



2020

STATE OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

REPORT FOR 2020



Общественная палата
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CIVIC CHAMBER OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

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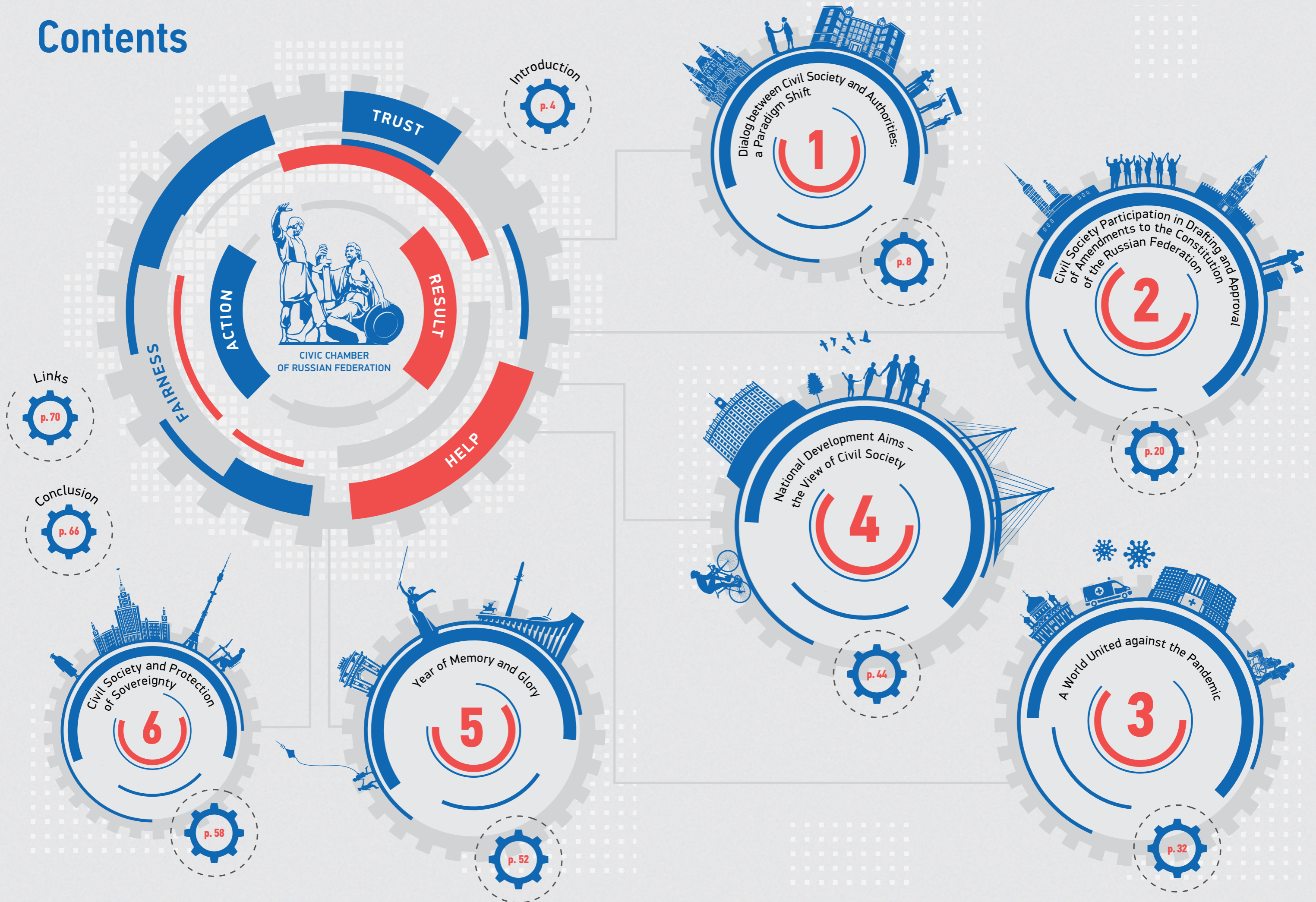
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STATE OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

REPORT FOR 2020

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Introduction



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The principles we established when we founded the Civic Chamber remain valuable 15 years on. In this time Russia's position in the world has changed, and the role of civil society has grown significantly. It is important that the Civic Chamber has a good history and a good future. We will continue to work,” Honorary President of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation Eugenie Velikhov.



The Civic Chamber, as a key institution of civil society in our country, keeps close watch on events, conditions and changes in public life, and solutions proposed and approved by the authorities, as well as analyzing their potential consequences and the general reaction to them of people and society. It also interacts with representatives of social groups and leaders of social organizations and government bodies, in order that civil initiatives reach governmental organizations, and public interest is taken into account by the government when making decisions. A barometer for social mood and interests is the appeals and initiatives of citizens,¹ forwarded for consideration by the Civic Chamber, in which citizens, social communities and business structures highlight specific problems. The Chamber draws on the expert potential of its members and the smooth

system of interaction with regional civic chambers, relevant nonprofit organizations and social alliances, the scientific and professional communities, and the public councils under the federal executive authorities. It then studies the more systemic and sensitive problems, presenting them to government agencies, proposing specific solutions, and managing their implementation.

The annual Report on the State of Civil Society is a report prepared by the Civic Chamber with the aim of labeling and analyzing the most important tendencies in public life in the current year.

Despite the diversity of events and conditions occurring during the year, the Report for 2020 concentrates on the main, defining questions for civil society in Russia.

The Report presents the results of the transformation of public-authorities dialog, the stimulus for the development of which were the events of 2020.

By the end of the year, it can be confidently noted that people and social structures became participants in the process of formulating amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation. The Civic Chamber, which became a platform for the gathering and discussion of “popular” amendments from all around the country, conceptualized them and passed them on to a working group set up by the President of the Russian Federation. 11 of the 18 amendments proposed by the Chamber were introduced in the updated text of the Constitution. Observers, trained by the Chamber to organize public observation of the all-Russia referendum on approving the constitutional amendments and control of the legitimacy of the electoral process, were present at voting stations in all the Russian regions.

It is worth noting that in the proposals received by the Civic Chamber from our citizens, alongside social amendments aimed at reducing poverty and achieving social equality, dominant issues were the reinforcement of sovereignty and national security, and the protection of Russia's national interests and strategic national priorities. The constitutional amendments concerning the protection of the country's sovereignty were supported by the majority of Russians.²

2020 was a year of global challenges and changes. The new coronavirus pandemic and its social and economic consequences have changed life around the world.

The government faced serious and difficult tasks, including preserving the lives and health of citizens from an unstudied and unknown virus, research into means of stabilizing the epidemiologic situation, and the full and timely provision of quality medical and social assistance to vulnerable citizens, as well as providing steady economic development and financial stability in times of increasing budget expenditure on essential needs.

At the same time, society demonstrated solidarity in solving arising problems, and is continuing to fight the pandemic in collaboration with the government. The government is responding with supportive measures intended for both the population and the worst hit economic agents – small and medium business and nonprofit organizations. The Civic Chamber played a big role in justifying the need for these support measures and their elaboration.

2020 was also marked by increased popular activity and collaboration to overcome ecological disasters. These resulted in social conflicts, to solve which, unlike in previous years, government agencies paid due attention and consideration to the demands of the population in all regions.

There are other eternally unsolvable problems too. One is the provision of expensive medicines to children with critical rare (orphan) diseases, whose families cannot afford them. In response to this, the President introduced a progressive scale for personal income tax, profit from the collection of which would go towards the treatment and rehabilitation of such children, and the provision of their medicine. However, it still remains to establish a specific finance mechanism and

determine the way of public funds allocation. By the decision of the President, the Civic Chamber already intervened in the process, teaming up with relevant nonprofit organizations, medical experts and parent community.

There is a long-overdue need to reform neuropsychiatric inpatient facilities and the system of guardianship for mentally ill people. Since 2013, the State Duma has been considering a bill concerning so-called shared legal guardianship. However, nothing changed and institutions remain closed, the rights of patients are still not fully realized, and they are deprived of socialization. Relatives and the relevant nonprofit organizations have appealed for reform of the laws concerning psychiatric help and the system of legal guardianship (trusteeship) for people with mental impairments.

Despite the particularities of 2020, the difficult epidemiologic situation, and the total lockdown in the spring due to the coronavirus pandemic, the current generation could not overlook the 75th anniversary of victory in World War II. Every family in our country remembers and honors

its grandfathers and great-grandfathers, and memories of the events of 75 years ago are sacred. However, instances of falsification and the distortion of historical truths are not uncommon, and demand is high in Russian society not to allow this. The main national identity of contemporary Russian society is based around questions of the preservation and protection of the historical memory of the “Great Victory”.

It is precisely in these key areas that was most clearly evident the paradigm shift in collaboration between the government bodies and civil society, and the mutual desire for the joint development, discussion and realization of historical solutions.

The Civic Chamber has a secure position in terms of credibility among the leading institutions in our country’s social and political system.³ It draws on the expert potential of its members and the smooth system of interaction with regional civic chambers, relevant nonprofit organizations and social alliances, the scientific and professional communities, and the public councils under federal executive authorities, as it continues to monitor the progress of these issues and reach fair solutions.





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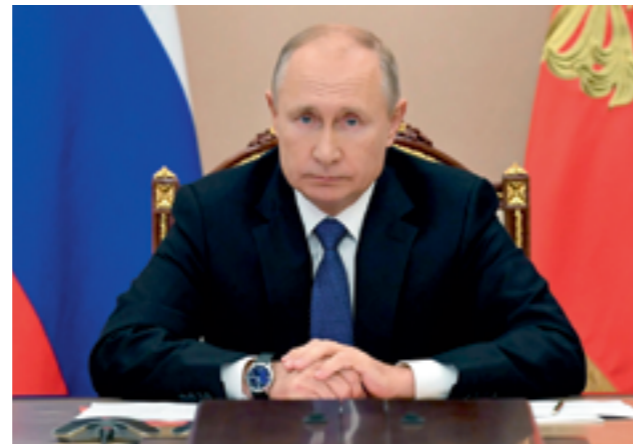
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Dialog between Civil Society and Authorities: a Paradigm Shift

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I am confident that you are aware of the high status membership in the Civic Chamber carries, but you should also know that you will have to uphold it all the time through your efforts. You must keep working to win and justify the confidence bestowed upon you, which is the foundation of authority, including that of the Civic Chamber, and its role in the country,” President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin.



Collaboration between civil society and authorities has undergone serious changes, and the events of 2020 served as a stimulus for the development of public-authorities dialog. There was a noticeable shift toward a partnership model in the solution of more socially sensitive problems, as well as active invitation from government structures to civil society to develop and approve government solutions. New ideas, experience, resources, knowledge, and an outside point of view became valuable to a government faced with the serious challenges presented by the pandemic and its social and economic consequences.

The actions of the President of the Russian Federation show a deep understanding of the value of dialog with civil society.

The new paradigm of collaboration between authorities and civil society is set by meetings that the Russian President of holds regularly with the general public, and by the questions and problems discussed at these meetings. Opinions are exchanged and proposals are formulated, and they go on to become Presidential instructions and are manifested in decisions taken. The openness of the President to dialog sets a corresponding benchmark for all levels of government, allowing them to form appeals for the participation of civil society institutions at all stages of the development and realization of solutions.

At a meeting between the President and representatives of civil society on January 22, 2020, concerning questions of social support for citizens during a trip to the town of Usman in the Lipetsk Oblast, the necessity was underlined for the active inclusion of civic chambers in the realization of public oversight for the more significant social questions raised in the Address to the Federal Assembly.

The President held numerous online meetings in 2020 with participants in the nationwide We Are Together campaign from all around the country, which addressed questions of contributing to the development of volunteer activity during the pandemic. At

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President's instructions resulting from the Russian President meeting with the members of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation completed



the meeting of April 30, 2020, the President highlighted the necessity for, and effectiveness of, the volunteer initiatives and socially oriented, nonprofit organizations which during the pandemic effectively assisted vulnerable people and the government’s medical and social organizations. He promised government support for these organizations.

The Civic Chamber is now the very institution which, in direct dialog with the head of state, formulates and proposes solutions aiming to increase the efficiency of government policy.

On June 25, 2020 there was a meeting of Russian President Vladimir Putin with the members of the new Civic Chamber composition. A wide range of issues was discussed, including the organization of public observation of the national referendum on constitutional amendments, and public oversight of the quality of implementation of solutions approved in view of the fight against the coronavirus pandemic. Members of the Chamber made proposals concerning: the monitoring of national projects, accounting for the importance of population preserving and the improved quality of life for Russians; the creation of a single register of socially oriented and other nonprofit organizations, and the introduction of additional measures of government support for NPOs in light of the pandemic; and the creation of a mechanism to finance medical help for children with rare (orphan) diseases, from money entering the budget from the introduction of a progressive scale of personal income tax.

As a result of the meeting, the President approved a list of 17 instructions,⁴ for each of which the Civic Chamber, in 2020, forwarded reports containing thoroughly detailed proposals.

Assistance for Children with Orphan Diseases

An example of the improved quality of authorities dialog one may consider the development of means to solve problems of assisting children with rare (orphan) diseases. Eternal systemic problems with providing medical assistance, in particular the provision of

medicines to these patients, were exacerbated by the pandemic.

Within the framework of the implementation of the Russian President’s instructions which resulted from the meeting with members of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation on June 25, 2020, the Chamber prepared proposals concerning the development of a mechanism for the target financing of assistance for children with orphan diseases. This would use money entering the budget due to increased personal income tax rates for people whose income exceeds 5 million rubles a year.⁵

The Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation initiated and supported the proposal concerning the establishment of an endowment foundation,⁶ noting that it should be the “assembly point” for a system providing assistance for children with orphan diseases. During a series of events and public discussions involving geneticists, physicians, the patient community, and charity organizations, the Civic Chamber prepared proposals concerning: the activity of the foundation; a list of nosologies and the principles of their selection; and governing bodies and the approach to organizing public oversight over the activity of the fund. During discussions at the “Community” forum in Moscow on November 2,⁷ key problems were underlined in the assistance of children with rare (orphan) diseases, the solutions to which now depend, among other things, on the work of the endowment foundation: the lack of suitable diagnostics; the lack of clinical recommendations and orders to provide medical assistance, even according to nosologies included in the federal and regional registers; the irregular scale of charges for different kinds of medical assistance, for doctors working with children with orphan diseases; the incompetence of regional doctors in treating genetic disorders; the inequality of access to medicines (children with identical diagnoses either receive or do not receive medicine depending on the budgetary possibilities and solutions of the specific region); the lack of a system of continued treatment, rehabilitation, and assistance during puberty. The Civic Chamber specifically underlines that the system of target financing for the medical assistance of children with rare diseases must be up and running on January 1, 2021.⁸

60 billion rubles will be allocated for treatment of children with rare (orphan) diseases



A year’s course of Spinraza (medicine for treatment of spinal muscular atrophy) costs up to 60 million rubles



The President



Announced that incomes higher than 5 million rubles will be taxed not at 13%, but at 15%. Means derived from this income tax increase will be “highlighted” in the budget and channelled for treatment of children with rare (orphan) diseases



Charged the Government to prepare joint proposals with the Civic Chamber on financing the medical treatment of children with orphan diseases



Expanded the list of rare (orphan) diseases requiring finance, within the “14 cost-intensive nosologies” federal program. This will allow the additional provision of medicines to over 1,500 people, 255 of whom are children

The Civic Chamber



Supported the proposal on establishing an endowment foundation for providing medical treatment for children with orphan diseases. The foundation’s governing board must be independent and collegial; the mechanism of transfer of funds must be transparent and clear



Will ensure the system of target finance for medical help launches on January 1, 2021



In October-November 2020, the Civic Chamber operated a “Rare Opinion” hotline, which accepts appeals concerning questions of assistance for children with orphan diseases. Information received via the hotline will be used within the framework of the public oversight of the work of the authorities in implementing the instructions of the President of the Russian Federation.⁹

Shared Legal Guardianship: How to Help Mentally Ill People?

Another problem that has become more acute due to the pandemic is the inadequacy of the system for providing assistance to mentally ill people,

in particular patients at psychoneurological inpatient facilities. In order to avoid the spread of the virus, these special institutions were closed and fully quarantined, with employees working on a rotation system. Major assistance to patients in psychoneurological inpatient facilities was provided by nonprofit organizations. So, within the framework of the Evacuation project, representatives of the nongovernment sector took into their homes on a temporary basis 5,500 inpatients, and were able to provide them more comfortable living conditions and security while they were self-isolating.¹⁰ The pandemic clearly illustrated the existing legal and organizational gaps in the system of protection of mentally ill people.

5,500

inpatients were taken in by NPO representatives during the pandemic for temporary family life



PROBLEMS WITH THE SYSTEM OF PSYCHONEUROLOGICAL INPATIENT FACILITIES



Opacity of psychoneurological inpatient facilities, absence of viable mechanisms for public oversight

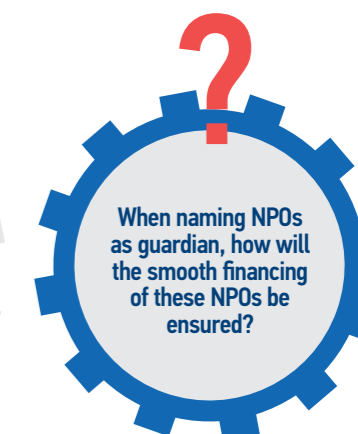
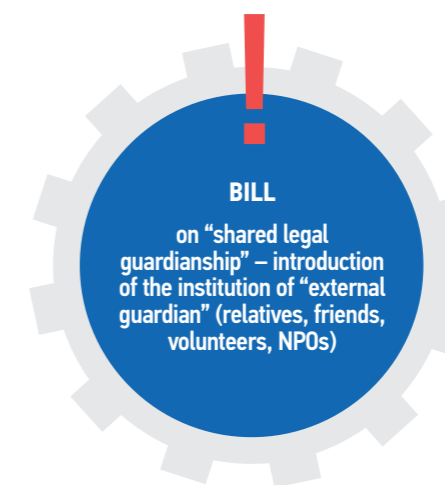


Conflict of interests as one person (head of the facility) exercises the the functions of both a client and a service provider



No possibility to name nonprofit organization as guardian

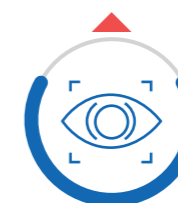
POSSIBLE SOLUTION



ACTION NEEDED



Building of a system of self-regulation and liability insurance, creation of a special insurance fund



Establishing an institution of public oversight and an independent protection service for the rights of mentally ill people



Improvement of legislation on guardianship and psychiatric help

Considering civil society's demand to reform the system of psychoneurological inpatient facilities and the system of guardianship for mentally ill people, on November 3, within the framework of the Civic Chamber's final "Community" forum, a discussion session was held concerning problems connected with inpatients in psychoneurological inpatient facilities. The participants concurred that the system of psychiatric care and the system of guardianship and custodianship agencies require reform to create more comfortable conditions, closer to their normal lives, for mentally ill people.¹¹

Relevant charitable and other nonprofit organizations and the parent community support the introduction, proposed in a bill which has been under consideration in the State Duma since 2013, of the institution of "shared legal guardianship".¹² This supposes that not only employees of psychoneurological inpatient facilities will be able to take decisions concerning the fate of patients, but also several natural and legal persons, including representatives of civic associations and nonprofit organizations.

The bill proposes the introduction of "external guardians" for patients of psychoneurological inpatient facilities besides inpatient facilities which usually function as guardians. "External" co-guardians (relatives or friends of the patient, volunteers, nonstate, nonprofit organizations) must, as envisioned by the developers of the bill, undertake to fulfill all guardianship duties in the representation of the charge and in the protection of their rights and legal interests. It is also proposed that the new law will facilitate the access of interested parties to rehabilitation programs and information about the accessibility of technical means of rehabilitation.

However, assigning a large number of people as guardians leaves open the question of who will take responsibility for and indemnify against potential harm caused by charges. The inclusion of nonprofit organizations in the list of potential guardians will necessitate the provision of robust funding to those nonprofit organizations, as well as the elimination of the possibility of violation and abuse. To solve this question, the possibility is being discussed

of the creation of a system of self-regulation and liability insurance, and the establishment of a special insurance fund. It is also necessary to discuss the setting up of an institution for public oversight, an independent service to protect the rights of mentally ill people, and the improvement of legislation concerning guardianship and psychiatric help.

The Environment

Informational transparency in the ecological sphere, just as in any other sphere, must become the norm in cooperation between authorities, business, and civil society.

Ecology and respect for the environment are unarguably a priority for civil society. Along with the problems in the system of dealing with SMW, and questions of protecting wood and water sources, events in Norilsk, Kamchatka, and Bashkortostan demonstrated the role of responsible dialog between civil society and the government in promoting quick solutions to ecological problems.

Norilsk

On May 29, 2020 in Norilsk, approximately 20,000 tons of diesel fuel was spilled at Thermal Power Plant No. 3, as a result of the collapse of a concrete platform and the destruction of a reservoir. Petrochemicals spread into the earth and water bodies in the area around the Nadezhdinski Metallurgical Plant, which resulted in pollution and tens of billions of rubles' worth of damage to the environment.¹³ On June 1, President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin declared a federal-level state of emergency in the area.

Considering the public outcry over the state of emergency in Norilsk, it was very important to organize collaboration between the government, civil society institutions, and the scientific community, to develop and realize the optimal and most effective means of rectifying the consequences of the accident and compensating damage caused. The steps taken to rectify the consequences of the accident, and the possibilities for further recovery of the environment

in the area, were discussed with experts in July in Norilsk at a working meeting, organized by the Civic Chamber, concerning the post-accident cleanup. On July 11, public hearings were held in the Civic Chamber, in which participated, among others, representatives of AO Norilsk-Taymyr Energy Company.

As a result of these events, the Civic Chamber worked out recommendations and proposals¹⁴ highlighting the importance of: looking for new warning facilities and new ways to clean up oil and petrochemical spillages; improving the provision of information to the population concerning the activity and interaction of management teams dealing with operations to clean up oil spills; improving the system of ecological monitoring; approving measures to realize an internal and external audit of AO Norilsk-Taymyr Energy Company; establishing a project office to realize an integrated strategy for events concerning the recovery of the biodiversity and the remediation of the natural environment which has become polluted. The realization of the proposed measures is possible only with the participation and support of civil society and their control of the situation. In the given situation, it is necessary to: conduct ethnological evaluations aimed at discovering the effects of changes caused by the accident to the native living environment of small indigenous groups of peoples and the social and cultural situation; and, on the basis of the resulting data, develop and realize measures aimed at preserving the way of life of indigenous minorities living on these lands.

Kushtau

In 2020, the five-year conflict around the "shihan" hills, unique natural objects in the Republic of Bashkortostan, predictably intensified. One of the four shihans was already practically destroyed by industrial development, and the Bashkir Soda Company was planning to begin development of the Kushtau shihan in 2020, but local residents and ecologists strongly opposed it. In the middle of August, protests began in the republic. According to surveys, 70% of the residents of the Republic of Bashkortostan did not support the industrial development of the shihans.¹⁵

The intense social conflict surrounding the development of Kushtau was halted thanks to a radical decision of the Head of the Republic of Bashkortostan Radiy Khabirov, prohibiting the industrial reclamation of the land around the shihans and creating there a "specially protected natural area" of regional significance.

The Civic Chamber supported the awarding of the status of "specially protected natural area" to the Kushtau shihan. Moreover, the Civic Chamber supports the initiative to award Kushtau the status of "specially protected natural area" not of regional but of federal significance. It also proposed to create a cluster of national parks in Bashkiria to include all the land around the shihan. This may kick-start the development of ecotourism in the area and make the area around the shihan an attractive visitors' destination.

The Civic Chamber has taken under control not only the situation with Kushtau, but also with other areas undergoing a conflict of interests between industry and the local population, in order to propose a systemic solution to such kinds of problems.

Considering on the one hand the importance of protecting natural areas in their pristine state, their protection from human activity, and the necessity to meet the demands of the local population living in specially protected natural areas, and on the other hand considering the results of the discussion of the conflict surrounding Kushtau, the Civic Chamber conducted an evaluation of the project concerned with amendments to the Law on Specialty Protected Natural Areas.¹⁶ The Civic Chamber underlined the urgency, timeliness, and importance of investigation and the provision of legal mechanisms aimed at reducing social tension among the local population living on the borders of specially protected natural areas. Also, it sharply criticized the provisions in the bill, stipulating the possibility to reduce the areas of national parks, ostensibly altering their boundaries, which might cause significant harm to natural habitats, species of wild flora and fauna, and cultural and historical objects.¹⁷

235

billion rubles – total damage caused to the ground and water bodies in 2020



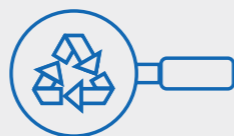
Man-made disaster in Norilsk



Ecological disaster in Kamchatka



Social and ecological conflict in Kushtau



Independent ecological monitoring



Systemic ecological control



Dialog between representatives of the government, the public, and business



Informational transparency in ecological sphere

Kamchatka

Civil society's attention was particularly drawn to the mass mortality of marine animals in Kamchatka in September of this year. At the end of September, local residents began complaining about changes in the color of the water in the area of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky and a large number of dead animals washed up on the shore.

The ecological disaster demonstrated the role of civil society in solving ecological problems. It was thanks to information relayed by eco-activists and bloggers that it was possible to attract the urgent attention of the authorities in Kamchatka, and the rectification of the accident's consequences began with the mapping of the polluted shore zone by volunteers. Following the publications by bloggers and the posts in social media, an investigation of the causes of the pollution, involving scientists and specialists, started. Samples of water and the innards of dead marine animals were taken and quickly transferred to leading research laboratories. Satellite monitoring tools were also brought into the investigation.

The Civic Chamber also actively investigated potential causes of the accident. The majority of the experts consider that the disaster was not man made. Today, according to scientists and experts, the most likely cause of the pollution is the so-called "red tide" (toxic algal bloom).¹⁸ However, the fact that the wide-scale investigation began after the publications in social networks indicates the importance of open dialog between civil society and the authorities on the most pressing social and ecological problems.

In order to prevent negative consequences and damage to the environment, a special role must be played by independent, ecological public monitoring. Systemic control of the environment may facilitate the prevention of ecological disasters.

In all the cases of ecological disaster and conflict mentioned, openness of the authorities' position is vital in the discovery of the causes and the approval of solutions.

2



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#Civil Society Participation in Drafting and Approval of Amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation



Civil Society Participation in Drafting and Approval of Amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation



Drafting “Popular” Amendments to the Constitution

On January 15, 2020, in his Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, the President of the Russian Federation proposed a range of amendments to the Russian Constitution, aimed at the further development of the country.¹⁹ The President made separate mention of the necessity on holding the country’s

citizens voting on the whole package of proposed constitutional amendments, since the given novations would involve significant changes to the political system and the activity of the executive, legislative, and judiciary authorities.

On the same day, the President of the Russian Federation signed an instruction setting up a working group to draft proposals for amending the Constitution of the Russian Federation.²⁰ The working group included nine members of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation.²¹

Civil society began actively discussing the draft amendments. In its turn, the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation offered its platform as a venue for meetings of the working group, and became a center for the collection and initial processing of “popular” amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Regional civic chambers were also included in the collection and discussion of the amendments to the Constitution.²² Formulated proposals were then forwarded to the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation for further processing and consideration by the working group.

Over 1150 appeals and proposals from citizens and organizations were forwarded to the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, and in total, together with proposals from regional civic chambers, in January-March 2020, the Civic Chamber processed and systemized over 2250 proposals and comments concerning the introduction of amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation. As a result of the processing, analysis, and assimilation, over 600 proposals were forwarded to the working group and discussed at its meetings.

The Civic Chamber considered twice, before the first and second readings at the State Duma, the key bill on constitutional amendments.²³ As a result, 11 proposals of the Civic Chamber were included in the bill.

Active public participation at all stages of drafting and discussing amendments to the Constitution became a mainstay of civil society’s consensus surrounding the updated Main Law of Russia.

At present, the legal processing of the new provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federation is underway. Citizens and organizations are actively discussing various legal initiatives aimed at realizing the “popular” provisions of the Constitution.

The Civic Chamber has become involved with the collection, processing, and presentation to the government of civil society’s position by, among other things, conducting public evaluation of bills developed during the execution of new provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federation. This work will involve maximum use of the “popular” amendments received by the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, which for objective reasons could not be included in the updated text of the Constitution.

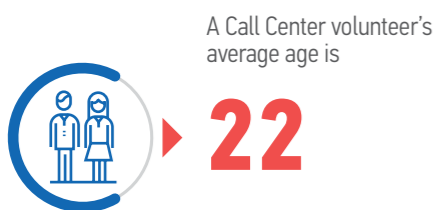
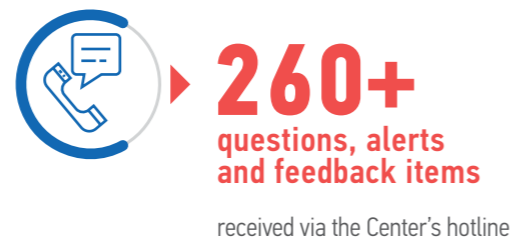
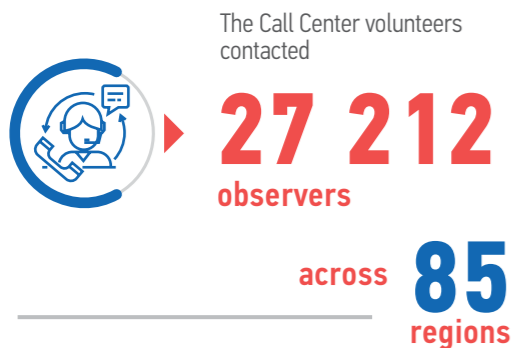
Public Observation of the All-Russian Referendum

Considering the increased attention of civil society to the all-Russian referendum on approving changes to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, as well as civil society’s appeal for maximum objectivity, honesty, and transparency in such referendums, the Civic Chamber proposed the organization of public observation at the all-Russia referendum.

Thousands of volunteers took part in the work of the all-Russia “Constitutional Volunteers” corps, organized by the Association of Volunteer Centers together with the country’s largest youth organizations. 114,000 volunteers from all regions of the Russian Federation contributed to the pending changes, becoming part of a very important historical event. They helped in 3,500 information booths, telling the public about the upcoming referendum and planned amendments, worked at the voting stations, assisting mobility-impaired people, and also organized volunteers’ events concerning the amendments around the country.

In order to ensure observation efficiency, the Civic Chamber, in conjunction with the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, developed a “Gold Standard” for public observation – a “check list” of all questions concerning the organization and conduct of the referendum, as well as a vote tally at the polling station.

THE CIVIC CHAMBER'S NATIONAL VOTING OBSERVATIONS AND RESPONSE CENTER



The Civic Chamber signed an Agreement on Cooperation in Observers' Training and Stationing with 18 political parties and 37 public organizations, and over 1,600 public organizations joined the observers' corps all over Russia.

A Coordination Council was created under the Civic Chamber, to address the collaboration with political parties in realizing public oversight at the all-Russia referendum.

526,584 public observers monitored the all-Russia referendum, including 236,272 observers from political parties, and 290,312 observers represented public organizations and self-nominees; 77 certificates were provided for observers of the all-Russia referendum at voting stations in 31 countries, with approximately 50 foreign nationals working as experts at the referendum in Russia.

From June 25 to July 1, 2020, the Civic Chamber had a Situation Center which throughout the entire referendum kept in contact with the observers around the country, and received, analyzed, and checked information concerning potential violations at the referendum. There were also situation centers in the regional civic chambers.

The Situation Center also conducted real-time Internet monitoring for information concerning potential violations. Analysis of publications on the Internet showed that the voting can be hugely influenced by the creation of negative publicity around unconfirmed news of "fake" violations, and their active distribution in the press and social networks. As a rule, official rebuttal of such information attracts significantly less attention than the fake news itself, which explains growing attraction among hackers.

All messages received by the Situation Center and the Civic Chamber hotline were monitored by observers and members of regional civic chambers. Upon confirmation of discrepancies, regional civic chambers and observers were able to rectify them.

The civic chambers of all 85 regions of Russia regularly forwarded to the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation materials and messages about the situation at the voting stations and the rectification of discrepancies from the "Gold Standard".

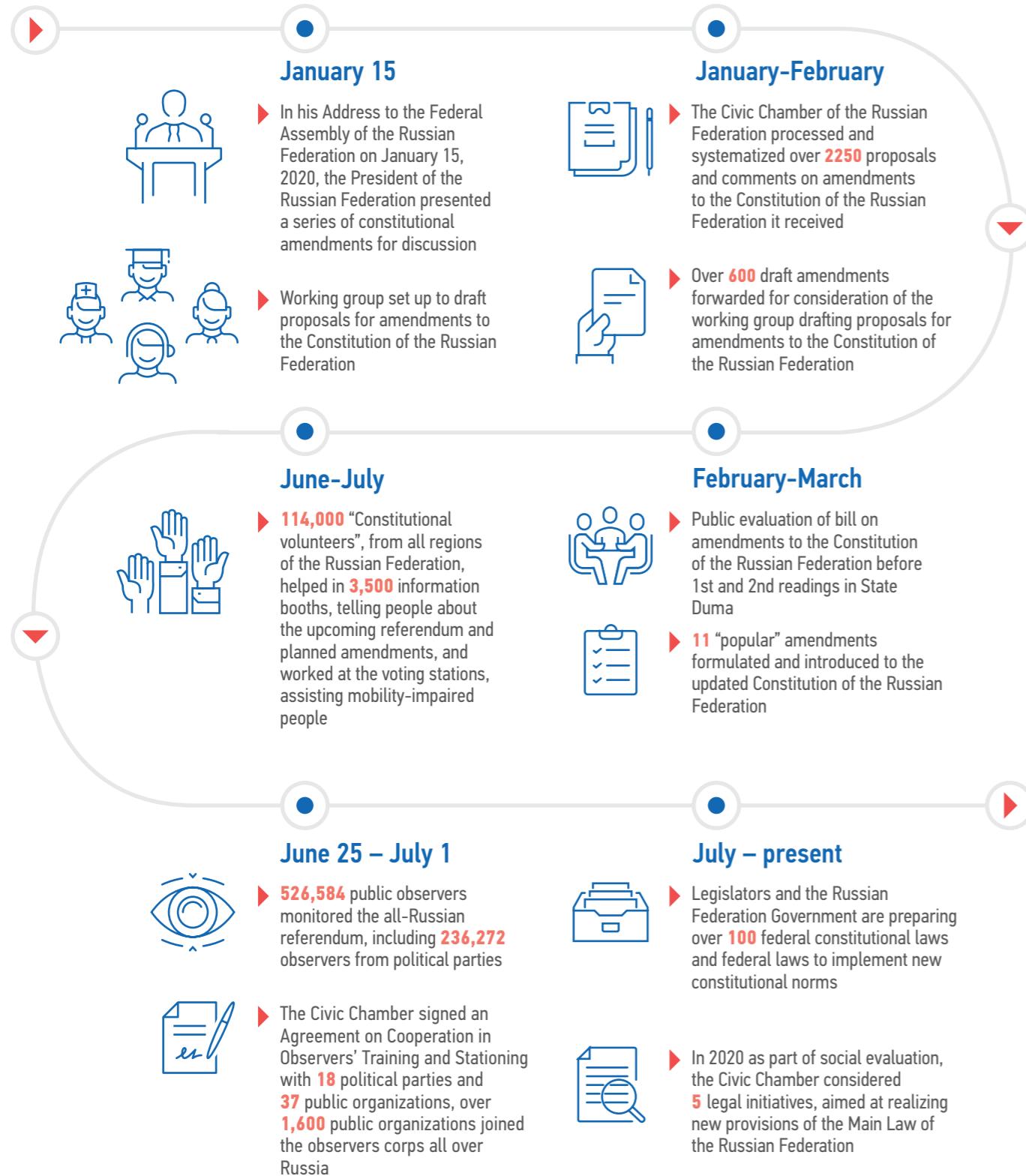
After analyzing the results of the monitoring of the all-Russia referendum, the Civic Chamber developed a package of proposals and recommendations aimed at improving the institution of public observation. In particular, the Chamber proposed: allowing the possibility of the federal budget and the budgets of the Russian regions to compensate the expenses of public observers incurred in the course of them exercising their powers; allowing the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation and the regional civic chambers the right to send observers to electoral commissions of any level (to regional civic chambers – within the corresponding region) from the moment the electoral campaign is announced, which facilitates the provision of transparency and increases the legitimacy of electoral procedures, regulating vital questions such as control of the collection of signatures for candidates, as well as checking signatures collected.

In view of the growing interest in civil society's observation of elections, the Civic Chamber is taking measures to: improve the institution of monitoring, including measures aimed at improved collaboration with organizations sending observers; develop the institution of preparing observers; and encourage students of leading law schools to work in situation centers.

Moreover, the introduction is planned of an online system of registration on общественныйнаблюдатель.рф (Public Observer) website to receive and consider observers' documents, and the updating of the "Gold Standard" of public observation with the aim of improving the wording, as well as preparing public monitoring experts for remote electronic voting.

11

“popular” amendments were fixed in the updated Russian Federation Constitution



During the all-Russia referendum on amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Civic Chamber invited over 50 foreign experts from over 20 countries. These included deputies of foreign, including European, parliaments, and representatives of governing bodies, OSCE, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. The foreign experts noted the high level of organization of the referendum and security at voting stations during the pandemic, and showed interest in Russian procedures for electronic voting. A number of experts expressed the willingness to learn from the Russian system when organizing elections in their own countries. The positive experience of foreign public observation allows the question of future access for foreign experts as legitimate observers at Russian elections. The Civic Chamber observation of the elections in foreign countries, for example, of the presidential elections in Belarus in 2010 and the USA in 2012, and of the parliamentary elections in Cambodia in 2018 was also positively evaluated. Considering the unique experience of the Russian Federation in organizing independent public observation of electoral procedures, it seems expedient to develop a practice of attracting observers from the Civic Chamber for monitoring elections abroad.

As a result of the 8-year experience of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation and the regional civic chambers, it can be said that a new mass public institution has been established to publicly monitor elections, and it successfully protects the vote of every Russian Federation citizen and fights attempts to delegitimize elections.

Legislative Implementation of Constitutional Amendments

Legislators and the Government of the Russian Federation are preparing over 100 federal constitutional laws and federal laws in compliance with new provisions in the Constitution of the Russian Federation. The regions make changes to their own legal acts – from the constitution and statutes to individual acts of the Russian

regions. The working group for drafting proposals for amendments to the Constitution is working on recording in legislation the proposals of citizens that were not reflected in the amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

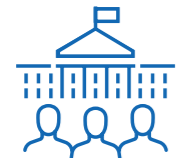
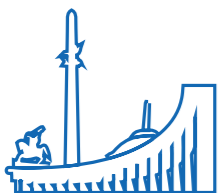




The task of the Civic Chamber here is to provide maximum public participation in the process of realizing amendments to the Constitution. This is achieved, among other means, by conducting public evaluations of relevant legal initiatives, such as happened, for example, with the legal changes proposed by search organizations and aimed at the offsetting up a system of active search for missing people by indentifying the location of their mobile devices using geolocation data. Another example is the collaboration between representatives of civil rights groups in improving the legislation on the provision of housing rights for rehabilitated citizens.²⁴ In both cases, within the framework of public evaluation, the agreement of the socially significant interests of various communities was provided for, and relevant proposals concerning improvements to bills were passed to legislators.






The main task of public evaluation is dialog between, and the agreement of, general public interests and the socially significant interests of various communities, the government, business, and the nonprofit sector. The Civic Chamber conducted a public evaluation which gives an independent public assessment of the regulatory implications of proposed legal solutions, along with a prognosis of the improvement or worsening in the situation of the people and individual social groups, and conditions for the realization of business or public activity.

After the approval of the amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, people began to look hopefully at those obligations that were raised to constitutional level — pension indexing, provision of minimum wage (MROT) at no less than subsistence minimum, affordable quality medical care, and affordable quality education. The Civic Chamber sees its task as living up to the expectations of the people.²⁵

> 90% of Russians, according to a public survey, supported the amendments that affect the social sphere



Proposal of Civic Chamber	How Implemented
 <p>○ on supporting civil society institutions and ensuring participation of public organizations and associations in the development and implementation of state policy</p>	<p>✓ realized in point e.1 of part 1 of article 114 of the Constitution</p>
 <p>○ on preserving historical memory and opposing falsification</p>	<p>✓ fixed in part 3 of article 67.1 of the Constitution</p>
 <p>○ on the legislative recognition of the need to preserve cultural heritage</p>	<p>✓ reflected in part 4 of article 68 of the Constitution</p>
 <p>○ on prohibiting the estrangement of Russian Federation territory</p>	<p>✓ preserved in part 2.1 of article 67 of the Constitution</p>
 <p>○ on the recognition of the understanding of “federal territory” in the Main Law of Russia</p>	<p>✓ realized in part 1 of article 67 of the Constitution</p>
 <p>○ on the indexing at least yearly of the volume of pension provision, social welfare, and other social payments for citizens</p>	<p>✓ realized in parts 6 and 7 of article 75 of the Constitution</p>

Proposal of Civic Chamber	How Implemented
 <p>○ on the recognition of a norm concerning the protection of the institution of family and traditional family values as one of the foundations of the civilizational identity of Russia, and also the endowment of the President of the Russian Federation with the responsibility to provide civil peace, and interethnic and interfaith cohesion</p>	<p>✓ realized: – in point g of part 1 of article 72 of the Constitution; – in point v of part 1 of article 114 of the Constitution; – in part 2 of article 80 of the Constitution</p>
 <p>○ on the elaboration of authority in the joint competence of the Russian Federation and the constituent areas of the Russian Federation, as regards the provision of access to quality medical care for the population and the coordination of questions of health care</p>	<p>✓ realized in point g of part 1 of article 72 of the Constitution</p>
 <p>○ on the delineation of authority between the Russian Federation and the constituent areas of the Russian Federation, as regards the provision of security in the use of digital information technology within the country, for citizens of the Russian Federation</p>	<p>✓ realized in point m of part 1 of article 71 of the Constitution</p>
 <p>○ on rejecting development which is not in line with the contemporary stage of development of the state of the sovereignty of the Russian Federation, in accordance with which the chambers of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation could assemble to hear speeches by leaders of foreign nations</p>	<p>✓ realized in the amended part 3 of article 100 of the Constitution</p>
 <p>○ on the realization of public oversight of compliance with national voting procedure, with the participation of public observers, a pool of whom is formed by the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation and regional civic chambers of the Russian Federation</p>	<p>✓ fixed in part 16 of article 2 of Law No. 1-FKZ of the Russian Federation, of 14 March 2020, on introducing an amendment to the Constitution of the Russian Federation “On Improving the Regulation of Certain Aspects of the Organization and Functioning of Public Authority”</p>

The Civic Chamber actively involved itself in the public oversight of the realization of the “popular” amendments to the Russian Constitution. In 2020, within the framework of public evaluation, a series of legal initiatives was considered, aimed at realizing the new provisions of the Main Law of the Russian Federation, including:

- # planned amendments to the Law on education concerning mentoring students.²⁶ The Chamber approved a bill with a series of comments, including some concerning the optimization of accountability for teachers, and introduced proposals for the development of mentoring programs;²⁷
- # a planned federal law providing the introduction of legal processes to take decisions about removing children from their families if their lives or health are under threat.²⁸ The bill provoked fierce debate, particularly as concerns the proposed order to remove a child from family “within 24 hours”, and the Chamber made a series of serious comments.²⁹ As a consequence, the bill was retracted by members of the legislative initiative and removed from the State Duma consideration;
- # planned federal laws on youth policy in the Russian Federation.³⁰ The Chamber generally supported the planned provisions, underlining the necessity for their agreement with the Family Code and other current regulatory acts, noting the inadmissibility of diminishing guarantees for people who fall into the “young adult” category;³¹
- # planned amendments to the Federal Law “On Official Language of the Russian Federation”, with regard to improving the mechanisms for the provision of the status of the Russian language as the official language of the Russian Federation.³² In conclusion of the results of the public evaluation of the bill, the Civic Chamber underlines the necessity to provide a complex system of support for studying the Russian language, including abroad, and introduces proposals concerning the setting of qualifying requirements for knowledge of the Russian language for people deputizing in public office.³³

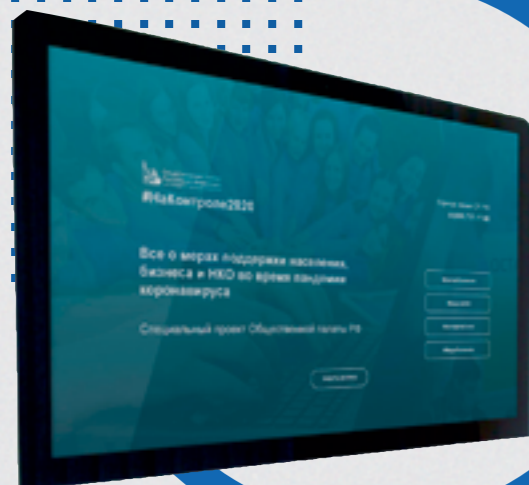
The Civic Chamber conducts annual public evaluation of the planned federal budget. In the planned federal budget for 2021, and for the planning period for 2022 and 2023, financing is provided for a nationwide plan of action to ensure job and income recovery for the population, as well as unprecedented anti-crisis measures aimed at supporting citizens and the worst-hit branches of the economy. At the same time, the Civic Chamber noted a series of existing shortcomings in the planning of the federal budget:

- # the impossibility to make adequate evaluations of the effectiveness of budgetary expenses, due to the absence of measurable target indicators;
- # the return, beginning in 2022, of limited expense capping, in full accordance with budget rules;
- # significantly reduced financing for national projects and government programs;
- # insufficient spending of the consolidated budget on government support for families and children to ensure population reproduction. According to data from the special “Demographics 2024” report by the Civic Chamber,³⁴ it should be no less than 2.2% of GDP (1.2% is planned for 2021). At the same time, no less than 40% of all investment must be used to support large families (at present it is 8%);
- # reduction of financing for projects connected with supporting the nonprofit sector and civil society.

Based on the results of discussions held, in general support of the bill, and accounting for the above-mentioned comments, the Civic Chamber formulated a series of recommendations for the Government of the Russian Federation, including those concerning financial provision for children with rare (orphan) diseases, and the preservation of the level of finance for measures of support for the nonprofit sector and the activities of public development institutions, in the context of demand for the work of socially oriented nonprofit organizations during the pandemic.³⁵

A priority for constitutional amendments is creating conditions for sustainable economic growth in the country and the increased welfare of the people, and the formation of effective social policy. The Civic Chamber records the appeals of the people for qualitative changes to the social sphere. It is clear that social amendments must have a direct impact on the development of government solutions, including documents of strategic planning. In connection with this, in its proposals for the projected single plan for the realization of national aims confirmed by Russian President’s Decree No.474 of July 21, 2020, the Civic Chamber noted the importance of providing constitutional social guarantees.

Considering the current appeal to strengthen the role of civil society in the legislative process, the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation proposes to approve additional measures for the improvement of public debating procedures for projected laws and regulations. Federal government agencies must in timely fashion update information about hearings, as well as publish up-to-date revisions of the bills and projected regulations on the official site <https://regulation.gov.ru>, along with information concerning imminent project hearings in the Civic Chamber and the conclusions and recommendations of the Civic Chamber.



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A World United against the Pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic has become essentially a global test for all humanity, a trial for all countries of the effectiveness of public administration systems and, in just the same way, of the maturity and effectiveness of public structures.

In spring 2020 in our country, as all over the world, the government was forced, urgently and with a huge deficit of information, to seek out and approve restrictive protection measures on an unprecedented scale, right up to a two-month lockdown. At the start of the year it was impossible to imagine that in the year of the 75th anniversary of the Great Victory, the parade would have to be delayed until the summer, and the Immortal Regiment march would be held online.

Also in the face of time pressure and uncertainty, the government had to take the challenge and decide questions of support for the people and the economy, and not allow the health system to collapse, while thousands of companies were temporarily unable to work, and millions of employees and students worked and studied online.

The pandemic remains in the autumn and winter of 2020, and society is in the process of learning to live and work with the risk and restrictions of coronavirus, in its own way a process of developing “social immunity.” A significant role in this is played by nonprofit organizations which understand that their help can save the health, and sometimes the lives, of the people they meant to help.

#МыВместе (We Are Together): the New Face of Volunteering and Charity Work

Civil society’s response to the pandemic has been the unprecedented growth of volunteer activity. Spring saw the launch of the all-Russia mutual-aid campaign #МыВместе (We Are Together), within the framework of which anyone can offer their help or ask for it. The campaign was organized by the DOBRO. RU platform, the All-Russia People’s Front, the Public Movement of Medical Volunteers, and the Association of Volunteer Centers supported by the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation. The campaign had a round-the-clock hotline to help the elderly and people with limited mobility, with call-center specialists consulting, and registering appeals for help. Volunteer stations in all the

Russian regions provided timely response to appeals.

Over 118,000 volunteers from all around the country provided unpaid assistance to elderly people living alone and those with disabilities, orphan children, and war veterans. Everybody who needed support was provided with food, essential goods, medicines, and help around the home. Since the launch of the campaign, over 9,000 partner organizations have joined.³⁶ Donations from businesses and private individuals were collected to a total value of over 1.8 billion rubles, which facilitated the charitable support of approximately 3.5 million people all around Russia,³⁷ for many of whom it was a real life saver.

Regional civic chambers were also actively participating in this work, coordinating the volunteers’ work, providing the authorities with local information about where there is tension surrounding restrictive measures, and where the support measures are working and where they aren’t. Due to the efforts of the regional civic chambers, hotlines were launched to organize voluntary assistance, including that concerning: adherence to self-isolation regimes; and provision of personal protective equipment, information, and legal consultations for citizens, medical workers working with people infected with coronavirus, and nonprofit organizations, concerning the question of their continued work in times of restricted measures. With increased demand for personal protective equipment, the chambers helped

118,000

volunteers around the whole country provided unpaid help to elderly people living alone, disabled people, orphans, and veterans



#МыВместе

The all-Russian mutual-help campaign, during which volunteers delivered food, essential goods, and medicines, and helped around the home. Since the beginning of the campaign, approximately **3.5 million people** received help, and over **9,000 partner organizations** joined. The campaign collected donations from business and private persons to a total of over **1.8 billion rubles**.

#НаКонтроле2020

A special project dedicated to explaining support measures for the population, business, and NPOs during the coronavirus pandemic: topical hotlines and internet resources



#НашОтвет

Initiatives, expert opinion and explanation of support measures for the people and business



#ВместеНКО

Nonprofit sector work in the new conditions and information about measures to support it, a platform for the exchange of success stories of socially focused NPOs reformatting their work and assisting people during the pandemic



#ДокторПрописал

An internet platform for the exchange of information between doctors and the patient community. Leading medics from the capital and the regions gave advice and recounted their experience of treating COVID-19 patients



#АнтифейкCOVID

Exposure of false information, explanation of the law and tactics to oppose local-level fakery, analysis of fake news and messages, life hacks, and recommendations on how to distinguish true facts from misleading statements in the Internet



#МерыРегионов

Information about local-level problems arising in all 85 Russian regions, and restrictions and support measures for the population, doctors, businesses, and NPOs



nonprofit organizations to organize their own production of masks, from materials acquired by nonprofit organizations, to be given free of charge to medical organizations.

The regional chambers also realized public oversight over pricing policy in grocery stores and pharmacies, and the reservation of additional beds equipped with ventilators in medical organizations.

Religious organizations of all traditional Russian confessions made a significant contribution to the organization of social assistance for people and the medical community. Social services and volunteers from religious communities provided help for those who asked for it, irrespective of their religious worldview. Special attention was paid by these religious organizations to the safeguarding of the rights of believers during the pandemic. The leaders of religious organizations and secular

authorities in the regions jointly discussed solutions to the question of visiting religious institutions and observing all necessary health regulations.

In “Assistance for doctors” 7,000 volunteer medics helped in 160 medical institutions around the country, assisting doctors. They actually performed the duties of medium-grade medical personnel, gave psychological support, used their own transport to ferry doctors to their places of work, and delivered food packages and personal protective equipment to hospitals.³⁸ With a deficit of medical masks, protective suits, and respirators in pharmacies, they also organized production of masks and their unpaid delivery to medical facilities.³⁹

In the process of providing hands-on assistance to the population with the effort of volunteer associations and nonprofit organizations, several bottleneck situations became apparent in the

country’s healthcare system, among which were bed space, doctor training, laboratories, mobilization plans, and orders for providing scheduled assistance.⁴⁰

The experience of volunteer associations and nonprofit organizations in providing help in an emergency situation must be consolidated, and the best practices should be introduced to the Russian regions. In this connection, it is proposed to confirm, in all the regions, the order of cooperation between medical institutions and volunteer organizations in the provision of medical assistance to the population.⁴¹

Since September 29, 2020, the #МыВместе (We Are Together) mutual-assistance campaign was reactivated and is now active in most of the Russian regions.

Meanwhile the lack of information became a significant problem. With an abundance of all kinds of rumors, and the general panicked mood, a lack of popular access to, and understanding of, official information about active restrictive measures in the relevant regions was revealed. The pandemic highlighted the need for qualitative changes in the information transparency of the government, and the formation of unified demands for access to information about government actions and for standard publications of regional laws and regulations, particularly those concerning restrictions of the rights and freedoms of citizens.⁴²

In response to difficulties experienced by people facing their first serious restrictions introduced by federal, departmental, and regional acts and regulations from the regions’ chief public health officers, the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation launched the special **#НаКонтроле2020 (Under Control 2020)**⁴³ informational project, aimed at clarifying support measures for the population, business, and nonprofit organizations during the pandemic.

A very important part of the project was the work of four hotlines dedicated to supporting the population, business, and nonprofit sector, and the disclosure of

false information about COVID-19 and the activities of medical institutions. The same subjects were covered by five topical sections of the website, which were constantly updated.

The main information sections of the special project #НаКонтроле2020 (Under Control 2020):

- **#НашОтвет (Our Response)** – initiatives, expert opinion, expert explanation of support measures for people and business;
- **#ВместеНКО (NPOs Together)** – nonprofit sector work in the new situation and information about measures of its support, a platform for the exchange of success stories of socially oriented NPOs reformatting their work and assisting people during the pandemic;
- **#Доктор Прописал (Doctor Ordered)** – an internet platform for the exchange of information between doctors and the patient community. Leading medics from the capital and the regions gave advice and recounted their experience of treating COVID-19 patients;
- **#Антифейк COVID (Antifake COVID)** – exposure of false information, explanation of the law and tactics to oppose local-level fakery, analysis of fake news and messages, life hacks, and recommendations on how to distinguish true facts from misleading statements on the Internet;
- **#Меры Регионов (Regional Measures)** – information about local-level problems arising in all 85 Russian regions, restrictions and support measures for the population, doctors, businesses, and NPOs.

Within the #НаКонтроле2020 (Under Control) project, citizens and regional civic chambers of the Russian Federation drew attention to a wide range of problems such as: the deficit of medical masks and personal protective equipment in pharmacies; the halted work of companies in various spheres of business; the build-up of significant debt for utilities companies and organizations in connection with delayed payments, in particular owners and lessees in shopping centers; and the low level of preparation of the administration of educational organizations, teachers, students, and parents for online education, and the low quality of education in this format.⁴⁴ Also a serious problem connected with failures in the

rendering of home-based assistance and in cases of the hospitalization of socially vulnerable people needing constant nursing care and social support, who are infected with the coronavirus or have been in contact with infected persons became highlighted. In the “Community” forum, the Civic Chamber organized a discussion of all the questions mentioned with leading charity organizations and NPOs.

The forum noted that problems such as administrative barriers, insufficient public awareness of volunteer activity and the resulting low involvement in it, as well as problems with legal status and insurance guarantees for volunteers remain critical. In this connection in particular, it is necessary to ensure public oversight over the fulfilment of the “Plan of Action to Realize the Concept of Facilitating the Development of Voluntary Work in the Russian Federation until 2025,” with respect to charging the regional governments of the Russian Federation to support the development of voluntary work.⁴⁵

Analyzing and consolidating the work experience of volunteer organizations during the pandemic, the Civic Chamber formulated an extensive package of recommendations to increase the effectiveness of collaboration between volunteers, the competent authorities, and civil society. It is particularly worth improving: public accessibility of information concerning the possibility of receiving assistance; security for volunteers; the regulation of volunteer access to social and medical organizations; assistance for medics and social workers; and the provision to organizations of the social servicing and social protection of computer technology and Internet access.⁴⁶

Although the pandemic continues, the results of 2020 show a new paradigm of collaboration between the government, organized civil society institutions, NPOs, and volunteers, when for the first time in recent memory they helped to create and successfully launch operative horizontal network structures for mutual assistance.

Support Measures for SMEs and Nonprofit Sector

The pandemic, and the lockdown enforced in the spring to stop it, threatened business and had a negative effect on the economy. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs), forced to swiftly reorganize their business strategies in the absence of resources and reserves, found themselves in a very hard situation.

Since April, support measures were available for SMEs in respect of deadlines for providing documentation concerning tax payments, extensions or instalments for tax payments, advance payments of taxes and insurance premiums, and the suspension of checks, subsidized loans for job retention, etc.⁴⁷ In July a program was launched proposing the subsidies for socially oriented NPOs and SMEs to follow the recommendation of Rospotrebnadzor.⁴⁸

The Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation were monitoring support measures for SMEs in the branches of the economy worst hit by the pandemic. It evaluated the potential of the government’s support measures, forwarded proposals to the Government of the Russian Federation concerning the necessity to extend deadlines for applying to receive the status of social entrepreneur,⁴⁹ and provided a platform for the exchange of best social business practices during the pandemic.⁵⁰

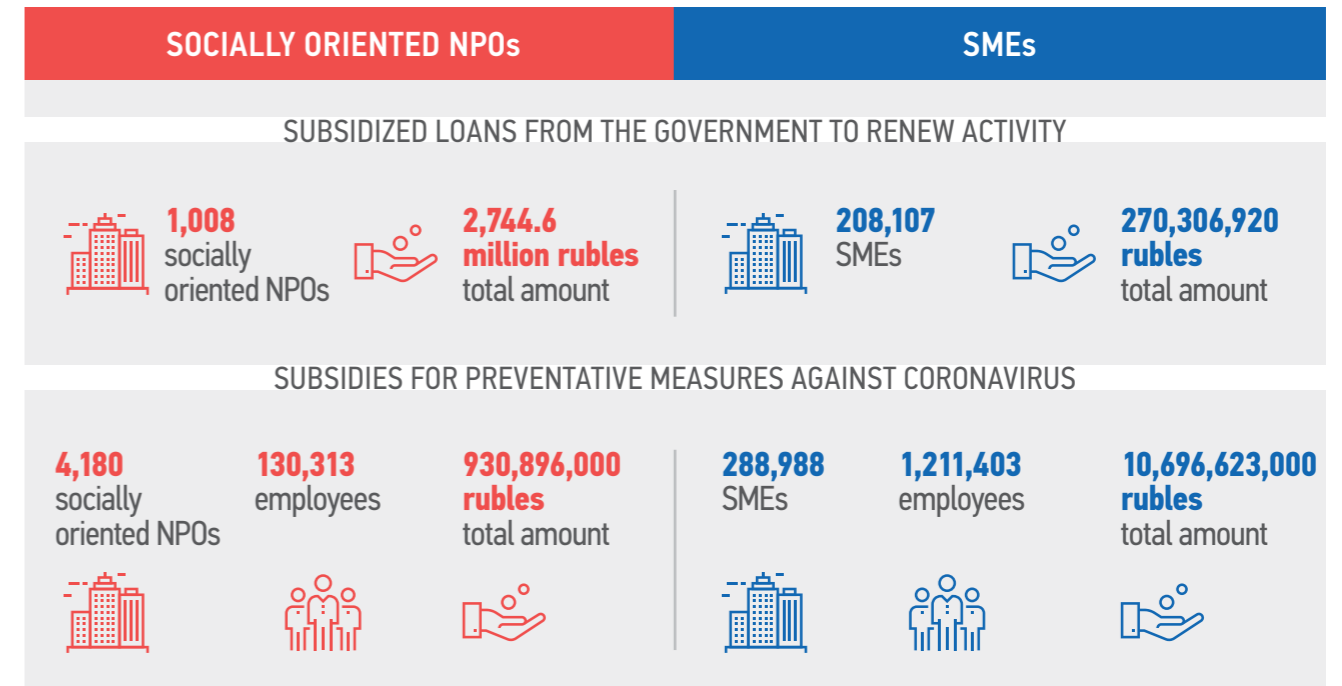
The first government economy support package only contained support measures for entrepreneurs, and nonprofit organizations were not accepted as serious participants in the economic process capable to make a fair contribution to economic development and support.

At the same time, society showed solidarity in solving rising problems. Public volunteer associations, as well as socially oriented NPOs, came to the aid of elderly people, those suffering from chronic diseases, and disabled people (providing targeted aid and delivering groceries, medicines, and personal protection equipment), providing support to government medical and social institutions.

40,000
nonprofit organizations became potential receivers of government help



The government established **2 NPO registers** to distribute support measures



NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS USED THE FOLLOWING SUPPORT MEASURES

EXEMPTION FROM PAYING ADVANCE TAX AND PAYMENTS AND FEES

1,742 socially oriented NPOs
162 million rubles

EXEMPTION FROM PAYING INSURANCE PREMIUMS

24,200 socially oriented NPOs
8.8 billion rubles

SOCIAL INCOME TAX REDUCTIONS FOR AMOUNTS INDICATED AS DONATIONS

6,166 tax payers
1,347,834,000 rubles

Special unscheduled competition held by Presidential Grants Foundation



900 winners



total amount of grants **2 billion rubles**

The Civic Chamber was among the first to draw attention to problems of socially oriented NPOs, which arose due to the pandemic and the introduction of restrictive measures, and it proposed to approve support measures for NPOs. The demand and effectiveness of socially oriented NPOs during the pandemic was acknowledged by the Russian President and Government. The Civic Chamber proposals formulated between March and May 2020 were heard, and reflected the relevant instructions of the Russian President and state-approved laws and regulations.⁵¹

In April the Civic Chamber launched the #ВместеНКО (NPOs Together) hotline. Organizations forwarded to the hotline information about how they had reorganized their work, and were now helping people in these hard times, as well as about what they needed themselves.

Based on the work done, the Civic Chamber achieved the unprecedented support measures for the NPO sector with regard to: temporary exemption from paying taxes and insurance; checks; provision of subsidized loans and a series of other tax incentives for businesses donating their assets free of charge to socially oriented NPOs.⁵² Approximately 40,000 nonprofit organizations became potential beneficiaries of government aid.⁵³

The government created **two registers of NPOs** with the right to receive support measures. The first includes: organizations that have received financial support from all levels of public funds, including Presidential grants; providers of social services in the last three years; and NPOs included in the register of public service providers. The second register includes NPOs excluded from the first but in need of support, inasmuch as their activity has suffered seriously as a result of the pandemic – educational and charitable organizations.

The Civic Chamber was the most active participant in the formation of both the NPO registers. The Civic Chamber, public councils under federal executive authorities, and regional civic chambers did everything possible to make sure that not one NPO was

forgotten. As a result, the Civic Chamber promoted the idea of combining the two registers.

The proposal to create a single register of socially oriented NPOs was raised at a meeting of the Russian President with the new Civic Chamber composition. The President supported this idea and charged the Russian Government and Civic Chamber to jointly work out proposals concerning the development and management of a single register of socially oriented and other NPOs with the right to receive additional government support.⁵⁴

In August the Civic Chamber began publicly debating bills and planned regulations aimed at merging of two registers into one. The single NPO register is to be developed with understandable rules concerning inclusion in, and exclusion from, it. The digitalization and public online accessibility of the register will facilitate a huge increase in transparency and efficiency of regulation and support for the nonprofit sector.⁵⁵

In its special report to the Russian President,⁵⁶ the Civic Chamber proposed changing the approach to the development of the single register of socially oriented NPOs, originally proposed by the Government, and expanding the circle of organizations liable for inclusion in it. It proposed providing socially oriented NPOs which did not fulfil the criteria for automatic inclusion the right to appeal to the Ministry of Economic Development for inclusion in the register based on additional criteria, and also endowing the Civic Chamber and regional civic chambers with the right to plead on behalf of NPOs if they consider they have been unjustly excluded from the single register.⁵⁷

The Russian Civic Chamber continues to analyze the effectiveness of the support measures for socially oriented NPOs.

In total, for the support of socially oriented NPOs, the Government earmarked:

- # subsidized loans for resuming the activity of organizations, for 1,008 socially oriented NPOs

to a total of 2,744.6 million rubles. At the same time, for the same aims, loans were given to 208,107 small and medium businesses to a total of 270,306.92 thousand rubles;⁵⁸

- # subsidies for prophylactic measures against coronavirus infection, for 4,180 socially oriented NPOs (employing 130,313 employees) to a total of 930,896 thousand rubles. At the same time, for the same aims, loans were given to 288,998 small and medium businesses (employing 1,211,403 employees) to a total of 10,696,623 thousand rubles;⁵⁹

On top of this, the second quarter of 2020 saw nonprofit organizations using the following support measures:

- # exemption from paying advance payments – 1,742 socially oriented NPOs to a total of 162 million rubles;⁶⁰
- # exemption from paying insurance premiums – 24.2 thousand socially oriented NPOs to a total of 8.8 billion rubles;⁶¹
- # 6,166 tax payers received personal-income-tax deductions, for sums itemized as contributions, to a total of 1,347,834 thousand rubles.⁶²

To support socially oriented NPOs during the pandemic, a special unscheduled competition was held by the Presidential Grants Foundation. The results of independent evaluation produced 900 winning organizations. The total value of grants awarded by the President within the special contest was 2 billion rubles.⁶³

In general, the measures approved to support socially oriented NPOs did not simply prevent the cessation of activity for a host of organizations, but also set the direction of development for the sector for years ahead. A significant step forward was taken to support both the nonprofit sector and socially responsible business.

It is all the more important not to lose established potential in the worsening epidemiologic situation of autumn 2020 (the second wave of the pandemic).

Continuing its work in consolidating the experience of the nonprofit sector, now in the second wave of the pandemic, on November 24 the Civic Chamber formulated a series of recommendations aimed at increasing and maintaining the integrity of organizations whose activity is aimed at helping socially vulnerable categories of people, and presented them to the Russian government. Public appeals for support from NPOs continue to grow with the difficult epidemiologic situation. It is necessary to introduce additional measures of support for the NPOs and volunteers which allow them to provide assistance to all those in need.⁶⁴

“Regional NPO” Ratings

The pandemic especially brightly showed the high demand among citizens for the help of nonprofit organizations. In those regions where the sector is more active and cohesive, with well-oiled cooperation between them and the government, socially responsible business, and the press, the role of NPOs in the solution of problems created by the pandemic has become more significant.

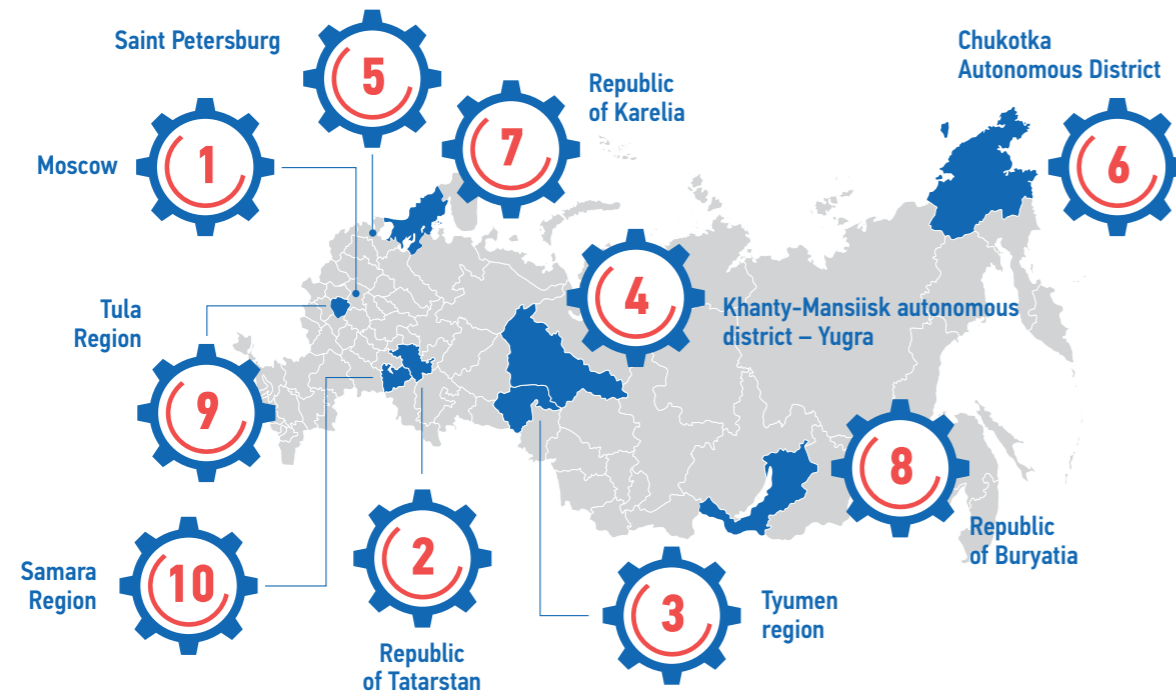
In order to reveal the level and quality of the development of the regional nonprofit sector, to define its potential and possibilities for its realization, in 2020 the Civic Chamber realized a pilot project to establish the “Regional NPO” Third Sector Rating. It is based on a multidimensional model that includes 9 factors, 39 indicators, and 185 primary parameters. The Civic Chamber’s partner in this project was the RAEX rating agency.

The Rating was presented at the final “Community” forum in Moscow on November 2, 2020.⁶⁵

The main questions answered by the Rating are how developed the nonprofit sector is in the region, how great is its potential, and how effectively is that potential being realized in practice for cooperation with the main interested parties.

To develop the Rating, a wealth of knowledge was gathered from ministries and agencies, and from

TOP 10 REGIONS FOR LEVEL AND QUALITY OF NONPROFIT SECTOR DEVELOPMENT



open sources: the Justice Ministry, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Federal State Statistics Service, Agency of Social Information, and SPARK-Interfax, among others. The results of an expert poll conducted by the Civic Chamber among members of the regional chambers and experts were also used.

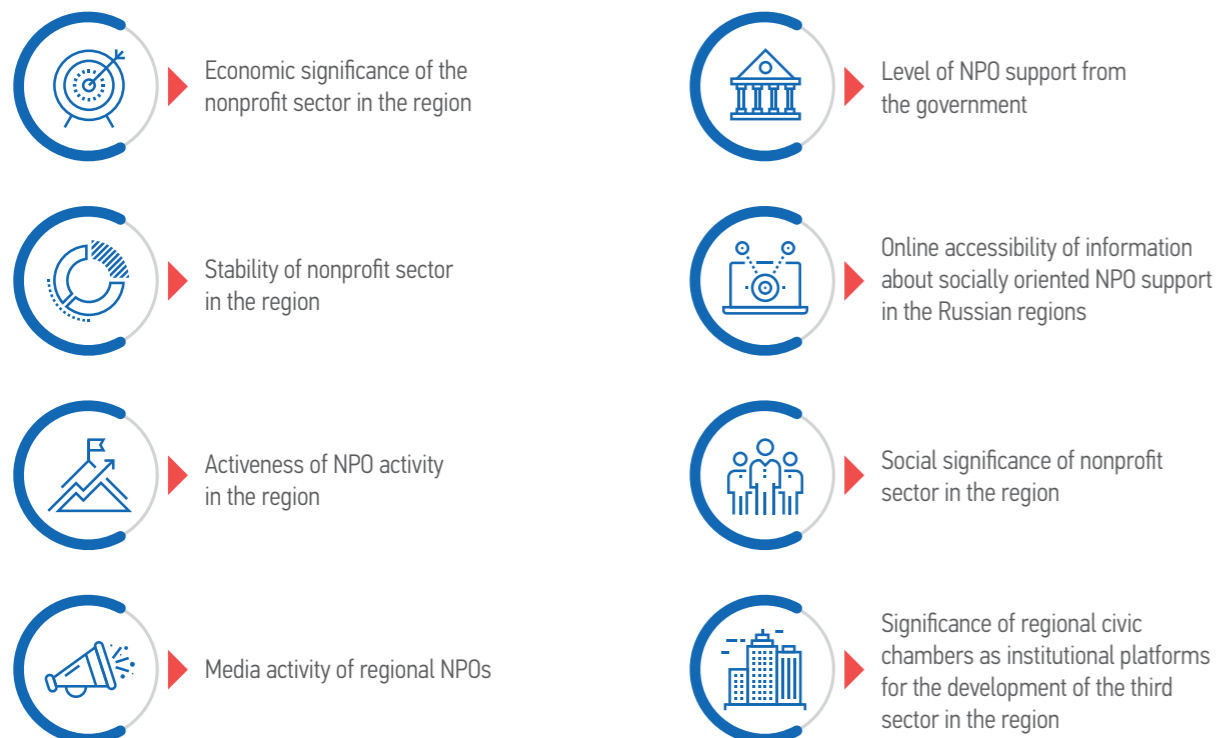
According to the Rating, the following regions made the top 10: Moscow, the Republic of Tatarstan, the Tyumen Region, the Khanty-Mansiisk autonomous district – Yugra, St. Petersburg, the Chukotka Autonomous District, the Republic of Karelia, the Republic of Buryatia, the Tula Region, and the Samara Region.

The regions can use the Rating to evaluate not only their positions according to level and quality of development of the third sector, but also how

effectively managed and transparent the regional NPO-support system is, how actively NPOs participate in finding solutions to social problems, and how well established mutual relations are between the nonprofit sector, the government, business, and the media. Aside from which, according to all the indicators used in the rating, a chart of recommendations has been prepared, which regional governments and NPO support and development institutions will be able to use in their practical work.

The Civic Chamber reckons that the “Regional NPO” Rating will stimulate discussion on federal, regional, and local levels: what or who does third sector development really depend on, and what needs to be done so that this development is progressive and sustainable.

THE LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE NONPROFIT SECTOR IS DEFINED BY 8 OBJECTIVE FACTORS





4



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#National Development Aims – the View of Civil Society



National Development Aims – the View of Civil Society

With Decree No. 474 of July 21, 2020, the President defined 5 national development aims for Russia, extending the planning horizon until 2030: preservation of the population and the health and welfare of the people; opportunities for self-realization and talent development; a comfortable and safe living environment; respectable and effective labor and successful entrepreneurship; digital transformation.

In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the government faced new challenges that demanded solutions and means to stabilize the epidemiological situation, economic development, and financing.

At the same time, social guarantees fixed in the Constitution must be fully observed, and popular appeals for qualitative changes in the social sphere must be considered.

To preserve citizens' social positions and the government's systematic improvement and accountability of these aims, the Civic Chamber began monitoring and evaluating socially significant strategic documents, among which were: the Nationwide Plan of Action for Economic Recovery; a single plan to achieve Russian national development aims by 2024, and for the planning period until 2030; and formulating proposals on the improvement of national projects which the President has charged the Government with the improvement of.

Public Debate of the Nationwide Plan of Action for Economic Recovery

To ensure retention of jobs and income for the population, renewed economic growth and long-term structural changes to the economy, and negotiation of crisis phenomena resulting from the coronavirus pandemic, the Government prepared the Nationwide Plan of Action for Economic Recovery.

Taking into consideration the heightened interest in the Plan by citizens and business structures the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation together with the regional civic chambers developed proposals on supplementing the Plan with a complex of special support measures for the most vulnerable categories of citizens, as well as small and medium enterprises and forwarded them to the Russian Government.

The Civic Chamber's proposals, aimed at supporting the most vulnerable categories of citizen, were reflected in the Plan's provision to establish a single digital platform for the increased targeting and effectiveness of social support measures at federal, regional and municipal level, as well as to extend the list of provisions included in the program of social adaptation for recipients of government social welfare on the basis of a social contract.

The Civic Chamber highlighted the necessity of support measures for Russian farming and it was reckoned with in the Plan. The Plan includes provisions aimed at increasing the public procurement share of Russian-farm-grown agricultural and food products, and measures to improve information support for SMEs and self-employed people.

The Civic Chamber proposals of support for SMEs hit by the pandemic were reflected in Plan provisions concerning: access for SMEs to support measures, including by means of synchronizing existing online support platforms and services within a single digital one-stop-shop platform, as well as in provisions to restrict the number of checks (and bases for conducting them) in 2021 compared to 2020; and the gradual switch to completely paperless cooperation between supervising bodies and SMEs.⁶⁶



Civic Chamber Proposals for the Single Plan to Achieve National Development Aims

In accordance with Russian President's Decree No. 474 of July 21, 2020, the Government has developed a single plan to achieve national development aims by 2024, and for the planning period until 2030. It defines strategic priorities for the next 10 years, and specific Government steps to achieve aims fixed in the President's Decree. The plan gathered together all the aims, key indicators, and achievement mechanisms, resources, responsibilities of federal authorities, and improvements to create new tasks for national projects. The prepared Russian Government Plan⁶⁷ must ensure retention of jobs and income for the population, economic growth, and long-term structural changes to the economy.

Members of the Civic Chamber presented their proposals concerning the Plan at a Government meeting to discuss the draft Plan, chaired by First Deputy Chairman of the Russian Government Andrey Belousov, on November 16, 2020.⁶⁸

The people need qualitative changes in the social sphere. The society's growing demand for government transparency in the decision-making process, and the involvement of the civil society institutions in the development of strategic-planning documents and oversight over their realization have become notable trends.

In this connection, it was proposed to consolidate the target indicator of public satisfaction, and include the Civic Chamber as coauthor of the Single Plan and national projects as regards public oversight and monitoring, and evaluation of the

achievement of their target indicators. It was also proposed to reject the departmental approach to the formulation, improvement, and realization of national projects. This work must be conducted with the participation of all interested parties, and various government authorities and civil society institutions. It is necessary to take measures to increase cooperation between authorities and civil society institutions while improving and realizing national projects. It is also important to accelerate Government implementation of a high-quality, modern information system to monitor the realization of national projects, and develop measures to increase connectivity between all national projects, and information openness in the realization of national projects.

Preservation of the population is acknowledged as the main national goal by the vast majority of our people.⁶⁹ However, with significant growth in finance volumes for demographic policy,⁷⁰ the demographic situation is not yet changing and the resident population is decreasing.⁷¹ Increased birth rate must play a key role in bucking this trend.

It is proposed to change the formulation of the aim of the Single Plan to achieve national development aims, from “stabilized birth rate” to “increased birth rate,” which will allow a more precise reflection of the main idea of demographic policy in times of low birth rate. To ensure increased birth rate, it is necessary to: establish Future Generation Fund; conduct research on the social wellbeing of families with children; consider the positive experience of high-income regions which also demonstrate a high birth rate (the Sakhalin Region); and step up the fight against poverty, within the framework of which it is proposed to change the Low Income” bracket, as defined in the Single Plan, to Families with Children; as well as supplement the Plan with a special section or addendum containing a list of public projects targeted at achieving the aims of national development.

As regards to education, it was proposed to supplement the national aims using the indicator of attracting students to a system of additional education in progressive areas of science and technology, and to a system of intellectual

volunteering and mentoring, as well as to develop the spiritual, ethical, and formative elements of the education system.

To solve the problem of low life expectancy, it was proposed to consolidate work on the formulation of a prophylactic continuum to include the strengthening of public health (population prophylaxis), medical prophylaxis (health assessment), and regular medical checkups, as well as the creation of a system for the stable epidemiological monitoring of the prevalence and risk-factor dynamic of chronic noncontagious diseases in the various regions.

Within the system of long-term care, a complex approach was proposed which implies that people providing vital care for relatives who are unemployable and no longer able to realize their life plans are fully fledged target groups for the system of long-term care. With the realization of the system of long-term care, it was proposed: to ensure provision of free care services for up to 28 hours per week for elderly or disabled people in need; to provide medical patronage; and to organize day centers, specialized rental points for rehabilitation equipment, and schools of care for relatives.

The Civic Chamber continued to realize public oversight over ensuring the achievement of national development aims as defined by the President of the Russian Federation.

Improvement of National Projects and Public Monitoring of their Implementation

In his Address to the Federal Assembly of January 15, 2020, the President of the Russian Federation defined the preservation and expansion of the population as the highest national priority. At the same time, the head of state underlined the necessity to quickly solve the large-scale social, economic, and technological tasks facing the country. The substance of these tasks was reflected in the national projects, the realization

The Russian President charged the Civic Chamber to become involved with the current improvement and monitoring of national projects, to concentrate and consolidate, and to put difficult questions to all levels of government. Public institutions were enticed to work on important strategic-planning documents: single plan for the achievement of national development aims, and the nationwide plan of action for economic recovery.

> 500 proposals were received by the Civic Chamber regarding the improvement of national projects and ways to monitor their implementation

> 500 proposals were gathered and analyzed regarding supporting civil initiatives and promoting best practices for improving people’s wellbeing

CIVIC CHAMBER PROPOSALS



Fix in the registration documents of all national projects the target indicator of public satisfaction



Approve measures to increase the level of cooperation between the government and public institutions while improving and realizing national projects, which includes discussing problem questions at the Civic Chamber Coordination Council for national projects and the preservation of the population



Include the Civic Chamber in the registration documents of all national projects as co-executor to ensuring public oversight and monitoring, and evaluation of the achievement of their target indicators



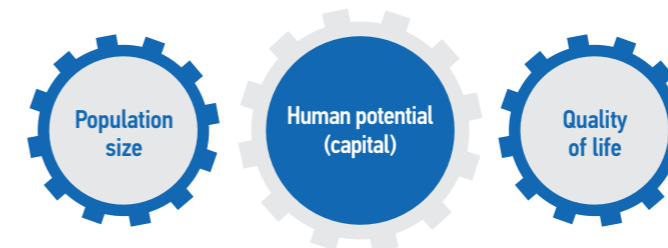
Support the Russian Government’s implementation work on a high-quality contemporary information system for monitoring the realization of national projects. Stipulate measures for increasing information openness for the realization of national projects



Reject the departmental approach to the formulation, improvement, and realization of national projects. This work must be conducted with the participation of all interested parties, and various government departments and civil society institutions

EVALUATION OF NATIONAL PROJECTS BASED ON INDEX OF POPULATION PRESERVATION

THE INDEX INCLUDES 3 CATEGORIES



Each category consists of groups that include a set of statistical and sociological indicators. The index includes **53** statistical and **81** sociological survey indicators

of which demands better quality government management, work at all levels of public authority, and direct dialog with civil society.

The pandemic and new economic reality made it necessary to change the planning horizon for national aims and national projects, and improve them, accounting for the economic crisis and new tendencies in the global economy.

After a meeting of the Presidential Council for Strategic Development and National Projects, the President charged the Government to integrate the measures of the Nationwide Plan of Action for Economic Recovery into national projects, and to provide for the achievement of socially significant results in the improved national projects directly affecting the quality of people's lives. He also charged the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation to ensure regular public oversight over the realization of national projects.⁷²

Earlier, on June 25, 2020, at a meeting with members of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, the President had also charged the Civic Chamber to become involved with the current improvement and monitoring of national projects, to concentrate and consolidate, and to put difficult questions to all levels of public authorities.⁷³

Within the implementation framework of the President's instructions, the Civic Chamber commissions and the regional civic chambers formulated proposals on the improvement of national projects. The work was directly connected to the analysis of the experience of realizing national projects both throughout the whole country and in individual regions.

The Chamber received over 500 proposals on improvement of national projects.

The most proposals were for the Education (83), Demography (62), and Ecology (64) national projects. On the one hand, this indicates increased interest in these national projects, and on the

other hand, it may indicate problems with their realization.

Moreover, in compliance with instruction No. Pr-1395 of the President of the Russian Federation of September 1, 2020, the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation with the participation of the regional civic chambers collected and analyzed over 500 proposals, concerning support for public initiatives and the promotion of best practices aimed at improving the quality of people's life.

The Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation set up a Coordination Council for National Projects and the Preservation of the Population. Its aim was to ensure effective participation in: the formulation and realization of government policy on preserving the population; and the single plan for the achievement of national development aims, national projects, federal projects, and other strategic-planning documents and their addendums, as well as consideration of proposals concerning their improvement.

The Coordination Council held expert discussions with the auditors of the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation, representatives of responsible ministries and agencies, public councils under federal executive authorities, regional government agencies, regional civic chambers, independent research organizations, scientists, and public experts.

Six Coordination Council meetings were held concerning national projects and preservation of the population. They presented a unique method to calculate the Population Preservation Index,⁷⁴ and formulated proposals for the Health Care, Ecology, Education, Science, and Workforce Productivity and Employment Support national projects.

During an extended meeting of the Coordination Council at the final "Community" forum in Moscow, the Civic Chamber delivered the provisional results of the campaign and presented

the main proposals for all the national projects, most notably:

- # to reject the departmental approach to the formulation, improvement, and realization of national projects. This work must be conducted with the participation of all interested parties, and various government departments and civil society institutions;
- # to fix in the registration documents of all national projects, the customer-satisfaction target indicator for the quality of services provided within the framework of their realization;
- # include the Civic Chamber in the registration documents of all national projects as co-executor to ensuring public oversight and monitoring, and evaluation of the achievement of their target indicators;
- # to take measures for increasing cooperation between government agencies and civil society institutions while improving and realizing national projects, including by means of discussing problems on the Coordination Council platform;

- # to support the Russian Government's implementation work on a high-quality contemporary information system for monitoring the realization of national projects. To stipulate measures for increasing information openness for the realization of national projects.⁷⁵

The Civic Chamber, based on the specifics of strategic planning documents, and the social importance and direct correlation to people's quality of life, paid particular attention to their realization and improvement. Currently underway large-scale work on improvements to national projects, in fulfilment of the order of the President of the Russian Federation, facilitated the uncovering of a significant number of problems in the realization of national projects. Solutions developed on the results of conducted work must be formulated with the participation of civil society institutions, and aimed at increasing the population and improving the quality of life for Russian people.



#Year of Memory and Glory

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Year of Memory and Glory..... 54

Year of Memory and Glory

2020 brought our country, just as the whole world, a serious challenge in the form of the pandemic. It is now all the more important to remember what serious challenges our country went through during the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945. Back then our people were able to gain Victory. The preservation and protection of the historical memory of the Great Victory is our duty and obligation.

During this year numerous events have been organized, among which were exploratory expeditions, and museum and exhibition projects. New historical places were discovered all around the country, drawing attention to the history of the Great Victory, linking historical memory with the geography of the country. Thus, one of the symbols of the Year of Memory and Glory was the Rzhev memorial to the Soviet soldier. This monument became truly the people’s, the country’s citizens donating over 500 million rubles to build it.⁷⁶ Starting this year, Russian had the honorary title of “City of Labor Valor,” which was bestowed in recognition of the significant contribution of a number of cities to achieving victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945.

As a part of the Year of Memory and Glory, numerous projects were realized with the participation of youth volunteers. Despite many commemorative events were conducted online due to restrictive measures, the Russian public demonstrated its loyalty to the feat of the people in that Great War. New formats allowed the audience not only to not shrink, but even to grow.⁷⁷ Thus, for example, even times of restrictive measures saw the success of the Window of Victory campaign, in which citizens decorated the windows of their flats and houses with pictures, photographs and signs dedicated to the victory of the Soviet people over fascism.⁷⁸ We must develop and support such patriotic initiatives and projects as: My Childhood – War,⁷⁹ Letter of Victory,⁸⁰ Garden of Memory,⁸¹ Victory Fact Test,⁸² and the Victory Volunteers youth forum.⁸³

With the passage of time, fewer and fewer participants of the Great Patriotic War remain – approximately 60 thousand this year.⁸⁴ The debt of Russian society and government to their heroes is to provide a worthy life. The all-Russia project “Mobile assistance teams for disabled people and veterans”⁸⁵ provides them with free mobile telephones with unlimited tariffs, and the Victory Volunteers help them with everything they need during

the pandemic, most importantly documenting their invaluable memories and experience for future generations.⁸⁶

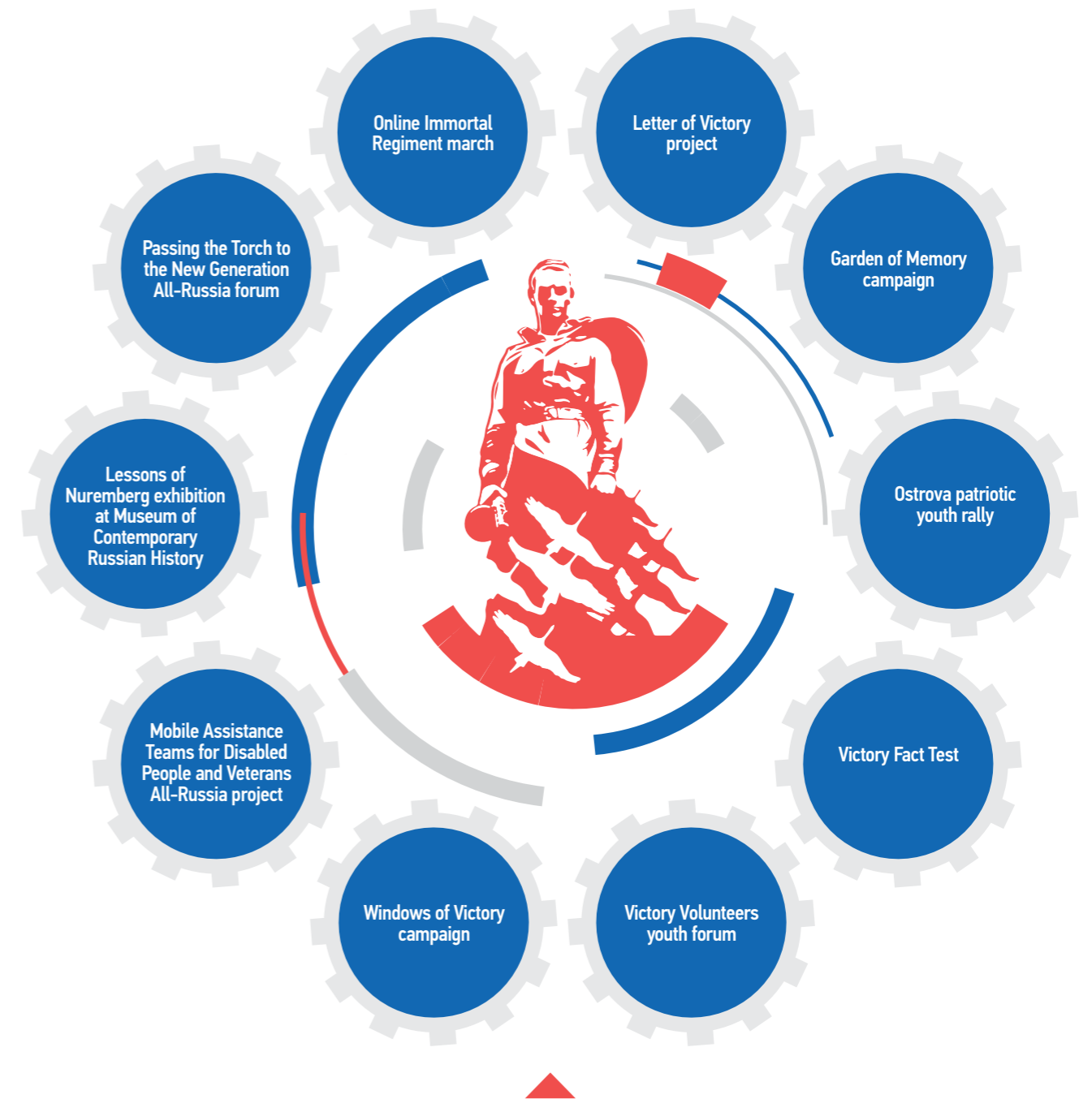
According to census survey data, at present Russia is home to 24.3 million people aged from 15 to 29, which is 16.5% of the whole population of the country.⁸⁷ The vast majority have no experience of personal interaction with veterans, so a very important problem is how to instill in them a reverential attitude to the Great Victory. New formats and new solutions must be sought. One such solution for developing a patriotic attitude is the all-Russia Passing the Torch to the New Generation project. During the pandemic, Passing the Torch to the New Generation project conducts educational events online, organizes lessons in fortitude, and provides targeted aid to veterans.⁸⁸ One more example is the People’s Feat exhibition in the Victory Museum at Victory Park in Moscow. It is full of interactive and multimedia elements, allowing children and teenagers to immerse themselves in this important subject.

In order to instill patriotism, important amendments were made this year to the “On Education”, according to which, from 1 September 2020 the educational process at all levels includes mentoring element designed to instill patriotism in students, the necessity for the return of which has been discussed for a long time in society.⁸⁹ New approaches to working

2,837,681

people participated in the online Immortal Regiment march in 2020

SOCIAL INITIATIVES IN THE YEAR OF MEMORY AND GLORY WERE REALIZED SUCCESSFULLY, DESPITE THE PANDEMIC



Over 511 million rubles donated by Russian citizens to build the Rzhev memorial

with young people must be carefully considered in developing the federal Patriotic Education of Citizens project, which will be part of the Education national project.

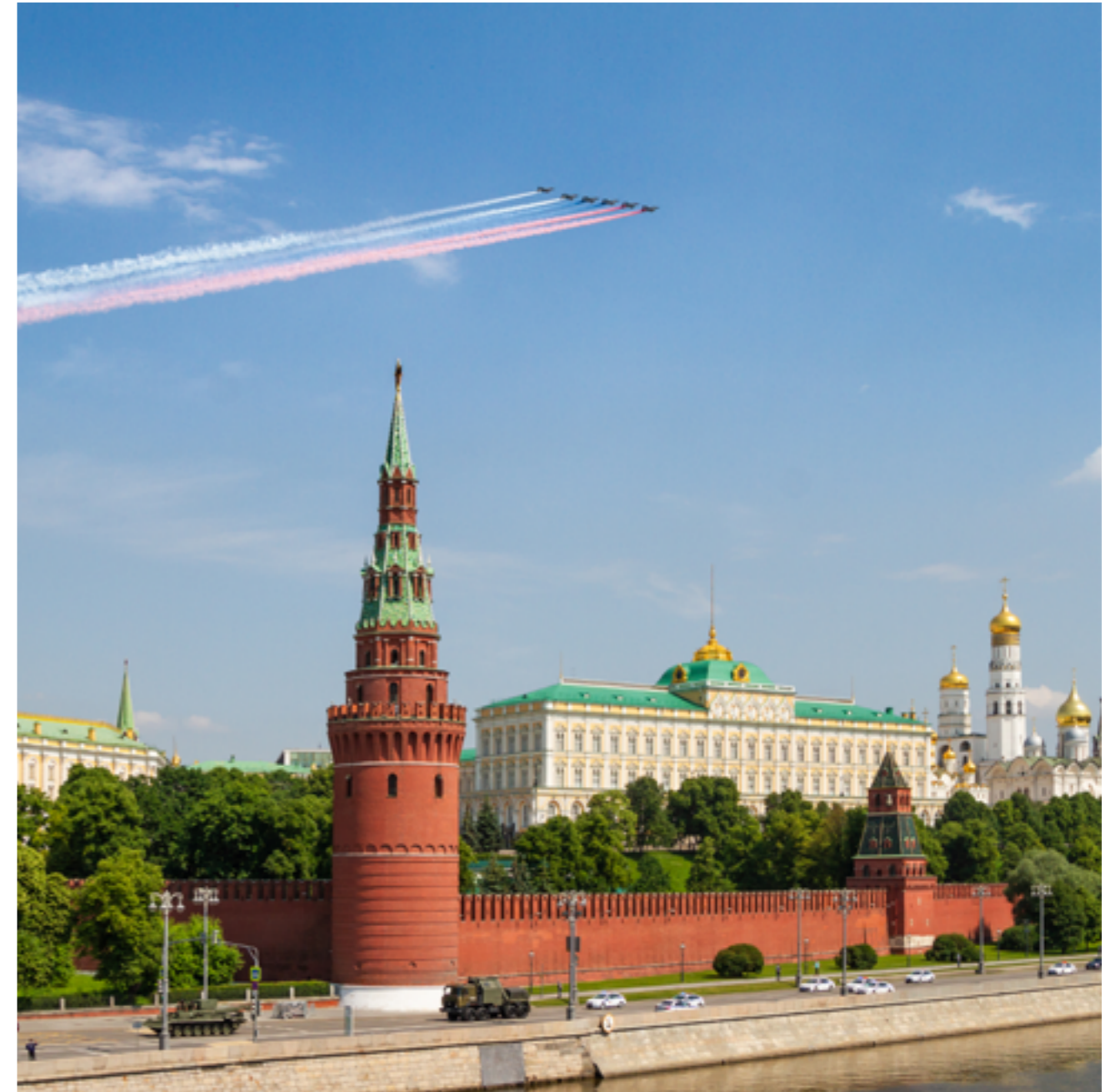
The importance of preserving the historical memory is now fixed in the Constitution. “The Russian Federation honors the memory of defenders of the Fatherland, and protects historical truth. Belittling the significance of the people’s feat in defending the Fatherland shall not be permitted”, asserts part 3 of article 67.1 of the Main Law.

We must not leave unpunished attempts to mock symbols of our memory – desecration of the Eternal Flame and attempts to post photographs of fascists on the online Immortal Regiment platform, just as we must not leave unanswered pseudohistorical rhetoric concerning the weighty contribution made to the Great Victory by the countries of the West, diminishing or concealing the role of our country, and sometimes blasphemously equating the actions of the USSR with the actions of fascist Germany. Under no circumstance must we be allowed to forget who was tried at Nuremberg trial and for what. On November 20–21, 2020, the Lessons of Nuremberg Forum was held at the Museum of the Great Patriotic War. The Forum discussed the Long, Long Ago project, which united NPOs, museum employees, prosecutors and investigators, whose task was to show, based precisely on archived documents, the scale of the

criminal offences and wicked deeds carried out by the Nazis and their co-conspirators during World War II. This work was vital for the preservation and protection of the historical memory, especially for the young generation.

Work concerning the uncovering and opposition of the dissemination of historical fakery and provocation must be done methodically and persistently. Patriotic social associations and organizations, and civic activists were working on uncovering historical falsifications and managing to suppress them. The Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation served as a platform for the exchange of opinion and the realization of projects aimed at fighting the falsification of history. Thus, the Civic Chamber developed proposals to introduce fines and other sanctions for unprincipled producers and/or disseminators of advertising materials containing distorted information about historical facts, and participants in wartime events, etc.

The preservation and protection of the memory of the Great Victory is a basis for the consolidation of Russian civil society. It is necessary to provide full government social support for veterans of the Great Patriotic War and all our other military veterans. We must comprehensively support social projects connected with assisting veterans, and the historical enlightenment of the youth about the Great Victory and the struggle with the falsification of our history must be the basis for educational and mentoring programs.



FAKE NEWS



CENSORED

6



Civil Society and Protection of Sovereignty 60

#Civil Society and Protection of Sovereignty



Civil Society and Protection of Sovereignty

The recent tendency to use “soft power” and Internet propaganda in the face of geopolitical competition, as well as the analysis of the international experience in restricting foreign influence on the nonprofit sector, as on a sphere for the formation of public opinion and a mechanism for the articulation of a socially significant agenda, again made relevant the question of refining the legislative mechanisms for regulating the activities of organizations acting as foreign agents in Russia.

There is a general need to improve legislation, in order to ensure public accessibility to information about the foreign financing of nonprofit organizations, public associations, and politically active persons associated with them. This is especially important in not allowing foreign interference in elections and election campaigns.

Protecting sovereignty in this context supposes increased responsibility of the press when acting as foreign agents, and the refinement of the legal regulation of the activities of foreign NPOs, public associations acting without being registered as legal entities, and citizens participating in political activity in Russia on behalf of foreign sources.

In this matter, Russian legislation and law enforcement practices should take into account the experience of other countries. The Civic Chamber held a series of public hearings, within the framework of which, among other

things, an analysis of regulating the activities of foreign agents in foreign countries was conducted, and the relevant tendencies in its implementation were considered. The most striking examples are the law currently in force in the USA about the registration of foreign agents (FARA), and the modernization of legislation in this sphere in Australia, India, Israel, and France. Moreover, legislation in numerous “democratic countries” is notable for the extremely tough demands it makes of foreign agents, and the severe penalties in the case of their not being met. The Civic Chamber draws attention to the inexpediency of repeating a negative foreign experience. At the same time, general approaches and legal tools adopted abroad could be used, on condition of their being adjusted and implemented to take into account the development specifics of the Russian society.

In this connection, measures, supposed in planned Federal Law No. 1057914-7 “On Amendments to Individual Laws of the Russian Federation Concerning Additional Measures to Oppose Threats to National Security”,⁹⁰ may be considered truly relevant. These measures suppose the introduction, by analogy with the legislative regulation of the activity of NPOs acting as foreign agents, of a notification requirement for the registration of public associations acting in the Russian Federation without government registration and receiving foreign finance to take part in political activity. A register will be established of unregistered public associations acting as foreign agents. Materials produced and distributed by NPOs and unregistered public associations shall have appropriate markings.

It was proposed to introduce this kind of registration mechanism for private persons participating in political activity in Russia on behalf of foreign sources and/or deliberately collecting specific significant intelligence on the government’s military and technical activity. These people must not take positions in government or municipal services, or have access to state confidential information.

Also, the Civic Chamber underlined the importance of preciseness and clarity for legislative regulation, and the impermissibility of the ambiguous and loose definition and implementation of introduced measures. It was also important to viably ensure constant monitoring of the judiciary, with the aim of detecting and preventing unjustified decisions by the competent authorities, including their regional offices.

It was especially important to ensure this while forming an understanding of “political activity”. Representatives of socially oriented NPOs and charity funds voiced concerns about the possible “wider” definition of the understanding in practice, which might lead to conscientious citizens not involved in political activity being accused of as acting as foreign agents. In order to prevent this, it was proposed to rule out the classification of activity in science, culture and art, as well as in specific socially significant areas (for example, activity in health care, social care, social services for the people, physical activity and sport, charity work, etc.) as political.

A researcher, including a representative of an educational or scientific organization, may be invited to a foreign symposium, to participate in an international project with foreign financing, or to receive a research grant. Obstacles to work in this area must not be permitted. Considering the importance of developing international cooperation in science and education, the Civic Chamber also reviewed planned Federal Law No. 1057895-7⁹¹ “On Amendments to the Federal “On Education” in the Russian Federation” (with regard to the introduction of public awareness activities). The bill defined public awareness activities and was aimed at staving off the use of the education system: to stir up social, racial, national or religious discord; to propagandize people’s exclusiveness, superiority, or inferiority based on social, racial, national, religious, or linguistic affiliation, or their attitudes to religion, including via the communication of false information about the historical, national, religious, or cultural traditions of peoples; and to provoke actions contradictory to the Constitution of the Russian Federation. In this connection, it is worth noting that the bill was based on constitutional demands and aimed at protecting the fundamental constitutional constructions of Russian nationhood: civil accord, traditional family values, and respect for the deeds of our ancestors.

Despite the regulation of public awareness activities in the bill being proposed in the context of the functioning of the education system, a number of experts expressed concerns about the lack of clarity in the implementation mechanism for the bill, proposing to project a separate federal law for

the complex regulation of questions connected with the realization of public awareness activities. In the context of discussing the bill, the Civic Chamber noted that the administrative mechanisms of the regulation of public awareness activities, the definition of which it was planned to refer to the competence of the Russian Government, must absolutely be organized in a manner convenient for educational organizations and participants in public awareness activities, so that the new law does not create barriers to international cooperation and collaboration. The Civic Chamber will participate in the provision of this as an institution of public oversight.

This kind of logic is also fair in relation to other socially significant areas, where socially oriented NPOs and charity funds traditionally work effectively. In particular, it is necessary to maintain conditions for the development of international cooperation and such directions as art and culture. Our art is popular abroad. For example, our theatre and musical groups, and exhibitions by large museums tour many countries successfully. As part of such projects, there are various forms of help and assistance provided for our cultural organizations. As a rule, political figures, regional leaders, and mayors speak at the opening of such festivals, though it is clear that this is not political, but international cultural activity.

Teamwork and joint research in medicine is difficult to imagine today without international cooperation, the importance of which was underlined by the pandemic. Good examples are the World Health Organization and other similar-level programs which are playing an ever more important role in the solution of global health-related problems.

During the pandemic, our civil society, business, and government worked efficiently together, including in the social support of the people. Without doubt, the experience gained this year must be used for the further development of best practices in the social support of the population, and it is important not to allow the creation of additional barriers. Restrictions must not affect sport and physical exercise. Most sports are integrated into international federations and other similar structures, which presupposes continuous collaboration, both organizational and financial.

Taking into account the position of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation, which stated that the status of a foreign agent must not cause discrimination in any given right,⁹² the Civic Chamber proposed not to approve the article of the bill which prescribed to deprive NPOs acting as foreign agents of their right to nominate candidates for the public councils under federal executive authorities. This was proceeding from the fact that public oversight in Russia was regulated by a separate law and detached from the political system (especially not permitted was the participation of political parties in nominating candidates to public oversight departments).

One more sphere, which recently saw the need to rethink existing threats and the experience of opposing them, was the provision of information sovereignty.

In recent years, the Internet became a universal space for communication and vital activities, and pretty much the main sphere of socialization for the youth. At present, Rунet’s audience is 96.7 million users, which is 79% of the country’s population. Today Russians get access to the largest part of internet traffic via their mobile phones,⁹³ and 90% of Internet users in Russia use the Internet every day. The way of information consumption changed, with ever more people taking their news from the Internet. This creates both possibilities and risks, because apart from verifiable information, there is also fake news and destructive content circulating on the Internet. Just like other countries, Russia is actively fighting for the “purity” of the Internet, its liberation from wrongful information, and the protection of its information sovereignty.

During the new coronavirus pandemic, false reports circulating on the Internet might put people’s lives and health in serious danger, not to mention forming of space for the activities of fraudsters. In 2020, numerous items of fake news about the coronavirus and the single voting day demonstrated that at the moment, unprincipled disseminators of information were taking minimal responsibility for misleading Internet users, and the sense of impunity would lead to an increase in false content. It would be productive

to introduce special programs capable of recognizing fake news and its disseminators. With the aim of opposing various forms of provocation and fakery, it was also proposed to introduce changes to the general school program Health and Safety course, setting aside 1 hour for the study of media literacy. A serious strategic solution would be deanonymization in social media, followed by increased legal accountability for the creation and dissemination of fake news.

In this context another sphere was also very important – opposition to the recently heightening censorship of foreign IT platforms with regard to Russian citizens and press. A glaring example of such censorship was the blocking of Alexander Rogatkin’s film “Beslan” by the video hosting service YouTube, which is owned by Google. This policy of the western IT giants with respect to Russia is a double standard. The Civic Chamber and Roskomnadzor searched YouTube and found over 3,000 clips of extreme content in open access, with no restrictions or labels. Moreover, YouTube ignored appeals by Roskomnadzor to delete the content. At the same time, over 200 accounts of the Russian press, journalists, and natural persons were deleted from the platform without any explanation.⁹⁴ Western IT companies violated not only the rights of Russian citizens, but also Russian press laws concerning the inadmissibility of censorship. The Civic Chamber supports proposals concerning a stricter policy towards such companies as Google for the relevant government structures. In this connection, the initiation by Roskomnadzor of administrative procedure against Google LLC⁹⁵ was an example of protecting information sovereignty. The Civic Chamber supports measures proposed in planned Federal Law No. 1058572-7 “On Amendments to the Federal Law “On Information, Information Technology, and the Protection of Information” and the Federal Law “On Sanctions against People Involved in Violating People’s Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, and the Rights and Freedoms of Citizens of the Russian Federation”.⁹⁶ These measures were designed to guarantee the rights of citizens to free access to, and search and distribution of, information, and the introduction of the status of owner of an information

resource involved in violating people’s fundamental rights and freedoms, and the rights and freedoms of citizens of the Russian Federation, as well as demanding rectification of violations committed by them.

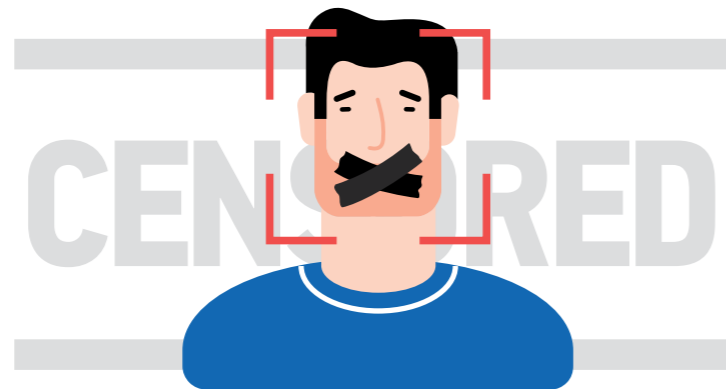
In the further adjustment of the government regulation of legal relationships with foreign Internet platforms, it is necessary to define and clarify the criteria for the evaluation of violations, and the order for administrative procedures concerning the owner of the information resource. It is also extremely important that superfluous demands are not made of the owners of information resources, and it is important to preserve and provide the opportunity to realize the fundamental information rights of Russian citizens.

In order to protect information sovereignty, it is first necessary to develop Russian online resources and services, and simplify means of receiving useful information for Russian residents. Citizens’ access to socially significant resources must be free whenever possible. The Civic Chamber supports the idea of providing free access to socially significant Internet resources, free of advertizing, for Russian citizens registered in a portal for government and municipal services, even when they have no money in their accounts.⁹⁷ Information security in contemporary life is one of the most important elements of the system of national security as a whole. The Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation consistently supports the access of Russian citizens to verified data, and the noncensorship of Russian press content by foreign companies.



> 200

Russian press accounts distributing socially useful information for Russians were blocked last year



INITIATIVES FOR PROVISION OF ACCESSIBLE AND GOOD-QUALITY INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET

BLATANT CASES OF CENSORSHIP OF RUSSIAN PRESS IN FOREIGN SOCIAL NETWORKS

- ▶ discriminatory labeling of Russian press with government participation on Facebook and Twitter
- ▶ temporary blocking of "Victory Banner over Reichstag" photograph on Facebook
- ▶ permanent blocking of YouTube accounts of ANNA-News information agency
- ▶ over 1,000 cases of blocking or difficulty of access for RT materials
- ▶ blocking of Alexander Rogatkin's "Beslan" documentary on YouTube
- ▶ permanent blocking of YouTube accounts of "Tsargrad" TV channel
- ▶ blocking of Facebook account of Federal News Agency
- ▶ temporary blocking of video interview with head doctor of Kommunarka hospital Denis Protsenko

INITIATIVES FOR PROVISION OF INFORMATION SOVEREIGNTY



▶ bill on sanctions for censorship of Russian press



▶ tougher law about transfer of Russian users' data to Russian servers



▶ obligation of foreign social networks to have representation in Russia



▶ tougher policy on work with foreign press agents in the Russian Federation



▶ audit of western IT giants' income from advertising in Russia



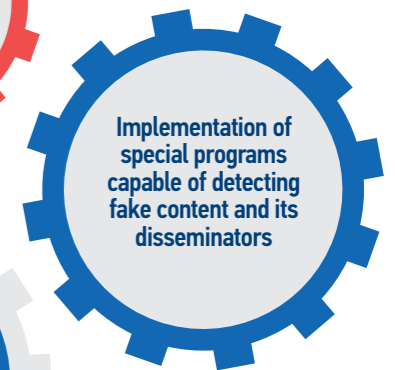
▶ introduction of additional measures against IT giants applying censorship (restricted traffic and advertising)



▶ demand for transparent moderation and simplification of user agreements of foreign corporations



▶ establishment of Russian equivalents to foreign IT giants, make development of Russian IT platforms a priority in "Digital Economy" national project



Conclusion



2020 showed that in times of great tribulation, our society displays solidarity and solves arising problems in partnership with the government. This new model of public-authorities dialog was displayed most clearly in the “constitutional process”, during the battle with the social consequences of the pandemic, while developing support measures for the nonprofit sector, and also while working on important strategic-planning documents: the single plan for the achievement of Nationwide Plan of Action for Economic Recovery.

After taking active part in the preparation and approval of amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, citizens looked hopefully at the responsibilities that were raised to constitutional level. The Civic Chamber saw its task as making sure that these expectations were justified, and that all proposals received at the amendment-drafting stage but not making it into the text of the updated Constitution were considered when developing legislative and other laws and regulations at federal, regional, and local levels. In this connection, in conjunction with the regional civic chambers, municipal civic chambers (councils), and public councils under federal executive authorities, control will be ensured over the legislative documentation of social amendments.

The Civic Chamber consistently advocated strengthening the resource base and independence of the regional civic chambers and the civic chambers (councils) of municipal organizations. Society expects these institutions to show more active involvement in the relevant agenda, the solution of the systemic problems and tasks facing our country, the public oversight of the realization of national projects, and discussion of projected federal and regional laws and regulations, and to participate in the realization of social projects and the support of public initiatives.

The issue of ensuring the information openness of the public councils under federal executive authorities, and consolidated cooperation between them, their committees and working groups, relevant Commissions of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, the regional civic chambers, and other institutions of civil society remained on the agenda.

Clearly, the pandemic will continue to affect life next year, in 2021. The Civic Chamber will continue to monitor the consequences of the pandemic and their influence on vulnerable people in need of help, and to consolidate the strengths of the nonprofit sector and the volunteer movement to provide assistance to the needy and government support in overcoming the consequences of the pandemic.

In order to reduce poverty and increase the income and economic stability of Russian families, we must develop social partnerships, increased workforce productivity, and support for families with children, as well as a guaranteed minimum wage no less than the subsistence rate of an able-bodied population. The Civic Chamber: serves as a platform for the collection and formulation of public initiatives concerning the preservation and growth of the population; continues to provide support and assistance to representatives of civil society, including by realizing joint nationwide projects; will increase the efficiency and speed of work with civil society’s appeals and the achievement of concrete results by the governments of those regions that are sending out signals. The in conjunction with the regional civic chambers, the Civic Chamber continues to organize cooperation between activists, public communities, and the government.

The pandemic called into action the horizontal network structures of mutual aid, and affected the phenomenon of growth in the volunteer movement. For its further development, it is necessary to consolidate the experience in regulatory documents



Civil society is the foundation upon which can be built a solid future for our great Motherland, a future for many long years and decades. And the task of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation is to help people realize their urge to participate in the life of the country. Only together can we make Russia economically powerful, comfortable for life, and open to the world,” President of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation Lydia Mikheeva.

and spread successful practices, remove all existing administrative barriers, and increase the awareness of our people about receiving volunteer assistance and participation in volunteer and charity projects.

Fixed in the Constitution are guarantees of the government’s support of civil society institutions and of the ensured participation of public organizations and associations in the development and realization of government policy. During the pandemic, NPO support measures, approved at federal level on the recommendation of civil society, not only allowed NPOs to not stop working, but also defined the direction of development for the sector for years to come. The Civic Chamber will continue to deal with questions of strengthening the nonprofit sector and its professionalization. Work continues on the creation of a single register of socially oriented nonprofit organizations. The Civic Chamber will work jointly with the regional civic chambers to track the inclusion of NPOs in the register, and investigate cases of groundless exclusion from the register, as well as fighting for the expansion of criteria for organizations’ inclusion in it. To ensure the stable development of the sector, analysis of the effectiveness of regional support measures for nonprofit organizations and existing institutional platforms will continue, including by means of rating the regions according to the level and quality of the development of the nonprofit sector.



It is planned to continue previously begun systemic work on analyzing legislation concerning NPOs, and developing proposals on its improvement. Currently it is replete with internal contradictions and unviable norms, and recently developed relationships remain unsettled.

Support for small and medium business is also a priority for the Civic Chamber: solutions for the improvement of the tax system and the launch of a “regulatory guillotine”, along with support measures for small and medium business, should create a positive environment for business and stabilize the social and economic situation.

Aside from many other problems, the pandemic highlighted the disastrous state of the care system for patients in neuropsychiatric inpatient facilities. Here the task is to create an institution of public oversight and an independent service to protect the rights of mentally ill people, as well as to involve the relevant NPOs in this work, and to improve legislation concerning guardianship and psychiatric help.

The institution of public supervisory commissions for ensuring human rights in detention facilities remains a priority for the Civic Chamber. The Civic Chamber consistently advocates initiatives for the legislative securing of questions of resource provision and support for public supervisory commissions. In 2021

the Civic Chamber will continue to ensure public monitoring of the resocialization of people released from detention facilities and their adaptation to contemporary society.

Oversight over the target financing of medical assistance and medicinal provision for children with orphan diseases, based on principles of accountability and transparency remains another priority. This oversight mechanism should come into force on January 1, 2021.

It is necessary to overcome the interdepartmental incoordination and narrow-departmental approach in realizing national projects. Without accounting for public initiatives in the realization of national projects, the latter cannot be considered authentically national. It is important for the Government to implement a high-quality contemporary information system for monitoring the realization of national projects and ensure measures for increasing connectivity between all the national projects, and information openness in the realization of national projects. Citizens should appreciate the improved quality of life and the positive results of national projects in their everyday lives. The Civic Chamber continues to conduct public monitoring of the effectiveness of the realization of national projects, while standing up for the rights and interests of the most vulnerable layers of the population: families with children, large families, and disabled and elderly people.

The ecological agenda for civil society next year will undoubtedly be concentrated around tasks voiced in the Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation at the start of 2020. The Civic Chamber will ensure that information openness, obligatory reporting of popular opinion in the relevant regions, and swift consideration of popular appeals and mediation of conflicts become the norm for interaction between the government, civil society, and business, both in questions of the environment and urban-planning activity and in all other areas.

The pandemic set the task of intensively developing the digital education environment. A priority for the Chamber here is to ensure that the implemented capacities of online education facilitate the provision of quality education and equality of educational opportunity.

In 2020 the labor market faced new challenges: during the pandemic all organizations underwent several stages of transformation, including transition to temporary distance (remote) work and combined remote work. Despite remote work offering good opportunities and advantages for both employees, employers, and the self-employed, there remain difficulties with the switch to the remote work regime, and the organization of the working process in the new conditions. The Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation will pay particular attention to supporting the development of digital services to promote employment, as well as compliance with labor law for those categories of people for whom it is difficult to compete in the labor market – people with disabilities, women with small children, young people seeking work for the first time, and citizens close to retiring.

During the pandemic, society is experiencing a demand for the preservation of cultural space. Digitalization processes in the sphere of culture, receiving an impulse to develop in 2020, are far from always able to fully replace the viewer, the consumer of live presentations and performances, and visual sensations. The Chamber will monitor the preservation of conditions for public access to cultural activity, cultural values and benefits, and facilitate support for government and private cultural organizations during the continuing adverse epidemiological situation with its restrictive measures.

In a time of global political changes and growing ethnic conflicts, the Civic Chamber is recording appeals to strengthen the unity of the Russian nation and the ethnocultural development of the peoples of the country.

The state is firmly on the road to protecting and strengthening sovereignty, national security, national interests, and strategic national priorities,⁹⁸ and has civil society's support for this.

We proceed from the fact that Russia must have a strong civil society, and an independent, nongovernmental, nonprofit sector, which does not require financial support from foreign sources. It is important for conscientious associations and nonprofit organizations involved in socially beneficial activities to be more active. The Civic Chamber will facilitate the preservation and increase the level of budgetary allocations for the support and development of public structures, as well as providing public oversight of the approval of legislative requirements aimed at increasing the liability of NPOs, public associations acting without registration as legal entities, and citizens involved in political activity in Russia on behalf of foreign sources. At the same time, foreign interference in the domestic affairs, including elections, of our country is unacceptable. The

Civic Chamber is ready to provide independent public monitoring of the elections to the lower house of Parliament in 2021.

2020 sees the 75th anniversary of the Victory of our people in the Great Patriotic War. The pandemic introduced adjustments and restrictions, but it could not cancel the commemorative events and social projects, many of which were conducted online. The efforts of civil society must be directed toward the preservation of the sacred memory of that war and the Great Victory, as the basis of our national unity and sovereignty, and toward the development of patriotic education for children beginning in kindergarten.

The events of 2020 demonstrated the potential of Russian civil society. The people's and the government's growing trust in civil society institutions allows us to count on the strengthening of the most effective practices of NPOs, and the further institutionalization and development of civil society in our country.

Links

¹ Annually the Civic Chamber receives an average of 15-17 thousand appeals. In the working period of the 6th composition of the Civic Chamber, from June 2017 to June 2020, 52,395 appeals were considered.

² Constitutional amendments: rating of Russians' preferences. Results of VCIOM survey: <https://wciom.ru/analytical-reviews/analiticheskii-obzor/konstituzionnye-popravki-rejting-predpochtenij-rossiyan>

³ Activity of public institutions. VCIOM website, August 2020: https://wciom.ru/news/ratings/odobrenie_deyatelnosti_obshestvennykh_institutov/

⁴ List of instructions resulting from meeting 25.06.2020 with members of the Civic Chamber (Pr-1395) of 1 September 2020: <http://kremlin.ru/acts/assignments/orders/63993>

⁵ Federal Law of 23.11.2020 No. 372 – Federal Law “On the introduction of amendments to part 2 of the Tax Code of the Russian Federation with regard to taxation of personal income exceeding 5 million rubles for the tax period”: <https://rg.ru/2020/11/26/nalog-ndfl-dok.html>

⁶ The Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation supported the idea of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation, concerning the creation of a fund for the target financing of medical help for children: <https://www.oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/55251>

⁷ Experts: Russia may become a unique country in the creation of a strong genetic service // Civic Chamber of Russian Federation site, 02.11.2020: <https://www.oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/55559>

⁸ Lidia Mikheeva: “It is important that the financial mechanism for helping children with orphan diseases is in operation as of January 1, 2021”. Civic Chamber of Russian Federation site, 28.10.2020: <https://www.oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/55468>

⁹ “Rare opinion”: a hotline for problems treating children with orphan diseases, 22.10.2020: <https://www.oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/55408>

¹⁰ The balance between security measures and preserving quality of life in residential facilities, 20.10.2020: <https://www.oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/55377>

¹¹ “We need an integrated examination of the law about guardianship” — Lidia Mikheeva, 03.11.2020: <https://oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/55564>

¹² Draft Law No. 879343-6 “On introducing amendments to separate legal acts of the Russian Federation, with the aim of increasing the guarantee of realizing the rights and freedoms of disabled and partly disabled people” // System for ensuring legal activity: <https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/879343-6>

¹³ Rosprirodnadzor estimated the environmental damage from the fuel spill in Norilsk at 148 billion rubles, 06.07.2020: <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/8897191>

¹⁴ Recommendations of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, resulting from public hearings concerning: “The accident in Norilsk: ecological damage and recovery programs”: <https://www.oprf.ru/documents/497/2628/newsitem/55583>

¹⁵ Kushtau shihan: social activists and experts – for conferring on it the status of natural monument of federal significance // Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation site, 03.09.2020: <https://oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/54650>

¹⁶ Bill No. 974393-7 “On introducing amendments to the Federal law “On Specially Protected Natural Areas” and separate legal acts of the Russian Federation”: <https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/974393-7>

¹⁷ Conclusions of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation concerning the results of the public evaluation of projected federal law No. 974393-7 “On the introduction of amendments to the Law of the Russian Federation “On specially protected natural areas” and separate legal acts of the Russian Federation”: <https://oprf.ru/1449/2133/1537/views/2676/newsitem/55654>

¹⁸ The Russian Academy of Sciences announced the reason for the pollution of water in Kamchatka // RBC, 23.10.2020: <https://www.rbc.ru/society/23/10/2020/5f92c1119a79475365e37f34>

¹⁹ Presidential address to the Federal Assembly // site of the Russian President, 15.01.2020: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/62582>

²⁰ Working group established to prepare proposals concerning the introduction of amendments to the Constitution // Site of the Russian President, 15.01.2020: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/62589>

²¹ Working group for preparation of amendments to the Constitution held a meeting in the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation // Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation site, 23.01.2020: <https://www.oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/52177>

²² “It is very important that the whole Russian population participates in discussing amendments to the Constitution” // Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation site, 10.03.2020: <https://www.oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/52717>

²³ Law No. 1-FKZ of the Russian Federation on amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation of 14 March 2020 “On improvements to the regulation of individual questions of the organization and functioning of the public authorities”: <http://pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?docbody=@firstDoc=1&lastDoc=1&nd=102693962>

²⁴ Conclusions of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation concerning the results of the public evaluation of projected federal law No. 974290-7 “On the introduction of amendments to article 13 of the Law of the Russian Federation “On rehabilitating the victims of political repression”” // Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation site: https://www.oprf.ru/files/1_2020dok/zakl_izmenniya_st_13_974290-7__21092020.pdf

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²⁵ Final “Community” forum in Moscow: review of national projects, response to the challenges of the pandemic, support of NPOs // Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation site, 03.11.2020: <https://oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/55527>

²⁶ Projected federal law No. 960545-7 “On the introduction of amendments to article 13 of the Law of the Russian Federation “On education in the Russian Federation” concerning questions of mentoring students” // System for ensuring legal activity: <https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/960545-7>

- ²⁷ Federal law No. 304-FZ of 31 July 2020 “On the introduction of amendments to the Law of the Russian Federation “On education in the Russian Federation” concerning questions of mentoring students”: <http://pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?docbody=@firstDoc=1&lastDoc=1&nd=102801634>
- ²⁸ Projected federal law No. 986679-7 “On the introduction of amendments to separate legal acts of the Russian Federation» // System for ensuring legal activity: <https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/986679-7>
- ²⁹ Conclusions of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation concerning the results of the public evaluation of the projected federal law No. 986679-7 “On the introduction of amendments to individual legal acts of the Russian Federation» // Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation site: https://opr.f.ru/files/1_2020dok/zakl986679-7_otobranie_rebenka15102020.pdf
- ³⁰ Projected federal law No. 993419-7 “On youth policy in the Russian Federation” <https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/993419-7>, No. 993434-7 “On the introduction of amendments to article 4 of the Federal Law “On government support of youths’ and children’s civic associations”, and the repeal of the Resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation “On the main directions in government youth policy in the Russian Federation” in connection with the approval of the Federal Law “On youth policy in the Russian Federation” // System for ensuring legal activity: <https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/993434-7>
- ³¹ Conclusions of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation concerning the results of the public evaluation of the projected federal laws No. 993419-7 “On youth policy in the Russian Federation” and No. 993434-7 “On the introduction of amendments to article 4 of the Federal Law “On government support of youths’ and children’s civic associations”, and the repeal of the Resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation “On the main directions in government youth policy in the Russian Federation” in connection with the approval of the Federal Law “On youth policy in the Russian Federation” // Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation site: https://opr.f.ru/files/1_2020dok/zakl993419-7_molodeg_ob_edineniya21092020.pdf
- ³² Projected federal law “On the introduction of amendments to the Federal Law “On the official language of the Russian Federation,” in particular the improvement of the mechanism that allows the Russian language the status of the official language of the Russian Federation” // Federal portal for projected laws and regulations: <https://regulation.gov.ru/p/107550>
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- ³⁷ Society and the pandemic: experience and lessons from the battle with COVID-19 in Russia. — Moscow: 2020. ISBN 978-5-85006-256-9, C. 584.
- ³⁸ From materials from the Penza region civic chamber, Orenburg region civic chamber.
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- ⁴⁰ Society and the pandemic: experience and lessons from the battle with COVID-19 in Russia.— Moscow: 2020, p. 9.
- ⁴¹ From materials from Orenburg region civic chamber.
- ⁴² The concept of federal government openness, confirmed by instruction of the Russian government of 30 January 2014 No. 93-r.
- ⁴³ Сайт Nakontrol2020 (Наконтроле2020.рф (Under Control)).
- ⁴⁴ Сайт Nakontrol2020 (Наконтроле2020.рф (Under Control)).
- ⁴⁵ Confirmed by instruction of the Russian government No. 2950-r of 27 December 2018.
- ⁴⁶ Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation recommendations following the round table discussion “What can civil society do to curb the “second wave” of the COVID-19 pandemic?” // Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation site, 15.10.2020: <https://www.oprf.ru/documents/497/2628/newsitem/56169>
- ⁴⁷ Russian government provision of 02.04.2020 No. 409 “On measures to provide stable economic development”.
- ⁴⁸ The Ministry of Economic Development and the Federal Tax Service began payment of subsidies to suffering businesses and community-focused nonprofit organizations for preventative measures against coronavirus // Ministry of Economic Development of RF site, 15.07.2020: https://www.economy.gov.ru/material/news/ekonomika_bez_virusa/minekonomrazvitiya_i_fns_nachali_vydachu_subsidiy_postradavshemu_biznesu_i_sonko_na_profilaktiku_koronavirusnoy_infekcii.html
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⁵² See Russian Government Provision No. 696 of 16.05.2020 “On confirming the rules for providing subsidies from the federal budget to Russian credit organizations to compensate income not received from loans provided in 2020 to legal persons and individual entrepreneurs to restart activity” // <https://www.garant.ru/products/ipo/prime/doc/73933064/>; Russian Government Provision No. 976 of 02.07.2020 “On confirming the rules for providing subsidies in 2020 from the federal budget to small and medium businesses and community-focused non-profit organizations to provide preventative measures against coronavirus” // <https://www.garant.ru/products/ipo/prime/doc/74234000/>

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⁵⁴ In Presidential Instruction No. Pr-1395 of 1 September 2020.

⁵⁵ NPO register: accelerate the development of the Third Sector, make it transparent // Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation site, 11/08/2020. <https://www.oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/54422>

⁵⁶ Within the framework of fulfilling the list of Russian presidential instructions Pr-1395 of 01.09.2020 (point 1, subpoint c).

⁵⁷ CC RF proposes improving the approach to the formulation of the single register for socially focused NPOs. CC RF site, 5.10.2020; <https://oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/55135>

⁵⁸ 6 October. In accordance with Russian Presidential Instruction No. 696 of 16.05.2020.

⁵⁹ In accordance with Russian Presidential Instruction No. 976 of 02.07.2020.

⁶⁰ In accordance with article 2 of Federal Law No. 172-FZ of 08.06.2020 “On the introduction of amendments to part two of the Russian Tax Code”

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⁶⁴ CC RF orders additional NPO support measures // Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation site, 25.11.2020: <https://www.oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/55849>

⁶⁵ Regional Third Sector rating presented on final “Community” forum in Moscow // Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation site, 25.11.2020: <https://oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/55537>

⁶⁶ Pp. 1, 2 of section 3 of “Growth of disposable income of citizens, recovery of full employment and effective demand”; pp. 5 of section 8 “Sectoral support: recovery and development of individual sectors”; pp. 21, 42, 8, 9, 10 of section 4 of “Support and development of small and medium business” National plan of action ensuring recovery of employment and income for the population, economic growth and long-term structural changes

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⁶⁸ “A living document which will become richer with new ideas and initiatives”. <https://www.oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/55703>

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