

EDITORIAL

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The Special Military Operation Reveals New Features of Civil Society



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Abstract. Eight months have passed since the RF President announced the launch of a special military operation on the territory of Ukraine (February 24, 2022); thus, currently Russia is facing a global political situation that has become more turbulent. Difficulties on the front line, frequent terrorist attacks, military aid to the Kiev regime from NATO countries – all this urged the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the RF Armed Forces to make tough but necessary decisions that could not but affect the majority of Russian society. The paper analyzes key events related to the special military operation, as well as the decisions promptly taken by the President in accordance with the requirements of the time and the situation on the front line. We focus on some of the President’s decisions, such as the announcement of partial military mobilization (September 21, 2022); amendments to the RF Criminal Code aimed to strengthen discipline in the army and society during martial law and wartime (September 24, 2022); accession of new territories to Russia – the Donetsk People’s Republic, the Lugansk People’s Republic, the Kherson and

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Zaporozhye oblasts (October 5, 2022); large-scale precision missile strikes on Ukrainian infrastructure, military communications and command posts (October 10, 2022); introduction of martial law in the new constituent entities of the Russian Federation and the establishment of special measures to ensure security of all regions of the Russian Federation (19 October 2022). We analyze public opinion trends and the results of the Single Voting Day (September 11, 2022), which are considered as indicators of public sentiment in the hard times that our country is facing. On the whole, our research has shown that the alarming political situation on the global arena, as well as the tough decisions adopted by the head of state in recent months, revealed new features in Russian civil society, provoked changes in the people's internal awareness of the scale of threats to national security. This, in particular, was expressed in the following: many Russians are participating in the special military operation as volunteers; volunteer aid is increasing; in society, there is strong condemnation of those who left Russia after the start of the special operation; all the social strata are consolidating around the RF President; the above trends are observed in the dynamics of public opinion assessments. All these factors can play an important role in Russia's crossing its internal Rubicon in the form of the reorientation of broad strata of Russian society, and above all its elite groups, from the Western development dogmas imposed during the 30th anniversary of the market transformation toward nationally oriented goals and values.

Key words: special military operation, partial mobilization, RF President, public administration system, civil society, elections, public opinion.

The special military operation, the beginning of which was announced by the RF President on February 24, 2022, “drew an invisible but indelible line in the history of the country”, marking the end of Russia's history as a “quasi-colony” of the

West and the starting point of its new history as a sovereign state and one of the centers of a multipolar world.

However, for a long time after the outbreak of hostilities on the territory of Ukraine, experts have raised a question of how much Russian society, and above all its elite, is aware and ready to accept the **scale and irreversibility** of the changes taking place in the country? **“We have irrevocably and radically broken up with the West. But this has not yet been comprehended”**, the Russian philosopher A. Dugin wrote in July 2022². The elite “has no worldview for the last decisive battle with the West. **Moreover, its whole system of long-term interests is protesting against something like this**”³. “It is useless to pretend that the current elites will easily rebuild in a new way. It doesn't happen that way ...”⁴

“Russia's special military operation in Ukraine, which began on February 24, 2022, **drew an invisible but indelible line in the history of the country...** It was the SMO that marked the rise of a new political movement in the country, which can be described as **liberation from colonial restrictions**. Thus, the watershed of the events of 2022 is marked very clearly: the history of Russia as a quasi-colony from 1991 to February 24, 2022; **the latest history of sovereign Russia after this date**”¹.

¹ Balatsky E.V., Ekimova N.A. (2022). Social contract in Russia: Before and after 2022. *Journal of Institutional Studies*, 14(3), p. 75.

² Dugin A.G. Integral sovereignty. Official website of the Izborsk Club. July 4, 2022. Available at: <https://izborsk-club.ru/23057>

³ Kurginyan S.E. In order not to collapse into the abyss. *Sut' vremeni*. June 30, 2022. Available at: <https://eot.su/node/23743>

⁴ Averyanov V.V. There will be a battle for the renewal of the state. Official website of the Izborsk Club. July 16, 2022. Available at: <https://izborsk-club.ru/23090>

In many respects, the events that began after six months of the special military operation and led to a series of important decisions made by Russian President Vladimir Putin became a kind of answer to these quite reasonable doubts voiced by experts.

Since mid-August 2022, the situation in and around Russia has become significantly more complicated. The continuing growth of international political tension (loud statements in the public rhetoric of the international political establishment and the world media; the “pumping” of Ukraine with weapons, mercenaries, instructors; economic sanctions, etc.) was aggravated by a **difficult situation on the front line** (the counteroffensive of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on September 6–12, 2022, as a result of which Russian troops had to withdraw from their previous positions in the Kharkov region; withdrawal of allied forces from the city of Krasny Liman on October 1, 2022).

Due to active supplies of weapons from NATO countries, the Armed Forces of Ukraine continued regular shelling of the border territories; as a result, on **September 25**, a hotel was destroyed in the Kherson Oblast (among the dead was a well-known public figure **A. Zhuravko**⁵); On October 15, one of the tanks of a local oil depot was hit in the Belgorod Oblast...

In addition, since the second half of August, **major terrorist** attacks have been committed against Russia (both outside and on its territory); they have actually become regular:

✓ **August 15** – an attempted terrorist attack was prevented at an oil and gas complex facility in the Volgograd Oblast;

✓ **August 20** – murder of Dariya Dugina, Russian journalist, daughter of philosopher A. Dugin;

✓ **September 26** – explosions at the Nord Stream and Nord Stream-2 gas pipelines;

✓ **October 8** – a terrorist attack that contributed to the collapse of part of the Crimean Bridge (after which it was decided to strike with high-precision weapons at energy, military administration and communications facilities on the territory of Ukraine);

✓ **October 10** – an attempt to undermine one of the sections of the TurkStream gas transmission system was prevented;

✓ **October 11** – a terrorist attack on the Druzhba oil pipeline, the largest Russian pipeline supplying oil to Europe, was prevented.

Thus, the extremely tense situation required the Supreme Commander to take **decisive action**. As the President noted: “In the event of a threat to the territorial integrity of our country and to defend Russia and our people, we will certainly make use of **all weapon systems available to us**”⁶.

“Vladimir Putin makes all decisions with his eyes open, consciously. There is no doubt about it”⁷. In fact, from the very beginning of the special military operation, the President and the Government of the Russian Federation regularly take measures aimed both at the general strengthening of the spiritual and moral atmosphere and traditional values in Russian society and at addressing specific, priority tasks related to supporting the country’s economy and the standard of living under sanctions, with social protection of certain categories of citizens, with the strengthening of morale and

⁵ A.V. Zhuravko was a Ukrainian politician, member of the Party of Regions; former deputy of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, member of the Party of Regions faction, Secretary of the Committee on the Rights of Disabled People and Veterans. After the change of power in Kiev in 2014, he was in opposition to the government of Ukraine. In 2015, he left Ukraine, moved to live in Russia and in 2022 returned to the Kherson Oblast. For his public activities, he was posthumously awarded the medal “For Bravery” by the Head of the Donetsk People’s Republic D. Pushilin.

⁶ Address of the President of the Russian Federation to Russians on September 21, 2022. Official website of the RF President. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/69390>

⁷ What the Presidential decree is about. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. September 22, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/editorial/2022-09-22/2_8547_editorial.html

discipline in the Russian army, with personnel changes in the system of public administration, in science and education, culture, media, etc.

The monitoring⁸ of the decisions taken by the RF President and the RF Government in the current difficult external and internal conditions for Russia, shows the most significant of them.

✓ **March 4, 2022, administrative liability was established for public actions aimed at discrediting the Russian Armed Forces⁹ and criminal liability for the public dissemination, under the guise of reliable reports, of deliberately false information containing data on the use of the Russian Armed Forces¹⁰.** V. Kolokoltsev, RF Minister of Internal Affairs, pointed out that “against the background of the special military operation, the Ministry of Internal Affairs stopped about 4.5 thousand administrative offenses related to the discrediting of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation... more than 100 criminal cases were initiated”¹¹.

✓ **May 3, 2022, Presidential Decree 252 “On the application of retaliatory special economic measures in connection with the unfriendly actions of some foreign states and international organizations” was adopted¹².** It approved a list of companies with which (and controlled by which) Russian legal entities and individuals are prohibited from any financial transactions and the supply of goods. The list of organizations of unfriendly countries includes

31 enterprises. Experts noted that this decree became “a clear, tough and at the same time demonstratively deliberate response in the gas sphere, which is the most sensitive for the aggressor countries”¹³.

✓ **July 14, 2022, Federal Law 255 “On the control of the activities of persons under foreign influence” was adopted,** which, according to experts, acted as “a kind of code on foreign agents... Its essence lies in the placement of all categories of foreign agents in the unified register of the Ministry of Justice, the unification of various prohibitions and restrictions”¹⁴. It is worth noting that as of October 14, 2022, 193 foreign agents (individuals and legal entities, associations, mass media) appear in the official “Register of foreign mass media performing the functions of a foreign agent”, 75 of them (that is, almost 40%) are listed in the register in the period after the start of the special military operation on territory of Ukraine¹⁵.

✓ **July 31, 2022, the Naval Doctrine of the Russian Federation and the Naval Charter of the Navy were approved,** which clearly identify the main threats to national security (these include for the first time “the strategic course of the United States to dominate the oceans and its global influence on the development of international processes”) and with the help of which, according to experts, “Russia shows to the whole world that it will protect itself by all available means”¹⁶.

⁸ The first monitoring data are published in the article: Ilyin V.A., Morev M.V. (2022). A difficult road after the Rubicon. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 15(3), 29–32.

⁹ On amendments to the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation: Federal Law. Official website of the RF President. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67910>

¹⁰ On amendments to the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation and Articles 31 and 151 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Russian Federation: Federal Law. Official website of the RF President. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67908>

¹¹ Report of the Minister of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation V. Kolokoltsev in the State Duma on October 10, 2022. Official website of the RF State Duma. Available at: <http://duma.gov.ru/news/55541/>

¹² Official website of the RF President. May 3, 2022. Available at: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/news/68347>

¹³ Delyagin M. Mishustin’s government: Moving to the offensive. *Zavtra*. May 19, 2022. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/blogs/pravitel_stvo_mishustina_perehodya_v_nastuplenie

¹⁴ Rodin I. Draconian laws will be applied not only to the opposition. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. June 28, 2022.

¹⁵ Register of foreign mass media performing the functions of a foreign agent (data as of October 14, 2022). Official website of the RF Ministry of Justice. Available at: <https://minjust.gov.ru/ru/documents/7755/>

¹⁶ Russia’s Naval Doctrine is a response to U.S. ambitions in the Arctic. *Vzglyad*. July 31, 2022. Available at: <https://vz.ru/news/2022/7/31/1170278.html> (opinion of the Hero of the Russian Federation, Rear Admiral I. Kozlov).

In the context of frequent terrorist attacks and the difficult situation on the front line in August – October 2022, the head of state, the Government, the Federal Assembly continued the process of developing and taking priority measures to strengthen Russia's national sovereignty (the most important of them are presented in *Insert 1*).

August 5, 2022, the RF President signed a decree on the application of special economic measures in the financial and fuel and energy spheres in connection with the unfriendly actions of some foreign states and international organizations, continuing the process of regulating the international policy of the Russian Federation toward unfriendly countries.

“...the three components [of the Concept], which mean that Moscow has passed the point of no return in relations with the West:

The first point among the national interests of the Russian Federation in the humanitarian sphere abroad is called “**protection of traditional Russian spiritual and moral values**”...

The second component is consolidation of the concept of “Russian world” at the official level ...

The third component is the formulation... of the concept of Eurasianism. We are talking about the “synthesis of the European and the Asian principles”, which, in fact, is the essence of this ideology...

These provisions of the concept are the formulation of a **total ideological alternative on the part of Russia**. From now on, we are not integrated into the “Atlantic Community” and offer a conservative value alternative, challenging left-wing liberalism”¹⁷.

August 27, 2022, a decree was signed on temporary measures to regulate the legal status of citizens of the DPR, LPR and Ukraine in Russia, simplifying the possibility of living in Russia for citizens of these territories.

September 5, 2022, the Concept for Russia's Humanitarian Policy was adopted¹⁸, which, according to experts, became evidence that “Russia declared itself not only as a military-political alternative to the United States ... For the first time since 1985, it formulated its alternative value project to the West... Russia is now a value alternative to the American-centric project”¹⁹.

September 21, 2022, the decree “On the announcement of partial mobilization in the Russian Federation” was signed, according to which citizens called up for military service on mobilization receive the status of military personnel serving in the RF Armed Forces under a contract. According to the statement of the RF Minister of Defense Sergei Shoigu, 300 thousand reservists (primarily those with combat experience) will be mobilized to participate in the special military operation; they constitute about 1.1% of the total mobilization resource of the country²⁰.

September 24, 2022, the federal law “On amendments to the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation and Article 151 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Russian Federation” was adopted, which established legal foundations for the amendments to the RF Criminal Code on punishments for actions related to military service and committed during periods of mobilization, martial law and wartime (in *Insert 1*, this decision

¹⁷ Fenenko A. Value confrontation. Russia has passed the point of no return in foreign policy. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. September 12, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/kartblansh/2022-09-12/3_8537_kb.html

¹⁸ On the approval of the Concept for Russia's Humanitarian Policy abroad: Presidential Decree 611, dated September 5, 2022.

¹⁹ Fenenko A. Value confrontation. Russia has passed the point of no return in foreign policy. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. September 12, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/kartblansh/2022-09-12/3_8537_kb.html

²⁰ Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu gave a number of explanations about the partial mobilization. Channel One. News. September 21, 2022. Available at: https://www.itv.ru/news/2022-09-21/438147-ministr_oborony_serгей_shoygu_dal_ryad_poyasneniy_naschet_chastichnoy_mobilizatsii

is highlighted in pink). The amendments clarify the terms “mobilization”, “martial law”, “wartime”, introduce new types of violations into the RF Criminal Code (“Voluntary surrender”, “Looting”), toughen penalties for leaving a unit or failing to appear on time for service, non-fulfillment by subordinates of their superior’s order, refusal to participate in military or combat operations, non-fulfillment of a state defense order, damage or destruction of military equipment (for all these crimes, penalties from 3 to 15 years in prison are provided). The Director General of the Institute of Political Studies S. Markov noted that “it was also necessary to strengthen discipline. Tougher penalties are aimed at solving this problem... After 30 years of looseness, relaxation, the time has come for testing, and it requires more strictness”²¹.

September 30, 2022, the RF President signed agreements on the admission of the DPR, LPR, Zaporozhye and Kherson oblasts to Russia. This is the most important event in the history of the country. In fact, the whole range of procedures²² related to the accession of new territories to the Russian Federation, starting with the referendums of September 23–27 and ending with the President

At the signing ceremony, the head of state noted: “Behind the choice of millions of residents in the Donetsk and Lugansk people’s republics, in the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions, is **our common destiny and thousand-year history...** I want the Kiev authorities and their true handlers in the West to hear me now, and I want everyone to remember this: **the people living in Lugansk and Donetsk, in Kherson and Zaporozhye have become our citizens, forever**”²³.

signing the relevant federal constitutional laws on October 5, 2022 **summed up the first eight months of the special military operation on the territory of Ukraine:** simultaneously with the signing of agreements on the accession of four new constituent entities to Russia, **the country moved on “to the next round of its historical existence”, at which it entered into a tough confrontation with NATO countries,** including “almost all dimensions – geopolitical, civilizational, economic, cultural, military... Everything that we only guessed, assumed and hoped for is now called by its own names... Now it is obvious to everyone that Moscow has essentially come to question the Belovezha Accords ..., which

²¹ “Mobilization is a ‘just in case’ option”: Political scientists have revealed the meaning of the amendments to the Criminal Code (opinion of S. Markov, Director General of the Institute of Political Studies). MK.ru. September 20, 2022. Available at: <https://www.mk.ru/politics/2022/09/20/mobilizaciya-opciya-na-vsyakiy-sluchay-politologi-raskryli-smysl-popravok-uk.html>

²² September 23–27, 2022, referendums on joining the Russian Federation were held on the territory of the DPR, LPR, Kherson and Zaporozhye oblasts. According to their results, 99.23% of residents of the Donetsk People’s Republic voted for joining Russia; 98.42% of residents of the Lugansk People’s Republic; 93.11% of residents of the Zaporozhye Oblast; 87.05% of residents of the Kherson Oblast (source: <https://vz.ru/news/2022/9/30/1180132.html>).

September 29, 2022, Vladimir Putin signed the decrees recognizing the independence of the Zaporozhye and Kherson oblasts (decrees 685, 686).

September 30, 2022, the ceremony of signing the agreements on the accession of the Donetsk People’s Republic, the Lugansk People’s Republic, the Zaporozhye Oblast and the Kherson Oblast to Russia and the formation of new constituent entities of the Russian Federation took place.

October 2, 2022, the Constitutional Court approved the package of documents on the accession of the Donetsk and Lugansk people’s republics, the Kherson and Zaporozhye oblasts to Russia.

October 3, 2022, deputies of the State Duma of the Russian Federation unanimously ratified the relevant treaties on the admission of four new territories to Russia.

October 4, 2022, the Federation Council ratified the agreements on the adoption of the DPR, LPR, Kherson and Zaporozhye regions.

On October 5, 2022, the President of the Russian Federation signed federal constitutional laws on the admission to the Russian Federation and the formation of new constituent entities within the Russian Federation – the Donetsk People’s Republic, the Lugansk People’s Republic, the Zaporozhye Oblast, the Kherson Oblast.

²³ Vladimir Putin’s speech at the ceremony of signing the agreements on the accession of the DPR, LPR, Zaporozhye and Kherson oblasts to Russia. Official website of the RF President. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/69465>

means that we are going to revise the entire post-Soviet history of Russia and, accordingly, the world”²⁴.

October 10, 2022, after the terrorist attack on the Crimean Bridge, speaking at a meeting with permanent members of the RF Security Council, Vladimir Putin announced the decision to resume (after such actions started on February 24–25, 2022) “massive strikes with high-precision long-range air, sea and land-based weapons on energy, military administration and communications facilities of Ukraine”.

October 19, 2022, Vladimir Putin signed a decree on the introduction of martial law in the territories of the DPR, LPR, Zaporozhye and Kherson oblasts, as well as the Decree “On measures implemented in constituent entities of the Russian Federation in connection with Presidential Decree 756, dated October 19, 2022”.

The fundamental importance of these decrees lies in the fact that in this way (as some experts note) the President “ponders the contours of the system of public administration that would correspond to martial law”²⁵. In addition to the actual introduction of martial law in the new Russian territories, **all RF constituent entities** were classified as territories with the “maximum”, “average”, “increased” and “basic” response levels; **all governors were given additional powers; a special Coordinating Council was created**, which included vice-premiers, representatives of law enforcement agencies, the

socio-economic block of the Government, the Presidential Administration, as well as the State Council. Its goal is “to continue work on improving the coordination of activities to solve the tasks of the special military operation”²⁶. The head of the faction, State Duma deputy S. Mironov noted that the Coordinating Council “will become a key body that will address all the tasks related to the SMO. **And these tasks, of course, are broader than purely military measures carried out by law enforcement agencies**”²⁷.

Thus, in a difficult foreign policy situation, the head of state is forced to carry out “modernization of the public administration system for the tasks of the special operation and its consequences”²⁸, **and this actually opens up real prospects for gradually bringing the quality of the ruling elites in line with national interests within the framework of this process**, given the fact that many of these elites have formed, existed and are still under the “long-term hypnotic influence of the liberal-capitalist development paradigm”²⁹.

In particular, this type of modernization of the public administration system, according to some experts, could help “**for the entire period of economic mobilization**” to limit the export of national capital, which, as experts say, currently flows freely from the country and thus “**objectively turns itself into a resource for the development of other societies that involuntarily compete with Russia or are directly hostile to it**”³⁰.

²⁴ Dugin A. Putin has proclaimed the Russian idea. *Zavtra*. October 4, 2022. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/blogs/putin_provozglasil_russkuyu_ideyu

²⁵ Rodin I. Putin conducts a special operation in the field of national governance. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. October 20, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/politics/2022-10-20/1_3_8571_decree.html

²⁶ Vladimir Putin’s speech at the meeting of the Security Council on October 19, 2022. Official website of the RF President. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/69636>

²⁷ Official website of S. Mironov. October 20, 2022. Available at: <https://mironov.ru/moya-pozitsiya/nado-privlech-k-rabote-koordinatsionnogo-soveta-svo-deputatov-gosdumy/>

²⁸ Rodin I. Putin conducts a special operation in the field of national governance. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. October 20, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/politics/2022-10-20/1_3_8571_decree.html

²⁹ Ilyin V.A., Morev M.V. (2022). On the way toward crossing the inner Rubicon. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 15(4), 9–31.

³⁰ Delyagin M. Locking up the creative energy of capital in Russia. *Zavtra*. October 21, 2022. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/blogs/zapiranie_v_rossii_tvorcheskoj_energii_kapitala

**Monitoring of the actions of federal state authorities to strengthen
the internal foundations of national sovereignty³¹**

August 5 – Decree on the application of special economic measures in the financial and fuel and energy spheres in connection with the unfriendly actions of some foreign states and international organizations. “According to the new rules, transactions with shares owned by companies of unfriendly states are prohibited until the end of 2022³², in strategic enterprises and their “offsprings”... at the same time, operations that are prohibited by the document can be carried out on the basis of the President special permission”³³.

August 12 – amendments were made to the decree on additional social guarantees for border guards and their family members. Russian border guards in the area of the special operation received new benefits (to count the completion of missions in the length of service for the appointment of a pension on preferential terms: one day of performing missions for the protection of the state border of the Russian Federation is counted as two days; for border guards injured in areas adjacent to the areas of the special operation, a month of being cured in case of injury will be counted for two months of the service”). Moreover, the new benefits also apply to those who have been guarding the border in these areas since February 24, 2022³⁴.

August 27 – Decree on temporary measures to regulate the legal status of citizens of the DPR, LPR and Ukraine in Russia. The decree grants the right to citizens of the DPR, LPR and Ukraine to stay in the Russian Federation without time limits, provided that they have undergone fingerprinting, photo and medical examination.

September 5 – Presidential Decree 611 “On approval of the Concept for Russia’s Humanitarian Policy abroad”. The Concept reflects Russia’s national interests in the humanitarian sphere, and also prescribes the main goals, objectives, principles and directions of humanitarian policy abroad. It touches upon the importance of promoting Russian science and education abroad, as well as supporting and popularizing the Russian language as a means of international communication. The task is to increase the competitiveness of domestic education, research and development. The need for proper coverage of the role of Russian scientists in the development of world science and support of bilateral ties with foreign universities, in particular in the development of international cooperation through UNESCO educational networks, is noted.³⁵ “The goals of the humanitarian policy of the Russian Federation abroad are to form and strengthen an objective perception of our country in the world, to promote understanding of the historical path, the role and place of Russia in world history and culture, and to expand contacts between people”³⁶.

³¹ In the Insert, we continue the monitoring of management decisions of the authorities, which we started in the previous article (Ilyin V.A., Morev M.V. (2022). A difficult road after the Rubicon. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 15(3), 29–32).

³² The list of unfriendly countries was created in accordance with Presidential Decree “On the temporary procedure for fulfilling obligations to certain foreign creditors”, dated March 5, 2022. The list includes 49 unfriendly countries, among them – 27 EU states.

³³ Putin signed a decree on retaliatory measures in the areas of fuel and energy and finance. *RIA-novosti*. August 6, 2022. Available at: <https://ria.ru/20220806/ukaz-1807681096.html>

³⁴ Putin granted new privileges to border guards in special operation areas. *RBK*. August 12, 2022. Available at: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/12/08/2022/62f651fc9a794759cfc0352a>

³⁵ Vladimir Putin approved the Concept for Russia’s Humanitarian Policy abroad. Press Center of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation. September 7, 2022. Available at: <https://minobrnauki.gov.ru/press-center/news/novosti-ministerstva/57537/>

³⁶ On the approval of the Concept for Russia’s Humanitarian Policy abroad: Presidential Decree 611, dated September 5, 2022. Official website of the RF President. Available at: <http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/G3CkAuMhZXio8AzNaweT3wTGTaEA16OU.pdf>

Continuation of Insert 1

September 21 – Decree “On the announcement of partial mobilization in the Russian Federation”. The law provides for the conscription of citizens of the Russian Federation for military service on mobilization into the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, while citizens of the Russian Federation called up for military service on mobilization receive the status of military personnel undergoing military service in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation under contract.

According to the statement of the RF Ministry of Defense, “privates and sergeants under the age of 35, junior officers – up to 50, seniors – up to 55 are subject to mobilization. Those who are needed to perform current tasks will be called up – these are shooters, tankers, gunners, drivers and driver mechanics. One of the key factors in conscription is the presence of combat experience”³⁷. As Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu noted, “we have a huge mobilization resource, that is, the resource of those who had been enlisted, those who have combat experience, those who have a military specialty. We have almost 25 million of them. Thus, you can understand that this mobilization, partial mobilization, is 1% or slightly more, 1.1% of the total mobilization resource... this is 300 thousand reservists who will be mobilized”³⁸.

September 22 – RF Government Resolution 1677 “On the preservation of jobs for mobilized citizens”. According to the Resolution, “employment contracts with citizens called up for partial mobilization will be suspended, but not terminated” and “their jobs will be preserved”³⁹.

September 23 – Mikhail Mishustin gave instructions on the results of the strategic session on import substitution of software in industries.

The Chairman of the RF Government gave instructions to develop a draft law on the preferential use of domestic software, hardware and software complexes, telecommunications equipment and radio-electronic products by November 1. The RF Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media is responsible for the preparation of the draft law.

September 24 – Federal Law “On amendments to the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation and Article 151 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Russian Federation”.

The Law approves amendments to the RF Criminal Code introduced by the RF State Duma on September 20, 2022. The terms “mobilization”, “martial law” and “wartime” are introduced in the RF Criminal Code. Article 63 of the RF Criminal Code (“circumstances that aggravate punishment”) is supplemented with the terms “the period of mobilization and martial law” and “wartime”. In the corresponding periods, penalties are tightened: for damage or destruction of military equipment – up to five years in prison; for leaving a unit or failing to appear on time for service during mobilization and martial law – up to ten years in a colony; for non-fulfillment of the superior’s order by the subordinate, for refusal to participate in military or combat operations – up to three years of imprisonment (if such cases entailed grave consequences – from three to ten years). Also, new articles appeared in the RF Criminal Code: “Voluntary surrender” (Article 352.1; from three to ten years of imprisonment) and “Looting” (Article 356.1; up to fifteen years). A group of articles on violation of the terms of the state contract and non-fulfillment of the state defense order is introduced (Article 201.2, Article 201.3 285.6 of the RF Criminal Code)⁴⁰.

September 30 – Decree on the simplified procedure for granting citizenship of the Russian Federation to foreign citizens who have signed a contract for service in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. The procedure for obtaining citizenship is simplified for foreigners, as well as stateless persons who have signed a contract for military service in the Russian Armed Forces⁴¹.

³⁷ The RF Ministry of Defense explained the procedure for partial mobilization. *Rossiiskaya gazeta*. 22.09.22. Available at: <https://rg.ru/2022/09/22/minoborony-rf-dalo-raziasneniia-po-naibolee-chastym-voprosam-o-chastichnoj-mobilizacii.html>

³⁸ Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu gave a number of explanations about the partial mobilization. Channel One. News. September 21, 2022. Available at: https://www.ltv.ru/news/2022-09-21/438147-ministr_oborony_serгей_shoygu_dal_ryad_poyasneniy_naschet_chastichnoy_mobilizatsii

³⁹ The Government approved the preservation of jobs for the mobilized. *RBK*. September 22, 2022. Available at: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/22/09/2022/632c9f649a79472f8fec02b4>

⁴⁰ Amendments to the Criminal Code regarding “mobilization” and “wartime”. What is important to know. *RBK*. September 20, 2022. Available at: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/20/09/2022/6329a4059a794731c2e205f9>

⁴¹ Putin simplified the procedure for obtaining Russian citizenship for foreign contractors. *RBK*. September 30, 2022. Available at: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/30/09/2022/6336fcfe9a7947f6f8308904>

End of Insert 1

<p>October 5 – The President signed federal constitutional laws on the admission to the Russian Federation and the formation of new constituent entities within the Russian Federation – the Donetsk People’s Republic, the Lugansk People’s Republic, the Zaporozhye Oblast, the Kherson Oblast.</p>
<p>October 7 – amendments were made to the Labor Code aimed at regulating the relationship between an employer and an employee called up for military service on mobilization. The law establishes that during the period of mobilization, the validity of the employment contract concluded by the employee and the employer is suspended, but the period is counted as the employee’s work experience; the place of work (position) is retained for them, termination of the employment contract at the initiative of the employer is not allowed. The federal law also establishes additional labor guarantees for family members of persons called up for military service on mobilization or serving in the military under a contract.</p>
<p>October 8 – Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu appointed Army General S. Surovikin commander of the group of forces in the zone of the special military operation. Most experts call this appointment a landmark one, since previously the command of the group was conducted from Moscow, many decisions required long approvals, which undoubtedly influenced the course of its implementation⁴². Military expert A. Leonkov noted: “Army General Sergei Surovikin is one of the most authoritative military leaders in our army. He has extensive military experience (including in Syria). This will undoubtedly help to competently plan the course of the special military operation in Ukraine. As a matter of fact, Surovikin is always assigned to the places where it is necessary to act decisively and quickly... Now, when our grouping in Ukraine is seriously increasing, it should be headed by an experienced military leader who has undoubted authority in the troops. Surovikin is a perfect choice in this regard”⁴³.</p>
<p>October 10 – at a meeting with permanent members of the Security Council, the President announced the first “massive strike with high-precision long-range air, sea and land-based weapons against energy, military administration and communications facilities of Ukraine”⁴⁴. The head of state pointed out that “in the event of more attempts to stage terrorist attacks on our territory, Russia’s response will be harsh and commensurate with the threats posed to the Russian Federation. Nobody should have any doubts about that”⁴⁵.</p>
<p>October 19 – Decree on the introduction of martial law in the territories of the DPR, LPR, Zaporozhye and Kherson oblasts; Decree “On measures implemented in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation in connection with Presidential Decree 756, dated October 19, 2022”. According to the decrees, martial law will be introduced in four new constituent entities of the Russian Federation from October 20, 2022; the heads of all RF constituent entities will receive additional powers to make decisions on carrying out certain measures for territorial defense and civil defense, measures to protect the population and territories from natural and man-made emergencies, and powers to implement measures to meet the needs of the Armed Forces. All RF constituent entities are divided into territories with a “maximum”, “average”, “enhanced” and “basic” level of response with corresponding differences in the powers of the heads of regions. As some experts noted, “the introduction of martial law was used to put the country on a mobilization track...”, while strengthening the powers of the governors, the President actually “repeats the scheme of division of responsibility used in the fight against COVID”⁴⁶.</p>

⁴² Stepanov A. Sergei Surovikin has been appointed Commander of the Russian joint troops in Ukraine. *Rossiiskaya gazeta*. October 9, 2022. Available at: <https://rg.ru/2022/10/09/general-bystrogo-reagirovaniia.html>

⁴³ Ibidem.

⁴⁴ Vladimir Putin’s speech at a meeting with permanent members of the Security Council. October 10, 2022. Official website of the RF President. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/69568>

⁴⁵ Ibidem.

⁴⁶ Rodin I. Putin introduces Russia into a paramilitary situation. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. October 19, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/politics/2022-10-19/3_8569_securitycouncil.html

One of the most important and difficult steps taken by the RF Supreme Commander was the decision to conduct partial mobilization adopted on September 21, 2022. According to a number of experts, with this step, Vladimir Putin “actually informed society that **the situation, though not an emergency, is difficult and requires full mobilization of all the forces of society**”⁴⁷.

“...the idea that only professional military personnel were involved in the fighting calmed society... but even those who fully supported and are supporting the special operation are worried about their loved ones who may be mobilized”⁴⁸.

Partial mobilization has become one of the most “sensitive topics for society”⁴⁹. It turned out to be “**an actual challenge to the current power vertical**”⁵⁰. At the initial stage of organizing partial mobilization a significant number of problems arose, related to informing citizens about the course and criteria of mobilization, placement of mobilized military personnel, supply of their uniforms and weapons, increase in prices for necessary equipment, returning

home of the mobilized citizens who do not meet the criteria for the priority of conscription, etc.⁵¹

Largely because of the cases of confusion, partial mobilization caused increased anxiety in society. In the first days after the announcement of partial mobilization in the media (with reference to official sources of foreign countries) reports began to appear about the second wave of emigration from Russia after February 24, 2022⁵². In some regions of the country, protests against mobilization took place, during which more than 1,000 protesters were detained⁵³.

Nevertheless, according to the official representative of the RF Ministry of Internal Affairs I. Volk, the number of participants in the protests was “insignificant”⁵⁴, this corresponds to the opinion some experts who characterized those actions as “**spontaneous outbreaks** to which the authorities promptly respond... Organized protest as a form of political reaction is hardly feasible in the current situation”⁵⁵.

The results of monitoring sociological studies conducted both at the federal (VCIOM) and regional (VolRC RAS) levels also indicate that,

⁴⁷ What the Presidential decree is about. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. September 22, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/editorial/2022-09-22/2_8547_editorial.html

⁴⁸ About the reaction of society to the partial mobilization. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. October 3, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/editorial/2022-10-03/2_8555_editorial.html

⁴⁹ *Argumenty nedeli*. September 27, 2022. Available at: <https://argumenti.ru/society/2022/09/791413> (V.A. Fadeev – from October 21, 2019, Advisor to the President of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Presidential Council for the Development of Civil Society and Human Rights).

⁵⁰ Garmonenko D. Mobilization as a test for the vertical of power (opinion of A. Mukhin, Director General of the Center for Political Information). *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. September 21, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/politics/2022-09-21/1_8545_vertical.html

⁵¹ See, for example: Garmonenko D. The struggle for the truth about the special operation and mobilization unfolded within the government. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. October 6, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/politics/2022-10-06/1_8559_administration.html

⁵² A. Atalykov (Acting Chairman of the Migration Service Committee of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan): “About 98 thousand Russians have come to Kazakhstan since September 21; 64,234 Russians have left” (source: *RBK*. September 27, 2022. Available at: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/27/09/2022/6332a8b29a794720fabf3450>)

A. Darakhvelidze (Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia): “In recent days, about six thousand Russian citizens have been entering Georgia daily. At the end of September, this figure was ten thousand. I should note that the number of Russian citizens entering and leaving Georgia every day has almost equaled” (source: Interfax. October 3, 2022. Available at: <https://www.interfax.ru/world/866025>).

⁵³ There are no official data on the number of protesters; however, according to estimates of some human rights organizations, 1,312 protesters were detained in 38 cities, including 468 in Moscow, 490 in Saint Petersburg (source: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/5571951>).

⁵⁴ *Kommersant*. September 21, 2022. Available at: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/5571951>

⁵⁵ About the reaction of society to the partial mobilization. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. October 3, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/editorial/2022-10-03/2_8555_editorial.html

despite the alarming events of August – October 2022, Russian society maintains a high level of support for the work of the head of state and, in general, a positive background of emotional state.

Thus, according to VCIOM, in October 2022, the share of Russians supporting the activities of the RF President amounted to 77%, while from February 2022 (when the start of the special military operation was announced) to October 2022, the share of positive assessments of the activities of the head of state increased by 12 percentage points (from 65 to 77; *Tab. 1*).

According to the public opinion monitoring carried out by VoIRC RAS in the Vologda Oblast, over the past 12 months (from October 2021 to October 2022), the share of people who support the activities of the RF President has increased by 7 percentage points (from 52 to 59%), and since February 2022 – by 11 percentage points (from 48

to 59%; *Tab. 2, Insert 2*), and negative changes are not observed in any of the main socio-demographic groups (*Insert 2*). However, over the past 2 months (from August to October 2022), the share of positive judgments about the work of the head of state has decreased slightly (by 2 percentage points, from 61 to 59%; *Tab. 2, Insert 2*) in most (11 out of 14) socio-demographic groups (*Insert 2*).

As for the dynamics of the social mood for the period from August to October 2022, the proportion of people experiencing predominantly positive emotions decreased by 6 percentage points (from 70 to 64%; *Tab. 3, Insert 3*); however, for the entire previous period of the special operation (February – August 2022), the proportion of residents characterizing their mood as “normal, fine” remained stable (69–70%) in the majority (8 out of 14) of the main socio-demographic groups (*Insert 3*).

Table 1. Dynamics of the assessment of the RF President's activity from February to October 2022, % of respondents

Answer option	February 2022	April 2022	June 2022	August 2022	September 2022	October 2022*	Dynamics (+/-), February – October 2022
Approval	65.4	78.7	78.5	78.2	77.0	76.5	+12
Disapproval	23.9	13.5	13.4	13.0	13.8	14.0	-10

*VCIOM data as of October represent the average for three polls (October 2, 9 and 16, 2022). In September 2022, polls were held September 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th (the table shows the average data for these four polls). The data are presented on the basis of the All-Russian telephone surveys “Sputnik”. The margin of error is 2.5%.
The wording of the question: “Do you generally approve or disapprove of the activities of the President of Russia?”
Source: VCIOM. Available at: <https://wciom.ru/ratings/dejatelnost-gosudarstvennykh-institutov/>

Table 2. Dynamics of the assessment of the RF President's activity* (VoIRC RAS data), % of respondents

Population assessments	Oct. 2021	Feb. 2022	Aug. 2022	Oct. 2022	Dynamics (+/-)		
					Oct. 2021 – Oct. 2022	Oct. – Feb. 2022	Oct. – Aug. 2022
Proportion of positive assessments of the President's activity	51.9	48.0	60.9	59.0	+7	+11	-2
Proportion of negative assessments of the President's activity	33.1	32.9	21.8	23.5	-10	-9	+2

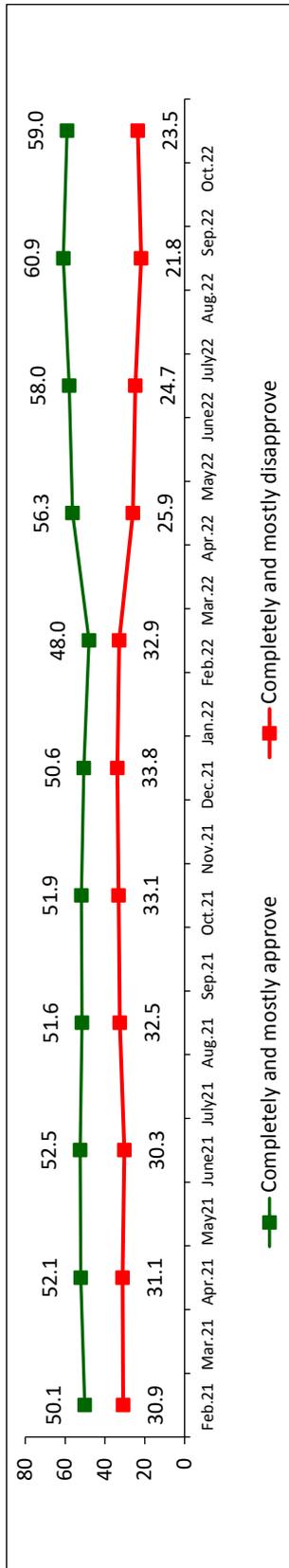
* Tables 2–3 show the changes during the survey periods, which allow us to see the dynamics of public opinion assessments for the entire period of the special military operation (February – October 2022), taking into account the events of recent months (August – October 2022). For reference, changes in public sentiment assessments over the past 12 months (October 2021 – October 2022), including four months before the special military operation on the territory of Ukraine.

Table 3. Dynamics of social mood assessments (VoIRC RAS data), % of respondents

Population assessments	Oct. 2021	Feb. 2022	Aug. 2022	Oct. 2022	Dynamics (+/-)		
					Oct. 2021 – Oct. 2022	Oct. – Feb. 2022	Oct. – Aug. 2022
Proportion of positive assessments of social mood	70.5	69.3	70.0	64.1	-6	-5	-6
Proportion of negative assessments of social mood	25.5	26.6	24.8	33.1	+8	+7	+8

Insert 2

Dynamics of assessments of the RF President's work (VoIRC RAS data), % of respondents



Proportion of positive assessments of the RF President's work by various socio-demographic groups, %

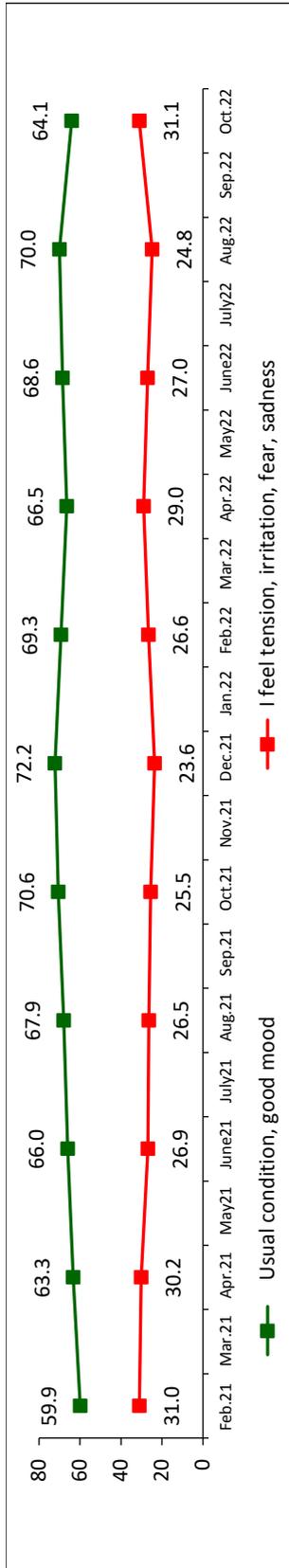
Population group	Feb. 2021	Oct. 2021	Feb. 2022	Apr. 2022	June 2022	Aug. 2022	Oct. 2022	Dynamics (+/-) for the period...	
								Feb. 2021 – Feb. 2022 (12 months)	Feb. – Aug. 2022 (7 months)
Sex									
Men	48.9	50.4	45.9	51.7	52.2	59.9	58.9	-3	+14
Women	51.0	53.2	49.7	60.1	62.7	61.8	59.1	-1	+12
Age									
Under 30	38.6	52.5	51.6	50.9	51.4	53.7	45.4	+2	+13
30–55	48.1	50.7	44.4	55.5	54.6	59.0	58.6	-4	+15
Over 55	56.9	53.2	51.0	59.4	64.6	66.2	64.6	-6	+15
Education									
Secondary and incomplete secondary	47.5	46.4	44.0	48.3	52.0	56.9	53.9	-4	+13
Secondary vocational	50.2	51.7	48.5	59.2	60.0	59.5	59.4	-2	+11
Higher and incomplete higher	52.7	57.7	54.2	63.8	62.6	67.4	64.3	+2	+13
Income group									
Bottom 20%	38.5	40.7	37.0	41.1	39.3	43.1	42.6	-2	+6
Middle 60%	53.1	52.2	50.4	57.6	61.0	64.0	63.4	-3	+14
Top 20%	63.7	65.9	56.5	63.4	67.8	63.2	63.6	-7	+7
Territory									
Vologda	44.4	42.5	38.8	48.1	49.6	52.4	50.6	-6	+14
Cherepovets	55.0	58.1	53.3	62.0	64.2	67.4	66.4	-2	+14
Districts	50.4	53.8	50.1	57.7	59.2	62.0	59.5	0	+12
Oblast	50.1	51.9	48.0	56.3	58.0	60.9	59.0	-2	+13
Total number of positive and negative changes in 14 socio-demographic groups								2 / 11	14 / 0

In February – August 2022, the level of support for the President's work increased in all socio-demographic groups, especially among people aged 30–55 (by 15 percentage points, from 44 to 59%) and over 55 (by 15 percentage points, from 51 to 66%).

In August – October 2022, in most socio-demographic groups (in 11 out of 14), there was a slight decrease in the level support for the work of the head of state, especially among people under the age of 30 (by 8 percentage points, from 53 to 45%).

Insert 3

Dynamics of social mood (VoIRC RAS data), % of respondents



Dynamics of positive assessments of social mood in various socio-demographic groups, %

Population group	Feb. 2021	Oct. 2021	Feb. 2022	Apr. 2022	June 2022	Aug. 2022	Oct. 2022	Dynamics (+/-) for the period...		
								Feb. 2021 – Feb. 2022 (12 months)	Feb. – Aug. 2022 (7 months)	Aug. – Oct. 2022 (2 months)
Sex										
Men	60.8	70.0	65.6	68.3	67.4	69.9	65.0	+5	+4	-5
Women	59.2	70.9	72.3	65.1	69.7	70.2	63.3	+13	-2	-7
Age										
Under 30	60.9	75.3	75.3	81.8	77.3	77.8	74.5	+14	+3	-3
30–55	64.4	70.8	70.7	71.1	68.8	72.0	65.2	+6	+1	-7
Over 55	54.1	68.3	65.3	55.2	65.3	64.6	58.7	+11	-1	-6
Education										
Secondary and incomplete secondary	56.2	64.1	68.7	63.0	65.8	68.5	58.9	+13	0	-10
Secondary vocational	60.9	70.4	68.3	69.8	70.5	71.0	65.8	+7	+3	-5
Higher and incomplete higher	62.7	77.1	71.5	66.9	69.7	70.8	67.5	+9	-1	-3
Income group										
Bottom 20%	44.3	60.4	60.5	61.5	58.4	55.4	50.7	+16	-5	-5
Middle 60%	60.1	70.9	68.8	64.2	70.3	73.2	65.9	+9	+4	-7
Top 20%	76.0	84.2	81.5	81.9	75.7	77.0	78.7	+6	-5	+2
Territory										
Vologda	55.8	64.0	63.2	60.2	61.0	61.5	55.7	+7	-2	-6
Cherepovets	64.4	72.6	70.8	70.1	72.8	74.6	67.9	+8	+2	-7
Districts	59.7	71.5	70.8	68.1	70.6	72.3	66.6	+11	+2	-6
Oblast	59.9	70.5	69.3	66.5	68.7	70.1	64.1	+9	+1	-6
Total number of positive and negative changes in 14 socio-demographic groups								14 / 0	7 / 6	1 / 13
Question: "What could you say about your mood in recent days?"										
Source: VoIRC RAS public opinion monitoring.										

In February – August 2022, the share of positive assessments of social mood in the Vologda Oblast as a whole remained stable (69–70%). Negative changes were noted primarily among people who, according to self-estimates of income, belong to the bottom 20% (by 5 percentage points, from 60 to 55%) and top 20% (by 5 percentage points, from 82 to 77%) residents of the oblast.

Over the past two months (August – October 2022), a decrease in the share of positive assessments of social mood has been observed in all major socio-demographic groups, except for the top 20%, especially among people with secondary and incomplete secondary education (by 10 percentage points, from 69 to 59%), women (by 7 percentage points from 70 to 63%), persons aged 30–55 (by 7 percentage points, from 72 to 65%), 60% of the middle-income strata (by 7 percentage points, from 73 to 67%), as well as among residents of Cherepovets (by 7 percentage points, from 75 to 68%).

Thus, sociological assessments help to monitor the “temperature” of society and the dynamics of social attitudes in various segments of the population. Studies conducted by Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences show that even despite slight fluctuations in the assessments of the President’s activities and the psychological well-being of people in August – October 2022, **since the beginning of the special operation there has been a stable emotional background** (more than 50% of positive judgments in all socio-demographic groups) **and a high level of support for the head of the state** (the share of positive assessments in 12 of the 14 main socio-demographic groups ranges from 50 to 65%).

We should also emphasize that after the partial mobilization, in conditions when society is increasingly aware that during the special military operation, Russia is opposed not by Ukraine, but by all NATO countries, and, accordingly, due to a more obvious and acute awareness of the threats to national security hanging over the country, **New features of civil society have begun to form in the Russian Federation**. And this manifests itself not just in good intentions or, as they say, “on paper”, but in the concrete deeds and actions of ordinary citizens, representatives of nonprofit organizations, businesses, and authorities.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu noted that “a large number of volunteers come to military enlistment centers”⁵⁶. In the first days of the partial mobilization, branches of the All-Russian Popular Front for the protection of the rights of citizens called up for military service were opened in all regions of Russia. Official information channels that explain to the public any issues related to this topic have been launched (round-the-clock hotlines (“122”), official websites (“Объясняем.рф”). Public and volunteer associations have become

more active, carrying out various humanitarian actions to support Russian servicemen participating in the special military operation. Charitable organizations have promptly established round-the-clock telephone lines for psychological and legal assistance to mobilized citizens and their relatives.

The leading mass media took on an important mission. Regular coverage of events in the news, expert assessments in analytical programs, reports of war correspondents directly from the front line – all this is aimed not just at informing the population about the course of the special operation. Due to its wide representation (on TV channels, on radio, on the Internet) the media, first, create patriotically oriented psychological climate in the country, explain to the broad strata of Russian society the deep goals of both the special operation itself and the general civilizational conflict between Russia and the Collective West; second, they serve as an effective means of communication between civil society, the army and the authorities. They openly talk about the problems that arise during the conduct of hostilities, during the partial mobilization; they focus on the most urgent needs of military personnel; inform the population about guarantees and existing tools for supporting family members of mobilized citizens.

The consolidated condemnation by the Russian society of citizens (first of all, those who were previously considered to be representatives of cultural, political and entrepreneurial elites) who left the country after February 24, 2022, the low probability of mass protests, despite the difficult time, is largely the result of the activities of the media and, in particular, such political and cultural programs as “Time will show” and “Big game” (Channel One), “60 minutes” and “Evening with V. Solovyov” (“Russia 1”), Nikita Mikhalkov’s program “Besogon TV” (“Russia 1”, “Russia 24”,

⁵⁶ *RIA-novosti*. October 4, 2022. Available at: <https://ria.ru/20221004/shoygu-1821393672.html>

“Spas”), whose audience from March to October 2022 increased from about 10 to 12 million people⁵⁷.

In the tense conditions associated with the continuation of hostilities in Ukraine, the partial mobilization and the growing tension in relations with the Collective West, one of the important markers reflecting the attitude of the population toward the activities of the authorities is also the election results and voter turnout. Over the past years, based on official data from the RF Central Election Commission, we have been monitoring⁵⁸ and analyzing the results of the main federal, regional and municipal elections, while paying special attention to the turnout at the polling stations, which, in fact, reflects the attitude of people toward the elections themselves as a legitimate and democratic way of expressing the will of the people.

From September 9 to 11, 2022, against the background of the ongoing special operation on

the territory of Ukraine, another Single Voting Day took place in Russia, in which 19 RF constituent entities and 12 regional centers representing almost all federal districts of the country participated⁵⁹.

The main result of the last elections is the popular support of the United Russia party of power. Thus, at the elections of the heads of RF constituent entities, “in all 14 regions, the current governors and acting governors, representatives of United Russia or self-nominated candidates supported by this party were re-elected”⁶⁰.

“The governors who confirmed their powers showed better results than last time. And this is the result of the consensus around the president”⁶¹.

Nevertheless, we should note that voter turnout has decreased in many regions and regional centers in comparison with the previous similar elections (that is, for the period from 2017 to 2022)⁶².

⁵⁷ Source: official website of the Besogon TV project. Episode 202 “The snow will come down, and we’ll see who’s been making a mess and where” (March 18, 2022), Episode 212 “Out of the brackets” (October 7, 2022). Available at: <https://besogontv.ru/videos/>

⁵⁸ The analysis of the results of elections and referendums at various levels according to official data of the RF Central Election Commission is presented in our editorials since 2016. The monitoring analyzed the results of the RF presidential elections for 2000–2018; the elections to the State Duma of the 3rd–8th convocations (1999–2020); the results of the all-Russian vote on amendments to the Constitution (2020), as well as regional and municipal elections that were held during the Single Voting Day in 2012–2022.

⁵⁹ Elections of senior officials of RF constituent entities were held in 15 regions of Russia (in the Republic of Adygea, the head of the RF constituent entity was elected by deputies of the State Council – Khase at the suggestion of the President of the Russian Federation; therefore, this territory was not considered in our study).

Elections of deputies of legislative bodies of RF constituent entities were held in six regions.

Elections of deputies of representative bodies of municipalities of administrative centers of RF constituent entities were held in 12 regions.

Elections of deputies of representative bodies of local self-government in 125 municipal districts of Moscow were also held.

In general, the elections were held in all federal districts of Russia, except for the Crimean Federal District. Our research considered all the elections held on September 11, except for the elections in Moscow.

Remote electronic voting was provided for in eight territories: elections of heads of the Kaliningrad, Novgorod, Tomsk, Yaroslavl oblasts; elections of deputies of legislative bodies in Kursk and Pskov oblasts; elections of deputies of representative bodies of local self-government in Moscow and by-elections of the deputy of the Kaluga City Duma of the 7th convocation in single-mandate constituency number 7 (source: RF Central Election Commission. Available at: <http://www.cikrf.ru/analog/ediny-den-golosovaniya-2022/distsionnoe-elektronnoe-golosovanie/>).

⁶⁰ Skorobogaty P. (2022). New consolidation: Results of the Single Voting Day. *Ekspert*, 38, p. 50.

⁶¹ Experts on the election results: The political system has successfully passed the SVD. *Rossiiskaya gazeta*. September 12, 2022. Available at: <https://rg.ru/2022/09/12/eksperty-ob-itogah-vyborov-politicheskaia-sistema-uspeshno-sdala-edg.html> (opinion of E. Sokolova, Head of the Department of Strategic Research and Forecasting at the Expert Institute of Social Research).

⁶² Here we should note that in 16 of the 18 regions, as well as in 13 of the 26 municipalities for which the election results were analyzed, the population and, among other things, voter turnout decreased during the period from 2017 to 2022. We also should not forget about the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which Russia faced mainly in 2020–2021 and which largely influenced the overall decline in the country’s population (according to official Rosstat data, the population of Russia as of January 1, 2019 and 2020 was 146.8 million people, as of January 1, 2021 – 146.2 million people, as of January 1, 2022 – 145.6 million; source: EMISS. Permanent population as of January 1. Available at: <https://showdata.gks.ru/report/278928/>).

So, in the elections of the heads of RF constituent entities, voter turnout⁶³ for the period from 2017 to 2022 decreased by an average of 2.58 percentage points in regions (from 39.29 to 36.71%, or from 6.2 to 5.5 million people; *Tab. 4, Insert 4*), by 3.27 percentage points in regional centers (from 30.47 to 27.20%, or from 1.7 to 1.5 million people; *Tab. 5, Insert 4*). Moreover, a decrease in voter turnout is noted in the majority of RF constituent entities (in 10 out of 14) and their regional centers (in 9 out of 14).

A similar trend was observed in the elections of deputies of representative bodies of municipalities: voter turnout for the period from 2017 to 2022 decreased by 3.11 percentage points (from 29.35 to 26.24%, or from 931 to 753 thousand people; *Tab. 6, Insert 5*). Moreover, voter turnout decreased in 9 out of 12 regional centers.

The decrease in turnout in the 2022 regional elections urges us pay attention to the warnings of experts, according to whom a low turnout may indicate that “the authorities have problems or do not have enough confidence”⁶⁴. However, we should note that the lower turnout at the regional-level elections, compared with the federal-level elections, is, in fact, quite a common phenomenon. Thus, in recent years, voter turnout for the Presidential election, as well as for the all-Russian vote on amendments to the Constitution in the whole country averaged 67%; for the election of deputies

Table 4. Dynamics of turnout for the elections of the heads of RF constituent entities for the period from 2017 to 2022, % of voters*

Amount of RF constituent entities in which...		Average turnout in RF constituent entities		Dynamics (+/-), 2017–2022
turnout declined	turnout increased	2017	2022	
10	4	39.29	36.71	-2.58

* More detailed data on the turnout for the 2017–2022 elections are presented in *Insert 4*.

Table 5. Dynamics of turnout for the elections of the heads of RF constituent entities in regional centers for 2017–2022, % of voters*

Amount of regional centers in which...		Average turnout in 14 regional centers		Dynamics (+/-), 2017–2022
turnout declined	turnout increased	2017	2022	
9	5	30.47	27.20	-3.27

* More detailed data on the turnout for the 2017–2022 elections are presented in *Insert 4*.

Table 6. Dynamics of turnout for the elections of deputies of representative bodies of municipalities of administrative centers of RF constituent entities for 2017–2022, % of voters*

Amount of regional centers in which...		Average turnout in 14 regional centers		Dynamics (+/-), 2017–2022
turnout declined	turnout increased	2017	2022	
9	3	29.35	26.24	-3.11

* More detailed data on the turnout for the 2017–2022 elections are presented in *Insert 4*.

of the RF State Duma – 57%, and for the election of the regional level – 42% (*Tab. 7*).

Table 7. Dynamics of turnout for the main federal and regional elections, % of voters

Election of the President of the Russian Federation / voting on amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation	year	2000	2004	2008	2012	2018	2020	Average for 2000–2020
	data		68.74	64.39	69.81	65.34	67.54	67.97
RF State Duma elections	year	1999	2003	2007	2011	2016	2021	Average for 1999–2021
	data		61.85	55.67	63.78	60.21	47.88	51.72
Elections of heads of RF constituent entities	year	2013	2014	2017	2018	2019	2022	Average for 2013–2022
	data		44.79	43.97	40.54	42.95	44.58	36.71

⁶³ The turnout indicator was calculated according to official data of the RF Central Election Commission as the sum of the number of “ballots issued to voters who voted early”; “the number of ballots issued to voters in the voting room” and “the number of ballots issued to voters who voted outside the voting room” as a percentage of the “number of voters”. The indicator “Number of voters” denotes “the number of voters included in the list at the end of the voting”.

⁶⁴ Garmonenko D. The government continues to win regardless of the number of voters. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. September 11, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/politics/2022-09-11/1_8536_elections.html

Insert 4

Elections of heads of RF constituent entities (2017, 2022; results broken down by region and regional center*)

		2017				2022				Dynamics (+/-), 2022 to 2017			
Number (persons)		Turnout		Number (persons)		Turnout		Number (persons)		Turnout			
population	voters	persons	% of population	population	voters	persons	% of population	population	voters	persons	% of population	persons	% of voters
CENTRAL FEDERAL DISTRICT (TOTAL FOR 4 CONSTITUENT ENTITIES OF THE DISTRICT)													
4782475	3919678	1655602	34.62	4617178	3779071	1430286	30.98	37.85	-140607	-225316	-3.64	-225316	-4.39
TOTAL FOR 4 REGIONAL CENTERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ENTITIES OF THE DISTRICT													
1794865	1410573	434451	24.21	1759429	1370785	360812	20.51	26.32	-39788	-73639	-3.70	-73639	-4.48
1. RYAZAN OBLAST													
1126739	928667	335721	29.80	1085152	884553	379726	34.99	42.93	-41114	+44005	+5.19	+44005	+6.78
RYAZAN													
537622	421460	92181	17.15	529401	416971	110873	20.94	26.59	-8221	+18692	+3.79	+18692	+4.72
2. TAMBOV OBLAST (the previous elections were held in 2020)													
1007000	835095	539500	53.57	980984	809704	468656	47.77	57.88	-26016	-25391	-5.8	-70844	-6.72
TAMBOV													
292140	245289	82703	28.31	287407	242987	78208	27.21	32.19	-4733	-4495	-1.1	-4495	-1.53
3. YAROSLAVL OBLAST													
1270736	1021588	346097	27.24	1227383	993990	264999	21.59	26.66	-43353	-27598	-5.65	-81098	-7.22
YAROSLAVL													
608079	466703	147843	24.31	593958	438043	91553	15.41	20.90	-14121	-28660	-8.9	-56290	-10.78
4. VLADIMIR OBLAST (previous elections were held in 2018; results of the 2nd round are presented)													
1378000	1134328	434284	31.52	1323659	1090824	316905	23.94	29.05	-54341	-117379	-7.58	-117379	-9.24
VLADIMIR													
357024	277121	111724	31.29	348663	272784	80178	23.00	29.39	-8361	-31546	-8.29	-31546	-10.93
VOLGA FEDERAL DISTRICT (TOTAL FOR 4 CONSTITUENT ENTITIES OF THE DISTRICT)													
5972454	4765114	2164483	36.24	5751654	4553187	1964081	34.15	43.14	-220800	-211927	-2.09	-200402	-2.29
TOTAL FOR 4 REGIONAL CENTERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ENTITIES OF THE DISTRICT													
2259720	1784306	645925	28.58	2266508	1819940	591465	26.10	32.50	+6788	+35634	-2.49	-54460	-3.70
5. KIROV OBLAST													
1291684	1076750	327207	25.33	1234780	1016583	338993	27.45	33.35	-60167	+11786	+2.12	+11786	+2.96
KIROV													
501468	410024	95618	19.07	523543	419669	102739	19.62	24.48	+22075	+9645	+0.55	+7121	+1.16

Continuation of Insert 4

2017				2022				Dynamics (+/-), 2022 to 2017			
Number (persons)		Turnout		Number (persons)		Turnout		Number (persons)		Turnout	
population	voters	persons	% of population	population	voters	persons	% of population	population	voters	persons	% of voters
1516826	1208494	520795	34.33	1484460	1166781	464298	31.28	-32366	-41713	-56497	-3.05
6. UDMURT REPUBLIC											
IZHEVSK											
646277	493261	131327	20.32	645183	492230	152014	23.56	-1094	-1031	+20687	+3.24
7. SARATOV OBLAST											
2479260	1930142	1057605	42.66	2360959	1839804	988939	41.89	-118301	-90338	-68666	-0.77
SARATOV											
845300	675894	349446	41.34	818383	702831	289712	35.40	-26917	+26937	-59734	-5.94
8. REPUBLIC OF MARI EL											
684684	549728	258876	37.81	671455	530019	171851	25.59	-13229	-19709	-87025	-12.22
YOSHKAR-OLA											
266675	205127	69534	26.07	279399	205210	47000	16.82	+12724	+83	-22534	-9.25
NORTHWESTERN FEDERAL DISTRICT (TOTAL FOR 3 CONSTITUENT ENTITIES OF THE DISTRICT)											
2225866	1840778	615026	27.63	2216874	1821816	621012	28.01	-8992	-18962	+5986	+0.38
TOTAL FOR 3 REGIONAL CENTERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ENTITIES OF THE DISTRICT											
988434	780001	221741	22.90	1004011	795311	198812	19.80	+35577	+15310	-22929	-3.10
9. NOVGOROD OBLAST											
612522	505412	143313	23.40	586129	477158	156559	26.71	-26393	-28254	+13246	+3.31
NOVGOROD											
222594	178425	43892	19.72	224861	169050	44556	19.81	+2267	-9375	+664	+0.09
10. KALININGRAD OBLAST											
986261	801351	315337	31.97	1027678	839700	323347	31.46	+41417	+38349	+8010	-0.51
KALININGRAD											
467289	390076	113302	24.25	498260	414900	99814	20.03	+30971	+24824	-13488	-4.22
11. REPUBLIC OF KARELIA											
627083	534015	156376	24.94	603067	504958	141106	23.40	-24016	-29057	-15270	-1.54
PETROZAVODSK											
278551	211500	64547	23.17	280890	211361	54442	19.38	+2339	-139	-10105	-3.79

End of Insert 4

2017				2022				Dynamics (+/-), 2022 to 2017						
Number (persons)		Turnout		Number (persons)		Turnout		Number (persons)		Turnout				
population	voters	persons	% of population	population	voters	persons	% of population	population	voters	persons	% of population			
SIBERIAN FEDERAL DISTRICT (TOTAL FOR 2 CONSTITUENT ENTITIES OF THE DISTRICT)														
2063025	1485357	496383	24.06	33.42	2050933	1739408	507329	24.74	29.17	-12092	+254051	10946	0.68	-4.25
TOTAL FOR 2 REGIONAL CENTERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ENTITIES OF THE DISTRICT														
1004662	668553	175567	17.48	26.26	1007182	648134	169208	16.80	26.11	+2520	-20419	-6359	-0.68	-0.15
12. TOMSK OBLAST														
1078891	771404	198892	18.43	25.78	1068304	756779	234192	21.92	30.95	-10587	-14625	+35300	+3.49	+5.17
TOMSK														
572740	373110	72162	12.60	19.34	570776	352127	84913	14.88	24.11	-1964	-20983	+12751	+2.28	+4.77
13. REPUBLIC OF BURYATIA														
984134	713953	297491	30.23	41.67	982629	982629	273137	27.80	39.44	-1505	+268676	-24354	-2.43	-2.23
ULAN-UDE														
431922	295443	103405	23.94	35.00	436406	296007	84295	19.32	28.48	+4484	+564	-19110	-4.62	-6.52
URAL FEDERAL DISTRICT														
14. SVERDLOVSK OBLAST														
4329341	3401744	1269560	29.32	37.32	4264340	3303323	940546	22.06	28.47	-65001	-98421	-329014	-7.26	-8.85
YEKATERINBURG														
1455514	1086603	271648	18.66	25.00	1493600	1125263	264050	17.68	23.47	+38086	+38660	-7598	-0.98	-1.53
TOTAL FOR 14 RF CONSTITUENT ENTITIES														
19373161	15412671	6201054	31.47	39.29	18900979	15198805	5463254	29.13	36.71	-472182	-215866	-737800	-2.34	-2.58
TOTAL FOR 14 REGIONAL CENTERS OF RF CONSTITUENT ENTITIES														
7483195	5730036	1749332	23.59	30.47	7530730	5759433	1584347	20.93	27.20	+47535	+29397	-164985	-2.66	-3.27

* Federal districts are ranked by the number of RF constituent entities in which elections were held in 2022. Within each federal district, RF constituent entities are ranked by the change in turnout for the period from 2017 to 2022 (persons).

Insert 5

Elections of deputies of representative bodies of municipalities of administrative centers of RF constituent entities*

2017				2022				Dynamics (+/-), 2022 to 2017				
Number (persons)		Turnout		Number (persons)		Turnout		Number (persons)		Turnout		
population	voters	persons	% of population	population	voters	persons	% of population	population	voters	persons	% of population	
1991970	1521756	345480	17.34	1941800	1515950	258346	13.30	17.04	-50170	-87134	-4.04	-5.66
SIBERIAN FEDERAL DISTRICT (TOTAL FOR 4 REGIONAL CENTERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ENTITIES OF THE DISTRICT)												
1. Kyzyl, Republic of Tyva (previous elections were held in 2018)												
116983	67753	34854	29.79	123280	72760	38962	31.61	53.55	+6277	+5007	+1.82	+2.11
2. Gorno-Altaysk, Altai Republic												
63295	43067	13387	21.15	64558	43291	13648	21.14	31.53	+1263	+261	-0.01	+0.45
3. Barnaul, Altai Krai												
633301	510579	101644	16.05	627789	526789	77706	12.38	14.75	-5512	+16210	-3.67	-5.16
4. Omsk, Omsk Oblast												
1178391	900357	195595	16.60	1126193	873110	128030	11.37	14.66	-52198	-27247	-5.23	-7.06
CENTRAL FEDERAL DISTRICT (TOTAL FOR 3 REGIONAL CENTERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ENTITIES OF THE DISTRICT)												
1476509	1143912	304847	20.65	1466257	1126811	232095	15.83	20.60	-10252	-17101	-4.82	-6.05
5. Kursk, Kursk Oblast												
449063	349037	91890	20.46	447387	344569	81810	18.29	23.74	-1676	-4468	-2.17	-2.59
6. Tver, Tver Oblast												
419367	328351	64835	15.46	424912	323347	41321	9.72	12.78	+5545	-5004	-5.74	-6.97
7. Yaroslavl, Yaroslavl Oblast												
608079	466524	148122	24.36	593958	458895	108964	18.35	23.74	-14121	-7629	-6.01	-8.01
FAR EASTERN FEDERAL DISTRICT (TOTAL FOR 2 REGIONAL CENTERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ENTITIES OF THE DISTRICT)												
787043	577880	86729	11.02	782563	566495	72325	9.24	12.77	-4480	-11385	-1.78	-2.24
8. Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, Kamchatka Krai												
180454	132712	21670	12.01	181293	129711	18769	10.35	14.47	+839	-3001	-1.66	-1.86
9. Vladivostok, Primorsky Krai												
606589	445168	65059	10.73	601270	436784	53556	8.91	12.26	-5319	-8384	-1.82	-2.35
NORTHWESTERN FEDERAL DISTRICT												
10. Pskov, Pskov Oblast												
209840	165067	37825	18.03	209073	157780	33349	15.95	21.14	-767	-7287	-2.08	-1.77
NORTH CAUCASIAN FEDERAL DISTRICT												
11. Cherkessk, Karachay-Cherkess Republic												
122478	84332	61770	50.43	122579	83512	56947	46.46	68.19	+101	-820	-3.97	-5.06
VOLGA FEDERAL DISTRICT												
12. Kirov, Kirov Oblast												
501468	408430	94357	18.82	523543	416846	100293	19.16	24.06	+22075	+8416	+0.34	+0.96
TOTAL FOR 12 REGIONAL CENTERS OF RF CONSTITUENT ENTITIES												
5089308	3901377	931008	21.16	5045815	3867394	753355	18.64	26.24	-43493	-33983	-2.52	-3.11

* Federal districts are ranked by the number of RF constituent entities in which elections were held in 2022. Within each federal district, RF constituent entities are ranked by the change in turnout for the period from 2017 to 2022 (persons).

Thus, the regional and municipal elections held during the special military operation, despite the downward trend in voter turnout over the past five years, demonstrated the consolidation of society around the RF President and the party in power, **and this is especially important in the difficult foreign policy context.**

The results of the vote, as well as the trends in public opinion noted by monitoring sociological studies, suggest that, despite all the anxiety of the internal and external political situation developing around Russia, **the people perceive the events with understanding and patience, assess the activities of the head of state with hope and expect him to take further steps aimed to protect the public and national interests of the country.**

In the eight months that have passed since the beginning of the special military operation on the territory of Ukraine, Russian society has changed its understanding of the scale of the implications of the ongoing hostilities, including the nature of threats to national security; it has come to understand that in the current confrontation between Russia and the Collective West, it is impossible to win by engaging only a limited number of people who are fighting “somewhere out there”. As the President said, it is necessary to “protect our land with all the forces and means available to us”⁶⁵.

However, we cannot but agree with experts who emphasize: **“From time to time we need to call a spade a spade ... in order to advance on the front lines, we must give a decisive battle inside”**⁶⁶. In this sense, a vivid marker of the state of affairs in

the country was the process of organizing partial mobilization, which exposed a lot of “nonsense” that had existed and accumulated over a long time.

“...Unfortunately, there is enough stupidity, in fact, as, unfortunately, I repeat once again, it often happens in other areas. **But if we had not started dealing with it the way we are doing it now, we would never have seen the problems that have been accumulating there and, apparently, have been accumulating for quite a long time.** This is a good opportunity for us to deal with all these issues”⁶⁷.

Moreover, the problems that have arisen during the partial mobilization are not the first case and far from the only case when it is under the pressure of external circumstances that long-term brewing problems begin to be revealed, recognized and only then solved.

“Today the main problem is in our power potential. **But its roots go into society, in the absence of ideology, into a decomposed comfortable lifestyle, into the reality that was imposed on us after our defeat and surrender in the 1990s. We are reaping the fruits of the paradigmatic mental occupation of Russia.** Putin has already given the signal to end this, but to whom did he give it? If not direct agents of influence, then the products of this long-term sabotage ... – to representatives of the elite that developed in the turbulent 1990s”⁶⁸.

⁶⁵ Vladimir Putin’s speech at the ceremony of signing the agreements on the accession of the DPR, LPR, Zaporozhye and Kherson oblasts to Russia. Official website of the RF President. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/69465>

⁶⁶ Dugin A. The SMO and the change of the world order. Official website of the Izborsk Club. October 11, 2022. Available at: <https://izborsk-club.ru/23426>

⁶⁷ President’s speech at a meeting with the elected heads of regions. Official website of the RF President. October 10, 2022. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/69567>

⁶⁸ Dugin A. The SMO and the change of the world order. Official website of the Izborsk Club. October 11, 2022. Available at: <https://izborsk-club.ru/23426>

Many experts still pay attention to the existence of “ordinary nomenclature rivalry” in power, that is, to the ongoing struggle of various groups of influence in the system of public administration, in the economy, culture, in the media and virtual communication (Internet, social media) and, ultimately, in almost all spheres of life... When such “nomenclature rivalry” slows down the implementation of national development goals or the realization of public expectations, it begins to arouse questions and confusion in society and ultimately negatively affects its psychological state. This is especially evident at the present time, when the country is facing real and common threats to national security for all population groups.

“In recent days, attention to the course of the special operation and mobilization has intensified among deputies and state propagandists. It seems that the struggle for the truth is already unfolding within the government itself... Of course, there is also an element of the **usual nomenclature rivalry** for positions and titles, that is, the attention of the president. But it cannot be ruled out that the struggle of the notorious Kremlin towers is already coming out”⁶⁹.

It is premature to say that there is an active “alignment of the value system of the ruling vertical (largely formed in the period of the country’s movement in the framework of the liberal-capitalist paradigm preceding the special operation) with the goals of national development, which are based on such concepts as “sovereignty”, “social state”, “social justice”, “traditional values”⁷⁰.

“Social differentiation in our country remains monstrous: 1% of families own 70% of market family assets. It’s not just about twice as much as in the U.S.: **this gap is tearing our society apart...**

In order to avoid a catastrophe and preserve statehood, it is necessary to reduce social differentiation, to bring the gap between the 10% of the richest and the poorest from the current official 16 times (in reality, it is, clearly, much more) to 5 times like it was in the Soviet era, not more than 7 times. **But the whole liberal policy that is returning our once most socially developed country in the world to not just wild capitalism, but wild feudalism and reviving class society, directly contradicts this**”⁷¹.

This is a long process; it will probably take many years. “In order to adequately and qualitatively respond to challenges and pressure, Vladimir Putin needs to show the maximum ability to successfully search... the only right decisions. The fate of the country depends on it”⁷².

⁶⁹ Garmonenko D. The struggle for the truth about the special operation and mobilization unfolded within the government. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. October 6, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/politics/2022-10-06/1_8559_administration.html

⁷⁰ Ilyin V.A., Morev M.V. (2022). On the way toward crossing the inner Rubicon. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 15(4), 9–31

⁷¹ Delyagin M. To reduce social differentiation! *Zavtra*. October 17, 2022. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/blogs/snizit_sotcial_nuyu_differentiatciyu

⁷² Putin under pressure. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. September 18, 2022. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/editorial/2022-09-18/2_8542_editorial.html

Too many vital issues for the country (primarily related to the military operation in Ukraine) today still remain in “limbo”. The “poisonous dogmas of Western economics: about minimizing state participation in economic life; about the “invisible hand of the market” regulating everything by itself...; about the importance and even necessity of foreign investment for the development of the national economy; about competition as an engine

of the economy and others”⁷⁴ have been too deeply ingrained in the Russian elite and bureaucracy over the past 30 years.

However, many things (trends in public opinion reflected in the results of sociological assessments, specific actions of citizens, rapid response of the authorities to problems that arose during the mobilization, active involvement of representatives of public forces in this process, etc.) suggest that the whole country is capable of mobilization in a difficult moment, including the system of public administration, which finds the strength to see and admit its mistakes. This is extremely important, because **“you can win a battle only by taking part in it and fully realizing what is happening – risks, bets, resources, options for the development of events...”**⁷⁵

“Today, it is necessary to effectively understand whether, in principle, it is possible to professionally accurately arrange and effectively deal with difficult-to-structure categories and hyper-complex problems in a short time... **it should be about holistic program-targeted mobilization socio-economic and military-technological development...** In order to adequately confront a hostile globally designed organization, **we will have to design our own organization system of the same power class within the framework of the mobilization project**”⁷³.

The special military operation reveals and forms new features of civil society in Russia, and it is quite possible that this will be the beginning of a real movement of the country to overcome the internal Rubicon in the system of interests, values, goals of the ruling circles and the whole society, which is a necessary condition for Russia to achieve full national sovereignty.

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⁷³ Skripko V. System setup: Some aspects of the mobilization strategy. *Zavtra*. September 22, 2022. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/blogs/nastrojka_sistemi

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