

MONITORING OF PUBLIC OPINION

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Public Opinion Monitoring of the State of the Russian Society

As in the previous issues, we publish the results of the monitoring of public opinion concerning the state of the Russian society. The monitoring is conducted by VoIRC RAS in the Vologda Region¹.

The following tables and graphs show the dynamics of several parameters of social well-being and socio-political sentiment of the region's population according to the results of the latest round of the monitoring (April 2024) and for the period from April 2023 to April 2024 (the last seven surveys, that is, almost a year).

We compare the results of the surveys with the average annual data for 2000 (the first year of Vladimir Putin's first presidential term), 2007 (the last year of Vladimir Putin's second presidential term, when the assessment of the President's work was the highest), 2011 (the last year of Dmitry Medvedev's presidency), and 2012 (the first year of Vladimir Putin's third presidential term).

We also present the annual dynamics of the data for 2018 and for 2020–2023².

In February 2023 – April 2024, the President's approval rating increased slightly (by 3 percentage points, from 64 to 67%). The share of negative assessments remains stable (20–21%) and is significantly lower in comparison with positive ones³.

Positive dynamics have been recorded over the past 12 months (from April 2023 to April 2024): the President's approval rating increased by 6 percentage points (from 61 to 67%)⁴.

¹ The surveys are held six times a year in the cities of Vologda and Cherepovets, in Babayevsky, Velikoustyugsky, Vozhegodsky, Gryazovetsky, Tarnogsky Kirillovsky, Nikolsky municipal okrugs, and in Sheksninsky Municipal District. The method of the survey is a questionnaire poll by place of residence of respondents. The volume of a sample population is 1,500 people 18 years of age and older. The sample is purposeful and quoted. The representativeness of the sample is ensured by the observance of the proportions between the urban and rural population, the proportions between the inhabitants of settlements of various types (rural communities, small and medium-sized cities), age and sex structure of the Region's adult population. Sampling error does not exceed 3%.

More information on the results of VoIRC RAS surveys is available at <http://www.vsc.ac.ru/>.

² In 2020, four rounds of the monitoring were conducted. Surveys in April and June 2020 were not conducted due to quarantine restrictions during the spread of COVID-19.

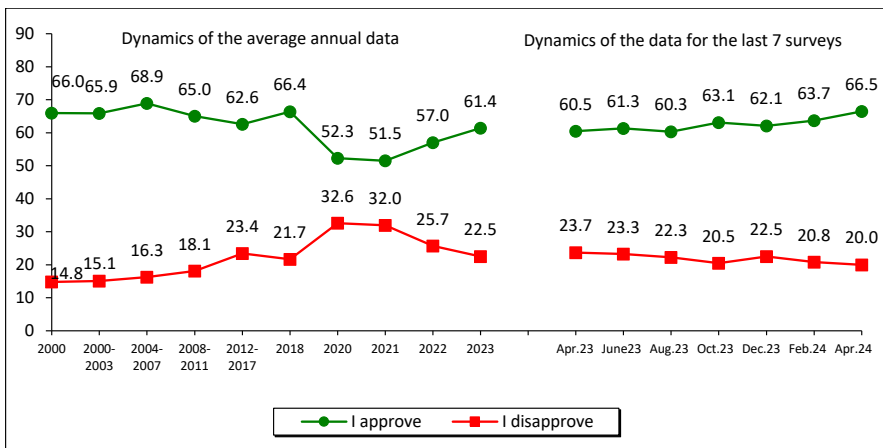
³ Here and elsewhere, in all tables and in the text, positive changes are highlighted in green, negative changes are highlighted in red, and no changes – in blue. Due to the fact that the changes of +/- 3 p.p. fall within the limits of sampling error, they are considered insignificant and are marked in blue.

⁴ Here and elsewhere in the text, the results of a comparative analysis of the data from the survey conducted in April 2024 and the results of the monitoring round conducted in April 2023 are given in the frame.

How would you assess the current work of...? (% of respondents)

Response	Dynamics of the average annual data										Dynamics of the data for the last 7 surveys							Dynamics (+/-), Apr. 2024 to	
	2000	2007	2011	2012	2018	2020	2021	2022	2023	Apr. 2023	June 2023	Aug. 2023	Oct. 2023	Dec. 2023	Feb. 2024	Apr. 2024	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024	
RF President																			
I approve	66.0	75.3	58.7	51.7	66.4	52.3	51.5	57.0	61.4	60.5	61.3	60.3	63.1	62.1	63.7	66.5	+6	+3	
I disapprove	14.8	11.5	25.5	32.6	21.7	32.6	32.0	25.7	22.5	23.7	23.3	22.3	20.5	22.5	20.8	20.0	-4	-1	
Chairman of the RF Government																			
I approve	-	-	59.3	49.6	48.0	38.7	39.9	45.4	50.1	48.3	49.2	50.8	51.3	51.9	52.7	53.7	+5	+1	
I disapprove	-	-	24.7	33.3	31.6	40.4	37.6	32.0	27.6	28.1	27.1	26.1	28.6	27.9	26.2	24.3	-4	-2	
Vologda Region Governor																			
I approve	56.1	55.8	45.7	41.9	38.4	35.0	36.7	40.9	48.1	48.3	48.7	48.1	47.5	49.1	50.8	51.7	+3	+1	
I disapprove	19.3	22.2	30.5	33.3	37.6	42.5	40.5	35.8	30.9	32.3	30.7	29.7	29.7	29.9	27.5	30.1	-2	+3	
Wording of the question: "How would you assess the current work of ...?"																			

How would you assess the way that the RF President is handling his job? (% of respondents, VoIRC RAS data)*



Dynamics (+/-), April 2024 to		
Response	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024
I approve	+6	+3
I disapprove	-4	-1

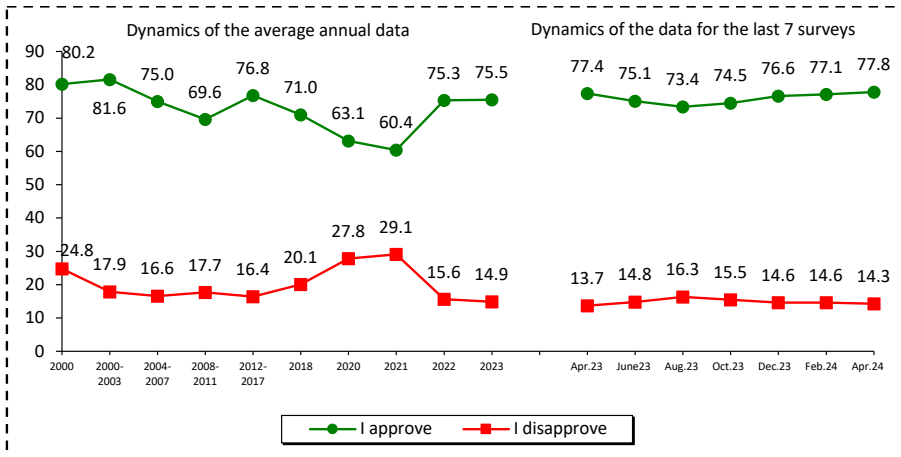
* Here and elsewhere, all graphs show the average annual data for 2000, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, as well as the average annual data for the periods 2000–2003, 2004–2007, 2008–2011, 2012–2017 that correspond to presidential terms.

For reference:

According to VCIOM, the President's approval rating for the period from February 2024 to the beginning of April 2024 is 78%. The proportion of those who disapprove of the way the President is handling his job is 14%.

The President's approval rating in 2024 remains at the level of 2023.

Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the RF President is handling his job?
(% of respondents; VCIOM data)



Dynamics (+/-), April 2024 to		
Response	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024
I approve	0	+1
I disapprove	+1	0

Source: VCIOM. Available at: <https://wciom.ru/>

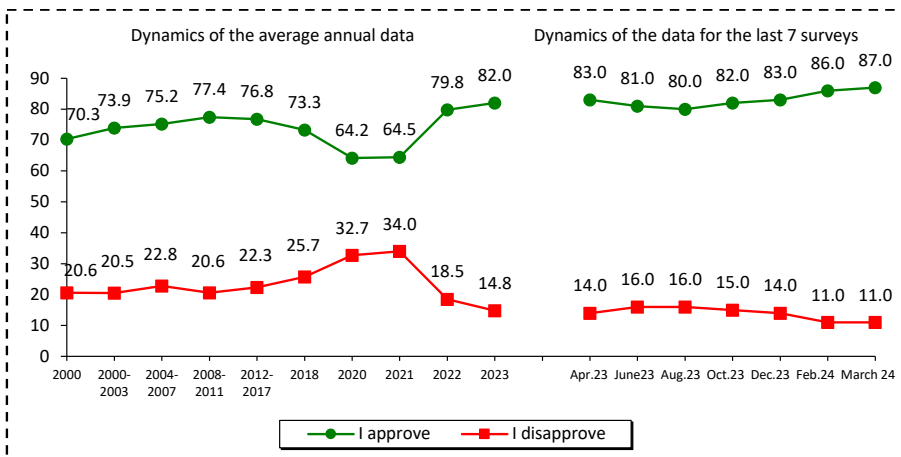
Wording of the question: "In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the Russian President is handling his job?"

Data as of April 2024 – for one survey of April 7, 2024.

According to Levada-Center, the President's approval rating has been increasing since August 2023. In February 2023 – March 2024, the share of those who approve of the way that the head of state is handling his job did not change (86–87%).*

Compared with April 2024, the President's approval rating in March 2024 increased by 4 percentage points, from 83 to 87%.

In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Vladimir Putin is handling his job as President of Russia?
(% of respondents; Levada-Center* data)



Dynamics (+/-), March 2024 to		
Response	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024
I approve	+4	+1
I disapprove	-3	0

Source: Levada-Center*. Available at: <https://www.levada.ru/>

Wording of the question: In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Vladimir Putin is handling his job as President of Russia?

* Included in the register of foreign agents.

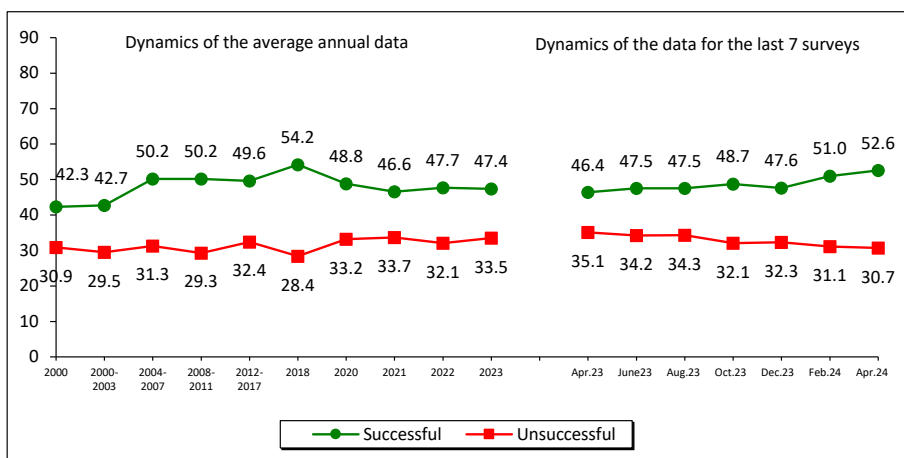
* Included in the register of foreign agents.

In your opinion, how successful is the RF President in handling challenging issues?
(% of respondents; VoIRC RAS data)

From February to April 2024, we observe a slight increase in the share of the region’s residents who consider the President’s actions to strengthen Russia’s international positions successful (by 2 percentage points, from 51 to 53%). The share of those who hold the opposite point of view has not changed and amounts to 31%.

Compared to April 2023, in April 2024, the share of positive assessments concerning the RF President’s work aimed at strengthening Russia’s position in the international arena increased by 6 percentage points (from 46 to 52%).

Strengthening Russia's international position

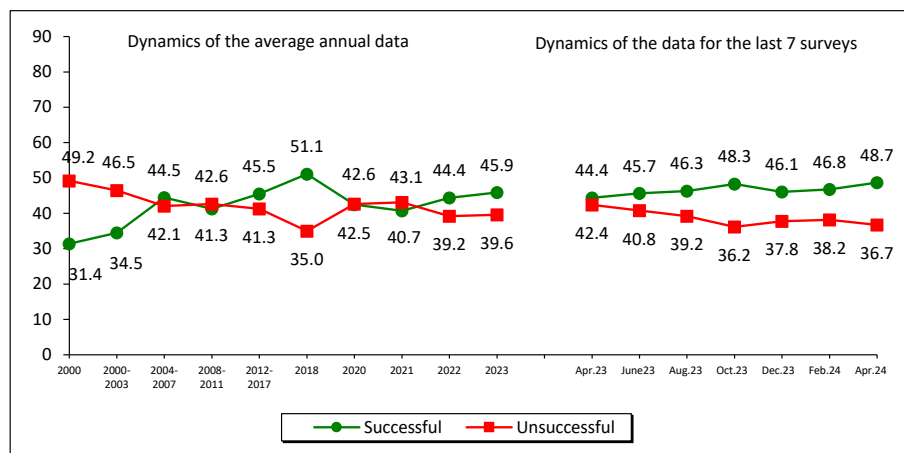


Response	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024
Successful	+7	+2
Unsuccessful	-4	0

Over the past two months, the share of positive judgments about the RF President’s work to restore order in the country has not changed significantly and amounted to 49%. The share of negative judgments is lower and there are small changes toward their reduction.

Positive dynamics are observed during the year of measurements (April 2023 – April 2024): the proportion of positive characteristics increased from 44 to 49%, the share of negative characteristics decreased from 42 to 37%.

Imposing order in the country

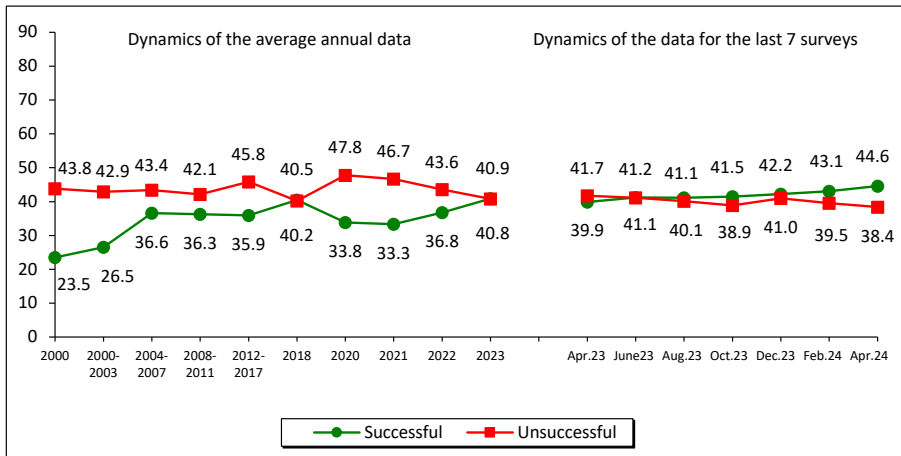


Response	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024
Successful	+5	+2
Unsuccessful	-5	-2

The share of Vologda Region residents who consider the President’s work to protect democracy and strengthen citizens’ freedoms successful in February – April 2024 amounted to 43–45%. The proportion of those who adhere to the opposite point of view remains stable and amounts to 38–40%.

Compared to April 2023, the share of positive assessments of the President’s work to protect democracy and strengthen citizens’ freedoms increased from 40 to 45%, and the proportion of negative judgments decreased from 42 to 38%.

Protecting democracy and strengthening citizens’ freedoms

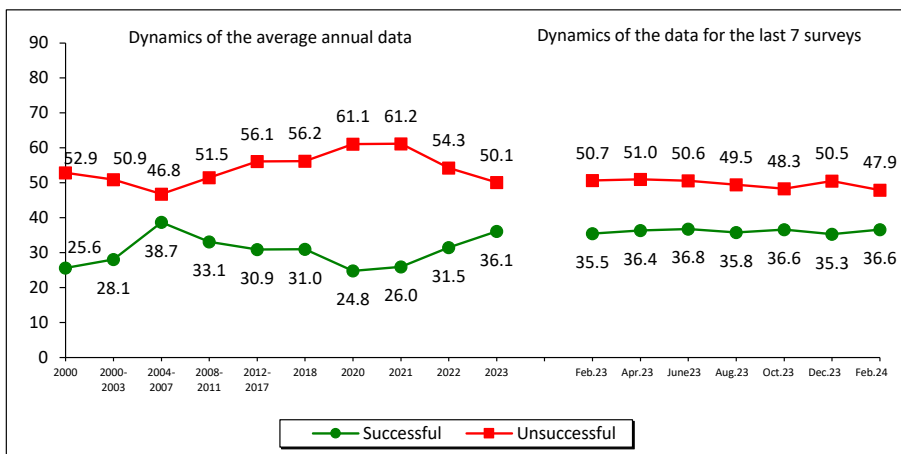


Dynamics (+/-), April 2024 to		
Response	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024
Successful	+5	+2
Unsuccessful	-4	-1

In February – April 2024, assessments of the way the Russian President handles the problem of economic recovery and growth of citizens’ welfare improved slightly: the share of positive opinions increased by 2 percentage points (from 37 to 39%), while the proportion of negative judgments remained at the same level.

Compared to April last year, there were no significant changes in public opinion. The share of positive judgments increased by 3 percentage points (from 36 to 39%), the proportion of negative judgments decreased by 3 percentage points (from 51 to 48%).

Economic recovery, increase in citizens’ welfare



Dynamics (+/-), April 2024 to		
Response	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024
Successful	+3	+2
Unsuccessful	-3	0

The political preferences of Vologda Region inhabitants have remained stable over the past two months. A large proportion still notes that their interests are expressed by the United Russia party (43–45%); the share of supporters of the United Russia party increased insignificantly, by 2 percentage points. The support of the population for the rest of the parties remains unchanged: Communist Party – 9%, LDPR – 6%, Just Russia – 4–3%, New People – 1–2%.

Over the past 12 months, the share of those whose interests are expressed by the United Russia Party has increased by 7 percentage points (from 38 to 45%). The proportion of those who do not support any of the parties decreased by 4 percentage points (from 28 to 24%).

Which party expresses your interests? (% of respondents; VoIRC RAS data)

Party	Dynamics of the average annual data													Dynamics of the data for the last 7 surveys							Dynamics (+/-), Apr. 2024 to	
	2000	2007	2011	Election to the RF State Duma 2011, fact	2012	2016	Election to the RF State Duma 2016, fact	2018	2020	Election to the RF State Duma 2020, fact	2021	2022	2023	Apr. 2023	June 2023	Aug. 2023	Oct. 2023	Dec. 2023	Feb. 2024	Apr. 2024	Apr. 2024	Feb. 2024
United Russia	18.5	30.2	31.1	33.4	29.1	35.4	38.0	37.9	31.5	49.8	31.7	35.2	39.5	37.6	39.3	39.0	40.3	41.7	42.7	44.5	+7	+2
KPRF	11.5	7.0	10.3	16.8	10.6	8.3	14.2	9.2	8.4	18.9	9.3	10.1	9.6	9.3	9.5	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.0	8.5	-1	0
LDPR	4.8	7.5	7.8	15.4	7.8	10.4	21.9	9.6	9.5	7.6	9.9	7.3	7.0	6.9	6.7	7.8	7.9	6.5	6.6	6.5	0	0
Just Russia – Patriots for the Truth	-	7.8	5.6	27.2	6.6	4.2	10.8	2.9	4.7	7.5	4.7	4.9	4.4	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.5	3.5	3.6	2.8	-2	-1
New People*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.3	2.3	1.5	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.3	1.5	1.9	1.4	1.9	0	1
Other	0.9	1.8	1.9	-	2.1	0.3	-	0.7	0.5	-	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.1	0	0
None	29.6	17.8	29.4	-	31.3	29.4	-	28.5	34.2	-	33.9	30.6	26.5	28.0	26.5	25.2	24.6	26.6	25.2	24.2	-4	-1
Unsure	20.3	21.2	13.2	-	11.7	12.0	-	11.2	11.1	-	10.0	10.1	11.1	11.4	11.4	11.2	11.4	9.9	11.4	11.4	0	0

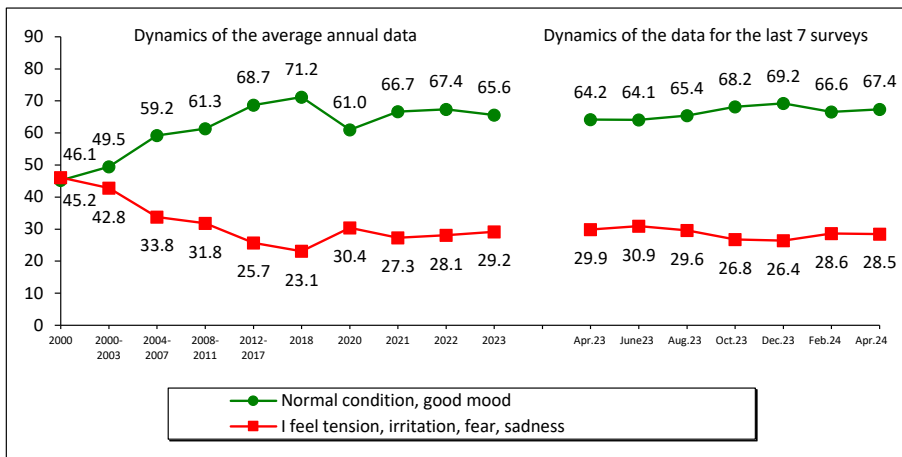
* The New People party was elected to the State Duma of the Russian Federation for the first time following the results of the election held on September 17–19, 2021.

Estimation of social condition (% of respondents; VoIRC RAS data)

In April 2024, social sentiment estimates did not change significantly, compared to February. The largest proportion of people say that their daily emotional state is positive (67%).

The dynamics of the social well-being of the population over the year of observations remain stable. The proportion of positive ratings exceeds negative ones.

Social mood

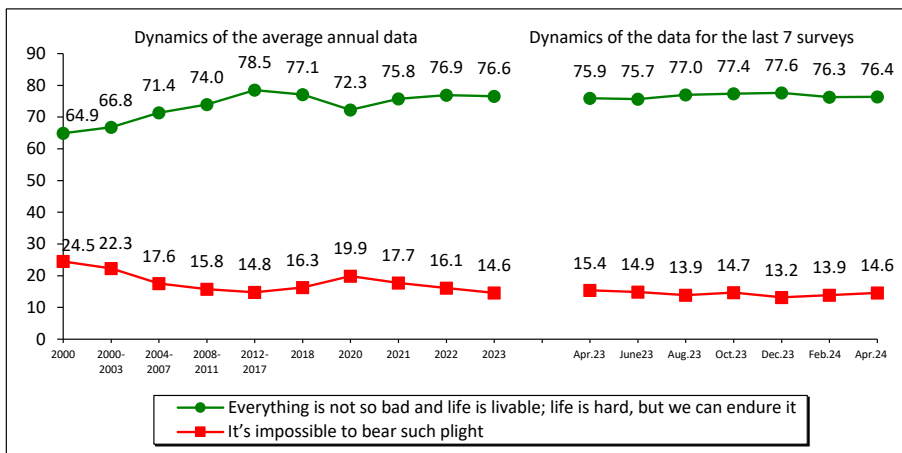


Dynamics (+/-), April 2024 to		
Response	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024
Usual condition good mood	+3	+1
I feel tension, irritation, fear, sadness	-1	0

Over the past two months, the indicators of stock patience have remained consistently high: the proportion of those who believe that “everything is not so bad and life is livable; life is hard, but we can endure it” has remained at the level of 76%. The proportion of negative responses is 13–14%.

During the period from April 2023 to April 2024, there was no deterioration or improvement in the indicators of social patience.

Stock of patience

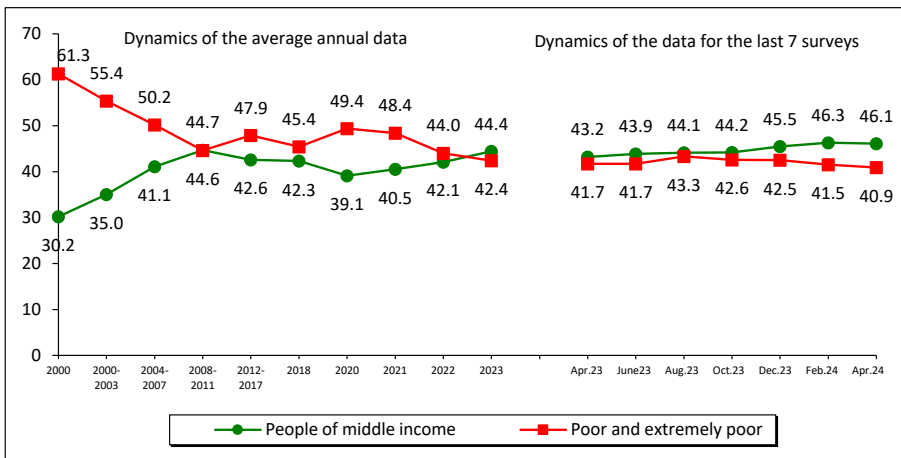


Dynamics (+/-), April 2024 to		
Response	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024
Everything is not so bad and life is livable; life is hard, but we can endure it	+1	0
It's impossible to bear such plight	-1	+1

In April 2024, as in February, the share of Vologda Region residents who consider themselves people of “middle income” was 46%. According to self-assessments, the proportion of the “poor and extremely poor” remained at the level of 40–42%.

There have also been no significant changes in population estimates over the past year. However, the share of Vologda Region residents who consider themselves people of middle income increased by 3 percentage points (from 43 to 46%).

Social self-identification*



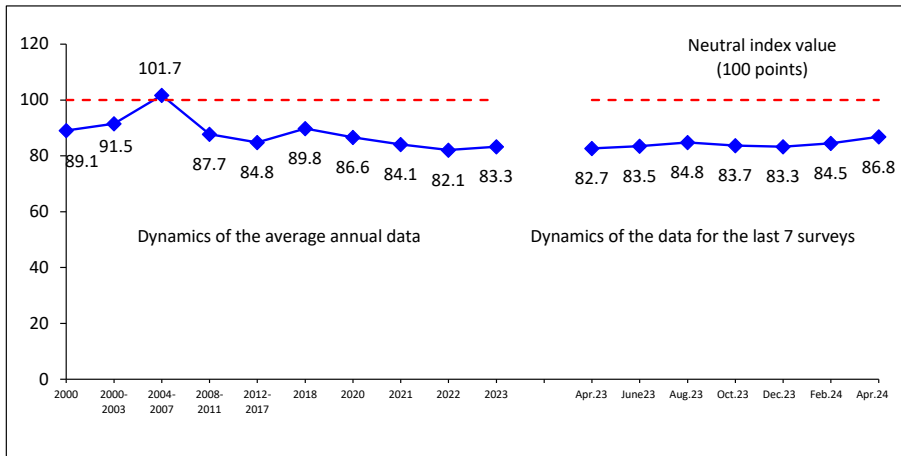
Dynamics (+/-), April 2024 to		
Response	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024
People of middle income	+3	0
Poor and extremely poor	-1	-1

Wording of the question: “What category do you belong to, in your opinion?”

The Consumer Sentiment Index (CSI) increased slightly in February – April 2024: from 85 to 87 points, by 2 points.

Over the past year, there have been positive changes in the values of the CSI: an increase of 4 percentage points from 83 points in April 2023 to 87 points in April 2024.

Consumer Sentiment Index (CSI, points; VoIRC RAS data for the Vologda Region)



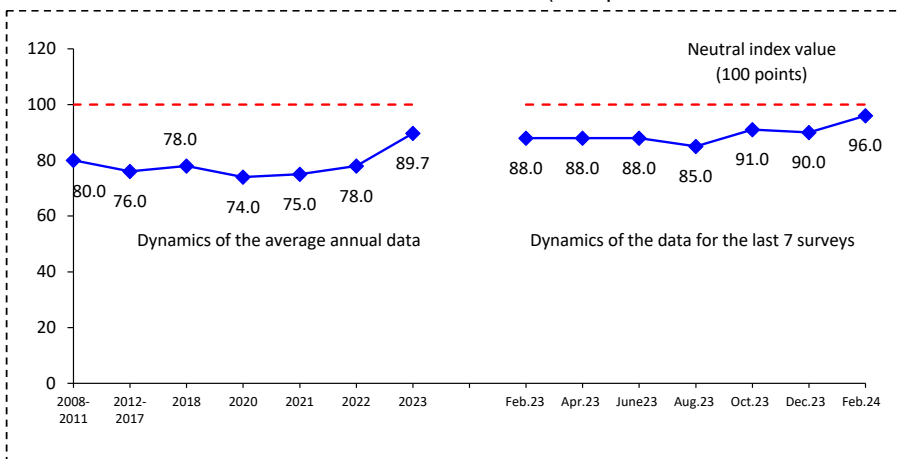
Dynamics (+/-), April 2024 to		
CSI	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024
Index value, points	+4	+2

For reference:

According to the latest data from the all-Russian surveys conducted by *Levada-Center**, for the period from December 2023 to February 2024, the Consumer Sentiment Index increased significantly (by 6 points) and amounted to 96 points.

More positive changes are recorded in the annual dynamics. The CSI increased by 8 points, from 88 to 96 points.

Consumer Sentiment Index (CSI, points; *Levada-Center** data for Russia)



Dynamics (+/-), February 2024 to		
CSI	Feb. 2023	Dec. 2023
Index value, points	+8	+6

The latest data are as of February 2024.

The index is calculated since 2008.

Source: *Levada-Center**. Available at: <https://www.levada.ru/indikatory/sotsialno-ekonomicheskie-indikatory/>

* Included in the register of foreign agents

In February – April 2024, there were no significant changes in estimates of social mood in all major socio-demographic groups. An insignificant (by 3 percentage points) decrease in the proportion of people experiencing predominantly positive emotions in their daily lives is noted among the top 20%.

In the annual dynamics, 7 out of 14 groups show positive trends, while the estimates remain stable in the rest of the groups. At the same time, the most pronounced positive changes are recorded in women, young people under 30 years of age, and people over 55 years of age, people with a low level of education, as well as among the least affluent and middle-income residents of Vologda.

Social mood in different social groups (response: “Wonderful mood, normal, stable condition”, % of respondents; VoIRC RAS data)

Population group	Dynamics of the average annual data										Dynamics of the data for the last 7 surveys							Dynamics (+/-), Apr. 2024 to	
	2000	2007	2011	2012	2018	2020	2021	2022	2023	Апр. 2023	Июнь 2023	Авг. 2023	Окт. 2023	Дек. 2023	Фев. 2024	Апр. 2024	Apr. 2023	Feb. 2024	
Sex																			
Men	50.1	65.9	64.5	69.1	72.8	60.8	65.7	66.8	65.5	65.4	63.4	65.4	66.9	69.6	66.5	67.7	+2	+1	
Women	43.3	61.7	62.0	65.8	69.8	61.2	67.4	67.9	65.7	63.4	64.7	65.3	69.4	68.9	66.5	67.1	+4	+1	
Age																			
Under 30	59.1	71.3	70.0	72.3	80.0	67.6	73.5	77.6	75.0	72.9	72.9	76.2	79.4	78.0	75.1	77.5	+5	+2	
30–55	44.2	64.8	62.5	67.9	72.6	61.8	69.5	69.4	68.8	67.7	68.6	69.2	71.1	72.3	69.9	70.0	+2	0	
Over 55	37.4	54.8	58.3	62.1	65.2	57.4	60.5	61.1	58.2	56.9	55.4	56.3	60.5	62.0	59.2	60.7	+4	+2	
Education																			
Secondary and incomplete secondary	41.7	58.4	57.4	57.2	64.8	56.1	62.1	64.6	62.0	60.2	61.6	63.2	64.4	65.5	63.9	64.7	+5	+1	
Secondary vocational	46.4	64.6	63.6	66.7	72.2	63.5	66.7	68.3	66.1	65.1	63.7	65.1	70.1	69.1	66.0	67.9	+3	+2	
Higher and incomplete higher	53.3	68.6	68.3	77.0	76.8	63.3	71.5	69.5	68.8	67.3	68.2	67.4	70.0	72.8	69.4	69.8	2	0	
Income group																			
Bottom 20%	28.4	51.6	45.3	51.5	57.3	43.4	54.6	57.0	50.1	47.8	50.4	49.6	52.5	54.2	52.2	53.0	+5	+1	
Middle 60%	45.5	62.9	65.3	68.7	71.9	62.6	67.3	68.1	67.4	64.4	65.7	67.9	71.0	73.1	66.9	68.5	+4	+2	
Top 20%	64.6	74.9	75.3	81.1	82.9	75.6	79.9	78.3	73.9	78.2	72.1	70.3	73.2	75.9	74.4	77.5	-1	+3	
Territory																			
Vologda	49.2	63.1	67.1	73.6	71.0	60.9	60.3	59.8	59.6	56.0	57.8	60.8	63.8	64.8	62.5	64.2	+8	+2	
Cherepovets	50.8	68.1	71.2	76.2	75.8	60.4	71.0	71.2	68.1	68.4	67.9	66.4	69.4	70.6	67.2	68.2	0	+1	
Districts	42.2	61.6	57.1	59.8	68.7	61.4	67.8	69.5	67.7	66.6	65.6	67.3	70.2	70.9	68.5	68.8	+2	0	
Region	46.2	63.6	63.1	67.3	71.2	61.0	66.6	67.4	65.6	64.3	64.1	65.3	68.3	69.2	66.5	67.4	+3	+1	

RESUME

The results of the latest round of the public opinion monitoring demonstrate the stability of society and the high adaptive abilities of the population to challenges within the country and in the international arena, as evidenced by the predominance of mostly stable and positive assessments of the main indicators over the last two months (February – April 2024), and the year of observations (April 2023 – April 2024):

- the President’s approval rating remains high (67%); compared with last year there is an increase in support for the head of state from 61 to 67%;

- since April 2023, there has been a steady positive trend in approval of the President’s work aimed at strengthening international positions (46 to 53%), protecting democracy and citizens’ freedoms (from 40 to 45%), as well as restoring order in the country (from 44 to 49%), while no significant changes have been recorded in two months;

- a certain increase in support is also noted in the field of political preferences, in which the United Russia party is consistently on top. While there were no significant changes in the level of support for this party from February to April 2024, in a year there has been an increase in the number of its supporters – those people whose interests it expresses – from 38 to 45%;

- estimates of social mood remained almost unchanged over the two months of observation and over the year: most people continue to assess their emotional state in everyday life as positive (64–67%). At the same time, positive trends are observed in the annual dynamics in seven of the 14 socio-demographic groups, the estimates remain stable in the rest of the groups.

- there were no noticeable changes in the dynamics of self-assessments of the financial situation on average in the region in April 2024, the majority of the population considers themselves “middle-income people” – 46%, but there remains a significant proportion of those who consider themselves “poor and extremely poor” – 41%.

- the values of the Consumer Sentiment Index remained almost at the level of two months ago, the growth was insignificant – by 2 p. (from 85 to 87 p.). In addition, in the long-term measurement (April 2023 – April 2024), the values of the CSI increased by 4 points (from 83 to 87 points), which may indicate some improvement in the financial situation and the forecast for the future.

Thus, there is an implicit, but mostly positive trend in the dynamics of public opinion. In this regard, the results of the surveys conducted at the regional level correlate with the estimates of the population as a whole in the country.

At the same time, we should note that the international situation around Russia continues to be alarming: the goals of the SMO have not yet been achieved, new economic sanctions are being imposed, and NATO is expanding (Sweden officially joined NATO on March 7, 2024, becoming the 32nd ally⁵), The norms of international law are being violated in relation to our country⁶.

In addition, we cannot but recall the tragic event that occurred in Russia on March 22, 2024 – the terrorist attack at Crocus City Hall. Experts note that “the purpose of any terrorist action is the moral

⁵ Sweden will officially join NATO on March 7. Available at: <https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/news/2024/03/07/1024261-shvetsiya-nato-marta>

⁶ Confiscation of assets of the Russian Federation will be a violation of the UN Charter and international law – expert. Available at: https://rapsinews.ru/international_news/20240422/309831684.html; Russian Mission to the UN: Russia condemns Israel’s violations of international law in Gaza. Available at: <https://tass.ru/politika/20205191>

decay of society, devastation and fear”⁷. However, according to the survey data, the political situation in the country and the region has not worsened, and public sentiment is stable.

Perhaps these two factors (support for the course of national development implemented by Vladimir Putin, and the unrelenting nature of threats to national security from the Collective West) had a decisive influence on the main political event in the life of the country: on March 15–17, 2024, the presidential election was held in Russia, in which the current head of state, Vladimir Putin, quite predictably won a landslide victory. “The result obtained by the current President is more than 87% with a turnout of 77.44%, this is the most important confirmation of popular support for his course... This is a historical maximum. There has never been such a result in the modern political history of the country”⁸.

We should also note that compared with Vladimir Putin’s first presidential election (March 26, 2000), the number of people who voted for him almost doubled – from 39.7 to 76.3 million.

“The current high score of Vladimir Putin is not a political success, it is not some kind of accident, it is the result of many years of work in the interests of the people”⁹.

Opinion of A. Mukhin, director general of the Center for Political Information.

April 4, 2024

“There is an effect of “consolidating around the flag” in the RF presidential election... Russians have given a mandate to support the head of state against the background of the SMO”¹⁰.

Opinion of M. Muzaev, election expert

“In the atmosphere of wartime, the election was held in the mode of military mobilization... The logic “for power – or we perish” for many voters turned out to be the main dominant behavior on voting days”¹¹.

Opinion of V. Egorov, RF State Duma deputy

This election result reflects people’s trust in the national leader, and the demand for continuity in government is becoming more and more significant for society. Nevertheless, it is necessary to remember the importance of a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of public opinion assessments. The majority support of the head of state should not serve as a reason to ignore the opinions of “other groups” of the population and their needs. It is important to take into account the diversity of points of view and strive to unite them.

Prepared by K.E. Kosygina, I.M. Bakhvalova

⁷ The tragedy at Crocus City Hall and the attacks on Belgorod united the whole of Russia from citizens to corporations. Available at: <https://eissr.ru/news-and-announcements/eisi-tragediya-v-krokuse-i-ataki-na-belgorod-splotili-vsyu-rossiyu-ot-grazhdan-do-korporatsiy/>

⁸ Experts assessed the past presidential election: There was a supermajority. Available at: <https://rg.ru/2024/03/18/eksperty-ocenili-proshedshie-vybory-prezidenta-slozhilos-superbolshinstvo.html>

⁹ The Expert Institute for Social Research noted an unprecedented level of conolidation around the president. Available at: <https://lenta.ru/news/2024/04/04/edineniya/>

¹⁰ Political scientists discussed the results of the presidential election. Available at: <https://rg.ru/2024/03/19/lider-i-brendy-ocenki.html?ysclid=lugn7jyv3x476786397>

¹¹ Ibidem.