DOI: 10.63550/ICEIP.2025.61.19.063

Features of Territorial Distribution of the Level of Social Well-Being in the Russian Federation

Alina Akhmerova[1], Emma Shaybakova[2], Flarida Bayrushina[3]
Ufa State Petroleum Technological University, Russia, Ufa, 450064, Ufa,.Kosmonavtovst, 1

Keywords: spatial inequality, regional economy, federal districts, socio-economic dynamics, social well-being.

Abstract: This article presents the author's methodology for assessing the level of socio-economic well-being of federal districts, which is based on the analysis of the eight most important, according to the authors of the study, indicators of the standard of living of the population: real disposable income of the population, GDP per capita, unemployment rate, real average monthly accrued wages of workers, total fertility rate, life expectancy, the number of hospital organizations and the number of people per doctor. Based on the analysis of these indicators, the authors present a method for calculating the index of socio-economic well-being, which allows assessing the level of social stability of the federal district.

1 INTRODUCTION

For Russia, due to its federal nature of state structure and the presence of 89 subjects, each of which has its own unique climatic, geographical and historical features, social inequality has a pronounced territorial character. This fact makes Russia a unique object of study of the level of social inequality in the context of its regional characteristics of the spread of social inequality. At the same time, the choice of the Russian Federation as an object of study is due not only to its territorial size, but also to the fact that the country plays a significant role in global economic processes, and the geopolitical situation not only in Europe, but also in the world largely depends on the state of its political and social stability. At the same time, Russian statistics present in sufficient detail various indicators of the socio-economic dynamics of the regions, which makes it possible to work with a large amount of data when studying all aspects of social inequality in a territorial context.

The purpose of this study is to identify the level of social inequality in the federal districts of the Russian Federation.

The purpose of this study is to identify the level of social inequality in the federal districts of the Russian Federation. Achieving this goal involves answering the following questions. Which federal districts of Russia are the most prosperous in the socio-economic dimension of the standard of living of the population? What factors determine the presence of noticeable differences in the level of well-being between the federal districts of Russia? The initial hypothesis of this study is that Russia is characterized by a high degree of territorial inequality, expressed in particular in the existence of serious disproportions in the standard of living of the population, which has increased during the introduction of sanctions against Russia

2 METHODS

The methodology for assessing the level of social inequality in this work also includes the calculation of an integral indicator - the index of social well-being, which allows for a comprehensive assessment of the well-being of the population of the territory and the necessary comparisons between different regions and countries. As criteria for assessing the level of social well-being in the federal districts of Russia, groups of indicators were selected that together allow

[1] https://orcid.org/0009-0007-7003-6876
[2] https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7985-089X
[3] https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0395-1026

for an assessment of the standard of living of the average Russian.

Thus, the first criterion involves assessing the level of income of the population, which allows for an assessment of the economic component of social inequality. This criterion includes the following indicators:

- real disposable income of the population;
- GDP per capita.

The second group of indicators includes an assessment of the state of the labor market in the federal districts, it includes the following indicators:
- unemployment rate;
- real average monthly accrued wages of workers.

The third criterion analyzes the state of demographic indicators of the federal districts, it includes such indicators as:

- total fertility rate;
- life expectancy at birth.

The last group of indicators, the fourth, is aimed at analyzing the state of healthcare in federal districts and is expressed in the following indicators:

– the number of hospital organizations at the end of the reporting year;
– population per doctor.

3 RESULTS

As already noted, the federal districts of Russia were chosen as the object of the study as administrative-territorial units officially enshrined in Russian legislation. The reasons for choosing federal districts as the object of the study, rather than economic regions, are that the economic zoning in Russia that currently exists is outdated.

Thus, it is noted that in its current form, economic zoning has no practical application and attempts to form a new classification of economic regions, which are traced in the Strategy for Spatial Development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025, did not bring the desired results. It is for this reason that choosing federal districts as the objects of study of the level of spatial inequality in Russia seems most appropriate. Numerous studies devoted to the analysis and assessment of the level of interregional social inequality in Russia note that there is a significant gap not only between federal districts, but also within the federal districts themselves, which is manifested primarily in the level of income of the population.

However, this article does not aim to study the nuances of the distribution of inequality between the subjects of the Russian Federation, but only examines the stratification of the population by socio-economic indicators at the level of federal districts. The empirical basis for the study is the official data of the Federal State Statistics Service for 2023. Before proceeding directly to the result of the analysis of statistical data on the level of social inequality between the federal districts of Russia, it should be noted that at the moment, the existence of serious differences in the role played by each federal district in the country's production and economic activity is recognized.

Real disposable income allows us to assess the solvency of the population, taking into account mandatory payments in the structure of population expenditure. The highest growth rates of real disposable income of the population for the period from 2018 to 2023 were observed in the Central Federal District and the Northwestern Federal District, which generally corresponds to the established ideas about them as the most stable in financial and economic terms. The Southern, Ural, Siberian and Far Eastern Federal Districts demonstrate the average value of this indicator for the period from 2018 to 2023 at approximately the same level (from 102.5 to 102.7%).

The most socially and politically stable federal districts are those in which GDP per capita is at a relatively high level and has a stable growth trend. The highest GRP per capita in 2023 belongs to the Urals Federal District, which exceeds the GRP per capita in Russia, which amounted to 1,074 thousand rubles. Also, for 2023, in the Central, Northwestern and Far Eastern Federal Districts, this indicator is higher than the Russian average.

The number of unemployed in the total population allows us to assess the ability of the economic mechanism of the federal district to create jobs that are sufficiently attractive to its population. Unemployment is a factor that can disrupt social balance, since a high level of unemployment, especially among young people, contributes to the deterioration of the crime situation, which negatively affects the standard of living of the population and requires additional efforts from the authorities to resolve emerging problems.

The unemployment rate in federal districts also varies significantly, according to official statistics.
The lowest unemployment rate for 2023 was recorded in the Volga Federal District - 2.4%. This figure is lower than the Russian average (2.8%). Also, the unemployment rate, which is lower than the Russian average at the end of 2023, was recorded in the Central, Northwestern and Ural Federal Districts. The most unfavorable situation with a high

unemployment rate, which significantly exceeds the Russian average, is in the North Caucasian Federal District.

The fourth indicator that is advisable to consider as one of the indicators of social well-being of the population is the real average monthly accrued wages of workers. The structure of monetary income of the population by the main sources of their formation in Russia indicates that wages remain the main channel for the receipt of funds for the subsistence of households in our country. Thus, in 2023, 60.7% of the monetary income of Russians was formed through wages, 17.9% - social benefits, 7.1% - income from property and only 6.9% - from entrepreneurial activity.

The highest growth in real accrued wages in 2023 was recorded in the Volga Federal District (111.8%), which exceeds the Russian average (109.1%). The Ural Federal District and the Siberian Federal District also exceeded the Russian average. This indicator grew the least in the North Caucasian Federal District. The reasons for the growth in wages in Russia are caused by the sharply increasing competition for personnel, both between different sectors of the economy and between regions.

The total fertility rate allows us to determine the state of the demographic situation in the country and in a separate federal district. It shows the average number of children that a woman of childbearing age is capable of bringing into the world.

All federal districts have seen a reduction in the total fertility rate. The largest decline over the six years under review was recorded in the Northwestern Federal District (by 0.223) and the Far Eastern Federal District (0.211). The smallest decline in this indicator was observed in the North Caucasian Federal District (0.113). However, none of the federal districts provides a total fertility rate of 2.1, which is necessary for simply reproducing the population.

In 2023, life expectancy at birth in Russia was 73.41 years. In the Central, Northwestern, Southern and North Caucasian Federal Districts, this indicator exceeds the Russian average. The lowest life expectancy was recorded in the Far Eastern Federal District. Over the period under review, the largest increase in life expectancy was recorded in the Urals Federal District (0.87 years), the only federal district where this indicator decreased was the Far Eastern. The gap between life expectancy in the North Caucasian and Far Eastern Federal Districts in 2023 is 7.19 years

The largest number of hospital organizations in 2023 was recorded in the Central Federal District - 1,160 units, the smallest - in the North Caucasian Federal District, which is primarily due to the population. Thus, the population of the Central Federal District in 2023 is 40.199 million people, and the North Caucasian - 10.251 million people. Only in three federal districts did the number of hospital organizations increase during the period under review - in the Central (by 10 units), in the Southern Federal District (by 36 units) and in the North Caucasian (by 44 units). The largest decrease in the number of hospital organizations is observed in the Volga Federal District, it amounted to 68 units.

The degree of workload of the health care system allows us to assess the quality of services provided to the population; the most accurate indicator for assessing the effectiveness of the health care system of a territory is the number of people per doctor. The lower this indicator, the more effective the health care system.

The average Russian indicator of the population per doctor in 2023 is 192.6 people. This indicator is significantly higher in the Southern, North Caucasian, Volga and Ural Federal Districts. In all federal districts during the period under review, this indicator decreased, the largest decrease can be seen in the Central Federal District (30.9), the smallest decrease - in the North Caucasian (by 5 people).

This dynamic is due to the fact that the rate of population decline exceeds the rate of decline in the number of doctors. Despite the fact that the workload on doctors is decreasing, there is a shortage of doctors in all federal districts, and for all of Russia in 2023 it is 23.3 thousand people.

To calculate the final value of the socio-economic well-being index of the federal districts of the Russian Federation, it is necessary to rank all federal districts by all eight indicators under study. Depending on the place that a federal district occupies among others by a specific indicator, it is awarded points from 8 to 1. 8 points are received by a federal district for 1st place in the ranking, 1 point - for 8th place in the ranking. All points are summed up and, based on the resulting sum, the position of the federal district as the most or least prosperous is determined. Calculation of the social well-being index based on the analysis of statistical data for 2023 allows us to identify leaders and outsiders in the socio-economic development of federal districts.

Table 1: Results of ranking federal districts by the value of the socio-economic well-being index for 2023.

Federal district	Level of socio-economic well-being
Central Federal District	High

Northwestern Federal District	Average
Southern Federal District	Low
North Caucasian Federal District	Low
Volga Federal District	Average
Ural Federal District	Average
Siberian Federal District	Average
Far Eastern Federal District	Low

Based on the total points for each indicator, the federal district was assigned a final place in the socio-economic well-being rating. Depending on the number of points scored, the federal district can be classified into one of three levels of socio-economic well-being: – low (from 8 to 32 points); – medium (from 33 to 45 points); – high (from 46 to 64 points). The most socially stable is the Central Federal District, which scored 47 out of 64 possible points, the very last place was taken by the North Caucasian Federal District with 23 points, which indicates an extremely low standard of living for its population.

The most socially stable is the Central Federal District, which scored 47 out of 64 possible points, the very last place was taken by the North Caucasian Federal District with 23 points, which indicates an extremely low standard of living of its population. The high positions of the Central, Ural and Volga Federal Districts in this rating are due to the developed infrastructure, relatively high accessibility of the population to social benefits (medicine, health care), as well as a developed industrial base, which in the current period of reindustrialization of the Russian economy allows for rapid growth in wages of the population.

4 CONCLUSION

The conducted study of fundamental works devoted to the issues of spatial inequality in the world allows us to note the presence of many points of view regarding the causes and forms of this phenomenon. However, despite the fact that there is no consensus on this issue in the scientific community, most researchers consider spatial inequality as a serious threat to social cohesion, capable of causing serious damage to the political structure of the country. Social inequality is growing in the world, which is causing increasing concern among politicians and government officials, and the issues of finding the most effective ways to combat inequality are the subject of research in a large number of modern scientific publications.

For Russia, the problem of spatial inequality, due to its vast territory and the federal nature of the administrative structure, is becoming increasingly relevant in connection with the rapid changes taking place in the Russian economy. In this regard, it is necessary to develop the most accurate and objective tools for assessing the level of social inequality between its territorial units. In this study, based on the methodology developed by the authors for constructing the socio-economic well-being index, the federal districts of the Russian Federation were ranked. Based on this, a conclusion was made about the existence of a serious level of spatial inequality in Russia, expressed primarily in a significant gap in the standard of living of the population of different federal districts.

REFERENCES

The Federal State Statistics Service. Electronic resource.

Yusupova, R. A., 2022. Formalized approach to calculating subsidies to regions. *Economics and Management: scientific and practical journal.*

Mukhamadieva, E. F., Galimullina, S. R., Galimullina, N A., Abramov, I. R., 2021. Statistical analysis of the economic security of the region. *Eurasian Law Journal.*

Blazhenkova, N. M., Bayrushina, F. F., 2022. On the problems of monitoring the socio-economic development of the region in modern economic conditions. *Bulletin of Ufa State Petroleum Technical University. Science, education, economics. Series: Economics.*

Russian Internet portal and analytical agency "RBC". Electronic resource.

Surinov, A.Ye., Luppov, A.B., 2021. Inequality in Russia: Regions, Cost of Living, and Equivalent Income. *Economic Policy.*

The system of cities and spatial development of Russia: [Monograph] / edited by L.E. Limonov - International Center for Social and Economic Research "Leontief Center". - St. Petersburg: ICSER "Leontief Center" (2024).

Zubarevich, N. V., 2024. Regions of Russia at the End of 2023: Was It Possible to Overcome the Crisis Recession? *Issues of Theoretical Economics.*

Bobkov, V.N., Gubarev, R.V., Dzyuba, E.I., Fayzullin, F.S., 2024. Assessment of interregional inequality in the Russian Federation based on the index of social well-being of the population. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast.*

Menshikova, O.I., 2020. The Level of Well-being of the Working Population as a Concentrated Expression of the Quality of Working Life. *The world of new economy.*