

Does political opinions distribution in  
Russia match with German, French  
and American ones?

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# Research goals

- Explore the relations between three groups of factors: political opinions\*, country of residence, socio-professional strata
- Compare political opinions of different socio-professional strata within different countries
- Identify particular opinions that “pull” different social groups to one of the scale poles

\* The regulation of the economic life

# Research process

- 2006 ISSP data: wave focused on the Role of the Government
- Sample size: 6807 respondents. Russia – 2377, France – 1803, Western Germany – 1109, the USA - 1518
- Country choice:

		Form of government	
Regime type		Presidential republic	Parliamentary republic
	Developed democracy	USA, France	Germany
	Developing democracy	Russia	

# Political opinion measurements

## Scale construction

**Step 1. Selection of 22 relevant items from ISSP questionnaire**

**Method – 5 expert interviews**



**Step 2. Attribution of reply options to the scale poles : “left – right political opinions”**

**Method – 5 expert interviews**



**Step 3. Scale quality assessment**

**Method – correlation coefficient; P-value  
less than 5%**

**Method – Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient**  
Total sample - 0,8; Germany - 0,8; USA - 0,8; France – 0,8;  
Russia - 0,7

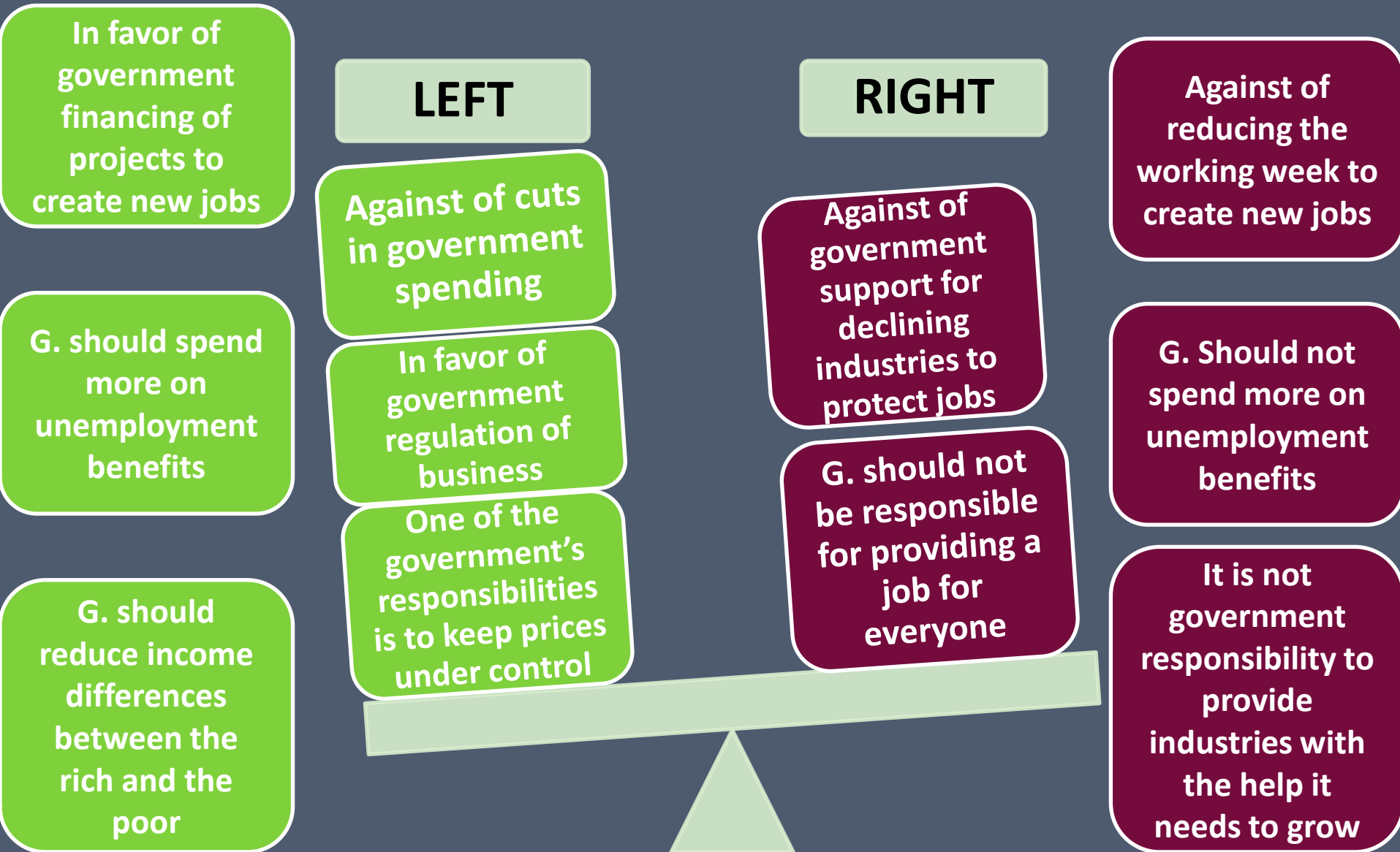


**Results**

**The scale “Role of Government: left – right poles”. The lowest value correspond to the left pole and the highest to the right pole**

# Left – right poles in the political opinion scale

✓ Scale is based **ONLY** on the opinions towards the Role of the Government



<p><b>G5. Here are some things the government might do for the economy. Please show which actions you are in favour of and which you are against.</b></p>	<p><b>G7. On the whole, do you think it should or should not be the government's responsibility to ...:</b></p>
Cuts in government spending	Provide a job for everyone who wants one
Government financing of projects to create new jobs	Keep prices under control
Less government regulation of business	Provide health care for the sick
Support for declining industries to protect jobs	Provide a decent standard of living for the old
Reducing the working week to create more jobs	Provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed
<p><b>G6 Listed below are various areas of government spending. Please show whether you would like to see more or less government spending in each area. Remember that if you say "much more", it might require a tax increase to pay for it.</b></p>	Reduce income differences between the rich and the poor
The environment	Give financial help to university students from low-income families
Health	Provide decent housing for those who can't afford it
The police and law enforcement	
Education	
The military and defence	
Old age pensions	
Unemployment benefits	
Culture and the arts	

# EGP Scheme



(1) I Higher Controllers



(2) II Lower Controllers



(3) IIIa: Routine Nonmanual



(4) IIIb: Lower Sales-Service



(5) IVa: Selfempl with empl.



(6) IVb: Selfempl no empl.



(7) v: Manual Supervisors



(8) VI: Skilled Worker



(9) VIIa: Unskilled Worker



(10) VIIb: Farm Labor



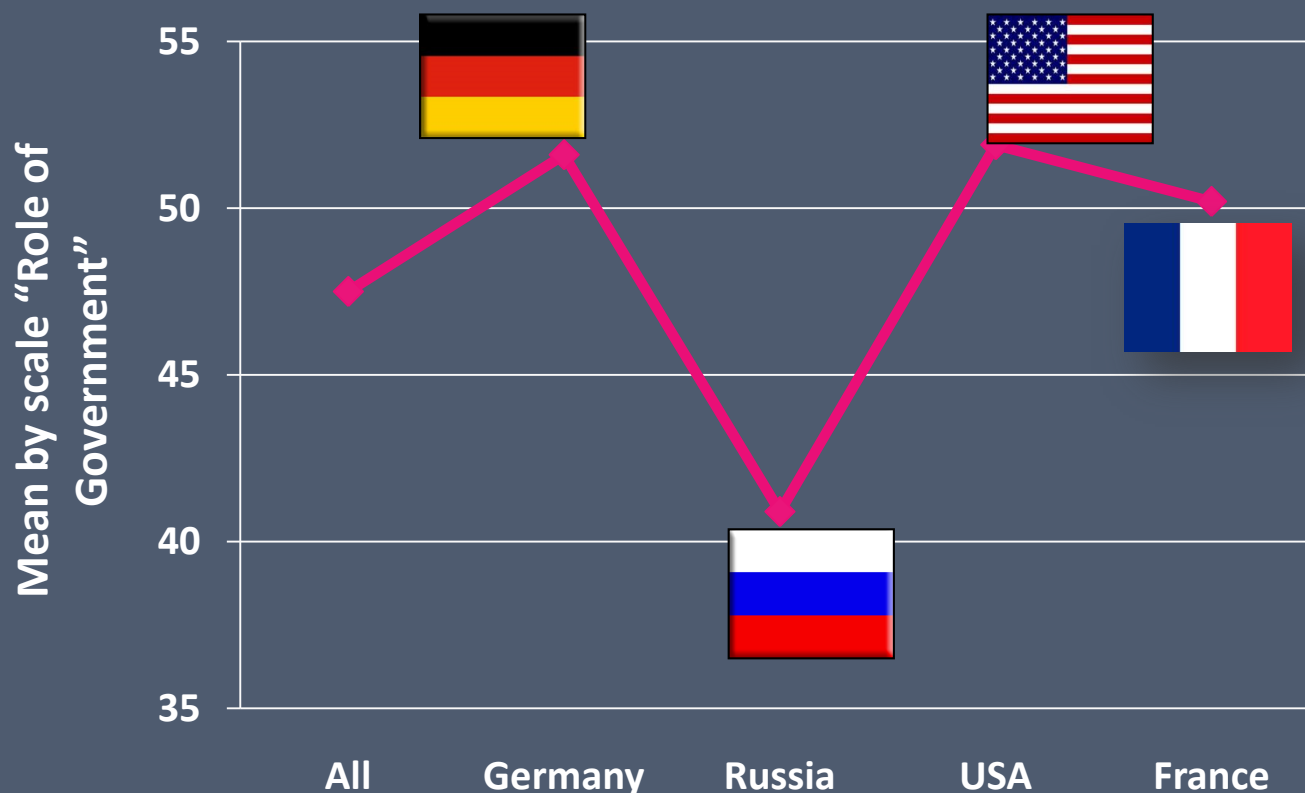
(11) IVc: Selfempl Farmer

Hauser R.M., Warren J.R.  
1997

# Political opinions in different countries

✓ ANOVA: F-statistics - 546,5 p-value<0,001.

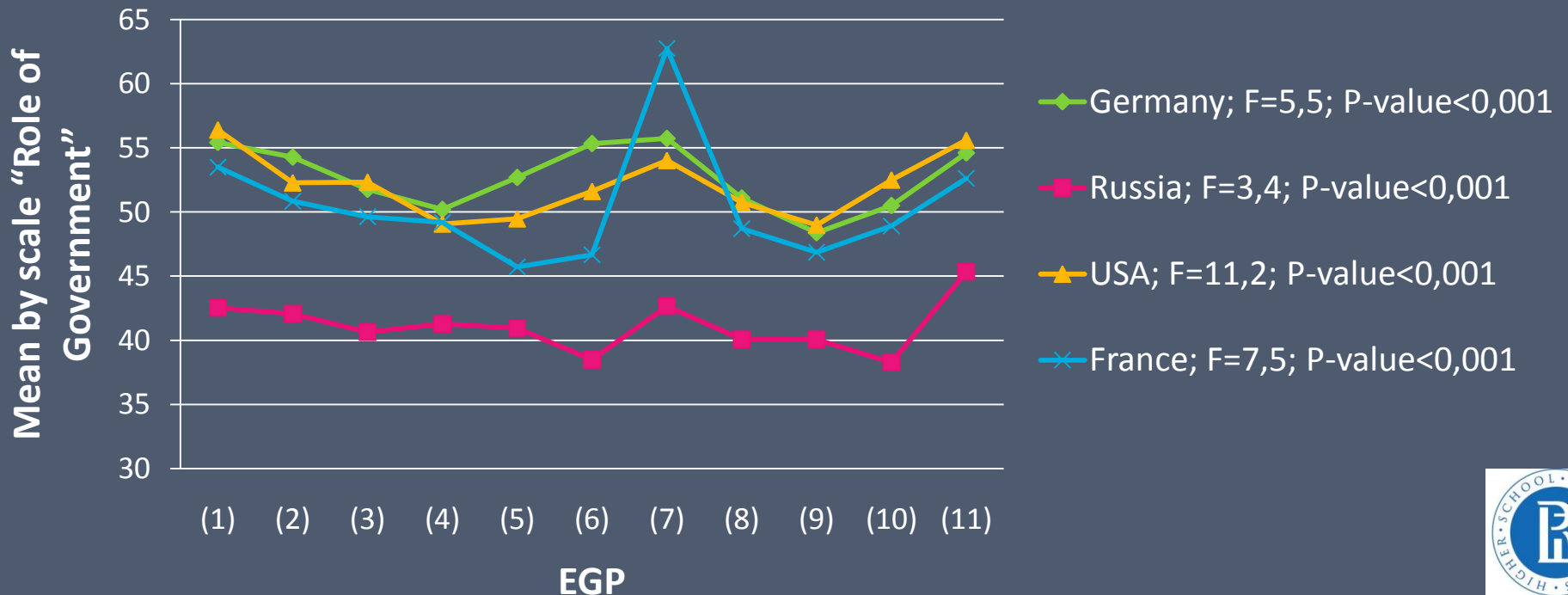
✓ Distribution of left and right pole opinions in Russia differs from 3 other countries





# Political opinions in different countries and socio-professional strata

- ✓ Russia happens to be the most left-oriented country
- ✓ The structure of political opinions distribution between different social strata is similar in three countries, less in Russia
- ✓ Professions with high level of autonomy (higher controllers, manual supervisors and selfemployed farmers) – are the most right oriented strata



# Statistical model characteristics

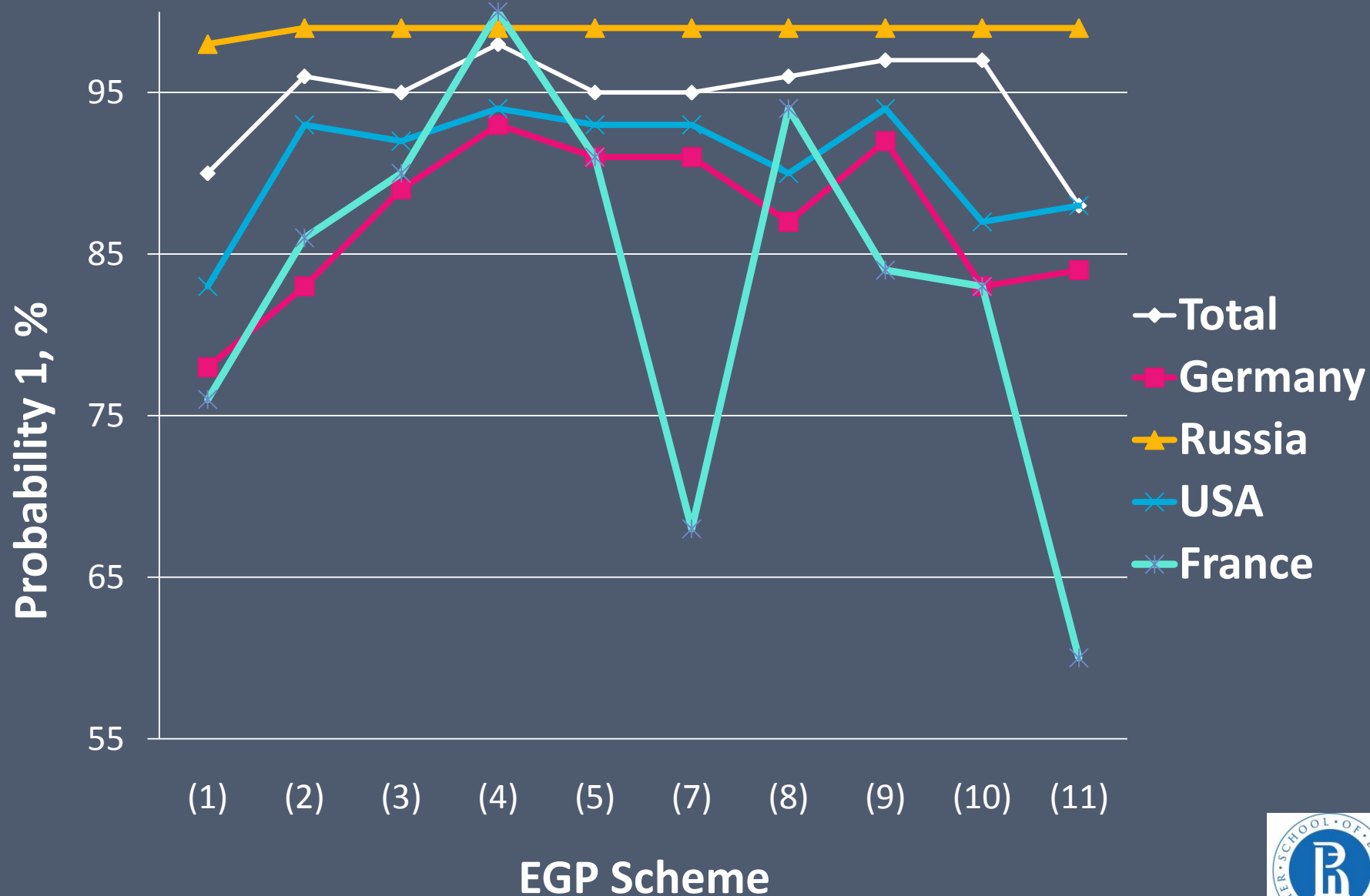
- Logistic regression model:
  - Dependent variable – dichotomized political opinion items according to the results of expert interviews
  - Predictors – country of residence and socio-professional strata
- Selected questions:
  - **Here are some facts the government might do for the economy. Please show which facts you are in favor of and which you are against**
    - Support for declining industries to protect jobs
  - **Listed below are various areas of government spending. Please show whether you would like to see more or less government spending in each area. Remember that if you say "much more", it might require a tax increase to pay for it**
    - Old age pensions
    - Unemployment benefits
  - **On the whole, do you think it should be or should not be government's responsibility to...**
    - ... provide a job for everyone who wants one
    - ... keep prices under control
    - ... reduce income differences between the rich and the poor

# Political opinions and the country of residence

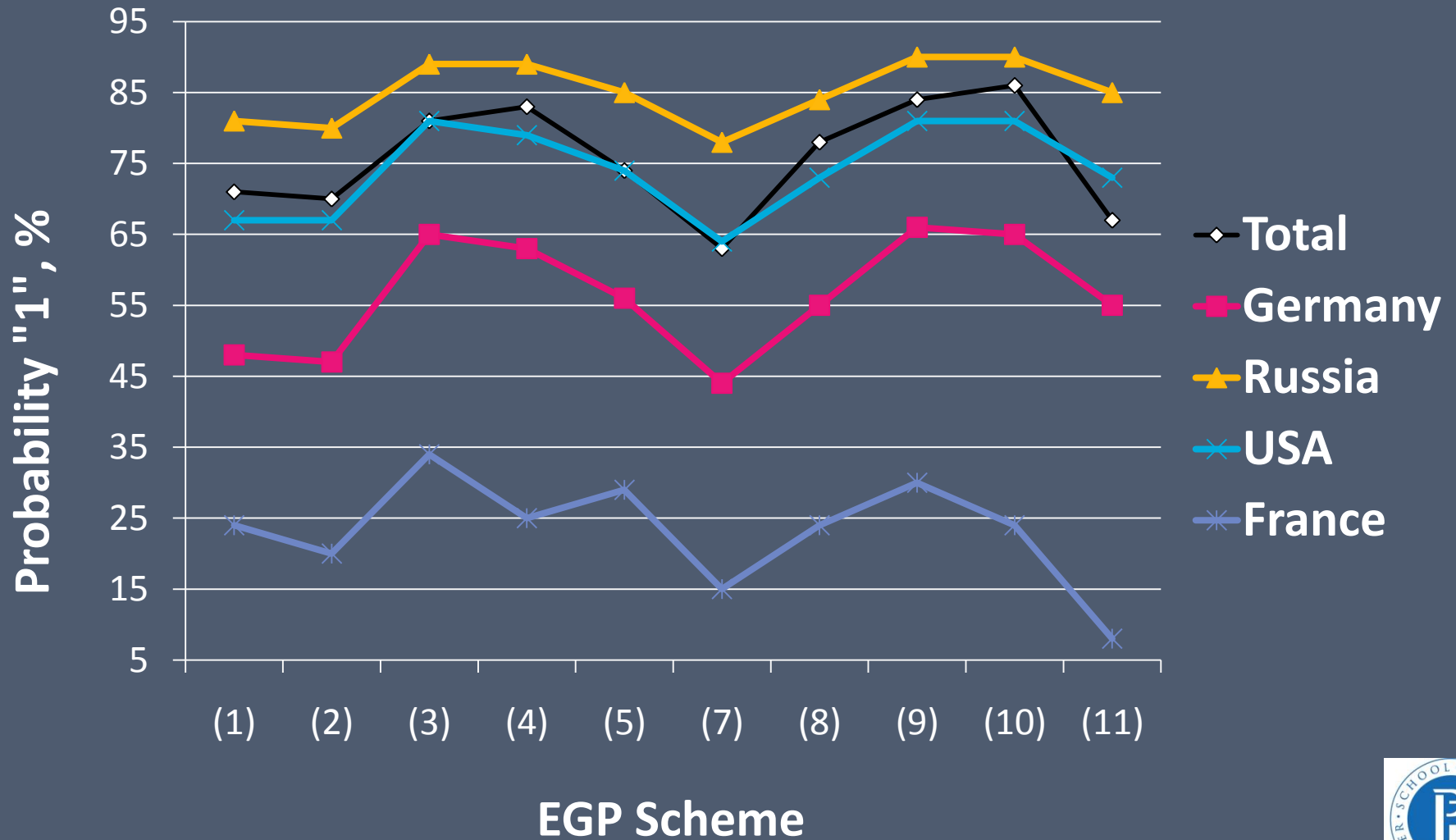
- ✓ Russia – is the country mostly aligned to the left pole (first requests of the society: keep prices under control and provide jobs to everyone)
- ✓ USA – obvious right-pole trend (do not need income difference reduction as well as jobs for everyone)
- ✓ France, Germany – the European mean. According to country's own "fixed national effects" each country demonstrates the deviation towards either right or left pole

Question:	USA	France	Germany	Russia
...support for declining industries to protect jobs?	80	81	<u>70</u>	64
...to spend more or not to spend more on unemployment benefits?	72	<u>26</u>	57	85
...reduce income differences between the rich and the poor?	52	78	<u>67</u>	86
...provide a job for everyone who wants one?	40	62	63	93
...to keep prices under control?	77	83	75	98
...to spend more or not to spend more on old age pensions?	90	<u>86</u>	89	99

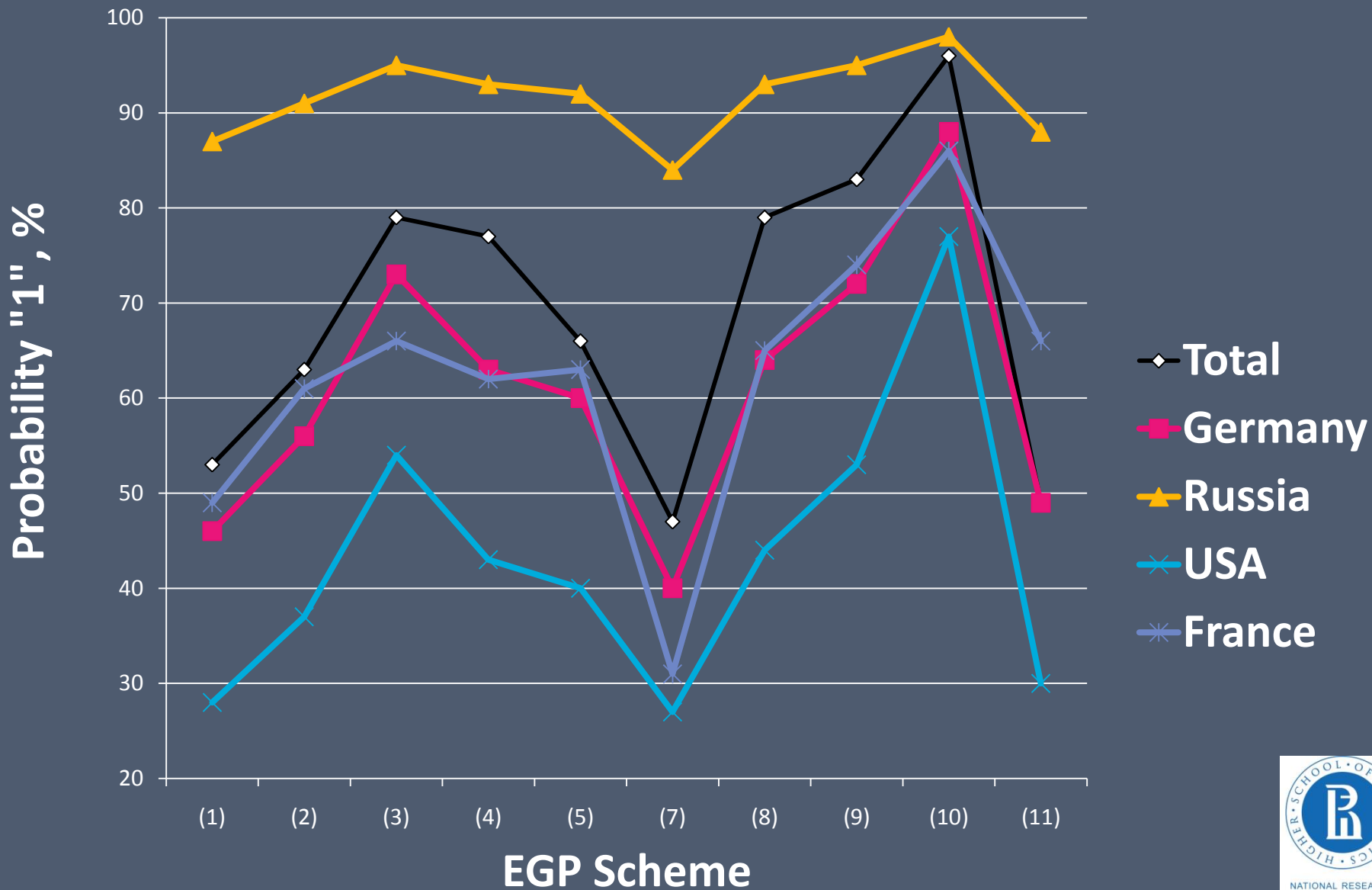
# To spend more or not to spend more on old age pensions



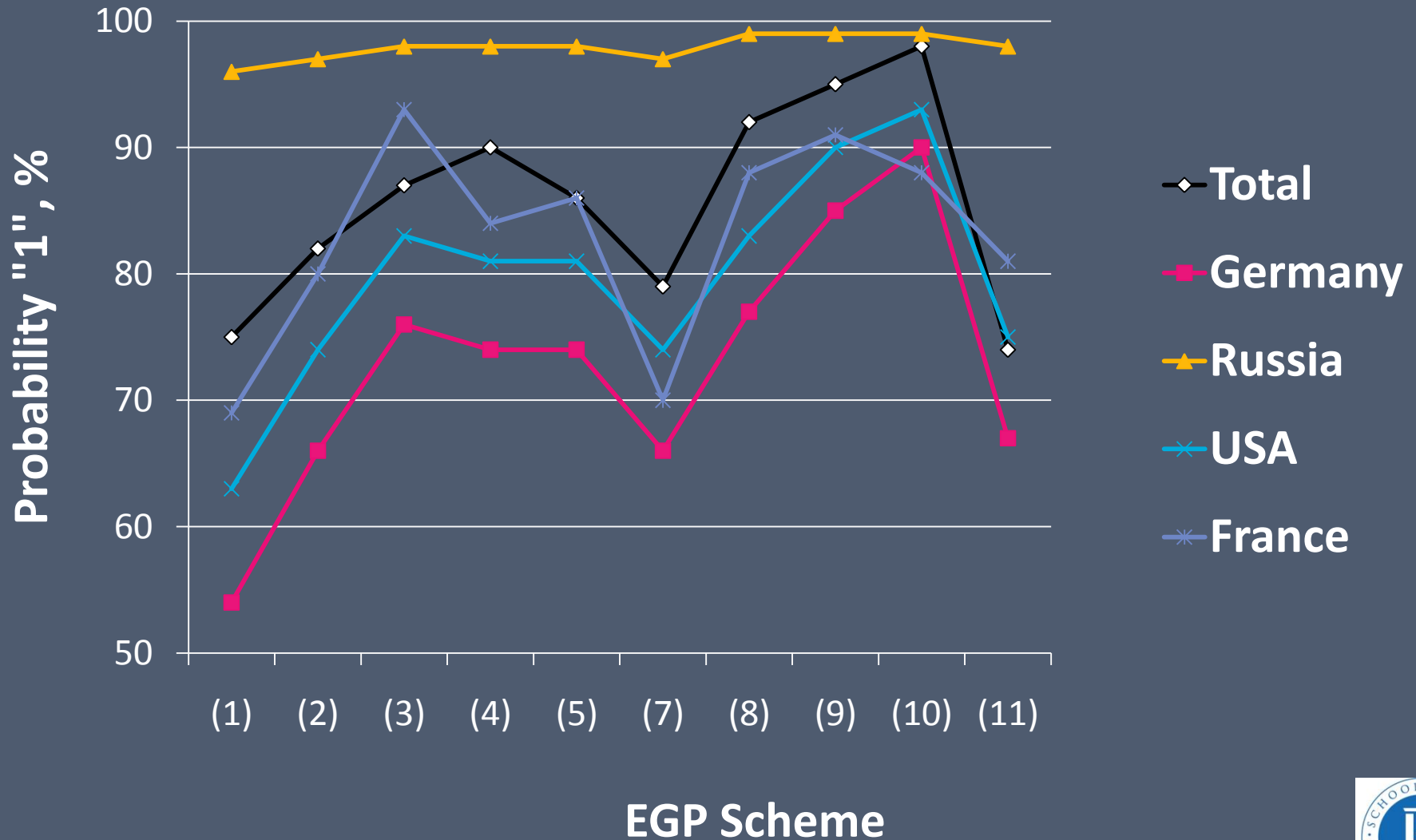
# To spend more or not to spend on unemployment benefits



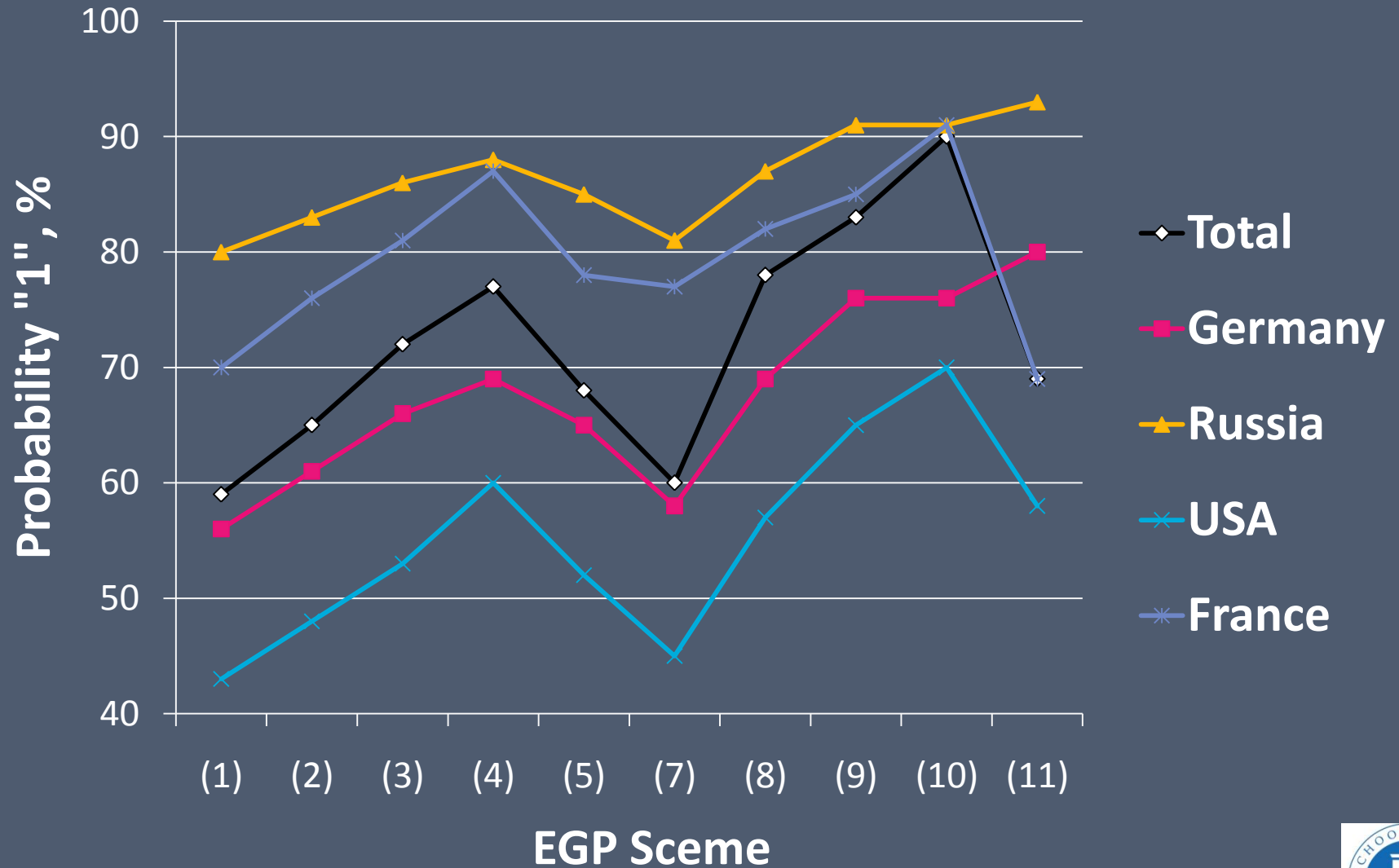
# Provide a job for everyone who wants one



# To keep prices under control

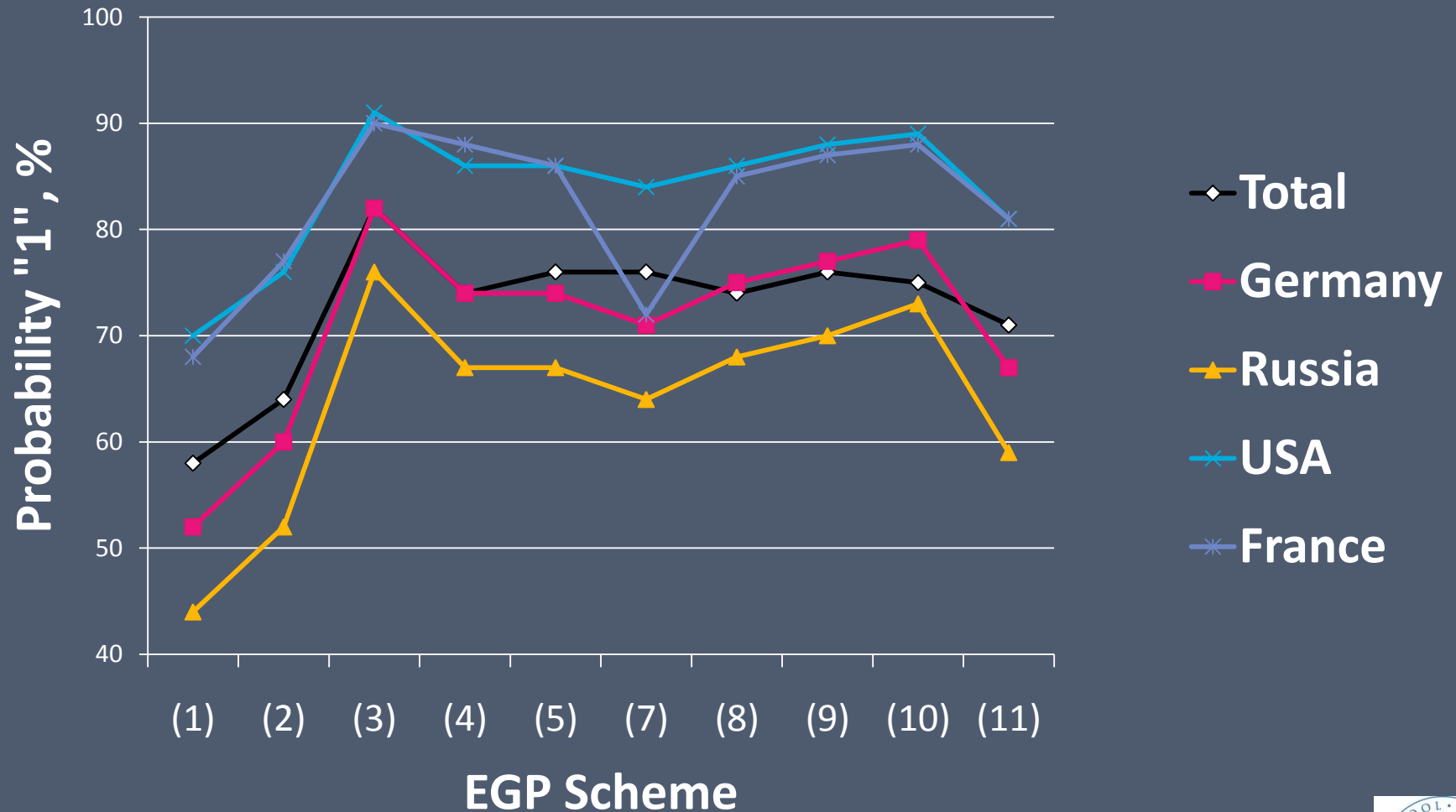


# Reduce income differences between the rich and the poor





# Support for declining industries to protect jobs



# Conclusions

- Russia is strongly left-oriented country as opposed to the USA, Germany and France (e.g. the most right oriented Russian top-manage demonstrates more left orientation than American worker)
- German, French and American societies are more heterogeneous compared to the Russian one
- Political opinions' distributions within social-professional strata are very similar for all four societies

# Future research

- To expand a range of political opinions by constructing new scales using the same data
  - e.g. scale on protest behavior (in favor vs against)
  - scale on security (security vs personal freedom)

Thank you for your attention!

