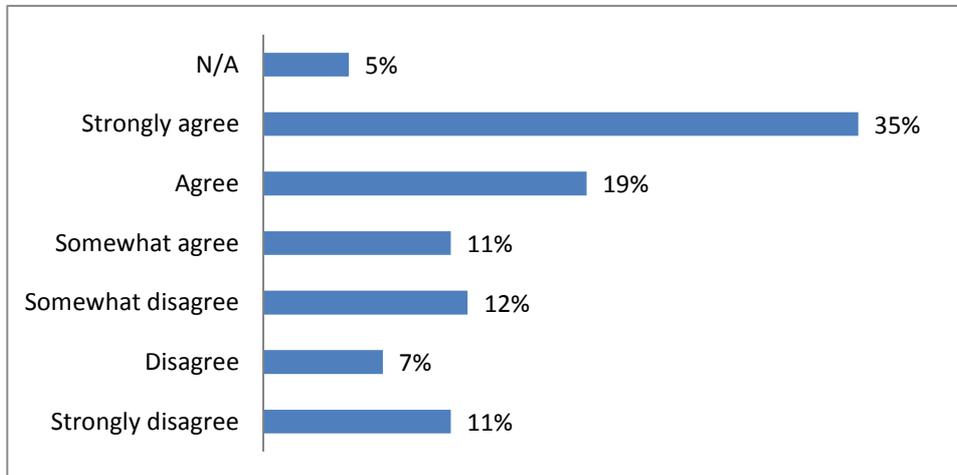


Figure 11: Story c

The majority of the survey participants were concerned about the naivety of the family and doubted that the family would ever find another village where things would go according to the rules: 'It never happens "according to the rules"', "It's very silly. Will everything be according to the rules? In Russia, this will be impossible". One respondent argued: 'they will not find a place where "things go according to the rules." Steps to take: either pay try to run one's head against a brick wall.' A few respondents support the family, however: 'The action is adequate, but it would be logical to look for help at a higher level of authorities', 'In the end, I would give a black eye to the one "in charge"'. Some respondents would encourage the family to stay and fight further in this location by arguing: 'I do not quite agree with this. If so much time and effort have been spent, one has to bring everything to the end. There is no guarantee that the same story will not happen at the new place', 'Maybe this is a place worthwhile to fight for? But on the other hand, I also used to pay traffic cops before, and now I do not do it on principle'. One respondent thought that it might not be the family's moral principles but probably their financial capacity: 'And if you have nothing to pay with?' The last point might be crucial; Galitskii and Levin (2004)¹⁷ found similar situations in the Russian educational sector. Many parents who are not involved in informal payment schemes on behalf of their children usually cannot afford it and/or do not know how to do it.

¹⁷ Galitskii, E.B. and Levin, M.I. (2004), *Korrupsiiia v sisteme obrazovaniia*. (Corruption in the higher education system) GU-VSHE, Moscow.

Story d.

Peter has a small business preparing sandwiches, which he sells to local schools. Last year, he was successful in winning a tender and gained a contract with one local primary school. Unfortunately, the school head changed this year, and his contract expired. Before applying for the next tender, he is looking for an influential person who will introduce him to the new school head.

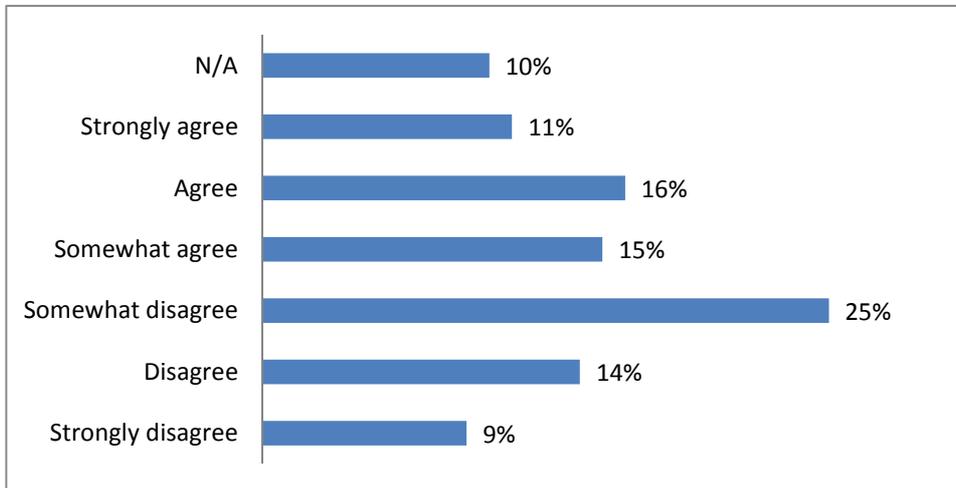


Figure 12: Story d

People supporting the character in this scenario considered: 'Meeting the principal is not against the law' and 'this is a rather beneficial move'. Participants of another opinion argued: 'What is the mediator for? Why does not he want to meet him directly?' In spite of the fact that this situation might include more actors in Russia, survey participants commented on general issues with tenders: 'Problems with tenders have always been extremely difficult, and it is not easy to get around a system of kickbacks. Therefore, poor old Peter tries to survive somehow'. Moreover, in the Russian context, 'the Director will be required to conclude a tender with those who offer the lowest price; the personal connection will not help'. One respondent concluded: 'Sometimes it is impossible otherwise, but generally it is bad that the society works this way'.

Story e.

Lucy runs a local NGO for human rights protection. She is very active and well established in the region, but she also has a lot of competitors. There was a large bid by an international donor last year, so she applied, being one of the most successful in that field. In the end, she failed, because she was not aware that some politicians wanted a share of the money in order to approve the projects. Next time, she will secure the proper agreements with them first.

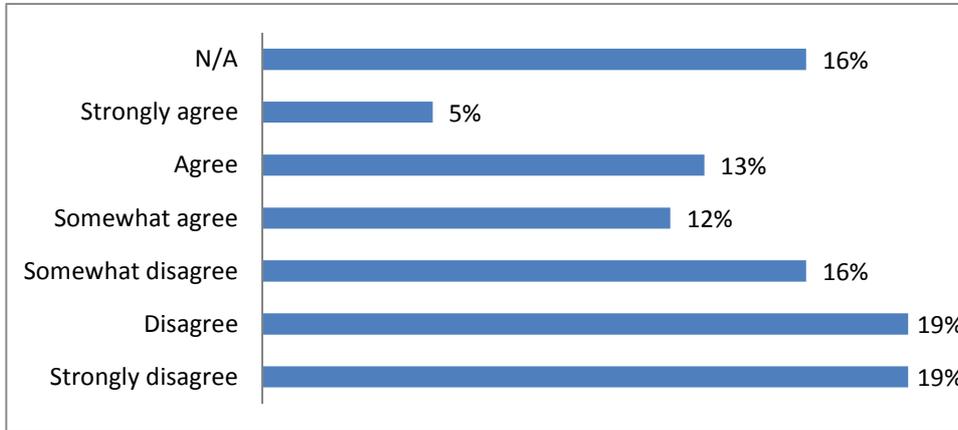


Figure 13: Story e

Many survey participants did not support the character due to ethical reasons:

‘One cannot protect human rights, and this leads to dishonest ways. Nothing good will come out of it: Lucy will be dependent and unable to perform her duties well.’

‘There is nothing for Lucy to do in the field of human rights protection in general and in principle. Absolutely.’

‘Apparently, Lucy herself does not know human rights well and cannot fight for them.’

‘In my opinion, she has neither the moral principles of a decent person nor the willpower’.

Some respondents doubted Lucy’s management competency: “She should have done it right away or should not have even gone there... She was poorly prepared”, ‘This is a business project and it is necessary to calculate all the risks’.

This particular case caused many discussions among respondents about ambivalence to corruption and its justification:

‘In general, it is bad, but for Russia, this is not so clear: we must always correlate and evaluate the dimension of evil. For example, sometimes one can go the way of corruption for other people – that is, if her bribe for the sake of receiving a grant will help protect human rights in the future, it may be necessary to go for it’

‘What if her organization, if it receives a grant, makes society better and then in similar situations in the future one will not have to pay?’

Many respondents did not see any way out of this situation in terms of the general situation in the country: ‘I do not agree, but can do nothing. This and that are both wrong. She will not receive it on her own and she cannot do it without them.’, ‘In the Russian reality, this is necessary, but I do not like it.’, ‘There is no other way out.’

5. Values

5.1 Self-identification with character from ‘True of myself’ to ‘Not at all true of myself’

In this part of the survey, respondents were asked to judge themselves on a scale from 1 (not at all true of myself) to 6 (true of myself).

Table 8: Self-identification with character

	Character	1	2	3	4	5	6
a	She/he lives his life as a fully autonomous individual, trying to rely on other people’s help as less as possible.	6	8	23	21	21	34
b	She/he would not break the rules because rules are what make order in a society.	9	8	14	37	30	14
c	She/he thinks that traditions must be respected because they make up one person’s culture.	7	6	17	19	21	43
d	She/he believes that young generations should learn more from listening to the advices from elderly people.	18	12	37	26	10	10
e	She/he is very religious because religion helps people to be part of a community and get together regularly.	50	35	17	6	3	1
f	She/he thinks that strangers should not be accepted in the community if most of the people don’t want so.	28	21	27	5	10	19
g	Her/his house is often visited by guests and he has an intense social life.	13	24	24	21	16	14
h	She/he thinks that being loyal to one’s superior or boss is a very important virtue.	10	19	33	22	15	13
i	She/he will try not to show her/his true feelings in public in order not to appear selfish or egocentric.	10	20	28	29	11	12
j	She/he prefers not to show to others her/his economic standards of living in order to avoid jealousy.	23	22	27	20	8	11

Character a.

She/he lives a life as a fully autonomous individual, trying to rely on other people’s help as little as possible.

More than a half of the respondents (53%) state that they live independently. Respondents that are more or less dependent are usually unemployed or students and/or families with small children.

Character b.

She/he would not break the rules because rules are what make order in a society.

Only 14% of participants would break the rules. One of the respondents explained her position: ‘Nowadays, they [the government] adopt new laws, which I do not agree with’. The majority, however, believe: ‘this is difficult’. Some respondents think it might depend on the rule: ‘Which rules – minor or major ones?’

Character c.

She/he thinks that traditions must be respected because they make up a person’s culture.

Many respondents (53%) support this statement. Some participants, however, differentiate between 'only traditions from my perspective' while another argues: 'we should not treat them blindly, and as if they exist in a vacuum'. Moreover, one respondent asked in return: 'What do traditions mean? After all, corruption can also be considered our "tradition"'.

Character d.

She/he believes that younger generations should learn more from listening to the advice of elderly people.

More than a half (53%) of all respondents support this statement.

Character e.

She/he is very religious because religion helps people to be part of a community and get together regularly.

Some of the respondents found this statement 'ill-chosen' [*neudachnyi*]. Many of them argue that 'not in all cases is religion responsible for this – in some cases it is philosophy' or 'there is no connection between religiosity and getting together'.

Character f.

She/he thinks that strangers should not be accepted in the community if most of the people don't want them to be.

Strangers are reluctantly accepted as group members in Russia. One respondent, a top manager of a public company, gave some examples from his professional life. Recently he insisted on hiring a young man who had been a drug addict in the past. Many employers had refused to hire him previously. But the respondent explained that a person should be given a chance and only if he has job-related reprimands should his candidacy be disputed. The new employee proved to be a good specialist, with no bad habits. A few days before the interview, the respondent again insisted on hiring another applicant – a recent graduate. His subordinates did not want to hire her because of her appearance: the woman was very short (~ dwarfism). Thus, only professional qualities are important for this respondent. Interestingly, during this interview, this particular respondent asked me about my attitude towards homosexuals. Forgetting where I was, I said that I recently visited Vienna and by chance saw the Love Parade. By saying that, I provoked a negative reaction from the respondent, who asserted that this was propaganda promoting same-sex relationships. I tried to change the subject as soon as possible by describing the wonderful organization of the whole procession. For example, I discussed the garbage trucks, which followed a column of demonstrators, picking up the litter after them. I also said that in the evening of the same day, I saw the ballet at the Vienna State Opera and that most of the soloists had Russian and Ukrainian surnames. Only in this way (with pride for the Russian ballet) was I able to switch the respondent's attention to a different subject.

Character g.

Her/his house is often visited by guests and she/he has an intense social life.

In spite of the fact that the respondents give different answers, many Russians love to host guests. Guests are often not invited because of financial reasons, housing difficulties, or the schedules of the hosts (for example, when they have frequent business trips and/or

small children): 'when we had two kids, we invited guests, but now that we have three – not as much'; 'It is not my case, because I do not have physical possibility (I live with relatives in a limited space, plus I have two children; so it is difficult to host friends), but I would love this to be my case'. Some respondents have a broader definition of the term 'house': I 'have guests more often at my work'.

Character h.

She/he thinks that being loyal to one's superior or boss is a very important virtue.

Many respondents added in their answers that 'it is important to be *naturally* loyal' and/or 'it is necessary to pretend' at least, because 'it is impossible without it'. One respondent concludes: 'This is what we have and I do not like it'.

Character i.

She/he will try not to show her/his true feelings in public in order not to appear selfish or egocentric.

This statement aroused many irritations. Many respondents did not see 'any relationship between the first and the second part of this statement'. Others explained their positions in the following ways: 'I agree that we should not demonstrate our feelings, but not for fear of being selfish, but because people can take advantage of you (somehow offend you)', 'I hide my feelings, but not because of this, but because any well-mannered person must be able to do it'.

Character j.

She/he prefers not to show to others her/his economic standards of living in order to avoid jealousy.

Jealousy is a big issue in post-communist countries. Respondents often addressed their judgments to themselves: 'I wish I were good at it'; 'It is better to show [one's high standard of living] to make them [other people] envy'; and to others: 'Not for the fear of envy, but for the shame of underserved wealth'.

5.2 Choose from the following list the statement that is the most appropriate to you:

One of the last statements given in the survey was to choose from the following statements respondents would deem most appropriate to them:

- to believe living conditions can be changed mainly through my actions
- to believe only those in power can improve our living conditions
- to believe only our community as a strong group can improve living conditions
- to believe no matter what my actions are our conditions will not improve easily

The results are provided below in Table 9:

Table 9: 'Most important to you'

Statement	n	%
living conditions can be changed mainly through my actions	64	56%
only those in power can improve our living conditions	2	2%
only our community as a strong group can improve living conditions	18	16%
no matter what my actions are our conditions will not improve easily	12	10%
N/A	19	16%

5.3 Choose from the following list the statement that is most important to you:

Participants were asked to choose 'the most important' statement for themselves. Question is as follows: 'Choose from the following list the statement that is most important to you'.

- to do all my best to help the community in which I live
- to do all my best to improve only the life of my family, others will do by themselves
- to do what I can to improve things according to the indications of those who administer the country
- to do what I can to improve my living standards, this will help to change things as everyone will do his best too

The results are shown in Table 10:

Table 10: 'Most important to you'

Statement	n	%
do all my best to help the community in which I live	21	18%
do all my best to improve only the life of my family, others will do by themselves	54	47%
do what I can to improve things according to the indications of those who administer the country	2	2%
do what I can to improve my living standards, this will help to change things as everyone will do his best too	22	19%
N/A	16	14%

These results showed that a high level of personal engagement and responsibility is expected by the respondents, but the reality differs. The same respondents underscored the high level of egoism: 'Nobody wants to work, it is difficult to rely on somebody, you never know if people will do what they have promised or not', 'people think that everyone should be quiet, keep their heads down, be like everyone else. Anyone who is somehow different causes disapproval (migrants, homosexuals, opposition, etc.)'.

6. Conclusion

The results of the survey conducted in the second half of 2013 provided some information on trust and experiences with local institutions, as well as serious problems in the community, the quality of services provided by institutions and access to these services, and social norms and values.

According to the survey results, public schools and state doctors rank the highest in trust. These results might be explained through various reasons, including the lack of alternatives. The institution that has the lowest amount of trust is the judiciary. Respondents do not believe in judges' independence or the fairness of treatment in Russian courts.

Looking at experiences with institutions, the survey respondents named public health providers as one of the institutions that offer good services, but at the same time, this service could be bad. Interviewees usually explained that it depended on the situation, the doctor, or the problem that drives someone to seek service at public health providers. In analyzing the data, it is very important to keep in mind that survey participants did not have experiences with many institutions and hence were not able to judge. The less familiar institutions included district councils and local associations. NB: The designation 'local associations' was not clear for many participants. One interviewee remarked ironically: 'Do people playing spoons also belong to local associations?'

According to the survey respondents, serious problems in the community include education, healthcare, transportation, urban infrastructure, security, employment, cost of living, the environment, corruption, leadership and migration. While all of the aforementioned issues were relevant to all regions, the problem of migration is more pronounced in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

In evaluating the ability to obtain service from local institutions using only one's own resources, respondents again indicated public health providers to be an institution where this can be simultaneously possible and impossible. For problem resolution techniques, many respondents prefer informal approaches (asking for an intervention from a friend, a relative, or an important person, or paying a fee and giving small gifts) to formal ones (denouncing the disservice to the relevant authorities or trying several times).

The results of the survey showed that citizens and authorities on the local, regional and federal levels can influence the well-being of the communities.

When talking about some practices that are incompatible with the development of society, the survey participants believed many practices to 'spoil the good development of a society', while some of these practices might 'somehow depend on a situation'. The less bad practices include giving gifts to obtain access to health services or to be accepted at a good school, as well as the use of scandals to get rid of political opponents.

Two important Russian customs are providing hospitality to guests and satisfying a personal request for a favor. Less important are reciprocating received gifts 'in time' and 'in the same value'.

The questions on gift giving for better treatment or service and whether personal relationships affect quality of service also resulted in a third group of 'agree/disagree' responses: many survey participants believe it might depend on the situation, the actors involved, or the problem to be resolved.

The common values for many Russian respondents include their independence and their belief in traditions as a part of one's culture. It was less common for respondents to believe that religion helps people to be part of a community and get together regularly.

Many respondents agree with the statement that 'living conditions can be changed mainly through their own actions' and they have to 'do all my best to improve only the life of my family, others will do by themselves'.

Finally, one of the most discussed parts of the survey was the respondents' agreement and/or disagreement with different scenarios.

One of the most interesting results of the survey is the ambivalence it revealed: institutions might be bad and good at the same time, and gifts might be both helpful and unhelpful. This tendency needs further investigation.