

# Social orientations as a factor in the accelerating differentiation of the information society

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**Abstract.** In this article, a sociological analysis of the "social orientations" category is presented as a methodological principle of separation of external (social attitudes) and internal (value orientations) incentives of communication. External incentives, drawing a person into technological dependence on the NBIC-technologies used, cause a break in humanitarian relations, hinder the development of self-identity, and lead to a decline in social differentiation. In opposite, human capital, as the main element of the novelty of production relations in the information age, enters into a deep hidden contradiction with the power of management and the alienation of the individual abilities and needs. Subjective factors, expressed by the human value orientations, in the conditions of new opportunities opened up by informatization and digitalization of all social institutions, receive global advantages for maintaining harmony and progress in the society development, despite the objective instability of irreconcilable contradictions between large social groups. For empirical identification of qualitatively new subjective factors of social differentiation multiplication, the author's typology of personalities is used, which unites actors into typological groups distinguished by social orientations. Terminal type, distinguished by the dominance of terminal (ultimate semantic) values and motives in the personality structure; inert type, the core of the "information poor"; instrumental type, occupying an intermediate position. Primary and secondary research made it possible to predict new opportunities for using the institution of education, in addition to the objective potentials of society self-development in the case of multidirectional differentiation.

## 1 Introduction

An incorrectly selected methodology results in the research made in a theoretically undetectable area, and any hypothesis, remaining verifiable, becomes unprovable. Differentiation of subjects is a complex process, and due to its multidimensionality, this concept has received opposite interpretations. In those theories where the study of social *experience* prevails, differentiation is considered in its negative aspect, since the multidirectional activity that forms the basis of any experience corresponds to the loss of the collective effect, destroying coherence and effectiveness of any social institution. On the contrary, differentiation acts as a fundamental law that guarantees stability in those studies that focus on fundamental forecasts of changes in negative situations, in order to find ways to resolve deep social contradictions. Consistency and organization are the foundations of differentiation and adaptation of living beings. This biological fundamental law acquires a new systemic complexity in the information society. "There is a need to introduce synthetic concepts that combine the sides of the dichotomy: deterministic chaos (ordered disorder; necessary, natural randomness), self-organization (randomly arising order); fractality (discrete continuity, integral part) ... It leads to the idea of the feedbacks existence in the system ... in case of complex

systems" [1, p. 31], to which the social human-sized system undoubtedly belongs.

This general specificity of the complex systems development, derived on the basis of general scientific disciplines (synergetics, in particular) in their unity with ontology, that is, a philosophical picture of the world, made it possible to abandon the one-sided technicist methodology that was popular for researchers of global problems in the middle of the 20th century and outdated by the 21st century. The authors of the article hypothetically conclude that a society without increasing differentiation (segregation of individuals into isolated groups that destroy the objective processes of the social labor division, social stratification, as well as the inward processes of the individual all-round abilities development) is a degrading society. Whatever research methodology we use, the fundamental approach to progress as a complication based on the open systems self-development will remain a development criterion, while the system closedness and its simplification is a model of collapsing integrity.

It is much more effective to calculate the risks of social entropy, which, according to Forrester, "is a social movement turned into a disorderly (heat) form" [2, p. 361], considering the leveling of the main internal personal potentials of participants in social processes. Without denying the growing danger of wasting human abilities in the event of their disunity, political or civil

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confrontation caused by a “manifested identity” [2, p. 368-369], we insist that the main reason for the decline in social potential is the hidden growth of animal biological motives of human behavior in their technical reformatting. This is how the man’s alienation from his abilities, discovered by the classics of Marxism, manifests itself today through the inability to control the results of his labor.

## 2 Researching the problem

- Differentiation is a universal characteristic, since any activity has its own definite and stable carrier. As there is no energy outside the carrier, there are also no social relations outside the person and social institutions.

- If a person does not guarantee the stability of his social space-time boundaries, then external environmental influences, often negatively directed towards the interests of an individual person, become a guarantee.

- The unification of people in various social institutions is a normal process of increasing social differentiation, since the person essence is the complex of all social relations.

- In all cases of participation in social institutions, a person as a representative of a collective subject can be a carrier of communicative, strategic, normative or dramatic action according to the typology of J. Habermas [3]. At the same time, instrumentally rational, value-rational, affective or traditional actions can be distinguished in human behavior, if we use the typology of social actions by M. Weber [4].

- The increase in differentiation, motivated from within, coincides with communicative activity, partly intersecting with the instrumentally rational activity, partly with the value-rational activity. For the sake of simplicity, let us dwell on the communicative type of social action, and then the problem of the meaning of activity, or social orientations, arises most acutely.

- Social orientations are an element of a bunch of concepts such as social attitudes (an externally determined element of consciousness of a collective subject, actor) and value orientations [5]. In contrast to meaningful value orientations, social attitudes are multiple, superficial, do not contain unity, and easily fit into any rational-technological environment, since they combine a method of achieving goals and a means of achieving goals. The destruction of moral values, or the internal way of self-development, leads to the washing out of the individual person role from all social institutions, leading to a fall in social differentiation, to the destruction of the complexity and social potential of society, replacing it with the biological potential of adaptation, survival, in adaptation to the NBIC environment requirements.

If in the days of early capitalism the only social group that gained in relation to the majority were the owners of the means of production, today, a practical benefit is technology, an artificial environment, which, due to the relativization of social relations, blocks the

growth potential of human capital as the main element of the information age novelty. Schumpeter [6] called this social problem the power of management, working in conjunction with big business and an alienated labor force. Modern society is technocratic and exists due to the spread of false consciousness. A social system with a predominance of a technical and economic basis instead of human capital guarantees the collective subject integrity even in critical situations, protecting against painful crises of spirituality by symbolic replacement of knowledge potential with the wealth of the information environment. However, crises of spirituality indicate the presence of spirituality! The gain in the rationalized use of the means of labor occurs due to the sacrifice of the value orientations in favor of communicative activity. The losers are small and medium-sized businesses, which, ideally, are employers for 80% of participants in social production. “The weight of GDP is still produced by modern capitalist employers, and judging human capital in terms of the employees’ number would be an excessive expansion of the “human capital” concept. We offer a criterion for such participation of an employee in the profit production of small or medium-sized businesses, when the employer pays a share of the profit as a monetary reward to a particularly valuable employee, exceeding the amount of the cost of his labor. If an employee receives only wages, he cannot be considered human capital, since in order to provide himself with the means of life, he gave in hiring his capabilities and his needs up to the alienation of labor” [7, p. 102]. With the breakdown of humanitarian relations caused by technization, the abundance of material and cultural resources seemingly endless and durable may disappear at any moment, as the philosopher Jose Ortega y Gasset warned in his famous work “Rise of the Masses”: “easily attainable benefits are based on certain and not easily attainable human qualities, the slightest shortage of which will immediately scatter a magnificent structure to ashes” [8, p. 319].

Today, not only Russia, but the whole world is in just such a situation predicted by the Spanish philosopher. The economy has suffered in many ways since the massive lockdown, but the main one of this ways is the wage earner. According to qualified forecasts, “in Russia at the end of 2020 the decline in GDP may exceed 5%, and the number of the poor may rise from 18 million to 20-21 million people. In these conditions, all the problems and limitations of development are aggravated» [9, p. 18].

At this moment of irreversible and dangerous loss of well-being, the subject participating in the collective subject ceases to critically perceive the substitution of concepts, moving further and further from control over social interests in his inner world. Just as the industrial society was perceived by sociologists of the Frankfurt School as the greatest danger of personal leveling, so the information society demonstrates this trend even more clearly, since the digital world has multiplied the alienation of artificially created information from user-subjects. The essence of these dangers is when the possible wealth, the absolute well-being of society is

accompanied not only by environmental and military crises, but begins to balance on the brink of self-destruction at the intersection of all global crises - the point of loss of self-identification by a person as a result of the replacement of human capital with symbolic capital. This is a communication activity devoted to NBIC-technologies. Instead of the contractual practices of a subject with a subject (collective or individual), when the main instrument of agreement became language, which is important for reaching agreement with all participants to achieve a common goal, a technological deceptive, symbolic artificial world, a world without a subject, absorbing a person, pays him compensation in the form wages, and it does not matter whether it is large (for managers) or small. If in the process of cognition as internal differentiation "the subject has not mastered certain areas of complex system knowledge, using the terminology of Academician V.S. Stepin - human-sized (humanitarian, legal, moral, philosophical and sociological, etc.), then the result may be an irreversible inability to see systemic objects associated with the problems of man and society. So, moral problems, even voiced and spoken, may not "hurt a living"; Forgetting the history of one's native country also refers to this phenomenon of spiritual blindness caused by the lack of fundamental humanitarian knowledge. The atavistic features of rationality are rooted precisely in everyday experience, when opinions replace knowledge, while relativism, subjectivism are in demand in all areas of human practice, except for the narrowly professional technological sphere, where the leading role is played not by the subject himself, but by new technologies" [10, p. 21-22].

### 3 Results and discussion

With the threat of unemployment, the presence of a paid job makes a person adaptively, affectively and rationally subordinate to external regulators-differentials. As a result, differentiation falls by exactly as much as the value-rational sphere of activity in people's behavior has decreased. We can trace this data on the basis of sociological research.

The possibilities of a collective entity (state, political institutions, religious organizations, trade unions) to standardize and normalize behavior, on the one hand, and knowledge, on the other, are sharply limited.

Firstly, because of the depopulation, when the projected indicators of an increase in the birth rate, an increase in average life expectancy, and a decrease in mortality in the field of cardiovascular and oncological pathologies diverge from reality in a depressingly significant way. In 2017, a full-fledged depopulation began, when the number of deaths exceeded the number of births by 136 000 people [11, p. 6].

Secondly, the planned indicators of economic growth (as, for example, a serious upward spurt of the economy with an increase in GDP per capita by 50% provided for in the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of May 7, 2018 "About national goals and strategic objectives of the Russian Federation development for the

period up to 2024") are not implemented or are partially implemented [11, p. 5].

Thirdly, the subjective area of relations also needs to be taken into account due to the availability of the digital sphere of communication. Of particular note is the cognitive functions of social media and media. Even education is becoming increasingly dependent on the flow and directions of the digital environment created with the help of NBIC technologies. The social environment is in a dissociated, disordered state.

The abstractness of the digital environment, used as a source of information to replenish the cognitive functions of a person, does not contain unity by definition: the abstractness of concepts, words, natural human language is an irreplaceable partial!

Social orientations of the modern personality are multifaceted and contradictory. As we assume, one of the main factors leading to the inconsistency of the personality social orientations is that some of the instrumental and avoidant values and motives are blocked by the personality as socially disapproved, but at the same time their latent influence on the personality orientations remains [12, p. 116]. The most active subjects of economic, political and socio-cultural institutions, which we unite through the concept of "intellectual owners", can resist this.

"A person endowed with intellectual property is protected more than a person endowed with a thing (where one's own personal participation is accidental, outwardly). He is protected not only from material distress, but also from the interference of destructively oriented people. Deception, envy, and competition can only be overcome by a constructively oriented organizer of his own life. It is assumed that an exploited person is brought to the dangerous line of losing himself, may lose the meaning of life" [13, p. 64]. Meanwhile, "when a creative person - an intellectual owner - is included in any social structure - a family, a professional team, a party, an informal group - their mutual enrichment and transformation occurs, which can lead to the emergence of new intellectual owners, personalities" [13, p. 63]. And it doesn't matter whether large capitalist property becomes a bulwark for the development of an intellectual property owner, or the employer is a small businessman, or the state.

The significant potential for self-development, self-renewal of the Russian intellectual community is growing in the social institution of the self-employed, which contributes to the private property development in Russia on the basis of the so-called "Smallest entrepreneurship" [14, p. 822]. This definition, which is neither basic nor generally accepted, nevertheless emphasizes the differentiating power of this practice, since it makes it possible to engage in several types of economic activities with the help of one's own means of production at once, while often not even breaking with previous work as employees. Since the institution of the self-employed combines practical and the cognitive spheres of differentiating activity, we assume this phenomenon is an optimal soft way of correcting the latent influence of the technological blocking of the individual self-awareness.

The main advantage of the self-employed is the ability to work for oneself, freedom, the ability to independently make decisions about employment and time [14, c 830]. More than 330 thousand people registered as self-employed in Russia [14, p. 833].

The institute of education can promote the development of the self-employed and the development of intellectual property owners among the so-called the workforce in its industrial social form, merging in function with the new high technology, but in a modernized, individualizing version, bypassing test practice, leveling the deep differentiation of knowledge. "Professional knowledge acquired in universities and colleges becomes obsolete within 2–3 years of work. In this regard, investment in education should be a necessary element of the labor strategy" [15, p. 263]. This strategy is essentially based on the law of value, since profit growth is guaranteed where a larger share of capital is concentrated in living labor  $V$  in comparison with materialized labor  $C$ . Investing in education increases the share of  $V$  without attracting additional labor, since human knowledge capital through educational practices is steadily and significantly growing. The social gain in educational investments, which is also manifested by a differentiating effect in labor functions, is also large. Numerous risks associated with the processes of the market economy formation, which include social insecurity, unemployment, the risk of losing social and labor status, go away precisely because the employer chooses high professionals who are ready to regularly change and improve their qualifications. "Analysis of Russian and foreign educational statistics indicators shows that Russia is one of the most highly educated countries in the world. Thus, 96% of Russians under the age of 64 have tertiary education and about half of Russians have secondary and higher professional education. In addition, 94% of Russian workers have not lower than complete secondary education, which is significantly higher than the average for the economically developed OECD countries, where it is 75%. According to this indicator, Russia is more than twice ahead of Brazil and more than four times ahead of China" [15, p. 267]. These indicators, which do honor to a Russian who holds a high level for preserving the best traditions of the Soviet economy era, can explain the high resistance to social factors of instability.

We can talk about the presence of the social orientations influence on numerous areas of personality activity, based on the results of empirical research. At the same time, we note that the representations organized through the individual social orientations and the corresponding individual behavior models of the person as a subject of economic, political and sociocultural subsystems are not chaotic and multidirectional. On the contrary, there are regular connections between them. As a result, the constructed "picture of the world" of a person, which is based on his social orientations, determines the position of this person in the global social space. Thus, the social orientations of the individual act as the system-forming criterion of social stratification in the conditions of the emerging information society (a

criterion of a higher order than the traditional ones: income, power, education and prestige), setting new boundaries of social differentiation.

Basing on the materials of the author's research from 2012 to 2016 ("Social representations of the personality about the information society (on the example of PNRPU)" (2012 and 2016,  $N=1246$ , Perm); "The status of youth in modern Russian society" (2015-2016,  $N=2238$ , Perm)) by the example of students it can be stated that typological groups, distinguished by social orientations, indicate the outlines of social differentiation of the emerging information society. The most harmonious type, corresponding to the characteristic changes in the institutional system, is the terminal type, distinguished by the dominance of terminal (final) values and motives, labor and personal, in the structure of the personality. Representatives of this type, to a greater extent than representatives of other typological groups, are characterized by an orientation toward education as a basic value, a desire for self-education and self-development throughout life, as well as the possibility of creative work.

In addition, representatives of the terminal type are more aware of the information society at the level of self-esteem as well as in the analysis of the characteristics of the society being formed that they assess. Representatives of this type more often emphasized the importance of education in the organization of entrepreneurship, higher assessing the share of enterprise costs for high technologies and the importance of regular advanced training of employees as the main way to achieve a competitive advantage. Representatives of the terminal type are much more likely point to the prospect of increasing the labor and specialization division level, seeing the future in highly specialized professions, which also corresponds to the existing dynamics of changes in the labor market, shows the level of awareness and adaptability of representatives of the type. A similar situation is observed when assessing changes in the social structure of society, where representatives of the terminal type more often note the prospect of the structural organization of society around the mass "middle class". At the same time, the view of the social and labor sphere among representatives of the terminal type is more personality-oriented than among representatives of other groups of typology, they believe that new technologies will only facilitate human labor, without a person they are useless. We assume that in this position it is possible to trace the appeal of the terminal type representatives to creative work, which is the basic element of the system of labor values for this type, and this work cannot be automated even with the development of technology. When assessing the prestige of labor activity, the terminal type, less often than other groups of typology, indicates the importance of the wages level and the prospects for career growth.

The inert type, on the contrary, can be assessed as the least adapted to changes in society, risking, in the conditions of growing social differentiation, being "out of work", forming the core of the "information poor". This type is characterized by an "avoidance" orientation,

a tendency to conformism, high inertia and an almost complete lack of orientation towards self-development. The key goal for this type is to minimize risks.

Representatives of this type can be assessed as the least aware of the information society and the institutional changes that accompany its formation. Moreover, this assessment is valid both when analyzing the answers of representatives of this typological group about various aspects of the functioning of society and changes in it, and on the basis of their self-esteem.

Describing this typological group, we also note that its representatives are more inclined to regard advertising as the main expense item of an entrepreneur. This indicates an increased attention to this information channel and, therefore, dependence on external channels of influence. The inert type, more often than other groups of typology, considers the acquisition of patents and other intellectual property as a way to achieve a competitive advantage, and also the inert type is more inclined to predict the replacement of hard human labor with a "machine". When assessing the prestige of labor, representatives of the inert type more than other types note the importance of high wages, additional benefits and the managerial nature of activities. Significant is "the opportunity to work under the guidance of a professionally competent leader ...". These assessments present a projection of the characteristics of an inert type: conformity, lack of inclination to creative and innovative activity, focus on labor activity with minimizing costs. The assessments of the inert type representatives are quite reactionary; they ignore the "weight" of a qualified worker in the production of an information-intensive product and the growing demands for the level of training of an employee and his education in a transforming society. In addition, the inert type is rather pessimistic about the prospect of changing the social structure of society, anticipating an increased conflict.

When assessing the complementarity of typological

accompanying the formation of the information society, we can note clear differences. According to this criterion, the terminal and inert types act as a kind of antagonists in relation to each other, where the terminal type is the most optimal, corresponding to the requirements of the new society for the individual and the worker. The instrumental type occupies an intermediate position. Despite the alienated nature of labor inherent in this type, the representatives of this group demonstrate a sufficient level of awareness, highlighting and correctly assessing the changes inherent in the transitional stage in various social institutions. In addition, the assessments of instrumental type representatives in most cases correspond to the median distribution, it can be interpreted as evidence of the presence of instrumental orientations in modern student youth, albeit in a latent form, which is a legacy of the industrial period. Representatives of the instrumental type consider various forms of activity, work in general and higher education, in particular, through the prism of instrumental motivation and needs.

Taking into account the studied patterns of the social orientations influence on the representations and behavior of the individual, the correspondence to institutional changes, it turns out to be possible to outline the foundations of social differentiation of the emerging information society. As a result, the use of the author's typology makes it possible to analyze adaptation for various social subjects or even entire countries. Thus, the results of approbation of the methodological approach to the secondary analysis of the European Social Survey data, a cross-cultural study of attitudes, values and behavior of the European countries population, look extremely interesting.

The methodology of the European Social Research, in conjunction with the author's typology, makes it possible to distinguish in the studied population groups belonging to the instrumental, terminal and avoidant / inert types and also to expand the typology, highlighting

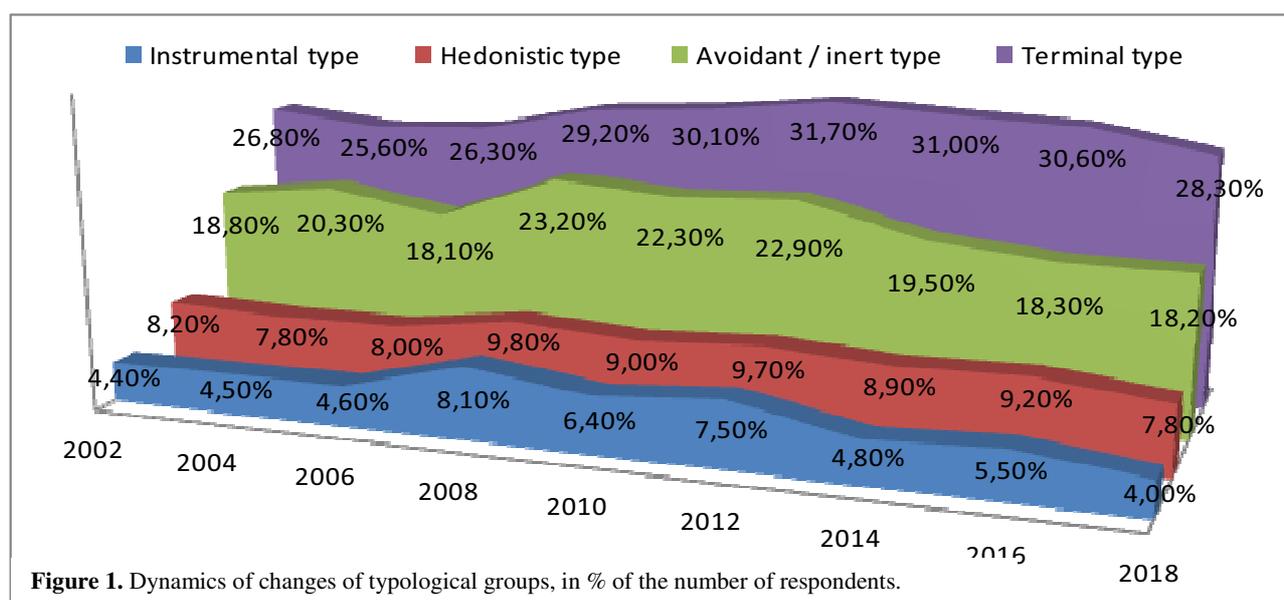
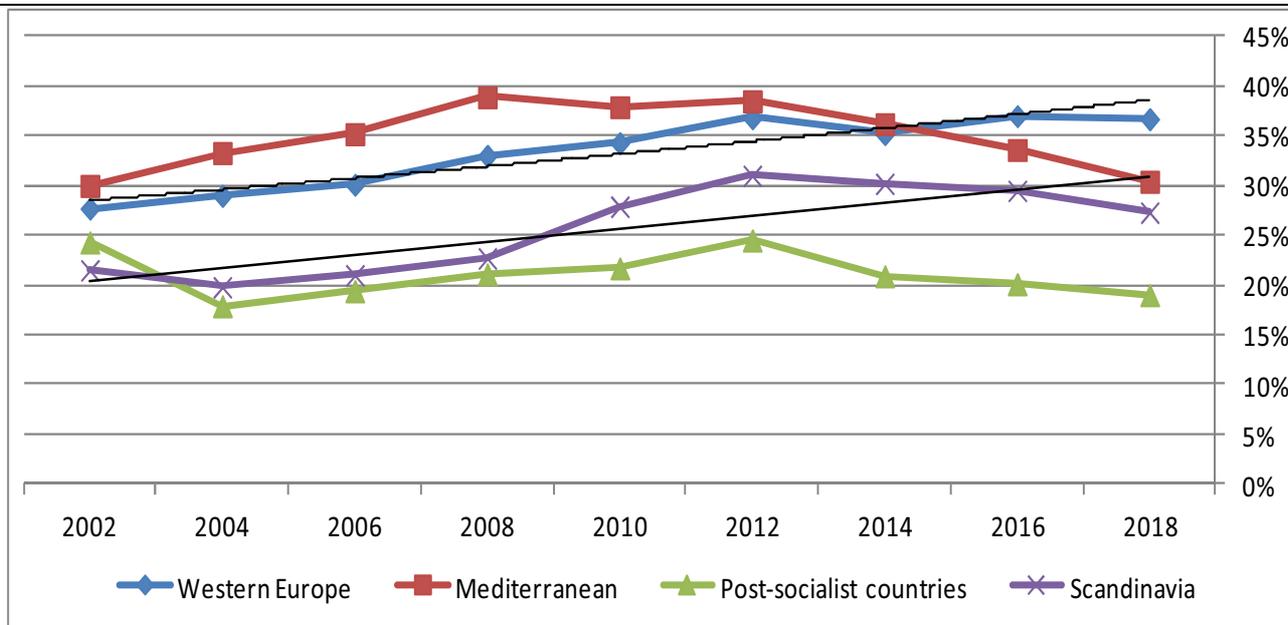


Figure 1. Dynamics of changes of typological groups, in % of the number of respondents.

groups which is constructed on the basis of prevailing social orientations to social transformations

also 4 type - hedonistic, the basis of orientation for



**Figure 2.** Dynamics of changes of the terminal type group in different countries, in% of the number of respondents.

which is the desire for pleasure and attention to the characteristics of the pastime.

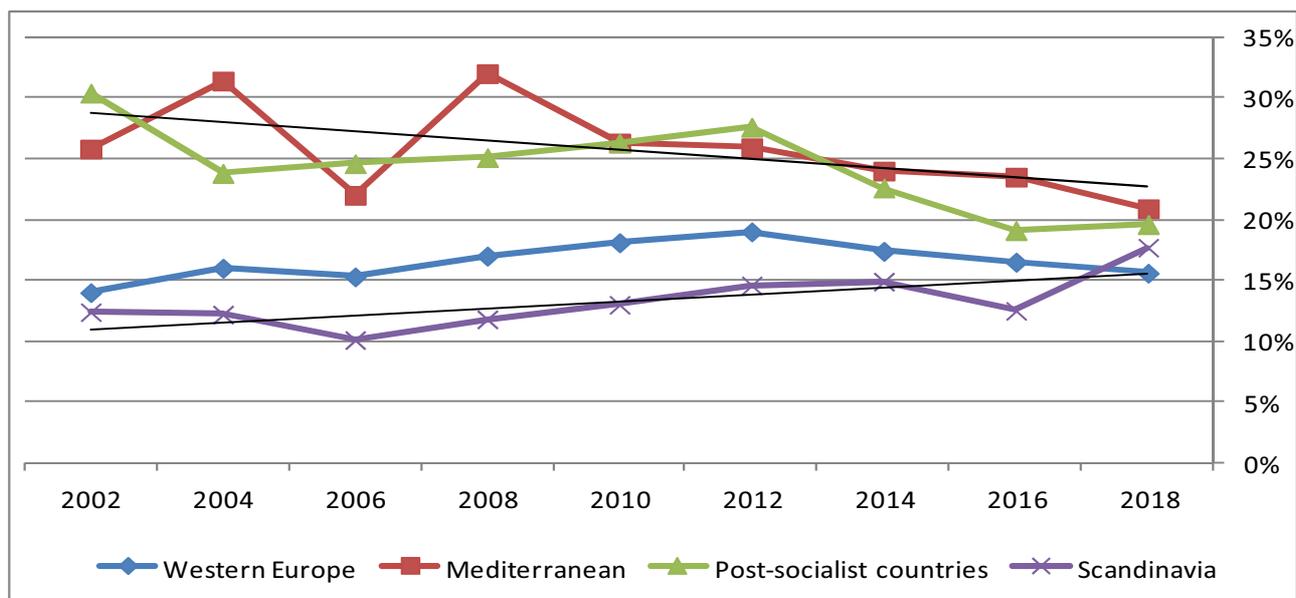
The study involved 38 countries, the total sample consisted of more than 425,000 respondents. According to the analysis of data from nine waves of research (see Figure 1) from 2002 to 2018, it can be seen that the volume of typological groups remains practically unchanged. Fluctuations for the entire period do not exceed 5%. The most representative are the groups of the terminal type (on average 28.8% of the number of respondents) and the avoidant / inert type (20.2% on average). However, if we differentiate the survey data by country, the difference in the representativeness of typological groups will be clearly traced. The countries participating in the project were grouped:

**Western Europe:** Austria, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Switzerland, United Kingdom;

**Post-socialist countries:** Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine, Kosovo;

**Scandinavia:** Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden.

Let us compare the dynamics of change in the representativeness of the terminal type group (see Figure 2) between the groups of countries for the period from 2002 to 2018. This typological group has a different number in different countries; the most representative is the terminal type in the countries of Western Europe and the Mediterranean (36.7% and 30.4% in 2018, respectively). There is also a clear trend in the growth of the number of the terminal type group in Western Europe and Scandinavia. In the Mediterranean countries, despite the peak periods (from 2006 to 2014), when the share of the terminal type was the largest among all countries, there was a further decline and



**Figure 3.** Dynamics of changes of the avoidant / inert type group in different countries, in% of the number of respondents.

**Mediterranean:** Albania, Cyprus, Spain, France, Greece, Croatia, Israel, Italy, Slovenia, Turkey;

return to the initial values in 2018. In post-socialist countries, the share of the terminal type is the smallest

among all countries, while there is a downward trend since 2002. (24.3%) to 2018 (19%). A similar situation is observed in Russia from 18.7% in 2006 up to 16.3% in 2018.

Comparison of the dynamics of change in the representativeness of the avoidant / inert type group (see Figure 3) shows a different picture. This group of typology is most represented in the post-socialist countries and the Mediterranean countries. As the share of this group decreased from 30.4% and 25.8% in 2002 up to 19.6% and 20.9% in 2018 accordingly, as a result, the share of the avoidant / inert type group in 2018 became almost the same in all countries (the spread of values is in the range of 5%). However, in the countries of Western Europe and Scandinavia, there is an upward trend, and its further prolongation allows us to judge that in the future 6-8 years, the proportion of representatives of the avoidant / inert type in these countries will be the largest in comparison with the rest of the countries participating in the study.

## 4 Conclusion

In the information society, the potential of the cognitive power of all participants in social production is growing unprecedentedly, including the participation of subjects in social institutions of the superstructure, from politics to art, religion and morality. As a result, the possibility of overcoming dangerous crises internally regularized dangerous crises overcoming grows, which will receive an external manifestation with a great delay. This is due to the fact that systemic identity is different from individual identity ideologically leveled by political institutions in the interests of the civil world. Since the complexity potential is coupled with unity through value-rational intersubjectivity, then all the risks associated with the poverty line, environmental, civil, industrial crises can be fixed and overcome by the increasing complexity of a differentiated, internally integrated society. The main risk for the social sphere in any country is the loss of self-identity, which is much more dangerous than any contradictory diversity. It is the loss of self-identification that can explain the high prevalence of the avoidant / inert type among other personality types in all countries.

In our opinion, education as a social institution, built on the principle of differentiating the ability to work, communication and thinking, is the main source of the preservation of the objective tendency of society towards self-development. The former power of the USSR high-tech industries in the field of space, mechanical engineering, energy and other high-tech industries was the embodiment of such approach to education. The resource orientation prevailing in the world today is a consequence of the disorganization of creative thinking abilities due to the rupture of humanitarian relations and the redundancy of high technologies. Today, between the digital society, on the one hand, and resource orientation, on the other, it is necessary to create a support for the meaning of the activity of any social orientation, to prevent social entropy, the collapse of normal,

institutionally traditionally and objectively verified conditions. Education, which has not free from the caste system in all previous epochs, today receives a new megatrend of restoration of the person semantic ego-identity lost in the process of technization.

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