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YOUTH PRO-NATALIST POLICY: THE SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECT

Annotation: In this article, based on the studies carried out, the experience of implementing a pro-natalist policy in Germany and in France, is presented a set of measures of the Russian youth pro-natalist policy, which is included in the model of youthful pro-natalist policy. It's aimed at increasing the birth rate and creating a positive image of a close-knit family. From the standpoint of political sociology, the presented model reflects the mechanism of social partnership as one of the conditions for effective management, taking into account the system-forming components of managerial activity.

Keywords: pro-natalist policy, youth, the model of youthful pro-natalist policy, reproductive behavior of youth, public authorities.

The contemporary demographic situation in the Russian Federation and in its regions is largely due to socio-economic processes that occurred in the XX century. Over the 1950-1960s years in Russia were annually born about 2-2,7 million children, and about 1-1,5 million people were died. People's life expectancy has been steadily increasing and has been approaching to the indicators of the European countries [6].

Since 1992 the population has been declining steadily as the death rate has exceeded the birth rate. The fertility rate has decreased from 2,8 million people in 1960 to 1,3 million people in 2000. The total fertility rate has decreased by a factor of 1,8 in 1995 and by a factor of 2,1 in 2000 in comparison with 1960 year (the period, where the gradual fall in the birth rate in Russia has begun). For the past 15 years in Russia, over 2 million people have died annually, which is two times more per 1,000 people than in the European countries and the USA, and this is 1,5 times more than the global average [5, p. 30].

Since 2000 in the Russian Federation the birth rate has been rising. In 2016 the total fertility rate has increased by a factor of 1,5 in comparison with 2000 and amounted to 1,8 births per woman. However, the birth rate is still inadequate to ensure simple reproduction of the population [9].

Factors such as low money incomes in many families, inadequate housing conditions, modern family structure (a trend towards reduced lifetime fertility, increasing numbers of single-parent families), hard physical labor of a large proportion of the working women (about 15%), working that do not meet sanitary and hygienic standards, the low level of women's reproductive health, continuing high number of interruptions of pregnancy (abortions) have negative impacts on birth rate [2, p. 541].

The low fertility rate leads to the demographic ageing of the population. Whereas in 1992 the number of women aged over 55 years and men aged over 60 years was 19,3% of total population, then already in 2005 this rate amounted to 20,5%, in 2015 – 24,6%, in 2016 – 24,9% [8].

In the case of differentiated programs development and implementation, aimed at specific tasks for increasing the birth rate (including in the youth pro-natalist policies), family and marriage strengthening, improving public health and increasing life expectancy, the population of the Russian Federation will increase by 5,9 million people (4%) to 2030, and, in comparison with 2015 will account for 152,4 million people [7]. Through the implementation of special programs and a set of measures in the youth pro-natalist policy, the birth rate could reach 2,02 births per woman by 2030, that is almost simple reproduction of the population.

Considering this data provided through studies of reproductive and family and marriage behavior in regions of Russia, France and Germany we have conducted, as well as the results of analysis of demographic situation in the area of pronatalism in regions the Russian Federation, and also the experience of the pro-natalist policy in Germany and France, we think that it is appropriate to develop a model of the youth pro-natalist policy.

The term "pronatalistic" (lat. pro – for and natalis – birth) means the focus of population policy on increasing the fertility rate by establishing financial and social incentives for people, for example, tax breaks for families with several children [1; 38, p. 54]. We have an opportunity to clarify the very concept of the pro-natalist policy within the context of political sociology based on the experience of implementation this policy carried out by the government authorities in some parts of the world, and also based on historical background and examining of its types and forms. Accordingly, the pro-natalist policy means the direction of population-based policy, which represents a set of activities implemented by the government authorities and aimed at increasing of the population and decreasing a natural population decline through an increase of fertility rate [4, c. 538].

A set of activities of Russian youth pro-natalist policy at the regional level includes the following:

1. Changes in conditions of maternity leaves provision. Our developments consist in providing a several options for maternity leaves and allowance system, according to the wishes of parents.

a) Maternity leave of 4 months without loss of job and 100% salary. After that young female can come back to work and can use the services of certified babysitter, who is been looking after the kids at her place, or come to parents' apartment. For example in France, this constitutes a whole system of specially trained babysitters, who may look after children in their house: there are about 300,000 babysitters caring for more than 1 million children, with an average of one babysitter per 3 children;

b) Maternity leave is shared between both young parents: a part of maternity leave is taken by a mother (3,5 months), then she should come back at work, and the second part of the leave is taken by a father (up to 3,5 months). During maternity leave both parents keep their working places and 100% salary.

Our research shows that the reluctance of most women (including Russians) to fall out of social and professional life due to their child-bearing is the main factor affecting the delaying or even foregoing childbearing.

2. The development of a childcare system under the age of 3 and support for employment of young women. In fact, the field of nursery and childcare social services shall be designated in the education system. A childcare allowance should become a financial instrument, that should be paid in case of gaining childcare services in accredited pre-school institutions (nursery, kindergarten), or services of certified babysitters.

3. Creating a "work-life balance" culture (balance between career and personal life). A culture which will guide young people into family creating, based on working compatibility, on having and bringing up of children is good for both young people and whole society.

4. The progressive development of the supporting environment, which includes a wide range of adjustments and daily practices, improved the lives of young families.

5. The development of a system of low-interest mortgages for young families, including decrease in the rate of interest depending on number of children (the more children a family has – the lower the rate of interest). Concessional providing of land for housing would also contribute to resolve the housing issue among young families. Reimbursements payments for rental accommodation (usually partial) might be possible as one of the other resolving variants of the housing issue. This reimbursement should be made in full when families have children (usually in the event of the birth of two or more children).

6. Information and education on issues relating to sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people.

7. Benefits introducing for persons entering into marriage (for example, a one-time fixed payment at the time of marriage, favorable tax rules of personal income, benefits from the employer for family workers, among the others with children).

Summary:

All actors of the youth pro-natalist policy are interconnected. They form the unified holistic set of interactions and they involved in a follow-up mechanism of the youth pro-natalist policy carried out by the regional government. This follow-up mechanism includes some specific elements (actors and their authority, spatial-temporal relationships) and stages.

It is important to underscore the fact that the coherence and consistency should refer to the key attributes of the youth pro-natalist policy. Most experts agree that if we admit French actions as successful ones, it is precisely because they had been implemented consistently for several decades. Such measures should be flow from the real context that means the mix of policy instruments must reflect specific conditions and circumstances of the specific region. Without a doubt, they shouldn't be forced, should respect personal rights and should be financially profitable, that means they should be substantiated by long-term regional budget. Otherwise, binding themselves with commitments without financial viability it is a way to threat economic growth and contribute to further deterioration in demographic situation in the region.

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