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# Russia and The G20

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Tanish Srivastava, Tarana Dutta, Vandita Raj

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# Analysis of Russia's Role in the G20

- Vandita Raj, Tanish Srivastava, Tarana Dutta

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## I. Introduction

Russia has been a part of the G20 Summitry since its inception in 1999. It holds the role of an undisputed equal member of the Group of 20 as a forum for finance ministers and central bank governors.

Further Russia states that's its biggest contribution to G20 summitry so far has been bridging the differences between the G8 (now G7) and BRICS partners, especially improving the relations between China and the US (Kirton, 2013). ‘

## II. Basic Statistics – Russia

Russia, being the world's largest country by land area, and being a part of both: The 10 largest economies and populations, is geopolitically very active and is a major power in the international political status quo. It is important for all nations to maintain their relations with Russia, given its importance as one of the most powerful nations in the world due to its massive military might and the vast amount of resources it contains within the limits of its borders. To understand Russia as a country and the role it plays in multilateral organisations such as the G20, it is essential to provide some relevant statistics about the country, that are as follows:

1. Russia is the largest country in the world with a land area of 17,000,000 Square Kilometres (O'Neill, 2023). This means that Russia has a massive reserve of natural resources and energy, including the world's largest proved natural resources at 1.32 quadrillion cubic feet,

which is nearly 20% of the entire globe's total, and Russia's proved oil reserves are the sixth largest in the world, at an estimated 107.8 Billion barrels (BP, 2021).

2. Russia is also an important military power, with powerful Armed Forces and military intelligence units that are active throughout the globe. According to the Global Firepower Index, which assesses the military power of countries globally, Russia holds a score of 0.0714 (a score of 0.000 is considered to be perfect), which makes it the second most powerful military in the world, after the United States and ahead of states such as China and India (Global Fire Power, 2023).
3. The Russian economy was worth 2240.42 billion US Dollars in 2022, which makes it one of the largest economies in the world (Trading Economics, 2022). Despite the military operation in Ukraine, which had led to strong sanctions against the Russian economy, the economy has remained relatively intact. Of course, the sanctions have had a negative effect, however, the economy managed to pull its weight with a real GDP growth of 5.62% post war, given factors such as other buyers of its natural resources such as China and India (Statista, 2023).

### **III. Current standing of Russia in G20**

The 2023 G20 summit is being hosted by India in New Delhi, President Putin will be unable to attend the G20 summit and Russia will instead be represented by the Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov (Prime Minister's Office, 2023). Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has been substituting for the president ever since the start of the military operations in Ukraine. This has been the case for last year's G20 summit in Bali,

as well as the 15<sup>th</sup> BRICS summit in Johannesburg (Bhattacharjee, 2023). Russia was originally part of G8 alongside Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK and the US, but was later suspended in 2014 following its annexation of Crimea. G7 further tightened its sanctions around Russia, as a form of punishment in retaliation to its invasion of Ukraine (Al Jazeera, 2023).

The Invasion of Ukraine has also resulted in a dispute within the G20 countries, with the west being critical of Moscow stating that they are the reason behind the war. U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen went as far as to condemn officials from Moscow attending the Bali summit for being complicit in the atrocities taking place in Ukraine. Even the French minister opposed any step-backs regarding the condemnation of war. However, on the contrary India, continues to stay neutral neither critiquing nor siding with Moscow, and instead has increased its trade with Russia, importing large volumes of oil at discounted rates (The Hindu, 2023).

#### **IV. Future of Russia with G20**

For the dynamics of the world's economy and politics, Russia's future participation in the G20 will have a huge impact. Russia's influence on how the G20 talks about economic cooperation, financial stability, and development on the global stage is vital. Large natural resources, a diverse economy, and geopolitical clout make the country an important member of the group. Russia's position in the G20 is anticipated to change in the lines with its internal economic reforms and developments on the international energy market. Because of its reliance on exporting gas and oil, the nation is vulnerable to changes in energy costs, which emphasizes the importance of diversifying the nation's economy. The G20 conversations that Russia participates in will be influenced by its efforts to modernize its industry, invest in technology, and encourage innovations. In terms of geopolitics Russia's participation in the G20 enables it to take a positive stance on matters of international security and regional crises. However, some

G20 members have grown dissatisfied with its actions on world stage, such as its Annexation of Crimea and involvement in Ukraine. Russia's standing inside the G20 will depend on the course of its foreign policy in the future and how seriously it takes diplomatic difficulties (Wintour, 2022).

A vital component is environmental sustainability. In concerns about climate change, biodiversity and environmental protection, Russia plays a vital role due to its enormous territory and wealth of natural resources. Its role in the G20's sustainability initiatives will be shaped by its involvement in international efforts to address climate change as well as its local policies supporting renewable energy and conservation. That is Russia's future in the G20 depends on its ability to negotiate economic diversification, geopolitical concerns, and environmental duties. Russia's ability to have an impact on the G20 and the rest of the world will depend on how actively it engages in advancing international collaboration, sustainable development, responsible governance as the global landscape changes.

Relationship between Russia and other G20 members particularly western countries will be vital from a geopolitical perspective. The degree to which Russia can positively contribute to the group's goal which will depend on open conversations and collaborations on topics like cybersecurity, conflict resolution and climate change. Russia's participation at the G20 presents prospects for diplomatic cooperation between the east and the west. Russia's international standing can be enhanced, and stability prompted by working towards agreement and cooperation on global issues. But there are obstacles in Russia's way of participating in the G20. While with other G20 members it has experienced a deterioration in ties because of its actions in foreign affairs, including its engagement in Ukraine and accusations of election meddling. To effectively participate in the exert influence within the organization, Russia will need to establish trust (Kundu., 2023)

The dedication of Russia to tackling environmental issues will be essential in the context of the G20's focus on sustainable development. Long-term prospects for the nation will depend on making the switch to a low-carbon economy and taking an active role in global climate agreements. Therefore, Russia's future in the G20 depends on its capacity to strike a balance between economic diversification, geopolitical collaboration, and diplomatic involvement. Russia can create a future that improves its standing in the G20 and contributes to security and prosperity around the world by embracing positive change, promoting collaboration, and attending to international issues.

#### **V. Russia's G20 Presidency: Navigating Global Diplomacy and Economic Priorities**

The G20 stands as a premium forum which is recognized as the top international platform for discussion and decision-making on matters pertaining to the world economy. Assuming the G20 presidency in 2013, Russia has a huge potential to influence international economic policies and promote multilateral discussions. The significance of Russia's G20 presidency is explored in this essay, which also examines the country's diplomatic efforts, economic goals, and general influence on the global scene. The G20 presidency was assumed by Russia which represented a crucial turning point in its efforts to increase its worldwide influence. Russia sought to assert its position on the global scene through this leading role as a BRICS member and significant stakeholder in the global economy. To help create a more inclusive and balanced global economic addenda, Russia was able to arrange dialogues between the major economies of the globe, spanning numerous areas and economic models.

Russia prioritized a variety of economic concerns while it was in presidency. Enhancing financial regulations and stability, encouraging sustainable growth, and addressing global issues like climate change were some of these. In order to improve the global financial system

and lower the likelihood of future economic crises, Russia placed a strong emphasis on financial regulations. Further highlighting the necessity of responsible economic growth that takes social and environmental factors into account in Russia's dedication to sustainable development. This was especially given the importance in growing understanding of the connections between economic, social, and environmental concerns.

Geopolitical tensions and international diplomacy collided during the Russia's G20 leadership which was also a pivotal moment. During his administration, tension between Russia and western countries including those related to the situation in Ukraine- rose to a new level. Given that debates on economic issues frequently took place concurrently with political deliberations, the geopolitical setting made Russia's role as the G20 host even more complex. Russia's task was to make sure that the geopolitical background didn't distract from the G20 agenda's primary objectives of economic cooperation and consensus building (The International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2013).

Both triumphs and shortcomings in term of influence were present during Russia's G20 chairmanship. By guiding the G20 towards concrete results, the president gave Russia the chance to demonstrate its diplomatic skills. Issues including international taxation, anti-corruption, and financial regulations whereas the anti-corruption issues were resolved. These successes illustrated Russia's capacity to promote cooperation between various economies. The persistent geopolitical challenges, which occasionally eclipsed the economic agenda, however brought about criticism and reaction from several western nations towards the presidency.

Russia's 2013 G20 presidency marked a significant milestone in its quest for involvement and influence abroad. Russia's ability to assume a leadership position allowed it to influence economic priorities, strengthen intergovernmental relations, and tackle urgent global issues. During the presidency, Russia showed its ability to balance attention on economic issues with

complicated geopolitical dynamics. The encounter, however, brought home how difficult it is to strike a balance between geopolitical realities and diplomatic efforts. Consequently, Russia's G20 presidency continues to serve as a noteworthy illustration of how economic diplomacy and international politics interact on a global scale (Davies, 2013)

## **VI. Prospects of Resolving Social Issues at the G20**

Healthcare is one of the key social issues that Russia has brought up at the G20 summit. The nation has struggled to offer its people affordable, high-quality healthcare. Russia has had the opportunity to have discussions on healthcare policies, best practices, and prospective partnerships to enhance its healthcare system by taking part in the G20. Education is a further important factor. Russia has a long history of placing a high priority on education, but there have been questions regarding the standard of instruction and how well it meets the needs of the contemporary labor market. Through the G20, Russia has the chance to benefit from other member nations' reform and improvement of their educational systems (Ghosh, 2023).

Social inequality and inclusivity are also urgent issues. Like many other nations, Russia struggles with wealth inequality, discrimination, and social exclusion. Russia's involvement in the G20 enables it to share ideas on policies that support inclusivity, poverty reduction methods, and social safety nets. In recent years, environmental issues have received a lot of attention. Environmental conservation is essential because of Russia's expansive terrain and abundant natural resources. Russia has a forum at the G20 to work with other countries on environmental projects like combating climate change, preserving biodiversity, and implementing sustainable practices (Wintour, 2022).

The G20 conference provided a forum for world leaders to discuss many societal issues in Russia. Income inequality has been a significant problem. Members of the G20 might advocate for laws that support equal pay, social safety nets, and inclusive economic growth to combat



this. Additionally, there have been issues with human rights in Russia; conversations at the G20 could support diplomatic efforts to advance civil liberties and free speech. G20 collaboration on sustainable development initiatives may be necessary to address environmental concerns including waste management and air quality. The G20 can be extremely helpful in finding answers to these social problems in Russia by promoting cooperation and exchanging best practices (Power, 2022).

Additionally, conversations at the G20 may touch on topics like gender equity and women's empowerment. Although Russia has made attempts to advance gender equality, there is still work to be done. The G20 provides a forum for discussing tactics and experiences that have helped progress women's involvement and rights in a variety of fields. In conclusion, while the G20 largely focuses on economic challenges, the meeting also gives members like Russia a platform to discuss a variety of associated social issues. The G20 meetings give Russia the opportunity to learn from international experiences, share its own thoughts, and collaborate on solutions to these issues, which range from healthcare and education to inclusion, environmental concerns, and gender equality. Russia may try to create a more just and sustainable society through such interactions (Kapoor, 2019)

## **VII. Prospects of Resolving Political Issues in the G20**

There is no multilateral institution quite like the Group of 20. The 20 most powerful and influential entities and economies meet, and it is in this institution where the opportunity of reaching middle grounds and negotiating is at its peak. Russia has been a geopolitically active power and also an influential member of the G20 and continues to strive for a multipolar world along with active military action in Ukraine.

The Crisis in Ukraine is an issue that has been a point of contention within the G20 summit held in Indonesia last year, and also continues to be a problem in the summit held in India in

2023. India has taken a relatively neutral stance when it comes to the Ukraine crisis, and that sets the stage for what can be an actual discussion on what the solution to the crisis is.

New Delhi is perhaps one of the only major powers that is trusted both by Moscow and Washington and can possibly also mediate for peaceful negotiations given the Ukraine Crisis and is also why the G20 summit being held in India is important. The summit is now taking place in countries in the global south, with Indonesia's presidency being the predecessor to India's presidency and Brazil being the successor. These states in the Global South can not only hold relatively neutral stances in the war but can also give a voice to the Global South, voicing issues that developing and underdeveloped nations have faced since the start of the war. The Ukraine Crisis can be one of the political issues the G20 summit, especially one hosted by India, is resolved or at least halted on temporary lines.

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