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**PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS
IN MODERN CONDITIONS**

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Abstract

The article presents the materials of a survey of Moscow residents in order to assess the activities of non-profit organizations in modern conditions. The leading method of the study was a telephone survey of respondents based on random generation of telephone numbers. The sample selection consisted of 1006 respondents aged over 18 years. The gender and age of the residents of the Moscow city became the signs of representativeness. The authors define the factors that determine the public's attitude to the third sector: age, level of education, degree of involvement in the work of NPOs, the experience of actual practices of interaction, the level of awareness of NPO activities. The expectations of Moscow residents in relation to NPOs are connected with the need to solve acute social problems, to provide charitable assistance to socially vulnerable groups of the population. Narrowly professional activities of NPOs such as independent public control, human rights activities are perceived as secondary. Despite the fact that more than half of respondents positively assess the activity of NPOs (55%), there are negative trends in the attitude of Moscow residents to the third sector: a low level of trust, stereotypical perception of its functions. In some cases, the assessment of the activities of non-profit organizations is based on superficial knowledge, which is due to the lack of most of the respondents of real interaction with NPOs, and of low level of awareness about their activities.

Keywords

Non-profit organizations – Third sector – Public control – Social capital – Civil society

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Introduction

The interests and goals of the population as a subject of intersectoral interaction are expressed by representatives of non-profit organizations (NPOs), public associations¹. Non-governmental organizations are created as a result of the unifying tendencies of citizens to solve the problems of various social groups or to protect the rights of members of these groups². The non-profit sector, as a special social, economic and political phenomenon, attracted serious attention of researchers relatively recently - only in the late 1960s, and only in the 1970s this problem in the Western countries became the subject of public debate and political programs. Nowadays the state and municipal policy in the developed countries is necessarily formed taking into account the economic and political potential of non-profit organizations³.

The “third sector” performs the monitoring function of the government activities, being an element of the system of political balances. Non-governmental organizations engaged in lobbying provide representative functions for all social groups and give a wide opportunity to participate in the process of development and decision-making, and form a public opinion. It is the non-profit sector that is seen as the organizational basis of a civil society - a state of socio-political relations in the state in which citizens have sufficient grounds to be confident that the government is acting in their interests and is doing that quite effectively⁴.

The development of the Russian non-profit sector largely depends on the relations formed by its main subjects (public organizations) with the institutions of the external environment. In general, it should be noted that this influence is largely one-sided – public organizations are in most cases in a subordinate or dependent position. It is necessary to work on the formation of a positive attitude of people to public organizations. Their general recognition exists, therefore, it is necessary to qualitatively fill the relationship between society and the third sector⁵.

The main problem of interaction between the government and the public today is the lack of trust between the participants of these relationships in the implementation and evaluation of social and economic policy. The existing relationships between different

¹ D. King y M. Griffin, “Nonprofits as Schools for Democracy: The Justifications for Organizational Democracy Within Nonprofit Organizations”, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* Vol: 48 num 5 (2019): 910-930.

² J. Altaibaatar, “Buddhist Religious Non-Governmental Organizations in Mongolia”, *Contemporary Problems of Social Work* Vol: 4 num 14 (2018): 18-26 y N. V. Buley; T. S. Demchenko; S. A. Makushkin; M. V. Vinichenko y A. V. Melnichuk, “Human resource management in the context of the global economic crisis”, *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues*, Vol: 6 num 8S (2016): 160-165.

³ V. Yu. Morozov; N. V. Khavanova y E. V. Bokareva, “Formation of target capital by non-profit organizations”, *Service in Russia and abroad* Vol: 10 num 1 (2016): 20-30.

⁴ G. A. Sulдина y I. S. Glebova, “Interests of public organizations and municipal authorities in the regions of Russia: contradictions and forms of interaction”, *Scientific notes of Kazan University. Humanities series* Vol: 151 num 1 (2009): 261-274 y E. V. Frolova; N. V. Medvedeva; E. E. Kabanova; S. N. Kurbakova y M. V. Vinichenko, “Social Partnership in Russia: Prerequisites, Problems and Trends”, *Journal of Advanced Research in Law and Economics* Vol: 7 num 2 (2016): 221–228.

⁵ A. V. Sokolov, “The activities of public organizations: assessing the population”, *Theory and practice of social development* num 10 (2013): 300-303.

branches and levels of the government, between different social structures, between the government and the public are, as a rule, of the corporate nature of protecting clan interests, which further aggravates the crisis in Russia. In today's situation, possible relationships are complicated by the fact that potential partners do not see and do not understand each other, moreover, in every possible way are closed from each other⁶.

Review of the scientific literature

A significant part of scientific research on the development of NPOs is devoted to the study of the financial side of the organization of the third sector of the economy. The focus of attention of scientists is concentrated on the mechanisms of fundraising, “a donation mentality”. In particular, scientists note that the younger generation is less likely to donate than the older age group. The study conducted by Choi S., Kim H., Chung M, Lee S. Y. suggests that non-profits should view online donation platforms as important fundraising mechanisms to encourage young donors⁷.

Klafke R. and co-authors propose a theoretical analysis of the phenomenon of non-profit organizations through the prism of dominant service theory⁸. In particular, scientists have focused their research attention on charitable non-profit organisations, which imply a simultaneous desire for competition and cooperation. The scientists have assumed that charitable non-profits should collaborate to draw attention to the donation mentality, suggesting that such organizations have the ability to control and shape human behavior by establishing patterns of behavior. Once this factor is institutionalized, a relational environment of co-creation value is created, and this is where charitable nonprofits can offer the best value proposition to fight for donations. In the works of a number of scientists, the results of the study of strategies for the formation of social networks of non-profit organizations (NPOs) are presented. Special attention is paid to the specifics of the dialogue between NPOs and various social groups, the formation of a positive image of the non-profit sector. Concerned parties can also create autonomous networks among themselves, which increases the role of virtual communities for NPOs in an era of transformation of collective actions and social changes, existing at the intersection of weak organizational coordination and individual autonomy⁹. Ranucci R and Lee H conducted a study on how donors influence non-profit long-term innovative products, evaluated a model with fixed effects using longitudinal data on a sample selection of non-profits¹⁰. The scientists have found that when non-profits increasingly rely on donations from outside private funding sources long-term innovations decline.

⁶ A. M. Shapovalova, “Development of a variety of relations between the government and public organizations”, Historical and socio-educational thought num 4 (2010).

⁷ S. Choi; H. Kim; M. Chung y S. Y. Lee, “Online Donation Experiences, Donation Awareness, and Intention of Future Donation Among Teenagers in South Korea”, Journal of Social Service Research Vol: 45 num 5 (2018): 622-633.

⁸ R. Klafke; F. Von der Osten; S. R. Didonet y A. M. M. Toaldo, “Service-Dominant Logic and Nonprofit Organizations: A Value Creation Perspective”, Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing num 9 (2019): 1-19.

⁹ J. Ihm, “Communicating without nonprofit organizations on nonprofits' social media: Stakeholders' autonomous networks and three types of organizational ties”, New Media & Society Vol: 21 num 11-12 (2019): 2648-2670.

¹⁰ R. Ranucci y H. Lee, “Donor Influence on Long-Term Innovation Within Nonprofit Organizations”, Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly Vol: 48 num 5 (2019): 1045-1065.

A number of scholars have concluded that non-profit organizations serve a unique purpose by filling dysfunctions in public social policy¹¹. However, non-profit organizations are often limited in resources, both financially and in terms of human capital. In addition, NPOs often estimate the ratio of administrative costs to program costs¹². For these reasons, the staff of small NPOs are often diverted from the organization's mission to administrative functions.

In connection with the current situation, the task of attracting volunteers and activation of creative participation of highly qualified employees in the activities of NPOs is particularly relevant¹³; introducing young people to the activities of NPOs as a promising vector of building a professional career¹⁴. Even more acute than personnel issues there is a problem of financial support for the work of the non-profit sector. The studies of Song, D and Kim, DH established the relationship between the public's attitude and individual social factors to the activities of a non-profit organization and the size of the contribution to its work: time resource, financial component, etc. (Song, D; Kim, DH, 2019). NPOs also collaborate with other NPOs to implement socially responsible programs. However, the assessment of the motives and factors of cooperation between NPOs and like-minded organizations remains today among the most controversial issues¹⁵. In these circumstances, trust is of particular importance as a catalyst for social interaction between initiative citizens with each other in the framework of public projects, and in the context of inclusion in the work of the non-profit sector¹⁶.

One of the directions of transformation of non-profit organizations at cross-sector interactions leads to an interaction with socially-oriented business, which in return generates a change in public relations and forms a new paradigm of interactions between the society and entrepreneurs¹⁷.

¹¹ J. A. Pope; K. A. Key y A. Saigal, "Nonprofit Outsourcing Patterns: Why Don't Small NPOs Outsource More?", *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, Vol: 27 num 1 (2015): 99-116 y L. Novel; M. N. S. Ali y M. F. M. Jali, "Sociological perspective on the well-being of the elderly Muslim women in Malaysia", *International Journal of Advanced and Applied Sciences*, num 6 Vol: 12 (2019): 82-91.

¹² M. H. Alshammari, "Patient safety culture of nurses in public and private hospitals in northwestern Saudi Arabia", *International Journal of Advanced and Applied Sciences* num 6 Vol: 12 (2019): 71-77.

¹³ I. Y. Shachar y L. Hustinx, "Settling the Neoliberal Contradiction through Corporate Volunteering: Governing Employees in the Era of Cognitive Capitalism", *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* Vol: 48 num 6 (2019): 773-805 y E. V. Frolova; O. V. Rogach; N. V. Medvedeva; E. E. Kabanova y T. M. Ryabova, "Volunteer activity as a factor in the development of cultural tourism in the Russian Federation", *Academy of Strategic Management Journal* Vol: 16 num 2 (2017): 1-20.

¹⁴ T. E. Belyakova, "Features of formation of culture of project activity of students to design in Russia", *Contemporary problems of social work* num 5 Vol: 17 (2019): 44-51.

¹⁵ G. Zeimers; C. Anagnostopoulos; T. Zintz y A. Willem, "Examining Collaboration Among Nonprofit Organizations for Social Responsibility Programs", *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* Vol: 48 num 5 (2019): 953-974.

¹⁶ O. V. Rogach; E. V. Frolova y T. M. Ryabova, "Theory of "trust" in the focus of expectation study concerning educational space key actors", *European Journal of Contemporary Education*, Vol: 7 num 2 (2018): 392-399.

¹⁷ N. V. Mironenko y A. A. Gashin, "Institutional changes in intersectoral interaction of non-profit organizations", *Central Russian Bulletin of social Sciences* num 2 Vol: 32 (2014): 232-236.

Methodological coordinates

The authors present empirical results obtained in the sociological research on the topic: "The study of the attitude of the Moscow city residents to the activities of non-profit organizations (implementing social projects and programs and/or providing social services), involvement in their activities." This study was conducted under the leadership of the Moscow house of public organizations in November-December 2018.

The purpose of the study was to assess the activities of non-profit organizations, based on the analysis of the materials of the survey of Moscow citizens, and to define the factors determining the public's attitude to the third sector. The hypothesis of the study – the attitude of Moscow citizens to the activities of NPOs is determined by the experience of interactions with these organizations, social-demographic characteristics (the level of education, age).

The sample selection consisted of 1006 respondents aged over 18 years. The gender and age of the Moscow city residents became the signs of representativeness. The leading method of the research was a telephone survey of respondents based on random generation of telephone numbers in the proportion: 70% mobile phones, 30% - landlines.

Research result

The awareness of the public about the activities of NPOs. The obtained research materials illustrate the high level of awareness of Moscow residents about the activities of NPOs. In total, 63% of respondents, according to their own words, have some ideas on this issue (the answers are summed up "Yes, I have personally encountered the activities of non-profit organizations", "Yes, I definitely know about such organizations" and "I have heard something about such organizations"). Just over a third of respondents (36%) said they knew nothing about NPOs, or found it difficult to answer the question. It should be noted that the low level of awareness about the activities of NPOs is most often demonstrated by people with a low level of material income and education, representatives of the older age group.

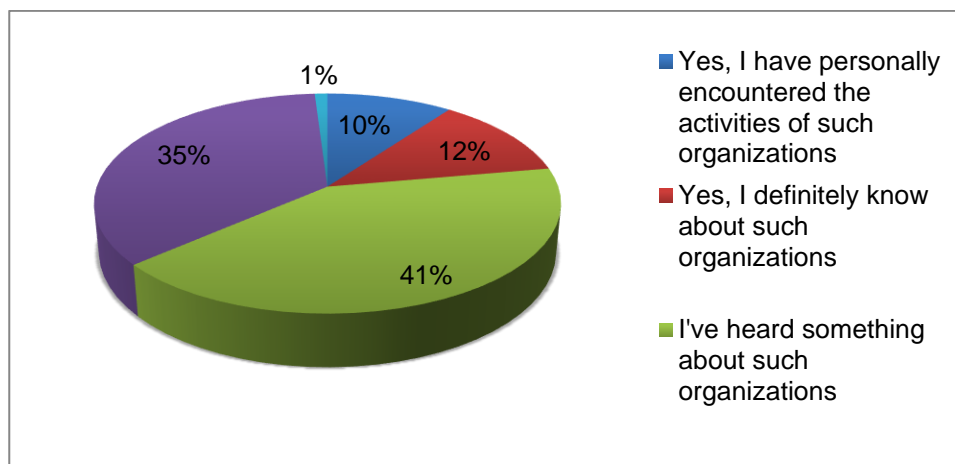


Figure 1

Distribution of answers to the question: "do you Know or have heard anything about the activities of non-profit organizations in our city (in %)"

The conclusions made about the degree of awareness of Moscow residents about the work of NPOs in general correspond to the results of surveys conducted by the All-Russian center for the study of public opinion. Depending on the wording, approximately 60-70% of Russian residents say that they are more or less familiar with the activities of NPOs or aware of the goals of their work.

At the same time, a more detailed analysis of the survey data shows that the real awareness of the population of Moscow about the activities of non-profit organizations is still significantly lower. It should be clarified that by general awareness the respondents mean the presence of information about the existence of non-profit organizations. Two-thirds of those who declare their awareness of the work of NPOs (and this is 41% of the total number of respondents) said that they just “heard something about such organizations”. These respondents have not personally interacted with NPOs and do not even have specific knowledge about their work. Thus, only every fifth resident of the capital can be classified as knowledgeable about the work of NPOs (those who chose the answers “I personally encountered” and “I definitely know” about such organizations).

More clearly, the real scale of public awareness about the work of non-profit organizations is manifested in the answers to an open question asking to recall the name of specific NPOs operating in Moscow. This question was asked only to those respondents who were among those informed about the work of NPOs (63% of the total sample selection). More than half of them (37% of the total population of the capital) could not name any non-profit organization (the answers are “I do not know”, “I find it difficult to answer the question”).

Only a quarter of Moscow residents surveyed (26%) were able to provide a meaningful answer, while half of them made a large number of mistakes, incorrect and inaccurate formulations. Thus, about 7% of the total number of the respondents gave a wrong answer, naming among the “non-profit organizations” (as sounded in the wording of the question) state institutions of social protection, public service centers, pension funds, the platform “Active citizen”, political structures, etc.

About 6% of the total number of the respondents named not specific NPOs, but some generalized group (type) of the organization. Most often there were such answers: “charitable foundations”, “volunteer organizations/volunteers”, “human rights/human rights organizations”, “religious organizations”, as well as various associations of property owners (HBC, garage cooperatives, horticultural associations, etc.). Thus, only 13% of the total number of Moscow residents surveyed could remember the exact names of specific NPOs. In total, just over 100 NPOs were named, but most often they were isolated mentions.

The most well-known for Moscow citizens Fund “Give life”, the Human rights center “Memorial”, the “Anti-corruption Fund”, ANO “Voice” and the Charity Fund “Russia sitting”. These organizations are really quite active in the public space, which is certainly reflected in the results of the survey on the awareness.

No	The names of NPOs	Number of references in absolute numbers
1	Fund "Give life"	21
2	Human rights center "Memorial"	17
3	"Anti-corruption Fund"	12
4	The hospice charity Fund "Vera"	10
5	ANO "in defense of the rights of voters" Voice"	8
6	Charity Fund "Russia sitting"	5

Table 1

The names of NPOs from their list for 2018, which were found in the responses of respondents to the question: "Remember what non-profit or public organizations operate in our city?" 5 or more times (in absolute numbers)

Interestingly, three-quarters (72%) of those who chose the answer "heard something" about the work of NPOs, can not name any particular organization. Even if there is a personal experience of interaction with NPOs (declared in the survey), a significant number of respondents (31%) cannot remember any of the names of NPOs.

Assessment of NPO activities. Based on the above, it becomes clear that not all respondents can really assess the activities of NPOs (figure 2). This question was asked only to those respondents who are aware of the work of NPOs. About 27% of the respondents found it difficult to answer it. Thus, only less than half of the Moscow residents surveyed (46%) were able to give some definite assessment of the work of NPOs. Among them, 55% tend to evaluate the work of NPOs mostly positively and 17% - negatively (summed up in pairs assessment "entirely positive" and "rather positive"; as well as "entirely negative" and "rather negative").

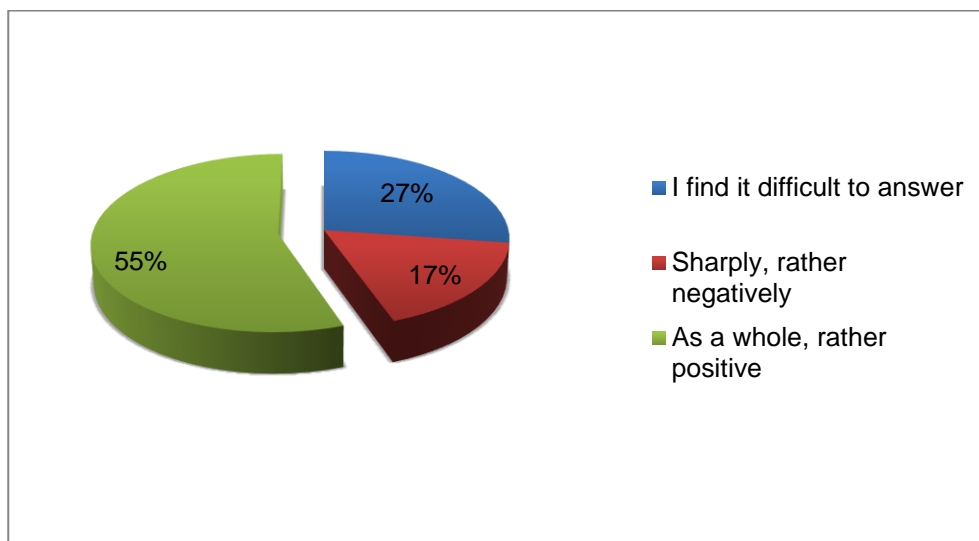


Figure 2

Distribution of answers to the question: "How do you assess the activities of non-profit organizations and public organizations in our city?" (% of informed).

Young people more often than other categories of the respondents assess the work of NPOs positively. The results of the study also showed a correlation between the level of education of the respondents and a positive assessment of the activities of NPOs. The survey showed another feature – high awareness and personal experience with NPOs

definitely change public opinion towards a more positive perception of the activities of non-profit organizations. Among those who “personally encountered” the activities of NPOs, 70% rated this activity positively, which is higher than the average by 15 percentage points. As awareness decreases, the gap between positive and negative assessments is narrowed and the number of the respondents who find it difficult to answer the question increases.

Representation of the functions of NPOs. In general, the rather friendly attitude of many Moscow residents to NPOs is manifested in the answers to the question about the functions performed by NPOs (figure 3). This question does not affect the knowledge of the respondents but illustrates the perception of the image of non-profit organizations in public opinion (the question was asked to all the respondents).

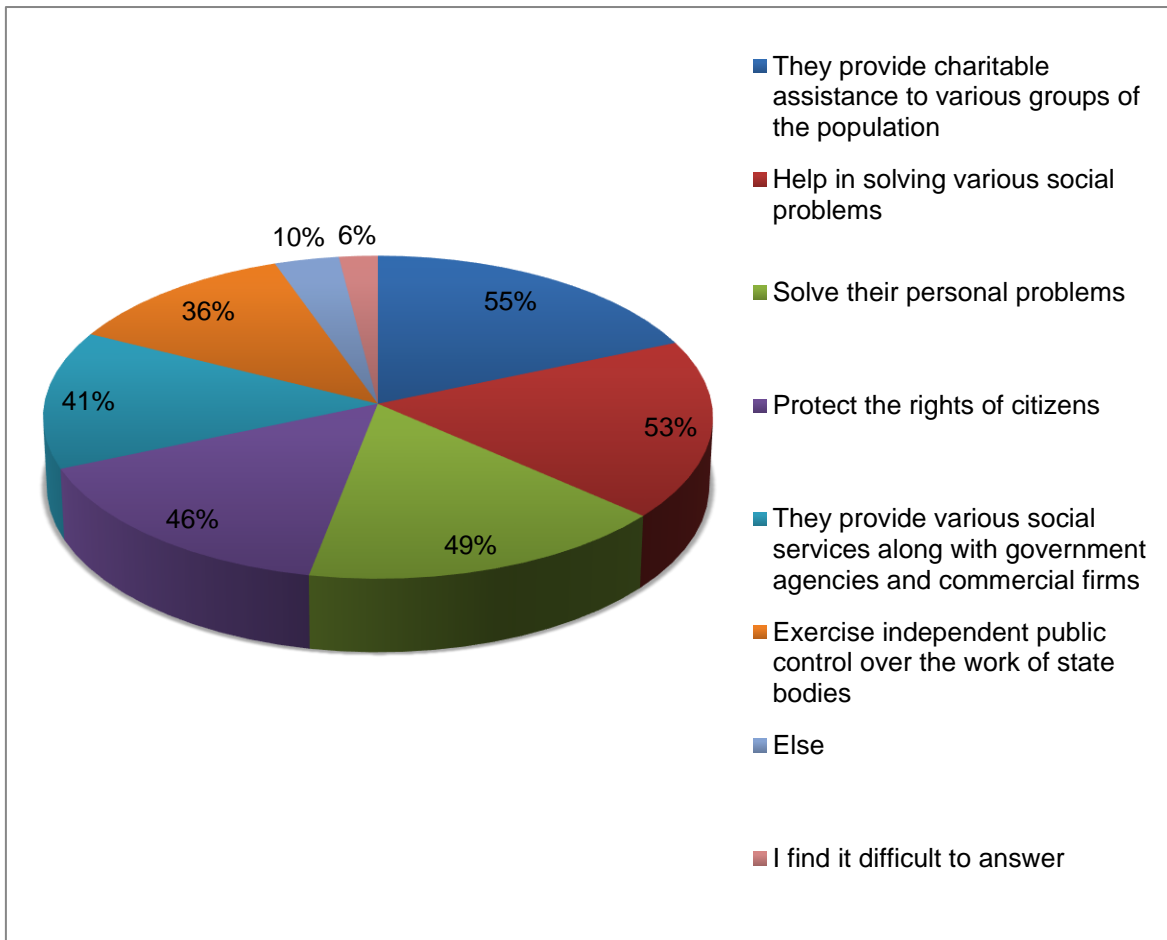


Figure 3
Distribution of answers to the question: "What, in Your opinion, are mainly engaged in non-profit and public organizations?», (%)

Public opinion assigns the “third sector” represented by NPOs, first of all, a leading role in solving social problems and charity issues. Such areas as human rights activities or independent public control are perceived by Moscow residents as secondary. At the same time, a significant part of Moscow residents (49%) believe that NPOs are primarily concerned with solving their private problems. These results illustrate the not entirely

favorable image of NPOs. Almost half of the population does not notice the public benefit from the activities of NPOs. The data obtained may indicate a cautious attitude of a significant part of the population to the activities of NPOs in conditions of rather low awareness.

In order to assess the factors of formation of the image of NPOs we are to consider the distribution of answers to the question “What in your opinion are mainly engaged in non-profit organizations activities?” among respondents who have a low level of awareness about the activities of NPOs. Since the question of the population's perception of the functions of non-profit organizations also reflects the general attitude of Moscow citizens to the activities of NPOs, it is interesting to see whether awareness affects this attitude, and in general, what the part of the population who says that they know nothing about the work of non-profit organizations think about NPOs (Table 2).

№	Functions of NPOs	% of the total sample	% of Uninformed about the activities of NPOs
1	They provide charitable assistance to various groups of the population	55	43
2	Help in solving various kinds of problems	53	43
3	Solve their personal problems	49	49
4	Protect the rights of citizens	46	37
5	They provide various services in the social sphere along with government agencies and commercial firms	41	34
6	Exercise independent public control over the work of state bodies	36	25

Table 2

Distribution of answers to the question: "What do you think non-profit organizations mainly do?" (%)

The positive perception of NPO functions among poorly informed respondents is generally lower than the sample selection average. Only 43% of the respondents in this group believe that NPOs provide charitable assistance to various groups of the population (below the average by 12 percentage points). Similar data was obtained when assessing such a function as “exercise independent public control over the work of state bodies” (below the average values by 11 percentage points).

For a better understanding of the capital's specifics, let us refer to the data of All-Russian and Moscow polls conducted by other centers of the study of public opinion (Table 3).

The comparison in this case is very conditional because of the difference in methods. However, it is clear that the priority functions of NPOs in public opinion of the Russians in general and Moscow residents separately are similar: the respondents see in organizations of the “third sector” not so much the institutions of civil society, but entities, along with the government, solving social problems, as well as realizing their own goals.

No	Judgments	2014 year	2018 year
1	Non-profit organizations contribute to the solution of acute social problems, the development of the social sphere	55	59
2	Non-profit organizations protect the rights of citizens, promote public initiative	56	50
3	Non-profit organizations are created to solve individual tasks that meet the personal interests of their leaders	40	12
4	Non-profit organizations exercise independent public control over the activities of state bodies	40	18
5	Non-profit organizations do not bring any benefit or harm, their activities are not noticeable or important for the majority of citizens	40	9
6	Non-profit organizations provide services and assistance only to members of their organization	39	12
7	Non-profit organizations are not needed in principle, their tasks should be solved by the state	34	17

Table 3

Distribution of answers to the question: "Tell Me, which of the following judgments about the role and activities of non – profit organizations do you agree with, and which do not? (the data on the answer "rather agree" according to the results of a mass survey conducted by the all-Russian center of public opinion (VTSIOM) in 2014 N=1600 people. and a survey conducted by the author's team in 2018 N=1006 people.), %.

The results of the survey show that non-profit organizations in the eyes of a large part of citizens have firmly taken their place in solving problems of the social sphere. NPOs are perceived along with the state as a full-fledged subject of social policy (figure 4). At the same time, almost one of five respondents do not support these trends. 22% believe that social issues should be the prerogative of the state.

The results of the survey illustrate the heterogeneity of the public opinion. Thus, 22% of Moscow residents believe that social issues should be the prerogative of the state. Of these, 70% of the respondents gave negative assessments of the work of NPOs. A significant part of the respondents believes that employees of NPOs "solve their personal problems" (49% of the sample selection in total).

These results explain the distrust of Russian citizens to the activities of NPOs. The category of the respondents who have a low level of confidence in NPOs is most often represented by such social groups as pensioners and older people.

They traditionally believe that the social sphere should be under the responsibility of the state. In general, the majority of Moscow residents support the "third sector" in its activities to solve social problems (72%).

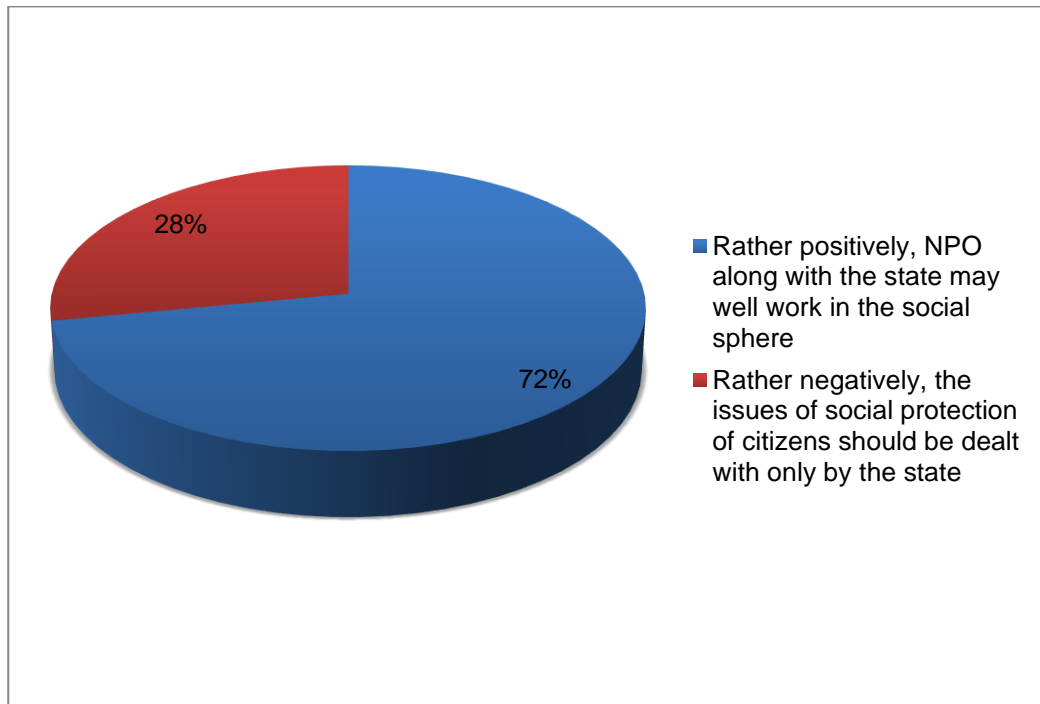


Figure 4

Distribution of answers to the question: "Today in Russia, social support and protection is not only the state, but also non-profit and public organizations. How do you personally feel about this?", %.

Moscow residents' assessment of priority areas of NPO activity. The results of the survey indicate that the priority of the NPOs is to address social issues. This answer does not imply a decrease in the importance of other areas and activities of NPOs, however in the eyes of the general public they have less priority than acute social issues. This may be due to the current socio-economic situation in Russia, where the difficulties in the social sphere are so relevant and topical for the vast majority of the country's population that they "obscure" the problems in other spheres of public life. The list of traditional acute topics typical for the entire Russian society – the low level of material well-being of the population, unemployment, difficulties in health care and education. Against the background of these problems, issues of cultural development, ecology, leisure, etc. are pushed to the periphery. The current situation is typical for both all-Russian and Moscow polls. Based on the above, the distribution of answers to the question of "areas in which the activities of non-profit organizations would be most useful for our city and its residents" becomes understandable (Table 3).

In the first place among the priorities for NPOs Moscow residents put assistance to socially vulnerable segments of the population (60%) and people in difficult situations (37%). Slightly more often than in the whole sample selection, these tasks are allocated by pensioners, housewives, low-income citizens, as well as young people. For respondents of the age category up to 35 years, in addition to the above priorities, the issues of ecology, health, leisure, human rights activities on the part of NPOs are of particular relevance.

Evaluation parameter	Share of respondents, %
Support for socially vulnerable categories of the population – pensioners, disabled people, children, orphans, etc.	60
Assistance to people in difficult life situations, victims of natural disasters	37
Ecology, improvement and protection of animals	35
Activities in the field of health and promotion of healthy lifestyles	31
Protection of citizens' rights, provision of legal assistance to the population	27
Organization of leisure and entertainment (interest clubs), activities in the field of physical education and sports	26
Activities in the field of education, science, culture, art	20
Else	4
I find it difficult to answer	3

Table 3

Distribution of answers to the question: "What do you think, in which areas of activity of non-profit and public organizations would be most useful for our city and its residents?", %.

All respondents are characterized by the absence of influence of such parameters as the level of awareness, personal experience, etc., on the choice of priority areas of activity of NPOs.

Discussion

Comparison of estimates of NPO functions among poorly informed respondents and in the whole sample selection shows a low range of discrepancies. It can be assumed that society has some credibility or stable stereotypes about NPOs, poorly related to the actual knowledge of Moscow residents about the activities of the third sector". On the other hand, the obtained results indicate the insufficient quality and volume of information about the work of NPOs, which creates certain distortions in the population's perceptions about the goals of NPOs, the image of non-profit organizations, priority areas of their work. The results of the study demonstrate a higher level of loyalty of Moscow residents to the activities of NPOs compared to residents of other regions of the Russian Federation. In particular, 40% of Russians share the opinion that "public organizations do not bring any benefit or harm, their activities for the majority of citizens are not noticeable and not important." Among Moscow residents, the share of skeptics is much lower (24% according to the results of the VTSIOM survey, among Moscow residents, this percentage is 9%). It can be concluded that the majority of Moscow residents support the activities of non-profit organizations in the field of solving social problems. Older people who have traditional ideas about the role of the state in the social sphere demonstrate negative assessments of the activities of NPOs and a low level of confidence in the third sector. Their paternalistic attitudes determine value judgments in relation to the third sector. The general social background, the severity of social problems and the unfavorable economic situation in Russia determine the expectations of Moscow residents to the activities of NPOs. The majority of the respondents believe that NPOs should focus their efforts on supporting socially vulnerable categories of the population: pensioners, disabled people, children, orphans, as well as helping people in difficult life situations. The presented results correlate with the studies of other authors¹⁸. For the present the organization of work in the

¹⁸ N. E. Papkova y N.V. Bagrova, "Social and Pedagogical Aspects of the Problems of People of "Third Age" at the Present Stage", Contemporary Problems of Social Work Vol: 4 num 2 (2018): 41-48.

field of leisure, legal assistance to citizens has not been widely recognized by the public as a significant area of activity of NPOs.

Conclusions

Summing up the results of the study, we can note the following. The results of the survey showed that the vast majority of Moscow residents do not have an accurate idea about the nature and specifics of the non-profit sector in Russia. Russians' knowledge of NPOs is superficial and fragmentary. The materials of the study illustrate the dominance of established stereotypes and paternalistic judgments about the role and place of NPOs in the state-led social policy in the minds of the general public.

The total share of the respondents who have a more accurate idea of the activities of NPOs does not exceed 20%, however, they often cannot specify the exact name of the NPOs known to them for their activities. At the same time, 55% of Moscow residents are quite positive about the third sector and only 17% of the respondents have a clearly negative reaction. Along with this, the presence of personal experience with NPOs definitely changes public opinion towards a more favorable perception of the activities of NPOs.

The public opinion assigns the “third sector” represented by NPOs a leading role, first of all, in solving social problems and charity issues. Such areas as human rights activities or independent public control fade into the background, reducing the importance of NPOs in the eyes of the population as an institution of civil society. Almost half of the population does not notice the public benefit from the activities of NPOs, believing that non-profit structures are concerned with solving, first of all, their personal problems. It is important that the answers related to the general ideas of Moscow residents about the purpose and functions of NPOs are poorly influenced by their awareness or personal experience of interaction with non-profit organizations.

Summarizing the materials of the study, we can conclude that the key hypothesis has been confirmed. In particular, the attitude of Moscow residents to the activities of the third sector in general and individual non-profit organizations is determined by the experience of their interaction to solve social problems. At the same time, among Moscow residents with higher education, the highest proportion of those who positively assess the work of NPOs. Similar results are typical for young people. A possible limitation in the interpretation of the results is the low representation of the proportion of the respondents with real experience of interaction with non-profit organizations.

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