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*The art of dialogue
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The purpose of the journal is to create a scientific discussion platform
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and reviews, in the field of political science, sociology, world economy,
cultural studies. The substantive and thematic profile of the journal
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political, economic, social, cultural aspects of international relations,
interstate and intercultural communications, international security and
sustainable development

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22.00.04 Social structure, social institutions and processes / 5.4.4. Social
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23.00.02 Political institutions, processes and technologies / 5.5.2. Political
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23.00.04 Political problems of international relations, global and regional
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Vitaly V. NAUMKIN,
Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences,
Editor-in-chief of the journal «Russia & World: Scientific
Dialogue»

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF FOREWORD

Dear readers!

The current issue is devoted mainly to the problems of a changing society, the challenges of its sustainability and stability: the materials of two discussions and articles by our authors are devoted to this.

The section «International, Global and Regional Processes» is opened by materials of scientific discussion about the experience of settling territorial conflicts, which are one of the most common types of conflicts in the world. The discussion was organized and conducted by the National Research Institute for the Communications Development of (NIIRK). Its members Vladislav V. Frolov, Taisiya V. Marmontova, Andrey G. Bolshakov, Artur V. Ataev noted that this issue is especially actual in the context of a sharp aggravation of international tension, as well as the formation of a new architecture of international relations as a result of the search for a modern model and instrument of international mediation in the settlement of territorial disputes. The authors draw attention to the role in this process of such influential players as China, India, Brazil, Indonesia, South Africa, who strictly refrain from intervening in any interstate conflicts and are able to become effective mediators in their resolution. New regional organizations also retain significant potential. Thus, this topic is of considerable research interest for finding an effective and optimal model of international mediation in the context of aggravation of geopolitical contradictions. Despite their intensity, they are still manageable. The most frequently practiced are negotiations in which it is possible to agree on the delimitation and demarcation of disputed borders and the ownership of enclaves. A special role here is played by the information flows that accompany the disputes themselves as well as the process of their resolution, at the same time the field for fakes and manipulations remains open. The discussion participants proposed content analysis and web analytics for monitoring information flows, which allow obtaining a verified set of data. The analysis of it will make it possible to draw reasonable conclusions, and on the basis of this, a specific administrative and managerial decision can be made.

Omar M. Nessar analyzed the results of a study of the main factors determining Afghan instability and developed proposals for solving this problem. Among the factors of instability in modern Afghanistan, according to the author, are the risks associated with regional security, including terrorism and drug threats, difficulties that have arisen due to the non-recognition of the new political regime in the financial and banking system, that will significantly affect the socio-economic and humanitarian situation in the country soon. As a stabilizing factor, the author sees the development of the transit potential of

Afghanistan (the opportunity to become a connecting bridge between Central and South Asia), the author draws attention to the example of Afghanistan, in which a new mechanism for the international legitimation of governments that have seized power by force is being created.

Article by Aynar O. Lasarya is dedicated to the political systems of partially recognized states, the increment of new knowledge on this issue. The author focused on the problem of assessing their stability, focused on establishing differences and similarities between the concepts of «stability» and «sustainability», the influence of external and internal political processes and relations on them. As a result of the study A.O. Lasariya came to the conclusion that if sustainability is the basis for stability, then diagnosing the status of advancement to the state of such stability becomes relevant.

The reader is also be able to get acquainted with the results of a comparative analysis of the friendliness of the communication modes of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Moldova, as well as the materials of the discussion on the communication mode of Belarus. Comparing the friendliness of the communication modes of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Moldova in the realities of the fragmentation of the world communication order, Roman A. Tatarov came to the conclusion that the degree of friendliness is directly dependent on the national interests of states and their relationship with external actors. And the latter are significantly influenced by the process of fragmentation of the world communication order. The level of friendliness of the Moldovan communication mode towards Russia, according to the author, is quite low. In the region, the problem of compatibility of the implementation of the national interests of Moldova and Russia is considered contradictory.

Elena V. Khakhalkina and Kseniya A. Kotovich focused on the pandemic factor in the rivalry between E. Macron and M. Le Pen in the presidential elections in France in 2022 and on understanding the role of this factor in the rivalry between the two candidates for the outcome of the vote in the upcoming elections. The authors paid special attention to some of the controversial actions of E. Macron in the fight against the pandemic, which had a negative impact on his rating, and M. Le Pen's attempts to use the pandemic to expand his electorate and increase her chances of winning the elections.

«Changing Society» is presented by two articles and materials of scientific discussion. The article based on the materials of the discussion on information sovereignty, draws attention primarily to the problems of information sovereignty and information security of Russia. Participants of the scientific discussion Nikolai P. Gribin, Irina N. Kokhtyulina, Denis I. Sedunov, Egor I. Sobolev. considered various approaches to organizing the information sovereignty of countries such as China, the United States and Russia. The trends affecting the information sovereignty of the state are noted: the growth of research in the digital industry and the creation of high-tech products; the coronavirus pandemic, which caused a surge in the use of these products in everyday life; moving many forms of interaction between people online; use of cyberspace as a platform for hacker attacks and espionage. The threats to the information sovereignty of Russia associated with the technological dependence of Russia on foreign technologies and equipment, the weak security of the Russian information infrastructure are considered, some proposals for additional measures to ensure it are developed and presented.

Belarus is currently attracting special attention of representatives of various social sciences. Participants of the scientific discussion at the National Research Institute

for the Communications Development Valentina V. Komleva, Pavel A. Barakhvostov, Irina I. Kalacheva, Nikolay M. Mezhevich, Stanislav G. Rogalsky, Vladislav V. Vorotnikov, Andrey G. Kachura, Olga I. Lazorkina turned to the study of the communication mode of Belarus. During the discussion, the participants considered the factors of influence on the communication mode in Belarus and communication between generations in the Belarusian society. The participants came to the conclusion that the formation of the communication mode in this country took place in the context of counteraction of two trends: the development of a system of vertical communications, typical of countries with an institutional matrix where redistributive institutions dominate, and a system of horizontal communications, which is typical of countries with the dominance of market institutions in the institutional matrix.

In the section «Historical retrospective and modernity» Pavel A. Barakhvostov raises the issue of frontier territories and their role in the genesis of social systems, which has been updated by the geopolitical and geo-economic transformations of recent decades. In his article on the formation and evolution of the Russian frontiers, the author comes to the conclusion that colonization slowed down the transition from extensive to intensive methods of space development, consolidated low-tech ways and broadcast them to the periphery. This led to the fact that the Russian frontiers reoriented the empire towards a self-sufficient development option, causing a special, Russian path of modernization. He notes that the evolution of the frontier territories was directly controlled by the Russian state, and the policy pursued was traditionally built on the principles of dialogue with the indigenous population.

Ksenia M. Dorokhina turned to assessing the impact of the 2021-2022 gas crisis on energy sustainability and the implementation of climate commitments by the largest emitters of carbon dioxide. The purpose of the author's research was to analyze the rapid growth in natural gas prices, which she associates with the implementation of climate commitments and national plans of states dependent on natural gas imports. As a result, she concludes that issuing countries in times of crisis are forced to partly deviate from their previous climate decisions, which makes them problematic.

The section «Power, Politics, State» is represented by four articles. The sustainability and stability of states in the digital age are the subject of another discussion, the participants of which were Oleg F. Shabrov, Valentina V. Komleva, Sergey V. Volodenkov, Khanlar A. Gadzhiev, Igbal A. Guliyev. The discussion focused on the problems of digitalization of social relations and the hybridization of modern political regimes as a model for adapting the state to digital technological transformations. The ongoing processes are systemic: they include both advantages and social problems that can lead to destabilization and disruption of the stability of the socio-political system. Among the latter, the participants attributed the impact of digitalization on electoral processes, moral and ethical problems associated with the contradictions between technological progress and the laws of the development of human societies, and the weakness of sociotechnical management systems. Even more vulnerable to the socio-political system are external influences and attacks. Therefore, the participants in the discussion come to the conclusion that it is necessary to form social immunity, which would allow society to respond to external and internal destabilization.

Mikhail M. Chernyshov's article is devoted to the influence of elites on the choice of the direction of development of the region. In his opinion, one of the reasons for the low effectiveness of regional strategies is that they do not have broad public support, mainly

from the regional elites. The author proposes as a conventional strategy the search for a balance of interests of the elites and the formation of a broad social contract on the main goals and priorities of development. Readers may be interested in the idea put forward by the author of developing «maps of spheres of influence and interests» of various elite groups. The article identifies and describes four types of regional elite: conservative, radical, progressive and colonial, presents a financial and property portrait of the elites, a «matrix» of goals and vectors of elite groups, and a «compass of elite behavior».

Mikhail A. Burda, Marina M. Ivanova turned to the study of the conditions for ensuring socio-political stability in the migration policy of modern Russia. The authors draw attention to the existing points of migration attraction, the structure of external migration flows directed to Russia. Since the main flow of external migration to the Russian Federation is made up of labor migrants from the post-Soviet space, they generally do not consider Russia as a new permanent place of residence and are not interested in full integration into Russian society. The authors consider certain changes related to the quantitative and qualitative indicators of external migration to be overdue, since they form risks for domestic political stability.

Dear readers!

The editorial board of the journal hopes that the materials of the issue will arouse your interest and that you yourself will become one of our authors in the future.

Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences Vitaly V. Naumkin

INTERNATIONAL, GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PROCESSES

International relations

...Negotiations by themselves will not be effective enough, they need to be connected with other ways of resolving the conflict. With a forceful approach, for example, negotiations are a secondary means and determine the composition of the peacekeeping forces, their mandate, size, time and place of introduction, location, and so on. At the same time, the use of force stops violence between opponents, stimulates cooperation between them, establishes contacts, and contributes to the start of a new round of the negotiation process...

Froltsov V.V., Marmontova T.V., Bolshakov A.G., Ataev A.V.

Models for the Settlement of Territorial Conflicts: Materials of the Discussion

Perhaps, on the example of Afghanistan in the future, the world will see a new mechanism for international legitimation of governments that seized power by force and were initially unacceptable international partners, outcasts.

Nessar M.O.

Modern Afghanistan: Factors of Instability

Sustainability has a more definite static character, in contrast to stability, which may vary depending on fluctuations in the non-permanent elements of the political system within predetermined limits.

Lasaria A.O.

Political Systems of Partially Recognized States

Under the current circumstances, it is not reasonable to expect that the communication mode of Moldova will become more friendly. It is likely that the stagnation of bilateral security cooperation will continue to be relevant...

Tatarov R.A.

Friendly Communication Modes of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Moldova in the Realities of Fragmentation of the World Communication Order

According to sociological polls, the leader of the right parties has practically no chance of getting a presidential mandate, since if not E. Macron, but other candidates from the top five most popular candidates enter the second round, there is a high probability of repeating the scenario of 2002 and 2017... today E. Macron is most likely to win and run for a second presidential term, despite a number of controversial decisions made by him during the pandemic. At the same time, for M. Le Pen, the pandemic has become the topic, thanks to which she was able to expand her electorate by including various sectors of society.

Khakhalkina E.V., Kotovich K.A.

The Pandemic Factor in the Rivalry Between E. Macron and M. Le Pen in the Upcoming Presidential Elections in France in 2022

Models for the settlement of territorial conflicts

Vladislav V. Froltsov^{1a}✉, Taisiya V. Marmontova^{2b}✉,
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Abstract. The article presents the materials of a round table held at the The National Communications Development Research Institution (Moscow, Russia), the main topic of which was the experience of resolving territorial conflicts.

A wide range of issues related to the theory and practice of crisis resolution practices is considered. The main political and legal approaches and diplomatic instruments to international mediation in the settlement of territorial conflicts are characterized. The results of the study of the historical experience of international mediation in the settlement of territorial conflicts are presented. A data-based methodology is proposed that allows evaluate information sources covering the conflict.

The conflicts in Central Asia and the Caucasus that took place in different periods are considered. Territorial conflicts are numerous in the Central Asian region. They are mainly related to the absence of official state borders between the three countries: Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan. The most complex, large-scale, and bloody is the conflict between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in 2021, which was supported by the armed forces of the two countries. Negotiations, delimitation, and demarcation of borders are still the most significant alternative to existing conflicts.

The tools for managing these events are highlighted. A set of recommendations is proposed that has scientific and practical significance in terms of anti-crisis response strategies in the post-Soviet space.

Keywords: International mediation, intermediary States, demarcation line, local plebiscite, regional organizations, territorial conflict, enclave, negotiations, conflict resolution, open borders, information

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Introduction

A comparative analysis of the effectiveness of using various political and legal approaches and diplomatic tools for resolving territorial conflicts is of great research interest in order not only to provide a generalization of the historical experience of the peaceful settlement of armed conflicts, but also to offer the most effective, optimal model of international mediation in the context of modern reformatting of the world political system and exacerbation of geopolitical contradictions.

Territorial conflicts are among the most widespread in the world. Although they are for the most part quite intense (the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the conflict between Cyprus and Turkey, the Kashmir conflict, etc.), they can be resolved in principle. The post-Soviet space has its own specifics of managing territorial conflicts. These conflicts are, as a rule, prolonged, and the methods of their settlement have not changed for decades. The best-known method is negotiations, in which parties to the conflict agree on the delimitation and demarcation of disputed borders and enclave ownership.

The creation of information flows is an important aspect of the resolving various types of crises. The ongoing situation shows that information today can be assessed as an integral part of any, including territorial, conflict; thus, the use of methodological approaches such as content analysis and web analytics makes it possible to obtain a verified set of data, the analysis of which will make it possible to draw reasonable conclusions, on the basis of which point management action can be taken.

Materials and methods

The authors used different methodological approaches for their research. The scientific discussion made it possible to identify those that are most effective and promising: the system method, the historical perspective method, the comparative method, the statistical method, modeling, concrete historical analysis, comparative analysis, content analysis using a number of specialized utilities.

V.V.Froltsov presented brief results of a comparative historical analysis of the experience of international mediation in the settlement of territorial conflicts, outlining the strengths and weaknesses of the main approaches used to solve this urgent problem of international relations.

T.V.Marmontova involved in the content analysis the materials of the regional media of the border areas of Russia and Kazakhstan (nine media in six regions) from February

24 to March 1, 2022, conclusions were drawn on how to use instrumental methods of analysis in the information policy. The presented materials, based on the analysis of the historical experience of conflict resolution, allow showing the logical continuity in the process of their settlement. The post-Soviet space is potentially associated with the possibility of many conflicts, due to ethnic diversity, different orientations of geopolitical interests, and a high degree of influence of different actors. Potentially, the conflict should be considered one of the phases of socio-political development; the experience of going through the conflict is dramatic, painfully reflected in the public consciousness. It is important to remember that any crisis tends to recur, and having an analytical backlog, how to resolve it, what consequences are long-, medium- and short-term in nature etc., will help decision makers in building an algorithm for managerial action. As a result of the study, you can see the principles of the analysis and a set of data related to the study of the real situation.

A.G.Bolshakov used the case study methodology, which analyzes specific cases of border conflicts, that allow you to explore territorial claims and disputes between the countries of Central Asia, especially those located in the Ferghana Valley. Various cases are compared with each other to construct a holistic theory of conflict resolution in the region.

A.V.Ataev involved materials of the Sharia court during the territorial dispute between Chechnya and Ingushetia, materials of the Ceasefire and separation of forces Agreements in the Georgian-Abkhaz armed conflict of 1992–1993 signed in Moscow, statistical materials on the structure of the Collective Peacekeeping Forces in that conflict.

Results

Historical experience of international mediation in the settlement of territorial conflicts (V.V.Froltsov)

A comprehensive characterization and systematic assessment of the historical experience of various international mediators in the process of resolving territorial conflicts is of particular interest to both researchers in the field of international relations and practitioners. In the current situation of reformatting the system of international relations, they need to find optimal models and mechanisms for preventing and resolving territorial conflicts, which not only have not disappeared, but have become noticeably aggravated at the beginning of the 21st century.

The traditional mediator in the settlement of such conflicts for centuries was a third side - the state, whose interests were not directly or indirectly affected by the conflict and which the sides to the conflict could equally trust. The choice of such a mediator was always difficult, since the degree of confidence in him of the sides to the conflict could change in the process of negotiations and under the influence of various external factors.

Thus, in order to reach a peace treaty following the results of the first major armed conflict of the 20th century, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, US President T.Roosevelt

was invited as a mediator, as was supposed, he could provide acceptable conditions for both sides. As a result, they did not suit either Russia or Japan, and that created the conditions for a permanent territorial dispute in the Far East¹. The dispute continues in the 21st century, taking into account the actualization of Japan's claims to the Russian South Kuriles, once again these claims were voiced in March 2022 against the backdrop of the introduction of Western sanctions against Russia².

Intending to create long-term conditions for peace in Europe, in 1919–1921, former participants of the conflict came up with new ways to resolve territorial disputes: the work of special commissions to study the ethnic, confessional and linguistic situation in the disputed regions, including on the basis of ethnographic research. Thus the “Curzon Line” was established. Named after the Head of the British Foreign Office in 1919–1924, Lord J.N.Curzon, the demarcation line took into account the peculiarities of the resettlement of the Belarusian, Ukrainian and Polish population in the territory from Grodno to the Carpathians and was recommended by the Supreme Council of the Entente in December 1919 to draw the eastern border of Poland³. As a result of the Polish-Soviet War of 1919–1921 and the Riga Peace Treaty of 1921, it passed much to the east. However, following the results of World War II, the victorious powers returned to the Curzon Line. It was the Line which, in 1945, with minor adjustments, formed the basis of the Polish-Soviet border, and since 1991, the current border of Poland with the Republic of Belarus and Ukraine⁴.

Another instrument of national-territorial delimitation was the holding of local (cantonal) plebiscites, which were designed to determine the desire of the population of certain regions to live as part of a particular state. According to this principle, the current border line between Germany and Denmark was established in 1920, which remained unchanged even after the German Nazi invasion of Denmark in 1940⁵.

During the functioning of the UN as a universal international organization, the mechanism of independent arbitration was quite effective for determining the territorial affiliation of disputed areas, especially between the newly independent states in Asia, Africa and South America. Their borders were established during the colonial period and based on the interests of the European metropolises and, as a rule, did not take into account the ethno-confessional structure of the population.

1 Peace Treaty Between Russia and Japan Concluded in Portsmouth on 1905 August 28 – September 5. Collection of treaties between Russia and other states. 1856–1917. Moscow. 1952:337–341.

2 Statement of the Russian Foreign Ministry on Response Measures to the Decisions of the Government of Japan. MFA of the Russian Federation. Available: https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1805541/. Checked on: 21.03.2022.

3 Note of British Foreign Secretary Curzon dated July 11, 1920 («Curzon Line»). Documents of foreign policy of the USSR: in 24 vols. Moscow. 1959:3:54–55.

4 Conference Decisions. 1945 February 4–12 (Yalta (Crimean) Conference in 1945). The Soviet Union at International Conferences During the Great Patriotic War, 1941–1945. Doc.: in 6 vols. Moscow. 1984:4:247–253.

5 Teil II. Deutschlands Grenzen. Artikel 27. Friedensvertrag von Versailles. Vom 28. 1919, Juni. Available: <http://www.documentarchiv.de/wr/vv02.html/> Checked on: 03.01.2022.

Socio-political version of the Kazakh-Russian border area through the prism of regional media (T.V.Marmontova)

An analysis of the communicative space plays an important role in solving the problems of preventing and regulating conflicts. It is largely determined by the regional press.

The Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation have strong ties. The legal framework for bilateral cooperation is about 300 different agreements and memorandums.

The research hypothesis was that all social and political processes are reflected in the information field. The regional press makes it possible to evaluate the activity of such interactions and draw conclusions about their depth.

To confirm the hypothesis, a study of the regional press was conducted both of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation.

In particular, the content of regional media in such cities of Kazakhstan as Pavlodar, Petropavlovsk and Kostanay was analyzed. Taking into account close cultural and economic ties between the cities of the border regions, the regional media of the Russian cities of Novosibirsk, Omsk and Chelyabinsk were studied.

A content analysis of timelines between February 24 and March 1, 2022 of 9 media in 6 regions (three each from Kazakhstan and Russia) was carried out. In addition, to determine the features of information flows in the Internet space, a web analysis of the sites of these media was carried out using a number of specialized utilities.

As a result of a comparative analysis of information in the media of Pavlodar and Novosibirsk, the following results were obtained. During this period, 75 notes were published in the regional media of Pavlodar⁶, and only 5 on the international situation. In the regional media of Novosibirsk⁷, 542 notes were published, on the international situation - 49 notes.

Assessing the content of the latter, we note that on the part of Kazakhstan, topics related to outgoing migration, the number of those who left the region, dominated.

The Novosibirsk media focused on the main event, the conflict in Ukraine and the consequences for the Russian Federation related to this: sanctions, restrictions, and so on.

As a result of a comparative analysis of information in the media of Kostanay and Chelyabinsk, the following results were obtained. During the specified period, 163 notes were published in the regional media of Kostanay⁸, and 16 of them were on the international situation. In the regional media of Chelyabinsk⁹, 378 notes were published, on the subject of the international situation – 53 notes.

The analysis of the content made it possible to determine the informational dominants, the reaction to the situation in Ukraine, to assess the economic effects of

⁶ Pavlodar online. Available: <https://pavon.kz/>; Review of the week. Available: <https://obozrenie.kz/>; Our life. Available: <https://lifepvl.kz/>.

⁷ Taiga.info. Available: <https://taiga.info/>; Novosibirsk-online. Available: <https://ngs.ru/>; VN.ru - Novosibirsk region all news. Available: <https://vn.ru/>.

⁸ Kostanay News. Available: <https://kstnews.kz/news/>; Our Newspaper. Available: <https://www.ng.kz/>; Kostanay-agro. Available: <https://qagro.kz/>.

⁹ 74.ru, 101.ru, Portal Chelyabinsk Today. Available: <https://cheltoday.ru>

sanctions (both direct, on Russia, and indirect, on Kazakhstan), as well as to identify private topics (sports, migration, etc.).

As a result of a comparative analysis of information in the media of Petropavlovsk and Omsk, the following results were obtained. In the regional media of Petropavlovsk¹⁰, 171 notes were published during this period, and 40 of them were on the international situation. In the regional media of Omsk¹¹, 443 notes were published, on the international situation – 67 notes.

An analysis of the content of timelines indicates the presence of topics related to military operations in Ukraine, but it is more typical for the Russian press. The media of Kazakhstan appeal not only to the main, but also to local newsbreaks.

As for the content, it is worth talking about its fragmentary, non-systemic nature. Notes are episodic and are associated with some specific events. The only assessment material was found: in one of the media in Chelyabinsk there was information about high-quality and inexpensive goods from Kazakhstan.

Web analytics of sites showed that there is no news information from Kazakhstan as a trigger. This is evidenced by the analysis of incoming and outgoing traffic, as well as the study of the geography of visits to sites. When analyzing the geography of visits to media sites from Kazakhstan, one can see that traffic from Russia ranks second or third.

Discussion

As recommendations, we can propose to intensify work with regional media that have a state information order to inform about the situation in the region. Moreover, the regions of the Russian Federation, in the face of growing sanctions pressure and the importance of Kazakhstan as a valuable partner, need to constantly inform their citizens about what exactly can be obtained in a neighboring country when the resources of their own region are limited. The lack of quality information about the neighboring country, in fact, creates a perfect backdrop for the flow of «toxic» statements from media people in the center of the country – they simply do not know anything about Kazakhstan.

Experience in the settlement of territorial conflicts in the post-Soviet period (on the example of the Central Asian region) (A.G.Bolshakov)

The region of Central Asia is considered by researchers in different ways. Some scholars deny it subjectivity; others expand it to include even South Asia (Mongolia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, part of India, part of China, and part of the Russian Federation).

¹⁰ Petropavlovsk News. Available: <https://pkzsk.info>, Available: <https://www.7152.kz>, My city. Available: <https://mygorod.kz/>.

¹¹ Super Omsk. Available: <https://superomsk.ru/>; City 55 Available: <https://gorod55.ru/>; New Omsk. Available: <https://newsomsk.ru/>.

In modern Russia, the region is considered to include five former Soviet republics, that variant replaced the Soviet version, which includes 4 Soviet republics: Kazakhstan and Central Asia. According to that understanding of the region, we evaluate experience of regulating territorial conflicts.

In Soviet times, the borders in Central Asia were drawn arbitrarily, according to the planned Soviet economy. But in a single state, the republics did not have territorial problems [3]. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the situation changed. For the population of border regions and enclaves, their native places turned into a neighboring independent country, and their relatives turned out to be citizens of other sovereign states. Currently, there are no enclaves and exclaves in Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan has no enclaves, but has two exclaves in Uzbekistan, no enclaves in Tajikistan, but has two exclaves in Kyrgyzstan and one in Uzbekistan. Kyrgyzstan has four Uzbek and two Tajik enclaves, and Uzbekistan has one Uzbek enclave, one Kyrgyz enclave, and two Kazakh enclaves. True, in one of them there is simply no population.

Enclaves exist quite harmoniously on the territory of many countries, but the main problem of enclaves in Central Asia is hundreds of kilometers of uncoordinated borders [4:45–46]. The process of negotiations and the first agreements on the demarcation of borders in the region began in the late 90s of the XX century. Kazakhstan is a leader in establishing borders, but the process of negotiations on the delimitation of borders with Turkmenistan took 17 years, the Kazakhs negotiated with Kyrgyzstan for 20 years, and with Uzbekistan the process of negotiations is close to the end, but not yet completed.

The most difficult situation is in the Ferghana Valley, where Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan border on each other. The population density here is high; the standard of living is low. The population is engaged in agriculture and cattle breeding. Water and land resources are limited. This situation in itself increases the possibility of conflicts. Youth unemployment radicalizes society [3:75–90]. Organized crime and drug trafficking play an important role in this area. Therefore, due to the interweaving of many contradictions, it is difficult to solve the territorial problems of the Ferghana Valley [3:148–150].

Uzbekistan borders on all the countries of Central Asia, its former leadership pursued a tough policy in resolving border disputes. It is widely known that, fearing the penetration of Islamic extremists into the country, Uzbekistan in 2000 mined the border with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Since the border in many places remained conditional, civilians were blown up by mines.

With Sh.Mirziyoyev coming to power in Uzbekistan, improving relations with the closest neighbors became important. Discussion of border issues resumed. States are ready to compromise. For example, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan resumed negotiations on uncoordinated sections of the border – this issue has not been discussed since 2000. The total length of the border between the countries is 1650 km. The final documents are expected to be signed in the near future.

Negotiations between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan on border demarcation began in 2003 and intensified in 2017. The parties have almost completed the process of demarcation of the border, which is about 2,300 kilometers long, and are preparing the final documents. The states do not have disputed border areas.

Of the 1,300 km of the Uzbek-Tajik border, 20% were disputed. Sh.Mirziyoyev and E.Rahmon signed an agreement on separate sections of the border in March 2018. Since then, the joint border demarcation commission has met regularly.

Positive changes are also taking place between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. In September 2019, the two states exchanged equal parts of territory for the first time. The agreed border lines are already 92%.

But the situation on the border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan is still unstable. The line of the Kyrgyz-Tajik border is about 980 km, of which only 60% are delimited and demarcated. In July 2019, the Presidents of the two countries, S.Jeenbekov and E.Rahmon, met in the border area between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to discuss border issues. Then high hopes were pinned on the meeting of the leaders, but two months later there was another clash at the border.

In 2020, more than a dozen violent conflicts took place between the citizens of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan over disputed territories. As a result of the clashes, soldiers and residents of the border areas were killed and injured.

The bloodiest conflict in the region over the past 20 years was one in late April – early May 2021 near the borders of the two countries. Not only by local semi-partisan detachments, but also by the military of the two states took part in it, mortars, aircraft and heavy equipment were used, as a result, dozens of people were killed and hundreds were injured. About a dozen villages were also affected, houses and other objects burned down, more than 50 thousand people were evacuated from the conflict zone. But even after the settlement, small incidents at the border continue.

The conflict began in the area of the water distribution point «Golovnaya», which in Kyrgyzstan is considered their territory, and in Tajikistan - theirs. According to the Kyrgyz authorities, Tajik officials have begun installing video cameras on a pole near a water distribution point (replenishing the Tortkul reservoir) in the Batken region. This caused discontent among the locals and led to another incident. At first, the sides threw stones at each other, but then the border units of the two countries joined the conflict. In Tajikistan, they say that, in accordance with the maps of 1924–1927 and 1989, “Golovnaya” “entirely belongs to the Republic of Tajikistan.” According to the Kyrgyz side, the water distribution hub “Golovnaya” is a «strategic facility and is located on the territory of Kyrgyzstan.»

Most of the violent clashes along the Kyrgyz-Tajik border are due to disputes over infrastructure, land and water resources, and construction on disputed sites. Due to conflicts in these areas, border guards often block checkpoints, which leads to the fact that access to the territory of neighboring countries is blocked, including for citizens of these countries living in enclaves.

The armed border conflict between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in 2021 brought mutual hostility from the previous local level to a national scale in both countries. However, unlike other global territorial conflicts such as in Karabakh, Tibet or Cyprus, Central Asian leaders publicly espouse peaceful rhetoric and call for good neighborly relations, and the conflict is called «the tragedy of two kindred peoples.» In the current situation, it is necessary to continue negotiations on borders, although it is becoming more difficult to agree on disputable situations, the most controversial points have remained unresolved.

Approaches to the resolution of territorial disputes in the Caucasus: legal, forceful, contractual (A.V. Ataev)

In international practice, an international territorial dispute is defined as a dispute between states, and in an intrastate territorial dispute, the parties to the conflict protest the existing administrative-territorial principle of dividing the internal territory.

Territorial disputes in the Caucasus exist as an "objectively existing clash of interests" and proceed at the international and domestic levels. By 2022, territorial disputes in the Caucasus have acquired the status of already "crystallized and formulated disagreements." This is facilitated by the fact that states, heads of states, heads of subjects, public institutions, large public organizations of the Caucasian states and republics are the subjects of the territorial dispute.

It should be emphasized that the classification of territorial disputes remains debatable. There are three main ways to resolve conflicts: regulatory, negotiation and force.

The normative-legal approach involves the appeal of the parties to the conflict to an international court or other body. In administrative-territorial disputes between the subjects of Russia, there are facts of appeals to the Sharia court. For example, during the dispute between Chechnya and Ingushetia, the Head of the Chechen Parliament M. Daudov appealed to the Sharia court and thus initiated consideration of the territorial dispute between Chechnya and Ingushetia. This territorial dispute began in the autumn of 2018, when an agreement on the regulation of the territorial dispute was signed by the Heads of Chechnya and Ingushetia, Ramzan Kadyrov and Yunus-Bek Yevkurov.

The controversy has reached its climax after protests organized by social activists and some non-profit organizations.

With this approach, the independent actions of the sides to resolve the conflict are limited, they are included in the framework of the established rules. As a result, the dissatisfaction of at least one of the sides with the decision taken threatens to result in a new conflict in the future.

The positive part of this approach is the consent of both sides to resolve the conflict by going to court. These are not unilateral, but joint actions of the sides that seek to resolve the conflict situation. The problem is that Sharia court decisions, as a rule, do not change the specific of the relationship between the sides. Often they remain in conflict, which increases the likelihood of a new conflict; court decisions are limited, not extending to the secular part of society. The Sharia court does not have the right to resolve conflicts, and acts only when all the conflicting sides turn to it.

The forceful approach presupposes a violent resolution of the conflict: it can be the actions of international peacekeeping forces or forceful intervention or the presence of one or more states.

Let us give a number of examples concerning the Transcaucasian states. Thus, the basis for the peacekeeping activities of the Russian Federation in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict are the Sochi Agreement of 1992, as well as the decisions of the Joint Control Commission (JCC), created in accordance with the said Agreement. In South Ossetia, Russian

troops, along with the Georgian and Ossetian military, became part of the Joint Peacekeeping Forces (JPKF) in the conflict zone. The JPKF included three peacekeeping battalions. Each side – Georgian, Russian and Ossetian – has the right to deploy a peacekeeping battalion of no more than 500 military personnel in the conflict zone. In addition, they can also deploy an additional 300 troops with the permission of the JCC.

It is known that the main goal of peacekeeping operations is to stabilize the situation in the conflict area, create favorable conditions for its resolution through negotiations, and establish and maintain peace. Peacekeeping actions are carried out with the consent of all sides of the conflict, but cannot carry out coercive measures. Positive aspects of the forceful approach: peacekeeping forces separate the conflicting sides, prevent armed clashes between them, create and patrol areas of separation, monitor the cessation of armed clashes, and the development of the situation between the adversaries.

Forceful actions are an ineffective way to resolve the conflict; it only creates the basis for future interaction, now extinguishes the violence between them, but does not resolve the conflict on its merits. The conflict goes into a latent state and persists until the sides resolve the problem by other means. In the situation of the use of force, there is not a resolution of the conflict, but its regulation.

But in the Caucasus there is a precedent for a successful Russian peacekeeping operation under a UN mandate. We are talking about the actions in Abkhazia. On May 14, 1994, after several rounds of complex negotiations led by the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General, the opposing sides in the Georgian-Abkhaz armed conflict of 1992–1993 signed the Agreement on a Ceasefire and Separation of Forces in Moscow. The sides agreed to deploy the Collective Peacekeeping Forces (CPF) of the CIS to monitor compliance with the Agreement. Under the control of the Collective Peacekeeping Forces, deployed in June 1994 and fully manned by Russian military personnel, there was a security zone 24 km wide along the line of contact between Georgian and Abkhaz forces.

As of August 1, 2008, the KSPM group consisted of 1,561 people (including 199 officers). It was equipped with 135 armored vehicles, 267 vehicles, 4 helicopters (Mi-8, Mi-24). The KSPM was armed with 30 mortars and 2943 small arms.

The third and main way to resolve conflicts in the second half of the twentieth century was negotiations. Their significance is evidenced by the fact that the number of conflicts that ended thanks to negotiations has increased. The scope of negotiations has also expanded, more people are involved in them, and there are not only participants in the negotiations themselves but experts.

The main difference between negotiations is that the decision is developed jointly by all participants in the negotiations. Negotiation is primarily a process of joint decision-making. The negative feature of the negotiations is that they can last for a very long time, the conflicting parties, not bound by any obligations, can interrupt or completely stop them.

The main difference between negotiations and other ways of resolving conflicts is that the solution is developed jointly by all the participants. Negotiation is a process of joint decision-making. The negative feature of the negotiations is that they can last for a long time, the conflicting sides, not bound by any obligations, can interrupt or completely stop them.

Conclusions

In the context of a sharp aggravation of international tension against the backdrop of the formation of a new architecture of international relations, modern models and tools of international mediation in the settlement of territorial conflicts are becoming especially in demand. Such influential states as China, India, Brazil, Indonesia, and South Africa can play an important role. They consistently refrain from interfering in any interstate conflicts and are able to become effective mediators in their resolution. Significant potential has new regional organizations, including the Eurasian Economic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, whose mediation efforts can be combined with the activities of both UN institutions and other regional organizations.

The lack of media coverage of the life of a neighboring state is a worrying trend, especially in the face of open conflict. This leaves possibilities for fakes and manipulation, as it is evident today in the rise of toxicity on social media.

In general, the situation can be assessed as potentially problematic. Despite the great length of their border, the Russians do not have official, verified regular information about neighboring Kazakhstan. Of course, there are enough information channels today: television, social networks, print media, but at the same time, the regional press can and should serve as the main means of implementing the information policy of the region.

Thus, territorial conflicts (as opposed to ethnic and religious ones) in Central Asia are fundamentally amenable to political settlement. Relations at this stage between the states can be called mostly good-neighborly, so the existing contradictions and destructive conflicts can be resolved in the coming years. There is no ethnic or religious hatred between the peoples of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and this is a guarantee that territorial conflicts in this region will end in the next decade.

The main method for resolving territorial conflicts is lengthy (for many years) bilateral negotiations followed by borders delimitation and demarcation. However, the importance of mediation by Russia and Uzbekistan may soon increase [1:145–164]. Their proposals may be related, for example, to the creation of a common economic zone or to the interaction of all three countries in the EAEU (currently only Kyrgyzstan is a member of the Eurasian Economic Union, Uzbekistan is an observer, and Tajikistan has not yet joined this international organization – note by A.B.).

Common economic zones and open borders are no less effective means of overcoming conflicts between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Attempts to seek forceful solutions to problems are futile, and diplomacy, compromises, constant dialogue and negotiations are gradually becoming the leading methods in resolving territorial conflicts in Central Asia.

An analysis of the ways to resolve the conflict allows us to say that negotiations occupy a dominant position in resolving conflicts. But negotiations by themselves will not be effective; their relationship with other ways of resolving the conflict is necessary. When force is used, for example, negotiations are secondary and determine the composition of the peacekeeping forces, their mandate, size, time and place of introduction, location, and so on. At the same time, the use of force stops violence between opponents, stimulates

cooperation between them, establishes contacts, and start of a new round of the negotiation process. With a legal approach, the sides of the conflict are negotiating on the transfer of the case for consideration to mediation structures, on post-conflict interaction. In addition, negotiated decisions must also be legally enforceable.

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Modern Afghanistan: factors of instability

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Abstract. The article analyzes global, regional and internal factors that have a significant impact on socio-political fluctuations and destabilization in Afghanistan. A special attention is paid to the risks associated with regional security, including the problems of terrorism and drug threats. Among the stabilizing factors, a special place is given to the development of Afghanistan's transit potential (the opportunity to become a connecting bridge between Central Asia and South Asia). The author analyzes the activities of the Taliban during their seven months in power, puts forward a hypothesis about the causes of internal confrontation in the movement and pays attention to the problem of recognition of the new government by the international community. It is noted that a paradoxical phenomenon has developed when negotiations on economic and infrastructure projects are conducted with the illegitimate, unrecognized government of the Taliban (a terrorist organization banned in many countries), investment agreements are concluded, foreign policy relations are established, new diplomats are accepted. Perhaps, on the example of Afghanistan, the world will see a new mechanism for international legitimization of governments that seized power by force and were initially unrecognized by international partners.

Keywords: Afghanistan, stability, security in Central Asia, trans-Afghan projects, cross-border threats

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Introduction

The importance of Afghanistan in international politics is defined by a number of factors, connected with necessity to provide regional security (settlement of armed conflicts with participation of external and internal forces), economic development of Central Asia region (development of Afghanistan's transit potential, actualization of the opportunity to become a connecting link between Central Asia and South Asia); need for social and cultural development of Afghan society, provision of rights and liberties to all social groups,

including women, as well as necessity to combat terrorism and drug trafficking, which endanger not only regional, but also worldwide security.

Despite the efforts made by the international community and regional actors, the situation in Afghanistan keeps developing in an instable and uncertain way, Afghanistan being considered a source of threat both on international and regional arena. Therefore, the international community and the countries neighboring Afghanistan aim their efforts to search the ways of settling the situation. The article contains results of a study into the principal factors provoking Afghan instability and some suggestions as to the ways how to resolve the problem.

Materials and methods

The author's methodological stance got its shape under the influence of institutional and systemic approaches; besides, the author appeals to the theory of political realism. The theoretical basis of the study is rooted in the works of national scholars specialized in Afghanistan [6, 2], an Afghan historian [3], a Pakistani scholar [5]. The basic research methods applied are the following: dialectic method, comparative study, content analysis, invent analysis. The resources used include formal pronouncements, resolutions; normative legal acts issued by the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, foreign countries, international institutions, including quarterly and annual reports provided by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan; information obtained from original sources; materials provided by mass media and analytical organizations, including proceedings of research to practice conferences held by the Institute of Oriental Studies (the Russian Academy of Sciences)¹, analytical reports published by the Center for contemporary Afghanistan studies².

Results

Long-term observations and a comprehensive analysis into Afghanistan's development problems make it possible to identify a number of factors that substantially affect social and political fluctuations and provoke the country's unrest. The first two factors, associated with terrorism and drug dealing, form part of the global order factors and constitute a menace to the global stability. Other factors can be referred to as risk factors of regional and local scale. Nevertheless, under certain circumstances and together with the first two factors they may grow to become global order factors.

¹ Proceedings of the international conference "New approach to the Taliban rule in Afghanistan: reasons, challenges prospects" [Novyi podkhod k vlasti talibov v Afganistane: prichiny, problemy, perspektivy] Moscow: IV RAN, 28.02.11

² Peculiar characteristics of contemporary Afghan elites [Osobennosti sovremenoy afganskoy elity]: March, 2020. Moscow: Center for contemporary Afghanistan studies (CCAS), 2020:20. Available: https://afghanistan.ru/catalog/areport_29042020.pdf; CCAS analytical materials [Analiticheskie materialy TSISA]. Available: <https://afghanistan.ru/doc/category/editorial>.

The first factor is terrorism. Afghan unrest might be considered a source of risk and threat to the majority of countries inside the region, including Central Asia, Russia and the People's Republic of China. Should the extremists gain power and the state institutions get weak, Afghanistan is very likely to become a potential beachhead for establishing terrorist groups.

In accordance with the Global terrorism index, created by the Institute for Economics and Peace, between 2011 and 2022 Afghanistan was listed among the top five countries upon this criterion, ranking first in the index between 2019 and 2022.

In the six months of Taliban rule (between August, 15, 2021 and February, 15, 2022) the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan recorded the total of 1153 (397 casualties and 756 wounded) among civilian population³. All in all, it demonstrates a lower rate of casualties among Afghanistan's innocent population as compared to the same period last year. Nevertheless, this figure is still very high and cannot instill growing optimism as to the country's stability. The active status of IGIL-H causes special concern in a number of neighboring countries. According to the UN organization, it was this group's attacks that provoked a substantial fraction of casualties among civilian population in the period of the Taliban rule⁴.

The second factor is that of drug trafficking. The problem of illegal drug production and drug smuggling remains being a serious threat to the region. Drugs made up and still do make up one of Afghanistan's revenue items. According to the data provided by the United Nations office on drugs and crime, the country's income from drug dealing in 2021 was \$1.8-2.7 billion. It is worth noting, that major part of the income obtained through the supply chain remains outside Afghanistan⁵.

Despite the Taliban's promises to combat drug production and drug smuggling, there is no reason to assume that the amount of Afghan opiates will sharply decrease in the near future⁶.

One of the ways to fight drug trafficking and drug production might consist in developing alternative economy sectors, with the return rate approximately equivalent to that of drug production. However, currently there are no feasible projects of the sort underway.

The third factor is economic one. Deterioration of social and economic conditions, following the seize power and provoked among other matters by the sanctions imposed by the West, has become a formidable challenge for the Taliban. The USA froze Afghanistan Central Bank's assets and banned the use of dollar in the country which caused paralysis of the banking and financial system and a severe currency crisis. Banking system paralysis

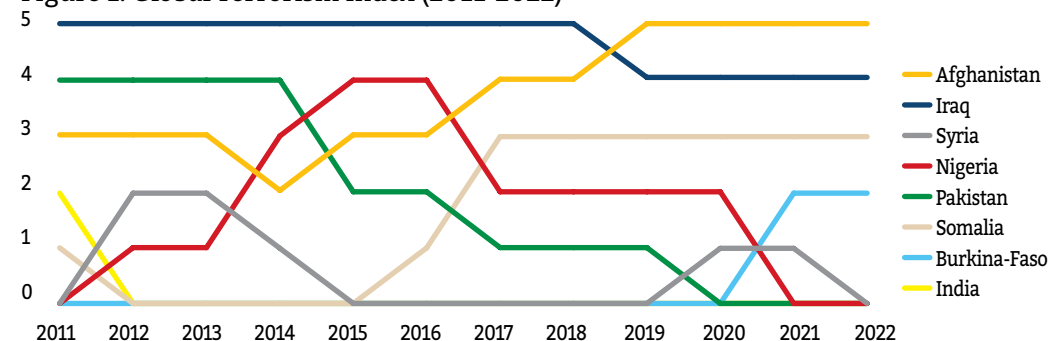
³ Interactive dialogue on the High Commissioner's report on Afghanistan. UN, 7.03.2022. Available: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2022/03/interactive-dialogue-high-commissioners-report-afghanistan?LangID=E&NewsID=28218>.

⁴ Afghanistan. Protection of civilians in armed conflict: 15 aug. 2021 to 15 feb 2022. UNAMA. Available: https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama_poc_midyear_report_2022_15a_feb.pdf (checked on 25.02.2022); The head of the US Committee on Armed Services declared IGIL to gain strength in Afghanistan [Glava Tsentskoma VS SSHA zayavil ob usilenii IGIL v Afganistane]. *Afghanistan.ru*, 16.03.2022. Available: <https://afghanistan.ru/doc/148497.html>.

⁵ Drug situation in Afghanistan 2021, UNODC – 2021.

⁶ Tajikistan reports an increase in drug trafficking from Afghanistan [V Tadjikistane zayavili o roste narkotrafika iz Afganistana]. *Afghanistan.ru*, 19.02.2022. Available: <https://afghanistan.ru/doc/148227.html>.

Figure 1. Global Terrorism Index (2011-2022)



together with the national currency cheapening led to an import curtailment and an increase in prices for basic needs and fuel. Another problem that has arisen is that of brain drain which led to increasing unemployment⁷.

In this context implementation of a number of ambitious transport and energetic projects gains special significance with regard to stabilization, the most outstanding being TAPI, CASA-1000, Trans-Afghan transport corridor⁸. Besides, there is mineral resources exploitation, such as Aynak copper-ore deposit⁹ etc.

Even partial implementation of these ambitious projects will not only provide new work places, so urgently wanted inside the country, but will also reduce the country's dependence on foreign economic aid. Large infrastructural projects are evidently able to consolidate Central and South Asian countries around Afghanistan, which in its turn will enhance global and regional prestige of Kabul, thus converting it from a troublesome neighbor into an attractive one. Nevertheless, the main obstacle which hindered implementation of these projects in the previous years was the ongoing armed conflict or unrest.

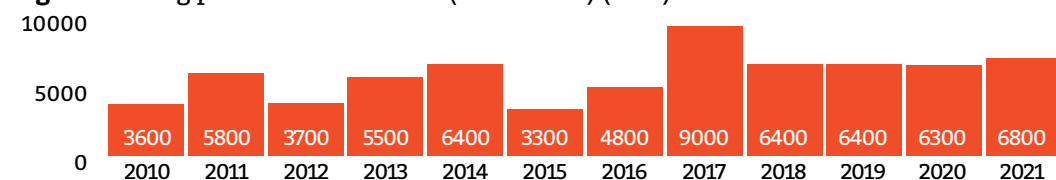
The fourth factor is associated with external control. In 2021 the Afghan turmoil entered a new stage in its development. In August 2021 after a 20 year-long military presence in Afghanistan the US-led coalition withdrew its troops from the country. This step was anteceded by a peace agreement concluded between Washington and the Taliban in February 2020, which gave grounds for optimistic forecasts as to the prospective development of the situation in the country. Amongst other things, the peace agreement presupposed establishment of a coalition government including Afghan legal political movements and the Taliban. Nevertheless, for a host of reasons things took a different turn and on August, 15, 2021 the Taliban seized the power in Kabul [1]¹⁰.

⁷ Sifton J. Averting Afghanistan's Economic and Food Crises. HRW, 06.10.2021. Available: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/10/06/averting-afghanistans-economic-and-food-crises>.

⁸ Among the trans-Afghan transport projects there is "Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar" railway line, a corridor passing through Afghanistan to connect Central Asia, and Pakistan as well as Middle East. Khaf-Herat rail line is designed to connect China's railway and Iran through Afghanistan.

⁹ One of the world's largest copper mines is located 35 km away from Kabul. In 2007 the winner of the tender for its exploitation and development became Chinese company MSS.

¹⁰ For more detailed information see: Konarovskiy M.A., Nessar M.O. Afghanistan under the Taliban: what comes next? [Talibskiy Afganstan: chto dalshe]. *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn*. 2022, January:14-28.

Figure 2. Drug production volumes (2010-2020) (tons)

During the 20 years, previous to the takeover of Kabul, the USA participated in the armed conflict as one of its principal actors. To assess the results, purpose and objectives of the military operation, conducted by the Western coalition in Afghanistan, we would need a more profound separate study. Nonetheless, we consider appropriate to provide some data regarding military presence of the Western countries. The US government spent over \$980 billion on war fighting and modernization of Afghanistan, including creation of State Institutions, Security Force training, economic development and civil society formation. The US and their allies lost 24253 persons (among them 3587 killed and 20666 wounded). Afghan side lost at the very least 66 thousand state military men, civilian casualties exceeding 123 thousand (48 thousand killed and 75 thousand wounded)¹¹. During the US military presence as part of the mission in Afghanistan, other countries were involved as well, both member states and not member states of the North Atlantic alliance. According to The Guardian diary¹², the total of 50 countries participated in the military and public missions under the military operation in Afghanistan¹³.

The US and the allies' withdrawal from Afghanistan and their distancing from the direct military conflict in 2021 gave grounds for optimistic forecasts as to the subsequent progress of the situation in the country. However, the external forces' attitude to the Taliban's ascension to power might be referred to as ambiguous. On the one hand, the neighboring countries did their best to establish rapport with Kabul, on the other hand, a radical group's ascension to power could not but give rise to concern¹⁴. For example, following the Taliban seize power, leaders of the CSTO member states issued statements of «profound concern about the events in Afghanistan and the potential threat» proceeding from the territory of this country¹⁵.

The fifth factor regards inter-ethnic and inter-tribal relations. The fact that the USA and their allies are directly involved into the armed conflict, may be considered one

of the external factors that affect the situation. However, there are internal factors that keep affecting the region's stability, of high importance being the inter-ethnic discord. The significance of inter-ethnic confrontation in Afghanistan's political life has been increasing in the recent three decades, which made ethno-tribal nature of power acquire newfound relevance. As was demonstrated in one of our previous research works, ethno-tribal network is considered a constant value in Afghanistan's political life, its negligence causing adverse social and political consequences [4]. One of the ways to settle the conflict might become creation of an inclusive multi-ethnic and multi-tribal government, comprising members of various political movements. However, the Nepushtuns (the Tadjik and the Uzbek) who entered the Taliban cabinet, are actually members of the Taliban movement and manifest mainly pro-Taliban interests, rather than their own ethnic and tribal groups' ones. In other words, an inclusive Taliban government which consists in a down-sized version of an ethno-tribal government, in fact does not fulfill the function of coordinating positions and representing interests of various ethno-tribal groups in Afghanistan. As a result, it provokes a civil war.

During the Taliban rule confrontation within Afghan civic society grew in strength, the women's movements being especially prominent. The Talibs (unsurprising for many experts and specialists in Afghanistan) introduced new bans and restrictions for women, which questioned the achievements in the sphere of women's rights over the last 20 years. Many Afghan girls were deprived of access to education, dozens of thousands of women dropped out of the labor force. The international community expressed strong disapproval at the decision of the new authorities ordering Afghan girls being denied access to secondary schools¹⁶.

Neither can we ignore the anti-Taliban armed groups, which were observed to get increasingly excited in March, 2022. In the same month the minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov focused special attention on one of them, namely, «National Resistance Front» (under the leadership of Ahmad Massoud)¹⁷.

The sixth factor consists in lack of consensus among the Taliban's governing elites. The seize power was followed by sharpening of the internal inter-tribal and inter-fractional discord (among other problems, it refers to the antagonism between the so-called radical wing (Khakkani tribe) and the moderate one (native from Kandagar)). An analysis of the Taliban's activities during the seven months of their rule makes it possible to infer existence of confrontation in two areas: 1) increasingly fierce customary inter-tribal rivalry between

11 What we need to learn: Lessons from twenty years of Afghanistan Reconstruction. SIGAR, 2021.

12 Afghanistan troop numbers data: how many does each country send to the NATO mission there? The Guardian. 22.06.2011. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2009/sep/21/afghanistan-troop-numbers-nato-data#data>.

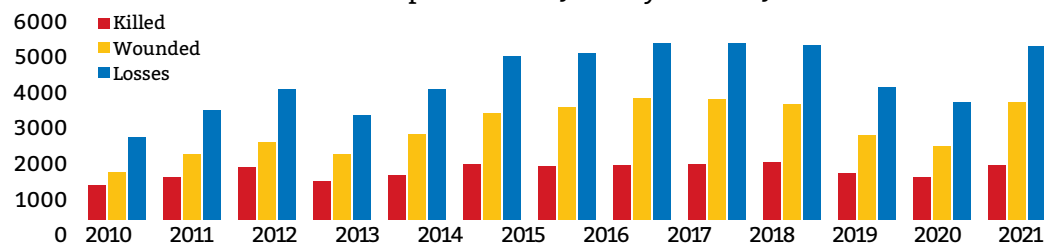
13 Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Albania, Armenia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Great Britain, Hungary, Germany, Greece, Georgia, Denmark, Jordan, Ireland, Israel, Spain, Italy, Canada, South Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the UAE, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, the USA, Tonga, Turkey, Ukraine, Finland, France, Croatia, Monte Negro, the Czech republic, Sweden, Estonia.

14 Terrorists want to benefit from the Taliban's ascent to power, the Ministry of External Affairs claimed [Terroristy hotyat izvlech vygody iz Prihoda talibov k vlasti, zayavili v MID]. RIA Novosti, 22.12.2021. Available: <https://ria.ru/20211222/afganistan-1764865631.html>.

15 CSTO declaration. Available: <http://kremlin.ru/catalog/persons/119/events/66433/print>.

16 The UN Security Council called on the Talib to open schools for girls [Sovbez OON prizval talibov otkryt shkoly dla devochek]. Афганистан.Ру, 28.03.2022. Available: <https://afghanistan.ru/doc/148626.html>; UN Security Council asks Taliban to allow Afghan girls to attend school // Reuters, 28.03.2022. URL: <https://www.yahoo.com/entertainment/un-security-council-asks-taliban-041700071.html>.

17 Speech delivered by the minister of External Affairs of the Russian Federation S.V. Lavrov during the plenary session at the meeting of Afghanistan's neighboring countries (Russia, China, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan) [Vystuplenie ministra inostrannykh del Rossiyskoy Federatsii S.V. Lavrova v hode plenarnoy sessii na vstreche v formate cnran sosedey Afganistana (Rossia, Kitay, Iran, Pakistan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan) Tunsy, March, 31, 2022. Available: https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1807302/?lang=ru.

Table 1. Civilian casualties in the period from January 2009 to June 2021

the Pashtun tribes Durrani and Ghilzay; 2) discord in viewpoints and methods between the executive organ in Kabul and the spiritual leader, assumingly dwelling in Kandahar. Influence of external factors cannot be neglected either, for example, attempts to maintain external control over certain decision-making centers, made by some foreign actors. The increasing discord seems to have been provoked by endeavors to centralize and hierarchize the terrorist nexus, turning into the Taliban political network.

Discussion

The unrest factors are both the reason and partly the consequence of the Taliban government being unrecognized by international institutions and foreign countries. The unrecognized the international community demonstrates towards the Taliban creates serious obstacles for the national financial and banking industry to work and trans-Afghan projects to be realized. There are several reasons that impede recognition. Firstly, in a number of countries the «Taliban» movement is recognized as a radical and terrorist one (including Russia). Secondly, some of the Taliban's actions discord with the principles created by the UN, their norms and morale. For instance, the ban on secondary education for girls, disapproved by Muslim countries as well. Thirdly, the Taliban government has not secured trust of foreign countries and international institutions, which remains very low. The Taliban government demonstrated itself to be incoherent whilst fulfilling a number of prerequisites for being recognized. One of these was to respect rights and freedoms of all social groups and form an inclusive government. Neither the first nor the second condition has been complied with. Thus, commenting on the Taliban's failure to keep the promises given with regard to women's rights and girls' access to secondary education, the UN Secretary General António Guterres said: "I strongly appeal to the Taliban to keep their promises"¹⁸. Neither has the Taliban accomplished the second condition, that of forming an inclusive government¹⁹. As

¹⁸ UN chief slams 'broken' Taliban promises made to women, girls. Aljazeera, 11.10.2021. Available: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/10/11/un-chief-slams-broken-taliban-promises-made-to-women-girls>.

¹⁹ UN's new Afghanistan mandate focuses on equality, inclusion. AP, 17.03.2022. Available: <https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-afghanistan-business-norway-taliban-6e760c7ab971fe3cbb8db7e0f9cd23f>; Russia, China and India called for the creation of an inclusive government in Afghanistan [Rossia, Kitay y India prizvali k formirovaniyu inkluzivnogo pravitelstva v Afganistane]. Afghanistan.ru, 26.11.2021. Available: <https://afghanistan.ru/doc/147195.html>.

previously stated, it was formed as a reduced and rather specific version of such.

The Taliban movement has not been able to convince the international community so far that it has made a clean break with terrorist organizations. From time to time, information leak into press, regarding the Taliban's contacts with one or another terrorist group. Nevertheless, risks and threats posed by Afghanistan, the humanitarian crisis in the context of total immiseration and violation of the citizens' rights, make foreign countries and international institutions participate in settlement of the situation in Afghanistan. Paradoxical is the phenomenon that has arisen recently, when an illegitimate and unrecognized government of the Taliban (a terrorist organization prohibited in multiple countries) is addressed to negotiate economic, infrastructural projects, enter into agreements on investments, cultivate political relations, admit new diplomats. Maybe the example of Afghanistan will provide a precedent for creating new mechanisms of international legitimation for authorities seizing governmental power via armed conflicts and being considered unacceptable international partners and outsiders. Such a mechanism should be referred to as enforced, implemented in order to avoid a humanitarian crisis and provide geopolitical, economic, regional and international security.

Conclusions

The Taliban's seize power in August, 2021 may be considered a failure to fulfill the plans, undertaken by external actors, to settle the conflict in Afghanistan, with the following formation of a coalition government and a peaceful transition of power. External endeavors did not take effect and did not deliver the results anticipated and provisioned by the agreements.

The external peace plans having failed, foreign economic aid to Afghanistan reduced, although Afghanistan's dependence on international financial aid has been strong during the recent decades and remains being so. Keeping this fact in mind and understanding the difficulties that financial and banking sector faces as a result of the unrecognized status of the current political regime, we cannot become more optimistic as to the socio-economic and humanitarian situation in the country in the nearest future.

The influence of external factors on Afghan unrest remains strong. Nevertheless, the USA and their allies' withdrawal from direct participation in the hostilities on the territory of Afghanistan may be interpreted as removal of one of the main external factors. In our opinion, in the long-term and medium-term perspective this step might lead to an increase in the role of internal factors, such as ethno-tribal and religious ones, etc.

The Taliban are now facing a wide range of internal challenges: 1) the complicated internal process has intensified (including the confrontation between the so-called radical and moderate wings of the movement); 2) security challenges (Islamic State Khorasan, civilian pressure, anti-Taliban resistance movements); 3) economic challenges, provoked by curtailment of foreign aid, unwillingness of the international community to recognize the new regime in Kabul, decline in labor market and business activities' potential, outflow

of professional personnel. Of special complexity for the Taliban is the decision to make a clean break with terrorist organizations. Meanwhile, this issue will significantly affect the progress of relationships building between the Taliban and the external world.

The subsequent developments and stability of the regime will largely depend on the ability of the Taliban to get through the challenges specified, their ability to understand internal and external factors, as well as the way the Taliban will build their relationships with the outer world, taking into consideration the existing multi-level inter-regional competition and complicated relationships between the global players.

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Political systems of partially recognized states: the problem of assessing stability

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Abstract. The article discusses the possibilities and limits of assessing the stability of political systems in partially recognized states. The author explores the features, properties and characteristics of the central phenomena – «political system», «stability», «stability», «partially recognized states». Considerable attention is focused on establishing differences and similarities between the concepts of «stability» and «sustainability». The relevance of the study is determined by the need to establish links between the state of political systems, partially recognized by the state from external and internal political processes and relations.

The methodological basis of the study is: general scientific and systemic methods; structural-functional and comparative political methods; content analysis of historical and legal documents. The chosen methodological base is determined by two factors: the first is modern trends, patterns and processes of progressive development of domestic and foreign political science; the second is the author's position of the researcher.

The results of the study indicate the possible validity of assessing the stability of the political systems of partially recognized states, considering the peculiarities of their political culture. While, as external factors that determine individual, but essential elements of the political system of partially recognized states, they indicate the characteristic instability of the political systems of the studied polities

Keywords: political system, stability, resilience, partially recognized states, stability indices

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Introduction

The issues of steadiness and stability of political systems are very relevant for modern political science. The humanities and social sciences are also profoundly interested in the

increments of new knowledge regarding approaches and mechanisms for determining the factors of steadiness and stability of the political systems of partially recognized states moving in the trajectory of forming state power institutions according to the constitutional and legal patterns of modern developed countries.

The purpose of the study is to establish the limits and possibilities of assessing the stability of the political systems of partially recognized states.

Materials and methods

The methodological basis of the research is represented by the comparative (comparative-political), systemic and general scientific approaches. The chosen methodological base is determined by two factors where the first is the current trends, patterns and processes of the domestic and foreign political science development, the second is the author's research position.

The importance and significance of the interdisciplinary scientific method in achieving this goal. The present research is based on the theoretical and methodological paradigms of scientific knowledge related branches, such as Theory of Politics, Ethnopolitology, Comparative Political Science, Sociology, Philosophy, History and other humanities and social sciences disciplines.

The analysis of the stability of the political systems of partially recognized states requires, if not detailed, then at least formal clarification of the conceptual content of the central categories, namely, "political system", "steadiness" and "stability". Since the "political system" and "stability" categories are the subject of this analysis, the expediency of concretizing their essence is beyond doubt, while the clarification of the "steadiness" concept is required for conceptual demarcation with the characteristic signs of stability. In such a way their undoubted causality is emphasized, but not their identity.

The theory and methodology of political systems is a sufficiently developed direction in political, philosophical, constitutional and legal sciences. The political system as a social and partly political and philosophical category has been developed and formalized in the scientific works of famous both foreign and domestic researchers such as T.Parsons, D.Easton, G.Almond, K.Deutsch and others.

Without paying too much attention to the evolution of socio-political thought about the essence and nature of the political system, we can note that the term "political system" used in a broad sense means a set of all kinds of relations covering state governance and various socio-political processes occurring within the state [8:126]. As noted by S.E.Bilyuga, it was only by the beginning of the XXI century that the political system started being interpreted as an integral and well-organized totality of political institutions, of political relations and processes, the role and purpose of subjects of political relations and processes, the principles of power relations functioning [2:46–56].

Results

It is obvious that the basis of the existence of the political system is the preservation and maintenance of both its steadiness and stability.

The relevance of modern studies of political stability is due to an extraordinary property of political science itself, namely, the lack of a generally accepted interpretation, unity in determining the essence and the specifics of "stability" in the direct political dimension. Dialectics, as well as the interpretation of the individual elements of this phenomenon and the whole scope of the concept for domestic and foreign researchers often differ in empirical, semantic and other respects.

One of the explanations for this circumstance is a process of globalization coming along with geopolitical, economic, social, cultural and other processes related to the political sphere, which significantly adjust the architecture of the modern world order, and it, in turn, retouches the limits and the parameters of the functioning of the political systems of modern states.

Kenneth Waltz, an American political scientist, the founder of the theory of structural realism, defines stability as a state of the system in which it retains its viable functions (so it exists) and does not collapse [16:174]. However, the approach has its own drawback, since it is possible to diagnose the state of stability of the system through the binary nature of this political phenomenon (state), using the antithesis. Thus, the political system can be in a stable or unstable position, preserving the inherent institutional properties of the political organism. At the same time, the preservation or the loss of functions that maintain life support may indicate the persistence or the destruction of the institutional foundations of the political system, which indicates the stability of the system in principle. Some major researchers of institutional and neoinstitutional approaches point to the direct connection of stability with the state itself, which is a universal political institution whose goal is to preserve the ruling power, sovereignty and territorial integrity [13:1–25].

According to A.S.Makarychev,

...stability is a multidimensional concept that includes such characteristics as the preservation of the system of government, civil order, legitimacy and reliability of governance. Stability should be discussed only in comparative categories: the political system can be characterized as more or less stable in comparison either with other systems or with the regime in which it functioned before [9:149–157].

Political stability can characterize the balance of internal and external political relations, reflecting the degree of balance in the correlation of forces and providing options for using political measures to preserve the existing situation, as well as to strengthen the functioning bases of the current government and society [10:1–9]. As A.I.Solovyov rightly noted, the political stability is the most significant goal and value both for the current government and for the society as a whole [10:1–9].

The limits of understanding the essence of the "stability" concept are clearly revealed through establishing the extension of the "instability" antithesis. In a simplified sense,

instability implies the inability of the political system to maintain or cope with the destructive transformations. The forms of instability vary depending on the balance of socio-political forces, the peculiarities of public-management decision-making, etc.

In case of threat the destabilization of a democratic state government depends on the following circumstances: firstly, on the presence or absence of “dissidence” in the society on socio-cultural, ideological, socio-economic grounds; secondly, on the level of support of an incumbent democratic regime by the country’s population [9:149–157].

Disclosing the term “stability”, we should refer to the researches by M.V.Vilisov, K.O.Telin, K.G.Filimonov, who believe that

...sustainability is the condition of the state system that allows it to reproduce and exercise the powers vested in the government apparatus and state institutions as a whole, thereby achieving an equilibrium that ensures its functioning. [4:7–27]

Researchers use the category of “state system” rather than “political”, which, as they believe, is justified by the successful opportunity to fix the central object of research – the state, as well as practical aspects of public administration and the system of power relations. However, it should be noted that this approach is controversial.

Meanwhile, foreign academic and political science discourses related to the solvency of states, periodically updated the conceptual and categorical apparatus of the categories considered in the current article. For example, “failed states” were first replaced by “unstable states”, later by “unstable conditions”, and in the last two decades the “stability” category have been widely used together with other categories related to the meaning and content [1:26–41]. Thus, the concept of “failed states”, as follows from the analysis of the theoretical positions of Western researchers, is understood as a recognized subject of international law, which for various reasons has lost some of the attributes and/or does not perform the basic functions of a sovereign (established) state, and not, as it may seem initially, unrecognized and/or a partially recognized state. However, the Russian researcher A.G.Bolshakov in his work points out that the insolvency of the state is diagnosed by several indicators, one of which is the non-recognition of their subjectivity by the world community, or in other words, by subjects of International Law [3:105–124]. It is difficult to agree with this, since the de jure political status of unrecognized and/or partially recognized states indicates the process of formation, the development of political institutions, which did not lead to the apogee of sovereignty itself that is the recognition by the world community, but moving away from the point of bifurcation.

The greatest interest in determining the scope of the concepts under study is the institutional approach interpreted by R. Rothberg, based on a binary matrix of the “ability” and/or «desire» of public authorities to maintain functioning [15:1–25]. This approach reproduces the stability parameters in four configurations, which can be extrapolated to the state of stability of the political system (Table 1).

Table 1. Assessment of the stability state: binary matrix

State	Correlation	
	Ability	Desire / readiness
Stable	+	+
Vulnerable	+	–
Unstable	–	+
Critical	–	–

At the same time, the political system, like any other, is stable when it is in an equilibrium state while fitting the necessary internal parameters in order to support the socio-political system and perform the basic functions assigned to the institutions of state power.

Steadiness has a more pronounced static character, in contrast to stability, which can vary depending on the fluctuations of non-permanent elements of the political system within predetermined limits. Probably, if the assessment of the political system steadiness is the extreme limit of measuring the viability of the political functions of the state, then the assessment of the political system stability can diagnose the future correctable, intermediate or threshold values of deviations in the political process and relations.

It is essential to share the concerns of domestic researchers who pay attention to the fact that threshold values in different political systems may differ depending on both trends and patterns of political processes and relations, and on the peculiarities of the current socio-political conjuncture [5:19–28]. Without any doubt, any political system has special, authentic characteristics, a historically conditioned and formed political consciousness, a system of public-state ideas or views (an ideological element), traditions of political relations, forms of interaction between society and the state.

Thus, the criteria and indicators of political stability cannot be universal and comprehensive, respectively, by default extrapolated and projected on all political systems of states without exception.

The examples of socio-political processes in Venezuela in 2002 and Turkey in 2016 cited by Kh.A.Gajiyev and A.S.Semchenkov, where political “turbulence” provoked political instability, are noteworthy. However, the subsequent “alignment” (normalization of the situation almost immediately after the upheavals passed) demonstrated the high level of political systems stability of these countries [6:161–194].

Having established the structure and content of the categories “political system”, “steadiness”, “stability”, it is necessary to determine the technology and method of assessing the stability of the political system of partially recognized states. M.V.Vilisov, K.O.Telin and K.G.Filimonov reasonably note that domestic and foreign researchers discuss the categories of “solvency” and “effectiveness”, “capacity” and “equilibrium”, “steadiness” and “stability”, while international indices measuring state and political systems use criteria such as “competitiveness”, “fragility”, “transformation”, etc. [4:7–27].

To fix and assess the political system stability there have been developed a wide range of ratings that focus on special components of political systems and political regimes. A significant number of ratings analyze mainly recognized, established subjects of International Law

(states) and do not take into account partially recognized and unrecognized ones, considered more often as separatist territorial structures that threaten the stability of the territories of sovereign states from which they have separated or declared independence.

There are a number of indices and evaluation parameters with a central denominator that is the stability (including steadiness) of the political system. Following Kh.A.Gajiyev and A.S.Semchenkov, we will single out the most analytically sound and relevant among all of them:

1. The index of stability of the political system (PSSI) by D.Handel, G.West, R.Meadow, which is based on social and economic indicators, on the state of political conjuncture and the presence or absence of political conflicts.

2. The Index of political stability and Absence of Violence (PSAV), developed by D.Kaufmann, A.Kraai, M.Mastruzzi, that is based on the ability of the incumbent government to maintain its leading position, on the level of political violence, on the confrontation on the external political circuit and tension in the society on socio-cultural grounds.

3. The Index of Political Instability (PII), developed by The Economist journal, and which is known as the index based on forecasting and analysis of probable prerequisites for destabilization through ongoing social, economic and political processes.

4. Index of Failed and Fragile States (FDSI), developed by the Canadian International Development Agency. The index is based on the measurement of the quality of governance, the state of the economy, security and crime, the level of human potential, demographic situation and ecology.

5. The Fragile States Index (FSI), developed within the framework of the Peace Foundation project, is based on measuring the level of intra-state tension by social indicators: national, religious, confessional, linguistic, class, territorial and other attributes.

6. The Index of State Fragility (SFI), developed within the framework of the project of the Center for Systematic Peace, that is based on measuring the ability to manage internal conflicts, develop and implement public policy, provide public services in the social sphere, maintain a high standard of living, etc.

7. The Index of Weakness of states in the Developing World (ISWDW), developers of which are S. Rice and S.Patrick. It is based on measuring the state of the economy, politics, security, and the social environment.

The purpose of the illustrated indices is to measure political stability in recognized countries, while the specifics of partially recognized states, their initial capabilities and resources are not taken into account. It is important to note that the definition of the term “partially recognized states”, as well as other categories studied in this paper, has an enviable degree of uncertainty both in the political science theory of international relations and in the legal theory of state and law. Along with the term “partially recognized state” the terms as “unrecognized state”, “self-proclaimed state/republic” etc. can often be used in the same sense.

Rather fair comes the remark by N.A.Dobronravin about the fact that the choice of a particular term in relation to a particular phenomenon depends on the preferences of the researcher himself or on the political rhetoric of the state, in whose academic environment

research is reflected [7:5]. Thus, in domestic scientific works until 2008, considering the specifics of the Abkhazian and South Ossetia statehood, the term “unrecognized states” was widely used. Later, after the recognition of the sovereignty of Abkhazia and South Ossetia by Russia, the still-used term “partially recognized states” was introduced in political discourse.

Partially recognized states have a number of important features that characterize their political systems. The key feature is their paradoxical peculiarity when, on the one hand, they are interdependent, and, on the other, are significantly distanced from regional political processes and global political trends. These manifestations have a dispersed character, a special internal and external expression, that extremely accurately illustrate the existing problems of assessing the stability of the political systems of partially recognized states.

The internal features of the political systems of partially recognized states in most cases are confined to the formed or emerging transcendent political culture, but above all on its basic component that is political consciousness. The platform of political consciousness, especially for the partially recognized states, is political myths, symbols, mentality and value orientations. In these conditions, political myths act as a kind of worldview tool based on an existential perception of the surrounding world (mainly political reality) and national and/or state purpose. It is interesting that collective prejudices, stereotypes, historical experience and other driving forces of social life that influenced the format of interaction between government and society have the peculiarity of being identified as “national character”, this concept preceded the introduction of “political culture” into scientific circulation.

The political culture in partially recognized states is characterized by: firstly, the absence or underdevelopment of basic civil society institutions, and as a result, the overestimated expectations of society in solving pressing problems by the current government; secondly, the lack of public support for political institutions, including some disregard for legal norms, in which priority is given, for example, to such institutions of direct and informal democracy as the “people’s assembly”; thirdly, considering that the majority of partially recognized states have passed the stages of autonomization and sovereignization in conditions of armed conflicts, acute “post-conflict reflection” is often diagnosed, that is usually expressed by the absence of stable political traditions and the presence of ethnocentric tendencies; fourth, with rare exceptions, political processes and relations in partially recognized states are formed in a parity balance of legality and legitimacy. The latter is evidenced by the high frequency of political upheavals in Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Kosovo.

In this regard, a qualitative assessment of the stability of the political systems of partially recognized states according to the “scale” marked by indicators of the recognized by the International Law subjects’ political systems is impossible. That is explained by the fact that the basic components of the systems of partially recognized states are destabilized initially. But the external facade of political crises and the change of the main political actors in any way (protest, electoral, etc.) in the partially recognized states does not usually hide any complex restructuring of political processes and relations. That is mainly caused by the

¹ Tokarev A.A. What’s with the Abkhazians? (The point of view of the authors, whose comments are published in the section “MGIMO experts say”) [Electronic resource]. Available: <https://mgimo.ru/about/news/experts/chto-tam-u-abkhazov/> (In Russ).

following factors: firstly, the system is often represented by the same Establishment group, where the differentiation can be caused only by the diversity of decision-making methods and approaches to management; secondly, by the internal agenda, where social demands and targets (domestic and foreign policy blocks) do not undergo a clear modification; thirdly, by the low coefficient of concordance (consistency).

Thus, the internal features of the political systems of partially recognized states correlate with the properties of the political systems of recognized states, and taking into account the specifics of the partially recognized states, the condition of their political systems should be assessed.

The external features of the political systems of the partially recognized states are formed on the basis of several factors.

1. The factor of external patronage. External interest in correcting or maintaining the status quo of partially recognized (more often – unrecognized) Polities is an indicator that demonstrates the obvious activity of the patron state.

Almost all the partially recognized states, without exception, come as a subject to the comprehensive influence of the countries that initiated the recognition of their international legal personality. And via that influence, a deep dependence and mobility of the political system is established depending on the political rhetoric of the metropolitan states (patron states).

2. The factor of the international political conjuncture. Lack of recognition of subjectivity, parity, autonomy and self-sufficiency in the international political arena. The inability to build equal contacts with all regional actors.

3. Causality of political systems. Here we mean the conditions in which the political systems of partially recognized Polities are located in the “reach” orbit of the political systems of the patron states, which strengthens their causal connection with various transformations of the political process and relations. It is when political events (change of the political regime, change of power, adjustment of the foreign policy and/or domestic political concept, etc.) in the patron states can cause a radical restructuring of the domestic political agenda of the partially recognized states.

Thus, limited international subjectivity, a high degree of comprehensive dependence, organic integration into political systems of the most extensive and complex order indicate (with a high degree of probability) the characteristic instability of the political systems of the partially recognized states.

Conclusions

If the steadiness is the basis for stability, then in the context of the partially recognized states, the most relevant value is the diagnosis of the status of “progress” to the condition of stability of the political system of the partially recognized states (as Polities that are highly dependent on patron states, external factors and processes).

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Friendly communication modes of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Moldova in the realities of fragmentation of the world communication order

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the issue of friendliness as a category for determining the current state of the communication regimes of the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation at the regional level. In the process of research, the theoretical and methodological base was involved, the basis of which was the works of representatives of political realism and social constructivism. In the course of the analysis, it was possible to identify the main components that make it possible to judge the nature of the friendliness of the two communication regimes, including: the consistency of national interests in the region; parameters of cooperation in the field of security, in the field of trade and economic cooperation, in the plane of the humanitarian direction. A separate place is occupied by the issue of settlement of Moldovan-Pridnestrovian relations, in which Russia is given the place of a guarantor of peace and security in the region. It is proved that in the socio-political discourse of Moldova, Russia is perceived as one of the main participants in the regional system of relations, in connection with which geopolitical parties were formed on the political condition of the Moldovan state, of which one part stands for the European integration of Moldova, the other for balanced relations between Moldova, the EU and Russia, giving preference to the European vector. The third forces – of the unionist persuasion are in favor of the integration of Moldova into Romania. It is determined that the degree of friendliness of the regimes is directly dependent on the gradation of the national interests of the states in the region and their connection with external actors.

Keywords: national interests, national security, Moldova, Russia, Pridnestrovie, communication regime, friendliness, political parties, actors

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Introduction

The fragmentation of the global communication order necessitates the analysis of the friendliness of communication regimes in the new realities. The deep involvement of the Russian Federation into the regional processes taking place in the Moldovan–Pridnestrovian settlement zone, as well as the ties between Russia and Moldova established over thirty years of sovereign existence, make it possible to identify the nature of friendship between the two actors, to trace transformations, and determine the criteria for their interaction. Despite the existence of a contractual framework on good-partner relations between Moldova and Russia, nevertheless, there appear additional mechanisms that determine the nature of the friendliness of the communication regimes of the two states.

Materials and methods

Our methodological position was formed under the influence of scientists who laid the foundation for the interpretation of Communicativism in political research. The researches of M.Castels and J.Habermas [5; 6] can be characterized as focal works while in the study of the communication regime, where the problem of security occupies an important place, we preferred to rely on the approaches of B.Buzan, M.Williams, etc., developed in the theory of securitization [3; 7].

The methodological foundations of the study of communication modes were laid in the works of Russian scientists of the National Research Institute for the Development of Communication (NRIDC). In the article by V.I.Gasumyanov and V.V.Komleva, the communication regime is considered as a separate category of political science, which is understood as a controlled (with varying degrees of controllability) system of formal and informal norms, rules, traditions, actors and tools that ensure communication in a certain space [1:45]. These authors develop the concept of friendliness and analyze the parameters of the friendliness of the communication regime. NRIDC developed a methodology and published the first Rating of the Friendliness of Country Communication Regimes for 2021, where Moldova was ranked the 9th out of 14 countries. The rating is based on ten evaluation criteria and more than sixty indicators¹. In our opinion, in addition to the proposed evaluation criteria and the key factors determining the nature of friendliness, we should mention the issues connected to the comprehensive realization of the national interests, which are expressed by the matters ensuring military-political stability and security, which embrace trade and economic cooperation, and concern with the implementation of humanitarian norms. Thus, the dominant factor in building the architecture of friendship is the consistency of national interests between Moldova and Russia in the region.

¹ The rating of friendliness of country communication regimes in 2021. Available: <http://nicrus.ru/rating2021>.

The empirical basis of our research was founded on the political parties' program documents, on the speeches of the National Parliament representatives, the President, the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs representatives. The research presupposed the following methods: content analysis, structural and functional method, historical method, critical discourse analysis.

Results

Political parameters in assessing the friendliness of the communication regime of the Republic of Moldova

The problem of friendship between Russia and Moldova, which has not lost its relevance for 30 years, has now acquired new parameters related both to the fragmentation of the world communication order, expressed in the transformation of key parameters of globalization, and to the accumulated interstate contradictions. The key indicator acting as a criterion of actors' friendliness or unfriendliness, in our opinion, is the consistency of the states' national interests and the mechanisms for achieving them in a wide range of activities, including security issues, creating conditions for cooperation in the field of trade, interaction on humanitarian issues. In other words, the criteria that will determine the parameters of interaction between the communication regimes of Moldova and Russia at the present stage are: communications in the process of the Moldovan- Pridnestrovian conflict settlement; communications in the sphere of ensuring the neutral military-political status of Moldova and its aspirations towards European integration, capable of reformatting the regional political space; communications in the field of energy cooperation, trade and economic cooperation; communications on the problem of unionism in Moldova; communications on the status of the Russian language in Moldova and support for Russian-speaking citizens; communications in the field of cooperation on issues of preservation of historical memory.

The analysis of the socio-political space of the Republic of Moldova allows us to conclude that the main criteria of friendliness on the world stage are the norms of international law, among which the following are considered to be crucial: ensuring territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states, respect for human rights and freedoms. The key characteristic of the Moldovan national interests at the present stage is the settlement of regional problems exclusively by peaceful means. Delivering his speech at the event dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the Republic of Moldova, President Maia Sandu noted that "we will promote the policy of dialogue and peace, diplomatic solutions and peaceful compromises, guided by the interests of citizens. We will defend our national interests and values with honor and dignity"².

² Speech by the President of the Republic of Moldova Maia Sandu on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Moldova. Available: <https://presedinte.md/rus/discursuri/mesajul-doamnei-maia-sandu-presedintele-republicii-moldova-cu-ocazia-aniversarii-a-30-a-a-proclamariei-independentei-republicii-moldova>.

It is important to note that the vector of friendliness of the Moldovan communication regime, in which national interests are concentrated, is the subject of discussions by various political forces. The article reveals the combination of traditional means of forming positions of political parties and mechanisms of articulation of national interests, enshrined in their program documents. This provides an opportunity for a deeper introduction of public opinion formation tools, the source of which are, on the one hand, party policy statements broadcast in print media, distributed via radio and television and virtual space sources, on the other. Nevertheless, it is hard to describe it as the complete harmony of the two sources forming communication regime discourse. This is due to the fact that national interests on the external perimeter are mainly used by political forces as the resource to construct election programs, while the access to traditional information resources is not the same for all the participants of political processes in Moldova.

The Russian factor, as one of the external sources of forming the communication regime, comes as the dominant in socio-political discourse of the Republic of Moldova. Firstly, the sovereignization of the Moldovan state began in 1990 and took place in the context of the spread of disintegration processes in the USSR. It is important to understand that this process, in fact, divided Moldovan society into two camps: the supporters and the opponents of the new course. Among the opponents of the new course was the public that opposed Moldova's secession from the USSR, proclaiming on the left bank of the Dniester River the first Pridnestrovian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic as part of the Moldavian SSR, and then the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic as part of the Soviet Union. The Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic declared independence with the subsequent accession to Russia as the priority. Currently, the republic is one of the most important resources of the Russian Federation's influence on regional relations, which can be used as a mechanism for the realization of Russian national interests [4:132].

Secondly, having identified integration into the European Union as an absolute priority, the modern ruling the Action and Solidarity Party largely considers Russia's position in the region as an irritating factor that slows down the pace of Moldova's European integration. It should be noted that the national interests of Moldova, first of all, supposes the need to ensure the comprehensive security of the Moldovan state. The repeated references of Moldovan officials to the Russian peacekeeping forces as a threat to regional security and the inconsistency of their presence for the status of neutrality enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova³ indicate a low level of friendliness of Moldova's modern communication regime towards the Russian Federation.

It is typical for Moldovan political parties to use external factors, including Russian, in the formation of electoral strategies. In this regard, the political forces of Moldova can be logically divided into three branches.

The first group of political forces consists of political parties that advocate for the European future of Moldova as part of the European Union. Currently, the largest right-wing

³ Moldovan Foreign Ministry: The withdrawal of Russian peacekeepers from Pridnestrovie remains a policy priority. Available: https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/12949097?utm_source=google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=google.com&utm_referrer=google.com.

party holding an absolute majority in the National Parliament is the Action and Solidarity Party. The repeated messages of the party representatives suggesting to minimize Russian influence in the region allow us to conclude that the communication regime of modern Moldova is unfriendly towards Russia. In general, it is worth noting that the ideas expressed by PAS representatives about the integration into the EU are supported in Moldovan society, where 65.1% of the nation are for the implementation of the priority. At the same time, the amount of the integration opponents (25.8%) shows that the level of confidence in such initiatives needs to be adjusted by the communication messages of the political elites. It is characteristic that the majority of Moldovan citizens believe that the Russian Federation should be a strategic partner in the future (32.5%)⁴.

The second branch parties consist of the left-wing parties represented by the Socialists Party and the Communists Party, represented in the Moldovan Parliament. Adhering to the course of maintaining good-partner relations in the field of trade and economic cooperation, these parties nevertheless consistently advocate the withdrawal of Russian peacekeeping forces from Pridnestrovie after they have completed the tasks of disposing of Soviet weapons stored in warehouses in the region⁵. Given the course of the Russian leadership to maintain its influence in the region, it is not possible to talk about the friendliness of communication regimes in key areas. However, the ideology of Moldovenism, the bearers of which are left-wing parties, as a rule, during pre-election periods, activate appeals to the population, broadcasting the values of social justice, a positive attitude to the Soviet past. Thus, they attract those sympathetic with the «strategic partnership of the two states» making them loyal to their programs [2:139].

The third direction is formed by the unionist parties, which, although not represented in the National Parliament, nevertheless have a great influence on the formation of public opinion in Moldova. Unionist parties, including the Liberal Party, the National Unity Party, the Romanian People's Party, use the theses hostile to Russian national interests in the region upholding the withdrawal of Russian troops from Pridnestrovie and supporting Moldova's integration into Romania. Nevertheless, the public opinion about Moldova integration into Romania still remains quite controversial. The majority (46%) are against the union, while 41.4% support the unification⁶.

Thus, the Moldovan political discourse is dominated by the theses that largely contradict Russian national interests and can potentially be considered by Russia as the threats.

Securitization of the friendliness of the communication regimes of Russia and Moldova

When analyzing the friendliness of communication regimes, it is important to take into account the fact that national interests and national security are the dominants of

⁴ The Public Opinion Barometer of the Republic of Moldova. Available: <http://bop.ipp.md/ru>.

⁵ Igor Dodon: Russian military forces will leave Pridnestrovie. Available: <https://novostipmr.com/ru/news/20-03-02/igor-dodon-rossiyskie-voennye-pokinut-pridnestrovoe>.

⁶ The Public Opinion Barometer of the Republic of Moldova. Available: <http://bop.ipp.md/ru>.

this process. The key area of securitization of the communication regimes of Moldova and Russia is the Moldovan- Pridnestrovian settlement.

Since signing in 1992 the Agreement “On the Principles of Peaceful Settlement of the armed conflict in the Pridnestrovian Region of the Republic of Moldova”, cooperation between the two sides began to resolve the contradictions that arose. During the settlement process some efforts to find mutually beneficial solutions for the two sides were taken: signing a Memorandum on the basics of normalization of relations between Pridnestrovie and Moldova in 1997, an unsuccessful attempt to sign the Kozak Memorandum, which would provide the federalization of Moldova, in 2003.

A problematic area in relations between the two states is the discrepancy in the content of interests with a sufficiently coordinated vision of the Moldavian-Pridnestrovian settlement form (Table 1).

Table 1. National interests of the main actors in the region

Priority	Мирное урегулирование конфликта	Peaceful settlement of the conflict through the integration of Pridnestrovie into Moldova without a special status	A form of peaceful settlement of the conflict through federalization or confederalization	Peaceful settlement of the conflict by recognizing the independence of Pridnestrovie	Further maintaining / withdrawal of Russian peacekeepers from Pridnestrovie
Actor					
Pridnestrovie	Vital	Secondary	Core	Vital	Further maintaining – vital
Moldova	Vital	Vital	Secondary	Secondary	Withdrawal – core
Russia	Core	Secondary	Core	Core	Further maintaining – vital

- Vital interests are the deepest interests of the state, the defense of which implies the possibility of mobilizing all available resources.
- Core interests are the significant interests of the state, which can be the subject of bargaining with other international actors to achieve vital interests.
- Secondary interests are not usually among the priorities of the state in the region, but can be realized if they are coordinate with vital interests.

As the analysis shows, Moldova and Pridnestrovie have more vital interests in the region than Russia does. This means that Moldova is extremely dependent on external factors, mainly from Russia, which forms the specifics of the Moldovan communication regime.

Thus, it is possible to identify the underlying factors that characterize the friendliness of the communication regimes of Moldova and Russia (Table 2).

Table 2. Consistency of Russia and Moldova national interests

Priority	Territorial integrity of Moldova	Settlement of the conflict exclusively by peaceful means	Withdrawal of peacekeeping forces from Pridnestrovie	Russia is a party of the conflict	Common position on ensuring the rights of Russian-speaking citizens	Common position on the historical heritage preservation	Neutral status of Moldova
Russia	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Moldova	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes

The analysis shows that there is no common position between the parties on ensuring the security architecture, but both Russia and Moldova are committed to a peaceful settlement of the relations. Nevertheless, in matters of security, the communication regimes of the two countries are prone to have an unfriendly line that does not lead to the coordination of their national interests.

Here we can observe some examples of documents that reflect the unfriendliness of the communication regimes of Moldova and Russia:

The law adopted in 2005 by the Parliament of Moldova "On the main provisions of the special legal status of settlements on the left bank of the Dniester River (Pridnestrovie)", which granted Pridnestrovie the status of an autonomous region and assumed the democratization and demilitarization of Pridnestrovie, as well as the withdrawal of Russian troops from the region;

On May 26, 2014, the unionist-minded Liberal Party of Moldova appealed to the Constitutional Court of Moldova. They demanded to declare the presence of Russian troops in Pridnestrovie as illegal. A resolution of the Moldovan Constitutional Court adopted in 2017 declared Pridnestrovie being occupied by Russia;

Moldovan leaders repeated statements "on the complete and non-conditional withdrawal of the Russian armed forces"⁷ going against the official position of Russia;

Declaring Pridnestrovie as a zone of special strategic interests by Russia in 1996.

Additional factors that do not contribute to the friendliness of the two communication regimes are the general degradation of the relations between Russia and NATO countries, as well as the Ukrainian factor, which comes as a focal point in the modern system of international relations. The position of Chisinau, according to which the Crimea is considered to be Ukrainian territory illegally annexed⁸, as well as the participation of the official Chisinau in the Crimean Platform forum in 2021 are also among the unfriendly steps by Moldova towards Russia⁹.

⁷ The President of Moldova spoke in favor of the Russian troops withdrawal from Pridnestrovie. Available: <https://www.interfax.ru/world/792960>.

⁸ Maia Sandu called Crimea to be Ukrainian at the summit in Kiev. The Socialists are dissatisfied. Available: <https://esp.md/ru/sobytiya/2021/08/23/mayya-sandu-na-sammite-v-kieve-nazvala-krym-ukrainskim-socialisty-nedovolny>.

⁹ Russia will consider Sandu's participation in the "Crimean Platform" – Matvienko. Available: https://eurasia.expert/rossiya-uchtet-uchastie-sandu-v-krymskoy-platforme-matvienko/?utm_source=google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=google.com&utm_referrer=google.com.

Trade and economic relations as an indicator of the friendliness of the communication regime

Trade and economic cooperation and issues of humanitarian cooperation occupy a significant place on the bilateral agenda. Russia remains one of the most important markets for Moldovan producers, so it is very significant that the Russian leadership sometimes uses restrictive measures on the supply of Moldovan products as an instrument of influence, which can be interpreted by the Moldovan side as an unfriendly gesture.

The energy problem, led by the fact that the gas price for Moldova had been significantly increased on market conditions in 2021¹⁰, caused the energy crisis that was followed with the state of emergency in the country. In the rhetoric of the official representatives of Moscow and Chisinau here appeared some theses that posed a question whether this was a political crisis or a crisis in the sphere of business cooperation¹¹. Chisinau insisted on the geopoliticization of Moscow's decision not to extend the contract on preferential terms for Moldova due to fact that pro-European political forces, who are not on the same wave with the gas suppliers, had come to power¹². Moscow's position was that this problem is exclusively in the trade and economic plane.

Humanitarian problems of the friendliness of the communication regime of Moldova

The sphere of ensuring the special status of the Russian language in Moldova remains problematic. After the declaration of independence, Moldova began to use the Moldovan (Romanian) language with Latin graphics as the state language. This decision largely ignored the interests of Russian-speaking citizens, which was one of the reasons for the start of the protest movement in Pridnestrovie. Currently, Russian remains the language of international communication.

The problem of preserving historical heritage is also among the urgent ones. The Moldovan leadership made decisions that caused outrage in Russia. In particular, back in 2010, there was signed a decree that recognized June 28, 1940 as the day of the Soviet occupation, together with the repeated attempts by unionists to cancel Victory Day in Moldova and the acts of Soviet military graves desecration – all this was perceived in Russia as an act of unfriendliness and generally worsened the relations between the two countries.

The functioning of the Russian media in Moldova also remains quite problematic. Having refused to broadcast Russian federal channels, the Moldovan leadership blocked some Internet resources (such as Sputnik), which caused a rather painful reaction of Moscow.

¹⁰ The fruits of short-sightedness: how Moldova tries to overcome the energy crisis. Available: <https://russian.rt.com/ussr/article/958059-moldaviya-gaz-cena-protesty>.

¹¹ Moldova-Russia gas dispute: Geopolitics or business? What is important to know. Available: <https://www.dw.com/ru/gazovyy-spor-moldovy-i-rossii-geopolitika-ili-biznes/a-59649994>.

¹² «Because PAS has a different orientation»: Speaker of the Moldovan Parliament Igor Grosse believes that Russia is deliberately creating problems for our country, and no one is to blame for the increase in prices and tariffs. Available: <https://www.kp.md/online/news/4622503/>.

Discussion

The presented analysis makes it possible to identify the specifics of the friendly communication regime of Moldova in relation to Russia, which is directly dependent on the nature of the implementation of the two actors' national interests. The practical content and approaches to the realization of these interests are often transformed under the influence of the changes of political elites, which could be observed after the elections in Moldova in 2020–2021.

The problem of restricting access to information supplied by the Russian media in Moldova is currently most relevant. In the nearest future, it is unlikely to expect a dialogue between Moscow and Chisinau on these issues. It is obvious that the media regulation, including restrictions on the work of separate sources, will continue in Moldova.

The dialogue on ensuring conditions for the support of the Russian language in the region is also likely to continue. Obviously, this remains one of the promising areas of bilateral cooperation.

Thus, the range of research on the communication regime of Moldova in relation to Russia will only expand, bringing to the fore the initiatives of the political forces of the two states on further cooperation.

Conclusions

The most important factor in the friendliness of country communication regimes is the realization of national interests, or rather, their consistency in the process of intercountry interactions in different directions. Recently, the communication regimes of countries have been transformed under the influence of foreign policy priorities of the states and the situational international environment.

The analysis shows that at the present stage the level of friendliness of the communication regime of Moldova in relation to Russia is quite low. It is quite obvious that the compatibility of the implementation of the national interests of Moldova and Russia is forming some contradictions in the region.

Despite the focus of both states on the peaceful settlement of the Moldovan-Pridnestrovian conflict (which can be considered as one of the most important points, where the interests adjoin) and besides trade and economic cooperation, there are some prerequisites for the friendly relations degradation between the two countries, which are increasingly manifested in many other areas of the bilateral agenda, including prohibitions and restrictions on those information channels contrary to the official course in Chisinau, as well as in the discourse of the political authorities of Moldova and in the socio-political media. Under the circumstances, it is not necessary to expect that the communication regime of Moldova will become more friendly. It is likely that the stagnation of bilateral cooperation in the field of security will continue to remain relevant on the bilateral agenda,

which will also not contribute to the establishment of a friendly communication regime.

Against this background, it is important for the political forces of Moldova and Russia to preserve the rational basis of relations and the previously established formats of cooperation in the field of science and education, the established format of interaction in the Joint Control Commission, membership in the internationally recognized format of the Moldovan-Pridnestrovian settlement "5+2", as well as the other platforms of bilateral interaction.

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The pandemic factor in the rivalry between E. Macron and M. Le Pen in the Presidential Elections in France in 2022

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Abstract. The ongoing French president E. Macron and the leader of the right-wing leader of the right-wing National Union Party M. Le Pen are the main candidates for the upcoming French presidential election in 2022, especially in the case of a second round of voting. The purpose of this article is to estimate the influence of pandemic factor in the rivalry between the two candidates and a possible turnout of the upcoming election. The article focuses especially on two aspects of the two politicians' rivalry: Macron's controversial actions against the pandemic, which have had a negative impact on his rating and Le Pen's attempts to use the pandemic to broaden her electorate and increase her chances for the election.

To achieve the goals, statistical methods, work with sociological surveys, as well as a comparative analysis of the views of two politicians on specific issues were used. It was concluded that some of E. Macron's decisions to combat the pandemic did have a negative, but not decisive impact on his rating. M. Le Pen, on the contrary, having adapted some of the most important points of her program during the coronavirus period, did not offer qualitatively new ideas to combat the pandemic, and experts continue to determine her as a right-wing populist politician with contradictory statements. It attracts new followers, however, if M. Le Pen enters the second round against E. Macron, the scenario of the 2017 elections is likely to repeat.

Keywords: Emmanuel Macron, Marine Le Pen, National Union Party, "La République En Marche!", popularity rating of Emmanuel Macron, presidential elections, pandemic, right-wing populism

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Introduction

On April 10th, the next presidential elections will be held in France. Article 6 of the French Constitution of 1958 allows the president to serve two consecutive terms¹; however the current president of France E. Macron maintained the suspense up until the date of formation of the final lists, announcing his participation in the elections only on March 3rd 2022². Nevertheless, over the past year, experts had no doubts about the president's nomination for a second term. Often, Macron's indecision was explained as follows: the current president is waiting for a more appropriate moment to officially nominate his candidacy, because the republic has been experiencing the fifth wave of the pandemic since the end of 2021, against which the president's ratings are low³. In this case, the following questions arise: was the policy of the French government really so unsuccessful that it undermined the president's public-approval rating, significantly reducing his chances for a second presidential term? If these claims are substantiated, then who will win the election? Are there other factors, for example, the participation of M. Le Pen in the second round, which can play a more significant role in the potential victory of E. Macron? These issues are being actively discussed today in the expert community of the Fifth Republic.

Certainly, a huge number of events in addition to the pandemic have an impact on the president's rating; among them are: yellow vests protests, which started in November 2018 as a result of rising car fuel prices; a series of murders committed by immigrants in France in the second half of 2020 and the subsequent debates over Islamophobia; a letter from the Generals in the spring of 2021 about the risk of a civil war in the country because of Muslim immigrants, etc. As noted by Yu. I. Rubinsky, Head of the Center for French Studies at the Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the socio-economic reforms carried out by E. Macron served mainly the interests of the upper strata of the population, and their implementation fell on the less well-to-do strata of the population, workers and farmers, as a result of which, presidential support by this category of the population also noticeably decreased [12:3]. Also, the elections in France were affected by the special military operation in Ukraine, during which E. Macron assumed the role of a mediator, probably counting, among other things, on the increase of the approval of his candidacy by the French population. However, as mentioned earlier, the number one topic in the French political field until February 2022 was the pandemic, which for a long time had an impact on the pre-election situation. Therefore, in the context of this study, attention will be paid to some of the unsuccessful or ambiguous actions of the French government in the fight

1 Texte intégral de la Constitution du 4 octobre 1958 en vigueur. Conseil Constitutionnel. 2008. Available: <https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/le-bloc-de-constitutionnalite/texte-integral-de-la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958-en-vigueur>

2 Emmanuel Macron va annoncer ce soir sa candidature dans une lettre aux français. Le Figaro. 2022. Available: <https://www.lefigaro.fr/elections/presidentielles/presidentielle-2022-emmanuel-macron-va-annoncer-ce-soir-sa-candidature-dans-une-lettre-aux-francais-20220303>.

3 Baromètre des indices de popularité – mars 2022. Ifop. 2021. Available: <https://www.ifop.com/publication/les-indices-de-popularite-mars-2022/>.

against coronavirus, which had a negative impact on the support of the current president and became a central issue in the confrontation between E.Macron and M.Le Pen.

Materials and Methods

The source base of this study consists of statistics, sociological surveys, the press and platforms of presidential candidates. Sociological surveys conducted by such centers as the French Institute of Public Opinion (Ifop), the Parisian private research center Odoxa-Backbone Consulting, etc., made it possible to study the dynamics of public opinion on the upcoming elections, to identify the impact of certain actions of E.Macron on his rating, as well as to analyze possible combinations of participants in the second round of the presidential elections in France in 2022. And furthermore, the national government portal publishing official data on the number of cases and people vaccinated was used to study the coronavirus pandemic in France. The French press, in its turn, was used to cover current events, solicit various expert views, as well as to gain access to some electoral platforms and studies. Such French papers as *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, which are distinguished by a high level of authority in French society and abroad, were chosen as news sources. To work with these types of sources, the method of working with sociological surveys and data analysis was used.

Also, comparative analysis was used to study the opinions of E.Macron and M.Le Pen, with the help of which the main distinguishing points in the positions of the two politicians on the pandemic and some other events were identified. Among other things, the principles of historicism and consistency were used to determine the dynamics of historical processes and determine the possibilities for the participation of the leaders of the National Union Party in the second round of the French presidential elections in 2002 and 2017.

Results

The study reached the following conclusions. Firstly, the ambivalent actions of E.Macron in the fight against the pandemic affected his rating negatively, but not significantly. Thus, yellow vests movement or the unpopular reforms of the president had a more severe impact on his rating. Secondly, M.Le Pen uses all news opportunities to expand her electorate, and the pandemic is no exception. The leader of the National Union Party does not miss the opportunity to criticize the actions of the executive power in the framework of the crisis management, but M.Le Pen does not offer qualitatively new ideas on this issue. As a result, M.Le Pen expands her electorate, but a significant part of the population still considers her an ultra-right populist politician. Thirdly, systemic traditional French parties, for various reasons, cannot recover from the crisis after the 2017 elections. As a result, today the most likely combination of candidates for the second round

of presidential elections is the Macron – Le Pen duel, in which M.Le Pen has practically no chance of winning. In this case, we will see a repetition of the 2017 elections scenario, in which E.Macron will be elected for a second presidential term.

Ambivalent actions of E. Macron in the fight against the pandemic

In March 2022, the Ifop French Institute of Public Opinion conducted a study and presented the results of Macron's rating dynamics in 2017–2022⁴. The results of this study show that at the beginning of his presidential term, E.Macron enjoyed the support of a fairly large number of the population – 64%, but with the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, the president's rating became 32%. So, it can be seen that during his presidency, E.Macron lost half of the support. It is also interesting to note that since the start of the pandemic in February 2020, the president's rating has fallen by 2%, which seems like a minor change. The pandemic has definitely become a challenge for the leaders of most countries in the world, however, E.Macron has made several controversial actions that could have been avoided and which had a negative impact on his popularity in the short term.

Let us recall the facts of the situation. The first case of coronavirus infection was recorded in France on January 24, 2020⁵. The start of the pandemic coincided with municipal elections at various levels in Paris, held in March 2020. Agnès Buzyn, the Minister of Solidarity and Health, was appointed the head of the electoral lists of the Republic Forward! Party (La République En Marche!), after which she formally left the ministerial position to participate in the elections. This decision drew public criticism for two reasons. Firstly, the population blames E.Macron for this appointment, since it happened due to the decision of the president's party. As a result, at the beginning of the pandemic, France changed the Minister of Health, which is unlikely to have had a positive impact on the decision-making process. Secondly, the first round of elections was held despite the pandemic that had already started. Later, Agnès Buzyn herself expressed regret about participating in these elections, calling them a "masquerade", since, in her opinion, elections should have been postponed⁶. During this period, the number of new infections per day was not so high, but it was growing rapidly. At the same time, the holding of municipal elections in this situation had a negative impact on E.Macron himself, since the voter turnout was low (54% in the second round⁷), and especially among the electorate of the Republic Forward! Party. As noted, a high level of absenteeism can be interpreted as a negative attitude

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Informations Covid-19.Gouvernement.fr. 2021. Available: <https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus/carte-et-donnees>.

⁶ Les regrets d'Agnès Buzyn: « On aurait dû tout arrêter, c'était une mascarade ». *Le Monde*. 2020. Available: https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2020/03/17/entre-campagne-municipale-et-crise-du-coronavirus-le-chemin-de-croix-d-agnes-buzyn_6033395_823448.html.

⁷ Abstention aux municipales 2020: qui sont les maires les mieux et les plus mal élus? *Le Monde*. 2020. Available: https://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2020/06/29/abstention-aux-municipales-2020-qui-sont-les-maires-les-mieux-et-les-plus-mal-elus_6044608_4355770.html.

of the population towards holding elections during a pandemic, fear of infection and, consequently, a mistake by the president [7:190].

Later, another series of events provoked fierce criticism of E. Macron. By the end of January 2021, experts from around the world began to actively discuss the possibility of a new wave of the pandemic, larger and more deadly than the previous ones, in connection with the identification of a new strain of coronavirus in the UK. Then French experts and politicians started talking about the need to introduce new restrictive measures that should work to prevent a new wave. The French president, wanting to improve the economic situation, refused to renew the lockdown. However, since the beginning of March 2021, the number of new infections per day began to grow again, reaching a peak of 34 thousand people per day on April 1⁸, so the third wave began in France. On March 25, E. Macron said it was a fair decision to refuse to introduce a lockdown at the end of January, and a few days later he announced the beginning of the third lockdown, after which debates and voting were initiated in the National Assembly, the lower house of the French Parliament.

The move has arguably attracted the most criticism of the president since the yellow vests movement that began in France in 2018 after raising gasoline taxes. Firstly, experts emphasized that the beginning of the third wave caused by the new British strain was predicted for March, and not for February⁹. In their opinion, enhanced restrictive measures in these months would really help to reduce the rate of infection with a new strain, although they would not be able to completely defeat the virus. Secondly, E. Macron is criticized for the fact that he made this decision alone, and only then initiated its discussion in the National Assembly, the results of which actually no longer mattered, since the decision had already been made in the Health Protection Council. Thus, deputies from the Republicans, the Socialist Party and the party Europe – Ecology – the Greens boycotted participation in the voting¹⁰. In the French political field, there appeared comparisons of E. Macron with Louis XIV, the likely author of the phrase “The State is me”, as well as with German Chancellor A. Merkel, who “takes the trouble to discuss with the presidents of the regions for seven hours in order to reach a consensus ... to vote on all decisions in the Bundestag», while the French president acts alone¹¹. Also, according to the French *Le Monde*, the president’s refusal to introduce a third lockdown at the end of January resulted in the death of 14,000 people, the hospitalization of 112,000 people and about 160,000 new infections in the long term¹².

⁸ Informations Covid-19. Gouvernement.fr. 2021. Available: <https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus/carte-et-donnees>.

⁹ Covid: Emmanuel Macron sur la défensive pour justifier sa gestion de la crise. *LesEchos*. 2021. Available: <https://www.lesechos.fr/politique-societe/emmanuel-macron-president/covid-emmanuel-macron-sur-la-defensive-pour-justifier-sa-gestion-de-la-crise-1301842>.

¹⁰ Covid-19: le nouveau confinement annoncé par Emmanuel Macron critiqué par l’opposition. *Le Monde*. 2021. Available: https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2021/04/01/covid-19-les-nouvelles-mesures-annoncees-par-emmanuel-macron-debattues-au-parlement_6075189_823448.html.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Le lourd coût humain d’un troisième confinement tardif en France. *Le Monde*. 2021. Available: https://www.lemonde.fr/planete/article/2021/06/18/le-lourd-cout-humain-d-un-troisieme-confinement-tardif-en-france_6084619_3244.html.

In the light of this situation, it is necessary to pay attention to the bodies and structures that make decisions in the field of combating coronavirus in France. This system is built centrally and vertically: the main role is assigned to the Health Protection Council (under the Defense Council), responsible to the president, prime minister and the Council of Ministers¹³. The Health Protection Council is criticized by French politicians, since the composition of the body is determined only by the decision of the President, therefore, it does not include either the opposition or members of most parties represented in the parliament. Also, due to the fact that this body was established under the Defense Council, the details of the meetings and the principle of decision-making are subject to state secrets, as a result of which the population does not know whether the president takes into account the opinion of experts or whether he acts alone. However, within the framework of crisis management, the Health Protection Council makes quick decisions, since it can be convened not as a whole by the decision of E. Macron in the shortest possible time.

Since mid-August, the number of new infections detected per day had been rapidly falling to a minimum of 4 thousand people on October 8, 2021, but by the beginning of November this figure more than doubled and reached 10 thousand people per day, after which French experts started talking about the beginning of the fifth wave of the pandemic in France¹⁴. Subsequently, the fifth wave with a new strain of coronavirus became the largest in terms of the number of new infections per day of all the past waves¹⁵, therefore, it is noted that it is the pandemic factor that forces E. Macron to postpone the official announcement of participation in the 2022 presidential elections. The problem is that by November 2021, about 74% of the population had already been fully vaccinated in France¹⁶, and strict restrictive measures were in place, but the epidemiological situation was deteriorating. In this case, it seems that there is still a possibility of introducing a fourth lockdown or tightening quarantine measures that could lead to restrictions on the activities of public institutions, and hence to economic losses. Both measures will certainly lead to a decrease in the president’s popular-approval rating, which will be an undesirable consequence for him, since less than six months are left before the elections. As a result, E. Macron is probably not announcing his participation in the elections, waiting for changes in the epidemiological situation to make a further decision to combat the pandemic.

Thus, it can be seen that some of the actions of E. Macron in the fight against coronavirus have a negative impact on his popular-approval rating. The beginning of the pandemic and the related municipal elections in Paris lowered Macron’s rating by 2 points (from 34% in January 2019 to 32% in March 2021), and the third lockdown in the spring of 2021 - by 4 points (from 41% in March to 37% in April)¹⁷. The latest drop in the

¹³ Le Conseil de défense sanitaire, cette instance de décision qui crispe jusque dans la majorité. LCI. 2021. Available: <https://www.lci.fr/politique/covid-19-coronavirus-pandemie-le-conseil-de-defense-sanitaire-cette-instance-de-decision-qui-crispe-jusque-dans-la-majorite-2177322.html>.

¹⁴ Informations Covid-19. Gouvernement.fr. 2021. Available: <https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus/carte-et-donnees>.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Baromètre des indices de popularité – mars 2022. Ifop. 2021. Available: <https://www.ifop.com/publication/les-indices-de-popularite-mars-2022/>.

presidential rating can be supplemented by the results of public opinion from February 2020, conducted by the private research center Odoxa-Backbone Consulting, located in Paris: 60% of the population distrust the government's actions to combat coronavirus; 71% do not believe that the government is making the right decisions at the right time; 73% do not believe that the government is telling them the truth; 81% do not think the government knows what to do¹⁸. For comparison: in the results of a study from the same center from May to September 2021, when the third lockdown was lifted while maintaining restrictive measures, the share of French people who consider Macron's actions positive increased from 36 to 48%¹⁹. Consequently, the decision not to introduce a third lockdown in January-February 2020 did significantly lower the president's popular support rating, and also affected the public's trust in the government.

Thus, the coronavirus pandemic, without any doubt, had a negative impact on the president's rating, keeping it at an average level of 38% for a year and a half. At the same time, paying attention to the rating of E.Macron for the entire presidential mandate, one can see that in May 2017 he was supported by 62-64% of the population, after which his rating fell sharply in August 2017 to 40%, and in November 2018, it hit an all-time low of 23%²⁰. On the whole, the first drop is noteworthy, since the rating of French presidents often grows in the first months of presidency, which happened with N.Sarkozy and even with F.Hollande. Experts explain the current situation by the end of the "honeymoon", as well as a number of decisions by E.Macron that are contradictory in the eyes of the French population: as part of the program to reduce public spending, the indexation of salaries of civil servants was frozen, the process of receiving payments during sick leave was made more difficult, and the defense budget was reduced subsequently leading to resignation of the Minister of Defense, General Pierre de Villiers, who enjoyed enormous support from the army; at the same time, a magnificent reception was held for V.Putin in Paris²¹.

The second drop, in November 2018, was due to yellow vests movement. The yellow vests protests began in 2018 after a diesel tax hike, but quickly turned into a massive movement with its own list of demands in most areas of human life. In the context of its influence on E.Macron's rating, it is important to note that, firstly, the yellow vests undoubtedly hit the president's popularity - since then, both in the expert community and among the population, there have been statements that E.Macron is a president only for the rich, who pays little attention to the poor, as well as to the agricultural sector.

18 Covid-19: la gestion de la crise par l'exécutif ne convainc toujours pas les Français. Le Figaro, 2021. Available: <https://www.lefigaro.fr/politique/le-scan/covid-19-la-gestion-de-la-crise-par-emmanuel-macron-ne-convainc-toujours-pas-les-francais-20210204>.

19 Crise sanitaire: le bilan d'Emmanuel Macron continue d'être revu à la hausse. Odoxa. 2021. Available: <http://www.odoxa.fr/sondage/crise-sanitaire-le-bilan-demmanuel-macron-continue-detre-revu-a-la-hausse/>.

20 Baromètre des indices de popularité – mars 2022. Ifop. 2021. Available: <https://www.ifop.com/publication/les-indices-de-popularite-mars-2022/>.

21 Macron: les raisons d'une chute de popularité quasi-inédite sous la ve. BFMTV. 2021. Available: https://www.bfmtv.com/politique/gouvernement/macron-les-raisons-d-une-chute-de-popularite-quasi-inedite-sous-la-ve_AV-201708040015.html.

Yu.Rubinsky notes that such an opinion about E.Macron has developed because of his economic reforms in general and in particular because of the abolition of the tax on great fortunes, the restriction of trade union rights, and the tightening of conditions for unemployment insurance [11:40]. The pandemic also became an obstacle to the implementation of all economic reforms planned by the president, as a result of which the controversial reforms of E.Macron also became inconsistent, which definitely had a negative impact on the level of public confidence in the president [13:473]. Secondly, despite quarantine measures, the movement slowed down, but did not stop – the last demonstrations of the yellow vests took place in France in October 2021²². The pandemic has also become an obstacle to economic reforms initiated by E.Macron. Therefore, we can conclude that in comparison with a number of decisions by E.Macron made in 2017, as well as with the yellow vests movement, the coronavirus pandemic did not have such a significant impact on the president's popular-approval rating, lowering it by several points on average. At the same time, Doctor of Political Sciences N.Yu.Lapina notes the opportunities for the president to use the pandemic to strengthen his position in the event of a successful recovery of the country in the post-pandemic period, since France has already overtaken the OECD countries in terms of the amount of financial resources as a percentage of GNP currently spent on helping the population [6:19]. However, it seems too early to talk about the end of the pandemic and the revival of France, so this belief remains only an assumption.

The rivalry between E.Macron and M.Le Pen in the pandemic

As of March 2022, according to the Ifop French Institute of Public Opinion, Macron's popular support rating is as follows: 9% 'completely satisfied', 33% 'rather satisfied', 28% 'rather dissatisfied', 28% "completely dissatisfied"²³. In the light of the upcoming elections, it is important to note that despite the pandemic and the controversial actions of the government, E.Macron has long been leading the list of candidates for whom the French would prefer to vote in the first round. Throughout 2021, sociological polls revealed the following most popular candidates for the second round: E.Macron, M.Le Pen, E.Zemmour, X.Bertrand, V.Pécresse²⁴. At the same time, according to most experts, the duel between E. Macron and M. Le Pen is the most likely scenario for the second round of elections, in which, practically in spite of everything, the current President of France will become the winner. Such a hypothesis is of a particular interest, since in this case, for the third time

22 Saint-Avoid: les Gilets jaunes mobilisés ce week-end. Radio Mélodie. 2021. Available: <https://www.radiomelodie.com/a/16032-saint-avoid-les-gilets-jaunes-mobilises-ce-week-end>.

23 Baromètre des indices de popularité – mars 2022. Ifop. 2021. Available: <https://www.ifop.com/publication/les-indices-de-popularite-mars-2022/>.

24 Présidentielle 2022: Éric Zemmour en baisse, selon un sondage. Le Point. 2021. Available: https://www.lepoint.fr/politique/presidentielle-2022-eric-zemmour-en-baisse-selon-un-sondage-11-11-2021-2451631_20.php.

in the history of France, the leader of the National Union Party (called the National Front until 2018) is likely to lose the elections in the second round. This theory seems to require some clarification.

The National Front political party was founded in 1972 by French politician Jean-Marie Le Pen. For the first time, the leader of this party, then called the National Front, entered the second round of the presidential elections in 2002, then Jean-Marie Le Pen opposed Jacques Chirac, who was running for a second term. At the beginning of the elections, J.Chirac was supported by about 55% of the population, and by that time there were speculations about his involvement in corruption frauds, that is why experts assumed that in the second round he could only count on 48% of the vote²⁵. The results of the first round of elections were unexpected: J.Chirac took first place, with 19.8% of the vote, and Jean-Marie Le Pen sensationally took second place, overtaking the socialist Lionel Jospin by only 0.7%, with 16.8% of the vote²⁶. These results led to resonant consequences: at that time, the National Front was an obvious ultra-right party frightening with its radical suggestions, so almost all political movements and the media began to agitate the population for J. Chirac, offering to vote "for a thief, but not a fascist." So, the incumbent president, being not the most attractive candidate for the French, won and was elected for a second term. Probably, J.Chirac would not have won the elections if he had faced L.Jospin in the second round. The events of April 21, 2002 demonstrated for the first time that right-wing and ultra-right ideas were impressively popular in French society, after which a dangerous growth of these ideas was predicted, which could one day lead the National Union Party candidate for the presidency.

However, 15 years later, the situation repeated itself, in 2017 Marine Le Pen, the current leader of the National Union Party, took second place in the first round of the presidential election, with 21% of the vote, and E.Macron took first place with 24% of the vote²⁷. In contrast to the 2002 elections, the entry of National Union Party's leader into the second round was not a surprise, and public opinion polls showed this very outcome²⁸. At the same time, the forecast about the rise of the popularity of this party turned out to be wrong, since E.Macron won the elections in 2017 (66% of the vote against 33% of the vote for M.Le Pen²⁹). However, public opinion polls conducted after the election revealed an interesting picture. Firstly, more than a third of the population voted for E.Macron so that M.Le Pen would not win: 43% voted for the "Le Pen opposition", 33% for the updates that E.Macron proposes, only 16% for his program and 8% for his personality [15]. As it turned

²⁵ Sondages: la cote de popularité de Jacques Chirac est en baisse. *Le Monde*. 2021. Available: https://www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/2001/07/12/sondages-la-cote-de-popularite-de-jacques-chirac-est-en-baisse_4203508_1819218.html.

²⁶ Décision n° 2002-109 PDR du 24 avril 2002. Conseil Constitutionnel. 2002. Available: <https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/decision/2002/2002109PDR.html>.

²⁷ Décision n° 2017-169 PDR du 26 avril 2017. Conseil Constitutionnel, 2017. Available: <https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/decision/2017/2017169PDR.html>.

²⁸ Présidentielle 2017: les sondages ont vu plutôt juste. *Le Monde*. 2017. Available: https://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2017/04/26/presidentielle-les-sondages-ont-vu-plutot-juste_5117718_4355770.html.

²⁹ Décision n° 2017-171 PDR du 10 mai 2017. Conseil Constitutionnel. 2017. Available: <https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/decision/2017/2017171PDR.html>.

out, this result is attributable not only to the fact that M.Le Pen is committed to right-wing or ultra-right ideas, but also due to her failure in the debate with E. Macron, which took place between two rounds of elections on May 3, 2017. Experts note that during the debate, the leader of the National Union Party sharply criticized her opponent, while getting confused in the facts, while the leader of Republic Forward! Party behaved confidently. Also, M.Le Pen often could not defend her position, especially on those issues where her opinion changed recently (for example, on abandoning the euro or the cancellation of pension reform). As a result, it can be noted that after the debate, M.Le Pen in the eyes of the French people was definitely not the candidate who should lead the country [15]. Secondly, the 2017 presidential election is remarkable for two statistical indicators in the history of the Fifth Republic: 11.5% of those who voted spoiled the ballot or left it blank (the highest number in any presidential election), and another 25% abstained from voting (the second-highest number for the same period) [15]. Thus, 36% of the population did not make their choice, and 11.5% of them made it clear that they did not want to see either M.Le Pen or E.Macron as president.

As for the upcoming elections in 2022, in the context of the political situation in France during the period of E.Macron's presidency as a whole, A.Chikhachev notes an interesting feature: most of the traditional parties and political forces faced a crisis and a number of internal problems after the 2017 elections, as a result of which they were never able to regain their lost positions [14:84].

Thus, the Gaullists were affected by the departure of N.Sarkozy from the political scene; and the socialists are still experiencing the distrust of the population after the presidency of F.Hollande, as well as a colossal lack of financial resources for the development of their party. As for another traditional French party, the Republicans, as stated, the party's affairs have become much more complicated due to the corruption scandal around F.Fillon [4:81]. As a result, only X.Bertrand remained among the popular Republicans, but he ran for election as a non-partisan candidate due to disagreements within the party and returned to the party after a while.

A.Chikhachev also believes that during the pandemic in France, the gap between the poor and the rich widened, but not a single political party (except for the National Union Party) was able to present updated and popular ideas amid the increased protest moods of the society [14:85]. At the same time, today this party has 6 deputy mandates out of 577 in the lower house of the French parliament³⁰, and 20-25 thousand people are members of the party³¹. Thus, it can be seen that the National Union Party has a rather modest number of followers and, consequently, a small number of seats in parliament. Therefore, since 2018, after the last presidential election, the National Union Party has been implementing a series of reforms to expand its electorate, aiming to become a universal party to attract voters from different social strata with different political views. Now, for example, the

³⁰ Députés non-inscrits. Assemblée Nationale. 2021. Available: <https://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/15/les-groupes-politiques/deputes-non-inscrits>.

³¹ Le Rassemblement national à la recherche des militants perdus. *l'Opinion*. 2021. Available: <https://www.lopinion.fr/politique/le-rassemblement-national-a-la-recherche-des-militants-perdus>.

National Union Party is moving away from acute Euroscepticism and calls to leave the euro area (but retains criticism of the EU as a whole), still stands on firm positions in relation to immigrants, but in addition to these points, the party proposes projects to protect the rights of citizens, fight inequality, protect the environment, etc.³²

Apparently that is why opinion polls have shown an increase in M.Le Pen's popularity over a long period. At the same time, many researchers come to the conclusion that the reforms of the National Union Party are a façade, they change the rhetoric of the party without fundamentally changing the essence of the political program, which has now become more disguised [5:484]. So, A.S.Badaeva, PhD in Political Science, points out that the reforms did not change the right-wing essence of the party, but it became more attractive to the population, but not to the establishment and political institutions in general [3:28–82]. The same conclusion is true for M.Le Pen herself, a group of experts in the field of philology from MGIMO conducted a study of the transformation of the discourse of the National Union Party, according to which M.Le Pen is described as a “typical populist politician” who uses the “opacity technique”, allowing different interpretations of her statements [10:93].

At the same time, in the last year, M.Le Pen's position has become more complicated when the ultra-right publicist E.Zemmour whose statements sometimes shock France enters the French political scene, as a result of which the most radical followers of the National Union Party move to the side of E.Zemmour. Head of the Center for Ethnopolitical Studies of the Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences P.V.Oskolkov notes that this situation is forcing M.Le Pen to expand her electorate, including outside France, by strengthening support from other ultra-right European parties [9:75].

Today, against the backdrop of the pandemic, M.Le Pen, of course, never misses the opportunity to increase her popularity, blaming E.Macron, the French government and the presidential party Republic Forward! for all issues related to crisis management. So, as early as in July 2020, the National Union Party published a 168-page book called “The Black Book of Coronavirus. From the fiasco to the abyss” [16], whose task, as stated, is to comprehend the passing period and search for truth and lies in certain actions of the executive branch. The first part of the book is devoted to a general overview of the situation through the prism of criticism from the National Union Party and M.Le Pen herself. For example, the authors of the book believe that E.Macron, describing the beginning of the pandemic with the phrase “We are at war”, sought to create for himself the image of the “Father of the Nation”, thanks to whom France would emerge from the crisis, which implied his sole actions and the growth of his personal popularity and authority [16]. National Union Party, in its turn, insists that such crises require democratic solutions, in which the entire population, and not only the Council for Health Protection headed by E.Macron, will participate [16]. However, as mentioned earlier, one of the advantages of the Council for the Protection of Health is the speed of decision-making, which the French

³² Publications thématiques. Rassemblement National. 2022. Available: <https://rassemblementnational.fr/publications-thematiques/>.

parliament cannot boast of and which is essential in such a critical period. Therefore, the claim of a greater efficiency of parliament is questionable.

The second part of the report, titled “Managing the COVID-19 Pandemic. Chronology of the fiasco” contains a chronology of key events with quotes from the executive branch and various officials on 11 topics that the National Union Party considers the failure of Macron's crisis management. The 11 topics include the holding of the first round of the municipal elections in Paris in March 2020, the party's doubts about the effectiveness of wearing medical masks and the use of certain methods of treating coronavirus, criticism of the holding of a number of public events in the spring of 2020, etc. In the context of municipal elections, it is interesting to add that, as noted by A.S.Badaeva, M.Le Pen was actively holding her pre-electoral campaign in March 2020, and only the day after the elections she began to condemn the refusal to postpone them, and the National Union Party began to distribute leaflets with the text “Coronavirus: the government knew, but did nothing!” [3:99]. In general, this work is based on the main belief of the party and M.Le Pen herself about the epidemiological crisis: “The economic crisis that France has been facing for a long period originates in an unprecedented health crisis, exacerbated by a deep political crisis. The combination of these three crises, first of all, revealed the scope of France's decline” [16].

M.Le Pen also often speaks about some of the specific actions of E.Macron in the framework of the pandemic crisis management. One striking example was the reaction of the leader of the National Union Party to the vaccination campaign, which she called “Macron's Waterloo”³³. In this context, M.Le Pen considers the president's plans for vaccination a failure, since France failed to reach the planned percentage of the vaccinated population by the spring of 2021. It is worth noting that M.Le Pen also opposes compulsory vaccination, but does not offer other options for developing herd immunity, which was considered a key factor essential to stop the pandemic. In addition, France still managed to complete the vaccination plan by October 2021³⁴. Apparently, considering the regular demonstrations against sanitary passes and compulsory vaccination, the position of M.Le Pen actually does some good to her popularity and the expansion of the electorate, since completely different segments of the population with different political views oppose compulsory vaccination.

M.Le Pen also accused the French government of inaction during the start of the pandemic. So, according to her, if she was the president of the republic, she would have distributed a protective mask to each Frenchman on state funds, and not municipal ones. The French government had to purchase or produce more than 60 million masks amid their acute shortage throughout the EU. Another relevant topic for all European right-wing populists, according to P.V.Oskolkov, was the link of the pandemic to the problem of immigration. P.V.Oskolkov, referring to the statement of the British political scientist

³³ Marine Le Pen sur Twitter. Twitter. 2021. Available: https://twitter.com/mlp_officiel/status/1377331394351800321.

³⁴ Informations Covid-19. Gouvernement.fr, 2021. Available: <https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus/carte-et-donnees>.

M. Pagliarello ("If before, a migrant was the enemy, now the enemy is a migrant who has coronavirus") highlights the same rhetoric from M. Le Pen [8:2].

A similar position is taken by some other experts who cite the National Union Party's proposal to temporarily lift the moratorium on the forced labor of prisoners for the production of masks [1:25]. In this proposal, the party condemns the government's decision to temporarily clear temporary detention facilities, where there are a lot of immigrants due to the increased threat of coronavirus infection in such institutions. Indeed, as it turned out, the far-right positions of the party regarding immigrants fit perfectly into the pandemic time, which presents new reasons for anti-immigrant statements.

In general, the position and proposals of the National Union Party headed by M. Le Pen are largely based on criticism of decisions already taken, and the party does not propose a specific program of actions against the pandemic that could be adopted now or in the near future to reduce the incidence of coronavirus and revive the country in the post-pandemic era. A similar situation happens with many other political parties in France; this is probably why, according to a poll of January 7, 2022, 57% of the French population responded that none of the presented presidential candidates would have coped with the pandemic better than E. Macron³⁵. It can also be added that M. Le Pen, being in sharp opposition to E. Macron, managed to strengthen her position due to other political events that have been discussed earlier.

So, M. Le Pen openly supported the letter of the generals in the spring of 2021, as it perfectly illustrates the ideas of the National Union Party. Furthermore, Yu. I. Rubinsky notes that the unpopularity of the socio-economic reforms of E. Macron and the growing protest moods amid them led to an increase of the electorate of M. Le Pen owing to the inclusion of a significant part of the «people's» electorate, who previously voted for the communists or socialists [12:3].

However, what is the probability that M. Le Pen will reach the second round, or will there be another candidate instead? French law sets out fairly strict requirements for a candidate to be admitted to the first round of elections: a candidate must obtain 500 signatures from officials at various levels, taking into account geographical diversity³⁶. This requirement aims to significantly reduce the number of candidates admitted to the elections. Therefore, out of more than 30 initial candidates, only 12 people were admitted to the elections, according to the final list of candidates published on March 7, 2022 by the French Constitutional Council³⁷. At the moment, all the candidates presented can be roughly divided into the following groups: the right and the left, and among the left, the

35 Les Français et les opposants à Emmanuel Macron dans le cadre de l'élection présidentielle de 2022. Ifop. 2022. Available: <https://www.ifop.com/publication/les-francais-et-les-opposants-a-emmanuel-macron-dans-le-cadre-de-lelection-presidentielle-de-2022/>.

36 Élection présidentielle: les règles pour les parrainages des candidats. Vie publique. 2021. Available: <https://www.vie-publique.fr/eclairage/23872-parrainage-des-candidats-la-presidentielle-les-500-signatures> (Retrieved: 01.11.2021).

37 Présidenteielle 2022. Qui sont les candidats déclarés et pressentis. Le Monde. 2022. Available: https://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2021/06/02/presidentielle-2022-qui-sont-les-candidats-declares-et-presentis_6082545_4355770.html.

“greens” stand out. For a long time, Xavier Bertan, Valerie Pécresse and Michel Barnier³⁸ were in the lead among the right-wing candidates.

Later, far-right publicist Eric Zemmour joined the race, and the polls began to show different results for the combination of candidates for second-third places in the first round: often M. Le Pen comes in second place, but in some cases there is a razor-thin gap from the third place. So, in the early autumn of 2021, E. Zemmour began to gain popularity, while at the beginning of the year his participation in the elections was not even contemplated. Also in December 2021, V. Pécresse unexpectedly won the Republican primaries, as a result of which her rating skyrocketed, and she began to take second place after E. Macron, overtaking M. Le Pen³⁹. Nevertheless, by mid-January 2022, M. Le Pen was able to regain lost ground and caught up with V. Pécresse. Some French political scientists explain this by the fact that V. Pécresse was able to unite only right-wing forces around her, remaining an unattractive candidate for leftists and centrists, while people with different political views⁴⁰ cast their votes for the leader of the National Union Party. As a result, only V. Pécresse will represent the right-wingers in the elections, while the ultra-rightists will be represented by M. Le Pen, E. Zemmour and N. Dupont-Aignan, who announced his candidacy for president back in September 2020, but today in the first round of elections he would have got only 2% of the French votes⁴¹, so his candidacy may not be an option.

The Greens held their primaries in September 2021, as a result of which Yannick Jadot, a member of the Europe – Ecology – the Greens party⁴², was chosen as the main candidate from this political branch. At the same time, Antoine Waechter, another “green” candidate, decided to participate in the elections, despite the results of the past primaries, as a result of which he was unable to collect the required number of signatures and was not allowed to participate in the elections. Nevertheless, the situation around the rest of the left candidates remained unclear for a long time, the political movement was represented by 9 candidates, and Christiane Taubira won the “People's Primary”. However, as early as in March, she announced the withdrawal of her candidacy due to the impossibility of collecting 500 signatures⁴³. Then the team of People's Primary single-handedly, not paying attention

38 Sondage Ifop: Pécresse, Bertrand, Barnier... duels dans l'opinion. Paris Match. 2021. Available: <https://www.parismatch.com/Actu/Politique/Sondage-Ifop-Pecresse-Bertrand-Barnier-duels-dans-l-opinion-1756762>.

39 Valérie Pécresse, première femme investie par la droite pour la présidentielle. Le Monde. 2021. Available: https://www.lemonde.fr/election-presidentielle-2022/article/2021/12/04/election-presidentielle-2022-valerie-pecresse-premiere-femme-du-parti-les-republicains-candidate-a-l-elysee_6104724_6059010.html.

40 Valérie Pécresse peine à donner un second souffle à sa campagne. L'OBS. 2022. Available: <https://www.nouvelobs.com/election-presidentielle-2022/20220112.OBS53122/valerie-pecresse-peine-a-donner-un-second-souffle-a-sa-campagne.html>.

41 Présidenteielle 2022. Ifop. 2022. Available: <https://www.ifop.com/presidentielle-2022/> (Retrieved: 05.04.2022).

42 Présidenteielle 2022. Qui sont les candidats déclarés et pressentis. Le Monde. 2022. Available: https://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2021/06/02/presidentielle-2022-qui-sont-les-candidats-declares-et-presentis_6082545_4355770.html.

43 Présidenteielle: la Primaire populaire «présente ses excuses» à ses «soutiens», après son choix controversé de soutenir Jean-Luc Mélenchon. Franceinfo. 2022. Available: https://www.francetvinfo.fr/elections/presidentielle-la-primaire-populaire-presente-ses-excuses-a-ses-soutiens-apres-son-choix-controverse-de-soutenir-jean-luc-melenchon_5017421.html.

to the will of the voters, announced Jean-Luc Mélenchon, a member of the ultra-left party France Unbowed, as the only candidate from the left-wing. It is interesting to note that the candidacy of J.-L.Mélenchon was just as controversial as M.Le Pen, since both candidates represented radical forces, often characterized as semi-mystical. As a consequence, the decision of the left caused a wave of indignation among voters and, probably, further split this political wing. The left are represented by four more candidates, however, none but J.-L.Mélenchon, can come close to the most popular trio⁴⁴.

In the context of the pre-election situation, it is important to note how the current French president reacted to the events in Ukraine and how this affected his rating. E.Macron has taken a fairly active position since the beginning of March this year, trying to become a mediator between the parties to the conflict, the French president frequently made telephone calls to the leaders of various states on this matter, and especially to V.Putin and V.Zelensky. In the case of the upcoming elections, attention is drawn to the fact that during these negotiations the personal photographer of the leader of the French Republic is invited, and then pictures are circulated in the media, where E.Macron is extremely annoyed and agitated about everything that is happening.

As a result, one might get the impression that the purpose of these actions is to increase the rating in the run-up to the elections. Indeed, by mid-March, more than 31% of the population was going to vote for E.Macron in the first round, and these figures are comparable only with the pre-pandemic period⁴⁵. M.Le Pen, in her turn, on the contrary, lost more than 10 points⁴⁶, which can be explained by the cooperation of the National Union Party with the United Russia and the calls of M.Le Pen's party to normalize relations with Russia, which were characteristic of her party over a long period. Later, information appeared that M.Le Pen ordered the local branches of her party to destroy all copies of the previously distributed election brochure, on one of the pages of which there was a photograph of the leader of the National Union Party and the President of Russia V.Putin, however, M.Le Pen refuted this information⁴⁷.

Nevertheless, the impact of the Ukrainian events turned out to be short-lived, both for E.Macron and M.Le Pen. E. Macron lost points received as a result of his series of telephone conversations. This can probably be explained by the fact that the French population began to feel the effect of the sanctions against Russia, which lead to higher fuel prices, which were already a painful topic for French society after the yellow vests movement. As a result, the most popular scenario for the second round of the presidential elections at the beginning of April 2022 is still the Macron-Le Pen standoff, since, according

44 Sondage sur la présidentielle 2022: 1er tour, 2e tour... Le Pen peut battre Macron. L'internaute. 2022. Available: <https://www.linternaute.com/actualite/politique/2575740-sondages-sur-la-presidentielle-2022-1er-tour-2e-tour-dernier-sondage-et-compilation-des-enquetes-05-04/>.

45 Sondage présidentielle 2022: notre baromètre quotidien. Le Parisien. 2022. Available: <https://www.leparisien.fr/elections/presidentielle/sondage-presidentielle-2022-decouvrez-notre-barometre-quotidien-24-03-2022-NRS4DWMSJ5CIFI3VTXIZ7SXZKU.php>.

46 Ibid

47 French far-right leader Marine Le Pen forced to defend Putin links. The Guardian. 2022. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/02/french-far-right-leader-marine-le-pen-forced-to-defend-putin-links>.

to public opinion surveys of April 5, 2022, in the first round 26.5% will vote for the current president, 23% will vote for M.Le Pen, the third place will be taken by Jean-Luc Mélenchon with 17% of the vote, and É.Zemmour shares fourth place with V.Pécresse – 9.5% of the vote each⁴⁸.

In general, it can be noted that E.Macron and M.Le Pen are leading in such polls throughout the year, with a constant change in candidates for the other places. Therefore, it is likely that whatever happens and whatever ideas the National Union Party suggest, in the second round of the presidential elections in 2022 we will see a repetition of the duel between M.Le Pen and E.Macron in 2017. You can also notice another important point, after E. Macron, two candidates from radical parties are in the lead, which has never happened before and which may pose a certain threat. This fact can be explained by the events that took place during the presidency of E.Macron: the rise of fuel prices in 2018 and subsequent quarantine restrictions hit agricultural and industrial workers, as well as the less well-off population; amid this, ambiguous reforms took place, because of which the current president began to be considered the “president for the rich”; then the sanctions against Russia once again led to an increase in fuel prices, in which these categories of the population blame the president; as a result, not only far-right, but also far-left ideas are gaining popularity in French society.

Conclusions

Thus, having analyzed the impact of actions against the coronavirus pandemic on the rating of E.Macron, as well as on the basis of the analysis of the Macron and Le Pen standoff, the following conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, some decisions of the president, and in particular the refusal to introduce a third lockdown at the end of January 2021, did have a negative impact on his support and the degree of public confidence in the entire government. Macron, nevertheless, announced his participation in the presidential elections, but did it rather late; the reasons were related to the beginning of the fifth wave of the spread of coronavirus infection, which is several times larger than the previous ones, and to the desire of the current president to additionally attract attention and choose the “right moment”. Secondly, in comparison with the yellow vests movement and the events of August 2017, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Macron's rating was not so significant. M.Le Pen, in her turn, does not miss the opportunity to profit politically from the president's mistakes: she regularly sharply criticizes his actions, opposes compulsory vaccination and supports protests on this basis, without, however, offering qualitatively new options for combating the pandemic and the country's recovery from the crisis. Thirdly, the factors already mentioned and the subsequent actions of the president in this area are unlikely to play a key role in the presidential elections, given that M.Le Pen and E.Macron are likely to get into the second round. In this case, the victory of E.Macron

will be largely due to his confrontation with M. Le Pen. Although, according to opinion polls, the right-wing leader has practically no chance of getting a presidential mandate, since if not E. Macron, but other candidates from the top five most popular candidates enter the second round, there is a high probability of repeating the scenario of 2002 and 2017. Consequently, today E. Macron has the highest probability of winning and being re-elected for a second presidential term, despite a number of controversial decisions he made during the pandemic. At the same time, for M. Le Pen, the pandemic has become the topic, thanks to which she was able to expand her electorate by including various sectors of society. However, just criticizing the president during the pandemic is still not enough for the leader of the National Union Party to have a good chance of winning the presidential election. E. Macron, in his turn, continues to make attempts to use the military situation in Ukraine to increase his ratings, but so far the positive result is of a short-term nature, and his gap with M. Le Pen has narrowed again.

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CHANGING SOCIETY

**Social structure,
social institutions
and processes**

The threats that exist for our country are quite surmountable if additional measures are taken: in the development and implementation of domestic high-tech products, in equipping the Russian army with the necessary means to repel all possible types of attacks in cyberspace..., in combating fake news and information, in monitoring social networks for placement there information that threatens sovereignty, in policy on cryptocurrencies, and safe Internet use among citizens.

Gribin N.P., Kokhtyulina I.N., Sobolev I.I. Sedunov D.I.
Information Sovereignty: Materials of Scientific Discussion

..Belarus is still under two influences at the same time: the western one with its open communication mode and the eastern one, which is characterized by more closed country communication modes. As a result of the diffusion of institutions in the Belarusian communication regime, not one, as usual, but two cores were formed, connected with the Catholic and Orthodox churches, around which communication forces are grouped. Although they are not equal (there are 15% of Catholics in the country), nevertheless, due to the peculiarities of the Catholic Church, its relative independence from the state, this feature means that it is impossible to build a rigid hierarchical communication model absolutely controlled by the authorities in Belarus, since a certain part of the population has the ability to obtain information from alternative sources.

**Komleva V.V., Barakhvostov P.A., Kalacheva I.I., Mezhevich N.M.,
Rogalsky S.G., Vorotnikov V.V., Kachura A.G., Lazorkina O.I.**
The Communication Mode of Belarus: Stability and Formation Factors

Information sovereignty: materials of scientific discussion

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Abstract. The article contains the most significant and interesting materials of the scientific discussion on the problems of information sovereignty and information security in Russia held by the National Research Institute for the Communications Development. The authors identify the main threats and risks to the stability of the Russian Federation in the era of digitalization. Approaches to the definition of the concept of «information sovereignty» are considered, its criteria are defined. Problems of ensuring the information sovereignty of Russia are identified, in particular, relating to Russia's technological dependence on foreign technologies and equipment, weak security of the Russian information infrastructure. During the discussion, recommendations were developed: 1) significantly increase the financing of the Russian high-tech industry, support Russian research in the field of computer technology in order to reduce dependence on foreign products to a minimum and increase the security of critical infrastructure facilities; 2) to continue the development of a special direction in the sphere of cybersecurity in the Russian Armed Forces, increase military potential in the sphere of digital technologies; 3) to pursue an active information policy aimed at combating false messages; 4) to monitor the dissemination of illegal information in social networks; 5) to begin the implementation of state policy in the field of public education on information security, rules for safe interaction with digital technologies; 6) to strengthen control over illegal activities on the Internet.

Keywords: state, information sovereignty, information security, threats to information sovereignty

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Introduction

The relevance of the scientific discussion about the problems and criteria of information sovereignty is due to a number of reasons related to the strengthening of international information confrontation, the tightening of the technology of information wars, and the increasingly unfriendly information policy of a number of foreign countries towards Russia. Despite the fact that for many years work has been carried out to create a legal framework that would regulate the international information space and the place of states in it, the problem of information sovereignty is only getting worse. The purpose of our discussion is to define the criteria for information sovereignty, identify the risks and threats to Russia's information sovereignty, discuss the experience of ensuring it in other countries, and identify possible ways to solve the problems of information sovereignty.

Materials and methods

The authors of this scientific discussion in their research applied systematic, institutional approaches, relied on the concepts of political realism, used the method of comparative analysis. The empirical base of the study was statistical data, materials of analytical reports, and regulatory legal acts: UN international reports (reports of a group of government experts on achievements in the field of informatization and telecommunications in the context of international security in 2013¹ and 2015²), national strategies and doctrines (National Security Strategy China in Cyberspace³, US National Cyber Strategy⁴, US Department of Defense Cyber Strategy⁵, Information Security Doctrine of the Russian Federation⁶, National Security Strategy of the Russian

1 Report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. A/68/98. Available: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/98&referer=/english/&Lang=R.

2 Report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. A/70/174. Available: <https://documents-ddsny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/228/37/PDF/N1522837.pdf?OpenElement>.

3 National Security Strategy in Cyberspace. Available: http://www.cac.gov.cn/2016-12/27/c_1120195926.htm.

4 National Cyber Strategy of the United States of America. Available: <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/National-Cyber-Strategy.pdf>.

5 Department of Defense Cyber Strategy – 2018. Available: <https://www.cybercom.mil/About/Mission-and-Vision/>.

6 The Information Security Doctrine of the Russian Federation. Available: <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/documents/6/5.html>.

Federation⁷, Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation⁸), laws related to ensuring information sovereignty.

Results

Threats and risks to the sustainability and stability of the Russian Federation in the era of digitalization (N.P.Gribin)

In the current situation of turbulent geopolitical processes, unforeseen explosive events and international conflicts, reflecting the growth of interstate contradictions, the confrontation between global and regional leading countries for hegemony in establishing the rules and principles of the world order, the uncompromising promotion of their own national interests, often to the detriment of other subjects of international law, all advanced technologies play a more prominent role. Along with the disclosure of unlimited opportunities for the accelerated development of human civilization and the rapid solution of many of the most complex problems in public administration, the economy, business and the social sphere, technological tools are becoming a key means of achieving advantages in armed clashes, economic and trade expansion, information and psychological confrontation between rival states and their coalitions.

On this side of the scientific and technological revolution taking place in our days drew attention the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir V.Putin, who declared in 2019 at the St.Petersburg International Economic Forum about “the first technological war coming in the digital age.” The head of the Russian state singled out the quintessence of this war:

Attempts to monopolize a new technological wave, to limit access to its achievements, bring the problem of global inequality both between countries and regions, and within the states themselves to a completely new, different level. Well, this is the main source of instability in the world⁹.

The intensification of geopolitical tension and the uncertain prospects for its mitigation have necessitated the protection of the vital interests of the Russian Federation from external and internal enemies, including from unfriendly actions of foreign states. As a result, a new National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation was adopted, approved by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation on July 2, 2021. No 400.

⁷ Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 400 dated 02.07.2021 “On the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation”. Available: <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001202107030001>.

⁸ Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation (approved by the President of the Russian Federation on 25.12.2014 No. Pr-2976). Available: <https://www.mchs.gov.ru/dokumenty/2940>.

⁹ St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, St.Petersburg, June 7, 2019. Available: https://www.1tv.ru/news/2019-06-07/366537-vladimir_putin_vystupil_na_ekonomicheskoy_forume_v_sankt-peterburge.

The Strategy states that the main “goal of the scientific and technological development of the Russian Federation is to ensure the technological independence and competitiveness of the country.” To achieve this goal, it is necessary to develop and implement perspective high technologies, such as nanotechnology, robotics, genetic engineering, information and communication technologies, artificial intelligence, technologies for processing colossal data arrays, and the creation of new materials.

The Strategy expresses confidence that the implementation of the outlined ambitious plans will lead to

strengthening defense capabilities, modernizing the economy and developing industrial potential, strengthening the sovereign statehood of Russia, capable of pursuing an independent foreign and domestic policy, and of effectively resisting attempts by external pressure.

Seems like it would be frivolous not to notice the negative concomitant manifestations and limitations in the ongoing promising, rapidly developing technological breakthrough. Such manifestations and limitations have obvious signs of threats and risks in the event of reckless introduction of digital technologies into all spheres of the state and society, the advantages of which are presented today in the mass media mainly in enthusiastic tones. It is not difficult to assume that threats and risks that are not yet always obvious, will sooner or later affect the effectiveness of applied technological innovations.

In this regard, I believe it is useful to focus on some obvious threats and risks of the era of digitalization, which in the long run may negatively affect the stability of the state if measures are not taken to neutralize them, which directly affects the interests of ensuring the national security of the Russian Federation.

The threats and risks of digitalization (from the English word digital, and ization means an action or process), can be conditionally divided into two different blocks. The first block is formed on the basis of an indicator of the scale of the use of digital technologies that generate threats and risks of a general plan. The second block consists of threats and risks that arise in the process of using digital technologies in specific areas of the life of the state and society. From the point of view of external manifestation, threats and risks can be real and potential and manifest themselves in both blocks.

The main general threat to the implementation of the digital transformation of the entire country is seen in the fact that in the electronic equipment and software segments, almost all the needs of the domestic Russian market are met through imports. This fact is confirmed in the Strategy for the Development of Information Technologies in the Russian Federation for 2014–2020 and for the period up to 2025, approved by the Government of the Russian Federation on November 1, 2013 (No. 2036-r). According to experts in the field of information technology, today the situation has not changed significantly. As a result, foreign manufacturers of this class of products still occupy a dominant position in the domestic IT market, and this gives them the opportunity to dictate their terms. The current situation is especially dangerous due to the aggravation of external threats to Russia, the escalation of sanctions against our country, the illegal removal of information

from telecommunications systems, the real possibility of blocking purchased imported equipment and the deformation of software, and the increasing number of cyber-attacks on government agencies, corporations and private businesses. In such conditions, the question of the country's ability to ensure domestic sovereign digitalization is very important.

To remove the real threat of Russia's IT dependence on Western countries, it seems necessary to strengthen the regulatory role of the state, following the example in the electronics industry in the United States, China and South Korea, which, thanks to this decision, have advanced in this industry. In particular, it is desirable to do:

- increase direct budgetary support for Russian IT companies, create a preferential tax regime for them, provide them with affordable long-term loans;
- limit and in the future prohibit the use of foreign IT technologies in the Russian Federation;
- legally oblige state structures, corporations and businesses to purchase domestic IT technologies, which, according to experts, are not inferior in quality to foreign ones.

Another general threat is associated with artificial intelligence, which today is called "the main technology of the 21st century", it is a cross-cutting scientific and technological area. The range of application of artificial intelligence and robotization is unlimitedly wide. This is primarily production, the social sphere, education, science and culture. Artificial intelligence opens up unique opportunities for quickly analyzing a huge amount of data, for improving the quality of human life, for improving education and medical care, and for radically increasing labor productivity in almost all sectors of the economy. With the help of such innovations, people are freed from routine, difficult, labor-intensive and dangerous processes in production, fewer mistakes are made in labor activity, and costs in the course of manufacturing products are minimized. For example, artificial intelligence algorithms make it easier for doctors to quickly detect dangerous diseases, allow them to analyze the results of medical research with high accuracy, and make it possible to significantly improve the quality of diagnostics, which is especially important during the ongoing pandemic.

At the same time, it is impossible to ignore the completely justified fears that the unique technologies of artificial intelligence and robotization will lead to the loss of many jobs and specialties both in our country and abroad. Around 85 million people are expected to lose their jobs worldwide. People deprived of work and livelihood can join the ranks of protesters, illegal armed groups, terrorists and extremists, as well as increase uncontrolled migration flows, including from foreign countries to the Russian Federation. The idea of establishing total control over every step of a person with the help of "smart" technical means will hardly be welcomed by society. There is even a fantastic warning about a possible "revolt" of machines, which, of course, is hardly probable, since man will always keep machines under control. The disadvantages of using artificial intelligence and robotics are also seen in the high cost of maintaining high-tech and complex mechanisms created on the basis of such innovations, and in the high cost of repairing them.

Important is the risk of leakage of personal data of each person due to the participation of artificial intelligence in the processing of the entire array of information about the population of the country, becoming open and accessible. An important step in mitigating

this risk is the Federal Law "On the Unified Federal Information Register Containing Information on the Population of the Russian Federation", adopted on June 8, 2020 (No. 168-FZ). The law establishes criteria for admitting only competent state agencies to this kind of information. Currently, the issue of creating other regulatory, technical and organizational barriers that prevent the leakage of personal data of Russian citizens and their illegal use is being worked out.

Another issue concerns the dissemination of information about Russian achievements in the field of military technologies, the creation of ultra-modern strike combat systems, supersonic (with many strokes) aircrafts and missiles, which have no analogues in the West. Of course, you are proud of such successes of our scientists, designers, specialists and the country as a whole. However, it is impossible not to say that Russia's enemies warn about the alleged threat to Western civilization from our country. This topic is constantly present in the news of Western countries; unfriendly states psychologically process their population and negatively set it up against the Russian Federation and its citizens. Focusing on the threat from Russia motivates the ruling circles of Western states to annually increase their already huge military budgets, exceeding Russian defense spending. At the same time, the fake about the aggressiveness of our country is used to justify the demonstration of its own "defense" measures and military exercises in the countries adjacent to Russia and along the borders of the Russian Federation.

The second block of threats and risks manifests itself, as noted, in the process of using digital technologies in specific areas of socio-economic activity, primarily in public administration, the economy, energy, education, healthcare, urban economy, culture, science and statistics.

In a short speech, it is impossible to deeply and comprehensively highlight the features and nuances of threats and risks from the introduction of digital technologies in all areas of the life of the state and society. Therefore, for illustration, let me dwell on only some of these areas. In particular, discuss the state in economics and science.

In the economic, unfortunately, there is a slow introduction of digital technologies. This is especially noticeable if we recall that the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir V. Putin even in December 2016, signed the Decree "On the Strategy for the Scientific and Technological Development of the Russian Federation"¹⁰, where were the measures provided for creating legal, technical, organizational and financial conditions for the development of the digital economy in the country. However, after more than five years, the digital economy in Russia, according to experts, is only 4% of GDP, while in the US this figure is 10%. One of the reasons for this situation is the lack of incentive mechanisms that promote the development of innovative activities of business entities, and this, in turn, keeps the Russian economy tilted towards the export of raw materials.

In this regard, the transfer of the country's economy to a qualitatively new level through digital technologies is again proclaimed a priority in the policy of mastering

¹⁰ Decree of the President of the Russian Federation "On the Strategy of Scientific and Technological Development of the Russian Federation" dated December 01, 2016 No. 642. Available: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/41449>.

a non-raw material development model. But it is clearly not enough to confine ourselves to declarations about the accelerated development of digital technologies and their rapid introduction into everyday life, since the development, manufacture, testing and popularization in society and in business circles of the advantages of digital technologies require the efforts of large teams of scientists and specialists, as well as modern expensive material technical base. We have to state that today domestic science is in a situation that can hardly be called favorable, and primarily due to underfunding. According to the website of the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation, expenses on science in Russia are now about 1.1% of GDP. In the USA, 2.8% of GDP is allocated for science, in China – 2.2%, in South Korea – 4.8%. Due to the latest scientific and technological achievements, the Americans are reducing the price of shale oil, and our oil production in the North, especially on the shelf of the northern seas, may soon be uncompetitive.

Just a few words about the threats and risks when using digital technologies in education. So, with distance learning, there is no direct communication between students and teachers, social communication skills are not developed, the dialogue between them mutually enriching knowledge disappears, the perception of information decreases and the understanding of the material become difficult. Such a system of education is technically unable to control the independence of completing tasks and tests. Physical deviations in the health of distance learning participants are also recorded: visual impairment, headache, insomnia, irritability.

Conclusions

In conclusion, I would like to note that in this discussion I have identified only some of the most significant real and potential threats and risks to the state and society in the era of digitalization. By the way, some of them can hardly be qualified as threats. Rather, these are the shortcomings or costs of the development of digital civilization, and humanity is able to neutralize or at least reduce their negative impact, whether we are ready to the identification, in-depth study and comprehensive scientific understanding of the digital component of our life, as well as the thoughtful development and implementation of a set of effective and sufficient preventive countermeasures.

International information security in new geopolitical realities (I.N.Kokhtyulina)

Humanity has entered the zone of total breakdown of the world order. According to a number of experts, information and communication technologies (ICT) and the info narrative as a whole play an increasingly subversive role in this process and in the process of desovereignization of nation states.

At the same time, the planet is seized by an unprecedented digital transformation. The coronavirus pandemic also gave a powerful impulse to the aggravation of geopolitical

confrontation. Humanity is becoming more and more aware of its gigantic scale, leading experts compare it with the Great Depression and call it the greatest global challenge since the Second World War.

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered both many of the benefits and threats of the digital world. Given the particular urgency of this problem, UN Secretary-General A. Guterres proposed on June 11, 2020 the Roadmap for Digital Cooperation: Implementing the Recommendations of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation¹¹. The impetus for this is Internet technologies, which caused and continue to cause tectonic shifts in the development of civilization. In fact, humanity has entered a new phase transition, comparable in significance, for example, with the creation of writing. At the same time, microelectronics has been replaced by a new technological order: nano-, bio-, info- and cognitive technologies, and based on the principles of Industry IV the digital economy, cyber-physical systems, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, blockchain, 5G generation communications and others are rapidly developing, radically changing the world, technologies.

Under these conditions, leading countries are developing and implementing a variety of doctrines and strategies for the implementation of these technologies with the aim of geopolitical dominance.

Because of this, the Fundamentals of State Policy in the Field of International Information Security approved by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of April 12, 2021 No. 213¹² (further here - Fundamentals) are of invaluable and strategic importance in creating a secure global information space. This document is aimed at promoting Russian approaches to the formation of a system of ensuring international information security and Russian initiatives in this area, at promoting the creation of international legal mechanisms for preventing and resolving interstate conflicts in the global information space and at organizing interagency cooperation.

Among the threats to international information security, the Fundamentals highlight the following:

- a) the use of information and communication technologies in the military-political and other spheres for the purpose of undermining (infringing) the sovereignty, violating the territorial integrity of states, carrying out other actions in the global information space that impede the maintenance of international peace, security and stability;
- b) the use of information and communication technologies for terrorist purposes, including for promoting terrorism and attracting new supporters to terrorist activities;
- c) the use of information and communication technologies for extremist purposes, as well as for interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states;
- d) the use of information and communication technologies for criminal purposes, including for committing crimes in the field of computer information, as well as for committing various types of scam;

¹¹ Official Documents System of the United Nations. Available: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N20/102/53/PDF/N2010253.pdf?OpenElement>.

¹² Fundamentals of the state policy in the field of international information security, approved by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of April 12, 2021 No. 213 Available: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/46614>

- e) the use of information and communication technologies to carry out computer attacks on the information resources of states, including critical information infrastructure;
- f) the use by individual states of technological dominance in the global information space to monopolize the market of information and communication technologies, limit the access of other states to advanced information and communication technologies, as well as to increase their technological dependence on the states that dominate in the field of informatization and information inequality.

Now the United States and its satellites have launched a total hybrid war against Russia. This is confirmed, in particular, by the report "NATO-2030"¹³, published on November 25, 2020, the meaning of which is to strengthen the hybrid impact on Russia and its allies: political, diplomatic, economic, military and informational. At the same time, NATO centers in Riga, Tallinn, Helsinki play a key role in the information and psychological manipulation of the mass consciousness of Russians.

The development of cognitive and mental warfare in the information environment increases the risk of conflicts that can disrupt international peace.

Mental war is a war aimed at changing the worldview not only of the enemy's population, but also of its own population, in the countries of allies and partners, the main threat lies in the fact that its consequences do not affect immediately, but through generations¹⁴.

Unlike cyberwar and direct information operations, mental warfare is implemented in the context of the emerging world of "post-truth", when people are "weaned" from critical thinking, from striving for the truth.

Today, the manipulation of public consciousness is already actively conducted both at the level of meaning, and at the level of emotions, and at the level of the subconscious.

At present, the United States and its satellites have launched an all-out hybrid war against Russia. This is confirmed, in particular, by the NATO-2030 report published on November 25, 2020, the meaning of which is to increase the hybrid impact on Russia and its allies: political, diplomatic, economic, military and informational. At the same time, NATO centers in Riga, Tallinn, and Helsinki play a key role in the information and psychological manipulation of the mass consciousness of Russians.

The development of cognitive and mental warfare in the ICT environment increases the risk of conflicts that can disrupt international peace.

Mental warfare is a war aimed at changing the worldview not only of the enemy population, but also in their own countries, in the countries of allies and partners, bearing a "generational" scale, the main threat of which lies in the fact that its consequences do not affect immediately, but through generations.

¹³ NATO-2030: United for a New Era. 25 November 2020. Available: https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf.

¹⁴ Il'nitsky Andrey. A mental war for the future of Russia. Available: <https://zvezdaweb.ru/news/20214211636-jxgHZ.html>.

Unlike cyberwars and direct information operations, mental warfare is directed and implemented taking into account the actually emerging world of "post-truth", when people are "weaned" from critical thinking, from striving for truth.

Today, public consciousness is being actively manipulated both at the level of meaning, and at the level of emotions, and at the level of the subconscious.

In this context, it is relevant to analyze the documents concerning the information work of Great Britain on the territory of the former USSR. This archive¹⁵, possibly hacked by the group Anonymous, contains links to internal documents of the British Foreign Office concerning its activities in Europe and Asia, while some of them are directly related to Ukraine and Russia.

Thus, the documents note that the British Foreign Office issued a secret form, which refers to the launch of a program to counter Russia's informational influence in the Baltic countries, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, etc.

The purpose of this program is to weaken the influence of the Russian Federation on its closest neighbors, and its macro-goal is to reduce the level of public confidence in the leadership of Russia.

The task of interaction, communication between ethnic Russians and local communities, as well as training, involvement of new participants in various projects was entrusted to the British Council, whose activities were terminated in Russia in 2018.

The British Foreign Office has focused on supporting independent media in the post-Soviet space, especially Russian-language media. As follows from the documents, since 2018, London has been ready to discredit any information disseminated by Russian state media if it did not correspond to British interests.

Anti-Russian publications in the media today are only a part of the large-scale information operation carried out by the UK throughout the post-Soviet space.

From March 2019 to March 2021, the UK spent about £9 million related grants on the implementation of the information expansion plan.

It is noteworthy that since the beginning of Russia's military operation in Ukraine, the topic of information confrontation has received a new development: the key element of information is precisely its "anti-Russianness", the question of its authenticity or falsity turns out to be secondary.

In total, according to the Safe Internet League, since February 24, 2022, about 6.5 million fake messages about a special military operation in Ukraine, as well as about Russia, have appeared on the Internet. The cost of an information attack on the Russian Federation reached \$1.5 billion¹⁶. About \$25 million is spent daily on the campaign, which is about 2 billion rubles a day. Messages are distributed from the territory of Ukraine, Poland, Latvia, USA, Great Britain and other countries.

¹⁵ "Weaken Russia's influence": how Britain was preparing Ukraine for an information war. Available: <https://russian.rt.com/world/article/988503-britaniya-ukraina-finansirovanie-utechka-anonimus>.

¹⁶ The Safe Internet League has identified about 6.5 million fakes about a special operation in Ukraine. Available: https://tass.ru/obschestvo/14463169?utm_source=yandex.ru&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=yandex.ru&utm_referrer=yandex.ru.

At the same time, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov noted in his speech at the plenary session "International Relations in the context of digitalization of public life" of the International Scientific and Practical Conference "Digital International Relations 2022" on April 14, 2022, the West, having given itself the title of "beacon of democracy", grossly violates its international obligations to ensure freedom of expression, equal access to information, blocking access to it. Thus, the West demonstrates totalitarian intolerance towards alternative points of view¹⁷.

Under the Western repressions fall both individual users of social networks and large media with all the infrastructure for disseminating news that has been created over the years. Under the illegitimate sanctions fall the heads of domestic media operators and ordinary employees are being brought under the influence. Global Western, primarily American, Internet platforms are blocking the Russian information resource all over the world. They do it defiantly, without hesitation.

Thus, the YouTube video hosting, owned by the American IT company Google, restricted access to the briefing by the official representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Maria V. Zakharova in March 17 this year¹⁸. M. Zakharova called the incident as another act of censorship against Russian resources, and also suggested that the blocking could be related to the data on biological laboratories in Ukraine, which were discussed at the briefing and which are hidden in the West. Unreasonable restrictions are also imposed on the publications of the Russian Foreign Ministry and foreign agencies on the Twitter network only because these sources publish truthful information, supported by facts.

The channel of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation DumaTV was also blocked without the possibility of recovery, to which more than 145 thousand people were subscribed, and the number of video content views exceeded 100 million¹⁹.

There are about 36 accounts under YouTube video hosting restrictions, including RT, Russia 24, Sputnik, Zvezda, RBC, NTV, etc.

Roskomnadzor called Youtube one of the key platforms for the dissemination of "false content" about Russia's special military operation in Ukraine. And the restrictive measures introduced by the YouTube video hosting administration against Russian media fundamentally violate the key principles of the free distribution of information and unhindered access to it²⁰.

At the same time, Russian state institutions, the media, critical information infrastructure facilities, and life support systems are almost daily subjected to serious

¹⁷ Speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov at the plenary session "International relations in the context of digitalization of public life" of the International scientific and Practical conference «Digital International Relations 2022», Moscow, April 14, 2022. Available: https://www.mid.ru/ru/press_service/video/view/1809294/.

¹⁸ Google called the reason for blocking the recording of Zakharova's briefing on YouTube. Available: <https://www.m24.ru/news/politika/07042022/448857>.

¹⁹ Google has blocked the Duma TV YouTube channel. Available: <https://dumatv.ru/news/google-zablokiroval-youtube-kanal-duma-tv>.

²⁰ Roskomnadzor demands to immediately remove restrictions from YouTube channels of Russian state media. Available: <https://rkn.gov.ru/news/rsoc/news74284.htm>.

cyberattacks using the latest information technologies. All this is part of a coordinated information aggression against Russia, which requires special attention to the tasks of protecting the information resources of state authorities.

In this regard, Russia is taking specific legislative and practical steps to further strengthen the country's technological digital sovereignty. On April 25, 2022, the head of the Defense and Security Committee of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, Viktor Bondarev, held a round table on the topic: «Mental wars: problems and countermeasures»²¹. The participants of the round table stated that the attacks of the West on our country are the part of an ever-increasing hybrid impact, anti-Russian information and propaganda campaigns discredit the leadership of the state and its domestic and foreign policy, form the prerequisites for destabilizing the socio-political situation, involve youth, including minors in extremist and protest activities.

The current situation requires the activity of all institutions of civil society and authorities, the participants of the round table emphasized. It is noted that the basic principle of the security strategy in the mental sphere should be considered proactive actions, within the framework of a unified system for forecasting and preventing hybrid threats and challenges in the information sphere.

Russia steadily stands for the speedy development of universal norms and principles of responsible behavior of states in the information space, for the development under the auspices of the UN of the Convention on Combating Crimes in the Sphere of the Use of Information and Communication Technologies, as well as for the internationalization of Internet management.

Information sovereignty of the State: criteria and indicators (E.I. Sobolev)

The idea of state sovereignty has been around for a long time. Without sovereignty, it is difficult to imagine a modern state that successfully and actively operates on the world stage. Its essence is the independence and supremacy of power in making and executing decisions both within the country and abroad. The concept of information sovereignty has long been absent from the world legal practice. The first steps towards developing a definition of information sovereignty were taken only in the last decades of the 20th century. This is due to the active development and implementation of technological innovations in people's lives, among which traditional and easy-to-use sources of information were replaced by more complex ones - cellular and satellite communications. The world wide web, the Internet, has become the crowning achievement of these technologies. The Internet has provided mankind with a new platform for interaction - a virtual space in which people could freely communicate with each other regardless of distance, exchange and receive the information they need. It was quite difficult to develop legal mechanisms for regulating the activities of participants in this space, for using data volumes. Nevertheless, active work

²¹ The SF Defense and Security Committee discussed ways to counter mental warfare. Available: http://council.gov.ru/events/main_themes/135291/.

was carried out to create legislative initiatives, also to comprehend the state presence in the virtual space. A.Efremov identifies 4 main stages in the formation of the concept of information sovereignty [2].

The first stage took place in the 1980s. At that time, the Internet was still at the development and testing stage. Due to the fact that the exchange of information through the use of satellites, television and radio has acquired a transboundary character, the researchers decided to consider the relationship between national sovereignty and the right to freedom of information [8]. After comparing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) with state restrictions on the flow of information, they concluded that there are differences in the interpretation of aspects of state sovereignty between developed and developing countries [2:205]. For the first category of countries, unlimited exchange of information is a component that strengthens their sovereignty, while for the second, freedom in the dissemination of data poses a danger to sovereignty [8:267]. This difference can be traced even today.

The second stage is related to the consideration of the Internet itself in the context of a threat to the sovereignty of the state. Its rapid development in the 1990s made it possible to analyze in detail the relationship between the international network and the state. For example, one of the Chinese researchers W.Gong put forward the idea of two components of information sovereignty: external and internal. External includes the legal equality of states and their independence in the creation and dissemination of information. Internal is the legal rule in ensuring the information order and the implementation of information policy [9]. It is said about the continuation of the tendency of developing states to protect their own sovereignty, and developed ones to call for a free exchange of data. In the works of American researchers, no emphasis is placed on the degree of development of the state, since the basis is the belief that the vast majority of countries are taking active steps to protect and strengthen their sovereignty. Moreover, their works indicate that the majority of citizens support these initiatives [2].

In the third stage, up to our days, researchers highlight the concept of data sovereignty. According to this concept, in a number of countries (Russia, France, Germany, Australia) legislative acts were adopted that obligated to save the storage of personal data of citizens on the servers of the country to which they belong [10]. Interaction with data volumes in these states became subject to the jurisdiction of the state in which these data were located. Modern researchers consider the desire of states to develop data sovereignty understandable and reasonable, since it is aimed at maintaining the confidentiality of information, protecting and protecting the interests of the state in the field of ensuring the integrity and availability of data. The concept is spreading not only among Western states, but also in the scientific works of researchers in China, South Korea, and Indonesia. Big data technology is also being studied, which since the early 2010s has been associated with the concept of data sovereignty.

The fourth stage in the development of the concept of information sovereignty is under study. It is associated not so much with the regulation of information flows, but with control over the information and communication infrastructure (IT infrastructure). It has

been reflected in a number of international studies. For example, according to the report of the group of government experts of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly, which was held in 2013, any state activity in IT and IT infrastructure, including their use, is subject to state sovereignty and the principles and international norms arising from it²². In addition to this report, two years later, at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly, that approach was developed and was proposed an approach that would allow in practice the application of international law in matters of the use of information and communication technologies by the state. It was approved that the state has jurisdiction over the IT infrastructure located on its territory. The principles of non-interference in the affairs of other states, sovereign equality, state sovereignty and the resolution of disputes through peaceful means were emphasized²³.

In the research works, various terms are used: digital sovereignty, cyber sovereignty, sovereignty in the information sphere, the Internet of sovereignty. Various definitions are also given to that phenomenon. For example, E.Zorina distinguishes two aspects of information sovereignty, ideological and technical. The ideological aspect includes a developed national idea or national ideology, the achievements of high-level mass culture, the presence of propaganda and legislation in the information sphere. The technical aspect includes the existence of national software, own social networks, search engines, national electronic payment system [4]. V.Bukharin in his work supplements the technical aspect with the presence of microelectronics, network equipment, the national segment on the Internet, cryptographic algorithms and protocols, a functioning navigation system and its own means of protection [1].

In the work of E.Zorina, such criteria of information sovereignty [3] are given. The first is the state's high level of computer and communication systems. They are responsible for the creation and dissemination of information. Without the proper level of provision with these systems, the potential for sovereignty in the network space is limited. The second is the availability of means to protect the above systems: antiviruses, firewalls, etc. Their absence threatens to leak or steal personal data of users and information constituting a state secret. Data protection tools must be created by the state, otherwise there is a risk of dependence on external providers. The existence of a national Internet infrastructure is an important indicator of a state's sustainable information sovereignty, since its own search engines and social networks open up opportunities for state control over processes in cyberspace. One of the criteria is also considered a national payment system, which avoids the risks of external political pressure. In Russia, such a payment system already exists and continues to develop.

Also, the state must have a developed propaganda mechanism and a developed media network, not only within the country, but also must have channels for broadcasting

²² Report of the Group of governmental experts on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. A/68/98. Available: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/98&referer=/english/&Lang=R.

²³ Report of the Group of governmental experts on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. A/70/174. Available: <https://documents-ddsny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/228/37/PDF/N1522837.pdf?OpenElement>.

in foreign countries. The purpose of these channels is to provide domestic and foreign audiences with information that meets national interests. The role of the media, both through the usual forms of broadcasting and through the Internet, is enormous. No wonder the media is called the fourth power. They can present the main news in a neutral way; they can give their own assessment of them, keep silent about incidents that negatively characterize the official position. Therefore, the media, as the most proven political tool, carry out propaganda.

The next feature is the creation and dissemination of products in the field of culture at the state level. For example, products of the cinema or the music industry. Popularization of these products can contribute to the formation of a positive image of the country among citizens of foreign countries. This also includes the creation of the image of the state through mass culture and the Internet. Good examples are the Winter Olympics in Sochi in 2014 or the FIFA World Cup in 2018. Increasing the attractiveness of the country not only meets the interests of information security, but also allows attracting additional investment and making new partners. In diplomacy, the formation of a positive image of the state by the above methods is called «soft power». Another sign of information sovereignty is the active use of the Internet space for the dissemination of ideas that meet the interests of the state. They can be embedded in videos and other publications. Their focus is to discredit negative information and influence the mass consciousness. As an example, E.Zorina cites Wikipedia, one of the most popular sources of information on the Internet [3]. Speaking of criteria, we should not forget about the issues of institutionalization. The information field requires the state to create institutions with assigned responsibilities, such as ministries and departments. Institutionalization requires a legal framework - this is the next criterion. Legal mechanisms of influence provide not only protective functions, but also allow the state to take adequate actions to ensure the integrity of its information sovereignty.

An analysis of the experience of ensuring information sovereignty in China, the United States and Russia shows a number of distinctive features. China has a number of specific features in information and communication technologies. Today, China is one of the leaders in the use of cyberspace. A characteristic feature of the Chinese development of the network segment is the active borrowing of foreign technologies. Only in the last decade, China has moved to the development of its own products. Nevertheless, the tendency to actively attract foreign innovations continues. The Internet for the Chinese government is not only a part of the sovereign space, but also a means for exercising almost total control over its own citizens, actively cultivating online ethics in the spirit of Confucianism and the Chinese model of socialism. The National Cyber Security Strategy, approved in 2017²⁴, highlights both the opportunities and threats presented by the evolution of information technology. Security is a priority in any form of cyberspace development: "security is a necessary condition for development, and any development that occurs at the expense of security is unsustainable. Development is the basis of security, and failure to develop is the greatest danger."

²⁴ National Cyberspace Security Strategy. Available: www.cac.gov.cn/2016-12/27/c_1120195926.htm.

China has been deeply involved in security issues since the early 2000s. The terrorist acts that shook the world on September 11, 2001 forced many countries, including China, to reconsider and tighten their policies in the information environment. The Internet in China is under the vigilant supervision of relevant structures. There is even an Internet police that monitors the incoming data flow to websites, forums and social networks [5]. One of the most famous Chinese inventions for the protection of information sovereignty is the so-called "Golden Shield", better known in the West as the "Great Firewall of China". This project, which has been operating since 2004, is responsible for filtering content on the Internet and blocking dangerous sites. It consists of 3 technological components. The first one is the technology of accumulating statistical information, checking and filtering network packets by their content. The second is a merger between the filtering mechanism and the proxy server. The third component is an advanced data filtering mechanism, featuring a wider range of information analysis. The Golden Shield project is successfully fighting terrorists, quickly detecting their cells in the network. Its effectiveness is evidenced by the number of terrorist attacks in China and neighboring Asian states [7].

The Chinese Internet blocks foreign websites and social networks such as Wikipedia, Facebook, Twitter. Western media is also inaccessible to Chinese users. Since 2017, online anonymity has been banned. The use of Internet became available only after registration with an indication of your real name and contact information. Anonymous commenting, discussing or creating Internet posts is not possible. Moreover, technologies to protect information sovereignty are actively used to control public behavior. In 2020, a previously experimental social credit system was introduced throughout China, rewarding or punishing citizens depending on the nature of their activity both in life and on the Internet. For its implementation, several hundred million new generation cameras are planned to be installed throughout the country. Depending on the high or low amount of social loans, a person will receive benefits when using transport, shopping, traveling around the country, or restrictions on using the Internet, quality medicine, and purchasing expensive real estate, respectively. Those who lose a significant amount of their credit risk is going to be completely isolated, since communication with such marginalized persons of the social system will not be encouraged by the government.

The Chinese themselves are calm about the introduction of the new system, as they are quite disciplined in matters of control over their personal lives. China is not only using means to protect its information sovereignty, but is also trying to prevent potential threats. The country has its own army of Internet trolls, consisting of government-funded bloggers (their total number is from 300 thousand to 2 million people), and cyber troops separately from them. The former are responsible for maintaining the pro-government line in controversial issues on the Internet in difficult times for the country, during periods of various crises and upheavals. Internet trolls leave a lot of comments in support of the ruling party, skillfully change the topic of discussion and never attack the opponent directly. Chinese cyber troops are acting more seriously in the Internet space. Their activities are often covered by foreign media. The main activity of this type of armed forces is cyber espionage and hacker attacks. Thus, China, despite its technological lag behind the leading

countries of the world, has provided its information sovereignty with serious protection based on an obedient society under state supervision, total filtering of information on the Internet and the actions of law enforcement agencies. However, the authoritarian methods of this country are not suitable for everyone.

The United States, being one of the leaders in technology and global control over information flows, has been developing concepts for ensuring its own information sovereignty for a long time. Today, the main document responsible for the practical application of measures to ensure information sovereignty is the National Cyber Security Strategy, adopted by President Donald Trump in 2018, and the US Department of Defense Cyberspace Strategy of the same year²⁵. These documents put the protection of American democratic values at the forefront, therefore, a distinctive feature of the US information sovereignty (according to the official government line) is openness and accessibility in receiving and exchanging information. The US government guarantees free access to the Internet and other channels of social communication. It is the unlimited movement of data, according to the authors of the strategy that ensures the security of the American society, its stable development, financial well-being and technological superiority

The main role in ensuring information sovereignty is assigned to the federal government. The strategy describes the prospects for further centralization of the management and control of the security of the civilian sector in cyberspace by increasing transparency in interdepartmental affairs, eliminating duplicative actions that complicate the procedure for fulfilling the tasks assigned to the government in the information environment. The strategy gives equal responsibility to the government and the private sector in ensuring the security of critically vulnerable infrastructure. IT vendors play an important role in the US economy, so to keep them productive, the federal government is committed to actively work with them to counter hacker attacks together.

The United States is actively working to improve its laws in order to provide law enforcement agencies with additional opportunities to track illegal actions on the Internet. These include both criminal activity using computer systems inside the country, and hacker attacks from outside in the form of hacking, data theft, organization of leaks, attacks on information infrastructure. The United States is open to cooperation with foreign countries in matters of security in cyberspace. Through cooperation, joint projects with its partners, including both entire countries and representatives of individual industry groups (industrialists, scientists), civil society, America cannot only strengthen its digital sovereignty, but also spread its influence, which would provide the United States with a leading position in development of information and communication technologies. The government actively promotes the development of creative potential in the information field, providing financial support for projects such as artificial intelligence and quantum informatics. To improve the effectiveness of digital sovereignty, it is planned to upgrade the existing IT infrastructure with next-generation technologies.

²⁵ Department of Defense Cyber Strategy – 2018. Available: <https://www.cybercom.mil/About/Mission-and-Vision/>.

The actions of the United States to ensure information sovereignty must coincide with the content of all international norms. The Government will encourage compliance with these standards and prove by its own example the need to comply with them. In case of violation of these norms, as well as a threat to digital sovereignty, the United States has the right to use all the tools at its disposal to influence those whose activities in cyberspace are dangerous: diplomatic, informational, military (kinetic and digital), financial, intelligence, law enforcement capabilities. Thus, the protection of its own information sovereignty in the United States is closely intertwined with the principles of deterring potential adversaries in the information field at the global level. A major role in achieving these goals is played by American intelligence, which online identifies the sources of information campaigns, disinformation, hacker attacks and transmits this information to the federal government. The loudest example of recent US actions in the information space has been the campaign to accuse Russia of interfering in the US elections in 2016 as a direct encroachment on the country's sovereignty in cyberspace. Thus, the United States has created one of the most complex systems to ensure its information sovereignty.

A serious technological base, a powerful intelligence apparatus and the geopolitical position of the leader of the Western world allow the US government to implement its goals quite effectively, to solve the tasks to protect state interests in cyberspace set in doctrinal documents, to impose its own rules of the game on weaker participants and to expand its influence. The emphasis of the US actions on the Internet is on close cooperation with its partners, openness and respect for human rights. However, after the events of September 11, the American government significantly expanded the powers of law enforcement agencies in matters of information control, which became equivalent to monitoring the actions of its citizens. On this basis, scandals periodically occur, the loudest of which are connected with the confessions of the escaped employee of the American special services Edward Snowden and the Australian journalist Julian Assange. The data that they provided to the public hit hard on the image of the United States and shook the position of this country as the leader of the free world.

The Russian Federation is actively developing the concept of state sovereignty in the digital space. Nevertheless, now Russia does not have such a detailed strategy as the United States or China. However, it is impossible to say that information sovereignty is not paid attention to. On the contrary, improving security in this area is one of the priorities of our country.

In 2016, the Information Security Doctrine of the Russian Federation was adopted²⁶, which details measures to protect information sovereignty, as well as to defend Russia's national interests in the information sphere. National interests include actions to protect the constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens in obtaining and using information; to ensure the uninterrupted operation of the information and communication infrastructure, where priority is given to critical infrastructure facilities; as well as to develop knowledge-intensive branches of information technology and the electronics

²⁶ The Information Security Doctrine of the Russian Federation. Available: <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/documents/6/5.html>.

industry, to improve current activities; to convey to internal and external audiences relevant and reliable information about the policy pursued by Russia and the official position of the country on significant issues; to use of IT technologies to ensure national security in culture; to cooperate in creating an international digital security system, to strengthen an equal strategic partnership in the information sphere. These measures are aimed at creating a sustainable and protected from any form of influence information infrastructure, stable development of the country, protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens.

The protection of information sovereignty is achieved through ensuring information security in the following areas:

- in the field of defense through conflict prevention using digital technologies, detection of information threats;
- in state and public security by combating the propaganda of extremism, calls to undermine sovereignty and change the constitutional order using information technology; countering the activities of foreign intelligence services on the territory of the country; increasing the security of critical information infrastructure, its functioning; improving information protection mechanisms and increasing the effectiveness of information policy implementation;
- in economics by eliminating the technological dependence of domestic industry on foreign countries; improving the competitiveness of the Russian information services sector; developing its own electronic database;
- in science, technology and education through the development of scientific research, the creation of promising information technologies; the formation of experienced personnel in the field of digital technologies;
- in strategic stability and partnership through the implementation of an independent policy to realize of national interests; assistance in the formation of international legal mechanisms in the field of information technology and the system of international information security; coverage of Russia's position on digital security; development of the national segment of the Internet.

The doctrine identifies the vulnerable sides of Russia's information sovereignty. These include: the weak competitiveness of domestic digital technologies, the state's dependence on foreign innovations, especially the electronic computing base, the low level of education of citizens in matters of personal information security, the weak pace of equipping production with Russian information technology components, the serious struggle of the leading states in the information sphere to maintain their dominant position in the world. In his article, which assesses the state policy in the field of information security, D.Litvinov supplements the list of weaknesses with sanctions imposed by the West, the lack of an orderly structure in the regulatory framework, the lack of budget funds to implement the declared actions [6]. The digital security doctrine is a component of the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation adopted in 2021. It summarizes the above measures to achieve a secure information environment. Thus, Russia considers the protection of information sovereignty to be one of the components of ensuring national security. Despite the current number of

problems in the practical implementation of the measures enshrined in the doctrines for the state protection of its sovereignty in all areas, we can assume that the development of information sovereignty in our country is actively engaged.

Ensuring the information sovereignty of states (D.I.Sedunov)

The need to ensure information sovereignty was clearly manifested in the events related to Russia's special operation in Ukraine. To compare Western and Russian approaches to ensuring information sovereignty, we propose three main criteria according to the technologies used: the speed of the impact (how quickly the technology is used), the cost of the impact (the resources necessary for the application of the technology), the duration of the impact (the prolongation of the result of the applied technology).

In the "Western" approach to ensuring information sovereignty, using the example of the current conflict "collective West against Russia", the following three key technologies for ensuring information sovereignty can be identified:

Strict censorship of information, blocking of any information other than state policy. Technologically, this is manifested in the ban of official media belonging to the opposing side (RT, Sputnik, and other channels of the Russian Federation were closed); in the strict censorship of social networks (removal and blocking of any information from the Russian Federation from the information field in FB, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram); a ban on the dissemination of official information in the media from the Russian Federation (blocking interviews, broadcasts, publishing only interpretations that are beneficial to Western politicians in isolation from the context).

2) Creating false content aimed at discrediting Russia and its allies. Technologies of fakes, publications of false analytics; active provocations to create false stories and informational occasions in the media are widely spread; as well as links to unreliable and unverified sources containing information necessary for Western politicians to justify their actions to their citizens.

3) Emotional presentation of information: emphasis on affect, not on rationality, ignoring logic and facts.

The Russian approach to ensuring information sovereignty differs from the Western one:

1. Detailed exposure and analysis of fakes by both official state authorities and the patriotic blogosphere. In particular, we are talking about the channels of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Defense and others in the Telegram; about providing reliable information in the form of stories from the scenes of events and interviews with eyewitnesses, about the publication of official documents of foreign countries confirming hostile intentions towards Russia and the population of the DPR and LPR.

2. Russia blocks hostile actions and restricts the work of anti-Russian aggressive media and new media, social networks that openly pursue aggressive information policy on FB and Instagram; gives symmetrical responses to the ban of Russian media abroad; expand

the number of non-profit organizations and media in the group of foreign agents; adopt the regulatory legal acts to ensure the information sovereignty of Russia.

3. Russia activates the patriotic blogosphere.

Conclusions

Comparing the Russian and Western approaches according to the previously identified criteria, we can draw the following conclusions. Severe censorship in the field of information works quickly, only a prepared point of view is communicated to the population, and alternative points of view are completely excluded. At the same time, maintaining and maintaining the necessary infrastructure for censorship activities requires significant financial costs. Violation of the information blockade over a long period of time leads to a violation of information sovereignty (an example from history is the Iron Curtain of the USSR).

The joint use of false information technologies with “emotional mobilization” quickly brings results, but requires high financial costs for the preparation and presentation of information. This, as with strict censorship of information, sooner or later may lead to a violation of information sovereignty.

The specifics of the technologies used in the Russian version are the work for a long time perspective with minimal investment of financial resources. This approach makes it possible, under conditions of financial constraints, to build a promising information policy and strengthen information sovereignty.

Discussion

Having studied the approaches of China, the United States and Russia to the issue of organizing and protecting information sovereignty, it is possible to determine the current trends. First of all, the development by various countries of a set of measures to create a stable and secure information environment is caused by the increased role of information and communication technologies in all spheres of people's lives at the same time. If thirty years ago only a narrow circle of specialists thought about the existence of such an extensive, multifunctional and high-tech data exchange system as the Internet, today the use of the Internet has become an integral part of our daily routine. Its capabilities in the modern world clearly exceed all the expectations of those who were involved in the development of this innovation at the initial stages. The widespread digitalization of economic, social, political, cultural processes implies the existence of legal and technological mechanisms for their implementation, as well as tools for protecting the transformed information.

Secondly, the coronavirus pandemic that began two years ago has accelerated the introduction of information technology into people's lives, especially in the organization of

work. It required additional costs and additional decisions to form its sustainable structure. Today, as deaths from new strains of the virus have fallen, many experts are of the opinion that the pandemic will end soon. However, the end of the epidemic is unlikely to affect the desire of the global elite to deprive themselves of all the advantages created by information and communication technologies in recent years, as they have become a good platform for additional supervision over the activities of their own citizens.

Thirdly, cases of cyber espionage, hacker attacks and the use of the power of social networks to control social consciousness have increased. Countries with underdeveloped cyber infrastructure have little to offer against technologically advanced competitors.

The first and perhaps the key vulnerability of Russia's digital sovereignty lie in technological weakness in the face of external dangers. In the case of a planned large-scale hacker attack, information infrastructure objects can be disabled. The situation is complicated by the strong dependence of the state on imports of high-tech products. If these supply channels stop, not only the further improvement of digital sovereignty, but also the technological development of the country as a whole can significantly slow down and cause a number of problems. The potential for the production of domestic analogues of Western electronic components is at a very low level. It is no secret that in the third decade of the 21st century, the most developed countries are actively waging cyberwars around the world. The targets of such attacks are strategically important objects in the digital space and vulnerable at the same time. Thanks to the developed malicious programs that penetrate the devices, their functioning is disrupted or completely stopped.

The consequences can immediately affect the economic, political, energy, and defense spheres. Another threat to the information sovereignty of our country is the information war, which is actively waged by some foreign states. Its essence lies in the juggling of facts, the manipulation of data and the formation of a distorted picture of the world, where the image of Russia is negative. A clear example of this war was the propaganda of the Western media about the imminent start of a large-scale war between Russia and Ukraine. Specific dates were given for the beginning of the invasion, but on these days the declared invasion did not occur²⁷.

Despite this significant miscalculation, the information war has an impact: an unstable market, the growth of anti-Russian sentiment in Europe and the escalation of the situation around Ukraine. As a source of threat to information sovereignty we note the use of social networks as a platform for organizing illegal activities. One example is the use of the Telegram messenger to coordinate protest movements on the territory of Belarus in summer and autumn of 2020. The high level of anonymity provided by this messenger allows not only to hide your identity, but also to ensure security and confidentiality in the transfer of information, which was used by the organizers of the protests. The most famous channel on Telegram during the turmoil was NEXTA²⁸.

²⁷ There is a cloudless sky over Ukraine. How the West waited all night for Russia's «invasion». Available: <https://www.gazeta.ru/army/2022/02/16/14541109.shtml>.

²⁸ How four people created the main Telegram channel of the Belarusian protest with an audience of 2 million subscribers. Available: <https://www.forbes.ru/tehnologii/407119-kak-chetyre-cheloveka-sozdali-glavnyy-telegram-kanal-belorusskogo-protesta-s>.

Of course, even good Telegram protection can be bypassed and real participants can be identified, but this requires higher technologies and, most importantly, time. And in a period of political instability, we have no enough time. During the crisis in Kazakhstan in January this year, this messenger was also used, not only by local opposition forces, but also by foreign participants leading remote control of the riots that broke out²⁹. The problem of social networks is not only the organization of opposition movements. Anonymity is also enjoyed by terrorist cells, traffickers of illegal substances; distributors of child pornography and other prohibited content³⁰.

The uncontrolled circulation of cryptocurrencies is another threat to Russian sovereignty in cyberspace. Bitcoin is one of the most common today. Since the cryptocurrency is not secured by anything, which means it is not capable of being managed, this creates a certain risk for the state economy. Despite the decline in the value of key cryptocurrencies, the threat emanating from them does not disappear, and their market requires legal regulation by the state. Among the additional threats to information sovereignty, one can single out scam on the Internet, which includes offenses and crimes of various scales. Cybercrime continues to evolve, and the costs of it continue to grow.

Each of the above threats can either be solved or its risk can be reduced. It would be good to take the following measures:

- significantly increase funding for the domestic high-tech industry, and most importantly, support Russian research in the field of computer technology in order to reduce dependence on foreign products to a minimum; increase the security of critical infrastructure facilities;
- continue to develop cybersecurity in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, build up military potential in the field of digital technologies, use the experience of foreign states in similar conditions and thereby more successfully resist their attacks in cyberspace;
- pursue an active policy in the information sphere aimed at combating false reports; form a clearly articulated official point of view on vital issues and timely communicate it to a wide audience inside and outside the country; refute provocative statements, defend our interests in a balanced and reasoned manner;
- be attentive to publications in social networks that may threaten information sovereignty; track illegal and other prohibited by law activities;
- ensure a clear and consistent state policy in the field of cryptocurrency circulation;
- develop and implement the state policy in the field of educating the population on information security issues, the rules for the safe interaction of citizens with digital technologies, their skillful use (pay special attention to older people as the group most at risk of Internet scam);
- strengthen control over illegal activities on the Internet.

²⁹ According to NEXTA patterns: Who is behind the Telegram channel from Kiev, which called for a revolution in Kazakhstan. Available: <https://life-ru.turbopages.org/life.ru/s/p/1462931>.

³⁰ In Russia, terrorists actively use Telegram for communication, the FSB said. Available: <https://ria.ru/20170626/1497271423.html>.

Conclusions

Technological and legal understanding of the concept of information sovereignty began more than 40 years ago and continues up to this day. The development of the concept is closely related to the development of technologies in general from cellular and satellite communications to the global Internet and cloud storage technology. This concept affects not only issues related to all possible types of information, but also its relationship with international standards in the field of human rights protection, in protection of state sovereignty, in matters of the use of information and communication infrastructure.

In the 21st century, it is difficult to imagine a country that would not take care of its information sovereignty and, in particular, security in cyberspace. Despite the fact that today information sovereignty has not yet been given due attention by scientists, the participants of that scientific discussion express confidence that in the near future we will see new, deep research and scientifically reasoned managerial decisions. The moral and legal side of the issue also should be discussed. Of course, the sovereignty of the state is an integral part of the modern world and a guarantee of the security of society. However, in striving to achieve this security, it is important not to forget about the basic human rights enshrined in dozens of international documents, and not to try to ensure security solely for the sake of one's own unilateral benefit.

Summarizing the opinions of the participants in the discussion, we draw a number of conclusions:

- The concept of information sovereignty has been developing for more than 40 years, overcome four stages of its formation from technical and legal understanding of the position of the state among data flows to international standards in the field of control over digital infrastructure.
- The signs of information sovereignty are: availability of a technological base and means for its protection, the existence of a national payment system, the implementation of propaganda and improving the image of the country in the information space, the dissemination of ideas that meet the interests of the state in it.
- Countries that differ from each other, such as China, the United States and Russia, demonstrate different approaches to the organization of their information sovereignty. In China, it is achieved due to total control over information, lack of full access to foreign sources and a powerful network protection system. The United States enjoys its leading position in the field of technology, actively involves the private sector in cooperation and has equipped cyber forces to protect information sovereignty. In Russia, ensuring state sovereignty in the information space is achieved through the Information Security Doctrine and National Security Strategy. The doctrine names the following tasks: the development of the domestic segment

of the Internet, increasing the resilience of strategic facilities to hacker attacks, the development of information technology and international cooperation to create legal documents that ensure fair and secure use of cyberspace.

- Among the trends affecting the development of ideas about the information sovereignty of the state, one can single out: the rapid growth of research in the digital industry and the creation of high-tech products; the coronavirus pandemic, which caused a leap in the use of these products in everyday life, the fact that many forms of interaction between people have switched to online mode, the use of cyberspace as a platform for fighting in the form of hacker attacks and espionage.
- Russia's information sovereignty faces such serious challenges as technological dependence, cyberattacks, information wars, and the use of social networks to ensure anonymity while committing illegal actions, unregulated cryptocurrency markets, Internet scam.
- The threats existing for our country can be solved if additional measures are taken to develop and introduce domestic high-tech products, equip the Russian army with the necessary means to repel possible types of attacks in cyberspace from foreign states; to create technologies to combat fake news and information, to monitor social networks for the placement of information threatening sovereignty in them, ensuring the policy in the field of cryptocurrencies and promoting the safe use of the Internet among citizens.

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The communication mode of Belarus: stability and formation factors

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Abstract. The article presents the materials of a scientific discussion held by the National Research Institute of Communications Development in April 2021. As the result of discussion the controllability assessment was carried out and the type of the communication mode of Belarus was determined. Geographical, historical, and geopolitical factors forming the Belarusian communication mode are analyzed from a historical point of view and in their current state. The evolution of communication mode was carried out under the influence of two multidirectional trends: the development of a system of vertical communications, typical for countries with an institutional matrix where redistributive institutions dominate, and horizontal communication systems, which is typical for countries with market-dominated institutions. As the result we see the formation of two cores in the communication mode. A number of participants of the discussion believe that one of the cores of the communication mode (connected with the Catholic Church) makes it impossible to build a rigid hierarchical communication model in Belarus, absolutely controlled by the authorities.

Keywords: communication mode, manageability, political management, political stability, Belarus, social system, institutional matrix, redistributive institutions, market institutions

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Introduction

The difficult period of geopolitical instability actualized the problem of socio-political stability, the effectiveness of public communications, channels of communication and information, the friendliness of interactions between countries, which led to an increasing interest in the study of communication regimes. The communication regimes of countries that combine “cultural traditions, legal norms, situational circumstances, the interests of decision-making centers and centers of influence and communication activity of non-state actors” (5) are becoming the subject of close scientific attention and the object of technological influence. Significant actors of country communication regimes include: political power, civil institutions, media, church, army, security structures, and business structures. The control centers of communication regimes, as a rule, are concentrated in the institutions of power. Despite the structural similarity of the communication regimes of different countries, they have functional and content uniqueness.

One of the countries of the post-Soviet space, attracting the attention of many political scientists, sociologists, historians, is Belarus. According to research conducted by NIIRK, the Belarusian communication regime is distinguished by a high level of state control over communications, weak openness of channels and filters of political mobility, channels and filters of entry into the control center, development and decision-making

regarding the norms and rules of socio-political communication in the country. This article is a presentation of the main results of the study of the controllability of the communication modes in Belarus and the position of Russian and Belarusian experts invited for scientific discussion.

Materials and methods

The research is based on systemic and neo-institutional approaches, according to which the development of a social system is ensured by a complex structure of institutions that structure social action and understand the “rules of the game” [6]. In this structure, it is possible to identify the basic institutions that form the institutional matrix. The features of its formation and evolution determine the essential features of the country’s communication regime. The authors used the methods of content analysis, event analysis, expert interviews, sociological surveys, and the method of retrospective analysis. The empirical base of the study was the normative legal documents of the Republic of Belarus, statements of officials, media materials, new media, information and analytical centers materials, specific practices for implementing the decisions made.

Results and discussion

Controllability of the Communication Mode of the Republic of Belarus (V.V.Komleva)

The study of communication modes began in 2020, when NIIRK posed the problem, introduced the concept of “communication mode” into scientific circulation, developed a methodology for scientific understanding of this phenomenon and a methodology for its empirical study. Our focus is primarily on the countries of the post-Soviet space. In 2021, we conducted a comparative study of the friendliness of communication modes and published the first rating of countries compiled by the degree of their friendliness towards Russia. Belarus shared the first place with Kazakhstan. The study of friendliness and the compilation of the rating is planned to be carried out annually. In 2022, we began comparative studies of the manageability of country communication regimes.

Let me remind you that we consider the communication mode as a controlled (to varying degrees), institutionalized (to varying degrees) system of norms, rules, principles, customs, traditions, structures, actors that regulate information and communication processes. Mode regulation concerns two immanent components of the communication mode: information (messages, information transmitted in the process are regulated); communication (the process and channels for establishing bilateral or multilateral contacts are regulated - the result of communication is controlled). Both, information and communication create an information space. That is the purpose of the communication mode.

The communication mode of each country has a control center that develops rules and regulations. The communication regime of each country has a control center that develops rules and regulations. Usually, they are legally fixed by the institutions of power and are formed in accordance with the ideas of the authorities about the desired public discourse, ways of interacting with society and their ideas about the models of information channels (mass media, new media, etc.). Today we see that these ideas about the “correct” communication mode are determined by the national interests of countries, national security considerations (in particular, information security) and the desire to ensure information sovereignty.

The communication system is influenced not only by the laws adopted by the authorities, but also by informal practices that have historically emerged and are fixed as quite effective norms of communication. We are talking about customs, traditions, stereotypes, historically established socio-cultural institutions (for example, elders, clans, tribes). In a number of countries, they have a significant impact both on those who legally establish the rules of communication and on those who must comply with them, they are legally fixed by the institutions of power and are formed in accordance with the ideas of the authorities about the desired public discourse, ways of interacting with society and their ideas about the models of information channels (mass media, new media, etc.). Today we see that these ideas about the “correct” communication mode are determined by the national interests of countries, national security considerations (in particular, information security) and the desire to ensure information sovereignty.

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In our study, we analyzed two characteristics of communication modes: controllability and friendliness. Materials on friendliness were published by us earlier (3). I will focus on the study of controllability.

Controllability of the Communication Mode of Belarus

Considering that controllability is society’s agreement with the measure of control and restrictions that the control center imposes on public communications, the author’s methodology was based on three important parameters:

1. location of the communication mode control center (domestic or international);
2. the degree of conventionality of the control center of the communication mode;
3. assessment of manageability indicators, the main criteria of which are:
 - 3.1. the ability of communication mode control centers to transfer it from one state to another without conflict;
 - 3.2. the ability to achieve controlled parameters of the communication mode;

3.3. the ability to use the mechanisms of self-organization and self-reflection of control objects to regulate communication modes.

From January 2021 to January 2022, a study of the above parameters of the controllability of the communication mode in the Republic of Belarus was conducted.

Criterion 1. Location (inside the country or outside the country) of the decision-making and control of the communication mode center.

The control center is inside the country. The main actors in this center are the President of the Republic and State institutions, whose functions include regulation, support, control, sanctions for deviations in the field of communication. In fact, legislative, executive, judicial and law enforcement authorities are involved here.

Since 2018, there has been an activation of alternative communication mode control centers in Belarus. The key technologies of their work concerned socialization and the formation of civic networks. As a rule, these centers were located outside the country, but based on non-profit organizations and projects (education, media, leadership, human rights, etc.) within the country. These projects and non-profit organizations developed in Belarus with the support of foreign investors and technologists. In 2020, they made an unsuccessful attempt to take over the management of communications within the country. Currently, such attempts at communication influence are being made by the opposition located abroad.

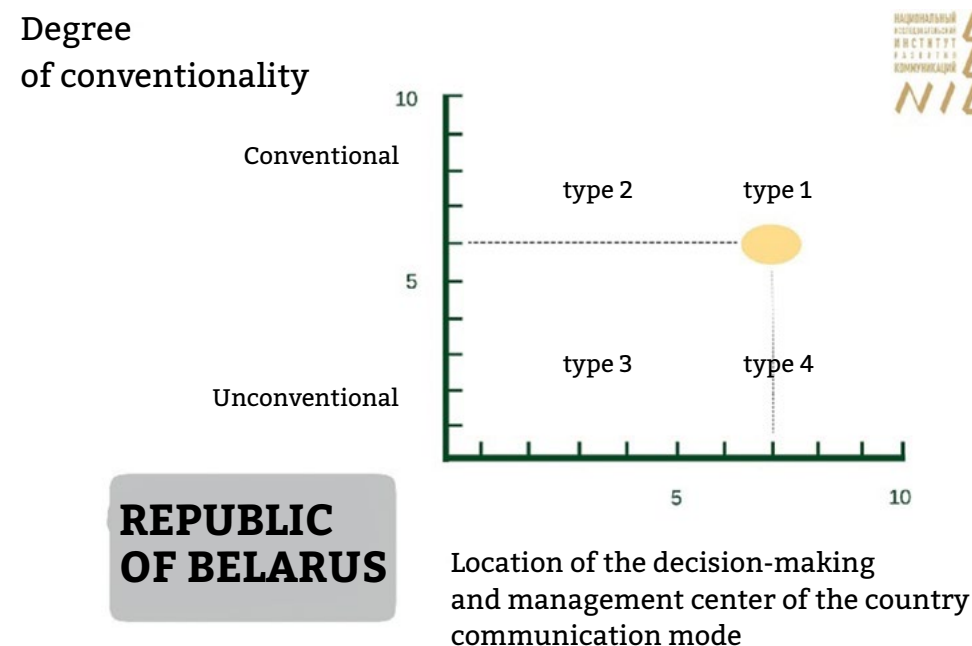
It should be noted that, taking into account the integration ties within the Union State and the CIS, the communication mode control center in Belarus sometimes adjusts its information agenda in the context of the Russian one. Socio-political discourse and media content can also be adjusted (including through the dissemination of information by Russian media and new media). Nevertheless, the issues of the rules and norms of the country communication mode are regulated by the Belarusian authorities independently, as well as bear independent responsibility for the effectiveness of these norms and rules. Belarus is guided by the principles of information sovereignty and the goals of national security. From a scientific point of view, the interpretation of the Belarusian communication mode can be defined in terms of political realism. It is obvious that Belarus "defends its own national interests in the information sphere using all available forces and means"¹.

Criterion 2. The degree of conventionality of the decision-making and control of the communication mode center.

After the presidential elections in Belarus, part of the population had doubts about the reliability of the results, and alternative channels of information support these doubts to this day. Decisions that tighten the norms and rules of communication cause controversy. According to the results of the expert assessment, the degree of conventionality of the communication mode in Belarus was rated 6 (out of 10 possible), and by the location of the decision-making and management center 7 (out of 10 possible). The type of communication mode in Belarus is characterized as conventional with an internal control center and is shown in Figure 1.

¹ The concept of Information Security of the Republic of Belarus. Approved by the Resolution of the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus, dated March 18, 2019. No. 1.

Fig. 1. The type of communication mode of Belarus according to the level of controllability and conventionality



Criterion 3. The assessment of manageability indicators is disclosed by three sub-criteria.

3.1. Manageability criterion: the ability of communication mode control centers to transfer it from one state to another without conflict.

The Belarusian case of 2020–2021 demonstrates the controllability of the country's communication regime through the conscious updating of the norms and rules of socio-political communication by government institutions. As a result, the communication mode remained under the control of the conventional control center – the current government. Although the contradictions that arose during the socio-political conflict of August 2020 pushed for such changes.

Legally, the guarantor of freedom of speech and information in Belarus is the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus. According to Article 33 of the Constitution, "monopolization of mass media by the state, public associations or individual citizens, as well as censorship is not allowed." The main law that controls and regulates the media in Belarus is the law "On the Mass Media" dated July 17, 2008 N.427–3. In May 2021, amendments to this law were adopted. In particular, the legal mechanisms of control over the media, Internet resources, foreign founders of the media, editors-in-chief of the media, companies conducting a public opinion poll on socio-political topics have been strengthened; restrictions have been introduced on propaganda of extremist activity, calls for it; and other information, the dissemination of which can harm national interests.

In May 2021, amendments were also made to the law on mass events, which strengthened control over events and the responsibility of their organizers. In particular, instead of a notification procedure, a permissive procedure for holding mass events has been introduced. In accordance with Art.8 of the Law on Mass Events “until obtaining permission to hold a mass event, its organizer (organizers), as well as other organizations and citizens, are prohibited from publicly calling for the organization and holding of a mass event, including announcing in the media, the global computer network Internet or other information networks about the date, place and time of its holding, to produce and distribute leaflets, posters and other materials for this purpose”². A ban has been introduced on coverage in the media, the Internet or other information networks in real time of mass events held in violation of the established procedure for organizing or holding them, in order to popularize or promote them. In carrying out their activities, journalists are prohibited from acting as organizers or participants in mass events.

Thus, we see that the control center of the communication mode of Belarus is capable and has the ability to relatively conflict-free transfer the mode from one state to another. Active changes take place after August 2020. The change in the goals of the communication mode and the modernization of the tools to achieve them were to a greater extent forced and associated with attempts at socio-political destabilization. But subsequent decisions and actions show that the management center was able to analyze the problems and make a number of important decisions: 1) to create conditions for increasing information sovereignty; 2) to strengthen control over the content of information circulating in the information field; 3) to strengthen the requirements and control over the activities of media institutions and non-profit organizations; 4) to create new institutions of interaction between government and society.

3.2. Controllability criterion: the ability to achieve the target and controlled parameters of the communication mode.

In cybernetics, where the term “controllability” was introduced, controllability is closely related to the ability of a system to achieve controlled. We are talking about a wide range of parameters set by the communication mode of a particular country.

Judging by the statements of the President of Belarus, the adopted strategic documents and regulatory legal acts, the key target parameters of the communication regime of Belarus are:

1) the creation of institutions for effective communications with the authorities (feedback systems and interactions) for a better understanding of public needs and sentiments, to increase the level of public trust and support those norms and rules of communication that the authorities establish. In other words, the task is to increase the conventionality.

2) achieving information sovereignty. Information sovereignty is understood as “the inalienable and exclusive possibility of law of the State to independently determine the rules for the possession, use and disposal of national information resources, to implement an

² On Changing the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Mass Events in the Republic of Belarus”: Law of the Republic of Belarus dated May 24, 2021 No. 108-3. Available: <https://president.gov.by/ru/events/subpisan-zakon-o-massovyh-meropriyatiyah>.

independent foreign and domestic State information policy, to form a national information infrastructure, to ensure information security”³;

3) achieving information neutrality. The principle of information neutrality provides for “pursuing a peaceful foreign information policy, respecting the generally recognized and generally accepted rights of any state in this area, excluding interference in the information sphere of other countries to discredit or challenge their political, economic, social and spiritual standards and priorities, as well as causing harm information infrastructure of all states and participation in their information confrontation”⁴. At the same time, the Republic of Belarus defends its own national interests in the information sphere using all available forces and means.

The tools for achieving and controlling these parameters of controllability of the communication mode are, in fact, formulated in the Concept of Information Security of the Republic of Belarus. Chapters 7 and 8 of the Concept also clearly indicate the readiness of the control center for tough actions regarding external interference in the communication field of Belarus. It was noted that Belarus is pursuing a policy of information containment, which is expressed in “demonstrating a reliable readiness to repel destructive information impacts, a sufficient possibility of technological, organizational, legal counteraction to threats in the information sphere and identifying their sources”⁵.

Thus, the ability to achieve target and control indicators is above average (7 points out of 10). The control center itself recognizes that it is not possible to fully achieve the target indicators, therefore a number of changes to the legislation and strategic documents have been adopted.

3.3. Controllability indicator - the ability to use the mechanisms of self-organization of control objects to regulate communication modes.

In modern conditions of non-linearity, the growth of self-reflection of communication participants, it is increasingly difficult to maintain controllability of communication modes through control and subordination. The autonomy and self-organization of social subjects increasingly determines their reactions to the regulatory influences of power (up to confrontation). Therefore, it is advisable to use the creative energy of self-organization to form communication modes to involve self-organizing communication networks and information channels, especially the institution of citizen journalism, in communication with the authorities. State-civil partnerships are necessary for timely receipt of information through feedback from the authorities and society, for timely adjustment of decisions made and for increasing public support for the norms and rules of communication and the content of disseminated information.

Experts gave a low rating (4 out of 10) to the ability of the control center in Belarus to use the mechanisms of self-organization of control objects to regulate communication modes. The risk lies in the weak involvement of self-organizing communities in relations

³ The Concept of Information Security of the Republic of Belarus. Approved by the Resolution of the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus dated March 18, 2019. N.1.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

and system of communications with the authorities. A number of communities do not set such goals, they were originally created to change the parameters of the regime, and not to support it. They are blocked, restricted, prohibited. This is understandable and logical from the point of view of ensuring national security. But there are initially consciously and constructively minded self-organizing communities whose involvement in systemic relations with the authorities would be appropriate to ensure the controllability of the communication mode and social immunity against destabilizing influences.

Factors of influence on the formation of the Belarusian communication regime (P.A.Barakhvostov)

The Belarusian institutional matrix was formed and developed under the influence of both endogenous and exogenous factors. The flat nature of the territory, completely covered with forests and a network of rivers and reservoirs, a climate with a short warm period, the need to reclaim arable land from the forest were not favorable for the development of agriculture. Floods were a big problem, requiring work to prevent and eliminate their consequences. In addition, the Belarusian rivers were communication routes, played an important role in trade contacts (in particular, the well-known route "from the Varangians to the Greeks" ran here), which required security for their use.

The result of this and the "path dependence" effect was the formation and self-reproduction of the most important institutions of the redistributive type: a centralized power structure for managing agricultural and flood control work and a communitarian worldview. However, the density of the hydraulic society (the term was introduced by K.Wittfogel) in these lands was significantly lower than in the East, due to a less developed bureaucratic system due to the impulsive variant of collective work.

The geopolitical location of the Belarusian lands determined the "disturbing" neighborhood. Due to the capture of the mouth of the Western Dvina by the Livonian Order, and the southern trade routes by the Tatars for many decades, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (hereinafter GDL), which included the Belarusian lands, was cut off from both the West and the East. This forced self-isolation, supplemented by a poorly developed infrastructure, led to the fact that each of the regions in the GDL was an independent economic entity, and horizontal communication was built between the regions.

After the conclusion of the Union of Krewo between the GDL and the Kingdom of Poland, there was an active penetration of market institutions from the Polish institutional matrix. Among them are the institutions of subsidiarity, pluralism of opinions and ideologies introduced by the Catholic Church and merchant capital, the concept of freedom, the spread of Magdeburg Law, etc. The strengthening of market institutions contributed to the development of horizontal communication links. However, their alignment ran into active opposition from the magnates - the owners of large latifundia (later - ordinations, which were an analogue of Western European majors), who, on the one hand, were generated by market institutions that came from the West, on the other, they tried to build within their possessions and spread outwards a strictly hierarchical top-down management and communication system. Thus, the

evolution of the communication mode in the Belarusian lands since ancient times has been carried out in the face of opposition from two opposite trends: the development of a system of vertical communications, typical for countries with an institutional matrix dominated by redistributive institutions, and a system of horizontal communications, which is typical for countries with the dominance of market institutions in the institutional matrix.

Located on a civilizational fault formed when GDL became a part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Belarus is now the subject of both two influences: the Western one with its open communication mode and the eastern one, which is characterized by more closed country communication modes. As a result of the diffusion of institutions in the Belarusian communication mode, not one, as usual, but two cores have been formed, connected with the Catholic and Orthodox churches, around which communication forces are grouped. Although they are not equivalent (15% of Catholics in the country), nevertheless, due to the peculiarities of the Catholic Church, its relative independence from the state, such a feature means that it is impossible to build a rigid hierarchical communication model in Belarus, absolutely controlled by the authorities, since a certain part of the population has the opportunity to receive information from alternative sources.

Thus, the Belarusian communication mode was formed and developed in the face of two opposing trends: the development of a system of vertical communications, typical of countries with an institutional matrix with dominating redistributive institutions, and horizontal communication systems, which is typical of countries with market institutions dominating in the institutional matrix. The result was the formation of two cores of the communication mode, one of which is connected with the Catholic Church that makes it impossible to build a rigid hierarchical communication model in Belarus, absolutely controlled by the authorities.

Communication of generations: research experience in Belarusian society (I.I.Kalacheva)

Generational communication is what determines the development of the communication environment from within the country. There is an opinion in the expert community that the new generations, who are active figures in the communication space and the information environment today, are insufficiently researched. Therefore, such an indicator as manageability, which is important in the study of communication strategies of any country, is difficult to study.

In the context of the rapid development of information technologies, there is a "reset" of values, the formation of new ideas about social institutions, the civil sector, education, mass media, etc. The continuity of generations as a principle of communication is subject to change.

Many researchers note that the main ways of transferring knowledge have changed: in the past, knowledge was transferred from seniors to juniors, but in modern conditions, knowledge is transferred from juniors to seniors. This also determines other aspects of relations between generations. The shift in continuity and in the performance of the

main function by the older generations in relation to the younger ones also influences the formation of the normative-value basis of communication.

In Belarus, this problem is very relevant. 2022 in the country has been declared the “Year of Historical Memory”, which is a significant event at the present stage of the development of the state. The Belarusian State University is conducting a study: “Historical memory in the system of basic values of the Belarusian people as a factor in intergenerational communication and information security” (supervisor I.I.Kalacheva). The purpose of the work is to study the problem in the context of modern communication processes, cultural and civilizational practices and new challenges in the information environment. The object are the representatives of the older and younger generations of the inhabitants of Belarus. The study is carried out within the framework of an interdisciplinary approach, using general scientific, historical, and sociological research methods. Empirical material allows to test the hypotheses put forward. For example, a group of researchers put forward a hypothesis – the assumption that the involvement of younger generations in Internet communication makes communication difficult and contributes to the creation of communication barriers with older generation. The respondents were representatives of different generations of the Belarusian society. This is the post-war generation (1943–1963); Soviet (1963–1983); perestroika generation (1983–2003); post-perestroika generation (2003–2023). Respondents – survey participants, representatives of different generations expressed their opinion on this issue. It was revealed that representatives of the older generations more confidently refer themselves to the Soviet people, the perestroika generation or the post-perestroika generation, and the younger generation associate themselves with the digital society, call themselves “electronic people”. However, respondents note that there are no fundamental changes in relations between generations “because of the Internet”. Relationships remain helpful, trusting, benevolent, open, although, of course, there are reasons for concern, especially in matters of raising children. The answer of Anna, 22 years old, can be indicative. Anna explains that it is the moral duty of a young man to provide all possible assistance to his parents, grandparents. Anna says:

Without them, my loved ones, I would not be able to build my life the way it is now. I love my relatives and cherish them, helping them is not something burdensome for me, on the contrary, I take care of my loved ones with pleasure and joy.

For the team of authors, the scale of the issue its significance for research and development of practical recommendations is important. The topic of historical memory is rather new for the Belarusian humanities. Therefore, researchers see great potential for its solution both at the theoretical and practical levels. Historical memory is creative if it is directed to the future. At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the opinion of each person as a representative of a particular generation.

The work continues, and its results are being tested in student audiences, at scientific and practical conferences in Belarusian universities. In the near future, the report “Memorable places and historical memory and patriotic education of youth” will be presented.

The scientific journal “Modern Youth and Society” constantly publishes articles on this topic (editor-in-chief I.I.Kalacheva). For example, in issue 10 for 2022, the article by DrScs (Hist.) S.A.Pivovarchik “Historical and cultural heritage and commemorative practices

in the formation of the historical memory of youth” was published. The article discusses the experience of using the historical and cultural heritage of the Grodno region (Ponemanye) in the formation of the historical memory of students. The author comes to the conclusion that the most effective is the participation of young people in commemorative practices, which include educational excursions, the installation of commemorative signs, visits to thematic museums and exhibitions, participation in festivals, master classes and military historical reconstructions. The factors influencing the formation of historical memory are revealed: collectivity, emotionality, sacredness, focus on the past.

Discussion (N.M.Mezhevich)

It is difficult to assess which of the theoretical categories is more important: the political or communication mode. I think they overlap. It is clear that both are based on an economic, current political and historical basis. It is clear that such studies are very necessary, especially for the Republic of Belarus. Because now in the Republic sociology is poorly developed. But in this case, I would not criticize the research conducted by academic teams and authorities in the Republic. I would mention that the “sociology” that comes to the territory of the Republic of Belarus from abroad, primarily from Warsaw, is an outrage on theory, methodology, and practice. Therefore, of course, we need direct and indirect research methods that would allow us to get an idea of what is happening in the country.

Issues of communication between the political regime and the government should be in the spotlight. The communication mode and the political regime are not abstract academic categories, but a reflection of the situation in which the state, in this case, the Republic of Belarus, lives. This is a situation of enormous external pressure. And under these conditions, it becomes necessary to choose between the famous Chinese slogan “Let a hundred flowers bloom!” and harsh state security practices. Now priority is given to the security of the state and society. I think that this is actual: the actions taken by the President of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko have collected the results of the best practices, which, unfortunately, we will have to go through in our Russian Federation.

I would like to note that Belarus is on a civilizational frontier. Western influences have always been very strong. Moreover, one should not always treat them critically. I do not understand the position of many Russian experts who propose to almost exclude the period of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from Belarusian history. Let’s throw out the Horde period from Russian history right away: from Kievan Rus immediately to Peter. Historical heritage is different, contradictory.

And here I, substantiating my thought, touch upon the issues of the Catholic faith. In the Republic, 8–11% of people profess a Catholic version of Christianity. As a person who worked for many years in the Republic of Poland and, accordingly, was in a Catholic environment, I can say: these are other Catholics. The attitude towards faith and religious morality is completely different than in Bavaria or Northern Italy. People sometimes come to the service, but life and the church go in parallel. What cannot be said about Poland. And I would not just take this factor into account, but revise it altogether. Communicating with

Belarusian Catholics, I also asked them about the perception of information from Poland, about their attitude towards the regime, about their knowledge of the Polish language. I do not claim to be a linguist, but the language used to the answers was not Polish. And the idea of dogmas was also imperfect. This is an intermediate option that can adapt to the classical Catholicism of Poland, if a person moves to Lublin, and to Smolensk Orthodoxy, and to Lviv Uniatism. But this is not the classical Catholic faith and, accordingly, the influence of religion on a person is completely different.

As for information flows, I have a feeling that, on the whole, Catholics, Orthodox Christians, and the vast majority of people who define their faith by their parents have a high level of trust in secular authorities. And the differences are not related to faith, but to other parameters. For example, in the cities, super-Orthodox people, as they believe, are much more likely to be in opposition to the regime. Catholics mostly live in the countryside. Therefore, there is much more reason to talk about loyalty (not support, since loyalty and support are different things) to the authorities, even with internal disagreements. The gulf is more often not between Catholics and Orthodox, but between people who moved from the countryside to the city in the first (sometimes in the second generation) and those who continue to live in the countryside. This is visible to the naked eye. And this must also be taken into account. There are well-known methods for conducting sociological surveys (how to do this, taking into account the level of urbanization) for this.

In connection with the events of 2020–2021, it should be noted that the opposition was supported by both representatives of the Orthodox and Catholics, and not supported by representatives of the Orthodox and Catholic hierarchies. Everything is very different. This is a choice that depends on specific people, and not on the fact that we have a priest in front of us. This is not a question of religious institutions, but a question of a common understanding of the situation in the country by every person, regardless of religious affiliation.

Discussion (S.G.Rogalsky)

It is important for me that the religious factor sounded bright and distinct in previous speeches; this is because without this it is impossible to characterize the situation in Belarus. Here, in Belarus, indeed, a lot is connected with a person's religious affiliation, despite the fact that according to sociology, the level of religiosity of Belarusians is still assessed as "moderate" (50–60% of the believing population). The confessional / religious affiliation to which a person refers himself is also important.

Statistically, 82% of Belarusians are Orthodox, 12% are Catholics, and the remaining 6% are of other religions. These are the people who identify themselves with one or another confession. At the same time, Catholics are usually second only to the Orthodox in terms of number and number. But at the same time, in terms of the number of registered communities in Belarus, Evangelical Christians are in second place (524 communities), that is, they have more communities than the Roman Catholic Church (499 communities). The Orthodox Church today has an absolute majority: 1,714 communities are registered in Belarus.

It should be emphasized that the concept of traditional confessions is enshrined in our Constitution. This is important, since the significance of the confession in Belarus is determined by the influence that it had on the historical, spiritual and cultural development of the Belarusian people. These faiths include Christianity, Judaism and Islam. This is an important factor that we must take into account when evaluating the influence of religion on the communication regime.

The second important aspect is ethno-confessional. There is a widespread opinion in society: if you are Orthodox, then you are Russian. And if you are a Catholic, then you are a Pole. This is a philistine approach, reflecting the trends that have taken shape in the Belarusian confessional community. I agree that Belarusian Catholics are not Polish Catholics. In general, religiosity in Belarus depends on the region. This became especially felt in the post-Soviet period, because the religiosity of Western and Southern Belarus (both Orthodox people and people of other faiths) is objectively higher than in the north and east of the country. This happened in the days of Soviet power, when there was an idea to make Belarus the first atheistic republic, to make a buffer between a very believing Poland and the USSR. And this reflected in the confessional character of our country.

In both denominations, Catholics and Orthodox, there were people who were "for" and "against" the current government. It cannot be said that all Catholics were "against", all Orthodox were "for": both there and there were people who held different political views, so I would like us not to make sweeping generalizations about which church supports what. Everything depends on the person, on his views, and not on the denomination to which he belongs. Although cultural and external factors have an impact on people.

The third important point concerns the media: state media (those controlled by the current government) and those who consider themselves independent. Today, modern means of communication have a great influence: instant messengers, channels, social networks. Especially among young people, and this is inevitable. The younger generation now categorically claims that television is already dead, and radio is also almost dead, so a person will draw all the necessary information from the Internet, from social networks and various channels. Another problem arises: the official media broadcast the official position of the state. Verification of other channels and information is difficult. Is the information staged or false? The first reaction of a person is always emotional, only after a while the person begins to think. Yes, it used to be clear several decades ago: what was printed in the newspaper or reported on TV was a fact. The alternative makes the situation blurry.

In Belarus, confessions do not have special media facilities, unlike in Russia (their own television, channels such as Spas). Nevertheless, we have bureaus that cooperate and broadcast these channels. They are popular and trusted among believers. The rest of the information channels mainly cover the life of denominations and churches in Belarus, they simply talk about certain events.

They continue the traditions: before the revolution, there were newspapers «Church Gazette» that recorded in great detail and accurately what was happening in the life of the church. Thanks to them, today we have a lot of information about how church life used to go. The current church media have inherited this tradition in the context of the general

life of the church. They talk about various doctrinal, moral and other aspects, that is, they establish a similar nature of communication.

Let's summarize. We recently had a conference with representatives of the Evangelical Church, colleagues spoke at our Christian Educational Center. We communicated, and it is very pleasant that despite the difficult modern life we had a dialogue. At the political level, even at the business level, dialogue is not working right now. But in the confessional sphere it still exists. In communication with our German colleagues, we saw that there really are people who understand that information about the current situation is given one-sidedly from both sides. They understand that they need to hear the position of the people who live here and who are also Christians. We got a detailed dialogue, where we spoke frankly about our worldview. Unfortunately, modern media do not don't deal with it. So communication at our level is now one of the most constructive. These are the confessional aspects in the implementation of communication.

Discussion (V.V. Vorotnikov)

Dear colleagues! Let me thank the organizers for an extremely interesting report and informative discussion. In continuation of the discussion about the relationship between the concepts of political and communication modes, I would like to emphasize their difference. If the political mode that is the process of exercising and redistributing power as a hierarchical phenomenon, then the communication mode reflects multidirectional interactions within society: power – society, society – power, horizontal connections within society. Thus, the communication mode is a more voluminous, systemic concept and, therefore, is more suitable for a comprehensive description of socio-political interactions in the state. On the one hand, the communication mode is a political and legal framework and a tool for regulating the processes of limiting, promoting or imposing (and in crisis conditions, propaganda) certain meanings, norms and principles. On the other hand, this is an important research category that allows one to analyze the role, place, nature and content of communication between different institutions and social groups.

Let's move on to the subject of discussion. My research and teaching specialization is the history of the Baltic States. Speaking of Lithuania before the 19th century, I inevitably touch upon the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish – Lithuanian Commonwealth, and, consequently, the territories that are the part of modern Belarus. In Russian school and university textbooks (probably due to the Soviet heritage), the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, both before and even more so after the Union of Lublin, is still not covered. Several pages are devoted to it concerning a situation about the existence of an alternative center for collecting Russian lands in the Middle Ages and the reasons for its defeat in this struggle.

Indeed, in the Soviet years, in union center, the history of the national republics (the Baltic, and Belarus, Ukraine, etc.) was not studied - this was the sphere of interest of the regional academies of sciences. Accordingly, by the time of the collapse of the USSR, Moscow did not have not only historians, but also a systematic vision of the history of the states

that emerged in the post-Soviet space. This led not only to a research vacuum, but also to the fact that nationalist and anti-Russian narratives began to dominate national historical discourses. For example, scientific and educational literature, educational programs in Belarus in the 1990s began to be created in the spirit of the ideology of the Belarusian People's Republic, the Belarusian emigration and, unfortunately, even the Belarusian Central Rada.

The collapse of the USSR, the defeat of the ideological construct of Soviet internationalism returned many contradictions to the space of Central and Eastern Europe, including territorial and interethnic disputes. They are based, no doubt, on differences in historical memory, national historical narratives. Let me clarify: the formation of a national historical narrative is an objective phenomenon in the process of state formation and nation building. It becomes problematic only when it is based on a sharp, aggressive opposition to the national narratives of other countries (and, consequently, it's ideologization).

What are the starting points of the historical narrative of Belarus? How friendly is it towards Russia?

Common to the Polish, Lithuanian and Belarusian history is, for example, the Battle of Orsha in 1514, which is regarded as a historically significant victory in the confrontation with Moscow and the containment of its aggressive policy. Here is how its significance is characterized in the "History of the Belarusian statehood" recently prepared by the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Belarus:

The further advance of the Muscovites to the west was stopped thanks to the defeat of the Moscow army in the Battle of Orsha on September 8, 1514. This was an important achievement, which showed that the seizure of new lands for the Muscovites is fraught with significant difficulties. The position of the local population, which was more tightly integrated into the structures of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, also played a role in this [4].

This quote does not require special explanations.

I would like to give a number of examples from the field of so-called "banal nationalism" (that is a constant, everyday reminder of identity, for example, through the demonstration of state symbols, photographs of recognizable sights, natural landscapes, representatives of flora and fauna characteristic of a given country, and even simple writing or pronouncing the name of the country, etc.). Let's have a look at the banknotes of Belarus. For example, the Rumyantsev-Paskevich Palace, built in Gomel and associated with the period of the Russian Empire, is depicted on the Belarusian 20-ruble banknote, then the Nesvizh Castle, the residence of the Radziwills, is depicted on the 100-ruble banknote. Given the well-known role of this aristocratic family in the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to any Belarusian schoolchild, such a hierarchy of the significance of these symbols reflected in the denominations of banknotes can be subconsciously interpreted in favor of the undoubted priority of the national, "regional" history.

One more example. If we analyze the postage stamps issued by Belarus, it is striking that the white-red-white color scheme, which has nationalist historical and political connotations, is regularly used both when displaying the denomination and when writing

the name of the country “Belarus”. The publication of postage stamps is an institutionally complex, multi-stage process that involves a significant number of officials, representatives of the scientific community and the interested public, which means that it reflects a public consensus. Of course, the use of an appropriate color scheme, directly associated with the heritage of the Belarusian National Rada, raise questions. I would also like to note the recently issued block and stamp dedicated to the “30th anniversary of the first Belarusian postage stamp”. It depicted the cross of Euphrosyne of Polotsk, symbolically significant for Belarusian nationalism; the same image naturally appeared on the 2022 issue as well.

In general, in the modern historical discourse of Belarus, both points of view on the development of the Belarusian statehood harmoniously coexist – as an independent Eastern European national project (regionalism) and as a part of a large Russian project (Western Russianism). For a frontier space that has repeatedly experienced influence from both the West and the East over the centuries, such balancing and eclecticism are quite natural. However, the question of the primacy of one or another narrative remains a matter of the political will of the elites. That is why the presence of the mentioned and similar semantic elements that have conflict potential and threaten the substantive, conceptual integrity of the integration project of Russia and Belarus requires constant attention from politicians, academic and expert communities of the two countries.

Discussion (A.G.Kachura)

Belarusian society at the present situation is much more complex than the communications that function in it. Unfortunately, we can state that there is a lack of communication editions, not only from a qualitative point of view, but also from a quantitative one. It is not in vain that the problem of Union media is raised in the programs of the Union State: we do not have enough opportunities to “deliver” our ideas to the audience. There are not enough children’s and youth editions, programs. Now our attention is focused on the means of communication, which have the ability to influence the audience quickly, and we practically do not work on the future.

If you look at the media market, then our ideological opponents have more media and channels. If you sum up all the United media, they do not cover a third of the audience that our opponents reach. Moreover, I would not like to use the concept of “independent media”, since after February 24 there were practically no independent media left. What is happening now in politics, economics, ideology and the information space is, on the one hand, a process of negativity that has been launched against Russia and its allies, and on the other hand, it is a complete absence of any rules and morality. Therefore, we are now no longer in a period of “turbulence”, but in the very center of the storm. We are now trying to find something to lean on and say: “Let’s now build a new relationship from scratch.” Unfortunately, this is not possible and finding support is becoming more and more difficult.

Another important aspect: the Russian language. The Russian language has become not just a communication tool, it has become a boundary along which there is a division

into “us” and “them”. We are now drawing conclusions about the social, cultural affiliation and way of thinking of a person, even his political affiliation by language. Our ideological opponents, when they work with a mass audience, switch to Russian. They don’t hesitate to use it against us. This is a paradox. Even in Latvia, people who were recently banned from getting a job without passing the Latvian language test (and migrants from Ukraine) are canceling the Latvian language test and are allowed to work and use the Russian language. When analyzing the content side of communication modes, it is important to take into account that language today is becoming the main marker of the specifics of the mode.

Another important note: in our time, almost all major media (classical, network, television) are not geo-referenced. They can collect their audience all over the world. This will increasingly characterize modern media and be increasingly manifested in communication modes, which will ultimately increase the importance of country communication modes in shaping the intercountry, regional (and possibly global) agenda.

Discussion (O.I.Lazorkina)

The cross-border nature of the communication mode in Belarus determines the specifics influence of external factors on its formation. This is also important for creating programs to improve the communication mode, taking into account internal and external processes. It is necessary to pay attention to the vulnerability of the Belarusian society, which for several centuries has been under the influence of external influences and has developed a certain level of information “immunity” and stress resistance. In this regard, it is important to combine the approaches and requests of the society itself for certain formats of interaction.

Obviously, this affects the interpretation of such categories as trust and social contract. In crisis conditions, traditional principles for measuring the level of trust do not fully reflect the mood of society. In a transboundary environment, such parameters as understanding the internal space of the country, the willingness to protect it and make it a priority in comparison with the need to change the social contract, have a significant impact.

Determining the specifics of the communication mode in Belarus, we can talk about the need to use a reduction analysis, which involves dividing the whole into its component parts and identifying the mood of a stress-resistant society.

Discussion (A.G.Stoppe)

I will start with the thesis which we have already heard today that in the Union State “there is no joint information space, but there is a common one.” If we turn to the Treaty on the Establishment of the Union State of December 8, 1999, then Article 18 states that the joint activities of the Union State and the participating states include the formation of a

common information space. At the same time, the Action Program for the implementation of this Treaty refers to the provision of a joint information space. Specific measures to solve these problems are determined by the Priority Directions of the Union State for 2018–2022, approved by the Supreme State Council of the Union State.

It's not about the terms, it's about the essence. The essence is that the common information space of Russia and Belarus as an equal and sovereign association of information spaces of the two states really exists. Its most important base is the socio-cultural community: the proximity of cultures and history, unity in the perception of the world, religion, and the education system. An important role is played by the mass media and information, the formation of a similar public opinion on political, economic and social issues. At the same time, taking into account the adoption of 28 Union state programmes that open a new historical stage in the economic integration of Belarus and Russia, it is necessary to accelerate work on the formation of a common information space while ensuring the security from external destructive influence in the context of a hybrid war launched by the collective West against our countries.

A frank and detailed discussion on further steps to develop a mutually complementary common communication space between Russia and Belarus took place in November 2021 as part of the Belarusian-Russian expert media forum "Union State: Information Space in the Digital Age". The Internet today has become as much an integral part of modern comfortable life as electricity and hot water, that was especially shown by the coronavirus pandemic. The accessibility of the Internet, the unprecedented growth of its audience, the demand for social networks define a new reality for traditional media in the information space. It must be taken into account that the Internet is increasingly beginning to resemble a "sticky web" due to fake and toxic content.

Modern information and disinformation are transboundary, therefore the creation of a common information field, no less than a defense or economic one, is of strategic and political importance for Russia and Belarus, for the Union State.

It was for these purposes that the State Secretary of the Union State D.F. Mezentsev proposed the creation of a media holding. It should provide objective, trustworthy and complementary information, cement a unite information space.

In the Union State there are common media – these are the newspapers "Soyuznoye Veche" and "Soyuz. Belarus–Russia", the journal "Union State", the portal of the Union State and the television and radio broadcasting organization of the Union State "BelRos". They have their pluses and minuses; a colossal data base has been accumulated – archival and informational.

The creation of a media holding will strengthen the advantages and get rid of many disadvantages, for example, bring the technological base to a new modern level. In addition, it must promote the theme of the union in the harsh conditions of the hybrid and information war.

At the same time, instead of an embellished, often boring, passive format for presenting information about the successes and problems of the union, an active, offensive position is needed, and not only about the Union States, but also about the Eurasian Economic Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Another thesis discussed today, on which I would like to focus attention, is the thesis about "the continued simplicity of management in an increasingly complex society", which allegedly leads to a loss in the effectiveness of this management.

I cannot agree with this approach. For example, a symphony orchestra – what could be more difficult in terms of polyphony, settings, consistency of musicians? And the conductor comes out – only with a simple stick – and music sounds with a lot of themes, accents, acupunctures. This means that the point is not in the simplicity of management, but in its efficiency, professionalism, mutual understanding and trust. In order to achieve this, we need to have, among other things, communication links that unite society, government, and the state into a single organism.

There is no stronger force that unites peoples than language. The struggle in Ukraine with the Russian language is the clearest proof of this thesis "by the contrary".

This topic is also important for communication in the sphere of the Orthodox church, which unites Russians and Belarusians. In what language do priests serve in their churches in Belarus? Not only in Latin or Polish, but also in Belarusian, and today often in Russian.

Old Church Slavonic is the basis of all three East Slavic languages, but today it is difficult for understanding, especially for young people. A young man comes to church, begins to listen to the service and understands little. Turns around and leaves. This is also a question of the communication mode, moreover, in the spiritual area that unites the peoples of Belarus and Russia.

On the eve of the Day of Unity of the Peoples of Belarus and Russia, on March 31, 2022, an expert media forum "Union State: Economic Integration – Development Tasks" was held. One of its sections was entirely devoted to the youth. It was called: "The role of youth in the preservation of historical heritage."

One of the main conclusions of the section is that it is not necessary to treat young people only as the future, they are our present, and they are here and now. For them, the information space and communications has become a natural habitat, both with a plus and a minus sign. This is especially true for the generation born at the beginning of the century – the so-called Generation Z.

In this regard, the country's communication mode should be analyzed, formed, and adjusted taking into account the youth factor. This is especially important now, when external – we can already say with certainty – forces hostile to Russia and Belarus are doing everything to promote their values, including discrediting patriotism, asserting the priority of personal benefits and comfort over the interests of their Fatherland and its sovereignty. At the same time, modern virtual technologies, technological advantages, many years of experience in advertising campaigns, etc. are actively used.

We must actively resist this, especially since the opportunities and time have not yet been lost.

Speaking at the expert media forum of the Union State, Special Representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry Maria Zakharova cited the words of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk: "Like a small tree, to which side it will be inclined, it will grow to its end, so the young man, to which he will first be instructed, will have it until the end of his life."

I am sure that these words are directly related not only to young people, but also to the formation of a communication environment that has a tremendous impact on the sustainable development of the state. Therefore, the analysis and study of trends in changing communication modes is not only the subject of scientific research, but also the most important political and applied task.

Conclusions

An analysis of the relationship between political and communication modes shows that the communication mode is a broader systemic concept and allows to characterize the socio-political interactions in the state more deeply. As a research category, the communication mode makes it possible to analyze the role, significance, nature and content of communication between different institutions and social groups. In practical terms, the communication mode is a political and legal framework and a tool for regulating the processes of restriction, promotion (and in crisis conditions – propaganda) of certain meanings, norms and principles.

Controllability of the communication mode is a measure of control on the part of the control center (subjects of control that make decisions regarding the rules and institutions of communication) with the voluntary consent of control objects with the degree of their autonomy and subordination. The analysis is based on significant controllability parameters: 1) the location of the communication mode control center; 2) the degree of conventionality of the communication mode control center; 3) the ability of communication mode control centers to transfer it from one state to another without conflict; the ability to achieve controlled parameters of the communication mode; the ability to use the mechanisms of self-organization and self-reflection of control objects to regulate communication modes. The results of the study of controllability parameters on the example of the communication regime of Belarus made it possible to draw the following conclusions:

- the control center of the communication mode of Belarus is located inside the country and is concentrated by the top leadership of the country. Rules and norms are fixed by law. Informal norms do not play such a significant role as, for example, in the countries of Central Asia. To support the communication mode, a mass media system has been created, as well as control bodies so that the mode deviates minimally from the specified parameters;
- the goals of the communication regime of Belarus are defined in strategic government documents: ensuring information sovereignty, information neutrality, optimizing the system of interaction between government and society;
- despite the concentration of communications management in the hands of top state management, the control center coordinates its policy in the information sphere with the Russian side, which is due to integration processes and the need to coordinate efforts to counter external influences;

- creation of alternative control centers for communication modes and their attempts to seize control and dominate the system of communications and information were unsuccessful. Nevertheless, they continue to exist (with a location abroad);
- nowadays, the control center of the Belarusian communication mode is able to relatively conflict-free transfer the regime from one state to another, change the target parameters of the communication mode and modernize the tools for achieving them;
- the most vulnerable parameter of the communication mode is the mechanism of communication between the authorities and society, namely, the lack of involvement in communication with the authorities of self-organizing communities and communication networks (which are often not normatively institutionalized and, therefore, are difficult to control and regulate). We are talking about civil self-organizations, gathered, among other things, on the basis of non-political interests.

The communication mode, like the political mode, is a reflection of the situation in which the state and society live. The tendency to strengthen the regulation of the communication mode, the concentration of control in the highest political circles, the change in target parameters (the dominant of information sovereignty), which we have identified, are due to the reality in which Belarus finds itself. Namely, in conditions of strong external pressure, priority is given to the security of the state and society.

An essential characteristic of the communication mode of Belarus is its cross-border nature, which historically predetermined the degree of vulnerability of the Belarusian society and developed the level of information “immunity” and information stress resistance. Cross-border character determines the specifics of assessing public trust: in times of crisis, traditional criteria for assessing the level of trust do not accurately reflect the real state of society. In a transboundary environment, such parameters as the readiness to protect the internal space of the country have a significant impact.

Features of the communication mode of Belarus are historically determined. Features of the climate, soil, economic life, geographical location of Belarus predetermined that the evolution of the communication mode was carried out in the conditions of contradictions between two trends: 1) the development of a system of vertical communications, typical for countries with an institutional matrix with dominating redistributive institutions, and 2) a system of horizontal communications, which is typical for countries with the dominance of market institutions in the institutional matrix. As a result, two cores of the communication mode were formed, one of which is associated with the Catholic Church, which makes it impossible to build a rigid hierarchical communication model absolutely controlled by the authorities in Belarus.

The religious factor plays a significant role in the formation of communication modes in a number of countries. The uniqueness of Belarus lies in the fact that the concept of traditional confessions is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic. That is, the significance of the confession is due to its influence on the historical, spiritual and cultural development of the Belarusian people. These faiths include Christianity, Judaism and Islam. According to a number of participants in the discussion, it is important to take this factor into account when studying the communication mode. According to other scientists, despite the fact that the territory of present-day Belarus has always been and is on the

civilizational frontier and historically it has been influenced by Western Catholicism, one should not overestimate the influence of the religious factor. In addition, confessions do not have their own media of the same level as Spas in Russia. In modern society a much more significant split in the assessments of the norms and rules of communication takes place between the urban and rural populations (and not among people of different faiths). This is what requires serious sociological research and reflection.

The content situation of the communication mode is closely related to the issues of historical memory. In Belarus, historically influenced by both the West and the East, there are two main principles that influence the development of the Belarusian statehood: 1) an independent Eastern European national project (regionalism); 2) Belarus is part of a large Russian project (Western Russianism). The dominance of one or another point of view is determined by political elites and often depends on the specific historical context. Sometimes some meanings are updated that have not only integration, but also conflict potential. In such situations, there are threats to the conceptual integrity of the integration project of Russia and Belarus. Therefore, issues of historical memory require constant attention from the political, academic and expert communities of the two countries.

In the formation and maintenance of the country's communication mode, the media and new media play an important role. Summarizing the opinions of the participants in the discussion, we will show the key problems of Belarus: 1) there are practically no quality media for children and youth in the Republic; 2) in the open information space, the media and new media projects of ideological opponents of the current communication mode of Belarus quantitatively dominate (all union media do not cover even 1/3 of the audience that our opponents cover); 3) low popularity of union media. During the years of union integration, a common information space of Russia and Belarus has developed as an equal and sovereign association of information spaces of the two states. Union media play a key role in its development (newspapers "Soyuznoye Veche" and "Soyuz. Belarus – Russia", the magazine "Soyuznoye Gosudarstvo", the portal of the Union State, and the TV and radio broadcasting organization of the Union State "BelRos"), which have accumulated large archives of information. However, these media are not popular; 4) underdevelopment of the system of national Belarusian media; 5) the difficulty of verifying information entering the society through the channels of new media and social networks.

For the development of a friendly communication mode, the preservation of the Russian language as the language of communication and the preservation of the socio-cultural community of Russia and Belarus play an essential role.

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HISTORICAL RETROSPECTIVE AND MODERNITY

History of
international relations
and foreign policy

... The presence of the southern and eastern frontiers had a tremendous impact on the historical path of Russia. The colonization slowed down the transition from extensive to intensive methods of exploration; consolidated low-tech ways in the center of the country and transmitted them to the periphery, and also reoriented the empire towards a self-sufficient development option. The expansion deep into the Eurasian continent, farther and farther from the sea and the crossroads of the Western European civilization, has led to Russia's weak involvement in the international division of labor, weak transfer of advanced Western technologies and, ultimately, a special, the Russian type of modernization.

Barakhvostov P.A.

Formation and Evolution of Russian Frontiers

It is likely to take more time for the energy transition and building the needed infrastructure than the UN's suggests. Forcing the process, especially in developing countries, could lead to new domestic energy crises, as happened in China in 2021.

Dorokhina K.M.

The Impact of the Gas Crisis of 2021–2022 on Energy Sustainability
and the Implementation of Climate Commitments
by the Largest Emitters of Carbon Dioxide

RUSSIA & WORLD: SCIENTIFIC DIALOGUE

**РОССИЯ
И МИР**

НАУЧНЫЙ ДИАЛОГ

Formation and evolution of russian frontiers

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Abstract. It is shown in the article that the formation of Russian Frontiers was carried out primarily due to the need to ensure the security of the borders. Periods in their evolution are identified and characterized here. It is established that the first stage (the formation of a military frontier) is associated with the construction of fortified lines and the relocation of Cossacks and peasants to the lands fenced by them. The second stage is the registration of the legal status of frontier territories and the establishment of special paramilitary forms of the government. The third stage is characterized, along with the transplantation of redistributive-type institutions that dominated the institutional matrix of Russia to new lands, by the emergence and spread of market institutions here, that caused the spatial heterogeneity of the Russian institutional matrix. The final stage is defrontization, various tools were used to achieve it: improvement of the material and technological environment of acquired territories, embedding them in the general imperial legal field, spreading Orthodoxy and Russian language, economic stimulation of Russian colonization by the state, socialization of local elites and their involvement in the process of managing new lands. At all stages, the evolution of frontier territories was governed by the Russian state, and the policy was based on the principles of dialogue with the autochthonous population. The presence of frontiers hindered the transition from extensive to intensive methods of space exploration, reoriented the empire to a self-sufficient development option, and determined a special, Russian path of modernization.

Keywords: frontier, colonization, institutional environment, institutional matrix, Russian Empire

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Introduction

The geopolitical and geoeconomic transformations of recent decades have actualized the problem of studying frontiers and their role in the genesis of social systems. There are many definitions of this concept. In accordance with the classical works of F.J.Turner [23], the frontier is a special kind of border that implements both spatial and socio-cultural division. R.Billington interprets the frontier as “a geographical

region ... where low population density and usually rich and poorly developed natural resources provide an exceptional opportunity to improve the social and economic status of smallholders” [4]. I.Ya.Levyash notes that “the frontier is the interpenetration and contradictory combination of various cultural and civilizational practices, the territory of the meeting and contacts of different cultures and civilizations” [10:194]. Unlike an interstate, clearly defined border, this is a “blurred area of variable width” [20], characterized by cultural mosaicism, “unstable balance” [26: 82], and special social conditions. The frontier is both a historical process and a certain space, that is, it has spatio-temporal characteristics [25].

The presence of such an “area of uncertainty” on the territory occupied by a society has a significant impact on the trajectory of its development. For centuries, Russia existed in the context of the continued expansion of the country, the annexation of new lands and their development [21; 27; 24; 18; 12; 6; 7]. This determined the nature of Russian modernization, which I.V. Poberezhnikov described as “frontier” [16].

However, there are a number of poorly studied issues despite the increased interest in this matter. Among them is the problem of the evolution of this “zone of uncertainty”, the identification of the general and the special in this process for specific cases. This work, in which the phenomenon of the Russian frontier is analysed, is devoted to the solution of this problem.

Materials and methods

The methodological basis of this work is historical neo-institutionalism, according to which society is a holistic integrated formation of interconnected and interdependent equivalent subsystems: economic, political and sociocultural [15]. The whole structure is regulated by a complex system of institutions, understood as the “rules of the game”, structuring social action [13:97], in which it is possible to identify the basic institutions that form the institutional matrix [8]. It simultaneously contains two main types of institutions that interact with each other according to the principle of “dominance – compensatory” [17:XIX]: redistributive and market ones. The redistributive model assumes institutions of redistribution (accumulation – coordination – distribution), public-service property, public/service labor, complaints in the form of feedback, a unitary political system and elements of a communitarian ideology [2]. The market model is a relationship of purchase and sale, private/personal property, hired labor, profit as a feedback institution, federal principles of government, the prevalence of elements of a subsidiary mindset. The institutional matrix is not a frozen construct: permanent changes occur in it, due, in particular, to the impact of another social system with a direct merger of societies [20]. The process of evolution of frontier territories is associated with their incorporation into the institutional matrix of the recipient society, which will be analyzed in this paper.

Results

There are different types of frontier. Some of them (type I) were formed as a zone of spatial contact of the “centers” of force, others (type II) – as an “open” frontier [9], the limits of the spatial expansion of which are the natural factors.

The example of type I frontiers is the blurred border between the Ottoman Empire, on the one hand, and the Muscovite state, on the other. These territories were suitable for agriculture, cattle breeding, crafts and attracted the colonists even in the era of Kievan Rus. However, the raids of the steppe nomads turned these lands into a practically deserted and poorly controlled territory. The need for its settlement was due primarily to security considerations.

By the 16th century, the outposts of Muscovy in these territories were the Abatis lines; “free men” were at the forefront of state-controlled colonization, attracted by the issuance of funds for resettlement and housing construction, the opportunity to change their social status (up to being recorded in the category of “boyar children”). In order to attack the uninhabited lands in the 1630s–1650s, a line of fortifications was built – the Belgorod line, near which there were built the cities, which became the basis for further colonization. After 1647, the settlement to the southern part of the line was prohibited [11]; however, significant lands beyond the line of fortifications were leased by local governors as quitrents, fishing and fur lands.

Serving small landowners and people without an estate prevailed among the settlers. There were extremely few patrimonial estates on the territory of the frontier, and almost until the end of the 17th century there was a system of «reserved cities» with a ban on noble land ownership.

The frontiersmen performed two main tasks: the economic development of new lands and the protection of the southern borders. As a result, a special class emerged in these territories, consisting of militarized landowners – *odnodvortsy* (smallholders). *Odnodvortsy* (smallholders) had the right to own land and peasant serfs, they were exempted from corporal punishment, like nobles, however, unlike them, they paid taxes, including for the maintenance of the landmilitia (border settled troops), where they were obliged to serve. *Odnodvortsy* (smallholders) used to settled in *slobodas* (large villages), headed by a governor appointed by the military department. The peculiarities of the social system of the *odnodvortsy* (smallholders) were mutual responsibility, which assumed collective responsibility for paying taxes, observing a strict order in choosing the lowest level management in dealing with the affairs of the settlement; and the isolation from the other classes.

The southern frontier stretched from west to east, and the Don, the birthplace of the Cossacks, had a special significance. The first Cossack settlements on the Don frontier lands appeared in the 15th century. Initially, the Cossack community lived mainly by hunting, fishing and robbery, arable farming was prohibited. Nevertheless, from the very beginning it established itself as a force capable of resisting the Tatar-Ottoman expansion, which

prompted the tsar (crown) authorities to actively use the Cossacks to protect the southern borders.

The society on the Don (the Don Cossack Host (Don Army)) was created on the basis of non-class principles; the formation of elites was carried out according to the military and political merits. People of different religious beliefs like Muslims (Don Tatars, descended from Nogais) and Orthodox Christians peacefully coexisted here. The Don Cossack Host (Don Army) had its own elected central and local authorities, which did not submit to Moscow, and pursued an independent foreign policy. The Muscovite state interacted with the Don Cossacks through the *Posolsky prikaz* (Ambassadorial order), as with foreign citizens. Moscow's policy was ambivalent. On the one hand, Moscow sought to curb the independence of the Don people by resorting to sanctions (in particular, blocking the Don in the mid-1660s), introducing a ban on Cossacks to enter large Russian cities in the first half of the 17th century [22;1]. On the other hand, Moscow was interested in the Cossacks as a powerful military force, which resulted in the establishment of salaries for the provision of military services.

The frontline position of the community and the need to simultaneously confront the two “centers” of power (Ottoman Empire and Russia) required a choice of further development path. In 1671 the Don Cossacks swore allegiance to the Russian sovereigns. The process of embedding the Don Cossacks in the institutional matrix of the empire included the transfer of all Don lands to the Don Cossacks by Catherine II and the transformation of the Cossacks into a land holder as a collective landowner, granting the right to duty-free trade, the exclusive right to fishing, salt mining on the Manych River, exemption from state taxes and duties, subordination to the military department (since 1721 to the Military Collegium and since 1832 to the Department of Military Settlements), the transition from an elective to an appointed system of government and, finally, the transformation of the Cossacks into a “caste of warriors” for protection of the autocracy by the Regulations on the management of the Don Army (1835)

In the 1770s–1780s, the southern frontier shifted to Ciscaucasia and further to the Greater Caucasus Ridge until it collided with the frontiers of Turkey, Persia, and Crimea. Now the neighbors of the avant-garde of the Russian colonization turned out to be not nomads, but the mountain communities with a developed agricultural culture, but with a different faith as well. Their norms and traditions were significantly different from the Russians, which led to a number of problems in integrating these territories into the institutional matrix of Russia.

And yet as before, the fortresses (Kizlyar, Mozdok) became the centers of Russian influence, serving as reference points for the construction of an entire military-civilian infrastructure, for example, the Azov – Mozdok fortified line. The peculiarities of the colonization of the Caucasus were the primacy of administrative colonization over the economic development (decrees appointed the location of future administrative centers); state regulation of colonization processes, for which the incentive conditionality mechanism was used such as payments and benefits to immigrants; the central figure of the Russian colonization became the Cossack; separation of the colonists and autochthonous population

(migration of highlanders to the foothills of the Caucasus); high conflict potential of the colonized territories (raids of the highlanders), which led to a special type of administration (since 1822, the commander of the troops of the Caucasian line was at the head of the administration of the Caucasus region (note - an administrative unit in the Caucasus). The peculiarities of the development led to the birth of a new type of government such as the ruling by military and by people, according to which the territory was divided into districts, headed by officers of the Russian army, however, in the rural societies the administration relied on elected foremen. To consolidate on these lands, the Russian authorities used a number of mechanisms like socialization (changing the system of upbringing and education of the highlanders, training the sons of the local aristocrats in the Russian military schools), putting pressure on the autochthonous population by introducing a monopoly on the salt trade.

By the mid-19th century, a viceroyalty was established in the Caucasus, which reflected the desire of the autocracy to centralize administration (the administrative system of these lands was directly subordinate to the emperor). However, the enormous rights and powers granted to the Caucasian governor turned him from a local echelon in the bureaucratic imperial apparatus into an independent center of power. In 1882, the viceroyalties were liquidated, and a course was set for the accelerated integration of the Caucasus region with the internal provinces of the empire within the framework of a unified administrative and legal field, which meant limiting the special powers granted to local government structures in favor of general imperial state institutions. Accelerated integration without taking into account the specifics of the region led to the formation and development of anti-Russian sentiments and a number of national movements in the Caucasus.

Another type of "zone of uncertainty" is the eastern frontier. Starting from the second half of the 17th century, the authorities of Muscovite state invested huge amounts of money in the construction of fortified lines (outposts) on the eastern borders. This, in its turn, led to the resettlement of Cossacks and peasants to the lands "fenced" with fortifications. The frontier zone turned out to be an area of contact between different lifestyles – settled (agricultural) and nomadic (pastoral), which invariably gave rise to the conflicts. However, this did not lead to a "total cleansing" of the local population by the Russian authorities, who sought to solve the problems not by military means, but by economic ones. Declaring itself the sovereign and owner of the land, Moscow at the same time sought not to violate the traditional forms of land use, thereby ensuring that the autochthonous population fulfills their main obligation, paying *yasak* (tax) with furs, and its size did not exceed that in "pre-Russian" times. The peculiarity of the Russian approach was the gradual transformation of military outposts into administrative centers in order to assert the position of the empire in the region.

The Cossack, the peasant and the exile became the central figures of the colonization in the East. At the same time, unlike the American frontier, this process was led not by the private firms, but by the state, which regulated the staffing of administrative institutions, the location of the Russian settlements (as a rule, separated from the places of residence of the local population and located in strategically important places,

such as along the highways and border lines), created a protective infrastructure for the Russian settlers. There was no serfdom here. The laws of colonization demanded entrepreneurship and personal initiative from its participants, thereby contributing to the emergence and the spread of elements of a subsidiary worldview like market and socio-cultural institutions.

The administrative and territorial division of the new lands had been changing in accordance with the movement of the frontier to the east: first were the Urals mastered, then Siberia was divided into Western and Eastern, and later the Far East formed out. The style of administration had also been changing. It is noteworthy that in 1764 Catherine II ordered Siberia to be called the Tsardom of Siberia, emphasizing the origin of these territories from the Tatar Khanate and the continuity of the Russian administration of these lands and the traditions of the former rulers. But yet in 1782–1783, viceroyalty was introduced in the region, which indicated the beginning of the application of general imperial administrative practices to these territories. At the same time, the remoteness of the frontier territories made it necessary to establish special forms of government, implying much greater independence in solving local issues than it was allowed in Central Russia.

Developed infrastructure (primarily through the construction of railways) was necessary for the economic development of the frontier territories. It is noteworthy that Russia, unlike America, emphasized their linear extent, and not branching. Administrative points were located, as a rule, along the railway tracks. In addition, their construction (especially the Trans-Siberian Railway) created opportunities to organize large-scale exports of agricultural products. The fastest growth in the region was the production of tallow oil, 80–90% of which was exported abroad. In 1909–1913, 16% of the world exports of this product and 60% of the Russian exports were from Siberia [3:161–162], facilitated by the state, which established preferential railway tariffs for the transportation of this product.

Along with agriculture, also the industry developed, especially in the Urals. Some of the lands granted by charters of the 16th century (such as Stroganov's), being initially under local and then patrimonial law, in the 19th century acquired the status of majorates (indivisible), which indicates the diffusion of the Western European institutions. The Perm majorate estate included mining complexes that provided the entire metallurgical cycle, and gave their owners huge economic and political power in the region, relative independence from the central authorities.

Nevertheless, despite the advance of the frontier to the east up to the borders of the continent, the new territories were sparsely populated, which required a more active enabling of the incentive conditioning mechanism. As the tools for this, P.A. Stolypin proposed to extend the ownership of land in Siberia (fixing the market institution). However, this proposal, which, in case of implementation, would have led to a significant transformation of the redistributive institutional matrix with the dominance of the idea of public interest over personal interest, was rejected, since such land management "will attach the old-timer to the place and thereby deprive him of the opportunity to fulfill his cultural task" [14:44] for the development of the new territories.

Yet, market institutions were formed on these lands. Since 1908, the Siberian settlers began to allocate the land not only for communal ownership, but for farms as well. In the communities with an equalizing redistribution, the delimitation of lands and their transfer to individual ownership has begun. It should be noted that the process of decomposition of the communal land tenure in Siberia took place much faster than in Russia.

Discussion

A necessary condition for the formation of a frontier is the emergence of the “vacuum”, the absence of clear boundaries, which makes it possible to expand the space occupied by the social system. The southern and eastern borders of the Muscovite state during its formation were not clearly defined due to the proximity of tribal groups of nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples to it. Muscovia could not defend itself against the constant raids of the nomads. As a result, the formation of the Russian frontier was determined not as much by the possibility of expansion as by the need to ensure the security of its borders.

Despite asynchronism of the frontier processes (different times of formation and rates of change), several stages can be distinguished in the evolution of Russian frontiers. The first of them is the formation of a military frontier, the construction of fortified lines (outposts) on the southern and eastern borders, the resettlement of Cossacks and peasants to the lands “fenced” by fortifications. The peculiarity of the Russian approach is the entry into contractual relations with the autochthonous population, the embedding of the Russian institutions in their norms and traditions. At the same time, the fortified lines, together with the infrastructure created for their functioning, had not only a military, but also a political and cultural purpose, being strongholds for asserting the positions of the empire in the region.

The second stage is the transitional period, the essence of which is the formalization of the legal status of the frontier territories and the establishment of special forms of government. The frontier territories provided for the presence of permanent and irregular troops; and their head (usually a military man) was entrusted with civil, military and diplomatic powers (his tasks included to draw border lines, to organize internal administrative units and to delimit them, etc.).

A management style, that was different from that in Central Russia, was formed on the lands of the Russian frontier; in these territories the officials were allowed much greater independence in resolving local issues. It should be noted, that the peculiarity of the imperial administration was the lack of a single central body to manage all frontier territories [19].

The third stage is the transplantation of economic and socio-cultural institutions of the redistributive type that dominated the institutional matrix of Russia to the new lands.

At the same time, due to the remoteness of the frontier territories from the center and their prominent economic specialization, market institutions were strengthened in the new lands, in particular, the introduction of majorat in the Urals, farming of the village,

the spread of elements of a subsidiary worldview, etc. This led to the emergence of spatial heterogeneity of the Russian institutional matrix.

The final stage is defrontierization (the final incorporation of the new lands into the institutional matrix of the empire). To achieve this goal, various mechanisms and tools were used such as improving the material and technological environment of the acquired territories (the creation of a developed infrastructure, primarily through the construction of railways), embedding them in the general imperial legal field (unification of legislation), spreading Orthodoxy and the scope of the Russian language, economic stimulation of the Russian colonization by the state, socialization of local elites and their involvement in the process of managing the new lands, granting much greater rights to local self-government than in the central Russian provinces.

At all stages, the evolution of the frontier territories was controlled by the Russian state, and the policy pursued was built on the principles of dialogue with the autochthonous population. Nevertheless, the process of defrontierization was rather complicated. In case with type I frontier, its speed was determined by the influence of exogenous (bordering “centers of power”) and endogenous factors (the need to integrate the institutions of the mountain communities into the Russian institutional matrix). For the open frontier, the main problem was the scarce population and, as a result, poor economic development.

Conclusions

The presence of vast, rich with the natural resources (and, therefore, economically promising) frontier territories in Russia, where market institutions developed and strengthened, led to the spatial heterogeneity of the Russian institutional matrix by the beginning of the 20th century. Defrontierization required decisive actions (in particular, changing the principles and forms of land tenure, taking into account national characteristics and traditions (informal institutions) of indigenous population), which would further exacerbate the heterogeneity and could lead to a crisis. This led to an inconsistent policy of the autocracy and, as a result, sluggish defrontierization.

In conclusion, it should be noted, that the presence of the southern and eastern frontiers had a tremendous impact on the historical path of Russia. The colonization slowed down the transition from extensive to intensive methods of exploration; consolidated low-tech ways in the center of the country and transmitted them to the periphery, and also reoriented the empire towards a self-sufficient development option. The expansion deep into the Eurasian continent, farther and farther from the sea and the crossroads of the Western European civilization, has led to Russia's weak involvement in the international division of labor, weak transfer of advanced Western technologies and, ultimately, a special, the Russian type of modernization.

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Contribution of the author

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The impact of the gas crisis of 2021–2022 on energy sustainability and the implementation of climate commitments by the largest emitters of carbon dioxide

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Abstract. Under the Paris Climate Agreement, 193 states have committed themselves to reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change. Almost half of them have now adopted programs to achieve carbon neutrality. Last year, leading up to the 26th UN Climate Conference in Glasgow, many of the leading CO₂ emitters stepped up their climate targets significantly. However, the desire to increasingly reduce fossil and nuclear energy in favor of «clean» sources has collided in 2021 with a global energy crisis that has called into question the sustainability of energy systems tailored to achieve climate goals. The purpose of this study is to identify the relationship between the rapid growth in natural gas prices and the implementation of climate commitments and national plans of states dependent on natural gas imports. The author analyzes the impact of the energy crisis on gas prices, and then, using the example of developed and developing countries among the largest emitters of carbon dioxide, monitors the impact of this price increase on the implementation of their climate obligations. Based on statistical data, the author studies the energy balance of China, Japan, India and Germany, its vulnerability to gas prices, the reaction of energy systems to the crisis and the subsequent measures of states to mitigate it in terms of following climate paradigms, in particular, abandoning coal. As a result of the study, the author comes to the conclusion that the issuing states in times of crises are forced to partially deviate from their previous climate measures, respectively, the implementation of their ambitious climate commitments that do not take into account such risks is in question.

Keywords: climate commitments, NDC, energy security, natural gas, renewable energy, import dependence

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Introduction

Since the entry into force of the Paris Agreement on climate change, the understanding of the role that the commitments of participating States can have on the global economy has changed.

The Paris Agreement was signed by 193 states, 194 countries (including Eritrea, which is not a party to the Paris Agreement¹) submitted Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) – plans to reduce emissions and plans to adapt to climate change². By the end of the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow (COP26), 151 countries had submitted updated climate plans (in March 2022 – already 156 States)³.

I.A. Stepanov, N.D. Aghikyan and E.E. Muzychenko identify the following factors that influence the climate concernment of states [4]:

- vulnerability to global climate change;
- level of socio-economic development;
- energy policy (for ex. dependence on imports in energy supply);
- the problem of air pollution;
- specialization in the extraction and export of fossil fuels.

The authors distinguish the following clusters of States according to the scale of climate commitments:

1. Cluster “Very rich and with a lack of energy” (for example, Austria, Germany, Denmark, Ireland).
2. Cluster “Moderately wealthy and with an extremely lack of energy” (for example, Greece, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Lithuania).
3. Cluster “Moderately wealthy and with abundance of energy” (for example, Azerbaijan, Russia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan).
4. Cluster “Poor and energy – supplied” (for example, Botswana, Guatemala, Belarus, Uzbekistan).

The results of the authors’ analysis indicate that the most large-scale goals for reducing emissions are in developed countries. In turn, the countries of the fourth cluster have rather modest ambitions in climate policy, while at the same time, it is in the countries of the fourth cluster we see extremely high values of local air pollution and climate changes, which, as the authors suggest, is explained by high negative correlation with the level of

- 1 NDC Registry. UNFCCC. Available: <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/Pages/Home.aspx>.
- 2 Available: <https://www.un.org/ru/climatechange/all-about-ndcs>.
- 3 NDC Enhancement Tracker. Climate Watch. Available: <https://www.climatewatchdata.org/2020-ndc-tracker>.

economic development. In addition, the results indicate that energy-abundant countries tend to be less active in climate policy [4].

According to Net Zero Tracker in March 2022, 83 countries that emit 74.2% of greenhouse gas (GHG) have set a goal of achieving carbon neutrality and fix it in national strategic documents or political commitments, but the results depending on the factors outlined above, may be called into question in the situation of global economic shocks.

Economies heavily dependent on fossil fuels are most vulnerable to various energy market shocks, primarily due to volatility in energy prices.

The energy crisis that began in 2021 poses risks and leads to a forced slowdown in climate projects or even a temporary waiver of a number of obligations in order to maintain economic and energy stability. This is especially true for states dependent on natural gas imports, as well as those where gas occupies a significant share in the country's energy balance or those where we see the transition to the use of gas instead of other sources with higher CO₂ emissions.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify the relationship between the rapid growth in natural gas prices and the implementation of climate commitments and national plans of states dependent on natural gas imports.

Materials and methods

The study used the databases of the International Energy Agency (IEA) on the dynamics of gas prices in 2020–2022 (2022), the IEA databases on the energy balances of the countries studied (n.d.), the report BP Statistical Review of World Energy (2021), the report “World gas market, Monitoring” (January 2021) of the Moscow School of Management Skolkovo (2021), as well as statistical data and specialized reports from government agencies in China, India, Japan, Germany and the Republic of Korea. In addition, the author uses information and analytical reports from Russian and foreign media and expert comments in the media to provide up-to-date data for 2022.

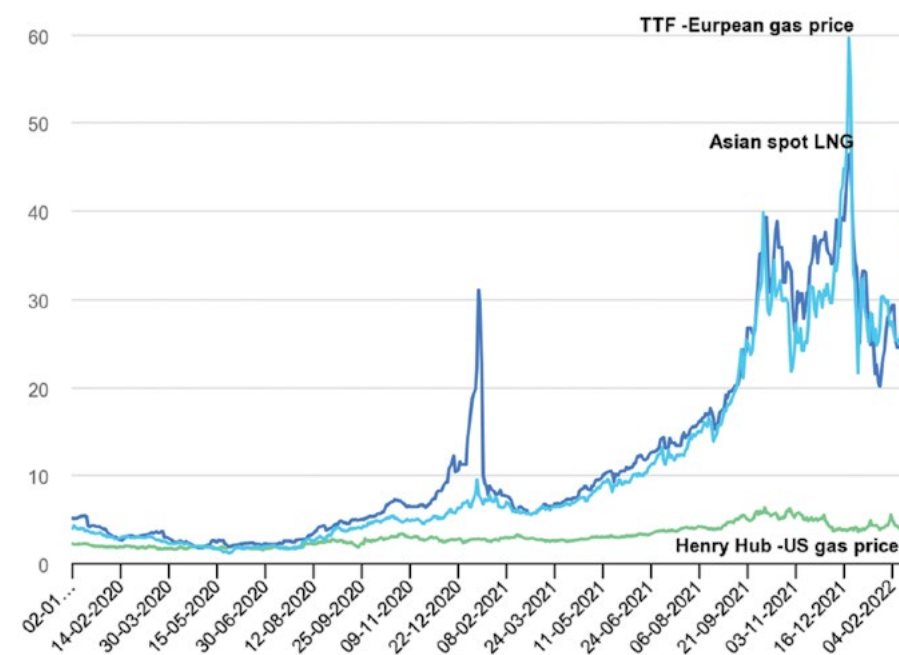
Results

Causes of the gas crisis and its dynamics

At the end of 2020, the price of gas in the spot markets began to rise (Figure 1), reaching its highest level since the beginning of the year. The growth spurt in January 2020 was recorded in the Asian spot market, it was associated with strong demand due to weather conditions, as well as an increase in demand from China due to the ongoing policy of replacing coal with gas⁴. After a typical spring slowdown in demand, in particular

⁴ The global gas market. Monitoring January 2021. Skolkovo. Moscow School of Management. Available: https://energy.skolkovo.ru/downloads/documents/SEneC/Monitoring/SKOLKOVO_EneC_

Figure 1. Dynamics of gas prices in spot markets in Europe, Asia and the USA in 2020–2022 (\$ / MBTU)



Source: International Energy Agency. IEA, Natural gas prices in Europe, Asia and the United States, Jan 2020 – February 2022. IEA, Paris, 2022. URL: <https://www.iea.org/data-and-statistics/charts/natural-gas-prices-in-europe-asia-and-the-united-states-jan-2020-february-2022>.

due to weather conditions, prices began to rise actively, reaching the first price record on the European and Asian stock markets of autumn 2021. It should be noted that the experts predicted a rise in prices at the European and Asian hubs not only due to an increase in demand on the eve of the winter heating period, but also due to low reserves in gas storage facilities, a series of supply disruptions (deliveries usually occur during a period of low demand in summer for filling gas storage facilities), the post-COVID economic recovery and the associated increased demand in Asia⁵. In addition, the new climate policy of European countries also has an impact, that implies the abandonment of coal in favor of gas and the reduction of their own production by European states (which, in particular, is explained both by the cessation of a number of countries of production in the North Sea and the depletion of North Sea deposits)⁶. As Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Alexander Novak noted, European countries have abandoned long-term investments in that economic sector, preferring spot contracts, which led to supply disruptions due to increased demand for LNG in Asian markets. Another reason, according to the Deputy Prime Minister, is in

⁵ Record-breaking summer European gas prices signal an expensive winter. Reuters, 7 July 2021. URL: <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/record-breaking-summer-european-gas-prices-signal-an-expensive-winter-2021-07-07/>.

⁶ The causes of the gas crisis in Europe. Oil and capital, 17.11.2021. Available: <https://oilcapital.ru/interview/17-11-2021/prichiny-gazovogo-krizisa-v-evrope?amp=1>.

weather conditions – due to the risks of a new cold winter and a shortage of gas, futures prices began to react with growth, laying in advance the conditions for increased demand⁷. The Deputy Prime Minister also notes that the reason that aggravated the crisis in countries that have relied on RES was a decrease in wind speed, which directly affects the energy generation by wind turbines, and the onset of autumn, as expected, reduced the volume of energy generation at solar power plants [3].

Following European gas prices, the cost of “blue fuel” in Asian markets has increased. The rise in prices in European markets was accompanied by strong demand in Asia⁸, especially due to the energy crisis in China caused by the lack of coal⁹, as well as Beijing’s policy to increase the use of gas in the transport industry, industry and electric power industry¹⁰.

The Ukrainian crisis and the accompanying conflict between Russia and Western countries only exacerbated the situation with gas pricing. Now it is difficult to predict the long-term development of the situation. However, there are already signs that, in order to stabilize the economic situation and ensure energy security, import-dependent countries are forced to neglect part of their climate commitments.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres said that the current situation could mean that the world’s leading economies, in an attempt to find alternatives to Russian fossil fuel supplies, risk prolonging their dependence on this energy source in future and can miss the opportunity to keep global warming within 1.5°C¹¹.

In this regard, we looked at four countries that are among the ten largest emitters of carbon dioxide and depend on gas imports, and tracked their actions in fulfillment of their climate obligations in the energy sector starting from 2021.

Below are data on the ten largest emitters of carbon dioxide in 2020 (Table 1). The analysis showed that four countries are dependent on natural gas supplies due to their own limited production: China, India, Japan, Germany.

China and India have been criticized by the environmental community for what the greens say is not active enough to combat climate change.

Japan and Germany, on the contrary, are among the nations that are constantly updating their climate commitments and placing them at the center of their energy policies.

⁷ Novak named six reasons for the gas crisis in Europe. RBC. Available: <https://www.rbc.ru/business/29/12/2021/61cb3bc99a7947b4aef9c3ff>.

⁸ Asia LNG price rise on firm Chinese demand, eyes on Russian flow. Reuters. Available: <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/asia-lng-price-rise-firm-chinese-demand-eyes-russian-flow-2021-10-15/>.

⁹ China power crisis. S&P Global. Available: <https://www.spglobal.com/commodity-insights/en/market-insights/topics/china-power-crisis-news>.

¹⁰ Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) for National Economic and Social Development and Vision 2035 of the People’s Republic of China. Center for Security and Emerging Technology (CSET). Translation, 12 May 2021. Available: https://cset.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/t0284_14th_Five_Year_Plan_EN.pdf.

¹¹ UN Secretary-General: We are moving further and further away from the goal of keeping global warming within 1.5 degrees Celsius. UN, 21.03.2022. Available: <https://news.un.org/ru/story/2022/03/1420252>.

Table 1. Top 10 carbon emitters in 2020

Country	Volume of emissions (Mt)
China	9 899,3
USA	4 457,2
India	2 302,3
Russia	1 482,2
Japan	1 027,0
Iran	678,2
Germany	604,9
Republic of Korea	577,8
Indonesia	575,9
Saudi Arabia	570,8

Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2021. URL: <https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2021-full-report.pdf>

Below are statistical data on the production, import and consumption of natural gas in each of these countries, as well as the energy balance, which allows you to track the degree of their dependence on gas supplies and price volatility. Then, political actions and decisions in the energy industry and other branches of the economy related to the supply of “blue fuel” that affect the climate policy of each state are considered.

The reaction of import-dependent countries to the gas crisis in the context of climate commitments

China

China is the largest emitter of carbon dioxide, so its climate policy in recent years has received particular attention. Introduced by China in October 2021, the updated NDC includes a goal of peaking carbon dioxide emissions by 2030, followed by reductions to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060. It also it is planned to reduce emissions per unit of GDP by more than 65% from the 2005 level and to increase the capacity of wind and solar energy by 2030 to more than 1.2 billion kW¹².

As part of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021–2025), it is assumed, firstly, to increase the share of non-fossil resources in energy consumption by about 20% by 2025¹³ and

¹² China’s Achievements, New Goals and New Measures for Nationally Determined Contributions, 28 October 2021. NDC Registry. Available: <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NDCStaging/pages/Party.aspx?party=CHN>.

¹³ Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) for National Economic and Social Development and Vision 2035 of the People’s Republic of China. Center for Security and Emerging Technology (CSET). Translation, 12 May 2021. Available: https://cset.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/t0284_14th_Five_Year_Plan_EN.pdf.

in energy production by about 39%¹⁴, and secondly, the development of solar and wind energy, construction of new coastal nuclear power stations, a significant role is given to the development of hydrogen energy.

Table 2. Statistics of production, import and consumption of natural gas in China in 2021

Year	Gas production (billion m3)	Import ¹⁵ (billion m3)	Consumption (billion m3)
2021	205,3	167,5	372,6

Source: Energy production in December 2021. National Bureau of Statistics, 17 January 2022 (in Chinese). URL: http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/zxfb/202201/t20220117_1826406.html; Brief analysis of natural gas exploitation in China in 2021. China Gas Association, 22 February 2022. URL: <http://www.chinagas.org.cn/mobile/index.php/m/c/5/6/58079> (in Chinese)

China is about fourth in terms of gas production¹⁶, but about 45% is the need for imported gas (Table 2).

Despite the relatively small share of gas (7% in the country's energy balance), in recent years its consumption has increased markedly (in 2021 – 17.6%)¹⁷. This is due both to the recovery in demand after the pandemic and the economic policy pursued by Beijing. China is promoting large-scale use of natural gas in sectors including industrial fuels, electricity generation and transportation as part of efforts to combat air pollution¹⁸. In addition, natural gas is actively used in the transport industry: in particular, buses and taxis are being converted to “blue fuel”, China's gas fleet is also actively developing. Beijing recognizes gas as a clean energy source that complies with climate commitments¹⁹, and the approval of natural gas as a “clean” energy source in the EU taxonomy is also beneficial for China²⁰. The 14th Five-Year Plan (2021–2025) presupposes expanding the use of natural gas, however, the emphasis is on increasing domestic production to reduce dependence on imports²¹.

¹⁴ New energy to play increasing role with LNG continuing to contribute. The State Council of the People's Republic of China, 24 March 2022. Available: http://english.www.gov.cn/news/topnews/202203/24/content_WS623bd672c6d02e5335328368.html.

¹⁵ Information on the volume of imports in the report is given in million tons. 1 Mt of LNG = 1.3802622498753 billion m3 of natural gas.

¹⁶ IEA Atlas of Energy. International Energy Agency. Available: <http://energyatlas.iea.org/#/tellmap/-1165808390>.

¹⁷ Brief analysis of natural gas exploitation in China in 2021. China Gas Association, 22 February 2022. Available: <http://www.chinagas.org.cn/mobile/index.php/m/c/5/6/58079>.

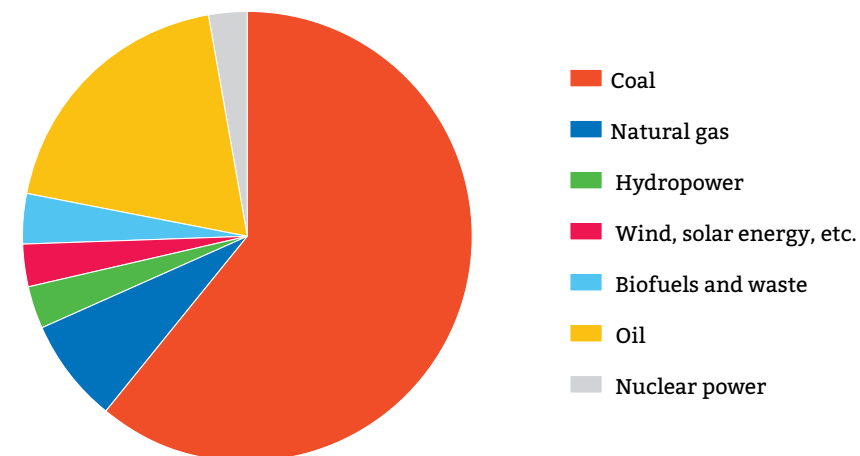
¹⁸ China's natural-gas consumption jumps in Jan.-Nov. period. Xinhua. Available: <http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/20220102/b4752b18e4e54bcaa8a65d13bf9f05b1/c.html>.

¹⁹ Energy in China's New Era. Ministry of Ecology and Environment the People's Republic of China, 22 December 2020. Available: https://english.mee.gov.cn/Resources/publications/Whitep/202012/t20201222_814160.shtml.

²⁰ Questions and Answers on the EU Taxonomy Complementary Climate Delegated Act covering certain nuclear and gas activities. European Commission. Available: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA_22_712.

²¹ Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021–2025) for National Economic and Social Development and Vision 2035 of the People's Republic of China. Center for Security and Emerging Technology (CSET). Translation, 12 May 2021. Available: https://cset.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/t0284_14th_Five_Year_Plan_EN.pdf.

Figure 2. Energy balance of China in 2019



Source: International Energy Agency. IEA World Energy Balances. Available: <https://www.iea.org/countries/china>

The energy crisis of 2021 was a serious blow to the Chinese energy industry. Among its reasons, experts primarily name the high share of thermal power production, which, due to the inaccessibility of coal (due to a physical shortage, a jump in prices, or the underdevelopment of logistics channels to ensure timely supplies both domestically and from abroad), has repeatedly led to interruptions in the supply of electricity in past²². Some experts believe that a significant role in the electricity shortage, which led to a series of blackouts in the country, was played by a plan to reduce emissions in the provinces, tightly controlled by the State Committee for Reform and Development. This has led to the closure of several coal mines with the largest carbon footprint²³, in addition, since the beginning of the year, mine safety requirements have been increased, which have also led to a number of closures of mines²⁴. China's trade war with Australia also had an impact, which led to a ban on the supply of cheap Australian coal. Last but not least, this forced China to significantly increase LNG supplies, but the supply failed to meet the growing demand ahead of the winter season, thus creating a shortage also in other markets, in particular in the EU. High gas prices connected with growing demand in the north at the beginning of the heating season, according to Chinese analysts, led to a decrease in sales of gas filling stations from 5 to 30% in different regions²⁵.

The current situation has become a challenge for the Chinese government, which has repeatedly stressed that the achievement of climate goals and the energy transition should

²² Epikhina Raisa. The energy crisis in China. November 19, 2021. Available: <https://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/energeticheskiy-krizis-v-kitae/>.

²³ The reasons for the energy crisis in China are the struggle to reduce emissions. Vedomosti. 11.10.21. Available: <https://www.vedomosti.ru/economics/articles/2021/10/11/890712-energokrizisa-kitae>.

²⁴ Fitch: Due to lack of supply, projected prices for thermal coal have increased. Sina, 09.09.21. Available: <https://cj.sina.com.cn/articles/view/7194157228/1acce20ac00100vc1x>.

²⁵ China's natural gas consumption will continue its upward trend (中国天然气表观消费量将保持增长态势). Comnews, 12.01.2022. Available: <http://www.comnews.cn/article/cysj/202201/20220100094978.shtml>.

not be to the detriment of the country's economic and energy security, and the climate transition should be soft and gradual²⁶. The country's authorities were forced to make a decision to reactivate temporarily frozen coal mines, which can produce up to 67 million tons of coal per year²⁷. Rising energy prices led to an unprecedented increase in electricity prices and caused losses to suppliers, so forcing the State Committee for Reform and Development to increase the tariff for end consumers by 10%²⁸. That's why for the Chinese government ensuring the sustainability of the economy turned out to be a higher priority than the fulfillment of climate obligations.

China's policy on "dirty" energy has been controversial even until that situation. The designated 14th five-year plan, in addition to increasing renewable capacities, also contains plans to increase oil production, as well as coal production – a resource necessary not only for electric power generation, but also in metallurgy and the steel industry. The plan provides for retention of the indicator of coal production at 4.1 billion tons, but at the same time it provides for the construction of new coal-fired electric power stations²⁹. In 2021, the year the plan was adopted, construction of coal-fired electric power stations with a total capacity of 33 GW began – more than in 2016³⁰. This was the basis for widespread criticism from Western environmental organizations, who accused China of double standards in the field of climate³¹. However, it is important to note that both the 14th Five-Year Plan and the new conclusion by two National Commissions released in January 2022 highlight that China is pursuing a policy of modernizing coal-fired electric power stations across the country, decommissioning outdated production facilities and promoting "clean" coal energy with a high degree of filtration, as well as promoting the construction of new, more environmentally friendly coal mines^{32,33}.

26 «14th five-year plan» Planning of a modern energy system. National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), National Energy Administration (NEA). Available: <https://www.ndrc.gov.cn/xxgk/zcfb/ghwb/202203/P020220322582066837126.pdf>.

27 Fitch: Due to lack of supply, projected prices for thermal coal have increased. Sina, 09.09.21. Available: <https://cj.sina.com.cn/articles/view/7194157228/1acce20ac00100vc1x>.

28 The causes of the energy crisis in China are the struggle to reduce emissions. Vedomosti. 11.10.21. Available: <https://www.vedomosti.ru/economics/articles/2021/10/11/890712-energokrizisa-kitae>.

29 China will limit annual coal production to 4.1 billion tons by the end of 2025. Xinhua, 04.03.2021. Available: http://russian.news.cn/2021-03/04/c_139782781.htm.

30 BRIEFING: Most coal power plants since 2016 entered construction in China in 2021, investment in coal-based steelmaking accelerated. CERA. Available: <https://energyandcleanair.org/china-coal-power-steel-2021/>.

31 China starts building 33 GW of coal power in 2021, most since 2016 -research. Reuters, 24 February 2022. Available: <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/china-starts-building-33-gw-coal-power-2021-most-since-2016-research-2022-02-24/>.

32 Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021–2025) for National Economic and Social Development and Vision 2035 of the People's Republic of China. Center for Security and Emerging Technology (CSET). Translation, 12 May 2021. Available: https://cset.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/t0284_14th_Five_Year_Plan_EN.pdf.

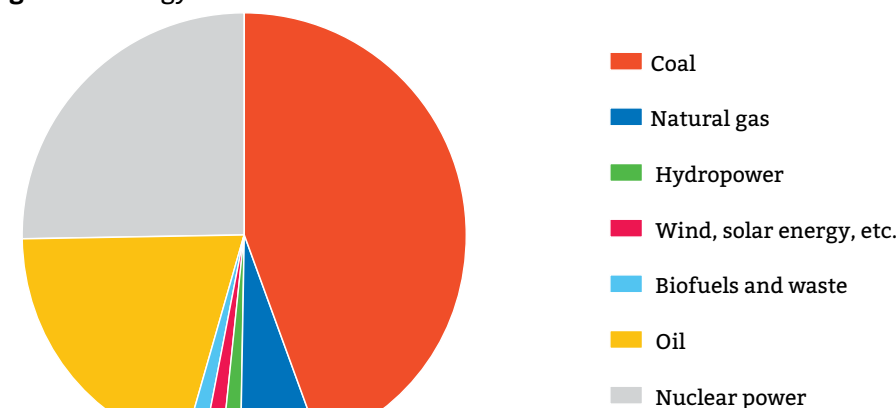
33 Conclusions of the National Development and Reform Commission and the National Energy Administration on improving the Institutional Mechanism and Policies and Measures for Green and Low-Carbon Transformation. Government of the People's Republic of China, 2022. Available: http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/zhengceku/2022-02/11/content_5673015.htm.

India

India, ranked third in terms of CO₂ emissions, is one of the countries where climate reforms are proving to be the most difficult. That country did not present an updated version of the NDC for the Glasgow climate summit, but during the conference, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that with financial support from developed countries, India is able to achieve climate neutrality in 50 years, by 2070. He stated that \$1 trillion would be needed to achieve India's climate goals³⁴. At the Paris conference, Modi emphasized that the responsibility for global warming lies primarily with the developed countries, and therefore they should provide financial support to less wealthy countries in the implementation of costly climate policies³⁵.

Back in 2018, India adopted the 13th Five-Year National Electricity Plan, according to which by 2022 the expected increase in capacity from renewable sources (wind, solar power plants, biomass, small hydropower plants) will be from 117.8 GW to 175 GW, and by 2027 year will increase by another 100 GW (as of December 31, 2021, the installed RES capacity was 151.4 GW)³⁶. In addition, the development of nuclear energy is planned, while coal-fired power plants with a total capacity of 9.5 GW will be decommissioned by the end of 2022³⁷.

Figure 3. Energy balance of India in 2019



Source: International Energy Agency. URL: <https://www.iea.org/countries/india>

34 Modi Surprises Climate Summit With 2070 Net-Zero Vow for India. Bloomberg, 1 November 2021. Available: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-01/india-will-reach-net-zero-emissions-by-2070-modi-tells-cop26>.

35 India pushes rich countries to boost their climate pledges at Paris. The Guardian, 2 December 2015. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/dec/02/india-takes-leading-role-for-global-south-nations-in-climate-talks>.

36 Industry Scenario. Invest India. Available: <https://www.investindia.gov.in/sector/renewable-energy>.

37 National Electricity Plan (Vol. 1). Central Electricity Authority, January 2018. Available: https://cea.nic.in/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/nep_jan_2018.pdf.

At the conference, the Prime Minister announced five new principles for India's climate policy: achieving 500 GW of energy capacity from non-fossil resources – about 50% in the energy balance by 2030, reducing the carbon intensity of the economy by 45%, achieving zero emissions by 2070³⁸.

Even in 2018, India adopted the 13th Five-Year National Electricity Plan, according to which by 2022 the expected increase in capacity from renewable sources (wind, solar power plants, biomass, small hydropower stations) will be from 117.8 GW to 175 GW, and by 2027 year they will increase by another 100 GW (on December 31, 2021, the installed RES capacity was 151.4 GW). In addition, the development of nuclear energy is planned, and at the same time coal-fired power electric stations with a total capacity of 9.5 GW will be closed by the end of 2022.

Table 3. Statistics of production, import and consumption of natural gas in India in 2021-2022

Year	Gas production ³⁹ (billion m3)	Import ⁴⁰ (billion m3)	Consumption ⁴¹ (billion m3)
2021-2022 (April-February)	31,13	29,29	59,61

The growth of gas generation by the end of 2022 was projected to 25.7 GW, this figure was planned to save until 2027, due to the low level of domestic fuel production in the country⁴². At the early 2022, India really had an approximate gas-fired stations installed capacity of 24.9 GW⁴³.

Based on IEA data for 2019, natural gas gave about 6% of India's energy balance (Figure 3), and it remained at the same level in 2022. However, according to the plan of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country will increase the share of gas in the fuel balance to 15% by 2030 as a "green" fuel for the country's energy transit.

The growth in demand for natural gas is also predicted by a representative of India's largest gas company GAIL, linking it to the growing needs of the industry (including through the new industries), as well as the policy of phasing out coal. There is also the demand for gas in the transport industry and among households⁴⁴.

38 National Statement by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at COP26 Summit in Glasgow. Prime Minister's Office of India, 1 November 2021. Available: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1768712>.

39 Monthly Production Report for February 2022. Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, 22 March 2022. Available: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1808113>.

40 Import of LNG. Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas. Available: https://www.ppac.gov.in/content/153_1_ImportNaturalgas.aspx.

41 Gas consumption. Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas. Available: https://www.ppac.gov.in/content/152_1_Consumption.aspx.

42 National Electricity Plan (Vol.1). Central Electricity Authority, January 2018. Available: https://cea.nic.in/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/nep_jan_2018.pdf.

43 Power Sector at a Glance All India. Government of India, Ministry of Power, 11 February 2022. Available: <https://powermin.gov.in/en/content/power-sector-glance-all-india>.

44 India's gas consumption to jump more than 3 times by 2030: GAIL Director. Business-Standard, 25 November 2021. Available: https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/india-s-gas-consumption-to-jump-more-than-3-times-by-2030-gail-director-121112500902_1.html.

The state is approximately 48.5% dependent on the import of "blue fuel" (Table 3). The 2021 gas crisis has led to fears that the country will abandon its obligations to increase the use of gas and return to the use of coal and petroleum coke⁴⁵. In addition, the crisis coincided with the largest coal crisis, which led to a decrease in the generation of electric power by most coal-fired power stations and rolling blackouts. Coal deliveries in India in the fall of 2021 increased despite the crisis, due to an increase in the volume of their own production, including mines, which products are intended for the inner consumption. The government also called on housing utilities to increase coal imports, despite rising prices^{46, 47}. High gas prices have played a major role in driving India's coal-fired power generation up to 72.9% in the first eight months of 2021. Rising LNG prices led to a decrease in imports and a reorientation towards long-term supplies, rather than spot contracts, which were massively abandoned among Indian companies in October 2021⁴⁸.

This crisis has demonstrated that, despite its climate commitment targets, and with gas prices still high, India is likely to continue to rely on coal for its energy security, at least as a back-up source. Growing dissatisfaction with high domestic gas prices may also play a role: back in August, Congress launched a massive criticism of the Modi government due to the lack of subsidies for the population because of unprecedented price increases⁴⁹. Such criticism continued until the spring of 2022, despite the fact that the Prime Minister confirmed that the growth of gas in the country's energy balance will continue⁵⁰. In addition, the Indian Ministry of Coal Mining has announced the intention to loosen some environmental regulations ahead of the summer season, so not to repeat the situation of 2021⁵¹. Given the complexity of introducing renewable energy sources for a number of reasons, such as Indian bureaucracy and a complex tax system that involves tariff barriers for domestic cell and module manufacturers, achieving climate goals is becoming increasingly difficult, especially in the absence of support from developed countries.

45 High prices could slow India's transition to gas. Economic Times, 20 October 2021. Available: https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/high-prices-could-slow-indias-transition-to-gas/articleshow/87165103.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst.

46 So called "captive coal mines". India asks "captive" coal mines to increase output as power demand rises. Reuters, 7 September 2021. Available: <https://www.reuters.com/world/india/india-asks-captive-coal-mines-increase-output-power-demand-rises-2021-09-06/>.

47 India asks housing utilities to import coal amid short supply as demand spikes. Reuters, 2 September 2021. Available: <https://www.reuters.com/world/india/indias-august-power-output-rises-161-coal-fired-power-by-237-2021-09-01/>.

48 High LNG prices put spotlight on India's exposure to global gas market volatility. S&P Global, 15 October 2021. Available: <https://www.spglobal.com/commodity-insights/en/market-insights/latest-news/lng/101521-high-lng-prices-put-spotlight-on-indias-exposure-to-global-gas-market-volatility>.

49 LPG price rose by Rs 265 in 9 months, Congress slams Modi govt over Rs 25 hike. The Times of India, 18 August 2021. Available: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/lpg-rose-by-rs-265-in-9-months-congress-slams-rs-25-price-hike/articleshow/85426250.cms>.

50 India sets target to raise share of natural gas in energy mix to 15 per cent by 2030. The Print, 24 March 2022. Available: <https://theprint.in/economy/india-sets-target-to-raise-share-of-natural-gas-in-energy-mix-to-15-per-cent-by-2030/887140/>.

51 India's coal miners want to loosen environmental regulations. Oil and capital, 28.03.2022. (In Russ). Available: <https://oilcapital.ru/news/abroad/28-03-2022/ugolschiki-indii-hotyat-oslabit-ekologicheskije-normy>.

Japan

Japan has set a goal in its NDC to reduce «greenhouse» gas emissions by 46% by 2030 compared to 2013 levels. Tokyo plans to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. Reductions in energy-related CO₂ emissions are expected to be up to 760 Mt compared to 1.4 Gt in 2013⁵².

The target of achieving climate neutrality by 2050 was adopted in 2020, the same year the “green growth” and environmental protection strategy was adopted, which covers industries such as energy, automobiles, batteries, food, agriculture, forestry, construction, shipping and aviation, semiconductor/information and communications, and lifestyle industries⁵³. It is interesting that the strategy recognizes that it is unrealistic to cover the entire demand for electricity only from renewable energy sources. Thus, by 2050 Japan’s energy balance will consist of 50–60% renewable energy sources, 10% hydrogen and ammonia, and 30–40% of energy will be generated by nuclear and thermal power stations. The strategy recognizes that the promotion of electrification in all sectors will increase the demand for electricity by 30–50%⁵⁴.

Table 4. Statistics of production, import and consumption of natural gas in Japan in 2020

Year	Gas production ⁵⁵ (billion m3)	Import ⁵⁶ (billion m3)	Consumption ⁵⁷ (billion m3)
2020	3,872	102	104,4

According to the strategy, by 2050 it is planned to build a distributed energy system that ensures the efficient use of heat through the implementation of gas cogeneration, as well as to develop the supply of synthetic methane (equivalent to LNG) at a cost equivalent to LNG (40-50 yen/m³) through the development of innovative technologies such as higher methanation efficiency⁵⁸.

In addition, intelligent energy systems are becoming an important - an automated software package, based on the collection of information from all participants in the system and its intermediate elements, will allow to distribute all available energy among consumers as efficiently as possible, will ensure the stability of the operation of the

⁵² Japan’s Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). NDC Registry. Available: <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NDCStaging/pages/Party.aspx?party=JPN>.

⁵³ Green Growth Strategy through Achieving Carbon Neutrality in 2050. Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. Available: https://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/energy_environment/global_warming/ggs2050/index.html.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

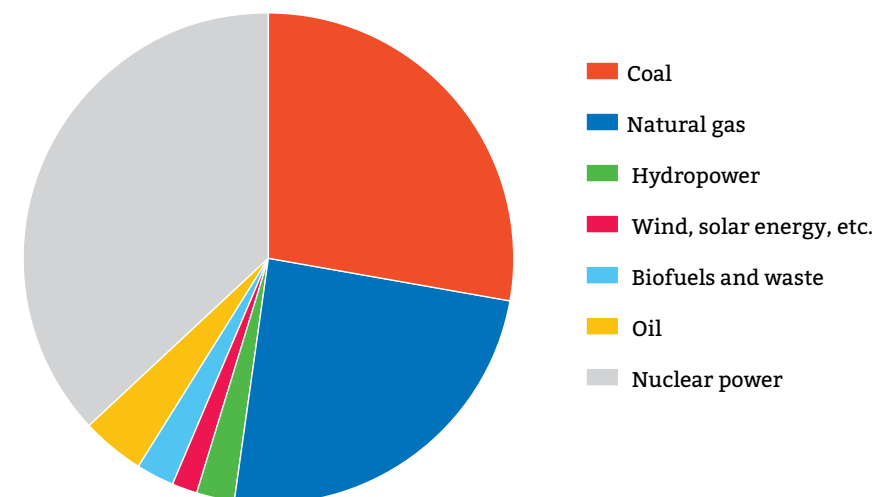
⁵⁵ OPEC Data. OPEC. Available: <https://asb.opec.org/data/ASBData.php>.

⁵⁶ BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2021. Available: <https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2021-full-report.pdf>.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Green Growth Strategy Through Achieving Carbon Neutrality in 2050. Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. Available: https://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/energy_environment/global_warming/ggs2050/index.html.

Figure 4. Energy balance in Japan in 2020



Source: International Energy Agency. Available: <https://www.iea.org/countries/japan>

power grid, while regulating various technical aspects of the process, such as voltage and frequency [2].

In an effort to reduce dependence on imports and at the same time achieve climate goals, Japan announced in July 2021 its intention to reduce the share of LNG in the energy balance to 20% by 2030⁵⁹. It should be noted that the growth of fossil fuels in Japan was noticeable after the disaster at the Fukushima nuclear power station in 2011 and the minimizing of nuclear energy programs for almost a decade. However, the new energy goals imply an increase in nuclear energy as well as renewable energy. In 2010, before the disaster, Japan’s energy self-sufficiency rate was 20.3%. The most critical point in the fall of this indicator was 2014 – the level of self-sufficiency of Japan in energy decreased to 6.4% [2].

However, the share of gas consumption of 20% is quite high, taking into account the degree of Japan’s dependence on imports by almost 98% (Table 4). The 2021 gas crisis caused a 9-month record increase in electricity prices, with wholesale prices rising to 13-year highs. However, the policy of Japanese utility companies, which began replenishing LNG reserves in advance, prevented a repeat of the winter 2021 crisis due to energy shortages. The snowy winter made adjustments against the backdrop of persistently high gas prices. Coal imports hit a 13-month high in January 2022, but Tokyo expects that gradual restart of the country’s nuclear power stations will help to offset periods of rising demand without the need for additional purchases of “dirty” fuel⁶⁰. But the restart of the nuclear power stations is connected with a number of difficulties: first of all, among the Japanese public,

⁵⁹ Japan set for 60% non-fossil fuel power supply in 2030 in GHG slash drive. S&P Global, 21 July 2021. Available: <https://www.spglobal.com/commodity-insights/en/market-insights/latest-news/electric-power/072121-japan-set-for-60-non-fossil-fuel-power-supply-in-2030-in-ghg-slash-drive>.

⁶⁰ Japan coal imports hit 13-month high. Argus, 17 February 2022. Available: <https://www.argusmedia.com/en/news/2187739-japan-coal-imports-hit-13month-high>.

there is still a widespread opinion about the insecurity of nuclear energy, there are fears of a repetition of the 2011 disaster.

In October 2021, the cabinet held public hearings where conflicting positions about the restart were formulated. According to existing safety rules, nuclear reactors are allowed to operate for 40 years, with a possible one-time extension of their service life up to 60 years. Of the formally operating 33 reactors (in fact, 6 reactors are operating in the country, the rest are not in service⁶¹), 15 reactors with a total capacity of 14.1 GW should be decommissioned by December 2030, and by 2050 there will not be a single reactor that assumes 40- summer service life⁶². Restarting capacities in the near future is fraught with complex relicensing procedures and safety checks, so the country will have to rely on fossil fuels, despite criticism of the government (from representatives of Japanese renewable energy companies in particular)⁶³.

Germany

Germany's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) is presented as a part of the European Union Common Plan. An updated version of the document was published in December 2020. It should be taken into account that in order to reduce emissions, the European Union has developed the Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) – a specialized tool that regulates through a system of quotas (in fact, limited by a certain level of permits) the maximum amount of greenhouse gases that can be emitted in a certain territory for a certain period of time. Emissions above the standards are subject to fines. Quotas can be distributed free of charge or sold. Permissions are allocated to each industrial installation covered by the system⁶⁴.

According to the EU NDC, by 2030 Germany will reduce its emissions from sectors outside the EU ETS by 38% from 2005 levels⁶⁵.

Germany's climate strategy, the Climate Action Plan 2050, aims to reduce emissions from the energy sector by 61–62% by 2030 compared to 1990 by moving away from fossil fuels in favor of renewable energy⁶⁶.

61 Reactor restarts could be 'best option' for Japan to ride out energy shortages, senior LDP lawmaker says. Japan Times, 8 March 2022. Available: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2022/03/08/national/restart-nuclear-reactors-ldp-lawmaker/>.

62 Japan remains focused on restarting nuclear reactors. Argus, 25 October 2021. Available: <https://www.argusmedia.com/en/news/2266794-japan-remains-focused-on-restarting-nuclear-reactors?amp=1>.

63 Goldman-Founded Firm Says Japan Must Do More on Clean Energy. Bloomberg, 16 December 2021. Available: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-12-16/goldman-founded-energy-firm-says-japan-must-do-more-on-climate>.

64 EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS). European Commission. Available: https://ec.europa.eu/clima/eu-action/eu-emissions-trading-system-eu-ets_en.

65 Submission by Germany and the European Commission on Behalf of the European Union and its Member States. NDC Registry. Available: <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NDCStaging/pages/Party.aspx?party=DEU>.

66 Climate Action Plan 2050 – Germany's long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategy. Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection. Available: <https://www.bmuv.de/en/topics/climate-adaptation/climate-protection/national-climate-policy/climate-action-plan-2050-germanys-long-term-low-greenhouse-gas-emission-development-strategy#c12737>.

The key components of the German energy transition are: increasing energy efficiency and introducing smart systems for generating and transporting electricity in order to reduce energy consumption, increasing the use of renewable energy sources in the energy sector, increasing the use of biomass in the transport sector and building heating, increasing the flexibility of the energy supply system, that is, the possibility of using storage drives energy and use them during periods of peak demand⁶⁷. Also, under the government of Angela Merkel, a plan was adopted to abandon coal by 2038⁶⁸, the activists of the new government intend to accelerate the achievement of this goal until 2030⁶⁹.

In situation of the conflict with Russia, the German government published in April 2022 a new package of measures to expand renewable energy to 80% in the country's energy balance by 2030, among them 200 GW – from solar energy, 30 GW – from offshore wind and up to 100 GW – for overland wind generation⁷⁰.

Table 5. Statistics of production, import and consumption of natural gas in Germany in 2021

Year	Gas production ⁷¹ (billion m3)	Import ⁷² (billion m3)	Consumption ⁷³ (billion m3)
2021	5,16	142	100

67 Electricity 2030. Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, September 2016. Available: https://www.bmwi.de/Redaktion/EN/Publikationen/discussion-paper-electricity-2030.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=5.

68 Frequently Asked Questions on Germany's coal phase-out. Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection. Available: <https://www.bmuv.de/en/topics/climate-adaptation/climate-protection/national-climate-policy/translate-to-english-fragen-und-antworten-zum-kohleausstieg-in-deutschland>.

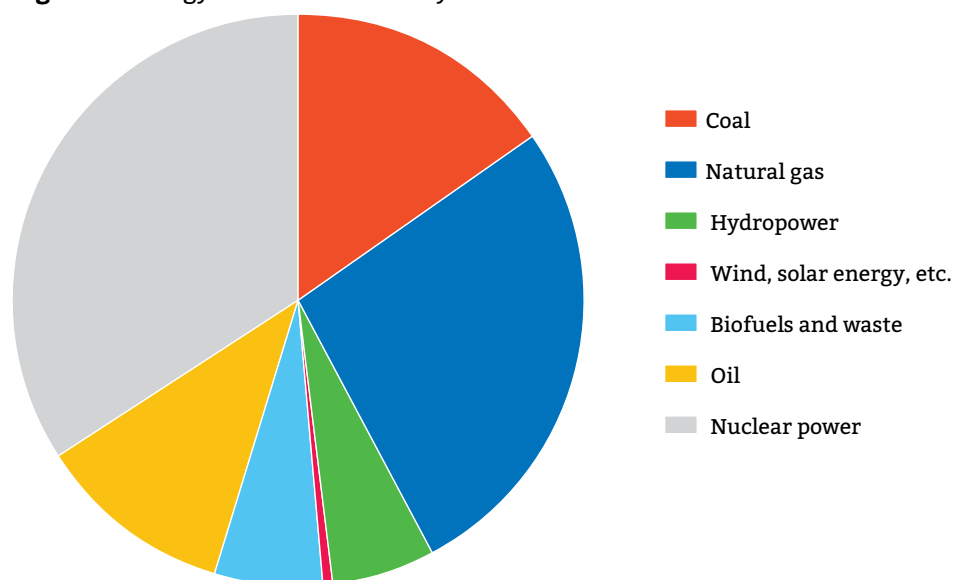
69 German Coalition Eyes 2030 Coal Exit, Years Ahead of Plan. Bloomberg Green, 15 October 2021. Available: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-15/german-coalition-eyes-2030-coal-exit-eight-years-ahead-of-plan>.

70 Germany unveils plans to accelerate green energy expansion. Reuters, 6 April 2022. Available: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/germany-present-renewable-energy-expansion-measures-2022-04-05/>; Germany to double down on wind, solar amid wider energy policy review. S&P Global, 4 March 2022, Available: <https://www.spglobal.com/commodity-insights/en/market-insights/latest-news/electric-power/030422-germany-to-double-down-on-wind-solar-amid-wider-energy-policy-review>.

71 Natural gas production on federal lands (Erdgasförderung nach Bundesländern), 30.03.2022. BVEG. Available: <https://www.bveg.de/die-branche/statistik/erdgasfoerderung-nach-bundeslaendern/> (In German).

72 ErdgasINFO Dezember 2021 (Erdgasimporte). Bundesamt für Wirtschaft und Ausfuhrkontrolle, 21 February 2022. Available: https://www.bafa.de/SharedDocs/Kurzmeldungen/DE/Energie/Erdgas/2021_12_erdgasinfo.html. Информация на сайте Федерального ведомства по экономике и экспортному контролю дана в тераджоулях (ТJ). The information on the website of the Federal Department for Economics and Export Control is given in terajoules (TJ). The equivalent in billion m3 is presented, for example, in the article: Reuters. Factbox: How dependent is Germany on Russian gas? Reuters. Available: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/how-much-does-germany-need-russian-gas-2022-01-20/>.

73 Fakten und Argumente Kurzfristige Substitutionsund Einsparpotenziale Erdgas in Deutschland, 17 March 2022. Available: https://www.bdew.de/media/documents/Kurzfristige_Gassubstitution_Deutschland_final_17.03.2022_korr1.pdf. The information on the website of the Federal Association of Energy and Water Supply Enterprises is presented in billion kWh. The equivalent in billion m3 is presented, for example, in the Reuters article Reuters (см. ссылку 75).

Figure 5. Energy balance of Germany in 2020

Source: International Energy Agency. Available: <https://www.iea.org/countries/japan>

Almost a third of Germany's energy balance is a natural gas (Figure 5), which is widely used not only in CHP stations, but also for heating buildings and transport. At the same time, dependence on external supplies (Table 5) is almost 95%. The share of Russian pipeline gas deliveries accounts for, according to various sources, from 40 to 50%⁷⁴. The conflict around the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline with a capacity of 55 billion m³ per year, including the protracted certification, became one of the reasons for the rise in prices in the LNG market⁷⁵.

It is important to note that in the autumn 2021, a new government came to power in Germany, where the Green Party entered the ruling coalition, and their Head Annalena Baerbock received the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs. It also affected the energy policy of the country. Baerbock pressured the new chancellor, Olaf Scholz, to approve the Russian gas pipeline, despite significant increases in gas prices⁷⁶. After the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis and the confrontation with Russia, Baerbock began to actively advocate for a complete rejection of Russian gas supplies⁷⁷.

⁷⁴ See, for example: The statement of the Vice-Chancellor, Minister of Economy Robert Habeck. Wie sich Deutschland unabhängig von Russlands Energie machen will. Spiegel, 25 March 2022. Available: <https://www.spiegel.de/wirtschaft/service/so-will-sich-deutschland-unabhaengig-von-russlands-energie-machen-a-ebd11ed6-44ac-4b7a-bc0b-1bd84a080bdf> (In German).

⁷⁵ Natural gas prices surge on suspension of Nord Stream 2 approval. Currency.com, 16 November 2021. Available: <https://currency.com/natural-gas-prices-surge-on-suspension-of-nord-stream-2-approval>.

⁷⁶ German green leader Baerbock opposes Nord Stream 2 permit, calls out Russian 'blackmail'. Politico, 20 October 2021. Available: <https://www.politico.eu/article/baerbock-against-operating-permit-for-nord-stream-2/>.

⁷⁷ Baerbock warnt vor Gas-Importstopp. Tagesschau, 11 March 2022. Available: <https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/europa/baerbock-importstopp-gas-oel-101.html>.

The situation worsened in 2021, when sharp criticism of the Russian Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline project began inside and outside the EU, according to experts, due to the increased dependence of the European bloc on fossil fuels and the expansion of Russia's geopolitical influence on the world stage. Russia has been accused of trying to capitalize on the current crisis [1]. Renewable energy began to lose ground to coal even before the start of the active phase of growth in natural gas prices. Thus, according to the results of the first seven months of 2021, the share of coal in energy generation increased to 26.1% in situation of a decrease in wind and solar power generation. Among the reasons, experts name the cold spring and the low length of sunny days, which caused, on the one hand, an increase in demand for heating, and on the other, a decrease in the efficiency of solar farms⁷⁸.

The situation worsened in 2021, when sharp criticism of the Russian Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline project began within the EU and outside it, according to experts, due to the increased dependence of the European bloc on fossil fuels and the expansion of Russia's geopolitical influence on the world arena. Russia has been accused of trying to capitalize on the current crisis [1].

High gas prices led to an increase in demand for coal fuel, especially in situation of reduced wind power generation⁷⁹. Coal imports for 2021 amounted to 32.4 million tons, exceeding the level of the pandemic 2020 (however, less than the pre-crisis 2019)⁸⁰.

In general, this may indicate that against the backdrop of energy crises and with the start of economic recovery, the need for electricity in Germany it is necessary to cover by the most affordable resources, despite climate goals, especially against the background of the decommissioning of nuclear power stations. After the start of the conflict between the EU and Russia, the initiative to temporarily suspend the decommissioning of nuclear power stations was discussed in German government, but experts soon came to the conclusion that it would be too difficult and economically inexpedient to reverse the initiated procedure, and with a shortage of fuel and the need for significant modernization, the effect would not be noticeable for the winter season of 2022. Because of that (especially in situation of speculation about the complete abandonment of Russian gas), the German Energy Network Agency asked the country's coal-fired power electric stations to remain on standby mode instead of shutting down⁸¹, and Vice-Chancellor Robert Habeck announced the formation of coal reserves that will allow Germany over 30 winter days to provide themselves with electricity even without Russian gas supplies. Notably, the decision was made by Vice Chancellor Robert Habeck as a member of the Green Party⁸².

⁷⁸ European Electricity Review: H1-2021. EMBER, 28 July 2021. Available: <https://ember-climate.org/insights/research/european-electricity-review-h1-2021/>.

⁷⁹ European Electricity Review 2022. EMBER, 1 February 2022. Available: <https://ember-climate.org/insights/research/european-electricity-review-2022/>.

⁸⁰ Hard coal imports for the years 2017 to 2021. Statistisches Bundesamt. Available: <https://www.destatis.de/EN/Themes/Economic-Sectors-Enterprises/Energy/Use/Tables/hard-coal-time-series.html#fussnote-1-63124>.

⁸¹ Some EU members turn back to coal to cut reliance on Russian gas. Climate Home News, 15 March 2022. Available: <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2022/03/15/some-eu-members-turn-back-to-coal-to-cut-reliance-on-russian-gas/>.

⁸² Germany plans strategic gas and coal reserves. Clean Energy Wire, 25 February 2022. Available: <https://www.cleanenergywire.org/news/germany-plans-strategic-gas-and-coal-reserves>.

The current situation in the gas market is pushing Germany to increasingly ambitious targets in introduction of renewable energy. But given the dependence of solar and wind generation on weather conditions, as well as the current underdevelopment of the hydrogen market, reserve fossil fuel capacity during periods of peak demand is an urgent need. With gas prices remaining high or rising further, it is possible that Germany will continue to abandon ambitious climate targets in the short term in favor of energy sustainability.

Conclusions

Large-scale plans for the energy transition, largely amplified by the economic downturn because of the pandemic, postpone the development of clean energy for the long term. As this study shows, in most of the countries' strategies to reduce CO2 emissions, don't take into account potential crises in the fossil fuel market in the periods of increased demand for electricity during economic recovery.

There is a possibility that the changes proposed by import-dependent states in the context of the current crisis do not take into account potential future economic shocks that force in the short term to slow down the implementation of climate commitments in order to maintain energy sustainability.

There is a fundamental difference between India and China and Japan and Germany. The former adhere to the position that in order to ensure economic and energy sustainability, if necessary, one can give up part of the climate obligations, if possible, compensating for the damage when the situation stabilizes, as well as making a gradual, smooth energy transition, which will also allow avoiding additional costs for the end consumer. For India, where most of the population lives below the poverty line, in the absence of support from developed countries, the adoption of more ambitious targets for increasing "clean" energy inevitably means higher tariffs for electricity and fuel.

Japan and Germany, on the contrary, responding to the crisis, set an even higher bar for the implementation of climate commitments in the energy sector by financing the development of additional renewable energy capacities. However, now the introduction to use of new renewable sources capacities in the absence of a sustainable energy accumulation and storage system may not be sufficient during periods of peak demand for electricity in summer and winter – since the generation of wind and solar power stations depends on weather conditions, this in any case implies the need to store reserves of traditional energy sources. The energy transition and creating the infrastructure needed for it is going to be longer than the UN's proposed. Forcing the process, especially in developing countries, could lead to new domestic energy crises, as happened in China in 2021.

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Contribution of the authors

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POWER, POLITICS, STATE

Political institutions,
processes and
technologies

It seems obvious that humanity is today at the point of bifurcation. In the era of digitalization, progress has entered into a tough confrontation with the development of man and society. It is important that the further development of society be based on moral and ethical foundations.

A kind of technological turbulence has emerged, characterized by the predominance of a variety of technologies over a variety of systems (state-administrative and political).

As a result, traditional state institutions turned out to be objectively unprepared for confrontation with new technological models of information and communication work.

Regardless of the sources of destabilization, a critically significant factor of sustainability is a developed social immunity against destabilizing influences.

Shabrov O.F., Komleva V.V., Volodenkov S.V., Gadzhiev Kh.A., Guliyeu I.A.

State Sustainability and Stability in the Digital Age

Preparing long-term documents, implementing the state policy of regional development, federal and regional authorities should form real platforms for dialogue between groups of the regional elite on key development issues, on developing elements of a "social contract", on mechanisms for elite participation in the implementation of development strategies and monitoring compliance with the contract.

Chernyshov M.M.

The Influence Of Elites on the Choice
of the Direction of the Development of the Region

The specificity of the Russian Federation is that the main flow of external migration is of labor migrants from the post-Soviet space, who do not always consider our country as a new permanent place of residence, and therefore are not interested in full integration into Russian society.

Burda M.A., Ivanova M.M.

Migration Policy Of Modern Russia: Conditions
for Ensuring Socio-Political Stability

RUSSIA & WORLD: SCIENTIFIC DIALOGUE

**РОССИЯ
И МИР**
НАУЧНЫЙ ДИАЛОГ

State sustainability and stability in the digital age: discussion materials

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Abstract. The article presents the materials of the discussion held at the National Research Institute of Communications Development (NIIRC). The participants discussed the problems of digitalization of public relations, hybridization of modern political regimes (as a model of adaptation of the state to digital technological transformations); problems of Russia's sustainability in the context of energy wars and the climate agenda. The authors conclude that the relationship between digitalization and the stability of political systems is contradictory. Many advantages of large-scale use of digital technologies, increasing the efficiency of the political and administrative process and improving public and political institutions, in practice can have negative consequences, the key of which affects the stability of political systems. For the development of internal forces that contribute to stability and prevent destabilization, it is proposed to form social immunity.

Keywords: sustainability, stability, technological transformation, digitalization, digital technologies, information, progress, social immunity, diversity

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Introduction

Digitalization is a process that today has covered almost all spheres of life in modern societies. The political and administrative sphere is no exception: in many states, «electronic government», «electronic democracy», «digital diplomacy», etc. are actively implemented. Digitalization is not only a factor in the functioning of political systems, it affects their stability and ability to preserve essential features in the event of external destructive influences, that is, stability.

The impact of digitalization on the sustainability of political systems is insufficiently researched. Meanwhile, this problem is the most important and relevant from both theoretical and practical points of view.

The interaction of digitalization and stability of political systems and states is contradictory. Sometimes political institutions cannot predict the consequences of the introduction of digital technologies, competition for technological advantage is growing, and the ability to proactively respond and make decisions becomes critical. These and other issues were discussed by scientists and experts during a scientific symposium held at the National Research Institute for the Communications Development (NIIRC) in February 2022. We publish part of the discussion materials in this article.

Materials and methods

The participants in the scientific discussion used different, but not contradictory, methodological research approaches. The discussion made it possible to single out the most of them: systemic, neo-institutional, constructivist approaches; method of scenario forecasting, comparative analysis, event analysis, analysis of «digital footprints». Almost all participants in the discussion relied on the methodological approaches developed by M.G. Anokhin (1) and Shabrov O.F. (15; 16; 17). Some author's methods were also presented. Gadzhiev Kh.A. used the method to determine the sustainability index of the political system (8). V.V. Komleva suggested the model of social immunity formation developed and tested by the author (9; 4).

The research materials were: regulatory legal acts, government decisions, digitalization practices, political destabilization practices, and practices for ensuring sustainability and stability.

Results

Digitalization of public relations: progress or degradation? (O.F.Shabrov)

The author understands the development as the transition of the system to a state with a higher ability to adapt. The reverse process is degradation. As a measure of development the author understands the degree of diversity of the system. Progress is a positive dynamics of indicators, moving forward, from the lowest to the highest.

Progress in the field of digitalization is characterized, in particular, by the expansion of the information space and carries a number of negative consequences:

increasing the volume of information, which leads to informational alienation and, as a result, alienation from reality, other people and self-alienation. On this basis, the first problem arises: clip consciousness and big data technologies create opportunities for the formation of virtual needs.

Virtualization of social relations.

A person is formed under the influence of three groups of factors: genetics, family upbringing and social environment. Studies conducted in the United States and Sweden have shown that such human qualities as the degree of trust and gratitude are influenced by genetic factors from 10 to 20%, by families 8–12%, and by society 68–72% (11). We can say that the influence of society is the main factor in the formation of man as a social being.

Therefore, there is an objective need for a look at oneself from the outside, a social assessment. With the virtualization of communication, these processes change. Now Maslow's pyramid of needs is undergoing major changes: the third level of needs (in social approval), moving into virtual reality, is practically leveled. The physiological needs and the need for security are immediately followed by the needs for prestige and self-realization.

Digitalization of relations between a person and the state.

The action of these two factors calls into question the effectiveness of the mechanisms of representative democracy that have developed in the last century, or democracy, the meaning of which is that the voter gives a politician or party a mandate to represent their interests in government bodies. To the extent that virtual socialized voters proceed from virtual personal needs when voting, they are unable to correctly assess their own interest, and their totality is not a people, but a population. In addition, modern technologies, including the promising Deep Fake technologies that simulate real politicians (21), do not allow voters to have a real idea of who they are handing their mandate to. Finally, as J. Soros rightly notes, "states have to pay more and more attention to the requirements of international capital to the detriment of the expectations of their own citizens" (19). And the implementation of the "Soft Power" strategy - "forcing other peoples to want the results you want to receive" (12) allows you to form the necessary expectations by promoting your own values in their consciousness. Cross-border communication using modern digital technologies makes this strategy particularly effective. In other words, in modern

democracies the people/population is no longer the only source of power. There is a full-blown crisis of representative democracy.

The problem of global governance.

One of the immutable principles of cybernetics is the principle of necessary diversity: in order to control, the control subsystem must have no less variety than the controlled one (2). On the other hand, there is a fundamental limit to increasing the degree of diversity of any system, including the governing one, the so-called "principle of the fragility of the good" (10). The problem of the modern era is a sharp increase in the degree of diversity of social systems in the post-industrial era, noted at the end of the last century by E. Toffler and multiplied today by ethnic diversity due to mass migration, the expansion of the information space and the claims of transnational elites to global governance.

Prospects for solving this problem, aggravated by the anthropogenic load on nature that has gone beyond the permissible limits, are:

- reduction of the world's population «from 7 billion to two and a half, two, or even up to 1.5 billion people...»;
- restriction of access of the controlled to information;
- creation of a new subspecies of the "service man" ("limited self-awareness", "controlled reproduction", "cheap food");
- unification of cultures through the introduction of «universal values» into the consciousness of people.

It is obvious that humanity is today at the point of bifurcation. In the era of digitalization, progress has entered into a tough confrontation with the development of man and society. It is important that the further development of society be based on moral and ethical foundations.

On the need to form social immunity as a factor of socio-political stability and stability (V.V.Komleva)

A critical factor in sustainability is social immunity. An analysis of this phenomenon is described in our publications (9), and the methodology for the formation of social immunity was verified in the research in the Republic of Crimea (4). Social immunity is defined by us as the ability of society to recognize threats to stability and sustainability and respond to them in the same way as the system center reacts. Social immunity develops society's immunity to alien influences, reducing the effect and risks of such influences. The perception of alienness is manifested in the ability of society to identify external influences as destabilizing (according to the principle of "friends / foes", "useful / harmful", "developing / killing", etc.) and react negatively to such influences.

How does society develop social immunity to external and internal destabilizing influences? Specific technologies and techniques are poorly described. Of the authors known to us, such a study was carried out by Z.A. Zhapuev (22), and much earlier - on the example of the USSR A. Zinoviev (23). According to A. Zinoviev, the USSR used such mechanisms for the formation of social immunity as: limiting contacts with the outside world ("Iron Curtain"),

a system of education (communist), the use of sanctions ("punitive measures") against those who succumbed to external influences, the creation of conditions under which the immediate environment made sure that people did not fall under external influences. I don't want to comment on the personal position of A. Zinoviev (an authoritative philosopher), but I note that social immunity in the USSR was ensured by the ability of the system to show an attractive goal for the development of a social system, where each member of society saw his own perspective and entered his personal life scenario into the public one (socialism, communism, universal equality and welfare of all, etc.); the attractiveness of the way of life in the USSR (social justice, accessibility of education, medicine and other significant social services); the possibility of influencing the process of making political decisions and the clarity of the conditions and filters for entering political elites and management systems; realization of rights (including women), etc.

Most of these mechanisms would be in high demand in modern society.

The conceptual model of the formation of social immunity (9) that we propose reflects the logical connection between the goals and objectives of the subjects and objects of interaction, factors affecting political stability, methods and resources that should be used to achieve the goals and objectives. The conceptual model covers in general terms the existing dependencies, trends, patterns and is the basis for specific actions. The use of this model will allow achieving a synergistic effect when using various technological methods by different actors.

The fundamental positions on the basis of which the model was developed:

1. In a situation of external destabilizing influences, under the condition of developed social immunity against destabilizing influences, the system is able to independently maintain homeostasis, maintain an equilibrium position within controlled boundaries with small changes, maintain its internal potential for control and integration of parts of the system. External influences will not have a destabilizing effect if they are assessed by the majority of the population as alien, violating the normal development of the social system and its foundations that satisfy society.

2. This kind of immunity is developed in conditions of public trust in the system center, approval of its activities, internal cohesion of society, consistent public consciousness and social memory, compliance of the decisions of the system center with public ideas about social justice, a decent quality of life, rights and freedoms. The development of immunity against external influences is possible only with the effective integrated activity of institutions to ensure these conditions.

3. A special condition for the development of social immunity against external destabilizing influences is the presence of constructive opposition within the system itself. Such opposition is important because it periodically makes «social inoculations» in the form of constructive public criticism. It tests the immune system of society for dissatisfaction with the actions of the system center, conflict of values, current vectors of socio-political sentiments, readiness for open protests; tests the system center and the elite for cohesion and the presence of conflicting interests, the ability to integrate and mobilize society in defense of integrity and values.

4. A priority role in the formation of social immunity is played by institutions that create a normative framework for the stability of the social system. However, with the development of the information society, new actors appear, whose activities take place in a virtual environment.

5. Not all external influences should be seen as destabilizing the socio-political system. Thanks to some of them, the system itself becomes more competitive, reflecting the state and adopting other experience. But there are destructive influences, which we mean when we talk about destabilization.

We divided the conditions for social immunity into three groups: 1) the conditions necessary for the emergence and development of social immunity; 2) conditions that support social immunity; 3) conditions under which it is possible to test the ability of social immunity to identify and respond to alien influences.

Let's briefly describe these conditions.

The conditions necessary for the emergence and development of social immunity are the results of socialization. In the process of socialization, the following are formed: 1) values, spiritual foundations shared by the majority of society; 2) social bonds (in the form of social expectations and sanctions); 3) consistent social memory; 4) social connections, the value of which is much higher than the benefits offered by external actors. The most important institutions that shape these conditions are the family, the system of upbringing, education, the media, and religion. Separately, we single out the institutions of political socialization, which include socio-political associations, youth organizations that make it possible to assimilate the norms and values of the political system and the culture of political competition inherent in a particular society. However, without the maintenance of social immunity, laid down by the institutions of socialization, without public approval of reactions to external influences, immunity will fade. In other words, internal conditions are necessary to maintain social immunity.

The key conditions for maintaining social immunity are the following:

- the attractiveness of the society for its members, manifested in the level and quality of life (satisfying the majority of society), the opportunity to realize their potential, a high assessment of the fairness of the distribution of benefits and resources;
- existential security, manifested in the fear of losing the existing stability; confidence in the present and future, in the absence of threats to life, health, rights, freedoms and the system of generally accepted and reference values and spiritual foundations;
- the ability to influence the process of making managerial decisions, which is manifested in the accessibility of political institutions and authorities, in the development of the expert potential of civil society institutions.

It is advisable to direct the activities of political institutions (especially authorities), economic institutions (especially those that distribute economic benefits and resources), and institutions of control, supervision, and security to the formation of this group of conditions. Of course, the mass media play an important role in supporting public opinion.

To understand whether social immunity works, it must be periodically tested. This will make it possible to understand to what extent society allows external influences and

where is the limit, after which they are assessed as destabilizing. The conditions under which it is possible to test social immunity are: the presence of constructive opposition and civil society institutions with high expert potential. The existence of such conditions depends on the ability of the political opposition to perform its functions (to be precisely the opposition and offer constructive alternatives to solving problems) and on the activity of civil society institutions and civil initiatives. In other words, to ensure social stability, a set of internal conditions is needed under which social immunity against alien influences is formed, maintained and periodically tested.

If this exists, then a system of interdependencies of the goal (desired state of stability), conditions for the development of the mechanism of social immunity, the mechanism itself and institutions that ensure its development, maintenance and verification are formed.

The mechanisms of formation of social immunity have been described previously (9). Here I'll list the most significant: the mechanism of social memory, social cohesion, existential security, institutional and systemic trust. These mechanisms have been described in detail on the example of the Republic of Crimea (2).

Thus, the social immunity of society against destabilizing influences is of critical importance for ensuring socio-political stability. Social immunity makes it possible to identify among the multitude of influences precisely those that destabilize society, that alien and threaten its integrity. The development and performance of the mechanism of social immunity is associated with the mechanisms of social memory, social cohesion, existential security, institutional and systemic trust. Of decisive importance for maintaining social immunity and identifying external influences as destabilizing in assessing the degree of their threat are the internal conditions of the life of society, to the development of which it is advisable to direct the efforts of responsible institutions.

Hybridization of modern political regimes as a model of state adaptation to digital technological transformations (S.V.Volodenkov)

With the spread and improvement of digital communication technologies, the intensification and penetration of digital information flows into key areas of the state and society life, a state of technological turbulence has arisen, which is characterized by the predominance of a variety of technologies over a variety of systems (state-administrative and political). If we recall the law of necessary diversity of W.R. Ashby, the complexity and diversity of a control system to maintain its effective viability must exceed the complexity and diversity of those controlled systems that it manages.

In other words, at a certain point, the diversity of the digital space of socio-political communications and digital technological infrastructure turned out to be higher than the complexity of control systems inherent in traditional political regimes. As a result, traditional state institutions of power turned out to be unprepared to confront new technological models of information and communication work with the population, models

of mobilizing protest masses, situations of discrediting national political elites, and seizing the initiative in the process of forming an information agenda.

For this reason, technologically advanced states were forced to adapt their management systems to the new sociotechnical reality in a forced mode, increasing their own diversity and reducing the diversity of the digital communication space.

In this regard, one of the most realistic scenarios for the adaptation of state management systems is the "hybrid" scenario of the merging of state institutions and tech giants into a single system of state-political management. This scenario seems to us one of the most promising from the standpoint of government institutions and large technocorporations (but not society).

The potential of state-corporate symbiosis is due to several factors at once:

a) traditional political regimes already have the legitimacy necessary to govern society, which makes it possible to "technologize" the existing public administration systems in a soft variant - without transition periods and socio-political upheavals characteristic of states in which a regime change occurs;

b) due to the technological diversity of corporations in the general management system, state institutions of power are also able to significantly increase their own complexity and diversity, which, as a result, is a necessary condition for ensuring the effective management of complex social systems (in accordance with Ashby's law);

c) the global technological infrastructure owned by large corporations can be quickly integrated into a new type of digital state-political management system, together with all the billions of audiences of global digital platforms, and the available Big Data arrays, combined with modern artificial intelligence technologies and self-learning neural network algorithms, allow us successfully form not only national, but also supranational systems of «smart» management and control in the socio-political sphere.

Digitalization and sustainability of political systems: the ambivalence of the relationship (Kh.A.Gadzhiev)

Digitalization in a general can be understood in three meanings: 1) as a global transition from the use of analog technologies to digital ones; 2) as a large-scale implementation of digital technologies into various spheres of human activity (primarily computer technologies and the Internet); 3) as an increase of the role of digital technologies in the life of society, as a result their use by a person moves to a qualitatively new level and they become the most important social value (6, p.150-151). Each of the three presented meanings can be considered as a certain level of the digitalization process, these levels replace each other in turn. As a result, now most modern societies are in the third stage of digitalization, when digital technologies have become an important part and value in people's lives. This is clearly seen in the statistics. So, by the beginning of 2022 (data for January), the number of mobile device users worldwide amounted to 5.31 billion people (this is 67.1% of the world's population). There were 4.95 billion Internet users worldwide (62.5% of the world's population), although ten years ago (in January

2012) there were about 2.18 billion people; finally, the number of active users of social media (social networks, messengers, video hosting, etc.) by January 2022 amounted to about 4.62 billion people (58.4%), while in January 2012 there were about 1.48 billion people of such users¹.

The process of digitalization has so radically changed the information field, integrated new technologies into the life of societies, that we can talk about the formed digital space, into which more and more spheres of human activity are being transferred. The political and administrative sphere was no exception. It uses not only those technologies that can qualitatively improve public services, but also those that change the system of relations «power-society». And if we evaluate the consequences of the expansion of the use of digital technologies, which is happening in many modern states, then they are ambiguous, there are positive and negative consequences. If we talk about the positive, then we should note the many opportunities that open up for improving channels and feedback mechanisms; expanding opportunities for increasing the level of transparency and openness in the functioning of the political and administrative apparatus of the state; the development of civil society institutions and their ever-increasing influence in the future on the process of making government decisions; increasing the level of efficiency in monitoring the mood of the masses and identifying emerging social and political conflicts in order to take preventive measures to prevent them; expanding opportunities for effective regulation of interethnic and interfaith relations, etc.

But in addition to the benefits, there are many challenges and risks. Particular attention is required to those that may adversely affect the socio-political sustainability and stability of political systems. Let us immediately make a reservation about what should be understood by the sustainability and stability of the political system, since these are different phenomena that it is important not to identify. Sustainability is the ability of a political system, despite the external destructive impact, to keep unchanged that part of its elements and the relations established between them that determine its integrity and essence, while political stability should be understood as the state of the political system in which it functions in a given mode and in accordance with the intended vector of development, while maintaining its essential characteristics by keeping the deviations that appear as a result of external influence within the established threshold values. This is more clearly seen in practice (7, pp. 23-24). Thus, any large-scale mass protests, attempts to change political regimes and carry out coups d'état, obviously, indicate that political systems are in an unsustainable state at such moments. But if as a result of such attempts there are no significant changes in the political system, it retains the basic principles of its functioning and essential features, then we can say that the system is sufficiently stable (for example, in Venezuela in 2002, in South Sudan in 2013, in Burundi in 2015, in Turkey in 2016, in Belarus in 2020, in Kazakhstan in 2022, etc.).

¹ Kemp S. Digital 2022: Global Overview Report / DataReportal. 26 JANUARY 2022. URL: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-global-overview-report> (accessed: 12.04.2022)

The world practice of recent years has clearly illustrated that the digital space, or rather, its correct and rational state regulation, the ability to effectively use its advantages, is increasingly becoming the most important factor in stability/instability and sustainability/un sustainability of political systems. Since the political and administrative sphere is the sphere in which the development and implementation of the goals and strategies of social development take place, any miscalculations and abuses (this applies to politics and political struggle) create serious risks for all other spheres of public life. This can directly affect the state of the political system and, as a result, its ability to overcome negative impulses that threaten the preservation of the integrity and essential features of the system, i.e. – sustainability.

Today, often, by appealing to security, states are increasing control over society in the digital space. This requires broad access of the authorities to large amounts of information and to citizens' data. But this may not be perceived positively in society, especially when in countries that officially declare liberal democratic values. As a result, a factor of conflict arises in the system of relations «power-society», and this may negatively affect the level of public support for the ruling elites. And this is one of the most important components of the sustainability and stability of the political system.

In addition to the ambiguous public attitude to the access of the authorities to information and data, the provision of these opportunities to a narrow group of people (the ruling elites of a particular state) creates the risk of misuse (in particular, when using personal data) for obtaining the advantages in the course of political struggle or the preservation of one's own power. There are examples of states in which wide access to personal information and control is fixed at the level of the law (the most striking example is China).

Another political and administrative area in which the consequences of the active and intensive implementation of digital technologies are contradictory is the sphere of public services. With the implementation of «electronic government», it became possible to simplify and speed up their provision. Moreover, the digitalization of public authorities can significantly improve their quality. But other difficulties arise: for the effective operation of the system, sufficient digital literacy of the population and the availability of necessary technical devices are required for citizens. This affects the older generation most painfully, but they are the ones who most often need more public services and social security.

As for public administration in general, there are problems of a different type: the transfer of important aspects of public administration activities to the digital space actualizes the problem of cyber-attacks and hacks. They can pose a serious threat to public security and the preservation of sensitive government information and data. It is not without reason that cyber threats and the need to ensure cyber security are increasingly being discussed on the political agenda; because the lack of protection of political systems is becoming a key risk to their stability and sustainability (clear examples are the color revolutions of recent years in the Arab countries and the post-Soviet space).

Sustainable Russia in the context of energy wars and the climate agenda (I.A.Guliyev)

A number of other challenges facing Russia are also related to digitalization issues. Some of them are intensifying, connecting with the processes of digitalization. These include:

1) Energy transition. Now the fourth energy transition is taking place, which reflects the objective reality and does not depend on the decisions of groups, individuals, countries. The change in priority energy carriers is due to the change in the needs of society, the formation of a new energy consumption paradigm.

This is a philosophical problem. If you look at history, it becomes clear how previous transitions took place. The first transition is from firewood to coal, the second is from coal to oil, the third is from oil to natural gas. None of these energy transitions has been accompanied by the abandonment of other energy sources. Everything happened naturally against the background of a gradual increase in the share of one of the priority energy resources. Now we are forced to move from oil and gas to renewable energy sources. This is where the problems associated with interfering with the natural course of the energy revolution begin.

There are sad examples of this phenomenon in Europe: the countries of Europe forced the increase in the share of renewable energy sources and as a result there was a recent energy crisis. Industry, aircraft, transport are tied to energy.

2) Climate agenda. The Paris Agreement, under which it is planned to achieve «carbon neutrality» by 2060. The European partners have warned the Russian Federation that a cross-border carbon tax will be determined for those products that have a large amount of CO2 emissions. This is a challenge for Russia's industry and energy sector.

3) Sanctions policy. Sanctions also have a negative impact on the energy sector. There are countries that are forcing sanctions. They argue that it is necessary to introduce, as in the case of Iran, an embargo on energy resources. But no one dares to do this because of the "boomerang effect" that threatens them. For example, the unprecedented change in gas and oil prices has already had a negative impact on the European market. A complete rejection of energy resources (oil and gas) supplied from the Russian Federation is impossible for European neighbors, because there is no alternative to Russian pipeline supplies. Deliveries on tankers take much longer time.

Discussion

Thus, the impact of digitalization on the state, its political and administrative institutions and public administration in general is ambiguous and ambivalent. Today it

1. Kemp S. Digital 2022: Global Overview Report / DataReportal. 26 JANUARY 2022. URL: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-global-overview-report>.

is difficult to say that a total focus on digitalization has and will have extremely positive consequences, but the fact is that this process is inevitable and is already leading to fundamental changes in "traditional" political and administrative institutions. Modern states are forced to adapt to this process and improve their institutional structures on its basis. And their ability to preserve the essential features of their political systems, to be sustainable will depend on how flexible and strategically they will manage to integrate new digital mechanisms into their usual decision-making procedures.

In this sense, the incorrect implementation of such important goals of digitalization of the political and administrative sphere (which, by the way, are officially postulated as a priority), as increasing the openness of the state and developing institutions for the political participation of citizens, can be considered rather as an omission of states. The participation of citizens in the political and administrative process, in terms of ensuring and maintaining the stability and sustainability of the political system, should not be limited to the possibility of citizens only passively receive information about government decisions taken, about the activities of politicians and officials (including through publications on their public pages in social networks and special digital platforms). The opportunity to come up with public initiatives and petitions, as well as participation in public discussions, should not be only formal. The participation of citizens in the political and administrative process through digital technologies is the way for the development of feedback channels and mechanisms. That is necessary for both the authorities and society; necessary for socio-political stability, and for the stability of the political system, and for political development as a whole.

Conclusions

The digitalization of public life brings not only advantages; this process has deep social contradictions that can lead to destabilization and disruption of the stability of the socio-political system. First of all, we are talking about the contradictions associated with the functioning of social systems.

First, this is the impact of the virtualization of relations between power and society on the functioning of representative democracy and the choice of voters. Secondly, technological progress and the laws of the development of human societies have come into conflict with each other, and questions of a moral and ethical nature arise. Thirdly, emerging socio-technical systems are becoming more complex and diverse than their control systems.

In the context of digitalization, external influences are becoming more and more diverse, more and more diverse new socio-political practices are emerging, which makes the socio-political system more vulnerable. In addition, the energy balance is being disrupted; risks and threats to Russia's national security arise in the face of sanctions pressure and the imposition of foreign energy policy standards. Under these conditions, it is advisable to draw the attention of the control centers to the need to form social immunity, which will allow society to respond to destabilization under the influence of the control center.

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The influence of elites on the choice of the vector of development of the region

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Abstract. The article deals with the issues of typology of regional elites in connection with their influence on the choice of models of political, state and socio-economic development of regions. The author singles out and describes the types of the regional elite (conservative, radical, progressive and colonial), proposes a methodical approach to classify representatives of the regional elite as a certain type based on their financial and property characteristics. For groups of regional elites, behavioral vectors (matrix of vectors) and targets (matrix of goals) are systematized, a scheme for the correlation of the «matrix of goals» (the goal of the elite in the region, an attractive system of power, attitude to the center, the landmark of the concept of change) and the «matrix of vectors» (planning horizon, migration mobility, negotiability, escalation of violence) in the format of a “compass of elite behavior” (shows guidelines for socio-political development under the dominance of certain types of regional elite). The idea of developing «maps of spheres of influence and interests» of various elite groups has been put forward (it allows for the formalization of resources, motives and intentions, the creation of logical and mathematical models of the behavior of elite groups, monitoring and forecasting systems). The necessity of creating platforms for dialogue between groups of regional elites on the main guidelines for spatial development is substantiated.

Keywords: regional development, regional elites, public power, compass of elite behavior, matrices of goals and vectors of elites, state policy of regional development

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Introduction

During the past decade, the Russian Federation has been forming the regulatory framework for the implementation of state regional policy, strategic management of regional development, and organization of public authorities¹.

At the same time, an analysis of the implementation of regional development strategies² shows that from 2006 to the present, not a single subject of the Russian Federation has been able to fully realise what was planned. One of the reasons for the low efficiency of the implementation of regional plans and strategies is that strategic planning documents remain only a declaration of intent and do not have broad public support, mainly from the regional elites. When preparing documents, it was not taken into account to find a balance of interests of the elites as well as the formation of a broad social contract on the main goals and priorities of development. This determines the importance of conducting scientific research in the field of influence of regional elites on the processes of social and socio-economic development in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. These problems are actualized in the upcoming centralization of public power³, which violates the established balance of influence of regional elites.

Materials and methods

The study is based on the methodology of system analysis, structural analysis, expert assessments, and other general scientific methods of cognition. The information base of the study was the work of Russian scientists on the study of public relations in the regions of the North Caucasus and Siberia, documents of federal executive authorities, as well as statistical data characterizing the economic, demographic and migration state of the regions, the property status of groups of regional elites.

¹ Decree of the President of the Russian Federation dated January 16, 2017, N. 13 “Fundamentals of the State policy of Regional Development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025”, dated 04/25/2019, N. 193 “On evaluating the effectiveness of the activities of senior officials (heads of Supreme Executive bodies of State Power) of the Subjects of the Russian Federation and the activities of executive authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation”, dated May 7, 2018, N. 204 “On National Goals and Strategic Objectives of the Development of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2024”, Federal Law N. 172-FZ of 28.06.2014 (as amended on 03.07.2016) “On Strategic Planning in the Russian Federation”.

² The analysis was carried out by the author on the basis of open sources and documents of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation.

³ The provisions of Federal Law No. 414-FZ of December 21, 2021 “On General Principles of the Organization of Public Power in the Subjects of the Russian Federation” come into force from June 1, 2022 and from January 1, 2023.

Results

Throughout the history of the development of the Russian state, the regional elite to varying degrees influenced the adoption of key management decisions for the development of regions. In cases where the region had its own traditions of statehood (for example, the former Russian *veche* republics of the North-West, independent feudal formations in the Caucasus and Siberia), the number and quality of regional elite groups was higher. In the newly formed regions (mainly in the Soviet period), the independence and influence of the regional elite was minimal.

During the collapse of the Russian Empire, regions with more consolidated and stronger regional elite (Poland, Finland, and the Baltic states) managed to achieve separation of territories and independence. During the collapse of the USSR, these processes manifested themselves at the level of the Union republics, and the tendencies towards sovereignization, to one degree or another, manifested themselves at the level of some subjects of the Russian Federation (for example, the Chechen Republic, Republic of Tatarstan), and in the post-Soviet space they led to the emergence of a number of isolated regions (the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic, republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Lugansk and Donetsk People's Republics).

In this regard, it is important to understand how the regional elites see the future (of their own and the region), in what ways it is possible to consolidate the elites to implement a positive development direction.

In this article, the object of research is the regional elites of the constitutional subject of the Russian Federation, and the research subject is their influence on the processes of socio-economic and social development of the regions.

Theoretical and methodological issues of the study of elites have been sufficiently examined in domestic and foreign literature, including the works of Wilfred Pareto [15, 18, 19], Robert Michels [17], Gaetano Mosca [11], G.K.Ashina [1], O.V.Gaman-Golutvina [2, 3], O.V.Kryshtanovskaya [8, 9], V.M.Ochirova [14] and others. In contrast to the Marxist-Leninist model of class struggle, elitology considers the struggle of elites as the engine of social development. In the competitive struggle of elites, the choice of a political model of management is manifested, but regional elites are more limited in their freedom to choose the form of government, make managerial decisions, and distribute budgetary and other resources.

The elite are commonly understood as the highest social groups in the system of social hierarchy, which ensure integration and perform managerial functions in the socio-political system [1:230]. In this regard, the elite are the most prominent representatives of a part of society, people with authority, public influence and political will. In our opinion, it is not chosenness (a high place in the social hierarchy) that characterizes the elite, but its activity and influence on socio-political and economic processes.

Looking at representatives of the regional elite from the standpoint of the spatial hierarchy (Figure 1), we can distinguish several areas (leaders of public administration, business and public opinion) and levels (federal, regional, municipal). It should be noted that when the level of location of a representative of the elite changes (for example, when

the head of a municipal subject passes to the regional government or a regional official heads the territorial branch of the federal executive body), his system of goals and values, views on the development of the territory may change.

The regional elite are a broader social stratum than current politicians and heads of government. It includes some representatives of business, religious figures, scientists, athletes, cultural figures, doctors, writers, journalists, bloggers, etc. Although these people do not have direct channels of influence on decision-making, their opinion is perceived by the authorities and society. The authorities are trying to integrate such leaders of business and public opinion by including them in various public and expert structures. This measure is not always aimed to organize "platforms for dialogue on development issues". In most cases, it is the way of containment and neutralization of the protest activity of the leaders.

From the standpoint of the goals and values of the regional elite groups, we distinguish four types: conservative, radical, progressive, and colonial elites (Table 1).

The conservative elite were mainly formed on the basis of the bureaucracy of the Soviet period and came to power in the 90s. It is aimed at retaining power, property and sources of income (including shadow and corrupt ones). Representatives of this group (conservatives) are not interested in the dynamic development of the region; it is more convenient for them to receive money in the form of subsidies, compensations, etc. Dynamic development disrupts the balance of interests, brings in new players, and stimulates the redistribution of spheres of influence and property. Therefore, stagnation with low activity and low economic growth is more comfortable for the conservative elite. Conservatives try to transfer posts and power to their children or people from their clan, so the principles of democracy and free change of power are contrary to their interests. Since the power, money and property of the conservatives are concentrated mainly in the region of residence, they are more attached to the region than other groups, and they are reluctant to leave for another region for permanent residence. They are loyal to the federal center (or any other state), whether their needs are financed and the federal center does not interfere in "local peculiarities of the distribution of power." Conservatives are in the middle in terms of the level of passionarity activity⁴, mostly "harmonics" with a small number of "passionaries" (first generation) and "subpassionaries" (degenerate second and subsequent generations). The conservative elite dominates in most Russian regions.

The radical elite (radicals)⁵ is represented by an ambitious group that, for various reasons, could not get enough power, income and property. This group is aimed at the destruction of the existing system of power and the redistribution of property, and is ready to support the use of force to seize power and resolve conflicts. Radicals often deny the existing world order; speculate on violations of social justice, using demagogic slogans of a religious, national, populist orientation. For the conservatives the basis of power is traditions (adats), that is the achieved balance of agreements, the radicals respect only the power backed up by

⁴ The source of terminology: Gumilev L.N. *Ethnogenesis and the biosphere of the Earth*. Leningrad, 1989.

⁵ It is described in more detail in the article: Chernyshov M.M. Red and black. Draft. 2007;34 *veche* August 24. Available: <https://chernovik.net/content/ekonomika/krasnoe-i-chyornoe>.

real force. Radicals are mostly passionaries, they seek to activate the subpassionary part of society, to consolidate those who are normally loyal to the authorities to protest and support their interests. Their goal is revolution. The radicals are striving for the sovereignization of the region, up to the formation of a separate state, in order to remove external control and factors that prevent the seizure of power and the redistribution of property. Since the radicals basically do not have access to the resources allocated by the federal center to the region, subsidies do not restrain their ambitions. Economic growth rates are secondary for this group, which is ready to solve the problems of its own well-being at the expense of other groups of the population.

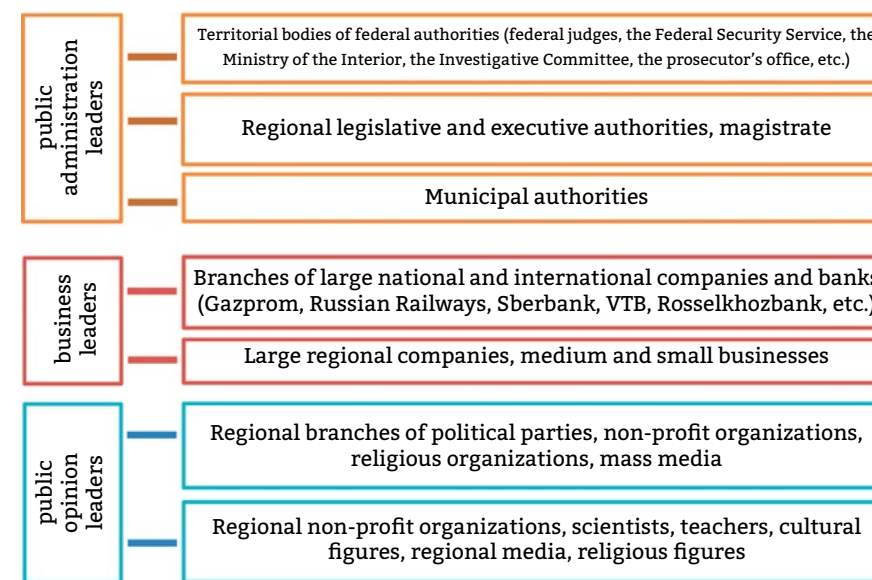
Table 1. Targets of groups of regional elites («matrix of goals»)

Characteristics of the elite	Type of elite			
	Conservative	Radical	Progressive	Colonial
The goal of the elite in the region	Retention of power and property	Seizure of power and redistribution of property	Increasing the efficiency of government and the value of property	Retention of power, seizure of property, execution of instructions of the central government
System of power attractive for the elite	An authoritarian system with a hereditary form of transfer of power	An authoritarian system with a forceful form of transfer of power	A democratic system with a competitive form of transfer of power	An authoritarian system with an administrative and legal form of transfer of power
The attitude to the federal center of the elite	Isolation of the region in exchange for loyalty to the center	Isolation of the region up to separation from the center	Inclusion of the region in the open space of the global world	Maximum loyalty to the center, even to the detriment of the interests of the region
Guidelines in the concept of change	Stagnation	Revolution	Modernization	Evolution

Compiled: based on the author's empirical research, surveys and expert assessments

The progressive elite (progressors) are most often represented by the educated, intellectual part of society. Many of the representatives of this group have strategic and project thinking, are able to create a new business (including in the information and science-intensive areas), and are not afraid to attract outside investors to it. They are most dependent on the state of public institutions, vulnerable to pressure from the conservative authorities of and to forceful influence from the radicals. They do not have sufficient access to the resources of power; they have not inherited significant property. Progressors are interested in increasing the efficiency of government, high rates of economic growth, developed public institutions, in which their business assets can be capitalized in the exchange trading system or by integrating into large companies. They are interested in the region as a part of the

Figure 1. The structure of the regional elite from the standpoint of the spatial hierarchy



global economy and support the country's integration into supranational associations. They are quite mobile, being insufficiently demanded in the region or under the influence of a negative external environment, they can move to a permanent place of residence in another region or country. Progressors are able to compete in the political and economic spheres; therefore they gravitate towards democratic forms of government. They are interested in the modernization of government and society, which would create comfortable conditions for life and business. In terms of the level of passionary activity, progressors (like conservatives) are mostly "harmonics", but the level of "passionaries" in this group is significant.

The colonial elite (colonizers, "Varangians") are dualistic: on the one hand, its representatives live in the region and work here (mainly in the territorial subdivisions of federal authorities, branches of national and international companies); on the other hand, they may perceive it as a temporary place. There are cases when representatives of the colonial elite, thinking about the permanent place of residence of their family (for example, in the capital), move to another category of the regional elite, changing their behavioral model. Sometimes, representatives of the colonial elite plan to leave for permanent residence abroad, non-thinking their country as a place of self-identification until the end of their active work. This is the most mobile type of regional elites (often owns property in other regions and countries). Most often, they do not associate themselves with the development of the region (since the period of their stay in the region is less than the minimum economic cycle), they follow the instructions of the federal center, their goal is to retain power, seize property (for further resale) and control financial flows (for obtaining a corruption margin), and for this it is necessary to follow the instructions of the central government or the head offices of companies, sometimes even to the detriment of the interests of the region (often

this position leads to environmental and man-made disasters⁶). In the economy they are supporters of evolution, without abrupt changes and upheavals, in politics – of authoritarian system with an administrative-legal form of transfer of power.

The colonial elite can be both destructive (temporary workers aimed at getting rich as soon as possible and moving to more comfortable regions for living) and constructive (professionals, bearers of a higher managerial culture).

The analysis made it possible to correlate the types of regional elites with the vectors of spatial development (Table 2). The conservative elite is the least inclined to escalate violence in order to achieve its goals, is the least mobile (because it is bound by property and business interests in the region), has an average level of ability to negotiate, and is not inclined to make long-term plans (more than 1–2 years). The radical elite easily escalate violence, use protests to achieve their own goals, do not make complex plans for the future (they live in the present and often do not understand the need to develop long-term and strategic plans), are not prone to migration (although some of the most radical representatives can mobilize and move, for example, emigrate to ISIS⁷). Radicals find it difficult to negotiate with other groups, often do it only under the forceful or legal influence of the state system⁸.

Table 2. Behavioral vectors of regional elite groups («vector matrix»)

Тип вектора	Type of elite			
	Conservative	Radical	Progressive	Colonial
Planning	(2) Short Term	(1) Minimal (current planning)	(4) Long-term	(3) Medium-term
Migration mobility	(1) Low	(2) Middle	(3) High	(4) High maximum
Ability to contract	(2) Middle	(1) Low	(4) Very high	(3) High
Escalation of violence	(1) Low	(4) Very high	(3) Высокая	(2) Middle

Compiled: based on the author's empirical research, surveys and expert assessments

Representatives of the progressive type are the most negotiable of all regional elites, for the most part they understand and support the creation of long-term (more than 10 years) plans for territorial development, at the same time they are ready to support

⁶ For example, the environmental disaster in Norilsk in 2020. See: Catastrophe every day. KuzPress: Novokuznetsk Information and Analytical website. Available: <https://kuzpress.ru/ecology/07-06-2020/75352.html>.

⁷ An unrecognized quasi-state with a Sharia form of government located on the territory of Syria and Iraq. ISIS is banned by the court on the territory of the Russian Federation.

⁸ For example, in order to localize the activity of the Salafi community in Dagestan, the law "On the prohibition of Wahhabi and other extremist activities on the Territory of the Republic of Dagestan" (N.15 of September 22, 1999) was adopted, was operated a system of "preventive accounting" (supervision) and restrictions on the movement of community members.

protest actions (including ideologically motivated violence⁹). Since progressors are more competitive in the global world, not being able to fully realize themselves in the region, they can relatively easily move to another region or country.

The colonial elite are the most mobile (due to their historical attachment to other regions or involvement in the career system of large national and international companies, authorities), they tend to plan their activities (most often for the 3–7 years terms of rotation of personnel in companies and in government), are ready to negotiate with other influential groups (due to the instability of their own positions in the region), but at the same time they support power decisions against local elite groups.

To identify specific representatives of elite groups, we propose to use their typical financial and property characteristics. For example, conservatives tend to own large land plots located in the region (including agricultural purposes), own residential and commercial buildings (for rent), prestigious apartments and houses for their own residence, prestigious vehicles for personal consumption, large deposits in federal and regional banks (including foreign exchange), they are characterized by a very low bank debt load.

Progressors usually own production assets in the region, have business interests in other regions, own securities (included in the federal and international exchange listing), actively use loans for business development, have their own housing and transport. Radicals most often own small businesses in a sector of the economy dependent on market conditions, have their own vehicles and rented housing, and have a high level of consumer debt. The colonizers may have various highly liquid assets in the region, use rented or service housing and vehicles in the region (and most often have good housing in other regions and abroad), keep most of their ruble savings outside the region or in large federal banks (they may have foreign currency savings abroad, including offshore and cryptocurrencies). Determining the finances and property of conservative and colonial elite groups can be difficult because property and other assets can be registered with relatives and trustees, and financial investments are placed in anonymous accounts.

Such a financial and property portrait of the elites can become the basis for the development of a "map of spheres of influence and interests" of various elite groups for the region (this is a promising area for further research).

Schematic representation of behavioral vectors and targets of regional elites (Figure 2) made it possible to draw up a kind of "compass" of elite behavior. The four main points show the guidelines for socio-political development under the dominance of one or another type of regional elite¹⁰. Four quadruple points show options for preferential development under the dominance of two negotiable groups of elites. The antagonism of colonial and radical, conservative and progressive groups of elites is shown. The growth of the influence

⁹ The historical example of public support from the progressive intelligentsia of Vera Zasulich (acquitted by the jury for the attempted murder of St. Petersburg mayor F.F.Trepov) is indicative. In 2010, the Constitutional Court of Russia deprived those accused of terrorism of the right to a jury trial due to the high (about 40%) number of acquittals.

¹⁰ In its pure form, the landmarks of the main points are quite rare in the modern world: anarchy (Somalia in the 90s), meritocracy (Singapore), colonialism (Gibraltar), monarchy (Saudi Arabia). This makes it necessary to find a compromise between groups of elites.

of the progressive and radical elite in Russia at the end of the XIX – beginning of the XXth century led to the February and October revolutions, the occurrence of the USSR. In the 1930s in Germany, Spain and Italy, the cooperation of the conservative and radical elites brought the National Socialists to power. When the colonial elite managed to strike a balance with the interests of local conservatives, colonial empires were created (which were subsequently destroyed under the influence of the growing influence of radical elites).

In this regard, the scientific task to substantiate the principles and constructive approaches to the formation of platforms for the dialogue of regional elites and develop the elements of a social contract on issues of regional development is relevant. Such experience took place in Russia at the regional¹¹ and municipal levels¹².

At the same time, the goal is not to guarantee the participation in the dialogue of all (or even the majority) representatives of each of the regional elites. Far from all politicians, heads of government bodies, scientists, cultural and religion figures are leaders and activists of the dialogue about the region development¹³. It is important to ensure the representation of all elite groups, which will make it possible to develop balanced basic fundamental decisions to make concrete agreements.

Conclusions

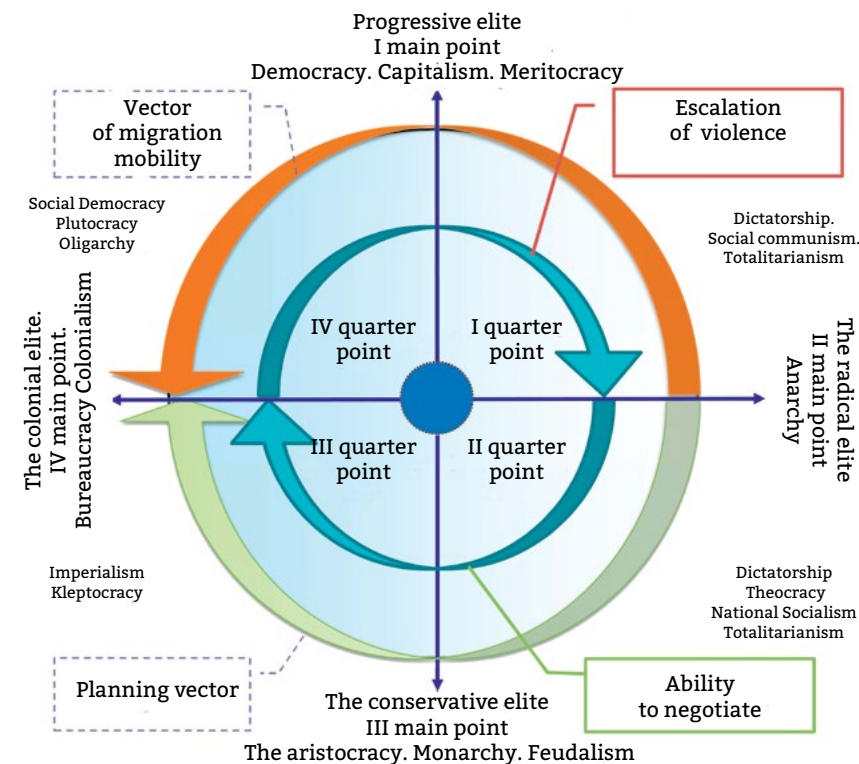
The studies show that the existing approaches to determining the groups of the regional elite and their structure need to be improved, taking into account the attitude of the elite to the process of developing and implementing strategies and long-term plans for the development of regions. We have identified and described four types of regional elite: conservative, radical, progressive and colonial. The financial and property portrait of the elites, the “matrices” of the goals of the elite groups are shown, the “compass of the behavior of the elites” is compiled. The idea of developing a “map of spheres of influence and interests” of the elites is outlined.

¹¹ For example, the Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan in 2010 became a positive experience in organizing a dialogue between regional elites on acute development problems (intra-confessional reconciliation of Islamic communities of Tariqa and Salafists, the land issue, preservation of national languages and culture). Source: III Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan. Source: III Congress of the peoples of Dagestan. Peoples of Dagestan. 2011. № 1. Available: http://www.narodidagestana.ru/vipusk/7/stat/iii_sezd_narodov_dagestana.

¹² At the municipal level, it was possible to unite more than 3.5 thousand scientists, experts, businessmen, and civil servants in the process of developing a Strategy for the development of the city of Samara until 2025 on the site of the «living strategy». For 2 years, there was a process of intra-city discussion of the desired future. This experience of developing a «soft renewal strategy» was included in the UNESCO report at the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (October 17-20, 2016, Quito, Ecuador). Source: Samara Integrated Development Strategy until 2025. Available: <https://www.samadm.ru/docs/strategiya-2025/>.

¹³ Unlike most authors who consider only the political elite, we distinguish business and public opinion leaders who do not participate in political processes, but have a powerful influence on the position of a significant part of society. For example, such was the spiritual leader of the Muslims of Dagestan, the Islamic theologian and Sufi Sheikh Said Afandi Chirkey, who was killed in a terrorist attack in 2012.

Figure 2. Scheme of correlation of behavioral vectors and targets of the main types of regional elites (“compass of elites”)



Preparing documents on the development of the region for a long period of time, implementing the state policy of regional development, federal and regional authorities should form real platforms for dialogue between groups of the regional elite on key development issues, should develop elements of a “social contract”, mechanisms for elite participation in the implementation of development strategies and monitoring compliance with the contract.

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Contribution of the authors

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Migration policy of modern Russia: conditions for ensuring socio-political stability

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Abstract. In the article we analyze existing approaches to the implementation of the migration policy in the Russian Federation, highlight some conditions that have a destabilizing effect on its perception in society. Analyzing and introducing into scientific circulation some statistical data of federal executive authorities the authors talk about the existing points of the migration attraction and structure the international migration flows directed to Russia. The authors focus on the necessity of the certain changes related to the quantitative and qualitative indicators of international migration, believing that improving the efficiency of public authorities in this area will become a condition for ensuring socio-political stability with the deterioration of migration issues.

Keywords: migration policy, migration processes, international migration, political stability, post-Soviet space

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Introduction

Migration processes are an integral element of the life of states, some of which receive migrants (recipients), while others become migration donors. More and more countries are getting involved in transnational migration processes, and there are almost no countries left that would not be affected by the problem of migration and its consequences. The United Nations records an increase in international migration at the beginning of the 21st century by more than 100 million people (from 173 million in 2000 up to 281 million by the beginning of 2021, even taking into account the significantly slowed down international migration in 2020 by the

COVID-19 pandemic¹. The use of various approaches to understanding migration as a modern global political phenomenon affecting many aspects of public life stipulated the necessity of the adjustment of existing narratives for the formation of state migration policy related to the need to solve economic and demographic problems, while ensuring national security.

Materials and methods

The materials for this research were taken from the works of the Russian and foreign scientists devoted to the migration issues, as well as from information and reference materials of international organizations and the authorities of the Russian Federation. The main method of this research has been system analysis method, which made it possible to analyze migration as a global socio-political phenomenon, as well as the impact of the implemented state migration policy to ensure socio-political stability. In addition, comparative, institutional and dialectical methods have been used during the research.

Results

In 2015, at the peak of the migration crisis in Europe, there began discussions on the need to adopt a new document in the field of global migration. And in 2016, 193 UN Member States signed the Declaration on Refugees and Migrants in New York². In the same year, the goal to ensure the adoption of the Migration Pact by the end of 2018 by the maximum number of states was set. In December 2018, an Intergovernmental Conference to adopt a Global Compact for safe, orderly, regular and legal migration was held³.

This document caused a lot of discussions in the international arena, some countries refused to ratify it at all, which can be explained by a certain political situation within states associated with migrant phobia and the problem of integrating a large number of migrants into the host society, their adaptation to new living conditions.

In modern Russia, the impact of migration as a socio-political phenomenon on political stability is due to a rather pragmatic understanding of the relevant processes from the point of view of business and part of the political elite that support the economic and demographic concept of migration.

In this paradigm, external migration becomes a mechanism to increase the proportion of the working-age population, a way to solve demographic problems [3].

¹ UN. Key indicators of international migration for 2020. Available: https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/imr2020_10_key_messages_ru_1.pdf.

² UN. Key indicators of international migration for 2020. Available: https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/imr2020_10_key_messages_ru_1.pdf.

³ Official website of EU. Available: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/54597/global-compact-for-safe-orderly-and-legal-migration_ru.

However, this approach does not take into account the risks of replacing the local population with external migrants, the risks of increasing the conflict potential based on the difference in cultures, mentality, as well as the formation of ethnic enclaves in large cities that have become the points of migration attraction.

Comparing the data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia (migration registration of foreign citizens in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation) and the Federal State Statistics Service (population permanently registered in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation), it is possible to single out individual Russian regions with a critical share of external migrants, such as Moscow (27.5%), St. Petersburg and Leningrad region (21.5%), Moscow region (20.5%), Kaluga region (20.1%)⁴, etc.

Such migratory overabundance is reflected in the public perception of external migration, expressed in the approval of various restrictive measures to limit the influx of newcomers⁵.

In this regard, the opinion of M.Yu. Apanovich seems rather interesting, who, speaking about the political understanding of the term “migration”, focused on the transformation of the state-political reality in the context of the influence of the moving population on the receiving society [1].

From this perspective, the limitation of external migration, the regulation of this process are now increasingly considered in the context of ensuring national security, where the following areas of activity of government institutions and their interaction with civil society institutions can be distinguished:

- ensuring effective immigration control;
- formation of the tools for socio-cultural adaptation and integration of migrants in the territory of the Russian Federation.

As part of the institutional activities of the federal executive authorities of the Russian Federation competent in the field of migration (Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, Federal Security Service of Russia, Ministry of Labor of Russia, Ministry of Economic Development of Russia, Federal Service for Labour and Employment Rostrud, FADN (The Federal Agency for Ethnic Affairs) of Russia), we should talk about developing the proposals related to the quantitative regulation of external migration, improving the measures taken on migration registration, toughening the responsibility for the organization and implementation of illegal migration. This approach seems obvious in order to reduce the potential for conflict at the points of migration attraction, for which individual regions in modern Russia are considered to be.

As part of the second area, implemented by the authorities in cooperation with civil society institutions, we have the right to talk about the formation of qualitative criteria for external migration, which will allow potential migrants to more easily adapt to work in Russia

⁴ Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia. Selected indicators of the migration situation in the Russian Federation for January-December 2021 with the distribution by country and region. Available: <https://xn--b1aew.xn--p1ai/dejatelnost/statistics/migracionnaya/item/28104344/>.

⁵ Xenophobia and migrants. Available: <https://www.levada.ru/2022/01/24/ksenofobiya-i-migranty/>.

and integrate into Russian society, i.e. knowledge of the Russian language, possession of a profession in demand, high qualification, integration potential.

The implementation of these areas will significantly reformat the paradigm of the migration policy of modern Russia towards the priority of the interests to ensure national security and domestic political stability over the quantitative, economic and demographic indicators.

Discussion

The peculiarities of the migration processes in the post-Soviet space are defined by the transformation of the once internal migration within one state into international migration processes, in which modern Russia has become the main center of migration attraction of foreign labor. Russian researchers, such as V.A.Volokh [6], S.V.Ryazantsev [5] and others single out the so-called "Eurasian migration corridor" that has developed between Russia and the Central Asian states.

The intensification of migration movements taken place in the post-Soviet space required the states to develop new approaches to the implementation of state migration policy, and the formation of their own state-civic and ethno-religious identities in the post-Soviet republics actualized the need to find approaches to the compromise coexistence of the host society and the external migrants in the receiving state.

The migration regime of the Russian Federation distinguishes three categories of states for which there are different approaches related to the level of migration preferences. The first group includes the Member States of the Eurasian Economic Union, such as Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan that enjoy the maximum level of preferences within the framework of the single economic space. The second group should include other CIS states that are not the members of the Eurasian Economic Union, such as Azerbaijan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine with which Russia has a visa-free entry procedure, including the labour activity. The third group includes states with a visa procedure for migration interaction.

Let's consider special migration indicators of the states of the post-Soviet space in 2019 and 2021, consciously not considering the indicators of 2020, within which the migration movements were significantly limited due to the strict measures to counter the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 1. Foreign labor migrants in the Russian Federation in 2019 and 2021 (according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia)

State	The number of citizens of a foreign state put on the migration registration in the Russian Federation	Declared purpose of entry into the Russian Federation "Labour"	The number of citizens of a foreign state put on the migration registration in the Russian Federation	Declared purpose of entry into the Russian Federation "Labour"
2019 ⁶		2021 ⁷		
Total	13 863 521	5 478 249	13 392 897	9 530 934
CIS member states that are not members of the Eurasian Economic Union				
1 Azerbaijan	465 615	194 929	477 160	275 280
2 Tajikistan	1 585 146	1 179 423	3 076 781	2 439 198
3 Uzbekistan	2 584 207	2 107 302	4 961 301	4 519 618
4 Ukraine	1 133 957	435 528	711 511	240 590
5 Moldova	340 183	174 150	209 884	104 582
Member States of the Eurasian Economic Union				
1 Armenia	331 115	210 460	578 789	389 809
2 Belarus	29 444	1 607	466 034	174 500
3 Kazakhstan	560 067	136 208	562 738	163 938
4 Kyrgyzstan	583 717	453 702	1 063 928	884 133

From the materials of the table, we can observe a significant (almost two-fold) increase in the share of labour migrants in migration flows directed to the Russian Federation, including the proportional growth trend in the share of labour migrants from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The formation of tolerant relations between Russians and external migrants from the post-Soviet states, actively attracted to the Russian labour market, is one of the main tasks of the migration policy of modern Russia, where at present there is practically no adaptation and integration infrastructure, like the courses of the Russian language, history and culture, adaptation centers and advisory services, which has a significant impact on the conditions to ensure domestic political stability.

⁶ Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia. Selected indicators of the migration situation in the Russian Federation for January – December 2019 with distribution by country and region. Available: <https://xn--b1aew.xn--p1ai/Deljatelnost/statistics/migracionnaya/item/19365693/>.

⁷ Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia. Selected indicators of the migration situation in the Russian Federation for January – December 2021 with distribution by country and region. Available: <https://xn--b1aew.xn--p1ai/dejatelnost/statistics/migracionnaya/item/28104344/>.

Conclusions

The migration system of the state, being one of the components of the public administration system, also becomes dependent on the political decisions made, which in the managerial level are responsible for the formation and subsequent application of the criteria for demanded migration in the receiving state and the migration attractiveness of the receiving state in the state of origin of the migrants [4].

Modern recipient states are forced to find a kind of migration compromise, according to which the economic need for external migrants will be consistent with ensuring the interests of national security within the framework of such formal criteria of the migration system (migration regime, legislation), as well as informal social criteria as migration narratives due to ethnic and cultural and religious differences between the host society and migrants.

The specificity of the Russian Federation in this case is that the main flow of external migration is made up of labour migrants from the post-Soviet space, who do not always consider our country in the context of a new permanent place of residence, and therefore are not fully interested in the integration into the Russian society. The peculiarities of the quantitative and qualitative composition of external migration to Russia from the states of the post-Soviet space, primarily from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as their concentration at certain points of migration attraction, form the risks for domestic political stability.

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