



GLOBALISING OR NATIONALISING—RUSSIAN ACADEMIA

■ ANALYSIS		
Education in Russia, 2016		2
By Ivan Kurilla, St. Petersburg		
■ ANALYSIS		
Corruption in Russian Higher Education		5
Elena Denisova-Schmidt, St. Gallen/Chestnut Hill, MA		
■ DATA		
Corruption and Education		7
■ OPINION POLL		
Attitudes Towards Education		9

Education in Russia, 2016

By Ivan Kurilla, St. Petersburg

Abstract

The Russian president has declared education to be a top priority in coming years. However, the field faces several challenges, including constrained resources and numerous splits among educators and administrators. While some centers of excellence are emerging, much of the education system is falling into neglect.

The Most Important Goal

“We clearly understand that it is people who create and use technologies,” Russian President Vladimir Putin said during the St. Petersburg Economic Forum on June 17, 2016. “Talented researchers, qualified engineers and workers play a crucial role in making the national economy competitive. Therefore education is something we should pay particular attention to in the next few years.”¹ The Russian language version was even more straightforward compared to this official English translation: «Поэтому считаю образование самым главным, на что мы должны обратить внимание в ближайшие годы» “I consider education the most important (task) we need to pay attention to in the upcoming years.” The reasons for such a bold statement could be manifold, and include the start of an election campaign, obvious gridlock in defining a Russian strategic vision, and the need for the new sources of economic development. In any case, the field is too important for Russians to neglect.

Three years after I made a previous snapshot of Russian education (see RAD No. 137, 9 October 2013), the situation continues to develop mostly in the same direction that was already apparent then. However, the field looks more nuanced and complex now. The splits that exist within the educational community have acquired new dimensions since the open turn of the Russian authorities to isolation from the world community.

Higher Education Shrinking

State policy on education during the last four years was defined to a large extent by the so-called “May (2012) Decrees” of President Vladimir Putin, who ordered that professors’ salaries be increased to double the median salary in each region, and school teachers’ pay to the level of that median. As no special budget funds were allocated for this purpose, the Ministry of Education and Science, regional authorities and university rectors needed to cut the number of professors in order to raise the salary of the remaining faculty. The last several years saw growing workloads per professor (teacher), as well as

the closure of some universities, either by a decree cancelling the university’s license or through mergers. New budget restrictions led to severe cuts in the number of professors’ positions. One popular move for administrators was simplifying the requirements for receiving a baccalaureate’s degree and increasing class sizes. The idea of an “efficient contract” introduced by the Ministry as an incentive for professors to work more effectively was perceived by faculty members as yet another attempt to increase their workload. The transition from a five-year “specialist” degree to a four-year baccalaureate also aggravated the situation. The less specialized baccalaureate led to larger classes and allowed universities to offer fewer disciplines.

Another cost-cutting measure was the creation of “federal universities” in each federal district (usually by merging several existing universities in one city or sometimes in several neighboring cities into one institution), and the process continues until the present. While President Putin called for “particular attention” to education, his chief of staff Sergey Ivanov criticized the “higher schools in the Russian Federation and the [large] number of colleges,” a concern echoed by Tyumen governor Vladimir Yakushev who suggested “cutting the [number of] universities.”

Two Splits

The first significant split, which was already apparent in the previous decade and continues to grow, is the cleavage between scholars and professors on the one side, and bureaucrats on the other. The Ministry of Education and Science and the Russian Federal Service for Supervision in Education and Science (Rosobrnadzor), as well as the Federal Agency on Scientific Organizations (FANO) produce mountains of requirements, regulations, and report forms that teachers and professors are obliged to fill out and file. The bureaucracy cannot rely on reputation and trust, so the state invents paper reports that replace trust and peer-review. Professors and teachers are obviously indignant, but they have been put in a position where protests are futile or even dangerous.

Nevertheless, two independent trade unions were created, one (since 2011)—“Uchitel” (Teacher) that unites secondary school pedagogues and the other

1 Vladimir Putin at the plenary session of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, June 17, 2016. <<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/52178>>

(since 2013)—“Universitetskaya solidarnost” (University Solidarity) that was created by university professors. Both unions are small in size and the members experience pressure from the administration, but both are well known among educators, and attract sympathy and hope.

The second split is partially related to the same bureaucratic approach to problem solving, but focuses on a different angle. The Ministry in its attempt to make academic work accountable increasingly relies on internationally recognized bibliometrics in order to measure a professor’s competence. Without high a Hirsch-index and publications in peer-reviewed international journals, a professor now has problems with being allowed to sit on dissertation committees, and even reappointment for his or her position. These new Ministry requirements push Russian scholars to publish abroad, but at the same time the new standards have alienated several big groups in academia, including those who do not write in English and those who deem the new requirements artificial and even detrimental to Russian science. The latter claim is especially popular among faculty in the arts and humanities, who insist on the national character of their field. Certainly, scholars who are not competitive internationally are also protesting this innovation.

University Hierarchy

The process of dividing Russia’s universities into several tiers continued and the number of “tiers” increased. The new hierarchy of universities includes Moscow and St. Petersburg state universities as special cases, federal, national research, «opornye» (regional) universities, and the rest.

In June 2016 there were 10 federal universities in Russia. Initially the intention was to have one for each of the federal districts, but eventually two additional federal universities were created—one in the Far Eastern Federal District (there are two federal universities in the Far East—Far Eastern Federal University in Vladivostok and North-Eastern Federal University in Yakutsk) and one in the North-Western Federal District (Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad and Northern Federal University in Arkhangelsk) while no federal university was created in the Central Federal District. There are 29 national research universities that receive additional funding for research (not predominantly for teaching as is the case with the rest). Twenty-one universities participate in the program 5/100, which seeks to place five Russian universities in the top-100 international ranking and provides special funding to achieve that goal (this group includes Moscow and St. Petersburg state universities, as well as several federal and national research universities). Early in 2016, a new project started—11 uni-

versities received the new status of “Opornye” (regional) universities, meaning that the state continues to support one university in a region to guarantee access to higher education in regions with neither federal nor national research universities present. Each group receives special funding that distinguishes one university from another.

Dissernet

One of the most successful grassroots initiatives of the last several years was the Dissernet project, a network of scholars who investigate cases of plagiarism in dissertations. Its leaders, scholars Andrey Rostovtsev and Andrey Zayakin and journalist and public figure Sergey Parkhomenko, coordinate the work of dozens of volunteers who compare the texts of dissertations and other scholarly work. Dissernet exposed hundreds of “stolen degrees” and filed multiple cases with the Ministry of Education and Science Committee on Attestation (VAK) and dissertation councils against holders of such plagiarized degrees. They also made it clear that many politicians—governors and State Duma deputies—“defended” falsified dissertations, but such cases are not rare among rectors of state universities as well. The Ministry of Education and Science, while not openly supportive of the public initiative, seems to be attentive to the Dissernet findings; in many cases rectors lost their jobs soon after their plagiarized dissertations were exposed, and the expert boards of the VAK was completely overhauled during the last two years. The Public board (obshchestvenny sovet) of the Ministry of Education and Science now includes several reformist professors and teachers including Dissernet activist Mikhail Gelfand.

Internationalization of Education vs Nationalization of Politics

The introduction of bibliometrics is not the only decision of the Ministry that pushes higher education into deeper participation in international science. The criteria for evaluating universities include the number of foreign students and scholars working in the university, the amount of foreign grants and international mobility. The Ministry continues to fund “megagrants” to attract foreign scholars to Russian universities in order to foster cooperation and to create research groups that can push forward the boundaries of international science.

After 2014 Russia seemingly turned to isolationist policies, with a coercive apparatus fighting against the foreign funding of NGOs and becoming increasingly suspicious about Western contacts as a whole. Nevertheless, the Ministry continues to pressure the universities and professors to increase their international cooperation thus supporting incentives contrary to those promoted by state propaganda and the security services.

This situation created another important cleavage, between “internationally” and “nationally” oriented scholars and professors. Some politicians have already used this visual contradiction to attack the Ministry of Education and Science, combining their unhappiness about other activities with political accusations.

State Exam

The Unified State Examination (EGE) continues to be the most apparent bone of contention concerning secondary school education. EGE resembles the American SAT in the procedural way, although it is not one, but a series of exams on the basic school disciplines (e.g., Russian, math, history, geography, physics and others). While Russian and Math are obligatory for everybody, a pupil can choose other additional topics for gaining entry to universities (thus, if a student plans to study physics and engineering, he or she must pass the physics exam, if the choice is social science, the required exam may be history, geography or social science basics). The critics insist that the “EGEization” of school education replaced the last year of high school teaching with test training in order to prepare pupils for passing the exam. They claim that the school abandoned its goal to teach thinking and writing in favor of test-passing skills.

Those who defend the EGE insist that the exam eliminated corruption in the entrance exams for universities, helped to standardize teaching requirements nationwide, and permitted applicants from the remote corners of Russia to enter the best universities of the country (as it is now possible to send an application to several universities at once—a practice that did not exist before the EGE).

The EGE had its own victories and failures. Nobody denies the victory of EGE over corruption in the college admissions process. The most disastrous failure took place in 2013, when the “secret” examination questions leaked into the Internet days before the exam and many pupils had a chance to solve them beforehand. The ministry did not change the assignment or cancel the exam, so those children who cheated got a leg up over honest kids who did not use the leaked materials for their preparations. Starting in 2014 the procedures were made much stricter, and there were no further leaks.

Complexity of the Struggle

With so many cross-cutting cleavages among education stakeholders, the struggle within the field creates strange

and unusual combinations. Thus, “westerners” are disappointed with the bureaucratization, but support the Ministry in its fight against plagiarism; at the same time EGE-haters can unite with underpaid and overloaded professors in their protests against educational policies. Duma deputies with questionable dissertations attack Minister of Education and Science Dmitry Livanov for “westernization” of scholarship and lack of patriotism. Such a situation makes the discontented groups weak and dispersed, as many of them do not support the demands of others. Still, it is not an easy task to identify the bottom line from all of the above. Education in Russia is getting more diverse, with centers of excellence appearing in some universities and more scholars of world fame emerging, while, at the same time, the other (and larger) part of academia is falling into neglect.

New Minister

A month before the Duma elections, on August 19, 2016 Dmitrii Livanov lost his position and Olga Vasilieva was appointed as the new Minister of Education and Science. She is a professional historian who studied relations between the Soviet state and Orthodox Church in the 20th century and she came to the position from the presidential administration. Many critics expressed their concern that Vasilieva would support the possible penetration of the clergy into schools and also hastened to find pro-Stalin expressions in her earlier public speeches.

In fact, those critical claims do not look sufficiently substantiated. Vasilieva seemed to take a cautious start, but addressed several policies on the edge of the public controversy. Thus, she criticized programs aimed at the international integration of Russia’s universities and urged for caution; the new minister also promised to stop university mergers and to return some entrance exams to the university (a move that would devalue EGE).

Vasilieva, however, has not yet made any decision that would reverse the previous policies. Although in late August the Ministry issued an amendment to the rules regarding dissertation defense that would let plagiarizers escape the revocation of their degrees (by equating thesis plagiarism to pop-music plagiarism and requiring a court decision before the academic council could act), Vasilieva subsequently revoked the amendment and punished an official responsible for the new text.

About the Author

Ivan Kurilla is a Professor of History and International Relations at European University at St. Petersburg.

Corruption in Russian Higher Education

Elena Denisova-Schmidt, St. Gallen/Chestnut Hill, MA

Abstract

Endemic corruption in the country, the rising numbers in higher education, heightened competition between educational institutions at various levels and the creation of improper dependencies among all actors involved in the higher education sector are most likely the main reasons for the extensive spread of corruption at Russian universities. This paper discusses these issues as well as their consequences for further domestic development and for international cooperation with Russia.

Introduction

The Russian government has adopted some aggressive strategies for establishing world-class universities in the country. The results are more than impressive: today, Russian universities are well-situated in the QS World University Rankings and the Academic Ranking of World Universities (the Shanghai Rankings). The British *Times Higher Education (THE)* World University Rankings included 15 Russian universities on its 2015 list, while only two universities were on this list in 2014. One of the obstacles that several Russian universities still have to face, however, remains corruption. Defined as ‘the abuse of entrusted power for private gain’ (Transparency International) and ‘the lack of academic integrity’, corruption might take place at all kinds of universities: public and private, mass and elite. It might be monetary or non-monetary, with or without student involvement, and it can take various forms, ranging from bribes and misuse of university funds to fake degrees and plagiarism.

Comparing freshmen and graduates in some public universities in the Russian Far East in 2012, my colleagues and I found that graduates are significantly more aware of bribes at universities than their young colleagues—the difference is 52%. While monetary corruption is more visible, non-monetary corruption is difficult to capture and actually more widespread. Our results suggest that the students’ acceptance of the use of various cheating techniques increases significantly during their university studies: ‘using crib sheets and other unauthorized materials during exams’ increased by 12%; ‘copying off during exams or tests’ by 25%; ‘downloading term papers (or other papers) from the internet’ by 15%; ‘purchasing term papers (or other papers) from special agencies or from other students’ by 12.5% and ‘giving a professor fraudulent or misleading excuses for poor academic performance’ by 11% (Denisova-Schmidt, Huber and Leontyeva 2016a). The other study conducted three years later, in 2015, also shows how widespread various types of plagiarism and informal agreements in exchange for grades or preferential treatment have become (Table 1 on p. 7).

Students often have an ambivalent attitude towards various forms of cheating. On the one hand, they condemn these practices; on the other hand, they might legitimize them, pointing to ‘unnecessary’ classes and the need to have a job during their university studies. Very often students are unaware they are doing anything wrong, however.

Alexander Trushin, a journalist working for ‘Ogonek’, recently discovered a black market for fake diplomas in Russia. According to his sources, one of the major groups of potential clients are people who are good in their fields and qualified to do their job, but who need to show their employers a formal degree for a promotion. There is a ‘code of honor’ on this market: no fake diplomas for doctors and pilots are sold. The safety of the lives of other people has a priority.

Why has this happened? Endemic corruption in the country, the increase in higher education, heightened competition between educational institutions at all levels and the creation of improper dependencies among all actors involved in the higher education sector are the main reasons.

Endemic Corruption

Previous research has shown that people with personal experience with corruption and/or who believe that everyone around them is corrupt are more predisposed to corruption in their own activities. Transparency International, an NGO monitoring the perception of corruption around the world, ranked Russia as one of the most corrupt countries. Other international rankings such as the Index of Economic Freedom conducted by the Heritage Foundation and the Worldwide Governance Indicators organized by the World Bank show similar findings (Table 2 on p. 8).

According to the Levada Center, one of the best-known Russian opinion research institutes, the majority of Russians (42%) believe that corruption is ineradicable in the country (*Obshestvennoe mnenie 2015*). Higher education is one of the areas affected by corruption. Some respondents believe that current reforms aiming to fight corruption in the sector actually increase it. So

the idea behind the *Edinyi Gosudarstvennyi Eksamen* (*EGE*, Engl.: ‘Unified State Exam’), for example, which, since 2009, has served as both secondary school finals and university entrance exam, was among other things, to reduce corruption at the admissions level. Only 23% of respondents believe that the number of violations in university admissions are decreasing; 38% think they remain at the same level and 21% consider they will increase (figures for May 2016 in Figure 1 on p. 8).

Rising Students’ Numbers in Higher Education

The number of students going to Russian universities has reached a crucial level—about 80% of the 18–21 age cohort now enrolls in tertiary education. Not all of them are ready to study on such a high level and universities are increasingly dealing with ‘un-teachable’ students: underachieving students and those who attend universities for purposes other than study.

‘Forest science’, ‘metallurgy’, ‘maritime studies’ and ‘agriculture and fish industry’ are the fields that admit the highest number of underachieving students – that is, students with low *EGE* scores among *budzhetye mesta*.¹ The tendency has been growing: lower-achieving school students often choose the sciences as one of the most secure options for gaining university admission. One professor complained that some senior-level students in electrical engineering are not able to say what is measured by a volt and what is by an ampere—which is basic knowledge for an electrical engineer, and is actually a part of the high school curriculum in Russia.

My empirical data from 2015 show that some students attending universities for purposes other than study: ‘self-expression in sport and creativity’ (48.2%) – such as participation in *Universiada*, the Olympics, *KVN*² – are among the most important reasons for choosing the university. Those students do not have time for studies, but they are important for monitoring and for the self-marketing of universities.

Improper Dependencies

Young people without a higher education have almost no chances on the job market in Russia. In spite of the great demand for qualified workers, the blue-collar professions are not popular among Russian society at large. The results of the surveys conducted by the Lev-

ada Center show that only 6% of Russians wish their children to be a qualified blue-collar worker (*Obshestvennoe mnenie 2015*). The faculty is under pressure from the administration not to expel students for underachievement. How can they do this? They might water down their requirements, or ignore and/or pretend to ignore plagiarism, or expect or even demand gifts, services or money from students in exchange for better marks and/or preferential treatment. The administration, in turn, is under pressure from the Ministry of Education. Public universities receive their budget allocation according to the number of students enrolled. If the university were to expel students, they would need to return the money they received from the state for those students. This is hardly possible, because the money is already in used to cover costs. It would also mean that, in the next academic year, the budget might be cut by the state, and the universities would have to reconsider their personnel and material costs, which would likely lead to the dismissal of faculty or staff, or the closure of some programs in the near future.

Consequences

The current situation has consequences, not only for economic growth, but also for international cooperation with Russia: Corruption can be exported and/or imported. This might make it difficult for western universities to cooperate with Russian universities, or at least it might negatively influence their image and force them to justify their cooperation projects with partners.

For example, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has, in the past, had to justify its cooperation with SkolTech University, a newly established school in Russia. According to Russian sources, MIT received 7.5 million USD for a development strategy and a road map for the joint project. Critics called the grant to MIT a ‘bribe’ to get a prestigious university on board. Or another example from Europe: Ca’ Foscari University of Venice decided to award an honorary doctorate to Vladimir Medinsky, Minister of Culture (since 2012). This decision provoked strong protest among students and the faculty in Italy. One of the reasons for this was the fact the Medinsky was accused by *dissernet*, an online community of experts and journalists investigating plagiarism in theses, of plagiarism in his dissertations. The administration was pushed to reexamine their decision. As a result, the ceremony was moved from Venice to Moscow and one of the Ca’ Foscari vice-rectors had to resign (retired).

The situation might become even worse—especially at Russian universities, which will host more and more ‘un-teachable’ students. The Russian government will partly support this, because these young people will

1 Russian universities offer two types of placements for students: *budzhetye mesta*—placements for students who have their tuition fees paid by the state, and *platnye mesta*—placements for students who pay their own tuition fees.

2 *KVN* – ‘Club of the Smart and the Merry’, a popular Russian TV show where Russian-speaking students compete with each other in wittiness, dancing, and music performance.

be in very good hands for four to six years and will not become unemployed, criminals or alcoholics. Russian universities will also partly support this, because they often see that study at universities is the only way for young people to leave what can sometimes be unhealthy home environments.

The main problem, however, is not corruption per se, but the functions that corruption serves. The quality of education is increasingly being assessed through

quantitative instruments. This encourages secondary schools to focus on achieving good *EGE* results, while universities aspire to be recognized as effective on the next monitoring conducted by the Ministry of Education. Students are becoming less and less important in this race. Corruption seems to be the only effective instrument to manage the entire system of higher education—to keep the system running and to gain recognition domestically and internationally.

About the Author

Dr. Elena Denisova-Schmidt is Lecturer at the University of St. Gallen (HSG), St. Gallen, Switzerland and Research Fellow at the Center for International Higher Education (CIHE), Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA, USA

Further Reading:

- Denisova-Schmidt, E., Huber, M. and Leontyeva, E. 2016a. On the Development of Students' Attitudes towards Corruption and Cheating in Russian Universities. *European Journal of Higher Education*. 6, 2, 128–143 <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2016.1154477>>
- Denisova-Schmidt E., Huber M. and Leontyeva E. 2016b. Do Anti-Corruption Educational Campaigns Reach Students? Some Evidence from two cities in Russia and Ukraine, *Voprosy Obrazovaniia*, 1, 61–83. <<https://vo.hse.ru/2016--1/178805268.html>>
- *Obshchestvennoe mnenie* 2015. See <<http://www.levada.ru/books/obshchestvennoe-mnenie-2015>>, accessed 30 May 2016.

DATA

Corruption and Education

Table 1: Russian Students on Academic Dishonesty
Question: How often do you use the following practices?

Areas	Actions	not never responses*
Taking exams	Using a cheat sheet during exams	92.2%
	Copying somebody's work during examinations or tests	90.8%
Writing papers	Downloading a course paper (or other written work) from the internet	57.9%
	Buying a course paper (or other written work) from the special companies or classmates	32.2%
	Writing a paper on one's own, but copying and pasting some chapters from the internet	92.8%
Communicating with the professor	Deceiving a professor while explaining problems associated with studies	42.5%
	Asking a professor for preferential treatment	26.1%

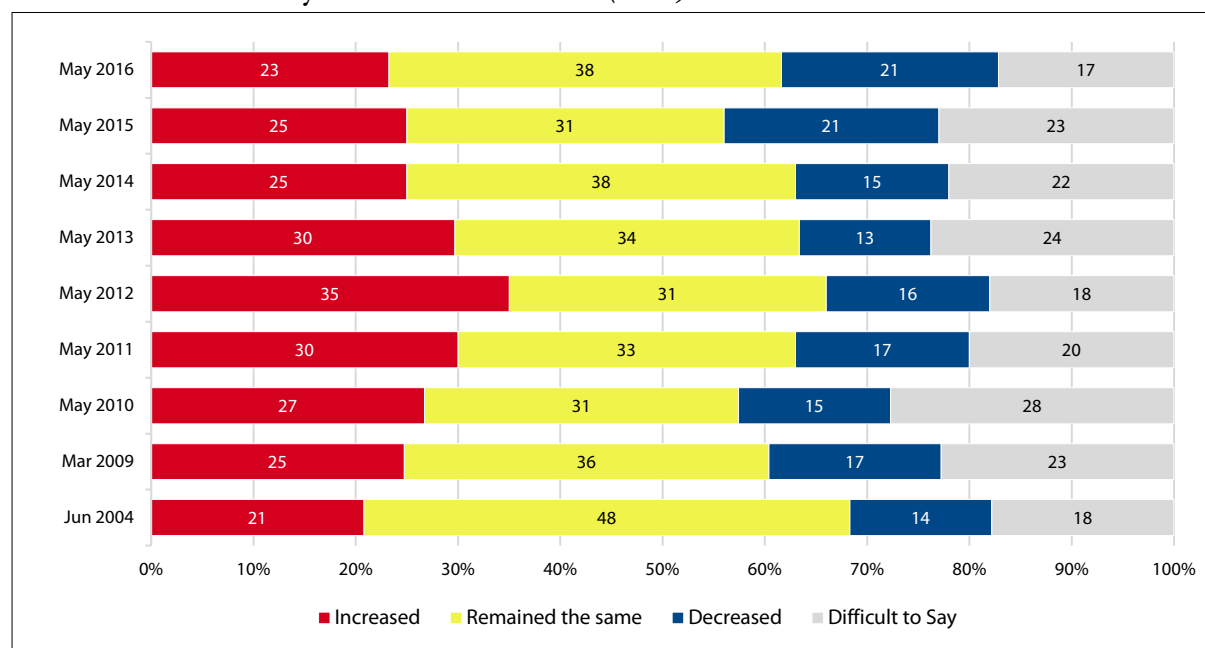
* 'not never' represents the sum of the responses 'seldom', 'sometimes', 'often' and 'systematically'.

Source: Denisova-Schmidt E., Huber M. and Leontyeva E. 2016b.

Table 2: Ranking of Corruption in Russia: Dynamics in 2011–2015

Indicator (Institution)	Country	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Corruption Perception Index (Transparency International)	USA	7.1	73	73	74	76
	Germany	8.0	79	78	79	81
	Russia	2.4	28	28	27	29
	Congo, Dem. Rep.	2.0	21	22	22	22
Freedom from Corruption/Index of Economic Freedom (Heritage Foundation)	USA	75	71	71	72	73
	Germany	80	79	80	80	78
	Russia	22	21	24	22	28
	Congo, Dem. Rep.	19	20	20	17.6	22
Control of Corruption/Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank)	USA	1.27	1.38	1.30	1.30	1.38
	Germany	1.71	1.78	1.80	1.80	1.82
	Russia	-1.04	-1.01	-1.00	-0.90	-0.86
	Congo, Dem. Rep.	-1.40	-1.30	-1.30	-1.30	-1.25

Sources: <<http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview>>, <<http://www.heritage.org/index/>>, <<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home>>

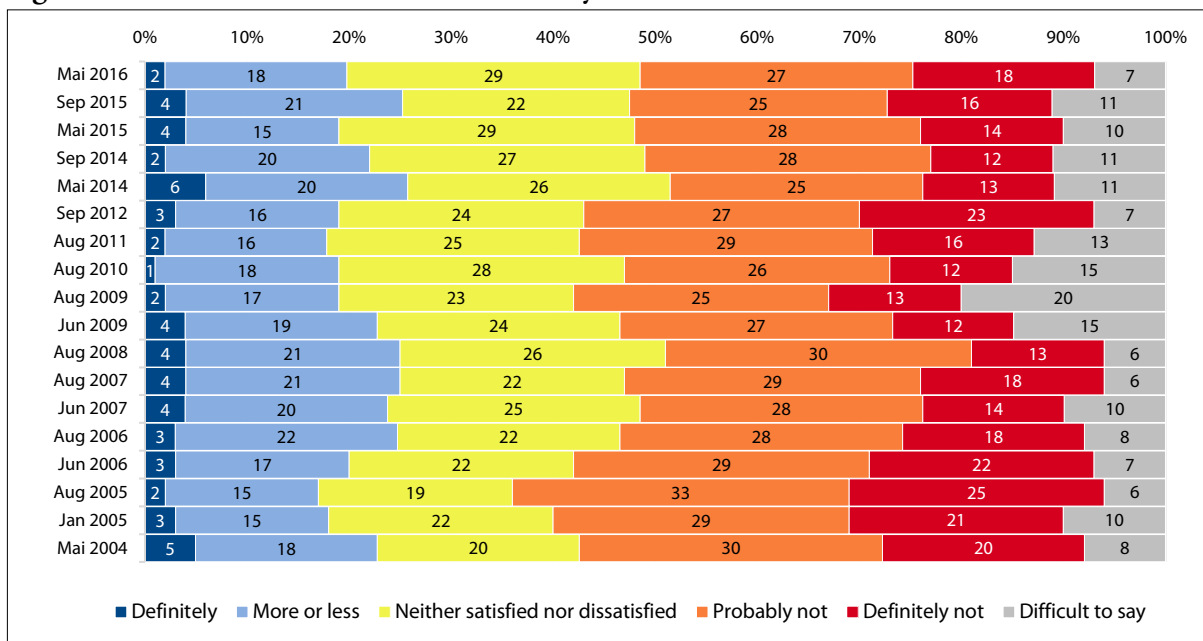
Figure 1: Has the Amount of Bribes, *blat*, and Other Abuses Connected to High School Graduation and Entrance to University Increased or Decreased with the Introduction of the Unified Entry Exam for Universities (*EGE*)?

Source: representative opinion polls by Levada Center June 2004 to 27–30 May 2016, <<http://www.levada.ru/2016/06/21/sistema-obrazovaniya-i-ege/>>

OPINION POLL

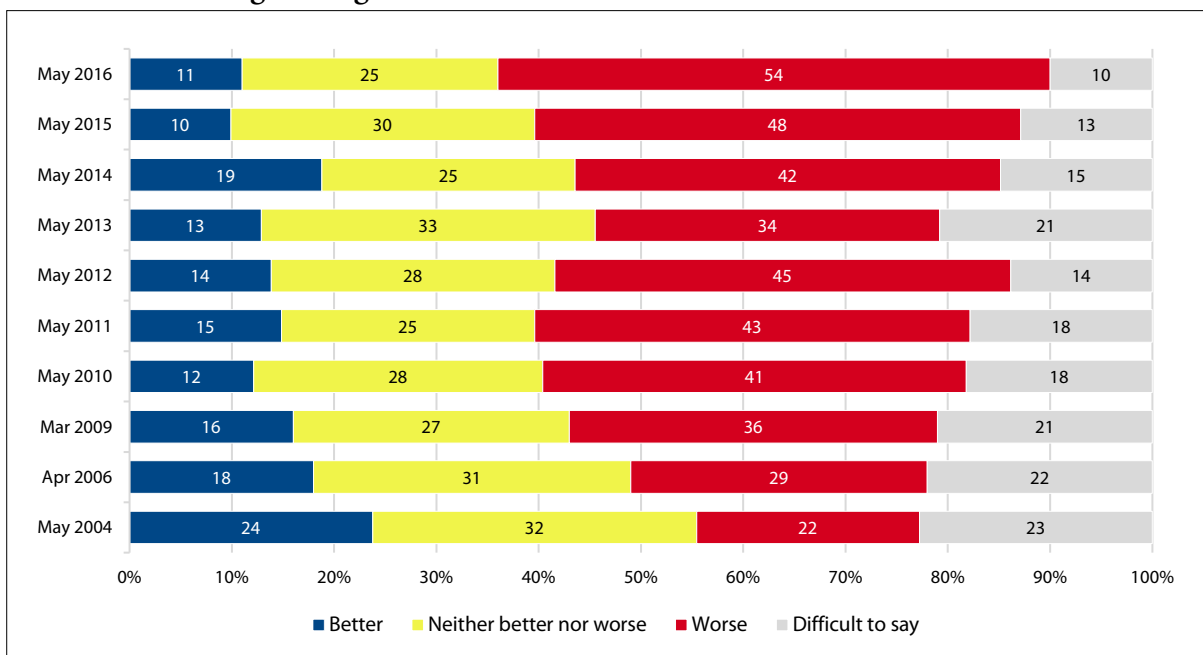
Attitudes Towards Education

Figure 1: Are You Satisfied with the Present System of Education?



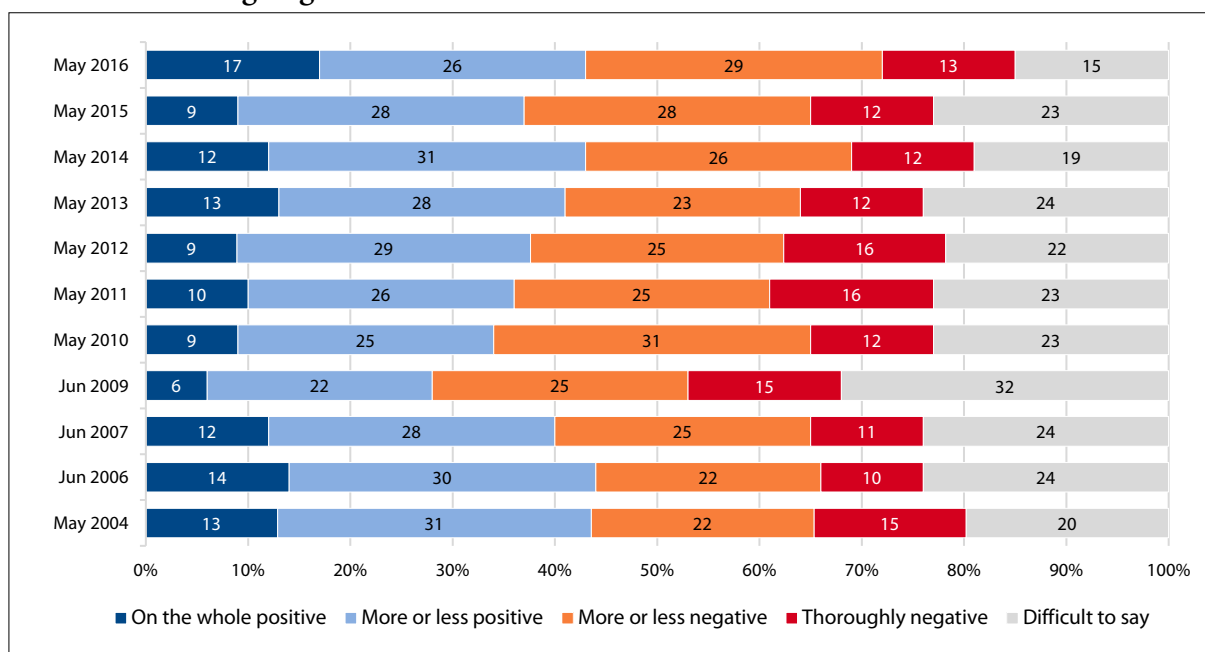
Source: representative opinion polls by Levada Center May 2004 to 27–30 May 2016, <<http://www.levada.ru/2016/06/21/sistema-obrazovaniya-i-ege/>>

Figure 2: Compared to Usual Exams, Does the EGE Do a Better or Worse Job of Assessing the Knowledge of High School Graduates?



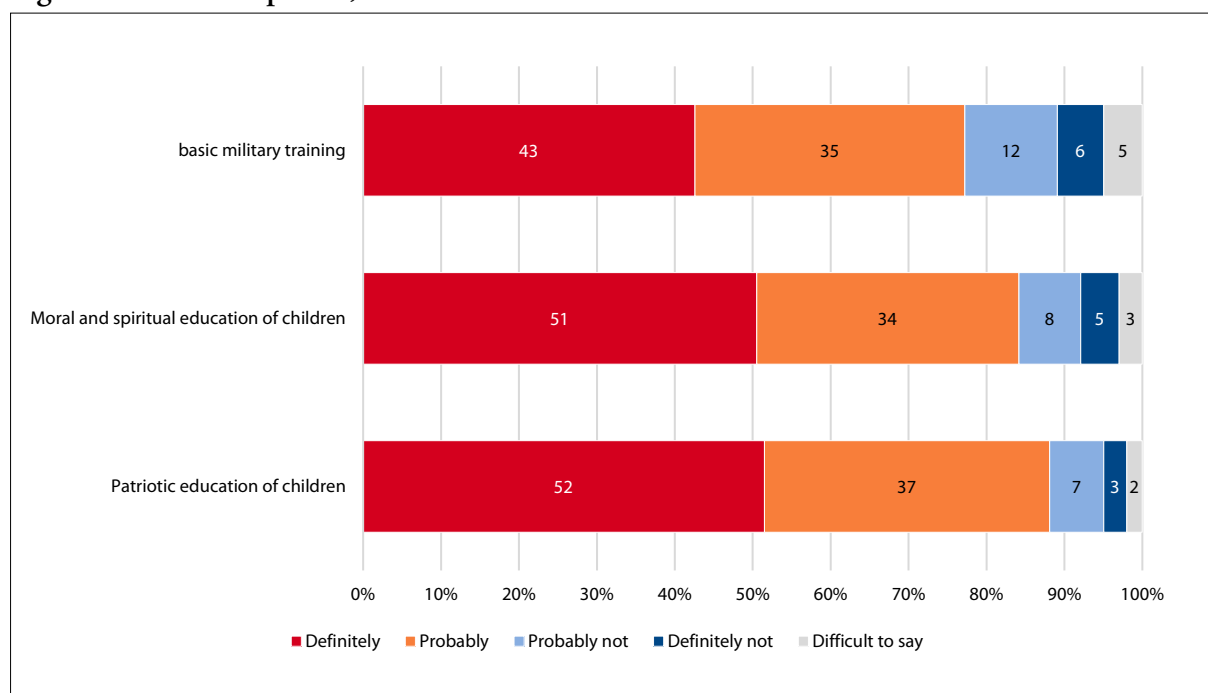
Source: representative opinion polls by Levada Center May 2004 to 27–30 May 2016, <<http://www.levada.ru/2016/06/21/sistema-obrazovaniya-i-ege/>>

Figure 3: What is Your Opinion of the Abolishing of Entrance Exams for University and Obtaining a Place at University on the Basis of the *EGE*, which Candidates Take when Finishing High School?



Source: representative opinion polls by Levada Center May 2004 to 27–30 May 2016, <<http://www.levada.ru/2016/06/21/sistema-obrazovaniya-i-ege/>>

Figure 4: In Your Opinion, School Should Concern itself with ...



Source: representative opinion poll by Levada Center 26–29 August 2016, <<http://www.levada.ru/2016/09/01/uchebnye-predmety-i-funktsii-shkoly/>>

ABOUT THE RUSSIAN ANALYTICAL DIGEST

Editors: Stephen Aris, Matthias Neumann, Robert Ortung, Jeronim Perović, Heiko Pleines, Hans-Henning Schröder, Aglaya Snetkov

The Russian Analytical Digest is a bi-weekly internet publication jointly produced by the Research Centre for East European Studies [Forschungsstelle Osteuropa] at the University of Bremen (<www.forschungsstelle.uni-bremen.de>), the Center for Security Studies (CSS) at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH Zurich), the Resource Security Institute, the Institute of History at the University of Zurich (<<http://www.hist.uzh.ch/>>), the Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies at The George Washington University, and the German Association for East European Studies (DGO). The Digest draws on contributions to the German-language *Russland-Analysen* (<www.laender-analysen.de/russland>), the CSS analytical network on Russia and Eurasia (<www.css.ethz.ch/en/publications/rad.html>), and the Russian Regional Report. The Russian Analytical Digest covers political, economic, and social developments in Russia and its regions, and looks at Russia's role in international relations.

To subscribe or unsubscribe to the Russian Analytical Digest, please visit our web page at <<http://www.css.ethz.ch/en/publications/rad.html>>

Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen

Founded in 1982, the Research Centre for East European Studies (Forschungsstelle Osteuropa) at the University of Bremen is dedicated to the interdisciplinary analysis of socialist and post-socialist developments in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The major focus is on the role of dissent, opposition and civil society in their historic, political, sociological and cultural dimensions.

With a unique archive on dissident culture under socialism and with an extensive collection of publications on Central and Eastern Europe, the Research Centre regularly hosts visiting scholars from all over the world.

One of the core missions of the institute is the dissemination of academic knowledge to the interested public. This includes regular e-mail newsletters covering current developments in Central and Eastern Europe.

The Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich

The Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich is a Swiss academic center of competence that specializes in research, teaching, and information services in the fields of international and Swiss security studies. The CSS also acts as a consultant to various political bodies and the general public. The CSS is engaged in research projects with a number of Swiss and international partners. The Center's research focus is on new risks, European and transatlantic security, strategy and doctrine, area studies, state failure and state building, and Swiss foreign and security policy.

In its teaching capacity, the CSS contributes to the ETH Zurich-based Bachelor of Arts (BA) in public policy degree course for prospective professional military officers in the Swiss army and the ETH and University of Zurich-based MA program in Comparative and International Studies (MACIS); offers and develops specialized courses and study programs to all ETH Zurich and University of Zurich students; and has the lead in the Executive Masters degree program in Security Policy and Crisis Management (MAS ETH SPCM), which is offered by ETH Zurich. The program is tailored to the needs of experienced senior executives and managers from the private and public sectors, the policy community, and the armed forces.

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

The Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, The Elliott School of International Affairs, The George Washington University

The Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies is home to a Master's program in European and Eurasian Studies, faculty members from political science, history, economics, sociology, anthropology, language and literature, and other fields, visiting scholars from around the world, research associates, graduate student fellows, and a rich assortment of brown bag lunches, seminars, public lectures, and conferences.

The Institute of History at the University of Zurich

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

Resource Security Institute

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

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

Reprint possible with permission by the editors.

Editors: Stephen Aris, Matthias Neumann, Robert Ortung, Jeronim Perović, Heiko Pleines, Hans-Henning Schröder, Aglaya Snetkov

Layout: Cengiz Kibaroglu, Matthias Neumann, Michael Clemens

ISSN 1863-0421 © 2016 by Forschungsstelle Osteuropa, Bremen and Center for Security Studies, Zürich

Research Centre for East European Studies • Publications Department • Klagenfurter Str. 8 • 28359 Bremen • Germany

Phone: +49 421-218-69600 • Telefax: +49 421-218-69607 • e-mail: fsopr@uni-bremen.de • Internet: <www.css.ethz.ch/en/publications/rad.html>