

MONITORING OF PUBLIC OPINION

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The Monitoring of Public Opinion on 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 (August 2024) and for the period from August 2023 to August 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 August 2024 the President's approval rating remained the same as in June 2024 and amounted to 67%. The proportion of negative assessments remains consistently low (19–20%)³.

A significant increase in the President's approval rating is recorded from August 2023 to August 2024: the proportion of positive assessments increased by 7 percentage points (from 60 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.vscs.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.

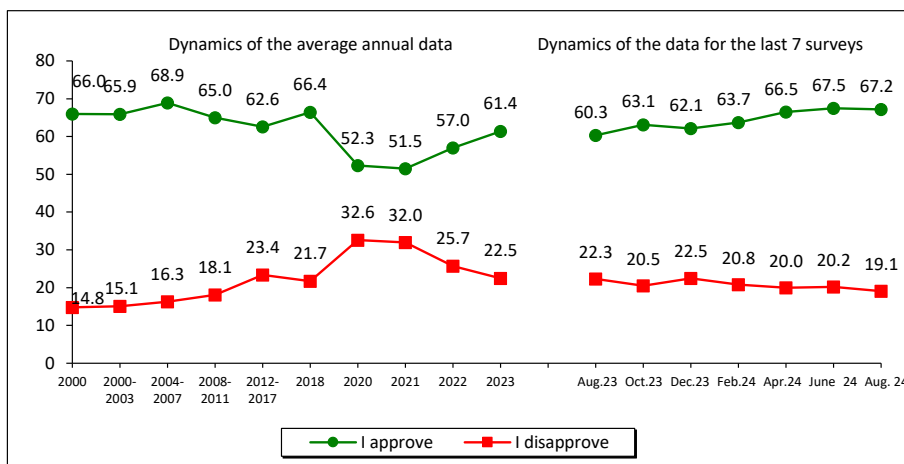
³ Here and elsewhere, in all tables and in the text, positive changes are highlighted in green, negative changes are highlighted in red, and no changes – in blue. Due to the fact that the changes of +/- 3 p.p. fall within the limits of sampling error, they are considered insignificant and are marked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

⁴ Here and elsewhere in the text, the results of a comparative analysis of the data from the survey conducted in August 2024 and the results of the monitoring round conducted in August 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 (+/-), Aug. 2024 to	
	2000	2007	2011	2012	2018	2020	2021	2022	2023	Aug. 2023	Oct. 2023	Dec. 2023	Feb. 2024	Apr. 2024	June 2024	Aug. 2024	Aug. 2023	June 2024
RF President																		
I approve	66.0	75.3	58.7	51.7	66.4	52.3	51.5	57.0	61.4	60.3	63.1	62.1	63.7	66.5	67.5	67.2	+7	0
I disapprove	14.8	11.5	25.5	32.6	21.7	32.6	32.0	25.7	22.5	22.3	20.5	22.5	20.8	20.0	20.2	19.1	-3	-1
Chairman of the RF Government																		
I approve	-	-	59.3	49.6	48.0	38.7	39.9	45.4	50.1	50.8	51.3	51.9	52.7	53.7	53.5	55.3	+5	+2
I disapprove	-	-	24.7	33.3	31.6	40.4	37.6	32.0	27.6	26.1	28.6	27.9	26.2	24.3	23.4	24.1	-2	+1
Vologda Region Governor																		
I approve	56.1	55.8	45.7	41.9	38.4	35.0	36.7	40.9	48.1	48.1	47.5	49.1	50.8	51.7	51.6	53.4	+5	+2
I disapprove	19.3	22.2	30.5	33.3	37.6	42.5	40.5	35.8	30.9	29.7	29.7	29.9	27.5	30.1	28.0	26.7	-3	-1
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 (+/-), Aug. 2024 to		
Response	Aug. 2023	June 2024
I approve	+7	0
I disapprove	-3	-1

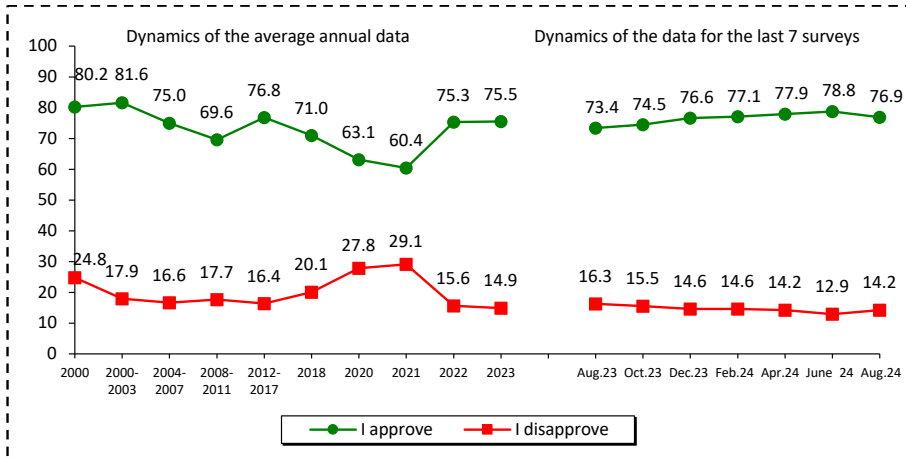
* Here and elsewhere, all graphs show the average annual data for 2000, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, as well as the average annual data for the periods 2000–2003, 2004–2007, 2008–2011, 2012–2017 that correspond to presidential terms.

For reference:

According to VCIOM, the President's approval rating as of the beginning of August 2024 was 77%. The share of positive assessments decreased by 2 percentage points (from 79 to 77%). The proportion of negative judgments was 14%.

The President's approval rating in August 2024 increased by 4 percentage points compared to August 2023 (from 73 to 77%).

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



Response	Aug. 2023	June 2024
I approve	+4	-2
I disapprove	-2	+1

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

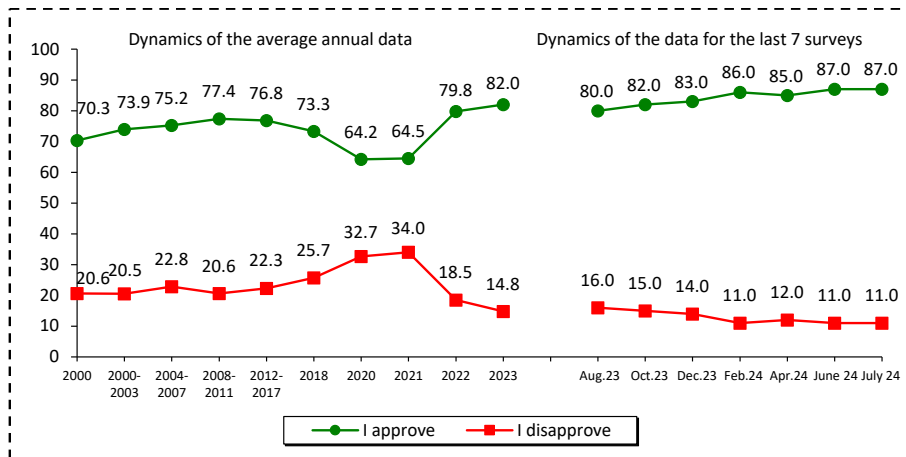
Data as of August 2024 reflect the results of one survey conducted on August 4, 2024.

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

According to Levada-Center, the President’s approval rating has been increasing since 2021. In June – July 2024, the proportion of those who approve of the way that the head of state is handling his job did not change and amounted to 87%.*

Compared with August 2023, the President’s approval rating in July 2024 increased by 7 percentage points, from 80 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)



Response	Aug. 2023	June 2024
I approve	+7	0
I disapprove	-5	0

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?”

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

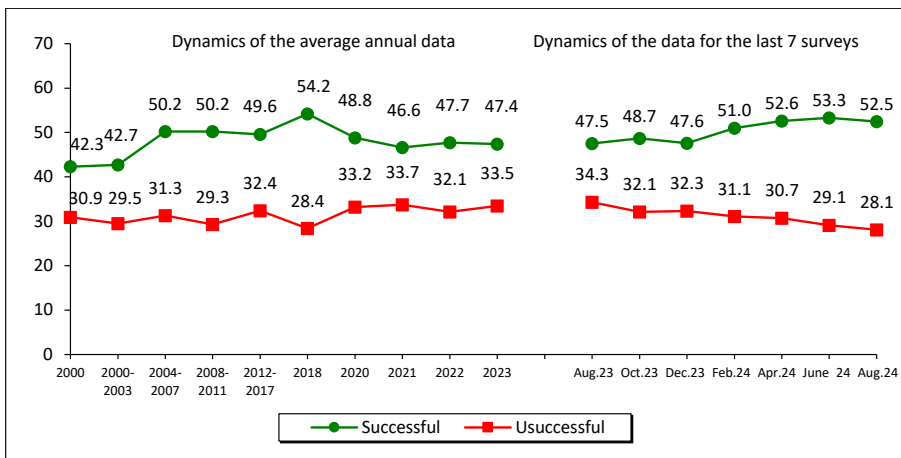
* Included in the register of foreign agents.

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

Over the past two months the share of those who consider the President’s actions to strengthen Russia’s international positions successful did not change and amounted to 52%. The proportion of those who hold the opposite point of view also remained at the level of June 2024 (28–29%).

Over the past 12 months (from August 2023 to August 2024), the share of positive assessments of the president’s work to strengthen Russia’s international positions has increased by 5 percentage points (from 48 to 53%), while the share of negative characteristics has decreased by 6 percentage points (from 34 to 28%).

Strengthening Russia’s international position

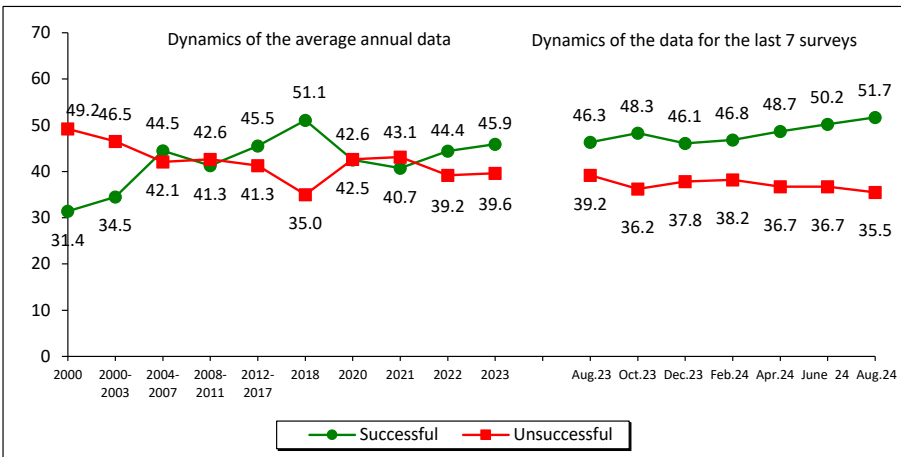


Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2024 to		
Response	Aug. 2023	June 2024
Successful	+5	-1
Unsuccessful	-6	-1

The share of the region’s residents who positively assess the work of the head of state aimed at restoring order in the country in June – August 2024 amounted to 50–52%.

We observe positive dynamics over the year of assessments: the proportion of positive characteristics increased by 5 percentage points (from 46 to 51%); the share of negative judgments decreased by 4 percentage points (from 39 to 35%).

Imposing order in the country

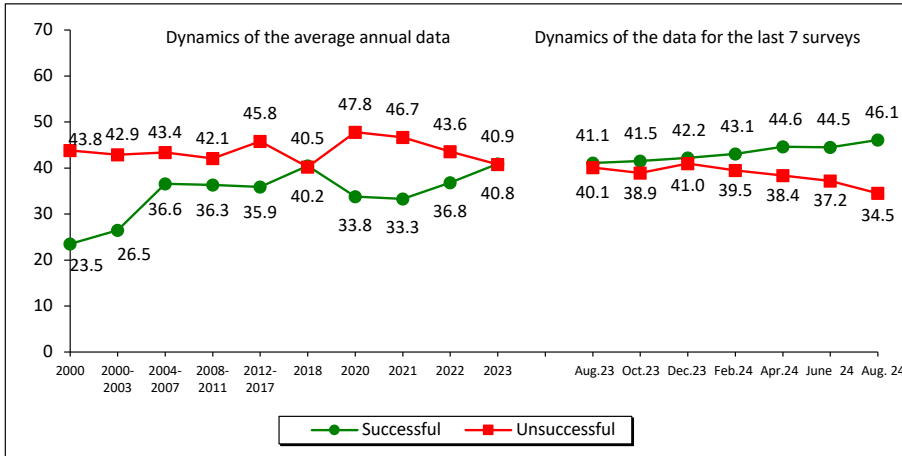


Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2024 to		
Response	Aug. 2023	June 2024
Successful	+5	+2
Unsuccessful	-4	-1

In June – August 2024, the share of positive assessments of the President’s work to protect democracy and strengthen citizens’ freedoms was 46%, negative – 34%.

From August 2023 to August 2024, we observe an increase in the share of positive characteristics by 5 percentage points (from 41 to 46%) when evaluating the work of the head of state to protect democracy and strengthen citizens’ freedoms. The proportion of negative judgments decreased by 6 percentage points (from 40 to 34%).

Protecting democracy and strengthening citizens’ freedoms

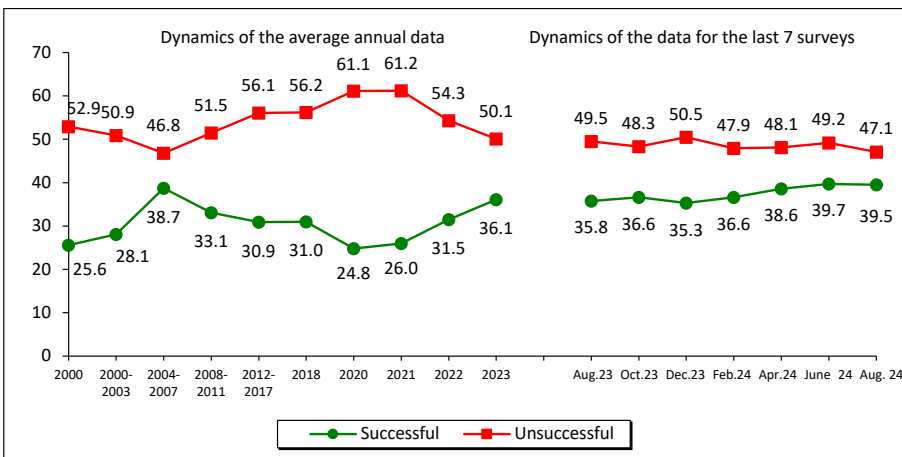


Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2024 to		
Response	Aug. 2023	June 2024
Successful	+5	+2
Unsuccessful	-6	-3

Over the past two months the share of positive assessments of the way the Russian President handles the problem of economic recovery and growth of citizens’ welfare amounted to 40%; the proportion of negative judgments was 47–49%.

Compared to August last year, positive changes were recorded in public opinion regarding the activities of the head of state to boost the economy and increase the welfare of citizens. The share of positive judgments grew by 4 percentage points (from 36 to 40%), the share of negative ones decreased by 2 percentage points (from 49 to 47%).

Economic recovery, increase in citizens’ welfare



Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2024 to		
Response	Aug. 2023	June 2024
Successful	+4	0
Unsuccessful	-2	-2

The political preferences of Vologda Region inhabitants remained stable. In June – August 2024 the share of people whose interests are expressed by the United Russia party was 43%, the Communist Party – 10%, the Liberal Democratic Party – 8–10%, the Just Russia – 3–4%, the New People – 2%

From August 2023 to August 2024, there was an increase in support for the United Russia party (by 4 percentage points, from 39 to 43%). The proportion of the region’s residents who believe that none of the parties represented in parliament reflects their interests has not changed (25%).

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 (+/-), Aug. 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	Aug. 2023	Oct. 2023	Dec. 2023	Feb. 2024	Apr. 2024	June 2024	Aug. 2024	Aug. 2023	June 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	39.0	40.3	41.7	42.7	44.5	43.7	42.5	+4	-1
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	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.0	8.5	8.2	9.7	0	+2
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	7.8	7.9	6.5	6.6	6.5	7.1	6.1	-2	-1
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	4.5	4.5	3.5	3.6	2.8	2.7	3.5	-1	+1
New People*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.3	2.3	1.5	1.9	2.3	1.5	1.9	1.4	1.9	2.3	1.6	-1	-1
Other	0.9	1.8	1.9	-	2.1	0.3	-	0.7	0.5	-	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0	0
None	29.6	17.8	29.4	-	31.3	29.4	-	28.5	34.2	-	33.9	30.6	26.5	25.2	24.6	26.6	25.2	24.2	26.1	25.1	0	-1
Difficult to answer	20.3	21.2	13.2	-	11.7	12.0	-	11.2	11.1	-	10.0	10.1	11.1	11.2	11.4	9.9	11.4	11.4	9.8	11.5	0	+2

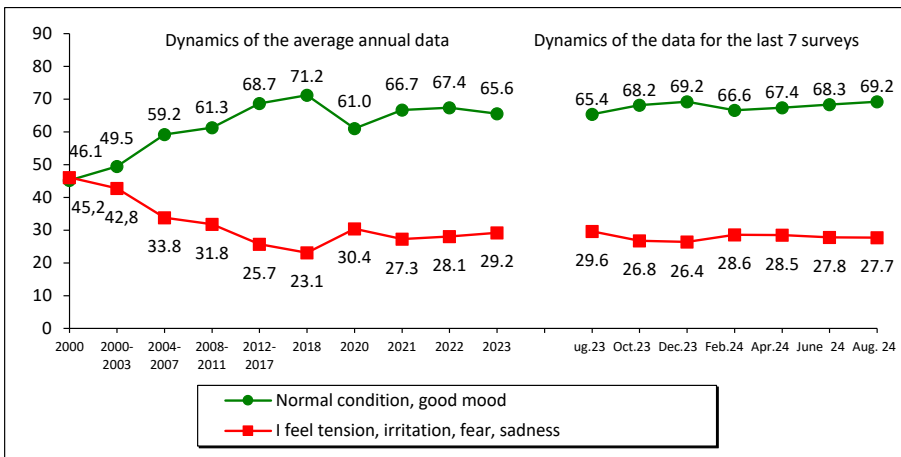
* The New People party was elected to the State Duma of the Russian Federation for the first time following the results of the election held on September 17–19, 2021.

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

From June to August 2024, the share of positive assessments of social mood remained at the level of 68–69%. The proportion of people experiencing predominantly negative emotions also did not change and amounted to 28%.

Over the past 12 months, the proportion of people describing their mood as “normal, fine” increased by 4 percentage points (from 65 to 69%). The proportion of those who more often feel “tension, irritation, fear, sadness” decreased slightly – by 2 percentage points (from 30 to 28%).

Social mood

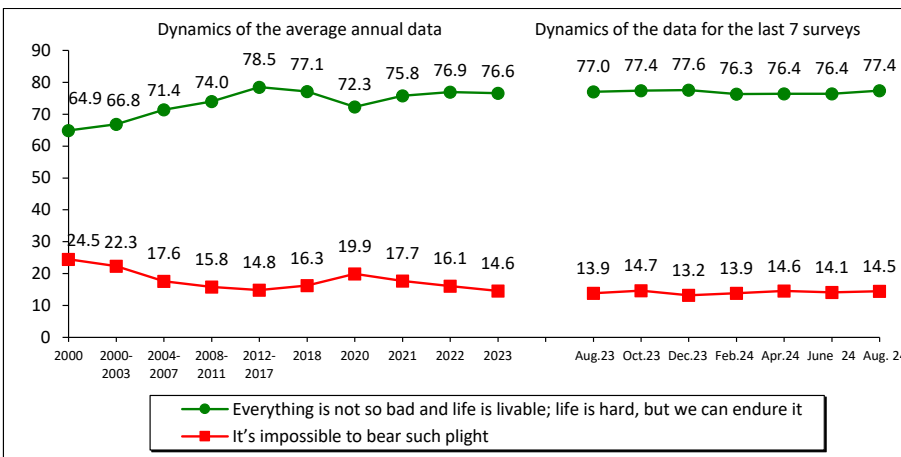


Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2024 to		
Response	Aug. 2023	June 2024
Normal condition, good mood	+4	+1
I feel tension, irritation, fear, sadness	-2	0

In June – August 2024, the proportion of people who believe that “everything is not so bad and life is livable” (76–77%) remains stable, as well as the share of those who believe that “it is impossible to bear such plight” (14–15%).

From August 2023 to August 2024, there was no deterioration or improvement in the indicators of the stock of social patience: the proportion of positive characteristics of the stock of patience is 77%, while the proportion of negative judgments is significantly lower.

Stock of patience

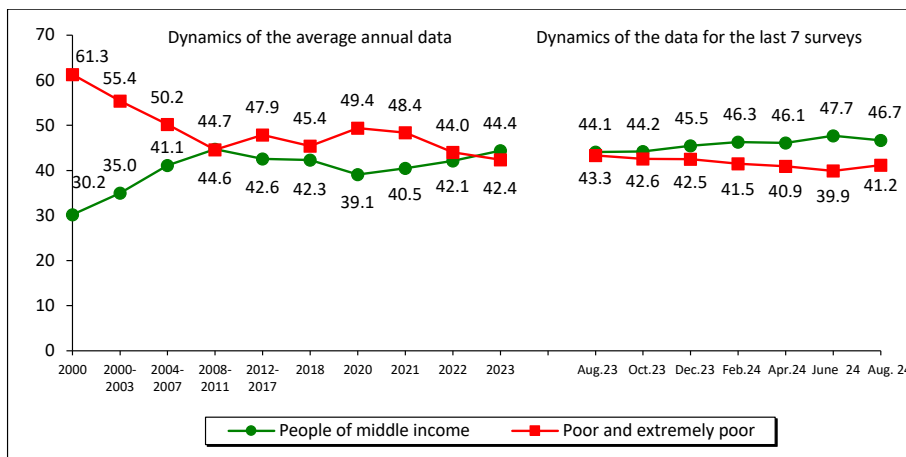


Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2024 to		
Response	Aug. 2023	June 2024
Everything is not so bad and life is livable; life is hard, but we can endure it	0	+1
It's impossible to bear such plight	+1	0

In June – August 2024 the proportion of Vologda Region residents who consider themselves “poor and extremely poor” amounted to 40–41%. The share of those who describe themselves as “middle-income people” was 47%.

There are no noticeable changes in the annual dynamics, as well. However, the share of Vologda Region residents who consider themselves people of average income increased by 3 percentage points (from 44 to 47%)

Social self-identification*



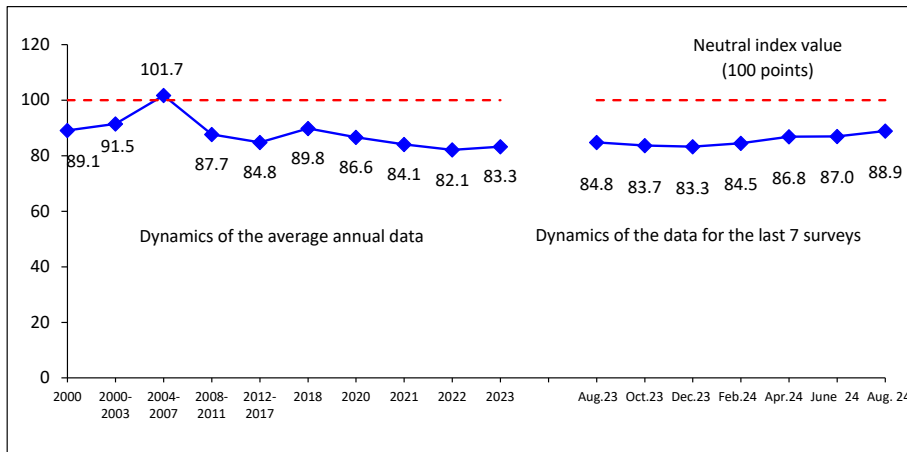
Response	Aug. 2023	June 2024
People of average income	+3	-1
Poor and extremely poor	-2	+1

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

The past two months, the Consumer Sentiment Index (CSI) changed slightly: it increased by 2 percentage points (from 87 to 89 points).

Over the past year, there have been positive changes in the values of the CSI: we observe an increase of 4 percentage points (from 85 points in August 2023 to 89 points in August 2024).

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



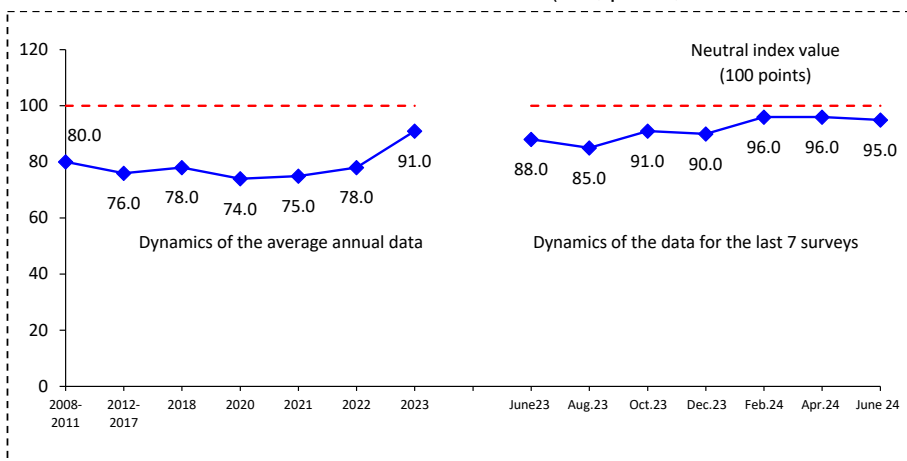
Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2024 to		
CSI	Aug. 2023	June 2024
Index value, points	+4	+2

For reference:

According to the latest data from the all-Russian surveys by Levada-Center* for the period from April to June 2024 the Consumer Sentiment Index did not change and amounted to 95–96 points.

From June 2023 to June 2024, positive changes are observed in the dynamics of the CSI (the index increased by 7 points, from 88 to 95 points).

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



Dynamics (+/-), June 2024 to		
CSI	June 2023	Apr. 2024
Index value, points	+7	+1

The index is calculated since 2008.

The latest data are as of June 2024.

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

* Included in the register of foreign agents.

From June to August 2024 estimates of social mood did not change significantly in the majority of the main socio-demographic groups (in 10 out of 14). The proportion of people experiencing predominantly positive emotions in everyday life in the group with higher and incomplete higher education decreased by 4 percentage points (from 76 to 72%).

Positive changes are observed in three socio-demographic groups: among people under the age of 30 (the share of positive assessments of social mood increased by 4 percentage points, from 72 to 76%), men (by 4 percentage points, from 63 to 67%), people with secondary vocational education (by 6 percentage points, from 65 to 71%).

Over the past 12 months (from August 2023 to August 2024), a predominantly positive trend is observed in social mood: assessments improved in 9 out of 14 socio-demographic groups. At the same time, the most pronounced positive changes (by 6 percentage points) are recorded in women; persons over 55 years of age; people with secondary vocational education, as well as among the 20% of the most affluent residents of Vologda.

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

Population group	Dynamics of the average annual data									Dynamics of the data for the last 7 surveys							Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2024 to	
	2000	2007	2011	2012	2018	2020	2021	2022	2023	Aug. 2023	Oct. 2023	Dec. 2023	Feb. 2024	Apr. 2024	June 2024	Aug. 2024	Aug. 2023	June 2024
Sex																		
Men	50.1	65.9	64.5	69.1	72.8	60.8	65.7	66.8	65.5	65.4	66.9	69.6	66.5	67.7	63.5	67.1	+2	+4
Women	43.3	61.7	62.0	65.8	69.8	61.2	67.4	67.9	65.7	65.3	69.4	68.9	66.5	67.1	72.1	70.9	+6	-1
Age																		
Under 30	59.1	71.3	70.0	72.3	80.0	67.6	73.5	77.6	75.0	76.2	79.4	78.0	75.1	77.5	71.8	76.1	0	+4
30–55	44.2	64.8	62.5	67.9	72.6	61.8	69.5	69.4	68.8	69.2	71.1	72.3	69.9	70.0	71.8	72.8	+4	+1
Over 55	37.4	54.8	58.3	62.1	65.2	57.4	60.5	61.1	58.2	56.3	60.5	62.0	59.2	60.7	62.7	62.1	+6	-1
Education																		
Secondary and incomplete secondary	41.7	58.4	57.4	57.2	64.8	56.1	62.1	64.6	62.0	63.2	64.4	65.5	63.9	64.7	65.5	65.3	+2	0
Secondary vocational	46.4	64.6	63.6	66.7	72.2	63.5	66.7	68.3	66.1	65.1	70.1	69.1	66.0	67.9	65.2	70.7	+6	+6
Higher and incomplete higher	53.3	68.6	68.3	77.0	76.8	63.3	71.5	69.5	68.8	67.4	70.0	72.8	69.4	69.8	76.0	72.1	+5	-4
Income group																		
Bottom 20%	28.4	51.6	45.3	51.5	57.3	43.4	54.6	57.0	50.1	49.6	52.5	54.2	52.2	53.0	51.3	53.7	+4	+2
Middle 60%	45.5	62.9	65.3	68.7	71.9	62.6	67.3	68.1	67.4	67.9	71.0	73.1	66.9	68.5	70.0	71.0	3	+1
Top 20%	64.6	74.9	75.3	81.1	82.9	75.6	79.9	78.3	73.9	70.3	73.2	75.9	74.4	77.5	78.5	75.9	+6	-3
Territory																		
Vologda	49.2	63.1	67.1	73.6	71.0	60.9	60.3	59.8	59.6	60.8	63.8	64.8	62.5	64.2	65.2	66.4	+6	+1
Cherepovets	50.8	68.1	71.2	76.2	75.8	60.4	71.0	71.2	68.1	66.4	69.4	70.6	67.2	68.2	69.4	70.2	+4	+1
Districts	42.2	61.6	57.1	59.8	68.7	61.4	67.8	69.5	67.7	67.3	70.2	70.9	68.5	68.8	69.4	70.3	+3	+1
Region	46.2	63.6	63.1	67.3	71.2	61.0	66.6	67.4	65.6	65.3	68.3	69.2	66.5	67.4	68.3	69.2	+4	+1

RESUME

According to the results of the latest round of the public opinion monitoring, there were no significant changes in the dynamics of public sentiment in June – August 2024:

- the President’s approval rating remains high; in two months, no significant changes have been recorded in the assessments of the way the head of state is handling his job;
- in the field of party and political preferences, the United Russia Party is a stable leader with an approval rating of 43%;
- assessments of social mood also remained almost unchanged: most people assess their emotional state in everyday life as positive (68–69%);
- there have been no noticeable changes in self-assessments of the financial situation: 47% of respondents classify themselves as “middle-income people”, but the proportion of those who consider themselves “poor and extremely poor” remains significant – 41%; the Consumer Sentiment Index remained almost at the level of two months ago (there was an insignificant increase – by 2 points, from 87 to 89 points).

In the last 12 months (August 2023 – August 2024), we observe a noticeable positive trend in public opinion regarding the work of the RF President and social mood; as for the changes in the standard of living, they are less pronounced:

- the RF President’s approval rating increased by 7 percentage points over the year (from 60 to 67%), in general, a steady positive trend in assessments of Vladimir Putin’s work as head of the country has been observed since 2021 (approval level increased by 12 percentage points, from 52 to 64%⁵);
- we observe an increase in the share of positive assessments of the President’s work in various areas such as strengthening international positions (from 47 to 53%), protecting democracy and citizens’ freedoms (from 41 to 46%) and restoring order in the country (from 46 to 52%). Moreover, these foundations of the course of national development pursued by Vladimir Putin over 24 years are supported by the majority of voters. This is evidenced by the results of the presidential election and the growing support for the United Russia party, which underlines the high level of trust in the current leadership of the country;
- we observe an improvement in the emotional state of the region’s population: the proportion of people describing their daily emotional state as “normal, fine” increased by 4 percentage points (from 65 to 69%), especially among young people, men, and people with secondary vocational education;
- there have been no significant changes in social identification by financial status: 41–43% of respondents consider themselves “poor and extremely poor”, 44–46% – “middle-income people”, which at the moment cannot be called an improvement in the quality of life.

However, the Consumer Sentiment Index showed an increase of 4 percentage points over the year (from 85 to 89 points). This indicates some positive changes in welfare of the region’s population and their expectations for the future, which confirms the effectiveness and necessitates the continuation of the introduction of comprehensive measures to improve the quality of life of citizens, which are being undertaken both at the federal and regional levels. In his inaugural speech on May 7, 2024, the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin noted that “our decisions regarding the development of the country and its regions must be effective and fair and must promote the prosperity of Russian families and improve their quality of life”⁶.

⁵ Average for 8 months of 2024 (January – August).

⁶ Putin V. Inauguration on May 7, 2024. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/73981>

Russian public opinion surveys have already recorded that expectations for the future have improved markedly compared to last year: “Respondents expect an improvement in the situation of their family, in the company where they work, and in the country. The difference in expectations ranged from 16 to 21% and, according to most indicators, turned out to be in the “green” zone, while expectations regarding the welfare of the country as a whole showed the greatest positive dynamics. The survey results also indicate that Russians have mentally adjusted to the new reality. The share of respondents indicating that a return to their former life is impossible has doubled – from 20 to 40%”⁷.

The extent to which the leadership of the country and regions will be able to maintain this positive attitude of society regarding the future national development can be judged by the upcoming public opinion surveys, given that the main part of the monitoring took place in July and early August before the invasion of the armed forces of Ukraine into the historical territory of Russia – the Kursk Region. People need time to form their position on significant events.

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

⁷ Russians have accepted the impossibility of returning to their former lives. Citizens are no longer worried too much about their future. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 108, June 6, 2024.