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**5th Tyumen International Sociological Forum  
and 13th All-Russian Scientific-Practical Conference  
on the Program “Socio-cultural evolution in Russia and its regions”\***



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October 5–6th 2017, Tyumen held the 5th Tyumen International Sociological Forum devoted to the topic “Dynamics of social transformation of the Russian society: regional aspects”. The Forum was attended by over 300 representatives of universities, research organizations, and public authorities from 40 Russian regions, as well as from Belarus, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Poland, the Republic of Korea and the United States. The scale and level of the scientific event is characterized by the following figures: the sections and round tables involved three RAS corresponding members, 71 Doctors of Science, 113 Ph.D. candidates, the forum was attended by 248 people. By the beginning of the conference, a collection of all submitted materials was published.

*The forum was organized* by Tyumen Regional Duma, the Government of the Tyumen Oblast, the Federal Research Center for Sociology, the Russian Academy of Sciences, Tyumen regional branch of the Russian Academy of Social Sciences, Tyumen State University, Tyumen Industrial University, and Surgut State University. The co-chairmen of the Planning Committee were: S.M. Sarychev, Vice-Governor of the Tyumen Oblast Ph.D. in Sociology; Y.M. Konev, Deputy Chairman of the Committee of the Tyumen Regional Duma Professor, Doctor of Sociology; G.F. Kutsev, Academic Director of Tyumen State University, Doctor of Philosophy, Academician.

Welcoming the participants, S.M. Sarychev, Deputy Governor of the Tyumen Oblast, stressed that the forum has become a traditional platform for scientific and practical comprehension of the most urgent issues of

socio-economic development of Russian regions. He noted that the increase in the number of participants and expansion to the international level indicates its scientific and practical relevance among the academic community and government authorities. S.E. Korepanov, Chairman of Tyumen Regional Duma, focused on the fact that, being a leader in economic development, the Tyumen Oblast is the first to facenew challenges and risks are associated with the social structure of the society, rather than the economy. According to him, changes in communications and virtualization of life cause the emergence of new social strata and groups, levels and life styles of region’s residents. Since these changes will sooner or later have a strong impact on the economy, in is necessary to predict the possible consequences today. It is important that strategic objectives of science and government coincide in terms of this issue. Therefore, according to S.E. Korepanov, public authorities of economically developed and prosperous Russian regions are seeking to intensify cooperation with the scientific community, realizing their intelligence potential. He also made an emphasis on the fact that the organizers of the forum are counting on practical results, expecting to obtain specific recommendations from the forum participants, the implementation of which will raise the standard of living and ensure innovation and technological development of Russian regions.

*The topics of the plenary reports* reflected the acute issues and highlighted new issues relevant to the development of Russia and its regions, and covered a fairly wide range of both theoretical and practical solutions. The plenary lectures included the following delivered by:

Zh.T. Toshchenko (“Old and new meanings of labor”); G.F. Kutsev (“On the sociological patterns of development of education in the digital age”); V.V. Markin (“Regions in Russia’s social space: some lessons from the modern crisis reality”); Joonseo Song (“Branding Local Towns in Post-Soviet Russia: Local Symbols and Identities”); A.A. Shabunova (“Spatial aspects of the socio-cultural transformation of the Russian society”); T.Z. Golenkova (“Social aspects of work behavior of the population in modern Russia”); D.L. Konstantinovskii (“Expansion and differentiation of higher education”); T.A. Gurko (“The development of marriage and family relations and the implementation of family policy concepts in the Russian Federation”); Yu.V. Latov (“Inter-settlement differentiation of the distribution of modernization of social and cultural values in modern Russia”). Having no possibility to cover the entire range of issues presented in the plenary sessions due to the small size of the article, we will briefly review the most relevant. Zh. T. Toshchenko in his report revealed the old and new meanings of labor. Applying statistics and sociological studies, he showed that labor motivation and attitude to work prevalent in the Soviet times do not work now as the nature of work and its value has changed. According to Zh.T. Toshchenko, Russia’s most acute semantic problem of labor is employment. Paid work has become a value which 31% of citizens seek and are afraid of losing. Zh.T. Toshchenko turned to the topic of new forms of employment and the formation of “the precariat” class, the key characteristics of which is temporary employment, precarious social situation, insignificant income, social insecurity, uncertainty of life prospects; those

who are limited by the circumstances: out-of-line taxes, unemployment, harassment at work, lack of time, overtime work, poverty, insecurity, homelessness. They are unable to create a family because they live in uncertain conditions; it produces unpleasant emotional associations relate to poverty, need, misery, slums, outright poorness (according to the estimates of T. Golikova, Chairman of the Auditing Chamber, and Rosstat, in Russia in 2017 22.1 million people are below the poverty line). In his report on the development of education in the digital era, G.F. Kutsev highlighted the features of the present society – the transition to a new technological order on the basis of a powerful information explosion and the fundamental value of education.

As is obvious from the content of other plenary lectures, the scholars have done enormous work studying the current state of the Russian society, its opportunities, axiological factors, economic and social behavior, and involvement in the processes of the socio-economic modernization. The scholars stated that the Russian society continues to deform as a new social reality; that there have developed socio-economic relations and mechanisms of ownership and income distribution which lead to general population degradation. The foreign policy and economic pressure on Russia became the catalyst for many social transformations within the country, the most obvious being the growing patriotic sentiment. People are worried about the phenomena of social inequality which contradict the basic values and philosophical attitudes of the majority of citizens. Twenty years of reform, change, broken hopes and disappointments is a very long period. In

the 1990–s, the Russians were promised a European standard of living. Instead, Russia and its regions are facing a huge structural, economic, social, cultural, and regional disparities.

At the second plenary session, the forum participants adopted *a resolution* which contains specific recommendations for both public authorities and the Russian sociological community. In particular, public authorities of Russia and its constituent entities are recommended: to continue the implementation of re-industrialization, innovation and technological modernization of the country, import substitution, adaptation of the personnel training system to new objectives; to summarize and consolidate in the system of state and municipal management the practice of monitoring research on the condition and development of key spheres of life in regions and municipal units; to view sociological research as an integral part of the information support for the development of management decisions.

The forum held meetings of *five scientific sections*: “Culture, ideology, religion in contemporary society: trends, determinants, factors”; “Developmental characteristics of education in Russia and abroad, the transformation of the regional educational subsystems”; “Political and managerial context of social transformations in Russian regions”; “Social transformation in the economic activity of Russian regions: trends, determinants, factors”. The forum held the 13th All-Russian Scientific-Practical Conference on the Program “Socio-cultural evolution in Russia and its regions” on the topic “Comparative analysis of the processes of socio-cultural and socio-

economic modernization in Russian regions: the multi-paradigm approach”. The conference presented 38 reports from 14 Russian regions (Moscow, Tyumen, Cheboksary, Tomsk, Novosibirsk, Volgograd, Samara, Ulyanovsk, Kursk, Ufa, Tula, Vladimir, Voronezh, Grozny), with 26 authors with full-time participation.

The scholars discussed the report of the RAS corresponding member N.I. Lapin who, being Chairman of the Scientific Coordination Council on the issues of socio-cultural evolution of Russia and its regions, has contributed to its effective work directing the efforts towards the solution of topical issues of territories’ development. Paying particular attention to the section on the program “Socio-cultural evolution of Russia and its regions”, it is important to note that the participants discussed the following issues: biggest challenges of the new Russia and the development of regions’ innovative systems (N.I. Lapin); the institution of property in the post-Soviet Russia: issues of economic and social efficiency (L.A. Belyaeva); socio-cultural and socio-economic components and factors in modernization (G.F. Romashkina, E.A. Kogay, I.A. Kokh, V.T. Tarasov, E.B. Mostovaya, E.V. Andrianov, I.F. Pecherkina, A.N. Tarasova, A.V. Khoroshilova, Yu.A. Afanasyev, S.I. Shumilova); analysis of strategic development programs in the context of socio-cultural and socio-economic modernization of regions (T.A. Bulatov, T.G. Maklakova); human potential development, demographic issues and issues of social identity (R.M. Valiakhmetov, V.G. Kharitonova, A.A. Shabunova, O.N. Kalachikova); issues related to performance assessment of social well-being of citizens of Russian regions (V.A. Davydenko, I.D.

Petrosyan); methodological potential of “mixed” research methodology (E.B. Plotnikova) and other issues of regional comparative studies. The session ended with the summary of the section and the conference, the development of their resolutions.

The guests got acquainted with the work of important enterprises of the Tyumen petrochemical cluster which can be viewed as innovative businesses such as Antipinsky oil refinery and Factory of polymer tubes. The leading representatives of these factories described in detail the socio-economic context of their business, explained the principles of their interaction with municipal authorities. In fact, it was a “penetration” inside businesses in order to understand how such innovative plants, how they really work, what accompanies the creation of an innovation cluster: “what is going on and what is behind it”, using the terms of N. Luhmann. All participants noted that such in-depth tours are very useful.

In terms of the cultural program, the conference organized a study tour around Tyumen and a visit to the first private Museum in Russia – a house-museum of G. Rasputin.

In summing up of the section emphasized that in contemporary Russia, social and economic efficiency of the institution of property is not high enough. The economy remains highly monopolized, enterprises are in close contact with the authorities at all levels, which hinders the development of market institutions and competition. It has been determined that the new stage of economic development will clearly increase the role of the state and state enterprises in the economy. In order to achieve long-term strategic development it is important to create

institutional conditions for the emergence of a fully fledged market economy and competition (L.A. Belyaeva). It is also important to take into account the negative impact “excessive inequality” on the development of regions with a large share of population with incomes below the living wage, which negatively affects their modernization (V.T. Tarasov). Regions with a relatively low level of per capita income are “trapped” by extreme inequality with a significant number of the so-called “working poor” earning minimum wage amid higher level of living wage. The possible development scenarios of Russia and its regions were analyzed – stagnation and leadership – the necessity of forming regional and national innovation systems was proved.

The participants of the section concluded that in each region it is necessary to create an innovative system consistent with its cultural and historical conditions, as well as socio-cultural, economic and managerial practices (N.I. Lapin). In order to further improve the methodology for assessing socio-cultural images of regions, the participants consider it expedient to update the system of indicators designed to assess the socio-labor sphere of the region. It is necessary to develop the criteria for its modernization and identify social indicators which adequately reflect the transformation processes in this area (R.M. Valiakhmetov). Suggestions were made about raising the minimum wage and introducing a progressive tax scale (T.V. Tarasov). It turned out necessary to focus the efforts on the development of the civil society. The growing potential of social tension is caused by the contradictory nature of the institutional and regulatory components of modernization: there

is a simultaneous increase in self-esteem of the level of security and life satisfaction in general and an increase assessment of frequency of violations of basic human rights and freedoms (to the greatest extent: the right to emigrate, religious rights and freedoms, right to one's own language and culture) (G.F. Romashkina, V.A. Davydenko). The methodological potential of "mixed" methodology for studying modernization projects, the life worlds of local communities were reviewed. Within each region, those local communities where significant changes take (or took) place may be chosen as objects of empirical studies (E.B. Plotnikova). A promising technique to assess

the level of modernization of Russian regions is a classification approach based on the mixed methodology (E.B. Mostovaya).

The conference participants confirmed that the "Socio-cultural image of Russia regions" is among the greatest sociological projects in Russia. The goals set by authors and project participants are ambitious and reflect the undoubted social significance of the project. The project is a professional and civil act, the solution of problems of further improvement of the methodology of the program "Socio-cultural evolution of Russia and its regions" must be the result of collaboration of project participants.

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