

Federal State Budgetary
educational institution of higher education
RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF NATIONAL ECONOMY AND PUBLIC SERVICE
UNDER THE PRESIDENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
SIBERIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT

As a manuscript



SLAVINSKAYA Anastasia Konstantinovna

Youth extremism in modern Russia: problems, solutions, prospects

Abstract of the dissertation for the degree of candidate of political sciences in the
specialization

5.5.2 - Political institutions, processes, technologies

Scientific supervisor:

Savinov Leonid Vyacheslavovich,

Doctor of Political Science, Professor

Novosibirsk – 2025

The main results of the dissertation of A.K. Slavinskaya
Youth extremism in modern Russia: problems, solutions, prospects

The dissertation for the degree of Candidate of Political Sciences by A.K. Slavinskaya is completed in the scientific field of "5.5.2 – Political Institutions, Processes, Technologies" and represents a comprehensive independent study of youth extremism and its characteristics in modern Russia, as well as ways and mechanisms to counter youth extremism in the Russian Federation. The work presents a set of conclusions containing scientific novelty, making a certain contribution to the development of domestic political science and practice, as well as having significant potential for use in scientific, advisory and expert activities of specialists in political science, as well as employees of internal affairs and security agencies.

Relevance of the research topic. Today, Russian society is experiencing a significant level of extremism among young people. The situation is becoming more complicated every year, primarily due to large-scale transformational processes taking place in the main institutional subsystems of society, which are causing a number of destructive consequences. It should be understood that any profound transformation provokes social disorganisation or deformation of existing social institutions. In addition, it is worth considering the following factors.

Young people are one of the largest socio-demographic groups in society, with certain age-specific characteristics, interests and values, and this group occupies a specific place in the social structure. Precisely because young people constitute a significant part of the population, they are an important factor of power in the political sphere of public life – various political groups rely on this social group during transformations in the state and society. And since young people are a strategic resource for the state and a guarantee of social development, the spread of extremism among young people poses a threat to the future of the entire country.

Multinationality and multi-confessionalism, and in general the diversity of Russian society, youth nihilism towards law and a fluid value system also have a negative impact on young people's worldview, placing this social group in the high-

risk category. So, social differences in society and the global openness of the information and communication space are just as dangerous, often creating the conditions for extreme behaviour.

At the same time, current foreign policy processes and factors affect the growth of extremism among young people. The geopolitical conflicts of the last decade (the war in Syria, the special military operation and the hybrid war against our state, which is being actively carried out by Western countries) create complex and multi-level contexts for young people. We should also note the targeted informational and psychological impact on Russian society (and, in particular, on young people) aimed at destabilising Russia by the special services of Ukraine and other hostile states.

That is why the study of the phenomenon of youth extremism, the identification of its forms of manifestation and characteristics in Russian society, as well as the comparison of technologies and tools to combat it, is of vital importance for the prevention and countering of youth extremism, since the emerge of extremist groups (associations) and the intensification of their activities pose a threat to national security.

Thus, studying the causes of youth extremism and improving the technologies for overcoming it is an important task not only in terms of its political and practical implications, but also in terms of political science, both for the scientific community and for the state and its institutions of power. In our opinion, this research will help identify the factors that contribute to the spread of youth extremism and determine effective mechanisms and tools to counter it.

At the same time, the problem is that, today, there is still no unified approach to the prevention and warning of youth extremism in the regions of the Russian Federation and the state as a whole. As a rule, there are general recommendations on what this approach should be and what it should include (for example, the main directions of state policy in the field of countering extremism are prescribed in the Strategy for Countering Extremism in the Russian Federation until 2025). Often, preventive measures are formal in nature and are carried out in an extremely fragmented manner, which seems inappropriate in the context of real threats and

challenges. Consequently, there is a need to develop scientifically based, truly effective and specific recommendations.

Improving technologies for overcoming youth extremism is important in practical terms, as it will enable young people to be involved in positive social practices and community projects, as well as helping to shape healthy values and beliefs in young people that do not conflict with Russia's national interests.

The degree of development of a scientific problem. Extremism as an independent subject of study in political science began to be researched in the late 1970s, when the number of left-wing terrorist organisations began to grow in developed countries. The phenomenon of youth extremism is relatively new in political life and is the focus of attention of both Russian and foreign researchers, taking on the character of interdisciplinary research.

An analysis of publications on the topic of youth extremism in the Russian Science Citation Index (RSCI) shows that the number of scientific publications is increasing every year. The RSCI search engine for the keyword 'youth extremism' shows the availability of scientific works (articles, books, dissertations) by period: 1990-1994 – 0, 1995-1999 – 1, 2000-2004 – 6, 2005-2009 – 111, 2010-2014 – 463, 2015-2019 – 900, 2020-2024 – 766. The number of publications on the subject under consideration is increasing in the core of the Russian Science Citation Index, which indicates the qualitative development of research.

In a broad humanitarian context, the problem of extremism is considered in the philosophical works of R.M. Afanasyeva, A.M. Bagautdinov, A.A. Ignatenko, and others.

Scientific research covering the problems of extremism and its prevention can be conditionally classified on several grounds. This is due to the fact that the works were carried out within the framework of various scientific subject areas, including political science itself, as well as sociology, philosophy, psychology, law, and others.

The growth of extremism among young people was highlighted in the works of E.A. Grishin, M.I. Egorov, Yu.A. Zubok, S.P. Ivanenkov, A.V. Serikov, L.A. Potapova, V.I. Chuprov, and others.

The specifics of the political component of extremism were presented in the publications of M.K. Archakov, S.V. Ventsel, E.N. Karatueva, V.N. Naidenko, A.K. Magomedov, and others.

A description of the functions and mechanisms of extremism formation can be found in the works of E.N. Semkina, A.V. Sigarov, G.M. Meretukov, A.V. Ivanov, and others.

When studying youth extremism, a number of different grounds are distinguished:

- the characteristics of the upbringing of the younger generation in different types of families and the influence of such upbringing on the formation of criminal behaviour among young people (N.V. Filippova, I.A. Dvoymenny, A.N. Elizarov, I.M. Khadikova, T.G. Pospelova, V.L. Bozadzhiev);
- the classification of extremist groups (A.G. Nikitin, V.S. Kudrin, E.S. Skrebets);
- leisure issues and the role of informal youth associations in desocialisation (A.S. Gilyano, E.V. Knyazkova, Z.I. Bichanina, V.Ya. Surtayev);
- legal illiteracy, political and legal nihilism among young people (E.S. Zhidyayeva, Yu.S. Kanina).

The current stage of research into youth extremism within the framework of political science concepts is characterised by the works of G.V. Akimova, N.B. Baal, E.N. Grechkina, S.V. Ventsel, S.N. Fridinsky, D.A. Lazarev, E.P. Olifirenko, L.V. Savinov, E.V. Ulezko, and Ya.Yu. Shashkova.

Youth extremism, primarily caused by conflictological, national (ethnic), and confessional components, is examined in the works of R.G. Abdulatipova, V.Kh. Akaeva, S.A. Alekseeva, V.O. Bobrovnikova, I.M. Vakula, G.S. Denisova, A.A. Ignatenko, E.V. Nekrasova, B. Jenkins, R. Payne, and others.

The legal basis of extremism among young people has been studied in the works of authors such as E.A. Avdeev, S.M. Vorobyov and M.E. Erokhina, Yu.S. Zharikov and M.F. Kostyuk, V.V. Engel, and others.

Issues of countering and preventing youth extremism have been addressed in studies by S.V. Devyatovskaya, D.A. Koshelev, N.A. Solovyova and P.P. Fantrov, D.L. Tsybakov, and others.

Foreign studies of extremism and its prevention are characterised by the works of P. Coleman and A. Bartoli, E. Loland and J. Moroni, E. Rice, P. Riker, A. Sotlyar, S. Trip, K. Bora and M. Marian, K. Hickman, M. Hassan, Ya.V. Projen and A. Cruvel, and many others.

An analysis of the scientific literature has shown that there is still a high degree of debate in scientific discourse regarding the nature of youth extremism as a political phenomenon and political problem, the assessment of modern political technologies, including the regulatory and legal framework and approaches to countering it in this area.

In particular, existing studies on the issue are based on various research and methodological approaches that often contradict each other. It is notable that most of the materials focus on aspects of youth extremism studied in sociology, pedagogy, psychology, jurisprudence, etc.

At the same time, the dynamics of political practices in the field of prevention and countering youth extremism indicate the development and change of forms and manifestations of extremism in the youth environment. Thus, it seems promising to study youth extremism in the context of the transforming Russian reality through a comprehensive political science approach.

The object of the study is youth extremism as a political phenomenon and political problem..

The subject of the research is the policy of countering youth extremism in modern Russia.

The purpose of the study is to clarify the problems, solutions and prospects of the policy of countering youth extremism in modern Russia.

Achieving this goal requires setting and solving the following **research problems**:

1. to analyse the basic theoretical and methodological positions used in studying the phenomenon of youth extremism in modern Russia;
2. to identify and explain the types and forms of youth extremism and the specifics of its manifestation in the Russian Federation;
3. to summarise foreign experience in countering extremism among young people and determine the possibilities for its use in the national context;
4. to identify the forms of manifestation, dynamics and trends in the development of youth extremism in modern Russia;
5. to identify the prospects for countering youth extremism within the framework of state youth policy.

The theoretical basis of the study was provided by the scientific work of researchers such as Akimova G.V., Aminov D.I., Archakov M.K., Baal N.B., Belikov S.A., Ventsel S.V., Grishina E. A., Grechkina E.N., Egorov M.I., Zubok Yu.A., Ivanenkov S.P., Kozlov A.A., Lazarev D.A., Morozov G.I., Oganian R.E., Olifirenko E. P., Petrishchev V.E., Pidzjakov A.Yu., Potapova L.A., Savinov L.V., Serikov A.V., Ulezko E.V., Fridinsky S.N., Chuprov V.I., Shashkova Ya.Yu. and others.

Methodological basis of the study. In this work, a systematic approach was used, which made it possible to consider youth extremism as a result of negative socio-economic, socio-political, moral and other social factors. The institutional method helped to explore the essence of the phenomenon of youth extremism, its signs, types and forms. The dialectical method allowed us to identify the dynamics and trends of youth extremism in Russia. The use of a political and cultural approach explained the mechanisms of youth involvement in extremist manifestations in modern Russian society.

The work used methods of analysing information materials from the mass media, including Internet resources, documents of state authorities, legal acts and other regulatory documents regulating the countering of extremism.

Chronological framework of the study covers youth extremism in contemporary Russia, from the early 1990s to the present day.

The empirical basis of the study includes official documents and statistical data necessary for a comprehensive analysis of the stated topic. These include official documents from state authorities and local governments, as well as documents regulating the activities of law enforcement agencies and special services in the organisation of counter-extremism efforts. The study used official statistical reports from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, materials from the press service of the Federal Security Service, and the National Anti-Terrorism Committee of Russia.

The results of sociological studies (secondary sociological analysis) were processed:

— FOMnibus – weekly all-Russian door-to-door survey. 2020-2024. 53 constituent entities of the Russian Federation, 104 settlements, 1,500 respondents. The statistical error does not exceed 3.6%. FOM-OM project: 2024 – ‘Youth in the labour market: flexibility vs stability’ (preferences in forms of youth employment); 2023 – ‘Risks of youth radicalisation on the internet’ (how Russians assess the role of social networks in the spread of extremism); 2023 – ‘Protest sentiments among students’ (analysis of the causes of discontent and forms of its expression); 2023 – ‘Career strategies of Generation Z’ (what professions young Russians choose); 2021 – ‘Tolerance towards radical groups: age differences’ (comparison of the positions of young people and the older generation); 2021 – ‘Youth and entrepreneurship: barriers and motivation’.

— All-Russian annual telephone survey ‘VTsIOM-Sputnik’. 2020-2024. 1,600 Russians aged 18 and older: 2024 – ‘Russians’ attitudes towards extremist manifestations among young people’ (analysis of the perception of the threat of extremism, assessment of the effectiveness of state policy); 2024 – ‘Youth employment: problems and expectations’ (how young people assess career prospects in Russia); 2023 – ‘Youth and political activism: the limits of what is acceptable’ (research on the degree of involvement of young people in protest activity); 2023 – ‘Youth-2023: values and guidelines’ (assessments of employment, migration attitudes, attitudes towards the state); 2022 – ‘Migrant workers vs locals: competition in the

labour market through the eyes of young people' (study of perceptions of labour migration); 2022 – 'Social networks and radical ideas: who is susceptible to influence?' (assessment by young people of the risks of exposure to destructive content); 2021 – 'Nationalism and xenophobia among young people' (measurements of intolerance among Russians aged 18–30).

Conformity of the work content to the passport of scientific specialization

5.5.2 – Political institutions, processes, technologies.

The dissertation research is carried out in the scientific-problematic and semantic content of the following positions of the passport:

21. Ethnopolitical processes and conflicts. National-state, national-territorial, national-cultural self-determination;

26. Social and political conflicts: causes, factors, types, and regulation technologies;

30. Political technologies and the specifics of their application.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the comprehensive political analysis reflecting the problems of extremism among young people in contemporary Russia.

Specifically, scientific novelty is expressed in the following:

1. A systematic theoretical and methodological analysis of domestic and foreign works was carried out, resulting in the author's clarification of the concepts of 'extremism' and 'youth extremism'.

2. As a result of a review analysis of studies on extremism, the author presents a refined classification of the causes of youth extremism.

3. The author demonstrates the interconnection between extremist behaviour among young people and various transformational processes taking place in Russian society.

4. This paper concludes that destructive content in information and telecommunications networks exacerbates the problem of youth extremism.

5. The paper identifies ways and mechanisms for improving the fight against youth extremism in the specific conditions of modern Russian reality.

Provisions submitted for defense.

1. An analysis of theoretical developments in the field of extremism reveals a lack of consensus on the phenomenon of extremism, as well as a lack of definition of youth extremism. In light of this, the author proposes a clarification of the concept of extremism and a definition of youth extremism. Extremism is the expression of extreme views through illegal actions aimed at reforming the political, economic, moral or social spheres of society or their individual components. Youth extremism is a phenomenon characterised by illegal activities of representatives of marginal social groups aged 14 to 35 in extreme forms aimed at radically changing one or more spheres of public life.

2. An analysis of the typology of extremism carried out in the context of existing theoretical research has made it possible to identify the author's model of the social basis of youth extremism. Thus, five groups of reasons for young people joining extremist movements, groups and formations were identified: political (ideological contradictions, low political culture, external influences and threats), the influence of the digital environment (public availability of content, including illegal content, anonymity, social networks as a recruitment tool), economic (low incomes, high inflation and economic uncertainty), social (polarisation of society, weak social mobility, level of education, migration), psychological (psychological and age characteristics and susceptibility to external influences, personal frustration, desire for power and authority).

3. Youth extremism is based not only on political or socio-economic problems in the state, but also on religious and moral values and interethnic relations. Given that research shows an active shift of youth extremism to 'virtual space,' effective countering of extremism and measures to prevent it require not only state instruments, but also other measures that would prevent extremist manifestations and limit the negative aspirations of young extremists.

4. Proposals for improving policies in the field of preventing and countering extremism among young people reflect the need to create a set of preventive measures to neutralise the threats of extremism among young people, which will include the following: involving specialists from various spheres of life to develop specific areas

of state youth policy; measures to involve today's youth in the bodies responsible for implementing state youth policy, with the aim of implementing it with the direct participation and under the leadership of young people who have an objective understanding of what today's youth are concerned with; work on a clear division of powers between the bodies implementing state youth policy; financing of state youth policy measures not only from the federal budget, but also by commercial enterprises, giving them the opportunity to advertise themselves and attract young specialists to work.

Theoretical significance of the study is determined by the fact that the results of the analysis expand political science knowledge about the essence and nature of youth extremism within the social realities of modern Russia.

Practical significance of the research is expressed in the fact that the conclusions and recommendations prepared in the work can be applied in the activities of the unified system of public authorities of the Russian Federation – for the purpose of analysing youth extremism at the regional level, for the preparation of a set of measures to prevent and counter extremism among young people.

Approbation of research results. Theoretical and applied results of the dissertation research are presented at scientific forums and conferences:

- 1) IV International Scientific and Practical Conference ‘SOCIAL SCIENCE’: SDSE ‘Strategies for Social and Economic Development in the New Reality’ (Rostov-on-Don, 2022);
- 2) International Symposium on Comprehensive Territorial Development ‘State. Politics. Society (CTD-2022)’ (Yekaterinburg, 2022);
- 3) IV International Scientific and Practical Conference “Economics and Law. Current State and Future Prospects” (Petrozavodsk, 2022);
- 4) International Youth Scientific Forum ‘Lomonosov-2023’ - regional platform ‘Vernadsky - Novosibirsk Region’ (Novosibirsk, 2023).

List of the author's publications.

Articles in publications recommended by the Academic Council of the Academy

- 1) Ruzavina A.K. Definition of extremism in contemporary scientific

discourse // The bulletin of Irkutsk state university. Series «Political science and religion studies». 2021. Volume 35, pp. 9-16;

2) Ruzavina A.K. The influence of the media on the growth of extremism among young people // Society: politics, economics, law. 2021. No. 2 (91), pp. 26-30;

3) Ruzavina A.K. The Internet and social networks as a factor in the spread of youth extremism // Political Science Issues. 2021. No. 4 (68), pp. 1174-1181;

4) Ruzavina A.K., Tabarev D.M. Radicalisation of youth as a threat to the national security of the Russian Federation // Issues of National and Federative Relations. 2021. No. 11 (80). 2021. Volume 11. pp. 3136-3143;

5) Ruzavina A.K. Youth extremism – threats and challenges to modern Russia // Issues of National and Federative Relations. 2023. No. 7 (100). Volume 13. pp. 3136-3143.

Other works by the author

Articles published in peer-reviewed scientific journals and publications included in the RSCI :

6) Ruzavina A.K. Methods of countering youth extremism in the Russian Federation // Strategies for the development of society and the economy in the new reality. Collection of works from the fourth international scientific and practical conference 'SOCIAL SCIENCE' Part II. Rostov-on-Don, 20-21 October 2022. Edited by Ignatova T.V., Bryukhanova N.V. – Rostov-on-Don: YURI RANHiGS. – 2022. – pp. 369-374;

7) Ruzavina A.K. Prevention of youth extremism on the Internet // State. Politics. Society (CTD-2022): Collection of articles from the International Symposium on Comprehensive Territorial Development, Yekaterinburg, 23-25 November 2022. - Yekaterinburg: Ural University of Management – branch of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, 2022.

The results of the applicant's dissertation research are also presented in the following scientific publications:

8) Ruzavina A.K. The use of Internet technologies to recruit young people into extremist organisations // Economics and law. Current state and prospects for

development: collection of articles from the IV International Scientific and Practical Conference (19 December 2022). – Petrozavodsk: MCNP 'New Science', 2022. – P. 173-176;

9) Ruzavina A.K. State regulation of policy in the field of countering extremism // Materials of the International Youth Scientific Forum 'LOMONOSOV-2023' / Ed. by I.A. Aleshkovsky, A.V. Andriyanov, E.A. Antipov, E.I. Zimakova. [Electronic resource] – Moscow: MAKS Press, 2023.

The structure and volume of the research are determined by the purpose and research tasks of the work. The dissertation research includes an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion and a list of used sources and literature used.

The text of the dissertation research is 169 pages, the total volume of work is 189 pages.