

Public Opinion Monitoring of the State of the Russian Society

Continuing the established tradition of our journal, we present the results of public opinion monitoring on the state of Russian society, conducted by the Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences (VoIRC RAS) in the Vologda Region¹.

The tables and figures below show the dynamics of a number of indicators of social well-being and socio-political attitudes among the region's population based on the most recent wave of the monitoring (June 2026), as well as over the period from August 2025 to August 2026 (the last seven surveys, i.e., one year of measurements).

The survey results are compared with the average annual data for 2000 (the first year of V.V. Putin's first presidential term), 2007 (the last year of his second presidential term, when presidential performance ratings reached their highest), 2012 (the first year of his third presidential term), 2018 (the first year of his fourth presidential term), and 2023 (the last full year of his fourth presidential term).

Annual data for 2007–2025 are also presented².

In June–August 2026, the approval rating of the President of the Russian Federation remained unchanged at 61%. The share of negative assessments stands at 23–24%.

Over the past 12 months (from August 2025 to August 2026), the share of positive assessments of the head of state's performance declined by 6 percentage points (from 67 to 61%), while the share of negative assessments increased by 5 percentage points (from 19 to 24%).

¹ The surveys are conducted six times a year in the cities of Vologda and Cherepovets and in the Babayevsky, Velikoustyugsky, Vozhegodsky, Gryazovetsky, Tarnogsky, Kirillovsky, Nikolsky, and Sheksninsky municipal okrugs of the region. The survey is carried out through face-to-face questionnaire interviews at respondents' places of residence. The sample size is 1,500 people aged 18 and over. The sample is purposive and quota-based. The representativeness of the sample is ensured by maintaining the proportions between the urban and rural populations, between residents of different types of settlements (rural settlements, small and medium-sized towns), and by the gender and age structure of the region's adult population. The sampling error does not exceed 3%.

More detailed information about the results of surveys conducted by VoIRC RAS is available at <http://www.vsecc.ac.ru>.

² In 2020, four waves of the monitoring were conducted. The surveys scheduled for April and June 2020 were not carried out due to quarantine restrictions during the spread of COVID-19.

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

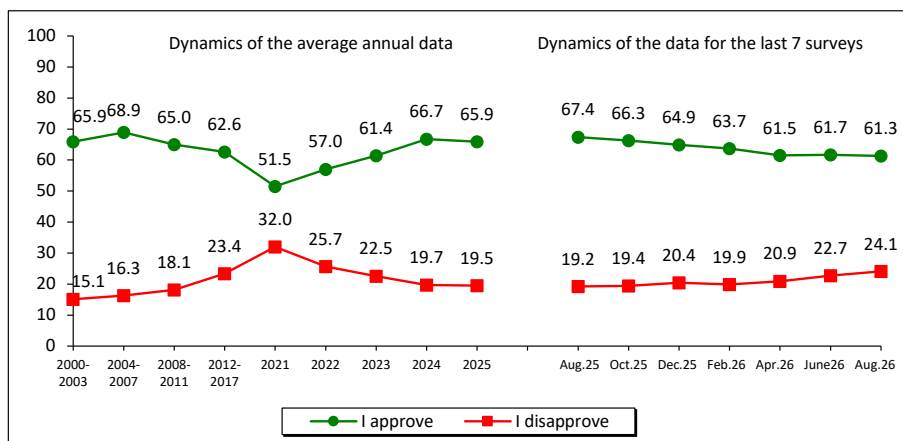
Response	Dynamics of the average annual data										Dynamics of the data for the last 7 surveys							Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	2000	2007	2012	2018	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025		Aug. 2025	Oct. 2025	Dec. 2025	Feb. 2026	Apr. 2026	June 2026	Aug. 2026	Aug. 2025	June 2026
RF President																			
I approve	66.0	75.3	51.7	66.4	51.5	57.0	61.4	66.7	65.9		67.4	66.3	64.9	63.7	61.5	61.7	61.3	-6	0
I disapprove	14.8	11.5	32.6	21.7	32.0	25.7	22.5	19.7	19.5		19.2	19.4	20.4	19.9	20.9	22.7	24.1	+5	+1
Chairman of the RF Government																			
I approve	–	–	49.6	48.0	39.9	45.4	50.1	54.1	54.4		55.1	55.7	54.0	51.1	48.9	49.1	48.6	-7	-1
I disapprove	–	–	33.3	31.6	37.6	32.0	27.6	24.8	22.5		20.6	23.1	22.2	21.3	22.8	25.1	26.8	+6	+2
Vologda Region Governor**																			
I approve	56.1	55.8	41.9	38.4	36.7	40.9	48.1	51.7	42.5		41.0	41.8	42.8	40.2	38.2	37.3	36.3	-5	-1
I disapprove	19.3	22.2	33.3	37.6	40.5	35.8	30.9	28.4	37.2		39.1	41.3	39.3	39.0	41.2	42.3	44.1	+5	+2

Note: The wording of the question: “How do you currently assess the performance of...?” Respondents were then offered a list of government bodies at various levels to evaluate their work, with the following answer options: “fully approve”, “mostly approve”, “mostly disapprove”, “fully disapprove”, “not familiar with their activities”, “difficult to answer”.

* Positive changes are highlighted in green, negative changes in red, and no change in blue. Since changes of ± 3 percentage points fall within the sampling error, they are considered non-significant and are marked in blue.

** On October 31, 2023, by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation, Georgy Filimonov was appointed acting governor of the Vologda Region. Following the regional elections held on September 6–8, 2024, Filimonov received 62.3% of the vote and became the elected Governor of the Vologda Region.

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



Response	Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	Aug. 2025	June 2026
I approve	-6	0
I disapprove	+5	+1

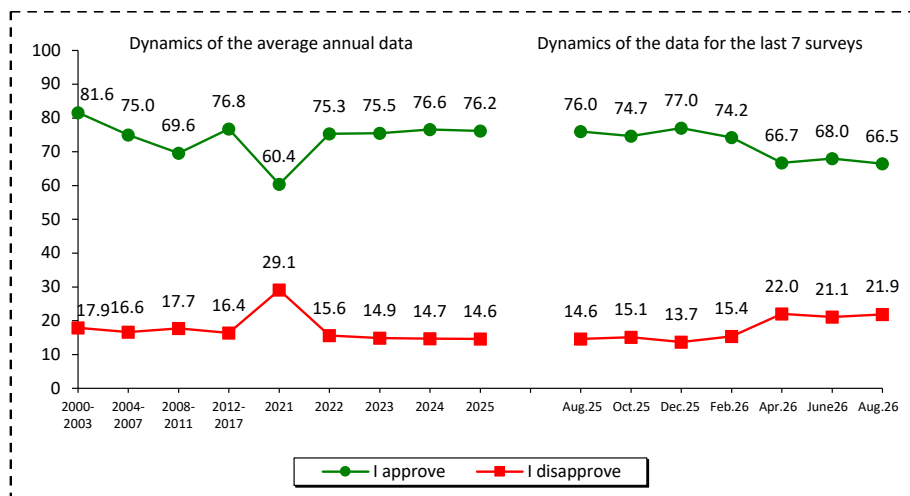
* Here and below, all graphs present average annual data for 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025, as well as average annual data for the periods 2000–2003, 2004–2007, 2008–2011, and 2012–2017, corresponding to presidential term periods.

For reference:

Over the summer months of 2026 (June–August), the presidential approval rating recorded by VCIOM showed a slight negative trend, declining by 2 percentage points.

In annual terms, the decline was more pronounced: from August 2025 to August 2026, the rating fell by 10 percentage points (from 76 to 66%).

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



Response	Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	Aug. 2025	June 2026
I approve	-10	-2
I disapprove	+7	+1

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

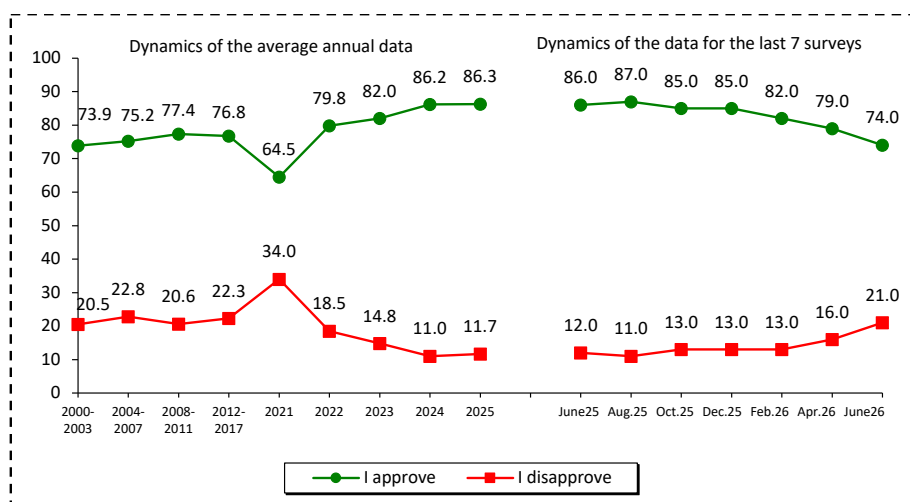
Source: VCIOM. Available at: <https://wciom.ru/>

Data for August are the average of two surveys: August 2, 2026, and August 9, 2026.

According to Levada-Center data, the share of positive assessments of the President of the Russian Federation's performance in April–June 2026 decreased by 5 percentage points (from 79 to 74%).*

Compared with August 2025, in August 2026 the share of positive assessments declined by 12 percentage points (from 86 to 74%).

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



Response	Dynamics (+/-), June 2026 to	
	June 2025	Apr. 2026
I approve	-12	-5
I disapprove	+9	+5

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

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

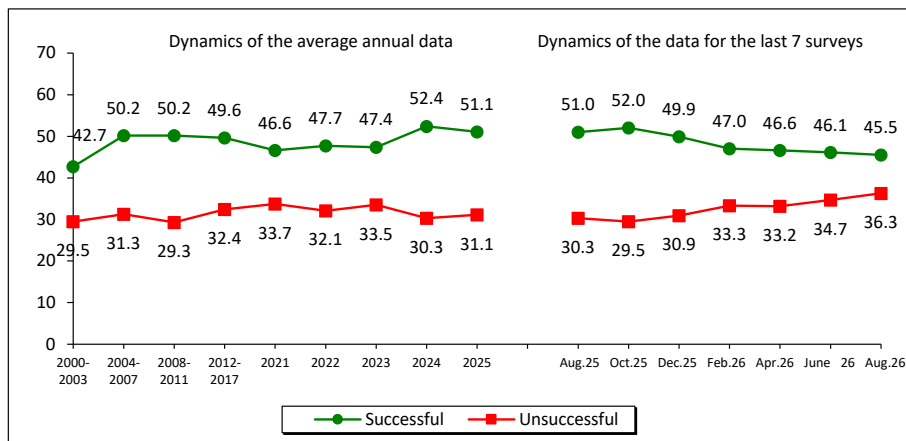
* Included in the register of foreign agents.

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

The share of regional residents who consider the President's efforts to strengthen Russia's international standing successful did not change between June and August 2026.

Over the past 12 months, the share of positive judgments about the head of state's handling of international affairs declined by 6 percentage points (from 51 to 45%).

Strengthening Russia's international standing

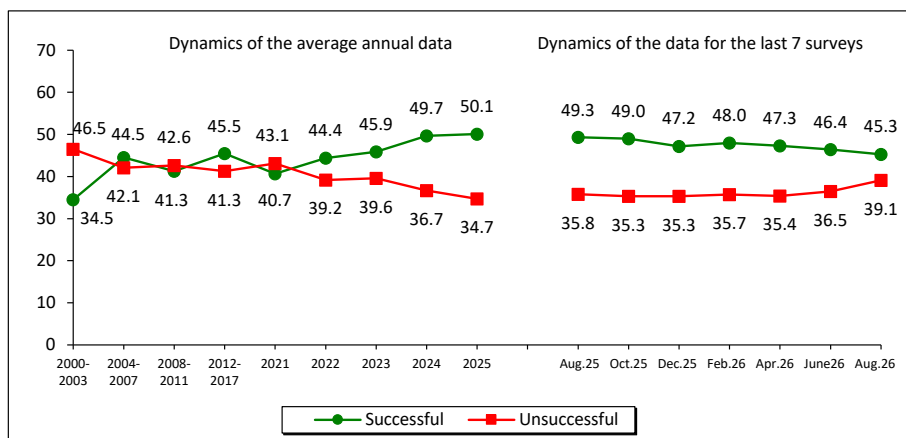


Response	Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	Aug. 2025	June 2026
Successful	-6	-1
Unsuccessful	+6	+2

Over the past two months, regional residents' opinion of the President's efforts to restore order in the country remained unchanged: the share of positive judgments stood at 45–46%, and negative ones at 37–39%.

From August 2025 to August 2026, the proportion of people who believe the President is successfully restoring order in the country declined from 49 to 45%.

Restoring order in the country

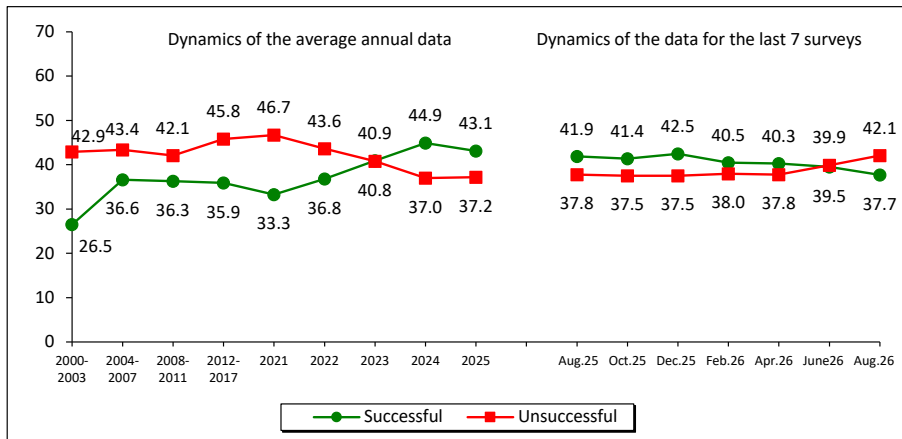


Response	Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	Aug. 2025	June 2026
Successful	-4	-1
Unsuccessful	+3	+3

In August 2026, the share of regional residents who positively assess the President's efforts to protect democracy and civil liberties remained virtually unchanged compared with June, standing at 38–39%.

Negative changes have been observed over the past 12 months. The share of those who approve of the head of state's work to protect democracy and strengthen civil liberties declined by 4 percentage points (from 42 to 38%).

Protecting democracy and strengthening civil liberties

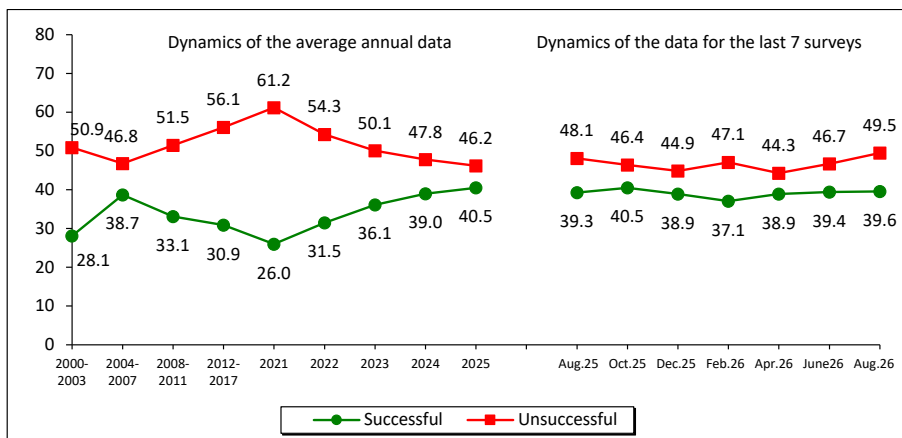


Response	Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	Aug. 2025	June 2026
Successful	-4	-2
Unsuccessful	+4	+2

In June–August 2026, the share of residents who positively assess the President's efforts to revive the economy and improve citizens' well-being remained at 39%.

In the year-on-year comparison (August 2025 – August 2026), the distribution of opinions is likewise stable: 48–49% of respondents consider the head of state's work successful, while 39–40% hold the opposite view.

Boosting the economy and improving citizens' well-being



Response	Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	Aug. 2025	June 2026
Successful	0	0
Unsuccessful	+1	+3

In June–August 2026, the structure of regional residents' party-political preferences remains stable. The majority of respondents (36–37%) continue to support the United Russia party. This is followed by the CPRF (9–10%), the LDPR (8–9%), A Just Russia (3–4%), and New People (2–3%).

Over the past 12 months, the share of people who say that United Russia represents their interests declined by 5 percentage points (from 41 to 36%).

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

Party	Dynamics of the average annual data													Dynamics of the data for the last 7 surveys							Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	2011	Election to the RF State Duma 2011, fact	2012	2016	Election to the RF State Duma 2016, fact	2018	2020	Election to the RF State Duma 2020, fact	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Aug. 2025	Oct. 2025	Dec. 2025	Feb. 2026	Apr. 2026	June 2026	Aug. 2026	Aug. 2025	June 2026
United Russia	31.1	33.4	29.1	35.4	38.0	37.9	31.5	49.8	31.7	35.2	39.5	42.9	40.3	41.2	40.5	38.1	36.1	35.7	36.8	36.1	-5	-1
CPRF	10.3	16.8	10.6	8.3	14.2	9.2	8.4	18.9	9.3	10.1	9.6	8.9	9.6	11.5	10.5	9.7	9.2	8.1	8.9	10.5	-1	+2
LDPR	7.8	15.4	7.8	10.4	21.9	9.6	9.5	7.6	9.9	7.3	7.0	7.1	8.2	8.7	7.8	8.6	8.9	7.9	7.6	8.6	0	+1
Just Russia – Patriots for the Truth	5.6	27.2	6.6	4.2	10.8	2.9	4.7	7.5	4.7	4.9	4.4	3.5	3.5	4.2	3.4	4.1	3.1	4.3	3.7	4.5	0	+1
New People*	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5.3	2.3	1.5	1.9	2.0	2.5	1.8	2.2	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.6	2.5	+1	0
Other	1.9	–	2.1	0.3	–	0.7	0.5	–	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0	0
None	29.4	–	31.3	29.4	–	28.5	34.2	–	33.9	30.6	26.5	25.2	25.8	23.3	24.3	26.1	29.1	31.5	30.5	27.9	+5	-3
Difficult to answer	13.2	–	11.7	12.0	–	11.2	11.1	–	10.0	10.1	11.1	10.3	10.0	9.2	11.3	10.7	11.0	9.8	9.7	9.3	0	0

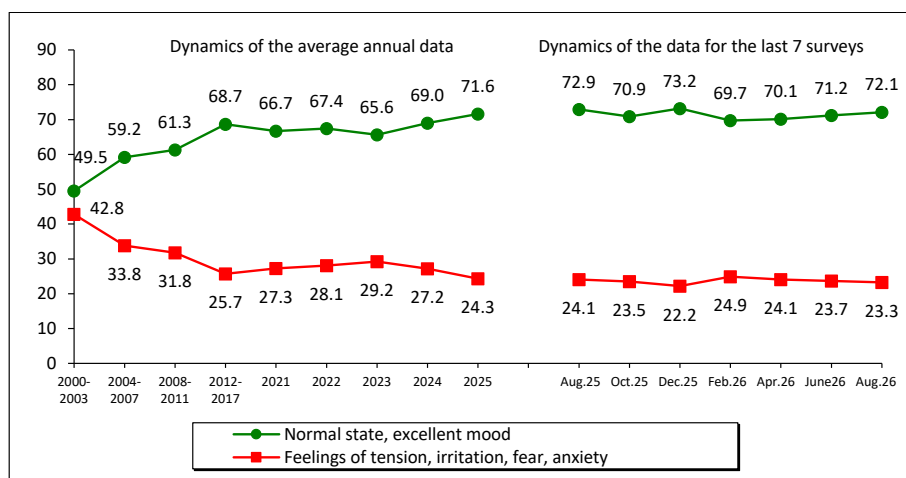
* The New People party won a seat in the State Duma of the Russian Federation for the first time following the elections held on September 17–19, 2021.

Assessment of social condition (% of respondents; VolRC RAS data)

Over the past two months, the share of positive assessments of social well-being remained at the previous level (71–72%).

The annual dynamics (August 2025 – August 2026) are also stable: the share of those who describe their mood as “normal” or “excellent” stands at 72–73%. At the same time, 23–24% of respondents experience the opposite emotions – “tension, irritation, fear, anguish”.

Social mood

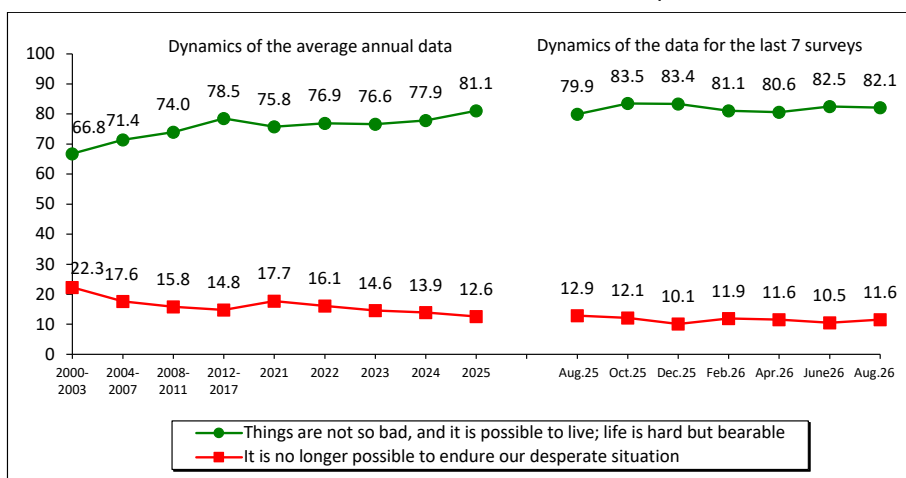


Response	Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	Aug. 2025	June 2026
Normal state, excellent mood	-1	+1
Feelings of tension, irritation, fear, anxiety	-1	0

In June–August 2026, the patience reserve remains at a consistently high level: 82–83% of regional residents noted that “everything is not so bad and one can live”. The share of those who believe that it is “no longer possible” to endure their plight stood at 10–12%.

In August 2026, the patience reserve indicator remained at the level of August 2025.

Reserve of patience

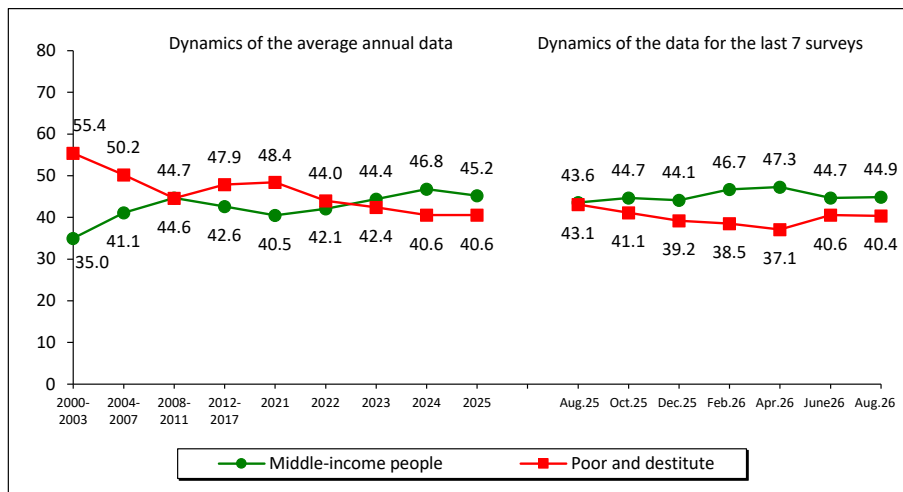


Response	Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	Aug. 2025	June 2026
Things are not so bad, and it is possible to live; life is hard but bearable	+2	0
It is no longer possible to endure our desperate situation	-1	+1

In August 2026, compared with June, the structure of social self-identification among the region's residents remained unchanged. The share of citizens who identify as middle-income stood at 45%, while 40–41% of respondents chose the category “poor and destitute”.

Over 12 months, the share of those who consider themselves poor and destitute declined by 3 percentage points (from 43 to 40%).

Social self-identification



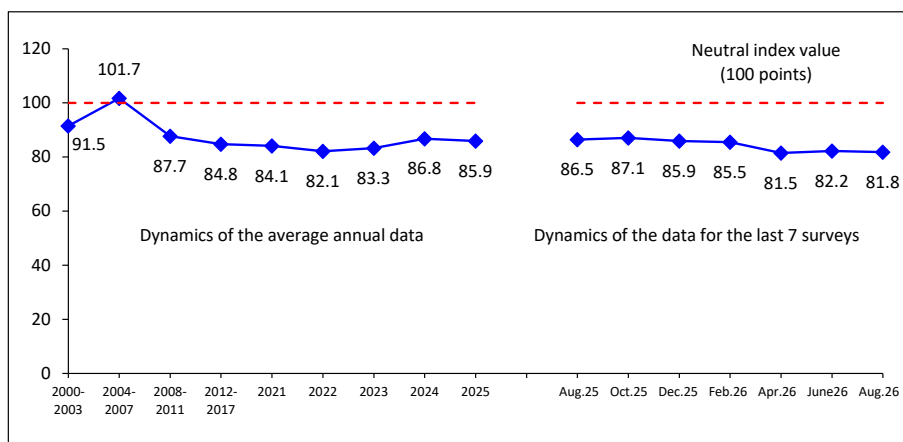
Response	Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	Aug. 2025	June 2026
Share of those considering themselves middle-income	+1	0
Share of those considering themselves poor and destitute	-3	0

Question wording: “Which category do you belong to, in your opinion?”.

The Consumer Sentiment Index (CSI) in June–August 2026 stood at 82 points and remained unchanged.

From August 2025 to August 2026, negative dynamics have been observed: the CSI declined by 5 points (from 87 to 82 points).

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



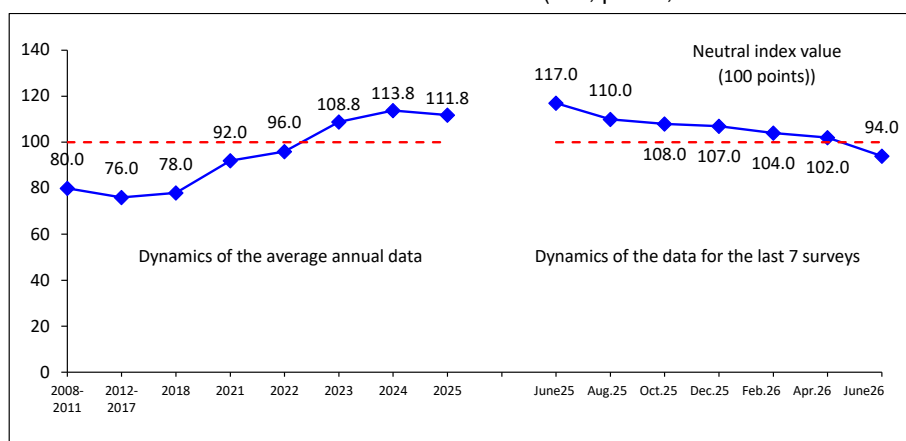
Response	Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	Aug. 2025	June 2026
Index value, points	-5	0

For reference:

According to the latest nationwide Levada-Center* polls (for the period April–June 2026), the Consumer Sentiment Index declined from 102 to 94 points.

From June 2025 to June 2026, the CSI values decreased by 23 points, from 117 to 94.

Consumer Sentiment Index (CSI, points; Levada-Center* data for Russia³)



Response	Dynamics (+/-), June 2026 to	
	June 2025	Apr. 2026
Index value, points	-23	-8

The index has been calculated since 2008.

Latest data are for June 2026.

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

In the period from June to August 2026, no significant changes in social mood were observed in most socio-demographic groups. Positive dynamics were recorded in one category: among the bottom 20% income group, the share of positive assessments of social mood increased by 4 percentage points).

Over the year, no growth in the share of positive assessments of social mood is observed across socio-demographic groups. A deterioration in mood occurred in one group: among young people under 30, a decline of 10 percentage points (from 78 to 68%).

³ Since March 2025, Levada-Center* has updated its CSI data. The Consumer Sentiment Index in Russia has been calculated since 1993 based on five questions, following the approach of the index developed in the 1940s by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. The individual indices for each question are calculated as the difference between the share of positive and negative responses plus 100. The aggregate CSI is the arithmetic mean of the individual indices (range 0–200, where >100 indicates a predominance of positive assessments). In 2009, the CSI was pegged to the values of March 2008 (base 100%), reflecting a change in survey methodology and the economic crisis. However, this meant that the index only reflected changes relative to 2008. In March 2025, the decision was made to return to the original CSI calculation methodology, abandoning the 2008 benchmark, because many indicators in 2023 exceeded the 2008 highs, and the old version of the index no longer adequately reflected the current situation. The return to the original methodology is intended to solve this problem. Source: Updated Consumer Sentiment Index: February 2025 figures. Available at: <https://www.levada.ru/2025/03/26/obnovlennyyj-indeks-potrebitelskihnastroenij-pokazateli-fevralya-2025-goda/>

* Included in the register of foreign agents.

Social mood in various social groups
(response option “Excellent mood, normal, even state”,
% of respondents; VoIRC RAS data)

Population group	Dynamics of the average annual data								Dynamics of the data for the last 7 surveys							Dynamics (+/-), Aug. 2026 to	
	2007	2012	2018	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Aug. 2025	Oct. 2025	Dec. 2025	Feb. 2026	Apr. 2026	June 2026	Aug. 2026	Aug. 2025	June 2026
Gender																	
Men	65.9	69.1	72.8	65.7	66.8	65.5	66.5	70.7	72.1	68.2	73.3	69.1	71.9	70.7	72.1	0	+1
Women	61.7	65.8	69.8	67.4	67.9	65.7	70.9	72.3	73.5	73.1	73.1	70.1	68.7	71.6	72.1	-1	+1
Age																	
Under 30	71.3	72.3	79.9	73.5	77.6	75.0	76.6	76.8	78.1	75.2	74.3	69.5	67.6	66.2	68.6	-10	+2
30–55	64.8	67.9	72.6	69.5	69.4	68.8	71.3	74.3	74.9	73.9	78.4	73.6	73.1	73.5	75.2	0	+2
Over 55	54.8	62.1	65.2	60.5	61.1	58.2	63.3	66.5	68.6	65.9	66.6	64.9	67.5	70.2	69.5	+1	-1
Education																	
Secondary and incomplete secondary	58.4	57.2	64.8	62.1	64.6	62.0	64.6	67.2	70.3	68.4	66.1	60.6	60.4	65.0	67.0	-3	+2
Secondary vocational	64.6	66.7	72.1	66.7	68.3	66.1	70.3	73.6	73.6	71.4	75.6	71.6	74.7	73.4	72.2	-1	-1
Higher and incomplete higher	68.6	77.0	76.7	71.5	69.5	68.8	72.3	73.9	74.7	73.1	77.6	74.7	74.0	75.5	77.4	+3	+2
Income group																	
Bottom 20%	51.6	51.5	57.2	54.6	57.0	50.1	53.5	55.2	58.3	53.3	50.7	48.2	51.3	55.6	59.4	+1	+4
Middle 60%	62.9	68.7	72.1	67.3	68.1	67.4	70.7	73.2	73.1	73.1	75.2	72.2	72.7	72.0	74.4	+1	+2
Top 20%	74.9	81.1	82.4	79.9	78.3	73.9	77.6	83.6	83.8	84.8	89.4	87.7	83.4	84.7	86.7	+3	+2
Territory																	
Vologda	63.1	73.6	71.0	60.3	59.8	59.6	66.0	70.2	72.9	71.4	71.9	68.1	68.8	68.1	69.5	-3	+1
Cherepovets	68.1	76.2	75.7	71.0	71.2	68.1	69.8	73.1	75.0	73.2	76.3	73.0	73.5	75.3	76.0	+1	+1
Districts	61.6	59.8	68.6	67.8	69.5	67.7	70.2	71.6	71.6	69.3	72.2	68.7	69.0	70.8	71.3	0	+1
Region	63.6	67.3	71.2	66.6	67.4	65.6	69.0	71.6	72.9	70.9	73.2	69.7	70.1	71.2	72.1	-1	+1
Total number of groups: positive changes / no changes / negative changes																14: 0 / 13 / 1	14: 1 / 13 / 0

SUMMARY

The latest wave of public opinion monitoring was conducted in July–August 2026. The measurements were carried out against the backdrop of stalled negotiations on settling the Ukrainian conflict, continuing drone attacks on Russian regions, a fuel crisis, and the height of the election campaign for the State Duma of the Russian Federation.

The escalation of national security threats (more frequent attacks by the “Kyiv regime” deep into Russian territory, which triggered, among other things, a gasoline crisis in a number of the country’s regions), set against broad public expectations of a swift and successful end to the conflict in Ukraine, may have been the cause of the deterioration in assessments of the authorities’ performance observed in the

year-on-year retrospective. It should be noted that the decline in the share of positive assessments of the President's performance over the past 12 months has been recorded not only in the research conducted in the Vologda Region but also nationwide, according to VCIOM and Levada Center* data.

In August 2026, compared with August 2025, the approval rating of the head of state declined by 6 percentage points (from 67% to 61%). A decline in the share of positive assessments of his work is recorded across virtually all key areas:

- ✓ strengthening Russia's international standing, by 6 percentage points (from 51 to 45%);
- ✓ restoring order in the country, by 4 percentage points (from 43 to 39%);
- ✓ protecting democracy and strengthening civil liberties, by 4 percentage points (from 42 to 38%).

A decline in support is also recorded for other levels of government: the share of positive assessments of the performance of the Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation declined over the year by 7 percentage points (from 55 to 48%), that of the head of the region by 5 percentage points (from 41% to 36%), and support for the United Russia party by 5 percentage points (from 41% to 36%). At the same time, the share of respondents who see no party representing their interests grew over the year by 5 percentage points (from 23 to 28%).

A worrying signal is the steady decline in the Consumer Sentiment Index (CSI), which fell over the year by 5 points (from 87 to 82). This points to a gradual deterioration in the population's economic expectations and declining confidence in the future. At the nationwide level, the negative dynamics are even more pronounced: according to Levada-Center* data, the CSI decreased by 23 points (from 117 to 94 points).

At the same time, despite the recorded decline in a number of key indicators, important stabilizing factors persist in society. The patience reserve remains consistently high: 82–83% of the region's residents believe that "everything is not so bad and one can live", while the share of those who state that it is impossible to endure their plight does not exceed 10–12%. Social mood in 13 of the 14 socio-demographic groups has not undergone significant changes over the past two months, indicating that social equilibrium is being maintained. The structure of party-political preferences remains stable, and the distribution of votes among parties is steady, suggesting an absence of political destabilization ahead of the September 2026 elections to the State Duma of the Russian Federation.

Thus, the public opinion monitoring data for August 2026 recorded the further development of the negative trends identified at the beginning of the year and the transition of certain indicators from the category of fluctuations to a sustained downward trend. On the one hand, the relatively high level of support for the President of the Russian Federation and the population's patience reserve persist. On the other hand, the decline in a number of key indicators is becoming more systemic in nature.

Materials prepared by: K.E. Kosygina, I.M. Bakhvalova

* Included in the register of foreign agents.