

## Poverty of Families With Children: Problems of Definition and Measurement, Regional Characteristics

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**Annotation:** The Object of the Study. Families with children. The Subject of the Study. The poverty of families with children. The Purpose of the Study. Studying of the characteristics and the ability to measure the poverty level of families with children, at the regional level in particular.

**Keywords:** Poverty; low income; families with children; family policies; the concepts of poverty; social policy; social support.

The Main Provisions of the Article. The article deals with devoted to the methodological aspects of the poverty of families with children and the peculiarities of its study in recent decades. The standard of living of families and the poverty of families with children have traditionally been considered as socioeconomic problems, and therefore the tasks of reducing poverty and cutting the income deficit have been formulated as tasks within the framework of social policy, taking into account the constraints imposed by resource opportunities. At the same time, in demography and the economics of the family, the standard of living of families has always been considered as one of the important factors in the formation of the family and the fertility, affecting the number of children in the family, births postponing and giving up subsequent births, and family stability. The article justifies the urgency of the poverty of families with children reducing problem, since this category of families currently stands at approximately 60% of all poor families in Russia. Existing definitions of poverty and approaches to its measurement, indicators of poverty dynamics, sources and types of statistical data available to researchers for poverty analysis at the regional level are considered, and three types of effects have been determined: economic effect (growth of purchasing power of families with children, expansion of opportunities for combining work with the family life, incentives for the development of relevant sectors that produce goods and services for families with children); social effect (reduction of social and gender inequality, increasing of starting opportunities for development of children in families with low income) and demographic effect (allowing more families to plan children's births freely and responsibly, realizing their desire to have several children, slowing down the forthcoming birth rate decline, enabling to raise more healthy and educated children).

The study of this theoretically complex topic will make it possible to clarify the concepts and criteria of poverty and low income, to study and systematize the conditions, factors and causes of poverty of families with children (including taking into account regional characteristics), to assess the need for families of different types in social support, to assess the effectiveness of both the overall system of assistance to families with children and individual measures of family and demographic policy, to substantiate reasonable proposals for the development of a system of state guarantees to support families with children and specific measures that will really reduce the level of poverty for families with children, improve conditions for giving birth and education of healthy children, for the prevention of poverty in times of crisis and economic stagnation. Research in the field of analysis of the living standards of families with children and the factors and extent of poverty of families with children in modern Russia was carried out relatively actively in the 1990s and early 2000s, which is associated with changes in living conditions. As a result of the socio-economic transformation, the conditions for employment and income generation changed, the system of social protection of the population was modified after a serious degradation, and due to price liberalization and high inflation, the problems of income deficit, low income, and poverty aggravated. The birth of children predetermined the poverty of a family with children, both due to a decrease in income and an increase in expenses, which were only slightly offset by various types of benefits. The standard of living of families and the poverty of families with children have traditionally been viewed as socio-economic problems; therefore, the tasks of reducing poverty and reducing the income gap were formulated as tasks within the framework of social policy, taking into account the limitations imposed by resource opportunities. At the same time, in the demographics and economics of the family, the standard of living of families has always been considered as one of the important factors in family formation and fertility, affecting the number of children in the family, postponing births and refusing subsequent births, and family stability.

For the development and implementation of policies aimed at overcoming the poverty of families with children, the available information is still insufficient. This is especially true for regional policy, for which the number of published indicators is very small. In the context of significant inter-regional differences caused by economic, social, climatic and other reasons, the lack of data on the poverty of families with children not only makes it impossible to compare regions with each other, but also to determine the level of poverty of this group in all regions. The situation is complicated by the

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fact that there is no fixed normative definition of “poverty” in the legislation, and the poor are registered according to only one criterion, which excludes many families with children from the poor. In modern conditions, being poor means not only having a low standard of living, but also having limited access to social benefits, to good education and quality healthcare, which reduces the chance of ceasing to be poor. Measures are needed that have a broad impact on the level and quality of life of the population, as well as help improve the quality of information support for the policy being pursued. In the absence of statistical data on the poverty of families with children, the most important measure is the development of a system for collecting and publishing freely available indicators describing the poverty of families with children at the regional level. Further, it is necessary to develop a clearer system of criteria that would allow families to be classified as poor and legislate the definition of poverty, including taking into account regional specifics. Such a system should include not only monetary indicators, but also hardships, since far from everything can be expressed in money (for example, dilapidated housing, the inaccessibility of modern telecommunication technologies or the lack of high-quality transport infrastructure). There is a need for a comprehensive socio-economic development of the territories, which will improve the living conditions of families with children. Government agencies and social services should be more active in informing families with children about rights and available opportunities, as well as developing a social environment that is friendly to families with low incomes or those in difficult life situations. Finally, additional measures are needed reduction of poverty of families with children. These include raising the minimum wage to the subsistence level, clarifying the methodology for calculating it for smaller socioeconomic groups (for example, children of preschool age), creating unified regional accounting systems for low-income families, preferential property tax rates for individuals - and large families and similar. Reducing the poverty of families with children will contribute to the formation of better human capital, will have an economic effect (increasing the purchasing power of families with children, expanding opportunities to combine work with family responsibilities, incentives for the development of relevant sectors that produce goods and services for families with children); social effect (reducing social and gender inequality, increasing start-up opportunities for the development of children in low-income families) and demographic (will allow more families to freely and responsibly plan the birth of children, realize their desire to have several children, slow down the upcoming decline in the birth rate, allow raising more healthy and educated children).

**List of used literature:**

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