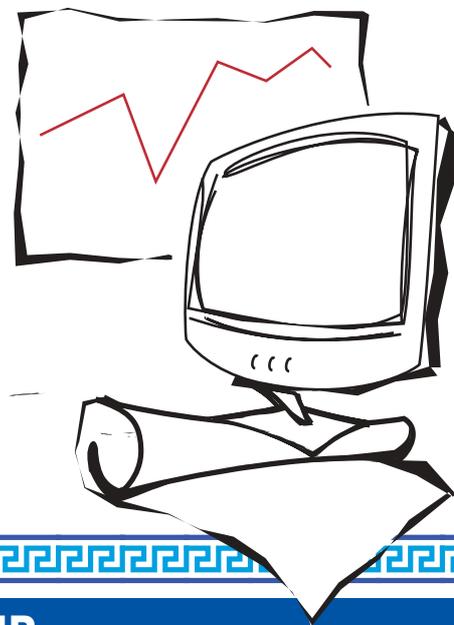


Sophist



2004: SUMMING UP

The passed year has proved very fruitful for the Russian Sociological Data Archive. We have managed to carry out a number of important projects, which have raised our archive to a new level of work. Above all it is connected with replenishment of datasets and their online availability. Over the last year, 377 new datasets were made accessible; now the archive users can see the results of 482 surveys right on the site. The basic part of new entries is formed by the results of monitoring, which allows to follow the dynamics of basic indices of socio-economic development over the passed 15 years. Some of the trends are shown on Pages 2-3 of the bulletin.

The increase of the volume of datasets required a serious improving of the software, maintaining the archive work. In 2004 we completed the switch of search system to SQL-server. It noticeably reduced the search time and significantly raised reliability in the situation of a permanent growth of the volume of datasets and users' demand.

The range of archive users has widened: not only by the number of queries but also by their geography. We are especially pleased to have new archive users from regional universi-

ties. In 2004 we had applications from the Altay State University, the Baikal State Economy and Law University, the Buryat Proficiency Raising Institute for Educational Workers, the Volgograd State University, the European University in Saint-Petersburg, the Irkutsk State University, the Kazan State Technical University, the Nizhegorodskiy State University, the Novosibirsk State University, the Novocherkassk Polytechnic University, the Perm State University, the Russian State Pedagogical University (Yekaterinburg), the Rostov State Pedagogical University, the Saratov State University, the Tomsk State University, the Ukrainian Humanitarian Institute, the Ulyanovsk State University, the South-Russian Economy and Service University. We had queries from foreign researchers as well. The Data from the RSDA were provided to the Tokyo State University, the Keyo University (Japan), Nuffield College (Oxford), Pennsylvania University (USA). The materials of the archive are used both for teaching and research purposes. More than 50% of queries were received from students. They apply for information for various purposes: starting with work on term papers as well as master's dissertations.

We are eager to widen the range not only of home, but also of foreign users. For that purpose in 2004 we started translating the deposited surveys into English. By now we have translated 75 surveys. Besides, all the descriptions and keywords are presented in the retrieval system in English.

Step by step the experience of the Russian Archive is gaining authority among researchers. An important event took place in 2004: our methods of data storage and providing access to them were chosen as an example to follow by other archives. The Caucasian Resource Research Center, acting as an association of regional centers of three Transcaucasian states turned to the Russian Sociological Data Archive with a request to help choose an optimal method of research data storage. A number of workshops were held. At present the suggested formats of data storage and software are actively used by all the centers, comprising the CRRC.

We hope that the pace we took in 2004 will not be slackened this year. We invite all who are interested in sociological analysis to visit our site: <http://solist.socpol.ru>. We remind you that the data for teaching and research purposes are provided free of charge.

UNEMPLOYMENT... ARE WE NOT AFRAID ANY MORE?

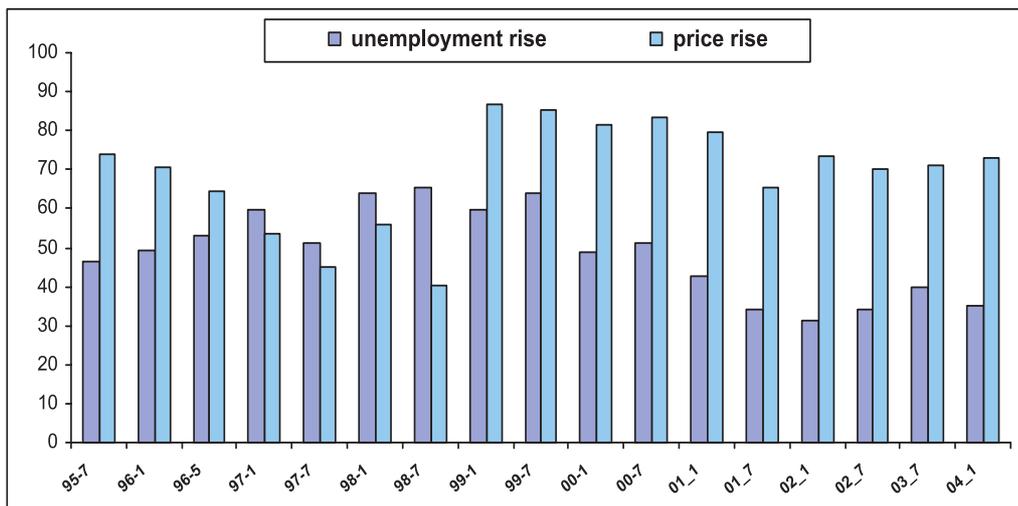
For the major part of the Russian population revenues from work are the main source of existence. Not without reason the unemployment threat from the respondents' point of view is one of the most critical social problems. Pic. 1 presents the dynamics of responses to the ques-

tion "Which of the following problems in our society worry you most of all?" We have chosen two most critical from the respondents' point of view problems: unemployment rise and price rise. Let us consider the data in a more detailed way, starting with the first measurements.

Pic. 1

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING PROBLEMS IN OUR SOCIETY WORRY YOU MOST OF ALL?

In the second half of 1995 the rising prices were viewed as a more important problem than a possible loss of job. But the significance of these risks was gradually equalizing and by the end of 1996 the risk of unemployment had turned into the main threat and worry. It was the time of decrease of the inflation tempo and stabilization of the national currency. On the other hand it was also the time of intensive property redistribution and labor-market restructuring. Requirements to employees were changing. Unemployment became the main risk and preserved its "priority" by the end of 1998, that is by the moment, when the consequences of the August crisis became evident. By this time the price rise had again turned into the main problem, though the risk of losing a job was as high as before.



Starting from 2000 the threat of losing a job has been evaluated by the respondents as less and less critical. At present the share of those who view the unemployment rise as a critical social problem is the smallest in the whole period of monitoring. Let us try and understand if this is the consequence of completion of the labor-market restructuring, or the respondents have got some other more actual problems to think of, which

moved the unemployment to the periphery of mass conscience. The answers to the question "Your main occupation?" are given in Pic. 2. We have picked out only the answer "Temporarily don't work, unemployed". The percentage is drawn from the number of respondents, that is, it reflects the share of the unemployed in the population structure.

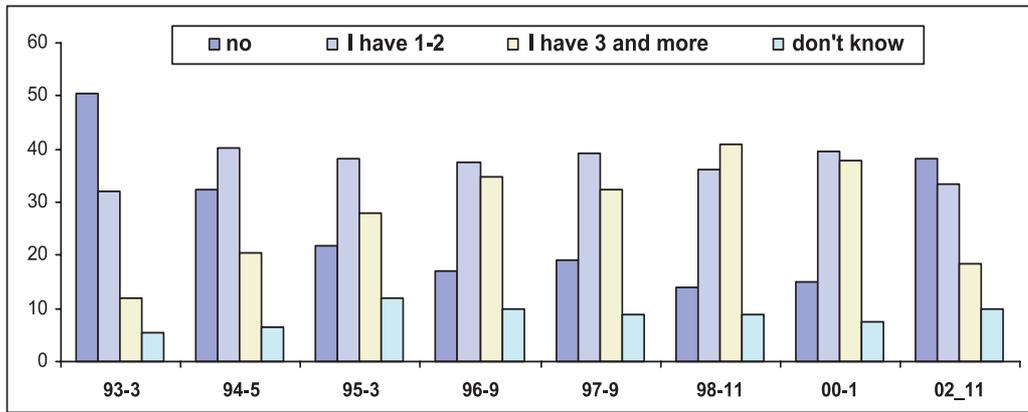
Pic. 2

YOUR MAIN OCCUPATION? TEMPORARILY DON'T WORK, UNEMPLOYED



DO YOU HAVE UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AMONG YOUR RELATIVES, FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES?

Pic. 3

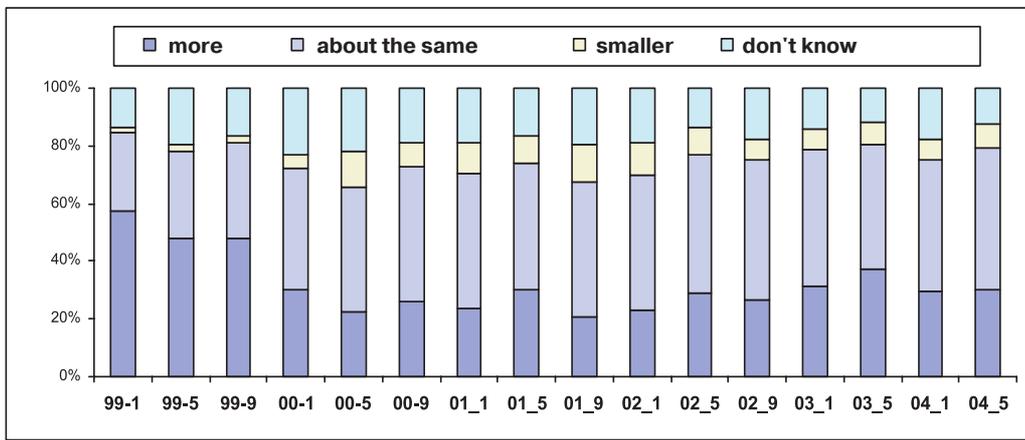


As we see in Pic.2 the share of the unemployed among the population has a tendency for decrease. The same conclusion can be confirmed by the data in Pic.3. "Do you have unemployed people among your relatives, friends and acquaintances?" The share of those who didn't have unemployed in their circle decreased from 50% in 1993 to 17% in 1996, it remained approximately at the same level up to

2000 and then leaped to 39% in 2002. The share of those who had 3 or more unemployed in their circle, who comprised 12% in 1993, gradually increased to 41% in 1998. By 2002 it dropped to 19%. The same tendency of the labor-market stabilization is observed in Pic.4

Pic. 4

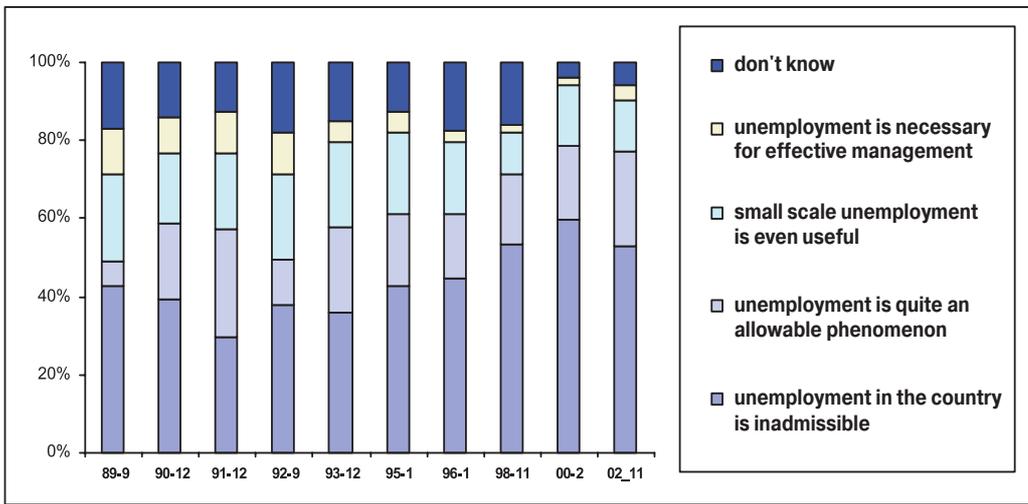
DO YOU THINK THE NUMBER OF THE UNEMPLOYED WILL BE BIGGER, ABOUT THE SAME OR SMALLER THAN NOW OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?



The attitude to unemployment has undergone certain changes. In 1989 more than 40% of respondents thought that unemployment

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING JUDGMENTS DO YOU RATHER SHARE?

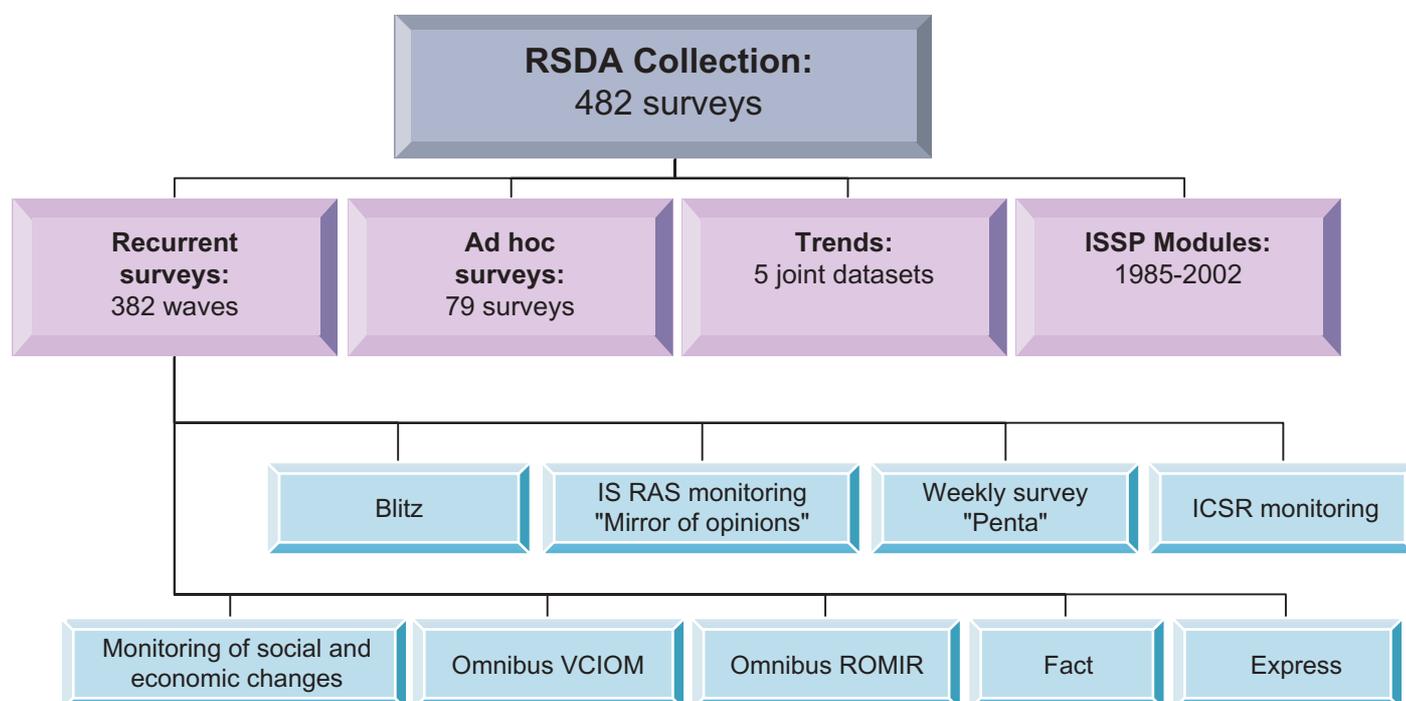
Pic. 5



was inadmissible (Pic.5). It could be explained with a high degree of probability that these results were the remnants of soviet ideological dogma, proclaiming that absence of unemployment was the basic gain of socialism. Liberalization of conscience lowered the level of this directive to 25% in 1991, but the real threat of losing a job increased the number of respondents, who shared the opinion that unemployment was inadmissible, and in 2000 it comprised about 60%.

Based on the results of "Monitoring of Social and Economic Changes"

Collection of the Russian Sociological Data Archive



At present the web-site of the Russian Sociological Data Archive provides access to the results of 482 surveys, encompassing the period from 1989 to 2003. The general structure of storage is described in the following chart.

The section **"Recurrent surveys"** contains surveys of the monitoring type undertaken by various sociological agencies: All-Russian Center for Public Opinion Research (VCIOM), Institute of Complex Social Studies (ICSS), Institute of Sociology of the RAS (IS RAS), Russian Public Opinion and Market Study (ROMIR), "Public Opinion Foundation" (POF). All the surveys are based on Russian representative samples and contain recurring blocs of questions that makes it possible not only to follow dynamics of the most important social and economic indices, but also to compare methodology of different research institutes.

The section **"Ad hoc surveys"** contains surveys, devoted to the study of concrete subjects. A whole series of studies are focused on the beginning of the reforms. They are such surveys as "Perestroyka-91", "Economical Reform-92", "Agrarian Reform-92", "Reform-92", "Selskaya nov-91" (New elements in rural life - two waves), "Social Changes in Russia-93". Still urgent are studies on national relations: "Antisemitism-92", "Jews-97", "The Indigenous Population of the Republics-90", "Russians in the Republics-90, 91, 92". A large bulk of surveys is devoted to electoral behavior, in particular to the elections of 1996. We can mention such surveys as "Politics" (9 waves), "Youth", "Rural" and others.

A wide and important range of subjects were discussed in the study "Social Justice". Two waves were conducted: in 1991 and 1996. The respondents were questioned on poverty and wealth, unemployment and employment, state social programs, success criteria of achievement, reasons for income distinctions, goals of politics, contentment with life.

The section **"Trends"** contains 5 joint datasets, each containing data, collected for many years. For example the dataset "Time budget of rural population" contains the data collected during 1975-1999. This is a systemic study of soviet and post-soviet village, devoted to the shift in time usage under changing conditions of life of rural population. It is a longitude survey of a sample of rural locations universe.

The **"ISSP Modules"** is an international study with participants from about 30 countries. It has been conducted since 1985 on coordinated subjects and according to the unified methodology. It allows to make comparison between countries as well as to monitor the time dynamics. Russia joined the participating countries in 1991. Over this time a number of studies have been conducted, among them "Social Inequality", "Attitude to Labor", "National Identity", "The Role of Government".

The full list of surveys is available on the site:

<http://sofist.socpol.ru/oprosy.shtml?ts=3&en=0>

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