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**Russian World? Protection of National Minorities Abroad
as a Component of Russia's Foreign Policy**

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Abstract

This thesis examines Russian foreign policy towards Russian minorities abroad through the prism of the intellectual and political concept of the Russian World. The thesis focuses on the following research questions: (1) What role do minorities abroad play in contemporary Russian foreign policy? What is their position in it? (2) What tools does the Russian Government use in order to keep these minorities in its sphere of influence? And (3) What is the role of the Russian World concept in contemporary Russian foreign policy? The findings indicate an evolution of the concept. At the same time, certain problems in the state policy towards Russians abroad are also indicated. Conclusively, it is also identified that the Russian World concept, as well as the commitment to protect minorities, is used by Russian government in certain cases. However, existing political realities, inevitably made adjustments to the perception and assessment of the prospects of the Russian World, polarizing for a long time the already ambiguous ideas about the commonality of their civilizational foundations, traditions and values.

Keywords

Russian World, Russian minorities, compatriots abroad, post-Soviet area, Russian diaspora, Russia's foreign policy

Range of thesis: 136 pages; 180.724 characters.

Declaration of Authorship

1. The author hereby declares that he compiled this thesis independently, using only the listed resources and literature.
2. The author hereby declares that all the sources and literature used have been properly cited.
3. The author hereby declares that the thesis has not been used to obtain a different or the same degree.

Prague 30th July 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping, stylized loops and lines, positioned to the right of the date.

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INTRODUCTION

Recently, especially after the annexation of Crimea and the war in the East of Ukraine, more and more often in the international space, there were talks about the negative influence of Russia and its interference in the internal affairs of other states. There is a growing number of causations in which Russia is involved in a certain way, among them, for instance, information and cyberwar, shot down of Malaysia Airlines plane (MH17), meddling in elections (Presidential elections in the USA and France, EU elections, Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom), poisoning of people objectionable to the regime on the territory of other countries (for instance, Alexander Litvinenko, Boris Berezovsky, Sergey Skripal and others), unleashing a war in the East of Ukraine. This list of Russian ‘achievements’ can be continued ad infinitum. The suspicions are also reinforced by the fact that Russia is developing towards the strengthening of authoritarianism¹, showing even monarchical features². It is difficult to blame the Russian people for this development: the political culture of Russia has become a so-called subject culture according to the Almond and Verba’s definition³ thanks to a well-functioning system of state propaganda for more than 20 years.

Nevertheless, for the Russian political elites, international politics has become the most important field of activity. Vladimir Putin in the media and in folk art has the status of the Father of the Nation, who “raised Russia from its knees”⁴. Russians are proud that its Motherland restored the status of great power with a say in the international system, despite the fact that the internal situation in the country leaves much to be desired.

¹ According to the Economist World Democracy Index Russia was a hybrid regime with total score 4.26 out of 10.0 (107th place) in 2010, an authoritarian regime with total score 3.31 out of 10.0 (132th place) in 2016 and an authoritarian regime with total score 3.11 out of 10.0 (134th place) in 2020. See more: Democracy Index. *The Economist* [online]. undated [cit. 2020-01-24]. Retrieved from: <https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index>

² MAMONOVA, Natalia. Naive Monarchism and Rural Resistance in Contemporary Russia. *Rural Sociology*. September 2016, 81(3), 316–342.

³ ALMOND, Gabriel A. and Sidney VERBA. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton University: Center for International Studies, 1963.

⁴ An expression that is constantly present in Russian discourse about Vladimir Putin, who was able to achieve international recognition for Russia and respect from other countries, and also brought Russia out of the deep economic crisis of 1998.

One of the ways of Russia's influence on international politics is to maintain ties with the Russian diaspora abroad. According to some authors (M. Suslov⁵, M. Panenkova⁶, V. Fillipov⁷, and others), Russia is not so active in maintaining contacts, and its policy towards the Russian diaspora is not developed. However, the protection of Russian citizens and the Russian-speaking population became an official justification for Russia's entry into the military conflict with Georgia in 2008 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014. Russia in its constitution has undertaken the obligation to protect and defend the rights and legal claims of its citizens abroad⁸. The Russian leader Vladimir Putin often appeals to the term Russian World⁹; this term can also be encountered in the 2008 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation¹⁰. What is the Russian World like? What do the political elites and decision-makers of Russia mean by appealing to this term? What place does the Russian World occupy in the foreign political doctrine of Russia? All these questions are very important for understanding Russian policy towards Russian minorities abroad.

The question also arises as to why Russia protects the rights of its compatriots through military conflict and illegal annexation in one region but does not try to enter into conflicts between the official authorities and the diaspora in other countries (for instance, in Estonia, Latvia and Turkmenistan). Thus, it can be argued that Russia's policy towards Russian minorities abroad is not homogeneous.

Within this thesis, the author intends to:

- critically investigate the term/concept of the Russian World,
- clarify understanding of the political usage of the term 'compatriot living abroad',

⁵ SUSLOV, Mikhail. "Russian World" Concept: Post-Soviet Geopolitical Ideology and the Logic of "Spheres of Influence". *Geopolitics*. 2018. Vol. 23, no. 2, p. 330-353.

⁶ PANENKOVA, Mariya Anatol'yevna. Gosudarstvennaya politika Rossiyskoy Federatsii v otnoshenii rossiyskikh grazhdan za rubezhom. *Yuridicheskaya nauka*. 2014. Vol. 3, p. 35-37.

⁷ FILLIPOV, Vladimir. Formirovaniye gosudarstvennoy politiki Rossii v otnoshenii sootchestvennikov za rubezhom. *Vlast'*. 2010. No. 12, p. 46-49.

⁸ Paragraph 61 (2), Constitution of the Russian Federation [online]. Moscow, Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.constitution.ru>.

⁹ For instance, Vsemirnyy kongress sootchestvennikov, prozhivayushchikh za rubezhom. *Kremlin* [online]. [Accessed 24 January 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/59003>, Vystupleniye Vladimira Putina na otkrytii Kongressa sootchestvennikov 2001. *Kremlin* [online]. [Accessed 24 January 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21359>.

¹⁰ *Kontseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii 2008 goda* [online]. Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/news/785>.

- analyse the place of Russian minorities abroad in Russian foreign policy, its main points and features,
- reveal the features and potential of the Russian diaspora abroad,
- discuss how does the Russian government communicate with these minorities.

The main goal of this thesis is to analyse the characteristics and problems of shaping the concept of ‘Russians in the near abroad’ as an integral part of the Russian World. The author will discuss the positioning of Russian minorities in actual Russian documents and analyse the tools used by the Russian Government to uphold relations with them and keep them in the sphere of influence of Russian culture.

The following **research questions** will be investigated: (1) What role do minorities abroad play in contemporary Russian foreign policy? What is their position in it? (2) What tools does the Russian Government use in order to keep these minorities in its sphere of influence? And (3) What is the role of the Russian World concept in contemporary Russian foreign policy?

The relevance of the topic is as follows. The current stage of globalization is characterized by two different trends. On one hand, the interconnection and interdependence of people is increasing, on the other hand, the rivalry between states and civilizations is increasing. The subjects of international relations in the struggle for leading positions are developing new models of the world order, predetermining their position in it. Despite the difficulties experienced, Russia is trying to work out and implement its own development doctrine, which has a global character. In this context, an idea-concept called ‘Russian World’ acquires great importance.

The Russian World includes two basic elements, they are Russia as a state and the Russian diaspora as Russians abroad. Relations between the components of the Russian World were cool for a long time, especially during the Soviet years. The question of the existence of the numerous Russian diasporas in their historical homeland was not relevant, in the socio-political vocabulary there was no concept of ‘compatriot abroad’. For several decades the thesis that the emigrated fellow citizens are enemies of the Soviet people and the state has been propagated in the country.

Awareness of the importance of the Russian emigration took place in the country only in the 90s of the XX century. Then the category ‘compatriot abroad’ acquired legal status and was

enshrined in the Federal Law. Today the implementation of an effective diaspora policy, interaction with compatriots, support and protection of their rights is defined as one of the priority directions of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation. The topic of Russia's cooperation with foreign compatriots began to be frequently raised in the speeches of top officials of the state. A clear understanding has come that compatriots permanently living abroad are a large political, economic, intellectual and demographic resource of Russia, which for a long time remained unattended. Using the potential of the Russian World should lead to an increase in Russia's influence on international processes, the preservation of the ethnocultural identity of the Russian ethnos.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter analyses the Russian World as a theoretical and practical concept. This chapter focuses mostly on the study of the modern (post-Soviet) understanding of the Russian World concept, which has been formed in 1992–1998. The author of the thesis examines the development of the concept and its main changes and analyses the concept of the Russian World based on certain characteristics. At the end, the author of the thesis examines the criticism of the concept.

Within the practical part of the work, the author answers the research questions stated above. The second chapter of the thesis is devoted to Russian minorities as the main component of the theory of the Russian World. The author studies the concept of the Russian diaspora and analyses the problems with its definition. The author of the thesis also studies the size of the diaspora in the world and in the territory of the former Soviet Union, as well as maps its position and status in the former Soviet republics. The third chapter examines the official documents of Russia and analyses the position of the Russian diaspora in them, paying particular attention to the protection of minorities, which Russia promises in its main documents. The fourth chapter maps with Russian policy towards Russian minorities, analyses internal legal statements, and focuses on two main organisations that Vladimir Putin considers to be the stronghold of compatriots outside the homeland. This is followed by a conclusion that summarizes all the information found and analyses them.

Methodologically, the thesis draws on a thorough heuristic analysis of primary sources, especially from the publications of theorists of the Russian World as a theoretical concept and official public policy documents of the Russian Federation, which it then processes and interprets. The thesis also uses classical methods of social sciences, especially the statistical and comparative method, the method of discourse analysis and the hermeneutic method. The

thesis also draws on a broad base of secondary literature (see more in Literature Review). A large number of foreign-language sources, especially Russian-language ones, were used in the processing of the work.

It should be emphasized that the present analysis is linked to some specificities. It should be noted that the concept of the Russian World is a rather specific topic that moves on the border between the theoretical framework and the practical functioning of politics (see explanation in Chapter 1.6). At the same time, the non-transparency of the analysed organisations and the political (and also ideological) colouring of Russian-language literature is also a problematic point.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THE DEGREE OF SCIENTIFIC ELABORATION OF THE TOPIC

In the modern scientific literature, there is an opinion that the concept of Russian World was introduced into scientific circulation by P.G. Shchedrovitskiy in the 1990s as a reaction to the collapse of the USSR and the need to search for new strategic ideas and solutions in the matter of ‘gathering’ the disunited Russian-speaking compatriots¹¹. Accordingly, the sphere of influence of the concept in question extends to the post-Soviet space, primarily in the part of the Russian-speaking countries of the so-called ‘Slavic triangle’ (Belarus, Russia and Ukraine).

In the process of genesis and development of the Russian World concept, three stages are distinguished: constitutional registration, when the idea of consolidating the Russian-speaking community was proposed as the basis of Russian policy in the CIS (1998); giving the idea of Russian World the status of state policy (2001); its institutionalization and practical implementation¹². The ideas of the need to search for and construct a new identity for the pro-Russian World, going beyond the territorial borders of Russia, since the 1990s, were put forward and substantiated by M. Gefter¹³, S. Gradirovskiy and B. Mezhujev¹⁴, A. Dugin¹⁵, G. Pavlovskiy¹⁶, V. Tsymburskiy¹⁷, and others.

It is noteworthy that the positioning of the authors in relation to some problems and determined the structure and content of the main theoretical and methodological approaches

¹¹ BATANOVA, O. N. *Russkiy mir i problemy yego formirovaniya*. Moscow: Rossiyskaya akad. gos. sluzhby pri Prezidente Rossiyskoy Federatsii, 2009, p. 6.

PEN'KOVA, E. A. *Russkiy mir kak faktor sotsial'noy identifikatsii rossiyskoy molodezhi*. Moscow : Rossiyskiy gos. sotsial'nyy un-t, 2012, p.6.

PETUKHOV, V. V. and BARASH, R. E. Russkiye i “Russkiy mir”: istoricheskiy kontekst i sovremennoye prochneniye. *Politicheskiye issledovaniya*. 2014. No. 6, pp. 91.

¹² SKRINNIK, V. M. "Russian World" as a Sociocultural Phenomenon. *Questions of the History of Kyrgyzstan*. 2008. No. 3, p.177

¹³ GEFTER, Mikhail. : World of worlds: Russian origin. [online]. [Accessed 25 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://old.russ.ru/antolog/inoe/geft.htm/>

¹⁴ GRADIROVSKIY, Sergey and MEZHUYEV, Boris. Russkiy mir kak ob'yekt geokul'turnogo proyektirovaniya. [online]. [Accessed 20 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://www.archipelag.ru/>

¹⁵ DUGIN, Alexandr. *Rossiya mozhet byt' velikoy ili nikakoy. Osnovy yevraziystva*. Moscow: Arktogeya-Tsentr, 2002.

¹⁶ PAVLOVSKIY, Gleb. K vozobnovleniyu russkogo (Iz vystupleniya S.Chernysheva v Sobranii Russkogo instituta). *Russkiy zhurnal* [online]. 1996. [Accessed 05 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://old.russ.ru/ri/index.htm/>

¹⁷ TSYMBURSKIY, Vadim. Ostrov Rossiya perspektivy rossiyskoy geopolitiki. *Polis*. 1993. No. 5, p. 6–53.

to the Russian World that have developed in the scientific literature. The differences are mainly in the prioritisation of the search and structuring of the grounds and signs of belonging to the Russian World. These problems are: (1) criteria for identification and assignment to Russian World; (2) its transnational and supranational character; (3) real and potential territorial boundaries, as well as the possible political form of its implementation.

In the scientific literature, three main theoretical approaches to the concept of the Russian World have been formed: cultural-civilizational, religious, geopolitical. It should be noted that most of the works combine several approaches and typological foundations at once. From a methodological point of view, this gives grounds to consider Russian World as an interdisciplinary concept operating with a wide variety of meanings and connotations.

Russian World as a cultural and civilizational concept

The most popular in the scientific literature and at the same time the least developed in theoretical and methodological terms is the cultural and civilizational approach, various aspects of which are devoted to numerous works of mainly Russian scientists: O. Batanova¹⁸, R. Barash¹⁹, V. Ivanov²⁰, V. Ksenofontov²¹, V. Nikonov²², N. Yarkova²³ and many others.

Russian World can be considered as a modernized version of the Russian idea, since “*there can be no Russian World without the Russian idea.*”²⁴ The significant ‘blurring’ of the Russian culture as a key component of the concept poses a problem of identity. Identity in scientific literature is increasingly understood as the traditional concepts of ‘self-

¹⁸ BATANOVA, O. N. Russkiy mir. *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*. 2008. No. 11, p. 109–117.

BATANOVA, O. N. Russkiy mir kak real'nost' i global'nyy proyekt. *Pravo i politika*. 2008. No. 12, p. 3017–3021.

¹⁹ PETUKHOV, V. V. and BARASH, R. E. Russkiye i «Russkiy mir»: istoricheskiy kontekst i sovremennoye prochtenie. *Politicheskiye issledovaniya*. 2014. No. 6, p. 83–101.

²⁰ IVANOV, V. N. *Rossiya i "Russkiy mir" (ekspertnyye suzhdeniya i otsenki)*. Moscow: Akademika, 2010, p. 12.

IVANOV, V. N. Russkiy mir (ekspertnyye suzhdeniya i otsenki). *Vestnik Rossiyskogo un-ta druzhby narodov: Sotsiologiya*. 2010. No. 1, p. 5–16.

²¹ KSENOFONTOV, V. N. Russkiy mir: kriterii i osobennosti realizatsii. *Poisk: Politika. Obshchestvovedeniye. Iskusstvo. Sotsiologiya. Kul'tura*. 2009. Vol. 1, no. 21p. 120–128.

²² Ne vospominaniye o proshlom, a mehta o budushchem. In: NIKONOV, V., *Smysly i tsennosti Russkogo mira: sbornik statey i materialov kruglykh stolov; organizovannykh fondom «Russkiy mir»*. Moscow : Russkiy mir, 2009. p. 2–14.

²³ YARKOVA, N. A. Opredelennost' russkogo mira. *Poznaniye stran mira: istoriya, kul'tura, dostizheniya*. 2013. No. 2p. 127–130.

YARKOVA, N. A. Ponyatiye russkogo mira. In : *Nauka vchera, segodnya, zavtra: materialy I Mezhd. zaachnoy nauch.-prakt. konf.* Novosibirsk : SibAK, 2013. p. 74–78.

²⁴ KOCHEROV, S.N. Russkiy mir: problema opredeleniya. *Vestnik Nizhegorodskogo universiteta im. N.I. Lobachevskogo*. 2014. Vol. 5, no. 1, p.163.

determination' and 'self-awareness'²⁵. This position is consistent with the idea of the cultural content of Russian identity, which "is not limited to ethnic or geographic boundaries but is value-normative"²⁶.

In general, it can be concluded that within the approach under consideration, the Russian World is a modernized version of the Russian idea since it meets its main characteristics and requirements, providing for supranational or transnational character, the conventionality of territorial boundaries, messianism, the opposition of 'friends' to 'aliens', the need for mandatory protection of the proclaimed ideas and values from negative external encroachments.

Russian World as a religious concept

The following understanding of the Russian World is a religious one. A large number of authors pay attention to this understanding, for instance, E. Astakhov²⁷, O. Zhukova²⁸, N. Narochnitskaya²⁹, A.I. Rodionov³⁰, Ya. Svechinskaya³¹ and many others.

The main difference between the religious and the cultural-civilizational approach is that the initial prerequisite is the proclamation of the decisive role in the integration processes not of the Russian language and culture, but of Orthodoxy and the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. Orthodoxy and the Russian Orthodox Church are considered as key components and culture-/state-forming factors of the formation and development of Russian

²⁵ BUSHUYEV, V. V. Istoricheskaya politika kak instrumental'naya sostavlyayushchaya natsional'nykh politicheskikh sistem: teoreticheskiy analiz. *Vestnik Moskovskogo un-ta.: Seriya 12: Politicheskiye nauki*. 2013. Vol. 12, no. 1, p. 19.

²⁶ SKRINNIK, V. M. *Rossiya i zarubezhnyye sootchestvenniki: problemy konsolidatsii i integratsii v novykh geopoliticheskikh usloviyakh*. Bishkek : Kyrgyzsko-Rossiyskiy Slavyanskiy un-t., 2009, p. 14.

²⁷ ASTAKHOV, Ye. M. Global'naya tsivilizatsiya i Rossiya. *Vestnik MGIMO Universiteta*. 2012. Vol. 5, no. 26, p. 52–54.

ASTAKHOV, Ye. M. Zadachi Rossii v informatsionnoy voyne. *Vestnik MGIMO Universiteta*. 2014. Vol. 2, no. 8, p. 136–141.

²⁸ ZHUKOVA, O. A. Russkaya kul'tura kak osnova natsional'no-istoricheskogo bytiya Rossii. In : *Ros. akad. nauk; in-t filosofii RAN*. Moscow: IFRAN, 2001, p. 50–92.

²⁹ NAROCHNITSKAYA, N. A. *Russkiy mir*. Sankt-Petersbrug: Aleteyya, 2007.

NAROCHNITSKAYA, N. A. Budushcheye Rossii – eto budushcheye Yevropy. *Rossiya i Zapad: dialog kul'tur*. 2012. Vol. 3, no. 1, p. 12–13.

³⁰ RODIONOV, A. I. O sostoyanii i blizhayshikh perspektivakh russkoy tsivilizatsii. *TSITISE*. 2015. No. 1p. 12–29.

³¹ SVECHINSKAYA, Ya. S. *Imperskaya ideologiya v rossiyskoy gosudarstvenno-pravovoy mysli*. Moscow : Yurlitinform, 2011.

SVECHINSKAYA, Ya. S. Sovremennoye sostoyaniye imperskoy ideologii v Rossii. *Filosofiya prava*. 2009. No. 3, p. 128–130.

civilization. The concept of Holy Russia³² is considered as an ideological basis of the religious understanding of the Russian World concept³³.

The Russian World, according to this approach, is an Orthodox Christian civilization, a self-sufficient world that does not need special contacts with other worlds, religions and crops³⁴. The Russian Orthodox Church is the “spiritual core of the Russian World”³⁵, performing the function of legitimising political power in modern society. This allows to speak about the phenomenon of the so-called ‘political Orthodoxy’ when the political practice is based on the religious doctrines and traditions. The goal of ‘political Orthodoxy’ is the supremacy of religious power over political³⁶.

Thus, according to this approach, the Russian World is above all Orthodox, not Russian. At the same time, Russian World cannot be associated with Russia or any other state, and cannot have any clear geographical dimension, because the boundaries of the Church do not cover territories and countries, but believers³⁷.

Russian World as a geopolitical concept

The political leaders’ speeches, which largely predetermined the social order of the corresponding topics of scientific research, contributed to the formation of another theoretical and methodological approach to the Russian World concept, which can be designated as geopolitical.

In the official rhetoric of political leaders, the idea of the Russian World as the idea of ‘gathering nations’ was firstly announced by the President of the Russian Federation at the

³² Holy Rus is a concept primarily in Russian folklore, poetry and vernacular. This concept implies the metaphysical and philosophical space, Russian land, chosen by God by the Christian faith. The understanding of Holy Rus is not limited only with its understanding as an ethno-political community. Holy Rus is distinguished neither by geography, nor statehood and nor ethnicity, but Orthodox Christianity first.

³³ KOL'YEV, A. V. *Natsiya i gosudarstvo. Teoriya konservativnoy rekonstruktsii*. Moscow: Logos, 2005, p. 759

KSENOFONTOV, V. N. *Russkiy mir: kriterii i osobennosti realizatsii. Poisk: Politika. Obshchestvovedeniye. Iskusstvo. Sotsiologiya. Kul'tura*. 2009. Vol. 1, no. 21, p.124.

³⁴ MEZHUYEV, V. M. "Russkaya ideya" i tsivilizatsionnyye osobennosti Russkogo mira: Russkiy mir kak tsivilizatsionnoye prostranstvo. *Ros. Akad. nauk; In-t filosofii RAN*. 2001, p.14

³⁵ PEN'KOVA, E. A. *Russkiy mir kak faktor sotsial'noy identifikatsii rossiyskoy molodezhi*. Moscow : Rossiyskiy gos. sotsial'nyy un-t, 2012.

³⁶ OVCHAROVA, A. I. *Pravoslavnaya politika ili politicheskoye pravoslaviye. Filosofiya prava*. 2009. No. 5, p. 100–103.

³⁷ KOSTYUK, K. "Russkiy mir": bogoslovskiy smysl i politicheskoye eksplikatsii: "Russkiy mir": bogoslovskiy smysl i politicheskoye eksplikatsii. *Vestnik Pravoslavnogo Svyato-Tikhonovskogo gumanitarnogo un-ta*. 2015. Vol. 3, no. 59p. 137–151.

First World Congress of Compatriots in 2001. In his speech, Vladimir Putin immediately identified the key features of the political dimension of the Russian World: linguistic affiliation and conventionality of territorial boundaries. Nevertheless, Putin noted that belonging to the Russian World is a matter of personal choice and spiritual self-determination. He also noted that the concept of the Russian World “*went far beyond the geographical boundaries of Russia and even far beyond the boundaries of the Russian ethnos*”³⁸.

According to the definition presented by the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov, the Russian World is “*a huge resource for strengthening Russia’s authority in the international system*”³⁹.

During 2014–2016 the appeal to the ideas of the Russian World almost totally disappeared from the public rhetoric of the Russian political elites. The last mention was in June 2014, when the President promised the security guarantees to the ethnic Russians in the World:

*“Of course, we will always protect both ethnic Russians in Ukraine and that part of the Ukrainian population, the Ukrainian people, which feels its inseparable not only ethnic but also cultural, linguistic connection with Russia, feels itself as a part of the Russian World. And we, of course, will not only follow closely but also react accordingly. I hope that the Armed Forces will not be required for this.”*⁴⁰

The geopolitical approach is based on the idea of the balance of power and the multipolar world. The Russian World (in any period of history) was traditionally opposed to the Western, and the Russian World concept appears as a model for integrating the divided Russian-speaking community into a transnational network in order to create a global political player that can be an alternative to the West. In accordance with the geopolitical approach,

³⁸ Vystupleniye Vladimira Putina na otkrytii Kongressa sootchestvennikov 2001. *Kremlin* [online]. [Accessed 24 January 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21359>.

³⁹ DROBIZHEVA, L. M. Grazhdanskaya i etnicheskaya identichnost' i obraz zhelayemogo gosudarstva v Rossii. *Polis*. 2015. No. 5, p. 9–24.

⁴⁰ Zayavleniya dlya pressy i otvety na voprosy zhurnalistov po itogam rossiysko-avstriyskikh peregovorov 24 iyunya 2014 g. *Kremlin* [online]. [Accessed 05 February 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46060>.

the Russian World includes the entire post-Soviet space (Near Abroad) and all other Russian-speaking communities (Far Abroad)⁴¹.

As one of the variants of the geopolitical approach includes another narrower 'post-Soviet' approach, which claims that the Russian World is constituted by post-Soviet countries only. Among the intellectuals agreed with this approach are A. Dugin⁴², S. Kara-Murza⁴³, V. Pavlovsky⁴⁴, and others. The emergence of global network projects that brought together scientists, politicians and public figures has a significant impact on the development of the Russian World concept. These projects include the Russkiy Mir Foundation, the Russkiy Archipelag (Russian Archipelago) network project, the Russkiy Zhurnal network magazine and other corresponding. They exist with state support, unite government, research and educational institutions, libraries and other cultural institutions and have extensive resources for research activities.

The research information base of this thesis was made up of:

- 1) normative legal documents of the Russian Federation, above all the Constitution of the Russian Federation, then also the laws "On Compatriots", "On Citizenship", "On Migrants" and the Foreign Policy Concepts and National Security Concepts and many others (see Bibliography); as well as the normative legal documents of European Union, Ukraine and other countries;
- 2) legal documents of other countries (e.g. Ukraine, Latvia, Estonia and other);
- 3) transcripts of speeches of the representatives of the top leadership of the Russian Federation (in particular, Vladimir Putin's so-called Crimean speech, speeches at the Congresses of Compatriots and others);
- 4) academic works and articles;

⁴¹ SHCHEDROVITSKIY, Pyotr. Russkiy mir i transnatsional'noye russkoye. *Archipelag* [online]. [Accessed 17 April 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history99-00/shedrovicky-transnatio/

⁴² DUGIN, Alexandr. *Rossiya mozhет byt' velikoy ili nikakoy. Osnovy yevraziystva*. Moscow: Arktogeya-Tsentr, 2002.

⁴³ KARA-MURZA, A. A. Primireniye Russkogo mira. Vozmozhn li vnutrsivilizatsionnyy dialog? In: *Russkiy mir kak tsivilizatsionnoye prostranstvo*. Moscow : IFRAN, 2001. p. 148–195.

⁴⁴ PAVLOVSKIY, V. V. Rossiyskiy mir: eksplyatsiya ponyatiya. *Vestnik Krasnoyarskogo gosudarstvennogo agrarnogo universiteta*. 2014. No. 12p. 297–302.

- 5) statistical sources: data from the Levada survey centre, Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, the Federal State Statistics Service of different countries and other corresponding.
 - 6) other materials: data from the Russkiy Mir Foundation, materials covering identity problems, ethnic issues, etc., information on the websites of the Russian-speaking population;
- and many other corresponding.

CHAPTER 1: RUSSIAN WORLD AS AN INTELLECTUAL CONSTRUCT AND ANALYTICAL APPROACH

This chapter analyses the concept of the Russian World, its genesis, the key roots and development to the present day. Within this chapter the author conducts a detailed analysis of the development of the Russian World concept in the post-Soviet period, where compares periods based on chosen criteria. The author of the thesis divides the modern development of the theory into several time periods, based on the time frame proposed by Mikhail Suslov in the article named “Russian World” Concept: Post-Soviet Geopolitical Ideology and the Logic of “Spheres of Influence”⁴⁵. In addition, based on literature analysis the author of the thesis adds the fourth period in the Russian World concept development, which dates back to the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. The author studies a shift in the theory and gives her vision of the fourth stage in the development of the theory, based on the results of the literature analysis. The author of this thesis provides the criticism of the concept previously stated by different authors and compares the Russian World with other concepts of integration of the post-Soviet territories.

1.1 Dualism in the understanding of the Russian World concept

As was mentioned above, the main problem of the Russian World concept is its duality. It evinces the characteristics of both intellectual⁴⁶ and practical understanding. It has to be stressed that the concept is an intellectual construction, not a theory in the disciplinary sense of IR or security studies. It is the very convergence of an intellectual construct and its political implications that provides the concept with certain uniqueness, but at the same time creates certain problems in its analysis and use.

The concept of the Russian World was created by Pyotr G. Shchedrovitskiy between 1993 and 1998 during the process of the formation of the Strategy of Russian Foreign Policy towards the Commonwealth of Independent States⁴⁷. Then, according to Shchedrovitsky,

⁴⁵ SUSLOV, Mikhail. “Russian World” Concept: Post-Soviet Geopolitical Ideology and the Logic of “Spheres of Influence”. *Geopolitics*. 2018. Vol. 23, no. 2, p. 330-353.

⁴⁶ The author considers this approach as an intellectual construction. Concept of the Russian World is not a theory in the sense of the theory of security studies.

⁴⁷ SHCHEDROVITSKIY, Pyotr. *Russkiy Mir: vosstanovleniye konteksta. Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 2001. [Accessed 01 February 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history01/shedrovitsky-russmir/.

when he presented the concept in question as to the basis of the future Russian foreign policy, Russian political elites rejected it, considering it unpromising. He argues that the elites were surprised and amazed by the number of Russians abroad⁴⁸. However, at that time the concept did not find its practical application, and, in fact, it was “swept under the carpet”. Nevertheless, Russia did not abandon its compatriots and approved a series of legal documents that helped Russians abroad to return to their homeland. Among such laws, there are the Declaration on the Support of the Russian Diaspora and on the Protection of Russian Compatriots⁴⁹, Federal Law No. 99-FZ “On the State Policy of the Russian Federation Towards Compatriots Abroad⁵⁰ and other corresponding (see more in Chapter 4.1.2).

At that time the Russian World concept was developing as an intellectual concept only. A large number of authors began to study the concept, debating about its definition, historical and cultural roots, and understanding. Three main directions of the concept’s understanding were established, among them the culturally civilizational, religious, and geopolitical (diasporic) understanding (see more Literature Review). Culturally civilizational understanding is consistent with the idea of the cultural content of Russian identity, which “is not limited to ethnic or geographic boundaries but is value-normative”⁵¹. The understanding of the Russian World as a religious concept is based on the Orthodox faith and commitment to the Russian Orthodox Church⁵². The third, geopolitical understanding, is based on an analysis of Russian foreign policy and considers work with compatriots abroad to be its key direction⁵³.

⁴⁸ SHCHEDROVITSKIY, Pyotr. *Russkiy Mir: vosstanovleniye konteksta. Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 2001. [Accessed 01 February 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history01/shedrovitsky-russmir/.

⁴⁹ *POSTANOVLENIYE GOSUDARSTVENNOY DUMY FEDERAL'NOGO SOBRANIYA ROSSIYSKOY O Deklaratsii o podderzhke rossiyskoy diaspori i o pokrovitel'stve rossiyskim sootchestvennikam* [online]. 1995. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: http://www.pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?doc_itself=&nd=102038598&page=1&rdk=0&intelsearch=%CA%EE%ED%F1%F2%E8%F2%F3%F6%E8%FF+%D0%EE%F1%F1%E8%E9%F1%EA%EE%E9+%D4%E5%E4%E5%F0%E0%F6%E8%E8++&link_id=44#I0.

⁵⁰ *Federal'nyy zakon ot 24.05.1999 g. № 99-FZ O gosudarstvennoy politike Rossiyskoy Federatsii v otnoshenii sootchestvennikov za rubezhom* [online]. 1999. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/13875>.

⁵¹ SKRINNIK, V. M. *Rossiya i zarubezhnyye sootchestvenniki: problemy konsolidatsii i integratsii v novykh geopoliticheskikh usloviyakh*. Bishkek : Kyrgyzsko-Rossiyskiy Slavyanskiy un-t., 2009, p. 14.

⁵² KOSTYUK, K. "Russkiy mir": bogoslovskiy smysl i politicheskiye eksplikatsii: "Russkiy mir": bogoslovskiy smysl i politicheskiye eksplikatsii. *Vestnik Pravoslavnogo Svyato-Tikhonovskogo gumanitarnogo un-ta*. 2015. Vol. 3, no. 59p. 137–151.

⁵³ SHCHEDROVITSKIY, Pyotr. *Russkiy mir i transnatsional'noye russkoye. Archipelag* [online]. [Accessed 17 April 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history99-00/shedrovitsky-transnatio/

In those years (1993–2006), the concept was practically not mentioned in a political vein and developed only from an intellectual viewpoint. A large number of authors appeared who became interested in the concept; they tried to elaborate them and comprehend in their own way (for instance, B. Kruming-Sukharev, S. Gradirovskiy, A. Vasilyev, see more Chapter 1.3), or criticize its main ideas (for instance, K. Krylov, A. Verkhovitskiy, L. Fishman, see more Chapter 1.4). It can be argued that in the first decade of the 20th century, the concept experienced the peak of its development as an intellectual concept.

The first mention of the Russian World in practical political usage dates back to 2001 when Vladimir Putin used this term in his opening speech at the World Congress of Compatriots⁵⁴. However, it seems that Russian political elites only became seriously interested in the concept around the year 2007. Vladimir Putin signed a decree on the creation of the Russkiy Mir Foundation⁵⁵. Then, in the 2008 Foreign Policy Concept, the understanding of the Russian diaspora as the Russian World appeared⁵⁶. Moreover, in this period of time Patriarch Kirill also turned to the Russian World, especially to its religious understanding⁵⁷ (see more in Chapter 1.3.4). Vladimir Putin uses this term at the congresses of compatriots, in 2018 he gave his definition of the Russian World (see more in Chapter 1.3.4). However, from the 2013 Foreign Policy Concept, the concept of Russian World has disappeared (the rest of the wording of the paragraph remains the same)⁵⁸. The concept of the Russian World has never been formally elevated to the rank of state policy, but it seems that its influence on Russian foreign policy is quite large.

It is important to note that the concept of the Russian World, due to its ambiguity and blurred boundaries between theory and practice, was rarely used as an initial point for the analysis of Russian foreign policy. For these purposes, as a rule, other concepts are used, for instance, hybrid war, ideological competition, and other corresponding. The chosen intellectual

⁵⁴ Prezident Rossii vystupil na otkrytii Kongressa sootchestvennikov. *Kremlin* [online]. 2001. [Accessed 26 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/40497>.

⁵⁵ Ukaz Prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii ot 21.06.2007 g. № 796 O sozdanii fonda «Russkiy mir» [online]. 2007. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/25689>.

⁵⁶ Kontsepsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii [online]. 2008. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/news/785>.

⁵⁷ GUNDYAEV, Kirill [Patriarch Kirill]. Patriarkh Kirill: Russkiy mir — osobaya tsivilizatsiya, kotoruyu neobkhodimo sberech'. *Vsemirnyy russkiy narodnyy sobor* [online]. [Accessed 26 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://www.vrns.ru/news/3254/#.VA7iT6OhE5Q>.

⁵⁸ Kontsepsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii (utratila silu na osnovanii Ukaza Prezidenta RF ot 30.11.2016 N 640) [online]. 2013. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/499003797>.

concept as a basis for analysis is not often used in the field, however, it does not detract from its influence on Russian foreign policy. By converging the use of this concept to policy towards Russians abroad, the Russian government has shown its relevance. The concept of the Russian World is quite vague (see below), there is no agreement on the exact definition, and because of this, there may be manipulations and opportunistic interpretations. An analysis of Russia's foreign policy through the prism of the concept of the Russian World will contribute to a better understanding of the mechanism of the Putin regime's operation and its external behaviour.

1.2 Russian idea as a basis of the Russian World concept

The term 'Russian World' firstly appeared in the 11th century in writings of Grand Kniaz (Prince) of Kyiv Iziaslav Yaroslavovich, the son of Yaroslav the Wise (Yaroslav Mudryi), where he wrote: "...not only in Rome, but everywhere: in Kherson⁵⁹ and also in Russian World⁶⁰". The concept of the Russian World itself refers to ideas of the so-called Russian spirit, Russian idea and Russian soul. Russian spirit is a metaphor referred to as a set of personality traits inherent to the Russian people. It can be considered that the Russian spirit is directly expressed in the Russian mentality and culture. According to various authors (mainly Russian classical writers, for instance, L. Tolstoy and I. Turgenev⁶¹), the Russian spirit is inherent – courage, nobleness, spiritual kindness, bravery, and openness. Thus, Russian mentality is the core component of the Russian World, which can be considered as a cultural basis of the Russian World.

It can be claimed that the so-called Russian idea can be considered as the political basis of the Russian World concept. Russian idea is a set of concepts expressing historical originality and a special vocation of the Russian people. It includes a whole group of various topics and problems, ideological trends and directions, discussions, which to a large extent determined the picture of the development of Russian culture, in particular and especially philosophy.

⁵⁹ Kherson here is an old name of Chersonesus (Crimean Peninsula).

⁶⁰ NAZARENKO, A. V. «Slovo na obnovleniye Desyatinnoy tserkvi», ili k istorii pochitaniya svyatitelya Klimenta Rimskogo v Drevney Rusi. Moskva—Brussel : Conférence Sainte Trinité du Patriarcat de Moscou ASBL, Svyato-Yekaterininskiy muzhskoy monastyr', 2013, p. 184–185.

⁶¹ MAYDANOVA, Lyudmila. Stereotip «Zagadochnaya russkaya dusha»: ot zhurnalistskogo shtampa k khudozhestvennoy zagadke. In : KOTYUROVA, M. P., *Mezhvuzovskiy sbornik nauchnykh trudov*. Perm' : Permskiy gosudarstvennyy universitet, 2010. p. s. 181-189.

The concept of ‘Russian idea’ was formed in the 16th century and was embodied primarily in the Orthodox monarchy, the form of state’s government.

The Russian philosopher Pyotr Yak. Chaadayev for the first time wondered about the purpose of the Russian people and their special vocation. Pyotr Yak. Chaadayev was not convinced of the exclusiveness of Russia as a state:

*“Sometimes it seems that Russia is intended only to show the whole world how to not live and what not to do,”*⁶²

but at the same time, his ‘Philosophical Letter’ published in 1836 initiated the conversation about the destiny of Russian people:

*“We [Russians] belong neither to the West nor to the East <...> we are an exceptional people.”*⁶³

At the same time, he claims that Russian people is one of the most underdeveloped nations in the world, which “*gave nothing to the World.*”⁶⁴ Nevertheless, his writings significantly influenced the debate between Slavophiles and Westernizers.

A paper ‘Russian idea’ written by Russian philosopher Vladimir S. Solovyov in 1888 was one of the first writings telling about the concept in question. He claimed that Russian idea is based on its culture and its historical mission. Noting the fact that none of the cultures passed the religious stage, Vladimir S. Solovyov claims that Russian culture, as many others, based on ‘eternal truths of religion’⁶⁵:

*“The Russian people are the Christian people, <...> the Russian idea <...> can be nothing more than <...> a certain aspect of the Christian idea, and the mission of our people can become clear to us only when we penetrate into the true meaning of Christianity.”*⁶⁶

⁶² CHAADAYEV, Pyotr Yak. *Filosoficheskiye pis'ma*. Kazan' : Tip. D. M. Gran, 1906.

⁶³ CHAADAYEV, Pyotr Yak. *Filosoficheskiye pis'ma*. Kazan' : Tip. D. M. Gran, 1906.

⁶⁴ CHAADAYEV, Pyotr Yak. *Filosoficheskiye pis'ma*. Kazan' : Tip. D. M. Gran, 1906.

⁶⁵ SOLOVYOV, Vladimir S. *L'Idée Russe*. Paris : YMCA Press, 1946, p. 229, 239.

⁶⁶ SOLOVYOV, Vladimir S. *L'Idée Russe*. Paris : YMCA Press, 1946, p. 229, 239.

Russian idea was also discussed by Russian philosopher Nikolay A. Berdyaev in his books 'Russian idea' written in 1946⁶⁷ and 'Russia's Soul' written in 1915⁶⁸. He sees Russian people as people with exceptional qualities, such as selflessness and sacrifice that Western people do not have⁶⁹. Nikolay Berdyaev is one of the those who speak about Russia's uniqueness:

*"Russia is neither the West nor the East. It is the great East-West, the meeting and interaction of Eastern and Western basics. This is the complexity and mystery of Russia"*⁷⁰.

Berdyaev also considers Russia to be a religious country, in this aspect he also opposes it to the West⁷¹.

1.3 Russian World concept development in modern (post-Soviet) period

Danish researcher of Russian origin Mikhail Suslov claims that there are three periods in the Russian World concept development. According to his research, Suslov defines the following time periods: (1) 1996–2001, (2) 2001–2009, and (3) 2009–2015⁷². He briefly analyses these periods and compares them based on certain defined criteria. This master thesis will use the same chronology, but the author of the thesis believes that after the Crimea annexation there was some shift to a new period of the Russian World concept development. So, the author of the thesis adds one more time period to the Suslov chronology and compares them based on other defined criteria. These criteria are: (1) key intellectuals, (2) definition of Russian World and/or Russian diaspora, (2) theoretical vision of Russia and Russian diaspora (means how do the intellectuals see Russian diaspora and Russian Federation and relations between them), (4) key political approach, (5) used metaphors (how do the intellectuals name Russian diaspora), (6) role of the other actors (NGOs, media and other corresponding), (7) political background of the period and (8) Russian politics towards

⁶⁷ SOLOVYOV, Vladimir S. *L'Idée Russe*. Paris : YMCA Press, 1946, p. 260.

⁶⁸ BERDYAYEV, Nikolay Aleksandrovich. *Dusha Rossii*. Moscow : Tsentrpoligraf, 2016.

⁶⁹ BERDYAYEV, Nikolay Aleksandrovich. *Dusha Rossii*. Moscow : Tsentrpoligraf, 2016.

⁷⁰ BERDYAYEV, Nikolay Aleksandrovich. *Mirosozertsaniye Dostoyevskogo*. Moscow. Moscow : Akademicheskii proyekt, 2013, p. 238.

⁷¹ SOLOVYOV, Vladimir S. *L'Idée Russe*. Paris : YMCA Press, 1946, p. 260.

⁷² Article is dated 2015.

diaspora. Further subchapters examine the Russian World concept according to above-stated criteria and compare the assumptions in a particular conclusion (see Chapter 1.3.5).

1.3.1 The first period of the Russian World concept development (1996–2001)

Russian World concept has been creating by Pyotr G. Shchedrovitskiy between 1993 and 1997 during the process of the creation of the Strategy of Russian Foreign Policy towards the Commonwealth of Independent States. He is considered as a key intellectual⁷³ of the Russian World concept, mainly in the first period (1996–2001) according to Mikhail Suslov⁷⁴. Pyotr G. Shchedrovitskiy and his team (Shchedrovitskiy did not mention its members) suggested the existence of a certain socio-cultural reality. Pyotr G. Shchedrovitskiy claims that the same amount of people speaking and thinking in the Russian language live both in Russia and outside of it. In other words, the author claims that approximately 146.6 million Russian thinking and speaking people lived outside Russia in those times (2000–2001). According to Pyotr G. Shchedrovitskiy, Russian World is a global Russian speaking community. He also claims that the Russian World phenomenon has created a unique possibility for Russia to adapt to globalisation thanks to a wide network of Russian communities constituting global Russian diaspora⁷⁵:

“Small countries adapt due to the fact that they allow globalization to themselves, and large countries due to the fact that they enter the space of globalization. They are looking for a way to adapt to the global world: either through colonial capture, or through diasporas. A metasystem is being created that provides such adaptiveness.

Therefore, immunity is formed not here, but outside of Russia. Russians outside the Russian Federation is our immune system in

⁷³ Among others, such as Efim Ostrovskiy, Boris Kruming-Sukharev, Sergey Pereslegin, Maksim Shevchenko, Boris Mezhuyev and Sergey Gradirovskiy.

⁷⁴ SUSLOV, Mikhail. “Russian World” Concept: Post-Soviet Geopolitical Ideology and the Logic of “Spheres of Influence”. *Geopolitics*. 2018. Vol. 23, no. 2p. 330-353.

⁷⁵ SHCHEDROVITSKIY, Pyotr. *Russkiy Mir: vosstanovleniye konteksta. Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 2001. [Accessed 01 February 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history01/shedrovitsky-russmir/.

*relation to that globalization <...> which will occur in 50 years
<...>. Real globalization will break countries... ”⁷⁶*

Boris Kruming-Sukharev in his article “Mission of the Russian World” talks about the main goals of the Russian World and its mission in relation to Russia. The author considers the main goal of the Russian World is to fill the worldview vacuum of people mentally positioning themselves as Russian. He also claims that the goal of the Russian World is to expand the area of distribution of the Russian language and preserve the Russian people. It is very important to note that in that period (1996–2000) Russian World ideologists based their theory mainly on the knowledge of the Russian language⁷⁷.

Boris Kruming-Sukharev is one of the few who speaks of the disunity of the Russian diaspora due to the devaluation of moral values and the lack of common ideals⁷⁸. In addition, he criticizes the Russian authorities for inaction towards the Russian diaspora:

“The initiative on the part of the diasporas was manifested repeatedly, but it did not translate into real forms of systemic cooperation on the part of the metropolis. We live in a dynamically changing environment, so for the real, and not fictitious, functioning of the Russian World, we should talk about establishing ties, on one hand, between the Russian diasporas and the metropolis, and on the other, between the diasporas themselves. The role of the metropolis at the initial stage of formation is of course a priority.”⁷⁹

In this period, the Russian World was named ‘the Archipelago’ by Sergey Gradirovskiy in 1999. He argued that the Russian World is not Russian at all, but rather a definite alternative

⁷⁶ SHCHEDROVITSKIY, Pyotr. Russkiy Mir: vosstanovleniye konteksta. *Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 2001. [Accessed 01 February 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history01/shedrovitsky-russmir/

⁷⁷ KRUMING-SUKHAREV, Boris. Missiya Russkogo Mira. [online]. 2002. [Accessed 26 January 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history02/krouming-missiya/.

⁷⁸ KRUMING-SUKHAREV, Boris. Missiya Russkogo Mira. [online]. 2002. [Accessed 26 January 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history02/krouming-missiya/.

⁷⁹ KRUMING-SUKHAREV, Boris. Missiya Russkogo Mira. [online]. 2002. [Accessed 26 January 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history02/krouming-missiya/.

to ‘Russianness’, where cultural hybridization occurs due to the influence of the titular cultures and their mixing⁸⁰:

“*Russia has shrunk in order [to let] the Russian Archipelago expand, [to let] the Russian World spread.*”⁸¹

This metaphor became a name of the web-project Russian Archipelago (Russkiy Arkhipelag, <http://www.archipelag.ru>), its key intellectuals are conservative and pro-government (for instance, Pyotr Shchedrovitskiy, Sergey Pereslegin, Maksim Shevchenko, Boris Mezhujev and Sergey Gradirovskiy himself). One of the Archipelago’s intellectuals Pyotr Shchedrovitskiy speaks about the Russian World as a World of the Russian language, many times naming it ‘Russophone World’⁸².

The authors of the period in question claimed that the relations between the Russian diaspora and Russia have to be reversed: diaspora has to influence Russia⁸³. As for the relations of the diaspora and the motherland and its policy towards the diaspora, the authors noted that the relations remain disconnected⁸⁴. Russian political elites have not decided on their attitude to the diaspora, the diaspora is more likely a threat to them. Meanwhile, Russia was on the verge of the 20th century in a difficult economic, political, and social situation. Russia was adversely affected by the strong economic crisis of 1998, the Chechen wars (1994–1996, 1999–2009), as well as the political incompetence of President Boris N. Yeltsin, with which society was not satisfied. In such situation, the Russian government was not able to decide its attitude to the diaspora; in those years, Russia’s focus shifted to the domestic political situation.

⁸⁰ GRADIROVSKIY, Sergey. Rossiia i postsovetskie gosudarstva: Iskushenie diasporal’noi politikoi. [online]. 1999. [Accessed 03 February 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/rm-diaspor/diaspor-politic/iskus/.

⁸¹ GRADIROVSKIY, Sergey. Rossiia i postsovetskie gosudarstva: Iskushenie diasporal’noi politikoi. [online]. 1999. [Accessed 03 February 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/rm-diaspor/diaspor-politic/iskus/.

⁸² SHCHEDROVITSKIY, Pyotr. Russkiy Mir: vosstanovleniye konteksta. *Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 2001. [Accessed 01 February 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history01/shedrovitsky-russmir/.

⁸³ SHCHEDROVITSKIY, Pyotr. Russkiy Mir: vosstanovleniye konteksta. *Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 2001. [Accessed 01 February 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history01/shedrovitsky-russmir/.

⁸⁴ KRUMING-SUKHAREV, Boris. Missiya Russkogo Mira. [online]. 2002. [Accessed 26 January 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history02/krouming-missiya/.

Nevertheless, during this period Russia made an attempt to define Russian diaspora and to create a legislative framework. In 1995 the State Duma adopted the “Declaration on the Support of the Russian Diaspora and on the Protection of Russian Compatriots” (see more in Chapter 4.1.2) and then in 1999 Russia formulated the basis of the state policy in relation to compatriots abroad in the Federal Law No. 99-FZ “On the State Policy of the Russian Federation Towards Compatriots Abroad” (see more in Chapter 4.1.2). The law defines the concept of ‘compatriots abroad’ and the issue of relationship with them is raised to the rank of the state policy of the Russian Federation.

1.3.2 The second period of the Russian World concept development (2001–2009)

The beginning of the second period in the Russian World concept development can be approximately dated from 2001. Russia has already adopted a law on the support and protection of compatriots abroad. In 2001 the First All-Russian Congress of Russian Compatriots was held, where President Vladimir Putin introduced the opening remarks. The President noted the need to establish good relations between the Russian authorities and compatriots living abroad. At the same time, he emphasized that compatriots abroad should have equal rights with the citizens of the country in which they live. According to him, the state should fight for it persistently, competently, and skilfully. Vladimir Putin noted that it is necessary to respond to the closure of Russian-language newspapers and Russian schools abroad and insisted on the development of electronic communications with compatriots, the distribution of Russian-language literature and textbooks. The President of Russia also proposed the creation of a single structure that would deal with the whole range of problems in relations with compatriots⁸⁵.

Among the main theorists of the Russian World concept, one can distinguish Gleb Pavlovskiy, Sergey Kara-Murza, and other intellectuals of the Russian Journal. They, as well as representatives of the previous period of the concept development, defined the Russian World on the basis of knowledge of Russian speech, nevertheless, adding also a cultural element:

⁸⁵ Президент России выступил на открытии Конгресса соотечественников. *Kremlin* [online]. 2001. [Accessed 26 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/40497>.

“This is an association of people for whom the Russian language, Russian traditions are a native, close affair and form the basis for bringing people together”⁸⁶.

It is important to note that into the definition of the Russian World as a Russophone World, the concept of a compatriot abroad was added. As mentioned above, in 1999 President Boris N. Yeltsin adopted the Federal Law “On Compatriots”, which introduced the concept of ‘compatriot abroad’ into world legislative practice. According to the law, compatriots are people born in one state, living or residing in it and having signs of a common language, history, cultural heritage, traditions, and customs, as well as descendants of these people in a direct descending line. The law also defines the concept of a ‘compatriot abroad’, they are (1) citizens of the Russian Federation permanently residing outside the territory of the Russian Federation; (2) people and their descendants residing outside the territory of the Russian Federation and generally belonging to people who historically resided in the territory of the Russian Federation, as well as those who have made a free choice in favour of spiritual, cultural and legal relations with the Russian Federation, people whose relatives previously lived on the territory of the Russian Federation in a direct ascending line, including: (a) people who were citizens of the USSR, residing in the states that were part of the USSR, received the citizenship of these states or became stateless people; (b) immigrants (emigrants) from the Russian state⁸⁷, the Russian Republic⁸⁸, the RSFSR, the USSR, and the Russian Federation who had appropriate citizenship and became citizens of a foreign state or stateless people⁸⁹.

Typically for this period, the intellectuals saw the main problem in the relationship between Russia and the diaspora:

⁸⁶ VASILYEV, Aleksandr. Politicheskoye yedinstvo vozmozhno lish' teoreticheski. *Baltiyskiy mir*. 2010. Vol. 5, p. 72-73.

⁸⁷ The Russian state (Rossiyskoye gosudarstvo) is a state proclaimed by the Act of the Ufa State Conference of September 23, 1918 "on the formation of the All-Russian supreme power" with the aim of establishing the state unity and independence of Russia, establishing Soviet power and signing the Brest Peace by the Soviet government.

⁸⁸ The Russian Republic (Rossiyskaya Respublika) is the name of a state on the territory of Russia from September 1 (14), 1917 to October 25 (November 7), 1917.

⁸⁹ Article 1 of the Federal Law “On Compatriots”, see FEDERAL LAW On the state policy of the Russian Federation in relation to compatriots abroad [online]. 1999. Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?docbody=&firstDoc=1&lastDoc=1&nd=102059861>.

“As for the unification of the Russian World with Russia, there are a lot of obstacles, both moral and political. I do not yet see any will in Russia for the formation of a single political space - from the metropolis to the very outskirts”⁹⁰.

Alexander Vasilyev, director of the Baltic Forum international society, claimed that political unification of Russia and the Russian diaspora is possible only theoretically. Russia, in his opinion, is not taking any steps for this.

The Russian World in Gleb Pavlovsky's interpretation was based on the idea of his teacher Mikhail Gefter⁹¹, a Soviet dissident historian. According to Pavlovskiy, the first post-Soviet theory of the Russian World belongs to Mikhail Gefter, which he proposed in 1993. According to Gefter, the Russian World is an integral part of the 'World of Worlds', his vision is close to the Clash of Civilization theory of American political scientist Samuel P. Huntington⁹². According to Gefter, there are transnational and post-national worlds that were in a close communicative relationship with each other but retained differences in culture, politics, economics, and morality. Within such 'world' countries are organised as an international community of friendly and culturally fraternal states. Regarding the Russian World, Gefter argued that Russian civilization is strong and independent enough, it does not need a political space for support. In addition, he claimed that the cultural union of states based on Russianness is very weak, but Russia itself, due to its dynamism and strength, is able to maintain subsidiary sovereignties⁹³.

According to the concept of a 'World of Worlds', cooperation between worlds is very difficult, even impossible, and more often moves to rivalry. It is also necessary to pay attention to the fact that within the framework of this concept it is neglected by small political actors and cultures. This interpretation was further developed in the work of other political

⁹⁰ VASILYEV, Aleksandr. Politicheskoye yedinstvo vozmozhno lish' teoreticheski. *Baltiyskiy mir*. 2010. Vol. 5, p. 72-73.

⁹¹ Mikhail Gefter (1918–1995) was a Soviet and Russian historian, philosopher, publicist. He was engaged in questions of methodology and philosophy of history, the evolution of the idea of utopia and the concept of humanity, etc. Gefter presented an unorthodox portrait of Vladimir Lenin, describing the reticence, contradictions and ambiguities in Lenin's views. After the book was published, Gefter's works were prohibited to publish for ideological inconsistency. He took part in the human rights and dissident movement.

⁹² PAVLOVSKIY, Gleb. *Mikhail Gefter. Tret'yego tysyacheletiya ne budet. Russkaya istoriya igry s chelovechestvom*. Moscow : Evropa, 2015, p. 370)

⁹³ PAVLOVSKIY, Gleb. *Mikhail Gefter. Tret'yego tysyacheletiya ne budet. Russkaya istoriya igry s chelovechestvom*. Moscow : Evropa, 2015, p. 371)

analysts and theorists. For instance, in reaction to the Gefter's concept is the assumption of Miroslav Mitrofanov that

“The Russian World does not compete with the national cultures of countries neighbouring Russia, but with the cultural impact of powers comparable to Russia⁹⁴”.

As an example of such countries, Miroslav Mitrofanov cites the United States of America, France and Germany⁹⁵.

For the intellectuals of this period the so-called new conservatives (for instance, Boris Mezhuyev, Mikhail Remizov, and Yegor Kholmogorov), the Russian World is not a modernization tool. In their opinion, Russia is a self-sufficient civilization and it does not need any catch-up modernization, much less any approval and recognition of its actions by the West:

“The implicit geopolitical meaning, civilizational rhetoric and anti-West-centrist thrust of the ‘Russian World’ concept came at the fore when Russia was re-considered recently as a ‘state-civilization.’”⁹⁶

Mikhail Suslov writes, citing works of Fabian Linde⁹⁷ and Andrey Tsygankov⁹⁸. The rhetoric about the Russian World as a special civilization comes to the fore⁹⁹, there are foundations about the further understanding of Russian international politics as an independent actor, an independent country with an independent policy and pronounced anti-Western features. It is during this period that the foundations are laid that will become decisive in the third period of the development of the concept of the Russian World such as irredentism. This was also

⁹⁴ Russkiy mir konkuriruyet ne s natsional'nymi kul'turami sosednikh s Rossiiyey stran, a s kul'turnym vozdeystviyem sravnimykhs s Rossiiyey derzhav. *Baltiyskiy mir*. 2010. No. 3, p. 55-57.

⁹⁵ Russkiy mir konkuriruyet ne s natsional'nymi kul'turami sosednikh s Rossiiyey stran, a s kul'turnym vozdeystviyem sravnimykhs s Rossiiyey derzhav. *Baltiyskiy mir*. 2010. No. 3, p. 55-57.

⁹⁶ Russkiy mir konkuriruyet ne s natsional'nymi kul'turami sosednikh s Rossiiyey stran, a s kul'turnym vozdeystviyem sravnimykhs s Rossiiyey derzhav. *Baltiyskiy mir*. 2010. No. 3, p. 55-57.

⁹⁷ LINDE, Fabian. The civilisational turn in Russian political discourse: From pan-Europeanism to civilisational distinctiveness. *The Russian Review*. 2016. Vol. 75, no. 4.

⁹⁸ TSYGANKOV, Andrey. Crafting the state-civilization. *Problems of Post-Communism*. 2016. Vol. 63, no. 3, p. 1-13.

⁹⁹ LARUELLE, Marlene. Russia as a “Divided nation,” from compatriots to Crimea: A contribution to the discussion on nationalism and foreign policy. *Problems of Post-Communism*. 2015. Vol. 62, no. 2, p. 88-97.

facilitated by the global political situation when a military conflict between Russia and Georgia in 2008 over South Ossetia occurred.

In this regard, it should be noted that there was a debate between the intellectuals of this period about whether the Russian World could exist without Russia. A publicist Garry Gaylit claimed that the Russian World with Russia constitutes a coherent whole:

“If you <...> subtract Russia from the Russian World, the Russian diaspora remains, that is the totality of all Russians living outside of Russia. But it can no longer be called the Russian World.”¹⁰⁰

In his opinion, the disconnection of the Russian World and Russia poses a threat to the dying of the Russian World. However, Sergey Kara-Murza claimed that the Russian World can exist regardless of the existence of Russia or the Russian people. The author compared the Russian World with ancient Greece: despite the fact that ancient Greece fell, its culture is of great international significance to these days. He attributed the same mission to the Russian World, which, in his opinion, has tremendous, powerful spiritual strength, thanks to which he entered the world culture¹⁰¹:

“The Russian World will remain even if the Russian people disappear.”¹⁰²

Sergey Kara-Murza also described Russia and the Russian World as an ‘octopus with tentacles’. In his opinion, the Russian people live in the Russian Federation in the form of such a bloc and have many branches, diasporas. These diasporas and Russian societies are the tentacles of a huge octopus (Russians in Russia). These so-called tentacles are a necessary part of it to adapt to the current situation and for its development¹⁰³.

1.3.3 The third period of the Russian World concept development (2009–2015)

A start of this period of the Russian World concept development is Vladimir Putin’s Munich speech in 2007 and the 2008 Russian-Georgian war. In his speech, President Vladimir Putin disagreed with the unipolarity of the international system after the Cold War, which is not

¹⁰⁰ GAYLIT, Garry. Russkiy mir s Rossiyei sostavlyayet odno tseloye. *Baltiyskiy mir*. 2008. No. 5, p. 76-77.

¹⁰¹ KARA-MURZA, Vladimir. Vyyti iz glubokoy smuty. *Baltiyskiy mir*. 2010. Vol. 5, p. 72-73.

¹⁰² KARA-MURZA, Vladimir. Vyyti iz glubokoy smuty. *Baltiyskiy mir*. 2010. Vol. 5, p. 72-73.

¹⁰³ KARA-MURZA, Vladimir. Vyyti iz glubokoy smuty. *Baltiyskiy mir*. 2010. Vol. 5, p. 72-73.

acceptable in the modern international community according to him. In his opinion, the United States crossed borders and violated all sorts of rules of the UN Charter, intervening in conflicts and creating a threat to international security. Putin also criticized some, in his opinion, unfriendly steps of the EU and NATO against Russia (for instance, non-compliance with the CFE Treaty and NATO's eastward expansion). The war between Russia and Georgia around South Ossetia was also a turning point in modern history. Both sides of the conflict blamed the other and saw the essence of the conflict in different ways¹⁰⁴. Opinions also differed about who first crossed the border and started a military operation. The Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov explained that Russian intervention in the conflict was caused by the aggression of Georgia against South Ossetian territories beyond its control and the consequences of this aggression: humanitarian catastrophe, an exodus from the region of 30 thousand refugees, the death of Russian peacekeepers and many residents of South Ossetia. In his opinion, the actions of the Georgian army against civilians were genocide. Sergey Lavrov also noted that the majority of the population of South Ossetia are Russian citizens and that

“No country in the world would remain indifferent to the murder of its citizens and their expulsion from their homes”¹⁰⁵.

The Russian side confirmed that it conducted its actions solely in attempts to protect its citizens living in the territory of South Ossetia. Russia in this matter referred to Article 61, Paragraph 2 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation¹⁰⁶. However, in its report the EU expressed concern and disagreement with this formulation:

¹⁰⁴ The president of the unrecognized republic of South Ossetia claims that Georgia attacked South Ossetia for the purpose of ethnic cleansing. The President of Georgia claims that Russia was the first to violate the border between the countries and sent troops into Ossetia. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said that the reasons for the entry of Russian troops into the conflict zone were Georgia's aggression against the territories of South Ossetia beyond its control and the consequences of this aggression.

See Obrashcheniye Prezidenta Respubliki Yuzhnaya Osetiya Eduarda Kokoyty. [online]. 20 September 2008. [Accessed 29 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://cominf.org/2008/09/20/1166478323.html>; Interv'yu Prezidenta Rossii Dmitriya Medvedeva. *EchoMSK* [online]. 2011. [Accessed 29 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://echo.msk.ru/programs/beseda/799478-echo/>; Zayavleniye pravitel'stva Gruzii v svyazi s obstanovkoy v regione Yuzhnoy Osetii. *Government of Georgia* [online]. [Accessed 01 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://www.civil.ge/rus/article.php?id=17146>.

¹⁰⁵ S. Lavrov: Rossiya gotova k voyne s Gruziiyey. *RBC* [online]. [Accessed 26 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/30/04/2008/5703cc529a79470eaf76a6c0>.

¹⁰⁶ Constitution of the Russian Federation [online]. Moscow, Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.constitution.ru>.

“[S]ince 1945, numerous states have led military actions by pointing to the need to protect their own nationals abroad. In many cases, the legality of these actions was disputed. There is no customary law allowing such actions. If at all, such actions should be limited in scope and duration and exclusively focused on rescuing and evacuating nationals <...>. Consequently, it must be concluded that the Russian military action <...> was essentially conducted in violation of international law.”¹⁰⁷.

In this regard, Russian decision-makers turned their eyes to the defence of Russian minorities, which they had only talked about before. The civilization state of Russia, according to Gefter’s ‘World of the Worlds’ theory, not only protected the Russian population abroad but also took the small state under its protection.

Other processes were developing at this time, the state captured the media network in whole Russia and made them the ‘mouthpiece of propaganda’¹⁰⁸. The state took control mainly of television media that became state-owned directly or through state-owned corporations¹⁰⁹.

Mass propaganda activated, laying the foundations of the ideology of Putinism in the minds of Russians: the philosophy of militarism, where victory in The Great Patriotic War plays a key role; traditionalism and orthodox values; stability and opposition to the Western values. It should also be noted, that the stable domestic political situation in Russia promotes faith in the regime and, consequently, interim media. At that time Russia, which received a high income from the sale of oil and gas, was living at the peak of economic development and stability, showing high economic indicators¹¹⁰. Putin has repeatedly appealed to compatriots abroad as people who are important and necessary to Russia. It seems that the regime placed great hopes on organisations working as an aid for Russians abroad, created a large number of different centres and other bodies.

¹⁰⁷ *Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia (Report, Volume I)* [online]. September 2009. Strasbourg: European Court of Human Rights. Retrieved from: https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/HUDOC_38263_08_Annexes_ENG.pdf.

¹⁰⁸ KOROBKOVA, Daria. *Mediální image druhé rusko-čečenské války (1999–2009) v publikacích a člancích vybraných ruských opozičních novinářů*. Bakalářská práce. Plzeň, 2019.

¹⁰⁹ KOROBKOVA, Daria. *Mediální image druhé rusko-čečenské války (1999–2009) v publikacích a člancích vybraných ruských opozičních novinářů*. Bakalářská práce. Plzeň, 2019.

¹¹⁰ World Bank Data. [online]. undated. [Accessed 06 June 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=RU>.

The main ideologists during this period became intellectuals from the Izborsk club, among them Alexander Prokhanov, Oleg Rozanov, Vitaly Averyanov, Alexander Ageyev, and others. It is important to note that the concept of the Russian World is moving from theoretical to practical implementation. During this period the Russian authorities turned to her several times, reacting to various international events. This concept was used during the 2008 Russo-Georgian conflict and during the annexation of Crimea in 2014, Russia both times justified its actions by the political defence of the minority and their rights.

The metaphor for the meaning of Russia and the Russian diaspora is the designation ‘cathedral with many side-chapels’ given by Oleg Rozanov in his article “Do not let hell be confirmed on Earth”:

“Now the chapels of the Russian church are being formed. Crimea is one of the side-chapels of the Russian World, Novorossiya is as important side-altar as the Tula land. We are living through great times – the time of gathering lands, the time of building a new Russian tradition. Paradoxically, the metaphysics of Russian life consists in the fact that, defending itself, Russia grows. All the wars that Russia waged were defensive. And now we have been attacked through Ukraine as an important part of the Russian World. And we, defending ourselves, have enlarged our territories. Is Crimea a Defence or an Attack? Novorossiya is defence or attack? By defending, we are growing.”¹¹¹

Thus, Oleg Rozanov compared Russia with the cathedral and the Russian World with its side- chapels. At the same time, it is necessary to note the author’s assertion of the defensive nature of Russian foreign policy. In his opinion, the Russian World is “growing by defending itself”, while Russia is the centre of the Russian World, the stronghold of the international piece and its guarantor:

“World peace <...> rests on the Russian nuclear missile shield. <...> Novorossiya’s case has shown: there will be no harmonious peace without a strong Russia. <...> we [Russians] will not allow

¹¹¹ ROZANOV, Oleg. Ne dadim utverdit'sya adu na Zemle. *Izborskiy Klub* [online]. [Accessed 12 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://izborskiy-club.livejournal.com/49938.html>.

hell to establish itself not only on our own land but throughout the entire globe. This is the mission of the Russian people, the Russian World and Holy Russia.”¹¹²

1.3.4 The fourth period of the Russian World concept development (2015–Present)

Mikhail Suslov in his work identifies only three periods in the development of the modern Russian World theory. The author of the thesis claims that after the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, the next stage in the development of the theory can be distinguished. One can talk about new trends not only in Russian ideology but also in politics itself.

The Russian World is no longer the world of only the Russian language, nowadays it is defined as a world whose representatives are spiritually connected. In 2018 at the World Congress of Compatriots Russian President Vladimir Putin defined the Russian World as

“...one big, huge Russian World which was never built exclusively and only on ethnic, national or religious grounds <...>. It gathered and united everyone who is spiritually connected to Russia, who feels a spiritual connection with our Motherland, who consider themselves to be native speakers of the Russian language, [representatives of Russian] culture, Russian history.”¹¹³

At the same time, according to the position of Patriarch Kirill, a person himself should feel belonging to the Russian World and its system of values:

“The Russian World is a spiritual, cultural, and value dimension of a human being. Russians, even those who call themselves Russians, may not belong to this World, because speaking Russian or understanding Russian is not the only condition for belonging to the Russian World. And we know that many people do not associate themselves with either Russian tradition, spirituality or culture but

¹¹² ROZANOV, Oleg. Ne dadim utverdit'sya adu na Zemle. *Izborskiy Klub* [online]. [Accessed 12 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://izborskiy-club.livejournal.com/49938.html>.

¹¹³ Vsemirnyy kongress sootechstvennikov, prozhivayushchikh za rubezhom. *Kremlin* [online]. [Accessed 06 May 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/59003>.

live with different views, beliefs and lose touch with their own civilization”¹¹⁴.

Thus, today’s understanding of the Russian World is not limited only to the knowledge of the Russian language and Russian culture. This is a person’s worldview, personal commitment to the values that are the basis of Russian culture as well as a sense of spiritual connection with Russia.

A large role in Russian World values spreading is being played by the Russian media, which go beyond the TV to the Internet, various troll factories, nationalist and pro-Putinist groups and webpages, and other corresponding appear. More and more often Russia is resorting to the practice of manipulating social networks and suppressing dissent on the Internet, following the pattern of such control as in China. This is stated in a study by the international non-governmental human rights organisation Freedom House, devoted to the state of freedom of speech on the Internet. The report also mentions the so-called ‘troll factories’, organisations that write comments on social networks on the instructions of government structures in Russia. The report estimates that such Russian factories work in 30 countries around the world. It is very important to note that one of the largest Russian troll factories belongs to Yevgeniy Prigozhin¹¹⁵, the so-called ‘Putin’s cook’, who is a member of the Putin’s closest circle. A very important aspect is the development of a network of international TV and radio broadcasting in Russian by organisations belonging to the Kremlin, for instance, Sputnik News and Russia Today (RT). Internet platforms are currently emerging; they unite everyone who agrees with the Kremlin’s policies (inosmi.ru, as well as other local platforms in other countries). In the era of globalisation, it became possible to watch programs broadcast by the pro-Kremlin Pervyi kanal and VGTRK anywhere in the

¹¹⁴ GUNDYAEV, Kirill [Patriarch Kirill]. Patriarkh Kirill: Russkiy mir — osobaya tsivilizatsiya, kotoruyu neobkhodimo sberech'. *Vsemirnyy russkiy narodnyy sobor* [online]. [Accessed 26 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://www.vrns.ru/news/3254/#.VA7iT6OhE5Q>.

¹¹⁵ Yevgeniy Viktorovich Prigozhin (1961) is a Russian businessman, restaurateur, owner of the catering business. Prigozhin’s company was engaged in the organisation of catering for the highest officials of the state in Russia, thanks to which he received the nickname “Putin’s cook” in the media. In his restaurant New Island in 2001, dinner was held by the presidents of Russia and France, Vladimir Putin and Jacques Chirac, after in 2002, dinner, Vladimir Putin and George W. Bush. In the summer of 2016, Fontanka.ru linked Yevgeny Prigozhin with Dmitry Utkin, the head of the Wagner Group. Among the latter’s entourage, the head of the security service of one of the entrepreneur’s firms, Yevgeniy Gulyaev, was discovered. Independent media associate the company Glavset with Yevgeny Prigozhin’s work of the skull troll factory.

world, the proportion of their viewers outside of Russia is constantly growing¹¹⁶. That is, the number of people “intoxicated” by the Kremlin’s propaganda is growing.

At the same time, one must not forget that Putinism has developed and become clearer during this time. Kremlin ideologists have decided on the vector of Putinism; society is under the total influence of state propaganda machinery. The author of the thesis claims that among the most characteristic features of Putinism are: collectivism and collegiality¹¹⁷; traditional, conservative values; churchiness¹¹⁸, religiosity; statism¹¹⁹, stability; Russian imperialism and monarchism (where Putin is monarch and Father of the Nation); opposition to decay of Western values; Russian originality; humility; and militarism¹²⁰. Putin propaganda has developed xenophobia and hatred towards other nations in Russian society, as evidenced by population polls conducted by the Levada Centre.

¹¹⁶ The audience of Pervyi kanal is 250 million people (50 million are ethnic Russians, 200 million are Russian speaking and understanding population, emigrants and their children, businessmen temporarily living abroad, tourists). Pervyi kanal is the most popular TV channel among the Russian-speaking audience in Europe, watched by over 90% of viewers. In most European countries, Pervyi kanal remains the leader in the Russian-language television market. According to the Ministry of Tourism of the Russian Federation, the number of Russians going on vacation abroad is at least 7 million people a year. See more: Pervyi Kanal Vsemirnaya Set'. *I tv* [online]. [Accessed 07 May 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.1tv.com/about>.

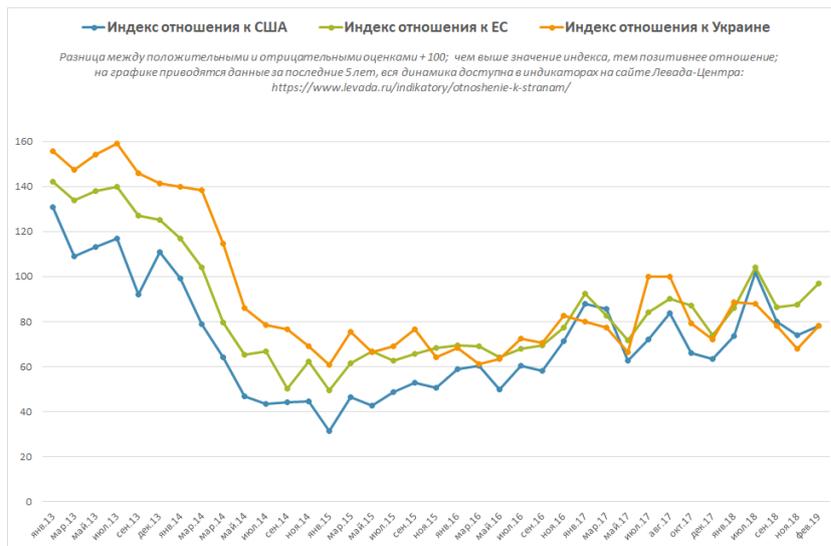
¹¹⁷ LUTSEVYCH, Orysia. Agents of the Russian World: Proxy Groups in the Contested Neighbourhood (Research Paper). *Russia and Eurasia Programme*. April 2016, p. 1-45; TOYNBEE, Arnold J. *A Study of History*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1987.

¹¹⁸ GUNDYAEV, Kirill [Patriarch Kirill]. Patriarkh Kirill: Russkiy mir — osobaya tsivilizatsiya, kotoruyu neobkhodimo sberech'. *Vsemirnyy russkiy narodnyy sobor* [online]. [Accessed 26 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://www.vrns.ru/news/3254/#.VA7iT6OhE5Q>.

¹¹⁹ VAN HERPEN, Marcel. *Putinism : The Slow Rise of a Radical Right Regime in Russia*. Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

¹²⁰ GOLTS, Aleksandr and PUTNAM, Tonya L. State Militarism and Its Legacies: Why Military Reform Has Failed in Russia. *International Security*. 3 November 2004AD. Vol. 29, no. 2p. 121-158.

Figure 1. Russians' attitude towards the USA, EU and Ukraine



Legend: blue – index of attitude towards the USA, green – index of attitude towards EU, orange – index of attitude towards Ukraine, time period January 2013 – February 2019.

Source: Otnosheniye k stranam. *Levada Centre* [online]. 2019. [Accessed 26 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.levada.ru/2019/03/20/otnoshenie-k-stranam-3/>.

It is important to stress that more than half of Russians do not concern about its isolationist foreign policy (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Survey on Russia's isolationist foreign policy



Question: Do you feel any concerns about Russia's isolationism in the world?

Legend: dark blue (1st one below) – very concerns, blue (2nd one below) – concerns, green (3rd one below) – not really concerns, grey (2nd one top) – not concerns, grey-blue (1st one top) – do not know.

Source: Otnosheniye k stranam i sanktsii. *Levada Centre* [online]. 2018. [Accessed 03 June 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.levada.ru/2018/12/06/otnoshenie-k-stranam-i-sanktsii/>.

Among the main intellectuals of this period is the Russian International Affairs Council, which functions under the protection of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Government of Russia. Russian politics is becoming closer to the theory of the Russian World, merge it with its foreign policy and the media are becoming its main ideologist. Due to the fact that the Kremlin is able to influence Russians abroad through the media, it is quite obvious that the political consolidation of Russians in Russia and Russians abroad around the values that the regime offers them is extremely high. This can be seen, for instance from the election results (although, as in Russia, they can be completely falsified) and participation in different activities (for instance, in Immortal Regiment¹²¹).

1.3.5 Particular conclusion

As a result of the analysis of the key intellectuals' works, one can come to the following conclusions. The Russian World as a concept at the beginning of its development was above all a theoretical framework but later it also developed in political terms. From understanding the Russian World as a Russophone world came its understanding as a spiritual world, in which all its participants feel themselves part of it, share common cultural values. From indifference to the Russian diaspora, Russian political elites have moved to its active use for political purposes. At the beginning of the century Russia tried to communicate with the Russian diaspora through Russian centres, today Russia actively uses social networks and the media to expand its propaganda throughout its world. During Vladimir Putin's presidency, the state has made a shift to a deep stage of authoritarianism and in the past years to authoritarian populism¹²².

¹²¹ The Immortal Regiment is an international public civil-patriotic movement created to preserve the personal memory of the Great Patriotic War (1941–1945), as well as the name of the parades organized by this movement. Every year, on Victory Day (9th May), participants march through the streets of cities with photographs of their relatives-participants in the Great Patriotic War, as well as underground fighters, resistance fighters, home front workers, prisoners of concentration camps and many others. The movement was initiated in 2012 in Tomsk.

¹²² NORRIS, Pippa. *Cultural Backlash: Trump, Brexit, and Authoritarian Populism*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2019.

The following Table 1 illustrates the main shifts in the Russian World concept during defined periods:

Table 1. Comparison of the periods of the Russian World concept development

Chronology	1st period 1996–2001	2nd period 2001–2009	3rd period 2009–2015	4th period 2015–Present
Key intellectuals	Pyotr Shchedrovitskiy, Archipelago	Gleb Pavlovskiy, Kara-Murza, Russian Zhurnal	“New” conservatives of Izborski club	Russian International Affairs Council
Definition of Russian World / diaspora	Russian speakers	Russian speakers, culturally Russian, compatriots abroad ¹²³	Compatriots abroad, Russian minorities in the former Soviet republics	Spiritual and mental connection with Russia and its destiny, Russian speakers, culturally Russians (Putin)
Theoretical vision of Russia and Russian diaspora	Diaspora disconnected from Russia, Russian speakers	Nation-state and its loyal diaspora	Isolated and autonomous state-civilization, protection of Russian minorities	State-civilization, protection of the compatriots abroad, fight against Russophobia
Key political approach	Lack of attendance on the world Russian diaspora	Sovereign democracy (Surkov)	Divided nation (Putin), opposition to the moral decay	Opposition to the moral decay, Russia as an ultimate superpower
Used metaphors	Archipelago, Russophone World	Octopus with tentacles	Cathedral with many side-chapels	N/A
Role of the actors	There were no defined supportive actors	State-created NGOs and programs	State-created NGOs, education exchange, coming up media propaganda	Media – mass propaganda inside and outside Russia (RT, Sputnik)
Political background	1998 economic crisis, Yeltsin’s and his Family’s end, Putin’s coming to power, Chechen Wars	Putin-Medvedev-Putin castling, 2008 Russo-Georgian War	Putinism, shaping of mass propaganda and censorship, shift to the authoritarian state, 2014 annexation of Crimea	Deep Putinism ¹²⁴ , authoritarianism, monarchism ¹²⁵ , acute nationalism and xenophobia, “world’s Russophobia” narrative
Politics towards diaspora	Nothing Reversed: Diaspora should influence Russia	Control (over the post- Soviet sphere)	Annexation (of culturally homogenous zones), irredentism	Politization, no activities towards them

Source: the author’s findings.

¹²³ Article 1 of the law “On Compatriots”, see more in Chapter 4.1.2.

¹²⁴ Democracy Index 2015. *The Economist (Intelligence Unit)* [online]. 2016. [Accessed 27 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.yabiladi.com/img/content/EIU-Democracy-Index-2015.pdf>

¹²⁵ KENDALL-TAYLOR, Andrea. Putin Is Following the Game Plan of Other Autocrats Before Him. *Foreign Policy* [online]. [Accessed 17 May 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/01/17/russia-constitutional-change-putin-transition-autocrats/>.

1.4 Critics of the Russian World concept

The concept of the Russian World, like any other concept, is faced with critics from its opponents. The opponents of the Russian World are not only political opponents when it comes to the Russian World as a practical policy. Among Russian scientists, ideologists, and political strategists there are also enough critics of this concept.

The basis of criticism of the concept is its ambiguity, the authors also debate about its nature as a civilizational, religious, or geopolitical concept (see Literature Review). At the same time, the thesis about the very existence of certain constant common traditional values is also criticized¹²⁶. A large wave of criticism is caused by the emphasis of the concept on its own civilizational exclusivity. The Russian ideology of the 'special path' is designated as 'civilizational nationalism'¹²⁷. Some authors (in particular, L. Fishman) sharply criticize the concept, characterizing it as an ideology of 'half-nationalism' (*nedonatsionalism*) that combines elements of nationalism and imperialism. In the works of these intellectuals, the definitions of the Russian World as the modern 'Soviet world' are given¹²⁸. For instance, P. Simashenkov called the Russian World 'Reanimation of the USSR project'¹²⁹.

Konstantin A. Krylov (1967–2020), a Russian philosopher, writer, nationalist politician, in his article "Russian World as a Russian Problem" states that the Russian World is not a sphere of distribution of Russia's interests in the world but rather a means of putting pressure on Russia. In his understanding, the Russian World represents a huge geographical space of the Russian presence, where the author distinguished two areas: the sphere of dominance and the sphere of presence. As the sphere of dominance, the author defined the territory of the Russian Federation, the sphere of presence is the territory of other countries where the Russian-speaking population resides¹³⁰.

¹²⁶ BABOSOV, E. M. *Osnovy ideologii sovremennogo gosudarstva*. Minsk : Amalfeya, 2004, p. 62.

¹²⁷ VERKHOVSKIY, A. M. Tsivilizatsionnyy natsionalizm: rossiyskaya versiya «osobogo puti». *Politicheskaya kontseptologiya: zhurnal metadistsiplinarnykh issledovaniy*. 2013. Vol. 4, p. 23.

¹²⁸ FISHMAN, L. G. «Russkom mire» i besperspektivnosti «nedonatsionalizma». *Neprikosnovenny zapas. Debaty o politike i kul'ture*. 2015. Vol. 99, p. 262.

¹²⁹ SIMASHENKOV, P. D. Ideologicheskiye granitsy «Russkogo mira» v krivom zerkale geopolitiki (k 85-letiyu M. Gorbacheva). In : *Vneshnepoliticheskiye interesy Rossii: istoriya i sovremennost' : sb. materialov III Vserossiyskoy nauch. konferentsii*. Saratov : Saratovskiy nats. issledovatel'skiy gos. un-t im. N.G. Chernyshevskogo, 2016. p. 206.

¹³⁰ KRYLOV, Konstantin. Russkiy Mir kak rossiyskaya problema. *Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 2003. [Accessed 27 July 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history00-03/krilov-russmir/.

Criticism of the concept of the Russian World according to Konstantin Krylov is based on an understanding of the behaviour of the Russian diaspora. In his opinion, the Russian diaspora does not want to maintain relations with Russia, does not want to form a stable diaspora, and seeks speedy assimilation¹³¹:

*“[E]migrant solidarity (even in its infancy) was formed rather as a means of ‘escaping from Russia’ to keep individuals from close contacts (or even sympathies) to the ‘place of origin’. The Russian World was formed as a means of divorce from Russia - and never as a means of communication with it.”*¹³²

Konstantin Krylov criticizes Pyotr Shchedrovitsky and argues that the Russian World is not an instrument for integrating Russia into a changing world, on the contrary, in his opinion, it is a huge barrier that prevents Russia from entering the international community¹³³.

The next place of criticism was that representatives of the Russian World have no benefits from the fact that they are its representatives, on the contrary, they are burdened with many negatives (for instance, the lack of fiction and scientific literature in Russian). The author also claims that the only thing we need to demand from representatives of the Russian World is to disseminate truthful information about Russia¹³⁴.

The next critic of certain places in the concept of the Russian World is Sergey B. Pereslegin, a Russian literary critic and publicist, researcher and theorist of science fiction and alternative history, a sociologist and a military historian. The author claims that the Russian World is not one system, there are a ‘dozen’ of such worlds, however, the author does not explain what he means. Sergey Pereslegin does not agree with the thesis that the Russian World should be based on Orthodoxy or nostalgia for the Soviet Union:

¹³¹ An important aspect is that the article was written in 2003 and the processes described should be attributed only to that time. Today, some members of the Russian diaspora have a desire to participate in Russian politics and be needed by the Russian state.

¹³² KRYLOV, Konstantin. *Russkiy Mir kak rossiyskaya problema. Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 2003. [Accessed 27 July 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history00-03/krilov-russmir/.

¹³³ KRYLOV, Konstantin. *Russkiy Mir kak rossiyskaya problema. Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 2003. [Accessed 27 July 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history00-03/krilov-russmir/.

¹³⁴ KRYLOV, Konstantin. *Russkiy Mir kak rossiyskaya problema. Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 2003. [Accessed 27 July 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history00-03/krilov-russmir/.

*“Today the Russian World has the main problem which is the mythological attitude towards the Russian Orthodox Church and the Soviet Union. Until emigration understands that ‘Russian’ does not mean ‘Orthodox’, talking with it is impossible, and not necessary. As long as the Soviet period of the development of Russia will be considered emigration from the position of ‘abuse of Russian culture and the Russian people’, it is impossible and not necessary to talk with it”*¹³⁵.

The author also gives his definition of the Russian World, defining it as a language world. In this, the author is completely in solidarity with Pyotr Shchedrovitsky: the Russian World unites all Russian speakers. Sergey Pereslegin also argues that in order to better consolidate the Russian World, it is necessary to amend the law on citizenship. The author compares Russia and the Russian World with Armenia and the Armenian diaspora, claiming that they are much similar. Sergey Pereslegin considers it possible and necessary to give Russian citizenship to everyone who speaks Russian and wants to obtain citizenship¹³⁶:

*“I would prefer to introduce the concept of language citizenship: everyone who speaks Russian and wants to obtain Russian citizenship should receive it. Frankly speaking, given the continuous decline in the country's population, I do not see any reasonable arguments against such a migration practice. Or does someone think that we have such a high standard of living that we need to fence ourselves off from residents of other countries so that they do not break through to our hearty ‘cake’?”*¹³⁷

Sergey Pereslegin is a supporter of economic methods in the construction of the Russian World. He argues that Russia should become financially attractive and successfully integrate into the commercial and industrial systems of the world.

¹³⁵ GRADIROVSKIY, Sergey and PERESLEGIN, Sergey. Russkiy Mir: mekhanizmy samoosushchestvleniya. *Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 2003. [Accessed 20 March 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/histori2003/machinery/.

¹³⁶ KARA-MURZA, Vladimir. Vyyti iz glubokoy smuty. *Baltiyskiy mir*. 2010. Vol. 5, p. 72-73.

¹³⁷ GRADIROVSKIY, Sergey and PERESLEGIN, Sergey. Russkiy Mir: mekhanizmy samoosushchestvleniya. *Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 2003. [Accessed 20 March 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/histori2003/machinery/.

1.5 Other conceptualizations of post-Soviet area construction and their comparison to ‘Russian World’ ideology

Among a large number of conceptualizations of post-Soviet area construction, two directions can be distinguished: theoretical and practical. The first, theoretical, direction is represented by various theoretical approaches, among which the most famous are: Pax Sovietica, Alexandr Dugin’s neo- Eurasianism, panslavism, and Samuel P. Huntington orthodox Christian civilization and other corresponding. Integration in the post-Soviet space, including, for instance, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)¹³⁸, the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO)¹³⁹, the Union State of Russia and Belarus¹⁴⁰, and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)¹⁴¹, can be understood as practical conceptualizations of post-Soviet area construction.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to understand that the concept of the Russian World, unlike the others, goes beyond the post-Soviet space, including Russians around the world. At the last stage of the development of the concept, as noted above, the Russian World is based on a spiritual and mental connection with Russia and its destiny, Russian speakers, culturally Russians, in contrast to other concepts. Pax Sovietica, in contrast to the Russian World, is defined as a multicultural (not multinational, the Russian World is also multinational) civilization in the post-Soviet space (with the question of the participation of the Baltic region). Pan-Slavism unites a large number of states with different nationalities and cultures, which are now at different stages of political, economic, and social development. Modern Pan-Slavism of 21st century, unlike the Russian World and Pax Sovietica, does not assert about a supranational Slavic identity. The following Table 2 compares three

¹³⁸ The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is an international organization designed to regulate cooperation relations between states that were previously part of the USSR. Member states are Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldavia, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

¹³⁹ The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) is a regional international organization, the proclaimed goals of which are “strengthening peace, international and regional security and stability, protecting on a collective basis the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of member states” (see more paragraph 3, *Charter of the CSTO* [online]. 2002. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: http://www.odkb-csto.org/documents/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=124). Member states are Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan.

¹⁴⁰ The Union State of Russia and Belarus is a supranational union founded in 1999 and consisting of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus.

¹⁴¹ Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is an international organisation for regional economic integration. The EAEU ensures the freedom of movement of goods, services, capital and labour, and the implementation of a coordinated policy in the chosen sectors of the economy. Member states are Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan.

conceptualizations of post-Soviet area construction including the modern understanding of the Russian World concept.

Table 2. Comparison of the conceptualizations of post-Soviet area construction

Chronology	Neo Pan-Slavism	Pax Sovietica	RW 4th period 2015–Present
Geographical definition	Countries where Slavic people live	Former Soviet republics	Spiritual and mental connection with Russia and its destiny, Russian speakers, culturally Russians (Putin) ¹⁴²
Theoretical vision of Russia and Russian diaspora	Political unit, political integration	Common civilization with supra-national characteristics	State-civilization, divided nation
Key political approach	In XXI century, renaissance ¹⁴³	Homo Sovieticus, Soviet person	Opposition to the moral decay, Russians as exceptional people

Source: A. MAKOWSKI, Krzysztof A. and HADLER, Frank (eds.). *Approaches to Slavic unity : Austro-Slavism, Pan-Slavism, Neo-Slavism, and solidarity among the Slavs today*. Poznan : Instytut Historii UAM., 2013.

But the concept of the Russian World has taken roots in the politics better than anyone else: it is spatially difficult to identify, its definition can be changed according to the political situation, the diaspora can be used for various purposes and defined in different ways, depending on political events.

The practical framework for the conceptualization of post-Soviet area construction also differs from the ideology of the Russian World in geographical terms. The Russian World goes far beyond the borders of the post-Soviet space, while the rest of the organisations are located within the region. It is important to note that the Russian World does not have its own intergovernmental organisation for many reasons: the lack of an accurate and clear definition of the Russian World and its members, the lack of a supra-regional unification of Russians, the lack of clear recognition of the existence of the Russian World by the state, and other corresponding.

The second very important remark is that integration in the post-Soviet space unites a small number of states and given the fact that after the collapse of the USSR for Russia lost its

¹⁴² See Chapter 1.3.4.

¹⁴³ There is an opinion that the current political situation in the Slavic world is characterized not only by the complete decline of the once popular Pan-Slavism, but by the often hostile policies of the Slavic countries towards each other. This point of view is based on the official policy of a number of Slavic states aimed at joining NATO, the EU, on the one hand, and the EAEU, CSTO, on the other. Intellectuals believe that NATO and the EU are increasingly opposing the Slavic world. This is what contributes to the renaissance of Pan-Slavism in almost all Slavic countries.

authority in the region for a long period, the integrations here are not deep, but superficial. In addition, the former Soviet republics are looking for partners in the West and among Asian countries and do not want to be associated only with Russia.

Thirdly, of all member countries, only Kazakhstan and Belarus are the countries with the maximum number of Russian and Russian speaking populations (see Appendix 2). Thus, here it cannot be spoken about integrations of the Russian World.

That being so, it can be argued that the concept of the Russian World is exceptional. Its boundaries are blurred and unclear, there is no clear definition of the basic concepts, therefore its theoretical definition is imprecise, the issue of interstate integration is complicated, and its political application depends on the situation and its benefits for Russian political elites (see more in Chapter 3.4).

1.6 Research design

Despite the fact that the Russian World concept is not entirely theoretical, but rather ideological and analytical, this concept was chosen by the author of the thesis for analysis. The author intends to analyse Russian foreign policy through the prism of the Russian World concept. By defining the preservation of relations with the Russian diaspora and its protection as the main goal of the foreign policy, the geopolitical (diasporic) understanding of the Russian World concept influences the priorities of the Russian political elites. It is noteworthy that the protection of Russian minorities, which is one of the main political components of the geopolitical (diasporic) understanding, has become especially important after the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014. This is not the first time Russia has applied a policy of punishment towards its neighbours: in 2008, Georgia suffered from a desire to leave the Russian guardianship and orient itself towards the West (see more in Chapter 3.4). It should be noted that there are several other territories bordering Russia with a huge potential for irredentism, for instance, Northern Kazakhstan, South-Eastern Ukraine (at the moment in a stage of the conflict) and Eastern border of Baltic states.

The analysis will be divided into several steps. First, the author of the thesis will examine the Russian diaspora as a phenomenon, analysing not only its definition and problems emanating from this definition, but also detailly map the Russian diaspora and its position, primarily in the post-Soviet states. Despite the dispersion of the Russian diaspora around the world, its issue is most acute on the territory of the post-Soviet space above all, mainly

because of the above-mentioned irredentism, which can become a threat to regional security. This step is important to understand how acute is the issue of Russian minorities abroad.

Further, the author will discuss the issue of protection of the Russian diaspora. To do this, the main foreign policy documents will be analysed, and it will be established how important the issue of the Russian diaspora is for Russia, what status it gives to Russian minorities. In addition, the author of the thesis also examines the narrative of the protection of Russian minorities during two major conflicts of the modern period: the military conflict in South Ossetia in 2008 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014.

The next step of the analysis will be the study of Russia's policy towards compatriots abroad. As was stated above, many intellectuals and ideologues of the Russian World concept argue that Russia does not pay enough attention to Russians abroad. According to them, compatriots abroad do not have any benefits for being part of the cultural heritage of Russia and representatives of the Russian World. Meanwhile, in their opinion, Russia should provide the diaspora with constant support and assistance. In addition, some of them appeal to the elevation of the Russian World to the rank of state policy with the highest priority due to the fact that the diaspora is a demographic, cultural and labour capital. That is why the author will study the policy of Russia towards compatriots abroad.

CHAPTER 2: RUSSIAN DIASPORA AS A KEY COMPONENT OF THE RUSSIAN WORLD CONCEPT

This chapter examines the issue of the Russian diaspora not only in a global context but also in the context of the post-Soviet space. In this chapter, the author defines the Russian diaspora and also analyses the main problematic points in this definition. The chapter investigates the Russian diaspora as a phenomenon and maps its position and status in the former Soviet republics. It also studies the problems that Russian minorities face outside their homeland. The main goal of this chapter is to understand the prospective of the Russian diaspora and to define its features.

2.1 Definition of the Russian diaspora

The term ‘diaspora’ appeared mainly in the context of the historical event, which was the resettlement of Hebrews after the First temple’s destruction in the 6th century BC. However, today this term refers to a group of people (ethnos) living outside their country of origin, forming united and stable ethnic groups in their country of residence, and having social institutions to maintain and develop their identity and community¹⁴⁴. Relations with the diaspora are recognized as an important foreign policy direction by many countries. For some countries (Israel, Armenia, India) the diaspora, which provides political and economic support to the historical homeland, plays a particularly important role. The diaspora can also play a prominent role in preserving the national culture and the formation of national identity. The members of the diaspora can also maintain contact with the country of their historical affiliation and influence the politics of the host country¹⁴⁵.

The definition of the Russian diaspora is complicated by the set of different aspects. The first aspect is that the **idea of resettlement cannot be applied on the Russians** in the post-Soviet area. Russian diaspora of the Near Abroad formed as a result of the borders change, these Russians just remained on the territory of the former Soviet Republics. As a result, the society

¹⁴⁴ GRITSANOV, A. A., ABUSHENKO, V. L. and TERESHCHENKO, O. V. *Sotsiologiya: Entsiklopediya*. Minsk: Knizhnyy Dom, 2003.

¹⁴⁵ SHLAPENTOKH, Vladimir, SENDICH, Munir and PAYIN, Emil. *The New Russian Diaspora: Russian Minorities in the Former Soviet Republics*. London : Routledge, 2016.

and Russian nation as a unit was separated due to the USSR's collapse, not due to the resettlement¹⁴⁶.

At the same time, Yuriy Gromyko claims that the idea of resettlement can be applied to the Russian diaspora. He defines the “*shooting of the Tsar Family* [Nikolay II Romanov, his wife and their children] *at the Ipatyev House*”¹⁴⁷ as the initial point of the resettlement of Russians and equates it to the destruction of the Second (Herod's) Temple.

The second problem is the **heterogeneous structure** of the Russian diaspora. The main reason for this heterogeneity is the ability and desire to assimilate and integrate into the new country of residence. In modern liberal democracies, the ability to integrate into the host society can be considered as much higher, since it implies that discrimination by origin, nationality, and other aspects should not exist. Nevertheless, among liberal democracies, there are also anti-examples, for instance, Estonia and Latvia, where the question of the Russian population is quite acute. Russian scientist Mikhail Suslov also argues that a more integrated diaspora is less susceptible to the Russian information campaigns and it is much more difficult for the Kremlin to gain its trust and manipulate it¹⁴⁸.

The third problem is the **low political mobilization** of the compatriots abroad. This problem consists of the three key aspects: (1) heterogeneous nature of the diaspora (see above), (2) passivity of these different parts of the diaspora¹⁴⁹, (3) Kremlin's unwillingness to involve the diaspora into internal affairs of the state¹⁵⁰. The heterogeneous nature of the diaspora rests not only on the level of integration into host society, but also on the interests of the compatriots, their occupation, narrative in the host country, and other corresponding aspects. The passivity of some of the compatriots caused also by the level of integration, but also by distrust in the Kremlin's narratives. However, the most important aspect is the

¹⁴⁶ SHLAPENTOKH, Vladimir, SENDICH, Munir and PAYIN, Emil. *The New Russian Diaspora: Russian Minorities in the Former Soviet Republics*. London : Routledge, 2016.

¹⁴⁷ GROMYKO, Yuriy. Sobiraniye russkogo mira, ili Na zadvorkakh SNG-diplomatii?.: Sootechestvenniki v blizhnem zarubezh'ye — pole bor'by za vosstanovleniye russkogo naroda. *Russkiy Archipelag* [online]. 1998. [Accessed 20 March 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history98-00/gromiko-sobiranie/.

¹⁴⁸ SUSLOV, Mikhail. “Russkiy mir”: politika Rossii v otnoshenii sootechestvennikov za rubezhom. *Notes de l'Ifri. Russie.Nei.Visions*. July 2017, pp. 1–32.

¹⁴⁹ SUSLOV, Mikhail. “Russkiy mir”: politika Rossii v otnoshenii sootechestvennikov za rubezhom. *Notes de l'Ifri. Russie.Nei.Visions*. July 2017, pp. 1–32.

¹⁵⁰ SHLAPENTOKH, Vladimir, SENDICH, Munir and PAYIN, Emil. *The New Russian Diaspora: Russian Minorities in the Former Soviet Republics*. London : Routledge, 2016.

Kremlin's unwillingness to involve the diaspora into internal affairs due to some grade of concerns of the Russian political elites about the influence on the internal policy¹⁵¹.

2.2 Russian diaspora in the World

The Russian Diaspora ('Russian Abroad', *russkoye zarubezhye*) is a collective definition of the Russian national community outside of Russia. The term has both a narrow and broad interpretation. In many countries, the Russian diaspora is considered to be anyone who speaks Russian or knows the Russian language, regardless of ethnic origin, thus, Ukrainians, Tatars, Jews, Chechens, Kalmyks, and other ethnicities living on the former USSR territory are considered as Russian. The narrow concept of the Russian diaspora includes only ethnic Russians¹⁵².

According to United Nations statistics, Russian diaspora (people with Russian citizenship) is counted of 16.69 million people living outside of Russia (see Appendix 1). According to the UN World Migration Report (2018), Russian diaspora (people with Russian citizenship) is the third-largest diaspora in the world after Indian and Mexico ones¹⁵³.

At the same time, many authors claim, that the Russian diaspora is bigger. For instance, Russian political scientist Mikhail Suslov claims that:

“Thus, on the balance the numbers of ‘compatriots’ residing abroad remained approximately the same at about 25-30 million which makes Russians the second-biggest diaspora in the world after the Chinese’ <...> Georgy Poltavchenko, St. Petersburg’s mayor, puts the number at 35 million. Russian Member of Parliament (MP), the head of state Duma Committee on the Compatriots Abroad, Leonid Slutsky speaks of ‘more than 30 million; Konstantin Kosachev, the former head of Rossotrudnichestvo, a state agency for relations with compatriots abroad, gives a figure of ‘approximately 30 million’...”

¹⁵¹ NIKOLKO, Milana V. and CARMENT, David (eds.). *Post-Soviet Migration and Diasporas: From Global Perspectives to Everyday Practices*. London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.

¹⁵² SHLAPENTOKH, Vladimir, SENDICH, Munir and PAYIN, Emil. *The New Russian Diaspora: Russian Minorities in the Former Soviet Republics*. London : Routledge, 2016.

¹⁵³ WORLD MIGRATION REPORT 2018. [online]. 2019. [Accessed 01 April 2020]. Retrieved from: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/country/docs/china/r5_world_migration_report_2018_en.pdf, p. 19.

Rossotrudnichestvo also claims that the Russian diaspora is counted about 30 million people¹⁵⁴. At the same time Russian School Abroad state program claims that

“[a]ccording to estimates by the Russian Foreign Ministry, only about 17 million Russian citizens and compatriots now live in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, of which about 7 million are in Ukraine, about 5 million in Kazakhstan, more than 1 million in Belarus, and in Uzbekistan - about 1 million, in other countries and regions of the world - more than 12.5 million people. The main countries of compact residence of Russian citizens and compatriots are: Germany - about 4 million people, the USA - more than 3 million, Israel - more than 1.5 million, Latvia - about 750 thousand, Estonia - about 400 thousand, Canada - about 400 thousand, Greece - more than 350 thousand, Argentina - more than 300 thousand, Lithuania - about 220 thousand, Australia - more than 200 thousand, Great Britain - about 200 thousand, Jordan - about 120 thousand people.”¹⁵⁵

However, according to statistics, there are approximately 16.7 million people constituting the world Russian diaspora (see Appendix 1). At the same time, there are 131.9 million Russians in the post-Soviet area (117.3 in Russia, 81.19 percent of Russian population; 14.9 million Russians in the former Soviet states except the Russian Federation, see Appendix 1).

2.3 Russian minorities on the territory of the post-Soviet space

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 fifteen new states were formed with fairly large Russian minorities inside (see following tables in the Chapter 2.3.1), within this chapter, the author analyses the population of Russians in the former Soviet republics and maps the status and position of Russians in them.

¹⁵⁴ Podderzhka sootchestvennikov za rubezhom. *Rossotrudnichestvo* [online]. undated. [Accessed 25 February 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://rs.gov.ru/%20/activities/5>.

¹⁵⁵ *Kontsepsiya "Russkaya shkola za rubezhom": (legislative)* [online]. 2015. Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/news/50643>.

2.3.1 Russian population in the former Soviet republics

According to the last Soviet All-Union Population Census taken place in 1989¹⁵⁶, it can be claimed that as a result of the collapse of the USSR about 27.6 million ethnic Russians stayed outside the borders of the Russian Federation, on the territory of the newly independent states¹⁵⁷ (see Table 3).

Table 3. Russian population in the USSR's republics (1989)

Republic	Population (1989)	Titular ethnic (1989), %	Russian (1989), %
Soviet Union	286 717 000	–	51.40 (147 372 538 people)
Russian SFSR	147 386 000	81.30	81.30 (119 824 818 people)
Ukraine	51 704 000	72.70	22.10
Belarus	10 200 000	77.90	13.20
Moldova	4 341 000	64.50	13.00
Azerbaijan	7 029 000	82.70	5.60
Georgia	5 449 000	70.10	6.30
Armenia	3 283 000	93.30	1.60
Uzbekistan	19 906 000	71.40	8.30
Kazakhstan	16 538 000	39.70	37.80
Tajikistan	5 112 000	62.30	7.60
Kyrgyzstan	4 291 000	52.40	21.50
Turkmenistan	3 534 000	72.00	9.50
Lithuania	3 690 000	79.60	9.40
Latvia	2 681 000	52.00	34.00
Estonia	1 573 000	61.50	30.30

Source: BOLDYREV, B. A. *Itogi perepisi naseleniya SSSR* [online]. Moscow, USSR : GOSUDARSTVENNYY KOMITET SSSR PO STATISTIKE, INFORMATSIONNO-IZDATEL'SKIY TSENTR, 1990.

[Accessed 03 May 2020]. Retrieved from: http://istmat.info/files/uploads/17594/naselenie_ssr._po_dannym_vsesoyuznoy_perepisi_naseleniya_1989g.pdf, the author's own calculations.

At the same time, a very important fact was that outside the Russian Federation, the majority of the Russian population is concentrated in border areas, such as Northern Kazakhstan, South-Eastern Ukraine, Crimea and Eastern border of Baltic states. This became to be possible due to two main reasons. First, the territorial expansion of the Russian Empire which began several centuries ago and continued during the Soviet era. This expansion was

¹⁵⁶ BOLDYREV, B. A. *Itogi perepisi naseleniya SSSR* [online]. Moscow, USSR : GOSUDARSTVENNYY KOMITET SSSR PO STATISTIKE, INFORMATSIONNO-IZDATEL'SKIY TSENTR, 1990. [Accessed 03 May 2020]. Retrieved from: http://istmat.info/files/uploads/17594/naselenie_ssr._po_dannym_vsesoyuznoy_perepisi_naseleniya_1989g.pdf.

¹⁵⁷ The terms 'Russian' in the Soviet and post-Soviet official classification has a narrow ethnic character and corresponds to the term '*velikoros*' (Russian of a Great Russia – Russia, Ukraine, Belarus). Since the concept of 'Russian' continues to have a broader and more multifaceted meaning, the use of the category 'ethnic Russians' makes it possible to more accurately designate the category '*velikoros*'.

accompanied by demographic growth and the migration of the Russian population to neighbouring territories¹⁵⁸. Secondly, the current situation is connected with the formation of Russian territory in the Soviet era: the Soviet government changed and redrawn the borders between the republics several times¹⁵⁹. Thus, the borders of the Russian Federation with the former Soviet republics are not the result of the pre-revolutionary heritage and at the same time do not correspond to the distribution of the Russian population in the post-Soviet space.

In general, two macro-regions in which the number of Russians is strikingly different can be defined. This difference conditions the goals and objectives of the modern Russian Federation's policy towards them to be different: the first region is the southern part of Central Asia (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan), and the so-called 'Eurasian Balkans'¹⁶⁰ (Transcaucasia – Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia). There Russians are a relatively small ethnic minority concentrated in large urban centres of these countries (see Appendix 2).

The second macro-region includes the European part of the former USSR (Baltic States, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova), as well as the northern part of Central Asia (Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan). The share of the Russian population there is greater (see Appendix 2); in addition, Russians live in territories bordering Russia¹⁶¹. In these countries, the Russian

¹⁵⁸ RASIZADE, Alec. Russian Irredentism after the Georgian Blitzkrieg. *Contemporary Review*. Spring 2009. Vol. 291, no. 1692, p. 11–25.

¹⁵⁹ In the early 1920s, an active process of defining the borders of Soviet Russia, Belarus and Ukraine took place. So, between the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR, the territory of the Don Cossack Oblast (now the Rostov Oblast of Russia, Donetsk and Lugansk Oblasts of Ukraine) was divided. In 1926, Ukraine handed over parts of the Shakhty and Taganrog districts (together with Taganrog) to Russia but received several territories in the Kursk and Voronezh provinces. In 1924 and 1926 parts of the Vitebsk (with Vitebsk), Smolensk (with Orsha), Gomel (with Gomel) provinces were transferred from the RSFSR to the BSSR.

An active exchange of territories took place between the RSFSR and the Kazakh SSR. In 1939, Russia transferred to Kazakh SSR territories in Chelyabinsk district and received in return a part of the Steppe region of the Aktobe district. In 1940, Kazakh USSR received part of the territory of the Chkalovsk district. In 1956, the southern part of the Dzhanybek region of Kazakh district was included in the Astrakhan region (Russia).

In 1944 seven districts of the Estonian and Latvian SSR, inhabited mainly by Russians, were transferred to the Pskov district of Russia. In 1946, the Leningrad region received the Estonian settlements on the eastern bank of the Narva River. In 1957, Russia and Estonia exchanged several more settlements.

In 1943, Georgia received the southern part of the Karachay Autonomous Region during the Stalinist deportation of peoples, then in 1944, Georgia received the southern part of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR. These territories were returned to the RSFSR in 1955–1957. In the 1950–1970s, several decrees were signed on the partial change of the borders between the Kazakh, Uzbek, Kirghiz and Tajik SSR.

¹⁶⁰ BRZEZINSKI, Zbigniew. *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy And Its Geostrategic Imperatives*. New York, USA: Basic Books Publisher, 2016.

¹⁶¹ RASIZADE, Alec. Russian Irredentism after the Georgian Blitzkrieg. *Contemporary Review*. Spring 2009. Vol. 291, no. 1692, p. 11–25.

language directly competes with national languages, which are often pushed into the background. This is the case of Ukraine (before the crisis of 2014) and Belarus, where ethnic and cultural proximity and a common religion as well as long-standing integration and mixing of the population ensured deep Russification.

This contrast between the two defined macro-regions has been noticeably sharpened during the last thirty years due to the difference in demographic and migration trends: the Russian-speaking population began to leave the Caucasus and Central Asia *en masse* due to the destruction of the economic system, politics of ‘derusification’ and armed conflicts. Given the rate of demographic growth of the indigenous population, this trend led to a rapid decrease in the relative number of Russian speakers in the southern republics of the former USSR: in the three Transcaucasian republics and southern republics of Central Asia, ethnic Russians make up no more than 3% of the population and Russian-speaking communities make up less 9% of the population (see Table 4).

Nevertheless, even when the Russian-speaking population is subjected to various restrictions in the former Soviet republics, continued Russification in Belarus, opposition to the Ukrainianization policy of the Russian-speaking population in South-Eastern Ukraine and cohesion of the Russian-speaking community in the Baltic states (see more in Chapters 2.3.2.1–2.3.2.3) leads to the fact that the Russian language continues to dominate the European parts of the former Soviet Union. At the same time radio and TV broadcasting and the Internet websites in Russian language, education, and common traditions and shared historical grounding also contributed to the preservation of the Russian language’s popularity¹⁶². The Russian-speaking community makes up more than 50% of the population in the region, which extends from the Baltic Sea to the Black one (see Appendix 2). The proportion of Russian speaking persons is much larger and applies to the vast majority of the population in this region.

¹⁶² LUTSEVYCH, Orysia. Agents of the Russian World: Proxy Groups in the Contested Neighbourhood (Research Paper). *Russia and Eurasia Programme*. April 2016, p. 1-45.

Table 4. Russian population in the USSR's republics (2019)

Country	Population	Russian (ethnically) population	Russian (ethnically), %
Armenia	2 965 000	12 000	0,40
Azerbaijan	9 981 000	129 000	1,29
Belarus	9 485 000	779 000	8,21
Estonia	1 329 000	308 000	23,18
Georgia	3 731 000	27 000	0,72
Kazakhstan	18 280 000	3 770 000	20,62
Kyrgyzstan	6 316 000	404 000	6,40
Latvia	1 920 000	457 000	23,80
Lithuania	2 794 000	142 000	5,08
Moldova	3 546 000	110 000	3,10
Russian Federation	144 500 000	117 319 000	81,19
Tajikistan	9 101 000	27 000	0,30
Turkmenistan	5 851 000	163 000	2,79
Ukraine	41 980 000	7 487 000	17,83
Uzbekistan	32 960 000	773 000	2,35
Total (former USSR)	294 739 000	131 907 000	44,75
Total (without Russia)	150 239 000	14 588 000	9,71
Total (only in the Commonwealth of Independent States¹⁶³ without Russia)	92 634 000	6 004 000	6,48

Source: Appendix 1, the author's own calculations.

2.3.2 Status of the Russian population in the former Soviet republics

In connection with the crisis in Ukraine, the Russian authorities for the first time in many years started talking about the situation of Russians in the post-Soviet space. In his address on the annexation of Crimea, President Vladimir Putin called the Russian people one of the largest divided peoples in the world¹⁶⁴. Indeed, more than 16.69 of millions of Russians currently live abroad (see Appendix 1)¹⁶⁵; the Russian diaspora is the third largest. It can be argued that the Kremlin seriously remembered the interests of compatriots only when they coincided with its own political ambitions. It suddenly became clear that the rights of Russian-speaking citizens in the CIS countries can and should be protected and by all possible means up to the use of troops.

¹⁶³ The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is an international organization designed to regulate cooperation relations between states that were previously part of the USSR. Member states are Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldavia, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

¹⁶⁴ Obrashcheniye Prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii [Krymskaya rech']. *Kremlin* [online]. 2014. [Accessed 02 December 2019]. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603>.

¹⁶⁵ WORLD MIGRATION REPORT 2018. [online]. 2019. [Accessed 01 April 2020]. Retrieved from: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/country/docs/china/r5_world_migration_report_2018_en.pdf, p. 19.

2.3.2.1 Baltic States

Unfortunately, the status of the Russian minority in the Baltic states leaves much to be desired. For many years now Russian national movements in Latvia and Estonia have been reporting violations of their rights. In these countries, many representatives of the Russian-speaking population have been called ‘non-citizens’ (*nepilsoņi*¹⁶⁶ in Latvia and *määratlemata kodakondsusega isik*¹⁶⁷ in Estonia) for more than 25 years. Moreover, the majority of them were born and lived all their lives in these countries or who moved there during the Soviet era. These groups constitute approximately 15% of the population of Latvia and 5.73% of Estonia¹⁶⁸.

Latvia

According to Latvian laws, only the descendants of Russians who moved before the 1940 Soviet occupation can have Latvian citizenship. There are also some restrictions in the question of the non-citizens’ occupation. Latvian non-citizens do not have the right to work as judges, officials, lawyers, prosecutors, private investigators, customs officers, pilots, firefighters, pharmacy managers. They cannot acquire real estate near borders, cannot receive compensation for the costs of central heating, they are prohibited from carrying firearms. A non-citizen cannot legally work in the countries of the European Union. And most importantly, Latvian non-citizens do not have active suffrage (unlike, for instance, Russians in Estonia). It is noteworthy that according to the legal norms of the European Union, even a German or French citizen who has been living in Latvia for three months can vote in municipal elections, and after six months can run for local government¹⁶⁹.

From time to time signature collections¹⁷⁰ and public appeals¹⁷¹ of public organisations against non-citizenship and for expanding the rights of non-citizens are held in the country,

¹⁶⁶ From Latvian ‘non-citizens’.

¹⁶⁷ From Estonian ‘persons of undetermined nationality’.

¹⁶⁸ BRIEFING Requested by the PETI committee: Political and Electoral Rights of Non-citizen Residents in Latvia and Estonia: Current Situation and Perspectives. *EU Parliament* [online]. [Accessed 04 December 2020]. Retrieved from: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/604953/IPOL_BRI\(2018\)604953_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/604953/IPOL_BRI(2018)604953_EN.pdf).

¹⁶⁹ BUZAYEV, Vladimir and KUZ'MIN, Alexandr (eds.). Spisok razlichiy v pravakh grazhdan i negrazhdan Latvii. BUZAYEV, Vladimir and KUZ'MIN, Alexandr (eds.), *Latvia Human Rights Committee* [online]. 2013. [Accessed 25 July 2020]. Retrieved from: http://lhrc.lv/biblioteka/svod_razl_2013_rus.pdf.

¹⁷⁰ Par nepilsoņu tiesību izpratni: No. 309/310 (1024/1025). *Latvijas Vēstnesis* [online]. [Accessed 18 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.vestnesis.lv/ta/id/52251>.

¹⁷¹ Negrazhdanam – pravo uchastiya v vyborakh samoupravleniy. *Shtab zashchity russkikh shkol* [online]. [Accessed 25 June 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://www.shtab.lv/main.php?w2=doc&id=196>.

and relevant legislative initiatives are being submitted¹⁷². At the same time, rallies are often timed to coincide with the elections or the anniversary of statelessness on October 15¹⁷³. Latvian nationalist organisations, on the other hand, take measures against naturalization or its pace, submit corresponding amendments to laws and draft political declarations to the Sejm¹⁷⁴.

The international community has slightly different opinions about non-citizenship and the conditions for naturalization. The recommendations of international organisations include desires to simplify the naturalization process and reduce the differences in the rights of citizens and non-citizens. Thus, the OSCE parliamentary election observation missions of 2006 in Latvia stated the following:

*“The fact that a significant percentage of the adult population does not enjoy voting rights represents a continuing democratic deficit. The OSCE/ODIHR, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Council of Europe and the Council of Baltic Sea States have all recommended that consideration be given to permitting non-citizens to vote in municipal elections”.*¹⁷⁵

ECRI considers that the status of non-citizens makes affected persons feel like ‘second-class citizens’¹⁷⁶.

Estonia

A similar situation has developed in Estonia, where there are also non-citizens. Most non-citizens are former citizens of the USSR who lived in Estonia and did not receive her

¹⁷² For instance, Draft Law on the Assignment of Citizenship to Three Categories of Non-Citizens. *Latvijas Republikas Saeimas* [online]. 2005. [Accessed 04 March 2020]. Retrieved from: www.saeima.lv/saeima8/lasa?dd=LP1351_0.

¹⁷³ Initiatives on the elimination of mass statelessness and its consequences. [online]. [Accessed 06 May 2020]. Retrieved from: http://russian-latvia.info/docs/ItogiDejatelnosti_negri.pdf.

¹⁷⁴ BUZAYEV, Vladimir and KUZ'MIN, Alexandr (eds.). Spisok razlichiy v pravakh grazhdan i negrazhdan Latvii. BUZAYEV, Vladimir and KUZ'MIN, Alexandr (eds.), *Latvia Human Rights Committee* [online]. 2013. [Accessed 25 July 2020]. Retrieved from: http://lhrc.lv/biblioteka/svod_razl_2013_rus.pdf.

¹⁷⁵ Resolution 1527 (2006) Rights of national minorities in Latvia. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 17 November 2006. *Parliamentary Assembly* [online]. [Accessed 17 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=17491&lang=en>.

¹⁷⁶ Third report on Latvia. Adopted on 29 June 2007. *European Commission against Racism and Intolerance* [online]. 2008. [Accessed 25 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://rm.coe.int/third-report-on-latvia/16808b58b3>.

citizenship after the collapse of the USSR. Currently, most of the original non-citizens became citizens of Estonia¹⁷⁷, some received the citizenship of Russia or other country, the rest are stateless¹⁷⁸.

Unlike an Estonian citizen, non-Estonian citizens do not have the right to vote in elections to the Riigikogu, to be elected to it¹⁷⁹. Only citizens of Estonia and other EU countries can vote and be elected in the elections of the European Parliament, be elected to local government councils, elect local government councils - also “third-country nationals” (including “persons with undetermined citizenship”) with long-term resident status or right permanent residence. Only citizens of Estonia and other EU countries can be members of political parties and create them¹⁸⁰. In 2011 the Committee on Petitions of the European Parliament discussed the petition of 3,000 people from Estonia on granting non-citizens the right to participate in the elections of the European Parliament but considered that the issue was outside the competence of the European Union¹⁸¹.

Estonia is one of the countries where non-citizens have the right to vote in local elections. This right is limited to a 5-year residency qualification on the territory of local self-government¹⁸². The number of non-citizens in Estonia is constantly decreasing due to migration, naturalization and natural causes¹⁸³.

In 2000, 170,349 people were not citizens, of which 133,346 were Russian. At that time Estonia was the second state after Russia in terms of the share of Russian citizens living¹⁸⁴. By 2020 this figure has been halved.

¹⁷⁷ About Estonia: Citizenship. *Estonia* [online]. [Accessed 25 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://estonia.eu/about-estonia/society/citizenship.html>.

¹⁷⁸ <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/docs/CountryReports/Estonia.pdf>

¹⁷⁹ SHISHKIN, Igor', IGOR' SHISHKIN, ANDREY GROZIN, ANDREY KUPRIYANOV, Andrey and KUPRIYANOV, Andrey (eds.). *STRANY SNG Russkiye i russkoyazychnyye v novom zarubezh'ye*. Moscow : INSTITUT STRAN SNG INSTITUT DIASPORY I INTEGRATSII, 2004.

¹⁸⁰ SHISHKIN, Igor', IGOR' SHISHKIN, ANDREY GROZIN, ANDREY KUPRIYANOV, Andrey and KUPRIYANOV, Andrey (eds.). *STRANY SNG Russkiye i russkoyazychnyye v novom zarubezh'ye*. Moscow : INSTITUT STRAN SNG INSTITUT DIASPORY I INTEGRATSII, 2004.

¹⁸¹ Yevroparlament otkazalsya obsuzhdat' problemy negrazhdan Estonii. *Komsomol'skaya pravda* [online]. [Accessed 27 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.kp.ru/online/news/1046998/>.

¹⁸² Kohaliku omavalitsuse volikogu valimise seadus. *Riigikantselei* [online]. [Accessed 30 June 2020]. Retrieved from: www.riigikantselei.ee/arhiiv/rto/pae/2004/pae_nr12_21-09-2004.pdf.

¹⁸³ POLESHCHUK, V. V. *Problemy prav natsional'nykh men'shinstv v Latvii i Estonii*. Moscow : Panorama, 2009.

¹⁸⁴ ERNITS, Peeter. Byvshiy general'nyy direktor Departamenta grazhdanstva i migratsii Andres Kollist: "Ikh tsel'yu bylo prevratit' zhizn' russkikh v ad." *ME Subbota* [online]. 2000. [Accessed 27 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://www.moles.ee/00/Feb/12/6-1.html>.

2.3.2.2 Belarus

Russians have been the second largest ethnic group on the territory of the modern Republic of Belarus since the middle of the 20th century. According to the 2009 census, 785 thousand Russians lived in the country (8.26% of the population). At the same time, Russian are united with the titular nationality by a common historical periods and rather complex system of ethno-linguistic similarities¹⁸⁵. The modern Belarus is characterized by the highest level of discrepancy between Russian and Russian-speaking identity (except Russia). Thus, only 8% of the population consider themselves Russian but more than 85% of the population consider themselves as Russian speaking Belarusians¹⁸⁶.

A feature of the Russian population of Belarus is its rather dispersed settlement throughout the country without some places of maximum concentration. It is noteworthy that, unlike Ukraine, Kazakhstan, the Baltic countries, there is not a single city or region in Belarus where Russians constituted an absolute or at least a relative majority of the population. The maximum concentration of Russians in Belarus is observed in the cities of Novopolotsk (15% of the population) and Polotsk (14% of the population)¹⁸⁷.

In this regard, the question of the possible joining of Belarus to Russia became interesting. Attention to this issue has been riveted for at least a year. Belarusians themselves take this idea negatively. The first opinion polls on the possibility of Belarus joining the Russian Federation were conducted in the summer of 2014, immediately after the Euromaidan in Kyiv, the annexation of Crimea to Russia and the outbreak of the war in Donbas. According to the survey made by the Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies (IISEPS), at the referendum on the unification of Belarus and Russia, only 24.8% of Belarusians would vote “for”, and 54.8% of them against. The number of those who believe that “Belarus and Russia should become one state, with a single president, government, army, flag, currency, etc.” was 9.8%. In December 2018, a similar survey was conducted on the same topic. It turned out that the number of Belarusians wishing to join Belarus to Russia

¹⁸⁵ VDOVIN, Alexandr. *Russkaya natsiya v XX veke (russkoye, sovetskoye, rossiyskoye v etnopoliticheskoy istorii Rossii)*. Moscow: RG-Press, 2020, p. 248.

STRIZHOVA, I. M. and TEREKHOVA, N. M. *Rossiya i yeye "kolonii." Kak Gruziya, Ukraina, Moldaviya, Pribaltika i Srednyaya Aziya voshli v sostav Rossii*. Moscow: Dar, 2007, p. 192–194.

¹⁸⁶ See Appendix 2.

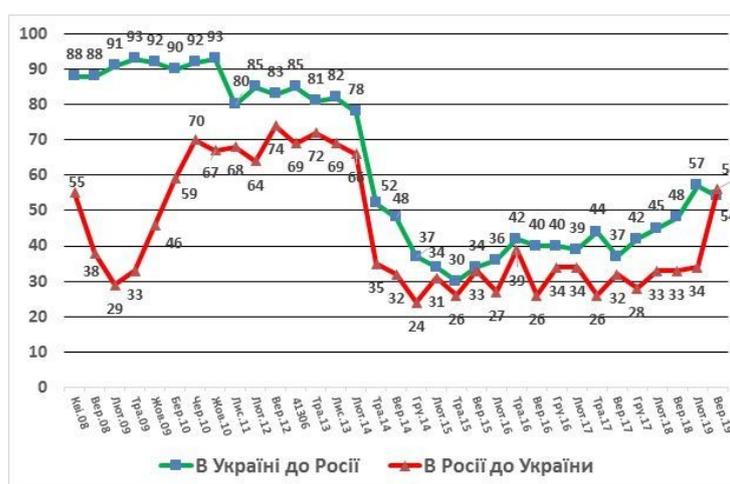
¹⁸⁷ *Perepis' naseleniya 2009. Natsional'nyy sostav Respubliki Belarus'. Tom 3*. Minsk, Belarus : Natsional'nyy statisticheskiy komitet Respubliki Belarus' (Belstat), 2011.

was then 10%. Except for one place in Belarus which is the city of Vitebsk, where the idea was supported by 39% of respondents, and rejected by 33%¹⁸⁸.

2.3.2.3 Ukraine

After the collapse of the Soviet Union 11.5 million ethnic Russians remained on the territory of modern Ukraine. The second president of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, followed the principle of multi-vector and equal cooperation both with the Western states and with the countries of Asia, Latin America, Russia, and members of the CIS. His foreign policy was distinguished by a dexterous balancing between Russia and the West. With the arrival of Yushchenko after the Orange Revolution in 2004, the vector of Ukrainian foreign policy shifted towards a westward orientation. Nevertheless, the attitude of Ukrainians towards Russians remained positive. This is evidenced by the results of public opinion polls (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Ukrainians' attitude towards Russians



Legend: red – Russians' attitude towards Ukrainians, green – Ukrainians' attitude towards Russians
 Source: Otnosheniye naseleniya Ukrainy k Rossii i naseleniya Rossii k Ukraine, sentyabr' 2019 g. KYIV INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE of SOCIOLOGY [online]. 2019. [Accessed 16 May 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=rus&cat=reports&id=899&page=1>.

A significant deterioration in the attitude of Ukrainians towards Russians occurs in 2014 after the annexation of Crimea and Russia's intervention in the War in the East of Ukraine. Nevertheless, the attitude of Ukrainians towards Russians is gradually improving since the hot phase of the conflict has already passed. At the same time, the Ukrainian authorities began to take various steps to de-Russify the country. The first such step was the language

¹⁸⁸ Konflikt v Ukraine: rossiyskiy vzglyad belorusskimi glazami. IISEPS [online]. [Accessed 30 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://www.iiseps.org/?p=4097>

reform adopted by the Verkhovna Rada in 2019¹⁸⁹. According to this law, the Russian language has lost its status as a regional language¹⁹⁰, all official communication must take place in the Ukrainian language. After that, in January 2020, amendments to the education law were adopted. According to them, the Russian language will also leave the sphere of education, schools will have to completely switch to the Ukrainian language.

After Euromaidan in Ukraine some steps were taken to start the process of so-called decommunization. The state policy of eliminating the ideological legacy of the Soviet period of history was approved by a package of laws adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in April 2015. As part of decommunization, a ban on the activities of the Communist Party and Soviet symbols was introduced, thus, monuments to Soviet state, USSR Communist Party leaders and Soviet commanders were dismantled, and Soviet place names were changed to new ones¹⁹¹.

By 2019 only 7.5 million ethnic Russians remain in Russia. The Russian population decreased due to its emigration to Russia. However, 50.74 percent of the Ukrainian population remains Russian speaking (see Appendix 2).

2.3.2.4 Central Asia

The outflow of the Russian-speaking population from Transcaucasia and Central Asia began in the 1970s. But after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s Russian emigration more than doubled¹⁹².

The authorities of the Central Asian republics explain the departure of the Russian-speaking population, primarily economic reasons. However, the main factor was still the local policy of social displacement and marginalisation of Russians, Russian language and culture. In 1989 laws on language were adopted in all countries of Central Asia, providing for the

¹⁸⁹ *ZAKONU UKRAYINY vid 25.04.2019 Pro zabezpechennya funktsionuvannya ukrayins'koyi movy yak derzhavnoyi* [online]. 2019. Ukraine. Retrieved from: https://ips.ligazakon.net/document/view/JH4DI7LI?utm_source=jurliga.ligazakon.ua&utm_medium=news&utm_campaign=IPS_text&utm_content=jl08.

¹⁹⁰ Regional languages of Ukraine are languages that are traditionally used within a certain territory of Ukraine by national minorities. The problem of the regional languages of Ukraine intensified after the country gained sovereignty in 1991, when Ukrainian was proclaimed the only official language of the country, despite the fact that the majority of the population of Ukraine is bilingual.

¹⁹¹ *Zakon Ukrayiny vid 09.04.2015 № 317-VIII Pro zasudzhennya komunistychnoho ta natsional-sotsialistychnoho (natsyst-s'koho) totalitarnykh rezhymiv v Ukrayini ta zaboronu propahandy yikhnoyi symboliky* [online]. 2015. Ukraine : Kyiv. Retrieved from: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/317-19#Text>.

¹⁹² PILKINGTON, Hilary. *Migration, Displacement and Identity in Post-Soviet Russia*. London : Routledge, 1998.

transition of state office work and the education system to the language of the titular nationality. In Azerbaijan (1991), Uzbekistan (1991), Turkmenistan (1993), Kazakhstan (2017, the full transition by 2025) and Kyrgyzstan (the transition is scheduled for 2030–2040) abandoned the Cyrillic alphabet in favour of the Latin alphabet. As a result, Russians and Russian speakers found themselves in the position of minorities in these states. Mass riots and interethnic conflicts in Ferghana, Osh, Uzgen and Dushanbe in 1990 intensified forced migration. The number of Russians in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in 1989–1995 decreased four times, in Tajikistan decreased two times, in Turkmenistan decreased six times, in Kazakhstan decreased nine times¹⁹³.

According to the 2009 polls, the Russian-speaking population did not complain about the ‘massive violation of their rights’. The Russians today consider a lack of educational literature in Russian and qualified teachers and the departure of the Russian language and culture from Central Asia as the main problem. Surprisingly, 80 percent of the Russian-speaking population blame the Russian authorities for this situation, which do not take sufficient measures to protect their interests. Paradoxical as it may seem, the position of the Russian language and culture in Asian countries today is somehow managed to be maintained only thanks to the huge number of migrant workers traveling to and from Russia¹⁹⁴.

2.3.2.5 Transcaucasia

Transcaucasia as a whole is notable for the small Russian diaspora not only today but also in Soviet times. Today the number of Russians in the region does not exceed 2%, and the largest number of Russian speakers live in Georgia and does not reach 9% (see Appendix 2).

Armenia

Earlier, the number and proportion of Russians in the republic were slightly larger but after the Spitak earthquake, the collapse of the USSR, the conflict in Karabakh, the Turkish and Azerbaijani blockades and the subsequent sharp economic decline, the socio-economic situation of Russians, mainly employed in industry, science and urban economy, significantly worsened. Most of them emigrated from the country to the Russian Federation

¹⁹³ PILKINGTON, Hilary. *Migration, Displacement and Identity in Post-Soviet Russia*. London : Routledge, 1998.

¹⁹⁴ KARPOVA, Galina G. and VORONA, Maria A. Labour Migration in Russia: Issues and Policies. *International Social Work*. 2014. Vol. 57, no. 5, p. 535–546.

immediately after the Spitak earthquake and in the first years of independence. As the general director of the Foundation for the Support and Protection of the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad in Armenia Ivan Semenov points out, among those who have not left Armenia, about half are members of mixed families¹⁹⁵, and among the descendants of the Russians there are strong manifestations of linguistic and ethnic assimilation by Armenians¹⁹⁶.

After the adoption of the Law on Language in 1993, all paperwork and training were translated into Armenian, while Russian faculties were closed in technical schools and universities, some of the qualified Russian-speaking specialists were forced to leave¹⁹⁷. In Armenia, Russian classes remained in 40 secondary schools, where, according to the Law on Language, only children of ethnic Russians, Russian citizens and children from mixed marriages have the right to study¹⁹⁸. Education in Russian classes is carried out according to Russian programs, and textbooks are provided by the Moscow government but most of the subjects are taught in Armenian¹⁹⁹.

Newspapers and magazines in Russian language are published in Armenia, programs of Russian television channels are broadcast, daily news in Russian on Armenian television channels and a Russian drama theatre²⁰⁰. The Armenian government also annually allocates funds for the activities of the Russian community²⁰¹. Russians in Armenia show an increase in ethnic identity and a desire for intra-ethnic unification, as a result of which Russian cultural centres and public organisations were created²⁰².

¹⁹⁵ GOMÓŁKA, Krystyna. The migration policy of Armenia. *Przegląd Politologiczny*. 2018. No. 3p. 57-70.

¹⁹⁶ MKHOYAN, A. Soft power, Russia and the former Soviet states: a case study of Russian language and education in Armenia. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*. 2017. Vol. 23, no. 6, p. 690-704.

¹⁹⁷ MANVELYAN, Aleksey. Russkiye v Armenii: posledniye iz molokan. *BBC Russian* [online]. 2007. [Accessed 01 July 2020]. Retrieved from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/in_depth/newsid_6929000/6929421.stm.

¹⁹⁸ TERZYAN, Aram. Russian policy, Russian Armenians and Armenia: ethnic minority or political leverage? *CES Working Papers*. 2019. Vol. 11, no. 2, p. 124.

¹⁹⁹ BOYAJIAN, David. Why Russia Needs Armenia and Vice Versa. *The Armenian Weekly* [online]. [Accessed 06 February 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://armenianweekly.com/2019/02/05/why-russia-needs-armenia-and-vice-versa/>.

²⁰⁰ MKHOYAN, A. Soft power, Russia and the former Soviet states: a case study of Russian language and education in Armenia. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*. 2017. Vol. 23, no. 6, p. 690-704.

²⁰¹ BOYAJIAN, David. Why Russia Needs Armenia and Vice Versa. *The Armenian Weekly* [online]. [Accessed 06 February 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://armenianweekly.com/2019/02/05/why-russia-needs-armenia-and-vice-versa/>.

²⁰² MKHOYAN, A. Soft power, Russia and the former Soviet states: a case study of Russian language and education in Armenia. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*. 2017. Vol. 23, no. 6, p. 690-704.

Georgia

According to the 2014 Georgia Census, Russians is the third largest ethnic minority of the Republic of Georgia and one of the Russian diasporas in the CIS countries outside modern Russia. Economic decline and ethnic cleansing led to the mass emigration of the Russian and other European populations, including the Georgian population itself from Georgia in the early 1990s. This, in turn, led to a significant ageing of the Russian population and the deterioration of its demographic indicators, although there was some stabilization after 2000. The share of Russians in the population has significantly decreased: from 10.1% in the early 1960s to 0.7% in 2014²⁰³.

There are no more than 50 thousand Russians in Georgia. In Soviet times there were eight times more (up to 350 thousand). They began to leave in large numbers, starting in 1991, after the start of the implementation of the slogan “Georgia for Georgians” in the country²⁰⁴.

At the same time, despite the openly anti-Russian orientation of Georgian foreign policy, Russians in Georgia do not experience any kind of ethnic discrimination. After 2008 Georgia stopped broadcasting Russian television channels, closed Russian theatres, but the attitude of Georgians towards Russians themselves practically did not change²⁰⁵.

2.3.2.6 Moldova and Transnistria

Moldova can be attributed to those countries of the new foreign countries whose policies regarding the Russian population were relatively tight. From an ‘elder brother’ the Russians turned into invaders, people of the ‘second grade’, whose stay in the republic became undesirable. The proclamation in 1989 of the language of the titular nationality as the only state language, its translation into Latin and its identification with Romanian, as well as the establishment of unreasonably short terms for the transition to this language of the education and clerical system, publishing and other fields, put the Russians, most of whom did not speak the Moldavian language, in an almost hopeless situation. Since the early 1990s, the

²⁰³ 2014 General Population Census: Main Results, General Information [online]. 2016. Georgia. Retrieved from: http://census.ge/files/results/Census_release_ENG.pdf.

²⁰⁴ RYABICHENKO, T. A., LEBEDEVA, N. M. and PLOTKA, I. D. Multiple identities, acculturation and adaptation of Russians in Latvia and Georgia. *Cultural-Historical Psychology*. 2019. Vol. 15, no. 2p. 54–64.

²⁰⁵ DUBROVSKIY, Dmitry. Russia and Georgia 2008-2018 – Escapism for the Sake of Peace? *Journal of Conflict Transformation* [online]. 2019. [Accessed 03 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://caucasusedition.net/russia-and-georgia-2008-2018-escapism-for-the-sake-of-peace/>.

number of educational institutions with the Russian language of instruction has significantly decreased.

Nevertheless, the Russian language in Moldova is the official language of interethnic communication, which is enshrined in the relevant laws on languages. In two regions of Moldova, the Russian language has the status of an official language, enshrined in the laws on the special legal status of Gagauzia²⁰⁶ and Transnistria²⁰⁷. It is widely spoken as a language of interpersonal communication, training, and the media. But lately, tendencies towards its restriction have begun to appear. So, in Moldova, a draft law was discussed on the deprivation of the Russian language of its status, on the abolition of the Gagauz-Russian-Moldavian trilingualism in Gagauzia²⁰⁸, which caused concern in the Russian Foreign Ministry²⁰⁹.

However, especially after the Communists came to power, the situation began to stabilize gradually. The policy regarding ethnic minorities, their language and culture has slightly changed. A serious role in this was played by the growing need of the republic's economy recovering after the crisis for qualified personnel, as well as the active desire of the Moldovan leadership in the European Union, for accession which required strict observance of the rights of ethnic minorities. Moreover, the main tasks of ethnic mobilization were solved – Moldovans and Romanians got the leading posts in the sphere of administration, culture, education, the formation of ideology and public opinion, and the number of Russians in the republic dropped sharply.

Attacks on the Russian language have lost their former aggressiveness. By the beginning of the new century, the Russian language was involved in a quarter of schools in Moldova (with a share of Russians in the population of the republic less than 6%). The share of Russians

²⁰⁶ *ZAKON RESPUBLIKI MOLDOVA Ob osobom pravovom statuse Gagauzii (Gagauz Yeri) Nr. 344-XIII ot 23.12.94* [online]. 1994. Republic of Moldova. Retrieved from: http://www.cilevics.eu/minelres/NationalLegislation/Moldova/Moldova_Gagauzia_Russian.htm.

²⁰⁷ *ZAKON Nr. 173 ot 22.07.2005 ob osnovnykh polozheniyakh osobogo pravovogo statusa naseleennykh punktov levoberezh'ya Dnestra (Pridnestrov'ya)* [online]. 2005. Republic of Moldova : Parliament. Retrieved from: <http://lex.justice.md/viewdoc.php?action=view&view=doc&id=313004&lang=2>.

²⁰⁸ MID RF: Novaya yazykovaya politika Moldavii navyazana izвне i ushchemlyayet prava russkoyazychnykh. *REGNUM* [online]. [Accessed 01 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/1645610.html>.

²⁰⁹ Iz udostovereniy lichnosti v Moldavii uberut zapisi na russkom yazyke. *Demoscope Weekly* [online]. [Accessed 27 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/2012/0515/panorm01.php#19>.

among university students was almost 10%²¹⁰. A number of popular newspapers and magazines of especially economic and technical content continued to be published in Russian. At the beginning and middle of the first decade of the 2000s the ethnolinguistic aspects of Russian life, compared with the mid-1990s, have become less acute, not only due to the softening of ethnolinguistic policies but also due to the gradual familiarization of the Russian population with the Moldavian language.

2.3.3 Key problems related to Russian minorities in the post-Soviet space

Due to prevailing Marxist-Leninist ideology, the process of internationalization and the erasure of national differences was stimulated. The 1977 Constitution of the USSR consolidated the thesis on the formation of a new community that was called the Soviet people²¹¹. This thesis subsequently began to be perceived as undeniable evidence of the absence of interethnic contradictions and conflicts in the Soviet Union. The state's ideological framework considered that the victory of socialism automatically excludes the possibility of such contradictions. This misconception prevented the authorities from promptly and adequately responding and resolving emerging contradictions. The illusion of 'friendship of peoples' persisted for a long time caused a deep suppress of the state's political elites to get away from acute problems.

However, over decades the interethnic problems in the USSR gradually accumulated. **Historical territorial disputes** occur on the territory of post-Soviet space until now. These disputes were inherited from tsarist Russia and the repartition of borders between the republics during Soviet times. Among them, one can distinguish such disputed territories as Transnistria, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh and the former Shaumyanovsky district²¹², Donetsk and Luhansk regions, the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, where the genesis of separatism occurred due to national disputes and contradictions. The dispute over the status of the Crimean Peninsula is also one of the most complicated territorial disputes.

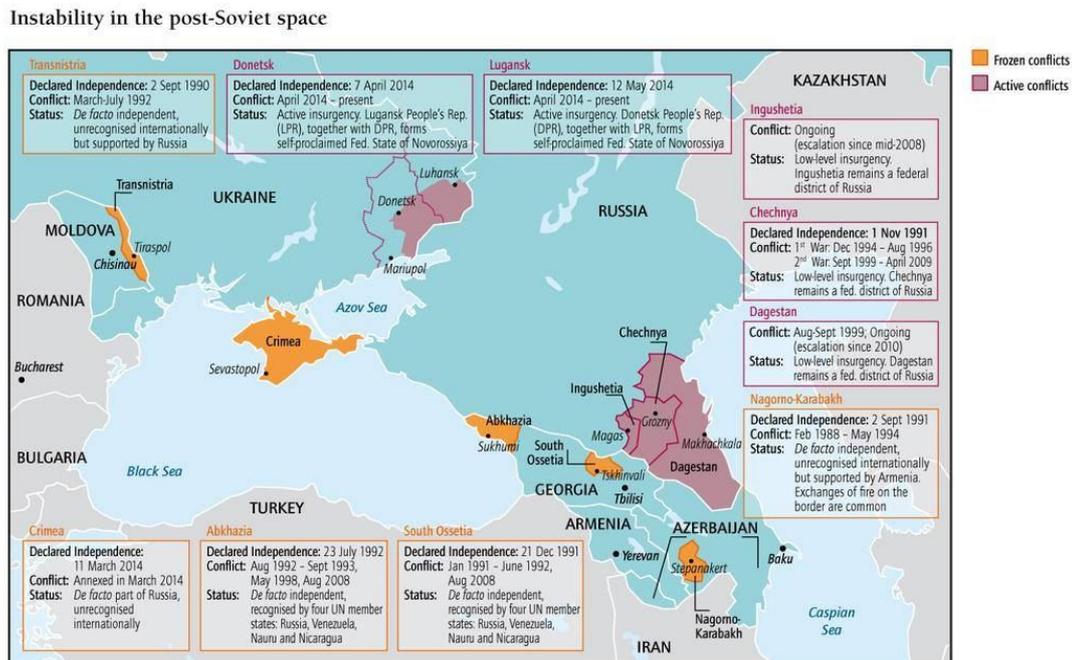
²¹⁰ CEBOTARI, Svetlana and BUDURINA-GOREACI., Carolina. The Republic of Moldova in the Context of Russian Federation's Strategy of Maintaining Influence. *Annals of the University of Oradea. International Relations and European Studies (RISE)*. 2017. Vol. 7, no. 7, p. 35-46.

²¹¹ *CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW) OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS* [online]. USSR. Retrieved from: <https://www.departments.bucknell.edu/russian/const/1977toc.html>.

²¹² Shaumyanovsky district is an administrative unit within the unrecognized Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. Azerbaijan considers Nagorno-Karabakh and the adjacent territories of the Shaumyanovsky district of the former Azerbaijan SSR to be occupied by the Armenian armed forces.

Meanwhile, there are still problems of undivided borders between Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan on the territory of the Ferghana Valley, as well as the disputed borders between Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan in Russia. It has to be noted that a significant part of the territorial disputes in the post-Soviet space went into the armed conflict stage (see Map 1).

Map 1. Map of the armed conflicts in the post-Soviet area



Source: CHAUSOVSKY, Eugene. For Russia, some conflicts are colder than ever. *EURACTIV* [online]. 2016. [Accessed 30 June 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/armenia/opinion/for-russia-some-conflicts-are-colder-than-ever/>.

In the three decades that have passed since the collapse of the USSR eight armed conflicts have occurred on its former territory, not counting the unfolding Ukrainian crisis these days. All these conflicts led to numerous casualties and millions of refugees, the destruction of economic infrastructure and human contacts. Of the fifteen former fraternal republics of the USSR four do not have diplomatic relations: Armenia and Azerbaijan, Russia, and Georgia. On the agenda is the prospect of ending diplomatic relations between Moscow and Kyiv.

It is highly important to stress that Russia participated in almost all conflicts except one about Nagorno-Karabakh (see Table 5). Each conflict was somehow connected with Russia: Russia sent humanitarian or military assistance, was ideologically or culturally involved. The range of Russian participation in the settlement of conflicts in the post-Soviet space varies from mediation and peacekeeping to conducting a military operation and legal guarantee of self-determination.

Table 5. Overview of the armed conflicts in the post-Soviet space

Conflict	Ethnic	Secessionist	Pro-Soviet identity/orientation	Decisive external influence	Russia in the conflict
Transnistria	NO	YES	YES	YES (Russia, Russian volunteers)	YES
Abkhazia	YES?	YES	YES	YES (Russia, Northern Caucasus volunteers)	YES
South Ossetia	YES	YES	YES	YES (Russia, Northern Caucasus volunteers)	YES
Nagorno-Karabakh	YES	YES	NO	YES (Armenia, Armenian diaspora)	NO
Chechnya	YES	YES	NO	NO (only small number of volunteers)	YES
Tajikistan	NO	NO	YES	YES (Russia, Uzbekistan)	YES
Donbas	NO	YES	YES	YES (Russia, Russian volunteers)	YES

Source: LARYŠ, Martin. *JPM711 Russian and Post-Soviet Security (Seminar 2 - Ethno-Separatist Conflicts)* [online]. [Accessed 29 May 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://is.cuni.cz/studium/predmety/index.php?id=765a1e22ee477a3c9fe8fb77371a4918&tid=&do=download&did=204706&kod=JPM711>.

The next problem was the **struggle for national independence**, where one of the most striking examples was the struggle for the independence of the Baltic republics, which considered illegal the ‘occupation’ of their territories in 1940 and, accordingly, their stay in the Soviet Union.

The rehabilitation of the rights of deported and repressed people was also one of the main problems of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. Among the repressed nations – Koreans, Germans, Ingush, Chechens, Meskhetian Turks, Kurds, Crimean Tatars, Greeks, Bulgarians, Karachays, Balkars, Kalmyks and others – not all were rehabilitated by the beginning of perestroika²¹³ period. In modern Russia rehabilitation has not yet been fully completed. Ingush journalist Lilia Kharsieva claims that²¹⁴:

“The measures envisaged by the Law of the Russian Federation ‘On the rehabilitation of repressed peoples’ are carried out by the authorities only in those doses at which they consider it appropriate to implement them. Thus, the law did not achieve its goal in ensuring comprehensive rehabilitation of repressed ethnics. The next

²¹³ HEIJS, Duco. The Gardening States: Comparing State Repression of Ethnic Minorities in the Soviet Union and Turkey, 1908-1945. *Genocide Studies & Prevention*. 2018. Vol. 12, no. 1p. 63–79.

²¹⁴ KHARSIEVA, Lilia. Zakon v ozhidanii. 27 let nazad byl prinyat zakon «O reabilitatsii repressirovannykh narodov». *Ingushetia – Gialgiyache* [online]. 2018. [Accessed 18 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://gazetaingush.ru/obshchestvo/27-let-nazad-by-l-prinyat-zakon-o-reabilitacii-repressirovannyh-narodov>.

anniversary states that no changes have been made to implement this humane legislative act since the fall of 1992. <...> And the Ingush people will believe and continue to wait for full rehabilitation, in accordance with the Law on Repressed Peoples”.

There were **problems of a religious and cultural** nature, among them insufficient attention and support of the national language, national traditions and religious cults. Among the problems there were also **economic** ones, for instance, the low standard of living in the countries and different levels of their economic development; and **legal** ones concerning the division of competences between the centre and regions and other corresponding.

CHAPTER 3: PROTECTION OF RUSSIAN MINORITIES ABROAD

This chapter examines the protection of Russian citizens abroad which the Russian Federation has officially promised in its Constitution. The chapter analyses other basic documents in which Russia indicates the protection of the compatriots abroad as its goal. The chapter also maps the work of the Foundation for the Support and Protection of the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad which is supposed to provide Russian citizens with legal assistance free of charge. The chapter then examines the narrative of Russia and its political elites on the issue of two conflicts where the protection of Russians outside the Russian Federation served as the main reason for Russia's military intervention. The main goal of this chapter is to understand where the place of Russian minorities in the main Russian foreign policy documents is and how do Russian decision-makers understand the protection of Russians abroad.

3.1 National Security Concept

After the collapse of the Soviet Union Russian military doctrine was adopted four times: in 1993 and later in 2000 under the new President Vladimir Putin. The following doctrine, adopted in 2010, was a reaction to the gas wars with Ukraine and the military conflict with Georgia in 2008. The doctrine, adopted in 2014, was a kind of reaction to the events in Ukraine in 2013 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014.

The 2000 National Security Concept defined discrimination, suppression of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of citizens of the Russian Federation in foreign states as one of the main external threats. This was the only mention of the Russian diaspora abroad in this document²¹⁵.

The 2010 National Security Concept contains a more complete description of external threats and sets the military-political priorities of Russia. This document discourages modern political reality according to Russia's political elites and clearly defines Russia's future priorities on the international stage. According to the new doctrine, the use of armed forces and troops to ensure the protection of their citizens outside the Russian Federation is

²¹⁵ *NATIONAL SECURITY CONCEPT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION* Approved by Presidential Decree No. 24 of 10 January 2000 [online]. 2000. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICk6BZ29/content/id/589768.

legitimate. One of Russia's priorities in the international arena is to protect citizens of the Russian Federation outside the Russian Federation from an armed attack on them²¹⁶.

In 2009 the Federal Law "On Defence" was amended by President Dmitriy Medvedev²¹⁷. According to the document, the Supreme Commander can send troops abroad for four reasons: to protect Russian citizens abroad, to combat piracy, to repel an attack on our military bases abroad, or to prevent aggression against a friendly state. In this last case, the head of the state must obtain the consent of the Federation Council. True, according to some experts, in emergency situations this can be done post-factum: within two days after the army entered the battle. Thus, the bill expands the list of reasons why Russian troops can be sent abroad.²¹⁸

The 2015 National Security Concept has fully preserved the wording of these priorities in relation to Russians abroad. Russia still assumes responsibility for protecting their interests and military defence in the event of an attack on them. Nevertheless, the doctrine is not only a summary of Russia's concerns but also a summary of foreign policy trends (e.g. the Arctic, Abkhazia and South Ossetia). Account is also taken of new urgent threats that have never been so clearly defined in Russian doctrines (e.g. threats to the state's internal sovereignty)²¹⁹.

3.2 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation

The foreign policy of any state is one of the most difficult areas of its activity. At the same time, the effectiveness of foreign policy to a decisive extent depends on its realism, purposefulness and consistency. All these characteristics are largely laid down already at the stage of drafting the corresponding doctrines, strategies, concepts and other documents. The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation is a system of views on the content and main directions of Russia's foreign policy. The legal base of the Concept is constituted by

²¹⁶ NATIONAL SECURITY CONCEPT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION Approved by Presidential Decree of 28 December 2010 [online]. 2010. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/420327289>.

²¹⁷ FEDERAL'NYY ZAKON O vnesenii izmeneniy v Federal'nyy zakon "Ob oborone" [online]. 2009. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/902183535>.

²¹⁸ Article 10, paragraf 2.1, see more FEDERAL'NYY ZAKON O vnesenii izmeneniy v Federal'nyy zakon "Ob oborone" [online]. 2009. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/902183535>.

²¹⁹ Ukaz Prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii ot 31.12.2015 g. No. 683 [online]. 2015. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/40391>.

the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, other regulatory legal acts, as well as the National Security Concept of the Russian Federation.

The Foreign Policy Concept, adopted by President Vladimir Putin in 2000, addressed the theme of compatriots. It defined the goals of Russian foreign policy, including the comprehensive protection of rights and interests of Russian citizens and compatriots abroad. Russia sees its mission in “*protecting the rights and interests of Russian citizens and compatriots abroad on the basis of international law and existing bilateral agreements*”²²⁰ and seeks to protect the rights and freedoms of compatriots in the states of their permanent residence. The document also notes that Russia is interested in cooperation with the CIS countries in ensuring the rights of Russian compatriots.

However, changes in the understanding of the Russian diaspora by the authorities lead to changes in policy regarding them. The 2008 Foreign Policy Concept demonstrates Russia’s interest in maintaining relations with compatriots and protecting their rights abroad²²¹. The document also talks about supporting and popularising the study of the Russian language, contributing to the preservation of Russian culture and identity. The interest of Russian political elites in relation to the Concept of the Russian World is manifested precisely in the concept of 2008. The document also appeals to compatriots, considering a “*multi-million Russian diaspora – the Russian World – as a partner*”²²², making consolidation of compatriots’ organisations a priority for Russian foreign policy. The document also pays special attention of Russian policy towards compatriots living in the CIS member states where Russia is interested in protecting the educational, linguistic, social, labour, humanitarian and other rights and freedoms of compatriots.

The next Foreign Policy Concept was adopted by President Dmitry Medvedev in February 2013²²³, a year before the annexation of Crimea. The concept defined Ukraine as a priority partner of the CIS countries, in such wise the goal of cooperation was to connect it to the

²²⁰ *Kontseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii, UTVERZHDENA Prezidentom Rossiyskoy Federatsii 28 iyunya 2000 goda* [online]. 2000. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/901764263>.

²²¹ *Kontseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii* [online]. 2008. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/news/785>.

²²² *Kontseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii* [online]. 2008. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/news/785>.

²²³ *Kontseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii (utratila silu na osnovanii Ukaza Prezidenta RF ot 30.11.2016 N 640)* [online]. 2013. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/499003797>.

deep integration processes. Russia still appealed to the consolidation of the Russian diaspora abroad and the protection of their rights and legitimate interests in various international formats of Russian approaches to the protection of human rights. Paragraph 100 of the Concept in question follows the important role of Rossotrudnichestvo (see more in Chapter 4.2.1) in the development of proposals and implementation of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation in the field of supporting Russian compatriots living abroad, strengthening the position of the Russian language in the world and developing a network of Russian centres of science and culture abroad.

The term Russian World no longer appeared in the Foreign Policy Concept. The formulation of the paragraph on the Russian diaspora remained the same but the notion of the Russian World disappeared from the concept: “...considering the multi-million Russian diaspora as a partner”²²⁴ (compare above).

The next Foreign Policy Concept was issued three years later in 2016. According to Russian decision-makers, along with a certain strengthening of the international positions of the Russian Federation, negative trends also appeared, for instance, hopes for the formation of new partnerships between Russia and other countries did not materialize²²⁵. Russia’s taking into consideration many changes on the international arena and looking for its place in it. As usual, it also addresses the topic of compatriots abroad, speaking of them no longer as partners, but only “recognizing the significant contribution of compatriots to the preservation and spread of the Russian language and Russian culture.”²²⁶ Russia also undertakes to protect the rights and legitimate interests of compatriots living abroad and promote the consolidation of compatriots.

Compared to 2013, the position of Rossotrudnichestvo has also changed, which in the previous Concept was an active participant in the development and implementation of Russia’s foreign policy but in 2016 its role changed. According to the 2016 Concept,

²²⁴ Compare 2008 Foreign Policy Concept, 2013 Foreign Policy Concept and 2016 Foreign Policy Concept.

²²⁵ *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016)* [online]. 2016. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICk6BZ29/content/id/2542248.

²²⁶ *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016)* [online]. 2016. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICk6BZ29/content/id/2542248.

Rossotrudnichestvo is only rendering assistance to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in carrying out a single foreign policy line of the Russian Federation²²⁷.

In the 2016 Concept, new paragraphs appeared that had not previously been in the context of Russian foreign policy, for instance, on the support and development of the system of Russian educational organisations abroad, branches and representative offices of Russian educational organisations located in the territories of foreign states. Support for Russian educational institutions is very narrowly connected with the spread of the Russian language as an integral part of Russian and world culture, as well as with the Russian School Abroad project (see Chapter 4.1.3.2).

The next passage, which newly appeared in the 2016 Concept, was a paragraph on expanding international cooperation in order to increase the level of protection of the rights and legitimate interests of Russian children living abroad²²⁸. This was a reaction to the Dima Yakovlev's Law adopted in Russia in December 2012, which prohibited the adoption of Russian children by US citizens²²⁹.

3.3 Foundation for the Support and Protection of the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad

The non-profit organisation Foundation for the Support and Protection of the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad was created by the Presidential decree No. 678²³⁰ and started its activities on January 1, 2012. The founders of the Foundation are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and the Federal Agency Rossotrudnichestvo (see Chapter 4.2.1).

²²⁷ *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016)* [online]. 2016. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/2542248.

²²⁸ *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016)* [online]. 2016. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/2542248.

²²⁹ *FEDERAL'NYY ZAKON O merakh vozdeystviya na lits, prichastnykh k narusheniyam osnovopolagayushchikh prav i svobod cheloveka, prav i svobod grazhdan Rossiyskoy Federatsii* [online]. 2012. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/902389496>.

²³⁰ *Ukaz Prezidenta RF ot 25.05.2011 N 678 "O sozdanii Fonda podderzhki i zashchity prav sootchestvennikov, prozhivayushchikh za rubezhom."* [online]. 2011. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/11345>.

The purpose of the Foundation, in accordance with its Charter²³¹, is to provide Russian compatriots with comprehensive legal and other necessary support in cases of violation of their rights, freedoms and legitimate interests in accordance with generally recognized principles and norms of international human rights law. According to the Charter, the Foundation carries out its activities in the name of the development of democracy, social justice, respect for the rights and freedoms of man and national minorities, improving relations between man and society, between man and state, and education of citizenship. Targeted legal assistance to individual compatriots and human rights organisations is provided through the allocation of grants and subsidies.

The Executive Director of the Foundation, Igor Panevkin, argues that between 2012 and 2016 real legal assistance was provided for approximately 40 thousand requests from Russian compatriots. These are proceedings both in court and administrative authorities as well as in the international instances. In just four years, with the support of the Fund, it was possible to implement about 300 projects in 42 countries all over the World. Igor Panevkin claims that the geography of assistance is constantly expanding, new Centres for Legal Assistance for compatriots are opening, including those outside the post-Soviet space:

“Finally, with the support of the Foundation, the International Association of Russian-Speaking Lawyers was created. This is a very important milestone. We hope that the Association will allow Russian-speaking lawyers to interact more closely with each other. And our people who find themselves in a difficult situation will know who to turn to. After all, not everyone has the opportunity to pay for expensive legal services.”²³²

According to the executive director, applications from instance compatriots concern various forms of discrimination, for instance, in the labour, pension, and educational sectors.

However, when trying to find information about legal advice, difficulties arise. Sections of the Foundation’s website (www.pravfond.ru) providing advice are not filled in, only the

²³¹ Ustav Fonda Russkiy Mir. *Russkiy Mir* [online]. [Accessed 01 March 2020]. Retrieved from: http://pravfond.ru/media/kozlov/Ustav_2.doc.

²³² ZABRODINA, Yekaterina. My pomogayem "nashim lyudyam." Fond podderzhki sootchestvennikov vykhodit na novyye rubezhi. *Rossiyskaya gazeta* [online]. 2016. [Accessed 27 January 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://rg.ru/2016/03/03/kak-rabotaet-fond-podderzhki-sootchestvennikov.html>.

news feed is filled. The site does not allow you to find information about the required lawyer, who can be contacted in a particular country. Among the official documents of the Foundation, there is an agreement on the provision of legal services between the foundation and an individual. Therefore, it can be concluded that the foundation provides legal assistance for a fee. Thus, not everyone can get the necessary legal assistance and protection from Russia. The Foundation also does not publish financial statements or accountability for its activities.

3.4 Military conflicts over minorities with Russia's participation in the post-Soviet area

The narrative on the Protection of Russian Minorities was used by Russia twice: during its participation in the conflict with Georgia and the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. In both situations, Russian political elites have appealed to the need of protection of Russian compatriots abroad according to provision 61 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation²³³.

Armed conflict in South Ossetia

After the 2003 Rose Revolution in Georgia, a pro-Western government was established, headed by President Mikheil N. Saakashvili. Relations between Russia and Georgia began to deteriorate. This was also facilitated by Russia's political support for Abkhazia, as well as South Ossetian separatists. In addition, at the referendum in January 2008 the Georgian people agreed with Georgia's join to NATO²³⁴. Relations between two countries have deteriorated, then in April 2008 diplomatic relations between the two countries were interrupted. In August 2008 on the eve of the Beijing Olympic Games armed conflict began in South Ossetia waged between Georgia on one side and the self-proclaimed republics of South Ossetia and the Republic of Abkhazia, as well as Russia, on the other. Until now there is no single opinion about the outbreak of war, the opponents accuse each other of crossing the border and the outbreak of hostilities.

²³³ Paragraph 61 (2), Constitution of the Russian Federation [online]. Moscow, Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.constitution.ru>.

²³⁴ KISHKOVSKY, Sophia. Georgia Is Warned by Russia Against Plans to Join NATO. *N.Y. TIMES* [online]. [Accessed 27 May 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/07/world/europe/07russia.html>.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov explained that Russian intervention in the conflict was caused by the aggression of Georgia against South Ossetian territories beyond its control and the consequences of this aggression: humanitarian catastrophe, an exodus from the region of 30 thousand refugees, the death of Russian peacekeepers and many residents of South Ossetia. In his opinion, the actions of the Georgian army against civilians were genocide. Sergey Lavrov also noted that the majority of the population of South Ossetia are Russian citizens and that

“No country in the world would remain indifferent to the murder of its citizens and their expulsion from their homes”²³⁵.

The Russian side confirmed that it conducted its actions solely in attempts to protect its citizens living in the territory of South Ossetia. At the UN Security Council session Vitaly Churkin, Russia’s representative to the UN Security Council, said:

“The President of the Russian Federation today unambiguously emphasized that Russia will not allow the deaths of our compatriots to go unpunished and that the lives and dignity of our citizens, wherever they are, will be protected, in accordance with the Constitution of Russia and in accordance with the laws of the Russian Federation and international law”²³⁶.

Thus, the Russian Government referred to the implementation of Article 61 of the Constitution, according to which Russia assumes the obligation to protect and protect Russian citizens abroad²³⁷.

Annexation of Crimean Peninsula

The political cycle that led to the annexation of Crimea by Russia began in the fall of 2011 when Vladimir Putin announced his decision to run for the presidency. Putin’s return and rigged elections to the State Duma triggered protests on Bolotnaya Square in Moscow. These

²³⁵ S. Lavrov: Rossiya gotova k voyne s Gruziiyey. *RBC* [online]. [Accessed 26 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/30/04/2008/5703cc529a79470eaf76a6c0>.

²³⁶ *U.N. SCOR, 63d Sess., 5922 mtg. at 5, U.N. Doc. S/PV.5952 (Aug. 8, 2008)*. [online]. United Nations (New York). Retrieved from: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/georgia-spv-5952.php>

²³⁷ Paragraph 61 (2), Constitution of the Russian Federation [online]. Moscow, Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.constitution.ru>.

anti-government protests fuelled the Kremlin's fear of a colour revolution. Russian President started a campaign of repression against the opposition. However, the 'Revolution of Dignity' in Ukraine began a veritable colour revolution, heightened Putin's concerns about this.

As it was mentioned above, one of the main goals of Russia's foreign policy is its role as a defender of compatriots abroad and a guarantor of their rights. Based on this, Russian politicians have concentrated on identifying the main threats faced by Russian-speaking people in post-Soviet countries²³⁸. Research into President Putin's rhetoric has shown that the most frequently put forward justification for annexation was that Russia must protect the Russian (or Russian-speaking) population abroad (so-called compatriots)²³⁹. It is also important to note that in the context of the Ukrainian crisis Russian political representatives advocated Russia's right to take actions similar to those of the West in Kosovo²⁴⁰.

Vladimir Putin himself, in his so-called Crimean speech, announced that Crimea has always belonged to Russia and the decision of the Soviet political elites to transfer Crimea to the Ukrainian SSR was a historical mistake. Putin claimed that in 2000, during the delimitation negotiations between him and Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, Russian President ceded Crimea to Ukraine, on the basis that friendly relations with Ukraine were then the main priority. Putin argued that the situation was developing differently and that there were constant attempts to deprive Russians of their historical memory and their native language. Putin argued that the reprisals that had begun against the Russian people by the Ukrainian authorities left Russia no choice but to protect compatriots. And if then, in 2014, Putin denied the presence of the Russian army on the territory of Russia, today it would erect monuments to the so-called Polite People, the military, who participated in the "return" of the Crimea. Putin also stated that

²³⁸ BURAI, Erna. Parody as norm contestation: Russian normative justifications in Georgia and Ukraine and their implications for global norms. *Global Society*. 2016. Vol. 30, no. 1, p. 67-77.

MOROZOVA, Natalia. Geopolitics, eurasianism and Russian foreign policy under Putin. *Geopolitics*. 2009. Vol. 14, no. 4, p. 667-686.

²³⁹ LARUELLE, Mariene. Russia as a "Divided Nation", from Compatriots to Crimea: A Contribution to the Discussion on Nationalism and Foreign Policy. *Problems of Post-Communism*. 2015. Vol. 62, no. 2, p. 88-97.
MAKARYCHEV, Andrey and MEDVEDEV, Sergey. Biopolitics and power in Putin's Russia. *Problems of Post-Communism*. 2015. Vol. 62, no. 1, p. 45-54.

²⁴⁰ LINDEN-RETEK, Paul and BREWER, Evan. Crimea justified by Kosovo ICJ ruling. *Open Democracy* [online]. 2014. [Accessed 28 January 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/crimea-justified-kosovo-ruling-icj-2008-russia-putin/>.

“Millions of Russian people, Russian-speaking citizens live and will live in Ukraine and Russia will always defend their interests by political, diplomatic and legal means”²⁴¹.

Conclusion

In both cases, Russian political elites sought to present their actions as legitimate. It is important for Russia to recognize the legitimacy of both interventions. Primarily because Russia is a permanent member of the UN Security Council whose mission is the preservation of global peace. Secondly, Russian political elites often criticize the NATO bombing of Serbia in the spring of 1999 and the US invasion of Iraq in March 2003. Thirdly, according to Emmanuel Karagiannis, the legitimacy of the interventions could help the Russian government reduce the likelihood of any future Georgian and Ukrainian lawsuits before the European Court of Human Rights²⁴².

Yet the defence of Russian minorities has nothing to do with the real motivation for Russia's military action against the two former Soviet republics. These two interventions were reactions to the geopolitical reorientation of Georgia and Ukraine. Russia, which has no natural borders (e.g. mountains, seas) with Europe and near its southern border, has to look for buffer zones. The end of the USSR also meant that Russia could lose its buffer zone states politically. That is why the struggle for the loyalty of the former communist republics is important for Russia.

²⁴¹ Obrashcheniye Prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii (Krymskaya rech'). *Kremlin* [online]. 2014. [Accessed 28 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603>.

²⁴² KARAGIANNIS, Emmanuel. The Russian Interventions in South Ossetia and Crimea Compared: Military Performance, Legitimacy and Goals. *Contemporary Security Policy*. 2014. Vol. 35, no. 3, p. 400-420.

CHAPTER 4: POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT TOWARDS RUSSIAN MINORITIES ABROAD

This chapter examines the Kremlin's policy towards compatriots abroad. The chapter defines the concept of a 'compatriot abroad', analyses its place in the legal system of the Russian Federation, then studies two state programs aimed at compatriots abroad. The chapter also focuses on two main organisations that Vladimir Putin considers to be the stronghold of compatriots outside the homeland. The main goal of the chapter is to understand how and through what routes the Russian Government uphold and develop relations with Russians abroad.

4.1 Compatriots abroad: definition and their place in Russian legal system and foreign policy

A relatively new problem of the compatriots abroad required the formation of Russian policy in this area. The policy towards compatriots has undergone a generally positive evolution: from misunderstanding and ignoring the problem to its recognition as one of the most important, adoption legal acts and development programs to support compatriots²⁴³.

4.1.1 Definition of the term 'compatriot abroad'

On December 8, 1995, the State Duma adopted the "Declaration on the Support of the Russian Diaspora and on the Protection of Russian Compatriots"²⁴⁴. It is the first attempt to formulate the concept of 'compatriot'. The basis of the state policy of Russia in relation to compatriots abroad was the Federal Law No. 99-FZ "On the State Policy of the Russian Federation Towards Compatriots Abroad" (hereinafter referred to as Law "On Compatriots")²⁴⁵. For the first time in legislative practice, the law defines the concept of

²⁴³ RAZDOBAROV, V.V. and PAVLOV, Ye.A. O polozhenii sootchestvennikov v stranakh SNG i ikh podderzhke Rossiyskoy Federatsiyey. *Analiticheskiy vestnik Soveta Federatsii FS RF*. 2005. Vol. 20, no. 272.

²⁴⁴ *POSTANOVLENIYE GOSUDARSTVENNOY DUMY FEDERAL'NOGO SOBRANIYA ROSSIYSKOY O Deklaratsii o podderzhke rossiyskoy diaspori i o pokrovitel'stve rossiyskim sootchestvennikam* [online]. 1995. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: http://www.pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?doc_itself=&nd=102038598&page=1&rdk=0&intelsearch=%CA%EE%ED%F1%F2%E8%F2%F3%F6%E8%FF+%D0%EE%F1%F1%E8%E9%F1%EA%EE%E9+%D4%E5%E4%E5%F0%E0%F6%E8%E8++&link_id=44#I0.

²⁴⁵ *Federal'nyy zakon ot 24.05.1999 g. № 99-FZ O gosudarstvennoy politike Rossiyskoy Federatsii v otnoshenii sootchestvennikov za rubezhom* [online]. 1999. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/13875>.

‘compatriots abroad’ and the issue of relations with them is raised to the rank of the state policy of the Russian Federation.

Article 1 of the law “On Compatriots” reveals the concept of a ‘**compatriot**’. According to the law, compatriots are people born in one state, living or residing in it and having signs of a common language, history, cultural heritage, traditions and customs, as well as descendants of these people in a direct descending line. The law also defines the concept of a ‘**compatriot abroad**’, they are (1) citizens of the Russian Federation permanently residing outside the territory of the Russian Federation; (2) persons and their descendants residing outside the territory of the Russian Federation and generally belonging to people historically residing in the territory of the Russian Federation, as well as those who have made a free choice in favour of spiritual, cultural and legal relations with the Russian Federation, persons whose relatives previously lived on the territory of the Russian Federation in a direct ascending line, including: (a) people who were citizens of the USSR, residing in the states that were part of the USSR, received the citizenship of these states or became stateless people; (b) immigrants (emigrants) from the Russian state²⁴⁶, the Russian Republic²⁴⁷, the RSFSR, the USSR, and the Russian Federation who had appropriate citizenship and became citizens of a foreign state or stateless people.

In any case, from the appearance of Federal Law “On Compatriots” in May 1999 till this day, no one can determine their real amount, since it all depends on how to count or rather, whom to consider as these same Russian compatriots. For instance, in 2010 Alexander Chepurin, former director of the Department for Work with Compatriots Abroad at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that based on the provisions of the Federal Law “On Compatriots” as amended in 1999:

*“...the number of people falling under this concept can be automatically to ascribe 150-200 million people...”*²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ The Russian state (Rossiyskoye gosudarstvo) is a state proclaimed by the Act of the Ufa State Conference of September 23, 1918 "on the formation of the All-Russian supreme power" with the aim of establishing the state unity and independence of Russia, establishing Soviet power and signing the Brest Peace by the Soviet government.

²⁴⁷ The Russian Republic (Rossiyskaya Respublika) is the name of a state on the territory of Russia from September 1 (14), 1917 to October 25 (November 7), 1917.

²⁴⁸ YAKOVLEV, Fyodor. «Vtoroy svezhesti» ili «v zakone»: Kto takiye rossiyskiye sootchestvenniki? *Regnum* [online]. [Accessed 30 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/2247331.html>.

But then, nevertheless, confidently stated:

*“About 30 million of our compatriots live outside Russia. Most of them are citizens of the post-Soviet states”.*²⁴⁹

Turning to the opinion of Foreign Minister Sergey V. Lavrov on this issue also complicated the situation with a number of compatriots on October 19, 2015, during a meeting with Franklin Drilon, the Chairman of the Senate of the Philippines, Sergey V. Lavrov claimed that:

*“...outside Russia there are 25 million people who associate themselves with the Russian culture, the Russian past, history and present”.*²⁵⁰

A few days later, on November 1, 2015, in his article ‘Russian World on the Way to Consolidation’ in the Government’s newspaper Rossiyskaya Gazeta Lavrov wrote:

*“...The Russian community abroad is counted about 30 million people all over the world”.*²⁵¹

It has to be concluded that the Russian Government is not clear in its definition and counting of compatriots abroad, as well as in counting of ethnic Russians.

4.1.2 Compatriots abroad according to the Russian legal system

The legal foundations of relations between the Russian Federation and compatriots living abroad are determined by international treaties of the Russian Federation, the Constitution of the Russian Federation, and a wide range of internal federal laws and decrees. Among the federal laws, the main ones are: Federal Law of May 31, 2002 No. 62-FZ “On Citizenship

²⁴⁹ YAKOVLEV, Fyodor. «Vtoroy svezhesti» ili «v zakone»: Kto takiye rossiyskiye sootchestvenniki? *Regnum* [online]. [Accessed 30 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/2247331.html>.

²⁵⁰ Vstupitel'noye slovo Ministra inostrannykh del Rossii S.V.Lavrova v khode peregovorov s Predsedatelem Senata Kongressa Respubliki Filippiny F.Drilonom, Moskva, 19 oktyabrya 2015 goda. *Kremlin* [online]. 2015. [Accessed 30 July 2020]. Retrieved from: https://www.mid.ru/sr/press_service/minister_speeches/-/asset_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmr/content/id/1878314.

²⁵¹ LAVROV, Sergey Viktorovich. Russkiy mir na puti konsolidatsii. *Rossiyskaya gazeta* [online]. Vol. 247, no. 6818. [Accessed 30 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://rg.ru/2015/11/02/lavrov.html>.

of the Russian Federation²⁵²”, Federal Law of May 24, 1999 No. 99-FZ “On The State Policy of The Russian Federation Towards Compatriots Abroad”²⁵³, Federal Law of July 25, 2002 No. 115- Federal Law “On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation”²⁵⁴, by the Law of the Russian Federation of February 19, 1993 No. 4530-I “On Forced Migrants”²⁵⁵.

In the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 940 dated September 14, 1995 “On Approving the Strategic Course of the Russian Federation with the CIS Member States”²⁵⁶, a whole section “Humanitarian Cooperation and Human Rights” was devoted to the problems of Russian compatriots and the protection of their rights in the newly independent states.

On December 8, 1995, the State Duma adopted the declaration “On the Support of the Russian Diaspora and on the Protection of Russian Compatriots”²⁵⁷. It first made an attempt to formulate the concept of ‘compatriot’ and proclaimed the idea of Russia’s responsibility for the level of real guarantee of basic human rights and freedoms in relation to Russian compatriots abroad²⁵⁸.

²⁵² *Federal'nyy zakon "O grazhdanstve Rossiyskoy Federatsii" ot 31.05.2002 N 62-FZ (poslednyaya redaktsiya)* [online]. 2002. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_36927/ (with amendments).

²⁵³ *Federal'nyy zakon "O gosudarstvennoy politike Rossiyskoy Federatsii v otnoshenii sootechestvennikov za rubezhom" ot 24.05.1999 N 99-FZ (poslednyaya redaktsiya)* [online]. 1999. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_23178/.

²⁵⁴ *Federal'nyy zakon "O pravovom polozhenii inostrannykh grazhdan v Rossiyskoy Federatsii" ot 25.07.2002 N 115-FZ (poslednyaya redaktsiya)* [online]. 2002. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_37868/.

²⁵⁵ *Zakon RF "O vynuzhdennykh pereselentsakh" ot 19.02.1993 N 4530-1 (poslednyaya redaktsiya)* [online]. 1993. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_4339/.

²⁵⁶ *Ukaz Prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii ot 14.09.1995 g. № 940 Ob utverzhdenii Strategicheskogo kursa Rossiyskoy Federatsii s gosudarstvami — uchastnikami Sodruzhestva Nezavisimyykh Gosudarstv* [online]. 1995. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/8307>.

²⁵⁷ *POSTANOVLENIYE GOSUDARSTVENNOY DUMY FEDERAL'NOGO SOBRANIYA ROSSIYSKOY O Deklaratsii o podderzhke rossiyskoy diaspori i o pokrovitel'stve rossiyskim sootechestvennikam* [online]. 1995. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: http://www.pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?doc_itself=&nd=102038598&page=1&rdk=0&intelsearch=%CA%EE%ED%F1%F2%E8%F2%F3%F6%E8%FF+%D0%EE%F1%F1%E8%E9%F1%EA%EE%E9+%D4%E5%E4%E5%F0%E0%F6%E8%E8++&link_id=44#I0.

²⁵⁸ *POSTANOVLENIYE GOSUDARSTVENNOY DUMY FEDERAL'NOGO SOBRANIYA ROSSIYSKOY O Deklaratsii o podderzhke rossiyskoy diaspori i o pokrovitel'stve rossiyskim sootechestvennikam* [online]. 1995. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: http://www.pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?doc_itself=&nd=102038598&page=1&rdk=0&intelsearch=%CA%EE%ED%F1%F2%E8%F2%F3%F6%E8%FF+%D0%EE%F1%F1%E8%E9%F1%EA%EE%E9+%D4%E5%E4%E5%F0%E0%F6%E8%E8++&link_id=44#I0.

By a Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of April 13, 1996, it was decided to create a ‘Russians Foundation’ to support compatriots abroad²⁵⁹. The foundation is called upon to promote the Russian Federation’s policy towards compatriots, develop appropriate programs, help establish local educational, cultural and scientific structures, as well as provide humanitarian assistance to socially vulnerable citizens.

By a Resolution of the State Duma of October 25, 1996²⁶⁰, The Council of Compatriots was created under the State Duma as a permanent expert advisory body and its composition was approved from among the most active and respected leaders of organisations and associations abroad. A Directive of the Chairman of the State Duma of December 3, 1998 established The Council of Migration Associations²⁶¹, a permanent advisory body representing Russian compatriots who came to permanent residence in Russia after the destruction of a single Soviet state, supporting refugees and internally displaced persons, protecting their civilians, economic, moral, political and other rights in places of the new residence.

Nevertheless, the Federal Law “On the State Policy of the Russian Federation Towards Compatriots Abroad” became the real basis of Russia’s state policy regarding compatriots abroad. The Law defines the concept of ‘compatriots abroad’, and the issue of relations with them is raised to the rank of the state policy of the Russian Federation.

With the beginning of the third millennium the international organisations of compatriots themselves began to play an increasingly prominent role in protecting the rights of compatriots on the political stage. One of the most respected organisations of this kind is the International Council of Russian Compatriots (ICRC). On October 2, 2002, a constituent assembly of representatives of public organisations of Russian foreign countries from 19

²⁵⁹ *Ukaz Prezidenta RF ot 13 aprelya 1996 g. N 536 "O sozdanii fonda podderzhki sootchestvennikov za rubezhom "Rossiyane"* [online]. 1996. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <https://base.garant.ru/3960450/>.

²⁶⁰ *Postanovleniye GD FS RF ot 25.10.1996 N 768-II GD "Ob Obrashchenii Gosudarstvennoy Dumy Federal'nogo Sobraniya Rossiyskoy Federatsii "K Pravitel'stvu Rossiyskoy Federatsii ob otmene sbora s naseleniya za otpuskayemuyu elektroenergiyu"* [online]. 1996. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_12197/.

²⁶¹ *Rasporyazheniye Predsedatelya Gosudarstvennoy Dumy ot 3 dekabrya 1998 g. Ob osnovanii Soveta pereselencheskikh ob"yedineniy* [online]. 1998. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.duma.gov.ru/sng/polozen1.htm>.

countries was held in Moscow, at which the international public organisation International Council of Russian Compatriots was created²⁶².

The Russian government has also developed various programs for working with compatriots that define the main areas of support for compatriots abroad²⁶³. They include protecting the rights and interests of compatriots, promoting and supporting the Russian language, culture and education abroad²⁶⁴.

For instance, one of the directions of the policy of the Russian Federation towards compatriots abroad is the possibility of the victims of repression and historical upheaval, as well as their descendants, to return to Russia and, if they wish, to restore citizenship. To implement such a return the State Program for promotion of the voluntary resettlement of compatriots to the Russian Federation was created (see Chapter 4.1.3.1). Moreover, the decision to participate in the State Program is made voluntarily by the compatriot on the basis of his conscious choice of place of residence, work and (or) study and the realization of his potential labour, educational, creative and other opportunities in the Russian Federation.

The Russian Government believes that these changes are the result of a new ideology of interaction with compatriots, which is transforming into a long-term state policy²⁶⁵.

Law on the Compatriots Abroad

In May 1991 the State Duma of the Russian Federation adopted a federal law ‘On the State Policy of the Russian Federation Towards Compatriots Abroad’. According to this law, relations with compatriots abroad are an important field of the foreign and domestic policy of the Russian Federation. The first article of this law describes the definition of the terms ‘compatriot’ and ‘compatriot abroad’. Due to the law’s provisions ‘compatriots abroad’ are people (not only the citizens of the Russian Federation) who permanently reside outside the territory of Russia and, as a rule, belong to nations historically lived in the territory of the

²⁶² About us. *International Council of Russian Compatriots* [online]. [Accessed 28 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://www.msrs.ru/about-us>.

²⁶³ Normativnye dokumenty. *Moskovskiy Dom Sootechestvennikov* [online]. [Accessed 28 April 2020]. Retrieved from: http://www.mosds.ru/Dokum/dokum_rosFZ99-1999.shtml.

²⁶⁴ MURADOV, G. L. and SKRINNIK, V. M. *Spravochnik rossiyskogo sootechestvennika*. Moscow : Russkiy mir, 2006, p. 240–241.

²⁶⁵ Vsemirnyy kongress sootechestvennikov, prozhivayushchikh za rubezhom. *Kremlin* [online]. [Accessed 06 May 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/59003>.

Russian Federation, as well as who have made a free choice in favour of spiritual and cultural ties with the Russian Federation²⁶⁶. Thus, the law itself determines the need for spiritual and cultural ties with Russia. The law regulates relations between the state and citizens of the Russian Federation, however, it also more detailedly regulates relations with compatriots abroad.

Under the provisions of this law, the state undertakes to support its compatriots abroad in the field of fundamental human and civil rights and freedoms, where Russia undertakes to support compatriots abroad not only in providing them with such rights, but also undertakes to support compatriots in case of discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, language, religion, political or other beliefs, national or social origin, affiliation with compatriots, property status or any other corresponding²⁶⁷. Russia also committed itself to support compatriots in the economic and social fields (Article 16), in the field of information (Article 18), as well as in relations with other compatriots (Article 19)²⁶⁸.

According to the provision 11.1 of this law, compatriots have a right to acquire citizenship of the Russian Federation in a simplified manner. For this, due to the presidential decree from 2006, a special State Program was created to facilitate the voluntary resettlement to the Russian Federation of compatriots living abroad (see Chapter 4.1.3.1).

4.1.3 State policy of the Russian Federation on compatriots abroad

In line with Article 5 of the Law “On Compatriots” abroad, the state policy of the Russian Federation with respect to compatriots is an integral part of the domestic and foreign policy of the Russian Federation. It is:

“...a combination of legal, diplomatic, social, economic, organisational measures, measures in the field of information, education, culture and other measures carried out by the President

²⁶⁶ *Federal'nyy zakon ot 24.05.1999 g. № 99-FZ O gosudarstvennoy politike Rossiyskoy Federatsii v otnoshenii sootechestvennikov za rubezhom* [online]. 1999. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/13875>.

²⁶⁷ *Federal'nyy zakon ot 24.05.1999 g. № 99-FZ O gosudarstvennoy politike Rossiyskoy Federatsii v otnoshenii sootechestvennikov za rubezhom* [online]. 1999. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/13875>.

²⁶⁸ *Federal'nyy zakon ot 24.05.1999 g. № 99-FZ O gosudarstvennoy politike Rossiyskoy Federatsii v otnoshenii sootechestvennikov za rubezhom* [online]. 1999. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/13875>.

*of the Russian Federation, state authorities of the Russian Federation and state authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation with the participation of local governments in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, international treaties of the Russian Federation, the legislation of the Russian Federation to implement the principles and goals established by the above Federal Law*²⁶⁹.

According to the law, the State policy of the Russian Federation towards compatriots is based on the principles of partnership and cooperation, as well as on the recognition of inalienability and belonging to everyone from the birth of the fundamental rights and freedoms of human and citizen; the need to ensure civil, political, social, economic, cultural and other rights and freedoms of compatriots, as well as their legitimate interests in the states of residence in accordance with generally recognized principles and norms of international law; interaction of states in the field of ensuring the rights and freedoms of compatriots.

The purpose of the state policy of the Russian Federation towards compatriots is to provide state support to them, including providing legal protection of their interests, as well as the conditions under which they could live as equal citizens in foreign states or return to the Russian Federation.

In order to achieve the purposes of state policy towards compatriots abroad, individuals and legal entities of the Russian Federation, foreign individuals and organisations that provide material and financial assistance and support to compatriots can be provided with tax, customs discounts and other benefits. In order to assist Russians abroad in preserving and developing their cultural heritage, the state bodies of the Russian Federation are obliged to provide assistance to cultural centres, libraries, archives, museums, theatres to protect the cultural heritage of the Russian Federation.

At the same time, it is important to stress that the Russian Federation, like any other state, does not extend its jurisdiction to other countries. Therefore, the activation of foreign language policy is a complex problem, implemented mainly by diplomatic means.

²⁶⁹ *Federal'nyy zakon ot 24.05.1999 g. № 99-FZ O gosudarstvennoy politike Rossiyskoy Federatsii v otnoshenii sootechestvennikov za rubezhom* [online]. 1999. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/13875>.

4.1.3.1 State program for the promotion of the voluntary resettlement of compatriots to the Russian Federation

In 2006, a presidential decree approved creation of the program for the promotion the voluntary resettlement of compatriots living abroad to the territory of the Russian Federation²⁷⁰. The program is aimed at relocating people who, after the collapse of the USSR, stayed outside the Russian Federation and want to move back to Russia.

According to this program, immigrants are granted a number of benefits, for instance, they are allowed to import their property duty-free, their travel and baggage expenses will be compensated, and one private car can also be brought in without paying customs duty²⁷¹. The program participant and members of his family receive a state guarantee and social support, in particular, the cost of moving to a permanent place of residence is paid, the cost of paying the state fee is compensated, a lump-sum allowance for accommodation is paid, as well as a benefit of 50% of the subsistence level in the region in case no other income.

In the very beginning the resettlement program was not too popular, for instance, in 2006–2008, a little more than 8 thousand people moved to Russia under the voluntary resettlement program²⁷². Nevertheless, in September 2012 Russian President Vladimir V. Putin signed a decree by which the program became unlimited²⁷³.

The press-service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs reported that during 12 years of the functioning of the state program for the voluntary resettlement of compatriots, 826 thousand people returned to Russia. The largest numbers of compatriots moved from Ukraine (about 36,98%, see Figure 4), Kazakhstan (about 21.4%), Tajikistan (about 10.5%), Armenia (about 8.72%), Uzbekistan (8.33%) and Moldova (about 7.72%). According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 72% of compatriots are able-bodied and 43% of them have higher education.

²⁷⁰ *Ukaz prezidenta o merakh po okazaniyu sodeystviya dobrovol'nomu pereseleniyu (28.06.2006)* [online]. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.rg.ru/2006/06/28/ukaz-pereselenie.html>.

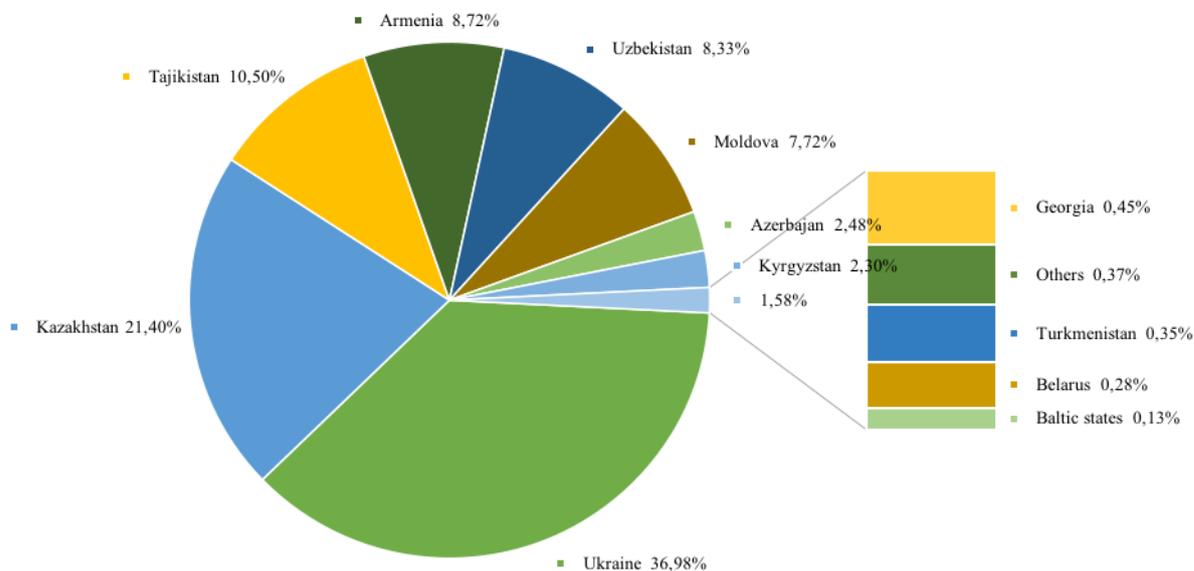
²⁷¹ *Ukaz prezidenta o merakh po okazaniyu sodeystviya dobrovol'nomu pereseleniyu (28.06.2006)* [online]. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.rg.ru/2006/06/28/ukaz-pereselenie.html>.

²⁷² *Trudnoye vozvrashcheniye domoy. Interfax* [online]. 2013. [Accessed 28 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.interfax-russia.ru/view/trudnoe-vozvrashchenie-domoy>.

²⁷³ *UKAZ PREZIDENTA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII O realizatsii Gosudarstvennoy programmy po okazaniyu sodeystviya dobrovol'nomu pereseleniyu v Rossiyskuyu Federatsiyu sootchestvennikov, prozhivayushchikh za rubezhom (V redaktsii ukazov Prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii ot 14.06.2013 g. N 565; ot 15.03.2018 g. N 109)* [online]. 2013. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/36045>.

Almost a quarter of all who arrived are citizens under the age of 18. Another 5% are pensioners²⁷⁴.

Figure 4. States of origin of the participants of the State Resettlement Program



Source: analysis of the reports of the program 2006–2019, see Monitoring Gosudarstvennoy programmy. *Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del (MVD)* [online]. [Accessed 30 April 2020]. Retrieved from: https://мвд.рф/мвд/structure1/Glavnie_upravlenija/guvm/compatriots/monitoring, the author's calculations.

In order to inform compatriots living abroad about the possibilities of participating in the State Program on resettlement to permanent residence in Russia, employment and housing arrangement in the territories of settlement, various information resources have been created and are functioning. Among them is the reference publication of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 'To Help the Russian Compatriot Abroad'²⁷⁵; web-portal 'Russian Century' (*Russkiy vek*) under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia²⁷⁶; automated information system 'Compatriots' managed by the Ministry of Health and Social Development of Russia²⁷⁷; and International Internet Forum 'Integration of Compatriots' under the control of the Russian Ministry of Regional Development²⁷⁸.

²⁷⁴ Monitoring Gosudarstvennoy programmy. *MVD* [online]. [Accessed 17 May 2020]. Retrieved from: https://мвд.рф/мвд/structure1/Glavnie_upravlenija/guvm/compatriots/monitoring.

²⁷⁵ Справочное издание "V POMOSHCH' ROSSIYSKOMU SOOTECHESTVENNIKU ZA RUBEZHOM." *Koordinatsionnyy sovet rossiyskikh sootechestvennikov v Norvegii* [online]. 2008. [Accessed 28 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://www.ksovet.no/component/content/article/23-help>.

²⁷⁶ Russkiy vek. [online]. [Accessed 15 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.ruvek.ru>.

²⁷⁷ Avtomatizirovannaya informatsionnaya sistema "Sootechestvenniki". [online]. [Accessed 28 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://aiss.gov.ru>.

²⁷⁸ Back2Russian - Domoy v Rossiyu. [online]. [Accessed 28 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://back2russia.net>.

4.1.3.2. Russian School Abroad Program

The Russian School Abroad program arose on the basis of the concept of the program approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 4, 2015. The authors of the concept argue that the impossibility of receiving education in the Russian language concerns a large number of Russian citizens permanently residing abroad. In the concept, Russia assumes the obligation to protect the rights of Russian citizens to receive education in the Russian language. The concept states that:

*“Support and promotion abroad of general education in Russian is an important factor in the humanitarian and political influence of the Russian Federation in the world community, serves to strengthen the position of the Russian language and the spread of Russian culture in the world.”*²⁷⁹

The goals of the program were announced by Vladimir Putin himself at the 5th Congress of Compatriots 2015:

*“The goal of such schools is to promote domestic methods of teaching, upbringing, developmental education, to promote the study of the Russian language and subjects that are relevant to our country, their attitude to Russia, for instance, the history and geography of our country, the development of its culture and art.”*²⁸⁰

The objectives of the program, according to its concept, are to provide access to Russian education and education in the Russian language for Russian-speaking citizens of Russia living abroad, foreign citizens and stateless people; and also, to

“Improv[e] the conditions for the shaping of the student’s personality on the basis of Russian cultural traditions and moral values, [to] develop of interests and the ability to social self-determination <...> [to] shap[e] respect for human rights and freedoms and a positive

²⁷⁹ *Kontsepsiya «Russkaya shkola za rubezhom»* [online]. 2015. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/news/50643>.

²⁸⁰ *Kontsepsiya «Russkaya shkola za rubezhom»* [online]. 2015. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/news/50643>.

attitude towards modern Russia during the process of studying abroad.”²⁸¹

It is very important that the document in question gives a definition of the concept of Russian School Abroad. A Russian School Abroad is considered to be an institution or organisation that carries out educational activities in the field of general education abroad: (1) specialized structural educational units in foreign establishments of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs that carry out educational activities according to basic and additional general educational programs, taking into account the features established by Article 88 of the Federal Law “On Education in the Russian Federation”; (2) Russian educational organisations (their branches) that carry out educational activities in accordance with basic and additional general educational programs in the territory of foreign states; (3) educational organisations created in accordance with international treaties of the Russian Federation; (4) foreign organisations (state and non-state) that carry out educational activities under the main and (or) additional general educational programs in whole or in part in Russian language and (or) in accordance with federal state educational standards.²⁸²

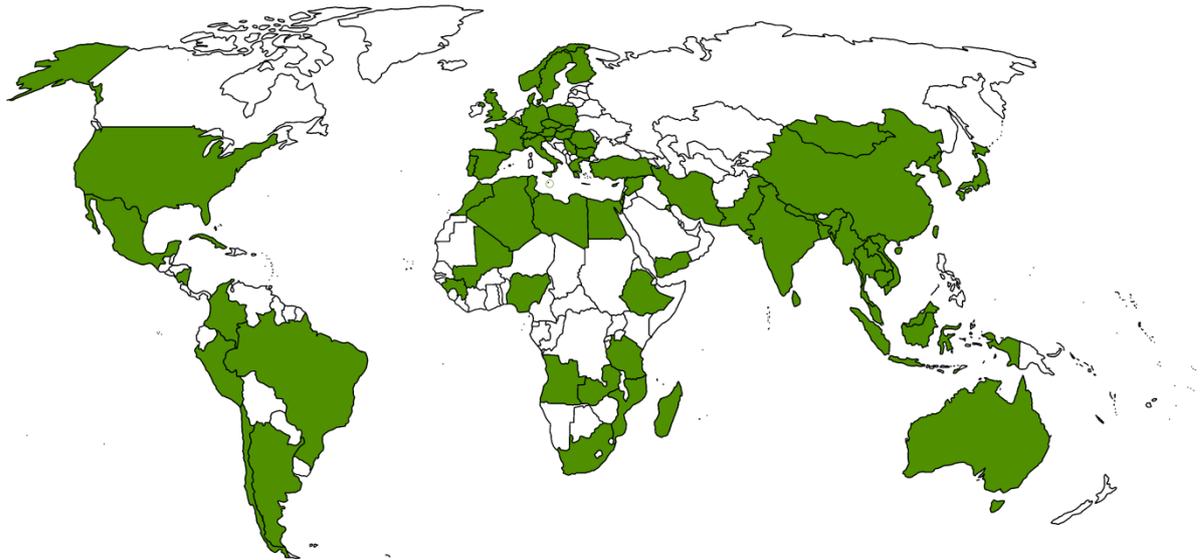
Discussing Russian schools under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, there are 84 of them in 75 countries of the world (see Map 2). Nevertheless, it has to be noted that there are 2,588 officially registered Russian schools (dated June 17, 2020)²⁸³. The main state bodies engaged in the practical implementation of the Concept are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia, Rossotrudnichestvo, as well as other federal executive bodies and executive bodies of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

²⁸¹ *Kontsepsiya «Russkaya shkola za rubezhom»* [online]. 2015. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/news/50643>.

²⁸² *Kontsepsiya «Russkaya shkola za rubezhom»* [online]. 2015. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/news/50643>.

²⁸³ *Sistema podderzhki russkikh shkol.* [online]. undated. [Accessed 02 June 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://russchools.org>.

Map 2. Map of the Russian Schools affiliated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



Source: Specialized structural educational divisions of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (foreign schools of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) (official sites). *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation* [online]. [Accessed 30 June 2020]. Retrieved from: https://www.mid.ru/diverse/-/asset_publisher/8bWtTfQKqtaS/content/id/754265, the author's own drawing.

It can be also noted that education can be the next route for spreading Russian influence in the world. At the same time, Russian Schools Abroad helps to remain in touch with the young generation of Russians and educate according to Russian system to keep them in the Russian World.

4.2 Key organisations for cooperation with compatriots abroad

The Russian government has organised a large network of various organisations that convey the Russian point of view on the ongoing processes to the masses and unite people along ideological lines. It can be argued that these are certain ways of the Kremlin's influence not only on Russian citizens but also on compatriots abroad, foreign citizens, and the academic community.

These organisations can be divided into various categories of activity according to the principle of affiliation to the Russian government. Three types of organisations can be distinguished among them: (1) large federal organisations and foundations founded and financed by the state, (2) smaller "subsidiary" organisations and foundations affiliated to

state, financed by parent organisations or other state grants, (3) groups sharing Kremlin priorities and ideology, but working separately, without official support²⁸⁴.

Major governmental organisations are Rossotrudnichestvo (Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation), Foundation for Support of Compatriots, Russian World Foundation, Gorchakov Foundation, Moscow House of Compatriots, Intergovernmental Foundation for Humanitarian Cooperation of CIS countries.

Table 6. Key state organisation for cooperation with compatriots abroad

Organisation	Est.	GOV/NGO	Affiliated	Type / aim
Rossotrudnichestvo	2008	GOV, Presidential decree No. 1315, 6.9.2008	MFA of RF	international humanitarian cooperation
Support and Protection of the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad	2011	GOV, Presidential decree No. 678, 25.5.2011	MFA of RF, Rossotrudnichestvo	legal help to compatriots abroad
Russian World (Russkiy Mir) Foundation	2005	GOV, Presidential decree No. 796, 21.6.2007	MFA of RF, Ministry of Science and Higher Education of RF	educational
The Alexander Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Foundation	2011	GOV, Presidential decree No 60-rp, 02.02.2010	MFA of RF	public diplomacy
Moscow House of Compatriots	2002	GOV, Moscow Government decree	Government of Moscow	strengthening ties with compatriots, educational
Intergovernmental Foundation for Humanitarian Cooperation of CIS countries	2006	Dushanbe Multilateral Treaty, 25.5.2006	CIS	multicultural dialog

Source: O Rossotrudnichestve. *Rossotrudnichestvo* [online]. [Accessed 30 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://rs.gov.ru/about>; *Support and Protection of the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad* [online]. undated. [Accessed 30 July 2020]. Retrieved from: www.pravfond.ru; O Fonde. *Fond Russkiy Mir* [online]. [Accessed 28 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://ruskiymir.ru/fund/>; The Alexander Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Foundation. [online]. undated. [Accessed 30 May 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://gorchakovfund.ru/en/>; Moscow House of Compatriots. [online]. [Accessed 30 July 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://mosds.mos.ru>; The Intergovernmental Foundation for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation (IFESCCO). [online]. [Accessed 30 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://www.mfsg-sng.org>.

These organisations are distinguished by the fact that they were founded by state bodies of the Russian Federation, as well as by the fact that the spectrum of their activities covers

²⁸⁴ LUTSEVYCH, Orysia. Agents of the Russian World: Proxy Groups in the Contested Neighbourhood (Research Paper). *Russia and Eurasia Programme*. April 2016, p. 1-45.

various areas: educational, communication, educational and others. At the same time, the main problem is the lack of transparency in the activities of organisations and their financing. For instance, the Gorchakov Fund and the Russian World Foundation do not publish financial statements, Rossotrudnichestvo publishes neither reports on its official website nor financial statements nor reports on the done activities.

In general, several types of organisations can be distinguished according to their interests: compatriot networks, integration, media, educational and historical, ideological, Christian paramilitary, youth organisations (see Appendix 3). Some of them are directly affiliated with the state, for instance, the Centre for Social and Conservative Politics, Russian Institute for Strategic Studies (affiliated to the President), while others are affiliated with the state through other organisations, for instance, the media network affiliated through the news agency MIA Rossiya Segodnya.

The following subchapters map main organisations and its activities in spreading Russian language, culture and political attitude.

4.2.1 Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo)

Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation (hereinafter Rossotrudnichestvo) was created by Decree No. 1315 of the President of the Russian Federation Dmitry A. Medvedev on September 6, 2008 in order to “*increase the effectiveness of public administration in the field of international cooperation*”.²⁸⁵ The activities of Rossotrudnichestvo and its overseas institutions are aimed at implementing the state policy of international humanitarian cooperation, promoting an objective view of modern Russia abroad. It can be argued that the representative offices of Rossotrudnichestvo are an integral part of the public diplomacy system of the Russian Federation to promote its positive image.

According to the organisation, “*the presentation of the best achievements of multinational Russian culture*”²⁸⁶ is the main tool for a positive perception of Russia in the world.

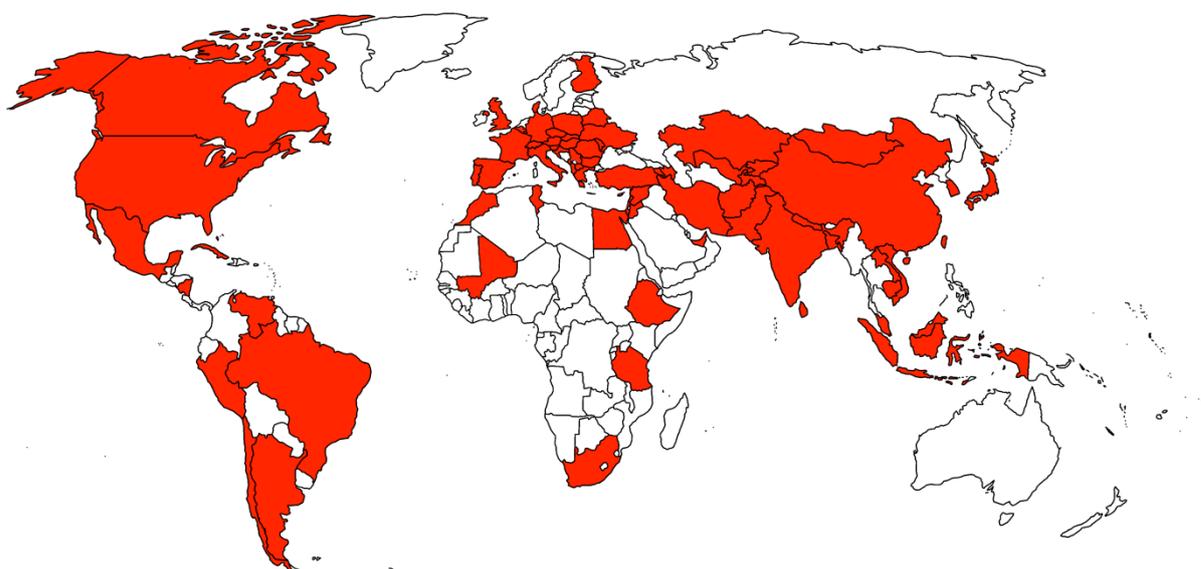
²⁸⁵ O Rossotrudnichestve. *Rossotrudnichestvo* [online]. [Accessed 30 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://rs.gov.ru/about>.

²⁸⁶ O Rossotrudnichestve. *Rossotrudnichestvo* [online]. [Accessed 30 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://rs.gov.ru/about>.

Rossotrudnichestvo also supports and promotes the Russian language abroad: at representative offices, there are Russian language courses with the subsequent possibility of education in Russian and moving to Russia. Representative offices of Rossotrudnichestvo also participate in the selection of foreign students to Russian universities.

As it poses the interest of the latter, Rossotrudnichestvo is subordinate to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. The organisation is currently represented in 81 countries (80 countries and Russia) by 98 representative offices (96 in the world and 2 in Russia), which indicate how vast is its geographical coverage (see Map 3).

Map 3. Rossotrudnichestvo Centres in the World (except Russians ones)



Source: Contacts. *Rossotrudnichestvo* [online]. [Accessed 18 March 2020].
Retrieved from: <http://rs.gov.ru/ru/contacts>, author's own drawing.

The main directions of the Rossotrudnichestvo's activities are international development assistance, promotion of Russian culture in the world, public diplomacy, support for compatriots abroad, strengthening the position of the Russian language, education and science development assistance, preservation of historical and memorial heritage, international regional and municipal cooperation, anti-terrorist activities and preservation of historical memory (in relation to the World War II Victory²⁸⁷).

²⁸⁷ DORSKAYA, A. A. and DORSKIY, A. Yu. Official politics of memory in modern Russia: legal dimension. *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University*. 2018. Vol. 9, no. 2, p. 124-138.

For the purposes of this thesis, maintaining relations with compatriots abroad, as well as with graduates of Russian (Soviet) universities, is a priority area for analysis. According to Rossotrudnichestvo basic principles, Russian compatriots are carriers of Russian culture, values, language, and peculiar conductors of humanitarian ties and relations between Russia and foreign countries. Rossotrudnichestvo actively interacts with organisations of compatriots, organising various joint events for people who continue to feel their involvement in Russia and are doing everything to develop friendly ties between the countries.

The competence of Rossotrudnichestvo includes the implementation of the Program of Interaction with Compatriots Living Abroad (*Programma raboty s sootchestvennikami, prozhivayushchimi za rubezhom*) in the field of supporting public associations of compatriots, meeting the cultural, linguistic and spiritual needs of Russian compatriots abroad, supporting youth of the Russian diaspora worldwide. Every year around the world the organisation arranges events dedicated to the Day of National Unity and the Day of the Russian Language, as well as other festivals, sports tournaments, thematic competitions, evenings dedicated to the memorable dates of Russian history and culture.

Rossotrudnichestvo, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, provides assistance in the field of rights protection and interests legitimation of Russian compatriots abroad through the Foundation for the Support and Protection of the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad (*Fond podderzhki i zashchity prav sootchestvennikov, prozhivayushchikh za rubezhom*, see Chapter 3.3). The organisation also participates in the activities of the Government Commission for Compatriots Abroad (*Pravitel'stvennaya komissiya po delam sootchestvennikov za rubezhom*).

At the same time, one of the interesting points is that the activity Education and Science can be considered as the most prioritized one due to the enormous number of projects created (see Table 7 based on the analysis of the Rossotrudnichestvo's projects):

Table 7. Key directions of Rossotrudnichestvo's activities and realised projects

Direction of activity	Amount of the projects	Amount of the projects, %
Education and science	13	33,33 %
Promotion of Russian culture in the world	5	12,82 %
Public diplomacy	5	12,82 %
Preservation of historical memory – 75 years of the Great Victory	4	10,26 %
Integration, innovation and international development assistance	3	7,69 %
International regional and municipal cooperation	3	7,69 %
Support for compatriots abroad	2	5,12 %
Strengthening the position of the Russian language	2	5,12 %
Measures to control the spread of new coronavirus infection COVID-19	1	2,575%
Stop terrorism together	1	2,575 %
Preservation of historical and memorial heritage	N/A	0 %
Total	39	100%

Source: Analysis of the projects, see Deyatel'nost'. *Rossotrudnichestvo* [online]. [Accessed 30 May 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://rs.gov.ru/ru/activities>, the author's own calculations.

On March 27, 2014 the Strategy of Promotion of Russian Education Abroad on the Basis of Rossotrudnichestvo Representation²⁸⁸ (*Kontseptsiya prodvizheniya rossiyskogo obrazovaniya na baze predstavitel'stv Rossotrudnichestva za rubezhom*) was adopted. The strategy aims on promotion of Russian educations, as well as on creation of mechanisms for information and coordination support of universities on the development of international relations. The strategy also focuses on the support of Russian schools abroad. In addition, the Strategy of Support of Russian Schools Abroad was adopted on November 4, 2015²⁸⁹.

Annually projects and programs, aimed at exporting Russian education, promoting the development of international scientific cooperation, attracting foreign citizens to study in Russia, as well as interacting with graduates of Russian (Soviet) universities are implemented. Partners in this area are the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation, Russian educational and research organisations, associations of foreign graduates of Russian (Soviet) universities and foreign students studying in Russia and other corresponding²⁹⁰.

²⁸⁸ *Kontseptsiya prodvizheniya rossiyskogo obrazovaniya na baze predstavitel'stv Rossotrudnichestva za rubezhom (utv. MID Rossii 27 marta 2014 g.)* [online]. 2014. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://base.garant.ru/70892382/>.

²⁸⁹ *Kontseptsiya "Russkaya shkola za rubezhom": (legislative)* [online]. 2015. Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/news/50643>.

²⁹⁰ *Obrazovaniye i nauka. Rossotrudnichestvo* [online]. [Accessed 05 January 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://rs.gov.ru/ru/activities/10>.

It is noteworthy, that the organisation does not publish reports on its activities as well as financial reports. Thus, control over the organisation by third parties is impossible and it can be spoken about its non-transparency²⁹¹.

4.2.2 Russian World Foundation

The Russian World (*Russkiy mir*) Foundation was created based on the decree No. 796 of the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir V. Putin dated June 21, 2007²⁹². The key purposes of the Foundation are (1) to popularize the Russian language, which is “*the national treasure of Russia and an important element of Russian and world culture*”²⁹³, and (2) to support programs for studying the Russian language in the Russian Federation and abroad.

Charter of the Russian World Foundation²⁹⁴ defines its main goals, among them **scientific and educational**:

“...support of public and non-profit organisations, professional associations, scientific and educational institutions, the subject of which is the research and development of teaching methods and programs for studying the Russian language and literature, the study of history and modern Russia; <...>

support of national and international organisations and associations of teachers of the Russian language and literature;<...>

support for the export of Russian educational services; <...>

*facilitating expert, scientific and educational exchanges that are consistent with the objectives of the Fund... ”*²⁹⁵;

²⁹¹ O Rossotrudnichestve. *Rossotrudnichestvo* [online]. [Accessed 30 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <http://rs.gov.ru/about>.

²⁹² Ukaz Prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii ot 21.06.2007 g. № 796 O sozdanii fonda «Russkiy mir» [online]. 2007. The Russian Federation. Retrieved from: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/25689>.

²⁹³ O Fonde. *Fond Russkiy Mir* [online]. [Accessed 28 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://russkiymir.ru/fund/>.

²⁹⁴ Ustav fonda Russkiy mir. *Fond Russkiy mir* [online]. 2019. [Accessed 28 July 2020]. Retrieved from: https://russkiymir.ru/fund/docs/ustav_2019.PDF.

²⁹⁵ Ustav fonda Russkiy mir. *Fond Russkiy mir* [online]. 2019. [Accessed 28 July 2020]. Retrieved from: https://russkiymir.ru/fund/docs/ustav_2019.PDF.

informational:

“...promoting the dissemination of objective information about modern Russia, Russian compatriots and the formation on this basis of a public opinion favourable to Russia; <...>

support of foreign Russian-speaking and Russian media and information resources focused on achieving the goals of the Foundation... ”²⁹⁶;

cultural:

“...cooperation with Russian, foreign and international state, public, scientific, commercial, non-profit and charitable organisations, educational and cultural institutions, other institutions, organisations and associations, private individuals in promoting the Russian language and culture;<...>

supporting the activities of Russian diasporas abroad in preserving their cultural identity and the Russian language as a means of interethnic communication, promoting the establishment of a climate of interethnic respect and peace; <...>

supporting the efforts of public organisations and government agencies to preserve the manuscript heritage of Russia... ”²⁹⁷;

and religious:

“...interaction with the Russian Orthodox Church and other faiths in the promotion of the Russian language and Russian culture ”²⁹⁸.

So, it can be concluded, that the Foundation has its mission mainly in humanitarian sphere.

²⁹⁶ Ustav fonda Russkiy mir. *Fond Russkiy mir* [online]. 2019. [Accessed 28 July 2020]. Retrieved from: https://ruskiymir.ru/fund/docs/ustav_2019.PDF.

²⁹⁷ Ustav fonda Russkiy mir. *Fond Russkiy mir* [online]. 2019. [Accessed 28 July 2020]. Retrieved from: https://ruskiymir.ru/fund/docs/ustav_2019.PDF.

²⁹⁸ Ustav fonda Russkiy mir. *Fond Russkiy mir* [online]. 2019. [Accessed 28 July 2020]. Retrieved from: https://ruskiymir.ru/fund/docs/ustav_2019.PDF.

This organisation defines Russian World concept as:

*“...not only Russians [ethnically], not only Russians [by citizenship], not only our compatriots in the countries of former USSR, emigrants and their offspring. It is also foreigners speaking Russian, learning and teaching it, everybody, who is interested in Russia and its future.”*²⁹⁹

It also claims that Russian World concept's elements join together mainly due to its connection to Russia.

At the same time, it can be claimed that the Russian World Foundation argues about the importance of knowledge of the Russian language in order to be considered as a part of the Russian World. It claims that knowledge of the Russian language is an indispensable element of Russian identity.

It also argues that all the signs of belonging to the Russian World are characteristic of both Russians living in the country and compatriots abroad. All of them, due to their **spiritual** and **cultural**, as well as **linguistic** ties with Russia, constitute the borders of the Russian World.

A certain problem in the activities of the organization is its partial non-transparency. The Russkiy Mir Foundation publishes reports on its activities (for instance, the number and types of events held), however, it does not publish financial reports³⁰⁰. Thus, control over the organisation by third parties is impossible.

Russian Centres and Rooms

Russian Centres of the Russian World Foundation are created to popularize the Russian language and culture and to develop intercultural dialogue. According to the Charter of the Foundation, Russian Centres are also created to maintain relations and provide educational and cultural services for compatriots abroad and representatives of emigration, as well as foreign citizens who show a sincere interest in Russia and its culture.

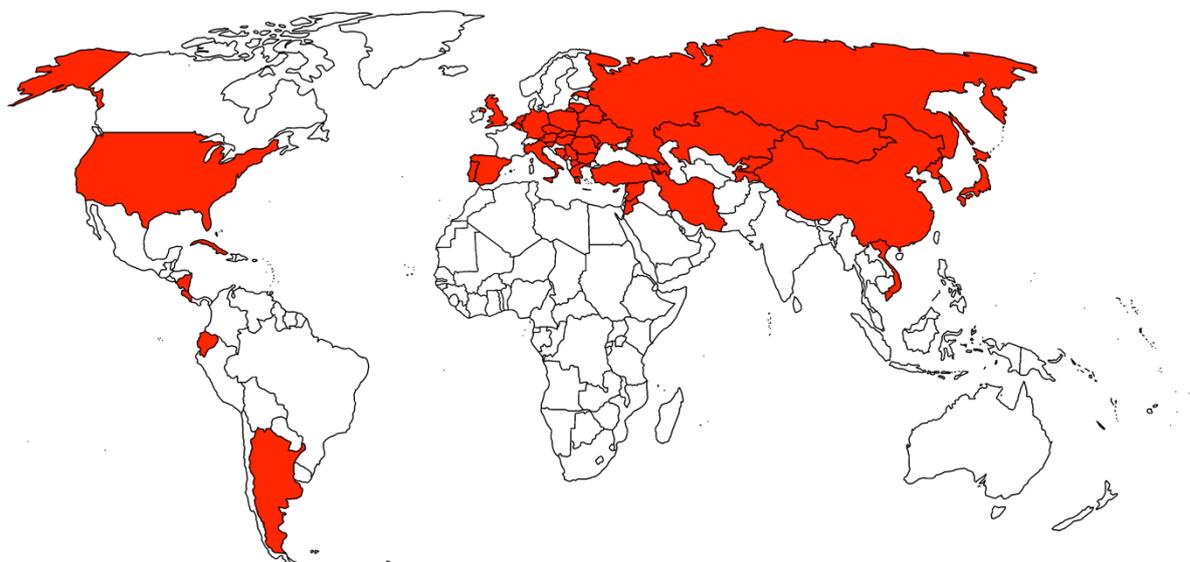
²⁹⁹ O Fonde. *Fond Russkiy Mir* [online]. [Accessed 28 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://ruskiymir.ru/fund/>.

³⁰⁰ Analysis of the Foundation's webpage, see Godovyie otchoty deyatelnosti Fonda. *Russkiy Mir* [online]. [Accessed 30 June 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://ruskiymir.ru/fund/reports.php>.

According to the Charter, Russian Centre is a resource centre that provides access to large amounts of educational, methodological and popular science literature from Russia, which allows people to effectively learn Russian language and culture based on progressive methods and programs. At the same time, it is also a creative and communicative platform. Russian Centres in addition undertake the organisation and holding of exhibitions, vernissages, ‘movie evenings’ (Russian *kinovecher* – watching and discussing movies), musical and theatre performances, scientific conferences and seminars, cultural programs for children and youth, and other events in Russian language.

There are 99 Russian Centres functioning in 47 states and also in unrecognized Luhansk People’s Republic, Donetsk People’s Republic, Transnistria and Taiwan (see Map 4).

Map 4. Map of the Russian Centres



Source: Russkiye centry - Katalog. *Fond Russkiy Mir* [online]. undated. [Accessed 28 April 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://russkiymir.ru/rucenter/catalogue.php>, author's own drawing

The Russian World Foundation also organised the so-called Russian rooms. This is the target program of the Russkiy Mir Foundation, carried out in accordance with the Charter and in pursuance of the Priority Areas of the Fund’s Activities, approved by the Board of Trustees. The activities of the Cabinet are aimed at popularizing the Russian language and culture, supporting programs for their study, providing everyone with access to Russian educational online resources in the Russian language.

Russian rooms are open all over the world, in total 118 rooms are located in 56 countries of the world (see Map 5).

CONCLUSION

Russia and its behaviour in the international arena quite often remain a 'black box'; recently it has become almost impossible to predict its further steps. The foreign policy of each state is a certain reflection of its culture, traditions and self-understanding. Understanding the logic of the regime's operation is a necessary component for both academic research and political action.

By the annexation of Crimea, Russia has shown its capability of taking decisive and assertive steps. Under the guise of protecting Russian minorities abroad, Russia has achieved its geopolitical goals. This is not the first time Russia has invaded the territory of its neighbours to protect compatriots. Is their protection really such a priority for Russia?

Within this thesis the author analysed Russia's foreign policy towards Russian minorities abroad. To examine this issue the author turned to the theoretical concept of the Russian World. The geopolitical (diasporic) understanding of the concept of the Russian World was chosen as a prism for analysis of Russian foreign policy. This understanding elevates relations with compatriots abroad to the rank of the highest priority area of foreign policy. **The main goal** of this thesis was to analyse the characteristics and problems of shaping the concept of 'Russians in the near abroad' as an integral part of the Russian World. The author discussed the positioning of Russian minorities in actual Russian documents and analysed the tools used by Russian Government to uphold relations with them and keep them in the sphere of influence of Russian culture. The following **research questions** were investigated: (1) What role do minorities abroad play in contemporary Russian foreign policy? What is their position in it? (2) What tools does the Russian Government use in order to keep these minorities in its sphere of influence? And (3) What is the role of the Russian World concept in contemporary Russian foreign policy?

Methodologically, the analysis consisted of three main directions: (1) analysis of the diaspora and the status of Russians in post-Soviet countries, (2) analysis of the protection of compatriots abroad as a direction of Russian foreign policy, and (3) analysis of Russian policy towards Russians abroad.

As for the first research question, it can be argued that the Russian diaspora abroad (especially the Russians in Far Abroad) has come a long way from rejection and denial of its existence by the Russian authorities to its instrumentalization. However, Russian political

elites limit the participation of Russian diaspora in the state's political life (for example, in municipal elections, as noted in Chapter 2.1). The Russian Government has approved several laws concerning the Russian diaspora, devised a voluntary resettlement program and opened various organisations for cooperation with compatriots. For the first time in world practice, Russian lawmakers introduced the concept of a 'compatriot abroad' and assigned a fairly large number of people to this category (at least 14 million people living in the former USSR). However, it should be noted that the functioning of most of the created structures are not transparent. During the analysis the author of this thesis came to the conclusion that most of all created organisations do not publish financial reports and/or reports on their activities. In addition, Russia has created a large number of organisations that are identical in function and the system of their support from the Government is also opaque.

The second research question asked about the tools which the Russian Government uses in order to keep Russian minorities in its sphere of influence. Despite the ambiguous attitude towards compatriots abroad Russian political elites are trying to keep in touch with them. Congresses of compatriots are held oftentimes, and the President of the Russian Federation is a regular guest there. Recently Russian political elites have begun to use the media to actively influence the Russian-speaking audience. To this end Russian authorities have developed a network of state-owned traditional media (TV, radio) and have also actively entered the online media platform. In general, the audience of the Russian media in the world (according to the *Pervyi kanal*) is 250 million people (of which 147 million are residents of the Russian Federation). It should be noted that state and semi-state channels are representatives of the Kremlin's policy and disseminate propaganda and are Russia's main weapon in the hybrid war.

To analyse the issue of protecting Russians abroad the author turned to the concept of the Russian World. The roots of this concept go back to history to the concept of the Russian idea proposed by the Slavophiles. Nevertheless, the author also mapped the modern concept, at the origins of which was Peter Shchedrovitskiy, one of the authors of the Russian foreign policy concept towards the CIS (1993–1997). There he first spoke about the Russian World. Since then, the concept in question has gone a long way of development and change. The author of the thesis analysed four periods of the development of this concept: three periods identified by Mikhail Suslov and fourth one was added to it based on the analysis of the current situation. As a result of the analysis the author came to the following conclusions. The Russian World as a concept at the beginning of its development was above all a

theoretical framework, but later it also developed in political terms. From understanding the Russian World as a Russophone world came its understanding as a spiritual world, in which all its participants feel themselves part of it and share common cultural values. From indifference to the Russian diaspora, Russian political elites have moved to its active use for political purposes. At the beginning of the century Russia tried to communicate with the Russian diaspora through Russian centres, today Russia actively uses social networks and the media to expand its propaganda throughout its world. During Vladimir Putin's presidency the state has made a shift to a deep stage of authoritarianism and in the last year to authoritarian populism.

As for the third research question, it can be argued that the concept of the Russian World is an instrument of the foreign policy of Putin's regime. It has already been encountered in official documents of Russia (for instance, in 2008 Foreign Policy Concept) but after that it completely disappeared from official documents. It can be claimed that Putin's regime dexterously uses the concept of the Russian World in situations when it is beneficial. The protection of Russians abroad was reflected in paragraph 61 of the constitution of the Russian Federation and was applied in practice during the Armed conflict in South Ossetia in 2008 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014 as justification. It should be noted that Russia focuses its gaze only on those post-Soviet republics in which there is no NATO presence. As a result, despite promises of protection and patronage for its compatriots abroad, Russia does not defend the rights of Russian minorities in the Baltic (where they face serious problems and discrimination, see Chapter 2.3.2.1). The two conflicts in which Russia intervened under the pretext of protecting the Russians were, according to American political scientist John Mearsheimer, Russia's reaction to its fear to be surrounded by NATO troops³⁰¹.

To conclude, it can be stressed that in the post-Soviet space, the functioning of such mechanisms focused on the search for common deep foundations, is associated, among other things, with the development and promotion of the ideas of the Russian World, which is a global integration project designed to unite Belarus, Russia and Ukraine, as well as other countries of the near and far abroad into a single geopolitical entity. However, the existing political realities, the orientation of many countries of the former USSR and the socialist

³⁰¹ MEARSHEIMER, John. Why Ukraine's Crisis is the West's Fault. *Foreign Affairs*. Sep/Oct 2014. Vol. 93, no. 5.

camp towards integration with the EU and NATO, the military conflict in Ukraine inevitably made adjustments to the perception and assessment of the prospects of the Russian World, polarizing for a long time the already ambiguous ideas about the commonality of their civilizational foundations, traditions, and values.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1. Russians in the world (2020)

Country	Russian Population
Afghanistan	900
Algeria	400
Argentina	32 000
Armenia	12 000
Australia	27 000
Austria	17 000
Azerbaijan	129 000
Belarus	779 000
Belgium	20 000
Brazil	143 000
Bulgaria	9 300
Canada	111 000
Chile	19 000
China	23 000
Croatia	1 200
Cuba	1 000
Cyprus	11 000
Czechia	14 000
Denmark	5 700
Egypt	2 000
Estonia	308 000
Ethiopia	900
Finland	31 000
France	130 000
Georgia	27 000
Germany	227 000
Greece	12 000
Hungary	13 000
Iran	2 700
Ireland	4 100
Italy	31 000
Kazakhstan	3 770 000
Korea, North	5 200
Korea, South	17 000
Kyrgyzstan	404 000
Latvia	457 000
Lithuania	142 000
Mexico	102 000
Moldova	110 000
Monaco	300
Mongolia	2 800
Montenegro	1 000
Morocco	800
Mozambique	4 700
Netherlands	7 200

New Zealand	6 300
Norway	20 000
Paraguay	900
Peru	1 600
Poland	22 000
Portugal	4 100
Romania	21 000
Russia	117 319 000
Serbia	3 600
Slovakia	2 000
Slovenia	30 000
Spain	55 000
Svalbard	1 200
Sweden	9 100
Switzerland	10 000
Syria	2 700
Tajikistan	27 000
Turkey	36 000
Turkmenistan	163 000
Ukraine	7 487 000
United Kingdom	29 000
United States	787 000
Uruguay	14 000
Uzbekistan	773 000
Venezuela	4 600
West Bank / Gaza	800
Yemen	12 000
Total (71 countries)	134 010 100
Total (without Russia)	16 691 100
Total (former USSR)	131 907 000
Total (former USSR except Russia)	2 103 100

Source: 2019 Revision of World Population Prospects. *United Nations* [online]. [Accessed 30 March 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://population.un.org/wpp/>.

Appendix 2. Ethnically Russian and Russian speaking population in the former Soviet republics (2020)

Defined macro-region	Countries	Population	Ethnically Russian	Ethnically Russian, %	Russian Speaking	Russian Speaking, %
Caucasus and Central Asia	Armenia	2 965 000	12 000	0,40	150 000	5,06
	Azerbaijan	9 981 000	129 000	1,29	480 000	4,81
	Georgia	3 731 000	27 000	0,72	320 000	8,58
	Uzbekistan	32 960 000	773 000	2,35	1 580 000	4,79
	Tajikistan	9 101 000	27 000	0,30	300 000	3,30
	Turkmenistan	5 851 000	163 000	2,79	250 000	4,27
	Total in defined region	64 589 000	1 131 000	1,75	3 080 000	4,77
Eastern Europe	Estonia	1 329 000	308 000	23,18	390 000	29,35
	Latvia	1 920 000	457 000	23,80	680 000	35,42
	Lithuania	2 794 000	142 000	5,08	250 000	8,95
	Belarus	9 485 000	779 000	8,21	8 080 000	85,19
	Moldova	3 546 000	110 000	3,10	800 000	22,56
	Ukraine	41 980 000	7 487 000	17,83	21 300 000	50,74
	Kazakhstan	18 280 000	3 770 000	20,62	7 000 000	38,29
	Kyrgyzstan	6 316 000	404 000	6,40	1 200 000	19,00
	Total in defined region	85 650 000	13 457 000	15,71	39 700 000	46,35
	Total in defined region (without Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan)	61 054 000	9 283 000	15,20	31 500 000	51,59

Source: Source: BOLDYREV, B. A. Itogi perepisi naseleniya SSSR [online]. Moscow, USSR : GOSUDARSTVENNYY KOMITET SSSR PO STATISTIKE, INFORMATSIONNO-IZDATEL'SKIY TSENTR, 1990.

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Appendix 3. Key organisations of Russian influence

Organisation	Type, topic
Governmental Commission for Compatriots Abroad	Compatriot network, affiliated to Russian Government
World Congress of Russian Compatriots	compatriot network, linked to Russian Government
International Union of Russian Compatriots	compatriot network
Institute of Russian Compatriots	compatriot network
Anti-Globalization Movement of Russia	compatriot network
Russian Age	compatriot network, affiliated to MFA of RF
Foundation for Historical Perspective	educational, historical
Institute for Democracy and Cooperation	educational, historical
International Antifascist Front	educational, historical
World Without Nazism	educational, historical
Russian Association for International Cooperation	educational, historical
Historical Memory Foundation	educational, historical
Centre for Social and Conservative Politics	ideological, affiliated to United Russia Party
Institute for Civic Projects	ideological, liberal conservative
Centre for Strategic Assessment and Forecasts	ideological, geopolitics
Institute for the Study of Foreign Relations and Initiatives	ideological, geopolitics
Russian Institute for Strategic Studies	ideological, affiliated to the President
Essence of Time (Sut Vremeni)	ideological, neo-Soviet
Institute of CIS	integration
Foundation for the Support of Eurasian Cooperation	integration, military, economic
Russian People's Front/ Internationalist Russia	integration
Eurasians New Wave	integration, media
Griboedov Club	integration, linked to Dmitriy Kiselev and RT
Skovoroda Club	integration, linked to Dmitriy Kiselev and RT
Eurasian Humanitarian Foundation for Development	integration, focus on Transnistria
Eurasian Heritage	integration, economic, linked to Oleg Deripaska
Day of Baptism of Rus (Den Kreshcheniya Rusi)	Christian, linked to Patriarch Kirill
Global Russian People Council	Christian, linked to Patriarch Kirill
Dialogue of Civilizations Endowment	Christian
Russian Parent Committee of Schoolchildren and its counterparts in Ukraine and Armenia	Christian
Association of Orthodox Experts	Christian
Izborskiy Club	ideological, conservative
Russian Foreign Affairs Council	ideological, liberal conservative
International Eurasian Movement	paramilitary
Veterans in Military Action	paramilitary
Russian Imperial Movement	paramilitary
Afghan Veterans	paramilitary
Great Don Cossacks	paramilitary
Military Fraternity (Boyevoe Bratstvo)	paramilitary
Union of Russian Cossacks	paramilitary
Night Wolves	paramilitary
Russia Today	media, affiliated to the Russian Government
Sputnik News	media, affiliated to the Russian Government
Inosmi	media, affiliated to the Russian Government
Pervyi Kanal Global Network	media, affiliated to the Russian Government
VGTRK	media, affiliated to the Russian Government
MIA Rossiya Segodnya (before 2015 RIA Novosti)	media, affiliated to the Russian Government

Russian Reporter	media
InoTV	media, affiliated to RT
WARP Foundation	media, affiliated to the Russian Government

Source: based on LUTSEVYCH, Orysia. Agents of the Russian World: Proxy Groups in the Contested Neighbourhood (Research Paper). *Russia and Eurasia Programme*. April 2016, p. 1-45; TOYNBEE, Arnold J. *A Study of History*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1987, analysis of the organisations webpages.