



Western Views of Russia

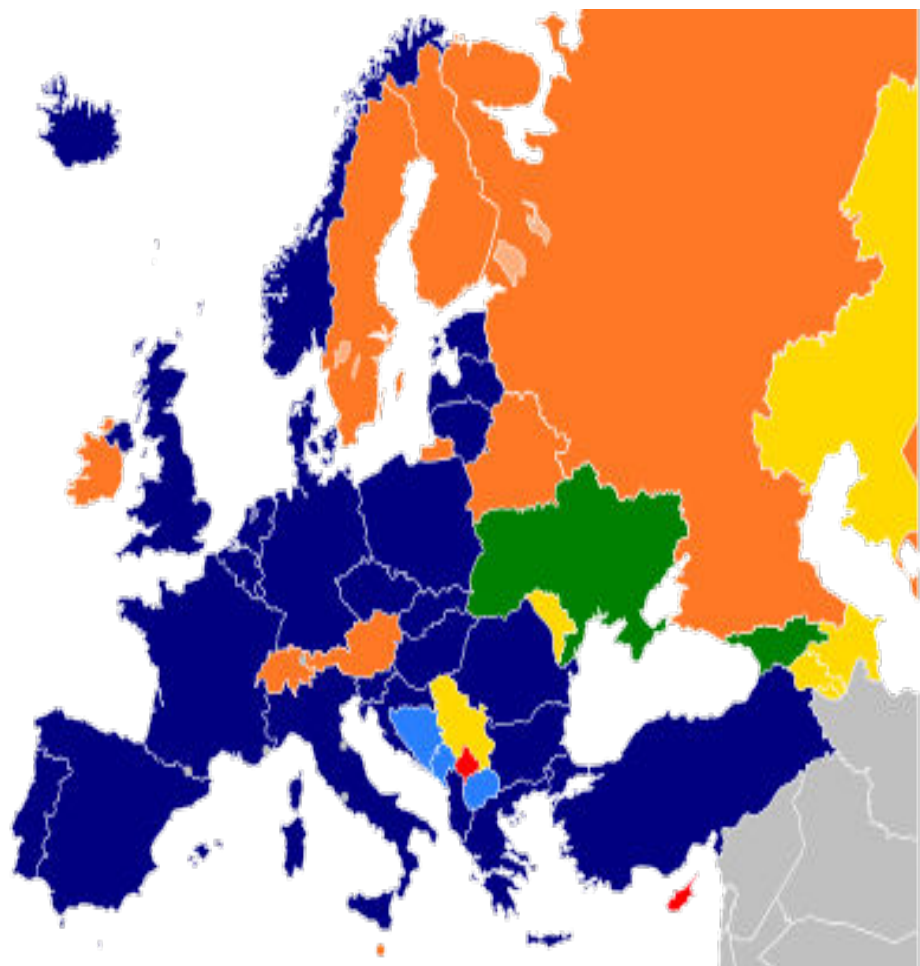
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Overview

- State of surprise
- Optimism – Towards Russia’s transition and “Strategic Partnership”
 - Russia as we want it to be, rather than Russia as it is
- Towards a “new Cold War”?
 - Russia’s domestic politics – “the regime question”
 - “Putinology” – since 2012
- 2014 – a new approach?
 - Wars in Ukraine and Syria: sanctions, diplomacy, NATO
 - Maintaining unity?
- Russia in Transition?

Russia?



State of Surprise & Optimism

- Collapse of the USSR
 - Redistribution of resources
 - Wars in Middle East, Afghanistan
- Russia “returning to the Western Family of Nations”?
 - Transition to liberal democracy
 - “Strategic Partner” on international stage
- Frameworks for dialogue
 - NATO-Russia Council
 - EU Permanent Partnership Councils

Towards a “new Cold War”?

- Ideological underpinnings of Western views of Russia
 - Hope for transition and change – increasingly automatic
 - Medvedev; Protest demonstrations 2011-2
 - “Resets”
- Disappointments, Frustration, Disagreements
 - “Regime Question”
 - Russo-Georgia War
 - Energy disputes 2006, 2009
- 2012: “Putinology”

2014: A new era?

- Russia back on the Western political map
 - Surprise
 - What does Putin want?
 - Reactive policies
 - sanctions, suspension of mechanisms for dialogue, NATO's response
- Maintaining unity?
 - Divisions across the Euro-Atlantic community
 - State/business
 - North America/Continental Europe

Where is Russia today?



Where is Russia today? In Transition...

- Economic stagnation & recession
 - Downturn since late 2011
- “Vertical of power” often dysfunctional
- Transition towards mobilisation –
 - Concern about international instability: preparing the country
- Underway since 2011? (Post-“Arab Spring”)
 - “Colour revolution proofing” Russia – “Zaslon-2015”
 - Investment in military – R20 trillion
 - Military reform; thousands of exercises
- Political stability through electoral cycle – 2016/2018
- Projection of Russian power in the state’s interests