

Improvement of Government Support System of Families with Children at the Federal and Regional Levels (On the Example of the Kurgan Region)

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Abstract—The article is devoted to the actual aspects of the system improvement of the government support of the families with children, at the federal and regional levels to make the demographic situation in Russia and its regions better on the example of the Kurgan region. The stability of the demographic problem for Russia with its specificity of functioning of social processes is paid special attention to and one of the contexts of the demographic issues, leveling of the family institution in the Russian society, is outlined. Based on the statistical and sociological research methods, the authors analyze the effectiveness of the government regulators on the protection of the family, motherhood, fatherhood and childhood, having a complex socio-economic character. The conducted analysis has allowed revealing and explaining underutilized potential of mainly information resources of the government measures of the support of families with children, at the regional level in the first place. On the basis of the identified problems in this sphere, the prior directions of their solution are indicated.

Keywords—family, children, population, government support, benefits, exemptions.

I. INTRODUCTION

The family is a social institute, changing constantly under the influence of socio-economic, political, mental as well as inner processes. At different levels (both government and individual) it is necessary to understand the importance of a family institute in the life of the society, its role in the education of a new generation.

The family position in Russia has greatly changed recently because of stable demographic crisis processes in the country. The protection of the family, motherhood and childhood has a complex character and is carried out by taking various government measures to strengthen and support the family institute, to create necessary conditions for the family to realize its economic, reproduction, educational, cultural functions. Now a great number of families in Russia need support from the government and, in the first place, the government is required to raise the life quality of families with children.

II. METHODS AND PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

In the work the statistical and sociological research methods act as the main methodology of problem study. So, the analysis and the modeling of statistical data by constructing dynamic and trend tables and graphs allow

assessing and predicting the main demographic values in dynamics. And the results of sociological researches (both authors and published ones) in the form of a representative analysis, sociological polls and surveys in different groups of respondents (grouped on the basis of gender and age, place of living and other criteria) allow making an objective assessment of the effectiveness of the government regulators on the support of the family institute, motherhood and childhood in Russia.

The results, received by the authors, can be used in educational and information activity as well as in the activity of the government authorities and the institutions of the sphere of the social protection of the population.

III. RESULTS

A. Results of theoretical researches

The analysis of theoretical resources makes it possible to conclude that the term “family” has many different definitions in the modern scientific and special literature. In the legal terminology “family” is a union of two or more people based on marriage, kinship or adoption of children; these people are connected by the common character of life (common household, care of each other and up-bringing of children), as well as personal and property rights and obligations. And the terminology “government support of the family” implies different directions of legal, economic and political character, promoting the family institute with the use of instruments and mechanisms of the subject of the management activity represented by the state.

It should be noted that quite long ago scientists paid attention to the research of the problem of a low birth rate and to the assessment of the government role in the solution of this problem.

The Soviet and Russian demographer and economist A.G. Vishnevskiy came to the following conclusions [1]:

- The the birth rate in Russia is insufficient for the basic reproduction of the population – and this is, unfortunately, an inevitable rule for all the countries of the developed world;
- the policy, aimed at the increase of the birth rate, has not managed to succeed in any country of the world, at most it led to the temporary increase of this value;

- the reason of the decrease of the birth rate is the appearance of other priorities in the life of a woman apart from family and children;
- families increase qualitative inputs into the child, if there are few children in the family, “specific investments” into the child grow, which makes the quality of his family education better for the society.

In the foreign sources on the aspects of demographical questions of the birth and death rate there are also publications on the researches of scientists, based on the national peculiarities of the family institute and the role of the government regulator in this process in different time periods of analytical researches [2, 3], which makes this topic actual in the global aspect.

In the modern interpretation of the researches of interconnection of the role of the government demographic policy and the processes of birth rate the following works of the Russian scientists should be noted: V.N. Arkhangelskiy and others. [4]; S.V. Zakharov [5]; N.V. Zubarevich and others [6]; T.M. Maleva and others [7]; A.O. Tyndik [8]; S. Biryukova and others [9], as well as the works of foreign researchers: F. Slonimczyk, A.V. Yurko [10]. On the whole, the contradictory and ambivalence character can be seen in the conclusions of researchers on the influence of the government support measures on the stimulation of the birth rate, at the same time the introduction of the maternal capital is recognized as the most positive measure in the Russian practice of realization of the demographic policy at the state level, though it is also interpreted differently.

B. Results of experimental researches

Nowadays a great number of families in Russia need support from the state. It is connected with the fact that lately the number of single-parent families has increased as well as the number of different social problems (orphanage; alcoholism in the family; drug addiction). It follows that the most important task of the state is the realization of social guarantees, established by legislative acts in the sphere of the material support of the families with children, their patronage.

In the Russian Federation at the legal level there are a number of legal normative documents, regulating the support of families with children. In the first place, it is the Federal law dated 19.05.1995 № 81-FL (version dated 29.07.2018) “On state benefits to citizens, having children”, which is the principle legal normative act in the questions of benefit payments to families with children. The Federal Law dated 29.12.2006 N 256-FL (version dated 02.08.2019) “On supplementary measures of the state support to families with children” establishes such measure of the state support of families with children as the maternal capital. The Federal Law dated 28.12.2017 N 418- FL (version dated 01.05.2019) “On monthly payments to families with children” provides for supplementary federal monthly payments for the first child up to the age of one and a half years. The Decree of the President of the RF dated 05.05.1992 N 431 (version 25.02.2003) “On measures of social support of multi-child families” defines those categories of families that belong to multi-child ones and need social support, it also establishes a number of benefits for multi-child families, the organization of the necessary help to multi-child parents in different aspects.

At the regional level, in the Kurgan region in particular, the necessary measures are taken to strengthen the family institute in all ways, a number of regional laws, aiming at the social support of pregnant women and families with children, act: Law of the Kurgan region dated 6 June 2007 № 253 “On the state family policy, social support, protection of rights and legal interests, motherhood, fatherhood and childhood in the Kurgan region”; Law of the Kurgan region dated 9 March 2007 № 232 “On measures of improvement of demographic situation in the Kurgan region” and others.

So, in Russia at the federal and regional levels the legal regulator with regard to the protection of the family institute, motherhood and childhood has been formed and it functions quite steadily.

To improve the system of the state support of families with children it is necessary to understand what motivates people to have children. Birth rate is one of the main values, which helps to understand if the conducted state policy of the support of families with children is reasonable. This value is influenced by factors that cannot be directly dependent on the state policy (for example, sex and age structure of the population), but there are factors that are directly depended on the state (common level of welfare, number of families and etc.).

The analysis of statistical data, presented on Rosstat’s web-site (Federal State Statistic Service), has been carried out to assess the demographic situation in the country and constituent entities of the Russian Federation [11]. On the basis of the conducted research of statistical data of the birth rate in Russia it is possible to make the conclusion that in 1999 the level of the birth rate reached its historical minimum. Since 2002 there was a stable growth of the birth rate but since 2016 the birth rate decreased again. In most entities of the Russian Federation the same negative demographic tendencies can be observed as in Russia on the whole. The results of the comparative analysis of the birth rate dynamics in some entities of the Ural federal district (the Kurgan, the Sverdlovsk and the Chelyabinsk regions) prove the indicated tendency (figure 1).

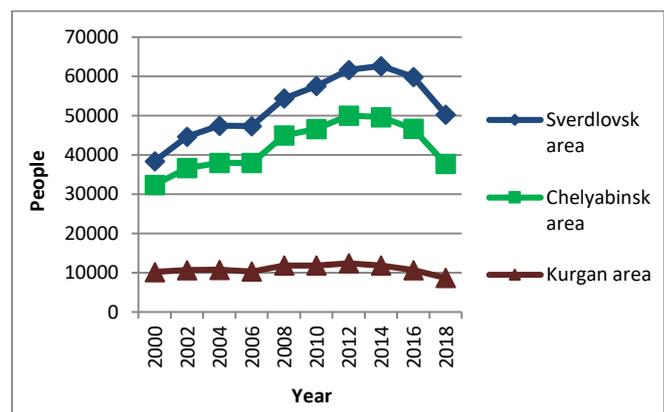


Fig. 1. – Birth rate dynamics in the Sverdlovsk, the Chelyabinsk and the Kurgan region (according to Rosstat’s data).

Meanwhile, in the Kurgan region 2018 was fixed as the year with the minimum birth rate beginning from 1995 (figure 2).

So, both in Russia as a whole and at the regional level, in the Kurgan region in particular, a negative demographic tendency and stable birth rate decrease are monitored.

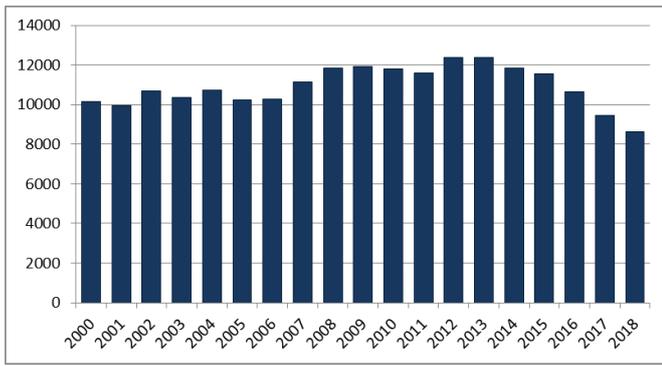


Fig. 2. Birth rate dynamics of the Kurgan region (2000-2018), people.

The trend forecasts of the birth rate also reflect general tendency of the disadvantage of this demographic value (figures 3 and 4), prolonged in the same conditions of the state regulation of the sphere of the support of the family, motherhood and childhood.

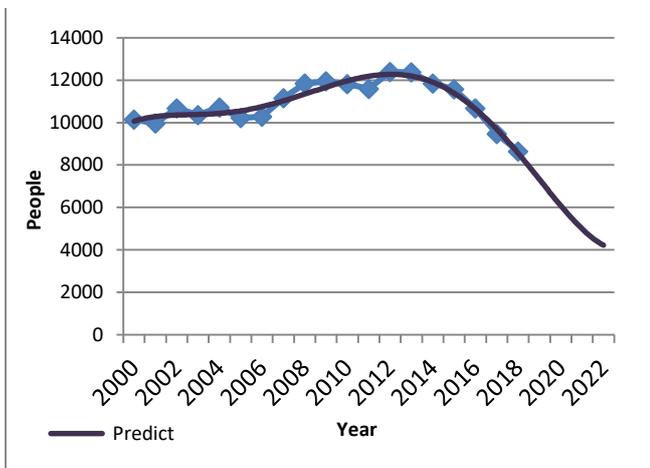


Fig. 3. Value forecast of birth rate in the Kurgan region, made on the basis of Conception of demographic development of the Kurgan region for the period to 2025.

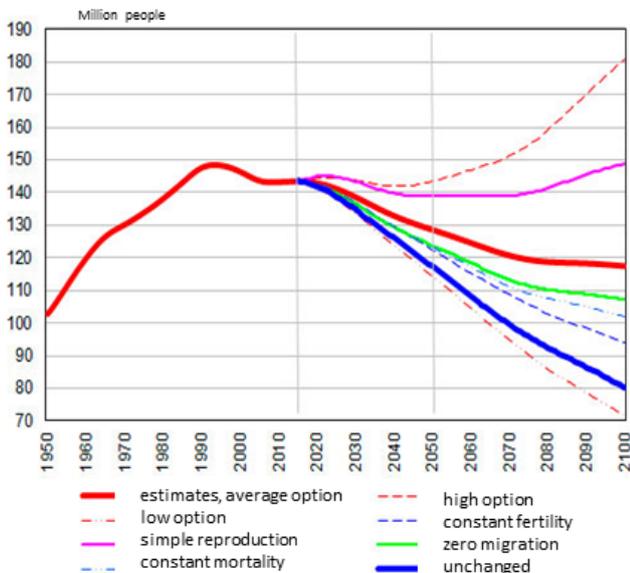


Fig. 4. – Estimates (1950-2015) and deterministic forecasts of the UN (2015-2100) of population size, mln. people in the mid-year [12].

On the whole, in Russia the general coefficient of the birth rate has fallen by for times in a century. The researches of the birth rate processes have revealed the influence of the following factors on them:

- natural (physical environment, heredity);
- social (social position of a woman; level of satisfaction with material and cultural needs; cultural level of parents; education; provision with child institutions; legislation, reflexing demographic policy in the country; traditions; child and infant mortality).

One more important factor is “reproductive attitude”, readiness of an individual for a certain activity and actions in regard with giving birth to the definite number of children. It is necessary to agree with the author [13] that the main indicators of reproductive attitudes are:

- average ideal number of children – idea of social norms of the number of children in the family, of the best number of children in the family in certain circumstances and life conditions;
- average desired number of children – value, characterizing individual need to have certain number if children;
- average expected (planned) number of children – value, characterizing real intentions and reproductive plans of individuals with the account of concrete life circumstances.

One of the reasons of the revealed negative tendencies of the birth rate in Russia is in the fact that most women of reproductive age were born in 1990-ies, when the maximum birth rate decline was fixed, that is why the number of potential mothers is at a low level. So, from 2015 to 2017 the number of born children in Russian decreased by 13% and in the Kurgan region by 19%, i.e. the decrease comprised 6 p.p. According to the opinion of the expert community, in the coming years the situation will only worsen as the existing negative tendency with number of childbearing women will remain.

While developing the activities on the state support of families with children, it is necessary to define the most problematic issues in the realization of this direction. On the example of the Kurgan region the following problems have been detected: the lack of places at the nurseries and kindergartens for children under 3 years old; non-purpose use of benefits and allowances; difficulty in completing the paperwork for getting different measures of the state support to families with children.

The state at different levels addresses these problems actively. A number of new measures of the state support of families with children are now being introduced to protect motherhood and childhood, the development and improvement of the available forms of the support is going on as well. So, in the President’s message 2019 to the Federal assembly of the RF [14] new measures of the support of families with children are proposed: additional financing from the federal budget to pay the mortgage loan in the amount of 450 thousand rubles to the families, having had the third (subsequent) child; reducing mortgage interest rate up to 8% and lower; decreasing property tax for families with children; from 01.01.2020 subsistence minimum is raised up to two per a member of the family in monthly payments for the first child

up to the age of one and a half years. Since 2019 the National project “Demography” has been started (2019-2024), the goal of which is to increase the cumulative birth rate in the country up to 1.7 by 2024. In 2019 the decision was made to increase the benefit for the child aged from one and a half to three years old of low-income families from 5 to 10 thousand rubles per child (payments of new benefits for children will start from 1 January 2020) [15].

Moreover, the National project “Public health service” has been brought into force, one of the main targets of which is to increase the birth rate. In 2018 Project committee of the Kurgan region adopted 7 regional projects within the framework of the realization of the National project “Public health service” and three *годы* within the National project “Demography”. To realize all the regional projects in the Kurgan region in the sphere of public health service for 2019-2024, 13 billion 834 million rubles was appropriated, 2 billion 141 million rubles in particular for 2019.

So, the project “Development of child health care, including construction of modern infrastructure of health care provision to children” includes re-equipment of 20 children polyclinics, 9 - in 2019, comprising the creation of organization plan concepts of interior spaces, providing the comfort of being there. By 2024 prophylactic medical examination will cover no less than 80% of teenagers aged 15-17, in 2019 – no less than 60% (170 thousand people) [16].

In 2019 eighteen families in the Kurgan region will already receive subsidies for the purchase (building) of housing – the corresponding decision was taken at the meeting of the government of the region on 11 September 2019. To provide young families of the Kurgan region, who have decided to buy or build housing, with social benefits, in 2019 the amount of more than 15 mln. rubles from the federal budget and 1.1 mln. rubles from the regional budget was appropriated. The subsidies are paid within the sub-program “Provision of young families with housing in the Kurgan region” of the state program “Development of housing construction”. In 2018 37 young families managed to improve living conditions with the use of social benefit. Also, since 2019 in the region a new measure of the support has been in force – reimbursement of the first contribution of the mortgage, now at the level of Governor of the Kurgan region the possibility to increase funding for these purposes is being considered [17].

The expert community does not find the latest state initiatives in the sphere of the support of the birth rate and families with children effective. So, according to the results of the population survey, conducted by the service of special communication and information of FSO in April 2019, the state has not started to do more than before for encouraging the birth rate and support of families with children in Russia in recent years. 42% of the Russians are sure in this, 8.2% of them think that the authorities have started to do less. This survey was conducted in 85 regions of the country with the use of the representative sampling of practically 50 thousand people. According to the opinion of the director of the Institute of the social analysis and forecasting of RANEPA T.M.Maleva, new material measures of support concern a small number of families, whose children were born in 2018 and whose income meets to the needs criteria, and they haven’t concerned other families at all.

Maleva also notes that the key value of the birth rate, the coefficient of births of the first child per one woman, keeps falling, and according to the results of 2018 its value is 0.66 children per one woman, which is the lowest in 20 years. At the same time the coefficient of the births of the second child is decreasing. However, the birth rate is growing only in multi-child families where the coefficients of the third and subsequent births have increased from 0.31 to 0.33 children per one woman in 2018. Consequently, people postpone the birth of the first child and it means that there are almost no bases to expect that Russia will remain to be the country with the general model of the family “with at least one child”. The authors of the article completely agree with this opinion [18].

To reveal the level of knowledge of the measures of the state support of families with children among the population, in March 2019 the authors of the article conducted a sociological questionnaire among the population of Kurgan, in which 115 respondents took part, 70% of them were women and 30% - men. The questionnaire has shown that 57% of the interviewed have children and, consequently, they benefited from exemptions and allowances, which are provided by the state to the families with children.

According to the data of the sociological questionnaire it is possible to note that 70% of the respondents know of the federal and regional benefits and exemptions, which the state provides to the families with children. At the same time 17% of the interviewed know only of the federal exemptions and allowances.

According to the opinion of the surveyed respondents, the most popular benefits, which the state provides to the families with children are:

- pregnancy-maternity allowance (95% of the surveyed, having children);
- one-time allowance at the birth of a child (90% of the surveyed, having children);
- monthly child care allowance (90% of the surveyed, having children);
- child allowance (85% of the surveyed, having children);
- one-time allowance for women, registered at the medical organizations in early pregnancy (61% of the surveyed, having children);
- maternity capital (46% of the surveyed, having children).

Analyzing the questionnaire data, it is possible to make a conclusion of a high level of knowledge of the federal exemptions and allowances for families with children, but many respondents do not know of regional forms of the support of families with children. It means that it is necessary to inform the population of all the kinds of allowances and exemptions for the families with children.

IV. CONCLUSION

In the course of the conducted research the measures of the state support of the families with children have been studied in the conditions of the transformation of the Russian society (on the example of the Kurgan region). The population awareness of the measures of the support of the families with children has been revealed.

However, in spite of significant measures of the real state support of the families with children both at the federal and regional levels, the demographic problem is not becoming less acute. That is why it is necessary to enlarge the list of free state services.

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