

**Vladimir Putin's actual trust rating is far lower than
the 70% shown by official polls**

Findings from two regional surveys



The Institute for Conflict Studies and Analysis of Russia

Research methodology



The Institute for Conflict Studies and Analysis of Russia (IKAR) conducted two regional sociological studies — one in Krasnodar krai and the other in Rostov oblast — as part of a systematic study of Russian society. The survey was conducted in Krasnodar krai from May 14 to 31, 2026, and in Rostov oblast from June 5 to 30, using representative regional samples. The survey methodology was CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview), a telephone survey by interactive structured questionnaire using special software for sociological surveys. Eight hundred respondents were interviewed in each region. The margin of error for both studies, with a probability of 0.95 and excluding the design effect, does not exceed 3.5%.

In autocratic political regimes, especially those waging an aggressive full-scale war, closed-ended questions about trust in the autocrat cannot accurately reflect the true mood of the population. It is far more methodologically sound to obtain valid data by asking respondents an open-ended question about which political and government figures they trust most. This allows respondents to answer more honestly and also reduces fear. This is precisely the question that was asked of Russians in two regionally representative surveys.

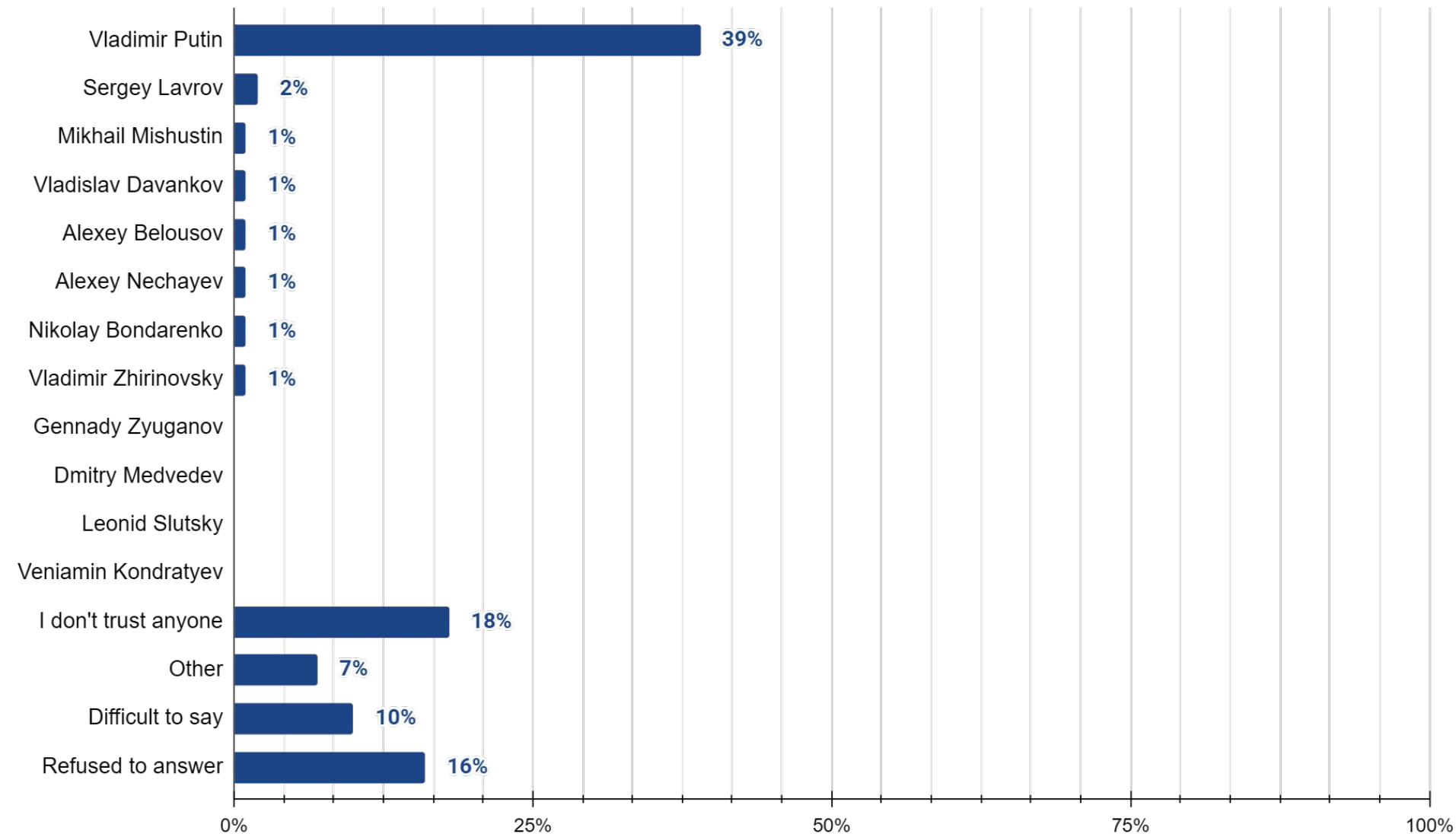
Key Findings



1. The trust rating for Vladimir Putin is quite similar in both regions, standing at 39% in Krasnodar Krai and 37% in Rostov Oblast. This is significantly lower than the average of 70% recorded by closed-ended questions about trust in the Russian president personally. This is an important distinction, because the figures obtained through closed-ended questions are consistently cited as the actual level of trust in Putin among the population and as evidence that people will accept any decision he makes.
2. The share of Russians in both regions who do not trust any politician, cannot answer this question, or refuse to answer this question exceeds Vladimir Putin's trust rating – 44% in Krasnodar krai and 47% in Rostov Oblast, respectively.
3. No other Russian politician or government official garners more than 4% trust in either region. Only Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov is mentioned more than 1% of the time: 2% in Krasnodar Krai and 4% in Rostov Oblast.
4. Only 1% in both regions mention long-serving Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin as the political and public figure they trust most.
5. Trust ratings for Vladimir Putin vary significantly across age groups. This is demonstrated by survey results in both regions. Among young people under 30, only 16% in the Rostov oblast and 24% in the Krasnodar krai mention the Russian president as the politician and statesman they trust most.
6. Overall, the difference in trust in Vladimir Putin between generations is most evident when comparing the answers of younger and older people: in Krasnodar krai, the gap is twofold, from 24% to 48%, and in Rostov oblast, it is nearly threefold, from 16% to 45%.
7. Residents of large cities in both regions are much less likely to name Vladimir Putin as the political figure they trust most. In Krasnodar, the figure is 36%, compared with 45% on average in the rest of the region. In Rostov, the Russian president is named by 31%, compared with 43% on average in the rest of the oblast. In addition, in both large cities, the share of citizens who do not trust any politician in Russia is higher.

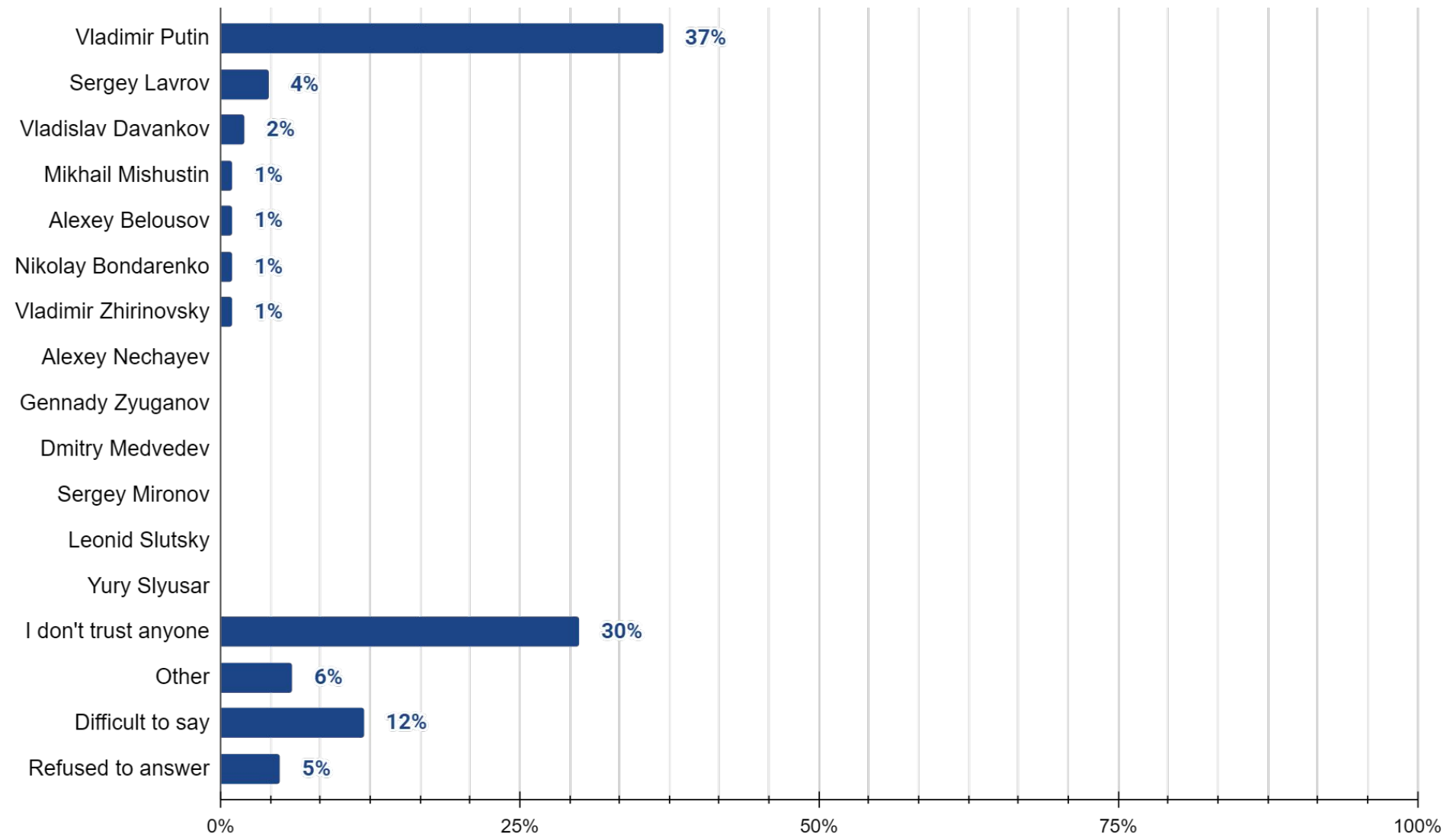
Which Russian politician or government official do you trust the most? (%)

– Krasnodar Krai

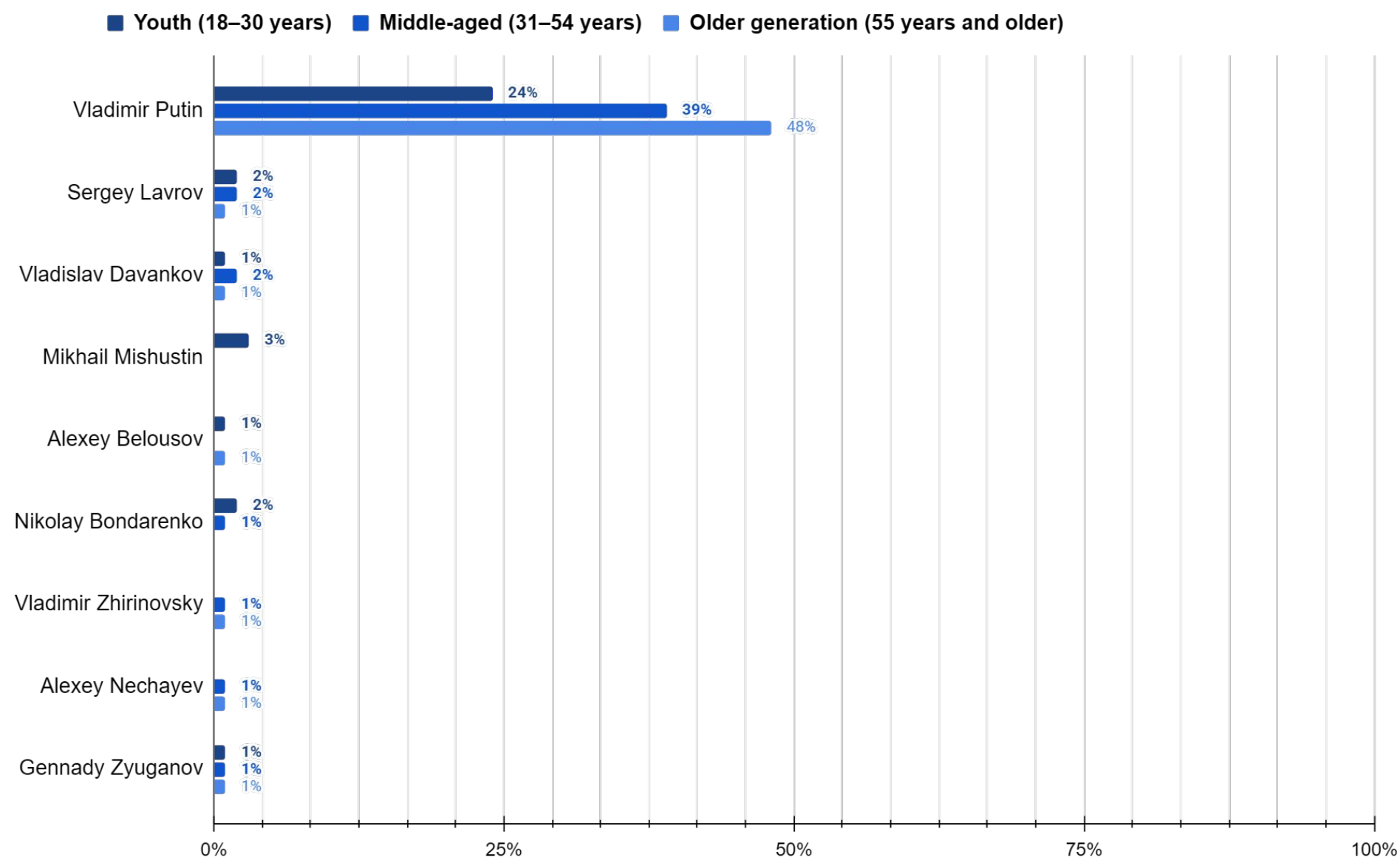


Which Russian politician or government official do you trust the most? (%)

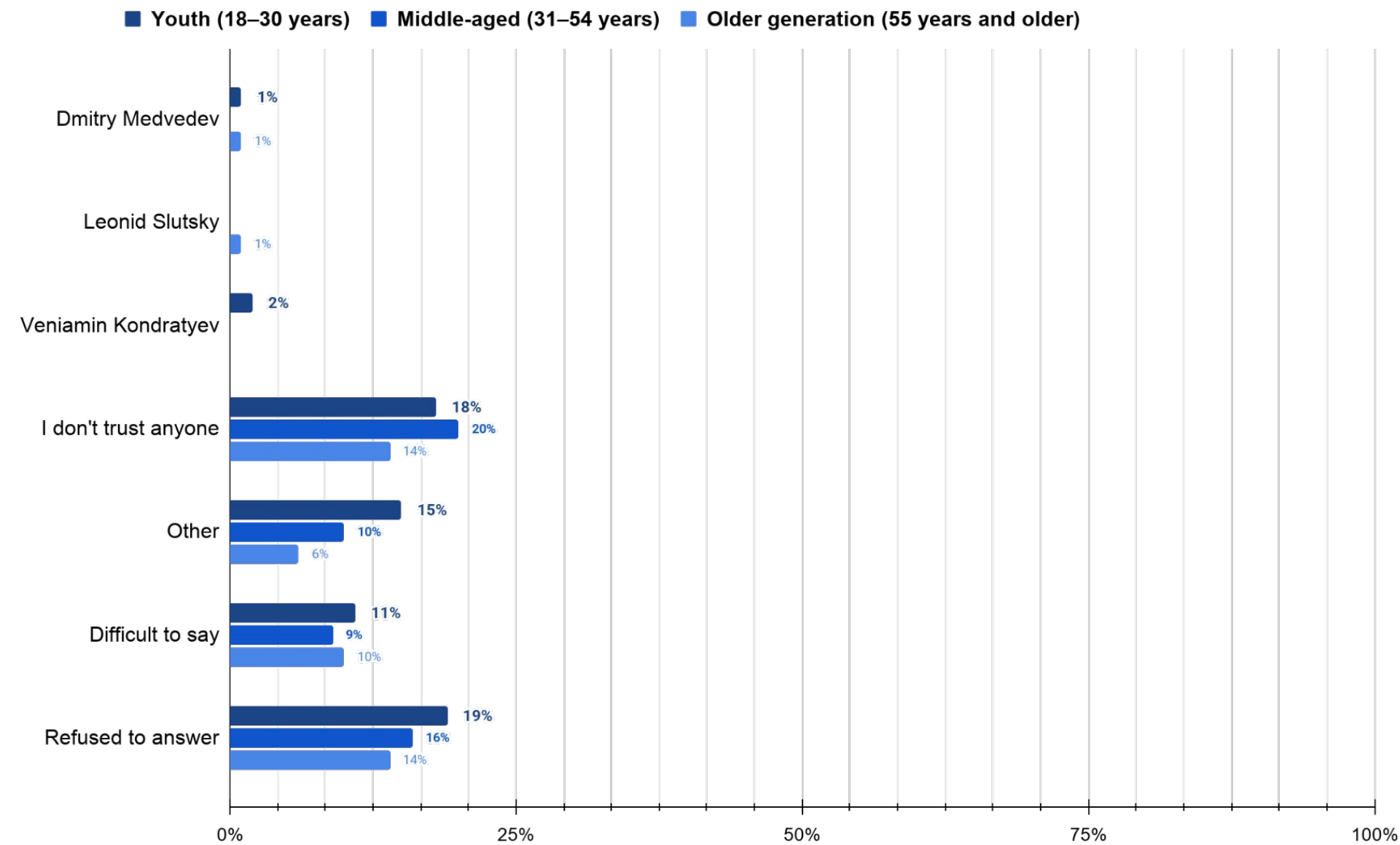
– Rostov Oblast



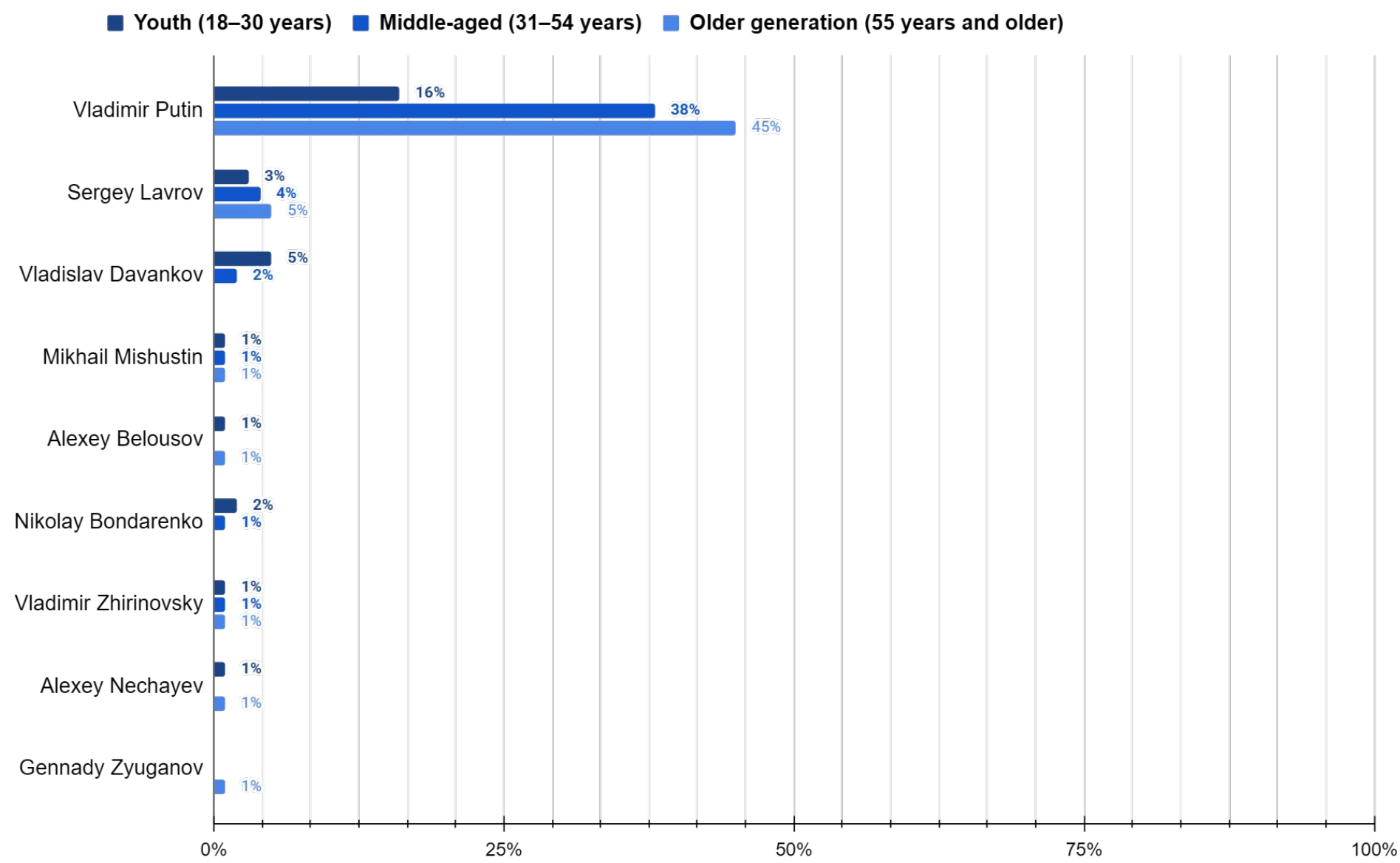
Which Russian politician or government figure is most trusted by different age groups (%) – Krasnodar Krai. Part 1



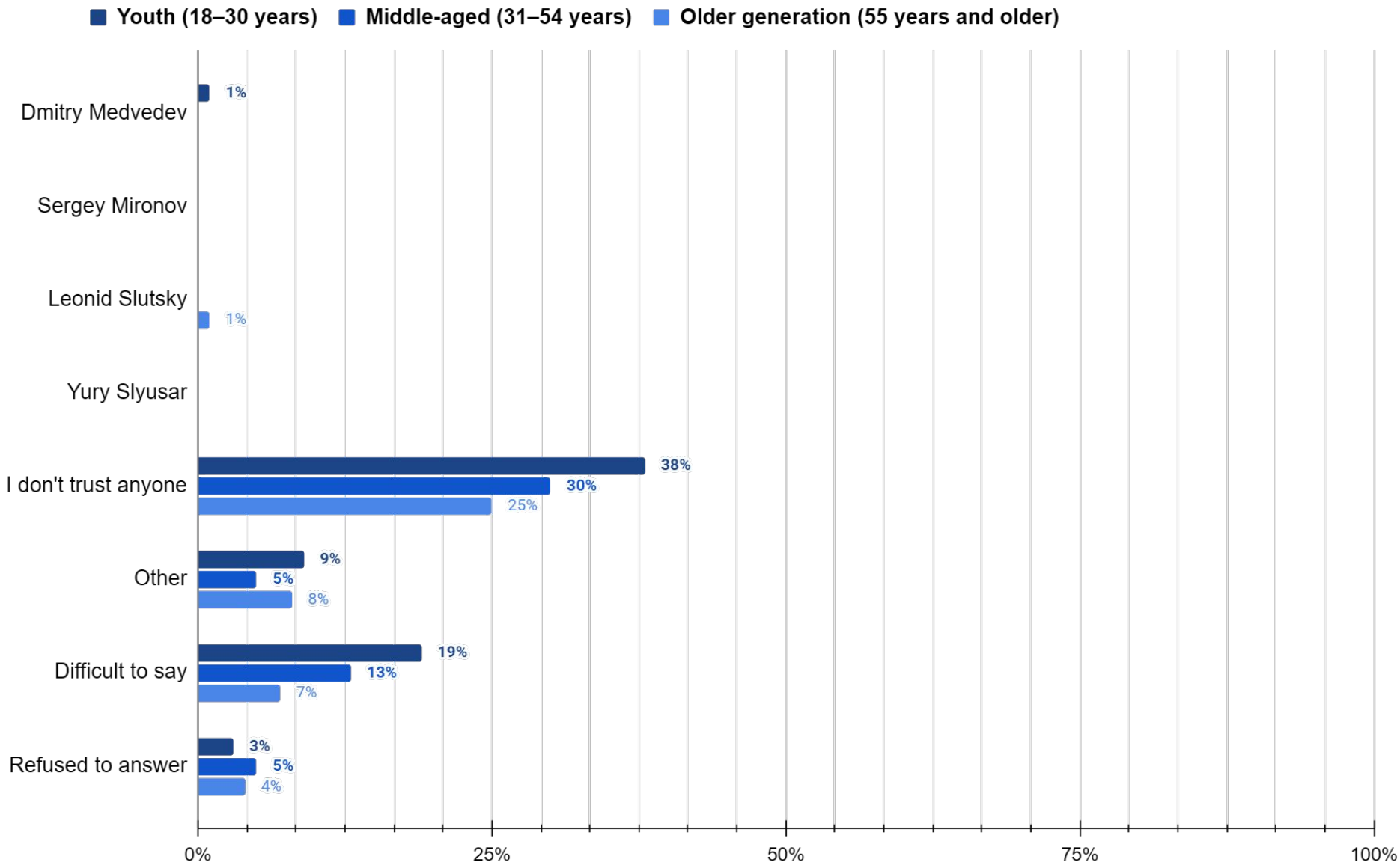
Which Russian politician or government figure is most trusted by different age groups (%) – Krasnodar Krai. Part 2



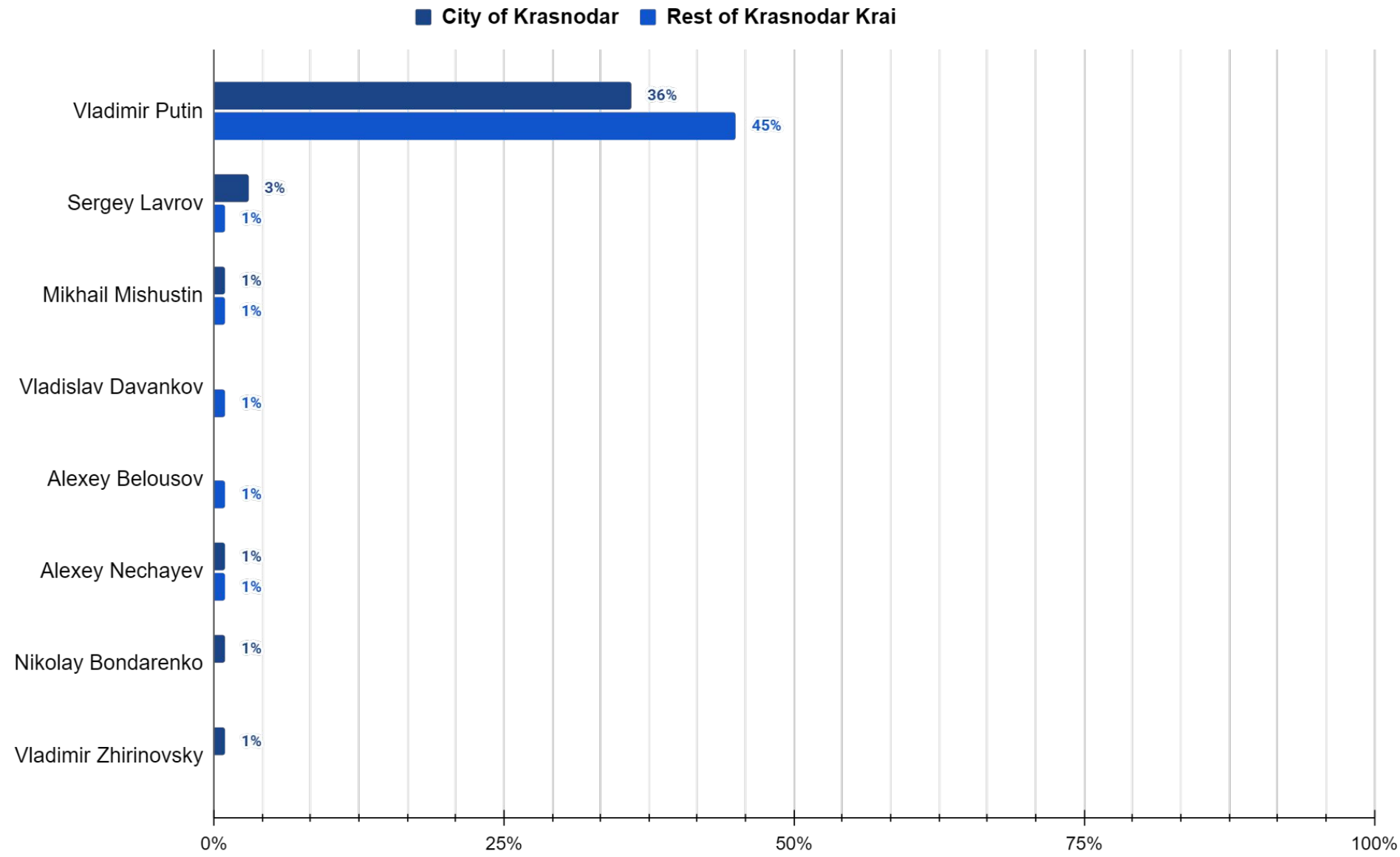
Which Russian politician or government figure is most trusted by different age groups (%) – Rostov Oblast. Part 1



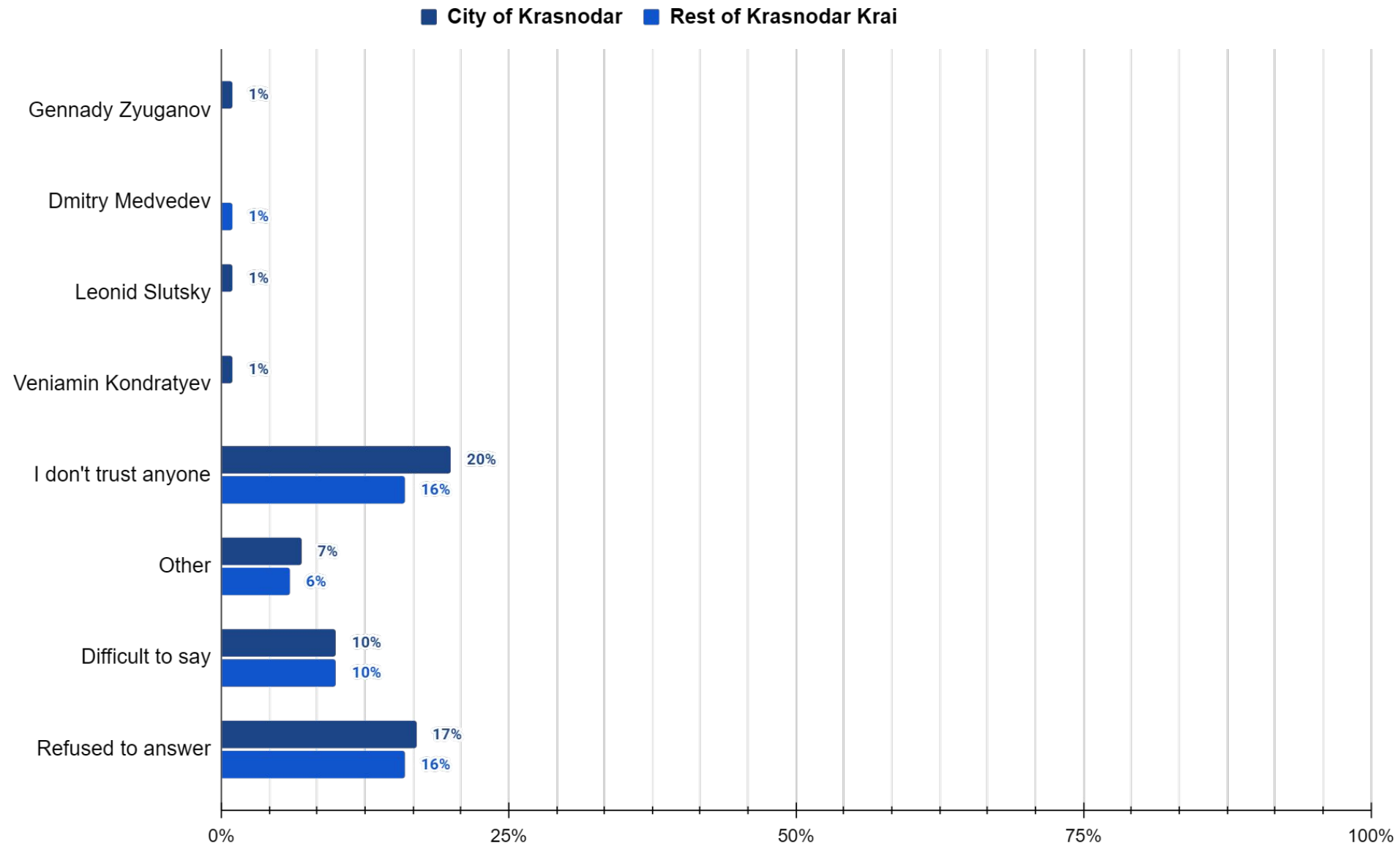
Which Russian politician or government figure is most trusted by different age groups (%) – Rostov Oblast. Part 2



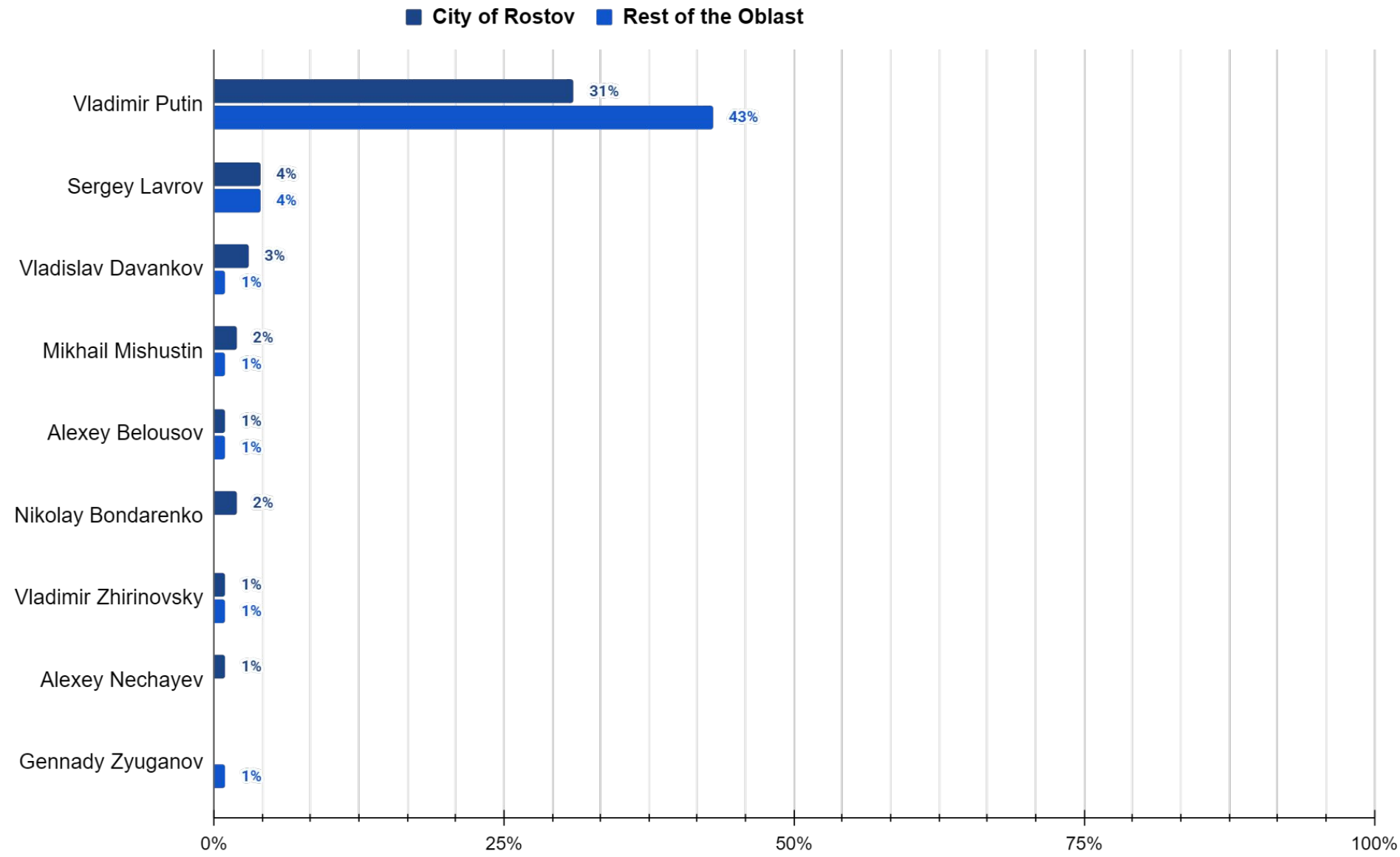
Which Russian politician or government figure is most trusted by residents of the regional capital and the rest of the region (%) – Krasnodar Krai. Part 1



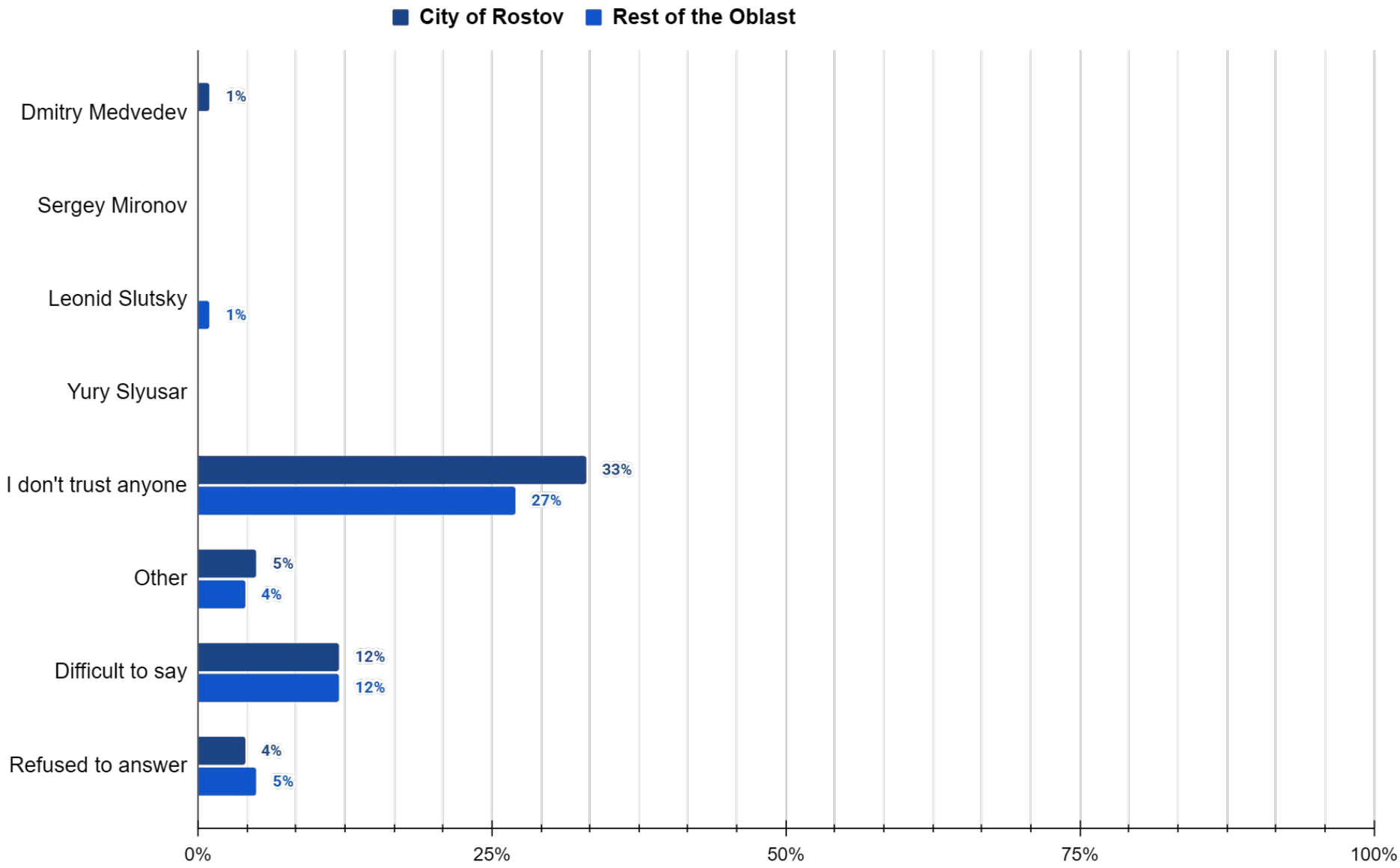
Which Russian politician or government figure is most trusted by residents of the regional capital and the rest of the region (%) – Krasnodar Krai. Part 2



Which Russian politician or government figure is most trusted by residents of the regional capital and the rest of the region, % – Rostov Oblast. Part 1



Which Russian politician or government figure is most trusted by residents of the regional capital and the rest of the region, % – Rostov Oblast. Part 2





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