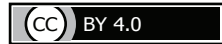


## ORIGINAL PAPER



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# The Evolution of the Non-Profit Sector in Russia: Regional Ranking Experience and Development Trends of the Third Sector

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## ABSTRACT

The article presents a comprehensive analysis of the transformation of the non-profit sector (NPS) across the regions of the Russian Federation based on the Region–NPO ranking (2020–2025). The aim of the study is to identify, through this analytical instrument, key changes in the development of socially oriented non-profit organizations (SONPOs), major trends in the formation of the third sector, and the factors influencing these processes. Drawing on eight ranking criteria and 54 indicators, the paper examines structural transformations within the non-profit sector, the evolving interaction between SONPOs and key stakeholders, changes in support mechanisms, and the specific features of regional third-sector ecosystems. Particular attention is paid to the reduction of interregional disparities and the formation of sustainable development models. The study explores the principal trends in the development of sectoral infrastructure, financial sustainability, and citizen engagement in non-profit activities, as well as the dynamics in the number of organizations. The findings make it possible to identify promising directions for governmental and civic support, as well as to determine success factors and regional typologies of development. **Keywords:** non-profit sector; socially oriented non-profit organizations; regional ranking; third-sector development dynamics; interregional disparities; civil society; efficiency of the non-profit sector

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## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the development of the Russian non-profit sector (NPS) has demonstrated stable positive dynamics, while conditions conducive to the further systemic strengthening and expansion of opportunities for non-profit organizations<sup>1</sup> (NPOs) in the regions have been taking shape. The year 2025 became a key milestone marked by significant achievements related to the infrastructure of the non-profit sector, funding mechanisms, transparency of operations, civic engagement, and information openness.

These positive developments constitute an important indicator of the maturity of civil society and the effectiveness of the state's social policy. Over recent decades, Russia has witnessed the active formation and institutionalization of the non-profit

sector, which has become a significant component of both the economy and the social sphere. In order to assess its condition and development dynamics, a special monitoring instrument – the “Region–NPO<sup>2</sup>” ranking – was established in 2020 by the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation in partnership with the rating agency RAEX Analytics.

The relevance of the “Region–NPO” ranking is determined not only by the theoretical interest in the subject under consideration [1–4], but also by the practical significance of the identified patterns for shaping effective public policy toward the non-profit sector [5, 6]. The ranking, whose database has by now become substantial, makes it possible to trace significant changes in the non-profit sectors of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation

<sup>1</sup> NGOs (non-profit organizations), including socially oriented NGOs (SO NGOs), constitute the non-profit sector (NPS), also referred to as the third sector

<sup>2</sup> A new “Region–NGO” ranking has been published. Journal of Charity. URL: <https://givingjournal.ru/2025/11/01/opublikovan-novyj-rejting-region-nko/> (date of access: 08.11.2025).

and to identify stable development trends, thereby contributing to the improvement of the effectiveness of socially oriented non-profit organizations (SO NPOs) themselves [7–9]. The successive stages of ranking third-sector organizations since 2020 — including the publication of the fifth anniversary edition of the ranking in 2024<sup>3</sup>, as well as the current sixth edition<sup>4</sup> — provide a unique opportunity for analyzing dynamic processes within the non-profit sector across Russia's regions.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Evolution of the Methodology of the “Region-NPO” Ranking

Before proceeding to the analysis of changes within the non-profit sector, it is necessary to address the evolution of the measurement instrument itself — the methodology of the “Region-NPO” ranking. Over the years of its existence, the methodology has undergone a number of transformations reflecting both the evolving understanding of the nature of the non-profit sector and the aspiration to improve the accuracy and objectivity of assessment.

The pilot edition of the ranking in 2020 included 39 indicators. In 2021, their number increased to 70, which was associated with the expansion of data sources and the intention to incorporate the maximum possible range of aspects characterizing the functioning of the non-profit sector. In subsequent editions, the model was optimized: 58 indicators were used in both 2022 and 2023, while the 2024 edition included 54 indicators. At the same time, the number of analyzed metrics (primary data points) increased to 170, indicating an improvement in the quality of analysis despite the reduction in the number of indicators.

It is important to emphasize that the refinement of the methodology does not disrupt data continuity, since the fundamental structure of the ranking and its key assessment factors have remained

unchanged [10]. This makes it possible to conduct valid comparisons of results across different years and to identify stable trends in the development of the non-profit sector.

### Structure of the Rating Model

The 2024 version<sup>5</sup> of the “Region-NPO” rating model comprises eight key factors, each reflecting a particular aspect of the functioning of the non-profit sector:

1. Economic significance of the non-profit sector in the region (weight: 15%) — assesses the scale and economic contribution of socially oriented non-profit organizations (SO NPOs) to the regional economy.
2. Sustainability of the non-profit sector in the region (weight: 5%) — characterizes the stability of SO NPO operations and their capacity for long-term functioning.
3. Activity level of the non-profit sector in the region (weight: 15%) — reflects the intensity of SO NPO activities and their ability to attract resources.
4. Level of state support for SO NPOs (weight: 15%) — evaluates the volume and diversity of forms of government support provided to SO NPOs.
5. Online accessibility of information on support for SO NPOs in the regions of the Russian Federation (weight: 15%) — characterizes the informational openness and accessibility of support mechanisms for SO NPOs.
6. Media activity of regional SO NPOs (weight: 10%) — assesses the representation of SO NPOs within the information space and media environment.
7. Results of the expert survey on the development of the non-profit sector (weight: 10%) — reflects expert evaluations of the condition of the third sector.
8. Social significance of the non-profit sector in the region (weight: 15%) — characterizes the social impact generated by the activities of SO NPOs.

<sup>3</sup> PA RAEX (official website). URL: <https://raex-rr.com/NKO/Region-nko/Region-nko/2024/analytics/> (date of access: 08.11.2025).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. URL: <https://raex-rr.com/NKO/Region-nko/Region-nko/2025/analytics/> (date of access: 08.11.2025).

<sup>5</sup> Maltsev, E. A. Methodology of the Regional Rating of the Third Sector “Region-NGO”. Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, RAEX (RAEX-Analytics). URL: [https://raex-rr.com/files/methods/Region-NKO\\_methodology\\_2024.pdf](https://raex-rr.com/files/methods/Region-NKO_methodology_2024.pdf) (date of access: 08.11.2025).

### Data Sources

The ranking is based on 23 sources of objective information, including data provided by: the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation on the number and activities of socially oriented non-profit organizations (SO NPOs); SPARK-Interfax (financial indicators of SO NPOs); SCAN-Interfax (citation rates and media presence); the Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Russian Federation; the Federal Tax Service regarding social tax deductions for charitable donations; the Presidential Grants Foundation, the Presidential Foundation for Cultural Initiatives, Rosmolodezh; the analytical platform Similarweb; and other sources.

Of particular value are the results of the 2024 expert survey, which involved 3,506 specialists from 87 constituent entities of the Russian Federation (for comparison, the first survey conducted in 2021 involved 1,881 experts).

## ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR

### Dynamics of Key Development Indicators

An examination of the data presented in the “Region-NPO” ranking makes it possible to identify a number of significant changes in the development of the non-profit sector.

#### Increased Transparency and Formalization of SO NPO Activities

One of the key indicators of the institutional development of the non-profit sector is the share of socially oriented non-profit organizations (SO NPOs) submitting non-zero financial statements. This indicator reflects the degree of transparency in organizational activities and their integration into formal institutional frameworks. Between 2020 and 2023, its steady increase from 50.0% to 55.0% indicates the gradual professionalization of the third sector and improvements in the quality of administrative management within SO NPOs. This constitutes an important institutional transformation, since operational transparency is a necessary condition for building trust in the non-

profit sector among all stakeholders — the state, business, and society.

### Growth in Civic Philanthropy

The most remarkable change within the non-profit sector during the period under review was the substantial increase — more than twofold — in charitable donations made by citizens. In 2024, charitable tax deductions were claimed by 20.4 thousand individuals, compared to only 9.9 thousand in 2020.

The growth in the total amount of donations is also noteworthy: from RUB 3.9 billion in 2020 to RUB 7.3 billion in 2024. These figures likewise indicate the legalization of charitable practices and their transition into the formal legal framework.

Such dynamics may be explained by several factors, including: increased financial and tax literacy among the population; improved public awareness regarding the possibility of obtaining tax deductions; the development of digital platforms for charitable donations that simplify the donation process; and strengthened public trust in the activities of SO NPOs and charitable foundations.

### Development of the Support System for SO NPOs

During the first five years of the ranking’s operation, substantial changes were observed in the support system for socially oriented non-profit organizations (SO NPOs). Whereas in 2020 Russian regions differed significantly in terms of the level and quality of support provided to the non-profit sector, by 2024 a trend toward the equalization of these indicators had become evident. This is confirmed by the decline in the Gini index<sup>6</sup> across a number of criteria related to support for SO NPOs, particularly through the development of infrastructure.

Thus, in the majority of constituent entities of the Russian Federation, resource centers have been established and are actively operating, providing non-profit organizations with informational, consulting, educational, and other forms of assistance. Over the five-year period, the number of such centers increased by more than 30%.

<sup>6</sup> The Gini index (coefficient) is a statistical measure of the degree of inequality within a country or region across a selected variable. It is used to assess economic inequality.

Qualitative changes also occurred in the structure of support for SO NPOs. In addition to financial support, which predominated in 2020, by 2024 property-related, informational, consulting, legal, and educational forms of support had become increasingly developed. This indicates the emergence of a comprehensive approach to the development of the non-profit sector.

#### Reduction of Interregional Disparities

One of the most important findings of the “Region-NPO” ranking is the existence of significant disparities between regions across individual indicators of non-profit sector development, despite the relative homogeneity of the overall integral ranking<sup>7</sup>.

The greatest disparities — those most directly affecting both the population and non-profit organizations themselves — relate to the following indicators (2023 data):

1. Compensation to NPOs for social services from regional budgets<sup>8</sup> — Gini index: 56.5%.
2. Total revenues of regional resource centers relative to the total revenues of all SO NPOs — Gini index: 56.2%.
3. Support for SO NPO infrastructure — Gini index: 51.3%.
4. Trend in charitable tax deductions — Gini index: 48.4%.
5. Aggregate social media audience of operating resource centers — Gini index: 42.2%.

At the same time, the most balanced indicators include the share of resource centers submitting non-zero financial statements (Gini index: 7.0%); workforce dynamics (Gini index: 12.4%); and evaluations of interaction between SO NPOs, the media, other SO NPOs, and public authorities (Gini indices ranging from 12.7% to 15.7%).

One of the most significant developments observed between 2020 and 2024 was the reduction of interregional disparities in the development of the non-profit sector. According to data from the

“Region-NPO” ranking, regional differences across a number of key indicators decreased substantially. For example, in 2020 the Gini index for the criterion “Support for SO NPO Infrastructure” amounted to 62.5%, indicating a highly uneven distribution of support among the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. By 2024, this indicator had declined to 58.2%, pointing to a tendency toward greater equalization in the level of infrastructural support for SO NPOs across the country.

A similar trend can be observed for other criteria as well. For instance, the Gini index for the indicator “Total Revenues of SO NPOs Relative to Regional Budgets” decreased from 52.1% in 2020 to 46.2% in 2024, indicating a more even distribution of the financial resources of the non-profit sector relative to the budgetary capacities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

#### CASES OF SUCCESSFUL REGIONS

An analysis of the ranking data makes it possible to identify territories demonstrating the most significant progress in the development of the non-profit sector. Between 2020 and 2024, 28 regions consistently implemented measures aimed at improving the conditions for non-profit sector activities, and the positions of many constituent entities of the Russian Federation in the ranking strengthened considerably: the maximum increase over the five-year period amounted to 55 positions (with an average improvement of more than 10 positions).

Among the leading regions, particular attention should be given to the Belgorod Oblast (+55 positions over four years), Leningrad Oblast (+39), Smolensk Oblast (+33), Arkhangelsk Oblast (+31), Kirov Oblast (+30), and Kursk Oblast (+29).

An examination of their experience makes it possible to identify several key success factors in the development of the non-profit sector:

Systemic support for SO NPO infrastructure. For example, in Leningrad Oblast the volume of such support increased by 128% (from RUB 1.2 billion to RUB 2.6 billion).

Development of mechanisms for socially beneficial services. In Astrakhan Oblast the number of

<sup>7</sup> Leaders outperform lagging regions by 2.5 times..

<sup>8</sup> Federal Law “On the Fundamentals of Social Services for Citizens in the Russian Federation” dated 28.12.2013 No. 442-FZ (latest amendment). URL: [https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons\\_doc\\_LAW\\_156558/](https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_156558/)

service providers operating within this framework increased by 55% (from 11 to 17).

Financial sustainability and legal protection of NPOs. In Astrakhan Oblast the total amount of unresolved legal claims involving NPOs as defendants decreased by 87% (from RUB 20.2 million to RUB 2.5 million).

Active participation in federal competitions and programs. In Orenburg Oblast the total number of projects submitted to the “#WEARETOGETHER” competition increased by 64% (from 14 to 23).

Development of media activity and information openness. In Orenburg Oblast the number of publications concerning SO NPOs, according to the Zircon Research Group, increased by 73% (from 26 to 45).

Growth in the economic significance of the sector. In the Republic of Bashkortostan the total revenues of regional NPOs increased by 41% (from RUB 29.4 billion to RUB 41.4 billion).

## GENERAL INDICATORS AND KEY TRENDS OF 2025

### Infrastructure for Supporting Non-Profit Organizations

In 2025, more than 150 resource and support centers for non-profit organizations were operating across the country, which is nearly 1.5 times higher than the number recorded in 2024.

At the level of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, the most developed support infrastructures are observed in Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Belgorod Oblast, Leningrad Oblast, Arkhangelsk Oblast, Novosibirsk Oblast, and Krasnodar Krai.

The development of an effective infrastructure for supporting non-profit organizations represents a key factor in enhancing their sustainability, professionalization, and social effectiveness. The following section examines the current trends in this sphere as of 2025, with particular attention to quantitative indicators, structural transformations, and regional characteristics.

#### Overview of Current Trends

As previously noted, more than 150 resource and support centers for NPOs are currently operating in Russia as of 2025.

The nearly 1.5-fold increase compared to 2024 reflects targeted governmental and private-sector initiatives aimed at strengthening the ecosystem of civil society organizations.

The number of digital platforms is also increasing: between 2024 and 2025, their number grew by more than one third. The expansion of online resources contributes to transparent communication, simplifies access to grants and consulting support, facilitates the organization of educational programs, and promotes the exchange of experience. As a result, conditions are being created for more effective interaction between sector participants, public authorities, businesses, and civil society.

#### Regional Features of Infrastructure Development

Among the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, the leading regions in terms of NPO support infrastructure include:

Moscow and Saint Petersburg — the largest metropolitan areas, characterized by extensive networks of resource centers and digital platforms. Their infrastructure is distinguished by a high degree of automation, a broad range of services, and frequent integration with both national and international platforms.

Belgorod Oblast and Leningrad Oblast — regions actively implementing support programs for the sector and developing regional portals and educational platforms that contribute to the formation of sustainable and professional non-profit organizations.

Arkhangelsk Oblast, Novosibirsk Oblast, and Krasnodar Krai demonstrate substantial progress in improving basic support resources, thereby creating conditions for the emergence of local initiatives, the expansion of support mechanisms, and increased public trust in the sector.

These regions stand out due to the high level of integration of infrastructural elements and the active utilization of local capacities, which contributes to improving the effectiveness of the non-profit sector.

#### Analytical Perspective

The increase in the number of support centers and digital platforms has been accompanied by growing levels of professionalization and transparency

within the activities of non-profit organizations. This trend contributes to lowering entry barriers for new participants and improving the quality of projects implemented within the sector. Overall, infrastructure development constitutes a strategic objective that enables the systematic growth of the non-profit sector, particularly in the context of contemporary social and economic challenges.

The successful implementation of infrastructure development initiatives demonstrates the expanding capacity of the non-profit sector to carry out socially significant projects and contributes to the strengthening of civil society.

#### **Financial Support for the Sector**

The total volume of charitable donations exceeded RUB 500 billion by the end of 2024<sup>9</sup>. The volume of state grant funding and subsidization of the non-profit sector amounted to approximately RUB 18 billion, representing an 11% increase compared to the previous year. This trend has been driven by increasing civic engagement and the expansion of tax deduction mechanisms. Charitable platforms are actively adopting new instruments, including online payment systems, mobile applications, and crowdfunding services.

#### **Professionalization and Transparency**

The share of non-profit organizations submitting non-zero financial statements reached 55% by the end of 2023, significantly increasing public and governmental trust in the sector. The implementation of automated reporting systems, national registries, and transparent digital platforms has helped reduce the bureaucratic burden placed on organizations. The level of competence among NPO staff and managers is also increasing, primarily through training programs, certification initiatives, and participation in professional associations.

#### **Civic Engagement and Charitable Activity**

According to recent studies, citizen participation in charitable campaigns and community initiatives has increased more than threefold, with approximately 3 million individuals claiming charitable tax deduc-

tions. The total volume of charitable donations exceeded RUB 7 billion.

#### **Media Activity and Information Openness**

Compared to 2024, the number of thematic publications, reports, and news materials increased by 17%. Particular attention should be paid to the development of platforms for the public presentation of non-profit activities, including the creation of interactive maps, online reporting systems, video blogs, and podcasts. At the same time, regional authorities are directly involved in promoting the activities of non-profit organizations through internet platforms and mass media channels.

#### **Regional Dimension and Rankings**

The top ten constituent entities of the Russian Federation in terms of the development of socially oriented non-profit organizations (SO NPOs) in 2025 included: Moscow, Vologda Oblast, Samara Oblast, Chelyabinsk Oblast, Nizhny Novgorod Oblast, Republic of Tatarstan, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Yugra, Leningrad Oblast, Belgorod Oblast, and Krasnoyarsk Krai.

*Table 1* presents the characteristic features of the non-profit sector infrastructure demonstrating high growth rates across a number of regions.

However, despite the positive trends observed in the development of the non-profit sector across Russia, a substantial gap persists between regions with well-developed infrastructure, high levels of information activity, and significant funding opportunities, and those where civic initiatives continue to face serious barriers. The principal characteristics of the existing lagging regions include the following:

6. A small number of NGOs and their low level of activity: their operations are often concentrated primarily on local initiatives without broad media and communication support.

7. Limited infrastructure: a lack of specialized venues, support centers, and resources necessary for organizing events, educational programs, and consulting activities.

8. Low levels of public awareness and media activity: the absence or insufficient development of platforms for public reporting and the dissemination of information about sectoral activities.

<sup>9</sup> Frank RG. URL: [https://frankrg.com/wp-content/uploads/public-files/Sber\\_PB\\_Frank\\_RG\\_Charity\\_2025.pdf](https://frankrg.com/wp-content/uploads/public-files/Sber_PB_Frank_RG_Charity_2025.pdf) (date of access: 08.11.2025).

Table 1

## Regions with High Growth Rates of Socially Oriented Non-Profit Organizations (2025)

Region	Commentary
Belgorod region	Systemic support and the creation of NGO clusters
Leningrad region	Expansion of infrastructure projects
Arkhangelsk region	Active development in the field of social services
Novosibirsk region	Growth of regional support and initiatives
Krasnodar region	Infrastructure development, tourism, and the eco-sector
Kaliningrad region	Innovative projects and interregional cooperation
Republic of Tatarstan	Active participation of business and government
Moscow region	Continuous growth in support and project integration

Source: compiled by the author.

9. Funding shortages caused by the lack of internal revenue sources, insufficient large-scale federal or regional support, and a limited number of grant funding and subsidy programs.

10. Geographic and socio-economic factors: such regions are typically located in remote areas and are characterized by low household incomes and underdeveloped social infrastructure.

Examples of lagging regions are presented in Table 2.

The principal reasons for the weak development of the non-profit sector in these territories include the following:

1. Economic factors. In regions with weak economic performance and high unemployment rates, the decline in support for civic initiatives is primarily associated with the limited financial capacities of both the population and organizations.

2. Political and administrative factors. In a number of regions, there is an insufficient level of political commitment or limited resource capacity for supporting the sector, which is reflected in weak infrastructure, the absence of grant programs, and inadequate support for civic initiatives.

3. Cultural and social characteristics. Traditions associated with skepticism toward civic initiatives may create barriers to the development of the sector.

Infrastructure deficiencies. These include an underdeveloped network of organizations, a weak media environment, and the absence of information platforms for covering NGO activities.

The major challenges associated with the above-mentioned issues include the following:

1. The problem of information isolation and the resulting limited opportunities for attracting public attention to NGO initiatives.

2. Insufficient internal funding. The lack of federal and regional support programs hinders the development of non-profit infrastructure.

3. Geographic isolation and low mobility. These factors create difficulties in experience sharing, training, and establishing partnerships with more developed sectors.

Lagging territories require special attention from both federal and regional authorities.

In order to address the identified problems, the following support measures appear particularly promising: the introduction of targeted financing programs and grant projects in regions with low civic activity; the creation of regional platforms and media services to promote NGO activities; the implementation of educational and training programs for sector leaders and active participants; and the strengthening of interregional experience exchange and partnership networks.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the changes identified on the basis of the Region-NGO ranking for 2020–2025 is grounded in a comparison of the ranking indicators, including the number of registered organizations, activity indicators (the number of implemented projects and

Table 2

## Regions with a Low Level of Non-Profit Sector Development (2025)

Region	The main reasons	Specificities	Media resources and support
Republic of Ingushetia	High political and economic instability; low engagement of the civic sector	Small population size and limited civic initiatives	Absence of regional platforms and media outlets covering NGO activities
Republic of Dagestan	Economic difficulties and weak civil society development	Low public awareness and insufficiently developed sectoral infrastructure a	Almost complete absence of platforms for reporting and informational support
Karachay-Cherkess Republic	Traditionally oriented toward large businesses and state projects	Low activity of non-governmental initiatives	Underdeveloped network of information resources
Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug	Geographic remoteness and harsh climatic conditions	Constraints on the development of local NGOs and a low level of media culture	Weak local information activity
Republic of Kalmykia	Economic dependence and irregular support from federal authorities	Low level of information transparency	Lack of developed systems for publishing NGO activities
Tuva Republic	High level of isolation and weak infrastructure	Small population size and underdeveloped sector	Limited opportunities for reporting and public communication

Source: compiled by the author.

the level of public engagement), funding indicators (the volume of grants, state support, and other funding sources), as well as infrastructure-related factors (the presence of regional support centers and development programs<sup>10</sup>).

#### Growth in the Number of Organizations and Structural Transformation of the Sector

According to the ranking data, the period from 2020 to 2025 was characterized by a steady increase in the number of registered NGOs. The average annual growth rate amounted to approximately 7%, indicating the continued development of civic initiative-based society. The most significant progress was recorded in regions with extensive government support (for example, Republic of Tatarstan and Saint Petersburg), and was accompanied by demographic and structural transformations, including an increasing share of professional organizations and the emergence of new forms of activity such

<sup>10</sup> As a result of systematizing regional characteristics of third-sector development, key factors influencing its dynamics were identified. Correlation analysis and clustering methods were used to distinguish typological groups of regions based on the level of development and the sector's dynamics..

as online initiatives and social entrepreneurship.

#### Financial Sustainability and Sources of Funding

The ranking indicators demonstrate both an increase in the volume of attracted financial resources (including grant funding and private donations) and the diversification of funding sources, as well as the formation of sustainable financing models for active NGOs. However, regional disparities persist: unlike major urban centers, smaller territories continue to face a shortage of resources.

#### Development of Infrastructure and Regional Support Programs

The infrastructure of the non-profit sector has strengthened considerably, as reflected in the establishment of regional support centers, the expansion of mentoring programs, educational platforms, and coordination structures. According to the ranking data, the effectiveness of these measures is evidenced by increased levels of civic engagement, the expansion of project geography, and stronger intersectoral cooperation.

#### Regional Development Patterns and Typologies

Cluster analysis identified three principal regional typologies: major metropolitan regions, developing

regions, and stagnating regions. The leading positions are occupied by Moscow, Saint Petersburg, and Yekaterinburg, which demonstrate the highest growth dynamics across the majority of indicators. Developing regions are characterized by moderate growth and the active implementation of state support programs, whereas stagnating regions are represented by federal subjects with low levels of NGO activity and organizational density caused by insufficient infrastructure and limited resources. These typologies are shaped by the specific features of territorial policy, economic conditions, and the level of civic culture.

#### The Impact of External Factors and Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic had a destabilizing effect on the sector, while simultaneously stimulating the transition to remote forms of operation and fostering the development of new channels of communication and audience engagement. At the same time, economic constraints continue to hinder the emergence of new initiatives in lagging regions<sup>11</sup>.

### CONCLUSION

The analysis of non-profit sector rankings for the period 2020–2025 indicates several important trends in the development of the non-profit sector across Russian regions. Russian NGOs demonstrate steady growth across all key indicators. Infrastructure and financial support mechanisms continue to expand, contributing to higher levels of professionalism and increased public trust. Territorial disparities and regional imbalances are gradually decreasing due to the implementation of systemic programs and federal initiatives. The scale

<sup>11</sup> The implementation of recommendations aimed at strengthening infrastructure in lagging regions and enhancing systemic support programs will help ensure a more balanced development of the sector and increase its social effectiveness.

of civic participation is also increasing significantly, as evidenced by the steady growth in the number of donors and, consequently, in the volume of tax deductions for charitable contributions.

Under these conditions, new platforms for service provision, support, and interaction are being actively developed.

The results of the analysis of the Region–NGO ranking data for 2020–2025 make it possible to draw several important conclusions regarding the current state and future prospects of Russia’s national non-profit sector. The sector remains characterized by substantial disparities, reflecting not only differences in the economic potential of regions but also variations in local authorities’ approaches to NGO activities. Despite the progress achieved, several federal subjects still demonstrate low levels of support and weak infrastructure. There also remains a need to improve the quality of organizational performance, reporting standards, and transparency.

In this regard, the following areas appear particularly promising:

- strengthening network-based and digital platforms;
- expanding financial support mechanisms through the introduction of new capitalization instruments;
- increasing professionalism through training and certification programs;
- intensifying interregional exchange of experience and best practices;
- deepening the integration of NGOs with government institutions and business structures.

Overall, future efforts should focus on reducing regional disparities, developing innovative support mechanisms, and ensuring the full integration of the non-profit sector into the country’s social and economic policy framework.

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