



# The New Russian Security Concept and the ZAPAD-2021 Exercises

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NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY OF LATVIA

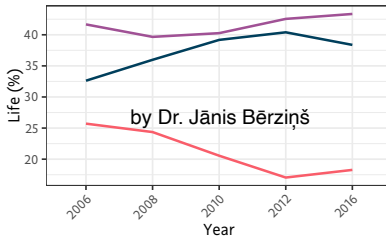
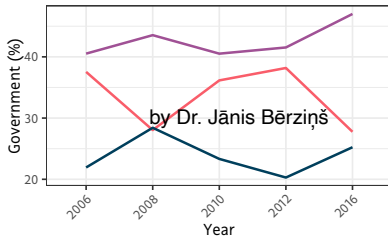
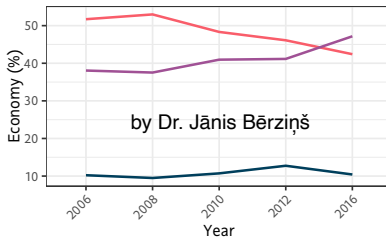
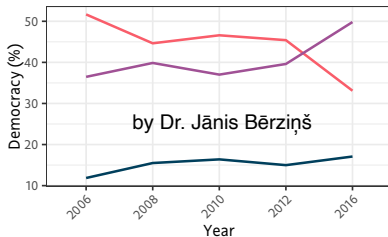
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## Satisfaction in Russia 2006 - 2016

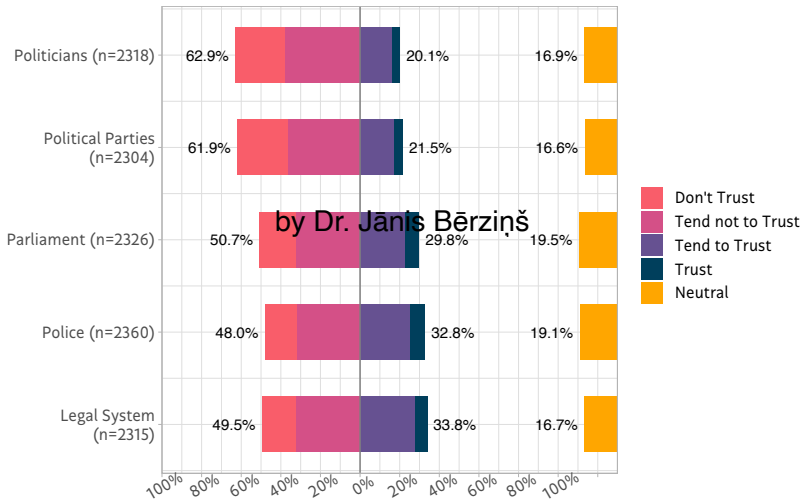
— Not Satisfied — Neutral — Satisfied



Source: Own calculations based on the European Social Survey.



## Trust in Institutions - Russia, 2016



Source: Own calculations based on the European Social Survey

## Russia's Military Doctrine's Word Cloud





## The 2014 Military Doctrine

Major external and internal military risks:

- Build-up of the power potential of NATO and vesting NATO with global functions carried out in violation of the rules of international law, bringing the military infrastructure of NATO member countries near the borders of the Russian Federation, including by further expansion of the alliance
- destabilization of the situation in individual states and regions and undermining of global and regional stability
- deployment (build-up) of military contingents of foreign states (groups of states) in the territories of the states contiguous with the Russian Federation and its allies, as well as in adjacent waters, including for exerting political and military pressure on the Russian Federation;

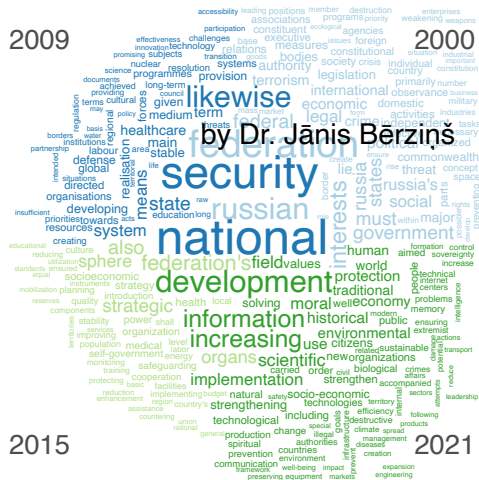


## The 2014 Military Doctrine

Major external and internal military dangers:

- Foreign private military companies
- Increasing threat of terrorism
- Activities of persons and organizations directed against sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of the state
- The trend of shifting of military dangers and threats in information space and inner sphere of a country

## Russia's National Security Strategy's Word Cloud





## The Security Strategy

16. (...) In order to gain advantages, a number of states exert open political and economic pressure on Russia and its partners. The increased attention of the world community to the problems of climate change and the preservation of a favorable environment is used as an excuse to restrict the access of Russian companies to export markets, restrain the development of Russian industry, establish control over transport routes, and impede Russia's development of the Arctic.

17. (...) The actions of some countries are aimed at instigating disintegration processes in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in order to destroy Russia's ties with its traditional allies. A number of states call Russia a threat and even a military adversary.





## The Security Strategy

19. (...) Against the background of the crisis of the Western liberal model, a number of states are making attempts to purposefully erode traditional values, distort world history, revise views on the role and place of Russia in it, rehabilitate fascism, and incite interethnic and interfaith conflicts. (...) The RF is unreasonably accused of violating international obligations, carrying out computer attacks, and interfering in the internal affairs of foreign states. Russian citizens and compatriots living abroad are discriminated and openly persecuted.



## The Security Strategy

20. Unfriendly countries are trying to use the existing socio-economic problems in the Russian Federation to destroy its internal unity, inspire and radicalize the protest movement, support marginal groups and split Russian society. Indirect methods aimed at provoking long-term instability within the Russian Federation are increasingly used.

21. Against the background of the implementation of a targeted policy to contain the Russian Federation, strengthening its sovereignty, independence, state and territorial integrity, protecting the traditional spiritual and moral foundations of Russian society, ensuring defense and security, and preventing interference in the internal affairs of the Russian Federation acquire vital importance for our country.

## ZAPAD-2021

- Two Phases
  - Color Revolution in Belarus
  - Contagion to Russia
- Nyaris, Pomoria, and the Polar Republic





## Zapad 2021 Training Grounds by Jānis Bērziņš



## First Phase

- NATO intervention into Belarus. Russia and Belarus respond
- Tested Russia's ability to raise units on alert, mobilize reserves, and deploy active units to the combat zone (training ranges) amid simulated large-scale aerospace attacks by the United States and NATO from multiple strategic directions
- One of the primary tasks in this phase was to deflect and parry a strategic NATO aerospace attack on both Russian forces and critically important infrastructure in the Russian homeland



## First Phase

- Russian formations left their garrisons while quick reaction forces like the airborne simulate flanking attacked along a fragmented front.
- Tested command and control relationships, logistics, and transitioning of the economy to a wartime footing
- Large reserve were activated, and military districts practiced coordinating critical civilian support functions
- Russian forces deployed, defended, and engaged in sustained counterattacks to disorganizing the opponent's offensive operation through conventional strikes and electronic attack



## Second Phase

- Combined-arms Russian force “stabilizing” the situation in response to a crisis
- Russian ground forces simulated a maneuver defense, degrading offensive forces and drawing them into fire cauldrons or pockets, before conducting a counteroffensive
- Russian strategic deterrence forces simulated strikes against critical targets and infrastructure in the opposing states
  - These are intended to demonstrate the Russian military’s ability to inflict substantial costs via conventional means and compel an opponent to abandon the conflict



## Second Phase

- The Russian navy practiced destroying enemy surface action and carrier strike groups, repelling amphibious landings, and conducting long-range strikes against land-based infrastructure
- Airborne units reinforced forward deployed formations, formed up into battalion tactical groups, and conducted raids or flanking actions to hold operationally significant positions
- Russia for the first time tested an independent payment system.
- The practical actions of the general naval forces were held in the southern part of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Finland





## Main Take Aways

- the Russian security and defense elite is aware of the country's internal fragilities being a possible conduit to destabilization operations that might escalate into open military conflict
- National grassroots movements might be considered a foreign attack with following escalation
- Conventional military capabilities are core to Russian defense strategy
  - Conventional
  - Unconventional
  - Whole of society approach