

p-ISSN : 2788-5054 | e-ISSN : 2788-5062

DOI(Journal): 10.31703/girr

DOI(Volume): 10.31703/girr/.2024(IX)

DOI(Issue): 10.31703/girr.2024(IX.III)

www.girrjournal.com



GIRR

GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS REVIEW

HEC-RECOGNIZED CATEGORY-Y

VOL. VII, ISSUE III, SUMMER (SEPTEMBER-2024)



Double-blind Peer-review Research Journal

www.girrjournal.com

© Global International Relations Review

Article Title

Russia after the USSR: Social Changes and Political Reforms

Global International Relations Review

p-ISSN: 2788-5054 **e-ISSN:** 2788-5062

DOI(journal): 10.31703/girr

Volume: VII (2024)

DOI (volume):10.31703/girr.2024(VII)

Issue: III Summer (September-2024)

DOI(Issue): 10.31703/girr.2024(VII-III)

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Volume: VII (2024)

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Issue: III-Summer (September-2024)

<https://www.girjournal.com/Current-issues/7/3/2024>

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Abstract

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 signaled the beginning of a new era—both social and political—in Russia's history. It looks at how the nation-leading social changes, such as the redefinition of the national identity, demographic challenges i.e., population decline and aging, and migration patterns that shaped the makeup of society—have impacted the nation. It also examines simultaneous political reforms such as creating a multi-party system, altering the electoral process, the attempt to decentralize, the privatization of state assets, and reforms in the judiciary and constitutional frameworks. By looking at the way that these factors interact, the article argues that Russia is trying to square the circle between systemic collapse and the legitimate aspirations of modern statehood and governance in post-Soviet Russia.

Keywords: USSR Disintegration, Russia, Social Changes, Political Reforms, Decentralization

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Pages: 60-70

DOI: 10.31703/girr.2024(VII-III).06

DOI link: [https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/girr.2024\(VII-III\).06](https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/girr.2024(VII-III).06)

Article link: <http://www.girjournal.com/article/A-b-c>

Full-text Link: <https://girjournal.com/fulltext/>

Pdf link: <https://www.girjournal.com/jadmin/Author/31rvIolA2.pdf>



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Citing this Article

06	Russia after the USSR: Social Changes and Political Reforms						
	Author	Zaiba Sarwar Abdul Qader Nida Nisar		DOI	10.31703/girr.2024(VII-III).06		
Pages	60-70	Year	2024	Volume	VII	Issue	III
Referencing & Citing Styles	APA	Sarwar, Z., Qader, A., & Nisar, N. (2024). Russia after the USSR: Social Changes and Political Reforms. <i>Global International Relations Review</i> , VII(III), 60-70. https://doi.org/10.31703/girr.2024(VII-III).06					
	CHICAGO	Sarwar, Zaiba, Abdul Qader, and Nida Nisar. 2024. "Russia after the USSR: Social Changes and Political Reforms." <i>Global International Relations Review</i> VII (III):60-70. doi: 10.31703/girr.2024(VII-III).06.					
	HARVARD	SARWAR, Z., QADER, A. & NISAR, N. 2024. Russia after the USSR: Social Changes and Political Reforms. <i>Global International Relations Review</i> , VII, 60-70.					
	MHRA	Sarwar, Zaiba, Abdul Qader, and Nida Nisar. 2024. 'Russia after the USSR: Social Changes and Political Reforms', <i>Global International Relations Review</i> , VII: 60-70.					
	MLA	Sarwar, Zaiba, Abdul Qader, and Nida Nisar. "Russia after the Ussr: Social Changes and Political Reforms." <i>Global International Relations Review</i> VII.III (2024): 60-70. Print.					
	OXFORD	Sarwar, Zaiba, Qader, Abdul, and Nisar, Nida (2024), 'Russia after the USSR: Social Changes and Political Reforms', <i>Global International Relations Review</i> , VII (III), 60-70.					
TURABIAN	Sarwar, Zaiba, Abdul Qader, and Nida Nisar. "Russia after the Ussr: Social Changes and Political Reforms." <i>Global International Relations Review</i> VII, no. III (2024): 60-70. https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/girr.2024(VII-III).06 .						





Global International Relations Review

www.girrjournal.com

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/girr>



Pages: 60-70

URL: [https://doi.org/10.31703/girr.2024\(VII-III\).06](https://doi.org/10.31703/girr.2024(VII-III).06)

Doi: 10.31703/girr.2024(VII-III).06



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Abstract

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 signaled the beginning of a new era—both social and political—in Russia's history. It looks at how the nation-leading social changes, such as the redefinition of the national identity, demographic challenges i.e., population decline and aging, and migration patterns that shaped the makeup of society—have impacted the nation. It also examines simultaneous political reforms such as creating a multi-party system, altering the electoral process, the attempt to decentralize, the privatization of state assets, and reforms in the judiciary and constitutional frameworks. By looking at the way that these factors interact, the article argues that Russia is trying to square the circle between systemic collapse and the legitimate aspirations of modern statehood and governance in post-Soviet Russia.

Keywords: [USSR Disintegration](#), [Russia](#), [Social Changes](#), [Political Reforms](#), [Decentralization](#)

Introduction

The disintegration of the Soviet Union (1991), one of the most important geopolitical events of the last century, opened the way for Russia to a new path in its history. Russia was also the most significant and powerful of the Soviet republics, which

defined for it an immense task of reestablishing its identity, rebuilding its institutions, and facing the tasks of the socio-economic and political transformation in the post-Soviet period. The social and political spheres experienced a good of upheaval in this period and reshaped the country's



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cultural, economic, and government structures (Starr, [2019](#)).

The collapse of the Soviet regime brought about a national identity crisis, as the old hegemonic ideology of communism seemed to dissolve due to widespread searches for new values in ethnicity, religion, and historical discourse. Demographically, the country faced problems of population decline and aging as well as enormous migration, the composition of whose society was fundamentally transformed and involved awesome policy problems (Finifter & Mickiewicz, [1992](#)).

Political reforms marked the transition from a one-party system to a multi-party democracy. Electoral changes brought about an end to the era of one party rule, constitutional and judicial reforms had as their goal the creation of a framework of federalism and the rule of law. Decentralization efforts attempted to give more power to regions while the federal government preferred to exercise centralizing effects. Privatization redefined economic ownership, creating a marketplace in which a market economy intensified while inequalities spread and a selected elite gained and consolidated power (Malinova, [2022](#)).

This article explores how post-Soviet Russia's social and political transformations in effect reconfigured the nation and guided its path toward becoming a contemporary state. It offers an analysis of the main themes of Russia's post-Soviet journey: national identity, migration, electoral reforms, and federal restructuring, and insight into the problems and intricacies of Russia's post-Soviet path.

Social Changes and Political Reforms Post USSR Disintegration

Significant social and political changes were brought about in Russia as a result of the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991. Russia's economy, population, and culture underwent significant changes after the collapse. To create a democratic government and change the political landscape of the nation, political reforms were started at the same time. Decentralization of power, electoral democracy, and institutional stability were the goals of these changes. In order to understand

Russia's post-Soviet trajectory and the obstacles it faces on its path to democracy and growth, it is essential to understand how these reforms have affected the country's social and political landscape (Finifter & Mickiewicz, [1992](#)).

Struggle for National Identity

All of the newly formed nations had to determine their identities and strategies for self-improvement when the USSR broke up. This required determining what unites them as a people and developing consensus-based institutions. However, because Russia was once a large empire, it was considerably more difficult. As a result, opinions on what Russia is and where its borders should be diverged. In the other new nations, this isn't as significant. However, the fundamental issue facing all of these locations is the same: how to unite individuals who share citizenship (i.e., belong to the same nation) with those who share ethnic ties (i.e., culture, language, and history). Ethnic nations, where people share elements like language and culture, and civic nations, where everyone is viewed as an equal citizen, are the two basic categories of nations (Starr, [2019](#)).

The identities that people in the newly established nations developed throughout the 1990s, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, significantly influenced the functioning of Eurasia. People's beliefs about themselves and their nations, as well as the degree of disagreement they had about them, served as the foundation for these identities. In these nations, nationalist organizations frequently emphasized the importance of their own country and viewed Russia as their primary adversary or danger. They strove for the realization of their views about what their nations ought to be like. However, they were not universally accepted. Some people had different goals, particularly those who had previously served in the Communist regime. Whether the governments of these new nations supported the nationalists or not was one of the major questions that arose. These nations' national identities were greatly influenced by the erstwhile Communists. The degree of consensus over the ideals of the nation was demonstrated by their responses to the nationalists, which included ignoring them, opposing them, cooperating with them, or even attempting to emulate them. Many

aspects of the 1990s were impacted by these various identities and the discussions around them. They had an impact on linguistic policy, citizenship eligibility, political and economic processes, security, and international relations. Therefore, these national identities had a significant role in determining the course of events in post-Soviet Eurasia at that time (Finifter & Mickiewicz, [1992](#)).

Demographic Challenges

Russia is confronted with a number of demographic issues in the early 2000s. The nation has experienced a decline in birth rates, an increase in mortality rates, an aging population, and a decrease in immigration since obtaining independence in 1992. As a result, Russia's population has begun to decline. Despite a mere 3% loss in population, the rate of decline is accelerating and is predicted to continue. Both nationalists and Russian officials are alarmed by this, as they fear the country's downfall and the country's position as a global force. In addition, Russians' health has deteriorated over this period. Many skilled individuals have fled the nation, and access to education has become questionable. The cost of caring for the elderly is rising as the population ages rapidly and fewer people are born (Malinova, [2022](#)).

Russia is dealing with a severe population issue that has never been seen in its history. The way people have lived in the past has an impact on demographic changes, which occur gradually. The population condition varies much more when we examine smaller regions of Russia. Analyzing the issue reveals that Russia has been gradually approaching this problem since the 1960s, not simply in the last few decades. Russia has had disasters throughout its history that have significantly altered the ages of its citizens, with some generations having a larger population than others. Despite the fact that there are more deaths than births, Russia has been able to offset this to some extent by attracting people from other former Soviet states. All Russian demographic specialists concur that Russia lacks a coherent strategy to address this issue (Kollontai, [1999](#)).

Ethnic Tension

Given that Russians had traditionally been the

majority group, a large portion of the pent-up resentment was directed toward the central authority. The tone of this resistance was frequently anti-Russian. The most extreme instances of growing ethnic consciousness, which led to violent and brutal conflicts, occurred in the Caucasus region. Ethnic conflicts and bloodshed persisted even after independence. Smaller-scale violent episodes and ethnic conflicts have occurred in other former Soviet republics. Ethnicity is heavily influenced by religion, which frequently endures beyond generations. Reform initiatives in nations like Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia have been slowed back by economic difficulties. Language, ethnicity, and economic divisions in Ukraine are comparable to those between various Christian denominations (Sloutsky & Searle, [1993](#)).

Economic Transition

After reaching its lowest point in 1999, Russia's economy began to rise again after a protracted period of decline. Nevertheless, the crisis had serious and long-lasting ramifications. Russia's recession was not brought on by a sudden shift to a market-based economy, in contrast to many other Eastern European nations. Gorbachev's measures had already devastated the Soviet economy prior to the communist regime's downfall. Economic disruptions resulted from this, including severing ties between companies, industries, and geographical areas as well as modifications to corporate management practices. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Russia's output plummeted by 5%. When Boris Yeltsin assumed power, he sent Yegor Gaidar to deal with economic issues. Gaidar prioritized swift reforms and the shift to a market economy, beginning with market and pricing liberalization. However, these initiatives didn't work out as predicted, which resulted in unforeseen price hikes and widespread inflation. Many Russians experienced economic instability and a drop in their level of living as a result of unsuccessful attempts to control inflation (Malinova, [2022](#)).

Migration and Diaspora

About 25.2 million Russians, who had not relocated, found themselves suddenly members of

a large diaspora when the Soviet Union broke apart in 1991. In 14 new nations, they became minorities after previously being a majority in the Soviet Union. While some of these nations were achieving independence for the first time in their history, others were doing so for the first time in a long time. Many of them disliked having Russian minorities, who accounted for up to 38% of their population, and all of them desired to elevate their own people. There were several options available to the Russians in these new nations. They may remain and attempt to defend their rights as a minority, particularly if they were in regions near Russia. They might possibly attempt to depart and return to Russia. Approximately 43.4 million members of various ethnic groups were living outside of their native nations at the time, many of them in smaller areas. Ethnic groups lived in 53 locations before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, 15 of which became independent nations. Some believed that people would return to their ethnic homelands after the Soviet Union disintegrated. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, many people from many ethnic groups relocated, although this was not the primary cause of migration. Throughout the 1990s, Russia's perspective on its diaspora varied according to the number of migrants and their destinations. The decisions taken by the Russian diaspora about their relocation and whether to remain in their current location are crucial for the establishment of new nations and states in the new countries as well as for the diaspora itself (Sloutsky & Searle, [1993](#)).

Crime and Mortality Crisis

In recent years, the Russian health crisis has gained widespread recognition. After World War II, life expectancy increased, but in the middle of the 1960s, Russia started to lag behind Western nations. Even while there was a notable improvement in 1985 as a result of initiatives to lower alcohol consumption, this success was swiftly undone. Life expectancy has decreased considerably further since the fall of the Soviet Union, falling by more than five years between 1990 and 1994. It is not enough to attribute these changes to measurement errors. Significant political, social, and economic developments in the nation during the 1990s are undoubtedly connected to the drop in life expectancy at that time. Yet the precise relationship

between these elements is yet unknown, alcohol consumption has also been a significant contributor to this reduction. While some contend that the primary problem is economic collapse and that not much can be done to fix it, others think that the swift changes in society are more to blame. Some parts of Russia have been more impacted than others by these developments, and their effects have not been uniform throughout the country. Furthermore, the death rates within regions vary significantly. We can learn more about the connections between economic conditions and mortality by examining these geographical variations. In particular, we can investigate whether poverty or the quick speed of social change is to blame for the drop in life expectancy (Kollontai, [1999](#)).

Social Transformations and Healthcare in Russia

Since the early 1990s, Russia's healthcare system has undergone substantial changes as a result of social, political, and economic shifts. At first, these modifications had detrimental effects on financial assistance, healthcare results, and access. Nonetheless, healthcare has gradually improved as the economy expanded and poverty declined. Political upheavals, especially in the 1990s, and the shift from a centralized planned economy to a market-based one made it difficult to make steady growth. Political unrest and economic turmoil made things much more difficult. All industries were impacted by these changes, and the healthcare industry was no exception. As a result, coverage and funding for healthcare services decreased (Sloutsky & Searle, 1993).

Political Instability

Following the dissolution of the USSR, Russia experienced severe political unrest. Due to a crisis of authority and a large power vacuum created by the fall of the Soviet Union, Russian politics are extremely unstable and uncertain. Protests, economic issues, and the challenges of transitioning from a strict to a democratic government all contributed to the worsening of the situation. The attempt to establish democratic norms proceeded too quickly, which further muddled and dispersed the political landscape.

Furthermore, the old Soviet-era methods of governance made it more difficult to create strong political institutions in the new Russia, and there were insufficiently robust systems in place to manage these changes successfully (Kollontai, [1999](#)).

Political Reforms of Russia

Following the dissolution of the USSR, Russia began to transform itself into a more democratic country. In 1993, they drafted a new set of regulations known as a constitution. The president, legislators, and courts all had different powers under this constitution. Additionally, they made it possible for additional political parties to compete, giving voters more options. However, there were issues like erratic political behavior, corruption, and an unjust legal system. Additionally, they attempted to empower local communities by allowing them to choose their own leaders. However, it wasn't simple because the economy wasn't performing well and some influential people didn't want to change. Notwithstanding these issues, Russia's gradual transition to democracy and openness was made possible by the reforms implemented following the fall of the USSR (Partlett, [2021](#)).

Electoral Reforms

Following the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia was forced to overhaul its political structure. Prior to this, everything was under the supervision of the Soviet Union, and voters had few options in elections. Fair elections and a variety of political parties were novel when Russia gained its independence. After winning the first presidential election in 1991, Boris Yeltsin began drafting a new constitution. Only in 1993, following some political strife, was a new constitution ultimately ratified (Qiang, [2021](#)). According to this new constitution, Russians would elect a parliament and a president. The parliament comprises two houses, and the president may hold office for a maximum of two terms of four or six years. The President appoints 166 members to the Federation Council, while the 450 members of the State Duma are elected to four- or five-year terms. There have been multiple legislative elections and five presidential elections since then. Dmitry

Medvedev also held the office for a term, as did Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin. In most elections, the Communist Party has been the dominant opposition party, however, several other parties have also seen some success. Since 2003, United Russia has been the largest party (Partlett, [2021](#)).

Economic Reforms

Following the fall of communism and the breakdown of the Soviet Union, Russia quickly enacted drastic economic changes in early 1992. These changes were implemented under the leadership of Acting Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar with the goal of moving away from a centralized command economy and toward a decentralized, market-based one. The majority of the previous command economy's centralized operations stopped operating within eight months, and market-based economic activity quickly expanded in its place. This change was reflected in the growing trade between Russia and other nations as well as the thriving "kiosk boom" in Moscow. Since the previous command system had been extremely ineffective and harmful to the economic quality of life, these economic changes had the potential to significantly raise living standards. However because of the communist legacy, Russia continued to experience severe financial difficulties, and the country's shift to a market economy and democratization was seriously threatened by hyperinflation (Qiang, [2021](#)).

Party System Evolution

The rise of rival political parties in post-Soviet Russia is examined in this research. After competitive elections were implemented, Russian elites started forming several party-like organizations. By 1995, these organizations were discovered to be weak and fragmented, with little societal linkages and little influence over state institutions. A difficult institutional context, marked by a weak civil society, pervasive anti-party attitude, and a revolutionary regime change, has impeded the growth of political parties in Russia. Notwithstanding these challenges, I contend that the laws controlling state authority and people involvement have been vital in deciding whether political parties have emerged as significant political forces or have stayed on the margins. Many academics have studied the rise of

party politics in post-communist Russia since 1991. These studies have generally examined the underlying public sentiments that influence party politics or evaluated the current status of the Russian party system. Instead of methodical attempts to comprehend party activity, political parties are frequently treated as organizations in descriptive studies of particular parties. The possible function of post-Soviet political parties as integrative institutions in post-communist politics is one topic of great interest to scholars and political practitioners alike. Political scientists in the West have long acknowledged the integrative role of political parties. As David Apter has shown, parties create avenues for communication between groups who would otherwise be hostile or non-communicative through their hiring procedures, fostering connections that are essential to the operation of the state (Logvinenko, [2020](#)).

Decentralization Processes in the Russian Federation

Many developed nations adopted a new management style in the late 1980s and early 1990s, emphasizing the privatization of public services or the implementation of market-oriented methods with more stringent oversight through decentralization. Following suit, developing nations sought to make major reforms to their public sectors. Dissatisfaction with centralized planning, the need for innovative approaches to social development program management, administrative difficulties at the center, and a desire to increase service quality and efficiency all contributed to the growing popularity of decentralization. Though the outcomes varied widely, both rich and developing nations believed that decentralization would improve healthcare's effectiveness and accessibility. While some nations experienced difficulties, others witnessed notable gains in the effectiveness of their public services. In the case of Russia, the fall of the Soviet Union was directly related to the decentralization of healthcare. Prior to that, the Soviet Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) oversaw the whole Soviet healthcare system, which was totally centralized. Resources were distributed through the ministries of each republic, including Russia's FMOH. All citizens were eligible for free healthcare services, which were fully financed by government funds. Medical personnel were state employees, and all

facilities were owned by the government. Budgets are set by the Union Ministry of Health according to production standards, such as the quantity of practitioners and infrastructure (Sakwa, [2020](#)).

Privatization

Russia's first post-communist administration started a major effort to convert the Soviet economy to a market economy in January 1992. This plan's primary component was privatization. The objective was to create businesses that were profit-driven, owned by foreigners and did not depend on government assistance to remain in operation. However, this objective was not accomplished two years later. By the summer of 1993, 22% of Russia's economy was subsidized by the government, and insiders owned the majority of the shares in two-thirds of the country's privatized businesses. There were few new market regulations, and companies remained mostly unchanged. The Russian government was unable to abolish the old Soviet regulations regarding the ownership of large corporations during the first two years. They were unable to impose stringent financial regulations on large corporations, force privatization to proceed as intended, or create new regulations to support markets, such as those pertaining to private property, company management, or a safety net for individuals (Smyth, R., & Sokhey, [2021](#)).

Federalism

A new federal structure was part of a significant political reform proposal approved by the USSR's parliament in late 1988. At the time, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, the head of the Soviet Union, thought that this new federalism would better serve local needs and preserve the Soviet state's unity. The drive for revitalized federalism, however, ignited long-suppressed nationalist and localist sentiments rather than accomplishing this purpose. Refederalization ideas grew increasingly serious by 1990, with proposals for a narrower federation based on a Union Treaty. By the end of 1991, the Soviet Union had completely abandoned its federal experiment due to growing calls for decentralization following a failed coup attempt by hard-line Kremlin authorities in August of that year. The federal reorganization plan was superseded by the rapid rise of autonomous states

following the fall of the USSR (Lisovskaya & Karpov, [2020](#)).

Significant changes occurred in Russia throughout the 1990s, including economic liberalization, a more democratic government, and a transition from a central to a more decentralized federal structure. It became evident that Boris Yeltsin's attempts to consolidate power had failed and might have even contributed to the disintegration of Russia when Vladimir Putin succeeded him as president. The majority of individuals, including politicians, academics, and ordinary residents, now concur that the 1990s failed to establish a robust federal structure. The new Russian leaders have been trying to consolidate political power and public funds since 2000 (Smyth, R., & Sokhey, [2021](#)).

Judicial Reforms

The Russian judiciary was not respected and was not independent throughout the Soviet era. Judges frequently had to obtain Communist party officials' consent before rendering decisions, which resulted in "telephone justice" and eroded public confidence in the legal system. In post-Soviet Russia, attempts have been undertaken to create a more independent court, notwithstanding the difficulties presented by the Soviet heritage. These changes, however, have been sluggish and insufficient, mirroring the uneven character of the nation's privatization initiatives. Even while there has been improvement, particularly in the area of giving judges lifetime appointments, there are still many barriers to overcome, especially for non-Russians and criminal defendants. Even though judicial independence is guaranteed by the Russian Constitution, the idea is still relatively young and developing in Russia. Furthermore, the judiciary has not undergone any major reforms or reorganizations since the fall of the Soviet Union, which has resulted in many judges and other bureaucrats remaining in their Soviet-era roles. Despite these obstacles, there is some hope for the Russian judiciary's future growth as long as changes are carried out (McFaul, [2001](#)).

Legal Transformation

Since Solon established laws for the Athenians to abide by in antiquity, the concept of the rule of law

has existed. Although it lost popularity during times of totalitarianism, it made a comeback with the Magna Carta and is now a significant component of Western political philosophy. These days, democracy and a healthy market economy that upholds people's rights are thought to depend on it. Western governments have advocated for the rule of law as a means of assisting the transition of Eastern bloc nations since the conclusion of the Cold War. Russia has limited experience with it, though, given its size. Strangely, President Putin has expanded the authority of security services and utilized official institutions like the courts, tax inspectors, and police for political ends, despite his promise to preserve democracy under the regime of law. Eras of freedom and the rule of law have always existed in Russia, but they have always been fleeting and have been eclipsed by protracted eras of autocratic rule in which the rules were twisted to suit the wishes of the ruling class. This booklet will discuss how Russia's recent focus on hyper-legalism has turned into a tool for the ruling class rather than a genuine commitment to the law (Belanovsky et al., [2011](#)).

Drafting and Adoption of a New Constitution

In post-Soviet Russia, the process of creating a constitution was complicated, taking more than three years and involving numerous versions, discussions, and even acts of violence. The structure of the federation and the relationship between the legislative and executive branches were the main points of contention. There were heated discussions and adjustments as a result of the several drafts that various factions provided. Although there had been discussions about constitutional reform since the late 1980s, the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union made it necessary to change the current constitution. Confusion and ambiguities resulted from the existing constitution's more than 300 amendments by the end of 1993. These legal inconsistencies became crucial to the argument between Yeltsin's reformists and conservatives in parliament as political polarization grew and the economy collapsed. In an effort to address the constitutional crisis impeding reforms, Yeltsin called a constitutional conference to create a single draft. He acknowledged the possibility of revisions based on other recommendations, but he also established

a timeframe for adoption and offered his document as the starting point for discussion. Yeltsin underlined the significance of earlier proclamations and agreements as the new constitution's pillars (McFaul, [2001](#)).

During the chaos of the state's dissolution, the creation of a new Constitution necessitated a focus on bringing Russian society together and creating a strong legal foundation. The Constitution sought to uphold universally recognized values in order to promote harmony and stability between various factions. These principles, which are regarded as unchangeable and may only be altered by a convoluted procedure described in Chapter 9, were established in the first and second parts of the Constitution. The Soviet era came to an end on December 12, 1993, when the Constitution was adopted by a ballot, establishing the framework for a democratic, federal, and socially just state in Russia. In order to guarantee a varied and inclusive political environment, it established concepts like a market economy, human rights, the division of powers, and the acknowledgment of international law. The people's support for the Constitution demonstrated their power and sovereignty in determining the course of the nation (Belanovsky et al., [2011](#)).

Increased Political Participation

Russia witnessed a rise in political participation following the dissolution of the USSR. In 1993, they created a new set of regulations that provided individuals the opportunity to vote whatever they wanted and permitted many parties to run in elections, in contrast to the previous one-party system. Many people became interested in politics as a result of this shift, and they began discussing political topics and starting new parties. However, not everyone was excited because the 1990s were a difficult economic decade and a few wealthy individuals held significant power, making life more difficult for average people. Furthermore, democracy's enabling mechanisms were still relatively new, and eventually fewer people bothered to cast ballots (Inkeles, [1968](#)).

Protection of Individual Rights and Freedoms

Russia started implementing political changes to strengthen the defense of individual liberties and

rights following the fall of the USSR. The 1993 ratification of the Russian Federation's new Constitution, which established a framework for defending fundamental liberties, was a significant step in this direction. The protection of rights and freedoms is expressly guaranteed by Article 17 of the Constitution, which affirms that individual rights and freedoms in Russia shall be recognized and protected in conformity with the norms of international law and the Constitution's own provisions. This clause of the constitution demonstrates Russia's dedication to protecting people's liberties and rights in the post-Soviet era (Noble & Petrov, [2021](#)).

Empowerment of Civil Society

Through political reforms aimed at boosting democratic engagement and diversity, the demise of the USSR cleared the path for the strengthening of civil society in Russia. The establishment of civil society organizations made it possible for them to actively engage in political processes and promote a range of causes. Scholars have noted that post-Soviet Russia's democratic transition has aided the emergence of a large number of grassroots groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), allowing citizens to express their complaints and guarantee state accountability (Inkeles, [1968](#)).

Economic Mobility

People's ability to advance economically has been impacted by the changes in Russia. Selling off government-owned companies and opening up the market have allowed some people to become richer and live better lives. However, not everyone has reaped the same rewards. There are still significant disparities in wealth, which prevents many individuals from improving their quality of life. Others find it difficult to advance due to corruption and a small number of wealthy individuals holding the majority of the money. Additionally, some people have found it more difficult to secure stable positions as a result of the economy's shift to a market system, which makes it even more difficult for them to advance. Because they lack access to quality education and other resources necessary for success, many people are still unable to improve their lives despite government efforts to improve

conditions and increase employment (Noble & Petrov, [2021](#)).

Modernization

Russia saw a transition from traditional to contemporary lifestyles during the imperial and Soviet eras. This includes technological developments as well as adjustments to society, politics, and culture to accommodate these new technologies. Imperial modernization, which aimed at educated, secular people, industrialization, urbanization, and changes in family structure, was modeled after European modernization. Soviet modernization carried on this tendency but with certain modifications, such as granting the government more authority and emphasizing group objectives above individual liberties. Although both types of modernization advanced society, the Soviet approach was slower and cost more. Following the revolution that ended the Soviet era, post-Soviet modernization was a time of further transformation. Despite its difficulties, this continuous process has followed the globalization trend and brought Russia closer to the West in terms of politics, culture, and society (Libman & Obydenkova, [2023](#)).

Modernization initiatives in Russia that enhance infrastructure, healthcare, and education could propel the nation toward greater development and prosperity. Investing in education can help the workforce become more technologically savvy and talented, which can spur economic growth and innovation. Improved healthcare systems can make it easier for people to get medical care, which will make the population healthier and more productive, which will lower long-term healthcare costs. Furthermore, modernizing utilities and transportation networks may streamline logistics, increase connectivity, and draw in investment—all of which support economic growth and raise individuals' standard of living in general (Noble & Petrov, [2021](#)).

Continued Impacts on Society and Politics

Russia's post-USSR transformations have had a significant impact on politics and society. Russia's transition from a rigid, one-ruler system to a more democratic one has altered the country's functioning. Adopting a new constitution and

establishing democratic standards have protected people's rights and increased opportunities for political participation. However, issues like political unrest, a lack of regulations, and corruption continue to hinder democracy's ability to function effectively. Additionally, the shift to a market economy has changed the way society and politics are perceived by making some individuals wealthy while keeping others impoverished (Libman & Obydenkova, [2023](#)).

Conclusion

The collapse of the Soviet Union signaled the beginning of a period of dramatic change for Russia, which had to press on with rebuilding with all of the challenges associated with such socio-political and economic upheaval. During this period, the nation would see profound changes in its new form, identity, form of governance, and social framework. The collapse of the collective Soviet ideology paved the way for a proliferation of ethnic, cultural, and religious identities socially, but that was accompanied by serious demographic challenges, such as population decline, population aging, and migration. Either these changes were opportunities for cultural revival or obstacles to shaping a cohesive, stable society: either will be determined depending on the case. The post-Soviet transition was politically a time of high reform aspirations characterized by an ambitious agenda of reforms whose objectives centered around the modernization of the governance system and the democratization of the same. Electoral reforms brought Russia to competitive politics and a multi-party system, during the time constitutional changes redefined federalism and also delineated the separation of powers. Yet judicial reforms were sought to promote the rule of law, but practical obstacles sometimes hampered the implementation. The efforts at decentralization pointed to the inseparability of regional autonomy and central control, and to the difficulty of managing a wide and diversified federation. While privatization was important to economic reform, it generated huge disparities which facilitated the emergence of oligarchy which determined governance and limited social equity. To sum up, the breakdown of the USSR and the process of democratization in Russia under modern nation-state characteristics mark the process of

centralization to democratization that has trouble in any area. These transformations highlighted Russia's post-Soviet trajectory as affected, yet tied to social identity, demographic trends, and political

reform. Progress was made, but many of the problems that arose during this period still bedeviled Russia's modern political and social milieu.

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