

PhD Candidate: Karolina Szydywar-Grabowska

Dissertation title:

Autonomy of the subjects of the Russian Federation

Abstract

The thesis titled „Autonomy of the Subjects of the Russian Federation” aims to explore the main research question: What is the scope of autonomy for the subjects of the Russian Federation that are furthest from the central government in terms of ethnicity, culture, religion, and communication, and what factors influence this autonomy?

The thesis is structured into eight chapters. Chapter One serves as an introduction, where the author provides a comprehensive review of existing research and literature related to the topic.

Chapter Two focuses on the theoretical framework, specifically examining nondemocratic regimes and the applicability of classical theories on center-region autonomy. In this section, the author analyzes various forms of dependencies between the Kremlin and its subordinate territories within the Russian Federation, offering insights into the central-regional power dynamics.

The third chapter of the thesis focuses on methodological assumptions, which are fundamental to guiding the research. Here, the author clearly defines the purpose and scope of the study, laying out the framework for investigation. This section also provides a detailed description of the research techniques employed, explaining how data is collected, analyzed, and interpreted. It includes various methods such as comparative analysis or statistical tools that help in gathering and processing information.

In the fourth chapter, the thesis shifts to a detailed analysis of the scope of autonomy across four distinct regions of the Russian Federation. The author examines these regions in terms of their economic, strategic, demographic, and cultural resources. The goal of this comparative analysis is to explore potential dependencies or relationships between these variables and the level of autonomy that each region enjoys. Through this, the thesis aims to identify patterns or factors that may influence the degree of self-governance in the Russian Federation.

Chapter Five examines the correlation between the level of regional self-government and the personal characteristics of the regional leader. Here, the author addresses how the effectiveness and personal traits of a regional leader can impact the degree of autonomy the region experiences. The chapter seeks to explore how leadership qualities—such as decision-making, charisma, and political acumen—directly affect the governance structures and independence from central authority.

Chapter Six provides a comparative analysis between the autonomy of the region and the effectiveness of the regional leader. In this chapter, the author attempts to illustrate the link between the personal values of regional rulers, their level of trust in the Kremlin, and the extent of regional self-government. This section delves into the balance of loyalty to central power versus local independence and how these factors interact to shape regional governance.

In Chapter Seven, the author investigates the relationship between regional leaders and interest groups within the region, analyzing how this dynamic impacts regional autonomy. The chapter evaluates the assumption that the nature of the regional leader's ties with local elite groups, business interests, and other influential stakeholders can either strengthen or weaken the region's self-governing capabilities.

The thesis concludes by affirming that the level of autonomy of the subjects of the Russian Federation, particularly those farthest from the central government, has evolved over time. This evolution is directly influenced by the configuration of various factors discussed throughout the research, including the region's cultural, ethnic, and geographical distance from Moscow, as well as the personal traits and effectiveness of regional leaders. The findings highlight that autonomy is not static but shaped by a complex interaction of political, social, and leadership dynamics, which have changed depending on the broader context of the Kremlin's relationship with the regions.

*Karolina Szydywar-Grabowska*

Karolina Szydywar-Grabowska

*08. 10. 2024*

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