



FAMILY STRATEGIES

OF MODERN RUSSIAN STUDENT YOUTH

WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT RESOLUTION



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**ILO Subregional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia
2009**

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Foreword

The idea of the project “Family Strategies of Modern Russian Student Youth” was proposed by the Centre for Comparative Social Policies and Social Governance under the State Administration Department of the Lomonosov Moscow State University, and it was supported by the UN Gender Theme Group in Russia. The objective of the group is to support initiatives by the government and civil society on improving the situation of women and promoting gender equality. The theme group affiliates the following UN agencies: United Nations Development Programme in the RF (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), World Health Organization (WHO), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The author of the research “Family Strategies of Modern Russian Student Youth” (Part I), is Natalia Grigorieva, Doctor of Political Science, Professor, director of the Centre for Comparative Social Policies and Social Governance under the State Administration Department of the Moscow State University.

The second part reproduces a publication of the International Labour Organization, devoted to work and family balance. The choice of the Gender Theme Group to include this material in the publication was logical – young students are those who will soon enter the labour market, and many of them, specifically student families, are already combining work and studies.

The publication was prepared with the financial support of the ILO Subregional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The authors would like to express their gratitude for the support in the preparation of this important publication to the staff in the UN agencies in Russia, and first of all to Galina Kalinaeva, coordinator of the gender theme group, Dr Ludmila Vassilenko, Professor of the Russian Academy of Public Service under the President of the Russian Federation, as well as to Irina Melekh, coordinator of the ILO-Netherlands Project “Boosting youth employment using an integrated approach in the framework of decent work country programmes in Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan”.

We are sure that this publication will be equally interesting for experts and students, as well for young workers entering the labour market, and for a wide readership.

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Part 1

Family strategies of modern Russian student youth

As you know, 2008 was announced the Year of Family in Russia. Family is much spoken about now and not only by experts. Family has become part and parcel of the politicians and authorities discourse, which proves that public and multi-professional debate about modern Russian family, its structure and its prospects is long overdue. This is a chance for our country to develop a new philosophy of interrelationship between a family, the state and the society. The only question is how to do this.

The developments of the late 20th and early 21st century demonstrated to the world that the institute of family turned out to be one of the most stable social formations in the course of centuries-long history. On the other hand, starting from the second half of the 20th century, this institute undergoes changes that are not merely significant. More often, researchers qualify the situation in the world as family crisis; however, the causes of this crisis are explained differently. It is important to define what the modern Russia family represents. Special researches of various social and family situations are needed for that, as well as elaboration of respective recommendations on their basis on what shape nonsimple relations between the family and the state should take. Specifically the character of these interrelations and interactions will predetermine to a large extent the general trend of the county development.

Therefore, the research of the strategies of the family behaviour of youth in general and student youth in particular is of high priority given deterioration of demographic situation in the country and the role of youth in replacement of older generation and in the social structure of the society on the whole. In this respect, we intend to consider this study as one of the first steps in this direction that were made after Russia adopted the new Concept of Demographic Development of the Country (2007), and the state proposed a number of legislative measures to boost birth-rates. This document is not a comprehensive description of youth; it is rather an outline that makes it possible to see some elements of the future picture.

Brief review of researches and surveys of youth family strategies in Russia, including the UNDP supported projects

Family model in the transforming Russian society. For many years, we have been observing and studying the same self-evident social factors in the family researches: the number of single men and women is growing, as well as the number of divorces, birth-rate declines, the incidence of repeated marriages grows, sexual relations out of the institution of marriage become more common, and etc.

But these phenomena reflected by statistics can be interpreted in different ways in scientific and journalism publications, when some write about severe family crisis and others about family modernization.

Traditional analysis contains certain fundamentals well described in sociological science. At the end of 19th and beginning of the 20th century, the classics of sociology focused attention on new phenomenon that is characteristic for transition from patriarchal feudalism to capitalism (M. Weber). In addition, it was underlined that collectiveness prevailed over an individual (E. Durkheim); the attitude towards family and family life in different types of the society was examined (K. Marx), the evolution of family and marriage was studied (F. Engels), the relation between the family institution and ownership institution was described, and etc. E. Durkheim formulated the law of family contraction from extended family to a narrower group of conjugal family. F. Le Play was the first to make an attempt of concrete sociological research of the family by means of household budget analysis. He thoroughly studied the specifics of family life in various European countries as well as in different social groups and described conditions and way of life of each of 300 surveyed households. Engel defined interrelations between the family income and expenditures on prime necessities. As a result, he developed family typology.

In the 20th century, the research of family transformation in new conditions began. The research of P. Sorokin really stands out. He examined the family as an organized social group and placed it at the basis of the hierarchy of the social structures, having divided family functions from other social institutes of the society.

It is known that researches based on structural-functional analysis have become very popular in Western sociology, which made it possible to conduct multiple-aspect study of functional features of the family as a social system (G. Parsons, R. Merton, P. Breger, and *et al*). Later, A. Giddens proposed his interpretation of family forms development periodization, placing special emphasis on marriage and divorce motivations in modern conditions.

Only within 1974–1975, 50 scientists from 25 universities in the United States took part in a large project on development of unified system of explanatory theoretical models of family functioning. Participants of the project selected 24 areas of family study, namely, family communication, power structure in the family, young family, role tension and conflicts in the family and etc.

It is possible to say that during practically the whole 20th century, the western and Russian traditions of family research existed in parallel. Already M. V. Lomonosov in his famous work “On Preservation and Reproduction of the Russian Nation” pointed that “namely people make up grandeur, might and wealth of the state, rather than vast areas vain without habitants” [Basics of Demography 2005, p. 5]. However, due to certain historical conditions, scientific research and development of demographic science was hindered at that time.

After the revolution of 1917, our family sociology was developing within Marxist tradition. Sociological research in the USSR became especially active starting from the second half of the 20th century. In 60–70s, these works studied reproductive behaviour, combination of professional and family duties, as well as their distribution among family members. In 1969, the Research Institute of the Central Statistics Bureau conducted all-Union research of reproduction drives, as a result of which major data set was introduced to scientific research. In the 80s, specialists paid more careful attention to the family way of life, state assistance to families, theory of family relations, young families, and child-rearing in troubled families. In early 90s, the most popular topics were prostitution, deviant behaviour, orphan children, women entrepreneurs, and pre- and post-divorce situations.

Changes in the Russian society at the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st century could not but affect the family, and in essence can be characterized as loss of formal institutional characteristics of the

family inherent to it in the past and strengthening of informal positions [Kartseva 2003].

Authors rightly note that the modern Russian society is marked by the change of the position in the interaction of three entities of different levels, namely, the society, the family as a small group and the individual. The phenomenon of upturned pyramid occurred, as in the past, an individual was at its basis and society on the top, while now they kind of changed their places, and the society is in the basis, while individual moved to the top. Family has preserved its position in the middle, in the sense of still being the channel through which contradictions between the society and the individual are resolved. But it does not mean that the family has not changed, as the emphasis in the assessment of the family importance has changed. Assessment of family models existing seemingly recently has changed, as well as family models that are characterized as alternative ones in modern conditions. The family regained the function of private property accumulation and its descent. Usually, analysis compares “traditional” family versus “modern” one.

All this predetermined the task of family model formation that would meet modern conception on its status and functioning. Here, we can speak about theoretical and empirical model of modern family.

Theoretical model in modern Russian society varies. It is no surprise that the majority of respondents in the pilot project (Moscow–Irkutsk, 2008) could not find an answer to the straightforward question “a family is...”. Twenty percent of respondents (the 1st place) could not give an answer (or did not want to answer it). To great extent, it reflects the situation when there is no unanimity in the definition of the notion, whether the family can unite children and spouses married officially or not, or mother and child (or as an option, one of the parents and the child), partners without children who are not married but jointly manage household, polygamous union based on religious traditions or some new morals, and finally, actual homosexual marriage. In addition, there is an increasing number of repeated marriages with the children from previous marriages who essentially become members of two families. All this makes it possible to conclude that no clear theoretical model of modern Russian family has been currently shaped.

Morals are stereotyped, especially family morals. Many things were not advertised in the past, people were ashamed of public condem-

nation. Many families considered that “one should wash dirty linen at home”. On the other hand, in the event of complicated situation, some family conflict, a person knew where to resort to. After all, the person could even “work off anger in the family” and spend the rage there. In case of family conflicts, women used to appeal to trade union organization or to Communist Party activists. Now, it seems that there remained only one way of family conflicts resolution that is judicial settlement.

Family problems are surrounded by the vacuum of indifference. Nobody really cares what is going on in the family. One of the reasons for the growing number of family violence cases is their frequent impunity. Selfhood psychology begins to prevail among men and women. The value of marriage has changed. Spouses are more often referred to as “partners”, rather than husband and wife.

The situation with **empirical model** of modern Russian family is even more complicated. On the one hand, it is simpler because many studies of modern families are conducted both at the federal and regional (local) levels. There are also many individual researches, the materials of which are used for dissertations; these researches can be conducted in the framework of certain projects or be part of more comprehensive studies. On the other hand, it is more complicated, because these researches are numerous, but they do not provide a certain picture of family relations in the Russian Federation that is accepted by all participants.

For instance, specific features of modern family development are analyzed in the article of S.I. Golod “Sociological and Demographic Analysis of Family Status and Evolution” [Golod 2008].

In particular, he pays attention to the beginning of the changes in the perception of a family that started began long before. He presents the data from the research of Professor V. T. Lisovsky from Leningrad State University that he conducted in late 60s of the 20th century when he explored life plans of Leningrad youth. There were two clear orientation lines in the respondents’ answers: to meet a beloved person (girls — 40.48% of interviewed, boys — 38.9%) and to create a family (31.4% and 29.8%, respectively), which pointed to the fact that these two were not identical events for them. The differences were even more explicit in the analysis of the primary plans (by the degree

of importance for the person). 72.9% of young people irrespective of their gender answered that their first priority is to meet the beloved person, while creation of family was the priority for only 38.9% [Lisovsky 1969, p. 34, 39].

During that period of time this data could be interpreted that love affair can lead to marriage, but it is also valuable in itself.

For comparison, S. I. Golod presents the data from another research conducted in the Tver Region forty years later. He considers that modern study reveals more significant separation by youth of sexuality from the institution of marriage. "Over half (61.6%) of the young people up to the age of 25 believe that it is necessary to "live together" for a year or two before the wedding in order "to test their feelings". Only 13.9% of the young girls and men from Tver consider that registration of marriage should precede conjugal relations [Arkhangelskiy, Antonova, Nikitina 2006].

And finally, the author presented the results of a nonrepresentational polling of the women who read "Glamour" magazine (May, 2006). Thus, the following answers were given to the question "Do you want to get married?": 45.6% believe that a wedding ring on the finger does not matter, 40% prefer professional carrier to marriage, 14% are waiting for the partner to make the first step, and 0.4% believe that marriage is the main goal of life. In other words, marriage has ceased to be the norm of life for the women who read "Glamour" magazine.

According to British sociologist Anthony Giddens, spouses have become to be perceived as colleagues in some joint emotional venture, and this has become even more important for them than their duties towards their children. "Home" has become a place where the agent could get emotional support by contrast to instrumental character of working environment [Giddens 1992, p. 26].

Conjugal family is a peculiar cooperation with unique possibilities to escape from relations of dependence and to unveil comprehensive active pallet in all structural channels such as "husband-wife", "parents-children", "spouses-relatives", and "children-grandparents". In fine, full and multilayer relations between the sexes and generations develop within one family type, as well as ample opportunities for self-realization of each agent.

Conjugality is personalized interaction between husband and wife regulated by moral standards and supported by the intrinsic values. This is recent phenomenon that emphasizes asymmetry of the husband's and wife's role.

Cohabitation of husband and wife requires adjustment of their individual plans, for which various niches exist, such as spiritual, psychological, sexual, informational, kindred and domestic ones. They have hierarchical structure the shifts in which are predetermined by different stages of the family development.

At the end of the 19th century, only 4% of men and 5% of women were never married. In other words, namely marriage was a normal phenomenon.

According to French sociological demographer L. Roussel who generalized statistics data for 5 countries (Denmark, France, Holland, Sweden, and USA) mass incidence of actual, but not officially registered marriages begins from mid-70s of the 20th century [Roussel 1989, s 1–8]. American sociologist V. Simon believes that “Shift from conjugality to cohabitation has taken place among our modern young people. In many cases their friends and parents are aware of that. I have the feeling that if someone says “Let’s go to the movies tonight”, it does not matter for them whether to go to the cinema or to stay home and have sex” [Simon 2003, p. 45].

Representative survey conducted in 1996–1999, in three European regions of Russia (the Ivanovo Region, cities of Ekaterinburg and Perm) indicate abundance of unregistered marriages. According to the data as of 1996, 14% of women were actually married at the age of 20-24, and the results of the following survey showed 17.4%. The share of those who had unregistered unions in the total number of married women turned out to be even more impressive and constituted 22% in the first survey and 30% in the second one.

The hypothesis of modernist way of demographic processes transformation consonant to the changes that take place with the institute of marriage in general is being actively promoted. “One can take different view on this” — say the authors of “Demographic Modernization in Russia in 1900–2000” — “but it is clearly unlikely to avoid it. That is why European, American or Russian strategists should think

not about how nice it would be if history could have been reversed, but how to act with minimum losses and with maximum benefit in conditions that will be proposed or already are being proposed by reality. Today, the thorny way ahead constitutes development in the conditions of low birth-rate, zero, and even more likely negative natural growth of population and constant significant inflow of migrants.” [Demographic Modernization 2006, p. 549–550]

Let us refer to one more research that was being conducted in the course of several years in the Republic of Tatarstan (research supervisor L. V. Kartseva). The whole Russian society was taken as universe of population and population of Tatarstan as sampled population. This research confirmed that incomplete families, unregistered marriages, families were children born out of wedlock are brought up, families with inexplicit leadership, and partnership marriages are becoming social norm in Russia. Social functions of family have changed. The authors note that transformation of the family structure should be reviewed also as adaptive strategy of Russians. Two main types of families are represented as a result of the research. The first one is full, nuclear, autonomous and primarily officially registered family. The preferred number of family members constitutes 3.6 persons, the number of children is 1.8. Two members of the family work. Urban residence is preferred.

Another type represents incomplete family, not registered, with one or two children. During the period of social reforms, this particular type strengthened its position being perceived by public opinion as a sound and conventional social structure [Kartseva 2003, p. 92–100].

Russian State Social University (RSSU) has conducted researches and published “The Russian Family” encyclopaedia where newly revealed tendencies in the development of family relations are reflected. Thus, the authors note that Russians keep fewer contacts with their relatives and prefer to spend time with their friends. Only New Year and birthdays remain to be the holidays that are celebrated in the bosom of the family, and also it is a child’s birthday that unites different generations of a family. Conclusion is made that a new family relations model is being developed in Russia now, when people agree upon the rules by which they will live. The study of losses and gains in the family life organization indicates that the most significant are the loss of generation link, children upbringing by grandparents

(preference is given to nannies), loss of kinship feeling, relatives are rarely visited, selfless assistance is passing (more often assistance is rendered on the basis of a financial agreement).

There become fewer people willing to have family life. The latest social research of Levada-Center (April, 2008) has revealed that Russians begin to loose many useful family and household skills. They cook worse, forget how to ply needle, there is no one in the family who can mend a leaking tap. The nation famous for playing musical instruments and singing is loosing these skills. In other words, functions and traditions that existed within the family in the past are now transferred outside the family and cease to serve as the basis for internal relations. Indeed, why do we need "grandma's holiday pie" when any cake can be bought in the shop around the corner?

Gender aspects in family studies. Gender issues were raised in family studies long ago, though they were not defied as such then. When J. McLennan presented his scheme of transfer from maternal law to fraternal law, his arguments were based on the assumption that transformation of initial totemic groups into exogamic matrilinear groups is explained by shortage of women due to the tradition to kill newborn girls. There were two possible ways out of this situation: either women are snatched from other groups, i.e., exogamy, or polyandry. In its turn, polyandry was developing in two ways, when husbands could be from the same tribe or brothers (Tibetan version). In the event of exogamy, as well as in case of polyandry, woman lives together with the relatives of her husband (or husbands), i.e. turns to be to greater or to less extent subordinate to the man. In case of Nair family model, only maternal kinship matters, therefore, maternal law stems from this.

All changes that have taken place in the patriarchal family are primarily connected with the feminist movement in late 19th and early 20th centuries that swept the majority of industrial countries. New opportunities to cover the whole range of social roles naturally changed the status of women in the 20th century and in the modern society. Transfer of women from subordinate to equal position required not only "victory" over men, but also taking up their territory. This was possibly only if masculine methods were used everywhere. This was justified, since namely masculine still remains to be not only the pat-

tern, but a human criterion. However, the process of female conquest was not painless. Often, high price had to be paid for this aspiration for freedom. Therefore, alongside with this striving for renovation we also reveal women's aggression as a desire to revenge for the past and to make up for the lost time.

The idea of gender equality has passed several stages in its development. One of the most popular topics in the modern family policy studies is the topic of combination of family duties and work as part of gender equality achievement. It is based on the thesis of equal relations in the family. Lately, the number of advocates of complete equality in the family has increased in Russia, that is proved by the results of the latest research of the Russian Public Opinion Research Center carried out in 153 localities of the Russian Federation. The previous research was carried out in 2005. Only 32% of Russians believe that patriarchal family where the man is the head of the family is an ideal family (versus 38 percent in 2005). Women become more and more equal participants of the labour market. In this environment, traditional view that a man can come home from work and indulge in rest, while the woman should serve him (give him to eat, to drink and put him to sleep) gradually passes and is not supported by women. In spite of the fact that almost half of the interviewed (46%) believe that even if the woman works and contributes to the family budget she should not get delayed at work (or anywhere else) since she has family household duties. This idea is supported by the majority of men (54%) and over one third of women (39%).

In spite of the fact that Russian women are very busy, the results of the survey show that children upbringing still remains primarily a woman's duty. 22% of the respondents stated that mainly woman is doing this and only 2% answered that this is done mostly by man. 44% assured that both spouses participate in children upbringing. However, the public opinion is dominated by the view that if a woman has successful professional career and dedicates a lot of time to work, she spends less time with the children. Therefore, the children do not get enough of mother care, which is one of the causes for the growth of juvenile delinquency, the number of neglected children, behaviour deviations, as well as alcohol and drug abuse. Certainly, they are not related directly. But certain tendencies are obvious, and most often the complaints of the society about these problems are addressed to mother, rather than to father.

*Family duties distribution between the spouses
(responses as %)*

	wife	hus- band	Both are equally responsible
Breadwinning	5	34	30
Distributions of money for major expenses	8	12	50
Distribution of money for current expenses	36	3	32
Bringing up children	22	2	44
Decisions on leisure-time activities, holidays	10	3	54
Family household issues	31	3	37
Relations with relatives	13	3	55

Who is the head in the family (responses as %)

	Men's re- sponses	Women's responses
Head of the family is the man (only if there is no man, the woman becomes the head of the family)	38	27
The breadwinner	10	13
The one who knows the ropes	12	15
There should not be any head at all. All important decisions should be made jointly, and less important ones in conformity with the existing duties distribution	36	39

Source: "Trud", July 10, 2008.

Both tables show that equality in the family so much spoken about is more likely imaginary, rather than real. In addition, the psychologists underline existence of role waves in the modern society. On the one hand, the type of strong, successful and independent women is popular in the society, on the other hand, in the majority of cases men prefer to create family with those women who are able to resign themselves (or at least demonstrate the readiness for this), who can run the house and create a homely home.

At the same time, there are not many special studies of gender aspects in family behaviour. Most often, these issues become part of other researches on this topic. And therefore, the pilot study of M. Gorlach is especially interesting in this respect. The study included 24 families of Moscow State University postgraduates (at the age of 25–30) who live in the dormitory, have been married for 2–6 years and have one child. The aim of the study was to reveal family role dissonance that was defined as inconsistency of assumptions (ideal believes) of the spouses. The results of the research showed that there is dissonance in all examined areas of family life, such as housekeeping, leisure activities, finances, and bringing up children. It exists at two levels: (1) dissonance as discrepancy of men's and women's assumptions about certain type of family relations; (2) dissonance as inconformity of assumptions with real behaviour [Gorlach 2002]. In real life, the egalitarian model of family relations is rarely considered to be a norm. The family status of a woman is still connected with the status of housewife and child-minder. The new phenomenon consists in more active involvement of women into business life than men's involvement into housekeeping. That is why, in the environment of overall social transformation women begin to question traditional roles distribution in the family and try to achieve gender alignment based on equal opportunities in all areas of activity.

But in their discussions about adjustment of men and women to the transformations in Russia at the end of the 20th century, many authors mention that economic changes had more dramatic impact on men, rather than on women [Ashwin 2007, p. 4]. The breadwinner role made the role of the man more vulnerable in the conditions when he lost his status of the major breadwinner and had to find something meaningful outside his professional activity. In case of break with the family, men run the risk to remain without any social basis and any spiritual support, which is fraught with their possible descent. In this situation, it is namely family (female) control that can deter drunkenness and other dangerous forms of behaviour.

It happens that in conditions of society transformation, the format of "traditional" family helps both men and women to cope with difficult situation. If a woman lost her work, in her functions of a housewife she maintains close links with other members of the family, with her girl friends and former colleagues. While the man who has lost his work finds himself in the situation of fragile social connections when

he needs them most of all (this situation was very well described in many soviet movies). This gives a man a chance to strengthen his relations with the family and thus survive these hard times and return to the usual status. Hence, the “double burden” of woman during crisis times can become a benefit for her and help her to survive in these hard times. Relatively speaking, this conclusion is supported by the situation of male and female mortality in the Russian Federation.

The researches of family and family relations initiated or supported by the UN organizations (2000–2008). In 2004, the report “Evolution of reproductive behaviour in transforming Russia” was prepared in the framework of UNFPA project “Development and implementation of regional population and development strategies”. Sociological research was carried out in the Saratov and Smolensk regions by employment and social services. Women of reproductive age participated in the survey.

Answers to the question *“When do you believe one should create a family?”* showed strong assumption that creation of the family should be postponed. The most popular point of view was that the family should be created after completion of education and acquiring of a profession. In Saratov, this opinion is supported by 36.6% of respondents, and in Smolensk 45.3%. According to this view, the best age for family creation by people with higher education begins from 22–23, provided that they entered university immediately after school. There is also widely spread opinion that the family should be created after professional career is built and certain level of prosperity is reached. In Saratov, where the majority of respondents had complete or incomplete higher education this opinion was expressed by 30.5% of the respondents, while in Smolensk, where the educational level of the respondents turned out to be lower this answer was given by 12.1%. As far as the notion of “family”, the majority of the respondents connect it rather with the notion “marriage” than “children”. The first place took the answer “spouses in registered marriage with children”.

In response to the question *“To what place in the system of values would you put family in comparison with professional carrier, well-being, and etc.?”* the majority of the respondents put the family to the first place (76% in Saratov and 95.1% in Smolensk). It is necessary to underline that these answers were given by women. But in Saratov,

where the majority of interviewed women were highly educated women, almost a quarter of them put the family to the second and even lower place. If this answer is correlated with the previous one, it may turn out that the respondents put the family to the first place (before the career and well-being), implying that one should not remain single for the sake of professional career and wealth. At the same time, half of the women surveyed in Saratov and three fourths of the women in Smolensk believe that the level of income influences the decision on family creation.

In response to the question about changes of attitude to family in Russia the majority of respondents believe that it improves. As far as the causes for this attitude deterioration the respondents indicated steep increase of living costs (1st place) and uncertainty about social guarantees (2nd place). In addition, the responders also indicated increase of importance of well-being and professional career. It should be noted that if these values are put to the first place then even with high standard of living of population the family becomes an impediment for women striving for personal success.

An important role in the change of attitude towards family was also played by the increase of sexual freedom that was mentioned by 26% of women in Saratov and 30% in Smolensk. This tendency is more explicit in large cities where life is anonymous.

In response to the question about satisfaction with their living conditions about two thirds of the women interviewed in Saratov and almost half of interviewed women in Smolensk responded that their living conditions were bad and even larger share of them did not anticipate any improvement in near future.

Noteworthy, that 59% of the respondents in Saratov and 91% in Smolensk interviewed in 2004 believed that the state or the society represented by its social institutes and government authorities had the right to influence the family formation. In addition, the majority of the respondents believed that these measures should be taken at the federal level.

In response to the question *“What birth-rate boosting measure would enjoy the highest support of population?”* every second woman in Saratov mentioned provision of housing.

The answers of the respondents to the question about their awareness of already existing assistance schemes for families with children are very interesting for analysis. Only 19.6% of the respondents in Saratov and 9% in Smolensk believe that they are well informed about these programs. This gives the reason to believe that it is the weakest place of the services whose task is to inform population. They simply do not perform their duties. That is why it is no surprise that often families do not enjoy those modest benefits provided to them by law.

Pilot research “Family and Birth-rate” was carried out by the Federal State Statistic Service in 2006 in three constituents of the Russian Federation with participation of the experts from the Center for Population Issues of the Moscow State University named after M.V. Lomonosov. The research was conducted in the framework of the project “Preliminary Stage of “Family and Birth-Rate” survey” with financial assistance of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities and United Nations Children’s Fund. The survey was conducted among married people (both officially and unofficially married) including women of reproductive age, their husbands and teenaged children (15–17-year old), as well as single mothers and their teenaged children. Since the age of the main group of respondents in “Family Strategies of Modern Student Youth” was 20–21-year old, the comparative analysis in “Family and Birth-Rate” project can be made on the basis of those parts of the survey that include answers from the respondents under the age of 25. They constituted 13.5% of all interviewed persons in the Tver Region (8.4% women and 5.1% men), 26.9% (14.6 and 12.3, respectively) in Nizhni Novgorod and 24.4% (15.4 and 9.0) in the Republic of Mariy-El.

The majority of interviewed 15–17-year old teenagers believe that registration of the first marriage is desirable, but not compulsory. Over half of the respondents under the age of 25 who participated in the pilot survey believe that it is necessary to live together for a while and test the feelings before registration of the first marriage. Only 10% of young boys and girls from Nizhni Novgorod and 13.9% from Tver believe that registration of marriage should precede the beginning of conjugal relations. Over one third of respondents adhere to this opinion in Mariy-El.

In response to the question about the ideal number of children asked in the section “Reproductive Orientation” men and women under 25 gave the answer 2.00 in the Tver Region, 2.38 and 2.23 in Nizhni Novgorod, 1.80 and 2.46 in the Republic of Mariy-El. If we compare different generations it becomes obvious that young men and women indicate much lower figure that older people.

Reasons for marriage. The first place in the group of women under 25 was given to psychological motive that was explained as wish “to be constantly with the significant other”. The second place got demographic reason or the wish “to give birth to a child in the near future”. The third place was given to economic reason “to get material benefits as a result of joint householding”. And the fourth place was given to the social reason “it is customary in our society for an adult person to have a family”. The distribution of places by the men of this age group is the same, but the third place is given to the social reason and respectively the fourth to economic reason (moreover, the economic reason takes the last place in all economic groups).

In all groups, the reason of having a child is given the highest score to psychological reasons of these types of behaviour. Modern social and economic conditions that predetermine the way of life do not motivate people to marry and have children.

Thus, in the context that interests us this survey gave the following key points for the comparative analysis: young respondents much more often consider that registration of marriage should be postponed; the young people who believe that at first, it is necessary to live together for a year or two and to test the feelings, and only after that to register the marriage have the lowest expectations about the number of children; the estimation of psychological reasons for marriage, namely “the wish to be with the beloved person” is high.

We cannot but mention one more publication that was supported by the UN office in the Russian Federation, that is “Russian Demographic Policy: From Contemplation To Action” (2008) prepared by a group of independent national experts (V.N. Arkhangel'sky, A.E. Ivanova, O.S. Chudinovskiykh, S.G. Misikhina, under the supervision of V.V. Yelizarov). This work diagnoses with high level of preciseness all problematic areas of the modern Russian demographic policy as

part of social policy. The authors fairly mention that in spite of unprecedented state measures aimed at birthrate boosting the share of these measures cost in GDP and contribution to the family income are much lower than in European countries. About 2/3 of the Russian population are not satisfied by their living conditions and do not have much chance to change them. In addition, every fourth family lives in bad or extremely bad conditions. Statistical data (at least that is available to us) of the social position of parturient women are not encouraging at all: 43% of children live in the families where income is below the subsistence level¹.

The authors consider that it will not be possible to overcome the demographic crisis and they do not share the optimism of officials that it can be achieved already by 2015. The authors have well-grounded arguments for that based primarily on the characteristics of age and gender structure of the Russian population and its deformation. Relative birth rate growth (in 2007, the number of births increased by 8.3%) is connected with the demographic wave: in 1981–1982, the Soviet government implemented active state support measures for families with children that led to surge of birthrate. Its local pinnacle was reached in 1987. Thus, if we add the average length of generation of 25 years to 1987 we will get 2011–2012. In other words, the pinnacle of birthrate is still ahead. And what is after that? After 2012, there is the threat of the next birth rate decrease in Russia because of the same demographic wave. Moreover, even in the case of the most optimistic scenario by 2010 the birth rate will reach only the level of 1993.

¹ It should be mentioned, that significant data necessary for evaluation of the demographic processes are not covered by statistics any more. They include marriages broken by the age of the betrothed, by the age of the fiancé and the bride, by the previous marriage, divorces broken by the age of the divorcees, by the duration of the marriage, by the sequence of the marriage, marriages in urban and rural areas, marriages and divorces broken down by ethnic origin, by the level of education, by the source of income, occupation. Our modern statistics data available to us give us information about the marriages broken down by age groups: from 18, 18–24, 25–34, 35 and older; total number of the first and repeated marriages; divorces broken down by age groups: from 18, 18–24, 25–39, 40 and older; divorces with common children under 18 only for 46 territories of the RF. Now, this data can be seen only in separate studies (for instance, RusGGS materials, 2004), survey conducted in the framework of international program "Generation and Gender" with financial support of the Pension Fund of the RF, Max-Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Rostock, Germany, and Independent Institute of Social Policy.

Concomitantly, there is the process of reduction of working population in the Russian Federation by one million persons per year. Therefore, the increase of burden of dependents is expecting us in future as there will be 670–470 dependants per each one thousand of working population by 2020–2025 and on. This can lead to the situation when by 2050 there will be one dependent per one working person. It is an exorbitant burden that will be inherited by those who will be born already today and will remain after us.

The section about the population attitude to reproductive issues completely reflects the results of those social researches that were conducted in different regions of the Russian Federation within the last several years, in particular, those presented in this report and conducted with the support of the UN organizations.

Research of family strategies of the student youth in Russia

1. Pilot projects. In March–April 2008, pilot researches were conducted with the aim of identification the attitude of student youth to marriage, family, birth of children and the problems that they can encounter in the near future. Students of 4 humanitarian and natural science faculties from MSU named after M.V. Lomonosov and students of technical faculties from Irkutsk universities took part in this research². The average age of the respondents was 21.

This research was preceded by two small studies. One of which was initiated and conducted by the students of the Faculty of Chemistry as part of “Sociology” course. 50 people were interviewed, of which 33 were men and 17 women. The age of the respondents was from

² The research was carried out on the basis of the Centre for Comparative Social Policies and Social Governance under the Governance Department of the Moscow State University named after M. Lomonosov (N.S. Grigorieva, L.G. Sudas, M.I. Yurasova).

17 to 25. The utmost majority of the participants were brought up in the families with both parents (43). Almost half of these families had 2 children (20). During the time of the survey all participants were not married. 16 persons were Moscovites, and 26 were from other cities of the Russian Federation, 2 came from rural areas and 6 from CIS countries. In response to the question *“What does the family mean for you?”* 10 persons could not decide what to say, 10 persons answered that it was literally EVERYTHING for them, 7 wrote that it is a social unit, and 4 said that is prop and stay in life. The opinion of others was dispersed. It should be mentioned that about one fifth of the respondents did not even try to define the notions of a family and this line in the questionnaire remained unfilled. Surprising unanimity of opinion was demonstrated in the response to the question *“At what age do you plan to create a family (to get officially married)?”* Everyone indicated 25 as a reference point (at about 25, at 25, after 25). No other options were offered. In addition, the utmost majority would like to have children (44), 21 of them would like to have two children, 14 of them would like to have three and only 1 person was ready to have more children, while all the rest plan to have 1 child. In response to the question *“What could be the reason for the marriage?”* 13 gave the answer “love”, 16 answered “birth of a child”, 11 — “to acquire the status of a married person”, and 9 “purchase of housing”. 25 young men and 7 girls supported the idea of so called “informal marriage” as “possibility to get to know each other better”, and “to try what family life and household activities mean”. It is interesting to mention that the share of the young girls who supported informal marriage turned out to be lower (7) than the share of the girls for whom it was difficult to define their attitude (8). In other words, the share of the girls who expressed their wish to live in informal marriage was much lower than of men (25 supported, 5 could not give any answer, and 3 were against). Birth of a child is more often considered by girls as an impulse for understanding the need to get officially married. As far as the reasons for divorce, the girls indicated primarily unsatisfied needs, mainly material ones, in other words, their answers looked more pragmatic than the answers of young men.

In the same 2006–2007 academic year, the students of the 4th year of the Faculty of Geography had an assignment to write an essay *“Low birth rate in Russia and the state: can the situation be changed by political means?”* as part of their “Sociology” course. This topic was

chosen by the large majority of the students, 45%, which testifies to the genuine interests of the young people to the proposed topic. In addition, young men turned out to be even more active than girls, as they constituted 60% of those who selected this topic. The works of the students turned out to be so interesting and creative, that there appeared an idea to include them into a collective essay, the extracts from which will finish this report.

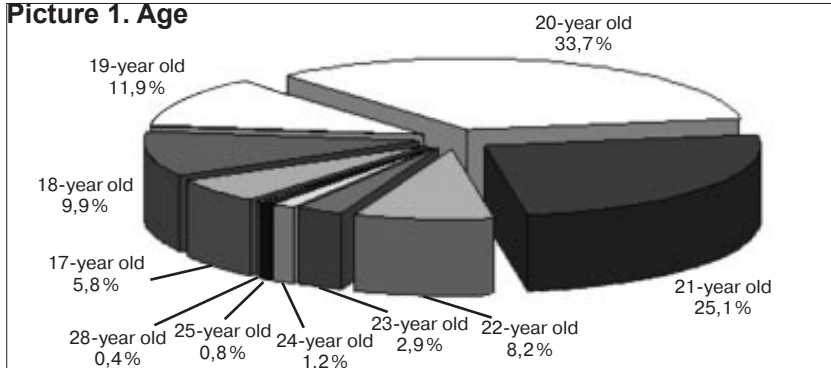
In 2007–2008 academic year, this topic, though a little bit modified “*What should be the priority of the demographic policy in Russia: increase of birthrate, mortality reduction or migration?*” was again offered to the students of the next year. But it did not arouse such an active interest, it was selected only by 8% of the students who were writing essays. Unfortunately, it is difficult to say why the interest to this topic declined so much. The results of the student activity forced us to pay attention to at least three important issues. Firstly, it is absolutely evident that the perception of family by students has changed. Secondly, when the majority of young people built their professional career and assess their own success they prefer to do it alone rather than in the family. Thirdly, family behaviour strategies differ among different groups of young people and one of the sources of these differences is education. Fourthly, priorities of the expected state assistance differ to some extent from the measures offered by the state.

Pilot surveys that were conducted in spring of 2008 covered students of natural science, technical and humanitarian specialties from Moscow and Irkutsk. They answered 10 questions.

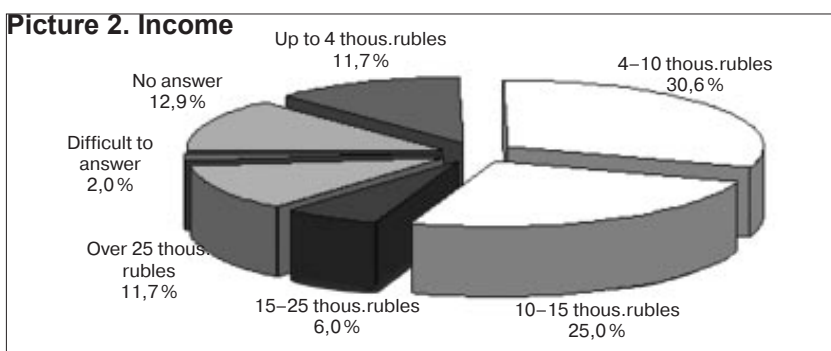
248 young people took part in this voluntary survey. 118 young men and 126 young women participated in it, so it can be considered gender-balanced. The majority of the respondents (58.8%) were 20–21-year old. The majority of the students were from the senior years, and 53.6% were the students of the fourth year (Picture 1).

The income of the students differs, about one third of them (30.6%) have from 4 to 10 thousand roubles per month, and the monthly income of 25% constitutes from 10 to 15 thousand roubles. About 15% found it difficult to answer this question or did not want to give an answer to it (Picture 2).

Picture 1. Age



Picture 2. Income



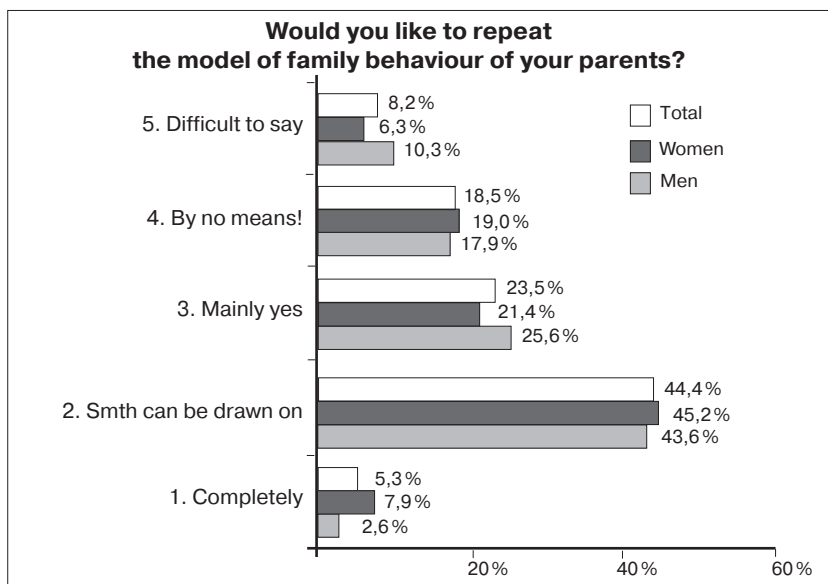
As far as professional specialization of the participants, we have defined the survey participants from Irkutsk as representatives of technical specialties, and Moscow students as representatives of humanitarian and natural science specialties. An attempt to reflect regional representation failed, as out of 248 survey participants 86 live in Moscow (6 in the Moscow Region) and 105 in the Irkutsk Region. Other regions (31) were mostly represented by 1 person; 12 persons did not give an answer to the question about their place of residence, and 5 students are residents of Ukraine, Belarus and China. Thus, it indirectly proves the hypothesis that it becomes more and more difficult for people from other cities and regions to enter universities in the capital. The overwhelming majority of the interviewed students are ethnic Russians (87.1%).

While analyzing the responses to the first question “*In your opinion, a family is ...*” we encountered the same problem as in the student

survey in 2006. The students cannot define what a family is, their responses vary greatly. That is probably why the most frequent was refusal to provide any definition. 36 persons could not give an answer to this question (29 men and 7 women). The second most popular answer is "family is a social unit" (7 men, and 13 women). After this the variation of opinions is very high, that is why we present the most popular answers that were repeated at least two times. Among young men these were "mutual understanding, mutual assistance, love", "place where you are understood and where you are waited for", "mother, father and me", "close people, friends", "union of people who love each other". The most popular answers of the girls were "an integral unit where people cannot live without each other", "the closest people", "happiness, love, and support". No other answers were repeated. Thus, practically 200 people gave different answers in their attempt to define what a family is in the eyes of modern student youth. These answers varied from "me and my dog" to "everything that I have".

There is no big difference between the answers of young men and women. It should seem that there is nothing terrible that young people cannot clearly formulate their answer to this question. However, such uncertainty has its own sources, particularly, in the fact that young people are oriented at other values (education, interesting work, professional career, and etc.) rather than family values. These particular values are supported by their parents, friends and public opinion. One cannot state categorically that young people do not have any family values, but it is evident that these are not prevailing ones and "success" of life is judged not on their basis. The fact that the notion of "family" is not defined from legal point of view cannot but affect the answers.

The answer to the question *"Would you like to repeat in your life the model of family behaviour of your parents?"* turned out to be gender-balanced. The majority of boys and girls believe (respectively, 43.6% and 45.2%) that something could be drawn upon (total 44%, and 53.6% in Moscow). But we should mention that this happens in the situation where the majority of the project participants come from families with both parents. The least supported answer, only 5.3%, was "to completely repeat the experience of the parents". The girls obviously prevail here with 7.9% versus 2.6% of young men.



The most popular answer to the question “*What is your attitude to unregistered marriage?*” is “this gives possibility to try what family life is” (43.7%).

When after the interview, the answers were discussed in the groups and legal comment was given about what the students call informal marriage the number of those who supported this form of relations significantly reduced. Even larger protest was caused by the proposal to call these relations cohabitation. Emotions swept the students, they were very active in their protest against this particular word. However, after discussions on how the term “informal marriage” appeared, even the most active had to agree that substitution of terms has actually taken place. But the students still support the last argument that “it is accepted so in the modern society, that is what all magazines and newspapers write about.” Lately, cohabitation is perceived by the students as a certain stage of the family life cycle, which the majority believe to compulsory precede the legal union (some participants of the discussion gave the following comparison “this is the same as to try to enter university without primary education”). To great extent it is explained by the fact that for over two decades there have not been any limitations on such ideas dissemination by mass media, moreover, such behaviour is rather supported, than blamed or discussed. This is considered to be the norm

of life of celebrities from show-business, popular actors and producers. This cannot but affect those who watch these programs, read numerous interviews and also want to become successful (and famous) though in another area of professional activity.

If we look at the dynamics of the attitude towards informal marriage, our study shows that by the 5th year the number of students who support the informal marriage reduces from over 50% to 18%, and the number of those who expressed negative attitude has increased. The number of the girls who do not support informal marriage is higher than the number of young men (12.8% in comparisons to 23.8%). If we judge by the specialty of the university, we can see that the greatest support of informal marriages comes from the students specializing in natural studies, which is natural to certain extent, as there are more men there and they are clearly oriented to the future career and most often in their profession. They believe that “official family” can impede this. We should note that young men demonstrated certain infantilism during the discussion, like “something will have to be done”, “I got used that when I come home everything is ready, cleaned, and my mother even begs me to eat something. I can concentrate only on my studies, but if I have children I can forget about my professional career. It will be constant rat race, the wife will be annoyed to death, and love will disappear.”

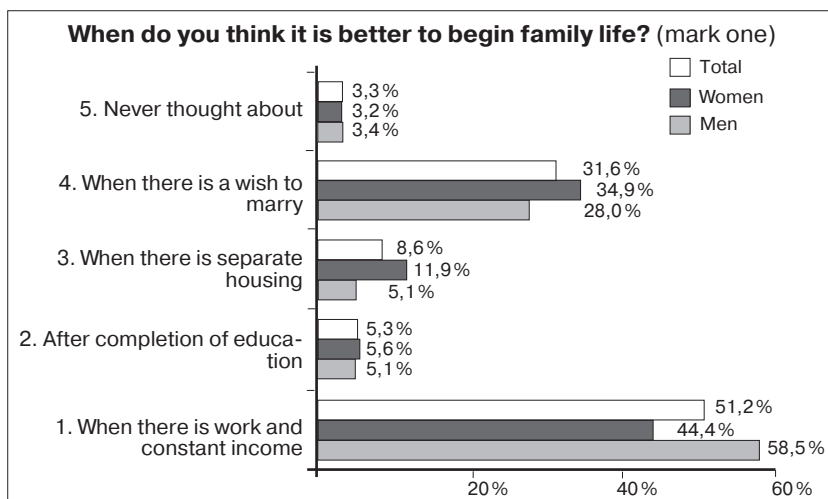
Year	1	2	3	4	5	Higher education	Total
1. Will allow to test the feelings of each other	25,8	21,7	11,8	28,6	31,3		25,9
2. Provides possibility to feel what family life is like	58,1	39,1	52,9	47,4	18,8	66,7	47,0
3. It is more convenient like this	3,2		5,9	3,0	18,8		4,0
4. Negative	9,7	34,8	23,5	15,8	25,0	33,3	18,2
5. It is simply customary so now	3,2	4,3	5,9	5,3	6,3		4,9
	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Two main reasons for official marriage were indicated, such as love (52.3%) and birth of a child (42.4%). It is notable, that the first reason

prevails though insignificantly among the young men and the second one among the girls.

	Men	Women	Total
1. Birth of a child	38,5	46,0	42,4
2. Love	53,0	51,6	52,3
3. Acquiring of the status	6,8	6,3	6,6
4. Wish of the parents	0	1,6	,8
5. Condition to get necessary work	1,7	,8	1,2
6.All together	4,3	0	2,1

The most popular answer to the question “*When do you believe it is best of all to start family life?*” turned out to be the answer “when there is work and constant income” (51.2%), almost 60% of young men think so. It is the most popular answer among girls as well (44.4%). This answer does not depend on the specialty of the university. The second place is taken by the answer “when there is the wish to create family” 31.6% and girls dominate there (34.9% versus 28.0%).



An important tendency has been revealed, as in response to the question “*How many children would you like to have?*” almost 60% of the respondents said that they would like to have two children, the second place took the answer that they would like to have three and more children (22.1%). Moreover, if the girls prevail among those

who would like to have two children (64% and 53%, respectively), the young men prevail among those who dream about more children (26.3% and 18.3%). We cannot but be concerned about the fact that about 3% of the respondents do not initially plan to have children.

	Men	Women	Total
1. One	15,3%	16,7%	16,0%
2. Two	53,4%	64,3%	59,0%
3. Three and more	26,3%	18,3%	22,1%
4. Do not plan to have children	5,1%	0,8%	2,9%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

If we analyze regional differences, the answers about the plans to have many children prevail among the students from Irkutsk (over 60%). The percentage of the answers of Moscovites, students from natural science faculties who want to have a large family is also high, though it is lower (50.0%).

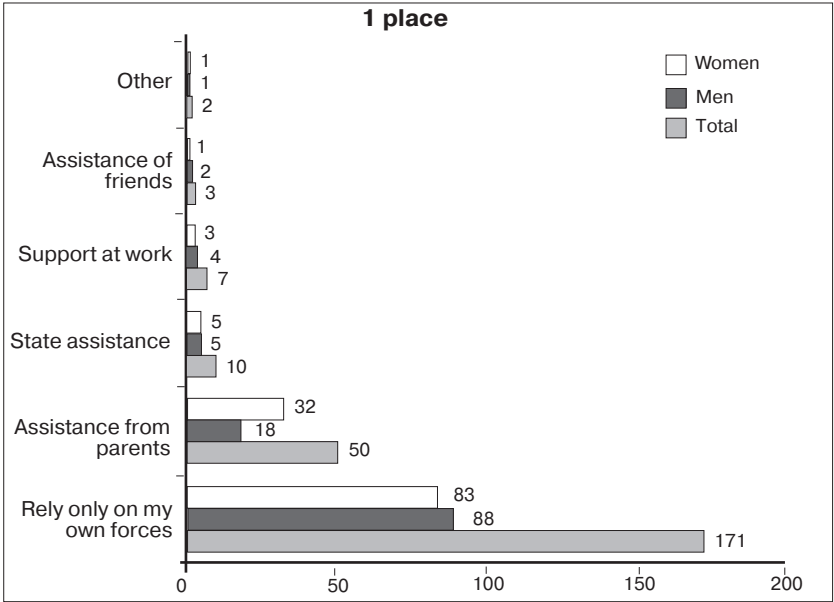
	Technical Irkutsk	Humanitarian Moscow	Science Moscow	Total
1. One	15,2%	24,2%	14,3%	16,3%
2. Two	60,1%	54,5%	50,0%	58,2%
3. Three and more	22,5%	18,2%	28,6%	22,6%
4. Do not plan to have children	2,2%	3,0%	7,1%	2,9%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

This data is comparable with the results of a large-scale research carried out by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center (RPORC) in April, 2007. The RPORC research showed that the overwhelming majority of the participants at the age of 18–24 would ideally prefer to have two children. But at the same time, we should pay attention to practically complete coincidence of the resulting figure of those who do not plan to have any children at all; we have the same 3 percent.

Number of children	• in ideal conditions	• at the time of the survey
Not a single one	3%	19%
One	7%	28%
Two	44%	36%
Three	27%	11%
Four and more	15%	5%

Source: official Internet site of the Russian Public Opinion Research Center: http://wciom.ru/arkhiv/tematicheskii-arkhiv/item\single/4340.html?no_cache=&cHash=43f6528c07

Answers of the students to the following four questions help to reveal what (whose) assistance the students rely upon, what is their priority choice. As a result, we can try to relate the wish to have certain number of children with the methods and forms of the state support that is available for young families now. In other way, we are speaking about the relevance of the state efforts to the clearly formulated requirements of students. Thus, in response to the question *“Which support you can rely upon during implementation of your family strategies (indicate by the level of priority)?”* the large majority of the respondents said “I rely only on myself”. 171 respondents gave this answer (83 girls and 88 young men). The second place took the answer “assistance from the parents.” Girls primarily rely upon it, they gave such answers two times more often than the young men. Only ten persons (5 and 5) rely upon the state assistance and very few participants rely on the assistance from the employer (at work), there are only 7 of them, and assistance from friends (there were three of them).



113 students put the assistance of the parents to the second place. The answer “I rely solely on myself” took the second position, and the state assistance turned out to be at the last place out of all answer variants.

State assistance

Rank	Men		Women		Total
1	5	6,0%	5	5,0%	5,4%
2	2	2,4%	3	3,0%	2,7%
3	15	17,9%	22	21,8%	20,0%
4	17	20,2%	16	15,8%	17,8%
5	34	40,5%	49	48,5%	44,9%
6	10	11,9%	6	5,9%	8,6%
7	1	1,2%			0,5%
Total	84	100,0%	101	100,0%	100,0%

Assistance of parents

Rank	Men		Women		Total
1	18	19,6%	32	28,6%	24,5%
2	49	53,3%	64	57,1%	55,4%
3	11	12,0%	8	7,1%	9,3%
4	10	10,9%	6	5,4%	7,8%
5	3	3,3%	2	1,8%	2,5%
7	1	1,1%			0,5%
Total	92	100,0%	112	100,0%	100,0%

Exactly half of the respondents believe that the state by its system of family assistance can influence the decisions made by the family. The answers of other groups are close to this (19.6% believe that the state must have an influence by setting the objectives of family policy or has the right by policy elaboration). But 20% of respondents consider that family is exclusively personal issue and the state has nothing to do with it.

	Men	Women	Total
1. Can influence (by its family support system)	45,2%	54,4%	50,0%
2. Has the right to influence (develops policy)	3,5%	7,2%	5,4%
3. This is exclusively personal issue and the state has nothing to do with it	26,1%	20,0%	22,9%
4. Should (if it sets objectives of family policy)	20,9%	18,4%	19,6%
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

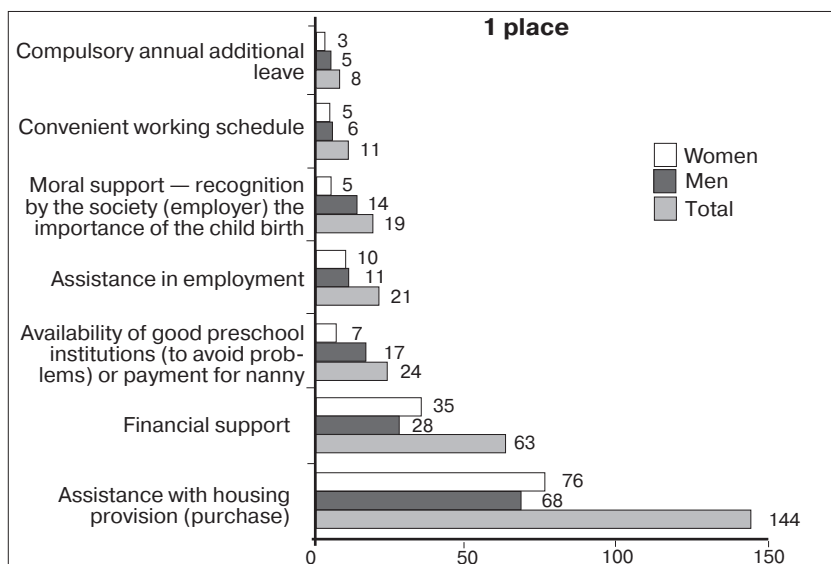
If we relate the answers of the respondents to the specialty of their universities, the students of humanitarian faculties obviously prevail (62%) in their opinion that the state can influence the family policy.

The answers of the students to the question *“What measure to boost birth rate would you support most of all?”* are especially interesting. The answer that support can be given acquiring housing significantly leads here. It was given by 144 persons (68 men and 76 girls). The second place was given to financial support. 68 persons, or one third of the respondents think so (28 men and 35 girls), and the third place was taken by the answer “provision of good preschool institutions” given by 24 persons. It should be noted that those respondents who put the second answer to the first place, put assistance in acquiring housing to the second place.

One can assume that these answers are well correlated with the answers to the previous answer and demonstrate that priority state support measures to families with children do not meet the expectations of the students. As we can see, the support in improvement of their living conditions and solution of their housing problems in general is important for them. And since they cannot receive this assistance to the extent they expect to, they select (let us make an allowance for student maximalism) “I can rely solely on myself”.

Currently, as far as the level of housing provision, quality and comfort of housing Russia is behind not only Western European countries, but also the former socialist countries. In 60–70s of the previous century, large scale projects on birth rate boosting were implemented in these countries (including the USSR). For instance, the experiment on utilization of housing programs for motivation of demographic behaviour in Bulgaria and Hungary are well-known (Sociology: History, Theory and Practices, 2006). These programs can be assessed as positive, because ten years later population growth was registered in Bulgaria, and overcome of negative balance of mortality and birthrate outlined in Hungary. Unfortunately, these programs were rolled back due to breakdown of the socialist system, transfer of these countries to market relations and retreat of the states from the social and demographic policy.

The choice of the students is evident and it is reflected on the scheme, they rely on the state support namely in the issues of acquiring independent housing for their family.



Financial support

Rank	Men		Women		Total
1	28	27,2%	35	29,9%	28,6%
2	36	35,0%	45	38,5%	36,8%
3	18	17,5%	21	17,9%	17,7%
4	12	11,7%	10	8,5%	10,0%
5	6	5,8%	6	5,1%	5,5%
6	1	1,0%			0,5%
7	2	1,9%			0,9%
Total	103	100,0%	117	100,0%	100,0%

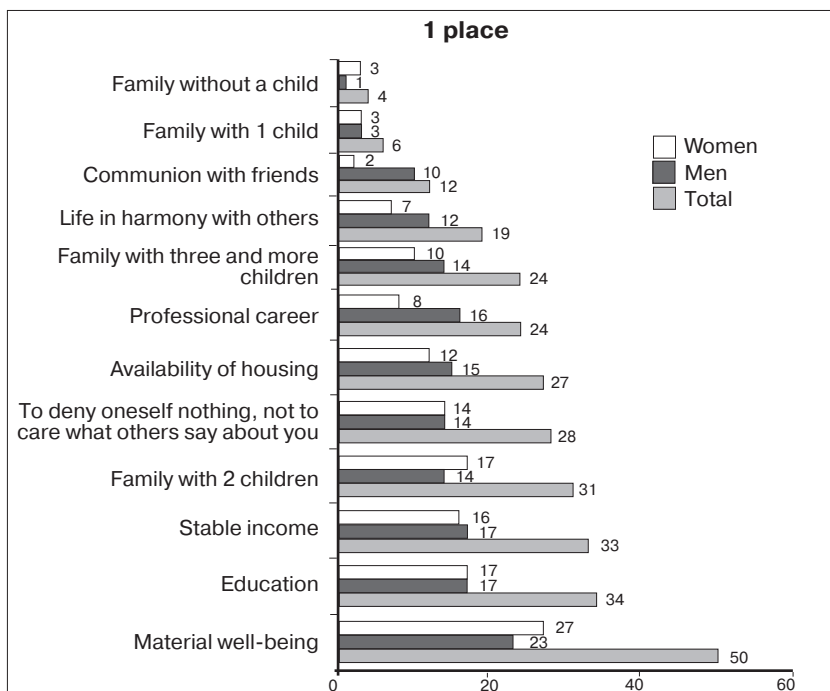
Availability of good preschool institutions

Rank	Men		Women		Total
1	17	17,3%	7	6,5%	11,7%
2	13	13,3%	16	14,8%	14,1%
3	21	21,4%	14	13,0%	17,0%
4	12	12,2%	24	22,2%	17,5%
5	19	19,4%	19	17,6%	18,4%
6	10	10,2%	18	16,7%	13,6%
7	5	5,1%	10	9,3%	7,3%
Total	98	100,0%	108	100,0%	100,0%

It should be mentioned that connection between the plans to have children and living conditions was examined in the Russian research in the framework of the program "Youth. Demography. Housing" (2005) and other, but they did not focus specifically on student families.

In 2008, Department of Sociology of Management of the Faculty of Public Administration in the MSU named after M.V. Lomonosov jointly with the Department of Social and Psychological Researchers of Stupino Municipal Region conducted a sociological survey of the population of the town of Stupino in the Moscow Region (supervisor A.A. Barbasov) "Living conditions and demographic behaviour of the inhabitants of Stupino Municipal Region." 244 persons from three age groups were interviewed. If we turn to the age group from 18 to 24, housing problems were put to the first place by them (with significant outrun) as the main reason that impedes the respondents to have the desired number of children. 81.8% persons interviewed in this age group gave this answer. Financial difficulties were named by them as the main problem that does not allow to solve housing issues (impossibility to save money to purchase housing, difficulties with having access to mortgage and high mortgage rates that actually double the cost of housing, absence of flexible credit system, impossibility to register in the waiting lists for municipal housing and other organizational difficulties). It is noteworthy, that in response to the question about the spheres of demographic policy regulation 75% of the respondents answered that this is the sphere ensuring various forms of access to housing.

And finally, the last question of the survey *"What do you consider important to be able to assess your life as successful?"* Material well-being took the first place. 50 persons gave this answer, which constituted 22% of all respondents. The second place (and it is not surprising for this group) was taken by good education, 34 persons gave this answer (17 men and 17 girls), the third place was taken by the stable income — 33 persons, and the fourth — availability of housing — 31. The values of these three indicators are very close. But collectively, material well-being and stable income give an integral indicator that shows important role of specifically material factor as the indicator of success.



2. Internet survey³. An Internet survey was being conducted for two weeks in June-July, 2008 where the questions used in the pilot project were asked. 5161 persons took part in the survey (3282 young men and 1879 young women). The average age of the respondents was 27. 4281 persons were students of technical specialties, and 880 of humanitarian. In general, the results of the Internet survey confirmed the results of the pilot studies. The students were also not able to give their definition of a family, however, the 3613 persons believe that an ideal family is the one where “two persons work, are equally involved in housekeeping and upbringing of children and are officially married.” If this answer is analyzed from gender point of view, we can certainly say that we have gender-balanced response.

Not a single participant of the Internet survey wanted to repeat the family behaviour model of their parents. Moreover, the answer “in

³ The questionnaire was placed on the site of the Innovation Holding FINAM. The research (supervisor L.A. Vasilenko) was conducted by the Social Policy Department of the Russian Civil Service under the President of the Russian Federation.

no case” turned out to be the most popular one, as it was given by 3407 person. The second place was taken by the answer “mainly yes” (916), the third one “something can be drawn on” (835), and only 3 persons found it difficult to answer this question.

A little more than half of the respondents — 2817 — support unofficial marriage, because it “enables us to test the feelings of each other” and “gives possibility to test what family life is like.” As we can see, these are very stable definitions that are replicated and are gradually moving as an explanation from one survey to another. However, the attitude of 1116 persons to unofficial marriage is negative.

Two possible reasons for marriage were given with practically the same level of frequency, namely love (2014 persons) and birth of a child (1977). The frequency of other reasons is insignificant. It is better to begin married life when the wish to create family appears. 3712 persons think so. The second frequent answer is when there is work and constant income (1231). And only one participant of the survey has not ever thought about the answer to this question.

The majority of the survey participants would ideally want to have two children (3244), while the number of those who would like to have one child (564) and those who would not like to have any children at all (587) is practically the same. Unlike the participants of pilot projects, the most popular answer to the question “*Whose assistance do you rely on?*” in the Internet survey is the assistance of the parents and only then on themselves. State assistance is the fourth answer in order of importance. Two views about the role of the state in family affairs significantly prevail in the answers: “the state formulates the policy (has the right to influence)” — (2365 persons) and “this is the personal issue, and the state has nothing to do there” (2701).

In response to the question what measures to boost birth rate you would rely on (arrange the answers by priority) the first place was given to financial support (1817), the second to moral support (acknowledgment by the society of the importance of child) — 1713, and the third place was given to the assistance with housing provision (1615). The values of these responses are very close. They can be defined as three main ones, as the values of other answers vary from 1 to 3 and no more, in other words cannot be taken into consideration.

And finally, the life of the respondents can be deemed as successful if they have housing. This specific indicator significantly prevails, it is three times higher than the closest ones, such as stable income and material well-being (the values of which are close to each other). The fifth place in assessing the success of their lives was given by the respondents to the family with two children.

Some conclusions

The following assumptions can be made on the basis of the conducted research:

- There are difficulties with understanding the family and its role in the life of a person. Young people find it difficult not only to define it, but the large majority of them give very proximate and often superficial characteristics.
- Ideally, the motivation of students is to have a family with two or three children. In this respect, the state can regard students as an active subject of demographic behaviour and take it into consideration in its demographic policy.
- Obtained education and future professional activity is perceived by the majority of this social group as the indicator of the current situation and the basis for achieving successful career.
- The students as the subject of the demographic policy are “beneficial” for the state. In their family behaviour they are oriented primarily at their own forces and consider education that they receive the basis for interesting and well-paid work and material well-being in future. But this position is typical primarily for the students of the leading educational institutions the demand for which in the modern Russian labour market is high and stable.
- When assessing how successful their life is the students are inclined to pay attention primarily to the material factors and professional career. Currently, family and children do not constitute important social priority in their system of values. They did not disappear completely, but have seriously sunk in the scale.
- The prevailing type of assistance that the students expect from the state is assistance with purchase of housing (even in the Internet

survey where it was not absolutely leading one, it was still among the three leading positions). Moreover, they do not expect to get “free of charge housing”, welfare mentality is not typical for them. The main conclusion that can be made on the basis of their answers is that it is very important and imperative for the state to implement sound housing policy for the young families which in their opinion would facilitate purchase of housing at an early stage. Therefore, the programs of guaranteed loans and subsidies, preferential mortgage conditions and etc. available for students and future young specialists that are not encumbered by complicated bureaucratic procedures become the priority objective.

Extracts from students' essays

- In market conditions, in order to be able to present oneself well in the labour market the person should be single and free, not bound in by any family commitments and be able to run the risk.
- In current conditions in Russia, transfer to the market does not stimulate young people to create families, rather on the contrary, everyone acts for himself, and people begin to unite only when they have already achieved something for themselves. Though education in Russia is not the recipe for success in you home country, there still exists some hope that something could be achieved. At least with our education (MSU) we have this chance. Many of us placed our stakes on high-quality education, which takes a lot of time and money. That is why it happens that education is the best contraceptive.
- We should find such place in life that can support us in future as well, however the professional career should not be played off against children, it is important to combine both of them in life. Though I do not see the prospects for that yet.
- I need to repay the education credit, rather than to think about the family and children!
- Today, it is not fashionable or prestigious to have a family. To certain extent the family is an indicator that you are not successful. There is no family cult in our country, and people who got married young are considered “to be fools to tie hand and foot.” When our parents were graduating from the universities, almost all their fellow students were married, though there are no such heroes among us.

- Two of my fellow-students have little children. So what? They have practically ceased any studies. They get good scores only because professors go into their condition. On the other hand, may be they are right, they will suffer for two years, but will find good work after that, as the employer will not be afraid that they will have to take maternity leave.
- Money is not the main thing. It is more important for us not to loose ourselves once the child is born.
- Circumspect urban development policy is needed, as well as family support policy of regional and local authorities. For instance, a young couple got married. Once they get a child they receive a room in youth family house with affordable accommodation payment. Even if utility payment is as high as for a two-room apartment, they will still have their own accommodation. These houses should be built not at the outskirts of the civilization, give the youth a chance to see that the state really supports families. That is why, if young people live in the downtown (and it is not called a “dying center” anymore), if children’s laugh fills playgrounds, it will mean that the CITY IS ALIVE!
- Demographic policy should be affected by other measures of social policy, and in current conditions this is housing. What does 250 thousand roubles mean in Russia? This is about 10 thousand US dollars. One can buy only 3 square meters with this money. To visualize it we can compare it with the Pumpkin’s House from the famous fairy-tale of Janny Rodary. But we also know that there is Seignior Tomato for every Pumpkin’s House.
- The best assistance from the state would be its control of price growth for housing. The state has enough possibilities to create logical crediting scheme and accessible mortgage faculties. Meanwhile, there is no confidence that you can rely on something just because you created a family. For some reason, if you want to rely on some support, you should be either sick, or disabled, or something should have happened with you. And if you are just a normal young man? What kind of support can you expect if you are not poor (but also not rich), if your parents have an apartment (but it is not yours), if you are just a student, but you are desperate to get married?
- The family of my sister with a baby live with us in our apartment. Our apartment is nice and big, that is why there is no chance for us to get a municipal flat for living space norms. The family of my sister

cannot be qualified as low-income one, as both she and her husband earn quite well. But they will n e v e r be able to buy an apartment in Moscow. Though they would be able to pay certain amount on a monthly basis. It would not be so very easy for them, but they would cope. But credit rates are so high (!) that as a result it is the same as if you have to buy two apartments, but give one of them as a present to someone. Why is the total floor space of the apartment taken into consideration in this case, as three of them actually live only in one tiny room (12 sq. meters). That is what should be taken into consideration when they are registered as the family which needs municipal apartment. I also feel sorry for my mum and dad. Ok, I am at the university all day long and come home late in the evening. But what about them? They have worked hard all their life to get this apartment and now they have to share it with the families of their children. What will happen when I get married? That is why once I graduate from the university I would like to study or to work for a couple of years abroad and then we shall see.

- My classmate and her boyfriend decided to live together in a summer house outside the city. It took them two hours every day to get to the city, and even more if suburban trains did not arrive on time. They could stand it only for three months after which they ditched the idea of family life and returned each to their own homes. They meet from time to time, but the wedding was postponed till better times.
- Modern migration policy does not take family factor into consideration. Preference can be given to young single men (for instance, from China, but income qualification should be set forth).
- If we are speaking about state demographic policy on the whole, it is actually not a policy, but material inducement, in addition to which real policy is needed, especially in education and health care. To be more precise, first policy is needed. We can feel very well the difference between the declared free-of-charge health care and the need to pay for every step. The quality of service is often so low, that people are even afraid to go to polyclinic. But when I only imagine that I decide to have a child, it would mean that I would be afraid for not only myself. If we add environmental problems and health problems in general, we get a really unfortunate picture. In general, if women give birth at older age, the health care system should take this into consideration and already take measures that would allow a woman to preserve good health in order to give birth to a healthy child.

- My friend from England stayed with me. She once saw how I bought a contraceptive in a kiosk. She asked me in the most delicate way why I bought that specific one. She was absolutely appalled. Have you decided this without your doctor? “Oh yes” — I reply. She could not believe it and for half a day kept telling me that it was unacceptable for them to sell me the contraceptive without any prescription. She read me a whole lecture how hazardous it is. She did a number on my head, and I decided to consult the doctor. Well, I came to the doctor... and left.
- Perhaps, small-family tax is not that horrible. And why not? But it is necessary to think out how to introduce it. It would be silly to charge it starting from the age of 18, but if people have been married for 7 years and there are no adverse health conditions, so why not? But how to make it sure that this tax money is really spent for support to the needy families?
- It would be more reasonable if this problem is approached from a different angle, for instance, by means of labour payment improvement. If people had stable, sound and fair income, then many problems would have been solved. The family should be saved from humiliating dependence on state generosity, the family that is able to work should have real income sufficient for birth and good development of a child. That is what the state should be dealing with.
- As far as 250000 roubles, the situation with them is also not completely clear. For instance, it is not understandable why this money can be used only in three years? The researches show that once a baby is born the material well-being of the family deteriorates (especially of middle age and young family). Namely now the state should help, so that the parents would like to have the second child. The first child is out of love. The second child makes you more rational. As in business. It is useless to invest one's time, money, efforts, and knowledge if the investment is not supported by developed infrastructure. For business this could be communications. For a family with children this could be kindergartens, nursery schools, polyclinics, schools, parks, convenient public transport. I feel so sorry for women with prams, even convertible ones, when they try to get into a bus through a pay-gate. I do not want to be like them. Let the person who has introduced them in Moscow try to assault a bus or a trolley-bus near “University” metro station one morning.

- It is also not quite clear what is implied by “young family”. If the first child is born when the parents are well over 30, are they still considered to be a young family?
- One of the main causes of demographic problems is alteration of system of values of the society and of an individual and mass media has made a significant contribution to this. Of course, it has not happened only due to mass media, but if the state policy is undergoing certain change, the policy of mass media remains the same. It also seems that it is not regulated at all.
- There is a well established opinion in the society that there is no need for children in current conditions, that children are rather a burden than helpmates, it is inefficient investment of money, they provide no support in old age, they impede free life, professional career, independence and promotion.
- The social status of a woman who is a mother and a man who is a father is very low, and judging by the accounts of our parents it is much lower than during Soviet times. All these talks that it is the USSR that is responsible for the current demographic situation seem to be very biased.
- Mass media is practically “against” child birth, though formally they support it. Films, shows, interviews with celebrities do not favour the family. However, there are certain exceptions, but they are rather come from the generation of our parents.
- It is not a secret, that often, whatever is shown in the “idiot box” is the ultimate truth for the modern youth, especially from the province. What does the “idiot box” offer to us? You can reach success only in the capital! One should elbow his way to the life that looks like paradise on the screen. Moscow is not swayed by tears! That is why, you need to strain every nerve if you are not an offspring of an oil or bank tycoon. You should disdain all possible rules and move ahead. You should become a slave of your master, a street prostitute and vendor in the market and after that ... some day fortune will smile upon you. Another story about Cinderella (nanny Fran, ugly Betty, and etc.). All that once again proves that a person should be free.
- Refrain from official marriage and actual support of such attitude by the society, shows, films and etc. does not encourage the majority of young people to get married, to establish committed and

long-term relations and to have children. Subconscious uncertainty about the relations prevents raising an issue about having children. All TV programs and channels are abundant in stories about beautiful life and free love, sex for the sake of pleasure. What a big deal it is to come together and then to strange, it's nothing at all serious, you can always have another try.

- I hate to think so, but sometimes I have the feeling that our generation is not the “generation of parents” any more, but may be the next generation will be.

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Part 2

HOW TO COMBINE YOUR WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

or

THE MODERN SOCIETY NEEDS A COMPLEX POLICY IN RESPECT OF WORKERS WITH FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES⁴

WORK AND FAMILY — WHERE THE CONFLICT LIES

Work and family have always been the foundation of most people's lives but today we often say there is a conflict between them. What is the reason behind it?

Agricultural pre-industrial society used to interpret the notions of work and family in a different way. Farmers' or craftsmen's work had close linkages with their family life and involved almost all family members. The family was different, too. Three or four generations shared the same home, facilitating the care of children, the sick and the old.

As the industry developed, work went beyond the households becoming more specialized and families became smaller, too. Today when the able-bodied family members are at work often there is no one to look after the children and the old. Family responsibilities are more difficult to combine with work; the balance is tilted. Women are more clearly specialized in household tasks, taking care of children and the old while men become the main breadwinners.

⁴ Combining your Work and Family responsibilities? — http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/eurpro/moscow/info/publ/work_and_family.pdf (free access, English).

Such a disbalance between work and family responsibilities, first of all, affects women because they bear children. Pregnancy, delivery, breastfeeding and childcare are hard to combine with a full-time job and high workload. Given these tensions, women often sacrifice their professional careers to family responsibilities. No wonder employers treat women as potentially “problem-causing” workers who would often be absent from work and demanding for additional privileges, like maternity leave. Such situation leads to gender discrimination when employers are reluctant to employ women, women are low-paid, not promoted, etc.

At the same time, men with no family responsibilities become “ideal workers”. With higher attachment to the work force, men suffer from increased work stress which tells on their physical and psychological health. Those men wishing to dedicate more of their time to their family are discriminated against just like women. Society does not welcome deviations from stereotypes.

WHAT DOES WORK — FAMILY CONFLICT LEAD TO?

The conflict between work and family responsibilities affects everyone: workers and their families, employers and companies, state and society as a whole. What are the main consequences of the conflict?

For workers (men and women) and their families:

- Increased pressures and stress at the workplace;
- Incompatibility of working conditions and schedule with family responsibilities;
- Inconveniences resulting from the absence or the lack of family supporting services;
- Involuntary decisions (e.g. accepting a more flexible working schedule at the expense of lower wages);
- Worsening family relationship, higher divorce rate, etc.

For employers:

- Absence from work or late arrival due to a work-family conflict;
- Turnover of staff or loss of skilled workers;

- Expenses on recruiting and training new staff;
- Lower efficiency of work.

For society as a whole:

- Preserving poverty and inequality (parents in low-income families are forced to quit jobs because they cannot afford childcare facilities, nurses, etc.);
- Loss of labour resources, lower economic activity among women, under-use of professional skills and knowledge;
- Lower birth rate due to the lack of incentives, especially for mothers;
- Overload of the social protection system;
- Feminization of home nursing (children are brought up mostly by women);
- Employment and occupation inequalities between men and women (all limitations in connection with family responsibilities refer mainly to women).

NORMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

Experience of most countries proves, that in many cases, as soon as a man claims his right to being a worker with family responsibilities he is discriminated against at his workplace in the same manner that affects many women. In fact, here we are dealing with discrimination against all workers with family responsibilities — both men and women.

ILO Convention No. 156 (1981) and corresponding Recommendation No. 165 provide for the principles of non-discrimination against workers with family responsibilities. Unlike Recommendation No. 123 (1965) that protects the rights of women as workers with family responsibilities, the ILO Convention No. 156 covers both women and men. The title of the document — **Convention on Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers: Workers with Family Responsibilities** — speaks for itself.

WHAT ARE FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES?

Under Convention No.156, family responsibilities are responsibilities in relation to dependent children and other members of workers' immediate family who clearly need their care or support. The notions of 'family' and 'family responsibilities' can be interpreted differently depending on the national context and local conditions. Nonetheless, Convention No.156 clearly applies to children, the sick and the old who depend on the worker. Household tasks are also seen as part of family responsibilities.

'With a view to creating effective equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women workers, each Member shall make it an aim of national policy to enable persons with family responsibilities who are engaged or wish to engage in employment to exercise their right to do so without being subject to discrimination and, to the extent possible, without conflict between their employment and family responsibilities.' (Convention No. 156, Article 3).

Another ILO convention — **Convention No. 183 on Maternity Protection** (2000) and Recommendation No.191 that supplements it are aimed at providing opportunities for women workers to combine child-bearing with work and eliminate occupational inequality due to their childbearing function. It includes health protection during pregnancy and breastfeeding, maternity leaves and accompanying leaves and grants.

Unlike previous ILO conventions on Maternity Protection (No.3, dated 1919 and No.103, dated 1952) ILO Convention No. 183 applies to all women employed in formal and informal economies irrespective of the type of work, enterprise and contract relationship, including those involved in atypical forms of dependent work (for instance, domestic workers) who are usually not covered by any social guarantees. Convention No. 183 extends the minimal compulsory maternity leave up to 14 weeks, thus extending protection of health and wellbeing to more working women and their children.

APPLICATION OF THE ILO CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ILO Conventions are international agreements subject to ratification by the member-states. As a rule, recommendations relate to issues covered by conventions and have guidelines for the national policies and practices. Irrespective of whether a state has ratified this or that convention national institutions and structures are guided by its norms. If the state ratifies an ILO convention it must fix the appropriate principles in the national legislation and legal practices as well as to report on practical measures taken to translate the ratified convention into reality.

Benefits for workers resulting from Conventions No. 156 and No. 183 are obvious. They allow workers live a comprehensive private life having a stable income and career prospects.

At first sight, it may not be clear how employers can benefit from a policy of combining work and family responsibilities. Very often it requires managerial decisions and money to arrange for favourable conditions for workers with family responsibilities. However, such expenditures have a long-term positive effect and are much lower than losses of an employer who does not realize the importance and economic efficiency of such investment. A worker who can reconcile work with family responsibilities is more efficient, loyal and cooperative.

BENEFICIAL FOR BOTH THE EMPLOYER AND THE WORKERS

Managers of a British pharmaceutical company have found out that 6 employees remained faithful to the company exclusively due to its policy that took into account their family responsibilities. Keeping those employees saved the company some 7,500 pounds per worker that could have been spent on hiring new staff. Thus, the company managed to save 45,000 pounds per year. The company's psychological environment improved and the employees appreciated the management's efforts while the staff turnover reduced by 15 percent. And it cost the company almost nothing.

SEARCHING FOR NEW SOLUTIONS

It requires a tripartite dialogue between the state, employers and trade unions as well as cooperation between a lot of interested parties to take into account family interests and make enterprises competitive in the context of a certain culture, traditions and values. The **state** should promote childcare and elderly care services, create a network of childcare facilities, improve community and social services. **Trade unions and employers** should provide for combining working conditions and employment (for instance, leaves, hours of work, etc.) with family responsibilities, i.e. they should **organize family-friendly workplaces**. Such measures can be fixed in collective agreements and/or through the appropriate managerial practices at the level of enterprises.

CHILDCARE FACILITIES IN RUSSIA

As of January 1, 2007 Russia had more than 45 thousand childcare facilities attended by 4,800 thousand children (61.3% of children aged under 7 which almost equals the 1991 figure of 63.9%). But in some regions families have to wait to get a place in a childcare facility. According to the Russian Statistics Committee, there were about 1 million children waiting for a place in a childcare facility as of early 2007. Nowadays, children attend traditional full-day childcare facilities along with short-term childcare centres, fitness centres and facilities for early correction of child development, etc.

HOW TO ORGANIZE FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES

Working hours and schedule

- Reduce long weekly and unsocial working hours (nights, weekends);
- Notify workers in advance of overtime work and changed shifts;
- Introduce part-time work and job-sharing;

- Reduce working hours for carers while keeping the wages;
- Introduce flexible work schedule and time banking (“working time accounts”) that allows to accumulate leave time by working overtime;
- Introduce telework (working away from the workplace).

Looking after children and elderly family members

- Arrange for nurseries at enterprises, earmark money for child-care;
- Provide conditions for breastfeeding at the workplace;
- Help workers look after family members;
- Allow using telephone for family purposes

FROM OVERTIME TO MORE EFFICIENT WORK

Among one of its problems Britain’s Pricewaterhouse Coopers named men’s traditional overtime work. As a solution the company proposed two brand-new principles: (1) A more flexible working schedule was introduced; (2) Results achieved (and not the amount of hours spent at work) were made the key work efficiency criteria. And the company noted that most of its employees preferred a flexible working schedule including working from home. That improved mutual understanding and built confidence between the management and the staff as well as increased personal responsibility for the work done.

Leaves

- Regular annual leave;
- Maternity leave;
- Parental leave (often right after a maternity leave), as a rule, not paid or partly paid;
- Paternity leave (granted to new fathers around the time of child-birth);
- Short emergency leave.

NORWAY'S SYSTEM OF PARENTAL AND PATERNITY LEAVES

Parents are granted parental leaves by turn until the child turns 3 years old providing that neither of them spends more than 2 years at home. It is done to keep the parents on the labour market after having a child so that they could resume work. The state either pays 100% of their wages during the first 44 weeks after the child was born or 80 % of the wages during the first 54 weeks. Experience shows that it is mothers who usually take such leaves. However, the state is pursuing a policy that would engage men in sharing family responsibilities. Norway was the first country to pass a law on a so-called 'father's quota which is a 5-week paid paternity leave. At present, more than 80 % of fathers take such leaves.

EVERYONE IS BENEFITED...

Policy that takes into account family interests and needs is beneficial for both enterprises and employees. Some measures may require substantial expenses by the employer. However, less expensive initiatives such as arranging for a breastfeeding room or allowing children in specially designed premises during their holidays can improve efficiency of work and performance of an enterprise.

Benefits for employees:

- Lower pressures and stress at the workplace;
- Stronger motivation to work resulting in higher efficiency and productivity of work;
- Satisfaction with working conditions and high morale resulting in workers' stronger loyalty and faithfulness to the company.

Benefits for employer:

- Reduced staff turnover, attraction of skilled specialists (both men and women) on a competitive labour market;
- Lower expenses on recruiting and training new staff;

- Fewer cases of absence from work or late arrivals; better work discipline;
- Increased work ability and motivation of workers and efficiency of work;
- Better psychological environment at work;
- Better image of the enterprise.

...ABOVE ALL, THE YOUTH

- In most cases, people first enter the labour market and start a family at the same time.
- Up to 70 % weddings occur at the age of 20-25 that implies family responsibilities for 2/3 of the young workers.
- 50 % of children in young families (on average in CIS countries) are born by mothers aged 24-25.
- And it is young people who face a need to look after children and quite often – their old-age parents.

Discrimination in work and employment against the youth is one of the major problems on the labour market especially in transitional economies. Young women are particularly affected since they suffer from sex and age discrimination. They often lack experience and professional skills and have prospects of starting a family, bearing children and acquiring family responsibilities. Granting woman a maternity leave may require additional efforts from the employer to maintain the production process. Very often a family cannot get a place in childcare facilities (for various reasons) and women have to stay at home after the maternity leave is over. That is how many young women miss their chance of making a career.

While most young women have to devote themselves to family life and caring of children and relatives, young men often have to say yes to any unskilled and low-income work to support a young family (the same is true for young women as well). In this case they cannot improve their skills - at a non-career job young fathers either cannot get necessary education or lose their skills taught at a higher educational establishment.

Labour market discrimination against youth is disadvantageous for everyone:

- **Young people** miss their chance to get decent wages and make a career;
- **Society** loses what has been invested in education; workers' professional skills degrade;
- **Employers** suffer from a shortage of skilled labour which affects work productivity.

Among negative effects are rising poverty, gender inequality, fewer educational opportunities for children, etc.

Successful implementation of the ILO Convention No. 156 on Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers: Workers with Family Responsibilities, as well as Convention No. 183 on Maternity Protection, are the main instruments to increase the welfare and to fight the inequality in the society, which calls upon joint coordinated activities of the governmental bodies, business, trade unions and workers, including young workers.

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