

Civil Society as an Environment for Production and Diffusion of Social Innovation

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Social innovations could potentially serve as a means for society to play a role in solving social problems. Such innovations stem from an active population and non-state non-profit organizations (NPO). As a new model for civil society's collaboration with the state, social innovations enable the population to better self-organize and act.

This article examines the potential and contribution of Russian NPOs to the development of social innovations.

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Keywords

social innovation; non-profit non-governmental organizations; civil society; civic participation; social sphere; state social policy

Citation: Krasnopolskaya I., Mersiyanova I. (2014) Civil Society as an Environment for Production and Diffusion of Social Innovation. *Foresight-Russia*, vol. 8, no 4, pp. 40–53.

* This article presents the results of the study 'The potential of social innovations in the development of Russian civil society, 2014', which was carried out by the Centre for Studies of Civil Society and the Non-profit Sector, NRU HSE with support from the Basic Research Programme, NRU HSE. The authors of this article would like to express their sincere gratitude to Dmitry Rogozin for his assistance and contribution to the development of the population typology based on criteria for relations with non-profit non-state organizations and to Irina Korneeva for her help with the statistical analysis.

The most effective method of forecasting changes in civil society is to combine normative performance with an impartial analysis of objective trends, which is the traditional methodology approached for Foresight studies [Loveridge, 2009; Schwartz, 1996]. The notion of civil society can be interpreted in diverse ways [John Hopkins University, 2004; Edwards, 2011, p. 7], However, almost all these interpretations are united in their focus on how voluntary collaboration between different people creates a public good.

Some authors view the concepts of ‘civil society’ and ‘group of non-state non-profit organizations’ as practically synonyms [John Hopkins University, 2004], while others see them, at least in part, as contrasting terms [Dekker, 2009]. We proceed from the understanding of civil society as the sphere of human activity outside the family, state and market, which is formed through individual and collective action, norms, values and social relations [Mersiyanova, 2013, pp. 173–174].

In the future, civil society may be viewed from a different perspective. Nevertheless, we consider such a judgement worthwhile in terms of functionality, grounding its role in the Russian modernization process [Yasin, 2007, p. 19]. This quality is shaped by both the external environment and internal factors. A study has shown that while the state plays a primary role in the development of civil society, without social support its existence is inconceivable [Ministry of Economic Development, 2012; Civil Fund, 2013; HSE, 2008; Zadorin *et al.*, 2009; Volkov, 2011].

We consider the main parameters shaping the possible developmental scenarios for civil society in Russia to be the strength or weakness of the state’s policy in this area, which is dependent on the extent of its influence over relevant institutes, and the level of social activity. These parameters can be combined into a two-dimensional matrix, giving rise to four scenarios with reference to Russian conditions (Table 1).

The development of civil society under the most preferable scenario of responsible subjectivity is not only dependent on the successful institutionalization of its structures and state support, but also on the extent to which the population is directly involved in overcoming social problems. Accordingly, we view social innovations as one of the most promising potential instruments for civic involvement and inter-sectoral partnership in solving social problems. These innovations generally refer to new developments (products, services, models, processes, etc.) which satisfy social demands more effectively compared with existing developments and contribute to the development of inter-sectoral relations and rational use of resources [European Commission, 2012a]. As a new model for collaboration between the state and civil society, social innovations enable civil society to better self-organize and act.

The article analyses the potential and real contribution of Russian NPOs (also referred to as the tertiary sector) to the development of social innovations by providing the necessary conditions in civil society to satisfy the logic of the preferred Russian scenario of responsible subjectivity. It considers the essence of social innovations and how they differ from market or technological innovations. The critical role of civil society and the tertiary sector as a favourable

Table 1. **Development scenarios for civil society in Russia**

Social activity	State policy supporting the development of civil society institutions	
	Weak	Active
Low	Deep freeze	Greenhouse effect
High	Explosive pocket	Responsible subjectivity*

* Desired scenario.

Source: compiled by the authors.

environment for social innovations will be highlighted. Data will be presented on the state of NPOs in Russia and citizens' involvement in their activities.

Social innovations: The essence and some specifics

In the last decade, social innovations have become one of the main focal points in the economic development strategies of the US and EU countries. In particular, they have been noted for their positive contribution to achieving a high level of employment, social security, and gender equality, to the reinforcement of economic and social unity, and the integration of territories into the EU [European Commission, 2011, 2012a]. The Social Innovation Fund has been supported by the US Presidential Administration since 2009 and, with the assistance of various civil society organizations, contributes to inter-sectoral collaboration and uses entrepreneurial approaches to implement programmes in healthcare, youth support and the creation of economic opportunities.

However, a theoretical understanding of social innovations, despite their political and research 'popularity', is extremely vague. Virtually all research publications are based on weak theoretical groundings, and therefore the practical use of the notion is ambiguous. The existing literature on the subject is sometimes seen as 'grey' as, for the most part, it comprises reports, memoranda and recommendations [Voorberg *et al.*, 2013].

Social innovations are often viewed as a unique remedy to overcome all social challenges. Politicians and academics constantly search for new approaches to solve problems such as youth unemployment, migrant adaptation, the territorial integrity of regions, etc. For instance, Eva Bund and her colleagues identified over 15 different indices which all, to varying degrees, reflected the state and development of social innovations at a country level and in comparison with other countries [Bund *et al.*, 2013]. All of these indices are based on corresponding theoretical assumptions and measure specific forms of social innovations in a given context. On this basis, it is scarcely possible to formulate a unified approach to conceptualizing social innovations.

In Russian literature, social innovations have not yet received any visible attention. They are considered one of the functional forms of innovation alongside technological, organizational and administrative, and information innovations [Kolosnitsyna, Kiseleva, 2008]. Exceptions to this include a number of articles on user innovations, where consumers modify products to adapt them as best as possible to their own needs [Zaytseva, Shuvalova, 2011]. But user initiatives are predominantly viewed from a commercial perspective, analysing the potential economic effects. Several studies have focused on the effect of the population's involvement in innovation processes on raising the quality of products and services, as well as on the emergence of new and expansion of traditional markets [*Ibid.*]. Some authors address the topic of open innovations, which, in essence, reflect the principles on which social innovations are based. Jean Guinet and Dirk Meissner analyse the role of the state in open innovation processes in entrepreneurial and public sector sciences and collaboration with innovators based on principles such as decentralization and network cooperation [Guinet, Meissner, 2012].

In view of the identified limitations, we consider the notion of social innovations as analogous to these foreign notions, paying special attention to their potential in the social sphere. 'Social inventions' were first mentioned in the works of Max Weber [Moulaert *et al.*, 2005, p. 1969] in which he attempted to interpret the social changes caused by technological and economic transformations. In the 1930s, Joseph Schumpeter introduced the concept of 'social innovations' as an element of organizational theory [*Ibid.*]. He interpreted innovations as a process of creative destruction [Schumpeter, 1942] leading to the emergence of new

combinations of existing resources in politics, business, the arts, the sciences, etc. In this sense they cannot be separated from enterprise, which is aimed at changing or modifying existing social and economic agreements that are unable to satisfy primary needs [Bekkers *et al.*, 2013, p. 37]. In other words, innovations, according to early theorists, were based on action and led to evolutionary changes in society [Kattel *et al.*, 2012, p. 3]. Thereafter, they started to view innovation as a source of economic growth [Crepaldi *et al.*, 2012].

Technological developments and the results of commercializing developments started to be studied actively from the 1980s. Today, the majority of indicators for the development of social innovations include innovation activity indicators for the entrepreneurial sector [OECD, 2002; OECD, Eurostat, 2005].

The role of innovations in economic development has close ties to the local social and cultural context. It is generally accepted that intangible variables — values and culture — have a significant impact on innovation activity and the output of the sciences and economic institutes [Rubalcaba, 2011, p. 3].

Contemporary researchers offer varying definitions of social innovations, each of which reflects their specific functions or properties. It has been argued that they satisfy society's needs, respond to social challenges, offer new or significantly improved products, processes, marketing methods or organizational models which satisfy social needs more effectively than existing options, and help to develop social collaboration and form alliances (the project 'Social Entrepreneurs as "Lead Users" for Service Innovation', SELUSI) [Stephan, 2010].

Some approaches focus on the contribution of civil society to the development of innovations (the project 'SPREAD: Sustainable Lifestyles 2050') [Rijnhout, Lorek, 2011]. Other variants look at social innovations from the opposite angle. Here, social innovations refer to a sub-group of innovations that are not based on technological inventions and where profit-making is not the priority for their creators. Innovations are aimed at transforming social relations and creating new opportunities. The main outcome of their use is a change in social practices, but economic effects are also not ruled out [Hochgerner, 2011, p. 2]. What is meant here is the production and dissemination of public goods and services, the transformation of financing and material production methods for socially important goods and services, institutional changes to forms of administration, and new methods to involve consumers of services in their production [Grimma *et al.*, 2013, p. 7]. Having analysed the various approaches to define social innovations, Bund and colleagues suggested the most fitting, in our view, definition of social innovations, where the role of civil society is taken into account. Social innovations are new solutions that respond to social needs and simultaneously create new or improved systems for collaboration, contribute to an effective use of resources and broaden social opportunities [Bund *et al.*, 2013]. In other words, they have a positive effect on society and, at the same time, raise its potential for action [Davies *et al.*, 2012].

Technological and other market innovations, as a general rule, also respond to social needs and are aimed at improving existing collaborative efforts; nonetheless, social innovations have a number of principal differences. Certain criteria can be used to identify them [Alcock, Kendall, 2014]. First, the 'social' characteristic in relation to innovations is often interpreted from the position of membership of society as a whole and of any social collaborations, which of course leads to confusion. In actual fact, this definition should be viewed in the context of social services. The remaining criteria are the existence of a social need, the high degree of importance accorded to the need, its urgency and social legitimacy. It is only when all these criteria have been satisfied that we can speak of social innovations.

The difference between social and market innovations can be observed visually in the example of a washing machine, which is a market innovation that satis-

fies the need for cleaning. However, it cannot be classified as a social innovation that responds to demands perceived as legitimate i.e. providing basic civil rights and free by definition public goods. Washing machines do not have to be provided free of charge unlike, for example, access to drinking water, health care or freedom of movement. In other words, besides the fact that market innovations contribute to raising the standard of living, they are not specifically geared towards satisfying basic civil rights and liberties.

It is generally accepted that social innovations can be broken down into four groups. Similar classifications can be found in the majority of studies [Bekkers *et al.*, 2011]. These classify them as: service innovations, innovative forms of production for goods and services, innovative administration solutions and the right of consumers to independently define and assess the importance of a producible social good.

The characteristics and examples of each of these groups are given below.

1. Service innovations. These offer new or improved services to satisfy existing social needs. Here, the focus is placed on joint activity between interested parties to solve a particular problem and on new methods for such collaboration. At the same time, it is perceived to be a personified approach (the proposed developments are specific to a certain territory and/or group of users) and one where new professional competencies are formed in the social services sphere [Osbourne, Brown, 2011; Ewert, Evers, 2012; Crepaldi *et al.*, 2012]. An example is creating new labour market opportunities to reduce youth unemployment or offering employment to people with limited capabilities.

2. Innovative production methods. These refer to hybrid forms of organizations — social enterprise, corporate social responsibility, etc. They imply active involvement of organizations and resources from various different industries [Crepaldi *et al.*, 2012]. This group includes social technological innovations (*civic tech innovations*), which emerge as a result of using technologies to provide new types of services, such as telemedicine. Developments that guarantee and simplify communities' activities occupy an important position among social technologies: public crowdfunding, organizing local social action and initiatives, collecting and disseminating information, etc. [Patel *et al.*, 2013].

3. Innovative forms of administration. These are predominantly linked to reorganizing a decision-making process that previously either did not take into account the interests of all groups or was unbalanced in nature [Moulaert *et al.*, 2005, p. 1975]. The innovation lies in delegating a certain proportion of authority, for instance, from the state to new actors, including members of civil society [Moore, Harley, 2008, p.18].

4. The right of consumers to independently define and assess the importance of a producible social good [Grimma *et al.*, 2013, p.17]. Joint decision-making, attracting new sources of funding and expanding the group of participants are all encouraged. Thus, conceptual innovations offer new paradigms of solutions to social challenges, in particular changing the approach to social work by including people with limited capabilities in the work process. The innovation lies in the fact that the collaboration takes place not in terms of an activity that a person cannot do, but in terms of his or her principal work capabilities and the duties he or she is able to carry out. In other words, the focus of attention is not their limited capabilities but rather the work potential.

Existing projects to study social innovations more often than not fall under several research fields (Table 2). Above all, they touch on questions of social integration, as well as innovations in public administration. Moreover, the focus of the study often turns out to be societal changes, social infrastructure, education and health care, and the labour market for young people and citizens with limited capabilities. In some cases, some attention is paid to network organizational

Table 2. **Examples of international initiatives to measure innovation**

Study focus	Name of initiative	Literature
International comparison of states' innovation potential	Innovation Union Scoreboard	[European Commission, 2014]
	Global Innovation Index	[INSEAD, 2012]
	Nordic Innovation Monitor	[Nordic Council of Ministers, 2009]
Innovations in the public sector	European Public Sector Innovation Scoreboard	[Bloch, 2010]
	Australian Public Sector Innovation Indicators	[DIISR, 2011]
	Measure Public Innovation in the Nordic Countries; Innovation in Public Sector Organisations	[Hughes et al., 2011]
Economic innovations	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor	[Kelley et al., 2012]
	OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard	[OECD, 2011]
	Measuring sectoral innovation capability in nine areas of the UK economy	[Roper et al., 2009]

Source: compiled by the authors.

structure, communications, social involvement and enterprise. At the same time, social activity and social capital is hardly ever encountered in studies of social innovations.

We will now outline the basic theoretical elements of the concept of social innovations, upon which specialists have reached relative agreement. First, social innovations offer new and long-term solutions geared towards the current needs of the population [Kattel et al., 2012]. In terms of their effects, they can surpass technological innovations, satisfying legitimate public and social needs and establishing new values that are perceived to be important by society.

In this sense, social innovations are an element of institutional development and one of the factors behind changes in society [Eurofound, 2013, p. 6]. They offer more effective solutions than traditional variants [European Commission, 2012b, p.18]. For instance, one-stop shops or multifunctional centres have clear advantages over a decentralized model for municipal services by various institutions. Such innovations lead to significant and at times unexpected redistributions of existing models for collaboration between stakeholders to solve social problems [Osborne, Brown, 2005]. As it is an open process, they encourage representatives of interested parties to get involved in exchanging experience, knowledge, skills and resources during the production of an in-demand product [Bekkers et al., 2013].

In this context, we often speak of co-production of social or user-driven innovations through the joint efforts of network participants [Verschuere et al., 2012, p. 1084]. This process is based on collaboration between state, volunteer and non-profit organizations, local public associations or certain individuals with the aim of improving the quality of social services. Officials of state organizations, private individuals or groups of citizens all play a role in this process voluntarily. Their involvement is dictated by demand to create new services or to raise the quality of existing services. The difference from 'traditional' volunteering in this case lies in the provision of personalized good, the end consumers of which are the volunteers themselves [Verschuere et al., 2012, p. 1085].

Social innovations are for the most part produced and disseminated in the service sector and in organizational and administrative activity (*governance*). The latter is extremely important, as the existence of 'free space' for structures capable of producing social innovations to operate is dependent on the nature of state governance, especially in the social sphere. From a theoretical perspective, the innovations are a hybrid concept [Dekker, 2009] proposing, as mentioned above, collaboration between the state, civil society and the market to satisfy current and legitimate social needs.

Finally, the potential for civic involvement in the co-production of social services is often referred to as the foundation of social innovations [Moore, Harley,

2008, p. 8, 10]. As they are engaged in the current interests of the population, civil society organizations are the sole environment for the production of such innovations. We will now examine this thesis in more detail.

The tertiary sector as a favourable environment for the development of social innovations

Current theories pit the tertiary sector against the market and the state, stressing its compensatory role in plugging the gaps left by the latter two. It is widely recognized that NPOs are more sensitive to signals from citizens:

‘Non-profit organizations are the priority mechanism for representing the diverse values of social groups and voicing religious, ideological, political, cultural, social, and other views’ [Anheier, 2005, p. 174].

NPOs take on special significance as a tool to amass and represent the interests of a part of the population experiencing difficult living conditions and whose needs are barely being catered to by the state or businesses.

The structural characteristics and features of tertiary sector organizations give them an advantage over the authorities or commercial entities in terms of establishing a more favourable environment for innovative solutions [Vedres, Stark, 2010; Rogers, 2003; Archibugi, Iammarino, 2002]. These characteristics include:

1. Bringing stakeholders together: NPOs can establish complex networks of lateral connections and involve representatives of various different social groups that have not previously collaborated with one another or communicated with one another in a hierarchical manner.
2. The activity of NPOs responds to the values and aspirations of a specific local community and, in this context, can be more relevant to the local population than the activity of ‘external’ state or commercial organizations. As a result, the involvement of citizens and feedback from citizens on such structures can be expected to intensify.
3. The diversification of resources, including financial, information and human (the latter predominantly through volunteering), makes it possible to achieve stability. Volunteers play a key role in the creation of social innovations, as they serve as a further binding link between NPOs and society, its values, problems and needs in their capacity as ‘think tanks’ and carriers of knowledge and skills [Brandson et al., 2010]. It is through these ‘links’ in the local community that the validity of the work done by NPOs is maintained and increased.

Table 3 sets out the prospects of social innovations depending on the intensity of civic involvement and the size of the tertiary sector. The table shows the contribution of the tertiary sector to the advancement of social innovations by creating opportunities to develop and later disseminate new ideas and approaches initiated by citizens. It is not true that these citizens are implicitly oriented towards innovation activity or that they are prepared to independently realize innovative ideas to improve the social situation in society as a whole or locally. If we were to draw a parallel with the proportion of citizens who are potential entrepreneurs (aged 18 to 64 years, and have not yet started their own business but positively

Table 3. Possible options for the development of social innovation

Maturity (size) of the tertiary sector	Civic involvement	
	Weak	Active
Small	Weak development	Moderate development
Sizeable	Moderate development	Intensive development

Source: [Anheier et al., 2014].

evaluate their own entrepreneurial skills and the current economic situation), then the number of such citizens would be low in Russia. In 2012, only 3% of Russians could be considered potential entrepreneurs [Verkhovskaya, Dorokhina, 2012]. Although no specific data have been gathered, it is reasonable to assume that the proportion of real ‘social innovators’ is even lower still. It is less that they share specific intentions to open their own business, but rather their assessment of their own abilities to produce new, in-demand ideas or products.

Non-profit organizations act as guides for new ideas in the social sphere. By making the corresponding organizational, expert, and at times even financial resources available, they test out the effectiveness of solutions proposed by the population and contribute to their further dissemination.

We will now analyse the population’s involvement in civil society. Furthermore, we will examine the current state and potential of the Russian tertiary sector as the optimal environment to support and produce social innovations.

Sources

The empirical basis for our analysis was the results of a study on NPOs (2012) as well as a Russia-wide survey of the population carried out across Russia within the context of monitoring the state of civil society, carried out by the Centre for Studies of Civil Society and the Non-profit Sector, NRU HSE.

The information on NPOs was collected by MarketUp LLC through individual surveys of the directors of these organizations using a semi-structured questionnaire. Respondents were selected on the basis of regional registers of NPOs and public associations using representative quotas based on their legal form of organization and year of registration. 1,005 organizations from 33 regions across Russia were selected based on their classification in the following indices:

- urbanization index;
- level of development of the non-profit sector (in quantitative terms);
- economic development indicator, assessed according to the gross regional product per capita compared with average figures for Russia as a whole.

Respondents were selected mechanically. No more than two thirds of the total number of organizations in each region was surveyed in the region’s administrative centre (excluding Moscow and St. Petersburg).

The population survey (2011–2013) was carried out by the ‘Public Opinion’ Fund through a structured individual interview at participants’ homes. The sample covered 2,000 respondents selected according to how representative they were of socio-demographic characteristics: age, sex, type of settlement and proportional representation according to education and social and professional group. The statistical margin of error of the data received did not exceed 3.4%.

The tertiary sector as the driving force behind the development of social innovations in Russia

The tertiary sector comprises informal volunteer associations and NPOs that all feature certain characteristics: they have to be formal self-regulating structures, act on a voluntary basis, be independent from state administration bodies and not distribute profit between members and founders [Salamon, Anheier, 1997; John Hopkins University, 2004].

Uncovering the potential of NPOs as a favourable environment to produce and introduce innovations in the social sphere is possible using empirical data obtained through the study carried out by NRU HSE to monitor the state of civil society. This study assessed the number of non-profit organizations, their stability, ability to mobilize volunteering, as well as the variants stated by individuals describing their involvement in the work of these structures.

We lack reliable data on numbers of informal associations. Official statistics point to roughly 434,000 NPOs, but the problem of determining the actual number is pervasive. According to the results of the national study carried out by the Centre for Studies of Civil Society and the Non-profit Sector, NRU HSE in 2007, the proportion of NPOs actually operating as a percentage of those of- ficially registered was no more than 38% [Mersiyanova, Yakobson, 2007].

The subjective role of these and other voluntary alliances implies that they have certain properties. In particular, three signs of a collective subject have been identified [Zhuravlev, 2002, pp. 64–70]:

- inter-connectivity between members;
- joint activity;
- group self-reflexivity reflecting the aims and ideas underpinning the group’s existence, its values, ideals and prohibitions, the history of how it came in- to being, its achievements and failings, and its potential opportunities and challenges.

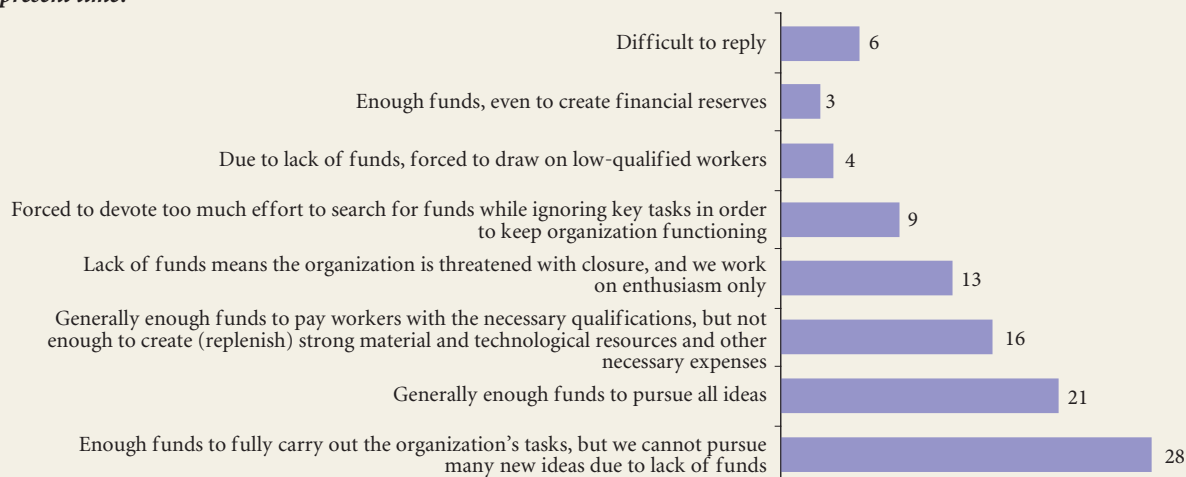
However, the subjective role of such organizations and groups can be weakened by unfavourable external and internal factors. We will now provide several em- pirical examples.

Data from the Russian study carried out in 2012 suggests that NPOs, on the whole, are economically weak and are often on the brink of folding. More than one third of them (37%) have no full-time workers. The proportion of NPOs that have to manage with the bare minimum of regular staff (from one to five workers) is 31%, of which 14% have one to two permanent employees. When it comes to attracting volunteers the situation is no better: only 41% of organiza- tions have 10 or more volunteers, and 31% do not enlist any. Figure 1 shows that only one fifth of NPOs overall have the necessary resources to fulfil their plans, while almost the same proportion are teetering on the brink of folding, acting merely on enthusiasm, with the majority experiencing varying degrees of shortfalls in resources.

The ability of NPOs to act as formal channels to mobilize social activity is still minor. Only 3% of Russians reported working as a volunteer (0.42% of the economically active population expressed as full employment) and only 1–2% indicated that they volunteer with certain organizations as intermediaries for charitable activities. The majority actually prefer to make direct monetary do- nations or give hand-outs [HSE, 2010, p. 233].

Figure 1. **Distribution of responses to the question on the current economic state of non-profit organizations (as a percentage of total surveyed, n = 1005)**

The question to directors of non-profit organizations was: ‘How would you rate the economic state of your organization at the present time?’



Source: authors’ calculations.

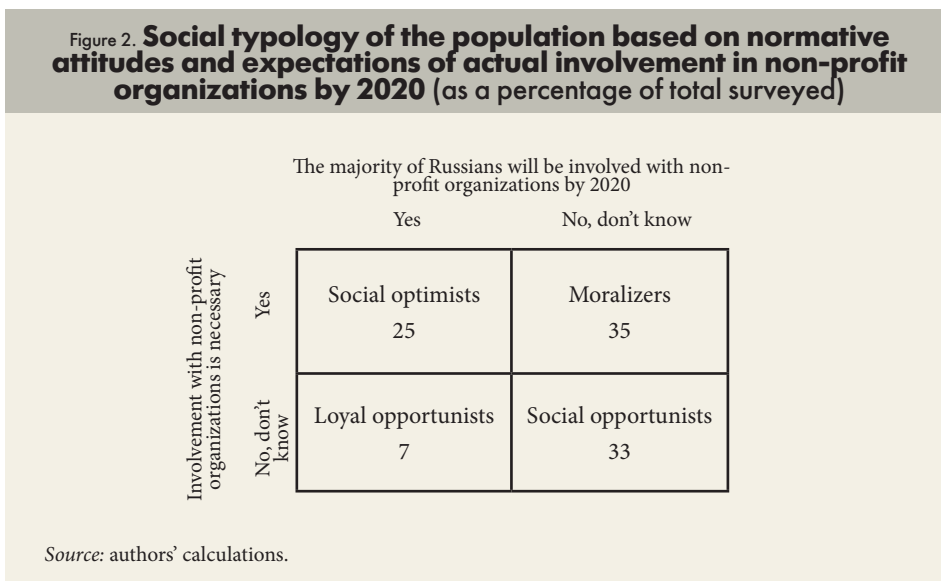
It is worth noting that the level of civic awareness of the activities of public and other non-state NPOs in their home town is relatively high. Only 24% of respondents confessed to not knowing anything about them, and 3% found it ‘difficult to reply’. Despite the relatively widespread lack of information, the involvement of Russians in the work of NPOs remains low: only 16% of those surveyed are involved with a public association. The results of the CHAID analysis¹ show that this figure differs considerably from the average in various social and demographic groups. It is more frequently the following categories of people who are involved with NPOs:

- non-working pensioners with a higher education (20%);
- non-working pensioners with a secondary specialist education living in Russian cities with a population of over one million (25%);
- hired workers with a higher education (26%), mostly aged 46 years or above (32%) or between 31 and 45 (26%);
- students and hired workers with secondary education or lower and who live in cities with a population of between 500,000 and one million (23%).

Expectations in terms of the prospects of citizens getting involved with NPOs to solve their own problems, help other people, and control the activity of the authorities are average. 40% of those surveyed were convinced that Russians would not look to become involved in such activity and 31% indicated that by 2020 the majority would work in public, religious, charitable and other non-state non-profit organizations.

Based on data from the two surveys reflecting attitudes towards NPOs², and specifically recognizing the need for involvement in their work, as well as the forecasts for the population’s involvement, it is possible to construct a social typology of the population. Successive groups are situated logically on the main diagonal — social optimists and opportunists. On the second diagonal, we place groups with more popular conceptions of obligation and prospects – loyal opportunists and moralizers (Figure 2).

Social optimists, who are not only in favour of involvement in non-profit organizations, but also forecast active growth in involvement to reach the majority



¹ This method of analysis is described in more detail in the study [Mersiyanova, Korneeva, 2011, p.22].

² The first question was on *proper* and *civilly justified* conduct: ‘In developed countries the majority of citizens are involved in the work of public, religious, charitable and other non-state non-profit organizations to work together to solve their problems and help other people, as well as to control the activities of the authorities. In your opinion, should the situation in Russia in this regard mirror that of developed countries?’ The second was on notions of *actual* involvement in the tertiary sector: ‘In your opinion, by 2020 will the majority of Russians be involved in the work of public, religious, charitable and other non-state non-profit organizations to solve their problems and help other people, as well as to control the activity of the authorities?’

of the population by 2020, make up one quarter of those surveyed. They can be considered the real target group for the tertiary sector and the potential core of the civil society's social base.

One third of the population falls under the 'social opportunists' category. This group considers involvement in such activity in general and their own participation unnecessary or inadvisable. We cannot really expect any support from them for the development of civil society in the near future.

Little more than one third of those surveyed (35%) falls under the most inert category of moralizers who agree that there is a need to be involved with non-profit organizations, but deny the possibility of this involvement growing in the next six years. While technically supporting the proposed initiatives, they do not see any potential for them to be fulfilled. Thus, the dual structure of social consciousness observed long ago by sociologists is repeating itself, leading to a clear difference between what people say and do. This category, even with the utmost loyalty to the reformative rhetoric, poses the greatest danger to any transformation as a descent into a 'spiral of silence' [Noel-Noiman, 1996] establishes the foundations for the reproduction of a passive, civilly inert majority.

Loyal opportunists, accounting for only 7% of respondents, do not see any motive for involvement with NPOs yet believe that by 2020 such participation will become more widespread. The discrepancy in actual and expected conduct could lead to formal declarations of civil positions amid complete nihilism towards social and democratic values.

As such, assessments of civil society organizations' opportunities to influence the achievement of the country's strategic development goals up to 2020 are poor. With the awareness of the supreme authority of state structures, the separate tertiary sector will rather be seen as incompetent and incapable in terms of solving strategic problems. Therefore, the development of positive policies linked to involving civil society in social practices and the widespread dissemination of its values are becoming the most important conditions for including the public in the production of social innovations.

At present, the proportion of adults who have not been involved in public affairs is slightly higher than those who have (53% and 42% respectively). Overall, involvement in voluntary clean-up work and measures to improve apartment entrances and courtyards, and cities (towns, villages) was reported by 28% of respondents. The second most popular variant — taking part in meetings of tenants in a particular building or those who share an entrance (18%) — can also be classified as involvement in self-organization based on residence. The remaining forms of activity were mentioned much less frequently: 4–7% publicly expressed their opinion on the Internet, organized groups to resolve a personal or external problem, or helped those in a difficult situation. The rarest of activity reported by respondents was gatherings at peaceful demonstrations, acts of protest, meetings, picket lines, and public hearings (2–3%). The most socially passive were the elderly and people with a low level of education and income, as well as Muscovites and villagers.

Trust, association and mutual assistance, among other things, all have an impact on the involvement of Russians in publicly beneficial forms of activity. Thus, those who believe they can trust people are almost five times fewer than those who think it is important to be cautious when dealing with others (17% and 80% respectively). Despite the fact that members of certain social and demographic groups are more open, caution when dealing with outsiders tends to dominate all groups.

Our studies corroborate a well-known pattern: the shorter the social distance the greater the trust. Citizens prefer to trust their personal entourage far more frequently than other people (58% compared with 17%). Highly resourceful

groups (those with a higher education and financial security, specialists, and residents of large cities) are more inclined to trust others, as are those who are publicly active and are confident about the future. More often it is members of marginal, deprived groups who show the greatest distrust, for instance, those who do not feel that they are citizens of the country, those living below the poverty line, the unemployed, or those waiting for improvements in their personal and social life. Those who believe that disagreement and disassociation dominate in society are four and a half times greater in number than those convinced that agreement and solidarity are more common (77% and 17% respectively). The latter group tends to include the younger generations, while the elderly are more inclined to mention disagreement.

Regarding solidarity, we observe the same pattern as that revealed by the analysis of issues relating to trust: reducing social distance increases the proportion of those who report agreement and solidarity by more than three times (58% for the question on the respondents' entourage compared with 17% in relation to society as a whole).

The closest ties are forged by younger people and members of society's upper classes who have resources and social status, for instance, directors and specialists.

It is striking that believers who are involved in the life of the church community and active users of the Internet most supported the predominance of agreement and solidarity among those in their personal entourage. It was often the elderly, the poor, the unemployed or people with very low levels of education who mentioned disagreement and disassociation in their close surroundings.

Opinions on preparedness for mutual assistance are split. The view that mutual assistance is rare is more widespread (52%). Slightly less in number (42%) are those who believe that mutual assistance is a widespread phenomenon. The difference in these assessments is shaped by the same set of factors as described above. It is important to note the interrelationships between trust, agreement, and preparedness to help, especially when talking about respondents' groups of immediate contacts. Those who are trusting in people more frequently note their willingness to help one another, while those respondents who consider mutual assistance to be widespread tend to also report agreement and solidarity. Willingness to unite with others was expressed by two thirds of adult Russians (63%), while the opposite was reported by roughly one quarter (24%). Young people showed a greater tendency for unity, while the elderly, on the other hand, had no desire to unite with anybody. Frequently, members of contrasting social groups expressed the least and greatest inclination for unity. This is related not only to age, but also education, financial position, membership of certain social classes, and views on life prospects. Moscow residents expressed significantly less willingness to associate with one another than residents of other cities with populations of over one million (54% and 70% respectively).

In view of the weak institutional structure of civil society and the informal nature of Russians' involvement in its practices, it is critical that we grasp the development opportunities of social innovations in the context of the responsible subjectivity scenario [HSE, 2010].

Conclusion

By their very nature, social innovations are worthy of rapt attention as a new tool in the development of civil society and the realization of the desired scenario of responsible subjectivity. At the same time, the strong parties involved in social innovations limit the opportunities for their practical application in Russia. The tertiary sector cannot yet be described as institutionally mature or ready for the production and dissemination of social innovations.

Our analysis enables us to identify the weak parties in this sphere, its infrastructure and existing tools to involve citizens in the production of innovative social solutions. Despite the numerous examples of innovative initiatives in the social sphere initiated and developed both by individual citizens and by non-profit organizations [Non-profit Foundation, 2013; Agency for Social Information, 2011], they are by nature rather isolated. To raise their viability and spread, further efforts are needed. In this regard, one cannot deny the desire of Russian tertiary sector organizations to solve social problems together with the state. The overwhelming majority of NPO directors (86%) believe, to varying degrees, that their organizations should be involved in overcoming existing problems in education, health care and culture. The hope is that tertiary sector organizations will make a positive contribution to help effectively solve existing social issues. The perception of these structures as suppliers of social services is gradually intensifying: 79% of the population expressed the need for NPOs to be involved in active social activity in 2012 survey.

Russia's tertiary sector lags far behind both Europe and the US in terms of its ability to produce social innovations. However, the sector's development and supportive state policies, while contradictory, are on the whole showing positive signs. The challenge for the state is to create favourable conditions for NPOs and, at the same time, strengthen their role as a driving force of innovative changes in the social sphere.

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