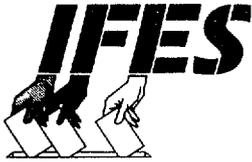


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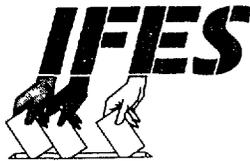
**INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION
FOR ELECTION SYSTEMS**

RUSSIA NATIONAL SURVEY

JULY 1995

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SUMMARY

- Voters are extremely dissatisfied with the current situation in Russia. Overall, 87% are dissatisfied and 75% say they are very dissatisfied.
- The economy is seen as the number one problem facing the country. Other perceived problems include quality of life issues, peace, lack of political leadership, and ethnic conflicts.
- Other concerns that receive a substantial number of mentions include inflation, crime, standard of living, the situation in Chechnya, unemployment, general instability in the country, economic decline, and social and moral decay.
- Voters are pessimistic about both the political and economic situations over the next two or three years and a plurality say these areas will worsen during that period.
- Concerns about the economy result in 52% saying that the country should return to a system where the state controls much of the economy while only 17% call for the reform process to continue.
- Voters are extremely skeptical about the interests, motivations, and actions of elected officials and about government in general. More than half (54%) say that official corruption is common and 56% say that officials in Moscow aren't capable of making any improvements in their lives. Only 5% think that elected officials are genuinely interested in "improving our lives" while 60% think officials are only interested in "helping themselves."
- High levels of dissatisfaction do not bode well for incumbent officials and President Yeltsin has problems on a number of key variables. Overall, only 19% have a favorable perception of him and 72% are unfavorable. His job approval stands at 21% while 69% disapprove. Further, 52% disapprove intensely. Finally, he receives just 7% in the presidential ballot test.
- A majority also disapprove of the job performance of the State Duma (23% approve - 52% disapprove) and the Federation Council (19% approve - 40% disapprove) also has a negative ratio.
- The electorate displays a low level of interest in politics and government. Fewer than one in three voters (32%) are interested in such matters while 66% say they are not.

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- Despite this pessimism, most people say they are likely to vote in both the State Duma elections (74%) and the presidential election (76%)
- A plurality of voters, led by young people, now view Russia as a democracy (47%) Many (41%) do not, however, and this sentiment is the main view among those age 45 and older Further, only 3% say the country is primarily a democracy
- The United States (13%) is the number one foreign country Russians look to as a model for the nation's development A plurality (30%) say that Russia serves as its own best model Another 7% look to the Soviet Union as a model for development
- Voters say that Russia would benefit more from an orientation toward the West (28%) than the East (7%) However, 32% say Russia would not benefit from either orientation
- Voters are divided on the subject of whether political power in Russia should be centralized (33%) or decentralized (34%)
- There is a great deal of skepticism regarding free and fair elections in Russia However, the view is somewhat more optimistic about the future than about the past That is, 56% believe there was at least some election fraud in the December 1993 elections and constitutional referendum and 48% think there will be fraud in the 1995 parliamentary elections
- Those who believe fraud will occur divide the responsibility between a variety of entities
 - 16% Central Election Commission
 - 9% Local executive authorities
 - 9% Local candidate organizations
 - 8% The executive branch
 - 7% Political parties
 - 5% Other central authorities
 - 24% All of these
 - 11% Don't know
- However, despite the widespread opinion that fraud occurred in the past and will occur again in the future, very few voters have witnessed any type of fraudulent voting act The most prominent act reported is people voting in groups without a secret ballot (14%) Group voting appears to be more prevalent among younger voters Very few have witnessed more egregious acts such as monetary or other incentives being offered to voters (2%), and officials (4%) or poll watchers (4%) trying to influence voting Further, very few voters experienced any kind of external pressure with regard to how they voted

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- Few voters know anything about the Central Election Commission. Only 7% have seen, read or heard even a “fair amount” and 51% have seen or heard absolutely nothing about the CEC. Still, the job approval ratio of the CEC (25% well done - 27% poorly done) among those who have any level of information is better than that given to the President, the State Duma, or the Federation Council.
- Another contrast to the pessimism exhibited about elections and elected officials is the optimism expressed about the impact of voting on their lives. A 53% majority say that by voting, people can “change something in the life of our country” while 40% say that change is not possible. Further, a majority of all age groups feel that voting can change things. This high efficacy is further expressed by the huge majorities who plan to go to the polls.
- Of course, turnout may be overstated (as past voting is over-reported). Older voters are more likely to vote than younger people and men generally express more interest in politics, awareness of candidates, and higher likelihood of voting than women. As a result, a variety of turnout models could be drawn that would indicate quite different electoral outcomes.
- Like other recent polls, this survey shows a presidential race that is wide open. No candidate receives more than 14% of the vote and the three leading candidates are within four points of each other. The next grouping finds five candidates with total support ranging from 7% to 5%. In the third tier, seven candidates have 1%-2% support each. More voters (23%) are undecided than support any candidate. As mentioned earlier, no candidate has emerged as the clear leader in this race and it is far too early to count anyone out of this contest.
- On the other hand, it does appear that the current leaders, Yavlinsky and Lebed, have room for growth that may not be available to many of the other candidates. Each has less than 80% name awareness (as opposed to 90+ percent for many of the other contenders) and both have far better favorable name awareness - and electoral support - across various population groups that don't have preconceived ideas about them.
- Political parties are at an important crossroads. A clear majority (69%) say that political parties are necessary for democracy and a 42% plurality say that, ideally, there would be several parties rather than one (17%) or many (10%). However, few belong to a party (6%) and 41% say there are not clear differences between the platforms of the various parties. Still, a majority (58%) believe that the parties speak to the issues that concern the Russian electorate.

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- Nevertheless, only 24% say they are more likely to support a candidate who is affiliated with a political party while 27% are more likely to support a non-affiliated candidate and 35% say party affiliation makes no difference
- Further, party support is extremely fragmented as of the end of July. The party preference question on the State Duma ballot test shows that only two parties, the Communist Party (14%) and Women of Russia (11%) have double-digit support. Yabloko (9%) and Russia's Democratic Choice (7%) are not far behind, and a cluster of other parties are currently below the 5% threshold. A 21% plurality support none of the parties and 19% are undecided. Of 20 parties tested, only seven have awareness levels of 50% or higher
- In many ways, young people hold the key to these elections because of their lower probability of voting as compared with older voters. Just 29% of those age 17-35 say they are certain to vote whereas 55% of those 55 and older say they are certain to go to the polls. Low turnout by young voters will result in higher percentages for the communist and Agrarian parties while higher turnout would likely benefit Russia's Democratic Choice, Yabloko, and Women of Russia. Low turnout also benefits a number of presidential candidates including Zyuganov and Rutskoï. Other candidates' support is more evenly distributed by age
- The media will also play a key role in these elections. A majority of voters (53%) rely on the media for their voting information and National Channel One (87%) and Channel Two (81%) are perceived as being the most useful. Newspapers are also seen as a useful source (69%)
- Findings in this research underscore the need for continued voter education efforts in Russia
 - ✓ Only 15% are very or somewhat familiar with their voting rights
 - ✓ Less than half of all respondents (49%) feel they received enough information from election officials so that they understand the election process while 33% do not feel they received enough information
 - ✓ An overwhelming majority (73%) agree with the statement "I don't have enough information about my rights with regard to the authorities"
 - ✓ Three out of four voters say they have inadequate information

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about the democratic process. That is, only 2% say they have a great deal of information about the democratic process of the Russian Federation while 16% say they have a fair amount, 53% not very much and 22% none at all. Not a single subgroup has even 10% who say they have a “great deal” of information.

- ✓ Only one voter in three had enough information about the candidates or parties to make a good choice between the candidates for the State Duma in December, 1993 Parliamentary elections
 - ✓ Better than one in five voters say they didn't have sufficient information on how to check the voter registry or on means of alternative voting
 - ✓ There are several widely-held misunderstandings regarding voting rights. More than one-third (34%) believe that a family member may vote on your behalf. Also, a majority of voters (51%) incorrectly believe that prisoners may vote and nearly four in ten believe that those who do not currently reside in Russia may not vote. In addition, 28% say that those who do not speak Russian may not vote and 10% say that those who are not of Russian ancestry may not vote. However, nearly all voters have the correct understanding of voting rights with regard to minimum age, Russian citizenship, the need to hold office or be of a certain religious faith, and the rights of students and military away from home
- This lack of information tends to promote the kind of skepticism about the integrity of the process that is seen throughout this survey. That is, those who possess less information are more likely to say that elections were, or will be, fraudulent
 - Along those lines, voters widely support the computerization of elections (73%). Voters are highly supportive of computerization regardless of their view of the political environment or reform process. For example, those who say that official corruption is very common and those who say it is very rare are equally in favor of computerization (74%). Similarly, those who think the 1995 elections will be free and fair (85%) and those who think there will be election fraud (76%) both strongly favor the computerization of elections

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- Further, voters oppose private campaign contributions and favor a ceiling on the amount of such contributions
- Finally, voters support a minimum threshold for the validation of national elections

METHODOLOGY

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems commissioned this survey of the Russian electorate as part of its voter education program. The project was a joint effort of researchers and policy experts in Russia and the United States. The project director and data analyst was Gary Ferguson, Vice President of American Viewpoint, Inc., who designed the questionnaire in conjunction with the IFES team led by Catherine Barnes.

The field test in Russia was led by Richard Raquet, Vice President of the Response Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Sampling, interviewing and data entry were conducted by the Institute for Comparative Social Research (CESSI). The project director in Russia was Anna Andreenkova of CESSI. In all, 4,070 personal interviews were conducted by CESSI during the month of July, 1995.

The sample includes an over sample of those ages 17-35. A total of 1,736 interviews were conducted with respondents age 17-35. The main sample consists of 3,560 interviews. All surveys are subject to errors caused by interviewing a sample of persons rather than the entire population. At the 95 confidence level, the margin of error for a random sample of 3,560 interviews is plus or minus 1.7 percentage points. The margin of error for 1,736 interviews is plus or minus 2.4 percentage points.

The sample was weighted by sex, age, and region and is representative of the population by those characteristics. The following table displays the sample characteristics.

Sample Characteristics

| | 17-35 | 36-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65+ | Male | Female |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|------|--------|
| North/Northwest | 39% | 18% | 10% | 15% | 17% | 47% | 53% |
| Center | 37 | 19 | 14 | 16 | 14 | 50 | 50 |
| Centralno-Chernozemny | 38 | 19 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 44 | 56 |
| Volgo-Vyatsky | 35 | 20 | 15 | 17 | 13 | 49 | 51 |
| Volga | 40 | 19 | 13 | 14 | 13 | 45 | 55 |
| North Caucasus | 32 | 17 | 24 | 17 | 10 | 66 | 34 |
| Ural | 41 | 16 | 14 | 14 | 16 | 45 | 55 |
| East Siberia | 48 | 22 | 19 | 6 | 5 | 54 | 46 |
| West Siberia | 43 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 16 | 44 | 56 |
| Far East | 44 | 14 | 10 | 14 | 17 | 42 | 58 |

APPENDIX A SAMPLING DESIGN

The Russian national sample consists of 51 sampling points across the country to represent its population of 149 million people. Each sampling point thus represents about 3 million people, except for Moscow (9 million) and St. Petersburg (5 million). The sample was created using Kish's (1965) area probability methods for national surveys.

The units of selection in this multi-stage cluster sampling scheme are described below in decreasing order of generality. In the first stage, the primary sampling units (PSUs) were districts (rayons) or major cities, with probabilities of selection based on their population size (PPS).

In the second stage, the municipalities and rural Soviets (grouping of several smaller communities) within these rayons were selected, again based on population size. Since both Moscow and St. Petersburg are large communities with more than 3 million population, they were automatically included in the sample.

The units for the third stage of selection were the electoral districts within these municipalities and rural communities (selected randomly from the list of electoral districts for each city). In each of these first three stages, then, sampling units had probabilities of selection proportionate to unit size.

In the fourth stage of selection, individual households are listed and randomly selected within electoral districts, while in the fifth stage, individual respondents are selected within these households. In these last two stages, households and individual respondents within households are selected randomly according to standard Kish procedures.