

**OPINION MONITORING: JANUARY—FEBRUARY 2022**

VCIOM-Sputnik daily survey results. The survey method is stratified dual-frame sample consisting of telephone interviews. The sample is based on a complete list of landline and mobile phone numbers operating in Russia and involves 1,600 persons aged 18 and older. The data were weighted for the probability of selection and reflect social and demographic characteristics. The margin of error at a 95% confidence level does not exceed 2.5%. In addition to sampling error, minor changes in question wording and different circumstances arising during the fieldwork can introduce bias into the survey.

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## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

### HIGHER EDUCATION: AN UNEXPECTED RENAISSANCE?

#### MEDIA TRUST IN RUSSIA

#### NEW INDUSTRIALIZATION: PRO AND CONTRA

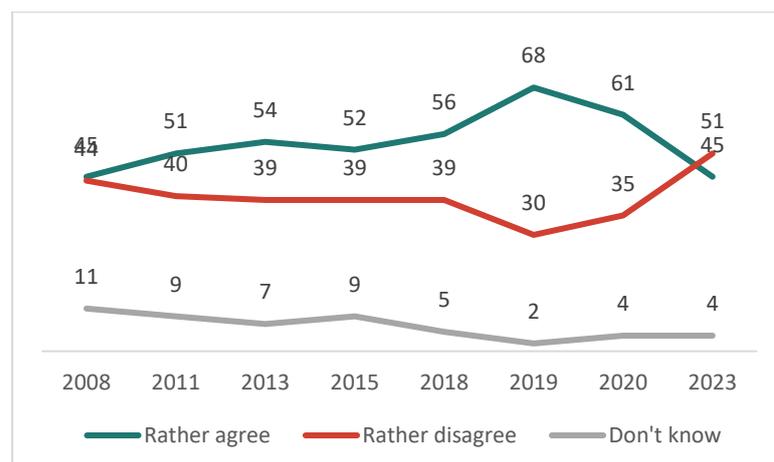
### HIGHER EDUCATION: AN UNEXPECTED RENAISSANCE?

January 22, 2023

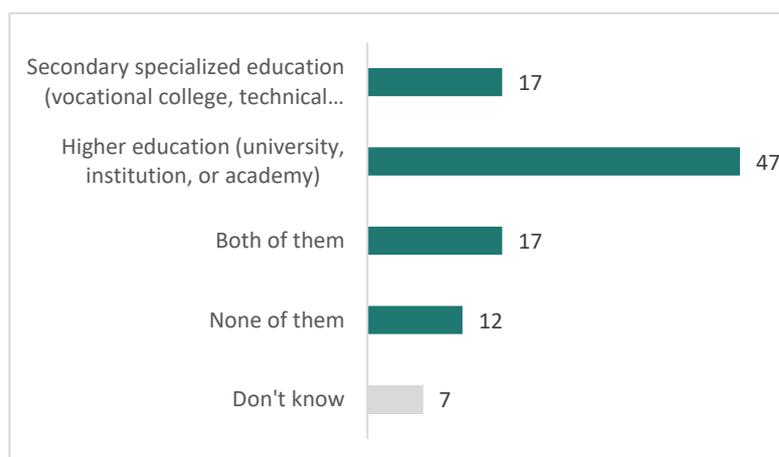
The Russians ambiguously perceive the statement that *the importance of higher education is often exaggerated, and in our time one can make a successful career and arrange one's life without it*. Relating to this statement, the respondents formed two approximately equal groups – 45% of them agree with this statement, and 51% disagree. In 2023, the share of Russians pointing to the importance of higher education and its impact on future career achievements has significantly increased. Compared to 2020, the indicator has grown by 16 percentage points. This is the highest value ever registered within the surveys.

Young people tend to underestimate the importance of higher education. The proportion of those who believe that *one can make a successful career and arrange one's life without it* in this population group is the largest: 60% among respondents aged 18–24 and 52% among aged 25–34. Educational level of the respondents also influences the assessment of the prospects offered by higher education. The largest proportion of Russians who believe that one can manage and have a successful career without higher education are observed among respondents with incomplete secondary education (63%), full secondary education (50%), and specialized secondary education (51%). The opposite opinion prevails among Russians with an incomplete higher and higher education (59%). Generally, the Russians believe that a well-paid job in the future for a graduate is more reliably guaranteed by higher education (47% of the respondents support this statement).

**Fig. 1.** Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: *the importance of higher education is often exaggerated, and in our time one can make a successful career and arrange one's life without it?* (closed-ended question, one answer, %)



**Fig. 2. In your opinion, what kind of education, secondary specialized or higher, guarantees a graduate a well-paid job in the future? (closed-ended question, one answer, %)**



## **MEDIA TRUST IN RUSSIA**

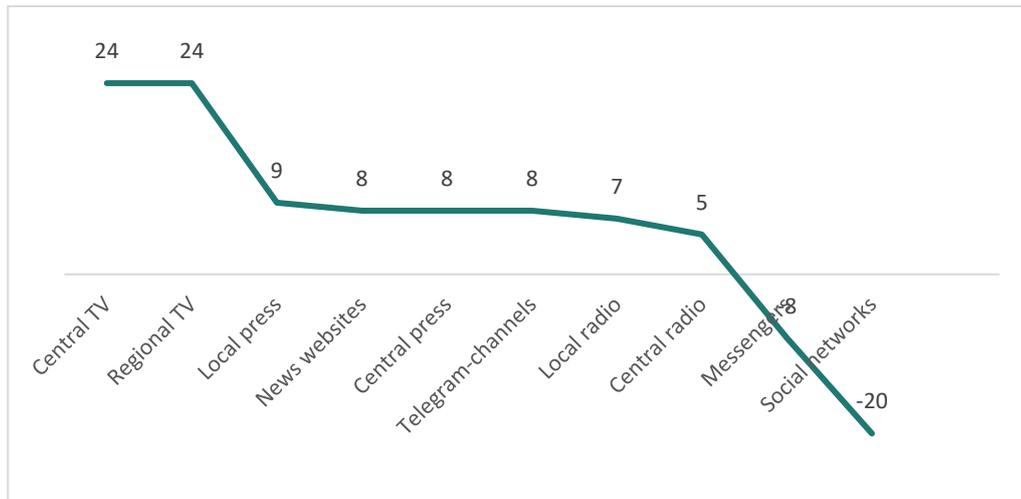
**January 14, 2023**

The January survey showed that the level of Russians' trust in various types of media varies greatly, but the priority is still reserved for traditional media — television. Central national television receives the greatest public trust in Russia (53% of the respondents point to this media). Second place, with a small but statistically significant margin from the leader, is occupied by local television: almost every second respondent (47%) trusts regional TV channels. Thus, the calculated index<sup>1</sup> for the presented media in January of 2023 amounted to 24 points (with a range of -100 to 100 points). Other sources of information yield to television in terms of audience trust.

Almost equal level of trust is observed in relation to the news, analytical, and official state websites (35%, trust index 8 points); central and regional press (33% each, trust indexes 8 and 9 points, respectively); Telegram channels (31%, trust index 8 points). The group of outsiders includes instant messengers (WhatsApp, Viber, etc.), social networks and blogs on the Internet. The share of those who do not trust them (35% and 43%) exceeds the share of those who trust them (27% and 23%), resulting in the negative index for both (-8 and -20 points, respectively). Thus, despite the high pace of transformation of the general media landscape under the influence of digital technologies, society continues to trust the most familiar information channels.

<sup>1</sup> The index was calculated as the difference between the share of answers "I trust" and "I don't trust". The index takes values from -100 to +100. The higher the index value, the higher the level of media trust.

**Fig. 3. Do you trust the following media? (closed-ended question, one answer, the chart displays the sum of answers «rather trust» and «definitely trust», %)**



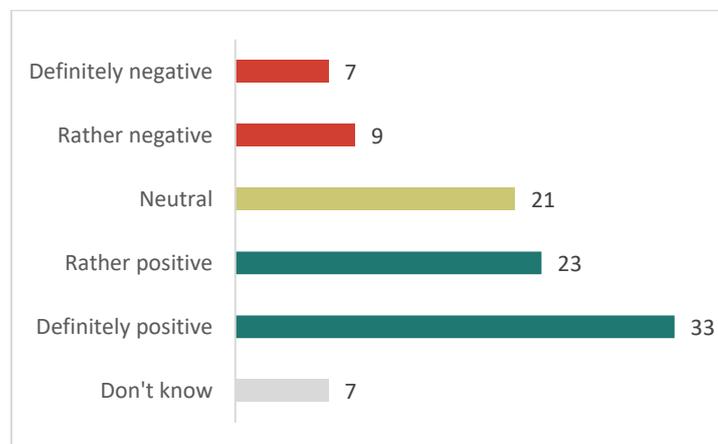
### **NEW INDUSTRIALIZATION: PRO AND CONTRA**

February 3, 2023

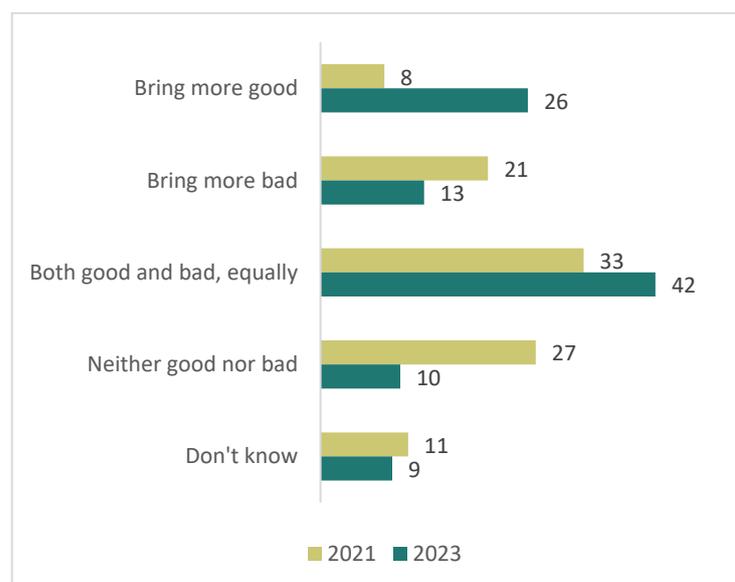
The state of the Russian economy is largely determined by the state of the industrial sector. In order to support the latter, since 2014 Russia has been implementing the state program “Development of Industry and Increasing its Competitiveness”, which includes measures to protect investments, information policy, personnel policy, etc. The survey results show that not only economic entities, but also residents may be interested in the construction of industrial facilities. More than half of the respondents would react positively to the construction of a new industrial enterprise in their settlement or in its neighborhood (56%). The share of positive sentiments is 3.5 times higher than the share of negative ones (16%). Every fifth respondent (21%) declared a neutral attitude towards industrial construction in their locality, and among young people aged 18–24 years old this proportion amounted one half (50%). Creating new jobs for residents is the main advantage of building a new industrial facility, according to 80% of the respondents. Other positive effects are the development of social infrastructure (44%), the improvement of living standards (41%), the reduction in the outflow of young people (41%), and additional tax revenues to the regional budget (40%). Every third believes that the construction of an industrial enterprise will contribute to the improvement of the settlement (32%). That is, the emergence of a new plant or factory in a locality is primarily perceived as support for the labor market and the provision of new jobs. The absence of positive consequences was noted only by 6% of the respondents; twice as often this answer was given by people living in Moscow and Saint Petersburg (13%). The rating of negative consequences of the construction of a new industrial facility was headed by environmental damage (51%). Every fifth believes that this will lead to traffic congestion in the settlement (22%). Another 30% stated that there were no negative consequences. Thus, according to the Russians, the advantages of building a new industrial enterprise in their locality outweigh the disadvantages.

Although half of the respondents consider the construction of an industrial facility as a source of environmental pollution (51%), the perception of the environmental activities of enterprises has rather improved over the past couple of years. One in four respondents state that corporations bring more good things for the environment of the settlement (26%); in two years, the number of supporters of this position has tripled (8% in 2021). The share of those who hold the opposite point of view (that it “brings more bad things”), on the contrary, decreased by 8 percentage points over this period (13% vs. 21% in 2021). Every tenth believes that the work of corporations is neither good nor bad for the ecology of the region (10%). However, the dominant position still remains the following: the activities of industrial enterprises bring both good and bad to the environment in approximately equal proportions: in 2023 42% of the respondents adhere to this opinion, while in 2021 it was supported by 33% of the surveyed.

**Fig. 4. How would you react to the construction of a new industrial enterprise in your locality or in its neighborhood? (closed-ended question, one answer, %)**



**Fig. 5. In your opinion, the activities of enterprises and corporations bring more good or more bad for the ecology of your city or settlement? (closed-ended question, one answer, %)**



**LIFESTYLE****PURE LANGUAGE AND HOW TO FIGHT FOR IT****PURE LANGUAGE AND HOW TO FIGHT FOR IT**

February 12, 2023

Changing the language is a natural process of its development, which is influenced by many factors. In recent decades, these are globalization, the spread of the Internet, and the active borrowing of foreign words and expressions. However, linguistic disputes about foreign borrowings have been going on for a long time. In Russia, they peaked at the beginning of the 19th century, when the controversy concentrated around the traditional, old style and the new, “Western”. The historical victory was left to the latter. And for Westernizers and Slavophiles, the question of language and speech has become completely political. Today, most Russians oppose the restructuring of the language situation, in their opinion, the native language must be protected and fought for its purity (56%). Since 2019, the share of the respondents supporting this sentiment has decreased by 12 percentage points. The opposite opinion, that the language reflects the real situation in society and should develop independently, without interference from anyone, is shared by 38% of the respondents (+11 percentage points since 2019). Compared to 2008, the distribution of the responses remained virtually unchanged.

Those Russians who are closer to the idea of the need to protect the Russian language believe that active, caring citizens themselves should monitor the purity of the language (49%); the option “professional linguists” is chosen by another 26% in this group. To a lesser extent, the solution of such tasks is assigned to politicians (10%) and public organizations (5%). Young people aged 18–24 mention professional linguists more often than other age groups (37%). Speaking about how best to act in relation to everything new (goods, ideas, processes, etc.) that has already appeared in reality, but not yet in the language, 45% of the respondents indicated that it does not matter, whether it is a foreign word or a new word with a Russian root, as long as it is clear what it means.

**Fig. 1. Who should monitor the purity of the Russian language? (closed-ended question, one answer, % of those stating the necessity to monitor it)**

