Economic Gains and Political Loyalty: How Rising Incomes Drive Support for Russia's Authoritarian Regime

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Abstract

Even as the invasion of Ukraine enters its fourth year, Russia's authoritarian regime has shown remarkable resilience: the economy remains relatively stable, the elites are loyal, and a large portion of the population continues to support the leadership. Putin and his inner circle display adamant determination to stay the course.

One key reason for this support, the author argues, lies in the substantial rise in employment and wages among specific groups, especially those who had long struggled economically.

The war is reshaping Russia's economy and social structure, though unevenly. Based on raw data from the Federal Tax Service, Rosstat (2022–2024 vs. 2021), Central Bank reports, and major recruiting platforms, the author identifies the regions, industries, and groups that have gained most—from war-related spending, import substitution, and the return of domestic capital.

Above all, these changes have benefited low-income, blue- and gray-collar workers in underdeveloped regions and previously underperforming industries. Once barely making ends meet, they now earn more times and can be considered the major economic and social beneficiaries of the war.

These groups account for a significant share of Russia's population. Holding traditional values and peculiar political preferences—and encouraged by the authorities—they may become a driving force in shaping Russia's future and its tense relations with the outside world.

1. Introduction

As the Russian invasion of Ukraine enters its fourth year, it must be acknowledged that Russia s authoritarian regime remains confident. In 2023 and early 2024, many economists warned that the Russian economy was nearing collapse. However, any serious deterioration has so far remained a distant prospect. As of early 2025, the economic outlook appears relatively strong. In mid-2024, according to the World Bank, Russia was classified as a high-income country and the fourth-largest economy by GDP (PPP). In April 2025, the national statistical agency Rosstat increased its estimate of the country's economic growth to 4.3% (Reuters, April 11, 2025) after

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last year’s 3.6%. The Russian unemployment rate is still low and revolves around 2.5% (FocusEconomics 2025), whereas real disposable income increased by 7.3% in 2024.

The political landscape also appears stable. The Russian elite remains loyal, and a majority of the population continues to rally behind the leadership. Notably, all major Russian polling agencies—state-run (VCIOM 2025) and independent (Levada-Center 2025) alike—report consistently high levels of public trust and support for the authorities.

Judging by the early stages of renewed negotiations involving Russian and American leaders and Ukraine, Putin and his inner circle are showing no signs of wavering in their commitment to their chosen course.

A year ago, when I presented the first results of my research, many academics and experts remained puzzled: why does the Russian population continue to support Putin s regime, even as the economic situation and citizens welfare appeared to be deteriorating under tightening Western sanctions and growing international isolation? By 2024, however, the tone has shifted. Analysts increasingly recognize that current macroeconomic indicators suggest the Russian economy remains in relatively strong condition. Still, the growing focus on headline figures and the overall effectiveness of sanctions often obscures a more nuanced examination of the underlying economic dynamics taking shape beneath the surface.

Without a doubt, one of the most significant drivers of recent economic change has been the massive injection of state funds into the military-industrial complex—the so-called military budget impulse.” In 2024–2025, military spending is projected to account for nearly 40% of the federal budget and approximately 7–8% of GDP (McGerty & Dewey 2025). Yet, this fiscal push is only one visible part of the story. The effects of tightening Western sanctions, the disruption of financial and trade channels, the withdrawal of foreign companies, and the repatriation of substantial private capital have also played a critical role. Together, these forces have spurred growth not only in the defense sector but across a broad array of related industries and service sectors. As a result, the structure of the Russian economy is undergoing significant transformation, with implications that are both immediate and far-reaching.

In this context, a more granular analysis becomes essential. While macro-level assessments dominate the discourse, there is little systematic attention to how these economic shifts impact households, industries, and regions—and how these changes may influence public perceptions of the war and the legitimacy of state actions.

This paper seeks to address that gap by tracing the evolution of regional and sectoral revenues, as well as household incomes, over three consecutive years, from 2022 to 2024. It examines which population groups gain or lose as a result of the ongoing war and its related developments, including the military budget impulse, forced import substitution, and the internal reallocation of state funds and private capital.

2. Research Question and Hypothesis

This working paper focuses on three analytical units: Russian regions, industries, and specific occupational groups, examined through changes in income and earnings levels over the past three years compared to 2021. Since overall economic and income growth are no longer in serious doubt, my analysis turns to the nature of the distribution of these gains, in particular to identifying those who have benefited more than the national average.

The core research question is: which population groups, industries, and regions have not only experienced significant growth in incomes or revenues, but have emerged as the primary economic beneficiaries of the war?

I argue that one crucial reason for the sustained support of the Russian authorities is the noticeable growth in employment and income among certain groups of the population. These are primarily residents of poor, underdeveloped regions and workers in previously unclaimed sectors who have been simply making ends meet for decades. Many are blue-collar workers—welders, turners, fitters, truck drivers—especially in the defense industry and related manufacturing sectors such as textiles, clothing, and footwear. Additional beneficiaries include workers in logistics, food service, and hospitality (to name a few), whose incomes have risen in line with rising consumer demand for services.

3. Research Methodology

The study is based on three main research methods: in-depth interviews, descriptive analysis of official primary data reports, and analysis of official reports. The main sources for data analysis are primary data from the Federal Tax Service of Russia (FTS) for 2021-2024 and the Federal State Statistics Service (FSSS, Rosstat) for 2021-2024. Secondary sources include reports “Monitoring the activities of enterprises" by the Central Bank of the Russian Federation”and annual reports of the Deposit Insurance Agency for 2022-2024. To analyze changes in the wages

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of individual blue-collar jobs, various open sources were used, mainly surveys and analytical reports of large recruiting platforms and companies.

The main indicators for my study on confirming income/revenue, which were taken as the basis for analysis and comparison, are the values of corporate income tax (CIT) and personal income tax (PIT). In the vast majority of cases, the values of these taxes and their changes during 2022–2024 are compared with 2021, unless otherwise noted

In this context, four significant caveats must be considered, all of which apply throughout the period analyzed in this paper (i.e., up to the end of 2024):

1. There were no changes to the main tax rates in Russia from 2021 to 2024. Although the government occasionally introduced temporary levies such as windfall taxes, the main tax rates, including corporate income tax (CIT) and personal income tax (PIT), remained unchanged[1].
2. CIT and PIT together account for approximately 40% of the total federal tax revenue and about 80% of regional tax revenue. Due to revenue-sharing rules defined by federal law, growth in CIT primarily benefits regional budgets and has only a limited effect on federal revenues. Increases in PIT directly translate into higher revenues for regional and local budgets. Therefore, taken together, CIT and PIT offer a stable and reliable basis for tracking and analyzing shifts in regional fiscal revenues and economic activity across Russia during this period.
3. Military payments do not significantly affect my analysis and conclusions for two reasons. First, one-time payments to military personnel—large sums paid upon signing a contract or in the event of injury or death—are exempt from taxation. Second, monthly military salaries, while higher, are not so large compared to the growth of salaries in the broader civilian economy and are dispersed across many regions. Consequently, military payments have little direct impact on the growth of regional revenues or household incomes when viewed through tax data analysis.
4. As noted earlier, the main objective of this research is to identify those who benefit the most. Therefore, the primary threshold for inclusion is a growth rate of at least 50%, unless otherwise specified. However, given that 2024 witnessed an especially sharp increase in personal incomes, the analysis focuses primarily on regions and industries that doubled their CIT or PIT revenues.

The study consists of three stages. In the first stage, 10 Russian experts were interviewed

[1] And this does not take into account the additional 2% tax introduced in 2021 on increased personal income, which goes directly to the fund for medical supply for children with rare diseases.

in December 2023, including renowned political and economic analysts, macroeconomists, sociologists and political commentators. These interviews served to establish the study's framework and formulate its hypothesis.

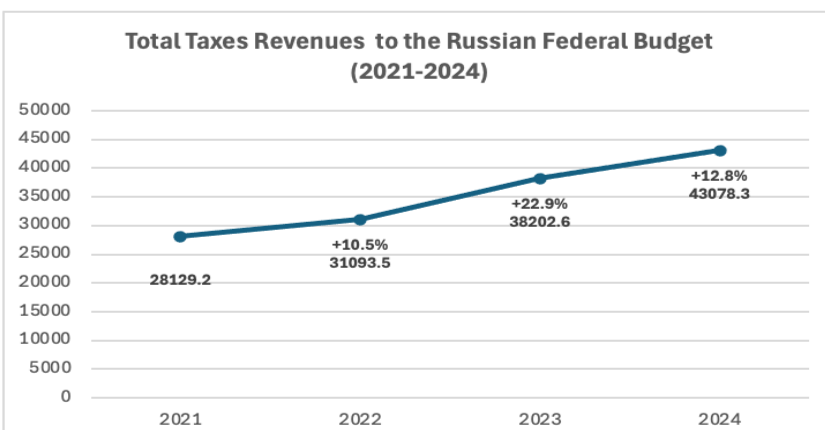
In the second stage, the annual primary data of the Federal Tax Service of Russia (FTS) for 2023 and the reports of the Federal State Statistics Service (FSSS, Rosstat) for 2021-2023, as well as the "Monitoring of Enterprise Activities" reports of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation, were analyzed to confirm the experts' observations and assumptions. Official data was taken from two official bodies intentionally to cross-check the figures and conclusions, since data from one ministry or federal agency may be questioned for obvious reasons. In addition, given the high turbulence of the Russian economic and political agenda, five experts were re-interviewed in March-April 2024 to record any fluctuations and obtain the necessary clarifications.

At the final stage, from March to May 2025, an analysis was conducted of the 2024 annual primary data from the Federal Tax Service of Russia (FTS) and the 2024 reports of the Federal State Statistics Service (FSSS, Rosstat). Additionally, official data from the Deposit Insurance Agency of Russia covering 2021–2024 were compiled and compared. The study also incorporated and analyzed survey results and reports from major recruitment platforms and agencies, including Superjob.ru, HeadHunter, and Avito Rabota.

4. Findings

4.1. Total Tax Revenues to Federal Budget

Figure 1



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Data source: Federal'naya Nalogovaya Sluzhba (FNS) Rossii (2021, 2022, 2023, 2024).

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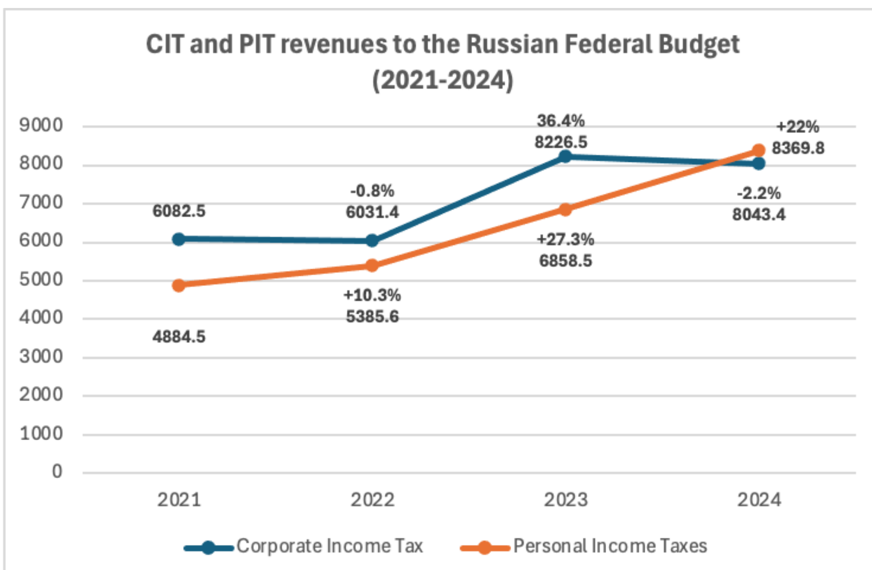
Over the past three years, total tax revenues to the federal budget have steadily increased, culminating in a substantial 53% rise by 2024 compared to 2021. Notably, the most significant growth occurred in 2023, with an increase of nearly 23% (see Figure 1).

Total revenues from Corporate Income Tax (CIT) and Personal Income Tax (PIT) have also shown overall growth during the observed period. CIT revenues experienced a sharp surge in 2023, increasing by 36% compared to 2021, but slightly declined in 2024 relative to the previous year. In contrast, PIT revenues have grown consistently year over year. By 2024, PIT revenues had increased by a total of 71% compared to 2021, with the most substantial gains (+27%) observed in 2023 (Figure 2).

Thus, by the end of the third year of the war, both CIT and, especially, PIT showed a sustained and significant upward trend, indicating simultaneous growth in production, employment, and wages.

Figure 2



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Data source: Federal'naya Nalogovaya Sluzhba (FNS) Rossii (2021, 2022, 2023, 2024).

4.2. Total Tax, CIT, and PIT by Regions

In 2023, only 19 regions managed to increase their total tax revenues by more than 50% compared to 2021 (Kurbangaleeva 2024). However, by 2024, this number had grown substantially:

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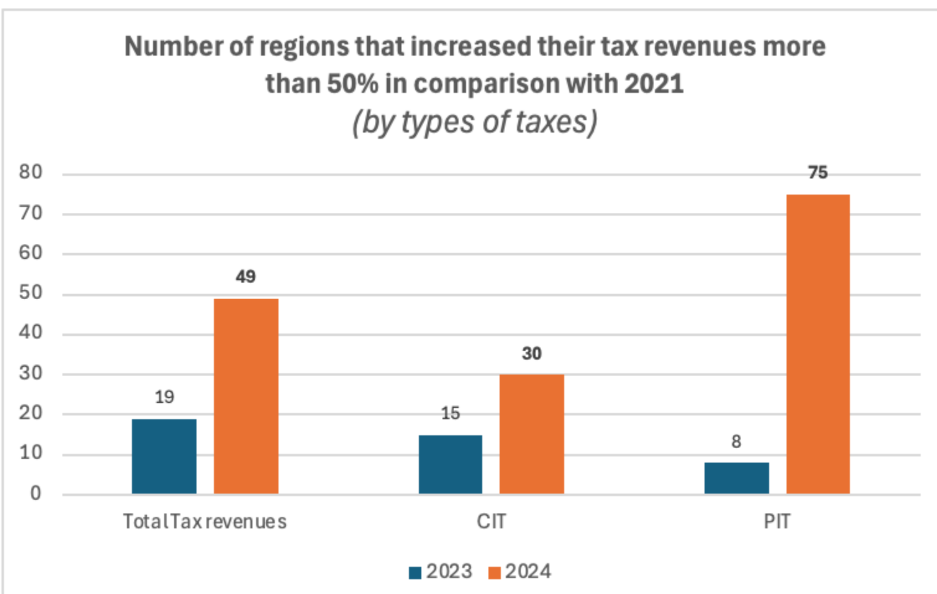
49 territories—nearly 60% of all regions—exceeded the 50% growth threshold in total tax revenues relative to 2021 (Figure 3).

Notably, nearly half of the regions on the 2024 list were previously considered underdeveloped. These include the Republic of Kalmykia (+101% in total tax revenues), Chuvash Republic (+99.7%), Magadan Oblast (+99.5%), Republic of Mari El (+93%), and Zabaikalsky Krai, Smolensk Oblast, Kostroma Oblast, and Karachay-Cherkess Republic (each around +78%). While the low base effect partly explains these figures, it is important to emphasize that such steady and substantial growth is highly unusual for regions of this profile. Nothing comparable has occurred in these territories in modern Russian history.

Adding to this dramatic shift, three regions experienced a sharp spike in total tax revenues: Tula Oblast (+122%), Perm Krai (+127%), and most remarkably, Amur Oblast, which saw its total tax revenues surge by 309%—more than quadrupling. A further 24 regions reported increases of over 20%. In contrast, only five regions experienced an actual decline in tax revenues, or nine if one includes those with growth below 15%. Among the most affected were the Republic of Komi (-29%), the Republic of Khakassia (-25%), and Kaliningrad Oblast (-12%).

Figure 3



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Data source: Federal'naya Nalogovaya Sluzhba (FNS) Rossii (2021, 2022, 2023, 2024).

In 2023, only 15 regions managed to increase corporate income tax (CIT) revenues by more than 50% compared to 2021 (Kurbangaleeva 2024). By 2024, this number had doubled (Figure 3).

So, over the past three years, nearly one in three Russian regions recorded significant growth in CIT revenues—in other words, profits derived from production activities. Strikingly, almost half of the regions on this list were previously classified as underdeveloped. These include the Chuvash Republic (+107% in corporate income tax revenues), Kurgan Oblast (+95%), Karachay-Cherkess Republic (+90%), Zabaikalsky Krai (+85%), and Kostroma Oblast (+74%). These are the same regions that had already shown notable growth in 2023. In 2024, traditionally wealthier territories such as Sakhalin Oblast (+108%), Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug (+82%), and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Yugra (+64%) caught them up in terms of CIT revenue growth.

Altogether, only 16 regions experienced a decline in CIT revenues compared to 2021. The most affected were Kemerovo Oblast (-57%) and Lipetsk Oblast (-52%), both with dominant steel industries, as well as Murmansk Oblast (-49%).

However, a different picture emerges when comparing 2024 to 2023: 52 regions experienced a year-over-year decline in CIT revenues.

Similarly, some of the hardest-hit regions were those with dominant steel industries. Kemerovo Oblast saw a major decline in 2024 (-65%), as did Vologda Oblast (-46%). Notably, Lipetsk Oblast, also home to a significant steel sector, experienced its steepest drop earlier, in 2022 (-71%). Murmansk Oblast also recorded a substantial decrease in 2024 (-63%). Meanwhile, three other regions—Novgorod Oblast (-45%), the Republic of Buryatia (-44%), and the Jewish Autonomous Oblast (-39%)—suffered a sharp fall in CIT revenues for the first time that year.

When it comes to personal income tax (PIT) revenues, a markedly different picture emerges. In 2023, only 8 regions recorded an increase in PIT revenues of more than 50% compared to 2021 (Kurbangaleeva 2024). By 2024, that number had surged to 75 regions—approximately 90% of all Russian territories (Figure 3). An additional 9 regions reported PIT growth of 27% or more. Only one region, the Republic of Dagestan, showed a decline, with PIT revenues down by 5.8%.

Among the biggest gainers in PIT revenues relative to 2021 were several previously underdeveloped regions, including the Republic of Kalmykia (+97%), Smolensk Oblast (+89%), Kostroma Oblast (+89%), the Chuvash Republic (+87%), the Republic of Mari El (+84%), and Kurgan Oblast (+84%). These were joined by traditionally wealthier territories such as Kaliningrad Oblast (+102%), the Republic of Tatarstan (+99%), and Leningrad Oblast (+90%). Appendix 2, which charts PIT revenues by region, vividly illustrates this trend: PIT revenue curves are soaring across nearly the entire country, with the only notable exceptions being the Republic of Ingushetia and the Republic of Dagestan.

Naturally, an 84% rise in PIT revenues in Kurgan Oblast and an 84% in Moscow reflects very different absolute income levels. Yet, regardless of the baseline, such a broad-based increase is tangible. People may not track regional budget reports or economic statistics, but they do notice what lands in their wallets. The near-universal surge in PIT revenues suggests that, across the country, individuals are earning—and likely spending—more. It s a deeply felt, personal indicator of economic activity that cuts through abstract numbers. Notably, a drop in CIT revenues does not necessarily correspond to a decline in PIT. For instance, despite substantial declines in corporate income taxes, Vologda Oblast saw PIT revenues jump by 90%, and Kemerovo Oblast by 74%.

4.3. Industries-Beneficiaries

Analyzing Russian industry performance presents challenges due to the peculiarities of national statistical accounting. The frequent reclassification of industrial categories—through the addition, removal, or renaming of accounting lines—often obscures clear comparisons over time. Nevertheless, using indicators such as changes in corporate income tax (CIT) and personal income tax (PIT) revenues, we can still draw meaningful conclusions. The data suggest that several industries, particularly in manufacturing, have significantly benefited from wartime economic conditions, with many more than doubling or even tripling their output. These include sectors ranging from machine-building to the production of consumer goods. Similarly, several service industries also posted remarkable gains.

Excluding defense-related sectors and the extraction of oil and gas, the most striking CIT revenue increases were observed in: meat processing and canning (+185%), dairy product manufacturing (+181%), clothing manufacturing (+167%), footwear production (+161%), textile manufacturing (+117%), beverage production (+131%), and food production more broadly (+114%). Electrical equipment manufacturing also saw substantial growth (+121%). In the services sector, CIT revenues surged in the hotel industry (+318%), and in financial services such as insurance, reinsurance, and non-government pension fund activities (+250%). Notably, most of these industries had already demonstrated strong CIT growth in 2023.

In contrast, sharp declines were recorded in 2024 in distinct resource extraction sectors and heavy industry. CIT revenues from coal mining fell by 81%, while metallurgy, depending on the specific type of metal, registered drops ranging from 70% to 80%.

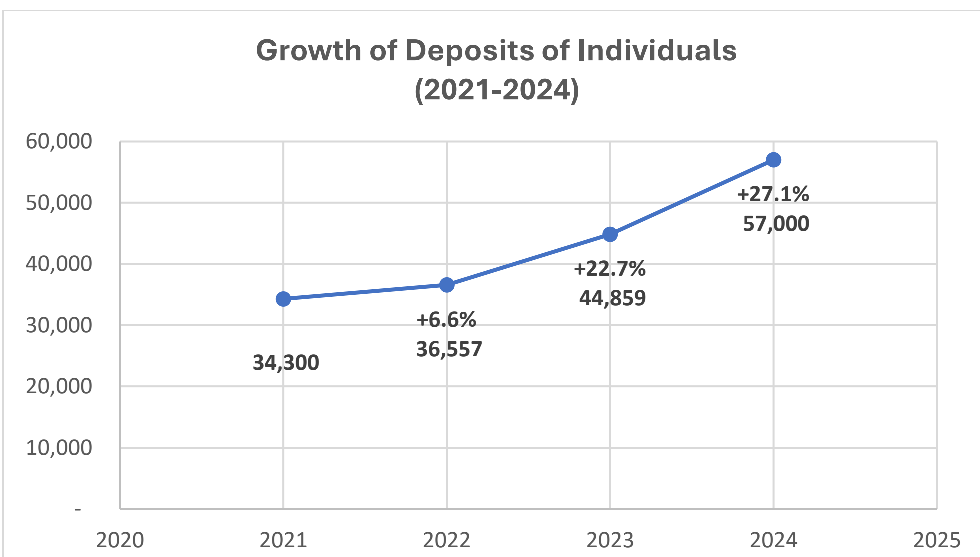
Judging by the substantial growth in PIT revenues across various industries, it is evident that total payrolls have increased significantly. Notable gains occurred in the production of electrical equipment (+112%) and electronic and optical equipment (+114%), as well as in clothing manufacturing (+110%). Payrolls in the hotel industry nearly doubled (+92%), while significant increases were also seen in meat processing and canning (+91%), footwear manufacturing (+90%), and the production of chemical substances and chemical products (+88%). Additionally, by the end of 2024, wages had risen markedly in sectors connected to the military-industrial complex.

Importantly, PIT revenues increased even in industries where CIT revenues declined—for instance, coal extraction (+96%) and metallurgy (+90%). Unlike corporate income tax revenues, PIT revenues grew across nearly all sectors, with only a few exceptions. This suggests a broad and significant rise in wage levels throughout the Russian economy, particularly in manufacturing.

4.4. Growth in Bank Savings as an Indicator of Increasing Household Incomes

One of the most telling indicators of rising household incomes is the growth in bank savings. According to data from the Deposit Insurance Agency of the Russian Federation, the total volume of individual bank deposits has consistently increased year over year. In 2024, deposits were up by 66% compared to 2021 (Figure 4).

Figure 4



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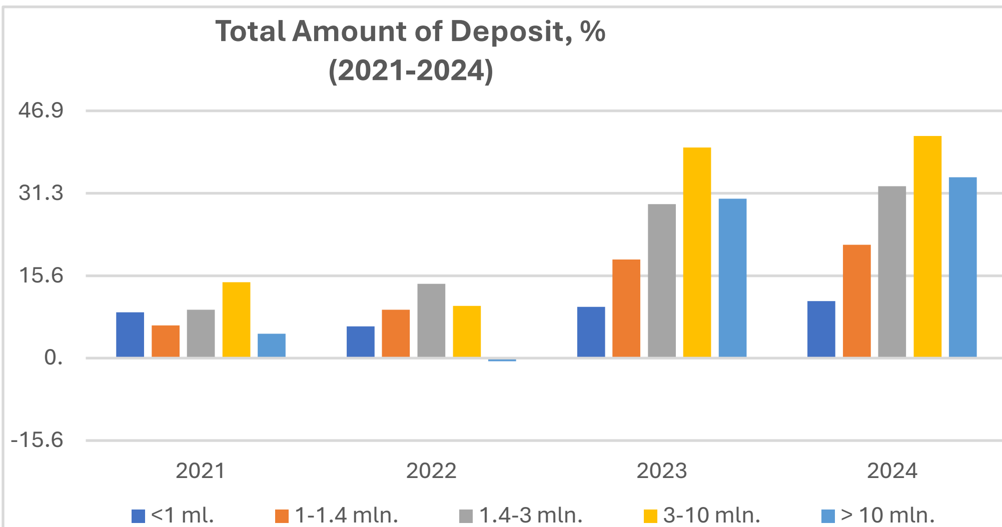
Data source: The Insurance Deposit Agency of the Russian Federation (2021, 2022, 2023, 2024)

Notably, deposits grew by 27% in 2024 alone, reaching a total of 57 trillion rubles. While high interest rates have certainly encouraged saving, such growth would not have occurred if people did not have disposable income to set aside.

To emphasize that this surge in bank deposits was not driven solely by the wealthiest individuals, it is worth examining how different deposit-size groups have evolved over the past four years. As shown in Figure 5, both the number of depositors and the volume of deposits across various groups have grown steadily. Tellingly, the fastest-growing group of bank clients consists of those holding between 3 and 10 million rubles in their accounts. This broad-based expansion in household savings proves the growth in incomes observed across the economy.

Figure 5



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Data source: The Insurance Deposit Agency of the Russian Federation (2021, 2022, 2023, 2024).

While both wage increases and labor force expansion may have contributed to this growth, the scale and consistency of PIT growth suggest that rising wages were the dominant factor. By the end of 2024, the total national payroll fund had grown by 55% compared to 2022—a change difficult to attribute to employment growth alone.

For a complete picture, additional evidence of rising salary satisfaction can be obtained from a Rosstat survey conducted in 2024. Compared to the previous 2022 survey, the share of respondents expressing satisfaction with their salary increased by 10.7 percentage points, reaching 61.3 percent (Federal’naja sluzhba gosudarstvennoj statistiki 2025). Notably, both government and independent research agencies report similar levels of self-assessed income satisfaction, indicating a consistent and reliable trend.

This conclusion is further supported by an analysis of overlapping subsets of regions and industries. In areas such as the Chuvash Republic, Kalmykia, Kurgan Oblast, and Smolensk Oblast, where machine-building and other manufacturing sectors made up a significant share of total production, wage growth was especially marked. Sectors such as construction, hospitality, and catering also contributed to the surge in income levels. Calculations by the National Credit Rating confirm these findings, showing that in regions dominated by manufacturing, average wages increased at a faster rate than in traditionally wealthier areas like Moscow and St. Petersburg.

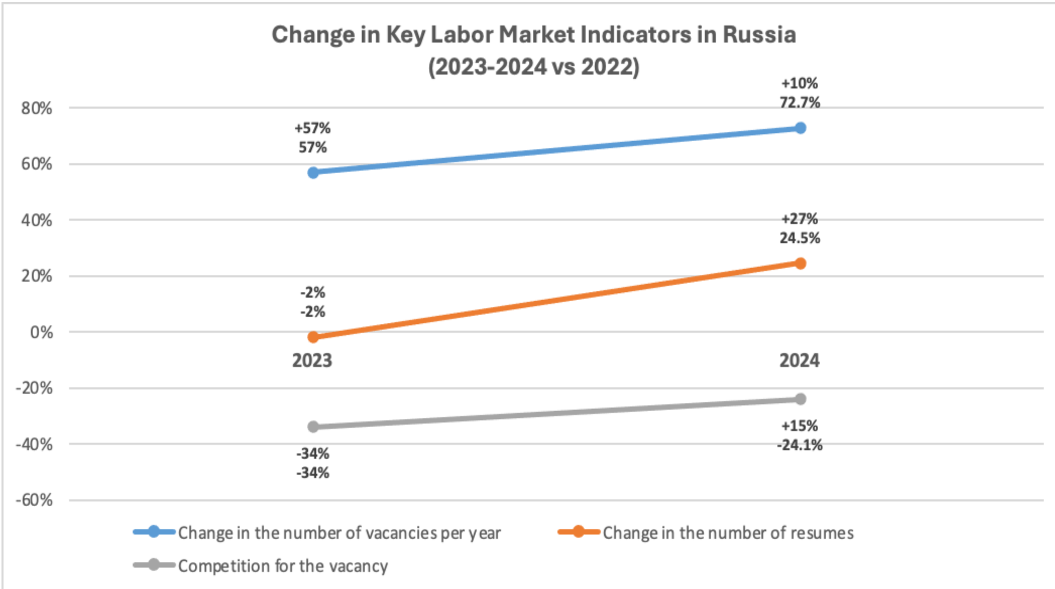
Therefore, it can be concluded that manufacturing, along with sectors such as transport and logistics, hotels and catering (HoReCa), were the main beneficiaries of the wartime budgetary impulse and import substitution policies. The subsequent increase in household incomes, in turn, boosted domestic consumption and reinforced the economic benefits.

4.5. Growth in wages

To deepen this analysis, it is essential to identify the specific occupational groups and job sectors that benefited most from the surge in production and wage growth, changes that primarily concern the manufacturing industries. This step is crucial to test and substantiate the central hypothesis of this research, which focuses on individuals formerly employed in low-income jobs. The Russian labor market grew by leaps and bounds throughout 2023 and 2024, reflecting a period of rapid and broad-based expansion. Rising demand for labor was driven by growth in manufacturing, construction, transportation, and certain segments of the service sector.

According to Superjob, one of the leading online recruiting platforms in Russia and the countries of the former Soviet Union, the labor market bounced back following a downturn in 2022, with both the number of vacancies and submitted résumés showing notable growth—albeit at differing rates. While the pace of vacancy growth began to slow in 2024, the supply of résumés continued to lag behind, indicating a persistent gap between employer demand and available workforce (Figure 6). A recent employer survey confirms this trend: companies in manufacturing, transportation and logistics, and services sectors reported particularly acute labor shortages, with nine out of ten firms citing ongoing difficulties in filling positions (SuperJob 2023, 2024).

Figure 6



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Data source: SuperJob.ru, 2023, 2024. Accessed May 15, 2025.

Official data also reinforces the reality of a deepening labor shortage, especially in individual industries. According to the Minister of Industry and Trade, Anton Alikhanov, the manufacturing sector alone is experiencing a deficit of 1.9 million workers. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection reports that 80% of the most in-demand occupations are blue-collar positions—such as welders, electrical installers, and construction workers. This severe shortfall contributes directly to rising wages in these sectors, as employers compete for a limited pool of skilled manual labor.

Wage trend analysis over the past two years reveals a consistent pattern: jobs that have experienced the most significant wage increases are primarily blue-collar, manual labor-intensive jobs. Although comprehensive wage statistics across all occupational categories remain limited, data from major employment platforms—tracking job postings and advertised salaries—provide valuable insights into sector- and job-specific dynamics.

In 2023, the ten occupations with the largest wage growth were all blue-collar or grey-collar jobs. Construction workers, machine operators, and waiters topped the list, with average wage growth of between 40% and 60% year-on-year. Strikingly, eight of these ten occupations were blue-collar, highlighting the rising market value of manual labor and confirming the growing demand for manual, labor-intensive work across many sectors (Figure 7).

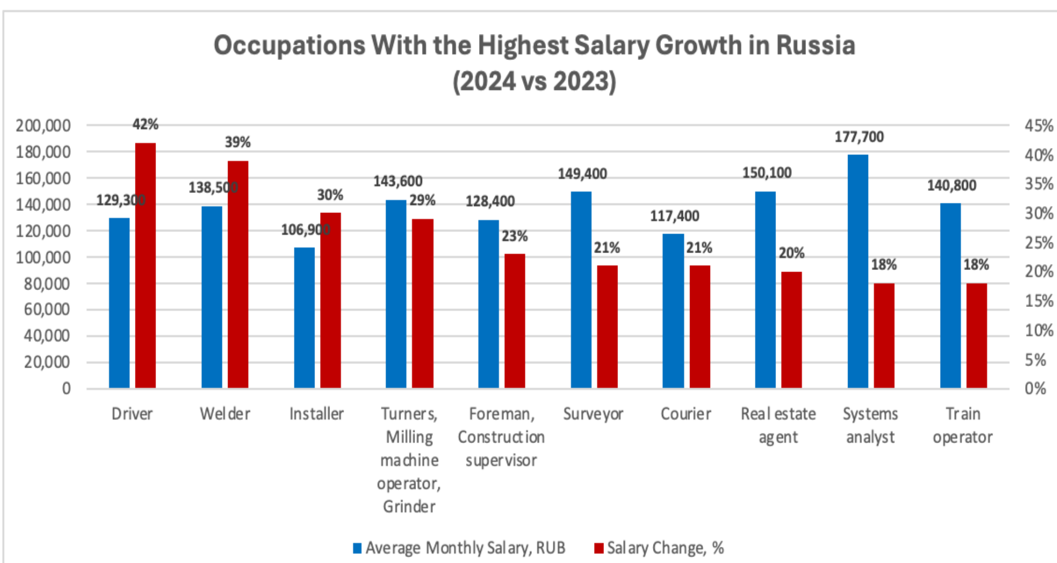
Figure 7

Constructed by the author.

Data source: Avito.ru, 2023. Accessed May 15, 2025.

This trend continued in 2024, though the specific occupations shifted. That year, drivers, welders, and installers occupied the top three spots, with wages rising by 30 to 40 percent year over year. Again, seven of the top ten occupations—including couriers—belonged to the blue-collar, in other words, to the manual labor–intensive category (Figure 8).

Figure 8



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Data source: HeadHunter 2024. Accessed May 15, 2025.

In this context, two important notes should be taken into account. First, the wage analysis presented here is based on the average salary offered by employers to new hires—that is, the wage a potential employer was willing to pay a newcomer, rather than the earnings of incumbent employees. Second, while in 2023 only two out of the top ten occupations with the highest wage growth exceeded 100,000 rubles per month (just over $1,100 at the current exchange rate), by 2024 all ten of the top-ranked occupations had crossed this psychological threshold. This shift suggests that wages in other job categories—particularly in blue-collar and grey-collar roles—were also rising, though not as sharply as those in the leading occupations.

Finally, given the clearer picture of which industries and occupations have benefited most from wage growth, it becomes relevant to estimate the size of these labor segments within the broader economy. According to Rosstat and data from VEB.RF, Russia's national economic development institution, the average number of employees in 2024 was approximately 43 million people. Of these, about 7 million were employed in the manufacturing sector, making up 16.4 percent of the total—the largest share among all sectors. When combined with the 4 million employees working in transportation and the HORECA sector (hotels, restaurants, and catering), which account for an additional 9 percent, these groups together represent 11 million workers, or roughly 25 percent of the total employed population in the real Russian economy (Klepach 2025).

5. Conclusion and Discussions

The findings support the research hypothesis that, despite the general rise in revenues across most Russian regions and industries, there are specific groups of people who have benefited disproportionately. An analysis of two overlapping subsets—regional and sectoral data—alongside official reports and wage comparisons across occupations, leads to a convincing conclusion: those who for years struggled to make ends meet in low-income jobs at underloaded factories in underdeveloped regions are now earning significantly more. They are, quite literally, enjoying a golden shower. These individuals are largely blue-collar workers—welders, drivers, adjusters, turners, weavers, and toolmakers—employed in manufacturing sectors, including but not limited to machine-building industries located in underdeveloped territories of Central Russia, the Volga region, and the Urals.

In addition to material improvement, these workers are experiencing a deeper sense of satisfaction: not only are they earning more, but they are now regarded as essential and highly sought-after contributors to the economy.

It would be too far-reaching to suggest that they are ardent admirers of the Russian leader, but it is fair to say they are highly likely to be content with what the current Russian authoritarian regime is delivering and doing.

Together, these groups—who account for 25% of all employed individuals and approximately 15% of the country s total labor force—alongside military personnel, other law enforcement employees, and a substantial portion of those working in administrative roles, constitute a significant segment of the Russian population.

In terms of political implications, the following conclusions can be drawn with a high degree of confidence:

First, these groups of people are not inclined to demand an end to the war. At the very least, they are unlikely to put pressure on the Russian authorities to stop military actions or shift toward peace negotiations. This reluctance stems not from political apathy but from the fact that many of them have directly benefited—economically and socially—during the wartime period.

Second, even if the war were to end, they would likely view the wartime period as a time of prosperity—a kind of "golden age" in their personal histories. This may give rise to a deeply rooted ressentiment, making them more prone to align themselves with those who support continued military engagement or preparations for future conflict. For them, such conditions promise stable and elevated incomes, coupled with enhanced social status.

Third, a large share of these groups adheres to a particular value system—typically conservative, authoritarian, and national-oriented. As the manufacturing sector might continue to expand, particularly due to increased federal budget allocations, the number of such individuals is likely to grow. This trend may be further reinforced by a simultaneous decline in the population engaged in the knowledge economy, as well as by deliberate political efforts. These shifts, taken together, suggest a likely trajectory of demodernization in Russian society marked by the waning influence of liberal, technocratic, and globally integrated elites and the rising dominance of traditional, industrial, and state-dependent social groups.

The three possible developments warrant ongoing attention, careful analysis, and empirical validation. This paper does not claim to offer definitive conclusions, but rather seeks to connect observable income trends and the identification of the primary beneficiaries of the war to a broader forecast regarding the potential direction of Russia s societal development.

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