

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

DOI: 10.15838/esc/2017.2.50.7

UDC 316.422, LBC 60.550

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Young People in Modernization Processes: Assessment of the State of Affairs (Case Study of Southern Federal District Regions)*



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* The article is prepared with financial support from the Russian Foundation for Humanities (project 16-03-00463 “Dynamics of socio-economic development of a region as a heterarchical system”).

For citation: Dulina N.V., Kargapolova E.V., Strizoe A.L. Young people in modernization processes: assessment of the state of affairs (case study of Southern Federal District regions). *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 2017, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 130-149. DOI: 10.15838/esc/2017.2.50.7



Abstract. The article considers the issues concerning the inclusion of modern Russian youth in the processes of modernization; the study is based on the analysis of the results of a sociological research carried out using questionnaires. Modernization in the broadest theoretical terms is understood as a comprehensive and manageable process of renewal of the social system, its approximation to a qualitatively new state on the basis of deep civilizational changes with the aim of improving living conditions. In this case the specific and long-established features of the value system of specific regions are investigated as the most important resource of modernization projects. It is shown that there exists a system lag in the pace and quality of modernization processes in the regions of the Southern Federal District of Russia, as recorded in the statistics and responses of the representatives of the young generation of the macro region. The reason for this situation lies in the scale of alienation from the results of labor activity that are more clearly seen in the Southern Federal District than in Russia as a whole, and this is largely caused by the artificial (institutional) pumping of surplus value produced in its territory to other regions of the country. A large part of the added value obtained from the products and services produced in the district is not allocated to the development of its social infrastructure (in particular, education) and people's welfare. Under certain conditions, the project called "Modernization" could become a program image of the future of modern Russia; this idea is registered in the answers of modern students. But in reality, in many regions, modernization projects on the indicators vital for the population acquire a character of quasi-modernization or even de-modernization. This is reflected in the high migration request of students, which in the Southern Federal District is higher than that in the amount of respondents in Russia as a whole. Thus, there exist two phenomena, the social value of which consists largely in their focus on the future – youth and modernization. But the vectors of this orientation among modern Russian youth and modernization projects of the country are different, which requires adjustment of youth policy.

Key words: modernization, youth, students, social processes, region, federal district, Southern Federal District, values.

Modern Russia is currently going through a period of social transformation. There still is the issue of identification of changes taking place in the country. Is the period of rapid reforms correlated with progress or degradation? What is the purpose and the expected outcomes of reforms at the current stage? Projects such as "Market relations in 500 days" have passed away, the term

"capitalism" has virtually disappeared from political rhetoric [10, p. 19], terms such as "civil society" and "social state" are less often used, and according to political rhetoric, we have already reached democracy.

All these issues are very acute for the whole society, especially for the youth as a social demographic group allocated "on the basis of age characteristics, specific features of social

status caused by socio-psychological qualities which are determined by the social system, culture, socialization patterns, education of the society; modern youth aged 14–16 to 25–30, whose proportion in the population amounts to 20%” [2, p. 147]. Young people can also be identified as a subject of social relations, which, according to E.M. Babosov, is in the process of formation and development of social, physiological, cultural and civic maturity adapted to the social statuses and roles which are characteristic of adults¹, and which, according to P. Bourdieu “has nothing” [3]. Indeed, having physical strength, turbulent energy due to age, but possessing no maturity or wisdom inherent in older generations, young people are future-oriented, they have nothing in this sense and have to establish their social status associated with having a family, profession and a sustainable position in the society. S.I. Ikonnikova and V.T. Lisovskii study youth as a generation which differs from other generations not only in age, but also in a set of goals, aspirations, beliefs, interests and values, shared experiences and attitude towards life [14]. Will the project entitled “modernization” become part of aspirations of modern Russian youth? Especially given that modern Russian youth is considered as not only as a “pro-Putin” generation [25,

p. 103], but also as a generation of pragmatists [6; 28], rational egotists [33]; the goals of modernization should at least coincide with young people’s ideas about their own purposes. Thus, it is necessary to explore young people’s social well-being, their attitude to social reality in order to develop a complex of measures on modernization of the Russian society.

In order to solve this problem, it is first necessary to understand the essence of the term “modernization”. Modernization primarily implies the transition from traditional agrarian society to secular, urban, and industrial. Thus, amid this understanding modernization is associated with a specific stage of historical development of a social system. But there is also a point of view which defines modernization as a continuous and endless process which accompanies the whole development of human history [20, p. 468] and is interpreted as a social system update and its approach to a qualitatively new state based on deep civilizational changes [21, p. 29]. In this sense, the concept “modernization” approaches the concepts “innovation”, “reform” [37, p. 190] and is opposed to archaization.

The term “modernization” comes from the French word “modernizer, modern”, which means “make modern”². Thus,

¹ Babosov E.M. *Sotsiologiya. Entsiklopedicheskii slovar’* [Sociology. Encyclopedic dictionary]. Moscow: ISPI RAN, 2009. P. 265.

² I.V. Lekhin, F.N. Petrov (Eds.). *Kratkii slovar’ inostrannykh slov* [Concise foreign dictionary]. 6th edition, revised and expanded. Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izd-vo inostrannykh i natsional’nykh slovarei, 1951. P. 254.



modernization implies not all range of changes and improvements, but only those meeting “modern demands and tastes of modern age...”³ That is why even the classical sense of the term “modernization” does not identify it with “industrialization” and includes a wider range of social processes which can be seen both as a mechanism, condition and a kind of modernization purpose determining the benefits and costs of this process. For example, E. Durkheim interprets modernization as a process of social differentiation, M. Weber – as a process of rationalization, K. Marx – as a process of commodification⁴, the theorists of evolutionism (structural functionalism) – as a process of social differentiation including political pluralism “with simultaneous integration, coordination, “organic” connection of differentiated elements” [39, p. 527].

There is also a point of view according to which “modernization... implies that knowledge is a decisive factor in the improvement of activities of economic entities, government authorities, social groups, and individuals” [37, p. 360].

According to Chinese researcher He Chuanqi, present-day modernization is a holistic socio-cultural process the main objective of which is “safety of the state

³ Ibid.

⁴ A.O. Boronoev, I.F. Kefeli (Eds.). *Sotsiologiya: uchebnyi slovar'* [Sociology: learner's dictionary]. Saint Petersburg: BGTU, 2009. P. 72.

and society and development of scenarios of further development to improve living conditions” [30, p. 7].

Several authors note the importance of the micro-social level of modernization processes in the society, which “affects individual choice and interpersonal relationships” [35, p. 61]. Social psychologists are looking for sources of modernization processes conditionalism in personal growth, i.e. in changes in “individual's personal, individual attitudes, motivations, orientations” [39, p. 528].

The idea about personal growth in the modernization theory is related to an important (and often politically biased) issue of what values and moral standards ensure the modernization process. There is a view according to which modernization is accompanied by replacement of traditional values which are hostile to social changes and economic growth. When developing this postulate, theorists of structural functionalism rely on the following principles: “a) the opposition of modern and traditional society which is viewed as an obstacle to economic development; b) the development through evolutionary stages very similar for all societies; c) the need of the third world countries to withdraw from tradition; d) a society of the Western type, (westernized society) is the preferred and more likely outcome”⁵. Terms such as “retarded”, “catching-up” modernization are appearing.

⁵ Ibid.

Accordingly, amid this understanding, modernization is becoming a quite tough and tyrannical form of globalist projects such as westernization and americanization.

The criticism of such understanding of modernization led to the emergence of neo-modernist concepts of multicultural modernization, the theorists of which insist there is a possibility of transition from the traditional society to modern industrial given the specific features of a civilization [16; 19; 26; 31; 41]. As noted by I.V. Kutyreva, “there are no modernization laws in which all societies evolve the same way... As for social modernization, it should be noted that its basics lie not only in attitudes, but also in deeper levels, i.e. in the structures of the consciousness. Mentality serves as an underlying spiritual basis of social modernization” [20, pp. 468-469].

A number of researchers note that the withdrawal from traditional values accompanied by the deterioration of the population’s moral and cultural characteristics causes family crisis, reproductive extinction and the aging of the nation [see, for example, 42, p. 462]. As noted above, indeed, the modernization processes are accompanied by growth of personal development and, consequently, a temporary decline in fertility, as observed in the modern period. The issue is how global this process is and whether it reveals itself in all forms of modernization.

Thus, V.E. Bagdasaryan notes that amid the globalization scenario which is contrary to the civilizational identity of national communities, the decline in fertility is observed in the countries where the modernization process was carried out by relying on traditional values, no reproduction crisis is observed [1, pp. 11-18].

These reflections result in the re-interpretation of the correlation between the dichotomies “modern–traditional”, “modernized–archaic”, “modernization–archaization” from their simple opposition to a more complex analysis. Modern social systems are successfully operating on the basis of the existing traditional elements [40, pp. 170-185]; modernization and tradition are in a dialectical interaction, reinforcing each other, tradition also serves as factor in stabilization of modernization processes.

There is also a point of view that catching-up modernization is accompanied by archaization and crisis [13, pp. 41-42], and modernization processes are not irreversible and can be accompanied by periods of de-modernization and archaization (neo-archaism) [38, p. 3].

Putting forward the thesis of civilizational specific features and lack of unified laws and stages of modernization process development, researchers, wishing or not, pass from the consideration of the influence of time factor



on modernization processes to the space factor. Moreover, it is emphasized that regional modernization is not synonymous to national in miniature, just like modernization of a group of countries is not analogous to the upgrading of individual countries in miniature [30, p. 105]. According to N.V. Zubarevich, “modernization processes are faster where there are best conditions for innovation diffusion – higher population concentration and quality, a more developed infrastructure, smaller economic distance, and lower institutional barriers. The need for lowering all the three barriers of spatial development is obvious but they are long-term and sustainable in their nature” [12, p. 99].

The issue related to the system of values, the ratio of tradition and innovation also arises when researchers analyze the issue of modernization reform pace. For example, U. Beck and A. Giddens noted the high pace of change, which leads to the growing risks in the modern society [2; 5]. P. Sztompka writes about the trauma of social change [39, p. 472-492].

Ideas about the painfulness and risks of modernization arise the problem of benefits and costs, i.e. the PRICE of any social processes, including modernization. It would be logical in this context to raise the question of whether modernization is a controlled or a spontaneous process. For example, P.

Sztompka believes that “modernization is not a manifestation, a gradual, spontaneous implementation of internal social trends, but a process directed and stimulated from the outside... Modernization can be defined as the approach of the society to a recognized model of modernity through conscious implementation of certain intentions, goals, and plans” [39, pp. 527-528]. The idea of balanced and controlled modernization is also being developed by He Chuanqi [30].

Quite controversial is the understanding of modernization through understanding the processes in the Russian society and their consequences for the modern stage of Russia’s development. It is especially characteristic of the issues of goals, specific plans and strategies, management and modernization actors in a particular historical period and in a specific country – Russia.

Thus, Russian scientists have critically reconsidered Russia’s historical experience in the terminology of “accelerated” or forced modernization as “a goal-oriented form of development related to actualization of personal and group resources, re-consideration of the hierarchy of social values and preferences, inheritance of traditional forms of identity” [29, p. 8]. The experience of accelerated modernization in the Russian consciousness is allegedly associated “with material deprivation and rationing of social

goods according to their official status” [29, p. 22] and the consequence of this experience is group egotism which “inhibits the efforts of social consolidation of the society, establishment of an effective state and progress towards social modernization” [29, p. 3]. It turns out that as a result of forced modernization, controlled (as it should be), but imposed on the Russians by the government, Russians are the losers, tired and exhausted of social construction, they are the victims. But this is the mistake of the previous period; Russians are now in need of implementing their own opportunistic (consumer) interests, of care, rest, comfort, happiness. Group selfishness is justified, consumption needs are to be satisfied, they are related to consumption which without an appropriate system of values is transformed into petty bourgeoisie described in the 19th century by A.I. Herzen: “Bourgeoisie erases personalities, however, such “erased” people are more satisfied; wearing ordinary dresses, not tailor made, not quite fitted, but more people wear them. Bourgeoisie erases the beauty of the breed, but increases its welfare” [4, p. 36]. Under the influence of consumerism as a value in modern Russia the whole generation has been bought up, which is unlikely to be at the forefront of modernization.

In general, the development of theoretical ideas about modernization has led to its

understanding as a contradictory and disputed process [20, p. 468]. Therefore only some researchers consider it part of the process of social development and assess it in a positive way [37, p. 190], and some are more negative towards it [42, p. 462].

What position is the Russian youth going to take today? Is it going to happen within a particular region or macro-region? In the context of this article the authors study students of the Southern Federal district. It should be noted that students play a very special role in the cohort of the younger generation. On the one hand, the main objective of students is to acquire education, which somewhat distances them from other objectives such as starting a family, for example. On the other hand, such remoteness determines the students’ status position of an active subject of social relations which is future-oriented just like a modernization project. In the authors’ view, participation in this project will help the youth form an image of the future. Acquiring quality education increases the opportunities of former students in terms of successful participation in the modernization process.

In order to reveal the specific features of challenges facing the youth of the Southern Federal district it is necessary to note the main results of development of this Federal district for 2000–2012. The results have been calculated on the basis of program



“Sociocultural evolution of Russia and its regions” developed by the Center for Studying Socio-Cultural Changes at Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences (supervisor: N.I. Lapin, L.A. Belyaeva) with the use of the research methodology of Center for Modernization at the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Data by region are calculated using the Modernization Information System (ISED T RAS, Vologda) [for more detail see 7; 8; 17; 18; 23; 24; 34; 36].

All regions of the Southern Federal district are at the stage of initial modernization and are not included in the stage of secondary modernization. By 2012, the district ranks 4th among federal districts by sustainability of the modernization process, 6th – by final indicator of primary modernization, last – by final indicator of secondary and integrated modernization; the lagging of all indicators of primary and secondary modernization from the national average still remains. The District’s modernization indicators are lower than the national average index of knowledge translation (91,8% against 93.6%), the economic quality (42.8% against 53.5%), much lower by index of innovation in knowledge (25.2% against 55.7%), integrated index of modernization sustainability (0.397 against 0.969). Although the value of the latter has increased from “below average” to “average”. The difference in indicators of

integrated modernization index by district and in the country as a whole is about 10% (59.1% and 67% respectively).

Five subjects of the Southern Federal District out of six are characterized by upward mobility of modernization states. Since 2008 the Rostov Oblast has been in at the stage of primary modernization (“maturity”) and moved on to a higher level – from type 2 to type 3. Since 2005, Krasnodar Krai has also increased the quality of primary modernization process – the region has overcome the “pre-traditional” stage and moved on to the “below the median” phase, and in 2012 – to the “medium” stage. In 2011, three regions – the Astrakhan and Volgograd oblasts and the Republic of Adygea came out of retarded growth of primary modernization: the Astrakhan and Volgograd oblasts entered the “medium” stage and the Republic of Adygea moved from “pre-traditional” to the “below the median” stage. The Republic of Kalmykia is now at the stage of sustained stagnation of primary modernization – the lowest “pre-traditional” stage. Thus, there is a system lag of the pace and quality of modernization processes in the Southern Federal district [for more detail see 7; 8; 17].

As for the **technological modernization component**, its essence consists in transition to new technological paradigms and connected with the state of education and

science in the region. In this context, it is important for the youth to assess the state of the educational system. Some answers to these questions became possible to obtain based on analysis of the results of the national initiative sociological research⁶.

The educational environment is strategic in the knowledge society, the main capital of which is intelligence and the employee's personal resources. Among the answers to the question: "What about rich people... In Your opinion, how often do they gained wealth due to the following reasons?" was "good education". Students' responses are summarized in the final index. The index value for this option across the array amounted to 2.81 points, in Astrakhan – 2.85, in Volgograd – 2.82 (with the maximum possible value of 4 points). Answering the questions about the causes of poverty in Russia young people pointed to "poor quality

of education they receive", the index value of which amounted to 1.99 points among all respondents (with the maximum possible value of 4 points). It seems to be not very much. But the value of this index among students of the two Russian cities is somewhat higher than the whole array, and makes up 2.04 points, being higher in Astrakhan than in Volgograd (2.08 against 2.01 points). The difference with the national average is small but the District is lagging behind in terms of modernization, especially in the knowledge innovation index.

When answering the question about the reasons which caused unfair treatment to them personally, 14.8% of students surveyed in Russia as a whole responded: "Your level of education", however, in the cities of the Southern Federal district this figure is somewhat larger and amounts to 17.8% (due to the answers of Astrakhan citizens:

⁶ *Technical research* parameters: a specific sociological research "Students about social inequality and social justice" was initiated and conducted by the Russian Society of Sociologists (RSS). Research objects – students of Russia's higher educational establishments. Method of data collection – questionnaire. The total number of respondents 3964 people from 71 higher educational establishments in 26 Russian cities. The field research took place in April–May 2016. The full set of technical research parameters are presented at the official RSS website. The Southern Federal district includes Volgograd and Astrakhan. In Volgograd, 600 people were questioned (49.5% young women and 50.5% young men), in Astrakhan – 300 people (57.2 and 42.8%). In Astrakhan and Volgograd, the research was carried out under the supervision and with participation of the authors. The research was of a scoping nature, the results may either be applied only to the sampling or be used as reference data. However, it appears that large sampling helps draw well-founded conclusions. Data processing was performed using the Vortex software complex (developed by D.V. Shkurin, Ph. D. in Sociology, Associate Professor at the Department for Applied Sociology, Ural Federal University named after the first President of Russia B.N. Yeltsin). Data analysis included the review of linear distributions and scaling. The scaling proposed for analysis was different: only with positive numbers, with positive and negative numbers. If the respondents have a positive view on the object within a given scale, their rating will be closer to the positive pole, i.e. it will have a numeric expression depending on the extent of a positive assessment. If negative assessment takes place the evaluation will shift to the negative pole taking a numeric expression depending on the extent of the negative assessment. In each case the maximum and minimum values of the scale are discussed separately. Such a scale is only viable if polar characteristics (antonyms) have clearly expressed positive or negative values, as, for example, a couple of properties "absolutely fair" – "absolutely unfair". In questions where the use of the "plus" and "minus" scale helps the respondent chose the desired response, scaling with positive numbers was used (as neutral in its expression), followed by assignment of distinct integers already at the stage of information processing.



21.8% against 13.8% respectively). Thus, the students are aware of the importance of education in modern times and the disadvantages of the regional educational system which reduce human potential of the region's youth. This is particularly evident in the medium-population city of Astrakhan compared to the million city of Volgograd. In fact, according to the studies, urban systems play an important role in economic growth and industrial development, and accordingly, the pace and outcome of regional modernization [30, p. 105].

Regional differences in human potential are also well recorded in answers to the question: "What is your parents' level of education?" (*Tab. 1*).

There are no significant differences in the cities of the Southern Federal district from the national results, but compared to the students'

fathers in Volgograd, the number of fathers with primary education in Astrakhan is 4% greater and 10% greater among fathers with secondary technical education, but 20% less among those with higher education. The difference is less significant in the number of mothers with higher education and accounts for about 7% in favor of Volgograd. The number of mothers with higher education on average in the two cities of the Southern Federal district is almost 10% greater than that of fathers. There is no such difference among the citizens of Volgograd, but it is 14% among the residents of Astrakhan. In addition, among the whole number of respondents about 2% do not know what their mothers' education is, and 7% of respondents – their fathers' education. It should be noted that in Astrakhan, this figure is two times greater than in Volgograd.

Table 1. Students' answers to the question: "What is your parents' level of education?", % of respondents

Variants	Father			Mother		
	Russia	Astrakhan	Volgograd	Russia	Astrakhan	Volgograd
Primary, incomplete secondary	0.97	0.34	0.89	0.64	1.03	0.22
General secondary (high school)	6.68	7.48	5.56	5.68	14.79	5.71
Elementary vocational education, vocational education (vocational training schools)	11.55	12.24	8.67	9.26	8.9	7.47
Secondary technical education (technical school)	28.43	32.31	22.44	26.5	26.37	23.96
Incomplete higher education (3 course education in a higher educational establishment)	4.18	4.42	4.22	5.5	7.88	6.59
Higher education	38.58	31.63	51.11	48.38	45.55	52.31
Academic degree – post-graduate education, dissertation	2.17	1.36	1.56	2.11	1.71	1.76
I do not know	7.45	10.2	5.56	1.93	3.77	1.98

It can be concluded that the research results prove a certain lag of the educational system in the Federal district compared to the national average. The survey results are confirmed by statistical data.

As for the modernization **socio-economic component**, the index of economic quality indicates the region's ability to implement one of the functions of the socio-cultural entity amid modern challenges – life-sustaining (for more detail on the functions of a region as a socio-cultural entity see [22]), which is implemented in the population's labor activity. If, according to V.Ya. Emel'yanov, work is a source of progressive development on the basis of the law of user value expressing the excess labor results over its cost, where the user value refers to actual wealth, acquisition of values necessary for life and useful for the society [9, p. 36], the region's life-sustaining function is implemented with the social utility of labor results, their equal distribution among the region's population.

How fair is the distribution of labor results for the students? Or, in other words, how, in their opinion, socially useful are the labor results? The answers to the question about the reasons of personal richness in modern Russia are summarized into the index value, the maximum of which is 4 units, minimum – 0. Thus, “hard work” as the reason of personal richness gained 2.85 points in the whole array, on average in the two cities of the Southern

Federal district it is slightly less and amounts to 2.74 points. The difference between the responses of the residents of Astrakhan and Volgograd in this case is not significant (Astrakhan – 2.7 points, Volgograd – 2.78 points). What is significant is that hard work as the cause of richness is not crucial, it is less important in the Southern Federal district than in Russia as a whole. This indicates the extent of alienation from the labor results which are more clearly apparent in the Southern Federal district than in Russia as a whole.

The extent of this process – alienation of labor results where labor becomes useless, forcing people to survive, rather than harmoniously and fully develop – is possible to identify on the basis of the results of students' answers to the question: “We are interested in your opinion on how fairly the representatives of different professions and retirees are paid for their work?” The answers are summarized in the index, the minimum value of which is “-1”, maximum – “+1”. The negative index value means that the students' responses are mostly negative, such as “are paid much less than deserved” and “are paid less than deserved”; a positive value – answers such as “are paid much more than they deserve” and “are paid more than they deserve”. As can be assumed, ideally, the evaluation of labor of the representatives of various professions in the value of the final generalized index must tend to zero, i.e. when



the vast majority of respondents choose the option “are paid what they deserve”. Only with such values labor is evaluated fairly.

As can be seen in students’ assessments, none of the presented occupations is fairly paid (*Tab. 2*). The prevailing is the opinion that the representatives of these professions are paid less than they deserve. These include owners of small grocery stores, university professors, ordinary engineers at big plants, high qualification surgeons in city hospitals, street sweepers, factory workers, and doctors at the clinic. At the very social “bottom” is the work of a retiree with 40 year working experience. Only the evaluation of labor of an owner of a small grocery store is close to the “ideal” zero value.

Judging by the data array as a whole and for the Southern Federal district, federal ministers, average bureaucrats in local

administration and managers of large factories are paid more than they deserve. When choosing between these professions, the values of the composite index are exponentially different: a federal minister is paid two times more than they deserve than an average bureaucrat in local administration, an average bureaucrat – respectively two times more than a big factory manager. Students’ answers very well demonstrate their ideas about which population group has benefited most (unfairly) in recent decades during the reforms in modern Russia.

The responses of students in the Southern Federal district demonstrate a quite clear macro-regional profile of perceptions of social injustice – the least fairly paid in the macro-region are engineers, shop owners, professors, surgeons, doctors and street

Table 2. Students’ answers to the question: “We are interested in your opinion on how fairly the representatives of different professions and retirees are paid for their work?”, indices

Variants	Unit of administrative subdivision			
	Russia	Southern Federal district	Astrakhan	Volgograd
Federal Minister	0.626	0.640	0.567	0.714
Average bureaucrat in local administration	0.431	0.475	0.441	0.510
Big factory manager	0.209	0.202	0.191	0.191
Owner of a small grocery store	-0.036	-0.055	-0.068	-0.043
University professor	-0.322	-0.367	-0.374	-0.360
Average engineer at a big plant	-0.364	-0.384	-0.322	-0.447
High qualification surgeon in a city hospital	-0.398	-0.429	-0.405	-0.453
Street sweeper	-0.497	-0.481	-0.481	-0.498
Factory worker	-0.546	-0.549	-0.525	-0.573
Doctor at a clinic	-0.578	-0.642	-0.601	-0.684
Retiree with 40 year working experience	-0.732	-0.730	-0.719	-0.741

sweepers. In Astrakhan, this category includes shop owners, professors, surgeons and doctors; in Volgograd – engineers, surgeons, factory workers, doctors, shop owners, professors and retirees. Thus, residents of Volgograd are more opinionated than those of Astrakhan.

According to students of the Southern Federal district, federal ministers and officials of the local administration are paid more than they deserve. The residents of Volgograd are more critical in their assessments of activities of the former, as well as of managers of large plants. The residents of Astrakhan mostly consider remuneration of big factory managers fair, compared to an average student in Volgograd or Russia as a whole, according to both, federal ministers' work results are somewhat better than those of local administration bureaucrats.

According to the assessment of remuneration fairness for seven out of the eleven represented socio-professional groups, students of the Southern Federal district are more critical than in Russia as a whole. This demonstrates the backwardness of the socio-economic modernization component in the macro-region caused by largely artificial (institutional) pumping of surplus value produced in its territory to other regions of the country.

Poor economic quality leads to backwardness of the **socio-cultural modernization component**, since a great part of the added

value obtained from products and services generated in the area is not used for developing its social infrastructure and population's welfare.

Such unequal distribution of social benefits is reflected in the students' responses. From the students' answers to the question: "What feelings do you experience when you think about how budget revenues are allocated in our country?" – it is evident that negative emotions are 2.6 times more prevailing than positive (*Tab. 3*). Thus, by total responses, the students of the Southern Federal district have demonstrated more emotions than in the whole data array (176.7% against 168.6% of respondents), and 10.8% more negative emotions than positive. This is despite the fact that in the whole data array, the socially significant part of respondents (12.8% of respondents) missed the answer to this question. And again, in the Southern Federal district, this category is 3.2% smaller. Students of the Southern Federal district experience more irritation (mostly students from Astrakhan), bitterness (mostly students from Volgograd), pessimism (mostly students from Volgograd).

However, the human potential of Astrakhan residents, somewhat reduced due to their parents' education, is also reduced compared to the Volgograd residents by level of parental household income. Analysis of students' answers to the question: "Which category does your family belong to by



Table 3. Students' answers to the question: "What feelings do you experience when you think about how budget revenues are allocated in our country?", % of respondents

Variants	Unit of administrative subdivision			
	Astrakhan	Volgograd	Southern Federal district	Russia
Irritation	36.47	32.63	34.55	29.38
Despair	27.82	29.81	28.81	27.13
Bitterness	23.31	25.59	24.45	22.41
Hope	22.56	22.77	22.66	21.72
Pessimism	19.17	20.42	19.79	17.70
Anger	14.29	15.02	14.65	14.81
Indifference	13.16	10.33	11.74	13.19
Composure	7.89	8.92	8.40	9.80
Optimism	5.26	7.28	6.27	5.64
Satisfaction	2.26	1.41	1.83	3.30
Other feelings	2.26	1.41	1.83	1.88
Happiness	1.88	1.41	1.64	1.65
Negative feelings	121.06	123.47	122.25	111.43
Positive feelings	39.85	41.79	40.82	42.11
Total	176.32	177.00	176.66	168.59
Missed	11.33	7.79	9.56	12.76

income level?" – demonstrates that among the residents of Astrakhan, there are 2% more poor families (3.4% against 1.1%), 7% more midi families (18.4% against 11.1%), but 5% less privileged families (45.24% against 50.11%) and 5% less wealthy families (24.5% against 29.9%). Accordingly, once again it is confirmed that the higher is the level of education, the higher the income level.

It is very difficult to analyze the **institutional and regulatory modernization components** using sociological techniques, as there are very few statistical indicators of social institutions activity, and the results of sociological research are quite difficult to interpret unambiguously. Among the

students' answers to the question: "Have you in the past twelve months dealt with the manifestation of the injustice done to you personally? How often has it happened in the following situations?" – answers such as "when dealing with local officials" scored 1.1 in the final generalized index in the whole data array, whereas in the Southern Federal district – 1.2. Thus, the profile of "personal injustice" in the Southern federal district officials are a greater tension factor than in Russia as a whole, being greater in Astrakhan than in Volgograd (1.23 against 1.19 points). Assessment of labor remuneration of a federal minister and officials in local administration is also remembered as the most excessive and unfair.

The purpose for modernization is the country's security. One of the indicators of social institution effectiveness is the established order and laws for ensuring safety. However, according to the results of the survey among students, in general, breaking the law, crimes are considered a more important reason for gaining wealth than a reasonable lifestyle, talents and abilities, good health and strength, government policies encouraging entrepreneurship, favorable laws, luck and economic development (2.33 against 2.31; 2.30; 2.10; 2.26; 2.14 and 2.12 points respectively). In the Southern Federal district this list also includes proper family education because this factor as a source of wealth is estimated slightly lower than violations of the law and crimes (2.4 points against 2.3). Moreover, the violation of law as a source of wealth is estimated as a more significant one (critically realistic?) by the Volgograd residents (2.5 points against 2.3). In the Southern Federal district, violations of law, crimes are also complemented by involvement in criminal structures, which as the source of wealth is assessed by the students as a more significant one than in Russia as a whole (2.4 points against 2.2), and the same estimation by the Volgograd residents is higher than those in Astrakhan (2.5 points against 2.3).

Students of the Southern Federal district to a much lesser extent agreed with the statement: "In a just society, people always follow the laws even if they consider them

wrong" (0.238 points against 0.172 with a maximum index value of 1), their number in Volgograd is less than in Astrakhan (0.155 against 0.189 points), as well as with the statement: "In a just society, all acute conflicts and contradictions are resolved in court" (0.313 points in the whole array against 0.304 points in the Southern Federal district, in Volgograd being more than in Astrakhan (0.36 points against 0.249). It can be assumed that Astrakhan residents are more inclined to resolve conflicts in interpersonal (primary) social relations, rather than in a formal institutional environment.

Young people were asked to rate how positive or negative are the feelings evoked by words and expressions in the context of their perception as principles of political programs. Indices related to these words and expressions were calculated: the number of negative responses was subtracted from the number of positive responses and divided by 100. Thus, if all answers are positive, the index value equals 1. Among these words, the most interesting is "modernization". This word evokes more positive feelings as the index value in Russia and the Southern Federal district is 0.64 and 0.63, respectively, though far from 1. Thus, under certain conditions, the project called "Modernization" could be the program image of modern Russia's future. But, as noted by V.A. Zimin, "nowadays... Russia's image of the future is rather blurred in the mass consciousness. It is fractured into



competing (and equally weakly supported by scientific and ideological argumentation) projects mostly reproducing either past domestic or foreign experience of solving modernization issues” [11, pp. 18–19]. According to E.I. Pashinina, “government recommendations and calls for modernization are not secured by material reinforcements; employers do not have sufficient motive and resources for implementing science-intensive advanced technologies, developing health- and environment-friendly industries” [32, p. 77]. A number of researchers emphasize that modernization projects in many regions are in fact becoming quasi-modernized [21, p. 31], and even de-modernized [15, p. 36] by indicators vital for the population.

It is known that the figures are silent by themselves, but they help have a different look at the world and see it through the eyes of other people, in this case, through the eyes of modern students. Their image of the world is not quite brightly colored: according to the results of the survey in general, each 4th respondent is willing to leave the country. In the Southern Federal district this figure is slightly higher due to the answers of

Astrakhan residents, among which each 3rd declares their intention to live permanently in another country. The evaluation of the students’ migration needs in the context of modernization assumes that most active want to leave the country, i.e. the vanguard of modernization. One of the main reasons lies in the fact that today’s youth perceives labor remuneration distribution existing in Russia as unjust and illegitimate, which is a subjective factor in the deepening labor alienation, the objective reasons of which are the socio-economic issues: decline in production and standards of living, low workforce. In the Southern Federal district, these processes are expressed sharper exacerbated by the shortcomings of the regional educational system, which lowers the chances of survival and adaptation in the region’s specific social environment, not to mention participation in modernization projects.

Thus, there are two phenomena the social value of which lies largely in their focus on the future – the youth and modernization. But modern Russian youth and modernization projects have different purposes, which requires the adjustment of the youth policy.

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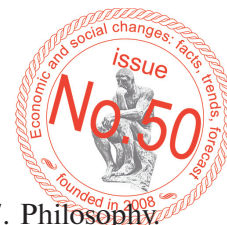
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Received September 19, 2016.