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**Демонстрационный вариант и методические рекомендации
по направлению «Политический анализ и публичная политика»**

Профиль:

«Политический анализ и публичная политика»

ДЕМОНСТРАЦИОННЫЙ ВАРИАНТ

Время выполнения задания – 180 мин.

Прочитайте статью и сделайте ее критический анализ на русском языке, стараясь придерживаться списка вопросов, приведенных в конце статьи.

The Politics of Pension Retrenchment in Transitional Regimes: A Political Institutional Analysis
of Russia

(from: Ilian Cashu, Final Policy Research Paper)

1. Introduction: The Policy Problem

The growing mismatch between social policy resources and commitments has prompted many post-communist governments to retrench their welfare systems. Retrenchment refers to policy changes that reduce the generosity, coverage, or quality of welfare benefits. As the largest program of social expenditure, pensions have become an obvious target for retrenchment. Have post-communist governments advocating pension retrenchment initiatives been able to translate them into actual policy reforms? What factors account for their retrenchment success and what explains their failure? How far can governments bent on retrenchment go before losing all political support? How effective have the efforts to assemble pro-retrenchment coalitions been in helping the governments implement pension-spending cuts?

2. Theory and Research Design

First, policy design determines the range of possible reform options, thus making retrenchment vary across policy areas. Previous policies, like PAYG (pay-as-you-go) public pension schemes, lock in a particular path of development by raising the cost of radical reforms. Second, political institutions (majoritarian Vs separation-of-powers) influence the government's ability to cut spending. They affect the number and status of veto actors, i.e., an individual or collective actor whose consent is necessary for a change in policy (Tsebelis 1995). Third, previous policies and political institutions offer opportunities for interest groups to shape the policy reform process. Forth, retrenchment advocates are advised to deploy strategies of obfuscation, i.e., limiting the visibility of cuts, and compensation, i.e., buying off the loyalty of opposition, in order to advance their unpopular reform proposals. And, fifth, they could exploit the fiscal crisis of social policy programs to assemble a powerful coalition in favor of spending cuts. In general, however, the excessive political and electoral risks associated with retrenchment initiatives discourage policymakers from pursuing such cuts in the first place. For this reason, welfare state retrenchment is a decidedly incremental process.

How do these hypotheses bear out in accounting for similar phenomena in post-communist countries or transitional regimes? How different, if at all, is the process of welfare state, and pension in particular, retrenchment in the East? Rys (1998) posits that politicians in the transition countries enjoy a larger room for retrenchment maneuvering, partly because of the magnitude of the fiscal crisis of their welfare systems and partly because of the generally higher popular tolerance for painful reforms. In contrast, this study takes a different approach on the welfare retrenchment process by stressing the relevance of political and institutional factors. It places its research focus on the relationship between different political institutions and policy style. Hence,

Hypothesis 1: The government's ability to control the policy making process depends the structure of political institutions.

Hypothesis 2: Governments operating in systems with a high degree of power concentration are more likely to pursue unilateral retrenchment policies.

Hypothesis 3: In political systems characterized by power fragmentation, governments are more inclined to negotiate retrenchment policies with opposition and coalition parties.

The cases selected for this comparative policy research reflect different degrees of power concentration in the executive. The paper examines the impact of a super-presidential system (Russia), a semi-presidential system (Romania), and a parliamentary system (Latvia), on the ability of their governments to cut pension spending. In particular, it captures the impact of the institutional variables like: the executive-Duma relations (Russia), fragmented party system (Romania), and referenda (Latvia). It accounts for the influential role of transnational financial institutions, like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, in social policy reform processes at the domestic level, as well as for the underdeveloped systems of interest representation, and hence, limited influence of civil society organizations.

Because pension reform affects entitlements, it is synonymous with retrenchment. Retrenchment in the area of pensions can be defined as policy changes that result in the reduction of the generosity, coverage and quality of benefits (Bonoli, 2000:35). The rationalization of the operating PAYG (pay-as-you-go) intergenerational pension systems by increasing retirement age, severing the link between contributions and benefits, etc., as well as the introduction of mandatory capitalized pension schemes, serve as instances of retrenchment. A systematic analysis of the three reform cases demonstrates that assembling pro-retrenchment coalitions is a politically complicated task yet not impossible. The cases identify the main actors, their preferences for change as well as the mechanisms they used to influence the reform process and its outcomes.

3. Case Study Russia

3.1 Russia: Mikhail Dmitriev's Privatization Effort (Unilateral Reform)

Initially such privatization plans were not on the pension reform agenda in Russia. Prevalent among reform ideas were those aimed at restoring the insurance design of the pension system while keeping the state as the main provider (Elvira Tuchkova, Interview). As early as mid 1995, the Ministry of Labor and Social Development together with the PF prepared a comprehensive reform proposal. Central to the new organizational structure of the pension system was the introduction of individual social security accounts to succeed the Soviet style 'work books' (Concept of Pension Reform, 1995). Note that the concept was silent about the introduction of mandatory funded schemes.

Proposals favoring mandatory funded schemes were strongly upheld by several think tanks as early as 1996. One such proposal produced by a group of researchers at the Moscow Carnegie Center argued for a complete overhaul of the public pension system. Their leader, Mikhail Dmitriev, presented capitalized pension funds not only as a functional solution to persistent pension crisis but also as a powerful means to increasing pensions and creating a solid reservoir of domestic sources for investment and growth (Dmitriev & Travina, 1998:162-163).

Also, the World Bank (WB) resolutely supported the funded pillar. Pension reform topped the list of loan conditionalities to Russia and the government's commitment to reform provided the Bank with an excellent avenue to push ahead with its model. Most importantly, the WB managed to assemble a politically influential group of state institutions that were firmly supportive of the funded pillar. The Russian Central Bank, Ministry of Economy, Inspectorate of Non-State Pension Funds, were among key backers of private schemes (Leonid Iakushev, 1997:10).

Finally, it was President Yeltsin himself who endorsed the reform of the public pension system to include capitalized mandatory schemes. Yeltsin spoke the language of pension privatization in that he regarded such schemes as capable of boosting economic development and freeing retirement provision from the clout of insensitive state bureaucrats (Boris Yeltsin 1997 Address).

The government was ordered to prepare a comprehensive pension reform program by November 1997 and submit it to the Duma the following month.

There was no accident that the task of designing such a proposal was assigned to Mikhail Dmitriev.

On October 30, 1997, the government turned down the reform proposal prepared by Dmitriev objecting its unduly radical character.

The compromise variant was approved by the Chernomyrdin cabinet in December 1997, then accepted with only some minor changes by President Yeltsin in April 1998, and served as a basis for the 'Pension Reform Program' adopted by Kirienko cabinet in May 1998. A complete package of pension reform draft laws was to be submitted to the Duma in the Fall of 1998.

However, the financial crisis of August-September 1998 gravely undermined all pension reform plans outlined by the government and completely wrote the issue off the political agenda. The crisis served as compelling proof for those who were skeptical of privatizing the system from the very beginning of pension reform debates. But even if the crisis did not occur there would have been little chances for even the compromise variant to be approved and implemented. Neither leftist parties in the Duma, like the Communist Party, nor liberal parties, like Iabloko, supported the private pillar reform. While opposing the government's proposal, the MPs often called upon the Duma to assume responsibility for pension reform.

Detrimental to the success of pension reform was the technocratic and inherently undemocratic style in which it was designed and debated. Not only the positions of important societal actors, like the trade unions, were neglected but there was no public outreach campaign to inform people about the goals of pension reform. An analysis of media articles devoted to pension reform demonstrated that their overwhelming majority tackled issues only associated with the low level of state pension benefits and persistent pension arrears. The only serious and in-depth discussion of pension reform was carried out only by specialized publications, like the Journal 'Pensia', largely inaccessible to the general public. Extensive and inclusive deliberative structures are crucial to ensuring support for reform during the legislative and implementation stages of the reform process.

3.2 Russia: Putin's 'Negotiated' Pension Policy Changes

Upon taking office in May 2000, public pensions become one of Vladimir Putin's main reform priorities. Significant changes related to the method and level of contributions to the country's four extra-budgetary funds (footnote: list the funds) were made already a month later. On June 9, 2000, at the initiative of a group of deputies from the Edinstvo faction, and with the full backing of the government, the Duma approved a proposal to combine contributions from all social funds into a single social tax. The proposal shifted the contribution collection function from the management of the respective funds to the Ministry of Tax Collection. Also, the level of the single social tax was lowered from 39.9% to 36.4% - a net reduction of 2.9% (Deputy Finance Minister Sergey Shatalin, Duma Transcript, No. 32, (480), 9 June 2000, pp. 18-20).

The single social tax, however, affected the power balance between the existing providers of social benefits, and, therefore, unavoidably generated stiff opposition. Trade Unions were one the most vocal opposition groups since they risked losing control over the resources of the Social Insurance Fund. Their leader, Mikhail Shmakov, deemed the proposal unacceptable because it transferred employees' contributions into state property (Mikhail Shmakov, Duma Transcript, 32 (480), p 17, 9 June 2000).

The convenient strategy was shortly found. In an ad hoc fashion, the government created a 'rift' among its ranks and reshaped the reform choice presented to the Duma. At issue was the fate of the Pension Fund, the largest among the four extra-budgetary funds. The government camp became split on whether to immediately include the Pension Fund contribution into the single social tax, or delay it until the year 2003. On the one side of the barricade, there were the proponents of the status quo (or the Pension Fund's monopoly). Pension Fund Chief Mikhail Zurabov, with the head of the presidential administration Alexandr Voloshin, Prime-Vice Minister for social affairs Valentina Matveenko, and Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, at his

side led the conservative group. What Zurabov and his supporters defended made sense because collecting contributions was the biggest responsibility of the Pension Fund. The opposite side was mainly represented by the finance minister Alexei Kudrin and his deputy Sergei Shatalin. Also portrayed as a liberal group, they opted for the immediate inclusion of the Pension Fund contribution into the single social tax. Neither side was debating the need for reform; they only disagreed on the timing of its enforcement (*Segodnya*, 7 June, 2000). Respectively, the 'rift' radically reshaped the reform choice presented to the deputies: they did not have to choose between reform and non-reform, but rather between different designs and paces of its implementation.

Predictably, the improvised division within the government faded away already by the second reading of the single social tax. At the plenary session, deputy finance minister Shatalin, ostensibly a member of the liberal camp, articulated a cohesive position of the government. The united government team unequivocally favored the delay of the Pension Fund contribution until the year 2003. They argued that the postponed inclusion of the Pension Fund would serve to prevent possible breakdowns with contribution collection and maintain a decent level of pension benefits (Sergey Shatalin, *Duma Transcript*, 32 (480), 9 June 2000, p. 20). It should be noted that the budget and finance committee of the Duma was in full agreement with the government. Its chairman, Alexandr Zhukov of the pro-Kremlin *Edinstvo* (Unity) faction, claimed that the proposal had been carefully examined by the members of his committee and urged the deputies to vote it (Alexandr Zhukov, *Duma Transcript*, 32 (480), 9 June 2000, p. 38).

Yet the exclusion of the Pension Fund contribution (28% out of 36.4%) from the single social tax would effectively defeat the very rationale of the proposal. It was evident that the government's justifications were not tenable. The first to confront the government team was the influential leader of the *Otechestvo-Vsya Rossiya* (Fatherland – All Russia) faction Yevgheny Primakov. In his own words, 'Your (government's) arguments are deficient. The only factor that operates here is lobbyism. Let's call things as they really are. When the proposal was submitted to the Duma for the first reading, the Pension Fund was part of the single social tax, then later on, it disappeared. What do you mean to postpone its inclusion for two years? No one knows what might happen in two years (Yevgheny Primakov, *Duma Transcript*, 32 (480), 9 June 2000, p. 38) [Authors' Translation]. Although the objection was made minutes before the final voting on the Pension Fund amendment, it proved surprisingly successful. It struck a strong cord even with the communists who eagerly rolled behind Primakov to demand the immediate inclusion of the Pension Fund contribution into the single social tax (Interview with Zotova, 5 February 2001). Indeed, Primakov hit the last nail in the coffin of the government's proposal.

While the rejection of the Pension Fund amendment might have upset Zurabov, in reality the result of the voting in the Duma corresponded neatly to the government's original intent: to combine contributions to the social funds into a single social tax. Key to its success was the strategy of securing the consent of the Duma. The government created an artificial division among its ranks and reshaped the reform choice presented to the Duma. As a result, it deflected the attention of deputies away from their own focus issues. Regarding Primakov, his avid support for the immediate inclusion of the Pension Fund contribution into the single social tax indirectly connected to Putin. The *Otechestvo* leader reportedly had consulted with the president two days before the Duma vote (*Segodnya*, 10 June 2000).

However, even for Zurabov and his agency, the loss of the function to collect contributions to the Federal Tax Ministry did no longer not matter much. The thing is that Putin took special care to generously compensate Zurabov. In September 2000, the president issued a decree which mandated the creation of unified pension service. Under the new scheme, Zurabov gained the exclusive control of pension calculation and pension payment. The latter function had to be taken away from the local agencies of social protection with the agencies themselves incorporated into the Pension Fund. It lost the power of contribution collection but, again, not totally, because the government gave the Pension Fund the right to collect contributions from the self-employed (Interview with Zotova, 5 February 2001). Of course, these changes

made perfect sense in the context of center-regions power relations, but, overall, the single social tax was a clear and easy victory of the government over the Duma.

As for pension reform, the single social tax victory meant only the beginning of a prolonged and complicated process. The first pension reform draft that Putin submitted to the Duma on April 19, 2001, dealt precisely with the status of the Pension Fund. It proposed the establishment of the non-commercial/unified pension service at the federal level responsible for granting and paying pensions. But most importantly, the presidential proposal provided for the elimination of the local agencies of social protection and their incorporation into the Pension Fund (Izvestiya, 20 April 2001).

Duma's assessment of the draft law was expectedly critical. The point is that the government and the Duma differ considerably on defining the pension policy problem. While the government invokes the demographic pressures, the Duma, and especially deputies from the leftist factions, cast blame on the poor management of the fund. In May 2001, a group of deputies led by deputy chairman of the Labor and Social Policy Committee, Valentina Savostianova, contested Putin's draft law in the Constitutional Court. They claimed that the unconstitutionality of the draft law in a situation where the constitutional responsibility for paying pensions had been assigned to the local agencies of social protection. Moreover, the legal relations between the subjects of the federation could be altered only through organic laws and not presidential decrees (Izvestiya, 26 June 2001).

Repeated efforts of Matveenko to persuade Savostianova to withdraw the petition from the court were to no avail (Interview with Sosnova, 2 August 2001). On June 25, 2001, the Constitutional Court ruled in favor of the president. The court referred to the existing disaccord in the pension legislation, which in turn, justified the altering of legal relations by decree (Izvestiya, 26 June 2001).

The experience of early Putin's reforms in the area of pensions demonstrates the centrality of well-crafted manipulative techniques, like dividing the opposition and creating false choices, in order to win the policy battles. No essential concessions were made during the deliberations on the single social tax and Pension Fund's status; the latter change, actually, was effected by decree. These social policy changes corresponded to a broader agenda of Putin, i.e., that of altering the power distribution between federation and regional authorities. The timing of its deliberation coincided with the establishment of the seven super-regions. By reshaping the political and administrative map of Russia, the federal authorities intended to strengthen their ability to influence regional policy. The single social tax provided such an instrument. Under this scheme, the federal tax service would collect contributions to the social funds, forward them to Moscow, which in turn would distribute them back to the regions. As a result, it tied the hands of the regional leaders by stripping them of the power to control the distribution of the social security taxes (Interview with Elena Zotova, 5 February 2001). In short, these policy changes not only influenced the administration and structure of the pension system, but also affected the balance of power in this field.

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6. Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

The experience of Russia, Romania, and Latvia with public pension reform during the past half decade provides an excellent test for hypotheses advanced by the retrenchment theory. As the largest item of social expenditure, public pensions became an obvious target of spending cuts in the face of hard fiscal constraints around mid 1990s. The maturity of public pension systems in these countries carried extensive state commitments to politically crucial segments of the population (e.g., elderly and people of near pension age), and hence raised the controversy and risk of retrenchment-related policies. With varying degree of power concentration superpresidential regime (Russia), semi-presidential regime (Romania), and parliamentary regime (Latvia), all governments resorted to extensive negotiations and dialogue in the process of reforming their public pension systems. In Latvia, the opposition effectively used the referendum to effect negotiated changes; in Romania actors other than the government used the tri-partite council and parliamentary committees as compromise mechanisms; and in Russia, the

president established an inclusive political structure, NCPR, to broaden political support for his reform proposal. These cases show that the establishment and use of consultation mechanisms is a necessary if not even sufficient condition of successful social sector reforms. Even if unilateral actions are still common, they are not effective in most cases. Governments enjoying the luxury of high power concentration would avoid non-negotiated solutions in the area of pensions. Following Putin, President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine created a Russian version of NCPR in May 2001 (Interview with Katya Petrina, 27 July 2001). Yet as the Russia case demonstrates, superpresidential governments often break the rules of political inclusion and resort to Byzantine manipulation and intrigue in order to advance their policy proposal. The task for the policy analyst remains to determine the degree to which state-crafted compromise mechanisms permit non-executive actors to advance their preferences for reform.

Following Nelson (2001), Hausner (2001), Ferge (1999), and Cashu (2001), this paper claims that the politics of social sector reforms discourage unilateral actions that characterized the old communist regimes and, to a large extent, the initial macroeconomic adjustment reforms. Interests groups, legislatures, and mass public are likely to play a greater role in social policy reforms through the establishment of extensive mechanisms of dialogue and consultation. The existence of such mechanisms diminishes the potential of policy reversals, and hence increases the likelihood of their implementation success. However, the inadequate consultation during the early phases of social-sector reform will likely to increase their centrality during subsequent attempts.

Вопросы:

1. Проанализировав текст сформулируйте и опишите главную проблему, которой посвящен данный текст.
2. Относятся ли описанные в тексте события/проблемы к публичной сфере, оказывают ли они влияние на формирование публичной политики и если да, то почему?
3. Являются ли описанные в тексте события/проблемы актуальными для публичной политики и почему? Интересы каких групп и акторов они затрагивают?
4. Какой политический субъект должен решить описанную проблему публичной политики? Опишите политические средства решения проблемы, которыми указанный субъект способен решить проблему.
5. Назовите актора, заинтересованного в решении описанной проблемы и раскройте его заинтересованность, мотивацию. Сформулируйте рекомендацию данному актору по решению проблемы.

МЕТОДИЧЕСКИЕ РЕКОМЕНДАЦИИ

Предварительные критерии оценивания

Для каждого вопроса, соответственно:

1. оцениваются навыки абитуриента операционализировать (**сформулировать и представить**) проблему, на основе текста формулировать проблему публичной политики, которую необходимо решить.
2. оцениваются навыки абитуриента операционализировать ситуацию как **проблему публичной политики, как политическую проблему**.
3. оцениваются способности абитуриента анализировать общественно-политическую ситуацию и расстановку сил в ней.
4. оцениваются знания абитуриента политической системы и политического устройства РФ.
5. оцениваются аналитические навыки абитуриента **предлагать решение проблем публичной политики...**

Критерии оценивания каждого вопроса:

1. степень аргументированности и обоснованности ответа
2. степень использования фактической информации (количественных и качественных данных, статистических и опросных данных, точных названий институций, должностей, статусов, законов)
3. ясность формулировки личной исследовательской позиции
4. способность к критическому анализу проблемы публичной политики

Перечень и содержание тем олимпиадных состязаний

1. Политическая ситуация в современной России
2. Публичная политика и гражданское общество в современной России
3. Публичная политика и негосударственные политические акторы (например, группы интересов, ассоциации бизнеса, крупные корпорации, аналитические центры, гражданские объединения)
4. Направления публичной политики современной России в сравнении с другими странами (например, национальная политика, политика в области образования, здравоохранения, безопасности, региональная политика, инновационная политика)
5. Глобальная публичная политика, глобальное гражданское участие и глобальное демократическое управление

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