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**Sociology of the civil society: regional aspects of measurement**

*Analysis of the state and dynamics of functioning of the main structures forming the civil society in the Khabarovsk territory is presented in the article. They are presented by individual activity of the citizens, non-profit organizations, the regional Public chamber, the Khabarovsk regional office of the All-Russian social movement "Popular Front "For Russia"". On the basis of results of the sociological monitoring and statistical data the evaluation of the state policy of the rather public activity of the citizens and non-profit organizations, their opportunities in rendering socially useful services to the population, trust to them in the country and the region is given. It is shown that the important direction of empirical researches of the civil society is sociological measurement of levels of its development by means of the system of indicators which cover different aspects of its structure and functions.*

**Социология гражданского общества: региональные аспекты измерения**

*В статье представлен анализ состояния и динамики функционирования основных структур, образующих гражданское общество в Хабаровском крае. Они представлены индивидуальной активностью граждан, некоммерческими организациями, региональной Общественной палатой, Хабаровским региональным отделением Общероссийского общественного движения «Народный фронт «За Россию»». На основе результатов социологического мониторинга и данных статистики дается оценка политики государства относительно общественной активности граждан и некоммерческих организаций, их возможностей в оказании общественно-полезных услуг населению, доверию к ним в стране и регионе. Показано, что важным направлением эмпирических исследований гражданского общества является социологическое измерение уровней его развития с помощью системы показателей, которые охватывают различные аспекты его структуры и функций.*

***Keywords:*** *civil society, sociological monitoring, social activity, non-profit organizations, the Khabarovsk territory.*

***Ключевые слова:*** *гражданское общество, социологический мониторинг, социальная активность, некоммерческие организации, Хабаровский край.*

Today the concept of civil society has found the status of one of the key, and the phenomenon which is behind it became a subject of scientific and analytical and political attention [1. P. 12 – 22]. Also the Khabarovsk territory isn't an exception, in which the perspective of the civil society becomes more and more actual in recent years [10].

Activity and high frequency of appeals to the questions of development of the civil society are connected not only with development of these or those its institutes and initiatives, but with the relevance of its scientific and practical tasks, first of all, with the importance increase of "human measurement" of socio-political life, increase of a role of ordinary citizens and their voluntary associations in all spheres of activity of the regional and municipal society.

As the system of non-political public relations, civil society is shown through the voluntarily formed associations and organizations protected from the direct intervention from the government. It carries out important functions in the society, forms civil virtues, make the structures of social involvement, solidarity, trust and tolerance.

From these positions becomes more and more obvious that the global social reorganization of the Russian society is impossible out of a context of emergence of the structures guaranteeing feedback between the person and the social environment of his dwelling. Political message: "… the power has to hear people, explain the essence of arising problems and the logic of its actions, to see in the civil society and in the business equal partners", – is a basis to its daily activity at the local level [9]. At the same time, it is already not only about an increase of efficiency of interaction of the authorities of all levels and the institutes of civil society on the basis of confidence-building, development of the mechanisms of social partnership, delegation of powers, division of the spheres of responsibility for the solution of socially important problems of people.

Real support of the organizations of noncommercial sector as the bases of civil society, proved as the faultless partners of the state, consists in establishment of the status by them "non-profit organization – the performer of socially useful services" [9]. These innovations of the state policy, undoubtedly, open the new horizons for the development of civil society. Development of the mechanism of transfer to the non-profit organizations of the part of state functions on social service of the citizens will allow solve many social problems of citizens by the forces of the society [2]

The official statistics demonstrates that the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation has registered 227196 non-profit organizations (further – NPO). From them in Moscow – 33,5 thousand (15,2% of total number), the Moscow region – 14,6 thousand (6,4%), St. Petersburg – 12,1 thousand (5,3%), the Krasnodar territory – 6,8 thousand (3%). Among the registered NPO: 27,2 thousand – trade-union and 28,1 thousand –religious organizations; 22,1 thousand – noncommercial and public funds; 20,7 thousand – autonomous noncommercial organizations; 17,3 thousand – institutions [6]. At the same time, the third part of NPO is a share of four territorial subjects of the Russian Federation (Moscow and the Moscow region, St. Petersburg and the Krasnodar territory). However the statistics of NPO in the country, according to the experts, in many respects quite contradictory also raises doubts in its objectivity [8].

Owing to the objective conditions and subjective factors in the most difficult situation by the opportunities of development are NPO in the regions of the Far East of Russia the Far-Eastern federal district (further – FEFD). The analysis of noncommercial sector of FEFD has shown that only about 11 thousand non-profit organizations of different legal form are the share of 6,2 million residents of the district. In this number over 7 thousand socially oriented NPO (further – SO NPO). In recent years essential reduction of their number is observed. In particular, in the regions of FEFD by 2015, in comparison with data for the beginning of 2012, this reduction has made about 32%. Change of a number of NPO operating in the territory of certain regions, cities and the other settlements can speak, first of all, deterioration in the conditions for their activity. Reduction of a number of NPO in a certain measure is compensated by a growth of informal activity of inhabitants. More than 2 thousand informal communities work in the region about half of them take active part in the solution of local problems [13].

The important direction of empirical researches of the civil society is measurement of the levels of its development. In modern science a set of indicators – indexes which cover different aspects of the organization of civil society are used: quality of life, state of health of the population, freedom level, extent of its influence on the policy, measure of civil trust to the main political institutes, activity of public sector, level of the political and civil participation etc.

Most often data of polls of the population on representative selection (taking into account quotas on a sex, age, education and territorial division into the districts) or data of expert polls form empirical base for the calculation of indexes. Among a set of different indexes and indicators of the level of development of civil society and a degree of its democratic character there is in Russia since 2005 “The Index of Civil Society project” (further – CIVICUS Civil Society Index) is realized [3].

Studying of the Index of development of the civil society is a new international program allowing verifies regularly the state of civil society with the international standards and on this basis to develop the ways of its development. Eventually, the Index of development of civil society is the means of evaluation, development on this basis of the purposes and programs of strengthening and development of the civil society.

The other indicator of development of the civil society serves the Index of stability of NPO developed by the Freedom House organization (www. freedomhouse.org). It reflects the development degree in the researched country of noncommercial or non-governmental sector.

Index of stability of the non-governmental organizations – the instrument of comparative evaluation of the level of development of civil society including 7 groups of indicators: institutional capacity, financial opportunities, human rights activity (advance possibility of public interests), rendering of services, infrastructure and the image in the opinion of the public. It is measured on a scale from 1 to 7 (1 – the best, 7 – the worst value). Indicators from 1 to 3 increase the stability of NPO, 4 – average, one may say, neutral value, and from 5 to 7 – interfere with a stability and development of NPO. Dynamics of the Russian index has made in recent years: 1997 – 3,4; 2000 – 4,3; 2008 – 4,4; 2013 – 4,4 [4].

In the domestic sociology for evaluation of the development of civil society use also the other indicators, for example, indexes of public moods which are regularly measured by the All-Russian center of studying of public opinion (further – ARCSPO). As the empirical base for calculation of the indexes which are the cornerstone of the dynamic ranks serve data of the monthly surveys conducted by ARCSPO on the representative all-Russian selection. At the same time, a set of indicators reflecting social well-being of the population, its relation to the situation in the country, approval/disapproval of the activity of different state institutes, public organizations, politicians and statesmen is used. They give a certain notion of a state of noncommercial sector of the civil society both in the country in general, and in the regional measurement. So, according to the All-Russian poll (ARCSPO, 2014) most of Russians (59%) have found it difficult to call any public organization [7]. The same who could specify them by name most often mentioned Greenpeace (6%), and the other ecological associations were remembered by 4% of respondents. Others heard about the societies of assistance to the socially vulnerable segments of the population (5%), some listed a number of charitable organizations (5%), another 4% – have noted the youth and volunteer movements.

For the last seven years the share of the Russians who have formed own position concerning the activity of public organizations has significantly increased. Today more than a half of respondents consider that they protect the rights of the citizens and promote manifestation of public initiatives (56% against 35% in 2007), and also the help with the solution of acute social issues (55% against 31% in 2007). Besides, from 2007 to 2014 the share of respondents noting that these organizations exercise independent control over the activity of government bodies has twice increased (from 21% to 40%).

At the same time there were more those who are inclined to think that similar associations are created only for satisfaction of personal needs of their heads (from 25% in 2007 to 40% in 2014). At the same time, the third part (36%) of respondents had another opinion. Public organizations help only the members of these institutions – say two of five (39%) respondents whereas they as much (38%) so don't consider.

Opinions of the Russians on that, how noticeable is the activity of public organizations, were divided: if 40% believe that their work doesn't influence the life of most of the citizens, then a share not concordant with it is the same (39%). A third part of respondents (34%) is inclined to think that public organizations aren't necessary at all, and the state has to solve their problems. About it the needy respondents speak (46%), than the respondents with high prosperity (26%), however, every fourth of ten respondents (41%) holds the opposite opinion.

In the estimates of interaction of public organizations and the states, according to every second Russian (49%), the authorities have to provide first of all the information support them, every third (36%) supports the idea of providing the state financial assistance. Only the fifth part (22%) of participants of the poll, and first of all, the residents of villages (30%) and the respondents with low prosperity (30%) supports the full independence of public organizations.

The results of sociological monitoring in the Khabarovsk territory testify to the positive vector of social activity of its citizens [11]. So, if in 2015 three quarters (72,5%) of residents of the region within a year have made, at least, "one socially useful business" – from sending money for charity through the SMS before participation in the work of public and political parties, then in 2014 – 65,4%, and in 2013 – 60,1% of respondents.

At the same time, forms of the civil activity of people are substantially connected with the development of public structures which pass difficult process of formation and "growing". As of November 20, 2015 in the Khabarovsk territory 2657 non-profit organizations are registered [5]. According to the sectoral approach to definition of the institutes of civil society, all registered non-profit organizations of the territory can be "divided" into four sectors also. Among them the specific weight of socio-cultural sector makes two thirds (65,6%), social – 22,5%, economic – 8,9% and political – 3,0%.

Non-profit organizations of the territory are presented: public organizations – 25,1%; autonomous non-profit organizations – 9,4%; non-profit partnerships – 8,7%; associations of homeowners – 8,6%; institutions – 8,5%. In general, the number of NPO in the region remains approximately at one level for the last three years (2013 - 2015).

In the majority NPO are concentrated in two cities (Khabarovsk and Komsomolsk-on-the Amur), in the regions their number is small or there are no registered public organizations and associations. From among the registered NPO in 2015 the majority (85,0%) are in the territory of Khabarovsk and Komsomolsk-on-the Amur and a number of city settlements, the others (15,0%) – in the rural settlements. The majority of NPO (69%) are registered in the territory of the regional capital, and an insignificant share – in Komsomolsk-on-the Amur (8,5%) and Nikolaevsk-on- the Amur (4,1%).

As a result, most of the interrogated residents of the region (88%) still "don't know and didn't hear" about the public organizations operating in its territory (2013 – 87%). The number of answers of the informed respondents is submitted by two tens public organizations – from national combatants to the political parties. Among them only the units represent the socially oriented organizations. The citizens note, as a rule, traditional societies of disabled people, veterans, the child youth organizations of the hard of hearing persons, association of indigenous ethnic groups, and some other, acting from the Soviet period.

By the estimates of two thirds of experts, civil society in the Khabarovsk territory is weak and passive (62,3%) [12]. Among the main reasons were called by them: "Insufficient development of the infrastructure of support and ensuring development of the initiatives of civil society, especially in certain regions"; "The population poorly trusts in the accounting of public opinion in the adoption of administrative decisions of the authorities"; "Lack of the uniting values, such as: trust, solidarity, consent on basic foundations of the society, respect for life, personality and dignity of the person"; "Many citizens don't believe that they will be heard"; "The majority of public organizations, especially in the remote areas, possess information on the opportunities insufficiently. In the majority of the districts there are only 2 - 3 public organizations which more or less conduct the activity, but publicizing of their activity isn't enough, the population is poorly informed on a possibility of solution of the questions through these organizations or mistakenly assigns to them powers of local governments and requires the solution of the questions not on the competence"; "In view of the fact that the civilian population in the province survives hardly, the civil activity is reduced. But teenagers have a tendency to an active living and civic stand by the youth"; "People are passive. There is no trust to the power and civil institutes, the opportunities something to change. There is a fear for himself and the family, possible persecutions from the power in a case of actions, objectionable for them"; "In my opinion, the main reasons that civil society isn't developed in our region, it is, first of all, inertness of thinking of our citizens and a habit to rely on "the state" and "the power" in the solution of socially significant questions, the questions of local value", etc.

In general, estimates of the experts testify to the positive tendencies in development of the civil society of the Khabarovsk territory in the last two years. So, a half of respondents have noted the growth of public structures in the region (53,9%), and also the number of the realized projects (55,0%), the citizens captured by the socially important projects of NPO (54,7%), activists (54,7%) and volunteers (56,2%). At the same time, citizens' initiatives in the municipal districts of the region are still poorly developed. The vast majority of a number of interrogated residents of the region note that they don't joint the public organizations (83%). Only less than fifth part (17%) shows the social activity, participating in the work of public organizations, labor unions, condominium, etc. At the same time, about a half (43%) of respondents of the population of the region have only general idea of the activity of NPO. The other half (50%) has noted that it has no idea of them.

At the same time, two of five inhabitants (40%) consider necessary and useful the activity of public organizations and only insignificant part (16%) of respondents don't see in it a sense (tab. 1).

*Table 1*

**Mistrust reasons to the public associations and organizations (*in % of a number of those who have stated the mistrust. The sum of answers exceeds 100% since by the technique of a poll it was possible to choose several variants of the answer)* [11]**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Variants of answers | **2013**  | **2014**  | **2015**  |
| 1. I don't know anything about their activity
 | 36,6 | 34,5 | 35,8 |
| 1. Results of work aren't visible
 | 24,3 | 28,8 | 29,1 |
| 1. They perform tasks of the power, but don't solve a problem of people
 | 18,5 | 12,5 | 11.3 |
| 1. I don't trust anybody at all
 | 15,3 | 15,9 | 18,0 |
| 1. They are useless, aren't effective, their opinion isn't considered
 | 11,0 | 9,6 | 7,3 |

Along with it, about a half of respondents (45%) of residents of the region have found it difficult to evaluate the usefulness of NPO. It can be explained with the absence or insufficiency of information on NPO that it, in turn, acts as the leading factor of mistrust of the population to them. The third part of the interrogated residents of the Khabarovsk territory has agreed with such assessment. In general, the results of sociological researches demonstrate the gradual growth of trust of the citizens to public associations and organizations. At the same time, still the third part of respondents has found it difficult to express the opinion on trust to the public organizations (tab. 2).

*Table 2*

**Distribution of answers to the question: "How you trust public organizations and associations?" (in % of a number of respondents) [11]**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Variants of answers | **2013**  | **2014**  | **2015**  |
| In a varying degree I trust | 28,3 | 36,2 | 40,0 |
| In a varying degree I don't trust | 40,7 | 34,0 | 30,8 |
| I find it difficult to answer | 31,0 | 29,8 | 29,3 |

Despite the low level of social activity and positive evaluations of NPO, the respondents consider necessary and useful to the development of the territory activity of these public structures. Only the sixth part of respondents doesn't see in it a sense (tab. 3).

In the majority the respondents see the advantage of public organizations in: improvement of the streets and yards (52%); protection of the interests of citizens, their rights and freedoms (45%); in prevention of drug addiction and alcoholism (37%); organizations of leisure and healthy lifestyle (36%); solution of environmental problems (36%); development of patriotism among the children and youth (35%); solution of the problems of socially vulnerable segments of the population (disabled people, social orphans, etc.) (33%) etc. Noticeable dynamics in these evaluations of respondents is in the recent years not revealed. At the same time, only the tenth part of respondents considers that public organizations can be useful in the solution of the problems of international and religious relations. Probably, the public leaves this delicate sphere behind the state.

*Table 3*

**Distribution of answers to the question: "How you consider whether could be public organizations useful to the development of the territory, its settlements?" [11]**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Variants of answers | **2014**  | **2015**  |
| Yes, they could | 39,6 | 39,2 |
| No, they couldn’t | 18,3 | 15,9 |
| I find it difficult to answer | 42,1 | 45,0 |

Coordination of the socially significant interests of the citizens, public associations, regional public authorities and local government for the solution of the most important questions of economic and social development, protection of the rights and freedoms of the person and the citizen and democratic principles of development of the civil society the Public chamber is urged to provide the territories. In the work it uses various forms: public hearings, public control, public examination of drafts of the laws of the Khabarovsk territory and the other forms of work, according to the powers which are determined by the requirements of the Regional law "About the Public Chamber of the Khabarovsk territory" (http://www.opkhv.ru).

However the analysis of information presence of activity of the Public chamber in media space is poorly reflected in the public opinion of inhabitants and is characterized by the low level of knowledge of its work and trust to its opportunities to influence the public processes. The main reasons for such estimates the respondents most often, as well as in the last years, called the lack of sufficient information on activity of the chamber ("I don't know anything about Public chamber" – 44,6%) and visible results of its activity ("results of work of the Public chamber" – 28,7% aren't visible).

In 2015 the all-Russian social movement "Popular Front "For Russia"" (Further – ARPF) represented by its regional office in the Khabarovsk territory has actively passed from the stage of organization to the real actions in many directions determined by the decrees and orders of the President of Russia, the leader of ARPF V.V. Putin. One of the problems which affect all residents of the region is ensuring uninterrupted safe driving through the highways of the Khabarovsk territory taking the second place among the regions of FEFD by a number of road accidents. Growth of death in the road accidents in the Khabarovsk territory in relation to the last year for 14,6% is observed.

 In the territory of the Khabarovsk territory the project of ARPF "For honest purchases" during which by the forces of activists inefficient purchases of expensive services come to light in carrying out office parties, cars, charter flights and others, having the elements of luxury and wastefulness is realized.

The real actions of regional ARPF in the structure of civil society are urged to promote an increase of trust to it among the population. However it is necessary to pay attention that only one of ten interrogated residents of the region considers effective to ask for help in ARPF for the solution of problems and protection of the rights. The fifth part of respondents considers it inefficient, and three quarters (71%) – have found it difficult to give an assessment. In this regard, an important task in an increase of public trust is strengthening of information presence of ARPF in the media space.

Thus, the majority of elements of the regional civil community, especially represented by the socially oriented NPO, are at a formation stage, have difficulties with financing, personnel potential, infrastructure. Poor development of "the third sector" in the majority of the Far-Eastern regions develops the stage-by-stage direction to the non-profit organizations of means of the regional and municipal social programs that they could participate in rendering social services at the expense of means of the budgets of different levels. Time is necessary for "cultivation" in the region and municipalities of the most successful socially useful suppliers of social services by the means of their grant support, development of interest in the results of their activity from the population, business structures and created funds.

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