

The processes of ageing in modern societies: adaptive strategies of population 60+ in Russian regionsⁱ

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Abstract

The problems of population ageing are the actual nowadays political economic and social discourse in majority of the European countries. The main modern time discussions related usually to the necessity of replacement migration because of burdens on welfare system of elderly population and demographic forecasting are usually very gloomy. Russian Federation is not exceptional in this context as population ageing and existing discourses. Russia lost for last decade every year almost one million people annually because of natural decrease where the population death rate exceeds the birth rate. The share of population 60+ in the beginning of XXI c. constitutes about 18 per cent of total population of Russia and to 2015 it will reach 20 per cent.

For years after the adoption of Demographic strategy and Migration Concept by Russian government there were a lot investments into the improvement of demographic situation, nevertheless the tendency is not reversed yet. The governmental support of course is crucial in the improvement of situation but not only among the possible approaches. The population itself, in its readiness to conduct healthy and active style of life is the important resource for the mitigation of effect of population ageing. The behavior of population of 60 + age in context can be an important source to increase involvement of this cohort of population into the labor market, increase their quality of life and satisfaction of their life. The paper presents the results of research on adaptive strategies of population 60+ on institutional, group and individual level in four border regions of Russian federation (Altai krai, Krasnoyarsk krai, Saratov and Kemerovo oblast) based on survey of 2400 people, accompanied by 80 expert interviews that were conducted in 2011-2012. Research was done with the support of Ministry of education.

In spite of all uncertainties of transition period the population 60+ presented different strategies of adaptation to the situation that in Russia usually related to retired period when income dramatically drop down because of low level of pensions, but high expenses of utilities and health care system increased, that usually leads to decrease of social status of pensioners. The research was done based on analysis of community and political activities, economic behavior, migration behavior, desire on self-development and self-education, style in family and social relations. The self -evaluations and self-esteem were also important characteristics and according to research they are very much related to several strategies of adaptation that were identified for population 60+ in the presented research.

ⁱ Federal Target Program «Scientific and pedagogical potential of innovation in Russia” 2009-2013 “Demographic security of border region of modern Russia: problems of population ageing and migration”.