

# SSH in Russia: Transformations, Limitations and Challenges

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# Classifications of social sciences and the humanities

**There different classifiers of SSH. E.g. for research specialisation SSH includes:**

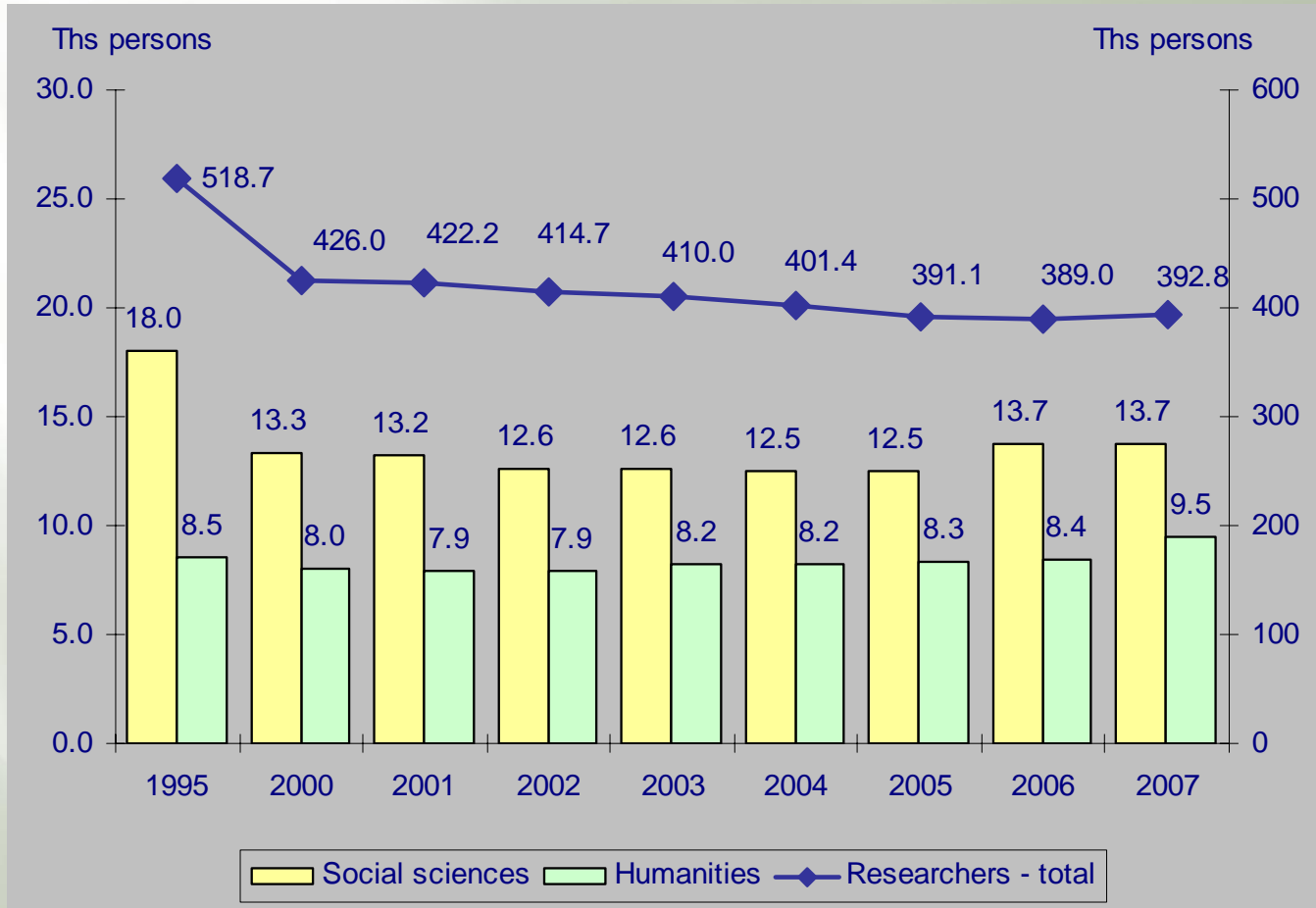
- History
- Economics
- Philosophy
- Philology
- Law
- Pedagogics
- Arts
- Architecture
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Political science

**The state rubricator for research organisations considers SSH as more detailed fields of research:**

Social Sciences in General (00)  
Philosophy (02)  
History. Historical Sciences (03)  
Sociology (04)  
Demography (05)  
Economics. Economic Sciences (06)  
State and Law. Jurisprudence (10)  
Politics. Political sciences (11)  
Science of Science (12)  
Culture. Culture Studies (13)  
Education. Pedagogics (14)  
Psychology (15)  
Linguistics (16)  
Literature. Literature Studies. Oral and Poetic Folklore (17)  
Art. Study of Art (18)  
Mass Communication. Journalism. Mass Media (19)  
Informatics (20)  
Religion. Atheism (21)  
Interdisciplinary Studies of Particular Countries and Regions (23)  
Interdisciplinary Problems of Social Sciences (26)

# 1. SSH potential in figures (1)

## Number of SSH researchers in 1995 – 2007



**1995:**

Social sciences – 3.5%

Humanities – 1.6%

**2007:**

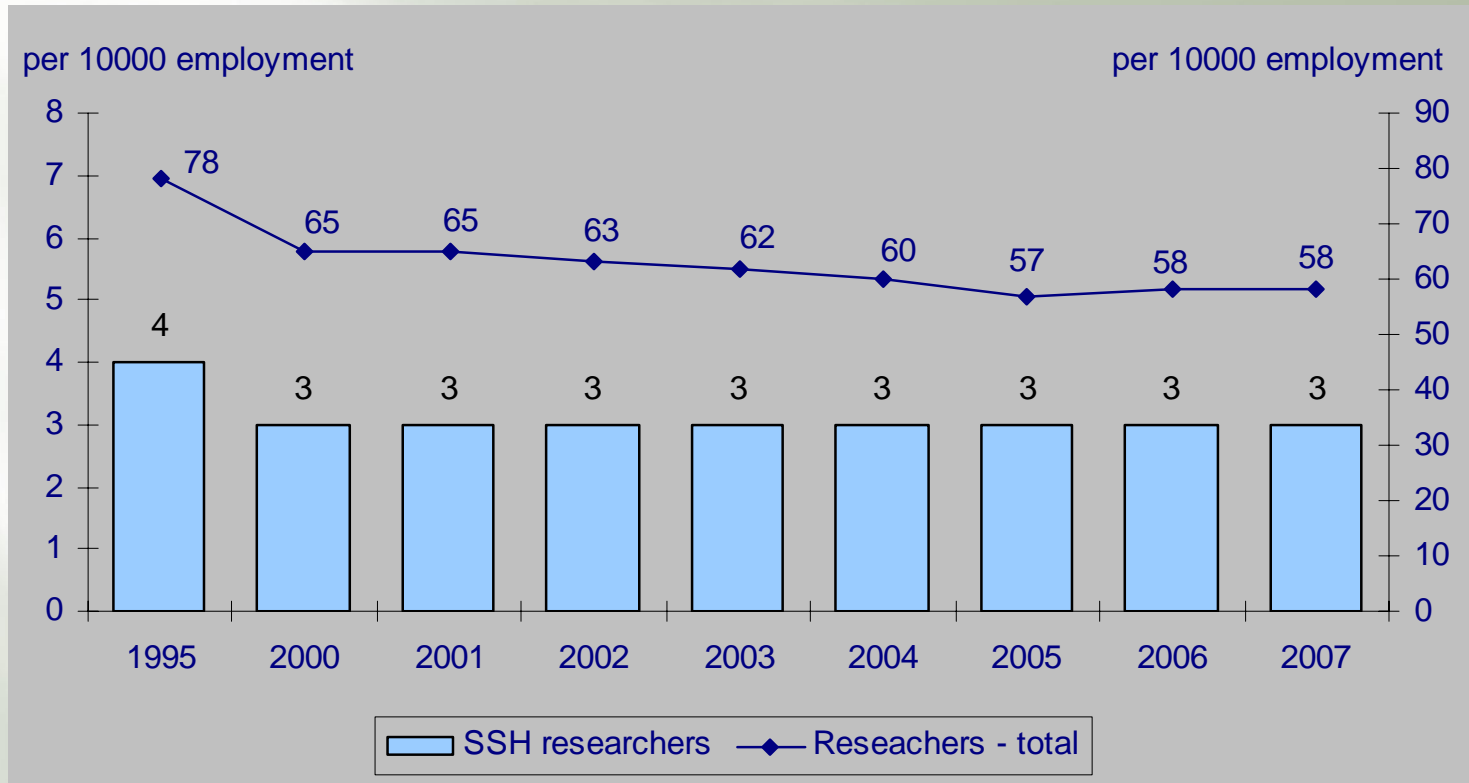
Social sciences – 3.5%

Humanities – 2.4

Source: Rosstat

# 1. SSH potential in figures (2)

Researchers and SSH researchers per 10000 employment in 1995 – 2007



Source: Rosstat

More detailed statistics can be found in Global SSH data book: "Measuring SSH Potential" (available for download at: [www.globalsocialscience.org](http://www.globalsocialscience.org))

# 1. SSH potential in figures (3)

## SSH in the Russian Academy of Sciences in 2006

Research organisations, total – 432, of which:  
20% perform research in social sciences, and  
17% – in the humanities

Researchers, total – 58161, of which:  
Social sciences – 3293 (5.7% of RAS total, 24% of SS total)  
Humanities – 4567 (7.9% of RAS total, 48.4 of H total)

*Source: ISS RAS*

## Higher Education Sector in 2007

HE institutions – 1108, of which:  
Governmental – 658, non-governmental – 450  
Enrolment – 7461.3 ths ps, of which:  
in Gov sector – 6208.4 ths ps (SSH – 65%), Non-Gov - 1252,9 ths ps (SSH- 95%)  
Faculty staff – 340.4 ths ps

*Source: ISS RAS; Global SSH Data Book*

## 2. Main characteristics of the current state of SSH in Russia (1)

### Demand for SSH in the society:

#### SSH and youngsters (HE students)

- “lead disciplines”: economics and law;
- “perspective disciplines”: sociology, psychology, international relations;
- “disciplines-outsiders”: history, philology, philosophy, study of culture, pedagogics

*Source: ROMIR*

#### Demand for politologists in the political life of the country:

- Higher concentration of PNP organisations in political science;
- “Expert wars”

#### Social sciences and the business community:

- Applied economic research (& marketing research which is not research, strictly speaking);
- Personnel strategies of a company, consulting, provision of training (group, psychological, etc.);
- Studies and investigation of Russian business phenomenon (and sometimes justification rather than research)

*Source: Yurevich 2004*

## **2. Main characteristics of the current state of SSH in Russia (2)**

**New conditions of SSH in Russia, developed in 1990s and essential for the post-communist society and SSH community (so-called four freedoms):**

1. freedom of planning and organising research;
2. freedom of international communications and information exchanges;
3. freedom of expressing any research idea and concept;
4. freedom of using and gathering any information



## 2. Main characteristics of the current state of SSH in Russia (3)

### Other necessary conditions for SSH performance:

- *existence of scientific organisations and (or) large science groups (i.e. availability of the institutional framework);*
- *normal reproduction of research personnel (optimisation of age structure in SSH personnel, i.e. normal reproduction of knowledge);*
- *presence of the internal social order (demand for SSH in the Establishment, i.e. constructive interrelations between SSH community and political elite);*
- *demand for SSH in the society;*
- *development of research and expert networks, involving research organisations as well as SSH researchers inside the country and internationally*

# 3. SSH community (1)

- Dispersion of the SSH research community; it is divided by “clubs of interests” and “clans” in which “the clan” members are loyal to each other;
- Lack of a good quality level of scientific expertise and of infrastructure providing enough funding for social science research (particularly, lack of non-gov. and non-institutional funding opportunities for SSH knowledge production);
- Predominance of small research projects and practical applications, depending on conjuncture of current needs, in social knowledge productions;
- A certain tension between a need of new ideas and paradigms, on the one hand, and poor conditions for knowledge productions, on the other hand;
- A deficiency in fundamental reflections on the changing society in Russia and, in a view of global economic crisis, on ways and socio-economic perspectives of the country.

## 3. SSH community (2)

- Weak linkages between so-called capital and provincial research communities in SSH;
- Lesser respect to the expertise of Russian researchers compared to foreign ones; as a result:  
“Like in the economy, the export potential of the Russian social sciences and humanities has yet a strongly expressed raw character. That turns the domestic SSH into a mechanism of translating knowledge acquired by foreign science into the domestic social practice where researchers are mainly engaged in application of foreign concepts to our social problems without taking into account the cultural frames of the place of their development” (Zavarukhin, Pipiya 2006);  
or what Andrei Yurevich characterises as “commercialisation and liberalisation of the social science cognitive context” (Yurevich 2004).

## 4. Funding SSH (1): Budget funding and a role of the state

- SSH shared only 3.7% of intramural current expenditure on R&D in 2007 (2.8% – in 2004), 13'058 mln rub (approx. 363.5 mln euros in 2007 currency)
- State budget is a main donor for SSH research as well as for the Russian science at large (61.6% of GERD); most part of the money comes as institutional support of the research organisations and universities
- Institutional support is a more complicated process than just a distribution of the budget funds among the research organisations and universities (e.g. RAS)
- Part of this money is distributed through budgetary foundations such as the *Russian Foundation for Basic Research* (it has a very small part of SSH funding – mainly for research project of interdisciplinary character, e.g. cognitive science) and the ***Russian Foundation for the Humanities*** (RFH); RFH is a major actor among those who grant money for SSH projects on a competitive basis

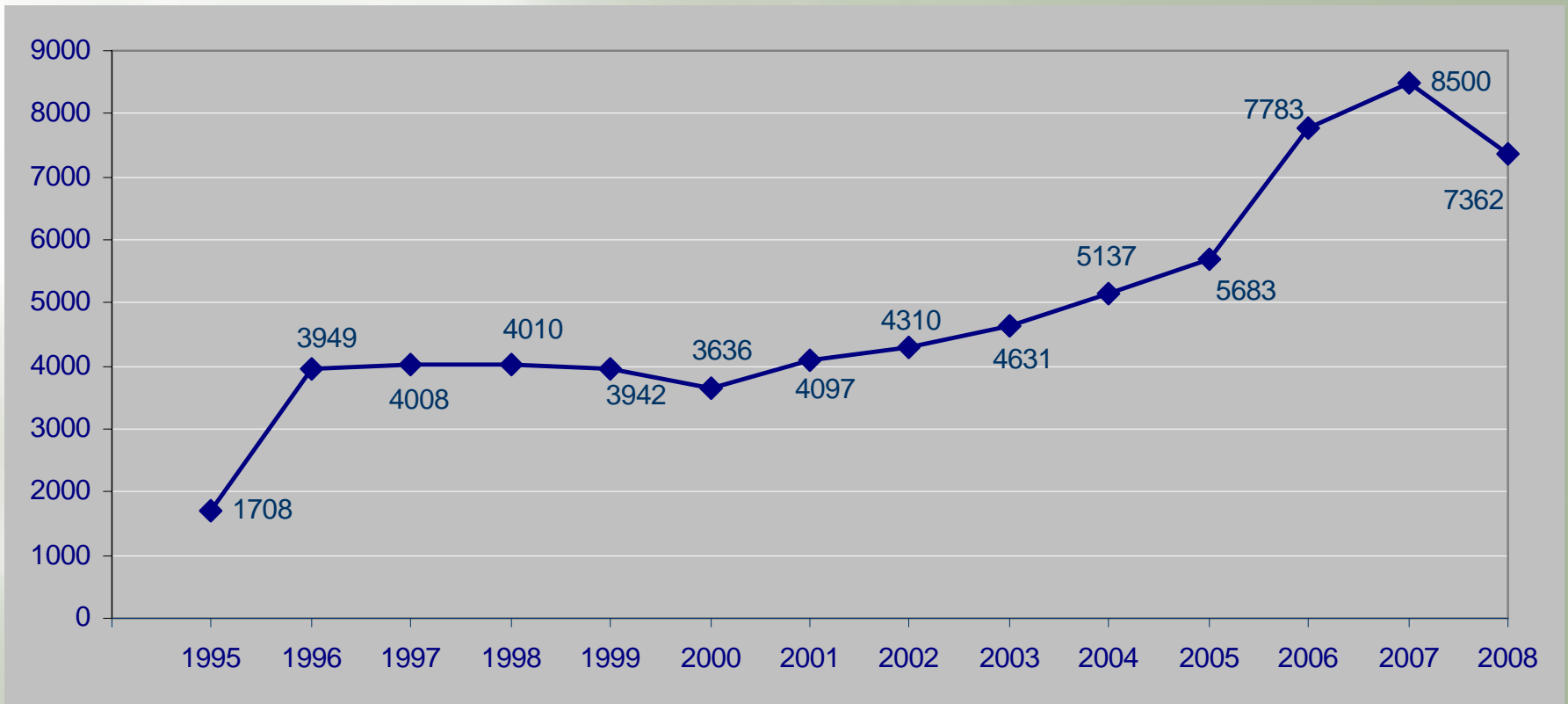
## 4. Funding SSH (2): RFH as a major donor for SSH team projects



Source: Yurasov 2008

# 4. Funding SSH (3): RFH as a major donor for SSH team projects

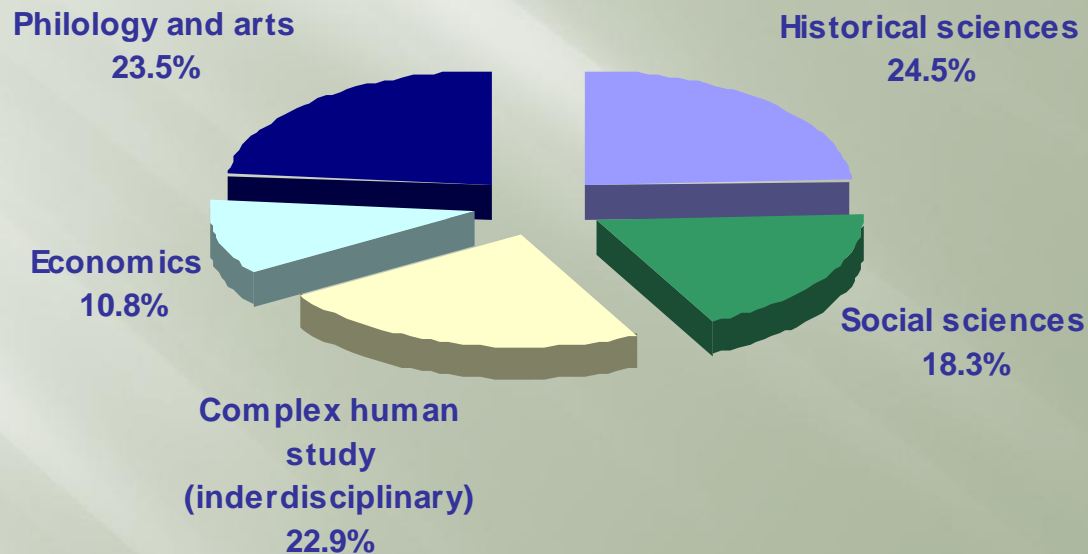
Applications for RFH grants in 1995 – 2007



Source: Yurasov 2008

# 4. Funding SSH (4): RFH as a major donor for SSH team projects

Distribution of supported projects by field of science



Source: Yurasov 2008

## 4. Funding SSH (5): foreign funds

- Unfortunately for Russian SSH, the non-gov. charity foundations, emerged in Russia in the early 2000s (e.g., “Dynasty”, Potanin Foundation), are oriented to the natural and hard sciences and pay no attention to human science research
- Foreign charity organisations (especially the US charities) were very active in 1990s, but they decreased their activity in 2000s. It is connected with stabilisation of the situation in the Russian S&T rather than political reasons as one would like to represent it
- Currently, most of these foreign non-gov. organisations provide mobility grants as well as grants on the development of civil society in Russia (e.g. Fulbright, MacArthurs’ Foundation, Carnegie Corp., American Council for International Education, IREX, Russia Oxford Fund, etc.)



# 5. Obstacles and opportunities for international collaboration (1) – involvement

**Representative sample:** According to the survey of the Institute of Sociology of RAS (205 respondents from 25 Russian cities):

- 10% of social scientists collaborate intensively;
- 23% are involved in international collaboration in a medium scale (irregularly);
- 67% show a low international involvement

*Source: Klimov 2005*

**Focused sample:** According Global SSH survey results (142 respondents with the high performance in the field of Russian grants, awards, etc. – i.e. the most active part of the SSH research community), 109 respondents from 142 are involved in international activity (76.7%):

- 99% - conferences, workshops, etc.
- 70% - transnational research
- 64% - international publications
- 49% - scholarship
- 39% - international grants
- 38% - international exchange
- 15% - other

# 5. Obstacles and opportunities for international collaboration (2) – obstacles

## I. Major problem that hampers international collaboration of Russian SSH scientists is the lack of language competence:

- **Representative sample:** the survey revealed (Institute of Sociology):  
30.2% - have a good English language competence;  
40% - know English sufficiently;  
29.8% - don't speak English or another foreign language
- by less optimistic estimations, e.g. only 5-7% (!) of political scientists speak English
- **Focused sample:** Global SSH survey (the most active part of SSH community):  
67.6% - speak at least 1 foreign language;  
21.1% - know 2 foreign languages
  - English – 84.5%;
  - French – 15.5%;
  - German – 17.6%;
  - Spanish – 2.1%;
  - Other – 14.1%

## 5. Obstacles and opportunities for international collaboration (3) – obstacles

II. As one can see, comparing the results of the survey, **the second obstacle is a low level of research activity and performance of SSH researchers at large.**

By rough and optimistic estimations, only 10-15% of SSH researchers have a good performance in research results (publications, presentations, obtained grants, etc.). The other part constitutes so-called *plankton*.

# 5. Obstacles and opportunities for international collaboration (4) – obstacles

III. The third major obstacle for international collaboration is the **underdeveloped mobility infrastructure** in the universities as well as in RAS research institutes:

- limited opportunities to apply for mobility grants;
- lack of scholarship and exchange programmes;
- lack of transparency of the distribution of the available mobility support (especially, in the regional universities);
- no formal stimuli promoting international activity in the overwhelming majority of the universities and research organisations, i.e. for most researchers, international collaboration is a personal business

IV. Last but not least, it should be mentioned **the ageing problem of the Russian S&T potential**:

- Medium age of researchers – 47.8 in 2006 (45 years in 1994)
- Medium age of RAS researchers – 49.7 in 2006 (48.2 in 2000); 54.6% of them are 50 and older, and the trend worsens.

# 5. Obstacles and opportunities for international collaboration (5) – opportunities

## Institutional opportunities:

- HE undergoes reforms: within the framework of the national priority project “Education” a network of the federal and national research universities is establishing:
  - Federal universities are being formed on the base of integration of the regional universities and other HE institutions;
  - National research university is a status to be given to the most advanced universities with a considerable research potential (e.g. Lomonosov MSU, Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, etc. – 15 universities altogether: 200 mln rub per university in 2009 in average, 400 mln rub – in 2010. This is extra-budget support which is aimed at the introduction of innovation educational programmes in the universities)
- Due to reforms in HE, one can see a rising number of mobility programmes in the advanced universities – Lomonosov MSU, StPSU, MSU of International Relations (MGIMO), etc.
- Joining *Bologna process* also positively affects the intensification of international exchange and scholarship

# 5. Obstacles and opportunities for international collaboration (6) – opportunities

## Personal motivations and trends:

- New generation of researchers are more mobile and better skilled in languages;
- International career as well as international acknowledgement remain a strong motivation for being engaged in international collaboration at a personal level

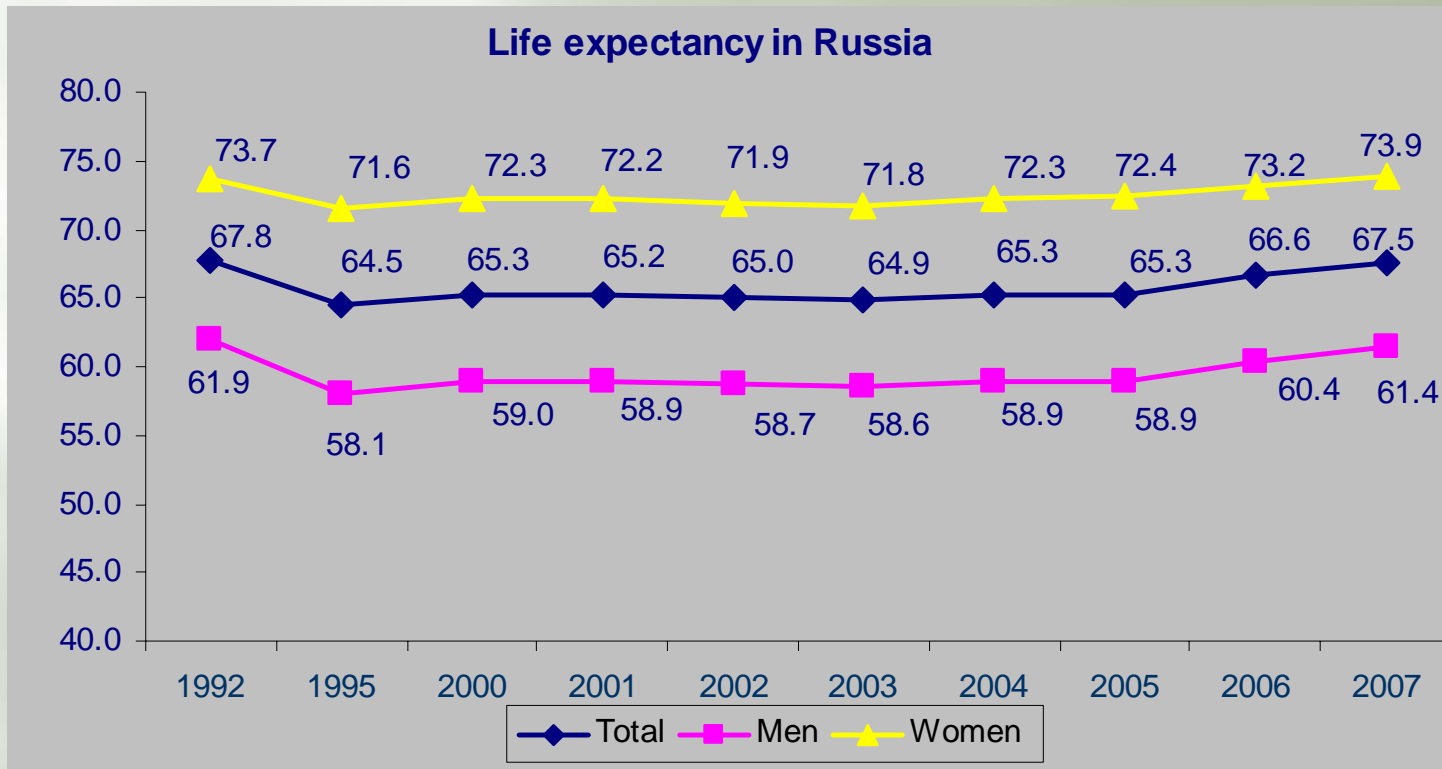
## Social and cultural environment:

- By my personal observations, the more stable life becomes in the country, the more intensive is intellectual activity in the society (publications, intellectual TV talk-shows, cultural events, etc.)
- ***But: sociological surveys reveal that ordinary people and the middle class don't care about "the intellectuals", "their problems", and "what they are talking about", especially in the regions)***

# 6. Challenges for SSH in modern Russia (1)

## I. Demographic challenge:

- shrinking population (in 1993 – 148.6 mln; in 2008 – 142 mln)
- low life expectancy (see LE for men)
- migration (287 ths migrants against 47 ths emigrants in 2007)



Source: Rosstat

# 6. Challenges for SSH in modern Russia (2)

## II. Global crisis challenge:

- unemployment (consequently, social tension, marginalisation, and crime)
- income decrease both in the state budget and households
- need of changes in the governance of the financial sector

## III. Economic structure challenge:

- diversification of the economy
- promotion of a innovation economy model(s)
- “reanimation” of depressive and agricultural regions

## IV. Societal challenge:

- development of the civil society
- development of democratic institutes in the country
- gender equality in the state institutes both federal and regional
- promotion of an innovative behaviour model in all spheres of the society



## 6. Challenges for SSH in modern Russia (3)

### V. Socio-economic challenges:

- decrease of a gap between “the reaches” and “the poors”
- gender equality in remuneration of labour
- improvement of the healthcare system

### VI. Specific challenge – Russian S&T:

- attraction of talented youngsters in S&T (e.g. newly adopted Federal Target Programme for 2009 – 2013)
- incorporation of the Russian science into the international research community
- improvement of the governance of science (e.g., detachment of managerial and research functions, introduction of clear criteria of scientific excellence, abatement of bureaucratisation)

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!**