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ON COMBATING
ANTI-SEMITISM



Russian
Jewish
Congress

Study report «Anti-Semitism in today's Russia»

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We are honored to present the new survey on the level of Anti-Semitism in Russia. The last such survey was conducted 19 years ago. This large scale research was performed for us by Lavada-Center, a leading Russian independent sociological analytical institution.

Our goal was to uncover the real situation. We wanted to receive facts and figures, and see whether the infamous “Jewish question” is still palpitant in Russia, and whether there is a real danger for the Russian Jewish Community, or the threat is exaggerated. The World Jewish Congress and the Euro-Asian Jewish Congress became our partners.

The information we received shows that the level of Anti-Semitism in Russia has declined. The Jewish Community feels almost no pressure neither from the government nor from their neighbours. These results also confirmed by the independent survey of Anti-Defamation League that shows that Anti-Semitism in Russia is on the lowest level in Europe.

I am confident that this situation was achieved thanks to of fruitful collaboration between Jewish organizations and the governmental bodies on different levels, regular monitoring of the Anti-Semitic acts, and effective reaction to them. Of course, this information needs to be analyzed carefully within the theory and practices of the international relations.

To make this happen RJC organized the first International Moscow Conference on Combating Anti-Semitism in November 2016, which the best international experts in this field will attend.

Yuri Kanner
President of Russian Jewish Congress



1. Introduction

1.1. Study description

In September 2015 RJC ordered a sociological study in order to determine structure and parameters of anti-Semitic views in Russia. The nation-wide poll followed two focus-groups – discussions held to determine basic outlines of the problem.

The study was conducted on a nationwide representative sample of 1200 respondents aged 18+. In addition, 400 Moscovites were polled in order to have a representative sample for Moscow, where the largest number of Jews reside, and so opinions about them, both positive and negative, are most actualized.

This project rests upon previous studies of anti-Semitism conducted by Levada Center experts in 1990, 1992 and 1997, which enables us to assess long-term trends in the popular opinions on Jews.

According to the study, the intensity of anti-Semitic sentiment in the Russian society can be considered low and declining. Yet, in some groups anti-Semitism is not just holding its grounds, but actually expanding. The structure of ethnic prejudices is quite inert and can be propagated even when the object is long gone (e.g. Polish «anti-Semitism without Jews»).

1.2. Reliability of the data gathered

In order to adequately understand the meaning of the data, one should keep in mind that a goal of a sociological study – in our case a study of anti-Semitism, xenophobia and attitudes towards other ethnic groups – is not to determine the real or «truthful» attitude towards certain objects. Polls indicate popular opinions on Jews and other ethnic groups. These opinions and attitudes usually do not reflect any real behavior by the respondents, but rather represent their general, average beliefs about the other or about historical events and circumstances, and such beliefs usually are stereotypical and cliché-like. Based largely on myths and ideology, they tend to reflect phantoms of the collective mind, psychological complexes and tensions inside the ethnic group, projected towards other ethnic groups. The received data thus is relevant not as an empirical description of Jews (for instance, derived from personal experience), but as facts of the communal life of those asked. Accordingly, opinions gathered during studies of anti-Semitism, xenophobia, anti-American or anti-Western sentiments should be perceived as characterizing the social environment, the society itself, its internal social factors, processes, conflicts, tensions, trends etc., which dictate such views of the objects of study ¹.

Sampling error in such studies is usually +/- 3.5%. It means that gaps up to 5%-6% in data from different groups are of little significance as per any particular question, but if a group consistently demonstrates the same deviation across a number of diagnostic and meaningful questions, we can deduce there is an opinion pattern. The same applies to comparing different polls. The reliability of data grows with every new measurement of anti-

¹ I.S.Kohn reflects this interpretation of opinion polls data in the title of his work «Homophobia as a Litmus Test for the Russian Democracy» («Public Opinion Review», 2007, #4, (90), p. 59-69).



Semitism and other ethnic prejudices, as this method allows us to separate rigid collective mind structures, self-propagating through generations, from accidental fluctuations and transient influences of the current events. Among such situational events captured by the new study – a steep rise of anti-Ukraine and anti-American sentiments, driven by the consequences of Crimea annexation and by the ongoing crisis in Russian-Ukrainian and Russian-Western relations. Anti-Western, anti-American and anti-Ukrainian rhetoric by the ruling political «class» and by the state-controlled media is what causes a sharp rise of such «situational» xenophobia.

On the other hand, the rigidity of certain stereotypes tells us they are not a spontaneous reaction to something Jews or other ethnic groups do, but are nurtured and propagated by social institutions, the media, mass culture, educational system, social regulation of access to high value positions and professions, vertical and horizontal mobility, collective memory and knowledge, religious institutions etc.



2. Context of the current study

The current social trends in Russia (the wave of patriotism following the annexation of Crimea, the anti-Ukraine and anti-Western propaganda and the consolidation of people and the regime under nationalistic banners) have obviously influenced the results, creating an impression of declining xenophobia. Other regular studies by Levada Center show that the popular fixation on the Ukrainian events of 2013-2015 contributed to a slight decline in anti-Caucasian and anti-immigrant views. Yet, it would be unwise to suggest that such a channelization of latent aggression towards US, Ukraine, EU and other countries can genuinely sooth hidden ethnic conflicts in Russia in the long run. Actually, one has to suggest that the campaign staged by the Russian government in late 2012 and still running, which is aimed at bolstering nationalist and conservative sentiment, is actually achieving its goals. Unclear situation in foreign relations, geopolitical ambitions, confrontation with the West and ongoing armed conflicts contribute to the economic crisis and to social tensions resulting from it. Thus, while admitting the general tendency of decline in anti-Semitism in Russia, we have to reiterate that it does not render its future rise impossible. Still, potential threats of this kind probably are local: e.g. one can expect increase in anti-Semitism in Moscow.



3. General parameters and factors of socially-induced xenophobia

After 25 years of studying xenophobia and anti-Semitism, we find it evident that the overall penetration of ethnic prejudices (notions that ethnic groups inherently differ from each other for better or for worse) is oscillating steadily around 20-25%.

The discrepancy in prevalence of such statements as «there are ethnic groups that are better than others» and «there are ethnic groups that cause sympathy or antipathy» shows there is a substantial layer of social tensions that in certain circumstances can contribute to development of conflicts, especially those incited by the regime and the media.

Data from 2015 shows a substantial growth (10 points – 68% to 78%) in the share of respondents who condemn public or articulated expression of ethnic hatred and prejudices. Ethnic discrimination is frowned upon as well.

Yet, it does not signal a substantial decline in ethnic prejudices and phobias – only that there is a social, collective taboo on the expression of outright xenophobia. It means that these norms are not deeply rooted in the public conscience and can be openly or covertly violated by various institutions – mainly by the media – which is especially important, considering that competitive public politics are virtually non-existent in Russia.

The study shows similar picture when it comes to ethnical and racial supremacy, latently present in the society and prone to expressing itself violently in the right circumstances.

TABLE 1

Do you believe all ethnic groups are generally the same, or some of them are inherently better or worse than others?

	1992	1997	2000	2015
All ethnic groups are the same	68	69	71	78
Some are inherently better or worse	22	25	22	19
Do not know, refuse to answer	10	6	7	4



TABLE 2

There are ethnic groups that have been put above others by the history itself

	1992	2015
Agree	23	28
Disagree	58	66
Do not know, refuse to answer	19	6

It is worth noting that while there are now less people who feel some ethnic antipathy, the decline of the share of those who reported sympathy and interest is much more substantial.

TABLE 3

Are there ethnic groups that you feel especially sympathetic towards?

	1992	1999	2015
There are such groups	42	31	23
There are not such groups	58	69	68
Do not know, refuse to answer	0	0	9

TABLE 4

Are there ethnic groups that you feel antipathetic, resentful about?

	1992	1999	2015
There are such groups	35	33	29
There are not such groups	65	67	64
Do not know, refuse to answer	0	0	7

This dormant racism is probably hosted by 28% to 41% of the population (41% agree that «ethnic Russians should enjoy certain privileges in Russia, that other citizens do not have»). It has to be noted that there were 17% of positive answers in 1992 and 32% in 1997. In other words, the overall pool of xenophobic and quasi-fascist (potentially anti-Semitic) views has expanded – probably due to the intensifying hostility towards the outside world which serves as a perfect growing environment for xenophobia. Yet, articulation of such opinions is still considered legitimate only in the narrow, trusted circle of like-minded people.



This diffuse (generic) xenophobia, as well as anti-Semitism, is more apparent in respondents who experience social and psychological stress, frustration or depression, caused by the gap between their expectations and the reality (in the family, at work, in the close environment). These are mostly elderly, poor people whose social resources are limited or non-existent.

The breakdown of answers by various socio-demographic groups shows us the following picture: almost a third of the respondents who characterize their usual mood as «tense, irritated» believe there are «ethnic groups who are inherently better or worse than others» (31%). This opinion is shared even more often by those who find their current position «insufferable» (36%). It is extremely important that a relatively large portion of the most well-off and professionally qualified (25%) agrees that some ethnic groups «are inherently better or worse than others». The «successful» part of the society demonstrates similar traits in their answers to other diagnostic questions as well. This leads us to the extremely important conclusion: similarly to the most disadvantaged part of the society (even if more subtly), the elite is subjected to the aggressive chauvinist and supremacist sentiment. This fact suggests that the elite is probably experiencing a major deficit of social recognition and gratification, which leads to self-isolation, negativism and cynicism. Thus, there are two factors most responsible for preservation and propagation of xenophobia. The first one is social deprivation (a disparity between goals and resources), mostly experienced by respondents living in middle-size towns who identify themselves as the low-middle class. They are characterized by passive, adaptive social behavior and social apathy. The second one is the deficit of social recognition and gratification (including influence) experienced by the groups who have been enjoying success in the post-Soviet Russia.

We can see that in Moscow, where higher income and quality of life coexist with some severe social tensions, more than a third of the respondents believes in inherent advantages or disadvantages of some ethnic groups (Moscow – 34%, large cities – 32%). Moderately well-to-do respondents demonstrate a relatively high level as well (31%).

Same differences remain when answering the question, «should ethnic Russians enjoy certain privileges that other citizens do not have?»

11% more of frustrated respondents answered positively, than of those who characterize their psychological state as «placid and content». This figure is full 33% higher than the average for those who find their current state «insufferable». (41% vs. 74%). The same category is much more inclined to favor barriers or quotas for non-Russians in such areas as high education, mass media, politics and army.

TABLE 5

Do you agree that ethnic Russians should enjoy certain privileges in Russia, that other citizens do not have?

	1992	1997	2015
Agree	17	32	41
Disagree	73	57	50
Not interested in this issue, do not care, refuse to answer	10	12	16



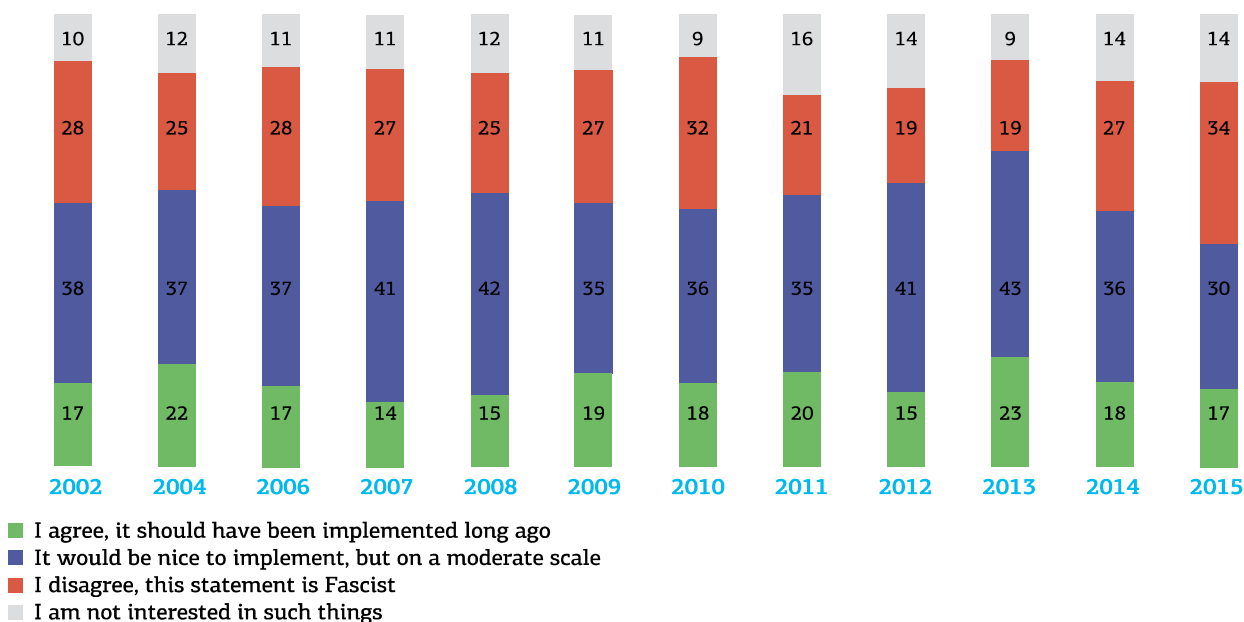
Since 1992 (see Table 5) the share of those who favor restoration of ethno-social hierarchy (probably similar to the one that existed during late Soviet period) has grown 2.5 times – from 17% to 41%. The public opinion clearly fails to see the absurdity of such a demand ², because the slide in this direction is happening due to such feelings as general insecurity and instability, lack of faith in the better future and fear of authority unrestrained by law, all these combined with the national inferiority complex.

The goal of this study was not only to determine maximum values and prevalence of anti-Semitism and xenophobia (collectively discriminative views, such as unwillingness to see Jews holding the reigns of government in Russia), but also to identify any potential for resistance, immunity from these xenophobic tendencies. The limits of such a potential can be vaguely drawn based on negative reactions to the slogan «Russia for Russians». These are oscillating from year to year in a corridor between 20% and 34%. In other words, in Russian society xenophobic views prevail, although slightly, over the tolerant and anti-xenophobic ones.

It is worth noting, that this ratio have remained quite steady over the course of the whole period of measurements. It means that negative views are systematically propagated, being important mechanisms of supporting collective identity through animosity towards «the other», rather than fleeting «moods». These mechanisms tend to project any traits considered bad, unwanted by the society onto the groups that are currently ascribed the role of «anti-us».

GRAPH 1

How do you feel about the slogan «Russia for Russians»?



² The share of ethnic Russians in the USSR near the time of its demise stood at 44%. In the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic they constituted 80%-83% of the population, after 1992 (in modern Russia) – 80%.



Some decline in levels of support for this statement in 2014-2015 probably occurred due to the events in Crimea and in Donbass, where the undeclared war was unraveling under the banner of solidarity with Russians in Ukraine and elsewhere in the world. Our working assumption is that it shifted the focus of attention from ethnic tensions inside Russia and also boosted national confidence and satisfaction.

Xenophobia is an important instrument of maintaining national identity, charting borders between «us» and «them» via antipathy towards other social or, more often, ethnic groups. Xenophobia allows to channel society's inner tensions outwards, attributing bad qualities to other groups and good ones to our own.

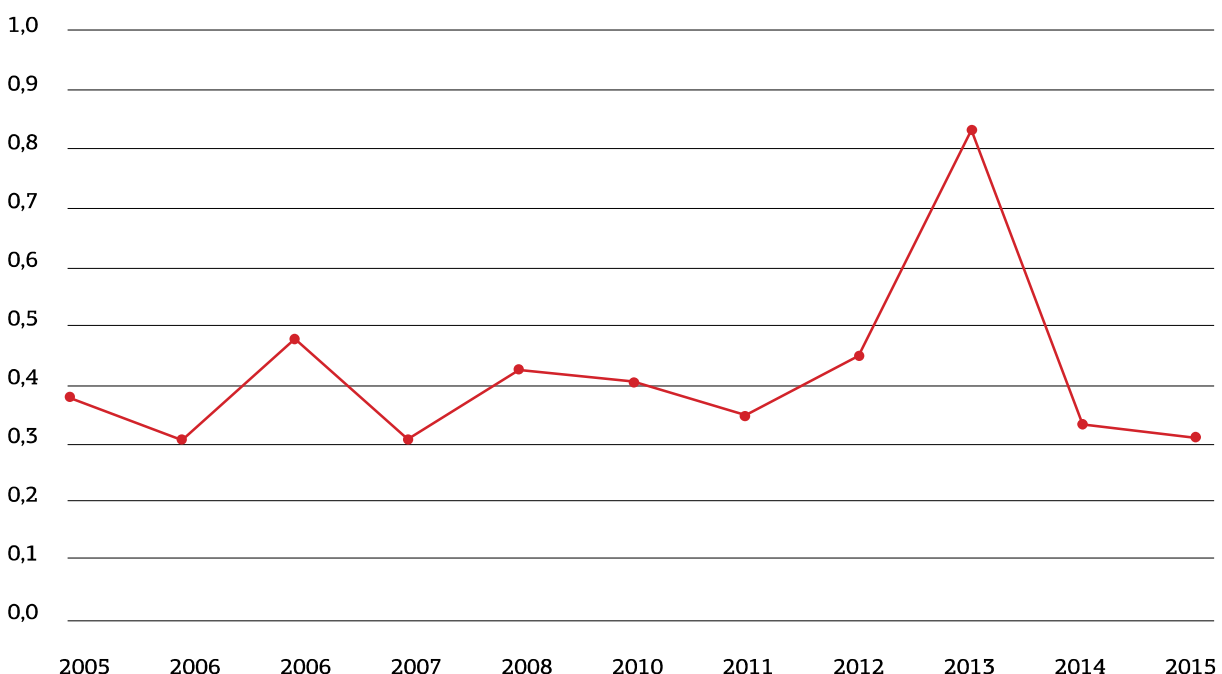
Xenophobia is far from static. Tzarist era anti-Semitism was a manifestation of conservative bigotry of the mostly agrarian society, fighting against progress and change. The state anti-Semitism of the Stalin era was an instrument aimed at crushing values of humanism, enlightenment, pluralism, open society etc. The post-Soviet anti-Caucasian xenophobia was rooted in the imperial and conservative mindset of the population undergoing a severe identity crisis, while the current wave of xenophobia is characterized by anti-Ukraine and anti-American sentiment nurtured by blatant propaganda.

Levels of xenophobia tend to rise during crises (often predicting them) and decline during periods of relative prosperity. For example, the relatively low post-Soviet xenophobia levels (1988-1992) were succeeded in the second half of 1990s by a slow growth, which indicated the surfacing of Russian nationalism. Ethnic xenophobia peaked in the autumn of 2013.

After the annexation of Crimea and the beginning of Russian-Ukraine conflict ethnic xenophobia (aimed mostly at Ukrainians and citizens of other former Soviet republics) is covertly supported by the state under the pretext of «conservatism». Its main pillar – «Russian tradition» (Russian Orthodox church, authoritarianism, patriotism) is increasingly welcomed. The other side of this coin is the growing demand for special rights and privileges for the Russian population. We find evidence for this in the rise in expectations of ethnic tensions and conflicts.

GRAPH 2

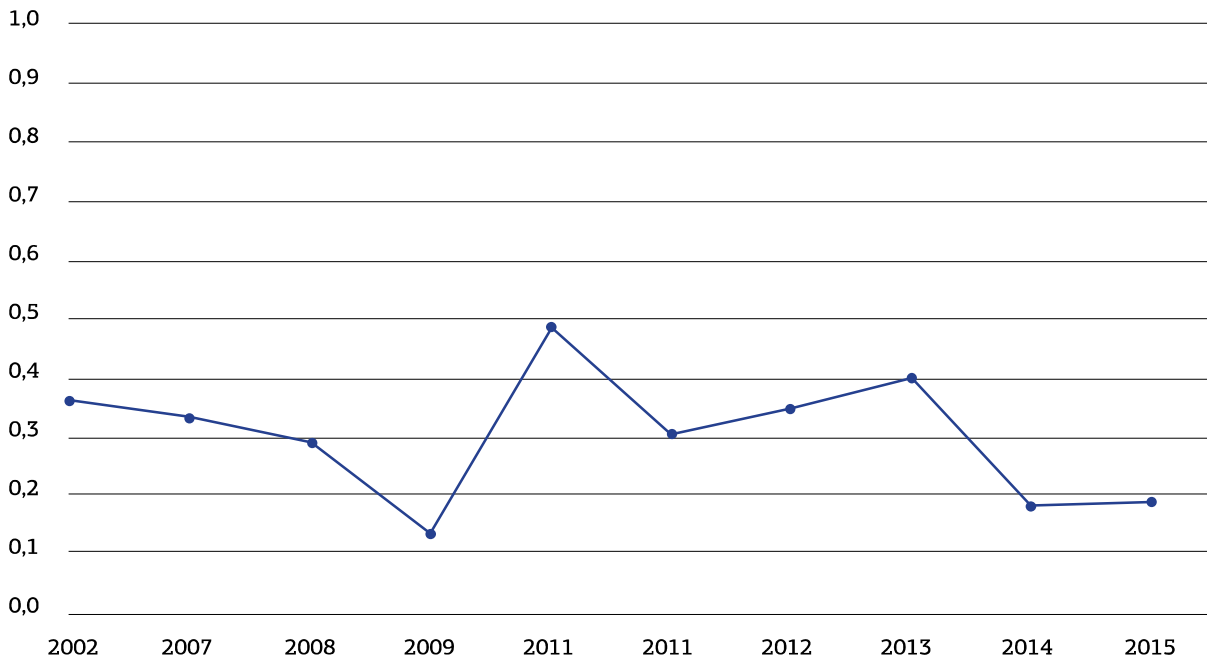
Do you feel ethnic tensions in your town and neighborhood?
(as the ratio of positive and negative answers)





GRAPH 3

Do you think a violent ethnic conflict can occur in the area you live in?
(as the ratio of positive and negative answers)



Levels of general anxiety get lower as the focus shift to the immediate vicinity of the respondents and the actual situation they are in. The sensation that ethnic tensions are growing and the threat of pogroms is looming had been increasing since 2002 to 2013 (peaking at 62% at the dawn of the Second Chechen War, when Russian cities were hit by a series of terrorist attacks), but it plunged since the annexation of Crimea and the beginning of hostilities in Donbass (to 24%-25%). Estimates appear more calm and adequate on the local level, even if the dynamics is similar to what people think about the situation in Russia as a whole. In 2002-2008 20%-24% had considered ethnic conflicts possible. After the 2008 economic crisis this figure plunged substantially to 10%, yet by 2011 it reached 30% (at the end of 2010 nationalist marches were held and ethnic clashes occurred in many cities). After the Ukrainian Maidan and the start of the anti-Ukrainian propaganda things calmed down: only 13%-14% think ethnic clashes are possible, compared to 30% in 2011 and 25% in 2013. In other words, outer conflicts channel inner tensions away, thus lowering expectations of ethnic violence and pogroms.

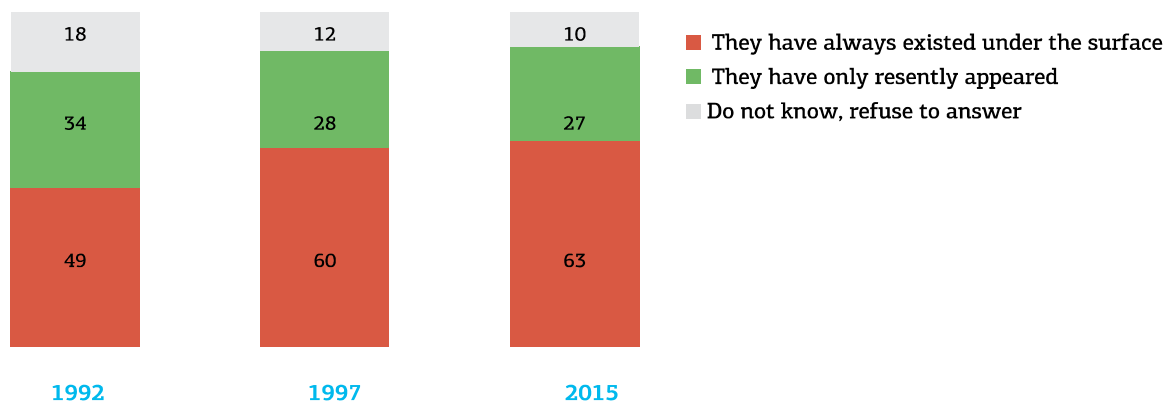
After the annexation of Crimean Peninsula and the beginning of the current Russian-Ukrainian conflict ethnic xenophobia (which, according to this study, is aimed now mainly at Ukrainians, people of the former Soviet republics, Baltic states – see Tables 6a-6j) starts drawing some covert state support or recognition, legitimization, although being officially called «conservatism» (Russian neo-traditionalism). This new paradigm is leaning on the «Russian tradition», and its parts – Orthodox church, etatism, state paternalism – are recognized as legitimate building blocks of mass conscience. The popular demand for privileged treatment



of ethnic Russians is the reverse side of this medal. The existence of ethnic conflicts and clashes is not acknowledged publicly as it would compromise «national unity».

GRAPH 4

Do you think ethnic animosity, tensions and conflicts have always existed under the surface in our country or just recently appeared?



The point is not that ethnic conflicts (attacks on migrant workers, pogroms, killings) become more frequent or, on the contrary, less frequent as monitoring by SOVA center suggests³, but that their very existence gradually becomes acknowledged as a common phenomenon, a «norm» in the life of the society – i.e. the official Soviet dogm of «internationalism» is being rejected. It is worth noting, that the respondents answer with increasing determination – the share of undecided have shrunk during the course of 23 years almost twofold (from 18% to 10%).

High status respondents are more inclined to believe that ethnic conflicts «have always existed». (68%-72% compared to 60% in groups with lower social status). These lower status groups also much more frequently think that such phenomena have only recently appeared (32% compared to 15% in higher status groups). The reason lies probably not only in more developed «social memory» and in higher ability to rationalize social processes attributed to the more sophisticated part of a society, but in apparently changing attitudes towards other ethnic groups. Social tolerance, including ethnic one, constitutes a vital condition for social development and progress. Thus, recognizing that ethnic conflicts have always existed has more to do with incorporation of ethnic-cultural diversity into the society as a welcomed norm, than with an empiric analysis of the situation.

³ Up to a certain moment the number of ethnic conflicts kept rising and then their frequency began a slow decent.



3.1. Anti-Semitism and xenophobia: the common traits and the differences

Anti-Semitism in Russia in the last 20-30 years cannot be viewed out of the context of other types and forms of xenophobia. It is a standalone type of ethnic prejudices and antipathies, but not an isolated phenomenon. Today's anti-Semitism is a part (and not the most articulated one) of a wide spectrum of xenophobic views and sentiments. Different types of xenophobia, sure enough, overlap. The probability of finding anti-Semitism in people who also express much more dominant anti-Caucasian or anti-immigrant views, is extremely high. Anti-Semitism, though, is the most ancient of all surviving forms of xenophobia in Russia and thus quite widespread. It is the most rationalized and elaborated type of ethnic-religious hatred. Based on previous research one can deduce that today's anti-Semitism is being preserved because it performs a certain function in the xenophobic paradigm – that of a way to articulate general xenophobia - and does not indicate genuine anti-Jewish aggression and hatred.

Some of the major social processes and factors that have contributed to this shift are:

1. Secession of Soviet-era anti-Semitic practices, which in Brezhnev's period gained almost semi-official status. Such practices had been a tangible part of social experience and included discrimination in employment and education, oppression of Zionist and religious activism, barriers against Jewish emigration etc.

2. Intensive assimilation of Jews during 1950-1980s and mass emigration that followed have led to a sharp decline in the Jewish population numbers. Jews became less noticeable. Jews have ceased to be a distinct and group with its own culture and way of life. The majority of Russian citizens (61% today, 52% in 1990) do not personally know any Jews (among family, relatives, close acquaintances and colleagues), which is why opinions about them are mostly figments of «social imagination», almost folklore.

3. Assimilated Jews (mostly thanks the vast social and cultural capital amassed by Jewish families) are viewed as a relatively high-positioned social group («social elite» as Y.A. Levada puts it), which is not evidently «marked» as ethnic. Consequently, outspoken antipathy towards Jews is viewed by more socially successful respondents as something vulgar, common and unbecoming.



4. The place of anti-Semitism in the general structure of ethnic prejudices and phobias

As mentioned above, today's anti-Semitism does not manifest itself as an autonomous, standalone type of xenophobia. It is only revealed alongside other forms of frustration, animosity and fear. Mass xenophobia indicates prevalence of a wide set of stereotypes triggered by general ethnic negativism. The current situation's only difference is that the anti-Semitic component in this set has become less evident and active.

As long-term research shows, Jews have lost their position as the most hated group to other groups and nations. It is of some importance, that Jews have long been viewed as more «kindred» to the Russians, than peoples of former Soviet republics. Contrary to the latter, who formed independent states, i.e. became fully detached from the Russian ethos, Jews constitute a well-integrated part of the Russian society, whose ethnic or religious identity appears rather vague and stereotypical.

Anti-Semitism levels began their descent way back in 2007, correlating with the intensification of state-sponsored imperial, anti-Western rhetoric. Xenophobia was diverted towards outer enemies and the «fifth column» at home. As Jews are no longer perceived by xenophobic Russians as a genuine threat, the intensity of anti-Semitism keeps declining. Here is the data showing attitude towards other ethnic groups, according to the 2015 study:

What is your attitude towards member of the following ethnic groups?

TABLE 6a

	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2015
Jews										
Sympathy, interest	7	6	5	7	5	6	6	5	6	9
No special attitude, just like towards other groups	83	81	82	78	84	83	80	84	84	83
Resentment, antipathy	10	13	12	16	11	11	13	11	1	6
Distrust, fear	2	3	3	5	3	3	3	4	4	2
Sum of negative attitudes	12	16	15	21	14	14	16	15	5	8



TABLE 6b

	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2015
Gypsies										
Sympathy, interest	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	3	3
No special attitude, just like towards other groups	55	50	55	46	48	45	47	50	54	51
Resentment, antipathy	28	28	27	32	31	30	32	30	25	30
Distrust, fear	12	20	16	20	19	23	20	19	18	17
Sum of negative attitudes	40	48	43	52	50	53	52	49	43	47

TABLE 6c

	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2015
Chechens										
Sympathy, interest	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	4
No special attitude, just like towards other groups	52	48	46	34	46	46	47	55	57	63
Resentment, antipathy	27	29	31	36	29	26	27	24	22	21
Distrust, fear	20	21	22	30	24	27	25	20	19	12
Sum of negative attitudes	47	50	53	66	53	53	52	44	41	33

TABLE 6d

	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2015
Americans										
Sympathy, interest	16	13	9	7	6	7	7	6	5	3
No special attitude, just like towards other groups	75	75	81	77	79	78	74	77	75	66
Resentment, antipathy	5	7	6	12	11	11	14	11	13	23
Distrust, fear	4	6	3	5	5	5	6	6	7	8
Sum of negative attitudes	9	13	9	17	16	16	20	17	20	31



TABLE 6e

	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2015
Arabs										
Sympathy, interest	—	—	3	2	3	4	4	3	3	4
No special attitude, just like towards other groups	—	—	82	70	75	72	74	79	78	71
Resentment, antipathy	—	—	10	16	15	14	13	10	11	15
Distrust, fear	—	—	5	12	7	10	9	8	7	10
Sum of negative answers	—	—	15	28	22	24	22	18	18	25

TABLE 6f

	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2015
Azerbaijanians										
Sympathy, interest	3	2	2	1	2	3	3	1	4	3
No special attitude, just like towards other groups	69	63	69	60	65	67	65	72	71	73
Resentment, antipathy	22	26	23	29	25	23	25	20	18	18
Distrust, fear	7	9	7	10	8	7	8	6	7	6
Sum of negative attitudes	29	35	30	39	33	30	33	26	25	24

TABLE 6g

	2006	2007	2015
Georgians			
Sympathy, interest	2	4	6
No special attitude, just like towards other groups	69	69	74
Resentment, antipathy	20	19	15
Distrust, fear	9	8	5
Sum of negative answers	29	27	20



TABLE 6h

	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2015
Blacks								
Sympathy, interest	6	5	6	7	4	6	5	5
No special attitude, just like towards other groups	86	81	84	83	81	85	83	77
Resentment, antipathy	6	10	7	7	11	7	8	11
Distrust, fear	3	4	3	3	5	3	4	7
Sum of negative answers	9	14	10	10	16	10	12	18

TABLE 6i

	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2015
Estonians										
Sympathy, interest	6	4	2	4	3	5	5	3	4	5
No special attitude, just like towards other groups	82	83	84	81	83	85	82	87	78	82
Resentment, antipathy	9	9	11	11	11	8	11	8	13	10
Distrust, fear	3	4	3	5	3	2	3	3	5	3
Sum of negative attitudes	12	13	14	16	14	10	14	11	18	13

TABLE 6j

	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2015
Germans								
Sympathy, interest	9	9	9	10	9	10	9	7
No special attitude, just like towards other groups	85	80	83	84	82	84	82	83
Resentment, antipathy	4	8	6	5	7	4	5	7
Distrust, fear	2	4	3	2	2	2	3	3
Sum of negative answers	6	12	9	7	9	6	8	10



Gypsies and Chechens evoke the most antipathetic attitude, probably fueled by social and cultural differences. Americans hold the second place, which is obviously situational: they are the current political foes. Arabs and Azerbaijanians follow. Animosity towards them is cultural again with palpable religious notes. The last factor is manifested even better than the rather dormant racial phobias: apparently, fear of Islamic terrorism is at work here. One must consider also a traditional disdainful view of Azerbaijanians as greedy market merchants.

Politically and socially induced xenophobia (towards Ukrainians, Americans, Georgians etc.), triggered by the current wave of aggressive anti-Western propaganda and by the praise for the Russian «greatness», «special way», «traditional values», affects about a quarter to a third of the population. This particular kind of ethnic animosity, though, is much weaker in terms of its manifestation. Its function is to elevate national self-esteem through accentuation of negative traits in other groups, rather than to call for action against these groups. For example, if Americans are viewed as «imposing their ways», «power-seeking», «arrogant», «two-faced, cunning», «cruel» etc., Russian, on the contrary, allegedly possess such qualities as «friendliness and openness», «hospitality», «forbearance» and «love for peace». The reason for this is not only national egocentrism and ignorance when it comes to other nations and cultures, but also the mechanism of «negative identity», when one's own merits can only be manifested through projecting various shortcomings onto others.

Anti-Semitism is the most ancient form of ethno-national negativism in Russia today, and it became a paradygm for expressing all other ethnic animosities that followed, a scheme for articulating any strand of xenophobia. This is the structure that all other ethnic phobias follow: mythological status of «the other», all the way up to theories of conspiracy of a minority against the «ruling ethos», social distancing and alienation, demonization and demand for privileges for the majority etc.

A number of levels of articulation or of intensity of the ethnic, anti-Semitic aggression can be isolated:

1. The hard core of anti-Semites and xenophobes (as mentioned above, two thirds of these groups overlap) constitute 8% to 16%. This is a provisional value, defined by the «common zone» of intercrossing anti-Semitic answers to a number of diagnostic questions and showing outright hatred towards Jews).
2. This core is bordered by the less defined mass that demonstrates not the whole set of anti-Semitic views and stereotypes, but some, and in a milder, less entrenched form – 18% to 35%. This layer is defined by such answers as «there are unpleasant ethnic groups» (23%-29%), «some ethnic groups are better than others» (19%), «put higher than others» (28%), «non-Russian cannot be a patriot of Russia» (31%).
3. Even poorer defined «outer cloud» of isolated negative reactions not aimed specifically against Jews, but more an instrument of self-defense, which helps ethnic majority to preserve its mythological identity. These needs are manifested mostly by the demand for certain privileges for Russians (shared by 41%, 59% in Moscow), and such views as «a Jew should not be the President» (67%). This diffused outer layer constitutes 40% to 65%. Here anti-Semitic views are expressed in their most vague and feeble form.



The xenophobic core, on the other hand, is much more aggressive and consistent in its ethnic antipathies and nationalism, as these respondents probably can only identify themselves via hating others. Those who believe that ethnic origin should be considered when appointing high level government officials constitute 55% of the respondents. This figure drops slightly when asked about army and police commanders (50%). 30% think such consideration should be made when hiring school and university teachers and media workers (29%). 16% think ethnic identity of university enrollees should be taken into account. We see that the idea of ethnic selection in areas thought to be linked to power or control is deeply rooted in Russian mass conscience.

Let us illustrate this point with more detailed analysis of the answers to the open question «Are there ethnic groups that you feel antipathetic, resentful about?» As mentioned above, the share of positive answers largely remains the same, around one third. Its decline in the recent poll is obviously due to the newly introduced option «Do not know, refuse to answer». One of the highest shares of positive answers was registered in Moscow and in middle-sized cities – 37%. Higher readiness to express their ethnic antipathies is registered among two opposite groups: socially challenged, disadvantaged, on one hand, and the most well adapted and successful, on the other (38% and 35% in these groups, respectively, report they feel antipathy towards other ethnic groups). The third major factor that facilitates animosity towards other ethnic groups is such negative social «moods» as irritation, aggression, fear, anxiety, resentment etc.

TABLE 7

Ethnic groups Russians feel antipathetic towards
(first 10 mentioned, as a % among those who do feel ethnic antipathy)

Gypsies	22
Azerbaijanians	16
Tajiks	15
Americans	13
Ukrainians	12
Uzbeks	12
Chechens	11
Armenians	11
Jews	10
Caucasians	8



The list of ethnic groups Russians feel most antipathetic about allows us to identify major categories or types of xenophobia.

1. Tribalistic xenophobia mainly aimed at the groups who are «culturally» alien: Gypsies, Azerbaijanians, Uzbeks, Chechens, Armenians, Caucasians as a whole (also less frequently mentioned Tatars, Kyrgyzs, Asians as a whole, Arabs).
2. Xenophobia aimed at foreign countries, nations. After the Maidan this group is dominated by Ukrainians who demonstrated their strong will to be accepted into the European family of nations, people of Baltic republics, Georgians, Moldovans, Poles. Americans also can belong in this group, as they are perceived now as Russia's arch-enemy, who supports «renegade» states of Eastern Europe and former Soviet republics.
3. Pure anti-Semitism, direct mentions of Jews (10% of those who replied positively or 3% of the respondents). It is not a new type of xenophobia, a recently appeared form of ethnic animosity, but rather remnants of the routine anti-Semitism of the past, an amalgam of different negative feelings and attitudes towards Jews. This amalgam includes several types of xenophobia, different in their origin, time of appearance and function.
 - a) traditional, tribalistic xenophobia typical of the agrarian societies of Eastern Europe and reinforced by the Christian anti-Semitism
 - b) Russian conservative nationalism, which often appears during early stages of modernization, when Jews are perceived as agents of such modernization, of universalist ideas and concepts (human rights, class equality, education, industrialization, emancipation etc.)
 - c) Anti-revolutionary sentiments, as Jews are associated by many with Bolsheviks of the early Soviet era
 - d) state-sponsored anti-Semitism of Stalin's era, when «cosmopolites» were being targeted
 - e) post-Soviet anti-Semitic ideology which blames Jews with perestroika reforms and the emergence of the new oligarchy in the 1990s

4.1. Types of anti-Semitism

In our previous research we have separated three major forms of anti-Semitism: tribalistic or traditional, anti-modernization and ideological anti-Semitism.

The first one is a reaction of ethnically marked social groups who defend their borders and resources from real or imaginable danger emanating from «others», where «others» are actually everyone outside the anti-Semite's own ethnic group. These are routine and least rationalized forms of maintaining group identity, typical of socially disadvantaged, deprived groups. These forms are exhibited not only by Russians, but even more frequently by ethnic minorities.

Second type of anti-Semitism self-replicates in an environment ridden with strong tension resulting from major social shifts, regardless of whether people inside the group



realize why these are happening or not. These processes are accompanied by feelings of general insecurity, instability, envy and resentment towards imaginable «Jews» who are viewed as agents of modernization. Jews are perceived as representatives of Western civilization, proponents of universalist, cosmopolitan ideas and values, contrary to the majority of the country's population. Viewed as agents of the West, Jews also become associated with the idealistic notions of it (democracy, abundance, equality before the law, effective state mechanisms), which raises their status even more. Obviously, some «Jewish traits» contribute to this kind of anti-Semitic sentiment as well: love of literature, respect for education and intellectual activities, professional overachieving etc. No wonder such anti-Semitic views are widespread in Russian society, which experiences serious problems with social development and is entering a period of political and economic stagnation. It is not the first time that Jews in Russia find themselves on the receiving end of frustration and of the feeling of national inferiority, when the country approaches another dead end.

The third type of anti-Semitism, the ideological one, is more prevalent in the social and governing elites. These groups are much less plagued by tribalist prejudices and racial barriers (unwillingness to marry Jews, to live or work alongside Jews), but more prone to such negative myths as Jews «strive for world dominance», «are allied with anti-Russian powers abroad» or «disrespect Russian culture, tradition and spirit».

4.2. Social distancing and barriers with regard to Jews

Opinions regarding «Ethnicity» entry in Russian IDs have barely changed during the last 25 years.

TABLE 8

Do you think «Ethnicity» entry should be kept in Russian IDs or omitted?

	1990	1997	2015
Should be kept (in 1990: "Must be kept")	53	50	46
Should be omitted	30	32	38
Do not know, refuse to answer	18	18	16

Almost all the groups effectively agree on this question, except for Muslims (i.e. such ethnic groups as Tatars, Bashkirs, Caucasians etc.): they view this entry unfavorably twice as often as others (72%). Orthodox Christians, on the contrary, appear to support «Ethnicity» entry slightly above average. Muslims are, in general, more skeptical about limiting access to positions of power in the society and giving Russians preferential treatment.



Obviously, we are witnessing a clash between the majority's demand for preferential treatment and the minorities' fear of restoration of ethnic-based social hierarchy and covert state-sponsored discrimination. This demand is a result of an illusion that such norms would not only promote interests of the ethnic majority, but would also benefit the country as a whole. What is interesting, though, is that this clearly discriminative demand does not go as far as «racial laws»: the majority does not want the state to somehow interfere with personal and family relations, e.g. marriages.

TABLE 9

Do you think ethnic origin should be considered when...

	1997	2011	2015	1997/2015
Appointing high-rank state officials?				
yes	53	53	55	=
no	40	40	39	=
no answer	7	7	6	
Appointing high-rank armed forces, police, intelligence commanders?				
yes	43	48	50	+7
no	50	46	45	-5
no answer	7	6	5	
Hiring school and college teachers?				
yes	19	22	30	+11
no	75	74	65	-10
no answer	6	4	5	
Hiring mass media workers (papers, TV, radio)?				
yes	21	-	29	+8
no	72	-	65	-7
no answer	8		6	
Admitting students to colleges?				
yes	9	11	16	+7
no	86	86	80	-6
no answer	5	4	4	



The demand for preferential treatment of Russians when it comes to positions of power is expressed more tangibly among the low-income, less educated, disadvantaged population.

Most respondents favor ethnic screening of high-ranking state officials, especially the President.

When asked specifically about Jews in positions of power, this ethnic barrier is less articulated, although it still gets stronger as much fewer people stay undecided.

TABLE 10

Is there a need to monitor and restrict the number of Jews in positions of power?

	1992	1997	2015	1990/2015
There is a need to monitor and restrict	29	34	39	+10
There is no such need	40	43	45	+5
Do not know, refuse to answer	32	23	15	-17
There is a need / there is no need	0.7	0.8	0.9	

TABLE 11

How would you react if a Jew was elected President of Russia?

	1990	1992	1997	2015	1990/2015
I would have nothing against it	22	17	21	21	=
I would find it undesirable	53	57	64	67	+14
Do not know, refuse to answer	25	26	15	12	-13
+/-	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	

A certain growth of opposition, mainly to a member of a minority becoming President, is due to the shrinking share of undecided, those who in the early 90s had no opinion on the subject. Same about Jews: the higher the position of power in question, the more respondents favor ethnic screening.

There is only slight disagreement on this matter among various social groups, which tells us that routine stereotypes and entrenched anti-Semitic views are at work here. It means, in turn, that such opinions are not influenced by the current events, they effectively propagate themselves in any circumstances, being slightly more prevalent in the groups with more socio-economic tensions.



TABLE 12
How would you react...

	1990	1992	1997	2015	1990/2015
...if a Jew became your direct superior at work?					
I would have nothing against it	57	54	62	58	=
I would consider it undesirable	22	28	28	35	+13
Do not know, refuse to answer	21	18	10	7	-14
...if a Jew became your business partner?					
I would have nothing against it	This question was not asked	58	64	63	+5
I would consider it undesirable		19	24	27	+8
Do not know, refuse to answer		24	13	10	+13
...if a Jewish family settled near you?					
I would have nothing against it	76	70	88	83	+7
I would consider it undesirable	11	17	8	13	+2
Do not know, refuse to answer	13	13	4	4	-9
...if your female relative (sister, daughter, granddaughter etc.) married a Jew?					
I would have nothing against it	48	44	55	56	+8
I would consider it undesirable	28	29	30	32	+4
Do not know, refuse to answer	24	27	16	12	-12
ваш брат, сын, внук, другой близкий родственник женился на еврейке?					
...if your male relative (brother, son, grandson etc.) married a Jew?	50	44	55	56	+6
I would have nothing against it	50	44	55	56	+6
I would consider it undesirable	27	29	29	33	+6
Do not know, refuse to answer	24	27	16	12	-12



When moving to the «horizontal» level, we see that open negativism towards Jews is expressed mildly, compared to other ethnic groups. It probably reflects norms established in the post-Soviet period and tabooing open demonstration of anti-Semitic aggression. These norms result, first and foremost, from the collective memory of the Holocaust in European culture.

4.3. Social distance: Bogardus scale

Analysis of positive views of other ethnic groups, including Jews, can help us get fuller picture. Although today negative views are expressed relatively mildly, there is also an evident lack of «attraction», of positive opinions about other ethnic groups.

It probably points at some latent hostility, a «barrier» that obstructs inter-ethnic relations.

This barrier manifests itself in behaviors of social distancing. Bogardus scale used in this study is a widely accepted tool for measuring social distance. This scale⁴ allows us to determine the respondent's openness for various forms of contact with other ethnic groups and the intensity of such contact.

The scale asks people about the extent to which they are ready to accept members of each group. It is cumulative and has seven categories. «As close relatives by marriage» – 1 point; «As my close personal friends» – 2 points; «As neighbors on the same street» – 3 points; «As co-workers in the same occupation» – 4 points; «As citizens of my country» – 5 points; «As non-citizen visitors in my country» – 6 points; «Would exclude them from entry into my country» – 7 points.

From the answers several social indices are constructed, including Social Distance Index (SDI) – the average score with regard to every ethnic group. The received figures allow meaningful interpretation of ethnic tolerance levels inside the following continuum: «tolerance-detachment-isolation-xenophobia». Figures less than 4 attest to a certain level of tolerance, acceptability of close family relations and friendship with members of other ethnic groups. Detachment lies within the region of 4 to 5 points. Such score is interpreted as lack of tolerance, when members of other ethnic groups are neither totally accepted nor totally rejected. Score of 5 to 6 points at isolation and latent xenophobia. Finally, xenophobia (SDI 6 and more): members of other ethnic groups are considered absolutely alien.

⁴ The scale was adapted to Russian by Ukrainian sociologist N.V. Panina. See Panina N.V., Golovakha E.I. «National Tolerance and Identity in Ukraine», Sociological Journal 2006. #3/4



TABLE 13
Bogardus social distance index

National (ethnic) distance between Russians and...	2010	2015
	Ср. знач.	Ср. знач.
Americans	5,2	5,3
Georgians	5,6	4,9
<i>Jews</i>	5,1	4,5
Chinese	5,8	5,1
Blacks (Africans)	5,7	5,5
Germans	5,1	4,7
Tajiks	5,8	5,4
Ukrainians	4,8	4,8
Gypsies	5,9	5,7
Chechens	5,9	5,3

Compared to 2010, SDI is lower, yet it still remains high (>4), which attests to a certain lack of ethnic openness. Negativism towards Jews is less evident, compared to other ethnic groups. Groups viewed most negatively are Gypsies, Tajiks, Chechens and blacks. Gypsies have always been pariahs, while Chechens became such after the First Chechen war. Attitude towards Chechens have improved since 2010, probably due to the end of the conflict in Chechnya and to the continuous stability throughout North Caucasus. Yet, they are still viewed by many Russians as unwanted guests. Distancing from Americans is stronger than in 2010. This change happened due to political circumstances – namely, the Ukrainian events and the sanctions imposed on Russia. Interesting, though, that social distance from Chinese and Georgian is getting shorter. This is yet another direct result of political developments. Chinese are viewed now as valuable economic partners, substituting for the Europeans. Animosity towards Georgians keeps declining since the cessation of 2008 hostilities.



TABLE 14
Bogardus social distance index
(comparison by sex)

National (ethnic) distance between Russians and...	Male	Female
Americans	5,4	5,2
Georgians	5	4,9
Jews	4,6	4,4
Chinese	5,1	5,2
Blacks (Africans)	5,5	5,5
Germans	4,7	4,7
Tajiks	5,5	5,4
Ukrainians	4,8	4,8
Gypsies	5,7	5,7
Chechens	5,3	5,3

Levels of isolationism and anti-Semitism are most clearly linked to education. The more educated respondents are, the stronger is their readiness to interact with members of other social groups.

TABLE 15
Bogardus social distance index
(comparison by education level)

	Less than high school	High school, professional high school	Technical college, unfinished university	University
Americans	5,6	5,5	5,3	4,9
Georgians	5,3	5,1	4,9	4,7
Jews	5,0	4,7	4,5	4,2
Chinese	5,3	5,3	5,2	4,9



Blacks (Africans)	5,5	5,6	5,5	5,3
Germans	5,1	5,0	4,7	4,4
Tajiks	5,3	5,5	5,4	5,3
Ukrainians	4,9	4,9	4,8	4,7
Gypsies	5,7	5,6	5,8	5,8
Chechens	5,3	5,4	5,3	5,1

Young people, 18-24, are most open for social interaction. Older respondents are more conservative and would only tolerate Jews in Russia as citizens or tourists. Yet, the distance from Jews is the shortest compared with other ethnic groups.

TABLE 16
Bogardus social distance index
(comparison by age)

	Age 18-24	Age 25-39	Age 40-54	Age 55+
Americans	4,3	5,4	5,2	5,6
Georgians	4,3	5,1	4,9	5,1
Jews	4,3	4,7	4,5	4,6
Chinese	4,7	5,2	5,1	5,4
Blacks (Africans)	4,9	5,4	5,5	5,7
Germans	4,2	4,8	4,7	4,8
Tajiks	5,0	5,5	5,4	5,5
Ukrainians	4,6	4,8	4,8	4,9
Gypsies	5,6	5,7	5,8	5,8
Chechens	4,8	5,4	5,4	5,3

Negativism towards Jews intensifies when it comes to the less rationalized and articulated traditional taboos (close personal relations with «strangers») or symbols and hierarchies of the society (institutions, power, education). Mostly tolerant attitude towards Jews as neighbors, coworkers, business partners gives way to much more hostile, when asked about marriage or symbolic positions of power.



Full third of the respondents would not be happy to have a Jew as a matrimonial partner or a direct superior.

Still, Jews enjoy a fairly tolerant attitude, which has not changed much since early 90s despite all the social and political shifts.

TABLE 17

	1990	1992	1997	2015
How would you feel if a Jewish family were you neighbors?				
I would have nothing against it	76	70	88	83
I would not like it	11	17	8	13
Do not know, refuse to answer	12	13	4	4
How would you feel if your immediate superior were a Jew?				
I would have nothing against it	57	54	62	58
I would not like it	22	28	28	35
Do not know, refuse to answer	21	18	10	7
How would you feel if a Jew married your sister, daughter, granddaughter, another close relative?				
I would have nothing against it	48	44	55	56
I would not like it	28	29	30	32
Do not know, refuse to answer	24	27	16	12
How would you feel if a Jew were your business partner?				
I would have nothing against it	–*	58	64	63
I would not like it	–*	19	24	27
Do not know, refuse to answer	–*	24	13	10
How would you feel if your brother, son, grandson, another close relative married a Jew?				
I would have nothing against it	50	44	55	56
I would not like it	27	29	29	33
Do not know, refuse to answer	24	27	16	12

* The question was not asked



Opposition grows even stronger, when respondents are asked about granting ethnic minorities access to positions of power in government, police, secret services, mass media, education etc. 39% agree that «there is a need to monitor and restrict the number of Jews in positions of power». Still, even more disagree with it – 46%, which suggests that anti-discriminative consensus may be starting to form. 15% chose not to give a direct answer.

Our study suggests that Russians still maintain a fairly high level of psychological isolationism in respect to all the ethnic groups they were asked about. In this context anti-Semitic views are rather peripheral, Jews are far from the center of negative attention. Today's anti-Semitism may be even called marginal, as it is mostly expressed by the least socially adapted people (be it due to age, lack of education and qualification, limited resources or inability to upgrade their socio-economic status). Their anti-Semitism is the direct descendant of the anti-Semitism of Soviet era. As any ethnic-based animosity and isolationism, anti-Semitism helps to overcome one's social insecurity and frustration and to compensate for tensions that in Russia are most strongly felt on the periphery.

Although quantitative differences between various social groups are not very significant, the character of these differences keeps stable throughout all the diagnostic questions. Maximum deviation is about 7%-10%. We can deduce that anti-Semitic views are barely linked to the interests of respective social groups, they are rather blot out, routine, latent, non-actualized.

4.4. Prevalence of different stereotypes about Jews

In general, anti-Semitic stereotypes have faded significantly, but still exist in the collective mind. Moreover, in accordance with the logic of stereotypical thinking certain stereotypes can sometimes change from negative to positive, while retaining their function in the constructed reality. For instance, a stereotype «there are many Jews in the government», characteristic of perestroika and of the early post-Soviet times, persists, but it is not as clear-cut negative as it used to be. 32% believe it to be true and view it negatively, while 18% believe it to be true and view it favorably. 19% think this statement is false. 18% answered «I do not know whether it is true or false and it does not matter to me» and 13% refused to answer.



TABLE 18
Prevalence of different stereotypes with regard to Jews
(negative stereotypes are in italic type)

Do you agree that...	Agree	Disagree	Do not know, refuse to answer
Jews are good employees?	66	14	20
Jews are good family people, caring for their children?	78	6	16
<i>Jews value money, personal gain above interpersonal relationships?</i>	57	22	21
<i>Jews refrain from physical labor?</i>	62	19	19
Jews are well-bred and sophisticated?	75	11	14
there are many talented people among Jews?	84	6	10
there is patronage and mutual aid among Jews?	78	8	14
Jews are inherently kind, peace-loving people?	63	17	20
Jews are honest and decent people?	54	22	24
<i>Jews are richer than others?</i>	67	18	15
<i>Jews' external appearance is unpleasant?</i>	18	62	19
<i>Jews should be held accountable for the crucifixion of Christ?</i>	17	56	27
<i>Jews tend to vastly overstate their grievances, suffering and losses?</i>	40	31	29
Jews and Christians share sacred places and ideas and can understand each other well?	71	13	16
Christians and Jews can forget their ancient animosity and live together in peace?	72	12	16
<i>Christian and Jews will forever remain irreconcilable foes?</i>	12	67	21
<i>Jews are disproportionately involved in the Russian culture?</i>	32	48	20
Jews had had their fair share of fighting during World War II?	70	14	16
<i>Jews carry the major share of blame for the suffering during the Revolution and for the mass repressions of the Soviet time?</i>	14	66	20
<i>Jews are the most accountable for Russia's current hardships?</i>	11	73	16
<i>Jews always pursue their own interest and not the interest of the country they live in?</i>	49	32	19
<i>Jews always attempt to distance themselves from other people, fear and despise them?</i>	31	48	21
<i>Russia would be better off without Jews?</i>	14	64	22



Only four of the above statements are held to be true by the majority of respondents. Below are values for the groups who more frequently or, on the contrary, more rarely than others believe or disbelieve negative stereotypes about Jews.

TABLE 19

Statement	Average values	Respondents' characteristics	
		Values above average	Values below average
Jews value money, personal gain above interpersonal relationships	57	Moscow (62%), high school and less (61%), blue collar (65%)	College and above (49%), ages 18-39 (56%-54%) Upper-middle class (45%), Muslims (44%)
Jews refrain from physical labor	62	Age 55 and above (67%), Moscow (75%), middle-sized cities (77%) Lowest classes (67%)	Rural population (55%) Ages 18-24 (41%) Muslims (41%)
Jews are richer than others	67	age 55 and above (70%), Moscow (73%) middle and lower-middle class (73%-72%), blue collar (70%), retired (71%)	ages 18-24 (62%) upper-middle class (60%) Muslims (57%)
Jews tend to vastly overstate their grievances, suffering and losses	40	ages 55 and above (46%) vocational school or college (46%) Moscow (46%) rural population (44%)	ages 18-24 (35%) unemployed (36%), rural population (33%)
Jews are disproportionately involved in the Russian culture	32	ages 55 and above (39%) unfinished high school (35%) Moscow (52%), lower class (39%), retired (41%)	ages 18-24 (23%), unemployed (24%), Muslims (21%)
Jews carry the major share of blame for the suffering during the Revolution and for the mass repressions of the Soviet time	14	Moscow (26%) upper-middle class (24%), lower class (19%), unemployed (19%)	rural population (11%), ages 25-39 (12%) blue collar (12%) middle class (12%) Muslims (12%)

As one can see from the data, among those who are most prone to negative stereotypes are, on one hand, «social periphery» (elderly, poorly educated, low-income), and, on the other hand, Muscovites who are on average more educated, well-off and socially adapted than other Russians.

It is very important to understand that anti-Semitic stereotypes have become less personal and are largely viewed as self-evident truth and the reality of life. The stereotypical opinion that «most Russians dislike Jews» (needed to indulge own anti-Semitic views) is not shared by many respondents. Most of them (69%) think that only few or very few Russians are hostile towards Jews. Another 24% answered «less than a half». Those who believe that «almost all Russian are hostile towards Jews» are vastly outnumbered (2%). Those who believe



«more than a half» in Russia dislike Jews, also constitute only 13%. Young and successful are more inclined to believe Russians are not hostile towards Jews, while the opposite belief is mostly held by less adapted and content respondents. It can be most clearly seen in Moscow, where social inequality soars, and, consequently, social envy and feelings of deprivation are more developed.

TABLE 20

**How many people in Russia are hostile towards Jews:
almost all of them, more than a half, less than a half or only a few?***

	«almost all of them» + «less than a half»
Average	16
Age	
18–24	26
25–39	16
40–54	11
55 and above	15
Education	
Higher	15
Vocational school or college	14
High school	19
Less than high school	13
Type of settlement	
Moscow	23
Big cities	13
Middle-sized cities	18
Small towns	14
Rural	17



«almost all of them» + «less than a half»	
Occupation	
Management	16
White collar	12
Blue collar	12
Retired	14
Unemployed	25
Religious affiliation	
Russian Orthodox Church	13
Muslims	26
Non-believers	19

* Answers «less than a half», «very few» and «do not know, refuse to answer» are omitted, as they mean that anti-Semitic views are not justified by the belief that «this is what majority thinks».

The results show faint traces of ideological tricks and practices of semi-official anti-Semitism of the Soviet era, that had been justified through the scarecrow of «Zionism», the latter being presented by the Soviet propaganda as a threat to freedom, world conspiracy etc. As of now, most respondents have lost any memory of those negative connotations of the word «Zionism».

TABLE 21

Have you heard about the «Global Zionist conspiracy»?

	1990	1992	1997	2015
Yes, I have	26	25	29	34
No, I have not	74	75	71	66

TABLE 22

Do you believe such a conspiracy does exist?

	1990	1992	1997	2015
Yes, it does	7	9	13	16
No, it does not	21	26	39	40
Do not know, refuse to answer	73	65	49	44



TABLE 22
What is Zionism?

	1990	1992	1997	2015
Policy aimed at establishing global Jewish domination	21	17	22	20
Movement to bring Jews back to their historical homeland and to reinforce the Jewish state	8	7	10	19
Ideology used to justify Israel's aggression in the Middle East	8	5	9	9
The Jewish religion	3	5	9	7
Movement to revive Jewish culture and tradition	5	7	8	9
No answer	57	60	42	36

The perestroika generation (40-55) was the first to forget about those propaganda clichés, as after the disintegration of the Soviet Union this anti-Zionist ideology had quickly marginalized. Provincials, blue collars and white collars had been indifferent to ideological campaigns of the past. Today these are the groups that tend to withhold answer (38%-47%). Among those who do give answer (not necessarily adequate), positive views of «Jewish matters» are prevalent: even if they do not know the right answer to the diagnostic questions (about Zionism in our case), they tend not to give negative ones (Tables 23, 24) A slight prevalence of negative views is evident only among the elderly, who probably retain some memory of the Soviet anti-Zionist propaganda and among active Internet users – probably, because this is where nationalistic aggression rages today. In any case, only a small minority (15%-22%) exhibits understanding of what Zionism is.

It shows us that Soviet propaganda has lost its grip on the population and seized to influence the collective mindset almost completely.

TABLE 24
Ratio of positive (including wrong) and negative definitions of Zionism in different social-demographic groups

Average	1.2
Age	
18-24	1.06
25-39	1.9
40-54	1.25
55	0.9



Education	
Higher	1.0
Vocational school or college	1.6
High school	1.48
Less than high school	1.0
Type of settlement	
Moscow	1.0
Big cities	1.1
Middle-sized cities	1.1
Small towns	1.2
Rural	1.1
Social and professional status	
Managers	1.2
White collar	1.5
Blue collar	2.1
Retired	0.9
Unemployed	1.2
Attitude to religion	
Russian Orthodox Church	1.46
Muslims	1.0
Non-believers	0.8

It is important to note, that the study suggest several images of Jews «inhabiting» the collective mind.

First one is the that of the «Jews in general», shared by the respondents who do not interact with Jews on a regular basis. This image is generic and faded. It is a routine set of stereotypes about Jews, sometimes anti-Semitic clichés (Jews value money, help each other, isolate themselves from the outer world, which is why they are strange, hard to understand, suspicious, they dream about global domination, despise Russian Orthodox church etc.). These myths are shared mostly on the group level, orally, and are sometimes supported by reading anti-Semitic literature.



Another variety of the «generic Jew image» is based upon information from more formal channels of communication – mass media, schools, literature.

It is a collective knowledge about the Holocaust and Israel and also about the oppression Jews had suffered in the past. It is important, that such views are not based on personal experience.

The second type of opinions about Jews is derived from daily functional interaction of regular people at work, in the neighborhood, in educational institutes etc. Here the Jewishness or specific «Jewish traits» are rarely accentuated – only in following situations: during conflicts, which trigger the whole arsenal of negativism and in «imitation situations», when successes and achievements of particular people are perceived as having something to do with their ethnic origin.

The third type of actualization of the image of «Jews» – situations where appealing to historical, mythological or ideological constructions of «Jews» and «Jewry» is used to to guard own social interests or where they are used as a proxy in more general conflicts – i.e., when defending the Russian Orthodox church (the «blood libel») or when attacking the oligarchy (which, allegedly, has an abnormal share of Jews).

Some other aspects in the mass perception of Jews can be described as well, yet what is important is that all of them are not shaped by group relations with Jews. This is the reason why levels of actual animosity towards Jews are fairly low, yet many of negative stereotypes of old still survive in the collective mind.



5. Sources of information about Jews and the level of acquaintance with their history, culture and tradition

Knowledge of Jews and of their culture is usually transmitted by the mass media, Internet, literature, movies etc. Still, a sizable share gets their knowledge of Jews from personal acquaintances. Yet, even those who said they have Jews in their «inner circle» (there are about 27% of them), draw their knowledge of Jews mostly from the formal channels. Formal channels play major role for those who personally interact with Jews, not on the closest level as relatives, but mainly as friends and colleagues. 25).

TABLE 25

What is the major source of your information about Jews?

	Total	Contacts with Jews		
		close contacts	distant contacts	no contacts
Mass media (papers, TV, theater and movies)	67	55	60	72
Literature (fiction, non-fiction, professional)	33	36	41	30
Internet	15	14	16	15
Parents, other relatives	26	35	26	25
Friends	25	39	28	21
Classmates, army mates, coworkers	16	25	19	14

How do channels through which information is received influence anti-Semitic views and social distance? Analysis shows this factor's influence is non-existent: opinions do not differ depending on what channel respondents use to get information about Jews, staying close to the average levels. It shows that today there are no specific information channels that trigger and actualize anti-Semitism, probably because Jews are not viewed as a hot-button problem.



There is only one substantial difference: Internet users are slightly better informed about Jewish history, tradition and religion, yet they do not demonstrate more positive or negative views than other groups.

5.1. Awareness

In 25 years since the first study the level of familiarity with various aspects of Jewish life and culture has grown dramatically. Fewer people refuse to answer, there is a greater readiness to discuss various Jews-related questions, their life and the history of discrimination against them.

Almost the entire adult population of Russia is now aware of the Jewish genocide during World War II (90%, while in 1997 – 92% and in 1990 – 87%). Still, there is only a vague knowledge of the reasons that led to the Holocaust and of its extent. Muslims demonstrate the lowest level of awareness to the Holocaust (18% of them never heard of it), as well as ages 18-24 and the less educated respondents (14% and 13% respectively know nothing about the Holocaust, while the average level of such ignorance is 7%).

The vast majority (70%) thinks it is important to study Holocaust at schools, 17% disagree. Least willing to teach school students about the Holocaust are Muslims (35%), poorly educated (25%), Muscovites (25%) and the most well-off (23%).

Still, Russians show little interest in Jewish history and culture, although the level of awareness has slightly risen since 1997.

There are some shifts in the opinions on whether and when Jews have suffered oppression. Firstly, a share of Russians who deny such oppression ever took place has almost doubled. Secondly, a share of those unable to answer has declined from two fifths in 1990 to a quarter in 2015. Among Muscovites there were only about 10% of such answers. More distant periods (Tzarist Russia, Revolution, Civil War) start to gain mentions, while Stalin's and Brezhnev's eras are mentioned less. The most mentioned epoch is Stalin's, followed by Tzarist times and the Revolution, while late Soviet era, riddled with state-sponsored anti-Semitism, is mentioned only by a small minority of respondents.

TABLE 26

Was there a certain era in our history when Jews had suffered most severe oppression? If there is such an era, which one exactly?

	1990	1997	2015	2015 Moscow
It never happened	9	9	15	9
Before the Revolution	12	15	17	32
During the Revolution and the Civil War	9	10	16	29
In Stalin's times	37	45	42	49



	1990	1997	2015	2015 Moscow
In Khrushchov's times	3	3	7	13
In Brezhnev's times	7	7	3	7
Nowadays	3	1	1	1
Do not know, refuse to answer	40	30	25	11

Muscovites mention Tzarist era and the Revolution more often than other groups, demonstrating a relatively high level of acquaintance with the Jewish history in Russia. Yet, even among them a mere one tenth mentions Soviet era.

A substantial share (46%) denies that «in the past Jews in Russia had lived in the atmosphere of hostility and abuse»: only 33% agree with this statement, while whole 21% (!) found it hard to answer. Most Russians (78%) deny that today Jews still suffer hostility and abuse (only 7% agree with it).

We see the same dynamic when it comes to the knowledge of certain historical facts. More people answer correctly now when asked what Pale of Settlement is, especially Muscovites. Much fewer Moscow inhabitants than the average find this question hard to answer.

TABLE 27

Do you know what «Pale of Settlement» is?

	1997	2015	2015 Moscow
The area under control of Central-Asian nomadic tribes	5	7	5
Borders of the Russian state in 17th and 18th centuries	3	3	4
Areas populated by the Mongols	3	4	7
Certain regions where Jews were allowed to settle	13	20	35
Other	8	4	2
No answer	68	61	39

Only 6% could give the right answer to the question, when Israel was established. 13% think the State of Israel was established BC, another 7% mentioned the first half of 20th century, while 5% – the second half. 70% could not pick an answer at all.

Only about a quarter could name Jewish holy books. While only 27% mentioned Torah as the main Jewish holy book, this parameter has grown fore than five-fold since 1997 (5%). Talmud was called the main Jewish holy book by 22% (same as in 1997). Compare this with



the much greater awareness to the Muslims' main religious book: in 2015 89% of Russians gave the correct answer «Koran» (79% in 1997).

The acquaintance with the Jewish kitchen has grown too, yet in 2015 the vast majority still could not mention a single Jewish dish (in 1997 84% refused to answer). The rest, just as 18 years ago, mentioned the regular triad of matzo, forshmack and gefilte fish. Muscovites proved to be more informed yet again (please note that there was an open question, which usually contributes to the large number of refuses to answer).

TABLE 28

Do you know any Jewish national dishes? (open question)

	Russia	Moscow
Matzo	10	22
Forshmack	9	20
Gefilte fish	4	7
Hummus	1	7
Hala	1	2
Tzimes	1	2
Kosher food	<1	1
Kugel	<1	1
Paskha	<1	1
Sweets	<1	1
Shakshuka	<1	1
Other	2	1
Do not know, refuse to answer	75	55



5.2. Interaction with Jews

Since 1990 the share of Russians who have Jews as their friends and relatives has not changed much, although probably many of those Jews have emigrated (the study could not reaffirm that). Yet, the last massive wave of Jewish emigration is felt when the respondents are asked about more immediate interactions: as colleagues, coworkers, classmates etc. Less Russians also mention Jews as their distant acquaintances – probably for the same reason.

TABLE 29
Are there any Jews among your...

	1990	1992	1997	2015
Close relatives (parents, grandparents)?	2	2	3	2
Other relatives	5	4	7	5
Close friends	9	9	12	7
Colleagues, coworkers, classmates	21	18	20	12
Neighbors	11	6	13	8
Distant acquaintances	25	26	30	19
Nobody	52	55	50	61

TABLE 30
Are there Jews among your relatives and acquaintances?

	Average	Moscow	Large city	Middle-sized city	Small town	Rural
Close relatives (parents, grandparents)	2	3	1	3	2	1
Other relatives	5	8	5	15	4	3
Close friends	7	25	7	15	4	3
Colleagues, coworkers, classmates	12	32	15	21	9	6
Neighbors	8	29	5	15	6	4
Distant acquaintances	19	31	22	25	20	12
Nobody	61	30	59	40	64	75



As we can see, the largest share of Russians who have Jewish relatives live in middle-sized cities, not in Moscow (18% compared to 7% on average). Yet, Muscovites have more Jewish close friends (some of them probably emigrants), as well as colleagues, co-workers and classmates. On the other hand, Moscow and middle-sized cities also show the largest share of those who do not have any Jewish relatives or acquaintances whatsoever.

5.3. Views of the Jewish identity

TABLE 31

What is the most important criterion of Jewishness?

	1997	2015
A person identifies him/herself as a Jew	38	48
A person speaks Jewish language	10	15
A person practices Jewish religion	15	19
A person observes Jewish ceremonies and traditions	17	33
<i>A person has Jewish character and mindset</i>	27	30
If it is a man, he is circumcised	3	6
<i>A person has Jewish appearance and manners</i>	25	28
A person's mother is a Jew	12	22
A person's father is a Jew	7	10
Both of a person's parents are Jews	29	26
Do not know, refuse to answer	10	5

In mass opinion on who should be called a Jew, compared to the first study of 1990, major shifts have occurred: substantially more people now choose subjective and cultural definitions of the Jewish identity. A Jew is «whoever thinks he or she is a Jew». Even more noticeable is the two-fold increase since 1997 of those thinking that Jews are people who «observe Jewish ceremonies and traditions». We see that the image of a Jew becomes less secular than it has been since early Soviet times and more traditional, i.e. more linked to the Jewish religion. The awareness of the Halachic criterion (a person's mother is a Jew) is up as well. On the other hand, traditional stereotypical criteria of «Jewish appearance and mindset» gain ground too.



5.4. Views of Jewish achievements in various areas

Areas in which Jews have a significant share (and where their achievements are thought to lie) are medicine, science, finance and business, art, literature, politics and law, i.e. high-value, high-status, very respectful types of occupation. The Jews are therefore linked not to violence, power and dominance, but rather to the idea of progress and to such values as knowledge, professionalism, competence. This status, on one hand, explains why Jews as a group are quite respected, and, on the other hand, why they are viewed with envy and resentment by the lower-status, less well-off and more frustrated respondents.

TABLE 32

In which area are the Jews most active in our country?

	1997	2015
Politics	21	25
Diplomacy	7	10
Science	33	29
Industry, innovation	4	5
Law, jurisprudence	12	15
Finance, business	30	36
Trade	22	19
Art, music, literature	36	28
Medicine	29	33
Journalism, radio, TV	11	10
Other areas	0	1
No answer	15	13



TABLE 33

In which professions Jews enjoy the greatest success?

	1992	2015
Doctors, medical personnel	40	38
Scientists	35	26
Law (attorneys, counselors)	16	26
Writers, poets, musicians	33	26
Economists, accountants, financial specialists	10	24
Political, social figures	14	23
Journalism, mass media	4	10
Governance, management	17	10
Engineers, technical specialists	7	7
Teachers, educators	8	7
Agronomists, farmers	1	2
Army, law enforcement	2	1
Other	2	1
Do not know, refuse to answer	25	15

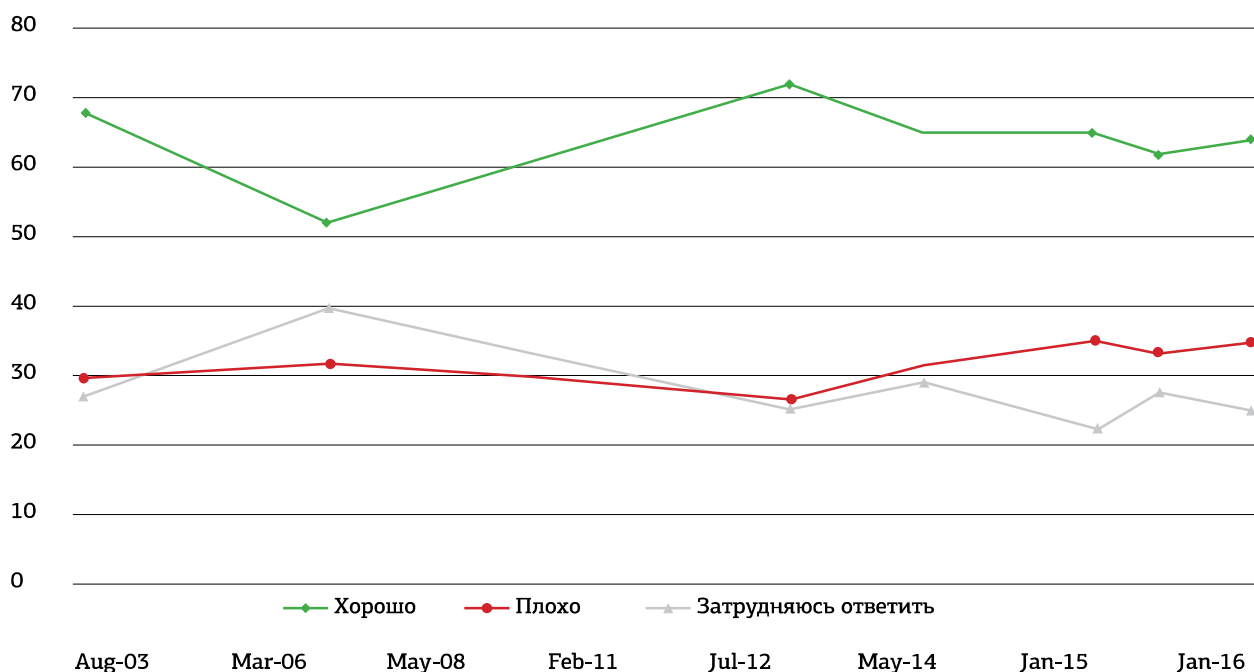


6. Opinions about Israel

According to our studies, the attitude towards Israel during the last 15 years has generally remained friendly, neutral, calm. Since the turn of the century positive views of Israel seem to dominate. On average they have been expressed by about 60% of the respondents, with 5%-6% expressing extremely positive opinion («very good»). The cumulative share of negative views has not exceeded 14%-15% since 2003, many times being lower than the share of those who do not have clear-cut opinion (which is substantial – from one fifth to one fourth of the respondents).

GRAPH 5.

What is your current general opinion about Israel?



6.1. Views of Israeli policies

The substantial rise of negative attitudes towards Israel in 2006 and 2008 (31% and 24% respectively) had probably happened due to the current political situation in the region: the increase in Hezbollah activity and the Israeli retaliation which led to the Second Lebanon War (2006) and the military operation in Gaza against Hamas terrorist infrastructure (2008). While the studies had been conducted prior to these operations, the respondents, probably, had



already been influenced by the negative anti-Israeli coverage in mass media (this assumption calls for a more detailed analysis which lies outside the area of the current study).

Let us analyze the sharpest spike in negative opinion that happened in 2006, when such opinions were expressed by as much as a third of the respondents. From the 2006 study we can learn that most Russian had no clear idea of the reasons of the armed conflict, and both sides enjoyed almost equal support. It is quite clear that the respondents were mostly concerned about the escalation itself. A majority of the respondents though back then that Russia should act as the mediating force (about a third said that «Russia should not intervene»).

TABLE 34

Do you think Israel does the right thing when forcibly transferring Jewish settlers from their homes in the Palestinian territories?

Definitely yes	6
Probably yes	17
Probably not	37
Definitely not	18
Do not know, refuse to answer	38

February 2006, N=1600

TABLE 35

What is your opinion about the Palestinian movement Hamas?

Very favorable	1
Mostly favorable	15
Mostly unfavorable	25
Very unfavorable	17
Do not know, refuse to answer	41

March 2006, N=1600



TABLE 36

Which position, in your opinion, should Russia take in view of the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

	2006 July	1997 August
To support Palestinians in their struggle against Israel	4	4
To support Israel in its fight against extremists in Palestine, Lebanon and other Middle Eastern countries	5	4
To strive for the peaceful solution	48	47
To abstain from intervening in the conflict	28	36
It is hard to say	14	11

N=1600

In regard to the 2006 events almost equal number of respondents thought that the hostilities will lead to the increase in Islamist threat and to the increase in anti-Semitism.

TABLE 37

**A. Will this conflict lead to the increase in Islamic terrorism throughout the world?
B. Will this conflict lead to the increase of anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic sentiments in various countries?**

	A. The increase in Islamic terrorism	B. The increase in anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic sentiments
Definitely yes	12	11
Probably yes	35	38
Probably no	17	15
Definitely no	5	5
Do not know, refuse to answer	30	32

August 2006, N=1600

In the atmosphere of the increasing onslaught on independent media and the lack



of alternative point of views only a small fraction of the respondents had been engaged in meaningful discussions on this subject. The same was evident during the new escalation in 2008. The nationalist propaganda aimed at Israel had not had major influence on public opinion. It was a part of the wider critique of all the «regular foes» of Russian imperialism and conservatism: the West, US, former Soviet republics aligning with the EU («traitors»), Islamists etc. The most anti-Israeli views had been expressed by proponents of the «Russian World» concept calling for the resurrection of the superpower that can stand against the West and against Zionism as its ally. Probably the most well-known of such figures is A.Prokhanov, who expresses anti-Zionist and (covertly and sometimes openly) anti-Semitic views as a part of his imperial, etatist discourse. Yet, such figures can probably evoke in an average, not very well informed person nothing more than fear and resentment. We can see that none of the sides enjoys definitive support of the society. Yet, alongside the indifference (about a third does not sympathize with either side) there is a constant concern about the ongoing conflict in general.

TABLE 38

With whom do you sympathize more in regard to the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

	2001	2002	2006
Palestinians	9	12	9
Israelis	9	7	6
Both of them equally	31	31	35
None of them	30	31	33
I know nothing about this conflict	8	9	5
Do not know, refuse to answer	13	11	12

February 2006 г., N=1600

Questions about the concrete events and circumstances of the conflict proved to be the most difficult to answer, which points at the overwhelming lack of information (and, probably, interest).

TABLE 39

What do you think about Russia's relations with radical Arab movements abroad?

Radical Arab movements are Russia's historical allies	10
We should support Western sanctions against radical Arab movements	14
We should try to benefit from the conflict between the West and radical Arab movements	33
Do not know, refuse to answer	44

April 2006, N=1600



TABLE 40

Who is responsible for the current conflict on Israeli-Lebanese border?

Arab extremists (Hezbollah and others)	10
Israel	17
US	13
Lebanon	2
International terrorism	11
Both Lebanon and Israel	27
Do not know, refuse to answer	20

August 2006, N=1600

While in Europe these and later violent events, including Israel's decisive actions against Arab radicals, triggered major discussions and caused deterioration of support for Israel, in Russia the public reaction was noticeably calmer, almost indifferent. There is a lack of interest about other political events in Israel as well (including the recent wave of terror that is viewed as a «major problem» by only a tiny minority).

6.2. The image of Israel

On the other hand, the general image of Israel is quite positive and keeps improving with time. Interest in Israel is mostly expressed by young, well-educated and well-off respondents and also by the Muscovites. Only 8% said their attitude towards Israel is «negative, hostile». Another 8% «know nothing» about this country. Together with those who refused to answer they constitute 11%, compared to 15% in 1997.

TABLE 41

How would you define your attitude towards Israel?

	1997	2015
I feel interest and sympathy towards this country	11	16
I feel neutral, just like towards any other country	63	64
I feel mistrust	8	6
I feel resentment, animosity	3	2
I know nothing about this country	9	8
Do not know, refuse to answer	6	3



TABLE 42

In the recent years mass media tend to report more on the events and the life in Israel, its culture, history etc. Have your opinion about Israel changed consequently, and if yes, for better or for worse?

	1997	2015
Changed for better	21	18
Changed for worse	2	8
Remained unchanged	60	64
Do not know, refuse to answer	17	10

As in late 1990s, most respondents (60%-64%) said their opinions on Israel had not changed recently. Still, today more people testify that their views have become more negative (8% against 2% in the past).

We find the highest levels of those who began to view Israel more positively among the less well-off (25%), with the lowest social status (27%). This is also the most religious part of the society, actively participating in church rituals. Their favorable attitudes towards Israel are probably fueled by their religious zeal, because Israel is increasingly referred to as the Promised Land, where many Christian sacred places are located. (In early 1990s, on the other hand, Israel was primarily «the land where all those emigrants go»).

Most respondents would be interested in visiting Israel. This interest has grown almost two-fold since early 1990s. Muslims, elderly, poor and rural population are the least interested in visiting Israel. Young (73%), well educated (69%) and Muscovites (69%) are the most interested.

TABLE 43

Would you like to visit Israel as a guest or a tourist?

	1990	1992	1997	2015
Yes	32	47	54	58
No	56	40	35	42
Do not know, refuse to answer	12	14	11	-

In general, the image of Israel has not changed much since the last study conducted in 1997. It is still most often referred to as «the Jewish country». Some more detailed answers, with regard to the history, culture and the current state of the country, were given by well-educated, well-off urban dwellers, active Internet users. Opinions that depict Israel as an aggressive nationalistic state constantly provoking violent tensions, are extremely rare – only about 3%-4%.



TABLE 44

What is the first thing that comes to your mind about Israel?

	1997	2015
This is a Jewish country	54	34
This is the country where holy places of the world religions are located	26	17
This is the birthplace of Christianity	26	11
This is a country with good resorts, a good place to spend a vacation	10	8
This is a country with highly developed economy	19	6
This is a country that fights for survival, for its independence	16	6
This is a country bogged down in a constant conflict, victim to many terrorist attacks	16	4
This is an aggressive nationalistic country	10	3
This is a country to which my Jewish acquaintances emigrate	21	2
This is a democratic country	10	2
This is a country with very capable secret services	7	2
Other	<1	1
Do not know, refuse to answer	7	6
<i>N</i>	1500	1600

Some facts about Israel, that have highly positive connotations for Russian, contribute to the favorable image of Israel and to its attractiveness as a tourist destination (including medical tourism and pilgrimage). Among them is the growing conviction that Israel has created an effective and affordable social care system, well-developed hi-tech economy and strong democratic institutions. Positive notions of Israeli social care system are probably spread via personal communication.



7. Conclusions

1. Ordered by RJC, a research has been recently conducted to determine popular attitudes towards Jews in Russian society. The research utilized various sociological methods and means of gathering and describing empirical data, and its results indicate that the «Jewish question» is no longer as urgent and relevant as it used to be. The dominant attitude towards Jews is that of moderate respect, which is probably a sign that negative connotations are largely gone. In the eyes of the society Jews seized to be a distinct group, socially and ethically «marked», an easy target for channelling politically or nationally charged animosity and aggression, collectively blamed for various negative events, including outcomes of the state policies. Jews no longer appear to provide a mechanism of negative identity.
2. Attitudes towards Jews have improved dramatically in comparison to the previous polls conducted in 1990, 1992 and 1997. «Positive attitude» levels have gone up from 53% in 1992 to 72% in 1997. In 2015 poll 9% reported they feel «sympathy» and «interest» towards Jews, while 83% said that Jews are «like any other people of a different ethnic origin». Only 13% in 1992, 16% in 1997 and 8% in 2015 expressed negative feelings about Jews.
3. Anti-Semitism thus holds a fairly insignificant place in the complex of Russian xenophobic views and ideas. The dynamic of the Russian anti-Semitic attitudes may be described as «passive»; some hostility is still present, but its mobilization potential is steadily declining. Compared to other types of xenophobia - racial, anti-migrant, anti-Western, hostility towards people from Central Asia and Caucasus - anti-Semitic views are apparent in only a small fraction of respondents. Yet, some traces of the old enmity, both traditional (rooted in the conservative pre-Revolution agrarian society) and the Soviet-style state anti-Semitism can be seen quite clearly. These are expressed mainly via readiness to support to some extent policies of ethnic discrimination (if such policies are introduced by the state and deemed as contributing it) and also via the persistent inclination to restrict access to positions of power for all non-Russians, including Jews.
4. Jews are seen as influential and holding high positions in the society, particularly in art, science, healthcare, business, finance and the media. Yet, contrary to what previous research has shown, today there is little argument about this status being legitimate and well-earned. The respondents respect Jews (as an imaginary group) for their professionalism and hard work. Jewish contribution to the global and Russian culture is generally recognized as well. Envy and resentment typical of low-income and low-status population gradually disappear as the socio-economic situation improves. These feelings are mostly experienced today by isolated groups where social tensions are still high. Consequently, outspoken anti-Semitism is widely associated with disadvantaged, uneducated population and marginalized groups.
5. The structure and the character of Russian anti-Semitic views and prejudices have hardly changed during the last 25 years, but their intensity is now much lower.
6. Anti-Semitism appears now to be less of a standalone grass roots phenomenon and more of an integral part of the xenophobic framework as a whole, maintained and nurtured by the increasingly intense nationalistic propaganda in the state-owned



media and by the official traditionalist rhetoric. Such rhetoric is aimed at compensating the feeling of national frustration, which results from Russia losing its superpower status (post-imperial syndrome). It is also an attempt to fight back the growing dissatisfaction with the regime, diverting it towards inner and outer enemies.

7. We can conclude then, albeit cautiously, that anti-Semitism is primarily a by-product of a more primordial and generic xenophobia, through which Russian nationalism expresses itself. The function of today's anti-Semitism in the collective conscience is probably to justify the need for positive discrimination and privileges for ethnic Russians in the most important areas of social competition.