

Development of rural territories of russia based on social standards

Desarrollo de territorios rurales de Rusia en base a estándares sociales

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Received: 06/03/2018 • Approved: xx/05/2018

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ABSTRACT:

The article deals with socio-economic development of rural territories of the Russian Federation and presents the analysis of the contemporary state and the prevailing trends over the past 20 years in demographic processes, the quality of living of rural population, the scope of state regulation, and the effectiveness of measures undertaken by the state. The conclusion drawn is the ongoing crisis in $\frac{3}{4}$ of rural areas and deepening of regional differentiation in most of the major indicators of social comfort of the population, followed by migration of the rural population, and the removal of arable land from circulation. Sustainable development of rural territories is recognized in the state agrarian policy as a priority. The state takes measures to develop the industrial and social infrastructure of the village, though the scope of development is insufficient, while interagency wrangling reduces the effectiveness of the state support. The article substantiates the need to develop and adopt social standards differentiated according to types of rural settlements in order to provide the rural population with vital material goods and services. Social standards must become a tool of state and municipal management to reduce spatial disparities in the social development of the village.

Keywords: Rural areas, quality of living, development differentiation, state regulation, social standards.

RESUMEN:

El artículo trata del desarrollo socioeconómico de los territorios rurales de la Federación de Rusia y presenta el análisis del estado contemporáneo y las tendencias predominantes en los últimos 20 años en los procesos demográficos, la calidad de vida de la población rural, el alcance de la regulación estatal, y la efectividad de las medidas emprendidas por el estado. La conclusión es la crisis actual en rural de las zonas rurales y la profundización de la diferenciación regional en la mayoría de los principales indicadores de confort social de la población, seguidos por la migración de la población rural y la eliminación de la tierra cultivable de la circulación. El desarrollo sostenible de los territorios rurales se reconoce en la política agraria estatal como una prioridad. El estado toma medidas para desarrollar la infraestructura industrial y social de la aldea, aunque el alcance del desarrollo es insuficiente, mientras que las disputas interinstitucionales reducen la efectividad del apoyo estatal. El artículo corrobora la necesidad de desarrollar y adoptar estándares sociales diferenciados según los tipos de asentamientos rurales a fin de proporcionar a la población rural bienes y servicios materiales vitales. Las normas sociales deben convertirse en una herramienta de gestión estatal y municipal para reducir las disparidades espaciales en el desarrollo social de la aldea. Palabras clave: Zonas rurales, calidad de vida, diferenciación del desarrollo, regulación estatal,

1. Introduction

1.1 Representation of the problem

Russia is a social state, responsible for a decent standard of living and free individual development of all citizens, including rural residents comprising 26% of the population. However, the quality of living of rural and urban population in the country varies considerably. This situation is caused by historical factors and is not overcome until the present time. A steady trend of depopulation in rural areas and disappearance from the country's map of thousands of villages is a threat to food security and loss of social control over large territories of the country. The state supports the social development of the village since 2003, giving priority to housing construction and engineering infrastructure, with virtually giving no attention to remaining settlements with a small number of residents, which is almost $\frac{1}{4}$ of the entire rural population. As a result, this group of citizens of the country in recent years has experienced difficulties in accessing social services (medical, educational, cultural and recreational, household, etc.) caused by the recent optimization of institutions' network of relevant industries to save budget. Solving the problem of spatial differentiation of social comfort of the rural population without social standards based just on the state guarantees for the provision of goods and services at the level of minimum standards is no longer possible. This complicated and important research area needs to be intensified because of its high practical importance for development of rural areas.

1.2 Exploration of the problem importance

In Russia, at the state level, the following documents deal with the problems of the rural population: "The concept of sustainable development of rural territories of the Russian Federation for the period until 2020", the Federal target program "Sustainable development of rural territories for 2014-2017 and for the period till 2020", which continues the activities initiated by the Federal target program "Social development of village until 2013", and the "Strategy of sustainable development of rural territories of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030". All of these documents formalize the acute problems concerning the social development of the Russian countryside and necessitate steering rural areas out of economic crisis (Strategy of sustainable development of rural territories of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030, 2015). Listed statutory and regulatory enactments define goals, objectives and the mechanisms of solving problems, as well as offering tools, which are dominated by concessional lending of housing construction, sectoral funding for the development of production infrastructure and social sphere, as well as providing grant support for specific initiatives. Evaluation of changes in everyday practice and their correlation with the scope of the issues leads to the conclusion that the applicable state measures do not fully take into account the whole diversity and complexity of the conditions and processes of rural territories' development. The activities carried out in this context by the state are often fragmented, not systemic, not stimulating rural community to the self-development. To some extent this results from insufficient scientific substantiation of state regulation system with regard to rural areas' development due to the fact that relevant research area is relatively young, and so far the dominant attention of scientists has been given to the development of agriculture, as well as social and labor relations in the industry. In the system of public administration at the federal and regional levels, the rural areas as management objects are still considered in the framework of agricultural policy, while in numerous program-based activities of other industry sectors the countryside is generally not identified at all. In Russia the direct addressing of rural population problems is constitutionally assigned to local self-government, most of which are not provided with financial resources needed for rural areas' development (Kovalenko E.G., Yakimova O. Yu., Polushkina T.M., 2006). The need to conduct active social policy aimed at ensuring a decent quality of living in rural areas causes the demand to expand the state regulation tools of

rural development, which should widely use social standards. They can be used to determine the scope of the solution of vital issues that ensure more complete satisfaction of the needs of rural residents. They can be used as a base when justifying measures to improve living standards and their equalization in the regional context. This is exactly the subject of the research presented in the article.

1.3 Literature review

The Russian Federation laid the foundation of the regulatory framework formation for sustainable rural development that identifies the main concepts, problems and solutions (Strategy of sustainable development of rural territories of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030, 2015).

Development of rural areas in recent years has received much attention in the Russian science. Given the complexity and diversified nature of the research object, it is studied by economists, geographers, sociologists, historians, and researchers specialized in other scientific disciplines. The transformation of rural communities, characteristics, trends, and factors of spatial changes in rural areas were investigated by T.I. Zaslavskaya and R.V. Ryvkina (1980), S.A. Kovalev (2006), T.N. Nefedova (2013), A.I. Treivish (2010), V.V. Patsiotserkovsky (2010), I.A. Semina and L.V. Sotova (2014), and by other scientists. The works of listed scientists allow evaluating the undergoing processes, their historical inevitability and proportionality of measures undertaken by the state.

The problems of social and economic development of rural areas, state support directions and tools are considered in the works of I.V. Antokhonova (2009), R.Kh. Adukov and A.N. Adukova (2011), L.V. Bondarenko (2014), I.N. Buzdalov (2013), V.K. Krutikov and O.V. Fedorova (2011), E.A. Lavrukhina (2012a), F. Mantino (2010), V.I. Menshchikova and E.A. Kolesnichenko (2013), I.N. Merenkova (2011), A.B. Merzlov (2012), I.V. Mishchenko (2012), I.V. Palatkin (2008), A.V. Petrikov (2005), L.A. Tretyakova (2008), and many others. These works deal with analysis of the current situation, the state regulation system of rural development, as well as provide suggestions to improve the sustainable development mechanism of rural territories and individual regions.

The issues related to the study of problems concerning quality and standard of living of the population are represented in the works of V.N. Bobkov (2009a; 2009b), I.V. Dodonova (2012), B.I. Kushnir (2009), E.A. Lavrukhina (2012b), L.A. Tretyakova, and N.I. Proki (2009), T.V. Kharitonova and I.P. Masterskikh (2009), and P.A. Shevtsova (2011). The scientific basis for the formation of a system of social living standards and life necessities of the rural population is reflected in the research of S.V. Belousova (2007), L.V. Bondarenko (2013), O.V. Glushakova and, V.V. Mikhailov (2014), I.V. Dodonova (2013a; 2013b), I.R. Zaripova (2008), M.V. Loskutova and V.I. Menshchikova (2013), A.A. Marasanova (2013), A.D. Uzyakov (2004), E.V. Takmakova (2013), V.A. Tupchienko (2004), T. V. Kharitonova (2009), and I.A. Shchetkina (2010). This line of research highlights the backwardness of the rural quality of living as compared to urban living standards. The authors suggest various methods to assess the quality of living, and shape the approaches to the standardization of the life necessities of the rural population.

Despite the great number of available theoretical and practical developments, as well as the multi-dimensionality and complexity of the research object, and relatively short period of study of the sustainable development mechanisms of rural areas, there is an urgent need for scientific substantiation of the state regulation tools of the quality of living of the rural population, as well as in particular the least developed social standardization.

2. Hypotheses and their influence on the research structure

Working hypothesis of the study is that the key role in ensuring food security of the country is played by systematic development of the rural population and sustainable socio-economic development of rural areas. A contemporary approach to the development of rural areas through grants and minimum state social guarantees just slows down the stagnation process

at best. Despite the importance of state support for the accelerated technical and technological development of the agro-industrial complex, advanced factors of the rural human capital revival, which primarily determine the decent quality of living of the rural population close to modern social standards, are more effective.

3. Methods

Theoretical base of the current research includes the concepts and hypotheses, grounded in fundamental and applied works, which formulated the social welfare theory, as well as theories of institutions and institutional change. The methodological basis of the research is the synergetic paradigm, which combines and synthesizes the systemic and institutional approaches. In the course of the research, general scientific methods of theoretical and empirical cognition were used, namely the scientific abstraction method, analysis and synthesis methods, method of analogies, modeling method, logical method, classification and formalization methods, as well as systemic, statistical, functional, and economic analysis.

Materials for a working hypothesis included the information of the Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), policy documents, analytical reports and reports of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Russian Federation, as well as the results of sociological research conducted by the Center for All-Russian Monitoring of the Social and Labor Sphere of the Village at the All-Russia Research and Development Institute of Agricultural Economics.

The research logic is subordinated to the achievement of set goal. The object matter is presented based on the problematic principle that gives the opportunity to reveal the essence of improving the quality of living and social comfort of the population living in rural areas, as well as substantiating comprehensively the necessity and content of social standardization.

4. Results and Discussion

Development of rural areas is one of the most important issues of socio-economic and regional policy in all countries worldwide. With the adoption in 2010 of the Concept of sustainable development of rural territories up to 2020, the latter is recognized as a priority in the Russian Federation. The Concept states that the rural area of the country has unique natural, demographic, economic and historical-cultural potential, which, if effectively used, can provide economic growth of the country and its individual regions, as well as the high level and quality of living of the population. Statutory and regulatory basis of state policy is the Strategy of sustainable development of rural territories of the Russian Federation for the period until 2030, which was approved in 2015. In addition, measures for rural development are part of the State program of agriculture development and regulation of agricultural products, raw materials and food markets for 2013-2020 in the form of the Federal target program "Sustainable development of rural territories in 2014-2017 and until 2020", which, as expected, will be implemented in all federal regions and most municipal districts of the country.

Rural areas of Russia are the socio-spatial formations established at various levels, such as state, constituent entities of the Russian Federation, as well as regional and local formations (settlements), which are closely interrelated with each other (Kovalenko E. G., Yakimov O. Y., Polushkina T. M., 2006). At the national level the importance of rural areas is determined by the fact that they occupy two thirds of the total area of the country (more than 11 mln sq. km) with rural population equal to 37.8 mln people or 25.7% of total population (as of January 1, 2017). Rural areas possess unique natural, demographic, and historical-cultural potential. They serve basis of stability, independence, and food security of the state. Rural areas perform vital national functions (production, socio-demographic, recreational, cultural, ethnic, and spatially communicational functions). Rural population plays important role in the implementation of social control over sparsely populated and border areas of the country. However, the rural territories of Russia do not fully ensure the fulfillment of these basic functions, as stated in the above statutory and regulatory enactments (Nefedova, T.G.,

Treyvish, A.I. (2010).

In addition to the general strategic goals and related tasks, rural territories of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation have significant differences in both baseline conditions and the potential as well as trends of socio-economic development (Merenkova I.N., Pertsev V.N., 2011). An example is the indicator of population density, which varies even according to the federal districts from 1.0 in the Far Eastern Federal District to 86.2 persons/km² in the Crimean Federal District. Between the subjects of the Russian Federation, minimum density is observed in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and the Magadan Region (0.3 persons/km²), while the maximum – in the Moscow Region (165 people/km²). The proportion of rural population ranges from 18.2% in the Central Federal District to 50.9% in the North Caucasus Federal District, while in some regions it varies from 4.6% in the Magadan Region to 70.8% in the Republic of Altai that testifies to the differences in level of development and urbanization of the Russian regions. In general, demographic processes play an important role for most country regions. As of 2015 the average natural decline in the rural population was 1.6 per 1000 people. The number of regions characterized by natural decline of population has reached 70%. Among them in 10 regions the death rate exceeded the birth rate by two and more times. The maximum rate of natural decline was recorded in the Pskov Region, where the death rate exceeded the birth rate by 2.6 times, while the natural decline rate amounted to -13.1. Natural decline rate of the rural population exceeding 11 permille was recorded in the Kursk, Smolensk, and Magadan regions. The situation in the regions with unfavorable demographic situation is compounded by migration loss, which in 2015 was observed in 62 subjects of the Russian Federation. The highest net migration rates of rural inhabitants per 10 thousand population were recorded in the Chukotka Autonomous District (407.6), Arkhangelsk (208.7) and Magadan (169.8) regions, Komi Republic (159.9), and Zabaikalye Territory (154.2). Positive migration balance was observed only in ¼ of the Russian regions. The highest rates were noted in Leningrad (165.4), Moscow (154.9) and Yaroslavl (103) regions (Status of rural areas in the Russian Federation in 2015, 2017). Depopulation of rural districts led to the fact that in the country in 2015 an average of 16% of the arable land was out of the use, while in some regions this figure exceeded 70% (the Arkhangelsk and Kostroma regions, and the Republic of Tuva).

The primary level of rural settlements has developed historically and for many decades there has been a decline in their numbers. Thus, according to the census of 1989, the total number of rural settlements amounted to 162.2 thousand, while in 2002 – 155.3 thousand, in 2010 – 153.1 thousand, i.e. for 20 years their number has decreased by 5.6%. At that, structure of rural settlements has significantly changed: the number of settlements with population up to 100 people (1st group) has increased by 41.4%; the number of settlements with population from 101 to 2000 people (2nd group) has reduced by 16.5%; while number of large settlements (3rd group with population of more than 2001 people) has increased by 15% (up to 3070). Studies of many Russian scientists show that villages in the 1st group are dominated by the elderly people and the prospect of further existence of these villages can be associated with a recreational function, at least those villages that have good roads and engineering infrastructure (gas supply and electricity), as well as favorable natural and ecological environment. No more than 30% of settlements from the 2nd group with population of more than 501 people (62% of the group population) can pretend for sustainable development. It should be noted that the 2nd group of villages are home to 57% of the rural population of the country. Their preservation and sustainable development can be achieved by pursuing active ekistical, social and economic policy on the part of both public authorities and local self-government. Large rural settlements of the 3rd group are usually centers of the municipal districts, rural settlements, and large agricultural organizations, which are characterized by the required social comfort of living of the rural population and have development potential (Nefedova, T.N., 2003; Patsiorkovsky V.V., 2010).

The reason for depopulation in rural areas is lower standard of living which has developed historically for many decades and so far has not been overcome. Thus, according to Rosstat, in 2015, the average per capita disposable resources of rural households in nominal terms

amounted to 16639.5 rubles per month, which was 65.2% compared to urban households (10128.6 rubles and 62.3% in 2010). For 2011-2015, the average per capita disposable resources of rural households increased by 64.3%. Adjusted for inflation, which amounted in this period to 51.4%, their real growth was just 8.5%. The ratio of per capita disposable resources of rural households with subsistence minimum in 2015 made 171.5%, while in 2010 it was at the level of 178.1%, i.e. decreased by 6.6 percentage points. The regional picture of the material wealth of rural households is significantly differentiated: in 2015, the ratio of per capita disposable resources of rural households with the regional subsistence minimum was below 100% in two constituent entities of the Russian Federation (93.1% in Ingushetia and 96.1% in Dagestan), in 20 regions it ranged from 150.1 up to 200%, while in 21 entity of the Russian Federation it was more than 200% (for example, in the Belgorod and Nizhny Novgorod regions it made up 2.6). Given that the main source of rural income is remuneration of labor, it directly depends on the employment of rural residents and their wages. Traditionally, for many decades the standard of living of the villagers depended on the functioning of agricultural organizations, the number of which had been declining. According to the national agricultural censuses of 2006 and 2016, the number of large and medium-sized agricultural organizations decreased from 27.8 to 7.6 thousand units, or by 3.7 times, while peasant farm enterprise decreased from 253.1 to 136.7 thousand units (by 46%). At that, a number of small enterprises increased from 20.4 to 24.3 thousand units (19.1%). This period was characterized by constantly decreasing number of employees: in large and medium-sized agricultural organizations this indicator decreased from 2381.5 in 2006 to 1007.7 thousand people in 2016 (by 2.4 times); in the peasant farm enterprises – from 377.0 to 301.5 thousand people (by 25%), respectively. The growth in the number of employees of small agricultural enterprises to 146.4 thousand people or 63.5% does not compensate for the required number of jobs in rural areas. These processes lead to the fact that hundreds of rural settlements lack employing organizations that causes great tension in the labor market, because employment and choice of jobs in rural areas are very limited. The level of employment of the rural labor force in working age is 70% while the unemployment rate, though having declined from 12% in 2006 to 8.5% in 2015, still remains high. In 2015, average monthly nominal accrued wages of agricultural employees were 19721 rubles, which accounts to 56.5% relative to the average level of this indicator for the Russian economy (versus 48.7% in 2010).

The risk of poverty in rural areas is much higher than in the urban areas, and it increases with decreasing population size of the settlement. Table 1 shows the dynamics of the poverty risk index for rural settlements with different population size.

Table 1
Poverty risk index in rural settlements with different population size

Population size of rural settlements, people	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
less than 200	2.60	2.77	3.07	3.29	2.53	2.20
from 200 to 1 thousand	1.64	1.66	1.59	1.64	1.54	1.48
from 1 to 5 thousand	1.48	1.46	1.62	1.52	1.52	1.45
more than 5 thousand	1.38	1.36	1.43	1.62	1.42	1.40

As we can see, in 2015, the poverty risk index in small rural settlements (with population less than 200) was 2.20. This was by 1.6 times higher than that in large towns (with population more than 5 thousand people). For comparison, in cities with population from 100

thousand and above, this index was less than 1, while at the population of more than 1 million it was 0.47. This was caused partly by migration of rural population to cities and large rural settlements (About the state of rural territories in the Russian Federation in 2015, 2017).

As known, quality of living depends on the social comfort of the population, which in rural areas is significantly different from that in the urban environment. The village is dominated by private housing (97.8% in 2015). Along with the positive effect of the family residence in the private house, this circumstance entails the full responsibility of the owners for the preservation and creation of comfortable living environment.

According to Rosstat, in 2015, the total area of dilapidated and emergency housing in the country amounted to 94.3 mln m², of which 42.5% were located in rural areas. Despite the federal target programs having been implemented since 2003 and directed to social development of rural areas, the funding of which has mainly been focused on housing construction, the proportion of dilapidated and emergency housing in rural areas is currently twice higher than in cities.

Table 2 reflects the improvement dynamics of housing facilities in rural and urban areas showing the growth of key indicators.

Table 2
Improvement of housing facilities in rural and urban areas (%)

	The total area equipped with						
	Running water	Sanitation	House heating*	Bath (shower)	Gas	Hot water	All kinds of modern conveniences
Rural area							
2010	47.6	38.5	60.0	28.7	74.5	25.3	23.9
2011	48.5	39.2	60.8	29.1	74.0	26.2	24.5
2012	49.1	39.9	61.3	29.4	73.8	26.5	24.8
2013	52.0	41.1	63.6	30.7	73.3	27.9	26.0
2014	54.7	43.4	66.3	32.5	74.1	30.2	28.4
2015	56.7	45.4	66.9	34.3	73.5	32.9	30.8
Urban area							
2010	89.3	87.3	92.0	81.3	66.9	80.1	77.3
2011	89.5	87.5	92.1	81.5	66.6	80.3	77.5
2012	89.6	87.5	92.2	81.4	66.2	80.4	77.4
2013	89.8	87.6	92.1	81.6	65.4	80.5	77.6
2014	85.7	83.5	87.9	77.7	62.1	76.7	73.5
2015	90.6	85.8	88.5	82.1	64.2	81.3	78.4

In 2015, the proportion of rural housing, equipped with all kinds of modern conveniences, reached 30.8% that was almost by 7% higher than that in 2010, though by 47.6 percentage points lower than that in the city. As with respect to most socio-economic indicators, the country has seen large regional differences in the level of rural housing improvement in terms of availability of modern conveniences. In this respect, the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania (88.8%), the Murmansk Region (80.1), and the Kabardino-Balkar Republic (64.3) are among leading regions. The worst situation still remains in Nenets Autonomous District, where the proportion of total area of housing, equipped with all kinds of amenities, is 3%, while in the republics of Sakha (Yakutia) and Tyva this indicator is 2.9 and 3.4 %, respectively. There are no less differences between the improvements of housing in rural settlements with different numbers of inhabitants. All of these types of improvements in the context of modern conveniences are missing even in the 6.4% of new individual houses set in operation in 2015 (while in 2010 this figure amounted to 19.2%). This is due to the fact that developers lack the necessary funds.

The level of home improvement depends on the development of engineering infrastructure in rural areas. The gasification of the village is the most important challenge of the recent decade. According to the data of the Russian Ministry of Agriculture, obtained from 73 entities of the Russian Federation, in 2015, the total length of gas networks increased by 6 thousand km and amounted to 461 thousand km, while the level of gasification of rural households (apartments) with natural gas reached 58.2% (against 52.6% in 2010). In 2015, 19.7% of rural homes (apartments) were supplied with liquefied natural gas. Thus, to date, more than ¼ of rural households remain non-gasified. According to LLC "Gazprom Mezhregiongaz", provision of village residents with natural gas across the federal districts of the Russian Federation varies by 19.2%, ranging from 4.5% in the Far Eastern Federal District to 86.5% in the North Caucasus Federal District. In eight entities of the Russian Federation, the level of gasification exceeds 90%. The maximum value equal to 99.9% has been reached in the Belgorod Region. At the same time, in rural territories of 12 entities of the Russian Federation natural gas is unavailable at all, of them 10 constituent entities are using liquefied gas, while rural areas in two regions (the Magadan Region and the Chukotka Autonomous District) so far remain without gasification.

Water supply to rural population is carried out in various ways – through centralized networks and individually. In 2015, the number of rural settlements having water supply system amounted to 49.8 thousand that was just 1/3 of the total number of settlements. With respect to constituent entities of the Russian Federation, securing villages and small settlements with water supply system is varied from 2% in the Nenets Autonomous District to 88% in the Krasnodar Region and Novosibirsk Region, as well as 100% in the Republic of Ingushetia. It should be noted that the technical condition of water supply networks in rural areas is quite poor: the proportion of networks needing to be replaced amounts to 41%.

One of the most pressing problems for rural residents is the impassability of roads. The proportion of rural settlements in Russia that were not connected by hard-surface roads with a public road network in 2015 was 30.2% (45.3 thousand), of which 27.4% concerned settlements with population no more than 100 people. With regard to the federal districts, this figure ranged from 0.4% in North Caucasus Federal District to 44% in the Central Federal District. More than 2/5 of villages and settlements not covered by reliable road networks are situated in the North-Western and Volga federal districts. In recent years, great attention has been paid to road construction in the country. This resulted in the fact that the length of public roads in 2015 had reached 1480.8 thousand km that was by 79.5% more than in 2010. Almost 62% of all motor roads are local and for 2010-2015 their length has increased by 3.25 times. The quality of the local roads is considerably inferior to the federal and regional (intermunicipal) motor roads. The proportion of local hard-surface roads in 2015 had increased up to 56.9% (for federal roads, this figure was 99.7, while for regional roads – 91.9%). Presented figures show both the positive processes and the scope of unsolved problems in road construction that essentially affect the development of rural economy and welfare of rural population.

One of the most important criteria characterizing quality of living is the availability of social

infrastructure services, and primarily the most socially significant educational and medical institutions. Over the last few years these institutions have been subjected to optimization (reduction) to enhance the quality of education and cut budgets. By 2015, the number of schools in rural areas decreased by 42.6% compared to 2000. The concentration of pupils in major educational institutions that requires everyday transportation of children from small settlements can be justified only in case of available developed hard-surface road network and special school buses. As noted above, such conditions have not yet been universally created in all regions of Russia. In addition, we should take into account many consequences of noted social policy that are negative for rural population, such as the reduction of free time of pupils, their fatigue and the increased incidence rate of diseases in children, the danger of transportation, the outflow of the rural teaching corps, and impoverishment of cultural life of the village. A similar trend is noted in number of hospitals situated in rural areas, reduction of which continued in 2010-2015. For the analyzed period the network of such medical institutions had reduced by 23.2% due to reduction, first of all, of small hospitals, and the growth of average capacity of rural hospitals (by 5.5 %). During the same period, the number of rural health posts had decreased by almost 10%, while the number of emergency stations decreased by 12.5%. At the same time, the number of outpatient facilities had increased by 59.4% along with the increase of their capacity up to 555.4 thousand visits of patients per shift. The transformation of healthcare institutions has led to the increase in the radius of their accessibility for the rural population, more than a quarter of which are not satisfied by medical care. The inaccessibility and poor quality of social services contribute to the outflow of the working population, primarily young families with children. This circumstance leads to the gradual extinction of the small towns and villages.

Summing up the characteristics of the main tendencies and problems of the rural areas of the country, which are reflected in official figures, we can state that the current measures of government on social development of the village have failed to overcome the crisis. The implementation of the Federal target program "Sustainable development of rural territories for 2014-2017 and for the period till 2020" was financed from the Federal budget in 2015 in the amount of 12613.45 mln rubles that was 38.5% of the total expenditures. Sources of financing included consolidated budgets of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation (37.8% or 11999.1 mln rubles) and extra budgetary funds (23.7% or 7530,9 mln rubles). It is obvious that the attracted financial resources (on average 850 rubles per 1 rural inhabitant) are not sufficient to solve the numerous problems of the village. It should be noted that Russia is currently implementing 12 national level programs in the framework of "A new quality of life". Among them, the following 11 programs concern rural areas: "Development of public health service" and "Development of education" (for 2013-2020), "Accessible environment" (for 2011-2020), "Enhancing employment", "Providing affordable and comfortable housing and utilities to citizens of the Russian Federation", "Social support of citizens", "Protection of population and territories against emergency situations, providing fire safety and safety of people on water objects", "Ensuring public order and combating crime", "Development of physical culture and sports", "Development of culture and tourism" (for 2013-2020), and "Environmental Protection" (for 2012-2020). However, the village in most of these programs has lost its individuality; activities, indicators and benchmarks for rural areas are not clearly defined, making it difficult to assess their contribution to rural development. We must recognize that the outputs of the various federal, regional, and municipal target programs allowed progressing in solving the social problems of the village, though the financial resources were focused on the development of individual infrastructure facilities in the framework of a single scheme without considering the needs for spatial support of the population by major socially important services. In addition, the main goal of most program documents is to achieve individual target indicators without consistent changes in their dynamics. Such approach does not allow promptly evaluating the ongoing changes. An important component of the comfortable living of the villagers in the small settlements is the development of semi-stationary and non-stationary (mobile) personal service facilities, which has not been reflected in program documents of almost all levels. The support of private entrepreneurship in the education sector, as well as social, cultural, leisure, domestic and other services for rural residents is also excluded from consideration in noted documents.

Conducted research allows drawing conclusion about interdepartmental disunity in the management of rural development at the federal, regional and local levels. Direct solution of the tasks of the rural population is constitutionally assigned to local self-government. Municipal settlements in rural areas are presented in the form of municipal regions and rural settlements, which unite several rural-type settlements. As of January 1, 2015, the number of rural settlements in the Russian Federation amounted to 18 654 (81% of all municipalities). They are part of 1823 municipal districts or 535 urban districts. The main functions of local government at present are: 1) creating favorable living conditions of the people through the formation and implementation of social policy of the municipality; 2) efficient using of the existing potential of the region, including municipal property and finance in order to insure sustainable socio-economic development of the municipality; 3) providing direct involvement of the population in decision making of important local issues; 4) accounting and coordinating interests of different population groups, as well as protecting minorities; 5) preserving the environment; 6) ensuring public order. Note that exactly the same objectives are stated in all governmental strategic documents with regard to sustainable development of rural areas. Thus, it would be logical to actively strengthen the system of local government. However, full-fledged institution of local self-government in the village is still not established, despite the large number of different reforms and the implementation of measures of state support aimed at development of Russian rural territories. In our opinion, this is why numerous initiatives undertaken at the federal and regional levels to overcome the crisis in the village including relevant federal target programs, do not give the desired effect.

The most important reason of vulnerability of local government in rural areas is the lack of the necessary economic and financial basis for sustainable socio-economic development of municipalities. Data on local budgets monitoring conducted by the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation, indicate that in 2015 own budget revenues amounted to 2258.4 bln rubles. Municipality funds for solving issues of local importance decreased in comparison to the previous year by 46.8 bln rubles or by 2.0% in connection with the reduction of non-tax revenues (by -7.4%) and the volumes of inter-budgetary transfers (excluding subventions) from budgets of other level of the budgetary system (-5.9%). The distribution of own revenue by type of municipalities is characterized by the following structure: the budgets of municipalities have received 34.9%, while the budgets of rural settlements have received 8.4%. Almost all rural areas of the country have survived at the expense of received financial aid. In the total volume of revenues of local budgets in 2015, the proportion of inter-budgetary transfers (including subventions) amounted to 63.4%. Note that in 39.2% of rural settlements, the proportion of inter-budgetary transfers (excluding subventions) and revenues received in the framework of additional regulations, amounted in own revenues of local budgets to more than 50%, while in 34.8% of the settlements this figure ranged from 20 to 50%. The bulk of expenditure in the budgets of rural settlements accounts for the management (30.1%), housing utilities (28.2%), culture, cinematography, and mass media (18.4%). It should be stated that under this background the local authorities of a significant part of the settlements are forced to finance many other expenditure obligations on a residual basis.

Costs to maintain local authorities in 2015 amounted on average to 9.4%, at that in municipal areas this figure was 7.8%, while in rural settlements – 23.1%. Budgets of the vast majority of rural settlements, namely 97.4% of their total number, are scarce. The exception was the Murmansk, Kurgan, and Sverdlovsk regions, and the Chukotka Autonomous District. In four constituent entities of the Russian Federation, the proportion of municipal debt in own revenues (excluding tax revenues according to additional normative deductions) exceeded 80% (the Udmurt Republic – 80.4 %, the Penza Region – 80.8%, the Republic of Mordovia – 97.2 %, and the Republic of Tatarstan – 100.5%). In the Republic of Mordovia, the deficit of the local budget in 2015 made up 6.71%, in the Penza Region – 3.23%, in the Republic of Udmurtia – 3.01%, in the Republic of Tatarstan – 1.53%. These data suggest that in the budgets of rural settlements there are no costs intended for development and, as a rule, they are even not envisaged (Information on the results of monitoring of local budgets' execution and inter-budgetary relations in the entities of the

Russian Federation on regional and municipal levels for the 2015, 2016).

Thus, it should be recognized that public policy for development of rural areas, implemented through the federal target programs, enhances spatial differentiation and concentration of financial resources, production capacities and jobs, and as a consequence, the population in large settlements. The local government system in rural municipalities and villages is deprived of the opportunity to conduct comprehensive socio-economic transformations at their own expense (Issues on sustainable development of territories: Methodological aspects of a study, 2009). Attempts to save the rural population and encourage migration of people to rural areas practically do not work due to the actual lack of employment and comfortable living conditions in most rural areas. It is obvious that the number of tools, widely used in recent years for rural development (mainly preferential loans and targeted grant support), are not enough, and this list needs to be expanded. As shown by actual practice, ensuring the fulfillment of social obligations of the state and the equal access of rural population to social services, as well as responsibility of state and municipal management bodies for the positive changes in the core indicators and reducing disparities between rural settlements on key indicators of rural development is impossible without formation and implementation of relevant social standards. In this context the social standard should be understood as scientifically reasoned quantitative and qualitative parameters indicating provision of various material benefits (wages, pensions, allowances, and payments) and social services (education, health, housing, etc.) aimed at achieving an acceptable level of security and meeting the needs of each villager. They should be legally defined by social norms and standards and provided through funding from the consolidated budget (Beglova E.I., 2014).

It should be stated that, despite numerous publications, clear understanding of the nature, purpose, diversity, and development methods of social standards in the Russian management science and practice has not yet formed. The legal framework for the development and implementation of social standards in Russia is presented by the following federal laws: "On the minimum wage", "On the basis of social services of citizens in the Russian Federation", and "On subsistence minimum in the Russian Federation". The Federal law "On state minimal social standards" is so far under the development. In this law state minimum standards are referred as uniform minimum social standards and norms established by public authorities for a certain period of time. These minimum standards reflect essential human needs in material goods, public and free services, ensuring an appropriate level of consumption, and determining the mandatory minimum of budget expenditures for noted purposes. The introduction of state minimum standards requires from the state taking over the financing of minimum social guarantees needed to meet basic human needs. Currently, the following minimum national standards of quality of living have been approved by legislative regulation and are in effect at the federal level: minimum wage, minimum of subsistence, labor and social pensions, benefits, healthcare standards, and education standards. A complete system of social standards at the federal level is still not available, although 20 years have passed since the beginning of the standardization process in the social sphere (Glushakova, O.V., Mikhailov V.V., 2014).

Socio-economic standardization is present fragmentarily in many regions of Russia. Some of them have adopted regional legal acts on state minimum social standards. By early 2000, approximately 30 regions of Russia (including the Belgorod, Samara, Tula and Kaliningrad regions, Krasnodar and Krasnoyarsk Territories, the Republics of Bashkortostan, Karelia and Tatarstan, the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District, etc.) had their own systems of standards for minimum budgetary provision, minimum social standards, social norms and criteria. In the Republic of Tatarstan, social standards are more systemic in nature. They contain all the components of the social standards' institution, though in an incomplete way. This concerns legal framework, social norms and regulations, and financial standards. At that, regional system of social standards provides two types of needs: social needs of the population and needs of the social sectors in budgetary financing. In the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District, the social standards were developed taking into account their practical implementation in the municipalities according to the Law of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District No. 51 dated 08.12.1997 "On establishment of the state minimum social standards and financial norms for the formation of the regional budget and budgets of municipal

formations". This law and the applicable methodology of financial ratios calculation allow differentiating the municipal formations in the territory of the region in terms of level of social infrastructure, using the coefficients of regional adjustment for each sector of the social sphere. These statutory and regulatory documents have introduced the indicator of the regulatory budgetary requirement for financial resources, which are needed at the municipal level of budgetary system to produce social services at the level of social standard. An attempt to adopt a list of social standards for rural residents has been undertaken so far only in the Belgorod region. The full scope of "social cluster" in this situation is guaranteed only in settlements with population over 500 people, representing just over 20% of settlements in the region. It should be recognized that the social standards' system covering the main spheres of the social life of the rural population has not been created to date, although the society is ripe understanding of its necessity, complexity and labor intensity of developing and constantly updating the standards, as well as their implementation in the rural areas' management system. The reason for the low activity of this process lies in the absence of federal legal and uniform methodological bases of the social standardization with respect to key sectors of the social sphere. A significant obstacle is the lack of financial resources in most regions, as already noted, as well as unwillingness of state authorities, local governments, and individual officials to be responsible for failure to comply with approved social standards in accordance with the current legislation of the Russian Federation (Loskutova M.V., Menshchikova, V.I., 2014).

Social standards should become the regulatory tool for state regulation of development of rural territories, justification of the objectives and priorities of rural development policy. Their use involves the creation of standardized terminology and the use of normative method to identify needs of the rural population to vital goods and services that are subject to constitutional guarantees of citizens in the field of education, health, culture, and social security, while their financing should be carried out from the budget. As noted above, only state minimum social standards are being currently used. They are formed based on the industry (professional) standards, which provide a set of requirements to scope and quality of rendered services in the relevant sector, and regulation of material, technical, personnel, timing budgets, and other types of resources (Tupchienko V. A., 2004). Each individual region should determine the range of objects for social standardization, as well as development and change procedure of social standards, social and financial regulations, mechanisms for their financing and implementation. The minimum social standards are guaranteed to be provided by the executive bodies of the federal authority or the constituent entity of the Russian Federation. In addition to them in the management of territories it is advisable to apply the basic standards (which have been reached at the beginning of the standard's validity period) and the target standards, which must be achieved in the course of activities of executive authorities. Obviously, the standards may vary depending on the types of rural areas differing in terms of their demographics, level of socio-economic development and, consequently, the basic value of the standard. The greater the deviation of the basic standard with respect to guaranteed (minimum) standard, the more urgent should be state regulation measures to remedy the situation. In our opinion, in case if the deviation is 10-20%, the situation requires urgent management on the part of the authorities, while if it is more than 20% – this should become a priority involving the development and implementation of programs (roadmaps) to achieve guaranteed indicators provided with reliable sources of funding (Polushkin N.A., 2017).

5. Conclusion

The conducted systematization of scientific approaches and the state regulation system, as well as an empirical study of the problems and tendencies of the social development of rural areas in Russia gave grounds to state the necessity of using social standardization in the regional and municipal management. Without removing from the agenda the issues concerning growth of agribusiness production to ensure national food security and import substitution of all kinds of food that can be produced in the country, the major focus in the strategy for sustainable development of rural areas should be directed to preservation of rural population and improvement of the quality of living. This can be achieved provided that

positive demographic trends and growth of social comfort of living in rural settlements, decreasing of the level of spatial differentiation in living standards of the rural population, increasing access to social services (especially medical, educational, cultural, and consumer services) rendered to rural population, as well as improving their efficiency and quality will serve the key performance indicators of the state bodies and local self-government activities. This requires the development of legislative support of social standards of both minimal (guaranteed) and the target standards, which should serve reference points of strategic development of rural areas. In our view, widespread application of social standards for analytical and scheduled activities of management bodies at all levels will allow balancing the needs for social services and the required level of financing of social objects, because, as shown in the present article, the problem cannot be solved by just existing measures.

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Revista ESPACIOS. ISSN 0798 1015
Vol. 39 (Nº 36) Year 2018

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