

## Improvement of social policy towards the disabled in the Russian Federation

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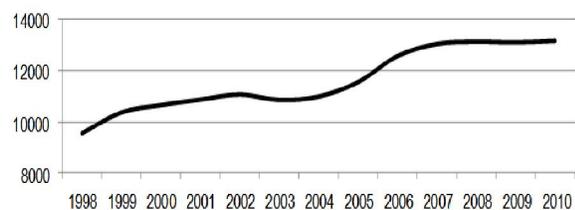
**Abstract.** The article is devoted to: the issues of improvement of social policy towards the disabled; the analysis of different approaches to the assessment of their quality of life; characteristic of the actual state of things on the example of program “Accessible environment” operating in Russia (federal level) and in the Republic of Tatarstan (regional level); the problems of poverty of persons with special abilities and proposals for its overcoming by the application of techniques of social and professional rehabilitation for the disabled.

[Karasik E., Yagudin R., Leukhin A., Zagidullina V. **Improvement of social policy towards the disabled in the Russian Federation.** *Life Sci J* 2014;11(6s):478-481] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 100

**Keywords:** The disabled (persons with special health needs), social policy, quality of life, regional system of social services for the disabled, targeted social assistance, relative poverty, subjective poverty, professional rehabilitation of the disabled.

### Introduction

The analysis of the process of integration of the disabled (persons with special health needs), the development of its mechanisms, principles and key areas can be considered as the most important problems, which modern science and society are facing nowadays. The transition of social policy in Russia from the purely medical model of rehabilitation of the disabled to a social-medical model revealed a number of problems, the solution of which did not belong to priority issues before. Moreover, statistical data indicate an increase in the number of disabled in Russia.



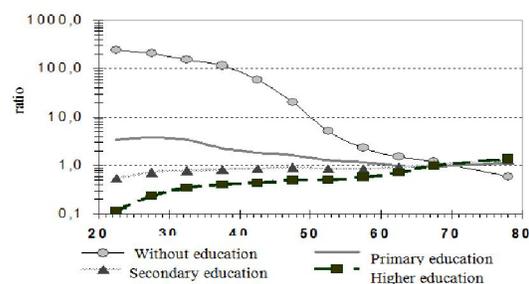
**Fig. 1. Dynamics of the number of disabled in Russia 1998-2010 (thousand people)**

The process of integration of the disabled into society is being currently destructively affected by various elements of social environment. To the elements of the social environment, which limit the integration potential or block the possibility of integration that impede the social typical, includes so-called “disability barriers” [1, 2]. However, according to the Constitution of the Russian Federation “the Russian Federation is a social state the policy of which is aimed at creating conditions ensuring a worthy life and a free development of a person”. A social state should pursue an active state

social policy aimed at ensuring that its citizens the most important social rights, which include the right to work, decent wages, housing, education, health, social security etc., i.e. a certain level of wealth.

However, the analysis of available data shows that access to the declared goods does not always correspond to reality.

The Russian Federation joined the international convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (September 2008) which involves the creation of a barrier-free environment, ensuring the right to education, work, social services and full participation in public life for this category of the population [3, 4]. Effective integration of persons with disabilities, or rather to say, persons with special health needs, involves active government policy towards this category of the population; struggle with such a widespread phenomenon as poverty, which accompanies disability and is often synonymous with disability in Russia.



**Fig. 2. Proportion of disabled people with the given level of education in each age group**

## Theory

Several basic approaches to the understanding of poverty category have developed in the scientific literature in the process of evolution of the study: the first comes from the fact that poverty is an absolute category, which is characterized by a specific set of goods, ensuring first of all physiological needs of a person. The number of these goods and their valuation establish the border of absolute poverty. The supporters of this approach were A. Smith, D. Ricardo, T. Malthus, G. Spencer, E. Reclus, K. Marx, C. Booth and S. Rowntree [5].

Other researchers (F.A. Hayek, P. Townsend, J. Peretti) proceed from the characteristics of marginal consumption. Poverty, according to these authors, is the level of income which allows an individual to be at the minimal level of satisfaction of physiological and social needs.

C. Rowntree became the founder of the culturological approach to the analysis of the problem of poverty; exploring this phenomenon he introduced the concept of "basket" of basic products. Rowntree offered to distinguish between the "primary" poverty, when the individual experiences a lack of funds, even if they are used efficiently to meet basic needs, and "secondary" - when basic needs are not being met due to irrational use of funds, thus, responsibility for the state of poverty can be subdivided into social and personal responsibility [6].

However, the use of principles of absolute approach and determination of the amount of subsistence minimum on the legislative level may not meet generally accepted world standards of consumption qualitatively and quantitatively; that means, the subsistence minimum in this case cannot perform the functions of the poverty line.

As a result the concept of relative poverty (deprivation) took the place of the concept of absolute poverty in the 60-80 of XX century. It explains poverty through the income of the individual, and analyses the level and quality of life.

Analysis of international experience of handling poverty allows to distinguish two main approaches to solving this problem [7].

First is applied in developed countries with high living standards and social guarantees which ensure basic minimum income (wages and pensions), sufficient for operating in a society of consumption standards.

The second one is a system of targeted social assistance for those who are in a relatively worse position. It is used in developed countries, as a supplementary measure, used exclusively towards a narrow circle of persons subjected in extreme situations. For developing countries, where the income of the majority of the people is extremely

low, the distribution of social assistance, including food, medicine, household and educational assistance is in fact the main method of support.

International research conducted by the UN, used a combined technique of research of poverty, based on a combination of all of the three concepts of poverty: absolute, relative and subjective. The status of "poor" get families corresponding to the three approaches. These are families with the income below the subsistence level, experiencing deprivation in the sphere of consumption and considering themselves to be poor [8].

## Results

Current social policies towards persons with special health needs in Russia are largely based on the second method, - on the strengthening the principles of social support network that is defined by the federal law "About social protection of disabled in the Russian Federation". In the regions measures of social support are established by local legislation. In the Republic of Tatarstan there is a law "On targeted social support of the population in the Republic of Tatarstan" from 08.12.2004; a significant part of the population comes within this law, which is confirmed by the data of the table.

**Table 1. Demographic situation in the Republic of Tatarstan on 01.06.2013**

District	Population	Pensioners, total	Including		Disabled	Including disabled children
			Living alone	In need of care		
Alkeevskii micro district	20752	6970	676	282	2606	112
Arskii micro district	50100	16222	947	362	8006	329
Bavilinskii micro district	37629	10314	2755	550	2767	113
Balsainskii micro district	33400	9306	1146	273	4710	181
Bugulminskii micro district	113331	30209	597	196	8893	382
Buinskii micro district	48652	15652	1435	376	3752	221
Vysokogonskii micro district	46317	13288	1365	295	4243	238
Zainskii micro district	58065	14550	4439	450	2607	209
Kamsko-Ustyenskii micro district	17695	5934	1926	532	1817	77
Mendeleevskii micro district	30305	7656	287	260	1742	152
Menzelinskii micro district	29900	9547	717	402	2042	163
Nurlatskii micro district	58500	16577	453	313	7143	258
Sarmanovskii micro district	36900	10861	3111	1097	2728	174
Spasskii micro district	20813	6849	1114	226	2285	110
Kazan city	1125000	299000	22018	3982	89019	5349

From this point of view it is interesting to consider the distribution of income and social protection provided by the federal and regional legislation for persons with special health needs.

Persons with disabilities may apply for payment and indexation of pensions and social payments; in respect of such people a number of social programs and additional targeted social assistance is being implemented. Part of the benefits, including travel on all forms of urban, suburban, intercity transport, communication services, is replaced with monthly cash payments, the size of

which is established taking into account the indexation from 01.04.2012: - for persons with disabilities 1 group - in the amount of 2684 rubles; - for persons with disabilities 2 group and children with disabilities - in the amount of 1917,33 rubles; for persons with disabilities on 3 group - in the amount of 1534 rubles; monthly monetary payment is established and paid by the territorial office of the Pension Fund of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Tatarstan.

A part of monthly monetary payment (795 rubles) is represented as a set of social services, including free medicines, free sanatorium-and-spa treatment, free travel to the place of treatment and free transportation on railway transport of the suburban transport. In addition, disabled persons receive a subsidy in the amount of 50% of expenses for housing and communal services, excluding social norms of housing area and norms of consumption of municipal services; the Federal budget funds provides the disabled, families having disabled children, and registered as in need of better housing conditions before 1 January 2005 with housing; for other people in need the improvement of housing conditions is not provided [9, 10].

The analysis of income of persons with special health needs, to which they are entitled in accordance with the law, it can be stated that targeted support cannot fundamentally solve problems of this category of population, including the problem of poverty. However, we cannot stop implementing additional measures to overcome the problem of poverty in Russia; many programs are developed at the federal and regional levels, the aim of which is to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities.

In the Republic of Tatarstan there is a program on formation of accessible social, transport and engineering infrastructure.

At the first stage of the program, in the period from 2012 till 2015, the following results should be achieved:

The figures of the intended results of the implementation of the Program show that the efforts of the government to solve the problem of poverty and participation in active life of people with disabilities are not sufficient. You need to abandon a traditional paternalistic model of building relations between the state and socially unprotected categories of the population [11]. To concentrate the efforts on involving persons with disabilities in accessible labor activities, to facilitate the interest of employers in hiring persons with special health needs; because of their exclusion the society sustains significant losses.

**Table 2. Results of the Program "Accessible environment" in the Republic of Tatarstan**

Results of the Program "Accessible environment" in the Republic of Tatarstan. Main parameters of the implementation of the program	The results of the implementation of the program in 2012	Expected results of the implementation of the program by 2015
the share of priority objects of social, transport and engineering infrastructure available for the disabled and other low-mobile groups of population in the total number of priority projects	16,8%	45%
the share of the rolling stock of motor vehicles and urban land-electric transport of general use, equipped for transportation of people with limited mobility, in the fleet of the rolling stock	11,4%	16,5%
the share of persons with disabilities, regularly engaged in physical culture and sports in the total number of this category of population	5%	10%
the share of the secondary schools, which created a universal barrier-free environment, allowing to provide joint training for persons with disabilities and persons with no abnormalities in the total number of educational institutions	5,5%	20%
the share of the disabled, who evaluate the level of accessibility of priority products and services positively	33,7%	55%
the share of the disabled, who evaluate the attitude of the population to problems of disabled persons positively in the total number of interviewed persons with disabilities	33,6%	49,6%

### Conclusion

Modern Russian reality requires new approaches to the implementation of social policy towards the disabled, which should be based on warranted human rights and partnership between the socio-political forces [12]. Improving the quality of life of the disabled should include the availability of equal opportunities and rights to independent and full participation in the life of society. Effectiveness of social policy towards people with disabilities implies neutralization of negative social factors which can be systematized as follows (table 3).

**Table 3. Influence of social factors on the quality of life of persons with disabilities**

The disabled	Factors		
	Formation of personality	Environment	Society
Quality of life	Ability	Availability, participation in public life	Laws, normative acts

The aim of social policy towards the disabled should be the ability to control one's own life; for that it is necessary to reorganize traditional institutions and techniques that will increase its efficiency.

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4/24/2014