

# OPINION POLL

ATTITUDES

IN THE **RUSSIAN FEDERATION** TOWARDS  
**WMD PROLIFERATION AND TERRORISM**

**PIR Center Report**



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This report continues the PIR Center tradition of studying Russian public opinion on nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, started in 2000, and contains an analysis of the results of the nationwide opinion poll on "Attitudes in the Russian Federation towards WMD Proliferation and Terrorism" carried out by the All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinions (VTSIOM) on January 21–22, 2006.

This publication is intended for a wide range of audience, including but not limited to journalists, diplomats, the military, scholars, businessmen, and university students.

The report was prepared within the framework of "Strengthening the Global Partnership", a joint project of PIR Center and CSIS (Washington D.C., USA) .

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## FOREWORD

Although the 21<sup>st</sup> century has barely begun, it has already been unofficially nicknamed the “virtual” century. We will only be able to confirm or refute this assertion in the future, depending upon the degree to which the latest communication and data tools, including television and Internet resources, are adopted in everyday life. Indeed, although we inherited the nuclear complex from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it remains strictly virtual for the overwhelming majority of people. Thanks to the media, we know that the secrets of the atom have been penetrated, and as a result nuclear weapons have been constructed that now hold life on earth itself in the balance. However, these weapons have not actually been used for over 60 years, during which time only a chosen few have witnessed nuclear explosions (other than on the silver screen). The majority of the world’s people, even those living in nuclear weapon states, have had to rely instead on the images formed in the public consciousness by the media.

Efforts by research centers to delve into “popular opinions” and evaluate the perceptions of nuclear weapons held by Russian citizens in the middle of this first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are of undoubted interest.

Among recent opinion polls in Russia on questions related to nuclear weapons, a poll carried out by the All-Russia Center for the Study of Public Opinions (VTsIOM) on July 30-31, 2005 is particularly noteworthy. Must a country possess nuclear weapons in order to be considered a great country? What should Russia do with its nuclear weapons? What policy should the global community adopt with respect to countries attempting to acquire their own nuclear weapons that have already carried out their first experiments? The answers to these questions, which are analyzed later in our report in connection with similar problems, indi-

cate that Russians as a whole are paying attention to these problems and relate them to national security issues.<sup>1</sup>

On the one hand, a half century of Cold War is over, a period when nuclear weapons and other types of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) were seen primarily in the context of the threat of their use by foreign states.

The global community made significant gains in reducing arsenals and moving towards the complete elimination of several types of weapons of mass destruction. After the prohibition of biological and toxin weapons (in 1972), the next major step was finally possible in 1993: a ban on chemical weapons and the elimination of stockpiles in the immediate future. A number of treaties on reductions in nuclear armaments, in particular on strategic nuclear weapons, have also been concluded, most recently in 2002 (the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, also known as the Moscow Treaty). These measures had a positive effect on the opinions of Russian citizens, regardless of the group to which they belong.<sup>2</sup>

Since 2002, Russia has cooperated with other G8 developed industrial powers, in the G8 Global Partnership, the first priority of which is to assist Russia in fulfilling its international obligations with regards to the dismantlement of Russian weapons. This international cooperation gets regular news coverage and is itself becoming an important factor influencing the considered opinions of Russian citizens.

On the other hand, new challenges to the security of Russia and many other states have appeared; people are now much more aware of the actions of terrorist groups and the problem of WMD in particular. Finally, the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is

<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.wciom.ru/?pt=45&article=1589>.

<sup>2</sup> The results of a public opinion poll on the question “What are the main problems that Russia should be working to solve today?” carried out in February 2005 by the research group ROMIR Monitoring are revealing (1,500 people from over 100 Russian communities participated in the survey). Combating terrorism was only in 13th place (just 8% of those questioned considered it to be an important problem). The restoration of the country’s military strength was in 17th place (6%). Other issues related to Russia’s international stance did not get into the “top 20” major issues at all (respondents could choose multiple ways to answer this question). See <http://romir.ru/socpolit/socio/2005/02/trouble.htm>.

also witnessing a kind of “nuclear renaissance,” with many states, including Russia, again emphasizing the importance of using the “peaceful atom” to guarantee energy security and national power supplies far into the future. It is critical that the development of nuclear power in various countries and regions not be allowed to destroy the existing institutions of international security—the nuclear nonproliferation regime first and foremost.

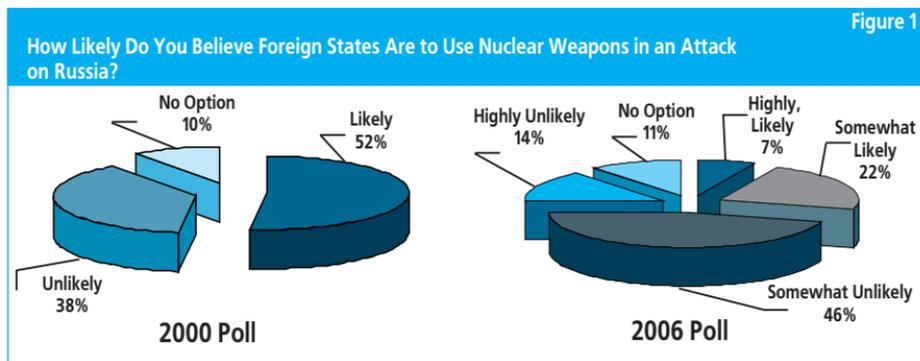
Public opinion on any issue is strongly dependent on sources of information about the issue and on standpoints established by concrete individuals respected due to their age, education, or socioeconomic or other reasons. Of course any poll, no matter how thoroughly its methodology and conduct has been thought out, can only give an approximate depiction of public opinion. Any researcher who attempts to evaluate and generalize based on the results obtained is “comparing apples and oranges,” and risks getting an inaccurate or incomplete picture. Moreover, there is always the hidden risk of accepting the answers of young extremists or elderly traditionalists at face value. The “law of large numbers” only ensures the unconditional accuracy of the picture obtained for overall estimates and on the most significant aspects of the issue.

This report continues a tradition of examining Russian public opinion that Moscow’s Center for

Policy Studies in Russia (PIR Center) first embarked upon in 2000, with the joint analytical report “Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Threats” produced by the PIR Center together with the Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS) at the Monterey Institute of International Studies (Monterey, California, USA).<sup>3</sup> At the same time the present report, in contrast to the 2000 study, analyzes a wider array of questions, related both to Russian perceptions of the threats associated with WMD as well as to Russia’s cooperation with foreign states, particularly with the other G8 states.

Unfortunately, the methodology used by the Obshchestvennoe Mnenie (Public Opinion) Foundation when it carried out the opinion poll in 2000 that became the basis of the PIR Center-CNS report was not identical to the methodology of the present opinion poll, carried out by the All-Russia Center for the Study of Public Opinions (ages and levels of education were grouped somewhat differently, respondents were categorized by the type of community in which they resided in a different way, etc.); therefore, a detailed comparison of the results of the studies is not possible in all cases. Changes in the opinions of Russian citizens that became apparent through answers to similar questions in the 2000 and 2006 polls are reflected in the text of this report, and are also indicated in the following diagrams.

## Comparison of Russian Citizens’ Answers in the 2000 and 2006 Polls



<sup>3</sup> See *Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges*, an analytical report examining a survey of public opinion in the Russian Federation. PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000.

Figure 2

Are You Afraid That If Weapons of Mass Destruction Fall into Terrorist Hands They May Use Them Against Our Country?<sup>4</sup>

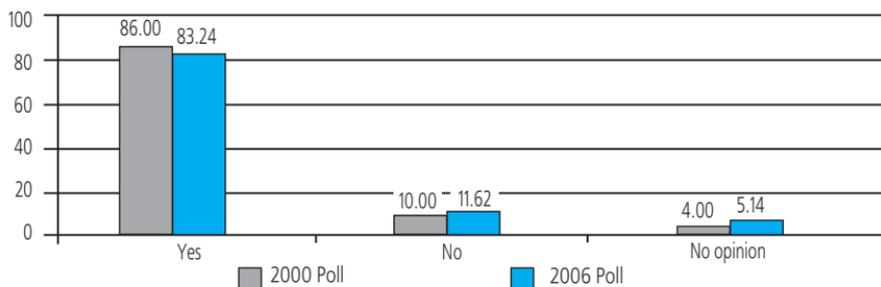


Figure 3

Are You Concerned That Russian Nuclear Facilities (Power Plants, Nuclear Weapon Storage Facilities, etc.) May Become the Target of Sabotage by Terrorists?

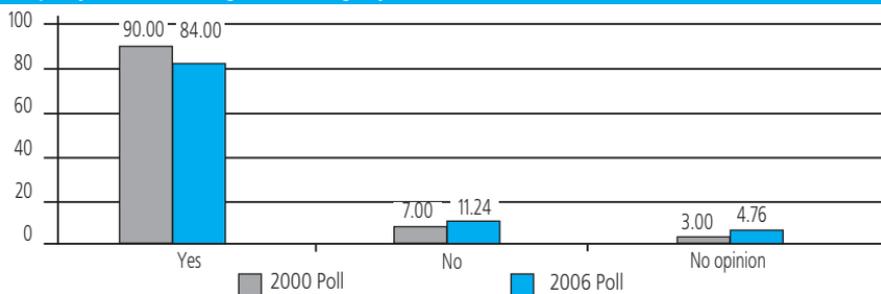
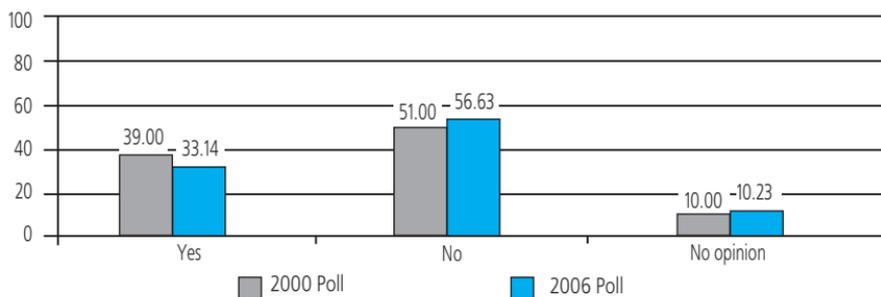


Figure 4

Should Russian Nuclear Weapons be Permanently Targeted at Particular States?<sup>5</sup>



<sup>4</sup> In 2006, this question read as follows: Are you concerned that weapons of mass destruction, if they fall into the hands of international terrorists, may be used against our country?

<sup>5</sup> In 2006, this question read as follows: Should Russian nuclear weapons be targeted at particular states in peacetime or not?

Figure 5

Will the World Become More Stable If the Number of Nuclear Weapon States Increases?

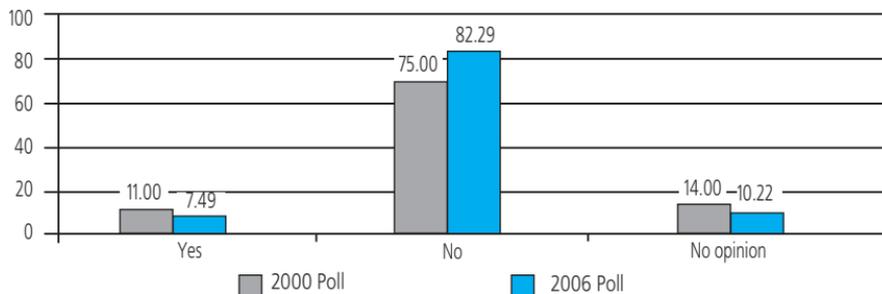
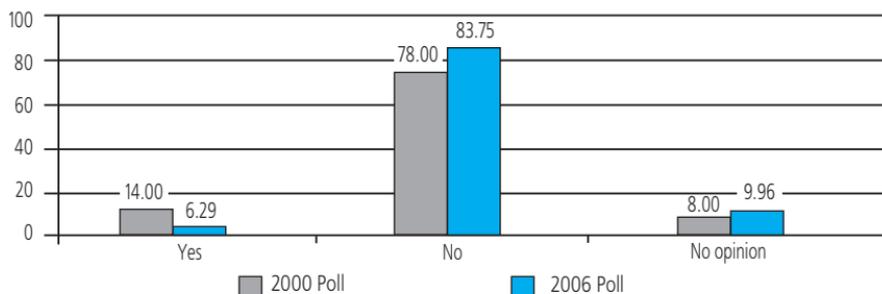


Figure 6

Should Russia Transfer Its Nuclear Technologies and Weapons to Other Countries?<sup>6</sup>



### Methodology Used in the All-Russia Center for the Study of Public Opinions (VTsIOM) Opinion Poll on "Attitudes in the Russian Federation towards WMD Proliferation and Terrorism"

The aim of the poll was primarily to learn about public opinions concerning the threat of WMD. This goal was realized by carrying out a poll of a representative sample of individuals in the Russian Federation on January 21-22, 2006, with a margin of error of 3.4%.<sup>7</sup> The polling was carried out as

part of the weekly polls VTsIOM regularly conducts. The polling was conducted through personal interviews at respondents' residences in all of Russia's federal districts.

When conducting omnibus "express" polls VTsIOM uses a multistage stratified territorial random sampling of respondents. It covers the adult (above age 18) population of the Russian Federation, divided according to sex, age, working status (employment), and type of community in which the respondent lives.

<sup>6</sup> In 2006, this question read as follows: Should Russia proliferate its nuclear weapons to other countries?

<sup>7</sup> The margin of error was taken into account in the analysis of the poll results presented in the present report. In a number of cases noted in the report, we indicate that "perceptible divergences of opinion were not revealed" or the relevant subtopic was omitted.

The selection of respondents involved several distributional requirements<sup>8</sup> and included four steps in the selection process (selection of regions, distribution of respondents according to type of community, determination of a route through the community, and the selection of households and a particular respondent within that household). This allowed for a considerable increase in sampling accuracy, thereby ensuring the highest quality of the predictions and analysis based on the opinions obtained.

A group of 46 Russian regions was composed, in which all types of Russian regions were represented, including several of the largest types of regions (judged by total population). The poll excluded the most inaccessible regions, where less than 0.4% of the population of the Russian Federation lives. Regions of military conflict (the Republic of Dagestan, Chechen Republic, and Republic of Ingushetia) were also excluded.

The number of respondents in each federal district was proportional to its population (given a total sample volume of 1,600 respondents). Within each federal district the total number of respondents was distributed among seven subgroups, which corresponded to seven types of administrative-territorial units (cities with populations of over one million, 500,000-1 million, 100,000-500,000, 50,000-100,000, less than 50,000, rural towns, and rural regions), proportional to the weight of each community type in the population of the federal district in question. The respondents in each subgroup were evenly distributed among regions in the federal district that contain communities of the subgroup's type.<sup>9</sup>

VTsIOM uses the random route sampling method, in which the interviewer only polls respondents in households (apartments, houses) selected in accordance with a specific route. After selecting the route's starting point, the poll organizer informs his interviewers, who in turn select the households to be polled. In accordance

with the rules for conducting the poll, one adult member (over age 18) of each household is polled.

Each interviewer receives a polling assignment from the organizer, with the number of respondents required for the route, the procedure for choosing respondents, and the starting address (community, street, and building number) at which the polling should begin. Before starting his polling, the interviewer determines the houses where interviews will be conducted. The length of the route is not limited ahead of time. The interviewer moves along it as guided by the sampling procedure, until the number of respondents assigned by the organizer has been polled.

To select the respondent in the household, the interviewer uses the selection quota issued by the poll organizer. In accordance with this quota, a given number of women and men, people in different age groups, as well as people with and without higher education must be polled on a particular route. In each household the interviewer finds out if a person of the required sex, age, and education lives there, and if so polls the individual with the necessary characteristics. The selection of a respondent from among several qualified members of a household is left to the interviewer.

The questioning of the respondent is realized by way of a formal interview, during which the interviewer orally reads the questions and records the answers him or herself, noting corresponding code numbers on a form.

### **Methodology Used in Other Public Opinion Polls, the Data of Which is Used in This Report**

This analysis also reflects results of other surveys of public opinion carried out by the All-Russia Center for the Study of Public Opinions, the Obshchestvennoe Mnenie Foundation, and the

<sup>8</sup> The end results of the stratified sampling were: a total of 1,600 people questioned; polling in no less than 40 Russian regions; no less than 150 communities (administrative territorial units) involved; and no fewer than 5 individuals responded in any one community (administrative territorial unit).

<sup>9</sup> If a region has only one community of the type in question, that community was included in the sample from the region. In cases where there were several of a single type of community in a given region (for example, rural regions or towns), the community with a population that was average for that community type in the district was chosen.

independent ROMIR Monitoring research group at their own initiative. The results of these studies are publicly available.

The polling carried out by the All-Russia Center for the Study of Public Opinions that was used in this analysis used the same methodology as the poll on "Attitudes towards WMD Threats in the Russian Federation." The Obshchestvennoe Mnenie Foundation and ROMIR Monitoring research group use methodologies that are largely similar to the VTsIOM methodology.<sup>10</sup>

## Report Structure

This report consists of four chapters and an executive summary, in which the most interesting conclusions and implications are presented in compressed fashion so as to bring them to the reader's attention. Of the four chapters, three are devoted to analyses of the following issues:

### Chapter 1. The Role of Nuclear Weapons in Providing for Russian Security

### Chapter 2. The Possibility of War and Terrorist Acts Involving WMD

### Chapter 3. International Cooperation and Problems of WMD Nonproliferation

Chapter 4 presents some general conclusions, obtained through an analysis of the answers Russians provided during the course of the opinion poll.

Each of these chapters provides a description of several questions from the "Attitudes towards WMD Threats in the Russian Federation" poll that relate to that chapter in the report, along with data from other polls on the issue in question. In the latter case, the organization that undertook the poll is

cited, along with the time of the poll and other information on the poll (as needed). Each chapter ends with a commentary containing the author's evaluation of the poll results presented in that chapter.

The description of each question in the poll includes information on the distribution of answers by political views of the respondents as well as by demographic characteristics (sex, age, level of education, socioeconomic status, income, type of community, and federal district).

Respondents' **political views** were determined by the question, "For which of the following parties would you be most likely to vote in Russian State Duma elections, if they took place next Sunday?" The respondents could choose from four political parties (Edinaya Rossiya (United Russia), the Russian Communist Party (CPRF), the Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR), or the Pensioners Party<sup>11</sup>), or the Rodina Popular Patriotic Union. The absence of the Union of Rightist Forces (SPS) and the Yabloko party on the list<sup>12</sup> narrowed the options for analysis in this part of the study and made it necessary to assume that people from that part of the electorate either indicated that they "would not vote," would vote for "none of the above," or could offer no opinion.

The following **age groups** were used in the research: 18–24 years of age, 25–34, 35–44, 45–59, and over 60. Depending on their **level of education**, respondents were divided into groups with "primary or below, incomplete secondary," "secondary education," "specialized secondary education, or higher education (including incomplete higher education).

<sup>10</sup> *On the methodology used by the Obshchestvennoe Mnenie Foundation*, see Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, an analytical report examining a survey of public opinion in the Russian Federation. PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, pp. 8–9.

<sup>11</sup> *By standards of sociology, one cannot draw accurate conclusions from the results of the 2006 poll in those cases where a particular subgroup has fewer than 100 or, at the very least, 60 respondents, and therefore is not of statistical relevance. Thus, it is only possible to draw conclusions about the larger respondent subgroups. In the area of political preference, just three parties fit this criteria: Edinaya Rossiya, the CPRF, and the LDPR. Since the number of respondents who were Rodina supporters (54 individuals) nearly corresponds to the minimum threshold, the report's author decided to draw conclusions about this group on certain issues, while recognizing that these conclusions may not provide a fully accurate picture of the group's positions.*

<sup>12</sup> *Support for Yabloko and the SPS in the 2004–2006 Russian Federation opinion polls did not exceed 1–2.5%. With a sample limited to 1,600 respondents, it would be impossible to draw any valid conclusions about supporters of these parties.*

Respondents' **socioeconomic status** was determined by their belonging to the following groups:<sup>13</sup>

- Occupation in private enterprise or business.
- Executive, deputy executive, or chief specialist of an enterprise or other organization.
- Division director or specialist with higher or middle specialist education.
- Technical or service personnel.
- Skilled worker (including agriculture).
- Unskilled worker (including agriculture), junior service personnel.
- Personnel in the military, law enforcement (including the police, transport police, and state road traffic inspectorate), or state security agencies.
- Unemployed.
- Student.
- Retired, on a pension (unemployed).
- Housewife/househusband.
- Other group.
- No opinion.
- No answer.

The respondents' **financial circumstances** were determined via three parameters. Primarily, by the level of income in rubles per family member:

- Up to 1,500 rubles.
- 1,501–3,000 rubles.
- 3,001–5,000 rubles.
- 5,001 and above.

Further, according to the answer to the question, "To which of the following groups do you most belong?" with the following possible answers:

- We barely make ends meet. We do not even have enough money for food.
- We have enough money for food, but purchasing clothing causes us financial difficulties.
- We have enough money for food and clothing. But purchases of durable goods (television, refrigerator) are difficult for us.
- We can easily purchase durable goods. However, we find it difficult to buy really expensive items.
- We can permit ourselves to buy fairly expensive things: an apartment, summer cottage (dacha), and many other items.

And, finally, according to the answer to the question, "How do you evaluate your family's financial standing at present?" with the following possible answers:

- Very good or good
- Average
- Bad or very bad.

The answers to these questions supplement each other to a certain extent; therefore they are analyzed together, and grouped under the heading "financial standing of respondents."

**The type of community** of the respondent was determined according to the following categories:

- Moscow and St. Petersburg.
- Over 500,000 inhabitants.
- 100,000–500,000 inhabitants.
- Under 100,000 inhabitants.
- Towns and rural regions.

The opinion poll encompassed residents of all seven of Russia's federal districts: the Central,

<sup>13</sup> In accordance with the thresholds for accuracy explained above (no fewer than 60–100 respondents), required in order to draw accurate conclusions regarding particular socio-demographic or political groups, it proved impossible to analyze the attitudes of such interesting subgroups as military servicemen, businessmen and entrepreneurs, or executives and chief specialists. The report's author decided to include some of these results in the footnotes, as a reference.

Northwestern, Southern, Volga, Urals, Siberian, and Far Eastern districts.

The results of the Attitudes towards WMD Threats in the Russian Federation opinion poll are generalized in chapter four. This chapter synthesizes the answers of particular groups to the polling questions, and provides a typology of respondent

groupings in relation to questions about WMD threats.

The report is prepared in the framework of the joint project of PIR Center and CSIS (Washington D.C., USA) entitled «Strengthening the Global Partnership» with support from the *Nuclear Threat Initiative*.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Russians closely follow events related to weapons of mass destruction (WMD), nuclear weapons in particular. Moreover, an analysis of the distribution of answers of respondents belonging to different political and demographic groups indicates that there is no strict correlation of their preferences to the group in which they belong. Thus it is impossible to divide society, for example, into “doves” and “hawks” where WMD is concerned, or to describe any particular group in this fashion.

Russia's possession of a WMD arsenal is viewed by Russian citizens as evidence of its retention of great power status, particularly in the military sphere. Nuclear deterrence is the country's best security guarantee in a tumultuous world. This is the source of the predominant view in favor of retaining Russia's nuclear arsenal, at least at current levels. At the same time, there is a steady increase in the popularity of the idea of not targeting nuclear weapons at other states in peacetime.

The appearance of “new, non-traditional challenges” to Russian security is widely recognized by the public. 83% of those surveyed affirmatively answered a question about fears that terrorists may use WMD against Russia, while 84% of the respondents were afraid that Russian nuclear facilities might become targets for terrorist sabotage. Furthermore, more than half of those questioned named Chechen terrorists as posing a possible WMD threat to Russia, one and a half times more than the number who saw Al-Qaeda or other terrorist organizations posing a similar threat. Both the danger of terrorist acts against Russia using WMD and the threat of such acts against Russian nuclear facilities noticeably exceeded the danger of any foreign state attacking with WMD, in the views of the Russians questioned.

Despite the end of the Cold War, the United States continues to be the foreign state most associated in Russian Federation popular opinion with the threat of the use of WMD. At the same time, only a third of those surveyed named the United States as a threat, while the proportion of respondents who saw Al-Qaeda, Chechen terrorists, or other terrorist groups as a threat was noticeably

greater – exceeding a third, and at times even half, of those questioned.

The opinions expressed by supporters of various Russian political factions were surprisingly close on many issues. The positions espoused by supporters of Edinaya Rossiya generally resemble the statistically average point of view within the Russian Federation as a whole. This fact testifies to the absence of a Edinaya Rossiya position with regards to WMD issues, which would help separate the views of this part of the electorate from others in the poll.

Opinions of political opponents were divided most strongly, in comparison to other groups of questions, when it came to questions related to the danger of a nuclear war with the use of WMD against Russia. Supporters of opposition parties had a greater than average belief that a foreign attack against Russia using WMD was “highly likely.”

Taking into account Russians' political sympathies, the respondents' views of the actions taken by authorities to increase the security of nuclear facilities are somewhat curious. The most satisfaction with these measures was felt not just by supporters of Edinaya Rossiya (35%), but also by supporters of the CPRF (about 42%). It appears that a greater expression of dissatisfaction, particularly by supporters of opposition parties, was to a certain degree deterred by the prevailing popular notion that giving in to panicky ideas itself meets terrorist aims.

Russian Federation views of the broad problems of nuclear nonproliferation indicate a basic interest in retaining the nonproliferation regime: the overwhelming majority (82-84% of those questioned) rejects the expansion of the “nuclear club” and are against the “spread of Russia's nuclear weapons.”

The group of questions related to Russia's international cooperation in the sphere of WMD nonproliferation and related problems, by and large revealed wide support for the country's actions on the global level. At the same time, some of those questioned were somewhat reticent with regards to such cooperation, particularly where it involved

the receipt of foreign assistance, which they viewed as a "sign of the country's weakness." This attitude, which can be described as "isolationist," has not become a common view, and is only somewhat popular among a few demographic groups (students and servicemen).

Divergences in answers by men and women to any of the groups of questions do not provide grounds to classify either gender as "hawks" or "doves." Instead one could say that the men possessed more information about WMD issues. This is indicated by the fact that in answering any of the poll questions, a higher proportion of women than men could offer no opinion.

In answering the second group of questions (on the danger of nuclear war and WMD terrorist acts), one could say that the women were "more worried;" however, they were simultaneously more satisfied than men by the measures authorities had taken to ensure the secure storage of nuclear materials and WMD. As a whole, answers to this group of questions only confirmed that the differences between the answers of men and women were more likely related to psychological factors than to a more or less rigid approach towards WMD.

An analysis of answers by age group does not provide any clear differentiation of views by age. As a rule, the answers of respondents over 60 and under 25 stand out; their opinions are somewhat different from the majority of those polled. This was most evident in answers to the question about the danger of a foreign attack on Russia using WMD: the answer "highly unlikely" received the greatest support from those 35-44 years of age (in comparison to other age groups), while those under 25 and over 60 were the least supportive of this position.

The proportion of individuals who could offer no opinion was consistently higher in the top age group than in others (up to 44% in the question on export control). Possibly, some of the elder generation views problems related to WMD more calmly, believing that their lives are nearing an end and that the "nuclear genie" will not have time to harm their age group. In addition, they are not as concerned with this issue and, therefore, often are less informed about it.

Not all of the answers given by youth under 25 years of age appear to be logically substantiated. One ought not to overrate, for example, the fact that this group had the greatest (in comparison to other age groups) opposition towards export control or to further Russian participation in the negotiations about the nuclear problem on the Korean Peninsula. At the same time, it is clear that young people are less inclined to value the role of nuclear weapons (the proportion of individuals in this group that stated nuclear weapons "in no way influence national security" was twice as high as the average).

The answers to the question about the threat of the use of WMD against Russia by individual countries and terrorist organizations presented a particularly interesting difference with respect to age: the elder generation more frequently connected this threat to states and more rarely to terrorist groups, while those under 45 (and especially those under 25) more strongly felt the threat of terrorist acts involving WMD.

The level of education of the Russian respondents correlated most closely with the opinions expressed. This arises from the initial association, in popular opinion, of nuclear weapons and other types of WMD with "high technology," which cannot be understood and judged without concrete knowledge obtained through education. Respondents with higher levels of education tended to place more value on the importance of nuclear weapons in providing for Russian security. Of principle importance for the prospects of Russia's international cooperation is the consistent support the group with higher education indicated for various ways of activating Russia's cooperation with other nations, including other G8 states.

The certainty of answers increased with income level (or higher self-identification), along with the optimism of those questioned.

About 60% of those surveyed in the most prosperous groups viewed nuclear weapons as "the main guarantee of Russian security," and the idea of increasing the country's nuclear arsenal becomes more popular as one looks at the more affluent groups of citizens. At the same time, Russians that have become affluent on the whole have positive feelings towards the West and, in particular, towards the United States. To a certain extent,

views of the United States affected their perception of other states and organizations. The more affluent the group questioned, the lower the proportion of individuals who see the United States as a threat to Russia and the higher the number viewing China, Pakistan, Iran, and especially Al-Qaeda (which personifies the enemies of the United States in the eyes of many Russians) as a threat.

International cooperation has strong support among Russia's most affluent citizens, the overwhelming majority of whom support the most varied forms of interaction between their country and the other G8 states, and approve of nonproliferation and export control measures.

There were no clear ties between opinions and place of residence. As one approached larger population centers the proportion of respondents who could offer no opinion decreased, but this is more simply explained as a result of an increased level of education and knowledge of relevant information.

To a certain degree one can isolate the views of inhabitants of rural towns and regions. The majority of this group was satisfied by the actions of the authorities to increase the security of nuclear materials and WMD in storage. At the same time, more than a third of rural residents believed that the danger of a nuclear war against Russia was "highly/more likely." These respondents do not support the idea of expanding the "nuclear club" and are more frequently disturbed by the prospect of nuclear weapons in Iran than the average respondent (almost half of those surveyed).

Residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg voiced a great appreciation for the role nuclear weapons play in national security. Russians from these "two capitals" typically have opinions that are close to those of the most well-to-do citizens. They are much calmer than the rural residents when it comes to questions related to terrorist dangers at Russian nuclear facilities or to threats from external terrorist organizations, and mention Iran (18.4%), China (16%), Pakistan (12.3%) and North Korea (10%) more frequently than the average when asked about the countries that present a WMD threat to Russia. The inhabitants of Moscow and St. Petersburg, more frequently than the "average Russian," support the expansion of the "nuclear club" (up to 15% of those questioned) and the idea of the "spread of Russia's nuclear

weapons" (9.2%), as well as the proposal for the complete dismantling and liquidation of Russia's nuclear arsenal. In these cities one finds the highest levels of support for the coordination of Russian policy with that of the other G8 countries (73.5%), for using foreign assistance to dismantle Russian weapons (49%), and for the inclusion of Russia in international cooperation on biosafety and biosecurity (81%).

The inhabitants of cities with medium-sized populations (100,000–500,000 residents) are more likely to support the long-term increase of the nation's nuclear capacity and less likely to support its reduction.

Living in a particular federal district influenced opinions on WMD issues. An important role is played by the proximity of the region to a conflict zone and to states that either *de jure* or *de facto* possess nuclear weapons, other forms of WMD, and means of their delivery.

One can differentiate the views of respondents in the Northwestern, Urals, and Volga districts on the one hand from the Central and Siberian districts on the other. Respondents in the Southern and Far Eastern districts had views that were somewhere in the middle. Here we are not talking about a strict differentiation between "doves" and "hawks," but the indication that respondents in the first group of districts are clearly less concerned with the dangers arising from WMD. In these federal districts one finds more support for non-targeting of Russian nuclear weapons during peacetime, and the greatest optimism regarding the impossibility of an attack by foreign states or terrorist groups on Russia using WMD or sabotage of the country's nuclear facilities. The Northwestern federal district repeatedly "holds the record" for optimism, whether in response to the question on the danger of an attack on Russia using nuclear weapons (78% of those surveyed answered "highly unlikely"), to the question of nuclear weapons in Iran (56.5% answered "it does not present a threat to Russian national interests"), or to the question about the threat of WMD terrorism to the country (at 20%, the most negative answers).

In the second group of districts there is more support for the idea of increasing the country's nuclear arsenal and a more aggravated perception

of the dangers associated with WMD. The greatest number of supporters for targeting nuclear weapons during peacetime was found in the Siberian region, where opinions on this question were nearly evenly divided. Undoubtedly, the greatest degree of "anxiety" is found in those

regions that are nearest to nuclear powers. Typically, in the "calmest" regions respondents are less worried about the prospects of an expansion of the "nuclear club" and even have fairly positive views of the spread of Russian "nuclear weapons to other countries."

# CHAPTER 1. The Role of Nuclear Weapons in Providing for Russian Security

The majority of Russians are convinced that Russia needs nuclear weapons.<sup>14</sup> This view is shared by 76% of the respondents; moreover, its supporters represent all socioeconomic and political groups. The opposite point of view is held by just 18% of those surveyed.

Additional questioning clarified the position of those supporting Russia's nuclear capabilities (since respondents were permitted to give two answers to this question, the answers total more than 100%): just 19% of them, mostly residents of small cities, emphasized purely military advantages ("a retaliatory strike can be delivered"), while 37–40% noted the political and international security benefits ("Russia is given more clout" and "other countries will not risk attacking Russia").

Nearly a fourth of those who supported Russian nuclear weapons (23%) observed that "the development of nuclear technologies contributes to technical progress" (this argument was particularly popular among individuals with higher education, youth, and residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg).<sup>15</sup>

Those against nuclear weapons made the following arguments:

- Maintaining the nuclear arsenal is too expensive for our country (24%).
- Using its nuclear weapons would cause Russia too much damage (17%).

- Nuclear weapons are unnecessary, since no one will decide to use them anyway (14%).
- No one plans to attack Russia (11%).
- Conventional armaments are enough to repel any possible aggression (11%).
- Because it possesses nuclear weapons, Russia will not have more influence (8%).<sup>16</sup>

According to the results of the recent poll carried out by VTsIOM (to which respondents were allowed to choose three answers; responses therefore total more than 100%), the majority of Russians believe that for the country to be considered great, its citizens must have a high level of welfare (68% of those surveyed) and its industry must be highly developed (59% of respondents). This view is shared by Russians from all socioeconomic and political groups.

Other factors that were mentioned include:

- Highly educated population (30%),
- Observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms (27%),
- Great cultural inheritance (25%).

Only 22% indicated that possession of nuclear weapons was a sign of a great power.<sup>17</sup> Thus, nuclear weapons are seen by Russians more as a necessary, than as a sufficient sign of a great power.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> See *Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, an analytical report examining a survey of public opinion in the Russian Federation. PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 17.*

<sup>15</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 20.

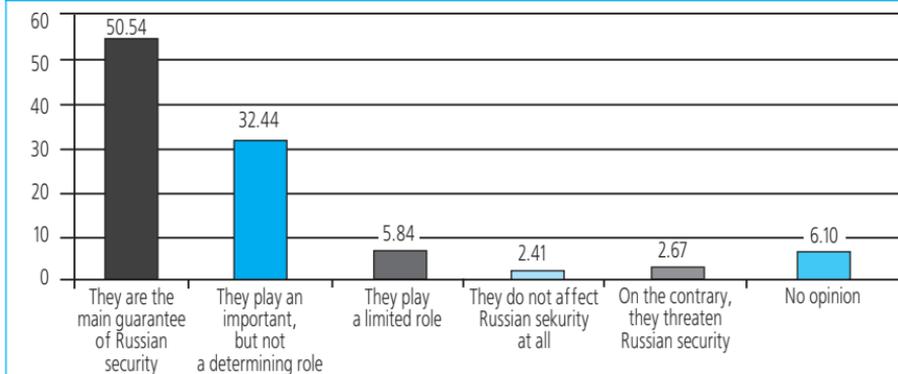
<sup>16</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>17</sup> See <http://www.wciom.ru/?pt=45&article=1589>. For comparison: the belief that rich natural resources and a vast territory are signs of a great state is noticeably rarer (11 and 5% of those surveyed, respectively). The survey was conducted on July 30–31, 2005. 1,600 people in 153 communities in 46 oblasts, krais, and republics of Russia were questioned. The statistical margin of error is less than 3.4%.

<sup>18</sup> The delicate balance in the public understanding of the need to possess nuclear weapons is illustrated to some degree by the results of a poll carried out by the ROMIR Monitoring research group in August 2004 regarding the need for Russia to observe the moratorium on nuclear tests. 1,500 respondents over 18 years of age were surveyed. The overwhelming majority (81%) supported continuing observance of moratorium; the opposite point of view was supported by just 13% of the respondents. See <http://www.romir.ru/socpolit/socio/2004/08/nuc.htm>.

Figure 7

What Role, in Your Opinion, Does Russia's Possession of Nuclear Weapons Play in Providing for National Security?<sup>19</sup>



### Political views of respondents

The points of view of respondents associated with different political forces were very close on this question, with the difference often within the statistical margin of error. Against this relatively equal background, the percentage of those who consider nuclear weapons "Russia's main security guarantee" is noticeably higher among the supporters of Rodina (over 61%) and the LDPR (about 60%). This latter group's opinion that nuclear weapons "threaten Russian security" (over 7%, or nearly three times more than the average) also stands out. This view is relatively more popular among supporters of the CPRF as well (double the average).

### Gender of respondents

Men, on the whole, place a higher value on the national security role of nuclear weapons: 54% in comparison with 48% of women consider it "the main guarantee of Russian security," while a perceptibly higher proportion of women (two and a half times more) have no opinion on this issue.

### Age of respondents

Individuals of less than 25 years of age stand out, as their position is somewhat different from that of the rest of the respondents. Young people are inclined to have less regard for the role of nuclear weapons. The proportion of those that said that nuclear weapons "do not affect Russian security at all" is twice as high in this group. Among those over 60, nearly 11% could offer no opinion about this question.

### Level of education of respondents

Those with higher education placed a higher value on the role of nuclear weapons in providing for Russian security.

### Socioeconomic status of respondents

More than 10% of pensioners and housewives/househusbands could offer no opinion on this issue.

### Financial standing of respondents

About 60% of those with incomes of over 5,001 rubles per family member (significantly more than average) believe that nuclear weapons are the "main guarantee of Russian security." Both the

<sup>19</sup> It is interesting to compare the answers to this question with the results of the survey summarized in the 2000 PIR Center report. At that time, 76% of the respondents expressed their agreement with the assertion that "nuclear weapons play an exceptional role in providing for Russian national security," a statement with which only 15% of those questioned disagreed. See *Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges*, an analytical report examining a survey of public opinion in the Russian Federation. PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 18.

more affluent and the poorest respondents stood out for the high value they place on the role of nuclear weapons.

### Type of community

Inhabitants of Moscow and St. Petersburg, as well as respondents from smaller communities (of up to 100,000 inhabitants), were more likely to place a high value on the role of nuclear weapons in providing for national security.

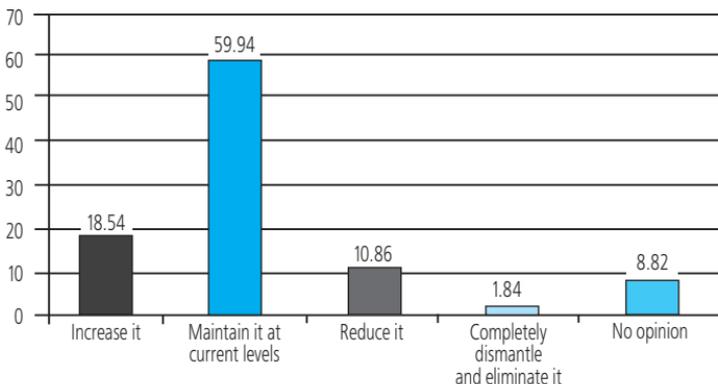
### Federal district

Among those who had difficulty expressing an opinion, the number in the Far Eastern federal district was double the average (over 12%).

Apart from this district, the other federal districts demonstrated a uniform, high valuation (77–87%) of nuclear weapons as playing an “important” or “main” role in providing for Russian national security.

Figure 8

What, in Your Opinion, Should Russia Do with Its Nuclear Arsenal in the Next 3–5 Years?<sup>20</sup>



### Political views of respondents

On the whole, there was no differentiation of opinion by political faction on this question; the views of respondents who would vote for “none of the above” or not vote in elections at all did not stand out either. Those sympathetic to Rodina, the CPRF, and the LDPR more frequently supported the idea of increasing the Russian nuclear arsenal, while its reduction found greater support among the followers of Edinaya Rossiya. Fewer than 2%

of those surveyed were for the complete dismantlement and destruction of nuclear weapons in the short term. The relatively active support for this idea from CPRF voters is noteworthy.

### Gender of respondents

Men generally were more likely to support the retention of the current level of nuclear weapons or its increase. Among women there was a significant portion that could offer no opinion or sup-

<sup>20</sup> It is interesting that in 1999 answers to a similar question – “What do you think, should Russia’s nuclear armaments at present be increased, maintained at the current level, or reduced?” – posed in a VTsIOM opinion poll were distributed somewhat differently. At the time, 46% of Russians were for maintaining the arsenal “at the current level,” 24% were for an increase, and 23% for a reduction. See Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 40.

A similar question (without an indication of a time period), posed to Russians in the July 2005 VTsIOM survey, indicated that only 23% of those questioned believed that everything should “remain as it is today,” while 25% supported an increase in the nuclear arsenal and 39% were for reductions, with the provision that “Russia should keep the number of nuclear weapons necessary to ensure national security.” See <http://www.wciom.ru/?pt=45&article=1589>.

ported the reduction of Russia's nuclear capabilities. At the same time, answers to the question about the prospects for the complete dismantlement and destruction of Russia's nuclear weapons were practically identical (1.5–2%).

### Age of respondents

The answers of individuals belonging to different age groups were nearly indistinguishable. Survey respondents of less than 35 years of age more frequently spoke out in favor of an increase in the country's nuclear arsenal, while respondents who were over 35 were more inclined towards its reduction. The idea of the complete dismantlement and destruction of nuclear weapons proved to be more popular the older the respondent group. However, this support never exceeded 3.5%. Among those over 60 years of age more than 14% could offer no opinion on this question.

### Level of education of respondents

There was no measurable difference of opinion.

### Financial standing of respondents

The idea of retaining and increasing Russia's nuclear weapons capabilities received more support as the socioeconomic status of the respondents increased. Those who said that their family's financial circumstances were "good" or "very good" were more – 5 years.

### Type of community

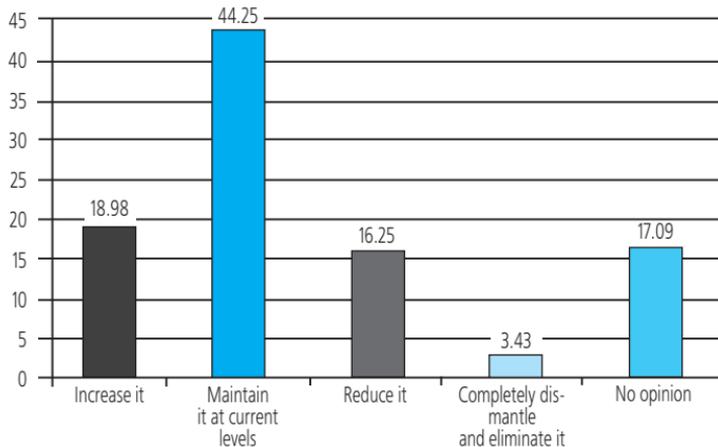
There was no noticeable difference in responses. More than 10% of the inhabitants of smaller cities (population up to 100,000) and rural residents could offer no opinion.

### Federal district

Answers in the Urals federal district stood out: respondents there supported retaining the current level of the country's nuclear arsenal by an overwhelming majority (almost 77% of those surveyed). In other respects, no perceptible differences of opinion were revealed.

Figure 9

### How Should Russia Handle Its Nuclear Arsenal in the Long Term – Over the Next 25–30 Years?



### Political views of respondents

Supporters of various factions expressed very similar points of view. More than a fourth of those sympathetic to the CPRF and LDPR backed the idea of increasing Russia's nuclear arsenal, while there

was relatively more support for its reduction among supporters of Edinaya Rossiya. The CPRF supporters more actively espoused the idea of the complete dismantlement and destruction of nuclear weapons in the long run. It is noteworthy that about the same proportion of respondents

who would vote for “none of the above” or not participate in elections came out in favor of this step as well. Probably these people can be classified as the protest electorate, who are prepared to accept the most radical measures to change the situation inside the country.

### Gender of respondents

Men more frequently backed an increase in the country’s nuclear arsenal (up to 22.5%), while more women were for the reduction of nuclear capabilities (over 18%). Women were somewhat more likely to be unable to offer an opinion. Answers to the question about the prospects for the complete dismantlement and destruction of Russian nuclear weapons were nearly identical (3.1–3.7% in support).

### Age of respondents

Those under 25 years of age more frequently spoke out in favor of an increase in the country’s nuclear arsenal (nearly a fourth of those surveyed), while respondents ages 35-60 were more inclined towards its reduction (18-19%). The idea of completely dismantling and destroying nuclear weapons proved to be more popular as the age group got older. Nonetheless, support never exceeded 3.5%. Among those over 60 years of age, more than 22% could offer no opinion, apparently in the belief that questions about long-term outlooks were inappropriate or tactless.

### Level of education of respondents

There was no measurable difference of opinion.

### Financial standing of respondents

The idea of retaining and increasing Russia’s nuclear weapons capabilities generally becomes more popular as the socioeconomic status of the respondents increases. Those who said that their family’s financial circumstances were “good” or “very good” were more inclined to support an increase in the Russian nuclear arsenal in the future.

### Type of community

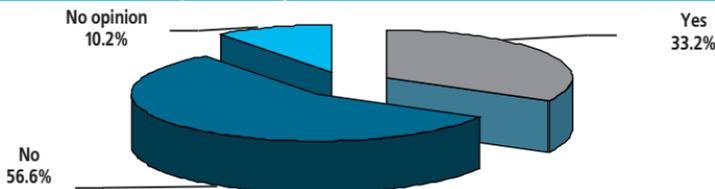
There was no noticeable difference in responses. Inhabitants of medium-sized cities (with populations of 100,000-500,000) were more likely to espouse the idea of a long-term increase in nuclear capacity and less likely to support a decrease. More than 6% of Moscow and St. Petersburg residents were for the complete dismantlement and elimination of the nuclear arsenal.

### Federal district

There is a clear divergence in answers regarding an increase in the nuclear arsenal: those from the Central, Siberian, and Southern federal districts support this measure much more actively than those from the Urals, Northwestern, and Volga federal districts. In all of the regions, approximately half of those surveyed supported the retention of the country’s nuclear arsenal at current levels.

Figure 10

Should Russian Nuclear Weapons Be Targeted at Particular States in Peacetime or Not?<sup>21</sup>



### Political views of respondents

There was a clear difference related to political views: supporters of the CPRF (36.5%), Rodina

(44%), and the LDPR (50%) far more actively backed the idea of targeting Russian nuclear weapons during peacetime. On the other hand,

<sup>21</sup> In 2000 the proportion of people supporting targeting was slightly higher (39%), and the proportion against targeting was slightly lower (51%). See Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 45.

Edinaya Rossiya supporters, as well as those who would vote for “none of the above” or not participate in elections, were more inclined to say that there should be no targeting or could offer no opinion on the matter (10-13% of those surveyed).

### Gender of respondents

Far more men supported targeting than women (41.6% of men vs. 26% of women), while more women supported non-targeting.

### Age of respondents

There was no noticeable difference of opinion.

### Level of education of respondents

There was no noticeable difference of opinion.

### Socioeconomic status of respondents

Among students the number in favor of targeting nuclear weapons (over 51.7%) far exceeded the average.

### Financial standing of respondents

Those with medium and high income levels (over 1,500 rubles per family member) evinced more support for non-targeting than those who were less affluent.

### Type of community

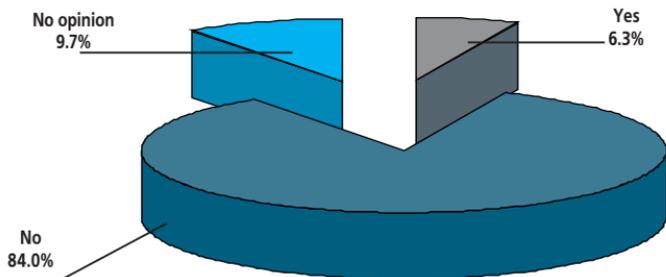
There was no noticeable difference of opinion. A high proportion of Moscow and St. Petersburg residents could offer no opinion on this question (15.4%).

### Federal district

Those from the Urals, Northwestern, and Volga federal districts were far less likely to support targeting in peacetime and more likely to support non-targeting. On the other hand, the number of respondents in the Siberian federal district supporting targeting (45.3%) was nearly as high as the number against it (46.8%)!

Figure 11

Should Russia Proliferate its Nuclear Weapons to Other Countries?<sup>22</sup>



### Political views of respondents

There is a clear difference between the answers of adherents to different political factions: supporters of the CPRF (nearly 7%), Rodina (7.4%), the LDPR (about 10%), and those who would vote for “none of the above” (10.3%) give the most positive

responses. Most likely this idea is being mainly adopted by the “protest voters.” Meanwhile, Edinaya Rossiya voters are less inclined to back this idea (3-4%) and more likely to be unable to offer an opinion (up to 12% for Edinaya Rossiya).

<sup>22</sup> The analogous question in 2000 read as follows: “Should Russia transfer its nuclear technology and weapons to other countries?” Of those questioned at the time, 78% were against this idea and just 14% supported it. It is possible that twice as many supported this idea in 2000 due to the formulation of the question, which made it possible to include transfers of peaceful nuclear technologies that are outside of the “proliferation context.” See Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 51.

**Gender of respondents**

Men were somewhat more likely to answer positively and less likely to be unable to offer an opinion.<sup>23</sup>

**Age of respondents**

There was no noticeable difference of opinion.

**Level of education of respondents**

There was no noticeable difference of opinion.

**Socioeconomic status of respondents**

There is more support for this idea among unskilled workers. There is noticeable reticence with regards to this issue in the attitude of students.

**Financial standing of respondents**

The least support for spreading Russian nuclear weapons was evinced by those with the highest

incomes (of over 5,001 rubles per person) – only two thirds of the average level.

**Type of community**

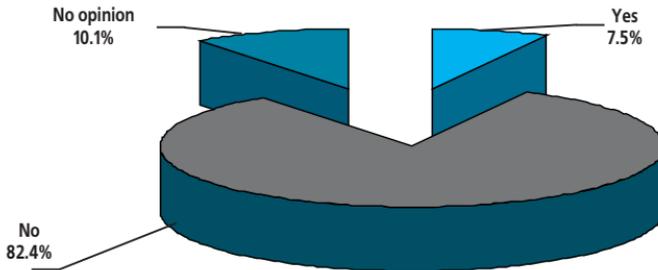
Residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg (9.2%) and rural residents (7.4%) were more likely to support the idea of transferring Russian nuclear weapons. A notably high proportion of residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg (12.3%), residents of smaller cities (11.6%), and rural residents (9.9%) could offer no opinion on this issue.

**Federal district**

The regions in which respondents were most likely to support this measure were the Central, Northwestern, and Far Eastern federal districts. Those in other federal districts were much colder towards this proposition.

Figure 12

Will the World Become More Stable if the Number of Nuclear Weapon States Increases?<sup>24</sup>



<sup>23</sup> Interestingly, a similar tendency was noted in the analysis of the 2000 opinion poll carried out by the PIR Center and CNS. With approximately equal numbers of male and female respondents against the transfer of Russian "nuclear technology and weapons" to other countries (77% and 80%, respectively), there were nonetheless more men supporting such transfers, since a higher proportion of women offered no opinion on the question. See *Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges*, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 52.

<sup>24</sup> Russian views of the probable consequences of the expansion of the informal "club" of nuclear powers have changed appreciably in recent months. According to a poll carried out by VTsIOM in July 2005, 51% of those surveyed supported the creation of "new nuclear countries," believing that they have the same right to nuclear weapons as the United States, China, and Russia. The proportion of those who thought that aspirant states should be isolated and sanctions imposed on them was only 29%. The share of people willing to "shut their eyes" to the nuclear ambitions of "third world" states has now substantially decreased. As a result, both points of view have about the same number of supporters in Russia today (39% and 36%). <http://www.wciom.ru/?pt=53&article=2259>. Sociologists have noted that the different results obtained by the two polls can be explained, in large part, by the influence of information provided by the media.

A similar question was asked during the 2000 poll; at the time, the portion of those against the proliferation of nuclear weapons was 75%, while 11% supported it. It is gratifying that the idea of nuclear nonproliferation has found solid and growing support in the opinions of the overwhelming majority of Russians.\* See *Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges*, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 49.

### **Political views of respondents**

Of those who back the LDPR or vote for “none of the above,” the number backing this idea was one and a half times greater than the average level (about 10%). Average numbers of positive responses were received from supporters of both Edinaya Rossiya and Rodina. But CPRF supporters and those who do not intend to vote or could not determine their political affiliation before elections viewed the possible expansion of the “nuclear club” more negatively.

### **Gender of respondents**

There was no noticeable difference of opinion. Probably the insignificant statistical differences are due to the fact that women were somewhat more likely to be unable to offer an opinion on this issue.<sup>25</sup>

### **Age of respondents**

Those under 25 years of age were more cautious, while respondents older than 60 were twice as likely to support expansion of the “nuclear club” (9%). In both of these age categories, respondents were more likely than average to be unable to offer an opinion (12–14%).

### **Level of education of respondents**

As educational levels increased, the number of respondents who could offer no opinion on this issue decreased. Correspondingly, the share of both positive and negative answers increased.

### **Socioeconomic status of respondents**

The greatest support (nearly 11%) for the idea of expanding the “nuclear club” comes from those who characterize themselves as a “division director or specialist with higher or middle specialist education,” i.e., people with positions in the middle of the social hierarchy. The level of support for this proposition among unemployed pensioners is slightly above average (8.7%). In every socioeconomic group, though, 82–87% are against this idea. The particularly reticent views on this issue expressed by students were also noteworthy.

### **Financial standing of respondents**

The most support for expansion of the “nuclear club” was among those with higher income levels (of above 3,001 rubles per family member) – more than one and a half times greater than the average. At the same time, as one moved to higher income groups the proportion of individuals who could not offer an opinion decreased.

### **Type of community**

Residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg (nearly 15%) were more supportive of the idea of expanding the “nuclear club,” while the proportion of rural residents who gave a positive response was noticeably lower (just 4.2%).

### **Federal district**

The regions where relatively more respondents voiced their support for this prospect were the Central (more than 8%) and Northwestern (11%) federal districts. The proposal met with a cooler response in other federal districts, especially in the Southern district (only 4.7% in support). A remarkably significant number could offer no opinion on this question in the Southern (11.5%), Volga (14%), and Far Eastern (16.3%) federal districts.

### **Commentary:**

1. Nuclear weapons have acquired a firm “status” role in the views of Russian citizens. Five out of every six surveyed either see nuclear weapons as the “main guarantee of Russian security” or believe that they play an “important role.” About 60% of those questioned support retaining the Russian nuclear arsenal at current levels for the next few years; moreover, this proportion was nearly constant, independent of political sympathies or antipathies (indicatively, a similar position was held by those respondents, who would vote for “none of the above” or not vote at all). It seems that the retention of Russia’s nuclear capabilities is viewed by the public as a patriotic and even as a “protest” belief.

<sup>25</sup> The results of the 2000 opinion poll, as summarized in the report by the PIR Center and CNS, gave a somewhat different picture. At that time, men (80% of those questioned) were clearly more decisive than women (72%) in rejecting the idea of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. See Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 49.

2. The negative side of the “image” of nuclear weapons in popular opinion is connected to ideas about the high cost of this arsenal and the dangers related to the possession of nuclear weapons. The question of the cost of maintaining Russia’s nuclear arsenal is recognized by the public; however, expenditures to maintain the current level of armaments generally are viewed as an “unavoidable expense” incurred for Russian security and status. This is clear when one analyzes answers to questions about an increase or reduction of nuclear capabilities. The 18.5–19% of those surveyed who support an increase in the country’s nuclear arsenal (in either the short or the long term), is significantly greater than the 2–3.5% who are ready to consider the complete dismantlement and elimination of nuclear weapons.<sup>26</sup> Even a reduction in nuclear capabilities would only be welcomed by 11–16.5%.

It is interesting that viewed in the long term, support for retaining the current level of the nuclear arsenal is reduced by one fourth; however, the number of those who could offer no opinion doubles at the same time (to 17%), so that support for reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons only gets a little less than half of the “theoretically possible” increase.

3. A third aspect of the nuclear issue – “nuclear threat” – had less of an effect on opinions than one might have expected: only 2.5% of the respondents, mostly those who support the CPRF and LDPR, backed the idea that nuclear weapons pose a “threat to Russian security.” Probably this is connected to the relatively high level of support (5–7%) CPRF supporters demonstrate for the idea of completely dismantling and eliminating nuclear weapons. It is striking that there is approximately the same proportion of support for this measure among those who vote for “none of the above” or do not vote. These answers probably relate to those protest voters who are willing to accept the most radical measures to change the situation in the country. The majority of Rodina, CPRF, and LDPR voters supported the idea of an increase in

Russia’s nuclear arsenal. Edinaya Rossiya supporters were more sympathetic towards its reduction.

4. The issue of nuclear weapons targeting in peacetime is more polarizing than questions about the maintenance or change of the physical dimensions of the nuclear arsenal. Given the perceptible decrease in the danger of a nuclear war, the question about targeting is perceived as less fundamental, and the degree of the respondents’ daring in answering this question is noticeably greater. There are clear differences between the views of those who support different political parties: CPRF, Rodina, and LDPR supporters much more actively espouse the idea of targeting Russian nuclear weapons in peacetime. On the contrary, Edinaya Rossiya supporters, as well as those who vote for “none of the above” and do not vote, are more inclined towards non-targeting.

5. The “status” role of nuclear weapons is reflected in Russian views of the “principal proliferation” issue: the overwhelming majority (82–84% of those surveyed) is against the expansion of the “nuclear club” and against the “proliferation of Russian nuclear weapons.”

Just 6.3% backed the idea of spreading nuclear weapons. Among the supporters of the CPRF, Rodina, the LDPR, and those who vote “none of the above” this idea finds relatively greater support. It is most likely that this idea is basically being welcomed by “protest voters.” At the same time, Edinaya Rossiya supporters are less inclined to be positive towards the idea (3–4% of those surveyed).

Positive answers to this frankly “proliferative” question on the prospect of expanding the “nuclear club” were offered by just 7.5% of those questioned (another 10% were unable to offer an opinion).

6. Due to their high costs, nuclear weapons are seen as an essential part of the nation’s wealth and inheritance, a fact that leads to unexpected agreement of opinion between the most and least afflu-

<sup>26</sup> This low number is confirmed by the results of other public opinion polls. In its poll conducted throughout the Russian Federation, VTsIOM found that only 3% of the Russians surveyed supported the thesis that “Russia should completely renounce its nuclear weapons.” VTsIOM carried out this nationwide opinion poll on July 30–31, 2005, surveying 1,600 people in 153 communities in 46 Russian oblasts, krais, and republics. The statistical margin of error did not exceed 3.4%. See <http://www.wciom.ru/?pt=45&article=1589>.

ent groups: for example, both the most affluent and the poorest respondents placed a strikingly high value on the role of nuclear weapons in providing for Russian security.

These same underlying concepts have completely different implications when the increase in the country's nuclear arsenal is considered. Those who said that their family's financial circumstances were "good" or "very good" were more frequently inclined to support an increase in Russia's nuclear arsenal in the next 3–5 years, to say nothing of in the longer term; in general, the idea of retaining and increasing the nation's nuclear capabilities is more popular the higher the socioeconomic status of those surveyed. The same picture is obtained from answers to the same question with a 25–30 year perspective. Among individuals with an average family income of more than 5,001 rubles per person, about 60% of those questioned (noticeably higher than average) consider nuclear weapons to be the "main guarantee of Russian security."

7. Men by and large place a higher value on the role of nuclear weapons for national security: 54% (vs. 48% for women) consider it the "main guarantee of Russian security;" a perceptibly higher (two and one half times greater) portion of women were not prepared to offer an opinion on this issue.<sup>27</sup> Men more frequently supported retaining the country's nuclear arsenal at current levels or increasing it in the next 3–5 years. Among women, a noticeably higher share found it difficult to offer an opinion or supported a reduction in nuclear capabilities. At the same time, their answers to the question about the complete dismantlement and elimination of Russia's nuclear weapons were nearly identical (just 1.5–2% of those surveyed were "for" complete elimination).

This tendency is also evident in answers to the question about Russia's nuclear arsenal in the long term: men more often supported its increase (up to 22.5%), while more women backed a decrease of nuclear capabilities (over 18%). In answer to the question about the prospects for the complete dismantlement and destruction of Russian nuclear weapons the position of men and women again practically coincided (3.1–3.7%).

Of those supporting targeting, men clearly predominated (41.6% of those polled vs. 26% of women), while more women supported non-targeting.<sup>28</sup>

8. There is no simple correlation between Russian attitudes toward nuclear weapons and age. On the whole, the answers of individuals belonging to different age groups were not easily distinguishable. As a rule, those over 60 and under 25 years of age stood out, as their views differed somewhat from the majority point of view. Young people are inclined to place less value on the role of nuclear weapons. The proportion of individuals in this group who stated that nuclear weapons "in no way influence national security" was twice as high as the average. Of those over 60, more than the average number had difficulty offering an opinion, and twice as many backed the complete elimination of nuclear weapons in the near future.

The answers to the question about the future of the country's nuclear arsenal in the long run (25–30 years) shared similar traits. Those younger than 35 years of age more frequently spoke out in favor of an increase in the country's nuclear arsenal, while those over 35 were more inclined towards its reduction. The idea of the complete dismantlement and elimination of nuclear weapons proved to be more popular the older the age group. However, support for this measure never exceeded 3.5%. Over 22% of the respon-

<sup>27</sup> This tendency has been noted multiple times in various opinion polls. For example, in the PIR Center and CNS report summarizing the results of the 2000 survey, it noted "Men, to a greater degree than women, are certain of the benefits of nuclear weapons for Russia: 82% of them believe that Russia needs nuclear weapons" (vs. 71% among women). The idea of nuclear weapons' "exceptional role" in providing for Russian national security was supported by 79% of the men (and 75% of the women) in the 2000 poll. See Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, pp. 17, 19.

<sup>28</sup> Similar correlations were noted in the 2000 poll. At that time, non-targeting was already supported by the majority of women (58%), and targeting by 50% of men and just 30% of women. See Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 45.

dents more than 60 years of age found it difficult to offer an opinion on this issue, possibly in the belief that questions about long-term outlooks were inappropriate or tactless.

The proportion of those over 60 that support expansion of the "nuclear club" is almost twice the average (9%). Both individuals younger than 25 and those over 60 had noticeably more difficulty in offering an opinion (12–14%).

9. Russians associate nuclear weapons with knowledge-intensive production, the understanding of which requires the appropriate level of education. As the level of education increases from group to group, the proportion of respondents who could offer no opinion falls (from 28% to 18%), and parallel to this, the proportion of both positive and negative responses increases. It is no accident that the group with higher education placed the highest value on the role of nuclear weapons in ensuring Russian security (87% of the respondents either noted nuclear weapons' "important role" or said that they view nuclear weapons as "the main guarantee of Russian security").

10. The respondents' socioeconomic status was determined in many respects by their educational level. It is not by chance that only a small portion of students had difficulty offering opinions and a considerably higher number of unemployed pensioners and housewives/househusbands.

11. An examination of the poll results does not reveal any strict correlations between the opinions expressed and the place of residence of those surveyed. The residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg, for example, more frequently than average expressed their appreciation for the role nuclear weapons play in the provision of national security, but this was also typical of respondents from small communities (of under 100,000 inhabitants). Similar agreement was found in the answers to the question about the "proliferation of Russian nuclear weapons": residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg (9.2%) and rural residents (7.4%) supported this idea more frequently than the average level (and both more frequently had difficulty offering an opinion).

Over 10% of residents of small communities (of under 100,000 inhabitants) and rural residents had difficulty offering an opinion regarding Russia's

nuclear arsenal in the short term; but those with the most difficulty offering an opinion on the question of targeting were the residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg (15.4%).

The parallels between the opinions of inhabitants of Moscow and St. Petersburg, on the one hand, and residents of rural towns and regions, on the other, completely fell away where the problem of the expansion of the "nuclear club" is concerned: inhabitants of Moscow and St. Petersburg (nearly 15%) more frequently supported the idea of the expansion of the "nuclear club," while the proportion of positive responses among rural residents was perceptibly below average. A similar divergence could be seen in answers about the complete dismantlement and elimination of Russia's nuclear arsenal: the share of those supporting this idea in Moscow and St. Petersburg exceeds 6% (almost twice as high as the share among residents of rural towns and regions).

12. Views of the fundamental problems related to nuclear weapons are influenced by the federal district of residence. To some degree, questions about targeting nuclear weapons during peacetime and increasing the nuclear arsenal over the long term can be seen as "polarizing." In the Urals, Volga, and Northwestern federal districts there is below average support for targeting in peacetime and more frequent support for non-targeting. There are also fewer voices in these same regions speaking out in favor of an increase in the country's nuclear arsenal. It appears that the respondents' views are "less anxious" in regions that are further away from conflict zones or states that possess nuclear weapons.

Responses in the Urals federal district are also noteworthy: here one finds the least support for an increase in Russia's nuclear arsenal, while an overwhelming majority (almost 77% of those questioned) backed the retention of the current level of the nation's arsenal. The opposite point of view was found in the Central, Siberian, and Southern federal districts, where there was much more active support for an increase in the nuclear arsenal. In the Siberian federal district, the portion supporting targeting is so high (45.3%), particularly in comparison to other regions, that it approaches the share of those opposing this practice (46.8%).

The assumptions in the “peaceful” regions have an unexpected affect on their inhabitants’ position with regards to “nonproliferation” issues: in regions with lower anxiety levels the prospect of an

expansion of the “nuclear club” is viewed far more calmly, and residents are more inclined to support the spread of Russian “nuclear weapons to other countries.”

## CHAPTER 2. The Possibility of War and Terrorist Acts Using WMD

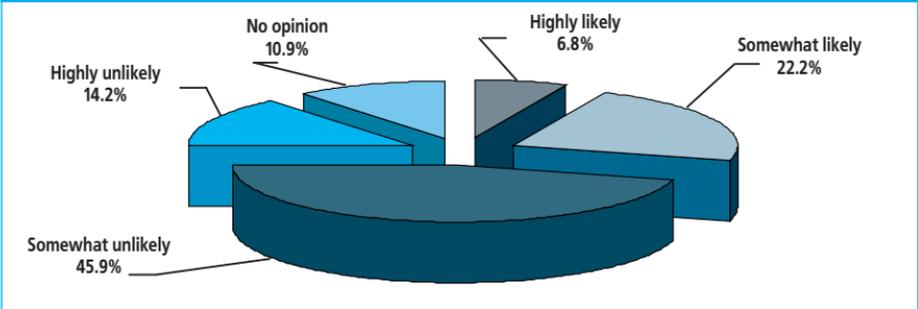
The majority of Russians continue to believe that the threat of deployment of weapons of mass destruction remains. In July 2003, the ROMIR Monitoring research center conducted a survey, including a similar question: "In your opinion, is there now a threat that nuclear weapons may be used?" The survey covered 1,500 Russians older than 18. The answers were as follows: "Yes, some threat" – 44%; "Yes, a significant threat" – 21%; "Virtually no threat" – 19%; "No, no threat" – 9%.<sup>29</sup>

The end of the Cold War facilitated a process of switching the focus of public attention from the WMD threat as related to foreign states, to the dangers emanating from terrorist groups; however, this process is far from complete. Russia's mass media has done a lot to ensure that the public recognizes the real dangers involved were WMD to be acquired by Al-Qaeda and other foreign terrorist

groups, as well as similar groups in Russia itself, particularly in regions embroiled in inter-ethnic conflict.

During a July (2003) survey by the research group ROMIR Monitoring, targeting the attitude of Russia's citizenry to the nuclear threat, one of the questions posed to respondents was: "In your opinion, over the past 10 years has this threat become larger, smaller, or remained at the same level?" One third of respondents answered that the threat has "remained at the previous level," while another 19% replied "become insignificantly/significantly smaller." However, 41% of respondents preferred to answer "become insignificantly/significantly greater." This distribution of replies bears testimony to the perseverance of the "nuclear threat" in the Russian mentality.

Figure 13  
How Probable Do You Consider an Attack by Foreign States against Russia, Using Nuclear Weapons?<sup>30</sup>



### Political views of respondents

Among those who support the CPRF and LDPR, and those who do not intend to vote, the proportion who answered "highly likely" or "somewhat

likely" was noticeably higher than average. The choice "somewhat likely" also received broad support among those who vote for "none of the above" (approximately 30%). The proportion of

<sup>29</sup> See <http://romir.ru/socpolit/socio/2003/08/nuclear-weapons.htm>

<sup>30</sup> One of the questions, for which the answers were analyzed in the PIR Center and CNS report in 2000, was as follows: "Is an attack by foreign states on Russia, using nuclear weapons, possible or impossible?" At that time, the possibility of such an attack was asserted by 53% of the respondents, while 38% considered it impossible. See Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 34.

“highly likely,” “somewhat likely,” and “somewhat unlikely” answers matched the average level among supporters of Edinaya Rossiya. The response “somewhat unlikely” was given by approximately one half of voters for Edinaya Rossiya, LDPR, and those who do not vote. Finally, the response “highly unlikely” was popular among 24% of Rodina supporters. Some Rodina supporters were unable to offer an opinion (almost 13%), like supporters of Edinaya Rossiya (over 11%), and those who vote for “none of the above” (approximately 12%).

### **Gender of respondents**

Although women were unable to offer an opinion with slightly higher frequency, no tangible differences were identified.

### **Age of respondents**

The proportion of respondents that answered “highly likely” falls as the age group increases; this is especially noticeable after the threshold of 45. Respondents in the age group of 35–44 more frequently than others (up to 17%) answered “highly unlikely,” while the least support for this response was given by persons aged up to 25 and older than 60 (12%). Finally, more than 17% of people older than 60 were unable to offer an opinion.

### **Level of education of respondents**

As the level of education grows from group to group, so the proportion of respondents who could offer no opinion, or answered “somewhat likely,” decreases. The proportion of “extreme” responses increases, such as “highly likely” and “highly/somewhat unlikely.”

### **Socioeconomic status of respondents**

The response “highly likely” met with more than average popularity among students, unqualified workers. The response “somewhat likely” was more frequently given by qualified workers, or persons who identified themselves as “division director or specialist with higher or middle specialist education,” i.e. people with positions in the middle of the social hierarchy. Half of qualified workers, and students considered this possibility to be “somewhat unlikely.”

The proportion of respondents who could offer no opinion was one and a half times higher than the average for unemployed pensioners and qualified workers.

### **Financial standing of respondents**

As the group income level increases, the proportion of persons who could offer no opinion falls. Every fifth respondent from the group with income greater than 5,001 rubles considered the possibility of such an attack to be “highly unlikely.”

As the family’s financial standing falls, the support for “extreme” assessments also falls—both “highly likely” and “highly unlikely;” the popularity of the “average” response—“somewhat likely/unlikely”—and the proportion of persons who could offer no opinion both grow.

### **Type of community**

Residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg, and small communities (with populations of up to 100,000), more frequently supported “extreme” response options (“highly likely”/“highly unlikely”), while at the same time approximately 40–50% of respondents in any type of community held a “moderate” viewpoint (“somewhat unlikely”). The concerns of rural residents are particularly noticeable here: more than 27% considered the danger of nuclear war in Russia “somewhat likely.”

### **Federal district**

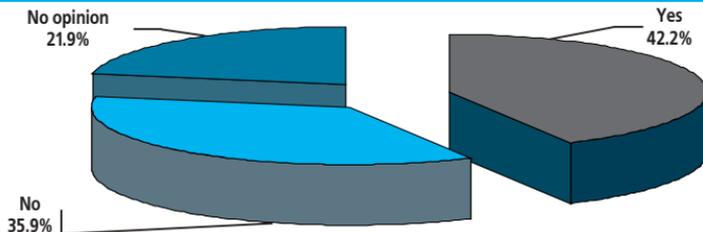
The “high likelihood” of an attack on Russia using nuclear weapons is more frequently perceived in the Central (more than 8% of respondents), Siberian (11%) and Far Eastern (14%) federal districts. In these same regions, this danger is considered to be “somewhat likely” (approximately 26%, 28.5%, and 31.5% of respondents, respectively).

There was least support for such a development of events being “highly unlikely” in the Urals, Siberian, and Volga districts.

The greatest optimism was seen in the Northwestern federal district: 78% of respondents there chose the response “highly/somewhat unlikely” (in Siberia and in the Far East, approximately 50% of responses were in this group).

Figure 14

If Iran Acquires Nuclear Weapons, Will This Comprise a Threat to the National Interests of Russia?



### **Political views of respondents**

Differences in the positions of political forces are not clearly expressed. Among those who support the CPRF, Rodina, LDPR, the proportion that gave positive assertions is above average. A lower than average proportion of positive responses was found among supporters of Edinaya Rossiya, and among those who vote for "none of the above," or who do not intend to vote. The latter more frequently could offer no opinion.

### **Gender of respondents**

No tangible differences were identified. Men more frequently responded negatively, although the proportion of positive responses approximately coincided (due to women more frequently being unable to offer an opinion).

### **Age of respondents**

A respondent group of age 25–34 was identified, whose positive and negative answers were, overall, distributed in inverse proportion: 37% positive and 42% negative responses. 23–24% of those older than 45 could offer no opinion.

### **Level of education of respondents**

As the level of education increases from group to group, the proportion of respondents who could offer no opinion falls (from 28% to 18%), and parallel to this, the proportion of negative responses slightly increases (up to 38% for those with higher education).

### **Socioeconomic status of respondents**

Positive responses more frequently came from unqualified workers. 41–41.5% of qualified workers and persons who identified themselves as "divi-

sion director or specialist with higher or middle specialist education," i.e. people with positions in the middle of the social hierarchy, responded negatively.

### **Financial standing of respondents**

The greatest proportion of people perceiving a threat (47%) was in the group with average incomes (1,501–3,000 rubles). As the group income increases (to more than 3,000 rubles), the proportion of negative responses also grows (to 40–41%). Positive responses most frequently came from the least affluent citizens, and negative responses from the most affluent (up to similar proportions among the most affluent). There is an obvious emphasis on negative responses (47% versus 35% positive) among people who consider their financial standing to be "good or very good."

### **Type of community**

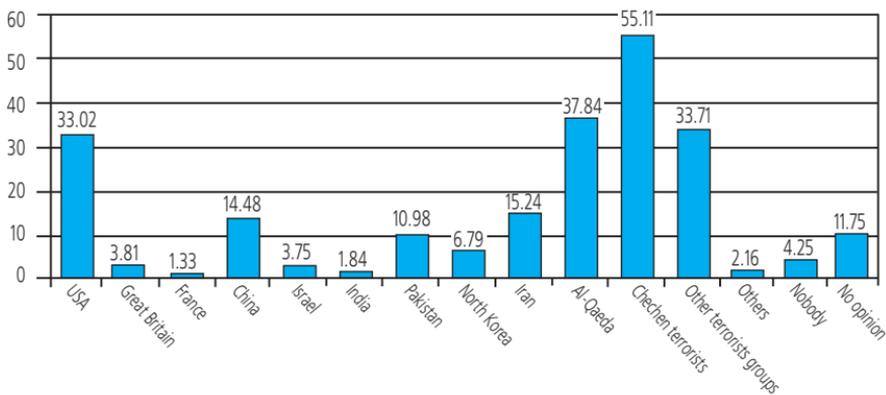
The possibility of Iran possessing nuclear weapons most concerns rural residents (47%) and residents of medium-sized cities (more than 48%), while the least concern (42% negative responses) is shown by residents of major cities (more than 500,000 residents). Here, also, respondents were most frequently unable to offer an opinion (28%).

### **Federal district**

The greatest concern was demonstrated in the Siberian (56% positive responses), Central (48%), and the Far Eastern (43.5%) federal districts, while the Northwest (56.5% negative responses) responded calmly.

Figure 15

Which of the Following Countries and Organizations, in Your Opinion, Poses a Threat to Russia, Involving the Use of WMD?<sup>31</sup>



### Political views of respondents

Differences in the positions of political forces are not clearly expressed. Those who support Edinaya Rossiya named all the above states (apart from Pakistan) with slightly less frequency, and terrorist organizations slightly more frequently. Approximately the same picture is found among those who vote for "none of the above" or who do not vote. Supporters of the

CPRF, Rodina, LDPR more generally held a critical view of the USA<sup>32</sup> (38–47%), the United Kingdom (5–16%), China (15–22%) and Iran (16.5–23%). Chechen terrorists were more frequently perceived as a threat to Russia by supporters of the CPRF (66%). LDPR supporters more frequently saw Israel (about 10%) and North Korea (about 11%) as threats to Russia. Interestingly, the greatest proportion of respon-

<sup>31</sup> It is interesting to compare the survey data with the results of a survey conducted by ROMIR Monitoring in July 2003. 1,500 Russians older than 18 were surveyed. The answers to the question of who currently poses the primary threat involving the use of nuclear weapons was balanced as follows: USA: 32%; international terrorists: 32%; North Korea: 7%; China: 6%; India and Pakistan: 4%; another 11% of respondents could offer no opinion. See <http://romir.ru/socpolit/socio/2003/08/nuclear-weapons.htm>

<sup>32</sup> As part of the international survey Voice of the People, conducted by Gallup International, the research group ROMIR Monitoring conducted a survey in August 2004, on the attitude of citizens of the Russian Federation and the United States to other G8 countries. 1,500 people (older than 18) in 102 Russian communities were surveyed. The respondents were asked, among others, the following question: "What is your opinion of the USA?" Opinions were split almost equally: 30% said "very/fairly positive," 35% said "very/fairly negative," while 34% said "neutral." It is curious to compare these figures with similar ones for other nuclear powers. France provokes a "very/fairly negative" attitude in just 3% of respondents, while for the UK the figure is 7%. Answers to the question "Does the USA play a positive, negative, or neutral role in the following processes?" evoked different responses, depending on the processes mentioned: in the field of "ensuring peace across the world:" 53% of respondents indicated a negative US role, and just 16% indicated positive. Russians have other attitudes to the role played by the US: under "the fight against international terrorism:" 44% of respondents noted a positive role of the US and just 29% indicated a negative one. In answering the next question, 60% of Russians emphasized a "negative influence" of America's foreign policy on Russia, while just 12% stated there was a "positive influence." See <http://www.romir.ru/socpolit/socio/2004/10/world.htm>.

Moreover, more than half of Russians questioned by ROMIR Monitoring in January of 2005 expressed hope for an improvement of Russo-American relations in coming years. Just 26% of respondents selected the response "highly likely/likely to deteriorate," while another 21% could offer no opinion. See: <http://romir.ru/socpolit/socio/2005/02/usa.htm>

dents who could offer no opinion was supporters of Edinaya Rossiya (11%), the CPRF (10%), and those who vote for "none of the above" (10%) or do not vote (17%).

### **Gender of respondents**

No tangible differences were identified. Men tended to assess the threat from nuclear powers, Iran, Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups more definitively, while women more frequently were unable to offer an opinion (up to 13.5% of respondents) and assessed the threat from India, Pakistan, and Chechen terrorists more stringently.

### **Age of respondents**

Persons older than 60 somewhat more frequently perceived a threat from the United States, the United Kingdom, Israel, Pakistan, and North Korea, and believed less in a threat involving WMD emanating from terrorist groups.

Conversely, people aged under 45 (especially those under 25) more strongly perceived a threat of WMD terrorism. Approximately 18% of people over 60 could offer no opinion.

### **Level of education of respondents**

As the level of education rises from group to group, so the proportion of those perceiving a threat from the United States, the United Kingdom, China, Israel, Pakistan, and Iran also increases. Parallel to this, the proportion unable to offer an opinion decreases (from 21% to 10%).

The greatest danger from Al-Qaeda is seen by people with middle special and higher education (up to 43%) somewhat lower than the "peak" perception of a threat from Chechen terrorists: this is expressed by people with middle and specialist middle education (56–57%).

### **Socioeconomic status of respondents**

The USA is more frequently seen as a threat by students (37%) and specialists with higher and middle specialist education (39%); the United Kingdom is seen as a threat by housewives/househusbands (10%); China by specialists with higher education (19%); Pakistan (15%) and Iran (19%) by division directors or specialists with higher and middle specialist education.

### **Financial standing of respondents**

As the income level increases from group to group, the proportion of those who see the United States as a threat to Russia decreases, while the corresponding proportion for China, Pakistan, Iran, and Al-Qaeda increases (from 29% to 44% among those who earn over 5,001 rubles per family member). The United States, the United Kingdom, China, Pakistan, and Iran received the most stringent assessments both from the poorest and the most affluent citizens. It is quite noteworthy that those who assess their financial standing as "good or very good" more frequently simultaneously see the United States (more than 39%) and Al-Qaeda (43%) as threats to Russia.

### **Type of community**

The United States was least frequently named by residents of small cities (of up to 100,000 residents) and rural residents (27–32% of respondents), while residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg more frequently than average named China (16%), North Korea (10%), Iran (18.4%), and Pakistan (12.3%). The greatest concern over the possibility of action by Chechen terrorists was expressed by residents of cities with populations of up to 500,000 people (58–60% of respondents).

### **Federal district**

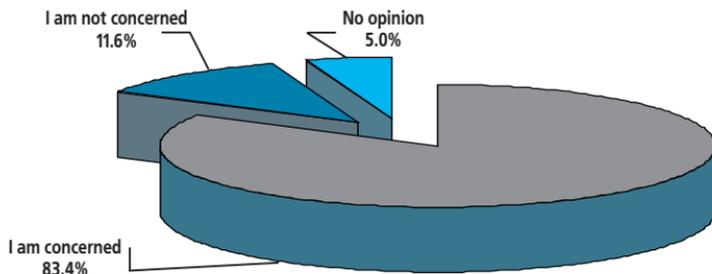
The most stringent assessments of the United States and the United Kingdom were obtained in the Central (38% and 6.7%, respectively), Southern (42% and 5.5%), and Far Eastern (40% and 6.5%) federal districts, and were least frequently named in the Urals (20.5% and 1%) and Northwest (23% and 2%) districts.

China is primarily perceived as a threat to Russia involving the use of WMD in the Far Eastern (31.5%) and Siberian (20%) districts (for comparison: in the Urals, a total of 5%, and less than 8% in the Northwest). In the Central district (11.5%) and in the Far East (10%) the threat from North Korea is seen as higher.

The threat from Al-Qaeda is more frequently named in the Central (43.5%) and Siberian regions (46%). The greatest concern over the possibility of action by Chechen terrorists was expressed by residents of the Central and Siberian districts (over 61% of respondents).

Figure 16

Are You Concerned That Weapons of Mass Destruction, if They Fall into Hands of International Terrorists, May Be Used against Russia?<sup>33</sup>



### Political views of respondents

Differences between the positions of the political factions were not clearly expressed. The greatest proportion of positive answers was given by supporters of the CPRF (89%), those who vote for "none of the above" (88.5%), and Rodina (87%). Negative responses were more frequently voiced by LDPR supporters (16%), who also had the greatest proportion unable to offer an opinion (more than 6%). Supporters of Edinaya Rossiya gave answers close to the statistical average.

### Gender of respondents

No tangible differences were identified. Women demonstrated greater anxiety<sup>34</sup> and gave negative answers less frequently.

### Age of respondents

People aged over 60 (14%) and younger than 25 more frequently gave negative responses.

### Level of education of respondents

As the level of education grows from group to group, so the proportion of negative responses grows (from 10% to 13%).<sup>35</sup>

### Socioeconomic status of respondents

The use of WMD against Russia by terrorists was of greater concern to service personnel (90.5%).<sup>36</sup> The least concern was expressed by students (16.3%).

### Financial standing of respondents

No tangible differences were identified, with the important exception of the group of people receiving more than 5,001 rubles per family member: 22.5% of negative responses. The proportion of negative (optimistic) responses grows, overall, as the financial standing of responses increases (from 9% to 16% among persons who assess their financial standing as "good or very good").

<sup>33</sup> A similar question regarding nuclear weapons, posed in a survey in 2000, the results of which are included in the report of the PIR Center and CNS, identified a similar picture of moods among Russians. 86% of respondents were concerned about such a development of events, while just 10% were not concerned. See Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 36.

<sup>34</sup> The 2000 survey, the results of which were included in the report by the PIR Center and CNS, identified a similar picture: women were concerned by the use of WMD by terrorists more than men (89% of women and 82% of men expressed concern). See Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 36.

<sup>35</sup> A similar trend was identified in the 2000 survey: 15% of the respondents with higher education were not concerned by the possibility of the use of WMD by international terrorists. See Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 36.

<sup>36</sup> There was a similarly high degree of concern noted among servicemen (94%) and individuals involved in private business (89%).

### Type of community

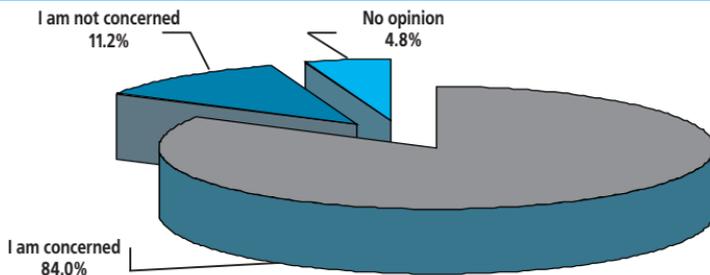
The greatest optimism was demonstrated by residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg, while in rural regions negative responses fell to below 10%.

### Federal district

The greatest concern was expressed by residents of the Central (87%), Southern (86%), and

Siberian (86%) federal districts, while optimism was expressed in the Northwest federal district (more than 20% negative responses). Respondents from the Far Eastern, Volga, and Urals federal districts expressed the greatest degree of concern about the use of WMD against Russia by terrorists (78%, 79.5%, and 82%, respectively).

**Figure 17**  
Are You Concerned That Russian Nuclear Facilities (Power Plants, Nuclear Weapon Storage Facilities, etc.) May Become the Target of Sabotage by Terrorists?<sup>37</sup>



### Political views of respondents

The greatest level of concern was expressed by supporters of the CPRF (6% negative responses) and Rodina (5.5%), and the least level was shown by supporters of Edinaya Rossiya (13.5%) and the LDPR (14.5%). In addition, the proportion of concerned respondents was high in all groups: 80–91%, including those who would not vote or who would vote for “none of the above.”

### Gender of respondents

No tangible differences were identified. Women demonstrated slightly more anxiety, and were unable to offer an opinion slightly more frequently.

### Age of respondents

The greatest concern was expressed by people aged 35-44 (less than 10% negative responses),

while those over 60 (12.5%) and younger than 25 (12%) more frequently gave negative answers.

### Level of education of respondents

Respondents with higher education more frequently expressed concern (approximately 87%) and were less frequently unable to offer an opinion.

### Socioeconomic status of respondents

Concerns were expressed to a greater degree by unqualified workers (89%).<sup>38</sup> The least concern was demonstrated by unemployed pensioners (more than 12.5% negative responses), service personnel, and qualified workers (in the order of 14%). Among those who could offer no opinion, students were predominant (approximately 11%).

<sup>37</sup> Responses to the same question during the 2000 survey, the results of which were included in the report by the PIR Center and CNS, showed an even more anxious picture of public opinion: 90% were worried about sabotage, and a total of just 7% responded that they were not concerned by this. See Russians on Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Challenges, PIR Library Series, Moscow, 2000, p. 37.

<sup>38</sup> 93% of servicemen and 87% of private businessmen surveyed also expressed concern.

### **Financial standing of respondents**

The level of concern falls as the group's prosperity level increases: groups of people earning more than 5,001 rubles per family member gave almost 16% negative responses.

The share of negative (optimistic) responses, overall, increases as the respondent financial standing increases (up to 29% among the richest).

### **Type of community**

The greatest optimism was demonstrated by residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg (approx-

mately 13%), while in rural regions negative responses fell to below 10%.

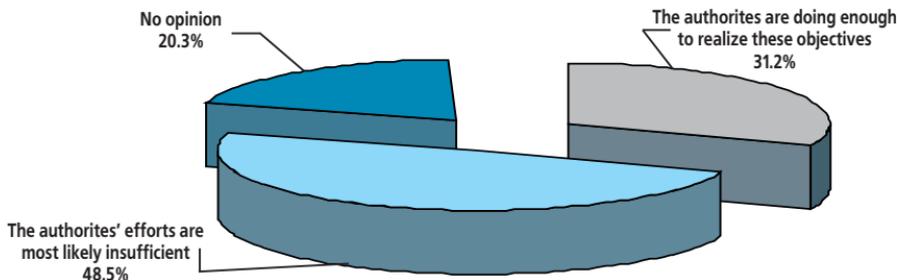
### **Federal district**

The greatest proportion of optimists was in the Northwestern (17.5% of negative responses), Far Eastern (16.3%), Volga (approximately 15%), and Siberian federal districts (approximately 15%).

The greatest proportion of concerned respondents was in the Central (less than 6.5%) and Southern (approximately 6%) federal districts.

Figure 18

**Do You Consider the Actions of the Russian Authorities to Be Sufficient to Enhance the Security of the Storage of Nuclear Materials and Weapons of Mass Destruction in Russia, and to Prevent Possible Unauthorized Access to Them?**



### **Political views of respondents**

The greatest satisfaction was demonstrated by supporters of the CPRF (42%) and Edinaya Rossiya (35%). However, 44% of supporters of Edinaya Rossiya and 40% of those who vote for CPRF, responded negatively. The efforts of the authorities were considered to be insufficient by those who voted for Rodina (61%), "none of the above" (approximately 61%), LDPR (55%), and those who do not vote (57%).

### **Gender of respondents**

Women demonstrated a lesser tendency to criticize the authorities (although 45.7% considered current efforts to be insufficient) and were more frequently unable to offer an opinion (21.5% of respondents).

### **Age of respondents**

The greatest level of concern was expressed by persons aged under 45, while those over 60 in more than a quarter of cases could offer no opinion.

### **Level of education of respondents**

As the level of education increases from group to group, so the proportion of those approving efforts by authorities falls (from 35% to 27%), while the proportion of the unsatisfied respondents grows (from 38% to 56%). It is noteworthy that all groups expressed general dissatisfaction.

### **Socioeconomic status of respondents**

Approval, higher than the statistical average, was expressed primarily by employees of technical and service industries. Meanwhile, there are high fig-

ures for the dissatisfaction of unqualified workers (51.5%), the unemployed (51.5%), and students (52%). Unemployed pensioners frequently were unable to offer an opinion (more than one quarter of respondents), as were housewives/househusbands (24%), and unqualified workers (20%).

### **Financial standing of respondents**

A critical attitude was found with greater frequency among both poor respondents and especially among those earning more than 5,001 rubles per family member (57% dissatisfied). The proportion of "insufficiently" replies is lowest in families with average incomes (however, even here it is at 46%), and reaches a maximum (55%) among respondents who assess their financial standing as "good or very good."

### **Type of community**

Residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg (approximately 56%) were unsatisfied, while in towns and rural regions (up to 100,000 residents) more than 33% of respondents considered current efforts by authorities to be sufficient.

### **Federal district**

The greatest proportion of unsatisfied respondents was in the Urals (57%), Central (52%), and Siberian (55%) federal districts, although across all districts, satisfied respondents were clearly in the minority.

### **Commentary:**

1. The danger of terrorist acts against Russia, both using WMD and against Russian nuclear facilities, noticeably exceeds the threat of an attack using WMD by any foreign power, in the opinion of Russians.

2. Despite the end of the Cold War, the United States is still the main foreign state, which is associated in Russian popular thinking with the threat of the use of WMD. One third of Russians named the United States and this proportion, with insignificant fluctuations, is traced through all social, educational, and age groups. It is noteworthy that the proportion of Russians who indicated a threat from Al-Qaeda, Chechen terrorists, and other terrorist groups exceeds one third, and sometimes one half of the respondents.

The second place among states associated with the danger of the use of WMD went to Iran (more than 15%, despite the fact that it does not possess nuclear weapons), which thus overtook China (14.5%), as well as other states that officially possess nuclear weapons. Pakistan, which has conducted nuclear testing, was also overtaken (just 11%). This, indubitably, is the result of regular coverage in the mass media of the crisis around the Iranian nuclear program.

3. The political views of the respondents, clearly, affected the responses to the group of questions on the danger of nuclear war and other uses of WMD against Russia. The most popular response, "somewhat unlikely," was chosen by approximately one half of the votes of respondents from Edinaya Rossiya, LDPR, and those who do not vote. The response "highly unlikely" was chosen by 24% of Rodina supporters. Among those who support the CPRF, LDPR, or do not intend to vote, the proportion that responded that the probability of a foreign attack using WMD was "highly likely" or "somewhat likely" was noticeably higher than the average level. Broad support for the response "somewhat likely" was garnered among those who vote for "none of the above." Thus, there are definite differences of opinion, although these do not reach "polarizing proportions."

Active concern over the nuclear threat is connected to the perception of dangers emanating from foreign states, and to terrorist threats. Supporters of the CPRF, Rodina, and the LDPR, more than the statistical average, have a critical view of the United States (38–43%), the United Kingdom (5–16%), China (15–22%), and Iran (16.5–22%). Chechen terrorists are perceived, at a level tangibly higher than the average, to be a threat to Russia by supporters of the CPRF (66%). Supporters of the LDPR more frequently named as threats to Russia Israel (about 10%) and North Korea (about 11%). Those who support Edinaya Rossiya named all the states (apart from Pakistan) with a frequency slightly less than average, and named terrorist organizations slightly more frequently. Approximately the same picture can be seen among those who vote for "none of the above" or do not vote. The impression is thus formed that supporters of none of the parties base their responses on an "automatic reflex," e.g. "against the West," "against China," or against some other

countries, but instead follow their own ideas about Russia's national interests.

In the responses to the question on the threat of terrorists using nuclear weapons against Russia, differences between the positions of political forces are not clearly expressed. The greatest proportion of positive responses was among supporters of the CPRF (89%), those who vote for "none of the above" (88.5%), and Rodina (87%). Negative responses of greater frequency than the average were voiced by those representing the LDPR (16%). Those who supported Edinaya Rossiya gave answers similar to the statistical average. In approximately the same way, political sympathies were influential in the question of the danger of a terrorist attack on Russian nuclear facilities. The greatest concern was demonstrated by supporters of the CPRF (a total of 6% of negative responses) and Rodina (5.5%), while the lowest were in Edinaya Rossiya (13.5%) and the LDPR (14.5%). In addition, the proportion of concerned respondents is higher in all groups: 80-91%, including those who would not vote or would vote for "none of the above."

The assessment by Russians of the actions of the authorities to enhance the security of nuclear facilities is of interest. The greatest satisfaction was expressed by supporters not only of Edinaya Rossiya (35%), but also the CPRF (about 42%). However, 44% of Edinaya Rossiya supporters and 40% of supporters of the CPRF declared their lack of satisfaction.

In the issue of the threat to Russia's national interests from the acquisition of nuclear arms by Iran, differences in the positions of political forces were not starkly expressed. Among those who support the CPRF, Rodina, and the LDPR, the proportion concerned about such a development of events was above the average level. Below the average level was the proportion of such answers among supporters of Edinaya Rossiya and those who vote for "none of the above," or who do not intend to vote.

4. The threat of nuclear war and terrorist acts using nuclear weapons and other forms of WMD have caused approximately equal concern on the part of male and female respondents. Women were unable to offer an opinion with noticeably greater

frequency, although no tangible differences were identified.

Women demonstrated a higher level of alarm, although at the same time they demonstrated a lesser tendency to criticize the Russian authorities, which is easily noticeable from the responses to the question about the sufficiency of actions by the authorities to enhance the security of stored nuclear materials and WMD. Men tended to more stringently assess the threat from nuclear powers, Iran, Al-Qaeda, and other terrorist groups, while women were more outspoken about the threat from India, Pakistan, and Chechen terrorists.

5. The age of respondents indirectly affects opinions about the threat of war and terrorist acts using WMD, although this interdependence is expressed in various ways. Overall, the proportion of respondents who responded to the question about a foreign attack using WMD as "highly likely" falls as the age group increases, and this is especially visible above the threshold of 45 years. People aged over 60 (14%) and younger than 25 more frequently than the average gave negative answers both to the question of the danger of the use of WMD against Russia by terrorists, and about the terrorist threat for Russian nuclear facilities.

People older than 60 slightly more frequently perceive a threat from the United States, the United Kingdom, Israel, Pakistan, and North Korea, and believe less in a threat involving the use of WMD from terrorist groups. Conversely, people aged under 45 (especially under 25) more strongly sense a threat of terrorist acts using WMD. It appears that the main mass of opinions about the sources of nuclear threats was obtained by the elder generation during the Cold War, while young people gained these opinions after the Cold War had ended.

6. The certainty of responses is directly linked to the level of education. As the level of education grows from group to group, the proportion that was unable to offer an opinion falls (for example, from 21% to 10% of respondents when answering the question about the threat to Russia from the above states and terrorist organizations), and support often grows for both answers, which can be seen as "extreme." For example, in answering the question on the likelihood of a foreign attack

against Russia using nuclear weapons, the proportions of both “highly likely” and “highly/somewhat unlikely” both rose. As the level of education grows from group to group, the proportion perceiving a danger from the United States, the United Kingdom, China, Israel, Pakistan, and Iran also grows. In addition, when answering the question about the danger for Russian national interests of Iran’s acquisition of nuclear weapons, the proportion of negative answers grows as the level of education grows (up to 38% among people with higher education). In answering the question on the sufficiency of actions by the Russian authorities to enhance the security of nuclear materials and WMD storage, in moving to a group with a higher level of education, the proportion of those approving of the efforts of the authorities falls (from 35% to 27%), and the proportion of dissatisfied respondents grows (from 38% to 56%). Respondents with higher education more frequently expressed concern over the threat of an attack by terrorists against Russian nuclear facilities (about 87%).

7. The financial standing of respondents influenced the character of these answers. As the income of a group grows, so the proportion of respondents who could offer no opinion falls, and the number of optimists grows in parallel.

One in five respondents from the group with high income per family member (more than 5,001 rubles) considered the possibility of a foreign attack using WMD as “highly unlikely,” while among the most affluent citizens, support for a similar response was five times higher than the average level: more than 71%. As the financial standing of the respondents increases, the proportion of optimistic responses to the question of the threat of a terrorist attack against Russia using WMD (in the group of respondents receiving more than 5,001 rubles per family member the proportion of optimists was 22.5%—twice the statistical average). The level of concern on the question of the terrorist threat to Russian nuclear facilities also falls as we move to more affluent groups (up to 29% of optimistic responses among the most affluent).

The same tendency is seen in assessments of the importance of the theoretical acquisition of nuclear weapons by Iran: among those who assess their financial standing as “good or very good,”

almost one half (one and a half times more than the statistical average) do not see such a development of events as a threat to Russian national interests.

Rich Russians have a more benign attitude towards the United States which is reflected, to some degree, in their attitude to other states and organizations. As we move to groups with greater incomes, the proportion of those that perceive the United States as a threat to Russia falls, and in parallel the corresponding proportion for China, Pakistan, Iran, and especially Al-Qaeda increases (from 29% to 44% among those who earn more than 5,001 rubles per family member).

The group of Russians with an average income level—more frequently than both poor and rich citizens—perceives a threat to Russian national interests if Iran acquires nuclear weapons (47% of respondents). Parallels in the moods of the most and least affluent Russians are noticeable when comparing answers to the question of the sufficiency of actions by Russian authorities to enhance the security of nuclear materials and WMD storage: dissatisfaction was voiced more frequently than the average by both poor Russians and the most affluent.

8. The socioeconomic status of respondents is one of the categories that integrates other social parameters – primarily financial standing and level of education. A higher level of information awareness on problems mentioned during the survey was noted among military personnel, students, and executives and deputy executives of enterprises and organizations. Among these, there was a low proportion of respondents who were unable to offer an opinion, which was noticeably higher among unemployed pensioners and housewives/househusbands, as well as the unemployed.

9. The threat of war and terrorist acts involving the use of WMD are perceived differently, depending on the place where the respondents live. Residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg, more than the average level, indicated Iran (18.4%), China (16%), Pakistan (12.3%), and North Korea (10%) when answering the question about which countries pose a threat to Russia, involving the use of WMD.

Rural residents perceived the threat of war involving WMD far more acutely: more than a third considered the threat of nuclear war against Russia to be "highly/somewhat likely." Rural residents more frequently than the statistical average are concerned by the possibility of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons (47% of respondents), and by the threat of WMD being used by terrorists, or terrorists attacking Russian nuclear facilities. Similar attitudes are traced in the results of a survey of residents of small communities (up to 100,000 people). Moreover, "permanent alarmism" is not the issue here: in rural regions and towns (up to 100,000 residents) more than 33% of respondents (more than the average) considered current efforts by authorities to enhance the security of Russian nuclear facilities to be sufficient, and when answering the question about the danger of individual countries and organizations, the residents of rural regions and towns named the United States less frequently than in other groups (27–32% of respondents).

The greatest optimism in answering the question about the terrorist threat to Russian nuclear facilities was demonstrated by residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg, while in rural regions the proportion of negative responses is noticeably lower. The same is typical with respect to opinions about the threat of WMD terrorism against Russia. The largest and small communities had different opinions about the sufficiency of actions by the Russian authorities to enhance the security of nuclear materials and WMD storage: the majority of residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg were not satisfied (about 58%).

10. The possibility of war and terrorist acts involving the use of WMD are, as previously, perceived differently in different federal districts. The main factor explaining these differences can be seen to be the proximity of districts to conflict zones or states that officially or unofficially possess nuclear weapons. These problems are perceived more acutely in the vicinity of the capital.

An attack on Russia using nuclear weapons is seen as "highly/somewhat likely" in the Central (more than one third of respondents), Siberian (about 40%), and Far Eastern (45.5%) federal districts. Such a development of events was seen as "highly/somewhat unlikely" by a majority of respondents in the Southern (65%), Urals

(64%), and Volga (64%) districts. This possibility is seen with the greatest optimism in the Northwest federal district: 78% of respondents there chose the answers "highly/somewhat unlikely."

Approximately the same picture can be seen in answers to the question of the threat of WMD terrorism against Russia. The greatest concern is expressed by residents of the Central (87%), Southern (86%), and Siberian (86%) federal districts, while optimism was shown in the Northwestern federal district (more than 20% negative responses). The possibility of terrorist sabotage at Russian nuclear facilities was considered to be most likely by respondents in the Central (92%) and Southern (about 89%) federal districts. The greatest proportion of optimists was in the Northwestern (17.5% negative responses), Far Eastern (16.3%), Volga (about 15%), and Siberian federal districts (about 15%).

Thus, the level of concern among respondents is noticeably more expressed in the Central and Siberian districts, and less in the Northwestern, Urals, and Volga districts, while respondents in the Southern and Far Eastern districts hold an intermediate position. Established ideas about "district preferences" are somewhat disrupted by answers to the question on satisfaction with measures by Russian authorities to enhance the security of nuclear materials and WMD storage in Russia.

Although in all districts satisfied respondents were in a noticeable minority, the greatest proportion of unsatisfied respondents was not only in the Central (52%) and Siberian (55%) federal districts, but also in the "unconcerned" Urals district (57%).

The most stringent assessments of the United States and the United Kingdom were voiced in the Central (38% and 6.7%, respectively), Southern (42% and 5.5%), and Far Eastern (40% and 6.5%) federal districts, and were mentioned least frequently in the Urals (20.5% and 1%) and the Northwest (23% and 2%). China is perceived as a threat to Russia, involving the use of WMD, primarily in the Far East (31.5%) and Siberia (20%), which are closest to this country (for comparison: in the Urals just 5%, and in the Northwest less than 8%). The

threat from Al-Qaeda is more frequently mentioned in the Central (43.5%) and Siberian regions (46%). The greatest level of concern over the possibility of acts by Chechen terrorists were expressed by the Central and Siberian districts (more than 61% of respondents).

The possibility that Iran will acquire nuclear weapons is a cause for greatest concern in the Siberian (56% affirmative responses), Central (48%), and Far Eastern (43.5%) federal districts, and the least concern in the Northwestern district (56.5% of negative responses).

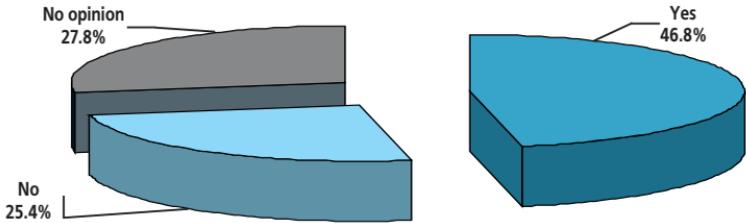
## CHAPTER 3. International Cooperation and Problems of WMD Nonproliferation

International cooperation on WMD problems is seen by Russians to have a range of differing aspects. On the one hand, Russians welcome the actions of Russia as a state that possesses nuclear weapons and nuclear technologies, actively participates in talks in various areas, cooperates with foreign states in the development of peaceful nuclear power, and works toward the development

of international approaches to the solution of problems in these fields. On the other hand, Russia's involvement in the activity of the G8 and receipt of foreign aid to resolve a number of WMD problems add to this "active" image of their country an aspect of concern that their country receiving foreign aid may become a sign of Russia's "dependence" or "weakness."

Figure 19

The International Community, Including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Has Certain Doubts about whether Iran is Using Nuclear Technologies for Exclusively Peaceful Purposes. In Such Conditions, Should Russia Continue to Cooperate with Iran to Develop Peaceful Nuclear Power (Construct Nuclear Power Plants, Train Specialists, etc.)?



### Political views of respondents

The greatest readiness to continue cooperation with Iran was expressed by supporters of Rodina (65%), the LDPR (56%), and the CPRF (more than half of respondents). Supporters of Edinaya Rossiya held a position close to the statistical average. 32% of those who do not vote would decline cooperation with Iran (among these, the greatest proportion who could offer no opinion was 30%).

### Gender of respondents

Men were more categorical, both in speaking "for" and "against" the issue, while women were unable to offer an opinion more frequently (31.2%).

### Age of respondents

The greatest opposition to continuing cooperation with Iran was found among those aged 25–34.

Respondents aged over 60 could offer no opinion in 30% of cases.

### Level of education of respondents

The greatest support for continuing cooperation with Iran was recorded among people with higher education (57%). As we move to groups with a higher level of education, so the proportion who could offer no opinion falls (from 35% to 24.5%).

### Socioeconomic status of respondents

A continuation of cooperation is favored by members of all socioeconomic groups. More than half of students and specialists with higher and middle specialist education supported this stance. The greatest proportion of opponents to such a development of events was among housewives/househusbands (28%).<sup>39</sup> Those unable to offer an opinion included some of the unemployed (31%).

<sup>39</sup> There was also a high proportion of opponents among military personnel (27.6%) and individuals engaged in private business (30%).

### Financial standing of respondents

More than half of respondents with income over 3,000 rubles per family member were in favor of continuing cooperation. Growth in support for continuing cooperation is noticeable in moving to a more affluent group (from 40% to 57% of respondents).

### Type of community

The greatest proportion of opponents to continuation of cooperation lives in rural regions (29%); in

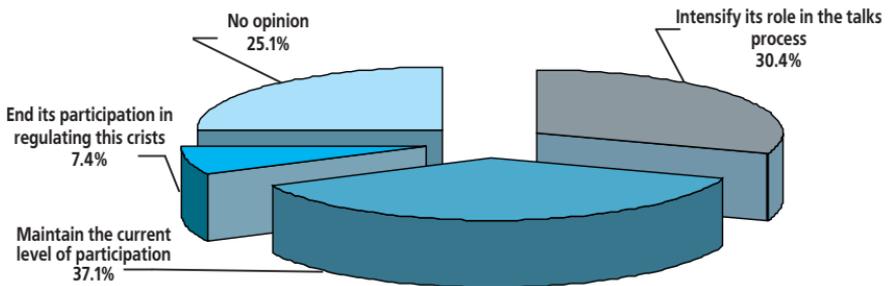
cities with a population of more than 500,000 residents approximately 30% of respondents could offer no opinion.

### Federal district

The greatest proportion of supporters of continuing cooperation were in the Central (54.5%) and Siberian (51.7%) federal districts. Noteworthy here is the high level of respondents who could offer no opinion in the Volga (38%) and Urals (34%) districts.

Figure 20

Russia Participates in the Six-Party Talks (the Other Parties are North Korea, South Korea, China, the United States, and Japan) to Solve the Nuclear Crisis on the Korean Peninsula, One of the Tasks of Which is to Curtail the Nuclear Weapon Production Program in North Korea. Considering the Absence of Significant Progress in the Talks, How Should Russia Act Now?



### Political views of respondents

Intensification of Russia's participation was supported by 41% of supporters of Rodina, and 32% of each of Edinaya Rossiya and the LDPR. The greatest proportion of those backing an end to participation in negotiations over this crisis came from supporters of the LDPR (14.6%), as well as those who do not vote (about 10%). A noticeable number could offer no opinion: among supporters of the CPRF (28.7%) and Edinaya Rossiya (26.6%).

### Gender of respondents

Men demonstrated a greater tendency toward intensifying Russia's participation in the talks process (34%), while a larger proportion of women could offer no opinion (28.5%).

### Age of respondents

The greatest opposition to future participation in these talks was found among respondents aged under 25 (10%), while intensification of the role in the talks process was especially strongly supported by respondents aged 45–59 (35%). Those over 60 could offer no opinion in 31.5% of cases.

### Level of education of respondents

In moving to groups with a higher level of education, so the proportion who could offer no opinion falls overall (from 41% to 22%), and the support for intensification of Russia's participation in the talks process grows (from 21% to 33.5%).

### Socioeconomic status of respondents

Intensification of participation in talks is most frequently supported by students (37%). Ending par-

ticipation in the efforts to handle the crisis was supported by some of the students (14%) as well as unqualified workers (10.5%).

### **Financial standing of respondents**

No opinion was offered by 38.2% of the least affluent citizens. In moving to more affluent groups, a growth in support for participation in talks is noticeable. An intensification of participation in the talks was supported by 41% of respondents with income over 5,000 rubles per family member.

### **Type of community**

The larger the community, the lesser the proportion who could offer no opinion (two times less than the average in Moscow and St. Petersburg).

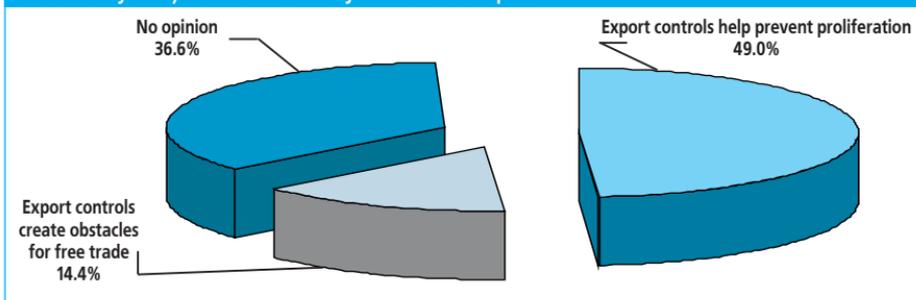
The greatest proportion of opponents to continuing cooperation live in rural regions (29%); in cities with a population of over 500,000 residents, 30% of respondents could offer no opinion.

### **Federal district**

The greatest proportion who could offer no opinion was in the Southern (30%) and Volga (33%) federal districts. Respondents in the Urals (36%), Central (35%), and Siberian (34.5%) regions most frequently support intensification of Russia's participation in the talks process. Support for ending the country's participation in negotiations on this crisis was higher than average in the Northwestern and Southern federal districts (9%). Interestingly, the greatest percentage who could offer no opinion was found in the Far Eastern federal district (36%).

Figure 21

**Below Are Judgments on the Role of Export Controls of Dual-Use Technologies (for Both Civil and Military Uses). Which Most Closely Matches Your Opinion?**



### **Political views of respondents**

Export controls met with approval from the majority of Rodina (54%) and CPRF (52%) supporters, as well as those voting for "none of the above" (54%), while disapproval was most frequently voiced by supporters of Rodina (22%) and the LDPR (22%). Those voting for Edinaya Rossiya demonstrated a position, which was close to the statistical average. The greatest proportion who could offer no opinion was found among those who do not vote (49%).

### **Gender of respondents**

The proportion of men that voiced approval or disapproval over export controls was slightly higher,

due to women being unable to offer an opinion more frequently (39%).

### **Age of respondents**

More than half of respondents aged 35-60 approved of export controls, and the greatest opposition (17%) to export controls was found among people under 25. Respondents over 60 in 44% of cases could offer no opinion.

### **Level of education of respondents**

In moving to groups with a higher level of education, the proportion who could offer no opinion falls overall (from 57.5% to 29%), and the propor-

tion that approves of export controls grows (from 32% to 54.7%).

**Socioeconomic status of respondents**

The greatest proportion who could offer no opinion was found among the unemployed (42.5%) and unemployed pensioners (42%). It is noteworthy that a disapproving attitude towards export controls, greater than the statistical average (17%), was found among students (20%) and unqualified workers (19%). The greatest proportion that approved of export controls was found among qualified workers (55%) and specialists with higher and middle specialist education (55%).<sup>40</sup>

**Financial standing of respondents**

Approvals of export controls came from respondents with income of over 3,000 rubles per family member (53%) and above 5,000 (61%). No opinion was offered by 40-42% of respondents with income of up to 3,000 rubles. The most negative assessment of export controls was given by respondents with income of less than 1,500 rubles. In moving to more affluent groups, a reduction in

the proportion who could offer no opinion is observed, as the level of approvals for export controls increases. In parallel to this, the proportion of disapproving opinions also grows (from 12% to 29% of respondents).

**Type of community**

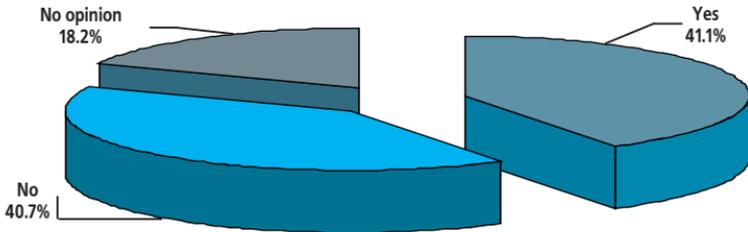
The larger the community, the lesser the proportion who could offer no opinion (two thirds of the average in Moscow and St. Petersburg). For this reason, in moving to larger communities, the proportion of both approving and disapproving opinions of export controls grows (to 55% and 20% respectively among residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg).

**Federal district**

The greatest proportion of approvals for export controls was found in the Urals (62%), Central (56%), and Siberian (54%) federal districts. The proportion who could offer no opinion (51%) was noticeably higher than average in the Volga region. The greatest proportion of disapproving responses was in the Siberian (21%), Central (17%), and Far Eastern (17%) federal districts.

Figure 22

Should Russia Seek Assistance (Financial or Technical) from Other G8 Countries to Dispose of Excess Russian Arms (Nuclear Submarines, Chemical Weapons, Weapons-Grade Nuclear Materials, etc.)?<sup>41</sup>



<sup>40</sup> It is noteworthy that 50% of the respondents involved in private enterprise expressed their approval of export controls.

<sup>41</sup> In connection with Russia's forthcoming presidency of the G8 and the 2006 summit in St. Petersburg, in December 2005 the Public Opinion Foundation (FOM) conducted a survey of 100 communities in 44 oblasts, regions, and republics in Russia. The majority of respondents (71%) considered Russia's very presence in the G8 important for the country, although 35% of respondents stated that Russia plays a secondary role in the organization. The meeting of G8 heads of state in Russia was interpreted by the majority of respondents as a significant step toward Russia and the West coming together. Those Russians who do not see the presidency of the G8 as either helpful or harmful to Russia stated, in part, that Russia has so much weight in the global arena, that the country has no need of either the G8 or presidency in it. See [http://bd.fom.ru/report/map/projects/dominant/d0m0551/d0m0551\\_6/d055128](http://bd.fom.ru/report/map/projects/dominant/d0m0551/d0m0551_6/d055128).

### Political views of respondents

Seeking assistance was mostly broadly favored by those who voted for "none of the above" (43.5%) and supporters of Edinaya Rossiya (43%), while a disapproving viewpoint was voiced more frequently than average by supporters of the LDPR (52%), Rodina (48%), and CPRF (46%). Those who vote for Edinaya Rossiya demonstrated a position which was close to the statistical average. The greatest proportion who could offer no opinion was found among those who do not vote (21%).

### Gender of respondents

The proportion of men who voiced an approving or disapproving opinion about assistance from other G8 states was slightly higher, due to women being unable to offer an opinion more frequently (22% vs. 13% among men).

### Age of respondents

In all age groups, similar and virtually equal proportions of positive and negative responses were obtained. Among respondents aged 35–44, the ratio was 39% "for" and 44% "against," while in the age group of 45–59 the opposite was true: 43% "for" and 39% "against." Respondents over 60 in 24.3% of cases could offer no opinion.

### Level of education of respondents

In moving to groups with higher levels of education, the proportion who could offer no opinion fell overall (from 30.5% to 10%), while growth was seen in the proportions of both positive

responses about receiving assistance (from 36.5% to 46%) and those rejecting this possibility (from 32% to 43%).

### Socioeconomic status of respondents

The most respondents unable to offer an opinion were among the unemployed (26%), housewives/househusbands (24%), unqualified workers, and service personnel (23%).<sup>42</sup>

### Financial standing of respondents

In moving to more affluent groups, there is a noticeable fall in the proportion who could offer no opinion (from 25% to 12%) and the level of approving responses grows (from 37% to 53.5%).

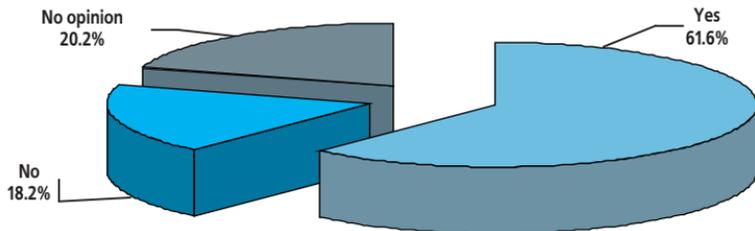
### Type of community

The larger the community, the lesser the proportion who could offer no opinion (two thirds of the average level in Moscow and St. Petersburg), and the higher the support for seeking assistance (in cities with a number of residents of more than 500,000: 48–49% "for" and just 34–39% "against").

### Federal district

The greatest proportion voicing approval for seeking aid was in the Urals (58%) and Central (49%) federal districts. The proportion who could offer no opinion was noticeably higher than the average in the Far Eastern (29%) and Volga (27%) federal districts. The greatest proportion of disapproving responses was in the Siberian (53%) and Northwestern (45.5%) federal districts.

Figure 23  
Should Russia Coordinate Its Policy in the Area of Nonproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction with Other G8 Countries?



<sup>42</sup> The greatest share of support for receiving assistance was expressed by chief executives and chief specialists of enterprises and other organizations (58%), while the greatest proportion of opponents was among servicemen (55%).

### Political views of respondents

Such coordination was actively favored by supporters of Rodina (68.5%) and the CPRF (64.5%). Those who vote for Edinaya Rossiya demonstrated a position that was close to the statistical average. The most opponents of coordinating Russia's policy with other G8 countries were found among supporters of Rodina (30%) and the LDPR (28%). The greatest proportion who could offer no opinion was among supporters of the CPRF (26%) and those who do not vote (23%).

### Gender of respondents

The proportion of men who approvingly and disapprovingly opined on assistance from other G8 states was slightly higher (65% and 20%, respectively), due to women being unable to offer an opinion more frequently (24.5% versus 15% among men).

### Age of respondents

Support for policy coordination was less than the statistical average among respondents over 60 and under 25 (although the proportion of positive responses in each age group exceeds half the respondents). Those over 60 could offer no opinion in 29% of cases.

### Level of education of respondents

In moving to groups with higher levels of education, the proportion who could offer no opinion falls overall (from 33.5% to 13%) and the proportion approving coordination of Russian policy rises (from 53% to 67% among people with higher education).

### Socioeconomic status of respondents

In all socioeconomic groups, more than half of respondents favored such coordination. The greatest proportion to vote "against" was among students (29%).

### Financial standing of respondents

In moving to more affluent groups, a reduction in the proportion who could offer no opinion is noticeable (from 22% to 9.5%). Both the poorest and the most affluent citizens voiced active support for coordination of Russian policy (up to 73% with an income of over 5,001 rubles were in favor). The proportion supporting policy coordination is above the statistical average among respondents with average incomes.

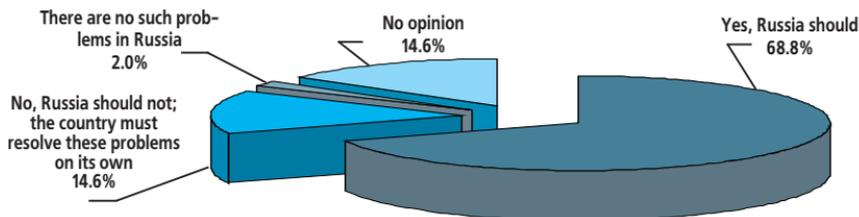
### Type of community

Respondents in Moscow and St. Petersburg stated most actively their support for coordinating Russian policy (73.5%), and the greatest proportion who could offer no opinion was among rural residents (24%).

### Federal district

The greatest proportion who could offer no opinion was in the Far Eastern (35%) and Volga (32%) federal districts, and in the same areas was the smallest proportion approving policy coordination with other G8 countries (40% and 55%, respectively). The greatest support for coordination of Russian policy was found among respondents in the Urals (75%), Central (68%), and Northwestern (66%) federal districts.

**Figure 24**  
Should Russia Participate More Actively in the Process of International Cooperation with Other G8 Countries in the Field of Biosafety and Biosecurity (Prevention of Terrorist Acts Using Biological Weapons, the Fight against Infectious Diseases), or Should Russia Resolve These Problems on Its Own?



### **Political views of respondents**

Rare unanimity was shown by supporters of all political parties, more strongly than the statistical average, in support of Russia's inclusion in this process (most active were Rodina supporters, at 83.5%). Support for such a step from those who vote for "none of the above" and who do not vote was less than the average level. Some of respondents who do not vote (24%) and some supporters of the LDPR (18%) and CPRF (18%) favored the response "We must resolve these problems on our own." The greatest proportion who could offer no opinion was among supporters of Edinaya Rossiya (15%) and those who do not vote (15%), as well as among those who vote for "none of the above" (16%).

### **Gender of respondents**

The proportion of men who responded approvingly or disapprovingly regarding inclusion in this process was slightly higher (71% and 16%, respectively), due to women being unable to offer an opinion more frequently (16.5% vs. 12% among men).

### **Age of respondents**

The most critical attitude was demonstrated by those over 60 (63.5% "for" and 16.5% "against"). Among these was the greatest proportion who could offer no opinion (17.5%).

### **Level of education of respondents**

In moving to groups with a higher level of education, the proportion who could offer no opinion fell overall (from 27% to 8%) and the proportion approving of active inclusion of Russia in this process grew (from 56% to 75.5% among respondents with higher education).

### **Socioeconomic status of respondents**

The lowest support for Russia's inclusion in this process was found among the unemployed (62%) and unqualified workers (51%). The proportion voicing support for the resolution of biological problems by Russia itself was also the highest among unqualified workers (20%). The unemployed were found to have the highest level unable to offer an opinion (24%).

### **Financial standing of respondents**

In moving to more affluent groups, a fall in the proportion of those unable to offer an opinion is

noticeable (from 16.5% to 9.5%), as is an increase in the proportion of supporters of the resolution of these problems by Russia independently (from 13.5% to 17.5%). The proportion of those supporting Russia's inclusion in this process grows as the prosperity of respondents grows (from 66% to 86% of respondents).

### **Type of community**

The greatest support for the inclusion of Russia in this process was found among respondents in Moscow and St. Petersburg (81%), and the greatest proportion who could offer no opinion was among rural residents (18%).

### **Federal district**

The highest proportion who could offer no opinion was in the Urals (22%), the Far Eastern (21%), and the Volga (21%) federal districts. The greatest support for the resolution of these problems independently was found in the Siberian (19%) and Central (16%) federal districts. However, in all federal districts the inclusion of Russia in the process of international cooperation won the majority of opinion, especially in the Central (75%), Northwestern (71%), and Southern (71%) regions.

### **Commentary**

1. The group of questions related to Russia's international cooperation in the interests of nonproliferation of WMD, or in connection with these problems, identified broad support, overall, for the country's actions in the international arena. In addition, some respondents demonstrated a tendency to a restrained attitude toward such cooperation, especially if it was connected with seeking foreign assistance. For this portion of respondents, the perception of assistance from abroad is associated with the image of insufficient capabilities in Russia itself, which prompts respondents to reiterate "Russia will go it alone!" Such associations, excepting any xenophobic tendencies, reinforce statements against even the inclusion of Russia in international cooperation in the field of biosafety and biosecurity and against coordination of Russian policies with other G8 states in the field of WMD nonproliferation.

2. The political views of the respondents became evident when answering this group of questions. For example, the greatest readiness to continue

cooperation with Iran was expressed by supporters of Rodina, the LDPR, and the CPRF (more than half of respondents). The position stated by supporters of Edinaya Rossiya was close to the statistical average.

Intensification of Russia's participation in talks on the Korean nuclear problem was favored by 41% of supporters of Rodina, 32% of those who voted for Edinaya Rossiya, and 32% of LDPR supporters. The greatest proportion in favor of ending participation in negotiating this crisis was among supporters of the LDPR (14.6%) and those who do not vote (about 10%).

Export controls met a favorable reaction from the majority of supporters of Rodina, the CPRF, as well as those who vote for "none of the above," while a disapproving viewpoint was expressed more frequently than average by supporters of Rodina (22%) and the LDPR (22%). Voters for Edinaya Rossiya held positions that were close to the statistical average.

Questions on Russia seeking assistance from other G8 states to destroy weapons, and on Russian WMD nonproliferation policy being coordinated with the G8, can be seen as polarizing. Seeking assistance was most broadly supported by those who voted for "none of the above" (43.5%) and Edinaya Rossiya supporters (43%), while a disapproving viewpoint was expressed more frequently than average by supporters of the LDPR (52%), Rodina (48%), and the CPRF (46%). Meanwhile, coordination of Russian policy was actively supported by supporters of Rodina (68.5%) and the CPRF (64.5%), apparently seeing no image of "Russian weakness" in such coordination.

With rare unanimity, supporters of all political parties supported, more actively than the average, the inclusion of Russia in the process of cooperation with the G8 in the area of biosafety and biosecurity (the most active were supporters of Rodina: 83.5%). Below average was the support for such a step by those who voted for "none of the above" or do not vote. Some of those who do not vote (24%), as well as some supporters of the LDPR (18%) and CPRF (18%) chose the response "we must resolve these problems on our own."

3. Men were more categorical, both speaking "for" and "against" export controls, cooperation with

Iran, and receipt of assistance from other G8 states in the destruction of weapons, and demonstrated a greater tendency toward intensification of Russian participation in the talks process on the Korean nuclear problem (34%). Among women, the proportion who could offer no opinion was higher (up to 39% in the question on export control).

4. Age differences became apparent in answers to questions about international cooperation by Russia. Those over 60 in all cases could offer no opinion more frequently than the statistical average (up to 44% of respondents on the question of export control). Among this group was the most critical attitude with respect to cooperation with the G8 in the field of biosafety and biosecurity (16.5% "against"). In the group of respondents under 25, there was the greatest opposition to export controls (17% voiced opposition) and future participation in talks on the nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula: as much as 10%. In both age groups (under 25 and over 60) support was below the statistical average for coordination of Russian WMD nonproliferation policy with the G8. The most benign position on issues of international cooperation was taken by respondents aged 35-60, and especially those over 45.

5. In moving to groups with a higher level of education, in responses to any question on international cooperation, the proportion who could offer no opinion falls, and the support for intensifying Russia's participation in such cooperation grows. The higher the level of education of the respondents, the more support grows for: continuing cooperation with Iran (among those with higher education: to 57%); intensification of Russian participation in the talks process on the Korean nuclear problem and approval of Russian cooperation with the G8 in questions of biosafety and biosecurity (to 75.5% among those with higher education); and coordination of Russian policy with the G8 (to 67% among those with higher education); as well as export controls (to 55%). Deviation from this general trend is noticeable only in the question of receiving assistance from other G8 states in the destruction of Russian arms: in parallel, the proportions grew of both approvals (to 46%) and rejections (to 43%) of such a possibility, due to the falling proportion of those offering no opinion. This deviation illustrates the nega-

tive perception among educated Russians of “foreign assistance” as a sign of Russia’s lack of readiness to take independent decisions.

6. The financial standing of the respondents, related to their level of education and socioeconomic status, was reflected in these answers. Overall, in moving to groups with higher prosperity levels, the proportion who could offer no opinion falls, and the proportion of supporters of international cooperation grows: for example, in the question of continuing cooperation with Iran, support grew from 40% to 57% among the most affluent citizens. Approval of export controls and support for intensification of Russian participation in the talks process on the Korean peninsula nuclear problem was far higher than the statistical average among those with income of more than 5,001 rubles per family member. No opinion was offered more frequently by the least affluent Russians (up to 42% in the question of export control). Affluent groups more broadly supported seeking assistance from other G8 states to dispose of Russian arms (53.5%), coordinating WMD nonproliferation policy with the G8 (73% support from those with income of more than 5,001 rubles per family member), and inclusion of Russia in international cooperation in the field of biosafety and biosecurity (86%). In addition, seeking assistance from abroad met with a negative response from both the poorest and most affluent citizens.

7. International cooperation in WMD nonproliferation and related areas met with broad support from all Russian socioeconomic groups. Against this generally positive backdrop, a fairly uneven picture is drawn, reflecting the variety of opinions in different parts of Russian society. Some aspects that are typical for this survey became apparent in the answers to a group of questions on international cooperation. No exception to this was found in the high proportion of respondents unable to offer an opinion among the unemployed (up to 42.5% when assessing the role of export controls), and among unqualified workers, housewives/househusbands, and unemployed pensioners.

An attentive attitude to international processes and interested participation in discussion of the same are typical for students. More than half of students supported continuation of Russo-Iranian cooperation in the development of peaceful

nuclear power. There is a noticeable difference of opinion in this social group in answering the question about Russian participation in the Six-Party talks on the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula. Twice the statistical average among students support ending Russian participation in the talks process (while 37% are in favor of intensifying Russian participation in the talks). Every fifth respondent in this group was disapproving of export control. Finally, almost 30% of respondent students were against coordination of Russian WMD nonproliferation policy with other G8 states. Indubitably, some students demonstrate “isolationist” tendencies.

8. A typical characteristic of responses to this group of questions is the fall in the proportion who could offer no opinion, in moving to groups from larger communities. The exception is the question on the continuation of cooperation with Iran: in cities with population of more than 500,000 residents, on the order of 30% of respondents could offer no opinion. The greatest confidence in answers was typical for residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg. In these cities there is the highest proportion of support for coordination of Russian policy with other G8 states (73.5%), seeking assistance from these states to destroy excess weapons (49%), and inclusion of Russia in international cooperation in the field of biosafety and biosecurity (81%). Here too, we see the greatest proportion of both approving and disapproving assessments of export controls (55% and 20%, respectively).

9. Differences in opinions between the seven federal districts on problems of international cooperation, as related to WMD nonproliferation, are explained, primarily, by the degree of information awareness of the respondents on specific issues, sometimes directly linked to the geographical proximity to the affected areas or states. It is no coincidence that the proportion of respondents in isolated districts that could offer no opinion is high; for example, in reply to the question on continuation of Russo-Iranian cooperation: in the Volga district: 38% of respondents, in the Urals: 34%. The greatest proportion supporting the continuation of cooperation was in the Central (54.5%) and Siberian (51.7%) federal districts, in which the main orders are being fulfilled to ensure cooperation. More than half of respondents could offer no opinion on the question of the role of

export controls in the "internal" Volga district. The greatest proportion of approvals for export control was in the Urals (62%), Central (56%), and Siberian (54%) federal districts. The greatest proportion of disapproving responses was in the Siberian (21%), Central (17%) and Far Eastern (17%) federal districts.

A similar pattern can be seen in the question of the Korean nuclear problem. Intensification of participation by the country in the Six-Party talks process is supported more broadly in the Central, Urals, and Siberian areas, while cessation of participation in talks is more frequently supported in districts further from East Asia (the Northwestern and Southern federal districts). Paradoxically, the greatest percentage that could offer no opinion was in the Far Eastern federal district (36%).<sup>43</sup>

The question of seeking assistance from other G8 countries for the destruction of excess Russian arms splits respondents in two nearly equal halves. The greatest proportion to favor seeking assistance was in the Urals (58%) and Central (49%) federal districts. The greatest proportion of disapproving

responses was in the Siberian (53%) and Northwestern (45.5%) federal districts. The proportion who could offer no opinion was greater than average for this question – and for the question of coordination of Russian WMD nonproliferation policies with the G8 – in the Far Eastern (29% and 35%, respectively) and Volga (30% and 32%) federal districts. Here also was the lowest proportion to approve coordination of policies with other G8 countries, while the greatest support for coordination of Russian policies was among respondents in the Urals (75%), Central (68%), and Northwestern (66%) federal districts.

Finally, the question of Russia's inclusion in cooperation with the G8 in the field of biosafety and biosecurity produced the greatest proportion of respondents unable to offer an opinion in the Urals (22%), Far Eastern (21%), and Volga (21%) federal districts. In all federal districts, the inclusion of Russia in the process of international cooperation garnered the majority, especially in the Central (75%), Northwestern (71%), and Southern (71%) districts.

<sup>43</sup> Sociologists observe that it is often precisely those individuals who "live with a particular problem" who find it more difficult to formulate an unambiguous opinion about it due to the overload of relevant information and experiences.

## CHAPTER 4. Results of the Research on Attitudes In the Russian Federation towards WMD Proliferation and Terrorism

1. The results of the research attest to the fact that Russians, on the whole, closely follow events related to weapons of mass destruction (WMD), in particular nuclear weapons. Moreover, an analysis of the distribution of answers of respondents belonging to different political, gender, age, socioeconomic, professional, and other groups indicates that there is no strict correlation of their preferences to the group in which they belong. Thus it is impossible to divide society, for example, into “doves” and “hawks” where WMD is concerned, or to describe any particular group in this fashion.

2. Nuclear weapons play a substantial and important role in Russian popular opinion. Russia’s possession of this arsenal is seen as evidence of its retention of great power status, particularly in the military sphere. Nuclear deterrence is the country’s best security guarantee in a tumultuous world. This is the source of the predominant view in favor of retaining Russia’s nuclear arsenal, at least at the present level.

3. The negative “image” of nuclear weapons in popular opinion (the “nuclear threat”) has notably weakened since the end of the Cold War. This can explain, in part, the steady increase in the popularity of the idea of not targeting nuclear weapons at other states in peacetime. Russians subconsciously assume that obligations of this sort are reciprocal, and recognized by all of the nuclear powers.

The new post-Cold War realities have been recognized by the majority of Russians. In the views of the Russians surveyed, both the danger of terrorist acts against Russia using WMD and the threat of such acts against Russian nuclear facilities noticeably exceeded the danger of any foreign state attacking with WMD.

Despite the end of the Cold War, the United States continues to be the foreign state most associated in Russian Federation popular opinion with the WMD threat. At the same time, only a third of those surveyed named the United States as threatening, while the proportion of respondents who

saw Al-Qaeda, Chechen terrorists, or other terrorist groups as a threat was noticeably greater – exceeding a third, and at times even half, of those questioned.

4. The appearance of “new, untraditional challenges” to Russian security is widely recognized in public opinion. 83% of those surveyed affirmatively answered a question about fears that terrorists may use WMD against Russia, while 84% of the respondents were afraid that Russian nuclear facilities might become terrorist targets. Moreover, more than half of those questioned named Chechen terrorists as posing a possible WMD threat to Russia, one and a half times more than the number who saw Al-Qaeda or other terrorist organizations posing a similar threat, apparently seeing the latter principally as enemies of the United States.

5. The “virtual” nature of nuclear weapons and other aspects of WMD means that the overwhelming majority of Russians rely chiefly on the media for their information. The degree to which the media succeeds or fails to illuminate particular problems related to WMD can be seen to some degree in the responses to this opinion poll. It is difficult to resist the recommendation that the media in the Russian Far East needs some “correction” because, for example, the record number of times “no opinion” is the answer chosen by respondents in the Far Eastern federal district (36%) when asked about Russian participation in the Six-Party Talks on the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula.

Another answer undoubtedly associated with media coverage of WMD issues related to the question about the WMD threat to Russia posed by particular foreign states. Alongside the United States, China, and Pakistan, Russians identified Iran, which does not possess nuclear weapons either officially or actually; however, it is frequently mentioned in the media in connection with IAEA doubts about the “strictly peaceful” nature of the country’s nuclear program.

**6.** The political sympathies and antipathies of the respondents affected their answers to each group of questions; the differences in their answers spring from their views of Russia's national interests and future prospects. For example, the "protest voters," who vote for opposition parties, support the complete dismantlement and elimination of the nuclear arsenal more frequently than average, but often consider nuclear weapons as the only part of their heritage from the socialist era that has not been "bargained away," and therefore view its retention as a crucial national task. On many issues the opinions expressed by those holding different political views are amazingly close, even though the supporters of different political factions come to these opinions from different directions.

The positions espoused by supporters of *Edinaya Rossiya* generally resemble the statistically average point of view within the Russian Federation as a whole. Concluding that this is the result of the "conformism" of these Russian citizens is premature: it is more likely due to the absence of a *Edinaya Rossiya* position on WMD issues that would help separate the views of this part of the electorate from others in the poll.

Opinions of political opponents were divided most strongly, in comparison to other groups of questions, when it came to questions related to the danger of a war with the use of WMD against Russia. Supporters of opposition factions had a greater than average belief that a foreign attack against Russia using WMD was "highly likely." This is partly a function of age differences between the supporters of different parties. As the results of the poll indicate, during the Cold War years members of the elder generation formed firm ideas about the United States, United Kingdom, and China as sources of WMD threats toward Russia.

**7.** Russian views of broader nuclear nonproliferation issues indicate a basic interest in retaining the nonproliferation regime: the overwhelming majority (82-84% of those questioned) rejects expansion of the "nuclear club" and are against the "proliferation of Russia's nuclear weapons." This confirms that Russians recognize their "status role" and the unique advantage of possessing nuclear weapons.

The group of questions on Russia's international cooperation in the sphere of the WMD nonproliferation and related problems generally revealed broad support for the country's actions on the global level. At the same time, some of those questioned were a bit reticent with regards to such cooperation, particularly where it involved the receipt of foreign assistance. This kind of attitude, apart from any xenophobic tendencies, strengthens views against the country's involvement in international cooperation in biosecurity and biosafety and against the coordination of Russian and G8 policy in the sphere of WMD nonproliferation.

**8.** A comparison of opinions expressed in answer to two questions about Iran is rather interesting. An above average number of supporters of opposition parties viewed Iranian possession of nuclear weapons as dangerous to Russian national interests. At the same time, more than half of the respondents that were supporters of the CPRF, Rodina, and LDPR supported the continuation of Russian-Iranian cooperation in the area of nuclear power, despite IAEA doubts regarding the strictly peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear program. These answers indicate the contradictory motives of opposition party supporters; the wide media attention to the clashes between the United States and Iran probably strengthened the sympathy this portion of the electorate felt for Iran.

**9.** Only when viewed at a very superficial level can one say that the poll results indicate that differences of opinion between men and women show that men are "hawks" and women support more active policies for the limitation of WMD. Divergences between men and women in answering any of the groups of questions do not provide grounds to classify either group as "hawks" or "doves." Instead, one could say that the men possessed more information about WMD issues. This is indicated by the fact that in answering any of the poll questions, a higher proportion of women than men offered no opinion.

In answering the second group of questions (on the danger of nuclear war and WMD terrorism), one could say that the women were "more anxious," however, they were also more satisfied than men by the measures authorities had taken to ensure the secure storage of nuclear materials and WMD, although they were unlikely to possess any

real information making it possible to draw logical conclusions in this regard. On the whole, answers to this group of questions only confirmed that the differences between the answers of men and women were more likely related to psychological factors than to a more or less rigid approach towards WMD.

**10.** An analysis of answers by age group does not provide any clear differentiation of views by age. As a rule, the answers of respondents over 60 and under 25 stand out; their opinions are somewhat different from the majority of those polled. This was most evident in answers to the question about the danger of a foreign attack on Russia using WMD: the answer “highly unlikely” received the greatest support from those 35-44 years of age (in comparison to other age groups), while those under 25 and over 60 were the least supportive of this position.

The agreement of opinion between the youngest and eldest respondents is not the result of similar assumptions. Brought up in a spirit of restraint and personal modesty, the elder generation hesitates to pass judgment on issues that require the possession of concrete information. In addition, the elder generation is less concerned with the WMD issue. Thus the proportion of individuals in this age group who could offer no opinion on questions was recurrently higher than in other groups (up to 44% in the question on export control). Some of the respondents over 60 may well have felt that the question dealing with a long-term perspective of 25–30 years was inappropriate.

Youth under 25 years of age were raised in a completely different tradition, a fact that makes it particularly difficult to understand some of their answers, not all of which appear to be logically substantiated. One ought not to overrate, for example, the fact that this group had the greatest (in comparison to other age groups) opposition towards export control or to further Russian participation in the negotiations related to the nuclear problem on the Korean Peninsula. At the same time, it is clear that young people are less inclined to value the role of nuclear weapons (the proportion of individuals in this group that stated nuclear weapons “in no way influence national security” was twice as high as the average).

The answers to the question about the threat of the use of WMD against Russia by individual countries and terrorist organizations presented particularly interesting differences correlated with age: the elder generation more frequently connected this threat to states and more rarely to terrorist groups, while those under 45 (and especially those under 25) more strongly felt the threat of terrorist acts involving WMD. Here the “virtual” nature of the nuclear danger was completely clear; indeed, the elder generation predominantly obtained its ideas about the sources of nuclear threats during the years of the Cold War, while young people developed their ideas after it was over.

**11.** The respondents’ level of education correlated most closely with the opinions expressed. This arises from the initial association, in popular opinion, of nuclear weapons and other types of WMD with “high technology,” which cannot be understood and judged without concrete knowledge obtained through education. Respondents with higher levels of education tended to place more value on the importance of nuclear weapons in providing for Russian security. Regardless of the type of question, fewer individuals in groups with higher levels of education found it difficult to offer an opinion. Of great interest is the fact that respondents with higher education appear most likely to see Russia’s problems as their own. Of principle importance for the prospects of Russia’s international cooperation is this group’s consistent support for various ways of activating Russia’s cooperation with other nations, including other G8 states.

**12.** Russians view WMD, nuclear weapons in particular, as multifaceted. Moreover, one and the same facet can influence opinions in various ways. For example, the perception that WMD are very costly in some cases tempers desires to increase the arsenal, but in other cases leads to a view of the nuclear complex as very valuable national property, the retention of which is in the long-term interest of the entire nation and its citizens. For this reason, both the least and most affluent respondents were more likely to support an increase than a decrease in the country’s arsenal.

**13.** The respondents’ income level is clearly tied to their educational level and socioeconomic standing. Therefore the opinions expressed in groups of

varying income levels can often be correlated with other socioeconomic characteristics. The certainty of answers generally increased with income level (or higher self-identification), along with the optimism of those questioned.

About 60% of those surveyed in the most prosperous groups viewed nuclear weapons as “the main guarantee of Russian security,” and the idea of increasing the country’s nuclear arsenal becomes more popular as one looks at more affluent groups of citizens. At the same time, Russians that have become prosperous on the whole have positive feelings towards the West and, in particular, towards the United States. To a certain extent, views of the United States affected their perception of other states and organizations. The more affluent the group questioned, the lower the proportion of individuals who see the United States as a threat to Russia and the higher the number viewing China, Pakistan, Iran, and especially Al-Qaeda (which personifies the enemies of the United States in the eyes of many Russians) as a threat.

However, one should note that prosperous Russians are fairly “calm” where the possibility of a WMD terrorist threat to Russia or terrorist threat to the country’s nuclear facilities is concerned.

International cooperation has particularly strong support among Russia’s most affluent citizens, the overwhelming majority of whom support the most varied forms of interaction between their country and the other G8 states, and approve of nonproliferation and export control measures.

**14.** The respondents’ socioeconomic status is closely tied to their level of education and income. Among socioeconomic groups, the servicemen of all categories (in the military, the police, or state security agencies) stood out<sup>44</sup>. On many questions related to WMD, the view of those who categorized themselves as executives and deputy executives of enterprises and other organizations stood out<sup>45</sup>. In the long term, the views of the group of individuals who consider their occupation to be “private enterprise and business” are particularly interesting<sup>46</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> Unfortunately, sociological research suggests that it is impossible to draw authoritative conclusions about the general opinions of this entire socioeconomic group, since the number of those surveyed in the group was less than 60 individuals. Without claiming to make conclusions about the view of all military servicemen, we can still note that during the 2006 poll military personnel supported an increase in the nation’s nuclear arsenal far more frequently than other socioeconomic groups, including in the long run. More than half of the servicemen questioned supported permanently targeting Russian nuclear weapons “at particular countries” during peacetime (one and a half times more than the average number supporting this measure). The idea that it was “highly likely” that a foreign state would use nuclear weapons to attack Russia was also more widespread among servicemen than the average, as was the perception of the United States and China as posing WMD threats to Russia. Some servicemen evinced “isolationist” views when they discussed the question of whether to accept G8 assistance for the destruction of excess domestic weapons (55% “against” – the highest proportion among all socioeconomic groups). Servicemen were also more reticent than the “average respondent” towards cooperation with the G8 in other areas. For example, although more than half supported international cooperation with the G8 in the realm of biosafety and biosecurity, almost a fourth of the respondents preferred to tackle these issues “through our own efforts.”

<sup>45</sup> The number of respondents in the group of “executives” is less than 60, so sociologists would consider it impossible to conclude that the results of the 2006 survey allow us to characterize the general opinion of this socioeconomic group. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that fewer than average in this group supported reductions of Russian nuclear weapons, but they spoke out on behalf of the complete elimination of this type of weapon in 25-30 years twice as often as the “average respondent” (and within the next 3-5 years three times more frequently than the average). As a group, “executives” tended towards certainty in their answers and preferred radical solutions. The “dispassionate concern” of this group led it to support the activation of Russian international cooperation. It is no surprise that support for export control was greatest among “executives” (60%), as was support for getting aid from the G8 to dismantle Russian weapons (58%).

<sup>46</sup> There were fewer than 60 individuals polled in this group, making it impossible to draw authoritative conclusions regarding the entire socioeconomic group. However, it is interesting to note that the opinions expressed by those polled in this group were mutually contradictory on many of the survey question, for example, on the question of increasing or reducing the Russian nuclear arsenal, or the prospects of a foreign attack on Russia (answers from “highly improbable” to “highly likely”). Clearly, this group (in which people of various status included themselves, from shopkeepers to business tycoons) cannot be considered well-established and expressing a conscious “group” attitude.

**15.** There were no clear ties between opinions and place of residence. As one approached larger population centers the proportion of respondents who could offer no opinion decreased, but this is more simply explained as a result of an increased level of education and higher degree of information awareness.

To a certain degree one can isolate the views of inhabitants of rural regions and towns, whose views remind one of the “traditional” approach in the Soviet era: the danger of war and terrorism is seen as greater than the average Russian views it, but one could clearly see the faith that the “motherland hears all and knows all” and belief that measures are being undertaken that are not always visible to those “below.” Typically, the majority of this group was satisfied by the authorities’ actions to increase the security of nuclear materials and WMD in storage. At the same time, more than a third of the rural residents believed that the danger of a nuclear war against Russia was “highly/more likely.” Rural residents do not support the idea of expanding the “nuclear club” and are more frequently disturbed by the prospect of nuclear weapons in Iran than the average respondent (almost half of those surveyed).

Like residents of rural regions and towns, inhabitants of Moscow and St. Petersburg voiced a greater than average appreciation for the role nuclear weapons play in national security. However, Russians from these “two capitals” typically have opinions that are close to those of the most well-to-do citizens. They are much calmer than the rural residents when it comes to questions related to terrorist dangers at Russian nuclear facilities or to threats from external terrorist organizations, and mention Iran (18.4%), China (16%), Pakistan (12.3%), and North Korea (10%) more frequently than the average when asked about the countries that present a WMD threat to Russia. The inhabitants of Moscow and St. Petersburg, more frequently than the “average Russian,” support the expansion of the “nuclear club” (up to 15% of those questioned) and the idea of the “proliferation of Russia’s nuclear weapons” (9.2%), as well as the proposal to completely dismantle and eliminate Russia’s nuclear arsenal. In these cities one finds the highest levels of support for the coordination of Russian policy with that of the other G8 coun-

tries (73.5%), for using foreign assistance to dismantle Russian weapons (49%), and for the inclusion of Russia in international cooperation on biosafety and biosecurity (81%). Here one also finds the greatest proportion of respondents both supporting and disapproving of export controls (up to 55% and 20%, respectively). The majority of the surveyed inhabitants of Moscow and St. Petersburg is not satisfied with the actions the authorities have taken to increase the secure storage of nuclear materials and WMD in Russia (approximately 56%).

The inhabitants of cities with medium-sized populations (100,000-500,000 residents) are more likely to support the long-term increase of the nation’s nuclear capacity and less likely to support its reduction.

**16.** To what degree does living in a particular federal district influence opinions on WMD issues? Understanding national interests is a complex process that undoubtedly reflects not just the personal qualities of the individual but also his or her socioeconomic characteristics. The geographic deployment of Russian nuclear forces and the defense industry, as well as related facilities, influences ideas about WMD in each federal district. An important role is played by border problems (in the broadest sense), and the proximity of a region to a conflict zone or to states that either *de jure* or *de facto* possess nuclear weapons, other forms of WMD, and means of their delivery.

Despite the wide variety of nuances that can be found in the answers to each question, one can differentiate the views of respondents in the Northwestern, Urals, and Volga districts on the one hand from the Central and Siberian districts on the other. Respondents in the Southern and Far Eastern districts had views that were somewhere in the middle. Here we are not talking about a strict differentiation between “doves” and “hawks,” but signs that respondents in the first group of districts are less concerned with the dangers arising from WMD. In these federal districts one finds more support for non-targeting of Russian nuclear weapons during peacetime and the greatest optimism regarding the impossibility of an attack by foreign states or terrorist groups on Russia using WMD or sabotage of nuclear facilities in the country. The Northwestern federal district repeatedly “holds the record” for optimism, whether in

response to the question on the danger of an attack in Russia using nuclear weapons (78% of those surveyed answered “highly improbable”), to the question of nuclear weapons in Iran (56.5% answered “it does not present a threat to Russian national interests”), or to the question about the threat of WMD terrorism to the country (the maximum, 20%, of negative answers).

In the second group of districts there is more support for the idea of increasing the country’s nuclear arsenal and a more aggravated perception of the dangers associated with WMD. It is indicative that the greatest number of supporters for targeting nuclear weapons during peacetime was found in the Siberian region, where opinions on this question were nearly evenly divided. By looking at the sum total of all of the answers, we may avoid hurried conclusions about the existence of more or less aggressiveness or wisdom in the various districts. It is more accurate to examine the degree of “anxiety” in various regions. Typically, in the “calmest” regions respondents are less worried about the prospects of an expansion of the “nuclear club” and even have fairly positive views of the spread of Russian “nuclear weapons into other countries.”

**17.** By examining all of the answers to the survey one can provisionally isolate three **types of respondent groups**. First, there is the group of **“anxious citizens,”** which includes both men and women, mostly less than 45 years of age. If we adhere to the median poll results, these people do live not in the largest cities, are in the Central or Siberian federal district, have a comparatively high level of education, are not very wealthy, and in many instances vote for opposition parties. They are against WMD proliferation and are afraid of the use of nuclear weapons against Russia, both by particular states and, especially, by terrorist organizations (they are equally afraid of attacks on Russian nuclear facilities). Although they are generally in favor of Russian participation in international cooperation (including with other G8 states), “anxious citizens” do not want it to be viewed as a sign of Russia’s relative weakness. This provisional group of Russians does not consider the threat of inter-state nuclear war to be the only reason why Russia should maintain its nuclear arsenal; therefore, these citizens do not exclude the

need to retain and even strengthen the country’s nuclear capabilities in the long run.

Another group provisionally identified by the survey results could be called **“optimists,”** who tend to take a more straightforward view both of the level of threat, as well as the various likely developments. The typical representatives of this group live in Moscow or St. Petersburg, or in the large cities of the Northwestern, Urals, or Volga federal districts, and do not have the highest levels of education, although they have solid finances. They do not believe in the likelihood of a nuclear war with another state, and see the danger of a terrorist attack against Russia as greatly exaggerated. They view the United States sympathetically, and those who oppose it as a threat to Russia. The “optimists” think that the nuclear arsenal is an expensive part of the nation’s inheritance, and do not exclude the possibility of rejecting it in the long run, but as a whole view its elimination as unadvisable. Supporting Russia’s international cooperation with other G8 countries, this provisional group is also open to other possible international developments, including expansion of the “nuclear club.”

As a third provision group, one can identify a small **“indifferent public”** that is growing every year. Signs of the appearance of this group can particularly be seen among individuals of less than 25 years of age, although typical representatives of this group can be found in any age range or place of residence. This group absolutely does not care if WMD falls into the hands of terrorists or irresponsible foreign states, or whether or not Russia remains in the Six-Party talks on the nuclear crisis in the Korean Peninsula, provided that the events do not affect a very narrowly understood set of personal interests. The answers of this group to the poll indicate its vacillation between extreme positions, a fact that points to a lack of appreciation for the seriousness of the problems or even a desire to analyze them logically. An increase in the size of this group and/or the growth of its influence on developments is the greatest long-term threat both to Russian interests and to the prospects for the development of the regimes for the nonproliferation of WMD and means of their delivery.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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**Ildar Abdulkhanovich AKHTAMZYAN** is a member of the PIR Center Advisory Board. Born in Moscow in 1957, he attended the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO). After his graduation in 1979, he was employed by the institute, first as a graduate student, then as a lecturer, senior lecturer, and currently as an associate professor in the History of International Relations and Foreign Policy Department of MGIMO – the

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