

Public opinion monitoring of the state of the Russian society

As in the previous issues, we publish the results of the public opinion monitoring of the state of the Russian society conducted by ISEDT RAS in the Vologda Oblast¹.

The following tables show the dynamics of a number of parameters indicating the social feeling and socio-political sentiment of the Vologda Oblast population on average for the last 6 surveys conducted for the period of June 2013 to April 2014 in comparison with the data for 2012, as well as for 2011, when D.A. Medvedev's presidential term was due to expire, and for 2007, when V.V. Putin's second Presidency was coming to an end.

Estimation of performance of the authorities

In early 2014 important changes took place at the world political arena; they had a significant influence on the internal policy of the RF President of the Russian Federation and the nature of public opinion in all social-demographic groups of the society. The oppression of the Russian-speaking population in Ukraine, the referendum in the Crimea and Sevastopol and their subsequent accession to the Russian Federation as its subjects became the catalyst of consolidation of all the layers of the population around the external policy of the RF President, defending the country's national interests not only in words, but in deeds.

¹ The polls are held six times a year in Vologda, Cherepovets, and in eight districts of the oblast (Babayevsky District, Velikoustyugsky District, Vozhegodsky District, Gryazovetsky District, Kirillovsky District, Nikolsky District, Tarnogsky District and Sheksninsky District). The method of the survey is a questionnaire poll by place of residence of respondents. The volume of a sample population is 1500 people aged from 18 and older. The sample is purposeful and quoted. Representativeness of the sample is ensured by the observance of the proportions between the urban and rural population, the proportions between the inhabitants of settlements of various types (rural communities, small and medium-sized cities), age and sex structure of the oblast's adult population. Sampling error does not exceed 3%.

More details on the results of ISEDT RAS polls are available at <http://www.vscs.ac.ru/>.

In February – April 2014 the approval level of the performance of Russia’s President by the Vologda Oblast population increased from 56 to 63%. Key changes that have occurred in the last two months had an impact on the estimation of the performance of the Federal Government, but they were not observed at the regional level. The approval level of the performance of the Vologda Oblast Governor for February – April 2014 has not changed and amounted to 42–43%, the share of negative assessments is 37–39%.

Table 1. How do you assess the current performance of..?, as a percentage of the number of respondents

Indicator	2007	2011	2012	2013	June 2013	Aug. 2013	Oct. 2013	Dec. 2013	Feb. 2014	Apr. 2014	Average for the last 6 surveys	Dynamics (+/-), the last 6 surveys in comparison with		
												2012	2011	2007
RF President														
I approve	75.3	58.7	51.7	55.3	54.3	55.1	54.3	57.3	56.1	62.8	56.7	+5	-2	-19
I do not approve	11.5	25.6	32.6	29.4	29.3	28.9	28.7	28.9	29.3	25.4	28.4	-4	+3	+17
Chairman of the RF Government*														
I approve	-	59.3	49.6	48.9	46.2	50.4	49.0	51.1	49.3	52.5	49.8	0	-10	-
I do not approve	-	24.7	33.3	32.8	33.2	30.4	30.6	32.5	32.9	30.9	31.8	-2	+7	-
Governor														
I approve	55.8	45.7	41.9	44.4	44.3	44.8	45.9	44.1	42.8	41.6	43.9	+2	-2	-12
I do not approve	22.2	30.5	33.3	33.2	31.9	31.1	32.4	35.3	36.9	39.0	34.4	+1	+4	+12
* included into the survey since 2008.														

More than 70% of the Vologda Oblast population give positive assessments of Russia’s policy towards Ukraine (71%) and support the accession of the Crimea as a subject of the Russian Federation (78%).

Table 2. How do you assess the policy of Russia with regard to Ukraine?

Answer	April 2014
I fully and rather approve	71.3
I fully and rather do not approve	12.0
It is difficult to answer	16.7

Table 3. Do you agree or not agree with the Crimea joining Russia as its subject?

Answer	April 2014
Yes, I agree	78.0
No, I do not agree	10.4
It is difficult to answer	11.6

Over the same period, the approval level of the President's activity increased in all the socio-demographic groups of the population, especially among women (from 57 to 66%), people aged under 30 (from 53 to 61%) and 30–55 (from 55 to 62%), with higher and incomplete higher education (from 59 to 69%).

Table 4. Dynamics of the RF President's activity approval by different social groups of population, as a percentage of the number of respondents

Indicator	2007	2011	2012	2013	June 2013	Aug. 2013	Oct. 2013	Dec. 2013	Feb. 2014	Apr. 2014	Average for the last 6 surveys	Dynamics (+/-), the last 6 surveys in comparison with		
												2012	2011	2007
Sex														
Men	73.6	55.6	48.9	52.4	53.5	53.1	48.1	52.5	55.4	58.7	53.6	+5	-2	-20
Women	76.7	61.2	53.9	57.7	54.9	56.8	59.3	61.1	56.6	66.1	59.1	+5	-2	-18
Age														
Under 30	76.6	58.3	49.7	52.9	48.1	50.9	53.4	52.7	53.0	61.1	53.2	+4	-5	-23
30–55	75.1	57.6	50.9	55.4	57.7	57.3	54.1	56.5	54.9	62.4	57.2	+6	0	-18
Over 55	74.6	60.7	54.6	57.1	53.6	55.1	55.1	61.6	59.8	64.7	58.3	+4	-2	-16
Education														
Incomplete secondary, secondary	70.3	54.9	46.0	51.4	51.6	51.1	47.5	55.8	51.9	58.1	52.7	+7	-2	-18
Secondary vocational	76.4	59.8	51.8	55.8	55.2	54.2	54.3	58.1	58.0	62.1	57.0	+5	-3	-19
Incomplete higher, higher	80.1	61.3	56.6	59.1	56.3	60.1	61.4	58.2	58.8	69.2	60.7	+4	-1	-19
Income groups														
20% of the poorest people	65.1	45.7	40.9	49.6	52.8	47.0	50.7	62.7	46.1	48.9	51.4	+11	+6	-14
60% of the people with middle-sized income	78.0	60.4	53.8	56.1	53.9	54.3	54.4	56.4	57.9	64.4	56.9	+3	-4	-21
20% of the most prosperous people	82.6	68.9	59.4	63.6	60.8	66.7	60.8	64.6	69.4	72.6	65.8	+6	-3	-17
Territories														
Vologda	74.1	58.3	51.6	53.2	51.1	54.1	52.7	55.2	53.1	61.0	54.5	+3	-4	-20
Cherepotets	82.8	68.5	62.3	63.7	65.3	62.8	63.8	65.0	66.8	73.2	66.2	+4	-2	-17
Districts	72.2	53.9	46.3	51.9	49.9	51.5	49.8	54.1	51.8	58.1	52.5	+6	-1	-20
Oblast	75.3	58.7	51.7	55.3	54.3	55.1	54.3	57.3	56.1	62.8	56.7	+5	-2	-19

The last two months saw an increase in the share of the Oblast residents who believe that the RF President is successful in coping with key problems in the country (by 3-4 p.p.).

Table 5. In your opinion, how successful is the RF President in coping with challenging issues?*, as a percentage of the number of respondents

Indicator	2007	2011	2012	2013	June 2013	Aug. 2013	Oct. 2013	Dec. 2013	Feb. 2014	Apr. 2014	Average for the last 6 surveys	Dynamics (+/-), the last 6 surveys in comparison with		
												2012	2011	2007
Strengthening Russia's international standing														
Successful	58.4	46.2	43.1	45.7	41.7	45.3	47.7	47.5	45.9	48.6	46.1	+3	0	-12
Unsuccessful	24.9	33.7	37.9	36.2	37.1	36.4	33.7	35.8	35.7	35.5	35.7	-2	+2	+11
Index of success	133.5	112.5	105.2	109.5	104.6	108.9	114.0	111.7	110.2	113.1	110.4	+5	-2	-23
Imposing order in the country														
Successful	53.2	36.6	35.4	39.4	35.1	39.9	41.7	44.5	42.7	46.7	41.8	+6	+5	-11
Unsuccessful	34.0	50.0	50.7	47.5	49.9	46.7	46.7	45.5	43.7	40.9	45.6	-5	-4	+12
Index of success	119.2	86.6	84.7	91.9	85.2	93.2	95.0	99.0	99.0	105.8	96.2	+12	+10	-23
Protecting democracy and strengthening the citizens' freedoms														
Successful	44.4	32.4	28.8	31.8	29.1	34.7	33.5	32.8	32.3	36.3	33.1	+4	+1	-11
Unsuccessful	37.0	48.3	52.3	51.0	50.0	48.5	50.9	51.6	50.1	48.7	50.0	-2	+2	+13
Index of success	107.4	84.1	76.5	80.8	79.1	86.2	82.6	81.2	82.2	87.6	83.2	+7	-1	-24
Economic recovery and increase in the citizens' welfare														
Successful	47.2	30.7	28.5	31.3	28.2	32.6	31.9	32.6	31.5	34.9	32.0	+4	+1	-15
Unsuccessful	39.1	56.1	57.9	56.8	56.7	53.4	57.7	59.7	57.1	54.3	56.5	-1	0	+17
Index of success	108.1	74.6	70.6	74.5	71.5	79.2	74.2	72.9	74.4	80.6	75.5	+5	+1	-33
* Ranked according to the average value of the indicator for the last 6 surveys.														

From February to April 2014 the share of the Oblast residents, who positively characterize their mood has increased (from 65 to 69%). The stock of patience has increased from 77 to 81%.

Table 6. Estimation of social condition (as a percentage of the number of respondents)

Indicator	2007	2011	2012	2013	June 2013	Aug. 2013	Oct. 2013	Dec. 2013	Feb. 2014	Apr. 2014	Average for the last 6 surveys	Dynamics (+/-), the last 6 surveys in comparison with		
												2012	2011	2007
Mood														
Usual condition, good mood	63.6	63.1	67.3	68.6	66.4	68.7	71.5	69.6	65.1	69.3	68.4	+1	+5	+5
Feeling stress, anger, fear, depression	27.8	28.9	27.0	26.2	25.9	26.3	24.0	26.2	27.1	24.9	25.7	-1	-3	-2
Stock of patience														
Everything is not so bad; it's difficult to live, but it's possible to stand it	74.1	74.8	76.6	79.3	77.8	79.7	81.6	83.1	79.8	81.3	80.6	+4	+6	+7
It's impossible to bear such plight	13.6	15.3	15.8	14.2	13.7	14.7	12.3	12.0	12.3	11.1	12.7	-3	-3	-1
Social self-identification														
The share of people who consider themselves to have average income	48.2	43.1	44.7	43.9	41.9	44.9	45.7	43.7	44.2	43.1	43.9	-1	+1	-4
The share of people who consider themselves to be poor and extremely poor	42.4	44.3	44.5	46.9	48.3	46.8	45.4	46.7	46.9	49.1	47.2	+3	+3	+5
Consumer Sentiment Index														
Index value, points	105.9	89.6	91.5	90.3	89.8	91.0	90.4	87.9	91.5	90.3	90.2	-1	+1	-16

As for political preferences of the population, the party “United Russia” retains the leading role in this regard. The level of its support in February – April 2014 was 28–30%, on average for the last 6 surveys – 29%, which approximately corresponds to the level of 2007–2013. The positions of KPRF and LDPR are also stable; they have the support of 11% and 8% of the Oblast residents, respectively. “Just Russia” has become less popular than in 2007–2012: 3% in February – April 2014; the average for the last 6 surveys – 4%; in 2007–2012 – 6-8%. The share of those who believe that no existing party expresses their interests has stabilized at the level of 35%. It is higher than in 2007 and 2012 (18 and 31%, respectively).

Table 7. Which party expresses your interests?,
as a percentage of the number of respondents

Party	2007	Election to the RF State Duma 2007, fact	2011	Election to the RF State Duma 2011, fact	2012	2013	June 2013	Aug. 2013	Oct. 2013	Dec. 2013	Feb. 2014	Apr. 2014	Average for the last 6 surveys	Dynamics (+/-), the last 6 surveys in comparison with		
														2012	2011	2007
United Russia	30.2	60.5	31.1	33.4	29.1	29.4	31.3	29.6	26.9	29.5	28.3	29.5	29.2	0	-2	-1
KPRF	7.0	9.3	10.3	16.8	10.6	11.3	11.3	12.0	11.9	11.8	10.9	10.7	11.4	+1	+1	+4
LDPR	7.5	11.0	7.8	15.4	7.8	7.2	6.6	6.8	8.4	8.1	8.9	8.3	7.9	0	0	0
Just Russia	7.8	8.8	5.6	27.2	6.6	4.6	4.7	4.3	4.0	4.4	3.5	3.3	4.0	-3	-2	-4
Other	1.8	–	1.9	–	2.1	0.6	2.0	3.4	1.0	0.8	0.4	0.2	1.3	-1	-1	-1
No party	17.8	–	29.4	–	31.3	34.9	31.7	33.4	37.3	34.4	35.2	34.8	34.5	+3	+5	+17
It is difficult to answer	21.2	–	13.2	–	11.7	10.2	12.3	10.5	10.5	10.9	12.7	13.1	11.7	0	-2	-10