

## **OPINION MONITORING: MAY—JUNE 2023**

VCIOM-Sputnik daily survey results. The survey method is stratified dual-frame sample consisting of telephone interviews. The sample is based on a complete list of landline and mobile phone numbers operating in Russia and involves 1,600 persons aged 18 and older. The data were weighted for the probability of selection and reflect social and demographic characteristics. The margin of error at a 95% confidence level does not exceed 2.5%. In addition to sampling error, minor changes in question wording and different circumstances arising during the fieldwork can introduce bias into the survey.

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**“BLACK OCTOBER — 1993”: THIRTY YEARS LATER**

## **“BLACK OCTOBER — 1993”: THIRTY YEARS LATER**

**October 13, 2023**

In the modern history of Russia, the 1990s are usually considered as a difficult era, full of dramatic events that affected the future fate of the country. One of the turning points was the storming of the White House in Moscow, also known as the “October Putsch” and the “Yeltsin coup of 1993.” Even though almost a third of a century has passed since this conflict, it is still stored in the memory of most Russians. Within a survey held in 2023, 32% of the respondents answered that they knew well about the October events of 1993, while 56% stated that they heard something, but without details. The overall level of awareness about the conflict, which almost turned into a civil war, sums up to 88% (in 2018 — 90%), which is 8–10 percentage points higher compared to 2013 (80%). The growth in the indicator was mainly due to an increase in the share of those who knew about the storming of the White House superficially, without details (+10 percentage points since 2013).

Every tenth Russian (10%) heard about the “October Putsch” for the first time during a survey; ten years ago, similar group was 1.5 times larger (2013 — 16%).

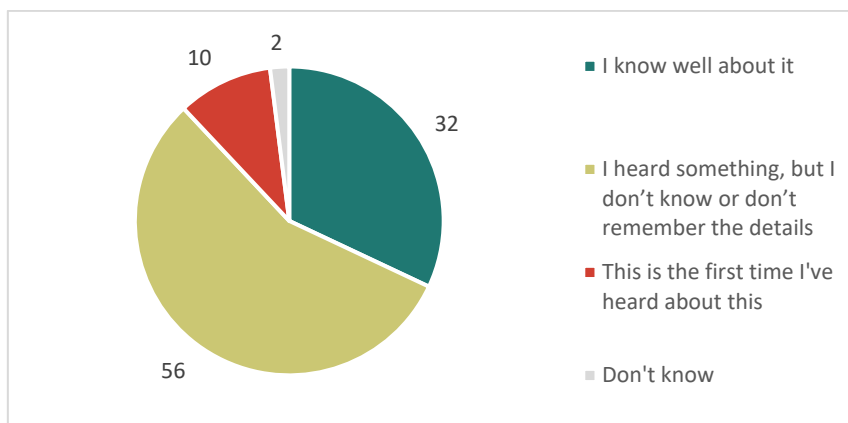
The minimum level of awareness is demonstrated by young people aged 18–24. Only 8% in this group are well informed about the storming of the White House, 57% heard something without details, and every third heard about these events for the first time during a survey (33%).

The typical Russian who is aware of the events of 1993 is a man (40% vs 26% among women), aged 45 years or older (45% among aged 45–59, 43% — among those aged 60+ years), with a college degree or incomplete higher education (39%) and living in one of the two capital cities (Moscow and St. Petersburg — 49%).

The share of those who have a superficial understanding of the “October Putsch” is higher among women (61% vs. 51% among men), citizens with secondary specialized education (61%), village residents (69%), active TV viewers (63%), as well as those who experienced these events in childhood or adolescence (64% among aged 35–44) or did not experience these events at all (61% among aged 25–34).

According to various estimates, more than 150 people died because of the armed clash on October 3–4, 1993. It has become more difficult for Russians to discuss the justification of using military force during this unrest: the question is twice as likely as in 2018 to cause difficulty among those who have heard or know something about the shooting of the White House (22% vs 11%). Every second Russian among those who remember these events well believes that forceful methods to control the situation were rather unjustified (53%, -10 percentage points compared to 2018), every fourth said the opposite (25%).

**Fig. 1. In October 1993, the confrontation between President Yeltsin and the Supreme Council led by Khasbulatov ended with riots in Moscow, shelling of the White House, dispersal of parliament and a significant expansion of the powers of the president. How well do you know about these events? (closed-ended question, one answer, % of all respondents)**



## **SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS**

### **WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES**

#### **OWN ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD, OR HOUSING FOR RUSSIANS**

#### **PROGRESS OR THREAT: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN MEDICINE**

## **WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES**

**September 1, 2023**

Most Russians are convinced that today men and women have similar chances of success in business (66% of the respondents). At the same time, every fourth noted that men still have more chances (25%), and just 5% say that women have more chances compared to men.

Men and women perceive the chances of success in business differently for different genders: men are more likely to say that chances are equal (70% vs 62% of women), while women are more likely to say that men have priority (29% vs 19% among men). However, an option “women have more chances” are mentioned only in 5% of cases both by men and women.

Russian youth under 25 more often state the inequality of entrepreneurial chances in favor of men (36%, every third in this group).

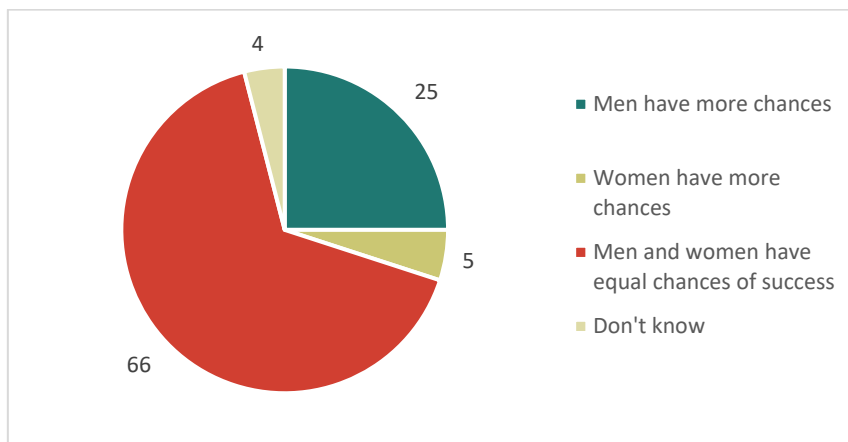
Urbanization is another factor that differentiates ideas about the roles of men and women in business. The larger the settlement, the more often the respondents state that it is easier for men to succeed in business. In Moscow and St. Petersburg, every third person thinks that way (34%), in rural areas the prevalence of this opinion is two times lower (18%).

Even though women's business is associated with traditional female functions, women are expected to display more masculine qualities and traits in running their enterprises. Every third person believes that women entrepreneurs are characterized by assertiveness, resilience, firmness, determination, and self-confidence (30%). Another 21% named activity, determination, and initiative among such qualities; authoritarian style of behavior (rigidity, demandingness, imperiousness) is expressed in the answers of 12% of the respondents. Organization, attentiveness, and discipline — such options were mentioned by 9%, next popular option is education, mental abilities (7%). Other characteristics include business sense, hard work (4% each), communication skills, stress resistance (3% each). Qualities that can be called “feminine” are heard much less frequently: 2% named kindness, gentleness, and love, and 1% — beauty and charm. 20% of Russians think that female entrepreneurs do not have any special character traits.

Women's interest in starting their own business in Russia is rather moderate. According to the survey, 5% of women have a business, more often — young women aged 25-34 years old (10%). Eight out of ten (80%) do not have a business and do not plan to open one. In the coming year, 4% intend to start their own business, another 9% have similar plans for later. In total, the potential of women's entrepreneurship is estimated at 13%. However, the situation changes dramatically if we look at it across age groups: among women aged 18-24 year old this estimate grows up to 46%, almost every

second person wants to start a business in the next year or several following years. Until the age of 45, it remains at the level of 20–25%, and then it drops to 5% among aged 45–59 year old and to 1% in the older cohort.

**Fig. 1. Let's talk about business. Who do you think has a better chance of achieving success in business in Russia – men or women? (closed-ended question, one answer, % of all respondents)**



## **OWN ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD, OR HOUSING FOR RUSSIANS**

September 24, 2023

According to the survey results, most Russians own residential real estate. To the question “What is your family’s main home?” 79% of the respondents answered that they live in their own living space, namely in an apartment (46%), house or a part of a house (31%), or a privatized room in a communal apartment (2%). Another 9% rent an apartment, house, or room from a private person, while only 3% and 1% named housing under a social tenancy agreement and departmental service housing, respectively.

Throughout the entire monitoring period (since 2005), a privatized apartment in an apartment building remains the most popular housing among Russians. The share of people living in it varies from 41% to 54%. As for their own house, over the past five years it has increased by 7 percentage points, from 24% to 31%. In addition, since 2005, the surveys reveal an almost threefold increase in the share of tenants renting housing from private owners (3% vs 9%), while the prevalence of social rented housing has decreased to a minimum (23% vs 3%).

Private renters are distinguished by their relatively young age (24% among aged 25–34), incomplete secondary education (16%), and average or poor financial situation (10% and 12%, respectively, vs 5% among wealthy citizens).

According to the survey results, 8 out of 10 Russians are more or less satisfied with their living conditions (80%). Since the beginning of measurements, this indicator has been steadily growing (2005 – 48%, 2007 – 55%, 2018 – 72%, 2023 – 80%), mainly due to an increase in the proportion of those giving a clearly affirmative answer (“completely satisfied”). Over the past 18 years it occurs 3.8 times

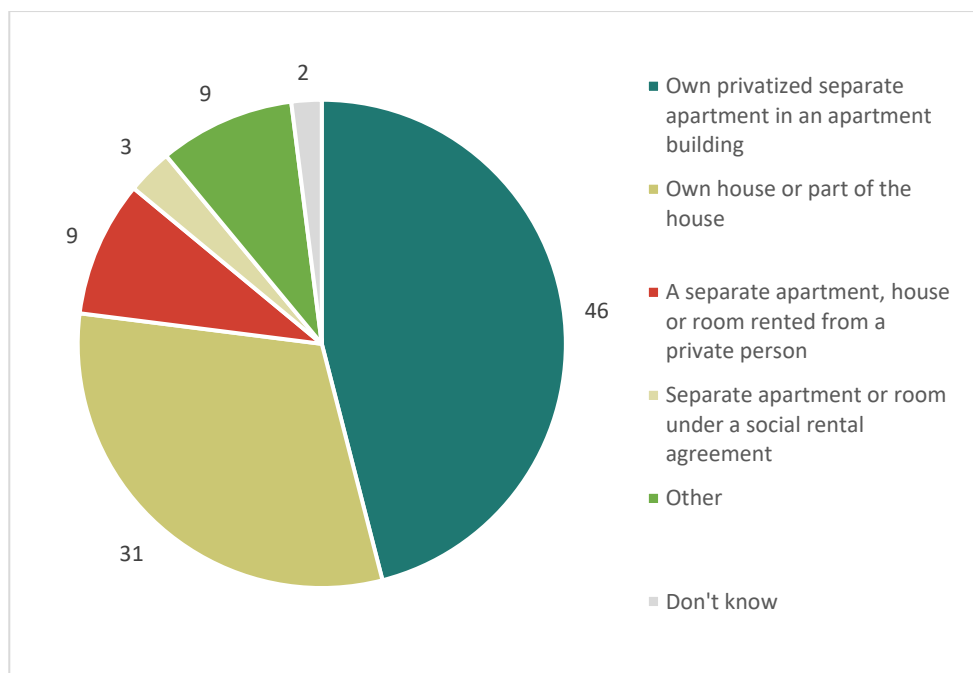
more often (13% vs 50%). Today, 18% of Russians are dissatisfied with their current housing conditions, five years ago this share reached 27%, and in 2005 – 50%.

The level of satisfaction with housing conditions stays equally high across various socio-demographic groups, namely among men and women (81% and 79%, respectively), young people and the older generation (83% and 85%), city dwellers and residents of rural areas (79–82% and 77%). The indicator depends, rather, on the financial situation of the family and housing security. In the high-income group, the overall level of satisfaction reaches 95% (vs 52% in the low-income group), and among those living in their own apartment or house or a part of the house – 86% and 87%, respectively.

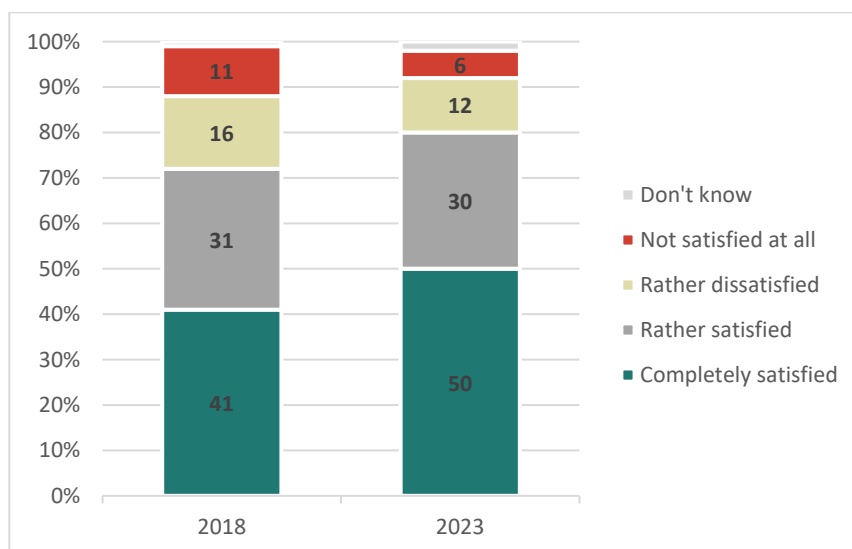
The reasons for dissatisfaction with living conditions in Russia are gradually changing. In 2007, dissatisfaction was primarily caused by overcrowding and lack of living space (41% in the group of those who are not satisfied with their living conditions). Today, as five years earlier, it is associated with high costs for housing and utility services (2023 – 33%, 2018 – 40% vs 18% in 2007). The lack of one's own housing also became a more common concern among respondents, which was expressed by every fourth (26%, +11 percentage points compared to 2007 and +10 percentage points compared to 2018). The lack of space (in square meters), on the contrary, becomes less common limitation (24 %, -17 percentage points compared to 2007 and -15 percentage points compared to 2018).

Over the observed period, the disrepair and emergency condition of housing began to be mentioned less often (18% vs 25% in 2007), while the quality of provision of housing and communal services was mentioned with the same frequency (2007 – 18%, 2018 – 18%, 2023 – 17%). Every eighth in the group of “dissatisfied” considers their housing not comfortable enough (12% vs 21% in 2007), another 8% are not satisfied with its location, the same share of respondents indicate the need to change housing for family reasons (divorce, etc.; 8%).

**Fig. 2. Please tell me, what main residence your family occupies and who owns it? (closed-ended question, one answer, % of all respondents)**



**Fig. 3. Are you satisfied with your living conditions in general or not? (closed-ended question, one answer, % of all respondents)**



### **PROGRESS OR THREAT: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN MEDICINE**

October 8, 2023

Polls by VCIOM and Pew Research Center show that in Russian and American societies, patients will feel more discomfort than comfort if doctors rely on Artificial Intelligence (AI) to diagnose diseases and recommend treatment. Such a situation would be unpleasant for 49% of Russians and 60% of Americans; 40% and 39%, respectively, would be neutral about this. This means that both in Russian and American society there are concerns about the use of AI in healthcare.

Among Russians, greater loyalty to the use of AI in medicine is shown by men (46% say they would be comfortable if a doctor turned to AI), young people (57% among aged 18–24 years old and 53% among aged 25–34 years old) and active Internet users (48%).

Discomfort in the potential situation of a doctor using AI occurs more often among women (54%) and Russians aged 35–59 years (54–52%). The older Russians are, the more often they find it difficult to answer the question (4% among young people under 25 and 18% in the older cohort).

AI could process huge amounts of data and find hidden patterns. In theory, this will allow doctors to better research diseases, make diagnoses faster and more accurately, and treat patients more effectively. Such prospects seem realistic to 38% of Americans and 40% of Russians, who believe that the use of AI in healthcare to diagnose diseases and recommend treatment will lead to improved health for patients. That is, the forecast for the effectiveness of AI in medicine in Russian and American societies is approximately at the same level.

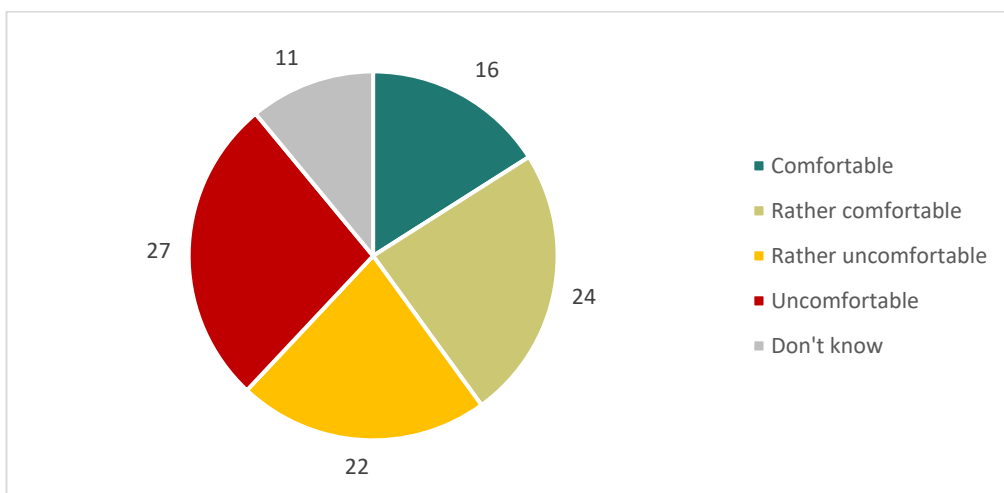
However, US residents were almost twice as likely to express a skeptical opinion on this matter; 33% are convinced that such innovations will lead to a deterioration in the health of patients. Among Russians, this opinion is shared by 17%. About a quarter of respondents in both the United States and

Russia are inclined to believe that the use of AI in healthcare will not affect the health of patients in any way (27% and 23%, respectively).

Both US and Russian residents are quite close in their assessments of how AI will affect the problem of medical errors; 40% of Americans and 44% of Russians believe that the situation will improve. 31% of Americans and 25% of Russians believe that the situation will not change at all. However, skepticism in this regard is higher among citizens of the United States – 27% expect an increase in the number of medical errors (vs 16% among Russians).

Speaking about the impact of AI on the security of patients' personal data, Russians more often than Americans gave positive assessments; about a third of Russians expect the situation to improve (31%), among US citizens this share comes down to 22%. At the same time, 20% of Russians and 37% of US residents believe that the situation will worsen. 31% of Russians and 39% of American citizens are inclined to believe that AI will not have any impact on this problem.

**Fig. 4. Let's talk about artificial intelligence. Artificial Intelligence is a computer program that can perform tasks that previously required human intervention. Artificial Intelligence is used in many areas, including medicine. How would you feel if your doctor relied on Artificial Intelligence, for example, to diagnose diseases and recommend treatments? (closed-ended question, one answer, % of all respondents)**





## **LIFESTYLE**

### **CORONAVIRUS A YEAR AND A HALF LATER: IS FEAR COMING BACK?**

#### **VACATIONS IN RUSSIA: YESTERDAY AND TODAY**

### **CORONAVIRUS A YEAR AND A HALF LATER: IS FEAR COMING BACK?<sup>1</sup>**

September 11, 2023

As the coronavirus incidence rate increased in September, Russians' fears of contracting COVID-19 also increased; a total of 41% are very afraid or somewhat afraid of contracting coronavirus. In June, this estimate was lower by 8 percentage points (33%). Every fourth person today is confident that this will not happen to him/her or his/her loved ones (24%), almost the same share of the respondents have not thought about it (26%).

Since 2020, Russians' anxiety about the virus has been going up and down, as has the spread of the infection itself. The maximum awareness was registered in 2020, when the situation of lockdown and pandemic provoked a social shock; in June and December 2020, the share of those feeling anxious reached 71%, that is, seven out of ten Russians were afraid of getting sick with coronavirus. In March 2021, the situation stabilized a little and the level of fears dropped to 58%; another year later, in March 2022, the figure was already 44%. Over the past two years, concerns have been growing at the beginning of the epidemiological season. Along with September of this year, an increase in worries was noted in September 2022 (57%) and then in December 2022 (53%), when the Omicron coronavirus strain and swine flu were simultaneously circulating in the country.

COVID-19 is gradually disappearing from the list of significant topics, which is evidenced by the fact that since last year the group of Russians who do not think about coronavirus has been growing (17% in December 2022, in September 2023 – 26%). Today, more than a quarter of Russians stay worried on this issue, while in June 2020, at the peak of the pandemic, this group included 9% of the respondents. Since 2022, the proportion of those who are confident that neither they themselves nor their loved ones will get sick with coronavirus has remained higher than in 2020–2021 (maximum was observed in June 2023 – 28%).

It is known that coronavirus infection is especially dangerous for older people, and they are the ones who are most often afraid of contracting COVID-19 – 52%, every second among aged over 60 years old (7% are very afraid and 45% are afraid to some extent). Among those aged 18-24 years olds, this share is more than two times lower – 22%. The level of anxiety due to the likelihood of contracting a coronavirus infection in the older cohort is decreasing more slowly than among young people: since

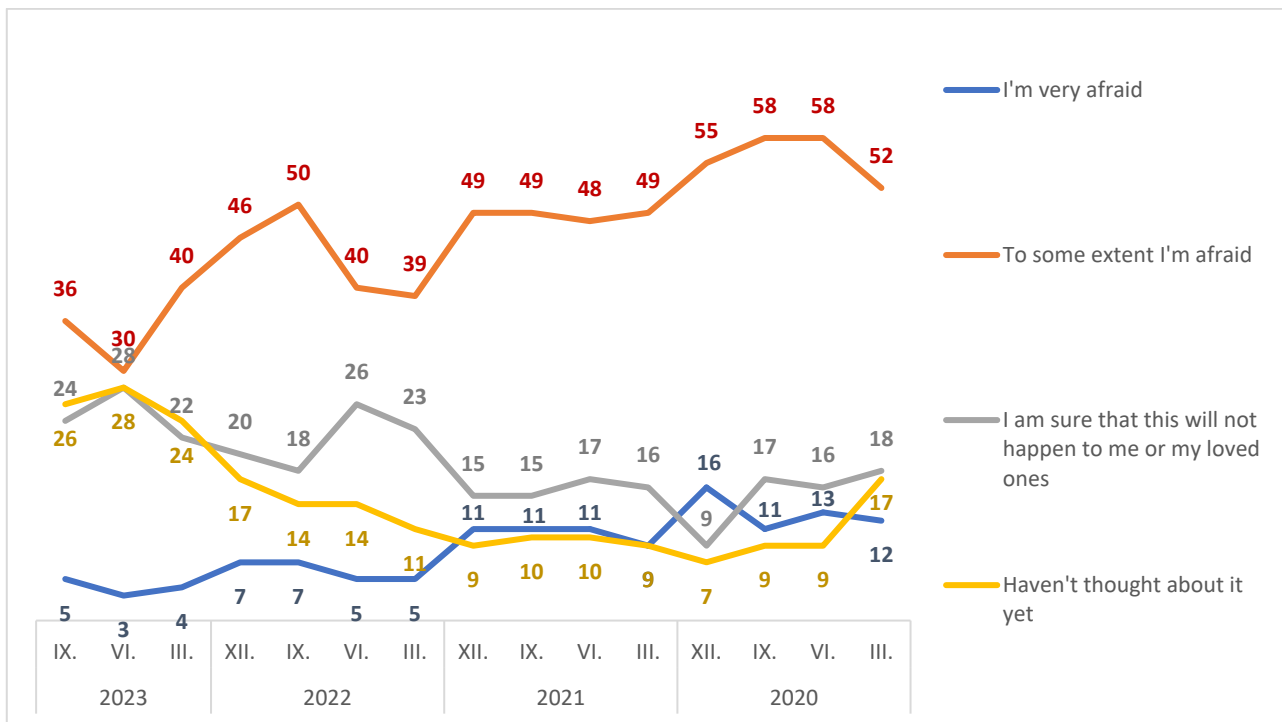
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<sup>1</sup> The Russia Public Opinion Research Center (VCIOM) presents the results of an all-Russian survey on the use of Artificial Intelligence in healthcare. The questions of the survey repeat a similar survey by the Pew Research Center in the United States. The American study was conducted by the Pew Research Center on December 12–18, 2022. The survey included 11,004 people aged over 18 years old. The survey was based a nationally representative online panel. More information about the research methodology and results can be found on the company's official website: <https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2023/02/22/60-of-americans-would-be-uncomfortable-with-provider-relying-on-ai-in-their-own-health-care/>

2020, the percentage of “anxious” youth aged 18-24 has fallen almost three times (September 2020 – 63%), and in the group of aged over 60 years old – by 1.5 times (September 2020 – 75%).

Other differentiating factors include gender (women are afraid more often than men, 46% vs 37%), income (“the rich” worry less than Russians with middle and low incomes, 34% vs 45%) and media consumption model (“TV viewers” – 52 %, “Internet users” – 33%).

**Fig. 1. In 2020, there was an outbreak of the disease caused by coronavirus. Are you now afraid that you or your loved ones may get coronavirus? (closed-ended question, one answer, % of all respondents)**



### VACATIONS IN RUSSIA: YESTERDAY AND TODAY

September 16, 2023

Over the past few years, VCIOM survey data show an increase in Russians’ interest in vacationing in Russia. Opinions about the conditions of recreation and leisure in our country are also changing. Today, every third person believes that the situation has improved (36%). Over the past three years, this figure has decreased; in the pandemic year of 2020, about half of Russians (46%) stated this opinion. A fifth of Russians today believe that conditions for recreation and leisure in our country have become worse (19%, + 9 percentage points compared to 2020). Almost the same number believe that no significant changes have occurred (22%).

The question caused difficulties for 23% of Russians. This is noticeably higher than in previous measurements (12–16%). This is likely because this year a record number of Russians noted that they have not taken a vacation over the past five years (35%).

The older the respondents, the more often they could not assess the conditions of recreation and leisure within the country (32% among aged over 60 years old vs 7% among young people under 25 years old).

Changes for the better more often are noticed by women (39%), young people under 25 years old (40%), Russians with a good financial situation (54%), rural residents (42%), and those who prefer a mixed model of media consumption combining and TV and Internet (41%).

Young people aged 18–34 (25–26%), Russians with a poor financial situation (32%) and active Internet users (27%), residents of large cities except for the two capitals are more likely to talk about changes for the worse.

The answers of Russians about what they liked and did not like about their holiday in Russia made it possible to identify the factors of a successful and unsuccessful holiday. The question was answered by those who vacationed in a country outside their region last summer.

Successful holidays are defined by the following:

- Nature and climate (beautiful nature, clean air — 27%, +8 percentage points compared to 2022; good weather, hot summer — 20%, +3 percentage points compared to 2022; warm sea, clean river — 20%, + 11 percentage points compared to 2022).
- Quality of service, prices (service, food, treatment — 14%, +7 percentage points compared to 2022; availability, affordable prices — 4%).
- Positive emotions and impressions (new impressions, recreation — 8%, -5 percentage points compared to 2022; friendliness of local residents — 8%; vacation spot, beautiful city — 7%; change of scenery, meeting with loved ones — 4% each).
- Comfort and safety (urban improvement, infrastructure — 8%; atmosphere, tranquility — 5%; transport infrastructure — 2%, -3 percentage points compared to 2022).
- Cultural attractions (architecture, monuments — 12%, +3 percentage points compared to 2022; events, entertainment — 5%).

Factors causing an unpleasant holiday experience are the following:

- Vacation expenses (high prices for housing, tickets, food, lack of money — 22%, +5 percentage points compared to 2022).
- Poor infrastructure, lack of amenities (poor condition of roads, traffic jams — 9%, +3 percentage points compared to 2022; underdevelopment of cities — 3%; dirty cities, beaches — 2%).
- Poor service, psychological discomfort (poor quality service — 6%; crowded spots — 5%).
- Unfavorable natural conditions (bad weather, heat, fires, insects — 4%, -6 percentage points compared to 2022).
- Social problems (tension due to the military operation — 2%).

**Fig. 2. How, in your opinion, have conditions for recreation and leisure changed in Russia over the past year? (closed-ended question, one answer, % of all respondents)**

