

**THE PROTEST POTENTIAL OF BLACK SEA REGION AREA  
UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF THE NEW ELECTORAL CYCLE  
(ON THE EXAMPLE OF KRASNODAR REGION)**

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The researchers have presented the analysis of the potential protest of the Black Sea area in the background of the development of a new electoral cycle between 2016-2018. The analysis shows that in Russia as a whole (according to the expert opinion) protest activity will increase. Protests related to the elections in Russia (the State Duma elections of the President), as well as the dissatisfaction of the population a significant reduction in quality of life, will wear, as opposed to the "Marsh" protest movement 2011-2013 a regional rather than nationwide character. The article shows the feature of the Black Sea area as a multi-ethnic, cross-border and strategically significant macro-analyze possible risks associated with the onset and development of a new electoral cycle. It is shown that the main threat to the stability of the macro-region in the development of the electoral situation is extremist movements, "playing" in the ethnic conflicts that, in relation to all the growing influx of migrants to the region, have considerable potential for conflict.

As the factual data are the results of sociological research, conducted in the Krasnodar region in June 2016 and aimed at the study of the socio-economic situation of residents of the province, inter-ethnic situation and measurement of potential protest in the region. In the frame of research in the article there have been discussed the following areas of analysis: assessment of the level of inter-ethnic tensions in the Krasnodar region, related to the migration policy, the level of life of the inhabitants of the region, assessment of the potential for protest and a description of the socio-demographic parameters, method of binary logistic regression was used to assess the significance of protest activity factors. Analysis of data from empirical research was made the general conclusion that the Krasnodar Territory does not stand out from the average indicators for the level of protest potential. The tendency of the population to the manifestation of protest activity in the region is due not so much socio-demographic factors, as personal security factors, for example fear of life and social well-being.

Key words: protest activity, electoral cycle, the threat of stability regions, migration policy, inter-ethnic situation.

Nowadays researches of protest activity level in the regions of Russia are appeared to be one of the foreground challenges of modern sociological science and practice. On the back of complex foreign policy atmosphere and negative tendencies in economic well-being of Russia (significant decrease of Russian people living standards), many analysts predict splash of civil discontent prior to elections to State Duma in autumn 2016, which presumably can outgrow into numerous protest actions throughout the country. Besides, according to the experts, protest activity will have noncentralized character as in 2011-2012, but regional, and will be pointed mainly to "faults" of regional powers in social and household sphere. It is worth mentioning that many researchers do not doubt in protests appearing, promoting suppositions only about their scope. Thus, A.A. Nechayev, the professor, and the leader of the party "Civic initiative", appearing at panel discussion "Russia in crises: political risk of 2016" within the frames of VII Gaidar forum, expressed his confirmation that in our country protest activities already pick up steam "according to concrete reasons – fee-paying parkings, ecological crimes, some evident corruption manifestations, monuments destruction and etc. When these protest activities on local matters unite with the protest on economic reasons then, as it is appeared, political risks will grow fast ... earlier or later, this certainly cannot help happening" [5].

At this forum the director of research and development centre "Special opinion" E.Sh. Kurbangaleeva noticed that the protest actions hardly outgrow in massive actions, however, the given actions will be poorly controlled: "Does this outgrow in vast protest movement – no, it does not. Most probably this will be constant succession of local protests". But this is to my mind the most dangerous. It is much easier to deal with the controlled protest or protest, which can be canalized under the systemic or even non-systemic opposition than protest chaos. There will be now leaders.

That is why the basic nerve of the oncoming campaign is – a succession of poorly regulated and poorly predictable local protests” [4]. According to conclusions, received in the course of economic and political reforms Centre inquiry (CEPR) “Power criticism and relation to mass actions”, conducted in January-March 2016, “mass transition to the other protest level (advancement of requirements of general character, political actions, cooperation between protest people even within the limits of one region, without speaking about interregional coordination) has not occurred yet. It can be acknowledged that for the present moment motivation to general civil solidarity and active protest has not formed yet. However, in mass consciousness there are transformations, general degree of discontent increases, more people consider that situation will not change without mass actions” [1].

Decline of internal political situation in Russia can negatively influence on state security general level in whole, lead to activation of extremist movements. Besides, mass throngs in the process of protest actions conducting can easily become the aim of terrorists. As, how the recent events in Europe showed, and particularly in France, the modern terrorism places stake on places with large concentration of people. The Black Sea area under the conditions of modern geopolitical realias is appeared to be strategically significant territory of Russia. That is why social and political stability supplying of the given macroregion is considered to be the most important direction in effective security system formation of our country. Krasnodar region, as the region, having one of the highest indexes of migration activity and ethnical differentiation has significant risks, connected with slacking of internal political situation. Interethnic contradiction, basing on competitive processes between local inhabitants and entrant, the inflow of which recently grows can become one of the trumps of extremist powers in the region. Thus, according to the data of Krasnodar statistics committee, migration increase in 2015 in comparison with index of 2014, rouse on 26% and comprised 57736 thousands of people, moreover the biggest migrators’ inflow in the structure of migration flows is accounted for cities, that inevitably creates tension on the labour market mainly in urban community, which, in its turn always appears to be the nucleus of protest activity. In the consciousness of the region native inhabitants migrants possess a serious competitive potential that induces some discontent among the local population. Besides, economic crises, which somehow affected on the regions of Russia, only gets the situation worse. For the present one does not observe problems, connected with unemployment (indexes have tendency to decline), however for the last 10 months defaulted debt on salary significantly increased. The gap was especially brightly expressed in October 2015, when debt to working people grew in 6 times in comparison with a previous month and comprised 31,7 mln of rubles.

The given index slightly decreased in June 2016 and comprised 21,5 mln. of rubles. Resonant cases of systematic non-payments of money allowance and protest actions conducting, connected with facts of similar violations are also well-known in the region. Thus, the meeting of factory workers named after Sedin, who 9 months were not paid salary took place on 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2015 in Krasnodar. The Criminal case on the fact of salary non-payment to these factory workers was directed to the court on 24<sup>th</sup> of November. Arbitration court of Krasnodar region admitted Closely-Held Stock Company “Krasnodar machine-building factory Sedin” to be bankrupt. As it is reported at the official site of Kuban television company RBC, “debtor has expired during more than three months debts in the amount of 275,64 mln. of rubles. From them debts on salary on 17<sup>th</sup> of March 2016 achieved 13,1 mln.of rubles. At the same time property reported value comprised 419,7 mln.of rubles., “however the real property cost, according to oral explanations of the manager, is significantly lower, market valuation within the observation procedure was not conducted”, as it is told in materials of the court” [2].

In the light of experts predictions about possible growth of population protest activity prior to elections, the researchers of ISEHR SSC RAS in June 2016 conducted in Krasnodar region social research with the help of questionnaire survey. Research objective – is study of economic and social situation of the region population, interethnic situation and protest potential mensuration. Data retrieval comprised 330 people, where 48,5% are men and 51,5% – are women. About 50% of sampled population was questioned in the regional center of Krasnodar, where mass protest actions can

occur with a biggest probability. The other participants half of inquiry are inhabitants of the cities and region districts, including large populated localities of littoral zone: Novorossiysk as industrial seaport and health resort Sochi-Adler, which receives the biggest number of tourists in contrast to the other littoral populated localities. Also data retrieval was divided according to age: young people (45,5%) and citizens of older age (54,5%) were question approximately in equal proportions.

According to the quiz data the majority of the region inhabitants consider that “tolerance” (45,5%) and “benevolence, peaceful coexistence” (34,8%) present in interethnic relations. Negative estimations – “tension” and “conflict” comprised totally only 11,8% of respondents. All this points to the quiet interethnic climate inside the region. Alongside with that, more than a quarter of respondents (26,1%) pointed to high probability of real interethnic collisions, that is rather significant index. Negative estimations were spoken out mainly by those respondents, who in reality dealt with situation of interethnic conflict. Approximately a third part of respondents – 28,8% from the general number had such experience. Judging by the answers of respondents, supposition about labor competition between local population and migrants is in any case confirmed in consciousness of the region inhabitants that: the great part of quiz participants (40%) marked that “migrants occupy work places, where local inhabitants could work”. In Krasnodar this opinion was spoken out more often than in cities and districts of the region. Third part of respondents (27,9%) expressed disagreement with this opinion, considering this problem to be strained, and the others (32,1%) do not consider themselves to be qualified to conduct such estimations. Considering the low level of unemployment in the region, objective suppositions for serious labor competition between local population and migrants are absent, however, in the consciousness of local residents the given problem is real that creates additional tension in relations with migrants, potential for protest movements formation. Rather tough position of the quiz participants, concerning migration policy development, confirms the given conclusion: the great majority (80,6%) considers that the strategy of migrants inflow restriction is suited for the region. Moreover, more than a half of respondents expressed the opinion that migrational legislation should be more severe (56,4%). Considering positive estimations of interethnic relations character, described higher, one can draw a conclusion that local people discontent aimed not to the fact of large number of other ethnic groups presence, but to the problems, which probably can lead to the additional migrants inflow. Possibly, such position of the region inhabitants is connected with the last events in Europe.

Socially-economic situation of Krasnodar region citizens can be estimated as a stable one. Index of family material stability is measured on-scale from -1(critical) to +1 (good) and comprised 0,3 of the point. The Index higher than one speaks about family material standing positive estimations predominance (“good” and “stable”). However, despite such optimistic data, less than a half of respondents are satisfied with their material standing (49,1%). The third part of respondents (36,4%) for the last year dealt with the situation of incomes decrease, but the majority from them (20,3%) look for the future with optimism (“I suppose this are temporarily difficulties and situation will normalize in the nearest year or two”). The rest part (16,1%) have pessimistic mood (“the situation will only get worse”). In spite of different opinions about epidemic loss of work in Krasnodar region, according to the researches data, only 15,8% of the respondents dealt with this problem, where 4,2% from them could not find work after dismissal.

Protest potential of Krasnodar region currently can be estimated in  $20 \pm 5,5\%$ . These are respondents who are ready to participate in mass protest actions (20%), and also those who point to people in their social environment, who are ready to participate in such actions. Technically obvious and latent protest potential was estimated through categorization of answers to the questions: *“If in our city/ agricultural area the mass protest actions against drop in the living standards, unjust authorities actions, in defense of their rights take place, will you personally take part, or not? And your relatives, colleagues?”* The answer to the given question presupposes choice from 3 categories: “rather yes”, “rather no” and “don’t know” (personal protest potential measurement procedure is borrowed from workings of Russian Public Opinion Research Center to supply possibilities of comparisons with All-Russia indexes [3] – *author's note*). At that three variables were measured in

the given question: readiness of personal participation in the protest actions, participation of the nearest surrounding (family, friends) and colleagues (professional surrounding). In the result of respondent answers categorization according to three pointed variables, the separate indicator, reflecting not only personal respondent readiness, and also involvement of his social surrounding into protest activity were formed. The given indicator has a seven-point scale, the minimal categories of which reflect the fact of respondent social environment involvement without his personal participation, maximum – personal respondent readiness to protest with the degree estimation of his social surrounding involvement. The results of the present characteristic frequency estimation are given in the table 1.

*Table 1. Protest potential of the Krasnodar region inhabitants  
(the results of frequency estimation)*

<b>Involvement category into protest potential</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Actual %</b>
<b>Actual</b>	1. Only professional surrounding	10	3,0	11,9
	2. Only the nearest surrounding	5	1,5	6,0
	3. All surrounding without personal readiness	5	1,5	6,0
	4. Personal readiness without social surrounding involvement	25	7,6	29,8
	5. Personal readiness and involvement of professional surrounding	7	2,1	8,3
	6. Personal readiness and involvement of the nearest surrounding	16	4,8	19,0
	7. Personal readiness and involvement of all social environment	16	4,8	19,0
	<b>All</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>25,5</b>	<b>100,0</b>
Omitted	0. Protest potential characteristic is absent	246	74,5	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>330</b>	<b>100,0</b>	

If one compares the given data specifically according to the index of protest potential with the quiz results of Russia Public Opinion Research Center, then one can draw a conclusion that the protest potential index in Krasnodar region coincides with All-Russia index – 32 items (situation for June 2016) [3], but there are more swing voters in the region – 13,9%, in the prejudice of those, who expressed readiness to protest (there are 20% of such people in the region, in whole – 25% in Russia). However, latent potential estimations of the region slightly equalize the situation. In the littoral zone (Novorossiysk, Sochi, Adler) the index is slightly higher – 34 points. In Krasnodar there 32 points, and in the cities and the regions index is lower – 29 points.

To determine significant factors, influencing on personal protest potential, the method of binary logistic regression was organized, where the personal readiness fact to participant in the protest actions acted in the quality of apparent variable. The next characteristics appear in the quality of predictors:

1) *Socially- demographic*: gender, age, sphere of action (budget, commerce), education, family status, children:

2) *Economic*: estimation of family material standing;

3) *Personal security*: estimation of material, physical, legal safety (in the form of composite index: full protection, i.e. safe feeling in all three spheres, partial protection (only in separate spheres), absence of safety feeling in all spheres), experience of situations, connected with interethnic conflicts, arbitrariness of executive and constituent authorities, unlawful acts, difficult life situations, feelings of anxiety and tranquility from life in the country;

4) *Electoral preferences*: electorate of V.V. Putin, electorate of the other possible presidential candidates, readiness to protest voting at the parliament and presidential elections.

The results of regression analysis, realized by the method of predictors positive activation, presented in the table 2.

Table 2. The results of factors regression analysis, influencing on readiness to protest activity

Factors		B	Wald statistics (W)	The level of predictor significance
Predictors	Gender	-0,355	1,173	0,279
	Age	0,021	1,770	0,183
	sphere of action (budget, commerce, business)	-0,054	0,104	0,747
	Education	-0,143	0,940	0,332
	Family status	-1,013	4,615	0,032

Factors		B	Wald statistics (W)	The level of predictor significance
Predictors	Children presence	0,497	0,861	0,353
	Estimation of family material standing	-0,336	2,452	0,117
	Feelings from life in the country (calmly / anxiously)	0,610	2,769	0,096
	Electoral preferences	-0,050	0,011	0,918
	Readiness to protest voting at the presidential elections	0,424	0,675	0,411
	Readiness to protest voting at the parliament elections	-0,907	5,044	0,025
	Estimation of personal protection level	-1,044	16,850	0,000
	Experience of situations, connected with unlawful acts	-0,638	4,308	0,049
	Experience of the situations, connected with arbitrary rules	0,342	0,931	0,335
	Experience of difficult life situations	-0,197	0,347	0,556
	Experience of interethnic conflicts situations	-0,992	8,042	0,005
	Constant	3,768	3,864	0,049

The results of regression analysis turned to be unexpected: economic and socially-demographic factors, also as electoral preferences do not significantly influence on Krasnodar region inhabitants protest potential. Family status composes an exception. However, this factor stands at the one of the final places from the number of significant for regression model predictors. **Safety** factors mostly influence on readiness to protest activity: Estimation of personal safety level (physical, juridical, material) (W=16,85 under  $p<0,0001$ ), and participation in interethnic conflict situations (or observation from the side) (W=8,04 under  $p<0,01$ ). Readiness to protest voting at the parliament elections goes further (W=5,04 under  $p<0,05$ ), family status (W=4,61 under  $p<0,05$ ) and experience of the respondent situations, connected with illegal (criminal) actions (W=4,31 under  $p<0,05$ ). From the enumerated factors, dependence of which with protest potential wear direct character (for instance, the higher subjective level of personal protection, the lower probability of protest activity, or the participation fact in interethnic conflict increases participation probability in

the protest actions), explanations require family status factor. As the research shows, married respondents are more inclined to protest activities (28,7%), then those who are not married (12,8%).

Thus, one can draw a general conclusion that Krasnodar region does not stand out from the middle Russian indices according to the protest potential level. Firstly personal security factors influence on the given index in the region and economic and demographic factors practically do not have influence on this factor. Electoral preferences also do not influence on protest potential, however, disregard of elections and other methods of protest voting increase probability of participations in protest actions.

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