

MONITORING OF THE SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF THE VOLOGDA REGION POPULATION IN FEBRUARY 2026

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In January–February 2026, the Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences (VolRC RAS) conducted the latest round of its ongoing public opinion monitoring survey on the socio-economic and political situation in the country and the region. The findings are presented below.

VolRC RAS has carried out this public opinion monitoring survey since 1996, with fieldwork conducted once every two months. Each wave comprises 1,500 respondents aged 18 and older residing in the cities of Vologda and Cherepovets, as well as in Babaevsky, Velikoustyugsky, Vozhegodsky, Gryazovetsky, Tarnogsky, Kirillovsky, Nikolsky, and Sheksninsky municipal okrugs. The sample is designed to be representative of the regional population by maintaining appropriate proportions in three key dimensions: the urban–rural divide; the distribution across settlement types (rural localities, small and medium-sized towns); and the adult population's gender and age structure. The survey employs a face-to-face questionnaire method administered at respondents' places of residence. The sampling error does not exceed 3%.

The analysis examines the dynamics of assessments across 14 socio-demographic categories, broken down by:

- gender (men, women);
- age (under 30, 30–55, over 55);
- education level (secondary/incomplete secondary, specialized secondary, higher);
- self-assessed income bracket (bottom 20%, middle 60%, top 20%);
- area of residence (City of Vologda, City of Cherepovets, districts of the region).

Sociological data processing and analysis rely on an index-based method. Index values are calculated by subtracting the percentage of negative responses from the percentage of positive responses, and then adding 100 to the result to eliminate negative figures. Consequently, uniformly negative responses would yield an index of 0, uniformly positive responses an index of 200, and an equal split between positive and negative would produce a neutral midpoint of 100.

☉ Compared to the previous monitoring wave (spanning December 2025 to February

2026), the key indicators of social well-being in Vologda Region remained broadly stable. Positive assessments of social mood stood at 70–73%, while the "reserve of patience" indicator ranged between 81% and 83% – levels consistent with those observed a year earlier (February 2025; *Tab. 1*).

📈 It is also worth noting that the reserve of patience Index recorded in February 2026 matches the annual average for 2025 (169 points) and represents the highest level observed over the past ten years.

For citation: Morev M.V., Leonidova E.E. (2026). Monitoring of social well-being of the Vologda Region population in February 2026. *Problems of Territory's Development*, 30(2), 138–146. DOI: 10.15838/ptd.2026.2.142.9

Table 1. Trends in selected indicators of social well-being in the Vologda Region*, % of respondents

Indicator	Response option	2012	2015	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Feb. 2025	Apr. 2025	June 2025	Aug. 2025	Oct. 2025	Dec. 2025	Feb. 2026	Dynamics (+/-), Feb. 2026 to	
																			Dec. 25	Feb. 25
Mood	Excellent mood; normal state	67.3	68.7	71.2	69.9	61.0	66.7	67.3	65.6	69.0	71.6	69.4	71.2	71.9	72.9	70.9	73.2	69.7	-4	0
	Feelings of tension, irritation; fear, anxiety	27.0	25.9	23.1	24.5	30.4	27.3	28.1	29.2	27.2	24.3	26.6	23.8	25.3	24.1	23.5	22.2	24.9	+3	-2
	Social Mood Index	140.3	142.8	148.2	145.5	130.6	139.4	139.3	136.4	141.8	147.3	142.8	147.4	146.6	148.8	147.4	151.0	144.8	-6	+2
Reserve of patience	Things aren't so bad, life goes on; life is hard, but bearable	76.6	78.4	77.1	77.0	72.3	75.8	76.9	76.5	77.9	81.1	79.6	79.6	80.4	79.9	83.5	83.4	81.1	-2	+2
	Our desperate situation is impossible to endure any longer	15.8	14.5	16.3	17.2	19.9	17.7	16.1	14.6	13.9	12.6	14.5	14.0	11.9	12.9	12.1	10.1	11.9	+2	-3
	Reserve of Patience Index	160.8	163.9	160.8	158.8	152.5	158.1	160.8	162.0	164.0	168.5	165.1	165.6	168.5	167.0	171.4	173.3	169.2	-4	+4

* According to the survey methodology, the sampling error does not exceed 3%. Therefore, here and throughout this report, changes of less than 3 percentage points are considered statistically insignificant and are highlighted in blue in the tables.

📈 Self-assessed household income dynamics showed positive changes over the past two months. Among the bottom 20% income group, per capita monthly income (based on self-assessments) rose by 2,000 rubles (from 16,000 to 18,000 rubles), while among the middle 60% it increased by 1,500 rubles (from 30,000 to 31,500 rubles; *Tab. 2*).

📈 Over the twelve months preceding the survey, self-assessed income levels rose across all income groups, with the most notable increase observed among the middle 60% of the region's residents (by 6,000 rubles, from 25,000 to 31,000 rubles). The regional average rose by 5,000 rubles (from 28,000 to 33,000 rubles).

🕒 In February 2026, assessments of the economic situation in the country, the region, and respondents' own household living standards remained essentially unchanged from December 2025 levels:

- positive assessments accounted for 12–15% of responses;
- 40–44% of the region's residents offered neutral assessments;
- negative assessments comprised 26–33% of responses (*Tab. 3*).

📉 A slight decline was observed in the index of the country's economic situation over the past two months (by 4 points, from 90 to 86), and in the index of the region's economic situation over the year from February 2025 to February 2026 (also by 4 points, from 86 to 82).

🕒 Assessments of the political situation in the country and the region showed no significant changes over the past two months, nor over the past year. The share of respondents who view the political situation in the country as "calm and favorable" stands at 20–22%, while for the region this figure is 50–52% (see *Tab. 4*).

Table 2. Per capita household income and the ratio of per capita income to the subsistence minimum (by income group)

Income group	2012	2015	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Feb. 2025	Apr. 2025	June 2025	Aug. 2025	Oct. 2025	Dec. 2025	Feb. 2026	Dynamics (+/-), Feb. 2026 to	
																		Dec. 25	Feb. 25
Per capita household income, RUB																			
Bottom 20%	4330	5430	6602	7792	7546	8529	10008	11746	13211	14731	13609	14382	13726	14118	16549	16002	18216	+2214	+4607
Middle 60%	9293	11708	13251	14113	14031	15741	17503	20310	22885	27620	25473	27120	26831	27079	29274	29941	31594	+1653	+6121
Top 20%	19907	23624	27433	28267	28207	30338	37250	40186	43286	51186	48009	50076	53688	52992	49932	52421	51864	-557	+3855
Average for the region	10425	12837	14757	15686	15570	17220	19953	22578	25038	29757	27607	29161	29579	29669	30863	31665	32986	+1321	+5379
Subsistence minimum, RUB*	6563	9639	10658	11042	11509	11767	13633	14519	15608	17910	17910	17910	17910	17910	17910	17910	19128	+1218	+1218
Ratio of per capita income to subsistence minimum by income group, times																			
Bottom 20%	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.0	+0,1	+0,2
Middle 60%	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.7	0	+0,3
Top 20%	3.0	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.9	2.7	-0,2	0
Average for the region	1.6	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.7	-0,1	+0,2

Source: Decrees of the Government of the Vologda Region "On Establishing the Subsistence Minimum per Capita and for Major Socio-Demographic Groups in the Vologda Region". Official Portal of the Government of the Vologda Region. Available at: <https://vologda-oblast.ru>

Table 3. Trends in assessments of the economic and financial situation, % of respondents

Indicator	2012	2015	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Feb. 2025	Apr. 2025	June 2025	Aug. 2025	Oct. 2025	Dec. 2025	Feb. 2026	Dynamics (+/-), Feb. 2026 to	
																		февр. 25	
Russia's economic situation																			
Good	10.7	6.2	14.4	14.6	11.7	11.5	11.7	12.1	13.9	14.5	13.0	14.3	14.2	15.1	16.1	14.3	12.0	-2	-1
Average	51.2	46.6	43.9	44.6	42.9	42.7	42.3	43.2	45.7	44.2	46.7	44.9	44.3	43.3	41.5	44.3	44.3	0	-2
Poor	25.5	35.5	27.2	26.1	31.1	30.8	32.9	30.2	26.2	27.6	29.0	29.4	28.5	27.5	26.4	24.7	26.1	+1	-3
Index	85.2	70.7	87.2	88.6	80.6	80.8	78.7	81.9	87.7	86.9	84.0	84.9	85.7	87.6	89.7	89.6	85.9	-4	+2
Region's economic situation																			
Good	9.9	5.2	11.8	11.5	10.8	10.9	11.1	13.8	15.0	16.1	15.2	16.2	15.9	16.5	17.7	15.1	14.6	-1	-1
Average	49.4	39.9	39.2	41.3	38.3	40.4	40.1	42.7	43.8	42.0	45.3	41.5	40.8	43.5	40.1	40.6	39.5	-1	-6
Poor	29.4	43.0	36.9	34.9	36.9	35.9	36.5	32.6	30.3	31.4	29.5	33.2	31.7	30.9	32.0	31.3	32.6	+1	+3
Index	80.5	62.2	74.9	76.6	73.9	75.0	74.6	81.2	84.7	84.7	85.7	83.0	84.2	85.6	85.7	83.8	82.0	-2	-4
Household financial situation																			
Good	10.1	7.9	11.8	10.2	9.2	8.4	8.8	10.1	12.4	14.3	13.8	14.0	14.7	13.8	15.3	13.9	13.9	0	0
Average	54.2	49.5	48.7	50.1	46.2	48.6	47.9	51.0	51.6	48.0	47.0	46.5	47.7	50.7	48.9	47.1	44.4	-3	-3
Poor	27.4	31.2	30.2	29.7	33.0	32.4	32.2	27.9	26.4	26.9	29.1	26.4	27.5	25.2	25.3	27.6	29.1	+2	0
Index	82.7	76.7	81.6	80.4	76.2	76.0	76.4	82.2	86.0	87.4	84.7	87.6	87.2	88.6	90.0	86.3	84.8	-2	0

**Table 4. Dynamics of assessments of the political situation,
% of respondents**

Indicator	2012	2015	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Feb. 2025	Apr. 2025	June 2025	Aug. 2025	Oct. 2025	Dec. 2025	Feb. 2026	Dynamics (+/-), Feb. 2026 to	
																		Dec. 25	Feb. 25
In Russia																			
Favorable, calm	39.8	25.5	40.4	45.0	41.0	37.2	27.5	23.3	24.7	23.8	22.3	24.7	24.3	25.6	24.0	22.1	20.3	-2	-2
Tense, critical, explosive	43.2	58.7	45.6	41.6	43.2	47.2	56.9	62.3	59.7	61.6	63.0	61.1	62.1	61.3	60.2	61.9	62.4	+1	-1
Index	96.6	66.8	94.8	103.5	97.8	89.9	70.6	61.0	65.0	62.2	59.3	63.6	62.2	64.3	63.8	60.2	57.9	-2	-1
In the region																			
Favorable, calm	51.8	46.0	54.9	58.0	53.9	53.7	47.9	49.8	52.5	52.3	51.3	52.9	54.3	51.1	52.3	51.9	49.4	-3	-2
Tense, critical, explosive	31.8	39.1	33.3	31.5	32.9	34.3	40.4	41.0	39.1	39.0	40.4	38.3	37.1	38.9	39.2	39.9	39.2	-1	-1
Index	120.0	106.9	121.6	126.4	121.0	119.8	107.5	108.8	113.4	113.3	110.9	114.6	117.2	112.2	113.1	112.0	110.2	-2	-1

Summary

The findings from the February 2026 monitoring wave indicate that the current public assessments of social well-being and the economic and political situation in the country and the region remain broadly stable.

A slight deterioration in public assessments of Russia's economic situation is observed in year-on-year terms, which is most likely attributable to a growing societal demand for improved living standards and quality

of life. As experts note, "for the first time in many years, a clear public demand for a constructive agenda has crystallized in the collective consciousness"²; "the country enters 2026 weary of geopolitics and with a colossal demand for a return to normality in everyday life"³. According to VCIOM Director V. Fedorov: "The army is fighting; the people watch on television and via Telegram channels... as our troops overcome enemy resistance, yet their worries lie elsewhere: the economy, wages, jobs, prices, their children's education, healthcare..."⁴.

² Garmonenko D. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation has revealed the grounds for the victory of United Russia. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/politics/2026-01-19/1_9418_kprf.html

³ Obukhov S.P., Mikhalechuk A.M., Bogachev A.M., Strelkov D.A., Khamadieva T.V., Chervontsev A.V. Results of 2025 from V.V. Putin. Express analysis of the message to the Russian society and foreign opponents. Available at: <https://kprf.ru/politindx/239901.html?ysclid=mlhmrkgapk916136109>

⁴ Alfimov V. From paycheck to victory: How Russian society has changed in a year (interview with V. Fedorov, head of VCIOM). Available at: <https://www.kp.ru/daily/27763.3/5191948/?ysclid=mkgituc55z530676123>

This particular feature is essential for understanding trends in public sentiment: the gradual "normalization" of life under the conditions of the special military operation (SMO) and the "return" of the socio-economic agenda – along with issues of social justice and improving the effectiveness of public administration, primarily within the country – impose special demands on the authorities in terms of meeting public expectations.

The direction in which public opinion on key aspects of citizens' daily lives will

develop further will be revealed by the results of subsequent waves of VolRC RAS monitoring.

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MONITORING OF SOCIAL SENTIMENT

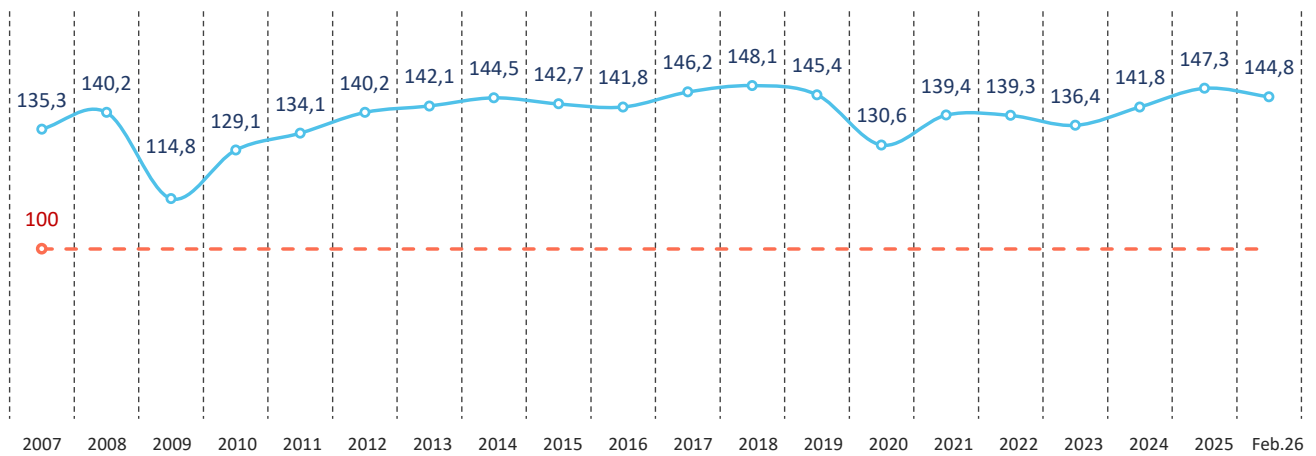


Figure 1. Index of Social Sentiment, points

In the first months of 2026, the Index of Social Sentiment among residents of the Vologda Region remained largely unchanged, holding steady at 2025 levels (145–147 points).

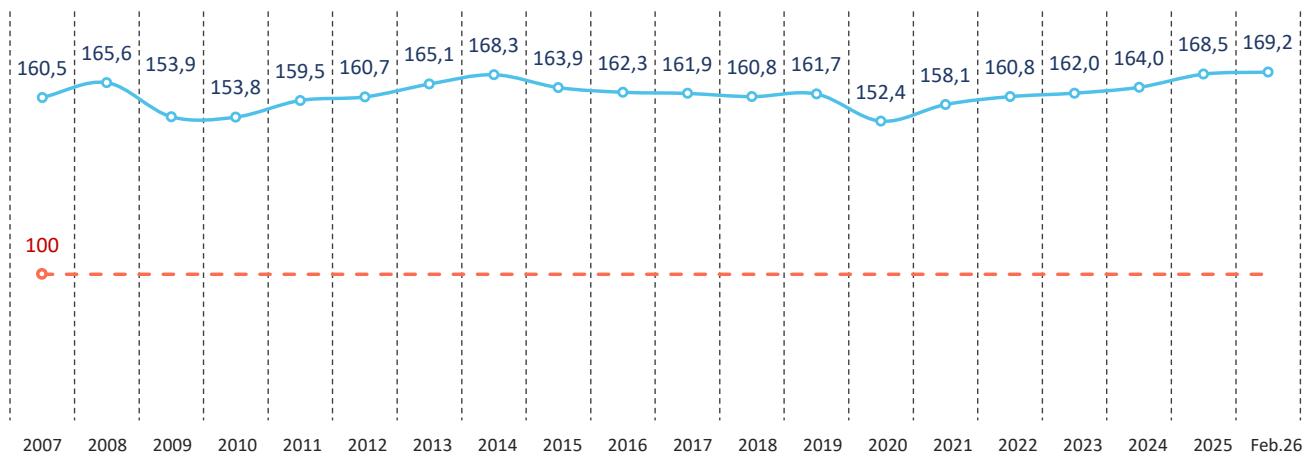


Figure 2. Reserve of Patience Index, points

The start of 2026 brought no significant shifts in how residents of Vologda Region assess their own reserve of patience. The corresponding index stood at 169 points, unchanged from its 2025 level.

Here and throughout: Index values are calculated by subtracting the percentage of negative responses from the percentage of positive responses, and then adding 100 to the resulting figure in order to avoid negative values. Thus, uniformly negative responses would yield an index of 0, uniformly positive responses an index of 200, and an equal split between positive and negative would produce a value of 100 – essentially a neutral midpoint (---).

Data are presented starting from 2007—the final year of Vladimir Putin's second presidential term.

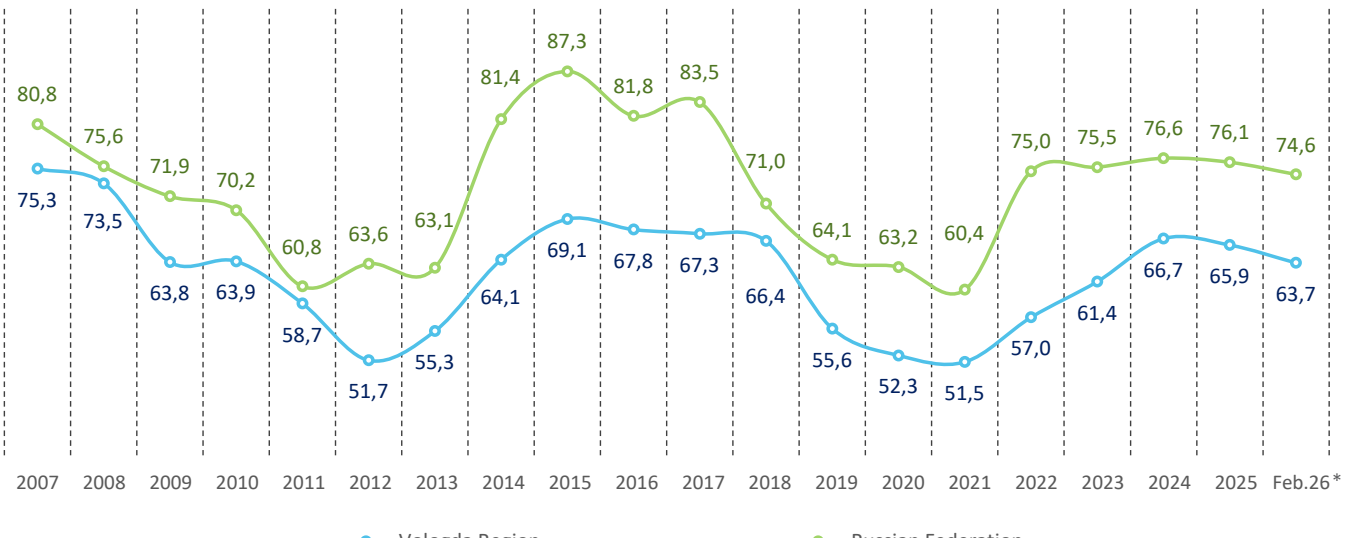


Figure 3. Approval of the activities of the President of the Russian Federation, % of respondents

In February 2026, compared to 2025, the share of positive assessments of the Russian President's performance among residents of the Vologda Region and Russia as a whole remained largely unchanged (64–66% and 75–76%, respectively).

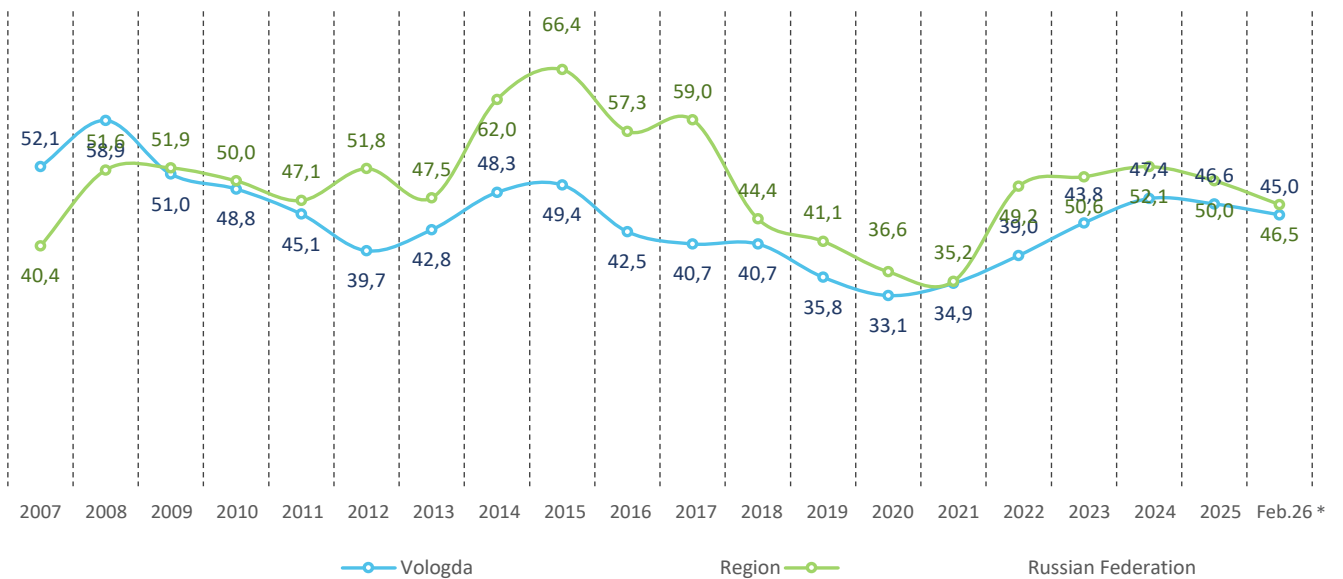


Figure 4. Approval of the activities of the Government of the Russian Federation, % of respondents

In February 2026, the approval rating of the Russian Government's performance within the Vologda Region showed no significant change compared to 2025 (45–47%), while the nationwide figure declined by 3 percentage points (from 50% to 47%).

Here and throughout: Vologda Region data are from VolRC RAS surveys; Russian Federation data are from VCIOM (<https://wciom.ru>).

* VCIOM data on approval of the Russian President and Government are averaged across three survey waves: February 1, 2026; February 8, 2026; and February 15, 2026.

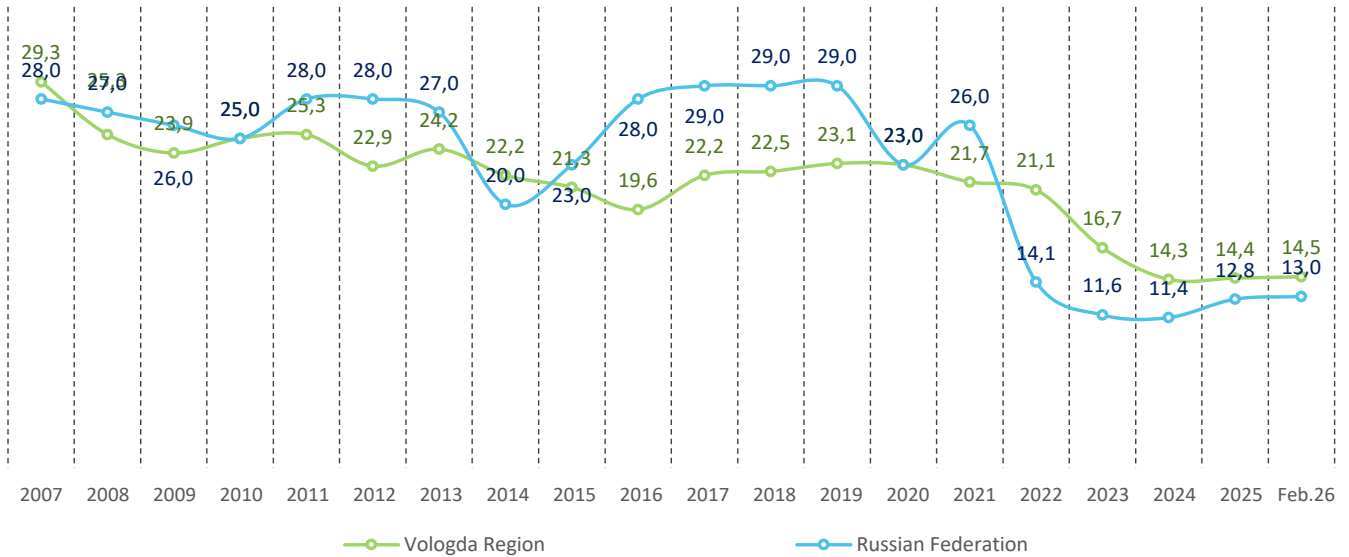


Figure 5. Likelihood of protest actions
(share of respondents who noted the possibility of mass protest rallies),
% of respondents

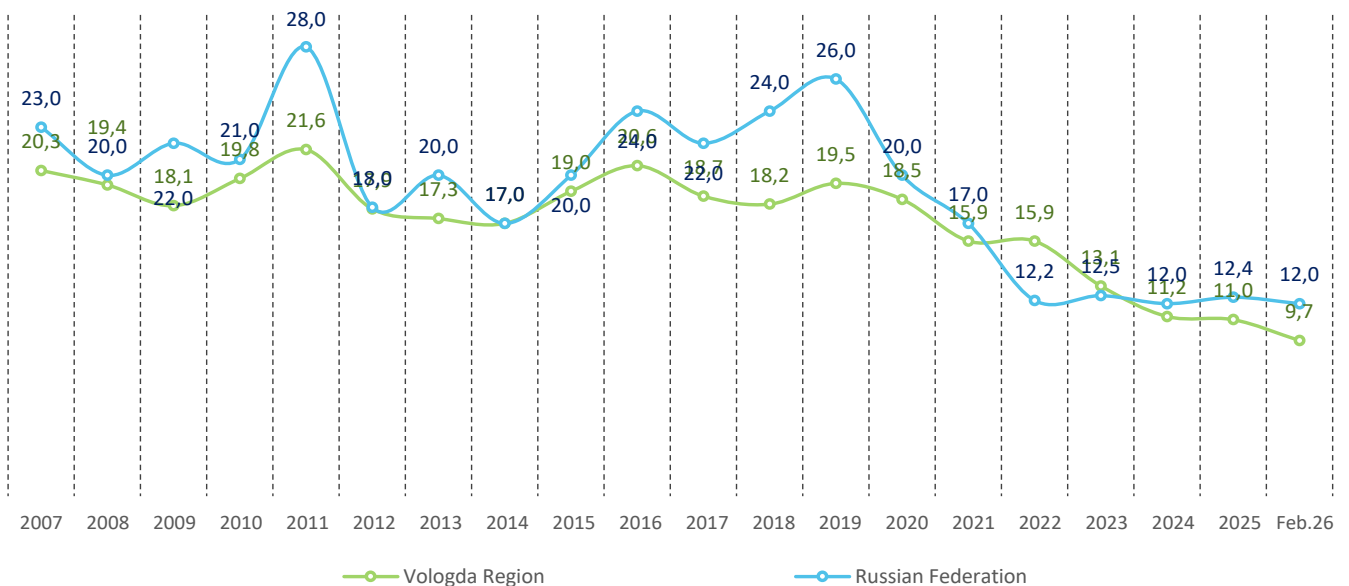


Figure 6. Willingness to participate in protests
(share of respondents who would be ready to take part in mass protest actions),
% of respondents

In February 2026, both regional and nationwide indicators of the perceived likelihood of protests, as well as respondents' own willingness to participate in them, remained at the average annual levels observed in 2025. Among residents of the region, 14–15% consider protest actions possible, compared to 13% among Russians overall. Ten to eleven percent of Vologda Region residents and 12% of Russians express readiness to take part in protest actions.

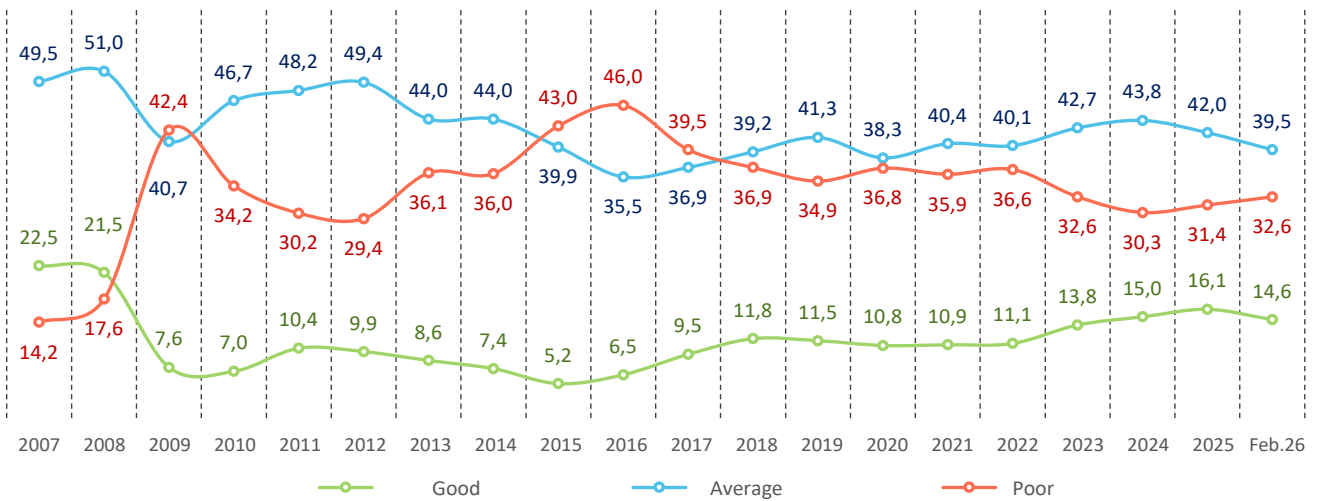


Figure 7. Assessment of the economic situation in the region, % of respondents

In February 2026, residents' assessments of the regional economy in the Vologda Region remained essentially unchanged from 2025 levels. Positive assessments accounted for 15–16% of responses, neutral ones for 40–42%, and negative ones for 31–33%.

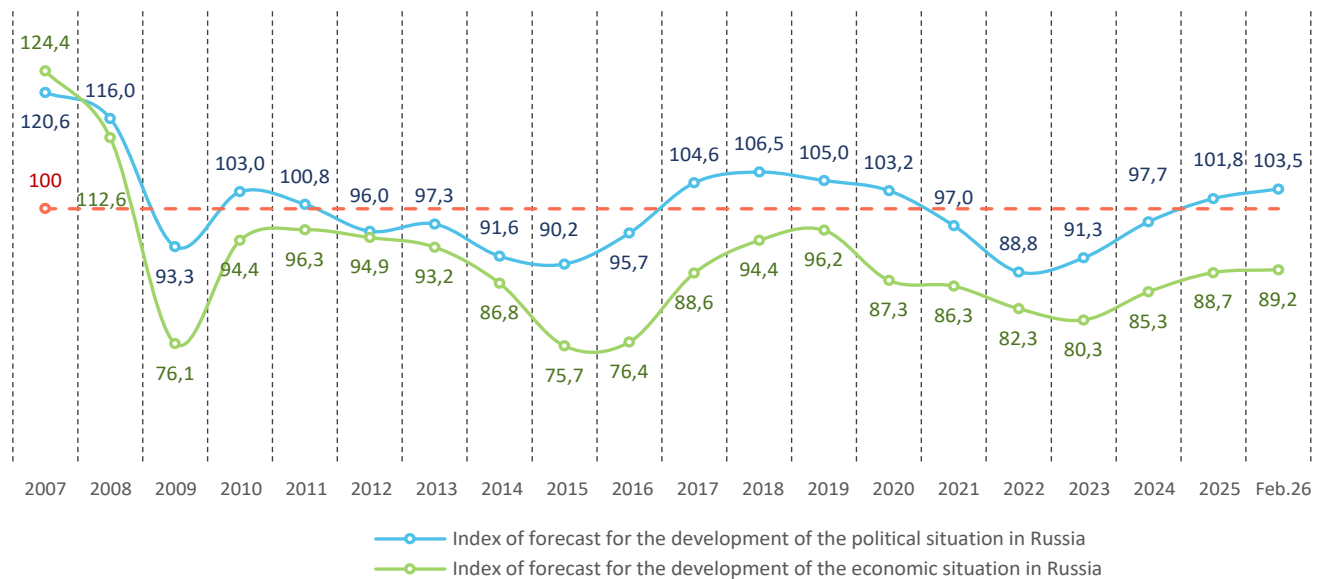


Figure 8. Indices of forecasts for the development of the political and economic situation in Russia*, points

At the start of 2026, the forecast indices for the development of the political and economic situation in Russia are in line with the 2025 annual averages (102–104 and 89 points, respectively).

* The index of forecast for the development of the political situation in Russia is calculated based on an analysis of respondents' positive and negative forecast assessments of the political situation in answer to the question: "What do you think awaits Russia's political life in the coming months?"

The index of forecast for the development of the economic situation in Russia is calculated based on an analysis of respondents' positive and negative forecast assessments of the economic situation in answer to the question: "Do you think the next 12 months will be a good time, a bad time, or something else for the Russian economy?"