



WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES: RUSSIAN FEDERATION



The Concept of the Demographic Policy of the RF, adopted in 2007 under Decree No. 1351 of October 9, 2007 of the President of the Russian Federation, envisaged the following measures to help the employment of women with small children:

- creating conditions for women to facilitate their return to work after maternity leave, to provide the systems to upgrade their qualifications and to receive retraining being suitable for labour market demands;
- widening the use of flexible employment forms (including working from home and part-time work arrangements) that enable a woman to combine work and family responsibilities;
- developing special programmes which will support women to acquire new professions in case of transfer/release from hazardous work places for new jobs.

In 2007, the Russian Federal Employment Service (Rostrud) developed a programme of retraining mothers taking care of children under the age of three and it is expected to train 720,000 women by 2010.

In recent years, various regions in Russia have largely resorted the system of creating family kindergartens for children who do not attend preschool childcare institutions. Family kindergartens are organized by families which have 3 or more children aged between 2 months and 7 years in the apartment where the children live. If a family does not have three children of crèche or kindergarten age, the teacher of the family kindergarten can take children from other large families for upbringing.

A "mini-kindergarten" is attached to a standard kindergarten which monitors its work and puts the teacher on its payroll. Thus, a mother with many children acquires a length of service as teacher and a salary of up to 10,000 roubles. The question of upgrading the qualification of the mothers running family kindergartens at home is currently under consideration.

the number of preschool institutions dropped from 82,000 to 46,000 and the number of children attending them dropped from 7,236,000 to 4,906,000. The growth of birthrate that began in 1999 aggravated the shortage of places at preschool institutions. Between 2000 and 2007 the number of children on the waiting list for preschool institutions increased almost ten times (from 238,000 to 2,232,000). That had a negative impact on the ability of young women to return to work

Care of very small children has become an acute problem today. In the late 1980s, all Russian women benefitted from



Photo: ILO

the childcare leave until the child reached 3 years of age. That was the reason why the system of crèches was practically dismantled. In recent years, women increasingly resumed work without using the whole of their leave which makes it imperative to restore the system of crèches.

The extended day system in schools, unlike the system of preschool education, was not dismantled in Russia but it did not develop as fast as necessary. In recent years, the share of children attending extended-day classes has been growing. At present 22% of grade 1–9 pupils are covered by the extended-day scheme.

Development of services network. In the initial period of reform, the "self-reliance of households" was an important strategy for household survival. That reduced the sphere of household services and increased the load of women at home and at work. As the economy grew and living standards went up, the sphere of services was restored. The amount of services per capita increased by 2.6 times from 879.5 roubles in 2002 to 2,328.0 roubles in 2007³.

In recent years, various structures aimed to help citizens and families in distress have been developing. These institutions typically provide free assistance. There are 480 centres of social assistance to family and children, 20 crisis centres for women and 2 crisis centres for men⁴.

2008 has been announced as the Year of the Family in Russia. For the first time in the whole history of Russia, attention at the national level was given that the family is considered as an important institution of society.

The plan of activities as part of the Year of the Family included benefits and state support to families (especially new families), mothers, children and orphans; charitable activities to support families; various events (festivities, concerts, competitions, contests); TV programmes, articles in the printed media; awards to families and mothers with many children, etc.

In 2008, Russia instituted the Order of Parental Glory awarded to the parents (or adoptive parents) or one of them (in a one-parent family) who: bring up or have brought up four and more children, constitute a socially responsible family, follow a healthy way of life and provide proper care for the health, education, physical, intellectual and moral development of children. In May 2008, eight family couples from eight Russian regions were given this award.

THE POSITION OF MEN AND WOMEN ON THE LABOUR MARKET AND THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF THE "WORK-FAMILY" CONFLICT

In spite of substantial negative impacts brought by social and economic transition, the level of economic activity of both women and men in Russia still remains high. In the sphere of employment, women and men are represented almost equally (in 2007, women accounted for 49.6% and men for 50.4% of all those employed). Unemployment calculated by the ILO methodology has consistently had a "male" face although women outnumber men among registered unemployed.

Although any gender discrimination is prohibited by the laws, female employment discriminatory practices are manifested in all the key areas of labour relations – recruitment, remuneration, promotion and dismissal. The root cause of this situation is the widespread "antiquated attitudes" both among employers and employees. As a result, although Russian women are generally better educated than men, the quality of their employment is lower to that of men.

In 1998, the average remuneration of women employed by large and medium-sized enterprises in Russia was 70% of that of men, and in 2007 – just 63%. Women are primarily employed in low-paid sectors of the national economy and in lower positions than men.

Considering that remuneration is the main source of income for the most of families, families can maintain reasonable well-being only based on double income sources. That makes women's professional activities imperative. Meanwhile the distribution of household

responsibilities follows the traditional pattern: women spend an average 30 hours a week doing household chores compared to 14 hours for men¹. The hours of paid employment do not differ much between women and men. As a result, women have a "double" workday.



Photo: ILO

The most common type of family in Russia is still a family consisting of a married couple with or without children although the share of such families dropped from 66.9% to 54.9% in the period between the 1989 and 2002. The share of one-parent families increased from 15.2% in 1989 to 21.6% in 2002².

The negative impact of the persisting "family-work" conflict in relation to gender payroll gap also appears with different marital status. In Russia, the biggest payroll gap between men and women appears in officially married couples (35%) because married women tend to choose underemployment status more frequently. The gender payroll gap is slightly less (31%) between men and women who live together. Divorcees reveal much smaller gender differences in remuneration (18.3%). Among divorced women, many are single mothers who can count only on themselves. The lack of effective mechanism of collecting child support in Russia stimulates single mothers to be active in the labour market and ultimately results in receiving higher pay. On average, divorced women have higher wages compared with women with other marital status. The smallest difference in remuneration (18.2%) is found among men and women who have never married, in other words, persons whose family responsibilities are minimal.

Results of NOBUS survey

³ Family 2008. Rosstat. 2008. p. 232 (in Russian).

⁴ Data from the Ministry of Health and Social Development. Family, 2008, Rosstat, p. 290 (in Russian).

¹ Ye.B. Mezentseva. Men and Women in Domestic Work Sphere: the Logic of Economic Rationality Versus the Logic of Gender Identity? // Gender Equality: In Quest of Solution of Old Problems. Moscow, ILO, 2003.

² The Population of Russia in 2003–2004. Moscow. Nauka Publishers, 2006, p.131 (in Russian).

The main causes that create incomplete families have been the birth of a child out of wedlock, the death of one of the parents and divorce. As a rule, women are the heads of such families. In 2007, 28% of all babies were born outside marriage. "Death of a parent" usually means the death of the father: the death coefficient for men in certain age groups approaches 4. As a result the life expectancy of Russian men is 60.4 years and of women 73.2 years. The high mortality rate among men is in many ways the result of "gender behaviour" stereotypes in Russia – which involve abuse of alcohol and tobacco as ways to overcome stress and display "masculinity". Divorces, in most cases, result in single-mother families because of the widespread practice whereby after a family breaks up children stay with the mother almost under any circumstances.

RUSSIAN LEGISLATION PROTECTING WORKERS WITH FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES



Photo: ILO

Russian labour legislation does not contain provisions that could be qualified as discriminatory with regard to women or men.

The principle of gender equality is laid down in the Russian Constitution – Article 19, Clause 3 stipulates that men and women in the Russian Federation have equal rights and freedoms and equal opportunities for the exercise thereof; Article 37, Clause 3 guarantees the right to remuneration for work without discrimination for men and women; Article 38 proclaims that child care and their upbringing are the right and obligation shared equally by both parents.

Russia has ratified a number of ILO conventions concerning gender aspects of labour:

- the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100);
- Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103);
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111);
- Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156).

Provisions of the new Labour Code of the RF were harmonized with ILO Convention No. 156, ratified by Russia in 1997. Chapter 41 of the new Labour Code is devoted to the regulation of the labour of women and

persons with family responsibilities. The mother's rights connected with the birth and nursing of a child and the rights connected with upbringing and/or child care are now granted not only to the mother, but to the father, grandmother, grandfather, other relatives or guardians who take care of the child in reality. Thus, the Labour Code stipulates the gender equality of workers with family responsibilities.

The main gender problem of labour legislation in Russia today is its enforcement. In 2006 alone, the State Labour Inspectorate of the Russian Federation uncovered and stopped more than 22,900 violations of labour legislation on the part of employers with regard to working women. The most common types of violations were: dismissal of pregnant women and women with children under 3, non-payment of state social insurance during maternity leave; work at night, day offs and holidays without their written consent for women with children under 3 and employees with disabled children; violation of the standard recruitment and dismissal procedures for female workers; violation of the procedure of granting guarantees to pregnant women and persons with family responsibilities when sending them on business trips, having them work overtime or at night, on days off and holidays.

Another problem is gender-asymmetric use of benefits to which all workers with family responsibilities are entitled: in practice, they are provided only to women.

Federal Law No. 256-FZ of January 1, 2007 "On Additional Measures of State Support of Families with Children" allows families with children to state support in the shape of **mother's (family) capital**. It is available in case of the birth/adoption of a second child and following children in the period from January 1, 2007 until December 31, 2016 only once irrespective of the number of children born to the family during this period. Mother's capital is made available to women who have given birth/adopted a second, third and following children and to single men who have adopted a second, third and following children.

The uses of the "capital": improving the housing conditions of the family/child, education of the child/children, establishing the contributory part of the mother's labour pension. Mother's (family) capital can be used not earlier than three years after the birth (adoption) of the second (third or following) children.

MATERNITY LEAVE

The duration of the maternity leave is 70 calendar days before childbirth (84 days in case of multiple pregnancy) and 70 calendar days after childbirth (86 days in case of complications during childbirth, 110 days in case of birth of two or more children). The duration of the leave is calculated aggregately and provided to a woman fully regardless of the number of days she has actually used before childbirth (Labour Code, Article 255).

Employees who have adopted a child are entitled to a leave for a period from the day of adoption and until 70 calendar days after the birthday of an adopted child (110 days if two or more children are adopted simultaneously). Women who have adopted a child may, upon their choice, take a maternity leave of similar duration (Labour Code, Article 257).

Maternity benefits are paid to an insured woman at the rate of 100% of her average remuneration from the Social Insurance Fund of the RF (Federal Law No. 255-FZ of December 29, 2006, Article 11).

CHILD CARE LEAVES

Child care leave to provide care for the child until the age of three can be used fully or partially by the mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, other relatives or a guardian who actually takes care of the child. During such leave, the employee may work short hours or from home while still being entitled to a state social insurance benefit.

Upon the choice of the employees who have adopted a child (children), they may take a leave to take care of the child (children) until the child (children) reach the age of three. If both spouses adopt a child (children) one of the spouses at their discretion is entitled to a leave. During the period of childcare leave, the worker retains his job and position (Labour Code, Articles 256, 257).

The mother or father, guardian or other relatives, who actually take care of the child and are subject to mandatory social insurance, are entitled to a monthly benefit of 40% of their average remuneration during the leave period **until the child reaches the age of 18 months**. After the child reaches the age of eighteen months, the amount of monthly allowance, procedure of granting, indexation and payment are set out under regional laws of the Russian Federation (Federal Law No. 81-FZ of May 19, 1995). The payment of a monthly childcare benefit during the childcare leave through the first eighteen months is made out of the Federal Budget and the Budget of the Social Insurance Fund of the RF.

CARE OF A SICK CHILD

Temporary disability benefits are payable to the insured person in case of providing care of a sick child (the gender of the insured person is not specified):

- a child of under 7: for the whole period of treatment, but not more than 60 days a year on aggregate,
- 7–15 years: up to 15 days for each incident of illness but not more than 45 days a year;
- disabled child under 15: for the whole period of treatment, but not more than 120 days a year;
- an HIV-infected child under 15: for the whole period of staying with the child in a stationary treatment and preventative institution (Federal Law No. 255-FZ of December 29, 2006, Article 6).

The size of the temporary disability allowance depends on the insurance record and the length of the working period of the worker, but may not exceed the maximum size of a temporary disability allowance under the federal law (Federal Law No. 255-FZ of December 29, 2006, Article 7).

The temporary disability benefits when taking care of a sick or quarantine child under the age of 7 who attends preschool institutions are paid out from the budget of the Social Insurance Fund of the RF (Federal Law No. 155-FZ of December 29, 2006, Article 3).

PRESCHOOL CHILDCARE INSTITUTIONS AND SERVICES

Creating favorable working conditions to combine work and family responsibilities also depend on the availability of preschool childcare institutions, of extended-day arrangements at schools and the development of the services network.

In the 1990s, the system of **preschool education** in Russia has gone through a crisis. Between 1992 and 2007,

According to a survey of mothers conducted in Moscow, almost one in every three Moscow women (36% of respondents) does not fully use even the child care leave through the first 18 months. Only 9.4% of all mothers use the entire leave to take care of a child in the first three years. **Work and Family in the Life of Women with Preschool Children: Moscow Experience. Moscow, 2008, p. 104 (in Russian)**



Photo: ILO