

Russia

Self-rule

INSTITUTIONAL DEPTH AND POLICY SCOPE

The Russian Federation has two (in some areas, three) tiers of regional governance: eighty-five *subyekty federacii* or *subyekty* (federal units or “subjects”), which since 2000 have been organized within eight *federalnyye okruga* (federal districts); and, in most *subyekty federacii*, *raionabi* (districts).¹ *Raionabi* have an average population under 150,000 in all *subyekty*.²

The most powerful intermediate tier consists of the *subyekty federacii*, which are composed of twenty-two *respubliki* (republics), forty-six *oblasti* (provinces), nine *kraya* (territories), four *avtonomnyye okruga* (autonomous districts), one *avtonomnaya oblast* (autonomous province), and the three *federalnyye goroda* (federal cities) of St Petersburg, Moscow, and Sevastopol (C 1993, Art. 65). Russia began in 1993 with eighty-nine *subyekty*, but six have since been merged.³ Each boundary change requires the consent of the affected *subyekt* as well as of the federal government (C 1993, Art. 67.3). Sevastopol and the Republic of Crimea were annexed as Russian federal subjects in 2014.

Respubliki and *avtonomnyye okruga* have an ethnic base; *oblasts* and *krais* are non-ethnic

¹ In 2014, the ministry for regional development selected 16 ‘pilot projects’ to establish metropolitan governance structures. In most *subyekty federacii*, a coordination council was established consisting of the mayors of the participating municipalities and some *subyekty federacii* also created an executive agency to implement the council’s decisions. The ‘pilot project’ is awaiting federal legislation, participation of the municipalities is voluntary, the decisions of the coordination council are non-binding, and by law municipal budget funds cannot be spent beyond municipal boundaries (Kinossian 2017). We do not code these 16 ‘pilot projects’ on metropolitan governance.

² *Raionabi* (districts) typically have some self-governance in the form of a popularly elected *raion* council with an elected or appointed chief executive (Law No. 154/1995; and No. 131/2003, Arts. 34–36). They are responsible for local service delivery, including roads, public transportation, municipal police, primary and secondary education, emergency medical care, burial sites, libraries, and waste collection (Law No. 131/2003, Art. 15). They exercise authority under strict control of *subwekty* and the federal government (Campbell 2006; Council of Europe: Russia 2000; Law No. 131/2003, Art. 77). City districts (*gorodskie okruga*) combine *raionabi* and municipal (*poseleniya*) functions and many regional capitals and large cities have this status (Wollmann and Gritsenko 2009). The city districts have an average population under 150,000. For an overview of local government reform, see Council of Europe (Russia 2019), Ross (2006) and Young and Wilson (2007).

³ Perm *oblast* and Komi–Permyak autonomous *okrug* were merged into Perm *krai* in 2006; Krasnoyarsk *krai*, Evenk autonomous *okrug*, and Taymyr autonomous *okrug* were merged into Krasnoyarsk *krai* in 2007; Kamchatka *oblast* and Koryak autonomous *okrug* were merged into Kamchatka *krai* in 2007; Irkutsk *oblast* and Ust–Orda Buryat autonomous *okrug* were merged into Irkutsk *oblast* in 2008; and Chita *oblast* and Agin–Buryat autonomous *okrug* were merged into Zabaykalsky *krai* in 2008 (Chebankova 2016: 172–178; De Silva et al. 2009: 22–25; Heany 2015, 2019; Oracheva and Osipov 2010).

(Wilson 2002).⁴ *Respubliki* have constitutions, whereas the other *subyekty* have statutes (Watts 2008; Wilson 2002). The four *avtonomnyye okruga* are in the unusual position of being supervised by both the federal government and a *subyekt* (Oracheva and Osipov 2010). However, all *subyekty federacii* have equal constitutional status (C 1993, Art. 66) and equal representation (two representatives each) in the upper house, the *Sovet Federacii* (federation council).⁵ Below we use *subyekty federacii* to describe the standard region at this level and discuss separately differentiated regions. We maintain throughout the distinction between *respubliki* and other *subyekty federacii* though the differences in statute have narrowed appreciably.⁶

The 1993 Russian constitution specifies three types of competences: exclusive federal competences, concurrent federal-subject competences, and residual competences for the *subyekty federacii* (Wilson 2002). The federal government has exclusive competence over the jurisdictional architecture of the federation, the single market, monetary policy, foreign and defense policy (including defense procurement), trade policy, the legal system, accounting standards, and citizenship and immigration; it sets framework legislation on the economy, the environment, the socio-cultural fabric of Russia, and energy policy; and it is responsible for the federal-wide infrastructure in transport, communications, and energy (C 1993, Art. 71). Policies concurrent between the federal state and the federal entities span the array of policies in our coding scheme, except for immigration and citizenship: natural resource management, the environment, coordination of external economic relations, emergency services, taxation; education, science, culture and sports; coordination of health and social security; the judiciary and law enforcement, minority rights, protection of rights and freedoms, law and order; local government (C 1993, Art. 72). Residual powers are assigned to the *subyekt* (C 1993, Art. 73) and each *subyekt* determines its own internal organization, though federal law lays down basic principles of local government (Law No. 154/1995; and No. 131/ 2003).

The constitution foresees a symmetrical federation and assigns the same competences to all

⁴ The Russian Saami do not have their own territory but two of their associations—*Guoládaga Sámi Searvi* (Kola Saami Association) and *Murmanskka guovllu Sámesearvi* (Saami Association of the Murmansk Region)—are members of the Saami Council which has a ‘permanent participant’ status in the Arctic Council (Josefsen 2010).

⁵ *Respubliki* have state languages that are used in legislation, administration, and schools alongside with Russian; they have the right to establish constitutional courts instead of charter courts; they have capitals instead of administrative centers; and the heads of the republics are usually denominated as presidents instead of governors. Historically, *kraya* had autonomous regions within their borders whereas *oblasts* did not (Busygina and Heinemann-Grüder 2010: 261–264; Salikov 2005: 285–287).

⁶ Tatarstan negotiated formal entry into the Russian federation in a bilateral treaty concluded in 1994. Chechen has never fully recognized its incorporation into the Russian federation and federal authority has been violently contested in 1994–1996 and 1999 (Heany 2015, 2019; Wilson 2002). In 1997, a peace treaty was signed between the Chechen republic and the Russian federation (Frommeyer 1999: 46–47). Further negotiations between Chechnya and Moscow have put on hold since 2007 (Hughes 2001: 56–58; Chebankova 2008: 1002). We score both Tatarstan and Chechnya from 1993 onwards and we consider Chechnya as a republic without a bilateral treaty.

subyekty. However, the Federation Treaty and, since 1994, bilateral treaties concluded between federal government and about half of the *subyekty* created an asymmetrical federation.

The Federation Treaty of 1992 is a collection of three different treaties, one for the republics, one for *oblasts* and *krais*, and one for the autonomous *okrugs*, *oblasts*, and two federal cities (Sakwa 2016).⁷ The republican version of the treaty gave the *respubliki* more autonomy compared to the other *subyekty* (Smith 1995: 167–174; Stoner-Weiss 2004: 311–312; Svendsen 2002: 68–70; Wilson 2002: 257). The republics were denoted as “sovereign,” were able to hold direct elections for republican presidents, gained control over land and natural resources, property rights, and trade, and were allowed to declare a state of emergency. Furthermore, several republics appended amendments to the republican treaty which allowed them to cut deals with the federal government subsequently on issues such as natural resources or local taxes (Svendsen 2002: 69). In addition, there is a subtle but important difference in the language that describes the relationship between subnational and national law. The treaty for the republics specifies that federal institutions may not issue legal rules for areas within the competence of the republics—suggesting that republican and federal law are on a par. In contrast, the treaties for the *oblasts* and *krais*, and for the autonomous *okrugs*, *oblasts*, and federal cities stipulate that these *subyekty* can legislate within the rules set by federal government—suggesting federal primacy (Federation Treaty of 1992, Art. VI).

The constitution enables *subyekty federacii* to negotiate greater devolution with Moscow which must be laid down in bilateral treaties (*dogovory*) and accompanying policy-specific agreements (*soglaheniya*) (C 1993, Arts. 11 and 73). The first bilateral treaty was signed with Tatarstan in February 1994 and the last treaty was concluded with Moscow City in June 1998 (Sakwa 2016). By that time forty-two bilateral treaties had been included affecting forty-six *subyekty federacii* (Council of Europe: Russia 2004; Ross 2010: 168; Sakwa 2016: 159; Stoner-Weiss 2004: 313; Svendsen 2002: 86). A presidential decree issued in 1996 and a law on the treaties adopted in 1999 (Law No. 119/1999) laid down that the bilateral treaties and accompanying agreements must be consistent with the federal constitution, they cannot change the status of a *subyekty*, or add to or change Arts. 71 and 72 of the federal constitution (which detail federal and concurrent competences), and they must respect the supremacy of the federal constitution. In practice, however, many bilateral treaties and agreements violated these conditions (Chuman 2011; Hughes 2001; Ross 2002; Sakwa 2016; Stoner-Weiss 1999, 2016: 51–56; Svendsen 2002; Zuber 2008). Exclusively federal areas were transferred to a *subyekty* or were specified as a joint competence, or concurrent areas were placed under the exclusive jurisdiction of the *subyekty*.⁸ Nineteen out of

⁷ Moscow and St. Petersburg have the status of federal city, which means that they are both a local government and a constituent federal subject. Since their powers are almost identical to those of other *subyekty* we do not score them separately. After the annexation of Crimea in March 2014, Sevastopol became Russia’s third city of federal significance. Sevastopol and the republic of Crimea are separate *subyekty* and, together, make up the new Crimean Federal District.

⁸ Excellent overviews of asymmetrically assigned competences are available in Chuman (2011); Frommeyer (1999); Ross (2002); Stoner-Weiss (2004); Svendsen (2002); and Zuber (2008). Examples of

twenty-one republican constitutions were reportedly in breach of the federal constitution by the end of the Yeltsin era (Ross 2010: 170). Two republics—Bashkortostan and Tatarstan—gained additional authority, including foreign economic policy, protection of civil liberties and rights, amnesty to individuals convicted by regional courts, and joint jurisdiction over citizenship (Chebankova 2016: 66–69; Chuman 2011: 135; Ross 2002: 44; Stoner-Weiss 2004: 314; Svendsen 2002: 104–112, 204–214; Zuber 2008).

The scores for the *subyekty federacii* for 1993–1999 reflect three elements: the constitutional division of powers (3 on institutional depth, 3 on policy scope); the Federation Treaty of 1992 (–1 on institutional depth for *oblasts*, *krais*, autonomous *okrugs*, autonomous *oblasts*, and federal cities);⁹ and devolution through bilateral agreement (+1 on institutional depth). The *respubliki* score 3 on institutional depth and 3 on policy scope (republican version of the Federation Treaty of 1992, nineteen out of twenty-one *respubliki* constitutions were in breach of the federal constitution, eleven *respubliki* had a bilateral treaty). The *respubliki* of Bashkortostan and Tatarstan score 4 on policy scope because of their extended competences in citizenship.^β The other *subyekty federacii* score 2 on institutional depth and 3 on policy scope. However, *subyekty* that negotiated a bilateral treaty score 3 on institutional depth from the year the bilateral treaty was adopted (thirty-five *subyekty federacii* negotiated a bilateral treaty: sixteen in 1996, fourteen in 1997, five in 1998).

In 2000, Vladimir Putin pushed through several reforms that reasserted federal authority (Ross 2002: 137–156; Law No. 95/2003; No. 122/2004).¹⁰ Putin set up a commission to examine the

policies that were transferred from exclusively federal to joint jurisdiction are state defense, border patrol, meteorology services, establishment of a free economic zone, conversion of defense industry to civilian production, management of the defense industry, arms sales, and the operation of enterprises in the defense complex. Examples of exclusively federal policies that became exclusively *subyekt* are international relations, or the establishment of national banks. Finally, examples of concurrent policies that by bilateral treaty could fall under exclusive *subyekt* authority are environmental protection, culture, monuments, and the creation, organization, and management of public institutions.

⁹ Between 1993 and 1995 *subyekt* autonomy was constrained because the executive head of the *subyekt* was appointed by the Russian president (Jackson and Lynn 2002: 102–104; Ross 2002: 92–94, 122–136; Söderlund 2005). The *respubliki*, however, had always been able to elect their president. In 1996, Yeltsin allowed direct elections for the governors and presidents of all *subyekty federacii* (Ross 2002: 95–96; Söderlund 2005).

¹⁰ The goal of recentralization was to establish “a vertical of power” and develop what Putin called “the dictatorship of laws,” an effective state that translates the rules of the game into uniform laws that ensure that authority flows from top to bottom and not the other way around (Robertson 2011: 149). Gel’man and Ryzhenkov (2011: 451) enumerate its key components as “the hierarchical subordination of regional chief executives (governors) as well as city mayors to the Kremlin; the de facto prohibition of open political competition of local elites on electoral and legislative arenas, and the forced co-optation and integration of the majority of key actors of local regimes into the ‘party of power’, United Russia; and making actors of local regimes responsible for the provision of favourable results of national and regional elections, requested by the centre, and for the prevention of actual mass protests.”

bilateral treaties and the commission called for regions to unilaterally rescind their bilateral treaties. By April 2001 nearly four-fifths of *subyekt* legislation was brought into compliance (Chebankova 2008: 993) and by early 2002, twenty-nine out of forty-six bilateral treaties had been abolished on the initiative of the *subyekt* (Chuman 2011: 146). Another five *subyekty* had annulled their bilateral treaties by the end of 2003 and a further ten bilateral treaties became invalid in 2005 (Chuman 2011: 146).

Bashkortostan incorporated the full text of the bilateral treaty into its constitution adopted in November 2000, but by 2002 the constitution was brought into line with federal law and the bilaterally treaty was annulled (Heany 2019: 194; Ross 2002: 149–150; Timerbulatov 2002).^a Tatarstan concluded a new bilateral treaty in 2007 (Sakwa, 2013: 263, 2016: 162). The republic kept its extended autonomy,^a but was stripped of most of its special powers on citizenship (Chebankova 2008: 1001; Gel'man 2009: 4). All that remains is that Tatar citizens can “carry specific national slips in their passports written in the Tatar language and containing the republican symbols” (Chebankova 2008: 1002). The bilateral treaty for Tatarstan expired in 2017 (Heany 2019: 208; Nilsson 2019: 6).

Another reform gave the Russian president the right to dissolve *subyekty* parliaments and dismiss their governments if they disobeyed federal law. In the event of disputes between the federation and *subyekty federacii*, the federation president can suspend *subyekt* executive decisions pending court adjudication. Finally, governors and chairs of the assemblies of *subyekty* were barred from sitting in the upper chamber; instead, they could send a delegate (Blakkisrud 2011).

In 2005, in the wake of the Chechen hostage crisis, President Putin also replaced the direct elections of governors and presidents with a system whereby a presidential appointee is approved by the assembly of the *subyekt* or *respublika* (Chebankova 2016: 134–151; Blakkisrud 2011; Law No. 1603/2004; Sakwa 2016: 163).

Finally, a new deconcentrated super-tier of seven *federalnyye okruga* was created in 2000 (Sakwa 2016: 161).¹¹ Their population ranges between 6.6 million (Far East) and thirty-eight million (Central). Each *federalnyye okrug* is headed by a *polpred* (presidential envoy) who coordinates federal agencies in the region, supervises law and order, and determines whether regional law is consistent with federal law (Chebankova 2016: 75–79; Hughes 2001; Law No. 849/2000; Petrov 2002, 2010). The boundaries of each district correspond exactly with the interior ministry's security regions and almost exactly with those of the ministry of defense. Five of the seven initial *polpred* were former generals (Petrov 2002).

The scores for 2000–2004 reflect Putin's reforms. Institutional depth and policy scope are reduced to 2 each from 2000 if a *subyekt* has no bilateral treaty, or from the year in which the bilateral treaty was rescinded for *subyekty* with a treaty. Bashkortostan and Tatarstan score 3 on institutional depth and 4 on policy scope during the time they enjoy special rights set out in their

¹¹ Eight since 2010, when the North Caucasian District, which includes a.o. Chechnia, was split from the Southern Federal District. The Crimean Federal District was created in 2014 after Crimea's annexation and existed until the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol city were incorporated into the Southern Federal District in 2016.

constitution and bilateral treaty, respectively.

Between 2005 and 2012 most *subyekty federacii* score 2 on institutional depth and 1 on policy scope to reflect more direct central intervention. Tatarstan lost control over citizenship policy when it renegotiated its bilateral treaty in 2007 and scores 3 on institutional depth and 3 on policy scope until 2017 when its bilateral treaty expired. Direct elections of the *subyekty* governors were reintroduced in 2012 and the first directly elected governors assumed office in five *subyekty federacii* in 2013. We increase the score for policy scope to 2 when a governor is elected into office.¹²

FISCAL AUTONOMY

The 1993 constitution says that taxation is concurrent between the federation and the *subyekty federacii* (C 1993, Arts. 71.h–i; De Silva et al. 2009). Fiscal autonomy varies across *subyekty* and over time. However, in almost all cases *subyekty* set the rate of at least one major tax, namely, corporate profits tax (De Silva et al. 2009; Libman 2009; Salikov 2005: 300–301; Solanko and Tekoniemi 2005).

Exclusively federal taxes consist of value added tax, export taxes (abolished in 1996), alcohol and vehicle excises, taxes on bank and insurance profits, taxes on currency exchange and securities, and customs duties. The federal government also sets the base and rate of shared taxes, including personal income tax, corporate income tax, and excise taxes (except those on motor vehicles and alcohol). *Subyekty* set the rate, but not the base, of a tax on enterprise profits, on sales and assets, on forestry, and on water usage (Martinez-Vazquez 2002). The federal government and *subyekty* had concurrent powers on natural resource taxes between 1995 and 2005.

Legislation in 1997, 1998, and 2000 classified taxes into federal, regional, and local revenue sources, clarified revenue sharing, and required the federal government and *subyekty* to establish an equalization scheme for lower level jurisdictions (De Silva et al. 2009: 25–98; Law Nos. 126/1997; No. 146/1998; No. 117/2000). The federal government retains the power to set the base and rate for the most important taxes, including personal and corporate income tax, VAT, capital tax, and excise tax and custom duties (Law No. 146/1998, Art. 13); *subyekty federacii* can determine the rate on property, roads, gambling, transport, and land, and control the rate on the corporate profits tax, which is set at 17.5 percent but which *subyekty* can reduce to 13.5 percent (De Silva et al. 2009: 60–74; Ermasova and Mikeseli 2016; Law No. 146/1998, Arts. 14 and 53.2; Libman 2009: 184–186; Solanko and Tekoniemi 2005: 17). A number of bilateral treaties included special arrangements which allowed *subyekty* to retain more revenues collected from taxes. The bilateral treaties of Bashkortostan, Kareliya, Sakha (Yakutiya), and Tatarstan contained such special arrangements (Hanson and Bradshaw 2003).

Federalnyye okruga are financed by the central government (Law No. 849/2000).

¹² By 2018 all government-appointed governors were replaced by directly elected governors with the exception of the governors of in seven *respubliki* (Adygeya, Crimea, Dagestan, Ingushetiya, Kabardino-Balkar, Karachei-Cherkess, and North Osetiya-Alaniya) and two autonomous *okruga* (Khanty-Mansii and Yamalo-Nents). The score for these *subyekty federacii* on policy scope remains 1.

BORROWING AUTONOMY

The Law on the Foundation of Budgetary Rights passed in 1993 gave *subyekty*, in principle, unlimited rights to borrow (Martinez-Vazquez and Boex 1999). However, limited assets and income that could be used as collateral for loans and an underdeveloped institutional banking structure inhibited extensive subnational borrowing (Craig, Norregaard, and Tsibouris 1997). Still, subnational debt accumulated rapidly in the early Yeltsin years, which led to a debt crisis and widespread insolvency among Russian *subyekty* in the later part of the nineties (Lavrov, Litwark, and Sutherland 2000). Many *subyekty* defaulted, and so did the federal government in August 1998.

The federal government took several steps to tie *subyekty* borrowing to conditions (De Silva et al. 2009: 94–97; Martinez-Vazquez and Boex 1999: 76–85; Watts 2007). A Law on the Securities Market adopted in 1996 (Law No. 39/1996) required federal authorization for bonds issued by *subyekty* governments, and it imposed registration disclosure requirements. This is the only component for which prior approval was required. A budget code, approved in 1998 and amended in 2000, lays down a series of constraints: the budget deficit of *subyekty* is limited to 10 percent of budget revenues, the overall level of debt is restricted to 15 percent of expenditures, *subyekty* borrowing is constrained to capital investment, and foreign borrowing is prohibited (except to refinance old debt) (De Silva et al. 2009: 94–97; Law No. 145/1998, Arts. 92 and 95).

In 2003, the president obtained the right to suspend *subyekty* administrative bodies if a region's debt to the central government exceeds 30 percent of its budget, or if the region mismanages federal subsidies (Chebankova 2007). In April 2007, President Putin signed a number of amendments to the budget code which loosened constraints on subnational borrowing. For example, as of January 2011, *subyekty* regained the right to take out foreign loans. In June 2007, the federal government set up a development bank to help finance public investment in the regions (De Silva et al. 2009).

Federalnyye okruga have no borrowing powers (Law No. 849/2000).

REPRESENTATION

Subyekty federacii have had popularly elected assemblies since 1993 (Golosov and Konstantinova 2016; Law No. 184/1999, Art. 10). There have been major changes on the executive side, that is to say, the governors in *subyekty* or the presidents in *respubliki*. *Respubliki* held fully contested elections to their assemblies in March 1990 and the first gubernatorial elections were held in five *respubliki* and in the federal cities of Moscow and Saint Petersburg in 1991. The governors in the other *respubliki* were elected shortly afterwards with the exception of Dagestan, Komi, and Udmurt where the governor was elected by the regional legislature (Hanson and Bradshaw 2003). A moratorium on elections adopted by the federal parliament in November 1991 prevented gubernatorial elections in other *subyekty federacii* (Heany 2015, 2019) and president Yeltsin appointed governors in all the *kraya*, *oblasti*, and *okruga* (Slider 2009: 106–109; Solnick 1998: 49–50). However, gubernatorial elections were permitted in *subyekty* where a regional legislature

approved a vote of no confidence in the governor (Saikkonen 2015). In September 1993, it was announced that all governors would be appointed and dismissed by presidential decree. The ban was challenged in the constitutional court and exceptions were granted in 1994 (Saikkonen 2015; Zuber 2008: 32). This broke the ban and gubernatorial elections were held in seventeen *subyekty* in December 1995 (Solnick 1998). By 2002 all governors were directly elected except for Dagestan where the governor was elected by the assembly (Heany 2015, 2019; Law No. 184/1999, Art. 18; Zlotnik 1997).¹³

In 2005 direct election of *subyekty* executives was replaced by a system under which regional legislatures vote on a candidate nominated by the Russian president (Council of Europe: Russia 2010; Goode 2007, 2010; Law No. 1603/2004). Each regional legislative assembly had to confirm or reject a presidential nominee to the post of regional chief executive. If the regional legislature rejected a nominee twice, a one-month consultative process was initiated. After that time the president could nominate a new candidate, or appoint an acting governor for up to six months. If the *subyekty* legislature rejected a nominee for the third time, the president had the right to dissolve the legislature (Blakkisrud 2011; Chebankova 2016: 134–151; Goode 2007; Slider 2009). This procedure is scored as dual executive because the executive needs support from both the central government and the *subyekty* assembly.⁷ The extent to which these governors had dual loyalty or were central government appointees is debated (Goode 2007; Blakkisrud 2011; Demchenko and Golosov 2016).¹⁴

Direct elections for the governor were reintroduced in 2012 in five *subyekty* which were selected as ‘test cases’ (Blakkisrud 2015; Golosov 2014; Law No. 40/2012). In 2013, the law was amended and *subyekty federacii* can opt for direct elections or let *subyekty* legislatures choose the governor based on a nomination by the president. In case a *subyekty federacii* decides for presidential nomination, all parties represented in the regional legislature as well as the State Duma are allowed to propose up to three candidates each. The president will then select three names at his own discretion, which are presented to the regional legislature for an approval vote (Blakkisrud 2015). In addition, from 2013 onwards all *subyekty* legislative and gubernatorial elections take place on a single ‘unified election day’ in early September (Saikkonen 2015). Before the law was implemented, President Medvedev replaced 22 governors who remained in office until expiry of their terms and direct elections were gradually phased in from 2012 onwards (Goode 2013; Heany 2015, 2019). Between 2012 and 2018, 76 *subyekty* have introduced direct elections and 9 *subyekty* have opted for presidential appointment.¹⁵ *Subyekty* with direct elections score 2 on executive from

¹³ We start scoring 2 on executive from the year when an elected governor assumes office.

¹⁴ We start scoring 1 on executive from the year a presidential nominee was approved by the regional legislature. By 2010, all *subyekty* governors were appointed.

¹⁵ All six *respubliki* from the North Caucasus federal okrug, the republic of Crimea, and the autonomous okrugs of Khanty-Manssi and Yamolo-Nenets (which produce more than 90 per cent of Russia’s natural gas) have their governors nominated by the president. The autonomous okrug of Nenets adopted the presidential nominee system in 2019 and the federal city of Sevastopol had a governor appointed by the Russian president between 2014 and 2017.

the year when an elected governor assumes office.¹⁶ The score on executive for *subyekty* which opted for presidential appointment remains 1.⁷

Federalnyye okruga polpred are appointed by the central government, and there is no assembly (Law No. 849/2000).

Shared rule

There is no shared rule for *federalnyye okruga*, but *subyekty federacii* and *respubliki* have power sharing.

LAW MAKING

The upper house of the Russian parliament, the *Sovet Federatsii* (Federation Council) was directly elected in December 1993 by universal suffrage for two years. The Federation Council represents regional interests since 1996 (Council of Europe: Russia 2004; Slider 2009). Each *subyekt federacii* (and each *respublik*) has two representatives, one selected by the *subyekt* legislature and one selected by the *subyekt* executive body (*L1, L2, L3*) (C 1993, Art. 95.2). Between 1996 and 2001, governors and the chairs of regional assemblies had the *ex officio* right to sit in the Federation Council, but since 2002, the governors or heads of the regional assembly can no longer sit in the upper house (Busygina and Heinemann-Grüder 2010: 272–273; Council of Europe: Russia 2004; Heany 2015, 2019; Law No. 113/2000; Ross 2010). The selection of the representatives for the *subyekty* legislatures and governors was changed again in 2013. The delegate for the *subyekt* legislature is elected from among the *subyekty* assembly members and the representative for the governor is selected from a list of three persons which has to be submitted by candidates when they submit their documents to register their candidacy for gubernatorial elections (Law No. 299/2012).

The *Sovet Federatsii* has fairly extensive legislative authority (*L4*), though less than the lower house or State Duma (Ross 2010).⁷ The *Sovet Federatsii* must be heard on laws concerning the federal budget, taxation, customs regulations, credit monitoring, and treaties, and it has special powers on border change between *subyekty*, as well as on federal court appointments, impeachment, martial law, states of emergency, and war (C 1993, Art. 106). It cannot block federal

¹⁶ The extent to which ‘Moscow’ can control or influence the outcomes of gubernatorial elections is debated. A candidate for the direct elections for governor must collect signatures of support from between 5 and 10 per cent—*subyetky* can set the exact threshold but most set the maximum—of the municipal legislators and elected municipal heads and signatures must be spread so as to cover at least 75 per cent of the municipalities (Goode 2013; Law No. 40/2012, Art. 18.3). This ‘municipal filter’ gives United Russia a comparative advantage because the party dominates in a majority of the local assemblies in the regions and thereby the party is able to prevent opposition parties and candidates from registering for the gubernatorial elections. In addition, gubernatorial candidates are screened through a ‘presidential filter’, whereby the president meets with federal party leaders to discuss their intended candidates (Blakkisrud 2015; Goode 2013; Golosov 2014; Nilsson 2019; Ross 2018; Saikkonen 2015).

laws, but it can raise the decision hurdle in the State Duma to a two-thirds majority (C 1993, Art. 107.3).

Between the mid-1990s and 2005 almost half of the *subyekty* had a bilateral treaty with Moscow. Many bilateral treaties contained provisions that enabled federal and *subyekt* governments to set up a joint commission on a parity basis for the implementation of the treaty. In addition, many bilateral treaties stipulated that disputes and conflicts between federal and *subyekt* governments be resolved through conciliation procedures. However, no bilateral treaty required the federal government to consult the *subyekt* government on federal legislation affecting the *subyekt*.

As of June 1999, there is a second way in which *subyekty federacii* are involved in national legislation. Federal laws on concurrent competences must be submitted to the *subyekty* for review. *Subyekty federacii* have thirty days to consider draft laws, and if one-third gives a negative response, a conciliation commission must work out a compromise (Law No. 119/1999; Ross 2010).

EXECUTIVE CONTROL

There were no routinized channels for executive control before 2000. President Putin set up two councils to compensate *subyekty* governors and presidents, and chairs of the *subyekt* parliaments who no longer have a seat in the federal parliament (Goode 2010). Both councils operate in the gray zone between the legislative and executive branch, but since they engage primarily federal executive actors, we categorize them as non-binding forms of executive control.^β

Since 2000 the State Council (*Gosudarstvennyi Sovet*), which is composed of all governors and presidents of the *subyekty federacii* and *respubliki*, as well as some presidential appointees, meets quarterly at the request of the Russian president (Council of Europe: Russia 2004; Law No. 1602/2000). It supervises twenty-two working groups on diverse topics including transportation, social policy, ecology, international relations, local government, land reform, and taxation (Chebankova 2007, 2016: 83). Regions can, and do, use the State Council to propose national regulation. For example, the governors collectively submitted proposals on small and medium business taxation, which was picked up by the president (Chebankova 2007). In August 2012, president Putin expanded the composition of the State Council to include the eight *polpredy*, the chairmen of the State Duma and the Federation Council, and the leaders of the Duma parliamentary factions. The president can additionally appoint members with extensive experience of public activities including former heads of regional executive bodies (Nilsson 2019).

Since 2002 the Legislative Council, which includes representatives from the *subyekt* assemblies, the Federal Assembly, *subyekt* executive branches, local governments, and non-governmental organizations, meets twice annually. Its presidium is composed of the heads of selected *subyekt* assemblies, the leadership of the upper chamber of the Russian parliament, and seven plenipotentiary representatives, and it convenes at least four times a year. The president and several ministers normally take part in the council hearings. The Legislative Council has eight working committees, which are chaired by heads of *subyekt* legislative bodies on a rotating basis.

The council has been involved in discussions on the division of responsibilities between the central government and *subyekt* governments, reform of the local electoral system, local government, and forestry regulations (Chebankova 2007, 2016: 83; Ross 2010).

The bilateral treaties did not regulate routine meetings between federal and *subyekt* governments (Frommeyer 1999: 28–32; Stoner-Weiss 2004:313–314).

FISCAL CONTROL

Subyekty federacii influence federal tax legislation through *the Sovet Federatsii*. Budgetary legislation begins in the State Duma and is submitted to the *Sovet Federatsii* for approval. If the *Sovet Federatsii* votes down a proposal, representatives from the two chambers meet in a conciliation committee. Failing compromise, the Duma can overrule the *Sovet Federatsii* with a two-thirds majority (C 1993, Arts. 106 and 107.3).

The bilateral treaties provided an avenue for *subyekty* to negotiate with the federal government the distribution of tax revenues affecting the region, including their contribution to a fiscal equalization fund (Frommeyer 1999: 33–34). Early budget agreements detailed the taxes from which the *subyekt*'s payments into the fund would come, but later agreements contained a general clause that a *subyekt*'s contribution is yearly established by federal law (Frommeyer 1999: 32–34). The budget agreements were a means to regulate the distribution of taxes between the federal government and the *subyekt* but final control remained with the federal government (De Silva et al. 2009: 32–33, 84–85, 107; Martinez-Vazquez and Boex 1999: 11–13, 90).^α The *subyekty* with a bilateral treaty score 1 on bilateral fiscal control.

BORROWING CONTROL

There are no routine intergovernmental meetings on borrowing.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

The Russian constitution contains two amendment procedures; both provide *subyekty federacii* with a veto (Salikov 2005: 306–307). The basic constitutional principles—fundamentals of the constitutional system, rights and liberties, and amendment procedure (Chapters 1, 2, and 9)—can be amended by the federal parliament: approval by at least three-quarters of the members of the *Sovet Federatsii*, and by two-thirds of the State Duma (C 1993, Art. 108). The rest of the constitution—the federal system, composition and functions of federal and subnational institutions, and the judiciary (Chapters 3 through 8)—require approval by two-thirds of *subyekty federacii* (C 1993, Art. 136).

Many bilateral treaties contained provisions that the treaty could not be unilaterally changed by either the federal or *subyekt* government (Frommeyer 1999: 22), which means that the *subyekt* government had a veto.^α

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Self-rule in Russia^a

			Institutional depth	Policy scope	Fiscal autonomy	Borrowing autonomy	Representation		Self-rule
							Assembly	Executive	
Respubliki	I	1993-1995	3	3	3	3	2	2	16
	I	1996-1999	3	3	3	2	2	2	15
	I → II	2000-2004	2	2	3	2	2	2	13
	II	2005 ^b -2012	2	1	3	2	2	1	11
	II	2013 ^c -2018	2	2	3	2	2	2	13
Republiki (bilateral treaty)	I	199X-200X ^d	3	3	3	2	2	2	15
Tatarstan	I	1993	3	3	3	3	2	2	16
	I	1994-1995	3	4	3	3	2	2	17
	I	1996-1999	3	4	3	2	2	2	16
	I → II	2000-2004	3	4	3	2	2	2	16
	II	2005-2006	3	4	3	2	2	1	15
	II	2007-2015	3	3	3	2	2	1	14
	II	2016-2017	3	3	3	2	2	2	15
	II	2018	2	2	3	2	2	2	13
Bashkortostan	I	1993-1994	3	3	3	3	2	2	16
	I	1995	3	4	3	3	2	2	17
	I	1996-1999	3	4	3	2	2	2	16
	I → II	2000-2002	3	4	3	2	2	2	16
	II	2003-2006	2	2	3	2	2	2	13
	II	2007-2014	2	1	3	2	2	1	11
	II	2015-2018	2	2	3	2	2	2	13

Subyekty federacii	I	1993-1995 ^e	2	3	3	3	2	0	13
	I	1996 ^f -1999	2	3	3	2	2	2	14
	I → II	2000-2004	2	2	3	2	2	2	13
	II	2005 ^g -2012	2	1	3	2	2	1	11
	II	2013 ^h -2018	2	2	3	2	2	2	13
Subyekty federacii (bilateral treaty)	I	199X-200X ⁱ	3	3	3	2	2	2	15
Federalnyye okruga	I	2000-2018	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

^a Each of the 92 *subyekty federacii* is scored as an asymmetric region because they all receive dissimilar scores throughout time. The asymmetry relates to the type of *subyekty federacii* (*respubliki* or other type of *subyekty federacii*, i.e. *oblast*, *federalnyye gorod*, *kray*, *avtonomnyye okrug*, or *avtonomnaya oblast*), having a bilateral treaty (or not), the varying durations of the bilateral treaties, and the election or appointment of a *subyekty* governor. The other notes provides further detail.

^b In 2005, directly elected governors were replaced by a system under which regional legislatures vote on a candidate nominated by the Russian president. *Respubliki* score 1 on policy scope and 1 on executive from the year when an appointed governor assumed office: three in 2005, ten in 2006, four in 2007, three in 2009, and one in 2010.

^c Directly elected governors were re-introduced in 2012. We score *respubliki* 2 on policy scope and 2 on executive from the year when a directly elected governor assumed office: one in 2014, six in 2015, three in 2016, two in 2017, and three in 2018. The governors in seven *respubliki* (Adygeya, Dagestan, Ingushetiya, Kabardino-Balkar, Karachei-Cherkess, North Osetiya-Alaniya, and the annexed territory of Crimea) are appointed by the president with regional approval and their score on policy scope and on executive remains 1.

^d For some time, nine *respubliki* had a bilateral treaty, of varying duration: 1994–2002: one; 1995–2002: two; 1995–2005: two; 1996–2002: two; 1996–2005: one; 1998–2001: one.

^e Six *subyekty federacii* had directly elected governors during this time period: Saint Petersburg since 1991, Lipetsk, Orel, Krasnoyarsk since 1993, and Belgorod and Ryazan since 1995.

^f Directly elected governors were introduced in 1995 and *subyekty federacii* score 2 on executive from the year when an elected governor assumed office: seventeen in 1996, in thirty-eight in 1997, five in 1998, and two in 2001.

^g In 2005, directly elected governors were replaced by a system under which regional legislatures vote on a candidate nominated by the Russian president. *Subyekty federacii* score 1 on policy scope and 1 on executive from the year when an appointed governor assumed office: twenty in 2005, twelve in 2006, eleven in 2007, fourteen in 2008, three in 2009, and three in 2010.

^h Directly elected governors were re-introduced in 2012. We score *subyekty federacii* 2 on policy scope and 2 on executive from the year when a directly elected governor assumed office: five in 2013, eight in 2014, twenty-three in 2015, sixteen in 2016, three in 2017, and six in 2018. The governors in Khanty-Mansii and Yamalo-Nents are appointed by the president with regional approval and their score remains 1 on policy scope and on executive.

ⁱ For some time, thirty-five *subyekty* had a bilateral treaty, of varying duration: 1996–2001: three; 1996–2002: ten; 1996–2005: three; 1997–2001: two; 1997–2002: eight; 1997–2003: one; 1997–2005: three; 1998–2002: four; 1998–2005: one.

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Shared rule in Russia

		Law making						Executive control		Fiscal control		Borrowing control		Constitutional reform		Shared rule
		L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	
Respubliki	1993-1995	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
	1996-1999	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	7
	2000-2018	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	8
Republiki (bilateral treaty)*	199X-1995	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	4	5
	1996-1999	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	4	4	7
	2000-200X	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	4	4	8
Tatarstan	1993	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
	1994-1995	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	4	5
	1996-1999	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	4	4	7
	2000-2017	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	4	4	8
	2018	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	8
Bashkortostan	1993-1994	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
	1995	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	4	5
	1996-1999	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	4	4	7
	2000-2002	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	4	4	8
	2003-2018	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	8
Subyekty federacii	1993-1995	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
	1996-1999	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	7
	2000-2018	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	8
Subyekty federacii (bilateral treaty)**	199X-1995	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	4	5
	1996-1999	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	4	4	7
	2000-200X	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	4	4	8
Federalnyye okruga	2000-2018	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

National legislature has: L1 = regional representation; L2 = regional government representation; L3 = majority regional representation; L4 = extensive authority; L5 = bilateral regional consultation; L6 = veto for individual region. Total for shared rule includes the highest score of either multilateral (M) or bilateral (B).

* For some time, nine *respubliki* had a bilateral treaty, of varying duration: 1994–2002: one; 1995–2002: two; 1995–2005: two; 1996–2002: two; 1996–2005: one; 1998–2001: one.

** For some time, thirty-five *subyekty* had a bilateral treaty, of varying duration: 1996–2001: three; 1996–2002: ten; 1996–2005: three; 1997–2001: two; 1997–2002: eight; 1997–2003: one; 1997–2005: three; 1998–2002: four; 1998–2005: one.

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