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HEALTH STATUS OF ELDERLY PEOPLE IN THE KOMI REPUBLIC AS A FACTOR IN INCREASING LIFE EXPECTANCY

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Abstract: *The article makes the assessment of the older population's health status in the Komi Republic in the frame of the new medical examination campaign for the adult population in the context of Russia's stated objectives in life expectancy. The sources of information are the official statistics, the annual "State report on the health state of the population in the Komi Republic" and the results of the two sociological studies "Problems of the third age" conducted in 2013 and 2018. The study has revealed the positive impact of the medical examination on the older people's awareness about their health, their increased responsibility for their health status, strengthening of the independent component of orientation on active, healthy lifestyle, increase of motor activities. At the same time, at older age there is an increase of problems associated with diabetes, unbalanced and excessive nutrition, overweight and obesity.*

Keywords: Russia; Komi Republic; life expectancy; population aging; older population health.

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INTRODUCTION

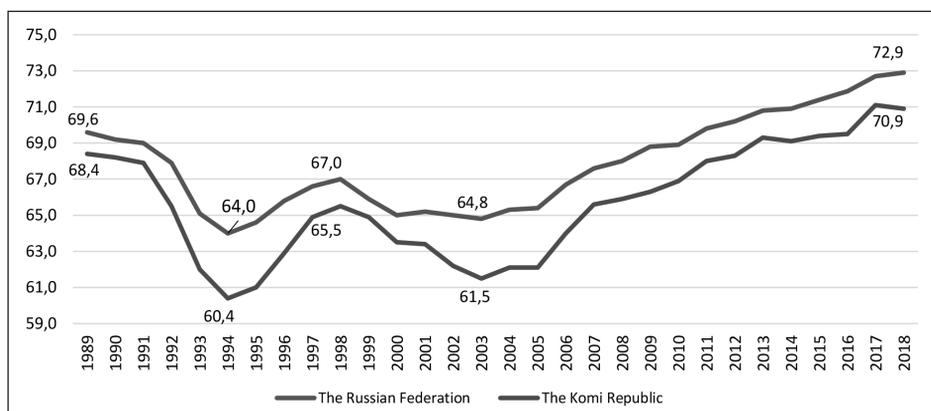
The Komi Republic is a huge area located in the northeast of the European part of Russia with the population of 830.2 thousand people at the beginning of 2019 (Demographic Yearbook of the Komi Republic. 2019: 11). Within the period of 30 years since the census survey made in 1989, that placed on record the maximum number of 1 million 250.8 thousand inhabitants, the population of the region has decreased by one third. That happened mostly due to migration outflow that is typical for almost all northern regions in Russia. In addition to that, during the time period of 1993-2010 it was common in Komi like on average in Russia to have natural population decline, caused by the low birth rate and high mortality rate. Since 2011 there was the short period of the natural population growth. In 2017, we observed the natural decline. In Russia, in general the new stage of natural decline started already in 2016.

That new stage of natural population decline is caused mainly by fertility decline, because since 2004 the Russian population longevity has been increasing. By 2018 it increased by 8.1 years compared to 2003 and made 72.9 years (Official website of Rosstat). The male indicator was 67.8 years, the female one was – 77.8. These data are the absolute maximum in the Russian history. According to preliminary estimates, in 2019 the life expectancy of the Russian population exceeded 73 years.

However, in spite of the achieved success, Russia is lagging behind the world leaders for more than 12 years, for the male longevity 15-16 years, for the female longevity more than 10 years. In 2018 the increment of longevity was quite small (from 72.7 years to 72.9 years). This indicator decreased in 23 out of 85 regions. At that in Russia in 2018 one of the declared national goals was to achieve longevity of 78 years by 2024, and 80 years by 2030 (Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 204 of 07.05.2018).

In such conditions, there is a need to activate realization of all reserves in order to rise longevity. Russia has substantial reserves in the structure of death reasons (share of mortality due to external reasons of death is 8%), gender (the difference between female and male indicators is 10 years), urban-rural (rural indicator lags behind the urban indicator by 1.7 years), regional (difference between the max indicator in Ingushetia and the min in Chukotka exceeds 18 years) and other reserves for longevity increase. They are ultimately dealing with aligning the differences in the level and way of life for different categories of people, which is to say in quality of life for different categories of people.

The Komi Republic is a territory with substantial regional reserves. The region is traditionally characterized by lower longevity than on average in Russia (fig. 1) (in 2018 the backlog made 2.0 years) (Demographic Yearbook of the Komi Republic. 2019: 176), higher percentage of mortality due to external reasons (11.2%), more important gender difference in the level of life expectancy (11.3 years), rural indicator is recently lagging behind really substantially (5.4 years). Under conditions of longevity increase, as a rule, we can see convergence of the republican indicator with the average indicator in the country. Within the period of 2003-2018 longevity in the region raised from 61.5 years to 70.9 years (by 9.4 years). Lagging from the



Source: Official website of Rosstat – <http://www.gks.ru>.

Figure 1. Dynamics of life expectancy of the population of the Russian Federation and the Komi Republic in 1989-2018, in years

all-Russian level decreased from 3.3 to 2.0 years. Nevertheless, in spite of that fact the Komi Republic continues keeping big reserves of increment of longevity that demands to be studied and realized.

HEALTH OF ELDERLY PEOPLE AND ACTIVE LONGEVITY AS RESERVES FOR INCREASING THE LIFE EXPECTANCY OF THE POPULATION

In this article, we consider possibilities of longevity increment dealing with the health status of people over working age. Obviously, the further growth of longevity in Russia is mostly determined by decrease of early and avertable mortality, I mean mortality of active working age population due to external reasons and heart diseases that can be explained in most cases by unfavorable lifestyle. But recently, the aging of the Russian population has increased. The country is approaching the model of demographic ageing, which is typical for developed countries. Since 2004 the absolute number of people older than working age has been increasing (Rosstat). And this age group exceeded one fourth of the population. In such conditions reduction of mortality for old people is getting more and more important to prolong longevity, that can be achieved by active way of life and preservation of health.

Ageing of the population, as a multifaceted phenomenon, is the subject of research in a number of sciences: medical science, demography, economics, history, political science, sociology, psychology, etc. Biodemographic researches in conditions of “aging from above”, i.e. an increase in the number of old people as a result of reduction in the mortality rate at the old age and a relatively slow increase in the number of children are focused on the issues of the life expectancy increase, healthy life expectancy and the social consequences of aging (for example, Vaupel (2001); Meslé, Vallin (2002); Minett (2002); Wolfson (2012)). Russian researches also tra-