Report on the State of Civil Society in the Russian Federation
2008

The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation

Moscow, 2009
Inter-Commission Working Group on preparation of the Report of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation:


Working Group Executive Secretary: A.M. Lopukhin.


© The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, 2009
© Design, "LEGEIN" Project Designing Bureau, 2009

Contents

Introduction 4

Chapter 1. Current State of Civil Society 5

Preconditions for shaping of civil society 6
The quality of public knowledge about non-profit organisations and civil initiatives 10
Social basis of Russian civil society 11
Regional differences 12
Social activity of Russian youth 15
NPOs as influence makers 18
Civil society as seen through the mass media mirror 34
Legal support of the "third sector" 38
Statistical portrait of the non-profit sector 40
Third sector economy 44
Analysis of non-profit sector support programmes 47

Chapter 2. Actual Agenda 59

Chapter 3. Principal Tendencies in Development of Civil Society 71

Tendency 1. Growing activity and influence of the state in various areas of civil society 73
Tendency 2. Promotion of dialogue between the state and civil society institutes in legislative process 75
Tendency 3. Comprehensive promotion of charities 77
Tendency 4. Growing personal activities of citizens in public life 78
Tendency 5. Development of NPO professionalism combined with decrease of their total number 81

Conclusion 84
Introduction

Report on the State of Civil Society in the Russian Federation (the Report) is prepared in accordance with Article 22 of the Federal law of 4 April 2005 № 32-FZ “On the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation”. For this purpose, Inter-Commission Working Group of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation was established. The Report was approved on 24 December 2008 at the plenary meeting of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation.

The principal purpose of the Report is provision of the reader with an idea of the current state of civil society in Russia and with quantitative and qualitative evaluation of all public institutes not incorporated, directly, into any governmental entities and enabling citizens and their associations to pursue their interests and initiatives.

Along with the information about activities of non-profit organisations and attitude of the public to their work and with statistical data reflecting the development of the non-profit sector, the Report for 2008 contains findings of new studies describing the important parameters of Russian civil society. Among such parameters are the following: levels of public credibility and solidarity, tolerance, the extent, to which the citizens feel their own responsibility for what is going on in their country, opinions held by citizens of their powers to make their own contributions to events occurring in their cities, in Russia and worldwide and whether the Russians feel personally safe. The Report shows the first findings of new studies performed as regards the major civil-society social practices making up the essential basis of civil society, such as volunteering and charities and participation in the activities of non-profit organisations and initiatives of informal public associations.

The Report also describes influence held by civil society upon various areas of governmental and public life. Events of the greatest importance for Russia and world on the whole have not been ignored either; these are: Russian Presidential elections, rapid promotion of charity programmes in Russia, anti-corruption efforts launched by the government of our state and the expanding economic crisis.

For the first time in history of reporting practiced by the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, attempts were made to identify and describe major tendencies typical for development of civil society in Russia. This became possible by way of, first and foremost, comprehensive analysis and expert evaluations of what is happening in the public life of the country, which have been carried out in the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation since 2006.

The Report presents activities of trade union, consumer and youth movements and highlights public activities related to the situation in the Caucasus.

This Report was prepared with use of findings obtained in a wide range of empiric studies, a collection of expert opinions and comprehensive content analysis of Russian mass-media publications on events in public life and public activities in general (such analysis is made for the first time ever). Preparation of the Report was also heavily reliant upon information of public hearings and other events of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation.

The necessity to make civil society institutes more important follows inevitably from the essential nature of public development. This requires joint efforts from the state and from businesses and, of course, broad public participation. In making any specific decisions designed to attain any truly significant changes in this area, it is vital to have adequate understanding of all processes going on today in civil society and major tendencies of its development. In presentation of its third annual Report, the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation is sincerely expecting that it will provide all interested readers with a sufficiently comprehensive and objective idea of today’s civil society.
Chapter 1. Current State of Civil Society

The Russians of today, whatever their status, social position, occupation, gender, age or education level, have no universally shared understanding of the term “civil society” as such or of whether any civil society has been shaped in our country at all. The major criteria, as of whether the civil society can be treated as fully shaped or not, are not mutually similar either. Some people hold it most important to be able to create societies, unions or associations without hindrance; others attach the top priority to whether citizens are inwardly prepared for mutual support practices. This Chapter contains systematized statistical findings of various studies performed both in individual constituent entities of the Russian Federation and throughout the whole country; as expected, such findings will enable the reader to assess current state of civil society basing on a number of direct and indirect parameters.

Preconditions for shaping of civil society

The course of public development regardless certain country shows that forming of civil society requires following of prerequisites of utmost importance such as solidarity, trust, tolerance, personal safety and sense of responsibility in the public. This Report is based on an opinion survey intended to provide quantitative evaluation of such parameters in application to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidarity and an attitude essentially opposite to Russian citizens. Moral preparedness to act together with others, if the underlying ideas and interests are coinciding, is a manifestation of public solidity...
Chapter 1. The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation


Fig. 4. Experience (if any) of personal participation in public and political life, %

Absence of any genuine mechanisms of influence entails low levels of participation held by citizens in Russian public life6 (Fig. 4).

Tolerance is the desire and ability to establish and maintain fellowship with people different, in any way, from the predominant population group of the given region or not subscribing to the generally accepted opinions. On the whole, 47% of Russians can be referred to as more or less tolerant and 53% as more or less intolerant people.

Typically, Russians declare themselves more tolerant ethnically than socially as far as intolerance to various social groups (minorities, criminals, mentally ill people, etc.) is concerned).

An obstacle on the way of public participation in civil society practices (volunteering, charities, participation in non-profit public association activities) is that the Russians’ need in security is not met adequately. Every second Russian (50%) reported having not been feeling safe lately, 56% women and 42% men, 47% young people under 34 years, 53% middle-aged people (35-54 years) and 53% people aged over 55 reported having sense of insecurity such as this. Percentage of Russians, who contrary to that, have been feeling quite safe lately, is 41%. The sense of personal security has gone through no changes, within the recent years, in 43% of Russians. The share of citizens, who have come to feeling more secure (most frequently, this was reported by residents of large cities), is 12%, and that of those, whose sense of personal security dwindled, is 37% (this is more typical for megalopolis residents).7

Comparison between the sense of social trust and moral preparedness to join hands with others, the ability to look upon the whole society and one’s own immediate social environment in terms of solidarity/disunity, sense of personal security and ability to make any influence showed absence of any changes (whether positive or negative) in 2008 as compared to 2007.

The majority of respondents (63%) believe that it is difficult to be publicly active in today’s Russia. Merely 16% of them are of the opposite viewpoint. Opinions reported by the respondents, as to attitude (approving or disapproving) prevalent in our country today towards publicly active people are divided to virtually two equal portions (36 and 40% respectively), 56% of residents of large cities believe that such attitude is approving.

As to rural residents, their more frequent characterization of the prevalent attitude towards publicly active people is disapproving (43%). Merely 27% of Russians are referring to themselves as more or less publicly active. Such references to themselves are most typical for the respondents having higher education, residents of big cities and people, who give the highest ratings of their own life standard. Compared to 2007, the rated values of such parameters have not changed at all.8

Especially alarming is situation with ratings of own public activity given by residents of villages and small towns. Public opinion polls performed in six small towns in Pskov oblast 9 showed the following ratings given by the citizens of their own activity (Fig. 5).

6. Findings of Russian society’s tolerance study performed by Civil Society Study Laboratory at the State University – Higher School of Economics (SU-HSE) (2008), based on data obtained in all Russian representative polling of public opinions (data gathered by the Public Opinion Foundation, 2007). For more details, see Mersiyanova L.V. The role of individual subject and personal practices in shaping of civil society in Russia // Development factors of civil society and mechanisms of its interaction with the State / L.I. Yakubov, ed. M.: Verhovina, 2008.

7. Representative public opinion poll in the Russian Federation, performed by the State University – Higher School of Economics jointly with the Public Opinion Foundation (2008).

8. Representative public opinion poll in the Russian Federation, performed by the State University – Higher School of Economics jointly with the Public Opinion Foundation (2008); opinion poll performed by ANO “Vozrozhdenie” [Revival] Social Designing Centre” Pskov, 2008.

The quality of public knowledge about non-profit organisations and civil initiatives

In 2008 the extent of Russians’ knowledge about non-profit organisations (NPOs) and civil initiatives was reported higher than in 2007 (Fig 6). Extent to which individual public and other non-profit organisations and civil initiatives are known to Russians, makes up 52%. The share of those who have no idea and never heard of them, is also on decline (by 5 points). As reported, the most informed of the respondents are holders of higher education, residents of megalopolises (Moscow included) and other large cities and people giving the highest ratings for their own life standards. In some of the rated positions, the level of awareness in such respondent groups is up to 77%. The share of those, who have no idea and never heard of any non-profit organisations or initiatives, is two times lower in the respondents with higher education than in the population in general (7 and 15% respectively); in rural residents, the said share is twice as much (30 and 15% respectively)10.

It should be noted that extent, to which any public organisations or civil initiatives are known, is not always in correlation with the way such activities are highlighted in mass media 11, where human rights, trade union and youth public organisations and initiatives are leading with a noticeable lead in mentioning rates.

Among the suggested list of non-governmental non-profit organisations and initiatives, the respondents reported levels, to which the following of them are publicly known: 51% for trade unions, 52% for gardening and summer cottage partnerships, 48% for veterans’ organisations, 46% for organisations of people with disabilities and 48% for consumers’ rights protection societies12.

In spite of the currently not-too-large rates of Russians’ participation in NPO activities and civil initiatives, the social basis of Russian third sector is rather impressive. At least, every second Russian is inwardly prepared to participate in NPOs’ and civil initiatives’ meetings and events, every third one – to be a NPO volunteer or salaried employee, and every fourth one declares inner preparedness to initiate establishment of or to organize any NPOs or civil initiatives13.

The “nucleus” comprises 7.7% of Russians, who are members of and/or participating in activities conducted by public associations and other non-governmental non-profit organisations and civil initiatives, involved in relationships of volunteering and philanthropy, inwardly prepared to act together, if their ideas and interests are coinciding, and demonstrating good knowledge about third sector organisations and civil initiatives.

“Nucleus satellite” makes up 26.6% of Russians not participating in any NPO or civil initiative activities, but ready inside to act jointly, to be engaged in charities in the broader sense of the term and well informed about public associations and other non-governmental non-profit organisations and civil initiatives.

“Buffer zone” makes up 26.5% of Russians. That group is a “link” between the active and peripheral segments of the social basis. Potentially, members of such group are inwardly

10 Representative public opinion polls performed with use of Georating technology by the State University – Higher School of Economics and the Public Opinion Foundation (2007, 2008).


12 Representative public opinion polls performed with use of Georating technology by the State University – Higher School of Economics and the Public Opinion Foundation (2008).

13 Representative public opinion poll performed by the State University – Higher School of Economics jointly with the Public Opinion Foundation (2008),
No text content available.
Chapter 1.

The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation

republics is reserving it as its sole authority to control all spheres of public life, including civil and economic safety of Russia.

sis of both is orientation to socially important interests. It is known that many Islamic standards are reliable factors protective for the existence of local communities as such. Obviously, there are many studies that could have made it possible to draw impartial conclusions as to how far civil society is formed there.

Actually, conservatism typical for Caucasian civil community has proven remedial for all North Caucasian ethnic groups in a challenging time such as this. The joint meeting and pursuing of social issues as well, while mentioning rate (and hence, acuity rate) of economic problems is on decline.

A peculiar situation is developing in North Caucasian republics, where, for reason of local ethnic-cultural specifics and organisational difficulties, there were no serious, mutually comparable studies that could have made it possible to draw impartial conclusions as to how far civil society is formed there.

As to relations between the authorities and the citizens, there are significant problems here. In the traditional North Caucasian community, it is not the custom to criticize one’s elders. In the traditional civil etiquette of Caucasian ethnic groups, the “eldest” is mentally associated with that of the “main” or, at any rate, an individual higher in social status. This is precisely why the local population looks despairingly upon any civil society institutes engaged in shaping of relationships with governmental authority on equal terms. Moreover, the major part of viable non-profit organisations operated otherwise than under the governmental financial support from Western grantors. After the South Ossetian events, such organisations ceased to be trusted not only by the authorities, but also by overwhelming majority of the population.

As applicable to the majority of the youth (and to the population in general, as well), an attitude of estrangement from active public life is discernible: according to various estimations, 60–85% of Russians have never taken part in it. Personal experience of public work in all others is impermanent, non-systematic and basically optional.

On the whole, there are no proofs at all or less evidence than expected both for beliefs that the youth is more active socially than all other population groups and for the cliché opinions about the young being too passive, inert, socially irresponsible, etc. It’s clear that, more active participation in public activities and wider involvement in public initiatives are tasks pertinent to all Russian society.

It should be noted that today military patriotic education of the youth is not systemic enough. Formation of interaction between patriotic non-profit associations is too slow-paced. There is much left to be desired in implementation of time-tested approaches used in working with young people. NPOs are insufficiently active in military patronage, which is also a method of patriotic education and improvement of morals in military communities, as well as a method of countering extremism and associational behaviour among the youth.

Certain differences between young people and Russians of older age groups are reportable in analysis of motivations for participation in socially beneficial activities and in wide range of social activities. On the one hand, today’s young people are oriented, in application to public activities, to the same guidelines of meaning (such as provision of aid and support to others and charity, first of all) as members of the older generation. On the other hand, young Russians attach a new shade of meaning to such activity, making special emphasis on its more rationalistic, sometimes even pragmatic, aspects. More often than their older fellow citizens, young people motivate their involvement in public activities by chances to improve their earnings, to extend social networks available to them, to make a good career and to acquire certain professional skills.

In other words, young people are, more than their parent generation, tending to look at public activity as a way to pursue their own self-actualization and social mobility.

It should be noticed that there is another social activity motivating factor more typical for young people than for other age groups, and namely: the guarantee of that the participation in socially beneficial activities is going to bring the expected result, that funds raised for charitable purposes will be used as intended, that the available help will be provided precisely to those, who are in need of it, etc. For young people, it is important to be sure of beneficial results of public activity; they are more rationalistic and selective in attitudes, that is: the young generation seeks clear purposes for their activity, to the same guidelines of meaning (such as provision of aid and support to others and charity, first of all) as members of the older generation. On the other hand, young Russians attach a new shade of meaning to such activity, making special emphasis on its more rationalistic, sometimes even pragmatic, aspects. More often than their older fellow citizens, young people motivate their involvement in public activities by chances to improve their earnings, to extend social networks available to them, to make a good career and to acquire certain professional skills.

As to “anti-motivations” to participation of the youth in public life, they are no different from those usually declared by the members of the older generation, that is: indifference, individualism, lack of belief that they are capable to make any contribution into tackling of the existing social prob-
lens. It is also true that young people, more often than their older fellow citizens do, refer to being too pressed in time, which is hardly true. It follows from this: to encourage better social activity of young people, it is necessary to help them in becoming aware that no time spent for socially beneficial activities is “lost idly” and to explain to them benefits available from such pastime. It does not necessarily mean any personal benefits; this can be useful for apartment block courtyard, street or area of one’s residence. As shown by studies performed, localization of social problems down to the immediate area of residence makes public tackling more appealing to young people.

Analysis of specific methods of getting young Russians more involved publicly showed that young people of today are hardly oriented at all to any institutionalized social activities (formal organizations and associations); the major channel of their public involvement is acting privately or acting within informal groups. The share of those involved in charitable and socially beneficial activities solely and within informal groups is three as large as the number of those, who are acting through non-profit organizations. Merely 10% of young people are publicly active through charitable or public organizations. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that these are rates of involvement declared formally; the actual rates are, most probably, lower.

Apart from young people’s tendency to act solely within public and charitable activities (which is also true for the older generations, although to somewhat lesser degree), the opinion surveys showed that young Russians find it more preferable to stick to such methods of involvement, as do not require being active on a regular or permanent base, such as taking part in one-time actions and events. Obviously, non-profit organizations interested in greater involvement of the youth (as volunteers, for instance) should keep such specific attitude of the target young population in mind and take care to offer them public involvement in appropriate formats.

Among the kinds of participation in public life most preferable for the youth is charitable activity. To a great extent, this is due to emotional involvement important for members of the younger generation; such involvement comes from participation in charities (such as visits to social institutions, provision of support to children or collection and delivery of clothes and foodstuff to the poor). No wonder that young people, unable to provide any support in monies, often prefer such methods, as personal involvement and non-financial support.

Along with charitable ones, the great variety of the existing public organizations and civil initiatives has a number of other groups of them the young people would like to join. First of all, these are sports and tourism, environmental and cultural organisations and affinity clubs, which, no doubt, is explainable by their age-specific interests.

The revealed preferences of young people for sole and non-regular methods of public involvement greatly hinder any growth in their formally organized civil activities. However, such preferences are mainly due to poor knowledge young people have about institutionalized social activities, including those conducted by non-profit organizations. The majority of young Russians have a very vague idea both of the meaning of the term “non-profit organisation” (more than a third of total young Russian population admitted never having heard the term at all) and of any NPO activities in their own regions and in Russia at the national scale.

The poor knowledge about non-profit organisations’ activities entails lack of any definite attitude to them shaped in young minds. On the one hand, young Russians are of prettily positive opinions of NPO activities (most probably, for reason of no specific dissatisfaction to be claimed against what they are doing); on the other hand, they give no great ratings for their usefulness for human purposes and for social life (that is, efficacy of their activities). Apart from all other things, mass mind of the younger generation has no idea that non-profit organizations are able to assume responsibility for tackling of the most acute social problems (usually, such role is interpreted as governmental responsibility). And, as shown above, high-rate efficacy of public activity and the assurance of the desired results are more important for young people than for members of the older age groups.

In spite of low-rate popularity of public involvement mediated by any formal institutes, today it is genuinely possible for a certain share of the youth to get involved in charitable and public organization activities (30–45%, according to various evaluations), provided non-profit organizations are more active in their efforts to involve young people in their activities, with all of their age specifics taken into account. Obviously, NPOs can grow into an important tool of making young people more active socially and more involved in socially beneficial activities.

Involvement of young people in public activities cannot be successful, unless there is an active informational support from a wide range of public (civil) initiatives. However, the principal source of information available today about public initiatives coming from non-profit organizations is a set of informal relations with other people (the so-called “word of mouth”), while the use of mass media for such purposes is not sufficiently active.

The huge potential of Internet does not meet adequate use either – especially for making focused appeals to the young population, who, as shown by all opinion surveys, are largely more frequent users of such source of information compared to the members of the older generation. Internet enables young people to regularly get news of public and social events, actions, arrangements, etc.
A promising channel for communication between young people and civil society entities is social advertising: more than a half of young people believe that social advertising is handy, for the young generation, who have grown up in the age of mass-scale “advertization”, such a channel is more accustomed-to than for elder age groups, and it can be quite adequate to the purposes of getting the youth more involved in various lines of social work.

NPOs as influence makers

Extent of influence provided by the public upon decisions taken by the authorities of various levels can be one of top-important indicators of how far the development of civil society has advanced. It is this very factor, which makes possible to come to any definite opinions as to level attained in civil society progressing.

Opinion poll performed in 2007 showed that approximately 75% of NPO heads interviewed consider themselves as members of Russian civil society. At the same time, only every third NPO head interviewed believes that civil society has already taken shape by now in Russia. Typically, such point of view is held by 15% of Russians on the whole. The corresponding distribution of opinions among the respondents is shown in Fig. 9.

![Fig. 9. Do you believe civil society has already shaped by now in Russia, %](image)

It is notable that there is no differentiation in opinions voiced by heads of NPOs having dissimilar legal organisational forms as to whether their respective organisations are making part and parcel of Russian civil society. However, as shown by findings of the opinion survey, public organisations are more fully playing the role of civil society actors (subjects). Consumer cooperative organisations are more fully playing the role of civil society actors (subjects). Consumer cooperative organisations are more fully playing the role of civil society actors (subjects).

Fig. 10. What are the purposes your organisation has ever been acting for? (as stated by heads of all NPOs surveyed, %)

There is a great variation in how NPOs act in the above-stated purposes; however, their involvement in individual ways of such acting is not too big (Fig. 11).

![Fig. 11. What are the methods your organisation has ever employed for acting in the afore-listed purposes? (as stated by heads of all NPOs surveyed, %)](image)

---

19 All-Russian non-governmental non-profit organisation opinion survey performed by the State University – Higher School of Economics jointly with “MarketAL” Ltd (November 2007).
It should be noted that actual efficacy of acting for such purposes is widely dissimilar. For instance, 30–64% of the respondents reported that their respective organisations were successful in attaining of their individual purposes (Fig. 12). The best efficacy is reported for shaping of public opinion and provision of the public, mass media or officers of the authorities with appropriate information. The lowest rate efficacy is that of efforts made to provide open and transparent work of the authorities.

How far the dialogue maintained in our country between the authorities and civil society is efficacious? According to every sixth NPO head (16%), there is no dialogue between the authorities and civil society at all. Every eighth of them gave no definite answer to the question. Opinions of all other NPOs’ heads were as follows:

- The authorities seek to confine their dialogue to a small circle of civil society organisations and to hold it upon individual occasions only (27%)
- The authorities maintain the dialogue with a rather wide circle of civil society organisations, although these are organisations within their own preferences (20%);
- The authorities do try to hold a wide-scope dialogue, but with no success (15%)

Fig. 12. Has your organisation eventually been successful in attaining its purposes? (% of organisations that were pursuing such purposes)

Influence upon decisions of the authorities
Influence upon activities of the citizens and organisations
Shaping of public opinion
Provision of the citizens, mass media or officers of the authorities with information
Ensuring of open and transparent work of the authorities
Involvement of the public in implementation of decisions made by the authorities

The analysis shows the necessity to augment influence of the public upon all spheres of national life. As expected, implementation of the proposal made by the President of the Russian Federation\(^{20}\) to make public organisations more prominent in the elections (in formation of municipal authorities, among other things) will be one of the truly efficacious ways to accomplish this.

Such initiative will promote NPOs themselves as active advancers of positions, as held by the public on various matters, and popularization of their work and shaping of a system maintaining efficient public control of the work of the authorities.

Having appreciated the extent of influence proven by civil organisations upon public life on the whole, let us focus on its individual spheres and see how civil society institutes express themselves within them.

\(^{20}\) Message of the President of the Russian Federation made to the Federal Assembly on 5 November 2008 Economics jointly with “MarketAl” Ltd (November 2007).
Social sector

Health care and social protection in Russia are the most important lines of social activities, both for the public and for the state. Essential importance of such lines of NPO activities lies in that they are making their own contribution into public health care and social security.

Such lines of activity are maintained both by governmental and by private organisations. Contribution made by each of the types into health care and social security doesn’t replace each other; to a large extent, each of them is formative for the actual levels of development of such social sectors. Traditionally, contributions made in Russia by governmental and municipal organisations are assessed as per amounts of budget funds allocated and with use of appropriate governmental statistics. The corresponding contribution from private businesses is evaluated on account of private investments and incomes and according to relevant governmental statistics. NPO contributions into health care and social protection continue to be estimated only on grounds of applicable governmental statistics, which do not provide a fully adequate picture of such contributions.

Assessment of the role played by civil society in the social sector cannot be properly comprehensive, if no account is taken of the restricted nature of the term, which can be counterbalanced by an expert estimation of contribution coming from the non-profit sector to health care and social protection in today’s Russia. Selection of the method is explainable by the experts’ superior knowledge and experience allowing to have sufficiently justified estimations despite incompleteness and low-level reliability of many statistical ratings pertaining to NPOs’ activities. In today’s situation, objective methods intended for assessments of NPOs’ contribution into tackling of social issues are clearly under-developed, and this should be borne in mind by governmental statistical and registration authorities in improvement of their practices.

Expert estimations used are, of course, subjective only, but they have proven sufficient for identification of the actual rates of NPOs’ contribution into health care and social protection, which are unbiased in nature for reason of strictly scientific approach to selection and interpretation of comprehensive, professionally substantiated data.

In the scope of experts estimation, a formalized, questionnaire-based opinion poll was held among the experts on the following topics: health care and social protection. Experts had to evaluate contribution of governmental and municipal organisations, businesses and NPOs into the principal activity lines typical for the above-mentioned sectors of social life (Table 1).

Table 1. Major lines of health care and social protection activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of activity in health care</th>
<th>Kind of activity in social protection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision of health care to the population</td>
<td>Provision of social care to the population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of patients’ rights</td>
<td>Protection of the citizens’ social rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of physicians’ and medical workers’ rights</td>
<td>Protection of social workers’ rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disease prevention</td>
<td>Social ill-being prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care personnel training</td>
<td>Social protection personnel training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of legislative norms</td>
<td>Development of legislative norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of health care standards</td>
<td>Development of social protection standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis and monitoring of activities conducted by health organisations</td>
<td>Analysis and monitoring of activities conducted by social protection organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity and openness of health care authorities</td>
<td>Publicity and openness of social protection authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propaganda of healthy life style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the first stage, experts compared some kinds of activities by importance to form a cumulative effect of all public sectors in health care and social protection.

At the second stage, experts assessed contribution made by all types of organisations into each of the above-mentioned activity lines. There were 7 types identified for health organisations and 6 – for social protection ones (Table 2).

Table 2. Major types of organisations operating in the field of protection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health care organisation type</th>
<th>Social protection organisation type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authorities</td>
<td>Authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical insurance organisations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental or municipal treatment facilities, care and prophylactic facilities</td>
<td>Governmental and municipal social protection organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment facilities, care and prophylactic facilities of private businesses</td>
<td>Social protection organisations of private businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physicians’ associations</td>
<td>Non-profit social protection organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patients’ associations</td>
<td>Associations of disabled people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other public associations of the citizens</td>
<td>Other public associations of the citizens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To have widely varied opinions properly taken into account, the opinion polls were held among experts of different categories. Analysis was made of the major lines of activity conducted by public institutes (Fig. 13 and 14) and their contribution into health care and social protection.

**Fig. 13. Major lines of activity conducted by public institutes in health care, %**

- Protection of physicians’ and medical workers’ rights: 18.1%
- Propaganda of healthy lifestyle: 16.6%
- Protection of patients’ rights: 13.3%
- Disease prevention: 12.4%
- Analysis and monitoring of health organisations’ activities: 10.4%
- Publicity and openness of health care authorities: 8.2%
- Development of legislative norms: 7.1%
- Development of health care standards: 4.3%
- Provision of health care to the public: 1.1%
- Training of health care personnel: 0.5%
- Regulation of health care organisational activities: 0.4%
- Regulation of health care economic activities: 0.4%
- Protection of the citizens’ rights: 14.7%
- Protection of social workers’ rights: 16.6%
- Social ill-being prevention: 14.1%
- Publicity and openness of social protection authorities: 13%
- Analysis and monitoring of activities conducted by social protection authorities: 10.3%
- Provision of social care to the public: 9.4%
- Development of legislative norms: 6.9%
- Training of social protection staff: 5%
- Development of social protection standards: 4.3%
- Regulation of social protection economic activities: 3.9%
- Regulation of social protection organisational activities: 3.8%

**Fig. 14. Major lines of activity conducted by public institutes in social protection, %**

- Contribution of NPOs (physicians’ associations, patients’ associations and other public associations of citizens) into health care made 16% of total contribution made by all types of organisations operating in that sector (Fig. 15).

**Fig. 15. Estimation of influence provided by various players upon the state of affairs in health care organisations of different types, %**

- 22% Authorities
- 25% Governmental or municipal treatment facilities, care and prophylactic facilities
- 11% Treatment facilities, care and prophylactic facilities of private businesses
- 16% Medical insurance organisations
- 7% Physicians’ associations
- 6% Patients’ associations
- 3% Other public associations of the citizens

The largest contribution is noticeable in governmental and municipal treatment facilities, care and prophylactic facilities engaged in provision of daily and mass-scale health care. However, the contribution from NPOs, especially that from physicians’ associations and patients’ associations, is by no means small, either. Major contribution available from public organisations is reported in protection of the rights of patients and medical workers, as well as in provision of publicity and openness of health care authorities.

The contribution of NPOs (non-profit social protection organisations, associations of disabled people and other public organisations of citizens) into social protection made 26% of the total contribution secured by all types of organisations operating in that sector (Fig. 16).

**Fig. 16. Estimation of influence provided by various players upon the state of affairs in social protection organisations of different types, %**

- 37% Authorities
- 24% Governmental or municipal social protection organisations
- 13% Social protection organisations of private businesses
- 15% Non-profit social protection organisations
- 9% Associations of disabled people
- 2% Other public associations of the citizens

It is noteworthy that the largest contribution comes from the authority boards into social protection of citizens: this is due to payments of pensions and money allowances and to provision of a wide range of social benefits. High ratings are given to contribution of NPOs providing, in spite of limited financial resources available, more strictly targeted aid as compared to that coming from the state.
The largest NPOs’ contribution is declared in protection of citizens’ social rights, provision of social care to the public and in ensuring of publicity and openness of health care authorities. Qualitative method usable in estimation of NPOs’ contributions into health care and social protection showed that one can get original data on comprehensive systems in the situation, wherein quantitative methods of assessment of contribution coming from individual public sectors are not cohesive intrinsically, cannot take into account the growing segment of public institutes and are obviously under-developed.

There is a general participation of NPOs in provision of adequate life standard for veterans, in the struggle to overcome their social vulnerability, in the realisation of humanitarian rights and in strengthening of their social status. Infringement of rights of today’s and would-be veterans is expected to gain momentum in future. It is important that NPOs should be wider represented in provision of social care to older people, to disabled veterans and those who live in permanent need of medical care.

Priority task to be tackled by civil society today is insistence pressure upon the State for the purpose of:

- provision of legal equality for all Russian social benefits holders;
- liquidation of their sub-division into Federal and regional classes;
- provision of equality in medical, social, drug-supply, sanatorium and health resort care;
- extension of financial opportunities and governmental support for NPOs engaged in care for older generation people, especially in rural areas;
- legislative provision of civil and social rights of veterans residing in social homes and homes for disabled people.

Labour relations

Public organisations operating in the employment sector (trade unions and employers’ associations) today is the largest NPO group. In Russia more than 28 million people are trade unions members. The largest trade union centres are Independent Russian Trade Unions’ Federation (FNPR) incorporating 41 trade unions, All-Russian Labour Confederation (VKT) – 7 trade unions, the Russian Labour Confederation (KTR) – 9 trade unions and Socprof – 10 trade unions. A considerable number of non-associations organisations, which have no significant memberships, are also registered as trade unions. FNPR, VKT and KTR are integrated to the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) incorporating 304 national trade union centres of 153 countries of the world. FNPR is a member of ITUC Pan-European Regional Council and General Confederation of Trade Unions (GCTU); it is also collaborating with International Labour Organisation (ILO) and trade union centres of more than 100 countries of the world.

Within a year, legal services of FNPR member organisations alone have revealed 160,510 and eliminated 145,810 violations of labour legislation and have restored 1,719 people at their jobs. Trade union labour technical inspectors have encountered 158 thousand non-compliances with labour protection regulations and have sent to employers 20.3 thousand letters with demands to eliminate such non-compliances. Representatives of trade unions attended the court proceedings initiated under 14,593 lawsuits, 13,144 of which were satisfied in full or in part.

There are 59 sector-specific and 78 regional trilateral agreements and 179 thousand collective agreements applicable to, as estimated by experts, about 20 million people. During 2008 various trade unions organized mass-scale union actions participated by more than 3 million people throughout Russia. First of all, those were employees’ rallies and meetings held to voice protests against escalating of prices and for higher salaries and better working conditions.

Trade unions are active in labour relations, where the intrinsic potential for conflicts is currently further aggravated by a number of other problems, such as lack of a truly fair system of salaries (in Russia, work outputs per expenses for manpower are between one and a half and two times higher than in the most developed countries); growing non justified differentiation in salaries (more than half of the funds are payable to 20% of top-salaried employees); numerous violations of the labour laws (in a year term, Public Prosecution Offices have revealed more than 800 thousand instances of that nature); loss of prestige for working productively in the real economy sector.

The civil entities and trade unions, as well as businesses, have improved the already existing system of social insurance and funding of social protection. They have also directed the State to the necessity of elaborating and implementing a new system of social insurance, considering the existing social protection system is ineffective and insufficient.

At the same time, 2008 retained the dwindling tendency in the number of trade union members (by about 2 million annually), which is directly dependent on employees’ civil activity levels and trade unions’ legal status. Today, trade unions may not defend interests of their members in courts, unless there is additional evidence for their entitlement to do so; interfere in any collective labour disputes; solely select pivotal points expected as the most reliable for negotiating upon any collective agreement to be concluded. A number of unjustified restrictions have been implemented, and the normal strike-declaring procedure has become more complicated. A considerable share of those persons has no faith in any collective protection of labour rights; they think it is permissible to non-comply with such rights, provided however salaries are high enough and tend to extend such attitude to the law to other spheres of life, which is an impediment to Russia becoming a law-abiding state.

It is in public interests to strengthen positions held by trade unions and to promote equal-terms interaction between civil society entities operating in the labour sector and authority officials. It is also reasonable to promote legal mechanisms to tackle non-compliances, to improve efficacy of tripartite interactions and status held by tripartite committees, to entitle them take decisions binding for all parties concerned. Mass-scale weakening of employees rights collective protection system, by way of labour force hiring from the outside (outsourcing and outstaffing), is something to be avoided.

It is necessary (on the basis of civil society entities augmented in their importance, trilateral labour arbitration system established for prompt tracking-down of any conflicts, as such arise, and commencement of their legal regulation) to simplify procedures of entrance into any collective labour dispute and to improve procedure applicable to its regulation on the whole.

The topical lines of interaction between civil society and authorities include provision of openness and reliability of the pension system and improvement thereof.

Basing on insurance principles supported with the leading part of trade unions and employers’ associations (within appropriate tripartite bodies), social protection system should be applicable as, to assessment of normative acts for payments to be made and to specific procedures and lines of insurance funds expenditures, in case of: job loss, disease and old age, insolvency (bankruptcy) of the employer; an active policy of employment rates improvement and migration policy should also be maintained in practice. It requires public support for better prestige of productive working, professional orientation for young people and support of professional mastership contests organized.
Public consumers movements

The state of affairs in public consumers’ movement of Russia is describable, first and foremost, by dynamics in the number of organisations established to represent and protect consumers’ rights, by how far their work is extended throughout regions and populated areas and by the number of their members. As reported by State registration authorities, 553 public associations, whose articles of association contained provisions for protection of consumers’ rights, have been registered in Russia as of 17 October 2008. They operate in overwhelming majority of Russian regions. About a quarter of them are incorporated into the Russian Consumers’ Union (SPRF) as follows: 107 are so incorporated directly and about 30 local societies – through interregional and regional associations linking them together. Regional organisations within SPRF have 32 thousand members, which figure is comparable to European rates, where fixed membership in public organisations is subject to formalization by way of appropriate procedures.

According to the Federal Supervision Service on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-being and SPRF, there are several dozens more of genuinely operative consumer organisations outside SPRF. All other organisations are either engaged in other lines of statutory activity, or have actually ceased to exist, or are working with much of initiative. Coming of a new, highly efficient consumer organisation is a rare instance; the progress of many other operable organisations has come to a full stop.

In countries having longer, compared to Russia, history of public consumer protection, circulation rates of their magazines and the number of consumers, who have turned to them for help, are also usable as indicators of the influence produced by consumer organisations.

Total circulation of all printed consumer-oriented publications in Russia is presently only slightly more than 20 thousand copies, that is hundreds times less than in the USA and dozens times less than in the leading European countries. To a certain extent, this is made up for by information available at specialized consumer web sites; currently, there are more than 30 sites in Russia. In 2008 there were more than 500 thousand visits to SPRF web portal, where the required consumer-oriented information or a “live” consultation is available free of charge.

In terms of the number of applications to consumer organisations for help, another such indicator, Russian consumers’ movement has higher rates than those of appropriate European organisations. For instance, there were more than 280 thousand requests for assistance to SPRF and its regional organisations in 2008.

In Russia, participation of civil organisations in public councils attached to authority boards is regulated by law in the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Federal Antimonopoly Service, and the Federal Supervision Service on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-being and SPRF, there are several dozens more of genuinely operative consumer organisations outside SPRF. All other organisations are either engaged in other lines of statutory activity, or have actually ceased to exist, or are working with much of initiative. Coming of a new, highly efficient consumer organisation is a rare instance; the progress of many other operable organisations has come to a full stop.

In countries having longer, compared to Russia, history of public consumer protection, circulation rates of their magazines and the number of consumers, who have turned to them for help, are also usable as indicators of the influence produced by consumer organisations.

Total circulation of all printed consumer-oriented publications in Russia is presently only slightly more than 20 thousand copies, that is hundreds times less than in the USA and dozens times less than in the leading European countries. To a certain extent, this is made up for by information available at specialized consumer web sites; currently, there are more than 30 sites in Russia. In 2008 there were more than 500 thousand visits to SPRF web portal, where the required consumer-oriented information or a “live” consultation is available free of charge.

In terms of the number of applications to consumer organisations for help, another such indicator, Russian consumers’ movement has higher rates than those of appropriate European organisations. For instance, there were more than 280 thousand requests for assistance to SPRF and its regional organisations in 2008.

In Russia, participation of civil organisations in public councils attached to authority boards is regulated by law in the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Federal Antimonopoly Service, and the Federal Supervision Service on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-being and SPRF, there are several dozens more of genuinely operative consumer organisations outside SPRF. All other organisations are either engaged in other lines of statutory activity, or have actually ceased to exist, or are working with much of initiative. Coming of a new, highly efficient consumer organisation is a rare instance; the progress of many other operable organisations has come to a full stop.

In countries having longer, compared to Russia, history of public consumer protection, circulation rates of their magazines and the number of consumers, who have turned to them for help, are also usable as indicators of the influence produced by consumer organisations.

Total circulation of all printed consumer-oriented publications in Russia is presently only slightly more than 20 thousand copies, that is hundreds times less than in the USA and dozens times less than in the leading European countries. To a certain extent, this is made up for by information available at specialized consumer web sites; currently, there are more than 30 sites in Russia. In 2008 there were more than 500 thousand visits to SPRF web portal, where the required consumer-oriented information or a “live” consultation is available free of charge.

In terms of the number of applications to consumer organisations for help, another such indicator, Russian consumers’ movement has higher rates than those of appropriate European organisations. For instance, there were more than 280 thousand requests for assistance to SPRF and its regional organisations in 2008.

In Russia, participation of civil organisations in public councils attached to authority boards is regulated by law in the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Federal Antimonopoly Service, and the Federal Supervision Service on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-being and SPRF, there are several dozens more of genuinely operative consumer organisations outside SPRF. All other organisations are either engaged in other lines of statutory activity, or have actually ceased to exist, or are working with much of initiative. Coming of a new, highly efficient consumer organisation is a rare instance; the progress of many other operable organisations has come to a full stop.

In countries having longer, compared to Russia, history of public consumer protection, circulation rates of their magazines and the number of consumers, who have turned to them for help, are also usable as indicators of the influence produced by consumer organisations.

Total circulation of all printed consumer-oriented publications in Russia is presently only slightly more than 20 thousand copies, that is hundreds times less than in the USA and dozens times less than in the leading European countries. To a certain extent, this is made up for by information available at specialized consumer web sites; currently, there are more than 30 sites in Russia. In 2008 there were more than 500 thousand visits to SPRF web portal, where the required consumer-oriented information or a “live” consultation is available free of charge.

In terms of the number of applications to consumer organisations for help, another such indicator, Russian consumers’ movement has higher rates than those of appropriate European organisations. For instance, there were more than 280 thousand requests for assistance to SPRF and its regional organisations in 2008.

In Russia, participation of civil organisations in public councils attached to authority boards is regulated by law in the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Federal Antimonopoly Service, and the Federal Supervision Service on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-being and SPRF, there are several dozens more of genuinely operative consumer organisations outside SPRF. All other organisations are either engaged in other lines of statutory activity, or have actually ceased to exist, or are working with much of initiative. Coming of a new, highly efficient consumer organisation is a rare instance; the progress of many other operable organisations has come to a full stop.

In countries having longer, compared to Russia, history of public consumer protection, circulation rates of their magazines and the number of consumers, who have turned to them for help, are also usable as indicators of the influence produced by consumer organisations.

Total circulation of all printed consumer-oriented publications in Russia is presently only slightly more than 20 thousand copies, that is hundreds times less than in the USA and dozens times less than in the leading European countries. To a certain extent, this is made up for by information available at specialized consumer web sites; currently, there are more than 30 sites in Russia. In 2008 there were more than 500 thousand visits to SPRF web portal, where the required consumer-oriented information or a “live” consultation is available free of charge.

In terms of the number of applications to consumer organisations for help, another such indicator, Russian consumers’ movement has higher rates than those of appropriate European organisations. For instance, there were more than 280 thousand requests for assistance to SPRF and its regional organisations in 2008.
are on the way to success (according to the latest opinion polling by SPRF), is 83% of those who have made up their minds to stand up for their rights.

In their overwhelming majority (72%) the suffering parties turned directly to the parties at fault for infringement of their rights. More than a half of consumers who made such applica-
tions, were successful in attaining a good result without having to refer the matter to courts or any other authorities.

In all other cases, the consumers began Purgatory involving governmental authorities, public consumer associations, courts, mass media, etc.

The share of citizens, who have applied to consumer societies for help, has increased by 1.5 times as compared to 1995; today, it is almost two times excessive of the number of applica-
tions made to governmental authorities. Such tendency is due to a noticeable growth in authority secured by consumer organisations through superior efficiency of their work. According to the latest opinion poll, applications made by the citizens to consumer associations for assistance returned negative results in less than 4% of all the cases.

Nevertheless, in spite of the noticeable shifts for the better in protection of consumers’ rights, every third consumer makes no attempts to protect himself/herself at all. To explain such an attitude, every sixth of them refers to poor knowledge of his/her rights, every tenth – to having no idea of where specifically he/she has to apply to, every third – to having no faith in the eventual success, and almost a half of them are of the opinion that the matter is too troub-
some to handle.

Regrettfully, the growth of other positive indicators of the current state of consumers’ move-
ment has significantly slowed down in the recent years. As shown by opinion poll held among consumers’ movement activists25 by SPRF in October 2008, 58% believe that consumers’ movement in Russia is developing further, 23% think that it is held in stagnation, and 9% – that it is degrading. Only 11% believe that financial position of their respective organisations is normal and good enough for working with perfect dedication. At the same time, almost half of the respondents mentioned pressures kept over them by businesses, and about a third of them – pressures from law-enforcement authorities and local authorities. A large hindrance to the progress of consumers’ movement, which has adverse effects upon the public attitude to it, is proliferation of “pseudo-consumer” organisations practising extortion, from business people, of any information evidencing acting against the regulations under the threat of other-
wise such information being used for purposes of mediation or pressing, upon consumers, their services involving more costs-consuming methods for protection of their infringed rights than it is actually required.

As major sources of funding, the opinion poll respondents mentioned income derived from legal practice, payments owed out of penalties26 adjudged by courts (68% for each of the two answers given) and expert activities (40%). In their opinion, the most proper sources of income, along with those mentioned above, are taking part in consumers’ rights protection targeted pro-
gressives and grants.

Efficient protection of consumers’ rights by individuals and public consumer organisations is hindered by such judiciary practice, as when decision-making is not in the scope of applicable legislation, but is based on “general impressions” dependent or pressing, upon consumers, their services in court. Quite often, courts are arbitrary in cutting down penalty and fine amounts payable under the Law. Court decisions, which have already been passed formally, are far from easy to be en-
forced. Flaws existing in the legislation enable negligent businessmen to avoid liability by use of legal entity change practice. Independent expert activity is not regulated in any way at all.

25 In total, 40 heads and 26 activists of public consumer associations were interviewed.
26 As specified in item 6, Article 13 of Russian Law of 7 February 1992, № 2300-1 “On Protection of Consumer Rights”, revi-

Among the principal tasks of Russian consumers’ movement has to tackle in the foresee-
able future are completion of shaping of infrastructure designed for public legal support of con-
sumers as a network of non-profit information and consultation stations (in constituent enti-
ties of the Russian Federation) and centres (in the Federal Districts), promotion of consumer education and establishment of a national consumer expertise centre, later to be supported with a mass-circulation magazine for consumers published on its basis. Apart from protection of consumers’ rights, successful handling of such tasks will, as expected, help the public to ar-
range their consumption habits on wiser patterns, which is especially important in conditions of the economic crisis.

Civil activity in the fields of culture and ethno-cultural development

Culture is the most powerful factor contributing to shaping the public life creatively and an inexhaustible source of public innovations. If seen as a tool for human self-actualization, culture reveals itself as generating new and unlimited inspirations capable to provide their own influ-
ence upon historical process and upon man. Culture maintains not only integrity of the society and the nation, but also their continuous reproduction.

As compared to 2007, the scope of civil initiatives put forth in 2008 in the realm of culture was somewhat expanded. First, there was a change in the generally prevalent idea of the range of the existing cultural institutions. Alongside with materials about traditional culture institutes (theatres, libraries, clubs, culture houses, museums, concert halls and architectural monu-
ments), a wide range of information has appeared about publishing companies, design, sound recording, computer games, fashion, movies, radio and television related, in any way, with for-
profit entities. Although such data is often “for reference only”, it is supposable that the sector of cultural initiatives is gradually expanding to nightclubs, Internet cafes, discotheques, aqua parks, bookstores, festivals and non-governmental schools.

Secondly, many governmental authorities have shown a tendency to greater openness lately. Events designed to provide participation of the general public and to put initiatives of the public to use have become more frequent. There is also a trend to collaboration between traditional culture institutes and independent creative arrangements. Thirdly, a new cultural space has taken shape, where it is not easy to distinguish between strictly governmental activities in the sphere of culture and civil initiatives in the same field. If governmental institutions are, with increasing pace, a sort of resource centres serving to encourage and to support public activity.

However, there is no growth in the number of independent non-profit organisations operat-
ing in the creative sphere. There are no new amateur organisations, associations, unions or communities, such as were coming to existence two decades ago. A serious drawback in shap-
ing of civil society in our country deals with the lack of any permanent and comparative infor-
mation available on the appearance of creative unions, guilds, arts academies, amateur theatres, literary studios or fine arts studios. Information available on cultural civil initiatives is not comprehensive and comes randomly only. Most typically, civil initiatives are focused upon the sphere of leisure.

Experts are reporting, first and foremost, arranging of literary and musical night concerts, gathering of books for residents of the areas affected by natural disasters, joint theatre going, planting of greenery in pre-specified areas and meeting with celebrities.

The second rating position is that of amateur artistic activity. However, in a number of cases, the interviewed respondents meant art circles headed by individuals who have formal, staff employ-
ment there. As to “purely” amateur art entities, they are not numerous. Their share is about 8% of the total sector of amateur arts.
It should be noted that all experts and surveys are showing that it is culture, where considerable positive dynamics are visible in a wide range of civil initiatives. To provide such dynamics with further support, the authorities should enable the population to act self-dependently in culture and arts and avoid any formal regulation of activities conducted by civil society entities. It is also necessary to find specific mechanisms applicable to wide-scope propaganda of cultural civil initiatives and to encouragement of enthusiasts active in promotion of such initiatives. Civil society institutes are especially important in development and support of cultural and linguistic environment in poly-ethnic Russia. More attention is paid to distinctly original cultures, especially those of small-scale ethnic groups; interest towards cultural of Russian population resident in various regions and to the religious component of culture and spiritual life has acquired priority level significance.

Non-profit organisations are engaged in holding of many ethnic culture festivals and traditional festivities, inauguration of local museums, restoration of monuments, publication of literary and periodical editions in many languages and in the hosting of radio and TV programmes. Russia pursues the policy of saving and further development of ethnic, linguistic and cultural distinction of ethnic groups resident in it. The purpose of Russian national policy is preservation of the culturally and linguistically varied nature of Russian society, to provide environment favourable for development of multi-culturalism and to affirm all-Russian identity and solidarity. One of the leading roles in this is played by non-governmental organisations active taking into account the interests of cultural and linguistic communities – in the sphere of, among other things, national education and security of the rights for self-determination and unhindered ethno-cultural development.

Environmental problems and civil society

Thanks to vigorous activity of civil society, especially of environmental NPOs, ecology is growing into a national development priority, recognized officially as such. The purpose of environmentally oriented policy is harmonization of economic development and environmental safety; it is meant that they should match each other advantageously in a concept of sustainable development impossible without sparing treatment of resources of any kind, including natural resources. Attitude towards environment is an inherent part of culture held by local population and shaping of ideology, as to be built on the basis of sustainable development concept, and feasibility of tasks targeted will be dependent on how much active the civil society is.

The majority of Russians continue to feel concerns about the environmental situation (78%)\(^27\); they do admit importance of the environmental topic both globally (70% of them think that global warming is a major threat) and nationally (64% are of the opinion that attainment of a sustainable development for Russia is impossible without improvement of environmental situation, although 22% of the respondents hesitated to give any definite answer for the reason of information lack on the matter).

When asked to identify 5–6 social problems important for them out of 25 most significant issues listed, 13% of the respondents mentioned environmental problems (rated the 18th by importance). This is explainable by that there are other socio-economic subjects, extremely significant and causing even greater concerns, by insufficient attention from governmental entities (80% are of the opinion that efforts taken in Russia to tackle environmental problems are insufficient; 57% believe that they are not able to provide any influence of their own upon handling of such problems) and, as shown by the latest opinion surveys, low levels of highlighting given by mass media to the environmental topic.

However, the pressing need in the proper management of environmental problems aggravated by encroachments upon public interests, which arises due to in-fill building developments practiced in many cities and due to implementation of building projects without proper environment

posal “On introduction of the fundamentals of environmental knowledge into the Federal State education standards of basic general education”. It is necessary to adapt and implement strategies designed to improve environmental culture of the population for sustainable development of the country, to put into effect ethical code on the rules of behaviour towards environment. For this purpose, educational work is maintained with the use of Earth Charter international initiative, ethical document, and discussions are underway as to the possibility of making up a national code such as this. Today, over three quarters (79%) of Russians believe it is important to put into effect a national code of environmental behaviour, and 19% hesitate to give any definite answer to the question for the reason of information lack on the issue.

The consolidating role is played by Environmentalist’s Day (5 June); the initiative for celebra-
tion of Russian Nature Day continues its development. Young people’s environmental movement, both along environmental NPOs lines and along youth organisation lines, is also evolving. That initiative has gained support from “National Council of Russian Youth’s and Children’s Associa-
tions” Public Unions’ Association. An environmental youth competition and a number of meetings between youth groups and organisations were held. Support also came to environmental youth forum and environmental schools for youth to be held in 2009 declared in Russia as Youth Year.

What is essentially important for identification of prospects available for environmental de-
velopment of civil society is becoming aware that “resourceful” citizens (those having higher income and education levels) are more frequent to voice their concerns about environmental situation and desire to take part in handling environmental problems. Opinion polls performed among the population as to how far the respondents are inwardly prepared to pay the price of environmental improvements are especially testimonial of this. Unlike population of our country in general, where just 29% of the respondents have voiced such preparedness, wealthy citizens and businesspeople have shown it at considerably higher rates (40 and 47% respectively).29 All these determine importance of professional environmental NPOs as institutes of public policy. There are also good outlooks for tight collaboration between environmental NPOs and regional public chambers.

With public and governmental concerns highly preoccupied with economic issues, no-delay management of environmental problems is indispensable for provision of better human health standards combined with successful economic development. The following becomes priority for the expert community and for public policy institutes: public and governmental interest in resolv-
ing of environmental problems, as well as development of fundamentals for national environ-
mental policy. Among priorities for making the civil society more active there are environmental enlightenment and development of youth movement.

Civil society as seen through the mass media mirror

In 2008 in course of preparation of the Report, a study was conducted, with a focus on civil society development problems’ positioning in mass media of 2006–2008.30 It is extremely important to under-
stand what aspects of civil initiative activities are of the interest for the press, how various organisations usually create newsmakers, and how their activities are actually highlighted in mass media. Analysis was made of the federal mass media and regional press media in eight constituent entities of the Russian Federation, as well as of Internet publications. For this purpose, civil society was conditionally sub-divided into 12 sectors by their interests; the studies were carried out on each of the topics separately, and this rendered possible to make certain important comparisons.

Fig. 18 shows informational field shaped by the Federal mass media; it is clearly seen here what activity aspects and what institutes of civil society enjoyed the most frequent emphasis in mass media.31 If we pay attention to results obtained in the scope of analysis of regional mass media, we cannot fail to see that the most frequent references were that of cultural, sports-related and educational initiatives and events in the life of young people.

31 Distance from the centre of the chart shows number of references made in the mass media reviewed.
On the whole, results of the analysis show that topics related to manifestations of civil activity are, mostly, of no interest for Russian mass media. This could be explained by several reasons. Firstly, as stated by the experts, Russian civil society has not become yet a force capable to produce any influence upon taking of important governmental decisions.

Secondly the existing presence, manifestations of civil activity are virtually free of any “conflicting”, protest-laden or emotionally coloured newsmakers, such as may be of any interest to the public and, hence, for mass media which ought to satisfy such an interest.

Such a situation is further aggravated by that, for the most part, public associations are not aware of the importance of their mass media positioning. Or, if they do, they are unable to make their purposes, motivations and activity results known to mass media. According to experts, the majority of NPOs have no idea of inherent mechanism underlying operation of mass media.

The best quality of working with mass media can be boasted of by political and human rights organisations, because the very nature of their activities makes them, more often than it is the case with all other public organisations, generate newsmakers, such as are more effective in terms of emotional impact produced, and show more initiative in acting together with mass media (which is especially true in respect to web-based mass media).

The study showed that the information field generated around the whole set of notions constituting the term “civil society” has remained even-patterned throughout the two study periods, and there has been no considerable growth or reduction in interest shown by mass media towards civil activity in its multiform manifestations. Nevertheless, the number of references made in the federal mass media of the full set of notions brought by us together to make up something known as “civil society” has somewhat grown lately, which is evidence of positive dynamics. An important contribution into such growth came from the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, whose work has drawn mass media attention to the issue. Analysis of the mentioning rate dynamics of the civil society topic showed that the growing number of such references is steadily correlated with elections, both to the Federal and regional public chambers.

To have better understanding of the tendency, a study was conducted, on the one hand, of mass media mentioning rate of distinctive features typical for civil society entities of various categories (civil society entities, CSE; public organisations, initiative-active citizens, volunteers, etc.) and, on the other hand, of the performance typical for manifestations of civil activity (picketing, demonstrations, rallies, protests, etc.).

Results received showed that mentioning rate of the third sector entities and actions in the federal mass media raised more or less equally; it follows from this thesis that there is a growing interest displayed towards civil society by the federal mass media on the whole.

In regional mass media segment, mentioning rate of activities typical for CSEs has dwindled, while Internet based mass media portrayed, on the contrary, a highly pronounced growth in the very same constituent (the protest component) of civil activity.

Mentioning rate of the federal mass media grew only barely, in the Internet, it was steadily sticking to basically same levels – and dropped dramatically in regional mass media. Such fact is explainable both by lessening in various human rights activities maintained in the regions and by reluctance of local authorities to let such activities become known to the public.

Since web-based mass media are less subject to control and censorship from the authorities, while regional mass media are, on the contrary, more dependent on local authorities, there are reasons for the conclusion that regional authorities are increasingly intend to inhibit any press publications about any protest activities. As to Internet based mass media, these are protest aspects (and no other aspects) of civil activities, which are of the greatest interest for them.

The study also showed a large growth in mentioning rate of such term, as “non-profit organisation”, or NPO.

This is explainable, on the one hand, by gradual replacement of the term “public organisation” (typical for regional mass media) by new terminology and, on the other hand, by active mass media discussions of tighter control policy of the State towards non-governmental organisations (such as the British Council), which provided the most visible impact upon the Federal and Internet based mass media.

As mentioned above, Russian mass media are most easily responsive to events involving scandals and conflicts. Information about various events covering any issues of social development is of no interest for the mass media.

Changes in mass media attitude towards civil activities are most obvious in how mass media are reflecting various lines of public activity.

The study showed that different mass media publications increased more numbers of publications regarding civil activities in health care and social protection fields.

Such a trend can be explained by continuous attempts made by retirees to protect their own rights and to be able to get the required medical drugs on preferential terms, by lack of the sufficient quantity of medicines for diabetic patients and by problems experienced by people with limited abilities.

A large growth was revealed in publications regarding support, integration and protection of the rights of people with limited abilities in all mass media, regional mass media especially. First and foremost, this is due to the growing attention paid to social integration of disabled people by the state and by the society in general. Virtually in all mass media, the most frequent highlighting is given to trade union activities.

It can be explained by the fact that they act in the labour sector, where the major civil interests are formatted and procured, and where the conflicts provoking fully justified interest from the press usually arise.

Apart from this, mass media publications focused on the business operation issues are quoting the most active representatives of business enterprises and organisations, who are in fact public activists and trade union members at such enterprises and organisations.

The study showed a steadily low mentioning rate of public activities maintained in science, sports, culture and arts. The most rare of them, without any noticeable trend to any change, were publications on protection of nature, religion and consumer-focused subjects.

The positioning study of dynamics of civil activity, as highlighted by mass media in Russia, for instance, increasing mentioning rates of terms related to civil society in Stavropol kray is explainable, on the other hand, by gradual replacement of the term “science and education”, while the federal and web-based mass media are more linking it to fields of science and education, while the federal and web-based mass media are more linking it with political issues.

The positioning study of dynamics of civil activity, as highlighted by mass media in Russia, was carried out for the first time. Therefore, it is too early to speak of any specific tendencies becoming visible. Nevertheless, the available data is sufficient for concluding that the civil activity topic is constantly present in all types of mass media.
The essential changes group should also be treated as incorporating the enactment of the Government of the Russian Federation of 28 June 2006 № 485 “On the list of international organisations, whose grants (free aid) are not subject to taxation and not accountable for taxation purposes, in the revenues of Russian grantee organisations”. Under this enactment, list of grantors, organisations, whose grants are not subject to taxation, has been seriously reduced.

According to sub point 14 of point 1 of article 251 of the Tax Code of the Russian Federation, income received as grants are targeted funds not accountable for in the assessment of tax base for profit tax payable by organisations of such classifications, as modified in point 14, article 250 of the Tax Code of the Russian Federation, tax-assignable profits and income is understood as derived by Russian non-profit organisations in no case other than use of targeted funds or incomes outside intended purposes. Therefore, no balance of targeted funds or incomes left unused by non-profit organisations, as of beginning and end of the reported (tax-assessable) periods, is subject to profit taxation. Changes involving interaction between civil society and authorities have affected regional laws; it should be mentioned, however, that they are in the border line between essential and formal changes.

Establishment of consultative councils, holding of public hearings focused on the most important issues, public and governmental consultations and provision of normative acts for various methods of cooperation are bright examples of the dialogue developing between authorities and the society. In April 2006 Russian regional laws regulating such forms of the dialogue as public chambers, governmental support of NPOs, social mandate, appeals made by the citizens, public hearings and public expertise and charities consisted of 1,363 normative acts passed on the level of the constituent entities of Federation (88 entities of all Federal Districts). By October 2007 the number of normative acts regulating the same spheres of relations between authorities and the society grew up to 2,351 (85 entities of all Federal Districts)\(^3\), with the most clear regulation provided, in the major part of the Federal entities, for holding of public hearings and public expertise and to establishment of consultative and expert councils. By September 2008 the number of such normative acts reached 3,042; it is noteworthy that there was not a single new law newly enacted on charities, but there was a large growth in the number of social mandate normative acts (from 21 up to 104, as of 88 the Federal entities). Also following the example of the Federal central authorities in allocation of governmental support to civil society organisations, the regions have continued about 1,000 new normative acts on governmental support to be available locally. Extension of the normative base stands for solid proof of growing tendency towards gradual and consistent development of regional legislation – led with appropriate amendments and by civil society organisations. Expansion of the normative base affects to development of regional legislation, in the major part of the Federal entities, for holding of public hearings and public expertise and to establishment of consultative and expert councils. By September 2008 the number of such norms reached 2,351 (85 entities of all Federal Districts).

In 2007 the Federal Registration Service audited 12 thousand NPOs, with non-compliances with applicable regulations found in overwhelming majority of them. In 2006 and 2007, every sixth NPO applying for registration faced a denial of incorporation. In 2007 four out of every five NPOs existing in Russia (160 thousand out of 200 thousand) failed to deliver new report forms within the terms specified by the latest amendments to the laws. As shown by the studies conducted\(^3\), the bigger part of difficulties arising and encountered by NPOs and their originators involved, first and foremost, unclear and imprecise wording of the laws, negative law-application practices and arbitrary assessments of individual Federal Registration Service officials.

In its interference with public association activities, the Federal Registration Service (FRS) made use of unclearly worded laws at own discretion. If a public association was exerting its rights, the Federal Registration Service could declare that such association was not entitled to do it, unless it obtained registration as a legal entity. At the same time, by maintaining control of activities conducted by public associations and by imposing liabilities upon them, FRS admitted establishment and activities of such organisations as lawful, even without such registration.


33 Study performed by “Lawyers for Civil Society” Non-Profit Partnership; for more details visit www.lawcs.ru

It was not always that FRS officers had proper understanding of purposes NPOs were set up for. In their overwhelming majority, the denials, whether for reasons of purposes or objectives (types of activity), were arbitrary and dependent on the level of legal conscience and education of officials responsible for state registration of non-profit organisations.

Changes involving redistribution of governmental responsibilities have been beneficial for the law enforcement practice. Since May 2008 audits of non-profit organisations and public associations held by the authorized body were selective, which entailed a less number of warnings given to non-profit organisations and, hence, a less number of legal proceedings, which had resulted in penalties upon a number of non-profit organisations in 2007.

Under a decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 12 May 2008 № 724, responsibilities for registration of non-profit organisations, including local branches of international organisations and foreign non-profit and non-governmental organisations, public associations and political parties, were taken away from the Federal Registration Service and vested upon the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation. The decree has become an important step towards shaping of civil society in Russia. Under that regulating instrument, the Federal Registration Service was dissolved on 1 October 2008.

It followed from the decree that the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation should become responsible for registration of non-profit organisations on 12 May 2008. The responsibility to audit activities of non-profit organisations (other than public associations) was not vested by such ordinance upon the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation, and, as provided for in Article 32 of the Federal law of 12 January 1996, № 7-FZ “On non-profit organisations”, it remains in the competence of the Federal Registration Service as body authorized for this by decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 13 October 2004 № 1315. The situation continued to be just like this until new decree issued by the President on 14 July 2008 under № 1079 to regulate the empowerments of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation.

The decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 14 July 2008 № 1079 has amended the Statute of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation due to the latter’s becoming responsible for registration of non-profit organisations and control of their activities. Since 14 July 2008 the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation has been performing all responsibilities regarding non-profit organisations, such as earlier were within the competence of the Federal Registration Service.

Due to the transitional period, some of the regions are facing difficulties with registration and amendments of constituent documents; however, unlike 2007, those involved administrative matters, rather than interpretation of any normative acts.

It follows from the foregoing that the legislative environment of civil society organisations’ work has gone through no major changes; for the most part, such alterations were pertinent to mechanisms underlying funding of their activities. There were no changes in 2008, such as could have any effects upon procedures of registration, introduction of addenda to constituent documents or reporting system of civil society organisations.

Statistical portrait of the non-profit sector

Civil society is a tool, of which statistical authorities have regrettably poor knowledge. The first and foremost reason for this is that far from all public initiatives or public associations are enthusiastic to get registration or declare their existence in any other way. This is why this section of the Report contains, first of all, information about non-profit organisations engaged in business activities and, as such, capable to be kept records of.

According to the Federal State Statistics Service, the total number of non-profit organisations (other than NPOs created by governmental and municipal authorities)⁵⁵ in the Russian Federation, as between 1 January 2007 and 1 January 2008 dropped from 675.6 thousand down to 655.4 thousand, or by 3%. The reduction of their number was not evenly distributed between non-profit organisations of various legal organisational forms (Fig. 19).

The largest cuts are in the number of farming (peasant) facility associations (by 18.5%, as compared to 1 January 2007), public movements (by 13.9%) and public and religious organisations (movements) (by 11.0%). The number of foundations and associations of legal persons (associations and unions) dwindle by 4.5%. There is growth in the number of territorial self-governing public units (by 5.0%, as compared to 1 January 2007), non-profit partnerships (by 2.7%), consumer cooperative societies (by 2.3%) and autonomous non-profit organisations (by 1.2%). The number of public initiative bodies (of self-initiated activity) and institutions remained unchanged.

Distribution of non-profit organisation groups, in terms of their key legal organisational forms, went through no considerable changes in 2007 (Fig. 20).

Institutions (42%), public and religious organisations (associations) (27%) and consumer cooperative societies (15%) continue to be leaders of the sector. The share of foundations is 5.5%, with shares held by non-profit partnerships, autonomous non-profit organisations and associations of legal persons (associations and unions) making 4.5%, about 3% and slightly less than 2% respectively; non-profit organisations of all other legal organisational forms have shares less than 1% of the sector. Public initiative bodies hold the smallest segment of the sector; as of 1 January 2008 it made 168 units, with its percentage share of the sector reaching 0.05%. Stability of such intra-sector distribution pattern is due to that the largest cut in the number of organisations made in small-share segments of the non-profit sector, except for public and religious organisations (movements).

According to the Federal State Statistics Service, the total number of non-profit organisations (other than NPOs created by governmental and municipal authorities)⁵⁵ in the Russian Federation, as between 1 January 2007 and 1 January 2008 dropped from 675.6 thousand down to 655.4 thousand, or by 3%. The reduction of their number was not evenly distributed between non-profit organisations of various legal organisational forms (Fig. 19).

The largest cuts are in the number of farming (peasant) facility associations (by 18.5%, as compared to 1 January 2007), public movements (by 13.9%) and public and religious organisations (movements) (by 11.0%). The number of foundations and associations of legal persons (associations and unions) dwindle by 4.5%. There is growth in the number of territorial self-governing public units (by 5.0%, as compared to 1 January 2007), non-profit partnerships (by 2.7%), consumer cooperative societies (by 2.3%) and autonomous non-profit organisations (by 1.2%). The number of public initiative bodies (of self-initiated activity) and institutions remained unchanged.

Distribution of non-profit organisation groups, in terms of their key legal organisational forms, went through no considerable changes in 2007 (Fig. 20).

Institutions (42%), public and religious organisations (associations) (27%) and consumer cooperative societies (15%) continue to be leaders of the sector. The share of foundations is 5.5%, with shares held by non-profit partnerships, autonomous non-profit organisations and associations of legal persons (associations and unions) making 4.5%, about 3% and slightly less than 2% respectively; non-profit organisations of all other legal organisational forms have shares less than 1% of the sector. Public initiative bodies hold the smallest segment of the sector; as of 1 January 2008 it made 168 units, with its percentage share of the sector reaching 0.05%. Stability of such intra-sector distribution pattern is due to that the largest cut in the number of organisations made in small-share segments of the non-profit sector, except for public and religious organisations (movements).
The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation

Chapter 1.


Current State of Civil Society

Changes in the number of non-profit organisations took place in 2007 in all Federal Districts of the Russian Federation (Fig. 21).

Fig. 20. Distribution of non-profit organisation groups (other than NPOs created by governmental and municipal authorities), as per their principal legal organisational forms, %

Fig. 21. Distribution of non-profit organisation groups (other than NPOs incorporated by governmental and municipal authorities), as per the Federal Districts of the Russian Federation (units)

The least changes in the number of non-profit organisations were reported for Central and Far Eastern Federal Districts (less than 2%), in all other Federal Districts changes made 3.5–5.5%.

Distribution of legal organisational non-profit organisation forms, as per the Federal Districts of the Russian Federation, is shown in Fig. 22.

Analysis of the Federal State Statistics Service data on distribution of existing non-profit organisations, as per their activity lines (see Fig. 23) makes it evident that further improvement of statistical methods, are applicable to Russian non-profit sector, is required. Data prepared by the Federal State Statistics Service basing on the General Economic Activity Types Classifier (OKVED) show that almost 40% of organisations listed in today’s Russian statistical records as non-profit entities, are hardly classifiable as civil society entities for the reason of their actual activities. What is also required is the continuation of elaboration of legal norms applicable to socially useful and charitable activities, so that both existing and intended governmental support to socially useful and charitable activities could be genuinely beneficial to all civil society entities, and not applicable to any organisations holding their non-profit status only formally, but actually engaged in profit business activities.

Regional specifics of distribution between non-profit organisation groups (other than government and municipal authorities) continue to be as they were earlier. More than a half of the total number of foundations, non-profit partnerships and autonomous non-profit organisations are active in Central and North-western federal districts. Southern and Volga federal districts have more than a half of farming (peasant) associations active in Russia. Distribution of non-profit organisation groups, as per their business activity lines, is shown in Fig. 23.

More than 60% of Russian non-profit organisations are active in such spheres as provision of social care, education, science, health care, sports and culture.

Regional analysis of the Federal State Statistics Service data on distribution of existing non-profit organisations, as per their activity lines (see Fig. 23) makes it evident that further improvement of statistical methods, are applicable to Russian non-profit sector, is required. Data prepared by the Federal State Statistics Service basing on the General Economic Activity Types Classifier (OKVED) show that almost 40% of organisations listed in today’s Russian statistical records as non-profit entities, are hardly classifiable as civil society entities for the reason of their actual activities. What is also required is the continuation of elaboration of legal norms applicable to socially useful and charitable activities, so that both existing and intended governmental support to socially useful and charitable activities could be genuinely beneficial to all civil society entities, and not applicable to any organisations holding their non-profit status only formally, but actually engaged in profit business activities.
Chapter 1.
The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation

classified (in accordance with CIUS) as non-profit organisations providing services to households

Statistics Service provided data on incomes and expenses of a group of non-profit organisations

0.5% in 2005 and remained unchanged throughout 2006–2007.

profit sector in Russian Gross Domestic Product made 1.2% in 2002, after which it dropped to

including any governmental or municipal (budgeted) socially important institutions.

...1.2% in 2002, after which it dropped to 1.1% in 2003, 1.0% in 2004, 0.9% in 2005, and 0.8% in 2006. Meanwhile, the share of non-profit sector in Russian economy is possible with the

...as desirable; it is probable that, for this reason, such classification, basic distinctive features of a NPO are provision of non-market services and products to the public and refunding of its expenditures, mainly, out of membership fees, donations, sponsorships and funds and incomes derived from property ownership. The NPO sector is not construed as including any governmental or municipal (budgeted) socially important institutions.

...Assessment of the role and significance of the non-profit sector in Russian economy is possible with the use of the Federal State Statistics Service data published annually over national accounts system. Classification of institutional sectors – Classifier of institutional units per sectors of economy (KIES), which is usable by statistical authorities for the purpose, provides more clear-cut borderlines between non-profit segments and brings organisations included into it closer to the whole set of civil society entities. According to such classification, basic distinctive features of a NPO are provision of non-market services and products to the public and refunding of its expenditures, mainly, out of membership fees, donations, sponsorships and funds and incomes derived from property ownership. The NPO sector is not construed as including any governmental or municipal (budgeted) socially important institutions.

...According to the Federal State Statistics Service data published in 2008, share held by non-profit sector in Russian Gross Domestic Product made 1.2% in 2002, after which it dropped to 0.5% in 2005 and remained unchanged throughout 2006–2007.

...In 2008 upon inquiry from the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, the Federal State Statistics Service provided data on incomes and expenses of a group of non-profit organisations classified (in accordance with CIUS) as non-profit organisations providing services to households...

and other business activities directly involving the principal NPO activity lines could be, along with development of targeted capital stocks and new methods of mass-scale fund raising, a tool usable to strengthen institutional stability of non-profit organisations.

One of the methods to do this is to outline business activities, such as are involving within-
ne socialization, socially useful activities, within legal norms regulating NPO activities and provide tax benefits applicable to revenues received by NPOs from such activities.

Fig. 25. NPOs’ expenses amounts and distribution patterns in 2005–2007, milliard Roubles

Expenses of the reported organisations borne in 2005 and 2007 were virtually equal to their incomes and made, on the average, 99% of the funds received in the respective year. 80% of NPO expenses were the costs of their principal activity lines.

There was a large growth in NPO involvement in provision of social and charitable relief. In 2005–2007, share held by expenses for such activities in total NPO-borne expenses grew from 26.6 up to 32.3%. Of them, expenses for social and charitable relief to individuals, who are citi-
zens of Russia, increased more than in three times: from 4.5 to 14.8% of all NPO expenses.

Expenses for purchase of fixed assets and intangible assets, construction and upgrading of buildings, purchase of securities, contributions payable to authorized capitals and payments of the share due. Share held by such expenses in total NPO-borne expenses raised from 3.5% in 2005 to 5.5% in 2007. In 2005 expenses for purchase of fixed assets and intangible assets made, as per organisation on the average, 35.9 thousand Roubles and grew up to 79.7 thousand Roubles in 2007. Such information confirms certain improvement of how far the organisations are outfitted with the required equipment, since the term “fixed assets and intangible assets” is applicable to, among other things, computers and other office equipment and licensed software. However, it should be mentioned that 97.5 thousand Roubles is not much and is comparable with the price payable for 2–3 average-class computer sets.

Expenses for the main line of activity, relative to current expenses, made up 32.4% of expenses in 2005, 34.8% in 2006, and 31.5% in 2007. Such information confirms certain improvement of the works performed by the organisations. In general, the trend confirmed in the report is continuing and by 2007 expenses for the main line of activity reached 55.7% of expenses in total. A large growth is noted for expenses for contribution to additional capitals of organisations and for compensation of financial losses suffered by the organisations.

Analysis of non-profit sector support programmes

In 2008 there was a large growth reported in funds allocated by a wide range of Russian organisations to support the third sector organisations and charitable projects. Share held by the largest Russian companies in such support constituted 13.8 milliard Roubles in 2008 versus 5.75 milliard Roubles in 2007.37 Governmental grants available on the federal level have been prominent in support of the sector since 2006.

As shown by analysis of business activities conducted by Russian NPOs that applied for govern-
mental grants in 200838, about 15% of revenues made by an “average” NPO were incomes from Russian for-profit companies, 11% came from international and foreign organisations and 24% – from governmental and municipal entities.

The key thing characteristic of development of Russian charities in 2008 was the growth of mass-scale philanthropy along a number of lines: appropriate foundations and NPOs are report-
ing the growing amounts of private donations; volunteering is increasingly active; on-line chari-
ties are gaining impetus. However, opinion polls continue to show far from high rates of trust towards charitable organi-
sations and foundations and low level of understanding of the role played by non-profit organisa-
tions. One could say that the growing interest to philanthropy and increasingly active public chari-
ties are contextually outside the non-profit sector: the prevalent practice is the so-called targeted
aid, and not systemic support of NPOs genuinely efficient in their operation. There is continuation
of the trend discovered in course of reporting results of “2006: Charity Year in Russia” campaign: mass media are paying more and more attention to charities, and journalists are increasingly competent in matters of non-profit activities. Unless all information is available on amounts of charitable donations made in Russia and distribution of the sources of funds coming to the non-
profit sector, it is difficult to estimate total capitalization rates of Russian charities. However, on the basis of indirect rates (declared by leading foundations and NPOs), it can be stated that the lion’s share of funds invested into charitable projects is that of corporate donations, which makes situation in Russia essentially different from practices normal for Western countries, where chari-
ties are funded, predominantly, through private donations made by individuals. The nascent tend-
cency, if not certain yet, drive towards mass-scale philanthropy and certain improvement of how far the organisations by businesses under the global financial crisis give reasons to assume that the situation will change in future: charitable activities will be financially sustained mainly by means of mass donations.

It should be noted that support provided to public initiatives in 2008 came both from Russian businesses and private parties and from foreign grantor organisations.

37 As reported by the Donors’ Forum, M., 2008, for more details visit http://donorsforum.ru/projects/corporate_awards/
results_2008/
38 “Development dynamics and the current state of NPO sector in Russia” analytical survey, ANO “Zadorin’s Sociological
Workshop” (CORDON Group), 2008.
Backed up by economic growth in 2008, there was growth reported in charitable activity of businesses. Large corporations first of all. With Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) standards gaining more and more importance, corporate philanthropy is increasingly important for positive corporate reputation and for relations to be built with all parties concerned, including local communities.

Registration of new corporate foundations (such as Renova Foundation) goes on, and new corporate charitable programmes are coming into existence. A special focus should be made in the attitude of the management of leading companies to getting their personnel involved in charities through development of programmes for private donations from their employees (first of all, this is “They need your help”, the only universal programme of such kind in Russia brought about by the following companies: British American Tobacco Russia, Independent Media Russia, Norma Magazines Publishing House, Procter & Gamble, Alpha Bank JSC, TNK-BP Management JSC, BP Russia, RESO Guarantee and CAF Russia) and projects of corporate volunteering, in close collaboration with NPOs.

Since 2007 socially oriented marketing projects have been growing in activity in Russia. Such marketing is designed to bring together the interests of businesses and those of charitable organisations. In 2008 it became clear than socially oriented marketing gained recognition from the business community, and that, if not yet actualized in marketing practices of any large retail sales company, it has become of interest for such company. Growing sales of products labelled “of social importance” are often purchasing no other products than those, which are “of social importance”.

A novelty for Russian corporate charities is “Charities instead of souvenirs” initiative, which, on the eve of 2008, brought together about 100 companies that sent more than 3 million dollars out of their New-Year gifts corporate budgets for charitable purposes, as decided by their management. Information “wave” raised by success of the initiative retained its impetus throughout 2008; in 2009 new participants are expected to sign in.

More and more successful Russians are choosing participation in philanthropy: in 2008 new private and family foundations were registered, with those established earlier extending the scopes of their activities. Private philanthropy is increasingly professional in its performance (an example of such success is “Foundations School”, CAF project designed in partnership with Donors’ Forum). This provides background for thematic focusing of activities conducted by private donors39, who are looking for their own “identity” and aim to occupy their own niches in the overall Russian charities.

In 2008 relief funds took shape as a separate charitable foundation type; some of them obtained legal status and evolved from spontaneous initiatives intended to raise funds for expensive medical treatment courses into institutionalized philanthropy tools. Unlike the mainstream non-profit organisations, relief funds enjoy greater trust from the public and demonstrating successful raising of mass donated funds. Funds best-known in that segment are: “Podari zhizn” (Let life be your gift), “Russian Relief Fund”, “Children’s Hearts”, “Life Line” and “Pomogi.org” Internet project. Supposedly, such funds will be instrumental in having the non-controlled and non-transparent “targeted aid” fit in properly into the civilized philanthropy system and, hence, in enabling donors to see eventual results attained thanks to their participation.

Local community funds (LCFs) usable as an organisational model for local charities have taken a firm footing in Russia. One might be certain that our country is one of the leaders in development of such philanthropy segment, being ahead of the ex-Socialist Camp. In 2008 it became clear that LCFs tend to act together with authorities in constituent entities of the Russian Federation and locally.

Development of the funds goes “hand in hand” with strengthening positions of local government; in many regions, the authorities have already realized importance of LCFs for social development of their respective territories. From the point of view of more advanced corporations, establishment of LCFs is a tool of institutionalization of charities in regions of their presence, and it is among priorities of their investment policies applicable to development of local communities. In total, about 30 LCFs work in Russia, with 26 of them incorporated to “Local Community Funds Partnership”. It is important to note that funds in operation are building up their resource capital and taking efforts to implement their own priority programmes in parallel with extension of projects designed by regional NPOs. In 2008 LCFs became noticeably tending to establish their regional associations – in Irkutsk Region, for instance.

Targeted Capital Fund (Endowment)40 federal law passed in 2007 proved beneficial for operation of the non-profit sector. Total number of foundations authorized to form any targeted capital grew up to more than 20; some of them have already come to holding capital stocks of their own. The utmost growth in targeted capital stocks is reported in the segment of higher education institutions.

In 2008 the tendency to lower activity of foreign foundations and governmental agencies in Russia, which became evident earlier, continued its development. Partially, this is explainable by restrictions imposed in 2007 upon their activities in Russia; however, to a larger extent, this is due to position held by Western donors. In spite of the growing number of private and corporate foundations and programmes and development of mass scale charities, Western donors are following the so-called exit strategies by gradual reduction of their presence in this country, where its own national charitable institutes are gaining foothold.

The practice of inclusion of Russian donors into the international philanthropic community has been carried forward to 2008. In 2008 foundations operating exclusively outside the Russian Federation or both in Russia and beyond it became active. These are “Russian World” and

---

39. The term implies large donors, whose charitable activities are institutionalized into private and family foundations, named titled programmes, etc.
Chapter 1.

The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation

42 Findings of “Private charities in BRIC countries” study conducted by CAF in 2008.

41 Findings of study performed by Civil Society Study Laboratory at the State University – Higher School of Economics (SU-HSE). Brazil 40% of the population donate funds to charitable organisations and 39% – directly to the organisations in reliance upon Civil Society Development Index methodology of International Alliance for Civil Participation (CIVICUS).

(2008), by way of secondary analysis of data contained in reports for 39 countries prepared by their national research teams.

Similar results were generated by other studies, according to which only 15% of Russians are donating their funds to NPOs, with 40% providing their funds directly to those, who are, according to their belief, in need of such funds. For the sake of comparison, it should be mentioned that in Brazil 40% of the population donate funds to charitable organisations and 38% – directly to the needy parties; in China, the figures are 72 and 32%, and in India – 32 and 26% respectively).

virtually every second Russian (53%) believes that the majority of Russian charitable organisations are trustworthy. Every fourth (24%) is of the opposite opinion. It is probable that such level of trust should not be treated as sufficiently high for charitable organisations. The situation is further complicated by contradictory attitude held by the public towards Russian charitable organisations. Only 17% of the respondents suppose that more than half of charitable organisations are truly disinterested in their activities, and only 3% – that almost all organisations are so disinterested. Furthermore, 37–40% of the respondents believe that more than a half of Russian organisations such as these are engaged in charities for the sake of, predominantly, better popularity, advertisement or just veiling-up their corrupt ties with officials and mafia fides business.

In 2008 along with traditional methods of donations collections (cargo boxes stationed at usually overcrowded places), technologically more advanced methods, such as “mobile purses”, SMS-aided transfers and use of payment terminals (“No-one but me”), credit cards (“Blagov”), and automated cash terminals (“Stretch your wings”), were promoted. It is worth mentioning that growing rates of public involvement into volunteering projects are tied to web-based social networks in certain instances.

2008 was the peak year of getting artistic, literary and sports celebrities involved into charities. Thanks to the efforts of Chulpan Khamatova, a well-known actress and member of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, “Podari Zhizn” Foundation became an undisputed leader among Russian “social brands” in 2008. One can say that being associated with any charitable foundation is growing into some sort of fashion among celebrities, which, of course, promotes more attention paid to the charities by the general public. During 2008 “Vera” Hospice Aid Foundation prepared “Book, for the sake of which...” jointly written by today’s best Russian people of letters for publication. On the whole, it is quite possible that, if such a trend is preserved, we would be able to see in 2009, on the example of that and a number of other projects, whether the contribution of public opinion leaders into development of charities in our country is going to be truly perceptible.

CAF (Charities Aid Foundation) is one of the largest international charitable foundations. Founded in the United Kingdom in 1924, it has a network of representative offices on five continents of the world. CAF is under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

CAF Russia, Russian branch of the foundation, has operated in Moscow since 1993. Every year, CAF Russia carries out about 40 programmes and projects together with the largest Russian and international companies and foundations, with more than 5 million dollars assigned for implementation of social projects.

2008 was the jubilee year for the foundation. During 15 years of its operation in our country, CAF has launched more than 300 initiatives, put forth to address a great deal of social problems ranging from payment of expensive medical treatment courses and support of social projects and promotion of local community funds in 45 regions of Russia. The foundation has allocated more than 44 million dollars for such purposes.

Governmental support programmes

Since 90’s of the past century, accumulation of variegated practical experience in governmental funding of non-governmental non-profit organisations has been taking place in Russia. Such programmes were meeting support from a number of ministries and governmental agencies and some of Russian regions. The situation changed radically after the first all-Russian contest held

Fig. 26. Share of population making money donations, %

43 Representative public opinion polls in the Russian Federation performed by the State University – Higher School of Economics jointly with Russian Public Opinion Research Centre (VCIOM) (2008).

42 Findings of “Private charities in BRIC countries” study conducted by CAF in 2008.
in 2006 among independent non-profit organisations for funding to be received. The contest was oriented to resource centres of the third sector. The contest was a trial step towards practical implementation of governmental policy aimed to support civil society institutes. In 2006 granted funds were subject to distribution through the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation. Since 2007 the federal grant contest (frequently referred to as “Presidential”) became more open in its terms; it also became applicable to all non-governmental organisation activity lines, acquired a highly pronounced social orientation and commissioned new organisational mechanisms. All these serve to advance the federal grant programme forward to a qualitatively new level. One could say that the funding contest has transformed into an integral part of governmental policy applicable to civil society institutes. Looking forward to it in advance, non-profit organisations are pinning serious hopes for support. The number of applications filed in 2008 was three-fold as large as in 2007. A year later, almost 90% of parties awarded grants in 2007, filed their funding applications again. More than one third of them won the contest anew.

It is very important to mention highly versatile activities conducted by NPOs that have submitted their contest applications. The appropriate data (Fig. 27) shows that the social sector and education are becoming priorities for Russian civil society.

The very fact of substantial amounts of funds allotted for NPO purposes out of the Federal budget serves to promote institutionalization and public recognition of non-governmental organisations active in the social sector.

The total sum granted made 1,250,000.0 thousand Roubles, with 2,223 projects implemented throughout the year in 81 entities of the Russian Federation. It was in Chukotka and Yamalo-Nenets autonomous districts only, that none of the projects found any support. The topic of the projects is emphatically social, which reflects governmental views of today’s priorities in public development of Russia. The sums of grants provided and their number, as per individual operators, are shown in Fig. 28.

In spite of short dates specified for the purpose, as much as about 4.5 thousand applications were filed. On the whole, NPO sector demonstrated that it is capable and well prepared to act together with the State, and that it has some ideas, as to how public problems can be tackled, worth considering.

All-Russian contest of social projects was held under Directive passed by the President of the Russian Federation on 30 June 2007 № 367-rp “On provision in 2007 of governmental support to non-profit non-governmental organisations participating in development of civil society institutes”. Distribution of funds granted was maintained by traditional methods, applicable in the developed countries: governmental entities assign holding of a contest to independent non-profit organisations (hereinafter referred to as operator NPOs) that, in their turn, engage experts to identify winners of the contest. Later, operator NPOs are, throughout the year, responsible for administration of grant programmes and interaction with the grantees.

Each of six operators appointed became liable for specific thematic range of competitive projects (Table 3).

Table 3. Thematic specialization of operator NPOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operator NPO</th>
<th>Thematic area of projects to be funded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Social Designing Institute” Autonomous Non-Profit Organisation</td>
<td>Opinion polling and monitoring of the state of civil society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Zhanei” [Knowledge] International Humanitarian Public Foundation</td>
<td>Education, arts, culture and public diplomacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“In Support of Civil Society” Independent Organisation” Non-Profit Partnership</td>
<td>Protection of human rights and freedoms and legal education of the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“National Health League” All-Russian Public Organisation</td>
<td>Propaganda of healthy lifestyle; protection of public health and environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“National Charitable Foundation” All-Russian Public Foundation</td>
<td>Support of and social care for the poor and socially vulnerable groups of citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Governmental Club” Personnel Corps Training Foundation</td>
<td>Youth initiatives; youth movement and organisation projects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The “Presidential Grant” should also be mentioned as a politically and socially important component of governmental support available to the non-governmental sector and as a model scheme to be followed by regional and local authorities.

Nevertheless, success of the formats and potential social effects of such support are dependent on the purposes of appropriate programmes, on whether promotion of civil society development is treated as priority constituent within them, and whether there are any good social opportunities to implement civil initiatives and to participate in making of socially important decisions.

The very fact of substantial amounts of funds allotted for NPO purposes out of the Federal budget serves to promote institutionalization and public recognition of non-governmental organisations active in the social sector.
Chapter 1.
The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation

Fig. 28. Total amount of grants and number of grants provided, as per NPO operators, in 2008

Analysis of projects supported within the “Presidential” programme of grants shows that its effect upon situation prevalent in Russian non-profit sector makes itself felt, mainly, in extension of civil activities, getting the public more involved in social activities, development of mechanisms usable in interaction between society and authorities at various levels, organisational development of NPOs and strengthening of the non-profit organisation community.

The general meaning the “Presidential Grant” holds today is making the “window of opportunities” perceptible for social NPOs. This can be illustrated by non-governmental organisations’ adrenalin rush in business development taking place in course of preparation of any application for the grant, and interplay with the operator for grant implementation purposes.

Apart from this, the “Presidential Grant” is important for a number of organisations as a tool serving to improve their reputation, to build their relations with local authorities and to make more resources available to them. “Knowledge” Foundation, one of the operators of the contest, has originally defined the role of the grant as local community “resources accumulator”. Regional and local authorities are cooperating with “Presidential Grantees” more willingly, interaction between the grantee and authorities takes place, one way or another, virtually in the framework of every project.

The lion’s share of the funds came for projects localized in big cities. Along with this, the project was an essentially new financial source available for socially oriented NPOs (in economically disadvantaged entities of the Russian Federation especially), and it made it possible to procure earmarked support for their activities in small, out-of-the-way townships and neighbourhods. However, the granted funds were not distributed evenly throughout Russia. This drew attention from NPO representatives and served as the principal argument for criticism of the grant mechanism.

Fig. 29. The share of funds in the total grants provided, %

As one of the grantees put figuratively: “The farther away from Moscow, the fewer grants and the lesser each grant available”. This is corroborated by statistical data on distribution of funds granted as per the Federal Districts. To be fair, it should also be mentioned that their average rates are basically dependent on several large all-Russian projects funded via Moscow-based NPOs. In all other respects, the “density” of funding available to European areas of Russia is not much higher than it is to all other regions. Intrinsically, Moscow-based NPOs are more competitive in fairly held contests. It can also be noted that self-rated efficiency of Far Eastern grantees is higher than that of their fellow grantees in other regions. It means that funds allocated to that region produced greater effects of social benefit (Fig. 29 and 30).

Since common practice was encouragement of projects largely traditional in design, their ability to go beyond the usual circle of NPO interactions, the rates of incorporation of new social groups were not high. The programme has many mutually similar, standardized projects. This is especially true in regards to organizing of informational and consultative services for the public (while acting under the project, the grantees are hardly paying any heed to practical experience of any other regions).
The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation

This is a highly probable reason for the multitude of projects developed in the spirit of traditional national patriotic education for the youth in the scope of “Governmental Club” contest in 2007–2008. In the second contest, however, core interest was shifted towards Internet methods and creation of a wide range of sites.

Laden heavily with communicative and organisational responsibilities, the NPOs operators often found conceptual support of the grantees too hard for themselves. Largely focused on successful business carrier-ings-on, the operators were busy, with various degrees of success, organizing a system of conceptual project analysis and mutual informational exchanges between the grantees.

Conflicts of interests arising, from time to time, in course of the contest continue to remain unsettled. There are cases reported when organisations provided with applied-for grants are unable to effect the declared project with proper quality. Many grantees are referring to legally under-regulated situation they have found themselves in through operation of the granted funds.

Although the organisations’ acting under the projects made no touch upon the general public, and although the contest had a targeted issue, it certainly has the civil activation idea, indirectly built-in. Initially, however, development of the third sector and that of civil society were not genuinely in the focus of the contest. The emphasis was shifted towards support of initiatives put forward by individual organisations and groups on matters important for the State. With the practiced approach being such as this, it is unwise to expect any activation of civil participation.

Furthermore, for a number of reasons (political reasons, as well) the potential of civil activity in Russia of today is not large. Such activity is reactive by its nature and arises as responses to problems immediately concerning the active people. Worldwide, the generally prevalent tendencies are the same. “Presidential Grants” have not transformed into a practical mechanism for social change either.

ANO “Vozrozhdenie” [Revival] Social Designing Centre

“Local communities of Pakov oblast small towns: social structure, life standards and development prospects” comprehensive study is a rare attempt ever made by NPOs to assess results of local government reform initiated in 2003 on example of their own region. How far has it succeeded to provide momentum to development of small towns? This was the focal point for specialists of “Revival” Centre based in Pakov.

The emphasis was made on the local community and its specific life style, which made it possible to shape “zemstvo” (local council) traditions in 19th century. The studies were carried out in 6 towns of Pskov oblast. The following hypothesis found its proof: if performed in its implementable way in small towns, local government reform is unable to produce desired socio-economic effects or to make the society more active; actually, it is in need of a major adjustment.

Such findings are important not only for the purposes of analysis on the Federal level, but also for the general public, experts and NPOs. As believed by the researchers, it is necessary to include the state of affairs in local governmental reform into the agenda to be followed by The Federal authorities until the reform is launched in its full scope in 2009.

Effects produced by the grant programme upon the non-governmental sector are visible locally only. Systemic changes (if any) in it are shaped, in all probability, by other public-political and socio-economic processes.

However, there are many instances of how a number of projects were conducive, without prejudice to handling of the principal tasks, to development of the third sector, as well. Since many of 2007 contest grantees were also winners of 2008 contest, their contribution into strengthening of the sector will, as expected, grow.

The contest laid down the basis for development of the non-profit sector as such; however, no specific goals of public activation or public motivation were stated clearly. Conceptually, the contest is more closely related to the ideas of governmental paternalism.

Chapter 1. Current State of Civil Society

Fig. 30. Correlation among average grant rates, as per regions (Federal Districts) and throughout Russia, %

The Social Designing Institute should be mentioned specially as an example of innovative programme. It enabled NPOs to try themselves in conducting research works and made that topic a priority within scientific and practical studies of civil society; it also made a number of essentially important intellectual products. In the pool of “Governmental Club” Personnel Corps Training Foundation, many human development projects were sustained. In spite of high urgency of such projects, practical experience showed that it is required for NPOs to develop special professional skills for successful implementation of the projects.

Despite the unprecedented scales of governmental support available to non-governmental non-profit organisations, the total amount of funding, as per constituent entities of the Russian Federation, is a relatively small “appendix” to the total earnings received by organisations of that circle. Although, for each individual grantee, the amount of grant provided is a substantial share of its incomes (evaluation of the share held by “Presidential Grant” in grantees’ revenues of 2008 can be made later; however, it has already become obvious that it approximates 80% of grantees’ incomes of 2006; more than 40% of grantees had no financial incomes at all in 2006).

Of course, the first contest was of pilot nature both for the operators and for the grantees, and provided grounds for making “the final touch” in testing and fine-tuning of “Presidential Grants” mechanism.

“Yuryatin” Foundation (Perm) “Vsevolodo-Vilva on the crossroads of Russian culture” project

Vsevolodo-Vilva township (Alexandrovsky region, Perm kray) is a place associated with a number of outstanding Russians; the Vsevolozhsky princes, Savva Morozov, industrialist and patron of arts, Boris Zbarskis, biochemist, Anton Chekhov and Boris Pasternak, writers. Regrettfully, in spite of that wealth of cultural and historical heritage, the township is hardly different, in any way, from other economically depressive areas.

The task “Yuryatin” Public Culture Foundation has set up for itself is to draw public attention to Vsevolodo-Vilva township as a unique historical and cultural territory in Russia, to initiate its use for the purposes of tourism and to promote renovations. Publication of “Vsevolodo-Vilva on the crossroads of Russian culture” book is a part of “Boris Pasternak’s Perm Period”, a major ongoing project launched by the Foundation.

The publication is one of the initiatives supported within “Presidential Grant” programme of 2007-2008 for Perm kray. Circulation of the book is 1 thousand copies, and its first readers proved to be residents of the township and Alexandrovsky region, where about half of the circulation is intended to be distributed. Electronic version of the publication appeared at “Pasternak’s House” site in 2008. “Yuryatin” Foundation considers the book as an important tool for improvement of local community’s self-awareness and self-identification.

In spite of the no-small importance of grantees’ becoming professional in administration and business, their selection of topics for designing of projects was oriented rather to abstract “governmental demand” (or their own understanding of it) than to actual needs of the focus groups.
Chapter 1.

With NPOs continuing to be weak, their projects are mainly aimed at addressing intra-organisational problems and supporting their basis, daily operation. Quite often the available funds are used to hold additional events conspicuous socially, but not of critical significance for the target groups. Furthermore, in terms of their essential meaning and concept, a number of grants are formatted for acting under governmental orders, rather than for innovative project implementation.

Such approach makes it possible to assist in addressing private public problems and to demonstrate new social models. However, the short-term nature of such projects and their relatively small-amount funding are preclusive of any wide-scope realization of any new mechanisms to public practices and making them applicable by governmental and municipal budget-supported organisations and institutions (law-enforcing, educational, cultural and social) conservative in their attitude.

Historically, it is the first grant programme that big in its scope to be carried out in Russia. It is within the reason that there are many critical remarks voiced against both implementation process and attained results. The need in mechanisms applicable to analysis and adjustments of organisational and technological schemes looks obvious. Nevertheless, the majority of the grantees have positive opinions of the grant programme.

Improvement of the grant programme and more transparency in selection of applicants (with amounts of funds available remaining as they are) can, in future, make the contest an efficient tool for the system of incentives for innovative civil initiative and actions and can accelerate shaping of an efficient Russian non-profit sector adequate to a wide range of public needs.

The grantors and onlookers are highly appreciative of the factual institutionalization of grants provided to non-governmental non-profit organisations from budget sources, effects produced by 2007/08 Grant Programme upon development of Russian third sector and upon formation of civil society, social effects produced and results attained out of implementation of the funded projects. Along with it, it is noted that, unless there is a tangible adjustment of principles and mechanisms applied, the programme will lose its social innovative and investment potential and will fail to grow into an efficient tool of the federal authorities’ influence upon socio-economic development maintainable through interaction with non-governmental non-profit organisations. Some of highly important public activities found no support at all. Funds allocated for environmental projects are not more than 2% of the total funding provided.

Important tasks to be tackled by upcoming contests cover enhancement of project quality standards, to promote greater trust of the public towards operator NPOs and acts of the Federal authorities, to make the contest more open and to have a wider circle of participants (including provincial ones) engaged in it.

The backbone of governmental policy in relation to the non-profit sector and, among other things, to grant programmes should be a more active role to be played by the public and independent groups in addressing public problems, instead of purely "automated" shifting the burden of responsibilities from budget-supported organisations and institutions onto non-governmental ones. Systemic changes in NPO sector will be not only describable by the ability of "efficiently appropriate" budget funding, but also to use public resources available.

Improvement of the efficiency of grant programmes funded from budget sources will be hindered by the absence of any well-designed governmental concept or programme for non-profit sector development and civil society strengthening. Workout of such programme is a subject of wide-scope discussion (dialogue) between authorities and civil associations. The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation can be the centre or mediator for such a dialogue.

Chapter 2.

Actual Agenda
Chapter 2. Actual Agenda

The purposes and tasks of development, as well as problems and issues focused upon by the civil society are directly dependent on events, of large and small scales, taking place in the country and abroad.

In 2008 the principal events important in their effects for the entire context of the topical agenda for Russian civil society were domestic Presidential elections, military and political conflict in Trans-Caucasus and the global financial and economic crisis.

Elections of the President of the Russian Federation held on 2 March 2008 drew attention of the public and that of the international experts. Established upon initiative of civil society institutes, the public control system provided openness and adherence to democratic standards at the elections. Active participation of civil society institutes in the elective cycle made it possible to provide stability and continuity in the scope of power succession. It is highly significant that Dmitry Medvedev made the first promulgation of the essential part of his elective political programme at the Second All-Russian Civil Forum on 22 January 2008. Active, truly interested dialogue with parties representing the civil society upon the most pending issues of national development has become normal for operation of the top level of governmental authorities, and matters of civil society development continue to be among priorities for higher-rank governmental officials of the country.

The Trans-Caucasian war was a serious threat to international stability. The attack of Georgian troops upon South Ossetia backed up with artillery, tanks and volley fire systems led to many casualties among the civilians; tens of thousands of South Ossetians were forced to seek refuge in Russia, while Georgians living in enclave villages located in South Ossetia sought shelter in Georgia. With specifics of the region as they are, high-rate risks arose for destabilization of the situation throughout the Caucasus.

Forced to interfere, Russia put an end to escalation of the conflict, ensured safety in the region and made it possible for refugees to come back. Nevertheless, the problem did not cease to be acute for Georgian refugees by the end of 2008. Thousands of families are unable to return to South Ossetia and Abkhazia; many of them have no place to come back to and they fix their homes upon Russian territory. This is a key-importance problem focused upon by Russian public in the efforts to eliminate consequences of the conflict.

The peace-enforcement operation received a wide-scope support in Russian society. Political parties, mass media as well as public and religious organisations condemned mur- derers of South Ossetian civilians and Russian peacemakers by Georgian military forces. The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation was one of such organisations. Its members were representing it in two newly established public committees: one for investigation of crimes against civilian population and another for provision of aid to service people, killed or injured in the conflict, and members of their families. Here, humanitarian actions were of special importance. Internet site set up for the purpose (http://www.osetinfo.ru) helped people to get information about their relatives and friends, about fatal casualties and people wounded and missing because of the conflict. The site shared important information about working with the refugees.

Rallies, donated funds raising, proclamations of parties and public organisations, numerous letters and publications in mass media and Internet and refugee relief – all these have been the expression of support provided by the civil society to endeavours made by the Russian Federation to protect people of South Ossetia and Russian peacemakers.

In the first days of the conflict, rallies were held in many regions of Russia, where representa- tives of a wide range of political parties and social groups were unanimous in voicing of their solidarity with people of South Ossetia.
The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation

Informational materials of plenary meeting held by the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation on the following matter:

the presence of Russian mass media in the global informational space. The important role

with utmost clarity, the necessity of working actively together with foreign journalists and of

military service.

complex; military patriotic education of young people and making them duly prepared for mili

tary policy aspects; arrangement of public discussions; national security studies and public

Non-profit associations can and should include: scientific and public expertise of various mili

The participation sphere for civil initiatives and

rising of top-important military and political decisions, as well as national military organisation

military units and authorities, but also to the system of developing, taking and implement

its coercive component. Civil (public) control was applied not only to the armed forces and

security taking into account various risks and threats arising in the world of today, are impossible

important for Russian public. Such problems, just like matters involving maintaining of national

insufficient supply of the troops with up-to-date means of communication, etc.) was no less im

Discussion of problems, which had become visible painfully in course of those events, and

With all this in mind, it was important for the public to prevent any anti-Georgian outbreaks, whether in our country or within interactions with partner organisations in newly established Trans-Caucasian states. During the first days of the conflict, public organisations in various re-

Russia, in Volga Region and in the Urals, as result of which local law-enforcement authorities

Such discussions encouraged activity of a number of municipalities and central regions of

regions, including those located far away from Caucasus, began to raise the question of taking due care to suppress growth in inter-ethnic tensions.

sensitive sphere as ensuring of tolerance, inter-ethnic concord and respect for other cultures, traditions and spiritual heritage.

On 13 August public worships were held in all Orthodox churches of Nizhny Novgorod in memory of all people killed. The memorial services were also held in all Old Believer churches. Protestants of Nizhny Novgorod – Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists and Pentecostals – could not ignore the South Ossetian tragedy either. Prayers were offered for peace and restoration of health in all people injured, with Protestants pointed out as present in South Ossetia as well; it was mentioned that humanitarian aid was sent from Protestants to South Ossetia, and condemnations of Saakashvili regime were outspoken. Moslem leaders of Nizhny Novgorod were also sharply critical of Georgian authorities.

Discussion of problems, which had become visible painfully in course of those events, and

ensuring of tolerance, inter-ethnic concord and respect for other cultures, traditions and spiritual heritage.

On 13 August public worships were held in all Orthodox churches of Nizhny Novgorod in memory of all people killed. The memorial services were also held in all Old Believer churches. Protestants of Nizhny Novgorod – Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists and Pentecostals – could not ignore the South Ossetian tragedy either. Prayers were offered for peace and restoration of health in all people injured, with Protestants pointed out as present in South Ossetia as well; it was mentioned that humanitarian aid was sent from Protestants to South Ossetia, and condemnations of Saakashvili regime were outspoken. Moslem leaders of Nizhny Novgorod were also sharply critical of Georgian authorities.

A new step forward was made within the system of collaboration between the society and its coercive component. Civil (public) control was applied not only to the armed forces and military units and authorities, but also to the system of developing, taking and implement-

ing of top-important military and political decisions, as well as national military organisation system on the whole, maintaining of its lawfulness and compliance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the Federal laws. The participation sphere for civil initiatives and non-profit associations can and should include: scientific and public expertise of various mili-
tary policy aspects; arrangement of public discussions; national security studies and public discussions of their findings; provision of legal and social protection for service people and persons dismissed from military service and members of their families; making military serv-

ice safer; promotion of democratic institutes in military communities; patronage over military units (worships); tackling of pending problems encountered by the military defence industrial complex; military patriotic education of young people and making them duly prepared for mili-
tary service.

The August events, as highlighted by the majority of foreign mass media, demonstrated, with utmost clarity, the necessity of working actively together with foreign journalists and of

of civil society institutes in making unbiased information known to foreign public, not always sufficiently informed to make adequate assessment of the way Russia acts, showed itself off with the same lucidity.

The South Caucasian conflict made a clear demonstration of the necessity for active rep-

resentation of Russian civil society on the international arena – that is, within global enti-
ties and institutes. Public diplomacy and preparedness of Russian civil society to take part

in handling foreign political tasks should be in the forefront. By way of public diplomacy projects, it is required to provide assistance in shaping of civil society institutes in newly established Trans-Caucasian states, in building and maintaining of dialogue with the public of such states and Georgia, and in building of public-governmental partnership in imple-

mentation of humanitarian and cultural purposes against the forcibly ruptured or “frozen up” relations. More active efforts of Russian civil community are needed in standing up for Russian positions before international institutes and in counteracting biased attitude and double standards.

2008 will, no doubt, be referred to in the future history textbooks as the global financial crisis year. Initially emerged in the USA, it has impacted the whole entirety of international financial system and entailed recession in the leading economies, decrease in demands and prices for oil, metals and other top-important articles of Russian exports. The global collapse of stock markets did not leave Russia unaffected, and currency resources flowing out of it have grown in volumes. The dwindling rates of economic growth and lesser budget incomes entail escalation of inflation, surging prices and unemployment rates. Such problems and their social outcomes require active participation of civil society institutes in their management.

46 Informational materials of plenary meeting held by the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation on the following matter:

"On a more important role of the society in addressing problems" (Moscow, 26 September 2008). M., 2008.
The financial crisis has put emphasis on whether it is possible at all to implement purposes of the Concept for Long-Term Development of the Russian Federation for the period until 2020 approved in summer 2008. In the first half of 2008, the Public Chamber initiated and became one of the principal sites for extensive public discussion of the key provisions of the Concept.

In course of discussions, the necessity of a more careful designing of development mechanisms, taking into account all changes, such as may take place in the global economic situation, was stressed out more than once. Situation that took place by the end of the year, demonstrates it with all clarity that, with strategic targets of Russian socio-economic development immutable, the following continues to be more than just topical: public-governmental partnership and dialogue in designing of socially important decisions and economic policy.

The global financial crisis produces serious influence upon all civil society. In view of this, it has become important today to organize an extensive and meaningful public discussion of how the State, jointly with the civil society, can minimize adverse effects of the crisis upon the public.

Today, economy provides formats for job market and for the state of productive forces in Russia; new positioning for the role played by trade unions in Russian public life; new meaning for the issues of working people’s rights protection; it is also making pressures for creation of tools usable to settle labour disputes. All such matters should be continuously kept in focus by institutes of Russian civil society. In a number of backbone sectors, labour relations were on the verge of conflict. As reported by public organisations, more than a thousand strikes were held in Russian industrial enterprises within a year; these were the strikes never mentioned in any of the official statistical records due to specifics of Russian laws. For instance, strike held by electric train drivers in Moscow was not acknowledged as a lawful strike by court. At the same time, strikes held by workers in Vsevolzhsk forced directors of “Ford” Automobile Plant to find compromise with the workers.

Starting with November motor vehicle owners’ protest actions were held in Russia against the intended increase of customs duties payable for foreign origin vehicles and spare parts for these vehicles. Civil support demanded more effective state control of domestic automobile industry and the number of automobile industry centres with a help of the “Yedinyaya Rossiya” [United Russia] political party and Independent Russian Trade Unions’ Federation47.

Public protests were provoked by growing prices, too: a wave of protests against high prices for petrol swept through, virtually, all over Russia in summer and autumn of 2008. Russian government bound the anti-monopoly service to make thorough investigations over business of fuel companies profiting fatly on the fuel problem. As result of this, the prices were considerably adjusted in October-November, with petrol going cheaper from one and a half to two Roubles, for petrol swept through, virtually, all over Russia in summer and autumn of 2008. Russian government bound the anti-monopoly service to make thorough investigations over business of fuel companies profiting fatly on the fuel problem. As result of this, the prices were considerably adjusted in October-November, with petrol going cheaper from one and a half to two Roubles, comparing to summer prices.

Held throughout 2008 locally, those and other actions similar to them showed up: people were inclined to be active in defence of their own rights – property rights, in the first place. These are violations of rights held by large groups of people, such as employees, property owners or persons in need of governmental support, which are leading to strikes, picketing and public mobilizations.

One of the most topical issues of 2008 was anti-corruption struggle many times declared indispensable from the top rostrums. In course of numerous public discussions, representatives of public organisations admitted that “corruption practiced in Russia is a system of social ties, rather than an offence”. Not only the governmental, but also the public system is pierced with corrupt relations. In late 2008, the State Duma was considering a package of anti-corruption laws, which are hardly possible to implement without broad support from the public.
Chapter 2.

The Third World. By Alexander Kagan, Moscow

Active discussion of the migration theme started in the situation of financial crisis: it was claimed that migrants were “taking jobs away from Russian citizens”. It was not until they took much care to give explanations of the situation that governmental officials finally proved: the actual state of affairs is not the way the radicals are trying to present it to the public, and migrants find employment where Russians usually do not want to work at all.

On the whole, the migration issue is the very background, which has revealed a serious social problem: a new generation is coming to public and political life. This is the generation of Russians born in late 1980’s – early 1990’s, whose childhood was spent in the years of a severe economic crisis and a change of the prevalent world outlooks, and who have no firm ethical views or sense of solidarity with the State to support themselves with. Grown up in the years of all-out breaking-up of the then education system and domination of TV-broadcast “anti-examples”, that numerous generation is easy to catch up extremist appeals and to unite themselves together under radical slogans. Working with young people is the top-important task for the nearest years to come, and its tackling should be accompanied with greater opportunities for social self-actualization of those, who have not been fortunate to be properly cared for by the society and by their own families, who have no profession adequate to today’s economy and no jobs properly fit for them, enabling to feel needed by and useful for Russia.

This is why more and more organisations and public personalities were speaking in 2008 about spiritual and moral national revival, about responsibility of the state for informational policy maintained on TV, for designing of a family and children support system, for promotion of desire to have healthy life style and to work honestly and to take all care to pre-

serve and further develop the historical heritage. To a large extent, events in the Family Year proclaimed in Russia in 2008 were conducive to it.

On the level of regions and municipal entities, new methods of incentives for parents having many children and durable married unions were launched. A special role is played here by mass media. And, although the bill on a ban to make any references of the ethnic origin of criminals and suspects was declined by the State Duma under the pretext of defence of freedom of speech, that circumstance does not exempt Russian mass media from professional responsibility for the contents of their publications.

Presently, there are two principal mass media groups in Russia: the so-called commercial media enterprises oriented to making of profits, and governmental information media, whose principal purpose is provision of governmental influence upon public opinion and public behaviour stereotypes. Along with these, there is the third group – that is, mass media positioning themselves as public institute defending public interests against authorities and the capital; however, their share in the total scope of mass media is not too big.

To put it as simple as possible, the first group is dependent, predominantly, on the interests of their audience and advertisers; the second one – on the governmental position, and the third – on financial and other opportunities available to civil society.

As to the first group, it has, according to studies conducted in the last ten years, favourable chances for development. The advertisement market is growing at fast pace, with the mass audience, unpretentious from the viewpoint of tastes and demands, happily consuming available contents of inferior quality. As stated in report of the Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications titled “Russian market of printed periodicals”, “in 2007 Russian market of printed mass media demonstrated good development dynamics and qualitative changes evidencing further transformation of national newspaper and magazine industry into an efficient line of business, which has been crucially promoted by the generally favourable economic situation in the Russian Federation. There was a growth in investments to mass media, capitalization of media companies and their incomes derived from advertisement and sales of the pressruns”.

It is stated in the same document: “Russian market of periodicals is demonstrating quite a number of positive changes. The publishers are switching over, on a mass scale, to new business models, technologies and formats, making radical updating of their editing practices and not only radical revising of their marketing policies, since they are aware that, unless all these are done, it is not possible at all to get the traditional publishing business properly adapted to new digital media environment, to build an efficient system of relations with the readers and advertisement clients or to make adequate positioning for themselves against TV, radio, Internet and the sweepingly growing “new media”; all this is just the way enabling the leading Russian publishing houses (in spite of that many of them have had a decrease in the total audience per publication issue) not only to retain, but also to successfully increase their financial and advertisement rates”.

Similar processes are going on in commercial TV and radio media. However, the commercialisation of mass media has not only pushed many of them beyond any compliance with their intended informational purposes, but also made them unable to carry on their cultural, educational and other responsibilities. Seeking to meet their audience’s demands (interpreted in their own way), for-profit mass media have confined themselves to highlighting of household issues, propaganda of consumerist lifestyle and provision of amusements. Understood this way, the system of mass audience’s informa-

49 Due to favourable economic climate and commercially attractive investments to, virtually, any media assets, investment activities in Russian mass-media market in 2008 remained high. As believed by experts, participants of that market, by way of mergers and takeovers mainly, exceeded rates attained in 2007 and invested not less than 95-96 milliard Rubles, against 55-60 milliard Rubles invested in 2006.
The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation

Chapter 2.

The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation


50 Quite often civil society is referred to in the context of news highlighting activities conducted by the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation. As to other newsmakers, they are involving charities predominantly, such as: inauguration of a public charity foundation, dispatch of humanitarian aid, arranging of a free museum visit for boarding school children, etc.


ternal needs is too narrow for any civil society problems to fit in. This is why commercially oriented mass media are showing interest in such problems in so far only, as it is required to draw and retain attention from mass audience – and, hence, to earn more incomes from advertisements.

Moreover, civil society performs as a poor newsmaker, such as may be of interest to profit mass media and their audience50.

To characterize development dynamics of governmental and pro-governmental mass media, it can be stated that, presently, foodstuffs of regional and up to 80% of municipal Russian newspapers are governmental and municipal authorities, and this provides its inevitable effect upon editing policies of such publications and upon their independence, since all of them, in one way or another, are subsidized from regional and local budgets.

In Moscow budget of 2008, for instance, 4.8 milliard rubles was intended for the current maintenance of the city’s TV and 697 million rubles – for the city’s printed periodicals. Mass media funding budget of Republic of Tatarstan for 2008 contained 3.4 milliard rubles, including 630 million Rubles planned for printed periodicals. 1 milliard Rubles was allocated for mass media support in the budget of Republic of Bashkortostan for 2008. As to amounts of governmental funding available to the Federal mass media, they are open to much speculation, because (along with direct funding stated in relevant budget lines) there are hundreds of ways of indirect funding (such as grants, projects, contests, etc.) applicable to keep mass media under control. In any case, it deals with tens of millions of Rubles.

For a support like this, mass media will be only happy to place any materials serving the interests and expressing the views of the authorities, with civil society issues interesting governmental mass media in so far only, as the President or the Prime Minister make any references to them.

Throughout the year, discussions were continuing on the significance and the role of mass media in Russia. In spring, a number of international organisations published their data about Russia: foreign experts included our country into the group of ten states, where freedom of mass media is under heavy pressure. According to their opinion, Russia took 144th rating position out of 169. In October, new ratings were published, where Russia occupied 144th position among 173 countries surveyed51. It is noticeable that Russian citizens are, on the whole, in agreement with such estimations. Phone opinion polling performed in Voronezh in the middle of the year showed that respondents’ treatment of mass media freedom was quite optimistic (26%), it exists, to a certain extent, in Russia as well (16%), but in Voronezh there still was a long way to get it (merely 8%).

For a number of public organisations and for Committee of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation for Communications, Information Policy and Freedom of Speech in Mass Media, it provided motivation for making their own “measuring” of public opinions and for deliberation of specific approaches applicable to improvement of the state of affairs in that sphere. A wide panel of expert surveys set themselves developing “Speech Freedom Index in Russia”. An important proposal was made: to assess actual performance of regional authorities and governments with account taken of the state of mass media, their access to information sources and participation in discussions of acute social problems.

Such protests were joined by the members of the Russian Academy of Sciences, who were demanding cancellation of the intended broadcasting of a motion picture about L. Landau, Nobel Prize winner, where intimate details of the physicist’s private life were scavenged on. However, management of the governmental TV channel chose to ignore public demands. Widely announced, the movie was shown in the scheduled time on the Federal Channel One.

For Russia of 2008, this continued to be more than just topical. Throughout the year, individual constitutional entities of the Russian Federation were mentioned in newssheets not because they had attained economic or social success, but because they were persecuting journalists for informational materials about existing problems. In March, Deputies of the People’s Assembly of Ingushetia published an appeal to heads of both chambers of the Federal Parliament, Director of the Federal Security Service, Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation and head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation [Home Office], where they were pleading REN TV channel guilty of “biased highlighting of events in the Republic” and demanding ban on entry to Ingushetia for journalists of the TV channel. It is known that later, the editor of an opposition web site was killed. In October, the authorities of the President of Ingushetia were stopped before the term expiration.

However, both reading and TV audiences in Russia have got quite a number of reasons to feel dissatisfied with mass media by 2008. The motto “I never watch TV” had its first voicing and met an appreciative welcome.

Even more indignation was caused over continuous exploitation of violence and sex themes. A number of well-known public figures were acting against informational policy such as this.

A heated public debate arose around “2×2” private TV channel specializing on demonstration of cartoons containing, in the opinion of a number of religious and public organisations, propaganda of sex and violence and offensive for religious feelings. On the one hand, the callers for a ban upon “2×2” broadcasting operation were religious persons, specialists in matters of mass media, parents’ associations and ordinary TV audience members. On the other hand, actions in support of the TV channel, including street-held picketing, were also accompanied with opinions voiced by a number of influential public associations in its defence. The channel is still alive, but its broadcasting policies have undergone noticeable changes.

As reported by heads of the federal ministries responsible for regulation of relations in that sphere, about 2/3 of all appeals coming from individuals in 2007–2008 contained demands “to stop no-limits practice” of TV broadcasts.

All those complicated and intrinsically contradictory processes were evolving in parallel with continuation (both in our country and worldwide) of active Internet development. By the end of 2008, the number of World Wide Web users in Russia exceeded 40 million individuals. As expected, more than 40% of the population will be linked to Internet in four years. Civil activity is moving into the virtual space, as well: with TV unable to meet public interest in news and educational programmes, Internet set of experts and opinion survey facilities are generating new content resources, which public organisations, ethno-cultural societies and scientific and other corporate unions operating there. However, the extremists find their way there, too. All processes listed above are pressed into greater importance by the necessity for the development of new approaches to civil control and monitoring of media space.

In 2008 Russian civil society demonstrated its ability to respond to various socially conspicuous events in active and consolidated way. The public attention was focused on individual life careers and problems, especially when human rights protection was involved. Among other things, dozens of materials were published in defence of Antonina Martynova, resident of Vologda oblast, charged with an attempt of murder of her own minor-age daughter; Svetlana Bakhmina, YUKOS lawyer, serving her criminal sentence term; Vasily Alexanian, YUKOS Vice President, also serving his term and suffering a number of life-threatening diseases. Public attention was also drawn to situation around region hospital in Tarusa, Kaluga oblast, where local physicians and sponsors set up Cardiac Therapy Department, which provoked a pretty unsound
response from medical top brass of the region. Administrative pressing with use of criminal proceeding threats against head doctor of the clinic did not cease, until loud-spoken public protests and highlighting in news block broadcast of the federal TV channels.

At the same time, initiatives not supported with extensive coverage in the press, such as are intended for use of civil activity resources for cardinal improvement of national penitentiary system, continue to be waiting for their putting into practice. As specified in the Federal law of 10 June 2006 № 76-FЗ "On public control of human rights ensuring in forced custody facilities and on assistance to persons, who are in forced custody facilities"\(^{52}\), supervisory committees were established in 2008 to stand for the rights of citizens independently from governmental agency subordination to any such forced custody facility.

Chapter 3.

Principal Tendencies in Development of Civil Society

- Tendency 1. Growing activity and influence of the state in various areas of civil society
- Tendency 2. Promotion of dialogue between the state and civil society institutes in the legislative process
- Tendency 3. Comprehensive promotion of charities
- Tendency 4. Growing personal activities of citizens in public life
- Tendency 5. Development of NPO professionalism combined with decrease of their total number

\(^{52}\) Collection of laws of the Russian Federation (СЗ РФ), 16 June 2008 № 24, art. 3789.
Chapter 3. Principal Tendencies in Development of Civil Society

To reveal the principal trends, experts estimation methods were used, with an extensive professional and public discussion in progress. Upon due consideration of thematic elaborations, discussion of conclusions drawn and voting, when the value of each vote is dependent on the level of knowledge and specialization of the voting expert, it was defined that the following is characteristic of civil society development:

- intensified governmental activity and influence in different sectors of civil society;
- development of dialogue between the State and civil society institutes in legislative process;
- systemic development of charities;
- intensified personal activity of citizens in public life;
- increasing professionalism of NPOs with their total number becoming less.

This is not an exhaustive description of tendencies characteristic for today’s civil society development vector. Reasons for classification of the afore-listed trends as the “principal” ones are duration, power and universality of their manifestation in various elements of civil society system. Furthermore, as expected by experts, such tendencies will be dominant in the next few years.

Interest towards civil society and towards its individual components is presently displayed by a wide range of social circles (authorities, businesses, mass media, scientific and expert communities and non-profit public organisations). All of them produce considerable (and sometimes just opposite) impact upon development of civil society and its individual elements. Scientifically and practically, the term “civil society” has many meanings. As result, the described trends found their shaping in complicated conditions, and there are examples proving both the tendency itself and exceptions from the rule.

Major part of the trends specified can be classified as positive and promoting development of civil society; their retention and continuation will be dependent both on activities of civil organisations and on position held by other parties concerned and their proper interplay.

Tendency 1. Growing activity and influence of the State in various areas of civil society

During the first civil forum of 2001, attitude of the State towards civil society started to change. At that very time, irregular and almost zero-result contacts between representatives of non-profit organisations and officials evolved into acting together; there was a change in the essential meaning of such cooperation and in the number of officials therein involved.

Today, there are hardly any matters pertaining to civil society (local government, mass media, education, culture, etc.) left beyond governmental attention.

In the first years of 21st century, the role of the State in the life of civil society found its expression in close studying of the latter. Therefore, the most typical reflection of governmental position held in relations with civil society was the organisation of various expert councils at the ministries and governmental bodies, tripartite forums and contests, social and cultural projects. Conventionally equal in status, such formats of interacting continue to exist; however, they are not formative for today’s tendency any longer; rather, they remain to constitute formal mechanism upholding interplay between the State and civil society.

Today the principal goal of governmental policy in relations with civil society deals with an attempt to impose control upon activities conducted by non-governmental institutes. Such policy is expressed in legislative changes taking place from time to time, in establishment and support of bodies acting as true representatives of civil society’s interests, in subjecting mass media to censorship and in selection of social priorities.

Legislation applicable to non-profit and public organisations has been changed pretty often, with such changes effected mainly in the recent years. The purpose of the reforms was to set control upon NPO activities; this is why the regulation affected, first and foremost,
such responsibilities as registration and reporting system of non-governmental organisations. However, implementation of legislative innovations encountered a number of obstacles, including shortage of officials available and their inadequate training in working with a large number of NPOs, as well as an poorly conceived and improperly integrated information component. This is why results of the reform proved controversial. On the one hand, there was, at last, a success in attempts at exact identification of the number of NPOs in Russia and in the closure of organisations existing formally only. On the other hand, it was difficult for many small-scale organisations to submit their reports or to introduce amendments to their incorporation documents, as and when required. Another important element of legislative changes was aimed at donorship organisations, foreign ones in the first place. The necessity to make up donor lists combined with non-transparency of procedures applicable and control of NPOs receiving foreign funds (in the regions especially) will not lead to a significant cut of foreign funding allowed, but to deterioration of international community’s attitude towards Russia.

On 16 October 2006 Mintimer Shaymiev, the President of Tatarstan, as he was delivering the speech at “Society – authorities – businesses: joining efforts together in promotion of charitable activities” forum held in the framework of the Charities Year, declared 2007 as Charities Year in Tatarstan. This initiated development and implementation of long-term charities policy applicable in the Republic and aimed at promotion of charities system.

Results produced by governmental approach to charities in Tatarstan are: Republican Council for Charitable Activities, headed by the President of the Republic, formally established and actively operated; about 100 councils at the municipal authorities in the Republic. Upon initiative and support from such Council, in the city of Naberezhnye Chelny alone, more than 22 thousand city-based businesses and private businesspeople took part in a charitable marathon in 2007, with the declared amount of donations exceeding 219 million Roubles.

The State has played a considerably more active role in development of local government. In the structural formation of local authorities, since the very beginning of the reform, regional authorities have been continuously making pressure in favour of a tighter accountability of executive municipal authorities. Results of such pressure are, among other things, inclusion of a number of non-grata municipal heads or low-rate interest felt by the public to participation in the formation of such local authorities.

Furthermore, more powerful position held by the State in relation to civil society reveals itself in greater amounts of governmental funds available for social and public purposes. Although, on the whole, this can be treated as a good thing evidencing governmental appreciation of the importance of such goals, methods used in distribution of such funds (to non-profit organisations especially) are still far from being certain. Such practice was applicable regionally until the first grant contests held on the federal level. Local authorities are actively effecting the practice of municipal heads or low-rate interest felt by the public to participation in the formation of such local authorities.

Tendency 2. Promotion of dialogue between the state and civil society institutes in legislative process

One can say that non-profit organisations have been participating in lawmaking since the onset of perestroika. Of course, this term implies expert institutes and associations of businesspeople (the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, Russian Banks’ Association, etc.), although civil public organisations were making their own contribution into preparation of the first laws on NPOs and charities as early as mid-1990’s. Contribution made into designing of mid-term development strategy for Russia is, perhaps, the initial point of serious involvement of traditional non-profit organisation in lawmaking.

Since NPOs are not authorized for legislative initiative, their principal format of participation in lawmaking is public expertise of the bills. It is maintained via expert councils at the ministries and governmental bodies and to the State Duma committees and the Council of Federation committees by way of attending public hearings – in the scope of appropriate events held by the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation especially. Recently such methods of interaction between the state and civil society have grown highly efficient.

That was upon initiative of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation that NPOs have been enabled to make expertise of the following legislative bills: bills on traditional social issues; on introduction of modifications to Civil, Forestry and Land codes; on non-governmental organisations and representatives of civil society, as well as active position taken by all parties concerned in development of civil society in Russia.
Chapter 3. The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation

The working group of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation has more than 30 NPO experts. Discussion of the draft concept took place at “Charities in Russia: problems and prospects of development” 2nd All-Russian Forum with participation of the federal and regional NPOs, private companies and authority bodies.

In December 2008, the draft Concept was presented to the Government of the Russian Federation for review.

Establishment of public councils at the authorities is expressly provided for in the laws and, therefore, provides the opportunity for efficient use of collaboration potential existing between the State, NPOs and civil society leaders. Interestingly, the earliest public councils were attached not to “humanitarian” ministries (of culture, education and social development), but to ministries of defence, environmental protection and natural resources. At the moment, operation of public councils is far from being perfect in many aspects; however, representatives of civil society should bear such channel of interaction in mind and, on their own part, maintain their working together with experts, who are members of such councils, appropriately and uphold all the feedback as required. The practice of establishing public councils is widely applicable regionally. For instance, there is an education council at the Irkutsk oblast Administration and a charity council at the Samara oblast Government.

At the regional level, representatives of civil society have more chances to produce some influence upon the laws, including preparation of comprehensive regional development strategies. Lately, however, local public hearings have become less applicable comparing to the Federal level. On the whole, making representatives of civil society more involved in discussions of legislative initiatives can be treated as a positive trend. However, it is necessary to take care not only of mechanisms to be designed as underlying such dialogue, but also of their efficacy. Quality of such dialogue is dependent not only on the goodwill of parties concerned, but also on professional level of experts participating in it and on how far the community puts its trust in such experts.

This is why procedure to be applicable to public council membership formation and public council member turnover should be an important matter for discussion at the councils and in the expert community. Another important issue worth paying attention to in future is use of decisions and recommendations offered to public councils and elaborated in the scope of public hearings.

As expected by experts, participation of civil society representatives in lawmaking in future can lead to the same results or decrease. Decrease in interest of governmental authorities can reduce many more rigid regulatory governmental policy applicable during the crisis, when the normal practice is making decisions with no public opinion taken into consideration. This is in spite of civil expertise and continuation of dialogue with civil society being indispensable for provision support required to the State under the presently challenging economic situation.

Having studied experience acquired in development of legislative basis serving to regulate interaction between governmental bodies and public/non-profit organisations, personnel members of “Sluzhenie” [Service] Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organisations’ Association of Nizhny Novgorod put forth, before Nizhny Novgorod oblast Administration, the idea of elaboration of legislative bill to regulate provision of public goods to the population, hosting various initiatives and ensuring a system of interplay between governmental authorities and NPOs. The idea was approved by V.N. Lunin, Chairperson of Nizhny Novgorod oblast Legislative Assembly.

Between August 2007 and February 2008, all sort of consultations and discussions regarding wording of the bill were underway. The bill was discussed both at non-profit organisations (within NPO Leaders’ Club of Nizhny Novgorod oblast) and in the offices of the authorities (in course of Informatization Committee session held at Nizhny Novgorod Legislative Assembly’s handling of public organisations and mass media).

Designed and mutually approved by the parties concerned, the bill was passed by Nizhny Novgorod Legislative Assembly.

Tendency 3. Comprehensive promotion of charities

Charities in Russia found their revival as soon as perestroika began. Its first active participants were the newly established non-profit organisations and foreign donors, who were providing not only financial assistance, but also methodologies and resources required for development of civil organisations.

Since then, charities have undergone major changes, and today they are largely conformant to internationally applicable approaches, forms and methods taking firm footing, gradually, in Russian laws as well.

The opportunity to create targeted capital (endowments) emerged after enactment of the Federal law of 30 December 2006 № 275-FZ. Putting that term into Russian practice is a tangible step ahead towards institutionalization of the charitable sector, as well as an opportunity to secure a change in the prevalent public attitude to targeted capital.

Endowment, whoever it may be created by (a donor or a non-profit organisation), makes it possible, in the first place, to maintain long-term support of the pre-selected social sphere. Hospitals, universities, museums, theatres and societies for provision of aid to disabled people are, of course, fully justified to hope for having a source of permanent funding. Independent from any market situation or in-vogue current trend to support any specific activities, such fund sourcing is strictly associated with specific object it is intended for the funding of.

For a donor organisation providing resources for charities, targeted capital is a tool of using the system approach to support of any object selected. It provides the opportunity to bring the donor’s own resources together with those of other donors and, thereby, to attain better results.

It is important to note that introduction of the “endowment” term to Russian legislation is an example of the system approach to charities development: along with “targeted capital law”, appropriate amendments were made in the Tax Code and other legislative acts, and the plan of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation was designed to provide backup to implementation of endowments creation practice.

As shown by many studies conducted of late, the number of charitable market participants and amount of funds provided by different charitable groups are growing. According to experts, there are 100 private and corporate foundations and more than 20,000 non-profit organisations registered in Russian; within two years after targeted capital law became effective, more than 30 funds such as these were registered. As to amounts of the funds, Donors’ Forum reported that the first ten companies participating in “Russian Corporate Donor’ Contest allowed 7.5 milliard Roubles for various charitable and social projects in 2006 and 13.8 milliard Roubles in 2007; the number of contest participants grew two-fold, and the number of projects submitted to the jury actually grew three-fold.

The growth in the number of organisations and their performance rates is only one of a great many indicators of how far charities are advanced in their development. The principal distinctive feature of the current state of affairs is the systemic nature of that phenomenon. In fact, today’s reality is transition from chaotic distribution of funds and attempts to fill-in the most problematic of the gaps to a technology-based approach to dynamic social charitable activity. The last three or four years have shown that systemic approaches to grant contests, to establishment of private and corporate foundations and to preparation of social corporate reporting are now making integral part of the generally accepted practice. What is also typical is wide applicability of such terms as “social investing” and “social capital development”, instead of the traditional term of “charities”. Charitable organisations and business sector are finally trying and proving technological interaction chains applicable between themselves and in relations with other parties concerned, as well as delegation of powers and consolidation of efforts. Strategic planning, personnel training, monitoring, situation estimation and results evaluation are growing in importance. All these are based on the centenarian practical experience of foreign countries and decennial experience acquired in Russia.
The most striking example of the tendency is how charitable activity of the organisations is sub-divided along more specialized lines. In the last two-three years, bigger companies long since participating in charities have been sticking to borderline drawn between corporate and personal charities of their owners. That frontier is maintained both as regards purposes to be pursued by the charities and on organisational and financial levels. The concurrent growth in the number of projects participated in by employees of the companies is a piece of evidence of clear understanding of the role of charities in business development. Of course, systematization of the charities is a positive trend. The appearance, as an alternative to the state, of other long-term sources of funding for important social and public projects is capable to be instrumental in solving many problems and to promote national development on the whole.

However, any further growth of organized charities is going to be largely vulnerable in conditions of the crisis. Many companies acting as principal participants of such activities will have, because of the crisis, to reduce funding usually available from them and to shift today’s focus of their activities from development projects to the efforts, which just cannot be postponed any more. For this reason, as experts believe, survival of charitable entities established and support of all other infrastructural elements of the charitable sector are getting major significance. Survival of the attained charities development level can be facilitated by informational campaign aimed both at the state seeking to regulate all cash flows in the times of the crisis and at individuals and public organisations seeking assistance from all sources available.

### Tendency 4. Growing personal activities of citizens in public life

Active public position taken and held by individuals is indispensable for development of civil society. Public activization got its first impetus in the beginning of perestroika; the next peak of it was due to financial crisis of 1998. Economic growth and dwindling public discussion realm typical for the recent years have somewhat reduced external manifestations of public activity.

As shown by statistical data, territorial self-governing public units (TSU) is not a universal phenomenon; there are only individual far-between areas of active development (Kostroma oblast and Moscow oblast in Central Federal District, Arkhangelsk oblast in Northwestern Federal District, Krasnodar kray, Volgograd oblast and Rostov oblast in Southern Federal District, Republic of Mari El and Nizhny Novgorod oblast in Volga Federal District and Tomsk oblast in Siberian Federal District)53. TSU practice was developing actively in such municipal entities only, as where local government authorities were not treating them as their rivals. As shown by opinion polls performed among municipal entity chiefs in the scope of various opinion surveys, the number of TSU is, however, growing little by little.

As to public self-organizing for addressing household, housing and public utility problems, an important form of it is the organizing of housing owners’ partnerships on the basis of apartment blocks. In 2003 there were 7,500 housing owners’ partnerships registered in Russia; there were 12,244 of them in 2005 and as many as 39,229 in 2007. Information source: Russian State Statistics Service data (2003–2004) and the Institute for Urban Economics data as of 2003, 2007. Review of the state of competitive environment in the services market in relation to apartment block management in cities, the Federal Antimonopoly Service press service, 5 February 2008. The largest number of housing owners’ partnerships established is in large cities (Moscow and St. Petersburg), as well as in Omsk, Krasnoyarsk and Krasnodar (as reported by the Institute for Urban Economics).

Moreover, it can be asserted with certainty that, in terms of public participation, different civil society sectors are largely dissimilar. For instance, public activity in local government issues is, although supported by the Federal law, insufficient in its development rates.

Regionally, the most important tendency is, perhaps, development of a model for local community funds intended for making the public more involved in addressing local problems. Let us focus on two principal manifestations of public activity of the citizens, which have become especially noticeable in the last two-three years and dominant in 2008. The first of them is acting to defend their own rights. Movements of the swindled unit trust holders and co-investors, marches performed by right-hand steering wheel vehicles defenders and protests of local residents against in-fill building developments are only few of the most striking examples of such activities. Wide popularity of such way of being publicly active arises from a threat to personal

---

53 Analysis of territorial self-governing public units establishment practice is performed basing on data obtained via monitoring of local self-government reform of the Ministry of Regional Development of the Russian Federation. Data provided as of 1 October 2007.
rights or property owned by the citizens. It is interesting that public protests have been comple-
mented lately by the practice of referring the disputed matters to courts. One the latest examples of this is victory won by Natalya Prisetskaya over S7 after that airline has refused carriage to a handicapped passenger confined to a wheelchair because of disability.

Internet based educational communities have started to take shape since the last part of the end of the last century, when pioneers of informatization (informatics school teachers and personnel of various scientific methodological entities) began to master the Internet. First of all, they were pragmatically intending to use World Wide Web as a new communications ground and to access global educational resources. Educational community networks have become independent civil society elements, efficient in supporting the dialogue and maintaining mutual assistance. That phenomenon is applicable both to individual education workers and to organisations forced to take Internet shared opportunities into account, as well as to authorities interested in monitor-
ing of the actual attitude of citizens to the work they are doing. In spite of the informal nature of the communities, they have rigid structure patterned by the software environment of Internet in general and individual websites in particular. Whatever one can do in the community, it is always regulated by rules described and available to all community users. Registration practice is applicable in the communities, and non-anonymous participation is always welcome. Com-
munity moderators are never appointed; on the contrary, they come from among leaders, who support the applicable order of discussions and uploading of any materials.

The largest Russian education communities are “Creative teachers’ network” contain-
ing 32,550 registered participants, 82 network-based communities, 42 regional sections, 12 creative groups, “Internet-Pedsovet” having 13,299 participants and “InterGu.Ru” having 2 thousand participants. Average number of individuals visiting educational community sites is 3 thousand daily. Social networks have their own educational communities, too, membership whereof tends to number millions (“Odnoklassniki.ru”, “Livejournal.ru” and “Vkontakte.ru”).

Today, there are 1 million 500 thousand teachers in Russia, while all Russian professional net-based communities embrace mere 3% of them. It is quite possible that a trend appears some day, when virtual communities will set themselves transformed into real ones.

Another line of public activity, which has gained momentum last year, is participation of citi-
zens in charities and volunteering. Recruitment of volunteers, private donations and existing organisations, including those done via Internet, and appearance of organisations essentially focused on handling of private donations are just some of the lines of such activity. As recently, as a few years ago, collection of gifts for children living in orphanages was confined to one’s own fellow employees and friends; presently, both the companies and the mass media are active in engagement of any parties willing to act for the purpose and in offering formats convenient for putting the donations through the required formalities. A number of banks have already included the following new service allowing for donations to be made upon closing certain transactions with a bank card, although to specific organisations pre-selected by the issuing banks, as for the time being. En-
vironmental actions suggesting to clean a park or to make wintertime food containers for birds have also become very popular. Followers of such organisations, as World Wildlife Fund or Green-
peace, have grown in numbers several-fold lately. The most active circulation of appeals for help and that of proclamations for various actions to be held are via Internet, including the origin of a number of “Odnoklassniki.ru” and “Vkontakte.ru” social communities.

Tendency 5. Development of NPO professionalism combined with decrease of their total number

Any further extension of the population’s participation in public life depends, as believed by experts, not so much on the citizens themselves as on external prerequisites. Most probably, the economic crisis will be pushing the citizens to taking more active position in defence of their rights. This is why the work of organisations providing legal aid to the population and that of hu-
man rights institutes in general can be in demand and have support from the population. Along with these, the crisis more pressingness necessitates mutual help between people; however, aid methods different from financial assistance will prevail. Therefore, efforts of operating NPOs fo-
cused on arrangement of such mutual aid will be required. In conditions of the crisis, however, another “scenario” can also come true.

Development of civil activity forms in amenity provision and tackling of socio-household and housing problems of local residents will entail more active participation of the population in local government and, eventually, will encourage further development of civil activity on the whole. Transformation of the tendency into further prominence will be promoted by active concernment of local government authorities.

One of the parameters indicative of how far civil society is advanced in its development is the exist-
ing number of non-profit and public organisations of various types. That factor was an object of pride for Russian third sector for a long time. Although there was no official statistical data then, experts made estimations, according to which the number of NPOs established in the first decade since the beginning of democratic transformations in Russia reached 600 thousand. However, that figure was considerably adjusted in 2006, when NPOs made the first submittions of their reports in compliance with new regulations. Since then – according to official data of that time – the number of NPOs has been dwindling annually.

Diminishing number of public organisations can be interpreted in different ways. On the one hand, small number of infrastructural institutes testifies low interest of citizens towards organ-
izing of their own life and taking part in public life. On the other hand, there are a number of objective factors preventing mass-scale involvement of Russians in non-profit activities. Such factors include the continuous deficit of the properly qualified human resources in businesses and in governmental authorities. Some NPO leaders changed the sector they were working in for another one due to new opportunities opened to them in other sectors; others had to change their job, because they were unable to adapt to new economic environment (the necessity to employ funds coming from businesses and to actively collaborate with the state). It happened all the time when NPO ceased to exist as result of its leader’s resignation.

Another typical reason on account of which Russians are refraining from joining of non-
profit organisations is the lack of relevant knowledge and the necessity to improve one’s qualifications in the economic field. However, it is not justified to claim that expert and professional skills of public organisations have lowered. Moreover, in the recent years professionalism of non-profit organisations has
become noticeable and appreciated by the parties concerned. There are many manifestations of the trend, such as improved quality of expertise of legislative bills developed by, among other parties, representatives of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, and the ability to avoid being confined to narrowly marked segmental problems; all these speak in favour of civil organisations.

Another important proof of increasing professionalism of the sector is enhancement of NPO self-regulation. After induction of the earliest ethical codes (continuing to be topical today, although they appeared back in mid-1990’s), common practice (prevalent until recently) was borrowing behaviour and activity standards by one organisation from another at the conferences and training courses. The situation started to change from the beginning of NPO legislation reforms, when the state imposed more rigorous standards upon reports to be submitted by NPOs to governmental authorities.

On the whole, such tendency is more positive, rather than negative. What is also positive here is growing professionalism of public organisations, as well as the presence of professional NPOs in other sectors, because this implies more attention towards the expert potential of NPOs and the desire to act together with them. Furthermore, due to the probable growth in the number of people, for whom public activity is attractive, professional segment of the sector is best equipped to help to create jobs required and to apply NPO rules and culture to new colleagues. As believed by experts, the course of events such as this is quite probable, because the crisis will drive many people to seek practical application of their knowledge and skills, and professionally organized and strategically acting NPOs will be able to offer jobs of interest to such people. In the long-term perspective, however, a small number of existing organisations, no matter their professional level, is not sufficient for proper civil society development. The possible result of such “marginalizing” is development of a parallel-line third sector – either upon initiative of and with support from authorities interested in “controlled civil society” or basing on informal social networks and affinity groups coming into existence at the place of employment or residence of their creators or on the Internet.
The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation

Conclusion

More than 50% of Russians believe that the global financial crisis is the core event of 2008. Processes in economy today and in future will, of course, have an impact on the state of Russian society and be formative of the course of events both inside and outside of our country. Under such circumstances, it continues to be vitally important to improve sense of mutual trust between people, to strengthen civil solidarity, which is helpful in attaining national purposes, and civil society institutes, to sustain social initiative and to shape environment adequate for personal development of free citizens of a free country.

In 2008 public activity in Russia remained at low levels. People were not enthusiastic at participation in efficacious control of decisions made by authorities, in preparation and enactment of top-important decisions — those formative for destinies of a large number of people. And, although a number of individual human rights and charitable organisations, trade unions and creative associations have accumulated considerable experience in interaction with governmental authorities, with noteworthy recommendations developed in application to the key issues of improving performance of authority institutes, all this store of knowledge is extremely Seldom used or, rather often, just ignored — which is especially true at the regional scale. The public is kept at a long distance from decision-making centres, which renders it impossible to early settle the conflicts arising in social or any other sectors and reduces the sustainability of the whole system of governmental administration.

There is no effective mechanism designed so far for keeping records of propositions made and for participation of the third sector experts in daily operation of authorities — whether locally or federally. Red tape and formalism are tightly rooted in Russian political and administrative practices: in the Parliament, they never go beyond public hearings, without any acting together to elaborate any legislative bills within any working groups; public councils attached to executive authorities are often for the sake of decorum only. The applicable formation system and operational frameworks and procedures of public councils and public chambers are leaving much to be desired and do not enable to tackle delegated tasks effectively.

Meanwhile, today public control continues to be one of top-important tasks of civil society: it should be widely applicable in the social sector and put to use for the purposes of fight against corruption and illegal enrichment of officials, businesses and ordinary citizens. Civil society institutes are capable to improve legal education in Russia. Wide-scope involvement of the public is indispensable for settlement of conflicts arising in land use relations and in housing sector and for elimination of raidership from our life. Special care should be taken to increase public control of the law-enforcement system, including authority boards in the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, Public Prosecutor’s Office of the Russian Federation, the Federal Service on Execution of Punishments the Federal Migration Service and Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.

Responsibility and transparent acting of authorities are no less important than responsibility and transparent doing of civil society institutes. Any crisis is both adverse and beneficial in its effects. Just like it is in economy, the crisis helps to get rid of inefficient companies; as far as the third sector is concerned, it can lead to disappearance of organisations, whose operation is confined to squeezing of grants for support of their own trouble-free existence. “It is also necessary to get rid of organisations offering all kind of public awards on the for-benefit basis and, thereby, discrediting and devaluating the idea of public devotion and charities.

Cooperation, active and genuinely concerned dialogue with civil society are among basic pre-conditions for efficient operation of authorities of all levels. In Russia of today, a wide range of methods is finding its implementation for the assessment of actual performance of regional administrations.

Civil Society Development Index should also be mentioned for this purpose. With qualitative properties, events, practices and trends being truly important, the study of civil society inevitably implies measuring the key parameters and characteristics of its development, as well. Examples of such indices created are well known. Since 1997, the US Agency for International Development has been publishing Non-Profit Organisation Development Sustainability Index for Eastern Europe and ex-Soviet republics. According to the latest published Index for 2007, Russia is rated 23rd out of 29 there55; CVICUS Index is also known56, but its measuring is not practiced on the regular basis. However, these indices assess just individual aspects of civil activity, largely subjective in their nature, and do not enable to judge on entire the state of civil society.

Precisely for these reasons, the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation responsible for, among other things, preparation and publication of annual Report on the State of Civil Society in the Russian Federation, initiated in 2008 methodological development of such index, with both public and scientific expert community to participate.

Indicators included to the index should be up to the principal five criteria designed by UN experts57. Such indicators should:

- provide relevant and robust measures of progress towards the targets of the Millennium Development Goals;
- be clear and straightforward to interpret and provide a basis for international comparison;
- be broadly consistent with other global lists and avoid imposing an unnecessary burden on country teams, governments and other partners;
- be based to the greatest extent possible on international standards, recommendations and best practices;
- be constructed from well-established data sources, be quantifiable and be consistent to enable measurement over time.

The indicators, which are empiric parameters descriptive of the state of civil society, should contain structural parameters, such as indicators reflecting the priority of democratic rights and freedoms, human dignity and independence of private and business life, as well as parameters of activities conducted by individuals: participation of citizens in public life and their ability to defend their interests in economic and political spheres.

After public and expert discussions and approbation, the consolidated Civil Society Development Index can be used in the study of various characteristics and parameters of the study object. Based on the appropriately adjusted international methods, Civil Society Development Index, as a scientifically justified system of assessment of such development, will make it possible: firstly, to take into integrated account all specifics of Russian society and provide a more comprehensive idea of the status of civil society in today’s Russia; secondly, to make comparisons between development of civil society in various Russian regions and outside Russia; thirdly, to analyse civil society development processes in their dynamics, year by year.

Report of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation on the State of Civil Society contains no “prescriptions”; it only “diagnoses” and describes the state of affairs and the principal events and tendencies in civil society development. Precise depicting of the situation prevalent in the civil society has been the principal target of the work performed to make ready the Report. It is very important for the document you are holding in your hands to be in demand for preparing and making decisions involving all Russians. That is: decisions providing new opportunities, altering the existing trends and improving the life of the entire population of Russia.

54 EXPRESS opinion poll № 12, VCIOM, December 2008.
55 The 2007 NGO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia, USAID.
Report on the State of Civil Society in the Russian Federation
2008

Доклад о состоянии гражданского общества в Российской Федерации
2008
(на английском языке)

Issuing editor: E. Imasheva
Technical editor: F. Khonikov
Proofreader: O. Shakleina
Design: N. Khodykina
Computer make up: N. Veselova

Translation into English: Babylon
English proof-reading: E. Wystorobets

Signed for printing on 5 May 2009
Format: 62 x 941/8. Conventional printed sheets: 5.94
Circulation: 500 copies. Order № 90775

7/1, Miusskaya Square, GSP-3, Moscow, 125993
Phone: +7 495 221 8363, Facsimile: +7 495 251 6004
e-mail: info@oprf.ru, www.oprf.ru

"LEGEIN" Project Designing Bureau
6 Chisty per., Bldg. 2, Moscow 119034
Printed by August Borg
47 Verkhnyaya Pervomaiskaya, Bldg. 11, Moscow 105264