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### On Achieving Strategic Goals and Ensuring the Security of Modern Russia\*

S.V. Kazantsev

Institute of Economics and Industrial Engineering, Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Novosibirsk, Russia

#### **ABSTRACT**

The strategic objectives of the subject (a person, a group of individuals, an estate, a class, a nation, a community, a state, groups of states, a society) are determined mainly by the conditions in which the subject is located. It includes its specifications (including traditions, worldview, level of development, and available knowledge) by its capabilities and opportunities. Changing even one of the listed factors can cause a change in goals. The paper presents the results of a study of the movement towards achieving vital goals that society sets for the long term: society's strategic goals. The goal in this paper is understood as a specific image (representation) of the result formed by society, which it strives to achieve. The author assessed the speed and nature of the movement towards achieving the constituent components of the strategic goals of the Russian Federation - preserving the nation and increasing the economic power of the country. Statistical data of the World Bank and the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation from 1992 to 2020 served as initial information for calculations. The calculations performed showed that the movement towards achieving the set goals was of an oscillatory nature, and the amplitude of fluctuations in time tended to decrease. The latter indicates a slowdown in the speed of approaching the set goals.

**Keywords**: strategic goal; Russian Federation; population; economic growth; security

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"High goals, even if unfulfilled, are dearer to us than low goals, even if achieved"

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

### INTRODUCTION

The goal of human society is some form of image (representation) of the result to which a given society aspires. Long-term goals important for society are called national or strategic. The content of the term "national" is ambiguous (and not only in Russian). Thus, Ozhegov's dictionary gives four definitions of the content of the word "national". Three of them relate it to the nation and nationality: 1) "in accordance with the social and political life of nations, related with their interests"; 2) "membership, characteristic of the particular nation, expressing its character"; 3) "belonging to a small separate national". And in a one "national" is identified with the state: "the same as the state" [1, p. 350].

American dictionary "Webster's new collegiate dictionary" gives five definitions of adjective "national": "1: of or relating to a nation, 2: nationalist, 3: comprising or characteristic of a nationality, 4: belonging to or maintained by the federal government, 5: of, relating to, or being a coalition government formed by most or all major political parties".

In our economic literature, the word "national" was used mainly in the phrase "national income" until 1991. Given this, the author believes that the notion "strategic goals of society" is more accurate than "national goals".

The goal is the mental expression of necessity, generated by reality. Failure to achieve the necessary (lack of necessary) for society threatens the development of society. Therefore, the degree of achievement of the goal(s) can be used as an indicator of safety.

Erroneous goals are also dangerous, because the idea of what is needed may not coincide (not completely coincide) with what is really necessary.

Currently, strategic goals, common to many countries of the world, are the following: preservation of the population, protection of the territory of their residence, secure the sovereignty of the country, increase the welfare of the people, protection from external hostilities, ensuring environmental safety, preserving and improving the country's position in the world. Failure to achieve these goals threatens the security of society, its members and institutions.

Below are presented the following results of the study of the Russian Federation's progress towards the three strategic objectives: increase the population, increase the level of welfare of the Russians and the entry of Russia in the ranks of advanced economic powers.

### **POPULATION**

The speech of the President of Russia V. V. Putin to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation in 2020 spoken: "The fate of Russia, its historical perspective, depends on how many of us... how many children will be born in Russian families in a year, in five, ten years, how they will grow up, what they will do for the development of the country and what values will support them in life". Demographic growth — a very pressing and important task. [2]. If there is no population, there is no society, no country, no state.

And it is no coincidence that the preservation of the population, the health and welfare of the people is the first goal in the list of the main development goals of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030, specified in the Decree of the President of the Russian

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "A goal — is an expected result of some actions, corresponding to the basic interests of a aspirant". URL: https://aftershock.news/?q=node/378579&full

 $<sup>^{2}</sup>$  Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary. 150th Anniversary Edition; 1981. 1532 p.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> URL: http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/62582

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> B 2006 r. A.I. Solzhenitsyn wrote: "Preserving of the people — both in their numbers and in their physical and mental health — is the highest of all our public tasks".

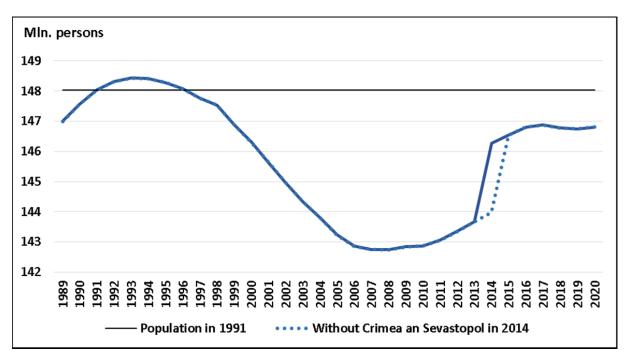


Fig. 1. Dynamics of the population of the Russian Federation in 1989-2020, millions of people

Source: compiled by the author based on the date of the World Bank), of the website "The population of the countries of the world in 1980–2020", and on the data of the Unified plan for achieving the national development goals of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2024 and the planning period up to 2030.

Federation from 21 July 2020 No. 474 "The Russian Federation's National Development Goals for the period until 2030". Within the framework of this goals, the Decree prescribes the sustainable growth of the population of the Russian Federation, which has been declining in recent years.

The first wave of depopulation in modern Russia lasted 15 years — from 1994 to 2008 inclusive<sup>6</sup> (*fig. 1*). The increase in the number of Russians in 2009–2017 was due to the relatively favorable age structure of the citizens of the Russian Federation, improving living

standards, the social and demographic policy implemented in the country. The population growth of the Russian Federation in 2014 (2.6 mln persons) was largely due to the accession to Russia of the Republic of Crimea (1.896 mln persons) and Sevastopol (399 thous. persons). If not included in the calculation, the population growth of the Russian Federation in 2014 amounted to 305 thous. persons.

In 2018 began the second depopulation wave. At the reproductive age came born in the first wave of depopulation in post-Soviet Russia. The decline in the number of women of reproductive age (possibly with worse health than before the 1990s), under otherwise equal conditions, leads to a decrease in the number of births, and the increase in the number of people over 70 years of age — the increase in mortality. It is therefore no coincidence that the Unified plan achieving the national development goals of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2024 and for the period

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> URL: https://rg.ru/2020/07/22/ukaz-dok.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Demographers note that "the population of Russia has ceased to reproduce itself for 1964–1965. And with the urban population this happened much earlier, and the rural population for almost thirty years, until 1992 inclusive, had an extended reproduction. Falling below the threshold, fertility determined the beginning of the phase of latent depopulation. However, due to the accumulated potential of the demographic structure, natural growth remained positive for many years and the population continued to grow by inertia" [3, p. 752].

Reduction of the population of the Russian Federation in 2021–2024 in the materials of the Unified plan for achieving the national development goals of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2024 and the planning period up to 2030 and in the Forecast of socio-economic development of the Russian Federation for 2022 and the planning period of 2023 and 2024, thousands of people

Source/Year	2021	2022	2023	2024
Unified plan	-536	-533	-303	-257
Forecast 2022–2024	-600	-500	-400	-300

Source: compiled by the author based on the date of the World Bank), of the website "The population of the countries of the world in 1980–2020", and on the data of the Unified plan for achieving the national development goals of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2024 and the planning period up to 2030.

up to 2030,<sup>7</sup> developed for the implementation of the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation from 21 July, 2020 No. 474 "The Russian Federation's National Development Goals for the period until 2030", expected the population of the Russian Federation to increase in 2022. However, less than a year later (September 2021) the Forecast of socio-economic development of the Russian Federation for 2022 and for the plan period 2023 and 2024 (Forecast 2022–2024) gave even more depressing numbers (*table 1*).

"Due to objective demographic trends,—noted in the Unified plan achieving the national development goals of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2024 and for the period up to 2030,— the population of the Russian Federation will decline in the next few years". The average annual reduction in the population of the Russian Federation in 2021–2024 (–407.0 thou. persons) indicated in the Unified Plan was significantly higher than that recorded by the World Bank in 1994–2008 (–379,6 thou. persons). "It's very strange to die out on your land in peacetime, having the world's largest territory and huge resources for life" [3, p. 758].

An idea of the success of this work may be illustrated from the example of cooperation between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Azerbaijan in the political, economic, military, scientific and technological, information and ideological fields and in the field of education from treaties concluded by these countries in recent years, joint memorandums, signed protocols.<sup>9</sup>

It is understandable that the decline in the number of inhabitants threatens the security of any country, especially those with low population density. The latter traditionally includes Russia, which rich in natural resources, water and forests. In terms of security, the situation of our country is complicated by the growth of population in neighboring countries (including Muslim religion) and in the USA (which is a strategic competitor) (table 2), and also because of the active work of the Republic of Turkey under President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to unify the Turkic peoples with the aim of reconstructing the Ottoman Empire [4], including the neighboring States with the Russian Federation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Approved by the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation from 01 October 2020 No. 2765-p.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> URL: https://www.economy.gov.ru/material/dokumenty/edinyy\_plan\_po\_dostizheniyu\_nacionalnyh\_celey\_razvitiya\_rossiyskoy\_federacii\_na\_period\_do\_2024\_goda\_i\_na\_planovyy\_period\_do\_2030\_goda.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Shusha Declaration on allied relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey, 2021 r. URL: https://news. day.az/officialchronicle/1352978.html; Political relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan. Economics essay. URL: https://www.uniassignment.com/essay-samples/economics/political-relations-between-turkey-and-azarbaijan-economics-essay.php



Table 2 Increase (+) / decrease (-) in the population of nine countries in 1993-2020, million persons

Country	Population growth	Country	Population decline
USA	76,694	Republic of Estonia	-0,232
Republic of Turkey	27,717	Republic of Armenia	-0,542
Republic of Uzbekistan	12,954	Republic of Latvia	-0,744
Republic of Tajikistan	4,057	Republic of Belarus	-0,786
Republic of Azerbaijan	2,830	Republic of Lithuania	-0,968
Kazakhstan	2,421	Republic of Moldova	-1,070
Republic of Turkmenistan	2,172	Republic of Georgia	-1,132
Kyrgyz Republic	2,053	Russian Federation	-1,224
Mongolia	1,226	Republic of Ukraine	-10,517

Source: compiled by the author according to the World Bank data (World Development Indicators) and the website "The population of the countries of the world in 1980–2020".

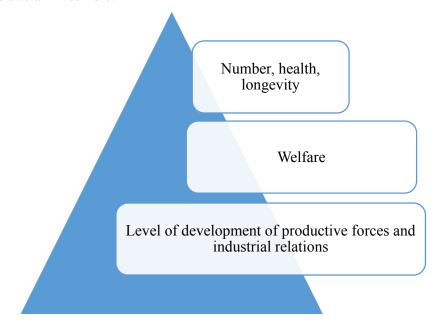


Fig 2. Components of population savings

Source: compiled by the author.

Thus, the goal of any people to maintain and increase the size of the Russian Federation in the short and medium term will not be fulfilled. It is a long-term, strategic goal that is important for the security of society. [5] Improving the welfare of all members of society is a basic

condition for its achievement. And in order to ensure and maintain the level of well-being for a long time, it is necessary to successful, progressive, sustainable development of the country's economy, its administrative and territorial entities and economic agents (fig. 2).

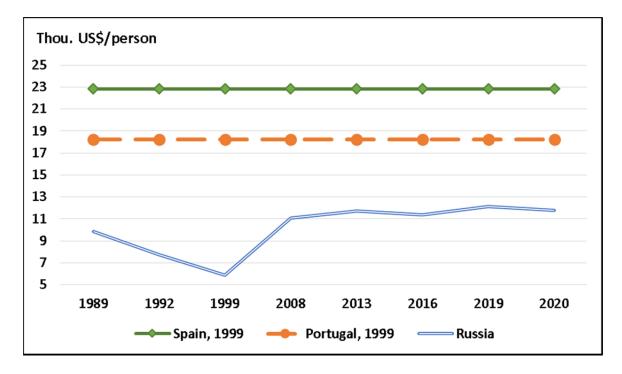


Fig. 3. Dynamics of GDP per capita in the Russian Federation in 1989 2020, thousand constant 2015 US\$ Source: compiled by the author according to the World Bank data (World Development Indicators).

# IMPROVING THE WELFARE OF CITIZENS

Increasing the welfare of all members of society is an important factor in saving people (growing populations, improving health, life expectancy, education and intellectual development). [2] Therefore, increasing prosperity — is a strategic goal of many countries of the world, including Russia. In international practice, the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is an integral indicator of a country's level of welfare.

In December 1999, V.V. Putin, based on the calculations provided to him, noted: "These are the experts' calculations. In order to achieve per capita GDP at the level of modern Portugal or Spain — countries that are not world economic leaders, — we'll need about 15 years with a GDP growth rate of at least 8% per year\....Let's suppose that the experts' calculations are not quite accurate, the current economic lag is not so great, and therefore we can overcome it faster". [6]

Hopes for high growth of Russian economy have not been fulfilled (miscalculation is one

of the reasons for setting unachievable goals and not implementing achievable goals). Average annual growth of Russian GDP in 2000–2014 (15 years after 1999) was 0.7%, +0.3% in Portugal, +1.5% in Spain.<sup>10</sup>

In 2000, Russia's per capita gross domestic product was twice as high as in 1999, but we still failed to reach the 1999 levels of Spain and Portugal (*fig. 3*).

Welfare goal not off the agenda, and the target set in 1999 is still to await implementation.

## ECONOMIC GROWTH

In the article "Russia on the Border of the Millennium" published on 30 December 1999 V.V. Putin noted that, that "our country is not among the states that represent the highest levels of economic and social development of the modern world".[6] Almost 10 years later, in the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation for 2020 was written,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Calculated according to World Bank. URL: https://databank.worldbank.org/indicator/ SP.POP.TOTL/1ff4a498/Popular-Indicators#

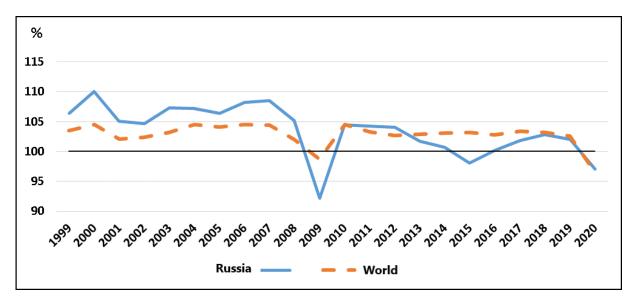


Fig. 4. GDP growth rates of Russia and the world in 1999-2020, %

Source: compiled by the author according to the World Bank data (World Development Indicators)\*.

that "the strategic objectives of national security are entry Russia in medium-term into the top five countries by gross domestic product, as well as achieving the necessary level of national security in the economic and technological fields". In 2018, the goal of "the Russian Federation becoming one of the world's five largest economies, ensuring economic growth above the world while maintaining macroeconomic stability" was set for the Russian government to achieve until 2024. 12

Such tasks of recovery of the country's economy to the level (and above) of the most developed economies of the world had previously sets V. I. Lenin: "The war is inexorable, it raises the question with merciless harshness: either to perish or to overtake the advanced countries and overtake them also economically" [7, p. 199]), and I.V. Stalin: "We catch up and overtook the advanced capitalist countries in the sense of establishing a new political order, a Soviet order. That's good.

But it's not enough. In order to achieve the final victory of socialism in our country, it is still necessary to catch up and overtake these countries also in techno-economic terms. Either we get it or we get crush". [8]

This strategic objective was dictated by the need for the country to survive in a hostile environment and is based on an objective pattern of living in a hostile environment, when progressive development is possible only through expansion (economic, military, territorial, political, scientific-technological, ideological, cultural, educational and information) in the global world. In the past centuries, the main instrument of expansion was war and religion, now — the so-called "soft power" and global economic aggression. [9]

The strength of a country's economy is usually judged by gross domestic product. In 1999–2008, 2011–2012 and 2020, the GDP growth rate of the Russian Federation was higher than that of the world, while in the remaining years it was lower (fig. 4).

While in 1999–2008 the average annual gross domestic product growth rate of the Russian Federation was higher than the world GDP growth rate by 3.4 p.p., in 2009–2020

<sup>\*</sup> For the calculation of growth rates, reference is made at USD 2015 years.

<sup>11</sup> URL: http://www.kremlin.ru/supplement/424

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Decree of the President of the Russian Federation from 07 May 2018 No. 204 "On national goals and strategic objectives of development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2024". URL: http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/Text/0001201805070038

The ratio of the GDP of the Russian Federation to the GDP of countries ranked 5th and 10th in terms of GDP in 1989–2020, %

Rank/Year	1989	1992	1999	2015	2018	2020
5 <sup>th</sup>	74.2	54.2	32.4	46.5	46.5	50.4
10 <sup>th</sup>	168.6	199.6	71.1	87.6	86.3	87.5

Source: compiled by the author according to the World Bank data.

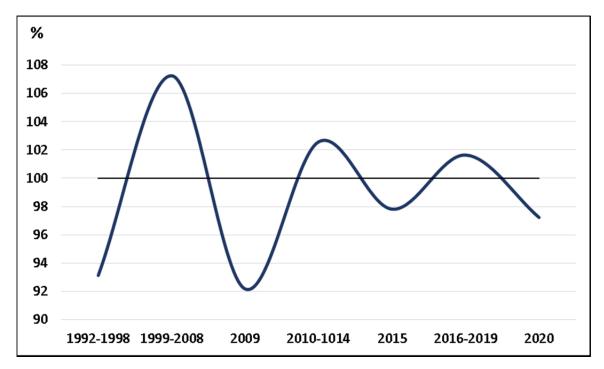


Fig. 5. The average annual growth rate of GDP per capita in the Russian Federation in 1992–2020, % Source: compiled by the author according to the World Bank data.

it was 2.0 p.p. lower. The target of higher economic growth than world growth was largely done. However, the gross domestic product of the most advanced economies grew even faster during the period under review, and in 2020 Russia managed to become only one of the top 13 economies in the world.

According to the World Bank, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) ranked fifth in the world in terms of GDP in 1999, 2009, 2015–2020 years. In 1999, the Russian Federation ranked 16<sup>th</sup> (in 1989–7<sup>th</sup>),

before it was the Republic of Korea. In 2020, Russia climbed to 13<sup>th</sup> place, Republic of Korea — 10<sup>th</sup>. The ratio of the GDP of the Russian Federation to the GDP of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Korea is shown in *table 3*.

Thus, Russia has yet to achieve its goal of becoming one of the world's largest economies.

### **UNEVEN PROGRESS TOWARDS GOALS**

So, in the period under research, the pace of the Russian Federation's approach to

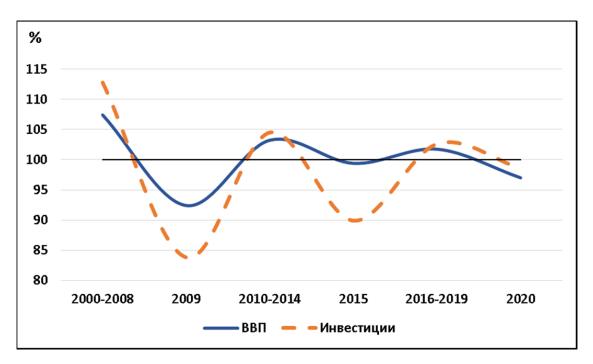


Fig. 6. The average annual growth rate of GDP and the physical volume of investments in fixed assets in the Russian Federation in 2000–2020, %

Source: compiled by the author according to the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation data.

the strategic goals under consideration fell short of expectations, the speed of the traffic changed over time, and therefore it was not possible to achieve the desired results everywhere. There is another feature of the implementation of modern Russia's long-term goals — a wavy trajectory, alternating between acceleration and deceleration, approximations and deviations from targets.

Slowdown and disengagement were most evident in the years when the Russian Federation's economy suffered the most from external and internal crises and shocks. Thus, the impact of the crisis of 2000–2001, caused by the collapse of stock indices of high-tech Internet companies, Russian economy felt the most in 2002, world financial and economic crisis 2008–2010 — in 2009, consequences of numerous anti-Russian sanctions — in 2015–2016 [10], consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic — in 2020. Such variations in the trajectories of the indicators of achievement are shown in *fig. 5, 6*.

The volumes of productive investments are the most important basis for building the

country's economic power. According to the data of the Federal Service of State Statistics of the Russian Federation (Rosstat), the growth rates of GDP and fixed investments in 2000–2020 are linearly correlated ( $R^2 = 0.9265$ ), the relationship is direct with high level of confidence ( $\alpha = 0.01$ ). It is logical that the growth rate of fixed investment, as well as gross domestic product, has been unsustainable, with ups and downs. As with GDP, the fluctuation was decreasing (*fig. 6*).

Such fluctuations in trajectories towards indicators of strategic objectives are influenced by a variety of factors and circumstances, which may be both external and internal to the goal-setting, objective and subjective. Thus, society can change the trajectory of movement towards the goal in connection with the changed socio-political, demographic and ecological situation, the new quality of management of society, as a result of creation of new or exhaustion of previously existing resources, increase or decrease the efficiency of the use of these resources.

Examples of factors external to the society, capable of changing the path chosen by society to the target and the speed of its passage are natural and man-made disasters, climate change, wars, world financial and economic crises, epidemics and pandemics, the emergence of new or disappearance of pre-existing markets for the sale and purchase of products, measures of isolation of the country, its business entities from the global community, etc.

In case of negative influence of external and (or) internal factors, conditions and circumstances, the approach to the goal is interrupted and the distance from it occurs. Once the adverse effects have been overcome, the movement towards the target is resumed. However, as societies and activities, by their nature, internal organization and damage, recover at different speeds, have different resources and capacities, and time frames and implementation of different objectives do not necessarily coincide and may vary significantly.<sup>13</sup>

Depending on current and future expectations, society can not only change the ways and pace of movement towards benchmarks, but also adjust short-, mediumand long-term goals and their relevance.<sup>14</sup>

### CONCLUSION

Failure to reach the target means unmet needs, breeds discontent, doubts, uncertainty of the future plan of action; requires a redefinition of objectives, time frames for their achievement and allocation of the resources necessary for their implementation. In addition, failure to achieve the stated objectives undermines public confidence in the authorities and representatives of the authorities and political parties responsible for the stated goals and

decisions. "If you promise the impossible, what does it means? This generates expectations that will not be fulfilled, deceive people and sow mistrust in the entire political system of the country, rocking it from within, which is what it means". 15

There are both objective and subjective reasons for non-achievement. The research results presented in this article show that strategic goals in modern Russia are not always achieved. There could be any number of reasons:

- the wrong target was chosen and it should not have been implemented;
- set an unattainable goal, the capacity of society and the external environment prevent it from being realized;
- extraordinary circumstances and so-called "black swans" prevented the achievement of the goal;
- the performers are unable to fulfil the tasks assigned to them;
- the goal was not going to be met. [11] Different combinations of these causes are also possible.

There are different ways to respond to an unachieved goal: keep working; reschedule; adjust or completely eliminate quantitative targets, leaving the objective; replace the original wording of the objective with a new version; abandon the objective.

The goal is the perfect representation of the desired. The ideal image either becomes a reality, or continues to be perfect, or is transformed into a new ideal image (new ideal images). So is the goal: it can be achieved, maintained for the future, specified, refined, changed, replaced by a new goal or goals.

The real, which embodies the ideal, the imagined, the conceivable, does not necessarily coincide with the ideal. And this new reality gives rise to a new ideal, in our case — a new goal or new goals.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> These objective reasons will naturally lead to the fact that, after overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic, economies around the world will recover differently — some faster, others slower.

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 14}$  It is natural to expect that the lesson of the COVID-19 pandemic will become more public attention to health and science.

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 15}$  Address from the President to the Federal Assembly. URL: http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/62582



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### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**



**Sergey V. Kazantsev** — Doctor of Economics, Chief Researcher at the Institute of Economics and Industrial Engineering, Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Novosibirsk, Russia https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4777-8840

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kzn-sv@yandex.ru