**Abstract**

**RS-136**

Title: «The social sustainability and propensity to change monitor, 2022»

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**The object of the study** is Russian population.

1. **Goal of research:** to analyze the dynamics of main indicators of population well-being, the attitudes towards actual and potential changes in education, healthcare, social protection in Russia, the vision of the role of the state and to find out the risks for social sustainability.
2. **Methodology:** the quantitative analysis of population surveys, the qualitative analysis of focus-group data, the analysis of open data of Federal Statistic Service and Ministry of Finance, the systematization and analysis of studies devoted to education and healthcare.
3. **Empirical base of research:**  the data of population surveys in Russia conducted in 2022: «Readiness for change, 2022» (CAWI, Sample size – 6000 respondents aged 15-72 years old); «Consumer choice of the population, 2022» (CAWI, Sample size – 6000 respondents aged 18 years and older); «Consumer choice and time budgets, 2022» (CAWI, Sample size – 4299 respondents aged 18 years and older); the data of special focus-groups conducted in 2022 (20 FGDs, devoted to social sustainability among the people aged 20-45 years old). In addition to the surveys mentioned above the data of official statistics and federal statistical observations were used.
4. **Results of the research:**

The analysis of income and spending dynamics, the financial and consumer behavior of Russians shows that in the 1st half of 2022 the changes in socio-economic state of Russian population were mainly conditioned by the consequences of special military operation started in February 2022 and the Western sanctions that followed. The real disposable income of the population was decreasing during all the period that was primarily caused by high inflation and the decline in economic activity due to the sanctions. The consumer spendings on goods and services in 1st half of 2022 were also decreasing. High inflation expectations that were shaped at the end of 2021, continued growing in 2022. The quantitative evaluations of actual changes in standard of living in the 1st half of 2022 didn’t change significantly remaining at the low level evidenced in 2021.

Focus-group data showed that at the end of the summer 2022, economically active Russians were in a wait-and-see position, more concerned about the fact that growing anxiety has a less impact on their lives. People felt that the changes were being compensated by the inertia of ordinary life and the economy, and they were waiting for this inertia to dry up in the fall. Inflation was felt strongly, savings were already being spent and there was not even a thought of replenishing them. In general, the feeling prevailed that in 2022 Russian society was entering changes in a condition critically weakened by the coronavirus pandemic. People were worried about their quality of life, not in terms of consumerism and comfort, but in terms of safety - physical, economic and food. The greatest concern was caused by medicines, medical technologies, hygiene products, auto parts, equipment and components for Russian industries.

The analysis of the inequality perception by the population shows that there is a consensus opinion regarding both its injustice and the unfairness of the wage system that forms it: income inequality is a universal “pain point”. Over the past year, the acuteness of the feeling of injustice of income inequality and the wage system among Russians, as well as the corresponding request to the state, have shown a slight downward trend - however, this cannot be considered to be qualitative shift that significantly changes the overall picture. Ideas about poverty and wealth are quite stable and are unlikely to transform qualitatively even in the current conditions of significant changes.

In terms of everyday behavior of Russian households and the structure of consumer choice, the study found that food retail is the most consolidated area (the vast majority of buyers most often purchase goods in chain stores), the second place in terms of consolidation holds the segment of household appliances and electronics. The introduction of international sanctions in one way or another affected the habitual consumption practices of the most of Russians. Most often, consumers faced technical problems - the inability to download computer and mobile applications. There were widespread situations when Russians were unable to buy familiar consumer goods, make bank transfers and purchase household appliances and electronics. Most of the respondents expect a reduction in the range of products and an increase in prices in domestic markets in the near future, however, the views of at least half of the population regarding the prospects for import substitution in terms of goods, technologies and travel are quite optimistic.

An analysis of the employment and entrepreneurial potential of the population did not reveal significant changes from the beginning of the special military operation till September 2022: the majority of Russians retained their employment. Negative consequences at work (such as an increase in the duration of the working day without an appropriate compensation or a decrease in the level of wages) were encountered by two-thirds of Russians who had a job during this time, including those who lost it. Under the sanctions, a fifth of Russians noted a reduction in earning opportunities, and the same number expect their reduction in the future. The entrepreneurial potential of the Russian population in the current realities is in a satisfactory condition. Russian people are ready to take responsibility and engage in business if appropriate conditions would be created for them - almost a third of the population noted that they would like to become an entrepreneur and develop their own business. However, this figure is six times higher than the share of those who actually conduct entrepreneurial activities today.

A study of issues related to education demonstrates the request for universities to build skills for the labor market and, to a lesser extent, to form the basis of a worldview. Survey data show that the majority of Russian citizens are ready for educational migration to another region of the country for their children. At the same time, over the past year, the share of those who would like to send their children and grandchildren to receive higher education abroad has decreased. Also, Russians began to give preference to a lower level of education (only a bachelor's or a specialist's degree).

When the attitude towards healthcare is considered, the data-2022 demonstrate that the usage of paid medical services in budget medical organizations is wide-spread (more than the half of Russians use them). This tendency is explained primarily by the lack of similar services provided for free. Searching for information on websites of medical organizations became a routine for all the strata in the society (including older age groups). There are two main sources of information about the work of medical organizations – Gosuslugi website (or its regional equivalents) and the web-sites of medical organizations themselves.

The well-being of families with children became a special focus of the research. During high economic volatility of the last years, they suffered most, that made the government to strengthen the social support for them and make it more effective. Despite all the efforts aimed at poverty reduction among the families with children, this category keeps its vulnerable position, especially families with 3 and more children and those who live in rural areas. Families with children have low safety margin (that provides the ability to keep the consumption at the certain level), as only one third of such families have savings that limits their consumption possibilities during the economic slowdown.

**Level of implementation, recommendations on implementation or outcomes of the implementation of the results:** some results of the study were used in the preparation of analytical notes and expert opinions in 2022. The results of this work can be used to find out the main points of social tensions and to develop the measures for social sustainability support.