

# RUSSIA RELATED ANALYTICAL DIGEST ON FEBRUARY 2026

## “FISCAL PRESSURE AND STATE CONTROL: OIL, INDUSTRY, BUDGET, SANCTIONS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT”

The world needs a proactive strategy on Russia, taking the initiative by developing and communicating a clear strategic vision for Ukraine, along with a plan to contain and counter Russian influence.

The [NGO ANTS](#) conducts monitoring and research work on the state not only of the Ukrainian economy and society, but of the Russian economy and Russian society as well in order to have a true picture of the situation in this country, and not be satisfied with the bluff, hybrid aggression and desinformation that Vladimir Putin loves so much.

Fortunately, in today's world it is difficult to hide anything, and realistic conclusions can be drawn if information is analyzed in a timely and correct manner, having instant access to the Russian and international information field, and an excellent understanding of the context and social processes.

**The head of our organization, Dr. Hanna Hopko, former head of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine,** is making great efforts in the international arena to advocate for the cessation of appeasement of the aggressor, who should not be irrationally feared, because his economy and social processes are far from being in the best shape.





Analytical columns:

## **10 macro trends changing the world order**

The global system of international relations is undergoing fundamental changes: increased competition between major powers, erosion of international institutions, and the growing role of technology and military force. For Ukraine, these processes mean the need to form a new security strategy and integrate into the system of alliances of the democratic world.

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## **Attempts to impose an illegal referendum on Ukraine are dangerous and unacceptable**

The idea of holding so-called “referendums” on Ukrainian territories is dangerous political manipulation that violates international law and the principles of state sovereignty. Such proposals effectively legitimise Russia's aggression and set a dangerous precedent for the world order.

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## **“Morning in 2035”: a scenario for the future**

ANTS also initiated a discussion about Ukraine's strategic vision after victory. What might the country look like in 2035 in terms of its economy, security, technology, and role in the world?

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# Mosaic of Russian economic news for February 2026

## Energy Revenues Decline and Budget Pressure Grows: Oil Discounts, Export Barriers, and Industrial Losses

### Oil and Gas Revenues Continue to Decline

Revenue from fossil fuel exports is now about 27% lower than before the war. Oil production fell for the second month in a row to 9.28 million barrels per day. Unsold oil is accumulating on tankers as traders search for buyers.

### Key Export Markets Are Shrinking

India sharply cut purchases of Russian oil. Imports fell 40% month-to-month and more than 50% year-to-year. Several LNG tankers with Russian gas are also waiting near China without buyers.

### Budget Deficit Is Growing

The federal budget deficit reached 1.72 trillion rubles in January 2026. Oil and gas revenues dropped roughly by half compared with last year. The total deficit across the budget system may exceed 10 trillion rubles.

### Government Prepares New Taxes

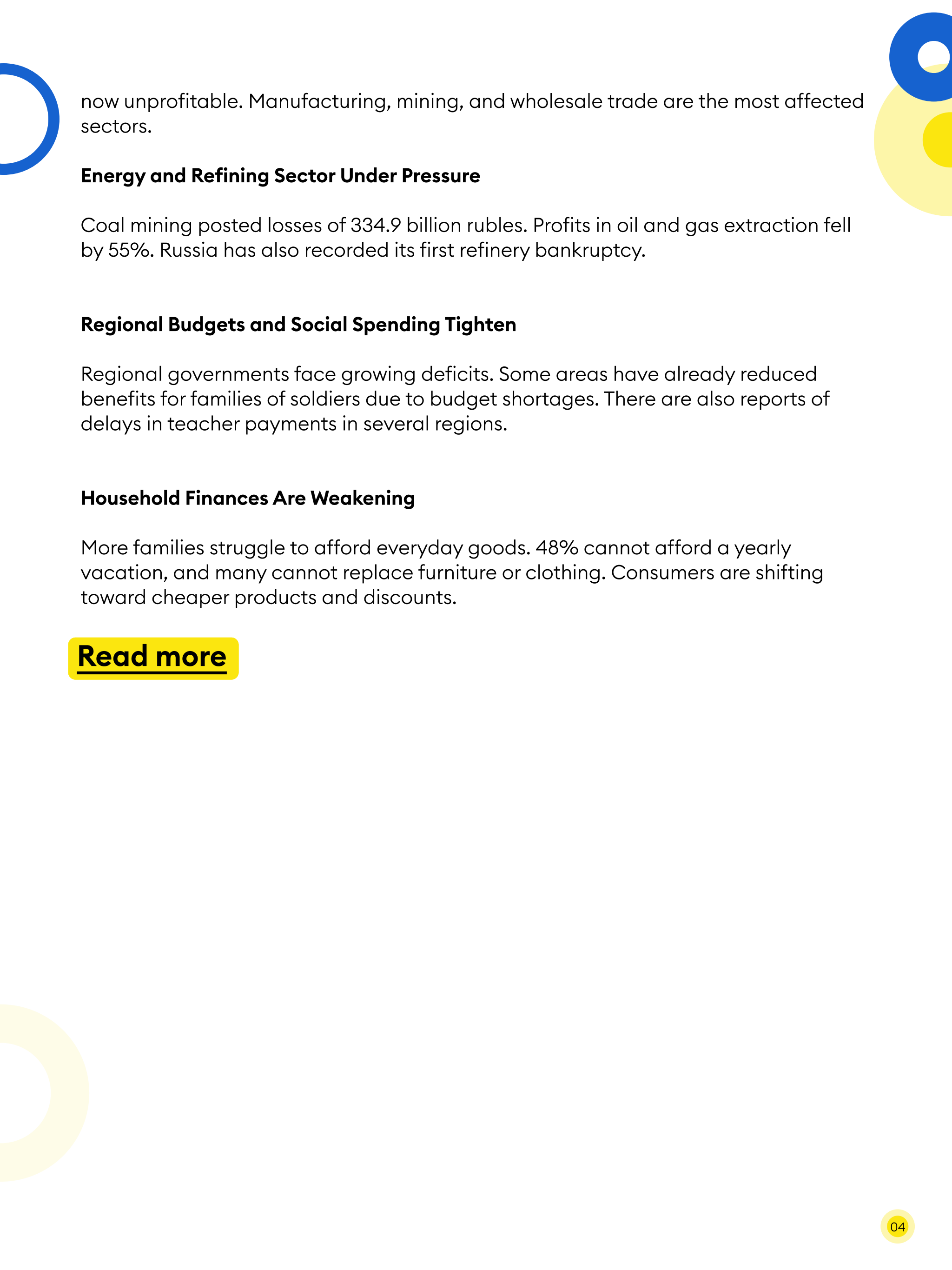
Authorities are searching for new revenue sources. Plans include an export duty on diamonds, taxes on large marketplace imports, and legalization of online casinos taxed at 30%. These steps aim to compensate for falling oil income.

### Environmental Fees for Industry Will Surge

The government plans steep increases in environmental payments. Fees may rise 9–20 times in metallurgy, 15–25 times in gold mining, and fivefold in oil and gas. This will significantly increase costs for heavy industry.

### Corporate Losses Reach Record Levels

Russian companies reported 7.5 trillion rubles in losses in 2025. Nearly 29% of firms are



now unprofitable. Manufacturing, mining, and wholesale trade are the most affected sectors.

### **Energy and Refining Sector Under Pressure**

Coal mining posted losses of 334.9 billion rubles. Profits in oil and gas extraction fell by 55%. Russia has also recorded its first refinery bankruptcy.

### **Regional Budgets and Social Spending Tighten**

Regional governments face growing deficits. Some areas have already reduced benefits for families of soldiers due to budget shortages. There are also reports of delays in teacher payments in several regions.

### **Household Finances Are Weakening**

More families struggle to afford everyday goods. 48% cannot afford a yearly vacation, and many cannot replace furniture or clothing. Consumers are shifting toward cheaper products and discounts.

**[Read more](#)**

# Mosaic of socio-political news from Russia in February 2026

## State Control and Social Mobilization: Compulsory Service, Labor Reforms, and Information Control

### Mandatory Service for Medical Graduates

Medical students on state-funded places will be required to work three years in public hospitals. The rule will apply to applicants starting in 2026. Those who refuse must reimburse the cost of their education.

### Possible Future Restrictions on Telegram

The February slowdown of Telegram may be a test for future restrictions. A full block is unlikely before the autumn State Duma elections. Authorities are reportedly preparing pro-government alternatives.

### Phone Inspections in the Moscow Metro

Passengers in the Moscow Metro may face mobile phone inspections. Security can require devices to be switched on and checked. Similar measures already exist in several other cities.

### Law Against “Incorrect” History

The State Duma approved a bill targeting “incorrect interpretations of Russian history.” Law enforcement will monitor alleged distortions. Individuals accused of such violations may face preventive supervision.

### War Themes Added to School Projects

A new school program will require students to complete volunteer-style projects as part of their curriculum. Some tasks involve creating materials about Russia’s war in Ukraine. The program will start in September.

### War Interviews Shown to Students

Schoolchildren are being shown interviews with veterans of the war in Ukraine. The



videos discuss combat experiences and patriotism. Teachers are encouraged to hold discussions afterward.

### **State TV Avoids War Anniversary**

Major Russian TV channels did not mention the anniversary of the invasion directly. Reports about related events were shown without explaining the date. The topic was largely avoided in official broadcasts.

### **FSB Gains Power to Cut Communications**

A new law allows authorities to disconnect citizens' communications at the request of the FSB. Telecom operators must comply with such orders. The measure expands state control over communications.

### **Teenagers May Work in Hazardous Industries**

Lawmakers are considering allowing teenagers to work in hazardous industries due to labor shortages. Officials say some workplaces were classified as dangerous under outdated rules. The changes could include certain defense sector jobs.

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## **ANTS is open to cooperation! The most accurate information on your desk before anyone else!**

NGO National Interests Advocacy Network ANTS is a non-governmental organization, a powerful analytical center working to develop a strategy for countering the threat from Russia and its allies. We are open to proposals for cooperation in this direction for a deeper awareness of our partners and allies about socio-political and economic processes in Russia and Ukraine, and therefore a more profitable strategy for dealing with threats.

We offer operational and high-quality monitoring, analytics, joint events, briefings and discussions.

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