

# HOW RUSSIAN CITIZENS REGARD INFRINGEMENT OF THE LAW?

**Demidova Olga**

Department of Economics

State University – Higher School of Economics

Postal Address

Home: Beskudnikovsky bul. 39-19, Moscow, Russia, 127247

Office: Pokrovsky bul. 11, office 515 ZH, Moscow, Russia, 109028

Phone: +74954890186

E-mail: demidova@hse.ru

## **Abstract:**

*According to the information from the 15<sup>th</sup> round of RLMS (Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey) the existence of law and order and fair courts are very important for Russian citizens. At the same time the considerable majority of Russian citizens do not trust the Government of the Russian Federation, the State Duma, Courts, Police etc. Some Russian citizens even contemplate breaking the law. We have tried to estimate the influence of citizens' socio-economics characteristics on the process of decision-making with the help of ordered logit and probit models. We have established that the higher citizen's level of education the more law-abiding the citizen. Women are more law-abiding, than men. A person with subordinates tends to be more trusting of political institutions and is less inclined to break the law. With the growth of income citizens trust the political parties and police less and are more willing to break laws.*

**Key words:** *Confidence, Institutions, Social attitude, Infringement of the Law*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

As many researchers (Glaeser E., 2004, Asoni A., 2008) have shown, the rate of economic growth is influenced by the attitude of citizens towards the basic social and political institutes.

There are many sources of data reflecting the relationship of a citizens' confidence in churches, labour unions, parliament, political parties, the armed forces, the government, the justice system, etc.(e.g. World Values Survey Association official data ([www.worldvaluessurvey.org](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org)) for more than 100 countries).

Many investigators have tried to estimate the influence of various factors on the relationship of the citizens to either one or several political or social institutes with the help of statistical methods and econometric models.

M.Cammatt (M. Cammett, 2008) has discussed how welfare programs affect citizen attitudes towards the state in both Western and Eastern European countries using a random intercept multi-level model, in which the coefficients are fixed across countries, while the intercept varies. Bean C. (Bean C., 2003) compared the level of confidence in 14 different Australian institutions with the help of multiple regression analysis on several dimensions of confidence, with ten independent variables: gender, age, education, occupational grade, trade union membership, subjective social class, religious denomination, church attendance, region of residence and political party identification. Older people display more confidence than younger people in institutions of security. Ivkovic S. (Ivkovic S., 2008) has studied the determinants of public

support for the police in 28 countries and has found that the respondents' views of the police, both general confidence and specific ability to control crime, are affected by the respondents' gender and age and by the quality of governance in the country in which they live. Kelleher C. (Kelleher C., 2007) used ordinal logit model with education, race, age, sex, representation ration of women in the office, measure of income inequality etc. as the explanatory variables for explaining the public confidence in the branches of state government. Peral B. (Peral B., 2008) tried to answer the questions: "Which aspects make citizens identify themselves with their political institutions? Which is the main source of the differences among societies in term of political support?" using the data for Europe in 1999-2005.

Many authors were engaged in the research of the questions, concerning the opinion of Russians on political institutes and processes occurring in the country.

V.Shlapentokh (V.Shlapentokh, 2006) has noted, "Russia is a country, much more than any other, that mistrusts its social institutions, political institutions in particular. There is no one institution that can garner more than 40 to 50 percent of the nation's trust". Denisova I. et al (Denisova I., 2007) describe the perception of the Russian people about the transitional process and the role of the state.

This paper continues the theme of the relationship between the socio-economics characteristics of Russian citizens and their attitudes to the main political institutions, such as the government, the police, the parliament and the courts. We also investigated the dynamics of the changes in the attitude of Russian inhabitants to the basic political institutes from 1990 to 2005. Using ordered logit and probit models we discussed the influence of social and economics characteristics of Russian inhabitants on their attitude to both political and social institutes and their willingness to infringe of the law.

## 2. DATA AND VARIABLES

The data for this study were taken from the two surveys: Russian Longitudinal Monitor Survey (RLMS) and World Values Survey (WVS). We used the fifteenth wave of RLMS (2005) and four waves of WVS for Russia (1990, 1995, 1999 and 2005). Both surveys contain rich information on individual characteristics, such as age, sex, education, income, wage, demographic characteristics etc. We use these variables as independent in our empirical analysis. The definition of such variables is given in table 1. RLMS and WVS also contain a series of questions regarding the attitude of individuals to the main social and political institutions. We separated all the questions into three parts: concerning the trust in the main political institutions, concerning the importance of several social and political institutions for Russians, concerning the opportunity to break the law. Corresponding variables are dependent in our analysis, the description of all such variables is provided in tables 2 - 4. The scales of the answers in RLMS and WVS differ; scale in RLMS is more detailed and contains answers like "yes or no". The four waves in WVS data allow tracking the changes which have occurred concerning the attitude of Russian citizens to the main political institutes, such as the Government of the Russian Federation, the State Duma, the courts, Army, Police, Political parties. We exclude from our analysis individuals who refused to answer the questions.

*Table 1. Independent variables.*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Definitions of variables in RLMS</b>	<b>Definitions of variables in WVS</b>
AGE	2006 – kh6, where kh6 is a year of individual's birth	V237- age
SEX	kh5 – Sex of respondent 1-male, 2-female	V235 – Sex of respondent 1-male, 2-female

DIPLOM	k_diplom 1 - Professional courses, e.g., tractor driving, chauffeuring, typing, accounting 2 - Vocational training school without secondary education 3 - Vocational training school with secondary education, technical trade school 4 - Technical community college, medical, music, pedagogical, art training school 5 - Institute, university, academy 6 - Post-graduate course, residency	V238 - What is the highest educational level that you have attained? 1 - No formal education 2 - Incomplete primary school 3 - Complete primary school 4 - Incomplete secondary school: technical/vocational type 5 - Complete secondary school: technical/vocational type 6 - Incomplete secondary: university-preparatory type 7 - Complete secondary: university-preparatory type 8 - Some university-level education, without degree 9 - University-level education, with degree
WAGE	kj10- money received in the last 30 days from individual's primary job after taxes	
INCOME	kj60 - the total amount of money that individual received in the last 30 days.	V253 – Scale of incomes 1- lowest step,..., 10 – upper step
EXPER	kj79 – the total work experience	
CHIEF	kj6 – Answer to question: “Do you have subordinates at your primary job?” 1 - yes, 2 – no.	

Source: RLMS, Round 15 ([www.cpc.unc.edu/rlms](http://www.cpc.unc.edu/rlms));

World Values Survey Association, waves 1-5 ([www.worldvaluessurvey.org](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org))

Table 2. Variables for measuring the level of confidence.

Variables	Definitions of variables in RLMS	To what extent do you trust... (1 – Completely trust 2 – Rather trust 3 – Trust nor distrust 4 – Neither rather trust 5 – Doesn't trust at all)	Definitions of variables in WVS	How much confidence you have in... (1 – A great deal 2 – Quite a lot 3 – Not very much 4 – Not at all)
CONFGOV	kj207.1	Government of the Russian Federation	V138	The government
CONFPARL	kj207.2	State Duma	V140	Parliament
CONF COURT	kj207.3	The courts	V137	The courts
CONFARMY	kj207.5	Army	V132	The armed forces
CONF POLICE	kj207.6	The Police	V136	The Police

Quite a

CONFPOLPAR	kj207.11	Political parties	V139	Political parties
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Source: RLMS, Round 15 (www.cpc.unc.edu/rlms);

World Values Survey Association, waves 1-5 (www.worldvaluessurvey.org)

Table 3. Variables for measuring the level of importance.

Variables	Definitions of variables in RLMS	How much is it important for you personally, that in our country today exist... (1 – Very Important, 2 - Rather Important, 3 – Both yes and now, 4 – Rather not important, 5 - Not important at all)
IMPFAIREL	kj208.1	Free and fair election
IMPLAWORD	kj208.2	Law and order
IMPFERSP	kj208.3	Freedom of speech
IMPINDPRESS	kj208.4	Independent press
IMPPOLOP	kj208.5	Political opposition
IMPFAIRCOUR	kj208.6	Fair courts
IMPPRRIGHTS	kj208.7	Protection of the rights of national, religious, etc. minorities

Source: RLMS, Round 15 (www.cpc.unc.edu/rlms)

Table 4. Variables for measuring the opportunity for infringement of the law.

Variables	Definitions of variables in RLMS	Do you agree with the statement... (1 – Strongly agree, 2 – Somewhat agree, 3 – Both yes and no, 4 – Somewhat disagree, 5 – Strongly disagree)
UNFAIRLAW	kj173.1	If the law is unfair, the person has the right to bypass it
VENALJUDGE	kj173.2	Judges in Russia are venal
BREAKLAW1	kj173.3	It is impossible to live in Russia, without breaking the law
BREAKLAW2	kj173.4	If statesmen or politicians do not observe the law should simple people observe the law?

Source: RLMS, Round 15 (www.cpc.unc.edu/rlms)

### 3. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

#### 3.1. Which institutions are trusted by Russians?

Figures 1-3 contains charts demonstrating the dynamics of the changes which have occurred during 15 years in the attitude of Russian citizens to the main political institutes. Questions of confidence to some institutes have not been included in all waves of WVS, therefore for some institutes we have 4 charts, and for some - only two.

Figure 1. Dynamics of the confidence in the Government of the Russian Federation and the State Duma.

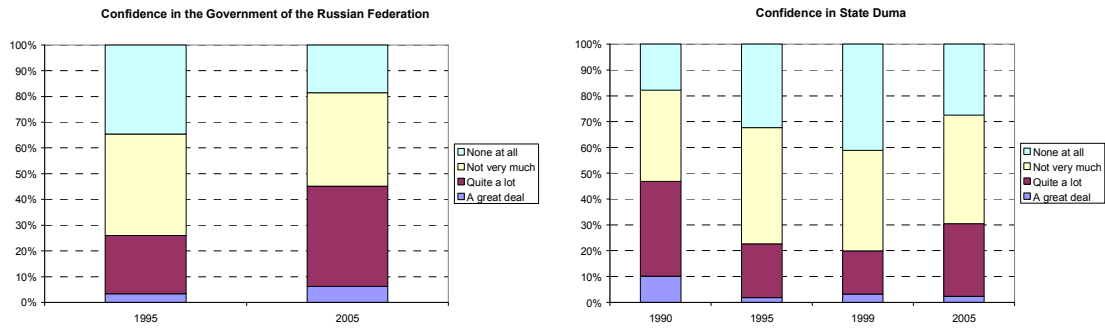


Figure 2. Dynamics of the confidence in the Courts and the Armed forces.

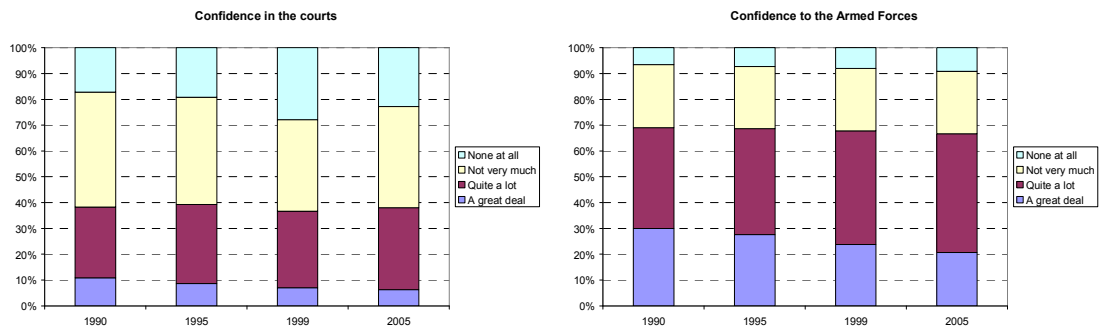
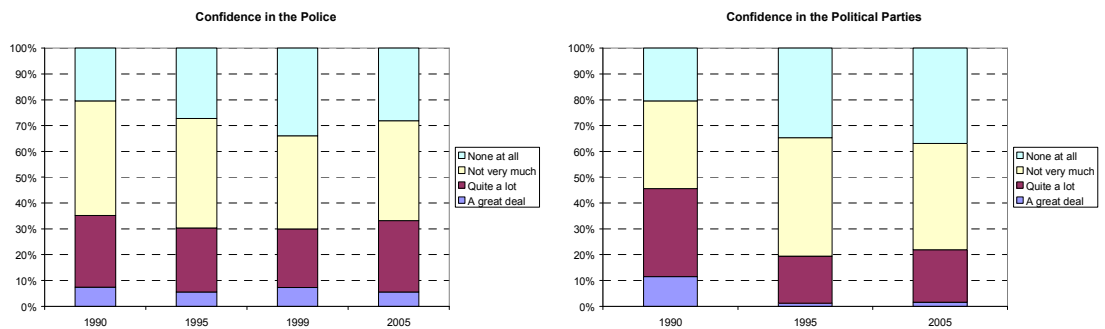


Figure 3. Dynamics of the confidence in the Police and Political Parties.



To make comments on the received results, it is necessary to notice that Russians really trust only the armed forces; however the degree of trust decreases very slowly. For all the other political institutes, the level of trusts of the Russian people is less than 50 %. Thus if in 1999 the degree of trust in the State Duma, Political Parties sharply decreased in comparison with 1990, then in 2005 the situation gradually started to change for the better. It is possible to consider as a positive factor the increase in level of trust to the government of the Russian federation. The degree of trust to Police and the courts varied a little.

To get a better understanding of the determinants concerning the attitude of Russian citizens to main political institutions, we ran a series of ordered logit and probit regressions. To avoid a problem with data multicollinearity we used stepwise backward-selection estimation. The results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Logit and probit models with confidence dependent variables.

	CONFGOV	CONFGOV	CONFPARL	CONFPARL	CONFCOURT	CONFCOURT
	LOGIT	PROBIT	LOGIT	PROBIT	LOGIT	PROBIT
AGE					.0116167***	.006455***
SEX	-.0877534*	-0.0569208**	-.1437548***	-0.0974437***	-0.1458899***	-0.884143***
DIPLOM					-.0708565***	-.0369357**

CHIEF	.1279019**	0.075784**	.1049612*		.1282878**	.0740508**
WAGE			6.91e-06**		9.53e-06**	3.92e-06*
INCOME						
EXPER			.0085522***	0.0040938***		
	CONFARMY	CONFARMY	CONFPOLICE	CONFPOLICE	CONFPOLPAR	CONFPOLPAR
	LOGIT	PROBIT	LOGIT	PROBIT	LOGIT	PROBIT
AGE	-.0052641***	-0.00308***				
SEX	.4052288***	.2315492***				
DIPLOM			-.0760036***	-.0426627***		
CHIEF	.1254554**	.0726004**			0.1413889**	0.0750359**
WAGE	.0000199***	.0000107***				
INCOME			.0000107***	5.15e-06***	0.0000109**	4.59e-06**
EXPER			.0065394***	0.0036211***	.0079521***	.0043862***

\* - significant at 10%, \*\* - significant at 5%, \*\*\* - significant at 1%.

The results obtained by logit and probit models are similar. For interpretation of the received results it is necessary to calculate the marginal effects of explaining factors. However it is easy to

show (Green W., 2008) that marginal effect  $\frac{\partial p(Y_i = 5)}{\partial X_j}$  signs ( $i = 1, \dots, 6, j = 1, \dots, 7, Y_1 =$

CONFGOV, ...,  $Y_6 =$  CONFPOLPAR are defined in table 2, and  $X_1 =$  age, ...,  $X_7 =$  exper are defined in table 1) coincides with a sign of  $X_j$  coefficient  $\beta_{ji}$  in the model with dependent variable

$Y_i$ , the marginal effect sign for  $\frac{\partial p(Y_i = 1)}{\partial X_j}$  is opposite to a sign of the coefficient  $\beta_{ji}$ .

We have dropped tables with signs on all marginal effects since they are rather bulky. We shall

note, that the sign of marginal effect  $\frac{\partial p(Y_i = 2)}{\partial X_j}$ , as well as the sign of marginal effect

$\frac{\partial p(Y_i = 1)}{\partial X_j}$ , has appeared opposite to the sign of the coefficient  $\beta_{ji}$ , and the sign of marginal

effects  $\frac{\partial p(Y_i = 4)}{\partial X_j}$ , as well as the sign of marginal effect  $\frac{\partial p(Y_i = 5)}{\partial X_j}$ , has coincided with sign of

the coefficient  $\beta_{ji}$ .

Proceeding from the signs of coefficients in table 5, it is possible to draw following conclusions:

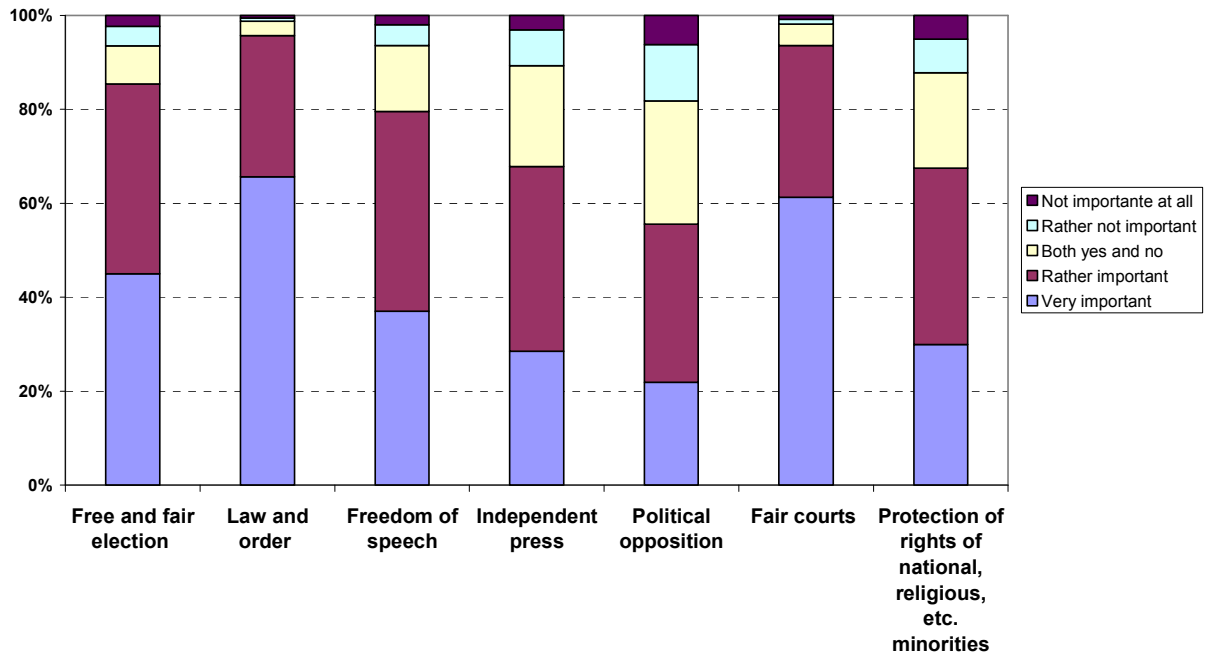
- Women more than men, trust the Government of the Russian Federation, the State Duma and the courts, but trust the Armed Forces less.
- More educated people trust the courts and the police more.
- With an increase in the level of wage or income the confidence in the political parties and police decrease.
- A person having subordinates trust almost all political institutes more.

### 3.2. What is important for Russians?

Results of the distribution of answers of the Russian respondents to questions on importance of some political and social institutes (table 3) are shown in figure 4.

*Figure 4. The importance for Russians of several social and political institutions.*

Answer the question: "How much it is important for you, that in your country today exist..."



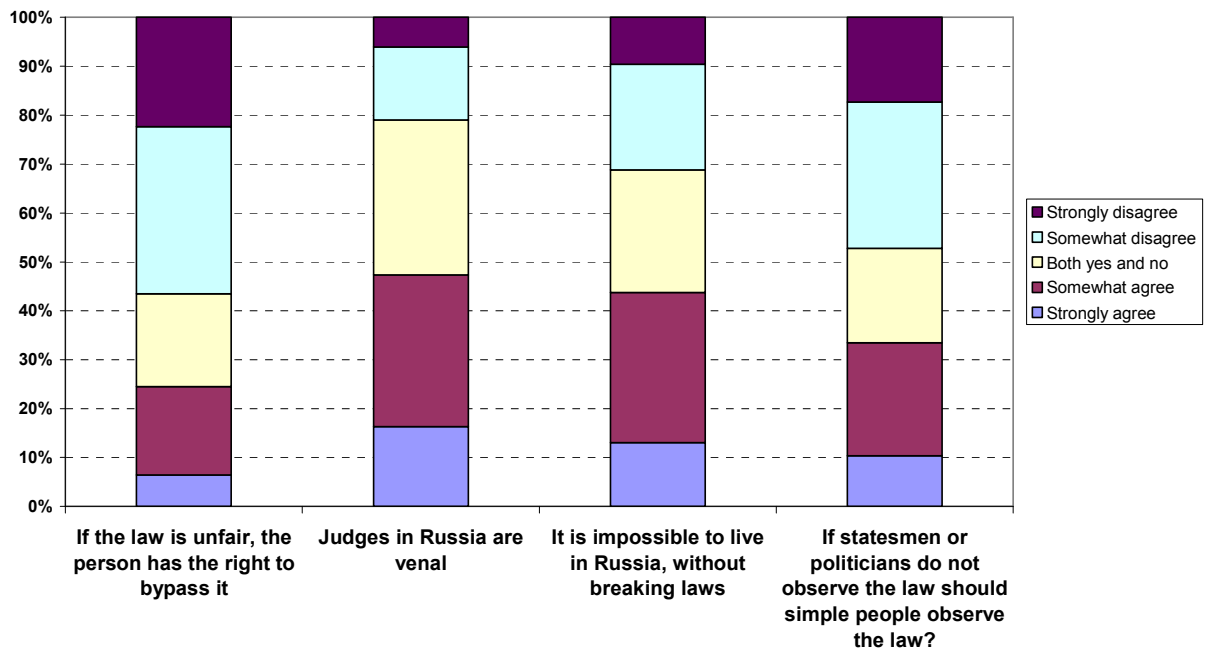
More than 50 % of Russians mark, that for them it is very important or rather important to have free and fair election, ..., protection of rights of national, religious, etc. minorities. But law and order and fair courts are the most important for Russian people. But, despite of it, a considerable part of the Russian citizens declare an opportunity to break the law. This question is discussed in more detail in the following paragraph.

### 3.3. How Russians regard breaking the law?

Distribution of answers of the Russian respondents to questions on the attitude to judges, opportunities to break laws (table 4) is resulted in figure 5.

Figure 5. The willingness of Russians to break the law.

Answer the question: "Do you agree with the statement..."



More than 40 % of Russians, to a greater or lesser extent, assured that “ It is impossible to live in Russia without breaking laws ” and “ Judges in Russia are venal”. More than 20 % of Russians are ready to break laws. By means of logit and probit models we have tried to catch the influence of social and economic forces on probability of acceptance of such decisions. As above we used stepwise backward-selection estimation. The results are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Logit and probit models with dependent variables describing the opportunity to break the law.

	UNFAIRLAW	UNFAIRLAW	VENALJUDGE	VENALJUDGE
	LOGIT	PROBIT	LOGIT	PROBIT
AGE			-.0052203**	-.002945**
SEX	0.1063516**	.185116***		
DIPLOM	0.0943479***	.1631253***	.1399207***	.0789885***
CHIEF	-0.0891241**	-.1763441***		
INCOME	-0.00000492***	-9.18e-06***	-.0000211***	-.0000116***
	BREAKLAW1	BREAKLAW1	BREAKLAW2	BREAKLAW2
	LOGIT	PROBIT	LOGIT	PROBIT
AGE				
SEX			.1262793**	.07379**
DIPLOM	.1203918***	.0671281***	.1427382***	.0798685***
CHIEF	.1305543**	.0784894**		
INCOME	-.0000211***	-.0000121***		

\*- significant at 10%, \*\*- significant at 5%, \*\*\* - significant at 1%.

The relationship of coefficient signs and signs on marginal effects of explaining factors was discussed already in section 3.1. We can give the following interpretation to the received results:

- Women are less inclined to break the law, than men

- More educated people are more law-abiding.
- Older people trust judges less.
- Although those having subordinates are more assured that “It is impossible to live in Russia without breaking laws”, they are less inclined to bypass “unfair laws”.
- With growth of the citizens’ income the willingness to infringe of the law increases.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Generalizing the results received in section 3, we can draw the following conclusions on moods in the Russian society:

- Women, more than men, trust the Government of the Russian Federation, the State Duma and the courts and are less inclined to break laws.
- More highly educated people trust the police and justice system more and also are more law-abiding.
- A person having subordinates trusts almost all political institutes more and is less inclined to break laws.
- Incomes of citizens do not influence the degree of trust in the Government of the Russian Federation, the State Duma
- However with the growth of income, citizens trust the political parties and police less and are more inclined to break laws.

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