
AP[®] Comparative Government and Politics

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

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Free Response Question 8

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AP[®] COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

2019 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 8

5 points

Part (a): 2 points

One point is earned for EACH correct description of a restriction to civil society adopted after Vladimir Putin became president in 2000.

Acceptable descriptions may include:

- Control of independent media by the government
- Government censorship of the media
- Increasing regulations on the Internet, such as blocking access or rerouting web traffic
- Regulations on protests or political participation
- Harassment or punishment of journalists, opposition leaders, or protestors
- Regulations on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), such as registration requirements
- Regulations on labor unions
- Regulations on ballot access
- Anti-gay propaganda laws
- Use of tax code to control civil society groups
- Movement to a corporatist system where the state must sanction interest groups
- Use of vague and overly broad laws

Part (b): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct explanation of why the Russian government restricts civil society.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- To safeguard or maintain power
- To minimize threats to the state

Part (c): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct description of an example of a political activity that indicates civil society has persisted despite these restrictions.

Acceptable descriptions may include:

- Continued protests or opposition groups, such as Pussy Riot
- Blogging and Internet activism
- Continued existence of opposition political parties
- Continued critical reporting by journalists
- High voter turnout
- The existence of independent pro-Putin groups

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Question 8 (continued)

Part (d): 1 point

One point is earned for a correct explanation of why the Russian government continues to allow some civil society groups.

Acceptable explanations may include:

- To promote internal or external legitimacy
- To provide a façade of democracy
- To act as a safety valve
- To encourage activities of progovernment civil society groups

A score of zero (0) is earned for an attempted or off-task answer that earns no points.

A score of (—) is earned for a blank.

8. Since 2000, the Russian government has undermined civil society groups.

(a) Describe two restrictions to civil society adopted after Vladimir Putin became president in 2000.

(b) Explain why the Russian government restricts civil society.

(c) Describe one example of political activity that indicates civil society has persisted despite these restrictions.

(d) Explain why the Russian government continues to allow some civil society groups.

growing impact of foreign
donors register as foreign
agents
Protesters can be
down

8A1

Authoritarian, Image of regime

Domestic exp
groups

Many Nongovt

Demonstrate & try to maintain interest in Putin

a) The first restriction on civil society adopted by Putin after 2000 was the requirement for NGOs with foreign donations and support to have to register as foreign agents within Russia. This made it increasingly difficult for NGOs to be created and added unnecessary restrictions. Secondly, the increasing difficulty for interest groups to obtain protest permits and the ease at which Russian police are allowed to arrest and jail people that are deemed dangerous to the Russian state have restricted civil society. The loosening of detainment regulations has posed difficulties for the organization of interest groups.

b) The Russian government restricts civil society because the ~~authoritarian~~ authoritarian nature of governance by the Putin regime gets challenged more when ~~more~~ civil society is active and thriving. To allow for corruption and authoritarian laws to persist, the Russian government is forced to limit civil society.

ADDITIONAL ANSWER PAGE FOR QUESTION 8

c) Alexy Navalny, the leader of an interest group that seeks to challenge Vladimir Putin's regime ~~at~~, has amassed large support and have hosted multiple protests against the Russian government. Despite being arrested, jailed, and threatened multiple times by the Putin government, he and his group have persisted in exposing the corruption of the Putin regime and in advocating for more freedoms and civil liberties for everyday Russian citizens.

d) The Russian government seeks to maintain an image that Russia is a legitimate democracy and that it allows civil society like other democratized nations. Due to mounting pressure from international watchdog groups as well as other organizations that promote freedom in illiberal and authoritarian regimes, Russia has to acquiesce to allowing certain interest groups ~~to~~ to somewhat comply with international pressure and maintain an image of democratization ~~amidst~~ amidst their deep-seated corruption.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

8. Since 2000, the Russian government has undermined civil society groups.

8B

- (a) Describe two restrictions to civil society adopted after Vladimir Putin became president in 2000.
- (b) Explain why the Russian government restricts civil society.
- (c) Describe one example of political activity that indicates civil society has persisted despite these restrictions.
- (d) Explain why the Russian government continues to allow some civil society groups.

8. (a). After Putin became president, restrictions were placed on media in Russia and free journalism. Also, Putin restricted the activities of civil society groups such as labor unions.

(b). The Russian government restricts civil society in order to maintain a large amount of control over their citizens, and remain in power over the country.

(c). Despite these restrictions, political activity online has persisted. Citizens are critical of their government on social media which indicates that civil society has persisted.

(d). Russia has permitted some civil society groups that are beneficial to the government and their image. Youth groups ~~pers~~ are permitted since they create party loyalty and teach obedience in Russian youth, which ~~is~~ is a trait favored by the government. The government only allows civil society groups that are going to make themselves look good.

8C

8. Since 2000, the Russian government has undermined civil society groups.

- (a) Describe two restrictions to civil society adopted after Vladimir Putin became president in 2000.
- (b) Explain why the Russian government restricts civil society.
- (c) Describe one example of political activity that indicates civil society has persisted despite these restrictions.
- (d) Explain why the Russian government continues to allow some civil society groups.

a) one restriction to civil society adopted after Vladimir Putin became president in 2000 is that media is heavily watched now and changed to how Putin wants it, another one would be there is no voting for President or anyone in the gov.

b) the Russian Gov restricts civil society because they don't want to let the people know what the gov is full of about so they censor a lot of the media and other stuff as well

c) one example of political activity that indicates civil society has persisted is by the Russian Gov being a little ~~for~~ lenient and letting people get away with little things

d) the Russian gov allows some civil society groups because they're not fully in charge they aren't like China, where everything is public and the gov knows

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2019 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 8

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Overview

The intent of this question was to assess students' understanding of the nature of restrictions on civil society in Russia adopted after Vladimir Putin became president in 2000, the reasons for the restrictions, political activity that indicates civil society has continued despite these restrictions, and why the Russian government continues to allow some civil society groups. The skills tested were descriptive and explanatory. Students had four specific tasks: to describe two restrictions to civil society, to explain why the Russian government restricts civil society, to describe one example of political activity that indicates civil society has persisted despite these restrictions, and to explain why the Russian government continues to allow some civil society groups.

Sample: 8A

Score: 5

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for correctly describing “the requirement for NGOs with foreign donations and support to have to register as foreign agents” as a restriction to civil society adopted after Putin became president in 2000. The response earned 1 point for describing a second restriction as the “increasing difficulty for interest groups to obtain protest permits.” Both descriptions are restrictions on group activity as opposed to individual activity. Additional acceptable descriptions include regulations on protests or political participation and government censorship of the media.

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for explaining that the Russian govern restricts civil society “because the authoritarian nature of governance by the Putin regime gets challenged more when civil society is active and thriving.” By referring to the challenge to the authoritarian regime, this response goes beyond stating that the Russian government restricts civil society to minimize opposition to explain that the opposition is a threat to the state. An additional acceptable explanation of why the Russian government restricts civil society is that it does so to safeguard or maintain its power.

In part (c) the response earned 1 point by describing group political activity as “Alexy Navalny, the leader of an interest group that seeks to challenge Vladimir Putin’s regime, has amassed large support and have hosted multiple protests against the Russian government.” The response demonstrates that this political activity has continued: “Despite by arrested, jailed, and threatened multiple times by the Putin government, he and his group have persisted in exposing the corruption of the Putin regime and in advocating for more freedoms and civil liberties for everyday Russian citizens.” The response clearly describes political activity of a group and its persistence despite restrictions. Additional acceptable descriptions include blogging and Internet activity and continued critical reporting by journalists.

In part (d) the response earned 1 point for explaining, “The Russian government seeks to maintain an image that Russia is a legitimate democracy and that it allows civil society like other democratized nations.” This provides an explanation of why the Russian government continues to allow some civil society groups. Additional acceptable explanations include to provide a façade of democracy and to encourage activities of progovernment civil society groups.

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Question 8 (continued)

Sample: 8B
Score: 3

In part (a) the response did not earn a point for stating that “After Putin became president, restrictions were placed on media in Russia and free journalism. Also, Putin restricted the activities of civil society groups such as labor unions.” None of these assertions explain the nature of the restrictions and so are not descriptions of restrictions to civil society. Acceptable descriptions of restrictions to civil society adopted after Putin became president in 2000 include government regulations restricting access to the Internet and government regulations requiring NGOs to register.

In part (b) the response earned 1 point because the assertion that the “Russian government restricts civil society in order to maintain a large amount of control over their citizens, and remain in power” is an accurate and complete enough explanation of why the Russian government restricts civil society. An additional acceptable explanation is that it does so to minimize threats to the state.

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for arguing, “Despite these restrictions, ... [c]itizens are critical of their government on social media which indicates that civil society has persisted.” Some additional acceptable descriptions of political activity that has persisted despite the restrictions to civil society include the existence of independent pro-Putin groups and continued critical reporting by journalists.

In part (d) the response earned 1 point for explaining, “Russia has permitted some civil society groups that are beneficial to the government and their image. Youth groups are permitted since they create party loyalty and teach obedience in Russian youth.” This is an accurate and complete explanation of why the Russian government continues to allow some civil society groups. Some additional acceptable explanations include to promote internal or external legitimacy and to provide an illusion of democracy

Sample: 8C
Score: 1

In part (a) the response earned 1 point for using “one restriction to civil society adopted after Vladimir Putin became president in 2000 is that media is heavily watched now and changed to how Putin wants it” as a correct description of a restriction to civil society because it refers to media restriction and the nature of that restriction. It did not earn a point for accurately describing a restriction to civil society by using “no voting for President or anyone in the gov.” The statement is both inaccurate and not a restriction to civil society, which is comprised of voluntary groups outside of state control and not individuals voting. Some additional acceptable descriptions of restrictions to civil society adopted after Putin became president in 2000 include regulations on protests or political participation and government censorship of the media.

In part (b) the response did not earn a point for stating that the Russian government “restricts civil society because they don’t want to let the people know what the gov is fully about” because it does not move beyond a description of a restriction to explain why the restriction exists. An acceptable explanation of why the Russian government restricts civil society is that it does so to safeguard or maintain its power or to minimize threats to the state.

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Question 8 (continued)

In part (c) the response did not earn a point for “the Russian gov being a little leaniate and letting people get away with little things” as it is too vague a description of a political activity. Some additional acceptable descriptions of political activity that has persisted despite the restrictions to civil society include registration requirements placed on NGOs, blogging and internet activity, and continued critical reporting by journalists.

In part (d) the response did not earn a point for stating the Russian government is not “fully in charge” because this is an insufficient explanation of why the government continues to allow some civil society groups. Some acceptable explanations include to promote internal or external legitimacy, to provide a façade of democracy, and to encourage activities of progovernment civil society groups.