

# The Collapse of the USSR and the Emergence of Mass Child Neglect

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*The photo on the front page was taken late autumn 1993 in the basement on Goncharnaia street 8 in St.Petersburg. It was the night patrol of the German organisation "Psalm – 23" who established contact with Sergei Shelaiev (12 years) and Sergei Voronin (16 years). The younger Sergei, who had an alcoholic mother and no father, died only 4 months later after a fall from the 7<sup>th</sup> floor in a building (near Vitebskii railroad station) where he used to stay overnight in the attic. The fate of the older Sergei was equally sad. Half a year later, when searching for a place to sleep in a cellar, he was shot with a gas pistol by junkies and lost 80 percent of his sight. In 1997 he was sentenced for robbery and sent to a colony (prison). There all traces of Sergei end.*

(Source: Dr Sereda's personal archives)

## PREFACE

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This thesis is born out of a desire to learn more about the causal circumstances associated with the deep and protracted humanitarian crisis that so detrimentally has affected the life of tens of millions of people in the post-Soviet countries.

This thesis also represents a lifetime interest and engagement in Russian affairs starting with a youthful curiosity and determination to understand Russia on its own terms, so to speak. From this grew studies in History, Musicology and Russian, which, in turn, were rewarded with a scholarship to Brezhnev's and Andropov's Leningrad. A Cand. Phil. thesis in Russian music history was one tangible result of this stay. Later, the prospects of thriving contacts between the Soviet Union and the West inspired me to study business management. But instead of progress, the modernisation drive that Gorbachev had initiated soon ended in chaos and prolonged economic decline, turning Russia into a second-rate nation. Personally, I actually "earned my bread" from commercial work with Russians during this period and had a few rather interesting experiences. From the mid-nineties, however, humanitarian work has been my profession, and the post-Soviet countries my main area of responsibility. My current job has therefore provided abundant opportunities for "specialisation" in social and organisational effects of the collapse of the USSR. Included in this have been numerous visits to the many run-down apartments in Russia which typically are inhabited by alcoholics, as well as conversations with children who have experienced various degrees of suffering due to parental and societal neglect.

If this thesis is to be dedicated to someone, it must be to those children who are at the end of the chain of destitution, those who have escaped intolerable conditions at home or in institutions only to end up on the street, in a living hell of intoxicants, alcohol, drugs, bitter cold and hunger, sickness, abuse, and crime.

The above is an attempt to explain why I "had to" adopt such a broad approach to my Master thesis in History. The work has indeed been challenging and I am therefore obliged to those who have helped me. First of all I owe great thanks to Professor Vasilii M. Sereda for his advice and assistance. As an "outreach" paediatrician and organiser of various shelters for street children in St.Petersburg, Dr Sereda has, since the late 1980s, followed the plight of

Russian street children at closer range and with more competent and compassionate eyes than perhaps anyone else. Furthermore, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Åsmund Egge, who has been very useful as a discussion partner. Thanks also to the researchers Victoria Telina and Aileen Espíritu at the Barents Institute in Kirkenes for the assistance I have received. Furthermore, I am grateful to my employer for understanding and many colleagues for support. Finally, my wife should be thanked for indulgence.

All primary sources and much of the literature in this study are in Russian. Original language fragments are only included in the text when necessary as a supplement to my translations of the original citations. Whereas Russian titles of the secondary sources are indicated in the footnotes, the normative documents referred to are translated into English. In the bibliography, however, all Russian titles are with English translations. I have used the British Standard System of transliteration from Russian, but kept the Latin letter “y” for the Cyrillic “й” in cases of established names and expressions.

Karsten Solheim  
Oslo, November 2009

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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

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### **The rationale and the research objectives of the thesis**

One of the less studied and acknowledged consequences of the disintegration of the USSR and the establishment of post-Soviet Russia is the emergence of the “third wave” of vagrant and homeless children in Russian history.<sup>1</sup> Although the manifestation of large cohorts of street children must be one of the most alarming and noticeable symptoms of crisis in any modern society,<sup>2</sup> the specific circumstances around the significant growth, presumably from around 1990, in the number of seriously neglected children in Russia seems to have attracted little if any historical research, both internationally and in Russia.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the *overall* research objective of the thesis is to analyse the causal relationship between, on the one hand, the late Soviet and early post-Soviet societal development, and, on the other, the evolving street-children problem. In terms of timeframe, the thesis mainly explores developments in Russia from 1985 (when Gorbachev came to power) until 1996 (when the post-Soviet framework conditions for child neglect became virtually irreversible as a result of the presidential elections of that year). However, several of the examinations of concrete child-neglect determinants will narrow their perspective to include only the period from 1987 (when Gorbachev embarked on radical reforms) or occasionally from a later point of time (due to lack of available sources).

In Russia, there seems to be a tendency to regard the emergence of mass child neglect during this period as a more or less inevitable result of a socio-economic crisis.<sup>4</sup> Although

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<sup>1</sup> In Russian public debate it is common to talk about three different waves of mass child homelessness and vagrancy in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This view has for example been articulated by the Russian Minister of Internal Affairs (MVD), Rashid Nurgaliev, speaking before the government in June 2005: “Presently, Russia experiences the third wave of homelessness among minors (*tret’ia volna bezprizornosti*) after the Civil War and the Great Fatherland War.” MVD Press Service, 01 June 2005. <http://www.mvd.ru/about/press/3466/?print> (24.10.2007)

<sup>2</sup> “Street children” denote minors who find themselves in a process of physical and social displacement characterised by extreme parental and societal *neglect*, such as deprivations (e.g. lack of food and shelter, lack of heating and cloths, lack of healthcare, lack of education and vocational training; lack of standard socialisation; lack of elementary care and love); and exposure to hazards (e.g. diseases and infections; alcohol, inhalants and drugs abuse; others and own criminal acts etc.). While “neglected children”, along with “street children”, are frequently used in the thesis, also other English words may appear, like “at-risk children”, “homeless”, “vagrant” “displaced”, “disadapted”, “unattended”, and “waifs”. In this way it is possible to reflect various stages of, and causalities leading to, the actual street children phenomenon, but also to enable a degree of linguistic variation. For the Russian words “besprizornik” and “beznadzornik”, see page 14.

<sup>3</sup> Typically, in its review of child homelessness in Russian history, the publication, *Siroststvo i Besprizornost’ v Rossii. Istoria i Sovremennost’* (ed. L.P. Bogdanov, St Petersburg, 2008), contains no actual analysis of the causalities of the last street-children wave in Russia. Yet its photo documentation speaks where words are silent.

<sup>4</sup> S.N.Smorgunova, *Preduprezhdenie bezprizornosti sredi detei i podrostkov v Rossii (20-90-e gg XX v)*,

moving beyond such a “mechanical” interpretation, I will carefully analyse economic and social factors, when reviewing determinants of the evolving street children problem. However, viewing political and organisational aspects of the system shift as *the* ultimate determinants of the child welfare crisis that occurred in Russia, I will pay considerable attention to processes and dilemmas at the top political levels of both the late Soviet Union and the first post-Soviet years.

According to Soviet and post-1991 Russian legislation alike, the pivotal role in child-protection work in Russia was assigned to the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors (*Komissii po Delam Nesovershennoletnikh, KDN*). This child protection institute thus acquires double actuality for the thesis. First, in its capacity as coordinating organ for all other agencies involved in prevention of child neglect, as well as in its capacity as agency assessing individual child-neglect cases, the KDN institute is definitely within the scope of the thesis. Second, as a societal institute spanning the Soviet and post-Soviet periods in Russia, the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors conveniently provides a topic for evaluating the effect of the politico-organisational (i.e. systemic) changes on the country’s child protection system. Therefore, while the scope and magnitude of the evolving street children phenomenon (i.e. *child-neglect scale*) represents *one* research topic, the changing effectiveness of KDN (i.e. *KDN capacity*) constitutes a *second* research topic.<sup>5</sup>

As far as the issue of continuity or rupture from Soviet to post-Soviet reality is concerned, the role of the Communist Party (in the thesis referred to as *CPSU* or *Party*) is undoubtedly of crucial importance. The Party was ultimately and solely responsible for the organisation of all aspects of Soviet society, child-protection work and KDN included. If the chaos and anarchy that increasingly characterised the late Soviet era, and in particular post-Soviet Russia, is largely associated with the organisational vacuum that arose from the rapid and unredressed disappearance of the Party from the historical scene, a logical consequence of the collapse of the USSR should also be an enfeebled KDN. Focusing on the politico-organisational aspects of the break-up of the Soviet Union, the *specific* research objective of the thesis will therefore be to assess the assumption that the weakening and eventual dissolution of the CPSU contributed to an accelerating disorganisation of KDN, thereby sharpening the effects of the socio-economic downturn on Russian child protection.

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Candidate thesis in Pedagogic, (Vladimir: 1977), 1: “The direct dependence between socio-economic indicators and the scale of the street children phenomenon is sufficiently evidently and patently manifested in the respective historical time spans of any country”.

<sup>5</sup> By “research topic” is understood a focus area that will be maintained throughout the analyses of the thesis. Undoubtedly interesting also in the overall perspective of the thesis, the research topics serves as a longitudinal source of information when addressing the overall and specific research objectives of the thesis.

## The conceptual framework and the methodology of the thesis

With regard to child vagrancy and homelessness, 20<sup>th</sup> century Russian history can provide examples of a range of various causalities. Different crisis situations, such as revolution, war, natural disasters, state violence, and, finally, the abrupt system change, have evidently occasioned mass child displacement as one of several tragic consequences. The complexity of these phenomena, along with the relatively low research interest in child issues, might perhaps explain why no generalised hypothesis has been deduced in terms of causality of mass child displacement. However, for any historic research, a consistent terminology and a theoretical reference framework are required. I therefore suggest the Child-Neglect Flow Chart,<sup>6</sup> supported by the Child-Neglect Indicator Table,<sup>7</sup> as the conceptual framework for the thesis.

The methodology reflected in this conceptual framework is developed on the basis of elements from public-health sociology in combination with knowledge of mass child neglect in Russian history.<sup>8</sup> As it appears from Annex 1, child-neglect *environment* constitutes the societal context within manifested child-neglect *phenomena* are generated. The term child-neglect environment includes principally therefore those conceivable *determinants*, which, within a given historical context, possess the capacity of influencing formation and modification of the manifested child-neglect phenomena. Determinants can be expressed in a number of specific, measurable and/or describable indicators, (possibly grouped in dimensions and categories – as the examples of indicators suggested in Annex 2). While determinants are factors of a *causal* level, the manifested child-neglect phenomena belongs to the *resultative* level, constituting the actual incidence, in a specific historical context, of neglected children, including these children's social, medical, psychological criminological and anthropological etc. characteristics.

Finally, feedback is provided from the manifested child-neglect phenomena to the society at large (i.e. the child-neglect environment). This feedback has the potential of influencing public and politicians, thus prompting *preventive* child-neglect measures.<sup>9</sup> In the

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<sup>6</sup> Annex 1, page 121.

<sup>7</sup> Annex 2, page 122.

<sup>8</sup> There is an established social research tradition building on “social determinant”, see for example Michael Marmot and, Richard Wilkinson, *Social Determinants of health*, (Oxford: University Press 2006), and Dominic Richardson, Petra Hoelscher and Jonathan Bradshaw, “Child Well-Being in Central and Eastern European Countries (CEE) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS),” in *Child Indicators Research*, 1, 2 (2008) 211-250. Expanding on this research, I have introduced terms like “overall child determinants,” (i.e. overall societal factors impacting the child-neglect environment), along with the terms “macro and micro determinants of child neglect”, (i.e. measurable determinants of macro-social and family level character).

<sup>9</sup> By “preventive measures” are understood any initiative or programme, organised by the state, by non-governmental organisations or individuals, aimed at protecting and supporting neglected children.

thesis, preventive measures are largely represented by the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors, KDN. The dimension “preventive measures” have, however, a dual function. On the one hand, the KDN child-protection institute evidently evolved under strong impact of the general societal development, and therefore belongs to the resultative level. On the other hand, within the Child-Neglect Flow Chart, KDN functions causally along with the specific child-neglect determinants within the street children environment (since KDN at a given point of time impacts the manifested child-neglect phenomena by modifying the child-neglect environment).<sup>10</sup> Depending on the context, KDN will therefore be considered in both of these perspectives.

Ideally, the application of this methodological model on a historical study should entail a year-by-year survey of all conceivable indicators that are relevant from the perspective of the methodology of the child-neglect Flow Chart.<sup>11</sup> While attempting to focus on particularly potent and characteristic indicators, the theses has limited itself according to its scope and availability of the sources.

### **The structure of the thesis**

In the 1990s, street children became a permanent and acknowledged part of the life in several Russian cities.<sup>12</sup> However, as will be discussed further below, details concerning causalities as well as scale and trends of the street-children problem remain largely unknown. Also the KDN institute and how it was affected by transition crisis has practically speaking escaped any research interest. Consequently, there is only very limited research devoted to the topics of the thesis, and there are few statistics, which can be of help.<sup>13</sup> What is beyond any doubt, however, is the fact that a new significant street-children problem emerged from around 1990.

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<sup>10</sup> The study of KDN, within the conceptual framework of the Child-Neglect Flow Chart, illustrates the notion *necessary* and *sufficient* causality. The matter of the logic is that changes in the street children environment do represent merely a necessary, but not sufficient, causality relative to manifestable changes at the level of the street children phenomena. In principle, necessary causal factors can be checked and balanced by preventive measures. Critical for the emergence of a child neglect crisis is therefore to what extent the measures carried out tackle the consequences of a deteriorating street-children environment. Hence, the absence of adequate preventive measures constitutes a sufficient causality for generating increased child-neglect in society.

<sup>11</sup> In Annex II, a range of imaginable indicators of child neglect determinant as well as other indicators of the research model are suggested. Needless to say, the thesis does not intend to explore but a few of these indicators.

<sup>12</sup> IN 2003, the Historian and deputy director of the Centre of Sociological Studies at the Russian Ministry of Education, A.L. Arefiev, wrote that street children have become “an integral part of the common life and a characteristic symbol of post-Soviet Russia.” Arefiev shares with his readers that the estimates (as per 1.1. 2002) of the street-children scale (i.e. the magnitude of the problem) in Russia vary from 1.1-1.13 Mill (“according to data from the Government”) via 2-2.5 mill (“according to MVD and the General Procuracy”) to 3-4 Mill (“according to The Soviet Federatsii and independent experts”). A.L Arefiev. “Besprizornye Deti Rossii,” *Sociologicheskie Issledovania* 9 (2002), 61.

<sup>13</sup> As a curiosity can be mentioned that, of a total of 21 presentations at a “scientific-practical” conference in

In order to tackle this information drought, the thesis applies a two-pronged approach; one represented by the causal level, the other by the manifested or resultative level of the research model. Hence, in order to chart causes as well as manifestations of child neglect to the extent possible, both levels are subject to extensive analysis by the thesis. Structurally, the two levels are linked together by two pairs of working hypotheses.

In more detail, the thesis is structured as follows: Chapter 2 outlines mass child-neglect experiences from earlier periods of Soviet history. The focus is on causalities as well as on the way in which authorities and society responded to the problem. This chapter forms a historical, organisational and cultural backdrop against which the recent wave of child neglect can be understood. Chapter 3 presents overall political and organisational determinants of child neglect, associated with the political history of the years 1985 to 1996. The basic assumption of the chapter is that both Gorbachev and Yeltsin were facing real alternatives when they decided on their strategies and policies. The decisions they finally made were therefore to provide the framework for the child-neglect environment of the period. Chapter 4 presents a detailed account of economic and social determinants at macro and family level for the evolving child neglect problem. At the end of the chapter, four working hypotheses are framed, encapsulating causalities established by the thesis, and, on the basis of these causalities, inferring developments at the resultative level of the research model:

<b>Hypotheses concerning:</b>	<b>Subperiod 1</b>	<b>Subperiod 2</b>
Child Neglect Scale	1987- August 1991 (i.e. “1991”)	Post-August 1991 (i.e. “1992”) -1996
KDN Capacity	1987- August 1991 (i.e. “1991”)	Post-August 1991 (i.e. “1992”) -1996

Whereas Chapter 5 assesses the hypotheses with the help of normative documents (legislative sources) and secondary sources, Chapter 6 assesses the hypotheses by scrutinising primary sources linked to the work of KDN. Finally, Chapter 7 consolidates the key findings of the thesis and updates the hypotheses. The chapter also indicates outstanding research issues and comments on the degree to which the research objectives of the thesis have been reached.

## **Bibliography**

The review of the literature and discussion of sources for the thesis following below is organised in accordance with the structural elements and chapters of the thesis.

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St.Petersburg in October 2008, the author of this thesis, who was alone as foreigner at the conference, was the only one giving a paper on the recent Russian street children wave from a causal perspective, including the role of KDN. Karsten Solheim, “Raspad SSSR. Novaia Volna Besprizornosti. Metodologicheskie podkhody k izucheniiu dannoi problemy,” in *Besprizornost’ i beznadzornost’ v Rossii: istoria i sovremennost’*. *Materialy nauchno-prakticheskoi konferentsii*, ed. Mishenkova, (St. Petersburg. Liki Rosii 2009) 83-93.

*The methodology of the thesis (Chapter 1):*

For this thesis, I could not identify any established methodology for the study of the causal chain from top political decisions, via economic and social repercussions, and down to the conditions for at-risk children.<sup>14</sup> The methodology suggested is therefore a result of years of pondering on how to approach the modern street children phenomenon in Russia from a historical angle. What I have arrived at is an attempt to secure a holistic approach to historical change, combining politics, economics and sociology, on the one hand; and research traditions focusing on the living conditions for people at the bottom of the social hierarchy, on the other. In general, both schools are broadly represented in the historiography of the past several decades. But as indicated, a study of the recent wave of Russian street children from this perspective has probably not yet been undertaken.

*The survey of child-neglect issues in Soviet history (Chapter 2):*

Depending on political conjunctures and causalities, mass child neglect and displacement in Soviet-Russian history has been treated very differently in the literature. The first period after the Russian revolution, that is, until Stalin's social upheavals around 1930, has been studied relatively thoroughly in this regard. This relates both to Russian and Western scholar publications. With the onset of Stalinism, access to sources and unbiased information pertaining to controversial issues was virtually blocked until the end of the Soviet era. One may assume that the lack of willingness to let child-protection issues of the 1930s be subjected to impartial research was associated with the fact that these problems, contrary to what had been the case during the preceding decade, were mainly caused by political actions by the Soviet leadership itself. Interestingly enough, in spite of the radically improved accessibility of sources after 1990, also post-Soviet researchers seem to have been somehow reluctant to explore child displacement topics of the pre-War years.

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<sup>14</sup> The third wave of street children in Russia emerged in a unique historical context. An industrialised society, in a matter of short time, collapsed in peacetime, causing massive social dislocation. Although literature on street children and child neglect worldwide could not be exhaustively reviewed for this study, it seems that research on causalities of street children *outside* the context of the Soviet collapse can have only limited relevance for the methodological approach I have chosen. Rosaria Franco, *Social Order and Social policies towards Displaced Children: The Soviet Case (1917-1953)*, PhD Thesis in History (Manchester, University, 2006), 12-13, provides arguably indirect support for this view. On the one hand, Franco regards street children as "homeless children, typically for societies going through a process of modernisation." (This builds, as also Franco underlines, on definitions used by UNICEF since the UN Year of the Child in 1979.) On the other hand, Franco perceives child homelessness in developed societies both in association with a "difficult personality" ("delinquency, alcoholism, drug abuse and prostitution") and with the "injustice" (...) "underlying the existing social order." In other words, in spite of certain communalities of a general nature between the Soviet and non-Soviet context, the causal circumstances of extreme child neglect in Franco's abovementioned examples appear, to the author of this thesis, to lie far beyond the situation associated with the abrupt collapse of the extremely centralised and indeed very specific Soviet state.

A completely different attitude to child displacement as a public topic and an area of research, especially on part of the Soviet establishment, has been seen regarding the Second World War. The social problems caused by this cataclysm were evidently beyond Soviet responsibility. Thus, the fate of children who were displaced following war and occupation, as well as of minors who continued a vagrant life during the first post-war years, has been studied reasonably well. Western research in this field, on the contrary, seems to be limited.<sup>15</sup>

When moving to the post-Stalin and Brezhnev years, it appears as if little proper historical research has been conducted. Certainly, there exist psychological and socio-medical studies examining the life of “disadapted children.”<sup>16</sup> But there seems to be no research work exploring the dynamics of child neglect in light of economic and social processes from the mid-1950s to the mid 1980s, such as the continued forced industrialisation which, inter alia, entailed extensive migration, but presumably also increased alcohol consumption.<sup>17</sup> Soviet-Russian literature covering this period seems first of all to be of normative or of campaigning character.<sup>18</sup> As far as Western research is concerned, the only scholar that has demonstrated interest in this period, albeit primarily as a background for a more deep-ploughing scrutiny of child-welfare issues during and after Perestroika, is the English professor Judith Harding.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Franco, *Social Order and Social policies towards Displaced Children*, is the latest and most comprehensive study of Russian mass child neglect of the period 1917-1953. The work itself, and in particular its extensive literature list, reflects, however, the uneven amount of research and attention devoted to child-neglect issues of the various periods of Soviet history: There seems to be an emphasis, both in the text volume and in particular on the number of references cited, on the 1920s, and less coverage of the 1930s and the 1940s. Also other works referred to in my historical review of Soviet child-neglect issues reflects this fact: e.g. Margaret Stolee, “Homeless Children in the USSR, 1917-1957”, *Soviet Studies* 40, 1 (1988): 64-83; Laurie Bernstein, “Fostering the next generation of socialists: Partonirovanie in the Fledgling Soviet State,” *Journal of Family History* 26, No1 (2001):66-89; and Alan Ball, “State Children: Soviet Russia’s Bezprizornye and the New Socialist Generation,” *The Russian Review* 52, April (1993): 228-247.

<sup>16</sup> Vasilii M. Sereda, *Zdorov’ e desadaptirovannykh detei i puti sovershenstvovaniia mediko-social’noi pomoschi v sovremennykh usloviakh*, Doctoral Dissertation in Social Medicine, (St Petersburg, The University of St Petersburg, 2005), 89-90, states that, in the 1940s and 50s, there were “extremely little research work” related to the subject of street children, while in the 1960s and 70s there was an “intensification in the research activities”. The focus of this research, however, was not on child neglect as such, but on “deviant behaviour of minors.”

<sup>17</sup> In her historical study of the legal conditions for Russian children in the family and in society, the Leading specialist at the Russian academy of Science, A.M. Nechayeva, *Rossii i ieio deti*, (Moscow, 2000), is indeed brief in her review of the period 1945 -1989. Only 12 of totally 240 pages are devoted to this these more than four decades and no reference to secondary literature is indicated.

<sup>18</sup> See for example the rather optimistic description of social community workers efforts in Iu.N. Iemel’ianov, et al., *Obshchestvennye vospitateli nesovershennoletnykh*. (Moscow: Iuridicheskaiia Literatura, 1974)

<sup>19</sup> The Professor of social welfare studies at the University of Sussex, Judith Harwin, has written the apparently only major Western study that reviews vulnerable Russian children throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century with a degree of holistic historical perspective. The work is the result of field studies in the late USSR and early post-Soviet Russia and contains valuable sources for my thesis. However, Harwin’s interest seems first of all to be concentrated on various forms of care arrangements and social service provision. Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, (Aldershot: Avebury, 1995).

*The overall determinants of child neglect (Chapter 3):*

There is no lack of publications devoted to the political development during Gorbachev and Yeltsin. These works undertake frequent forays into economic and social issues in order to find support for their reasoning. In addition, there are numerous specialised studies concerning different aspects of the transition period such as economy, the crime, the role of the oligarchs etc. Some of the literature, both Russian and Western, tends to be somehow partisan, that is, in favour of one of or both of the main protagonists of the period. However, there are also authors who are strongly critical of either Gorbachev or Yeltsin, or both.<sup>20</sup>

*The survey of macro and micro determinants of child neglect (Chapter 4):*

In its examination of economic and social determinants of child neglect, the thesis is particularly obliged to the UNICEF reporting on transitional Eastern Europe,<sup>21</sup> but also to other research initiatives that larger institutions conducted.<sup>22</sup> When it comes to particular aspects of the social consequences of the transition, in particular social-medical aspects, these appear to be well examined. Many of these issues, such as for example life expectancy, suicide rates, social diseases like tuberculosis and others, can not be considered as determinant of child neglect, but rather as concurrent phenomena. One aspect that has been subjected to considerable analyses, although consensus as to the actual per-capita consumption hardly has been reached, is the question of alcohol.<sup>23</sup> Other significant determinants of child neglect, like child abuse and drug addiction, on the contrary, seem to have been studied only to a limited degree.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> The internationally most active advocate of the Russian “Capitalist Revolution” seems to be the Swedish-American researcher, Anders Åslund. See e.g. Åslund, *Russia’s Capitalist Revolution*, (Washington D.C.: 2007). Evidently, Åslund strongly celebrates the overall outcome of this Revolution (and might therefore be slightly indulgent in his evaluation of Yeltsin’s performance, with whom he had worked as an adviser in the early nineties). His works contain, however, invaluable sources of information. A Russian counterpart of Åslund in terms of a certain apologetic approach to Yeltsin’s rule is found in the works of the official guardian of the central Russian State Archives, Rudolf G. Rudolf. See Pikhoia, *Moskva. Kreml’. Vlast’. Dve Istorii Odnoi Strany. Rossiia na izlome tyciacheletii. 1985-2005*. (Moscow 2007). On the other extreme of the spectre we find authors like Peter Reddaway and Dmitrii Glinski, 2001, *The Tragedy of Russia’s Reforms. Market Bolshevism against Democracy*. Washington: 2001, who tend to be particularly critical of Yeltsin. Conversely, the Russian professor Igor Froianov, *Pogruzhenie v bezdnu. (Rossiia na ishode XX veka)*, (St.Petersburg: 1999), clearly regards Gorbachev as the culprit and traitor of the Russian people. A perhaps more balanced position is taken by authors like Stephen Kotkin in: *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000* (Oxford: 2001).

<sup>21</sup> UNICEF’s research on the transition societies, beginning from the early nineties, is considerable. The weakness of these reports is perhaps that they mostly seem to be based on official statistics (see note 201, p.52). As will be discussed in this thesis, official social and other statistics from this period can often be largely non-exhaustive. For the complete UNICEF transition reports, see: <http://www.unicef-irc.org/databases/transmonee/>

<sup>22</sup> See e.g. Dabrowski, Marek and Razisława, Gortat 2002, *Political and Economic Institutions, Growth and Poverty – Experience of Transition Countries*. UN Development Programme. Occasional Paper, Background for the UN Human Development Report 2002. Warsaw: Center for Social and Economic research, 2002.

<sup>23</sup> E.g. A.V. Nemcov, “Suicides and alcohol consumption in Russia, 1965-1999”. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 71 (2): (2003) 161-168.

<sup>24</sup> Russian studies like Galina Yegoshina, *Sekusal’nye posjagatel’sva na maloletnykh i nesovershennoletnikh i*



Normative sources and secondary research material (Chapter 5):

It has not been possible to establish a complete list of all relevant laws, decrees and other normative documents adapted by central Soviet and Russian authorities over the period 1985-1996. It would moreover go far beyond the scope of the thesis to give an exhaustive review of all of them.<sup>25</sup> However, the normative documents discussed in Chapter 5 are selected on the basis of references in the literature, as well as of the availability of the sources on the Internet, and should therefore reflect the most relevant normative documents.

Research conducted on manifestations of the child-neglect phenomenon seems to be limited. There are in particular only very few western publications touching upon legislative and political aspects of the child-protection issues of the 1980s and 90s.<sup>26</sup> Some of the Russian academic publications with a certain historical approach are definitively of interest.<sup>27</sup> The same can be said also about other Russian publications and reports,<sup>28</sup> and not least about the background/analytic parts of most normative documents analysed in this thesis.

Primary sources linked to KDN (Chapter 6):

An exhaustive study of the impact of the Soviet collapse on the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors, KDN, including an analysis of how KDN tackled the growing number of seriously neglected children, would ideally require a broad investigation into documentary sources associated with the work of this key child-protection institute in several regions across Russia.<sup>29</sup> Obviously, this could not be done as part of this thesis.

In fact, even to get access to primary sources related to the work of KDN in a small selection of administrative entities in Russia was a challenging task.<sup>30</sup> As part of these efforts, I have made several inquiries to persons who had published material that somehow was related

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*ikh preduprzhdenie*. Candidate Dissertation in Law. (Joshkar-Ola: Marijskij State University 1999), seem to lack a systematic presentation of statistic as well as documented longitudinal trends.

<sup>25</sup> At central Russian level, only from 1994 to 1995, four presidential decrees and thirty ministerial legislative orders were published on educational matters. Conf. *The National Action Plan in the Interest of children* approved through Presidential decree No 942 of 14.9.95. (More on this decree on page 85)

<sup>26</sup> Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, has already been mentioned as an important source for my thesis. Anthropological works like C. Fujimora, *Russia's Abandoned Children: An Intimate Understanding*, (London, Payer, 2005) have been consulted for the study, but did not appear to contain much specific information of relevance for my approach to the subject.

<sup>27</sup> E.g. A.M. Nechayeva, *Rossii i ieio deti*. (See footnote 17 above).

<sup>28</sup> See e.g. A. Likhachev et. al (ed.) *Polozhenie Detei v Rossii 1992 g (Social'nyi Portret)*, Moscow (1993), a report issued by the Russian Children's Fond to monitor the commitments that Russia had made under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

<sup>29</sup> By "regions" are here understood "subjects" (including "oblast" – county) of the RSFSR or the Russian Federation". The sub-entity of regions is "raion" (municipality), which exist both in districts and in big cities. In Arkhangelsk city, the city municipalities are called "okrugy" (plural of okrug).

<sup>30</sup> Such difficulties may possibly have to do with the currently prevailing atmosphere in Russia: Not least amongst Russian officials there appears to exist a certain distrust towards foreigners and their motives. In the case of this study, such a scepticism may perhaps be nurtured by an intuitive understanding that a probe into the recent child-neglect problems of the country hardly can contribute to improving the image of Russia.

to the work of KDN.<sup>31</sup> In the end, however, KDN-related sources could be accessed only in Leningrad/St Petersburg<sup>32</sup> and in Arkhangelsk. The analyses of KDN's work will therefore concentrate on these two regions.<sup>33</sup> For unclear reasons, it was impossible to get access to unbroken, annual series of material related to the period under study. Neither were documents pertaining to certain of KDN's statutory areas of responsibility found in the archive material (such as political initiatives aimed at improving the child welfare, or proceedings related to the coordination of agencies involved in child-protection work). Apart from a few archive files pertaining to KDNs handling of mostly disciplinary cases against children and their parents, the material accessed consists therefore of annual reports on KDN's work in a number of raions within the two abovementioned Russian regions.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> I have corresponded with researchers in so different regions as Omsk oblast in Siberia, the republic Chuvashia on the river Volga in central Russia, the metropolis Leningrad/St Petersburg in the western part of the country, as well as Arkhangelsk *oblast* and *city* in north-west Russia. In addition, I have inquired through a professor of history in St Petersburg whether it was feasible to access MVD (militia) archives regarding vagrant minors detained in the Temporary Isolation Centres for Juvenile Delinquents (formerly *Reception and Distribution Centres*). Although this historian is well connected, the attempt was futile.

<sup>32</sup> The city on the Neva has seen its name changed repeatedly. The last time was in June 1991, when a majority of voters chose to restore the name "*Saint Petersburg*."

<sup>33</sup> For Leningrad/St.Petersburg the following material has been accessed: 1) Annual reports from the work of KDN in Kalininskii rayon (1990: 511,900 inhabitants; the population data are taken from: Sankt Petersburg: Federal'naia sluzhba gosudarsvennoi statistiki, 2006) for the years 1985-1991, as well as for 1996 to 2005. 2) Annual reports for the work of KDN in Leninskii rayon and Oktiabrskii raion (1991: 219,500) for the period including the years 1989-1993. 3) Archive material from the proceedings of Krasnogvardeiskii raion (1990: 371,400) for the period 1989-1991 (this material includes only files from examination of individual child protection cases).

For Arkhangelsk have been accessed: 1) Survey of annual aggregated data for KDN in Arkhangelsk oblast for 1975 as well as for the years 1985-1988. 2) Annual reports and some additional material (mostly various comments and specifications to the annual reports), have been accessed for a number of okrugi of Arkhangelsk city as well for some raions of Arkhangelsk oblast. The okrugi Oktiabrskii (2002: 85,044 inhabitants) and Solombalskii (2002: 37,160) are represented with annual reports and some additional material for 1985-1988, including Varvarino-Faktoria (36,392) and Maimanskii (24,701). From Arkhangelsk oblast, the raions Belomorskii, Severodvinsk and Primorskii are represented for the period 1985-1988. The two *okrugs* Isakogorskii (26,533) and Lomonosovskii (72,869) are, however, represented from the period both prior to and after 1991, but not uninterruptedly: the years 1990-1991 are not included in the material.

<sup>34</sup> In order to get a well-founded impression of the work of the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors, in these two regions also a few persons involved in the work of KDN of the actual period have been interviewed. However, whether or not it had to do with failing memory; insufficient intellectual capacity to analyse child neglect issues of the period; or a perception of the questionnaires of the interviews as a test of their personal work; the answers received were largely unusable due to the evidently massive errors and inconsistencies. These questionnaires – although the most qualitative of them provided information that largely is in line with the conclusions of the thesis - are therefore not taken into account in the thesis.

## Chapter 2

### MASS CHILD NEGLECT IN SOVIET RUSSIAN HISTORY UNTIL 1985

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#### Introduction

This chapter explores briefly the history of neglected and homeless children in Soviet Russia.<sup>35</sup> The focus is on causalities for mass child neglect as well as on the response to it by Soviet authorities. The purpose is to identify reaction patterns and traditions that might contribute to explaining child-protection developments that followed after 1985. While the first section of the chapter covers the period from 1917 to the first years after 1945 (i.e. the *first* and the *second* waves of street children), the second section addresses the period of *controlled* child neglect, lasting from the mid-1950s to the first part of the Gorbachev era.<sup>36</sup>

#### The First and the Second Waves of Child Homelessness (Street Children)

When emerging from the turbulence of 1917 and its aftermath as the new rulers of Russia, the triumphant Bolsheviks inherited an army of homeless children. As a result of the death and destruction brought upon Russia by the First World War, there were already by 1917 more than two million homeless children in the country.<sup>37</sup> Following the social displacement and huge losses of life caused by revolution, civil war, and epidemics and famines of 1920-22, this figure did definitely not decrease. Thus, in 1923, N. Krupskaya, a leading educational politician and Lenin's wife, estimated that the figure had risen to about seven million.<sup>38</sup>

From 1917, several government offices were involved in the work aimed at bringing child homelessness under control. Until the 1930s, it was the People's Commissariat for Culture and Education (Narkompros) that had the most prominent role in this regard.<sup>39</sup> Another central agency was the Commission for the Improvement of Children's Life, (Detkommisiia), founded in 1921 by F.E. Dzerzhinsky - the head of the Secret Police, Cheka.

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<sup>35</sup> Strictly historically, "Russia" denotes the Russian Empire before 1917 or the Russian Federation after 1991. In the thesis, ("Soviet") "Russia" may therefore occasionally be used beyond legal definitions. "Soviet Russia" or "RSFSR" (the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic) thus formally refers to the Soviet state from the Revolution until the formal creation of the Soviet Union (USSR) in December 1922. After 1922, "RSFSR" denotes the Russian Union Republic (in legal terms RSFSR was fully abolished only in December 1993 with the adoption of a new Russian Constitution). Besides, while the focus of this thesis is on the Russian part of the Soviet Union as well as on post-Soviet Russia, frequent references will be also made to the entire USSR.

<sup>36</sup> The indeed conditional term "controlled child neglect" emphasises the relatively limited scale this problem had over most post-war years, that is, when compared to both the enormous child homelessness of the preceding decades as well as to the third street-children wave that emerged from the late 1980s.

<sup>37</sup> See discussion on this in Stolee, "Homeless Children," 65.

<sup>38</sup> Stolee, "Homeless Children," 69

<sup>39</sup> A number of agencies operated children's institutions, colonies and clinics, but Narkompros's share of the total may have been as high as 90 percent. Alan Ball, "State Children," 230, note 10.

Whereas Narkompros can be said to have embodied a “soft” approach reflecting the educational optimism that largely characterised the young Soviet state,<sup>40</sup> Detkommissiia introduced also more authoritarian measures in the struggle to reduce child homelessness.<sup>41</sup>

The Bolsheviks soon nationalised all welfare provisions.<sup>42</sup> Adding to this, the most radical currents of the young revolutionary state taught that the family as an institution was obsolete and unsuitable for the upbringing of children.<sup>43</sup> Thus, it was the collective, and ultimately the state, that was the most qualified guardian, also for street children.<sup>44</sup> However, the capacity of children’s institutions did not match the number of needy children: In 1919, 125,000 children resided in various boarding homes; in 1921-22 this figure had risen to 540,000;<sup>45</sup> and in 1923 there was a total of 800,000.<sup>46</sup> When compared to the 7 million vagrant children Krupskaya estimated in 1923, it was obvious that the state had to find other solutions if the children were not to be left on the street. In spite of ideological hesitations, fostering (*patronirovanie*) was therefore both accepted and promoted, in practice, as an alternative to institutionalisation. In a predominant agrarian society, this meant placement of homeless children in peasant homes.<sup>47</sup>

While the reason for the original emergence of mass child homelessness had been major catastrophes inflicted on children and their families by identifiable “external” agents or events, such as war, intervention, civil war and starvation; the continued problem was prompted by social issues generated internally in Soviet Russia.<sup>48</sup> Studies made by Narkompros indicated that the unremedied backwardness and economic problems of the

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<sup>40</sup> Ball writes that Narkompros in 1920 justified its claim on the running of institutions for destitute juveniles by its “preeminent expertise in educating and rehabilitating children”, that is, in contrast to agencies that merely fed the children. See Ball, “State Children,” 233.

<sup>41</sup> Following the famines of the early twenties and the dramatic rise in the number of vagrant children, Detkommissiia often resorted to police-like methods in collecting and detaining vagrant minors so as to prevent juvenile crime getting totally out of control. See Stolee, “Homeless Children,” 68.

<sup>42</sup> Rosaria Franco, *Social Order and Social Policies towards Displaced Children, The Soviet Case (1917-1953)*, Ph.D. thesis in history (Manchester: University of Manchester, 2006), 67.

<sup>43</sup> Becky L. Glass, Becky and Margaret K. Stolee, “Family Law in Soviet Russia, 1917-1945.” *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 49, (November 1987):893.

<sup>44</sup> This attitude was reflected in the Family Code of 1918 stating that adoption was outlawed and that all needy children were to be under the guardianship of the state. See: L. Bernstein. “Fostering the next generation of socialists: Patronirovanie in the fledgling Soviet State.” *Journal of Family History* Vol. 26 No1 (2001): 66

<sup>45</sup> *Pedagogicheskaya encyclopaedia*, ed. Shapovalova Volume 1 (1964), 193. Quoted from the article “Detskaia Besprizornost” on the Russian Wikipedia Internet site. (Internet address not cited due to its extreme length)

<sup>46</sup> Stolee, “Homeless Children,” 69.

<sup>47</sup> This could not be an optimal solution for the leading Bolsheviks, who frowned upon parts of the peasant culture due to the latter’s “primitiveness, prejudices and frequent cruelty towards children,” not to mention the growing rural anti-Bolshevik sentiment following the numerous crop requisitions imposed by the government Ie. Chervoneko. “Sistema zaschity detei i elementy patronirovaniia v Sovetskoj Rossii”, in *Nuzda i Porjadok: Istoriiia socialnoi raboty v Rossii, XX v.* Ed.: PB Romanova, (Saratov: Nauchnaia Kniga, 2005) 342-345.

<sup>48</sup> As late as in 1927, there might have been as many as seven million homeless children in the USSR, according to the *Large Soviet Encyclopaedia*. Quoted from Stolee, “Homeless Children,” 65.

country created internal causes for the persistent huge caseload of homeless and disadapted children. In particular poor school facilities, a weakened family institution and child exploitation prompted children to run away from insufferable conditions.<sup>49</sup>

Towards the end of the 1920s, more initiatives were therefore taken to strengthen prevention of child neglect as well as rehabilitation of children who already had become used to an unsupervised life on the street. In June 1927, the Sovnarkom and VTsIK issued a detailed three-year plan aimed at minimizing the street-children problem until 1930.<sup>50</sup> It might be that this plan contributed to reducing the number of homeless children, but soon the first wave of street children in post-revolutionary Russia was to regain strength. Prompted by the social upheavals of industrialisation and collectivisation, new hosts of fresh “recruits” joined the remaining cohorts of neglected and abandoned children. In the 1930s, children of “dekulakized” farmers and of sundry “unmasked class enemies” could thus end up as waifs.<sup>51</sup> But especially the famine in the grain producing regions of the USSR in 1932-34, which was exacerbated by the effects of the collectivisation, created large numbers of vagrant children.<sup>52</sup>

The tendencies seen in the abovementioned plan of 1927 appeared more clearly in the Decree of May 1935 on *Liquidation of Children’s Besprizornost’ and Beznadzornost*, issued by the Soviet government and the Central Committee of the Party.<sup>53</sup> Typically for Soviet campaigning under Stalin, historic goals were set that were supposed to be reached almost instantaneously. In the context of the current terror regime, this meant that a huge mobilisation could begin and that the most diverse methods were utilised. One of the methods was to put blame on all “practitioners” in the sector criticized. Thus, the Decree in particular scolded state agencies and public organisation involved in child protection work. Needless to say, the top Party leadership was not touched. In contrast, parents were sharply criticised for letting their children out of control. Also children themselves were supposed to bear greater “responsibility” for their own situation. The latter factor indeed provided justification for the ever tougher police methods used in the fight against juvenile vagrancy and delinquency.<sup>54</sup> Hereafter, the *child-protectionist* attitude of the first post-revolutionary years was definitely

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<sup>49</sup> See Stolee, “Homeless Children”, 70.

<sup>50</sup> On the plan by the Government and All-Russian Executive Committee, see: Stolee, “Homeless Children”, 71.

<sup>51</sup> Some of the 700 000 children of *kulaks* (the moderately affluent farmers who in 1930/31 lost their possessions and were deported) became for different reasons displaced from their families. Franco, *Social Order*, 131-35. Children also became displaced following the mass arrests in connection with “counter-revolutionary crimes.” From 1930-1939, a total of 1.38 million persons were detained on such charges. *Ibid.*, 137.

<sup>52</sup> An unknown number of children became homeless when perhaps 5.7 million persons perished during the famine of 1932-33. *Ibid.*, 135.

<sup>53</sup> On the 1935 Decree, see for example Stolee, *Homeless Children*, 74-75; and Franco, *Social Order*, 148-163.

<sup>54</sup> On the role of the NKVD after the 1935 Decree in the Far East of the USSR, see A. Zharkova, *Istoricheskii Opyt Bor’by s Besprizornost’iu Dal’nom Vostoke (20-e-30-e gg. XX Veka)*. Autoreferat, (Khabarovsk, 2006), 23.

abandoned.<sup>55</sup> Delinquent minors tended therefore to be regarded more as criminals than as victims of circumstantial causes. E.g. criminal law was again applicable to 12 year-old children and all restrictions lifted in terms of punishment used in cases involving minors. Labour colonies for juveniles swelled and death penalty for children was reintroduced in serious criminal cases.<sup>56</sup> There are even unconfirmed reports of premeditated shooting by the NKVD of waifs caught stealing or found infected with venereal diseases.<sup>57</sup>

The changes in child protection policies of the 1930s were also reflected in the terminology. *Besprizornost'* (child homelessness; *besprizornik* – a homeless child) and *beznadzornost'* (neglected/unsupervised minors; *beznadzornik* – an unsupervised child) had hitherto largely been used indiscriminately. With the “victory” of Soviet *socialism*, the issue of whom to blame appeared to have become crucial. Obviously, the responsibility for unsupervised children “could not” be ascribed to the system as such, only to failing parental care. Hence, while *beznadzornost'* (i.e. minor delinquency occurring due to parental negligence – *not* due to homelessness inflicted upon children) continued to exist as a result of individual human faults (and could thus at least theoretically be admitted),<sup>58</sup> *besprizornost'* was deemed intolerable in a socialist society and had to be “eradicated” immediately.<sup>59</sup>

Towards the end of the 1930s, Stalin’s USSR had taken significant steps towards becoming an industrialised society. However, the economic transformation was achieved through unprecedented hardship and sacrifices. Under the lid of the terror-based autocracy, the socio-psychological tensions for Soviet people must have been extremely high. At family level, these circumstances, if combined with other risk factors, could undoubtedly create grounds for new cases of serious child neglect. Despite campaigns and coercive methods, the objective of the Decree of 1935 on “eliminating juvenile vagrancy” was therefore unrealistic. Hence, although there might have become fewer unsupervised or homeless children on streets

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<sup>55</sup> M. Goloviznina, “Politika social’nogo kontroliia prestupnosti nesovershennoletnikh v SSSR,” *Zhurnal issledovaniia social’noi politiki* 3, No 2, (2005), 223, states that post-Revolutionary Russia had mainly seen children as “victims of adverse socio-economic conditions,” which strengthened an obvious “protectionist” attitude towards them on part of the society. However, with Stalin a “Period of Reaction” set in. Ibid. 229.

<sup>56</sup> Franco, *Social Control*, 174 -198, gives an account of the expanding network of labour colonies for juveniles.

<sup>57</sup> Ball, “State Children,” 246.

<sup>58</sup> The ideologue and practitioner in the field of collectivist re-education of vagrant children, Anton Makarenko, provides an explanation to the increased parental role in causing child neglect: “Street Children of 1921-24 have long since disappeared. Our current street children are a product not of class collapse. Presently street children are children who have lost their family. There are numerous reasons for this. The family has a freer form; we cannot impose [marital] cohabitation; people’s life is more stressed; and both mothers and fathers are more heavily loaded by work tasks; the woman has departed from the constraint of family; and there are material and other contradictions. “Explanatory note to the project of organising children’s labour corpus (1934),” in *A Makarenko, Collected works I*, Quoted from M. Goloviznina, “Politika social’nogo kontroliia,” 229-230.

<sup>59</sup> M.V. Goloviznina, in *Social’nyi kontrol’ protivopravoi povedenie nesovershennoletnikh v penitentsiarnom uchrezhdenii*. Candidate thesis in criminology. Saratov University, (2005), 56, states that after the 1935 Decree “*besprizornost'*” disappeared from Soviet discourse to be used again only in cases pertaining to WWII.

and squares after 1935, there is no evidence to assert that the long-lasting, post-1917 first wave of child homelessness completely receded prior to the entry of the USSR into WWII.<sup>60</sup>

At any rate, not before long, a second major wave of child homelessness was to sweep over the Soviet Union. The German attack on the country in June 1941 gave rise to new uncontrollable caseloads of orphaned, displaced and fleeing children. The first months of the War created a chaotic atmosphere for many children, and, following acts of war and unsuccessful attempts of evacuation, numerous minors did get lost. Since most state bodies dealing with these problems had been dismantled in the late 1930s in connection with the “liquidation” of *besprizornost*,<sup>61</sup> a new agency was established. In 1942, the *Commission for the Arrangements for Children Left without Parents* was set up to coordinate all activities aimed at gathering up stray children into receiving stations; register the children; possibly reunify them with their guardians; or place them in those institutions that were available.<sup>62</sup>

In order to decrease the pressure on the collapsing network of children’s institutions, various forms of placement of children in private homes were encouraged, including adoption, which had been prohibited in 1918, but again made legal in 1928.<sup>63</sup> Also other forms of placement of children in private families were advanced, such as guardianship (*opeka*) and foster care (*patronirovanie* or *patronat*).<sup>64</sup>

When Soviet forces regained control over occupied territories, massive campaigns were unfolded in order to accommodate for the war orphans. It was considered a matter of honour for the state to provide shelter for the multi-thousand hosts of homeless children who had seen their life disrupted by the War. And it seemed that the efforts were successful: very soon, most of the wartime street children were evidently taken care of.<sup>65</sup>

Interestingly enough, during and shortly after the Second World War, Soviet discourse again applied the term “*besprizornost*” to contemporary Soviet realities. In the case of the

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<sup>60</sup> By mainly analysing memoirs, Stole, *Homeless Children*, 76, concludes that “the government’s more stringent measures may have reduced the numbers of homeless children, but they did not eliminate them completely.” See also Zharkova, *Istoricheskii Opyt*, 24, who, referring to the very beginning of the forties, states: The task of liquidating *besprizornost*, set by the organs of state power, was not solved.

<sup>61</sup> Zharkova, *Istoricheskii Opyt*, 23, refers to the Party’s objective of 1935 to “liquidate *besprizornost*”, and notes that the direction of preventive activities pertinent to juvenile delinquency had changed “from assistance to correction.” In this connection a number of organisation and services ceased to exist, such as the “Commission for Minors’ Affairs” (i.e. a post-1917 forerunner for the 1961 Child Protection institute), “Social Inspections”, “*Detkommisija*,” and the “Far East Society for the Friends of Children.” Also the Red Cross suffered.

<sup>62</sup> Stolee, “Homeless Children,” 77.

<sup>63</sup> Iev. Chervoneko, *Sistema zaschity detei i elementy patronirovaniiz*. (Saratov, 2005), 348.

<sup>64</sup> Foster care was the most common household placement of children since this only required that the minors in question should be wards of the state. The other referred arrangements of child placement in families demanded court rulings to decide the status of the child relative to its parents/guardians. In the circumstance of war this was often an insurmountable task. See Stolee, “Homeless Children,” 77.

<sup>65</sup> See Stolee, “Homeless Children”, 78. In the USSR one could obviously admit that there still existed homeless children as late as in 1946. See the vagrant child Vania in Sholokhov’s “The Fate of a Man” (1956).

*second street children wave* there was hardly any doubt that child homelessness had been entirely caused by the German attack on the USSR. On the other hand, when the first post-War years had passed, and child homelessness yet again became a phenomenon that officially had been “solved,” “besprizornost” again seemed to be banned from open publications.<sup>66</sup>

### **The period of controlled child neglect**

After World War II, the Soviet Union eventually went into smother waters. The economy grew, and - at least beginning with the second half of the 50s - the country did not experience huge and uncontrolled disasters or major social disorder on its territory. However, problems associated with Russia’s pre-revolutionary legacy and the inherent economic disbalances of the Soviet system continued to impact the country’s overall child-neglect environment.

The transformation from a country dominated by peasants to an industrialised society, which had started before the War with Stalin’s violent social revolutions from above; continued to place enormous burdens on the population. As millions of former peasants were turned into first-generation Soviet industrial workers, their new life in the small and crowded flats of the Soviet industrial cities must have sparked off significant adaptation problems. The industrialisation was accompanied by ubiquitous scarcity of food and periods of hunger; lack of practically any item of consumption; forced mass migration; arrests and deportation; extreme pressure of work; as well as deprivation of the right to any autonomous expression. Needless to say, the unprecedented destructions caused by the War only increased the pressure on the population, not least on women.<sup>67</sup> Adding to this was the overriding Cold-War logic of prioritising resource allocation to the heavy industry.

Several people may definitely have felt that the Soviet system relegated the fulfilment of their most pressing needs to a largely unspecified future. For sure, Khrushchev attempted to define the advent of the future society of abundance (i.e. “Communism”). Yet, by raising expectations without basis in reality, he probably gave birth to feelings of deception and hopelessness, not least amongst those at the lower steps of Soviet society. With economic growth eventually slowing down, Soviet authorities did not succeed in bridging the gap between the historically backward Russia and their Cold-War rivals in the advanced West.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> “Besprizornost” is found mentioned in an MVD decree (No 265) as late as in 1953. The militia was instructed to “liquidate besprizornost’ and beznadzornost” through intensified follow up of juvenile criminals where they lived. See the site “Narodnyi Server Protiv Narkotikov” <http://www.narcom.ru/ideas/socio/157.html> (24.4.08)

<sup>67</sup> Nechaeva, *Rossia i teio Deti*, 140, writes: “In the first post-War years - years of devastation, lack of food, and material difficulties - the remaining orphaned children [from the War] were joined by children who were neglected due to the extreme preoccupation of their mothers, whose working hands were especially in need as a result of the shortage of men. “

<sup>68</sup> According to S. Rosenfielde, *The Russian Economy. From Lenin to Putin* (2007), 159, the USSR increased its



The issue of *disadaptation* to modern society must have been at work, which, in the specific Soviet case, had to do in particular with material and other ordeals people were subjected to. But disadaptation at family level in Russia can not be understood without taking into account the deeply-rooted drinking traditions of the country. Moreover, with the stress people experienced, the inclination towards *binge drinking* as a way of escaping the harshness of reality could only increase.<sup>69</sup>

A second factor that could predispose for inappropriate parental behaviour can also be suggested: The extremely authoritarian Party monopoly, which was established during Stalin and continued after his death, albeit in a milder and more predictable form,<sup>70</sup> brought traditional Russian state paternalism to an unparalleled “perfection.”<sup>71</sup> Included in this was the widely internalised notion of the state as the ultimate provider of physical security, material wellbeing and ethics for all citizens. This circumstance, along with the high degree of ideological approval of institutionalising of neglected and needy children, could strengthen already existing tendencies of low parental responsibility towards their children.<sup>72</sup>

In sum, these and other factors may explain why risk factors for child neglect remained considerable in Russian families over the post-war decades. However, to corroborate this assumption empirically is difficult: As mentioned in Chapter 1, child-protection issues of the post-WWII period is largely ignored in Soviet publications and explored only to a very limited extent by the international academia.

On the other hand, legislative activity does indicate that “problematic children” posed sufficient challenges so as to be taken seriously by the authorities. Particularly important in

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GDP share relative to the one of the USA from 29.7 % in 1950 to 36.3% at its highest relative point in 1973. Then the relative share slowly decreased until it collapsed after 1981.

<sup>69</sup> According to the sources used in Stephen White, *Russia goes dry. Alcohol, state and society*, (Cambridge: 1996), 38, the consumption of alcohol increased nearly with 8 times from 1940 to 1984.

For more on alcohol and Russians, see Chapter 4 of this theses, p. 59-63; and Annex III and IV, p. 125-129.

<sup>70</sup> As to child protection, the criminologist M. Goloviznina views the post-Stalin period as an “orientation towards humanism”, Goloviznina, *Social'nyi kontrol' protivopravogo povedeniia*, 61. In particular she mentions the de-criminalization of certain forms of juvenile delinquency and the increased use of non-penal reactions and “societal influence” (Ibid, 64). In 1963 labour colonies for juveniles were transformed into closed, technical schools for juvenile delinquents. Also important, decisions on placement of adolescents in institutions were not taken by the courts, but by the *Commissions for the Affairs of Minors*, KDN (on KDN, see page 18-19 below).

<sup>71</sup> For the analysis of paternalism, see e.g. G.G. Diligenskii, “Rossiiskie arkhitypy i sovremennost'”, in T.I. Zaslavskaja (ed.), *Mezhdunarodnaia simpozium: Kuda idet Russia- Obshchestvo i osobennosti v sovremennom razviti*, (Moscow: Moskovskaia vyshaia shkola sotsialnykh. i ekonom. nauk, 1997), 273-279.

<sup>72</sup> Glass et al., “Family Law in Soviet Russia, 1917-1945,” 898, points at the high divorce rates following the liberal divorce legislation of the post-revolutionary years. She adds that Stalin reinstated more traditional legal frames for the marriage and family institutions, probably as a means of tightening social control during the industrialisation and post-War reconstruction. According to B.Kerblay, *Modern Soviet Society*, (London: 1983), 123, the divorce rate peaked in 1935, when 44 percent of all marriages were dissolved. With stricter legislation, the divorce rate fell to 16.7 percent in 1940 and 10.4 in 1960. Then the rate rose dramatically with 30.3 percent in 1967 and 34 in 1979.

this regard is the initiative that was taken with the adoption of Decree No 1099 in 1957. The Decree contains two normative documents: “On measures to improve work among children during after-school hours,” along with the “Statutes for the Commissions on arrangements for children and juveniles.”<sup>73</sup> Either document brings evidence of governmental intention to strengthen preventive measures such as leisure activities and involvement of public actors (i.e. Soviet mass organisations including volunteers) to compensate for lacking parental attention. In 1961, the Commissions mentioned in the decree of 1957 were renamed into the “Commissions for the Affairs of Minors” (below referred to as KDN or Commissions).<sup>74</sup> The Commissions had their legal base upgraded through a Decree of 1967: “Statutes for the Commissions of the Affairs of Minors”.<sup>75</sup> According to these statutes, the KDN should:

organise work aimed at preventing child neglect (*beznadzornost'*) and delinquency; arrange for children;<sup>76</sup> coordinate the efforts of state organs and public organisations in connection with the mentioned issues; review cases of [individual] juvenile delinquency; as well as control the conditions and educational work conducted in institutions run by the MVD,<sup>77</sup> and in other [correctional] institutions for minors.<sup>78</sup>

Commissions were to be attached to the executive organs of the state power at all levels, starting with the RSFSR government down to executive branches of raion Soviets (municipalities), and were accountable before the respective Soviets of People’s Deputies and their executive committees.”<sup>79</sup> The various KDNs were to be chaired by the deputy head of the respective executive organ and should comprise members from Soviets of deputies, Unions, Komsomol and “other public organisations,” work collectives, as well as representatives of education, health, and culture authorities, along with MVD (militia), “culture-enlightenment” and other institutions.<sup>80</sup> In addition, the work of KDN should be conducted with “broad participation of the Soviet public,” including parental and school committees; guardianship committees of kindergartens, residential children’s institutions; voluntary people’s guards (*narodnye družiny*); street and housing committees, and others. From these *aktivy* (pools of active representatives/volunteers of various organisations) KDN should appoint public inspectors to work with vulnerable children and their families.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> The two documents referred to in Decree by the RSFSR government No 1099 of 4 October 1957 can be found on: [www.bestpravo.ru/ussr/data04/tex16135.htm](http://www.bestpravo.ru/ussr/data04/tex16135.htm) (10.10.07)

<sup>74</sup> The establishment of KDN is mentioned in the literature, see e.g. Goloviznina, *Social'nyi kontrol'*, 61.

<sup>75</sup> Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet *Statutes of the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors*. Decree No 67-23, (Moscow 03.06.1967) [http://www.innovbusiness.ru/pravo/DocumShow\\_DocumID\\_36453.html](http://www.innovbusiness.ru/pravo/DocumShow_DocumID_36453.html) (1.12.07)

<sup>76</sup> The Russian word “*ustroistvo*” can include: arrangements for/provision of special or regular school place, work place or placement in residential care or in foster homes.

<sup>77</sup> MVD – *Ministersvo Vnutrennikh Del* (The Ministry of Internal Affairs).

<sup>78</sup> Article 1, the 1967 statutes.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid 2 and 4 of the 1967 statutes.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., Article 5.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., Article 6.

Decisions taken by KDN were binding for all involved state organs, but also for public organisations and citizens.<sup>82</sup> On issues of educational work, vocational education, employment and referral of minors to study places; KDN should present proposals to state and public institutions and enterprises.<sup>83</sup> In agreement with school authorities, social services, the militia, and with broad participation of the public; KDN should detect and put on record minors left without parental care, as well as of minors who were grossly neglected by their parents. If necessary, KDN should in turn secure alternative placement of such children.<sup>84</sup>

During its sessions, KDN should review cases involving “social dangerous behaviour” (done by minors below 14 or of minors between 14 and 16 years) as well as unlawful or (certain) criminal acts (done by minors beyond 14 years).<sup>85</sup> In serious cases, KDN could refer the youngsters to special correctional institutions.<sup>86</sup> As for parents who “intentionally” had failed to fulfil obligations pertaining to the upbringing and education of their children, KDN had several means of impacting or sanctioning. These included “public censure,” fees, referral to the “comrades courts,” referral to the “commissions for struggle against drunkenness,” or, in cases of deprivation of parental rights, referral to the regular (“people’s”) court.<sup>87</sup>

Several contemporary Soviet articles indicate that concrete community initiatives, for example in Kursk, Voronezh and Vladimir of the first half of the 1960s,<sup>88</sup> gave positive results in terms of involving community actors (examples are given of local housing and factory committees as well as of creative individuals) in practical prevention of juvenile delinquency and other forms of child neglect. However, the focus of the aforesaid articles is not on the role of KDN as such, but on the effectiveness of voluntary community work. It is interesting though to note that the articles reflect a utopian discourse that obviously still was incumbent at a point of time when the change from Khrushchev to Brezhnev was under way: Already the titles of two of the abovementioned articles set a maximalist tone by indicating that child delinquency actually could be “eradicated” altogether.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., Article 7

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., Article 13, letter g.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., Article 9

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., Article 17

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., Article 18

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., Article 19

<sup>88</sup> See the articles: T. Kalechits; Z. Keilina, “Gdie Obchshestvenniki – net beznadzornykh,” *Semii i Shkola* 4: (1964), V.Kukushkina, “Iz opyta raboty s pedagogicheski zapushcennymi det’mi,” *Voprosy psikhologii* 4: (1964), 148-50; K Speranskii, “Preduprezhdenie beznadzornosti – neobhodimoe uslovie likvidatsii prestupnosti sredi nesovershennoletnikh,” *Sovietskaia Iustitsiia* 19 (1965).

<sup>89</sup> Confer the titles of the two articles “Where there are community volunteers [“obshchestvenniki”], there are no unsupervised minors [“beznadzorniki”]”(ref. the article of Kalechits et al.); and “Prevention of child neglect, a necessary precondition for eradication of juvenile delinquency,” (ref. the article of Speranskii).

Perhaps in a vein more like campaigning or disseminating, Iu. Emelianov and K. Shchedrina demonstrate the ambitions of KDN in terms of involving public activists in concrete follow-up work of individual child-neglect cases.<sup>90</sup> In their brochure, the authors refer to success stories where children were averted from further developing deviant behaviour thanks to the intervention of “public [obshchestvennye] educators.” Whether or not these examples are based on empirical facts is naturally difficult to assess.

In her study on “Children of the Russian State,” the British researcher Judith Harwin comments on the specific Soviet set-up of “support and control of families with child care problems” by involving unpaid community workers. Harwin points at the crucial role of the Party, both in appointing responsible professionals and mobilising volunteers. Interestingly, the network of community workers may indeed have been huge, in the 1970s perhaps totalling up to nine million voluntary social workers within all eras of social work.<sup>91</sup>

Typically for the limited research interest in Soviet social history of the pre-Gorbachev era, there does not seem to exist any study devoted to the issue of how the key institute of Soviet child protection, KDN, actually functioned, how it took care of its mandatory tasks, and how its work evolved over time. This refers both to the USSR at large and to its republics.<sup>92</sup> The contemporary studies of the KDN in Soviet Estonia (of the period 1969-76) by the legal scholar Hillar Randalu suggests that Estonia was far ahead of other Soviet regions. Already in the early seventies, KDN in Estonia evidently recorded data on individual delinquency electronically.<sup>93</sup> However sophisticated the categories of Randalu’s work may be, there are, however, no absolute figures (i.e. on the child-neglect scale) or indications of the longitudinal trends of KDN’s work. All data represent percentages of an unknown total.

Sadovnikov’s article on the activities of KDN in Chuvashia around 1966-68 brings evidence that KDN was involved in many of its statutory areas of activity, and not only in the handling of individual delinquency cases.<sup>94</sup> Although the study is written recently, it does not

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<sup>90</sup> Iu.N. Iemel’ianov, N.N. Semerneva, A.N. Shchedrina, *Obshchestvennye vospitateli nesovershennoletnykh*, (Moscow: Juridicheskaja Literatura, 1974)

<sup>91</sup> The paragraph builds on Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 42-44.

<sup>92</sup> In the article “Gosudarstvennye and obshchestvennye struktury i kommissii po delam nesovershennoletnykh Chuvashii v 1960-e gody”, in *Nuzda i Porladok: Istoriia socialnij raboty v Rossii, XX v.* Red.: Romanova, et al. (Saratov: 2005), Jurij Sadovnikov analyses the work of the Commissions in the 1960s within the context of the Chuvash Autonomous Soviet Republic. There is, however, no reference whatsoever to any secondary publication dealing with KDN; the only references are to legislation regulating KDN, as well as to protocols and other archive material concerning the proceedings of KDN in the Chuvash republic.

<sup>93</sup> See for example H.A. Randalu, *Effektivnost primeneniia informatsionno-poiskovykh sistem v preduprezhdenii pravonarushenij nesovershennoletnykh*. Autoreferat of a Doctoral Dissertation of Law. Moscow – Vsesojuznyj institut po izucheniju prichin i razrabotke mer preduprezhdenija prestupnosti. 1977. Interestingly enough, archive material on KDN from this period does not seem to be obtainable in presentday Estonia.

<sup>94</sup> See Sadovnikov, “Gosudarstvennye and obshchestvennye struktury.”

seem to be particularly analytical. Again, there are no absolute figures and no indication of how KDN evolved from year to year, or from decade to decade. Moreover, the actual capacity of KDN, as compared to the real needs, is not assessed, neither is the impact of its work.

In Western research, KDN is largely ignored. Harwin, for example, only briefly comments that KDN was a “semi lay (Party) semi professional body.” With reference to KDN’s evidently intrusive attitude in family situations, where parents “were neglecting or failing to care properly for their children,” Harwin primarily views this child-protection institute in the perspective of the “erosion of family privacy” in the Soviet Union.<sup>95</sup>

### **Concluding comments**

After 1917 and until around 1950-55, mass child neglect in the Soviet Union was linked to titanic crises like war, revolution, civil war, mass starvation, collectivisation, industrialisation and mass terror, and, yet again, war in the shape of the apocalypse of the *Great Fatherland War*. In the post-War decades, preconditions for mass child neglect did definitely not disappear, but changed when compared to the dramatic upheavals of the preceding years. Henceforth, deviant child behaviour emanated from parental neglect and was largely associated with the fundamental socio-economic problems of Soviet society.

At the discourse level, the goal of the Soviet authorities had been to minimise and ultimately eradicate juvenile delinquency altogether. This echoed the USSR’s utopian goal of actually *building Communism*. However, as the Party faced increasing economic challenges in the post-war years, the most elevated goals of the Soviet ideology had to be abandoned.<sup>96</sup> In the area of child protection, a similar adjustment of the once “grand visions” must therefore have occurred. With persistent and huge material shortages in the Soviet society, and Soviet Russians increasingly resorting to alcohol as a means of relaxation or escapism, it became obvious that the optimistic goal of eliminating juvenile delinquency, along with other forms of unacceptable behaviour of minors, could not be reached.

The acknowledgment of a significant child-protection problem must have been decisive when Soviet authorities, around 1960, embarked on more active policies in terms of preventing, detecting and alleviating child neglect. Through the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors (KDN), administrative resources of the Soviet centralised command system - i.e. both state organs and Party-led “voluntary” community actors - were mobilised to bring the problem of child neglect under control.

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<sup>95</sup> Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 45-46, refers briefly to KDN in connection with her discussion of the initiatives of the 1960s aimed at increasing community involvement in social work, including child protection.

<sup>96</sup> Under Brezhnev the more modest policy aim of “further developing mature socialism” took over.

The official policy in regard to child neglect seemed largely to reflect the given causal nature of the problem. The existence of child homelessness (*besprizornost'*) appeared to be acknowledged as a fact, and made subject to massive mobilisation and relatively open discussion, only if the problem *causally* had to do with factors evidently beyond regime control. If caused by endogenous factors, however, *besprizornost'* tended to be denied and dealt with in a non-transparent fashion.

In periods when the USSR was *not* shaken by a major crisis, deviant child behaviour was primarily seen as a result of parental neglect (in the official discourse: *beznadzornost'*), not of systemic defects. Although considerable organisational attention was directed towards the prevention of *beznadzornost'* (as shown by the establishment of KDN), the existence of *beznadzornost'* under socialism was evidently causing embarrassment for Soviet authorities: For the most part, the handling of the problem avoided open campaigning and public debate.

It might be that the regime attitude of half denial and half concealment towards child neglect also impacted the mindset of the broader public. In a context of extreme state paternalism and a widespread expectation that societal initiatives had to come from the top, the conceptual distinction between *besprizornost'* and *beznadzornost'* had perhaps wider ramifications. It might be that the differentiated way in which Soviet society responded to concrete child-neglect phenomena (i.e. depending on whether the problem was caused by internal or external factors) led to patterns of perception and behaviour, both on the part of new generations of Russian leaders and the public at large, that ultimately could impede a broad mobilisation in case a major endogenous child-neglect crisis was to emerge.

It is widely considered that the stability under Brezhnev was founded on a “Social Contract,” according to which Soviet authorities should guarantee economic progress and provisions of social welfare, including child welfare, in return for people’s “buy in” to the Soviet system. As discussed in Chapter 3, the Contract remained in place more or less until Gorbachev embarked on his radical reforms, that is, until around 1987.

Expanding on the Social Contract, and in the absence of empirical evidence to the contrary, the thesis takes as one of its starting assumptions the following: The central Soviet child protection institute, the Commissions on the Affairs of Minors, by means of Party-imposed discipline and Party-mobilised public organisations and grass-root volunteers, coped with its statutory tasks and kept child neglect under control until at least the mid-1980s.

## Chapter 3

### THE OVERALL CHILD NEGLECT ENVIRONMENT

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#### Introduction

In the Soviet Union, developments within the politico-ideological sphere have often assumed primacy over other societal processes. To a lesser extent, this has also been the case in the still authoritarian and only semi-democratic post-Soviet Russia. Due to the tradition of autocratic governance in Russia, along with a suppressed or only embryonic civil society, the power in the hands of the central rulers of the country has in practice been without substantial checks and balances. In Imperial Russia, in the USSR, as well as in post-Soviet Russia, the strategic choices made by Tsars, General Secretaries and Presidents have therefore entailed enormous consequences for the country and its population.<sup>97</sup>

In light of this, one basic assumption of the thesis is that both Gorbachev and Yeltsin were facing real alternatives. Hence, the situation in Russia (including the overall *child-neglect environment*), as it was formed in the period 1985-1996, could have become different if these politicians had acted differently than they did. This chapter therefore sets out to examine in some detail a few of the complex processes that prompted the growing socio-economic crisis of the period.

The first section of the chapter (covering 1985 - 1991) starts with a review of some of the main political processes, dilemmas and controversies that Gorbachev had to tackle as the top Soviet leader. The political narrative is, however, organically intertwined with the economic and social topics that characterised the period and gave dynamics to the historical development. The remaining part of the section elaborates on economic and organisational consequences of the reforms. The second section of the chapter (1992-1996) is organised similarly to the first one, but with additional comments on economic issues.

#### Sub-period 1: 1987 – 1991

The post-Stalin Soviet model, consolidated during the Brezhnev era (1964-82), remained relatively stable until around 1987. The initiatives aimed at promoting technological innovation, strengthening discipline in the society and fighting corruption, which were

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<sup>97</sup> One may also speak of a “primacy of the economy.” Here the focus moves from the decisions per se to those underlying factors that actually impact the decisions of the policy makers. The first method should not exclude the other. On the contrary, in order to better comprehend the historical processes of this particular period, a dialectical approach is required whereby political, economic and cultural processes are assessed dialectically.

undertaken by Andropov (1982-83) as well as by Gorbachev during his first two years in office (1985-87), are therefore regarded as attempts to increase the functionality of the existing Soviet model.<sup>98</sup> The main purpose of these reforms was undoubtedly to reinvigorate an economy that had been seeing falling growth rates and stagnating technological developments from the 1970s onwards. This fact became all the more alarming for the Soviet leadership in a context of intensified Cold War rivalry between the USSR and its superiorly developed Western adversaries. Adding to Kremlin's challenges was the outburst of serious movements of workers' unrest in Poland, reminding it not only about the vulnerability of Soviet Union's East European alliance system,<sup>99</sup> but also of the Soviet *Social Contract*.<sup>100</sup>

The initial post-1985 reform impulse that soon was to precipitate the terminal crisis of the Soviet model thus ironically emanated from a resolve by the top Communist hierarchy to strengthen the functionality of the Soviet Union. However, by 1987 it had become evident that the initial system-immanent medicine prescribed by Gorbachev, i.e. stronger discipline, anti-alcohol campaign and orientation towards the "pure" pre-Stalinist, Soviet socialist ideals, did not provide any healing as far as sustained economic growth was concerned. The very limited GDP growth that the USSR saw from 1985 to 1987 (conf. Chapter 4, p. 44) coincided with a dramatic fall in the oil prices.<sup>101</sup> The failing revenues from oil sale were devastating for Soviet hard-currency earnings and seriously limited the latitude of the USSR policies, both internally and externally. In sum, the first two years of Gorbachev's reforms neither brought about economic development nor reinvigoration of Soviet socialism.

However, Gorbachev was determined to explore even more radical measures in his quest to bring about economic progress and renewal of the Soviet society.<sup>102</sup> In the course of 1987 all three main components of Gorbachev's reform policies were clearly pronounced and set afloat: *Perestroika* introduced cautious, but in the Soviet context radical market reforms. Certain market mechanisms were allowed in the relationship between state enterprises, and green light was given for limited private business opportunities, including cooperatives. *Democratizatsiia* entailed pluralism, which first was conceived as a measure to revitalise the

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<sup>98</sup> Rudolf Pikhov, *Moskva. Kreml. Vlast. Dve Istorii Odnoj Strany. Rossiia na izlome tyciacheletij 1985-2005* (Moscow, 2007), 13-40.

<sup>99</sup> Rudolf Pikhov, *Kremlin. Vlast. Sorok let posle vojny 1945-1985* (Moscow, 2006), 652-659, documents the top Soviet leadership's perception of the evolving Polish crisis.

<sup>100</sup> Linda Cook, "Brezhnev's 'Social Contract' and Gorbachev's Reforms." *Soviet Studies* 44, (1) (1992), 37-56, provides an analysis of the Brezhnev era's Social Contract and its impact on Gorbachev's policies.

<sup>101</sup> Anders Åslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution* (Washington DC, 2007), 194.

<sup>102</sup> Gorbachev was obviously encouraged by the positive initial reception he had got in the USSR as a young, vigorous and open-minded reformer. But perhaps most inspiring for his continued efforts was the almost cult-like support he received internationally as a person who dared to break with entrenched Cold War truths.



Party, but soon spilled over to other spheres of the society. And finally, *Glasnost* made it possible eventually to discuss any historical or contemporary political, social and ideological issue; also such topics that the Party leadership had refused to acknowledge the existence of due to their perceived potential for undermining the legitimacy, stability and coherence of the Soviet society.

For Gorbachev, the policy of allowing pluralism in the Soviet bodies and criticism of Communist Party malpractices was perhaps first of all a means of countering and discrediting conservative opposition against his reform policies within the CPSU itself. With his extensive experience from Komsomol and Party work, the new General Secretary must have been well aware of the innate conservatism within the Party apparatus.<sup>103</sup> However, it is often believed that Gorbachev, while focusing on the opposition “from his owns,” did not foresee the strong centrifugal tendencies that his policies engendered in the republics.<sup>104</sup> He thus might have underestimated the *anti-system* tendencies that increasingly characterised the political activism brought to life by his reforms.<sup>105</sup> Ever more political groupings mushroomed, often under nationalist banners. Most activists focused on negative track records of the Party, which, on its part, unexpectedly and quickly retreated from its former ideological monopoly.

In this situation the Soviet Party leader increasingly experienced that he was losing the political initiative. One sign of this was the fate of the anti-alcohol campaign which was closely associated with Gorbachev. While the collapsing anti-alcohol campaign symbolised Gorbachev’s failure to renew the Soviet society morally, his futile efforts to achieve economic restructuring convincingly demonstrated his inability to deliver on his overall reform project.

None of Gorbachev’s economic reforms that gained momentum in 1987 and 1988 provided any sustained improvement to the country’s industry and agriculture; neither did they result in well-stocked Soviet shops. As will be demonstrated in Chapter 4, the growth was limited and in 1989 the zero-growth line was crossed. From then on the GDP took a negative turn, increasingly so after mid-1990. Against a backdrop of growing economic problems, traditional Soviet shortages of consumer goods touched new levels. Amidst

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<sup>103</sup> For example, Khrushchev’s ousting in 1964 could have convinced Gorbachev that in the post-Stalin Soviet era it was possible to take resolute action for a well-organised group of “vassal” party bosses if sufficiently disgruntled by the policies of the person even at the very top of the Party.

<sup>104</sup> Stephen Lovell, *Destination in Doubt: Russia since 1989* (New York, 2006), 22. Lovell perceives Gorbachev “as a good Soviet patriot; nationalism was his greatest blind spot.”

<sup>105</sup> Referring to Gorbachev: “We (sic) were too long under the illusion that the problem was simply the difficulty of winning support for Perestroika,” Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000*, (Oxford University Press, 2003), 71-72, states that “it was unclear what, besides denouncing Stalin, *support* entailed. Worse, the common enemy, Stalinist socialism obscured the chasm between those who denounced Stalin in the name of reforming, and those who denounced him in the name of repudiating socialism.”

shocking Glasnost revelations of Party misuse and mismanagement, the remaining confidence was undermined in Soviet socialism, and not least, in Gorbachev as a politician.<sup>106</sup>

In 1989 the former allied states and trade partners in East Europe abandoned their former Soviet allegiance unopposed, and the Supreme Soviets of several Union republics in 1990 became dominated by secessionist nationalism. With this, Gorbachev's Soviet Union was dealt new blows, hastening the country's political disintegration and economic downturn.

The conditions were thus made ripe for the political comeback of Boris Yeltsin, Gorbachev's erstwhile reformist protégée and before that *apparatchik* colleague at top regional level. Demoted and humiliated in 1987 by Gorbachev for his populist radicalism in the Politburo, Yeltsin could now take "revenge." He utilised the Glasnost atmosphere and general turbulence prevalent in the society to make his ascent as a "fearless" spokesman of the Russian people against Party privileges and mismanagement.

The two protagonists fought on various political issues. One was on the question of economic reforms, especially from 1989, as systemic problems grew and outputs of the command economy plunged. The political agenda quickly became radicalised and it appeared as though the idea of a planned economy had exhausted its potential. Party traditionalists were clearly on the defensive. The political sentiments of Russia were furthermore influenced by the rightward tilt in international politics of the 1980s, the Chinese reforms from 1979, as well as the market revolutions of Eastern Europe in 1989.

There seemed to be a shared opinion at the time that comprehensive economic reforms were required to give a boost to the faltering Soviet economy. However, Gorbachev's already extremely low ratings in 1989-1990 must have made it impossible for him to take responsibility for a market liberalisation that would be socially very costly, thereby also confirming the continued actuality of Brezhnev's "Social Contract."<sup>107</sup> Yeltsin was not bound by such considerations. Moreover, riding on a wave of populist approval, the main Russian opposition figure was only "delighted to use economic reform as yet another weapon in his power struggle with the Soviet president."<sup>108</sup>

Yeltsin also played off the nationalist card. He effectively rendered support to secessionist sentiments in the republics, among other things, by demanding sovereignty for

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<sup>106</sup> Pikhov, *Moskva. Kreml. Vlast'*, 153-54, when discussing the socio-political atmosphere in the country in 1989-1990, notes: "There was first and foremost a systemic crisis that was evident in the USSR, and in particular in Russia. Everything was lacking: foodstuff in the shops; order in the country that was aching under the conflicts in its southern part; as well as faith in the leader of the country. Gorbachev's policies had reached an all-time low, about which the comprehensive sociological survey *Russia at the edge of centuries* is witnessing."

<sup>107</sup> Cook, "Social Contract," 53-54, states that still in late 1989, Gorbachev postponed price reform in fear of negative reactions. He was continuously "constrained by fear that workers" (...) would withdraw consent."

<sup>108</sup> Lovell, *Destination in Doubt*, 92.

the RSFSR vis-à-vis the Union. This might have been one of several factors that fuelled the exploding separatism that the USSR witnessed from 1989. Accusations and recriminations were hurled between the numerous Soviet nationalities, and conflicts popped up at different hot spots in the enormous country.

Gorbachev incessantly tried to balance the various factions within the Party and the country, however remaining faithful to socialist rhetoric and the principle of a unified Soviet state. Yeltsin, in contrast, demonstrated a widening split in the weakened Party by publicly giving up his Party card in July 1990. He quickly threw out previous ideological credo, freely manoeuvring amongst the rapidly changing political constellations of the crisis-ridden Soviet Union.<sup>109</sup>

As the number of crises grew, it was nevertheless the national conflicts that were to pose the most immediate threats to the idea of a controlled restructuring of the Soviet Union. Could therefore the central power, which in the course of Soviet history had been especially “vigilant” in any controversy linked to utterances of nationalism, remain passive as open secessionist agendas dominated more and more in the republics!

Certainly, from 1989 onwards there were indications that Moscow intended to crush the militant nationalist opposition in some of the republics. But the actions turned out to be half-hearted. Gorbachev washed his hands of these incidents; obviously he did not want to go down in history as a Machiavellian power politician under the guise of a “Peace Prince.”<sup>110</sup>

It was indeed the opposition from numerous republics against a renewed and federalised Union treaty that provoked the final drama of the Union. Facing the imminent reality of a new, emasculated Union of only a little more than half of the original 15 republics, a group of top officials directly under, and appointed by Gorbachev undertook an ill-conceived and *hand-trembling* attempt to rescue the Union.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Åslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution*, 74: “Yeltsin was a clever popular politician who played on many themes. One was liberalism and democracy. Another was market liberalization. (...) A third theme was Russian nationalism, and a fourth was, paradoxically, sympathy for other nationalities desiring independence from Russia. He also raised populist demands for higher wages and social benefits.”

<sup>110</sup> Comparing the ways in which Gorbachev's USSR and India tackled separatism during the 1980s and 90s, Kotkin, *The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000*, 106-107, notes that India had clearly stated “what lines could not be crossed”. India used massive force against those who ignored this, resulting in thousands of deaths at “no costs to the country's democratic reputation.” Gorbachev did neither, and thereby “unintentionally spread nationalism itself”. In Kotkin's understanding the “irresolute spilling of blood, in Georgia in 1989 and Lithuania in early 1991, served as a formidable weapon in the hands of separatists, helping them recruit ‘nationalists’ among those who had been undecided, while placing Moscow on the defensive and demoralizing the KGB and the army.”

<sup>111</sup> Mustering the entire central power except for Gorbachev himself (whose real role in the events remains contested), the plotters of the State Committee of Emergency (GKChP) obviously thought that the mere appearance of army and special units inside Moscow as well as in a few cities would be enough to frighten the opposition into obedience. However, with some of the members of the GKChP appearing on television, their hands trembling, the level of preparedness and determination on the part of the GKChP was probably not very

The failure of the “August Coup” heralded an immediate, de facto system change. The Union was in reality doomed. The ruling elites of the republics, to various degrees supported by popular mobilisation, soon proclaimed sovereignty. Declaring a nominal independence, most of the remaining republics, however, did not demonstrate any resolve to really leave the Union.<sup>112</sup> Nevertheless, Yeltsin, who now dominated the Centre, did not attempt to save the rest of the USSR. Following some vodka-ridden proceedings at a state dacha in *Belaveskaya Pushcha* in Belarus, the bosses of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus signed a treaty that led to the formal and complete dissolution of the Soviet Union by 31 December 1991.

#### Additional comments to Organisational and Economic Aspects of Gorbachev’s Reforms

What seems to have been most decisive for the rapid demise of the post-August Soviet Union, as well as for the direction that post-Russia followed (along with the other republics), was the fact that the Soviet Communist Party was “relegated to the Rubbish Heap of History”. Prior to June 1990, the Party had been *constitutionally* guaranteed a “leading role”, and it had until recently dominated all spheres of Soviet society. In reality, the CPSU had kept the fate of the Soviet state in its hands until August 1991. It was ideologically committed to the idea of the Soviet state, and a continued existence of the USSR could hardly be imagined without a dominating Communist Party. The bureaucracy was still in a “wait-and-see” mode, and the Party had considerable leverages through its control over the army, militia and the KGB.

However, when Yeltsin in late August suspended the activity of the CPSU on the territory of the Russian republic for its claimed participation in the coup, the once almighty Party and its followers in Russia met their fate without any resistance. The text of the formal dissolution of the CPSU in November 1991 tells much about the actual changes that took place with the Party descending from the historical scene: “The CPSU had never been a party. It had been a particular mechanism for forming and utilising the political power by help of its [own] coalescing with the state structures, or by subordinating the state to the CPSU”.<sup>113</sup>

The impact that the prohibition of the CPSU had on numerous societal processes in the immediate post-Soviet Russia does not seem to have been broadly studied. A central assumption of this thesis is that the *liquidation* of the Party was fundamental for the direction that the post-Soviet Russian society took, also within the sphere of child protection.

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impressive. The article “Coup That Wasn't Stirs Russians' Mixed Emotions; Decade Later,” *The Washington Post*, August 17, 2001, comments in the following way on a press conference 10 years later with the former Soviet Vice President, central member of the GKChP, Gennady Yanayev: “The hands that helped doom the Soviet Union no longer tremble.” <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1P2-471576.html>. (05.04.2008).

<sup>112</sup> The Baltic states got their independence recognised shortly after the coup and are not taken into account here.

<sup>113</sup> Pikhonia, *Dve Istorii Odnoi Strany*, 346.

First, the Party based its ultimate legitimacy on the notion that it was a provider of economic development and social equality. Ultimately, it had to deliver against these goals. (Gorbachev failed to deliver, and lost all popular support.) Second, the Party had throughout the Soviet period been solely and indisputably responsible for all aspects of societal life. All goals and objectives for the development of the Soviet society had been set by the Party, and the various implementing state bureaucracies and agencies were assigned, instructed, monitored, and, if deemed necessary, reprimanded by the Party. Organs and agencies dealing with child welfare and protection were integrated in this Party-led setup.

The assumption of an extraordinary organisational role of the Party – a role that evidently was not, and probably could not, immediately be taken over by any other actor or group of actors when the CPSU was banned in post-August 1991 – can be seen to be closely related to the *fourth* of the “main interrelated factors” (i.e. in addition to “inherited problems”, “exogenous problems” and “policy design problems”) that the UNICEF research on the transition countries has identified as explanations for the “the largely unexpected deterioration in human welfare” that emerged in the wake of the collapse of East European/Soviet socialism. This fourth factor is determined as *institutional vacuum and administrative weakness* and is described in the following way: “Dismantling institutions and social norms of the socialist regime has not been accompanied by an equally rapid and extensive development of adequate substitutes, thus causing social costs beyond those due to economic factors”.<sup>114</sup>

The methods used by the Party to manage and secure discipline in the bureaucracy (in the wider sense of the word including nomenklatura personnel in social service and *public organisations*) were numerous: recruiting compatible subordinates and making defiance of authoritative decisions exceedingly costly; securing ideological coherence through intensive screening and indoctrination of all cadres; utilising public organisations, e.g. the Trade Union and the Komsomol in order to monitor the implementation of political initiatives stemming from the Centre; and, if necessary as a complementary mechanism for ensuring leadership power, resorting to purging bureaucrats who lacked bonds of loyalty to the leadership.<sup>115</sup>

This system seemed to function so long as those at lower levels of the hierarchies acknowledged the authority of those at higher levels of the power structures. Since there was no third-party adjudicator of jurisdictional conflicts in the Soviet Union and all formal and real power belonged to Party officials and organs, the ultimate perpetuation of the links of

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<sup>114</sup> Quotations in this paragraph are from UNICEF, *Public Policies and Social Conditions*, (1993), iv.

<sup>115</sup> In explaining the collapse of the Soviet Union *from below*, inspiration has been found in Steven L. Solnick's: *Stealing the State. Control and Collapse in Soviet Institutions* (Cambridge, Mass. Harvard Univ. Press, 1998).

authority within the society therefore depended upon the continued existence of a Party that exercised leadership and was obeyed by the subordinates in the system.

Solnick's analysis focuses on the behaviour of actors of Soviet organisations (in this regard signifying any entity of the state apparatus, including enterprises) who used the fading Party authority opportunistically in order to gain material advantage. The power vacuum that emerged when hierarchical control slackened enabled bureaucrats to start a fierce "privatising" of state assets which hitherto they had only administered on behalf of the Party.

This model for understanding how *nomenklaturchiks* in enterprises took advantage of the eroding Party authority may be extrapolated to the level of Party-assigned staff in organisations that did not possess mentionable *material* assets. For this thesis, one central assumption is thus that as the old regime faltered, any obligations once imposed upon Soviet officials through the disciplining omnipresence of the Party were progressively abandoned. In other words, the declining and eventually abolished Party control offered an opportunity to both managers and employees in state agencies and organisations, which were without any *marketable* commodities or assets, to withdraw from challenging and stressful obligations. Hence, also these groups of professionals could "benefit" from the new power vacuum.

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At the time Gorbachev ascended to power, it was evident that many aspects of the existing Soviet economy, its technology and level of productivity, were unfit for market exposure and liberalised international trade.<sup>116</sup> A possible adaptation to market conditions would therefore *ideally* have required large investments, training programmes, as well as transitional arrangements that could secure highest possible social security. And, it goes without saying: such a smooth transition would require a great degree of stability.

But Gorbachev's economic reforms, launched as the deficits and disfunctionalities in the Soviet planned economy became embarrassing, occurred at the time of demoralising Glasnost revelations. These developments were hardly envisaged. In any event, the result was destabilisation of the entire Soviet society and a government that lost its ability to set the agenda for the country. Part of this change process was the fact that the servility and fear that had characterised the behaviour of the bureaucracy and the whole Soviet society suddenly evaporated, unleashing waves of *non-conformist* economic behaviour. Included in this was:

The thirst for *primitive accumulation* among the "emancipating" nomenclature and the emerging new Russian business class was undoubtedly a driving force for the development of

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<sup>116</sup> On the problems in Soviet economy, Gorbachev has said: "The gap in efficiency of production, quality of products and scientific-technical progress began to widen in relation to the most developed countries." Pravda, 26.06.1987 according to Åslund, *Gorbachev's Struggle for Economic Reform*, (London, Pinter 1991), 17.

Gorbachev's late Soviet society: As soon as the first economic liberalisation started, a chase for easy gains created new imbalances in Soviet economy. For example, cooperatives, distorting the intentions of the legislation, could now deliberately withhold parts of the production from circulation for speculative purposes. Further, joint ventures could divert commodities abroad for covert currency revenues instead of feeding the internal market.<sup>117</sup>

But there were also other forms of non-conformist economic behaviour that followed in the wake of the Gorbachev reforms. One of these was increasing working-class demands and strikes for increased pays. Before the end of the 1980s, strikes had virtually been a non-phenomenon in the USSR. When people's standard of living fell dramatically, the workers flew into a rage.<sup>118</sup> But the problem was that wage rises did not see a corresponding increase in supplies: Social benefits and wages had started to show a steep increase as of 1989, precisely as the country's GDP went into a period of serious contraction.<sup>119</sup>

Adding to the growing economic chaos was the increasing use of protectionism in both Soviet republics and regions. To strengthen the local supply level, republican and local actors started to withhold from circulation commodities of vital importance for the Soviet economy.<sup>120</sup> For the population, the indeed tangible result of these non-conform developments were chronic shortages,<sup>121</sup> increasing inflation, and unemployment.

Finally, the policy of the authorities of allowing a drastically widening budgetary imbalance was also "non-conformist". The rising deficit in the country's international trade balance and the growing dependence on international credits created a situation where the Soviet Union after 1989 in reality approached the stage of bankruptcy.<sup>122</sup>

The above discussion of the relationship between Gorbachev's economic reforms and their unintended consequences makes it possible to conclude that the dismantling of central

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<sup>117</sup> Anders Åslund *Russia's Capitalist Revolution* (Washington, D.C, 2007), 57. See also Paul Klebnikov, "Godfather of the Kremlin. Boris Berezovsky and the Looting of Russia" (New York: 2000), 54-55.

<sup>118</sup> William Moskoff, *Hard Times. Impoverishment and Protests in the Perestroika Years* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), 183-236. See Chapter 5 "Strikes and the New Militancy."

<sup>119</sup> Åslund *Russia's Capitalist Revolution*, 69. See Figure 2.1 "USSR personal incomes, social benefits, and inflation, 1985-90."

<sup>120</sup> Moskoff, *Hard Times* 28. He writes: "Beginning in 1989, policies to restrict the movement of goods spread like wildfire through the USSR. Although they were nominally described as rationing techniques to protect the local populations, in essence they were a form of local protectionism, and they significantly contributed to the demise of the Soviet Union as a unified and economic entity."

<sup>121</sup> Åslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution*, 67, characterises the supply situation from 1989 in the following way: "The chronic shortages became unbearable and prompted extensive rationing. The only good in surplus was money and people hoarded whatever they could buy."

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.* 70, Åslund comments on the Soviet state finances under Gorbachev: "From 1986, international loans were increasingly used to finance the Soviet budget deficit, although most of it was not financed by anything but money emission. The net foreign debt surged from \$14.2 billion at the end of 1984 to \$56.5 billion at the end of 1991." He adds (*ibid.*): "Soviet foreign departments were not all that large in themselves, but the government's refusal to deal with them until the country had run out of all foreign currency reserves was totally irresponsible."

planning under Gorbachev was not replaced by any other system of organising the economy. On the contrary, instead of improving people's lives, which was the main focus of Gorbachev's rather "tedious" rhetoric tirades,<sup>123</sup> the Perestroika experiment came to mean a "precipitous decline in the standard of living."<sup>124</sup>

### **Sub-period 2: 1992 – 1996**

When the yet formally *Soviet* republic, RSFSR, in the aftermath of August 1991 emerged as a *de facto* sovereign Russian state, there were no strong political parties or mass civil-society organisations that could exert significant influence on the political processes.<sup>125</sup> With the disappearance of the CPSU from the historical scene, the leading role in the new Russian society was therefore assumed by the new, emerging Russian elite, practically unopposed. The post-Soviet ruling elite consisted of a rather diverse mix of recently converted *democrats* and market proponents arising from former Soviet intellectuals and politicians; *red directors*<sup>126</sup> and sundry representatives of the former top nomenklatura who had been fully released of previous Party constraints;<sup>127</sup> along with young *biznesmen* of the Gorbachev era.

On the other hand, most of the 57 percent of the Russian electorate that had given Yeltsin their vote in the direct presidential elections of 1991 were ordinary citizens who had borne the social brunt of Gorbachev's reforms. Naturally, with their favourite politician assuming power in Russia, they now expected tangible improvements.

Hence, there was no stable constituency for Yeltsin when he inherited the crisis-ridden and historically dwarfed Russian state. One of the major dilemmas he immediately faced was whether to work with the Russian parliament, elected in 1989 according to the RSFSR Constitution, or to call swift elections for a new Constitution and a new Legislature. Yeltsin would perhaps have preferred neither, but rather continued in the spirit of a revolutionary and unifying leader who had saved the nation from "doomsday" in August 1991.<sup>128</sup> However,

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<sup>123</sup> Åslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution*, 80: "As his political standing deteriorated, Gorbachev's peculiar response was to speak for hours on television with ever less substance. (...), he was nicknamed the chatterbox (*boltun*')." "

<sup>124</sup> Moskoff, *Hard Times*, 87.

<sup>125</sup> For example, Lovell, *Destination in Doubt*, 41 in his analyses of the post-Soviet political culture concludes: "On both these counts – party politics in the broad sense and civil society – Russia seemed sadly deficient".

<sup>126</sup> "Red Directors," Party-appointed managers; ref. "nomenklaturchiks" – Russia's top nomenklatura personnel.

<sup>127</sup> Michael Dobbs, *Down with big brother: The Fall of the Soviet Empire*. (New York 1997), 373. "There was a fin de regime atmosphere in Moscow in the spring of 1991, and bureaucrats were lining up to jump ship before it was too late....Many members of the elite were now discovering that they could maintain their privileged positions in society even without ideology."

<sup>128</sup> R. Reddaway and D. Glinskii, *The Tragedy of Russia's Reforms* (Washington DC), 226, characterise Yeltsin's image building in this period: "During the months that followed August 1991, the invocation of the coup and its defeat served as a vital source of a charismatic, revolutionary legitimacy for the new Russian rulers."



with both the Gorbachev regime and Communist “hard-liners” ejected from real political life in post-August Russia, and the USSR nothing but an empty shell, agendas and allegiances of the pro-Yeltsin, *Democratic Russia* movement rapidly changed.<sup>129</sup>

Throughout 1991, Yeltsin seemed to enjoy strong popular endorsement. Nevertheless, according to the Russian researcher, Tatiana Koval, in 1991-1992 “only a small fraction – between 10 and 15 percent by most estimates – approved of the specific steps to reform the country’s economy.”<sup>130</sup> Besides, it is uncertain whether majority Russians eventually were supportive of many of Yeltsin's other policies, such as dissolving the USSR,<sup>131</sup> and the tendency of disavowing Soviet achievements and credentials.<sup>132</sup>

Yeltsin's perception of his actual and future support might therefore have dissuaded him from putting efforts into the potentially risky project of winning a majority in a new constitutional legislature. In the event of elections Yeltsin would have had to put forward not only his vision for the new Russian statehood, but also specify his reform program. Until August 1991, Yeltsin had spoken mostly in general terms of his goals, concentrating on generalities such as democracy, market economy, a law-governed state, human rights, cultural freedom and a *normal* life.<sup>133</sup>

Elections or not, it was clear that Yeltsin’s priority as of now was to initiate far-reaching economic changes. Clearly, Russia was a country in free fall economically. There was hardly anyone in the Post-Soviet political establishment who questioned the need for substantial market reforms. Still, there was no roadmap as to exactly how Yeltsin, a former top Party bureaucrat with no outstanding intellectual credentials, in any event in the field of economics, would proceed in practical terms with the reforms. Yeltsin was therefore susceptible to influences from various quarters such as numerous Soviet politicians, opinion makers, as well as entrepreneurial Komsomol leaders who had dramatically changed their views under influence of Glasnost, Soviet disintegration and Western contacts. With the collapse of the Soviet Union they appeared as militant converts of economic liberalism. Yet

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<sup>129</sup> Lovell, *Destination in Doubt*, 46: “*Democratic Russia* was a broad movement with an overarching cause rather than an organisation with a coherent programme. In the absence of any real political discipline, individuals had free rein to seek personal advantage...”

<sup>130</sup> Tatiana Koval, “Key Trends in the Population’s Attitudes toward Market Reforms”, in Gaidar, Yegor ed. *The Economic of Transition*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts/ London: 2003), 757.

<sup>131</sup> Reddaway et al., *The Tragedy of Russia’s Reforms*, 183. In the referendum on the preservation of the USSR in March 1991, 71 percent of the voters in Russia said “yes.” The total percentage of yes votes in those republics that participated was 76.

<sup>132</sup> One of the things that Putin obviously earned popularity for was that he not only rehabilitated certain Soviet symbols, but also restated a more positive image of the USSR.

<sup>133</sup> Robert Service, *Russia: experiment with a people*, (London, Macmillan 2002), 138. The author notes that Yeltsin’s utterances in this respect so far had been “slogans that had yet to be turned into policies.”

the rapid conversion hardly meant that they had changed their basic value system. If earlier they had defended economic determinism and looked upon average people's needs with a degree of condescension, the refashioned zealots incorporated their former attributes into the new *laissez-faire* ideological edifice.<sup>134</sup>

Moreover, the *end-of-the-system* ideological transmutation was undoubtedly stimulated by the Soviet elite's craving for money, luxury and material prestige, which under Soviet rule officially had been considered ideologically impure. Accumulated through years of ubiquitous lack of quality consumer goods, and fed by a humiliating feeling of inferiority vis-à-vis the standards set by the West, this form of materialism could now be pursued uninhibitedly.<sup>135</sup> For the ambitious, well-equipped and well-connected, the prospect of a rapid market revolution therefore opened possibilities of affluence and enrichment that in earlier times only belonged to the realm of dreams.

Another issue was that the breakdown of the Soviet system represented a fulfilment of the yearnings and endeavours of the numerous global adversaries of the Bolshevik-Soviet experiment. The right-wing liberalists, who had gained enormous successes in international politics over the previous 10-15 years, saw the breakdown of Soviet socialism as the ultimate triumph of their teaching of a maximally unregulated market and a non-intervening state.

For foreign proponents of liberalism, who indeed exerted enormous influence on the new team of emerging politicians and ideologues in Russia, it was of utmost importance both to prevent a restoration of the Communist rule in Russia, but also to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations of the so-called Washington Consensus in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe. A rapid dismantling of state-run businesses and transition to the market would combine these two aspirations.<sup>136</sup>

Furthermore, liberalisation of the market would undoubtedly appear attractive to economic and administrative managers of the former *nomenklatura*. As shown, these influential actors in the post-Soviet context had already sensed the taste of *ownerless* state

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<sup>134</sup> The 35-year old scholar economist Gaidar, a self-declared orthodox Marxist until recently (ref. Kotkin, *The Soviet Collapse*, 118), is probably the incarnation of this archetype. Descending from a top Soviet "pedigree," the incoming acting Prime Minister and main executive for Yeltsin's Shock Therapy had enjoyed all perquisites of the late Soviet society and, among other things, he had already been editor of the Party journal "*Communist*."

<sup>135</sup> Reddaway et al, *The Tragedy of Russia's Reforms*, 262, explains this phenomenon from a historical perspective: "Khrushchev's attempt to marry Marxist-Leninist ideology to Western consumer values proved to be fatal for communist doctrine." This "tore the ascetic veil of individual self-restraint that was perhaps the necessary condition for the survival of the communist idea on Russia's cultural soil." In its nature the system could, however, not "satisfy the explosion of consumer expectation Khrushchev provoked," and the result was therefore "the spread of private and group interests, the fast-track accumulation of wealth, the criminalisation of the *nomenklatura*, and the draining of any genuine passion for communist rhetoric."

<sup>136</sup> Åslund's writings seem to be a particularly promoted "position paper" of international liberalism on the Russian reforms.

properties that had appeared before them during the last chaotic years of Gorbachev's government. It was obvious that *nomenklaturchiks*, many of whom had developed high *proficiency* in wheeler-dealer businesses during the Soviet years, would not refrain from seizing the opportunity when traditional control mechanisms were paralysed with the disintegration and demise of the Party.<sup>137</sup> Life in the Soviet Union had definitely taught these obviously opportunistic followers of liberalism one particular thing: Nothing should be put off till tomorrow if the opportunity appeared today!<sup>138</sup>

Finally, the extent to which Yeltsin initially could count on popular backing for his market reforms was intrinsically linked to the expectations he had raised among the common people with the promise of imminent improvement. Yeltsin had obtained broad support thanks to his spirited criticism of inequalities and injustices in the increasingly crisis-ridden Soviet system, and he had pointed to the market as the way out of the impasse.

Balancing interests like the above could not have been an easy task and would have required a thorough consequence analysis. As a former Party autocrat, transparency and participatory planning was, however, hardly Yeltsin's strongest side.<sup>139</sup> Hence, convinced by his own young market liberalists and supported by Western advisors and institutions such as the IMF, and the World Bank, Yeltsin unflinchingly opted for the Shock Therapy policy.<sup>140</sup>

With the implementation of Shock Therapy, the political situation in the country rapidly changed. The unprecedented deterioration in the people's living conditions caused plunging confidence in Yeltsin. This also contributed to changing the prevailing attitude towards the President in the Supreme Soviet. Led by their Speaker, and the Vice President of the country, the parliamentarians evidently felt that the majority was on their side and that their time had come. The previous support to the President soon belonged to history, and a fierce confrontation between the two branches of the central Russian power unfolded.

But Yeltsin was no Gorbachev in terms of vacillating in decisive moments. Besides, he had no reason to fear losing either foreign support or substantial backing from the domestic elite that were benefitting from his reforms. When the Supreme Soviet in September 1993

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<sup>137</sup> Kotkin, *The Soviet Collapse*, 117, observes that the "infinite variety" of swindle businesses that "came to the surface" during the period in question "eloquently testified to entrepreneurial skills acquired from decades of having engaged in extra-plan dealings for both plan fulfilment and personal gain."

<sup>138</sup> Kotkin, *ibid.*, 115, describes the disorder of the transition from Soviet to post-Soviet conditions: "Those in power rushed to claim assets before the bureaucratic doors shut for good". However, Kotkin adds: "The doors to property appropriation and self-enrichment were only just opening."

<sup>139</sup> Åslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution*, 91, with reference to, Yevgeny Yasin, *Rossiiskaya ekonomika: Istoki i panorama rynochnykh reform*, (Moscow: Higher School of Economics, 2002), 167-68, deplors that "not formulating a formal reform program was a serious mistake." Further he says that (*ibid.*): "the reformers had not thought all their ideas through or agreed on them."

<sup>140</sup> For more details on Shock Therapy programme, see page 37-39 below.

blocked Yeltsin's initiatives aimed at changing the constitution and furthermore declared that the President was deposed, Yeltsin demonstrated his ability to take action regardless of legality or violent consequences. The Russian President simply called in the army, which, contrary to the tanks that Yeltsin "heroically" withstood in August 1991, actually opened fire. The Russian parliament was shelled before the cameras of international news stations until everyone in the building had surrendered. A new Constitution, highly biased in favour of presidential power, was swiftly drafted and presented for the electorate through a referendum.

One of the most extraordinary circumstances associated with Yeltsin's policies was that in critical times, he always gained a comfortable result in the elections. In April 1993, in the midst of escalating confrontation with the Supreme Soviet, Yeltsin "successfully" conducted a referendum of confidence in him and his economic policies,<sup>141</sup> and in December the same year he got his Constitution through, apparently with a safe majority on his side.<sup>142</sup> But most importantly, with ratings of around 3-5 percent when the presidential campaign started in early 1996, Yeltsin "easily" won a second term against his main contender, the rather moderate communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov.<sup>143</sup> Thus, thanks to the "blatantly falsified" 1996 presidential elections, Yeltsin remained in office and was able to continue his policies, also in regard to vulnerable groups such as at-risk children.<sup>144</sup> If prior to these elections there had existed an alternative at least theoretically that could have made a difference in terms of changed research allocation in society and increased social mobilisation, in our case to neglected children, it was demonstrated that Yeltsin and his wealthy supporters would let no one but themselves decide in Russia: In addition to massive election fraud, the oligarchs

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<sup>141</sup> Kotkin, *The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000*, 150. According to the official results, 58.7 percent expressed confidence in the president and 53 percent in the "painful economic reforms."

<sup>142</sup> For example, Yeltsin's first-term press secretary, Vyacheslav Kostikov, testifies in his memoirs that "when the preliminary voting results were reported to the president, he took a pen and raised the "yes" vote from around 50 percent to near 60 percent." Quoted from Kotkin, *ibid.* 151, who, in turn, builds on V. Kostikov, *Roman s prezidentom* (Moscow 1997), 267. The Swedish researcher, Carl Holmberg, in a study devoted to the issue of election fraud in post-Yeltsin Russia also touches upon the election "proceedings" of the 1990s. Among other things, he elaborates on the "technique" of using defunct citizens, "dead souls," and suggests in regard to the crucial elections of 1993 that around 7 million "dead souls" were taken into account "to increase the turnout to more than 50 percent, the number needed to endorse the new Constitution in the Referendum...". Carl Holmberg, *Managing elections in Russia. Mechanisms and problems* (Stockholm: FOI, 2008), 86.

<sup>143</sup> For those who followed the 1996 elections through the oligarch-owned Russian media of the time (as the author did when working in Azerbaijan, 1995-1997), the character of the campaign was striking: Yeltsin was presented as the one who could save Russia from bloody Soviet restoration. This image of Russian politics obviously explains the indulgent attitude that the West demonstrated towards Yeltsin's election falsifications. Holmberg comments: "The reason is probably partly because as long as the fraud and manipulation favoured Boris Yeltsin, seen as a bulwark against the return of Communism (...), the West was inclined to view all this as transitional problems." Carl Holmberg, *Managing elections in Russia*, 95.

<sup>144</sup> V. Solovyov, *My i Oni. Kratkii Kurs Vyzhivaniia v Rossii* (Moscow 2007), 231, a well-known TV journalist of present-day Russia, is very clear in his evaluation of the 1996 elections: "According to all parameters, both counted ballots and other circumstances, the winner was Zyuganov." Also Holmberg, *Managing elections*, 95, says that Yeltsin's re-election in 1996 was characterised by "fraud and manipulation (...) on a large scale".

secured Yeltsin's re-election by channelling around \$ 500 million in support of his campaign.<sup>145</sup> But as "compensation" the oligarchs received temporary control, which soon was to become permanent, over shares in ex-state mining industries.<sup>146</sup> To quote Robert Service:

Thus the oligarchs, while rescuing Yeltsin, piled up the mountains of their wealth still higher and reinforced the dependence of the political establishment upon their favour. The process of privatisation, which had always been corrupt, sank to unprecedented depths.<sup>147</sup>

At the other extreme of the social spectre, as this thesis will substantiate, children neglected by an increasingly impoverished and brutalised adult society continued to add to the swelling wave of vagrant minors. In basements, on heating pipes, on landings and in attics, they found their sanctuaries, struggling to survive with what they could collect from begging and through dishonest activities. Under continuous threat of harassment and violence from adult criminals and bums, the street children found a perverted comfort in all sorts of intoxicants, alcohol and drugs. Their young lives were being hurtled towards certain disaster.

#### Additional comments on Economic Aspects of Yeltsyn's reforms

A central element of the Shock Therapy which affected most Russians deeply was the price liberalisations. The *monetary overhang* from previous years turned immediately into a universal cash deficit: Hyperinflation gobbled up people's considerable Soviet-era savings. To be sure, Russian shops could before long display commodities that in Soviet times seldom or never had been "thrown out" through regular retail outlets.<sup>148</sup> But the new goods remained unattainable for the overwhelming majority of the population. Measly and delayed wages, often barter payments instead of cash, along with growing unemployment, made it impossible for millions of Russians to cope with the big price jumps that followed the introduction of Shock Therapy. Even basic goods, necessary for a life just above the subsistence level, became beyond numerous people's means.

The liberalisation of trade, another element of Shock Therapy, made it possible for well-connected traders with capital in their pockets to earn super-profits. During the first post-

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<sup>145</sup> Robert Service, *Russia: Experiment with a People, from 1991 to the present*, (London, Macmillan 2002), 146, notes that the legal spending limit for Presidential candidates was only \$2 million.

<sup>146</sup> This was part of the loans-for-shares privatization which Åslund sees as "qualitatively important, because they marked the demise of the state enterprise managers and the rise of the oligarchs.". See: Åslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution*, 162. Reddaway, on his part, points at the "massive fraud" involved, and the "net loss" for the Russian state. Reddaway, *The Tragedy of Russia's Reforms*, 480.

<sup>147</sup> Service, *Russia: Experiment with a People*, 146.

<sup>148</sup> "Throwing out" alludes to the specific (Soviet) Russian word, *vykidivat* (throw out): In the Soviet era shipments of deficit commodities could typically appear in a shop without notice, and the goods were literally hurled to the customers who were cramming before the shop in huge crowds.

Soviet period, raw materials were still priced extremely low on the internal Russian market. To sell these commodities abroad required special licenses. But in an atmosphere of endemic corruption, formal hurdles could be bypassed, provided that the involved *biznesmen* shared a necessary part of their enormous gains with “collaborating” bureaucrats and politicians. In addition, profiting by reselling subsidized food import was another rent seeking activity that must be seen in light of the rampant corruption in the Russian society.<sup>149</sup>

Furthermore, the balancing of the consolidated state budget in order to reduce inflation and stabilise the currency was essential for Yeltsin’s reformers.<sup>150</sup> Price liberalisation played an important role in reducing state expenditures in the sense that subsidies were cut. So did the 70 percent reduction in military procurements on the part of the state. “For the rest,” as Åslund puts it, Yeltsin and his team “tried to keep state subsidies and public investments low.”<sup>151</sup> But the reformers could not immediately cut transfers and credits to all non-profitable state industries to the extent they may have wanted. One thing was that the increasingly negative social consequences of the reforms strengthened the political opposition and therefore made it difficult for the government to act coherently in terms of pushing for a policy that inevitably led to massive lay-offs. Another aspect was that the policy of keeping life in faltering Russian state enterprises also provided abundant opportunities for “red directors,” as well as for intermediaries within the new private banking sector, to borrow money from the Russian Central Bank at moderate rates.<sup>152</sup>

Finally, for the architects of Shock Therapy, privatisation was of critical importance in order to put an irreversible end to the Soviet system with its state-run businesses.<sup>153</sup> In August 1992 the Russian President therefore pronounced his famous words: “We need millions of owners rather than a handful of millionaires.” Furthermore: “[T]he privatisation voucher is a ticket for each of us to a free economy.”<sup>154</sup> However, by the time the voucher privatization was put into practice, a “de facto appropriation of state property and asset stripping by factory

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<sup>149</sup> Åslund and Dmitriev, *Russia After Communism* (Washington, 1999), 96-97, estimate that export rents “at the peak year of 1992” totalled “no less than \$20 billion,” or 30 percent of Russia’s GDP, whereas rent-seeking profits from resale of subsidised food imports, as share of GDP, amounted to 17.5 percent.

<sup>150</sup> Reddaway et al., *The Tragedy of Russia’s Reforms*, 178. He describes how the various international organisations (IMF, WB, OECD, EBRD) that in 1991 published various recommendations on economic reforms in the USSR/Russia harmonised with the Washington Consensus when focusing on monetarism as well as on decontrolling prices and privatisation.

<sup>151</sup> Åslund, *Russia’s Capitalist Revolution*, 98.

<sup>152</sup> Reddaway et al. *The Tragedy of Russia’s Reforms*, 97. In 1992 the Central Bank of Russia provided subsidised rates at a level of 10-25 percent a year in a situation where the annual inflation was close to 2500 percent.

<sup>153</sup> Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia* (New York 1994), 147: “The goal I have set before the government is to make reform irreversible.”

<sup>154</sup> Åslund, *Russia’s Capitalist Revolution*, 109, with reference to Rossiiskaya Gazeta, July 9, 1992.

directors” was underway.<sup>155</sup> Largely impoverished by the effects of Shock Therapy, most Russians had become cash-hungry. It was therefore an easy match for incumbent *red directors* and *Nouveau Riche* financiers to get, at the lowest possible price, a significant part of the “plebeian” vouchers, thus gaining full *legal* control of numerous important former Soviet assets.<sup>156</sup> Instead of becoming the flagship of Russian “People’s Capitalism,” the voucher privatisation, which was completed by the summer of 1994, gave the common people a relief that meant little more than peeing in the pants to stay warm.

A second important chapter of Russian privatisation – the handing over to oligarchs of industries within the oil-, gas- and other key raw material-producing sectors, kept out of the first wave of privatisation – was written when Yeltsin got his second term secured in 1996. This privatisation was closely linked to the loan-for-shares *scheme*, according to which oligarchs not only obtained full ownership over some of the “crown jewels” in the Russian economy, but also significantly strengthened their grip on Russian politics in return for their help in keeping Yeltsin in power.

Finally, the phenomenon of capital flight added largely to the problems of the Russian economy. Wanting to secure the booty of their dealings and not confident of what the future Russia would bring, the new *buzinesmen* transferred enormous sums of money out of the country by criminal means.<sup>157</sup>

Yeltsin had stated that the “patient” – the Russian economy – would heal after only half a year of “shock” treatment.<sup>158</sup> The reality, however, turned out to be completely different. Instead of progress, the economic decline continued, creating a downturn that was unprecedented for any modern industrial society.<sup>159</sup> Until it hit rock bottom in 1998-99, there

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<sup>155</sup> Kotkin, *The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000*, 130.

<sup>156</sup> Service, *Russia: experiment with a people*, 142, pointing at the “obvious exploitation of vouchers by the old nomenklatura and by commercial newcomers for personal self-aggrandisement”, states: “*Privatizatsiya* became known popularly as *prikhatizatsiya*, not privatisation but expropriation.”

<sup>157</sup> Annual estimates for the outflow of capital in Russia during the 1990s vary between 100 and perhaps 200 billion USD. According to Mark Kramer of Harvard University, the capital flight “has been equivalent to more than 10 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) over the past decade, whereas in Mexico, Brazil, and South Korea it has been under 3 percent.” Mark Kramer, PONARS Policy Memo 128, April 2000. [http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/pm\\_0128.pdf](http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/pm_0128.pdf) (3.6.2009)

<sup>158</sup> Reddaway et al., *The Tragedy of Russia’s Reforms*, 230. In his speech to the RSFSR Congress of People’s Deputies, October 28, 1991, Yeltsin proclaimed: “A one-time changeover to market prices is a difficult and forced measure but a necessary one. For approximately six months, things will be worse for everyone, but then prices will fall, the consumer market will be filled with goods and by the autumn of 1992 there will be economic stabilisation and a gradual improvement in people’s lives.”

<sup>159</sup> Branko Milanovic, *Income, Inequality and Poverty during the Transition from Planned to Market Economy* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 1997), 26. When the situation in Russia is compared with the 1929-33 “Great Depression”, it becomes evident that the late-Soviet and post-Soviet depression was far deeper and longer than in e.g. Germany and the US of the 1930s. In the latter case the downturn flattened out at about 20 percent below the pre-crisis level.

was no sign of substantial economic regeneration or recovery. With the exception of a limited number of raw material-producing units enjoying constant demand for their products, very few industries managed to adapt successfully to the new quasi-market conditions.<sup>160</sup> Restructuring of the industry towards new products capable of securing continued production was far more complicated than the market reformers might have imagined. The formation of new businesses in Russia of the 1990s was also modest and could not compensate for the loss of traditional workplaces.<sup>161</sup>

However, in order for a tiny minority of the population to take advantage of the transformations so as to emerge as everything from moderately affluent or top-world-class opulent, the surviving economic capacities in post-Soviet Russia were evidently sufficient. Therefore, while the Russian reforms, as it will be detailed in the next chapter, brought nothing but a formidable social disaster to the overwhelming majority of Russians, a new dominating class was established. Alongside fortunate former nomenklaturchiks, who had happened to be at the right place at the right time, the new ruling class in Russia was also made up of New Russians who had earned their first capital under the chaotic last years of the Gorbachev epoch. This “unholy” alliance was wedded by corrupt politicians and bureaucrats across the country who also knew how to get their piece of the cake, and without whom few *buzines* arrangements could come about.

## Conclusions

This chapter has substantiated that the societal transformations which Gorbachev and Yeltsin presided over created the preconditions for economic collapse and widespread impoverishment of the population. A significant part of the nearly 150 million people who became citizens of post-Soviet Russia were hit by a protracted societal crisis that few if any other nations have experienced in times of peace. In the ensuing chapters, the implications of these developments for child welfare and child protection will be explored in detail.

To begin with, the above narrative has demonstrated how Gorbachev increasingly failed to cope with the numerous domestic and international contradictions that characterised the Soviet Union he led. Gorbachev obviously pursued a strategy of simultaneously

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<sup>160</sup> T.I. Zaslavskaya, *Sovremennoe Rossiiskoe Obschestvo. Social'niui mekhanizm ransformacii* (Moscow: Delo, 2004), 117. The Russian sociologist states that in the course of the 1990s “up to 75 percent of the industry enterprises stopped or drastically reduced their production. Many of them were destroyed or plundered.”

<sup>161</sup> The official investment rate in Russia says much about the creation of new businesses. The following figures show the fixed capital investment over the period 1990-1996, expressed in percentage of the preceding year: 1990 – 100,1; 1991 – 85,0; 1992 – 60, 0; 1993 – 88, 0; 1994– 76,0; 1995 – 90,0; 1996 – 82,0. Evgenii Gavrilentov and Olga, Izryadova, “General trends in the real Sector in the reform Period,” in: Gaidar ed., *The Economics of Transition*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: 2003), 667.



advancing along a broad front. The last Soviet leader was either unwilling or incapable of concentrating on essential economic reforms, while, at least temporarily, put aside initiatives that inevitably would unleash unmanageable political and ethnic controversies.

Furthermore, the thesis gives a critical appraisal of Yeltsin's contribution to social welfare in Russia. Although Yeltsin in 1991 inherited socio-economic problems that had put Russia in a far more precarious situation than the one Gorbachev was to handle in 1985, the first President of Russia took little advantage of the strong cards that had been dealt out to him initially. His popular mandate and strong international support were not transferred into politics that met the needs and aspirations of the majority of Russians. Instead he embarked on a strategy that pushed him into close alliance with Russia's "robber capitalists,"<sup>162</sup> thus imposing on his own people unprecedented hardship, poverty and despair.

In the understanding of the author, the post-Soviet economic reforms therefore did not fail because they were undermined by *rent-seeking* activities on the part of the new Russian economic elite.<sup>163</sup> On the contrary it was the Russian President who succumbed to the interests of the rent seekers, thereby providing the latter with significant discretionary rights to decide the very *agenda* of the Russian post-Soviet transformation!<sup>164</sup>

With his *liquidation* of the Party, Yeltsin perhaps wanted to create an image of the Law free of Party arbitrariness. At least to his speech writers, Yeltsin's directive was to highlight the non-discriminatory principle of the rule of law, which was applicable to the politicians, bureaucrats and the rich. However, Russia, and in particular the USSR, had never been a state where the judiciary had been guaranteed real independence. The established tradition was that in legal and other conflicts where the interests of the existing order or of privileged groups were at stake, the state and the powerful would always gain the upper hand. So, while it was one thing to abolish the former overall organising system with all its

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<sup>162</sup> With reference to the "wild capitalism" of the US of the late 1800s, many *New Russians* saw themselves as "Robber Capitalists," for example the finance tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky. M. Khodorkovsky has also been characterised in this way by his American financier colleagues, George Soros, who has said: "He [Khodorkovsky] led the way from 'robber capitalism' to more legitimate capitalism. By cracking down on Mr Khodorkovsky, the development of legitimate capitalism is now interrupted." From George Soros' interview with Yevgeny Kiselyev, 11 April, 2003. [http://www.gateway2russia.com/st/art\\_163717.php](http://www.gateway2russia.com/st/art_163717.php) (20.04 2009).

<sup>163</sup> In the reviewed literature, Åslund does not explicitly state that rent seeking was "undermining" the reforms. Yet the detailed way in which he depicts these activities, including the losses the rent seeking inflicted upon the Russian society, does not leave much doubt regarding Åslund's genuine assessment of the impact of the rent seeking on the outcome of reforms. However, Åslund does not mention any countermeasures undertaken by the authorities against rent seeking, thereby tacitly admitting a certain coalescing of interests between rent seekers and the post-Soviet Russian authorities.

<sup>164</sup> This interpretation partly echoes Zaslavskaja's understanding of the Yeltsin revolution, which according to her started with elements of a people's democratic revolution against the nomenklatura. However, "as a result of several causes, the revolutionary impetus was replaced by reforms from above in the interests of a slightly renewed nomenklatura." Zaslavskaja, *Sovermennoe Rossiiskoe Obschestvo*, 191.

shortcomings and injustices; it was another to set up an alternative model that disciplined and bound the society together.

The 1990s gave few if any signs of a new value system being adapted by the dominant players in politics, bureaucracy and business. The “bank run” on state properties that had started under Gorbachev therefore turned into a formidable and uninhibited plundering of former state assets.<sup>165</sup> No authority could secure a rule-based and transparent transition of property rights. Former “nomenklaturchiks” and emerging businessmen tried to get as much as possible out of the unguarded “bank vaults” before their gates possibly again closed, thereby also setting the standard for the characteristic legal nihilism of the post-Soviet years.<sup>166</sup>

The assumption of this thesis is that it was not only those officials who had marketable state assets under their authority who took advantage of their position; a similar systemic negligence of statutory obligations is also assumed to have taken place by analogue, so to speak, in social and public health establishments.

There seem to be no empirical studies that can bring evidence to the issue of how serious the reduction in discipline and efficiency might have been in non-marketable Soviet and post-Soviet public health organisations and social agencies. However, if the disorganisation within this sphere only approximately equalled the extent to which marketable Soviet and post-Soviet organisations were “looted,”<sup>167</sup> this may provide new information that can help in our understanding of the nature and scope of the social crisis in transitional Russia. The study of the evolving capacity of the Commission for the Affairs of Minors, addressed by this thesis, will expectedly add knowledge to this aspect of the Russian reforms.

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<sup>165</sup> Solnick, *Stealing the State*, 7, maintains that the effectiveness of Gorbachev’s reforms depended on “a coherent institutional response, but local officials [in stead ]defected en masse and the pillars of the Soviet system crumbled.”(...)“As in a bank run, the loss of confidence in the institution makes its demise a self-fulfilling prophecy.”

<sup>166</sup> The current Russian President, Dmitrii Medvedev, has repeatedly warned against the “hampering” impact on Russian society of “legal nihilism,” see e.g. <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/24485967/> (01.09.09).

<sup>167</sup> Confer the title of Klebnikov book: *Godfather of the Kremlin: Boris Berezovsky and the looting of Russia*, (author’s highlighting).

## Chapter 4

### DETERMINANTS OF CHILD NEGLECT AT MACRO AND MICRO LEVELS

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#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explore in detail the effects of the Soviet collapse (“Soviet collapse” is in this context understood in line with the discussions of Chapter 3) on economic and social determinants of child neglect at national and family levels. The chapter begins with a review of a number of “leading economic variables.”<sup>168</sup> This is in keeping with the methodology adopted by UNICEF to explain the immediate causes of the social changes that occurred in transitional Russia (as well as in other Eastern European states under transition). As the old system disintegrated and a new societal formation emerged, Eastern Europe saw a dramatic slump in its gross domestic product (GDP), which UNICEF regards as an overall indicator for the negative social development of the region.<sup>169</sup> The second section analyses *ten* specific risk factors, i.e. determinants of child neglect at the family or micro level. The methodology expands on UNICEF’s research on the transitional societies of Eastern European and utilises some key conclusions as established by Dr Vasilii Sereda, a Russian specialist on child-neglect issues, in his research. Finally the working hypotheses of this study are framed, which will provide the basis for further empirical examinations of the research topics of the thesis in the next two chapters.

#### Leading Economic Variables/Determinants of Child Neglect at Macro Level

Several analysts of the socio-economic development of Russia during transition (e.g. UNICEF) take 1989 as the base-line year. This is linked to the fact that GDP is a fundamental indicator of the status of the entire societal organism, and furthermore that the GDP level of 1989, as will be documented later, was the highest that Soviet Russia had ever reached. This also explains why the statistical material used in this thesis often starts with 1989. Indeed, while assessing several of the child-neglect determinants, it was difficult to come by data of the pre-1989 years; clearly a pointer to the statistical dearth that characterised critical aspects of Soviet society, even well into the Gorbachev era.

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<sup>168</sup> UNICEF, *Public Policy and Social Conditions* (UNICEF, Florence:1993), 47: “(...) for the 1989-92 period there is a strong correlation between several welfare indicators and ‘leading’ economic variables states (such as unemployment rate, real value and distribution of wages, child allowances and pensions).”

<sup>169</sup> UNICEF, *Public Policy*, 33: “The large GDP declines of the last few years have been translated into considerable and continuing deterioration of living conditions and steep increases in the number of the poor.”

Table 4.1: Annual economic growth in Russia, 1985-1989<sup>170</sup>

1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
1.8	2.7	1.8	3.7	1.5

Table 4.1 indicates that the official GDP growth in 1985 was a mere 1.8 percent, highlighting the alarming condition of the Soviet economy when Gorbachev assumed power. No significant growth could be observed in 1986 or in 1987, a factor which probably pushed Gorbachev to pursue a more radical approach in his efforts to reignite the Soviet economy. The growth of 3.7 percent in 1988 may have been propelled by the limited market reforms that were introduced. But these reforms – in combination with the others that Gorbachev initiated – resulted in unanticipated internal developments in the USSR, which turned out to be counterproductive for a sustained growth. The following year, 1989, was a turning point before the downturn began, demonstrating a GDP growth of only 1.5 percent, the lowest recorded after World War II.

As indicated in Chapter 3, the period 1987 - 1989 was characterised by rising imbalances in the Soviet economy. Following Gorbachev's radical reforms, the customary shortages became even more ubiquitous, creating civic frustrations and increasing existing vulnerabilities. However, with the GDP still growing until 1989, albeit feebly, there could be no significant deterioration in the living conditions of Russians – children and youth included.

Table 4.2: Annual GDP growth in Russia, 1989-1999<sup>171</sup>

1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999, 1989=100
0,0	-4.0	-5.0	-14.5	-8.7	-12.7	-4.1	-3.5	0.8	-4.6	57

Table 4.2 provides data on GDP developments in Russia from 1989 to 1999.<sup>172</sup> As the disintegration process of the USSR picked up pace, the economic crisis worsened with annual downturns in GDP of 4 and 5 percent in 1990 and 1991, respectively. But it was with the launch of Shock Therapy in January 1992 that the economy indeed plummeted. In 1992, the economic decline almost tripled compared with the last year when the USSR still formally existed. In 1993, the GDP contraction was 8.7 percent. The economic decline took one step back in 1994 when the GDP plunged by 12.7 percent against the previous year. Then in 1995

<sup>170</sup> UN Economic Commission for Europe for 1992, *Economic survey of Europe in 1991-1992*. (New York: United Nations Publications, 1992), 293. The figures are calculated as “Net annual product” and are derived from the CMEA (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance – COMECON).

<sup>171</sup> M. Dabrowski and R. Gortat, *Occasional Paper, 2002/2, Political and Economic Institutions, Growth and Poverty – Experience of Transition Countries*, UN Development Programme, (Warsaw: Centre for Social and Economic Research, 2002), 33.

<sup>172</sup> The figures in the table are based on information provided by the European Bank on Reconstruction and Development, and also on official Russian sources. These are obviously conservative estimates. For example, Moskoff, *Hard Times*, 15-17, gives indicators for 1991 of a far more dramatic nature: For this particular year Moskoff speaks of a reduction in the “aggregate output” of 17 percent and a drop in trade of 38 percent. He further estimates the GDP reduction at 12 percent for January through September 1991 (ibid. 160).

and 1996 the downturn decelerated with a GDP reduction of “only” 4.1 and 3.5 percent respectively. The second post-Soviet shock of 1998 is beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet it is interesting to note that by 1999, the GDP was 57 percent of what it was ten years earlier.

The GDP decline of the 1990s was unprecedented for any country in peacetime, that is, outside the post-Soviet context. Although it can be argued that some of the industrial capacities that were lost might have represented excessive military production, the downturn affected all sectors of the economy, from machine building and other heavy industry to production of child nutrition (see Chapter 5). Value creation fell across the board and incomes dwindled at private, enterprise and state levels.

*Table 4.3: End-of-year inflation in Russia 1992-1996*<sup>173</sup>

1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
6.2	7.3	8.4	10.5	53.6	675	2321.6	841.6	202.7	131.4	21.8

The researcher William Moskoff indicates an annual price rise in the range of 6.2 to 8.4 percent from 1986 to 1988, i.e. before the disintegration started. Inflation soared after 1989 when the hard-pressed authorities, without any real economic fundamentals in place, began to raise salaries to appease a grumbling population. In 1990 inflation thus reached 53.6 percent. In the period between January and June 1991, the increase was 90 percent while, according to Moskoff, the inflation comprised 650-700 percent for the entire year of 1991.<sup>174</sup>

But it was in 1992, with the removal of price control on most commodities that prices skyrocketed and Russians came face to face with the phenomenon of hyperinflation. In 1992, the first year of Shock Therapy, inflation reached 2,321 percent compared to the previous year. In 1993, the annual price rise dropped and plateaued at 841 percent. Inflation was further reduced in 1994 and 1995, reaching a more acceptable low of 21.8 percent in 1996. Hence, a relative balance between demand and supply was attained. The reforms thus met the objective of eliminating the monetary overhang.<sup>175</sup> However, the other side of the story was that the overwhelming majority of Russians, almost overnight, lost their personal savings.<sup>176</sup> Money put aside was quickly gone as salaries and bank interests fell far behind the inflation.

*Table 4.4: Annual changes in real wages until 1989*<sup>177</sup>

1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
2.1	0.9	2.7	7.3	7.3

<sup>173</sup> For the period prior to 1992: Moskoff, *Hard Times*, 89; after 1992: Dabrowski et al. *Occasional Paper*, 35.

<sup>174</sup> All figures in this paragraph are taken from Moskoff, *Hard Times*, 89.

<sup>175</sup> Reddaway et al., *Market Bolsheviks*, 178-179, emphasise the advice given to the Russian reformers by IMF and other international bodies in terms of balancing the budget and absorbing “the excess liquidity.”

<sup>176</sup> Moskoff, *Hard Times*, 18, with reference to a lecture by Anders Åsland, notes that by early 1991 excess demand in the Soviet Union was estimated at 250 billion roubles.

<sup>177</sup> UN Economic Commission for Europe 1992, 297.

Table 4.4 indicates moderate pay rises from 1985 to 1987, more or less corresponding to the GDP development of these years. From this point of time political turbulence increasingly left its imprint on Soviet society. Beginning with 1987, Glasnost made it possible to raise issues that in effect undermined the hitherto vigilantly preserved Soviet consensus and stability. As mentioned earlier, the authorities resorted to salary increases to alleviate distress. The failure of the system to provide supplies that matched the pay rises, however, led to inflation and undermined the Social Contract inherited from the Brezhnev era.

*Table 4.5: Annual index of real wages after 1989 (1989=100)<sup>178</sup>*

1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
100	109.1	102.4	68.9	68.1	63.1	45.5	51.5

Table 4.5 demonstrates that salary increases without real-economic coverage continued into 1990, but ebbed in the course of 1991. As Yeltsin prepared for radical economic reforms, the strategy of containing social unrest by increasing salaries was abandoned.

With the collapse of the command economy and the introduction of Shock Therapy, enterprises soon faltered and many were forced to shut down. As also stated in Chapter 3, numerous people lost their jobs and incomes. People's purchasing power went down dramatically in a situation where their savings had been wiped out almost immediately after the onset of Shock Therapy.<sup>179</sup>

Overall, during the period 1989 – 1996, real wages in Russia were reduced to almost half. The fall was particularly sharp between 1991 and 1992, when wages slumped from 102.4 to 68.9 percent of the 1989 level. A new major decline occurred in 1995 when the real-wages level constituted only 45 percent of the 1989 level. 1996 recorded a surprisingly minor increase in real wages. Whether this was due to statistical inaccuracies or whether it mirrored the efforts to have Yeltsin re-elected, is beyond this thesis to assess.

*Table 4.6: Employment ratio (percent of employed population aged 15-59 years)<sup>180</sup>*

1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
83.6	83.4	81.7	79.6	78.0	70.8	69.7	68.1

There are no statistics available on unemployment during the pre-Perestroika period. With Glasnost, unemployment figures started to be recorded. However, Soviet authorities still seemed very cautious when publishing such information. The discrepancy that existed

<sup>178</sup> UNICEF, *Understanding Child Poverty in South-Eastern Europe and the CIS*, Innocenti Social Monitoring (Florence: UNICEF, 2006), 122.

<sup>179</sup> Bertram Silverman and Murray Yanovitch, *New Rich, New Poor, New Russia. Winners and Losers on the Russian Road to Capitalism*, (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 23. "Inflation also destroyed household savings, preventing most Russians from drawing on past income to sustain current consumption levels."

<sup>180</sup> Silverman et al., *New Rich, New Poor*, 121. These figures are based on official Russian labour force survey.

between official and real unemployment figures under Gorbachev is assessed by Moskoff. By applying a modified version of Okun's Law on the quantitative relationship between changes in the rate of unemployment and changes in GDP,<sup>181</sup> Moskoff has arrived at relatively high unemployment figures. With correction for the low labour productivity in Russia, Moskoff suggests a ratio of one percent rise in unemployment for every one percent decline in GDP. In accordance with Moskoff's assumption,<sup>182</sup> the alleged Soviet GDP decline of 12 percent from January 1991 until October 1991 should correspond to a rise in unemployment by approximately 12 percent. This would amount to a total of 13.8 million unemployed in 1991 as against the official figure of 2 million.<sup>183</sup> A more conservative estimate, utilising the official GDP reduction of 9 percent from 1989-1991, would imply an unemployment growth of 9 percent, still far beyond the modest deterioration indicated for this period in Table 4.6.

Hence, Table 4.6 shows an unrealistically low reduction in the work force taking into account the dimensions of the economic downturn. Several factors may have contributed to the assumed inconsistency between the real number of unemployed and the official figures. Firstly, it was only in 1991 that "unemployment" became an officially acceptable category after having been regarded as "parasitic" activity for nearly 70 years. Secondly, the incentives for registering at an employment exchange office were few; the system was new and unknown, and there "was a low probability of receiving an unemployment benefit even if a jobless applied for it..." as well as "a low probability of an unemployed person obtaining a job through the employment service".<sup>184</sup>

According to Steven Rosefielde, the Russian statistical authorities, "after claiming for years that unemployment in the nineties was just a few percent" did, by the end of the 90s, admit that "the figure was in the mid teens".<sup>185</sup> Discussing the situation in Russia of the late 90s, Rosefielde claims that "the real unemployment rate was closer to 25 percent, a figure in line with a 45 percent fall in GDP".<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Wikipedia on Okun's law: "For every 1% increase in the unemployment rate, a country's GDP will be an additional roughly 2% lower than its potential GDP". [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okun's\\_Law](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okun's_Law) (01.03.2009).

<sup>182</sup> Moskoff uses the 12 percent for the GDP decline from January through February 1991; see footnote 6.

<sup>183</sup> Moskoff, *Hard Times*, 129-182. Moskoff has devoted one chapter to unemployment. The reference to Okun's Law: *ibid.*, 160.

<sup>184</sup> Guy Standing, "Why Measured Unemployment in Russia Is So Low: the Net With Many Holes," *Journal of European Social Policy* 35.4:35-49, (1994), 37. Standing lists a total of 12 factors to explain why many of those who were losing jobs and were unemployed did not visit employment exchanges, and were thus per definition excluded from official counts of the unemployed. The 12 factors are listed on pp. 36-38.

<sup>185</sup> Steven Rosefielde, "Russia: An Abnormal Country," *The Journal of Comparative Economics* 2 (1) 3-16. (2005), 8.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

Hence, there are no precise figures on unemployment in Russia during the first years of Yeltsin’s economic reforms. However, if Okun’s law in the interpretation referred to earlier is applied, the real unemployment rate would have increased by 14.5 percent in 1992 and by 8.7 percent in 1993, equalling the GDP contraction of those particular years. In any event, the research referred to corroborates the assertion that official Russian figures are heavily deflated: The real figure might therefore be somewhere in between these extremes, perhaps in the range indicated by Rosefielde in his research.<sup>187</sup>

All parameters discussed above indicate a growing number of Russians living under the subsistence level, or to put it more bluntly, living in poverty. The word “poverty” as such had not existed in official Soviet discourse pertaining to the situation in the country. Until the late 1980s, references in Soviet publications to domestic *bednost*’ (poverty) were unimaginable. But researchers could make mention of *malolbespechennye* (not sufficiently provided for) families, for the purpose of defining minimum wage rates and family supplements, etc.

Table 4.7: Average Wage and Poverty Threshold (calculated in 1987 roubles)<sup>188</sup>

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Average Wage	214	231	246	266	239	148	147	127	97	109
Poverty Threshold	75	74	78	88	94	47	51	50	53	50

Table 4.7 provides figures on the official subsistence levels as existed from 1987 to 1996. For comparison, the table also gives average wages corrected for inflation over the same period. Interestingly, the authorities calculated the criteria for subsistence level differently before and after the system change. In terms of spending patterns, food accounted for approximately one-half of a poor family’s total expenditure until 1990-91, whereas after 1991 nutritional items comprised more than two-thirds of the expenditure to stay above the poverty line.<sup>189</sup>

The World Bank economist Branko Milanovic has attempted to calculate the number of poor people in Central and Eastern Europe before and after the system change.<sup>190</sup> He uses the same criteria for all countries, namely a purchasing power of 4 “international” USD per person per day, or 120 international USD per month. A purchase-power parity (PPP) exchange rate is used for each country, representing the amount of units of local currency needed to buy USD

<sup>187</sup> On the methods used by Rosefielde in estimating unemployment estimate, see Steven Rosefielde, “The Civilian Labour Force and Unemployment in the Russian Federation,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 52 (8). (2000), 1433-1447.

<sup>188</sup> Branko Milanovic, *Income, Inequality and Poverty during the Transition from Planned to Market Economy*. (Washington, D.C. :The World Bank, 1997), 198.

<sup>189</sup> Silverman et al. *New Rich, New Poor*, 39-41.

<sup>190</sup> Milanovic, *Income, Inequality and Poverty during the Transition*, 60-114.



1 worth of basic goods at *international prices*.<sup>191</sup> Table 4.8 shows the comparable poverty development in Russia before and after 1991 according to this method.<sup>192</sup>

Table 4.8: Estimated poverty in Russia, 1987-88 and 1993-95<sup>193</sup>

	1987-88	1993-95
Poverty headcount (%)	2	50
Total number of the poor (million)	2.2	74.2

An interesting disparity occurs when comparing the number of the poor in Russia according to the fixed criterion for subsistence level applied both to the period before and after 1991 (Table 4.8), on the one hand, and the lowered poverty criteria introduced by the Russian authorities after 1991 (Table 4.7), on the other. Whereas Milanovic's calculation method implies that poverty after 1991 embraced around half the population, the official poverty criteria resulted in far fewer people living below subsistence level. According to information from the Russian Ministry of Labour, the population living in poverty made up 26 percent in 1992, 29 in 1993, 25 in 1994, 29 in 1995, and about 25 percent in 1996.<sup>194</sup>

Table 4.9: Distribution of earnings: Gini coefficient<sup>195</sup>

	1987/88 <sup>196</sup>	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Gini coefficient	0.24	0.271	0.269	0.325	0.371	0.461	0.446	0.471	0.483

Throughout the Soviet period, Russians had become accustomed, for better or for worse, to a relatively high degree of equal distribution of wealth. With the exception of top Party bosses and others who enjoyed huge fringe benefits and other unofficial privileges, the USSR was characterised by the phenomenon of *uravilovka* (prerogative for excessive wage-levelling).

With unparalleled rapidity, from 1991 the gap between the haves and the have-nots widened. Consequently, one can assume that the condition of poverty, which about half of the population abruptly ended up in living, must have been more difficult to accept when accompanied by the highly unfamiliar income and living standard inequality that came to

<sup>191</sup> In the USSR of 1988, USD 25 was needed to buy the amount of goods representing 120 international USD, whereas in Ukraine in 1993 USD 21 was needed to buy the same amount (Russia is not included in this example Milanovic, *Income, Inequality and Poverty*, 65-68. E.g., if a litre of milk costs 1 international USD, but 10 roubles in Russia, then the Russian price is 0.33 PPP-dollars (given an exchange rate is 30 RUR per 1 USD).

<sup>192</sup> The figure for 1987-1988 corresponds with an independent research referred to by Silverman et al., *New Rich, New Poor*, 68, suggesting that the poverty rate in the RSFSR was 5 percent in 1989.

<sup>193</sup> Milanovic, *Income, Inequality and Poverty*, 68.

<sup>194</sup> Silverman et al., *New Rich, New Poor*, 47.

<sup>195</sup> For 1989-1996, UNICEF, *Understanding Child Poverty in South-Eastern Europe and the CIS*, 122. The Gini coefficient is defined as "a ratio with values between 0 and 1: A low Gini coefficient indicates more equal income or wealth distribution, while a high Gini coefficient indicates more unequal distribution. 0 corresponds to perfect equality (everyone having exactly the same income) and 1 corresponds to perfect inequality (where one person has all the income, while everyone else has zero income)". Quoted from Wikipedia.

<sup>196</sup> For 1987-88, Milanovic, *Income, Inequality and Poverty*, 41.

characterise post-Soviet Russia. Table 4.9 demonstrates the sharp social polarisation that developed over the period 1987 to 1996, expressed in a changing *Gini coefficient*.<sup>197</sup>

Table 4.10. Government expenditure as percent of GDP<sup>198</sup>

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
GDP Development (for comparison)	0,0	-4.0	-5.0	-14.5	-8.7	-12.7	-4.1	-3.5
Public Social Expenditure	-	10.1	7.4	7.3	8.4	9.0	7.7	-
Public Expenditure on Health	2.6	2.3	2.4	2.5	3.2	3.2	2.4	-
Public Expenditure on Education	4.7	3.5	3.6	3.6	4.0	4.5	3.4	-
Family and Maternity Allowances	0.3	0.3	2.1	0.6	0.5	0.8	-	-

Finally, state finances must also be taken into consideration as an overall determinant for child neglect, closely related to the concept of leading economic parameters. First, it must be emphasised that before 1991-92 several social and cultural benefits for the people were provided by the enterprises and by the organisations where they were employed. Data on the situation before 1992 regarding the value of inputs offered by these service providers,<sup>199</sup> as well as on the pre-1989 level of governmental expenditures for social and cultural purposes, were unfortunately not available for this thesis. There is, however, no indication that there were any significant cuts on these budget lines before 1989. The substantial changes must have started with 1989. An accelerating GDP contraction, along with growing rent-seeking and corruption, clearly suggests that the Russian state saw a dramatically shrinking base for its revenues from then on, but especially after 1991.

According to Åslund, the state revenues in Russia did fall from about 40 percent of the GDP in early 1992 to about 33 percent by late 1996.<sup>200</sup> It goes without saying that with a rapidly declining GDP, various social and cultural budget lines would have required a considerable increase in terms of their percentage share of the GDP if they were to guarantee at least the same level of social services, etc. as it had been until 1989. But with the growth in caseloads of vulnerable people, all in need of support from the Russian state, the 1989-level of social and cultural service provisions soon lost its relevance as a point of comparison.

Table 4.10 demonstrates that no such substantial increase in state expenditure for state services occurred after 1989, even in terms of the percentage of a shrinking GDP. Although one of the proclaimed objectives of Shock Therapy was to obtain financial stabilisation, major cuts in the state expenditure (e.g. reductions in investments and subsidies, as well as in

<sup>197</sup> Milanovic, *Income, Inequality and Poverty*, 40. According to the author the Nordic countries are examples of nations with very low income-inequality, i.e. their Ginis range between 0.2 and 0.22. High income-inequality countries include Switzerland and the US with Ginis ranging between 0.33 and 0.35.

<sup>198</sup> UNICEF, *Children at Risk in Central and Eastern Europe: Perils and Promises*, (Florence, Unicef, 1997) 134-136 (data is not available for 1996).

<sup>199</sup> The socio-cultural provider arrangements presumably discontinued with the collapse of the USSR.

<sup>200</sup> Åslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution*, 191, (based on sources from EBRD).

military spending), there was obviously some space for minor adjustments in terms of the percentage share other budget lines had of the overall governmental budget. This might explain the relative increase in public spending that for example health, education and family allowances saw after 1991. But again, this was an increase expressed in percentage of a rapidly shrinking GDP, and the tendency was only partial.

The outline in this chapter of a number of leading economic parameters, along with the assessment of both poverty and relevant state funding, allow for unequivocal conclusions to be made. Firstly, few if any of the analysed macro socio-economic indicators vis-à-vis children's well-being started to go in a negative direction before 1989. Between 1989 and 1991 the GDP started to decline, and with this a number of other leading economic parameters also started to show a downward trend. Thus this period saw the creation of preconditions that would lead to child neglect.

It was, however, with the advent of the Shock Therapy in early 1992 that the leading economic parameters changed radically. Russia went into a period of unprecedented downturn in terms of its economic and social performance. The majority of Russians were deprived of their incomes and savings, and a significant part of the population lost their jobs or at least became functionally unemployed. More than half of all Russians fell below the subsistence level and were therefore subject to impoverishment. The Russian state became equally insolvent. State revenues plunged in tandem with the contracting GDP. Furthermore, as indicated in Chapter 3, the state was stripped of incomes and profitable assets, both through rent-seeking as well as privatisation by which it, among other things, handed over some of its most precious natural resources for little more than nothing to the new ruling class of Russia.

### **Risk Factors at Family, or Micro, Level**

The second section of this chapter explores how the negative socio-economic occurrences as identified earlier translated into micro determinants that presumably led to the emergence of a new wave of neglected and abandoned children in Russia's big cities and towns. A central methodological challenge in this chapter is to identify those determinants of child neglect that are particularly potent in terms of causing changes at the level of manifested Child Neglect Phenomena. The most comprehensive and continuous studies on children's living conditions, or *well-being*, in Central and East European countries, from late 1980s onwards, have been done by UNICEF under the Monee Project. As part of this project, numerous reports and analyses have been published.

All countries in Central and Eastern Europe that had adopted the Soviet model of socialism to varying degrees are included in the UNICEF monitoring. Although historically and culturally different, these countries had in this context the following points in common: In the period between 1989 and 1991 they underwent a relatively abrupt departure from a system of planned economies and one-party rule, proclaiming the introduction of market economy combined with representative democracy and respect for human rights.

It is important to underline that the UNICEF monitoring has no specific emphasis on the most extreme form of child neglect, or *absence* of child *well-being*, i.e. the condition of children who in reality had been abandoned by the adult society. In other words, UNICEF's research does not direct any explicit attention to the causes and manifestations of street children.<sup>201</sup> UNICEF's scope is definitively much broader. The benchmark for UNICEF's observations and analyses of the evolving living conditions of children in Central and Eastern Europe is associated with the concept of *child well-being*, which, in turn, is derived from the UN Convention on the Child's Rights. The UN Convention builds on the idea that all children are entitled to a life in which *all* requirements for an adequate childhood are fulfilled, and are formulated so as to address a broad spectre of needs, including physical needs (food, shelter, health, protection, etc.), as well as emotional, social, educational and spiritual needs.<sup>202</sup>

At first glance it might therefore appear as if certain rights of children, as well as the UNICEF risk factors associated with them, set standards that are far too elevated as far as street children are concerned. On the other hand, it is obvious that the eight main categories of child risk that UNICEF has identified as typical for the transition societies are interlinked and interdependent. The risk categories are: poverty; war and dislocation; environmental degradation; health and health service deterioration; changes in family formation, including rising family-breakdown rates; falling access to education and rising truancy; youth lifestyle and health, including an increase in drug abuse and the occurrence of sexually transmitted diseases; and juvenile crime.<sup>203</sup> First, these risk factors are interlinked due to the fact that in the given historical context they must be understood in light of one homogeneous causality; the 20<sup>th</sup> century European socialist states as well as their succeeding transitional societies. Second, several of the mentioned risks are interdependent in the sense that some factors contribute to strengthening others.

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<sup>201</sup> Leonardo Menchini, e-mail message to author, December 09, 2008. Menchini, one of the leading researchers of the Monee project, writes: "It is true that in our work on children in CEE and CIS countries, we do not have any specific research on street children. This is mainly due to the fact that our analyses are based on administrative data and household surveys."

<sup>202</sup> UNICEF, *Children at Risk in Central and Eastern Europe*, 18-19.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.* 21-59. The eight risk categories in their various facets are discussed.

As examined in the first section of this chapter, UNICEF points at the “strong correlation” between a number of indicators for the above risk factors on the one hand, and “leading economic variables” on the other.<sup>204</sup> Furthermore, UNICEF stresses that poverty is to be considered *the* main risk factor, strongly influencing the conditions under which children typically resided during post-socialist transition.<sup>205</sup> Supported by its monitoring and analyses, UNICEF uses the increase in juvenile crime during this period as a case to demonstrate how various risk factors might influence one another. According to UNICEF, the probability of juvenile delinquency increases with the presence of a number of risk factors both at the family level (e.g. poverty, divorce, and parental dysfunctions) as well as at the personal level (e.g. increasing truancy, alcohol consumption, drug use, etc.). UNICEF states that all the mentioned risk factors influencing crime amongst minors “heightened during the transition”.<sup>206</sup>

Moving closer to a concretisation of those micro-risk factors or (child neglect determinants)<sup>207</sup> that are particularly detrimental and contribute to pushing children onto the streets, the thesis will now turn to some of the risk factors described in the *Scale for identification of risk factors for children living in families* by Dr Vasilii Sereda.<sup>208</sup> Drawing on a life-long research and practical work devoted to vulnerable children, and over the past two decades to street children, Dr Sereda has developed a scale for risk factors causing gross child neglect. In a range from one to ten, ten represents the highest possible degree of risk. The 10 factors and their respective weighted risk are: parental misuse of alcohol – 10; parental drug addiction – 10; parental child abuse (violence) – 10; maternal asocial behaviour – 10; unemployment for both parents – 10; multi-child families – 9; disadvantageous psychological climate in the family – 8; single-parent family – 5; incomes for the family significantly below the subsistence level – 6; bad housing and hygienic living conditions – 5.

Obviously, the street-children risk factors suggested by Dr Sereda fall within the scope of the broader and more general UNICEF child risk factors of the transition period in a way that make the former a special case of the latter. Consequently, the causal dependence of the UNICEF transition risk factors on leading economic determinants, as well as the

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<sup>204</sup> UNICEF, *Public Policy and Social Conditions*, 1993, 47 and page 43 above.

<sup>205</sup> UNICEF, *Children at Risk in Central and Eastern Europe*, 22: “The physical and psychological well-being of children is almost inevitably jeopardised by the material deprivation and stress occurring in household environments affected by poverty and its underlying causes, like unemployment.”

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.* 57.

<sup>207</sup> The terminology “risk factors” used by UNICEF, as well as the *family-risk scale* suggested by Dr Sereda coincide with the concept of *determinants of child neglect*, (see Chapter 1, p. 3).

<sup>208</sup> For Sereda’s Scale for Risk Factors, see: Bogdanov, ed. *Sirotsvo i Besprizornost’ v Rossii. Istoriia i Sovremennost*, (St Petersburg: Liki Rossii, 2008), 155.

interconnection between these risk factors, remains valid as far as the street-children risk factors as established by Dr Sereda are concerned.<sup>209</sup>

Several of these risk factors have been put to very little, if any, empirical research, especially from a longitudinal perspective. This complicates the process of assessing data on the dynamics of these risk factors over the period studied. Hence, a practical “compromise” must be reached between the availability of information, on the one hand, and the relevance of the various risk factors, on the other. In order to assess the trends, which the ten risk factors followed, a classification will be made according to the level of research conducted on each of the factors. A consideration of the literature reviewed for the thesis may allow for a division of the risk factors into four main groups: No studies exist; limited studies exist; indirect data exist; specific data exist.

i) No studies exist: (maternal asocial behaviour - 10; disadvantageous psychological climate in the family – 8). Dr Sereda has in conversations with the author of this thesis explained that in the Russian context, the following mainly single-mother attributes are associated with the risk factor “maternal asocial behaviour:” extreme cases of mainly single-mother sexual promiscuity including prostitution; frequent misuse of alcohol and drugs; “unwillingness” to take on traditional work; and dirty, disorderly homes. According to Dr Sereda disadvantageous psychological climate in the family has to do with an extremely negative emotional relationship between certain, again, most often single mothers and their children. If the birth of the child in question was an “accident” and the child was unwanted in the first place, and if the mother continues to strongly regret the child’s existence, this might lead to a very destructive environment for the child to grow up in.

While it seems difficult to define exact indicators for measuring the prevalence of this particular risk factor, not to mention to find precise data pertaining to it,<sup>210</sup> it is obvious that the phenomena behind such a risk factor are at least partially linked to, and overlap with, several other risk factors discussed in this chapter. For the purpose of this thesis it is therefore assumed that most of the risk factors mentioned by Dr Sereda will be discussed under topics

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<sup>209</sup> A similar interdependence between several child risk factors is the basic assumption in research related to other aspects of Russian child neglect issues. In F. Berrien et al., “Child Abuse in Russian Urban Population: A preliminary report.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 19 (2), (1995), 261, the authors state that in the first post-Soviet years, Russia experienced a “deterioration of the standard of living” and diminishing “availability of human services.” These circumstances, in combination with widespread alcoholism, single parenting, and changing norms in the society “*can be conducive to child abuse.*”

<sup>210</sup> However, as data that potentially and at least partially might be indicative of one of the risk factors listed under this paragraph (maternal promiscuity) can be mentioned the rise in the share of non-marital births to mothers under age 20 (1989: 19,8%; 1991: 20,6%; 1993: 23,0%; 1996: 29,6%); see: UNICEF. *Children at Risk in Central and Eastern Europe*, 61; but also the statistics on the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases per 100 000 population (1989; 141,8: 1991:135,9; 1993: 264; 1996:401,8), see Unicef, *ibid.*, 79.

such as parental misuse of alcohol and drugs, unemployment, bad housing and hygienic living conditions, and single-parent families.

ii) Limited or no systematic empirical data: (parental child abuse – 10). Domestic violence in general and child abuse in particular were among the many social and criminological topics that were withheld from public discourse in the pre-Glasnost Soviet Union. Although the veil was partly lifted during the Gorbachev era, the study of child-abuse in Russia was not included in Russian medical and human service literature till as late as 1995.<sup>211</sup> Yet it seems beyond doubt that domestic violence has been and remains a serious problem in Russia. As the American researcher Sharon Horne demonstrates in a study, there was a dramatic rise in domestic violence against women in Russia from the late 1980s until the mid 90s.<sup>212</sup> In her research, Horne refers to data indicating the following dynamics in terms of women killed by their male partners: In 1989 a total of 1,623 women were murdered; in 1990 the figure went up to 1,914 women; and in 1991, 5,300 women had been killed. These figures pertain to the entire USSR. After the system changed the number of women who lost their lives under such circumstances in Russia alone, which constituted half the population of the former USSR, increased dramatically. In 1993, a total of 14,500 women were murdered by their partners; in 1994, the figure went up to 15,000 women; and in 1995, it had climbed to 16,000 women. If compared to analogous figures in other countries, e.g. the 1,423 American women who in 1992 were murdered by their male partners in a country with twice the population of Russia, the gravity of domestic violence in Russia becomes more evident.

When assessing the figures on partner violence against women, the phenomenon of *latent crime* must definitively be taken into consideration. In Russian criminology, latent crime is understood as unreported crime, or reported crime that is not duly followed up by law enforcement intervention, and constitutes a significant part of the total crime scenario. Increasing corruption and failing efficiency on the part of the police and judiciary during the post-Soviet transition period are two reasons why many crimes went unreported. Another reason was that public trust in law enforcement agencies dwindled; people did not think it was worth their while to report crimes. Clearly, the militia was not proactive in curbing crime, and in some cases it could even turn the incident against the aggrieved person and use it as a pretext for extortion. According to a study carried out by Konstantin Goryainov, chief researcher at the Russian Ministry of Internal, crime latency of this period is estimated at 70

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<sup>211</sup> F. Berrien, et al., "Child Abuse Prevalence in Russian Urban Population: A preliminary report". *Child Abuse & Neglect* 1 (2): 261:264, (1995), 161-162.

<sup>212</sup> All information and statistics in this paragraph are based on: Sharon Horne, "Domestic Violence in Russia", *American Psychologist* 54, 1 (1999), 55.

percent. Hence, official criminal statistics may reflect only 30 percent of the real criminality.<sup>213</sup>

The latent-crime factor therefore provides important indications of the actual scale of child abuse: First, although children are not directly involved in the phenomenon of partner homicide, the latter is clearly indicative of the general level of violence that was prevalent in Russian homes and therefore of child abuse in the period between 1987 and 96. Second, while underreporting might be less significant when it comes to such manifest crimes as murder (although murders can be written off as “accidents” or “disappearance” and therefore not be properly accounted for), it is especially high when it comes to “less noticeable” crimes such as child abuse.

This assumption is confirmed by a dissertation on sexual abuse of minors written by Galina Yegoshina in 1999. Yegoshina reviews data, collected in 1993 by a psychological crisis centre for juveniles in St. Petersburg, suggesting that around 30 percent of those surveyed had experienced sexual abuse. However, only 10 percent of these minors had contacted the police.<sup>214</sup> Furthermore, in a specific survey undertaken by Yegoshina and comprising roughly 338 children of the senior grades in comprehensive schools in the Russian republic in Marii El, the results were similar. A total of 76.9 percent of the respondees had been victims of “physical or psychical violence,” including 4.2 percent who had experienced sexual violence. But only one pupil had contacted the police. A total of 44.1 percent of the interviewed emphasised that they had no confidence in the police, in the prosecution authorities, or in the courts.<sup>215</sup>

Another source of latent crime related to child sexual abuse is indicated in a study by Grazyna Lasuk in 1989. Lasuk notes that “at times” a mother might be fully aware of the fact that the stepfather or father is raping or even “cohabiting” with her daughter. However, she neither reports the criminal acts nor confronts the perpetrator for the fear of losing the breadwinner of the family.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> The estimate is taken from a joint UNICRI/MVD written by Konstantin Goryainov and published in PDF format on the internet, an excerpt from a larger publication. The year of publication is not mentioned. The pages reproduced are 663-672 and the information referred to is found on page 669. [http://www.unicri.it/wwk/publications/books/series/understanding/63\\_LATENT\\_CRIME\\_IN\\_RUSSIA.pdf](http://www.unicri.it/wwk/publications/books/series/understanding/63_LATENT_CRIME_IN_RUSSIA.pdf) (:21.02.2009). See also, see K. Goryainov and Anna Alvazzi del Frate, *Latent Crime in Russia* (UNICRI, 1993). <http://www.unicri.it/wwk/publications/books/reports/r1.php> (03.04.09)

<sup>214</sup> Galina Aleksandrovna Yegoshina, *Sekusal'nye posjagatel'stva na maloletnykh i nesovershennoletnykh i ikh preduprzhdenie. Ugolovno-pravovoe i kriminologicheskoe issledovanie po materialam Respubiki Marij El*, Candidate Thesis in Law. (Joshkar-Ola: Mariiskii State University, 1999), 3.

<sup>215</sup> All data referred to related to on the survey, Yegoshina, *Sekusal'nye posjagatel'stva na maloletnykh*, 154.

<sup>216</sup> Grazyna Kristina Lasuk, *Sekusal'nye posjagatel'stva vzroslykh i ikh nesovershennoletnykh zhertvy, kriminologicheskoe issledovanie po materialam sudebmoi praktiki Tatarskoi SSR*. Candidate Dissertation in



Child abuse and its relationship with other major risk factors such as poverty and alcohol, forms the interdependent risk-factor complexity referred to above as a central element in the UNICEF methodology for understanding the deteriorated child welfare situation during post-socialist transition. This methodology is indirectly supported by empirical findings in the referred studies on sexual abuse of children, conducted by Lasuk and Yegoshina. First, in this period sexual crimes in Russia thrived in socially disadvantageous environments. Although neither of the works focuses on child abuse within families, the studies state that those committing sexual assault on minors largely originated from non-educated, under-privileged, and poor-resource settings. For example, Lasuk concludes that children who have been victims of violence committed by stepfathers, fathers or relatives “as a rule” originate from socially disadvantageous families.<sup>217</sup>

Lasuk and Yegoshina’s findings harmonise with the assumption that deteriorating living conditions, at least in the context of the Russian transition from plan to market, increased the incidence of domestic child abuse. Their findings are explicit when establishing a clear correlation between sexual assault against children and alcohol consumption on the part of the perpetrator. Lasuk’s studies from Tatarstan of the late 1980s established that 62.8 percent of the offenders were under influence of alcohol at the moment of the misdeed. Less than ten years later, according to Yegoshina’s empirical studies in Marii El, 69.2 percent of the sexual assaults on minors were committed by drunken criminals.<sup>218</sup> Hence, in the tradition of Russian binge drinking, there is a clear link between drinking and violent behaviour towards children.<sup>219</sup> It may be assumed therefore that increased heavy adult drinking in the Russian transition context will increase the risk for children to violence and abuse.

Although there seems to be no hard evidence to gauge the scope of the evolving child-abuse problem in Russia, the various “circumstantial evidences” assessed above point to a clear conclusion: After 1991 there was a significant increase in *real* (in contrast to *reported*) cases of domestic child abuse.

iii). Indirect data is available: (unemployment of both parents – 10; multi child families – 9; family income significantly below the subsistence level – 6; bad housing and hygienic conditions – 5). The family-level risk factors such as unemployment of both parents as well as family income significantly below the subsistence level are conceptually so close to

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Law. (Kazan: Kazan State University, 1991), 147.

<sup>217</sup> Lasuk, *Sekusal’nye posjagatel’sva*, 167.

<sup>218</sup> Lasuk, *Sekusal’nye posjagatel’sva*, 156; Yegoshina, *Sekusal’nye posjagatel’sva na maloletnykh*, 136.

<sup>219</sup> WHO, “*Interpersonal Violence and Alcohol in the Russian Federation*.” Policy Briefing. (WHO: Copenhagen), 4: “In the Russian Federation, alcohol consumption has been noted to be involved in the perpetration of violence generally as well as in specific types of violence.”

the corresponding macro-socioeconomic risk factors (or determinants) presented above that a separate discussion of these is hardly required. Also the risk factor multi-child families – defined in Russia as families comprising three or more children – must have developed in parallel with the worsening poverty situation in the country. Moreover, as incomes dwindled, multi-children families were obviously worse off simply because they had more mouths to fill and fewer resources at their disposal.<sup>220</sup> Child allowances in Russia were so modest that such entitlements, if received at all, could by no means compensate for loss of job and income.<sup>221</sup>

When it comes to the risk factor *bad housing and hygienic conditions*, it must be emphasised that the ubiquitous housing shortages, including the extensive and persistent sub-standard dwelling conditions that characterised the Soviet Union throughout its history, did not change for the better when the Soviet economy started to collapse after 1989.<sup>222</sup> One of the most distinguishing macro-economic developments of this period was the extraordinary drop in public and industrial investments.<sup>223</sup> There is no indication that investments in construction of new housing or repairs of old housing stock were higher than in other sectors of the economy. On the contrary, apart from Moscow and perhaps a few other cities where construction of prestigious buildings for the new and small Russian elite did not stop during the post-Soviet economic crisis, the housing standard for average citizens across the country deteriorated significantly during the 1990s .

The post-Soviet privatisation of people's flats must be mentioned. According to the researcher Tova Højdestrand, who wrote her PhD on "Homelessness and Humanness in Post-socialist Russia",<sup>224</sup> the privatisation of housing often resulted in frauds and extortions.<sup>225</sup> Due to manipulations by owners and intermediaries, several Russians lost their privatised flats.

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<sup>220</sup> "Child Poverty in Russia: Alarming Trends and Policy Options", (Moscow: UNICEF, 2005)30. This UNICEF report of 2005 on poverty in Russia (referring to the transition period in general) published by its Russian bureau, states that for families with three or more children there is a 90-95% probability of being impoverished. The average income shortfall for these families is estimated at 29-32% – 1.7 times higher than the same indicator for all households with children.

<sup>221</sup> See the discussion in Chapter 5 in this regard, conf. page 86.

<sup>222</sup> The key reasons for the shortages in the housing sector are *wars, destruction, population growth* but also obvious low efficiency and poor quality of the Soviet construction industry. Millions of Soviet people lived in so-called communal apartments (in one room with common kitchens and toilets which they shared with their neighbours) or several generations living together in one small flat. The lucky ones eventually received a tiny apartment of their own in one of the apartment blocks that had been constructed in bulk over the Soviet period.

<sup>223</sup> The figures are quoted from: Gaidar ed., *The Economics of Transition*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: 2003), 667. The dynamics of new fixed capital assessment over the period 1990-1997, expressed in percentage of the preceding year, are according to the Russian statistical agency, GOSKOMSTAT, as follows: 1990 – 100,1; 1991 – 85,0; 1992 – 60, 0; 1993 – 88, 0; 1994– 76,0; 1995 – 90,0; 1996 – 82;0.

<sup>224</sup> Tova Højdestrand, *Needed by Nobody, Homelessness and Humanness in Postsocialist Russia*, Doctoral dissertation. (University of Stockholm: Department of Social Anthropology, 2005).

<sup>225</sup> T. Højdestrand, "The Soviet-Russian Production of Homelessness", "AntroBase.com" 2003, 10. [http://www.anthrobase.com/Txt/H/Hoejdestrand\\_T\\_01.htm](http://www.anthrobase.com/Txt/H/Hoejdestrand_T_01.htm) (Reading date: 20.02.2009). .

Many people had to move in with their relatives or acquaintances; in several cases this created stress and frustration in the overcrowded homes. Others ended up as *bomzh'y*<sup>226</sup> adding to the increasing army of homeless persons in post-Soviet Russia.<sup>227</sup> Some parents brought their children with them into this state of homelessness, thereby creating new *manifested* cases of street children.

In conclusion, it seems probable that the developments associated with this category of risk factors were not very divergent from the trends established for other leading economic parameters as well as for family risk factors hitherto discussed. After minor changes until 1988-89, a more significantly negative development became a fact, increasingly so after 1991.

iv) Specific data is available: (parental alcohol abuse – 10; parental drug addiction– 10; single-parent family – 5). As far as parental alcohol abuse is concerned, it should first be emphasised that there were conflicting views vis-à-vis alcohol in Soviet politics.<sup>228</sup> On the one hand, “classic” bolshevism viewed drinking as a remnant of past class societies where the privileged class had nurtured destructive alcohol habits among the suppressed and toiling masses so as to keep them passive and indifferent to their lot. On the other hand, the tradition among Russians (as well as among many other peoples living in the USSR) of celebrating holidays and other events with alcoholic beverage could not be ignored even by ideologically prohibitionist Bolsheviks. Hence, drinking as a phenomenon did definitively not vanish under Soviet power, although its root causes, according to Marxist orthodoxy, had been eliminated. In contrast, socially harmful drinking thrived. Especially after World War II, alcohol-related problems became detrimental to the country’s economy as well as to its social fabric.<sup>229</sup>

One of the most controversial policies associated with Gorbachev as the new Party leader was the radical anti-alcohol policy that he launched. In terms of the measures that were employed, the campaign largely surpassed former Party initiatives against alcohol. Still, as demonstrated in the first section of this chapter, the Soviet economy did not receive a new growth impulse. However, the drastic production cuts and extensive reduction in the number of alcohol outlets, in particular over the period 1985-1987, did have several wide-reaching consequences. To take the unintended ones first, the anti-alcohol campaign gave rise to an explosive growth in the consumption of *samogon* (moonshine) and various substitutes. At the

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<sup>226</sup> Russian for (“filthy”) person without people without fixed residence *Bez Opredelennogo Mesta Zhitelstva*.

<sup>227</sup> Højdestrand, *Needed by Nobody*, 2005, on the dynamics of homelessness.

<sup>228</sup> The following information on the history of Soviet alcohol policies including Gorbachev’s anti-alcohol campaign owes much to S.White, *Russia Goes Dry. Alcohol, State and Society*, (Cambridge: 1996), as well as to B.Segal, *The Drunken Society: Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in the Soviet Union*, (New York:1990)

<sup>229</sup> After WWII, the increasing level of alcoholism among women must have had especially severe consequences for children’ situation in families. In 1940 women accounted for 4 percent of all heavy drinkers, by 1960 the accounted for 8 percent and by the early 1980 almost 15 percent. See White, *Russia Goes Dry*, 40.

same time, state finances were damaged. But also important, the anti-alcohol policy largely contributed to undermining popular trust in Gorbachev's reforms. People felt that the most accessible way of finding pleasure under "mature" socialism – that is, to take a drink or more whenever there was an occasion – became virtually impossible due to the many restrictions imposed on alcohol. While the desperate and chronic alcoholics resorted to samogon and chemical substances, the moderate had to abstain. In both cases the authorities were blamed.

As demonstrated in Attachment III to the thesis,<sup>230</sup> there was indeed a considerable drop in the total alcohol consumption during the first few years under Gorbachev. Moreover, statistics testify the measureable improvements in people's physical and psychical health as well as the reduced number of cases involving serious crime.<sup>231</sup> However, these positive results were evidently not sufficiently appreciated by the population who therefore did not support the strict anti-alcohol measures. The active anti-alcohol politics could not be sustained. Already by late 1988, the Party leadership signalled that the policy of hard-hitting methods in the struggle against alcohol was abandoned. The result of this turnaround was that legal alcohol production again went up and numerous alcohol outlets were reopened. More than three years of alcohol drought, coupled with long and humiliating queues for legal drink, often in vain, released an accumulated demand for liquor. This resulted in a surge in consumption which exacerbated existing social dysfunctionalities of the late Soviet society. Perhaps even worse for Russia, reasonable temperance measures seemed to have been fundamentally discredited for a long period to come.

Nearly 90 percent of all alcohol that Russians drink has traditionally been in the form of spirits, and drinking is typically done in binges rather than in frequent or moderate doses, such as in high-consumption countries in the Mediterranean region.<sup>232</sup> Moreover, the arena of drinking has most often been inside the typical tiny Russian apartment in the midst of the family. Important to emphasise, the Russian consumption pattern therefore enhances the potentially negative impact of alcohol beyond the sheer per-capita amounts of pure alcohol consumed. Adult frustrations and stresses, augmented under the influence of crisis and alcohol, therefore pose threats to the welfare and safety of the family, in particular of the children. (Confer the above discussion of the risk factor "parental child abuse.")

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<sup>230</sup> Annex III, p. 125, builds on information from *Demoscope Weekly*, No 19-20, 2001, a Russian Internet journal supported, among others, by UNFPA and UNESCO.

See: <http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/019/tema01.php> (24.04.09)

<sup>231</sup> A. Nemtsov, "Suicides and Alcohol Consumption in Russia," 1965-1999, *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 71 (2003), 162. The lowest figure for suicides in Russia for the period 1965-1999 was 33,482 in 1986. By 1994 the figure had almost doubled. As for the significant reduction in the number of homicides and cases of serious violence during the campaign: Figure 2 in: WHO, *Interpersonal Violence & Alcohol in Russia*, (Copenhagen) 3.

<sup>232</sup> Martin McKee, "Invited Commentary: Alcohol in Russia," *Alcohol & Alcoholism*, 34 (6) (1999), 825.

Annex III clearly demonstrates that there are no exact data on how much alcohol Russians actually drank; there are only several possible methods of estimation. One of the interesting questions arising from this data is why official sales (Column 2) never caught up with the level recorded prior to the anti-alcohol campaign. It seems reasonable to believe that with the traditional strict control mechanisms in place, Soviet figures for wholesale and retail trade did more or less reflect the amount of alcohol that was produced industrially. The situation must have changed: As the anti-alcohol campaign lost its steam and people's fear of authorities evaporated with Glasnost, unofficial trading became rampant. Yet, the most radical change occurred when Yeltsin abolished the state monopoly on alcohol beverages in 1992.<sup>233</sup> Green light was thereby given to an alcohol market that in practical terms became unrestrained. Hence, the bulk of the alcohol sale evaded official registration with the consequence that there are no credible statistics on the quantity of alcohol consumed.

Typical of the obvious discrepancy between official statistics and the real level of alcohol intake is the fact that over the period 1991-1993, in the midst of Shock Therapy, official figures for consumption of alcohol show a declining tendency. Furthermore, the calculations of the two Russian researchers Nemtsov and Trembl indicate that alcohol consumption during the first years of Shock Therapy only caught up with, but never exceeded the level that existed in the pre-Gorbachev period (see Annex III, column 4 and 5). In light of the changed level of social tensions and stresses that the population experienced in these two periods, such a trend in alcohol consumption does not seem plausible.

The *proxy methodology* for indicating the real level of alcohol consumption, suggested by the American specialist on alcohol and crime in modern Russia, William A. Pridemore, might therefore bring us closer to the real alcohol consumption rates during transition:

... the point is that by using a proxy we are not estimating the amount of actual alcohol consumption. Instead, in the absence of reliable information on alcohol consumption or heavy drinking, one can search for another indicator, such as deaths due to alcohol poisoning that should be closely related to the level of heavy drinking. Therefore, those years in which poisonings are higher should be those years, in which heavy drinking is higher[...]. Thus, you have an alternative indicator (i.e., a proxy) for drinking, but you do not have an actual estimate (e.g., 8 or 10 or 14 litres) of the level of consumption.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> In an interview with Komsomolskaya Pravda on 14.05. 2009 ("The scale of drunkenness has never been so horrifying"), Archimandrite Tikhon (Shevkunov) characterises the abolishment of the state monopoly on alcohol in 1992 as "one of the most tragic pages in our history". The interview was given in connection with the establishment of the joint church/civil-society "council for the defence against the alcohol threat." The article is reprinted in <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/press/30407.htm> (Reading date: 23.05.2009). Also the researcher Nemtsov has noted that the government "lost control over the country's alcohol market" in the period 1992-93. A.V. Nemtsov, "Estimates of Total Alcohol Consumption in Russia, 1980-94." *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* 58 (1), (2000), 134.

<sup>234</sup> William A. Pridemore, e-mail message to author, May 21, 2009.

In one of his numerous articles on the impact of the transition as well as of heavy drinking on homicide and suicide rates in Russia, Pridemore presents a figure indicating graphically the *overall and sex-specific combined alcohol-related death rates per 100,000 persons in Russia over the period 1956-2002*.<sup>235</sup> The logical implication of the author's proxy methodology applied to this figure must be that the estimate of the per-capita alcohol consumption in Russia around 1994-1995 might perhaps be 60 percent higher than it was in the first half of the 1980s.<sup>236</sup> Such an increase would correspond to the difference in alcohol-related mortality between the two time periods in question. A conservative estimate of the average alcohol consumption per capita for the pre-Gorbachev years, made on the basis of Annex III, would approximately be 13 litres. If we add 60 percent to this level, we could get a per-capita-alcohol consumption for Russia of the first post-Soviet years of around 20 litres.<sup>237</sup>

On the basis of the above it seems pertinent to raise the question whether there was systematic under-reporting on several social phenomena, engendering imprecise social statistics such as seems to be the case with data on alcohol consumption. It appears likely that the quality of statistical services deteriorated in Russia in parallel with the general disorganisation of the Russian society: underfunded, overloaded, demoralized and often corrupted agencies could hardly produce credible and representative reports (the increasingly ineffective police force has been discussed in connection with *latent crime*). Thus, in a country characterised by ubiquitous political opportunism and lack of independent monitoring, cautiousness indeed seems prudent when dealing with official statistics.

In conclusion, people were drinking less immediately after 1985, simply because it became much more difficult to get alcohol. Official sales plunged, but the unsatisfied demand resulting from this was partially compensated for by increased illegal production and sale of alcohol, as well as by new intoxication substitutes. These additional sources of, and distribution channels for, alcohol and substitutes lasted beyond the period of the anti-alcohol campaign, creating new and more non-transparent consumption patterns. When the anti-booze campaign died out, alcohol intake rose again and was largely driven by a suppressed demand from the "prohibition period." The increase in drinking as the social crisis in Russia widened

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<sup>235</sup> W. Pridemore and S. Kim, "Research Note: Patterns of Alcohol-Related Mortality in Russia" 2006 (13), <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/picrender.fcgi?artid=1534076&blobtype=pdf>. (6.6.09)

<sup>236</sup> Pridemore, e-mail message to author, May 22, 2009. When asked to comment whether his methods actually allowed for a conclusion that the Russian alcohol consumption in 1994-1995 might have been 60% higher than it was at the highest in the first half of the 80s, Pridemore answered: "In general, the answer is yes."

<sup>237</sup> *Saint Petersburg Times*, September 15, 2009. In 2009, President Medvedev stated that Russia's current, annual per capita consumption (which includes children) of pure alcohol was 18 litres. If this is the "official" figure for 2009, what was the "real" figure 15 years earlier! [http://www.sptimes.ru/index.php?action\\_id=2&story\\_id=29770](http://www.sptimes.ru/index.php?action_id=2&story_id=29770) (01.10.2009).

had also to do with established cultural patterns of resorting to booze as a means of escaping unfriendly realities. The official alcohol figures for the period after 1988 were definitely deflated, as reflected in Annex III to this thesis.

The discussion on the risk factor *parental alcohol abuse* has been more detailed and extensive than on the other micro-level risk factors. The reason for this is simple: Alcohol drinking is and always has been a part and parcel of Russian culture. The circumstances accompanying the dissolution of the Soviet Union therefore took binge drinking to unprecedented levels and produced unprecedented adverse effects. In my understanding, extensive drinking, not least due to its extremely deteriorating effect on all other risk factors studied, therefore was the causal factor that more than any other led to mass child neglect.

*Parental drug abuse.* Drug addiction in Russia did not emerge as a social curse only with the collapse of the Soviet Union. According to an article in Pravda, already by 1987 as many as 46,000 persons in the whole USSR were registered with the medical diagnosis of *drug addiction*.<sup>238</sup> That the problem was on the rise with the general social crisis that was under way from the late 1980s, is clearly demonstrated in Attachment IV to the thesis. Both crimes in general and crimes related to drugs skyrocketed (Figure 1). Figure 2 reveals a similar development in terms of the number of persons who were addicted to drugs.

Two other things are also clearly displayed in Figure 2. First, although a growing problem in the 1990s, drug addiction did in quantitative terms play a secondary role as a risk factor for child neglect when compared to alcohol. Whereas in 1996 a little more than 50 drug addicts were registered per 100 000 Russian city dwellers, the analogous figure for alcoholics was 1650. Second, similarly to the evident under-registering of alcohol misuse (confer the falling trend during the first half of the 1990s according to Figure 2, which blatantly contradict the conclusions of the previous section concerning alcohol consumption), there must have been a significant unregistered drug addiction.

In Attachment IV, Figure 3 (“Number of all special hospitals and special polyclinics; including number of narcological hospitals”) and in Figure 4, (“Number of hospital beds, including psychiatric and narcological hospital beds”), the increasing failure of the Russian society to offer treatment to the addicted is demonstrated. In 1991-1996, when Russia was riddled with the adverse effects of Shock Therapy, the number of hospitals and beds designated for addicted persons declined, thereby exacerbating the evolving addiction crisis.

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<sup>238</sup> Reference to the Pravda, article of 6.1.1987, is found in the article by M.M. Rusakova: “Narkotiki v Rossii” (1998), 5, published on the Internet site: NarCom, Russkii Narodnii Server Protiv Narkotikov, sponsored by the St. Petersburg Foundation “Zdorovoe Budushchee” and the Severo-Zapadnii Regional’nyi Meditsinskii Tsent. <http://www.narcom.ru/publ/info/507> (03.02.09).

The harmful impact of parental drug abuse, as well as of alcoholism, on children's well-being is of course beyond any doubt. There is little or absolute no predictability, material security, care and love, or educational follow-up in the lives of children living under such conditions. As more parents became addicted, their children could increasingly escape the tribulations by taking to the streets.

*Single-parent families.* We are now at the last of the risk factors for extreme child neglect as suggested by Dr Sereda. Sereda has given the lowest grade, i.e.5, to this particular risk factor (along with the factors bad housing and hygienic conditions). Obviously, a single-parent family cannot per se expose a child to greater risks of gross negligence than other families; that is, given that the remaining circumstances of a single-parent family are conducive to child well-being. Conversely, if the family is in a critical situation, a change from two responsible and constructive child caregivers to a state of single parenthood will inevitably increase the level of vulnerability for the child/children in question.<sup>239</sup>

As shown in UNICEF's statistics, reproduced in Attachment V,<sup>240</sup> there was a clear tendency from 1989 to 1996 (the years 1987-1989 are not included in UNICEF's research) that more and more families became single-parent and, consequently, an increasing share of Russian children were living with only one parent.<sup>241</sup> The crude marriage rate fell from 9.4 per 1000 mid-year population in 1989 to 5.9 in 1996; the divorce rate increased from 42.1 per 100 marriages in 1989 to 64.9 in 1996; the annual rate of children affected by parental divorce rose from 11.9 per 1000 population aged 0-17 years in 1989 to 15.9 in 1994, 15.4 in 1995, and then, somewhat incomprehensibly, to 12.5 in 1996; and lastly, the share of non-marital births rose from 13.5 percent of the total live births in 1989 to 23 in 1996.<sup>242</sup>

Consequently, there were an increasing number of children, particularly after 1991, who were brought up in single-parental families. Children with only one parent – who was

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<sup>239</sup> The discussion of the present risk factor does not take into account the assumption that the “removal” of a second parent in certain cases can also be a relief, that is, if this person is predominantly destructive for the child environment due to for example excessive drinking or violent behaviour. Increased drinking and domestic violence in Russia of the 1990s notwithstanding, a second parent is in most cases assumed to be an asset to the family and the children. Besides, there are no statistics on cases of “constructive” single-parents constellations.

<sup>240</sup> The information in this paragraph are from Attachment III (page 130 below) and reproduced from UNICEF. *The MONEE Project. A Decade of Transition. Regional Monitoring Report.* (Florence: UNICEF, 2001), 150-152, 181. For the period prior to 1989, UNICEF offers no data.

[http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/monee8/eng/monee8\\_annex.pdf](http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/monee8/eng/monee8_annex.pdf) (09.02.09)

<sup>241</sup> Although there are no available statistics on the correlation between single parenthood, on the one hand, and specific risk factors for child neglect on the other, it seems reasonable to use general data on the family situation of this period as an *indirect* indicator. That is, if the number of single-parent families and children living with only one parent increased in this period, then the probability of more single-parent families at risk also grew.

<sup>242</sup> Statistical errors might explain such statistics. For example, Belarus, a country that was coping better with the social consequences of the transition crisis than Russia did, had higher values for the category “children affected by parental divorces” over the periods 1995-1996-1997-1998. See UNICEF *TransMONEE 2007 features:* (Florence: 2007) 51, [http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/tm2007\\_features.pdf](http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/tm2007_features.pdf) (03.04.04)



most probably unable to work outside the home and who was entitled to only limited if any social support – almost inevitably faced more dire consequences of poverty than children in multi-parent families living under similar circumstances.

### **Summary and Framing of Hypotheses**

The leading economic parameters reviewed in this chapter have been relatively well covered by statistic data. In contrast, the analysis of the literature has shown that the longitudinal development of the risk factors at family level is far less mapped. It is therefore largely a fragmentary picture we have been able to restore. However, for some of the most potent risk factors, such as parental alcohol and drug misuse as well as parental child abuse, it has been possible to identify data which reveal increasingly negative trends. For other risk factors, the analyses have indirectly substantiated that a similarly negative development must have taken place.

The main findings of Chapter 4 can therefore be summarised as follows: First, although undoubtedly signalling a widening systemic crisis, the macro-economic problems in the Russian society until 1989 were still relatively limited. Similarly, the path followed by the micro-level risk factors from 1987 to 1989 does not indicate any dramatic social corrosion. Second, the year 1989 was a watershed in Russia's macroeconomic performance. In 1990 the economic downturn had become evident, and in 1991 the trend had strengthened. The analysis of the micro-risk factors over the years 1989-91 has, however, not provided overwhelming documentary evidence of a strong deterioration with direct impact on children's living conditions. Third, after 1991 the Russian economy plummeted into ruin. Although there is a lack of statistical material and a continuous and probably increasing underreporting on several indicators, this chapter documents a considerable deterioration of the living conditions of vulnerable families corresponding to the development of the macro-economic parameters.

Taking into account the information presented so far in the thesis, including the data provided in this chapter, the hypotheses on the evolving child neglect scale can be framed:

Hypothesis 1: In 1987-1989 the child-neglect scale was relatively stable, or had increased only slightly; but from 1989 to 1991 this negative tendency showed greater intensity.

Hypothesis 2: The Child-neglect scale in Russia deteriorated dramatically in 1992-1996.

The rationale behind the hypotheses on the KDN capacity was spelled out in Chapter 2 and 3. The Commissions for the Affairs of Minors was an integrated part of the Party-led rule that

permeated Soviet society. KDN unified not only a number of societal entities such as child welfare services, education, law enforcement, health, judiciary, etc., but also Soviet societal organisations such as Komsomol, dwelling and parental committees, and cultural and sport organisations. As such, KDN was connected, coordinated and disciplined by the invisible hand of the Party.

The USSR lapsed into a period of increasing volatility following Gorbachev's radicalisation as a reformer around 1987. With Glasnost, the weaknesses of the Soviet Union were exposed to open criticism, and the hitherto unquestioned propaganda picture of an infallible and historically unequalled Soviet socialism started to crack. As a consequence, the ubiquitous conformity pressure abated and the largely fear-based discipline in the society slowly dissipated. This was also true at operation level in social agencies like KDN.

Hypothesis 3: While continuing in its previous mode until 1987, KDN henceforth faced growing challenges. From 1989 to 1991, KDN showed signs of weakening efficiency.

With the elimination of Party-based government after August 1991, the overall organisational principle of the country was fundamentally transformed. Against a backdrop of economic breakdown and exploding social dysfunctionalities, trends that had been increasingly discernable towards the end of Gorbachev's period in office were brought to a logical conclusion. The departure of Party rule had wide-reaching consequences for the management of the state apparatus, enterprises, as well as for societal institutes like KDN; and was not countered by an alternative, constructive and humanitarian organisational principle for the Russian society. On the contrary, lawlessness flourished, and there were few if any signs of a laborious business community or innovative industries, a viable civil society, including autonomous parties, independent unions or other mass-based interest groups. Furthermore, Russia did not see the emergence of a new social ethos, which could inspire both elite and common people, thus balancing the strong nihilistic tendencies that followed in the wake of 70 years of hyper-paternalistic Party monopoly.

Hypothesis 4: After 1991, KDN was enfeebled. It lacked overall leadership, resources and the resolve to cope with the significantly growing number of neglected children.

## Chapter 5

### MANIFESTED CHILD NEGLECT – Normative Documents and Secondary Sources

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#### Introduction

This chapter starts the process of examining how the two research topics of the thesis (child neglect scale and KDN capacity) evolved over the period included in this thesis. This will be achieved by conducting an empirical assessment of the working hypotheses framed at the end of the previous chapter. In this chapter, two categories of sources are addressed: normative documents<sup>243</sup> and secondary sources, such as research and analytic publications, but also the analytic parts of normative sources.<sup>244</sup>

The examination of the two categories of sources is conducted theme-by-theme and is divided into two subperiods of this study: 1987-1991 and 1992-1996.<sup>245</sup> It goes without saying that the respective normative documents cannot *per se* provide exhaustive information on various aspects of a given legislation, such as the degree to which the legislation was actually implemented or its real impact. An interpretation is therefore required. Hence, analytic material, along with contextual data established in previous chapters, will be of indispensable importance.

#### The subperiod 1987 to 1991

It is hardly common to view concern for the country's child-neglect situation as a major motivating factor for Gorbachev, when deciding upon his strategies as the new leader of the Soviet Union. For example, the famous Anti-Alcohol Decree of May 1985, although indirectly pointing at several of the *material* deficiencies in Soviet society, which had caused excessive drinking;<sup>246</sup> stops short of saying anything about growing family dysfunctionalities

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<sup>243</sup> Relative to the research topics of the thesis, normative documents appear to be especially relevant as a source of *indirect* information. The rationale behind this is that in the process of drafting a bill, a given government observes a situation and then develops a response strategy to the situation. In other words, new legislation reflects indirectly changes that have occurred in society. The member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and specialist on child legislation, A.M. Nechayeva, utilises a similar logic in her analyses, e.g. of the Soviet family codes of 1969. Nechayeva notes that these codes, in much greater detail than before, prescribed the procedures for depriving parental rights, which, according to her, was "a reaction to a reality" that implied an "increased number of cases where the child's rights were violated," Nechayeva, *Rossia i ieio Deti*, 149.

<sup>244</sup> Several of the legislative initiatives analysed in the Chapter comprise also sections with analyses of the subject that the respective normative document addresses.

<sup>245</sup> When it comes to the year of 1991, a degree of overlapping will be observed in the way the chapter approaches the material. This is due to the dual-power struggle that prevailed in Russia most of that year.

<sup>246</sup> In the Decree, a number of sports, recreational, and other social and cultural measures were initiated, indicating a link between an unsatisfactory current level of these services and the unacceptable level of alcohol consumption in the Soviet society. See: Council of Ministers of the USSR, *On measures to overcome*

as a factor associated with people's growing alcohol consumption.<sup>247</sup> Nevertheless, Gorbachev's utterances in his programmatic book of 1987 on Perestroika demonstrate that the Soviet leader, with the introduction of glasnost, openly acknowledged interconnections, concealed in the Decree of 1985, between family and societal developments:

We have discovered that many of our problems – in children's and young people's behaviour, in our morals, culture and in production – are particularly caused by the weakening of family ties and slack attitude to family responsibilities. (...) One of the most urgent social tasks for us - also a major task in the anti-alcohol campaign – is to improve the health of the family and enhance its role in society.<sup>248</sup>

From this statement it is obvious that, by the time Gorbachev started his more radical reforms in 1987, the child welfare situation in the country was certainly not satisfactory, and that the development trend hardly could have been other but negative.

### The Decree of June 1987 on children left without parental care

In fact, when perusing decree No 872 of 1987, calling for fundamental improvements of the life of orphans and children left without parental care, the impression of a Soviet child-welfare and protection system in crisis is not only confirmed; a further upgrading of the level of urgency in the situation seems required.<sup>249</sup> Launched as a typical Party-managed mobilisation campaign, involving state organs as well as community actors, the Decree at the same time also heralded the introduction of *glasnost* (openness) and self-criticism within the area of child-welfare.<sup>250</sup>

Similarly to Stalin-era Decrees on child care,<sup>251</sup> scathing blame is indeed laid at the doorsteps of those parents whose child-raising had failed so fatally, that their children had ended up in alternative care arrangements. Interestingly, the Glasnost directness, when criticising the involved practitioners in the child-care work, also somewhat echoes Stalin's managerial harshness: It was the "indifference to the fate of orphans and social orphans" from authorities at all levels, but also lacking attention to child welfare, on the part of societal

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*drunkenness and alcoholism and on the eradication of illicit alcohol distillation*, Decree No 410 (Moscow, 1985), article 7. [http://www.lawmix.ru/docs\\_cccp.php?id=876](http://www.lawmix.ru/docs_cccp.php?id=876) (20.6.09)

<sup>247</sup> Alcohol as a factor leading to child neglect is repeatedly commented in this thesis.

<sup>248</sup> Gorbachev, *Perestroika, new thinking for our country and the world* (London: Novosti 1978), 117.

<sup>249</sup> See: CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet government: *On measures to radically improve the care, educational and material welfare of orphans and children left without parental care*. Decree No 872 (Moscow, 31 July 1987). [http://www.lawmix.ru/docs\\_cccp.php?id=2609](http://www.lawmix.ru/docs_cccp.php?id=2609) (18.06.09)

<sup>250</sup> The change from pre-glasnost decrees, where programme objectives tended to be stated without explicit identification of the weaknesses that had prompted the given initiatives, appears clearly when comparing the 1987 Decree (No 872) with a decree on the same topic from pre-Gorbachev 1985: CPSU Central Committee and Soviet Government: *On measures to improve the upbringing, education and material support to orphans and children left without parental care; in infant orphanages, children's homes and boarding schools*. Decree No 85 (Moscow, 24.1.1985) [http://www.lawmix.ru/docs\\_cccp.php?id=3497](http://www.lawmix.ru/docs_cccp.php?id=3497) (16.09.2008)

<sup>251</sup> Confer Chapter 2, p. 13.

organisation and Soviet enterprises, that had made it possible for the neglecting parents to get away with “impunity.”<sup>252</sup>

While stating that the authorities and other parts of Soviet society involved in child care conducted “extremely insufficient” work in terms of strengthening the family and “enhancing parental responsibility in matters of child-rearing,” the focus of the Decree was definitely on the critical situation in residential institutions. The Decree asserted that “weak” Party and state control of institutions for orphans had resulted in “shameful anti-pedagogical practices, undermining of children’s feelings of self-worth, abuses, embezzlement, the grossest violations of financial and labour management and sanitary conditions.”<sup>253</sup>

As far as of the working hypotheses of this study are concerned,<sup>254</sup> the abovementioned Decree (No 872) established that, by 1987, there was an alarmingly low level of attention and care provided to the most vulnerable child population, i.e. those who already had lost parental care. Implicitly, the Decree therefore made clear that there was a considerable reason for concern over what would happen - if the overall situation with Soviet families should deteriorate - to those groups of children who already were critically at risk of becoming socially orphaned due to the behaviour of “persons who scorned their parental obligations and misused the humanity of Soviet legislation.”<sup>255</sup>

While criticising failures and lacking responsibility in the way Soviet authorities, parents, and the society at large, treated the weakest groups of children, the Decree of 1987 brings little or no evidence regarding the unlike manifestations of urgent child vulnerabilities. It does not even mention words like *vagrancy*, *homelessness* or *delinquency*. However, the extremely critical tone of the Decree leaves little doubt as to the increasing seriousness of the problems associated with children left without proper or any parental follow up.

In fact, the secondary literature accessed suggests that the vulnerability of these children, at the point of time the Decree of 1987 was issued, definitely appeared also in the form of child vagrancy. For example, in *Psychical milieu-disadaptation of minors*, a study published in 1986, the Soviet researcher Almazov describes in detail the psychological motives of those children who are inclined to flee their homes. While noting that children from more advantaged milieus might escape their parents for various psychological or purely adventurous reasons, Almazov obviously recognises a link between social problems and the appearance of child vagrancy.

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<sup>252</sup> Quotation from the preamble to Decree No 872

<sup>253</sup> See preamble to Decree No 872

<sup>254</sup> Confer the aspect of the hypotheses (No 1 and 3) pertaining to the starting situation in 1987. Page 65-66.

<sup>255</sup> See preamble to Decree No 872.

It seems, however, that Almazov tends to downplay social problems as *the* causal factor in this regard, thus reflecting an ideological line that by 1986, before the onset of glasnost, obviously was not supposed to be crossed.<sup>256</sup> In any event, Almazov points at psychological, rather than material reasons for a child from a disadvantaged family to go on the run. According to Almazov, a child from this kind of milieu “not seldom flees home not because he is poorly fed or badly treated;” what the child allegedly feels burdensome is “to belong to a socially disadvantaged family.”<sup>257</sup>

When it comes to the scale and trend of the problem, Almazov evades any details, but suggests clearly that child vagrancy is much more than individual and separate incidents. In fact, he narrates a type of situation whereby children, finding together in a common feeling of discomfort with the condition in their homes, ultimately may end up as street children:

Spending their free time playing together, they “explore” all corners suitable for living (basements, garrets, dugouts, collectors for heating pipeline). The feeling of mutual support grows stronger between them. A decisive moment arrives when one of them faces a rapid deterioration of their family situation. The first escape “crushes” the psychological barrier keeping them from abandoning their homes, and the orientation of the children changes drastically. Minors start taking active steps in this direction, looking for new places of settlement. They establish contact with street children from other districts and undertake steps to secure financial means for their next escape (this time without any definite cause).<sup>258</sup>

An equally dramatic picture of the street-children situation of the pre-Gorbachev period is drawn by Nechayeva, polemicizing against the official view of the Brezhnev era implying that street children as a phenomenon “practically speaking did not exist”.<sup>259</sup> Nechayeva notes that “among stray children and youthful travellers” in the MVD reception and distribution centres, one could also meet minors “who had long forgotten about their own homes, spending their time anywhere and making a living through begging, prostitution and thefts.” As indicated by Nechayeva, the problem of child vagrancy and homelessness continued to exist, but it was diminished, as she puts it, “drawn into the shadow,” and was not dealt with seriously.<sup>260</sup> If this is a correct understanding, street children represented basically a marginal problem during the Brezhnev years. Consequently, most vagrant children were probably taken care of earlier or later by state services and offered alternative placement. Those who continued a life on the

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<sup>256</sup> Officially, child vagrancy had long since been eliminated. To state that there was a direct causal link between social problems of the Soviet reality and the fact that children preferred to take to the street would therefore probably have been too defying. (See discussions in Chapter 2, p. 16-22).

<sup>257</sup> Almazov, *Psikhicheskaiia sredovaia dezadaptatsia nesovershennoletnikh*. (Sverdlovsk University 1986), 87.

<sup>258</sup> Almazov, *Psikhicheskaiia sredovaia dezadaptatsia*, 88.

<sup>259</sup> Nechayeva, *Rossia i ieio deti*, 188, refers to an article by G.M. Min'kovkii, Soviet Pedagogical Encyclopaedia, Volume 1 (Moscow, 1969), 170.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

street and did not perish until they became adult *bomzh'y*,<sup>261</sup> were obviously so few that they did not create major challenges for authorities or the public.

A possible interpretation of Decree No 872 of 1987, including its dramatic calls for action to remedy an unacceptable situation, is therefore that the problem of juvenile vagrancy and delinquency, although not explicitly mentioned by the Decree,<sup>262</sup> by that time actually had grown to such an unacceptable level that more drastic actions had to be taken. Such a reading may find support in a research article of October 1987 by the Russian child-protection specialist, S.A. Belicheva. In her study, Belicheva presents findings from a study of the preventive work carried out by KDN in Tyumen city and Tyumen oblast in western Siberia. A key assumption of the research is that the “tendencies of increased crime among minors which is observed in individual regions of the county, included in Tyumen oblast” is a testimony of the “low effect of the educational-prophylactic work [of KDN]”.<sup>263</sup>

Another aspect of the Decree of 1987, with an obvious bearing on the hypotheses, is the fact that it was launched in the Soviet tradition of top-down national initiatives. Accordingly, and this is repeatedly emphasised throughout the Decree; it was the Party, by mobilising relevant state organs along with community players like Komsomol, the Labour unions, enterprises, the media, the intelligentsia, to mention but a few; who was to take the main responsibility to see that the set objectives of the Decree were achieved.

However, as shown in Chapter 2, involving various Party-subordinated community actors in child-protection work had for decades been the main methodology when addressing child welfare issues in the USSR. The problem was that by 1987, as Decree No 872 convincingly demonstrates, the established system did not respond to child-care challenges in an adequate manner. Moreover, there were signs already from the 1970s, that Party-led community services had “acquired a formalistic character.”<sup>264</sup> Nevertheless, Decree No 872 left little doubt that its endeavour to cope with the difficulties in child-care depended precisely upon a revitalisation of the Party-led mechanisms of social mobilisation.

With the benefit of hindsight, it is also evident that the issue of funding of the 1987 initiative was an extremely weak point. The Decree listed a wide range of measures that were

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<sup>261</sup> “Bomzhy. See also note 229.

<sup>262</sup> An official recognition of street children as a societal problem in a socialist society, more than three decades after the problem was officially eradicated, would probably in any event have been far beyond the limits of what Glasnost could tolerate.

<sup>263</sup> S.A. Belicheieva, “Rezervy sovershenstvovaniia deiatelnosti KDN,” *Sovietskoie gosudarvstvo i pravo*, No 9 (1987):13.

<sup>264</sup> Opinion of G.A. Novokshonova, a Russian Children’s Inspector and author of the dissertation “Analysis of the causes for negative factors in the upbringing in multi-child families,” expressed in an interview with Harwin in 1993. Quoted from Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 44.

to be carried out in order to *fundamentally* improve the obviously crisis-ridden Soviet child-care system.<sup>265</sup> Needless to say, success would require complex and huge investments. The funding schemes for the project were, however, not defined in detail. On the contrary, Decree No 872 calls for an increased role of Party-managed mobilisation mechanisms like *Communist Sobotniki*,<sup>266</sup> as well as “voluntary” contributions from state enterprises; including the method of using “*shefstvo*.”<sup>267</sup> All these forms of resource mobilisation were evidently only credible with a Party effectively in command of a network of subservient community organisations and other actors.

### Commissions for the Affairs of Minors, KDN

The Decree of 1987 definitely constitutes a major milestone in Soviet child care, suggesting a much more open and active attitude of the new Party leadership. Still there were several aspects of child protection that were left unmentioned.<sup>268</sup> In the context of the thesis, it is of particular significance that the central agency of Soviet child protection, the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors, KDN, is fully ignored by the Decree. Hence, as Gorbachev pushed ahead with his more radical reforms, Decree No 872 does not bring any direct evidence as to how KDN actually functioned. However, when taking into consideration the very poor performance appraisal the Decree gives of the various constituent parts of Soviet child care, one may, by extrapolation, conclude that KDN hardly could make up any exception in this regard.

Such a conclusion is also in line with the main findings in Belicheva’s referred article of 1987. Her study contains numerous observations of inadequate and ineffective methods used by KDN to detect, prevent and follow up cases of child neglect. Belicheva notes:

[KDN] did in practical terms not apply a differentiated approach when picking methods of exerting educational and prophylactic influence. What tends to predominate are verbal impacting, [such as] various forms of reprimands and scolding, often done in a tactless manner that is offending for both parents and children.<sup>269</sup>

Belicheva also criticises KDN for its lacking capacity beyond dealing with individual cases:

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<sup>265</sup> The decree mentions a number of measures that were required to improve different aspects in the life of institutionalised children, such as pedagogical methods utilised, nutrition, clothing, technical equipment, housing standards, leisure activities, health services, offered to the children, but also enhanced professionalism and working conditions for employees etc. See Decree No 872 of 1987, *Statutes of the Commissions*, articles 4-18.

<sup>266</sup> Decree No 872 of 1987, 20. (Sobotniki - days of volunteer work in the Soviet Union)

<sup>267</sup> Ibid. article 19 and 23b. Through the involvement of individuals, organisations or enterprises, the “*Shefstvo*” institute took other individuals or institutions under its patronage, providing guidance and material assistance.

<sup>268</sup> Interestingly, even the word “alcohol” does not appear a single time in the decree, regardless of the fact that the anti-alcohol campaign was still on-going and alcohol misuse was a major cause of child neglect.

<sup>269</sup> See Belicheva, “Rezervy sovershenstvovaniia deiatelnosti KDN,” 137.



[KDN] did find almost no space to its most important functions such as coordination and leadership of the entire system of early [child-neglect] prophylactics, including inspections [the inspections of the militia for juvenile affairs], schools, PTU [industrial technical secondary schools], enterprises, extra-curricular institutions etc.<sup>270</sup>

In the reviewed normative documents which cover the late Soviet period KDN as such seems to be fully ignored.<sup>271</sup> This does not imply that there was no legal activity in relation to organisational aspects of child-care services. One initiative with relevance to the working hypotheses is the new position of Children's School Inspector for the Protection of Childhood (hereinafter: children's inspector), introduced in a Decree by the USSR Ministry of Education in 1988, and promulgated in the Russian Soviet republic in July the same year by a circular letter from RSFSR Ministry.<sup>272</sup> The ministerial order announced that there should be at least one children's inspector for every raion (i.e. municipality), with one extra inspector for every 5000 child inhabitants (i.e. minors from 0 to 18 years of age) in the given raion.<sup>273</sup>

Among other things, the children's inspectors were assigned to "detect and secure placement of children left without parental care or in need of assistance from the state", that is, in the latter case when parents failed to "secure the necessary conditions for [their children's] upbringing and subsistence."<sup>274</sup> The children's inspectors were furthermore tasked with "attracting public inspectors for the protection of childhood," as well as with providing voluntary community workers with "methodological guidance and control."<sup>275</sup>

The implication for the hypotheses of this information is as follows: First, by strengthening the organisational set-up of social workers dealing with child neglect in families, the authorities signalled that the current child-care situation was not handled satisfactorily. Second, in the Decree of 1988 there was no mention of adjoining services involved in this field, in particular KDN; neither are the children's inspectors of the Militia, nor of the institute of public educators, referred to the above mentioned Decree No 21.<sup>276</sup> This

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<sup>270</sup> Ibid., 137.

<sup>271</sup> For the period 1987-1991, no legislative initiative related to KDN is mentioned in the survey of law sources in Y. Korchagina, *Administrativno-iuidiktсионнаиа деіател'ност' комиссії по делам несovershеннолетних*, Candidate dissertation in law (Omsk, Akademia MVD), 2002, 192-199. For more on Korchagina and her dissertation on the contemporary aspects of KDN, see below, p. 90-92 and 94.

<sup>272</sup> USSR Ministry of Education: *Statutes on School Inspectors*, Decree no 21, (Moscow, 16.02.1988, Circular letter of RSFSR Education Ministry, 08.06.1988, No 10-12/18. <http://pravo.levonevsky.org/baza/soviet/sssr1569.htm> (24.06.09)

<sup>273</sup> See decree No 21 of 1988, paragraph 1.2.

<sup>274</sup> See decree No 21 of 1988, paragraph 2.1. and 2.1.1

<sup>275</sup> "Public" signifies voluntary community workers. See decree No 21 of 1988, paragraph 1.6.

<sup>276</sup> The institute of public inspectors is briefly mentioned in Chapter 2, page 20. The role of the Inspectors on minors affairs of the militia are described in a decree by the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet "On the fundamental obligations and rights of the Inspections on Minors' Affairs," (Moscow 15 February 1977) [http://www.businesspravo.ru/Docum/DocumShow\\_DocumID\\_33365.html](http://www.businesspravo.ru/Docum/DocumShow_DocumID_33365.html). (24.12.07). Both categories of inspectors were part of the Party-led drive of the Brezhnev era to get child neglect under control.

might indicate a continued lack of coordination and holistic approach in the field of child protection.<sup>277</sup> Third, the effectiveness of the children's inspectors, as well as of virtually all Soviet-era social services working with risk-group children, was dependent on mobilisation of volunteers, in other words, of a continued functionality of the Party-led model.

In her quoted work, Judith Harwin, touches upon the Decree on the children's inspectors. Referring to an interview she had with the Principal Specialist in law of the RSFSR Ministry of Education, A.Z. Dzugaeva, Harwin conveys that by May 1991, "90 percent of all local authorities still only had between 1-2 professional inspectors and the push to expand above two officers was particularly unsuccessful."<sup>278</sup> To illustrate the discrepancy between the real, and the required, number of children's educators, Leningrad can be taken as an example. In 1991, there were living, a total of 1,112 600 minors in the 18 raions of the city, which represents approximately 62,000 minors per raion.<sup>279</sup> If the ratio of one inspector per 5000 child habitants had been observed, there should therefore have been 12 children's inspectors in each of the 18 raions.<sup>280</sup> There is no research on the real numbers of children's inspectors in Leningrad. However, if the city in this respect coincided with 90 percent of the rayons in Russia, there might have been one or two inspectors in these huge municipalities.

There is furthermore definitely no available information as to the extent to which the professional children's inspectors succeeded in attracting voluntary assistance in their work, such as their job description required. But if the assumption that Soviet voluntarism was bred and could only be maintained in an atmosphere of Party-imposed discipline is correct, the answer to such a question seems indeed self-evident.

When it comes to Gorbachev and his efforts within the area of child-neglect issues, credit should, arguably, first of all to be granted for making the concealed life of children's institutions and gloomy reality in at-risk families better known to the Soviet public.<sup>281</sup> As the discussion above indicates, the resultativeness appears, however, to be meagre in terms of legislative reforms with real impact on the way in which the Soviet child-care system was structured and run. Such a conclusion can clearly find support in Harwin's work: "[T]he pattern and organisation of services at local and central government level did not look very

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<sup>277</sup> Harwin refers several times to a characteristic "interagency fragmentation" in the Soviet child-care and – protection service. Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, e.g. 30, 57 and 9.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*, 91

<sup>279</sup> The figures are from: Komitet på delam sem'i, detstva i molodezhi; Gosudarstvennoe Uchrezhdenie – gororskoi centr "Sem'ia," *Analiticheskie materialy po problemam detei v Sankt-Peterburge v 1998 g.*, St Petersburg, 1999, 11.

<sup>280</sup> Whether or not 12 children's inspectors in a child and juvenile population of 62 000 were sufficient has not been possible to assess. With the growing child neglect of the period, the answer seems rather obvious.

<sup>281</sup> Building of the analyses of Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 64-74.

different at the end of the Gorbachev era from at the outset. The old structures remained in place, largely discredited, but as yet there was nothing new to put in their place.”<sup>282</sup>

### The 1990 Decrees on Income Security

In a context of a widening economic crisis, the Decree of April 1990 on benefits to child families is undoubtedly of interest as regards the working hypotheses.<sup>283</sup> To begin with, it should be emphasised that this normative document was issued by USSR’s Supreme Soviet; not with the participation of the CPSU Central Committee, as the Decree of 1987 had been. In itself, this might have marked a shift from an all-embracing Party rule, to a legitimation based on a legislature with at least a partial, popular mandate.<sup>284</sup> Moreover, neither in the April Decree nor in a follow-up order of November the same year,<sup>285</sup> there is any mentioning of mobilisation and involvement of community actors. With a view to the hypotheses, it should be noted that these facts corroborate an assumption that, by the time of the 1990 Decrees, Party-lead community work in the area of child welfare had significantly weakened or ceased to exist altogether.<sup>286</sup>

It is also interesting to observe that the discourse of the Decrees of 1990, when compared to the Decrees of 1987 analysed above, seems more modest and to-the-point. The typical Soviet ambitiousness in terms of achieving a *total* solution to the identified problem is toned down. However, in the introduction to the 1990 Decree, it appears that some of the declamatory style was kept. As the country plunged into an ever deeper political and economic chaos, and no feasible program for an exit from the crisis was in sight<sup>287</sup> Gorbachev’s administration wanted nothing less than “solving, within a short period of time, the most pressing problems of families, mothers and children,” as well as “enhancing the social protection of the least supplied child families.”<sup>288</sup> Yet, the task of keeping afloat the most crisis-ridden child families, did not appear to be *that* urgent. The April 1990 Decree

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<sup>282</sup> Harwin, *ibid.* 88-89.

<sup>283</sup> USSR Supreme Soviet: “On urgent measures to improve the situation for women, to protect motherhood and children, and to strengthen the family,” Decree No 1420, (Moscow, 10.04 1990). <http://nalog.consultant.ru/doc10633.html> (14.11.2008)

<sup>284</sup> In March 1989, the first partially multi-alternative elections to the top Soviet legislative body were conducted

<sup>285</sup> USSR Government “On the procedures for accessing and payment of certain entitlements, and changes and additions to the decisions of the USSR government on assistance to families with children,” Decree No 1177 (Moscow, 24.11. 1990). [http://www.innovbusiness.ru/pravo/DocumShow\\_DocumID\\_38488.html](http://www.innovbusiness.ru/pravo/DocumShow_DocumID_38488.html) (14.08.2008)

<sup>286</sup> This assumption is consistent with the March 1990 amendment to Art. 6 of the USSR Constitution of 1977. The revision placed the CPSU on equal footing with other political and societal actors “in forming the political realities and managing state and community affairs.” In terms of efforts towards risk-group children, this implied that the practice of Party-led community actors had lost its legal basis. USSR Supreme Soviet: *Law No 1360*, (Moscow, 14.03.1990). [http://www.constitution.garant.ru/DOC\\_1449448.htm#sub\\_para\\_N\\_10000](http://www.constitution.garant.ru/DOC_1449448.htm#sub_para_N_10000) (1.4.09)

<sup>287</sup> Confer Chap 3, e.g. p. 26.

<sup>288</sup> Quoted from the introduction to Decree No 1420 of April 1990.

actually granted the USSR government a period of no less than 6 months, regarding some of its elements up to 8 months, to present changes to existing legislation.<sup>289</sup>

The 1990 Decrees launched new allowances, a range of others were extended and upgraded in an apparent attempt to keep pace with the inflation, and, for the first time, Soviet benefits were pegged to minimum wages.<sup>290</sup> However, in spite of the somewhat elevated aim of “enhancing the social protection of the most vulnerable families,”<sup>291</sup> the 1990 initiatives seemed, realistically speaking, to be more like a reactive measure intending to compensate for the economic hardship that child families increasingly must have experienced.

Or to put the discussion directly into the context of the hypotheses: the 1990 Decrees could only contribute positively to the country’s overall child-protection balance sheet, if the measures prescribed actually improved the income security of families with children.<sup>292</sup> Conversely, if the Soviet government for various reasons failed to deliver, then the Decrees demonstrated that the enfeebled Soviet authorities in reality were without leverage in terms of containing the negative impact of the crisis on the most exposed risk-group children.

First, the effect of the Decrees was naturally dependent on the extent to which the target groups actually could access allowances they evidently were entitled to. Although no study is available on this aspect, some critical questions may be raised: E.g. for the category single-parents, the Decrees listed a number of general, as well as specific documentation requirement. In case of formal divorce between the spouses, the mother typically left with the children could probably, relatively and easily, produce attestation regarding her matrimonial status. But documents had also to be presented proving that alimony was in reality not being received from the former husband. Furthermore, if formal divorces became more frequent during the 1980s and later, the societal crisis definitely also brought about an increase in the number of fathers who just disappeared from their families, for never more to return. Therefore, in the typical Soviet-Russian atmosphere of bureaucratic arbitrariness, it could

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<sup>289</sup>Decree No 1420 of 1990, paragraphs 13 and 14.

<sup>290</sup> For example, on the birth of a child, a benefit equalling two times the minimum salary should be paid (Decree No 1177, Temporary Regulations, Part I, article 1.) ; mothers staying at home with children up to 1.5 years of age should receive allowances amounting to one minimum salary (Decree 1420, Part I. art. 1.); and for each child aged 1.5 – 6 years, 50 percent of min salary should be paid, but only if the average income per family member did not exceed twice the amount of a minimum salary (Decree No 1177, Temp. Reg., Part I, article 2. )

<sup>291</sup> Decree No 1420 of 1990, preamble.

<sup>292</sup> Without references or statistical data, Judith Haring promotes a rather optimistic assessment of the 1990 decrees, stating: “The benefit reform programme therefore was an essential buffer which did not so much improve family finances as prevent a rapid descent into a downward spiral of accelerating poverty, at a time when GDP had fallen sharply and inflation was rising very rapidly.” (Harwin, *Children of Russian state*, 93.)

indeed be a hard task to substantiate that you and your children actually were left without a breadwinner.<sup>293</sup>

Second, another unexplored aspect of the implementation of the 1990 Decree seems to be whether the narrowing financial latitude of the Soviet government really could allow for social benefits at a level that, as a minimum, could sustain the status quo in the household budget of a vulnerable child. With a plunging GDP, galloping inflation, as well as an increasing international indebtedness and budget deficits, this could not be an easy task.<sup>294</sup>

#### UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – the child neglect status of 1990-91

Under the circumstances prevailing after 1989, any legislative effort aimed at improving the country's child-care system must have suffered from lacking realism. One normative initiative of the late Gorbachev period must yet be mentioned. In June 1990 the USSR ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.<sup>295</sup> There is no documentation indicating that the Soviet adoption of the Convention, in response to the growing social challenges the country faced, had to do with a possible firm determination on the part of the authorities to secure an improved legal base for child protection.<sup>296</sup> On the other hand, the adoption of the Convention made Russian authorities formally accountable to the international community for their handling of child-welfare issues. Among other things, Russia had to submit reports, for submission to the UN, on the progress of the country's child-protection work towards the objectives of the Convention for the Rights of the Child.<sup>297</sup>

Although hardly resulting in any immediate and tangible improvements in Soviet child care, the Child Convention occasioned already in May 1990 (before it was formally ratified by the Supreme Soviet) certain law revisions which definitively are of interest for the assessment of the working hypotheses.<sup>298</sup> As a matter of fact, the revisions were evidently “also prompted by *the needs of the real life* [author's highlighting] when the number of children, associated with [issues under] the protection of the child's rights, grew by the

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<sup>293</sup> With the available information it can not be ascertained whether or to what extent a phenomenon well known from the post-Soviet reality also was relevant to the last Soviet years, namely that the socially deprived often are denied their due benefits as a result of insurmountable bureaucratic hurdles.

<sup>294</sup> The social benefits that had been granted by the USSR Supreme Soviet, “in competition with the Russian legislature,” (...) “[in 1991] surged beyond control by 80 percent in Russia.” Åslund, *Capitalist Revolution*, 68.

<sup>295</sup> The UN adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child and opened it for signature on 20.10. 1989.

<sup>296</sup> Rather than heralding a new era of societal resolve to enhance the level of child well-being in the country, the fact that the Convention was adapted by the Soviet Union at exactly this point of time had probably to do more with a Soviet desire to act in line with the majority international community.

<sup>297</sup> See also A. Likhachev et al (ed.) *Polozhenie Detei v Rossii 1992 g (Social'nyi Portret)*, Moscow (1993), a report issued by the Russian Children's Fond as per the UN Convention and supported by Russian authorities.

<sup>298</sup> “The first resonance of the Convention (...) was the USSR Law: *On amendments and additions to certain legislative acts of the USSR on issues related to women, family and childhood*,” USSR Law No 1501-1 (May 1990). <http://pravo.levonevsky.org/baza/soviet/sss0891.htm> (citation from Nechayeva, *Rossia i ieiio Detei*,152.)

day.”<sup>299</sup> One amendment to the Law of May 1990 assigned children the right to approach foster-care and guardianship authorities in case of parental abuse.<sup>300</sup> A second amendment - and this was obviously the more realistic option in case of grave child neglect - prescribed procedures for urgent removal of a child from her/his family “in extraordinary cases when the life and health of the child was directly threatened.”<sup>301</sup>

To restore the empirical observations that these amendments obviously were triggered by, and furthermore explore what the “needs of the real life” really were about, and how they could become so urgent; the remainder of the subsection will attempt to take stock of the broader child-neglect status in Russia as the Soviet era drew to an end.

In fact, there were several extremely negative developments in Soviet Russia of this period intimately associated with a deteriorated childhood environment. In the abovementioned report on the “Conditions for Children in Russia, 1992 (Social Portrait),<sup>302</sup> information is rendered on a number of aspects of children’s living conditions, mainly covering the late Soviet years. One of several indications of growing problems in this regard was the rise in juvenile crime since 1987.

*Table 5.1: Dynamics of registered crimes committed by minors.*<sup>303</sup>

1987	1988	1989	1990
116.000	133.000	163.000	166.000

The report on the conditions for Russian children emphasises, however, that criminal statistics covering the period can not be understood without due consideration of the phenomenon of latent crime.<sup>304</sup> According to the estimates of the report, the real level of juvenile crime is 2.5 to 3 times higher than in official statistics.”<sup>305</sup>

Clearly indicative of growing parental child neglect, including parental disinterest in their children’s whereabouts, are the comments of the report on the trends that juvenile crime had followed recently. One thing was that there had been an increase in the relative share of

<sup>299</sup> Nechayeva, *Rossia i ieiio deti*, 152.

<sup>300</sup> Law No 1501-1, Paragraph 18

<sup>301</sup> Law No 1501-1, Paragraph 19

<sup>302</sup> See note 296 above. Likhachov et al., *Polozhenie Detei v Rossii 1992 g.*, was published by the Scientific Institute of the Russian Children’s Fund. Established in 1987 as the Lenin Children’s Fund on a proposal of Decree No 872 of 1987 discussed above, the organisation aimed to raise the knowledge of, and mobilise support to vulnerable children. As stated in the preface to the report, it aimed at becoming a supplement to the state reports on the conditions of Russian children, to be submitted to UN.

<sup>303</sup> *Polozhenie Detei v Rossii 1992 g.*, 66.

<sup>304</sup> See also Chapter 4, p. 55,

<sup>305</sup> The report names a number of causes for latent crime in this regard. It indicates falling efficiency within Soviet public services as a main factor for the “huge latency in juvenile crime”. This is clearly, although cautiously, maintained in the following manner: “the reduction in the activity [of the militia ] in fighting juvenile [crime] increases the latent part [of crime] and reduces [its] registration.” *Ibid.*, 65.

younger age groups like 14-15 year-old children, girls included. Even more serious, however, was the character that juvenile crime had acquired, obviously over the past few years:

There is a steady increase in the number of crimes that are not of situational, but of intentional nature, having nothing to do with usual motivation of children (mischievous tricks, etc.), but nurtured by mature feelings: greed, cruelty, sadism, acerbated aggression, urge to get drugs, control certain territory, extremism, etc. Finally, adolescents have started committing new types of crimes which they did not practice before: weapon and drug dealing; brothel keeping, trading in prostitution; armed assaults and robbery of foreigners; kidnapping and other forms of blackmailing under aggravating circumstances; (...) <sup>306</sup>

Also Judith Harwin brings revealing evidence of a deteriorating situation in several Russian families over the Gorbachev years. By utilising unspecified information from an unpublished survey from the Russian Office of the Procuracy, Harwin discloses that “[s]uicide rates among minors were (...) rising, as were rates of child abandonment and child abuse.” <sup>307</sup> Furthermore, with reference to reports submitted to the RSFSR Council of Ministers, <sup>308</sup> Harwin notes that the number of missing children, an indicator obviously including cases of runaway children, increased from 20 200 in 1985 to 33 700 in 1989. <sup>309</sup>

That child and juvenile vagrancy and homelessness, the ultimate degree of not only parental neglect, but also *societal* neglect of children, had become an everyday and permanent occurrence in Russian cities in the course of the very few years, is plainly established by the referred report “Conditions for Russian Children, 1992.”

The crises that have emerged in the society have a tremendous impact on families, (...). All this nurtures social abandonment. Over the past two-three years, the notion of “social orphanhood” has acquired new features and resulted in a new category of outcasts, the waifs. These are children who, for various reasons, have escaped from their families and boarding institutions. For large cities located on the cross-roads of social and national conflicts, such “gavroches” represent a complex problem. <sup>310</sup> For example, officials of Saint-Petersburg Mayor’s Office know 500 addresses where such runaways can be spotted at any time. <sup>311</sup>

The data cited in the preceding paragraphs provides indisputable evidence of an increasing incidence of child neglect in the late Soviet society. At the same time, however, there are also available indicator values that, under “normal” circumstances, should have resulted in diametrically opposite conclusions. This is illustrated in the following table.

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<sup>306</sup> *Polozhenie Detei v Rossii 1992 g.*, 66.

<sup>307</sup> Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 89

<sup>308</sup> The reference to the survey by the Office of the Procuracy is comprised in a report submitted to the RSFSR government by the researchers Belacheva and Fomin. The latter report was been accessed by Harwidn *ibid.*

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>310</sup> “Gavroche” (French), a child character in Victor Hugo’s *Les Miserables*. Associated with the character of a waif.

<sup>311</sup> See. *Polozhenie Detei v Rossii 1992 g.*, 36.

*Table 5.2: Indicators of societal intervention related to child neglect, as well as new cases of children left without parental care.*<sup>312</sup>

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Parents deprived of their parental right	16.700	11.700	8.100	6.100	5.900	6.400
Parents on police register due to “negative influence on their children”	216.500	188.900	168.800	154.100	137.500	120.400
Children removed from their parents without deprivation of parental rights				1400	1500	1500
New notifications of children left without parental care	60.500					49.100

If the period 1985-1990 is taken as a whole, Table 5.2 demonstrates a development whereby fewer mothers and fathers were deprived of their parental rights, and fewer saw their children removed from them without court rulings. According to the table, also a declining number of parents were supervised by the police, and there were fewer children in 1990, than in 1985, that effectively were left without parental care and follow up. Theoretically, all these indicators suggest that the underlying child-neglect problems underwent a positive development. Only one indicator, the number of parents deprived of their parental right, bears witness to a deteriorating child-neglect environment after 1989.

For sure, the reduced indicator values registered over the years 1985 – 1988 might partially be explained in light of real improvements that took place in families following the decreased drinking, that the anti-alcohol campaign brought about. As discussed in Chapter 4, the effects of this campaign were, however, soon lost. For the period after 1987, the official figures rendered in Table 5.1 bear a convincing testimony of a dramatically deteriorated child-neglect environment. If one in addition takes into consideration the dimension of latent crime, which, during these years, evidently increased in parallel with the erosion of the existing system; one will arrive at much higher crime rates. Consequently, the real level of child neglect was correspondingly higher than reported in statistics. As also documented in this chapter, these were years when street children eventually became a more manifested part of the interior of Russian cities.

Hence, there is an obvious discrepancy between, on the one hand, the data of Table 5.2., most of which are actually suggesting an improved child-neglect development over the period 1985-1990; and, on the other hand, the empirically based picture outlined in the preceding paragraphs, verifying that the opposite actually was the case.

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<sup>312</sup>The table is compiled on the bases of information Harwin has obtained from an internal report submitted in to the RSFSR Cabinet of Ministers 1991 by Belicheva/Fokin. See Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 89-90.



Harwin suggests three sets of explanations for the apparent paradox of a lower state intervention and community involvement, as well as fewer children on record as needy, in a situation where, in reality more children and minors actually were in need of assistance. The last of the three is immediately dismissed by Harwin, namely that children were looked for through charity instead of by the state. In her opinion this was “very unlikely,” since the non-governmental sector was “still embryonic and in no position to take any serious inroads into the extent of unmet child need.”<sup>313</sup> The two other causal explanations that Harwin offers, i.e. that “agencies were carrying out their child welfare and protection obligations less efficiently”, and that “agencies [were] less interventionist as part of a deliberate policy shift emphasising diversion from state care,”<sup>314</sup> seems to the author of the thesis to bring much clarity in the causality of the situation described above, although certain modifications and additions are required.

To take the last model first, Harwin suggests that a reduced state interventionism had to do with officials averting committals of neglected children to state care arrangements. She does herself, however, immediately turn this hypothesis down as “speculative” in view of lack of any documentary evidence. According to Harwin, there was no indication that children’s inspectors or others involved avoided to proceed in neglect cases in fear of seeing children ending up in inadequate orphanages, which, as a result of the “glasnost campaign [that had been carried out] on the major deficiencies in residential care,” evoked negative associations.<sup>315</sup>

Secondly, there is obviously a missing link in Harwin’s approach. She appears to be clearly supportive of the hypothesis that the growing manifestation of child neglect was associated with agencies becoming less efficient. But Harwin seems to base her approval of this explanation exclusively on the fact that the state, represented by children’s inspectors appearing in smaller number than planned (conf. the discussion on page 73 on Decree No 21 of 1988), did not manage to detect and arrange for a sufficient number of children who were grossly neglected by their parents.

In view of the above, Harwin must have ignored at least two important circumstances: The Soviet system had in the post-war years had at its disposal a huge pool of Party-managed agencies and other community actors involved in detecting and following-up of neglected children. (Confer the up to nine million volunteer social workers of the 1970s that Harwin

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<sup>313</sup> Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 91.

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>315</sup> All citations in the paragraph taken from Harwin, *ibid.*

indicates; see page 20 above.) It does therefore not give sense to focus only on the failing capacity of one of several actors as *the* explanatory factor for the breakdown in the surveillance of at-risk families by community agencies.

The dismal child-neglect reality of the late Soviet era, including the failure of the society to take action, is obviously nothing but a testimony of the entire Soviet child-care system in full disarray. In fact, earlier in her study on Russian children and the state, Harwin had indicated the obviously fundamental causes of the emerging crisis. Reviewing the set-up of family support and surveillance that existed in the USSR of the 1970s and early 1980s, she notes that the “system was provided through state and social agencies and was closely interlinked to the Party.” She also explains: “The influence of the Party was one of the most striking features of the child-care system and it was still intact in the early 1980s.”<sup>316</sup>

To continue where Harwin stops, and thereby largely summing up the discussions pertaining to the two working hypothesis on the first subperiod (1987-1991) of the thesis: The Party quickly lost strength and soon abdicated altogether. At the same time, following the disintegration of the economy, the pressure on at-risk families increased. Very soon, the child protection system, in this study represented by the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors, was therefore left without the Party, which, with its sticks and carrots, had kept the whole machinery together. In sum, the empirical analyses of the chapter have documented an increasing mismatch between the growing needs of vulnerable children for protection and assistance by the society (i.e., increased child-neglect scale), on the one hand, and the decreasing intervention offered by the society (i.e. reduced KDN capacity), on the other.

### **The subperiod 1991 to 1996**

The manifested appearances of child neglect, and the obvious failure of the declining *Ancien Régime* to handle the situation, definitely point towards a sharpening of the statements of either of the hypothesis on the subperiod 1987-1991. Evidently, the starting point for post-Soviet Russia within the area of child care and child protection must therefore have been extremely unfavourable: As the country headed towards the post-Soviet economic and organisational precipice, the child-neglect situation got increasingly out of control. The ability of the Russian society to provide cushion in terms of absorbing an increased pressure on children’s wellbeing, if this was to happen, had dwindled significantly.

As an additional documentation of the critical situation in Russia at the point of intersection between Soviet and post-Soviet order, an article by the Russian child researcher

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<sup>316</sup> All citations in the paragraph taken from Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 43.

I.F. Dementieva should be mentioned. Published in the September 1991 issue of *Sotsiologicheskie Issledovaniia* (Sociological Studies), the article “Orphans – Problems of Survival”, among other things, provides a contemporary view of what is expected from the imminent, radical economic reforms. Dementieva focuses on the growing number of children who had become orphans over the last decades. She emphasises, however, that the current growth, contrary to earlier waves of orphans, was characterised by the fact that only five percent of the orphans actually were without parents. The causes for the social orphanhood are said to be alcoholism, drug addiction, “parasitism” (*tuneyadstvo*), as well as an increasing number of mothers abandoning their children to state institutions. Dementieva predicts an immediate, further deterioration resulting from the “forthcoming cardinal changes in the economy (introduction of market relations, privatisation etc.)” In particular, she expects that price rises will have significant impact on disadvantaged people, “pushing them beyond the poverty line.” In turn, this will lead to “a fall in people’s moral standard and norms,” prompting increased criminality and violence with an ensuing rise in the number of children abandoned as well as of parents deprived of their parental rights.<sup>317</sup>

However, Dementieva makes clear that the degree to which such consequences will appear will depend on “how thoroughly legislative acts on the transition to new economic conditions will be considered.” She concludes on this account: “A balanced and holistic (*vsestoronni*) analysis of the indicated social side effects is required.”<sup>318</sup>

### Child poverty

One general assumption of the study is that when Russian authorities introduced measures aiming to remedy poverty, this was prompted not only by a general perception of increased poverty (that is, linked to phenomena such as economic decline, unemployment, falling purchase power etc.), but also by observations of an increased incidence of child neglect. The author therefore regards legislative activities in this field as a response also to evolving child-neglect phenomena like child abuse, child runaways, vagrancy and delinquency.

With the evidence of a dramatic deterioration of both the general and concrete aspects of poverty towards the end of the Soviet period, any Russian government would have to undertake normative initiatives within the area of income security and poverty relief. The following discussion will focus on these normative schemes as well as on their impact, or possibly lack thereof, on the evolving child-neglect situation in the Russia. This will

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<sup>317</sup> I.F. Dementieva, “Deti-siroty: problemy vyzhivaniia.” *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia* 9 (1991), 73.

<sup>318</sup> Dementieva, *ibid.*

contribute to bringing more clarity in terms of the further trajectory that the problem child-neglect scale followed, as the country embarked on its path of radical societal transition.

Child poverty was a major challenge, which the upcoming Russian regime attempted to address, while still entangled in a dual power struggle with Gorbachev's faltering central power of the USSR.<sup>319</sup> On the eve of the system change, the Russian government was in such a precarious position that it evidently could not provide for the most basic needs of large segments of Russian children. This is illustrated by a Decree related to the nutritional status of infants, promulgated by the RSFSR government in June 1991:

In the Russian Federation an increasing number of children are in need of supplementary feeding or breast-milk substitute. According to information from the RSFSR Health Ministry, of the 2.2 million children that are born annually, 60 percent have health deviations. The supply of child nutrition under 3 years has to be improved without delay.<sup>320</sup>

Needless to say, the situation did not change for the better with the sharp economic downturn throughout 1991, and, not least, following the launching of the Shock Therapy in January 1992. By that time fully in charge of the situation in Russia and doubtlessly observing the impact on the population (not least on children) of own policies, Boris Yeltsin, in a presidential Decree of June 1992, instructed the Government and executive organs country-wide to prioritise the task of "securing survival, protection and development of children." The Russian leader also requested executive authorities at all levels "to take into consideration foreign-currency and raw-material resources when budgeting for the development of production of child-related goods, investment in construction works, as well as for other tasks [related to children]."<sup>321</sup>

A governmental Decree of August the same year followed up and concretised the aforesaid presidential Decree. However, by changing the accent from *developing and investing* in production of children's goods to *purchasing* medicaments and food internationally,<sup>322</sup> the governmental Decree implicitly demonstrated lack of feasibility of Yeltsin's initial scheme. On the other hand, amidst enormous budget deficits, foreign debts

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<sup>319</sup>To what extent the initiatives taken in this respect by the -led RSFSR government represented genuine efforts to improve children living conditions or whether it also had to do with political games aimed at further discrediting of political adversaries, goes naturally beyond this thesis to analyse.

<sup>320</sup> RSFSR Government, *State Programme to develop the child nutrition industry of the RSFSR for the period 1991-1995*. Decree No 70 (Moscow 31.01.1991), the citation is from the preamble to the decree. <http://infopravo.by.ru/fed1991/ch02/akt12064.shtm> (6.6.09)

<sup>321</sup> President of Russia, *On priority tasks for the realisation of the World declaration of securing survival, protection and development of children in the 1990s*. Decree No 543 (1.06.1992, Moscow), article 2. <http://www.pravoteka.ru/pst/1037/518462.html> (4.6.09)

<sup>322</sup> RSFSR Government, *On urgent measures to improve the situation for children in the Russian federation*, Governmental Decree no 610 (Moscow, 21.08.1992), action point 4.

and a virtually unrestrained rent seeking,<sup>323</sup> the Russian government can itself hardly have seriously assessed the realism of its own intention to secure the necessary currency resources for the purposes listed in its own Decree. Besides, by instructing regional authorities in all corners of Russia to “define categories of families who are in urgent need of supplies of foodstuffs, specific child items, medicaments and hygienic material”, as well as to ensure that these families “were catered for accordingly”, the Decree of June 92 reflects an increasing desperation in the handling of the child-poverty situation in Russian families.<sup>324</sup>

Three years on, as the poverty widened, the “Law on state allowances for citizens having children” was signed, opening for at least nominally more comprehensive benefits for child families.<sup>325</sup> According to the Law, the cut-off point for regular allowances was raised from one and a half year to 16 years for working youth, and to 18 years for youth under education, offering families with children within this age interval an allowance per child equalling 70 percent of a minimum wage. Single parents would receive 50 percent more.<sup>326</sup>

With Russian state finances in growing disarray, and with the official ideology preaching budget balancing, the very fact that the government introduced costly reforms, like the abovementioned, says itself probably much about of the character of the exacerbated poverty, including increased child neglect. However, the question is whether allowances in the order of 70 percent of a minimum wage would make much of a difference to unemployed families without other sources of income.<sup>327</sup> And furthermore, was actually the Russian government in a position to honour the entitlements it had granted to child families!

Interestingly enough, the Russian authorities provided largely themselves answers to questions like the ones indicated above. Of crucial importance in this regard is the normative document *Fundamental directions of the state social politics on improving the situation for children in the Russian Federation until the year of 2000 (National plan for the interest of children)*, published in September 1995, (below referred to as *National Plan* or *Plan*).<sup>328</sup> As

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<sup>323</sup> Anders Åslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution*, 116, estimates rent seeking at the middle of 1992 at about 80 percent of GDP. See also Chap. 3 of this thesis, page 38.

<sup>324</sup> Governmental Decree No 610 of 1992, action point 6

<sup>325</sup> State Duma, *Federal Law on Law on state allowances for citizens having children*, Law No 81-F, (Moscow, 19.05.1995), <http://nalog.consultant.ru/doc6659> (8.6.09)

<sup>326</sup> See Law on state allowances, chapters 15, 16 and 17

<sup>327</sup> Confer Harwin's reading of a draft law of 1994 “On social services to the population”. The bill comprised a proposal that poor families, the elderly and infirm, should receive certain free services if their income was *less than 4 times* the level of minimum wages. Harwin's laconic comments to this are that “this probably [is] best seen as an acknowledgement of the low level of minimum wages”. Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 118

<sup>328</sup> President of Russia: *Fundamental directions of the state social politics on improving the situation for children in the Russian Federation until the year of 2000 (National action plan for the interest of children)*, Decree No 942, (Moscow, 14.09.1995), point 3.2. [http://www.businesspravoru/Docum/DocumShow\\_DocumID\\_34379.html](http://www.businesspravoru/Docum/DocumShow_DocumID_34379.html) (5.5.2009)

background for the numerous objectives it set and measures it launched, the Plan offers apparent comprehensive and holistic analysis of the widening child-welfare crisis in the country.<sup>329</sup> The *National Plan* is therefore interesting as a point of orientation in the further assessment of post-Soviet normative initiatives and their bearing on the hypotheses.<sup>330</sup>

In particular, the *National Plan* provides an appraisal of the effect of the normative initiatives visited above, for example of the programme on developing an industry for child nutrition. The status on the measures associated with the attempts to “solve the problems of child food industry” is summarised in the following way: “There is a serious gap between declamatory measures and the unsatisfactory level of their realisation.”<sup>331</sup>

The *National Plan* makes equally critical remarks as regards the effect of previous legislative initiatives in the area of support provision to child families. In particular it mentions the “Law on state allowances for citizens having children,” which, according to the *Plan*, in fact had formalised regulations in place already since 1.1.1994.<sup>332</sup> Concretely mentioning the allowance of 70 percent of a minimum wage for each child below 16 years and the topping with an additional 50 percent for single mothers, the Plan, however, states: “in a number of regions the payment of allowances are made with considerable delays, which negatively impacts the current income in families.”<sup>333</sup>

Benefitting from more data available, Nechayeva, in the 2001 study *Russia and its Children (Child, Law and State)*, offers further details on the indeed limited reach the child allowances turned out to have. Noting that a “first-glance” impression might have been that there was a “tangible” support to minors in Russia, Nechayeva furthermore asserts that this was only “seemingly”. She sets forth: “In practical terms it [i.e. the support] doesn’t give anything; by 01.01.97 the average amount of support provided per child represented 14 percent of the minimum subsistence level, and the amount per single-parent child was 21,4 percent.” She adds that the “miserable allowances” in reality were paid with great delays in

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<sup>329</sup> The *National Plan* evaluates critically the status of and interrelation between six overall child-care directions: strengthening of the legal basis for childhood issues; support to family as the natural environment for ensuing living condition for children; guaranteeing a safe motherhood and safeguarding of children’s health; improvement of children’s nutrition; securing children’s upbringing, education and development; support to children who lives in especially difficult circumstances. National plan, point 3.4

<sup>330</sup> It goes without saying that in a subservient tradition like the Russian, ministerial assessments of societal problems of the type the National Plan offers can hardly be suspected of exaggerating existing negative trends.

<sup>331</sup> *National Plan*, point 3.4.

<sup>332</sup> *National Plan*, point 1.

<sup>333</sup> The percentage is according to the National plan, point 1. (According to UNICEF, “*Transmonee 2007 Features, data and analysis on the lives of of children in CEE/CIS and Baltic Countries*”. Florence 2007, p 38 and p 48, there was in 1995 a child population of 38, 6 million. Of these were 0.43 million in residential care.

several Russian regions: “Per 1.1. 1998, the indebted payment amounted to 15.3 billion roubles (which constitutes 87 percent of the annual allowance payments).”<sup>334</sup>

A bureaucratically cautious, but yet unambiguous characterisation made by the *National Plan* of the attempts by the Russian government to improve social welfare provisions to destitute families may recapitulate this subsection: “The process of establishing a new social guarantee, and mechanisms for its realisation, are not keeping up with the tempo of the economic transformations [of the country], thereby increasing the social vulnerability of families, in particular of the children.”<sup>335</sup> Hence, the government acknowledged that its own attempts, which largely had been motivated from an intention to mitigate the widening child-neglect problems in Russia, could not even modify the increasingly negative trend in this regard.

#### Deviant behaviour among minors

As ever more families were detrimentally affected by the economic reforms, a growing number of parents, along with their children, faced insurmountable problems.<sup>336</sup> Or as the *National Plan* sums up after almost four years of reforms: “a severe contradiction has arisen between the necessity of securing normal live activities and development of each child, and the inadequate economic possibilities of the majority of families.”<sup>337</sup>

Meanwhile, many children therefore developed deviant behaviour patterns as a reaction to poverty, alcoholism, violence and abuse. For example, in the course of only one year from 1992 to 1993, in an atmosphere of increasing latent crime and shrinking capacity of the police; the number of minors detained for crime, offences and vagrancy, and then placed in the reception–distribution centres of the militia, nevertheless rose from 35.500 to 59.000.<sup>338</sup>

The Russian state had evidently to do something in response to growing juvenile deviant behaviour and its immediate root cause, i.e. parental neglect. Against this background the Presidential Decree of September 1993 must be understood. In the Decree, Yeltsin, among other things, called for the creation of specialised institutions for minors in need of social rehabilitation, including new type of institutions for juvenile delinquents.<sup>339</sup> Besides, the

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<sup>334</sup> All citations in the paragraph from Nechayeva: *Rossia i ieiio deti*, 156.

<sup>335</sup> *National Plan*, point 3.2.

<sup>336</sup> In an interview with Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 123, the chief administrator of Moscow oblast, A.I. Morozov, argues that, with the price liberalisation, even regular working families could not cope anymore: “no matter how hard [they] worked, [their] income was still below the state minimum.”

<sup>337</sup> *National Plan*, point 3.2

<sup>338</sup> Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 127, refers in an unspecified fashion to a certain “Annual State Report, 1994”. For the thesis, it has not been possible to get access to the report Harwin refers to.

<sup>339</sup> President of Russia, *On prevention of juvenile vagrancy (beznadzornost) and delinquency of minors, and protection of their rights*, Decree No 1338 (Moscow, 6.09.1993), point 3a.

government was instructed to present, within three months, legislative projects for new social services and the mentioned rehabilitation centres.<sup>340</sup>

Translated into the realm of the hypotheses, Decree No 1338 confirmed that the authorities, by 1993, had not managed to develop capacities to handle the rising caseload of children in urgent need of alternative placement. Hence, there were children on the street that the society was not able to take care of. Furthermore, the government recognised that the legal base for child protection had not kept pace with the changes taking place in society.

As to the actual effect of Decree No 1338 of 1993, the Nation Plan again offers essential information. Although with a degree of prudence characterising the Decree of 1993 as a “principally new approach to protection of the rights of children who find themselves in a particular difficult situation,” the National Plan, in the same breath, nevertheless states that “the practical result of the measures undertaken by the state to halt negative processes within the child environment are insufficient.” The plan sets forth: “[T]he potentially effective forms of assistance to these children are only embryonic and require great attention as well as support in terms of financing and personnel.”<sup>341</sup>

A far more clear-cut statement on the existence of *beznadzornost* (child vagrancy) than in the Decree No 1338 of 1993 can be found in Decree No 1696 of 1995, “On the presidential programme *Children of Russia*” of 1995. In this document the precarious status of large segments of the child population, but also the causality between poverty and vagrancy, are indeed asserted straightforwardly:

Children’s nutritional status has become deteriorated; their access to extra-curricular education, culture and adequate holiday has been slashed. Child vagrancy (*beznadzornost*), crime and narcomania are on the rise. The problem of social orphanhood is deteriorating; the majority of contemporary orphans are the children who have been abandoned by their parents.<sup>342</sup>

In 1995, one year after the programme *Children of Russia* was launched, the *National Plan* presents more concrete material, statistically confirming the deteriorated situation for children at risk. The document provides in particular official figures, for the period 1991-1994, on the annual growth in the number of children below 18 years left without parental care. As appears from the table below, there were in 1994 a total of 446 000 of these kids of Russia. Evidently, there was a steep rise in the number of children who, at least according to official statistics, could be forced to live on the streets, if they were not taken care of, by the society: Only from

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[http://www.businesspravo.ru/Docum/DocumShow\\_DocumID\\_64876.html](http://www.businesspravo.ru/Docum/DocumShow_DocumID_64876.html) (8.7.09)

<sup>340</sup> Decree no 1338 of 1993, point 3c

<sup>341</sup> All quotation in the paragraph are from the *National Plan*, point 3.6.

<sup>342</sup> President of Russia, *On the presidential programme “Children of Russia”*, Decree No 1696, (Moscow 18.08.1994), see attachment *Fundamental Principles*. [www.mon-pit.ru/storage/documents/general/16/ukaz\\_ot\\_18\\_08\\_1994.doc](http://www.mon-pit.ru/storage/documents/general/16/ukaz_ot_18_08_1994.doc) (23.6.09)



1993 to 1994, a total of 102.000 minors become socially or otherwise orphaned, a number that represented almost a fourth part of the total number of children left without parental care.<sup>343</sup>

Table 5.3: Newly registered children left without parental, annual figures<sup>344</sup>

1985	...	...	1990 <sup>345</sup>	1991	1992	1993	1994
60.500			49.100	59.000	67.000	83.000	102.000

How many of these children who actually became manifested street children is not known. However, when comparing the information in Table 5.3 with the survey of the evolving capacity of the Russian society to take care of children who for various reasons were left without parents (see Table 5.4. below), it becomes evident that, even with the official figures in mind, a growing number of children had no other alternative but live on the streets.

Table 5.4. Annual alternative placement capacity of children left without parental care<sup>346</sup>

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Total placement capacity	100	99	96	98	102	109	116	123

Table 5.4 documents that from 1989 until 1991, in a period when the socio-economic situation in Russia rapidly deteriorated, the number of children actually accommodated in various residential institutions or in host families, actually sank. Subsequently, from 1991 to 1996, the total alternative placement capacity slowly grew, but at a completely different pace than the officially registered growth in new cases of children left without parental care.

The National Plan does not confront the rising number of deviant children with the relative decrease of Russia’s capacity to take care of its own children. Yet the National Plan does offer interesting explanations regarding the direct causal relationship between the way in which the transition in Russia was conducted and the growing child-welfare crisis in the country. In particular, the Plan points at the “abrupt change of social stereotypes and transformation of moral values,” which, in combination with “objectively deteriorated life conditions for the majority population,” had prompted a “surge in [cases of ] psycho-emotional overload.” In turn, this had caused “widened crisis phenomena in the family” characterised by:

abrupt growth in the social disadaptation of children, their early alcoholisation and drug and alcohol addiction, amoral behaviour and delinquent actions; intensifying of the problem of social orphanhood; re-emergence of child *besprizornost* [genuine child homelessness] as a social phenomenon; a threatening growth in child and juvenile delinquency; as well as a growth in the

<sup>343</sup> National Plan”, point 3.6  
<sup>344</sup> The table is compiled by using 1991-1994 figures indicated in ”The National Plan”, article 3.6  
<sup>345</sup> The 1985 and 1990 figures were also presented in Table 5.2 on page 80 above.  
<sup>346</sup> Table 5.4 is put together by combining UNICEF statistics on the rate of children in various care arrangements (per 100,000 population aged 0-17). See Annex VI to the thesis, page 131.

number of children who have become victims of criminal harassment, exploitation and sexual violence.<sup>347</sup>

### Commissions for the Affairs of Minors (KDN)

The 1992 Law on Education of 1992 comprises, inter alia, provisions on how the educational system shall handle matters related to children with deviant behaviour or otherwise requiring particular attention in terms of corrective measures.<sup>348</sup> The Law prescribes in detail under what circumstances pupils can be expelled from schools, and who in that case are responsible for deciding the further placement of such children.<sup>349</sup> Furthermore, the Law clearly states that minors above 11 years, having demonstrated “deviant behaviour” and committed “public dangerous” crimes, could be placed in special learning and upbringing institutions “only upon court decisions.”<sup>350</sup>

Remarkably, the Commissions on the Affairs of Minors is neither mentioned in the paragraphs referred to here, nor in the entire course of this law. However, according to the non-repealed Decree on KDN of 1967, KDN was indeed responsible for coordinating also educational authorities in cases involving particularly “difficult” children who, due to deviant behaviour, were in need of special follow up, and ultimately, alternative placement.<sup>351</sup>

It is true that the wide powers entrusted to KDN in this regard had been criticised earlier, for example, by a specialist commission appointed by the RSFSR government in 1990.<sup>352</sup> But nothing suggests that KDN’s prerogative to make decisions on placement matters had been formally revoked by 1992, when the Law on Education was promulgated, or for that case at any point of time during the reign of Yeltsin. A major study devoted to the contemporary “administrative-judicial” functions of KDN (actually the only research work on KDN identified in addition to the abovementioned article of 1988 by Belicheva), i.e. the 2002 Candidate’s Law Dissertation by Yekaterina Korchagina of the Omsk MVD Academy, is very clear on this account. Already in the introduction, Korchagina states that, by 2002, there had not been carried out any revision of KDN, allegedly leaving the institute out of step with the reforms at state level of the Russian society. According to Korchagina this had given reason

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<sup>347</sup> *National Plan*, point 3.6.

<sup>348</sup> Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, On education, Law No 3266-1, (Moscow, of 10.07.1992) <http://www.urkom.ru/Article.aspx?ID=65> (23.03.09)

<sup>349</sup> Pupils above 14 years, who repeatedly committed “unlawful actions” and grossly violated the statutes of the given educational institution, could be excluded from and referred to other institutions in agreement with the parents of the child. Interestingly, local municipalities, in cooperation with the parents, were obliged to identify job or a new school places for the expelled pupil. (Conf. Chapter II, educational system, article 19, point 11).

<sup>350</sup> Law “On education”, (Chapter V, article 50, point 11).

<sup>351</sup> See KDN statutes, e.g. Article 9. [http://www.innovbusiness.ru/pravo/DocumShow\\_DocumID\\_36453.html](http://www.innovbusiness.ru/pravo/DocumShow_DocumID_36453.html)

(see also discussion of the KDN statutes on p. 18-19 above).

<sup>352</sup> The commission (the Temporary Academic Research Committee) argued that KDN had to “be phased out since it violated the principles of natural justice by having power to send children to closed institutions without a court hearing.” Cited from Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 82

for “well-based doubt” as to the “legitimacy” (*dopustimost*) of KDN to apply “measures of state coercion against minors and their parents.”<sup>353</sup>

The fact that KDN is completely omitted in the Law on Education might raise the question whether Russian lawmakers, by 1992, at all reckoned with the existence of KDN. Furthermore, if this was the case, the reason might well have been that KDN was perceived as inactive; possibly in conjunction with a view by the immediate post-Soviet authorities that KDN was a moribund relict of the former system.

However, in the discussed Presidential Decree (No 1338 of 1993) on prevention of child vagrancy (*beznadzornost'*) and juvenile delinquency, KDN was definitely mentioned. The post-Soviet authorities assigned nothing less than the overall coordinating role for the child protection to the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors, thus confirming a status of KDN, which, in its level of ambition, equalled the one KDN had in Soviet times.<sup>354</sup>

In strictly legal terms, however, there should have been no necessity to publish a Decree like No 1338 of 1993, stating the continued validity of the Soviet statutes of KDN. As said, the legislation on KDN had in fact never been repealed. On the other hand, if KDN in practical terms largely had discontinued its work or only functioned to a limited degree, and if child-neglect phenomena increasingly caused problems for the post-Russian authorities as well as for the society at large; a reminder of the existence of KDN to local and regional executive authorities must indeed have been pertinent.

Presidential Decree No 1338 of 1993 instructed furthermore the Russian government to prepare, within three months' time, a legislative bill to the Russian parliament on amendments and additions to the 1967-statutes of the KDN.<sup>355</sup> This is noteworthy at least for two reasons: First, the fact that the KDN statutes yet by 1993 had not been revised to better cope with the growing mass child-neglect problems, witnesses of a very limited *de facto* role of KDN at least over the past few years. As repeatedly underlined, KDN had been specially tailored for the Soviet societal design. This included extensive involvement of the multitude of Party-led societal actors in child protection work, a resource that evidently was defunct by the time of the 1993 Decree. An unreformed and unreconstituted KDN was therefore

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<sup>353</sup> See Yekaterina Korchagina, *Administrativno-iuridiksiomaga deiatel'nost' kommissii po delam nesovershennoletnikh.*” Candidate Dissertation in Law, (Omsk, MVD Academy, 2000), 4.

<sup>354</sup> The Decree leaves perhaps a certain degree of ambiguity in terms of the real role of KDN by stating: “KDN, along with the state organ for guardianship; the ministries of Social Protection, Education, Health, Internal Affairs; the Employment Service; and other organs and institutions;” are to carry out preventive work “within the frames of their respective competences” (Article 1). On the other hand, the Decree maintains the traditional leading role of the Commissions, assigning to KDN the coordination of all involved state actors at central and regional level in their efforts to prevent *beznadzornost'* and juvenile delinquency (Decree 1338/1993, Article 2).

<sup>355</sup> Decree No 1338 of 1993, article 4c.

definitively out of tune with the post-Soviet realities and could not be capable to cope with the dramatically increased and different child-neglect challenges.

Second, by instructing the government to urgently revise the statutes on KDN, the Decree provides evidence to a contention that there had not been in place any functioning monitoring system of the evolving child-neglect situation. That is, the Russian authorities had paid little attention to the evolving child-neglect crisis, and were, so to speak, caught by surprise. If this had not been the case, a response strategy would have been gradually developed in parallel with the changing circumstances, and no legal-base urgency in terms of review and reassertion of the role of KDN would have occurred.

Another question is whether the statutes of KDN actually were revised, following the Decree of September 1993. The matter of the fact is that later that very month of 1993, Yeltsin, by employing military force, dissolved the Russian Supreme Soviet and subsequently had the Russian (RSFSR) constitution changed. Amongst the political and financial battles then unfolding, it seems that the Russian governing elite had little or no attention for the issue of reorganising and improving the system of child-neglect prevention. In any event, it has not been possible to find any indication that, in the immediate aftermath of the constitutional crisis of 1993, the directive of the 1993 Decree to revise the KDN statutes had been followed up. Moreover, the survey of legislation relative to KDN in Korchagina's abovementioned dissertation of 2002, contains no legislative item suggesting that the statutes of KDN actually were revised after 1993.<sup>356</sup>

The only legislative activity pertaining to KDN in the period between 1993 and 1995, again according to Korchagina's survey, was the resolution of June 1994, signed by Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, on the issue of an "Intra-Departmental" KDN attached to the Russian government.<sup>357</sup> In fact, the resolution makes clear that a KDN "had been created" at the level of the central government in order to "secure a coherent approach in terms of solving the problem of preventing vagrancy and unlawfulness by minors," as well as of "protecting their [the minors'] rights and lawful interests." In a specific reference document (*polozheniia*) to the Intra-Departmental KDN, which was annexed to the resolution, the tasks of the intra-departmental KDN were further spelled out. The central KDN should, in particular, prepare relevant initiatives for the Russian government, as well as assist KDN in the various administrative entities of the Russian Federation.

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<sup>356</sup> Korchagina, *Administrativno-iuridiksionnaga deiatelnost'*, 191-199.

<sup>357</sup> Russian Government, *On Intra-Ministerial Commissions on the Affairs of Minors attached to the Government of the Russian Federation*, Resolution (postanovlenie), No 646, (Moscow, 05.06.1994) [http://www.ngopravo.ru/documents/legislation/federal-laws/committee-minor/\(24.5.09](http://www.ngopravo.ru/documents/legislation/federal-laws/committee-minor/(24.5.09)

However, the concept of KDN at central government level was nothing new; the KDN statutes for the RSFSR of 1967 did also contain provisions for this.<sup>358</sup> Hence, if a top-layer KDN had to be re-established in June 1994, this proved that there had been no functioning KDN at governmental level in at least the immediate period prior to that particular point of time. In other words, to the extent KDN really existed or were active by 1994, at least in parts of the Russian Federation; there had been no central KDN to guide and monitor the work of the subordinate KDN structures across Russia.

In terms of the actual implementation of the abovementioned KDN-related Decrees of 1993 and 1994, the repeatedly consulted *National plan for the interest of children* appears again to provide useful information. In section 3.6 of the *Plan*, aspects of the status of KDN's work are considered as per September 1995 (when the Plan was issued). To begin with, the *National Plan* lists a number of overall child-welfare issues that were to be successfully addressed in order to secure "socialisation and adequate rehabilitation, and integration into the society" of children who found themselves in "especially difficult circumstances." According to the *Plan*, Russian authorities should therefore "prepare necessary legislative bills aimed at protecting the rights and interests and children living in particularly difficult." In this respect, KDN was the obvious target. That is, the Plan required that "mechanisms for individual child protection had to be *improved* [author's emphasis] in the context of assessments and decisions [regarding minors] undertaken by the Commissions on the Affairs of Minors. Finally, the National Plan called for "the creation of these commissions everywhere."<sup>359</sup>

The implication for the hypotheses of the abovementioned seems to be as follows: First, with the *National Plan*, Russian authorities reaffirmed a principal commitment to KDN: Regardless of how Commissions functioned in real terms before and after the Decree No 1338 of 1993, the KDN institute was designated to have a crucial role in the activities of the state in the area of prevention of child neglect. In other words, by making the success of its attempts to tackle the growing child-neglect challenges so dependent on an institute that at best functioned distinctively unsatisfactorily, the Russian authorities demonstrated a high degree of vulnerability towards a foreseeable future that bore few, if any, signs of improvement.

Second, the precarious position of KDN is also accentuated by the call for legislative initiatives which are reiterated by the *Plan*. Consequently, nothing seems to have been undertaken in terms of legal-base reform of KDN following the Decree of 1993. There is

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<sup>358</sup> See the KDN statutes of 1967, Decree No 67-23, Article 3.

<sup>359</sup> *National Action Plan*, point 3.6. "Support to children in particular difficult situation, section Goal, Objectives, Measures," measure 1.

moreover no evidence in the Plan that at least some Commissions in Russian regions might have been reinvigorated as a result of support received from the re-established KDN at governmental level.

Finally, the point in the Action Plan requiring the establishment of KDN *in all places* (*povsemestno*) provides undeniable evidence that, by 1995, the Commissions must have ceased to exist at least in a *significant* number of places. Tacking account of a certain element of embellishment in official Russian documents like those analysed above, especially due to the political sensitivity of child policies, one can not disregard the possibility that KDN had discontinued its work in a *great* number or even *majority* of regions and municipalities throughout the Russian federation.

The inference that KDN, following the system change, did not exist in several Russian regions during a certain period of time, corresponds with a central observation made by Korchagina in her abovementioned dissertation. Setting the context to the “period of the fundamental renewal of the Russian statehood which followed after the fall of the USSR,” she states: “As a result, the work of several Commissions became weaker and in a number of cases they completely discontinued their activity.”<sup>360</sup>

An even more unequivocally negative characterisation of the state of affairs of the Russian child-protection work of the 1990s was made in 2005 in a candidate’s dissertation in history by Yekaterina Nazarova ( of the Krasnodar Academy of MVD). In her study, *Struggle against deviant behaviour and crime in the youth policy of the Russian Federation (1991-1999)*, Nazarova writes that the “ruling elite of Russia” could not decide on “whether a specific youth policy was necessary.” The authorities therefore adopted a number of separate programmes that all were “chronically unworkable.” “In practical terms,” the result was “a complete absence of financing, which predecided a youth policy that remained declamatory.”<sup>361</sup> The main conclusion of Nazarova is formulated in the following way:

The research showed that prophylactic work at state, federal and regional level to prevent youth deviation and crime was almost not conducted. All preventive activity (help to homeless, victims of sexual and other criminal violence, drug addicts and persons realised from penitentiary institutions as well as others) were carried out by Non Governmental Organisations [NGOs] and private persons.<sup>362</sup>

If Nazarova’s assessment of the effectiveness of the state child-protective agencies is to be believed, it seems obvious that the total activities aimed at assisting seriously neglected

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<sup>360</sup> Korchagina, *Administrativno-iuridiksionnaga deiatel’nost’*, 120.

<sup>361</sup> Jekaterina Nazarova 2005. *Bor’ba s deviantnym povedeniem i prestupnost’iu v molodezhnoj politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (1991-1999gg)*, Candidate Dissertation in History, (Krasnodar –MVD, 2005), 26.

<sup>362</sup> Ibid.

children indeed must have been limited, at least during the first post-Soviet period. Although the first voluntary organisations by 1991 had started to establish projects aimed at providing new services such as temporary shelters and support to vulnerable families, the capacity of the humanitarian NGOs operating in Russia was limited. To once more quote Harwin on this account, Russian NGOs were “still only embryonic and in no position to make any serious inroads into the extent of unmet child needs.”<sup>363</sup>

Harwin’s observation is concretised in an article by one of the few other Western authors who have explored the modern Russian street children problem: In 1994-1995, the British researcher, Sarah Cemlyn, in association with Tanya Vdovenko, examined some aspects of the situation for street children in Saint Petersburg. The authors list four various NGO shelters for street children with a total capacity of 100 children, against the estimated 20,000 street children of the city, who “survive by their wits, sleeping where they can in the underground stations, derelict building and public toilets.”<sup>364</sup> Still the authors do at least not understate the role of the role of NGOs in assisting street children: “NGO responded to a public policy vacuum in pioneering services, and they fulfil a crucial role. However, it is clear that they cannot meet the needs of up to 20,000 street children.”<sup>365</sup>

## Conclusions

To briefly conclude, the analyses of this chapter have as yet attempted to establish empirically-based data on the development (over the period 1987-1996) of the child-neglect scale (research topic 1), and of the capacity of the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors (KDN) to solve its statutory tasks (research topic 2). Overall, the scrutiny of legislative and secondary sources did not present findings that appear to contradict the assertions of the working hypotheses of the thesis. However, some of the findings obviously require further clarifications of certain aspects of the hypotheses. In particular, this concerns the characterisation of the starting level of the research topics (i.e. the situation in 1985-1987), as well as gradient of the trend that the research topics followed. However, before a final fine-tuning of the working hypotheses is carried out (see Chapter 7), Chapter 6 will proceed with an analysis of the available primary sources associated with KDN’s work.

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<sup>363</sup> Harwin, *Children of the Russian State*, 92 (see also footnote 313 on page 81 above).

<sup>364</sup> S. Cemlyn et al., “Working with Street Children in St.Petersburg,” *Social Work in Europe*” 2, No2 (1995), 16.

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid*, 22.

## Chapter 6

### MANIFESTED CHILD NEGLECT – SOURCES LINKED TO KDN’s WORK

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#### Introduction and methodology for the chapter

As detailed in Chapter 1, primary sources linked to the work of the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors (KDN) could be accessed for this study, only in two Russian regions, St.Petersburg/Leningrad and Arkhangelsk oblast/city.<sup>366</sup> Consequently, annual reports and other available documents associated with KDN’s activities from these two regions, form the basis for the following comparative analyses of how the work of this key child-protection institute evolved over time. In this chapter, the working hypotheses,<sup>367</sup> which were tested against legislative and secondary sources in Chapter 5, are therefore further assessed before final conclusions regarding their validity are drawn in Chapter 7 of the thesis.

Two regions out of a total of 89 entities in Russia is a relatively small “sample.” Still, St.Petersburg/ Leningrad and Arkhangelsk oblast/city represent a relative diverse territorial selection and should definitely give indications of national trends. Challenging in terms of the representativeness of the material, however, is also the absence of complete annual series of documentation.<sup>368</sup> Yet, most critical for the examination of the sources is the now established fact that, as the old system collapsed and the new post-Soviet order rapidly descended into socio-economic disaster, KDN progressively weakened. Consequently, the Commissions could not manage to cope adequately with the growing child-neglect problems. If not otherwise convincingly documented throughout the forthcoming examination, primary sources related to KDN’s proceedings are therefore assumed to provide merely additional nuances to the picture of the child-neglect scale already established by the thesis.

When it comes to assessing the hypotheses on the changing KDN capacity, the value of the primary sources on KDN is far less problematic. For example, quantitative data on KDN’s examination of individual child-neglect issues may concurrently provide information

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<sup>366</sup> See the discussion in Chapter 1, p. 9-10.

<sup>367</sup> Confer the working analyses framed at the end of Chapter 4, p. 65-66.

<sup>368</sup> As for Leningrad/St.PB there is, first, an uncovered gap between 1991 and 1996 for Kalininskii raion; and, second, there is lacking material both prior to 1989 and after 1993 for the raions Leninskii and Oktiabrskii. In addition, the year 1991 is uncovered for Oktiabrskii. For Arkhangelsk oblast, only two city *okrugs* (city municipalities) are included in the tables analysed in this chapter: Lomonosovskii and Isakogorskii. These municipalities are represented with the two periods 1985 -1988 and 1992–1995. The period in between is uncovered. Material from the remaining raions of Arkhangelsk oblast’ and city accessed are not included in the tables below due to the fact that all these raions are either covered only for the period before the system shift, or, in a few cases, only for the post-Soviet years.



on the quality of the work of the child-protections institute in this regard: If there is an evident under-reporting on a given indicator (e.g. if KDN data suggests decreasing number of cases handled in a period when child neglect evidently was on the rise), this points clearly towards declining quality in the work of the societal institute. Furthermore, factors like the sheer number of indicators included in an annual report, but also the typographic and technical standard of the report, will, in addition, give an indication of how a given KDN entity functioned. There are indicators that also directly concern KDN's work. Examples of these are: number of sessions conducted in the course of a given year, number of child-related institutions checked by KDN, or number of volunteers involved in its work. Comparative analyses on the basis of such quantitative indicators require, however, a degree of caution. Given the falling quality of KDN's work, the fact that *one* child-related facility (e.g. correctional school) was inspected, or *one* community volunteer mobilised, was hardly the same in 1985 as it was in 1995.

Before turning to the concrete analysis of the indicator tables, some general comments should be given to what I will call *overall variation factors*. Methodologically, such factors may help conducting a first-line assessment if encountering contradicting tendencies in the material. In other words, in cases where some indicator values deviate from the overall trend, both in the context of the given region, but in particular from the overall national trend substantiated in the course of this thesis, these variations factors may distinguish minor deviations from the possibly significant ones.

In principle, variation factors can be associated with a number of imaginable circumstances, such as for example economic dissimilarities. That is, there might have been differences between, or within, territorial entities, e.g. differences in the number of enterprises and work places that for various reasons were preserved throughout the reforms of the 1990s. Furthermore, discrepancies in the KDN material, in particular when it comes to the first chaotic years of the 1990s, can perhaps be explained by diverse degrees of local leadership intent, or ability, to maintain aspects of Soviet-era mechanisms, such as child-protection schemes. Also factors like varying degrees of personal commitment to child protection work may obviously have been put to use. Finally, the attitude of the bureaucracy may have been mixed in terms of reporting on issues like KDN: While some public servants wished to be honest, others might have attempted to doctor data, including lowering requirements to accuracy in order to deliver according to own or others' expectations.

In the context of this thesis, the empirical realities behind the *variation factors* suggested above can naturally not be assessed. In order for this study to avail itself of the

primary sources *on KDNs work*, the overall assumptions for Russia as a whole must therefore be maintained as a starting point. Consequently, the material pertaining to the work of KDN in the five municipalities included in the analyses of this chapter are initially interpreted in light of the findings made in Chapter 5. If the established trends are confirmed, minor divergences in the material can then be explained by utilising *variation factors* like those suggested. However, should more substantial inconsistencies arise from the forthcoming analyses; the working hypotheses of this study must of course be accordingly adjusted.

### **Analysis of KDN material from five municipalities**

On the basis of the available annual reports from each of the five raions included in the below analyses I have compiled five *indicator surveys*,<sup>369</sup> containing indicators which I have found are of particular relevance for the research topics of this study.<sup>370</sup> The indicators included in the indicator surveys are grouped into three categories according to the type of information which is conveyed: data on minors followed-up by KDN; data on parents assessed by KDN; data on the scope and character of KDN's work. Within these three groups, a few selected *key indicators* are highlighted and converted into percentage values, indicating the development over time of the particular key indicator. The annual performance values of the key indicators are compared with a baseline value, representing a starting point which is set at 100 percent. For Kalininskii, Lomonosovskii and Isakogorskii, the baseline year is 1985, i.e. the first year containing data on these raions. For Leninskii and Oktiabrskii, the base-line year is 1989.

Finally, seven key indicators are selected and analysed, one-by-one, in the seven *key indicator tables* that are given below. Each table contains longitudinal data on one particular key indicator from each of the five raions focused in this chapter. The seven key indicators are: number of minors assessed; number of runaway or vagrancy cases registered; number of

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<sup>369</sup> In Annex VII (p.132), the indicator survey for Kalininskii raion is reproduced as an example of the indicator surveys from the five raions included in the analyses of this chapter. As said, an indicator surveys contains a selection of the relative extensive data which is presented in a given annual report of KDN's work.

<sup>370</sup> The accessed KDN annual reports related to Leningrad/St.Petersburg are stored in the *Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sankt Peterburga – TsGASP*, except the annual reports on KDN after 1996 for Kalininskii. All accessed material linked to KDN's work in Arkhangelsk is stored in the *Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti* (GAAO). Below follows the archive references of all annual KDN reports included in the seven key indicator surveys. 1. Leningrad/Saint Petersburg: a) KDN, Kalininskii raion, belongs to Fond 4793, Opis 8. The files (dela) are (with corresponding year): 748 (1985); 795 (1986); 837 1987; 905 (1988); 974 (1989); 1046 (1990); 1113 (1991). b) KDN, Oktiabrskii raion belongs to Fond 4914, Opis 8. The files (dela) are: 205 (1989); 434 (1990); 45 (1992); 88 (1993). c) KDN, Leninskii raion, belongs to Fond 4900, Opis' 5. The files (dela) are: 43 (1989). 108 (1990); 168 (1991). From 1992 the Fond is 5835 and the Opis' 1: The files are: 104 (1992); 187 (1993) 2. Arkhangelsk city/oblast. d) KDN, Isakogorskii okrug, belongs to Fond 2063, Opis' 2. The files (dela) are: 5194 (1985). 5373 (1986); 5556 (1987); 5695 (1988). From 1992 the Fond is 1137 and the Opis' 1: The files are: 16 (1992); 23 (1993); 33 (1994); 40 (1995). e) KDN, Lomonosovskii okrug, belongs to Fond 2063, Opis' 2. The files (dela) are: 5194 (1985). 5373 (1986); 5556 (1987); 5695 (1988). From 1992 the Fond is 1145 and the Opis' 1: The files are: 12 (1992); 31 (1993); 31 (1994); 31 (1995).

assessed minors with drinking problems; number of minors referred to correctional or other residential institution; (all four key indicators pertaining to Category 1: *data on minors followed up by KDN*); parents on KDN record; parents deprived of their parental rights (pertaining to Category: 2 *data on parents assessed by KDN*); and, finally, voluntary social workers involved in KDN's work (Category 3, *data pertaining to KDN's work*).

Table 6.1. *Key Indicator 1. Minors assessed by KDN, in percent of baseline year*<sup>371</sup>

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1992-
Kalininskii	100	94	105	96	79	79	68					78	65	97	80
Oktiabrskii					100	97		142	76						109
Leninskii					100	105	92	99	94						96
Isakogorskii	100	76	98	107				46	40	37	60				46
Lomonosovskii	100	110	121	123				165	57	111	74				102

If KDN had functioned optimally and captured all neglected minors in need of protection and support, Key Indicator 1 would have adequately reflected the changing number of neglected minors in the society. With the number of manifested cases of child neglect on the rise, the indicators of Table 6.1 should therefore have demonstrated increased values from the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s.

Both for 1989-1991, as well as for the years after 1991, Table 6.1 provides, however, a picture of a predominately declining number of minors assessed by KDN, at least after 1988. On the other hand, the material also contains some apparently significant deviations from this trend (conf. Oktiabrskii in 1992, Leninskii in 1990, 1991 and 1993; as well as Lomonosovskii in 1992 and 1994). For sure, particularly in 1992, under the first impact of the shock therapy, the tendency towards the growth in the numbers of children handled by KDN might reflect a real ad-hoc mobilisation on the part of KDN. At any rate, it does not seem probable that the most noticeable divergences in the table (i.e. the indicator values for 1992 of the two neighbouring and presumably homogeneous peers Oktiabrskii and Leninskii, or Lomonosovskii and Isakogorskii, respectively) are caused by objective factors such as diverse economic activity and employment levels in the various raions. Therefore, in view of the unstable performance of both Oktiabrskii and Lomonosovskii after 1992, a plausible explanation to the variations in the material might be greater or lesser in degree of incidental and unsustainable bureaucratic conscientiousness in both real work and reporting tasks.

<sup>371</sup> This table and the following tables (Table 6.1. – 6.7.) are compiled on the basis of the information comprised in the archive material referred to under footnote 369, p. 98. The last column in the tables is the average percentage change in the course of the post-Soviet period against the Soviet-period base-line year.

Certainly, the annual reports that Table 6.1 is based upon, do not reveal information on the quality of KDN's assessment of individual child neglect cases, or how this aspect of the work evolved over time. No protocols from KDN sessions of any of the five raions included in the study have been seen by the author, neither in original nor in copy. The author has, however, perused original KDN files from proceeding of the Leningrad raion Krasnoarmeiskii for the period 1989-1991.<sup>372</sup> The impression from this material is clearly that, the quality of the documentation attached to the personal files deteriorated during these three years, especially in 1991: It seems that the forms were filled in ever more rapidly and rudimentarily, the militia reports became shorter, and the KDN intervention towards the children and their parents became more formalistic and limited.

So, while the child-welfare conditions of the country objectively deteriorated, KDN in these raions, only with minor and probably insignificant exceptions, assessed a decreasing number of child-neglect cases. The inference of this is evident: As a source of information, the data contained in Table 6.1, cannot contribute to any further mapping of the real child-neglect scale. In terms of assessing the hypotheses on KDN capacity, however, the material brings clear evidence of a KDN institute increasingly failing to fulfil its mandatory tasks.

Table 6.2: *Key indicator 2. Registered cases of child runaway and vagrancy*

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1992-
Kalininskii	100	88	129	86	57	100	50					124	52	7	61
Oktiabrskii					100	91		164	91						127
Leninskii					100	500	1200	800	300						550
Isakogorskii	100							150		225	525				300
Lomonosovskii	100														0

Chapter 5 has already concluded with a growth in the number of street children, probably beginning from around 1989.<sup>373</sup> With adequate work of KDN, this should naturally have been reflected in a survey like the one of Table 6.2. Indeed, at first glance it might appear as if

<sup>372</sup> The material from Krasnoarmeiskii raion - stored in TsGASP, Fond 3539, Opis' 1, (dela) (with corresponding year): 947 (1989); 1033 (1990); 1072 (1991) - shows that KDN sessions were held every second week. A sitting was typically attended by from four to eighth members representing the militia and other authorities (education, health, social), occasionally also public organizations. KDN called minors and their parents to hear cases related mainly to various delinquencies (theft, drinking, hooligansim, juvenile bulling, truancy, etc.). Since more than 30 individual cases were assessed during one sitting, little time was given to each of them. A militia report was presented, and the invited family members were briefly interviewed. In the overwhelming number of cases, the evaluation resulted in reprimands or small fines (10-20 roubles) for the offending minors. For having allowed their children to get out of control, the parents were typically "sentenced to" public censure or fines. In the files reviewed, there were no examples of KDN referring children to correctional insitutions. Nor was any case initiated on deprivation of parental rights.

<sup>373</sup> Chapter 5, p. 79.

Table 6.2, at least partially, documents such a growth. However, if one, first of all concentrates on the largest of the municipalities represented, the highly populated Kalininskii, the overall trend conveys much the same picture as this raion did in Table 6.1: First, the surge in cases of runaway children in 1987 might well have been a result of increased Party-driven attention to orphans and abandoned children following, Decree No 872 of 1987 “On measures to radically improve...” (see p. 64 above). Second, the relative top in the number of detected vagrants that occurred in Kalininskii in 1990 - after two years of relatively low “catches” of street children (perhaps illustrating the short-lived effects of the 1987 campaign) – might be seen as a last cogent mobilisation, by utilising Soviet-era tools, against an apparently appalling surge in urgent child-neglect cases.

What happened with the work of KDN in Kalininskii raion in the years between 1991 -1996 could not be revealed through this study. Whether or not the KDN in Kalininskii actually functioned in this intervening period, and whether or not it actively addressed the manifested street-children problem, must therefore be a matter for future research to explore. What is proven, however, is that the child-welfare situation in Russia significantly deteriorated throughout the 1990s. For this thesis it might therefore suffice to suggest that KDN’s percentage performance of 124 in 1996, against the pre-crisis level 100 of 1985, must have fallen considerably short of the real level that the street children problem had reached after years of widening socio-economic and family crisis. Hence, if the years following 1991 were characterised by a high degree of idleness on the part of KDN in Kalininskii; the relative high indicator value in 1996, on the other hand, might have mirrored possibly increased efforts on the part of the Russian authorities to halt the galloping child-neglect problems.<sup>374</sup>

When it comes to the strong percentage fluctuations in terms of runaway children over the years 1989-1991, in Leninskii raion, this may reflect a real increase in the number of child-vagrancy cases. Yet, with only one runaway child registered in 1989, the baseline year, the statistical upsurge in child vagrancy that apparently ensued in 1990 and 1992 becomes less “impressive”. More characteristic for the assumed failing ability of this particular raion KDN to adequately tackle the real street-children problem, is, however, the declining trends of 1992 and 1993, two years when Shock Therapy hit at-risk families with relentless force.

A few remarks on Arkhangelsk: The reason for the data dearth in Table 6.2, both for Isakogorskii and Lomonosovskii, is not known. Isakogorskii, however, demonstrates a growth

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<sup>374</sup> President of Russia: *Fundamental directions of the state social politics on improving the situation for children in the Russian Federation until the year of 2000 (National action plan for the interest of children)*, Decree No 942, (Moscow, 14.09.1995) p. 85. The presidential re-election campaign of 1996, entailing certain social initiatives, can also have played a role in this respect (see p. 36).

in the number of street children registered by KDN for 1992, 1994 and 1995. An explanation to this may be that Isakogorskii KDN, in spite of the overall tendency of failing capacity during this period, kept so much of its functionality that it managed to handle more street children over the crisis-ridden first post-Soviet years than it had during the only year accounted for before 1992, the yet relatively stable year of 1985.

In sum, *Table 5.2*, provides further evidence of a failing KDN; this time in terms of detecting and taking care of vagrant children. But there are also nuances: Occasionally KDN, through increased registering of individual cases of runaway children, demonstrated a degree of human and organisational capacity that, although definitely only partially, reflected the growing caseload of child-neglect from the late 1980s.

*Table 6.3: Key indicator 3. Registered drinkers among minors passing through KDN*

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1992-
Kalininskii	100	106	106	82	111	119	111					117	122	54	98
Oktiabrskii					100	75		55	93						74
Leninskii					100	97	59	77	94						86
Isakogorskii	100	163	103	94				42	32	0	0				18
Lomonosovskii	100	94	85	98				58	40	0	0				25

An obvious assumption for the interpretation of *Table 6.3* is that, there is a positive correlation between child neglect and alcohol misuse of minors: neglected and abandoned children, in an alcoholised society like Russia, tend to resort to drinking and other means of intoxication. Overall, except for the real reduction in drinking during the Gorbachev anti-alcohol campaign (which statistically, however, could lead to increased indicator values in this respect due to more attention to the problem and higher detection rates), one should therefore, analogously to the deteriorating living conditions, expect more at-risk minors misusing alcohol.

It goes without saying that a well-organised and well-resourced KDN institute in this situation should have addressed a growing number of cases involving juvenile alcohol consumption. However, apart from minor tendencies to the contrary, which may be left uncommented in the light of the explanations given to similar statistical variations under the first two tables, the trend of *Table 5.3* is definitely one of a declining number of alcohol-related cases registered by KDN. Yet again the KDN material does not reflect a real deterioration in children's welfare, but only KDN's own failure to cope with the challenges.

Table 6.4: Key indicator 4. Referral of children to residential institutions

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1992-
Kalininskii	100	233	141	126	104	67	11				0	33	7		13
Oktiabrskii					100	81		50	8						29
Leninskii					100	6	0	238	131	6					125
Isakogorskii	100	113	125	50				38	0	0	0				9
Lomonosovskii	100	125	213	200				50	0	0	0				13

Alternative placement of neglected children would in the context of the Russian crisis be required for two main reasons: First, if children resided at home with their parents, the need for a safer place to live in could be triggered by such increasing risk factors, as domestic violence, parental heavy drinking, drug addiction as well as psychic disorder, but also intolerable living conditions due to poverty (see Chapter 4). Second, in cases of manifested child vagrancy, as well as of other forms of deviant child behaviour (such as delinquency and crime), the authorities were legally obliged, as a last resort, to secure alternative placement of these minors in correctional and other boarding institutions. Theoretically, with a KDN institute fulfilling its mission, a growth in the statistics of referrals should therefore have been registered in Table 6.4.

The statistical material of KDN's actual work provides evidence of the opposite. In general, there was a considerable drop in the number of referrals, both after 1989 and after 1992. The only deviation from the main, declining trend in this regard is observed for Leninskii in 1992. However, in the absence of concrete information on the causes for the unexpected jump to the 1992 level (from almost no referrals in 1990, and absolutely nil in 1991), one may suspect that there have been at play a combination of registration errors and a one-time mobilisation in response to the first dramatic effects of the 1992 Shock Therapy. In any event, the rapid reduction in the number of referrals in 1993 and 1994, in a situation where the socio-economic conditions further deteriorated, indicates that the high 1992 figures at best represented efforts that could not be sustained. Besides, Table 6.4 does not provide new information beyond what already has been documented in terms of failing KDN capacity.

Table 6.5: Key indicator 5. Parents on KDN records

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1992-
Kalininskii	100	36	36	35	27	32	40					117	117	74	103
Oktiabrskii					100	72		72	79						76
Leninskii					100	129	83	83	88						85
Isakogorskii	100	72	65	77				29	34	0	0				16
Lomonosovskii	100	84	107	95				140	147	0	0				72

With a well-functioning KDN, a deteriorated child-neglect environment would imply a growing number of parents placed on KDN records: The more frequently parents jeopardise the well-being of their children, the more families should be brought under KDN surveillance.

However, beginning with 1985 and continuing into the post-Soviet years, *Table 6.5* demonstrates no substantial tendency of increased KDN interventionism in relation to risk families. As for Kalininskii, the minor increase from the extreme low of 1990, to a slightly higher level in 1991, is definitely too insignificant to change this impression. Neither can the meagre 17 percent rise of 1996, against the 1985 level, indicate any degree of adequacy in KDN's response to a problem that by 1996 perhaps had grown manifold.

The tendencies of the data on the two Arkhangel'sk raions are indeed conflicting. On the one extreme, Lomonosovskii KDN monitored in 1993, at least nominally, almost fifty percent more families than it had done in 1985. In 1993, in Isakogorskii raion, on the other extreme, only around one third of the comparable 1985 number of families were on KDN record. With this vacillation in the material, significant registration errors cannot be ruled out. The 1992 and 1993 figures for Lomonosovskii raion do therefore not justify any modification of the main interpretation of *Table 6.5*: The KDN material does not, or only faintly, reflect the evolving, real child-neglect scale. It does, however, bring additional evidence of KDN's lacking capacity in terms of monitoring and supporting needy families.

Table 6.6: Key indicator 6. Parents deprived of their parental rights

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1992-
Kalininskii	100	100	33	58	27	10	10					0	0	0	0
Oktiabrskii					100	59		112	112						112
Leninskii					100	60	53	100	87						93
Isakogorskii	100	57	52	24				5	0	0	0				1
Lomonosovskii	100	29	18	0				0	0	0	0				0

One definite consequence of the deteriorated childhood environment in Russia was that growing child abuse and other examples of extreme child neglect had put an increasing



number of children at serious risk, whilst living with their families. In the most extreme and irreparable family situations, the only option for the authorities, in particular for the Commissions for the Minors Affairs, should have been to have the children in question removed from their parents.

However, this kind of intervention required at least two types of capacities on the part of the child protection and welfare agencies: First, there had to be a monitoring system in place to register families, where the situation was about to get out of control. Second, the society had to offer children, in critical need of placement outside their homes, a real alternative. With a collapsing state of social welfare, it is obvious that these capacities were underdeveloped or not present. The consequence for KDN and specialised agencies was most probably that they resigned before a problem that largely exceeded their capacity. Hence, sensing that the required resources to follow up a potential deprivation case, failed, or just lacking the necessary degree of personal commitment, KDN, along with specialised agencies, might therefore in several cases simply have turned a blind eye to the families in dire crisis.<sup>375</sup>

Table 6.6 substantiates that three of the five raions unequivocally failed to respond to the widening crisis, by more frequently than before, resorting to deprivation of parental rights as an ultimate means of guaranteeing the children's rights. Only KDN in Oktiabrskii and Leninskii apparently attempted to mobilise additional resources in this respect. However, while Leninskii never surpassed the base-line level of 1989, a year when the child-neglect crisis evidently was far more benign than it became in 1992 and 1993, Oktiabrskii KDN was able to deprive only twelve percent more persons of their parental rights in 1992 and 1993 than in 1989. In sum, it seems that KDN, and, for that case, the entire Russian society, did not manage, even in an approximately adequate fashion, to mobilise the resources required if the growth in number of child-neglect manifestation was to be effectively countered.

*Table 5.7: Key indicator 7. Voluntary social workers*

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1992-
Kalininskii	100	741	476	449	311	294	32					0	0	0	0
Oktiabrskii					100	108		254	285						269
Leninskii					100	193	93	75	146						111
Isakogorskii	100	41	18	12				0	0	0	0				0
Lomonosovskii	100	31	52	44				7	8	0	0				3

<sup>375</sup> This interpretation was indirectly confirmed by child-protection authorities in Vyborgskii raion in St.Petersburg in 2005 (5.10.05) during conversations the author was involved in when participating in a Norwegian film team collecting documentary material on the situation for street children in St.Petersburg.

As repeatedly stated in this thesis, Party-mobilised, voluntary community workers and community organisations were assigned a central role in Soviet child protection. This was part of the characteristic and omnipresent organisational web that bound the Soviet society together and made it work. As the Party gradually lost its grip on society not long after Gorbachev had started his radical reforms, this network also soon weakened and rapidly dissipated. In this respect Kalininskii, with its half a million inhabitants might prove typical in terms of the trajectory that the voluntary element of KDN followed over the period studied.

As shown in Annex VII,<sup>376</sup> KDN had in 1985, the year Gorbachev was elected general secretary of the CPSU, a total of 103 public educators. In addition 103 *shefy* were also mobilised for KDN in the raion. The surge in Kalininskii from 1985 to 1986 in the number of social volunteers (from 206 to 1527! persons) is remarkable also because it occurred before the Decree of 1987 “On radical improvements...”. The indicated development might therefore have reflected the general impetus of Gorbachev’s initial campaigning when assuming power (perhaps in combination with unknown factors, such as possibly changed reporting criteria). Although lower than in the record year of 1986, the number of volunteers continued at a very high level also in 1987 and 1988 (with 981 and 924 persons, respectively). However, as Gorbachev increasingly faced economic and political challenges, his campaigns obviously lost momentum. In the context of KDN in Kalininskii, it seems that this development was echoed in the reduced number of volunteers; first the number declined moderately (with 641 and 605 persons in 1989 and 1990, respectively) and in 1991, it plunged to 65 voluntary social workers in a total child population below 16 years of around 100 000 persons.<sup>377</sup>

As noted, it has proved impossible to access KDN data for Kalininskii raion relative to the years 1992-1995. The details on what happened with the volunteers as the system changed and the Party web disappeared, remain therefore uncharted. In any event, for the period after 1995, when KDN reports yet again become available, there is no information on voluntary participation in the raion’s child protecting work.

Behind the seemingly surprising trend, that the municipalities Isakogorskii and Lomonosovskii (Arkhangelsk city) demonstrate after 1995 a reporting peculiarity is hidden. For unknown reasons, the institute of *shefy* was not included in the annual reports after 1985 for Lomonosovskii (with 238 *shefy* in 1985),<sup>378</sup> and after 1986 for Isakogorskii (with 135

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<sup>376</sup> Annex VII, page 132-33.

<sup>377</sup> The data on total youth population comprise children below 16 years and are taken from: *Sankt Petersburg, Statisticheskii ezhegodnik 2006*, (Sankt Petersburg: *Federal’naia sluzhba gosudarsvennoi statistiki*, 2006), 17.

<sup>378</sup> GAA 2063/2, file 5194; (list 107); and 5373 (list150).

*shely* in 1985 and 41 in 1986).<sup>379</sup> Therefore, over the period 1985-1988, the number of *obshchestvennye vospitateli* (community educators) in the two Arkhangelsk raions followed a development path that was not fundamentally different from the one of Kalininskii in Leningrad. That is, for the four-year period 1985-1988, there were respectively 21, 23, 28 and 19 social educators in Isakogorskii;<sup>380</sup> and 26, 82, 136 and 117 in Lomonosovskii.<sup>381</sup> According to the available data, it seems that the breakdown in the institute of voluntary community workers in two Arkhangelsk raions occurred only with the post-Soviet circumstances.

The only *raions* that demonstrate an apparent strengthening of the voluntary element in child protection after the collapse of the USSR are the two St.Petersburg municipalities, Leninskii and Oktiabrskii. However, behind these figures, there might be some of the abovementioned *variation factors* at work. In particular, it may be questioned whether the criteria for reporting on social educators remained the same after the system shift: Both the material reviewed from KDN's work in Krasnoarmeiskii raion in St.Petersburg and some of the material from Arkhangelsk indicate that social educators were real individuals on whom requirements were placed.<sup>382</sup> When looking at the figures behind the percentages in Table 6.7 (Oktiabrskii reports to have had at their disposal 110, 120, 300 and 370 public educators for the years 1989, 1990, 1992 and 1993, respectively),<sup>383</sup> one may, however, wonder whether the very rounded-off character of the figures are coincidental, or whether they represent in the best case collective.

In an ideal situation where KDN were fully and continuously adjusted and adapted to the changing needs for child-protection intervention, the number of social educators, mentors (*shely*) and other social volunteers working with KDN - would reflect the changing amount of children in need of support. Not surprisingly, such a reading can hardly be made from Table 6.7. If there, in a few cases, as for example in Oktiabrskii, appear to be a tendency of growth in the number of volunteers involved in KDN's work after 1991, this may, as indicated, be a result, at least partly, of changed criteria and relaxed reporting requirements.

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<sup>379</sup> GAA 2063/2, file 5194; (list 96); and 5373 (list 150).

<sup>380</sup> GAA, file 5194; (list 96); and 5373 (list 150); file 5194 (list 110); and 5373 (list 16).

<sup>381</sup> GAA, file 5194; (list 107); and 5373 (list 150); file 5556 (list 159); and 5695 (list 107).

<sup>382</sup> That community educators were real individuals in the late Soviet period is evident from the files analysed from Krasnoarmeiskii raion in St.Petersburg (see e.g. TsGASP, 3539/ 1/ 947). The material reflecting the appointment of the voluntary social workers comprises information on age (several of them were in fact already pensioners) and membership of organisations (Party, Comsomol, Union). Similar analyses are also in some of the documents attached to of the annual reports of KDN's work in Arkhangelsk oblast and city.

<sup>383</sup> TsGASP 4914/8, file 205 and 434 (1989-90) and 5835/1, file 45 and 88 (1992 and 1993).

Hence, the key indicator of Table 6.7 adds little new information to the knowledge of KDN established throughout the examinations of the other key indicators tables: Instead of mobilising community support for the growing number of needy children, the Commissions demonstrated increasing organisational paralysis and inability to fulfil its mandate.

### **Additional comments and conclusion**

Almost none of the accessed documents indicate that KDN was involved in statutory tasks like overall coordination of other agencies or initiation of proposals pertaining to child protection. For example, in the abovementioned archive files from Krasnoarmeiskii KDN (covering the period 1989-1991), documents were deposited containing examination of individual cases of hooliganism and delinquency. The only exception is a few documents on appointment of “public educators,” (incidentally, as the documents show, the appointment of public educators sharply declined towards 1991).

There are, however, a few documents in the material reviewed, that reflect a certain analytical tendency on the part of KDN. These are found in some of the annual reports for the period after 1992 pertaining to Arkhangelsk. Amidst a cautious language, the otherwise subservient Russian bureaucracy show signs of candid analysis of the current child-neglect situation in the region. For example, in an attachment to the annual KDN report of Isakogorskii raion for 1995, the militia accounts for its effort to curb juvenile delinquency and crime.<sup>384</sup> The militia notes an alleged reduction in less serious law-breaking involving youngsters. But at the same time a distinct growth in the number of heavy crimes is registered: Accordingly, in 1995 a total of 60 serious crimes have been carried out by minors, against 33 in 1994. The militia further reports that every third crime had been committed under the influence of alcohol. This is said to represent a reduction of 39 percent against the corresponding 1994 figures. Moreover, the report notes that a great number of the young delinquents and criminals are involved in criminal gangs. But of the gangs on the militia records, only one had for “various reasons” been dissolved in 1995: The report sets forth:

To disband such groups is extremely difficult. This is due to the fact that in [Arkhangelsk] oblast there is one single special school [i.e. residential correctional institution] which has a capacity of only 80 pupils. The departure from upbringing work with the youth; [the departure of] societal organisations from prevention of juvenile delinquency; [as well as ] the reduction [in the number] of clubs and various activity circles for youngsters; is also considerably impacting [the level of] juvenile crime.<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>384</sup> GAAO, Fond 1137, opis' 1, del 40, list 34

<sup>385</sup> Ibid.

The above statement by a constituent member of the Commissions, the militia, is related to one of the most serious forms of child neglect, that is, minors involved in crime and criminal gangs. Through the militia report, KDN, and implicitly Russian authorities at large, actually make a number of interesting admissions. Together these admissions largely summarise the above discussion of the key indicators of KDN's work:

First, by presenting overwhelmingly incoherent and illogic information, and leaving it uncommented, the militia indirectly admits that it is not speaking the full truth. An example of this is the improbable claim that, in a context where heavy crimes almost doubled annually and the general societal crisis only widened, juvenile delinquency, combined with drinking, allegedly had declined from the previous year. Hence, the militia acknowledges that the tendency towards improvement is nothing but a result of low registration and low investigation rates. In other words, here is an example of the phenomenon of *latent crime*: The reality behind the obvious inconsistencies in the material is simply that the militia had not taken action in other criminal cases than the very serious ones, cases that just could not be ignored. This observation has a clear bearing on the issue of the official Russian statistics of the period: When first-line agencies like the militia, and for that case the principal child-protection institute, KDN, increasingly failed to do their job, the statistical data collected by these actors could reflect little more than the tip of the iceberg.

Second, the report admits relatively explicitly that the Russian child protection system did not possess the necessary resources even to deal with well-known child-neglect cases, such as for example, criminal youth gangs which were under surveillance. The reason that no action is taken by the law enforcement agency is that, in a region with 1.5 million inhabitants, there was only one special school where delinquents could be placed.

Third, and this is perhaps the most outstanding piece of information in the material; the memorandum of the militia attached to the 1995 annual report of KDN in Isakogorskii okrug in Arkhangelsk, does point, although cautiously, at an overall cause behind the problems the militia experienced with the youth. What is to blame is the breakdown of the Soviet-era network of after-school activities and the numerous volunteer community workers.

Closing the chapter, it can therefore be concluded that the primary sources linked to KDN's work, while largely confirming the main direction of the working hypotheses of the study, also brings important nuances to the analysis of how the inter-agency structure evolved from 1985-1996. We have observed a child protection institute that increasingly failed to take action on behalf of vulnerable children. The deterioration in KDN's performance is evident already by 1989, but increases dramatically after 1991. Or to put it differently, we have seen

evidence of a widening scissors effect: The magnitude of child-protection issues in the society and the level of KDN interventionism moved in different directions. Instead of demonstrating the ability to address the exploding number of child-neglect cases, the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors, which during the entire period under study was assigned the leading role in the era of child protection, imploded under the impact of the societal crisis.

# Chapter 7

## CONCLUSION

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### **Introduction**

The thesis moves from a narrative synthesis of issues pertaining to street children in the USSR from 1917 to 1985 (Chapter 2), to a detailed discussion of the general political determinants of child-neglect in Russia from 1985 to 1996 (Chapter 3). Combined, Chapters 2 and 3 constitute a historico-political backdrop against which to understand the emergence of mass child neglect around 1990. If these two chapters present *overall* determinants, Chapter 4 offers a survey of *specific* determinants of the evolving child-neglect crisis. Further, as a means of linking the analysis of the child-neglect environment, i.e., the causal level of the model studied (Chapters 2-4), with the actual manifestations of child neglect, i.e. the resultative level (Chapters 5-6), four working hypotheses are framed at the end of Chapter 4. These hypotheses are in turn assessed against empirical material stemming from normative and secondary sources and primary sources (Chapters 5 and 6).

Within this structural framework, the thesis pursues its overall research objective (i.e. to analyse the causality of the recent surge in the number of street children) and specific research objective (i.e. to assess the significance of the weakening and banning of the CPSU for the emergence of the third wave of street children in Russian history) by analysing how the two research topics at study - child neglect scale, and KDN capacity - evolved over time under the impact of the changing child-neglect environment.

Below follows a review of the main findings of this thesis. To start with, in order to indicate the general causal platform from which the phenomenon of street children of the 1990s emerged, the thesis offers a brief outline of the Soviet legacy in this respect. Thereafter, certain aspects of the working hypothesis with particular relevance for the research objectives of the thesis are discussed on the basis of the findings of the preceding chapters. This leads to consolidated reformulations of the hypotheses. Finally, outstanding research tasks are indicated before a few conclusive remarks are provided as to the degree to which the thesis has reached its objectives.

### **Soviet Legacy and child protection**

In periods when the USSR was hit by a severe crisis - be it self-inflicted or caused by external forces or nature - child vagrancy and homelessness tended to erupt as an open, festering

wound. In more quiet periods, child neglect as a social problem occurred rather with latent acuteness; so to speak concealed beneath the surface of society.

Prompted by diverse causes, cohorts of displaced children existed in Soviet Russia more or less continuously from the 1917 Revolution until the beginning of the 1950s. During most post-war decades, probably from the mid-fifties up to the end of the 1980s, it seems that mass child neglect in the form of roaming waifs largely disappeared and was met only occasionally and in small numbers.

Ideological dreams of seeing juvenile delinquency and other signs of child disadaptation dwindle, as Soviet society allegedly approached Communism, did not become reality. While post-war reconstruction and the (failed) endeavour “to catch up with and overtake” the West brought improvements for millions of people, Soviet society remained basically one of chronic shortages and enormous stress. Huge groups continued to live in cramped and sub-standard dwellings with little access to material and cultural benefits. If combined with the growing binge drinking that evolved over the post-war period, such circumstances could provide fertile ground for increased child abuse and neglect.

Decades of authoritarian Party monopoly on political and social initiatives in the USSR had resulted in an unprecedented degree of statism, arguably bolstering traditional passiveness and fatalism among Russians. The statism was reflected in the domain of child welfare in the dramatically increased state empowerment with regard to socialisation and education of children. It might be that the unprecedentedly strong state paternalism contributed to divesting some alcoholised parents of the last remnants of self-restraint: regardless how severely a child was subjected to harsh and careless treatment, the state was always there to take care of the child when the parents failed.

Acknowledging that child neglect was a problem that required strengthened efforts by the entire society if it was to be brought under control and ultimately reduced, the Party decided in 1961 to establish the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors (KDN). The aim of this key institute in the area of child protection was to coordinate community actors and relevant state agencies; initiate new working methods; but also implement practical mechanisms aimed at preventing, detecting and alleviating child neglect wherever it might appear.

### **Aspect 1 of the hypotheses: Analysis of the starting point of the research topics**

At the start of the work with this thesis, the assumption was that the Soviet child protection system, coordinated by KDN, functioned more or less adequately until the Party started to



lose its grip on Soviet society, that is, until around 1987. The degree of knowledge on the pre-Gorbachev period, as I had previously explored, did not therefore allow me to deduce assertions relative to the specific starting points for the two research topics when framing the working hypothesis for the period 1987-1991. Consequently, to specify the state of affairs by 1987, both in terms of child-neglect scale as well as KDN capacity, was a task that had to be dealt with as part of the review of the empirical material in Chapter 5 and 6.

Indeed, the scrutiny of normative documents and research literature in Chapter 5 provided important new information in this regard. In particular, the Decree of 1987 on “fundamental improvements” of the country’s child-protection system revealed “indifference” towards vulnerable children on the part of the Soviet society, including Party, State, community actors, as well as a significant number of parents of at-risk children. The abovementioned Decree therefore convincingly proved that the criminological visions of the 1950s and 60s had not materialised: modernisation of society (conf. building of “Communism”, later downgraded to “Developed Socialism”) had not resulted in a minimisation of problems like juvenile delinquency. On the contrary, the Decree cogently stated that child-neglect problems were unsatisfactorily handled, and that the Soviet child-protection system did not function in line with its intentions. As research literature additionally suggests, by 1987 child neglect and KDN-capacity failure had reached such a degree of acuteness that the number of street children was notable, albeit on a limited scale.

Therefore, by the time Gorbachev decided to move towards more radical reforms, the child-neglect and KDN challenges had become so grave that immediate improvements definitely were required in order to avoid an open crisis. Either hypothesis on the first subperiod (1987-1991) should therefore be fine-tuned. A new consolidated element should be added to these hypotheses:

*Already by 1987, the level of child-neglect and failing KDN capacity was so critical that a further economic downturn and organisational destabilisation would have to entail dramatic consequences.*

### **Aspect 2 of the hypotheses: Analysis of the research topics from 1987 - 1991**

The 1987 Decree demonstrated top Party determination to include the issue of child welfare into the country’s reform agenda. What is noticeable, however, is that the strategy offered to achieve improved conditions for vulnerable children this was one of traditional Soviet mobilising. It was therefore clear that the push towards upgrading of the country’s child protection and care system was entirely dependent on a reinvigorated system of Party-

managed community actors that, as shown in Chapters 5 and 6, already by the time of the Decree showed distinct signs of fatigue and disarray. Included in the campaign was also the call for Soviet enterprises to provide increased funding, through the *shefstvo* institute, to orphanages and other social schemes. In short, the huge social and financial investments, which were required to secure radically improved child welfare, could only become reality if the Soviet system and its economy gained new strength.

However, at the same time as the 1987 Decree was launched, Gorbachev introduced the most fateful element in his reforms: *Glasnost*. Whatever had been its original intentions, the Glasnost policy soon turned into an avalanche of criticism against present and past Soviet practices. In particular representatives of non-Russian nationalities used this opening to invoke old and new grievances. Perhaps the Union could have survived this sudden awakening of nationalist fervour and non-conformist onslaught that now followed, that is, if the economy were strong or at least in a stage of recovery. But as both Chapter 3 and 4 substantiate, the opposite was definitely the case. Increasing political turbulence and conflicts accelerated economic disintegration and fuelled discontent. The Soviet Union soon faltered on the brink of financial insolvency. The Party, instead of setting the agenda for the country, became disorganised and was pressed into a corner. Very soon, following the failed coup of August 1991, both the Party and the whole Union were formally dissolved. This meant that any plan aimed at improving the country's system for provision of child protection and care, like the Decree of 1987, was doomed to fail. The societal crisis that evolved, first slowly, then accelerating, gave no space for improvement of children's living conditions. On the contrary, the thesis has provided evidence of deteriorated values of a number of child-neglect indicators after 1987.

Encapsulating the period from 1987 until 1989, it must first of all be emphasised that the pressure on Soviet child welfare was dramatic already by 1987. Importantly, this year was the point of time when the anti-alcohol campaign lost its impetus and people again began to drink more. The year 1987 was furthermore the point of time when Glasnost pushed away the largely deceiving ideological curtains that people had been living behind for decades, entailing a surge of non-conformism and defiance in society. Simultaneously, Gorbachev did not manage to deliver on the promises he had made, creating widespread frustration and hopelessness. The Soviet Union remained in a state of economic and social stagnation brought upon the country and its people by the failed policies of previous leaders. The combination of these factors might explain both why vulnerable children became increasingly exposed to

risks in their families, but also why KDN failed to respond to the growing number of neglected children in an adequate fashion.

After 1989, the economic slump, along with growing organisational disorder (following the erosion of Party-based government) and territorial disintegration led to a dramatic speeding up of the processes that had been discernible from 1987. Chapter 3 and 4 demonstrates the correlative development between faltering political leadership, on the one hand, and economical and social deterioration, on the other. As part of this, drinking soon reached pre-Gorbachev levels. However, in a context of economic collapse, galloping inflation, incipient mass unemployment and corrosion of Soviet social-welfare schemes, the social costs of alcohol abuse became incomparably more serious than before for the society and in particular more detrimental for at-risk children. Chapter 5 traces manifestations of growing child neglect after 1989 and states, among other things, that in cities like Leningrad there were already observed more substantial concentrations of vagrant children.

Primary sources stemming from KDN's work (scrutinised in Chapter 6), can only provide limited evidence as to the real scope and trend of child neglect after 1989. As argued, the decreasing organisational coherency and reduced discipline in society gave rise to a more distinct *scissors effect*. Although the KDN-primary sources examined may allow for conflicting interpretations, the prevailing tendency is nevertheless that the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors demonstrated a reduced level of activities.

In other words, the *bank-run* mentality, which spread amongst asset-holding *nomenklaturchiks* as the Party withdrew from its commando posts, was presumably echoed in the social sector as well. Once strictly Party-managed, also social agencies and institutes like KDN were increasingly impacted by collapsing instruction and monitoring mechanisms. But contrary to those who found themselves in marketable enterprises when the collapse set in, social workers and administrators had few if any hard assets that could be acquired. Nonetheless, in an increasingly crisis-ridden and individualised context, underperformance at work or merely ignoring one's job duties could also be considered as a gain.

The empirical material provides evidence of an increasingly anaemic KDN after 1989, substantiating that the growing number of children who were neglected were also ignored by the child protection establishment of the Soviet-Russian society. As Chapter 5 and 6 further demonstrates, the time span 1987-1989, as well as 1989-1991, represented a more negative trend for both research topics under scrutiny than the one postulated in the original working hypotheses. It is evidence to state that the organisational disintegration of the society

increased the negative effects of the socio-economic downturn. Consequently, either hypothesis on the first subperiod (1987-1991) must be sharpened:

*Over the period 1987-1989, the negative child-protection trend observed by 1987 could not be halted. Moreover, both the scale of child neglect and the capacity of KDN were negatively impacted by continued societal stagnation, mounting frustration, and growing organisational paralysation.*

*Over the period 1989-1991, the economic and organisational foundation under the Soviet society started, so to speak, to cave in. No functional replacement was provided. This led to an upsurge in social problems, including a significant rise in the child-neglect scale. The operational voltage of the omnipresent, Party-managed spider web, which controlled Soviet society, was rapidly reduced before it was fully disconnected. Formerly Party-managed societal institutes like KDN were increasingly left on their own, under-resourced and demoralised.*

### **Aspect 3 of the hypotheses: Analysis of the research topics from 1992-1996**

The expectation of improved living conditions that was raised among millions of Russians was undoubtedly the main reason for Yeltsin's popularity when he emerged as the main contender to Gorbachev's impoverished and discredited Soviet regime. The converted Soviet *apparatchik* did indeed promise that his reforms soon should lift people out of the social impasse. Improved child welfare was one of the items included in his reform platform already before Yeltsin took over the full reins of power in Russia after the aborted coup of August 1991.

Rhetorically, Yeltsin's revolution was formulated with a strong democratic and humanitarian appeal. This increased the risk of a boomerang effect, both psychologically and politically, if the *first* post-Soviet Russian president failed to deliver, just as the *last* Soviet leader had failed. And the backlash came indeed very soon: With the liberalisation of prices, privatisation and mass unemployment, most people immediately found themselves deeply mired in poverty, but probably also deprived of their last illusions that progress was possible. Encouraged to see the popularity of the Russian president dwindling by the day, the Supreme Soviet (i.e. the yet existing Soviet-era legislature of the Russian Federation) went for a frontal attack of the Yeltsin regime and its policies. The dynamics of politics therefore prompted Yeltsin to resort to heavy-handed measures to stay in power. A new Russian authoritarianism emerged from his violent dissolution of the uncooperative Supreme Soviet, election

manipulations, and an increasingly narrow power base. It was evident that Yeltsin could only be kept afloat with support from the new ‘possessing classes’ led by oligarchs who obviously had little or no regard for the social conditions of the majority population.

In terms of political and administrative management under Yeltsin, most former Party nomenklaturchiks largely remained in place. Since August 1991 and the abrupt abolition of one organisational principle without replacement by a functioning new one, revamped ex-Soviet bosses and managers at central and local level were freed from any ideological imperative, and, to a considerable extent, also from effective vertical control.

With the dramatic economic downturn since 1989 and the endemic shortages of even basic consumer goods, post-Soviet Russia, both at state and family level, had no reserves to draw upon when heading towards the total societal implosion that was to come when the Shock Therapy was launched in early 1992. Chapter 4 brings incontestable evidence that a strong economic and social downturn was under way already in 1991, for so to be transformed into an abysmal societal collapse in 1992.

This development provides the causal background for the deterioration that occurred in the life of at-risk children. As hosts of parents were hit by the crisis and responded with increased drinking, their children were those who had to bear the brunt of the shock. With a collapsing child-protection network, more and more children capitulated before the mounting viciousness that faced them. Groups of minors who had resorted to life on the streets during the last couple of years of the Soviet era were therefore now joined by much larger numbers of children who fled poverty, cruelty, hopelessness and lack of supervision in their homes, or in impoverished, derelict, and perhaps brutal children’s institutions.

As said, the effectiveness of the formerly Party-controlled social welfare schemes plunged. Chapter 5 provides broad documentation of an unreformed KDN institute that after 1991 was left without attention and support from the society while the number of child-neglect cases rose dramatically. Only sporadic, inconsistent and resultless legal initiatives were taken to overhaul a child-protection institute that was increasingly out of touch with the new realities.

As far as the post-1991 years are concerned, there was a striking absence of data, also concerning the work of KDN. This fact may of course be related to the degree of disorder in archive procedures that prevailed in Russia during the chaotic 1990s. But it may also be a confirmation of the suggestion found in the literature, namely that KDN, due to the legal and organisational turmoil, in certain places went into a dormant mode. For the thesis it has been possible to access documentation related to KDN’s work in two Russian regions, Leningrad/

Saint Petersburg and Arkhangelsk. Concerning the period after 1991, Chapter 6 brings evidence of a wholesale reduction in the level of KDN interventionism pertaining to all seven key indicators scrutinised: the number of children assessed, runaway or vagrancy cases registered, cases of minors with drinking problems, minors referred to correctional or other residential institutions, parents placed on KDN record, parents deprived of their parental rights, volunteer social workers involved in KDN's activities. The minor variances that were observed in the material were probably due to insignificant and unsustained *variation factors*. The thesis has come to the conclusion that, already by the advent of Gorbachev, a child protection crisis was under way. A more serious crisis, however, erupted with the collapsing Soviet Union. This fact requires a sharpening of the assertions of the hypothesis pertaining to the second sub-period of the thesis, 1992-1996.

*Already by late 1991, mass child neglect and substantial KDN dysfunctionality had become an undisputable fact. The abrupt plunge in people's living standard combined with the organisational paralysation that occurred following the Shock Therapy, which in turn only widened over the ensuing years, threw millions of people into abject poverty. Large segments of crisis-ridden parents turned to alcohol or drugs and evidently went into a psychological trance whereby the fate of their children appeared as more or less irrelevant. The society, on its part, had neither resources, nor resolve, to intervene in order to rescue abused, vagrant and homeless children from the destructive and hazardous life on the street.*

### **Final remarks**

The thesis has provided merely a vague suggestion as to the real scope of the child neglect of the period (as well as of the organisational failure represented by the collapse of the KDN institute). Certainly, when it comes to estimating the number of vagrant and homeless children in the 1990s – i.e. whether there were hundreds of thousands or even millions of them – this must be left to future research. What is obvious, however, is that this will be a formidable task. The lack of substantial statistics in this field is definitely associated with the increasing latent crime of the period, which must be understood in light of the phenomenon of organisational breakdown and fragmentation which I have focused on in this thesis. In particular the work of the militia - the first-line agency in the encounter between authorities and abused, delinquent and vagrant children – was strongly affected by this trend. In effect, unlawful behaviour *by* minors (e.g. vagrancy and delinquency), or *towards* them (e.g. negligence and abuse) might in numerous cases have escaped primary recording due to poor

militia performance. A future estimate of the real extent of street children in the 1990s will therefore most probably have to rely on indirect methods in order to reach results.

Earlier surges in the number of street children in Russian history were caused by dramatic cataclysms like war, state violence, and natural catastrophes. The wave of street children that started to evolve during the Gorbachev period, for so to explode under Yeltsin, was more a result of leadership failure to deal with a systemic crisis that evolved without disasters or violent conflicts (the Cold War aside). The thesis contends that the degree of ill-preparedness and the lack of foresightedness on the part of the authorities constituted the overall cause for the unprecedented social crisis that emerged from the reforms, of which the new wave of street children was the most appalling humanitarian tragedy.

However required it might be, in Russia there seems hitherto to be few indications that serious research is underway regarding the circumstances of the last street-children wave. It might be that the problem is too actual and therefore politically inconvenient to address.

Obviously, enhanced attention towards the tragic fate of those who carried the heaviest burden of the failures and indifference of Russian politicians and the society at large will bring little credit to Russia, its leaders and people. If this is correct, we can observe that elements of Soviet-era traditions still are alive: If problems of extreme and massive child neglect (*besprizornost*) are caused by Russia's own policies, this does not trigger openness and mass mobilisation to bring relief to the victims.

The thesis has addressed its *overall research objective* in a way that has rendered the causal relationship between the two main levels of the *research model* overwhelmingly plausible: While the broader historic and political child-neglect determinants painted a general causal background for the economic and social processes studied, the detailed review of the increasingly negative causal factors at family level demonstrated the power with which the immediate child-neglect determinants directly impacted children's lives. At the *resultative level* of the research model, the thesis traced sources of manifested child neglect that evidently correlated with the identified negative changes at the causal level. The secondary sources thus documented - although incompletely and fragmentarily - both the incipient deterioration under Gorbachev, as well as, subsequently, the dramatic aggravation of children's condition that followed Yeltsin's policies. Concurrently, both secondary and primary sources provided evidence of an increasingly disorganised child-protection system, fully corresponding with

the tendencies of disintegration and lawlessness at the political level of society. In particular the primary sources pertaining to KDN's work bore testimony of a progressively collapsing social interventionism on the part of Russian authorities. The thesis therefore largely substantiated that the failure of the system-straddling KDN institute to take action on behalf of neglected minors added force to the social storm that blew crowds of children onto the streets.

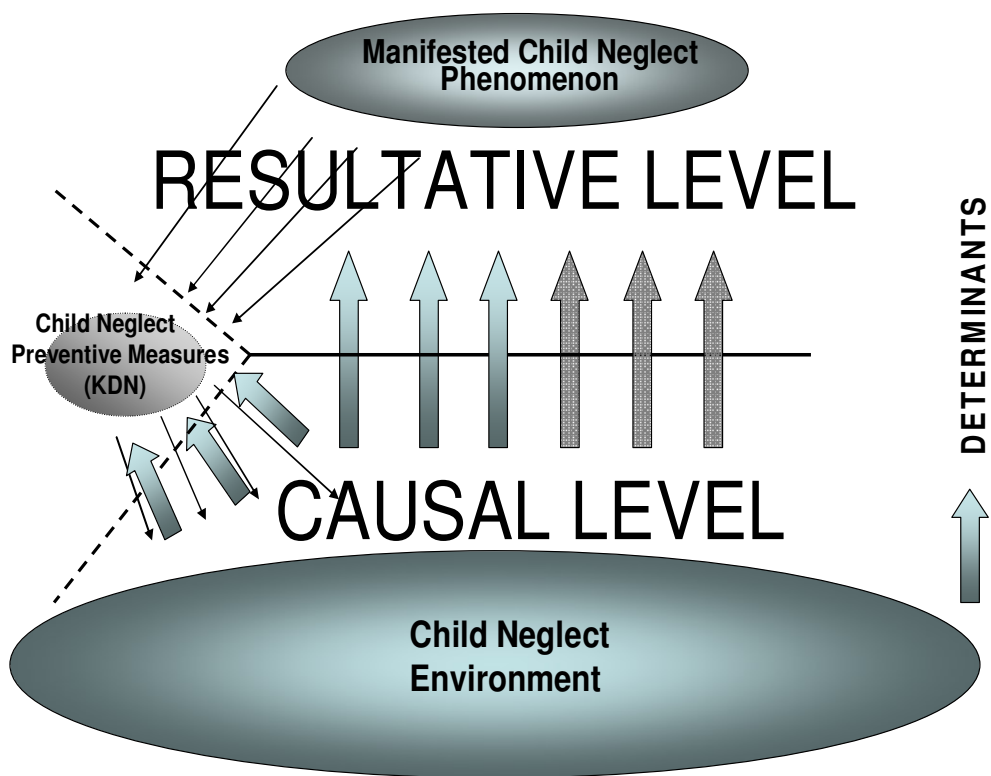
As far as the *specific research objective* is concerned, the thesis has argued both logically as well as corroborated through evidence that the collapse and dissolution of the state-bearing Party, CPSU, hastened the centrifugal and disintegrating processes not only of the Soviet state as such (which is beyond any doubt), but also of the country's societal institutes, such as the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors. Without a new, unifying organisational principle and shared value system in place, and without the restrictions that the Party had imposed on its office holders - perquisites and insider rule notwithstanding - the abrupt removal of the Party manifestly prompted increased disorder in society. Years of authoritarian conformism, ideological opportunism and eternal shortages, combined with a growing distrust in the future, had evidently prepared the ground for impetuous and short-sighted greed. In any event, this was what evidently characterised the behaviour of them who, all of a sudden, emerged in a position to act virtually unrestrained. For the New Russians, there was little regard neither for Russia's historic interests, nor for its population, the vulnerable children included.



# ANNEXES

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## Annex 1:            **Research Model – Child Neglect Flow Chart**



## Annex 2:      **Child-Neglect Indicator Table (confer Annex 1)**

Examples of possible indicators relative to the Causal and Resultative levels, as well as to the “Dual” level: Child-Neglect Preventive Measures

<b>1. Indicators of child neglect determinants</b>			
<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Component</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Source of information</b>
Stability vs. breakdown of society	-Predictability in society -War and violent conflicts -Natural disasters -Massive state violence -Socio-economic collapse	- Level of political volatility and overall tendency towards socio-economic deterioration - Massive population displacement - Epidemics and massive dead - Breakdown of societal infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• political analysis</li> <li>• statistics</li> <li>• research</li> <li>• publications</li> <li>• interviews</li> </ul>
Economic situation	-Macro economic deterioration -Employment rates -Purchase power of population	-GDP per capita -Number of children in unemployed families -Number of children living under subsistence level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statistics</li> <li>• research</li> <li>• publications</li> <li>• interviews</li> </ul>
Family situation	-Parental status  -Family safety  -Parental responsibility  -Housing conditions	- Divorce rate - Number of single-headed households - Alcohol abuse, number of cases - Drug addition, number of cases - Incidence of domestic violence, sexual abuse -Number of child abandonment -Incidence of deprivation of parental right -Number of children living in sub-standard housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statistics</li> <li>• research</li> <li>• publications</li> <li>• interviews</li> <li>• NGOs</li> </ul>
Child Safety	- In schools - In children’s institutions - In relation to other authorities	- Incidence of violence against children and child abuse -Police child abuse, incidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statistics</li> <li>• research</li> <li>• NGOs</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>
Cultural factors	-Public services  -Corporate sector  -Civil Society  -Psychology factors	-funding level -reporting requirements -level of professionalism and integrity -number of non-state enterprises -tradition of corporate social responsibility -characterisation law-abidingness in the business sector -number of CV humanitarian/charitable organisations -number of employed/volunteers in CS organisations -characterisation of individual value systems (empathy, <i>initiativeness</i> ), - level of entrepreneurial creativity in the population (vs. state paternalism)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statistics/ reports/legislation</li> <li>• research, including sociological and psychological studies</li> <li>• fictional literature</li> <li>• interviews</li> </ul>

## 2. Indicators of manifested child neglect and homelessness

Dimension	Component	Indicators	Source of information
Dropouts/ runaways	-Related to schools  -Related to private homes -Related to children's institutions/penitentiary institutions	-Number of reported missing minors -Number of unclosed dropout cases -Number of individual cases processed by KDN -Number and categories of sanctions and placements -Estimates of underreporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• general public statistics</li> <li>• child welfare organisations (e.g.KDN)</li> <li>• police data</li> <li>• research organisations and individual researchers</li> </ul>
Juvenile delinquency	-Alcohol misuse -Inhalants misuse -Drug misuse -Petty juvenile offences -Serious juvenile crime	-Number of minors brought in to police stations -Number of minors in Receiver/Distribution stations (MVD-militia) -Number of cases processed legally, children convicted -Number of individual cases processed by KDN -Number and categories sanctions and arrangements -Estimates of underreporting (latency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information from individual schools, children's institutions</li> <li>• information from health institutions/health personnel</li> </ul>
Observed homeless minors	-Child Beggars -Stray and vagrant children -Children sleeping at odd places -Health problems -Crime committed against street children	-Number of minors brought to police stations -Number of minors in Reciever/Distribution stations (Priemiki/raspredelitli) -Number of individual cases processed by KDN -Number and categories of sanctions incl. placement applied towards minors -Estimates of underreporting (latency) - Specific social organisation of street children communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NGO data</li> <li>• News, Media</li> <li>• Interviews with children</li> <li>• Interviews with observers/public</li> <li>• Imaginary literature/films</li> </ul>

**3. Indicators of child neglect preventive measures. (Exemplified by the work of the Commissions for the Affairs of Minors - KDN)**

Dimension	Component	Indicators	Source of information
<p>Handling of individual child neglect cases</p> <p>Coordination of state organs in child neglect prevention</p> <p>Involving non-state actors in child neglect prevention</p>	<p>Capacity to follow up real case load of child neglect</p> <p>-Quality of follow-up work of individual cases</p> <p>-Responsiveness to changing external conditions</p>	<p>-Total number of handled cases by KDN</p> <p>-Surveys of how cases are brought to KDN</p> <p>-Estimates of total child neglect cases</p> <p>-Time and resources spent on each child neglect case</p> <p>-Qualitative assessment of actions taken by KDN in each individual case</p> <p>-Amount of monitoring carried out by KDN regarding implementation of the decisions it has taken</p> <p>-Amount of monitoring by KDN of impact on neglected children of actions taken</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KDN material related its meetings and publication</li> <li>• Material related to organisation statutory taken part in KDN (MVD - militia), school, health, social service etc) and other involved parties</li> <li>• research organisations and individual researchers</li> <li>• Interviews with participants KDN's work as well as with other stakeholders</li> </ul>
	<p>-Capacity of state actors</p>	<p>-Time and resources spent by KDN in analysing the evolving child neglect situation and on that basis elaborating proposals to state organs</p> <p>-Number of initiatives taken towards state organs in terms of proposing revised/improved approaches to child neglect preventive work</p> <p>-Amount of monitoring by KDN of state organs preventive work</p> <p>-Amount of monitoring by KDN of state organs day-to-day work with neglected children (children's institutions, schools, MVD institutions etc)</p>	
	<p>-Role of "non-governmental" organisations in the child-protection work</p> <p>-Role of individual persons in preventive child neglect work</p>	<p>-Number of public (obshchestvennye) organisations taking part in KDNs work</p> <p>-Quality assessment of child neglect preventive work done by obshchestvennye org</p> <p>-Number of volunteer social workers (shefy, obshchestvennye vospitateli etc) involved in KDNs work</p> <p>-Quality assessment of child neglect preventive work by individuals</p>	

### **Annex III: Estimates of total alcohol consumption per capita<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Estimates of total alcohol consumption per capita**

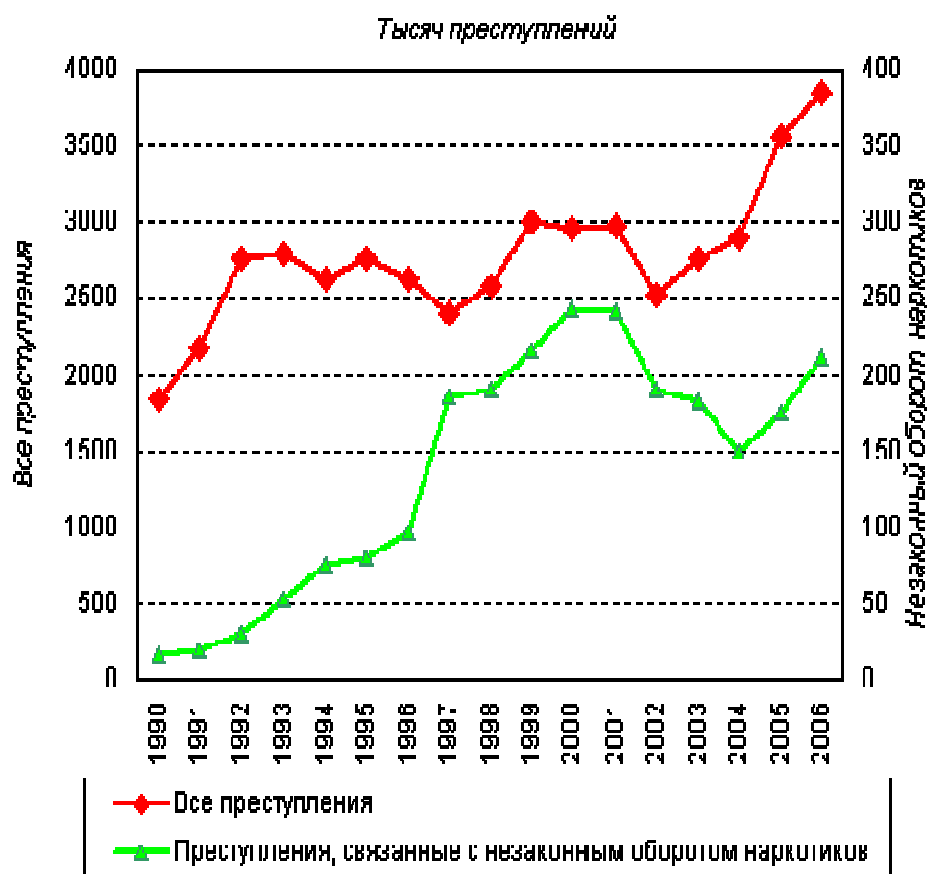
1. Year	2. Official Sales	3. Column 2 + samogon	4. Nemtsov	5. Treml	6. Average of estimates	7. Average above 15 yrs
1975	9,88			13,1		
1980	10,51	13,5		14	13,8	17,6
1984	10,45	13,8	14,63	14,25	14,2	18,3
1985	8,8	12,3	13,31	13,3	13	16,8
1986	5,17	10,2	10,77	10,57	10,5	13,6
1987	3,9	10	10,96	10,7	10,6	13,8
1988	4,4	8,3	11,57	11,2	11,4	14,8
1989	5,29	8,7	12,04	11,66	11,9	15,3
1990	5,56		12,29	11,76	12,2	15,6
1991	5,57		12,67	12,27	12,5	15,9
1992	5,01		13,23	13,81	13,5	17,9
1993	5,00		13,9	14,43	14,2	18,6
1994	6,8		14,6		14,6	19,0
1995	6,5					
1996	7,2					
1997	7,5					
1999	7,6		14,5			

Additional comments to Annex II: Column 2 – official Soviet/Russian statistics on alcohol consumption; Column 3– official figures (column 2) plus official estimates of moonshine; Column 4 - estimates by the Russian researcher Nemtsov; Column 5 – estimates by the researcher Treml; Column 6 – average per capita consumption of several estimates calculated by Demoscope; Column 7 – same as under Column 6, but calculated as an estimate for all Russian persons above 16 years of age

<sup>1</sup>The table is based on: *Demoscope Weekly*, No 19-20, 2001, (a Russian Internet journal supported, among others, by UNFPA and UNESCO) <http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/019/tema01.php> (2.8.2008)

**Annex IV: Alcohol- and Drug-related figures (Figures 1-4)**

**Figure 1. Correlation between the total number of crimes and drug related crimes, Russia 1990-2006. In thousand crimes.<sup>2</sup>**



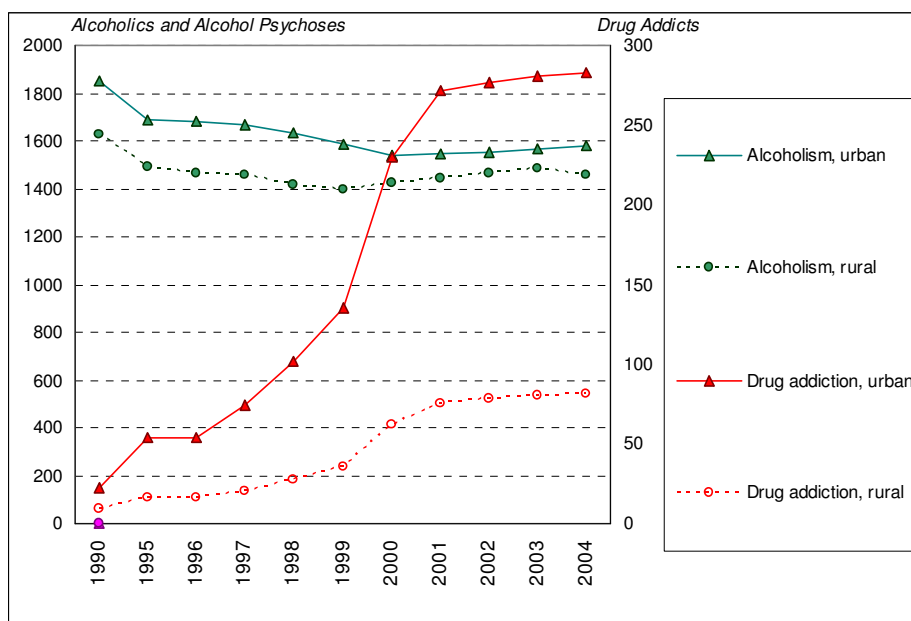
Y-Axis/left: number of general crimes per 100 000 inhabitants; Y-axis/right: Number of cases of drug related crime; X-Axis: time line.

Lower, Green Graph: Number of drug-related crimes. (point of orientation: from the right).

Upper, Red Graph: Total number of crimes (point of orientation - from the left);

<sup>2</sup>The figure is reproduced from an article by Yekaterina Shcherbakova: In the *Demoskop Weekly*; (No 297-98, August – September 2007) <http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2007/0297/barom01.php> (2.8.2008)

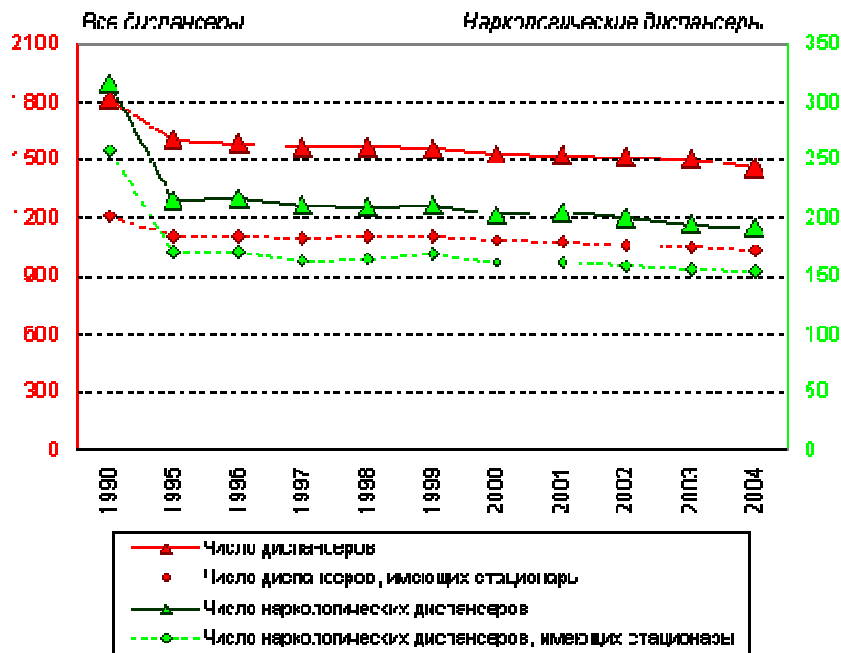
**Figure 2. Number of urban and rural alcoholics/alcohol psychoses as well as of drug addicts per 100 000 inhabitants in Russia, 1990 - 2004.**<sup>3</sup>



Number of persons registered in curative and prophylactic health institutions with diagnosis as shown in the definition box below.

<sup>3</sup> Yekaterina Shcherbakova: In the *Demoskop Weekly*; (No 297-98, August – September 2007) <http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2007/0297/barom03.php> (2.8.2008)

**Figure 3. Number of all special hospitals and special polyclinics; including number of narcological hospitals <sup>4</sup>**



Definition of the graphs from above:

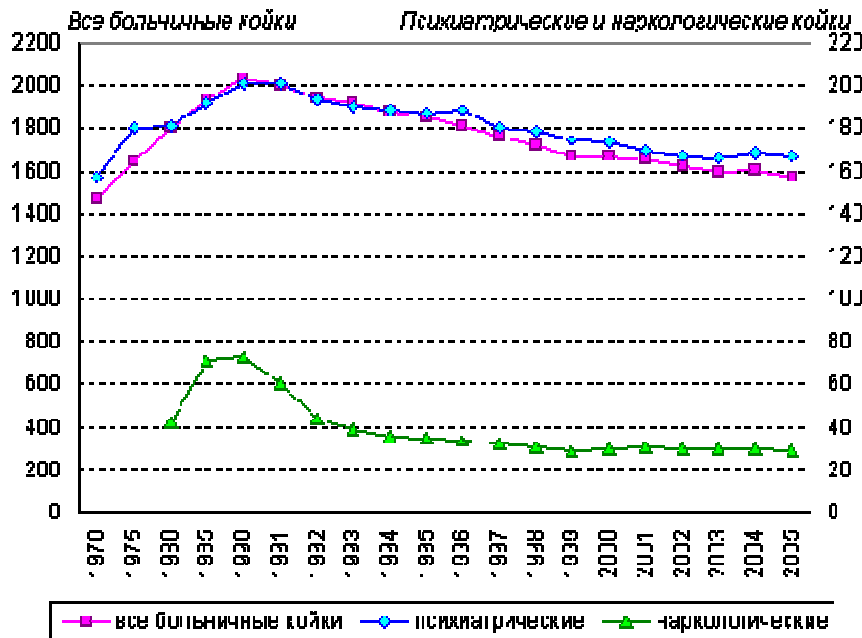
1. Total number of all special hospitals; (to be read from the left)
2. Total number of special hospitals with polyclinics (to be read from the left)
3. Total number of specialised narcological hospitals (to be read from the right)
4. Total number of specialised narcological hospitals with polyclinics (to be read from the right)

Y-Axis/left: Total number of all specialised hospitals; Y-axis/right: Total number of all specialised hospitals; X-Axis: time line.

<sup>4</sup>Shcherbakova, Yekaterina 2007: *Demoskop Weekly*, (No 297-98, August – September 2007) <http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2007/0297/barom04.php> (2.8.2008)



Figure 4: Number of hospital beds, including psychiatric and narcological hospital beds<sup>5</sup>



Definition of the graphs from the left:

1. Total number of all special hospitals beds; (to be read from the left)
2. Total number of psychiatric hospitals beds (to be read from the right)
3. Total number of narcological hospitals beds (to be read from the right)

Y-Axis/left: Total number of all hospitals beds;

Y-axis/right: Total number of psychiatric and narcological hospital beds;

X-Axis: time line.

<sup>5</sup>Shcherbakova, Yekaterina 2007: *Demoskop Weekly*, (No 297-98, August – September 2007) <http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2007/0297/barom04.php> (2.8.2008)

**Annex V:****Single-Headed Families <sup>6</sup>**

	p 181							
	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Crude marriage rate (marriages per 1,000 mid-year population)	9,4	8,9	8,6	7,1	7,5	7,3	7,3	5,9
General divorce rate (per 100 marriages)	42,1	42,4	46,8	60,7	59,9	63,0	61,9	64,9
Rate of children affected by parental divorce (per 1,000 population aged 0-17)	11,9	11,6	13,1	14,3	15,2	15,9	15,4	12,5
Share of non-marital births (% of total live births)	13,5	14,6	16,0	17,1	18,2	19,6	21,1	23,0

<sup>6</sup>UNICEF. *The MONEE Project. A Decade of Transition. Regional Monitoring Report*. Florence: Unicef, 2001, 181, [http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/monee8/eng/monee8\\_annex.pdf](http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/monee8/eng/monee8_annex.pdf),

## **Annex VI: Alternative Placement Capacity (in percent of 1989 level) <sup>7</sup>**

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Children in residential care (in 1,000s)	505	496	447	430	413	417	428	437
<b>p 150</b>								
Rate of children in residential care (per 100,000 population aged 0-17)	1254	1234	1116	1083	1057	1083	1133	1184
<b>p151</b>								
Rate of children in infant homes (per 100,000 population aged 0-3)	207	210	218	237	264	290	317	337
<b>p151</b>								
Children in care of foster parents or guardians (in 1,000s)	174	171	180	191	201	226	253	278
<b>p152</b>								
Rate of children in care of foster parents or guardians (per 100,000 pop. 0-17)	433	425	452	483	519	589	672	757
<b>p152</b>								
Gross adoption rate (per 100,000 population aged 0-3)	130	141	153	179	216	252	226	214
<b>Children taken care of by others than own parents (per 100,000, aged 0-17)</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>1938</b>	<b>1982</b>	<b>2055</b>	<b>2215</b>	<b>2348</b>	<b>2492</b>
<b>Children taken care of beyond own parents, as percent of 1989 level</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>123</b>

<sup>7</sup>UNICEF. *The MONEE Project. A Decade of Transition. Regional Monitoring Report*. Florence: Unicef, 2001, 150-152, [http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/monee8/eng/monee8\\_annex.pdf](http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/monee8/eng/monee8_annex.pdf).

## Annex VII: Indicator Survey, KALININSKII RAION, 1995-1991; 1996-1998<sup>8</sup>

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1996	1997	1998
<b>DATA ON MINORS</b>										
Minors assessed by KDN, number	842	794	880	808	669	665	572	328	546	817
Above figures in percentage of 1985 level	100 %	94 %	105 %	96 %	79 %	79 %	68 %	78 %	65 %	97 %
Of these at work	80	90	127	175	140	139	74	16	24	24
Of these not working and not studying	42	36	52	56	40	65	90	38		135
Boys	639	623	684	652	519	523	430	270	461	614
Girls	203	171	196	156	150	142	142	58	85	203
Minors below 11 years of age	3	3	11	10		6	7	6	36	46
Minors between 11 and 14 years of age	138	155	152	97	80	124	110	66	127	311
Minors consuming spirits	140	149	149	115	155	167	155	82	171	76
Above figures in percentage of 1985 level	100 %	106 %	106 %	82 %	111 %	119 %	111 %	117 %	122 %	54 %
Minors using drugs	10	12	27	10	3	2	3	9	29	18
Above figures in percentage of 1985 level	100 %	120 %	270 %	100 %	30 %	20 %	30 %	180 %	290 %	180 %
Escapes from home/after 1996 from TsVINP	42	37	54	36	24	42	21	26	22	3
Above figures in percentage of 1985 level	100 %	88 %	129 %	86 %	57 %	100 %	50 %	124 %	52 %	7 %
Toxicomania									23	18
Minors on MVD records for delinquency	956	928	1047	980	881	1078	1039	1180	1099,5	951
Above figures in percentage of 1985 level	100 %	97 %	110 %	103 %	92 %	113 %	109 %	123 %	115 %	99 %
Of these are going to school/studying	773	703	728	656	509	730	0	852	918,5	801
...working	156	194	296	301	311	314	223	118	79	54
...not working, not studying	27	31	23	23	31	34	104	110	102	96
Involved in		684	611	611	393	393				
No of cases, delinquency	4211	4387	4124	3462	3645	3296	2695		0	
Above figures in percentage of 1985 level	100 %	104 %	98 %	82 %	87 %	78 %	64 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
No of cases, crime	267	260	266	287	276	255	293		0	
Above figures in percentage of 1985 level	100 %	97 %	100 %	107 %	103 %	96 %	110 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Total of apology, warning, reprimand, fee	478	470	536	707	978	377	0	26	379	435
Employment of minors by the KDN referral		670	755	1366	1056	997	390			
E. Placed under public supervision	10	9	6	3	2	2	2			
Conditionally referred to correctional institutions	0	241	239	188	130	105	86	24	34	25

<sup>8</sup> The material is from, KDN, Kalininskii raion ( TsGASP).

1985-1991: Fond – 4738; Opis’ – 8; Delo -748, 795, 837, 905, 974, 1046, 113.

The material on 1996-1998 is received directly from the administration of the raion.

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1996	1997	1998
Actually referred to correctional institutions	27	63	38	34	28	18	3	0	9	2
Above figures in percentage of 1985 level	100 %	233 %	141 %	126 %	104 %	67 %	11 %	0 %	33 %	7 %
<b>DATA ON FAMILIES</b>										
Number of families on KDN record	583	208	208	203	157	186	231	684	656,5	434
Above figures in percentage of 1985 level	100 %	36 %	36 %	35 %	27 %	32 %	40 %	117 %	113 %	74 %
Public reprimand	6	5	-	-	-	-	-			0
Total compensation and fines	213	194	175	140	130	141	235	41		311
Referred for comrade court	13	48	7	-	-	-	-			
Number of home eviction order	38	95	4	30	14					
Families actually evicted from their homes	20	29	4	14	5					
Parental insane order	32	37	26	9		1				
Number of parents found insane	32	37		9		1				
No of deprivation of parental rights orders	59	103	32	40	24	12	5			
Families actually derived of parental rights	52	52	17	30	14	5	5			
Above figures in percentage of 1985 level	100 %	100 %	33 %	58 %	27 %	10 %	10 %	0 %		0 %
Number of child removal order		9	1		11	3		24		
No of children removed from their families		7	1		11	3				
<b>DATA ON KDN ORGANISATION</b>										
Checked of educational work, numbers		9	2?	Hb	15	8	2			
No of KDN sessions throughout the year	28	28	26	22	20	14	16	17		32
Educational issues analysed		2	3	2	2	1	1			
Number of inspections of child facilities	27	19	25	24	12	14	6	81		
No of general preventive issues discussed		23	21	25	15	5	9			
Received reports on preventive work	20	8	11	13	15	8	2			
No of functioning public inspections on minors	7									
Shef's working with the youth	103	856	121	306	233	506	-			
Social educators available	103	671	860	618	408	99	65			
Total number of voluntary social workers	206	1527	981	924	641	605	65	0	0	0
Above figures in percentage of 1985 level	100 %	741 %	476 %	449 %	311 %	294 %	32 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Social educators available, in reserve	23	25	26	30	20	10	-			
Clubs and activity centres	11									
Number of extra-school facilities		21								
Social teachers	66									

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1. Annual reports, KDN of, Kalininskii raion (Leningrad/Saint Petersburg):  
(Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sankt Petersburga - TsGASP)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fond</b>	<b>Opis'</b>	<b>Delo</b>
1985	4793	8	748
1986	4793	8	795
1987	4793	8	837
1988	4793	8	905
1989	4793	8	974
1990	4793	8	1046
1991	4793	8	1113

2. Annual reports, KDN of Kalininskii raion for the period after 1996 (to 2005) are seen in copies (provided by the administration of Kalininskii Raion)

3. Annual reports, KDN of Oktiabrskii raion (Leningrad/Saint Petersburg):  
(Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sankt Petersburga - TsGASP)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fond</b>	<b>Opis'</b>	<b>Delo</b>
1989	4914	8	205
1990	4914	8	434
1992	5838	1	45
1993	5838	1	88

4. Annual reports, KDN of Leninskii raion (Leningrad/Saint Petersburg):  
(Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sankt Petersburga - TsGASP)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fond</b>	<b>Opis'</b>	<b>Delo</b>
1989	4900	5	43
1990	4900	5	108
1991	4900	5	168
1992/I	5835	1	104
1993	5835	1	187

5. Files from sessions of Krasnoarmeiskii KDN's work (Leningrad/Saint Petersburg):  
(Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sankt Petersburga - TsGASP)

1989	3539	1	947
1990	3539	1	1033
1991	3539	1	1072

6. Consolidated annual reports, KDN of the raions and okrugs (Arkhangelsk city) of Arkhangelsk oblast. (Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti - GAAO)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fond</b>	<b>Opis'</b>	<b>Delo</b>
1975	2063	2	2366-7
1985	2063	2	5193-4
1986	2063	2	5372-3
1987	2063	2	5555-6
1988	2063	2	5694-5

7. Annual reports, KDN of Oktiabrskii okrug (Arkhangelsk city):  
(Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti - GAAO)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fond</b>	<b>Opis'</b>	<b>Delo</b>
1985	2063	2	5194
1986	2063	2	5373
1987	2063	2	5556
1988	2063	2	5695

8. Annual reports, KDN of Solombal'ski okrug (Arkhangelsk city)  
(Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti - GAAO)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fond</b>	<b>Opis'</b>	<b>Delo</b>
1985	2063	2	5194
1986	2063	2	5373
1987	2063	2	5556
1988	2063	2	5695

9. Annual reports, KDN of Primorskii raion (Arkhangelsk oblast)  
(Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti - GAAO)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fond</b>	<b>Opis'</b>	<b>Delo</b>
1985	2063	2	5194
1986	2063	2	5373
1987	2063	2	5556

10. Annual reports, KDN of Severodvinskii raion (Arkhangelsk oblast)  
(Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti - GAAO)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fond</b>	<b>Opis'</b>	<b>Delo</b>
1985	2063	2	5194
1986	2063	2	5373
1987	2063	2	5556
1988	2063	2	5695

11. Annual reports, KDN of Isakogorskii okrug (Arkhangelsk city)  
(Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti - GAAO)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fond</b>	<b>Opis'</b>	<b>Delo</b>
1985	2063	2	5194, list 107
1986	2063	2	5373, list 150
1987	2063	2	5556, list 159
1988	2063	2	5695, list 107
1992	1137	1	16
1993	1137	1	23
1994	1137	1	33
1995	1137	1	40

12. Annual reports, KDN of Lomonosovskii okrug (Arkhangelsk city)  
(Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti - GAAO)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fond</b>	<b>Opis'</b>	<b>Delo</b>
1985	2063	2	5194, list 96
1986	2063	2	5373, list 150
1987	2063	2	5556, list 110
1988	2063	2	5695, list 16

1992	1145	1	12
1993	1145	1	31
1994	1145	1	31
1995	1145	1	31

13. Annual reports, KDN of Maimaksanskii okrug (Arkhangelsk city)  
(Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti - GAAO)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fond</b>	<b>Opis'</b>	<b>Delo</b>
1992	5976	1	5
1993	5976	1	16
1994	5976	1	20
1995	5976	1	26

14. Annual reports, KDN of Varavino-Faktoria okrug (Arkhangelsk city)  
(Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti - GAAO)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fond</b>	<b>Opis'</b>	<b>Delo</b>
1992	1791	1	10
1993	1791	1	19
1994	1791	1	32
1995	1791	1	45