

The Putin Generation: The Political Views of Russian Youth



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The Putin Generation and Putin

- Unifying Themes:
 - Collapse of the USSR as “catastrophe”
 - Stalin did “more good than bad”
 - US as threat

- Are they buying what he is selling?



The Putin Generation and Bush

- Decline of US “Soft Power”
- Impact of counterterrorism policies (rendition, detention, interrogation)

- Are these factors contributing to anti-US sentiment?
- What do their views on CT say about them?



The Putin Generation and Nationalism

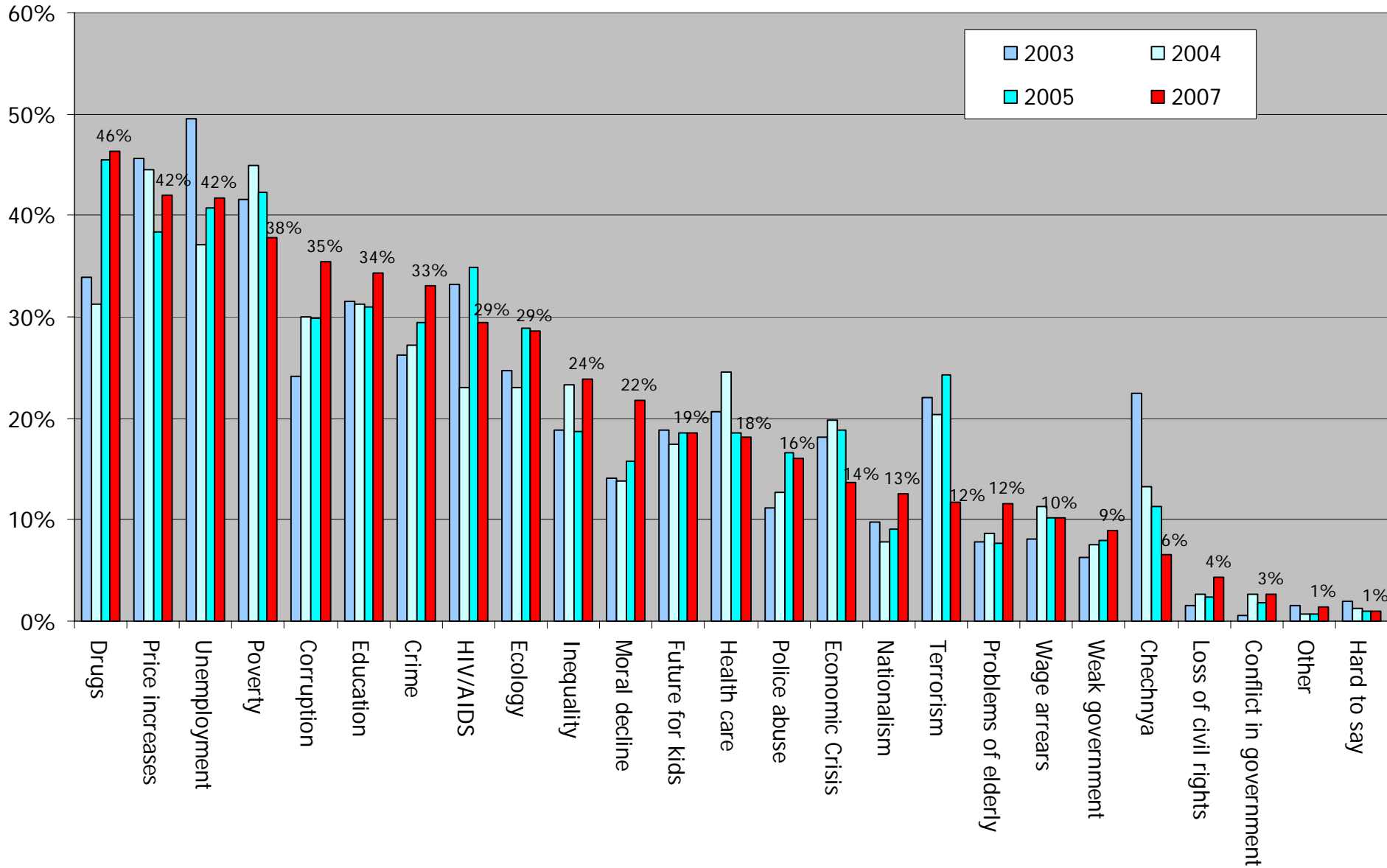
- Are they joining Nashi in droves?
- How far is the swing to the right?
- How anti-migration?
- How do they view assistance?



2007 CSIS Survey

- 4 Focus Groups in December 2004 and 2005 Survey
- 4 Focus Groups in January 2007
- Conducted by the Levada Analytic Center
- 1,802 16 to 29 year olds
- 44 Regions
- April-May 2007

Figure 1. Most widespread concerns of Russians 16-29





Collapse as "Catastrophe"

"The collapse of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th Century."

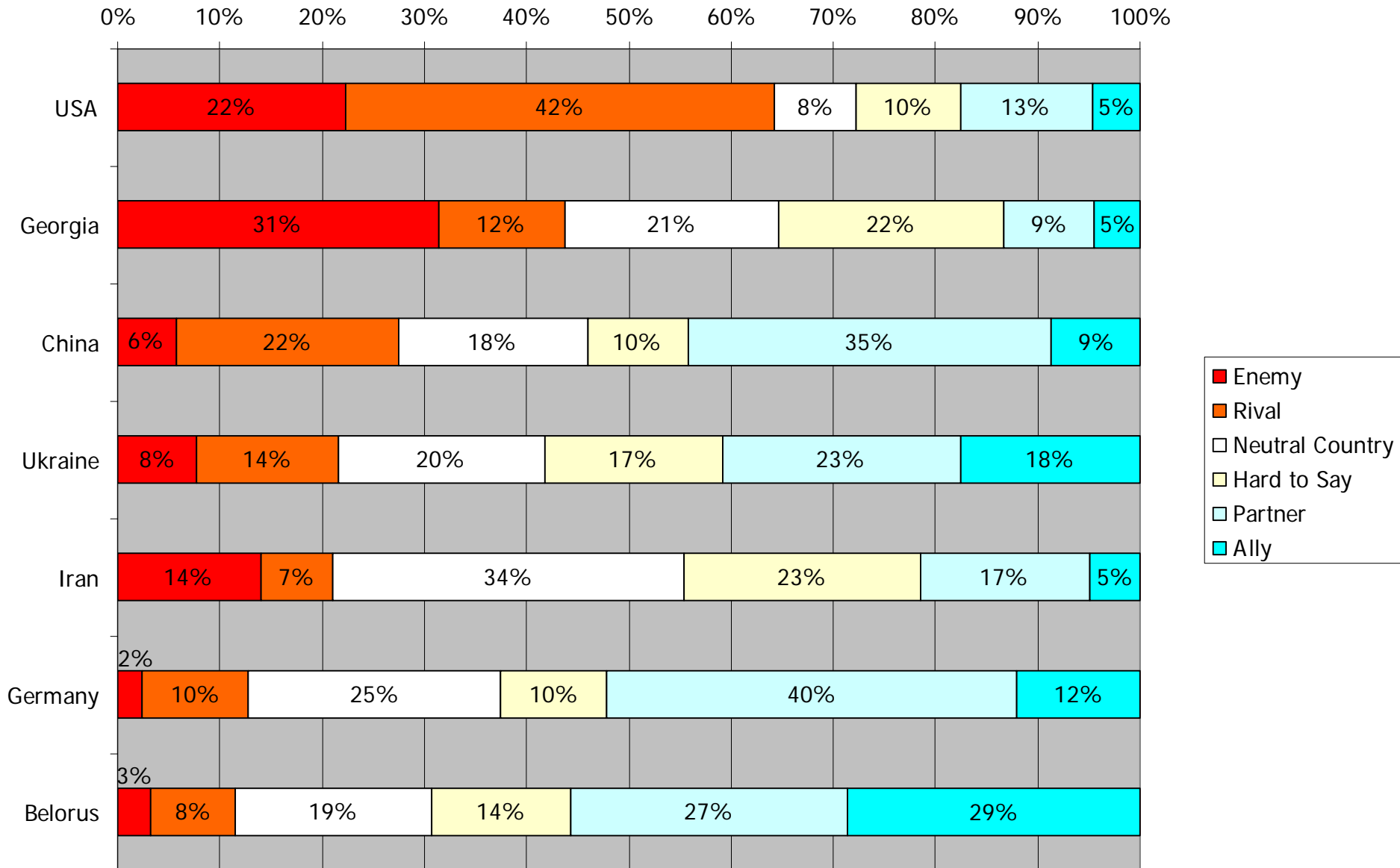
Fully agree	26%
Somewhat agree	37%
Somewhat disagree	15%
Fully disagree	4%
Hard to say	18%



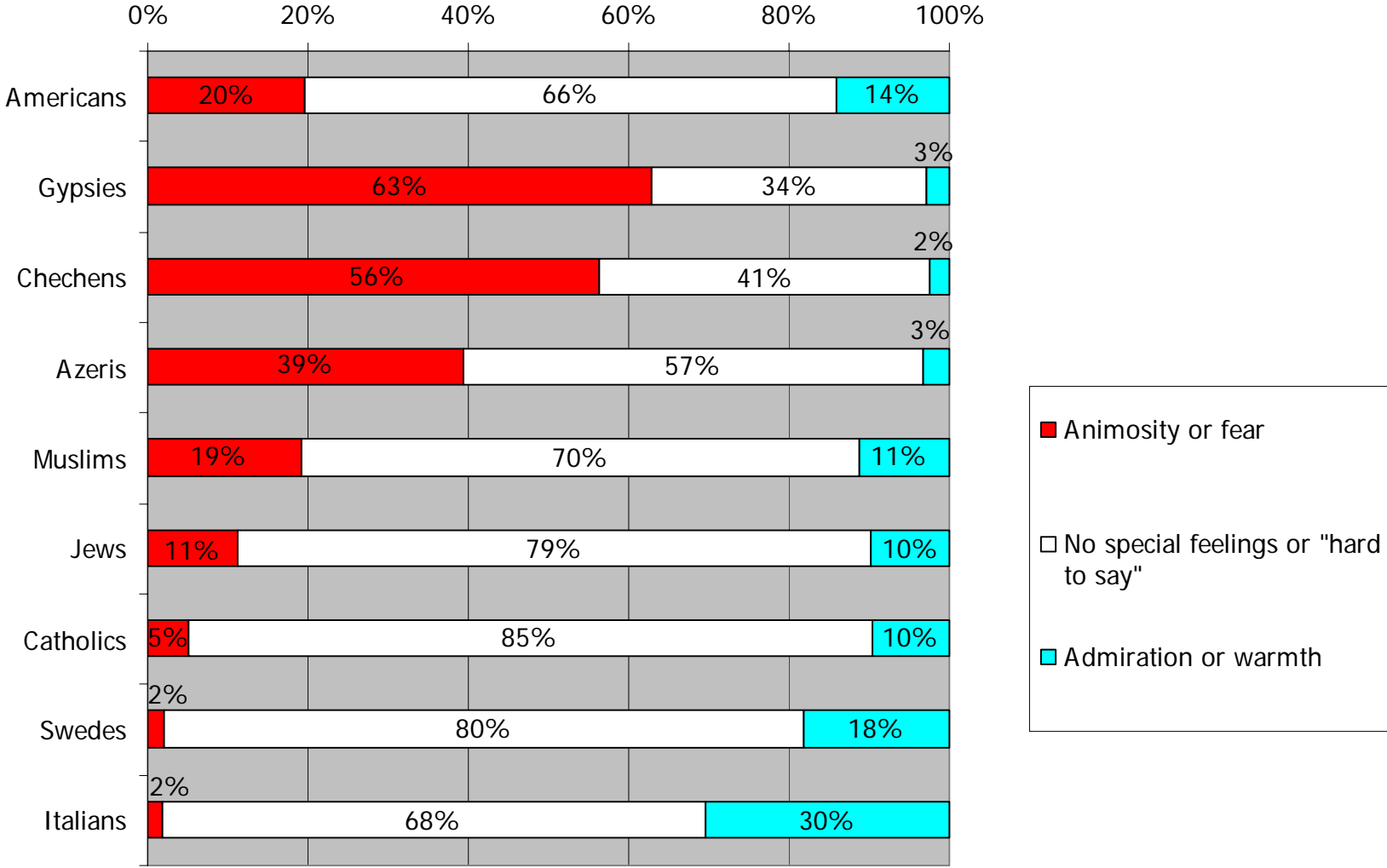
Stalin

	Fully agree	Somewhat agree	Hard to say	Somewhat disagree	Fully disagree
Stalin was a wise leader	16%	33%	15%	26%	10%
Stalin does not deserve credit for our defeat of the Nazis	5%	17%	13%	44%	20%
Stalin was a cruel tyrant	12%	27%	14%	37%	9%
Stalin may have made some mistakes, but he did more good than bad	16%	38%	14%	25%	7%
Stalin was directly responsible for the imprisonment, torture, and execution of millions of innocent people	29%	39%	15%	14%	3%
Nowadays some people exaggerate Stalin's role in the repressions	9%	30%	25%	28%	8%

"Frenemies": Relationship of [country] to Russia?



Views Toward Others (2005 and 2007 surveys combined)*



*Note: Relative to 2005, hostility toward Gypsies and warmth toward Italians and Muslims increased slightly; otherwise, there are no statistically significant changes over time.



America and Americans

<i>Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?</i>					
	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
The United States tries to impose its norms and way of life on the rest of the world.	45%	34%	13%	5%	2%
Overall, the United States does more good than bad in the world.	4%	15%	40%	29%	11%
The United States gives aid to other countries only in order to influence their internal affairs.	36%	40%	16%	5%	3%



America and Americans

Which statement comes closest to reflecting your views?

I like both the American President and the American people	24%
I like the American President, but not the American people	3%
I like the American people, but not the American President	38%
I dislike both the American President and the American people	14%
Hard to say	21%



Perceptions of US Human Rights Violations

What do you think about reports that the American authorities engage in the following?

	I am sure it is true	It is probably true	I have no opinion whether it is true	It is probably not true	It is definitely not true
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The United States authorities apply torture to individuals suspected of terrorist activities.

19%	34%	39%	7%	2%
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The United States authorities send terrorism suspects to other countries so that they can be tortured in the course of interrogation there.

14%	30%	43%	10%	3%
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The United States authorities arrest terror suspects and hold them indefinitely without formal indictment, judicial review, or access to a lawyer.

16%	30%	41%	10%	3%
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Perceptions of US Human Rights Violations

Do you think the American authorities should engage in the following?

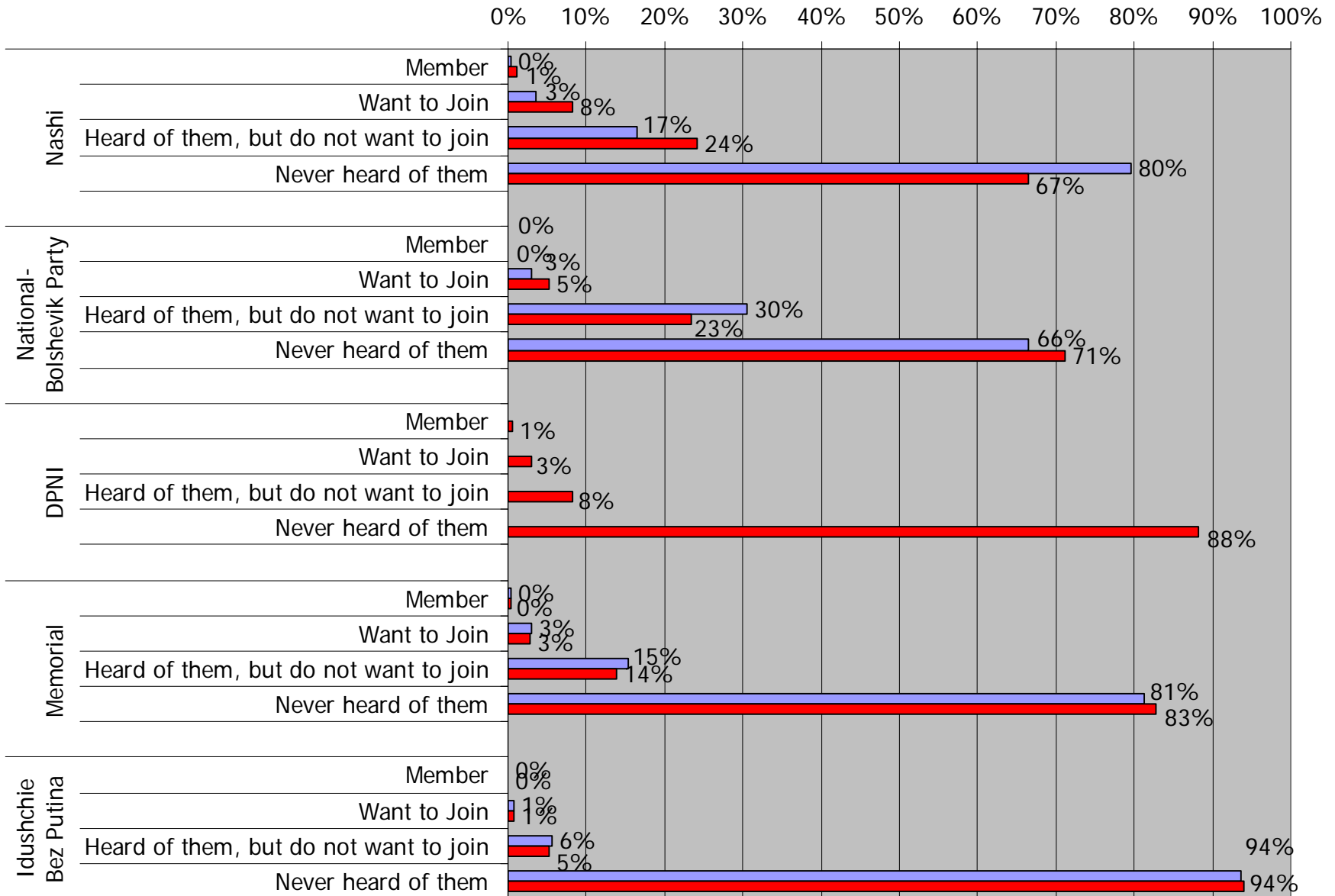
	Yes, they definitely should	They probably should	I have no opinion whether they should	They probably should not	They definitely should not
Apply torture to individuals suspected of terrorist activities.	7%	23%	28%	27%	15%
Send terrorism suspects to other countries so that they can be tortured in the course of interrogation there.	4%	12%	32%	33%	19%
Arrest terror suspects and hold them indefinitely without formal indictment, judicial review, or access to a lawyer.	4%	11%	28%	35%	22%



Who are the Anti-Americans?

- Those who believe claims of US human rights violations are more anti-American than those who are unsure about them and (even more so) those who do not perceive them.
- University educated Muscovite males are the most anti-American demographic group within Russian youth.
- In a curious twist, Russian Muslims are less anti-American than non-Muslims.

Awareness and views toward specific groups

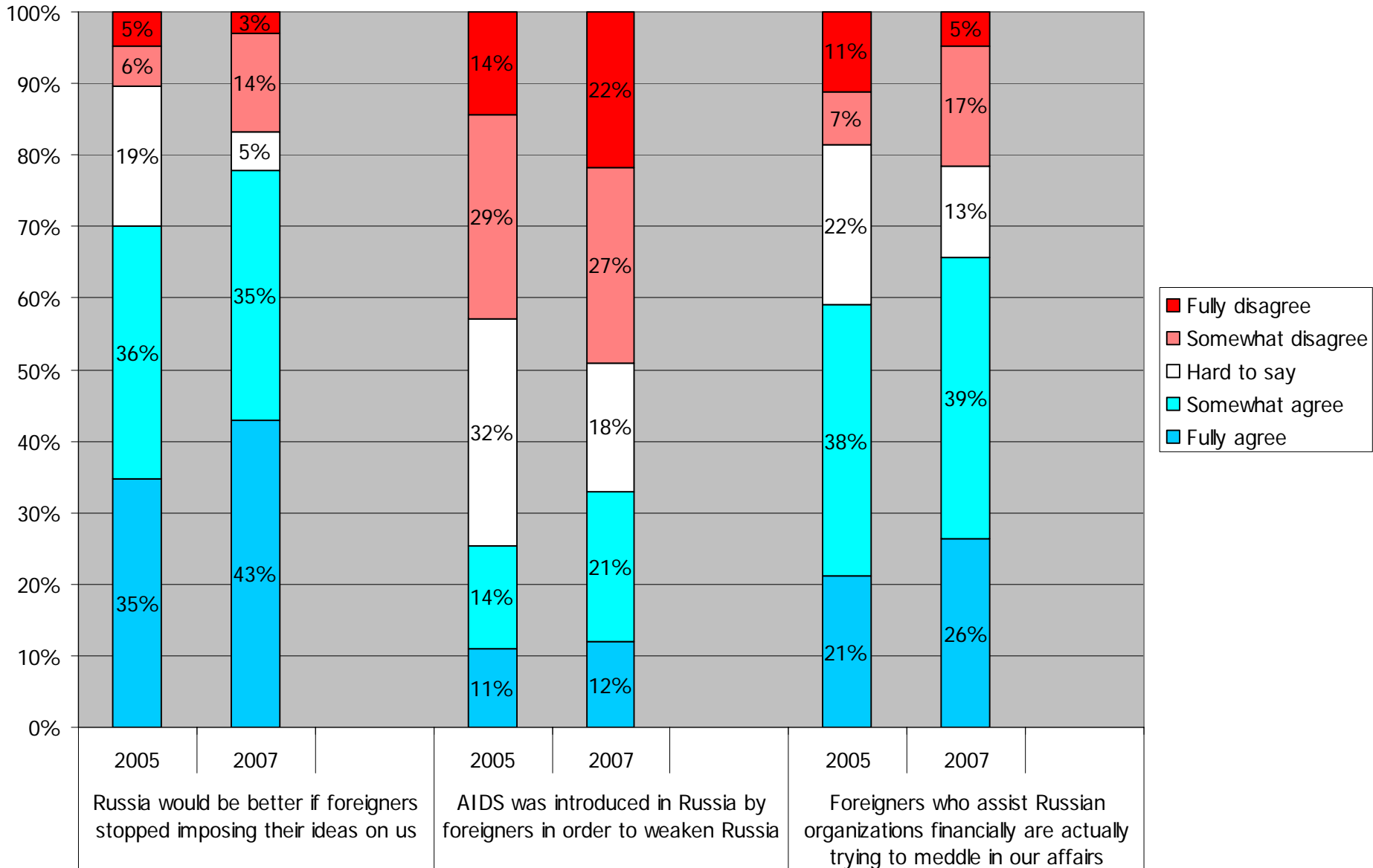




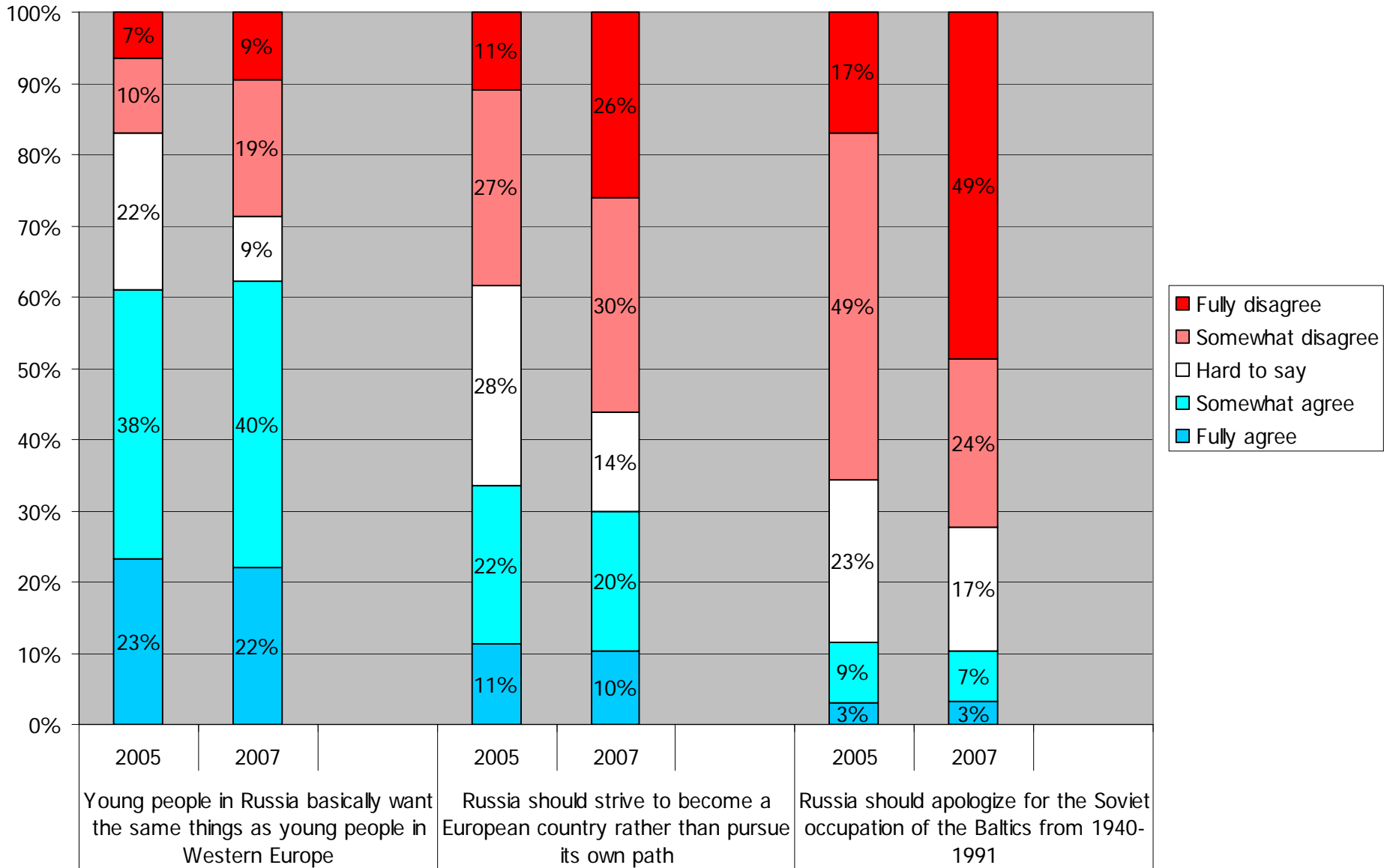
Nashi Supporters

- If the organization is serving its designed purpose, we would expect to find that those who support it are more likely to embrace the Putin administration's anti-American message. Is this the case?
- *Nashi supporters* are significantly more anti-American than young people who do not support *Nashi*, and supporters of *Memorial*
- As the *Nashi* constituency grows, so will support for Putin's anti-American rhetoric
- It makes sense to monitor the trajectory of this youth organization

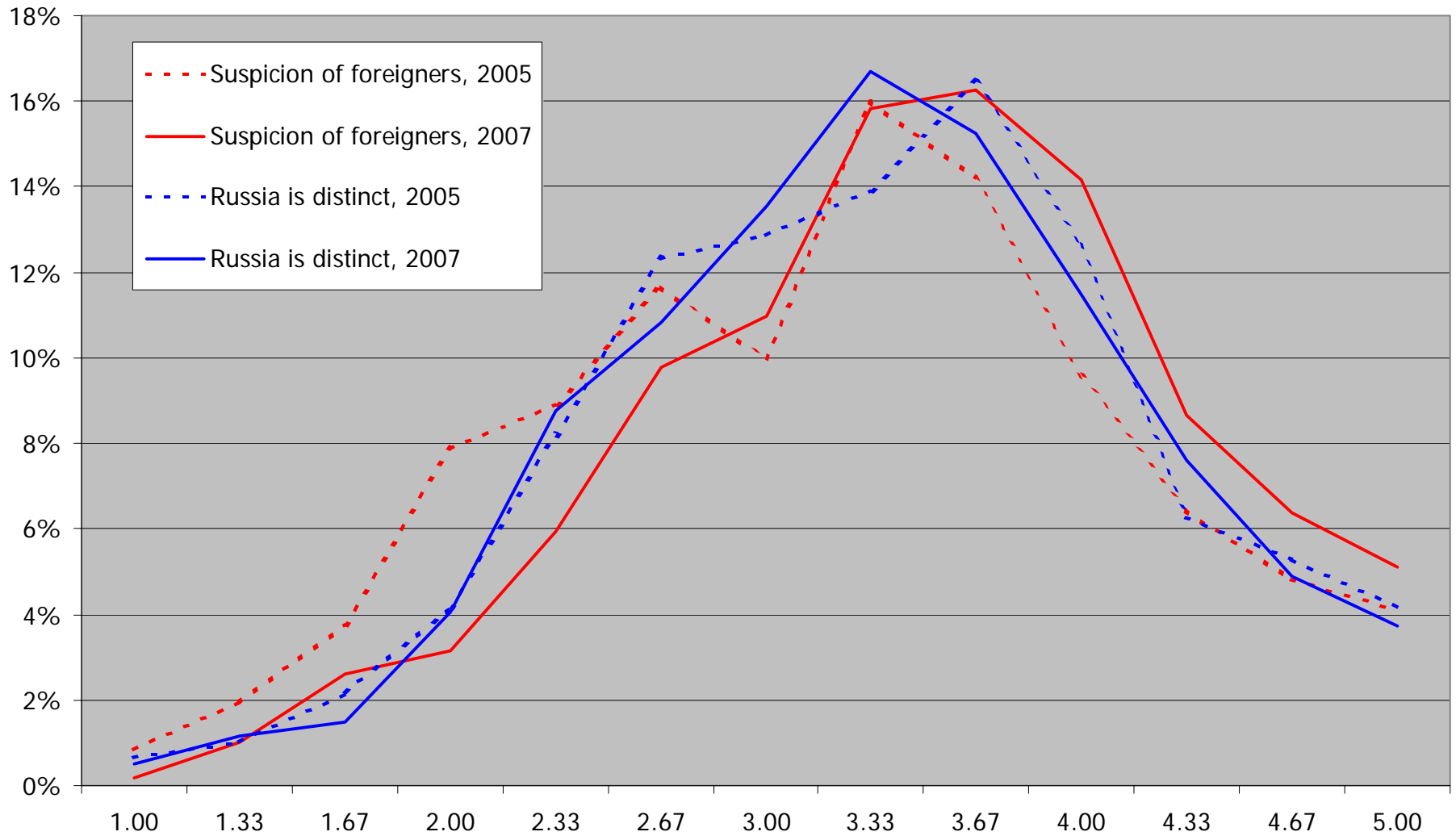
Views on foreign influence



Russia's Distinctivness



Growing Suspicions: Scales measuring views on nationalism issues

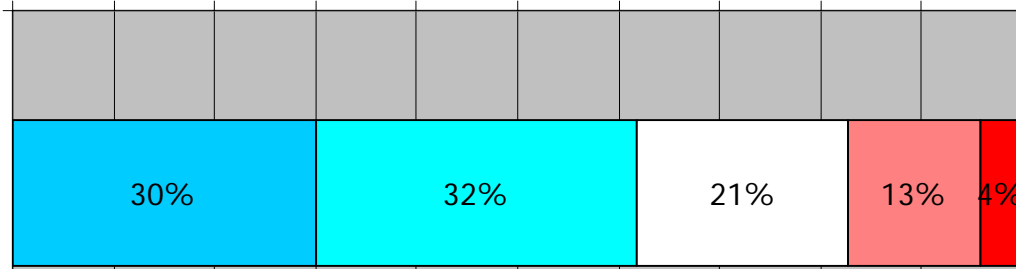


Note: Change in distribution is significant for "suspicion of foreigners," not significant for "Russia is distinct."

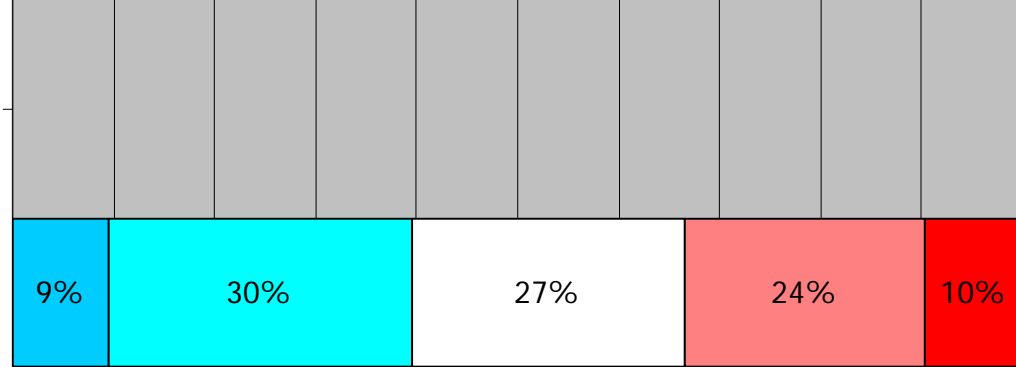
Views on Immigrants

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

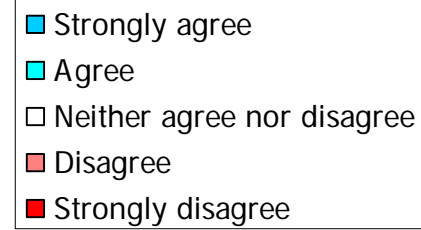
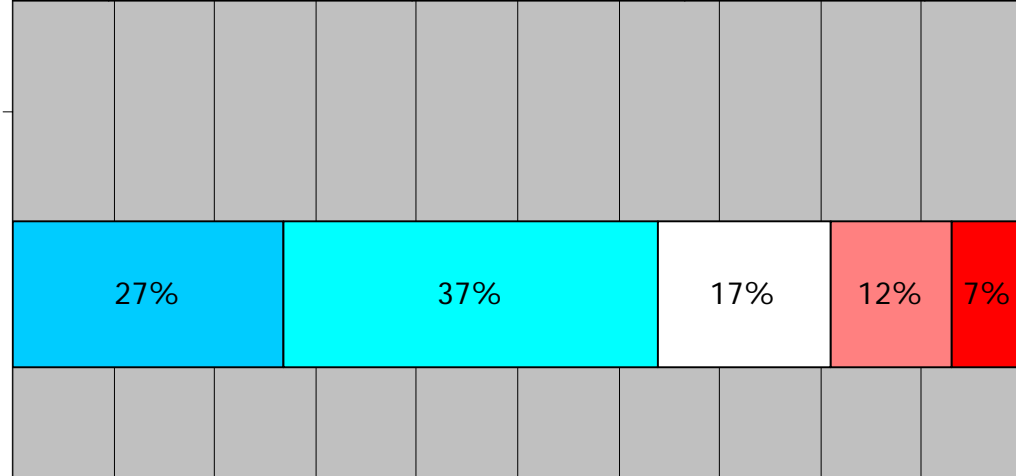
The Russian government should evict most immigrants.



Russia needs immigrants to work in jobs Russians don't want



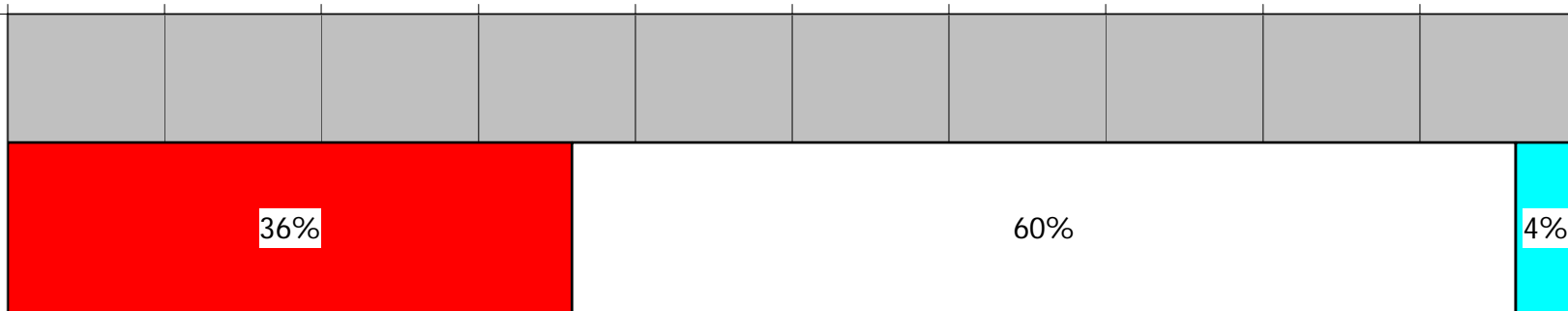
Immigrants should have the right to become Russian citizens if they obey Russia's laws and customs



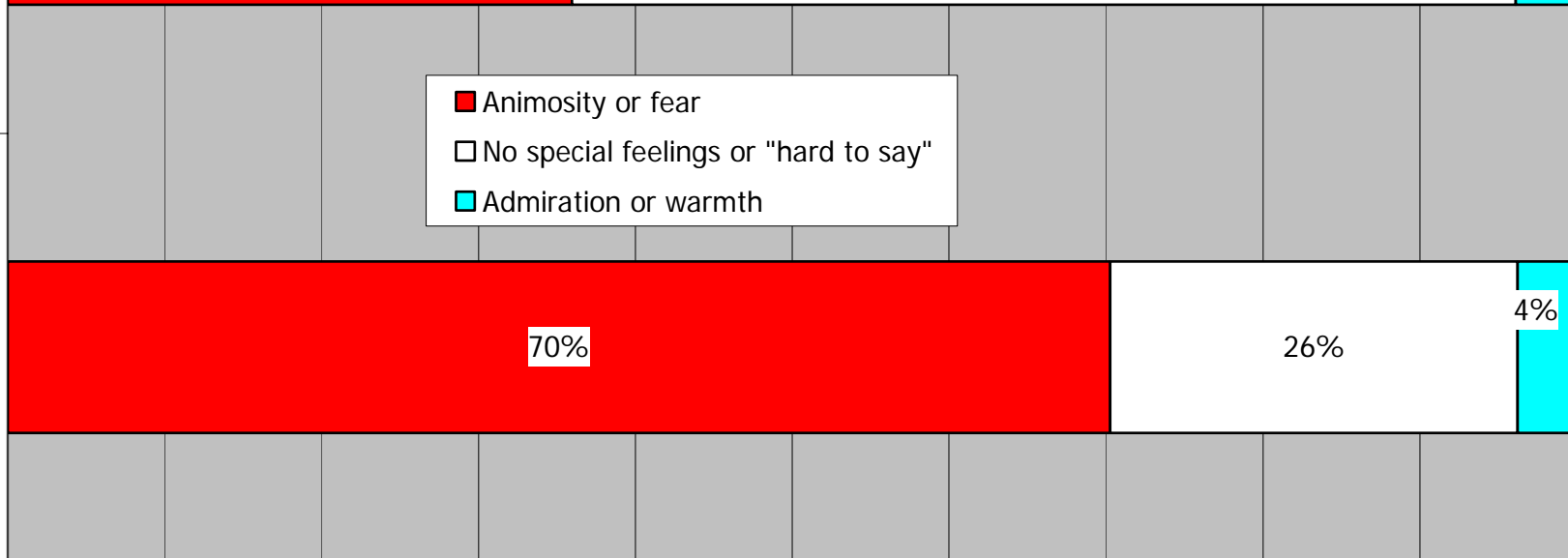
Views Toward Immigrants and Skinheads

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

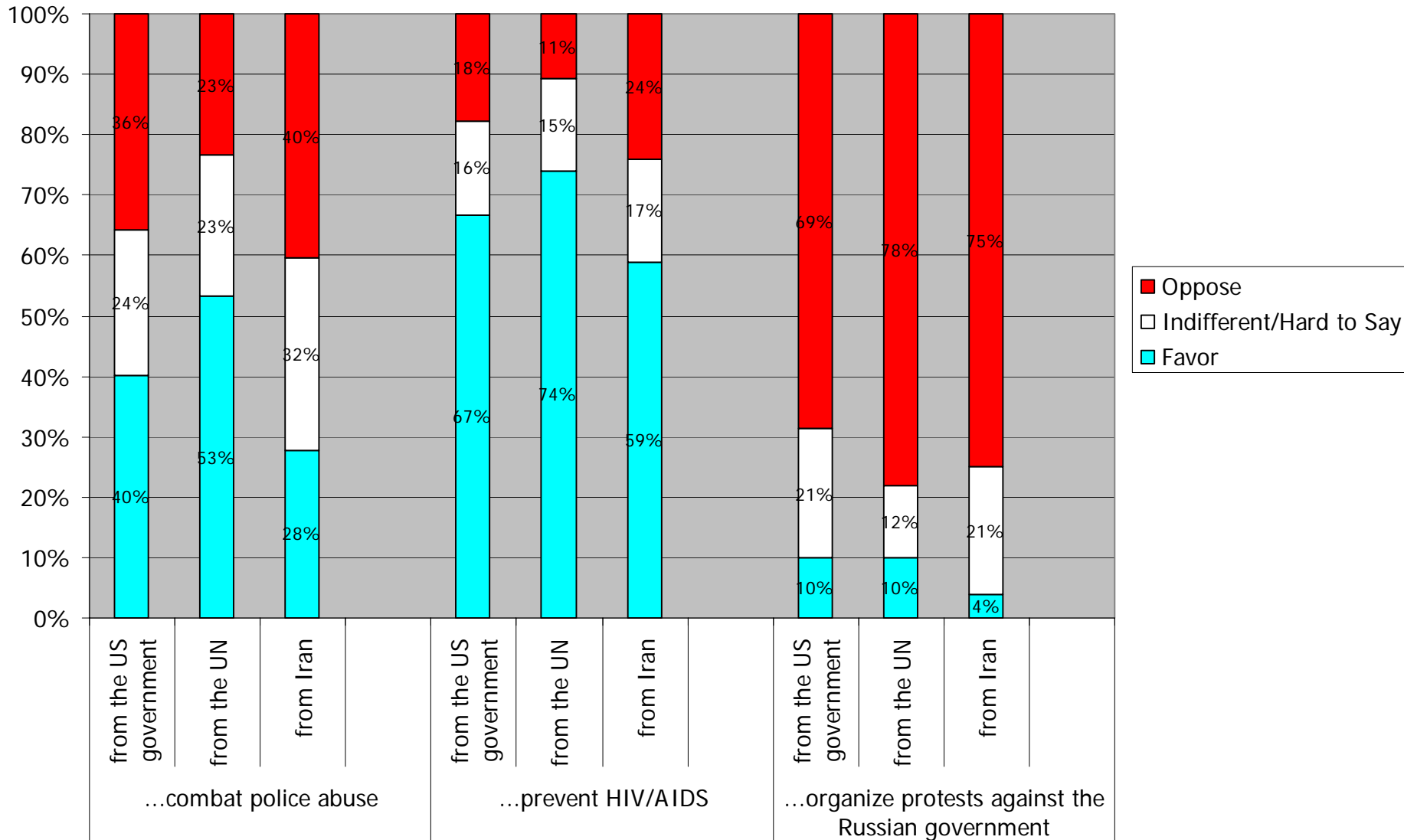
Immigrants



Skinheads



How would you feel about support from the following for sources for an NGO that works to...





Concluding Observations

- The Putin Generation's anti-American sentiment bodes ill for U.S.-Russian relations in the long term
- Future foreign assistance strategies should be informed by Russian views and address Russian needs
- This does not mean walking away from human rights or health
- Find new ways to address the role of absent memory in political development



Concluding Observations

- US CT policies have enabled authoritarian drift
- The next administration should call on all branches of the United States government and members of civil society to do what we can to reclaim our role as generators of human rights norms, not as abusers
- The next administration must show Russia and the world that we are re-embracing international human rights and humanitarian law, not only because it is the right thing to do but because it makes us safer
- Radical shifts in policies concerning counterterrorism will help reestablish US credibility on human rights