RUSSIA'S 'GENERATION Z': ATTITUDES AND VALUES

2019/2020

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FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG

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YOUTH STUDIES SOUTHEAST AND EASTERN EUROPE 2018/2019

The "FES Youth Studies" is an international youth research project carried out in many countries in East, Southeast Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The main objective of the surveys has been to identify, describe and analyse attitudes of young people and patterns of behaviour in contemporary society. The data for this study was collected in May and June 2019 from 1,600 respondents aged 14–29. A broad range of issues were addressed, including young peoples' experiences and aspirations in different realms of life, such as education, employment, political participation, family relationships, leisure and use of information and communications technology, but also their values, attitudes and beliefs. Findings are presented in both Russian and English language.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What are the concerns of the youth of Russia? What is the attitude of the country's latest generation, which has little or no memory of the Soviet Union? How does a young person, influenced mainly by the turbulent 1990s and the upswing in the 2000s, think about Russia and the world – especially in light of increasing de-democratisation and already more than 5 years of confrontation between Russia and "the West"? The Levada Centre, commissioned by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, has attempted to answer these questions through a representative survey, conducted in mid-2019, of 1500 young Russians between the ages of 14 and 29, supplemented with focus groups.

The young people were interviewed about various areas of their lives: education, employment, political participation and attitudes, leisure time and the use of new technologies, as well as their experiences of education and plans for their own families. The results show a highly differentiated, sometimes even contradictory portrait of Russian youth:

How do young people think about their own lives and the current state of affairs in politics?

— On an individual level, young people remain optimistic and satisfied with their immediate life realities and experiences: 87% are very satisfied with their lives and 81% look positively into their personal future; only 2% see things getting worse in the next 10 years.
— However, a different picture emerges when they are confronted with the realities of the country: although 43% still see the country's future in the next 10 years as better than today, 20% believe that the country will be worse off. This difference in the assessment of their own vs. the country's future is quite noticeable. Moreover, many are convinced that corruption in educational institutions is a problem and about half of the respondents feel that the voice of the young generation is not heard in politics.
— The concerns of young people range across a wide spectrum. When given a list of potential issues, the item that troubled them the least was refugees, which strongly concerned only 31% of respondents. More than half and up to 60% of youth were afraid of war, pollution and climate change, terrorist attacks, increased poverty in society and unemployment. The structure of fear is generally very similar to that of other age groups, except for "pollution and climate change", which is a far bigger concern for younger respondents than for older ones. Gender differences are also very evident: while just a quarter of men fear being a victim of physical violence, half of the women do so.
— Trust towards the state and its institutions overall is low. The only state institutions that receive a comparatively high level of trust are the president and the armed forces. The reasons for this are not quite clear but can be related to the perceived role of the president and the army as guarantors of national security, seen apart from domestic policies. Political parties and the state Duma, on the other hand, enjoy only very low levels of trust. This low trust in state institutions is most likely causally related to low political participation among youth (the highest share of any form of political engagement is a little above 20% for signing online petitions or participating in volunteer or civil society activities) and their very low willingness to participate in politics (only 7% consider becoming involved themselves). On the other hand, volunteer movements are generally trusted.
— The challenge is to get young people interested in politics again. Just under a fifth show any interest in politics,

whereas more than half (57%) do not. And even fewer respondents consider their own knowledge of politics to be good or very good (11%).

— The digital shift is very evident among Russian youth. The demand for digital services to obtain political information is much higher than for analogue services. 84% get their information from the Internet, 50% from television. The latter is seen more as a supplement to information obtained from the Internet. In general, 95% have access to the Internet, but most use it to communicate with friends or family (78%) or for school or work (58%).

— Young Russians already live in a different, post-Soviet reality. Only the oldest age group has vivid memories of the USSR, and only in this group does a majority have a negative view of the collapse of the USSR. On average, 50% do not have a clear position on the collapse of the USSR.

What values and family plans do young people have? How tolerant are they?

— 69% agree with the statement "I am proud to be a citizen of Russia". Their identity is focused on their immediate environment and the nation state. Hence, they mainly see themselves as citizens of their hometown (87%), as Russians (86%) or as a citizen of their region (86%). Nonetheless, ethnicity-based connotations of what makes a Russian citizen ("only those who have Russian blood in their veins") are less pronounced among youth and are even less frequent, the younger the respondent: among the youngest age group (14–17 years old) 33% strongly disagree with this statement, while among the oldest (25–29) 24% do so.

— Travelling opens new horizons. Half of the respondents see themselves as world citizens, although only one fifth claim a European identity. The share of those who consider themselves as Europeans or world citizens is significantly higher among those who have already travelled abroad. However, only 20% agree with what is commonly perceived as "Western culture", and only a third considers Russia to be a European country.

— Traditional ideas of the family are widespread: 84% want to have a marriage with children. Regarding the choice of a partner, romantic expectations prevail. Personal qualities and common interests are favoured as the main reasons for the choice, with economic aspects and status of the future partner less important.

— Except for family and close friends, young people show low levels of overall trust – no matter whether it is in their immediate environment or the institutional environment. People with other religions or political views and even neighbours are rarely trusted. Moreover, young people show very high levels of intolerance towards the following segments of the population: homosexual couples (more than 60% do not want them as neighbours), Roma, former prisoners and drug users.

— Family and close friends are basically the only trusted group in the lives of the majority of young people – they trust them the most and almost all of the respondents get along well with their parents. Loyalty is shown mainly to family and friends. But still, 38% would raise their children differently or completely differently than they were raised themselves.

— The acceptance of bribery is quite low compared to other forms of misconduct and ranks even lower, the younger the respondents. The use of personal relationships for help with work or to solve everyday problems is regarded more tolerantly.

— Young people are less religious than the population as a whole. While 19% of the general population belong to no religious group, that level is 27% for young people. Moreover, 17% of young people consider God not important at all in their lives, compared to 7% in the general population. But at the same time, of those who consider God very important in their lives, there is a higher percentage of young people (24% of young people vs. 19% overall). The church and religious organisations prove to be a polarising issue: 26% do not trust them at all (which is the same level of trust toward the OSCE, IMF or the State Duma and political parties), while 17% trust them fully (the only institutions enjoying higher levels of full trust are the president (20%), the armed forces (21%) and volunteer organisations (19%).

What do young people want from the state and how does this translate into their political views?

— The state is viewed as a guarantor of social security and stability. This is clearly voiced by young people towards the state. They want to be better represented in politics.

— But no clear patterns emerge when it comes to the question of what form of state they prefer. Although almost half of the respondents consider democracy in principle to be the best form of statehood and there is a broad consensus that the state should not use violence and other authoritarian methods to solve problems of a social or ethnic nature, at the same time 58% of the respondents believe that a strong party or leader can be good for leading Russia in the interest of the common good. Compared to the general population, however, the results hint towards more democratic attitudes among young people.

— Social democratic views are the most popular among Russian youth, followed by Russian nationalist, liberal and communist views. Interestingly, in their political views, they do not differ greatly from the general population.

The biggest difference is the slightly higher proportion of those who classify themselves as nationalists or liberals.

— Emigration is a challenge for Russia; the country risks losing a significant portion of its youth, among them a significant share of the most well educated. The main motivation for those with a strong wish to emigrate is the desire for an improvement in living standards (44%), but for more than a quarter, factors such as education and employment possibilities, culture and social and political stability also play an important role. The preferred destination countries are Germany, the USA and France. While our study, in comparison with other recent polls, shows a lower share of young people willing to emigrate, it is able to highlight – in addition to revealing differentiation among how strongly different subgroups wish to migrate – some additional characteristics of those seeking to move abroad. Apart from more urban youth, the strongest desire to emigrate is shown by those respondents who disproportionately distrust state institutions and the media.
— In general, there is a clear disparity between answers given by young Muscovites compared to young people in the rest of the country. The capital clearly stands out. Young people there more frequently consider themselves as liberals, show a higher interest in politics, have the highest level of distrust towards state institutions, consider themselves more often as cosmopolitan and European and are more critical towards the quality of education in Russia.

What does this mean for Europe and the confrontation between Russia and Europe?

— Young Russians are, to a large degree, estranged from Europe. Many young Russians do not have a European identity and don't identify with what is commonly perceived as "Western" culture. This changes, however, when looking at those who have experience in travelling abroad, among whom a higher share of respondents consider themselves as European. This shows that participating in exchanges and other forms of people-to-people contact can contribute to a better image of Europe among Russian youth.
— A considerable number of young Russians express an interest in leaving the country and most of these wish to emigrate to European countries. Those who want to emigrate cannot be clearly associated with either the wealthiest or poorest segment of respondents but are rather characterised by high dissatisfaction with state institutions and a pessimistic outlook on the future of Russia.
— Russians are highly distrustful not only towards their own state institutions, but also towards international and European institutions. The level of complete distrust of NATO (37%), the IMF (27%), the UN (27%) and the EU (25%) is comparable with that towards the State Duma (27%), Russian trade unions (22%) or Russian political parties (26%).
— Efforts to ease the confrontation between Russia and the West must be intensified. Only 52% of Russian young people believe that the relationship between Russia and the West can be truly friendly. The Ukraine conflict plays a key role in this respect, but also reveals that the youth have a similar attitude to that of their own government on key issues regarding the conflict. Almost two thirds of respondents would not support the return of Crimea if sanctions were lifted (although one fifth would agree); only an exchange of prisoners would receive considerable support among young Russians. Interestingly, the main party blamed for the conflict between Russia and Europe is the United States.

Lisa Gürth (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung)

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INTRODUCTION

When we try to understand how a country may develop in the future, we look mostly at the ruling elites. What are their plans, what is their vision, what future do they see for the country and what might this mean to us? If we look at the people, it is mostly to ask how they view, again, the elites. This narrow perspective of analysis tends to ignore a perhaps even more influential factor: the thoughts and attitudes of those who will be steering the country in 20–30 years in all fields of public, economic and social life – today's young people. Three decades from now the current elites will be gone, and it is today's youth who will be in charge. It is thus worthwhile taking a closer look at what young people today think, hope for and expect.

If one mentions Russia's youth, the label "Generation Putin" immediately comes to mind, showing again our focus on the ruling elites. But the generation between the ages of 14 and 29, surveyed in this study, has witnessed more than Putin's rule and has endured other developments that have influenced their views on the world. They have been shaped by the turbulent 1990s and several episodes of economic downturns and crises, by a period of enthusiasm towards Europe and a period of confrontation over the last six years, by an economic upturn in the 2000s and a time of stagnation, by a political system that has seen both democratisation and more repression, and, last but not least, by digitisation and globalisation.

While there is extensive discussion in "Western countries" on the Generations Y and Z and on digital natives and their impact on the future of societies, economies and political systems, very few systematic analyses of these young people have been done in the Eastern European countries. The FES is trying to close this gap with a series of youth studies that have been published in recent years and we are now adding to this discussion with an extensive survey about the attitudes and values of young people in Russia.

This survey sheds light on the perceptions of Russian youth in very different realms of life: education, employment, politics and political participation, family relationships, attitudes towards Europe, leisure, tolerance and the use of new technologies. With these surveys, we hope to contribute to a more differentiated picture about "Generation Putin".

The findings do present a very diverse and sometimes even contradictory picture. They show that the path of Russia remains open, and the results give hope for a slow democratisation in the minds of the country's youth – but at the same time they also indicate that autocratic attitudes are accepted, and that young people are divided among several dimensions. Russia, despite its perceived stability, remains on a path of transition, resulting in a certain lack of orientation. This concerns all realms of life, from the political to the religious and personal.

Peer Teschendorf and Lisa Gürth (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung)

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METHODOLOGY

The study's methodology is similar to the methodology used by the well-known Shell Youth Study conducted in Germany every 3 to 4 years.

The project used both quantitative and qualitative methods for conducting sociological surveys that included polling young individuals via personal interviews and conducting focus group discussions with young people aged 18–35. In addition to the quantitative poll, five focus group discussions (qualitative research) were held in August 2019: one focus group with respondents aged 18–24 in Moscow and two focus groups each with respondents aged 18–24 and 25–35 in Novosibirsk and Vologda.

DESCRIPTION OF THE QUANTITATIVE POLL

The quantitative poll was conducted using personal interviews at respondents' homes in May and June of 2019. The sample consisted of 1,500 respondents aged 14–29 representing Russia's young people in this age group. This required designing a four-stage representative probability sample of Russia's urban and rural population aged between 14 and 29.

Remote and sparsely populated areas of the Far North (Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, as well as Taymyrsky and Evenkiysky Districts of Krasnoyarsk Krai) were excluded from the target population. A total of three subjects of the Federation (federal-level administrative divisions) and two districts of the Russian Federation, accounting for around 2% of Russia's adult population, ended up being excluded from the study.

In addition, the target population did not include small settlements with less than 50 residents (about 1% of Russia's adult population), military personnel (about 1% of Russia's adult population), imprisoned convicts or those held in custody (0.8% of Russia's adult population), as well as persons of no fixed abode (1–1.5% of Russia's adult population).

Sampling Stage One – selection of primary sampling units (PSUs)

During Stage One, urban settlements (cities and village townships) as well as rural municipalities (comprising several types of settlements: small towns, villages, and hamlets) were chosen as primary sampling units (PSUs).

During preparation, preliminary stratification was carried out, resulting in the following distribution of all primary sampling units (PSUs):

— across 8 federal districts (Northwestern, Central, Volga, Southern, North Caucasus, Ural, Siberian, Far Eastern). In addition, Moscow was treated as a separated federal district.

— into 5 types according to size (population-wise) and administrative status:

1) cities with a population of over 1,000,000;

2) cities with a population of between 500,000 to 1,000,000;

3) cities with a population of between 100,000 to 500,000;

4) cities and towns with a population of up to 100,000;

5) rural municipalities.

Primary selection units were grouped independently for each federal district.

A total of 38 strata were identified after taking into consideration existing settlement patterns in the Russian Federation (e.g. not all federal districts include cities with a population of between 500,000 and 1,000,000 residents).

The next step involved defining the following for each stratum: the number of permanent residents aged 14–29 and the relative share of that stratum in Russia's population of the same age (Table I). The total sample size (1,500 respondents) was divided among the identified strata in proportion to the size of the population aged 14–29 in each stratum (see Table II).

All calculations were based on the Federal State Statistic Service's statistical data as of January 2018: 'The size of permanent population of constituent members of the Russian Federation across municipalities' (following the incorporation of two constituent entities of the Federation, the Republic of Buryatia and Zabaikalye Krai, formerly part of the Siberian District, into the Far Eastern Federal District, as directed by Presidential Decree No. 632 of November 3, 2018 On Amendments to the List of Federal Districts).

The next stage involved selecting urban settlements and rural areas (PSUs) in each stratum. All cities with a population of over 1m residents were included in the sample as self-representative units. For the remainder of the strata, one to ten cities/rural areas were randomly selected depending on the number of respondents in a given stratum, based on probability proportional to size. The number of cities/rural areas selected in any given stratum was determined with due consideration being given to the limit of 10 respondents on average per each city or rural area (but not to exceed 14) (see Table III).

The number of questionnaires per stratum was divided equally among that stratum's selected cities/rural municipalities (PSUs).

The final composition of the sample included 91 urban settlements and 38 rural areas.

Sampling Stage Two – selection of secondary polling areas

In urban areas, electoral precincts were used as polling areas. Lists of electoral precincts detailing their respective boundaries were copied off websites of regional-level electoral commissions. Restricted-access electoral precincts housed on the grounds of military compounds, in hospitals, pre-trial detention facilities, etc., were subsequently taken off the general lists of electoral precincts.

In rural areas, the role of polling areas was assigned to villages and hamlets. As with urban areas, electoral precincts were used as polling areas in larger towns with multiple electoral precincts.

The required number of polling areas was established separately for each urban and rural settlement, in line with the limit of 10 respondents on average per each polling area. In cities and towns with multiple electoral precincts, polling areas were selected from the city's list of electoral precincts using the simple random sampling method. In rural areas,

TABLE I. **Distribution of Russia's population aged 14–29 across federal districts and types of settlements**

Federal district	Rural settlements, %	Cities and towns with up to 100,000 residents, %	Cities with 100,000 to 500,000 residents, %	Cities with between 500,000 and 1,000,000 residents, %	Cities with over 1,000,000 residents, %	Total, %
Northwestern	1.27	2.12	2.16		3.61	9.16
Central	4.19	4.64	6.37	1.19	0.85	17.24
Volga	5.14	3.72	2.83	3.72	4.59	20.00
Southern	4.07	1.68	2.58	1.10	1.65	11.08
North Caucasus	4.34	1.36	2.17	0.65		8.52
Ural	1.45	2.21	1.96	0.63	2.11	8.36
Siberian	2.70	2.29	1.30	2.54	3.16	11.99
Far Eastern	1.58	1.43	2.06	1.06		6.13
Moscow					7.52	7.52
TOTAL	**24.74**	**19.45**	**21.43**	**10.89**	**23.49**	**100.00**

villages/hamlets were randomly selected from the general list of all settlements in a given rural area.

As a result, 1 to 2 polling areas were selected in each urban settlement and each rural area included in the sample. The exceptions were Moscow and St. Petersburg, where 11 and 5 polling areas were selected, respectively. A total of 145 polling areas were thus selected.

The number of respondents in each urban settlement and each rural area included in the sample was divided equally among the selected polling areas.

Sampling Stage Three – selection of households

Households were selected by the route sampling method using fixed intervals that varied depending on the residential area type: every 5th household was contacted in neighbourhoods dominated by high-rise apartment blocks and mixed housing as opposed to areas with detached houses, where every 4th household was selected.

Households that were thus selected were paid up to three visits: in the evening hours on weekdays and at any time throughout the day on weekends.

TABLE II. **Distribution of the sample of 1,500 respondents aged between 14 and 29 across federal districts and settlement types, no. of people**

Federal district	Rural settlements	Cities and towns with up to 100,000 residents	Cities with 100,000 to 500,000 residents	Cities with between 500,000 and 1,000,000 residents	Cities with over 1,000,000 residents	Total
Northwestern	19	32	32		54	137
Central	63	70	95	18	13	259
Volga	77	56	42	56	69	300
Southern	61	25	39	17	25	167
North Caucasus	65	20	33	10		128
Ural	22	33	29	9	32	125
Siberian	41	34	20	38	47	180
Far Eastern	24	21	31	16		92
Moscow					112	112
TOTAL	**372**	**291**	**321**	**164**	**352**	**1,500**

TABLE III. **Distribution of PSUs across federal districts and types of settlements**

Federal district	Rural settlements	Cities and towns with up to 100,000 residents	Cities with 100,000 to 500,000 residents	Cities with between 500,000 and 1,000,000 residents	Cities with over 1,000,000 residents	Total
Northwestern	2	3	3		1	9
Central	6	7	10	2	1	26
Volga	8	5	4	5	5	27
Southern	6	3	4	2	2	17
North Caucasus	7	2	3	1		13
Ural	2	3	3	1	2	11
Siberian	4	3	2	3	3	15
Far Eastern	3	2	3	2		10
Moscow					1	1
TOTAL	**38**	**29**	**32**	**16**	**15**	**129**

Sampling Stage Four – selection of respondents

For each household chosen for the survey, one respondent aged between 14 and 29 was selected. If there was more than one respondent in that age range residing in the selected household, one of them was selected using the nearest-birthday method, i.e. by picking the matching household member whose birthday is nearest to the date of the conduction of the survey. The standard error of measurement is 3.8%.

The Questionnaire

Methodologically, the survey was performed using a Russian translation of the adapted standardized questionnaire provided by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung as a basis. The questionnaire covered the following topics:

— leisure and lifestyle;
— values, religion, and trust;
— family and friends;
— mobility;
— education;
— employment;
— politics;
— demographic data;
— addendum: confidential questions;
— country-specific module.

Prior to the launch of the field phase of the study, the questionnaire was translated into Russian and adapted using the double-blind method. Respondents' personal data and privacy were duly protected in keeping with national law.

Sample description

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are consistent with the general composition of Russia's youth population: 53% of the respondents were young females and 47% were young males (see Table IV).

Of those polled, 81% of respondents identified themselves as Russians, 5% as belonging to the peoples of North Caucasus, 4% as Tatars, with the remaining 7% of respondents counting themselves as representatives of other ethnicities.

Distribution of respondents by age is shown in Graph I. This is consistent with the age distribution in the general population of Russia.

Analysis and interpretation of results

Input data was analysed using specialized data testing and data cleaning software for pooled data with a focus on the following data analysis procedures:

— outlier detection;
— review of data errors and omission protocols;
— checking for unanswered questions in the questionnaire;
— logical computer testing of pooled data;
— testing data for logical inconsistencies.

TABLE IV. **Respondent distribution by gender**

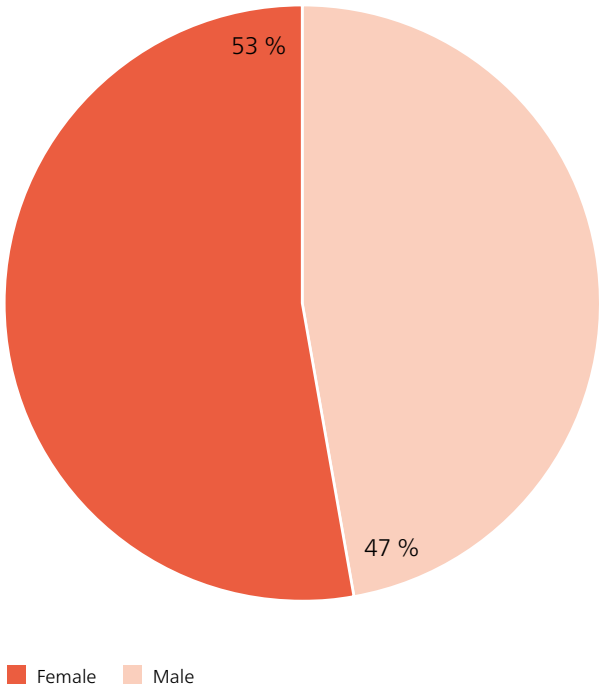
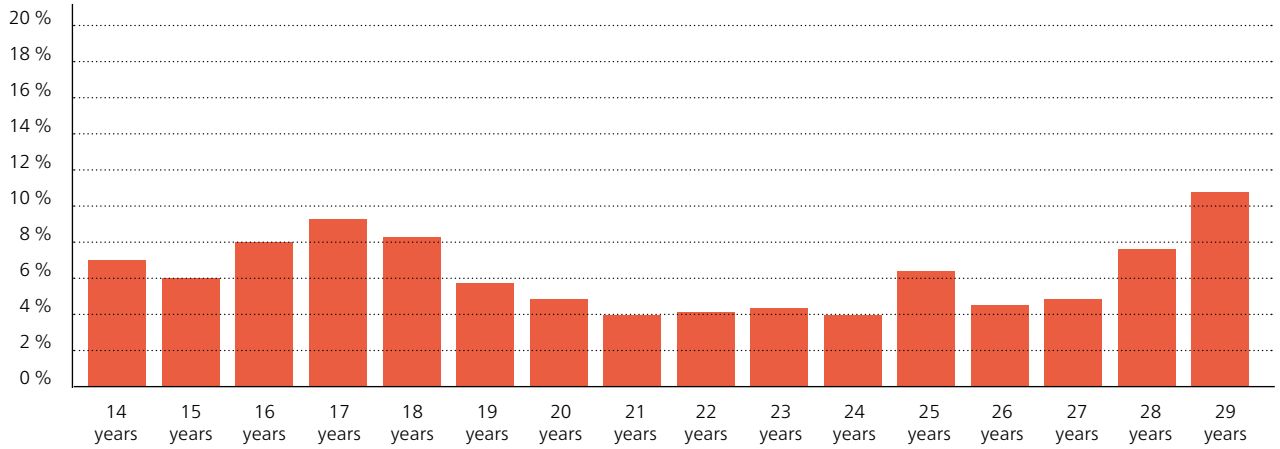


TABLE V. **Ethnicity**

	Quantity	Percent-age
Russian	1,214	81
Ukrainian	23	2
Belarussian	8	1
Tatar	62	4
Bashkir	4	0
Jew	4	0
German	2	0
Peoples of the Volga Region	28	2
Peoples of the North Caucasus	80	5
Peoples of Siberia and the North	4	0
Peoples of Central Asia	16	1
Other	21	1
No answer	29	2

GRAPH I. **Distribution by age** *(per cent)*



To perform data cleaning and to clear inadvertent errors, omissions, and inconsistencies, researchers would either refer back to the original questionnaires or talk to the respondents directly.

DESCRIPTION OF THE QUALITATIVE STUDY

Under the project, 5 focus group discussions were held in three Russian cities to learn about young Russians' perspectives on a number of topics. Selection of the cities was made based on their size and geographical location: Moscow being the nation's capital and its largest city (12.6m inhabitants), Novosibirsk, a major metropolitan city (population of 1.6m) east of the Urals, and Vologda, an average (311,000 inhabitants) city situated in the European part of the country. The breakdown of the focus groups was as follows:

— Moscow: 1 group of respondents aged 18–24;
— Novosibirsk: 2 groups of respondents aged 18–24 and 25–35;
— Vologda: 2 groups of respondents aged 18–24 and 25–35.

A total of 8 people took part in each focus group discussion, with each discussion lasting 2 hours. Respondents' answers were collected on condition of anonymity, with researchers having no access to respondents' contact details. An audio recording was made of each focus group discussion. Audio recordings were later transcribed and used as the basis for generating a report. Topics for discussion were chosen by the researchers based on consultations with the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung Russia.

In some cases, the response options have been grouped together in the data analysis so as not to overburden the tables. This is the case, for example, for the question RU.Q58 and RU.Q107[1].

The data for the study are publicly available on the FES homepage.

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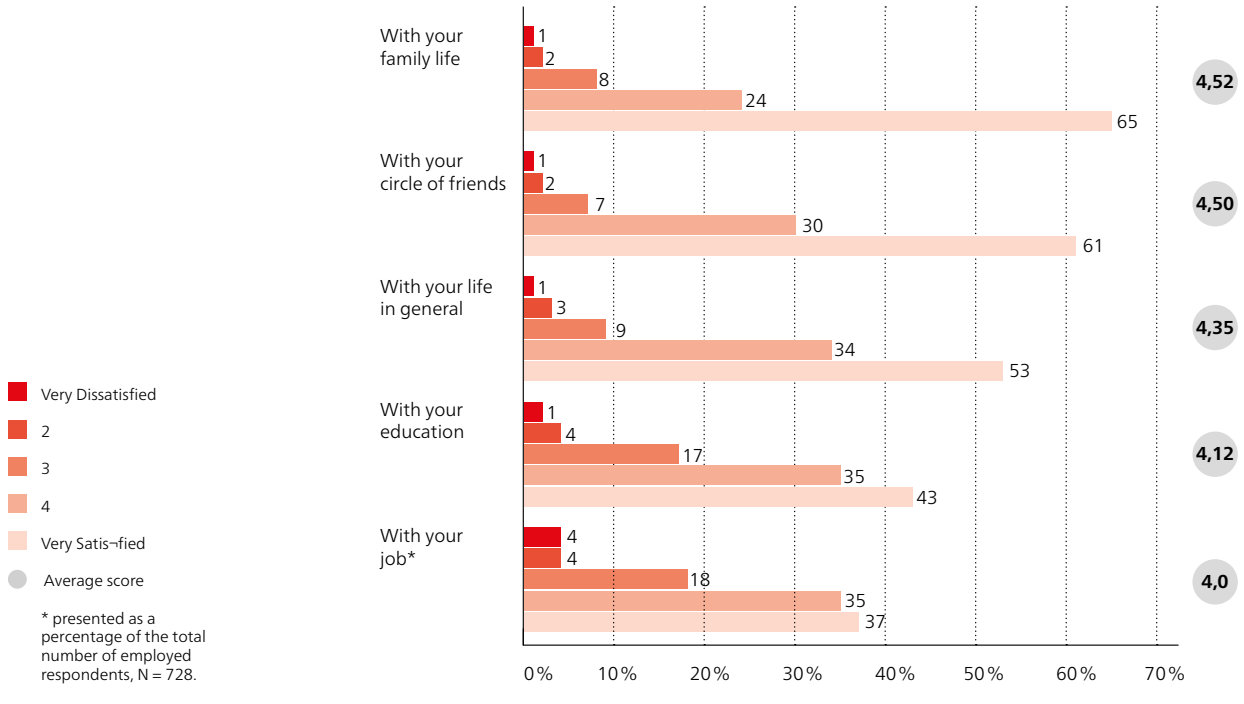
OUTLOOK: OPTIMISTIC VS. PESSIMISTIC

Young people in Russia appear to be satisfied with their lives to a fairly high degree: 87% of respondents said that they were fully or very satisfied with their life (as opposed to 4% who were dissatisfied), 89% were satisfied with their family life, and 91% were satisfied with their circle of friends. The level of satisfaction with education is just a bit lower, with 78% respondents satisfied and only 6% respondents dissatisfied. Notably, however, poor young people appear twice as dissatisfied with their education, scoring 11%. The level of satisfaction with jobs is lower still, with 72% of the employed

TABLE 1. **To what extent are you satisfied …?**



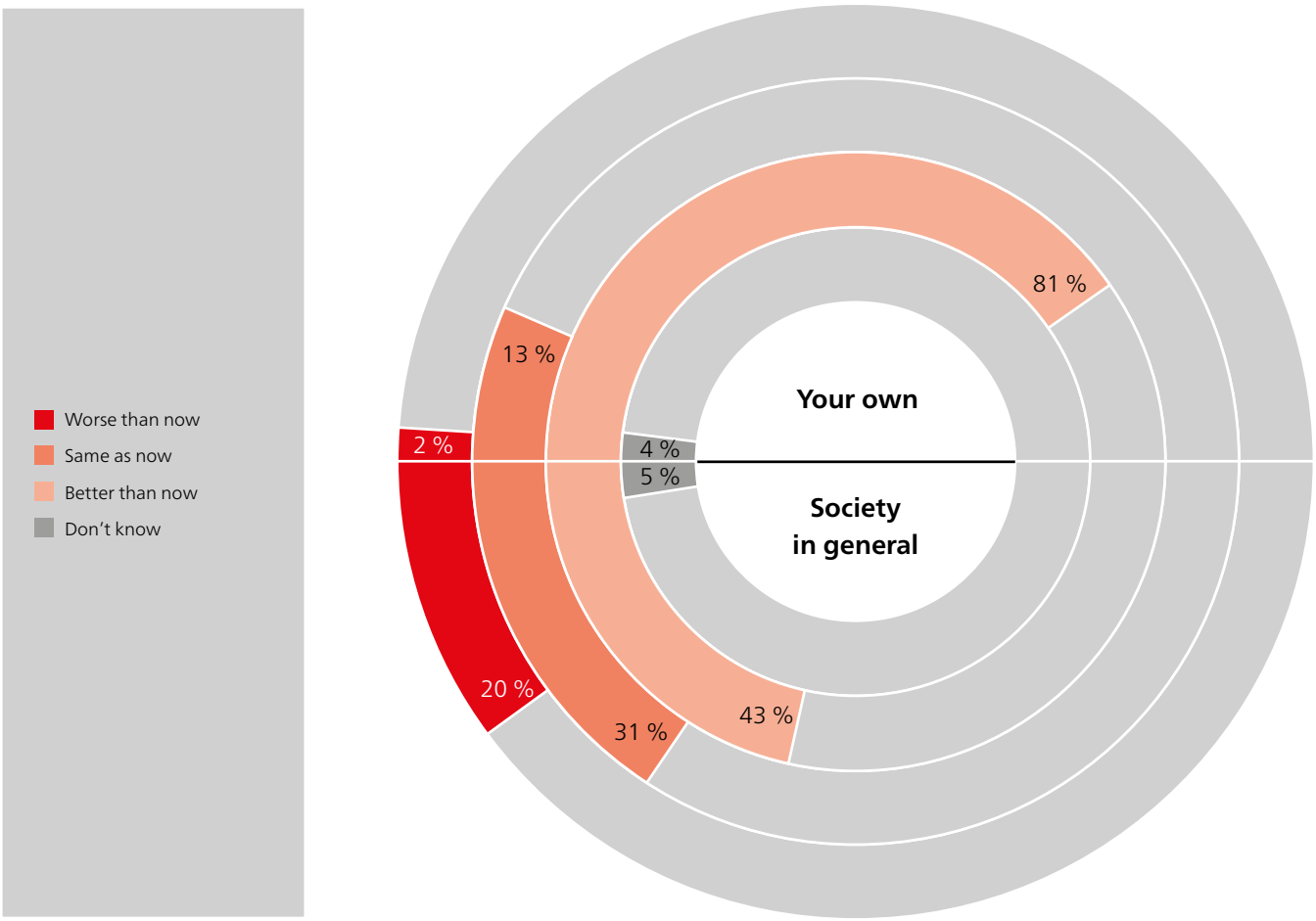
I believe that young people are concerned with the housing situation. They don't have a place of their own and they can't get a mortgage loan, or any other type of a loan. And interest on mortgage loans is extremely high. If you get a mortgage loan, you won't be able to buy even books for school. I believe those who have a place to live have much less trouble in life.'

Novosibirsk, age group 25 to 35

youth reporting satisfaction; however, this is nonetheless still a very high percentage and is significantly higher than responses of older people to the same question[2].

Average scores reflect young's people high level of satisfaction with their family, friends, and life in general; whereas their level of satisfaction with education and work (among the employed youth) is somewhat lower (see Table 1). The level of satisfaction with life is affected by the financial situation of the respondents; the poorest respondents tend to report lower levels of satisfaction than those in the most favourable financial situation, although the gap between these two groups is not very large. If we compare scores calculated as a sum total of those who replied 'very satisfied' and option 4 in the questionnaire, we'll see that only 84% of the 'poor' respondents are satisfied with their circle of friends as opposed to 93% of the respondents in the most favourable financial situation. In terms of satisfaction with education and with life in general, the poor as opposed to the wealthier respondents report scores of 72% vs. 81% and 79% vs. 93% respectively.

HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR PERSONAL FUTURE IN 10 YEARS? HOW DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF RUSSIAN SOCIETY IN GENERAL?



The respondents easily project their current high level of satisfaction onto their potential future, which translates to their high degree of optimism about their personal future in contrast to their much more restrained evaluation of Russia's collective future.

The highest levels of optimism about personal future are registered among two groups of people. The first group is comprised of the youngest respondents, aged between 14 and 20 years old. 86% to 87% of them believe that their life will be better in the foreseeable future, which is 5 to 6

'…[people's] main priorities are to have money and property, a social standing, a big family, a good income, a good car, a large summer house – all the cliché things, as sad as it is.'

Moscow, age group 18 to 24

TABLE 2. **How do you see your personal future in 10 years?**

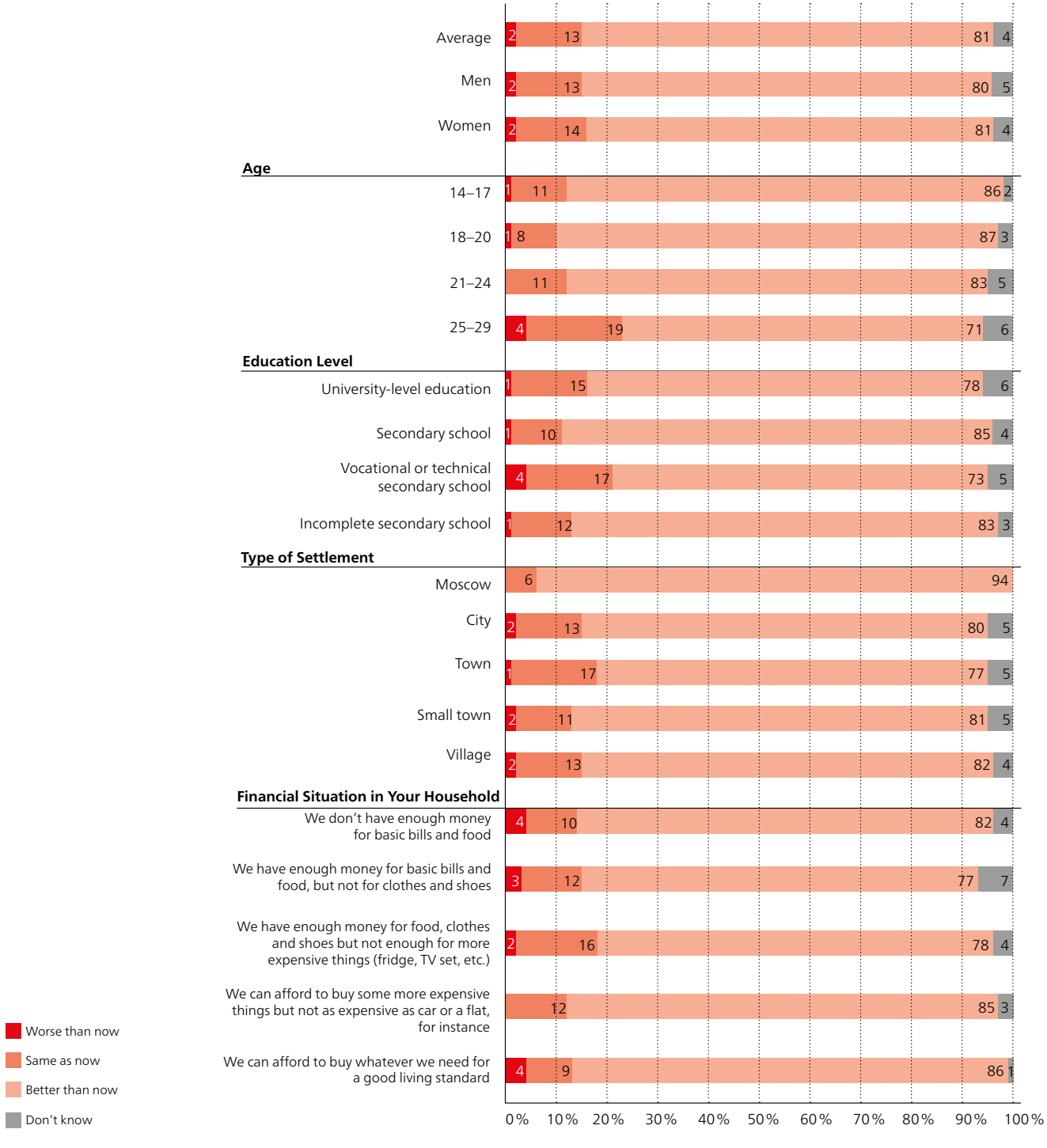
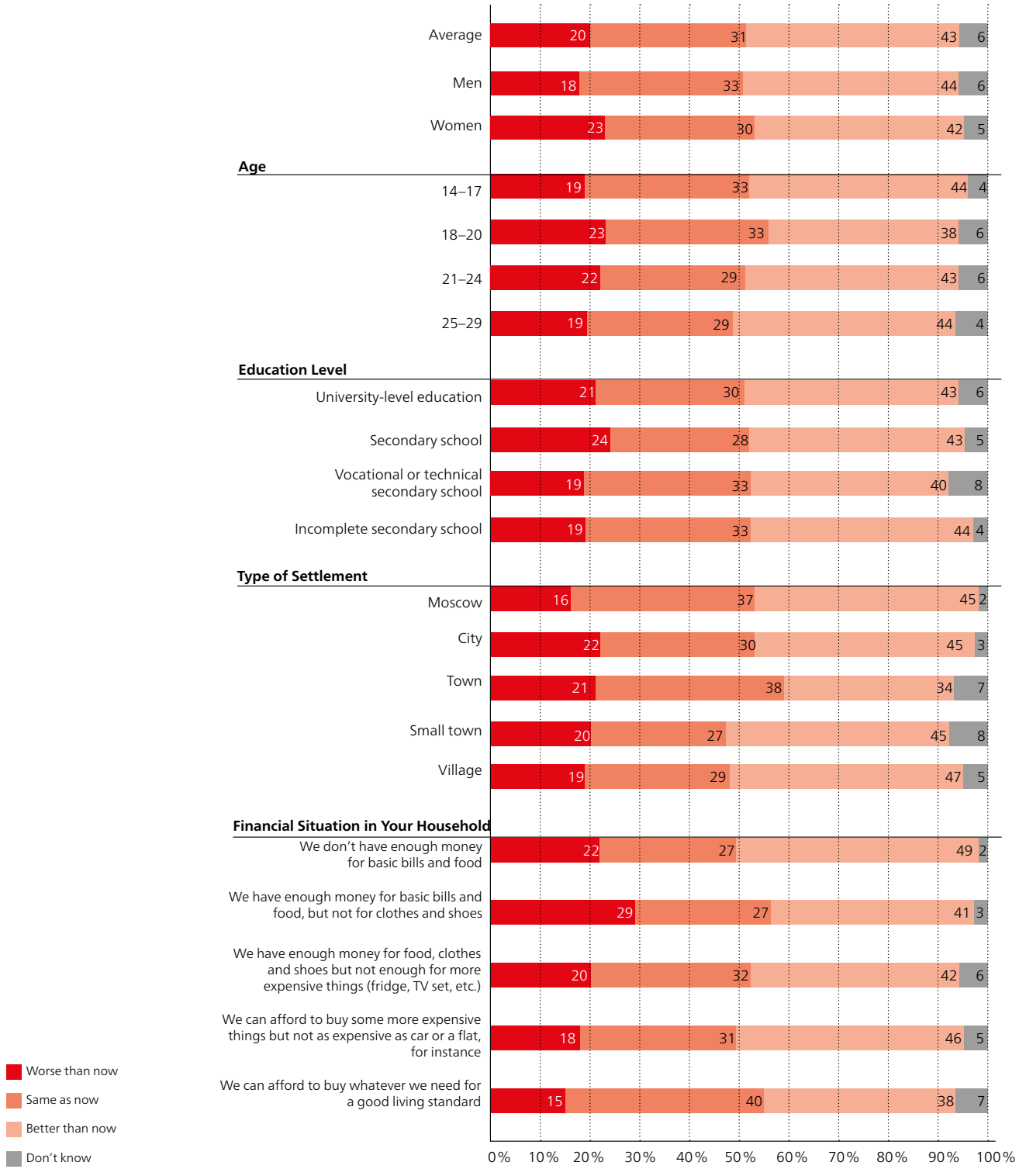


TABLE 3. **How do you see the future of Russian society in general?**



points higher than the average. For comparison, only 71% of people aged 25 to 29 produced the same response. The second group demonstrating the highest level of optimism is Moscow residents. 94% of them have an optimistic outlook. The share of less optimistic responses (life won't change, it will remain the same as now) or pessimistic expectations (things will take a turn for the worse) is higher among respondents aged 25 to 29 (a total of 23% for these two categories combined, which is 8 points higher than the average), residents of medium-sized cities, and respondents with a moderate income. However, these statistical differences are negligible. Very few respondents were pessimistic (i.e. 1%–2%); however, the share of those who don't expect significant changes in the future is higher the farther away they live from large cities. Only 6% of Moscow residents feel that way, compared to 13% of the residents of other large cities, 17% of the residents of

'[dissatisfied]...with the lack of money, lack of material comfort. I live in a one-room apartment; my child is now in school, we need more space, we need a three-room apartment. That means I need to take out a mortgage loan, I'll need to make money to repay it. So we'll be hardly making ends meet, all over again. That means we'll never go on a vacation, we'll never buy another car. It's money, all about money.'

Vologda, age group 25 to 35

medium-sized cities, and 11% to 13% of the residents of small towns and villages with similar lifestyles.

Also, groups of respondents enjoying very favourable and fairly favourable financial situations produced assessments of their personal future that are higher than average, i.e. 85% and 86% respectively (see Table 2).

Young people's level of optimism about the country's future is only half as high as their perception of their personal future, measuring 43% as opposed to 81%. Moscow residents, who have access to more opportunities, more developed social and IT infrastructure, social and cultural resources, as well as their parents' social capital, are the most optimistic group. On the whole, residents of Russia's provinces, whether living in larger or smaller cities, towns, or villages, are much more pessimistic about Russia's future than residents of Moscow. 20% to 22% of the respondents living outside of Moscow believe that life in the country will be worse than now in the future, as opposed to 16% of Moscow residents who hold this opinion. 29% to 38% of all respondents think that the situation in the country will remain the same. Women are a little more optimistic than men (18% and 23% respectively) about the country's future while their perception of their personal future is essentially the same. The level of education does not seem to play a significant role in the assessment of the future of the country. Groups with lower incomes (while not the lowest) are at the same time more pessimistic and optimistic. 22% of respondents in the lowest income group believe the future will be worse than now, while only 18% of respondents who find themselves in a favourable financial situation think the same. On the other hand, with 49% believing that the country's future will be better than now, they have the most optimistic outlook of all income groups.

QUOTATIONS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS: EXPECTATIONS, OUTLOOK, FUTURE, PLANS, ISSUES

'…I can't speak for everyone, but I can speak for myself, and I believe that there is no future in Russia… The very laws here are written to work against the people. The authorities only work for their personal gain. Even local authorities, in towns and cities, they abuse people's rights and only care about having a good life for themselves.'

'But in a week's time, if/ when the US dollar gets to be traded at 1 to 100 rubles, and gas prices, and absolutely all other prices get to soar, we won't be very optimistic anymore. Because our salaries will remain the same, for all people with fixed pay. There is no reason for us to feel optimistic about the future.'

'I believe that in terms of what people think about money and income, everyone is rather pessimistic than neutral.'
'Many are quite pessimistic about our country's future, while they are more or less optimistic about their own skills and abilities, and personal prospects…'

'…Some think, ok, my future will be glorious, absolutely super; while others think that there are no prospects for them in our country; there's only slaving away till retirement, and the pensions are small.'
Novosibirsk, age group 25 to 35

'Most people exaggerate their future prospects. Half of what they think…will never happen… they won't be able to afford it. People have great aspirations, great expectations, they hope for the best, but none of that ever happens.'

'…My friends mostly think about repaying their bank loans, for example, or paying for a vacation. But none of them have real long-term plans.'

'All we ever think about is, being able to afford a vacation or repay a loan, get a car.'
Vologda, age group 25 to 35

'To build one's own social capital, to make a name for oneself in the community, all that also takes money.'

'Of course it's about having a lot of money. Money can buy everything. So I agree with the statement that it's all about money. The more money you have, the better your life. It's capitalism. That's how it works.'

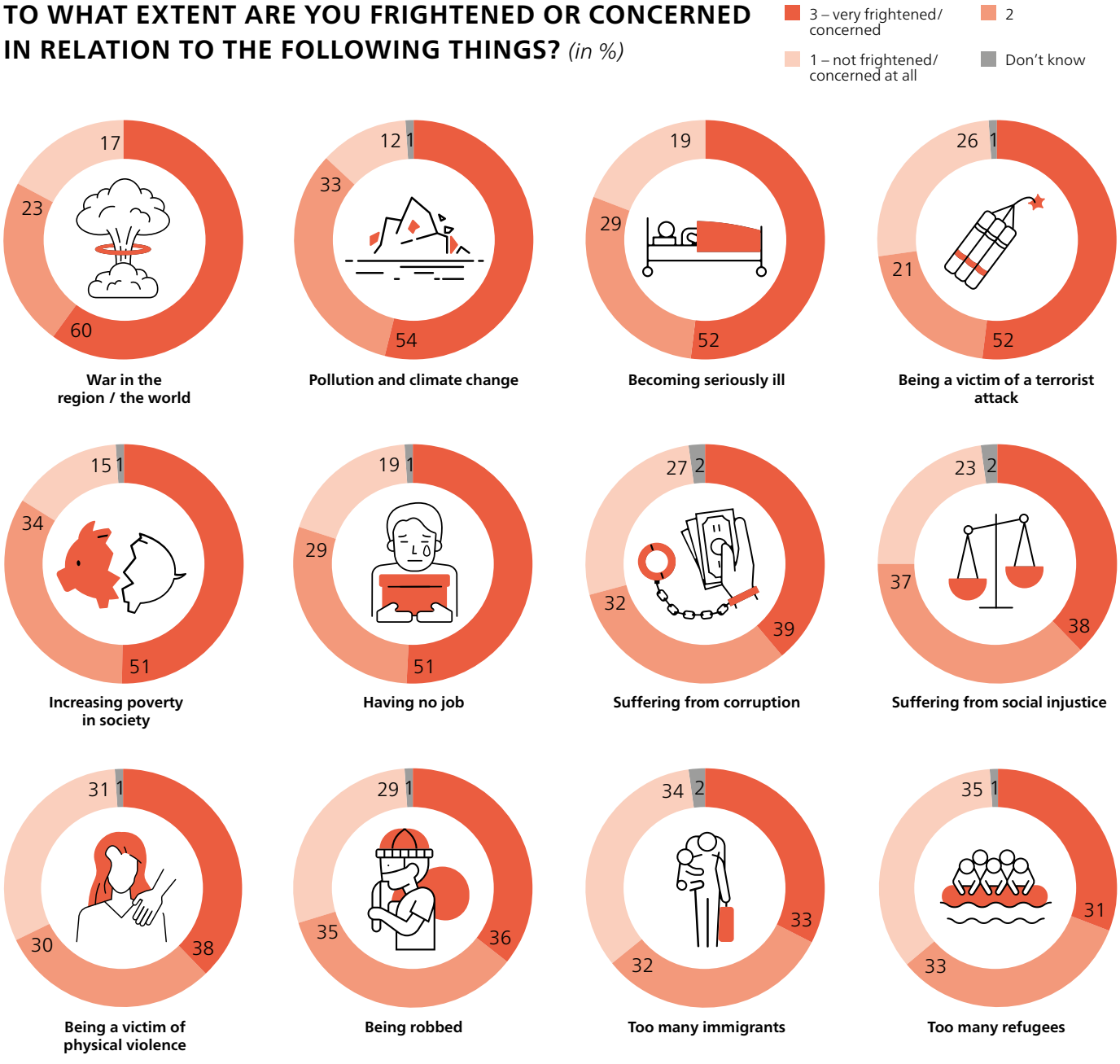
'…People are mostly concerned with money. And everyone works just to make some. I haven't noticed anyone thinking or dreaming big.'
Moscow, age group 18 to 24

FEARS AND CONCERNS

Anxiety: Structural Composition and Intensity Levels of Social Anxiety

People's social lives are full of fears and anxieties. The differences observed in the responses of the younger and older groups of the population do not relate so much to the things they fear or are concerned with, as to the intensity of their fears and concerns. The results of the polls undertaken by Levada Centre over the years indicate that the expressions of fears and anxieties by members of Russian society in general and Russian youth in particular not only reflect the existence of actual threats to their security or stability and the comfort of their everyday life, but are also used as a feedback tool to make statements or raise issues about values that are very important to them.[3] In general, this type of thinking is more of a negative mode of making a stand for one's values that originates in a situation where people have no access to self-defence and no guarantee of adequate protection or a stable, reliable existence. The inability to control one's own well-being and that of one's family or friends leads people to experience non-specific anxiety. Fears and concerns expressed by the respondents in their replies are not rationally justified responses to any real specific threats, but rather an expression of widely-experienced vulnerabilities in all important aspects of their everyday lives and of their inability to control them or to obtain any protection that would help them overcome these vulnerabilities – a situation that is subjectively experienced as a constant exposure to external threats. This is the reason why most respondents gave the highest score to very generalized fear factors that are mostly unrelated to them, such as war, pollution and climate change, a sudden illness (the fear of

TO WHAT EXTENT ARE YOU FRIGHTENED OR CONCERNED IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING THINGS? *(in %)*



which is irrational in young respondents and in healthy older respondents), or terrorist attacks. More immediate and specific social fear factors – such as losing an income, an increased unemployment rate, or getting robbed or attacked – were comparatively ignored by the respondents, who instead focused solely on expressing their fears and concerns through more irrational justifications for anxiety that lie beyond their actual experience. For this reason, this poll cannot present a better picture of social fears.[4]

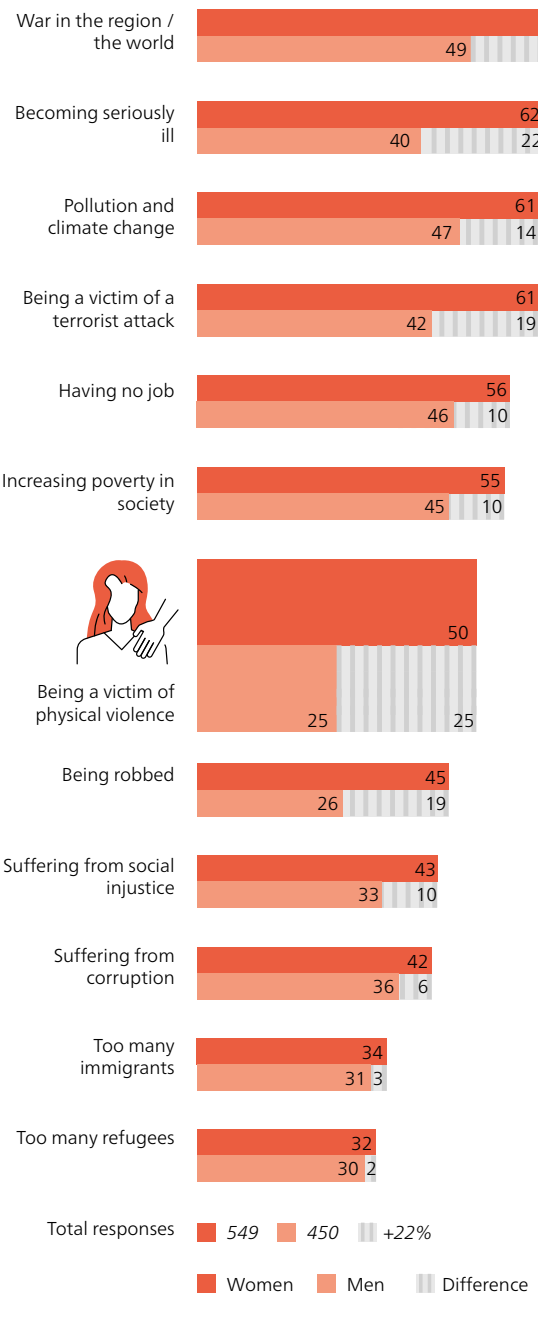
Both the youth and adult populations in Russia rank fear of a war or an armed conflict as their top fear. Previously, in the 1990s and 2000s, this fear scored at the bottom of the list, but it has gone up since 2014 as relations between Russia and the United States and European countries have become more strained. As for the concern about pollution and climate change, it has been among top-ranking fears of the younger and more educated population groups for the past 30 years, as evidenced by regular public opinion polls. It should be emphasized that younger people in Russia are typically more concerned about environment issues, feel more responsible for the environment, and participate actively in environment protection organizations and movements.

Given all this, fears and concerns about immigrants or refugees (while Russia does not host a lot of refugees) seem to be the least pronounced, although these fears still get a pretty high score. While there is a negative attitude toward immigrants in Russia in general, the results of this particular poll suggest that young people are less concerned with this issue; however, there is a clear tendency that the older, less educated, and/or less financially stable the respondents, the higher their level of fear. Thus, a strong concern about immigrants is shared by 40% of the respondents aged 24 to 29 years old, 41% of young people with vocational training, and 39% of young people with the lowest income. Overall, attitudes towards refugees are less pronounced, but similar in their patterns.

A greater amount of anxiety is typically exhibited by women (see Table 4) and the youngest groups of respondents (14 to 17 years old) with no experience of living on their own, as well as young people in smaller towns, especially those with a low level of education. In other words, the more limited the respondents' social experience, as well as their access to social resources, such as university-level education or vocational training, and to the greater opportunities found in larger cities, especially Moscow, the higher the level of fear. For example, the overall level of fear demonstrated by respondents living in Moscow is on average 20% lower than elsewhere, while the level of fear demonstrated by respondents living in small towns is 8% higher than the average score.

This is the general structural composition of fears that have been expressed by young respondents. As for the intensity of these fears, we consider those fears more intense that are more frequently mentioned by the respondents. Based on this approach, we conclude that women experience anxiety to a significantly higher degree than men (in total, over 20% higher). Women especially fear becoming victims of physical violence. Women's level of fear of physical violence is twice as high as men's at 50% compared to 25%. Women are 1.7 times more afraid of being robbed, 1.5 times more afraid of becoming seriously ill, and 1.3 more fearful of becoming a victim of a terrorist attack. This is well demonstrated by the statistics produced by the respondents' choice of option 3, i.e. 'a lot', to question 15 in the questionnaire.

TABLE 4. **To what extent are you frightened or concerned in relation to the following things** *(in %)*



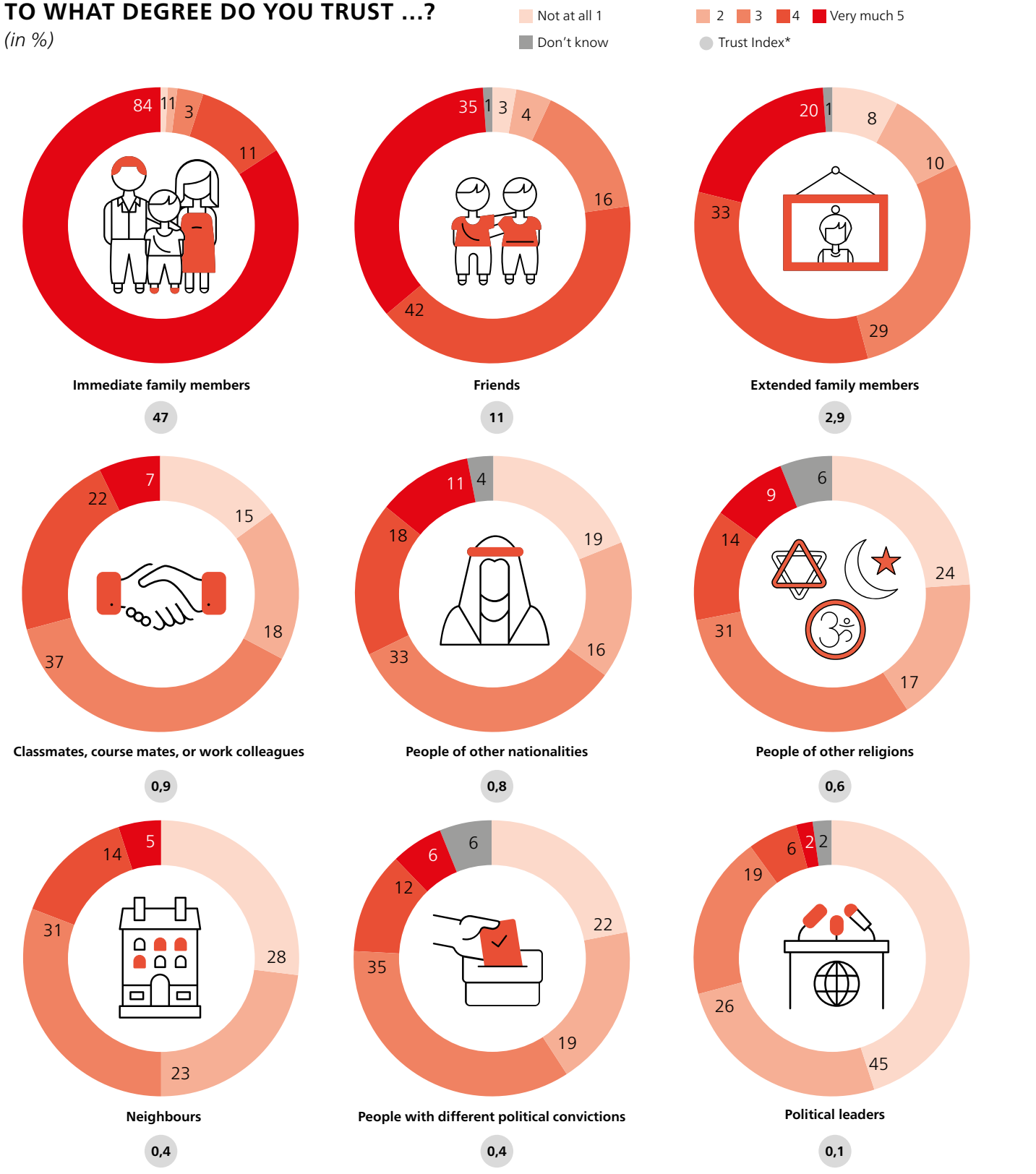
INTERPERSONAL TRUST

Russian society typically demonstrates low levels of interpersonal trust and institutional confidence.[5] Levada Centre polls, as well as relevant ISSP surveys, indicate that young people in Russia have a higher index of trust than other

'I don't trust neighbours; not ever, not now.'
Novosibirsk, age group 18 to 24

TO WHAT DEGREE DO YOU TRUST ...?

(in %)



* The responses that lie within 'trust very much' and 'more likely to trust' are given in columns 4 and 5. The total of 'not at all' and 'more likely not to trust' is given in columns 1 and 2. Column 3 was discarded as uncertain. The trust index is the ratio of positive to negative responses.

age groups of the population. With age, the level of trust gets decreases, while the structural composition of trust remains either the same or very similar (based on the answers).

As seen from Table 7, the circle of trust is very small; respondents tend to trust only their immediate family or, to a lesser degree, close friends; in other words, they tend to trust relations regulated by immediate personally and individually defined modes of social contract or tradition, or by a sense of solidarity. As soon as individuals enter circles with more formal rules and norms, such as schools, work environments, or neighbourhood communities, they begin to experience mutual distrust in interpersonal relations within these groups, and to feel excluded and distanced. These sentiments get stronger during encounters with representatives of 'alien' social groups, such as people of a different creed or religion, of different political standing, and so on, even when these are not perceived as 'competition' or 'enemy groups'. Young respondents appear to be all the more united in their opinions, the more general and ideology-related the topic of discussion, and the farther it departs from everyday life concerns and close personal relations. Young people express extreme levels of distrust, incredulity, and alienation especially toward political leaders.[6] Political leaders, as well as political parties and trade unions, are generally distrusted by all.

Thus, for almost all respondents, regardless of their social and demographic standing, the highest level of trust is associated with close family and the highest level of distrust is associated with political leaders.

Overall, the highest levels of trust are typical for youth with limited access to social resources, which translates to a challenge in today's highly differentiated society. The trust is based on primary, ascriptive connections and relations, such as family ties or inclusion in peer groups. All respondents, regardless of their social and demographic standing, trust their immediate family the most (see sum total of options 4 and 5). Levels of trust towards 'aliens' or 'strangers', such as neighbours, colleagues, people of different creeds and beliefs, or political leaders are not so uniform. The level of institutional confidence is the highest among the youngest respondents, aged 14 to 17 years old, whose social circle is usually limited to family and peer groups; and it clearly declines with age across age groups. It also declines across other groups, with young people with low levels of education, financial stability, and/or living in smaller towns and cities demonstrating higher levels of trust and young people with university-level education, better standing, and residing in Moscow and larger cities demonstrating lower levels of trust.[7] This speaks to the fact that with more experience and more social involvement, young people learn to be more sceptical and mistrustful, which is explained by difficulties of adaptation to formalized and regulatory practices in society. The highest level of frustration and social adaptation is experienced by young people with vocational training. They appear to have a larger mismatch between the levels of their aspirations and hopes and their abilities to actually implement them.

…when you grow up in the system, you learn not to trust anybody, So when you get new people moving in next door, you make sure they are scared even to see you.'

Novosibirsk, age group 18 to 24

Well it's not like we live in 1937, when they can just file an anonymous complaint about you, and you get sent to a forced labour camp in Siberia for ten years. So I don't see why not discuss news with people next door?'

Moscow, age group 18 to 24

VALUES AND RIGHTS

Most respondents had no difficulty naming values 'that are most important to them'. Only 2% of the respondents refused to reply or failed to come up with an answer.

The 'most important' to respondents are those values that they wish to see implemented in their lives, and through that, to ensure their physical and emotional well-being and protection. Thus, the values picked by respondents reflect those values that they feel missing in their everyday life. These values correspond to the respondents' sense of justice and well-being as they imagine it.

Each respondent was offered three consecutive choices of one 'most important' value on the list below, with no option to introduce other values. The sum total of all responses in listed in the 'total' column, where resulting values are sorted in descending order.

All values in the questionnaire fall into two broad categories. One is related to a person's desire to protect their personal life, to ensure personal security. The other refers rather to factors contributing to the general good and public welfare.

The first choice made by respondents indicates the importance of the following three values: human rights (voted for by 42% of the total number of respondents), economic welfare (12%), and security (12%).

The respondents' preferred values for the second choice are employment (24%), human rights (20%), and security (18%).

The respondents' preferred values for the third choice are security (27%), employment (16%), economic welfare (14%), and human rights (13%).

Thus, the option 'human rights' was selected in all three categories of answers by respondents. According to surveys by Levada Centre, Russian citizens mostly understand human rights as 'passive rights', such as the right to life, the right to security of person and home, and the right to be protected from any abuses of power by the authorities. Both younger and older generations of the population in Russia share the same vision of what rights are most important (see Table 5).

WHAT VALUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

responses ranked in descending order

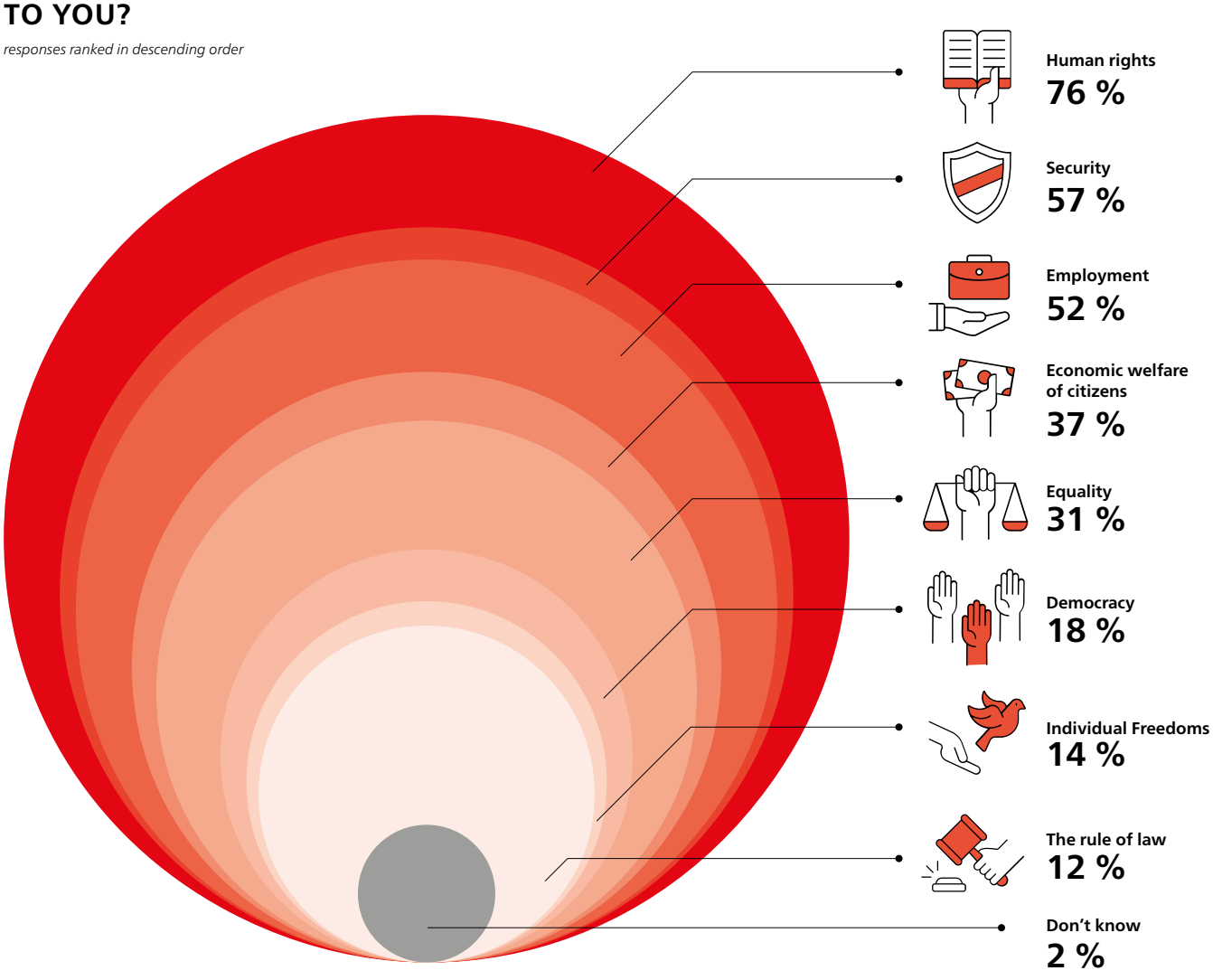
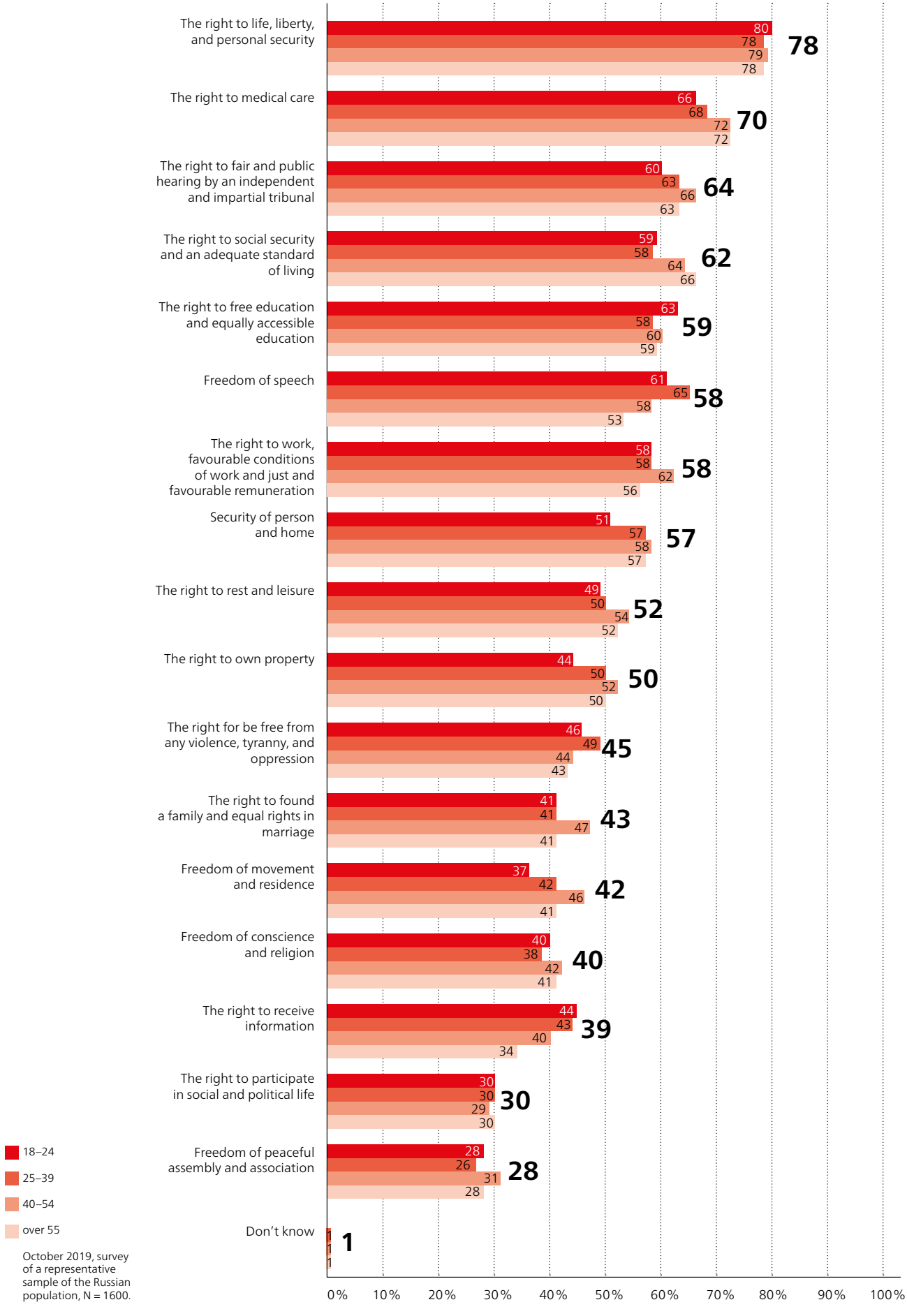


TABLE 5. **Which of the humans rights and values are most important in your opinion?**



October 2019, survey of a representative sample of the Russian population, N = 1600.

> *[They want] to move out of their parents' place to live on their own, to be completely independent, to make a living for themselves and their partner, if they have one. To be fully independent.'*
>
> Novosibirsk, age group 18 to 24

In this respect, Russian citizens differ significantly from people living in established democratic societies, who more often select the right to own property, freedom of speech, freedom of conscience and religion, and so on.

Thus, Russian young people mostly agree on the importance of the abovementioned values; the differences in responses across different social and demographic groups are negligible and fall within the margin of admissible statistical error. This outcome was on the whole quite expected, since young people are in general a homogenous stratum of society. This is easily explained by the fact that young people's attitudes toward values and ideas are shaped to a large extent by their education, with Russian schools, colleges, universities, academies, and other institutions following unified guidelines and standards produced by the Russian Ministry of Education. As young people accumulate more experience after graduation, their views on values begin to differ significantly.

Younger respondents, aged 18 to 21 years old, emphasized the importance of these values more than other groups. This can be explained by the fact that at this age, young people are actively exploring the meaning and significance of these values as part of their personal and social growth and transition to adulthood. Respondents of low financial standing who experience anxiety about the future more often, produced more replies citing values related to employment and security than their peers in a more favourable financial and social situation (based on family resources) with better future prospects. It has been noted that with age, respondents tend to select more pragmatic values, such as the right for protection and security, the right to employment, and the like.

QUOTATIONS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS ON VALUES AND RIGHTS

'All my peers want stability and reliable future prospects. This is the most important thing there is.'
Novosibirsk, age group 18 to 24

'The way I like it most is steady, stable, with no turbulence or disruptions.'

'The way the system works is that they don't care if you are innocent in court. Whatever the prosecution decides will be backed by the judge, and judge will simply point back at the prosecution. [That's]our law enforcement in essence…'
Novosibirsk, age group 25 to 35

How can one protect one's rights?

'You have to go through the courts and authorities of all levels.'

'Or it helps to have a prosecutor among friends.'

'You have to just know that it is the way it is and you can't do anything.'
Vologda, age group 25 to 35

'If you have no money or connections, you are no one.'
Novosibirsk, age group 18 to 24

5

YOUTH AND POLITICS

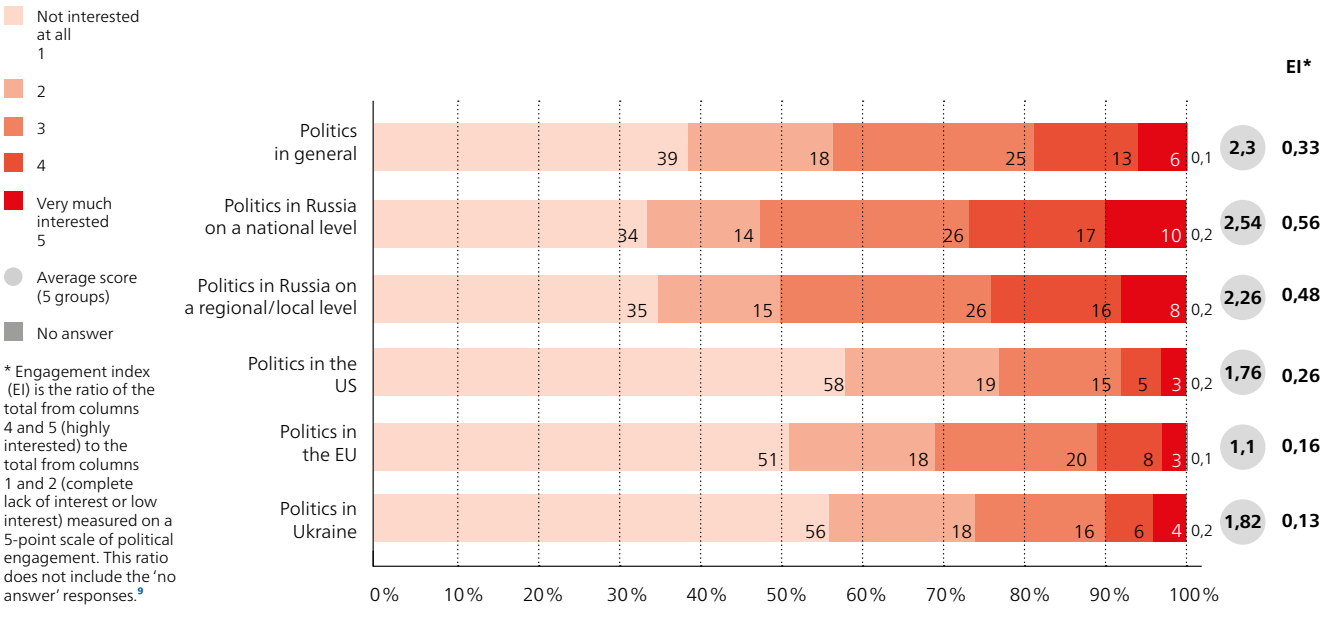
INTEREST IN POLITICS

Politics: Engagement, views, opinions, and concepts

The results of the present survey confirmed a long-established view that in general young people display no apparent interest in politics.[8] 57% of respondents mentioned that they are not generally interested in political affairs; only 19% of respondents (the total of columns 1, 2 and 4,5) are slightly interested in it. Over half of the respondents mentioned their total estrangement and indifference to political problems related to various aspects of life in Russia, and more than 75% of young people are indifferent to political matters that are related to the USA, Ukraine, or the EU (see Table 6).

This result reflects not so much a lack of understanding of political activity, open political competition, or the functioning of a party system, as well as everything else related to the

TABLE 6. **How much are you personally interested in political affairs?**



* Engagement index (EI) is the ratio of the total from columns 4 and 5 (highly interested) to the total from columns 1 and 2 (complete lack of interest or low interest) measured on a 5-point scale of political engagement. This ratio does not include the 'no answer' responses.[9]

TABLE 7. **How much are you interested in politics in general?**

works of democracy, but rather the fact that the day-to-day troubles and worries of modern young people have very little to do with what they call politics.

Some interest was shown in political events happening in Russia, the political agenda on the federal, regional, and local levels as well as events in the EU or Ukraine.

Echoing Yuri Levada, we call this kind of attitude to political affairs, i.e. choosing a neutral position in relation to the majority of political events that still remain of some interest to respondents, a spectator-like behaviour. It is akin to the behaviour of fans watching a football match on TV while at the same time having no intention to ever take part in a

TABLE 7A. **How much are you personally interested in politics in Russia?**

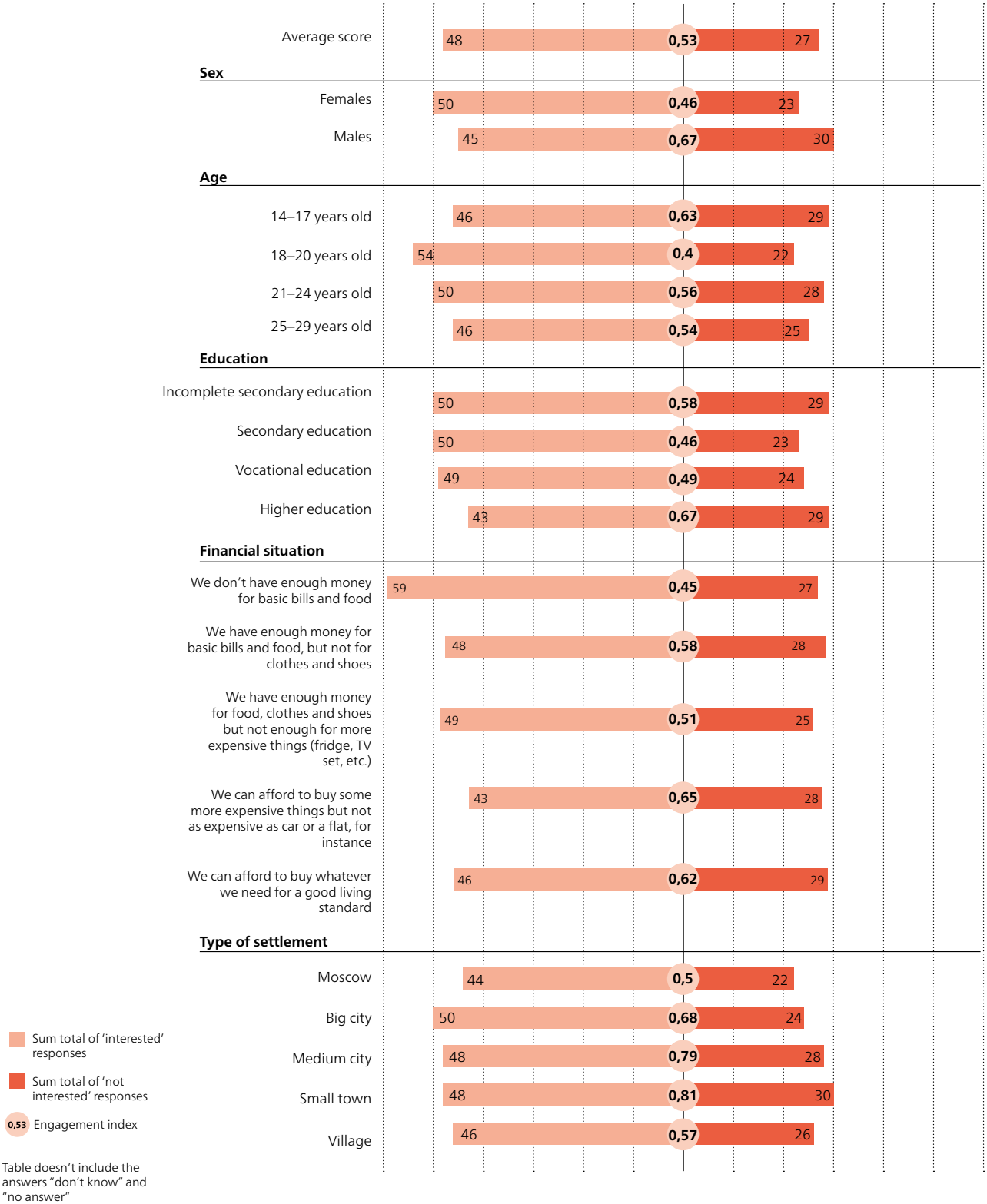


Table doesn't include the answers "don't know" and "no answer"

real game. The only difference here is that sports events stir up a lot more emotion in spectators than political processes.

Socio demographic variables and respondents' attitude to politics are shown in Table 7.

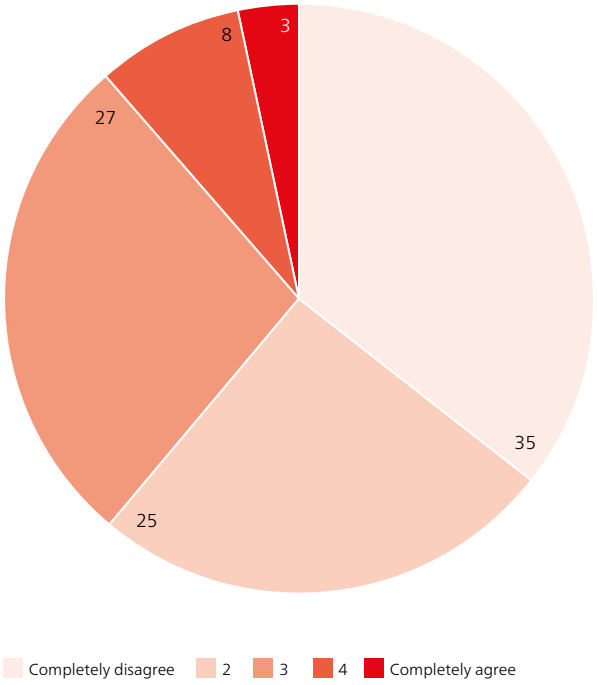
When compared to the adult population of the country young people appear to be more interested in political problems and especially political events in Russia. Young males are more engaged in current politics than females (24% of young men and 15% of young women are interested or very interested in politics, 52% young males and 60% females respectively are not interested or not interested at all). Young people residing in metropolitan areas tend

to be more politically engaged than young people from the rest of Russia (18%–24% in Moscow and big cities vs. 18–19% in small towns and villages), low-income households are also more engaged than more well-to-do households (26–28% vs. 17–20%). Since the wording of questions offered to different groups was not the same a direct comparison is hardly relevant, however parameters of typologically similar answers help conclude that in general young people tend to be more interested in political affairs than the rest of the population. The share of respondents interested in politics in all-Russia samples has been at the level of 10–12% for 20 years, whereas this parameter measured among young people is almost twice as high at 19%.[10]

Differences among responses given by various groups of young people are minor and are hardly above a statistical error. Regardless of how small they are, they remain consistent, i.e. their pattern is reproduced in responses to various theme-related and meaningful questions and thus these differences should not be dismissed. Women tend to be less interested in political affairs of any kind, regardless of their level or category (domestic, foreign, other countries' policy) than men. Also, the youngest group of respondents (14 – 17 years) are more interested than other age groups (29%, table 7a). This may have something to do with different stages of socialization at different ages. Teenagers (14-17 years old), mostly schoolchildren, tend to give more declarative and socially accepted answers, although a part of this group has a sincere interest in politics (as shown for example, by the recent protests in support of Navalny and the Moscow protests). In contrast, high school students entering the phase of socio-political socialization is for the first time are beginning to take an interest in common problems of morality and collective life. Respondents at the age of 18–20 have to make important decisions in their lives for the first time, choosing a profession, university, or going to serve in the army, all of which quite naturally make political affairs, which seem distant and irrelevant to the immediacies of daily life, look less significant. In contrast to this group, senior high school students wake up to concepts such as society, morale, and public life and show more interest in them. A revival of interest in politics is seen at the age of 21–24 (28%, table 11a) after respondents have chosen their profession and social status. After the age of 25 this interest fades away as respondents and especially young women tend to be more interested in other matters such as family, career, or children.

As we have previously noted, these fluctuations are not very significant: as age increases, the share of respondents interested in politics drops from 29% to 22%, then goes back up to 28% and slides down to 25%. This distribution is in line with the educational background of respective groups of respondents: school undergraduates, adolescents who did not complete their school education, and respondents with a university degree mentioned their higher interest

FIG. 1. **How much do you agree/disagree with the statement 'I know a lot about politics'?** *(in %)*

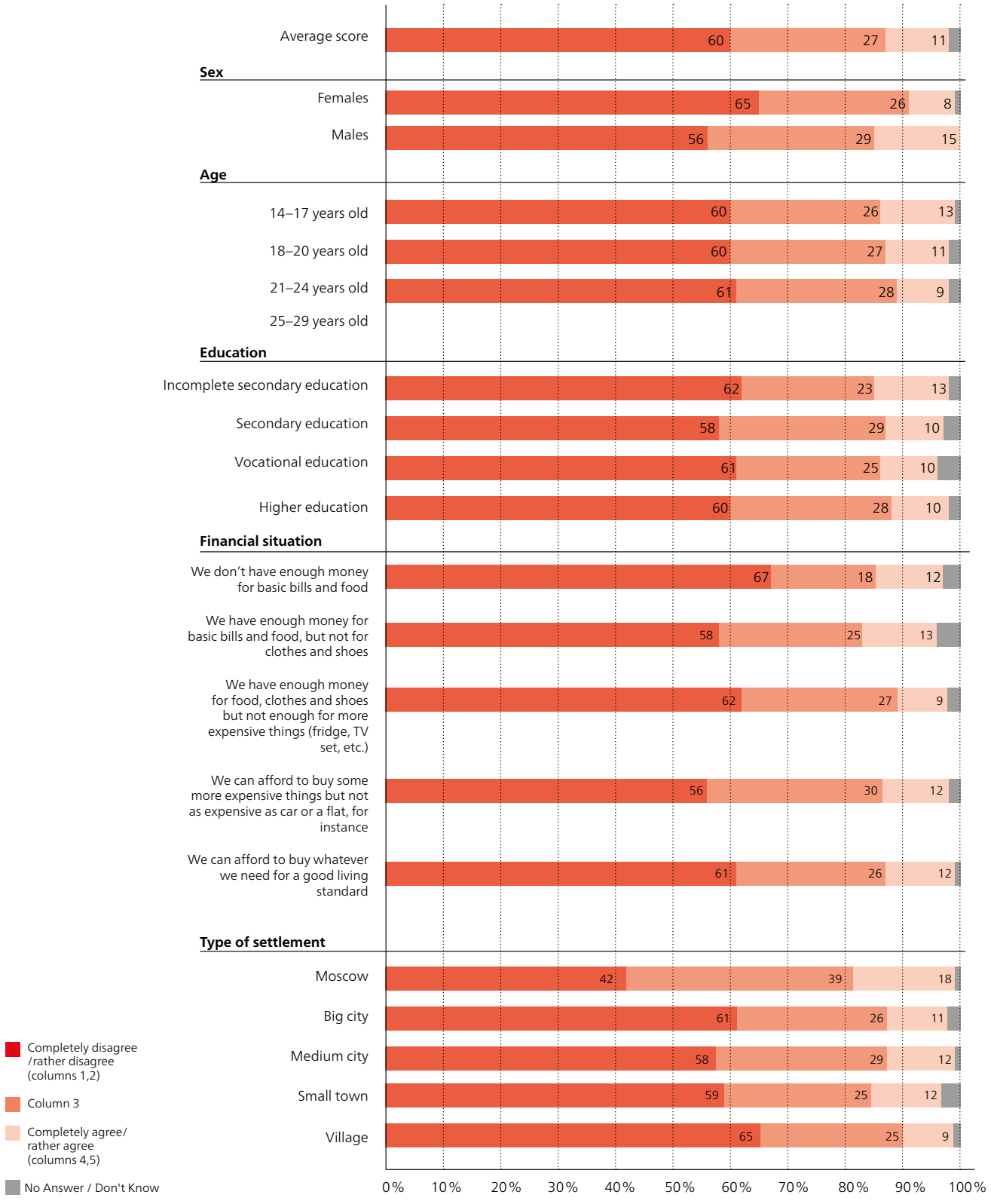


in politics. A passive interest in politics, as with a spectator watching television, is seen mostly among the young people in provincial towns and medium cities where social control is tighter and level of conformity higher than in major cities or Moscow, given the almost complete lack of social or political movements and organizations independent from the local authorities. There is no substantial correlation between the financial status of young people and their interest in political affairs.

The regional political agenda arouses less interest than political events on the federal level that have implications for collective identity. Young people in small towns and rural areas tend to be slightly more interested in regional and local political agendas.

Responses reveal the relatively low level of knowledge that young Russians have about politics. Only 3% refer to their knowledge as 'sufficient enough' with 8% more considering their knowledge 'satisfactory'.

TABLE 8. **How much do you agree/disagree with the statement 'I know a lot about politics'?**



POLITICS AND CLOSEST FRIENDS AND FAMILY

At first glance relatively few young Russians may seem to discuss political affairs with their relatives and friends. Just 14% of respondents reported doing so.

However, keeping in mind that only 19% of young people actively take an interest in politics, which indicates relatively limited interest in political affairs in general, we have to think about the magnitude of this number again. The group of people who tend to reflect upon political events and actively interpret political information is not big to start with so in relation to its size 14% becomes a significant number. Political information from the Internet, television, or radio sources is passed through various group interpretation filters, i.e. this information is discussed with relatives and friends, or spread via „star-structures" in social media networks. It is these discussions that help work out and instil group opinions and stereotypes, which are then used to validate understanding of events that occur. These discussions become an important secondary information source: 26% of respondents get political information mostly from social media, 17–19% of different groups of young Russians (adolescents, males, Moscow residents, and the poor; please see Table 9) get it from communicating with relatives, acquaintances, and colleagues.

Adolescent boys and young men mention this fact in their answers to our questionnaire almost twice as often as adolescent girls or young women (18% and 10% respectively). These discussions, which imply the need to reproduce relevant discourse, to track political events and be well-informed, to regularly comment on posts in social media, etc. are mostly typical for young Moscow residents (20%). As we move further from the centre into the provincial areas the share of responses that point to informal political discussions taking place in communities gradually goes down (please see Table 9).

On average 61% of respondents never discuss current political affairs or taking part in political events with anybody. The remaining 25% talk about them from time to time (presumably these conversations relate to high-profile events or the authorities' responses to them). In general the youngest cohort of our respondents (14–17-year-olds) tend to respond more emotionally to whatever goes on around them and thus have a stronger need to discuss political issues since this provides a way for them to have their opinion supported by peers and adults. This being said, within this cohort we see a strong differentiation of responses. This group also includes the largest share of respondents (63%) who are totally indifferent to politics and never discuss it, as these issues are of very little relevance to them. Respondents' family income or education does not matter much in this case, as such a position is mostly determined by the specific circumstance of finding one's role in society, a process that is typical for a maturing generation.

FIG. 2. **How often do you discuss politics with your family or acquaintances?** *(in %)*

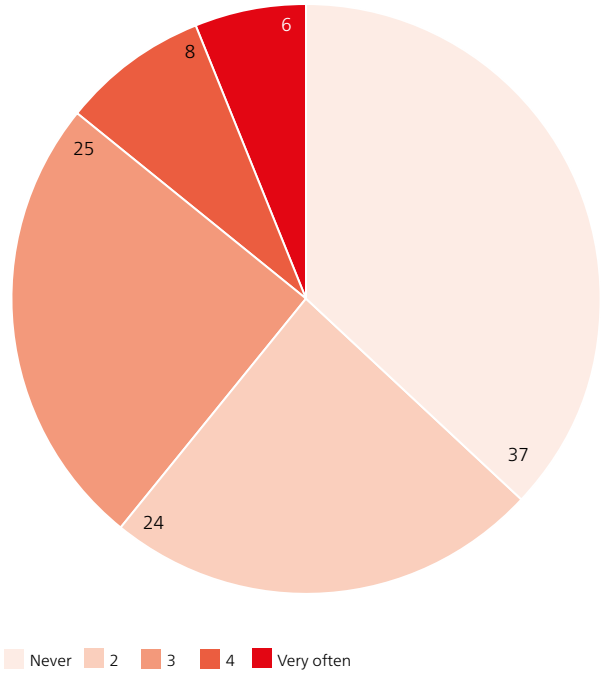
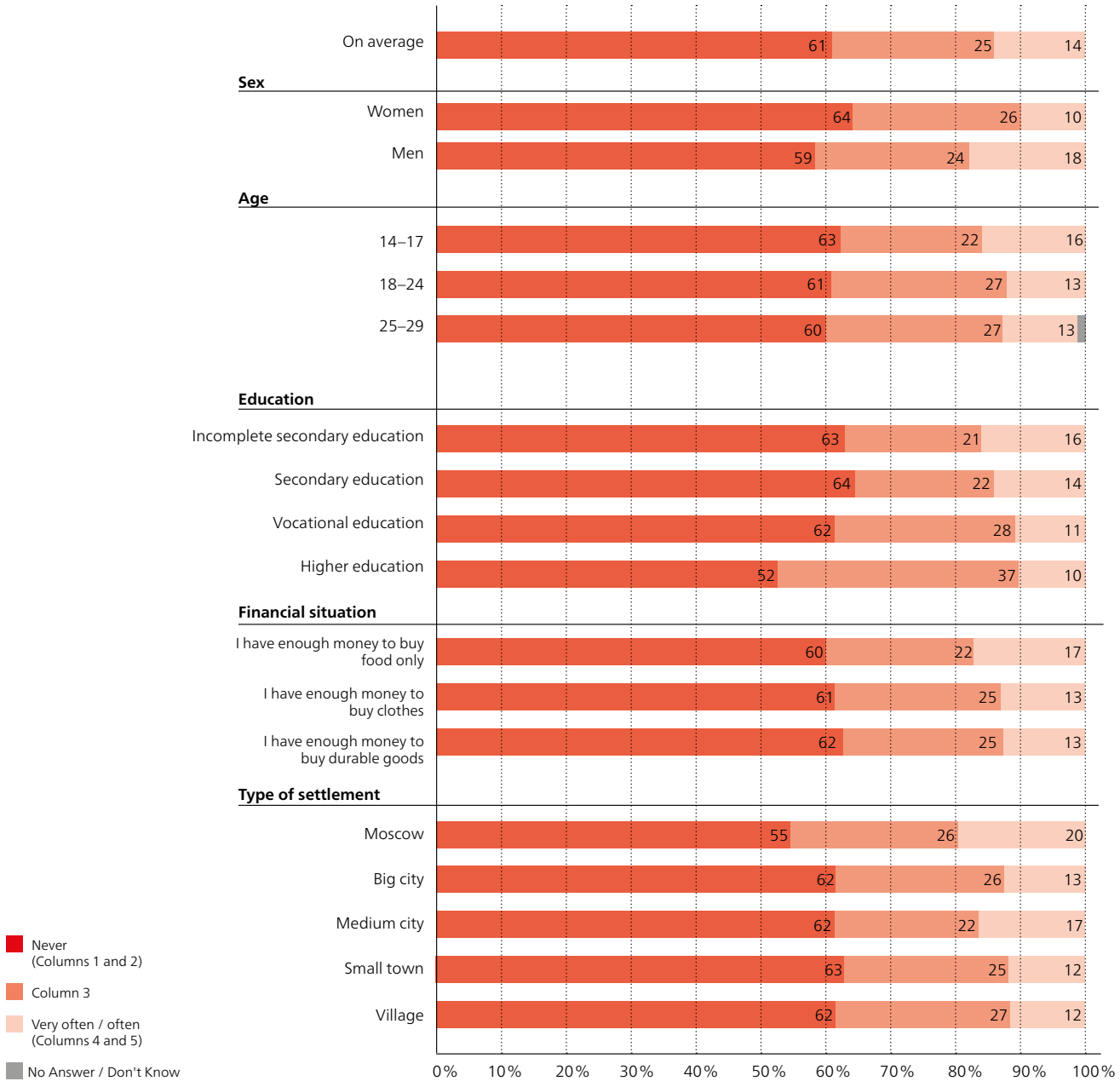


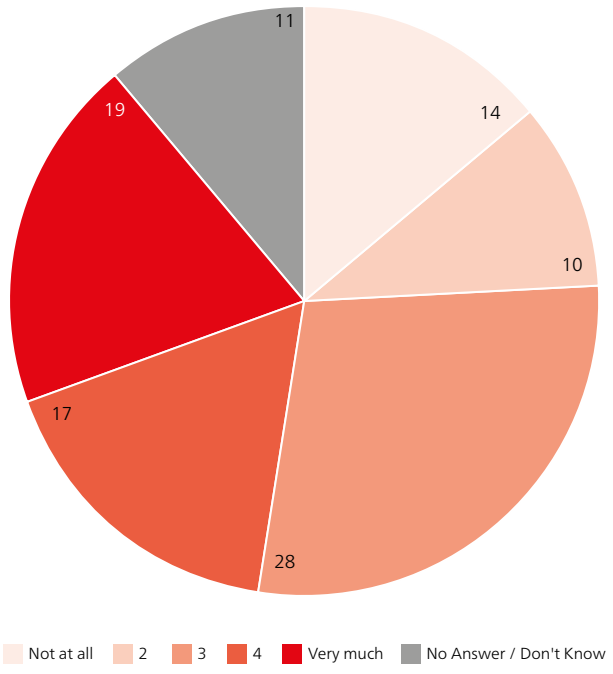
TABLE 9. **How often do you discuss politics with your family or acquaintances?**



POLITICAL VIEWS

From both a political and ideological perspective the views of young Russians are not very much different from those of the adult population. We have not found any stark differences between the views of young people and their parents, which means that within their generation these young people lack ideological reference points and opinion leaders of their own, a lack that pushes them to assume, albeit with some minor corrections, the opinions and views of older groups. Thus 36% confirm that the views of an older generation fully align with their own, and 40% (total of column 3 and 'do not know') believe that there is still some difference between them but are unable to specify what this difference is. Nonetheless, 24% of young people mention that there are major or substantial differences between their political views and understanding of political events and those of their parents (the total of columns 1 and 2).

FIG. 3. **To what extent are your political views and beliefs aligned with those of your parents?** *(in %)*

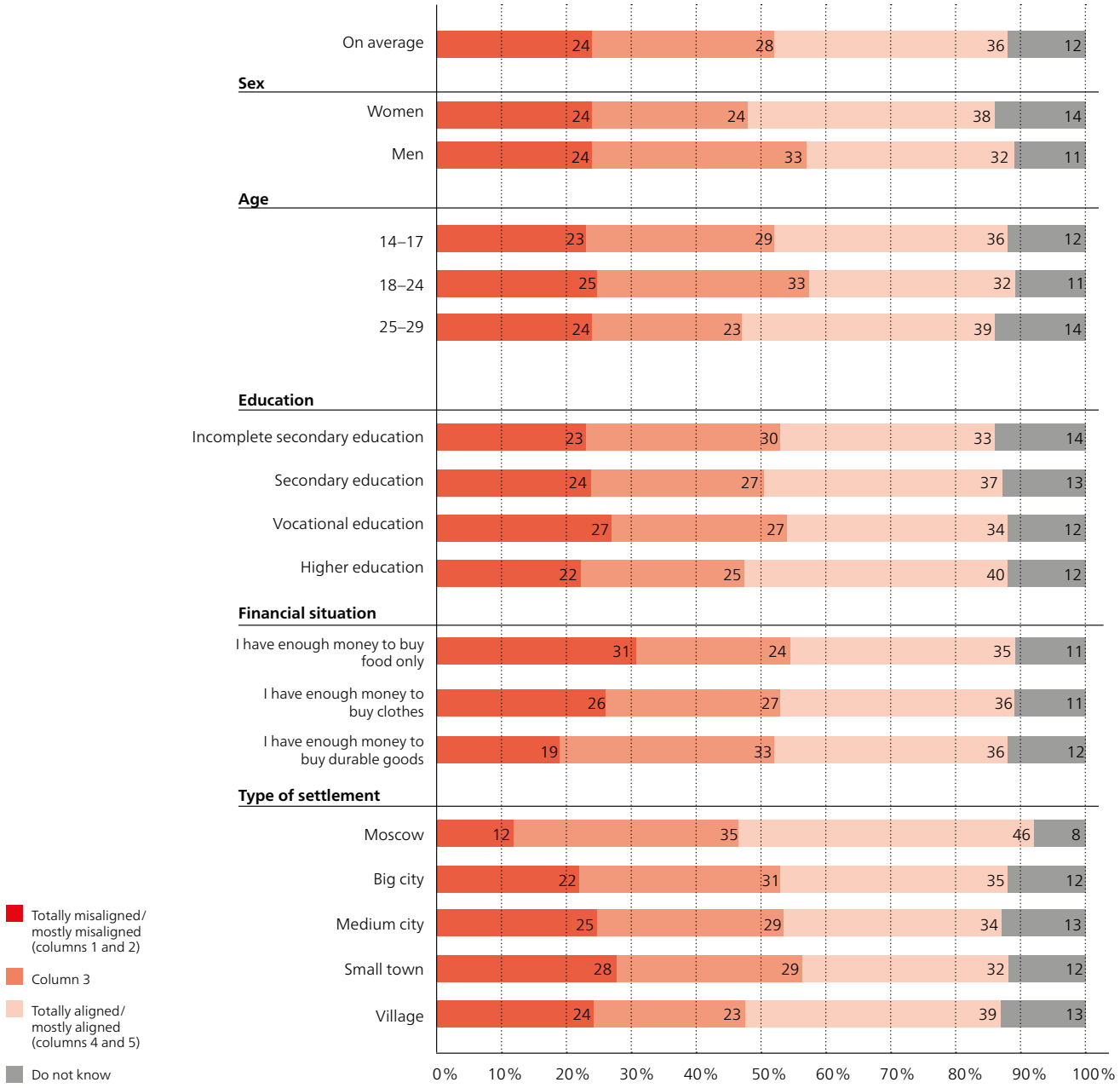


Agreement and disagreement with parents over political issues and views correlate with parameters such as family wealth and family income. In poorer families differences in political views become more apparent. Thus 31% of young people from low-income families describe a complete misalignment between their own political views and those of their parents, whereas in wealthy families only 19% of young people mention a political divergence from their parents. A similar pattern is seen in responses obtained from different places of residence. Moscow has the highest share of young people (46%) whose political beliefs are mostly in line with those of their parents, with only 12% of respondents mentioning political disagreements with their elders. However, in rural towns, usually in economically depressed areas, over 28% of respondents note disagreements with older generations over political issues. One may conclude that young people from provincial towns living in a socially challenging environment and unhappy about their current situation may develop a potential for change; however, this potential does not translate into taking a more active part in social and political life but rather pushes young people to seek improvements in their personal lives – for example, by moving to bigger cities from places where jobs are scarce, as it would otherwise be impossible to earn an income that in their view would be sufficient to support a future family. Official statistics show an outflow of population mostly from rural towns and villages, leading to the depopulation of entire regions such as the Russian North, Non-Black Soil Zone, Eastern Siberia, etc. However, it is unclear whether and to what extent there is a connection between the different opinions of generations in rural areas and the higher internal migration rate.

One remarkable thing about this data is a lack of major mismatches. There are a few tiny ones such as a slightly higher number, among the young Russians, of Russian nationalists on the one hand and liberals on the other hand. As compared to the rest of the population young respondents have considerably fewer supporters of a firm-hand approach among them and they also tend to shun the Agrarian party that is propped up by slogans from the perestroika times and is supported mostly by elderly people.

Although the socio-demographic difference between supporters of various political views is not particularly large, we should focus on it for the purpose of creating an accurate picture. The largest group of respondents associate themselves with Social Democrats. Thus their share among the group of educated 18–20 year olds is above the average and above 31% among respondents with higher education. In fact these dominant political preferences set a standard which other parties are unable to ignore. They either have to differentiate themselves from it like the more radical movements, including right nationalists, liberals, and the left, or they must try to adapt it to their purposes and interpret it to the benefit of their political groups. To a certain extent political differentiation may be driven by the social situation, urbanization (centre vs. remote areas or capital vs. province), or the social status of respondents. Thus, Russian Nationalists are the second largest ideological group after Social Democrats. This group is formed mostly of undereducated adolescents from economically depressed regions and low-income families,

TABLE 10. **To what extent are your political views and beliefs aligned with those of your parents?**

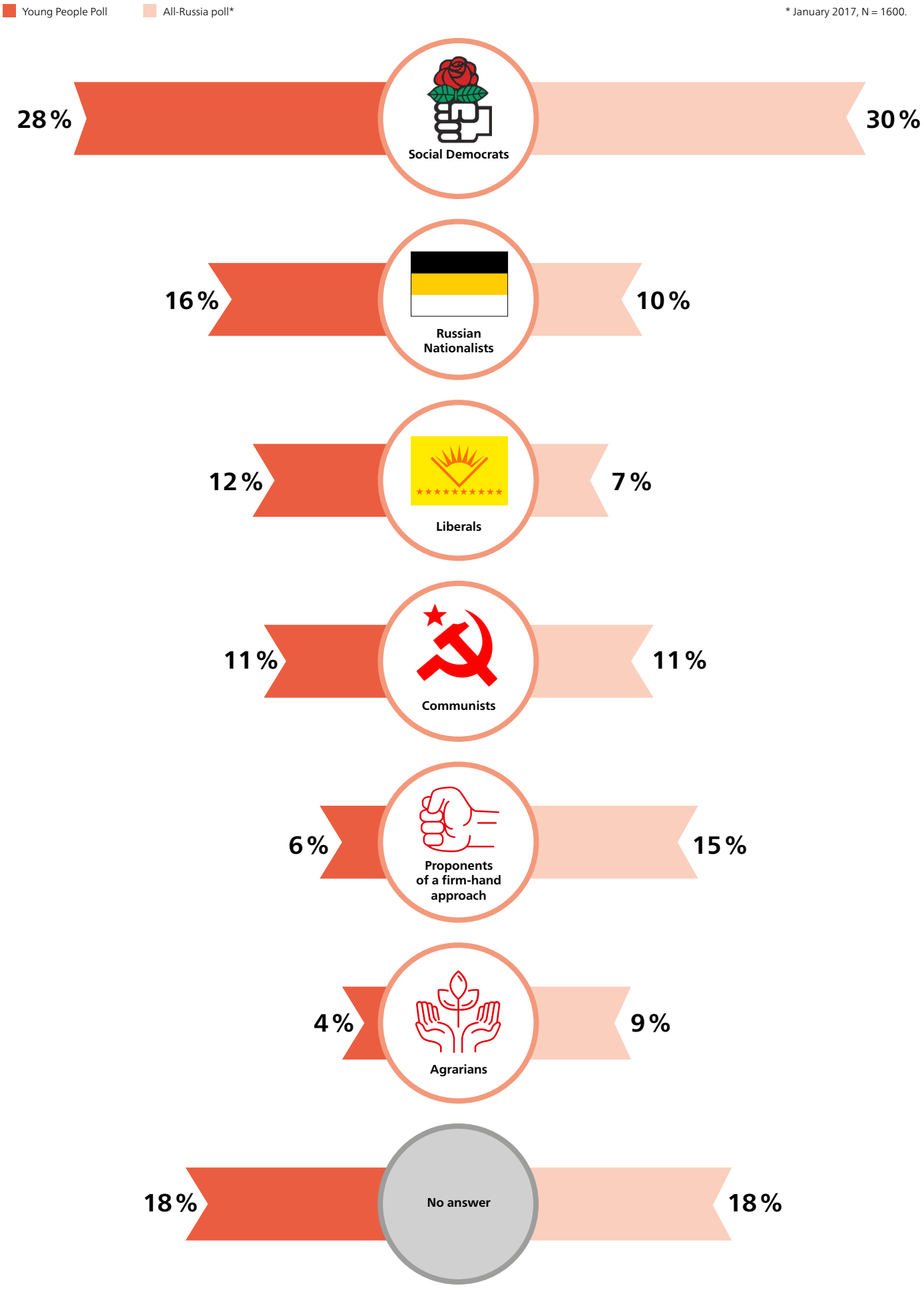


who have few opportunities to become more socially mobile and prosperous. They are followed by authoritarian proponents of a firm-hand approach, by Communists – whose only difference from the nationalists is that they are older, better educated and thus more capable of generalizing their views – and by agrarians, who are popular among the poorest respondents. Liberals, who mostly live in metropolitan areas and in big cities and are the oldest, best educated, and wealthiest among them all, are in opposition to both groups.

The political and ideological views of young people as well as their parents are based on the threadbare Soviet understanding of socialism or state paternalism and the only difference between the young and the older groups of the population is that the young are more polarized. If we compare the results of the present poll with All-Russia representative polls we see that there are more nationalists and liberals among young people and very few proponents of a firm-hand approach. These platforms, i.e. the nationalistic and the liberal, are seen as incompatible, though neither accepts the use of force or dictatorship in politics.

The comparison between the young people poll and all-Russia polls shows that the ideological focus of the public is shifting slowly. If the changes among young people translate into changes in the entire society in the future,

WHICH POLITICAL VIEWS DO YOU HOLD TODAY?



following the logic of evolution of generations whereby the beliefs of older generations are gradually replaced by the views of younger people, then we may say that democratic influence is slowly getting stronger in Russia. The share of democratically-minded people (the total of social-democrats and liberals) among the young population is 40% as compared to 37% among the general population. The share of those who support conservative authoritarianism (nationalists, communists, agrarians, and supporters of a firm-hand approach) among the young is 37% as compared to 45% among the population.

TABLE 11. **Which political views do you hold today?** *(in %)*

Social Democrats	Russian Nationalists	Liberals	Communists	Proponents of a firm-hand approach	Agrarians
Maximum value by group					
Higher education (31%)	Below-average education (20%)	Higher education 10%	21–24 years old (14%)	21–24 years old (9%)	poor (6%)
18–20 years old (34%)	14–17 years old (18%)	well-to-do 16%	poor (13%)	rural towns (9%)	
average in-come (30%)	impoverished (20%)	18–24 years old (15%)	village (17%)		
	rural towns (21%)	Moscow (26%)			
		big cities (18%)			

TAKING PART IN POLITICS AND NGO ACTIVITIES

The responses to the polls do not reflect the actual behaviour of young people, but rather show the strength of ideological beliefs and thus are declarative by nature. This is mostly true for the youngest cohort undergoing its socialization, a stage when political views are frequently idealistic and develop against a background of political indifference, lack of political engagement, reluctance to participate in real political events, and general lack of interest in politics at all, as was mentioned before. This inconsistency becomes apparent once you compare responses to different questions. For example, the high share of respondents who agree with the statement 'voting is the duty of every citizen' (57%) is not in line with the actual turnout rate among the young people, which is the lowest in comparison with other age cohorts. In the Duma elections in 2016 the turnout of young voters was 46%, among those who had the right to vote.

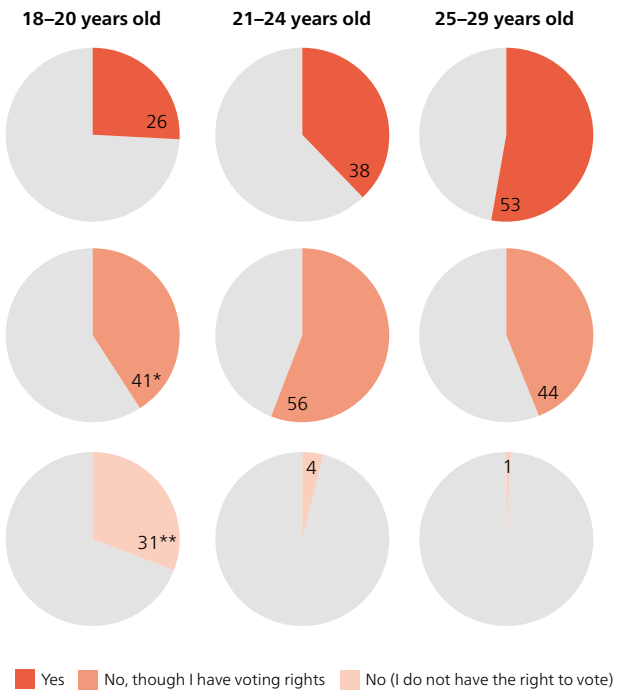
The ratio of those who voted to those who did not tends to improve as the age of respondents increases. Among 18–20 year olds this ratio is 0.6, among 21–24 year olds it is 0.7 and it reaches 1.2 among the oldest cohort of young people within this poll. The number of voters in the recent Duma elections in 2018 in combination with responses to a projective question 'Were the Duma elections to happen this Sunday would you vote?' reveals a trend showing a correlation between age and higher readiness to vote. (The voted-to-did-not-vote ratio in the cohort of 18–20-year-olds is 0.9 as compared to 1.1 in the cohort of 25–29-year-olds).

> *Take part in protests. Does it change anything? – Not really, no. – At least it shows that you are not sitting on your hands, you are doing something. – If more people took part in this, then things might change. – Yes. Everyone is depressed, people no longer participate in protests.'*
> Vologda, 18–25

> *Can we change anything? Only if there are many of us. One person is unable to change anything.'*
> Novosibirsk, 25–35

Before we describe the public and political activities of young people we would like to reveal the results of the self-assessment performed by our respondents. This quite

TABLE 12. **Did you vote in the last elections for the national parliament?** *(in %)*



* In 2016 a considerable number of young people were unable to vote as they were still below 18 years old or did not have passports.
** Achieved voting age by the time of the poll but after the elections.

FIG. 4. **How much do you agree/disagree with the following statement: 'I know a lot about politics'?** *(in %)*

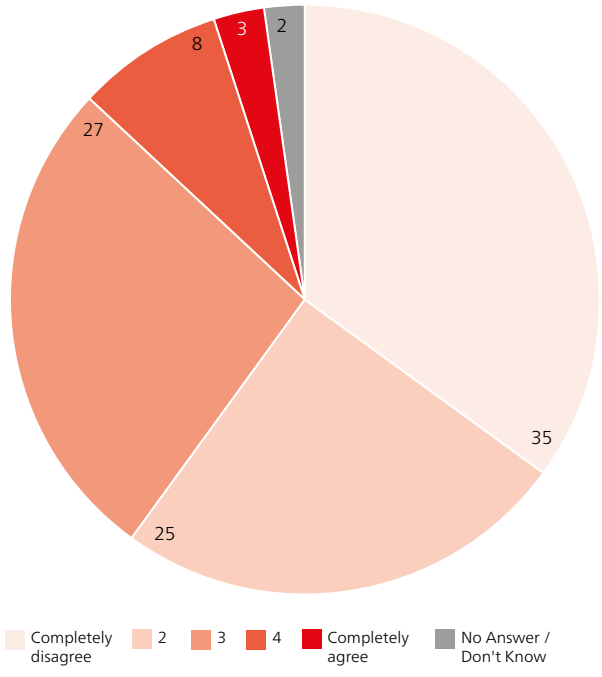
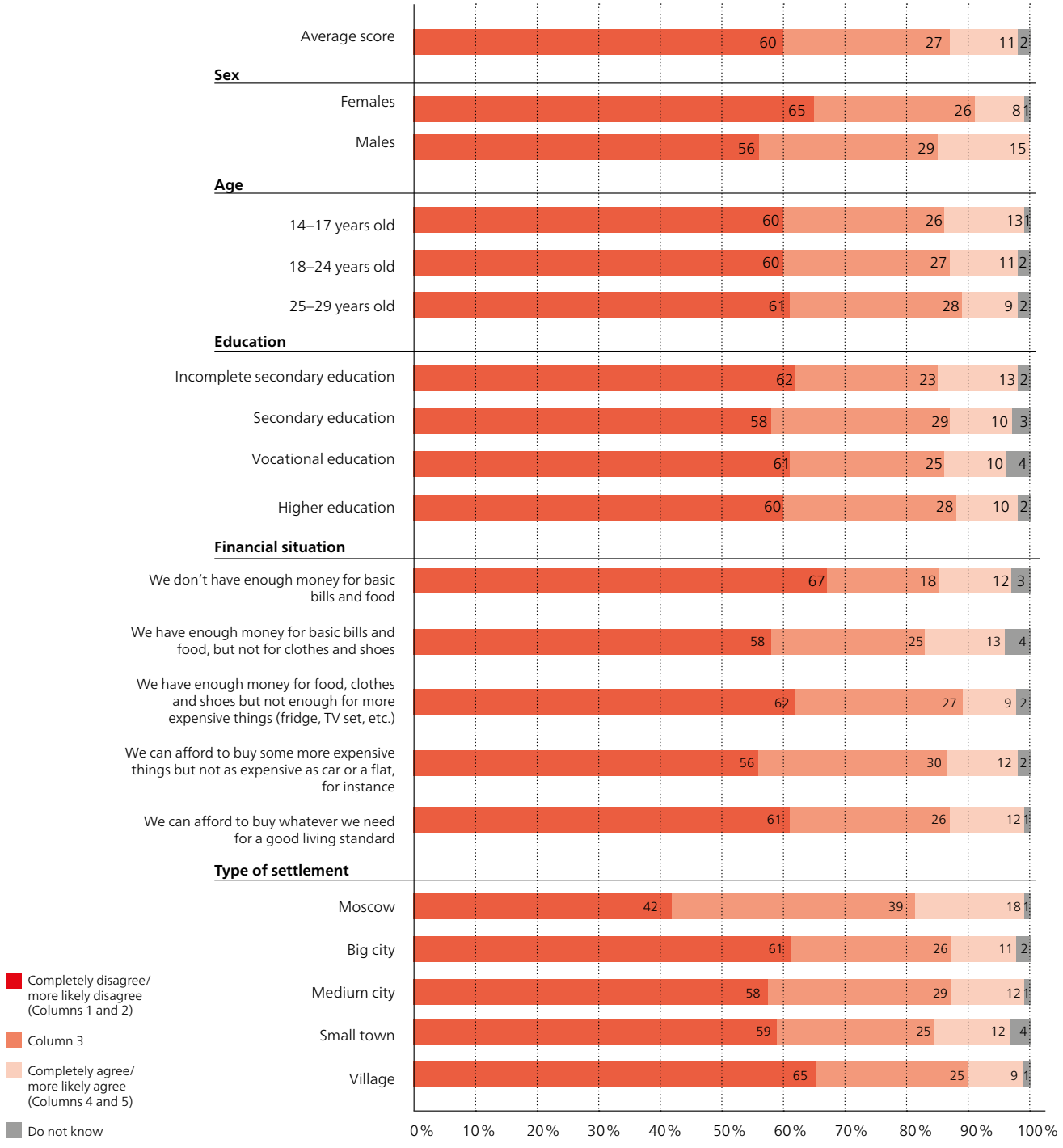


TABLE 13. **How much do you agree/disagree with the following statement: 'I know a lot about politics'?**



telling data highlights the level of political awareness, the political indifference of the majority of young people, the lack of serious interest in and knowledge about politics, and the lack of eagerness to acquire such knowledge and take an active part in political events.

Such distributions just confirm that political indifference is typical for the majority of young people. 66% of respondents firmly answered 'no' (35% answered 'no', 29% answered 'I rather would not') to the question 'Would you be willing to take on a political function?', 1% 'I already have such a function', 7% will 'gladly participate in future', 29% responded with a vague 'possibly', though still giving an answer other than 'no answer', and just 1% gave no answer. In other words the potential for improving the rate of political engagement, at least in the short term with no major political changes, is capped at a realistic 7%.

In general young Russians are weakly represented in social and political movements or processes. 75% of respondents as of the date of the poll had never engaged in any of the activities mentioned above.[11]

We should like ourselves more. We should no longer tolerate all this, this is typical Russian mentality, we keep looking into the future saying "Everything is going to be all right some day".'

Vologda, 18–25

This (i.e. rallies and protests) is the only thing we can do legally to get our message across to the authorities. Well, actually, these protests do not draw much attention.'

Vologda, 18–25

Quite frequently respondents named volunteering as a form of activity they engaged in (23%) or signing various predominantly online petitions or collective letters (22%) to communities or authorities in relation to a particular event or issue, like an environmental hazard or particularly outrageous case of violation of rights of a specific person, or an activity of human right advocacy groups. This being said, in the context of Russian sovereign or 'controlled' democracy, volunteering as well as taking part in rallies or protests cannot be seen as a free manifestation of a personal or common initiative. On the one hand, it can indeed be a free, truly voluntary, and spontaneous social movement inspired by a moral imperative or a humanitarian motive like disaster relief activity or helping diseased children, etc. and on the other hand this activity may be voluntary in its form and compulsory by its nature, a pseudo-social initiative such as participation in a public event or a rally organized by the municipal administration and local authorities.

WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO TAKE ON A POLITICAL FUNCTION?

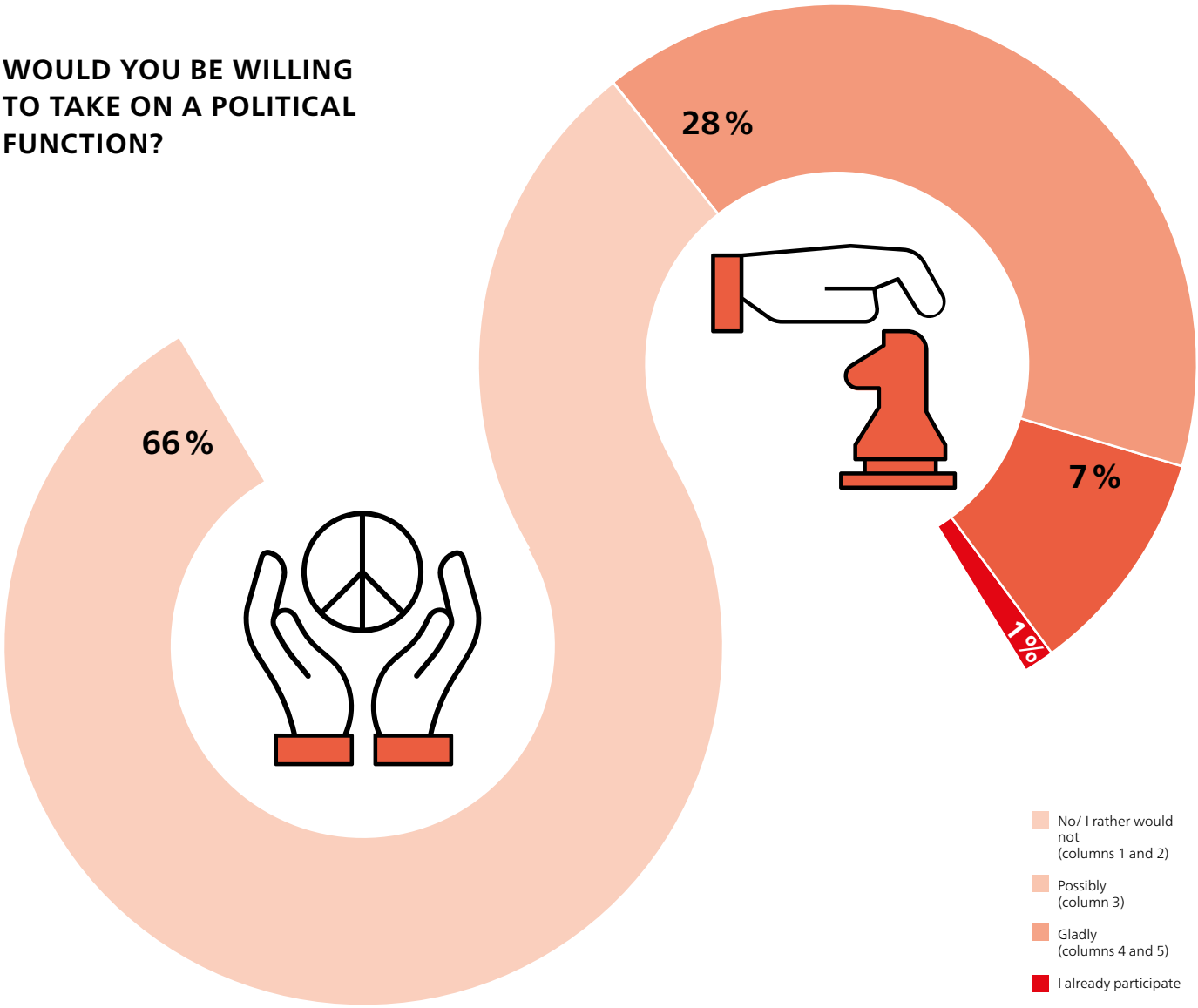


TABLE 14. **Would you be willing to take on a political function?**

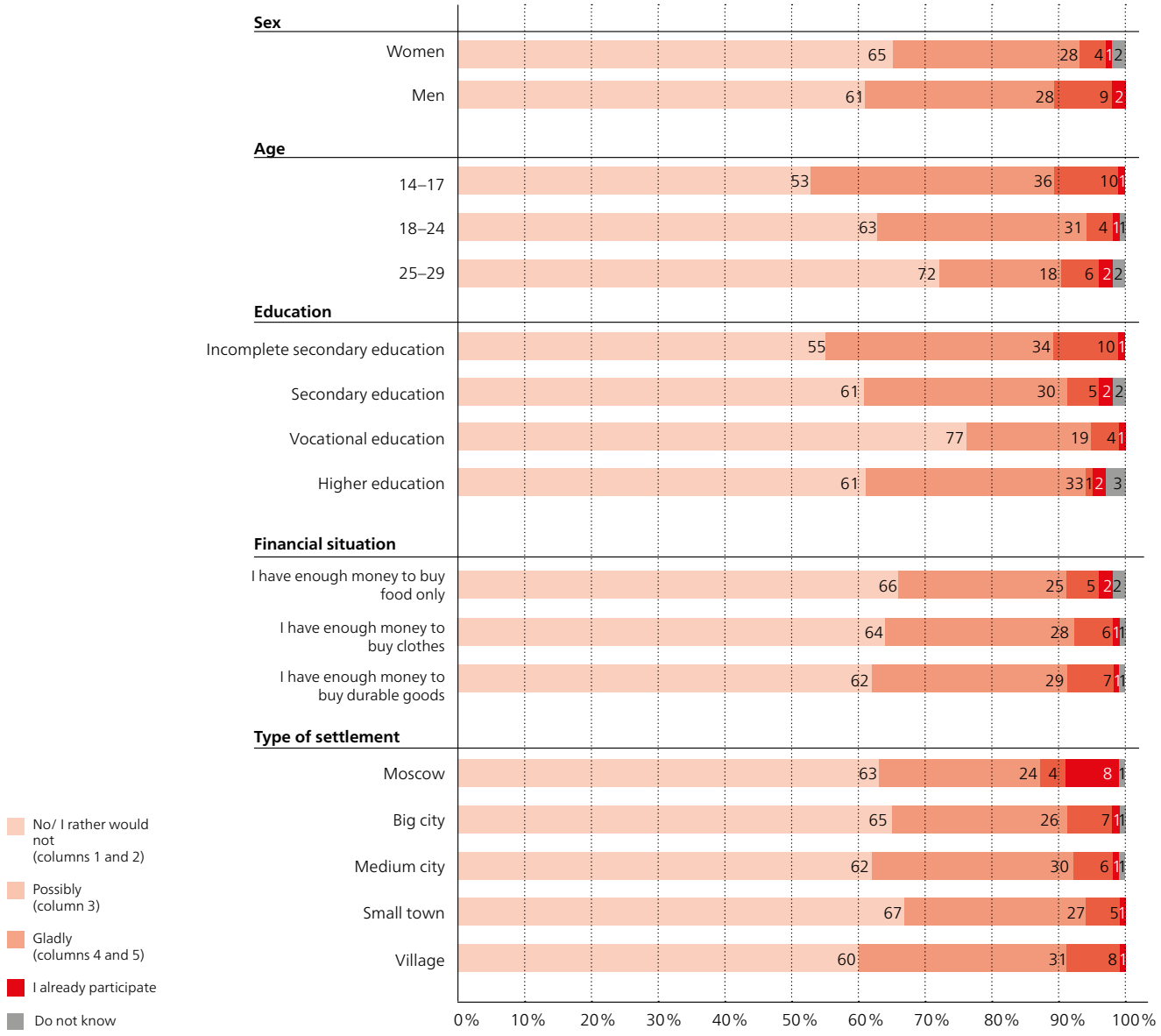
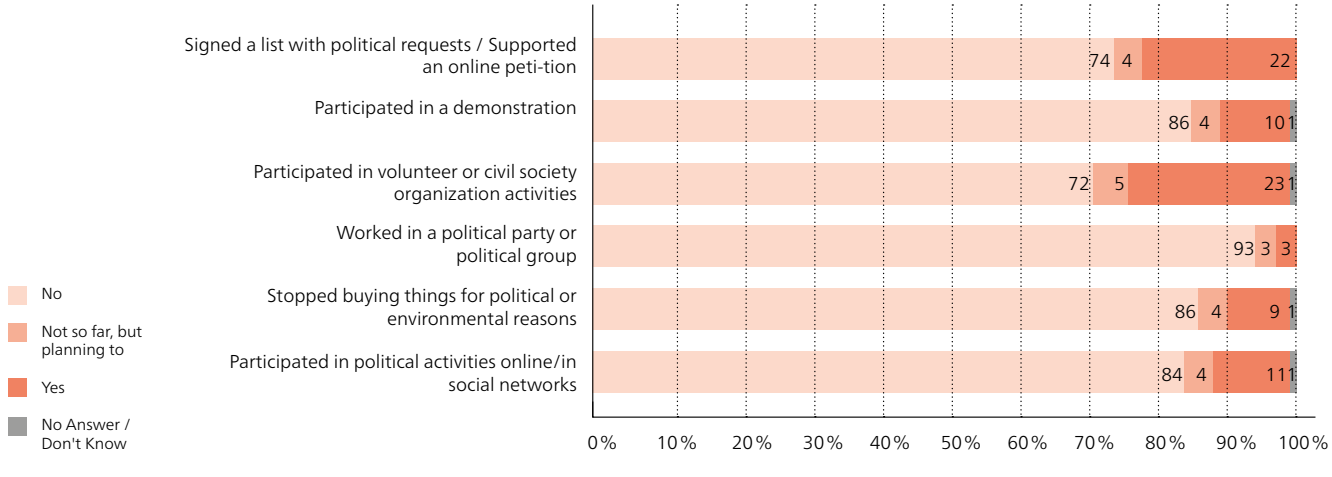


TABLE 15. **Have you tried one of the following means of political engagement?**



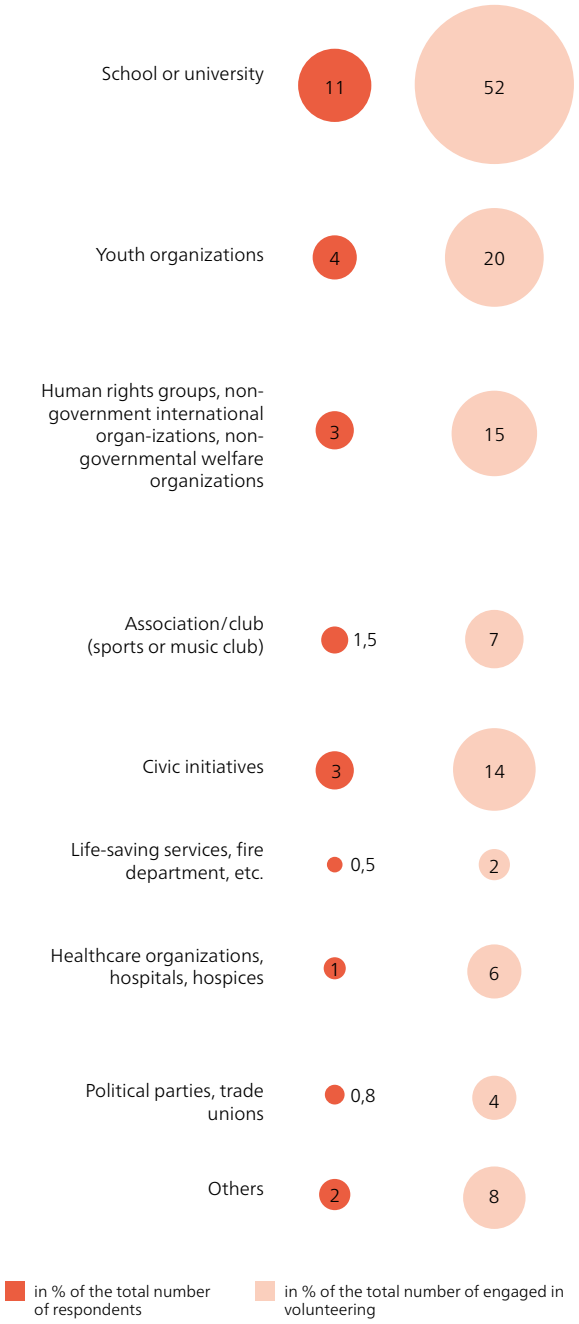
VOLUNTEERING

21% and 23% of respondents respectively gave positive answers to the questions 'Did you do any work as a volunteer this year?' and 'Have you ever participated in the work of a social organization or a volunteer movement?'. At first glance this may seem quite a large share of people engaged in social activities and it is twice the number that you normally see in an all-Russia poll (on average 10% of respondents in a country poll in Russia mention their volunteer experience, participation in a civic initiative, or work in an NGO or charity, etc.). If we look more closely at these numbers we see quite a different picture, however: 11% were volunteers at school or a college, which taking into account the nature of Russian pedagogy was probably not truly voluntary work. 4% took part in the activities of various youth organizations, which might have been set up by the authorities since the Russian Ministry of Justice registers only those youth organizations that promote patriotism.[12] Hence there always remains some doubt as to how sincere or spontaneous such engagement really is. Another 2% were engaged in sports, musical, or art-related activity. Data on young people working as volunteers in healthcare organizations such as hospitals or hospices, NGOs, charities, or environmental protection groups (Podari Zhizn, Vera, or local environmental protection groups) appears to be more credible.

More detailed data on how many of our respondents are engaged in volunteering is available in the table below.

> *Municipal authorities organize this. One of my sisters takes part in the work of these search groups. There are search movements, they organize search expeditions from April to September. They excavate things looking for bones of soldiers who were killed in combat. They have their own museum, it is in the centre of the city. The state pays for this.'*
>
> Vologda, 18–24

TABLE 16. **Within what kind of organization have you worked voluntarily/volunteered in the last 12 months?** *(multiple answers possible)*



QUOTATIONS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS: VOLUNTEERING

'…[Volunteering] is a well-developed movement. Some of the people I know regularly visit an orphanage or an animal shelter. They get together, post a message on Instagram or on other social media saying, "Hey, we need a bigger group to go there and there, come and join us". They also make a list of food, clothes, or other things that may be needed and people either donate these things to them or they make a collection, then whatever they collected they take to an orphanage or any other place of this kind. They also spend time there with the kids or animals. This kind of attitude is quite common. And then again, it takes a small group of people to organize this and then others come across this initiative and join if they like.'
Novosibirsk, 18–24

'It is quite widespread among young people. There are a lot of volunteers around. Doing something good is always great. You feel good and you also create value for other people.'

'The most well-known activity or at least the one I know about is looking for missing or kidnapped people and kids. This is something they show on TV quite often, when somebody gets kidnapped, kids mostly. It is when a special group goes to the scene and starts searching.'
Novosibirsk, 25–35

'…They are mostly kids, I mean teenagers from 16 to 21, I think, and college students as well. They meet school students and tell them about safety rules. They also go to events out of town.'

'One of my friends is from the Victory Volunteers. I do not know exactly what they are doing but they seem to be pretty big in Russia.'

Why are they doing this?
'There is a medal of some sort that they get. Well, as I said, the state is paying for this, it is all covered. They also study in groups, but you have to pay for these classes. Some may be interested in history. So you enrol for this programme, get interviewed, get approval from the municipal authorities, and that's it. From now on you may go to a forum or to an excavation site, if you want. The state covers your expenses. So you end up doing something that you are interested in and you are personally involved in this…'
Vologda, 18–24

'…we talk to the young people, we have a youth organization here in our city, we go to outdoor camp-fire events, we have a team to participate in the KVN comedian TV show. We have a pretty active youth association here.'

'We go there with kids. We have an entire team, there are other kids in it. We are volunteers. We help the elderly who live here, collect things and send them to our soldiers in the army, collect food for animals, collect paper waste for recycling. It is quite widespread here.'

'The only thing that I know about is the Subbotnik, or voluntary clean-up event. They happen here but cover only the factory and adjacent territory. Other than that there is nothing…'

'You can see something happening only before elections, when the whole place is in the spotlight.'
Vologda, 25-35

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

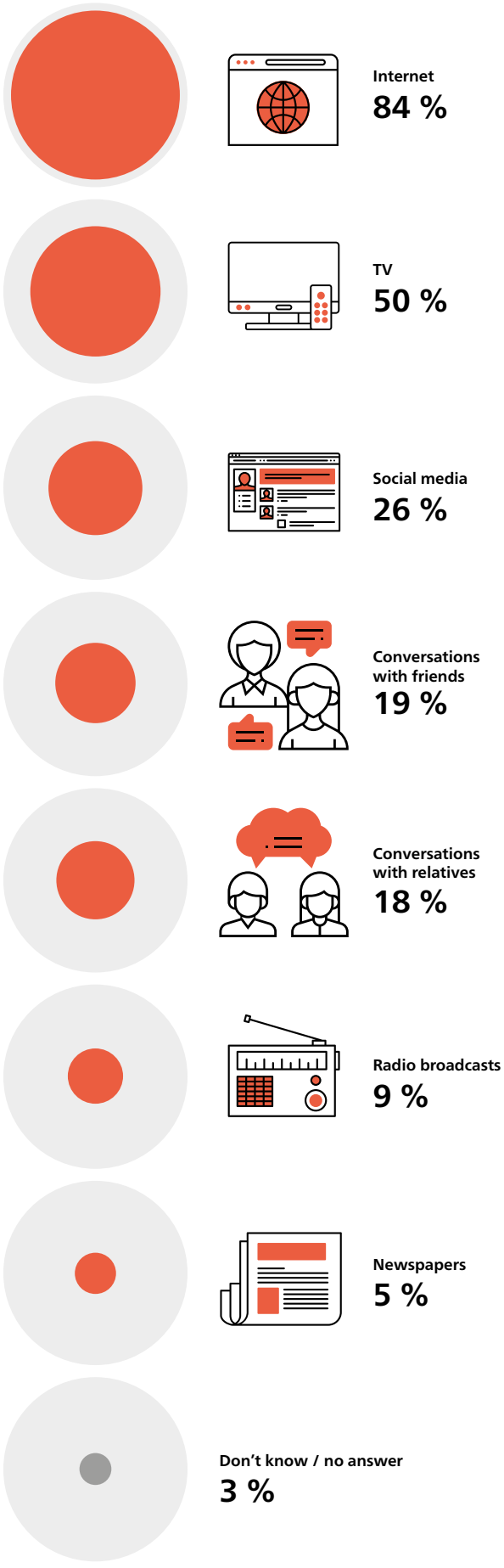
The fact that the young people are barely interested in politics and hardly ready to take part in collective political actions or social and political activity focused on making meaningful change of a legal and democratic nature in the country means that the majority of young Russians are focused on sorting out day-to-day problems in their own lives or their families (older cohorts). They turn to the Internet to find a simulated environment for their activity. The Internet is the place where the young get most of their news about public events or political activity, whereas for older generations TV remains the main source of information. For young people TV is the second most important source of news, though they believe that TV is dull, too forceful in imposing the official point of view on you, and is directly associated with the dominance of state authorities. Unlike TV, the Internet provides access to a great variety of information channels and interpretations, an abundance allows all sorts of points of view to proliferate, some of which may be radically different from the official one. However, there is no reason to believe that TV is getting squeezed out by the Internet. The Internet compliments TV and exists alongside it.

Minor socio-demographic differences among various categories of respondents just highlight the main patterns of information consumption. The better educated and the more well-to-do the respondents are, the more they tend to use the Internet and social media. Among university graduates 91% see the Internet as the major source of information; among wealthier group of respondents this number is 88%, among low-income respondents it drops to 77%, in big cities this share varies from 86%–90%,while in rural areas it is 78%. Age hardly correlates with this parameter at all, and the share of those who get information mostly from the Internet varies from 84% among the youngest cohort to 89% among 21–24 year olds. Men tend to be slightly more interested in political events than women, with the overall difference being quite small (87% and 82% respectively).

'… every media outlet has its own agenda no matter how small. Russia Today interprets things in its own way, Meduza or Lenta.ru each have their own interpretation, which benefits them more. Everyone here is making money. Yes, money and nothing more than that.'

Moscow, 18–24

WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON POLITICAL EVENTS?



> *'No, I would not say [I trust TV]. On YouTube or Instagram you have information that comes from people. I mean somebody goes somewhere and makes a video of something. Of course in the beginning you never know whether you should trust it all or not but then you come across something, which seems more trustworthy as compared to TV. I think this is because the TV is more about hiding things.'*
> Novosibirsk, 25-35

State-run television plays a systemic role in shaping reality and as such is more respected than social media or the Internet, especially by the adults. Not only do young people hold the opinion of adults in high regard, this opinion seriously affects the process of their political socialization.

The older cohorts of young people and low-income respondents, usually residents of small towns and villages, tend to name TV as the key source of information slightly more often (5% or 6% above the average). Young Muscovites are the only exception in this regard since only 31% (1.5 times below the average value) among them consider TV an important source of information. Radio broadcasts and newspapers are seen as less important sources, with only 9% and 5% of respondents mentioning them.

QUOTATIONS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS: INTERNET AND TELEVISION, TRUST

'On the Internet you can find news, which you will never see on TV. For example, information about some local event that took place in the city or something of this kind.'

'On TV they show things the way they want it to be seen… It is different from what happens in reality.'

'The news is shown by national TV channels, which work for the government. They are paid by the government as well.'
Novosibirsk, 18–24

'In any case the TV tries to force its view upon you whereas through the Internet you have access to various points of view.'

'They just do not show it to us in full. But you can watch a full version on the Internet.'

'Well, as for why TV is mostly watched by the elderly and why they are the staunchest supporters of the government, well it happens because they just voice the same opinion that was forced on them by the news media.'

'Yes, I agree that on the Internet there are some media outlets, which… are engaged in propaganda if you like. Still on the Internet you have a choice, there are many independent media outlets there.'

'Well, there are websites or news outlets, which at least care about their reputation. I mean they have not been caught hiding information.'
Vologda, 18–24

'On TV, sometimes from conversations, sometimes from papers. But there is no trust…'

'I do not trust anyone.'

'They will say whatever they are told to say.'

'They are hiding things.'

'They have an idea about what they need to say. And this is what they actually say.'
Vologda, 25–35

'…take the news programme on Channel 1. You can watch the very same programme on the Internet just like any other programme of any other channel. So young people watch the same news, but on the Internet and not on TV.'

'…never mind what we watch, an opposition channel on YouTube or a national channel on TV, they all try to impose their view on you. They interpret all events the way it suits them better.'
Moscow, 18–24

6

YOUTH AND THE STATE

GENERALIZED AND INSTITUTIONAL TRUST

Institutional or generalized trust is different from interpersonal trust and has a more complex structure. Not only does it imply that 'the other party' would act in a highly predictable manner, but furthermore it requires recognition of an institution's status and its significance as a symbol in maintaining social integrity and exerting influence on various areas of public life and its rank in the system of collective values. Institutional trust also implies recognition of expectations associated with particular policies, as well as illusions or hopes that social problems that are beyond competences or control of an individual will finally be resolved.

Only three institutions – volunteer movements, the armed forces, and the President – enjoy prevailing trust. This being said we should note that the basis of this trust in each case is different. People trust volunteer movements since they highly respect and appreciate the altruistic behaviour of their members and the possibility to join this movement personally further enhances confidence in its results and efficiency. The President is trusted as a national leader and guarantor of national security and integrity of the country, as a politician who led Russia to reclaim its status as a superpower. The armed forces are trusted since they are seen as one of the pillars supporting the superpower and since they inherited credit from the victory in World War II, with the moral authority and respect of the Red Army as the force that crushed the Nazis.

All international organizations, Russian political parties, and trade unions from the list enjoy the least trust, even though one might think that it is political parties and trade unions that should champion the interests, opinions, and views of people and be trusted as such. Other institutions including the government, the parliament, police, courts, financial institutions, and mass media either do not have the full trust of respondents or may be trusted to some extent because there is no alternative to them. This limited confidence that the public has in these institutions exists alongside chronic mistrust and apprehension.

When it comes to assessing public trust and confidence in social institutions, the Church and religious organizations should be reviewed separately. Just several years ago the Russian Orthodox Church enjoyed the full measure of trust from the people as a bearer of moral values. However, the trust and support it had before is now waning and the Church is losing supporters among young people. 'Civil society organizations' is too ambiguous and vague a category in the questionnaire, as it can potentially include pro-Kremlin organizations like the Society for Military History, Anti Maidan, Army of Youth, NOD, etc. as well as those representing civil society, which frequently find themselves under severe criticism from official bodies and are often labelled as foreign agents. The same category may include other organizations that are seen as troublesome by the official authorities regardless of

TABLE 17. **How far do you trust the entities listed below?**

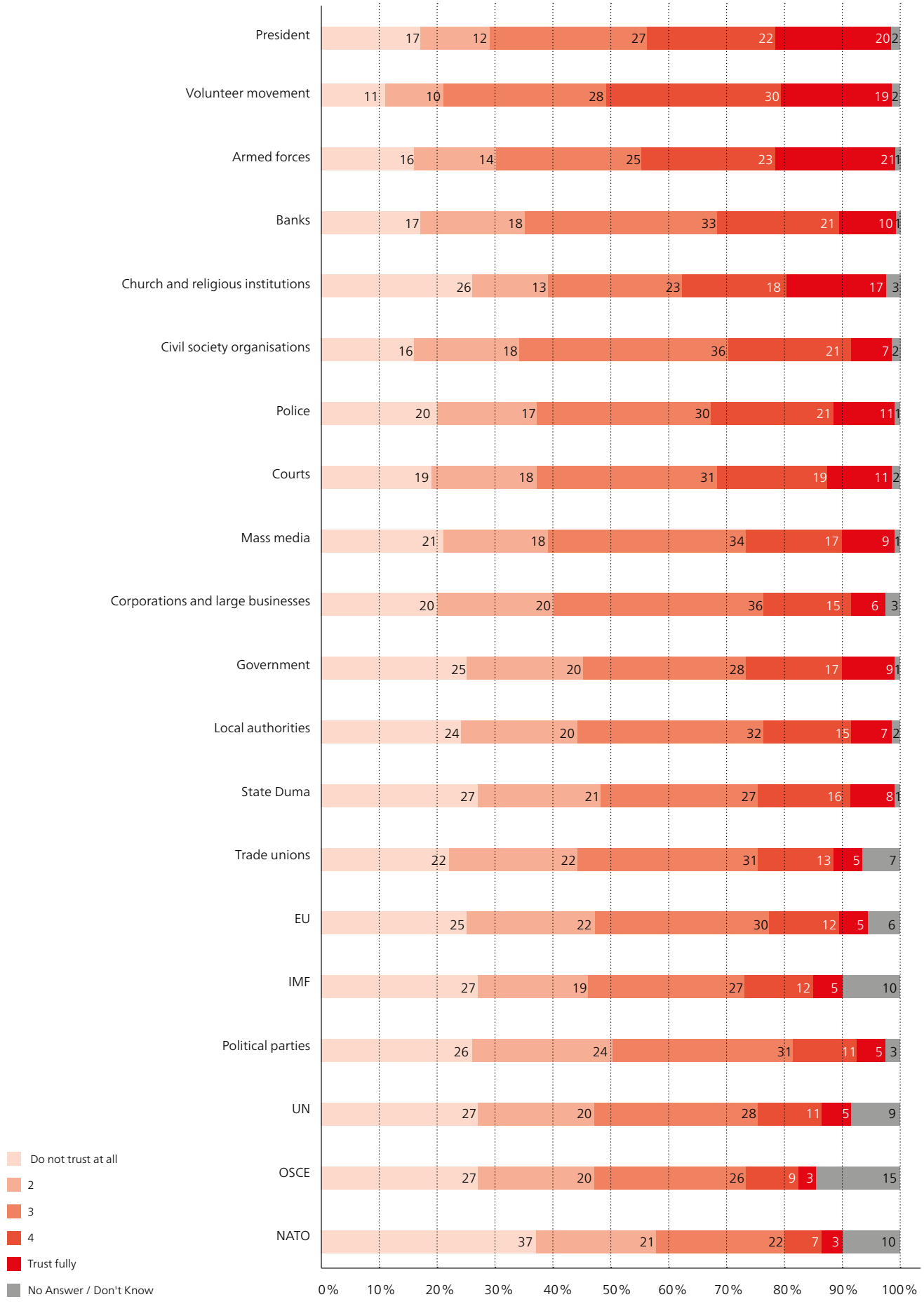
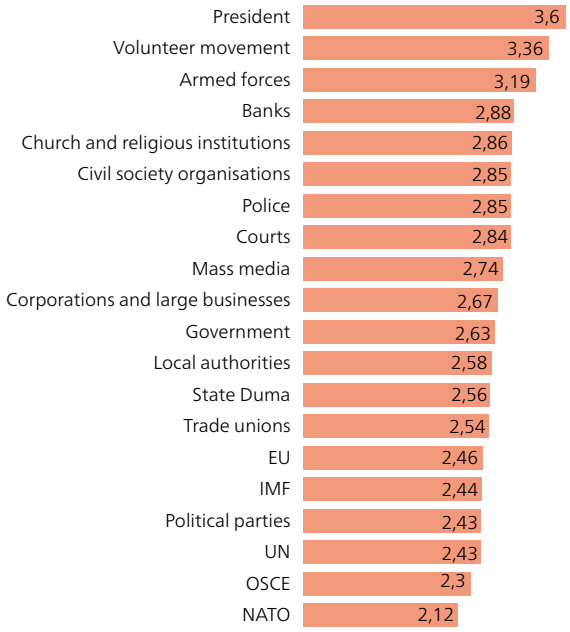


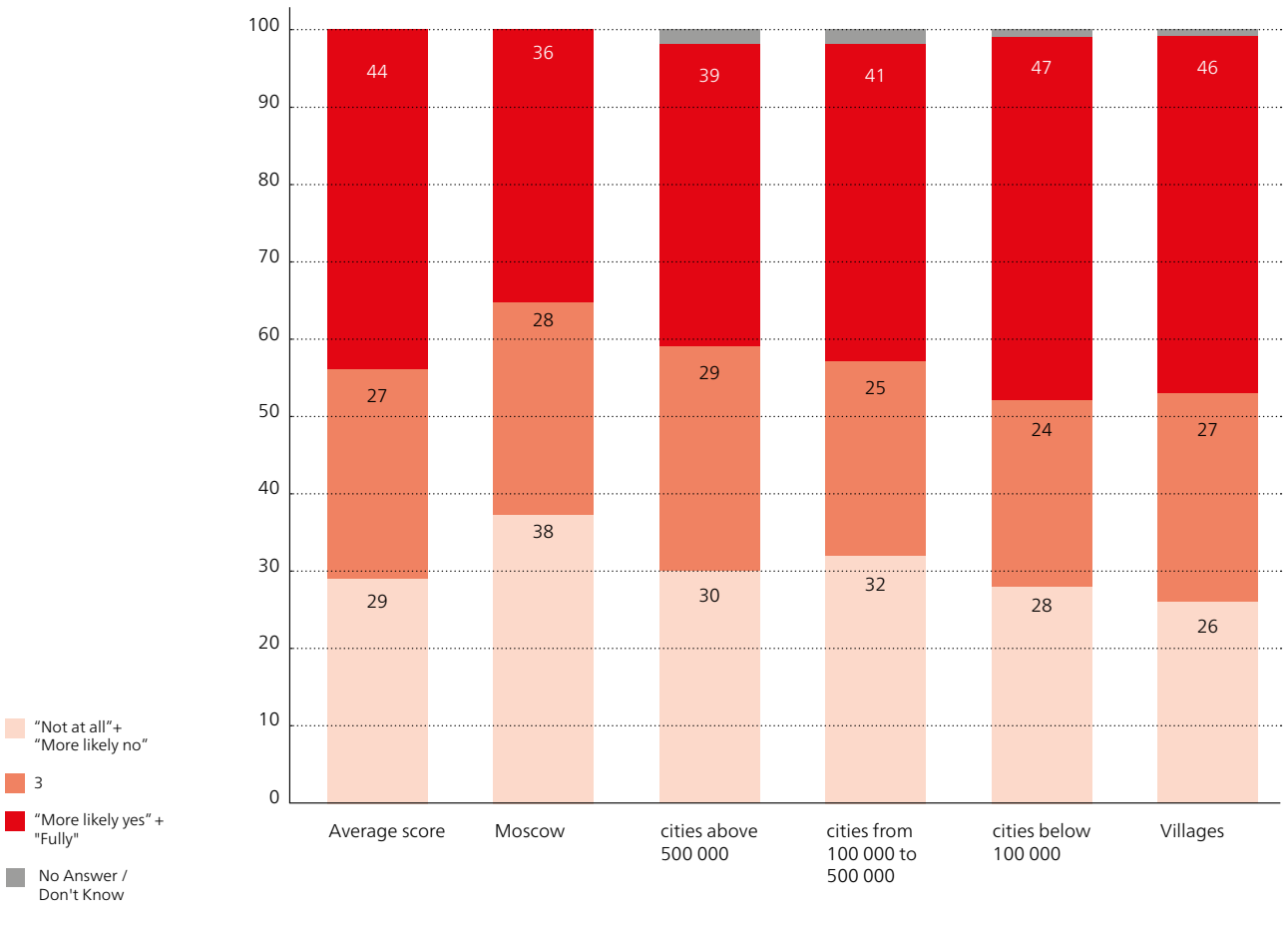
FIG. 5. **How far do you trust the entities listed below?**
(average score on a scale from 1 to 5)



area of their activity, which may include charity, human rights advocacy, journalism, or environmental protection. This is the reason why this wording of the question in this context may confuse those respondents who do not have a clear view and position of their own.

In general, institutional trust is higher in rural areas (villages and towns) and gradually goes down in larger cities, reaching its lowest level in Moscow. Thus, in line with this pattern, trust in the President decreases from 46% to 36% whereas mistrust grows from 26% to 38% respectively. Trust in the State Duma wanes from 28% to 16%, with mistrust increasing from 41% to 59%. Trust in the government drops from 30% in rural areas to 20% in Moscow, with mistrust jumping from 39% to 57% in Moscow. It is worth emphasizing that respondents in Moscow displayed the lowest level of trust and the highest level of mistrust in the President.

FIG. 6. **How far do you trust the president?**
(breakdown by type of settlement)



DEMOCRATIC ASPIRATIONS

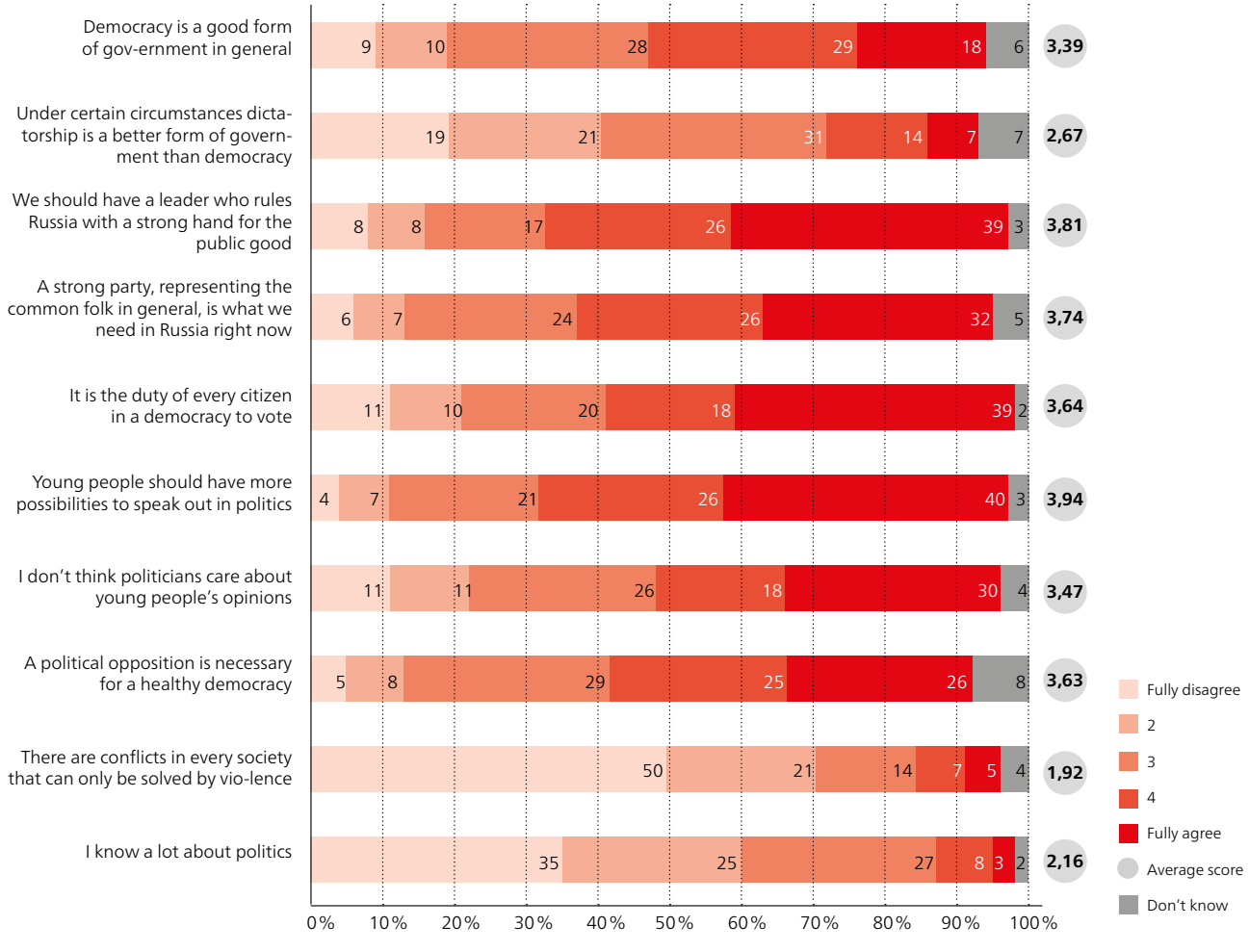
Taking very little interest in political affairs, young Russians still have preferences, albeit vague and unclear, regarding the form of government or political order in Russia. Nearly half of respondents (47%) mentioned democracy as the optimal socio-political model for Russia, 51% believe that opposition is necessary, and 71% do not accept authoritarian methods or use of law enforcement bodies and armed forces in resolving problems of social or ethnic nature. At the same time 58% still have populist faith in a strong leader or a strong party that will act in the interests of a majority. 66% agree with the statement that 'young people should have more opportunities to have their voice heard in politics' at the same time remaining quite sceptical (48%) and believing that 'the opinion of young people is not important to politicians'.

The low rationality of political beliefs translates into a situation in which contradicting and logically incompatible concepts can easily coexist as parts of the same picture and even be supported all at once by a majority of respondents.

This is determined by the history of our country. Leaders ruled for a long time each. ... I mean, our people are used to the idea of having the same leader for a long period of time who will keep the country stable. This is why if this leader makes a promise and does not keep it nobody will think about replacing him, he will get re-elected anyway. This is not democratic. In a democracy a leader should be held responsible for what he says, he should keep his promises.'

Vologda, 18–24

TABLE 18. **How much do you agree/disagree with the following statements?**



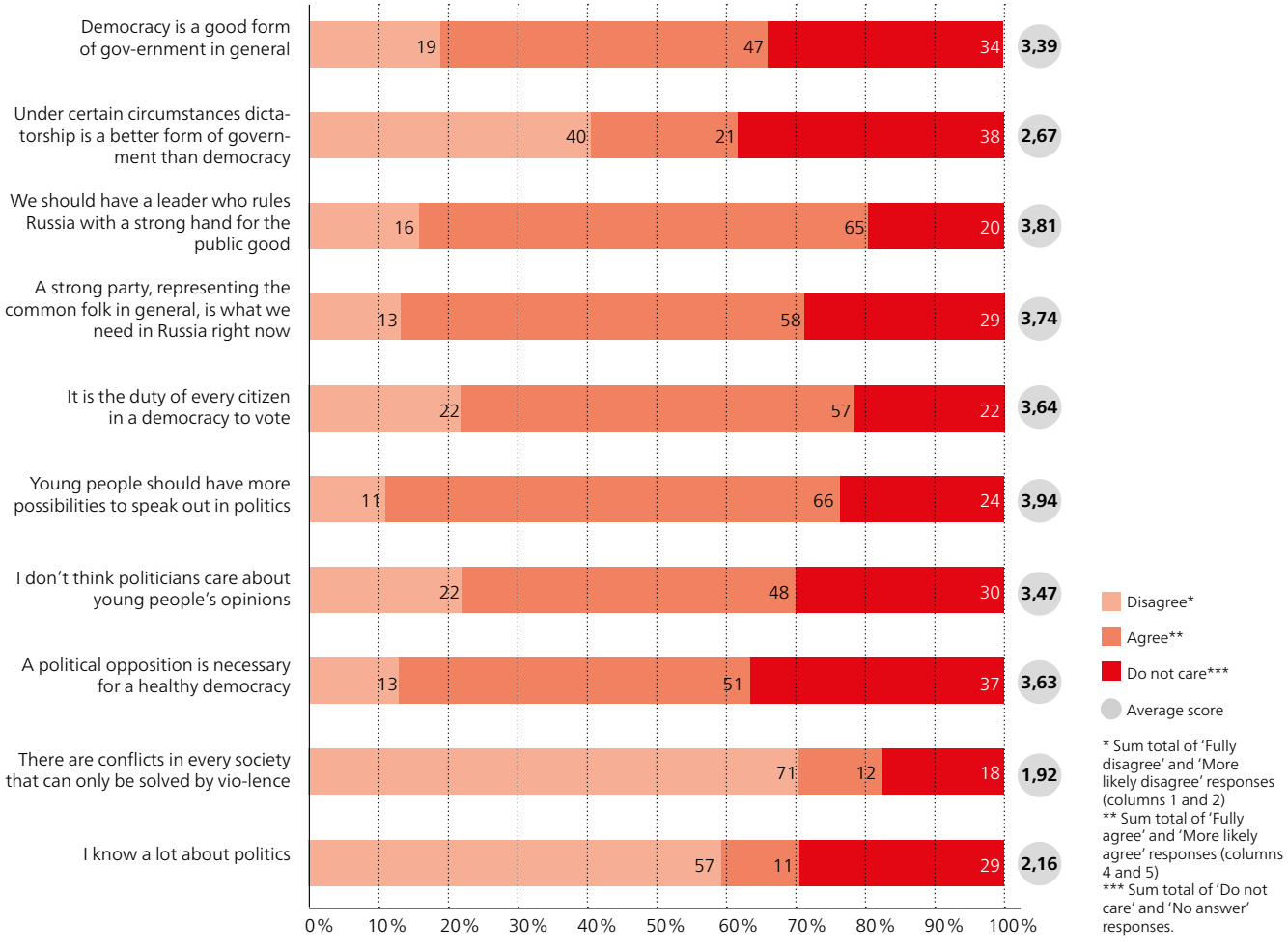
Thus a sizeable number (47%) agreed that 'Democracy is a good form of government in general' (please see Table 18a) and logically also disagreed with the converse that 'Under certain circumstances dictatorship is a better form of government than democracy' (40%). At the same time, however, 65% agreed that 'We should have a leader who rules Russia with a strong hand for the public good'. The rejection of dictatorship (the anti- to pro-dictatorship ratio is 40:21) coexists with a large share of respondents who remained indifferent (38%). The rejection of the use of force in politics is clearer (71% vs. 12% with a substantially smaller share [18%] of indifferent and undecided respondents).

What these numbers mean is that opposite concepts may easily coexist in the minds of respondents without causing any major contradiction or strain. Cross-tabulation analysis reveals that this contradiction smooths out and is dissolved in a growing number of eclectic responses (point 3 on a 5-point scale). Young people are taken by populist ideas like the need for a 'strong leader' who acts in the interest of the 'public good', which 'does not contradict the idea of democracy', and a need for a 'strong party that will protect

Let's take freedom of speech, for example. Here there is a law against defamation of the authorities. If you criticize measures taken by the authorities, because they do no good or if you are not satisfied by the results of their work, your dissatisfaction may be interpreted as a breach of this law and you will easily go to prison.'

Vologda, 18–24

TABLE 18A. **How much do you agree/disagree with the following statements?**

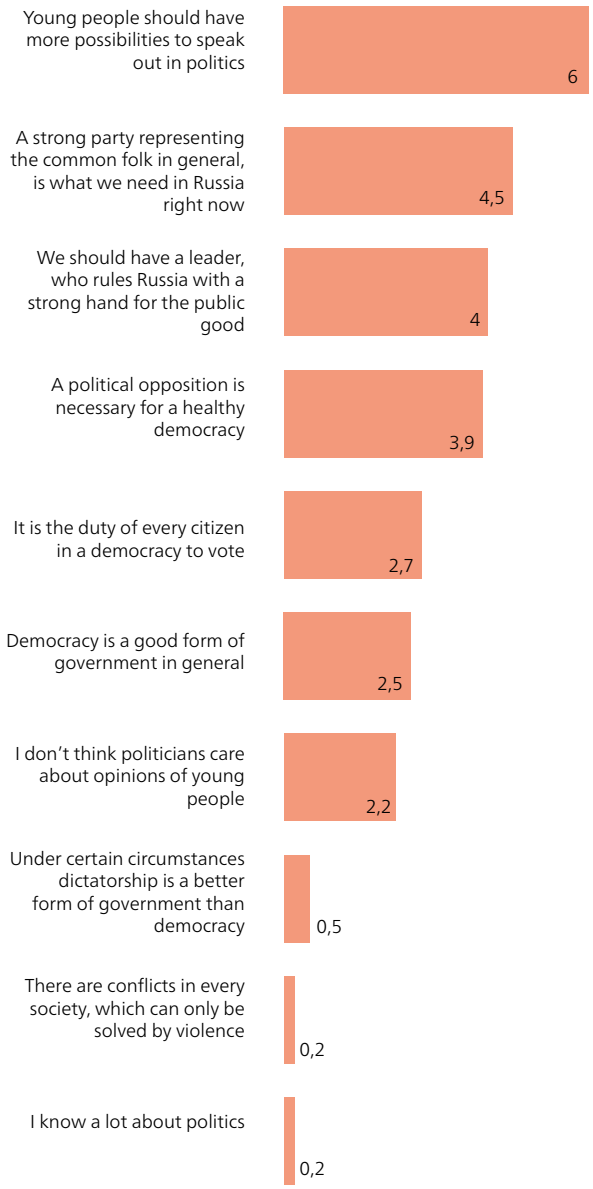


interests of the people'. In responses to the question about a strong leader and a strong party the share of indifferent answers drops to 20% and 29% respectively.

Young Russians recognize that their options are limited and they seek to be recognized. It is for this reason that the majority of them believe that 'Young people should have more possibilities to speak out in politics' and do not think that 'politicians care about the opinions of young people'. A combination of these reasons translates into a general reluctance to participate in political events, forcing respondents to make a stark choice between democracy and dictatorship amid a very high share of indifferent (34%) and undecided people with no answer (38%) to this symptomatic question.

> *Freedom of speech and freedom of faith is stipulated by the Constitution. Then again – we have a law under which you cannot say anything against a religion. But we all have our ways of thinking. The law says that we have freedom of speech, and you can do what you want. However in reality you cannot. In the Internet you cannot say what you think is true because you can go to prison for this.'*
>
> Novosibirsk, 18–24

FIG. 7. **Approval rating for democracy***



* The approval rating for democracy is the ratio of those who agree/disagree with particular statements ('do not know' and 'no answer' responses are not taken into account).

QUOTATIONS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS: DEMOCRACY AND THE RUSSIAN STATE

'This is the whole point. It is all about the alternation of power – it is the basis for the country's economic growth.'

'They keep making promises over and over again. In reality we get nothing.'

'The entire leadership of the country should be replaced….'

'We need fair elections otherwise vote or not, Putin will still be the President.'

'Alternation of power is a basic principle of the country's growth. They keep making promises, but they do not deliver. I mean, they should walk their talk in order to get re-elected. But if all you have to do is talk and still you'll have a clear perspective then why change anything at all?'

'It is for example the freedom of speech. I do not know whether we have this now or not.'

'I think it is sliding closer towards authoritarian style. We have some freedom but in certain situations you find it limited. This is what an authoritarian state looks like and this is why we cannot call Russia a fully democratic country.'

'Elections? Well, on the one hand we do elect our leaders, on the other it appears that we do not.'
Vologda, 18–24

'We have to look at the person in power. He was nobody when he started his ascent. Kept following his path consistently and became the most powerful man in the world.'

*'The impression is that [Putin]has no idea about the situation in the regions across the country. They would not be covering everything with canvas before his visit if he knew that this is a sh*thole.'*
Vologda, 25–35

'People want to have fair elections. Everyone understands that somebody else wants to get elected to the Moscow Duma, they submit their applications but they get squeezed out just like that. Every one for his or her own reason, of course.'

'People want to see an independent candidate.'
Moscow, 18–24

'It is like living under tsarist regime. The Tsar is not even leaving his estate, he is just sitting there. There is another view on this. He may well be held hostage of what we have here, of this entire situation.'

'Freedom of speech, freedom of choice, all these things. It means a lot already….'
Novosibirsk, 18–24

'We had some sort of freedom before. Now it is banned under the new law.'
Novosibirsk, 25–35

'Actually, we live in a free country. In our country you can do pretty much what you like. I mean it in a positive sense. Yes, le, but by and large we live in a free country.'
Moscow, 18–24

'Free elections and freedom of speech.'

'Everything has been decided already.'

'…this is no democracy, it is a tsarist rule.'
Vologda, 25–35

What do you think should change?
'Power.'

'Public officials.'

'Corruption needs to be dealt with.'

'Laws should work for the people so that people become better off with these laws. What we have today is anything but that.'

What do you think you need to have a democracy?
'Free elections and freedom of speech.'

'It is not real, it is a show.'

'Promises and nothing but the promises… We hear a lot of it ahead of the elections: we will do this for you, we promise that.'

'I think that we can call it bribing. They are bribing us before elections. They start making promises: we will give you this, we will build that for you.'
Vologda, 25–35

'[What's missing?] Alternation of power is missing, I think. That is the first thing, the second is an independent mass media.'
Moscow, 18–24

GOALS OF GOVERNMENTAL POLICY

Estrangement from politics or mostly spectator-like participation that is limited to watching political talk shows or news is combined with strong expectations pinned on the government to ensure availability of the necessary public good and to keep public life going without any supervision or any pressure upon the authorities from the public. The response to state paternalism (being unhappy about what authorities do while at the same time hoping for improvement to come from these authorities whilst remaining generally passive)

TO WHAT EXTENT SHOULD THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT FOCUS ON...
(in %)

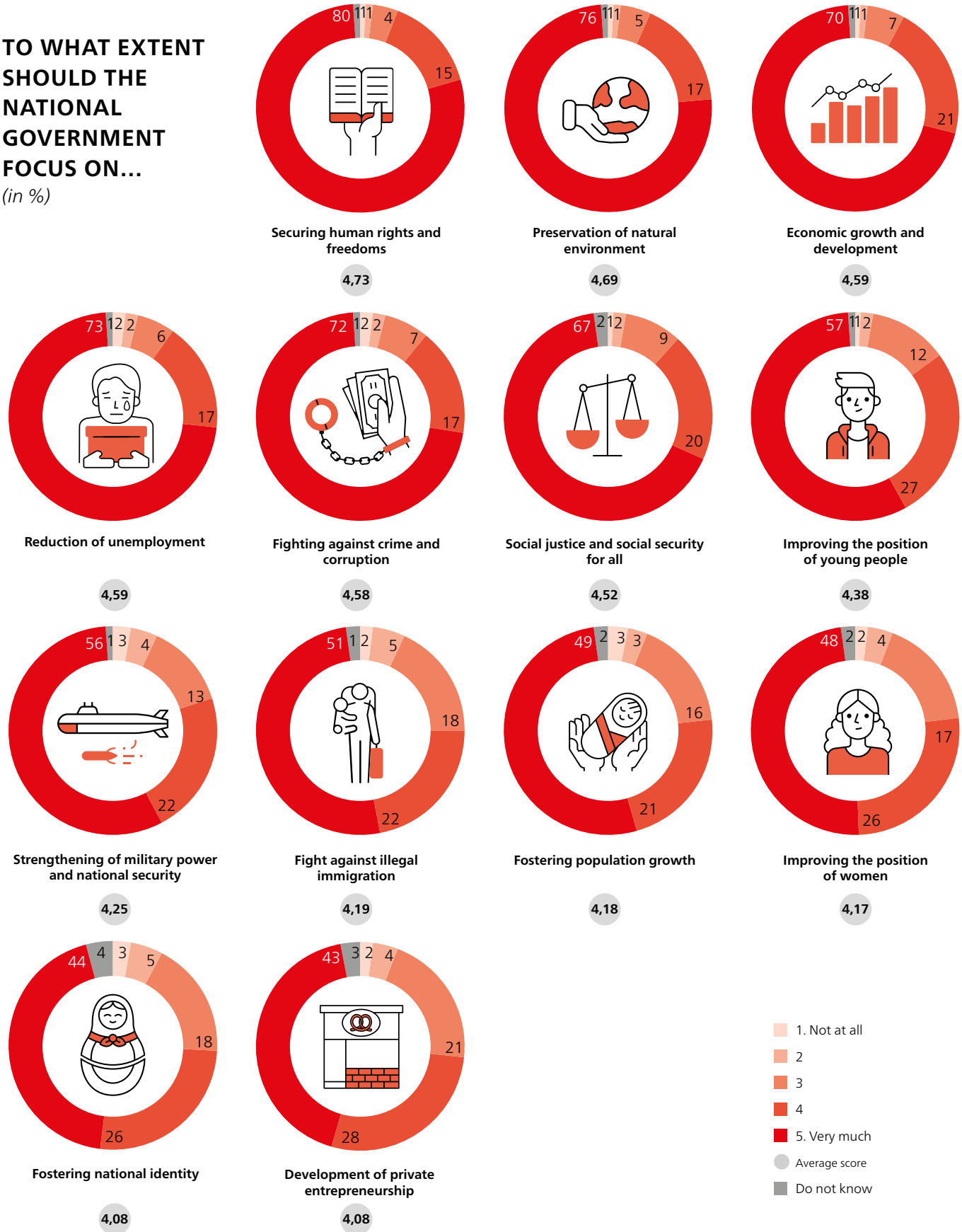


FIG. 8. **To what extent should the national government focus on…**
(with breakdown by sex, average score)

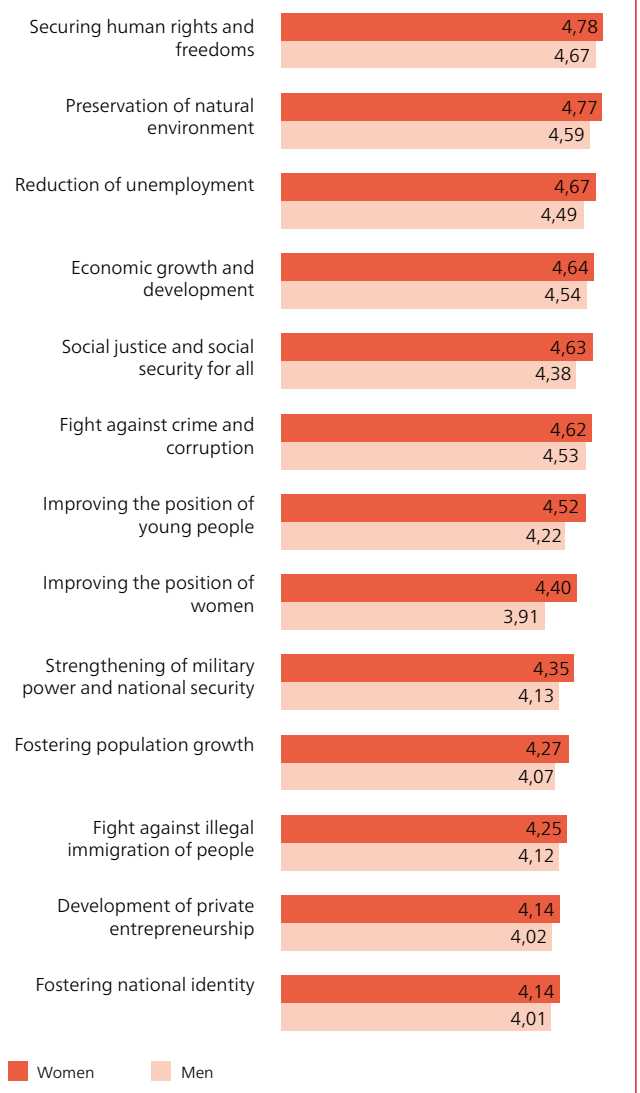
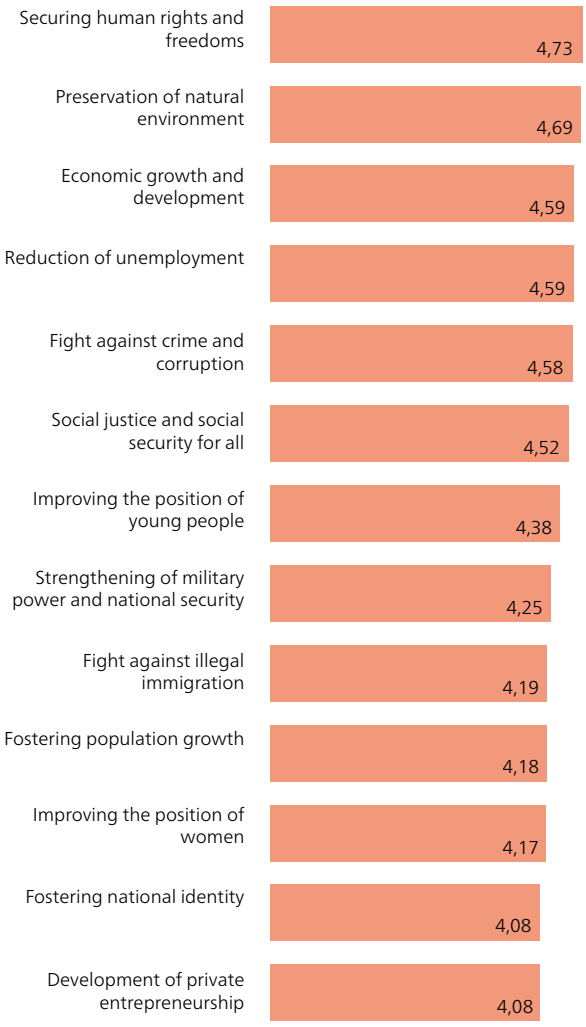


FIG. 9. **. To what extent should the national government focus on…** *(average score)*



paralyses the social activity of young people and prevents them from taking responsibility for the state of things in the country, region, city, or area of residence. For this reason the political demands of the majority of young people are limited to the idea of making sure that everything around them is fine, without this desire being translated into action. The general assumption that it is the authorities and not young people themselves who should deal with social issues turns these discussions into Utopian theorizing, and leads to the making of baseless plans, because there is no effective way to influence the results of governmental activity or to oversee how plans are implemented and promises are kept. Moreover, nobody expects these capabilities or political tools to appear in future. It is quite telling that the share of 'no answer'/'I do not know' responses drops dramatically when it comes to questions about the government asked in modality of obligation ('the government should…').

Having ranked all these demands within one table we get a hierarchic structure showing areas of political activity and major political goals. Based on this information the most meaningful task that the authorities may have is securing human rights and freedoms, in other words, securing the well-being of the individual and protecting that individual from administrative arbitrariness and unfairness. This task is followed by protecting the environment, improving well-being, cutting unemployment and providing guarantees of employment, and focusing on improving the position of young people. Indirectly this list of demands shows how much the minds of young people are dependent on the authorities and how much young people want the authorities to care about them and to create acceptable living conditions. The requirement to fight against corruption has exactly the same origin. It is also very telling that the share of those who think that the government should not deal with these issues is very small and varies from 2% to 8%.

Specific objectives of governmental efforts, like fostering private entrepreneurship, protecting the rights of women and young people, as well as political and ideological objectives like cultivating state patriotism or fostering national identity, enhancing national security and strengthening military power, fostering population growth, and fighting illegal immigration are seen by respondents as less relevant or less important today. The share of indifferent responses to these questions notably goes up.

In general young respondents are taken by the idea that the state should reclaim its role in directing economic growth and distributing benefits as a prerequisite to higher social justice. In a way this reflects the resilience of socialist beliefs inherited from Soviet times.

The sum total of all these answers gives us an impressive picture of two opposing ideologies gripping the minds of young Russians: opponents of state regulation and advocates of both state regulation and the subordination of the economy to political objectives.

Noteworthy is the low prevalence of liberal attitudes. Such distribution indicates weak, blurred and unstable positions of liberals and democrats in the absence of real liberal democratic parties, independent mass media, in a situation where freedom of speech and civil rights are suppressed. Only 43% of respondents believe that 'competition is harmful', a share that is not that far from that of their opponents. 40% of state regulation advocates agree that competition causes harm. A fairly sizeable number, 23%, think that the state should have a bigger stake in business and industry. Distribution of this kind indicates how weak, vaguely defined, and unstable the positions of the free market advocates are, especially taking into account the fact that the Russian government controls over 70% of assets in Russia.

With this difference in mind we look into each of these groups, i.e. advocates of a free market and supporters of state regulation, in order to identify those subgroups where respondents answer the largest number of questions on the one hand and on the other hand associate themselves with certain political movements or ideas. This will help us determine the extent to which previously declared political beliefs align with an understanding of how state, the economy, and society work.

The result is quite predictable: poor and undereducated respondents tend to support conservative and authoritarian parties like the Communist and the Agrarian party (the latter is virtually the same as the Communist party but plays the role of an agricultural lobby). Top rural bureaucrats and university graduates tend to support the Communist party as well. The youngest cohorts, especially among the undereducated and poor population of medium cities and rural towns, and the most impoverished group of the population in Russia support the nationalists.

TABLE 19. **To which extent should the national government focus on…** *(in %)*

TABLE 20. **How much do you agree with the following…**

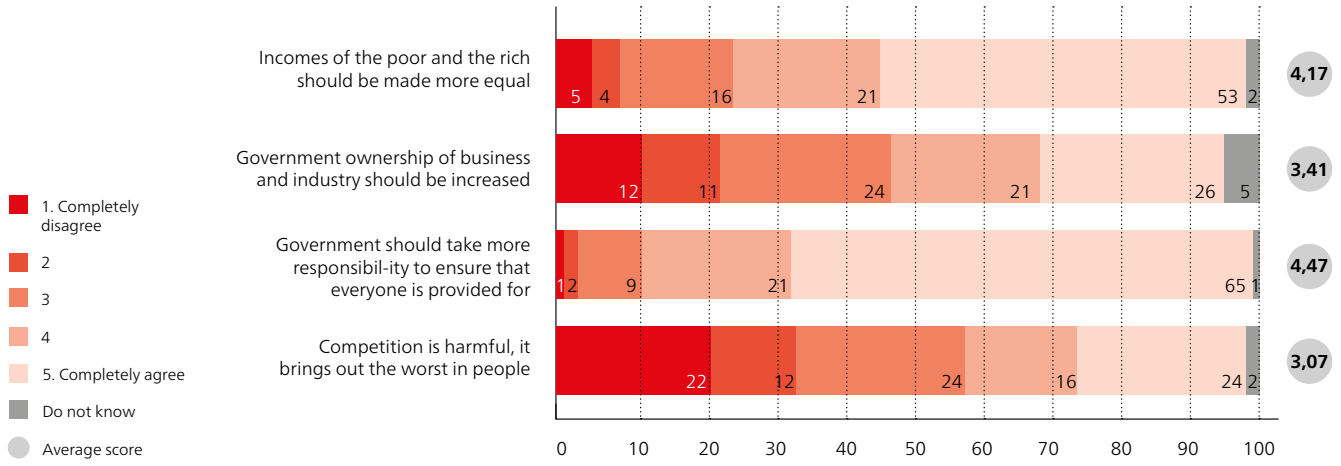
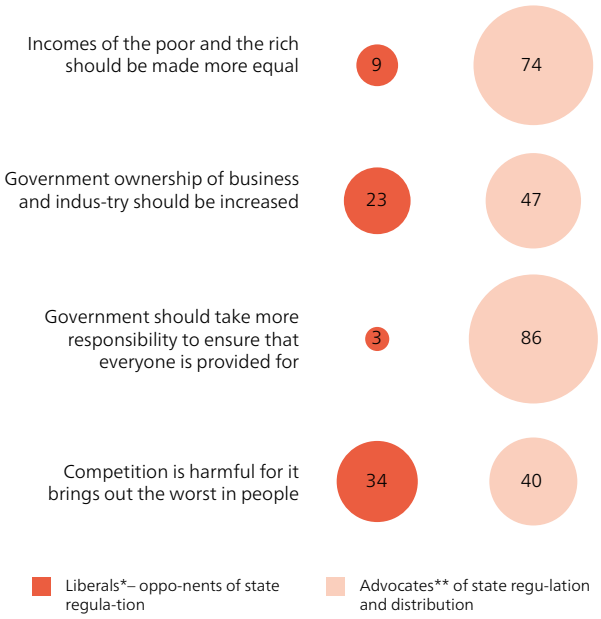


TABLE 21. **Do you agree that**

Prevalence of liberal and state attitudes among young people surveyed (in % of all respondents)

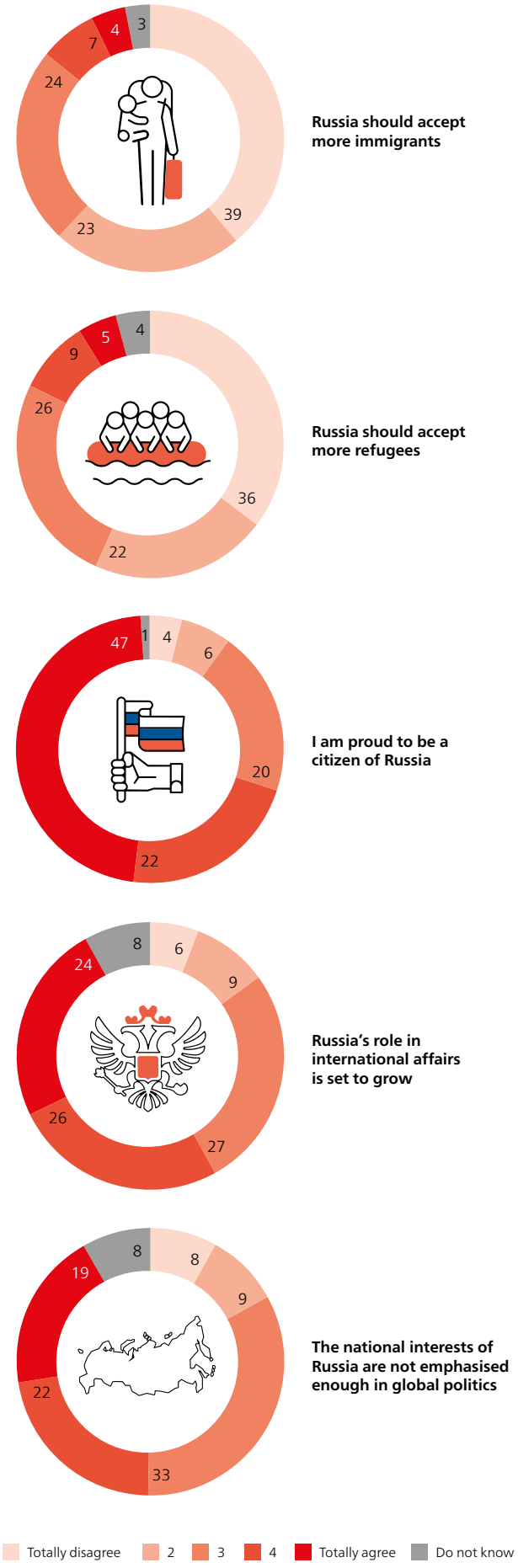


* Total of options 1 and 2 in response to items under question Q86 (Table 20).
** Total of options 4 and 5 in response to items under question Q86 (Table 20).

TABLE 21A. **Political preferences of 'firm liberals' and 'staunch supporters of state regulation'**

	Maximum responses	Maximum responses
Socialists	higher education, 18–24 years old, resi-dents of big cities	Moscow
Liberals	Moscow, 18–24 years old, higher education	Vocational training, village and small town residents
Communists	Village residents, poor, 21–24 years old, below secondary education, higher education	Moscow, secondary education
Agrarians	Poor, small towns	Moscow, higher education
Nationalists	Poor, 14–17 years old, below sec-ondary education, residents of small towns	Higher education, 18–20 years old
Advocates of the firm-hand approach	no significant variance	no significant variance

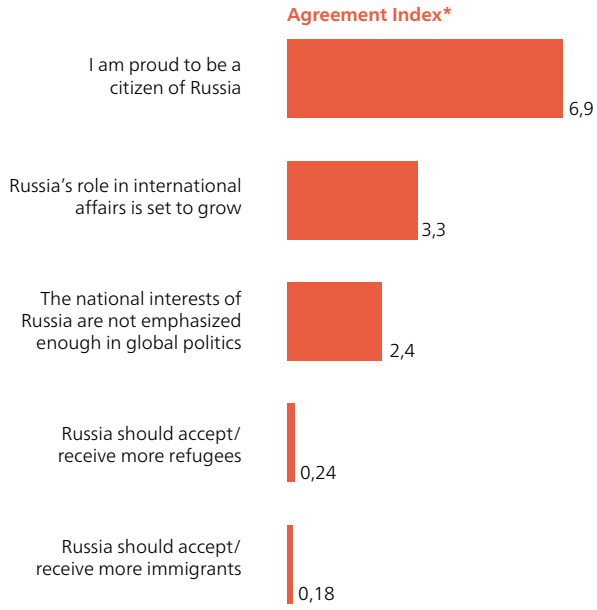
TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS? *(in %)*



Wealthier Moscow residents mostly with university degrees (not including respondents who are too young to graduate yet) tend to associate themselves with the liberals. Well-educated and affluent young residents of big cities tend to associate themselves with Socialists.

Half of the respondents are sure that Russia's prestige and international clout will keep growing, with only 15% disagreeing with this point. 69% are proud to be Russian citizens, with just 10% not being proud of it and only 1% of respondents undecided. It is telling that the share of respondents who are proud to be Russian citizens is greater among socially depressed and poor social groups who also tend to feel nostalgic about the USSR. Thus in rural areas this number is 80%, in small towns it goes down to 74%, and then it drops to 61% in wealthy but protest-prone Moscow. In Moscow 16% are 'not proud to have Russian citizenship' versus 7% in rural areas. This implies that such views and beliefs are social painkillers of sorts for those from economically depressed areas and help relieve social tensions in these groups.

FIG. 10. **To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**



* The responses are arranged by the agreement index, which is calculated as a ratio of the number of those who agree (options 4 and 5) to the number of those who disagree (options 1 and 2).

7

RUSSIA AND EUROPE

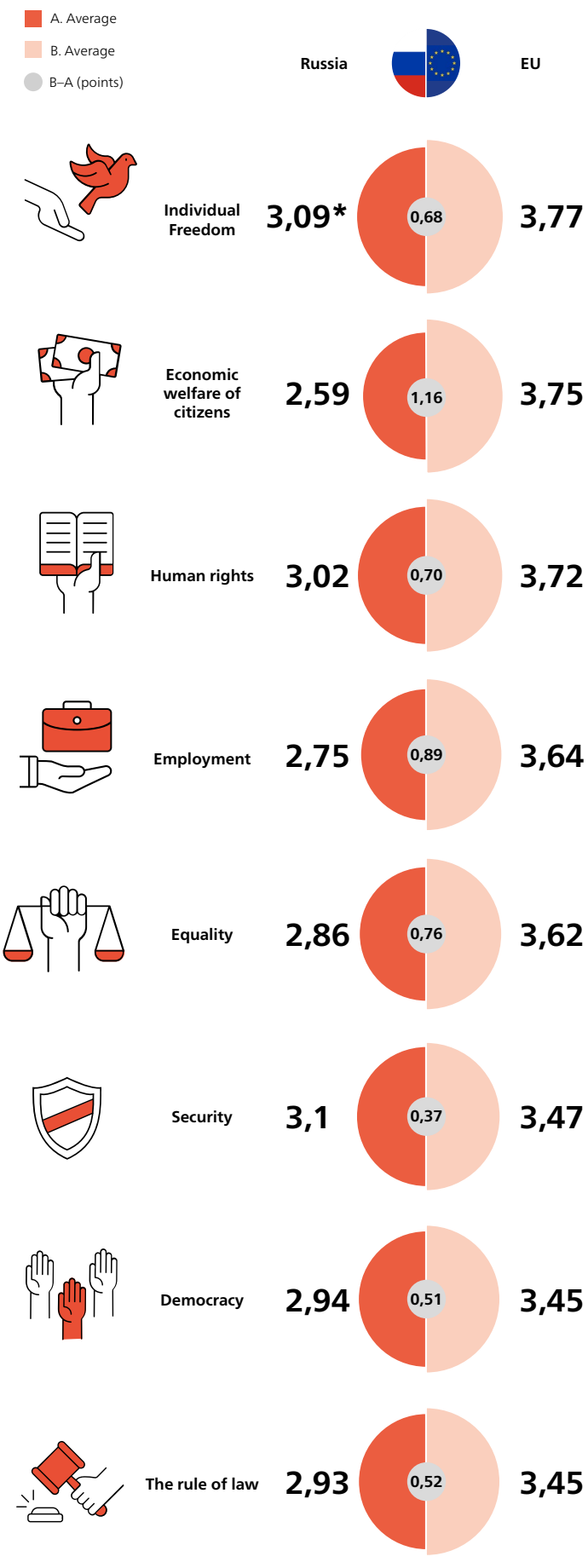
ATTITUDE TOWARDS DEMOCRACY: RUSSIA VS. EU

In response to the question: 'How satisfied are you, in general, with the democracy situation in Russia?' the majority of respondents provides evasive answers that show a lack of clear position or clear idea about democracy and its criteria that may be applied to the situation in Russia. 22% are quite happy, 36% unhappy, and 42% have a marginal position or don't know how to respond to the question. The question itself makes it somewhat hard for respondents to provide a definite answer and they tend to provide average, that is to say conformist assessments on the scale from 1 to 5. A clearer position was voiced by those who look at the democracy situation in Russia from a negative perspective. The majority of such respondents are mostly found amongst Muscovites (the balance between positive and negative responses is 0.52), amongst people with higher education (0.45), those aged 21–24 years old (0.41), and men in general (0.56; women, 0.71).

Opinions on the situation in the most problematic areas of social life in Russia and the EU, when compared, point to the sensitive spots in the Russian public mind. Therve is an undoubtedly higher assessment of the situation in European countries in all areas that are important to the Russians: economic welfare (what seems to be the most important for the Russians and where the gap between Russia and EU countries is the biggest), lack of arbitrariness of the authorities (individual freedom), individual legal protection, ensuring employment, and people's equality.

> *'In Europe… everything is new and they are doing something new all the time, they create, create and create. And Russia has stopped: kind of, oh, look, we are doing nothing, but some time ago we created "Topol-M" [intercontinental ballistic missile], now, be afraid of us. If you blow us up, we'd take the hidden weapon from under the ground and destroy you too, so make sure you're afraid of us. Meanwhile, we just relax, stretch our legs, hang around, and watch people on the Internet idolize your country. We'll imprison them for not being patriots and for insulting Russia. We'll put you in jail because you liked that country more.'*
>
> Novosibirsk, 18–24

HOW GOOD OR BAD, IN YOUR VIEW, IS THE STATUS OF THE FOLLOWING VALUES IN



*Ranked by EU (B). More points indicate better situation in the area in question.

QUOTATIONS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS: PORTRAIT OF EUROPE

'People are smiling when they walk down the streets. In our country – everyone is sad. That's understandable, this is Russia, it's cold here.'
Novosibirsk, 18–24

'We are beginning to look a lot like Europe, or the USA. Some young people's trends, music are the same. Something becomes popular in the US – bam! – it's popular in our country as well. Chinese trends. There's something new on Avito [classified advertisement website] and it immediately becomes popular in Russia. A little bit of this, a little bit of that. We are transforming our future, becoming a more Europeanized country.'
Novosibirsk, 25–35

'Compared to Europe, their quality of life and ours, we are a little different.'

'No. We have a different mindset, not like theirs.'

'There's still a big gap between us and Europe. Take technology, quality of life, everything.'

'No, Moscow, of course, is Europe …. While Vologda is not Europe at all.'

'Moscow – is an independent state, Vatican city.'

Why is Vologda not Europe?
'No such salaries.'
'Quality of life, healthcare, education – everything really.'

'Roads.'

'No infrastructure, no conveniences at all. In Europe – everything is mostly for the people, in our case – everything is for somebody else.'

'I don't know, Europe is Europe. Russia has to be an independent state anyway. Yes, we must copy their positive experience, they have more of it than we do. If we take something good, develop it a little further, in principle it might be quite good.'

'Accession [to the EU]? No one would let us in.'

'Actually, there's no need to be there.'

'Why would we want to be part of it? If we join – we'd have to share. We are doing quite well without them; we are a self-sufficient country that has plenty of all sorts of resources.'
Vologda, 18–24

RUSSIA – EUROPE: CONFRONTATION

64 per cent of respondents are sure that Russia and European countries have been locked in severe confrontation in recent years (even more Muscovites share this opinion – 73%). The clear minority of 20% disagrees.

At the same time the absolute majority of young Russians sees such confrontation as an 'abnormal' condition of state-to-state relations, and equally does not consider such a circumstance to be inevitable and not subject to change. On the contrary, 52% think that the relationship between Russia and the West may truly be friendly (and again, it's mostly Muscovites who talk about it more often, as well as youths 14 to 20 years old: 60% and 62%, respectively). However, with age, the confidence in the capability to normalize relations with Europe declines and amongst 25–29-year-olds

> *Yes, they think we're so scary or something, Russia, the North.'*
> Vologda, 25–35

FIG. 12. **To what extent do you presently identify yourself with Western culture?** *(in %)*

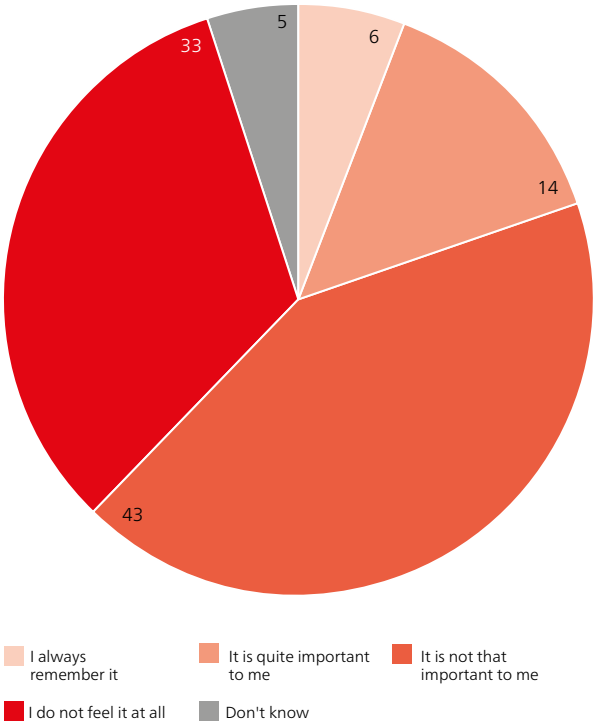


FIG. 11. **Do you fully agree, rather agree, rather disagree, or strongly disagree with the statement 'Russia is a European country'?** *(in %)*

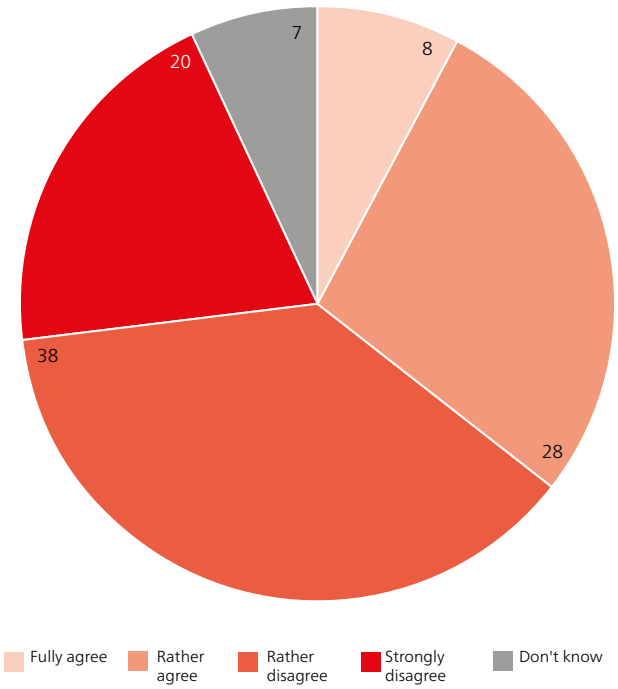
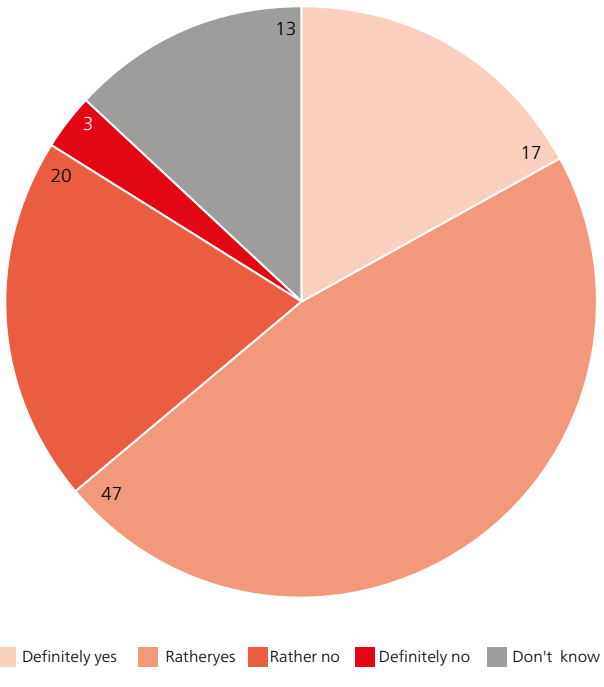
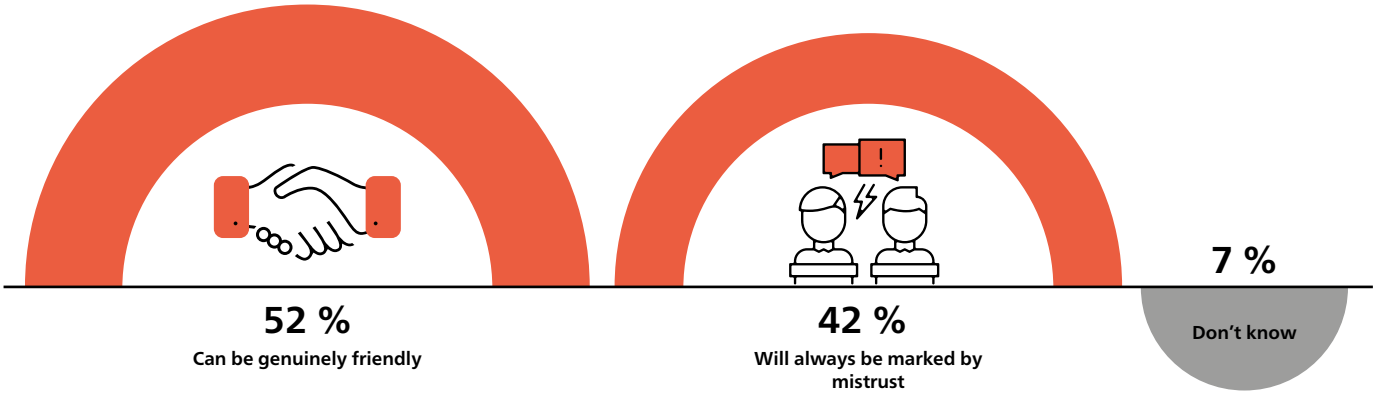


FIG. 13. **Would you personally agree or disagree with the opinion that over the last years Russia and Europe have been locked in severe confrontation?** *(in %)*



DO YOU THINK RELATIONS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE WEST CAN BE GENUINELY FRIENDLY OR WILL ALWAYS BE MARKED BY MISTRUST?



'Actually they never like us and are always afraid of us. These wars are endless.'
Vologda, 25–35

'[We are scaring them] with our uncertainty and improvisation.'
Vologda, 25–35

it drops down to 40%. Moreover, hopes for normalization are defeated by the opinion that antagonism of such a nature cannot be overcome, and that relations between our countries will always be based on mistrust (51%).

The reasons for such confrontation, according to these respondents, are based, first of all, on the USA's anti-Russia policy (that's what 48% of respondents believe, and more mature and educated respondents have a stronger opinion about this, shared by 55–56%; such views are more characteristic of Moscow vs. rural areas – 51%, compared to 42% in small towns). Respondents believe that an additional factor in this conflict is NATO's aggressiveness, which poses a major threat to Russia's security. 15% of respondents are convinced of that, and once again it is often Moscow youth who express this opinion: 24%. Both groups that provided such answers (USA and NATO are 'to blame'), overlap, which means that by and large such answers are provided by the same respondents.

The number two party amongst 'the guilty ones' is Europe itself (20% believe so). It's interesting that the more ideology-driven groups of respondents – well-educated Muscovites – blame Europe less for the deterioration of relations between Russia and the EU, believing that the US is putting pressure on the EU and that European countries, in this case, find themselves in a dependent position, that they are not capable of playing an independent role.

Only a relatively small group of respondents sees the reasons behind the deterioration of relations between the EU and Russia in the politics of Russia itself, believing that this conflict nature was caused by the actions of Russia's leadership (15%) and its military leadership (2%). The opinion

WHICH SIDE DO YOU THINK IS PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN THIS CONFRONTATION BETWEEN EUROPE AND RUSSIA?

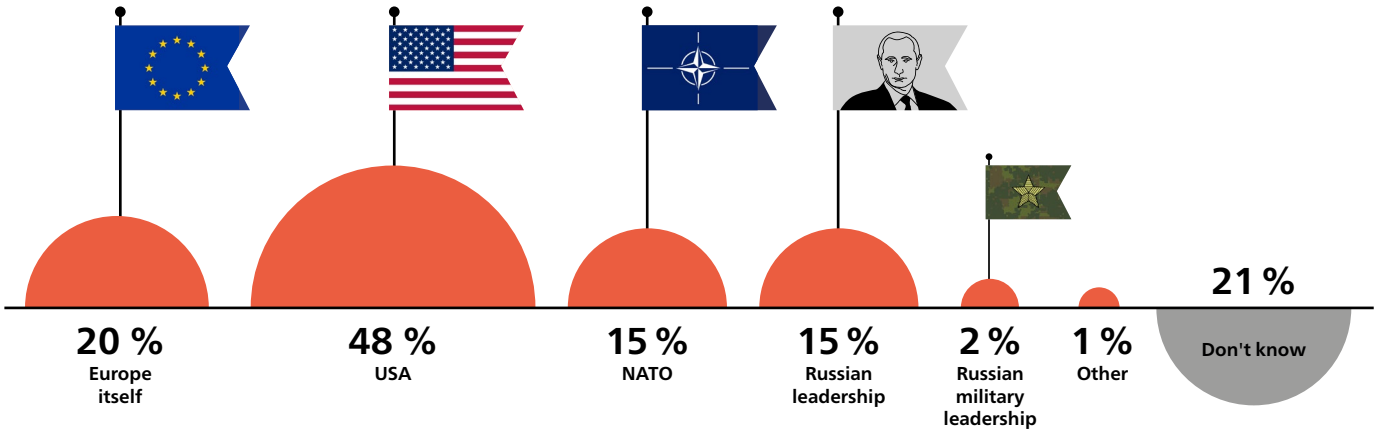
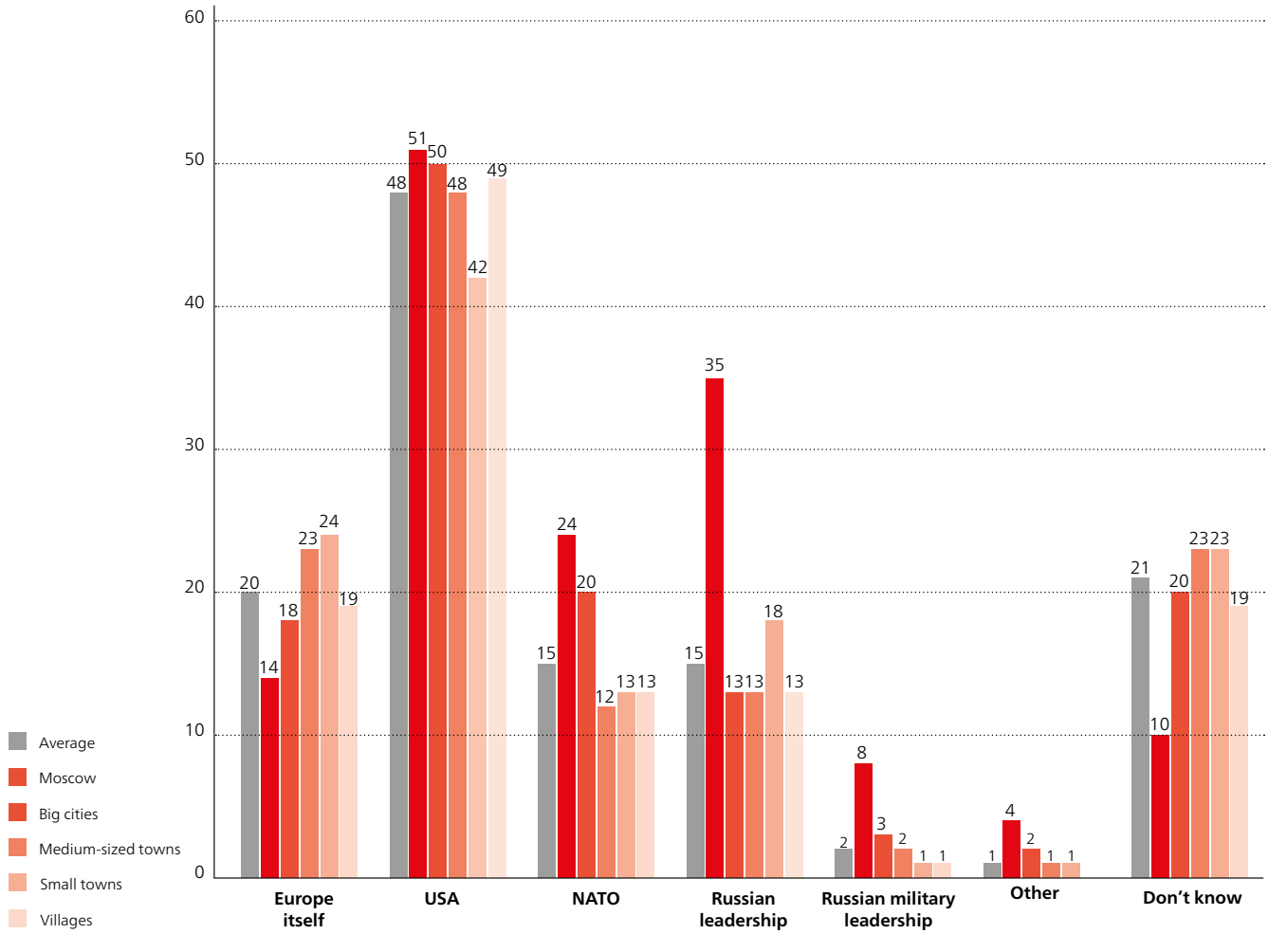


TABLE 22. **Which side do you think is primarily interested in this confrontation between Europe and Russia?**



of Moscow youth is very different once again from those who live in other cities and other settlements (35% of Muscovites hold the Russian leadership accountable for the on-going conflicts). In other words, there is a great deal of polarization between the opinions of Muscovites and those of rural youth.

It's worth noting the high cumulative percentage of those who answered 'don't know' in response to the question or refused to answer at all (21%).

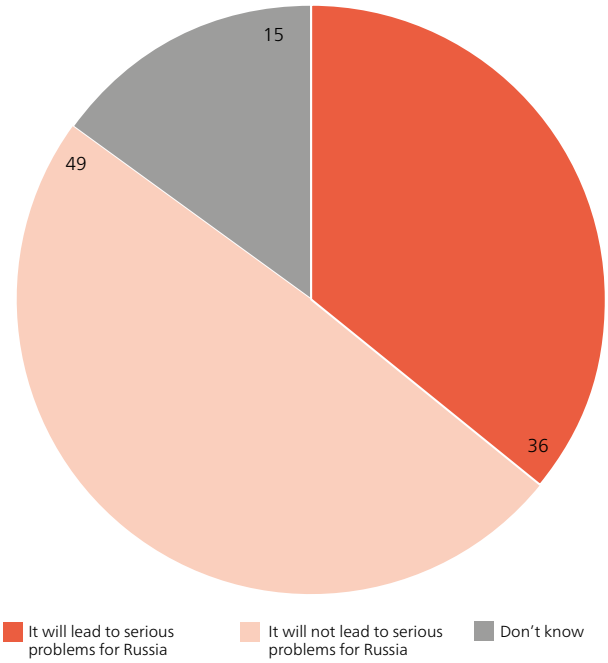
A little over 1/3 of Russian youth is concerned about the growing tension between the EU and Russia (36% on average, however amongst Muscovites and respondents with higher education this number is higher: 45–46%, which equals the number of those not bothered by the perspective – also 45–46%). But the majority – 49% – believes that further reduction of cooperation between Europe and Russia would not create serious problems and difficulties for Russia itself (in rural areas this opinion is much stronger, in villages, for example, 54% of respondents share it).

Apparently that is why the absolute majority of respondents doesn't welcome any reduction of tension between the EU and Russia that would include certain 'concessions' on Russia's part, i.e. going back to what it used to be like before the war in Donbas and annexation of Crimea. 67% of respondents would be against the idea of returning Crimea to Ukraine in exchange for the lifting of sanctions against Russia (22% would support such an action; in Moscow, 31%). It's interesting that readiness for such an exchange can be found not only amongst Muscovites and more affluent categories of respondents, but also amongst the poorest categories of youth – 29%. Slightly more respondents would welcome the proposal to end support for separatists in Donbas in exchange for the lifting of sanctions (such a policy of the Russian leadership would be supported by 29%, whereas 55% would not support it). But then again such support is much stronger amongst Muscovites (45% would approve it; 49% would not).

The only thing that the Russian young people are eager to agree to is full exchange of military prisoners by both sides (Ukraine and unrecognized LPR [Lugansk] and DPR [Donetsk]) in exchange for the lifting of sanctions against Russia. On average, such a proposal would be supported by 52% (32% would vote against in such a case). In Moscow this idea is supported by 80% (14% against and 6% don't know).

> *'We have huge nuclear capability.'*
> Vologda, 25–35

FIG. 14. **Will further deterioration of cooperation between Russia and European nations and the European Union lead to serious problems for Russia, or not?** *(in %)*



QUOTATIONS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS: CONFRONTATION WITH EUROPE

'We are scary indeed.'

'Belligerent.'

'We have huge nuclear capability.'

'[This is] good.'

'Yes, they should be afraid.'

'I'm very scared anyway.'

'Of course it should. We need a continuous dialogue, these sanctions – that's wrong. These sanctions don't do our economy any good, it's getting worse. So we need to talk.'
Vologda, 25–35

Should the relationship be patched up?

'No.'

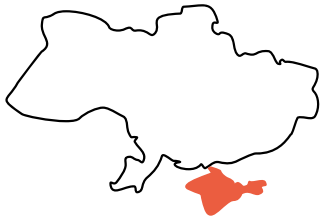
'We need to avoid war.'

'We need to reach an agreement.'

WOULD YOU SUPPORT/NOT SUPPORT THE RUSSIAN LEADERSHIP IF, IN EXCHANGE FOR LIFTING OF SANCTIONS,

Would support | Would not support | Don't know

THEY RETURNED CRIMEA TO UKRAINE?

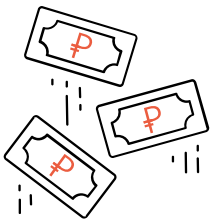


22 %

67 %

12 %

IT WOULD STOP PROVIDING ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SUPPORT TO DONETSK AND LUGANSK PEOPLE'S REPUBLICS?



29 %

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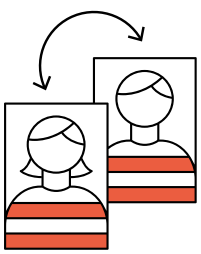
16 %

IT EXCHANGED MILITARY AND POLITICAL PRISONERS WITH UKRAINE?



52 %

32 %

16 %

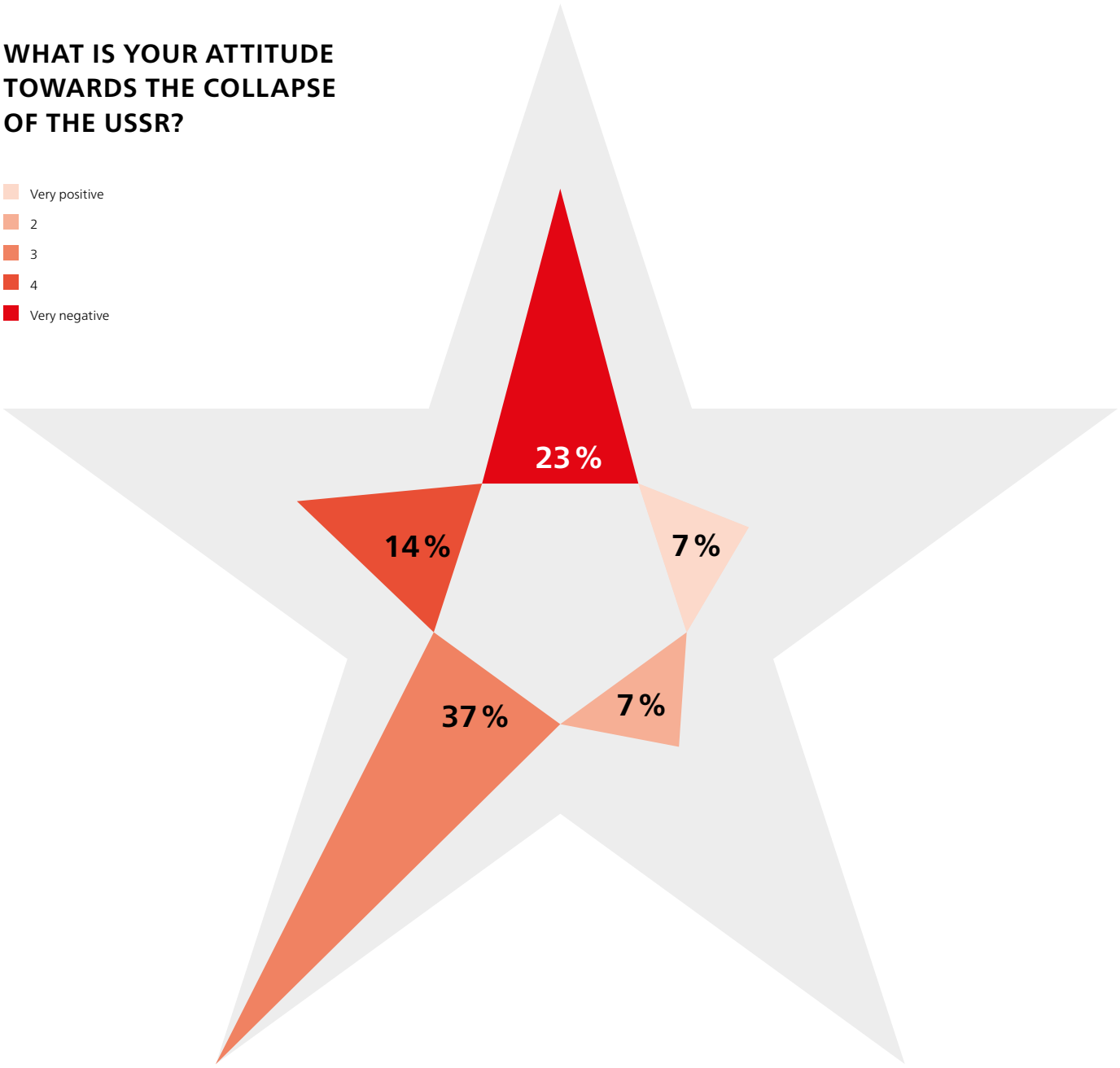
COLLAPSE OF THE USSR

The policy of the Russian leadership rests on the assumption that gradually Russia is getting rid of the negative consequences of the collapse of the USSR; it is coming back to life and becoming strong again, rightfully obtaining the status of superpower that the Soviet Union once had. The fact that Russia possesses nuclear weapons is what's making everyone else give it special treatment.

The collapse of the USSR is not as painful for young people as it is for the older generation. It's because they know very little about life in Soviet times and what they know comes from the stories told by the older generation that mythologizes those times a great deal. On average half of the young population is indifferent or doesn't much regret the end

> *All that social structure, meaning free education, free healthcare, I think it may also be considered to be a good thing. The military sphere began to develop back then. It was relevant then, not so much nowadays, completely different. High level of industrialization, development of agriculture, plus science was strong too.'*
>
> Moscow, 18–24

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE COLLAPSE OF THE USSR?

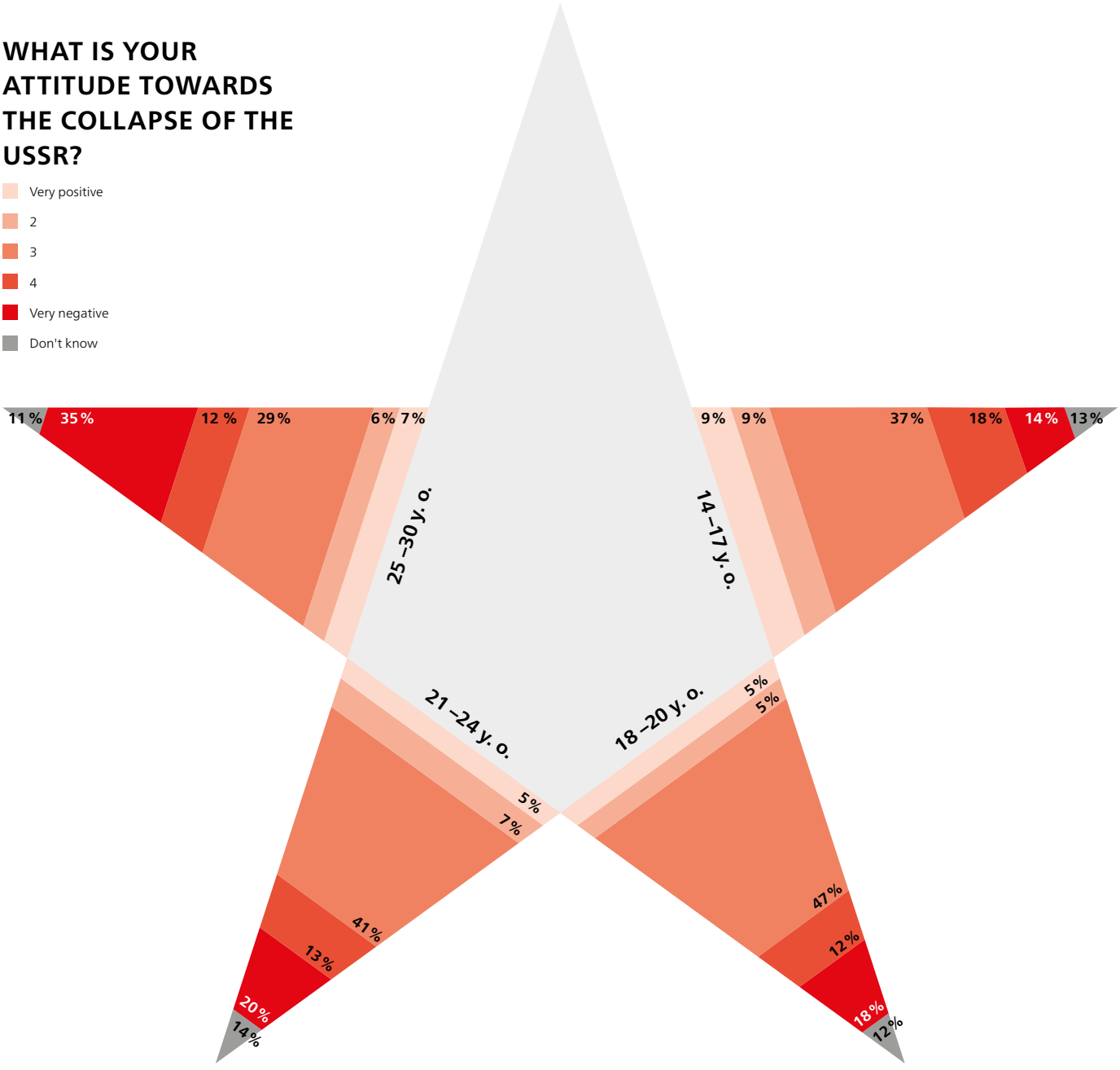


of the Soviet system and empire. If you add up the numbers on Fig. 21 (positive points 1 + 2, negative points 4 + 5), we can see the following: 37% of respondents consider the collapse of the USSR to be an extremely negative development, 14% see good in it, but 50% have no clear position (the cumulative number of respondents who chose point 3 and didn't know what to say). It means that the polarized positions (regrets and dissatisfaction with 1991 events) have no strong influence on the 'swamp' in the middle or, to be more precise, the negative effects of the collapse of the USSR are becoming weaker in new generations.

Young people have a very vague idea of what life was like in the USSR, receiving as they do the second-hand knowledge about it from TV shows or the older generation's stories. The Soviet past was severely criticized at the end of the 1980s / first half of the 1990s, but such criticism had almost stopped by the early 2000s, and from the mid-2000s Soviet achievements have been strongly praised and whitewashed.

A majority of young people, particularly the younger cohorts, have no particular opinion about the collapse of the USSR, but a clear minority views it as a positive development, particularly among 14–17 year olds (18%), people with liberal views, and Muscovites (22%). Those who view the collapse as a negative development include older groups of young people (25–29 years old) and those with vocational secondary education, the poor, and those from rural areas (population of towns and villages). However the main tone of the young people's attitudes (apart from the older generation[13]) is disinterest, uncertainty, and indifference, viewing the collapse of the Soviet empire as an irreversible fact of life that is of more relevance to the older generations, than to the younger. Young Russians are already living in a different, post-Soviet, reality.

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE COLLAPSE OF THE USSR?



QUOTATIONS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS: COLLAPSE OF THE USSR

'Empty shelves in the shops, people say. But the good thing is that we had education. You knew what you were going to get … You finish school, you could go to college, vocational college, or a university, or any other educational institution, you knew that you were going to study there and you were going to have a job.'

'Everything used to belong to the state and that's what was good.'

'Nowadays you work and you don't know what's going to happen in 5 years, you don't know what awaits you.'

'We were confident about the future.'
Novosibirsk, 18–24

'There was no strict segregation. The quality of life of a government official or a regular worker was not that different.'

'Yes, everybody says that it used to be better.'
Novosibirsk, 25–35

'First of all, because all those countries were together as one state … To my mind it's a good thing, meaning, there was no need for wars. Such ideas had never crossed our minds. Everybody was helping each other every way they could, because they knew that it's just one of the republics and they all had to stick together.'

'If one was earning an honest livelihood, one could achieve anything on his or her own, but I think that was true during the historic epoch of the Soviet Union. That's why if you compare the 30s and 80s – I think, that's wrong.'
Moscow, 18–24

'One already knew that he or she could go here, then there and so on. One's life was planned ahead, one had everything one might need. Plus some equal opportunities.'

'One was given an apartment, a job. I had higher education and could easily apply for a top position and be a boss.'

'People had stability inside them – you get education first, you work afterwards, they knew they were going to have a job. Prices, again, prices were different as well as salaries. Presently it's vice versa – prices are higher and salaries are the same.'

'I believe people were friendlier then.'
Vologda, 25–35

What's on the negative side?
'When the USSR was founded it was a more totalitarian state with numerous repressions. If you look at it after WWII, you'd see a developing, authoritarian state that had a promising future.'

'National republics started to form.'

'There used to be censorship in the USSR.'
'Naturally there was an iron curtain back then, I don't know what period of time are we talking about.'

'Everyone was supposed to obey.'

'Shortages.'

'People had to take what was available, even if it was last piece of something, but they could not choose like we can – you come to the store and you stand there for a couple of hours in front of one shelf thinking which brand is better.'
Vologda, 25–35

What has improved since the collapse?
'We've left isolation behind.'

'Yes, we have a little bit more freedom now.'
'Freedom, phones, Internet.'

'All sorts of equipment, one may say. Equipment has improved.'

'Quality of life (has improved))… We now have phones, TV panels – and all that.'

'We have a Constitution, I mean of the Russian Federation, not of "united something".'
Vologda, 18–24

'There is more glasnost. There wasn't any before, during Stalin times. I think the situation is better now.'

'New technologies, much more of those now. To a certain extent, probably, we are using the same plants to manufacture things using European experience, even though we've never done this before. We were only doing things the Soviet way, from shelf to shelf.'

'Meat grinders and cars are still in use up until today.'

What has got worse?
'There's no work actually. There used to be work back then, and now?'

'Loans. Everyone is forced to take a loan.'

'We were happy at first, but not so much now, because there's nothing to repay the loan with.'
Vologda, 25–35

8

YOUTH AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

IDENTITIES: HIERARCHY AND PRIDE

Identity is one of the key concepts in modern social studies and everyday life. It can be national, regional, ethnic, religious, etc. To measure identity the present survey uses the question 'How much do you see yourself as a...?' with a list of options. The survey shows that young people identify mostly as urban dwellers, they see themselves as 'citizens of their home towns' (in total, 87% agreed with the statement). Second favoured identities are national – 'Russian' (86%), and regional – 'a citizen of my region' (86%). To a lesser extent, respondents identify as 'world citizens' (50%) and even more rarely they say they are 'Europeans' (19%).

The average score was calculated for each of the identities in order to rank them by their prevalence (see Table 23).

Supranational identification is most prevalent among young people living in metropolitan areas. They are most likely to describe themselves as 'world citizens' and especially as 'Europeans' (the difference in identifying as 'Europeans' between those living in metropolitan areas and in rural areas is almost 1 point). However, the overall identity hierarchy of Moscow respondents is similar to that across Russia, and to that of young people living outside of big cities and in rural areas.

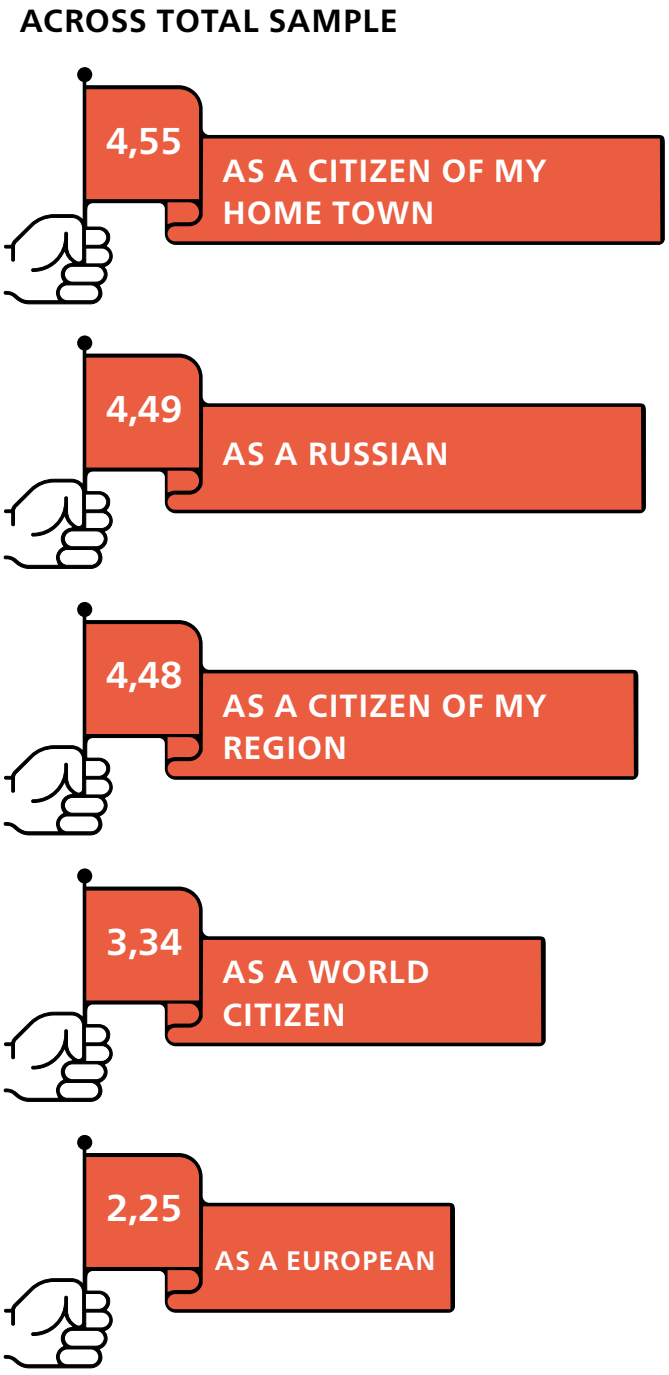
In terms of demography, the youngest group of respondents, aged 14 to 17, identifies as 'world citizens' somewhat more often than the older age group of 25–29 year-olds (in total, 58% and 45%, respectively).

Statistically, the level of education does not significantly impact on how often respondents pick certain options. When it comes to opting for a supranational (suprastate) identity, a more relevant factor is whether a respondent has ever been abroad. Those young people who have been abroad at least once tend to describe themselves as 'Europeans' and 'world citizens' more often than respondents with no such experience.

Another measure of the significance of national identity is the sense of pride associated with the mere fact of being

TABLE 23. **How much do you see yourself as a...?** *(The table features average scores on a scale from 1 'not at all' to 5 'completely'. The higher the number, the stronger the identification with the given option. The average score is ranked in descending order in the Across Total Sample column).*

See self	By settlement type				
	Moscow	city of more than 500,000	city of 100,000 to 500,000	city of up to 100,000	rural community
As a citizen of my home town	4.65	4.49	4.55	4.57	4.59
As a Russian	4.61	4.45	4.40	4.56	4.55
As a citizen of my region	4.69	4.41	4.46	4.48	4.56
As a world citizen	3.76	3.3	3.46	3.42	3.17
As a European	3.08	2.42	2.28	2.09	2.02



a Russian citizen – 'I am proud to be a citizen of Russia'. Overall, 69% of respondents agreed with this statement. Respondents with a more disadvantaged background, i.e. rural youth, on average showed an increased sense of pride (fully agree – 59%, cumulatively agree on two positions – 80%). Respondents with a university degree were less likely to fully agree with the pride statement (by 6 percentage points), unlike people who have less then a secondary education. However, level of education did not make a striking difference.

When looking into post-Soviet youth, especially older cohorts, it is particularly interesting to see how national ('I am Russian') and ethnic ('I am of Russian origin') identities overlap. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Soviet identity quickly started to be replaced with the Russian identity from the top down and with ethnic identities from the bottom up, leading to a surge in nationalist movements in early and mid-1990s.[14]

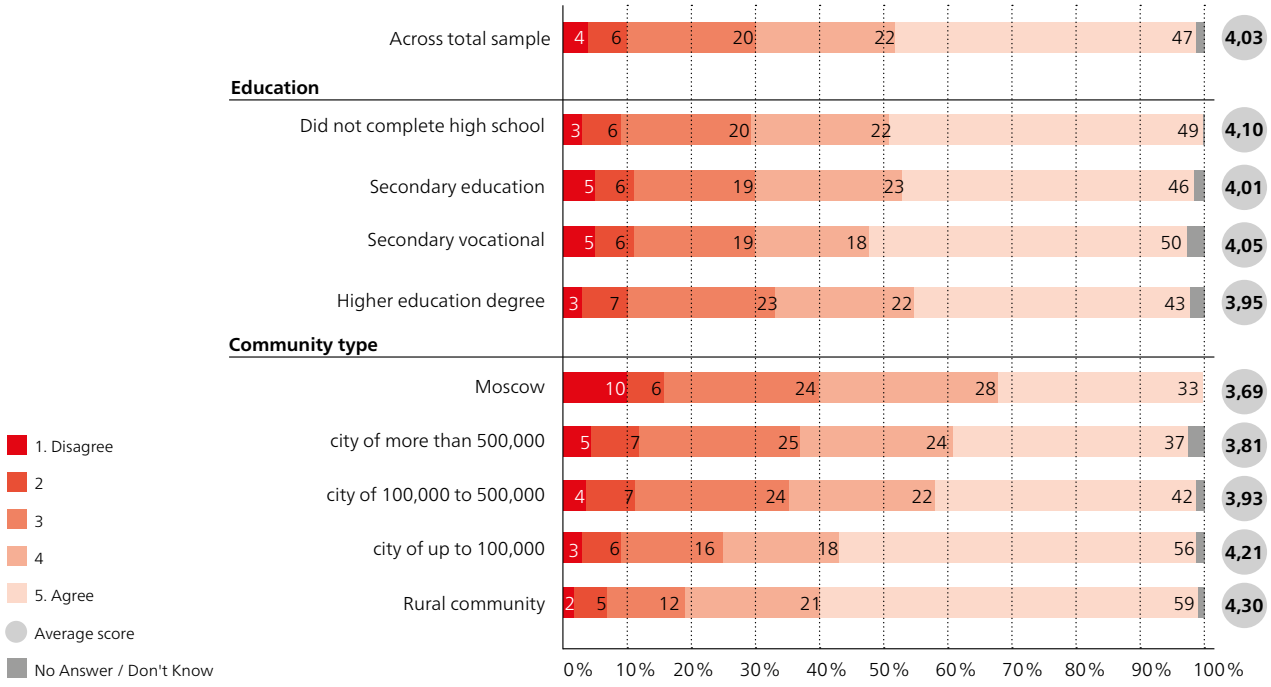
The questionnaire included ethnic indicators, such as the importance of ethnicity when choosing a marriage partner, supporting the idea that only the ethnic majority should live in the country, etc. That helped us to look into how perceived importance of ethnicity could impact respondents' national identity ('I am Russian'). Respondents who said their partner's ethnicity mattered or those who believed that 'It would be better, if Russia was only inhabited by ethnic Russians' called themselves 'Russian' more often than respondents did on average across the country, and more often than those who said ethnicity was unimportant (see Table 25).

For post-Soviet youth, it is rather normal that the descriptions of oneself as 'an ethnic Russian' and as 'a Russian citizen' fuse. This does not mean that these two identities are in conflict, but rather it highlights the importance of drawing a line between 'friend' and 'foe'. Respondents who say ethnicity matters identify more often with their nationality or region, but not as 'world citizens'.

TABLE 24. **Average score by age**

See self	Age			Ever been abroad	
	14–17	18–24	25–29	no	yes
As a citizen of my home town	4,53	4,49	4,63	4,55	4,53
As a Russian	4,42	4,43	4,61	4,51	4,43
As a citizen of my region	4,49	4,38	4,57	4,47	4,48
As a world citizen	3,63	3,27	3,16	3,30	3,42
As a European	2,32	2,22	2,23	2,10	2,55

TABLE 24A. **To what degree do you agree with the following statement: 'I am proud to be a citizen of Russia'?**



Young people still share the traditional importance attached to the concept of nation but that is more characteristic of older young adults born at the time when the USSR collapsed. In contrast, children born in the 2000s support ethnic diversity and predominantly disagree with discriminatory statements. Overall, 47% of 14–17-year-olds disagree with the statement that true Russians are only those 'who have Russian blood running through their veins', while 31% of the same age group agree with the statement. Among 18–24-year-olds this gap is smaller: 43% agree with the statement and 33% disagree. Among 25–29-year-olds the numbers are similar on both ends of the spectrum: 37% and 36%, respectively.

TABLE 25. **Russian identity through the prism of views on ethnicity***

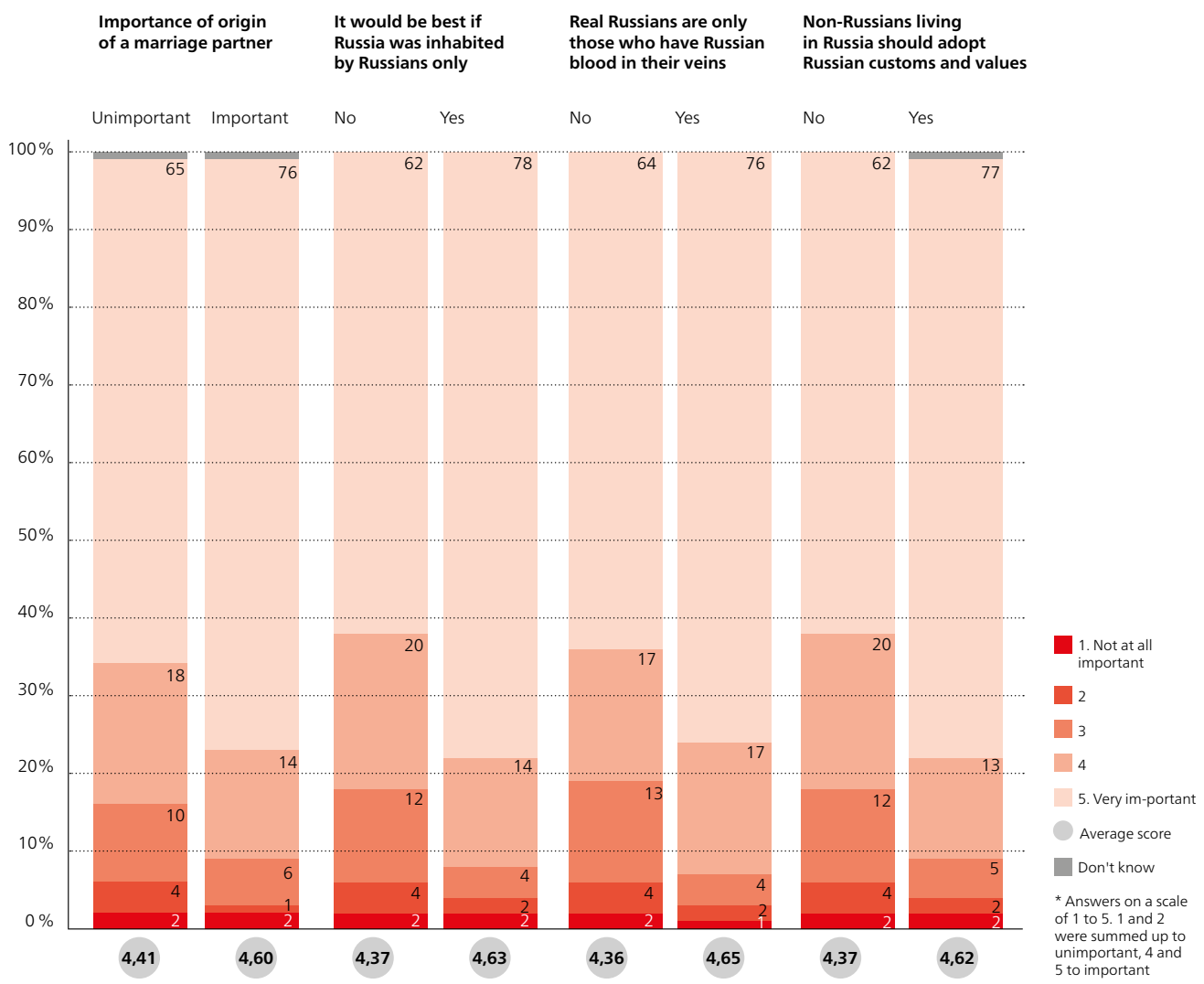
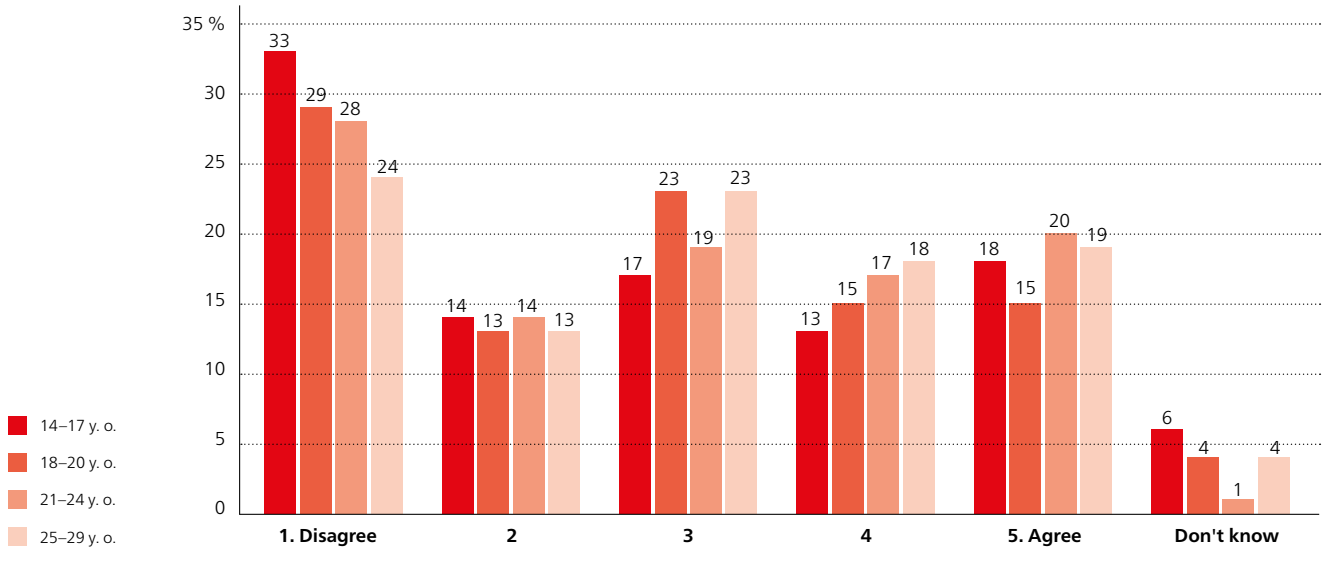


FIG. 15. **Degree of agreement by age with the statement 'Real Russians are only those who have Russian blood in their veins'**



9

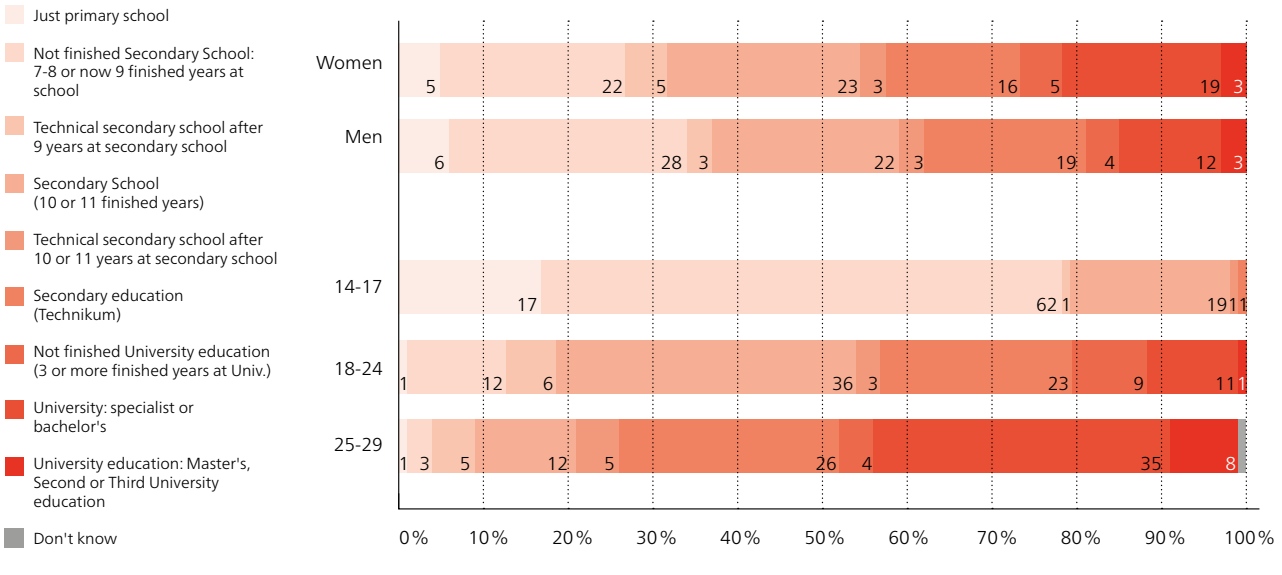
EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

EDUCATION AND WORK

This survey was conducted among respondents with different levels of education. Slightly less than a half the respondents (41%) say they want to graduate from a higher education institution with a bachelor's or a specialist's degree, 24% say they also want a master's. However, not everyone will accomplish that. The level of confidence in receiving a desired degree is quite high – 75% hope they will accomplish it, while only 6% are doubtful.

Almost half of respondents are satisfied with education in Russia (46%); however, one in five respondents (18%) are dissatisfied (Q58). Among those still in school, the level of satisfaction is higher – 48%. Respondents who have a secondary education and/or are now doing a degree programme (aged 18–24) tend to be less satisfied – 43%;

FIG. 16. **What is your highest education level completed so far?**



> *The people of my age are chiefly dissatisfied with how they teach in universities. They believe that education is the foundation for everything, and what we currently have is very odd people working in the sphere of education, frankly speaking, and they teach the wrong way, and as a result, new generations have a distorted way of thinking…'*
>
> Moscow, 18–24

the level of dissatisfaction, though, remains the same – 17%. The majority of respondents satisfied are found in Moscow (53%, with 14% of the dissatisfied). In other Russian cities, the satisfaction rate is slightly lower, at 44% on average.

Moscow, where the labour market is most highly developed, is the leader in terms of negative attitudes – only 39% of respondents in Moscow believe that the Russian education system meets the labour market's expectations and that educational institutions can train them properly for a future job. In rural areas, a similar opinion is shared by 45%. The most negative views on the education system are expressed in medium-sized cities (from 100,000 to 500,000 people). One in two respondents there think that the education people receive does not meet the market's expectations.

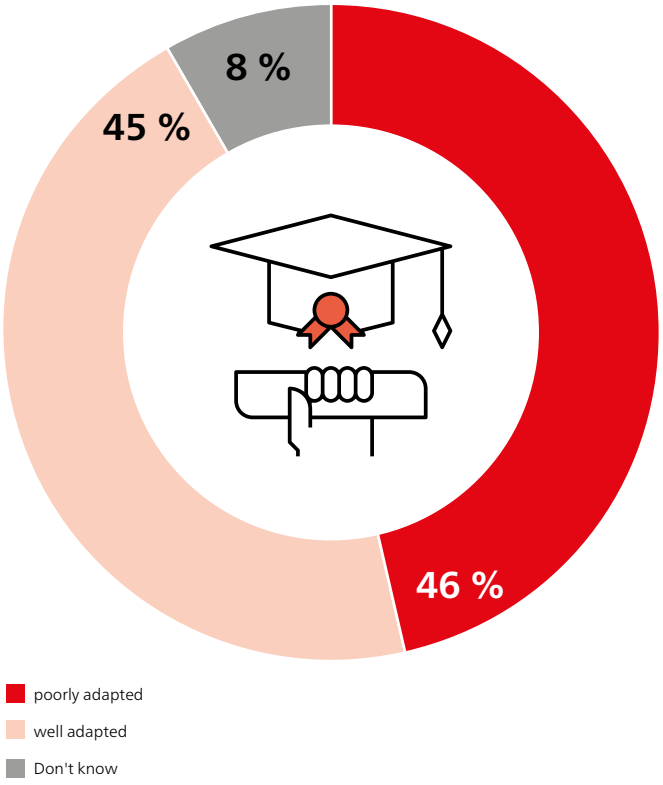
Despite negative views of the education system, respondents tend to be satisfied with their own education: 78% believe their education is very good, while only 6% are not satisfied.

Respondents do not tend to spend too much time on their homework or on preparing for classes. This question was only addressed to those who are currently in school, a vocational institution, or university. Their total number in the survey is 54% or 810 people. Slightly more than a third of respondents (32%) spend 1–2 hours a day on out-of-class studies. In sum, almost half of Russian youth spend '2–3 hours' and 'more than 3 hours' a day on homework – 26% and 23% respectively. Almost one in five respondents (18%) say it takes less than an hour to do homework. For comparison, overall, 43% spend 2–5 hours a day on the Internet.

Most commonly 14–17-year-olds (34% of them) in Russia spend 1–2 hours on their homework. Almost one in three (27%) students of the same age say they spend more time on this activity: 2–3 hours a day.

The next age group, of 21–24-year-olds, who are most likely in their senior years of BA or MA programmes, tends

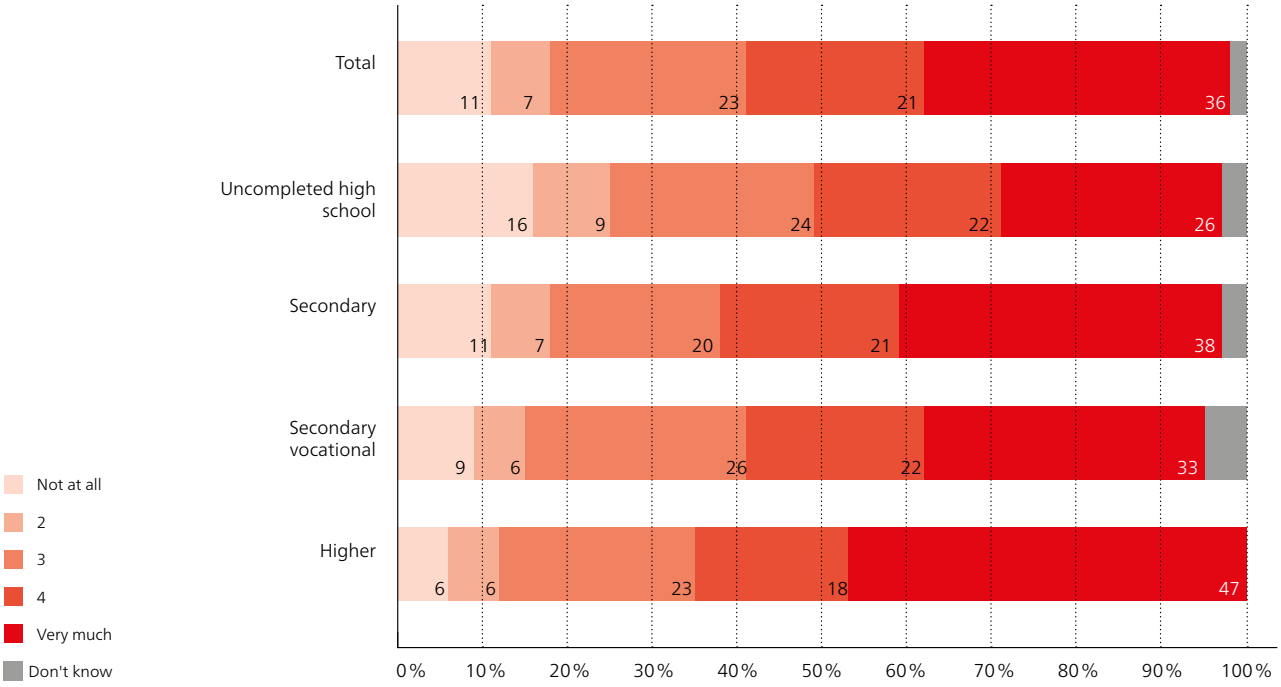
DO YOU THINK THAT IN RUSSIA, TRAINING, SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ARE WELL ADAPTED OR NOT TO THE CURRENT WORLD OF WORK?



to study even more. The same answer is preferred by this cohort: a third of them (31%) spends 2 to 3 hours on out-of-class studies, another third (29%) studies more than 3 hours a day. Only one in five young adults (21%) spends as little as 1–2 hours per day on studying.

A negative attitude to the quality of education is not the only issue. Corruption is another matter of concern. Responding to the question about bribery at universities, every second respondent says that 'buying grades' is a common practice in higher education institutions. 23% believe it happens 'from time to time', 18% believe bribing rarely occurs. People with a university degree are most likely to raise the issue of corruption – 65% of them say that you can buy grades. Even the Unified State Exams, designed to address the problem of admissions bribery, failed to live up to the task. These findings were supported by other surveys of school and university education.[15]

FIG. 17. **Do you agree that there are cases where grades and exams are 'bought' in institutes/universities?** *(%, comparison based on level of education)*



…a lot of what we are taught has already gone obsolete. They teach us what we don't need… take a student's book…written sometime back in the 80s. And you are thinking, okay, what good is this book now? It's no good. And it takes a couple of minutes to find an article that I need online, an article containing exactly the information I need.'
Novosibirsk, 18–24

QUOTATIONS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS: EDUCATION

'You have to pay for all of your education. And that's a fortune. Let's take an average family, in some cases they cannot afford to give their child an education, because it really can cost a lot. Forget about higher education, take school – you'll need to spent 50,000 right out of your pocket to get your child ready for school.'
Novosibirsk, 25–35

'If you want to have a nice vacation, earn the money. To earn the money, you need a job. To get a job, you need qualifications. Education is changing, new professions come into being, and we need to acquire new skills.'

'…the majority of people aren't serious about their degree at all. I'll cheat here, I'll get away with this assignment somehow, I'll forget it all the minute I pass my exams, I don't need it. I won't use it in my life. That affects the education system.'
Novosibirsk, 18–24

'…Education should be free of charge, I think. Not to mention secondary education. There is no money to pay for that. We need more state-funded places. Our generation can get by but for the younger ones, and those with no money, getting a degree is a risk. They don't always find a good job afterwards. Still, a degree gives you a lot.'
Vologda, 25–35

WORK AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

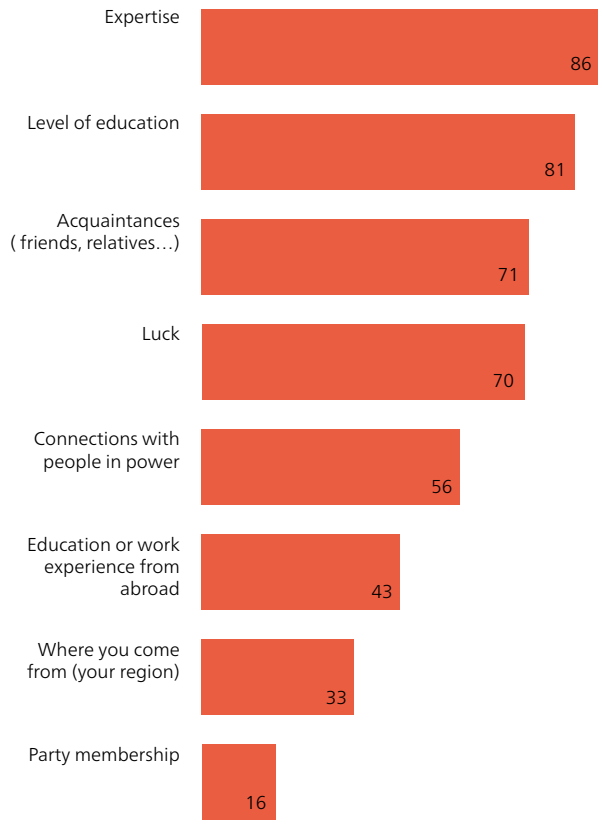
Education is closely associated with employment and the future career that young people will choose. 81% of respondents agreed that education helps one find a good job in the future, and 35% of them said that it would be 'very easy' to find a good job in the future (Q65). Schoolchildren of 14–17 years of age are the most optimistic about this. Across this demographic, 83% believe that education will help them get jobs in the future, while the older age group has more reservations, with only 54% certain of education's usefulness in finding a good job. The value of education is recognized by all social groups, including those based on income or financial status. Even among the poorest, who barely make ends meet, 74% say education is a contributing factor in getting a good job in the future, while in groups with higher income 78–79% recognize the value of education.

A third of respondents say they have been previously turned down by a potential employer for lack of a good education. The share of such people is larger, of course, in the older age group – 35% did not get a job because their education did not suffice (in Moscow the share of such cases was 41%, in other communities it was approximately 34%, regardless of the type of community). Respondents say key elements to finding a good job are professional skills and expertise (86%) and quality of education (81%) (Fig. 18). Still, when looking for a job, many rely on luck (70%) and social connections, such as acquaintances and relatives (71%).

Thus, despite being seen as an attribute of a successful person, education per se is not enough to start a professional career. Connections or just good luck, which is highly subjective, are also deemed important in finding a good job. 61% of Muscovites believe that luck is of paramount importance and plays a greater role than professional skills (only 57% of Moscow residents mentioned that these matter) and level of education (only 49% of Muscovites stressed its significance).

The attitude that young people have when they start looking for a job reflects not only their specific expectations, but their more general values as well, their idea of a 'good' or, as the youth in Russia put it, 'normal life'. From this standpoint, all factors listed in the survey are deemed valuable for young people. Formal factors are top of the list: income/salary (80% believe this factor is quite important) and job security (78%). These are followed by more subjective factors – 'career opportunities' and 'having the feeling of achieving something' – 71% and 66% of respondents say these factors are very important. Public good does not tend to play an important role, as giving back to the community and working with people are at the bottom of the list, with 51% and 46%, respectively.

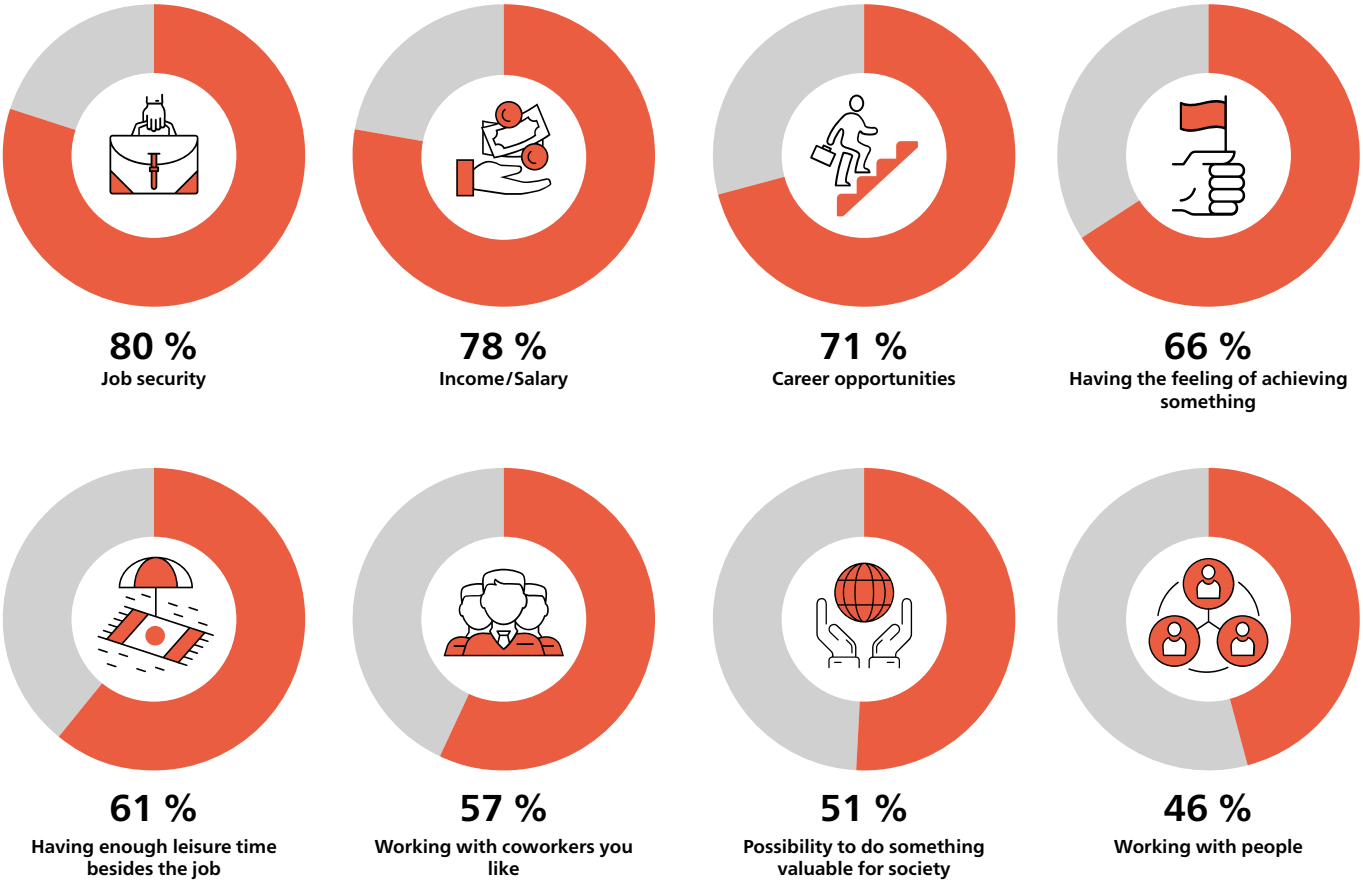
FIG. 18. **In your opinion, when it comes to finding a job for a young person in your country, how important is…?** *(in %)*



Neither the private nor public sector takes the lead when it comes to young people looking for a job. 38% and 39% would like to work in these sectors, respectively. 4% of young people would like to work for non-government organizations, while 10% opt for international organizations (this option is especially popular among the youngest respondents aged 14–17) (see Table 26).

> *That's why everyone is so eager to work, most people. Young people want to be their own bosses, they explore ways to set up their own businesses, even if small ones. Girls try to get their start in the beauty industry, start out really small, just not to work for someone and make their own money.'*
>
> Novosibirsk, 25–35

HERE ARE SOME FACTORS THAT PEOPLE CONSIDER IMPORTANT WHEN IT COMES TO CHOOSING A JOB TODAY. HOW IMPORTANT ARE THEY FOR YOU PERSONALLY?



'…Some people never settle, they do all sorts of things, they change jobs like socks. They don't like one job, they quit and start doing something else, and when they find out it doesn't suit them too – they quit again. These people end up doing that for half of their life, they get discouraged and blame everyone except themselves. They say everything is bad. And then there are those who want to fulfil their potential. … There's career and then there's family. And you have to choose… you can try to find balance between the two or just favour one over the other. You either devote yourself to your family or build your career.'

Novosibirsk, 25–35

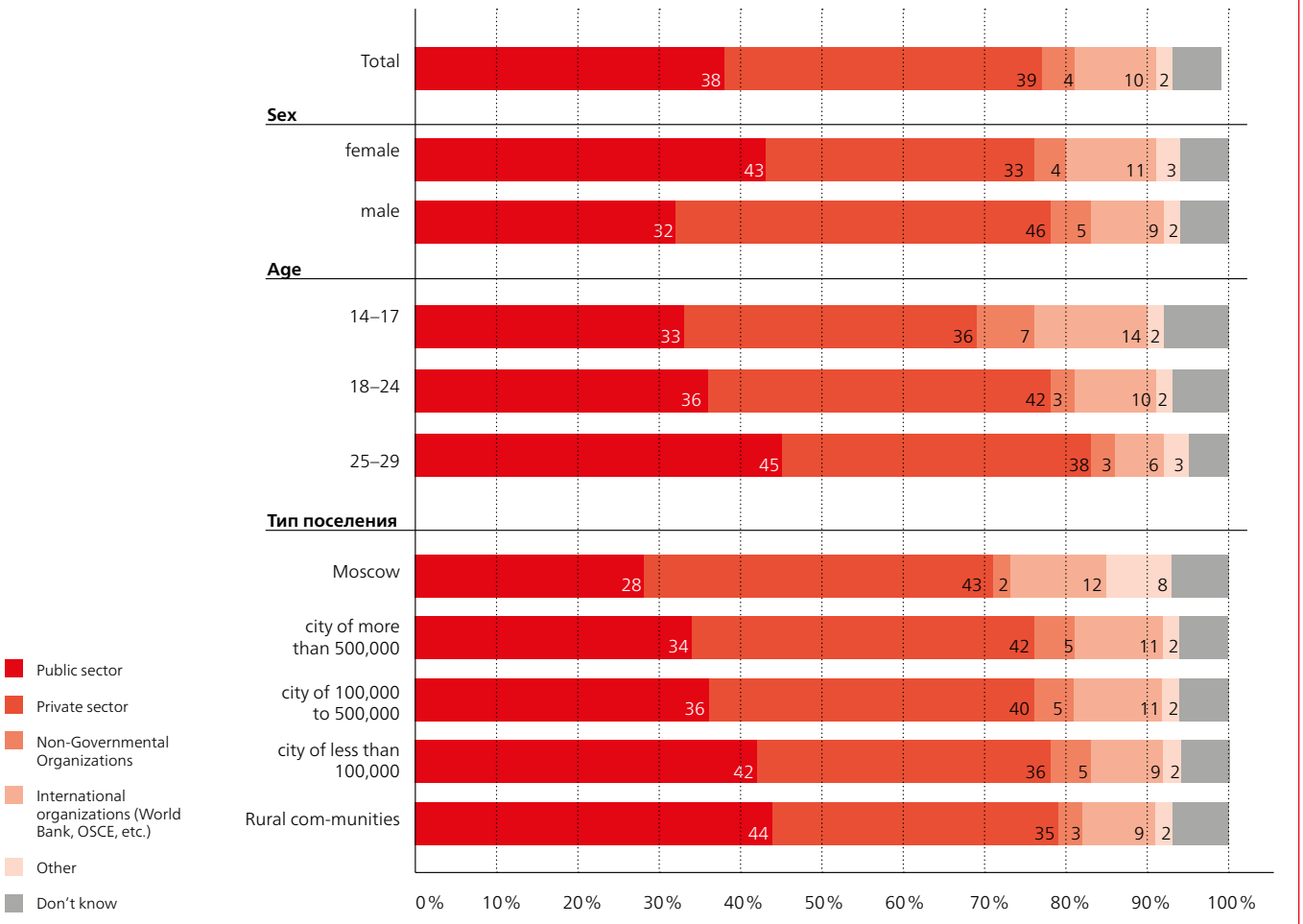
More men than women would prefer the private sector (46% of male and 33% female respondents), and the 25–29-year-olds favour the public sector more than any other cohort – 45%. This was chosen only by 33% of respondents aged between 14 and 17, and 36% of those from 18 to 24 years of age.

The answers to this question differ markedly among respondents who live in smaller cities, rural areas and Moscow. 44% of those living in small towns and villages would rather work in the public sector, while in Moscow the same answer was shared by only 28%. In other cities, residents also prefer the private sector. In cities with over one million inhabitants, this answer was given by 42%, in other major cities – 40%, while in smaller cities it dropped slightly to 36%. In Moscow, 43% of the respondents, somewhat less than a half of young people, opted for the private sector.

Currently, 33% of all respondents are employed, while 49% are not (some of them are school and university students). 4% work part-time, 3% describe themselves as either self-employed or entrepreneurs, while 6% live off occasional jobs (Table 27).

Among 14–17-year-olds, 88% are unemployed, and 5% do odd jobs. These figures change drastically once the

TABLE 26. **Which of the following sectors would you most like to work in**



20-year-old threshold is reached. Only 13% of 18–20-year-olds have a job, while 45% of those aged 21 to 24 have full-time employment. The number of employed is higher among 24–29-year-olds as 67% have a job, and only 14% are unemployed.

As expected, the highest employment rate is reported in Moscow. 45% of Muscovites have a permanent employment contract, while only 25% of rural residents work on a permanent basis. In cities other than Moscow, it's 35%.

> *That's why most people – the young ones – are disappointed that no one wants to hire them, and so they think all they did was wasting time on acquiring their profession.'*
> Vologda, 18–24

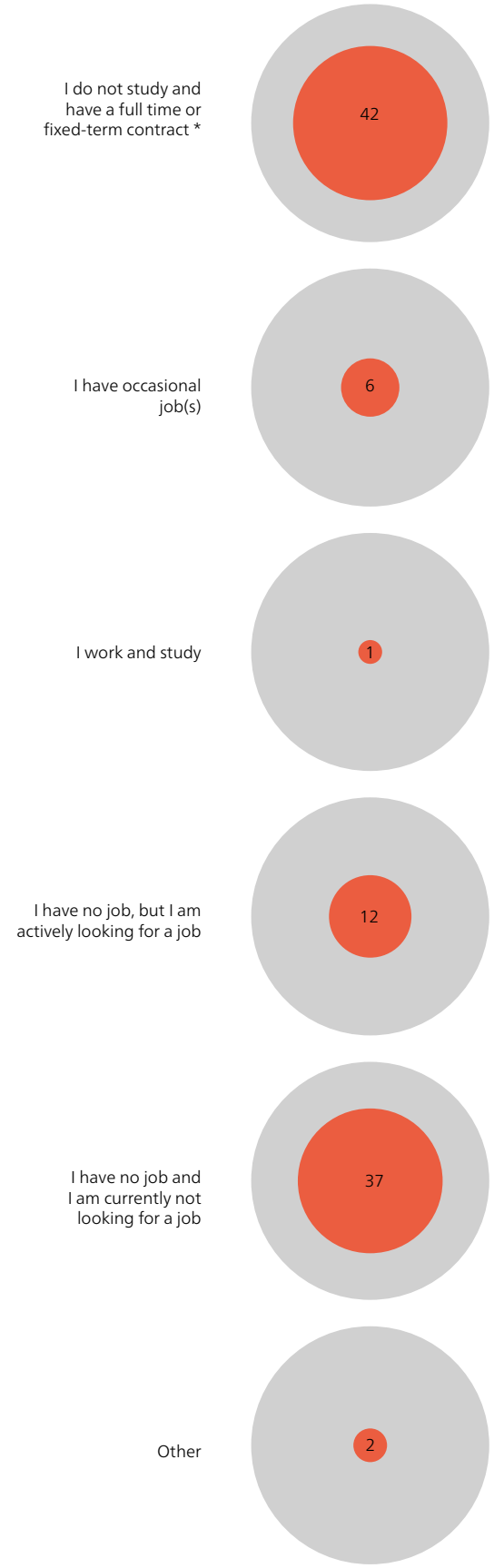
QUOTATIONS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS: WORK AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

'I don't like the fact that employers ask you for experience when you are fresh out of school.'
Novosibirsk, 25–35

'I think that finding a job is problematic too. Employment is basically the main problem that young people are confronted with.'
Vologda, 18–24

'It's hard to find a job in your field. You study to do one thing but you end up doing…well, it's very hard.'
Moscow, 18–24

TABLE 27. **What is your current employment status?** *(extended, in %)*



* Sum of answers: 'I have a full-time permanent employment contract', 'I have a part-time permanent employment contract', 'I have a temporary full-time employment contract', 'I have a temporary part-time employment contract', 'I am self-employed / an entrepreneur'.

10

WELL-BEING AND IMMIGRATION

SATISFACTION WITH LIFE

Young people generally believe that the country is not doing so well and its prospects are rather gloomy, but taking their personal life as a reference, they tend to see the world in a positive light, thinking that their personal future will be better than the future of the country, although they find it difficult to give arguments in support of such optimistic reasoning. Optimism is natural for youth, but sometimes it borders on naivety because it is entirely built on the shaky foundation of hope that everything will be fine. However, young people participating in focus groups (especially those in their late twenties – aged 25–29) actively talk about problems in their everyday lives, ignoring any possible interrelation between their personal difficulties and the general problems and challenges the country's public life is facing, such as social and economic policies, modernization of the country, etc.

The majority of young people are fairly satisfied with their lives, families, friends, and the education they received; they are also satisfied – but to a lesser extent – with their jobs. Those who are dissatisfied are clearly in the minority.

The answers of the young respondents to the questions on the general state of affairs in Russia in various areas of public life and state policy reveal more critical attitudes (see Table 29). As an example, although the respondents are generally satisfied with their education, the average rate of satisfaction with the quality of education in Russia stands at 3.35. Although the young people were quite positive about

TABLE 28. **To what extent are you satisfied …?**

*Per cent of total number of employed respondents, N = 728.

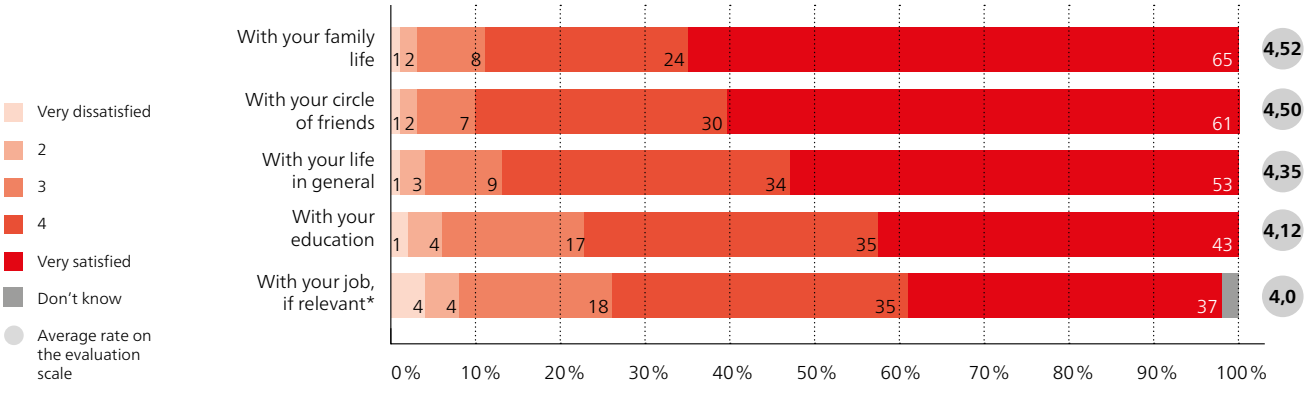
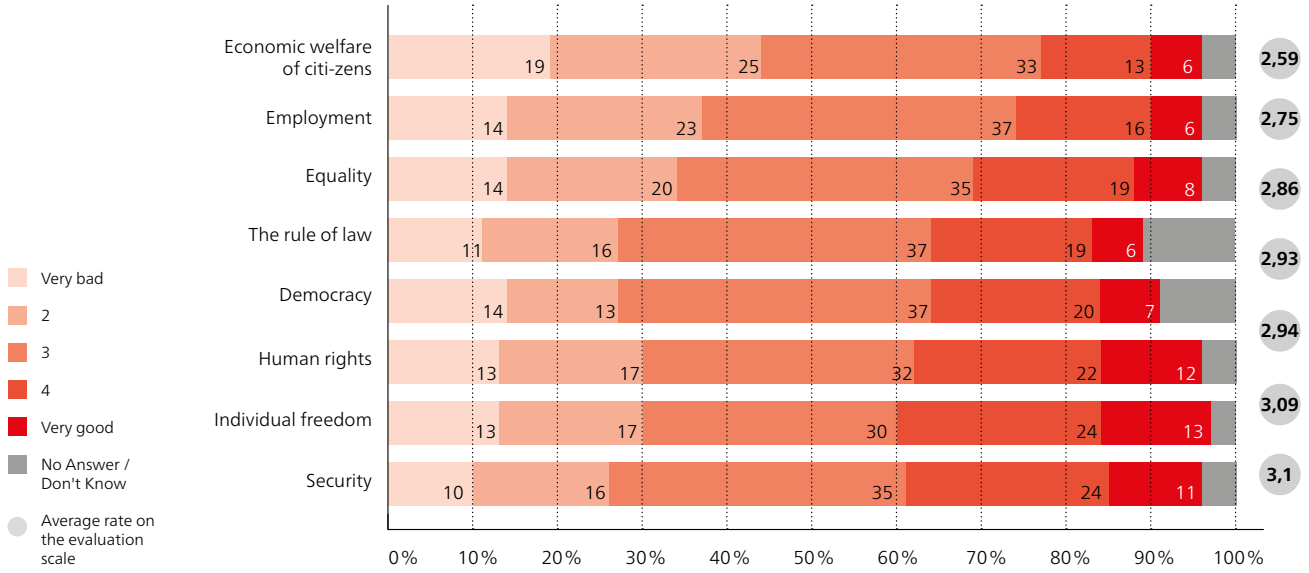


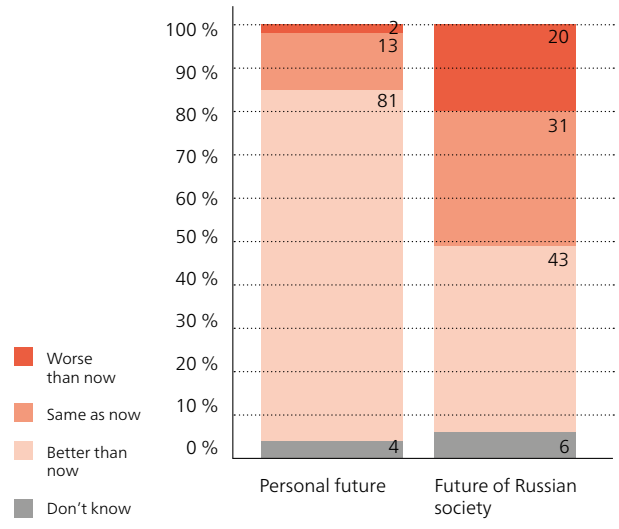
TABLE 29. **How good or bad is, in your view, the status of the following listed values in Russia?** *(in %)*



'…and also because it's easier to build something from scratch in Europe and America, a small business of your own. I know a lot of people, most of them adults, who have tried to do this in Russia, struggled and launched a start-up. But eventually it got stuck and many left after that.'

Novosibirsk, 18–24

TABLE 30. **How do you see future in 10 years?**



their own education, it marked a striking contrast with the low rating of national education, which can be explained by the lack of universal access to free higher education in Russia, especially quality education, which is perceived as a pressing problem and reveals huge gaps and inequalities in terms of access to educational opportunities for young Russians coming from various social backgrounds. This means that most young people are keen to get any education, in the first place, and its quality and role in mastering a profession are put on the back burner. The youth is mostly concerned about the accessibility of education, the expansion of the fee-based higher education sector versus free education, and from the very beginning they are prepared to pursue a career they have not been trained for. In some cases this happens because the income ambitions of fresh college graduates are rather high, but the training they got cannot provide the income level they have aspired for, especially when landing their first job after college, when they do not yet have any professional experience.

It is apparent that high-quality modern education is a luxury that very few young people living in the provinces, middle-sized, and small towns can get, especially if compared to the residents of Moscow and other big cities of Russia that can boast a broader access to quality education. That is why the young are most critical of the current situation in such areas as employment and jobs, which indirectly reveals dissatisfaction with the low level of pay when landing a job after college (this is explicitly substantiated in focus group discussions).

Another realm of public life that has a very low assessment rate is democracy in Russia and human rights and their protection, but the majority of young people seem to be unperturbed by such things. They tend to distance

> *I am thinking now about how many people around me want to get away from here somewhere abroad, somewhere far away. To America, Europe.'*
> Novosibirsk, 18–24

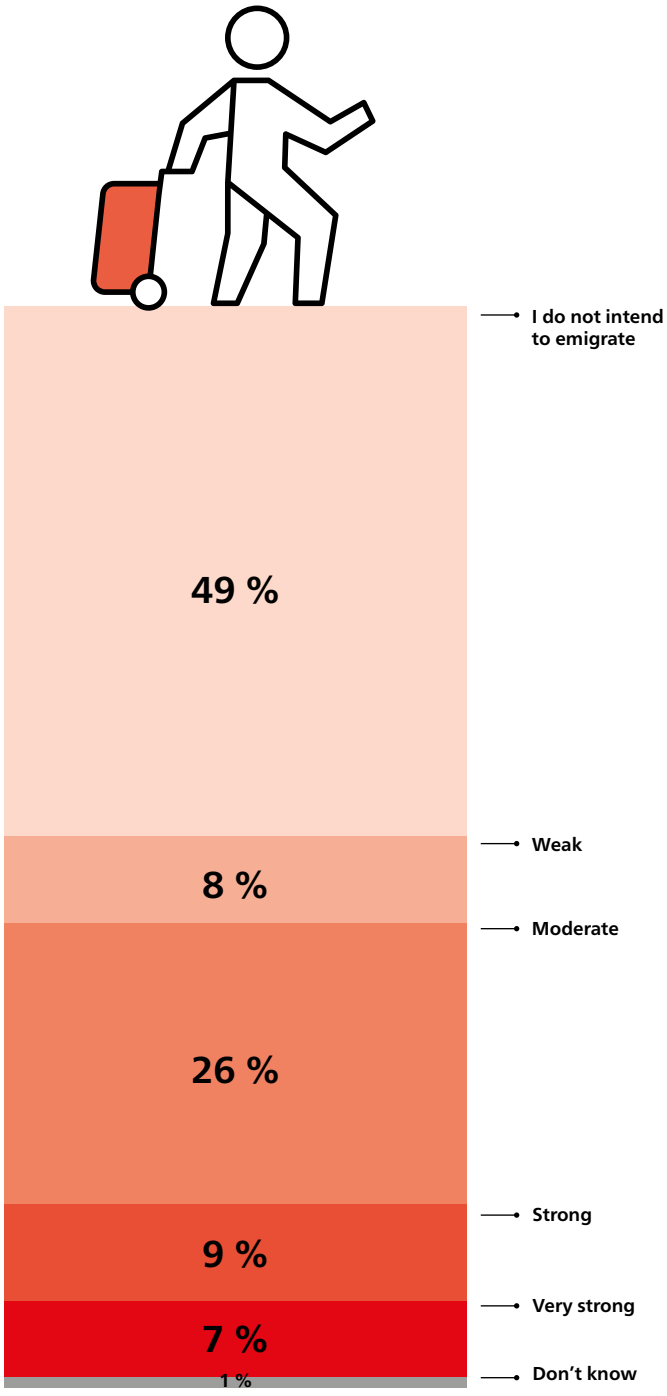
themselves from these problems unless they get involved and directly affected. But even in this case there is a general understanding among the youth, shared by society in general, that you can't change anything in a situation where human rights and freedoms are violated, you just have to resign yourself to it and adapt; as a result the Russian law enforcement and judiciary systems and police enjoy very little public confidence.

This suggests that young people generally feel and understand that there is a substantial number of unresolved acute issues that modern society has to deal with. And it's not only the deplorable state of education and healthcare, the sharp social divide, and the stagnant poverty of a considerable part of Russia's population – it's also the uncertainty of the prospects of the country's economic development, social sphere, and political processes. But still, the young are more positive about their personal future than they are about the future of the country as a whole.

EMIGRATION ATTITUDES

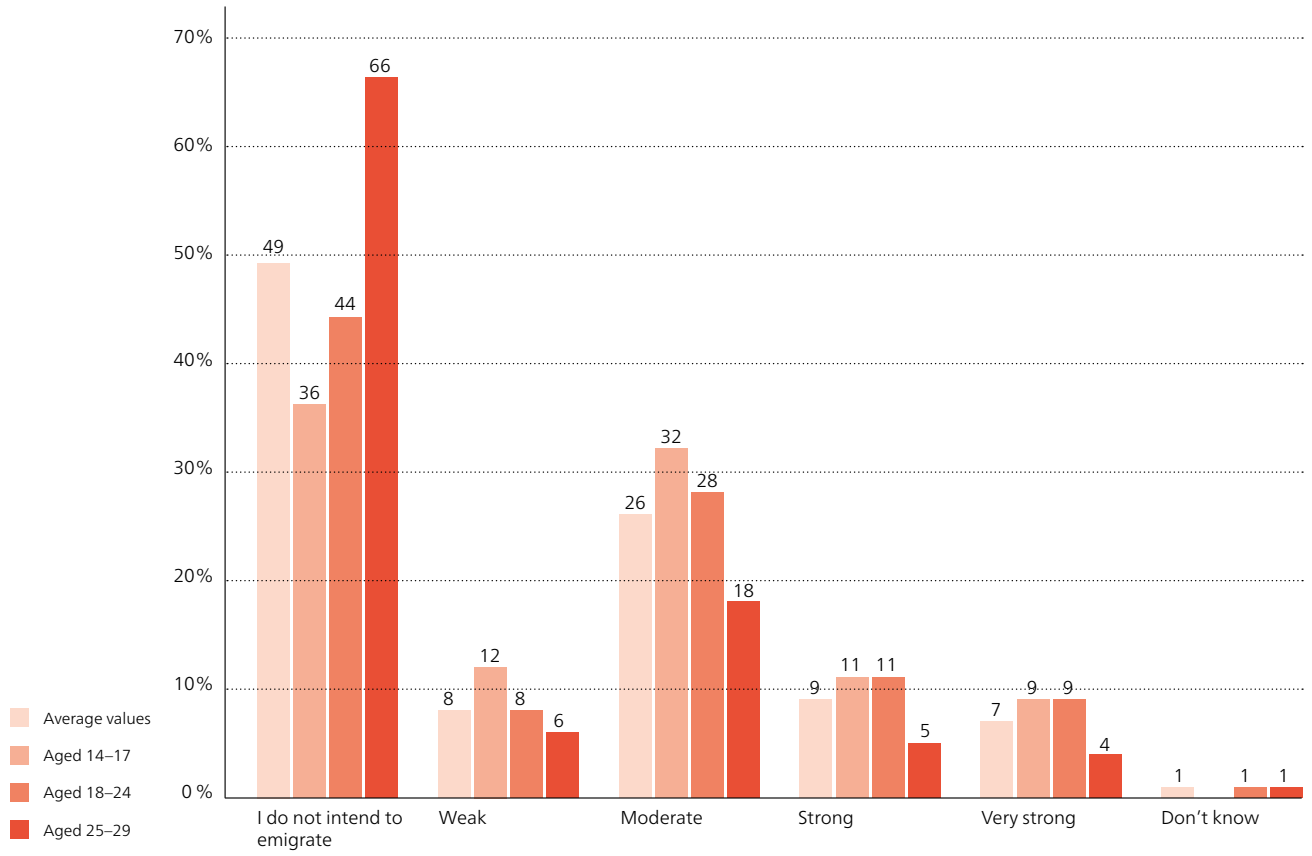
The surveys of emigration sentiments among successful young people conducted by the Levada Centre have shown that the favourable attitude to emigration displayed by youth is derived from their dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs in Russia, and the uncertainty of the country's future. The vulnerability and lack of rights of citizens, the absence of alternation of power, and the determination to provide a 'normal life' for themselves and their children are among the reasons why young Russians seek to leave the country to settle elsewhere. But the main reason behind emigration sentiments is not disagreement with the country's political realities exhibited by the most educated and affluent groups of Russian citizens, it is mostly anxiety about their personal well-being and eagerness to secure a future for themselves and their families that drives them away from Russia. It is therefore not a coincidence that such feelings as dissatisfaction with the situation in the country, hopelessness, and boredom haunt mostly the most educated, successful, and seemingly safe and

HOW STRONG IS YOUR DESIRE TO MOVE TO ANOTHER COUNTRY FOR MORE THAN SIX MONTHS (EMIGRATE)?



trouble-free young Russians – people with dual higher education, Moscow residents, top managers of enterprises and companies, and business owners. The real achievements of these people are not recognized by society, by the majority of their fellow citizens, which makes them worry about the safety of their savings, the reliability of the status they have achieved and, of most importance, about further growth opportunities.[16] The share of people exhibiting such sentiments is relatively high not only among successful young adults living in cities, but also among people from

TABLE 31. **How strong is your desire to move to another country for more than six months (emigrate)?** *(%)*



'I am attracted by the living standards abroad, the environment, people smile there more often. They go there just once and realize that it feels better to live there, more secure. And then the paycheque. An ordinary student, working as a lifeguard on a beach, can earn 600,000 in just three months, that's something. And you can't help drawing parallels when you get back to Russia, you start comparing.'

Novosibirsk, 18–24

other income groups and of various social status (the share of those willing to leave Russia among adults aged 30 or older is two or even more times lower, according to the surveys the Levada Centre has been conducting for years).

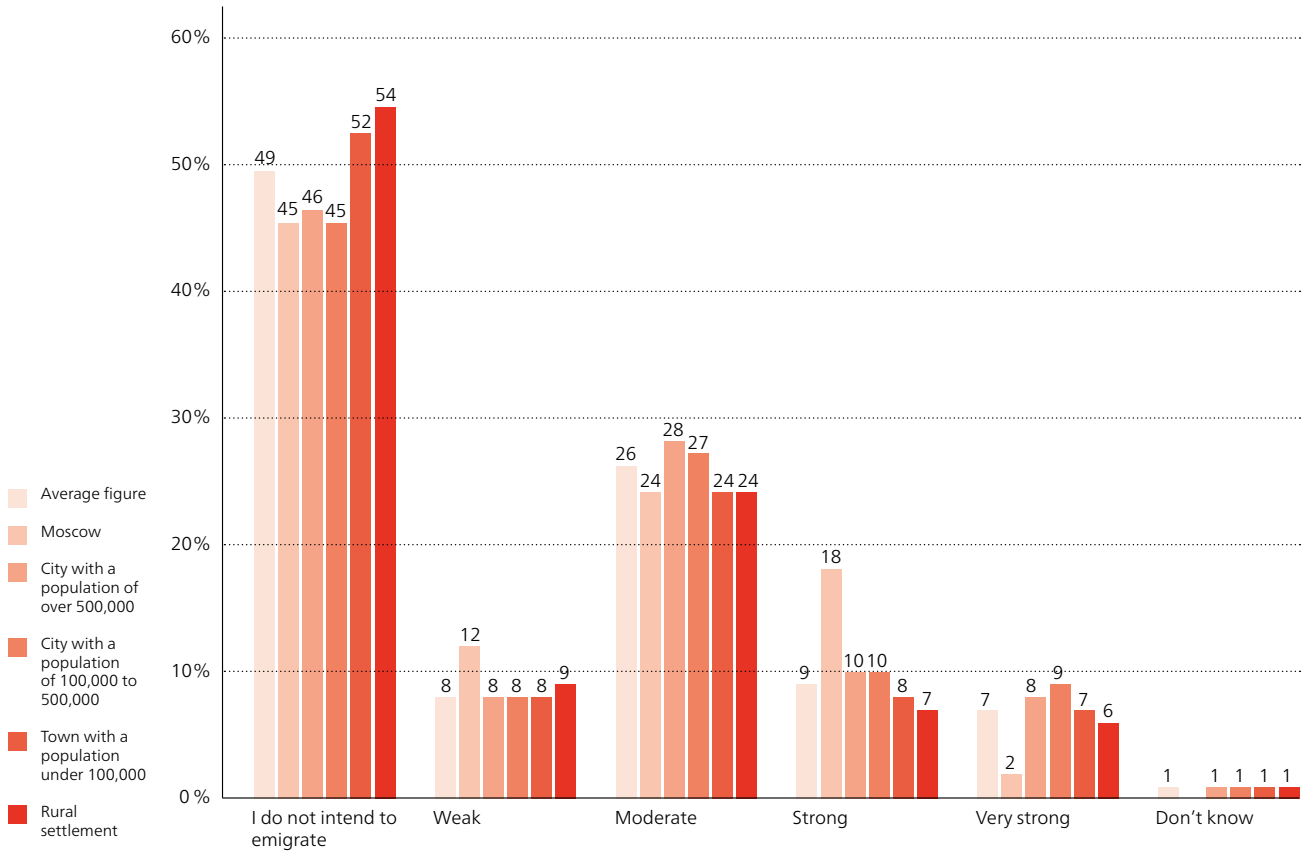
EMIGRATION ATTITUDES OF YOUTH

Temporary emigration or departure from the country in order to study or work abroad over a certain period of time can be viewed by young people as an opportunity to improve their lives in accordance with their expectations and plans for the future.

The number of young people who have ever been abroad is relatively small, although the figures have been constantly growing since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Just 4% of the respondents said they had lived abroad over a rather lengthy period of time (longer than six months), according to this survey. This figure does not vary significantly for different social and demographic groups.

Young people's desire to live abroad is very vague and indefinite. It is more about their dreams of a better life and dissatisfaction with their current circumstances and future

TABLE 32. **How strong is your desire to move to another country for more than six months (emigrate)?** *(%)*



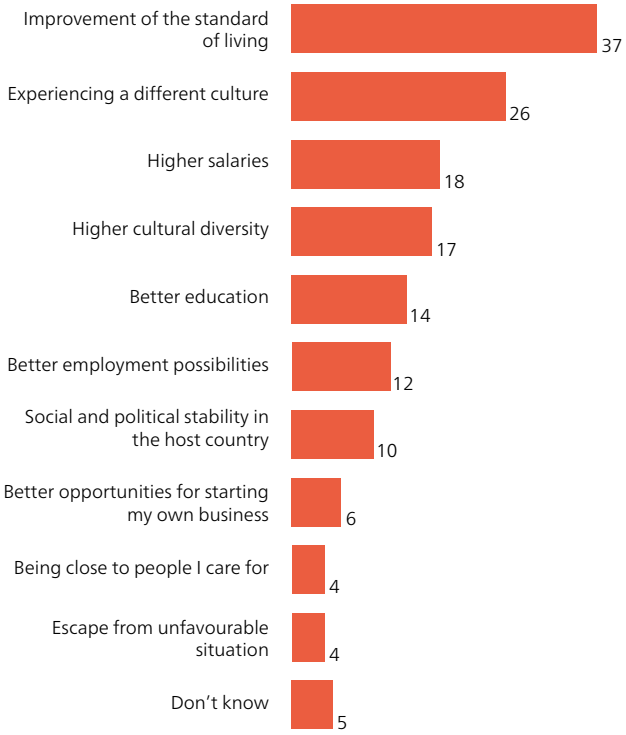
prospects. Almost half of the respondents (49%) said they did not want to leave the country for more than six months, which means that these people are not considering emigrating, studying, or working abroad, although about a quarter of the survey participants (26%) do not rule out this scenario in the future, describing the intensity of their desire as 'moderate'. 16% of the respondents said they had a 'strong' or 'very strong' desire to leave the country for a longer period of time.[17]

The age-related distribution of emigration sentiments shows that teenagers and young people aged 18–24 have the strongest desire to emigrate: about 18% of the respondents in each age group described their desire to live abroad as 'strong' or 'very strong' (see Table 31). The youngest survey participants, teenagers aged 14–17, tended not to rule out the prospect of departure from the country (they almost never opted for the answer 'I do not intend to emigrate'). The highest share of respondents who do not plan to leave the country for a lengthy period of time is in the age group 25–29, so we are talking here about people who, most likely, have already received an education, landed a job, and work on their family life or perhaps professional career, etc. To sum up, it can be said that the intensity of pro-emigration sentiment tends to wane as years go by.

The younger generation has a broader planning horizon than mature adults. They have the whole of their lives to plan and build ahead of them. That is why 'studying or working abroad' integrated into their life plan gives them considerable advantages (especially to those young people who have financial resources and social connections, and access to social capital). That's why the explicit desire to leave Russia was most frequently expressed by the most successful and affluent young people residing in Moscow (20%). The rate of those who wish to leave is above average in big and medium-sized cities (18% and 19%, respectively), whereas in poor and depressed small towns and in rural areas these figures decrease considerably (see Table 32).

These figures do not indicate that the young people are determined to leave the country to study or work abroad or obtain permanent residence in another country. They simply describe the sentiments and attitudes of these young people, not their preparedness to emigrate. We can say that the determination to emigrate is truly strong (and sometimes it even transforms into real actions) only with a small group of the most privileged and affluent young people living in the capital city of Russia and a few of the largest cities (this social group makes up 5% to 7% of the adult population, and this is a rather conditional and approximate figure, as well). In

TABLE 33. **What is the main reason for which you would move to another country?**
(% of all who expressed the desire to emigrate, N = 766)

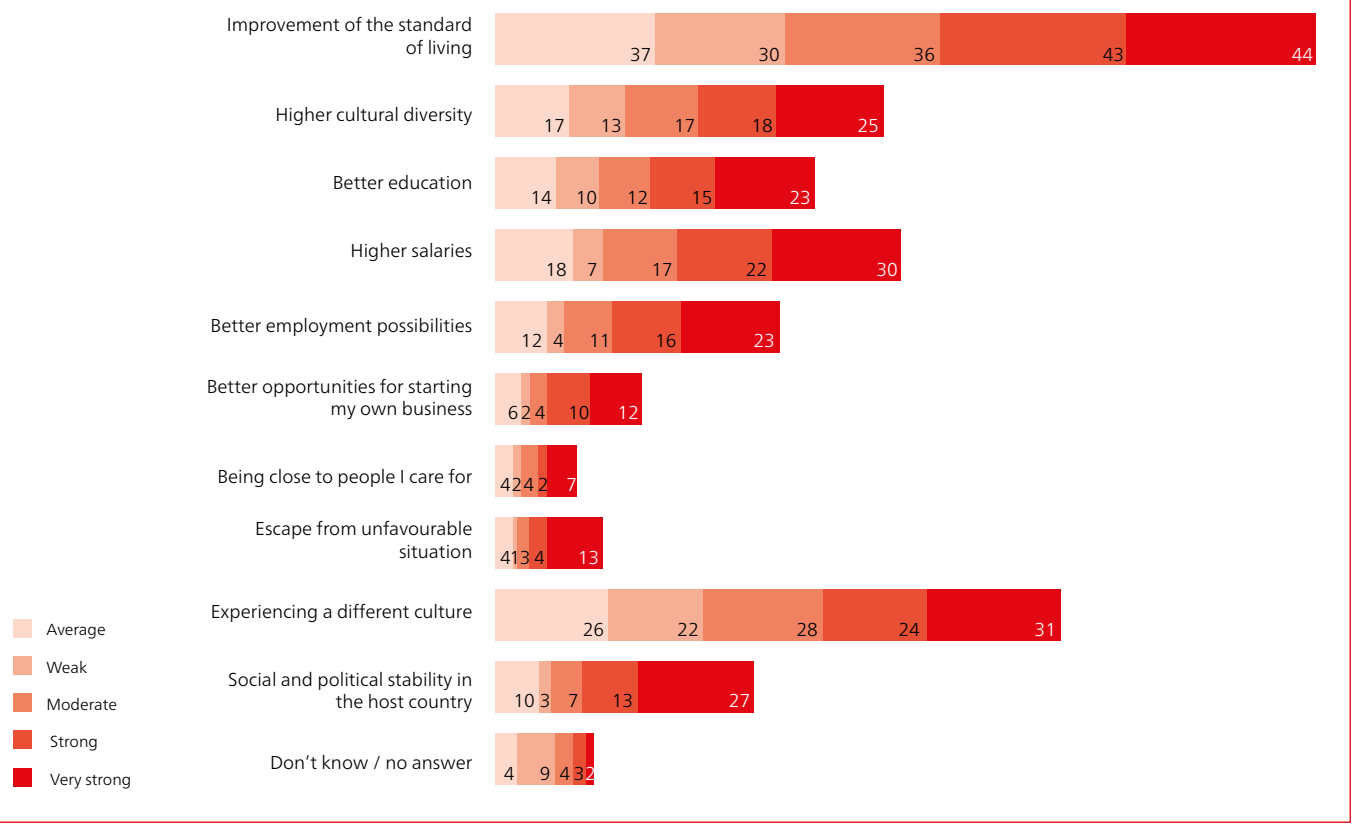


general, the obtained figures indicate that the respondents are dissatisfied with life, the way it has panned out for them, and the opportunities and prospects they can find for themselves in the future. In other words, it's a kind of a gauge of social dissatisfaction and social tensions.[18]

The first reason for departure from the country cited by the respondents is better living conditions (37%), and 18% said they would emigrate to get a higher salary.

Here we are dealing with the idealistic image of the West where, as many think, all your dreams can come true and all your needs will be met, where every person is entitled to the social goods that are so much valued in Russian society (this idea is especially strongly rooted in the minds of the youngest and most inexperienced dreamers, who have a poor understanding of what real life in Western countries looks like today). The motive of quickly achieving a state of well-being (understood in a very simplified form, primarily as financial prosperity), decent living standards, and security in the developed countries of the West[19] is cited not only by the youth, but also by adult respondents. Discussions at focus group meetings among young people have demonstrated that the main reasons for dissatisfaction with modern living conditions in Russia include a low pay grade (at present or in the future) and a lack of resources – real or potential – to start a family, support it financially, give children a decent upbringing, housing and mortgage issues, etc., which means there are difficulties dealing with most common human problems, and it

TABLE 34. **What is the main reason for which you would move to another country?** *(% by column)*



should be noted that modern youth have higher expectations than older generations, to begin with. Very few of the young people are concerned about political or legal challenges, and they are also very poorly informed about these spheres of social life. Most often, they just say something general about the government being unable to stand up for people, not caring about domestic policy, and this being the root of all evil in the country. Apart from such statements made at focus group discussions, such young people have no clear understanding whatsoever of how this situation can be improved and how their personal engagement in the political process can help change things for the better. At the other end of the spectrum, there are young people who have their own views and beliefs as to how the problems facing this country can be tackled. These people are more active and mostly live in Moscow and other big cities (coming from an affluent background and an environment with more opportunities), but this social layer is still quite thin. Quantitative studies hardly represent this social group at all (according to various estimates, it is just 6% to 7% of the youth), which doesn't want to adapt to the situation and remain subdued, but instead craves self-realization, including in the public and civil domains.

A common point for all discussion participants is their acknowledgement of the fact that the majority of them, even those who expressed the desire to leave, do not have the real resources – social, cultural, and financial – needed to depart from the country.

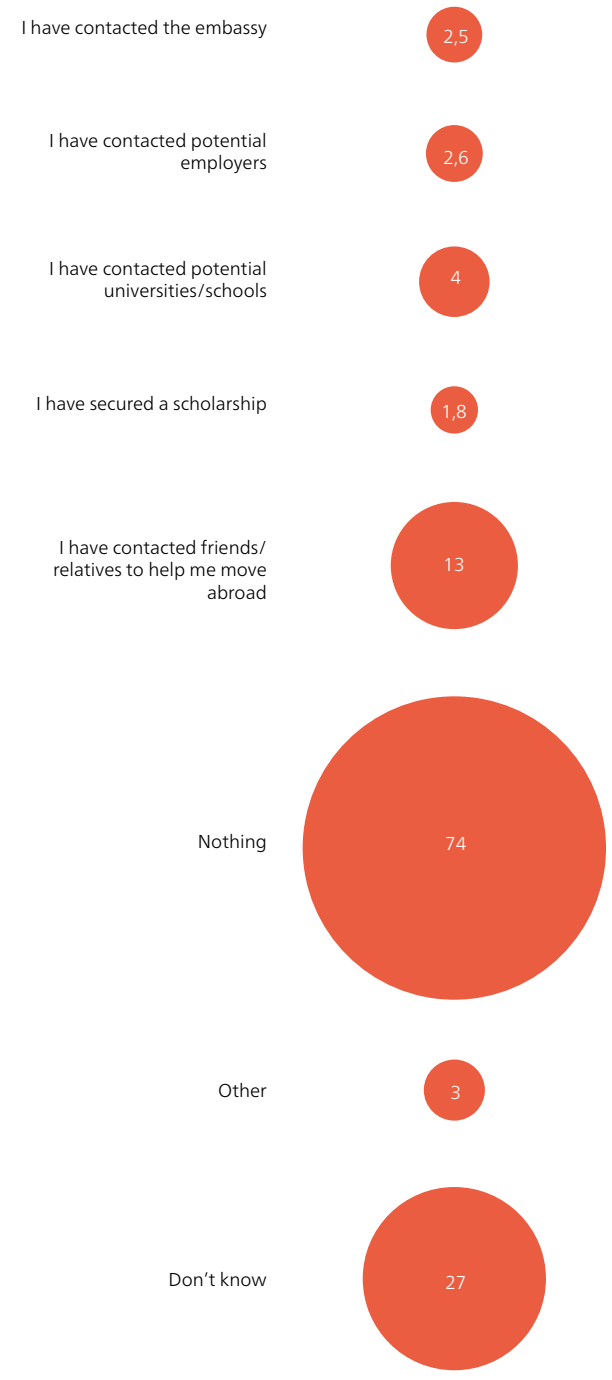
As Table 33 shows, social and political stability in the host country is important for just 10% of all those who wish to emigrate, although it seems that it would be more natural if the people, dissatisfied with the general living conditions and the state of their native country – economic, political, and social destabilization – and, therefore, wanting to emigrate, were more concerned about social and political stability than improving their living standards.

Table 34 brings together the answers about the main reasons behind the desire to emigrate and the intensity of this desire. We can see that the stronger the desire to emigrate from Russia, the more defined and clear-cut is the understanding of the reasons behind this aspiration. It is noteworthy that the group of respondents with the strongest desire to leave, just like all other groups but to a greater extent, gave priority to improving their living standards and getting a higher salary among other reasons for emigration. But over a quarter of this group (27%) cited 'social and political stability in the host country' (an average of 10%). The desire to get 'a better education' was expressed by 23% of respondents, making this reason the most commonly cited among those who are motivated to emigrate. The average figure stands at 14%. A quarter of the motivated respondents chose 'higher cultural diversity' as the main reason (an average of 17%), and another popular answer here is 'experiencing a different culture' (31% of motivated leavers, the average figure being 26%) (see Table 34).

You see, people flee from Russia, mostly scientists, because they are not paid here. Young people are leaving, young scientists.'

Novosibirsk, 25–35

TABLE 35. **What have you done so far in order to leave the country?** *(% of all who expressed the desire to emigrate, four positions summed up, N = 766)*



'I am dissatisfied with the quality of education and healthcare in this country. Most people of my age are also disappointed in education, mainly, and if they could change something now, they say they would have gone to study abroad, to another country, and it would have been easier to land a job in Russia after that.'
Moscow, 18–24

REAL EMIGRATION OR JUST ITCHY FEET?

The extent to which the expressed desire to emigrate is real is determined by a simple question that is standard for such studies – what have you already done to achieve your goal? The overwhelming majority of the respondents wishing to emigrate had done nothing to this end, and another 27% found it difficult to answer the question.

Contacts with friends and relatives in regard to moving abroad is one of the answers that was chosen most often (13%), otherwise real steps to support the decision to emigrate are very scarce. [20]

The majority of the young people who consider the possibility of leaving the country don't have an invitation or support from someone on the receiving end – a resident of the destination country (77% of this subsampling); for 23% who claimed that they had such support (the question in the international questionnaire is rather vague), it is more likely not about real settlement prospects or job offers, but rather about friendly support and purely humane sympathy, which nonetheless is a handy channel of getting useful information and learning about living prospects in a foreign country. The seriousness of commitment to emigration plans can be measured by the way a respondent evaluates his or her knowledge of the language spoken in the country he would like to live in: over one third of the respondents do not speak the language at all (37%), the relative majority, though (48%), have a basic language proficiency level; while just 2% of the potential emigrants have mastered the language to the extent that they can write and speak fluently.

TABLE 36. **Where would you prefer to move to?**
*(% of all who expressed the desire to emigrate, answers are ranked by the total number of three positions – ranked 1st/2nd/3rd)**

	Ranked 1st	Ranked 2nd	Ranked 3rd	Total number
USA	14	14	14	39
Germany	18	12	10	38
France	10	15	10	33
Italy	9	11	12	30
Great Britain	6	8	8	20
Switzerland	5	7	7	17
Sweden	3	5	6	13
Norway	3	5	6	12
Finland	3	4	5	11
Austria	1	4	3	7
Netherlands	1	3	3	6
Denmark	0	1	2	4
Other	20	8	8	33
Don't know	6	6	8	18

*The question was asked three times, and each time the participants were allowed to name just one country.

THE DUAL IMAGE OF THE WEST

For years, the US, Germany, and a few other European states have been and still are the most favoured destination countries for potential emigrants. In recent years, the Scandinavian countries have gained popularity among Russian migrants, which can be accounted for by the current trend to switch to prosperous Northern states with a reputation of stably high living standards and a good social security system. Apart from that they are not in direct political confrontation with Russia or at the forefront of the deep confrontation between Russia on the one hand and the EU and the United States on the other, which began in 2014.[21]

The first five countries in Table 36 have been on the list of unfriendly, antagonistic countries towards Russia since 2014, and Germany (ranking 1st in the first question by the frequency of mentioning), which had previously been among Russia's friends in Europe, has joined the list of Russia's enemies for the first time (an average of 20% of the respondents have mentioned Germany in all these

years), and Great Britain has moved to first place among other developed European countries perceived as Russia's enemies. An opinion poll conducted by the Levada Centre in May revealed that 38% of Russians mentioned the UK as a hostile country, which means it now rates 3rd on the list of Russia's 'enemies' second only to the USA (67%) and Ukraine (40%). However, the USA and other developed European countries retain their attractiveness for Russian youth who consider emigration (see Table 36). This indicates that the youth are seeking the high living standards – social, economic, legal and consumption-related – available in the Western countries, which exist in public opinion, especially among young people, as a goal to be reached for, despite worsened relations between Russia and these countries.

Other surveys, conducted by the Levada Centre and aimed at describing the images of such Russia-friendly European countries as Sweden, Finland, and Switzerland in the Russian public mind, have explicitly shown that a positive image of Europe as a paragon of development, bright future, prosperous life, and decent living conditions for its citizens is still imprinted in the popular consciousness of Russians.

TABLE 37. **Emigration sentiments and trust in state institutions** *(% by column)*

	Desire to emigrate					
	Average figure	I do not intend to emigrate	Weak	Moderate	Strong	Very strong
On the whole, how far do you trust the President?						
Grades 1 + 2. Not at all / I don't trust	29	23	24	32	41	63
Grade 3	27	25	30	32	25	22
Grades 4 + 5. Fully / I trust	44	52	46	36	31	15
On the whole, how far do you trust the National Parliament?						
Grades 1 + 2. Not at all / I don't trust	48	34	40	48	55	72
Grade 3	27	26	37	30	25	16
Grades 4 + 5. Fully / I trust	24	28	21	20	18	12
On the whole, how far do you trust the National Government?						
Grades 1 + 2. Not at all / I don't trust	45	40	38	46	50	76
Grade 3	28	28	32	30	28	13
Grades 4 + 5. Fully / I trust	28	30	28	23	18	11
On the whole, how much do you trust the army?						
Grades 1 + 2. Not at all / I don't trust	30	24	22	31	39	56
Grade 3	25	21	27	29	28	22
Grades 4 + 5. Fully / I trust	44	52	50	38	30	20
On the whole, how much do you trust the judiciary (courts)?						
Grades 1 + 2. Not at all / I don't trust	37	35	35	38	46	49
Grade 3	31	31	31	32	28	33
Grades 4 + 5. Fully / I trust	30	33	34	30	25	17
On the whole, how much do you trust the media in your country?						
Grades 1 + 2. Not at all / I don't trust	39	32	36	41	53	71
Grade 3	34	37	35	34	32	17
Grades 4 + 5. Fully / I trust	26	31	28	23	15	13

Our media are corrupt, education is corrupt, doctors are not paid, policemen beat everyone up, it's very dangerous to live here, they can plant drugs on you any minute, and Putin is a dictator. In short, it's time to go to Paris.'

Moscow, 18–24

THE MOST HIGHLY MOTIVATED GROUP OF POTENTIAL EMIGRANTS[22]

This group of people, who have a 'very strong' desire to emigrate, though making up just 7% of all the respondents, is distinguished through some conspicuous and unique features. On the whole, the stronger the desire to leave the country, the more pronounced are the following characteristics of the respondents: there is more distrust of the basic government institutions, political leaders and parties, and more criticism of the state of democracy in Russia, the human rights situation, the rule of law, economic and social standing of Russian citizens, etc. than the average figures across the sampling. Here are a few examples. In the table the question about the desire to emigrate is crossed with several questions from the questionnaire designed to assess public sentiments (Table 37).

Table 47 demonstrates that the stronger the desire to leave the country, the more critical the attitude towards core public institutions.

We get the same picture when comparing how groups with a different intensity in the desire to emigrate assess the state of the most important spheres of public life in Russia. By crossing their answers to various questions (not to overload this text with extra tables) we have established that, for example, 52% of people with a strong desire to emigrate believe that the future of Russian society will be worse than its present. The same opinion was echoed by an average of 20% of the respondents across the sampling.

Answers to other questions have revealed that more than half of the mentioned group – 60% – do not trust Russia's political leaders at all (the average figure across the sampling being 45%); among these respondents, the highest level of distrust is for all Russian political institutions, especially the State Duma (National Parliament), government, and mass media (over 50% do not trust them at all, and 42% within this group are totally dissatisfied with the state of democracy in Russia, the average figure being 19%). It is therefore clear why the largest share of those who participated in demonstrations belongs to this particular group (19% versus the average figure of 10%). But dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs in the country shapes different ideological stances: both authoritarian attitudes, support for a strong leader, and liberal views (20%, the average figure being 12%, and 8% among those with no intent to emigrate) are strongly represented within this group.

Respondents from this group have been discriminated against more often, on various grounds, including discrimination based on political beliefs. Social fears are also slightly more pronounced in this group, especially the fear of becoming a 'victim of corruption' – 52% against the average of 38%.

Although these people have good relations with their families, the majority of them said they would bring up their own children in a different manner (60% in total, 38% on the average).

Emigration sentiments, primarily in the most prosperous and successful groups of young people, are explained not only by such challenges as low living standards or poor prospects of social mobility. These sentiments are fuelled, especially among the most vulnerable and unprotected social groups, by the feeling of being constantly neglected and humiliated, being dependent, not free, and exposed to dangers originating in the aggressive environment that surrounds them. The expressed desire to leave the country is an actual manifestation of preparedness to flee from all the new and complicated forms of social life organization and individual behaviour, which have become systemic. This is demonstrated by both the least independent and well-off and the most successful youth. It is related to the whole complex of existential conditions and the concept of the individual formed in the Soviet epoch and retained to the present day through familiar patterns of everyday life and compliant human beings.

This is a problem with much deeper roots that just disagreement with the incumbent authorities. It marks a civilizational incompatibility between the almost Europeanized individuals (at least, in case of young urban professionals living in cities) and Russian society, which is regarded as paternalistic and dependent on the Russian state.[23]

11

MARRIAGE, CHILDREN, AND FAMILY PLANS

MARITAL STATUS

One in five respondents is in a registered marriage (19%), another 9% live in a partnership. 66% are single, and 4% of respondents are in a relationship but live separately. There are more single men than women – 73% of men and only 59% of women.

The most common age when people get married is 21–24 years old; in this age group one in three respondents is either in a registered union (16%) or cohabitating with a partner (22%). Unregistered cohabitation later turns into official marriage in most cases; in the age group of 25–29 about half of the respondents are officially married and 13% practice cohabitation. It is noteworthy that the percentage of divorces

TABLE 38. **What is your current status?** *(% by column, classification by gender across the sampling)*

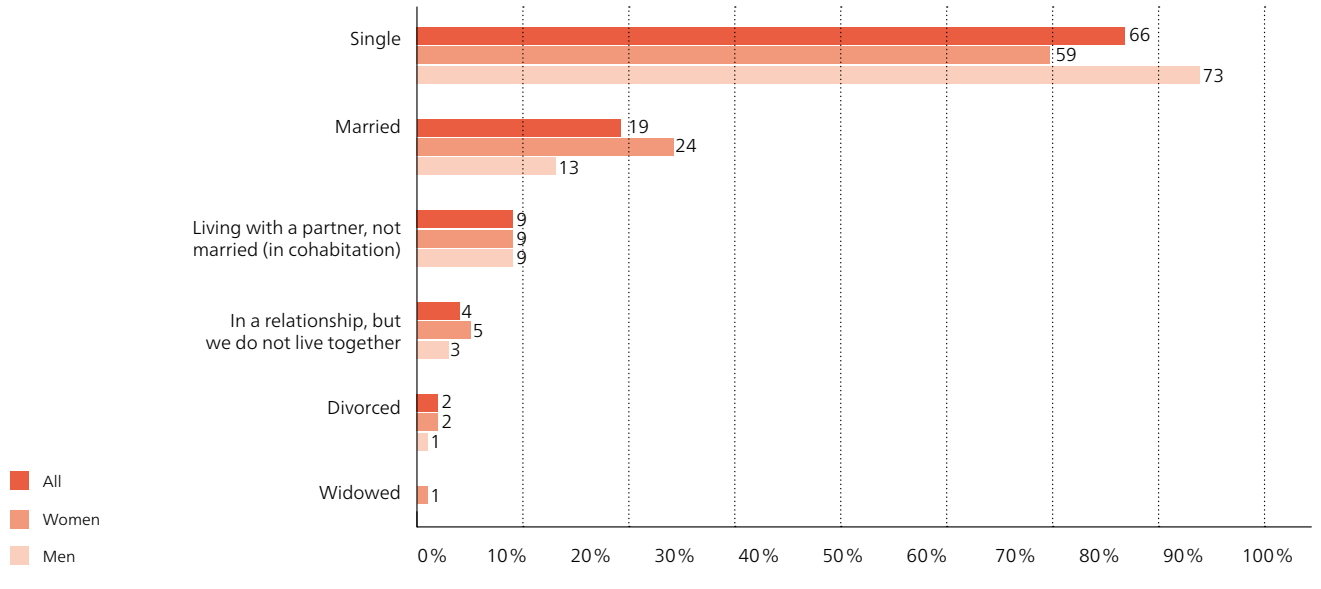
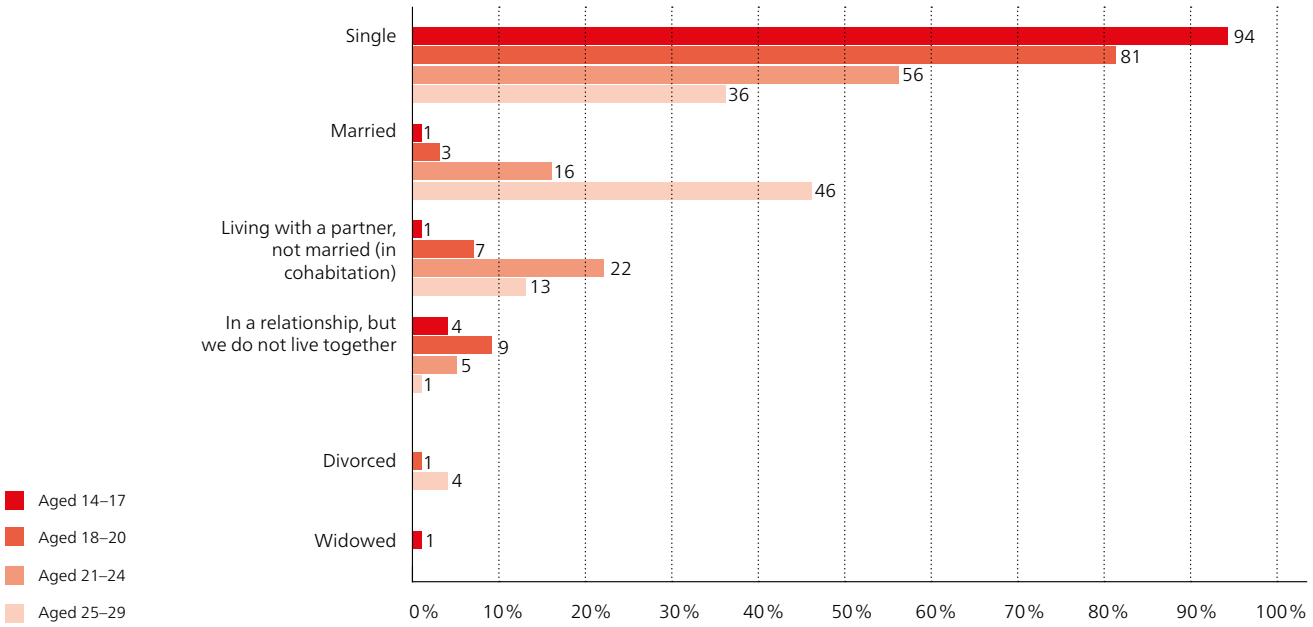


TABLE 39. **What is your current status?** *(classification by age)*



is low; the number of divorcees aged 29 and younger is very small – 5%.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Russian youth are almost unanimous in planning a married future for themselves. 84% of the respondents want to start a family and have children, 4% want to get married without children, and the smallest number of respondents (1%) plan on becoming a single parent.

Most differences in regard to future marital status occur between the groups formed on the basis of financial status. Thus, the number of respondents from the poorest social layers who don't want to have kids in their marriage is twice the figure (4% and 5%) obtained for other groups (2% in higher-status groups).

The desired number of children is another factor that unites youth, just like marriage plans: most young Russians think that the ideal number of children is two. There is no difference in the desired number of children between men and women: 49% of both men and women say they would like to have two kids. 17% and 19% of men and women opt for one and three children, respectively, another 5% don't want to have kids and the same number of respondents want five kids or more.

The best age for women to get married, according to the respondents, is 25 years of age (32% of answers, 35% from women and 28% from men). However, the respondents are not so unanimous about the ideal marriage age for men: some think that the best age is 25 (27% of men and 30% of women), others opt for 20 years of age (20% of male respondents). 12% of women think that the ideal age for men to get married is 27, while 30% of women like more mature men and believe 30 years to be the best age for them to get married. Interestingly, only 9% of the respondents in total went beyond 30 years of age. It is apparent that the life model common for most Russian women is to get married before you turn 30. The same goes for men – 30+ years of age was scarcely mentioned at all (just 6% in total). The upper limit for the bridegroom's age is considered to be 60, for the bride – 45 years old.

Male respondents are inclined towards two ideal marriage ages – 25 and 30, at 24% and 17%, respectively.

Among the most important qualities for a partner young Russians name, primarily, personal qualities and common interests. One third of the respondents deem it important to have the approval of their families (33%, this factor is most often cited by people from rural areas – 40%), and other important factors include the level of education (28%) and physical attractiveness (24%) of the prospective partner. Marriage is perceived as a romantic union in which partners are selected based on their attractiveness and common interests.

The greatest differences between male and female respondents in their approach to partner selection arise in the matters of religious beliefs (deemed important by 35% of women and 23% of men), economic standing of the potential partner (important to 64% of men and 27% of women), and family approval (important to 65% of women and 49% of men).

FIG. 19. **How do you see yourself in the future?** *(%)*

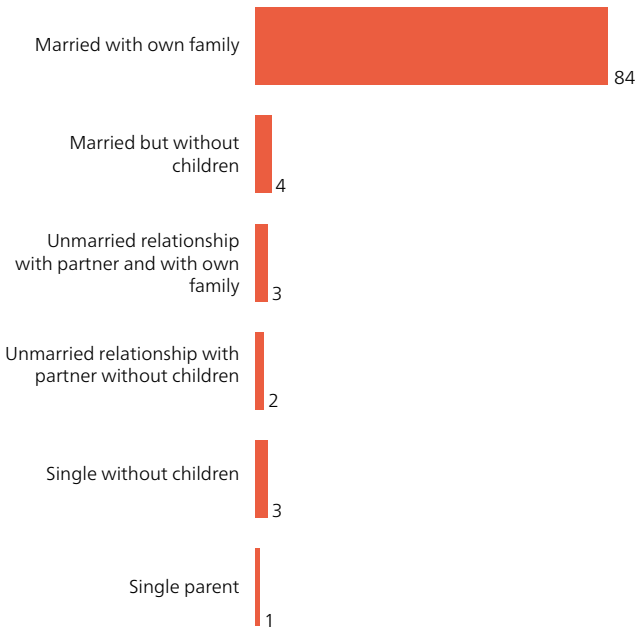


FIG. 20. **How many children do you plan or imagine having in your life altogether?** *(%)*

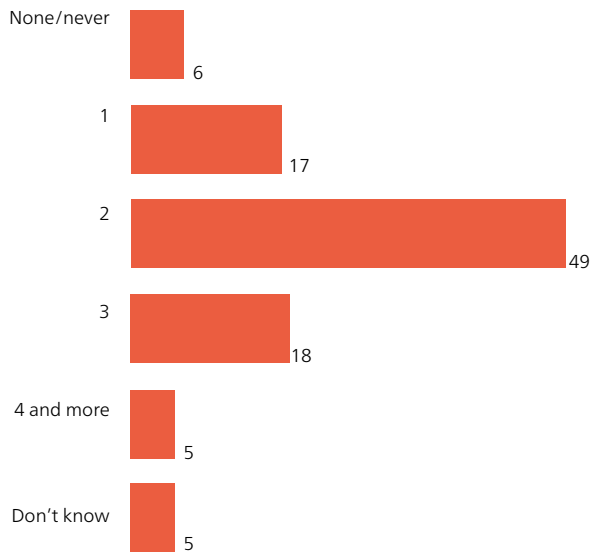


FIG. 21. **How many children do you plan or imagine having in your life altogether?** *(%, comparison by gender)*

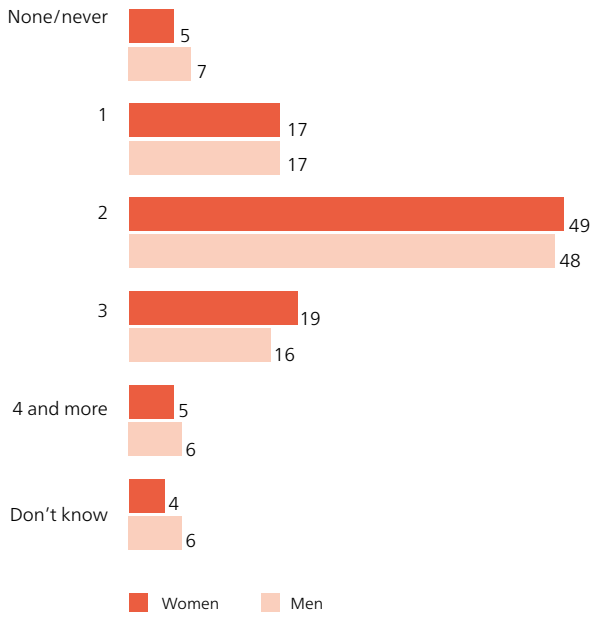


FIG. 22. **How important, in your opinion, are the following factors in choosing a marriage partner?** *(%)*

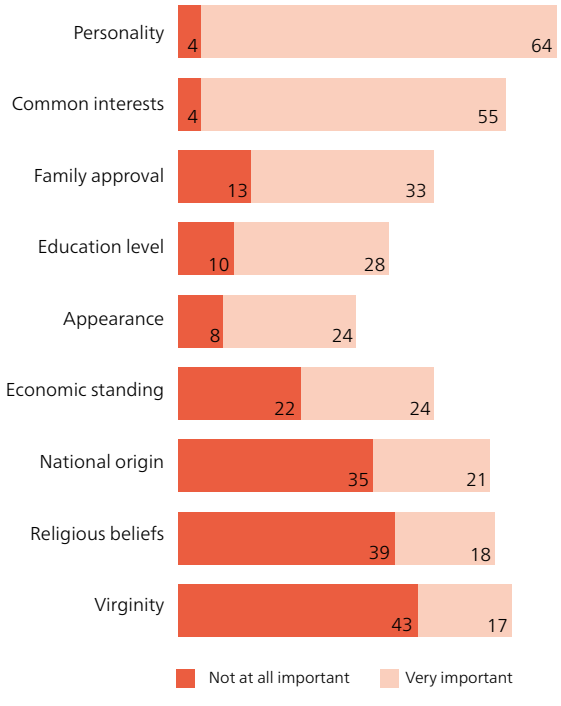


TABLE 40. **How important, in your opinion, are the following factors for choosing a marriage partner?**
(%, ranking by gender)

	1. Not at all important	2	3	4	5. Very important
Religious beliefs?					
Women	33	13	19	14	21
Men	46	12	18	9	14
Economic standing?					
Women	10	7	21	29	33
Men	35	14	24	14	13
Family approval?					
Women	9	8	18	25	40
Men	17	11	23	23	26
Virginity?					
Women	46	9	17	10	15
Men	39	13	18	10	19
Personality?					
Women	2	1	6	18	73
Men	7	2	10	28	53
Appearance?					
Women	7	7	28	35	24
Men	8	5	26	37	24
Education level?					
Women	7	5	21	35	32
Men	14	6	26	31	23
Common interests?					
Women	3	2	9	24	63
Men	5	3	16	31	45
National origin?					
Women	30	9	21	14	24
Men	41	11	19	14	16

RELATIONS WITH PARENTS AND THE HOUSING PROBLEM

The majority of respondents said that both their parents are still alive (83%). Naturally, the younger the respondents, the higher the percentage (in the 14–17 age group 92% of participants still have both parents, in the 25–29 age group – 73%). One in ten respondents has lost their father (died), 3% have lost their mother, and another 2% are full orphans. Paternal mortality is higher in the third age group (25–29) – 17% have lost their fathers and 5% their mothers. The highest parental mortality rate is registered in Moscow (only 78% of the respondents still have both their parents) and in the low consumer status groups (65% have both parents alive).

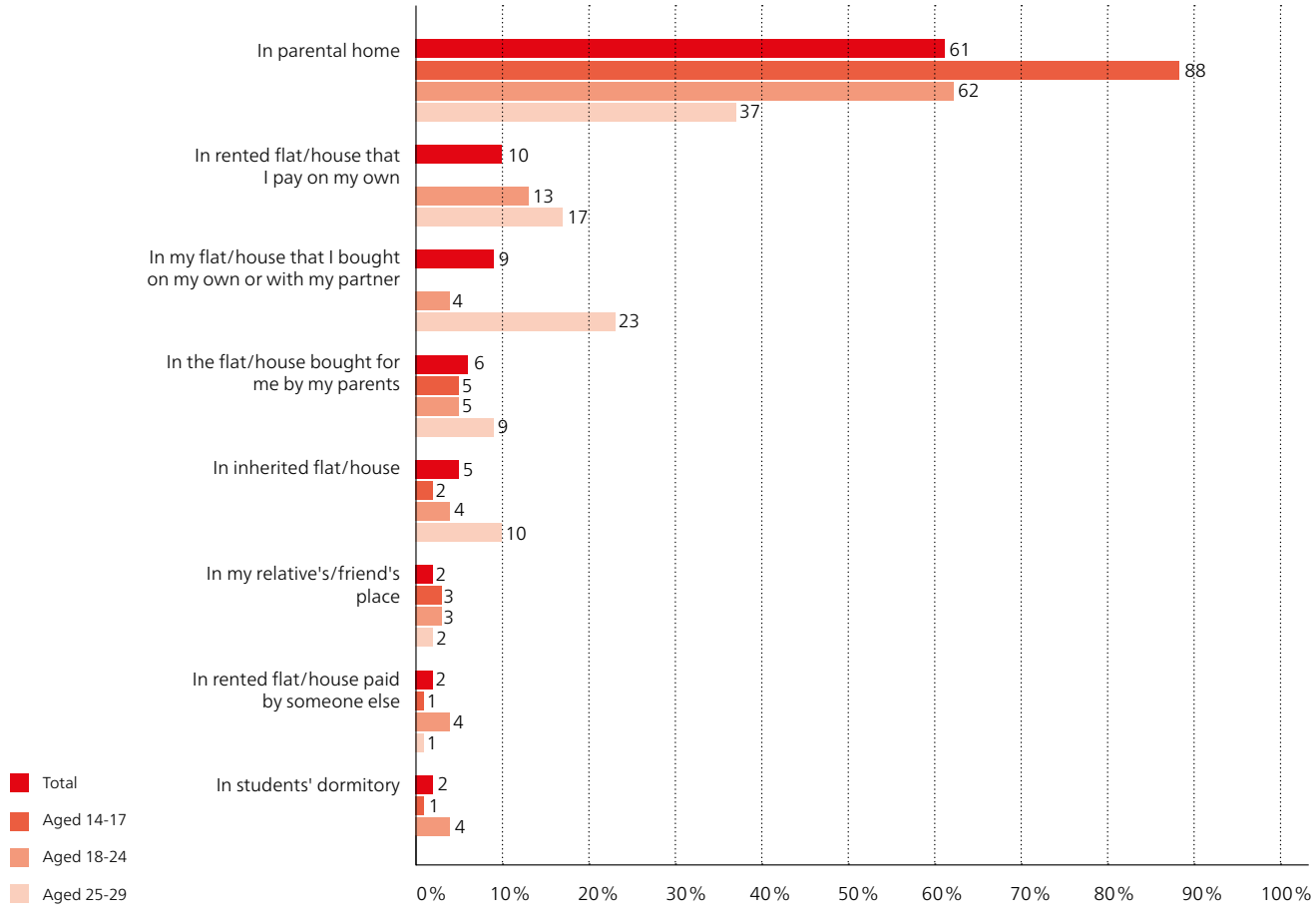
Parents play an important role in the process of decision-making, influencing the young. The mother is the central figure in Russian families. According to the respondents, mothers influence 53–54% of decisions they make; however, it should be noted that this is partly caused by the gender imbalance: one third of Russian households consist of mothers and children only.[24]

The father is a less influential figure in the Russian family; fathers influence the decision-making process of 41% of the male and only 24% of the female respondents. The next figure in terms of importance and influence is grandmother (mentioned by 8%). As children grow older, the circle of important people in their lives becomes broader, taking in friends and spouses; for young people aged 25–29 the opinion of their spouse matters in almost one third of all cases (27%). The influence of parents starts to wane, but it is still rather significant.

The housing problem is a key issue in the context of collaborative decision making. According to the collected data, two thirds (61%) of respondents live with their parents, 10% rent an apartment or room, 9% have already purchased their own flat or house (with support from the parents or on their own; as a rule, it's the oldest age group). The number of people living with parents tends to gradually decline as the respondents grow older (Fig. 23), but even at the age of 30, 37% of the young people still live with their parents. As young people start to earn their living and become financially independent, the number of respondents who have bought property (23%) or started renting an apartment (17%) increases

The respondents were also asked to reveal the number of people they share a home with. One in three respondents said that there are two more people in the household (33%); one

FIG. 23. **Where do you live?**

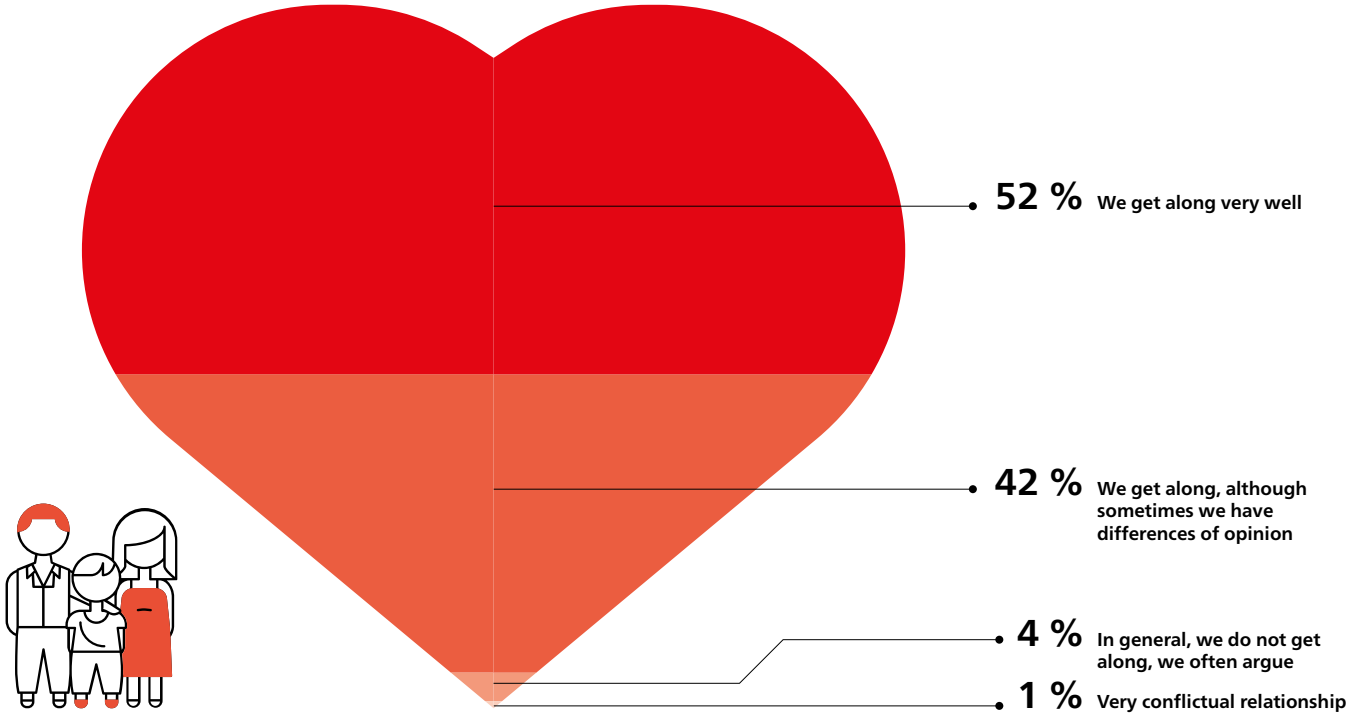


in five respondents lives with three other people (24%); 8% and 11% live alone or with four other household members, respectively.

Answering the question of why they still live with their parents, 45% of the respondents said it was the simplest and most comfortable solution, while 37% cited lack of funds to purchase a place of their own and expressed the desire to move out if their financial status improved.

Relations in the family are mostly described by the respondents as positive – half of the young people said they got along well with their family, and 40% said they had normal relations with their relatives, although there were differences of opinion at certain times. Another 4% said they constantly argued and fought with their families. And the smallest number of respondents mentioned serious family conflicts – just 1%.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BEST DESCRIBES YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PARENTS?



PARENTHOOD

Despite good relations with their parents, only one quarter of the respondents expressed the determination to bring up their children in the same manner they were raised themselves. The same number of respondents (24%) want to raise their children differently, and 14% marked the answer 'totally differently'. The largest group – 36% – intends to bring up their children more or less in the same manner they were raised themselves (see Table 41).

In this survey the respondents were asked to describe in detail how they were raised as kids, in primary school. Almost 36% of them said that their parents would often repeat that it was necessary for them to follow the rules (obey), 26% said such conversations were 'quite frequent', 22% remembered their parents would talk to them about it regularly, but not very often. 41% said they participated in defining the rules of behaviour in their families (see Table 42). Another third of the respondents (29%) said they didn't have this opportunity – that rules were imposed by their parents and they obeyed.

The respondents revealed that direct violence is still a problem in parenting: 15% said their parents used to beat them if they misbehaved (the total of 'many times' and 'frequently' answers), almost half of the respondents (48%) said that they were not beaten even if they did something bad, and a little more than a third were only rarely or occasionally hit (see Table 43).

The same structure of answers goes for those cases when the respondents said they were naughty or misbehaved – 26% said their parents would yell at them in such situations (the total of 'many times' and 'frequently' answers), whereas 47% said they would not be yelled at even if they were naughty (the total of 'never' and 'rarely' answers). According to the results of this survey, a conservative approach to raising children is still widespread:47% of children were never or rarely yelled at, 51% were never or rarely criticized and 48% were never beaten (22% rarely), as opposed to 10% who were beaten many times (16% often).

Thus, a little more than half of the respondents said they had never been punished by their parents, there had never been any threats of punishment even, and a quarter of the respondents said they were threatened with punishment, although their parents never really acted on their words. 23% said they had experienced this occasionally, but it was more of an exception than a rule (see Table 44).

Instead of corporal punishment, families use encouragement methods – 36% of the respondents admit that their parents would often encourage them with treats or toys if they behaved well, though 38% of the respondents said they rarely got such encouragement.

TABLE 41. **Would you raise your children like your parents raised you, or would you do it differently?**

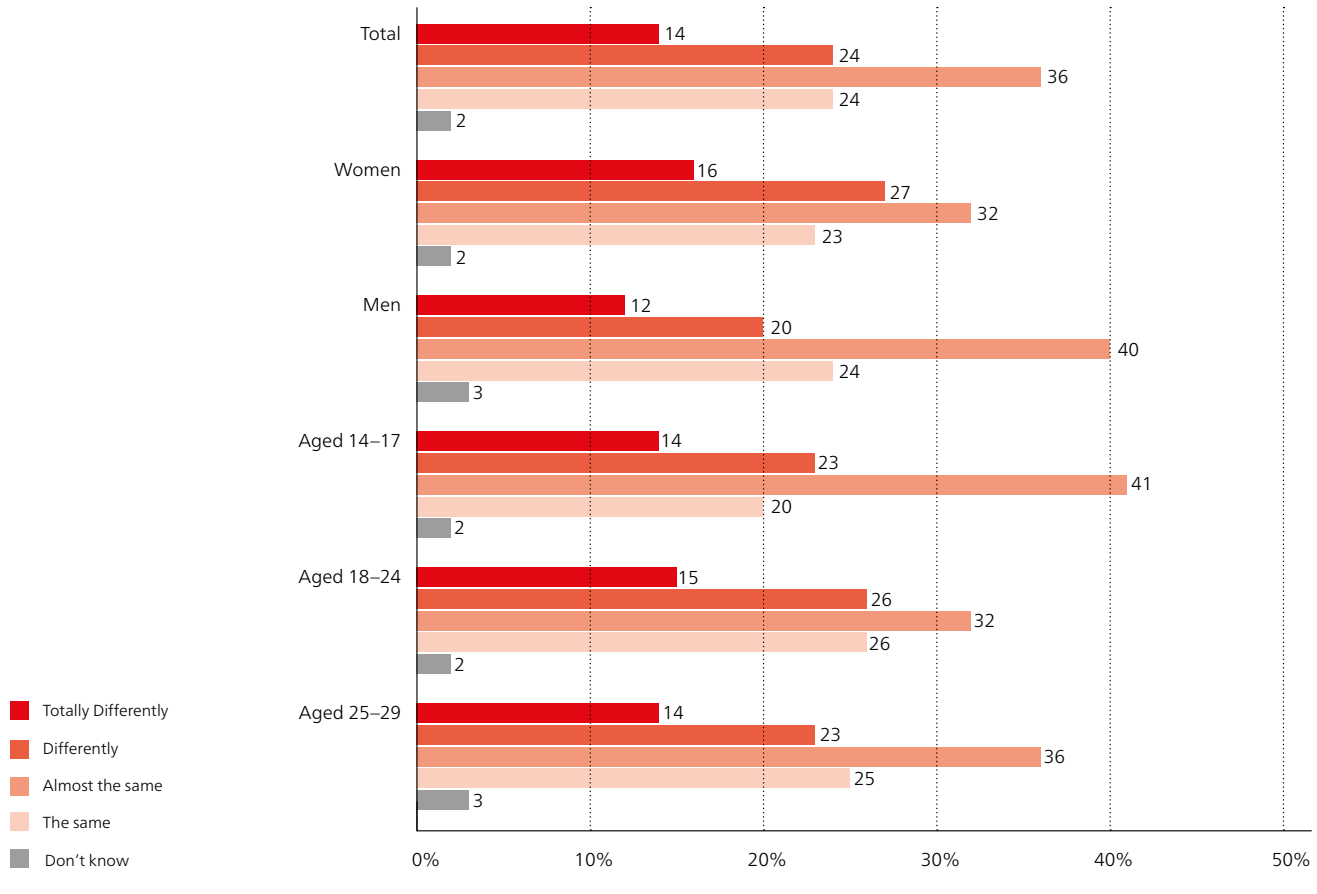


TABLE 42. **Try to recall how your parents raised you when you were in primary school. How often did they do the following?**

	Total	Gender		Age			Financial situation		
		female	male	Aged 14–17	Aged 18–24	Aged 25–29	Can afford food	Can afford clothes	Can afford durable goods
Parents explained to me why I ought to follow the rules (obey)									
Never	5	5	5	6	5	4	8	5	4
2	8	8	9	10	8	7	12	9	7
3	22	21	24	19	24	24	21	26	18
4	26	24	29	24	27	28	20	25	29
Many times	36	40	32	38	34	36	35	33	40
Don't know	3	3	2	3	3	1	4	1	2
I was allowed to participate in deciding on family rules									
Never	15	16	13	15	13	16	18	15	13
2	14	12	17	13	13	15	17	15	12
3	27	24	32	26	33	24	24	28	29
4	24	25	24	25	22	26	18	25	27
Many times	17	21	12	18	16	17	17	15	19
No Answer / Don't Know	3	3	3	3	3	2	6	3	2

TABLE 43. **Try to recall how your parents raised you when you were in primary school. How often did they do the following?**

	Total	Gender		Age			Financial situation		
		female	male	Aged 14–17	Aged 18–24	Aged 25–29	Can afford food	Can afford clothes	Can afford durable goods
My parents were aware of my problems at school									
Never	7	9	6	9	6	8	11	8	5
2	8	8	9	9	8	8	9	9	7
3	22	19	26	20	24	23	20	23	22
4	28	25	30	25	29	28	23	29	28
Many times	32	37	26	35	30	31	33	29	35
No Answer / Don't Know	3	3	3	2	4	3	4	2	2
I was beaten if I misbehaved, disobeyed									
Never	48	54	40	55	43	45	42	49	48
2	22	19	25	21	24	21	23	22	22
3	14	11	18	12	15	15	11	14	15
4	9	8	9	4	10	11	10	8	8
Many times	6	6	7	6	6	6	11	6	5
No Answer / Don't Know	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	1	2
If I failed to meet my parents' expectations, I was berated, criticized									
Never	29	31	26	33	29	26	27	30	29
2	22	20	25	24	23	20	18	24	22
3	24	22	26	19	25	27	22	22	26
4	14	16	13	14	14	15	11	14	15
Many times	9	10	9	9	8	11	20	9	7
No Answer / Don't Know	2	2	1	2	1	2	3	1	2
My parents would yell at me if I got naughty (disobeyed, misbehaved)									
Never	21	24	17	23	19	21	23	21	20
2	26	26	26	25	29	23	20	27	26
3	26	23	30	25	27	27	23	28	27
4	16	16	16	14	15	18	12	15	19
Many times	10	10	10	12	8	11	20	10	8
No Answer / Don't Know	2	2	2	1	2	2	3	1	2

TABLE 44. **Try to recall how your parents raise you when you were in primary school. How often did they do the following?**

	Total	Gender		Age			Financial situation		
		female	male	Aged 14–17	Aged 18–24	Aged 25–29	Can afford food	Can afford clothes	Can afford durable goods
If I was keen on doing something, my parents would allow me to do it									
Never	10	10	10	8	10	13	17	11	6
2	19	18	20	19	16	22	26	21	14
3	35	30	40	30	36	37	26	37	35
4	22	23	20	25	23	18	16	20	26
Many times	14	17	10	17	14	11	13	10	19
No Answer / Don't Know	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	1	2
I was given toys, sweets for behaving well									
Never	16	16	15	15	13	19	21	18	12
2	21	20	22	20	21	21	25	20	19
3	26	22	31	24	29	26	17	29	27
4	19	20	17	17	19	20	13	18	21
Many times	17	20	14	23	16	13	21	14	21
No Answer / Don't Know	2	2	1	2	3	2	3	1	2
My parents threatened me with punishment but almost never acted on their threats									
Never	34	38	29	37	34	30	32	35	32
2	18	17	20	16	20	19	18	20	16
3	23	21	26	20	23	26	20	24	25
4	14	13	14	14	12	15	11	12	17
Many times	9	9	9	10	9	7	16	7	8
No Answer / Don't Know	3	2	3	2	3	3	4	2	2

LEISURE ACTIVITIES AND LIFESTYLE

Today's youth has grown up in an entirely different world than their parents. The rapid advance of modern technology, the spread of the Internet, mobile devices, computers, and other gadgets have influenced the way today's young people work and relax, but the most drastic changes have occurred in the everyday behaviour of youth. The perception of the world, communication, and entertainment have changed the most, with 95% of modern young Russians having permanent access to the Internet (always or often), which is above the national average by a third. According to the data provided by regular nationwide opinion polls conducted by the Levada Centre, just 57% of Russia's population (on average) have permanent or regular access to the Internet (without youth this figure would be considerably lower)[25] (Fig. 24).

84% of youth use social media on a regular basis. On average, young people spend a little more than 6 hours on the Internet daily, with half of the respondents estimating their internet time at 5 hours per day (median and mode values). One in two respondents uses social media to communicate with friends, one in three to keep in touch with their relatives, and one in four to find information and read news.

The use of social media has age-related specifics: young people under 30 use it predominantly to listen to music and search for information and entertainment. Among the most popular topics and news segments on social media are culture and entertainment, and health and medicine. Young people are more interested in social life and activities, and science and technology, whilst adult users pay more attention to domestic policy, economy, and the environment.

The structure of young people's leisure time is very not diverse. The young generation generally prefers passive recreational activities in their homes: listening to music (86%), watching a movie (69%), and spending time with family (79%). Reading is not a popular hobby today; books are favoured by just a third of the respondents, while magazines and newspapers are read by one in ten focus group participants. Online gaming equals reading in terms of intensity and the amount of time spent on it – 28%, creative hobbies were mentioned by 25% of the respondents, sometimes young people like to relax doing nothing at all (35%) or to go shopping (33%).

Compared to older generations, today's youth spend very little time and effort on public activities, or 'community service', such as volunteering (5%) and participation in youth

FIG. 24. **Do you regularly have Internet access (any: Wi-Fi, smartphone, public, PC…)? If yes, how often?**
(compared to the nationwide opinion poll data provided by the Levada Centre, N = 1600)

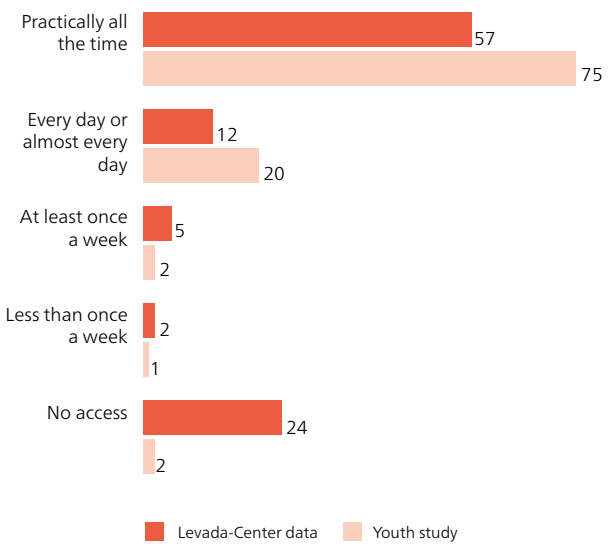
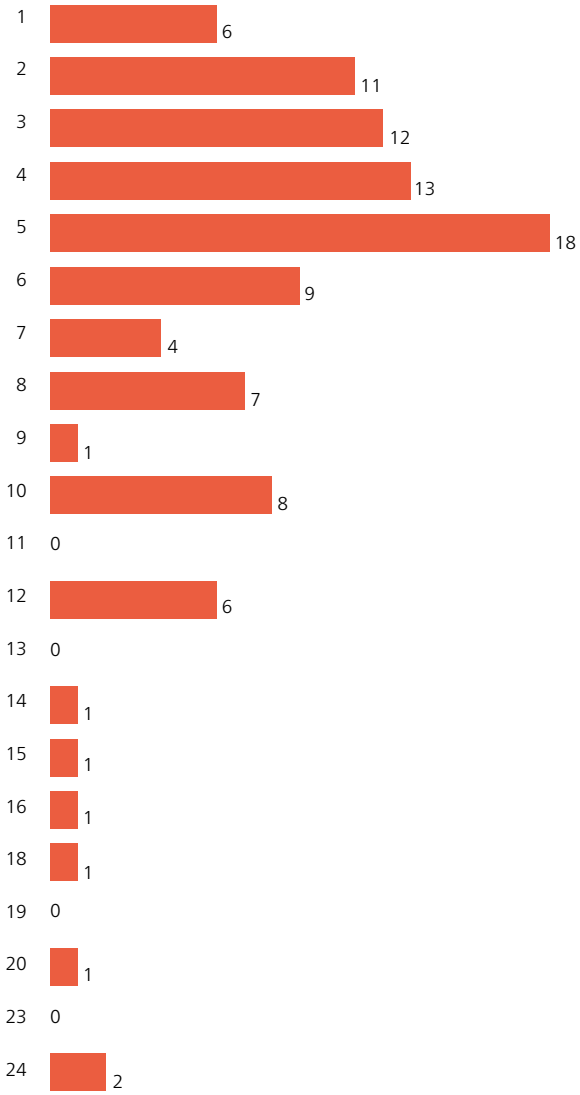


FIG. 25. **How many hours a day on average do you spend on the Internet?**



associations (8%).[26] But they communicate with their friends a lot, going for walks with them (64%) or going out – to a pub, bar, or club (which very few young people can afford – just 10% go to pubs often or very often).

The least frequent leisure activities for Russian youth include travelling abroad (only 3% do this often or regularly), meditation and yoga (4%), and spiritual practices, e.g. only 11% of the respondents revealed they said prayers.

The frequency of certain leisure activities depends on the age and economic status of the respondents. Thus, for example, teenagers aged 14–17 listen to music more often than the respondents from the 25–29 group (93% and 75%, respectively), go out with friends more often (79% and 48%), and exercise twice as much as the young people aged 25–29 (62% and 32%). Those leisure activities that do not require active engagement or a lot of free time are equally favoured by all age groups – an average of 30% read books in each age group, about 70% watch movies, and 4 in 5 young people spend time with their families.

Most of the young people's leisure time is taken up by Internet activities. Only 6% of the respondents do not have a PC at home, almost half of the respondents (48%) have one PC shared by all the members of the household, and 45% have two or more computers. The reach of the Internet is extensive – 96% of the youth have access to the global network at their homes.

The Internet plays a major role in the lives of young people; communication with friends and relatives takes place mostly on the Internet today. Just 16% of the respondents said they did not use social media, and among those who have social media accounts young people aged 14–20 (90%) are the most active users; in the third age group (25–29 years old) one in five respondents does not use social media. The older respondents also listen to music less – 13% – and download pictures from the Internet more seldom – 16%. And the third difference between the two age groups in terms of popular Internet activities is their use of online banking services. The older young people use online banking more often – 83% of the respondents, while 44% of the youth aged 14–17 do not use online banking services, and just 22% use such services regularly, at least once a week. Presumably this has to do with their financial situations.

The activity of the young people on social media is quite high: a total of 77% of the respondents claimed they had up to 200 social media friends or followers, and 16% said this figure was as high as 200 to 500 people. At the same time, the average number of friends in real life is 21, and the median value is still smaller – just 10 (20% of the respondents).

The number of friends among various age groups is similar. As young people grow older, the number of close contacts remains unchanged, and even such changes in their lives as engaging in new activities like going to the university, landing a job, and starting a romantic relationship do not

TABLE 45. **How often do you engage, on average, in the following activities?**
Imagine a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means 'never' and 5 means 'very often'. «часто» и «очень часто»)

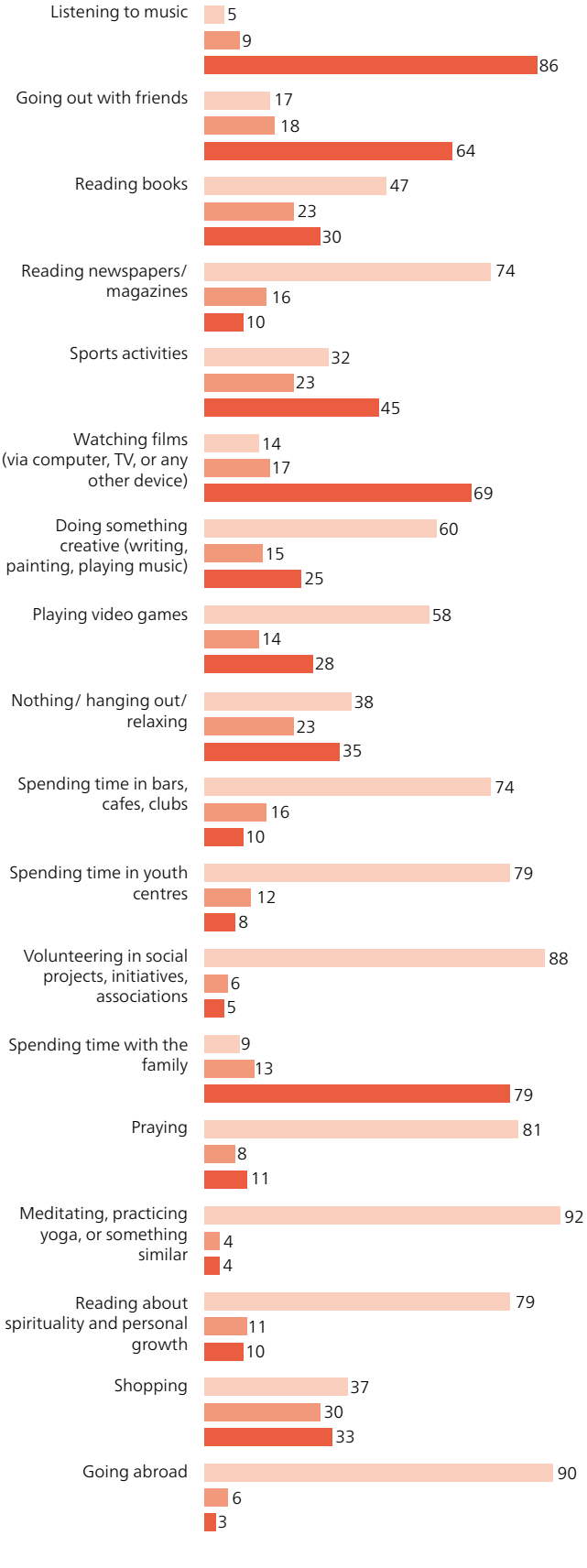
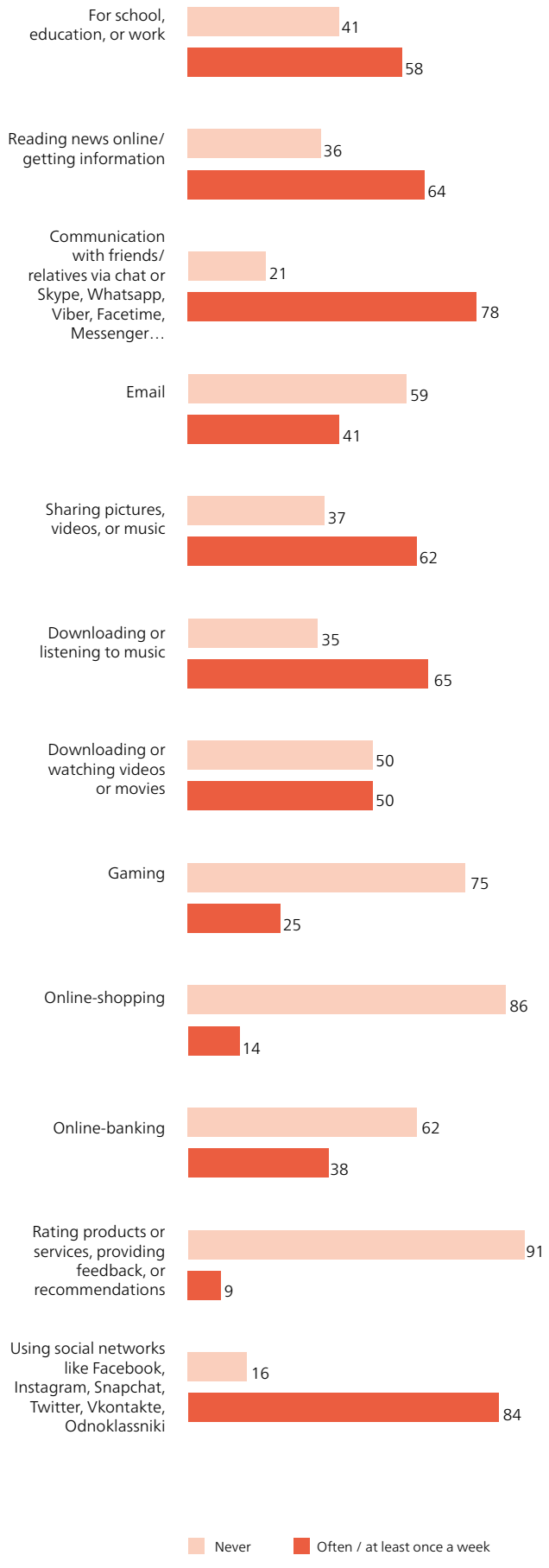


TABLE 46. **How often do you use the Internet for the following purposes?** *(in %)*



'If you want to have a nice vacation, earn the money. To earn the money, you need a job. To get a job, you need qualifications. Education is changing, new professions come into being, and we need to acquire new skills.'

Novosibirsk, 18–24

affect the number of close friends they have. Although the composition of the close friends group undergoes certain changes, their number remains almost the same. Friends take up a large part of the young people's leisure time – 64% of the respondents spend their free time with friends often or very often, and only 17% said they never went out with their friends. The amount of time spent with friends depends on the age of the person – the older people get, the less time they spend on informal contacts, but such contacts do not cease altogether. Thus, about 30% of the youth spend time with their friends across all the age groups, but in the 25–29 group the number of those who go out with friends just 'sometimes' is 23%, which is 10% more than in the youngest age group of 14–17, and 21% of the 25–29-year-olds see their friends not more than once a month (for comparison, teenagers here score 6%).

The Internet is equally used for entertainment and self-development, studies and work – to obtain additional, extracurricular knowledge, skills and competences, and for further training to improve existing qualifications.

The Internet plays a major role in everyday communication with family and relatives – almost 80% of the youth use messenger services to contact their nearest and dearest, and 84% need Internet access to use social media. One of the things that the respondents do very rarely is give their feedback or comment on products and services via the Internet – just 9%, while 14% use the web for online shopping, and a quarter of the respondents play online video games on the Internet.

Watching TV is not as popular a pastime with youth as one might think. Young people watch TV for 3 hours per day, on average (the median value across the sampling is two hours, standard deviation – 2.5 hours). Women watch TV more than men by approximately 30 minutes per day. The overwhelming majority of the respondents – 95% – do not watch TV for more than 6 hours a day. At the same time 27% do not watch TV at all, among them 36% are aged between 18 and 24 and 28% – between 14 and 17. The oldest group (25–29) has the lowest percentage of those who do not watch TV at all – 17%.

12

VALUES

In terms of moral goals and standards, Russian youth are to a large extent focused on their personal life, while collective values are deemed less important. At the top of the list we have loyalty to friends and partners, with a score of 4.69 each. Values in second place can be defined as pursuing self-actualization: 'having a successful career' (4.52), 'being independent' (4.48), and 'taking responsibility' (4.39).

It is worth noting that the majority of respondents do not see family-related values as a must-have: the average score for 'having children' was 4.15, while 'getting/being married' scored even lower, at 3.9. In detail, 11% of the respondents indicated that they having children is not at all or not important for them, the corresponding share for marriage is 15%. They do not see getting married and having children as a must, despite the government measures aimed at making a two-parent family with children a more attractive concept (such as maternity benefits, mortgage on preferential terms for large families with many children, etc.).[27]

The values related to 'quality of life' are perceived as similarly important. These include a healthy diet and taking care of your health and body: 'healthy eating' (4.19) and 'doing sports' (4.06).

Civic activism is considered of least importance to young Russians: 'being politically active' (an average of 3.01) and 'participating in civic action/initiatives' (2.32) were considered important by the smallest number of respondents. It is worth noting that in percentage terms, taking part in civic action turned out to be only half as important as being politically active (37% consider being politically active as important or very important, while only 13% think so about participating in civic action/initiatives).

In percentage terms. three in four respondents believe it is important to 'graduate from a university', while two in three highlighted 'getting rich'. Those who considered wealth and success important also, as a rule, attached importance to a good education, which seems to indicate that they see universities as a social mobility mechanism that can help them secure high social status, to a certain extent. Additionally, respondents who see all three values as important (graduating from university, having a successful career, and getting rich) accounted for half of the sample – 51%.

'Being loyal to your employer', which can be interpreted as staying at the same workplace, on average scored lower on the list (3.89). The precarization of labour – which means weak legal connections and obligations between an employer and an employee, sometimes even an absence of physical contact (e.g. when working remotely from a different country) – is spreading around the world, Russia included,[28] which suggests that with the new types of 'nontraditional employment', loyalty to one's employer and – in a broader sense – having a stable and steady job will be perceived as less and less important.

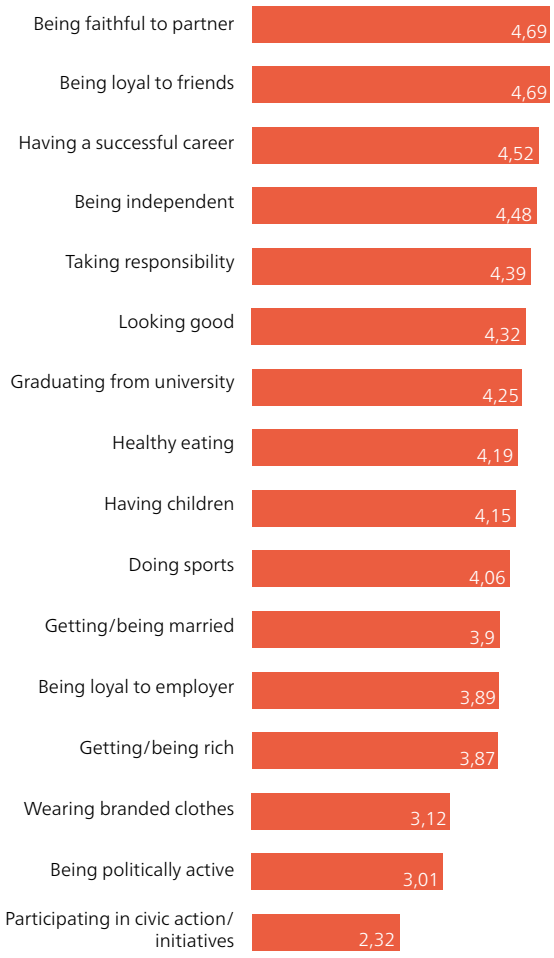
'Wearing branded clothes' also scored low on the list (3.12). It turned out not to be connected to the respondents' finances: 44% of both 'poor' young people who barely make

both ends meet and 'rich' young people who can afford to buy durable goods noted the importance of owning brands. We would also like to note that in this respect there are no statistically significant differences between young people living in urban and rural areas, nor between different age groups in the sample.

At the same time, it should be pointed out that declared values do not always correspond with practical action. For example, almost one third (31%) of the respondents who highlighted the importance of doing sports do not exercise regularly or exercise no more than once a month.

FIG. 26. **How important are the following items to you?**

(The figure shows average scores on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means 'not at all', and 5 means 'very important')



TOLERANCE OF VIOLATING ACCEPTED NORMS

One way to understand the existing social norms is to research the justifiability of an action that can be regarded as abnormal, violating the socially accepted norm or, on the contrary, be seen as justified in the eyes of the public.

A significant proportion of young Russians can justify using connections (in the form of cronyism, nepotism, or knowing the right people) to find a job or resolve issues that arise in everyday life. At the same time, there is a clear distinction between the following informal practices: a) socially acceptable use of connections by an ordinary person, which is 'necessary' in everyday life, vs. b) bribery ('accepting/ giving a bribe'). While the average score on whether using connections to find a job is justified on a scale from 1 to 10 is 7.06, and 'to get things done' scored at 6.68, the opinion on bribery is half as approving – 3.71.

It is important to note that since the early 2000s corruption has been among the top five social issues that concern the Russian people,[29] leaving behind issues to do with healthcare, education, the economy, the environment, and so on. Disregarding petty everyday corruption and considering actual bribery unacceptable is a sign of general dissatisfaction with how institutions and social mobility mechanisms function: knowing that advancing your career based on fair criteria or obtaining qualified medical care is impossible, people justify using their personal connections (the network of right people[30]) as an alternative to satisfy their needs within formal institutional practices, but emphatically disapprove of any informal practices seen as excessive and unfair.[31]

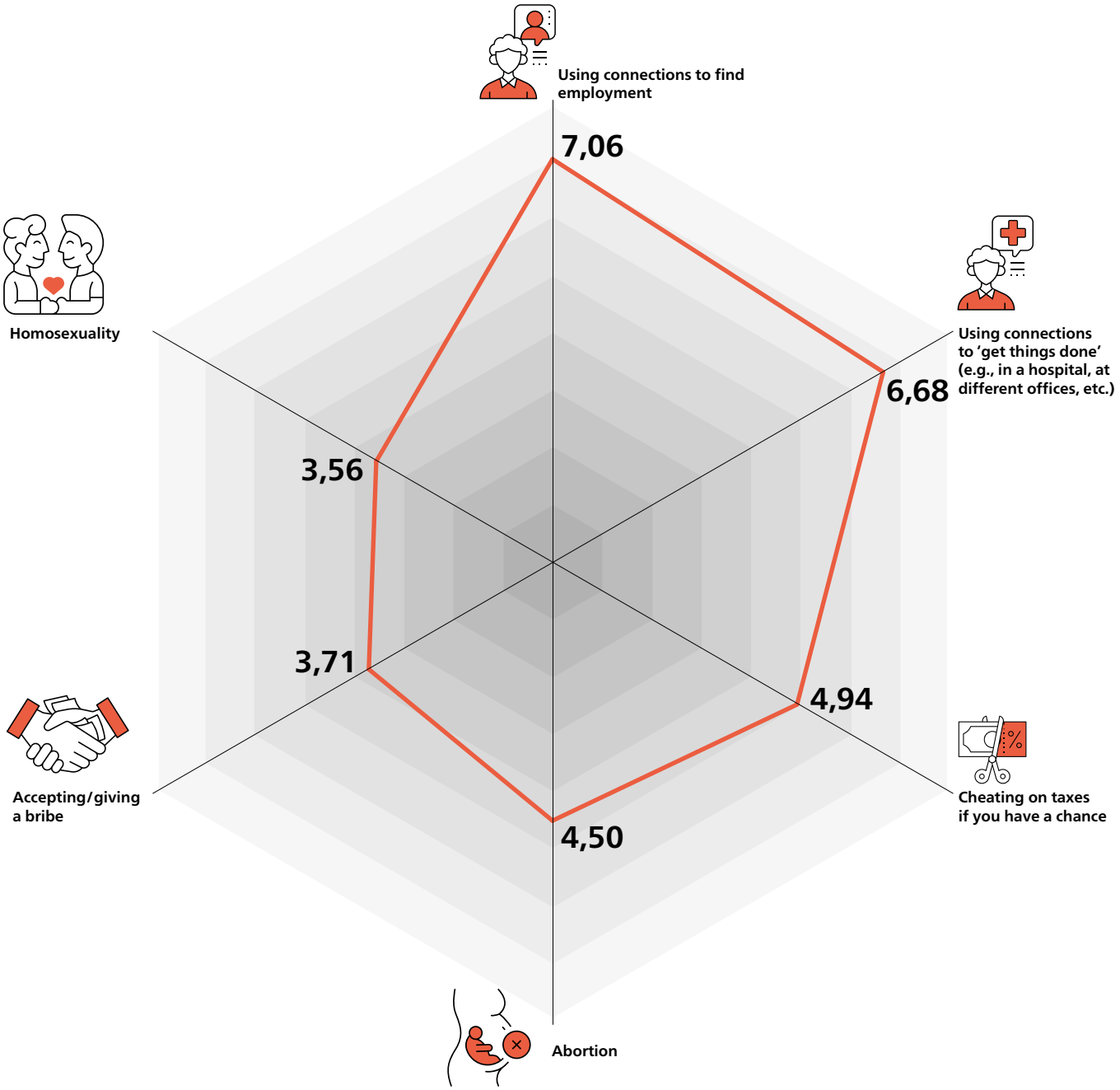
This behaviour is characteristic not only of the older generation, but of young Russian people as well, who also demonstrate a relative tolerance of everyday petty corruption, though respondents in the younger bracket (14–17 age group) found using such connections less frequently justified than those in the slightly older bracket; they had the lowest average scores. Such rigorism is typical of adolescent socialization, when a declared norm is adopted simplistically.

Another unlawful action that the majority of young people do not consider completely unacceptable is tax evasion. The older the individual respondent, the more justified they find 'cheating on taxes if you have a chance', which again shows that the informal and non-transparent nature of relations with the state is perceived as acceptable to a high degree and is typical of Russians in general[32] and young Russian people in particular. In essence, these are the cases that show the first results of people adopting 'doublethink' social mechanisms as an adaptation strategy in a state with a weak and inefficient social protection system (no independent justice system, etc.).

The actions young Russian people found most unacceptable have to do with reproduction and sexual

CAN THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIOURS EVER BE JUSTIFIED?

(Average figures on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is 'never' and 10 is 'always': the higher the number, the higher the justifiability of the action; ranked in a descending order, across the sample)



identity. 'Homosexuality' was branded the least acceptable behaviour out of the options presented, with about half of the respondents picking the extreme option (can never be justified). It is worth noting that women found this type of sexual preference more justifiable than men (an average of 4.25 among women, as opposed to 2.78 among men). At the same time, responses to other questions in this questionnaire indicated a pointed refusal to stretch the heteronormative framework and morally validate homosexuality (e.g. unwillingness to live near a same-sex couple).

The respondents expressed conservative views on abortion as well, and the younger the respondent, the more conservative the view (see Table 47). It is hard to pinpoint the reason behind this outlook of young Russian people toward reproductive regulation. On the one hand, we cannot regard it as a direct result of imposed religious values: the overwhelming majority of those who identify as Orthodox Christians have only nominal religious identities and do not follow the priests' instructions and religious tenets. Most Orthodox Christians are not practicing Christians in the strict sense of the word, for them to consider abortion a sin and apply this moral framework in their behaviour. Two thirds of the respondents who identified as Orthodox Christians went to religious services once a year or even more rarely than that.

TABLE 47. **Can the following behaviours ever be justified?**

(Average scores on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is 'never' and 10 is 'always' for different age groups: the higher the number, the higher the justifiability of the action; a difference of 1 point and more (when rounded off) indicates significant differences in opinion)

	Age				Sex	
	14–17	18–20	21–24	25–29	female	male
Using connections to find employment	6.88	7	7.18	7.21	7.03	7.10
Using connections to 'get things done' (e.g., in a hospital, at different offices, etc.)	6.45	6.62	6.66	6.92	6.97	6.34
Cheating on taxes if you have a chance	4.63	4.82	4.95	5.27	4.86	5.03
Abortion	4.26	4.5	4.41	4.74	4.63	4.35
Homosexuality	3.88	3.96	3.57	3.03	4.25	2.78
Accepting/giving a bribe	3.57	3.68	3.59	3.9	3.80	3.60

TABLE 48. **Can the following behaviours ever be justified?**

(Average scores on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is 'never' and 10 is 'always' for groups divided by education: the higher the number, the more justifiable the action)

	Education			
	secondary school (unfinished)	secondary school	vocational school/college	university degree
Using connections to find employment	6,96	6,91	7,11	7,39
Using connections to 'get things done' (e.g., in a hospital, at different offices, etc.)	6,54	6,50	6,74	7,05
Cheating on taxes if you have a chance	4,53	4,87	5,03	5,55
Abortion	4,04	4,46	4,6	5,03
Homosexuality	3,68	3,74	3,02	3,87
Accepting/giving a bribe	3,6	3,55	3,78	4,14

On the other hand, the inherent conservatism of Russian domestic policy, with its subtle promotion of 'traditional family values', having many children, and so on, has probably had an impact on post-Soviet youth with respect to norms in marital and family matters. Slight differences in opinion on justifying abortion stem from personal experience: sexually active young people find them more justifiable than those who have no sexual experience as of yet (an average of 4.76 and 4.34 respectively). In other words, we need to distinguish between the declared (widely approved) behaviour and operational, actual (conventional) behaviour to understand and explain such differences within a society.

The main differentiating factor is education, as it expands the scope of acceptable behaviour and justifiability of this or that action.

The education-based differences pertain only to the degree of justifiability of a certain action (whether the respondents see it as more or less justifiable), but the hierarchy remains the same for all groups. Therefore, out of the given options, the respondents with a university degree find homosexuality and bribery just as taboo as the respondents with unfinished secondary education, which means there is a moral consensus on these types of social behaviour. This research does not allow us to draw any conclusions about the motivations that drive people to declare how justifiable an action is (as there were no open-ended questions), but we can hypothesize that well-educated people have a wider spectrum of motivations determined by a different social and cultural background that allows them to regard some behaviours as more justifiable.

RELIGION AND RELIGIOSITY

From around the mid-90s, the government (still under Boris Yeltsin at the time) began involving and using the Church to strengthen its shaky legitimacy, which had weakened in the face of economic crisis. The Russian Orthodox Church is a conservative social institution with a profoundly archaic internal structure geared towards cooperation with and absolute loyalty to any Russian government and has suppressed any internal reformation movements. As the pivot to conservatism became more and more pronounced, liberalism and democracy were discredited as alien Western traditions and beliefs, while 'traditional values' and spiritual bonds were imposed along with the need to protect Russian culture from foreign Western influence. Orthodox hierarchs painted this as a religious renaissance, a revival of religion.

In this political context, the number of Russians who identify as Orthodox Christians spiked: by the late 1990s, it had reached half of adult Russian citizens, while since 2000, i.e. over almost two decades, the number has risen to an average of 70–75% (according to different surveys).

The noticeable increase in the number of people identifying as Orthodox Christians is not a reflection of any large-scale changes in people's mentality and moral and spiritual values or genuine adoption of Christian ideas and outlook. Turning to Christianity and superficially joining the Church was basically a way of finding a new identity after the USSR collapsed. Orthodox Christianity became synonymous with going back to 'Russianness' ('being a Russian means being Orthodox') and a part of the policy aimed at reviving the imperial myth (Russia is a great power and a unique civilisation), which blocked the emerging civic and political mentality.

For a number of reasons, the growing number of people identifying as Orthodox Christians in the post-Soviet period did not indicate a religious renaissance, a wider application of religious norms and tenets, or moral exploration of issues of faith, the meaning and purpose of life. The Church tried to impose a dogmatic, magical, and ritualistic kind of authority on the congregation, without introducing new believers to the religious importance and value of such sacraments as communion, confession, matrimony, and prayer. Only a very small group of Orthodox Christians has come closer to understanding their meaning and value for a truly spiritual life; parish priests (the more educated of them) estimate their number to be no higher than 2–3% of the entire congregation.[33]

The number of people who go to church at least once a month or more has been growing, but, first of all, at a slow pace, and secondly, they are still a minority compared to the

WHICH RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION, IF ANY, DO YOU BELONG TO?

(% of respondents)

Young people 2019 / Russians* 2018

*Representative survey of Russian citizens over 18 years old; April 2019, N = 1,600.

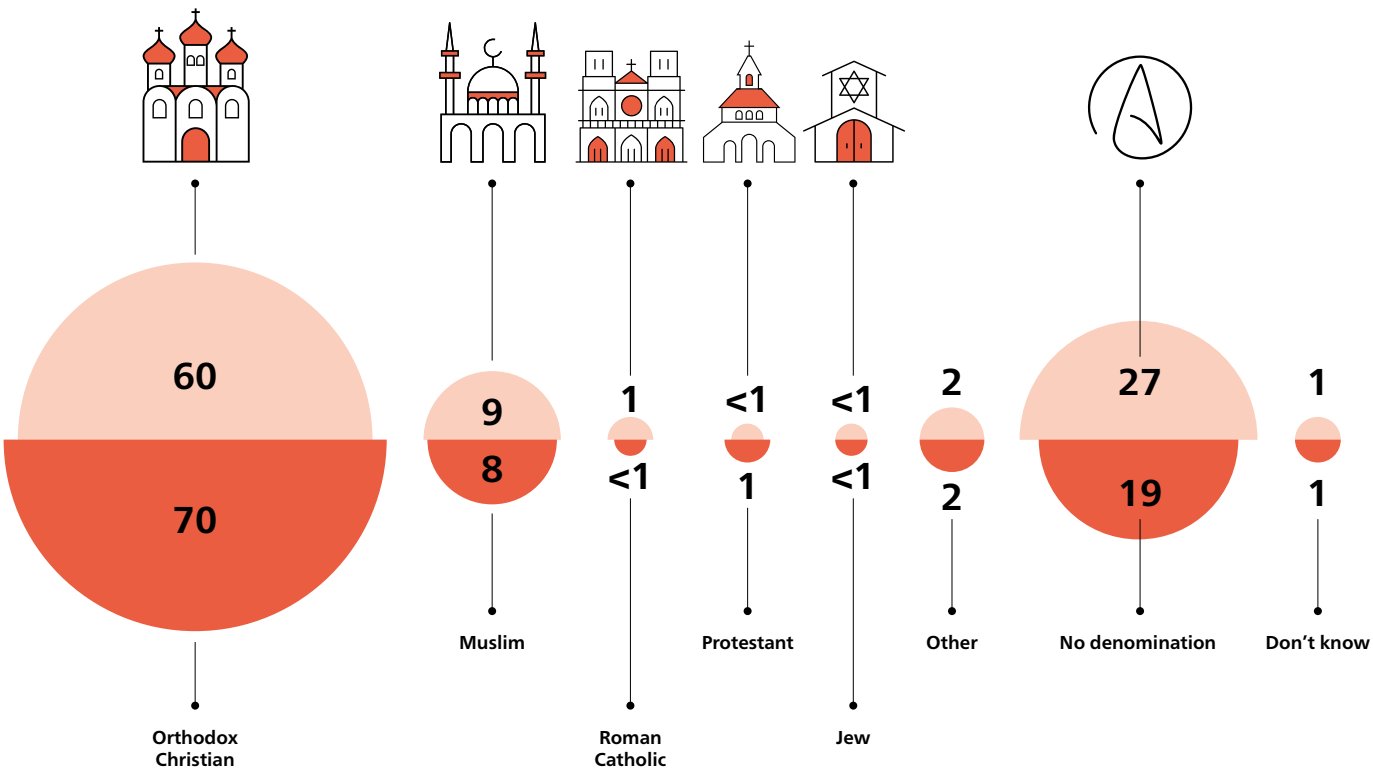
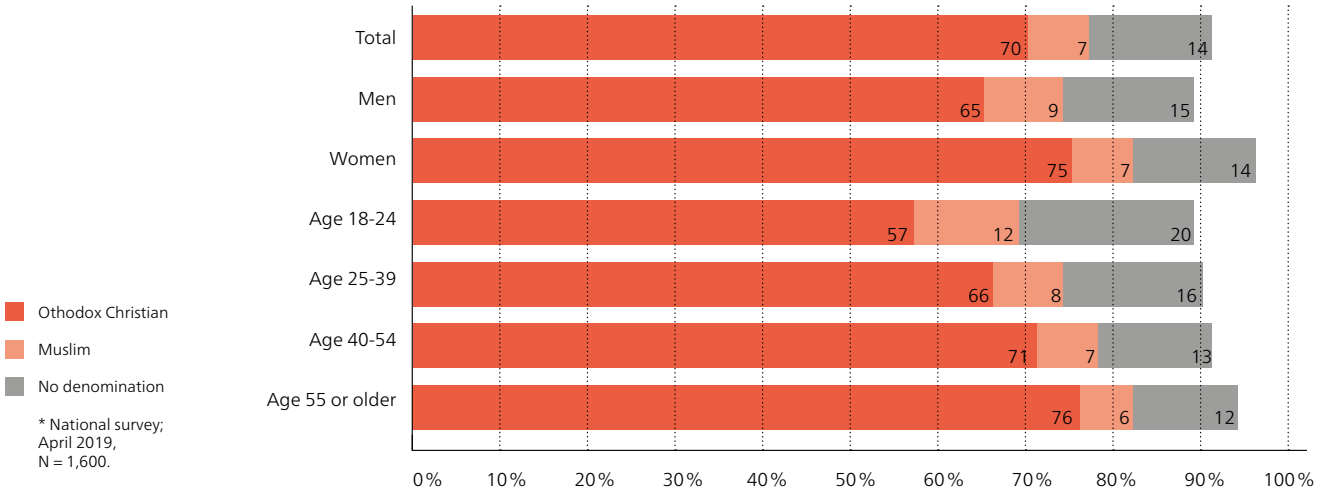
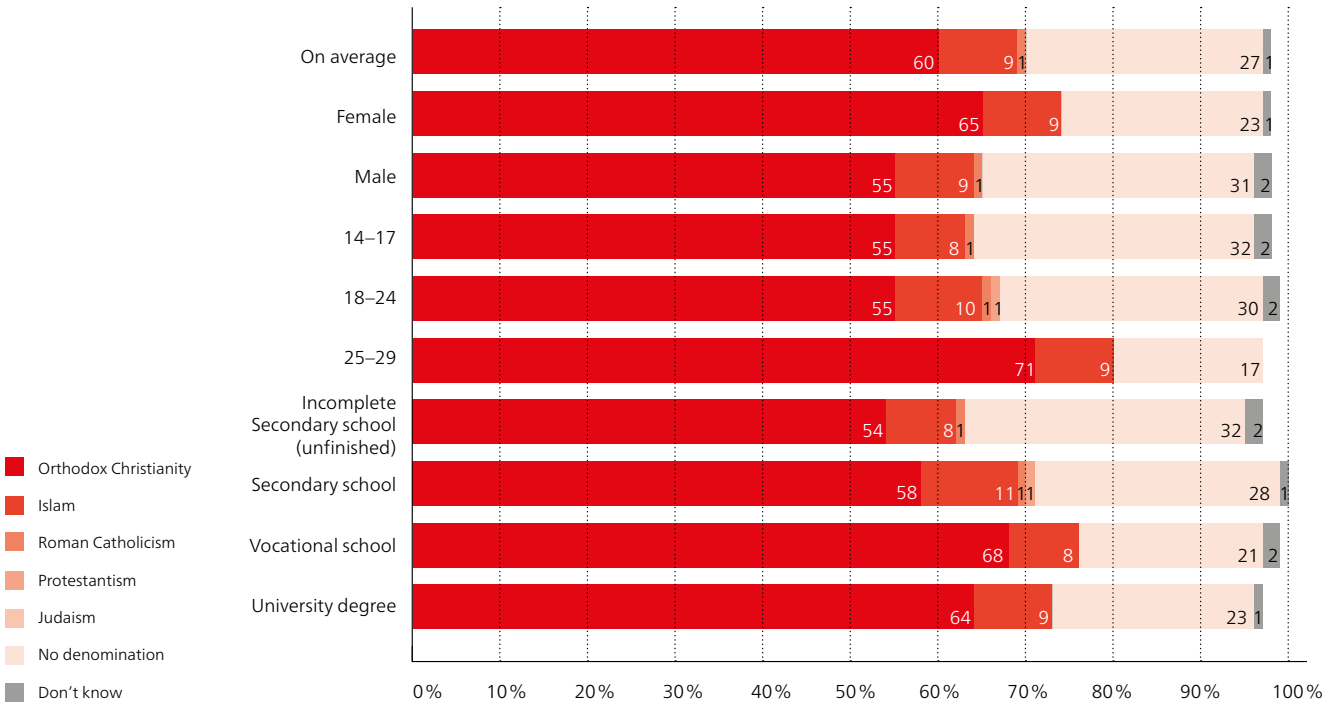


TABLE 49. **Which religious denomination, if any, do you belong to?***



* National survey; April 2019, N = 1,600.

TABLE 50. **Which religious denomination, if any, do you belong to?**
(% of respondents based on sex, age and education)



total number of Orthodox Christians (about 11–14%). More than one fifth of 'potential parishioners' (the most popular answer) go to church only several times a year, e.g., on major holy days – 22% (as of October, 2018). In other words, over half of adult Russians who identify as Orthodox Christians do not go to church at all (46% never go to church, and 37% do so very rarely).

These general trends hold true for the young generation of Russians as well. Overall, the proportion of young people who identify as Orthodox Christians is lower than the respective number among the general population. This means that religious behaviour is more common among older age groups. Our research studies on religion and religiosity show that the older the respondent, the more likely they are to identify as Orthodox Christian. The number is especially high among elderly women.

Second-largest religious denomination among young people is Islam (9%), which approximately corresponds to the percentage of Muslims in samples from different regions and republics within Russia (or is slightly higher).

FIG. 27. **Which religious denomination, if any, do you belong to?**
(% of respondents based on place of residence)

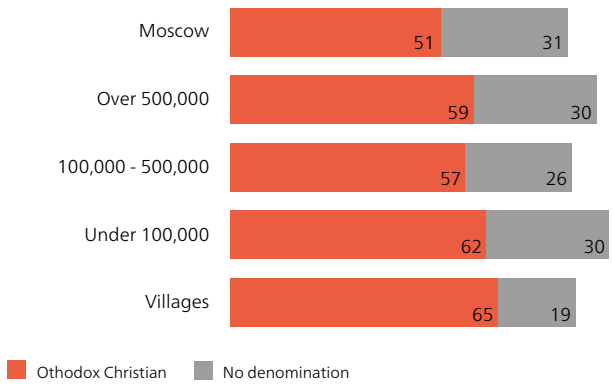
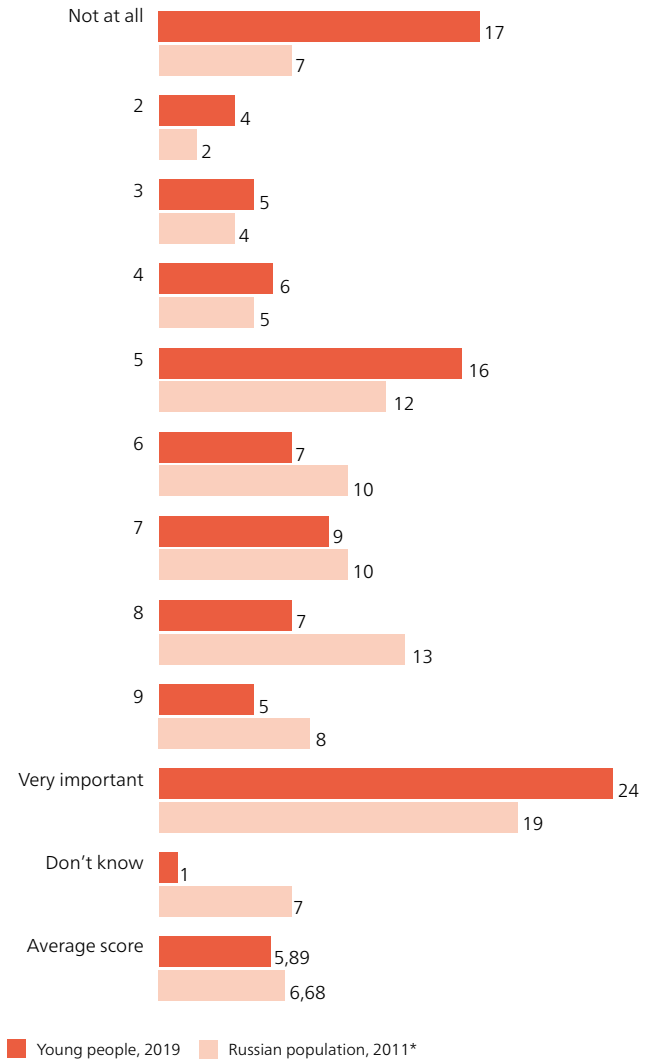


TABLE 51. **How important is God in your life?**
(% of respondents)



* National representative survey, N = 2,500; 2011. The number of Orthodox Christians has grown insignificantly since 2011, so we can use the data as a reference to get a general picture.

Our study shows that young people typically start identifying as Orthodox Christians at around 25, i.e. at the time when they start a family, have children, and begin their 'adult life'.

More young women identify as Orthodox Christians than young men – 65% and 55% respectively. As was mentioned above, the 25–29 age group had the highest number of those identifying as Orthodox Christians (71%), and if we consider educational background, the number is highest among the respondents who graduated from vocational schools and colleges (68%). In this respect, the figures for young people match the statistics for the adult population.

Non-believers, or, to be more exact, those who do not identify with a religious denomination, are more common among men (31%, as opposed to 23% of women) and teenagers (32%), i.e. adolescents who have not finished secondary school (see Table 50).

The geographical distribution of young Orthodox Christians correlates with the level of urbanization, increasing from the centre (51% in Moscow) to the periphery (65%). We see the largest number of believers (identifying as either Orthodox Christians or Muslims) in small towns and especially villages (see Fig. 27). In Moscow, there are 6% young Muslims, as opposed to 14% in rural areas. The number of non-believers shrinks from 31% to 19% when moving from Moscow to rural villages

The level of religiosity among the young generation can be determined via the question on the importance of God in their life. The ratio of the sum of the two answers at each end of the spectrum is 1.4 (29% of respondents opted for 'very important' and 'important', while 21% of respondents chose 'not at all' or 'not very important'). The average score on a scale from 1 to 10 is around 6, which means that the general attitude is closer to the middle (see Table 51).

Comparing responses from young people with the general population shows that God is more important to older generations. Based on previous research studies, we can stipulate that the results can be attributed to women living in peripheral towns, the poor, and the elderly. They make up the core of the parish; they go to church most often, regularly engage in religious practices, and follow religious precepts.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

However, religious behaviour patterns per se are almost the same among young Russian people and older generations: 40% of adults and 46% of young people 'practically never' go to church. Other figures are an almost perfect match (see Table 52).

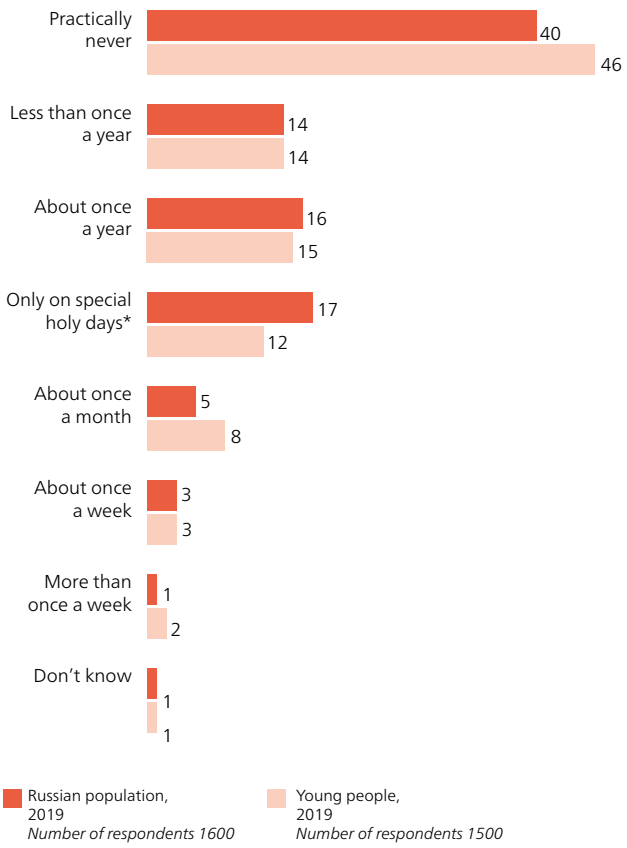
Men dominate among those who go to church very rarely ('practically never', 51%), while the 25–29 age group has the smallest percentage of non-church-goers (42%).

Young people and older generations go to church with similar frequency, though there are slightly more young people going to church regularly ('about once a month') – 13%, as opposed to 9% of the general population – but the discrepancy is almost within the standard margin of error.

The older respondents (25–29 age group) go to church more regularly (15%, as opposed to 10–11% in other age groups), with women attending more regularly than men (14% and 11% respectively). If we take groups based on the respondents' education and financial status, those with a university degree show a deviation from the average of 13%, scoring slightly higher (15%).

The larger the city they live in, the less often young people go to church. The proportion of those who almost never go to church goes down from 59% in the capital to 41% in villages. At the same time, church attendance regularity (once a month, once a week) is similar in all types of settlements (11–13%), though slightly higher in mid-sized cities, where 16% of young people go to church once a month or more (see Table 53).[34]

TABLE 52. **Apart from weddings, funerals, and baptisms, about how often do you attend religious services these days?**



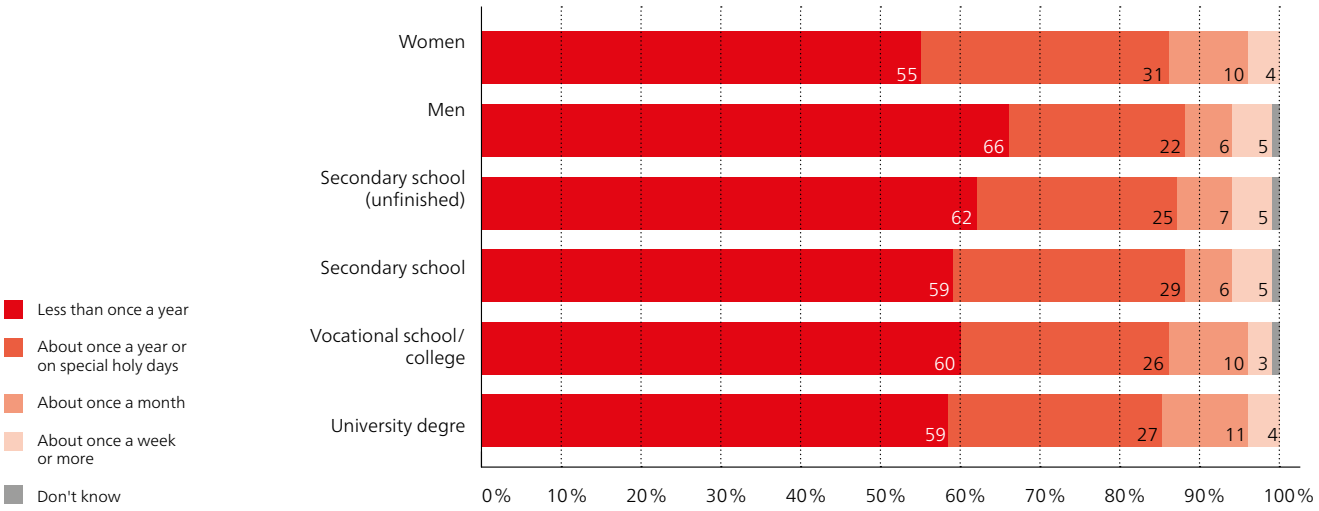
* 'Several times a year'.

TABLE 53. **Apart from weddings, funerals, and baptisms, about how often do you attend religious services these days?**

(% of respondents based on place of residence)

	On average	Moscow	City (population over 500,000)	City (population from 100,000 to 500,000)	Town (population under 100,000)	Village
Practically never	46	59	49	47	44	41
Less than once a year	14	4	14	12	15	17
About once a year	15	6	14	15	13	20
Only on special holy days	12	20	12	8	14	11
About once a month	8	8	7	11	7	8
About once a week	3	4	3	2	4	3
More than once a week	2	0	1	3	2	1
Don't know	1	0	0	1	2	0
Regularly	*13*	*12*	*11*	*16*	*13*	*12*

TABLE 54. **Apart from weddings, funerals, and baptisms, about how often do you attend religious services these days?** *(% of respondents based on sex and education)*



Regular church attendance (once a month) is higher among women and young people both with and without a university degree (see Table 54)

Another question that implicitly contributes to the understanding of youth religiosity is the question about frequency of prayer. An overwhelming majority of young people (62%) never pray, while only 46% of the respondents say they never go to church. 6% of respondents pray often, almost every day, representing the most religious part of the young population (though we do not know if they observe all canonic prayer requirements) (see Fig. 29).

No significant differences were detected across social and demographic groups; deviations of 1–2% can be disregarded.

According to research studies on religion and religiosity in Russia conducted by the Levada Centre, religious upbringing is not widespread in Russian families. In family circles, religion is rarely discussed, and reading religious literature, including scriptures, is not common.

More than half of the respondents (52%) consider their parents 'moderately religious', while the estimated proportion of non-religious and religious parents is the same – 22% (see Table 66). No significant differences were detected depending on age, education, or financial status.

As for place of residence, the research only shows a significant difference between Moscow youth and people living in other cities, towns, and villages. Moscow had the highest number of respondents who believe their parents are not religious (30%, as opposed to 22% on average), and the lowest number of respondents who believe their parents are religious (14%, as opposed to 22% on average). Data on other places of residence varies insignificantly and is close to average figures.

FIG. 28. **How often do you pray?**

(On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means 'never' and 5 means 'very often', % of respondents)

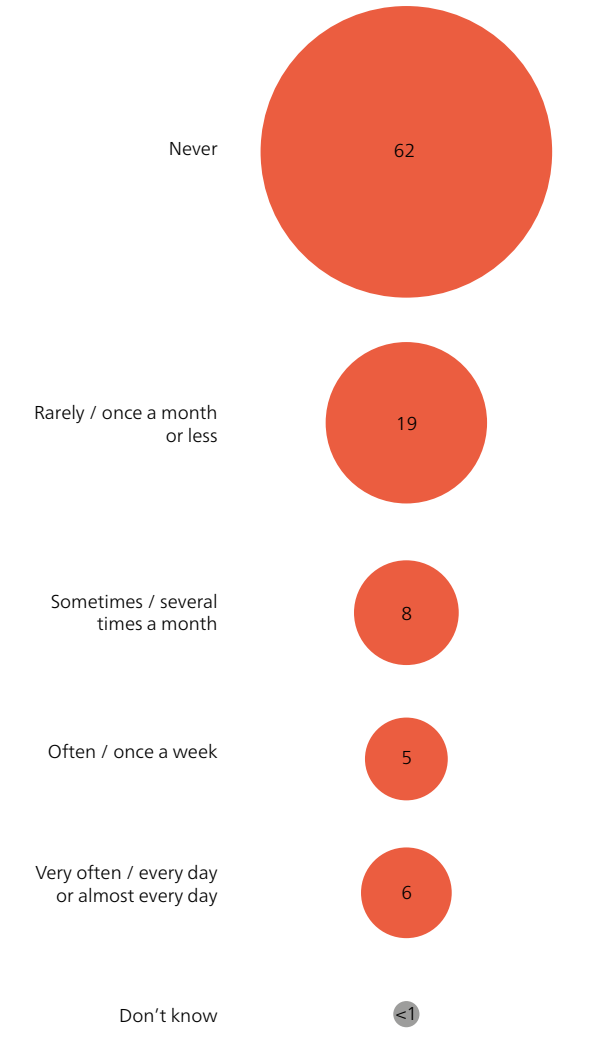


FIG. 29. **How religious would you say are/were your parents?** *(% of respondents)*

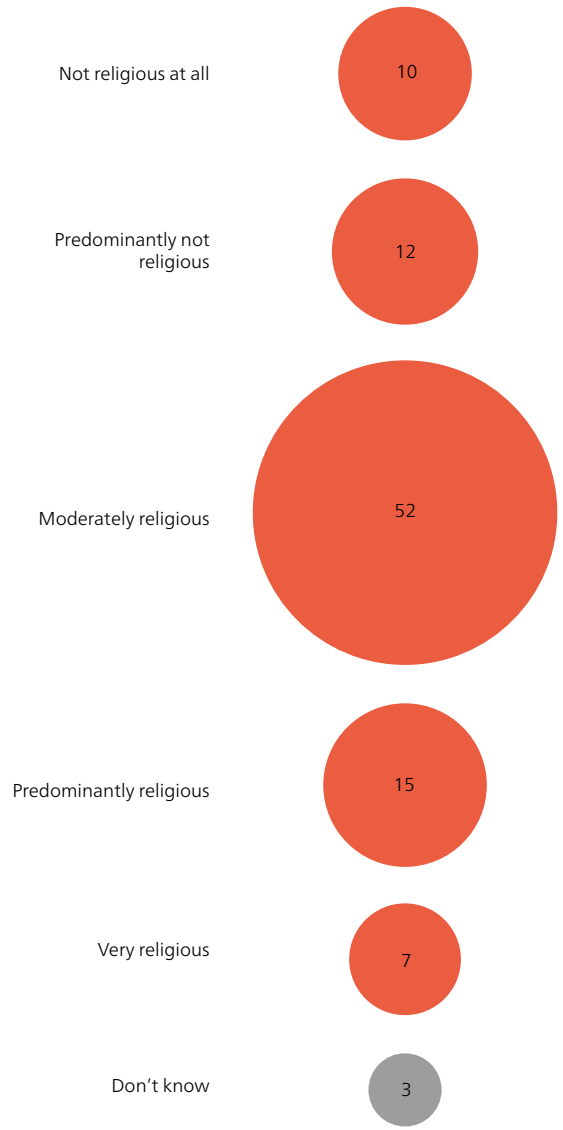
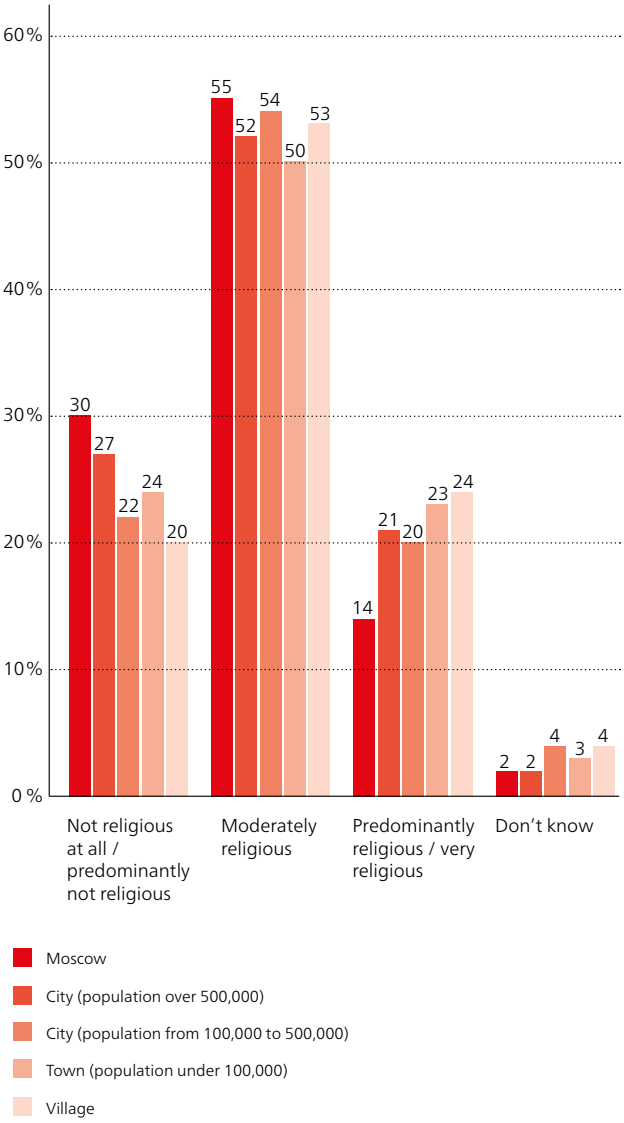


TABLE 55. **How religious would you say are/were your parents?**

(% of respondents based on place of residence)



TOLERANCE AND DISCRIMINATION

Social distance

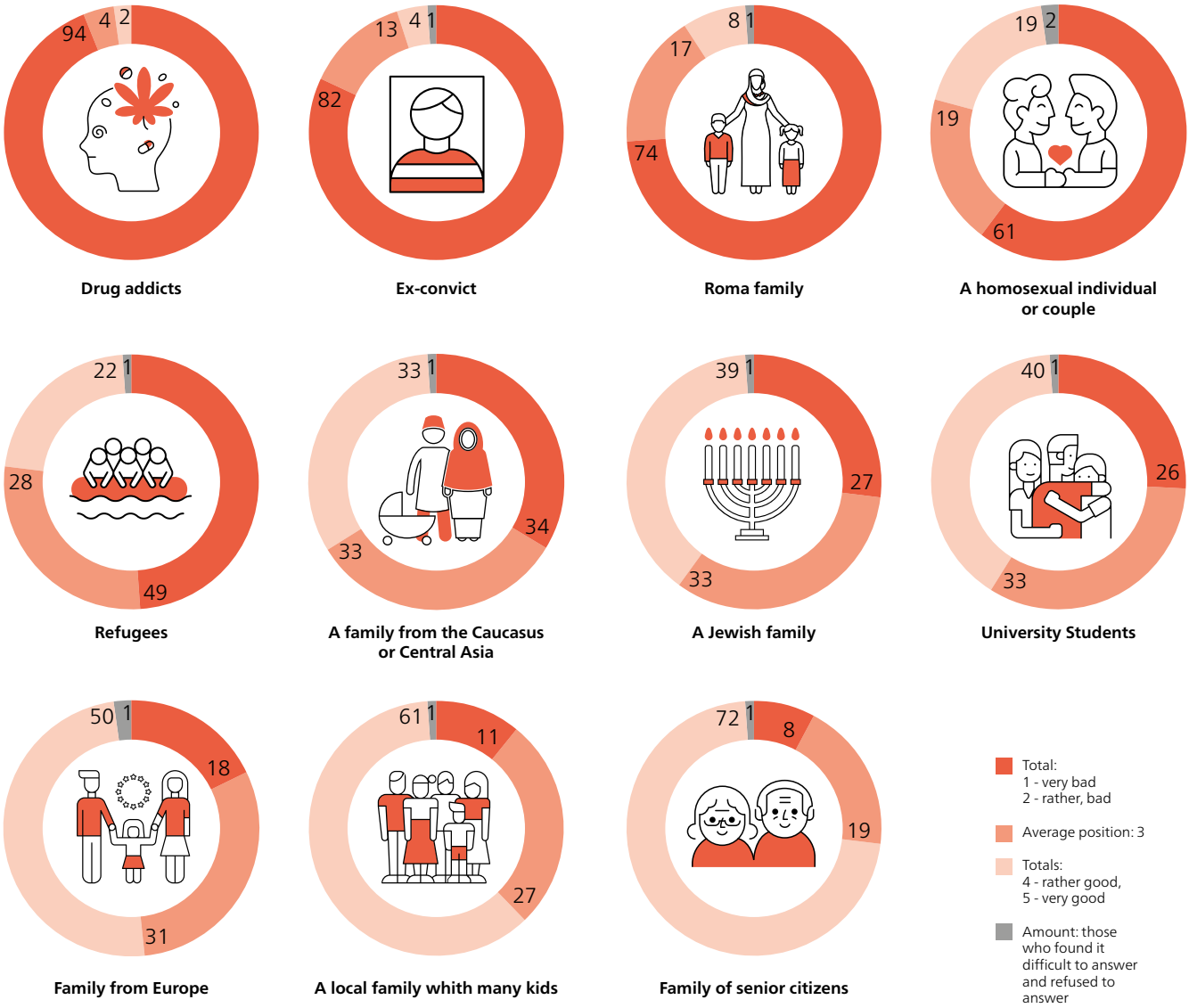
The scale of social distance shows the attitude that the majority of the population has towards social groups that can be perceived as undesirable, deviant, deprived, and so on. As such, it does not enable us to draw the conclusion that a declared animosity to potential neighbours is exhibited in any practical way and can be equated to a point-blank refusal to live next to someone. The purpose of the scale is to rank various social groups based on animosity (xenophobia) aimed at them within our society and understand the reasons behind the existing social distance.

Russians are least happy about living in the same neighbourhood as drug addicts (94%) and ex-convicts (82%).

> *In villages, in far-off places, in rural areas somewhere. They're always lacking – like power supply or food. Besides the fact that they have no jobs. There are even places where they have no roads. They have to wait until the river floods or something.'*
>
> Moscow, 18–24

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF ONE OF THE FOLLOWING FAMILIES OR PERSONS MOVED INTO YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD? *(in %)*

(On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means 'very bad' and 5 means 'very good')



Negative attitudes towards drug addicts are the norm for Russian public opinion. Drug addicts are often perceived as being the same as HIV positive people. The first reason is extreme stigmatization, including at the level of social institutions, where such people could be denied treatment or permission to adopt a child. Secondly, there is the government policy, which ignores this group and downplays the scale of the problem. The third reason is fears and myths that thrive among the public (for example, data obtained by the Levada Centre shows that one in ten adult Russians believes you can get HIV through an insect bite).

The respondents also took a predominantly negative view of the following two categories: 'homosexual individual or couple' (61% vs. 19%) and 'refugees' (49% vs. 22%). There are strict legal norms in place against homosexuality and the public demonstration thereof,[35] while sexual and reproductive deviations are seen by one third of the population as 'a disease that requires public interference and treatment'.[36] Living in a big city or the capital leads to a less homophobic outlook. Among the respondents residing in cities with a population over 100,000, one in five is willing to live in the same neighbourhood as homosexuals, while in rural areas it is only one in seven. Age also plays a role, as among the 14–17 age group, one in four respondents were favourable to having same-sex couple as neighbours, a sentiment shared by only one in seven in the 25–29 age group.

As for the ethnic groups that Russians would not want to live in the same neighbourhood with, gypsies (the word 'gypsy' has no negative connotation in the Russian language, and Russians are unfamiliar with terms such as 'Roma' or 'Sinti') top the list: almost two thirds of respondents (74%) reacted negatively to them as potential neighbours. In this respect, young Russian people are different from the average Russian citizen only in that their animosity and isolationist sentiment is even stronger (in July 2018, 43% of Russians said that they 'wouldn't let gypsies come to Russia'[37]). Meanwhile, anti-Semitism is not characteristic of Russian youth, most of whom are willing to live next door to a Jewish family. Positive and negative attitudes towards a family from Central Asia or the Caucasus are split evenly (33% and 34% respectively).

Despite a weak European identity or lack thereof among young Russian people, they are generally positive about a European family as potential neighbours. This is the third most favourable category that Russians would choose as neighbours. On the one hand, this means that the current social and political context (sanctions, stricter visa requirements, media campaigns etc.) have no dramatic impact on everyday life and young people's perceptions. On the other hand, it underscores the values held by young people, one third of whom see European countries as 'the wealthiest and most prosperous countries where people live a peaceful and untroubled life' (33%).

The fairly controversial law to decriminalize domestic violence comes to mind. That was just truly explosive. Like, he hits you means he loves you and all that. And that a husband can beat his wife and his kids and get away with it scot-free. They fixed it apparently, but the fact that this bill even passed, that it was seriously considered, that's very telling.'

Moscow, 18–24

I think some people don't know they have a right to something. Here's a good example: you can get a tax deduction off your tuition fee or a hospital surgery. Of course, no one is just going to tell you, "Hey, you know, you can get that money back." So if you know about it, you'll be the one to tell someone else.'

Moscow, 18–24

Women's rights, yes, mainly women's rights.'

Moscow, 18–24

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH DISCRIMINATION

Russian people show low levels of concern about issues of discrimination (in a broader sense – infringement on human rights and freedoms) in comparison with other problems, such as poverty, corruption, unaffordable healthcare and education, and so on. However, almost one in two respondents (45%) said they were 'sometimes' or 'often' discriminated against for at least one of the reasons below, i.e. had personal experience with it. Taking into consideration the regularity of such instances of discrimination, we can conclude that at least one in ten young Russians have faced it 'often' (12% of respondents).

Based on the respondents' own assessment, the most common reasons for discrimination are age and economic background, as one in five respondents have experienced it (22% and 21% respectively, with 'often' and 'sometimes' responses put together).

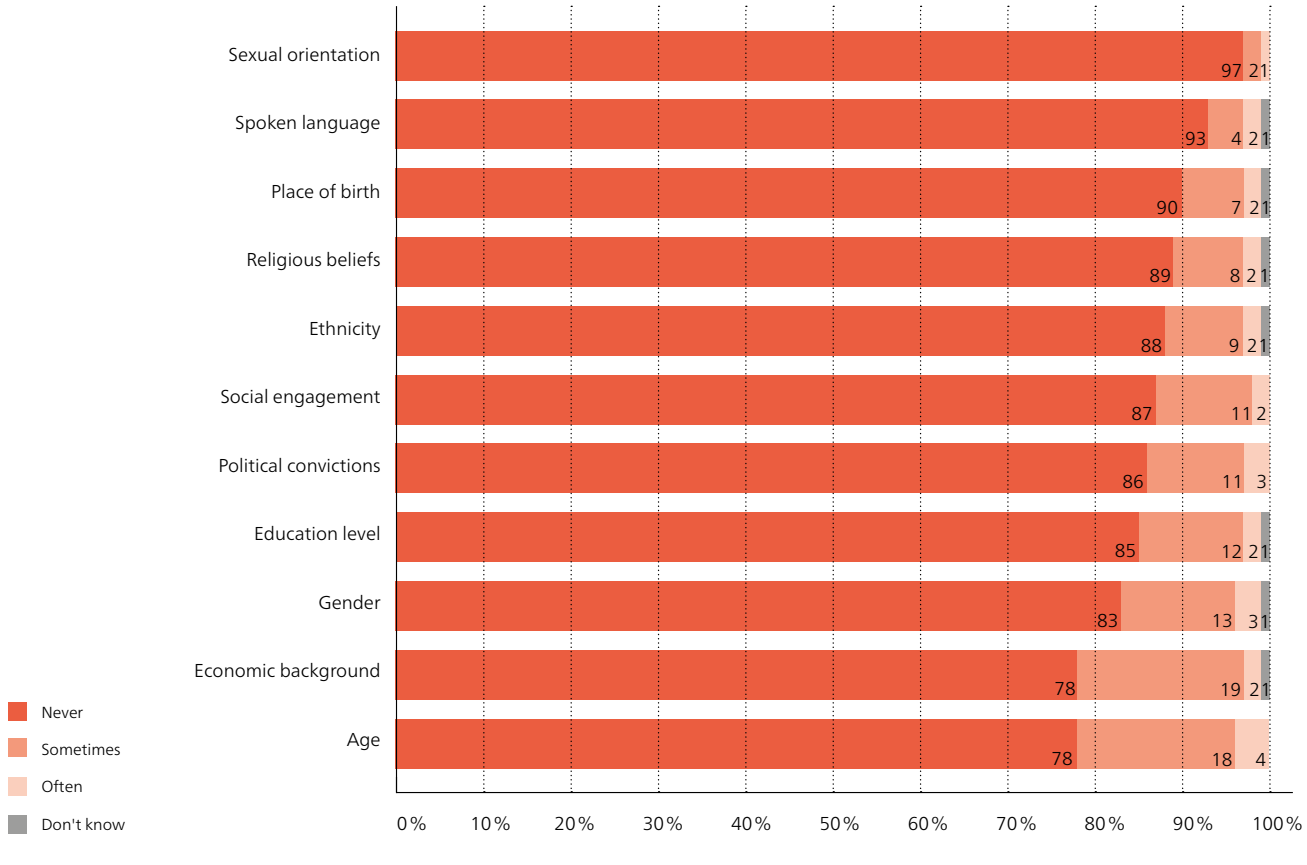
In third place, we have gender-based discrimination, pointed out by 16% of the respondents. Female respondents mentioned it twice as often as male respondents (22% and 9% respectively). Russian women in general registered more instances of discrimination against them than men (48% and 43% respectively).

> *'[Who is discriminated against?] I thought of sexual minorities right away. Yes. I believe they are oppressed here.'*
>
> Moscow, 18–24

Sexual orientation was the least-mentioned reason for discrimination (because in Russia, the behaviour patterns of this group do not involve openly demonstrating your sexual preferences, which helps to protect them from discrimination, whereas outspoken LGBT-activists face not only discrimination, but also violence[38]), closely followed by spoken language – 3% and 6% respectively. In focus groups for LGBT research studies there were arguments about how LGBT people should be treated. Some respondents believe that in Russia, the LGBT community's 'self-expression is stifled' and most people 'are aggressive towards them'. Talking about pride parades and same-sex marriages evokes mostly negative emotions and mockery. However, young people show more tolerance towards gay and lesbian people than older generations.

Discrimination as an issue causes more concern for urban youth than rural residents. City dwellers seem to be better at recognising certain actions as discrimination and use more

TABLE 56. **Have you ever experienced discrimination for any of the following reasons?**



alternative information sources (social media), accessing content that challenges the conventional norms (the submissive role of women, the attitude to same-sex marriages, etc.) and suggests adjustments to the existing social framework. If we compare the data from young people living in villages and big cities, it is apparent that the former did not reply 'sometimes' or 'often' when asked about being discriminated against based on gender or age as often as young residents of cities with a population over 500,000 people or Muscovites.

The same conclusion is valid for young people who use social media regularly as opposed to those who do so sometimes or not at all. Among active social media users, 17% spoke of gender-based discrimination, while only 13% of occasional social media users and 4% of non-users did so. Age-based discrimination was pointed out by 23%, 16%, and 11% of these groups of respondents respectively.

'...A child in that class, they came from Ukraine, from Donbas. It took them three years to get official registration. Citizenship, citizenship. They also had some issues, they were almost ready to go back.'

Novosibirsk, age 18–24

Basic types of discrimination are fairly widespread among youth: almost one in two respondents have experienced discrimination for one or more reasons, while one tenth of the respondents said they are regularly discriminated against.

TABLE 57. **Have you ever experienced discrimination for any of the following reasons?**

	Sex		Place of residence					Social media use		
	female	male	Moscow	city (over 500,000 people)	city (100,000 - 500,000 people)	town (under 100,000 people)	village	never	some-times	often / no less than once a week
Number of respondents	801	699	51	462	328	289	370	64	171	1 231
Gender										
Never	78	90	77	81	84	82	87	97	86	83
Sometimes	18	8	20	13	13	16	10	2	11	14
Often	4	1	2	4	2	2	1	2	2	3
Don't know	1	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
Economic background (poor/wealthy)										
Never	77	79	75	79	81	73	79	88	83	78
Sometimes	20	18	24	18	17	23	17	8	16	20
Often	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	5	1	2
Don't know	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Age										
Never	76	79	59	78	81	73	81	89	84	76
Sometimes	19	17	33	18	16	22	15	9	14	19
Often	4	3	8	4	4	5	3	2	2	4
Don't know	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Religious beliefs										
Never	90	89	84	90	89	88	91	91	85	90
Sometimes	7	9	10	8	8	8	8	5	12	7
Often	2	2	2	1	3	4	1	5	1	2
Don't know	0	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

	Sex		Place of residence					Social media use		
	female	male	Moscow	city (over 500,000 people)	city (100,000 - 500,000 people)	town (under 100,000 people)	village	never	some-times	often / no less than once a week
Ethnicity										
Never	90	87	80	89	91	87	88	92	86	89
Sometimes	9	10	14	9	7	11	10	6	12	9
Often	1	2	6	1	2	1	1	2	1	2
Don't know	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
Education level										
Never	86	83	80	84	89	82	84	89	84	85
Sometimes	11	14	16	13	10	14	12	8	12	13
Often	2	2	4	1	1	4	2	3	3	2
Don't know	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
Social activism										
Never	88	84	86	87	89	82	87	91	85	87
Sometimes	10	12	14	11	9	15	10	6	14	11
Often	1	3	0	1	2	2	2	3	1	2
Don't know	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
Political convictions										
Never	88	83	82	86	85	85	86	88	87	86
Sometimes	10	13	14	10	11	13	10	8	12	11
Often	2	3	4	2	3	2	3	3	1	2
Don't know	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	1
Place of birth										
Never	90	91	84	92	92	88	90	95	89	91
Sometimes	7	7	10	6	6	9	7	3	9	7
Often	2	2	6	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Don't know	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
Sexual orientation										
Never	97	97	98	97	98	97	95	97	98	97
Sometimes	2	1	0	1	1	2	2	0	1	2
Often	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
Don't know	1	2	2	1	0	1	2	3	1	1
Spoken language										
Never	94	92	92	94	93	94	92	94	89	94
Sometimes	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	0	7	4
Often	1	2	4	1	2	1	3	5	4	1
Don't know	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1

HEALTH, SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR, DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR

Physical exercise is important to young Russians (74%), 45% of whom rank it as 'very important' – 47% of women, and 43% of men. This view dominates in the youngest age group (57%), but 38% in the oldest age group share it.

Other good habits include 'healthy eating' (77%), considered 'very important' by 53% of respondents – 58% of women and 47% of men. Unlike exercising, a healthy diet becomes more important with age: 48% in the 14–17 age group believe it is 'very important', as opposed to 58% in the oldest age group. It is worth noting that this opinion dominates in the most well-off consumer group (63%).

Only one third of the respondents believe they are currently in good health: 11% rated their health as 'excellent', and 18% assessed it as 'very good'. And 59% of the respondents rated their health as 'good', so we can see a predominantly positive assessment, even though it does not go any higher than that. More women tend to see their health as poor than men (9% and 5% respectively), and half as many women rate their health as excellent (8%), opting for 'good' instead (61% of women and 56% of men) (see Table 58).

Health assessment also varies depending on the respondent's age: the older the respondent, the poorer the health condition they indicate. 37% in the 14–17 age group believe their health is 'excellent' or 'very good', while in the 25–29 age group only one in five respondents (20%) rate it as such, leaning towards 'good' instead (66%). The number of respondents who consider their health to be 'poor' is the same across all age groups (6–7%) (see Table 59).

Those who belong to the most well-off consumer group tend to be more optimistic about their health: 26% of them rated it as 'excellent' and 23% as 'very good'. The numbers are lower for the respondents from the poorest consumer group: one in five believes their health to be 'poor', about half of them opted for 'good' (47%), while only 18% and 9% indicated 'very good' and 'excellent' health respectively. In general, prosperity is directly proportional to health assessment.

A little more than half of young Russians have never smoked (51%). Currently, 20% of the respondents smoke regularly, 16% smoke occasionally, and 13% have quit smoking. In line with typical behaviour, smoking is more prominent among men (26% smoke regularly), whereas only 14% of women smoke regularly. 59% of women and 41% of men do not smoke at all. The number of smokers in the older age group is higher: by 30, almost one third of the respondents smoke (28%), while among teenagers 11% smoke regularly and 12% smoke from time to time. 69% of teenagers are non-smokers, while in the 25–29 age group the number is much lower – 36%. The highest number of non-smokers was recorded in rural areas (60%), as opposed to 46% in the capital.The number of those who 'smoke occasionally' is twice as high in the capital as it is in villages (24% and 12% respectively). On average, in the remaining types of settlements the results were split almost down the middle: 52% of the respondents were non-smokers and 48% were smokers.

TABLE 58. **How would you rate your health? Can you say that your health is…**

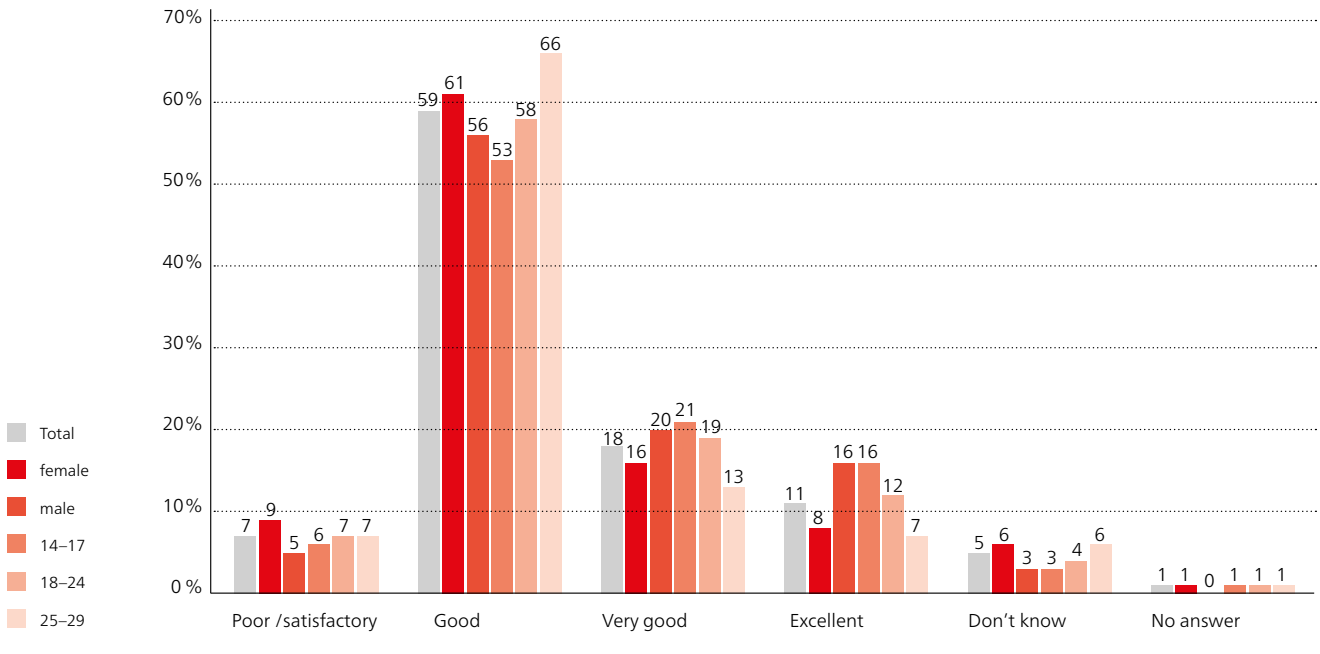
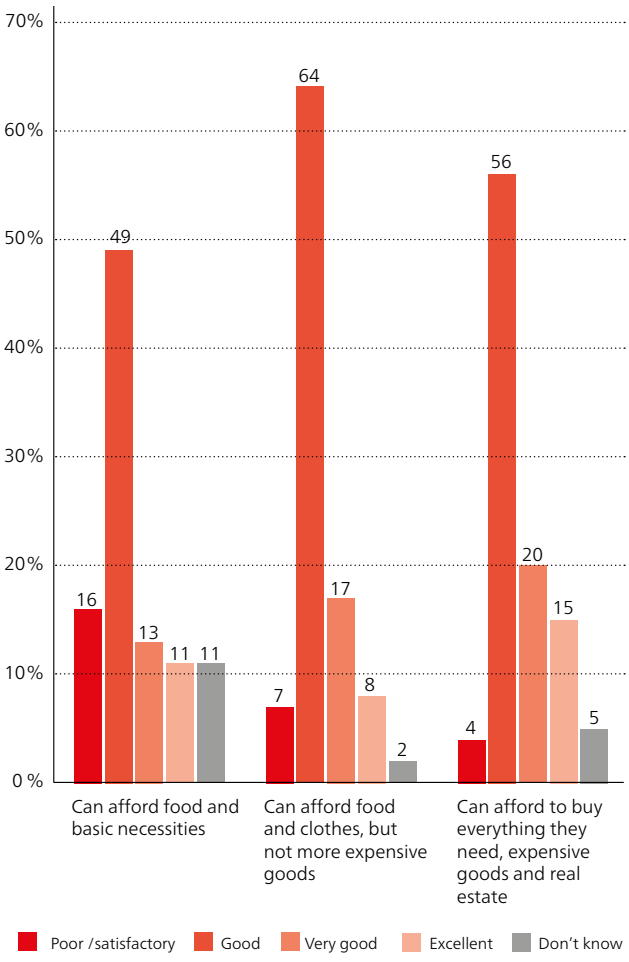


TABLE 59. **How would you rate your health? Can you say that your health is** *(based on financial situation)*



About half of the respondents (51%) said they occasionally drink alcohol, another 10% drink it only on weekends, while 5% do it several times a week. Unlike with smoking, approximately the same number of men and women drink, but men do it more often: 12% of men drink alcohol on weekends, as opposed to 9% of women.

Despite the legal ban on selling alcohol to minors, almost 40% of the respondents in the 14–17 age group reported drinking alcohol: 34% do it occasionally, 4% drink on weekends and another 2% drink several times a week. 58% of teenagers do not drink at all. Alcohol consumption becomes more frequent with age: by age 30, 58% of Russians drink alcohol occasionally, 17% do it on weekends, and another 7% several times a week, while only 15% of the respondents in the older age group said they did not drink.

Alcohol consumption is inversely proportional to income and consumer status of a family: in the poorest group only 27% of the respondents never drink alcohol at all and 6% do it every day, while among the most well-off respondents 45% never drink alcohol and only 2% drink it daily.

As with smoking, alcohol consumption is more widespread in the capital than the rural areas: 58% of Muscovites drink 'occasionally / rarely', while only a fifth of them never drink (22%), whereas in the villages 39% drink 'occasionally / rarely' and 46% do not drink at all. Mid-sized and smaller cities show the same pattern as the capital see Table 62).

Alcohol consumption is socially approved and acceptable (69% of the respondents believe drinking is quite acceptable); only one fourth of young Russians see

TABLE 60. **Do you smoke?**

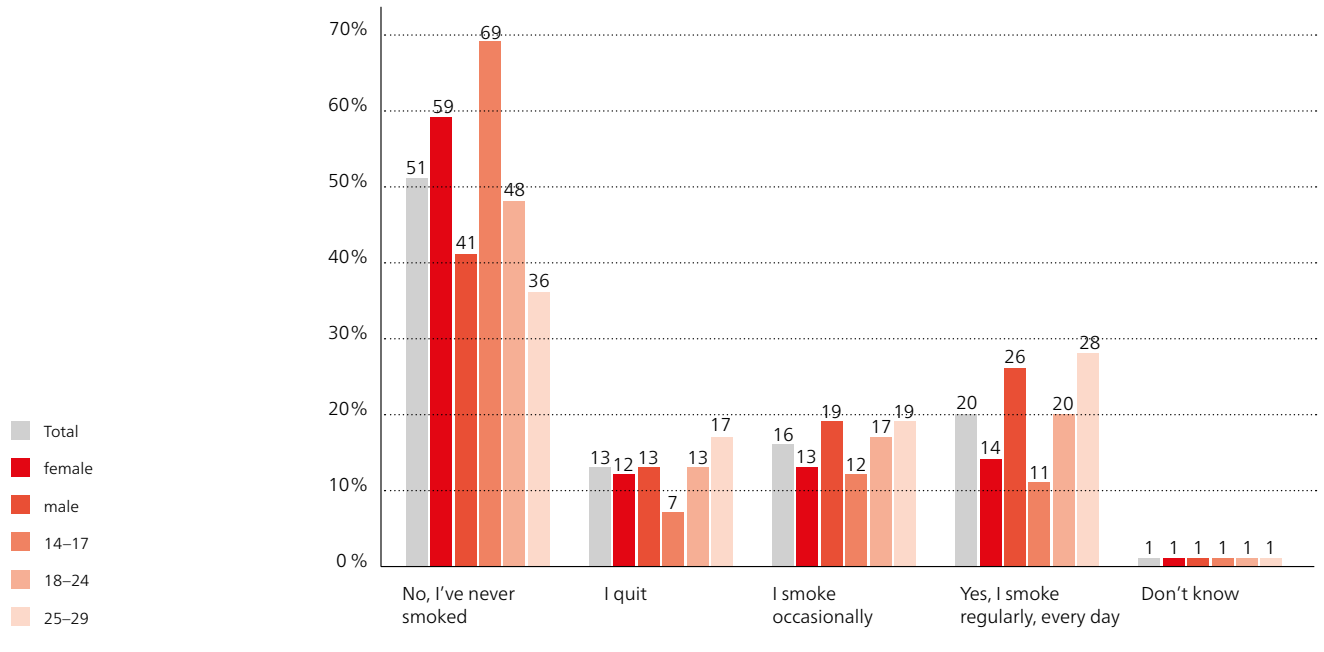
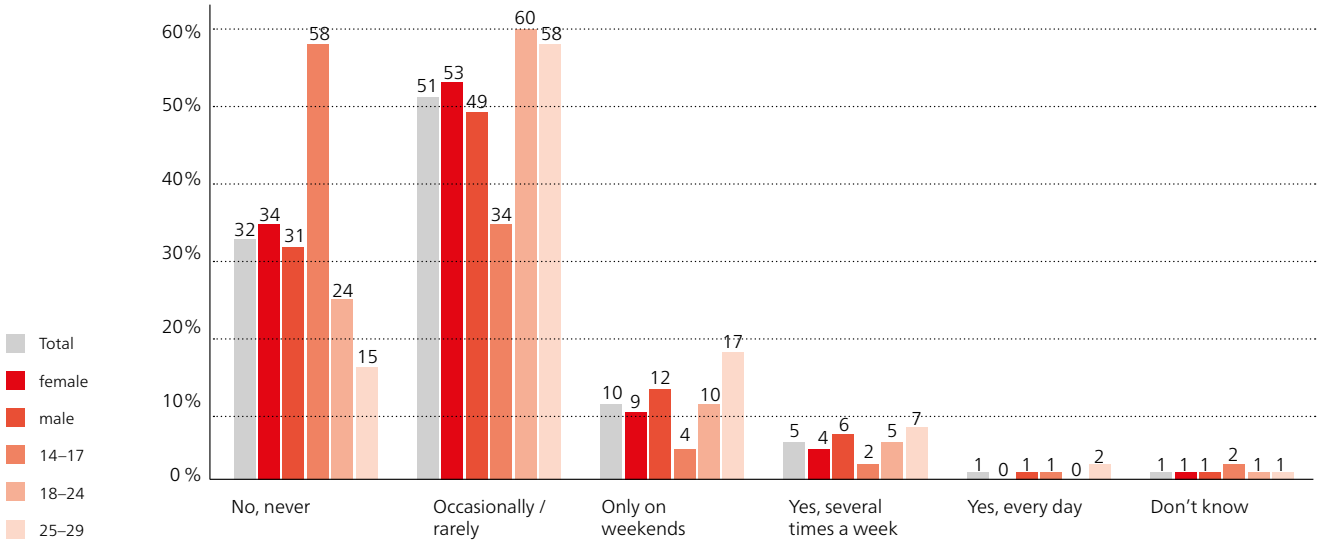


TABLE 61. **Do you drink alcohol?**



alcohol as unacceptable (24%), mainly teenagers (34%, as opposed to 18% in the 25–29 age group) and the rural population (35%).

An overwhelming majority of young people have never taken recreational drugs (92%), while 5% do it occasionally and 2% do it regularly. Trying drugs is more common among older age groups, as 95% in the 14–17 age group have not tried them, while by age 29 that number goes down to 93%. At the same time, the number of people who 'occasionally' smoke marijuana rises from 3% to 6% (see Table 63).

Drug usage is more common in poor or low-income groups. In the high-income group, 94% of respondents have never tried marijuana, while only 3% use it occasionally. Among the respondents with low income, the number of the respondents who use it 'occasionally' is two times higher. According to our data, soft drugs are the capital dwellers' prerogative: 14% of young Muscovites take soft drugs at least occasionally, while rural areas and smaller towns each have 4% of such respondents, and mid-sized and big cities have 6% and 5% respectively.

91% of the respondents have never tried hard drugs. Nevertheless, the fact that 9% of young people in the sample have used or are currently using drugs is an extremely high number that should raise concerns. More men use such drugs than women (7% of women have tried at least once; 10% of men). Using hard drugs is more common among the poorer population, but unlike soft drugs, there are no significant differences based on geography and type of settlement.

TABLE 62. **You believe that alcohol is…**

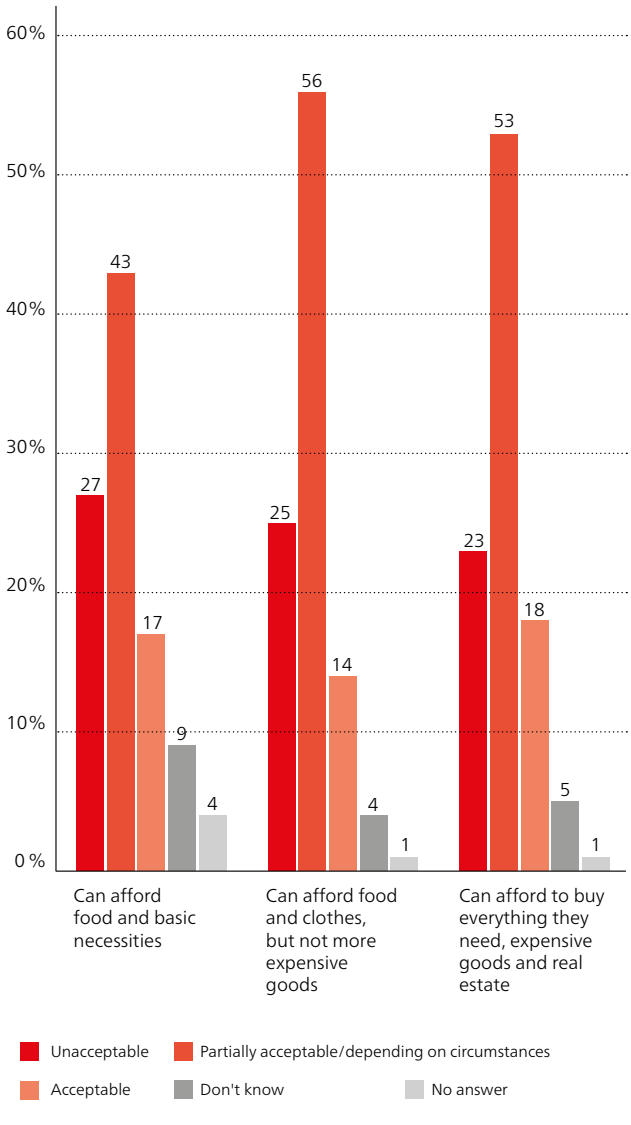


TABLE 63. **Do you use recreational drugs, like marijuana?**

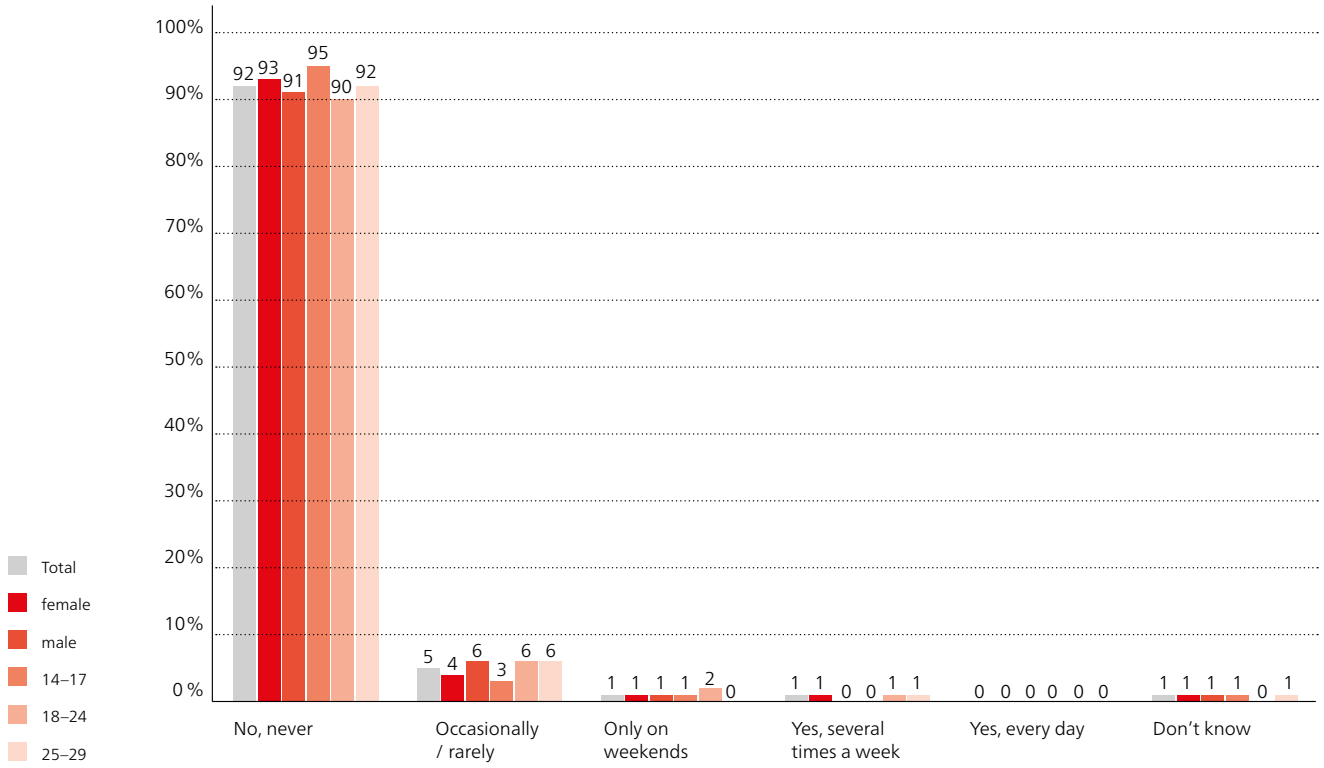
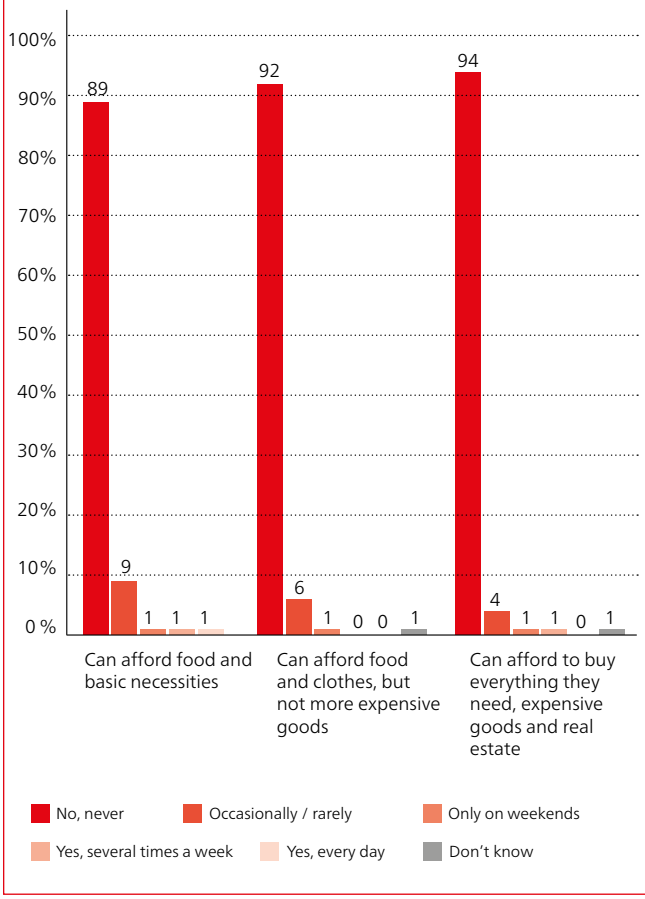


TABLE 64. **Do you use recreational drugs, like marijuana?** *(based on financial situation)*



SEXUAL RELATIONS

62% of young Russians are sexually active, with only about a third of the respondents (30%) not having had any sexual experience. One in five respondents reported having or having had just one sexual partner, and one third of the respondents (32%) said they have had sexual relations with more than one partner.

Men are more sexually experienced than women (at the time of the survey, 24% of men and 34% of women had no sexual experience), and they also have or have had more partners (44% of men have had more than one sexual partner, as opposed to 21% of women). Women tend to be more uncomfortable with questions concerning their sex life than men (15% and 11% respectively).

Almost two thirds of the respondents in the youngest age group (69%) have no sexual experience at this point, as opposed to 2% in the oldest age group and 21% in the 18–24 age group. The older the respondent, the more sexual partners they are likely to have had: 12% of teenagers indicated having had one partner and 10% said they have had several; by age 30, half of the young people have had several sexual partners, while 21% have had only one, i.e. one in five respondents is in a long-term monogamous relationship. Age is directly proportional to discomfort in answering questions about sexual experience: only 5% in the youngest age group felt uncomfortable answering the question, as opposed to 20% in the 25–29 age group.

The capital city is again at the top of the list compared to other places, but this time with respect to sexually active youth. In Moscow, only 12% of respondents have not had any sexual experience (compared to 35% in smaller towns and 37% in villages). However, Muscovites and residents of big cities (population over 1 million people) are more reluctant to answer that question – 16% and 18% respectively..

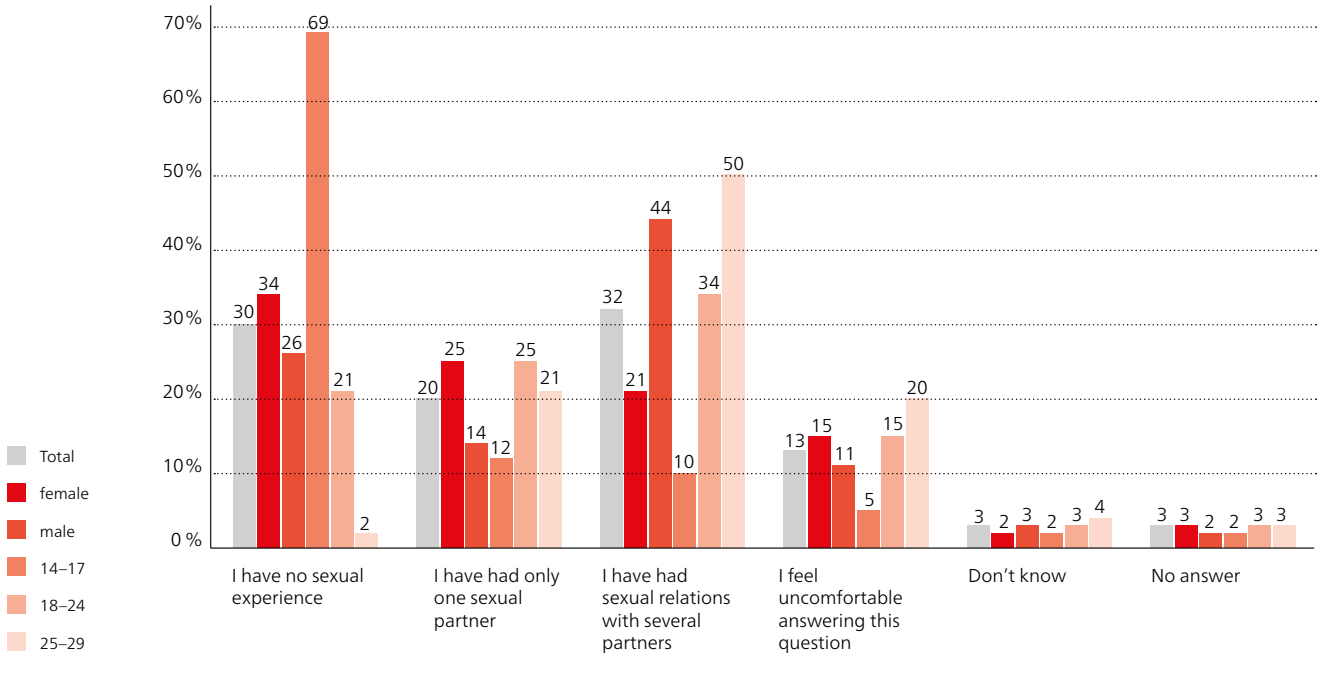
On average, people become sexually active at 17 (18 on average for women, 17 for men). The youngest age for sexual intercourse raises concerns, as it is as young as 11 (12 among girls, 11 among boys). At the other end of the spectrum we have age 29 (27 for women and 29 for men). The earliest first sexual intercourse across all age groups happened at age 11.

Two thirds of Russians use birth control. 27% do so sometimes, while almost half of the respondents (49%) do so regularly. However, one in ten people never use birth control. 50% of women regularly use birth control to avoid pregnancy, as well as 47% of men, whereas 9% of women and almost the same proportion of men (10%) never do.

Regular use of birth control is more common in the older age group, with 50% of respondents, as opposed to the youngest age group (37%). Half of the respondents aged 18–24 also use birth control regularly.

Sexual abstinence before marriage is seen as a virtue by one fifth of the young population that took part in the survey (19%). 26% believe it to be an 'outdated concept', 17% think it is an unnecessary psychological burden, while 14% believe it is important for a girl to be a virgin when she gets married. It should be pointed out that 18% of the respondents did not give a specific answer to this question – 17% of women and 20% of men. The gender-based differences in responses are slight; the biggest one is seen regarding virginity being an 'outdated concept', which is what one in three women

TABLE 65. **Which of the following statements describes your sexual experience best?**



(29%) and marginally fewer men (26%) believe (see Table 66).

As with other questions in this section, we see certain differences between the youngest and the oldest respondents. Almost one third of the 14–17 age group (28%) perceives sexual abstinence until marriage as a virtue, while only 12% in the older age group share that opinion. One in three young Russians aged 25–29 think that it is an outdated concept, as opposed to one in five teenagers (20%). At the same time, twice as many older respondents supported female virginity until marriage (15%, as opposed to 9% of teenagers).

Residents of the capital and big cities hold more modern views on sexual relations before marriage. In Moscow and big cities (population over 1 million people), one third of young people consider abstinence old-fashioned (36% and 33%), and one in four see is as a 'psychological burden' (24% of Muscovites). Only 18% of Muscovites and big city dwellers believe virginity is important, as opposed to 26% and 24% in villages and smaller towns.

TABLE 66. **Do you use contraceptives or other birth control methods?**

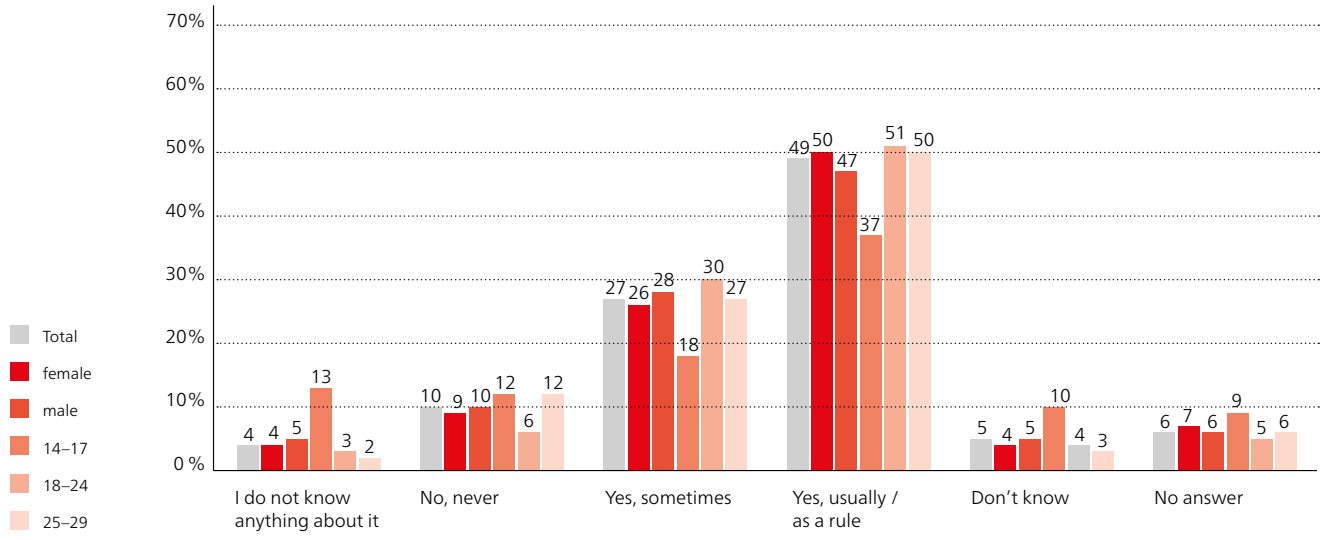
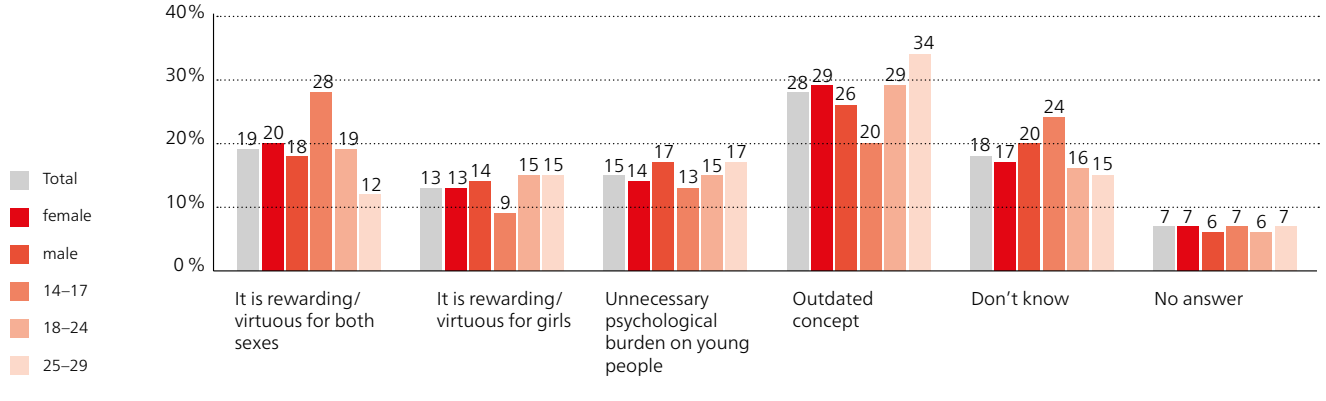


TABLE 67. **What do you think about sexual abstinence before marriage?**



APPENDIX 1: FOOTNOTES

[1] For RU.Q58 (What is your highest education level completed so far?), the following answer possibilities were grouped: 1. and 2. were grouped to 'incomplete secondary education'; 3. and 4. were grouped to Secondary school; 5. and 6. were grouped to 'Vocational or technical secondary school' and 7. to 10. were grouped to 'University-level education'. For RU.Q107, the following answer possibilities were grouped: 1. and 2. were grouped to 'I have enough money to buy food only'; 3. was renamed to 'I have enough money to buy clothes' and 4. and 5. were grouped to 'I have enough money to buy durable goods'

[2] On average, 35% of people in Russia are dissatisfied with their education (2009 Quality of Education poll, N = 2000), and 30% of employed people in Russia are dissatisfied with their job.

[3] L. Gudkov. Fear As Framework To Understand Reality // Economic And Social Changes: A Public Opinion Poll. 1999. # 6. pp. 46–53. This interpretation of the nature of anxiety in Russian society is validated by more recent Levada Centre polls, as well as by research by leading Russian economists V. Gimpelson and V. Kapelyushnikov, among others.

[4] The fact that there is an almost even distribution of answers of the three categories (on a scale 3 to 1 with a 'don't know' option) indicates that responses provided were not influenced by any external factors or forces. It speaks rather to a random or probabilistic choice of the four possible response options. In view of these rankings, the fears of being robbed, attacked, or becoming a victim of social injustice or corruption can be considered as 'less intense fears' as opposed to the more intense perception of the threat of war, climate change or pollution, impoverishment, or the need to struggle for survival.

[5] Y. Levada, The Problem of Trust in Russian Public Opinion // Trust and Democratic Transition in Post-Communist Europe. Proceedings of the British Academy. 2004. Vol. 123, pp. 157–171; L. Gudkov, Notion of Trust in Russia: Its Meaning, Functions and Structure // VOM, 2012, Issue # 2, pp. 8–47 (abridged in NLO, 2012, Issue # 117, pp. 249–280); L. Gudkov, About Institutional Confidence in Russia // Russia and Germany. Society and State: A History of Interaction / Editors: N. Katser, R. Krumm, M. Urnov, ROSSPEN, 2012, pp. 249–282.

[6] The questionnaire does not differentiate modes or types of political leadership, be it leaders of the country, leaders of the majority party, or informal leaders of the Russian political opposition. These could trigger different types of attitudes and levels of trust or distrust.

[7] This is typical for Russian society in general, not only for its younger members. As L. Gudkov explains in his Notion of 'Trust' in Russia: Its Meaning, Functions and Structure, 'The highest level of institutional confidence is expressed by the youngest, least educated, most underinformed respondents and respondents who live in small towns. All these groups strongly support the authorities in general and Vladimir Putin in particular. The lowest level of institutional confidence, on the other hand, is expressed by more mature, better educated, very well informed respondents (with access to all types of information channels and the Internet) and respondents who live in Moscow. The gap between the highest and lowest levels is not very big, however, it is persistent and statistically significant

[8] Radaev V.V. Millennial. How the Russian society is changing. Moscow: Higher School of Economics, 2019.

[9] Option 3 or the middle position on a 5-point scale chosen by respondents as an answer to a variety of questions manifests their indifference to the social and political life of the country and is a functional equivalent of a 'no answer' option, which is usually chosen by the least educated respondents or those who are less competent in a given matter. This is why this category of responses as well as 'no answer' responses are of little analytical value as compared to more polarized answers. In fact by choosing option 3 as an answer the respondents have politely refused to answer at all. As becomes clear from recorded interviews this is a frequent reaction to the formal language of the questionnaire, which has little to do with the routine life of the respondents.

[10] In recent years the Levada Centre did not ask its respondents about interest in politics following the methodology that is used in the present questionnaire, however we can still compare the results that we have obtained with those of the most recent Levada poll. These results show that only 3% of Russians took part in the activities of a political party and supported its programme. 41% kept track of political events without taking an active part in the political life of the country, 27% responded that they are 'indifferent to politics in Russia' or 'take no interest in politics' or 'dislike politics and are not disturbed by political affairs', 3% gave no answer (June 2019, N = 1600).

[11] We should take into consideration the fact that nowadays a party membership does not provide one with any advantages in obtaining employment. 61% or an absolute majority of our respondents believe that membership in a political party (by saying 'party' we refer to systemically important political parties from the Kremlin political pool i.e. the United Russia, the Communist party and the Liberal Democratic party) is not required for getting a job. Only 16% of respondents, mostly school students with no working experience and some 18–20 year olds believe that being a member of a political party may help them get a job, a belief that is most typical for respondents from low-income families. A possible explanation of this fact is that these young people may be linking a career as a public servant or law enforcement officer with loyalty to a particular party. These views may also be remnants of the old understanding of a career path inherited from Soviet times. Residents of Moscow tend to give almost zero significance to party membership.

[12] These organizations are not necessarily like the Young Guard, the Young Army, Nashi, Mestnye, StopKham, etc. Like the Pioneers or the New Talents or other organizations existing alongside the Cossack units, they imitate entities of civil society or mimic large youth organizations of Soviet times.

[13] Nationwide surveys show a more definite picture of people's attitudes towards the collapse of the USSR: on average in the last 10 years 56% of Russians have regretted the collapse of the USSR, 31% had no regrets or nostalgia, the rest did not know or had no opinion (the lowest number of those who had regrets – 49% – was in 2012, the time of mass protest demonstrations, the highest – 66% – was in 2018, when outrage regarding retirement from the Soviet pension system had reached its peak. Among 18–24-year-olds 34% had 'regrets' (48% had no similar feelings and another 18% didn't know), while among those aged 55 and over, 83% had regrets (no regrets – 14% and 3% didn't know; that is to say, that the dominant collective opinions were quite clear).

[14] In 1989, 31% of people living in the USSR identified as 'Soviet people', compared with only 7% in 2016 across the total sample (among 18–24-year-olds the figure was even smaller – 2%) For more information, see annual magazine The Russian Public Opinion Herald-2016, p. 31 URL: https://www.levada.ru/cp/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/OM-2016.pdf .

[15] https://ria.ru/20110826/424566241.html, accessed 23 October 2019. https://mel.fm/mneniye_eksperta/6523071-corruption, accessed 23 October 2019.

[16] See: Lev Gudkov, Boris Dubin., Natalya Zorkaya. Leaving Russia as a Social Diagnosis and Life Perspective // The Russian Public Opinion Herald. 2011. № 4. pp. 46–80.

[17] According to prior youth surveys carried out by the Levada Centre (2006, 2011), about two fifths of the respondents say they wanted to go abroad to study or work or even emigrate for good, and if we now add up all those who said they had ever thought about moving abroad for any reason, the figure in the current survey corresponds to the previous results (42%).

[18] For more details see: Lev Gudkov, Boris Dubin., Natalya Zorkaya. Leaving Russia as a Social Diagnosis and Life Perspective // The Russian Public Opinion Herald. 2011. № 4 (110). pp. 46–80.

[19] The fact that we are dealing with hopes and illusions that somewhere abroad, not here in Russia, a better life is available (which leads to distancing oneself from the pressing issues here at home, apathy, and the inability to contribute to the social and political life of the country) is confirmed by the poll results, according to which the strongest desire to leave the country is expressed not by the most affluent respondents (15% of all those who said they had a 'strong' desire to emigrate) with a high consumer status, but by the poorest social group (21%), for which it is in fact a way to flee from reality, from their current life. The same goes for the adult population, according to the polls.

[20] The same goes for adult respondents.

[21] In the post-Soviet years, the most popular host countries starting from the late 1980s were Germany, the US and Israel. For details see Lev Gudkov, Natalya Zorkaya, Two Countries (Germany and Israel in the Russian Identity Structure) // Osteuropa, 2019 (forthcoming).

[22] The features of this group were obtained by crossing the question about the desire to leave with a number of meaningful questions in the questionnaire.

[23] Lev Gudkov, Boris Dubin., Natalya Zorkaya.Leaving Russia as a Social Diagnosis and Life Perspective // The Russian Public Opinion Herald. 2011. № 4. p. 80.

[24] See https://www.rbc.ru/rbcfreenews/5899c3949a7947cd04125cc5, accessed 23 August 2019.

[25] See https://www.levada.ru/2018/11/13/polzovanie-internetom-2/, accessed 16 September 2019.

[26] See https://www.isras.ru/analytical_report_Youth_7_2.html, accessed: 16 September 2019.

[27] Notably, despite these measures, having one child, let alone multiple children, triggers a drop in the living standards of the family, often downgrading them to 'poor'.

[28] Researchers roughly estimate that the precariat makes up 27% of the Russian population. V.V. Semyonova, M.F. Chernysh, P.E. Sushko (eds), Social Mobility in an Ever More Complex Society: Objective and Subjective Aspects (Moscow: Federal Scientific and Research Sociology Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 2019), p. 329.

[29] Pressing issues, https://www.levada.ru/2018/09/06/trevozhashhie-problemy/.

[30] 'I'm from Ivan Ivanovich'. See A. Levinson, 'Notes on bureaucracy in the current Russian social structure', Public Opinion Bulletin. Data. Analysis. Discussion. no. 3–4 (125), 2017, pp. 48–74.

[31] A good example would be how the majority of the population reacted to high-profile corruption cases about multimillion bribes and extortion – by supporting the most severe possible sentences. See, e.g., public reaction to Ms. Vasilyeva's sentence in the Oboronservis case, https://www.levada.ru/2015/06/17/borba-s-korruptsiej-i-prigovor-e-vasilevoj/.

[32] At the same time, one in two Russians (45%) declare that they condemn those who engage in tax evasion, https://www.levada.ru/2015/04/16/uklonenie-ot-uplaty-nalogov/.

[33] See N. Mitrikhin, Russian Orthodox Church: Current State of Affairs and Challenges (Moscow: Novoye Literaturnoye Obozreniye, 2006) p. 656.

[34] We cannot state with any certainty that these young people are truly religious and go to church specifically to take part in religious services, as there are no questions in the questionnaire concerning the frequency of communion and confession (sacraments to be performed with certain regularity, though it depends on the specific parish and priest).

[35] Article 6.21 of the Code of the Russian Federation on Administrative Offenses, 'Propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations among minors'.

[36] https://www.levada.ru/2015/05/05/nevidimoe-menshinstvo-k-probleme-gomofobii-v-rossii/, accessed 20 September 2019.

[37] Monitoring xenophobic sentiments https://www.levada.ru/2018/08/27/monitoring-ksenofobskih-nastroenij/.

[38] 'Conflicts Were Homophobic in Nature': on 21 July 2019, Activist Elena Grigoryeva Killed in St. Petersburg https://www.novayagazeta.ru/articles/2019/07/23/81342-konflikty-imeli-gomofobnuyu-pochvu, accessed 20 September 2019. See also the resolution of the European Parliament of 18 May 2017: European Parliament resolution of 18 May 2017 on the implementation of the Council's LGBTI Guidelines, particularly in relation to the persecution of (perceived) homosexual men in Chechnya, Russia (2017/2688(RSP)), http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/B-8-2017-0351_EN.html, accessed 12 December 2020.

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73. INFOGRAPHIC
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78. TABLE 23.
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78. INFOGRAPHIC
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How strong is your desire to move to another country for more than six months (emigrate)? (%)

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