

'Chief Beneficiary' of Putin's Aggression in Ukraine and Syria is Moscow TV, New Poll Shows

Culture

Posted by:

Posted on : 2018/6/2 0:42:49

"The growth in the love of Russians for television has even eclipsed sex." Fifteen percent of Russians listed sex as a favorite activity in 2010, but only 12 percent did so in 2018.

By Paul Goble for "Window on Eurasia"; May 27 – There have been innumerable surveys of Russian attitudes over the last decade, but most of them have been limited in their value by the fact that participants likely answered some of the most important questions by saying what they believed those behind the polls wanted to hear, Igor Yakovenko [pictured] says. But two polls, one taken in 2010 and a second just now by the Levada Center asking Russians to identify those things which give them the greatest satisfaction and joy do not suffer from that limitation, he continues; and they show that "a small revolution" has taken place in Russian preferences (ej2018.ru/?a=note&id=32512). In the two years, Russians were asked to identify those things that gave them the most pleasure and joy. (They could identify more than one.) In 2010, 28 percent said watching television did; in 2018, 34 percent; in 2010, 33 percent said a good income; in 2018, 26 percent. In 2010, 17 percent said eating well; in 2018, 24 percent. Most obviously, these results show that "watching television instead of receiving a good income is the essence of the mental revolution over the last years. And thus the answer to the question – who has become the chief beneficiary of the occupation of Crimea, the war against Ukraine and Putin genocide of Syrians? – is television. Among the losers in this list are "the Russian economy, business, the standard of living including the overwhelming majority of the so-called 'elite,' and civil society." Among the beneficiaries, "in addition to television, are 'the siloviki and the defense sector. 'It is possible," Yakovenko says, "that the most important part of the mental consequences of 'Crimea is Ours' are connected with the attitude of Russians toward work." The share saying working at full capacity received 19 percent of the answers in 2010, putting it in fifth place, but only nine percent eight years later landing it in 21st. "The growth in the love of Russians for television has even eclipsed sex." Fifteen percent of Russians listed sex as a favorite activity in 2010, but only 12 percent did so in 2018. Consequently, "the expression 'Russia is married to Putin' is gradually losing the character of an ironic metaphor," Yakovenko sums up: "Television, having become the chief joy … has sharply reduced joy from getting good money, completely destroyed the view of work at full strength as a satisfaction and reduced to a minimum the joy of sex." TV may have helped Putin build power, but it is now getting in the way of his demographic and economic goals.

###

The commentary above is from Paul Goble's "Window on Eurasia" series and appears here with the author's permission. Contact Goble at: paul.goble@gmail.com

#

Have an opinion you'd like to share? UBO welcomes commentary in favor or opposed to any seen here. Send your opinion piece of any length to: Editor@ukrainebusiness.com.ua Submissions must include name and contact information; submission will be considered *de facto* permission for publication.