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Russian Enterprises in the Spring 2020: Covid-19 Pandemic Reactions and Opinions on the Role of the State in the Economy

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Abstract—The paper analyzes and comments on the results of a regular survey of Russian enterprises in the real sector, which was conducted by the Institute of National Economic Forecasting of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Information on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the activities of domestic enterprises is provided. The paper presents the opinions of enterprises on the role of the state in the economy, including in the pandemic. The assessments of enterprises regarding bureaucracy and corruption in Russia are considered. The data on investment intentions of enterprises are given. Information on the level of competition with foreign manufacturers in the Russian market is presented. The views of Russian enterprises on the concept of extended producer responsibility (EPR) and the prospects for its expansion in Russia to all phases of the product life cycle are reflected.

Keywords: Russian enterprises, the survey of enterprises, the impact of the pandemic on the economy, the role of the state in the economy, the level of corruption, extended producer responsibility, EPR

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Introduction. In the first half of 2020, the Russian economy fully faced the consequences of the global crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic and its consequences—the forced halt of many economic activities, a sharp decrease in demand for many goods and services, falling prices for raw materials, etc.

According to preliminary estimates of the Federal State Statistics Service, the volume of industrial production decreased by 2.4% for the first five months in 2020 in relation to the same period of 2019, transport freight turnover fell by 3.6%, and the volume of paid services to the population decreased by 16.6%. Meanwhile, the crisis failures in the months when the pandemic had already come to Russia turned out to be even deeper. The decline in industrial production in May 2020 compared to May 2019 amounted to 9.6%, the reduction in transport freight turnover came to 9.5%, and the volume of paid services to the population decreased by 39.5%. In addition, the number of unemployed increased significantly in the country [1]. The forecast calculations of the Institute of National Economic Forecasting of the Russian Academy of Sciences showed that the decline in GDP, mining and manufacturing industries by the end of 2020 may be 5.3%, 4.5% and 3.8%, respectively [2].

It should be noted that the restrictions associated with the pandemic also seriously affected the course of the survey of Russian enterprises, which was conducted by the Institute of National Economic Forecasting of the Russian Academy of Sciences in April–May 2020[1]. On the one hand, the delivery of letters by Russian post was suspended, which did not allow the paper mailing of questionnaires in regular scales. On the other hand, enterprises had fewer opportunities to familiarize themselves with the already received questionnaires during the quarantine period. The problem of communication with enterprises was to some extent solved by abruptly increasing the number of letters sent by e-mail and by creating an opportunity for respondents to fill out the received questionnaires online. As a result, the quantitative parameters of the sample turned out to be close to the usual ones. However, the share of enterprises that answered the questionnaire for the first time increased sharply. In other words, the composition of the sample participants changed quite significantly compared to the previous survey.

Meanwhile, despite the changes in the sample, the overwhelming majority of the trends identified in the previous surveys were also confirmed this time. This circumstance allows us to assert that both the previous samples of the respondents and the sample of the last survey were quite representative and very accurately

[1] The survey involved 136 enterprises (electric power industry; ferrous metallurgy; chemistry; mechanical engineering; building materials industry, forestry, woodworking and pulp and paper industries; light, food and printing industries; agriculture; construction; transport; health resort and spa sector and hotels) from 52 regions of Russia.

Table 1. Answers to the question: "Has your enterprise been affected by the events associated with the coronavirus pandemic?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	Yes	No	No, but it may be affected in the future
April–May 2020	73.60	4.80	21.60

reflected the processes taking place in the Russian economy.

The survey has confirmed that the crisis phenomena associated with the pandemic are frontal in nature and directly affect the vast majority of economic activities. Of the surveyed enterprises, 73.6% reported that they had already been affected by the pandemic (Table 1). In addition, 80.9% of the enterprises indicated that the volume of sales of their products had decreased due to the pandemic (Table 2).

Thus, 77.6% of the respondents indicated that the demand for their products in the domestic market had decreased, and another 23.2% indicated a decrease in demand in foreign markets. In addition, 44.6% of enterprises noted the facts of delays or stoppages in payments for already delivered products (in other words, there was a real surge in nonpayments). Another 40.8% of the respondents reported difficulties with paying taxes and 41.6% said that there were difficulties with paying salaries to employees (Table 3). As a result, 38.1% of enterprises had already reduced the number of their employees by the time of the survey (Table 4).

In modern conditions, the key role in the fight against the crisis is played by the state and its economic policy [3, 4]. In this regard, it is very important to understand how enterprises regard the role of the state in the economy. During previous crises, there was always an increase in the proportion of enterprises wishing to strengthen government intervention. This time, there has been no such shift. Moreover, in comparison with the previous survey, the share of enterprises advocating increased direct participation of the state in the economy has decreased approximately two times – from 19.2% in 2018 to 9.2% in 2020 (Table 5). Of course, this shift in proportions can also be partly attributed to changes in the sample. However, it is not improbable that some enterprises have come to the conclusion about the limited capabilities of the state in the economy.

A similar shift has also taken place in the assessments that enterprises gave to the state as an owner. While in 2018 the state was recognized as a more effective owner by 23.02% of the respondents, in 2020 their proportion was only 13.5% (Table 6).

The effectiveness of the state's actions during the crisis largely depends on the level of bureaucracy and corruption in the state power structures [5, 6]. The survey has shown that the state of affairs in this area continues to gradually improve on the whole, although negative shifts were also noticed in a number of particular cases. For example, the share of the enterprises that reported that had faced almost no corruption pressure in the last 2–3 years noticeably increased. While in 2018 the share of such respondents was 48.65%, in 2020 it was already 63.9% or almost two-thirds (Table 7).

As regards the reports about corruption of certain state power levels and structures, some unexpected answers were noticed. In particular, the share of the reports about the corruption of federal structures has increased very noticeably from 8.54% of answers in 2018 to 25.60% in 2020. Meanwhile, the proportion of complaints about corruption of local administrations has significantly decreased from 31.71% in 2018 to 17.40% in 2020. In other cases, the shifts were less significant, both positive and negative (Table 8). However, it is possible that these shifts were also partly due to an increase in the share of large enterprises in the sample structure.

The dynamics of reports about the bureaucratization of the state look similar. The structure of answers that reflect the general dynamics of bureaucracy has somewhat improved. The share of reports about increased difficulties in relations with the state bureaucracy has decreased from 35.04% in 2018 to 26.20% in 2020. Meanwhile, the share of reports about the absence of bureaucratic difficulties has grown from 8.55 to 13.80% (Table 9). At the same time, the frequency of complaints about the bureaucratization of a number of state structures has increased. For example, the bureaucracy of federal power structures, architectural planning and land management services, envi-

Table 2. Answers to the question: "What has happened to the sales volume of your enterprise?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	Sales volume has increased	Sales volume has remained at the same level	Sales volume has decreased by 1–10%	Sales volume has decreased by 11–20%	Sales volume has decreased by 21–50%	Sales volume has decreased by more than 50%	Sales volume has decreased down to 0%, the enterprise has almost closed
April–May 2020	3.20	15.90	15.90	23.00	22.20	15.90	4.00

Table 3. Answers to the question: "What are the main problems facing your company due to the events associated with the coronavirus pandemic?" (total of answers > 100%)

Period	Falling demand for the company's products		Difficulties with payment		Difficulties with payment for electricity, utility services and other obligatory payments	Difficulties with payment of wages	Delays or interruptions in payments for already delivered products	Difficulties with the movement of workers and goods	Other
	in the domestic market	in foreign markets	credits	taxes					
April–May 2020	77.60	23.20	22.40	40.80	32.00	41.60	44.80	39.20	11.00

Table 4. Answers to the question: "How has the headcount of your enterprise changed as a result of the coronavirus pandemic?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	It has increased	It has not changed	It has decreased by less than 25%	It has decreased by 25–50%	It has decreased by more than 50%	The enterprise has closed
April–May 2020	7.90	54.00	27.80	5.60	3.20	1.60

ronmental authorities and fire control bodies has begun to be mentioned more often.

Meanwhile, the respondents began to complain less often about the bureaucracy of local administrations, tax authorities and customs (Table 10). It should also be noted that the situation with bureaucracy in Russia is in general not improving as quickly as the situation with corruption.

As the experience of previous years shows, one of the main measures of adaptation of enterprises to the crisis is the reduction in investment. This has happened this time too: 37.2% of the respondents reported a complete halt in investment, and 31.4% reported a partial halt. However, previously launched investment projects are mainly being completed. As a result, the share of positive answers to the question about the implementation of investment projects at the moment turned out to be the highest over the last 11 years at 59.40% (Table 11).

At the same time, the crisis has already cooled the investment intentions of enterprises. The share of

Table 5. Answers to the question: "What role must the state play in the Russian economy in the next few years?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	It must completely refuse to interfere in economic life and only monitor the observance of laws by all economic agents	It must save a certain impact on the economic life, but its role must be reduced compared to the today's level	The current degree of state participation is close to optimal, so it is not necessary to change anything especially	It must intensify its economic policy, expanding the range of instruments used and applying mainly indirect methods of economic regulation	It must strengthen the degree of its direct participation in the economic life and intervene more actively in economic practice
February–March 2005	6.94	19.08	2.89	57.22	13.87
February–March 2007	2.52	20.13	5.66	61.00	10.69
February–March 2010	6.02	14.46	6.63	53.01	19.88
April–May 2012	6.08	22.30	8.11	47.30	16.21
April–May 2014	6.25	14.38	7.50	48.75	23.12
April–May 2016	9.09	13.64	6.49	47.40	23.38
April–May 2018	6.40	19.20	8.80	46.40	19.20
April–May 2020	9.20	22.30	11.50	47.70	9.20

Table 6. Answers to the question: "Please formulate your attitude towards the state as an owner of enterprises?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	In Russia, the state is a notoriously less efficient owner than private owners in any circumstances	The state is currently a less efficient owner than private owners, but this is explained by the low qualification of Russian officials and poor control over their activities	The state is an ordinary owner that is no worse and no better than the others	In modern conditions, the state is a more efficient owner than private owners; at least the state is more focused on solving the problems of enterprises and increasing production
February–March 2005	18.54	53.94	16.85	10.67
February–March 2007	22.01	54.72	15.09	8.17
February–March 2010	18.18	45.45	20.00	16.37
April–May 2012	20.55	54.11	10.27	15.07
April–May 2014	13.84	48.42	20.13	17.61
April–May 2016	18.59	42.95	17.95	20.51
April–May 2018	13.49	36.51	26.98	23.02
April–May 2020	15.80	47.40	23.30	13.50

Table 7. Answers to the question: "How has the degree of corruption pressure of officials on your enterprise changed over the last 2–3 years?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	Corruption pressure			In the last 2–3 years, the enterprise has faced almost no corruption pressure
	has increased	has remained at almost the same level as 2–3 years before	has decreased	
February–March 2017	23.72	38.46	7.05	30.77
October–December 2011	15.17	35.86	2.76	46.21
April–May 2014	11.54	42.31	10.26	35.89
April–May 2018	11.71	29.73	9.91	48.65
April–May 2020	5.00	26.10	5.00	63.90

enterprises intending to implement investment projects in the next 1–2 years turned out to be lower in 2020 than in 2018–2019 (Table 12).

However, the crisis is not the only deterrent factor in the investment intentions of Russian enterprises. Another important factor is the value of the interest rate on loans. The survey data showed that 40.4% of enterprises were determined to increase their investments in case of a decrease in the interest rate (Table 13). This means that a softer interest rate policy of the Bank of Russia can really lead to a significant surge in investment.

The economic crisis usually leads to increased competition in the markets, and the survey data on the whole support this rule. In particular, in answering the question about competition from foreign manufacturers, the share of enterprises reporting its growth increased from 15.24% in 2016 and 19.05% in 2018 to 25.40% in 2020 (Table 14). In addition, enterprises began to report increased competition from manufacturers from post-Soviet countries. The share of such reports grew from 9.26% in 2016 and 9.45% in 2018 to 15.70% in 2020 (Table 15).

The frontal nature of the current crisis was also confirmed by the answers of enterprises on sales dynamics. The share of reports about decreased sales volumes sharply grew. While at the end of 2019 the sales volume on the whole decreased in 31.47% of the respondents, the proportion of such respondents in the spring of 2020 was already 48.50% (Table 16).

Meanwhile, for the sake of comparability, the question was formulated in such a way as to obtain

Table 8. Answers to the question: "Which government bodies are the most corrupt?" (total of answers >100%)

Department	Jan.–Feb. 2001	Jan. 2003	Feb.–Mar. 2005	Feb.–Mar. 2007	Feb.–Mar. 2010	Apr.–May 2012	Apr.–May 2014	Apr.–May 2016	Apr.–May 2018	Apr.–May 2020
Federal ministries and departments	38.94	26.80	19.82	18.52	16.98	14.14	13.27	14.29	8.54	25.60
Regional administration	33.63	27.84	27.03	17.59	17.92	32.32	21.24	31.25	29.27	23.30
Local administration	35.40	25.77	27.03	25.00	24.53	34.34	29.20	34.82	31.71	17.40
Tax authorities	23.89	28.87	17.12	19.44	11.32	11.11	10.62	12.50	15.85	12.80
Local treasury office	6.19	8.25	1.80	0.93	1.89	2.02	1.77	4.46	2.44	3.50
Architectural and planning services	18.58	16.49	18.02	17.59	15.09	21.21	19.47	14.29	8.54	12.80
Land management services	16.81	21.65	21.62	28.70	31.13	24.24	28.32	16.96	18.29	16.30
Environmental authorities	18.58	17.53	16.22	20.37	24.53	16.16	20.35	20.54	12.20	15.10
Sanitary inspection bodies	22.12	34.02	18.92	24.07	21.70	22.22	20.35	19.64	17.07	18.60
Fire authorities	24.78	29.90	22.52	19.44	24.53	30.30	23.00	25.00	18.29	25.60
Law enforcement authorities	47.79	47.42	43.24	30.56	54.72	45.45	41.59	38.39	36.59	41.90
Judiciary authorities	32.74	37.11	26.13	28.70	21.70	33.33	24.78	26.79	30.49	22.10
Customs authorities	–	37.11	24.32	29.63	25.47	18.18	13.27	17.86	12.20	16.30
Other departments	4.42	5.15	3.60	5.56	4.72	11.11	8.84	7.14	10.98	10.00

Table 9. Answers to the question: "How has the bureaucracy of state authorities affected the activities of your enterprise in the last 2–3 years?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	There have been more difficulties with the state bureaucracy	The situation with bureaucratic difficulties is the same as it was were 2–3 years ago	Difficulties with the state bureaucracy have decreased	In the last 2–3 years bureaucratic difficulties have rarely taken place at our enterprise
February–March 2007	46.58	42.24	4.35	6.83
October–December 2011	28.38	50.00	2.70	18.92
April–May 2014	25.00	55.00	8.13	11.87
April–May 2018	35.04	46.15	10.26	8.55
April–May 2020	26.20	49.20	10.80	13.80

information about the sales dynamics in the previous six months, including the precrisis period. As for the sales dynamics in the period after the onset of the crisis, 80.9% of the respondents reported a decrease in sales volumes in April–May 2020.

In addition, studies on various aspects of sustainable development policy were continued as part of the survey. This time, Russian enterprises were asked the questions related to the so-called concept of extended producer responsibility (EPR). The need to develop this concept was caused by increased consumption and the related increase in waste.

The term and concept of EPR originated in the early 1990s and have since then become important elements of national economic policy in many countries around the world. Extended producer responsibility arises as an objective and integral response to production resulting in a huge amount of obsolete products that get into the waste stream (the most striking example of this type of product is electronics) [7]. The OECD defines EPR as an approach in which a manufacturer's responsibility for a product extends to all stages of the product's life cycle, including after the expiration of its service life [8]. In Russia, the EPR concept was legislatively enshrined in federal law No. 458-FL as of December 29, 2014 [9], which amended Federal Law No. 89 On Production and Consumption Waste.

According to the survey results, half of the surveyed enterprises are familiar with the concept of extended producer responsibility, and a quarter of them are engaged in the disposal of their own products after the end of their life cycle (Tables 17, 18).

The attitude of enterprises to the possibility of obtaining benefits from the implementation of the EPR concept is ambiguous, but overwhelmingly positive: 92.9% of the surveyed enterprises noted the exis-

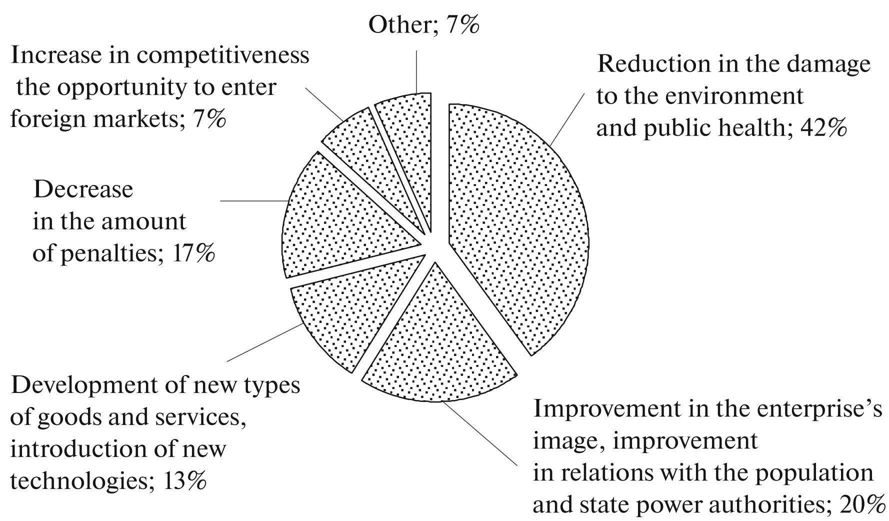

Fig. 1. Answers to the question: "What benefits does your company receive from the implementation of the EPR concept?" (total of answers >100%)

Table 10. Answers to the question: “Which government bodies are the most bureaucratic?” (total of answers > 100%)

Department	Jan.–Feb. 2001	Jan. 2003	Feb.–Mar. 2005	Feb.–Mar. 2007	Feb.–Mar. 2010	Apr.–May 2012	Apr.–May 2014	Apr.–May 2016	Apr.–May 2018	Apr.–May 2020
Federal ministries and departments	34.27	19.83	24.03	17.93	17.57	21.54	16.31	15.00	18.18	26.10
Regional administration	30.07	27.27	18.83	16.55	20.95	25.38	23.40	25.00	19.09	19.80
Local administration	30.07	23.14	20.13	20.69	23.65	21.54	21.28	26.43	20.91	16.20
Tax authorities	55.94	54.55	52.60	46.21	42.57	33.85	33.33	34.29	38.88	33.30
Local treasury office	11.89	6.61	3.9	2.07	2.70	4.62	2.84	2.86	6.30	16.20
Architectural and planning services	22.38	19.01	17.53	26.21	22.30	23.08	22.70	20.71	12.73	20.70
Land management services	25.17	24.79	29.12	42.07	39.86	29.23	29.08	21.43	19.09	26.10
Environmental authorities	28.67	20.66	22.08	37.24	33.70	33.08	25.53	28.57	23.64	33.30
Sanitary inspection bodies	31.47	24.79	20.78	33.79	29.73	19.23	19.86	17.14	15.45	18.00
Fire authorities	27.27	19.01	16.88	27.59	29.73	35.38	29.08	25.00	15.45	20.70
Law enforcement authorities	18.88	12.40	11.69	13.79	24.32	20.00	13.48	19.29	20.00	17.10
Judiciary authorities	24.48	13.22	9.09	13.79	15.54	18.46	21.28	22.86	20.91	18.90
Customs authorities	–	38.84	22.08	30.34	28.38	22.31	14.89	12.14	17.27	7.20
Other departments	5.59	2.48	6.49	8.28	4.73	11.54	9.22	9.29	8.18	12.00

Table 11. Answers to the question: "Is your enterprise currently implementing any industrial investment projects?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	Yes	No	Period	Yes	No
March–April 2006	72.16	27.84	April–May 2014	58.75	41.25
February–March 2007	74.52	25.48	April–May 2015	48.39	51.61
March–April 2008	69.23	30.77	April–May 2016	44.87	55.13
April–May 2009	44.74	55.26	April–May 2017	54.05	45.95
February–March 2010	57.40	42.60	April–May 2018	49.57	50.43
March–April 2011	52.28	47.72	April–May 2019	53.74	46.26
April–May 2012	54.11	45.89	April–May 2020	59.40	40.60
April–May 2013	62.58	37.42			

Table 12. Answers to the question: "Will your company begin to implement industrial investment projects in the next 1–2 years?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	Yes	No	It is difficult to say	Period	Yes	No	It is difficult to say
March–April 2006	55.57	10.92	33.33	April–May 2014	52.20	14.47	33.33
February–March 2007	63.29	7.59	29.11	April–May 2015	33.99	15.69	50.32
March–April 2008	64.54	8.51	26.95	April–May 2016	35.06	16.88	45.06
April–May 2009	34.90	19.27	45.83	April–May 2017	41.10	13.70	45.20
February–March 2010	52.08	11.24	36.68	April–May 2018	46.96	19.13	33.91
March–April 2011	46.43	17.35	36.22	April–May 2019	43.15	19.18	37.67
April–May 2012	47.59	18.62	33.79	April–May 2020	42.50	14.90	42.50
April–May 2013	56.49	11.69	31.82				

tence of certain benefits (Fig. 1). Enterprises pointed to both environmental and socioeconomic benefits in their answers: reduction of damage to the environment and public health (42.4%); improvement of the company's image, improving relations with the population and government authorities (20%), and reduction in the amount of fines (16.5%).

Nevertheless, only 7.1% of enterprises consider the implementation of EPR concept measures as an opportunity to increase competitiveness and enter foreign markets, and the remaining 7.1% are either skeptical about the possibility of deriving any benefits, or their type of activity is related to those activities for which the implementation of EPR measures is irrelevant or inapplicable (for example, in the pharmaceutical industry where a product is 100% used by the consumer; or where products do not have the end of service life[2]).

Despite the generally positive attitude to the EPR concept, enterprises point to difficulties in the process of its implementation such as an increase in the cost of production (47.1% of answers), an increase in the bureaucratic burden (22.4%), and a weakening of positions in relation to unscrupulous competitors (23.5%). In other cases (14%), enterprises either do not face difficulties because they do not implement

Table 13. Answers to the question: "Will your enterprise invest more if interest rates on bank loans are reduced?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	Yes	No	It is difficult to say
April–May 2020	40.40	22.10	37.50

[2] Such respondents include, for example, the KAO Azot (the city of Kemerovo) that is a first-rate producer of nitrogen fertilizers in Russia.

Table 14. Answers to the question: "How do you assess the competition from manufacturers from far abroad in your market at the present time?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	Competition on the part of foreigners is growing	Competition remains at approximately the same level	Competition on the part of foreigners is decreasing	Foreigners do not work in our market
August–September 2010	33.49	36.36	1.44	28.71
April–May 2012	46.58	28.08	0.68	24.66
November–December 2013	39.08	32.76	0.00	28.16
April–May 2015	14.09	30.87	25.50	29.54
November–December 2016	15.24	38.41	9.15	37.20
April–May 2018	19.05	42.06	5.56	33.33
April–May 2020	25.40	38.10	6.70	29.90

Table 15. Answers to the question: "How do you assess the competition from manufacturers from post-Soviet countries in your market at the present time?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	Competition from CIS representatives is growing	Competition remains approximately at the same level	Competition from CIS representatives is decreasing	CIS representatives do not work in our market
August–September 2010	16.92	48.72	0.00	34.36
April–May 2012	25.87	44.76	3.50	25.87
November–December 2013	18.13	52.05	3.51	26.31
April–May 2015	14.00	39.33	6.00	40.67
November–December 2016	9.26	40.74	7.41	42.59
April–May 2018	9.45	42.52	9.45	38.58
April–May 2020	15.70	38.80	8.20	37.30

the concept, or there are no difficulties in its implementation (Fig. 2).

Unlike foreign countries, the EPR concept is currently legally applied in Russia only to such a phase of the product life cycle as disposal, and so enterprises were asked whether they consider it appropriate to expand its content to all phases of the product life cycle. Almost half of the enterprises answered in the affirmative (45.1%, Table 19).

It is noteworthy that the main reason why enterprises consider it important to expand the EPR concept to all phases of the product life cycle is the reduc-

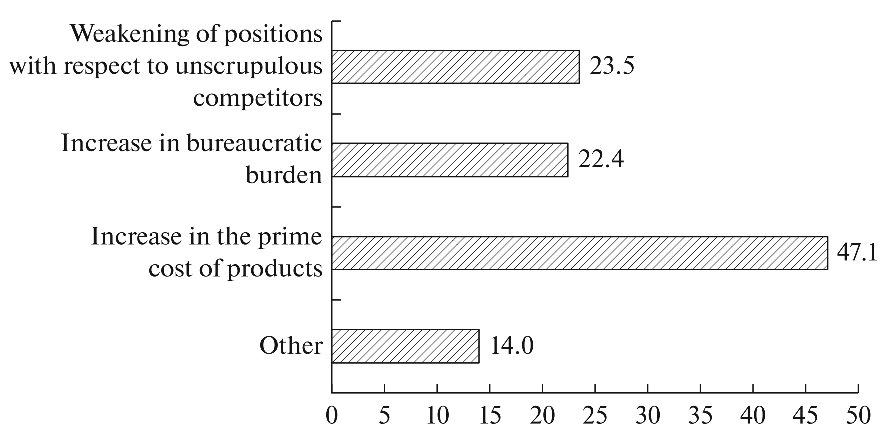

Fig. 2. Answers to the question: "What difficulties does your company face in the process of implementing the EPR concept" (total of answers >100%)

Table 16. Answers to the question: "How has the sales situation at your enterprise changed over the past six months?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	Sales volume has decreased			Sales volume has not changed	Sales volume has increased		
	by 50% or more	by 25–50%	by 0–25%		by 0–25%	by 25–50%	by 50% or more
February–March 2010	7.23	13.86	19.88	37.95	15.06	4.82	1.20
August–September 2010	2.38	5.71	12.86	36.19	28.10	7.62	7.14
March–April 2011	5.61	6.12	15.31	43.37	21.94	3.57	4.08
October–December 2011	4.46	3.18	12.74	42.68	25.48	5.10	6.36
April–May 2012	2.72	9.52	19.05	49.66	14.97	2.04	2.04
November–December 2012	2.96	1.78	18.93	49.11	20.71	3.55	2.96
April–May 2013	3.82	7.01	21.66	42.68	21.02	3.18	0.63
November–December 2013	3.53	5.88	23.53	49.41	15.29	1.18	1.18
April–May 2014	3.25	10.39	25.32	46.75	9.74	2.60	1.95
November–December 2014	2.11	5.63	26.76	43.66	16.20	2.11	3.53
April–May 2015	4.54	11.04	23.38	39.61	14.29	2.60	4.54
November–December 2015	5.23	6.98	19.19	45.35	14.53	2.91	5.81
April–May 2016	10.53	9.21	24.34	42.77	8.55	1.97	2.63
November–December 2016	6.21	4.35	22.98	45.58	14.23	3.11	2.48
April–May 2017	2.79	6.94	25.69	45.14	15.28	3.47	0.69
November–December 2017	3.95	7.24	21.70	50.65	13.82	1.32	1.32
April–May 2018	2.36	7.87	24.41	47.24	16.54	1.58	0.00
November–December 2018	1.44	7.19	22.30	46.76	15.11	4.32	2.88
April–May 2019	4.17	4.86	19.44	52.09	13.89	3.47	2.08
November–December 2019	1.23	8.02	22.22	47.54	17.90	2.47	0.62
April–May 2020	5.84	9.95	32.71	43.31	5.98	1.13	1.08

Table 17. Answers to the question: "Are you familiar with the concept of extended producer responsibility (EPR), according to which the manufacturer of products must dispose of them at the end of their life cycle?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	Yes	No
April–May 2020	50.4	49.6

Table 18. Answers to the question: "Is your company engaged in the disposal of its own products after the end of their life cycle?" (total of answers 100%)

Period	Yes	No
April–May 2020	25.4	74.6

Table 19. Answers to the question: "Do you consider it important to expand the content of the EPR concept implemented in Russia only at the stage of product disposal to all phases of their life cycle, including the phases of development, production, and marketing?" (total of answers = 100%)

Period	Yes	No
April–May 2020	45.10	54.90

tion in damage to the environment and public health (68.7%). Forty-one percent of enterprises consider it important to promote the introduction of new technologies, and 13.3% believe that it is important to increase competitiveness (Fig. 3).

The enterprises that did not consider it expedient to expand the content of the EPR concept pointed to the reasons such as an excessive increase in production costs (57%), an increase in bureaucratic burden (39.5%), and the insignificance of the real effect of the proposed measures (38.4%). Choosing the answer option "other," enterprises expressed opinions such as: "recycling must be performed by specialized companies"; "it is difficult to imagine how to organize the implementation of the concept in practice" (Table 20).

The key conclusions from the survey are as follows:

(1) The negative impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Russian enterprises is frontal in nature and is expressed in phenomena such as a drop in sales, surge in mutual nonpayments for delivered products, difficulties in paying taxes and bank loans, layoffs of employees and a reduction in their salaries.

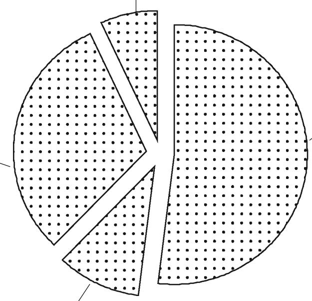

Fig. 3. Answers to the question: "Indicate the reasons why you consider it important to expand the content of the EPR concept to all phases of the product life cycle" (total of answers > 100%).

Table 20. Answers to the question: "Indicate the reasons why you consider it inappropriate to expand the content of the EPR concept" (total of answers >100%)

Period	Excessive increase in the prime cost of products	Further increase in bureaucratic burden	Insignificance of real effect from the proposed measures	Other
April–May 2020	57.00	39.50	38.40	13.00

(2) The situation with bureaucracy and corruption in Russia as a whole continues to improve. The share of answers about the absence of corruption pressure on the enterprise has reached 63.9%—this is a very good result. However, the situation in some state power structures is less optimistic.

(3) A significant share of enterprises (40.4%) is ready to increase investments in the event of a decrease in the bank interest rate. Consequently, further softening of the interest rate policy must lead to a fairly large-scale increase in investment activity in the Russian economy.

(4) Half of the surveyed enterprises are familiar with the concept of extended producer responsibility, and a quarter of them are engaged in the disposal of their own products after the end of their life cycle. This indicates that the level of involvement of Russian enterprises in EPR processes significantly lags behind the level of leading foreign countries.

(5) Despite the fact that enterprises receive real environmental, social and economic benefits as a result of the implementation of the EPR concept, this process is associated with a number of economic and institutional difficulties. Nevertheless, almost half of the surveyed enterprises consider it possible to expand the content of EPR by extending it to all phases of the products life cycle.

(6) Meanwhile, the other half of the surveyed enterprises consider it inappropriate to expand the content of the EPR concept, expecting additional economic and institutional difficulties and considering the effect of the proposed measures to be insignificant.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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