

# RUSSIA

## 1. PRESENTATION<sup>1</sup>

Basic Facts <sup>2</sup>	
Name of Country	Russian Federation (Russia)
Capital	Moscow
Population	142,893,540
Area	17,075,200 sq km
Average Life Expectancy	67.08 years
Ethnic Groups	Russian 79.8%, Tatar 3.8%, Ukrainian 2%, Bashkir 1.2%, Chuvash 1.1%, other or unspecified 12.1%
GDP per capita, PPP	\$11,100

Community of Democracies	
Previous participation	Warsaw 2000: Participant Seoul 2002: Participant Santiago 2005: Participant

### Timeline of Recent Major Events in Russia:

- **2005** May 31 – Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the majority owner and former CEO of the Russian oil company Yukos, is sentenced to nine years in prison.
- **2005** July 22 – The new election law is enacted, introducing a fully proportional system based on party lists with a 7% threshold for parliamentary representation.
- **2006** January 1 – Russia assumes the presidency of the G8.
- **2006** January 10 – President Putin signs new legislation increasing controls on the activities of Russian and foreign non-governmental organizations.
- **2006** January 22 – The newly created Public Chamber assembles for the first time. The Chamber, consisting of representatives of public life and civil society organizations, is intended to provide advice to political decision makers on a wide range of public issues.
- **2006** March 6 – President Putin signs the new Counter-Terrorism Law.
- **2006** July 15 – 17 – Russia hosts the G8 Summit in St. Petersburg.
- **2006** October 7 – Anna Politkovskaya, a prominent Russian journalist known for her critical coverage of the war in Chechnya, is shot dead in her apartment building in Moscow.
- **2006** December – President Putin signs bill eliminating minimum turnout requirements to validate elections over objections of his human rights advisor.
- **2007** January 23 – The Supreme Court upholds several successive court rulings calling for the liquidation of the Russian-Chechen Friendship Society. The NGO, which monitored the human rights situation in Chechnya, was closed down in October 2006 on extremism charges.
- **2007** December 2 – Parliamentary elections<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Principal author: Bertelsmann Stiftung

<sup>2</sup> Source: *CIA World Factbook* at <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/rs.html> (accessed on July 21, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> See Election Guide, *Country profile Russia* at <http://www.electionguide.org/country.php?ID=179> (accessed on September 12, 2006).

## 2. BACKGROUND

---

In terms of democratic standards, Russia's situation has been steadily deteriorating during the period under study (i.e., from spring 2005 to fall 2006). Russia's President Vladimir Putin consolidated his power by 2000/01 with the help of some decidedly undemocratic measures. The worst of these, including the marginalization of political actors outside the federal executive, asserting control over the national mass media, harassment of politically active NGOs and massive human rights violations in the North Caucasus, still persist today. Strengthening democracy, as defined in the 2002 "Criteria for Participation," is obviously not among the political leadership's priorities.

Major democratic fundamentals, such as free and fair elections, are largely guaranteed but are lacking elements of a genuine democratic contest. In addition to a dearth of meaningful debate and genuine pluralism, the election process fails to meet an important commitment concerning treatment by the state-controlled media, in particular television on a non-discriminatory basis.

In the last years, the country enacted a number of laws that significantly affected the political system. In July 2005, the electoral system was changed from a mixed system with single district mandates and party lists to a fully proportional system based on party lists. At the same time, the threshold for parliamentary representation was raised from 5 to 7 percent. Along with tougher regulations for political parties, the new electoral system is meant to consolidate the country's party system. Though the effects of the reform are debated heavily, the changes are in line with general democratic standards.

In January 2006, a much more controversial piece of legislation concerning the regulation of non-commercial organizations, the so-called NGO law, was signed by President Putin and came into force on April 10, 2006. The original version, which heavily restricted foreign funding of Russian NGOs and created a new, highly bureaucratic registration process open to manipulation, drew severe criticism from Russian NGOs, foreign governments and donors and the international media. In response to local and international pressure from organisations including the Council of Europe, a number of critical provisions in the NGO law were dropped. However, human rights NGOs still find the version that came into force in April 2006 too restrictive and decry the immense leeway it grants the government to close down NGOs that criticize the government on administrative technicalities.<sup>4</sup>

Another important development is the creation of the Public Chamber. President Putin had already signed the law on the Public Chamber in April 2005. The Chamber, consisting of citizen representatives and civil society organizations, is intended to advise political decision makers on a wide range of public issues. Independent NGOs have criticized the makeup of the Chamber as having been heavily influenced by the political leadership. President Putin handpicked one third of its 126 members, leading public associations recommended another third, and pre-existing Chamber members chose the

---

<sup>4</sup> A summary of critical statements from leading representatives of Russian NGOs is given in: Dmitry Vinogradov, "Authorities Begin Implementing New NGO Law" in: *Russian Analytical Digest* 03/06, p.12-14 at <http://www.res.ethz.ch/analysis/rad/details.cfm?id=19048> (accessed on August 29, 2006).

## RUSSIA

---

remaining third, which consisted of representatives of regional and local civil society organizations. Drawing attention to the fact that not a single human rights organization is represented in the Public Chamber, several NGOs characterized the Public Chamber as an unacceptable substitute for a genuine civil society.<sup>5</sup>

Several politically relevant court decisions have also been issued since the Santiago Ministerial in April 2005. Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the majority owner and former CEO of the Russian oil company Yukos, was sentenced to nine years in prison at the end of May 2005. New charges were filed against Khodorkovsky and a former business partner in February 2007. Several other members of the Yukos' management are also facing court proceedings. These trials, as well as the separate court proceedings against the company itself, have been criticized for falling far short of democratic standards and for repeatedly violating Russian law by ignoring advocate rights and bailiff procedures.<sup>6</sup>

As exemplified by its presidencies of the G8 in the first half of 2006 and of the Council of Europe from spring to fall 2006, Russia has played an increasingly active role in international relations. Nonetheless, Russia has been heavily criticized by the international community for the perceived deterioration of democratic standards and human rights. Amnesty International accused Russia of severe human rights violations in its 2005 and 2006 reports<sup>7</sup>. In May 2005, the European Parliament passed a resolution on Russia voicing concern about the misuse of the judicial system for political purposes and demanding increased freedom of the press.<sup>8</sup> In June 2005, the Council of Europe passed a resolution urging Russia to strengthen democracy and to increase the political role of parliament, the mass media and civil society.<sup>9</sup> In October 2005, Reporters without Borders ranked Russia in the bottom quarter of the 167 countries covered;<sup>10</sup> in its January 2006 annual report, Human Rights Watch criticized the rise of authoritarian tendencies in Russia.<sup>11</sup> In March 2006, the International Press Institute presented its annual report, in which it characterized the Russian situation as “difficult,”<sup>12</sup> and in December 2005, the Freedom in the World survey by Freedom House classified Russia as “not free.”<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Ludmilla Alekseeva of the Moscow Helsinki Group spoke of a lost moment for Russia's civil society. Memorial, another of Russia's leading human rights NGOs, stated in a report that the tasks of the chamber do not fit Russia's realities. Memorial like other human rights NGOs has decided to boycott the chamber.

<sup>6</sup> A summary of this criticism is provided by the Resolution 1418 (2004) of the European Council.

<sup>7</sup> *Amnesty International Report 2005* at <http://web.amnesty.org/report2005/rus-summary-eng> (accessed on August 29, 2006); *Amnesty International Report 2006* at <http://web.amnesty.org/report2006/rus-summary-eng> (accessed on August 29, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> European Parliament resolution on EU-Russia relations (2004/2170(INI)), P6\_TA(2005)0207 at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2005-0207+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN> (accessed on August 29, 2006).

<sup>9</sup> Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 1455 (2005), “Honouring of obligations and commitments by the Russian Federation”, [http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/Adopted\\_Text/ta05/ERES1455.htm](http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/Adopted_Text/ta05/ERES1455.htm) (accessed on August 29, 2006).

<sup>10</sup> Reporters Without Borders, *World Press Freedom Index 2005*, at [http://www.rsf.org/rubrique.php3?id\\_rubrique=554](http://www.rsf.org/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=554) (accessed on August 29, 2006).

<sup>11</sup> Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2006*, 381pp.

<sup>12</sup> International Press Institute (IPI), *World Press Freedom Review 2005* at [http://www.freemedia.at/cms/ipi/freedom\\_detail.html?country=/KW0001/KW0003/KW0078/](http://www.freemedia.at/cms/ipi/freedom_detail.html?country=/KW0001/KW0003/KW0078/) (accessed on August 29, 2006).

<sup>13</sup> Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2006* at <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=%2015&year=2006> (accessed on August 29, 2006).

## 3. ANALYSIS

---

Formally speaking, Russia has a democratic political system, with a powerful executive, and all major democratic and human rights are protected by the constitution. The Russian political leadership also supports the ideals of democracy – rhetorically, that is. However, as President Putin points out regularly, the Russian concept of democracy is different from that espoused by Western societies, and because of its historical legacies, Russia has a long road ahead to a democracy rooted in civil society. In practice, this argument is often used to justify violations of democratic standards.

The landscape of interest groups related to the political sphere is sparse. Important social interests are underrepresented. The political leadership’s reaction to work by these groups has been little more than symbolic. Though Putin has stressed the need for a strong civil society in several well-publicized speeches, he has also blamed Russian NGOs for accepting support from foreign donors and linked them to revolution and terrorism. NGOs critical of the government have been excluded from the dialogue between the state executive and civil society (as embodied in the Public Chamber), and they have been harassed by state agencies on several occasions.

### *Elections*

Outside Chechnya, which constitutes a special case due to the civil war-like situation, there are no serious restrictions on the voting process. However, election campaigns are heavily manipulated in favor of pro-presidential forces. In the formal political decision-making process, elected representatives exercise full governing powers. There are, however, considerable restrictions on the right to organize and communicate politically. According to Freedom House, amendments to the electoral law introduced in 2005 make it almost impossible for the parties outside Kremlin control to enter the State Duma. As a result, Putin’s United Russia Party commands more than a two-thirds constitutional majority of the Duma, which generally rubber-stamps his proposals. Media coverage of elections is routinely manipulated.

In an attempt to bring regional governors under greater Kremlin control, President Putin secured legislative changes that made the post of governor appointed by the president rather than elected. Most of the governors whose term in office expired in 2005, many of whom reluctantly endorsed the change, were reappointed by Putin.

### **Rule of Law**

Political interference as well as corruption leads to manipulation in the application of the law. A high profile example of this is the Yukos affair, in which taxes were levied for two consecutive years so that the company’s tax burden was slightly *higher* than its respective complete annual turnover. The Yukos management was accused of forming an organized criminal group. Though Russian legislation technically allows for this interpretation, it has never before or since been applied in this way. The lawyers’ right to obtain access to the accused was flouted during the Yukos affair as well. The prosecutor demanded the withdrawal of the licenses of Khodorkovsky’s defense lawyers. Security forces revoked the visa of one of Khodorkovsky’s foreign lawyers, who was paid a surprise nighttime visit in his hotel room. Although a court ruled on April 18, 2006 that

keeping Khodorkovsky in isolated custody was not justified, he was nevertheless put into an isolation cell the next day with a different justification.

On February 5, 2007, prosecutors leveled new charges against Khodorkovsky and a former business associate, Platon Lebedev. Prosecutors claim that they laundered \$20 billion worth of funds through their former company, Yukos. Critics allege that the charges are an attempt to prevent Khodorkovsky, who would have been released from jail this fall, from competing in upcoming elections.

The Moscow Helsinki Group commented on the Yukos affair in its annual report on 2005: “The prosecution became a classical machinery for repression on behalf of the political power, and the judiciary demonstrated an absolute lack of independence when reviewing a case of political relevance.”<sup>14</sup>

Political and bureaucratic corruption is perceived as high in Russia. Officeholders with political connections often elude adequate prosecution. Civil liberties are affected to some degree by the lack of legal constraints on government action, or by the bureaucracy’s sometimes selective application of the laws.

### *Separation of powers*

Serious deficiencies exist in the checks and balances among the executive, legislative and judiciary branches. As the president has a stable majority in parliament, the legislature exercises its review functions only to a very limited degree. The judiciary is nominally independent, but lower-court decisions in particular are often influenced by corruption and political pressure. In specific high-profile cases, like the Yukos affair, principles of equal treatment and formal court proceedings have been violated in the interest of the national government.

### **Human Rights**

#### *Freedom of association and assembly*

What the West criticizes as authoritarian tendencies is generally presented by the Putin government to the Russian public as a trade-off between stability and the luxuries of Western democracy. Both civil society and the mass media risk serious harassment from state organs when they engage in unwelcome criticism of the state. Most mass media have been brought under state control, and the creation of the Public Chamber in combination with the more restrictive new NGO law seems to be an attempt to bring civil society under control, too. Those remaining outside state control are often oppressed or ridiculed.

One way of accomplishing this is to associate critical voices with extremism. In 2005 and 2006, leading state officials, including President Putin, repeatedly linked NGOs that received foreign funding to revolutionaries and terrorists. In reaction to alleged British espionage activities, the Russian State Dumas passed a resolution in January 2006 condemning the financing of Russian NGOs by foreign secret services. In February 2006,

---

<sup>14</sup> Moskovskaya Khelsinkaya Gruppa (Moscow Helsinki Group): Prava cheloveka v Rossiiskoi Federatsii. Doklad o sobitiiakh 2005 g., Moscow 2006, p. 5, [translation by the author] at <http://www.mhg.ru/files/006/dokl2005.pdf> (accessed on September 6, 2006).

## RUSSIA

---

the state prosecutor accused the human rights organization Memorial of supporting terrorism for publishing an academic treatise on Islamist writings.

Ridicule or association with hooliganism is another governmental tactic for discrediting organizations that criticize the state. For example, in July 2006, two German students documenting protest actions during the G8 Summit in St. Petersburg were arrested for “urinating in public” and imprisoned for the full duration of the summit. Public appearances of leading liberal politicians as well as demonstrations by opposition groups are regularly spoiled by pro-Kremlin or extremist troublemakers, to whom the police often turn a blind eye.

Journalists and NGOs are frequently harassed under an administrative pretext. For example, the Moscow Center for Human Rights was threatened with liquidation in December 2005 because it allegedly failed to fully document its activities. Another case consists of democratic opposition party candidates, who are sometimes banned from participation in regional elections on technical grounds. Many NGOs perceive the political leadership’s desire to ban the opposition on flimsy technical (and ostensibly apolitical) grounds as the main impetus for the new NGO law. Lyubov Vinogradova, director of the Human Rights Research Center, claims: “It is impossible to prepare a ton of papers for the Federal Registration Service without making mistakes. The bureaucrats will audit the NGOs with ‘suspicious’ political positions and the mistakes found will provide the basis for liquidating the groups through the courts, on a completely legal basis. The small organizations will die since they will not be able to deal with all the paperwork, and it will be very difficult for the rest.”<sup>15</sup>

As a result, it is growing increasingly difficult to obtain an accurate picture of the state of Russian society, especially for the Russian public, but increasingly also for the country’s political leadership, which creates its own version of society through media control and incorporation of uncritical NGOs.

### *Free, independent and pluralistic media*

Most national mass media are under the control of the federal executive, at least indirectly. In his annual report, the Russian Ombudsman for Human Rights stated in February 2006: “The main mass media, and first of all the leading electronic media, accounting for 90% of the information segment of the country and forming public opinion, are under the very strict control of state organs.”<sup>16</sup>

The Russian Glasnost Defense Foundation, which documents violations of media freedom on a monthly basis, counted 1,322 violations for 2005, including 63 physical attacks on journalists and 23 acts of censorship. Forty-seven journalists were arrested by the police, while 42 faced criminal investigations by the prosecution.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> Quoted op. cit. p. 13

<sup>16</sup> Ombudsman for Human Rights: Doklad deyatel’nosti upolnomochennogo po pravam cheloveka v Rossiiskoi Federatsii v 2005 g., Moscow 2006 [translation by the author, HTML version without pages, no longer online].

<sup>17</sup> The documentation is available at <http://www.gdf.ru/monitor/index.shtml> (accessed on September 6, 2006).

## RUSSIA

---

### *Fair criminal investigation and trial*

According to former Russian general prosecutor (currently justice minister) Vladimir Ustinov, in 2005 alone the police deliberately refrained from investigating more than 80,000 crimes, including 700 murders (from a speech on February 3, 2006).<sup>18</sup> Russian citizens are increasingly turning to the European Court of Human Rights for redress; 9,000 Russian cases are on file at the court in Strasbourg, the highest by far of any country, and lawyers bringing such appeals are facing increasing harassment from Russian authorities.<sup>19</sup>

According to a representative poll of the Russian population conducted by the Russian INDEM Foundation, Russians spent \$210 million to bribe courts in 2005 (down from \$275 million in 2001) and \$30 million to bribe policemen (unchanged from 2001).<sup>20</sup>

In his annual report, the Russian Ombudsman for Human Rights stated in February 2006: "Corruption in the police and security forces has become an extremely serious problem, as has the increasing number of incidents of inhumane officer behavior towards citizens, violating their human dignity. [...] One of the most serious problems negatively affecting the trust of the population towards the judicial system is the lingering bias of some court decisions, giving rise to suspicions of collusion with political or commercial interests."<sup>21</sup>

As Alexei Trochev's analysis for the Russian Analytical Digest<sup>22</sup> (June 20, 2006) shows, police and prosecutors in the North Caucasus manipulate evidence and use torture on a regular basis in order to proclaim successes in the fight against terrorism.

### *Human rights in Chechnya*

Since the beginning of the second Chechen war in September 1999, all parties to the conflict have continuously engaged in massive violations of human rights. Arbitrary arrests and abductions, torture, rape, extortion and looting by Russian security forces are hardly ever prosecuted.

Russian human rights organizations such as Memorial and the Moscow Helsinki Group and international human rights organizations such as Amnesty International have documented myriad cases of torture, hostage-taking, bribery, extortion and other human rights violations by federal and regional security forces in Chechnya and other regions of the North Caucasus.

---

<sup>18</sup> RFE/RL Newsline, February 6, 2006 at

<http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2006/02/060206.asp> (accessed on September 6, 2006).

<sup>19</sup> "European Court Rulings on Chechnya Abuse Rile Russia," Dario Thurben, *Agence France Presse*, 26 Jan. 2007.

<sup>20</sup> INDEM: Vo skol'ko raz uvelichilas' korruptsiya za 4 goda. Rezul'taty novogo issledovaniya Fonda INDEM, Moscow 2005, p. 9 at

[http://www.anti-corr.ru/indem/2005diagnost/2005diag\\_press.doc](http://www.anti-corr.ru/indem/2005diagnost/2005diag_press.doc) (accessed on September 6, 2006).

<sup>21</sup> Ombudsman for Human Rights: Doklad deyatel'nosti upolnomochennogo po pravam cheloveka v Rossiiskoi Federatsii v 2005 g., Moscow 2006 [translation by the author, HTML version without pages, no longer online].

<sup>22</sup> Alexei Trochev, "Fabricated Evidence and Fair Jury Trials. The Russian Fight Against Terrorism: Case Studies from Dagestan", *Russian Analytical Digest*, 02/06, p. 7-9 at <http://www.res.ethz.ch/analysis/rad/details.cfm?id=18333> (accessed on August 29, 2006).

## RUSSIA

---

As the Moscow Helsinki Group comments in a special report of 2005, “It is evident that since the beginning of the second Chechen war there has been only one conviction for an abduction (“disappearance”) committed by a member of the federal forces in the case of Colonel Budanov, not a single conviction for torture (and only one for ‘intentional infliction of serious harm to health’ -- in the Lapin case), and only a handful of convictions for the hundreds of severe abuses committed in the conduct of the zachistkas (mop-up or cleansing operation).”<sup>23</sup>

### **Political interference of the state executive in excess of democratic limits**

The state executive generally tends to value its own strategic aims – especially its attempts to marginalize potential political opposition – more highly than certain democratic standards. National and regional governments have used their influence to manipulate legal regulations and court proceedings on more than one occasion. This has been demonstrated by the Yukos affair, in which a major businessman with political ambitions was removed from the Russian political scene.

The state prosecution has also initiated biased and selective investigations against a considerable number of independent journalists and NGOs. As Greenpeace Russia Executive Director Sergei Tsyplenkov believes, the new NGO law of 2006 “was introduced in order to get rid of unwanted social organizations.” It “introduces many new clauses” which can be interpreted broadly, so that “the interpretation of each clause of the law in each case will depend on the bureaucrats in the state registration service. Much will depend on the application of the law. In Russia, there are many laws that are simply not applied, while at the same time, there are many laws which offer the opportunity for bureaucrats to interpret them as they wish.”<sup>24</sup>

In summary, Russia’s political leadership often sacrifices certain democratic standards, such as freedom of press and assembly, the right to a fair trial and the rule of law in order to strengthen its own political power, which is seen in turn as a precondition for providing stability. In the case of the fight against terrorism and the situation in the North Caucasus, the security forces have decided at least implicitly that “stability” trumps the local population’s basic human rights. This view is supported by the fact that human rights violations by Russian security forces are rarely investigated and hardly ever punished. President Putin seems to support this view, at least verbally, in his repeated urgings (in rather colloquial language) to “kill terrorists like rats.”

## 4. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

---

During the period under review, there have been glaring deficits in terms of freedom of press, an independent judiciary, combating corruption, and the rights of political parties and interest groups. There has been serious deterioration in these areas during the

---

<sup>23</sup> International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF), “Impunity: A Leading Force behind Continued Massive Violations in Chechnya”, Moscow, May 19, 2005, p. 7 at <http://www.mhg.ru/files/engl/chreport.doc> (accessed on September 6, 2006).

<sup>24</sup> Quoted in Dmitry Vinogradov, “Authorities Begin Implementing New NGO Law”, *Russian Analytical Digest* 03/06, p.12 at <http://www.res.ethz.ch/analysis/rad/details.cfm?id=19048> (accessed on August 29, 2006).

## RUSSIA

---

period, although the government appears to be making efforts to reform the judiciary and fight corruption. Pressure from state agencies has meanwhile impeded attempts to fortify the mass media and NGOs. The massive human rights violations associated with the second Chechen war since 1999 represent a considerable setback for the country's democratic development.

In summary, there has been no visible improvement toward consolidating democratic standards, and the democratic deficits identified above have not only continued, but become more entrenched.

On the one hand, Russia's constitution more or less meets democratic standards and the country's political leaders rhetorically extol democracy as a general value. On the other hand, deficits abound with regard to adherence to democratic standards in Russian political life and the Russian leadership seems to practice a rather rudimentary understanding of democracy.

As has been suggested above, the manifold deficiencies of Russia's democracy are all linked to three core problems: (1) political interference of the state executive in violation of democratic standards, (2) widespread corruption, (3) lack of independent controls (mass media, civil society).

Accordingly, major improvements could be achieved if the political leadership (i.e., the state executive) would recognize the independence of the judiciary, media and civil society. This would entail the unconditional acceptance of decisions issued by the judiciary (or appeals via legal channels) on the state executive's part and the cessation of manipulation by judges. This is the only way to ensure the rule of law, which allows for the universal application of democratic standards within a country. It guarantees the rights of citizens and business interests alike, and is therefore vital for democratic development.

In order to ensure that democratic standards are being observed, a free media and a vibrant civil society are critical. Again, an immediate and substantial improvement of the situation could be reached if the state executive would make clear that it will not interfere unduly in the actions of journalists and civil society organizations. Reducing restrictions considered by many journalists and activists to be arbitrary and discriminatory, allowing an increase in the role of private mass media, and engaging in a dialogue with all relevant civil society organizations – and not only those which espouse the Kremlin's view – would allow for a broad national debate about democratic standards and the future direction of Russia's development.

Such a debate could potentially deal a serious blow to corruption as well. If the political leadership would refrain from undue interference, it would gain the moral legitimacy and credibility to fight corruption. Media and civil society could then join forces with the state in this goal. However, immediate substantial improvements are not to be expected; anti-corruption measures need time to change deep-rooted patterns of perception and behavior.

Human rights violations in the North Caucasus constitute a separate topic altogether. The ongoing war between Chechen separatist fighters, Russian soldiers, and the pro-Kremlin Chechen militia under Ramzan Kadyrov has led to a general deterioration

## RUSSIA

---

regarding respect for the local civilian population on all sides involved in the conflict. At the same time, more than a decade of upheaval has destroyed the basis of a normal, peaceful life for large parts of the population and has created a generation inured to warfare and terror. Therefore, an end to human rights violations by Russian security forces is only the first step.

In the longer run, a new perspective has to be offered to the local population so that it may return to a peaceful life. This perspective has to be based on the socioeconomic development of the region. Force should only be an ancillary means of keeping extremists in check. If anything, the current dominance of force only serves to discredit Russia in the eyes of the local population as being no better than the guerilla fighters and terrorists. Years of warfare have turned the conflict into a complicated mess, where major short-term gains are highly unlikely; it is therefore vital to develop a long-term strategy for the region.

In summary, the most important measures for improving Russia's adherence to democratic standards are:

- General acceptance of judicial independence by the state leadership.
- Protecting rights of journalists and private mass media.
- Reducing bureaucratic restrictions for civil society organizations and broadening the dialogue between state and civil society to include organizations critical of the political leadership.
- Ending human rights violations in the North Caucasus and developing a long-term perspective for the region.

It should be noted that the Russian leadership reacts very sensitively to these demands. It seems to fear that unless it asserts strong control over the media and civil society, there will be utter chaos in society. It also prefers to pretend that there is no serious problem in the North Caucasus at all.

It should also be noted that at a time when Russia's growth rate is much higher than the European Union's, and when China is leading worldwide economic performance, the link between democracy and good economic performance so often cited in EU foreign policy is dismissed by Russia's leadership.

### 5. STATISTICS AND INDICATORS

---

World Bank Institute Governance Indicators 2005	Russia Score	Key
Voice and Accountability	25.6	Range 0-100 (Lower value indicates weak voice and accountability; higher value indicates strong voice and account)
Political Stability and Absence of Violence	18.9	Range 0-100 (Lower value indicates weak political stability and high violence; higher value indicates opposite)
Government Effectiveness	38.8	Range 0-100 (Lower value indicates weak government effectiveness; higher value indicates strong govt. effectiveness)

## RUSSIA

Regulatory Quality	43.6	Range 0-100 (Lower value indicates weak regulatory quality; higher value indicates strong regulatory quality)
Rule of Law	21.7	Range 0-100 (Lower value indicates weak rule of law; higher value indicates strong rule of law)
Control of Corruption	28.1	Range 0-100 (Lower value indicates weak control of corruption; higher value indicates strong control of corruption)

Freedom House: Freedom in the World 2007	Russia Score	Key
Political Rights	6	Range 1-7 (Lower value indicates good system of political rights; higher value indicates bad system political rights)
Civil Liberties	5	Range 1-7 (Lower value indicates good system of civil liberties; higher value indicates bad system civil liberties)
Status	NF	3 Categories: F (Free); PF (Partly Free); NF (Not Free)

Freedom House: Freedom of the Press 2006	Russia Score	Key
Total Score	68NF	Range 0-100 (Lower value indicates total free press; higher value indicates less freedom) / 3 Categories: F (Free); PF (Partly Free); NF (Not Free)

Freedom House: Nations in Transit 2006	Russia Score	Key
Electoral Process	6.25	Range 1-7 (Lower value indicates strong electoral process; higher value indicates weak electoral process)
Civil Society	5.00	Range 1-7 (Lower value indicates strong civil society; higher value indicates weak civil society)
Independent Media	6.00	Range 1-7 (Lower value indicates strong independent media; higher value indicates weak independent media)
National Democratic Governance	6.00	Range 1-7 (Lower value indicates strong democratic governance; higher value indicates weak democratic governance)
Judicial Framework and Independence	5.25	Range 1-7 (Lower value indicates strong and independent judiciary; higher value indicates weak and corrupt judiciary)
Corruption	6.00	Range 1-7 (Lower value indicates low level of corruption; higher value indicates high level of corruption)

Freedom House: Countries at the Crossroads 2005	Russia Score	Key
Civil Liberties	2.88	Range 0-7 (Lower value indicates weak civil liberties; higher value indicates strong civil liberties)
Rule of Law	3.72	Range 0-7 (Lower value indicates weak rule of law; higher value indicates strong rule of law)
Anticorruption and Transparency	3.41	Range 0-7 (Lower value indicates weak anticorruption and transparency; higher value indicates strong a-c and transp.)
Accountability and Public Voice	2.79	Range 0-7 (Lower value indicates weak accountability and public voice; higher value indicates strong acc. and p.v.)

## RUSSIA

---

Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2006	Russia Score	Key
Stateness	7.5	Range 0-10 (Lower value indicates negative democratic development; higher value indicates positive democratic development)
Political Participation	6.0	
Rule of Law	4.8	
Stability of Democratic Institutions	5.5	
Political and Social Integration	4.8	
Total Score Political Transformation	5.70	Range 0-10 (Lower value indicates negative democratic development; higher value indicates positive democratic development) / Arrow shows trend in democratic development (↑Improved; ↓Worsened)
Total Score Political Management	3.84	Range 0-10 (Lower value indicates lower quality of political management; higher value indicates higher quality of political management)

Corruption Perceptions Index 2006	Russia Score	Key
Total Score	2.5	Range 0-10 (lower value indicates high corruption; higher value indicates lower values of corruption)

## 6. SOURCES

---

### Media:

- Kommersant, [www.kommersant.ru](http://www.kommersant.ru)
- Moscow Times, [www.moscowtimes.ru](http://www.moscowtimes.ru)
- Novye Izvestiya, [www.newizv.ru](http://www.newizv.ru)
- Vedomosti, [www.vedomosti.ru](http://www.vedomosti.ru)
- Website Polit.ru, [www.polit.ru](http://www.polit.ru)
- Database of Russian media articles, [www.integrum.ru](http://www.integrum.ru)
- Johnson's Russia List, <http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/default.cfm>

### Human Rights Organizations/ Civil Society:

- Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, Moscow office, [www.boell.ru](http://www.boell.ru)
- Citizens' Watch (St. Petersburg), [www.wplus.ru/pp/citwatch/index.htm](http://www.wplus.ru/pp/citwatch/index.htm)
- Fond INDEM (Moscow), [www.indem.ru](http://www.indem.ru)
- Glasnost Defense Foundation (Moscow), [www.gdf.ru](http://www.gdf.ru)
- Internet Portal Human Rights in Russia (Ryazan), [www.hro.org](http://www.hro.org)
- Memorial (Moscow), [www.memorial.ru](http://www.memorial.ru)
- Moscow Helsinki Group (Moscow), [www.mhg.ru](http://www.mhg.ru)
- National Project Institute "Public Treaty" (Moscow), [www.inp.ru](http://www.inp.ru)
- Union of the Committees of Soldiers' Mothers of Russia (Moscow), [www.ucsmr.ru](http://www.ucsmr.ru)
- Freedom House

## RUSSIA

---

### **Russian official sources:**

- General Prosecutor, [www.genproc.gov.ru](http://www.genproc.gov.ru)
- Judicial system, <http://www.gov.ru/main/page10.html>
- Ministry of the Interior, [www.mvdinform.ru](http://www.mvdinform.ru)
- Ministry of Justice, [www.minjust.ru](http://www.minjust.ru)
- Ombudsman for Human Rights, <http://ombudsman.gov.ru>
- Public Chamber, [www.oprf.ru](http://www.oprf.ru)

### **Analytical and academic sources:**

- Carnegie Moscow Center (Moscow), [www.carnegie.ru](http://www.carnegie.ru)
- Higher School of Economics (Moscow), [www.hse.ru](http://www.hse.ru)
- Jamestown Foundation (Washington), [www.jamestown.org](http://www.jamestown.org)
- Russian Analytical Digest (Zurich, Bremen), [www.res.ethz.ch/analysis/rad](http://www.res.ethz.ch/analysis/rad)