

## Editorial

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### **Vote of Confidence for the President is Confirmed. Achievement of Socio-Economic Development Goals before 2024–2030 is Uncertain**



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**Abstract.** All-Russian vote on amendments to the Constitution, which was conducted from June 25 to July 1 of 2020, showed that a vote of confidence, granted by society to a current system of public governance and the President personally during previous presidential elections, was confirmed. With a high voter turnout (68%), 78% of them supported Vladimir Putin’s initiative to amend the Main Law. However, a detailed analysis of “pressure points” of the last vote (regions where the share of votes against constitutional amendments was above national average numbers) confirms experts’ opinions that an idea to unite society around this event did not work out. The lack of real changes in the solution of key issues related to overcoming flagrant social inequality and the growth of the level and quality of life, which would be

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visible to general population, leads to people's exhaustion from another positive goals of socio-economic development that might not be fulfilled once again and remain only in a declarative form. It affected the dynamics of public opinion, and, in particular, it echoed in a high level of protest in most Russian regions (in 47 out of 86), its regional centers, and large industrial towns during all-Russian vote on amendments to the Constitution. At the same time, the President's Executive Order on Russia's national development goals through 2030, dated July 21, 2020, pushes back dates of national projects' implementation (from 2024 to 2030) once again and additionally decreases the level of optimism toward the implementation of national development goals until 2024 – exactly until the next elections of the President of the Russian Federation. An analysis of factual information and expert assessments, carried out by the authors, forces to state that, despite another vote of confidence granted by society to the President and his system of governance, the future of Russia's socio-economic development (at least until 2024–2030) remains unclear, and it increases residents' fears for their own and their families' life prospects, as well as for the country itself. In these circumstances, it is difficult to disagree with an opinion of several experts that, in order to overcome long-standing unresolved vital problems that concern population and improve the efficiency of the public administration system, it is necessary to take active steps (primarily by the President) toward the nationalization of ruling elites. Continuing balancing between liberal and state-patriotic forces in power may once again lead to failures in achieving key national development goals, which threatens the legitimacy and the very future of the Russian statehood.

**Key words:** efficiency of public governance, all-Russian vote on amendments to the Constitution, social inequality, national development goals, public opinion.

Despite a continuing rather alarming epidemiological situation (related to existing trends in the spread of coronavirus infection, expectations of a “second wave” of the pandemic, periodic media reports about new coronavirus strains<sup>1</sup>, and new potential threats of an epidemiological nature<sup>2</sup>), the world gradually overcomes this stage of its history. Quarantine restrictions are being consistently lifted, people return to work, resorts are being opened, traffic is being resumed, catering companies resume work, and so on.

Simultaneously, questions related to **the structure and basic principles of the “post-coronavirus” world** become more relevant. Undoubtedly, this topic had come to the surface

before, when the world was just entering the “coronavirus phase” of its existence. At that time, experts said that “this humanity coronavirus crisis has already become so global that the return to the situation existing on the eve of the epidemic is simply impossible”<sup>3</sup>.

This is what happens. Today, the post-pandemic structure of the world takes on an increasingly realistic shape: **a period of hypotheses and assumptions gradually turns into a period of the need for active actions and political decisions that will determine the international situation and internal stability in each country, Russia included.**

As many experts note, the coronavirus not just brought new problems to our lives but, moreover, exacerbated old protracted contradictions. The challenges that arise in the post-coronavirus era (political, economic,

<sup>1</sup> Efimova A. “More contagious”: What is the threat of Beijing coronavirus. *Gazeta.ru*, dated June 16, 2020. Available at: <https://www.gazeta.ru/social/2020/06/16/13119325.shtml>

<sup>2</sup> Outbreak of a deadly bubonic plague on the border with Russia. What does this mean for Russians? *Lenta.ru*, dated July 9, 2020. Available at: <https://lenta.ru/articles/2020/07/09/plague/>

<sup>3</sup> Dugin A. The post-global order. *Official website of the Izborsky club*, dated March 23, 2020. Available at: <https://izborsk-club.ru/18994>

**“The crisis was long time coming. Nearly a decade of global economic growth was happening with a simultaneous catastrophic lag in the modernization of social and political systems. The Internet, digital technologies, and artificial intelligence created enormous opportunities that were selectively used by states and corporations, leaving out many applications... A deeper systemic strain has been growing for decades. Institutions of industrial civilization were coming apart at the seams. Education, medicine, economy –everything faced new challenges but have been remaining conservative so far. The coronavirus dramatically exposed all contradictions. And now “the old way” is not possible: we will have to go through a painful and deep change of society and economy’s foundations in order to completely enter the digital age”<sup>4</sup>.**

and demographic) catalyze already turbulent processes that accompany the change of the technological order and the transition of global

community from modern to postmodern. It makes the issue of public administration efficiency one of the most significant, system-forming problems that determine the further “viability”<sup>5</sup> of the state. The “aggravating” factor for all countries is the noticeable deterioration of global economy caused by the consequences of the global pandemic and fluctuations of energy prices. According to the World Bank forecasts, in 2020, most of the world’s leading countries (except China) are expected to have the reduction of GDP growth by 5–9%, and in 2021 – growth not exceeding 4% (Tab. 1).

As data, presented in the table, shows, the rate of states’ recovery from the epidemiological crisis in 2020–2021 is different. It applies not only to the state of national economic systems but also to the internal psychological situation in the country. For example, officials of the

Table 1. GDP growth, % to the previous year (ranked by forecasts for 2021)

Country	2017	2018	2019 (estimation)	2020 (forecast)	2021 (forecast)
China	6.8	6.6	6.1	1.0	6.9
Indonesia	5.1	5.2	5.0	0.0	4.8
USA	2.4	2.9	2.3	-6.1	4.0
India	7.0	6.1	4.2	-3.2	3.1
Russia	1.8	2.5	1.3	-6.0	2.7
Japan	2.2	0.3	0.7	-6.1	2.5
Saudi Arabia	-0.7	2.4	0.3	-3.8	2.5
Brazil	1.3	1.3	1.1	-8.0	2.2
<i>For reference:</i>					
<i>World</i>	3.3	3.0	2.4	-5.2	4.2
<i>Euro zone</i>	2.5	1.9	1.2	-9.1	4.5
<i>Developed countries</i>	2.5	2.1	1.6	-7.0	3.9
<i>Developing countries</i>	4.5	4.3	3.5	-2.5	4.6
<i>East Asia and the Pacific</i>	6.5	6.3	5.9	0.5	6.6
<i>Europe and Central Asia</i>	4.1	3.3	2.2	-4.7	3.6
<i>Latin America and the Caribbean</i>	1.9	1.7	0.8	-7.2	2.8
<i>Middle East and North Africa</i>	1.1	0.9	-0.2	-4.2	2.3
<i>South Asia</i>	6.5	6.5	4.7	-2.7	2.8
<i>Africa South of the Sahara</i>	2.6	2.6	2.2	-2.8	3.1

Source: *Global Economic Prospects*. World Bank, June 2020. Washington, DC: World Bank. DOI: 10.1596/978-1-4648-1553-9

<sup>4</sup> Kuznetsov E. Three diseases of civilization that were aggravated by the coronavirus. *Forbes*, dated April 16, 2020. Available at: <https://yandex.ru/turbo/s/forbes.ru/biznes/398231-tri-bolezni-civilizacii-kotorye-obostril-koronavirus>

<sup>5</sup> Sulakshin S.S. *Quality and Success of Public Policies and Management*. “Political Axiology” Series. Moscow: Nauchny ekspert, 2012. P. 6, 12.

World Health Organization assessed the anti-epidemic measures taken by the Russian authorities as “timely and correct”<sup>6</sup>, paying particular attention to population’s wide coronavirus test coverage<sup>7</sup>.

At the same time, in the USA, which the world leader according to absolute number of deaths along with absolute and relative indicators of coronavirus infection numbers (*Insert 1–2*), negative epidemiological processes are accompanied by the most severe cultural and political crisis, which currently

extends far beyond the USA, and the consequences of which are still hard to imagine.

Experts point out that “American Titanic has been fatally blown, and the situation with the coronavirus will only worsen the general crisis, not resolve... we will suffer all these changes for a long time. And the position of the global hegemon will become vacant immediately. The fight for it will begin. Perhaps it will leave no stone unturned. After all, it is not just the leadership that is at stake but the remaining resources of the Earth”<sup>8</sup>.

**Martynov A.** (politologist, director of the International Institute of the Newly Established States): “The United States is such a country that any similar things will have serious consequences in the world: not only in countries that are subordinate to the interests of the United States”<sup>9</sup>.

**Bordachev T.** (director of the Centre for Comprehensive European and International Studies): “Protests in the United States are the result of the socio-economic structure of American society, demonstrations in Europe are the result of accumulated problems of European societies, whose citizens are looking for a solution and a way to express their dissatisfaction with ruling elites in general”<sup>10</sup>.

**Isakov A.** (correspondent, interpreter of Regnum News Agency): “The race riots in the United States, at the first glance, are a relapse of not completely excessive contradictions of the Civil War (1861–1865), but, if you look closely, there is a much deeper crisis behind this one. It marks a civilizational breakdown that may end the existence of the most powerful Empire”<sup>11</sup>.

**Inozemtsev V.** (economist, research supervisor and director of autonomous non-profit organization “Center for Post-Industrial Society Studies”): «Of course, Black Lives Matter protests are unlikely to start a civil war. But it will have quite serious consequences for the economy and liberal foundations of western society... All this suggests that “socialist” trends are here to stay, and it may cause significant harm to western economies over the next five-ten years. On the other hand, the new ideology of group differences seriously threatens liberal foundations on which western societies are built... I do not see any reasons for great optimism right now: just like in case of COVID, the world faced a virus that people are not immune to, so western countries now received a demand that they may not be able to meet while remaining themselves”<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> M. Vujnović noted that “Russia was one of the first countries to respond remarkably, literally from the first day when information from China about an outbreak of an unknown infection that causes severe pneumonia appeared. It allowed Russia to stay one step ahead of the epidemic. Now the range of measures constantly expands... Russia absolutely follows WHO recommendations” (Source: Nevinnaya I. What is it made of: WHO called Russian measures against coronavirus timely and correct. *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, dated March 26, 2020. Available at: <https://rg.ru/2020/03/26/voz-nazvala-mery-rossii-protiv-koronavirusa-svoevremennymi-i-pravilnymi.html>).

<sup>7</sup> WHO positively assessed the organization of testing for coronavirus in Russia. *News.ru*, dated June 5, 2020. Available at: <https://news.ru/society/v-voz-pozitivno-ocenili-organizaciyu-testirovaniya-na-koronavirus-v-rossii/>

<sup>8</sup> Stavickiy A. Will Titanic be able to run aground? *Zavtra*, dated August 4, 2020. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/chto\\_zhdyot\\_mir\\_i\\_ameriku\\_sumeet\\_li\\_titanik\\_vibrosit\\_sya\\_na\\_mel\\_](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/chto_zhdyot_mir_i_ameriku_sumeet_li_titanik_vibrosit_sya_na_mel_)

<sup>9</sup> How will riots in the United States end? Forecasts of political scientists. *Argumenty i Fakty*, dated June 16, 2020. Available at: [https://aif.ru/politics/world/chem\\_zakonchatsya\\_besporyadki\\_v\\_ssha\\_proгноzy\\_politologov](https://aif.ru/politics/world/chem_zakonchatsya_besporyadki_v_ssha_proгноzy_politologov)

<sup>10</sup> Poplavskiy A. Another racism: What is the difference between protests in the USA and Europe. *Gazeta.ru*, dated June 11, 2020. Available at: / [https://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2020/06/11\\_a\\_13115269.shtml](https://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2020/06/11_a_13115269.shtml)

<sup>11</sup> Isakov A. Decline of the American Empire: What will racial unrest in the United States lead to? Available at: <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/3005317.html>

<sup>12</sup> Inozemtsev V. Challenges to the modern order. What consequences will the protests in the USA and Europe have for the West. Available at: <https://snob.ru/entry/194595/>

## Insert 1

Dynamics of detected cases of infection and a number of deaths from coronavirus infection in countries\* (abs.)

Position	Country	Population num., people**	Number of deaths			Number of detected cases of infection				
			1Q	2Q	July	August	1Q.	2Q.	July	August
1	USA	332639102	3873	126203	150054	167201	188172	2537636	4388566	5258565
2	Brazil	211715973	201	57622	90134	106523	5717	1344143	2552265	3275520
3	Mexico	128649565	20	26648	45361	55908	993	216852	408449	511369
4	India	1326093247	35	16893	35747	49980	1397	566840	1638870	2589682
5	Great Britain	65761117	1789	43575	45999	41358	25150	311969	302305	316371
6	Italy	62402659	12428	34744	35132	35392	105792	240436	247158	253438
7	France	67848156	3523	29730	30136	30277	52128	156930	174648	202118
8	Spain	50015792	8464	28346	28443	28617	95923	248970	285430	342813
9	Peru	31914989	30	9317	18 816	25856	1065	279419	400683	516296
10	Iran	84923314	2898	10670	16659	19492	44605	225205	301530	341070
11	<b>Russia</b>	<b>141722205</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>9320</b>	<b>13963</b>	<b>15685</b>	<b>2337</b>	<b>647849</b>	<b>839981</b>	<b>922853</b>
12	Colombia	49084841	10	3106	9454	14492	702	91769	276055	445111
13	South Africa	56463617	3	2529	7 812	11677	1326	144264	482169	583653
14	Chile	18186770	8	5575	9377	10395	2449	275999	353536	383902
15	Germany	80159662	775	8973	9134	9231	71808	194259	207828	223453
16	Pakistan	233500636	25	4304	5951	6168	1865	209337	278305	288717
17	Turkey	82017514	214	5115	5674	5955	13531	198613	229891	248117
18	Argentina	45479118	20	1245	3311	5565	820	59933	178996	282437
19	Bangladesh	162650853	5	1783	3083	3625	49	141801	234889	274525
20	Saudi Arabia	34173498	8	1599	2869	3369	1453	186436	274219	297315

\* The table shows top 20 countries with the highest number of detected cases of infection as of August 16, 2020.

Ranked by a number of deaths as of August 16, 2020.

Data for 1, 2Q, July – last day of each month, August – latest data at the time of the article preparation (August 16, 2020).

Source: COVID-19 (2019-nCoV) Data Repository by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University with reference to WHO reports. Available at: <https://github.com/CSSEGISandData/COVID-19>

\*\* Number of population is based on estimates for July 2020 (Source: *The World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/>)

According to the results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter and currently, the United States is the world's leader in a number of infections and deaths from coronavirus infection.

Russia is on the 11th place according to a number of deaths from coronavirus. According to WHO, as of August 16, 2020, 15685 Russians died because of coronavirus infection, which is 11 times lower than in the USA, and 2–3 times lower than in many Western European countries (Great Britain, Italy, France, Spain).

## Insert 2

Dynamics of detected cases of infection and a number of deaths from coronavirus infection per 100 thousand population  
(in countries with the highest number of infections)\*

Position	Country	Population num., people**	Number of deaths			Number of detected cases of infection				
			1Q	2Q	July	August	1Q.	2Q.	July	August
1	Peru	31914989	0.094	29.193	58.957	81.015	3.337	875.510	1255.470	1617.723
2	Great Britain	65761117	2.720	66.263	69.949	62.891	38.244	474.397	459.702	481.091
3	Spain	50015792	16.923	56.674	56.868	57.216	191.785	497.783	570.680	685.410
4	Chile	18186770	0.044	30.654	51.559	57.157	13.466	1517.581	1943.919	2110.886
5	Italy	62402659	19.916	55.677	56.299	56.716	169.531	385.298	396.070	406.133
6	Brazil	211715973	0.095	27.217	42.573	50.314	2.700	634.880	1205.514	1547.129
7	USA	332639102	1.164	37.940	45.110	50.265	56.569	762.880	1319.318	1580.862
8	France	67848156	5.192	43.818	44.417	44.625	76.830	231.296	257.410	297.898
9	Mexico	128649565	0.016	20.714	35.259	43.458	0.772	168.560	317.490	397.490
10	Colombia	49084841	0.020	6.328	19.261	29.524	1.430	186.960	562.404	906.820
11	Iran	84923314	3.412	12.564	19.617	22.952	52.524	265.186	355.062	401.621
12	South Africa	56463617	0.005	4.479	13.835	20.681	2.348	255.499	853.946	1033.680
13	Argentina	45479118	0.044	2.738	7.280	12.236	1.803	131.781	393.578	621.026
14	Germany	80159662	0.967	11.194	11.395	11.516	89.581	242.340	259.268	278.760
15	<b>Russia</b>	<b>141722205</b>	<b>0.012</b>	<b>6.576</b>	<b>9.852</b>	<b>11.067</b>	<b>1.649</b>	<b>457.126</b>	<b>592.695</b>	<b>651.170</b>
16	Saudi Arabia	34173498	0.023	4.679	8.395	9.859	4.252	545.557	802.432	870.016
17	Turkey	82017514	0.261	6.236	6.918	7.261	16.498	242.159	280.295	302.517
18	India	1326093247	0.003	1.274	2.696	3.769	0.105	42.745	123.586	195.287
19	Pakistan	233500636	0.011	1.843	2.549	2.642	0.799	89.652	119.188	123.647
20	Bangladesh	162650853	0.003	1.096	1.895	2.229	0.030	87.181	144.413	168.782

\* The table shows top 20 countries with the highest number of detected cases of infection as of August 16, 2020 (own calculations).

Ranked by a number of deaths from coronavirus infection (per 100 thousand people) as of August 16, 2020.

Data for 1, 2Q, July – last day of each month, August – latest data at the time of the article preparation (August 16, 2020).

Source: COVID-19 (2019-nCoV) Data Repository by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University with reference to WHO reports. Available at: <https://github.com/CSSEGISandData/COVID-19>

\*\* Number of population is based on estimates for July 2020 (Source: *The World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/>)

Per 100 thousand people, leader in a number of deaths from coronavirus among population is Peru (81.015 cases as of August 16, 2020).

In Russia, this indicator is 11.064 cases per 100 thousand people (15<sup>th</sup> position in the world), which is 7 times less than in the United States and 5 times less than in several Western European countries (Great Britain, Italy, Spain).

The gradual lifting of quarantine restrictions in Russia allowed one of the main political and social events of recent years to take place – the all-Russian vote on amendments to the Constitution. It was held for the first time within a few days, and it summed up the large-scale socio-political process launched by the President of the Russian Federation on January 15, 2020 in a regular Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation.

The discussion of constitutional changes took place during the entire period of the epidemiological crisis and, of course, became one of the important factors consolidating society in a period of uncertainty and anxiety concerning the spread of coronavirus infection, changes in lifestyle due to quarantine measures, and negative socio-economic consequences of the pandemic. No less significant is the fact that the possibility of extending Vladimir Putin's presidential terms removed unnecessary questions about the transit of power until presidential elections of 2024, as we wrote in our previous article<sup>13</sup>.

**However, it should be emphasized that the main part of constitutional amendments and its general “emotional component”, perceived by society, fully corresponded to challenges presented to the public administration system by the objective reality of the post-coronavirus period. These challenges consist of the need for a quick and efficient response to issues that have been troubling Russian society for many years: dynamic increase of the level and quality of life, government guarantee of social protection for general population, growing need for social justice and the reduction of huge inequality<sup>14</sup>,**

**and the nationalization of elites, without which it is impossible to solve these problems.**

It is no accident that, according to VCIOM surveys, the amendments concerning population's social protection are of the greatest importance for Russians. Thus, more than 90% of respondents noted that it is important for them that the Constitution contains such principles as:

- ✓ government guarantee of affordable and high-quality medical care (95%);
- ✓ children as the top priority of government policy, their social support (93%);
- ✓ mandatory annual indexation of pensions (92%);
- ✓ guarantee of targeted social support, indexation of social benefits and payments (92%);
- ✓ state responsibility for protecting the rights of Russian workers and setting the minimum wage not below minimum subsistence level (92%)<sup>15</sup>.

**We would like to emphasize that society needs for social justice and dynamic development of the level and quality of life did not arise simultaneously with the lifting of quarantine restrictions but existed long before the epidemiological crisis. Currently, while Russians return to their usual lives, expectations that Russian society has repeatedly given credit to the authorities for implementing, primarily**

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**increased by 33% and exceeded 1 billion rubles** in the first half of 2020. **This increase was in the form bonuses, which are 66% higher than salaries.** On average, one member of the company's management board approximately earned **643 thousand rubles a day, 80 thousand rubles an hour, and a little more than 22 rubles a second** in January-June (if you take into account only 8-hour working days)... at the same time, employees of regional gas companies and subsidiaries of OOO “Gazprom Mezhhregiongaz” still cannot receive bonuses for 2019. **Those who really work and provide a stable cash flow from Russian consumers are left without money”** (source: Ivanov A. Unsinkable. Untriable. Insatiable. *Zavtra*, dated August 14, 2020).

<sup>13</sup> Ilyin V.A., Morev M.V Efficiency of the state's “manual” management. Challenges of 2020. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 2020, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 9–24.

<sup>14</sup> Example from current life: “net loss of PAO “Gazprom” amounted to 276.98 billion rubles in the first half of 2020... with this, the income of the top management of PAO “Gazprom”

<sup>15</sup> Constitutional amendments: Rating of preferences of Russians. VCIOM analytical review no. 4250, dated May 30, 2020. Available at: <https://wciom.ru/index.php?id=236&uid=10311>

during the presidential elections (*Insert 3*), **emerge again:** thus, since 2012, the turnout for presidential elections in all federal districts of the Russian Federation has been at least 60%, and more than 56% of voters, who took part in the vote, consistently cast their votes for the current President of the Russian Federation V. Putin. At the same time, during the last presidential elections of 2018, turnout in all federal districts increased (from 65 to 68% in the whole country, i.e. from 72 to 74 million people) along with support for the head of the state (from 64 to 77%, or from 46 to 56 million people).

Compliance with public needs and time moment that requires its efficient implementation makes the all-Russian vote an important factor that mobilizes and consolidates the country in face of epidemiological and socio-economic threats. **It helps relieve social tension by declaring the readiness and ability of state authorities to feel the mood of society and work for the realization of national interests.** It is no coincidence that the results of the vote, which ended on July 1, 2020, were quite convincing: overall, the turnout in the country was 68% (74.2 million people); 78% (57.7 million people) voted for amendments to the Constitution (*Insert 4*).

Results of the vote on amendments to the Constitution June 25 – July 1, 2020

Option	%	million people
For	77.9	57.7
Against	21.3	15.8
Turnout	68.0	74.2

**However, as the practice of public administration in Russia over the last 15 years shows, the declaration of authorities' intentions to implement policies in interests of the majority of country's citizens does not guarantee the real implementation of its goals and objectives.**

**Considering the previous long-term experience of non-implementation of the President's direct decrees and lack of tangible positive dynamics of changes in population's level and quality of life, a number of experts have great doubts that the system of public administration built by V. Putin during his presidential terms will be able to cope with the implementation of obligations stated in the Constitution, since new tools for this have not been proposed yet.**

For more than 10 years, despite the stated goals of “concentrating budgetary and administrative resources on improving the quality of life of Russian citizens”<sup>16</sup>, “increasing real salaries by 1.4–1.5 times by 2018”<sup>17</sup>, “2 times decrease of the poverty level”<sup>18</sup>, “implementing breakthrough development of the Russian Federation, increasing the country's population, raising citizens' living standards, creating comfortable conditions for their living, as well as revealing the talent of each person”<sup>19</sup>, etc., a number of people with monetary incomes below the subsistence minimum is 12–13%, or about 18–19 million Russians (since 2007, *Fig. 1*). It includes the “new” government, which has been working since 2018 and has set itself the goal of “improving the quality of life of

<sup>16</sup> V. Putin's speech at the meeting with the cabinet members, the heads of the Federal Assembly, and State Council Members, where he announced the launch of priority national projects in the RF, dated September 5, 2005. *Official website of the President of Russia*. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/23157>

<sup>17</sup> On measures to implement state social policy: Executive Order of the President of the Russian Federation no. 597, dated May 7, 2012. *Official website of the President of Russia*. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/news/15233>

<sup>18</sup> On national goals and strategic objectives of the Russian Federation through to 2024: Executive Order of the President of the Russian Federation no. 204, dated May 7, 2018. *Official website of the President of Russia*. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/43027>

<sup>19</sup> On Russia's national development goals through 2030: Executive Order of the President of the Russian Federation, dated July 21, 2020. *Official website of the President of Russia*. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/63728>

## Insert 3

Share of votes cast for V.V. Putin during presidential elections between 2000 and 2018

Territory	2000*						2004						2012						2018					
	turnout			votes			turnout			votes			turnout			votes			turnout			votes		
	abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%																
Central FD	20036294	68.42	9927543	49.64	17519613	60.56	11780015	67.41	18353771	62.48	10354176	56.51	18687906	64.37	14033866	75.16								
Northwestern FD	7609592	68.23	4803026	63.23	6373712	58.18	4755388	74.69	6783295	61.63	4003066	59.13	6634513	63.28	4974294	75.08								
Southern FD	7182086	68.51	3804869	53.03	6711292	65.03	4622378	68.92	6875173	65.80	4382194	63.79	8590423	70.74	7007737	81.62								
North Caucasian FD**	3872006	76.21	2514531	65.12	4340896	81.52	3722602	85.77	4492669	78.60	3713875	82.70	4850814	83.94	4210607	86.86								
Privolzhsky FD	17058364	72.31	9435625	55.37	16224425	69.37	12022837	74.14	16186857	68.43	11015125	68.10	15868095	69.65	12270602	77.53								
Ural FD	6024326	66.02	3334382	55.43	5910721	63.80	4348233	73.62	6168725	64.54	4132512	67.04	1748424	66.41	4714255	75.56								
Siberian FD	8890552	66.99	3728625	42.00	8112177	61.37	5360579	66.14	8482502	63.56	5231807	61.72	8380774	64.54	6171330	73.58								
Far Eastern FD	4263093	64.84	2002976	47.05	4099708	64.84	2705513	66.04	3984889	63.44	2438125	61.27	3885955	64.35	2632834	67.78								
<b>Average for RF</b>	<b>75181071</b>	<b>68.74</b>	<b>39740434</b>	<b>52.94</b>	<b>69581430</b>	<b>64.39</b>	<b>49563020</b>	<b>71.31</b>	<b>71780800</b>	<b>65.34</b>	<b>45602075</b>	<b>63.60</b>	<b>73624100</b>	<b>67.54</b>	<b>56426399</b>	<b>76.69</b>								

Federal districts were formed on May 13, 2000, after the presidential elections (held on March 26, 2000), so data for federal districts for 2000 is conditional.

\* In 2004, North Caucasian FD did not exist, its regions were included in Southern FD. North Caucasian FD was formed in 2010 that is why presented data for Southern and North Caucasian FD for 2004 is conditional.

In 2018, compared to 2012, all federal districts of Russia registered the increase of voter turnout for the Presidential election, as well as the increase of the share of votes cast for V. V. Putin. On average, more than 56 million Russians (76.69%) voted for him, which is 10 million more than in 2012 and nearly 17 million more than in 2000.

## Insert 4

Results of the all-Russian vote on amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, held from June 25 to July 1, 2020 (by federal districts of the Russian Federation)\*

Территория	Number (abs.)		Turnout		Number of votes "for"		Number of votes "against"	
	population	voters	abs.	%**	abs.	%	abs.	%
Central FD	39 433 556	29081341	19158072	65.88	14408730	76.17	4550592	22.95
Northwestern FD	13 981 992	10707867	6789619	63.41	5047418	68.92	1675646	30.19
Southern FD	16 466 084	12367692	10013117	80.96	8654101	85.75	1289863	13.54
North Caucasian FD**	9 930 933	5929820	5068306	85.47	4449487	87.52	564879	11.64
Privolzhsky FD	29 287 683	22698918	16285831	71.75	13016049	77.72	3126339	21.47
Ural FD	12 360 752	9259036	5704587	61.61	4099934	74.81	1553931	24.40
Siberian FD	17 118 387	12915011	7512507	58.17	5450713	72.06	1982563	27.00
Far Eastern FD	8 169 203	6065149	3529842	58.20	2516716	70.27	970678	28.57
<b>Average for RF</b>	<b>146 748 590</b>	<b>109190337</b>	<b>74215555</b>	<b>67.97</b>	<b>57747288</b>	<b>77.92</b>	<b>15761978</b>	<b>21.27</b>

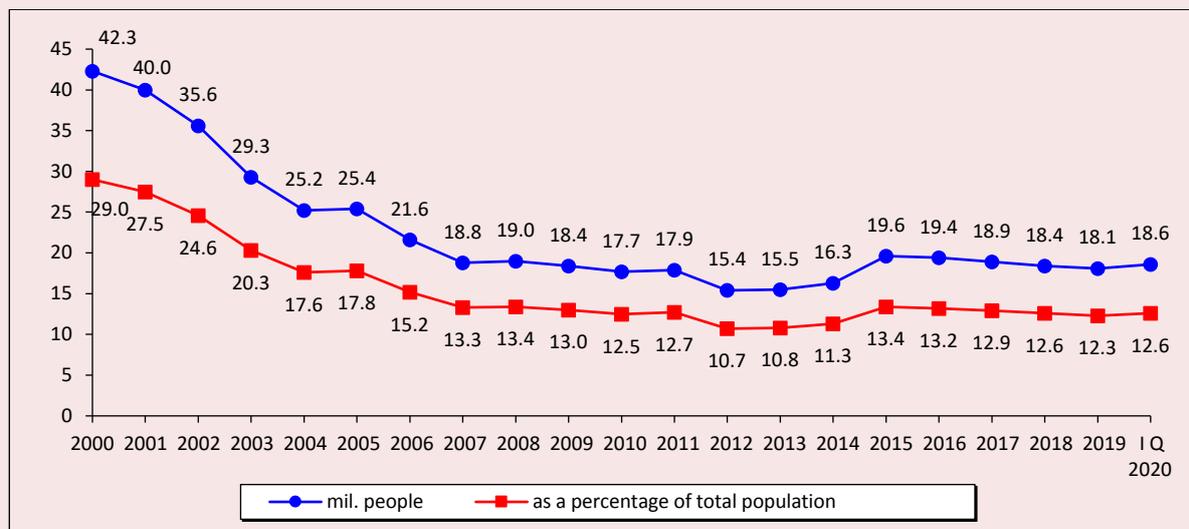
\* Ranked by the absolute number of votes cast "for".

\*\* Here and later, data in % of a number of voters presented.

More than 74 million Russians (68% of a total number of voters) took part in the all-Russian vote on amendments to the Constitution; it is nearly 18 million more than in the 2018 Presidential election. 78% of Russians supported the President's initiatives to change the Main Law, while this figure was higher than 70% in most federal districts.

At the same time, a significant share of those who voted against the amendments should also be noted. On average, 21% of voters (almost 16 million people) did not support these amendments across the country; in Northwestern FD – 30% (1.7 million people), in Far Eastern FD – 29% (almost 1 million people), in Siberian FD – 27% (2 million people).

Figure 1. A number of people with monetary incomes below the subsistence minimum



Source: <https://www.gks.ru/storage/mediabank/2-3.doc>

Table 2. Income growth and inequality in Russia (1989–2016), %

Income group (distribution of pre-tax national income per 1 adult)	Group size as of January 1, 2019* (people)	Average annual growth rate 1989–2016**	Total real growth 1989–2016**
All population	113892000	1.3	41
50% with the lowest income	56946000	-0.89	-20
40% with average income	45556800	0.5	15
10% with the highest income	11389200	3.8	171
including 1% with the highest incomes	1138920	6.4	429
including 0.1% with the highest income	113892	9.5	1054
including 0.01% with the highest income	11389	12.2	2134
including 0.001% with the highest income	1139	14.9	4122

\* Population of the Russian Federation aged over 20 years (own compilation according to the Federal State Statistics Service). Available at: [www.gks.ru](http://www.gks.ru).

\*\* Source: Novokmet F., Piketty T., Zucman G. From soviets to oligarchs: inequality and property in Russia, 1905–2016. National Bureau of Economic Research, August 2017. Cambridge, MA. P. 78.

every person in the country through economic growth and social development”<sup>20</sup>.

One of the largest international studies of inequality, which we have already mentioned in one of our previous articles<sup>21</sup>, shows that, nearly over the last 30 years (1989–2016), a total real

<sup>20</sup> Transcript of M. Mishustin’s report on the work of the Government. *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, dated July 22, 2020. Available at: <https://rg.ru/2020/07/22/otchet-mihaila-mishustina-o-rabote-pravitelstva-stenogramma.html>

<sup>21</sup> Ilyin V.A. “Crony Capitalism” – a Source of Social Inequality in Modern Russia. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 2017, vol. 10, no. 6, pp. 9–23.

income growth of 50% of Russians with the lowest incomes decreased by 20% (**according to 2019 data, it is about 57 million people**). Income level of 40% of population with average salaries (**nearly 46 million people**) increased only by 15%. For comparison, the share of income of 10% of the wealthiest citizens (**11.4 million people**) had a nearly 2 times increase – 171%, and the income level of 0.001% of the richest Russians (**about 1000 people**) had a nearly 40 (!) times increase – 4122% (Tab. 2).

Perhaps, it is possible to treat data of a particular study differently, but the fact is that it is also confirmed by statistical data. Thus, according to the World Bank, the income concentration index (Gini index<sup>22</sup>) in Russia is comparable to it in the United States (41.4) and China (38.5), but it is significantly higher than, for example, in Germany (31.9), the United Kingdom (34.8), France (31.6) and many other western European countries. However, the main thing is that, in 2000–2018, the Gini index in Russia has not actually changed (in 2000 – 37.1; in 2018 – 37.5); therefore, there are no tangible positive changes in the distribution of income by major social groups and solving the problem of social inequality.

At the same time, the dynamics of a number and size of a wealth of dollar billionaires does

not actually change, a number of which has increased from 60 to 100 people over the last 13 years (2006–2019), and their capital – from 153 to 275 billion rubles on average per billionaire (*Tab. 3*).

Data of public financial reports of large metallurgical corporations indicate a significant increase of funds directed at the personal

According to Forbes<sup>23</sup>, heads of mentioned enterprises are among 20 richest businessmen in Russia:

V. Potanin (PAO “Nornickel”) – 1st position (wealth is estimated at 19700 million US dollars),

A. Mordashov (PAO “Severstal”) – 4th position (16800 mil. US dollars),

V. Rashnikov (PAO “Magnitogorskiy metallurgicheskiy kombinat”) – 15th position (7300 mil. US dollars).

Table 3. Dynamics of a number and wealth of Russian dollar billionaires

Year	Number, people	Wealth, bil. dol.	Wealth, bil. rub. *	Average per billionaire, bil. rub.
2006	60	337.3	9168.4	152.8
2007	100	521.7	13355.5	133.6
2008	32	102.1	2542.3	79.4
2009	62	265.0	8400.5	135.5
2010	101	432.7	13141.1	130.1
2011	96	376.1	11057.3	115.2
2012	110	426.8	13269.2	120.6
2013	111	422.2	13426.0	121.0
2014	88	337.0	12940.8	147.1
2015	77	282.6	17224.5	223.7
2016	96	386.3	25882.1	269.6
2017	96	386.4	22565.8	235.1
2018	106	417.7	26189.8	247.1
2019	100	425.1	27504.0	275.0
2019, % to 2006	166.7	126.0	300.0	180.0

\* Wealth, given in Forbes in dollars, has been converted to rubles at the exchange rate set by the Bank of Russia.  
Sources: Forbes data; VoIRC RAS calculations.

<sup>22</sup> The Gini coefficient, or, as it is also called, the income concentration index, is a parameter that economists use in their calculations to characterize the existing economic inequality between individual segments of population of a country. Thus, it shows how unevenly income, or total wealth, is divided among members of society.

It is customary to evaluate it over time, observing a general trend. The Gini index is used to assess the uniformity of income distribution. This indicator is important for analyzing the pace of economic development. The fact is that **the more unevenly income is distributed, the more an imbalance is formed, and each generation becomes poorer in relation to the previous one, while the rich continue to increase their capital.** It creates a specific –poverty trap–that does not allow society to fully develop (Source: The Gini coefficient in Russia. Available at: [https://rosinfostat.ru/koeffitsienti\\_dzhini/](https://rosinfostat.ru/koeffitsienti_dzhini/)).

<sup>23</sup> Forbes ranking of the 200 richest businessmen in Russia – 2020. *Forbes official website*, dated April 17, 2020. Available at: <https://yandex.ru/turbo/s/forbes.ru/rating/397799-200-bogateyshih-biznesmenov-rossii-2020-reyting-forbes>

Table 4. Average salary of employees and average remuneration to management bodies of metallurgical corporations in 2012–2019, thousand rubles per month

Indicator	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Average for 2012–2019
<b>PAO “Severstal”</b>									
Salary of employees	39	47	53	54	61	64	65	67	56
Number of management employees, people	10	10	10	22	22	22	22	22	18
Remuneration	9848	10368	7398	2322	2530	2429	2621	2202	9755
To employees’ salaries, times	253	221	140	43	41	38	40	33	186
<b>PAO GMK “Nornickel”</b>									
Salary of employees	63	68,5	76	75	85	87	90	97	80
Number of management employees, people	19	24	26	27	27	27	27	27	26
Remuneration	12850	14253	6541	11433	12738	18638	21008	26817	15535
To employees’ salaries, times	204	208	86	152	150	214	233	276	190
<b>PAO “NLMK”</b>									
Salary of employees	39	43	48	52	58	60	62	63	53
Number of management employees, people	21	19	18	18	18	17	17	17	18
Remuneration	820	1288	2459	2571	3732	4145	3283	3241	2692
To employees’ salaries, times	21	30	51	49	64	69	53	51	49
<b>PAO “MMK”</b>									
Salary of employees	43	46	47	52	55	51	48	50	49
Number of management employees, people	26	25	25	23	23	23	25	24	24
Remuneration	887	2241	828	1539	1449	1858	1937	1885	1578
To employees’ salaries, times	20	49	18	30	26	36	40	38	32

Source: annual reports of metallurgical companies. Available at: [https://www.severstal.com/rus/ir/results\\_reports/annual\\_reports/](https://www.severstal.com/rus/ir/results_reports/annual_reports/); <https://nlmk.com/ru/ir/reporting-center/annual-reports/>; [http://mmk.ru/for\\_investor/annual\\_reports/index.php](http://mmk.ru/for_investor/annual_reports/index.php); <https://www.nornickel.ru/investors/reports-and-results/>

consumption of top managers, which causes a glaring gap in incomes in relation to the average salary of enterprises’ employees. Thus, in 2012–2019, an average monthly remuneration of one manager was tens or even hundreds of times higher (as at Severstal and Nornickel) than an average monthly salary of one corporate employee and, at the same time, increased at a higher rate (*Tab. 4*).

Perhaps, this unfair distribution of income was one of the reasons why, in all cities where these corporations are located (with the exception of Norilsk), the share of people who took part in the vote on amendments to the Constitution was lower than regional average numbers, and the share of those who did not support it was significantly (50–60%) higher (*Tab. 5*).

Table 5. Turnout (%) and percentage of people who voted against amendments to the Constitution on July 1, 2020 (% of turnout)

Territory	Turnout	Percentage of votes “against”	Deviation (+/-) of “against” votes from the Russian average (21.27%)	
			p.p.*	%**
Russia	67.97	21.27	0	0
Vologda Oblast	58.72	28.01	+6.74	+31.69
Vologda	57.19	28.80	+7.53	+35.40
Cherepovets	48.10	32.51	+11.24	+52.84
Lipetsk Oblast	66.31	20.39	-0.88	-4.14
Lipetsk	44.19	34.31	+13.04	+61.31
Krasnodar Krai	58.99	28.97	+7.7	+36.20
Norilsk	79.71	16.23	-5.04	-23.70
Chelyabinsk Oblast	65.88	29.55	+8.28	+38.93
Magnitogorsk	59.64	35.09	+13.82	+64.97

\* Difference between the share of votes cast against constitutional amendments in the region/city and the national average, given in percentage points.  
\*\* Difference between the share of votes cast against constitutional amendments in the region/city and the national average, given in % of the share of average number of “against” votes in Russia (21.27%).

**“Over 25 years, assets worth of at least 750 billion dollars have been withdrawn from Russia, which is half of the country’s annual GDP. If these assets were invested in the domestic economy, it could increase production and tax revenues that could be spent on infrastructure development and social programs – but, instead, most of it was spent on foreign assets, including luxury yachts that sail distant seas”<sup>24</sup>.**

However, negative consequences of the inefficient course of economic development implemented by the liberal bloc of the Russian Government do not affect any specific territories but the country’s economy as a whole. Thus, together with the absence of real changes in the dynamics of poverty and inequality, capital outflow has been continuing in the country for more than 10 years. According to the Central Bank’s estimates, in January–February 2019, net export of capital from Russia by the private sector amounted to 18.6 billion dollars, which is 2.1 times higher than in the same period of 2018 (8.7 billion dollars)<sup>25</sup>. At the end of 2018, net capital outflow increased 2.7 times in annual terms – from 25.2 billion to 67.5 billion dollars. Net outflow in 2017 amounted to 31.3 billion dollars (1.6 times increase by 2016).

It should be noted that the problem of Russia’s financial capital settling in offshore zones of foreign countries has long been ignored

by the government. Only after amendments to the Constitution, which prohibit senior officials from “opening and holding accounts (deposits), storing cash and valuables in foreign banks located outside the territory of the Russian Federation”<sup>26</sup>, the President decided to tax income in the form of dividends transferred to accounts abroad at a rate of 15%<sup>27</sup>, under which the procedure for denouncing the double taxation Treaty with Cyprus began in August 2020 (Malta and Luxembourg are next in line for the corresponding changes to the agreements)<sup>28</sup>.

Nevertheless, these measures may contribute to the deoffshorization of the Russian economy in the future, but, for now, the leakage of domestic capital abroad remains one of the most acute problems of the Russian economy.

In this regard, some experts Express well-founded concerns about the prospects for further prolongation of the existing, largely liberal, course of economic policy<sup>29</sup>, and also propose concrete measures to improve its efficiency in order to bring it in line with the objectives of global competitiveness and national development. However, for many years, the ruling elites have ignored these proposals, and they do everything to preserve the favorable (primarily for themselves) rules for conducting national economic policy<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Komrakov A. Volume of money export from the Russian Federation exceeded three annual budgets. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, dated March 13, 2019. Available at: [https://yandex.ru/turbo/s/ng.ru/economics/2019-03-13/1\\_7529\\_money.html](https://yandex.ru/turbo/s/ng.ru/economics/2019-03-13/1_7529_money.html)

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>26</sup> New text of the Constitution of the Russian Federation with amendments<sup>TM</sup> 2020 (Art. 77. P. 3.). *Official website of the State Duma of the RF*. Available at: <http://duma.gov.ru/news/48953/>

<sup>27</sup> Instructions following President’s Address to the Nation on the spread of coronavirus infection in the country. *Official website of the President of Russia*, dated March 28, 2020. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/63080>

<sup>28</sup> Alekseev D.A. Cyprus is outraged: What is behind the break in the tax agreement with Russia. Malta and Luxembourg are next in line for corresponding changes to the agreements. *News.ru*, dated August 3, 2020. Available at: <https://news.ru/economics/zachem-rossiya-razorvala-dogovor-po-dvojnemu-nalogooblozheniyu-s-kiprom/>

<sup>29</sup> Ayvazov A. Invite academician Glazyev to the broadcast. *Zavtra*, dated June 19, 2020. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/otkritoe\\_pis\\_mo\\_ekonomista\\_a\\_ajvazova\\_zhurnalistu\\_v\\_solov\\_evu](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/otkritoe_pis_mo_ekonomista_a_ajvazova_zhurnalistu_v_solov_evu)

<sup>30</sup> *For reference (on the reaction of the ruling elites to the proposals of experts):*

In April 2020, former adviser to the President of the Russian Federation and now minister for integration and macroeconomics of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) Sergey Glazyev prepared a report **“On forecasts of global economic dynamics within COVID-19 pandemic and possible stabilization measures within EAEU”**, which was posted on the official website of EEC. The author suggests a number of measures to stabilize the economy, in particular “the introduction of a tax on currency speculation

**Glaz'ev S.Ju.: “An immediate drastic change of economic policy is required.** It should ensure the restoration of macroeconomic stability at the same time with putting the Russian economy on a path of rapid growth based on a new technological order. It requires a forced transition to the formation of a new world economic order with its characteristic **institutions of strategic planning**, subordination of monetary policy to the tasks of increasing investment activity, and public-private partnership aimed at improving people’s well-being”<sup>31</sup>.

“The July presidential decree on national development goals is indeed very different from the similar May Decree of 2018. **The achievement of targets is now postponed from 2024 to 2030. At the same time, the targets are significantly worsened... Instead of nine national goals, only five have been identified. For example, there is no goal to make Russia one of five largest economies in the world, to ensure 5% annual growth of labor productivity, to increase the number of technologically innovative enterprises to 50% of their total number, to ensure a steady excess of the birth rate over the death rate, and so on**”<sup>33</sup>.

**It forces experts to state: “Finally, it is time to recognize the failure of the economic development model of recent years.** The main thing is to formulate an idea of a comprehensive development program... Reliance on national projects does not yet provide the economy with structural growth drivers... **An L-shaped way out of the coronavirus crisis is not the strategy that is needed for an economy that has been living in virtual stagnation for many years, and people who lose their income**”<sup>32</sup>.

In July 2020, at a Meeting of Council for Strategic Development and National Projects, Russian President V. Putin said: “Despite objective current difficulties, our long-term goals remain unchanged”<sup>34</sup>. However, it seems that the tasks set out in 2018 national projects, which aim to provide Russia with a “decisive breakthrough in people preservation”<sup>35</sup> by 2024, are being postponed for 6 years. At least, in almost identical wording, they are presented

(at a rate of 0.01% of a volume of exchange currency trading – admission to the budget of EAEU to finance targeted programs and projects of EAEU, which is 30 billion Russian rubles a year)” (source: Glazyev S. Yu. On forecasts of global economic dynamics within COVID-19 pandemic and possible stabilization measures within EAEU. *Official website of the Eurasian Economic Union*. Available at: <http://www.eurasiancommission.org/ru/covid-19/Documents/1111.pdf>). “It is necessary to take measures generally accepted in the world practice to neutralize attacks of currency speculators who use fluctuations of oil prices to manipulate the ruble exchange rate. In order to limit the export of capital abroad, it is possible to introduce a tax on non-trading currency exchange operations, the fees from which can be used for general purposes” – excerpt from the press release.

However, the academician’s proposals, as Interfax notes, “upset the Central Bank so much that it made **an unusual request for such discussions**” (source: The Central Bank asked officials to restrain Glazyev’s information activity during the pandemic. *Interfax*, dated April 22, 2020. Available at: <https://www.interfax.ru/business/705490>). In fact, according to experts, it was “**a denunciation with a demand to shut the academician’s mouth**” (source: Why did the Central Bank get so excited about Glazyev’s report. *Rabler-Novosti*, April 25, 2020. Available at: <https://news.rambler.ru/other/44080796-pochemu-tsb-tak-vozbudilsya-na-doklad-glazeva/?updated>).

As experts’ note, “The Central Bank’s claims to Glazyev’s “communication policy” look at least strange: he is not an actor, the President, the Prime Minister, the Finance Minister, or the Chairman of the Central Bank. His words cannot be interpreted as an attempt at manipulation. **It is clear to everyone that the academician Glazyev is an opponent of the most primitive monetarist course being pursued. And he asks the Bank of Russia fair questions... And, in response, we hear: make him close his mouth and not ask us**” (source: Ivanov A. Nabiullina demands that Glazyev be gagged. “*Strana i ljudi*” *information blog*, dated April 25, 2020. Available at: <https://strana-rf.ru/blog/43263549514/Nabiullina-trebUyet-zatknut-rot-Glazevu>).

<sup>31</sup> Glazyev S.Yu. Russian economy at the beginning of 2020: Underlying causes of increasing chaos and a set of anti-crisis measures. *Russian Economic Journal*, 2020, no. 2, p. 24.

<sup>32</sup> Skorobogatyi P. Constitutional prologue to the future. *Expert*, July 6–12, 2020, no. 28, p. 18.

<sup>33</sup> Sergeev M. New national projects disavow old national projects. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, dated August 12, 2020. Available at: [https://yandex.ru/turbo/s/ng.ru/economics/2020-08-12/1\\_7935\\_projects.html](https://yandex.ru/turbo/s/ng.ru/economics/2020-08-12/1_7935_projects.html)

<sup>34</sup> Putin V. Meeting of Council for Strategic Development and National Projects, dated July 13, 2020. *Official website of the President of Russia*. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/63635>

<sup>35</sup> Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly, dated March 1, 2018. *Official website of the President of Russia*. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/56957>

in the new Executive Order of the President of the Russian Federation “On the national development goals of the Russian Federation through 2030” (Tab. 6). As noted by Prime Minister M. Mishustin, “setting new goals will require changes in national projects and strategic planning documents”<sup>36</sup>.

**Thus, for more than 10 years, actual facts of public administration practice do not correspond to officially declared goals and objectives.**

**Although many reasons and explanations can be found for “stalling” the implementation of key national development goals (the global financial crisis, economic sanctions, the situation on the world energy market, the pandemic, etc.), they are unlikely to be able to “hold” public dissatisfaction with the lack of social justice for a long time, or, in other words, they are unlikely to prevent a threat to the government legitimacy.**

Table 6. Wording of national development goals in key documents of 2018 and 2020

Wording in 2018* (“For the Government to achieve the following national development goals by 2024:...”)	Target to be reached in 2024	Target to be reached in 2030	Wording in 2020** (“Set the following development goals characterizing achievement of national targets by 2030:...”)
✓ increase life expectancy to 78 years (80 years by 2030)	<b>78 years</b>	<b>78 years</b>	✓ increase life expectancy to 78 years
✓ cut poverty in half	<b>2 times</b>	<b>2 times</b>	✓ reduce the poverty rate by half compared to 2017
✓ ensure the global competitiveness of Russian education, make the Russian Federation one of the world’s top 10 countries in the quality of education	<b>10 countries of the world</b>	<b>10 countries of the world</b>	✓ join the world’s top 10 countries in the quality of education
✓ ensure the presence of the Russian Federation among <b>top five</b> countries of the world that carry out research in areas determined by the priorities of scientific and technological development	<b>5 countries of the world</b>	<b>10 countries of the world</b>	✓ join the world’s <b>top 10</b> countries in the volume of research and development, including through the creation of an effective system of higher education
✓ share of the road network of urban agglomerations that is in a standard state: 85% by 2024	<b>85%</b>	<b>85%</b>	✓ improve the urban environment quality index by at least 1.5 times; ensure that the road network in major metropolitan areas meets statutory requirements by at least 85 percent;
✓ number of employees in small and medium-sized businesses, including individual entrepreneurs: 25 million by 2024	<b>25 mil. people</b>	<b>25 mil. people</b>	✓ increase employment in small and medium-sized enterprises, including individual entrepreneurs and self-employed persons, to 25 million people
✓ share of households with broadband Internet access: 97% by 2024	<b>97%</b>	<b>97%</b>	✓ increase the share of households with broadband internet access to 97 percent
✓ share of socially significant infrastructure objects that can be connected to broadband Internet access: 100% by 2024	<b>100%</b>	<b>95%</b>	✓ increase the share of essential social services available online to 95 percent

\* Source: On national goals and strategic objectives of the Russian Federation through to 2024: Executive Order of the President of the Russian Federation no. 204, dated May 7, 2018. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/43027>  
Passports of national projects on the official website of the RF Government. Available at: <http://government.ru/rugovclassifier/section/2641/>  
\*\* Source: Russia’s national development goals through 2030: Executive Order, dated July 21, 2020. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/63728>

<sup>36</sup> Transcript of M. Mishustin’s report on the work of the Government. *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, dated July 22, 2020. Available at: <https://rg.ru/2020/07/22/otchet-mihaila-mishustina-o-rabote-pravitelstva-stenogramma.html>

Platoshkin: “The first national projects in our country were formed in 2005. Absolutely the same... So what? Everything was there since then: catching up with Portugal in terms of GDP per capita: no. The program-2020, to create 25 million high-paying jobs by 2020: no one has said anything about it for a long time... It has been formulated many times, but nothing has been done yet. And judging by this, if people did not do the same thing before, why should the same people do something now? Are they reformed? Have they completed an internship program? These are the same people”<sup>37</sup>.

“The Russian government believes that it is not necessary to worry about the current state of mind in society, which is rather sluggish and in a sense unattended. **But the authorities make a grave mistake of assuming that these attitudes do not have an alarming dynamic**”<sup>38</sup>.

«Now it is clear that Putin’s new terms are again only a postponement – for an indefinite period. It looks something unbearable even at the very beginning. **Unbearable exactly in the current way:** we are invited to enjoy what we have, because it might, they say, get worse. And to do this, we only need to sacrifice, first of all, the dream of the Russian peace, social justice, any ideals, honesty, health, remnants of humanity (the transition to digitalization), culture, and education – barely everything. The balance of this equation - either suffer as it is, or regret it – steadily shifts toward discontent. **Something similar in a small format happens in Belarus**”<sup>39</sup>.

Indeed, 6 years have passed since Russian sociologists began to record a steady trend of people’s increasing need for change

<sup>37</sup> N.S. Mikhalkov about N.N. Platoshkin, dated June 11, 2020. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gj-YGFozotk>

<sup>38</sup> Kurginyan S. The government is us. *Biznes-online*, dated July 24, 2020. Available at: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/475782>

<sup>39</sup> Dugin A. Russia is in a state of confusion. *Zavtra*, dated August 18, 2020. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/rossiya\\_v\\_sostoyanii\\_konfuzii](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/rossiya_v_sostoyanii_konfuzii)

(2014)<sup>40</sup>, and today this demand forms the basis of protest actions. **This is a complex challenge for the entire system of public administration, since this problem is not solved by the efficiency of individual services alone but shows the need for general transformation in a changing internal environment and in connection with a prevailing mood in society**<sup>41</sup>.

This is quite clearly shown by the situation with the former governor of the Khabarovsk territory – S. Furgal. Mass protests of population in the Khabarovsk Krai (which were either organized by the team of the former governor, or were caused by dissatisfaction with the appointment of the new interim M. Degtyarev) “revealed” a much deeper problem than local corruption.

According to the experts, “**the model of vertical of power in Russia is faced with horizontal young beautiful society**”<sup>42</sup>, that is, the system of public administration, which has been arrayed by the President since 2000 in such a way that all the elements are in strict subordination, and balance of different elite forces is regulated directly by the head of state, conflicts with politically, economically, and morally fragile society, which starts to defend their interests more actively.

<sup>40</sup> For example: *Russian society after the presidential election – 2018: Request for change: Information and analytical summary of the results of the all-Russian sociological research*. Moscow, 2018. 55 p.; Petuhov V.V. Dynamics of social attitudes of Russians and the formation of a request for change. *Socis*, 2018, no. 11, pp. 40–53.

<sup>41</sup> A sad example of recent days is the situation in Belarus, where, after the presidential elections on August 9, 2020, a large-scale protest movement broke out against the extension of the presidential term of the current head of state A. Lukashenko. Mass protests in Belarus show not only that a significant part of people are not satisfied with the situation in the country and the dynamics of their personal financial situation, but also that countries that are unfriendly to Russia continue to use various political technologies to weaken or even destroy the foundations of our statehood.

<sup>42</sup> Remchukov K. The political significance of the Furgal case goes deeper than just protest. *Seldon.news*, dated July 21, 2020. Available at: <https://news.myseldon.com/ru/news/index/234588256>

“It is no secret that the LDPR office in the Khabarovsk Krai has long been outsourced to a group formed during the long-term governorship of Viktor Ishaev (1991–2009), who then served as the presidential envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District for four more years. And now he has been under house arrest for more than a year and a half in a criminal case with a “trifling” amount of 5 million rubles. Furgal and his team have become, in fact, only a new generation of this elite”<sup>43</sup>.

“... most likely, the unexpected consequence of Furgal’s arrest will be: **in the following years, the insistence of regions, people in these regions, and politicians in these regions to determine a person in charge.** And it will be followed by an even more insistent demand that a significant part of taxes that these regions generate be left in regions, so those elected could implement an agenda necessary for this region’s population, who supported the candidate for governor because he proposed this agenda to them, without Moscow’s approval”<sup>44</sup>.

As it is known, any disease is more efficient to prevent than to treat. And if corruption and criminality in the government are considered to be among the most acute diseases of our society, then **the state administration system did not**

**determine the situation with Furgal, but, on the contrary, “missed” it.** Because, first, this is not the first such case in our country<sup>45</sup>; secondly, it is obvious that Furgal’s rise to power was a long, multi-year process that took place within the framework of the system of state administration that was created, and, third, in such cases, it is not about one person but a whole team of people directly or indirectly involved in this criminal system.

At the same time, high-profile cases such as those of S. Furgal, V. Gaiser, A. Khoroshavin and many others should not be misleading, pointing out that all the troubles in Russia are concentrated only around stolen governors. **This is only the “tip of the iceberg”, which is actually based on the actions of liberal elites who exist on all (including the highest) levels of government, who pursue mainly their own (rather than national) interests and do not have the sovereign status of the Russian economy in their priorities.**

Famous latest cases: the case of the former minister of economic development of Russia A. Ulyukayev (sentenced to 8 years in

<sup>43</sup> Remchukov K. The political significance of the Furgal case goes deeper than just protest. *Seldon.news*, dated July 21, 2020. Available at: <https://news.myseldon.com/ru/news/index/234588256>

<sup>44</sup> Germanenko D., Rodin I. Domestic policy in the regime of special operations. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, dated July 12, 2020. Available at: [https://yandex.ru/turbo/s/ng.ru/politics/2020-07-12/1\\_7908\\_politics.html](https://yandex.ru/turbo/s/ng.ru/politics/2020-07-12/1_7908_politics.html)

<sup>45</sup> Here are just some examples of “high-profile” arrests of heads of Russian regions (source: Nikolaeva V. Became the 13th: How many governors were arrested before Furgal. *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, dated July 9, 2020. Available at: <https://www.vologda.kp.ru/daily/27153/4250501/>):

V. Yurchenko – ex-head of the Novosibirsk Oblast (year of arrest – 2014, sentence – 3 years probation);

A. Khoroshavin – ex-head of the Sakhalin Oblast (year of arrest – 2015, sentence – 13 years in a maximum security prison, fine of 500 million rubles);

N. Denin – ex-head of the Bryansk Oblast (year of arrest – 2015, sentence – 4 years of general regime colony);

V. Gaiser – ex-head of the Komi Republic (year of arrest – 2015, sentence – 11 years in a maximum security prison, fine of 160 million rubles);

V. Torlopov – ex-head of the Komi (year of arrest – 2016, sentence – 6.5 years of general regime colony, fine of 500 thousand rubles);

N. Belykh – ex-head of the Kirov Oblast (year of arrest – 2016, sentence – 8 years in a maximum security prison, fine of 48.2 million rubles);

M. Yurevich – ex-head of the Chelyabinsk Oblast (year of charge – 2017, on the international wanted list, case is not closed);

A. Solovyov – ex-head of the Udmurt Republic (year of arrest – 2017, case is not closed);

L. Markelov – ex-head of the Mari El Republic (year of arrest – 2017, case is not closed);

A. Vinnikov – ex-head of the Jewish AO (year of arrest – 2019, sentence – 4 years of probation);

P. Konkov – ex-head of the Ivanovo Oblast (year of arrest – 2019, case is not closed).

“Bureaucratic body, as well as the political and business elite, all trained according to the notes of the “Washington consensus”, can not be transferred overnight to the rails of a different, alien ideology”<sup>46</sup>.

maximum security penal colony in 2017 for especially large bribe reception – 2 million dollars) and even more egregious case – the case of the former RF minister for open government M. Abyzov, who organized a criminal community which carried out illegal money manipulations equal to billions of rubles for several years<sup>47</sup>.

**It could be seen as the main reason for the “stalling” of national projects, May decrees, and many election promises of the President, the implementation of which was and remains the basis of the government power legitimacy in the country. Long-term strategic objectives of public administration related to the implementation of national interests remain in the hands of liberal officials who still hold key positions in the public administration system.**

It is no accident that experts say that **“in fact, Russian monetary policy is conducted in the interests of financial speculators.** Monetary authorities guarantee super profits and encourage the flow of money from the real sector to the financial sector and further abroad. At the same time, the main part (from 60 to 90%) of turnover in the Russian currency and financial market is made by American hedge funds and its affiliates. After the Bank of

<sup>46</sup> Skorobogatyi P. Constitutional prologue to the future. *Expert*, July 6–12, 2020, no. 28, p. 18.

<sup>47</sup> From April 2011 to November 2014, Abyzov, who is the beneficial owner of a number of offshore commercial organizations, created and headed a criminal community. In total, 15 persons became Abyzov’s accomplices. Four defendants are on the international wanted list. The total value of the seized property is worth more than 32 billion rubles (source: ICR completed investigation on case of Abyzov’s criminal association. *Interfax*, August 13, 2020. Available at: <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/721657>).

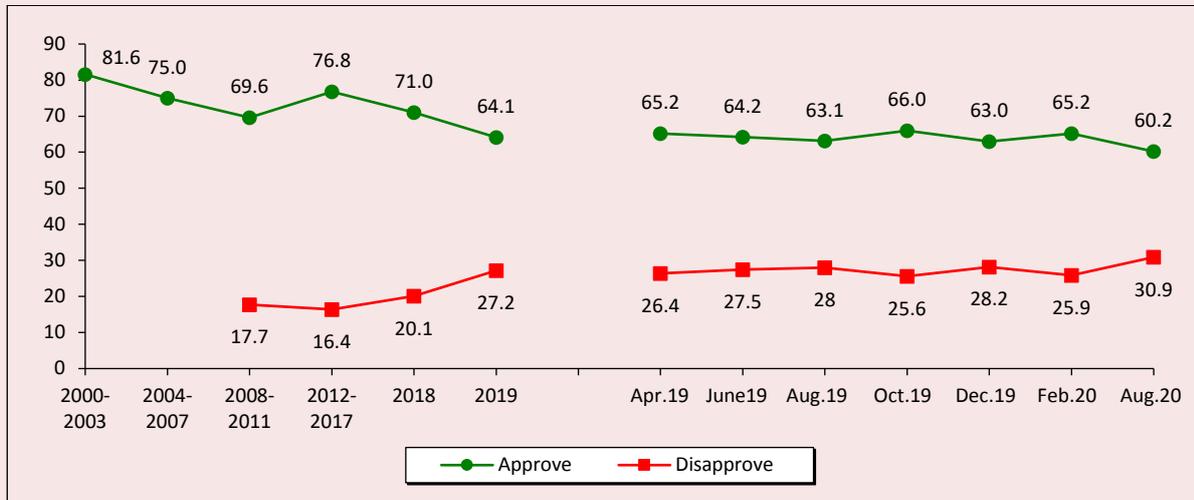
Russia let the ruble exchange rate float freely, they manipulate it, swinging it in order to extract excess profits due to the depreciation of ruble income and savings of Russian individuals and legal entities... **Today, monetary authorities make the same mistakes, the consequences of which have a negative impact on the economy which have been stagnant for 5 years**”<sup>48</sup>.

And the dynamics of public opinion, as one of the main criteria for the efficiency of the public administration system, “does not take long”, and it sensitively reacts to the lack of promises fulfilled by the authorities through the reduction of personal support to a person who is at its center – the head of state. According to the results of regional and all-Russian sociological studies, we may observe a slow but fairly stable growth in a number of Russians who negatively respond to the President’s activities, not only in the current dynamics (which may partly be caused by the socio-economic and psychological consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic) but also in the annual retrospect. Thus, in comparison with the third presidential term (2012–2017), the level of V. Putin’s approval decreased from 77 to 63–64% across the whole country by 2019–2020 (*Fig. 2*). According to regional studies – from 63 to 53–56% (*Fig. 3*).

**Thus, long-term unresolved issues related to the increase of the level and quality of life which would be noticeable by wider population, as well as more equitable distribution of national wealth (Tab. 7), has a negative impact on the dynamics of public opinion regarding the efficiency of the system of public administration and the President’s activities.**

<sup>48</sup> Glazyev S.Yu. Russian economy at the beginning of 2020: Underlying causes of increasing chaos and a set of anti-crisis measures. *Russian Economic Journal*, 2020, no. 2, p. 24.

Figure 2. In general, do you approve or disapprove of the activities of the President of the Russian Federation? (in % from a number of respondents; VCIOM data for Russia)\*

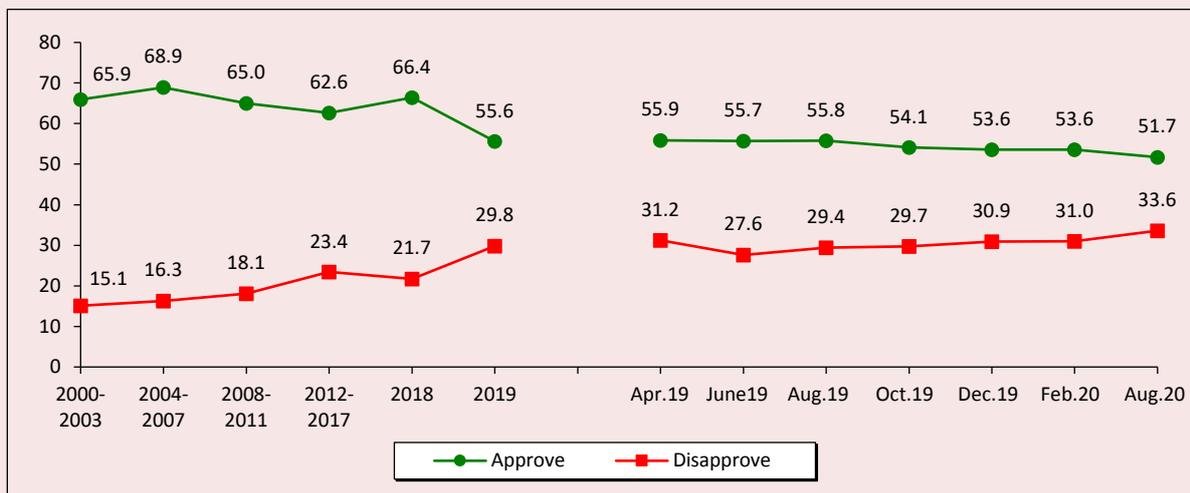


\* There is no data on the level of disapproval of the President’s activities for 2000–2007.

According to VCIOM, in 2012–2017, the level of approval of the President’s activities (V. Putin’s 3rd presidential term) was 77%. In 2018, it decreased by 6 p.p. (to 71%), in 2019 – by 7 p.p. (to 64%). According to latest data for August 2020, it decreased by 4 p.p. and is equal to 60%.

In general, in comparison with an average approval level of the President’s activities for 2012–2017, in August 2020, it decreased by 17 p.p. (from 77 to 60%).

Figure 3. Do you generally approve or disapprove activities of the Russian President? (in % from a number of respondents, data of FSBIS VolRC RAS in the Vologda Oblast)



According to data of the Vologda Research Center (FSBIS VolRC RAS), the average share of residents of the Vologda Oblast who approve of the President’s activities in 2012–2017 was 63%. By 2018, it increased slightly (by 3 p.p., to 66%), but in 2019 it decreased by 10 p.p. (from 66 to 56%), and, by August, it decreased by another 4 p.p. (from 56 to 52%).

In general, in comparison with an average approval level of the President’s activities for 2012–2017, in August 2020, it decreased by 11 p.p. (from 63 to 52%).

Table 7. Distribution of total monetary income and characteristics of differentiation of population's monetary income, %

20% groups of Russia's population	2000–2004	2005–2008	2009–2012	2013–2018	2019
First (with the lowest income)	5.6	5.2	5.2	5.3	5.3
Second	10.3	9.9	9.8	10.0	10.1
Third	15.3	14.9	14.9	15.0	15.1
Fourth	22.6	22.6	22.5	22.6	22.6
Fifth (with the highest income)	46.2	47.4	47.6	47.1	46.9

Source: Distribution of income of population. *Federal State Statistics Service*. Available at: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/storage/mediabank/urov\\_31g.doc](https://rosstat.gov.ru/storage/mediabank/urov_31g.doc)

It is also evidenced by the fact that, in most regions of the Russian Federation (47 out of 86), the proportion of people who voted against amendments to the Constitution on July 1, 2020 was above national average numbers (*Insert 5*).

The all-Russian vote on amendments to the Constitution may, in some sense, be considered a referendum on the vote of confidence for the President. After all, it was V. Putin who launched this initiative, stimulated public discussions, created expert groups, and held meetings with their representatives. In addition, amendment on a potential possibility of extending the presidential term of the current head of the state was among the changes to the Main Law as well, and Russians voted, among other things, for it, too.

Based on this, it is logical to compare the results of the all-Russian vote, held on July 1, 2020, with the previous presidential election, held on March 13, 2018. Despite the increase of votes for adopting amendments to the Constitution in the whole country per 1.3 million people (+2.29%), in the regional centers and large industrial towns of 47 regions, where the share of votes against amendments was higher than the national average, a number of votes for amendments to the Main Law was **significantly less than a number of people who**

**voted for V. Putin in the presidential elections of 2018 (by nearly 33%, or 2.6 million people). In major cities of the Northwestern Federal District – less by 50% (294 thousand people), the Siberian Federal District – by 70% (768 thousand people; *Tab. 8*).**

It means that residents of these territories over the past two years (“may be the most nondescript years in all of Vladimir Putin’s terms”<sup>49</sup>) have become more critical of how efficiently the government’s promises are being fulfilled. **They supported the amendments to the Constitution, especially its social and patriotic component, but they are not sure that the efficient implementation of the government’s new social obligations is possible with elites who do not put social (i.e. public) interests in priority.**

In oblast capitals of 36, out of 47, analyzed entities of the Russian Federation, the share of those who voted against amendments to the Constitution was higher than the average number for the region. Given that it is in oblast centers where administrative resources are most often concentrated, we may assume that such a vote, first, is a reaction of people to unfulfilled promises for breakthrough development in the level and quality of life, and it indicates their pessimistic attitude about the prospects for fulfilling these promises in the future, and, second, some kind of assessment of regional elites; conditions that they created as a relation to the norms of the Constitution. For example, in Moscow, the share of voters who voted against amendments to the Main Law on July 1 was 34% (in the Moscow Oblast – 20%), in Khabarovsk – 39% (in the Khabarovsk Krai – 37%), in Irkutsk – 41% (in the Irkutsk Oblast – 35%), and so on (*Insert 5*).

<sup>49</sup> Skorobogatyi P. Constitutional prologue to the future. *Expert*, July 6–12, 2020, no. 28, p. 18.

Table 8. Increase/decrease of a number of votes for amendments to the Constitution on July 1, 2020, compared to a number of votes for V. Putin in the Russian Presidential election on March 18, 2018

Territory*	For amendments to the Constitution (all-Russian vote, July 1, 2020)	For V.V. Putin (Presidential election, March 18, 2018)	Deviation**	
			abs.	%
<b>Russia</b>	<b>57747288</b>	<b>56426399</b>	<b>+1320889</b>	<b>+2,29</b>
Northwestern Fed. Distr.	5047418	4974294	+73124	+1,45
8 regions	1756603	2277051	-520448	-29,63
9 towns	585868	879929	-294061	-50,19
Far Eastern Fed. District	2516716	2632834	-116118	-4,61
9 regions	1 620 659	2 020 741	-400 082	-24,69
9 towns	602764	752946	-150182	-24,92
Siberian Fed. District	5450713	6171330	-720617	-13,22
8 regions	3 752 864	4 597 616	-844 752	-22,51
9 towns	1094324	1862818	-768494	-70,23
Ural Fed. District	4099934	4714255	-614321	-14,98
4 regions	3 086 407	3 750 461	-664 054	-21,52
5 towns	961940	1201400	-239460	-24,89
Central Fed. District	14408730	14033866	+374864	+2,60
11 regions	9623436	9782037	-158601	-1,62
9 towns	902925	1332911	-429986	-32,26
Privolzhsky Fed. District	13016049	12270602	+745447	+5,73
7 regions	3 492 484	4 042 900	-550 416	-15,76
7 towns	1033091	1440654	-407563	-39,45
<b>TOTAL in all districts (8)</b>	<b>57643148</b>	<b>56015525</b>	<b>1627623</b>	<b>+2.82</b>
<b>in all regions (47)</b>	<b>23332453</b>	<b>26470806</b>	<b>-3138353</b>	<b>-11.86</b>
<b>in all towns (49)</b>	<b>5180912</b>	<b>7470658</b>	<b>-2289746</b>	<b>-30.65</b>

\* Regions where the percentage of votes cast against constitutional amendments was higher than the national average (21.27%); its regional centers; and some major industrial towns (all of them are shown in insert 5).  
\*\* The difference between the share of votes for amendments to the Constitution on July 1, 2020 and the share of votes for the President of the Russian Federation on March 18, 2018.

“Critics of the Constitution state that we must recognize not only the great support for Putin and the Constitution but also a significant number of those who said “no”. There were a lot of them in the industrial regions of Central and Northern Russia – about 40%. **Given the huge turnout, we must admit that this is a deliberate step by citizens who considered it their duty to say “no”. And this is serious...** People who said “no” did not say this to Russia’s sovereignty, national science, education, or industry. **They expressed doubts that the current elite, which so easily lived in an integration model with the ungracious West and, in general, did not care about inequality, poverty, and economic helplessness of the country, is not able to build and even start thinking about way of building a strong sovereign Russia”<sup>50</sup>.**

**Based on these facts, it is difficult not to agree with the opinion of experts that “the consolidation of society around amendments to the Constitution did not work out. The result is high, but there is no monolithic support”<sup>51</sup>. The vote of confidence, once again given to the current government by society (as well as the constitutional majority of United Russia in the 2016 State Duma elections, or the record support for V. Putin during the 2018 presidential elections), is not infinite; it must be justified – even despite any force majeure circumstances. Otherwise, it may well be the last one<sup>52</sup>.**

<sup>50</sup> It is only the beginning. *Expert*, July 6–12, 2020, no. 28, p. 11.

<sup>51</sup> Skorobogatyi P. Constitutional prologue to the future. *Expert*, July 6–12, 2020, no. 28, p. 18.

<sup>52</sup> Khazin M. It is necessary to change the financial and economic team at any cost. *Zavtra*, dated July 19, 2020. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/lyuboj\\_tcenj\\_nuzhno\\_menyat\\_finansovo-ekonomicheskuyu\\_komandu](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/lyuboj_tcenj_nuzhno_menyat_finansovo-ekonomicheskuyu_komandu)

## Insert 5 (A)

Results of the all-Russian vote on amendments to the Constitution in regions where the share of votes cast "against" is higher than the national average number\*, % of turnout

Territory	Vote on amendments to the Constitution (July 1, 2020)						RF Presidential election (March 18, 2018)					
	turnout		for		against		turnout		for V.V. Putin		%	
	abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%		
<b>RUSSIA</b>	<b>7421555</b>	<b>67.97</b>	<b>57747288</b>	<b>77.92</b>	<b>15761978</b>	<b>21.27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73624100</b>	<b>67.54</b>	<b>56426399</b>	<b>76.64</b>	
NORTHWESTERN FEDERAL DISTRICT	6789619	63.41	5047418	68.92	1675646	30.19	+41.94	6634513	63.28	4974294	75.08	
Nenets AO	21879	58.36	9567	43.78	12074	55.25	+159.76	25109	63.62	17863	71.14	
Murmansk Obl.	261887	45.15	163735	62.54	95095	36.33	+70.80	398049	66.36	303796	76.32	
Komi Republic	340092	51.82	221113	65.08	115322	33.94	+59.57	407116	60.40	290716	71.41	
Arkhangelsk Obl.	452371	50.58	297432	65.78	150935	33.38	+56.93	541192	59.20	407190	75.24	
Karelia Republic	239077	46.07	168389	70.46	68304	28.58	+34.37	297227	57.20	216899	72.97	
Vologda Obl.	546230	58.72	388615	71.16	152983	28.01	+31.69	626993	66.20	453576	72.34	
Novgorod Obl.	242208	49.34	172997	71.44	66616	27.51	+29.34	288184	57.30	209286	72.62	
Kaliningrad Obl.	465476	56.59	334755	72.15	125341	27.02	+27.03	495245	62.18	377725	76.27	
FAR EASTERN FEDERAL DISTRICT	3529842	58.20	2516716	70.27	970678	28.57	+34.32	3885955	64.35	2632834	67.78	
Republic of Sakha	350707	55.56	204435	58.34	142464	40.65	+91.11	457065	71.00	294166	64.36	
Kamchatka Krai	106091	44.08	65485	61.76	39406	37.16	+74.71	161930	67.74	112401	69.41	
Khabarovsk Krai	435944	44.24	271421	62.28	159662	36.64	+72.26	648550	64.23	426385	65.74	
Magadan Obl.	54911	55.67	34035	62.03	20090	36.62	+72.17	73800	71.91	53341	72.28	
Amur Obl.	367667	59.17	103726	70.42	258548	28.25	+32.82	394681	62.15	264493	67.01	
Republic of Buryatia	458277	64.60	329208	71.95	121205	26.49	+24.54	453654	75.20	334381	73.71	
Zabaykalsky Krai	471093	60.08	352670	74.92	114010	24.22	+13.87	458138	57.99	329911	72.01	
Sakhalin Obl.	254486	67.99	189466	74.84	60853	24.04	+13.02	229139	61.22	153289	66.90	
Jewish AO	90853	72.11	70213	77.30	19430	21.39	+0.56	77627	60.25	52374	67.47	
SIBERIAN FEDERAL DISTRICT	7512507	58.17	5450713	72.06	1982563	27.00	+26.94	8380774	64.54	6171330	73.58	
Omsk Obl.	985663	64.98	610278	62.09	360348	36.66	+72.36	928746	60.49	624934	67.29	
Irkutsk Obl.	824360	44.18	529770	64.28	287131	34.84	+63.80	1045720	55.70	763810	73.06	
Tomsk Obl.	344033	44.57	223046	64.86	117232	34.09	+60.27	461270	59.27	328296	71.17	
Altai Republic	83571	51.46	55291	66.16	27433	32.83	+54.35	102919	64.77	72674	70.61	
Novosibirsk Obl.	1034355	47.79	698857	67.58	323674	31.30	+47.16	1304738	60.41	928858	71.04	
Republic of Khakassia	203523	51.48	141381	69.52	59758	29.38	+38.13	245366	65.87	169615	69.13	
Krasnoyarsk Krai	1211774	58.99	848638	70.10	350687	28.97	+36.20	1267615	60.34	941151	74.25	
Altai Krai	897951	49.49	645603	71.91	241132	26.86	+26.28	1191630	65.40	770278	64.64	

Territory	Vote on amendments to the Constitution (July 1, 2020)						RF Presidential election (March 18, 2018)			
	turnout		for		against		turnout		for V.V. Putin	
	abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%
URAL FEDERAL DISTRICT	5704587	61.61	4099934	74.81	1553931	24.40	1748424	66.41	4714255	75.56
Sverdlovsk Obl.	1715988	51.55	1 132 182	65.99	565 242	32.94	2085667	62.35	1555532	74.58
Khanty-Mansi AO	707553	61.72	487 750	69.00	212 434	30.05	788075	69.72	600404	76.19
Chelyabinsk Obl.	1711446	65.88	1 190 097	69.54	505 597	29.55	1748424	66.41	1275822	72.97
Kurgan Obl.	397258	57.83	276 378	69.58	117 294	29.53	434836	61.74	318703	73.29
CENTRAL FEDERAL DISTRICT	19158072	65.88	14408730	76.17	4550592	22.95	18687906	64.37	14033866	75.16
Moscow	7861697	55.93	2 855 547	65.29	1 485 963	33.98	4521355	59.94	3199214	70.76
<i>Moscow Obl.</i>	4423963	76.18	3488197	78.85	888794	20.09	3707556	63.60	2758911	74.41
Kostroma Obl.	266283	50.97	180 846	67.92	83 044	31.19	322346	60.51	221449	68.70
Yaroslavl Obl.	548819	55.85	374 053	68.29	168 930	30.84	658208	64.12	472666	71.81
Kaluga Obl.	483705	61.05	338 748	70.17	140 003	28.99	543898	68.17	414027	76.12
Vladimir Obl.	5889661	53.26	419 606	71.18	164 025	27.82	741964	65.01	546042	73.59
Tver Obl.	571390	54.94	410 421	71.87	155 409	27.21	616279	57.58	459198	74.51
Smolensk Obl.	412772	54.33	296 792	71.97	111 247	26.98	473596	61.27	347859	73.45
Kursk Obl.	527068	57.83	389 300	73.92	133 471	25.32	595354	64.48	482257	81.00
Ivanovo Obl.	512070	64.21	390 256	76.23	117 846	23.02	474184	58.55	338335	71.35
<i>Lipetsk Obl.</i>	670637	66.37	479670	78.56	124509	20.39	670716	72.16	542079	80.82
PRIVOLZHSKY FEDERAL DISTRICT	16285831	71.75	13016049	77.72	3126339	21.47	15868095	69.65	12270602	77.53
Udmurt Republic	661721	56.25	455 908	68.92	199 121	30.10	749943	63.27	571623	76.22
Perm Krai	1040935	52.49	734 802	70.75	293 643	28.27	1318884	66.51	993076	75.30
Kirov Obl.	579696	55.61	409 702	70.89	163 247	28.25	661861	62.72	465948	70.40
Ulyanovsk Obl.	533103	54.24	379 056	71.16	148 346	27.85	643360	64.33	477654	74.24
Chuvash Republic	588237	64.11	426 779	72.57	154 351	26.25	697527	76.22	539036	77.28
Orenburg Obl.	1135011	73.55	834 406	73.60	286 720	25.29	1003460	66.09	731838	72.93
Mari El Republic	332430	61.86	251 831	75.76	77 884	23.43	356511	66.43	263725	73.97
SOUTHERN FEDERAL DISTRICT	10013117	80.96	8654101	85.75	1289863	13.54	8590423	70.74	7007737	81.62
NORTH CAUCASIAN FEDERAL DISTRICT	5068306	85.47	4449487	87.52	564879	11.64	4850814	83.94	4210607	86.86

\* The table shows all entities of the Russian Federation where the percentage of votes cast against amendments to the Constitution was higher than the national average (21.27%).

Ranked by the percentage of votes cast "against", average for federal districts. Within federal districts – by the percentage of votes cast "against", in oblasts. Information in italics is provided for reference.

\*\* Difference between the percentage of votes cast "against" in the Okrug, Oblast, and the average number for the Russian Federation (21.27%), expressed as % of the average for the RF.

Source: Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation data (<http://www.cikrf.ru/>); own calculation according to CEC RF data.

## Insert 5 (B)

Results of the all-Russian vote on amendments to the Constitution in centers of regions where the percentage of votes cast "against" is higher than the national average\*, % of turnout

Territory	Vote on amendments to the Constitution (July 1, 2020)				Deviation (%)** of the share of votes "against" in the Okrug, Oblast from the average number in the RF (21.27%)	RF Presidential election (March 18, 2018)					
	turnout		for			against		turnout		for V.V. Putin	
	abs.	%	abs.	%		abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%
<b>RUSSIA</b>	<b>74215555</b>	<b>67.97</b>	<b>5747288</b>	<b>77.92</b>	<b>15761978</b>	<b>21.27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73624100</b>	<b>67.54</b>	<b>56426399</b>	<b>76.64</b>
NORTHWESTERN FEDERAL DISTRICT	6789619	63.41	5047418	68.92	1675646	30.19	+41.94	6634513	63.28	4974294	75.08
Naryan-Mar	9640	56.13	3583	37.13	5960	61.83	+190.69	10495	59.98	7477	71.24
Syktvykar	85793	57.84	50877	59.30	33811	39.41	+85.28	91656	61.33	63097	68.84
Arkhangelsk	119726	45.91	75470	63.04	43140	36.03	+69.39	154698	56.97	113964	73.67
Murmansk	93230	40.57	59074	63.36	33310	35.73	+67.98	154220	64.84	118573	76.89
Petrozavodsk	90694	43.81	59232	65.31	30648	33.79	+58.86	126708	60.31	90310	71.27
Veliky Novgorod	73241	41.73	47967	65.49	24509	33.46	+57.31	103741	58.19	72314	69.71
Kaliningrad	167868	40.93	110773	65.99	54747	32.61	+53.31	231627	58.61	171805	74.17
Vologda	143099	57.19	100809	70.45	41214	28.80	+35.40	165684	66.41	115236	69.55
Cherepovets	116984	48.10	78083	66.75	38029	32.57	+52.84	173602	69.30	127153	73.24
FAR EASTERN FEDERAL DISTRICT	3529842	58.20	2516716	70.27	970678	28.57	+34.32	3885955	64.35	2632834	67.78
Yakutsk	93561	49.41	47703	50.99	44754	47.83	+124.87	142244	70.34	85732	60.27
Magadan	31649	46.46	18834	59.51	12427	39.27	+84.63	47484	68.36	34124	71.86
Khabarovsk	191174	43.59	115673	60.51	73735	38.57	+81.34	290651	64.32	192140	66.11
Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy	47135	35.97	29539	62.67	17219	36.53	+71.74	84136	63.58	57450	68.28
Ulan-Ude	176511	58.70	113508	64.31	58252	33.00	+55.15	183368	76.53	129065	70.39
Blagoveshchensk	93459	55.79	65842	70.45	26705	28.57	+34.32	102507	59.35	69301	67.61
Birobidzhan	37373	65.74	27087	72.48	9727	26.03	+22.38	34509	59.93	22906	66.38
Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk	102722	73.38	74409	72.44	26478	25.78	+21.20	83644	61.24	55060	65.83
Chita	145829	59.90	110169	75.55	33751	23.14	+8.79	150385	60.78	107168	71.26
SIBERIAN FEDERAL DISTRICT	7512507	58.17	5450713	72.06	1982563	27.00	+26.94	8380774	64.54	6171330	73.58
Irkutsk	179303	38.88	105292	58.72	72734	40.56	+90.69	270021	57.20	193813	71.78
Omsk	59158	70.43	36326	61.41	22158	37.46	+76.12	524929	57.93	341495	65.06
Tomsk	149307	39.64	92385	61.88	55343	37.07	+74.28	222124	57.84	155189	69.87
Novosibirsk	423886	35.17	264068	62.30	156482	36.92	+73.58	705527	58.59	499141	70.75
Gorno-Altaysk	18440	41.68	11578	62.79	6690	36.28	+70.57	27837	62.09	18110	65.06
Abakan	51503	39.44	32831	63.75	18272	35.48	+66.81	77884	61.16	52830	67.83
Krasnoyarsk	464465	62.27	302612	65.15	127148	27.38	+28.73	431323	58.09	323312	74.96
Novosibirsk	87235	79.71	72209	82.78	14156	16.23	-23.70	78052	67.13	59172	75.81
Barnaul	247589	46.53	177023	71.50	66652	26.92	+26.56	342211	64.28	219756	64.22

Territory	Vote on amendments to the Constitution (July 1, 2020)						RF Presidential election (March 18, 2018)					
	turnout		for		against		turnout		for V.V. Putin		%	
	abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%		
URAL FEDERAL DISTRICT	5704587	61.61	4099934	74.81	1553931	24.40	+14.72	1748424	66.41	4714255	75.56	
Yekaterinburg	499808	45.02	315951	63.21	179632	35.94	+68.97	667461	60.51	493257	73.90	
Kurgan	121234	46.44	81054	66.86	38873	32.06	+50.73	152170	57.19	108743	71.46	
Chelyabinsk	567560	65.97	402896	70.99	159386	28.08	+32.02	612728	70.17	407677	66.53	
Magnitogorsk	185924	59.64	118860	63.93	65246	35.09	+64.97	218836	70.28	155139	70.89	
Khanty-Mansiysk	47253	91.63	43179	91.38	3884	8.22	-61.35	44196	80.04	36584	82.78	
CENTRAL FEDERAL DISTRICT	19158072	65.88	14408730	76.17	4550592	22.95	+7.90	18687906	64.37	14033866	75.16	
Lipetsk	149898	44.19	96981	64.70	51433	34.31	+61.31	257064	62.94	189357	73.66	
Yaroslavl	221596	47.54	143985	64.98	74512	33.63	+58.11	301071	63.33	213687	70.98	
Tver	144480	44.16	95355	66.00	47754	33.05	+55.38	196125	58.89	144310	73.58	
Kostroma	40184	40.73	26673	66.38	13185	32.81	+54.25	133449	60.26	94644	70.92	
Smolensk	128963	48.96	87224	67.63	40410	31.33	+47.30	166347	62.49	120411	72.39	
Kaluga	141838	48.65	97606	68.82	42776	30.16	+41.80	191555	64.63	144473	75.42	
Kursk	163423	46.95	113363	69.37	48773	29.84	+40.29	209698	59.72	164948	78.66	
Vladimir	158490	57.84	117847	74.36	39209	24.74	+16.31	183164	65.76	131985	72.06	
Ivanovo	202347	64.85	123891	61.23	47024	23.24	+9.26	180154	57.21	129096	71.66	
PRIVOLZHISKY FEDERAL DISTRICT	16285831	71.75	13016049	77.72	3126339	21.47	+0.94	15868095	69.65	12270602	77.53	
Ulyanovsk	200830	40.03	128476	63.97	69963	34.84	+63.80	302507	59.23	218414	72.20	
Cheboksary	175431	47.41	112675	64.23	60899	34.71	+63.19	259231	67.72	191454	73.85	
Izhevsk	226684	45.81	146034	64.42	78522	34.64	+62.86	300004	60.44	224497	74.83	
Yoshkar-Ola	96014	45.99	62778	65.38	32301	33.64	+58.16	133282	63.38	96365	72.30	
Kirov	186650	44.42	121688	65.20	62295	33.38	+56.93	250155	59.44	174508	69.76	
Perm	312642	47.35	214198	68.51	95121	30.42	+43.02	441367	64.08	328367	74.40	
Orenburg	324985	76.77	247242	76.08	73915	22.74	+6.91	278241	69.93	207049	74.41	
SOUTHERN FEDERAL DISTRICT	10013117	80.96	8654101	85.75	1289863	13.54	-36.34	8590423	70.74	7007737	81.62	
NORTH CAUCASIAN FEDERAL DISTRICT	5068306	85.47	4449487	87.52	564879	11.64	-45.28	4850814	83.94	4210607	86.86	
Balkonur	6886	50.11	4288	62.27	2548	37.00	+73.95	9659	66.27	7568	78.35	

\* The table shows all entities of the Russian Federation where the percentage of votes cast against amendments to the Constitution was higher than the national average (21.27%).

Ranked by the percentage of votes cast "against", average for federal districts. Within federal districts – by the percentage of votes cast "against", in oblast centers. Information in italics is provided for reference.

\*\* Difference between the percentage of votes cast "against" in the Okrug, Oblast, and the average number for the Russian Federation (21.27%), expressed as % of the average for the RF.

Source: Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation data (<http://www.cikrf.ru/>); own calculation according to CEC RF data.

“Even minor events, managerial and political mistakes may cause a sharp outburst of population’s dissatisfaction, not political, but socio-economic... There is no strong demand for protests, but there is a weariness of a splinter positive agenda, distrust in the institutions of power, and disbelief in its efficiency. Now loyalists and opponents of the President wait for changes, for which Putin has already received a strong mandate twice over the last two years. What will they be like?”<sup>53</sup>

Thus, despite rather tense economic situation in the world (mostly due to the pandemic), **the main challenge for the President and his system of public administration is now “inside” the country. Failure to comply with constitutional obligations and the lack of tangible progress in solving vital problems for population threatens the legitimacy of the government and the existence of the state itself. Therefore, in the coming months, the Russian state and V.V. Putin personally will face no less and, perhaps, even more serious tests than ones during the acute phase of the coronavirus infection spread.**

**The persistence of such problems as the non-functioning strategic planning system, the amorphous nature of officials’ personal responsibility, continuing practice of “delaying” the implementation of national projects, economic “reins” of the country in the hands of liberal elites of the Russian Government – all this makes the prospects for Russia’s socio-economic development extremely vague, confirming experts’ forecasts, to which we addressed back in 2017<sup>54</sup>: Russia is expected to have “a scenario of the liberal model prolongation, a scenario of balancing on the threshold of sustainable development...”<sup>55</sup>.**

On July 1, 2020, by supporting the amendments to the Constitution, Russian society, though with difficulty, issued another vote of confidence for the government and the President of the Russian Federation personally in order to further build the model of a nationally oriented state that he began to create back in 1999, which is based on the “Russian idea”, “strong state” and “efficient economy”<sup>56</sup>. Now the task of the

**From the expert opinion of the RF Accounting Chamber (Feb. 2020): “The system of strategic planning for activities of Federal Executive bodies is currently unbalanced and inefficient, insufficiently regulated and methodically provided, with a low level of control and executive discipline. In this state, it does not contribute to the achievement of national goals and requires improvement.**

In strategic planning, the problems of legislative regulation, methodological support, organization of control, openness, and availability of information are identified. The analysis showed that the normative legal acts, regulating this sphere, do not form a complete system of strategic planning. They are not coordinated with each other and **are not updated in accordance with documents defining national goals and strategic objectives of the country’s socio-economic development. As the result, none of the approved activity plans of Federal Executive bodies for 2019–2024 meet the established requirements.** Only 26% of state and subprograms’ programs indicators, for which they are responsible, are included in the activity plans of federal executive bodies. Out of indicators of national and federal projects, 55% are taken into account in the plans”<sup>57</sup>.

<sup>53</sup> Skorobogatyi P. Constitutional prologue to the future. *Expert*, July 6–12, 2020, no. 28, p. 18.

<sup>54</sup> Ilyin V.A. Significance of the thesis “Cadres decide everything” as applied to modern Russia. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 2017, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 9–31.

<sup>55</sup> Sulakshin S.S., Bagdasaryan V.Je., et al. *Russia is Waiting for a Revolution? Questions of Transition to the Post-Liberal Model of Russia (Algorithm and Scenarios)*. Moscow: Nauka i politika, 2016. Pp. 669–670.

<sup>56</sup> Putin V.V. Russia at the turn of the Millennium. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, dated December 30, 1999. Available at: [https://www.ng.ru/politics/1999-12-30/4\\_millennium.html](https://www.ng.ru/politics/1999-12-30/4_millennium.html)

<sup>57</sup> *Bulletin of the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation: Governance 2020*. No. 1 (266). P. 6.

“I am convinced that the achievement of necessary growth dynamics is not only an economic problem. This is also a political problem and, I am not afraid to use this word, in a certain sense, an ideological one. **More precisely, it is ideological, spiritual, and moral. And the last aspect at the present stage seems to me particularly significant from the point of view of the Russian society consolidation**”<sup>58</sup>.

**government administration system is to make sure that the most pessimistic forecasts of the expert community turn out to be wrong. The vote of confidence, issued by society, must be fully justified by the President, otherwise it may become the last, and not only for him.**

**Personal responsibility for resolving key issues of national security, which V. Putin took over himself on December 31, 2015<sup>59</sup>, does not allow him to stare blankly at the ruling elite continuing to implement the course of national development, which is profitable for them**

**personally, when prospects for the Russian economy, level, quality of life, and social stability in the country remain uncertain.**

\* \* \*

It seems that expectations of the majority of Russians were formulated in a concentrated form by S. Konovalov in “*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*” no. 170, dated August 12, 2020: **“We need our own “new course”, a new direction of movement, we need an institutional understanding of the new reality, we need to be ready for new challenges, we need to be ready to confront “black swans”... The “new course” is not only about tripling the economy, increasing the well-being of citizens, or fighting corruption. It is about the creation of a unified coordinate system, if you want – about a national idea that will change the idea of Russia in the world, but, most importantly, change the idea of citizens about their own country”**<sup>60</sup>.

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<sup>58</sup> Putin V.V. Russia at the turn of the Millennium. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, dated December 30, 1999. Available at: [https://www.ng.ru/politics/1999-12-30/4\\_millennium.html](https://www.ng.ru/politics/1999-12-30/4_millennium.html)

<sup>59</sup> “Implementation of the government policy of the Russian Federation in the sphere of national security is carried out through coordinated actions of all elements of the system of ensuring it **under the leadership of the President of the Russian Federation** and with the coordinating role of the Security Council of the Russian Federation” (source: On Russia’s National Security Strategy: Executive Order of the President of the Russian Federation no. 683, dated December 31, 2015. *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*. Available at: <http://www.rg.ru/2015/12/31/nac-bezopasnost-site-dok.html>).

<sup>60</sup> Konovalov S. New constitution is there, and there is no new development course yet. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, August 12, 2020. Available at: [https://yandex.ru/turbo/s/ng.ru/economics/2020-08-12/4\\_7935\\_12082020.html](https://yandex.ru/turbo/s/ng.ru/economics/2020-08-12/4_7935_12082020.html)

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