

PUBLIC OPINION MONITORING

DOI: 10.15838/esc.2024.5.95.16

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 (October 2024) and for the period from October 2023 to October 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 – October 2024 the President's approval rating did not change and amounted to 67%. The proportion of negative assessments remains within the limits of 19%³.

Over the past 12 months (from October 2023 to October 2024) the President's approval rating increased by 5 percentage points (from 63 to 68%)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.

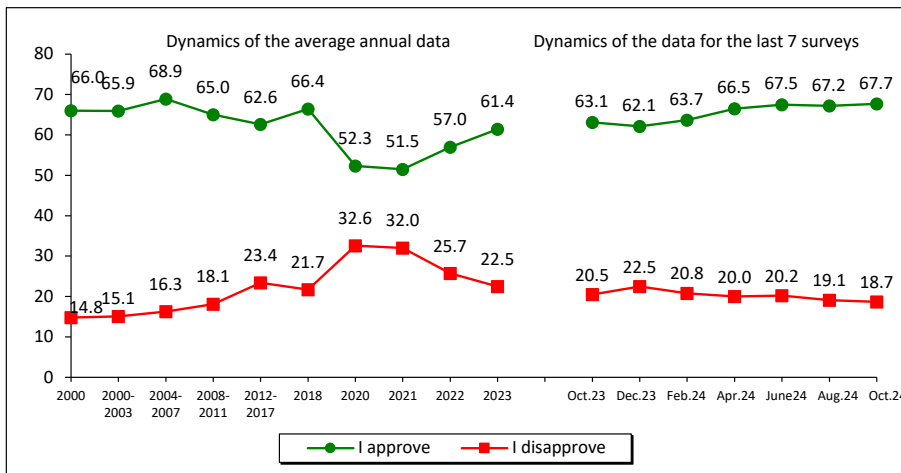
³ Here and elsewhere, in all tables and in the text, positive changes are highlighted in green, negative changes are highlighted in red, and no changes – in blue. Due to the fact that the changes of +/- 3 p.p. fall within the limits of sampling error, they are considered insignificant and are marked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

⁴ Here and elsewhere in the text, the results of a comparative analysis of the data from the survey conducted in October 2024 and the results of the monitoring round conducted in October 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 (+/-), Oct. 2024 to	
	2000	2007	2011	2012	2018	2020	2021	2022	2023	Oct. 2023	Dec. 2023	Feb. 2024	Apr. 2024	June 2024	Aug. 2024	Oct. 2024	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
RF President																		
I approve	66.0	75.3	58.7	51.7	66.4	52.3	51.5	57.0	61.4	63.1	62.1	63.7	66.5	67.5	67.2	67.7	+5	+1
I disapprove	14.8	11.5	25.5	32.6	21.7	32.6	32.0	25.7	22.5	20.5	22.5	20.8	20.0	20.2	19.1	18.7	-2	0
Chairman of the RF Government																		
I approve	-	-	59.3	49.6	48.0	38.7	39.9	45.4	50.1	51.3	51.9	52.7	53.7	53.5	55.3	53.7	+2	-2
I disapprove	-	-	24.7	33.3	31.6	40.4	37.6	32.0	27.6	28.6	27.9	26.2	24.3	23.4	24.1	25.5	-3	+1
Vologda Region Governor																		
I approve	56.1	55.8	45.7	41.9	38.4	35.0	36.7	40.9	48.1	47.5	49.1	50.8	51.7	51.6	53.4	51.9	+4	-2
I disapprove	19.3	22.2	30.5	33.3	37.6	42.5	40.5	35.8	30.9	29.7	29.9	27.5	30.1	28.0	26.7	28.0	-2	+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 (+/-), October 2024 to		
Response	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
I approve	+5	+1
I disapprove	-2	0

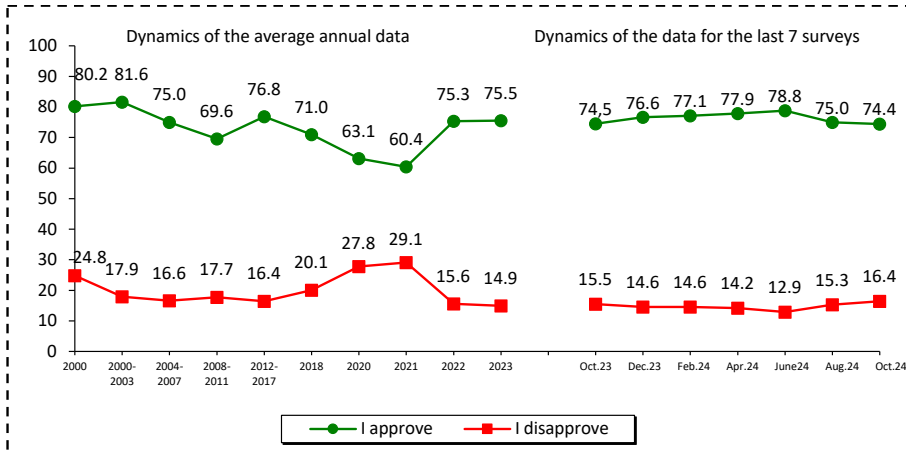
* Here and elsewhere, all graphs show the average annual data for 2000, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, as well as the average annual data for the periods 2000–2003, 2004–2007, 2008–2011, 2012–2017 that correspond to presidential terms.

For reference:

According to VCIOM, the President’s approval rating from August to the first half of October 2024 did not undergo considerable changes: the share of positive assessments is 74%, the proportion of negative ones – 16%.

The President’s approval rating in the first half of October 2024 remained the same as in October 2023.

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



Response	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
I approve	0	-1
I disapprove	+1	+1

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

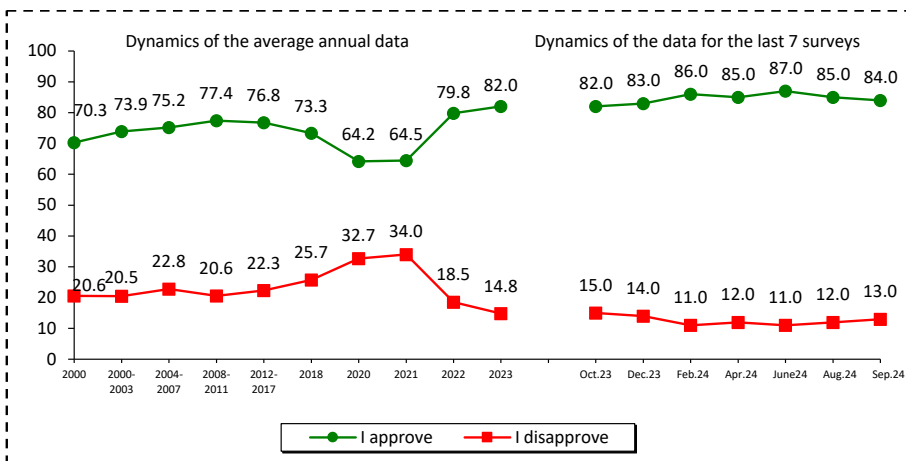
Data as of October 2024 reflect an average for two surveys: as of October 6, 2024, and October 13, 2024.

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

According to Levada-Center*, the share of positive assessments of the President's work in August – October 2024 amounted to 84%; the proportion of negative judgments was 12–13%.

In the annual retrospective, there are also no significant changes: over the past 12 months the share of positive assessments amounted to 82–84%, negative – 13–15%.

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	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
I approve	+2	-1
I disapprove	-2	+1

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?"

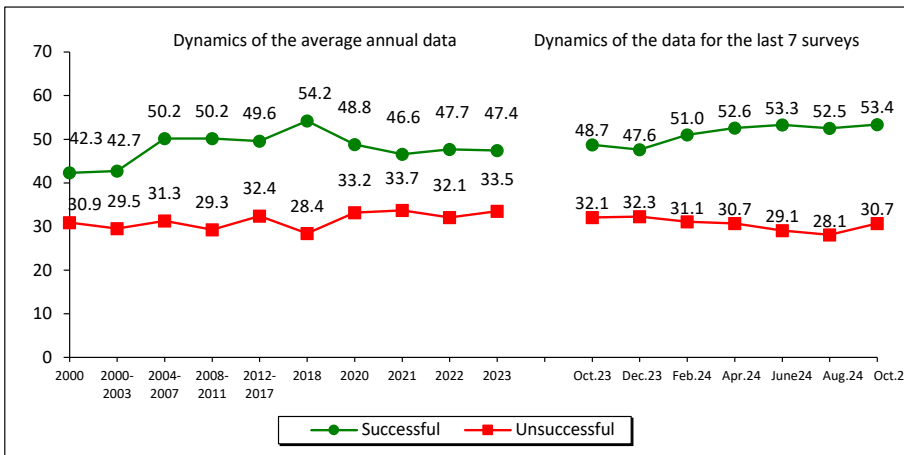
* Included in the register of foreign agents.

Over the past two months the share of those who consider the President’s actions to strengthen Russia’s international positions successful amounted to 53%. The proportion of those who hold the opposite point of view is considerably lower and also remains stable (28–31%).

From October 2023 to October 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 remained virtually at the same level of 31–32%.

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

Strengthening Russia’s international position

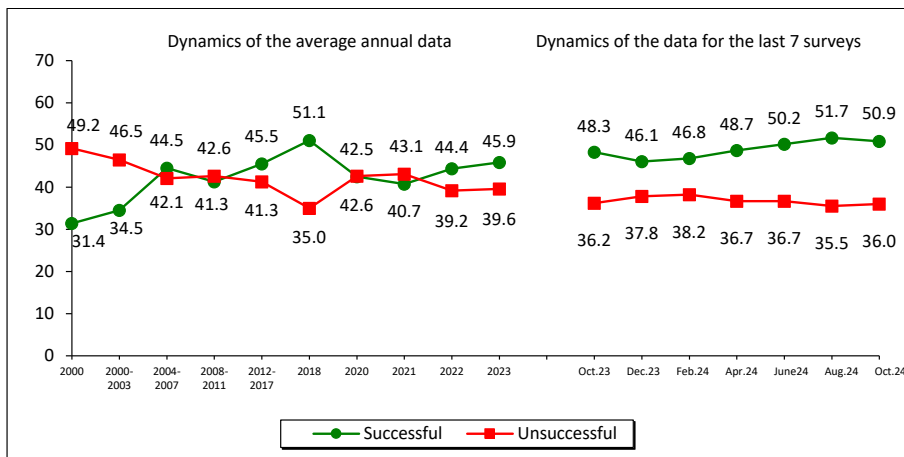


Dynamics (+ /-), October 2024 to		
Response	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
Successful	+5	+1
Unsuccessful	-1	+3

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 August – October 2024 amounted to 51–52%, the proportion of negative judgments is lower: 36%.

Over the 12 months (from October 2023 to October 2024), assessments of the President’s work to restore order in the country have been stable with a slight increase in the share of positive responses by 3 percentage points (from 48 to 51%).

Imposing order in the country

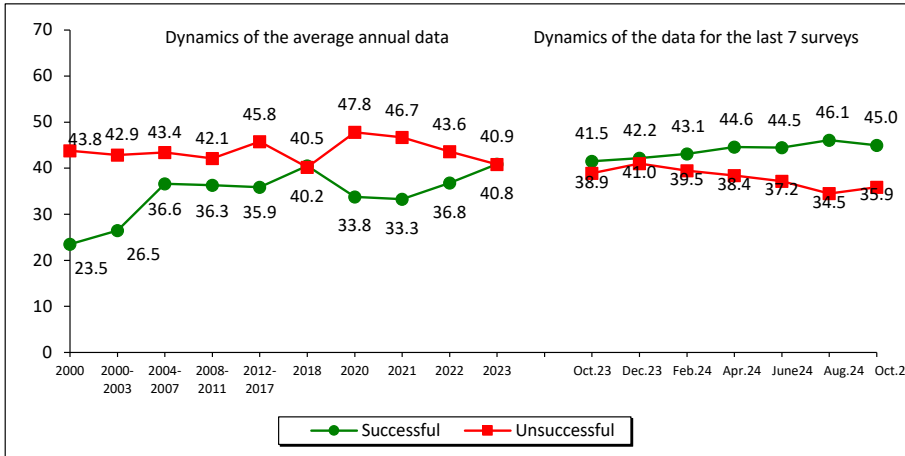


Dynamics (+ /-), October 2024 to		
Response	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
Successful	+3	-1
Unsuccessful	0	+1

In October 2024 the share of positive assessments of the President’s work to protect democracy and strengthen citizens’ freedoms was 41%.

From October 2023 to October 2024 we observe an increase in the share of positive characteristics by 4 percentage points, from 41 to 45% when evaluating the work of the head of state to protect democracy and strengthen citizens’ freedoms. The proportion of negative judgments remains stable and amounts to 36–39%.

Protecting democracy and strengthening citizens’ freedoms

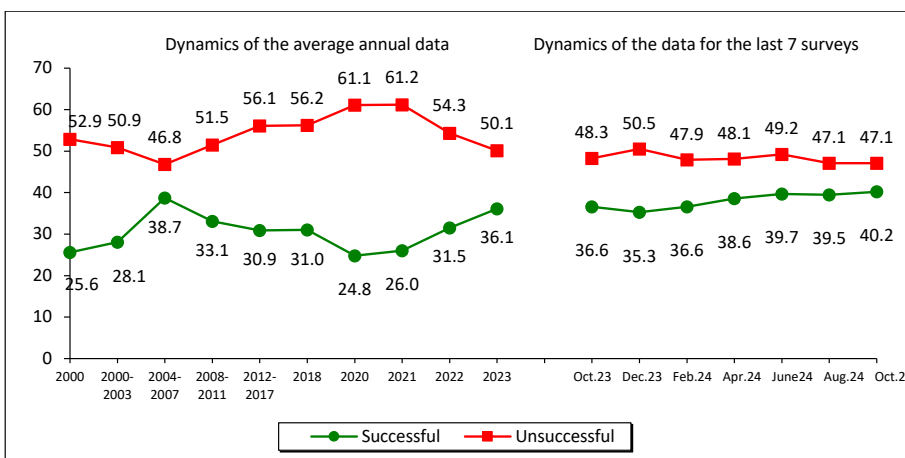


Response	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
Successful	+4	-1
Unsuccessful	-3	+1

Since August 2024 the share of positive assessments of the way the Russian President handles the problem of economic recovery and growth of citizens’ welfare has remained stable (40%). The proportion of negative judgments is still high and remains at the level of 47%.

Over the past 12 months there has been an increase in the share of positive characteristics by 4 percentage points in the assessments of the head of state’s work to protect democracy and strengthen citizens’ freedoms.

Economic recovery, increase in citizens’ welfare



Response	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
Successful	+4	+1
Unsuccessful	-1	0

The political preferences of Vologda Region inhabitants over the past two months do not show any considerable changes: in August – October 2024 the share of people whose interests are expressed by the United Russia party was 42%, the Communist Party – 9–10%, the Liberal Democratic Party – 6–7%, the Just Russia – 3–4%, the New People – 1–2%.

From October 2023 to October 2024 the political preferences of the Vologda Region’s residents remain unchanged. The proportion of people who believe that none of the parties represented in Parliament reflects their interests is 24–25%.

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 (+/-), Oct. 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	Oct. 2023	Dec. 2023	Feb. 2024	Apr. 2024	June 2024	Aug. 2024	Oct. 2024	Oct. 2023	Aug. 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	40.3	41.7	42.7	44.5	43.7	42.5	41.8	+2	-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	9.0	8.5	8.2	9.7	8.7	-1	-1
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	7.9	6.5	6.6	6.5	7.1	6.1	7.5	0	+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	3.5	3.6	2.8	2.7	3.5	4.2	0	+1
New People*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.3	2.3	1.5	1.9	1.5	1.9	1.4	1.9	2.3	1.6	2.3	+1	+1
Other	0.9	1.8	1.9	-	2.1	0.3	-	0.7	0.5	-	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.3	0	0
None	29.6	17.8	29.4	-	31.3	29.4	-	28.5	34.2	-	33.9	30.6	26.5	24.6	26.6	25.2	24.2	26.1	25.1	24.1	-1	-1
Difficult to answer	20.3	21.2	13.2	-	11.7	12.0	-	11.2	11.1	-	10.0	10.1	11.1	11.4	9.9	11.4	11.4	9.8	11.5	11.0	0	-1

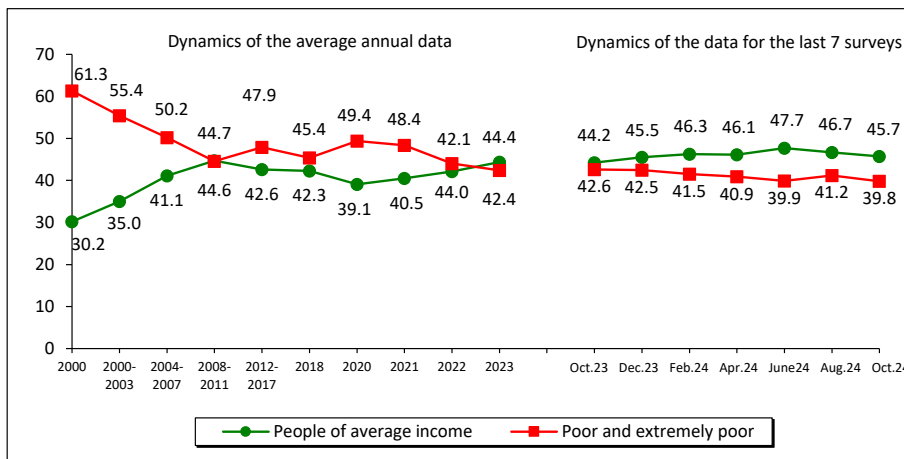
* The New People party was elected to the State Duma of the Russian Federation for the first time following the results of the election held on September 17–19, 2021.

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

From August to October 2024 the share of positive assessments of social mood remained at the level of 69–70%. The proportion of people experiencing predominantly negative emotions also did not change and amounted to 26–28%.

Over the year (from October 2023 to October 2024) the proportion of people describing their mood as “normal, fine” did not change. The proportion of those who more often feel “tension, irritation, fear, sadness” remains stable as well (26–28%).

Social mood

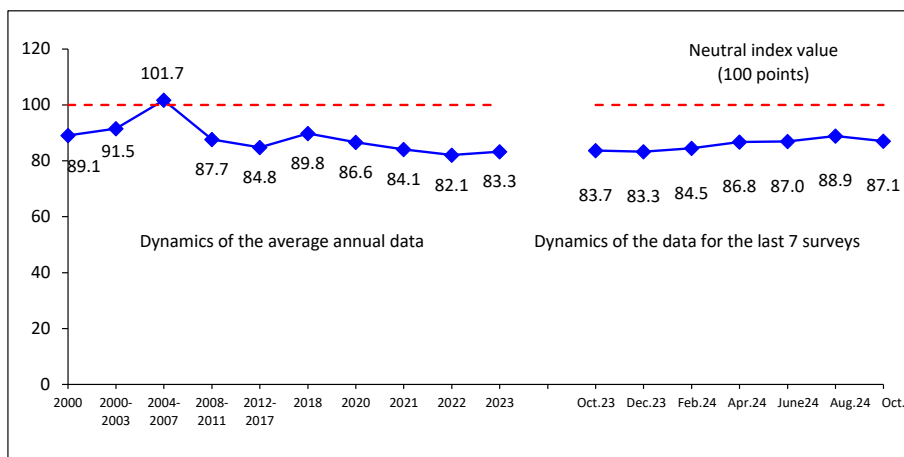


Dynamics (+/-), October 2024 to		
Response	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
Normal condition, good mood	+2	+1
I feel tension, irritation, fear, sadness	-1	-2

The stock of patience remains at a consistently high level: 80% of Vologda Region residents in October 2024 noted that “everything is not so bad and life is livable”. The proportion of those who believe that “it is impossible to bear such plight” did not change, too, and amounted to 14–15%.

From October 2023 to October 2024 the proportion of positive characteristics of the stock of patience was 80–77%; the share of negative judgments was 14%. Thus, the proportion of negative judgments is significantly lower.

Stock of patience

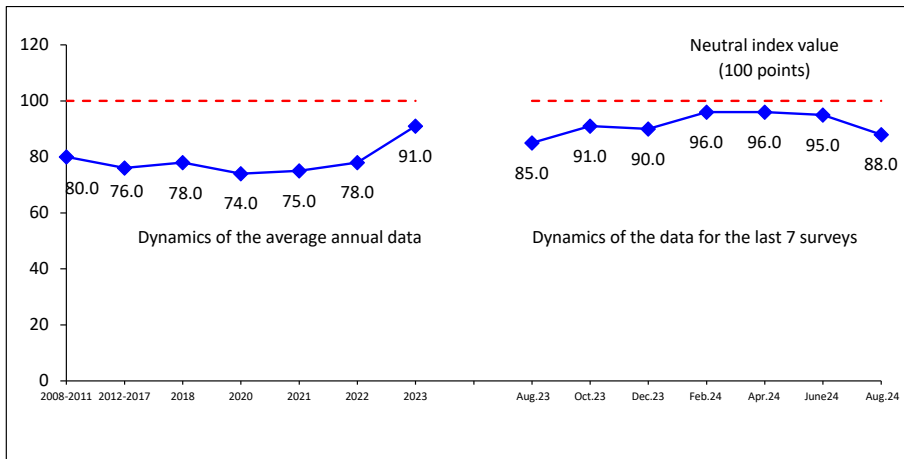


Dynamics (+/-), October 2024 to		
Response	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
Everything is not so bad and life is livable; life is hard, but we can endure it	+2	+2
It's impossible to bear such plight	-1	0

In August – October 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 46–47%.

There are no noticeable changes in the annual dynamics, as well. Over the past 12 months, the share of the “poor and extremely poor” increased by 3 percentage points (from 40 to 43%); the proportion of those who consider themselves “middle-income people” was 44–46%.

Social self-identification



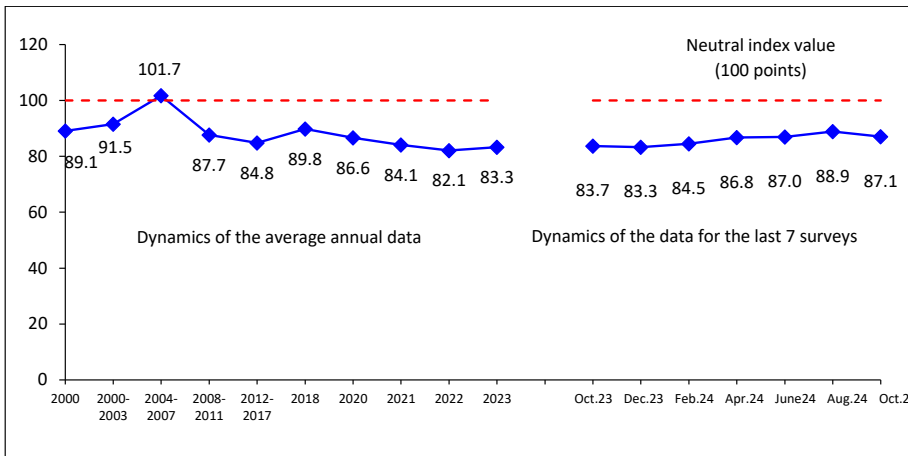
Dynamics (+ /-), October 2024 to		
Response	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
People of average income	+2	-1
Poor and extremely poor	-3	-1

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

In the past two months the Consumer Sentiment Index (CSI) did not change and amounted to 87–88 points.

Over the past year there were no considerable changes in the values of the CSI: we observe an increase by 4 points (from 84 to 87 points).

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



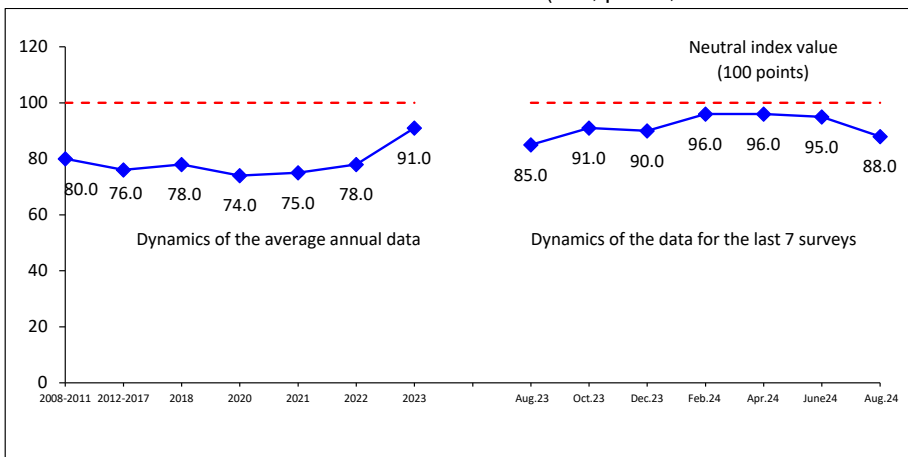
Dynamics (+/-), October 2024 to		
CSI	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
Index value, points	+3	-2

For reference:

According to the latest data from the all-Russian surveys by Levada-Center*, for the period from June to August 2024 the Consumer Sentiment Index dropped considerably (by 7 points, from 95 to 88 points).

However, annual dynamics show insignificant but positive changes. The CSI increased by 3 points, from 85 to 88 points.

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



Dynamics (+/-), August 2024 to		
CSI	Aug. 2023	June 2024
Index value, points	+3	-7

The index is calculated since 2008.

The latest data are as of August 2024.

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

* Included in the register of foreign agents.

From August to October 2024 the estimates of social mood did not change significantly in 12 socio-demographic groups out of 14. The increase in the proportion of people experiencing predominantly positive emotions in everyday life is noted in two groups: among the older generation (by 5 percentage points, from 62 to 67%) and people with secondary vocational education (by 5 percentage points, from 70 to 75%).

We observe positive trends in the annual dynamics in five out of 14 groups, while the estimates remain stable in the rest of the groups. While the most pronounced positive changes are observed in women; people over 55 years of age; people with secondary vocational education; and 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 (+ / -). Oct. 2024 to	
	2000	2007	2011	2012	2018	2020	2021	2022	2023	Oct. 2023	Dec. 2023	Feb. 2024	Apr. 2024	June 2024	Aug. 2024	Oct. 2024	Oct. 2023	Aug. 2024
Sex																		
Men	50.1	65.9	64.5	69.1	72.8	60.8	65.7	66.8	65.5	66.9	69.6	66.5	67.7	63.5	67.1	65.2	-2	-2
Women	43.3	61.7	62.0	65.8	69.8	61.2	67.4	67.9	65.7	69.4	68.9	66.5	67.1	72.1	70.9	74.0	+5	+3
Age																		
Under 30	59.1	71.3	70.0	72.3	80.0	67.6	73.5	77.6	75.0	79.4	78.0	75.1	77.5	71.8	76.1	78.0	-1	+2
30–55	44.2	64.8	62.5	67.9	72.6	61.8	69.5	69.4	68.8	71.1	72.3	69.9	70.0	71.8	72.8	69.8	-1	-3
Over 55	37.4	54.8	58.3	62.1	65.2	57.4	60.5	61.1	58.2	60.5	62.0	59.2	60.7	62.7	62.1	67.4	+7	+5
Education																		
Secondary and incomplete secondary	41.7	58.4	57.4	57.2	64.8	56.1	62.1	64.6	62.0	64.4	65.5	63.9	64.7	65.5	65.3	62.5	-2	-3
Secondary vocational	46.4	64.6	63.6	66.7	72.2	63.5	66.7	68.3	66.1	70.1	69.1	66.0	67.9	65.2	70.7	75.2	+5	+5
Higher and incomplete higher	53.3	68.6	68.3	77.0	76.8	63.3	71.5	69.5	68.8	70.0	72.8	69.4	69.8	76.0	72.1	72.3	+2	0
Income group																		
Bottom 20%	28.4	51.6	45.3	51.5	57.3	43.4	54.6	57.0	50.1	52.5	54.2	52.2	53.0	51.3	53.7	54.8	+2	+1
Middle 60%	45.5	62.9	65.3	68.7	71.9	62.6	67.3	68.1	67.4	71.0	73.1	66.9	68.5	70.0	71.0	73.6	+3	+3
Top 20%	64.6	74.9	75.3	81.1	82.9	75.6	79.9	78.3	73.9	73.2	75.9	74.4	77.5	78.5	75.9	78.4	+5	+3
Territory																		
Vologda	49.2	63.1	67.1	73.6	71.0	60.9	60.3	59.8	59.6	63.8	64.8	62.5	64.2	65.2	66.4	67.9	+4	+2
Cherepovets	50.8	68.1	71.2	76.2	75.8	60.4	71.0	71.2	68.1	69.4	70.6	67.2	68.2	69.4	70.2	70.7	+1	+1
Districts	42.2	61.6	57.1	59.8	68.7	61.4	67.8	69.5	67.7	70.2	70.9	68.5	68.8	69.4	70.3	71.0	+1	+1
Region	46.2	63.6	63.1	67.3	71.2	61.0	66.6	67.4	65.6	68.3	69.2	66.5	67.4	68.3	69.2	70.1	+2	+1

RESUME

The latest round of the public opinion monitoring (September – October 2024) took place in the context of increasing threats to national security for Russia. There are more and more signs that NATO countries are preparing to enter into direct conflict with Russia and use nuclear weapons⁵. In response to external threats, the President of the Russian Federation decided to adjust the foundations of state policy in the field of nuclear deterrence: on September 25, at the meeting of the Security Council standing conference on nuclear deterrence, Vladimir Putin announced changes in Russia's nuclear doctrine.

In the internal life of the Vologda Region, an event occurred that determines the political situation and further socio-economic development – the election of the Vologda Region Governor, which took place on September 6–8. Acting Governor of the region Georgy Filimonov (United Russia) won the election. He received 273,380 votes (62.3%).

Despite these significant events that determine the further vector of development of both the country and the region, population estimates on key parameters have not undergone significant changes, nor have they shifted in a positive direction; all this was reflected in monitoring measurements for two months (August – October 2024) and 12 months (October 2023 – October 2024).

In the short term we observe stability in public opinion regarding the way the RF President is handling his job: the approval rating is still high (67–68%). In October, estimates for the main areas of activity of the head of state remain at the level of August 2024. We should note that for all the problems the President is dealing with, the share of positive assessments is more than 50%, except for issues related to economic recovery and growth of citizens' welfare: according to this indicator, the share of approving judgments amounts to 40%, while the proportion of negative assessments is higher and remains at 47%. The absence of obvious positive changes in this area in recent months may be due to some restrictions in monetary policy: suspension of preferential mortgage programs (family and rural)⁶, as well as raising the key interest rate by the Central Bank of the Russian Federation⁷, which led to an increase in the cost of loans for the population.

However, the current picture regarding the social mood and personal financial situation of Vologda Region residents from August to October 2024 demonstrates stability, most residents remain optimistic.

During the year of measurements (October 2023 – October 2024), we observe a positive trend in people's assessments of the President's work, alongside relatively stable judgments of the region's residents about their financial situation and emotional state.

Thus, the results of the public opinion monitoring indicate that public sentiment in Russia and in the Vologda Region remains stable. However, the issues of economic development and improving the standard of living remain acute, and the lack of significant changes in these areas can undermine people's positive perception of the government's activities.

Maintaining the support of the national course by the population is especially significant in the tense situation that is unfolding in Russia in the context of the Special Military Operation. It is important to remember that the unity and cohesion of society are the key to success in overcoming challenges.

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

⁵ Speech by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the general debate of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly, New York, September 28, 2024. Available at: https://www.mid.ru/ru/press_service/video/posledniye_dobavlnenniye/1972774

⁶ Family mortgage suspended. Available at: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/7165818>; Rosselkhozbank suspended the acceptance of applications for rural mortgages at 3% per annum. Available at: <https://tass.ru/nedvizhimost/21818233>

⁷ On September 13, 2024, the Bank of Russia decided to increase the key rate by 100 basis points to 19.00% per annum. Available at: <https://cbr.ru/press/keypr/>