

**GAIDAR INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMIC POLICY**

**RUSSIAN ECONOMY IN 2019**

**TRENDS AND OUTLOOKS**

*(Issue 41)*

**Gaidar Institute Publishers  
Moscow / 2020**

UDC 338.1(470+571)"2019"

BBC 65.9(2Poc)"

- R95 *Russian Economy in 2019. Trends and outlooks. (Issue 41) / [V. Mau et al; scientific editing by Kudrin A.L., Doctor of sciences (economics), Radygin A.D., Doctor of sciences (economics), Sinelnikov-Murylev S.G., Doctor of sciences (economics)]; Gaidar Institute. – Moscow: Gaidar Institute Publishers, 2020. – 596 pp.: illust.*

**ISBN 978-5-93255-587-3**

The review “Russian Economy. Trends and Outlooks” has been published by the Gaidar Institute since 1991. This is the 41<sup>th</sup> issue. This publication provides a detailed analysis of main trends in Russian economy, global trends in social and economic development. The paper contains 6 big sections that highlight different aspects of Russia's economic development, which allow to monitor all angles of ongoing events over a prolonged period: global economic and political challenges and national responses, economic growth and economic crisis; the monetary and budget spheres; financial markets and institutions; the real sector; social sphere; institutional changes. The paper employs a huge mass of statistical data that forms the basis of original computation and numerous charts confirming the conclusions.

By contrast to the previous publications the present issue includes also a short analysis of the first three months of 2020 from the perspective of the COVID-19 pandemic impact on the Russian economy development.

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ISBN 978-5-93255-587-3

□ Gaidar Institute, 2020

### 5.7. The main issues of the state policy in education in 2019<sup>1</sup>

In 2019, the implementation of the “Education” national project began in the education sector. If in 2012–2018 the state policy’s main objective was to raise wages of teaching employees, now within the next six years it is necessary to carry out ten federal projects – included in the specified national project – which set the lines of the long-term development of this sector.

The second issue which attracted considerable public attention and gave rise to fierce debates is the adoption of new federal state educational standards (hereinafter FSES) of the elementary, basic and general secondary education. The advocates of new standards regard them as a guarantee facilitating the cohesion of Russia’s educational space, while the opponents, as a return to the Soviet school with its overregulation and a denial of all achievements made in the Russian education in the past 30 years.

The third issue which is widely discussed in the education sector is the “regulatory guillotine”, that is, clearing the regulatory and legal environment of excessive regulation and supervision in respect of educational establishments’ activities.

The fourth issue is the development of the Russian education system in 2020 amid the outbreak of the coronavirus.

#### 5.7.1. The “Education” National Project

The “Education” national project started to be formed in summer 2019 after Executive Order No.204 of the President of the Russian Federation “On National Goals and Strategic Objectives of the Development of the Russian Federation in the Period till 2024” was issued. As national goals for the education system, the following objectives were set:

- Facilitation of global competitiveness of the Russian education, entering by the Russian Federation the rating of the world’s top ten countries as regards the standard of education;
- Upbringing of a harmoniously developed and socially responsible personality on the basis of moral and spiritual values of peoples of the Russian Federation and historic, national and cultural traditions.

To achieve the specified objectives, within the frameworks of the “Education” national project ten federal projects worth RUB 784.5 billion for the term of six years were formed. The volume of financing of each federal project and its share in the overall volume of funds allocated to the specified national project are presented in *Table 5*.

*Table 5*

#### **The volume of funding of federal projects within the framework of the “Education” national project**

	Federal project	Volume of funding, billion RUB	Share in overall volume of allocated funds, %

<sup>1</sup> This Section was written by *Klyachko T.L.*, Doctor of science (Economics), Director of the Center for Continuing Education Economics, IAES, RANEPa.

## RUSSIAN ECONOMY IN 2019

### trends and outlooks

1	Modern School	295.1	37.6
2	Success of Each Child	80.5	10.3
3	Support of Families with Children	8.6	1.1
4	Digital Education Environment	79.8	10.2
5	Teacher of Future	15.4	2.0
6	Young Professionals	156.2	19.9
7	New Opportunities for Each Person	9.2	1.2
8	Social Activity	27.3	3.5
9	Exports of Education	107.5	13.6
10	Social Lifts	4.4	0.6

Source: own calculations based on the data of the “Education” national project: URL: <https://edu.gov.ru/national-project/>

So, the main funds of the “Education” national project were invested in three federal projects – “Modern School”, “Young Professionals” and “Exports of Education” – on which 71.1 percent of all allocated funds will be spent, while with two more federal projects – “Success of Each Child” and “Digital Education Environment” – taken into account, it will amount to 91.6 percent. Thus, it is expected to spend the mere 8.4 percent of the funds on the other half of federal projects.

Such a pattern of funding of federal projects highlights the main line of utilization of allocated funds, that is, the development of the infrastructure of the education system, namely:

- Creation of new places at schools (building and modernization of school buildings) to liquidate the third shift and reduce the share of students of the second shift;
- Formation of conditions for the development of extended education for children and the youth (the “Quantorium” children’s technology parks, the “Talent and Success” educational centers, rural schools’ playgrounds and other);
- Establishment of centers for advanced professional training in the system of the secondary vocational training and equipment thereof with modern facilities;
- Building of hostels for foreign students and students from other cities.

The “Education” national project’s orientation mainly on the development of the infrastructure can be justified, on one side, by the general orientation of all national projects on this goal, while, on the other side, by the fact that educational establishments experience acute shortages of funds to develop their material and technical base. Thanks to the efforts taken in the past six years to raise teachers’ wages, at present they account for 75-80 percent and sometimes even 85 percent of the budgets of preschool, general and secondary vocational training establishments. With public utility payments taken into account, educational establishments financed out of regional and municipal budgets lack funds for other needs. Further, most of them do not virtually have any possibility to attract extra-budgetary resources. With few exceptions, regions are not able to finance the required development of the educational infrastructure because they have not been relieved from the duties to support wages of social services workers at the fixed level, though the interest to this issue has waned somewhat.

Accordingly, the federal budget has actually taken upon itself the required modernization of the material, technical and information base without participation of the regional education systems through the implementation of the “Education” national project.

To what extent is it feasible to achieve this goal? With teachers’ average pay increased, teachers’ wages have become much more diversified both across and inside the regions. At the same time, according to the Monitoring of School Efficiency (which has been carried out on a regular basis by the Center for Permanent Education Economics IAES RANEPa since 2013)

two-thirds of school teachers did not even notice any pay rise, which situation on the backdrop of the official data on wage hikes leads to growth in social tensions in this sector.

Another negative factor, which emerged last year, is related to the fact that parents who in 2013-2015 started to regard teachers as representatives of the middle class after many years of attributing them to low-income people on the basis of the mass media's reports about teachers' low wages started to reduce again the estimate of the latter's social status. As a consequence, a teacher is regarded almost everywhere as a "loser" and the society believes that such teachers will not be able to educate a successful person of the future.

Also, the worsening of schools' material and technical base has become a serious problem in the past few years. If the population at large is unsatisfied with the general education system<sup>1</sup>, parents specifically believe that the school where their child (children) goes to is quite all right and meets its obligations. There are 84–86 percent of such parents depending on the region or populated area. However, the conditions in which children study arouse more and more criticism. According to the survey carried out by the All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VCIOM)<sup>2</sup>, over 32 percent of parents point to the poor state of schools' material and technical base and a lack of renovation for a long period of time, which factors cannot, but affect children. At the same time, the Monitoring of School Efficiency did not identify such high discontent (*Fig. 41*).

As seen from *Fig. 41*, across three regions where the Monitoring was carried out the technical equipment of schools – 21.7 percent (the Pskov Region which is a highly subsidized subject of the Russian Federation) and the condition of school buildings – 10.8 percent (the Samara Region which is a donor region) accounted for the highest degree of parents' discontent.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, most parents (35–40 percent) are "more likely satisfied" with the state of school premises and technical equipment of schools (45–48 percent). In other words, they are not satisfied with everything as regards educational establishments' material and technical base.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the data of various opinion polls, up to 38 percent of respondents say that there are more problems in the general education system. See, for example, URL: <https://wciom.ru/index.php?id=236&uid=9874>.

<sup>2</sup> URL: <https://wciom.ru/index.php?id=236&uid=9874>.

<sup>3</sup> The Monitoring of School Efficiency of the Center for Permanent Education Economics, IAES RANEPa includes regions which differ by the social and economic situation and are representative of the aggregate of Russia's regions.

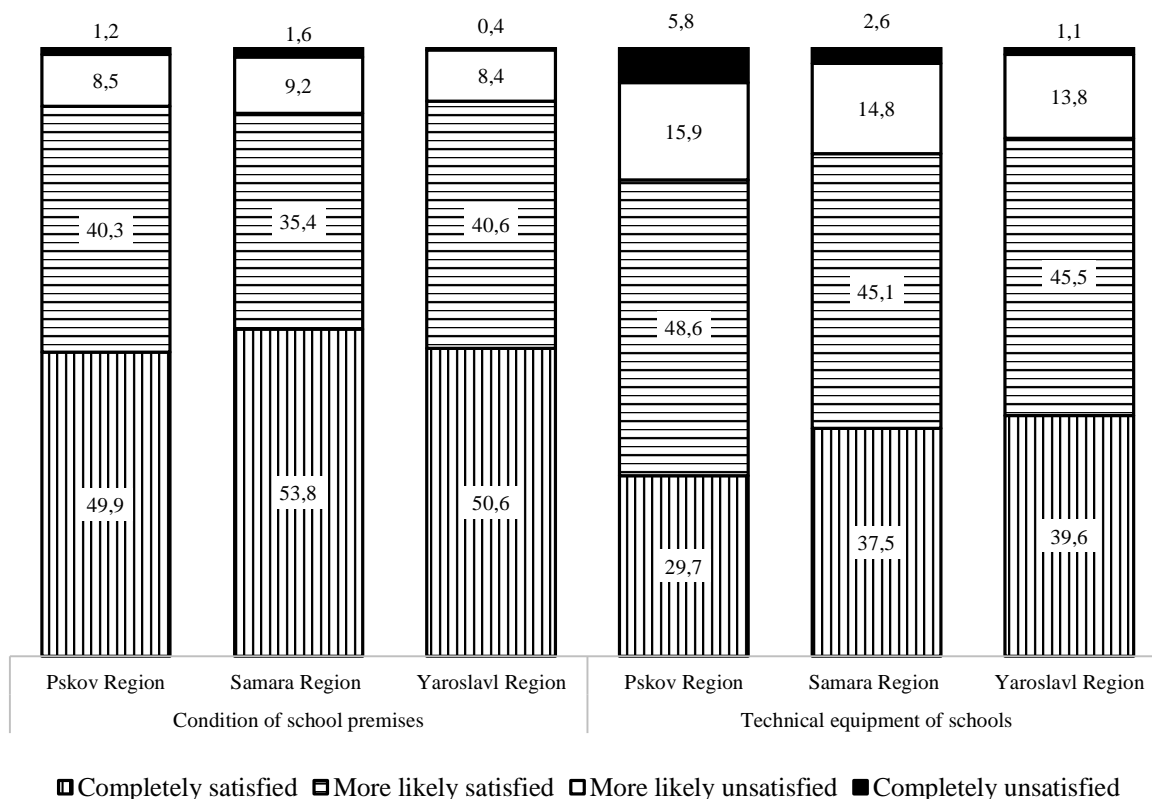


Fig. 41. Parents' satisfaction with the material and technical base of the school, which their child goes to, %

Source: The Monitoring of School Efficiency of the Center for Permanent Education Economics, IAES RANEPА.

As a result, in 2019 the issues related to the worsening of the learning environment took the forefront, having left behind even parents' discontent with a lack of subject teachers at some school (Fig. 42).

Generally, a lack of teachers is more typical of rural schools; to solve this problem, one teacher has to conduct classes in different subjects. However, the discontent with staffing of schools with teachers is more explicit in regional capitals and cities where 12.5–12.4 percent of parents are “completely or more likely dissatisfied”, against 11.8 percent in rural areas (as you can see the difference is not very big). However, the problems related to shortage of teachers become more acute and soon are likely come to the top of agenda. According to our calculations, schools need minimum 250,000 teachers, which situation creates a serious overburden for the existing staff.

At present, regions started to conduct on-line learning because of a lack of teachers in schools with relatively high-speed internet. The tasks of the Digital Education Environment federal project include the digitalization of education, introduction of new digital education technologies and connection of all schools to the high-speed internet; the work on these lines is being actively carried out at schools. However, the utilization of new technologies is sometimes urgently required by virtue of the existing shortage of teachers.

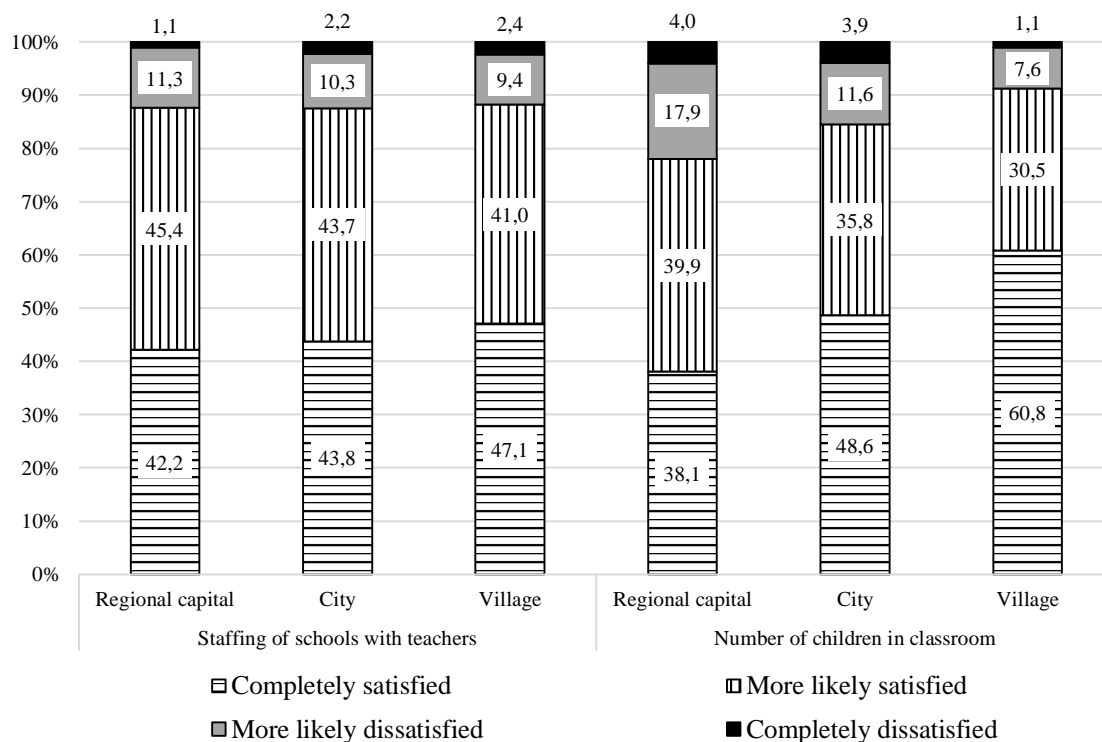


Fig. 42. Parents' satisfaction with staffing of schools where their children study with teachers, %

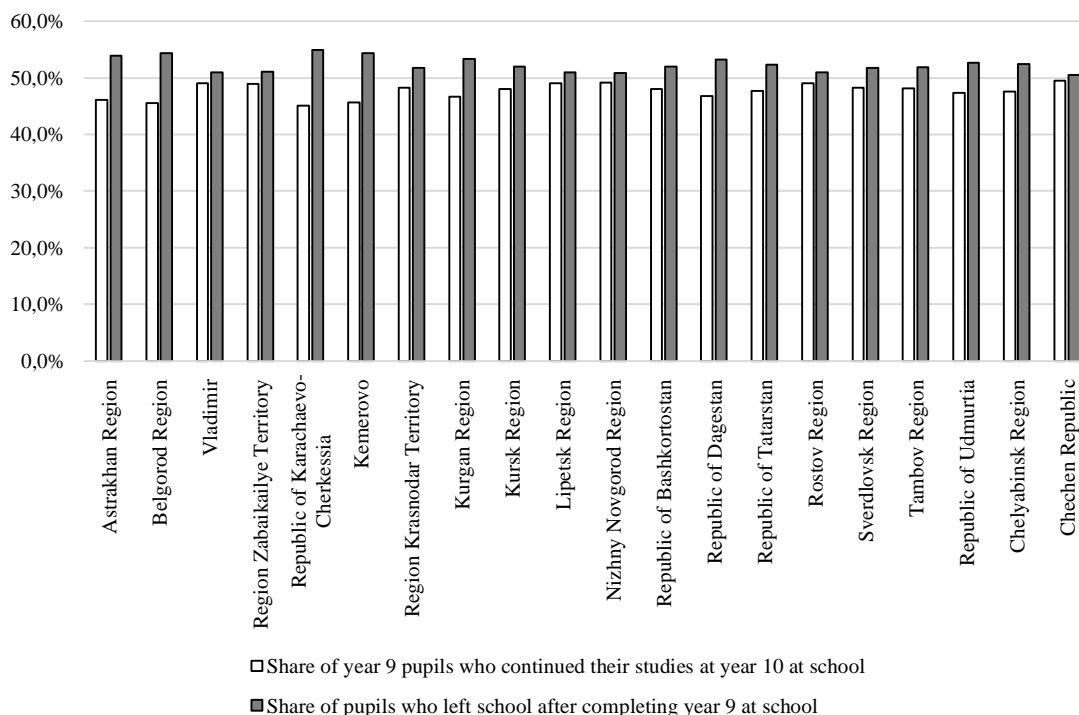
Source: The Monitoring of School Efficiency of the Center for Permanent Education Economics, IAES RANEPa.

Overall, the “Education” national project deals with a limited range of issues and, in our view, it can be explained by the fact that its implementation, generally speaking, is stalled because the essential problems of the education system are getting worse.

It is worthwhile to mention another important thing which results from the distribution of budget funds across federal projects included in the “Education” national project. Despite all talks about the importance of the human capital, the education management system is aimed at building up the physical capital of this sector, while it pays less attention to the human capital. The “Teacher of the Future” federal project accounts for the mere 2 percent of the total volume of this national project’s expenditures (see Table 5). At the same time, the human capital and development of this country depend a lot on the standard of the teaching staff (attention is mainly paid to its number).

This relates to the development of vocational education and training in Russia, too. In the “Young Professionals” federal project, an emphasis is made on the development in the Russian Federation of WorldSkills technologies which are used in developed countries in training of the personnel. Russia, which used to lag behind in WorldSkills global championships from competitor-countries, has advanced to the leading positions in the past few years. However, it does not mean that everything is all right in the system of secondary vocational education (hereinafter, SVE) which deals with training of workers. Russia is likely to have switched over as usual to the training of a small number of students who can perform well, while the rest of the SVE system is plunging into a serious crisis. In SVE, the number of students is rapidly growing; in numerous regions after completion of year nine at school over 50 percent of pupils

go the SVE system (Fig. 43). At the same time, its funding does not grow, while technical and technological equipment becomes obsolete. The teaching personnel is getting older, too (particularly, vocational training foremen), which makes it infeasible in principle for SVE institutions to prepare innovative workers and mid-tier employees.



**Fig. 43. Subjects of the Russian Federation where over 50 percent of pupils go to SVE institutions after completing year nine at school, 2018, %**

Source: calculations based on the data of the RF Ministry of Education. URL: <https://edu.gov.ru/activity/statistics/>

In 2018,<sup>1</sup> in Russia one SVE student accounted on average for RUB 83,700, while one student of a higher education establishment, for RUB 135,200.<sup>2</sup> With taking into account the practice-oriented nature of training personnel in the SVE system, such funds are not enough. Consequently, SVE institutions differentiate into those which provide more or less the required standard of training and those where this standard is rather low. As a result, employers' attitude to the SVE system is getting worse. First, regional authorities try to make business predict their need in personnel and then employ the trained workforce; second, SVE institutions switch over mainly to training of mid-tier employees specializing in accounting, design and other, which does not require a modern technical base. This situation prompted regional authorities to obligate employers to hand over to colleges and secondary technical schools modern equipment so that the latter could train personnel and, in addition, produce goods on orders of the business to compensate the latter's costs on purchasing of the equipment. The business is unlikely to agree on it because modern equipment is quite expensive and it is also needed to train first those

<sup>1</sup>As of the date of preparation of this section, the official data on administration of the 2019 consolidated budget were unavailable.

<sup>2</sup> Calculated on the basis of the data of the RF Federal Treasury and the Rosstat.



who will teach students. Again, it is quite a large sum of money, which employers cannot take without detriment to their own economic activity.

As regards the higher education, the “Young Professionals” federal project (a “Global Competitiveness of Higher Education” subproject) actually tries to expand somewhat the well-established practice of the 5/100 project where universities receive substantial funding to enter the global institutional ratings. If earlier it was required that minimum five Russian universities should enter the top-100, at present the goal is reduced to enter the top-500 and increase the presence in subject ratings. The number of higher education establishments involved in this task is expected to be increased from 21 universities which have already participated in the 5/100 project to 30 universities and it is likely that a small rotation of participants which jointed the project earlier will take place.

The above-listed measures permit, on one side, to finance out of the budget those higher education establishments (or at least most of them) which entered the 5/100 project in the previous years, while, on the other side, increase somewhat their number in order to give some impetus to the project. The risk related to this approach consists in the fact that in the system of vocational training the “elite sport” will prevail over the orderly promotion of the standard of personnel training.

#### 5.7.2. The new FSES in general education

In 2019, the issue of new federal state education standards has become very topical. A portion of the pedagogical community and those experts who developed the previous FSES insisted that schools should be orientated at developing metasubject competences, which were regarded as competences of the 21st century, that is, creativity, critical thinking, interpersonal skills and teamwork (ability to work in a team). In addition, it is important to teach children and teen-agers to work independently, look for the required information and systemize it. The emphasis is made on the design work which can be done both individually (each student works on his/her own project) and in groups in case a team works on the project.

This approach is based on the perception that in the modern world the specific knowledge becomes very quickly outdated, so it is necessary to orient students at something which is nontemporal. In addition, amid the growing information flow it is necessary to teach students to orientate themselves and find the data they need.

The other portion of the pedagogical community and experts believed that it was important to give students the domain knowledge because without it the creativity and critical thinking had no foundation to rely on and such an approach would lead to negative consequences where a new generation of young people without proper knowledge on the subject would be ready to discuss and modify it.

Actually, this dispute stems from the correlation in the modern world of *soft skills* (that is, “flexible” and “soft” skills) and *hard skills* (“hard” and “tough” skills) or a more profound thing, that is, prevalence of socialization and upbringing or professionalism and education. At the same time, both the sides have tried and still try to appeal to employers. According to numerous sociological surveys, the modern employer needs primarily workers with soft skills; for example, graduates of the secondary vocational education institutions lack such skills. At the same time, employers seek to employ a practice-orientated specialist or worker with the specific knowledge and skills which help him/her get integrated into the working process. However, it is ignored that due to rapid technological progress this orientation on practice becomes outdated because permanent retraining is required and, consequently, a worker with vocational training should have a base, that is, hard skills, a nucleus, which new knowledge is

based on. Obviously, in new conditions the worker has to look for the required information singlehandedly. But it is also important for him/her to differ the professional and trustworthy information from the incorrect one. But it is impossible to do that without professional knowledge and skills based on the fundamental education. When they say that children should not be overloaded with information because it is available in Google or Yandex they forget that someone should first receive (get) knowledge and then place the relevant information into modern databases and search engines.

At the same time, the school seems to have stuck between these two approaches: as a consequence students become overloaded because instructors try to cultivate with them as many as possible soft and hard skills simultaneously. Students lose interest in their studies and low-performing pupils fall virtually out of the education process. As was stated above, in the past few years this situation has led to growth in the flow of year nine pupils to vocational training institutions. It is noteworthy that schools oriented at high grades to be received by their pupils at single state exams – the criteria by which schools are regarded successful – try to get rid of low-performing pupils, rather than bring them up at least to the average level of learning. Most teachers of year nine pupils believe that 15–20 percent of their pupils are unable to learn the school curricula. Though this estimate in respect of year ten pupils is lower, teachers say that 5–10 percent of their pupils are unable to study at high school.<sup>1</sup>

As seen from the school efficiency monitoring, in addition to the fact that both parents and teachers would like to see a higher stability of school educational programs they believe that children's interest in learning can be increased primarily by means of modification of the educational content. Note that only 36.6 percent of parents are completely satisfied with the content of school programs, 52 percent are more likely satisfied, while 9.6 percent and 1.8 percent are unsatisfied and completely unsatisfied.<sup>2</sup>

Like parents, most teachers (73.6 percent) and primarily rural school teachers (77 percent) believe that the content of educational programs needs to be changed (*Fig. 44*). This need is pointed out not only by teachers of ordinary schools (74.8 percent), but also those who work at upper secondary schools, lysees and schools with advanced study of subjects (70.1 percent).

The more experience teachers have, the larger number of teachers is in favor of modification of educational programs and fewer teachers doubt the correctness of this answer: 83.5 percent of teachers with minimum 30-year long record of service at schools are confident that the content of subjects, as well as the methods of teaching should be changed.<sup>3</sup>

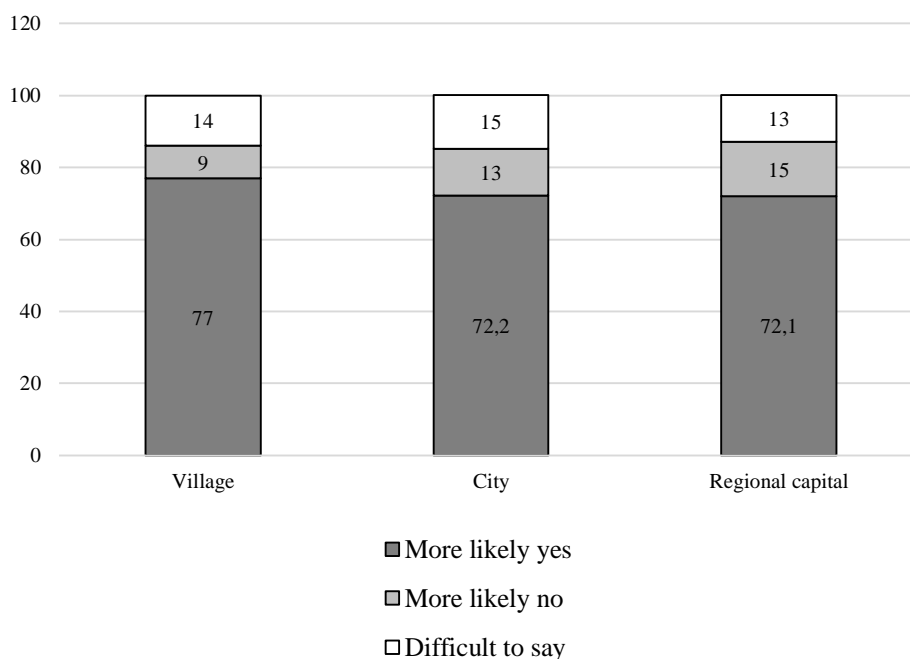
It is noteworthy that two-thirds of teachers (67.5 percent) believe that instruction based on the utilization of single textbooks is more effective and this approach is supported more widely by rural school teachers (72.9 percent), rather than school teacher in regional capitals (62.1 percent). So, teachers are not ready for variability and innovation: they prefer the uniformity of education programs. Probably, the problem consists in the fact that teachers are overburdened as over 61.3 percent of teachers say that they have to take 1.5 paid positions or even or more.

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<sup>1</sup> The Monitoring of School Efficiency. The Center for Permanent Education Economics, IAES RANEPА, November 2018.

<sup>2</sup> The Monitoring of School Efficiency. The Center for Permanent Education Economics, IAES RANEPА, September 2019.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



*Fig. 44.* Teachers’ opinion as regards the need to upgrade the content of educational programs; type of settlement, 2019, %

*Source:* The Monitoring of School Efficiency. The Center for Permanent Education Economics, IAES RANEP.

In developing the new FSES, the Ministry of Education paid attention in many respects to the collective request both of teachers and parents. After the change of top officials in the Ministry of Education, the issue of FSES is again on the agenda. The problem is not in educational standards alone; despite all efforts to modernize the teaching personnel, the “teacher of the future” represents a teacher of the present or even of the past who is overloaded, among other things, with numerous bureaucratic requirements. For the development (or before the development) of the new FSES, it is important to understand what content the general education should have amid the ongoing technological and social changes. It is believed that with the emphasis made on the fundamental nature of education the younger generation will be able to adapt itself more quickly to the growing “uncertainties of the future.”

### 5.7.3. The “Regulatory Guillotine” and accreditation of higher education institutions

Growth in a bureaucratic burden causes considerable damage to the development of the economy and the society. So, the need to decrease this burden by means of the “regulatory guillotine”, that is, to give up the excessive control in all spheres was accepted positively.

In the education sector, growth both in the red tape and burden on teachers prevents this sector from developing properly. The costs which educational establishments encounter at all levels of education are growing constantly, while the standard of training is more likely declining because of growth in supervision.

In the higher education, the issue of reduction of the administrative control has become particularly topical in a situation where the accreditation was withdrawn from two higher education establishments whose standards of training and research were never put into question

by the expert community. Those two institutions were the European University of St. Petersburg (both the accreditation and license were withdrawn from it, but later renewed) and the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences – the renowned “Shaninka” (its accreditation<sup>1</sup> was cancelled, but not the license).

However, the problem consists in the fact that the system of state accreditation deals not only with the higher education, but also its other levels and is linked with the FSES; furthermore, the availability of accreditation permits to solve many important issues (for example, in the higher education it is draft exemption, the prospect for a private higher education establishment to receive admission quotas, that is budget funding and other), so the deadlock is quite difficult to untangle.

In principle, the issue of the state accreditation of educational institutions highlights the fact that it is easy to establish a bureaucratic system, but difficult to change it.

The main idea, which is widely debated at present, deals with the shifting of the emphasis from accreditation to licensing of educational institutions. In principle, a higher attention paid to licensing and toughening of regulation thereof is the evidence of the fact that the emphasis in regulation has shifted to the process of admission of new participants to the education system (the education market). However, as before, the licensing procedure applied to state-owned kindergartens, schools, SVE institutions and higher education establishments is not quite clear. As regards municipal educational establishments, the licensing procedure was clear because under the Constitution the municipal level is not included into the system of state authorities and, consequently, may not comply with any state requirements. Municipal educational establishments (like municipal medical institutions, municipal institutions of culture and other) are actually quasi-state institutions: they are established by agreement with regions and funded partially (and often completely) out of regional budgets though budget subventions, subsidies and transfers pass officially through municipal budgets. Eventually, this factor is behind the intension of many subjects of the Russian Federation to make at least all schools be state-owned. Accordingly, the word “establishment” in cases where the state “establishes” a kindergarten, school or higher education establishment” defines more precisely the relations and nature of engagement between the state and a state educational establishment. In this case, granting of a license to a school or higher education establishment is a strange action because the state establishes them for carrying out functions it needs. Also controversial is the practice of accreditation of state educational establishments, that is, granting by the state of a “credit” (credit of trust): the state has already established a state educational establishment, defined its functions, sets objectives to it and finances fulfillment thereof. In this context, it is absolutely unclear what they verify in the process of accreditation: the standard of education or the standard of management of the educational establishment by the appointed state manager, no matter whether he/she is a school principal or rector of the higher education establishment. It seems the standard of management should be meant here and, consequently, the standard of the HR policy of the state in education when this refers to state educational establishments (institutions). However, the objective of accreditation is neither set nor formulated this way.

In case of private educational establishments, both licensing and accreditation have a somewhat different meaning. By issuing a license, the state takes responsibility for fulfillment by the educational establishment of its functions and for this reason verifies whether the private (non-state) founder is able to ensure the required training conditions and has the required

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<sup>1</sup> In March 2020 the accreditation was returned. URL: [http://obrnadzor.gov.ru/common/upload/doc\\_list/Zakluchenie\\_oano\\_vo\\_Moskovskaya\\_vyssshaya\\_shkola\\_sotsialnykh\\_i\\_ekonomicheskikh\\_nauk\\_1.pdf](http://obrnadzor.gov.ru/common/upload/doc_list/Zakluchenie_oano_vo_Moskovskaya_vyssshaya_shkola_sotsialnykh_i_ekonomicheskikh_nauk_1.pdf).

personnel to carry out the declared educational programs, while in the process of accreditation they check whether the educational establishment complies with the requirements set to its activity and personnel.

It is noteworthy that in case of both state (municipal) and private educational establishments the issue of “conversion” of conditions of training (material and technical facilities, information resources and other) and the existing personnel into the proper quality of education remains open. In principle, a larger volume of resources should lead to a higher standard of education (the principle of transition of quantity to quality is widely known), but it does not happen often in reality. According to Mikhail Agranovich, the method of assessment of the condition of the education system based on the volume of costs starts to fail from a certain moment (the level of such costs).<sup>1</sup> So, neither an increase in the share of expenditures on education in GDP, nor a high level of teachers’ or professors’ wages, or expenditures per school pupil or student of a higher education establishment permit to judge unambiguously about the quality of education and development of the education system. All these factors put into question the idea that growth in the level of control may facilitate growth in the standard of education as much as a decrease in regulatory zeal. The more so, it is not expected to decrease substantially: in 2018 Russia’s results which used to grow<sup>2</sup> in the PISA international comparative study declined and Russia may face the prospect of not being included into the top-10 leading countries as regards the standard of general (school) education (one of the goals of implementation of the “Education” national project). This may lead to growth in the number of inspections and audits. At the same time, it will be thought that the regulatory control has been relaxed because regulatory documents and, probably, some laws which were never complied with have been removed from the regulatory environment.

#### 5.7.4. The coronavirus pandemic and the measures applied in the Russian education system: challenges for 2020.

The education systems of virtually all countries around the world faced new serious challenges due to the coronavirus SARS-Cov19 outbreak which started in China late in 2019. The problems which have arisen are not completely comprehended so far; solution are yet to be found by numerous pedagogical, managerial and economic mechanisms. Much will depend on the situation and it is hard to tell which measures are going to be effective. At present, almost all countries around the globe close down kindergartens (pre-school educational institutions), schools, vocational training institutions of pre-higher education level and universities. Overall, nearly 1.5 billion children and the youth do not go to educational establishments because of the quarantine being imposed. Russia is not an exception here. At first, the authorities provided parents with a choice, either to send children to kindergartens and schools or leave them at home, having organized home schooling for them. By virtue of the fact that, parents whose children go to pre-school educational institutions and schools, have to go to work, this choice was almost unambiguous: the children kept visiting schools. According to the mass media’s reports, about 2 percent of parents, for example in Moscow, left their children at home, while across Russia the rate was even lower. So, the decision was taken to close pre-school

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<sup>1</sup> Agranovich M.L. Resources in Education: Saturation or Oversaturation? //Voprosy Obrazovania (The Issues of Education), 2019. Issue No. 4. p. 254–275.

<sup>2</sup> The data on the results received by Russian 15 year old school pupils became available only late in 2019.

educational institutions, schools and supplementary education facilities, extend holidays for school children and then switch them over to online training.

Similar measures were taken in the systems of vocational education and higher education: SVE institutions, supplementary vocational education institutions and higher education establishments switched over to the online format with a broad utilization of massive open online courses (MOOC). According to the data of the RF Ministry of Education and Science, by the end of March 80 percent of higher education establishments succeeded in switching over to online learning.

The main problems which have already been revealed are as follows:

Except for Moscow, St. Petersburg and a number of other large cities, schools are not prepared for a switchover to online learning; it concerns both teachers and students. The main problem is a lack of the required content and teachers' skills to work with it. In a number of regions (for example, the Kirov Region), some experience has been amassed in this field because due to a lack of subject teachers in rural areas and urban-type settlements the online learning was introduced some time ago for pupils of rural and village schools. However, such measures have not been introduced on a large scale, nor have the quality and efficiency thereof been tested. As was stated above, parents are becoming increasingly discontent with a lack of subject teachers, which factor is the indirect evidence of low efficiency of the current format of online learning. It is also clear that for pupils of the elementary school, particularly year one and year two pupils, it is difficult to organize the online learning without participation of parents. It is likely that teachers will be sending assignments to their pupils by e-mail or put them in electronic diaries (in case such diaries are available) and specify what sections of the textbook pupils should read. In addition, there is evidence of the revival of TV lessons because unlike PCs TV sets can be found in all Russian families.

A switch-over to the online format of training is expected to require a greater involvement of parents into education of their children. The children from the families with a low social and cultural capital where parents cannot help their children are the worst hit. However, these children are in the risk group, anyway. But if in the normal situation, the school could compensate it somehow, it is highly unlikely to achieve it in the online mode.

In the SVE practice-oriented system, the switch-over to the online format of learning entails the risk that the quality of training of the working personnel may decline if the online learning continues for a long time because of the coronavirus pandemic.

In the system of higher education, the loss of quality may be insignificant as students have better skills of individual work than students of other levels of education and with proper consulting work organized by the academic teaching staff in the online mode and active utilization of MOOC, the quality of training is likely to be the same as before or get worse just a little. In this situation, the risk group includes year one students who have not acquired yet the skills of individual work, but this risk in case of organization of webinars can be substantially lower. At the same time, technical equipment of higher education establishments and availability of the required software as well as notebooks or PCs with students at home or a hostel are crucially important at this stage of education.

Higher education establishments may face a serious problem with organization of exams unless the issue of online identification of students is resolved and implementation by students of team projects which have become an important part of the academic activity is made feasible. In addition, the extension of the coronavirus pandemic will put in question higher education establishments' admissions campaigns, including those to the master course and post-graduate

school. Another negative consequence of the pandemic may become the reduction of the number of foreign students at Russian higher education establishments both by virtue of problems related to the organization of admissions of foreign students and by virtue of the outflow of those foreign students who had to leave for their home countries and whose return to Russia under new conditions can be complicated for economic reasons. At the same time, the depreciation of the ruble is likely to have a favorable effect on their inflow to Russia as it happened after the depreciation of the Russian currency in 2014.

What is known for certain is that the arrangement of single state exams (SSE) and basic state exams (BSE) has been postponed, but not for long (just for 1–2 weeks). However, it is not clear how these two exams will be conducted (unless the pandemic subsides completely), nor is it clear in what way the new situation may influence year 9 pupils' and year 11 pupils' (school leavers) choice of their further educational trajectory.

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In 2019, the three issues which prevailed in the public consciousness - national projects, in particular, the “Education” national project, new FSES in general education and the “regulatory guillotine” – highlighted the common dominator of the state education policy, that is, the government cannot facilitate the development of the education system, it can only compensate to regions those costs which the subjects of the Russian Federation incurred before, but which failed to improve substantially the situation in this sector. The issue of adoption of the new FSES in a situation where the system does not evolve, but experiences a growing shortage of resources (particularly, human resources) resembles a “tempest in a teapot”: teachers and schools do their job as they can, while parents who studied earlier and at present are appealed for to compensate as much as possible the shortage of teachers (the poor standard of training) by way of participating in education of their children or through hiring of private tutors choose what they know the best and what they are accustomed to. Put simply, neither changes in the FSES, nor the infusion of funds into the obsolete system (to be precise, they are not invested so much), or the “regulatory guillotine” modify anything substantially in education. One should not interfere in the development of strong institutions (there are few of them). As regards the rest of the education system, it will adapt itself within a few months to any system of reporting as it is well aware of the fact that there is nothing to replace it. So, it is only the private sector, which is likely to be affected by the activities of the state, though it is already shrinking at a high rate, anyway.

The coronavirus pandemic has started to change the customary models of education, in particular, it may speed up the development of online modes of learning and the required content. At the same time, for some territories where the high-speed Internet (the provision of the Internet was planned within the framework of the “Digital Educational Environment” national project) is not available yet, the decisions which are currently taken will lead to serious problems both for schools and families, particularly, low-income families where parents have a low educational level.

In the vocational training system, the coronavirus pandemic has caused numerous problems, too, particularly, the arrangement of exams and organization of admissions campaigns at higher education establishments.