ASSESSMENT CRITERIA OF INDICATORS WHICH DEFINE QUALITY OF LIFE

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Annotation. This article presents the essential characteristic of indicators which define the quality of life. The appeal to the problem is urgent because assessment criteria of indicators defining quality of life, make it possible to create a picture of objective reality. They serve for the government helping to provide the certain social level and to develop the system of state guarantees in socio-economical policy.

Keywords: quality of life, welfare, social protection, population and health, education, living conditions, quality of products and services, environmental situation, legal protection, culture, physical culture and sport, tourism.

Meeting the needs of the population at the level of government`s standard is the norm of "quality of life". The purpose of the development of the norm is a benchmark for the minimum level of the state guarantees of social and economic rights for citizens provided by the constitution. Socio-economical policy of the

government which is aimed at ensuring of its sustainable development, adjusted to indicators and deviations from the target values of the norm.

Nowadays comprehensive procedures and methodologies for assessing the indicators, for their further comparing with a benchmark or target value are developing for the most accurate determination of the level of welfare of people and their living conditions. Creation of methodologies has a long analytical character, the developing universal mechanisms of which are aimed to identify the objective state of social relations, socio-economic indicators in the following directions:

Welfare;
Social protection of population;
Population and Health;
Education;
Housing conditions;
The quality of goods and services;
Environmental situation;
Legal protection;
Culture;
Physical culture and sports;
Tourism.

The development of indicators and standards of "quality of life" is carried out in accordance with international practice (see table 1).

Table 1

Standards of "quality of life" in accordance with international practice

Name of indicator	Target value
Welfare	
1. GDP per capita at purchasing power parity in thousand dollars. U.S.	Growth compared to previous year
2. The real wage index, %	No less than 100 %
3. Real disposable incomes of population,%	100 % or more
4. Proportion of the population living below national poverty line, %	Tending to zero
5. Assets ratio	5-6 times
6. Unemployment rate, %	Decrease compared to previous year
Social protection of the population	
1. Index of real pension insurance, %	No less than 100%
2. Ratio of average pension and subsistence minimum, %	100 % or more
Population and health	
1. Life expectancy at birth (by sex), years	Growth compared to previous year
2. Total fertility rate	No less than 2,1
3. Mortality rates: infant, maternal, children under age of 5	Decrease compared to previous year
4. Incidence of tuberculosis	Decrease compared to previous year

Education	
1. Net enrolment ratio in primary education	No less than previous year
Housing conditions	
1. Provision of population with housing, sq. m.	No less than previous year
Quality of goods and services	
1. Provision of population with consumer durables	Growth compared to previous year
2. Number of Internet users per 100 people	Growth compared to previous year
Ecological situation	
1. Air quality in urban areas, mg/m	
2. Share of protected natural areas in total territory of country, %	No less than previous year
3. Population access to clean drinking water	Growth by 100 %
Legal protection	
1. Crime rate	Decrease compared to previous year
Culture	
1. Visits to museums, theatres, cinema	Growth compared to previous year
Physical culture and sport	
1. Coverage of population with physical culture and sports	Growth compared to previous year
Tourism	
1. Volume of tourist services per capita	Growth compared to previous year

Leading role in defining quality of life is given to the integral characteristics. Annually the data of the world rating of quality of life forms and publishes. These data include the following criteria: the cost of living, culture, economy, ecology, health status, level of freedom, security, climatic and infrastructural components. "In 2011, according to the total score of the indicators, the USA was in the first place" (among 192 countries) [3].

The lack of methods of assessment of certain key performance indicators leads to an imbalance of social processes and daily life of the population. One of the main tasks of government is to create conditions for realization of citizens, their spiritual development and well-being, worthy of the material level. In addition, the comfortable environment must be available equally to residents of all regions, irrespective of the distance from the centre and economic potential. It should be noted that there were some negative demographic trend characteristic of the entire territory of modern Russia, such as "prevalence of the female population over the male, a high proportion of elderly people, the reducing number of children and young people" [4]. The goal is to transform the conditions of life, to support the economic and social mechanisms that helps the population.

The standards which are included in the list are dictated by the life. It is peculiar to public relations to have a dynamic development, but sometimes it needs to

be adjusted to the assessment criteria of social processes. The result obtained in the assessment of the indicators, is used to establish the minimum level of the guarantees and the implementation of socio-economic policy. The duality exploring the concept draws attention of A.S.Yakunin: "Quality of life of the population acts in modern conditions not only for the social progress and development, but also by criteria of social efficiency of activities of regional and municipal authorities" [12].

The term "criterion" means a sign, on the basis of which there is the up-made decision on the assessment of anything on the compliance with the legal requirements, the classification of something; it is a measure of the truth of the judgment.

In the assessment of quality of life the use official forms which are approved by the Executive authorities (such as criteria); there also informal ones, which are formed by a person. The development of regional and municipal criteria for the assessment of quality of life has a great importance, because the use of national indicators eliminates the results obtained in prosperous and poor regions on various indicators. The fallacy of thus obtained results leads to unbalanced management decisions.

Different indicators can be used to classify the criteria:
−   in the public sphere (e.g. socio-economic, legal, security, natural, environmental, medical, educational);
−   on the level of coverage (international, national, regional, local).

"With a formalized methodology to measure quality of life, built on the basis of appropriate statistical indicators, and more private properties in this category, we are able to determine strategic objectives in the development of human society: to compare different cells of the society for the indicator in time and space, and finally, design target criteria of social welfare" [7].

All the criteria on the basis of which an integrated assessment of the quality of life of the population of the state is formed have in their turn the hierarchical structure and are divided into smaller metrics, which allow to consider every aspect in detail.

1. Indicators of the welfare. One of the most important criterion of the welfare is GDP (gross domestic product) per capita at purchasing power parity, which is a measure that characterizes the final result of production activities of economic units-residents. To calculate GDP per capita we use an average annual number of resident population of the state. The target level announced by the government for 2020 is following: "Gross domestic product per capita at purchasing power parity will increase from 13.9 thousand US $ in 2007 (42 percent from the average level of the member States of the Organization for economic cooperation and development) to more than 30 thousand dollars in 2020 (70 percent)" [5].

Purchasing power parity is a tool of transferring monetary units in comparable currency. It consists of a number of currency units needed to purchase a standard set of goods and services, which can be bought for one monetary unit of the country. The data source is a system of national accounts, approved for the period the forecast of socio-economic development of Russia. The forecast of socio-economic development of the Russian Federation is the document containing the basic indicators of

demographic, scientific and technological development, environmental and natural resources, prepared by the Ministry of economic development of the Russian Federation.

Labour statistics is the basis for calculation of income indicators: the average monthly nominal wage index real wages (pension insurance). The average monthly nominal wage is determined by dividing the accrued wage Fund on the average number of employees and the number of months in the reporting period. The index of real wages (pension insurance) is the quotient of the index of nominal wages (pension insurance) and the consumer price index over the same period of time.

The main indicators of income distribution are the Gini coefficients and funds, the share of the population living below the national poverty line, the source of which is calculations based on data on the distribution of population by income level. "The stratification of society is a huge problem for Russia as a whole. The difference of income of 10 % poorest and 10 % richest in the country reaches 20 times and, for example, in Moscow by some estimates – 50 times. For comparison, the social Charter of the European Union does not allow the higher ratio of 7 times" [6]. According to A.Shevyakova, "the Russian ruling class must realize the need for what it is in his best interests to bring socio-economic inequalities to reasonable proportions, ensuring the consolidation of society, trust in government and favorable conditions for economic and population growth" [10].

The proportion of the population living below the national poverty line is commonly understood as the subsistence minimum of the state. The ratio of the minimum wage with the subsistence minimum of able-bodied population and insurance old age pensions (subject to compliance with work experience, period of payment of insurance premiums) with the value of the subsistence level are the socio-economic indicators of poverty.

Unemployment rate is the relation between unemployed and economically active population at the age established for measurement of economic activity of the population that is willing and has the potential of having an independent source of livelihood. The International labour organization includes people aged from 10 to 72, the lowest age limit to be included in the specified category of the population in Russia is15 years. Population survey on employment carried out by Rosstat on a quarterly basis and every two years publishes a book "Labour and employment in Russia".

2. Indicators of social protection in addition to the index of real pension insurance include:
- the minimum wage;
- the ratio of the minimum wages and average nominal wages;
- the average size of pension determined in respect of persons in receipt of pension;
- the average size of social pension determined in respect of persons receiving social pensions;
- minimum insurance old-age pension guaranteed by the state, subject to conditions stipulated by pension legislation;

–   the share of spending on pensions (from the state budget and state extra-budgetary funds) in % of gross domestic product;

–   the average monthly amount of social assistance issued to low-income families;

–   the proportion of the national (consolidated) budget for social security.

3. The criteria for defining demographic standards of the population are: life expectancy at birth, by sex; total fertility rate; age dependency ratios, abortion (per 1000 women of fertile age), marriage and divorce rates (per 1000 population), infant mortality, mortality of children aged under 5, maternal mortality; index of premature mortality. The source for all these indicators is the data from demographic statistics.

In accordance with the Concept of demographic policy of the Russian Federation "the basis of demographic policy of Russia is based on the following principles:

–   complexity of demographic issues in this area should cover the areas of demographic development (mortality, fertility and migration) and their relationship; there is focus on priorities – the choice for each area of demographic development of the most problematic issues and implement effective mechanisms of their decision;

–   timely response to the demographic trends in the current period;

–   the regional perspective of demographic development and differentiated approach to the development and implementation of regional demographic programs.

–   interaction of public authorities with civil society institutions;

–   coordination of legislative and Executive state bodies at Federal, regional and municipal levels" [8].

Life expectancy at the moment of the birth characterizes a number of years on average, and there had to live one person from generation born provided that throughout all life of this generation mortality at each age remains the same as in this period. This figure is used when the index of human potential is calculated.

The ratio of the infant (under one year) mortality, mortality of children aged under 5 is determinants the mortality of each category per 1000 live births. The maternal (causes of pregnancy-related) mortality is an indicator that determines the level of mortality per 100 000 live births.

Indicators of the population health are: morbidity by classes of diseases (neoplasms, diseases of blood, endocrine system, mental disorders, diseases of the circulatory system, respiratory system, digestive system, genitourinary system, injury); the incidence of tuberculosis; the level of industrial injuries; the level of incidence of HIV infection; the number of persons recognized as disabled for the first time; the proportion of the national (consolidated) budget on health. On the recommendations of the world health organization government expenditures on health should be at least 5 per cent of the gross domestic product. The incidence of tuberculosis, in particular, is determined by the number of new cases per 100 000 population, based on data from medical departments.

4. The level of the education is estimated by the following indicators: coverage of children with pre-school education; net enrolment ratio in primary education; coverage of children and young people with different levels of schooling;

expenditures of the state (consolidated) budget on education (expenditure on education according to international estimates should not be less than 5-7 per cent of gross domestic product); the coverage of special education and special pedagogical assistance. Net enrolment ratio in primary education in accordance with the statistics of demography and education is the percentage ratio between the number of children under statutory school age enrolled in primary school to total number of children of official primary school age (grades 1-4)

5. Housing conditions are characterized by criteria of housing in square meters; this is improvement of the housing stock and the number of families consisting on the account to obtain the living area (in need of better housing conditions). Data source is census of population and housing, estimates on the basis of statistical reports on housing and population, on account of needy in improvement of housing conditions. Total area of premises in square meters per one resident is a relative indicator of population provision with housing.

Housing is no less important asset in household life than money, in addition to it they interrelate. In relation to the housing market, it can be argued that the availability of cash savings allows households to improve their living conditions. There is a measure of area of the premises, which can be purchased for one month's wages of individuals, "allowing us to relate the level of household income and prices in the housing market" [1].

6. Comprehensive index of quality of products and services is defined as a set of criteria: consumer household spending, consumer prices and the provision of population with consumer durables. The consumer price index is the key to generate a number of income indicators (such as the average size of the pension insurance system for the forecast period), based on statistics of prices and represents a change over a period of cost of the fixed set of consumer goods and services purchased by the population for non-productive consumption. The consumer price index measures the relation of cost of the fixed consumer basket of goods and services in the prices of the current period to its cost in base period. Provision of population with consumer durables (TVs, computers, refrigerators, washing machines, etc.) per 100 households is calculated on the basis of trade statistics and sample surveys of households.

The indicator of quality of life associated with accessibility for the population of transport and communications, is based on the following data:

−   transport statistics (eligibility criteria: the proportion of roads with hard surface in the total length of public roads; the length of public roads; density of public roads with hard surface; the provision of public transport);

−   vehicle registration statistics (provision of public passenger vehicles);

−   provided by the international telecommunication Union and sample surveys (number of people who regularly and quite often use the Internet per 100 persons; the number of cellular subscribers per 100 people);

−   statistics of communication (the provision of domestic landline phones).

7. At present the most important factor in the welfare of people is the environmental situation in the region of residence. Indicators reflecting the situation in this area are diverse, formed on the basis of a wide range of sources; the interest of

many scientists is focused on precisely this aspect of quality of life. At the international level, there are the following indicators of the natural-ecological environment:

−   air quality in urban areas, source of the monitoring data on air pollution and environmental statistics, assessment criteria: the absolute value of the average annual concentration of pollutants (sulphur dioxide, particulates, nitrogen dioxide and others) in the atmospheric air of cities and stations background monitoring, in micrograms of pollutants per cubic meter of air; the number of days in the year when the level of air pollution in urban areas exceed the thresholds of permissible concentrations;

−   the share of protected natural areas to preserve ecological systems, biological and landscape diversity in the total territory of state (environment statistics);

−   forest land throughout the state which is a calculated value based on the data on the availability and distribution of land;

−   the proportion of green spaces in urban areas;

−   household water consumption per capita of the population (according to statistics of improvement of the housing stock of the urban economy);

−   the population's access to safe health, safe drinking water, in accordance with the data of specialized surveys to the share of the population with a reasonable opportunity to obtain safe water in the community or close enough to home;

−   access, volume of water/distance;

−   water quality;

−   population connected to waste water treatment and sewage networks, also connected with treatment plants.

8. The indicators for legal security are built on the basis of the data of law enforcement bodies, special sample surveys and crime statistics: crime detection; crime levels (including identified and officially registered in the reporting period, of a socially dangerous act envisaged by the criminal law per 10 000 population); the proportion of women and minors, victims of criminal assault.

9. The level of accessibility of the cultural sector is reflected in the estimated rates based on the statistics of Finance and the Ministry of culture of the Russian Federation, Department of cinematography. The criteria are: expenditures of the state (consolidated) budget for culture; the provision of a library Fund; the number of visits to museums, theatres, film screenings per 1,000 of the population.

10. Physical culture and sport. The calculations are based on the data of authorized bodies in the sphere of physical culture and sport, divided into the indicators of the coverage of the population with physical culture and sports, provision of sports halls and swimming pools per 100,000 of the population.

11. According to statistical authorities tracked the volume of tourist services per capita and the number of organizations engaged in tourism activities per 1,000 inhabitants.

As it has been described above, assessment of each criterion is strictly regulated in nature, takes a comprehensive approach and is an example of technology "as a means of control, regulation and planning of social processes" [9].

Thus, methods of statistical research and mathematical modeling of processes in all spheres of society through a system of indicators established regulatory assessment criteria to give a picture of objective reality. As well as for the implementation by public authorities of their main functions, to ensure a certain social level, development of the system of the state guarantees and measures socio-economic policy ensures its sustainable development. Through the use of administrative technologies the competence of personnel of management bodies gas been formed, which is able to ensure the transformation of social space to achieve concrete results improving the quality of life of the population according to social standards.

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