

THE RUSSIAN ELITE 2016 РОССИЙСКАЯ ЭЛИТА 2016

PERSPECTIVES ON FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICY

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

- 243 Moscow-based elites
 - Seven sub-groups: high-ranking individuals in the executive branch, the legislative branch, private firms, state-owned enterprises, major media outlets, universities and large academic research institutes, and the armed forces and security agencies
 - Face-to-face interviews lasting an average of 60 minutes
 - Interviews conducted in February-March 2016
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2016 SURVEY SPONSORSHIP AND DIRECTION

- Funded by Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center at Hamilton College
- Principal Investigator: Sharon Werning Rivera, Associate Professor of Government, Hamilton College
- Co-Principal Investigators:
 - William Zimmerman, Emeritus Professor of Political Science and Emeritus Research Professor, Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan
 - Eduard Ponarin, Director of the Laboratory for Comparative Social Research and Professor of Sociology, National Research University Higher School of Economics in St. Petersburg



PREVIOUS SURVEYS

- Six previous surveys (1993, 1995, 1999, 2004, 2008, and 2012) directed by William Zimmerman at the University of Michigan
 - Consistent methodology and replication of survey questions in all waves
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ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS

- Conducted by students in Government 333: Topics in Survey Research, taught by Prof. Sharon Werning Rivera



James Bryan

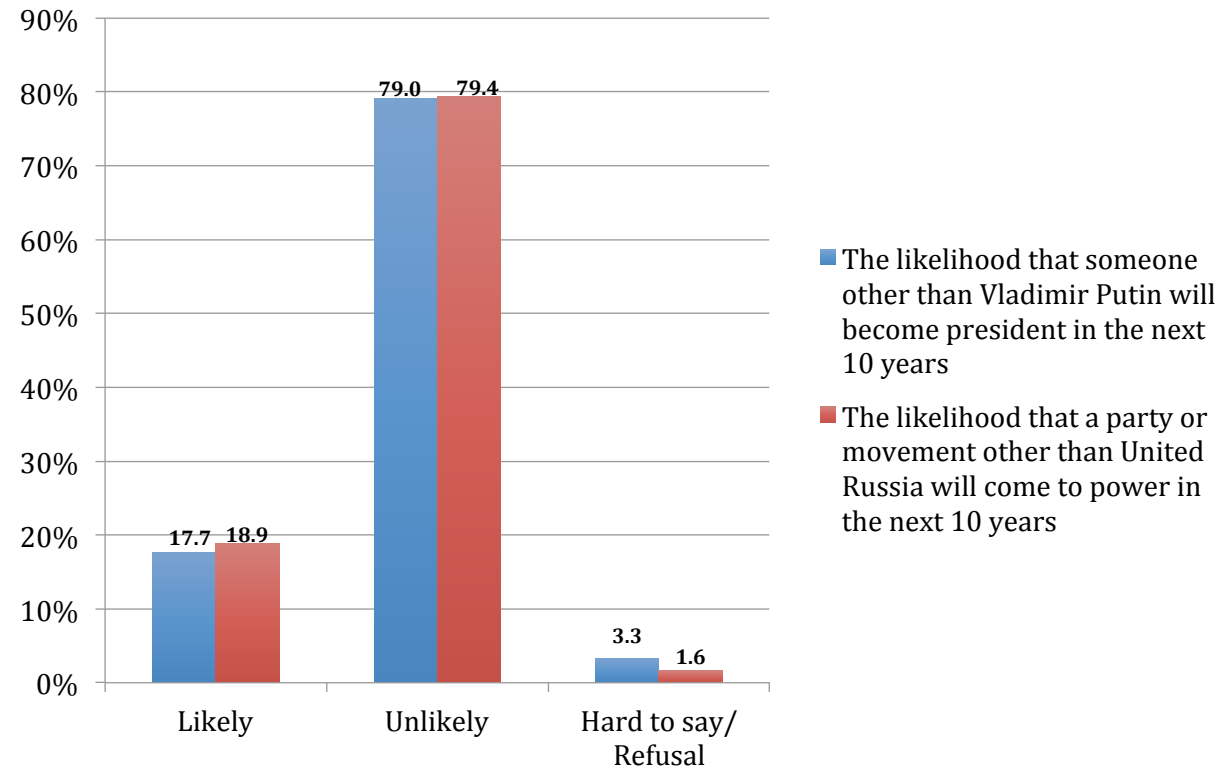
Brisa Camacho-Lovell

Carlos Fineman

Nora Klemmer

Emma Raynor

Figure 2.1
Expectations Regarding Vladimir Putin and United Russia



Source: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll – “The Russian Elite 2016.”

Note: The graph shows the combined percentages of responses for “very likely” and “quite likely” as well as for “unlikely” and “completely unlikely.”

Question Wording: “In your opinion, which of the following situations is very likely, quite likely, unlikely, or completely unlikely in the next 10 years?...A party or movement other than United Russia will come to power...Someone other than Vladimir Putin will become president.”

Table 2.1
Russian Elites' Party Affiliations

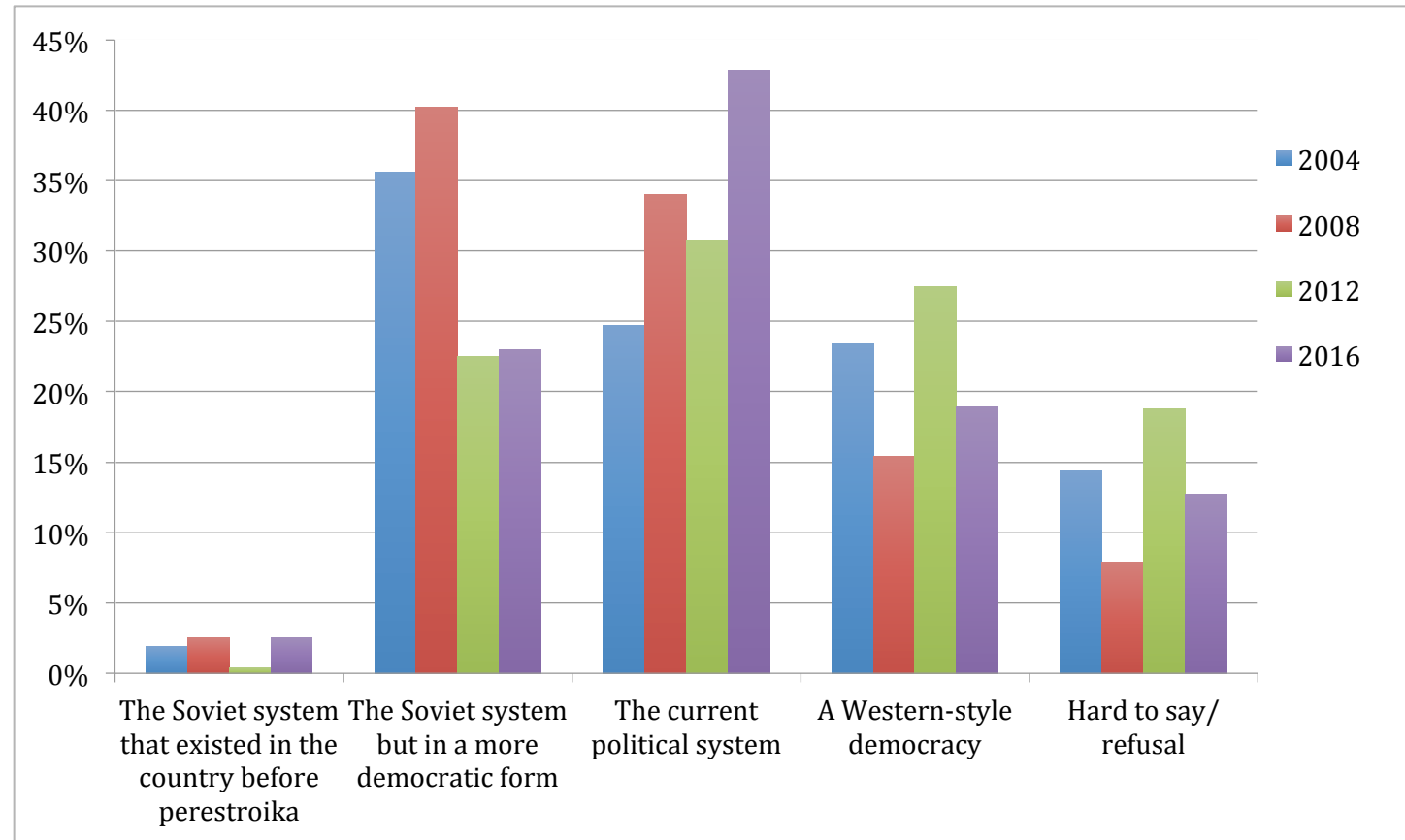
Political Party/Movement	Of which political party are you a member?	Which political party or movement best reflects your views?
United Russia	35.4% (86)	22.2% (54)
A Just Russia	1.2% (3)	1.6% (4)
Communist Party of the RF	2.5% (6)	0.8% (2)
LDPR	1.6% (4)	3.7% (9)
Young Russia	-	1.2% (3)
Patriots of Russia	0.4% (1)	0.8% (2)
Yabloko	0.4% (1)	1.2% (3)
Parnas	-	0.8 (2)
Party of Peace and Unity	-	0.4% (1)
Hard to Say/Refusal	0.4% (1)	25.1% (61)
Total % (n)	42% (102)	58% (141)

Source: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll – “The Russian Elite 2016.”

Note: The figures represent the percentage of total respondents.

Question Wording: “Are you a member of any political party or movement? 1. Yes, 2. No; [If yes] Of which party are you a member?; [If no] Which party or movement best reflects your views?” The latter two are open-ended questions.

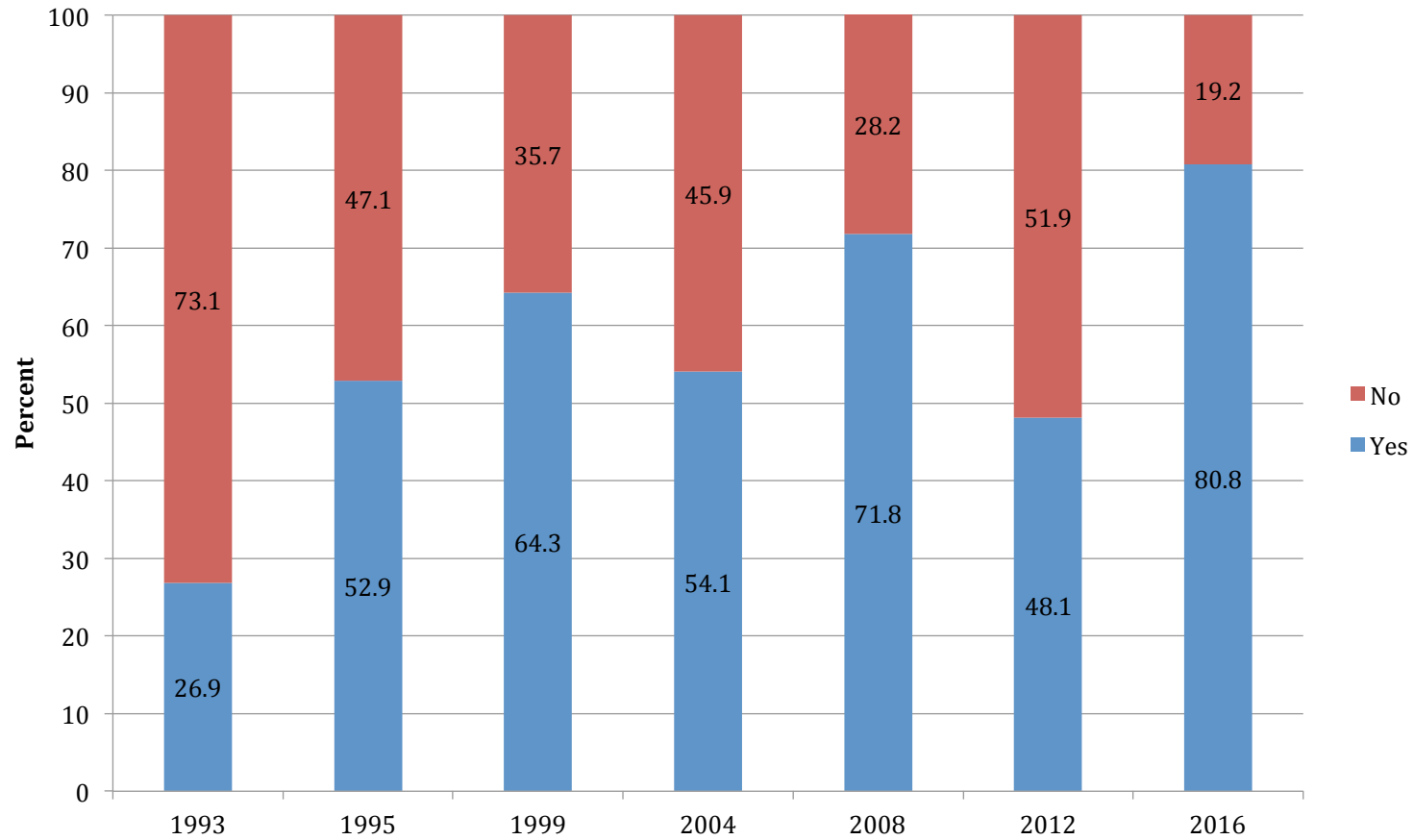
Figure 2.2
Elites' Preferred Political System



Sources: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll – “The Russian Elite 2016”; “Survey of Russian Elites: 1993-2012,” ICPSR, University of Michigan.

Question Wording: “Which political system, in your opinion, fits Russia best? 1. The Soviet system that existed in the country before *perestroika*, 2. The Soviet system but in a more democratic form, 3. The current political system, 4. A Western-style democracy, 5. Hard to Say, 6. Refusal”

Figure 3.1
Elites' Perceptions of the United States as a Threat

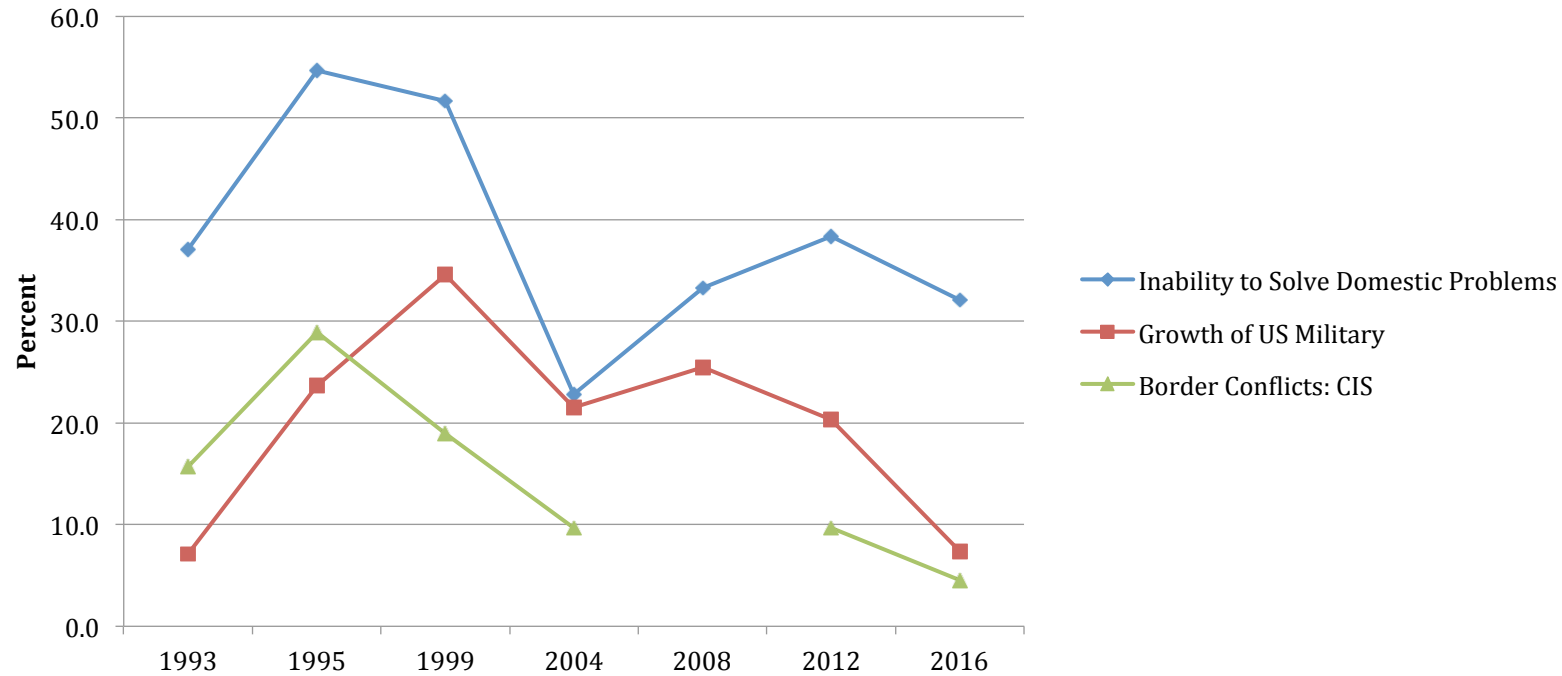


Sources: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll—"The Russian Elite 2016"; "Survey of Russian Elites: 1993-2012," ICPSR, University of Michigan.

Note: "Don't know" responses and refusals are excluded from the analysis.

Question Wording: "Do you think that the USA represents a threat to Russia's national security?"

Figure 3.2
Selected Threats to Russian Security,
1993-2016



Sources: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll—“The Russian Elite 2016”; “Survey of Russian Elites: 1993-2012,” ICPSR, University of Michigan.

Note: Results show percentage of respondents rating this threat as a 5, meaning “the utmost threat” to Russian security. “Don’t know” responses and refusals are excluded from the analysis. The question about “Border conflicts between Russia and countries of the CIS” was not asked in 2008.

Question Wording: “Which on the list below are most likely to represent the utmost threat to the security of Russia and which do not constitute any threat at all? Evaluate the level of threat, using a five-point scale, where 1 denotes the absence of threat and 5 the utmost threat.

1. The growth of America’s military might vis-à-vis Russia’s
2. The inability of Russia to resolve its internal problems
3. Terrorism
4. Border conflicts between Russia and countries of the CIS
5. Growth of ethnic tensions in Russia between Russians and other nationalities
6. A ‘color’ revolution
7. An information war against Russia conducted by the West”

Table 3.1
Threats Perceived as the “Utmost” in 2016
 % (n)

Inability to Solve Domestic Problems	Terrorism	Growth of US Military	Border Conflicts: CIS	Ethnic Tensions	Information War Conducted by the West	“Color” Revolution
32.1% (78)	22.2% (54)	7.4% (18)	4.5% (11)	3.3% (8)	2.5% (6)	2.2% (5)

Sources: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll—“The Russian Elite 2016”; “Survey of Russian Elites: 1993-2012,” ICPSR, University of Michigan.

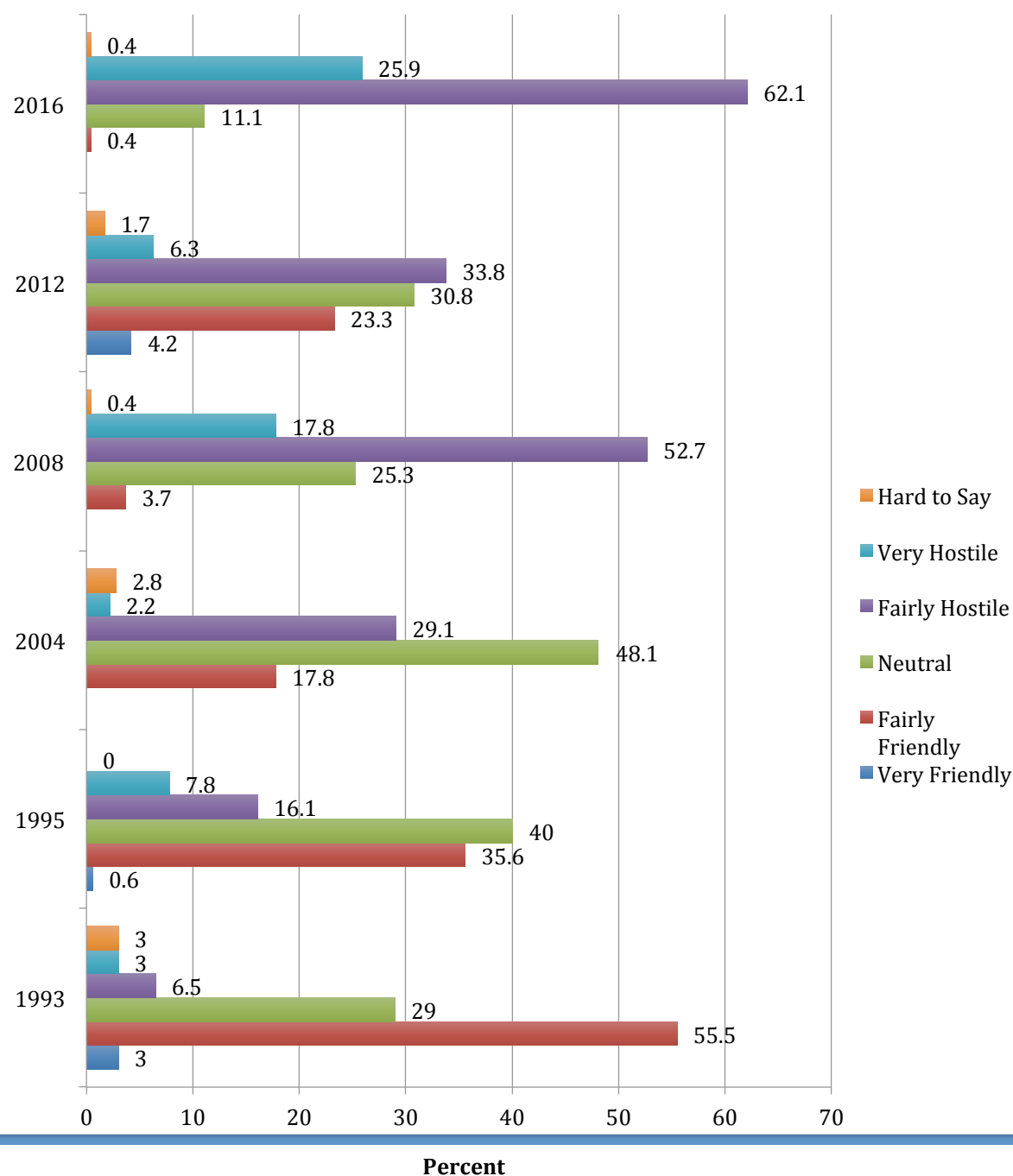
Note: Results show percentage of respondents rating this threat as a 5, meaning “the utmost threat” to Russian security. “Don’t know” responses and refusals are excluded from the analysis.

Question Wording: “Which on the list below are most likely to represent the utmost threat to the security of Russia and which do not constitute any threat at all?”

Evaluate the level of threat, using a five-point scale, where 1 denotes the absence of threat and 5 the utmost threat.

1. The growth of America’s military might vis-à-vis Russia’s
2. The inability of Russia to resolve its internal problems
3. Terrorism
4. Border conflicts between Russia and countries of the CIS
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Figure 4.1
Perceived Hostility of the US, 1993-2016

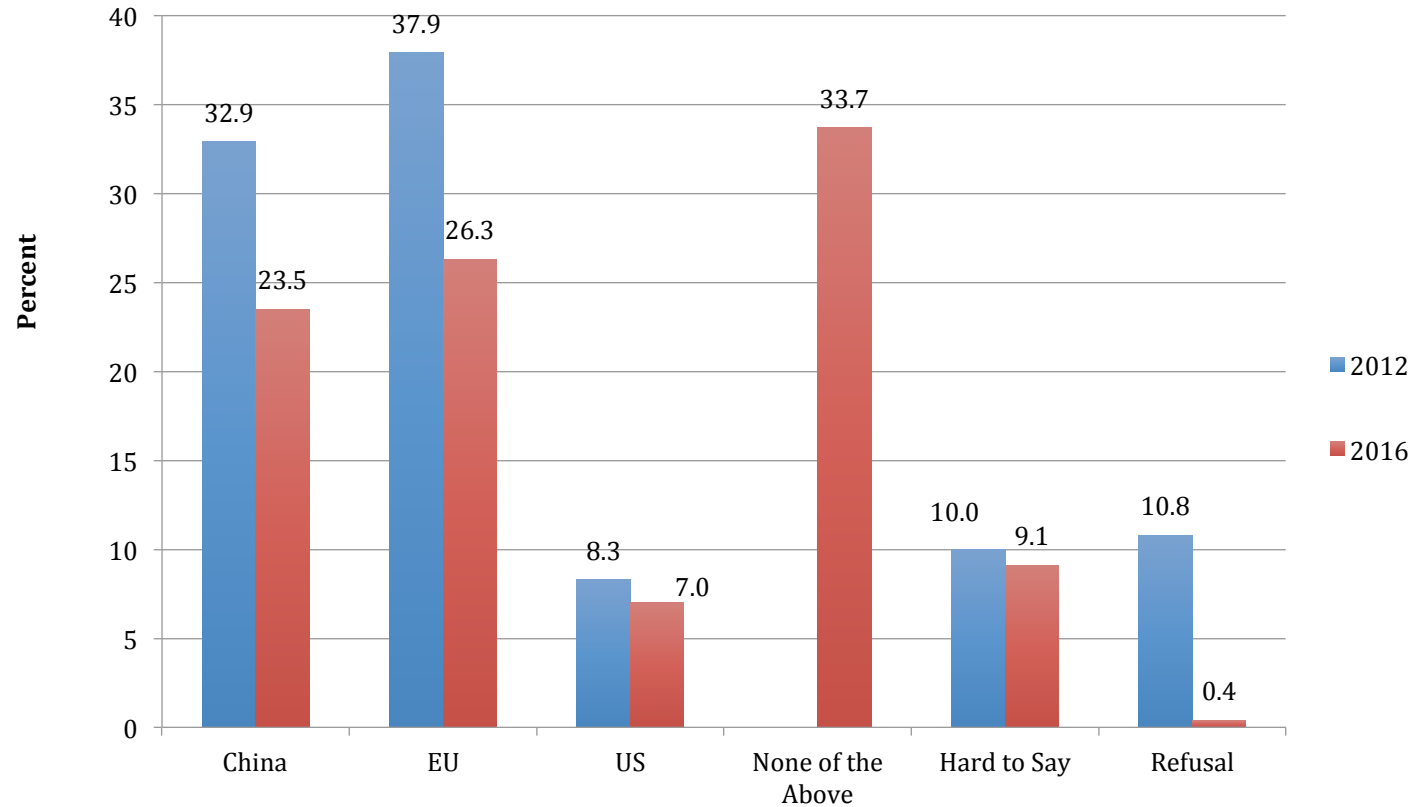


Sources: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll – “The Russian Elite 2016”; “Survey of Russian Elites: 1993-2012,” ICPSR, University of Michigan.

Note: Data from 1999 are not included in the figure.

Question Wording: “For each country or international organization that I will name, please tell me how friendly or hostile, in your opinion, it is toward Russia today: very friendly, fairly friendly, neutral, fairly hostile, or very hostile? 1. China, 2. Ukraine, 3. US, 4. Estonia, 5. Poland, 6. Germany, 7. EU, 8. Japan, 9. Georgia, 10. UK?” (Results presented for the US only)

Figure 4.2
Russia's Potential Coalition Partners

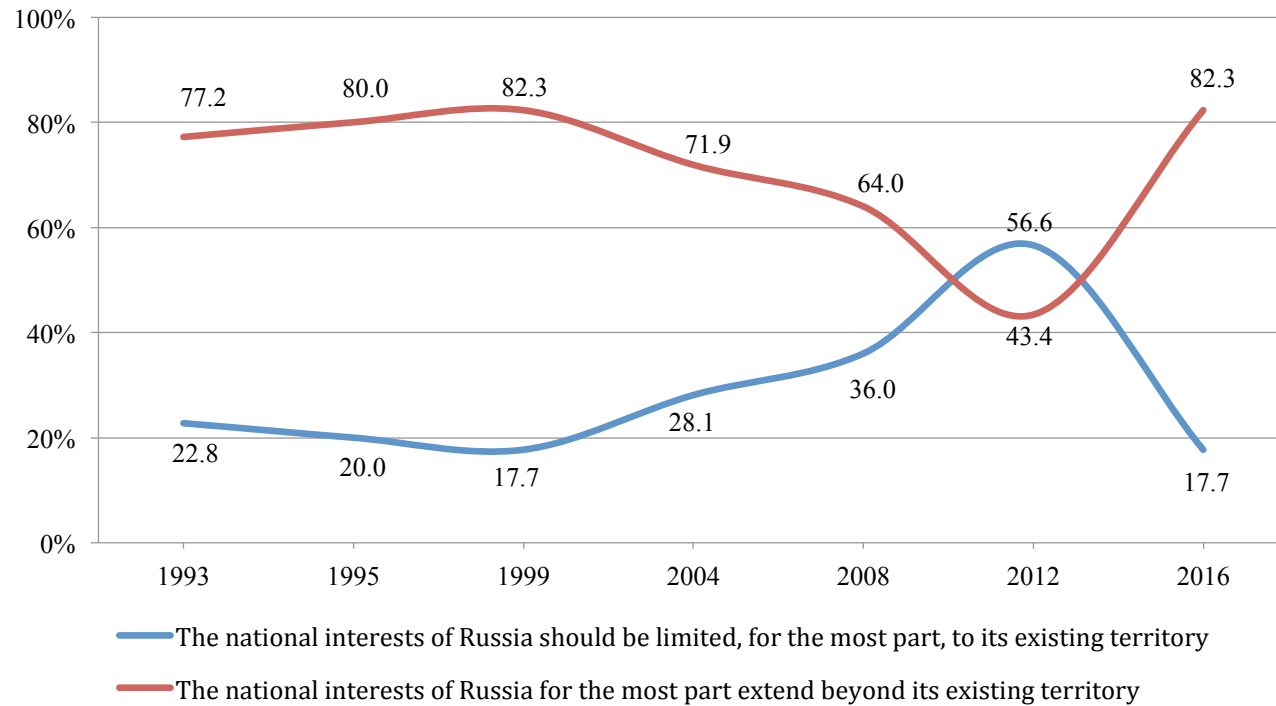


Sources: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll – “The Russian Elite 2016”; “Survey of Russian Elites: 1993-2012,” ICPSR, University of Michigan.

Note: In the 2012 survey, “None of the above” was not an option.

Question Wording: “Russia, being one of the most powerful actors in international politics, develops relationships with all other actors in world politics. However, if you had to choose, with which of these would you prefer to form a coalition?” “1. China 2. EU 3. US 4. None of the Above 5. Hard to Say 6. Refusal.”

Figure 5.1
Scope of Russia's National Interests

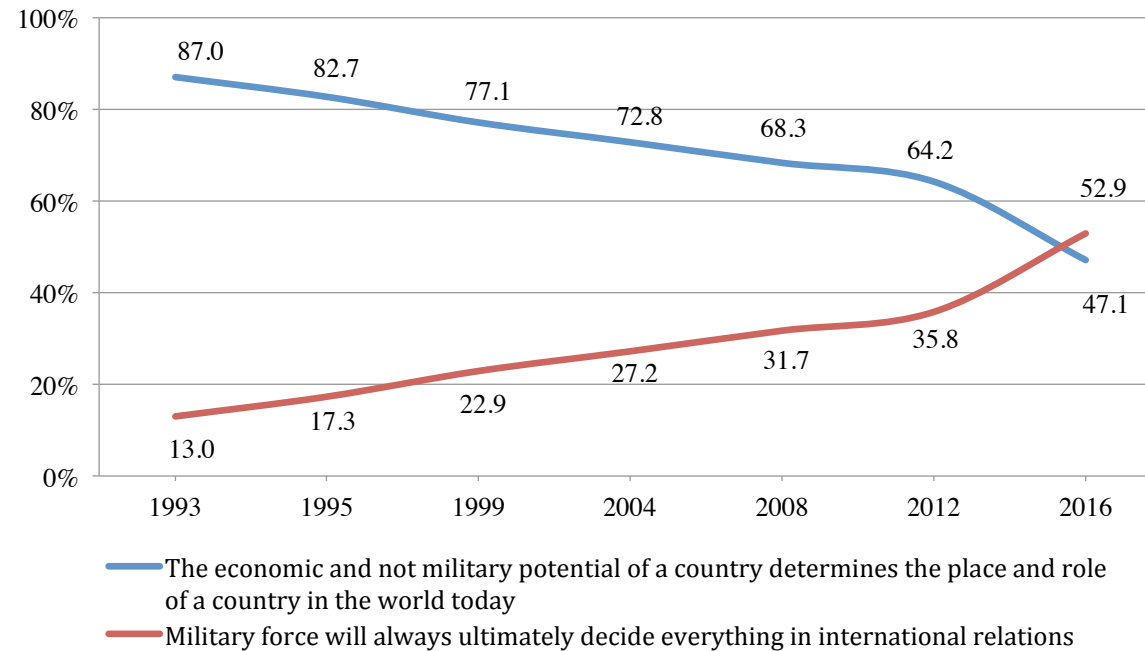


Sources: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll—“The Russian Elite 2016”; “Survey of Russian Elites: 1993-2012,” ICPSR, University of Michigan.

Note: “Don’t know” responses and refusals are excluded from the analysis.

Question Wording: “There are various opinions about the national interests of Russia. Which of the two assertions below are closer to your point of view? 1. The national interests of Russia should be limited, for the most part, to its existing territory; 2. The national interests of Russia for the most part extend beyond its existing territory.”

Figure 5.2
What Determines a State's Role in the World?



Sources: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll—“The Russian Elite 2016”; “Survey of Russian Elites: 1993-2012,” ICPSR, University of Michigan.

Note: “Don’t know” responses and refusals are excluded from the analysis.

Question Wording: “I will read you two statements about the role of military force in international relations. Which of these is closer to your opinion? 1. Military force will always ultimately decide everything in international relations; 2. The economic and not military potential of a country determines the place and role of a country in the world today.”

Table 5.1
What Determines a State's Role in the World?
Generational Differences

Year of Birth	Military Force % (n)	Economic Potential % (n)
≤1950	76.9 (10)	23.1 (3)
1951-1960	52.8 (28)	45.3 (24)
1961-1970	54.5 (54)	45.5 (45)
≥1971	44.7 (34)	52.6 (40)

Source: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll—"The Russian Elite 2016."

Question Wording: "I will read you two statements about the role of military force in international relations. Which of these is closer to your opinion? 1. Military force will always ultimately decide everything in international relations; 2. The economic and not military potential of a country determines the place and role of a country in the world today."

Table 6.1
**Was the Annexation of Crimea in Violation
of International Law?**

Response	%
Definitely yes	3.3
Probably yes	7.4
Probably no	26.7
Definitely no	61.7
Hard to say/refusal	0.8

Source: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll – “The Russian Elite 2016.”

Question Wording: “Do you agree that in annexing Crimea, Russia violated post-war and post-Soviet international agreements and international law?”

Table 6.2
What Led to the Conflict in Ukraine?
Selected Responses

Response	%
Attempts by the USA to foment another “color” revolution in Ukraine	75.7
The Ukrainian opposition, having resorted to armed methods of protests on the streets	35.4
The hopes of regular Ukrainians that association with the European Union would solve fundamental problems in the country	28.0

Source: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll – “The Russian Elite 2016.”

Note: Respondents could select all responses that apply. Only the responses most relevant to this analysis are displayed.

Question Wording: “In your opinion, what led to the crisis in Ukraine?”

1. Attempts by the USA to foment another ‘color’ revolution in Ukraine.
2. The corrupt regime of former Ukrainian president Yanukovych.
3. The hopes of regular Ukrainians that association with the European Union would solve fundamental problems in the country.
4. The persistent actions of the European Union to bring Ukraine into its sphere of influence.
5. The Ukrainian opposition, having resorted to armed methods of protest on the streets.
6. Attempts by Yanukovych to straddle Russia and the European Union.
7. Attempts by Russia to ‘buy’ Yanukovych’s loyalty.”

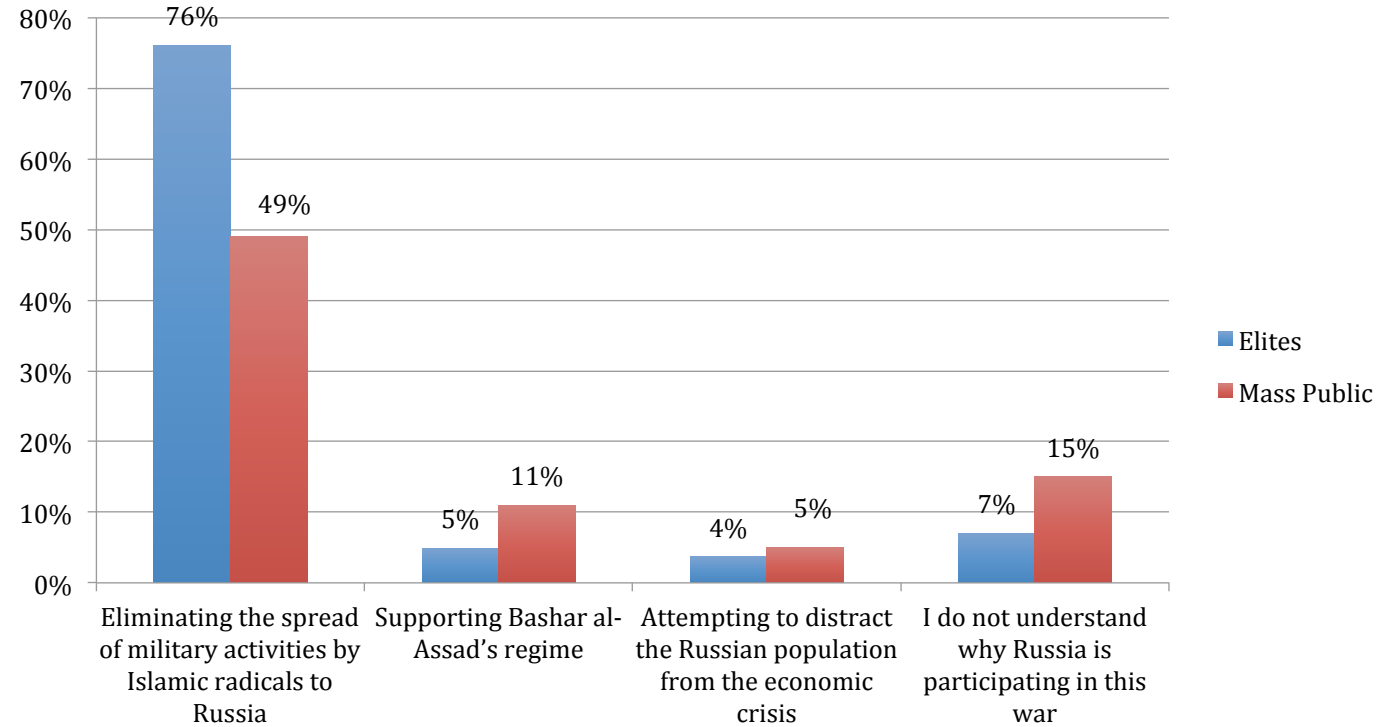
Table 6.3
Perspectives on the Syrian Conflict

Response	%
It's an intervention in the internal affairs of the state	27.6
It's a necessary step to stop the violence and human rights violations	63.0
Hard to say/refusal	9.5

Source: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll – “The Russian Elite 2016.”

Question Wording: “Which of the following statements are closest to your position on the international military operations in Syria?”

Figure 6.1
Russian Government's Goals for Participating in the Syrian Conflict



Sources: 2016 Hamilton College Levitt Poll – “The Russian Elite 2016”; “Syria and the Plane Crash in Egypt.” Levada Center. 23 November 2015. Available at: <http://www.levada.ru/eng/syria-plane-crash-egypt>.

Note: Respondents could select all responses that apply. Only four are displayed in the figure.

Question Wording: “In your opinion, what are the Russian government’s goals for participating in the Syrian conflict?”

1. Attempting to neutralize and eliminate the spread of military activities by Islamic radicals and terrorists to Russia.
2. Protecting the government of Bashar al-Assad in order to prevent a series of US-inspired ‘color revolutions’ around the world.
3. Defending the economic interests of Russian companies in the Middle East.
4. Supporting Bashar al-Assad’s regime and his struggle against the opposition, insofar as he is worried about massive anti-government protests.
5. Attempting to break up the coalition of Western countries in order to eliminate the threat of the complete isolation of Russia and the further tightening of sanctions.
6. Attempting to distract the Russian population from the economic crisis and the authorities’ inability to deal with the declining quality of life, corruption, and governmental incompetence.
7. I do not understand why Russia is participating in this war.”

THANK YOU!

Full results available at www.hamilton.edu/RussianPoll2016.

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