

Research Contract “Religious Intolerance among Orthodox Christians and Muslims in Russia: How Strong is it and Why?”

Working Paper Three

Religious Intolerance towards Western Churches in Russia

Vyacheslav Karpov & Elena Lisovskaya
(Western Michigan University)

Abstract

Our 2005 representative national survey (2,972 interviews) shows an overwhelmingly common and strong religious intolerance towards Western churches that are legally deemed “non-traditional” and are commonly perceived as foreign to Russia. Most Russians would not let Western groups build churches, establish religious schools, or engage in other basic religious activities in their hometowns. Western churches are Russia’s least tolerated religious minority. Orthodox Christians and Muslims share this unwillingness to grant Western churches religious freedom, and Muslims’ attitudes are more restrictive. However, religiosity itself does not make the Orthodox or Muslims more intolerant. The intolerance is more closely linked to illiberal and ethnocentric beliefs about religions than to religious beliefs proper. It is worsened by widespread reactionary and anti-Western attitudes, including anti-Americanism. Popular hostility thus limits religious freedom “from below.” Sustainable religious freedom for Western churches will be impossible until serious legal, educational, and other policy efforts are made to reduce this hostility.

September, 2006

PROBLEM

This paper explores religious intolerance towards Western churches in Russia. Numerous incidents of discrimination, hate speech, and violence against evangelical, Pentecostal, and many other historically Western religious groups are broadly reported by international observers. However, these reports do not show if and to what extent these incidents may resonate with popular sentiment of intolerance towards Western churches among ordinary Russians. We address this previously unanswered question using representative national survey data collected in Russia.

RELEVANCE TO POLICY ISSUES

This study can inform discussions in such important foreign-policy areas as support for international religious freedom, human rights, and democratic change in post-Soviet states as well as elsewhere in the world. The study innovatively measures hostility to religious freedom “from below” (i.e., people’s unwillingness to put up with other faiths). Thus, it offers a potentially important additional tool for assessing the previously understudied obstacles to religious freedom in Russia and elsewhere. Furthermore, by focusing on the intolerance towards religious groups with links to the United States and other Western nations, our study reveals understudied aspects of anti-American and anti-Western sentiment in Russia which presently is an important factor in U.S.–Russian relations.

MAIN ARGUMENT

This paper makes the following four points. *First*, having defined religious intolerance as the unwillingness to give religious freedom to people of other faiths, we find an

overwhelming majority of Russians strongly intolerant of Western churches. Most Russian Orthodox Christians and Muslims would not allow these groups to engage in basic religious activities, not even charity work which is much needed in Russia today.

Second, although religious intolerance is generally strong in Russia, we find Western churches to be the least tolerated religious minority among the country's Orthodox and Muslims. Both groups are less tolerant of Western churches than they are of the Jews. The Orthodox are less willing to put up with them than with Muslims, and the latter are less tolerant of Western groups than of Orthodox minorities in Islamic areas. Thus, hostility towards Western churches is the strongest indicator of the general climate of religious intolerance in Russia.

Third, a crucial finding is that the intolerance towards Western groups has little to do with Muslims and Orthodox religiosity. Greater commitment to either Orthodoxy or Islam does not lead to greater religious intolerance of Western churches. Instead, the intolerance towards them proves to be more directly connected to illiberal and ethnocentric beliefs about religions, and with such secular influences as reactionary and anti-Western political orientations, aversion to non-conformity, and anti-Americanism.

Fourth, we conclude that while legal constraints and governmental policies have severely limited religious freedom for Western groups, they are facing a no less dangerous hostility "from below." In fact, by allowing at least some freedom, the restrictive law treats Western groups more liberally than a vast majority of Russians would. Simply lifting legal bans will not result in greater freedom and safety for Western churches in Russia. To achieve sustainable religious freedom for them as well as for other

religious minorities will take lengthy and consistent policy efforts aimed at the transformation of public opinion towards greater acceptance of religious diversity.

HOW WAS THE TERM ‘WESTERN CHURCHES’ DEFINED?

The term ‘Western churches’ is vague and thus calls for clarification before we explain how we defined and measured the intolerance towards them. First, by ‘Western’ we mean churches *affiliated with Western religious traditions*. Next, within this broad category, we concentrate on the groups that in post-Soviet Russia are *likely to be perceived as new, foreign, and non-traditional*. The nature of such a perception requires explanation.

Many of these churches are in reality neither new nor particularly foreign to Russia. Most have been long and well established in the United States, Europe and elsewhere. Some existed in Soviet Russia clandestinely (as, for instance, Jehovah’s Witnesses did) or under the watchful eye of the atheist state (as some Baptist groups). The suppressed or clandestine status made these churches largely invisible and unknown to most Soviet Russians other than through scary, propaganda-generated rumors about the dangerous “sectarians.” Therefore, when the liberal 1990 law on religion allowed these groups to openly re-emerge, or emerge and expand, Russians inevitably saw them as “new,” unusual, and non-native to Russia. These perceptions could only be strengthened by the fact that such groups have often relied on support from their fellow-believers and missionaries from the United States and other Western nations.

The 1997 Law on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations solidified and institutionalized the status of these churches as foreign to Russia’s traditions. The Law officially designated these and many other groups “non-traditional,” thus setting them apart from Russia’s four “traditional” faiths (Orthodoxy, Islam,

Buddhism, and Judaism). This status meant legal restrictions on religious freedom. “Non-traditional” groups were allowed to officially register only if they could prove that they had been in Russia for at least fifteen years, i.e., as early as in 1982, when religious freedom was non-existent. This threshold disadvantaged many of those who either existed in the USSR clandestinely or came to Russia after the collapse of the USSR.

Although the Law defines all Western churches in Russia as “non-traditional,” some are unlikely to be perceived as such. For instance, Roman Catholic churches have been in major Russian cities for centuries, and some remained open even under Soviet rule. Moreover, most Russians probably realize that Catholicism is in fact quite a traditional faith for many in their country, including ethnic Poles, Lithuanians, Germans and other groups. Thus, we do not include Catholics among those whose churches are likely to be perceived as new, foreign, and non-traditional. As shown below, the questionnaire we used specifically mentions Western groups that are new to Russia.

HOW WAS RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE DEFINED IN THIS STUDY?

The term ‘religious intolerance’ is widely applied, yet little has been done to clarify what it means, and existing usages are vague and unfit for research and policy analysis. By contrast, we offer a definition that leads to a multi-faceted measure of religious intolerance in specific terms suitable for research and policy analysis.

We define *religious intolerance* as *the unwillingness to grant religious freedom to people and groups of other faiths*. Importantly, we focus on the opposition to granting *specific* (not abstract) rights to religious groups other than one’s own. Thus, we look at whether or not, and how strongly, Russians oppose granting Western groups such specific liberties as the right to build places of worship, to preach in public, to establish religious

schools, to publish and distribute religious newspapers and magazines, to engage in charitable work, and to raise funds for religious needs.

This interpretation distinguishes religious intolerance from prejudice. For example, negative attitudes towards Western groups may not lead to the unwillingness to grant them the right to publicly preach or open a religious school. On the other hand, support for these groups' rights does not necessarily express a positive view of their teachings and practices.

HOW WAS RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE TOWARDS WESTERN RELIGIOUS GROUPS MEASURED IN OUR SURVEY?

We asked Russians if in their hometowns the new religions and churches that recently came to Russia from America and other Western countries should be given specific religious liberties. The following questions were used:

Questions
<p>“In recent years, there came from America and other Western countries new religions and churches which previously were not in Russia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suppose that in our town they wanted to build one of such Western churches. Do you think they should be allowed or prohibited to do so?• And now suppose that such a new church started to publicly preach its religion in our town. Should it be allowed or prohibited to do so?• And what if a new Western church wanted to publish and distribute its newspapers and magazines in our town?• And if this church wanted to open a religious school in our town?• Now suppose that such a new Western church wanted to teach the foundations of its faith in the public schools of our town. Should they be allowed or prohibited to do this?• And if the followers of this Western church wanted to preach their religious views on television?• If the followers of this church wanted to engage in charitable work in our town?• And if this church's followers started collecting money and donations for their religious needs in our town, should they be allowed or prohibited to do so?”

The advantage of these questions is that they provide a very specific, multifaceted measure of religious intolerance in a comprehensible, down-to-earth language. Answers to these questions were used to construct a general measure of religious intolerance towards Western groups. Subsequently, we were able to compare the levels of intolerance toward Western churches with those towards other religious groups and among Orthodox Christians and Muslims.

HOW WAS THE EVIDENCE COLLECTED?

This paper is based primarily on evidence from our international collaborative study, “Religious Intolerance among Orthodox Christians and Muslims in Russia: How Strong is it and why?,” funded by The National Council for Eurasian and East European Research (NCEEER) in 2004-2006. The study involved a representative national survey conducted in Russia in June 2005 using a national probability area sample of Russia’s adult household population. In order to better represent Russia’s Muslims, the survey included four oversamples from the predominantly Muslim regions of Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Kabardino-Balkaria, and Dagestan. While Tatarstan and Bashkortostan have remained peaceful during the post-Soviet era, Dagestan and Kabardino-Balkaria have lately seen clashes with separatists and Islamists. Overall, 2,972 in-person interviews were conducted. Utilizing a questionnaire we designed for this project, each interview took on average slightly more than one hour. They were conducted by trained interviewers from our sub-contractor, the Moscow-based Institute for Comparative Social Research. The Institute was selected for its strong record of high-quality research in Russia and other post-Soviet states, including many projects commissioned by American and other Western organizations.

Of the 2,972 interviews, 1,651 were part of a national sample, and 1,321 were part of oversamples in Muslim regions. The response rate (measured as the ratio of completed interviews to the total number of contacts) was 64%. The interpretation of survey data is informed by observations obtained during our previous studies of religion and religious intolerance in Russia, including field research funded by Western Michigan University in 1998, 1999, and 2004.

FINDINGS

1. Western churches on Russia's religious scene

The number of Western religious organizations increased dramatically since 1990, even despite the restrictions imposed in 1997. Based on the data of Russia's Ministry of Justice, we estimated that in 2004 there were 5,266 registered organizations of this category. Given the difficulty of registration, it is understandable that many other unregistered groups actually exist. In some regions, Protestant groups outnumbered Orthodox and other "traditional" organizations combined.¹ However, since these groups are relatively small in size, our survey suggests that the followers of Western churches account only for 1% of Russia's population (about 1.4 million). National surveys often under-represent small groups, but the actual number is hardly much higher. In its 2006 International Religious Freedom Report, the U.S. Department of State mentions the estimate of 2 million Protestants in Russia.

This religious minority exists in an environment dominated by Orthodox Christianity and Islam. According to our surveys, presently over 80% of all Russians and

¹ Красиков, А.А. 2003. Религии в государстве – фактор укрепления или распада государства? *Современная Европа* 4: 22-34 (см. Стр. 25).

over 85% of ethnic Russians identify themselves as Orthodox Christians. In our survey, 3.1% of Russian citizens identified themselves as Muslims, and this is consistent with reliable surveys conducted in Russia in the last fifteen years. Some surveys estimate the Muslim population at five percent. Thus, among the 9.4% of all Russians whose ethnic identification, according to the 2002 Russian census data, is with traditionally Islamic groups, one third to a half consider themselves Muslims, which is unsurprising given cultural assimilation and Islam's status of a minority religion.

While most Russians affiliate themselves with Orthodoxy or Islam, traditional religious beliefs and practices are not very common. Overall, attendance of religious services in post-atheist Russia has been among the lowest in Europe. Even using rather soft criteria of religiosity (including relatively consistent core beliefs and relatively active practice), in our study we estimated that only 10% of self-identified Orthodox and 20% of Muslims could be considered religious in a traditional sense. When stricter criteria are applied, proportions of traditional believers drop to single digits. Yet, we show below that this relatively weak religious commitment does not preclude widespread religious intolerance towards Western churches.

2. Religious intolerance towards Western churches is overwhelming.

According to our data, the intolerance towards Western churches in Russia is overwhelmingly common and strong. Only a minority of Russians, regardless of their religious affiliation, would give Western churches basic religious freedom. Thus, less than one third of all Russians (29%) would allow these religious groups to build churches in their hometowns; even less would allow them to fundraise (28%); only about a quarter of Russians would permit these groups religious publishing (25%) or the opening of a

religious school (22%); even fewer would permit them the public preaching of their faith (18%) or preaching on TV (20.0%); and a small minority of Russians (8%) would not mind Western groups teaching their religion in public schools. There is only one liberty that more than one third of Russians (41%) would grant Western groups: doing charitable work in their hometowns. But, this is still less than a half. It is remarkable that most Russians would not permit Western churches to carry out charitable work that is so much needed in Russia today (see Table 1).

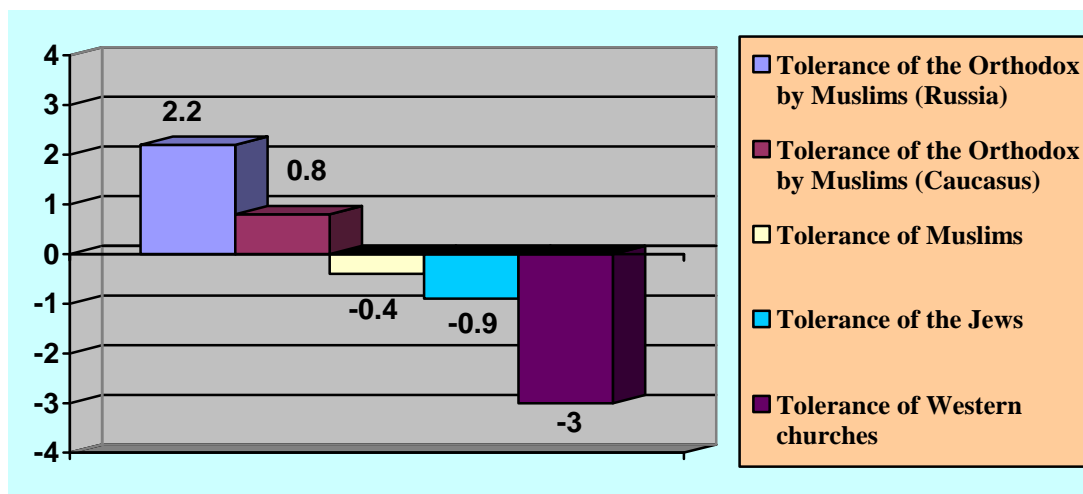
The strength of intolerance towards Western churches is evident from a comparison of percentages of those Russians who would fully deny Western churches all religious liberties with those who would give them nearly full religious rights. Astoundingly, only less than one in fourteen (7%) Russians would grant Western churches seven to eight liberties from our list, while four out of ten (39%) would deny them all of the eight liberties.

3. Western churches are the least tolerated religious group in Russia.

The intolerance towards “non-traditional” Western churches is substantially stronger than towards the Orthodox, Muslims, or even the Jews, the least tolerated “traditional” religious minority in Russia. To compare the intolerance towards Western churches and other groups, we computed average levels (also known as mean values) of tolerance by group. These averages are summary measures of tolerance of each group’s eight religious activities. The higher the numbers, the more tolerance, and the lower the numbers, the less tolerance they reflect. The numbers close to and especially below zero, signify strong intolerance.

Chart 1 shows that Western churches are the least tolerated among the four religious groups included in our study. They are the least tolerated religious minority, even when the Orthodox Christians in the overwhelmingly Muslim North Caucasus are included. Muslims and Orthodox are more willing to put up with each other and with the Jews than with Western churches.

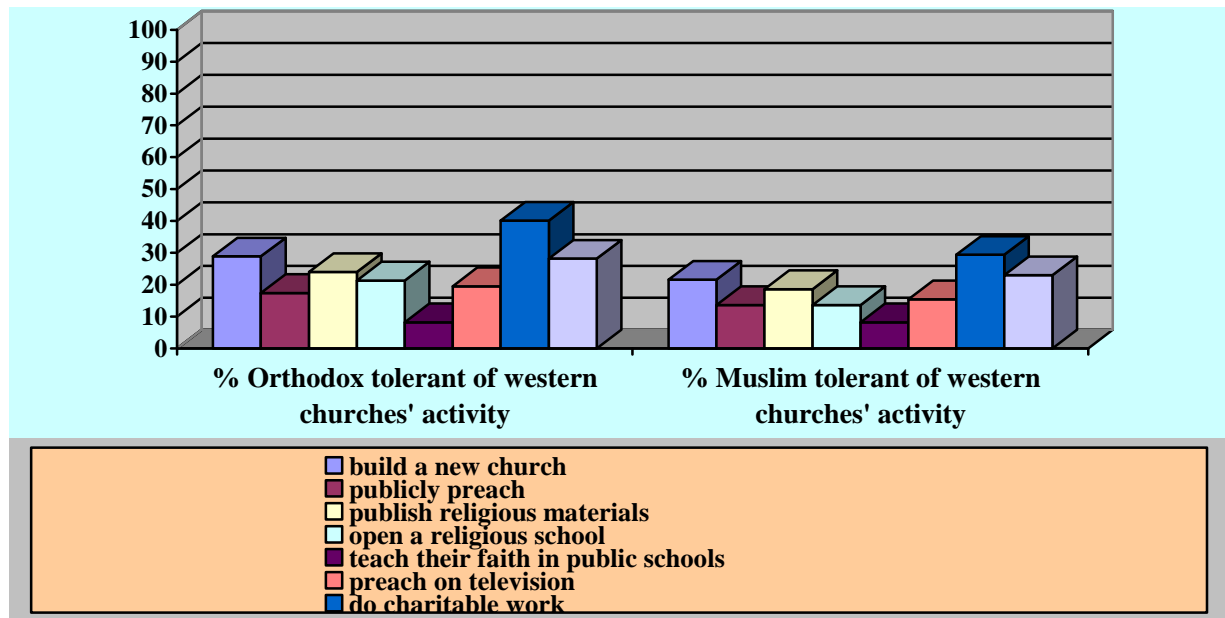
Chart 1. Levels of tolerance towards religious minorities in comparison with tolerance towards the Orthodox majority



4. Both Orthodox Christians and Muslims are strongly intolerant of Western churches.

As shown on Chart 2, the profiles of intolerance towards Western churches are very similar among Muslims and the Orthodox. Only tiny fractions of both groups are ready to allow these “non-traditional” churches the public preaching of their religion (14% and 17%), or preaching it on television (15% and 20% accordingly). For both the Orthodox and Muslims, the least acceptable activity is Western churches’ religious instruction in public schools. Only 8% in both groups would allow it. In comparison to all other activities, charitable work is more acceptable, but only minorities among the Orthodox and Muslims would allow it in their hometowns.

Chart 2. Tolerance levels towards Western churches among the Orthodox and Muslims by religious activity



5. Overall, Muslims are slightly less tolerant towards Western churches.

Although most of both Russia’s Orthodox and Muslims demonstrate remarkably low tolerance towards Western churches, Muslims appear less willing to grant them religious freedom. With the exception of teaching in public schools, fewer Muslims would support any of the remaining seven activities by Western churches. These differences between both groups are statistically significant and especially sizable on such issues as building churches, establishing religious schools, religious publishing, and doing charitable work (see Table 1).

6. Religious, near-religious, and secular factors behind the intolerance

We have seen how strongly intolerant Russians are of Western churches. A crucial question is: what makes them so intolerant? In particular, the roles of Orthodox and Muslim religiosity deserve a close look. If devotion to these traditions increases the

intolerance, their ongoing resurgence may be expected to make Russians even more hostile to Western groups. This would mean little hope for religious pluralism and support for liberty in Russia. If, however, the intolerance is not directly related to religiosity, if it mostly reflects the ideological and political atmosphere in which religions are currently practiced, then there may be a better chance for a more pluralistic and tolerant society in Russia. After all, unlike religious traditions, ideological circumstances can change relatively rapidly, and policies can accelerate their change. Thus, the question of religious and secular roots of the intolerance towards Western churches is not only academically, but also practically and politically important.

In order to address this question, we looked at how Orthodox-Muslim intolerance is related to the following religious, near religious and secular (non-religious factors):

(1) *religiosity* as such, including core beliefs of one's faith and religious practices (church or mosque attendance, frequency of prayer, and frequency of the Bible or the Koran reading); (2) *near-religious ideology*, which is not the religions' core beliefs, but rather people's beliefs about their and other religions. For instance, these may include people's beliefs about various religions as good or bad, ethnically native or alien, and about the treatment they deserve in society; and (3) *non-religious ideology*, including people's secular beliefs and sentiments. In our study, these include pro-democracy and pro-Western orientations and willingness to put up with dissidents.

The influence of these three groups of factors on intolerance is summarized below. Pertinent statistical details may be found in Table 2.

6.1. Religiosity does not make Russia's Orthodox and Muslims more intolerant of Western churches.

Looking at self-identified Orthodox Christians and Muslims separately, we explored the relations between their religiosity and intolerance of Western churches. The aspects of religiosity we looked at included monotheistic and Christian beliefs, church or mosque attendance, frequency of prayer, and the reading of the Bible or Koran.

For both Orthodox Christians and Muslims, we found no link whatsoever between religiosity and intolerance of Western churches. Those who more fully share monotheistic and Christian beliefs are no more and no less tolerant than those who do not. Tolerance levels among those who go to church/mosque often and those who do not are statistically indistinguishable. The same applies to prayer and scriptural readings.

Thus, with intolerance strong across the board, there are no reasons to attribute it to the rising Orthodox and Muslim religiosity in Russia.

6.2. Near-religious ideologies influence the intolerance towards Western churches.

While core *religious beliefs* do not make Russians more intolerant of Western churches, their ideological *beliefs about religions* do. In particular, as could be expected, the more negative opinions people hold about Western churches, the less they are willing to grant these churches religious freedom. Our data show that Russians see Western groups far more negatively than other religions. Not surprisingly, the intolerance towards them is also stronger than towards other groups. Given the relatively small number of Western groups' adherents in the country, it is clear that most Russians' opinions about them are not based on personal experience. Furthermore, given the relatively low level of religious attendance, Orthodox churches and mosques do not seem like the most important source of negativity towards Western churches. Moreover, our data show no connection between

attendance (high or low) and negative opinions about Western groups. This leaves us with secular media and ideology as the key suspected sources of the negative images of Western churches.

Next, intolerance also reflects ideological beliefs as to whether or not all religions should be given equal rights in Russia. Those who do not believe they should are predictably less tolerant of Western churches (as well as of other religious minorities). Importantly, Russians hold very contradictory views on the general question of equal rights. On the one hand, about half of them agree to some extent that all religions should be treated equally. And at the same time 65% say that Orthodoxy should be given more rights than others, and more than one third opine that all “traditional” religions should be given privileged status. Thus, there is in fact very little ideological support for treating all religions equally, which is reflected in the intolerance towards religious minorities.

Another source of intolerance deals with ideology that rigidly links a group’s ethnic identity to its dominant faith and that regards other religions as alien and harmful for the group. This ideology of religious ethnocentrism is strikingly common in Russia. For instance, 85% of ethnic Russians believe that they are Orthodox in their hearts even if they were not baptized and do not go to church. Nearly half believe that only ethnic Russians can be true Orthodox, and more than one third see converts to non-Orthodox faiths as no longer truly Russian. Similar beliefs about the ethnic nature of Islam are also common among Tatars and other historically Muslim ethnicities. However, among Muslims, acceptance of these views does not increase their intolerance towards Western churches. At the same time, religious ethnocentrism makes Orthodox Russians more intolerant of Western churches.

6.3. Secular ideological influences on religious intolerance

Religious intolerance towards Western churches is further influenced by beliefs and attitudes that have nothing to do with religion. In particular, undemocratic and anti-Western ideological orientations noticeably increase intolerance. The striking popularity of such reactionary orientations helps us understand why the intolerance of Western churches is so strong among Russians. For instance, in our survey two out of three Russians (67%) shared the opinion that Western governments are trying to undermine Russia and cause its collapse. And almost 55% said that adopting Western ways can only harm Russia. Less than one third (32%) see Russia as a European nation that will eventually join the Western world. Furthermore, 52% of Russians see chaos and lawlessness in their country as the result of democracy, and 77% think that elections and competition among parties do Russia more harm than good. In this reactionary ideological atmosphere, there is little surprise in the fact that Western religious groups are facing mass hostility and an unwillingness to give them any rights.

Next, there is a meaningful link between the unwillingness to grant civil liberties to dissidents and non-conformists (e.g., atheists and homosexuals) and religious intolerance towards Western churches in Russia. Here, a more general aversion to diversity manifests itself in the widespread hostility to specific religious out-groups.

Finally, religious intolerance towards groups associated with the U.S. and other Western countries is worsened by anti-American attitudes. While only 14% of Russians openly express negative opinions about Americans, such opinions add fuel to religious hostility towards groups perceived to be American.

7. Regional and social-demographic differences in intolerance

Our data show that religious intolerance towards Western churches is especially strong (markedly above the national average) in the North Caucasus and Central regions of Russia. The intolerance is weaker than average in the North-Western and Far-Eastern regions. Moscow's population appears somewhat more tolerant than the rest of Russia (although some actions of the city authorities against Protestant groups might suggest otherwise).

Additionally, we detected social-demographic differences that usually surface in research on tolerance. Thus, younger Russians (under 30 years of age), people with at least some college education, and city dwellers are more tolerant of Western churches than older, less educated, and those people who live in villages or small towns.

CONCLUSION

Religious intolerance towards Western churches is overwhelmingly common and strong in Russia. Most Russians are unwilling to grant them basic religious liberties; they would not allow Western groups to build churches, to establish religious schools, to preach in public, to publish religious newspapers, or to engage in other activities. Only a tiny proportion of Russians (seven percent) would allow these groups almost all of such activities.

Overall, Western churches are the least tolerated religious minority in Russia. Jews, Muslims, and Orthodox minorities in Islamic areas are all tolerated more than religious groups with links to the United States or other Western nations. While there is a widespread climate of religious intolerance and hostility to religious freedom in Russia, the intolerance of Western churches is its most robust indicator.

Religious intolerance towards Western churches is strikingly widespread among Russia's Orthodox Christians and Muslims, and the latter have slightly more restrictive attitudes. However, the intolerance of Western churches is not linked to either Orthodox or Muslim religiosity. Strong religious belief and active practice of faith do not make Russia's Christians and Muslims either more or less tolerant of Western groups.

Unlike their religious beliefs, Russians' *beliefs about religions* impact tolerance directly. Principled support for granting all religions equal rights is very weak among Russians, and their intolerance of Western churches reflects this fact. Additionally, a majority of Russians hold ethnocentric views of religion that lead them to perceive Western churches as alien and harmful to the Russian people. These negative opinions translate into intolerance.

Furthermore, other important ideological influences on intolerance have nothing to do with religion. Russia's current ideological climate is permeated by widespread reactionary, anti-democratic, and anti-Western orientations. Most Russians suspect Western powers of attempts to subvert their country, see Western ways as harmful to it, and regard democracy as the source of chaos and lawlessness. In this reactionary atmosphere, the widespread intolerance of Western groups is unsurprising. The intolerance is worsened by anti-American feelings.

Thus, in addition to restrictive laws and their arbitrary application by unfriendly authorities, Western churches and other "non-traditional" groups face powerful constraints to their religious freedom "from below," i.e., from ordinary Russians and their prevailing hostile sentiment. International observers' reports of hostile acts against these groups reveal no more than a tiny part of this hostility to religious freedom in Russia.

A sad fact is that, restrictive as it is, existing law still treats Western and other “non-traditional” groups more liberally than most Russians would. The law allows such groups, at least, some activities, while most Russians would not allow them any. If the law were to become more accommodating of public opinion, it would simply eliminate the little that remains of religious liberties of the “non-traditional” groups.

Religious freedom in Russia needs protection from popular hostility no less than from authorities’ arbitrary decisions. The existing legal system that makes some religions more equal than others will only further fuel popular hostility instead of protecting religious freedom from it. Therefore, a serious policy effort needs to be directed at promoting change of existing Russian law on religion towards a more libertarian model. At the very least, the international community must prevent further legal restrictions on religious freedom. According to some reports, such restrictions are already being prepared in Russia.

A no less important policy effort is required to address prejudice, stereotypes and ideological clichés that feed the intolerance towards Western churches in Russia. Clearly, even massive international efforts will have little effect unless they are matched and surpassed by Russians’ own endeavors to combat reactionary ideologies. However, U.S. organizations can make specific contributions to reducing religious intolerance. For instance, ordinary Russians know little if anything about the U.S.-based Western churches they quite commonly perceive as “dangerous sects.” Their perception could change drastically if they knew more about the fundamental role some of these “sects” play in U.S. society. Similarly, ordinary Russians’ perceptions could be changed considerably if they were more informed about the religious liberties that minority groups, including

Orthodox Christians and Muslims, enjoy in the U.S. This relevant knowledge could be spread more actively by American governmental and non-governmental organizations working in and with Russia.

A necessary condition for assessing the effectiveness of such policy efforts and for estimating the level of existing threats to religious freedom is systematic monitoring of religious intolerance among ordinary Russians. We consider our study a first step towards such a monitoring and hope to continue this much needed work.

APPENDIX

Table 1. Religious tolerance towards Western churches among all Russians (N=1,651), the Orthodox (N=1,331), and Muslims (N=833) in Russia (% allowing Western churches religious liberties)

Religious activities	All Russians	The Orthodox	Muslims
build a new church	29.3	28.9	21.6
publicly preach their religion	18.4	17.4	13.6
publish religious materials such as newspapers and magazines magazines	25.2	24.0	18.6
open a religious school	22.3	21.3	13.6
teach the foundations of their faith in public schools	8.7	8.2	8.2
preach their faith on television	20.0	19.5	15.4
do charitable work	40.7	40.1	29.4
raise funds for religious needs	27.7	28.2	23.0

Table 2. Religious, near-religious, and secular determinants of tolerance towards Western churches among Orthodox Christians and Muslims (partial correlations, controlling for the influence of age, education, and city size)

	Tolerance among Orthodox towards Western churches	Tolerance among Muslims towards Western churches
Religiosity (beliefs and practices):		
Monotheistic beliefs	–	–
Christian beliefs	–	N/A
Church/mosque attendance	–	–
Prayer frequency	–	–
Frequency of reading Bible/Koran	–	–
Near-religious ideology (beliefs about and attitudes to one’s own and other religions):		
Belief that all religions should have equal rights	.24***	.16**
Positive views of Islam/Orthodoxy	.17***	–
Religious ethnocentrism	-.23***	–
Positive view of Western churches	.29***	.30***
Non-religious ideology (secular beliefs and attitudes):		
Pro-democratic and pro-Western views	.25***	.19***
Political tolerance	.19***	.21***
Prejudice against ethnic non-Russians/Russians	-.15***	-.14***
Positive view of Americans	.13***	.22***

- no significant association
- * significant at $p < .05$
- ** significant at $p < .001$
- *** significant at $p < .0001$, tow-tailed test

