

FROM THE CHIEF EDITOR



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Dear readers,

The first three months of 2009 confirmed the fears of experts who spoke about the enduring nature of the global economic crisis. And it is obvious that the political and executive power in our country is based on this reality.

On February, 27, at the meeting with the leaders of the United Russia Party V.V. Putin assessed the situation in the global economy systematically and very soberly as well as Russia's limited opportunities to influence on its improvement. He said:

"We are closely following and analyzing global economic processes. For better or for worse, we depend on them. ...We have to say that the crisis is not over yet and has not even peaked. The efforts by the Governments of the most developed global economies have not yet produced any tangible results. This means that this situation may persist for a long time".

It should be noted that the Medvedev-Putin tandem efforts to explain the measures taken to temper the economy sharp downturn effects and the additional problems which the majority of the population faced with get its understanding.

The surveys show that that from May, 2008 to February, 2009¹ D. Medvedev and V. Putin activity approval appraisals remained the same: D. Medvedev – 71% (1 point plus), V. Putin – 78% (2 points minus).

However, one can not help but draw attention to the alarming figures, based on the polls, indicating people's reaction to changes in their personal life, family, nearest and dearest.

¹ Monitoring is carried out bimestrial by Yury Levada analytic center (Levada-center) according to national representative sampling of urban and rural population of Russia. In the survey 2000 respondents aged 16 and older are polled. Polls' results are available on the web-site: <http://www.levada.ru/>

Let us turn to such indicators as the Consumer Sentiment Index, psychological state, stock of patience.

According to the survey in February, 2009², Consumer Sentiment Index indicators returned to the level of 1997, the social mood ones to the level of 2003, and the stock of patience indicators to the level of 2006 (table 1, 2, 3).

It is very important that among the three submitted indicators stock of patience ones have changed least of all. It is evidence that different Russia's "well-wishers" both external and internal, which seek to cause a clash between Medvedev and Putin and on this tide again to weaken the central power, urge on separatist sentiments, to create conditions for the next "Perestroika", are not supported by the population. The Russian Federation President and the Chairman of the Government enjoy stable confidence as in February, 2008.

² Vologda Scientific and Coordinating Centre of CEMI RAS carries out opinion polls about region's population living conditions changes bimestrial.

Polls are carried out in the towns of Vologda and Cherepovetz as well as in 8 region's areas. The stratified sampling volume is 1500.

Representativeness of sample is provided by proportion between urban and rural population; proportion between different human settlements (rural human settlements, townlets and towns); sex and age related structure of region's adult population.

Questionnaire method is a respondent domiciliary poll. Sampling error is not more than 3%.

Polls' results are available on the web-site: on <http://www.vscac.ru/>.

Table 1. Consumer Sentiment Index indicators evolution in different population groups of the Vologda region (%)

February, 2008	107,3
February, 2009	69,5
Increase/ decrease (Feb. 2009 to Feb. 2008)	- 37,8
August, 2008	108,6
February, 2009	69,5
Increase/ decrease (Feb. 2009 to Aug. 2008)	-39,1
February, 2009 at level...	Oct. 1997

Table 2. Social mood dynamics in different population groups of the Vologda region (%)

	Normal state; in a good mood	Feel effort, irritation, fear, depression
February, 2008	67,4	23,5
February, 2009	49,2	20,1
Increase/ decrease (Feb. 2009 to Feb. 2008)	-18,2	-3,4
August, 2008	71,0	21,7
February, 2009	49,2	41,8
Increase/ decrease (Feb. 2009 to Aug. 2008)	-21,8	-20,1
February, 2009 at level ...	Feb. 2003	Feb. 2003

Table 3. Stock of patience level dynamics in different population groups of the Vologda region (%)

	To be quite well off; to have a difficult life but can be patient	It is impossible to be in great distress
February, 2008	83,0	7,7
February, 2009	72,6	18,1
Increase/ decrease (Feb. 2009 to Feb. 2008)	-10,4	-10,4
August, 2008	80,4	10,2
February, 2009	72,6	18,1
Increase/ decrease (Feb. 2009 to Aug. 2008)	-7,8	-7,9
February, 2009 at level ...	Oct. 2006	Oct. 2005

To answer the question “Who is guilty?” it is necessary to draw attention to far from being an ordinary official *Vladislav Surkov's* opinion³:

“All these years we have really accumulated resources. This was in all the official speeches. We said: «Behold, now we have acquired and are ready to invest in country's development. And we have been quite ready, but there is a crisis here again, and ... a rainy day has come. Optimists say that we have enough money for a year and a bit more. And it took eight years for it. I think the goal is rather pathetic for the people, who sometimes call himself the great and about which even the enemies sometimes tell that it is great. *I think if we have worked for eight years in order to accumulate reserves, which will allow us stand a year, stand anyhow, by no means not growing, but just anyhow spend the night or weather the storm. This is a pathetic goal.*”

I would find difficulty to quarrel with him that the crisis uncovered not only Russia's economy liberal model of the last eight years insolvency but the whole economic history of the last twenty years.

Answering the question “What to do?” State Duma Deputy, political scientist *Sergei Markov*, as I think, channelizes correctly. There is no doubt that it isn't unique but obligatory to achieve long-term positive results in the development of the country. These are real results in anti-corruption drive along the full vertical and horizontal power at all levels of economic and social life, what naturally leads to serious changes in personnel in the power elites at all levels.

“But the desire to reduce the corruption level has been demonstrated however to overcome it, we need the strength and political will. People will never believe that anti-corruption drive has begun till the regions is governed by extremely corrupt leaders”⁴.

“*Our ruling class is however business-bureaucracy you know and we see how effective it paralyzes any attempts of political leadership to start anti-corruption drive.*”⁵

³ The First Deputy of the RF President Administration Head V. Surkov's speech at economic section of the United Russia forum “Strategy-2020” on February, 9th, 2009.

⁴ The Izvestiya. — 2008. — №216. — November, 19th.

⁵ The Izvestiya. — 2009. — №39. — March, 11th.

Under the threat not only to economic stability conditions, but also at present to the political tandem Medvedev – Putin, it is necessary systematically and leaning upon the majority of the population to get visible results in the country's corruption level reduction, which largely can be a turning point to a new social and economic model of our society.

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The fifth issue of the journal opens its second year. In 2008 four issues came out in which more than 40 articles on strategy development, regional economy, social development, extended reproduction problems, information economy, foreign economic relations from Finland, Minsk, Moscow, St.-Petersburg and the North-West Federal District regions are published.

Institute of Economic Problems of Kola scientific centre RAS, Komi scientific centre of the Ural RAS department, Vologda scientific and coordinating centre RAS, Institute of Economics of Karelian scientific centre RAS actively participated in the journal's backlog of manuscripts formation. In 2008 Editorial Board of the journal was enlarged. Its new members are:

– **Peter A. Vityaz**, Presidium Chairman First deputy, Belarus NAS, academician, Doctor of Engineering, Professor;

– **Peter G. Nikitenko**, academician – secretary of humanities and arts department, Belarus NAS, academician, Doctor of Economics, Professor.

In 2009

– **Chang Shuhua**, Deputy Director of Documentation and Information centre, China Academy of Social Sciences, Doctor, Professor;

– **Olga V. Goncharuk**, acting Rector of St.-Petersburg State University of Engineering and Economics, Doctor of Economics, Professor also became new members of Editorial Board.

A group of scientific activists is gradually formed as well as institution of reviewers. Taking into account new requirements documents to be included to the list of the leading peer-reviewed scientific journals are submitted to the supreme certification commission of Education and Science Ministry of the RF.

Being up-to-date it is planned to publish the journal in English though it will take a pooling of material resources of RAS economics institutions – participants of journal issue. Print clone of the journal is placed on <http://jn.vsc.ac.ru>.

Editorial staff has come to agreement on the plan of issue in 2009 – 2010:

- The sixth issue will focus on small business development problems;
- The seventh issue will consider food security and agricultural sector problems.

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As it was planned, considerable part of publications in the fifth issue addresses the regional tourism development theme. Russian scientific and practical conference «Tourism as a factor for region's sustainable social and economic development and human potential growth» which will be held on April 16 – 18, 2009 in Vologda is also devoted to this problem. The conference coordinators are the Vologda region Committee on Tourism, Vologda Scientific and Coordination Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences and Vologda branch of St.-Petersburg State University of Engineering and Economics. Submitted materials are hoped to enable the conference participants to analyze the tourism territorial development problems and to tackle them under present-day conditions.

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Real economic and social problems associated with the world economic crisis impact on our country will certainly be the focus of editorial board. Dear readers and colleagues we are looking for your materials on the problems and prospects of regions' multi-dimensional life as well as your suggestions to improve it and make the country stronger.