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Как сократить бедность в России?

Тема бедности является одной из наиболее востребованных в современной российской экономической науке. В России нет государственного программирования действий и мер в сфере бедности с выходом на конкретный количественный результат. До сих пор ведется дискуссия о путях сокращения бедности и изменения самой системы управления, которая должна состоять из комплекса правовых актов, организационно-исполнительного звена, финансового источника действий, обученных кадров. Достойная заработная плата – это не только путь ликвидации экономической бедности, это стимул роста производства товаров и услуг, и как следствие – достойные трудовые пенсии, обеспеченное детство, высокая покупательная способность населения, поступление налогов в бюджет.

How to reduce poverty in Russia?

The topic of poverty is probably one of the most discussed in contemporary Russian economics. There are few other themes that can compete with it in terms of financial expenses and efforts invested in its research. Modern Russia witnessed the rise of specialized schools of social research dedicated to this very problem, as well as the multitude of books centered on this topic.

The system of governmental regulations in this respect seems much more modest. There are not many mechanisms which allow regulating incomes by population groups. In practice, there are only few laws: on subsistence minimum, on minimum consumer basket, on social welfare, on social service, on social security and pensions. But all these legislation norms listed above lack the concept and proper definition of poverty. Instead, there is a notion of “low income”.

These legislation initiatives are accompanied by a few statistical markers: the monitoring of subsistence minimum, the number of people leaving below this level, the proportion of poor population, its structure by categories with different situation measures. But, for all that, the very indicator, subsistence minimum, used to measure poverty within the system of personal incomes, is far from being perfect. Among the regions, the highest level of unemployment in July–September 2013 (average for the three months to enhance data representativeness) was seen in Ingushetia at 44.5 % and Chechnya at 26.6 %. There was also double-digit unemployment of 17.3 % in Tuva, 13.3 % in Kalmykia, 11.9 % in Altai, 11.7 % in Dagestan, 11.6 % in Karachaevo-Cherkesia and 10.3 % in Baikal territory. The lowest unemployment in the third quarter of 2013 was observed in St. Petersburg (1.6 %), Moscow (1.7 %), Chukotka autonomous district (2.1 %), Moscow region (2.7 %), Magadan region (2.7 %) and YamalNenets autonomous district (2.8 %) [4].

As for the official forecast measures and programs aimed at solving the problem of poverty reduction, there is little to boast here. At most, the “subsistence minimum” indicator is used as a resultant situation indicator for realizations of various programs – the latest example being the Strategy of Pension Reforms developed by the Ministry of Labor which forecasted that the pensioners’ standard of living in 2030 will amount to 2,5–3 % of subsistence minimum [3].

But the most important factor is that Russia lacks national programs and initiatives aimed at poverty reduction with concrete quantitative results. This is particularly strange when program- and goal-oriented planning and budgeting is being implemented, which is supposed to reflect the nationally important problem of poverty.

For example, the ways of poverty reduction are still under discussion, as well as the changes in the regulation system which should comprise legislative complex, organizational and implementation mechanism, financing source and trained personnel [2].

In this context, extensively researched academic materials serve only as an information source. All discussion is generally reduced to methodological problems of measuring and interpretation of obtained indexes: absolute or relative poverty, whether the acute want is eliminated, the composition of minimum consumer basket, the study of factors influencing living standard – wages, housing, items of long-term use.

It follows that in order to move from talking to actual decisive poverty reduction in Russia, we need to create corresponding governing structure and choose its main course. The first stage requires only political will. The second one, i.e. the strategy, is a complex and difficult question faced not only by politicians, but also by state apparatus, academic disciplines and every proactive individual [3, p. 103].

This strategic choice must depend on the structure of poverty. Poverty is heterogeneous by many parameters, and practical consideration of these parameters is necessary if we want to achieve desired results. The most important classification for the purposes of government regulation system divides poverty into economic poverty and demographic poverty. Economic poverty is described as an insufficiency of earned wages for a family to remain self-sufficient above minimum sustenance level; such families require social welfare. Demographic poverty happens when a family includes increased number of dependent persons per a working family member, or when a family consists of unemployables unable to earn their livelihood due to age or health conditions. Unfortunately, such structuring is not very popular within theoretical approaches to this problem; usually two means of poverty reduction – economic activity and social welfare – are mentioned on an almost equal basis [3, p. 74].

Such position is particularly pertinent in the existent situation. The economic situation in Russia leaves much to be desired. Social welfare retains only previously established budget commitments – moreover, authorities would like to cut back even these expenses. This is evident when we look at pension system, or increasingly commercialized healthcare and education. However, in historical perspective it is clear that austerity measures in themselves cannot replace the need for economic development and production expansion. Russia needs annual 6–7 % growth of GDP, but only 2–3 % rate is expected. Under existing conditions, it is becoming less important how we measure poverty and more important to find feasible and effective solutions to this problem [4, p. 12].

Reality determines the rule: political system as a whole should work to facilitate economy. Social welfare is not an exception here, and this is its main line of action, if we take into account an objective interdependence of social and economic phenomena.

Respectable salary rates are not only the way to liquidate economic poverty; it is above all the way to stimulate the growth of production of

goods and services, and, as a result of such growth – to ensure decent retirement pensions, secure childhood, high purchasing capacity of the population, steady tax flow in the budget. Then we will have resources for social services, welfare payments and benefits for those who cannot provide for themselves without the government help: large families, disabled persons, orphans and other population categories living in a condition of demographic poverty.

Although unemployment is high, the situation in Russia is gradually improving and the number of unemployed decreases.

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Денежные реформы России (на примере денежного довольствия 2012 года)

Кадровыми и финансовыми службами органов внутренних дел в период с декабря 2011 года по январь 2012 года были обеспечены назначение и выплата реформированного денежного довольствия сотрудникам и выплата военных пенсий в новых размерах с 1 января 2012 года. Денежное довольствие позволяет предъявлять адекватные