

# EDITORIAL

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## Efficiency of Strategic Public Administration: The State of Russian Society Following Four Years of the Special Military Operation



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**Abstract.** The deep civilizational crisis that humanity is currently experiencing, the emergence of a new multipolar world order, and the challenges confronting Russia in this context underscore the urgent need to examine the strategic effectiveness of public administration. The authors emphasize the importance of a rigorous scholarly approach to understanding Russia’s role in the ongoing historical shift toward multipolarity, as well as in the wake of four years of the special military operation. To evaluate the effectiveness of strategic governance, the study employs the “evolutionary leap model” developed by E.V. Balatsky, which draws on the classical theories of historians, philosophers, and sociologists such as L. Gumilev, A. Schopenhauer, A. Toynbee, and E. Todd. The article also traces the evolution of Russian society and scrutinizes the caliber of the ruling elites as bearers of what Gumilev termed “passionarity energy” – the decisive factor determining whether the country will make an “evolutionary leap” to the

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next stage of historical development or face a crisis of statehood that directly threatens its very survival. The authors' conclusions are grounded in data from nationwide and regional sociological surveys, official statistics, empirical evidence, and expert opinions, enabling a holistic assessment of public administration effectiveness, including its strategic dimensions: goal-setting, long-term consequences, and the motivations of decision-makers. Both the subjective evaluations and objective data presented in the article point to an acute need for improving the strategic effectiveness of governance. The President of Russia, who over the past quarter-century has consistently demonstrated strategic foresight, must now bring this quality to bear on the ruling elites, many of whose decisions continue to run counter to national interests and, as the study reveals, deepen the rift between society and the state. The study's scholarly contribution lies in applying the "evolutionary leap model" to assess not only the effectiveness of strategic public administration but also the state of society and the quality of ruling elites in contemporary Russia.

**Key words:** effectiveness of strategic public administration, civilizational crisis, new multipolarity, "evolutionary leap" model, passionarity, RF President, ruling elites, public opinion.

The first half of the 21st century has found global civilization in the grip of yet another profound socio-cultural, civilizational, and geopolitical crisis. As Russian President Vladimir Putin emphasized back in 2021 (prior to the start of the Special Military Operation), *"the crisis we are facing is conceptual, even civilizational... it is a crisis of the approaches and principles that define human existence on Earth"*. This circumstance, naturally, brings to the fore the critical task of **enhancing the effectiveness of strategic public administration** – that is, the ability to foresee the future strategically and to think in terms of grand historical and civilizational categories.

It is worth noting that Russian legislation lacks a clear definition of the term "strategic public administration"<sup>1</sup>. However, the head of state

"We are already living [in an era of change], whether we want it or not, and these changes are becoming ever deeper, ever more fundamental... **The crisis we are facing is conceptual, even civilizational. In essence, it is a crisis of the approaches and principles that define the very existence of man on Earth...** This is not simply a shift in the balance of power or a scientific-technological breakthrough, although both, of course, are also taking place. **Today we are confronted with simultaneous systemic changes across all fronts:** from the increasingly complex geophysical state of our planet to ever more paradoxical interpretations of what man himself is, and what the meaning of his existence is"<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Instead, Federal Law 172-FZ of June 28, 2014 (as amended on July 13, 2024) "On Strategic Planning in the Russian Federation" provides the following definitions:

1) strategic planning – the activities of strategic planning participants in goal-setting, forecasting, planning and programming of the socio-economic development of the Russian Federation, constituent entities of the Russian Federation and municipalities, sectors of the economy and spheres of state and municipal administration, ensuring the national security of the Russian Federation, aimed at solving the tasks of sustainable socio-economic development of the Russian Federation, constituent entities of the Russian Federation and municipalities and ensuring the national security of the Russian Federation;

2) public administration – the activities of public authorities to exercise their powers in the sphere of socio-economic development of the Russian Federation and ensuring the national security of the Russian Federation.

<sup>2</sup> Vladimir Putin's speech at the Valdai International Discussion Club meeting on October 21, 2021. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/66975?ysclid=mlrleg8wpi868699092>

2008: “Today we are already setting goals and objectives for ourselves not for a month or two ahead, but for 20–30 years ahead”<sup>3</sup>.

2012: “What is needed is precisely a long-term state approach, taking into account the interests of the regions, practically all sectors of the economy, as well as geopolitical and social factors. We need to look 10, 20, 30 years ahead”<sup>4</sup>.

2022: “Always – when making any decisions – one must identify the main thing. What is the main thing for us? To be independent, self-reliant, sovereign, and to ensure development for the future – both now and for future generations...”<sup>5</sup>

2023: “The country has always thought about the future. And you and I, of course, must act precisely in this way. Always, under any circumstances, think about the future of the people and of our state. That is what we are doing”<sup>6</sup>.

2025: “...the very idea [of building the Trans-Siberian Railway across the entire country to the Pacific Ocean] serves for us as an example of strategic vision of the future, when not only current needs and circumstances are taken into account, but also the country’s interests for centuries to come...”<sup>7</sup>

consistently draws attention to the absolute necessity of a strategic, long-term approach in implementing managerial decisions, urging that we consider “*not only current needs and circumstances, but also the country’s interests for centuries to come*”.

For the Russian Federation, the urgency of issues related to improving the effectiveness of strategic governance stems from two key factors.

**First, today, during the Special Military Operation, which began on February 24, 2022, and whose fourth anniversary is now being marked, Russia is navigating a pivotal chapter in its history.**

The fact is that every major state-civilization – one with a long historical trajectory that has played and continues to play a significant role in the cultural, economic, and geopolitical landscape of global civilization – develops cyclically. Such states repeatedly overcome critical periods that demand the mobilization of all their strength and resources<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Vladimir Putin’s speech at the ceremony inaugurating Dmitry Medvedev as President of the Russian Federation on May 7, 2008. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/2>

<sup>4</sup> Vladimir Putin’s opening remarks at the meeting on the development of railway infrastructure and high-speed traffic on April 26, 2012. Available at: <http://archive.premier.gov.ru/events/news/18783/>

<sup>5</sup> Vladimir Putin’s speech at the Plenary Session of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum on June 17, 2022. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/speeches/68669>

<sup>6</sup> Vladimir Putin’s speech at the Plenary Session of the World Russian People’s Council on November 28, 2023. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/copy/72863>

<sup>7</sup> Vladimir Putin’s speech at the Plenary Session of the VI International Arctic Forum “Arctic – Territory of Dialogue” on March 27, 2025. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/copy/76554>

<sup>8</sup> For example, in the USA:

- ✓ The economic crisis of the 1780s due to debts incurred during the War of Independence;
- ✓ The Civil War (1861–1865);
- ✓ The Great Depression of the 1930s.

In China:

- ✓ The Peasant War of 1628–1644;
- ✓ The crisis in the Qing Empire at the end of the 18th century;
- ✓ The Xinhai Revolution (1911);
- ✓ The crisis during the Great Leap Forward (1958–1960).

In India:

- ✓ The crisis of the Mughal Empire during the reign of Padishah Aurangzeb (1658–1707);
- ✓ The crisis of British India in the 19th century;
- ✓ The crisis of independent India (1960s – 1970s);
- ✓ The 1991 crisis;
- ✓ The balance of payments economic crisis in 1991.

As the Russian sociologist and philosopher N. Ya. Danilevsky wrote – and his views have been cited twice by the President in public speeches (on November 1, 2018, at the World Russian People’s Council<sup>9</sup>, and on October 27, 2022, at the plenary session of the Valdai International Discussion Club<sup>10</sup>) – *“history is not linear; it is a totality of civilizations that are in a constant cycle of formation and decline... Each civilization passes through certain stages of development: emergence, flourishing, decline, and demise”*<sup>11</sup>.

A “test of strength” in the form of critical stages in the life cycle of a state-civilization truly tempers it, makes it stronger, and enables it to reach new historical frontiers of development. **But this holds true only if it proves capable of learning from previous experience and, drawing on that accumulated wisdom, finds an effective and swift response to the challenges of the present.**

This is precisely the challenge facing the President and the entire system of governance he

leads. Russian (or Rus) civilization is no exception to this rule. Over its more than thousand-year history, it too has repeatedly faced crises of statehood, at times teetering on the brink of disappearance<sup>12</sup>.

**Today, during the Special Military Operation, Russia is once again undergoing such a stage in its development.** As Vladimir Putin stated, *“Everyone must understand the times we live in and the historical stage Russia is going through. And if we understand this, then everyone – everyone – must work as if on the front line. Everyone must feel mobilized. Only then will we achieve the goals we have set for ourselves”*<sup>13</sup>.

M. Yemelyanov<sup>14</sup>: “Some Russian political scientists believe that overcoming the unipolar world is the ultimate goal of Russian foreign policy, after which bliss in international relations will follow. **This is not so! A multipolar world order gives rise to exceptionally serious challenges for Russia and its diplomacy**”<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Excerpt from Vladimir Putin’s speech: “It is impossible to imagine human history without such unique civilizations as India, China, Western Europe, America and many others. This is truly a multifaceted complexity, each facet of which complements and enriches the other. And here I want to recall the words of the outstanding Russian thinker of the 19th century, Nikolai Danilevsky: ‘...No civilization can boast that it represents the highest point of development...’” (source: Vladimir Putin’s speech at the World Russian People’s Council meeting on November 1, 2018. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/59013>)

<sup>10</sup> Excerpt from Vladimir Putin’s speech: “I want to quote here the words of the great Russian philosopher Nikolai Yakovlevich Danilevsky, who believed that progress does not consist in everyone going in the same direction, as some of our opponents push us to do – in such a case, progress would soon cease, says Danilevsky – but in ‘traversing the entire field that constitutes the arena of humanity’s historical activity in all directions.’ And he adds that no civilization can boast that it represents the highest point of development” (source: Vladimir Putin’s speech at the plenary session of the Valdai International Discussion Club on October 27, 2022. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/69695>).

<sup>11</sup> Kazarinov Yu.G. Russia and the West: The current situation. Based on the works of the Russian philosopher N.Yu. Danilevsky. Available at: <https://herzenlib.ru/main/news/detail.php?ID=82853&ysclid=mlkr1xk9hj686660426>

<sup>12</sup> For example, in Russia:

- ✓ The “Time of Troubles” at the end of the 16th – beginning of the 17th century;
- ✓ The Patriotic War of 1812;
- ✓ The crisis of the Russian Empire (the revolutions of 1905–1907 and 1917);
- ✓ The Great Patriotic War (1941–1945);
- ✓ The Cold War (1945–1991) (the collapse of the USSR);
- ✓ The start of the Special Military Operation (February 24, 2022).

<sup>13</sup> Vladimir Putin’s speech at the meeting of the Council for Strategic Development and National Projects and the State Council commissions on socio-economic development directions on May 29, 2024. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/74162>

<sup>14</sup> Mikhail Vasilyevich Yemelyanov – Candidate of Sciences (Law), Deputy of the State Duma of the Russian Federation of the II–VII convocations (1995–2021), Chairman of the Council of the regional branch of the Just Russia Party in the Rostov Region. Author of more than 50 scientific publications on issues of public administration, constitutional law, and electoral legislation.

<sup>15</sup> Yemelyanov M. The new multipolarity is not what Russia expected. Available at: [https://www.ng.ru/vision/2026-01-20/8\\_9419\\_multipolarity.html?ysclid=mknkofr9yu294865114](https://www.ng.ru/vision/2026-01-20/8_9419_multipolarity.html?ysclid=mknkofr9yu294865114)

The second factor driving the urgency of enhancing the effectiveness of strategic public administration is linked to the fact that the **process of shaping a new multipolarity in the 21st century “gives rise to exceptionally serious challenges for Russia and its diplomacy”**.

The formation of a multipolar world, as Putin has repeatedly noted, is not a process contingent on the wishes of Russia, China, or any other single actor. **It is driven by the objective trends in the development of the potential of the world’s leading powers.** *“We can accelerate this process, we can, or someone might try to slow it down, and perhaps they might even manage to reduce the pace at which the multipolar world is being built. But its creation is inevitable”*<sup>16</sup>.

2023: “The multipolar world is creating itself, as a matter of fact. And it is happening due to the growth of the potential of many countries”<sup>17</sup>.

2024: “It is precisely on the basis of the new political economic reality that the contours of a multipolar and multilateral world order are being shaped today, and this is an objective process”<sup>18</sup>.

2025: “The new world order is emerging naturally. It’s like the sunrise. There’s no getting away from it”<sup>19</sup>.

**Moreover, as many experts point out, this process is unfolding not along state (national) lines, but along civilizational ones. In other words, the emerging multipolar world is likely to be a world not of numerous nation-states, but a world of macro-regions, or “pan-regions”.**

“The most likely scenario for the world’s development over the next twenty years is a ‘world of pan-regions’... That is precisely what the world will look like after a New Yalta: rights for the great powers, law and taxes for the rest...”<sup>20</sup>

**In such circumstances, the question of who holds the initiative in shaping their own “pan-region” and in the broader process of forming a multipolar world becomes fundamentally important. And it is precisely this point that places heightened demands on the effectiveness of strategic state governance.**

“The structure of the situation is simple to the point of banality: whoever takes the initiative sets the rules of the game, the level of escalation, the fabric of misconceptions, the dynamics of traps, the labyrinths of intrigue”<sup>21</sup>.

It is worth noting that the Russian Federation effectively led and for a long time remained “at the vanguard”<sup>22</sup> of this new multipolarity. The beginning of the “passive”, or latent, phase of this process was marked by Vladimir Putin’s speech in Munich on February 10, 2007.

It was then that Putin, addressing the so-called Western “civilized” world, drew attention to the fact that ***“a world with one master, one sovereign, is ultimately destructive not only for all those within this system, but also for the sovereign itself, because it destroys it from within... For the modern world, a unipolar model is not only unacceptable, but also entirely impossible. And not only because, with a single leader in the modern – precisely the modern –***

<sup>16</sup> V. Putin’s interview with Chinese media corporation. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/72508?ysclid=mlhlcjajxf736701540>

<sup>17</sup> V. Putin’s interview with Chinese media corporation. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/72508?ysclid=mlhlcjajxf736701540>

<sup>18</sup> V. Putin’s speech at the meeting with the leadership of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/74285?ysclid=mlhldrjeun34926444>

<sup>19</sup> V. Putin’s speech at the meeting with the leadership of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/74285?ysclid=mlhldrjeun34926444>

<sup>20</sup> Shkolnikov A. The World after Globalization and a New Yalta. Available at: <https://shkolnikov.info/articles/11-analitika-i-prognozy/71549-mir-posle-globalizatsii-i-novoy-jalty?ysclid=mlhlgc7ax101150444>

<sup>21</sup> Ageev A. How long? Available at: <https://izborsk-club.ru/27754>

<sup>22</sup> Naryshkin: Today Russia again stands at the vanguard of the struggle for a more just world order. Available at: [https://rg.ru/2025/03/25/banalnyj-grabez.html?ysclid=mkxshpg7o5176187012&utm\\_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fya.ru%2F](https://rg.ru/2025/03/25/banalnyj-grabez.html?ysclid=mkxshpg7o5176187012&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fya.ru%2F)

*world, there will be a shortage of both military-political and economic resources. But more importantly, the model itself is unworkable, as it lacks, and cannot have, a moral and ethical foundation for modern civilization*<sup>23</sup>.

In this forecast, the President of the Russian Federation demonstrated his strategic foresight. Essentially, all his subsequent actions within the country<sup>24</sup> were aimed, as Aleksandr Dugin writes, at “purging the West from within itself”<sup>25</sup> – at preparing Russia for the moment when the unipolar world model would collapse, and amidst its ruins, an even more complex, brutal process of forming a new, multipolar model would begin, fraught with military conflicts and artificially created cultural and value ruptures.

Russia also initiated the “active” phase of shaping the new multipolarity. This occurred with the Supreme Commander-in-Chief’s announcement of the Special Military Operation in Ukraine on February 24, 2022. “Since then”, experts note, “Russia has led the struggle for a multipolar world, drawing in a cautious China, a wavering India, and other international players striving for genuine independence”.

**However, three years later, a new stage has begun in the historical process of forming a new multipolarity.** This is linked to Donald Trump’s victory in the US presidential elections in early 2025<sup>26</sup>.

“The first powerful blow to the unipolar world was struck by Russian President Vladimir Putin with his famous Munich speech in 2007. Since then, Russia has led the struggle for a multipolar world, drawing in a cautious China, a wavering India, and other international players striving for genuine independence”<sup>27</sup>.

The US withdrawal from 66 international organizations; the imposition of trade tariffs on virtually every country in the world; territorial claims against Canada, Greenland, Venezuela... With all these moves, the United States is demonstrating a “readiness to disregard anything – anyone’s sovereignty, any international law, any public opinion, and even the official position of any state or group of states”<sup>28</sup>.

**On January 22, 2026, at the Davos forum, Donald Trump officially announced the creation of a “Board of Peace”.** Its “sole chairperson is Trump himself”<sup>29</sup>. As experts noted, “Trump seems to simply want to replace institutions with himself – and this is one of the most striking demonstrations of their current state and weakness”<sup>30</sup>;

**“The US actions are not the arbitrary folly of a weakening global hegemon, but the desire of a metropolis to establish its own order within the territory of the pan-region it is shaping for itself.. The US considers the entire Western Hemisphere its exclusive sphere of influence, whether others like it or not”<sup>31</sup>.**

<sup>23</sup> V. Putin’s speech at the Munich Conference on Security Policy on February 10, 2007. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034?ysclid=mlqalwd6zd174930989>

<sup>24</sup> Such as the strengthening of statehood after the protest actions on Bolotnaya Square (2011–2012); the “Crimean Spring” – the incorporation of Crimea and Sevastopol into the Russian Federation (2014); amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation (2020); the ban on the activities of “Navalny’s headquarters”<sup>\*</sup> (2021), the start of the Special Military Operation and the incorporation of 4 new regions into the Russian Federation (2022).

<sup>\*</sup> The activities of Navalny’s headquarters were recognized as extremist and banned on the territory of the Russian Federation.

<sup>25</sup> Dugin A. The key to victory in the special military operation lies in the 1990s. The capitulation of Ukraine will not be enough. Available at: <https://izborsk-club.ru/27605?ysclid=mlqdgpk4y774158587>

<sup>26</sup> The US presidential elections themselves took place on November 5, 2024, but their final results were confirmed on January 5, 2025, and D. Trump’s official inauguration ceremony was held on January 20, 2025.

<sup>27</sup> Emelyanov M. The new multipolarity is not what Russia expected. Available at: [https://www.ng.ru/vision/2026-01-20/8\\_9419\\_multipolarity.html?ysclid=mknkofr9yu294865114](https://www.ng.ru/vision/2026-01-20/8_9419_multipolarity.html?ysclid=mknkofr9yu294865114)

<sup>28</sup> Ageev A. How long? Available at: <https://izborsk-club.ru/27754>

<sup>29</sup> Sysoev I. All Power to the Board? The US President Presented a “Board of Peace”. Will it become an institution with real influence? Available at: <https://rg.ru/2026/01/22/k-sovetu-mira-uzhe-prisoedinilis-59-gosudarstv.html?ysclid=mkwm5vm92j199165143>

<sup>30</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>31</sup> Shkolnikov A. Venezuelan glimpses of the World of Pan-regions. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/venesuel\\_skie\\_probleski\\_mira\\_panregionov?ysclid=mkwgbzrx8219157854](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/venesuel_skie_probleski_mira_panregionov?ysclid=mkwgbzrx8219157854)

The key characteristic of this new stage is, firstly, a change in the very nature of the process itself: it is no longer merely a struggle between the “new” and the “outgoing” models of world order, **but a struggle among the world’s major powers (“metropolises”) for spheres of influence (“pan-regions”).**

**Secondly, the initiative in this new stage of forming a multipolar world is increasingly being seized by the very actor that led the outgoing unipolar model into global crisis – the United States.**

As experts note, the new Trump administration *“is implementing a decision to completely demolish the entire visible layer of the Western elite, its basic principles and laws... we are witnessing a deliberately provoked catastrophe of the Western elite system, not a crisis, but a catastrophe”*<sup>32</sup>.

Thus, *“right before our eyes, the architecture of the world order, built on the basis of the Yalta-Potsdam agreements following World War II, is crumbling”*<sup>33</sup>. And, of course, such qualitative, systemic transformations of the entire global architecture cannot but pose a challenge for the Russian Federation. It is no coincidence that the first meeting of the Russian Security Council in 2026 (on January 19) was devoted by Vladimir Putin precisely to two themes: *“issues in the sphere of security”* and Russia’s participation *“in the construction of a multipolar world and our actions in this regard”*<sup>34</sup>.

**Based on this, we see that the increased demands on the effectiveness of strategic public administration are dictated by the dynamics of the historical process not only at the national, but also at the global level.** As experts note, *“a long solo voyage lies ahead of us, and it requires a radical improvement in public administration at all levels”*.

**“The Munich Security Conference in 2026 showed that the Third World is unlikely to rally around Russia on an anti-colonial basis...”**

India, Brazil... all it takes is for the Americans to push a little, offer a profitable deal/transaction, and these countries act in their own interests...

**A long solo voyage lies ahead of us. It requires a radical improvement in public administration at all levels”**<sup>35</sup>.

How can we ensure that, at this pivotal moment in history that Russia is navigating at the end of the first quarter of the 21st century, we not only preserve the state, literally survive, but perhaps even strengthen our geopolitical standing? How do we avoid being left “by the wayside” of the chaotic and rapidly unfolding process shaping a new multipolar world? And, ultimately, how do we keep from ending up on the “backburner” of history?

**Vladimir Putin: “...all of us together must feel and understand what is happening in the world, around us, and what challenges lie before us.**

The fact is that the speed of technological change is accelerating rapidly, going sharply upwards. **The one who rides this technological wave will leap far ahead. Those who cannot do so will be overwhelmed and drowned by it”**<sup>36</sup>.

These are all questions of strategic public administration, and it is crucial to emphasize that finding answers to them is particularly vital for our country. For many states around the world, a pessimistic scenario might mean being, as President Putin has noted, simply *“overwhelmed and drowned by the wave of technological change”*. **But for Russia, this carries the additional, direct threat of military**

<sup>32</sup> Shkolnikov A. They decided not to take every creature onto the new elite ark. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/nanovij\\_elitnij\\_kovcheg\\_reshili\\_brat\\_ne\\_kazhduyu\\_tvar\\_](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/nanovij_elitnij_kovcheg_reshili_brat_ne_kazhduyu_tvar_)

<sup>33</sup> Remchukov K. In Davos, the end of globalization was proclaimed. Available at: [https://www.ng.ru/politics/2026-01-25/1\\_9421\\_250126.html?ysclid=mkwlo4qm4q391437725](https://www.ng.ru/politics/2026-01-25/1_9421_250126.html?ysclid=mkwlo4qm4q391437725)

<sup>34</sup> Meeting with permanent members of the Security Council. Available at: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/79020>

<sup>35</sup> Remchukov K. In Munich, they dreamed of exhausting Russia. Available at: [https://www.ng.ru/politics/2026-02-15/1\\_9437\\_14250502.html?ysclid=mlrv1wh0v2458702895](https://www.ng.ru/politics/2026-02-15/1_9437_14250502.html?ysclid=mlrv1wh0v2458702895)

<sup>36</sup> Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/56957?ysclid=ml0mr4gfs540557247>

**intervention.** As Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov underscored after the start of the Special Military Operation, “*Russia is fighting for its very survival, for the right to remain on the political map of the world*”<sup>37</sup>, and moreover, “*for the first time in its history, Russia is fighting alone against the entire West*”<sup>38</sup>.

It is important to note, however, that four years into the Special Military Operation, some experts – notably D.R. Belousov<sup>39</sup> – continue to point to troubling symptoms within the system of state economic management, symptoms that create risks

for sustaining the course of national development in the 21st century.

The systemic problems highlighted by this leading forecasting expert<sup>41</sup> demand deep scholarly analysis and a thorough understanding of their root causes. In our view, these causes are convincingly revealed in the “**Structural Model of the Evolutionary Leap**”, presented by Doctor of Sciences (Economics) Professor E.V. Balatsky, in his article “Russia at the Epicenter of Geopolitical Turbulence: The Accumulation of Global Contradictions”<sup>42</sup>.

Assessment by D.R. Belousov, Candidate of Economic Sciences, Deputy Director General of the Center for Macroeconomic Analysis and Short-Term Forecasting (CMASF):

**“At present, the formation of a long-term development strategy has, at the very least, slowed down. We are making a number of important decisions regarding space and digitalization, but unfortunately, we lack coherent strategic constructs that integrate technology, the economy, and socio-cultural aspects:**

✓ In current economic policy, very harsh decisions are being made that **paralyze investment**. I am referring primarily to fiscal consolidation and maintaining the Central Bank’s key rate at a very high level in real terms.

✓ **A marker of the absence of a wartime economy is that we still haven’t abandoned the inflation targeting concept adopted in the first half of the 2010s...**

✓ **Overall, it must be said that the economy is experiencing stagnation, even stagflation...** In the coming year... the risk of a recession is quite real, especially at the beginning of the year.

✓ **A decline in output is observed in a large segment of manufacturing industries.** There is a severe crisis in the automotive industry, with no end in sight...

✓ **At the instigation of the Central Bank, behind-the-scenes discussions have already begun on whether to lower the target inflation rate to two percent per year...** In a worst-case scenario, instead of accelerating economic growth to above three percent, we could slide into stagnation with growth rates below one percent, accompanied by fairly high inflation...

**The previous model of our integration into the global economy... is completely exhausted. It cannot be replicated under any circumstances... What is needed is to extend the planning horizon for development prospects... to break free from the trap of short-term balancing”**<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>37</sup> Russia is fighting a battle for life and death for a place on the political map. Available at: <https://rg.ru/2022/03/10/lavrov-rf-vedet-boj-ne-na-zhizn-a-na-smert-za-mesto-na-politicheskoj-karte.html?ysclid=mlhllc2tvz549323038>

<sup>38</sup> Lavrov speaks of Russia’s war against the West. Available at: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/28/07/2025/688746759a794772781fef2a?ysclid=mlhlmo6lrm741557729>

<sup>39</sup> Dmitry Removich Belousov – Candidate of Sciences (Economics), Head of the Macroeconomic Analysis and Forecasting Department, Deputy Director General of the Center for Macroeconomic Analysis and Short-Term Forecasting (CMASF). Head of Laboratory; Head of the Macroeconomic Analysis and Forecasting Department at the Institute of Economic Forecasting of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Led projects on long-term socio-economic forecasting and scientific-technological foresight commissioned by the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia.

<sup>40</sup> Belousov D.R. The most impressive challenge in the last three generations. *Monokl*. No. 5. 26.01.2026.

<sup>41</sup> The main man for forecasts. *Business Card*. D.R. Belousov. Available at: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2916474?ysclid=mlqj2lgax676222315>

<sup>42</sup> Balatsky E.V. (2025). Russia at the epicenter of geopolitical turbulence: The accumulation of global contradictions. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 15(4), 42–59.

The “evolutionary leap” model itself, along with some key characteristics necessary for understanding its essence, are presented in *Inserts 1 and 2*. Here, we will highlight the main point — the advantages of this model from the perspective of strategic effectiveness of public administration:

✓ first, the approach proposed by E.V. Balatsky draws upon and synthesizes knowledge from the classical theories of historians, philosophers, and sociologists (notably figures such as L. Gumilev<sup>43</sup>, A. Schopenhauer<sup>44</sup>, A. Toynbee<sup>45</sup>, E. Todd<sup>46</sup>, and others);

✓ second (and most importantly), the “evolutionary leap” model allows us to analyze the historical stage of multipolarity formation not from the perspective of global processes and events unfolding on the geopolitical arena, **but from the standpoint of internal changes, mechanisms, tasks, and challenges at the level of a specific state (a state-civilization). In other words, it enables an assessment of the effectiveness of strategic public administration.** It is precisely this feature that ensures the practical significance of the model.

It is also worth noting that in the first quarter of the 21st century, within the dynamics of successively unfolding stages of evolution (“warming-up period”, “reflection period”, “learning period”, and “innovation period”; *Insert 1*), the Russian Federation, in our view, finds itself situated between the first and second stages (between the “warming-up period” and the “reflection period”). This is because a “*cascade of internal and external challenges*” is present but has not yet been overcome; an “*inventory of all the system’s*

*capabilities, its shortcomings, and hidden reserves*” is underway, but it is still too early to speak of all the system’s resources being “*mobilized*”.

As can be seen from the key propositions presented in *Insert 2*, the crucial factors in the development of a state-civilization are the “**level of well-being**” (which, upon reaching certain limits, causes the passionary energy to wane) and the **state of the elites** (among whom, at a certain point in time, individuals emerge who are oriented not toward national, but toward personal interests).

This is precisely how, in their time, the Roman Empire and the Soviet Union faded into oblivion. Regarding the latter, E.V. Balatsky writes: “*The USSR lasted 70 years and, due to errors in public administration, disappeared irretrievably. The question boils down to details, which become decisive*”<sup>47</sup>.

“The main criterion of a ‘national elite’ is its ability to implement policy in the interests of society, aimed at strengthening the country’s sovereignty. There are situations where an elite **either has not yet become national**, remaining a kind of ruling force representing the interests of individual territorial communities; **or it has already ceased to be such, having incorporated itself into the ‘global elite’ or become a comprador elite...**

The degeneration of the elite, an important sign of which is its loss of national identity, leads to the decline of society... As soon as the elite loses its quality as a national force, becoming supranational, the stage of civilization’s decline begins, the final point of which is its demise”<sup>48</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> Gumilev L.N. (2005). *Landscape and Ethnos. Articles and Works (1949–1990)*. Old Buryat Painting. Saint Petersburg, Moscow: Kristall; ONIKS. 975 p.

<sup>44</sup> Schopenhauer A. (2011). *Sayings. Aphorisms of Worldly Wisdom*. Minsk: Kharvest. 416 p.

<sup>45</sup> Toynbee A.J. (2011). *Civilization on Trial. The World and the West*. Moscow: AST: Astrel. 318 p.

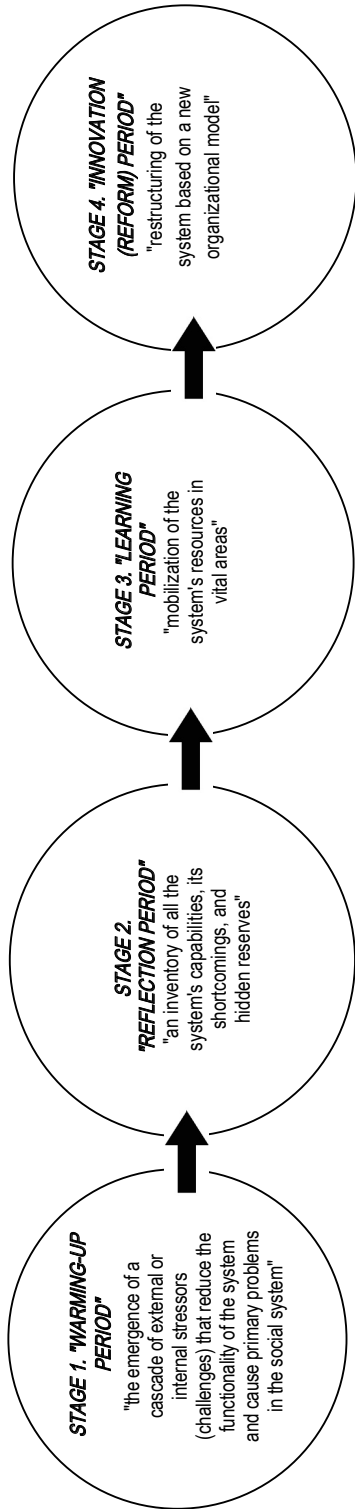
<sup>46</sup> Todd E. (2025). *The Defeat of the West*. Moscow: AST Publishing House. 320 p.

<sup>47</sup> Balatsky E.V. (2025). The extinction of passionarity in E. Todd’s demographic concept. *Sotsialnoe prostranstvo*, 11(3), p. 18.

<sup>48</sup> Ekimova N.A. (2024). The role of the elites in the evolutionary process: Conceptual framework and modern interpretations. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 17(2), p. 69.

Insert 1

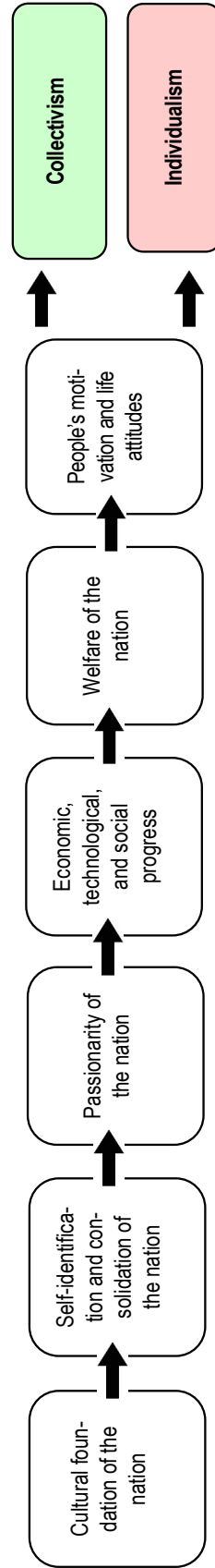
The “Evolutionary Leap” model



Compiled from Balatsky E.V. (2025). The extinction of passionarity in E. Todd's demographic concept. *Sotsialnoe prostranstvo*, 11(3), p. 3.

*“The realization of the full cycle of these four stages ensures the emergence of a hypercompensation effect, or, in other words, a passionate explosion of the nation”<sup>49</sup>.*

The mechanism of passionarity development



*“At the final stage of implementing a passionate impulse, a fork in the road emerges, depending on the nature of the elites, who can be either national (i.e., defending the country's national interests) or supranational (i.e., defending their own supranational interests)... When supranational elites dominate, the passionate scenario cannot be realized”<sup>50</sup>.*

<sup>49</sup> Balatsky E.V. (2025). The extinction of passionarity in E. Todd's demographic concept. *Sotsialnoe prostranstvo*, 11(3), p. 3.

<sup>50</sup> Ibidem. P. 4.

## Insert 2

Key propositions revealing the essence and significance of E. V. Balatsky's "Evolutionary Leap model"<sup>51</sup>

1. **The mechanism of decline for different civilizations and states is uniform and is associated with the attenuation of passionarity. The central element is the nation's well-being, which determines the motivation and life attitudes of the population. Moreover, the role of well-being is ambiguous. Up to a certain level, it serves as an additional stimulus for human activity; however, after exceeding a certain threshold, it begins to operate in the opposite direction...**
2. **Any significant historical phenomenon represents a reaction of the state and the nation to an existential challenge from the surrounding world... An external challenge acts as a detonator, triggering the mechanism for optimizing all the nation's resources and thereby generating a surge of passionarity...**
3. **Within the structure of ruling elites, there exist polar properties – passionarity and conservatism. It is the dominance of one of these properties among representatives of the ruling class that largely determines the paths of societal development – ranging from stagnation to reform.**
4. **Three institutions – family, ethics, and language – form the foundation that unites a nation and enables it to act as a cohesive whole, without which passionarity cannot be born... Developed versions of these three institutions serve as the initial impetus for the formation of a nation's passionarity. In their absence, an external challenge to the nation and state may even be acknowledged, but an effective response to it will not be forthcoming.**
5. **The "Iron Law of Welfare": a person (and humanity) can exist only within a relatively narrow range of material well-being – between certain minimum and maximum thresholds... Under excessively poor living conditions, a person loses their personality and individuality, descending into a primitive animal existence focused on mere survival. Conversely, under excessively comfortable conditions, sociability, collectivism, and activity are destroyed within the individual, provoking various forms of social autism.**
6. **It is possible to manage not the passionary impulse itself, but the critical passionarity on which the existence of the nation and state depends. This should be the goal. The level of well-being in the described scheme is also subject to management, which makes it possible to prevent undesirable events in the country's history. This is a subtle dialectical process, involving balancing a decent standard of living for the population against the backdrop of a social model that demands considerable effort from people to attain it. The combination of such developmental aspects constitutes the sacred essence of the art of public administration.**

<sup>51</sup> Balatsky E. V. (2025). The extinction of passionarity in E. Todd's demographic concept. *Sotsialnoe prostranstvo*, 11(3), 1–23.

It is worth noting that we have discussed these “decisive details” in detail in our previous articles<sup>52</sup>, when we addressed the specific personal characteristics of the so-called “grave-diggers of the USSR” – representatives of the ruling elites personally responsible for the collapse of the Soviet Union.

“No objective circumstances led to that geopolitical catastrophe [the collapse of the USSR]. **Here, the subjective factor played an enormous and decisive role – people who, due to their position, whether consciously or through thoughtlessness, did everything to ensure that the Soviet state ceased to exist...**

These phantom-like individuals developed completely different, hypertrophied social qualities – **an inordinate thirst for power, an unlimited desire for wealth, a morbid craving for fame...**

Their behavior completely (or significantly) diverges from, **and even contradicts, what interests and concerns the majority of the country’s population**”<sup>53</sup>.

The “evolutionary leap” model precisely describes the global processes unfolding today, including the most important aspect – **the state of “passionary energy” within our own country**. As E.V. Balatsky writes: *“The conditions for the decline of passionarity in Russia are fully met: a high rate of marital dissolution and low birth rate; low religiosity*

*and blurred ethical norms; the erosion of the Russian language... in Russia, which for 30 years has strived for integration into the Western community, cosmopolitan values and a model of behavior have taken shape that are not characteristic of a unified nation with a high degree of self-identification and the desire to overcome external pressure*”<sup>54</sup>.

In these circumstances, the “existential challenge from the surrounding world” (which, theoretically, should have led to the “emergence of a hypercompensation effect, or, in other words, a passionary explosion of the nation”) for Russia undoubtedly became the Special Military Operation – or, more precisely, the sharply increased threats to national security from the united Collective West that emerged after its commencement... **Yet, no “passionary explosion” or “evolutionary leap” has occurred in Russia so far. Why?**

In our view, the answer to this question lies precisely in the fact that even with the accumulation of a critical mass of passionary energy in society, Russia lacks *“the very possibility of realizing a passionary explosion”*<sup>55</sup>. And this possibility is absent precisely for the two key reasons highlighted by E.V. Balatsky: **the dominance within the state of elites guided by personal rather than national interests, and the “iron law of welfare”**, according to which *“the main ‘culprit’ in the decline of passionarity is the growth of well-being”* – more precisely, that stage of it when *“excessively comfortable life”* sets in, which is relevant above all for the ruling elites.

<sup>52</sup> See, for example:

Ilyin V.A., Morev M.V. (2022). A framework for a new Social Contract is being formed in Russia. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 15(6), 9–34.

Ilyin V.A., Morev M.V. (2025). Vladimir Putin’s 25 years of presidential terms: “Warrior”, “Ruler”, “Creator”. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 18(1), 9–45.

Ilyin V.A., Morev M.V. (2025). What a 30-year absence of state ideology leads to: “Great nations are not built without great, guiding ideas, and having lost them, they collapse with a thunderous crash”. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 18(4), 9–45.

<sup>53</sup> Toshchenko Zh.T., Kozhemyako V.S. (2025). *Werewolves in Power: They Killed the Soviet Country*. Moscow: Rodina. Pp. 9, 16.

<sup>54</sup> Balatsky E.V. (2025). The extinction of passionarity in E. Todd’s demographic concept. *Sotsialnoe prostranstvo*, 11(3), p. 17.

<sup>55</sup> Balatsky E.V. (2025). The extinction of passionarity in E. Todd’s demographic concept. *Sotsialnoe prostranstvo*, 11(3), p. 17, p. 4.

A caveat should be made here: the term “*excessively comfortable life*” is highly subjective. It is virtually impossible to give an objective assessment (that is, to specify a concrete value) of what level of well-being constitutes “comfortable” and what constitutes “excessively comfortable”. These magnitudes differ for different countries of the world, for representatives of different social strata, and so on.

However, if we set aside all this “political correctness” and call things by their proper names (as the situation in the country demands), then, at the very least, an understanding of “excessively comfortable life” is quite illuminated by descriptions of the assets of specific representatives of the ruling elites and members of their families that become

public knowledge after criminal cases are opened against them<sup>56</sup>.

It should be noted at this point that episodes of corruption and bribery among representatives of the ruling elites continue on a daily basis (over the last two months, from December 19, 2025, to February 19, 2026, at least 26 episodes; *Insert 3*).

According to the monthly reports of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation on the state of crime in Russia over the four years of the Special Military Operation (from 2022 to 2025):

- ✓ **the level of corruption-related crime increased by 22% (from 35,000 to 43,000 cases);**
- ✓ **the number of bribery-related crimes increased by 38% (from 19,000 to 27,000 cases)<sup>57</sup>.**

<sup>56</sup> For example:

**1. On January 16, 2026**, the Khostinsky District Court of Sochi satisfied an anti-corruption lawsuit filed by the Prosecutor General’s Office of the Russian Federation and ordered the assets of the former head of the resort city, A. Kopaigorodsky, totaling 1.6 billion rubles, to be confiscated to the state. The list of confiscated property included 77 real estate properties, registered mainly in the name of the former official’s wife and other defendants. In addition, the supervisory authority demanded the confiscation of a collection of rare wines worth about 7.7 million rubles, jewelry, and nearly two dozen wristwatches, the price of individual specimens being comparable to the cost of housing in the capital.

The lawsuit also involved warehouse complexes, land plots, parking spaces, and ten cars, including a Porsche 911 and several Mercedes vehicles. Separately, the prosecutor’s office claimed the recovery of funds in the amount of more than 215 million rubles as the equivalent of property alienated before the trial began (source: Kommersant. 16.01.2026. Available at: [https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/8360590?from=doc\\_vrez](https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/8360590?from=doc_vrez)).

**2. On January 21, 2026**, the Prosecutor General’s Office of the Russian Federation filed an anti-corruption lawsuit seeking to confiscate to the state the assets of former State Duma deputy Voronovsky, as well as State Duma deputy A. Doroshenko and deputy of the Legislative Assembly of the Krasnodar Territory A. Karpenko. The lawsuit involves a total of 30 defendants and 19 third parties. Corruption proceeds exceeded 2.8 billion rubles. The Prosecutor General’s Office demands the seizure of dozens of land plots, apartments and houses..., the defendants’ shares in various companies, funds in their accounts, and securities. In particular, a claim has been made to confiscate 19 enterprises, most of which are involved in road construction, to the Russian Federation. The case is ongoing (source: Kommersant. 01.02.2026. Available at: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/8397826?ysclid=mlerhgli46524131676>).

**3. On January 30, 2026**, the property of the former Chairman of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Adygea, A. Trakhov, and his close relatives was confiscated to the state. The treasury received 469 land plots, 176 non-residential buildings and commercial premises, 8 mansions, and 9 apartments. Also, 3 billion rubles received by the defendants from the sale of property belonging to them were recovered to the state revenue (source: Kommersant. 30.01.2026. Available at: [https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/8397208?from=doc\\_vrez](https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/8397208?from=doc_vrez)).

<sup>57</sup> Monthly reports of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation “The State of Crime in Russia”. Available at: <https://xn--b1aew.xn--p1ai/reports/1/>

*Insert 3***Facts of detentions and arrests of representatives of the ruling elites (December 19, 2025 – February 19, 2026)<sup>58</sup>**

- February 18** – Deputy Head of Novorossiysk, Head of the Construction Directorate R. Karagodin was detained (details not provided).
- February 18** – Minister of Culture of Bashkiria A. Shafikova was detained. She is suspected of exceeding official authority and embezzlement of budget funds.
- February 17** – Chairman of the Committee for State Procurement of Saint Petersburg D. Tolstykh was detained in a case of exceeding official authority and as the organizer of a criminal scheme. In the same case, the Head of the Department for Centralized Procurement and Interdepartmental Interaction of the Committee, E. Leonov, was also detained.
- February 16** – In Kuban, Acting Minister of Civil Defense and Emergency Situations S. Shtrikov was detained. He is suspected of exceeding official authority.
- February 13** – In the Chelyabinsk Region, the Head of the Rospotrebnadzor Administration, A. Semenov, was detained on suspicion of fraud.
- February 12** – The Acting Minister of the Agro-Industrial Complex and Food Policy of Zaporozhye Region was detained, charged with corruption on an especially large scale (over 4.8 million rubles).
- February 12** – On charges of taking a bribe of 8 million rubles, the former Director of the Department for Shipbuilding Industry and Marine Engineering of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, B. Kabakov, was detained.
- February 12** – On charges of taking a bribe on an especially large scale, Vice-Governor of the Chelyabinsk Region A. Faleichik was detained.
- February 9** – In a case of mediation in the transfer of a bribe, the Head of the Department of Housing and Communal Services and Transport of the Cabinet of Ministers of Tatarstan, F. Salikhov, was detained.
- February 5** – On charges of taking a bribe on an especially large scale, the Head of the Department of Agriculture and Food of the Chukotka Autonomous Area, P. Kashcheev, was detained.
- February 3** – Head of the Primorye Interregional Directorate of the Rosselkhoznadzor (Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance), D. Zdanovich, was detained on suspicion of receiving a bribe.
- February 3** – First Deputy Head of the Sergiev Posad District was detained. Along with him, the Head of the District Administration's Department of Agriculture, two of his subordinates, a Moscow Region deputy, and businessmen were detained. All became suspects in a criminal case involving the embezzlement of budget funds.
- January 29** – In Saint Petersburg, Captain Second Rank V. Nikitin, Head of the 178th Military Representative Office of the Russian Ministry of Defense, was detained on suspicion of receiving a bribe on an especially large scale.

<sup>58</sup> Source: RT in Russian. Latest news on detentions. Available at: <https://russian.rt.com/tag/zaderzhanie?ysclid=mdzkzlnnsn147444962>

*End of Insert 3*

**January 26** – In Dagestan, the former head of the Rosimushchestvo (Federal Agency for State Property Management) directorate was detained in a case of exceeding official authority. Between 2021 and 2024, the accused made illegal decisions to lease and subsequently transfer into ownership a federally owned land plot to individuals who did not possess subsoil use licenses.

**January 23** – The head of the Civil Defense and Emergency Situations Department of Syktyvkar was detained on suspicion of receiving a bribe for the acceptance of work under contracts for the major repair of fire reservoirs, which had not been fully completed.

**January 22** – In Moscow, S. Razzhivin, Head of a department at the Federal Agency for Nationalities (FADN), was detained in a fraud case. The official is suspected of fraud on an especially large scale and abuse of official authority.

**January 21** – In the Krasnodar Territory, two deputy heads of the regional Ministry of Transport were detained on suspicion of embezzling funds under state contracts.

**January 14** – In the Kaliningrad Region, A. Kalina, Director of the Curonian Spit National Park, was detained on suspicion of organizing large-scale illegal logging. The aim of the crime was to clear the area for the construction of a private complex of buildings intended for commercial tourist accommodation... damage exceeding 12.7 million rubles was caused.

**January 10** – In the Chelyabinsk Region, former regional deputy E. Sarsenbaev was detained. He is suspected of giving a bribe on an especially large scale.

**December 29** – In Saint Petersburg, V. Sagalae, Head of the “Dachnoye” Municipal Formation, was detained. He is charged with organizing an explosion near a house close to Smolny in 2003.

**December 29** – Former Head of the Tambov Region, M. Egorov, was arrested in a case involving bribes from entrepreneurs.

**December 27** – Thai police detained on Phuket Island a Russian citizen, D. Nazarets, who previously served as a deputy of the Legislative Assembly of the Primorye Territory. The detention was carried out as part of an international search.

**December 27** – In Italy, former president of Bashneft and ex-senator V. Khoroshavtsev, accused in Russia of large-scale fraud, was detained. The day after his detention, he was released due to Russia’s withdrawal from the Council of Europe and the termination of participation in agreements.

**December 24** – In the Rostov Region, the head of a production department at the defense industry enterprise JSC Almaz was detained. He is suspected of abuse of authority.

**December 23** – In the Krasnodar Territory, the mayor of Krymsk was detained on suspicion of possible involvement in land fraud in favor of the former head of Krymsky District, S. Les. With his participation, a land plot worth 120 million rubles was transferred into the ownership of persons controlled by Les.

**December 22** – Deputy Military Prosecutor of the Saint Petersburg Garrison, Lieutenant Colonel of Justice I. Kupkenov, was detained on charges of receiving a bribe on an especially large scale.

**December 22** – Chief of Police of Magnitogorsk, K. Kozitsyn, was detained for divulging state secrets.

The facts presented above, testifying to the frequency of corruption and the approximate level of financial, material, and other assets discovered among the corrupt officials themselves and their relatives, are important for gaining a rough understanding of what constitutes “excessively comfortable life” – the very thing “thanks to” which state servants and elites begin to be guided by personal rather than national interests.

However, the issue, of course, extends far beyond mere corrupt officials. As Aleksandr Dugin notes, it concerns a **“special group of the population” – the “global class”**; that is, people with a different worldview, a different operating system,” who form the “core of the sixth column operating within our society”.

For instance, in a previous editorial article, “What Kind of State Do Russians Want to Live In? What Kind of State Has Been Built?”<sup>59</sup> we cited the opinions of many experts pointing out that the entire “modern monetary system effectively blocks economic development”<sup>60</sup>, that “virtually the entire liberal part of state administration works in the interests of the banking system”<sup>61</sup> and that, by some assessments, the Central Bank’s policy simply “contradicts the Constitution of the Russian Federation”<sup>62</sup>.

S.Yu. Glazyev: “Russia’s current monetary policy, based on a high key rate, **effectively blocks economic development, creating a vicious circle of stagnation**”<sup>63</sup>.

“Over the past 35 years in our country – as in almost the entire rest of the world – **a special group of the population has formed, which can be called the ‘global class’**. These are people who, either during this period, managed to amass huge fortunes or become integrated into global processes at the level of culture, science, and technology...

**In Russia, over these 35 years, this class has become so intertwined with the ruling class as to be almost indistinguishable.** I am not asserting that our entire elite is like this, **but its most influential and prominent representatives are precisely part of the ‘global class’...**

Those representatives of the global class who remained in Russia and still constitute a significant part of our ruling elite in the broad sense are hindering our further development... **without systematically eliminating this ‘global class’ from Russian reality, the country will not be able to move forward. Preserving this class within the political elite condemns Russia to sabotage and an inability to move into the future.**

**Let me emphasize, this is not just about corruption.** The ‘global class’ consists of people with a different worldview, a different ‘operating system’. Appeals to simply obey the law do not work on them. **They form the core of the ‘sixth column’ operating within our society**”<sup>64</sup>.

<sup>59</sup> Ilyin V.A., Morev M.V. (2025). What kind of state do Russians want to live in? What kind of state has been built? Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast, 18(6), 9–45.

<sup>60</sup> Sergey Glazyev on the Central Bank rate and real estate. Available at: <https://smarent.com/tpost/jzvje1rka1-sergei-glazev-pro-stavku-tsb-i-nedvizhim?ysclid=mj025ng0t5809690879>

<sup>61</sup> Delyagin M. The banking ‘diaspora’ is destroying the Russian economy. Available at: <https://argumenti.ru/economics/2025/09/966797>

<sup>62</sup> Katasonov V. Once again on Russia’s international reserves. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/eshe\\_raz\\_o\\_mezhdunarodnih\\_rezervah\\_rossii\\_kommentarij\\_k\\_tcifram\\_ria\\_novosti\\_kak\\_informatciya\\_dlya\\_razmishleniya](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/eshe_raz_o_mezhdunarodnih_rezervah_rossii_kommentarij_k_tcifram_ria_novosti_kak_informatciya_dlya_razmishleniya)

<sup>63</sup> Sergey Glazyev on the Central Bank rate and real estate. Available at: <https://smarent.com/tpost/jzvje1rka1-sergei-glazev-pro-stavku-tsb-i-nedvizhim?ysclid=mj025ng0t5809690879>

<sup>64</sup> Dugin A. On the necessary extermination of the global class. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/imenno\\_oni\\_predali\\_rossiyu\\_dugin\\_vskril\\_sabotazh\\_elit\\_chistka\\_neizbezna](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/imenno_oni_predali_rossiyu_dugin_vskril_sabotazh_elit_chistka_neizbezna)

M.G. Delyagin: “The Russian banking system today is the **largest, institutionally recognized speculator. Virtually the entire liberal part of state administration works in their interests**”<sup>65</sup>.

V.Yu. Katasonov: “Take, for example, the current policy of the Central Bank. It’s called inflation targeting. These guys have become utterly brazen...! **Inflation targeting contradicts what is written in the Constitution of Russia**”<sup>66</sup>.

A.M. Babakov: “...at the present moment, we must still ensure that the state exercises real control over the financial sector. **Either the financial system governs the state, or the state governs the financial system.** Banks should not be simply analogues of commercial enterprises”<sup>67</sup>.

However, following the “Direct Line with Vladimir Putin,” which took place on December 19, 2025, experts from the Center for the Study of Political Culture of Russia (CISPKR) concluded that the head of state “*expressed full support for the Central Bank’s policy: the President reaffirmed the ultra-liberal economic policy in the financial sector, supporting the ‘independence of the Central Bank’.* The recent reduction in the key rate was described by the president as ‘probably sufficient’. The policy of ‘cooling down’ the economy received positive appraisals, *which may be perceived by the Central Bank’s leadership as a ‘green light’ to continue curbing inflation, even at the cost of slowing production growth rates*”<sup>68</sup>.

On February 13, 2026, at its first meeting of the year, the Bank of Russia lowered the key rate by 0.5 percentage points, to 15.5% per annum. This marked the sixth consecutive reduction of the key rate.

Expert assessments<sup>69</sup>:

1. **“The Central Bank’s actions did not fit into the worldview of the majority of analysts who were trying to build consensus forecasts... the standard communication channel between the Central Bank and the market has been destroyed and is beyond resuscitation...** Apparently, the Central Bank knows information about the economy and bank balances – information the market does not know – which led to yet another 180-degree turn in rhetoric, where inflation problems supposedly no longer exist... **decisions have to be made ‘literally on the fly,’ maneuvering between inflationary and economic risks that are layering on top of each other. And this problem has become acute not only for business, but apparently even for the departments authorized to manage and regulate**” (P. Ryabov, financial analyst).

2. “Despite the fact that a rate cut of 0.5% **will not be able to significantly impact macroeconomic indicators,** it was generally a positive signal for the market” (E. Zinoviev, analyst at “Tsifra broker”).

3. **“This decision will not have a significant impact on the real estate market,** but it should be perceived as a signal that the Central Bank is consistently pursuing a policy of monetary policy easing” (S. Lobzhanidze, Director of the bnMAP.pro analytical platform).

<sup>65</sup> Delyagin M. The banking ‘diaspora’ is destroying the Russian economy. Available at: <https://argumenti.ru/economics/2025/09/966797>

<sup>66</sup> Valentin Katasonov on the actions of the Central Bank: “These guys have become utterly brazen”. Available at: <https://reosh.ru/valentin-katasonov-o-dejstviyax-cb-rebyata-sovsem-uzhe-obnagleli.html?ysclid=mj0005afk5541099434>

<sup>67</sup> Sunday Evening with V. Solovyov”. 25.05.2025. Available at: <https://smotrim.ru/article/4517705?ysclid=mj01zv9heg609035726>.

<sup>68</sup> 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. An express analysis of the message to Russian society and foreign opponents. Available at: <https://kprf.ru/politindx/239901.html?ysclid=mlhmrkgapk916136109>

<sup>69</sup> Sources:

1. The Central Bank lowered the key rate for the 6th time in a row: How will this affect mortgages. Available at: <https://realty.rbc.ru/news/698f03349a7947750701a513?ysclid=mlorjv7u46820964095>

2. A turn of the “key” by 0.5%: how life will change with a rate of 15.5%. Available at: <https://www.mk.ru/economics/2026/02/14/povorot-klyucha-na-05-kak-izmenitsya-zhizn-pri-stavke-155.html?ysclid=mlornc5bcp869164106>

3. Bashkatova A. The Central Bank cautiously stepped down. Available at: [https://www.ng.ru/economics/2026-02-15/1\\_9437\\_lobbyists.html?ysclid=mlorxxhc67787441593](https://www.ng.ru/economics/2026-02-15/1_9437_lobbyists.html?ysclid=mlorxxhc67787441593)

It is also worth noting that it is far from the first time experts have pointed to the problem of imperfections in Russian legislation, which introduces confusion into the interpretation of the official status of the Central Bank, and consequently into its functions, goals, and the rules governing its activities. As State Duma Deputy M. Delyagin notes, *“Officially, we consider that the Bank of Russia is not a body of state administration. Contrary to what is written in the Constitution, contrary to what is written in the Federal Law on the Bank of Russia”*<sup>70</sup>.

Another striking example of how highly controversial, contradictory decisions – ones that do not correspond to national interests yet are highly significant – are made within the system of public administration lies in the sphere of culture. This sphere (like education) *“is not only a purely humanitarian field, but also an area for shaping society and managing consciousness... during the educational process, the consciousness of people is formatted, sometimes of entire generations, entire countries... it was precisely through the sphere of education that the colonization of Russia at the mental level took place”*<sup>71</sup>.

**“...in the entire body of Russian legislation, you will not find a definition of what the Central Bank of the Russian Federation is... In federal legislation... regarding the Central Bank, it is stated that its status shall be determined by the law on the Central Bank of the Russian Federation. **The circle is closed: the Constitution refers to the Civil Code of the Russian Federation, the Civil Code refers to the law on the Central Bank, the law on the Central Bank refers back to the Constitution!****

The Central Bank is indeed an unusual phenomenon, a kind of hybrid of a state body and a commercial (or non-commercial?!) organization. On the one hand, the Central Bank has the right to issue regulations binding on all, controls financial organizations, registers credit institutions and non-state pension funds, and exercises other executive and administrative powers. That is, it performs functions that can only be carried out by a body of state authority. On the other hand, it earns a profit, 75% of which goes to the state, and 25%, by decision of the Board of Directors, is transferred to certain funds. **Profit is a characteristic of commercial organizations.** But Article 3 of the law on the Central Bank states that the Central Bank does not aim to make a profit. This is a characteristic of a non-commercial organization...

In the Russian Constitution, the independence of the Central Bank from other bodies of state authority is enshrined only in the exercise of one, albeit the main, function — protecting and ensuring the stability of the ruble. **The law on the Central Bank already ‘adjusts’ the Constitution and speaks of the independence of performing all functions.** In practice, all activities of the Central Bank turn out to be ‘independent’...<sup>72</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Ivanov A. Vice-President of “Oboronstroy” embezzled 786 million and hid from our authorities, holding foreign residency. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/events/vitse-prezident\\_oboronstroya\\_ukrala\\_786 mln\\_i\\_skivalas\\_ot\\_nashih\\_organov\\_imeya\\_inostrannij\\_vnzh](https://zavtra.ru/events/vitse-prezident_oboronstroya_ukrala_786 mln_i_skivalas_ot_nashih_organov_imeya_inostrannij_vnzh)

<sup>71</sup> Dugin A. To decolonize the sphere of education. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/provesti\\_dekolonizatsiyu\\_sferi\\_obrazovaniya?ysclid=mkxo3njd3s288198716](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/provesti_dekolonizatsiyu_sferi_obrazovaniya?ysclid=mkxo3njd3s288198716)

<sup>72</sup> Yemelyanov M. The Central Bank of Russia as an unusual phenomenon. Available at: [https://www.ng.ru/society/2024-09-10/8\\_9090\\_phenomenon.html](https://www.ng.ru/society/2024-09-10/8_9090_phenomenon.html)

Specifically, we are referring to the decision by Minister of Culture O. Lyubimova to appoint K. Bogomolov as acting rector of the Moscow Art Theatre School-Studio. This decision provoked widespread public outcry<sup>73</sup> and, within just a few days, forced the scandal-plagued theater director to resign<sup>74</sup>.

“The [Moscow Art Theatre] School is considered one of the main training grounds for representatives of the acting profession in Russia and a cultural brand of the country, which means the post of its director is a **matter of virtually state importance**”<sup>75</sup>.

It must be noted that the episode with Bogomolov’s appointment in early 2026 is far from the first “unsavory incident” to occur in the sphere of culture with a context that is far from merely cultural, **but distinctly political and social**. This includes episodes during the period of the Special Military Operation (*Insert 4*).

**Nevertheless, whereas in the past, in similar episodes, the opinion of society was simply ignored by decision-makers, today, in early 2026, public indignation led to the reversal of a decision — effectively, a victory over yet another almost-accomplished act of injustice.**

“Public indignation managed to shift what seemed like a done deal... Even the attempt by those promoting Konstantin [Bogomolov] to quickly fashion a patriot out of him did nothing to save the situation – the people unequivocally said ‘no,’ and it worked”<sup>76</sup>.

This says a great deal about the state of contemporary Russian society and how the situation in the country has changed over the past four years of the Special Military Operation. Yet the fact remains:

- ✓ the Minister of Culture’s decision to appoint K. Bogomolov, a former (or current) “Navalny supporter”, was made and would most likely have stood, were it not for public outrage;

- ✓ many representatives of elite circles from government bodies (including the Presidential Administration), culture, and show business spoke out in support of this decision<sup>77</sup>;

- ✓ on February 6, 2026, K. Bogomolov served as the host of one of the country’s main national literary awards, “Slovo” (“The Word”), and none of those present (among whom there were also many representatives of elite circles<sup>78</sup>) saw anything reprehensible in *this*.

<sup>73</sup> The public outcry was linked, in particular, to the fact that K. Bogomolov’s theatrical productions simply **contradict the legislation of the Russian Federation** and specifically the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation 809 of November 9, 2022, “On Approval of the Foundations of State Policy for the Preservation and Strengthening of Traditional Russian Spiritual and Moral Values”. Furthermore, “during the 2013 Moscow mayoral election, **Bogomolov actively supported Navalny and spoke at Navalny-supporting rallies**” (source: Ivanov A. An unexpected decision by the Ministry of Culture: Bogomolov appointed acting rector of the Moscow Art Theatre School-Studio. Yes, that one. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/events/neozhidannoe\\_reshenie\\_minkul\\_ta\\_i\\_o\\_rektora\\_shkoli-studii\\_mhat\\_naznachen\\_bogomolov\\_da\\_tot\\_samij](https://zavtra.ru/events/neozhidannoe_reshenie_minkul_ta_i_o_rektora_shkoli-studii_mhat_naznachen_bogomolov_da_tot_samij)).

<sup>74</sup> This decision was announced on January 23, 2026, and on February 10, 2026, amid widespread public outcry, K. Bogomolov requested to resign from his appointed position.

<sup>75</sup> Avdoshina E. The solitaire of the Moscow Art Theatre School-Studio has not yet been laid out: Bogomolov is gone, but who will come? Available at: [https://www.ng.ru/vision/2026-02-12/8\\_9436\\_bogomolov.html?ysclid=mlow7xao68541793612](https://www.ng.ru/vision/2026-02-12/8_9436_bogomolov.html?ysclid=mlow7xao68541793612)

<sup>76</sup> Ivanov A. “He was recommended”: Bogomolov refused the rectorship at the Moscow Art Theatre School-Studio. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/events/emu\\_porekomendovali\\_bogomolov\\_otkazalsya\\_ot\\_rektorstva\\_v\\_shkole-studii\\_mhat](https://zavtra.ru/events/emu_porekomendovali_bogomolov_otkazalsya_ot_rektorstva_v_shkole-studii_mhat)

<sup>77</sup> Among them: Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation O. Lyubimova, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for International Cultural Cooperation M. Shvydkoy, General Director of the Rossiya Segodnya Media Group D. Kiselev, Member of the Governmental Council for the Development of National Cinematography F. Bondarchuk, Rector of the Russian Institute of Theatre Arts (GITIS) G. Zaslavsky, President of the National Drama Theatre of Russia (Alexandrinsky Theatre) V. Fokin.

<sup>78</sup> The awards to the winners of the prize were presented by the Press Secretary of the President of the Russian Federation D. Peskov, Deputy Head of the Security Council of the Russian Federation D. Medvedev, Aide to the President of the Russian Federation V. Medinsky, President of the Russian Book Union S. Stepashin, and Deputy Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation A. Tsivileva. The Grand Prix of the “Slovo” Prize was awarded to People’s Artist of the RSFSR N. Mikhalkov. Awards were also given to Z. Prilepin, M. Simonyan, and others.

### Some examples of controversial administrative decisions in the sphere of culture that caused public resonance

<p>1. <u>On August 27, 2022</u>, A. Saprykina was appointed Executive Director of the Sergiev Posad State Historical and Art Museum-Reserve. Described as an “art manager from the unequivocally liberal scene, a devoted adherent of contemporary art”<sup>79</sup>.</p>
<p>2. <u>On September 20, 2022</u>, N.S. Trukhanskaya was appointed Rector of the Pushkin State Russian Language Institute. One of her first initiatives was a proposal to strip the Russian language of its status as a state language in the national republics of the Russian Federation and to consider it a foreign language. The Head of the National Anti-Corruption Committee, a member of the Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights, K. Kabanov, noted that Trukhanskaya’s statement, “even as a topic for discussion, is a provocation and a threat to the integrity of the Russian Federation”.</p> <p>In early April 2024, members of a group were detained in Moscow for issuing invalid Russian language proficiency certificates to migrants. Among those detained were employees of the Russian Language Institute. In total, according to investigators, the criminal group “serviced” 464 citizens of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in this manner. On April 12, 2024, Natalya Trukhanskaya was dismissed<sup>80</sup>.</p>
<p>3. “On January 10, 2023, it became known about the first case initiated under the new article on LGBT propaganda against the scandalous publishing house Popcorn Books, which had published that very pedophilic novel ‘Summer in a Pioneer Tie’, its sequel ‘What the Swallow Keeps Silent About’, and many other perverted ‘masterpieces’. The case was opened under Article 6.21 of the Code of Administrative Offenses (propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations and/or preferences, sex change) and under Article 20.1 (petty hooliganism).</p> <p>On February 1, 2023, the owner of Popcorn Books, Denis Kotov (President of the ANO ‘Creation’, co-owner of the United Retail Chain ‘Chitai-Gorod – Bookvoed’)... joined the renewed composition of the Public Council under the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation. The corresponding order was signed by Minister of Culture Olga Lyubimova”<sup>81</sup>.</p>
<p>4. <u>On July 17, 2024</u>, former Moscow Minister of Culture A. Kibovsky was detained on charges of fraud and receiving bribes on an especially large scale<sup>82</sup>.</p>

<sup>79</sup> Ivanov A. The “stuffy Kapkov legacy” has reached Sergiev Posad. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/dushnoe\\_kapkovskoe\\_nasledie\\_dobralos\\_do\\_sergieva\\_posada](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/dushnoe_kapkovskoe_nasledie_dobralos_do_sergieva_posada)  
<sup>80</sup> Russian language exam failed: A “black mark” for the migrant lobby. Available at: [https://tsargrad.tv/articles/jekzamen-po-russkomu-provalen-chjornaja-metka-dlja-migrantskogo-lobbi\\_990057?ysclid=mlkki8j31f644988524](https://tsargrad.tv/articles/jekzamen-po-russkomu-provalen-chjornaja-metka-dlja-migrantskogo-lobbi_990057?ysclid=mlkki8j31f644988524)

<sup>81</sup> Ivanov A. A person charged in an LGBT propaganda case joins the Council of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/events/figurant\\_dela\\_ob\\_lgbt-propagande\\_voshyol\\_v\\_sovet\\_ministerstva\\_kul\\_turi\\_rf?ysclid=mlkip4aiac422954726](https://zavtra.ru/events/figurant_dela_ob_lgbt-propagande_voshyol_v_sovet_ministerstva_kul_turi_rf?ysclid=mlkip4aiac422954726)

<sup>82</sup> Lokotetskaya M., Rusakova R. Alexander Kibovsky was credited with one hundred million. Available at: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/6837466?ysclid=mlrpkulci341227036>

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5. On June 17, 2025, speaking at a plenary session of the State Duma, Russian director and active public figure N. Mikhalkov recounted a specific episode of how his proposal on quotas for foreign films in Russian film distribution was first approved and signed by the President, but then, during consideration in various instances, the head of state's written resolution simply disappeared.

Excerpt from N. Mikhalkov's speech: ***“The letter was written on March 1, 2025. A resolution was placed on this letter. ‘I ask you to support the idea. Measures need to be taken to protect the market in advance, even before competitors start returning. Work it out and report back.’ This was addressed to Vladimir Medinsky... Then this document is sent out to eight different organizations for consultation, probably to understand how and what. But the most interesting and most important thing: this document is sent out without the first page of my letter, on which the President’s resolution stands. And this document ceases to be supported by the President. It becomes a private initiative of some people...”***<sup>83</sup>

6. On July 9, 2025, V. Kekhman, Artistic Director of the Mikhailovsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg and General Director of the Gorky Moscow Art Theatre, former artistic director of the Novosibirsk Academic Theatre, was summoned to the Investigative Committee to give testimony and was then released on his own recognizance. On July 11, the newspaper “Izvestia”, citing sources in law enforcement agencies, reported that Kekhman had been charged with embezzlement related to exceeding the estimated cost of at least three contract agreements<sup>84</sup>.

7. On February 18, the Minister of Culture of Bashkiria, A. Shafikova, was detained. She is suspected of exceeding official authority and embezzlement of budget funds. As experts noted, ***“what happened was what should have happened much earlier. The reasons have been clear to everyone for a long time. They simply, apparently, lacked sufficient factual data... We don't know the documents the investigation has, but we can assume the following: if in any department there is a fact that a major contractor turned out to be, conditionally speaking, a criminal or is suspected of something, then the minister's ignorance of this situation is ruled out. The only question is the extent of their involvement”***<sup>85</sup>.

<sup>83</sup> Speech by N.S. Mikhalkov at the Plenary Session of the State Duma on June 17, 2025. Available at: <http://duma.gov.ru/news/61632/>

<sup>84</sup> Zhilyaeva A. The case of Vladimir Kekhman: How one businessman manages three theaters in the country. Available at: <https://www.forbes.ru/forbeslife/541748-delo-vladimira-kehmana-kak-odin-biznesmen-upravlaet-trema-teatrmi-sirany?yslid=mlrpng3r2m650101321>

<sup>85</sup> Skryp A., Senopalnikov A. The pianist played too far: Why was the minister of culture of Bashkortostan arrested? Available at: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/695203?yslid=mlt1mjjeiu862328495> (the assessment of the political strategist A. Potyitsin).

Thus, the Bogomolov episode is not an isolated incident; it is a “system”, and for many experts it raises serious questions about the quality of administrative decisions and the goals pursued by those making them.

S. Mardan (host of Solovyov Live TV channel): “Questions remain regarding the Ministry of Culture’s personnel policy. Questions, however, that no one will answer anyway”<sup>86</sup>.

N. Burlyayev (First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee on the Development of Civil Society, Issues of Public and Religious Associations): “This temporary misunderstanding has now persisted for decades, causing bewilderment among the overwhelming majority of normal people”<sup>87</sup>.

M. Raikina (Editor of the Literature and Art Department, Moskovsky Komsomolets): “What is happening with personnel policy in the sphere of culture? Rapid appointments and dismissals may indicate that **there is an invisible battle of thrones going on – there’s no other word for it...**

Who summoned whom, where, who announced what to whom, or, worse, ordered what – we cannot predict... One thing is clear, and the more time passes, the more convinced we become: to get a theater, a school, or indeed any post in another cultural institution, you need to have a resource. And this resource must be more powerful than all other resources. **Where this battle of resources/thrones will lead, particularly in culture – one can only guess at the catastrophic nature of the consequences**”<sup>88</sup>.

In the sphere of culture, we once again see confirmation of Aleksandr Dugin’s words that, regarding elites guided not by national but by

personal interests, we must speak “*not simply of corruption,*” but of a “*global class – people with a different worldview*”<sup>89</sup>. It is precisely their administrative decisions, contradicting what the President says and does, that ultimately lead to the “decline” of **passionary energy in society as a whole.**

How does this work in a concrete example?

In December 2025, following the year’s end and, more broadly, four years of the Special Military Operation, a number of research organizations conducted public opinion surveys. Based on the results, experts concluded: “*For the first time in many years, a clear demand for a constructive agenda has formed in public consciousness*”<sup>90</sup>; “*the country is entering 2026 with weariness from geopolitics and a colossal demand for the normalization of everyday life*”<sup>91</sup>.

“**For the first time in many years, a clear demand for a constructive agenda has formed in public consciousness. People are tired of the feeling of ‘empty talk’ and ‘stagnation’ that dominated in 2024. Instead, a demand for order and stability has come to the forefront (23% compared to 9% a year earlier). And crucially, the share of those who see development in the life of society has tripled (11%). This is not just adaptation to difficulties, but the formation of an expectation of positive dynamics and real deeds...**

The outcome of 2025 is a transition from shock and disappointment to hard-won stability and constructive expectations. **Society, having endured a severe crisis, is psychologically ready for a recovery agenda, but this demand requires concrete actions and results**”<sup>92</sup>.

<sup>86</sup> Skryp A., Senopalnikov A. The pianist played too far: Why was the minister of culture of Bashkortostan arrested? Available at: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/695203?ysclid=mlt1mjleju862328495> (the assessment of the political strategist A. Potylitsin).

<sup>87</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>88</sup> Raikina M. The war of thrones in culture: What lies behind Bogomolov’s swift resignation. Available at: <https://www.mk.ru/culture/2026/02/11/voyna-prestolov-v-kulture-chto-skryvaetsya-za-stremitelnoy-otstavkoy-bogomolova.html?ysclid=mlkhog8j80515588527>

<sup>89</sup> Dugin A. On the necessary extermination of the global class. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/imenno\\_oni\\_predali\\_rossiyu\\_dugin\\_vskril\\_sabotazh\\_elit\\_chistka\\_neizbezhna](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/imenno_oni_predali_rossiyu_dugin_vskril_sabotazh_elit_chistka_neizbezhna)

<sup>90</sup> Obukhov S.P., Mikhalchuk A.M., Bogachev A.M., Strelkov D.A., Khamadieva T.V., Chervontsev A.V. Results of 2025 from V.V. Putin. An Express Analysis of the Message to Russian Society and Foreign Opponents. Available at: <https://kprf.ru/politindx/239901.html?ysclid=mlhmrkgapk916136109>

<sup>91</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>92</sup> Garmonenko D. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation revealed the reasons for United Russia’s victory. Available at: [https://www.ng.ru/politics/2026-01-19/1\\_9418\\_kprf.html](https://www.ng.ru/politics/2026-01-19/1_9418_kprf.html)

In particular, a survey of experts conducted in December 2025 by the Center for the Study of Political Culture of Russia (CISPKR) revealed “three main demands that the authorities ignore or are afraid to discuss”<sup>93</sup>:

1. **“Just PEACE” (66%) – ending the Special Military Operation as the primary unspoken desire.**

2. **“Let us breathe” (62%) – a demand to stop rising prices and tariffs.**

3. **“Give me back my internet” (62%) – a demand for digital normality without an “electronic concentration camp”.**

**Some conclusions from the CISPKR report on the state of Russian society following 2025**<sup>94</sup>:

1. **United Russia (64%) blames economic failures solely on sanctions and hides behind “unity” (64%).**

2. **55% of respondents believe that the voice of the people remains “a voice crying in the wilderness”.**

3. **“The battle of the refrigerator against the television” (55%) – prices and tariffs frighten more than external enemies.**

4. **The final diagnosis of the social situation on the eve of 2026: “anxious equilibrium”:**

✓ Experts rated the mood of society as “apathy and muted irritation” (4.2 points out of 5).

✓ Weariness from geopolitics and **longing for a “normal life”** (3.95).

✓ **“Everyday concerns” outweigh the Special Military Operation (prices worry more than events on the line of combat contact) – 3.60.**

✓ Hope for the intervention and promises of the President as an “island of stability” **fell to 2.43 points.**

5. **The country is entering 2026 with weariness from geopolitics and a colossal demand for the normalization of everyday life – from price tags in stores to internet connection speeds and the functioning of messengers.**

*“This clear demand for a constructive agenda” is precisely the accumulation of a critical mass of passionary energy. At the same time, as V. Fedorov, Director General of VCIOM (Russian Public Opinion Research Center), emphasizes, the Russian people have “become more complex. More diverse. Wiser... people have begun to value themselves more..., have begun to feel our unity more deeply, to understand that we must be truly together. We have become more inclined towards what are called traditional spiritual and moral values. Strong family, patriotism, mutual assistance and mutual support...”*<sup>95</sup>.

*“We have managed to create something that ‘filters out’ the energetic, socially active, passionary part of society – those who have managed to change their social role and are ideologically charged. Moreover, in terms of their characteristics, these people are more of an entrepreneurial, ‘pioneering’ type than classical ‘service class people’ or, even more so, bureaucrats...”*

This new middle class also includes **workers from the revitalized defense industry... Volunteers** and all those who, through deeds – actual deeds, not chatter that masks idleness and lack of will – demonstrate empathy for the events unfolding at the front and in the rear, also gravitate toward this stratum in terms of values and function...

Until now, it seemed that our state rested on state servants – but no, it rests not only on them. **It turns out that to no lesser extent, it rests on these very active young (and not only) technological entrepreneurs...**

**We now have a chance that this class of passionaries, its social energy, will allow post-war Russia to make a leap forward in the economy and in technology. For the first time, we may obtain a mass, patriotically minded class of entrepreneurs in terms of behavioral model...”**<sup>96</sup>

<sup>93</sup> 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. An Express Analysis of the Message to Russian Society and Foreign Opponents. Available at: <https://kprf.ru/politindx/239901.html?ysclid=mlhmrkgapk916136109>

<sup>94</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>95</sup> Alfimov V. From salary to victory: How Russian society has changed over the year (interview with VCIOM Director V. Fedorov). Available at: <https://www.kp.ru/daily/27763.3/5191948/?ysclid=mkgituc55z530676123>

<sup>96</sup> Belousov D.R. The most impressive challenge in the last three generations. Available at: <https://monocle.ru/monocle/2026/05/samaya-vpechatlyayuschaya-zadacha-za-posledniye-tri-pokoleniya/?ysclid=mlunibi57a474763118>

V. Fedorov: “In 2022–2023, the Special Military Operation was in focus. It was unclear, frightening. Remember, for example, in 2023 Ukraine promised a counteroffensive – it failed, but people felt danger. 2023 can be considered a turning point. Our offensive began, which has now been ongoing continuously for a year and a half. This is good from a military perspective. But from a socio-psychological perspective, there are other consequences. **We are no longer afraid of losing: our heroic fighters are advancing. We, as a society, believe that all tasks will be achieved.** Of course, we would like it to be faster, but if the enemy is not ready to accept fair terms, we will continue to fight...

...the army is fighting, the people watch on TV, through Telegram channels... how our troops overcome the enemy’s resistance, **and worry about something else: about the economy, salaries, jobs, prices, children’s education, healthcare**”<sup>97</sup>.

Thus, various research organizations, independently of each other, are recording the same trend – a growing public demand for the “normalization of everyday life”; people’s primary concern is not the progress of the Special Military Operation, but the dynamics of their standard and quality of life.

In other words – along with people’s confidence in the success of the Special Military Operation, that demand from the population to the authorities which was relevant before the crisis is returning.

**Only now:**

**A) this demand comes from a society that (in V. Fedorov’s words) has become “more complex, more diverse, wiser...”;**

**and B) the acuteness of this demand is “heated” by a period of almost six years of waiting (from 2020 to 2025), when society, quite understandingly and patiently, supporting the President and consolidating**

**around him, “pushed” the agenda of standard and quality of life to the background, bringing the priorities of national security to the forefront.**

Experts quite rightly draw attention to the fact that **“this demand requires concrete actions and results”**<sup>98</sup>. And for this, as G. Zyuganov emphasizes, **“the socio-economic course in Russia must be urgently changed... It is impossible to solve problems within the framework of that oligarchic capitalism that our Government demonstrates today”**<sup>99</sup>.

Nevertheless, decisions like those occurring in the sphere of culture, the financial system, etc., are effectively “dampening” this passionate energy accumulating in society, blocking the “demand for a constructive agenda”.

**As a result, alienation of society from the authorities (the state) occurs.** Thus, according to VCIOM research data on Russians’ subjective assessments of the outgoing year, the majority of Russian citizens noted that 2025 was for them personally “generally successful, very good” (56%), while for the country it was “rather difficult, bad, very hard” (64%, *Insert 5*). **That is, Russians assess the results of the past year for themselves personally and for the country as a whole not just differently, but in opposite ways.**

**Moreover, in crisis periods for the country, this characteristic intensifies, and the specific nature of the crisis also matters here.** Thus, for the period from 2003 to 2019 (preceding the COVID-19 pandemic), the gap between the share of people positively assessing the year’s results for themselves and for the country averaged 14 percentage points; during the pandemic period before the start of the Special Military Operation (2020–2021) – 26 percentage points; over the four years of its conduct (2022–2025) – 32 percentage points (*Tab. 1; Insert 5*).

<sup>97</sup> Alfimov V. From salary to victory: How Russian society has changed over the year (interview with VCIOM Director V. Fedorov). Available at: <https://www.kp.ru/daily/27763.3/5191948/?ysclid=mkgituc55z530676123>

<sup>98</sup> Garmonenko D. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation revealed the reasons for United Russia’s victory. Available at: [https://www.ng.ru/politics/2026-01-19/1\\_9418\\_kprf.html](https://www.ng.ru/politics/2026-01-19/1_9418_kprf.html)

<sup>99</sup> “It is impossible to solve problems within the framework of oligarchic capitalism.” G.A. Zyuganov commented on the “Direct Line with President V.V. Putin”. Available at: <https://kprf-saratov.ru/2025/12/nevozmozhno-reshat-zadachi-v-ramkah-oligarhicheskogo-kapitalizma-g-a-zyuganov-prokomentiroval-pryamuyu-liniyu-s-prezidentom-v-v-putinyam/>

Table 1. Dynamics of assessments of the year's results (VCIOM, data for the Russian Federation), % of respondents

Period	For oneself (one's family)	For the country	Difference + / –
<b>Share of positive assessments</b>			
2003–2019 (before COVID-19)	55	42	+14
2020–2021 (before the start of the SMO)	39	14	+26
2022–2025 (4 years of the SMO)	55	23	+32
<b>Share of negative assessments of the year's results</b>			
2003–2019 (before COVID-19)	43	52	-9
2020–2021 (before the start of the SMO)	60	80	-21
2022–2025 (4 years of the SMO)	42	71	-29

Source: Results of 2025, expectations for 2026. VCIOM. 24.12.2025. Available at: <https://wciom.ru/analytical-reviews/analiticheskii-obzor/itogi-2025-goda-i-ozhidaniya-ot-2026-goda>

Table 2. Dynamics of assessments of the year's results (VoIRC RAS, data for the Vologda Region), % of respondents

Period	For oneself/ one's family	For the country	Difference + / –
<b>Share of positive assessments</b>			
2003–2019 (before COVID-19)	46.6	37.6	+9
2020–2021 (before the start of the SMO)	36.6	25.8	+11
2022–2025 (4 years of the SMO)	45.2	24.9	+18
<b>Share of negative assessments of the year's results</b>			
2003–2019 (before COVID-19)	44.5	45.0	-1
2020–2021 (before the start of the SMO)	55.3	60.9	-6
2022–2025 (4 years of the SMO)	48.8	64.0	-15

Source: VoIRC RAS public opinion monitoring.

**Thus, the majority of Russians positively assess the results of the past year for themselves personally and negatively for the country as a whole.**

The same feature was noted based on the results of studies conducted at the level of a specific region – Vologda Region: the gap between the share of people positively assessing the year's results for themselves personally and for the country as a whole averaged 9 p.p. in 2003–2019, 11 p.p. in 2020–2021, and 18 p.p. in 2022–2025 (*Tab. 2, Insert 6*).

**This discrepancy in the population's assessments of their personal and public life intensifies during periods of crisis and (as the research results show) has manifested itself especially clearly precisely during the period of the Special Military Operation.**

This same alienation of society from the authorities is evidenced by the decline in people's interest in the “Direct Line with Vladimir Putin” (that is, in the President's direct communication with the people, which has always formed the basis of the special, deep, trusting relationship that has developed between them; *Insert 7*).

According to FOM data, in 2025<sup>100</sup>:

- ✓ for the first time since 2019, the share of Russians who were generally interested in the “Direct Line with Vladimir Putin” decreased (from 66 to 64%);

- ✓ for the first time since 2018, the share of people who did not watch the “Direct Line” increased (from 43 to 46%);

- ✓ for the first time, the share of people who liked the “Direct Line” decreased (from 48 to 44%);

- ✓ for the first time, the share of those who noted that the questions asked during the “Direct Line” were “good, interesting” decreased (from 41 to 36%).

Thus, for the first time in the entire long crisis period in which our country finds itself (recall that the COVID-19 pandemic period can quite reasonably be included here), Russian society has demonstrated a decline in interest in what concerns our fellow citizens and in how V.V. Putin personally responds to this: what he says, what he does, and what he intends to do.

<sup>100</sup> “Results of the Year with Vladimir Putin”. Interest in the program and impressions from the Direct Line. Available at: <https://fom.ru/posts/15290>

### What was the past year like...? (VCIOM data for Russia, % of respondents)\*

Year	Overall successful, very good		Rather difficult, bad, very difficult		+/-
	For Russia	For oneself (one's family)	For Russia	For oneself (one's family)	
2025	29	56	64	40	-24
2024	23	53	70	43	-27
2023	26	57	66	41	-25
2022	14	52	83	45	-38
<b>Average for 4 years of SMO implementation</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>-29</b> ✓
COVID-19 pandemic	19	45	72	53	-19
2020	8	33	88	66	-22
<b>Average for 2 years of the COVID-19 pandemic</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>-21</b> ✓
2019	34	54	58	45	-13
2018	33	57	60	40	-20
2012	38	55	56	44	-12
2007	64	62	27	35	8
2005	46	51	49	48	-1
2003	45	55	50	44	-6
<b>Average for the "pre-crisis" period of 2003-2019</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>-9</b> ✓

\* Over the presented measurement period, the share of those who "found it difficult to answer" the question ranged from 1 to 9%.

Source: Results of 2025, expectations for 2026. VCIOM. 24.12.2025. Available at: <https://wciom.ru/analytical-reviews/analiticheskii-obzor/itogi-2025-goda-i-ozhidaniya-ot-2026-goda>

As VCIOM data show, for the period from 2003 to 2019, the difference between the share of people positively assessing the past year for themselves personally and for the country as a whole **did not exceed 24 p.p.** However, after the country entered a crisis period (associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, then with the start of the Special Military Operation), this indicator increased and began to range from 25 to 38 p.p.

A similar situation is observed in the share of those who negatively assess the year's results for themselves and for the country: before the coronavirus pandemic, the difference between them **did not exceed 20 p.p.**; after 2020, it ranged **from 19 to 38 p.p.**

**Thus, during the crisis period (especially after the start of the Special Military Operation), the share of people who assess the results of the past year differently for themselves personally (their family) and for the country as a whole increases.**

Insert 6

What was the past year like...? (VoIRC RAS data for Vologda Region, % of respondents)\*

Year	Overall successful, very good			Rather difficult, bad, very difficult			
	For Russia	For oneself (one's family)	+/-	For Russia	For oneself (one's family)	+/-	
SMO period	2025	24.9	45.2	+20	64.0	48.8	-15
	2024	24.7	43.2	+19	64.7	50.0	-15
	2023	23.8	40.1	+16	65.5	54.0	-12
	2022	21.6	36.2	+15	66.0	57.4	-9
<b>Average for 4 years of SMO implementation</b>		23,8	41,2	<b>+18</b> ✓	65.1	52.6	<b>-13</b> ✓
COVID-19 pandemic	2021	26.4	37.3	+11	60.5	54.9	-6
	2020	25.1	35.9	+11	61.2	55.7	-6
<b>Average for 2 years of the COVID-19 pandemic</b>		25,8	36,6	<b>+11</b> ✓	60.9	55.3	<b>-6</b> ✓
«Pre-crisis» period	2019	33.6	43.8	+10	53.1	48.8	-4
	2018	31.6	44.1	+13	54.0	46.3	-8
	2012	39.9	45.4	+6	43.9	45.5	+2
	2007	48.6	53.6	+5	29.0	35.9	+7
	2005	33.1	47.4	+14	48.3	44.7	-4
<b>Average for the "pre-crisis" period of 2003-2019</b>		38.5	45.1	+7	41.6	45.7	+4
			<b>46.6</b>	<b>+9</b> ✓	<b>45.0</b>	<b>44.5</b>	<b>-1</b> ✓

\* Over the presented measurement period, the share of those who "found it difficult to answer" the question ranged from 6 to 26%. Source: VoIRC RAS public opinion monitoring.

Not identical data (primarily due to the difference in the share of "those who found it difficult to answer"), but similar features (trends) were identified when analyzing data from sociological surveys conducted in the Vologda Region.

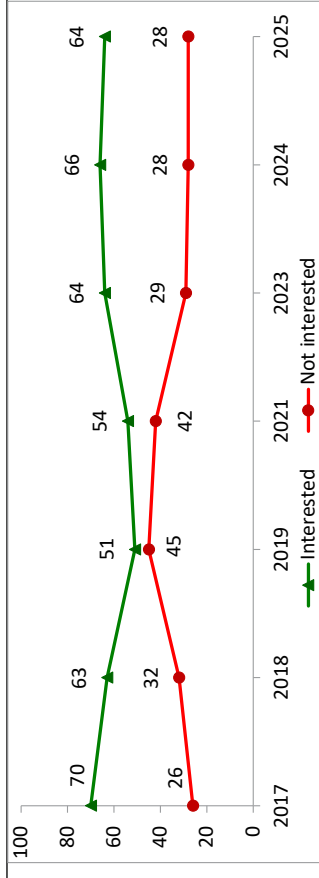
For the "pre-crisis" period of 2003–2019, the difference between the share of people **positively** assessing the year's results for themselves personally and for the country as a whole averaged 9 p.p., during the COVID-19 pandemic – 11 p.p., during the Special Military Operation – 18 p.p.

The difference between the share of those who **negatively** assess the year's results for themselves and for the country was 1 p.p. in 2003–2019, 6 p.p. during the pandemic, and 13 p.p. during the Special Military Operation.

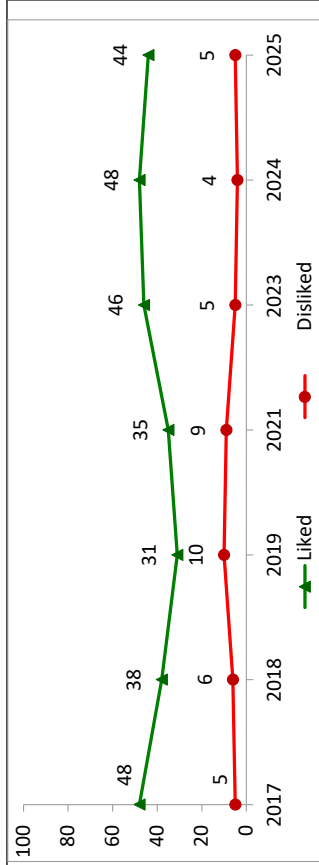
Thus, even with regional peculiarities that cause differences in the specific data obtained by VCIOM for Russia and VoIRC RAS for the Vologda Region, **the identified feature of the widening "gap" between society and the authorities during crisis periods (especially during the Special Military Operation) occurs in all territories.**

Insert 7

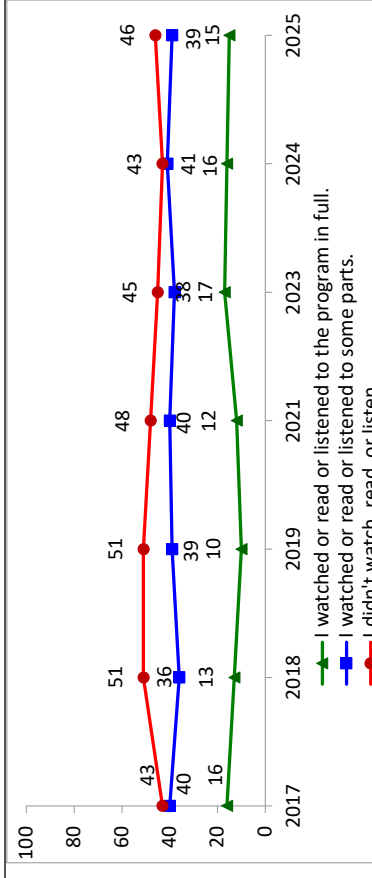
Dynamics of Public Opinion on the “Direct Line with Vladimir Putin” (FOM data, overall for Russia)<sup>101</sup>



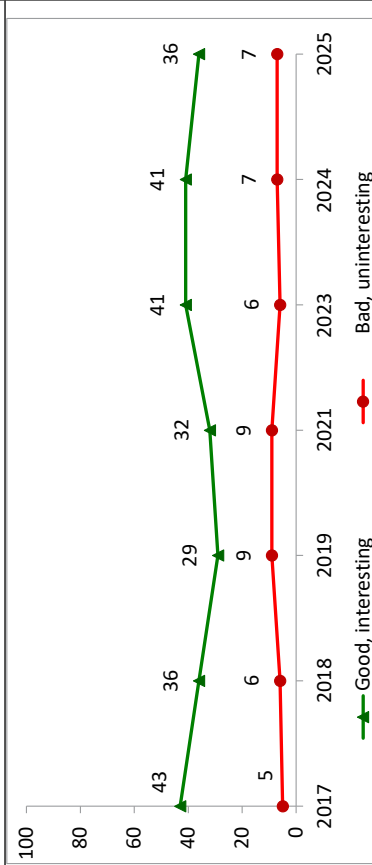
7A. Are you interested or not interested in watching stories and TV programs where Vladimir Putin answers questions from Russians live, that is, in the Direct Line format?



7B. Did you like or dislike how Vladimir Putin answered questions during the Direct Line?



7C. Did you watch the program “Results of the Year with Vladimir Putin” in full, did you see parts of it, or did you not watch it? Or perhaps you read Putin’s answers or listened to them on the radio?



7D. Overall, would you say that most of the questions asked to Putin during the Direct Line were good and interesting, or bad and uninteresting?

In 2025 (for the first time since 2019):

- ✓ the share of people interested in following the President’s live communication with Russians decreased (by 2 p.p., from 66 to 64%; Fig. 7A);
- ✓ the share of Russians who liked the past “Direct Line with Vladimir Putin” decreased (by 4 p.p., from 48 to 44%; Fig. 7B);
- ✓ the proportion of those who watched the program “Results of the Year with Vladimir Putin” fully or partially increased (by 3 p.p., from 43 to 46%; Fig. 7C);
- ✓ the proportion of people who found the questions asked during the “Direct Line” with the President interesting decreased (by 5 p.p., from 41 to 36%; Fig. 7D).

<sup>101</sup> “Results of the Year with Vladimir Putin”. Interest in the program and impressions from the Direct Line. Available at: <https://fom.ru/posts/15290>

**The presented sociological data show that Russians are “withdrawing into themselves”, “distancing themselves” from the state and the country (55–60% of people assess the results of the past year differently for themselves personally and for the country as a whole; Russians’ interest in the “Direct Line” with the President is declining, and the assessment of the quality of the head of state’s direct communication with the people is decreasing). Consequently, the “hypercompensation effect” capable of leading to a “passionary explosion” and an “evolutionary leap” is not occurring”.**

**It is important to note that this trend is hidden, latent in nature,** because the direct level of approval of the head of state’s activities in the country remains consistently high, and the assessment of the overall direction of Russia’s development remains significantly more positive than before the start of the Special Military Operation; the same can be said regarding people’s overall satisfaction with their living conditions.

According to VCIOM data<sup>102</sup>:

✓ the approval rating for the activities of the President of the Russian Federation in January 2026 was 75%; the average for 2025 was 76%.

✓ The index of the state of affairs in the country\* averaged 59 points in 2025, compared to an average of 37 points in 2021 (i.e., before the start of the Special Military Operation).

✓ The index of public sentiment\*\* averaged 62 points in 2025, compared to an average of 50 points in 2021.

\* Question wording: “To what extent do you agree that things in the country are going in the right direction?”

\*\* “To what extent are you satisfied with the life you are currently leading?”

Incidentally, similar latent trends in the dynamics of public opinion are also noted in the results of regional studies, particularly those conducted by Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences (VolRC RAS) in the Vologda Region.

On the one hand, according to the results of monitoring surveys conducted in the Vologda Region (*Tab. 3*):

✓ throughout 2025 and the first months of 2026, the approval rating for the head of state’s activities remained stable at 64–66%, which is higher than the average for 2021 (before the start of the Special Military Operation; 52%) and for 2022 (the first year of the Special Military Operation; 57%);

✓ at the same time, the share of people positively assessing their overall psychological state remained stable at 44–47% from February 2025 to February 2026, which is also higher than in 2021 and 2022 (41–42%).).

However, at the same time, over the last 12 months (from February 2025 to February 2026; *Tab. 3*):

✓ the share of positive opinions about the head of state’s work in strengthening Russia’s international positions decreased by 3 p.p. (from 50 to 47%);

✓ the proportion of people who believe that the President of the Russian Federation is successfully restoring order in the country decreased by 6 p.p. (from 54 to 48%);

✓ the share of positive assessments of the head of state’s work in protecting democracy and strengthening citizens’ freedoms decreased by 4 p.p. (from 45 to 41%);

✓ the proportion of people positively assessing the President of the Russian Federation’s work in boosting the economy and increasing citizens’ well-being decreased by 4 p.p. (from 41 to 37%).

Thus, the overall approval rating for the activities of the President of the Russian Federation is significantly higher (65–66%) than the assessments of his success in almost all individual areas reflecting the most acute problems (40–50%).

Furthermore, more pronounced negative changes are observed in their dynamics: over the last 12 months, they are quite evident across all key areas of the tasks facing the head of state.

<sup>102</sup> Official website of VCIOM. Ratings. Available at: <https://wciom.ru/ratings>

Table 3. Dynamics of subjective assessments of public opinion on the activities of the President of the Russian Federation and personal psychological well-being (VoIRC RAS data for the Vologda Region), % of respondents

Indicators	Average annual data					Last 12 months		Dynamics (+/-), Feb. 2026 to Feb. 2025*
	Year before the start of the SMO	SMO period				Feb. 2025	Feb. 2026	
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025			
Share of positive assessments of the President's activities	51.5	57.0	61.4	66.7	65.9	66.3	63.7	-2
Share of positive assessments of social mood	66.7	67.4	65.6	69.0	71.6	69.4	69.7	0
<i>Share of positive assessments of the President of the Russian Federation's success in addressing key national problems</i>								
Strengthening Russia's international positions	46.6	47.7	47.4	52.4	51.1	49.6	47.0	-3
Restoring order in the country	43.1	44.4	39.6	49.7	50.1	53.7	48.0	-6
Protecting democracy, strengthening citizens' freedoms	33.3	36.8	40.8	44.9	43.1	44.8	40.5	-4
Boosting the economy, increasing citizens' well-being	26.0	31.5	36.1	39.0	40.5	40.9	37.1	-4
* Changes of +/- 2 p.p. fall within the margin of error and can be considered insignificant. Question wording: "How do you currently assess the activities of the President of the Russian Federation?"; "What could you say about your mood in recent days?"; "How successfully, in your opinion, is V. Putin coping with the problems...?"								

The presented data indicate that recently, according to both Russian and regional sociological measurements, a latent trend of deteriorating assessments of public administration effectiveness has been observed. In our view, this reveals a quite obvious cause-and-effect relationship between the decisions made by individual representatives of the ruling elites and the dynamics of the state of Russian society.

This provides a direct answer to the question about the reasons for the "decline of passionarity energy" required for the "evolutionary leap" of a state-civilization and its transition to a new stage of development: "At the stage of societal consolidation, unity of the elites must also be observed"<sup>103</sup>. If this unity is absent, then a transition to the next stage of the "evolutionary leap" is out of the question.

"The most acute problem arising for the state lies in the degeneration of elites... when elites abandon a holistic systemic orientation and begin to pursue primarily their own selfish personal interests. In such cases, the public administration system loses effectiveness, and the country begins to move towards its demise. If such a process acquires sufficient scale and lasts long enough, the probability of a negative outcome rises to a critical level and may very well materialize"<sup>104</sup>.

It must be acknowledged, of course, that over the past 25 years, Vladimir Putin has taken many systematic steps to enhance the effectiveness of public administration in Russia.

<sup>103</sup> Balatsky E.V. (2025). The extinction of passionarity in E. Todd's demographic concept. *Sotsialnoe prostranstvo*, 11(3), p. 4.

<sup>104</sup> Balatsky E.V. (2024). Elite economics and political instability. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 17(2), p. 56.

Furthermore, throughout the entire period of the Special Military Operation, the head of state, the Government, and the State Duma have been pursuing an active policy to strengthen the cultural and economic foundations of Russia's sovereignty in the context of confrontation with the "collective West." This includes measures for the socio-economic support of broad strata of the population, participants in the Special Military Operation, and members of their families (*Insert 8*).

However, despite all the measures taken, the expert assessments, facts, statistical data, and sociological survey results presented above indicate that the *"task of renewing/purging the elite remains as pressing as ever"*. Consequently, the state and the country still need a *"consistent continuation of the revolution from above begun by the president"*.

This means that the paramount **"question-challenge"** remains: **whether the President and the country will have enough time to put the public administration system in order, to make it correspond to the goals and objectives of national policy dictated by the realities that have objectively changed since the start of the Special Military Operation.**

N. Berdyaev: "Since the creation of the world, a minority has always ruled, rules, and will always rule, not the majority... **The only question is whether the ruling minority is the better or the worse**"<sup>105</sup>.

"In the early 2000s, removing oligarchs from the levers of power and replacing the thieving liberal elite became an imperative for the country's survival... **Step by step, in the 2000s, the most odious comprador oligarchs were pushed away from the levers of power by V. Putin and replaced with more loyal state oligarchs.** The country, it seemed, had stepped back from the edge of the abyss, but the liberal elite in power continued to guard the interests of the wealthy minority and siphon capital out of the country, while the scale of corruption and social inequality grew.

**The start of the Special Military Operation showed that the steps taken by the president were clearly insufficient and the task of renewing/purging the elite remains as pressing as ever.** The remaining supporters of the Gaidar-Chubais course in power have become less brazen, they speak in a new way, in the spirit of the times, **but they have not linked their fate with the fate of the people, and they still do not...**

It would seem that there is complete clarity on the question of what kind of elite we need. Its inherent qualities must be incorruptibility, readiness for Service, spirituality..., strategic vision of the situation... **But how can we ensure that the political, cultural, scientific, and business elites all meet these strict criteria? Only through the consistent continuation of the revolution from above begun by the president...**"<sup>106</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Berdyaev N. The Philosophy of Inequality. Sixth Letter. On Aristocracy. Available at: <https://www.livelib.ru/book/82753/read-filosofiya-neravenstva-nikolaj-berdyaev/~6>

<sup>106</sup> Batchikov S. Cream or aoam? Once again on the tasks of the Russian elite. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/slivki\\_ili\\_pena?ysclid=mkkvioxane829493273](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/slivki_ili_pena?ysclid=mkkvioxane829493273)

**Monitoring of regulatory legal acts (laws, decrees) signed by the President of the Russian Federation  
in the period from December 13, 2025 to February 14, 2026<sup>107</sup>**

**MEASURES TO SUPPORT PARTICIPANTS OF THE SPECIAL MILITARY OPERATION AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS, DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX, MOBILIZATION, ORGANIZATION OF MARTIAL LAW, ENHANCEMENT OF ANTI-TERRORIST  
PROTECTION OF FACILITIES**

**December 15 – Federal Law 468 “On Amendments to Article 20 of the Federal Law ‘On the Status of Military Personnel’.**” Military personnel are granted the right to free travel to and from the place where military medical (flight medical) commissions conduct military medical examinations.

**December 15 – Federal Law 469 “On Amendments to the Federal Law ‘On the Status of Military Personnel’.**” The right to extraordinary provision of housing (housing subsidy) was granted to military personnel: those with children who are disabled from childhood; those declared by a military medical commission as unfit or partially fit for military service due to health conditions resulting from injuries (wounds, traumas, concussions) or illnesses sustained during combat operations, but who, despite this, decide to continue military service; those for whom the head of the federal executive body or federal state body where military service is provided for by law has made relevant decisions.

**December 15 – Federal Law 486 “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation.”** Benefits and social guarantees provided for by the legislation of the Russian Federation for family members of military personnel, citizens in volunteer formations, and employees of certain federal state bodies are extended to children who have reached the age of 18 and have completed their education in basic general or secondary general education programs, for the period until September 1 of the year in which such education was completed.

**December 15 – Federal Law 490 “On Amendments to Article 68 of the Federal Law ‘On Education in the Russian Federation’.**” The right to receive secondary vocational education again in a different profession or specialty at the expense of budgetary funds is granted to military personnel of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and the Russian National Guard, citizens called up for military service through mobilization, and citizens who have signed a contract for voluntary assistance in carrying out tasks assigned to the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation or the Russian National Guard troops, provided they have participated in the special military operation or performed tasks to repel armed incursion into the territory of the Russian Federation.

**December 29 – Federal Law 534 “On Amendments to the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation.”** Criminal liability is strengthened for certain crimes committed by mobilized personnel and contractors who have been conditionally released from serving their sentence or in respect of whom criminal prosecution has been suspended due to undergoing military service. Unauthorized leave from a place of service or failure to report for service without a valid reason for 2–10 days is punishable by imprisonment for 2 to 6 years; failure to report for service without a valid reason for one month – 3 to 8 years; desertion with weapons or by a group – 10 to 12 years; feigning illness, self-inflicted injury, or document forgery – up to 12 years.

**December 29 – Federal Law 572 “On Amending Article 3 of the Federal Law ‘On Veterans’.**” It is envisaged to classify as combat veterans prosecutors and employees of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation who performed their official duties in accordance with decisions of the prosecution authorities of the Russian Federation or the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation on the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic from September 30, 2015, during the special military operation on the territories of Ukraine, the Donetsk People’s Republic, and the Lugansk People’s Republic from February 24, 2022, and on the territories of the Zaporozhye Region and Kherson Region from September 30, 2022.

<sup>107</sup>This insert is a continuation of the monitoring of the most important regulatory legal acts signed by the President of the Russian Federation, which has been conducted since June 2022 (the first issue of the monitoring was presented in the article: Ilyin V.A., Morev M.V. (2022). The difficult road after the Rubicon. Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast, 15(3), 9–41).

**MEASURES TO PROTECT INFORMATION SECURITY, LIMIT THE INFLUENCE OF FOREIGN AGENTS, AND DEVELOP THE EDUCATION AND UPBRINGING SYSTEM FOR YOUNGER GENERATIONS**

**December 15 – Federal Law 462 “On Amendments to the Federal Law ‘On Countering the Legalization (Laundering) of Criminally Obtained Income and the Financing of Terrorism’ and Articles 41 and 51 of the Federal Law ‘On Special Economic Measures and Coercive Measures’.”** Individuals for whom there is information about involvement in extremism, terrorism, or sabotage will be required to coordinate financial transactions with Rosfinmonitoring (the Federal Financial Monitoring Service). Not only the salaries of these individuals but also other income determined by the Government will come under control. Banks will be required to block transactions of persons who are wanted and included in the list of terrorists and extremists.

**December 29 – Federal Constitutional Law “On Amending Article 1 of the Federal Constitutional Law ‘On the State Emblem of the Russian Federation’.”** The description of the State Emblem of the Russian Federation is clarified. It stipulates that the small crowns, the large crown, and the orb are surmounted by straight, equal-ended, four-pointed crosses with flared ends.

**December 29 – Federal Law 528 “On Amendments to the Code of the Russian Federation on Administrative Offenses.”** Fines are provided for officials and other employees of the Passport and Visa Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Multifunctional Migration Center who violate requirements for providing assistance in rendering public services in the sphere of migration. For violating the procedure for providing assistance to the Ministry of Internal Affairs or its territorial body in implementing certain powers when rendering public services and performing functions in the migration sphere, the fine for officials ranges from 5,000 to 10,000 rubles, and for other employees, from 2,000 to 2,500 rubles.

**MEASURES FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC SUPPORT OF THE GENERAL POPULATION AND STRENGTHENING THE COUNTRY’S ECONOMY, INCLUDING ON THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA**

**December 28 – Federal Law 505 “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation.”** Control over the money and property of civil servants and their family members has become continuous and is carried out in real time within the “Poseidon” system. It allows for the rapid acquisition of information from the Federal Tax Service, Rosfinmonitoring, Rosreestr, Rosimushchestvo, the Bank of Russia, and other agencies. Officials are no longer required to submit annual declarations of income and property. The obligation to submit a declaration remains when entering service, being appointed to a position, transferring, or being included in the personnel reserve. Such information must also be provided upon the occurrence of circumstances established by law, for example, when acquiring property whose value exceeds the civil servant’s family income for three years.

**December 29 – Federal Law 545 “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation.”** The law is aimed at protecting the rights of consumers of services provided by microfinance organizations (MFOs). From April 1, 2027, MFOs are prohibited from approving a new consumer loan with a total cost exceeding 100% until three days have passed after the full repayment of a previous loan with similar parameters from any credit institution or MFO. From October 1, 2026, to April 1, 2027, MFOs cannot issue a consumer loan with a total cost exceeding 200% if there are outstanding obligations under two consumer credit (loan) agreements with similar parameters concluded with any credit institution or MFO. From April 1, 2026, the overpayment on microloans of up to one year will be reduced from 130% to 100%.

**December 29 – Federal Law 561 “On Amendments to Articles 3.5 and 14.8 of the Code of the Russian Federation on Administrative Offenses.”** Administrative liability for imposing additional goods (works, services) on a consumer for a separate fee is strengthened. The fine for officials is set at 50,000 to 150,000 rubles, and for legal entities, at 200,000 to 500,000 rubles.

In conclusion, it should be noted that “*critical mass of passionarity*,” the “*life cycle of the state*,” and the “*level of well-being*” (as the main factor in the decline of passionary energy) – all these are categories that can only be considered in long-term, historical dynamics, **within the context of the evolution of a state-civilization**. This means they are a matter of the effectiveness of **strategic public administration**, and most importantly, **all these categories “are subject to management”**.

“How can passionarity be maintained at the maximum possible level...? **Through the support of effective public administration. This is the only way to extend the life cycle of the state and the nation.**

It is possible to manage... the critical passionarity on which the existence of the nation and state depends. This should be the goal. **The level of well-being [the main culprit in the process of passionarity’s decline] is subject to management, which makes it possible to prevent undesirable events in the country’s history.** This is a subtle dialectical process, involving **balancing a decent standard of living for the population against the backdrop of a social model that demands considerable effort from people to attain it.** The combination of such developmental aspects constitutes the **sacred essence of the art of public administration**”<sup>108</sup>.

At this pivotal moment in history (which Russia is currently undergoing), a great deal (if not everything) depends on the President, as a person of a “passionary psychological type”.

It depends, on the one hand, on his ability to learn the lessons from the true causes of the USSR’s collapse; that is, **to create such a structure of public administration in which new Gorbachevs, Yeltsins, Yakovlevs, and Chubais** could not emerge (and there are still many of them in the current system

of public administration, as experts note and as real facts show, especially in the first years of the Special Military Operation).

“People of a passionary psychological type are individuals **possessing very great energy and directing it towards great deeds**, typically towards the transformation of society, ready to risk their own lives and the lives of their community in the name of a great goal. The main stimuli for the activity of a passionary personality, as a rule, are **‘supra-personal’ values and meanings – that is, not individual, personal interests, but spiritual-ideological essences or meaningful orientations connected with the life of the community with which they identify themselves**”<sup>109</sup>.

“Former Russian Prime Minister M. Kasyanov\* has sailed off abroad and now resides in Latvia.

Deputy Prime Minister A. Dvorkovich moved to the USA.

Former Deputy Prime Ministers I. Klebanov, A. Khloponin, and ministers Ya. Urinson, M. Akimov chose Israel as their place of residence.

Former Head of State Property A. Kokh resides in Germany.

V. Khristenko has an apartment in Spain.

Former Deputy Prime Minister O. Golodets is also torn between two countries, one of them being the same Spain.

Also residing abroad are former heads of the Presidential Administration of the Russian Federation (V. Voloshin, V. Yumashev together with B. Yeltsin’s daughter Tatyana), former ministers and their deputies (A. Kozyrev, E. Skrynnik, A. Vavilov, I. Chuyan, A. Reimer, and others), numerous former governors and their deputies, and scores of federal government officials!”<sup>110</sup>

\* Entered in the register of foreign agents.

<sup>108</sup> Balatsky E.V. (2025). The extinction of passionarity in E. Todd’s demographic concept. *Sotsialnoe prostranstvo*, 11(3), p. 18.

<sup>109</sup> Volkonsky V.A. (2025). The epochs of passionaries and conservatives and the image of the future in historical processes. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 18(2), p. 41.

<sup>110</sup> Toshchenko Zh.T. Old and new faces of betrayal. Available at: <https://gazeta-pravda.ru/issue/9-31502-3031-yanvaryaya-2024-goda/starye-i-novye-liky-predatelstva/?ysclid=mlunjtsddn27983037>

On the other hand, it depends on the President's ability **to initiate and lead the process of forming in Russia an Image of the Future** as the main (and perhaps even the only) real instrument capable of resisting the power of capital, the power of money, and the lack of spirituality, which, in fact, has become a problem not only for our country but for the entire passing world of the "one hegemon".

As E. Birov notes<sup>111</sup>, *"when power is reduced to money, the image of the future becomes superfluous, which is why capital imposes on the masses a reluctance to strive for ideals."* But if there is an Image of the Future, then "capital loses its power, is reduced to the role of a servant," and this is *"the salvation of society from degradation"*.

**"The Image of the Future, when it exists, actually shapes the future... Its absence, the absence of a goal and constructive meanings, leads to degradation..."**

**When power is reduced to money, to the ownership of capital, then the image of the future becomes superfluous, unnecessary...** Capital imposes on the masses a reluctance to strive for ideals... Hence the constant sabotage of attempts to formulate ideals, spiritual values, and the image of a just world order. Otherwise, capital will lose its power, be reduced to the role of a servant, which is what it should be.

**Values are a threat to price tags. The Image of the Future is a threat to capital. But it is salvation for society from degradation"**<sup>112</sup>.

But what should this image of the future look like? Judging by the results of mass sociological surveys<sup>113</sup>, Russian society expects from the head of state an Image of the Future based on concepts such as **"law", "order", "justice", "human rights", "peace", "freedom", and "patriotism"**.

**"It can be stated that there is a clear deficit in society of politics** based on law, order, justice, human rights, and peace. In terms of content, such a set of ideas correlates with the priorities of the **value model of socialism** present in the mass consciousness..."<sup>114</sup>

This understanding of the Image of the Future, obtained by sociologists from research conducted in the early 2020s, remains stable and correlates well with what V. Fedorov, Director General of VCIOM, said in December 2025: *"In Russia, there are three Images of the Future. They do not contradict each other and overlap in many ways:*

✓ *The first image: 'Russia as a social state'. A very kind state that loves everyone, helps everyone, and protects everyone.*

✓ *The second: 'Russia as a comfortable country'. Everything is very convenient, well-ordered, polite.*

✓ *The third image: 'Russia the great'. That is, a Russia on which a great deal in the world depends"*<sup>115</sup>.

<sup>111</sup> E. Birov – journalist, columnist at the TASS analytical center, regular contributor to Zavtra newspaper; until 2013, he participated in the work of the "Center for Problem Analysis and State-Management Design" (Sulakshin Center), and was the editor-in-chief of the online publication "Russia Forever".

<sup>112</sup> Birov E. The image of the future vs the power of capital. Available at: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/obraz\\_budushego\\_protiv\\_vlasti\\_kapitala](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/obraz_budushego_protiv_vlasti_kapitala)

<sup>113</sup> The research was conducted by the Federal Center of Theoretical and Applied Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences (FCTAS RAS). The experts' conclusions are based on the results of the following projects:

1. Sociological monitoring "How Are You, Russia?", conducted by the Center for Strategic Social and Socio-Political Studies of the Institute of Socio-Political Research of FCTAS RAS from 1992 to the present.

2. Research project "The Image of the Future as a Foundation for Sustainable Social Optimism in the Context of Interactions between Russian Society and the State", implemented with the support of the Expert Institute for Social Research, within the framework of which an all-Russian public opinion survey was conducted in June 2023.

3. Research project "Forecasts and Alternatives for Russia's Development Through the Eyes of Russians (How Social Strata Assess the Future and Prospects for the Country's Development)", which was implemented in 2021.

<sup>114</sup> Bulanova M.B., Velikaya N.M., Grebnyak O.V. et al. (2023). The Image of the Future in the Prism of Sociological Measurements: Monograph. Moscow: Mir Nauki. P. 51.

<sup>115</sup> Sociologists named the most popular images of the future among Russians. Available at: <https://iz.ru/2015949/2025-12-26/sotciologi-nazvali-samye-populiarnye-u-rossiian-obrazy-budushchego>

1. Zh.T. Toshchenko: **“The social contract... is a fundamental but at the same time special state of relations between the state and the people, which is expressed in the philosophy of a shared destiny – an explicit (open) and latent mutually agreed-upon achievement of goals, means, and methods for their implementation in carrying out socio-economic, socio-political, and socio-cultural transformations”**<sup>116</sup>.

2. S.A. Karaganov: **“An image of the world in which we would like to live, a living dream-idea of Russia, a state ideology put forward and promoted, is needed so that all of us, from the President to the farmer, worker, engineer, officer, scientist, entrepreneur, civil servant, understand what we want to be and what we want our country to be... The presence of a common ideological platform, a national idea, is one of the most important constitutive features of a sovereign state – and we do not want to be, nor can we be, anything else. Its absence is a sign of under-sovereignty”**<sup>117</sup>.

**It is likely that such an Image of the Future – the creation of which is perhaps one of the main tasks facing the President after the conclusion of the Special Military Operation – could become the foundation of a new Social Contract. One based not on external (formal) agreement, but on a deeply internal, mutual understanding between society and the state.**

This would contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of strategic public administration, enabling the President to continue implementing the course of national development, guided *“not only by current*

*needs and circumstances, but also by the country’s interests for centuries to come...”*<sup>118</sup>

Vladimir Putin: **“...the very idea [of building the Trans-Siberian Railway across the entire country to the Pacific Ocean] serves for us as an example of a strategic vision of the future, when not only current needs and circumstances are taken into account, but also the country’s interests for centuries to come...”**<sup>119</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Toshchenko Zh.T. (2025). The social contract in contemporary Russia: Has a balance of interests been achieved? *Sotsis*, 2, p. 5.

<sup>117</sup> Karaganov S. (2025). The Living Dream-Idea of Russia, The Code of a Russian in the 21st Century: Report within the framework of the project “The Russian Dream-Idea and the Code of a Russian in the 21st Century” under the auspices of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy and the Faculty of World Economy and World Politics of the National Research University Higher School of Economics. July 2025.

<sup>118</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>7</sup> Vladimir Putin’s speech at the Plenary Session of the VI International Arctic Forum “Arctic – Territory of Dialogue” on March 27, 2025.

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