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**TOWARD A NEW MODEL  
OF RUSSIAN FEDERALISM:  
THE REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

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## From the editors

The findings of a sociological survey **«The State and prospects for the development of Russian federalism in the mass consciousness and expert opinion»** were reviewed in May 2011.

In September and October 2011, several regional centres in the Russian Federation hosted roundtables to discuss the findings of the survey conducted as part of the project «Towards a New Model of Russian Federalism» by the ZIRCON opinion service and other matters related to the problem of federalism and federative relations in Russia today. The roundtables, attended by experts, local officials, representatives of non-governmental organisations and the business community were held in Nizhny Novgorod, Ivanovo, Krasnodar, Perm, Irkutsk, Vladivostok, Kazan and Petrozavodsk. A Moscow expert representing the project's task force took part in each of these roundtables.

This issue of the project reports contains:

1. The sociological survey findings.
2. A summing up of informal interviews conducted as part of the study, looking at the way the problems of federalism and its prospects are perceived by members of the Russian regional élites (A.A. Zakharov).
3. An analytical review of the discussions at the regional roundtables (A.V. Ryabov).

## **KEY CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY «THE STATE AND PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIAN FEDERALISM IN THE MASS CONSCIOUSNESS AND EXPERT OPINION»**

The study was conducted in four Russian regions with samples representing the local adult population broken down by gender, age and education. The total size of the sample was 1603 respondents.

Members of the regional intellectual and administrative élites were interviewed within the qualitative study paradigm (in accordance with an informal interview guide). A total of 34 people were informally interviewed in the regions and a session of experts was held in Moscow.

### **Study conclusions**

- 1. Neither the mass consciousness nor expert assessments *revealed a consistently dominant opinion regarding regional autonomy. No significant preponderance of federalist, decentralisation or regionalist attitudes was revealed.***

The popular ideas of federalism are fairly contradictory; there is little awareness among the population of the main principles of the country's federative system and no consensus regarding the prospects for Russia's development as a federation.

No dominant point of view emerged on most of the questions asked during the study (on the part of either members of regional élites or ordinary citizens); there is a significant spread of opinions as to the state of and prospects for the development of Russian federalism.

- 2. *Currently, neither the citizens nor regional élites are articulating a demand for political or administrative autonomy of the constituent entities of the Federation.***

**Table 1. Study sample**

No.	Federal district	Region	Mass surveys (number of respondents, target)	Mass surveys (number of respondents, actual)	Interviews with experts (number of respondents, target)	Interviews with experts (number of respondents, actual)
1	Central	Ivanovo Region	400	400	7-8	11
2	Volga	Perm Territory	400	402	7-8	8
3	Volga	Republic of Tatarstan	400	400	7-8	8
4	Southern	Krasnodar Territory	400	401	7-8	7
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1600</b>	<b>1603</b>	<b>30-32</b>	<b>34</b>

The prevalent view among experts is that the main principle for the development of the Federation must be an economic autonomy of its constituent entities, to be achieved by leaving the taxes collected by the regions at their own disposal. The populace also largely supports the idea of eliminating the current «tilt» (in favour of the centre) in tax distribution.

3. Among the regional élites, ***there is an awareness of the need for greater independence of local self-government (LSG) and broader powers backed by economic factors.***

It is admitted that ***LSG bodies are totally (or partly) unprepared for independence.*** It is stressed that one of the key problems is personnel, specifically, an acute shortage of professional managers. Ordinary citizens are likewise uncertain about the issue of LSG independence, part of the reason being that they know little about its activities and are civically passive.

4. ***At present, the principles underlying the structure of the Federation do not particularly engage the attention of regional élites, while ordinary people have no opinion as to what administrative and territorial division would be best for the Russian Federation.***

The prevalent view among the experts was that the system is in a state of steady equilibrium and no changes are needed, as they might engender new problems and conflicts.

The findings of the population surveys have revealed a contradiction: on the one hand, the majority are in favour of preserving the existing administrative and territorial structure of the country, while, on the other hand, they would welcome a reduction in the number of constituent entities of the Russian Federation. This topic seems to be on the periphery of public consciousness and is definitely not perceived as a pressing problem today.

The same applies to the attitude to Federal Districts. Experts have a negative opinion of this institution. They believe that the districts were originally created to fulfil tasks that have been fulfilled and that, today, such a supra-regional administrative superstructure is redundant. Ordinary people have no opinion on the matter.

5. ***The current configuration of relations between the centre and the regions is recognised as suitable for the transi-***

***tional period, which is more associated with centralisation.***

The respondents admit that this configuration should give way to decentralisation, though not until the regional and, especially, local authorities are ready for this. In addition to the transitional period, which, in the opinion of many experts, warrants renunciation of certain federative principles, another «justification» for curtailing federalism seen by them is the population not being ready for self-government or direct elections of governors or a collegiate system of regional administration.

*(From interviews with experts: «People are not ready to take decisions, have a vague idea of the legal aspects of self-government and, lastly, local government lacks initiative...» On direct election of governors: «The population is unable to make a conscious and responsible choice...» On adoption of a collegiate system of running the region: «The Russian mentality is wedded to one-man rule»)*

The experts see the above as a serious problem but they, let alone ordinary citizens, have no suggestion as to how to resolve it, how to determine when regional and local authorities would be ready to «assume» broader powers and what needs to be done to this end.

6. Both ordinary citizens and experts ***understand that the relations between the budgets of different levels must be adjusted and power redistributed between the centre and the regions.*** Experts see these as necessary conditions for federalism to develop. At the same time, opinions vary concerning the other condition, reintroduction of direct elections of regional heads («the current model is not the best system for administering a region but the other options available at the moment (at the current stage) are even worse»).

Unlike the experts, ordinary citizens have stronger views on this: the majority are in favour of having governors elected and of direct elections to the Federation Council. The view that the governing bodies (not only governors) must be popularly elected has been dominant in mass opinion polls for 20 years.

7. ***No preponderance has been revealed of any of the four general groups of citizens in terms of attitude towards the interaction between the «centre and the regions» («federalists», «unitarists», «separatists», «other»).*** The share of



those who support federalism is just over a third of the population in the regions surveyed. So far, there is little evidence of separatist trends either among the population or among the regional élites.

- 8. Important factors** that contribute to (or impede) development of federalism and federalist consciousness are **the level of economic development in a region and the existence of an ethnic-national and/or regional (including local) identity of the region's citizens**. For instance, the population of the Perm Territory and the Republic of Tatarstan were more inclined to voice «federalist views» than the population in the Ivanovo Region and the Krasnodar Territory. The reason is, first, that the Perm Territory and Tatarstan are «donor» regions, with a relatively high level of economic development. Second, these Russian regions have a more pronounced regional identity: in Tatarstan, it is based on the ethnic-national component and the status of a national republic; in the Perm Territory, it is based on the regional («Siberian» or «Urals») identity.

For their part, the experts believe that the main factor in the development of federalism is the regional economy. They favour economic independence of regions and, in particular, redistribution or return of taxes to the regions. The experts singled out the importance of democratisation (including the development of civil society and civil activities at the grassroots level), of curbing corruption and «legal nihilism» as preconditions and factors for the development of federalism and a federalist culture.

**«IMPERIAL SYNDROME»:  
HOW FEDERALISM IS PERCEIVED  
BY REPRESENTATIVES  
OF THE RUSSIAN REGIONAL ELITES<sup>1</sup>**

Reading through the whole body of interviews with experts, one gets the impression that the Russian elite is, at present, hardly prepared for practical application of the federative model. Steady functioning of any federation that is a voluntary union implies that both the central and regional élites understand the benefits of a contract and of ongoing federative bargaining and are aware that, while they sometimes have to make concessions to the negotiating partners, each party might ultimately derive some benefit. Besides, this political ethos implies respect for the minorities that enter into contractual relations with bigger partners in an endeavour to protect and assert themselves. Yet there is almost a total lack of these two elements in the opinions and convictions shared by present-day members of the Russian regional élites. Regional leaders do not see why central (or any other) authorities should agree with anyone, since they themselves represent power, and why the opinion of the minority should be taken into account in shaping policy, if it is possible to do without this.

The above features of political attitudes are reflected in the commentaries offered by regional respondents belonging to the political, business and intellectual elite. Thus, the ***proposal to abolish the Federation Council, voiced by many experts during the interviews, reveals considerable confusion in the respondents' minds as to how a federative state functions and what the regional chamber is all about.*** «I think the State Duma reflects the political situation in the country and I see no need for laws to be additionally approved», says a member of the Perm Territory administration. Even so, the parliaments of federations are, with rare exceptions, always bicameral. The choice between having one or two chambers

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<sup>1</sup> Analysis of interviews with experts during a sociological survey carried out by the ZIRCON research group as part of the project «Towards a New Model of Russian Federalism: the View from the Regions.»

cannot be regarded as a merely technical issue of institution building: the two solutions reflect two opposite views of democracy. The former corresponds to a purely majoritarian concept of popular control over the legislature; in that view, the parliament elected by direct popular vote fully reflects the will of the population and is, therefore, self-sufficient. It does not need an upper chamber that would merely impede discharge by the deputies of their representative functions. This point of view was brilliantly summed up in his time by a prominent leader of the Great French Revolution Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès: «If the second chamber agrees with the first on everything, then it is useless; if it disagrees, it is dangerous»<sup>2</sup>. This is essentially the view expressed by the above-mentioned respondent from Perm.

Supporters of bicameralism (or federalism) naturally have no use for such arguments, as they proceed from the principle first formulated by John Stuart Mill: «There should be, in every polity, a centre of resistance to the predominant power»<sup>3</sup>. They proceed from a liberal interpretation of democracy, insisting that the upper chamber must always restrain and balance the potentially aggressive majority of the lower chamber, because it is the upper chamber that protects individual, group and regional interests, the interests of the various minorities. Its very existence is, therefore, exceptionally important for maintaining stability in any society with a complex structure. Moreover, by consenting to have a constitutional system that ignores or downgrades the bicameral legislature, a nation attests that it is not ready to practice such an advanced — and, ipso facto, complicated — political form as federalism.

This is something that is misunderstood not only by those representatives of élites who want to see the Federation Council abolished or, on the contrary, want to see it continue as it is, but those who complacently wish to see the principles of forming the council revised. In addition to the natural argument that legitimacy of a Chamber with half of the members being appointed is dubious, experts were oblivious of the fact that upholding regional interests means, in the first place, containment of federal power expansion.

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<sup>2</sup> Quoted from: Hague R., Harrop M. *Comparative Government and Politics*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. L.: Palgrave, 2001, p. 220.

<sup>3</sup> Mill J.S. *Reflections on representative governance*. Chelyabinsk, Sotium Publishers, 2006, p. 255 (in Russian).

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This leads to an extreme diversity of proposals concerning the method for forming the Chamber in the future; experts let their imaginations run wild on the issue. This is understandable: if the mission of a state institution is vague, one can hardly expect clarity on how that institution should be formed.

A similar ***shaky perception can be observed in the comments by respondents concerning election of governors***. The argument that «the population is unable to make the right choice» or that the current President and Prime Minister simply have high credibility are anthological: they constantly crop up in the arsenals of political conservatives not only in Russia but in other countries and no comment is really required here. In this country, such a tradition goes back to Nikolai Kramzin, who believed that of prime importance for Russia are not so much perfect institutions as the right people in positions of responsibility. The experts, however, give an unorthodox interpretation of the development of political competition, which is allegedly ensured by nomination of gubernatorial candidates by the party that has won the regional elections. «If a party has won and the governor represents another party, both the vertical power structure and federalism will suffer», says a businessman from Ivanovo Region. This kind of talk suggests that the respondent is simply unaware that federalism and the «vertical power structure» are incompatible in principle, while ignoring the fact that a «split mandate» is an effective and frequently used method for checking supreme political power in federative states<sup>4</sup>. The same can be said of the opinion whereby the governor «must represent the whole Territory or the whole Region» (an expert from the Krasnodar Territory). That view ignores the banal truth that, in modern (and post-modern) societies, politics can only be based on a division of political interest, whereas the concept of a «united and monolithic» guiding will attests to political backwardness and archaic attitudes<sup>5</sup>.

Not surprisingly, ***the prevalence of this kind of discourse results in a significant tilt towards various models of regional autocracy***

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<sup>4</sup> See, for example, *Divided Democracy. Cooperation and Conflict between the Congress and President*, ed. Tarbert J. Moscow. Progress Publishers, 1994 (in Russian).

<sup>5</sup> See: Eisenstadt. *Revolution and transformation of societies. A comparative study of civilizations*. Moscow, Aspektpress, 1999.

**that obviously run counter to federalism.** For instance, nearly all the respondents rejected the model of a parliamentary republic as an option for organising regional governance. The Russian ruling class, in spite of all the reforms and revolutions of past centuries, still believes that personal autocratic power is the most effective for management and administration because it dispenses with the cumbersome procedure of coordinating positions. «If governance is collegiate, everything needs to be agreed and adoption of managerial decisions is greatly delayed», a businessman from Ivanovo Region believes. Speaking about the prospects for federalism, regional leaders like to repeat that the mentality of the Russian people is attuned to autocracy, thus reproducing one of the most common and ungrounded propaganda and conservative myths. Many interviews revealed this kind of illiteracy. «When there is a collective body of some sort», says an expert from the Krasnodar Territory, there will be no collective responsibility, no single collective action plan.» Interviewed representatives of élites hardly ever mentioned that the devolution of power implied by federalism helps in avoiding systemic errors and guarantees social representation of alternative positions and viewpoints. To be sure, the élites that consider autocratic power to be the best possible governance model have nothing to do with federalism and cannot be proponents and practitioners of the federalist idea.

Quite naturally, **the tilt towards one-person power in the regions is accompanied by a disdainful attitude on the part of the élite towards local government.** In the opinion of experts, local government is, on the one hand, very poorly financed; on the other hand, people do not really need it. «They are paupers; they have nothing», says an Ivanovo businessman about municipal authorities. «You can vest them with any powers you like but if there is no financing; they cannot accomplish anything.» The much-touted «unpreparedness» of people for local government is a still bigger deterrent for the élite; representatives of government, business and the expert community speak about this with one voice. Yet, paradoxically, the reform of **local government launched by Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev is welcomed by the regional élites even though the main motive of that reform is to fit the municipal bodies into the «vertical power structure,» that is, to enslave and humiliate them still more.**

This is yet further proof of how little the regional élites understand the social and political foundations of federalism and its inseparable

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arable link with grassroots democracy. The comments by respondents on local government present a picture in which federalism is little more than the legal formula extensively described in textbooks, a formula devoid of any cultural content. This is not only because there is no sign of any sprouts of federalist culture at the grassroots level; it is far more lamentable that there is no sign of it among the élites, who do not understand the nature of federalism and are unprepared to practise it. That is why the interviewees reduced all the problems of local government to lack of funds, without being overly worried that local government is increasingly distancing itself from the population and becoming less and less representative. «We do not have local government, we have local enforcement», says an expert from the Perm Territory. His diagnosis is basically correct but one does not find in the interviews the most important thing — any suggestions regarding methods for overcoming the existing situation other than redistributing cash flows in favour of municipalities.

Some of the more interesting fragments from the interviews with members of the élite were devoted to the administrative-territorial division of the Federation. Generally, that aspect of Russia's political structure gets little attention from the élites; the prevailing view is that the system is in a state of equilibrium and no fundamental change is required. Whenever adjustment of the existing administrative system is thought to be desirable, the members of the élite assess it solely in terms of economic feasibility, while totally ignoring the issue of the political powers of regional authorities. The «economic bias» also reveals how extremely vague is the idea held by today's regional leaders of what federalism and federation actually are. Even establishment of federal districts is criticised by the experts not on superficial and therefore obvious political or legal grounds but on economic grounds: these districts have failed to prove their economic effectiveness and this alone makes them useless.

Members of the élites showed no signs of a genuinely federalist attitude regarding the problem of the unequal legal status of the constituent entities of the Federation. Ignoring the extreme complexity of our country and the high degree of regional diversity, most of them would like the status of the constituent entities to be brought to a common denominator, because a «symmetrical structure of the Federation is more fair.» «Some people may feel that a republic and presidency provide a higher status than another form, another name

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of a region and, in this connection, can claim some additional benefits», a member of the Perm Territory government reasons. This line of thinking reveals an alarming symptom, as it underestimates the importance of the fact that Russia is a multinational country. Indeed, being a republic within Russia confers a special legal status permitting the national minority living in a large country to think of itself as a majority on a specific, legally determined territory. Federalism is generally convenient as a political form in that, on the one hand, it panders to national sentiments and, on the other hand, constantly keeps them in rein by offering ethnic groups elements of political self-expression, while at the same time putting them under the umbrella of the «common home». Not feeling an urge for such self-expression or insisting, like a member of the expert community from the Ivanovo Region, that «there must be one common word: regions, gubernias as there used to be before», the Russian élites overlook the fateful «nationalities issue». During the century since 1917, this issue has not disappeared and it still poses a threat to Russia's integrity. The delicacy with which the élites that gain power after the imminent dismantling of the authoritarian regime will handle this issue will go a long way to determining whether Russia survives within its present borders.

Yet only a minority among the élites interviewed understand how serious this is. These people rightly say that the «natural asymmetry» prompted by the ethnic or confessional features of certain Russian territories cannot be ignored. «The autonomous republics grant a sort of self-determination to a people or nationality», says a businessman from Ivanovo Region. «A vast country with a host of ethnic-cultural groups... simply cannot consist of the same types of constituent entity», echoes an expert from Tatarstan. Not surprisingly, the idea of asymmetry is particularly well-received by the representatives of that republic. Unfortunately, as noted above, this is not a very popular idea among the élites.

During the interviews, members of all élite groups spoke enthusiastically about what they consider to be the optimal distribution of functions, powers and resources between the federal centre, the constituent entities of the Federation and local government. But the dominant word in the plethora of proposed options was «delegation»; meaning that, in the opinions of these élites, the power distribution must first be decided at the very top, at the level of the federal centre, and only then would the scheme worked out at the top be handed

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down to the constituent entities of the Federation. This scheme implies total passivity on the part of the constituent entities in working out an optimum federative structure; in essence, it is not federalist because it does not include the key element, the federal bargaining, the continuing tug-of-war between the central and regional élites that provides the life algorithm of any federation. In fact, the members of the Russian élites try to pass off the devolution process as federalisation. Yet the fundamental difference between these two phenomena is that, in the course of devolution, the centre divests itself of an excessive body of functions by handing them down to the lower levels, and it does so of its own free will and on its own initiative; in fact, it is a unilateral decision by the federal government. As regards the distribution of powers and competences within a federative state, on the contrary, this always implies bilateral or multilateral participation, dialogue, and communication of a kind that is generally referred to as federative bargaining<sup>6</sup>. Russian regional experts labour within the paradigm of the dominant role of the centre, which, in their opinion, is the dominant force in the federative process, although this is by no means obvious in classical federations, where the centre positions itself as an equal partner in the bargaining. **Members of the Russian regional élites usually have no idea how the constituent entities of the Federation can play an active role in the federative process. They take the dominance of the Kremlin and the White House (government) for granted.**

They become genuinely interested only when the question arises of changing the ratios of the distribution of funds in favour of their territories. The positions expressed by the regional representatives are very reminiscent of those of beggars: «We don't have enough money for anything; I think the Federation leaves a bit too much money for itself», complains a businessman from the Perm Territory. «What is a federation? It's basically the regions. Money should go there to enable them to develop», an administrative official from Ivanovo Region agrees. The comments and remarks by élite members reveal an unshakable conviction that the distribution of budgetary funds is the eternal prerogative of the federal centre and they cannot imagine any other arrangement. In this system of coordinates, one cannot imagine regions presenting the centre with finan-

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<sup>6</sup> Elazar D.J. *Constituting Globalization: the Post-Modern Revival of Confederal Arrangements*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998.



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cial claims or insisting on their own, original position. In other words, regional leaders are discussing the wrong things: they argue over specific figures, that is, the share of the money that goes to the regions, but not about whether the centre has the right to resolve this issue single-handed. Some experts go even further by attributing to the federation unmistakable signs of an empire and believing that this is the only true federalism: «Much of the money goes to the federal level and the federation then shares out the money. I believe that this is an objective imperative», says an expert from Ivanovo Region.

Similar discrepancies are revealed in expert comments on some marginal topics, such as representation of the regions in federal politics. Thus, the majority of respondents, while recognising the country's diversity, insist that regional parties should not be permitted. «There is no need for local parties; this goes against common sense», says a businessman from Ivanovo Region. The respondents don't seem to understand that local parties and separatism are not identical concepts. Judging from their answers, they simply do not know that there are regional parties in virtually any federation, even in the Third World, and, as a rule, far from weakening the country, they contribute to its cohesion and integrity. Indeed, in Canada, for example, the regional party representing Quebec was at one time the main opposition force in parliament, a circumstance that contributed significantly to the federative system<sup>7</sup>. The logic that assumes the existence of nationwide parties is the logic of unitarism, because such an organisation of the political space fails to reflect the diverse interests of voters living in significantly differing regions and holding different perceptions of the country's development and its prospects.

Finally, the experts' reasoning concerning regional cooperation leaves a strange impression. Most of them see it as primitive exchange of experience in one sphere or another, be it novelties in the field of local government or development of rice growing. None of the experts suggested that the regions with objectively similar interests might unite to make a stronger case for their positions to the federal centre. Political rather than economic or humanitarian cooperation is not considered an option; this should be attributed to the imperial worldview mentioned above. An empire is, among other things, a type of state

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<sup>7</sup> For more detail see: Young R. *The Secession of Quebec and the Future of Canada*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995.

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that discourages direct contacts between regions and, indeed, sometimes expressly bans them: the imperial centre sees to it that the regions do not form any blocs to promote their common interests in opposition to the central power<sup>8</sup>. A federation, on the contrary, encourages every kind of interregional cooperation because coalitions of regions, which are usually dynamic and mobile, cements the country and makes it stronger. In post-communist Russia, regional cooperation associations proved to be fairly effective as they assumed the role of brokers in the bargaining between the federal centre and groups of regions. Today, the Russian experts never mention that experience; for them, a model of regional interaction is token relations between «twin regions». Because they have nothing to say about such contacts, the experts describe them in a fittingly inarticulate way: «Well, with the regions... take the twin cities for example, there something is perhaps...» (a businessman from the Krasnodar Territory).

#### **Conclusions**

The current regional élites do not understand what federalism is, are unaware that they live and work in a federative state, see no potential benefits from the federative structure. The current state of their political awareness lacks the key component of federative relations: federative bargaining characterised by continuous competition between the central government and the regions. Their perception of the federal authorities bespeaks their total acquiescence in their secondary position. In the eyes of the majority of regional élites, Moscow's dominance is natural and normal. Finally, with the exception of representatives of national republics, the élites in the regions are unaware of the significance of federalism for smoothing over the interethnic frictions observed increasingly in our country. To sum up, one might say that the political class that shares such views cannot ensure establishment and assertion of a federalist culture in Russia.

The trouble, however, is that the signs of shaking of the «vertical power structure» will, in any case, revive federative institutions and rules that have been put in cold storage but not quite destroyed by the authoritarian regime<sup>9</sup>. According to the Constitution, Russia

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<sup>8</sup> See: Motyl A. *The Paths of Empires: Decline, Collapse and Revival of Imperial States*. Moscow, Moscow School of Political Studies, 2004, Chapter 1 (in Russian).

<sup>9</sup> For more detail see: Zakharov A.A. *Russian Federalism as a «Sleeping» Institution*. // *The Untouchable Stock: Debates on Politics and Culture*. 2010. No.3 (71), pp. 177–185 (in Russian).

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is still a federation. This means that federalisation as a result of a political thaw and prodding on the part of national republics is an inevitable process. But it will have to be administered by élites that shy away from federalism and are not familiar with the intricacies of the issue. The results can already be foreseen: after a final collapse of the vertical power structure, the country will enter a period of «no-holds-barred federal bargaining» by predatory and selfish regional élites. To make matters worse, they will not be restrained by any free press, political parties or independent judiciary because these institutions do not exist or are in a rudimentary state. Incidentally, such challenges were faced by the federations of Latin America when they abandoned authoritarianism in favour of democracy. In Brazil, for example, after the military relinquished power, the regional leaders turned out to be the strongest, most independent and legitimate political actors. The overall result of the awakening of «slumbering» federative principles in that country at the early stage was, therefore, that concentration of power was replaced by chaotic decentralisation with the states and municipalities riding roughshod over the politically and financially enfeebled federal government, in fact treating it in a predatory manner<sup>10</sup>.

Nothing is more dangerous in any federation than unregulated federative bargaining. If the rules governing the relations between the centre and the regions are not agreed in advance, the rationale of the very existence of the federation might be brought in question. In history, such situations have typically ended either in civil war or peaceful disintegration of the federation, the former cases being much more numerous. This saddles the élites in a federative state with special responsibility. If they do not cope with that responsibility, the federation completes its lifecycle, turning into a unitary state within much narrower borders. The poor quality of the regional political élites in Russia, confirmed by the study under analysis, makes such a scenario highly probable.

**Andrey Zakharov**

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<sup>10</sup> Costa M.M.F. Brazil (*Federative Republic of Brazil*) // Griffiths A.L. (ed.). *Handbook of Federal Countries*, 2002. Montreal etc.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002, p. 93-94.

## **DISCUSSION ABOUT RUSSIAN FEDERALISM: ON THE RESULTS OF REGIONAL ROUNDTABLES**

The participants in the discussions in all the cities where they were held expressed skepticism about the current state of federalism and federalist relations in Russia. The prevailing opinion was that, although the country is constitutionally a federation, in practice the federal principles are universally violated. Not infrequently, the participants in the roundtables described present-day Russia as a unitary state. During the roundtable in Perm, the term «formal federation» was used.

Naturally, because political practice does not match the federative principles of the Russian state proclaimed in the Constitution, those taking part in the discussions stated that, today, the problems of federalism are not at the top of the current political agenda. Yet the experts stressed its extreme importance in terms of the strategic outlook for building the Russian state.

### **The absence of political actors interested in promoting federalism**

The current condition of Russian statehood was attributed not only to the centralising policy of the federal centre, which objectively pushes the problems of federalism to the periphery of political life. The main reason that federalism is «irrelevant» to modern Russia is the absence of political actors interested in promoting it in practice. Regional élites are committed only to increased decentralisation and gradual expansion of their own powers, while not being prepared to change the type of relations with the federal centre and with the other constituent entities of the federation. The regional élites of the border territories (Karelia, the Primorye Territory) seek, above all, to gain key positions in deriving income from their geographical transit position. At present, these opportunities are controlled by the federal authorities and leading national companies. Yet, when a territory sees a major national project gen-

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erously financed out of the federal budget, even that demand inevitably weakens because the regional élites are preoccupied with making use of the funding that comes their way. Such a situation is emerging in the Primorye Territory, which will host the 2012 APEC summit, and in Krasnodar Territory, which will host the Sochi Winter Olympics in 2014.

The activities of the regional élites seeking decentralisation and greater access to local and federal resources are geared rather to behind-the-scenes horse-trading with the federal authorities than to a public discussion of the problems involved in building the Russian state. That restricts the opportunities for developing federative relations since this presupposes a developed public space. Contrary to traditional perceptions, regional business communities have not displayed a particular interest in development of federalist principles, as they seek a monopoly within individual constituent entities of the Federation and prefer to rely on the exclusive support of certain authorities. Finally, the major companies on a federal scale, which today play the key role in the regional economies, feel much more comfortable under a centralised system of governance. The populace in general perceives and expresses opinions only on isolated fragments of the whole set of federal problems. On the whole, the problems of federalism are marginal to their interests, so only the expert community consistently advocates developing federalism in Russia. That, of course, is not enough to strengthen federalist principles in practice. As the participants in the Irkutsk roundtable rightly pointed out, the present system in Russia, with the federal centre playing the decisive role, stifles regional initiative, restricts competition and contributes to creation of monopolies, thus impeding development of federative relations.

## **Demand for federalism and regional identities**

Another cause of the setbacks to federalism in Russia mentioned during some discussions (in Ivanovo and Petrozavodsk) is the lack of stable regional identities. That opinion was confirmed convincingly during that part of the discussions highlighting the varying demand for federalism in various regions of the federation. The roundtable materials can be represented as a graph reflecting

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different level of demand for federalism depending on the degree of regional identity. At present, that demand is strongest where there is an established *powerful ethnic* identity (Tatarstan). Perhaps it is only in this republic, as the discussions revealed, that there is a firm conviction among the political, academic and expert élite that the problem of federalism and federative relations has only temporarily been put on the back burner of the national agenda and that, after a while, it will inevitably move to the top. The Republic of Karelia does not have such a distinct ethnic identity, which is not surprising because the indigenous ethnic groups — Karelians, Vepsians and Finns — account for just over 12% of the total population. The demand for federalism is not, therefore, strong. Strong *regional identities* do not suffice for a stable request for federalism, as revealed by the example of the Krasnodar and Perm Territories. These regions are concerned with expanding their economic and internal autonomy but do not seek a return to the federal model of the Russian state. It has been suggested that the ethnically Russian regions, even in spite of developed regional identities, unlike many national republics, have no tradition of an equal dialogue with Moscow, which they see, above all, as the governing instance. For example, in Ivanovo Region, which does not have a marked regional identity, there is virtually no demand for federalism.

### **About the concept of «federalism»**

The discussion of terminology connected with the concept of «federalism» has revealed a different interpretation by experts from different regions. In addition to the common definition of federalism as a special form for organising the political space, other interpretations have been suggested. Thus, in Krasnodar, the members of the roundtable said that federalism was a «model of government and a form of decentralisation» and «a specifically functioning political process». During the discussion in Nizhny Novgorod, federalism was defined as a means of smoothing out interethnic contradictions or as an instrument for bridging the gaps in economic development between different regions.

Equally important were the discussions that sought to identify and clarify the subject, the various aspects of federal and regional

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policies that, in the opinion of regional experts, are covered by the concept of «federalism». As the discussions showed, these ideas differ from region to region. Not infrequently, acute local problems related to the degree of centralisation of government in the «centre-region» scheme and the prospects for enlargement of constituent entities of the Federation made an imprint on the discussion of the problems of federalism. Even so, the prevailing view among the participants was that the problems, however significant, were not directly connected with the theme of federalism. Decentralisation is a key condition for emergence and development of federative relations but it is not the only one. Yet, as was stated during the discussion in Perm, decentralisation and broader regional powers do not automatically improve the quality of federalism. For example, the cut in profit tax in the Perm Territory made strictly in accordance with the Budget and Tax Codes of Russia and aimed at stimulating business activity, above all small and medium-sized businesses, actually benefited only big companies. It did not increase the flow of investments or improve the position of small and medium-sized businesses, so the problem is the quality of managerial decisions and of the administrative apparatus.

Changing the boundaries of the members of the federation is primarily a managerial problem. It is different in nature in different regions. In the Krasnodar Territory, experts are still considering possible unification with the Republic of Adygeya. The members of the roundtable in Irkutsk, on the contrary, argued in favour of splitting some of the huge constituent entities of the Federation in Siberia into smaller units.

Nor can federalism be reduced to the admittedly important problem of relations between the budgets at different levels, as was stressed during the discussion in Nizhny Novgorod.

There was no uniform assessment among the participants of the role of local government in developing federalism. The experts who met in Ivanovo said that the emergence and development of local government was an integral part of the problems of federalism. In contrast, most of those in Kazan felt that local government was a separate set of problems, not directly related to federalism.

## **Factors of federalism**

The members of the discussion were one in stating that, if federalism is to develop in Russia, decentralisation must be accompanied by establishment of horizontal cooperation between the regions, bypassing the federal centre. Even so, they admitted that Russia did not, unfortunately, have sufficient experience of such cooperation. They also stressed that, to develop horizontal integration links, it was necessary for the regions to feel themselves to be fully-fledged actors in the national political process. That, in turn, can only be achieved on the basis of a contractual federation. In Russia, though, throughout its history, both Soviet and post-Soviet, there has never been such a federation. The rights of its constituent entities have, for the most part, been granted or delegated to them by the federal centre. The predominance of patron-client relations between the centre and the regions is another obstacle to development of horizontal forms of interaction. This suggests that formation of a horizontal infrastructure of Russian federalism will take a long time.

Other key conditions for successful development of federalism mentioned by the participants in the discussion were development of democracy and competition. The experts who spoke in various cities stressed that federalism could not provide a solid basis for the state structure without strong democratic principles for the functioning of the political system and developed competition. Russian experience of the 1990s proved highly instructive. During that period, the development of federative relations was based, above all, on a balance of forces and powers that had swung in favour of the regions and away from the federal centre. But the regional élites, having achieved a substantial expansion of their powers and control over their local resources, typically proceeded to use these achievements not to strengthen democratic government or develop competition, but gradually to form regional authoritarian regimes. As a result, federalism failed to become a sustainable system for organising the political space. When, therefore, the vector of national policy reversed and the trend of concentration of power and resources at the federal centre prevailed, the federalist model was quickly curtailed. That is why the majority of discussion participants in various cities spoke with varying



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degrees of persistence of the need to restore direct elections of governors as a key prerequisite for democratising regional political life and subsequently creating conditions for development of federative relations. The current practice of appointing governors from other regions got bad marks from experts. They stressed that this practice generated conflicts between regional élites and the appointed governors and had a negative effect on the quality of governance in the constituent entities of the Federation. Only in Nizhny Novgorod was it suggested that federalism in Russia in the coming years would preserve an «imperial character», i.e., managerial forms and practices that have nothing to do with democratic experience and hark back to a very different political tradition. But that point of view did not find favour among other discussants.

Another key condition for successfully establishing a federal model mentioned by the members of roundtables in several cities (Kazan, Perm) is the need to create a strong institutional order in the country. Unfortunately, the degree of regional autonomy in the 1990s and at present has been determined by the personal chemistry between the leaders of the country and those of the regions. Today, the lobbying potential of regional leaders in Moscow exerts considerable influence on the opportunities for development of a specific region. Yet, by forging good personal relations with the country's leaders, the regional élites can successfully solve only current problems, such as obtaining additional funding for some regional projects out of the federal budget. This cannot, however, provide the foundations for a stable federative system.

## **Federalist model in the historical perspective**

Considering the serious domestic and external problems Russia is facing, its internal political landscape and the features of its state, most participants in the discussions held in various cities came to the conclusion that, in the historical perspective, federalism is the best model for organising space in such a complicated and diversified country as Russia. Some experts even went as far as to assert that there is no alternative to federalism in Russia, though this is not to say that other views were not expressed. A minority of participants, citing the numerous problems of development and state building and the long-standing tradition of the cen-

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tralised state in Russian history, did not rule out that the federal project, as it has taken shape in developed democracies, will not take root in Russia. They argued, for example, that a federation, if it ever took shape in Russia, would be merely formal. This was the view expressed in Perm. In Nizhny Novgorod, as noted above, they said that some imperial practices would inevitably be brought back.

As for the form of federation that would be most practicable for Russia, the majority of experts said it should be asymmetric. They adduced two arguments. First, in a country with distinct ethnic identities tied to specific territories inhabited by indigenous peoples, it would be very difficult to renounce ethnic principles in structuring the federation. Second, Russia is so diverse in terms of geography, economics, culture, religion and natural conditions, that to work out an effective and flexible model for a symmetric federation is hardly possible. Only a few experts in some cities (Nizhny Novgorod, Kazan) spoke in favour of a symmetric federation based on administrative principles. That position, however, was symptomatic more of disgruntlement among some regional élites and part of the Russian population in the national republics, who felt that these republics were getting too much from the federal centre.

## **How to form and consolidate federalism in Russia**

The participants in the roundtables focused considerably on working out recommendations for how to form and consolidate federalism in Russia. These dealt with diverse matters. Some urged the need to write more laws to delimit the powers of the federal centre and the regions more clearly, to improve tax policy and increase the financial resources of the regions. These recommendations were within the realm of traditional political and administrative decisions. In Vladivostok, they spoke of the need to create an ideology of federalism as a set of immutable values.

Some out-of-the-box proposals concerning the development of federalism in Russia were made by M. Rozhansky of Irkutsk. He believes it necessary to develop the public sphere, without which

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federalism cannot exist as a system. This should be one of the main tasks of civil society and its institutions. Second, federalist values must be firmly embedded in the consciousness of the broad masses. So far, the popular ideas of federalism are fairly vague, as the ZIRCON survey has confirmed. The same is true of the perceptions prevalent in the minds of political, administrative and business élites. The federalist consciousness can only be fostered through education and educational institutions should address that problem in a purposeful manner.

As pointed out above, the participants in the roundtables reviewed the results of the ZIRCON study. While generally praising the high standard of the work, they made many practical remarks, most of which had to do with the methodology used. Some said that the concepts of «federalism» and «federative relations» were not sufficiently well adapted to be perceived by the lay respondent, making it difficult to determine the attitude of ordinary citizens to complex issues that presupposed a certain level of knowledge of what federalism is. An interesting remark was made by a participant in the discussion in Nizhny Novgorod. He noted that the selection of regions for the study according to the traditional approach dividing regions into donors, recipients, borderlands and national republics does not always accurately reflect current Russian realities. An alternative classification of regions would put the regions with a generally stable development in the first group. These are mainly in the European part of Russia. Another group would consist of the crisis regions comprising the territories in the South and in the North Caucasus. The third group could be described as pre-crisis, including parts of Siberia and the Far East. Perhaps a study based on such a grouping would reveal new differences and nuances in the way the regions approach the problems of federalism in Russia.

On the whole, the results of the roundtables have shown that the expert community and the regional élites today are not particularly engaged in the issues connected with creating a normative model for Russian federalism. They are more concerned with solving specific problems that are, in one way or another, connected with the problem of federalism. This is not a sign of weakness on the part of regional experts and politicians. It reflects the nationwide political practices in modern Russia, where the problems of

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federalism take a back seat. It should not be inferred, however, that raising the issue of a normative model of Russian federalism is premature. On the contrary, because the majority of the participants in the roundtables concluded that federalism is potentially the best form for organising the political space of Russia, it would be reasonable to begin work on the future political structure of our country in advance and to do so in accordance with the available opportunities, resources and intellectual approaches discussed in political, expert and business circles.

***Andrey Ryabov***

## List of the Roundtables Participants in the Regions

<b>Kazan</b>		
1	<b><i>Farukshin M.</i></b>	the Professor of the Political Science Chair, Kazan Federal University
2	<b><i>Tagirov I.</i></b>	the head of the National History Chair, Kazan Federal University
3	<b><i>Beljaev V.</i></b>	the head of the Sociology, Political Science and Management Chair, Kazan technical university
4	<b><i>Vorzhetsov A.</i></b>	the Professor the State and Municipal Management Chair, Kazan technological University
5	<b><i>Salagaev A.</i></b>	the head of the Social and Political Conflictology Chair, Kazan technological University
6	<b><i>Sergeev S.</i></b>	the Professor of the Social and Political Conflictology Chair, Kazan technological University
7	<b><i>Jagudin B.</i></b>	the head of the Foreign History and Regionology Chair, Kazan Federal University
8	<b><i>Homenko V.</i></b>	the corresponding member of the Science Academy Tatarstan Republic
9	<b><i>Belyakov R.</i></b>	the employee, the Internal Policy Management of the Executive office of the Tatarstan Republic President
10	<b><i>Ryabov A.</i></b>	the expert of the project Toward a New Model of Russian Federalism: the Regional Perspective
<b>Nizhni Novgorod</b>		
1	<b><i>Makarychev A.</i></b>	the doctor of political sciences, Volgo-Vjatskaja Public Service Academy
2	<b><i>Dahin A.</i></b>	the doctor of Philosophy, the head of the Philosophy and Political Science Chair, Nizhniy Novgorod Institute of Management
3	<b><i>Raspopov N.</i></b>	the candidate of historical sciences, the senior lecturer of the Higher School of Economy

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4	<b><i>Semyonov E.</i></b>	the candidate of Philosophical Sciences, Director of the Center of a Social-Conservative Policy
5	<b><i>Gusev A.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the senior teacher of the Political Science and International Relations Chair of Nizhniy Novgorod linguistic University
6	<b><i>Korshunov D.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the senior teacher of the Political Science and International Relations Chair, the Linguistic University of N.Novgorod
7	<b><i>Gronsky A.</i></b>	the doctor of Political Sciences, a projector on scientific work of the Higher School of Economy
8	<b><i>Orlinsky O.</i></b>	the senior lecturer of the Theory and Policy Chair, Nizhniy Novgorod State University
9	<b><i>Gronsky V.</i></b>	the post-graduate student, the faculty of Foreign Relations, the State University of N.Novgorod
10	<b><i>Kazakovtsev A.</i></b>	post-graduate student, Nizhniy Novgorod Institute of Management
11	<b><i>Matuhin A.</i></b>	post-graduate student of the Nizhniy Novgorod Institute of management
12	<b><i>Repin K.</i></b>	post-graduate student, Nizhniy Novgorod Linguistic University
13	<b><i>Baranovsky K.</i></b>	the cultural fund "Atmosphere"
14	<b><i>Fotenkov A.</i></b>	the Doctor of Philosophy, Chairman of Philosophy Department, Nizhniy Novgorod State University
15	<b><i>Zakharov A</i></b>	the expert of the project Toward a New Model of Russian Federalism: the Regional Perspective
<b>Perm</b>		
1	<b><i>Ashihmina J.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the Perm Branch office of the Philosophy and Law Institute of the Ural Department of the Russian Academy of Sciences
2	<b><i>Borisova H.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the senior lecturer of Political Sciences Chair, the Perm State National Research University

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3	<b><i>Boyarova A.</i></b>	the post-graduate student of the Perm Branch office of the Philosophy and Law Institute of the Ural Department of the Russian Academy of Sciences
4	<b><i>Vitkovsky T.</i></b>	the candidate of political sciences, the research assistant of the Perm Branch office of the Philosophy and Law Institute of the Ural Department of the Russian Academy of Sciences
5	<b><i>Ivanov M.</i></b>	the candidate of political sciences, the Perm Branch office of the National Research University (the Higher School of the Economy)
6	<b><i>Kovin V.</i></b>	the candidate of historical sciences, the Perm State Pedagogical University, association "VOICE"
7	<b><i>Kulick O.</i></b>	the Deputy of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, the fraction of the Communist Party
8	<b><i>Musin D.</i></b>	the expert of the center of the "Grani"
9	<b><i>Nazukina M.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the Laboratory Chief on Identity Studying, Perm State National Research University
10	<b><i>Povarnitsyn B.</i></b>	the doctor of historical sciences, Professor, Perm National Research Polytechnical University
11	<b><i>Podvintsev O.</i></b>	the doctor of Political Sciences, the professor, Perm Branch office of the Philosophy and Law Institute of Ural Department of the Russian Academy of Sciences
12	<b><i>Punina K.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the senior teacher of the Perm State National Research University, the Press Secretary of Kamsky Hydroelectric Power Station, the Public Limited Company "RusGidro"
13	<b><i>Sulimov K.</i></b>	the candidate of political sciences, the senior lecturer of chair of political sciences of the Perm State National Research University, the expert of the center "Grani"

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14	<b><i>Tyrina E.</i></b>	the post-graduate student of the Perm Branch office of the Philosophy and Law Institute of the Ural Department of the Russian Academy of Sciences
15	<b><i>Filatov S.</i></b>	the candidate of Historical Sciences, senior lecturer of the Perm State Pedagogical University
16	<b><i>Turovskiy R.</i></b>	the expert of the project Toward a New Model of Russian Federalism: the Regional Perspective
<b>Petrozavodsk</b>		
1	<b><i>Bezborodov M.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, senior teacher, the chair of political science
2	<b><i>Ilyin A</i></b>	the head of Political Science chair, the senior lecturer, the candidate of Philosophical Sciences
3	<b><i>Peteļjaeva I.</i></b>	the deputy Education Minister of Republic Kareliya, the head of the Karelian branch of «Fair Russia» Party
4	<b><i>Shekov K.</i></b>	the deputy of Legislative Assembly of Republic Kareliya of the fourth convocation, the vice-president of Committee on a state system and local government cases and the national policy; the committee-man on economic policy and taxes, a member of fraction of All-Russia political Party "United Russia"
5	<b><i>Sukhorukov A.</i></b>	the leader of "Petrozavodsk–Joensuu: cities in development" Project of the administrations of Petrozavodsk
6	<b><i>Inozemtseva B.</i></b>	the candidate of Philosophical Sciences, the senior lecturer, political science chair
7	<b><i>Chernenkova E.</i></b>	the candidate of Historical Sciences, the senior lecturer, the Political science Chair
8	<b><i>Rozhneva S.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the senior lecturer, the Political Science Chair
9	<b><i>Kushnir M.</i></b>	the senior teacher, political science chair
10	<b><i>Yarovoy G.</i></b>	candidate of political sciences, the senior lecturer, chair of the international relations



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11	<b>Balyka D.</b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the senior lecturer, the International Relations Chair
12	<b>Yusupovskiy A.</b>	the expert of the project "Toward a New Model of Russian Federalism: the Regional Perspective"
<b>Ivanovo</b>		
1	<b>Shnyrova O.</b>	the candidate of historical sciences, the senior lecturer of New, Contemporary History and the International Relations Chair of Ivanovo State University, y
2	<b>Berezkin I.</b>	the Vice-president of the local government of the Ivanovo regional Duma committee
3	<b>Gafizova N.</b>	the senior lecturer of the General Sociology Chair of Ivanovo State University, the participant of «Quality of life of region» project
4	<b>Dianova A.</b>	the chairman of Youth chamber at Ivanovo regional Duma
5	<b>Isaeva N.</b>	the senior lecturer of the Constitutional, Administrative and Financial Right Chair of Ivanovo State University, the expert of the Committee on the Constitutional Building and Legality of the regional Duma
6	<b>Pankratova E.</b>	the senior lecturer of the General Sociology Chair of Ivanovo State University, the participant of «Quality of life of region» project
7	<b>Polyvyanny D.I.</b>	the doctor of historical sciences, the pro-rector on scientific work of Ivanovo State University
8	<b>Averin V.</b>	the head of regional branch of the Public Organization "VOICE"
9	<b>Belov S.</b>	the vice-president of the Interregional Youth Movement «the New boundary»
10	<b>Kolesnikova A.L.</b>	the post-graduate student of the New, Contemporary History and the International Relations Chair of Ivanovo State University, the secretary of Ivanovo Center of Gender Studies

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<b>Krasnodar</b>		
1	<b><i>Morozova E.</i></b>	the Doctor of Philosophy, the professor, the regional coordinator of the project
2	<b><i>Zhdanov A.</i></b>	the candidate of Historical sciences, the professor, the dean of Management and Psychology Faculty of Kuban State University
3	<b><i>Samarkina I.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the senior lecturer of the State Policy and State Government Chair of Kuban State University
4	<b><i>Kolba A.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the senior lecturer of the State Policy and Government chair of Kuban State University
5	<b><i>Miroshnichenko I.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the senior lecturer of the State Policy and State Government Chair of Kuban State University
6	<b><i>Sava M.</i></b>	the doctor of Political Sciences, the professor, manager of grant programs of the South Russian resource center
7	<b><i>Filobok A.</i></b>	the candidate of geographical sciences, the senior lecturer of Economic and Political Geography Chair of Kuban State University
8	<b><i>Busygina I.</i></b>	the expert of the project "Toward a New Model of Russian Federalism: the Regional Perspective"
<b>Irkutsk</b>		
1	<b><i>Rozhansky M.</i></b>	the candidate of Philosophical Sciences, the Center of Independent Social Researches
2	<b><i>Oleynikov I.</i></b>	the senior teacher of the Political Science and National history Chair of Irkutsk State University
3	<b><i>Semenenko V.</i></b>	the publishing group "Number one"
4	<b><i>Schmidt S.</i></b>	the senior lecturer of the World history and the International Relations Chair of the Historical Faculty of Irkutsk State University
5	<b><i>Kovalyov V.</i></b>	the head of the <i>Human Rights Ombudsman</i> office

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6	<b><i>Bezrukov L.</i></b>	the chief of the Recourse Studies Laboratory and the Political Geography of the Geography Institute
7	<b><i>Damdinov B.</i></b>	the senior lecturer of the Constitutional Law Chair of the Legal Institute of Irkutsk State University
8	<b><i>Potorochenko N.</i></b>	the chief of Innovative Activity department of Irkutsk Centre of science, the senior lecturer of the Institute of the Mathematics, Economy and Computer science of Irkutsk State University
9	<b><i>Naumov V.</i></b>	the mathematician, the programmer, the businessman
10	<b><i>Vardomskiy L.</i></b>	the expert of the project "Toward a New Model of Russian Federalism: the Regional Perspective"
<b>Vladivostok</b>		
1	<b><i>Larin V.</i></b>	the doctor of Historical Sciences, the professor, director of the History, Archeology and Ethnography of the People of the Far East Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences
2	<b><i>Vashchuk A.</i></b>	the doctor of Historical Sciences, professor, head of the Sociopolitical History Department, the Institute of history, archeology and ethnography
3	<b><i>Savchenko A.</i></b>	the candidate of Historical Sciences, research assistant of the History, Archeology and Ethnography Institute
4	<b><i>Kovalevskaya J.</i></b>	the candidate of Historical Sciences, research Associate of the History, Archeology and Ethnography Institute
5	<b><i>Polushin V.</i></b>	the chief of the legal Legislative Assembly department of Primorskiy Region
6	<b><i>Perednya A.</i></b>	the deputy of Legislative Assembly of Primorskiy Region
7	<b><i>Rozov V.</i></b>	the chairman of the Vladivostok Duma
8	<b><i>Rudnikov V.</i></b>	the assistant to the chairman of the Vladivostok Duma

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9	<b><i>Turaev V.</i></b>	the candidate of Historical Sciences, the senior research associate of the History, Archeology and Ethnography Institute
10	<b><i>Panachyova A.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the senior lecturer and the head of the Political Science Chair of the Far East Federal University
11	<b><i>Tsyganyuk N.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the senior lecturer of the Constitutional and Administrative Law Chair of the Far East Federal University
12	<b><i>Tantsura M.</i></b>	the candidate of Political Sciences, the senior teacher of the Political Science Chair of the Far East Federal University
13	<b><i>Krushanova L.</i></b>	the candidate of Historical Sciences, the senior lecturer, researcher of the History, Archeology and Ethnography Institute
14	<b><i>Konjahina A.</i></b>	the research assistant, the History, Archeology and Ethnography Institute
15	<b><i>Zarovneva N.</i></b>	the senior laboratorian, of the History, Archeology and Ethnography Institute
16	<b><i>Zadorin I.</i></b>	the expert of the project "Toward a New Model of Russian Federalism: the Regional Perspective"