

## **YOUTH ABOUT THE FUTURE: IS IT POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE THE DESIRED?**

### **Report by**

**Svetlana N. Varlamova**

Federal Center for Theoretical and Applied Sociology - FCTAS  
Russian Academy of Sciences

**Elena I. Kayshauri**

Federal Center for Theoretical and Applied Sociology - FCTAS  
Russian Academy of Sciences

**Anna Doroshina**

Humanitarian Russian State University  
Mosca, Russian Federation

### **Introductory note by Eurispes Institute, Rome**

This study presents the results of two sociological surveys on "Young people and their idea of future" which were conducted in 2018 and 2019 with the same methods, times and questions on a representative sample of young people from Italy, Germany, Poland and Russia.

The initiative was promoted by a pool of experts, the Russian sociologists: Svetlana Varlamova and Elena Kayshauri from the Federal Center for Theoretical and Applied Sociology, Academy of Sciences of Russia (FCTAS-RAS), Anna Doroshina of the Humanitarian Russian State University of Moscow. Experts from the following structures have collaborated on the initiative: for Italy, the Eurispes Institute and the Coris Department of the La Sapienza University in Rome; for Germany, the IWAK Institute of the "W. Goethe University" in Frankfurt; for Poland, experts from the "Central Institute for Labor Protection (C.I.O.P)" in Warsaw, from the "Voivodeship Labor Office" in Białystok, from the "Warsaw School of Social Psychology".

The study was presented and discussed in Rome, February 25, 2020, in a meeting of experts organized by the Eurispes Institute.

The objective of the scholars of Italy, Germany, Poland, Russia who collaborated in the initiative is to contribute to filling a cognitive gap because rare are the in-depth studies on young people's orientation towards the future, on how young people see their personal prospects and those of the family, local, national community in which they live; moreover, because it is the first time that the orientations of young people belonging to very different systems for political, cultural, economic and social situations are compared.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

Studying the image of the future allows making political, demographic and economic forecasts of the development of states, it makes it possible to characterize the economic and socio-political activity of the population, helps to determine the bar of the desired and possible maximum of individual development, to understand the degree of so-called “social optimism”, or “social enthusiasm” both personal and country.

Cross-country comparativistics clearly defines the migration vector and identifies the future “point of attraction” of young people, not today. With the existing freedom of movement of goods, capital, and labor, especially within the EU member States, it is highly likely to assume which country will not lack an influx of young, active and effective workers, while understanding the “level of claim” of the individual in relation to the level of development of their country and their place on the social ladder.

The results of the study, presented for public discussion, allow us to propose a correction of the development vector, if this is necessary.

### 1-CHARACTERISTICS OF RESEARCH METHODS AND SAMPLES

Surveys were conducted in 2018 and 2019 among men and women aged 18 to 30 years, at the time of the survey, living in Italy, Germany, Poland and Russia. The total sample size in 2018 was 1536 people, in 2019 – 2400 people. a territorial, multi-stage quota sample was used. Quota attributes in each country – gender, age, type of settlement.

The aggregate samples for each country required weighting to accurately meet quotas for age groups, but the initial bias did not exceed the sampling error and allowed working with the collected data set.

The technique of conducting the survey was to use a combined method: a classic (face-to-face) and an online survey. The data collection algorithm was the same in all countries. Everywhere communication took place in the language of the country in which the survey was conducted. The fact of entering the sample of Italian, German, Polish and Russian youth was controlled with the direct participation of researchers.

#### *Why exactly Italy, Germany, Poland, and Russia?*

To answer the question “Does the economic and political structure of states affect the value structure of young people and their vision of the future?”, an attempt was made to select European countries that have different historical experience of transformations of political and economic structures, territorial losses or acquisitions in the twentieth century. The dominant faiths in these countries are also different: Christian culture is represented by its main components – Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox.

Thus, the study includes States in which over the last century: 1) there have never been *anyradical* changes in economic and religious spheres (Italy), 2) there has been a unification of *fundamentally different* economic and political systems (Germany), 3) there have been *pendulum changes* in economic and political patterns and religious life (Poland, Russia).

### 2-LIFE VALUES OF YOUTH OF ITALY, GERMANY, POLAND AND RUSSIA

The life values of the young generation - the structure of value orientations - largely determine what the attention of young people will be focused on and how this generation will act in the future.

The results of the study showed the dominance of social and private values, the second tier included the values of economic life. The outsiders were political (democracy, patriotism, politics) and spiritual values (beauty, religion). There is a noticeable dependence: *the higher the level of economic development of the state, the less importance its citizens attach to the material side of life.*

**TABLE 1**

**The Life Values of young people from Russia, Poland, Germany, Italy**

Year 2018

In% of the number of replies, subdivided by country. Only the answers: "very important" and "important" have been taken into consideration.

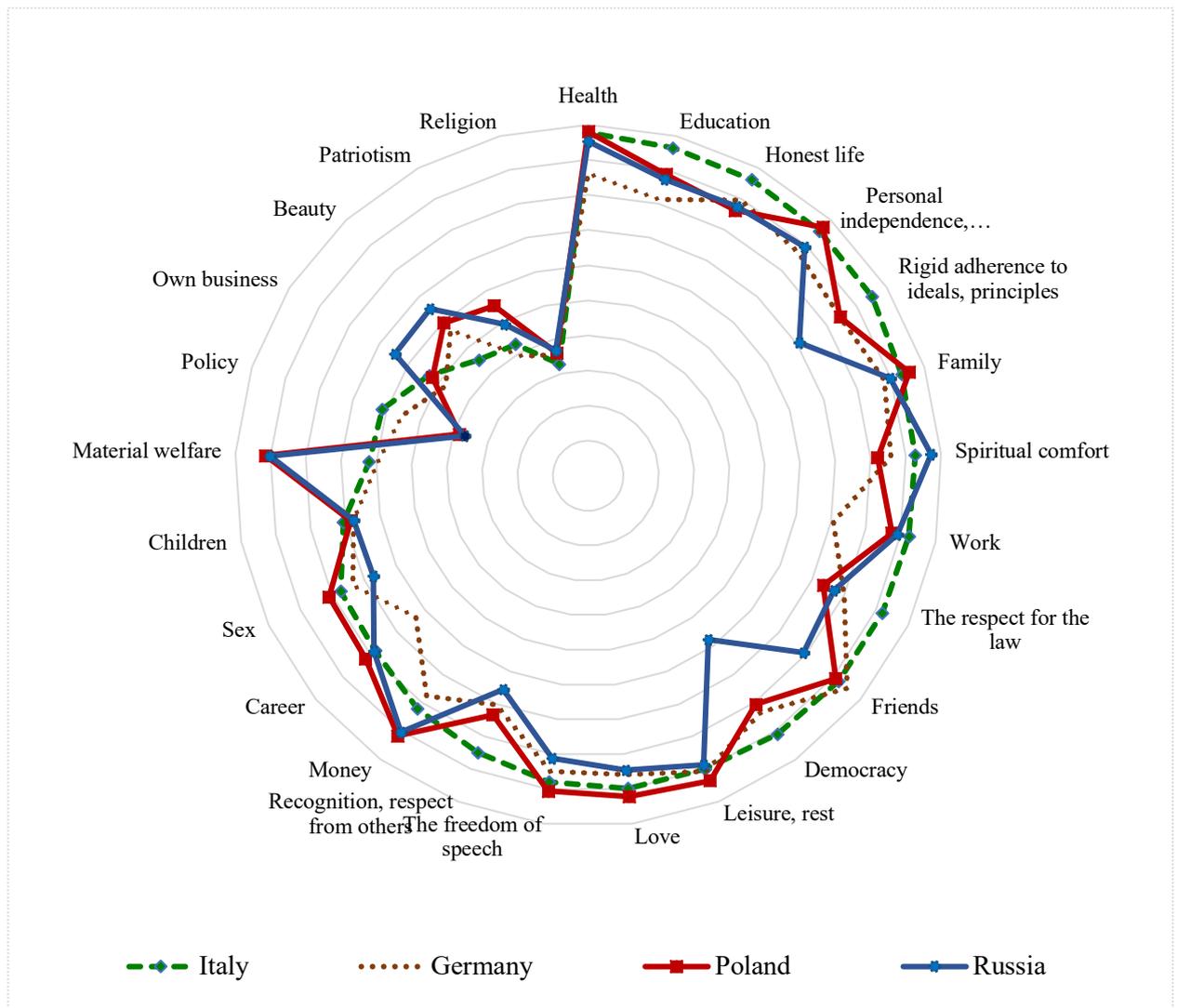
	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Polond</b>	<b>Russia</b>
Health	<b>97,8</b>	86,1	<b>98,0</b>	<b>95,3</b>
Education	96,4	81,2	88,6	87,2
Honest life	96,2	89,6	86,3	87,4
Personal independence, freedom from	95,6	87,1	97,1	89,4
Rigid adherence to ideals, principles	95,1	84,4	84,4	70,8
Family	93,3	88,1	95,5	89,8
Peace of mind – spiritual comfort	92,7	85,8	82,0	97,2
Work	92,4	70,7	87,5	89,1
Respect for the law	92,0	80,1	73,5	76,8
Friends	91,9	<b>95,1</b>	90,8	79,1
Democracy	91,1	83,2	80,6	57,8
Leisure, holidays	90,0	90,6	93,5	88,6
Love	89,9	85,9	92,2	84,6
Freedom of speech	88,0	84,9	90,6	81,2
Recognition, respect from others	84,9	70,2	73,3	65,5
Money	82,2	77,7	91,7	90,3
Career	78,2	63,2	81,8	78,7
Sex	77,4	73,6	81,1	67,2
Children	70,5	67,5	68,4	67,6
Material well-being	62,1	59,8	91,5	90,2
Politics	61,3	55,3	38,3	36,6
Own Business	53,3	47,7	52,2	64,8
Beauty	45,2	56,8	59,7	65,3
Patriotism	42,7	38,8	55,3	49,3
Religion	32,8	35,6	36,1	36,9

The general structure of value orientations of European countries at first glance seems to be quite similar. This can be clearly seen if the tabular form of the survey results is converted into a petal chart: for all countries, the value structure forms generally the same forms. It is possible to speak about domination of universal values, however it is necessary to note some differences in importance of a number of values and to pay attention to the changes which have occurred in the countries of Europe for the post-war period.

The Life Values of young people from Russia, Poland, Germany, Italy

Year 2018

In% of the number of replies, subdivided by country. Only the answers: "very important" and "important" have been taken into consideration.



If we talk about the general structure of value orientations of European youth, we note the following points:

- The importance of the value of "children" is rather low compared to older age groups – not more than 70% for each of the countries. The decline in the importance of this value among young people has been observed for several decades and is confirmed by low birth rates in all countries. Today, this value is significantly inferior in importance to traditional youth values such as friends or leisure and recreation.
- The importance of "personal independence, freedom" in the range of 80-95% of the answers can be interpreted by the characteristics of the age group, when there is a desire to

avoid parental, family care and regular control, increasing at this age the desire for independence.

- The decline in the importance of *religion* in regulating the behavior of the younger generation. Recall that the study involved States in which all branches of the Christian religion are present: in Russia the majority of the population refers to Orthodoxy; Poland and Italy – are the states with a predominant influence of Catholicism, Germany is a country whose population historically professes Protestantism. Researchers have noted for several years a drop in the level of religiosity in all European countries, which, as it turned out, does not depend on the religious denomination. For young people this value is now on the periphery of the value structure.
- The importance of *work and money* as values is significantly higher in countries where young people have more serious problems with employment or decent pay (work is a value for 92.4% of respondents in Italy, 89.1% in Russia 87.5% and in Poland against 70.7% in Germany). The value of work and the possibility of obtaining it often becomes a push-out migration factor.
- *Patriotism* – when the topic is updated in the media, political discussions, this value does not find a warm response among young people.
- Average indicators of the importance of the value of "*beauty*" are largely reflected in how young people relate to their appearance, preferring convenience, comfort, naturalness, in what trends of musical fashion and contemporary art are interesting to young people. In some ways, it can be stated that today functionalism, practicality and usefulness in the minds of young people have won.

The fundamental similarity of the structure of value orientations speaks not only about the belonging of the youth of Russia, Poland, Italy and Germany to the European culture, but also about the division of universal values by it. The unprincipled differences in value structures rather show the national characteristics and specifics of the social life of the countries in which the survey was conducted.

### **3-YOUTH REPRODUCTIVE ATTITUDES AND FAMILY PLANNING**

Demography is one of the most important economic factors, primarily because it significantly affects the labor market. If there are fewer and fewer workers in the country, which is happening now, and more and more pensioners, then there are certainly additional problems for the economy. In this regard, individual preferences regarding the number of children are key issues for research and forecasting the situation with the birth rate.

One of the most important demographic indicators is reproductive attitudes. Planning for the creation of a family and the birth of children allows us to reveal two main aspects, namely: how important this value is for the current generation. The reproductive coefficients in each country for the *ideal* number of children barely exceed the simple reproduction coefficient known in demography and family sociology – 2.14 children. In 2019, these indicators in all countries, except Poland, show a negative trend compared to 2018.

Plans are not always implemented, especially when it comes to plans for child birth. There can be a lot of restrictions – from health, material deprivation to the absence of a partner, and this usually leads to a reduction in attitudes to the birth of a child. Usually the planned (expected)

number of children is less than ideal, as demonstrated by the results of the survey in all countries. It is important to note that the fertility rates in each country in relation to the planned number of children do not reach the necessary coefficient for simple reproduction of the population, but we can note the following: this year, compared with 2018, there was a convergence of indicators of ideal and planned number of children, which indicates a more rational behavior of young people.

The failure to reach the desired number of children is due not only to the value hierarchy of young people, the place of the value “children” among others, but also to a number of socio-economic reasons — first of all, the involvement of women in production, their refusal only from home employment. An additional factor was the increase in their educational level: with an increase in the level of education of the mother, the birth rate usually decreases. As a result, the traditional model of the family (the man earns, the woman runs the house) was economically unprofitable, the earners in the family are now often two. Many demographers point out that the increase in the indirect costs of having a child, as well as the competition of this event with other stages of the life cycle, shift the entry into parenthood to a later date and often lead to a decrease in the number of children in general.

It is important to note that, according to the results of the study, the birth rates in each country in relation to the *planned* number of children do not reach the necessary coefficient for simple reproduction of the population, but we can note the following: this year, compared to 2018, there was a convergence of indicators of the ideal and planned number of children, which indicates a more rational behavior of young people.

Reproductive indicators warn us of the absence of natural population growth for at least a decade, in other words, further depopulation of the country's indigenous population and the release of space for migrants both geographically, literally, and in employment, which should be the subject of public discussion in all countries.

**TABLE 2**

**Expected / ideal number of children in relation to the level of trust in the future**  
Years 2018, 2019  
Average number of children

	Italy		Germany		Poland		Russia	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Ideal number of children	2,35	1,81	2,03	1,89	2,05	2,25	2,43	1,93
Expected number of children	1,74	1,60	1,28	1,73	1,54	2,08	1,64	1,87
Eurostat, Rossat, 2016, 2018	1,34	1,29	1,60	1,57	1,39	1,46	1,76	1,58

The factor that significantly affects the growth of reproductive attitudes was a sense of confidence in the future. In all countries, a comparison of responses from respondents who were confident and unsure of their future found a significant difference in performance. It follows that an increase in the birth rate is possible not only through measures of financial or other state support, but also by changing the views of young people about the possibilities of social mobility, demonstrating in the media real practices of youth success in society.

Low attitudes to childbearing do not mean that young people give up family life, which is completely consistent with their value structure, where the value of the family is significantly higher than the value of children. In principle, there are not so many categorical opponents of creating family unions, most of those who said a categorical “no”: to the family are among Poles (10.5%), and the minimum number of opponents of family life is among Germans (3.9%). Italians

were the most family-oriented – with 82.2% of respondents planning to start a family in the future, which is consistent with the value structure of Italian youth.

#### 4-EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE OF YOUNG PEOPLE DURING THE LAST YEAR AND CONFIDENCE IN THE FUTURE

The emotional and psychological state in which the younger generation is, determines its mood, reactions to an event, contributes to the rise of activity or leads to depression. The constant prevalence of passive, irritable or restless mood in several generations can create the ground for the emergence of a depressive background, can suppress the activity of the population and inhibit the development not only of the individual, but also of society as a whole. Young people with such sentiments will not be able to act as a catalyst for development. Positive moods have the same degree of contagion as negative, emotions of joy and happiness of one person, multiplying, can become the basis of public enthusiasm and best affect the future development of the country. Therefore, it is extremely important to assess the balance of emotional and psychological state inherent in youth in a given period of time.

**TABLE 3**

#### **Emotional-psychological state experienced by young people over the past year**

Year 2018

In% of the response number; for each country

	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>Russia</b>
Restless, anxious	30,6	9,3	12,1	16,0
Interested, active	27,1	15,8	11,3	13,6
Positive towards others	13,3	2,9	14,0	7,2
Enthusiastic	8,4	10,9	12,3	8,0
Friendly	6,7	5,8	11,1	1,3
Melancholy, sad	6,5	16,1	6,7	5,9
Indifferent, passive	5,4	15,8	7,5	8,5
Dilatory, which postpones the choices	1,2	5,7	20,1	32,6
Angry, aggressive	0,9	2,6	4,9	6,9
<i>balance of assessments</i>	+12,1	-8,4	+17,5	-7,2

Italy: 55.5% of young people experienced positive emotions during the last year, 43.4% of respondents had a negative emotional background. Uncertainty about their emotional and psychological state is not typical for Italian youth, only 1.2% of them.

Germany: negative emotions dominate (43.8%), among them – indifference, sadness. 35.4% of respondents in the youth cohorts experience positive emotions and only 5.7% said that their mood was constantly changing. The balance of sentiment is -8.4%.

Poland: positive mood prevails among young people. 48.7% of respondents experience positive emotions, such as calmness, enthusiasm/activity, peacefulness, joy. Just under a third (31.2%) of respondents experience negative emotions and 20.1% are in a state of uncertainty. The balance of assessments is + 17.5%

Russia: the mood of young people was divided into approximately 3 identical groups – 37.3% of respondents experienced during the last year a mood that can be characterized as

negative; 32.6% are in a state of uncertainty, which also has an alarming connotation, since it is not clear in which direction the pendulum will swing in the future; 30.1% of young people have a positive mood. Thus, the balance of estimates is +7.2%.

## 5-SATISFACTION WITH VARIOUS ASPECTS OF LIFE AND SOCIAL DEPRIVATION

How satisfied are young people from different countries with their lives? The question of the role of subjective well-being as an indicator of social development (see, for example, the Happy Planet Index calculated since 2006) is largely due to the adoption of the resolution “*Happiness: a holistic approach to development*” by the UN General Assembly on July 19, 2011, according to which the level of happiness is considered as an important indicator of the country's development. Prior to this time, interest usually focused on overall life satisfaction and the impact of income levels on it. However, it appeared that up to a certain level of income satisfaction with public life really depends on GDP growth, of household income and unemployment, but when it reaches “saturation point” there is no direct correlation and must be included in the tools other than economic indicators: it is necessary to analyze subjective indicators of not only general life satisfaction but also the dynamics of its individual characteristics.

We have seen studies that show a significant gap between East and West, for example: in former Communist countries, there is a tendency to lower subjective satisfaction scores than in other countries with comparable levels of economic development. However, the results of our research did not confirm these estimates. Moreover, based on the analysis of the value structures of the youth of each country, the similarity of the structure of value orientations, we made a statement about the common Christian roots of European culture and the division of the youth of Italy, Germany, Poland and Russia of universal values (for more information, see the EURISPES' report *Rapporto Italia-2020*) (1). National characteristics and the specifics of political and social life of countries, of course, affect the daily behavior of young people, but these differences do not have the character of an insurmountable “barrier”.

If we go to the actual results of the survey and take a closer look at the various aspects of life, we can say that most of the Western European youth are more or less satisfied with almost all the components of life, while the level of income is of concern to Eastern Europeans. It is always surprising when young people have low estimates of their financial situation in general, and they have a high estimate of other aspects of their lives. Obviously, for the most part, they still have the ability to fully meet their basic physiological needs. The low income of a European at the beginning of the XX century and the beginning of the XXI century is a completely disparate picture of life in terms of the quality of food and opportunities for purchasing clothing, durable goods and housing. With satisfaction of basic social needs, they are also fine, as over 80% rate them as good relations with their parents and others. This, in fact, allows young people to speak well about their lives with a general low assessment of their financial situation.

In Germany, Poland, and Russia, the leaders in satisfaction are those aspects of life whose quality depends directly on the respondent's personality – interpersonal relationships (relationships with parents, friends, and colleagues). Italy stands apart from other countries, and the hierarchy of satisfaction is different.

First of all, we note that in Italy there is less disharmony between different aspects of the life of young people, everything looks more or less balanced. The Italian dominants are the state of health and leisure activities, although the Italians have yielded to everyone else in terms of the share of life satisfied with these aspects of life. The bottom lines of the satisfaction rating in all

countries were given to the field of work, which accurately reflects the difficulties in finding not just a job, but a job for the soul and vocation that would allow young people to lead a decent life.

**TABLE 4**

**Youth satisfaction with various aspects of their lives**

Year 2019

In% of the response number; for each country

	<b>Italia</b>	<b>Germania</b>	<b>Polonia</b>	<b>Russia</b>
State of health	<b>71,7</b>	80,7	78,1	74,0
Leisure	<b>66,4</b>	68,3	75,2	76,4
Relationships with parents	64,4	<b>81,6</b>	<b>83,9</b>	<b>86,3</b>
Relationships with others (friends, colleagues, etc.)	65,2	<b>81,3</b>	<b>83,7</b>	<b>84,6</b>
Level of available income	60,3	51,0	43,6	38,9
Work in general	57,4	68,2	62,7	67,3
Life in general	61,0	74,5	77,9	77,7
Opportunities for building your future	62,2	63,0	63,1	67,0

The moods and opinions of individuals about their own lives reflect more likely the general emotional state that is characteristic of society as a whole and the position that young people occupy in it. However, we note that today's emotions and assessments did not provide a direct projection on life prospects. Answering the question about confidence in the future, the respondents, as we assume, relied more on their ideas about the sustainability of the national economy and the opportunities for social growth for different generations that they now observe. These results correlate well with those that youth gave to their countries today and in the dynamics of 10-15 years.

**TABLE 5**

**The sense of trust in the future among young people**

Year 2019

In% of the response number; for each country

	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>Russia</b>
Fully and rather sure	55,0	73,8	39,4	49,1
Rather and completely unsure	25,6	18,4	51,8	42,9
Difficult to answer	19,4	7,8	8,8	8,0

Another indicator that allows us to assess the degree of satisfaction with various aspects of life is the so-called *non-monetary measurement of social vulnerability*. The deprivation experienced by respondents in the modern world due to their difficult financial situation is not only related to deprivation of the most necessary things (food, clothing, and housing), as it was, for example, a century ago, but also to restrictions that hinder the social development of the individual. So, for modern people deprivation means limited access to education, medicine, social and cultural benefits, exclusion from social ties. In general, the results of the study did not show a pronounced negative.

In relation to young people in Italy, Poland, Germany, and Russia, the results of the survey were expected and correlated with previous estimates. Almost none of them live in a situation of hunger or actual lack of clothing. Restrictions mainly extended to new phenomena of the twentieth

century – holidays for the working masses, which are now perceived as a given, a norm, a necessity. For example, a third of young Russians, a little less than a third of Poles, and a quarter of Germans were unable to afford holidays or vacations due to lack of money last year. They expressed their dissatisfaction with the material side of life more categorically than others.

**TABLE 6**

**Life hardships faced by young people in Italy, Poland, Germany and Russia over the past year due to lack of money**

Year 2019

In% of the response number; for each country

	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>Russia</b>
When purchasing essential foods	3,0	1,3	1,7	1,5
When purchasing necessary clothes or footwear	7,8	6,7	2,9	7,5
When purchasing household items necessary for your family	9,1	8,9	1,2	5,1
At the reception or visit of guests and relatives	12,2	5,6	2,8	2,6
To go on vacation during the holidays	<b>15,4</b>	<b>24,2</b>	<b>29,6</b>	<b>34,4</b>
To health care and necessary treatments	12,3	8,7	6,4	10,1
At the payment of school services	8,1	3,5	1,4	2,4
<i>I never had to give up on any of the above things</i>	14,5	10,9	4,0	13,5
Difficult to answer	19,7	24,5	34,7	22,0

**6-PLANNING HORIZONS**

People differently determine the distance of their life plans. Someone plans their future for a year, someone for 5 or 10 years, and someone lives “one day”. Despite the fact that each person outlines his personal life horizon, an increase or decrease in the horizon of life planning depends on the conditions in which the individual is. The social atmosphere, the presence of social elevators that provide career and personal growth opportunities for most residents, the presence of established values in society, a clearly traced image of the future, or simply its presence, determine and shape the longitude of this horizon.

Usual we distinguish short-, medium-and long-term planning, and sociologists tend to ask the question of what period of life people make their plans for. We proposed to introduce new indicators into scientific circulation, namely the horizon of *social planning* and the horizon of *biological planning*. The first indicator is responsible for the period of building life plans, and the horizon of biological planning shows how long in the views of the interviewee his life will last, how many years his physical and mental resources will last.

Based on the results of 2018 and 2019, it can be concluded that the youth of all countries have only a medium-term horizon of social planning – from 4 to 8 years, which from the standpoint of social forecasting is a short period, and some variation in data is likely determined by the nuances of domestic political life and economic situation in each country (for example, many Russians find it difficult to answer the question of how the economy and political life of the country will change after the presidential elections in 2024, and therefore the planning horizon has decreased). Youth cohorts in the conditions of global changes, constant crises do not see for themselves the possibility of building long-term plans, but they do not live for "one day" and look for opportunities to vary resources.

**TABLE 7**

### The horizon of the life plan of young people from Italy, Germany, Poland, Russia

Years 2018, 2019

average number of years

	Italy	Germany	Poland	Russia
<b>2018</b>	For 5,5-6 years	For 6,5-7 years	For 8-8,5 years	For 7-7,5 years
<b>2019</b>	For 7,5 years	For 5-5,5 years	For 4-4,5 years	For 4,5-4,7 years

Long life is valuable for its carrier and its loved ones, provided that they are aware of the world around them; therefore, not only life expectancy is important, but also healthy life expectancy. In this light, the ideas of young people about the chances of their generation for physical and mental longevity are interesting. The answer to these questions in reality shows the “programming” by the respondent of the duration of his own life.

In the indicator "*horizon of biological planning*" we have identified two indicators: the idea of the age of mental and physical activity and the ideas of life expectancy.

*Estimated life expectancy* is the most important demographic indicator that characterizes the standard of living of the population, the work of health systems and social services. According to Eurostat data for 2016, the life expectancy of poles was estimated at 78 years, for Germans – 81 years. For Italy, the life expectancy was 83.4 years. Official statistics for Italy, Germany and Poland are close to the results of the study, and their differences are insignificant. Thus, young people, having before their eyes the example of older generations, very clearly determine the chances of longevity. The results of the 2019 survey gave a small but decline in life expectancy (except in Russia). This reflects the belief of young people that they will have to make more efforts to achieve their goals than the current older generation, and therefore their physical resources will be used up faster.

Another indicator of the biological planning horizon – *age of one's mental and physical activity* – has increased in all countries except Germany over the past year – to 80.9 years in Italy, 59.9 years in Poland and 58.1 years in Russia. The low results obtained in Poland and Russia confirm the willingness of respondents to sacrifice some part of their health for the sake of building a career and achieving material benefits, which is a value for them.

Nevertheless, the recorded gaps of 12-18 years between the notions of total life expectancy and healthy life expectancy do not correspond to modern medical attitudes. These indicators are significantly lower than estimates of the estimated life expectancy of a generation and, in our opinion, can serve as a guide for the health and social services about the age limits, when the appeal for help of this age cohort will increase by a multiple.

**TABLE 8**

#### Hypothesis on the age limit related to the psychological and physical activity and the life expectancy of their generation

Years 2018, 2019

average number of years, for each country

	Italy		Germany		Poland		Russia	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Estimated age of physical and mental activity	66,6	80,9	61,2	59,8	51,1	59,9	56,2	58,1

Life expectancy of a generation	84,3	82,7	82,4	77,7	76,6	73,5	68,8	70,4
Life expectancy according to official statistics	83,4		81,0		78,0		72,7	

Eurostat. Life expectancy by age and sex, last update, 15.03.18:

URL: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

## 7-PROBLEMS THAT COMPLICATE THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS

Describing the real difficulties of their own lives, young people focus primarily on the situation on the labor market and housing problems (difficulties in finding a job, high prices for rent, expensive housing and communal services – 40-49% of responses). It is obvious that housing problems would not be included in the top 5 of the list if young people had an income level that allows them to live separately from their parents without compromising other aspects of life. In short, this group of dominant problems can be called “where to live and what to live on?”. The second group includes problems in the social sphere-pension provision, lack of guarantees of a decent old age (indicated by 42-45% of respondents) and the work of the health system (42-25% of respondents noted the low quality of medical care). This pattern is typical for Germany, Poland, and Russia.

Italy stands apart on this issue. Eternal youth questions “how to separate from parents and what to live on?”, of course, has not passed the country, but it should be noted that most of the problems, according to the self-assessments of young Italians, are not too common or they have learned not to focus on them, demonstrating an enviable love of life. The top lines in the rating of problems received no more than 20-30% of responses, which can be considered a fairly safe situation for society as a whole.

It should be emphasized that in all countries, the subject of television news is almost not reflected in the real life of real people: most young people are not particularly concerned about the situation with migrants, the environment, crime, terrorism, and corruption.

**TABLE 9**

### **Problems that complicate the lives of young people and their family members**

Year 2019

In% of the response number; for each country, maximum 9 answers

	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>Russia</b>
High taxes, in general	16,2	29,1	<b>44,4</b>	29,5
High municipal taxes	<b>25,7</b>	<b>43,0</b>	<b>48,8</b>	<b>43,7</b>
High housing rental prices	<b>30,5</b>	<b>48,2</b>	<b>41,9</b>	<b>40,2</b>
Delays in paying wages	21,1	9,6	4,9	6,7
Conflicts in family of origin (or own)	<b>23,7</b>	14,2	13,6	13,1
Corruption, bribery of officials, etc.	16,4	22,5	15,1	29,8
Financial difficulties	<b>22,9</b>	<b>36,8</b>	22,5	<b>35,7</b>
Lack of services in the residence area	13,3	10,7	4,8	8,9
Insufficient information on the activities of the authorities	11,0	19,4	10,0	17,9
Insufficient guarantees for old age	13,0	<b>44,2</b>	<b>42,8</b>	<b>44,5</b>
Lack of time for children and family in general	10,0	15,8	15,8	17,4
Lack or shortage of living space	12,9	27,3	14,5	27,1
Poor quality of health services	14,5	<b>38,2</b>	<b>44,2</b>	<b>40,4</b>

Lack of services for sport and leisure	8,8	11,1	8,1	12,0
Insufficient public transport	15,7	10,8	17,2	15,3
Poor ecology in the region of residence	15,1	19,2	20,4	27,5
Poor health of any family member	12,9	9,7	10,2	12,3
Inflow of migrants	11,6	17,5	12,4	15,5
Drug problems for any family member	5,3	2,2	0,6	1,7
Alcoholism among family members	5,2	3,1	5,2	5,0
The growth of nationalist sentiments	9,7	11,5	11,8	9,1
Difficulty finding work	<b>25,9</b>	31,4	26,1	27,7
Risk of job loss	16,9	8,3	9,4	10,1
Threat of terrorism	8,1	1,9	2,9	3,5
Road crime	10,5	6,3	7,9	11,2
Deterioration in the quality of education	11,1	20,8	19,5	27,9
Other	0,2	0,8	4,0	1,4
<i>Our family has no serious difficulties</i>	18,5	12,3	12,6	8,6

## 8-SOCIAL RESOURCES OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

The daily life of each of us is full of not only positive events, achievements, but also obstacles on the way to the intended goals. Very few people manage to be born with a “silver spoon” in their mouth. Most people have to make a lot of effort to achieve something meaningful in life. Everyone has their own approach to solving certain problems, depending on the accepted social norms and personal education, culture, and family living conditions.

The task of the respondents was to determine who the youth would choose as the addressee for applying for help in case of real life difficulties. Young people from all countries without exception (Italy, Germany, Poland, Russia) in a difficult situation will turn, first of all, to relatives, friends, acquaintances, and work colleagues. Moreover, the values of indicators in 2018 and 2019 change slightly.

**TABLE 10**

### To whom requests for help are addressed in difficult situations

Year 2019

In% of the response number; for each country, maximum 4 answers

	Italy		Germany		Poland		Russia	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
To mass media	4,9	7,6	7,1	4,7	4,0	1,6	2,8	6,5
To relatives	73,6	74,0	71,4	79,2	84,9	76,5	79,9	78,8
To friends, acquaintances, work colleagues	51,4	52,1	85,7	60,3	55,7	46,1	58,4	54,4
To members of your home community (people from your country or, if you are a foreign citizen, of your ethnic group)	0,8	9,0	2,4	4,9	0,3	0	1,3	1,7
To rights protection associations	3,5	12,5	2,4	8,9	11,4	2,2	9,3	12,3
To local authorities	8,0	19,8	7,1	10,3	4,8	7,9	7,0	10,5
To the bodies of state power (to the president, to the government)	1,6	5,5	0	3,9	1,3	0,3	4,8	2,2

To members of the national parliament, or of the regional assembly, to local authorities	0,3	3,0	4,8	2,0	0,2	0,8	0,7	3,1
To social and voluntary associations	0,8	5,5	7,1	3,7	2,2	3,6	7,7	5,7
To the parish or other religious organizations	3,0	4,2	0	3,7	1,8	2,3	4,2	1,6
To God	15,9	8,4	9,5	16,1	15,7	23,9	15,0	16,3
To a psychologist or psychotherapist	11,1	6,9	40,5	24,9	14,5	10,7	12,6	14,7
Other ( <i>write</i> )	9,2	0,5	0,4	0,4	0,3	4,1	8,1	1,5
To nobody, I try to solve my problems by myself	11,5	16,1	21,4	14,8	5,9	19,0	21,0	26,4

A special feature of 2019 for Italians was the choice of human rights organizations (12.5%) and local authorities (19.8%). In Germany, in 2019, the share of those who are ready to turn to a psychologist and psychotherapist in difficult situations decreased from 40.5% to 24.9%, as well as those who are determined to solve problems independently (from 21.4% to 14.8%), but the top 5 included an appeal to God for support (16.1%).

The results of the survey of young people in Poland show a significant increase in the proportion of those who seek no one to help them solve their problems – from 5.9% in 2018 to 19.0% in 2019. There is also a strong decrease in those who intend to contact a human rights organization (from 11.4% to 2.2% in 2019).

Russian respondents demonstrate a stable view of seeking help in the event of serious difficulties. The top 5 includes options such as contacting relatives, friends, acquaintances and work colleagues, to God, to a psychologist, as well as independent search for a solution to difficulties. At the same time, in 2019, a solid share of those who are ready to seek help from a human rights organization joins the “top five” (12.3%).

## **9-SOCIAL DYNAMICS AND SOCIAL MOBILITY OF YOUTH IN THE PERSPECTIVE 10-15 YEARS: SOCIAL OPTIMISM OR APATHY?**

The degree of “*social optimism*” can be estimated by analyzing the self-assessments of the younger generation regarding the dynamics of their place on the hypothetical social ladder. A measure of social optimism can serve as an indicator for evaluating the performance of social elevators in a society.

At a distance of 10-15 years, the youth of the four countries are confident that in the future they have the opportunity to become both more financially secure and have more power and respect. When evaluating their future opportunities, young people are confident in their implementation, and all assessments show a positive perspective. However, we note that the degree of social optimism has significantly decreased, which was largely contributed to the political and economic perturbations of the last year, especially the long history with Brexit. Perhaps only the German youth saw the opportunities for themselves. Poles and Italians are positioning themselves most highly, both now and in 10-15 years, but Germans and Russians are confident that they are making more progress up the social ladder, according to the 2019 survey – the total increment on all scales was more than 4 points, or an average of 1.4 – 1.5 points per indicator of the social ladder, which can be assessed quite high on a nine-point scale. The “subsidence” of Italy and Poland should not be evaluated in any way yet, it is necessary to see these data in the dynamics of the next year in order to assess the emerging trends.

TABLE 11

**Young people from Italy, Germany, Poland, Russia and their position on the social scale:  
how they evaluate their current condition and their perspective after 10-15 years**

Years 2018,2019

Lower level = 1; highest level = 9; results from the number of responses

	Italy		Germany		Poland		Russia	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
<b>At present</b>								
Poor / Rich	5,09	4,81	4,43	4,59	5,05	4,88	4,56	4,40
Powerless / with authority	4,51	4,79	4,41	4,52	5,25	5,10	3,99	4,62
Not respected / Respected	5,37	4,88	5,44	5,26	6,48	5,96	5,48	4,75
<i>sum of the scores</i>	14,97	14,48	14,28	14,37	16,78	15,94	14,03	13,77
<b>After 10-15 years</b>								
Poor / Rich	6,93	5,20	6,63	6,61	7,0	5,83	6,48	6,03
Powerless / with authority	6,39	5,22	5,72	5,73	6,48	5,86	5,16	5,15
Not respected / Respected	7,53	5,29	6,07	6,45	7,36	6,68	6,68	6,67
<i>sum of the scores</i>	20,85	15,71	18,42	18,79	20,84	18,37	18,32	17,85
<i>increase</i>	5,88	1,23	4,14	4,42	4,06	2,43	4,29	4,08

Additional evidence of young people's optimism about their personal future is their answers about the degree of self-realization. In Germany, Poland, and Russia, respondents assumed that in 10-15 years, after getting an education and taking an appropriate place in the labor market, they will be able to reach their potential almost twice as much as now (dynamics from 35.5%-45.3% to 73.0%-81.3%).

Young Italians position themselves separately, believing that even now the situation does not look tragic: only in the Apennines, the answers about the percentage of today's self-realization exceeded half (61.9%), but there is no noticeable breakthrough in the future 10-15 years. The percentage of realization is expected to reach 75.3%. A positive point can be seen in the fact that there will still be potential for future years, because to live up to eighty years only on the old stock is boring and unproductive, in this case, if we do not develop ourselves, the world will overtake us very quickly.

TABLE 12

**Assumptions of youth and self-realization now and in the future 10-15 years**

Year 2019

by the number of respondents; average %, for each country

	Italy	Germany	Poland	Russia
Now: I feel ...% fulfilled	61,9%	45,3%	42,6%	35,5%
In 10-15 years: I will feel ....% fulfilled	75,3%	79,4%	73,0%	81,3%

Material successes over the same period of time is seen in accordance with, first, what opportunities the labor market provides for this, and, secondly, what place money occupies in the structure of personal value orientations. Recall that in poorer countries, material well-being for the population means more than for residents of richer countries. In Italy and Germany, the "appetites" of young people are quite moderate, Russians and Poles want to achieve clearly unrealistic results, and we can safely say that for most of them this income will remain a dream.

TABLE 13

**The planned level of monthly income in 10-15 years**  
**What net monthly earnings do you expect to achieve in 10-15 years?**

Year 2019

Italy	3 380 €
Germany	2 720 €
Poland	2500 €
Russia	3 771 €

The dynamics of individual assessments is indicative against the background of assessments of the situation of countries in 10-15 years of development. Germany in the future 10-15 years, according to the current young generation of the country, will remain one of the locomotives of world development. First of all, they attribute it to the country's authority on the world stage, the level of economic and cultural development. All estimates given by them to each of spheres today and in 10-15 years, exceed 5-point estimates, i.e. settle down in a leadership zone. It is interesting to note that after the depressed mood of the last year, in 2019, the Germans show positive dynamics, both in terms of personal prospects, and in relation to Germany itself. Their performance remained the highest of the questions received in this cluster compared to other countries.

Italians and Poles represent their countries now and in 10-15 years as strong middle peasants, although Poles have slightly lowered the level of optimism about the country's prospects. Russian youth, compared with 2018, seriously reduced the assessment of the current state of the political and social spheres, and, like the Poles, revised their estimates of the country's development in the direction of decreasing indicators.

Gender differences are interesting: the great optimists in Germany and Russia are girls, and in Italy and Poland – boys.

Thus, it can be stated that the "*social thermometer*" in Western European countries shows a more or less normal temperature, and in Eastern Europe attention to the issues of social mobility of young people, the work of social elevators should be strengthened.

**TABLE 14**

**Young people and the evaluation of their country:  
current situation and 10-15 years perspective**

Years 2018, 2019

Average score, from the number of responses received in each country

	Italy		Germany		Poland		Russia	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
<b>At present</b>								
Position of the country on the world stage, where 1 point is lagging behind, 10 points is leading	5,27	5,36	7,84	6,04	4,87	4,72	4,95	4,45
The level of economic development of the country, where 1 point is weak, stagnant, 10 points – strong, developing economy	4,80	5,16	7,54	5,53	5,45	5,16	3,97	3,68

The level of social development of the country, where 1 point is low, 10 points – high	4,96	5,01	6,82	5,43	5,35	4,96	4,33	3,98
The political situation in the country, where 1 point – the situation is close to dictatorship, authoritarianism, and 10 points – democracy, competition	5,62	5,22	7,99	5,75	5,12	4,40	4,27	3,62
The level of development of the spiritual-cultural sphere, where a score of 1 is low, 10 – high	5,41	5,10	7,05	5,90	5,91	5,31	4,91	4,65
<i>sum of the scores</i>	26,06	25,85	37,24	28,65	26,70	24,55	22,43	20,38
<b>After 10-15 years</b>								
Position of the country on the world stage, where 1 point is lagging behind, 10 points is leading	5,07	5,29	7,66	6,48	5,75	5,24	6,25	5,26
The level of economic development of the country, where 1 point is weak, stagnant, 10 points – strong, developing economy	4,88	5,36	7,95	6,22	6,36	5,59	5,70	4,81
The level of social development of the country, where 1 point is low, 10 points – high	5,87	5,63	6,57	5,79	6,31	5,35	5,86	5,12
The political situation in the country, where 1 point – the situation is close to dictatorship, authoritarianism, and 10 points – democracy, competition	5,68	5,51	7,71	6,20	4,98	4,98	5,32	4,64
The level of development of the spiritual-cultural sphere, where a score of 1 is low, 10 – high	5,62	5,50	7,19	6,22	6,61	4,73	5,80	5,34
<i>sum of the scores</i>	27,12	27,29	37,08	30,91	30,01	25,89	28,93	25,17
<i>increase</i>	1,06	2,01	-0,16	2,26	3,31	1,37	6,50	4,79

## 10-CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS AND WAYS TO ACHIEVE IT

There are hardly any young people who do not want to achieve success in life, or at least do not want to live a happy and prosperous life. Only the category “success” in different times, in different societies, in different social groups does not always hide the same content. For example, the ancient Greeks probably would have talked about a harmonious personality, in the middle Ages they would have talked about the desire for asceticism, and what model of success do modern societies offer? How do young people interpret this, how do they transform the impulses sent to them by modern society into models of success and adapt these models to themselves?

According to young people, society recognizes true success in life when material well-being is harmoniously combined with self-realization, interesting and rich life, and successful communications. Globalism and technological advances have made it possible to see almost the entire world, and young people believe that in society, the criteria for success include the ability to travel a lot. In countries where the standard of living of the population is lower (Poland, Russia), financial well-being and a career that implicitly involves improving material well-being, society refers to the criteria of success more often than good health.

TABLE 15

### Young people's ideas about how a person's life success is measured in society

Year 2019

In% of the response number; for each country maximum 5 answers

	Italy	Germany	Poland	Russia
The opportunity to live an interesting life	17,7	<b>36,2</b>	<b>41,4</b>	<b>42,8</b>
The possibility of traveling a lot	<b>40,2</b>	<b>37,3</b>	<b>33,5</b>	<b>40,0</b>
Having friends, having relationships	<b>37,7</b>	<b>36,4</b>	26,6	25,0
Health	<b>31,8</b>	<b>49,5</b>	30,7	35,3
Fame in society	<b>25,5</b>	19,6	30,2	22,5
Career achievements	22,8	36,1	<b>54,4</b>	<b>40,9</b>
Discoveries in science and technology	13,5	17,4	11,4	18,1
Benefit to society, people	18,2	27,2	11,1	28,0
Popularity in social networks	<b>24,8</b>	10,7	20,8	17,1
Recognition, respect of others	18,5	19,9	26,8	21,8
Self-realization	19,1	<b>48,1</b>	<b>31,1</b>	<b>46,8</b>
Faithfulness to ideals, to principles	13,9	17,6	5,5	9,1
Create a family, have children	14,6	13,0	19,4	17,6
Sporting success	17,8	5,1	3,4	5,5
Educational level	14,8	12,7	9,3	17,3
Physical beauty, attraction	19,4	9,8	24,6	13,0
Economic well-being	23,9	34,0	<b>48,4</b>	<b>42,4</b>
The number of love relationships	6,8	3,5	3,2	2,7
Other	0,5	1,4	0,8	1,4

Each person tries on the dominant attitudes in society to their own ideas about success. Modern youth does not focus only on material success, but connects personal success with the success of their internal potentials, self-realization, and recognition from others. The results of the survey indicate that true success can be said when harmony is achieved between personal achievements in the form of clearly fixed components of material well-being and the possibility of using them to improve it. Absolutization of only spiritual attitudes is futile if there are no material resources for their implementation.

It seems to young people that life is truly successful if they were able to realize a comfortable state in all areas of activity and directly or indirectly maintain a friendly relationship with the people around them and social groups at different levels. Any success is achieved through the inclusion of a person in the social structure and social relations. The age characteristics of the surveyed group were expected to give characteristic results: in the criteria of life success, young people also lead the “opportunity to live interesting”, “friendship/communication” and “health” (30-38% of responses).

The obtained empirical material once again indicates an alarming situation in the field of demography. The creation of a family and the birth of children are not considered by young people to be clearly defined criteria for successful life (only in Russia this criterion became the second most important – 37.9%), among Italians there were only 11.9% of them.

TABLE 16

### Youth perceptions of success criteria for their own life

Year 2019

In % of the response number; for each country maximum 5 answers

	Italy	Germany	Poland	Russia
I have had an interesting life	10,2	<b>40,0</b>	<b>25,2</b>	<b>39,9</b>
I travelled a lot	<b>23,4</b>	24,1	17,7	28,2
I have kept friendships, pleasant relationships	<b>30,4</b>	<b>36,6</b>	<b>37,5</b>	<b>37,3</b>
I have enjoyed good health	<b>36,2</b>	<b>38,0</b>	<b>37,9</b>	<b>36,7</b>
I have achieved fame in society	<b>20,7</b>	9,9	3,6	7,9
My career has been a success	18,6	27,8	20,7	30,6
I have made discoveries in science, technology	18,7	15,2	2,2	14,7
I made a contribution to society, helped others	16,6	22,5	20,1	31,5
I am popular on social networks	14,0	3,6	1,1	1,7
I got recognition, respect from others	14,2	16,0	<b>34,2</b>	20,6
I think I fulfilled myself	15,8	<b>29,9</b>	21,5	<b>34,8</b>
I have always followed my principles, ideals	<b>25,3</b>	17,4	20,2	16,6
I created a family, I had children	11,9	28,6	20,9	<b>37,9</b>
I have been successful in sports	11,8	6,6	3,1	3,2
I have received adequate education	19,8	12,7	<b>22,2</b>	14,8
I am beautiful and attractive	13,4	10,9	7,9	8,5
I have achieved economic well-being	9,8	<b>28,9</b>	14,5	<b>32,2</b>
I have had many love relationships	8,4	7,2	0,5	1,6
Other	0,6	0	3,3	0,5

Orientation to life success is associated with different ways to achieve it. The ways of achieving the goals set by the young generation to achieve the goals set make it possible to assess the extent to which young people rely on their strengths, plan to achieve everything on their own, or hope for someone else's help or simple luck. Respondents from all countries (Russia, Poland, Germany, and Italy) announce that they will achieve their goals independently. Italian youth rely on themselves as much as possible.

#### 10-CIVIL AND SOCIO-POLITICAL ACTIVITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND AUTHORITIES

As one of the indicators of interaction between the authorities and the youth, the issue of various components of political and civil activity, the participation of young men and girls in various public events and actions was considered. Participation in various actions in the country of residence allows us to assess the degree of maturity of civil society and the culture of political participation of young people. For example, in a country where the role of religion and the Church is high, religious institutions are actively involved in the life of society, participation in religious actions increases, as shown by the results of Italian youth (22.16%). The same can be said for volunteer events that involve young people in Italy (37.9%), while in Germany and Poland the proportion of young people participating in similar events is half as much (19.2% and 19.5%).

Comparing the responses of respondents from Russia and Poland with the responses of peers from Germany and Italy allows us to distinguish two groups with more or less similar results within each of them.

According to the revealed structure of political and civic participation, young Poles are much closer to Russians than Germans and Italians, with the only difference being that electoral participation rates in Poland were about 10% higher, and other types of social and political activity are slightly lower than Russian data.

The internal political and social life of Germany and Italy shows a completely different picture. The involvement of youth in political life through participation in elections of various levels, referenda, demonstrations and rallies can not be compared with its eastern neighbors. The social activities of young people in volunteer organizations and actions of religious events, which are most often also aimed at helping those in need, are significant and extensive. The reason for such active participation is that both Italians and Germans see the effect of the results of their involvement in both civic activism and political events.

The cross-country difference turned out to be significant, but it does not show the difference between young people, but reflects the features of the state and political structure, political life and culture of political participation of countries. In addition, the obtained results confirm the attitudes and behavioral practices of young people to influence or distance themselves from power, and to focus on solving exclusively personal problems or problems of their immediate environment.

**TABLE 17**

**Participation of young people in various events over the past 5 years  
and their evaluation of the effectiveness of these events**

Years 2018, 2019

In % of the response number; for each country

	Participated				Consider these activities effective			
	Italy	Germany	Poland	Russia	Italy	Germany	Poland	Russia
Municipal, regional elections	67,6	67,0	55,0	46,3	74,5	57,8	71,1	23,9
National elections, referendum	62,0	63,0	48,6	35,9	70,3	48,2	64,1	21,1
Collection of signatures / petitions in defense of civil rights in support of particular organizations	33,7	25,0	12,6	25,2	60,9	32,0	58,0	23,7
Volunteering initiatives	37,9	19,2	19,5	27,8	70,1	62,6	72,5	53,9
Charitable initiatives	36,2	40,8	17,2	24,9	70,3	62,6	76,4	52,8
Events	41,4	41,2	7,4	18,1	66,6	56,3	46,9	36,1
Protest initiatives	37,6	47,3	5,9	9,2	64,2	59,4	50,3	33,5
Strikes	34,6	14,4	5,2	4,8	64,4	58,1	57,8	31,8
Initiatives of religious organizations	22,1	10,2	4,3	5,1	61,9	32,5	28,9	2,0
Campaigns for the protection of consumer rights	17,6	35,9	2,4	10,2	62,6	75,7	48,2	30,9

Redevelopment of inhabited centers respecting the environment	20,8	33,0	4,3	18,1	65,5	70,4	71,3	53,8
National,towns,holidays, festivals	40,3	25,9	27,6	37,0	65,7	62,2	63,5	39,9
Other	1,4		1,4	0,6				
I haven't attended any events	0,7	27,1	12,0	10,1	56,4	66,1	30,8	17,0

The natural question that arises when discussing the involvement of young people in the social and political life of the country or the world, and whether there are any authorities who would act as reference points, would show their professional or private life an example worthy of imitation. For Italians, they were expected to be representatives of culture and art (40.4%), statesmen and politicians (25.5%), entertainers (21.0%), athletes, mainly football players (19.4%), scientists (15.5%) and religious figures (8.5%). The outsiders were TV commentators (3.8%) and public figures (3.7%), businessmen (2.0%).

The young people were asked the question: “Do you think that some of the famous politicians, public figures, scientists, or representatives of culture, art, and sports demonstrate patterns of behavior worthy of imitation?”. The following results were obtained:

**TABLE 18**

**Well-known figures who demonstrate patterns of behavior worthy of imitation**

Year 2019

In% of the response number; for each country, multiple answers allowed

	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Russia</b>
State and political figures	25,5	<b>34,1</b>	<b>46,5</b>	<b>58,3</b>
Representatives of culture and art	<b>40,4</b>	1,8	20,6	3,1
Pop performers	21,0	2,5	5,2	7,2
Actors	14,2	10,7	13,9	10,7
Athletes	19,4	29,6	25,9	10,7
Scientists	15,5	6,3		10,4
Religious figures	8,5	7,3	3,6	2,0
TV commentators	3,9	12,9	3,3	9,5
Businessmen	2,0	2,8	7,9	16,7
Public figures	3,7	2,6	0,0	3,1
Таких нет	6,7	30,5	6,1	8,8

For *Italians*, they were expected to be representatives of culture and art (40.4%), state and political figures (25.5%), pop performers (21.0%), athletes, mostly football players (19.4%), scientists (15.5%) and religious figures (8.5%). TV commentators (3.9%), public figures (3.7%), and businessmen (2.0%) turned out to be outsiders.

The *Germans* and *Poles* found their own patterns of behavior among government and political figures and athletes (25-46% of responses). For *Russians*, politicians and government officials are leading by a large margin (58.3%), while businessmen are second in this ranking, but the gap is too wide (16.7%).

It is important to find out who exactly is a role model for young people.

**TABLE 19**

**Figures of reference : Top-10**

	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Russia</b>
1	Totò	Robert Biedroń	Angela Merkel	Vladimir Zelensky
2	Papa Francesco	Jerzy Owsiak	Otto von Bismarck	Elon Musk
3	MadreTeresa	Mateusz Morawiecki	Joachim Löw	Vladimir Putin
4	Barack Hussein Obama	Robert Lewandowski	Alexander Gauland	Sergey Lavrov
5	Jovanotti	JamesMilner	Ludwig van Beethoven	Vladimir Zhirinovsky
6	MatteoSalvini	Adam Małysz	DirkNowitzki	Chulpan Khamatova
7	AlbertEinstein	Zdzisław Kuźniar	SahraWagenknecht	Sergey Shoigu
8	Rita Levi-Montalcini	Kamil Stoch	Michael Ende	Mark Zuckerberg
9	Donald JohnTrump	Sławomir Mentzen	Max Riemelt	Ksenia Sobchak
10	AntonioConte	MartinaWojciechowska	Bastian Schweinsteiger	Konstantin Khabensky

**TABLE 19 - BIS**

**Young Italians** considered the following not only their own countrymen, but also foreigners, as models of behavior worthy of imitation, which is greatly facilitated by the media.

1	Totò	6,8		Madonna	1,8
---	------	-----	--	---------	-----

2	Papa Francesco	3,8	23-30	LucianoPavarotti	1,6
3	MadreTeresa	3,3		CristianoRonaldo	1,6
4	Barack Obama	3,1		Francesco Totti	1,6
5-7	Jovanotti	2,8		Maria DeFilippi	1,6
	Matteo Salvini	2,8		Mahmood	1,6
	Albert Einstein	2,8		Diego Armando Maradona	1,6
8-10	RitaLevi-Montalcini	2,4		Eduardo De Filippo	1,6
	Donald Trump	2,4		DanteAlighieri	1,6
	AntonioConte	2,4	31-38	Martin Luther King	1,4
11-15	Mahatma Gandhi	2,1		SophiaLoren	1,4
	Roberto Benigni	2,1		Adolf Hitler	1,4
	Benito Mussolini	2,1		Bob Dylan	1,4
	Luigi DiMaio	2,1		Tiziano Ferro	1,4
	Nelson Mandela	2,1		Greta Thunberg	1,4
16-22	Barbara D'Urso	1,8		Roberto Saviano	1,4
	GiovanniPaolo II	1,8		Raffaella Carrà	1,4
	Alberto Angela	1,8	39-41	Sigmund Freud	1,2
	Sergio Mattarella	1,8		Amadeus	1,2
	Fabio Rovazzi	1,8		Guglielmo Marconi	1,2
	Giuseppe Fiorello	1,8		There are none	6,7

This list requires careful analysis. It is obvious that the athletes are dominated by those who represent the most popular sports in the country. Actors and entertainers are usually chosen by those who already have a consistently approved reputation in society. But the political spectrum raises questions about the presence of odious characters, classified by world public opinion as outcasts and either located in the zone of silence, or mentioned in the media exclusively with a negative connotation. Nevertheless, some young people chose them as a model for themselves. This can only mean one thing – there is a social and economic ground for the spread of these views, and, consequently, society must carefully analyze what allows such samples to germinate and strengthen on this basis.

## CONCLUSION

The presence of the image of the future is important for society as a whole and for its individual members, especially for the younger generation. It is the youth that is the group that most subtly perceives the social atmosphere and the vector of development of the state, most clearly and vividly represents the “pictures” of this image and is either its engine or brake. It is important to study all the factors shaping the image of the future, including the timely correction of “weaknesses”.

\*When studying the image of the future, first of all, it is important to pay attention to the horizon of life planning of young people, because it demonstrates the “longitude” and “capacity” of the image of the future. *The social horizon of life planning of young people is designed only for the medium term and significantly lags behind the horizon of biological planning, which impoverishes the overall picture of the future, but suggests that the younger generation does not live “one day”.* Youth cohorts in the context of global changes, constant crises do not see the possibility of building long-term plans, which is typical for more mature ages, and are looking for opportunities to vary resources. Sustainable development of the states of residence of young people and a stable situation in the field of international security can contribute to the extension of the distance of the horizon of life planning.

\*The image of the future is influenced by the structure of value orientations. *The similarity of the structure of value orientations speaks of the common Christian roots of European culture and the division of youth in Italy, Germany, Poland and Russia of universal values.* Not fundamental differences in value structures rather show the national characteristics and specifics of the political and public life of countries.

\**Social optimism is inherent in the youth of Italy, Germany, Poland and Russia.* Self-assessments of the prospects of the young generation show a focus on vertical social mobility, which indicates acceptable overall living conditions of the young generation in these countries and their confidence in their country. The higher the “degree” of optimism and the dynamics of movement on the social ladder, the higher the place of the country is positioned on the “world competition” ladder. Thus, the measure of social optimism can be an indicator of the evaluation of the work in the society of social elevators.

\**Adherence to certain values determines the direction of the aspirations of young people.*

\**The modern young generation is focused on creating their future mainly on their own.*

## References

EURISPES: *Rapporto Italia 2020* (Report on Italy 2020) , Publisher Minerva, Bologna, 2020

Web: [www.eurispes.eu](http://www.eurispes.eu)

## Contacts

**SVETLANA N. VARLAMOVA**

Federal Center for Theoretical and Applied Sociology - FCTAS

Russian Academy of Sciences

Email: [s\\_varlamova@mail.ru](mailto:s_varlamova@mail.ru)

**ELENA I. KAYSHAURI**

Federal Center for Theoretical and Applied Sociology – FCTAS RAS

Russian Academy of Sciences

Email: [lenaaspirantka@mail.ru](mailto:lenaaspirantka@mail.ru)

**ANNA DOROSHINA**

Humanitarian Russian State University

Moscow, Russian Federation

Email: [anna.doroshina.94@mail.ru](mailto:anna.doroshina.94@mail.ru)

**EURISPES**

Rome - Italy

Web : [www.eurispes.eu](http://www.eurispes.eu)  
Email: [istituto@eurispes.it](mailto:istituto@eurispes.it)