



Perception of the citizens' role by the city authorities in the process of implementation of smart city solutions in Russia

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The smart city concept

created by IT-industry

originally associated with technological solutions only

various similar terms

creative, sustainable, innovative, wired cities, etc.

different approaches

technology-driven & human-driven

Smart city

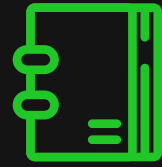
"is a city free from the influence of tech goggles, a city where technology is embraced as a powerful tool to address the needs of urban residents, in conjunction with other forms of innovation and social change, but is not valued for its own sake or viewed as a panacea"

Citizens' role



Resource

supplier of the creative class and potential leaders that promote progress



Object

recipients of benefits and objects of supervision and control



Subject

have the right to improve the city life, and can offer ideas and solutions



Research purposes

- to find out the main obstacles to implementing the smart city technologies
- to explore the local authorities' perceptions of the residents' role in transforming cities into smart ones

Research techniques

survey of **84** heads of Russian municipalities

1 interview with the Head of the Informatization Department of the Novosibirsk City Hall

3 interviews with social scientists, studying the smart city

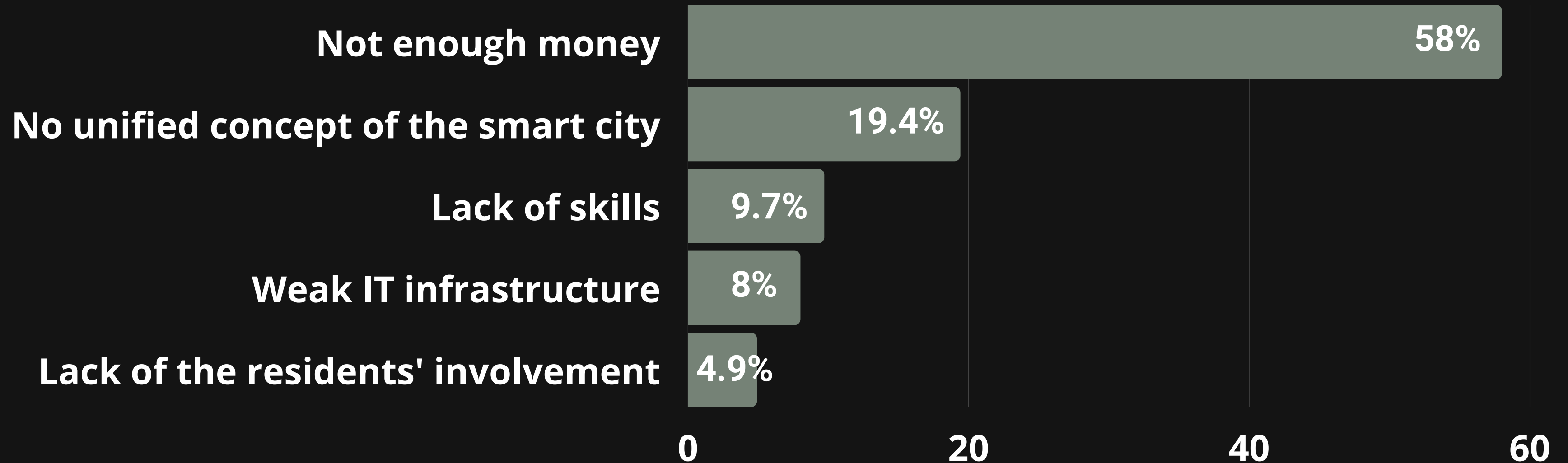
Institutional context

In 2019 the Smart City Project was approved by the Ministry of Construction, Housing and Communal Services of the Russian Federation

The Ministry released a Smart City Standard with a list of actions that municipal authorities must carry out in their municipalities by 2024

A project for improving the digital literacy of the Russian population is being implemented

Obstacles in implementing smart city technologies



Perception of the citizens role in the digitalization

- * residents perceived as an object
- * no willingness to address the real peoples' needs
- * asking for citizens opinions means losing competence
- * the only communication strategy is avoiding conflicts

Quotes from the interviews with the local authorities

“There’s no need to ask people about their needs because **they all want the same**: clean water, great schools, smooth roads, and no traffic jams, that's it”

“We **don't let people decide on the key issues**, especially ones that we aren't sure about. We can let them choose the color of a bench, but not where this bench should be placed”

Conclusions

- * **The main obstacles to implementing the smart city technologies, connected to the local authorities are not enough resources, no understanding of a smart city concept, and unwillingness to ask for the citizens opinions**
- * **The residents are perceived as an object that has almost no right to participate in the city managing and making decisions**



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