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## Methodological and methodical aspects of studying the social well-being of the population of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation in the context of its value orientation<sup>1</sup>



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**Abstract.** The article considers the methodology problems of studying the population social well-being in relation to its hierarchies of values and attitudes. Social well-being is interpreted as an integral indicator with two aspects. First, social well-being represents the objective parameters of the quality of life related to the state of the socio-economic system of a society, the level of infrastructure development, social security and the quantity of political rights. Secondly, an evaluation of subjective well-being, including the overall satisfaction with life and social optimism. The article gives a general description of the main international and Russian methods for measuring the quality of life. The necessity of modification of existing methods is shown. It's proposed to be implemented by incorporating indicators that represent the specifics of living conditions in the Arctic, along with the preservation of universal tools for measuring social well-being. The characteristic of the international measurement methods of quality of life in the Arctic is given as an example of such modification. The article offers the idea that the study of social well-being should be done out in the context of the value orientation studies, because the latter is an important part of the individuals' interpretation of socio-economic, political and legal situation. It's proposed to use the additional variables, affecting the state of social well-being, such as personal motivational and value characteristics (dominant terminal and instrumental values) and culturally determined value-behavioral imperatives common in a society.

**Keywords:** *social well-being, value orientations, the quality of life, subjective well-being, the Russian Arctic*

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### ***Introduction***

Among the priority areas of the Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as the Russian Arctic), its comprehensive socio-economic development has come first. Along with economic indices, such as GRP, average per capita income, labor market tension and many other things, key indicators of social and economic development dynamics are indicators reflecting the social well-being of the population. At the same time, as studies of Russian sociologists show [1, Gorshkov M.K., pp. 52–76], when measuring social well-being, it is important to consider the value orientations of the population of a country or region, because the individuals' assessment of their social and material position is interpreted through the prism of the hierarchy of life values and culturally conditioned imperatives of behavior. Thus, knowledge of regional cultural features helps to better interpret the data received, and at the stage of developing an empirical research program — to increase the validity of its tools. Next, we will consider the methodological and methodological aspects of researching the social well-being of the population in relation to the Arctic territories, and we will also determine the methodological possibilities for studying the dynamics of socio-economic development in the context of value transformations.

### ***Methodological aspects of empirical studies of social well-being***

The concept of "social well-being" does not have a generally accepted strict definition: its content can vary depending on the disciplinary field (in psychology and sociology the interpretation of the category of social well-being will be different). Nevertheless, it can be argued that there is a conceptual core of the term, bringing together its various definitions. At the same time, we can talk about two main approaches: the first relates to the interpretation of the concept in the broad sense as an analog of social sentiments, the second in a narrow one: as a similarity to subjective well-being.

The first approach involves considering, on the one hand, a general assessment of the individual's own lives in the context of the situation in society (social adaptation, material status, social status, etc.), and on the other hand, an assessment of the affairs in the country (economic and the political situation, the activities of the authorities and institutions) [2, Kuchenkova A.V., p. 120]. The second approach to interpreting the category of social self-feelings — through the measurement of satisfaction with life or its various aspects (spheres, domains) [3, Balatsky E.V.].

According to the P.M. Kozyreva, social well-being is a subjective expression of the process and outcome of individuals' adaptation to social transformations and, consequently, should be studied in the light of this phenomenon [4, Kozyreva P.M., pp. 25–26]. She also proposes to meas-

ure special well-being by means of three key variables: 1) satisfaction and stability of existence, 2) stable status (the idea of one's position in the system of stratification of the transforming Russian society), self-assessment of the state of health (physical and mental) [5, Kozyreva P.M.].

Social well-being is determined by a complex of factors of objective and subjective nature, the integral indicator of which is the quality of life of the population (otherwise — social well-being) [6, Morozova T.V., Belaya R.V., Murina S.G., p. 141]. The quality of life is traditionally determined through a set of objective characteristics of a specific society reflecting its overall economic and technological state [7, Ayyazyan S.A.]. At the same time, in the last quarter of the 20th century, Critical judgments have been made in the scientific literature regarding this approach, the essence of which is reduced to pointing to the one-sidedness of the "objectivist" interpretation of the term "quality of life" and the paradoxes it generates: with high rates of economic development, the population of a country or region may experience a pronounced dissatisfaction with life. At present, there is no doubt about the validity of such criticism. At the same time, the socio-psychological approach, appealing to the concept of "subjective welfare" [8, Badoux A., Mendelsohn G.A.] as a key category of assessing the quality of life, represents the opposite extreme — subjective assessments of the degree of satisfaction with life, representing a concentrated the expression of the success / failure of the implementation of the individual life strategy, with the aggregation of mass data still reflect the state of the economic subsystem of a particular society. Thus, the task is to find a balance between these complementary approaches.

The index of the best life (The OECD Better Life Index) is an attempt to bring measurable indicators of well-being together. In accordance with the OECD methodology, 11 main categories are used to calculate the index, which reflect various aspects of people's lives and social welfare parameters. At the heart of each aspect lies from one to three indicators.

Table 1

*The system of indices for measuring Better Index of Life<sup>2</sup>*

CATEGORY OF ANALYSIS	INDICATOR
1. Housing conditions	▪ number of rooms per person;
2. Income	▪ housing with basic communal facilities;
3. Work	▪ housing costs
4. Society	▪ Adjusted net household income after tax;
5. Education	▪ financial well-being of the household
6. Ecology	▪ level of employment;
7. Civil rights	▪ level of long-term unemployment;
8. Health	▪ average salary;
9. Satisfaction	▪ Guarantee of employment
10. Security	▪ social support network

<sup>2</sup> OECD Better Life Index. URL: <http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org> (Accessed: 22 November 2017)

11. Work / rest	▪ level of education;
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These categories are divided into two groups: aspects of well-being in terms of material living conditions (housing, income, work) and in terms of opportunities to meet social, cultural and political needs (society, education, ecology, civil rights, health, satisfaction with life, safety, balance of work and personal life). The index is determined by calculating the weighted average of the values listed above. The indicators are based on data from state statistics and sociological research.

The World Health Organization has developed a quality of life questionnaire (The World Health Organization Quality of Life — WHOQOL). The quality of human life, as defined by WHO, is the degree of comfort of a person both within himself and in the environment, which is determined by the physical, social and emotional factors affecting him. Although the WHOQOL questionnaire is primarily aimed at assessing the state of physical and mental health of citizens of a country, it also includes several issues by which the respondents assess their psychological state, social environment and infrastructure, safety, life goals, values and beliefs. In accordance with the methodology of WHOQOL, all questions are grouped into blocks (domains). Currently, there are six such domains:

1. Physical state.
2. Psychological state.
3. Independence (from the help of others).
4. Social relations.
5. Environment (quality of the environment).
6. The spiritual sphere.

To measure each variable in questions, we use ordinal 5-point scales. Aggregated indicators are calculated as the arithmetic mean / weighted average of all indicators of one domain<sup>3</sup>.

The methodology for evaluating the quality of life proposed by WHO reflects a widespread view of this phenomenon as complex and multifactorial, requiring not only objectively and more or less accurately measurable indicators of economic welfare and inequality, the development of infrastructure or medical problems of the population, but also subjective opinions of people regarding the conditions of their existence, the satisfaction of vital and spiritual needs and the state of social relations. It should be noted that in the WHOQOL methodology, these aspects are given more space in comparison with the OECD approach, which makes it useful for researching the social well-being of residents of a region.

Among the domestic methods of the survey of the quality of life of the population, one of the most developed methods is the methodology used within the framework of the project "High-

<sup>3</sup> For more information on WHOQOL see the WHO webpage. URL: [http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/publications/whoqol/en/](http://www.who.int/mental_health/publications/whoqol/en/) (Accessed: 24 November 2017)

er School of Economics", "Russian Monitoring of the Economic Situation and Health of the Population." This method allows to collect representative data, first, on the state and dynamics of micro-economic indicators of households and individuals, their human capital (income and expenditure structure, material welfare, employment, migration behavior, health and nutrition, educational trajectory, leisure, etc.). Details of the methodology, indicators, questionnaires and data received annually in the monitoring are available on the website of the Higher School of Economics (<https://www.hse.ru/rims/>).

Another method for measuring the quality of life was developed in the framework of the project of the Center for the Study of Socio-Cultural Changes of the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Lapin and L.A. Belyaeva [12, Lapin N.I., Belyaeva L.A.]. The system of indices proposed by this method is reflected in Table 2 [9, Belyaeva L.A., pp. 37–38].

Table 2

*The system of indices for measuring the quality of life by the methodology of the Center for the Study of Socio-Cultural Changes of the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences*

COMPONENTS OF QUALITY OF LIFE	PRIVATE INDEXES
I. Living standard (well-being)	1. The index of the material standard of living 2. The index of housing satisfaction 3. The index of access to health care 4. The index of accessibility of education
II. Quality of the nearest social environment	1. Self-identification index with residents of your settlement 2. Crime prevention index 3. The index of protection from poverty 4. Index of protection against the arbitrariness of officials 5. Index of protection against arbitrariness of law enforcement agencies
III. Quality of the environment	1. Index of protection against environmental threats 2. Index of air purity 3. Water purity index
IV. Social wellbeing of the population	1. The index of confidence in the future 2. The index of satisfaction with life 3. The Index of autonomy

The formula for calculating the partial indices:  $I \text{ part.} = (X - Y) + 100$ , where  $X$  — the share of positive answers (estimates),  $Y$  — the proportion of negative. Generalizing indices for each of the components of the quality of life ( $I_{\text{comp.}}$ ) Are calculated as the arithmetic mean of the partial indices, and the integral index (of the quality of life) as the arithmetic mean of the generalizing indices of the components.

The above-described methods, with all their inherent advantages, take little account of the specifics of vital activity in the Arctic territories, which are characterized by a focal type of settlement, the limited resources of transport infrastructure, extreme natural and climatic conditions, the specific sectoral structure of regional economies, the preservation of elements of traditional economy and culture among indigenous peoples residing on these territories, acute demographic

problems and additional difficulties with attracting, as well as reproduction and preservation of highly skilled labor.

Since the beginning of the XXI century in the environment of researchers of the Arctic, attempts are being made to create and approbate a variety of methods for studying the quality of life and the social well-being of the population, considering the specific conditions of their life activity in the arctic territories. Among these attempts, the most significant projects were The Arctic Social Indicators (ASI) and Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic (SLiCA).

The Arctic Social Indicators project was initiated by an international group of Arctic researchers following the results of the Arctic Human Development Report prepared for the Arctic Council in 2004. In studies conducted by the ASI methodology to assess the quality of life of Arctic residents the state of health of the population, material well-being, educational opportunities, cultural well-being, communication with the natural environment (contact with nature), opportunities to control fate are studied. The system of indicators developed by the ASI research team is presented in general form in Table 3 [13, Arctic Social Indicators, pp. 29–145].

Table 3

*Arctic Social Indicators*

CATEGORY OF ANALYSIS	INDICATORS
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- infant mortality</li> <li>- infant mortality</li> <li>- availability of medical services</li> <li>- percentage of suicides</li> <li>- self-evaluation of health</li> <li>- the percentage of obese people</li> <li>- percentage of smokers</li> </ul>
Material well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GDP per capita</li> <li>- per capita income</li> <li>- unemployment rate</li> <li>- poverty level</li> <li>- volume of production of traditional (natural) farming (per capita)</li> <li>- net migration rate</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the proportion of people receiving vocational education (students of the college, university)</li> <li>- the proportion of people who successfully graduated from college, university</li> <li>- the share of graduates of colleges, universities, which in the next 10 years remained on the arctic territories</li> </ul>
Cultural well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cultural autonomy</li> <li>- preservation of the language (the proportion of representatives of small indigenous peoples who speak their native language)</li> <li>- percentage of the population involved in recreational activities at the local level</li> <li>- percentage of the population engaged in subsidiary farming at the local level</li> </ul>
Connections with nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- production of (food) traditional farming</li> <li>- consumption of food (traditional) food</li> </ul>

Opportunities to control your destiny	Indicators characterizing the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Representation of indigenous peoples in local authorities</li> <li>- the area of the territory handed over to indigenous communities</li> <li>- budgetary powers of local / regional authorities in the Arctic territories</li> </ul>
	Indicators characterizing the participation of an individual in the life of a local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- electoral activity</li> <li>- the possibility of collective (public) distribution of natural resources at the local level</li> <li>- satisfaction with the standard of living</li> <li>- the possibilities (conditions) for preserving the native language</li> </ul>

Since the system of indicators presented was designed to examine the living conditions of indigenous peoples living in the Arctic territories, the limitations imposed by the ASI methodology on studying the quality of life and social well-being of Arctic residents outside the traditional indigenous habitat are obvious. In urban areas with ethnically and culturally mixed populations, including regional centers and monotowns, where there are other types of economic activity and other institutional forms of public life, the use of this methodology is not entirely adequate to the research tasks of measuring the social well-being of the population. At the same time, this method allows obtaining relevant data on the territories where the population is represented mainly by indigenous people leading a traditional way of life.

The SLiCA methodology was tested and finalized as part of a multi-year international research project to study the living conditions of the indigenous peoples of the arctic territories of the USA, Canada, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Russia (Inuit, Saami, indigenous peoples of Chukotka)<sup>4</sup>. Even though, the authors of the methodology point to the need for adaptation of the toolkit to the specifics of a region and the ethno-social community being researched, the ideas that are based on it remain unchanged. Specifically, the research program of the SLiCA project involves measuring the situation of residents of the Arctic territories in the following areas: family relations and the economy of the household; mobility (geographical), language and education; lifestyle (employment, values and beliefs, identity, health); environment (housing conditions, income and expenses, security and legal protection, technical infrastructure); ecological situation, relations within the local community and participation in the public sphere [14, Birger Poppel, p. 109].

<sup>4</sup> The results of this study were presented at the University of Greenland in May 2011. Financial support was provided by international organizations, including the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Barents Secretariat, and others, and the state structures of several Arctic Council member countries.



*Social well-being in the light of research on value orientations*

In domestic research practice, there is an experience of studying the social well-being of residents of the Arctic territories — based on techniques, as discussed above, and some others [6, Morozova T.V., Belaya R.V., Murina S.G.; 10, Mikhailova A.N., Popova L.N.; 15, Osipova O.V., Maklashova E.G.; 16, Popov A.I., Popova T.L.; 17, Romashkina G.F., Kryzhanovskii O.A., Romashkin G.S.]. However, in these works, there is no evidence of torture to identify the relationship between variables that reflect the value orientations of the population and indicators of subjective assessments of social well-being. Therefore, an important factor of social well-being is ignored, since the objective parameters of the socio-everyday, economic and political-legal situation of individuals influence its assessment not directly, but only when interpreted in the context of an actual value hierarchy and attitudes. It should be borne in mind that at an individual level, in comparison with the level of societal ones, value systems are organized in accordance with other principles. In one case, we are dealing with a motivation-value system, which organizes the priority life goals of individuals and acceptable means of goal achievement (terminal and instrumental values, according to M. Rokich) from their point of view. In another case, we are talking about normative cultural-value orientations, reflecting the dominant, institutionally supported collective notions about correct and deviant behavior that have for the individual a compulsory force. In this regard, between the culturally prescribed and personal values in the case when they simultaneously regulate the same sphere of social practices, contrary to expectations, a negative correlation may well be observed [18, Schwartz S.H.].

R. Inglehart, one of the initiators of the international project World Values Survey, is a leading figure in the study of values and beliefs. He points to a dialectical connection between the cultural and mental characteristics of national and regional communities and the existing economic institutions in them. The differentiation of cultural features, presented during large-scale comparative empirical studies, is conceptually conceptualized by R. Inglehart and his colleagues (especially, K. Welzel) through contrasting the systems of value orientations, namely 1) traditional values-secular-rational values; 2) "survival values" (self-expression values) [19, Inglehart R., Welzel K., p. 80].

One of the productive hypotheses of the scientist relates to the idea that intergenerational changes in value systems (from traditional to secular-rational and from values of survival to values of self-expression), caused initially by fundamental socio-economic shifts, in turn become one of the main factors that determine the content of everyday practices of individuals (economic, political, marital, etc.) [20, Inglehart R.].



Another significant hypothesis of R. Inglehart and K. Welzel, based on an empirically fixed trend, is that as the opportunities (economic, political and legal) for empowering social well-being in an aggregated assessment of social well-being and quality of life are expanded a large role begins to play by assessing people's opportunities for their participation in the life of society (through public and public institutions). Hence it follows logically that the high level of democratization of society, the real guarantees of political rights and freedoms in the conditions of cultural and socio-economic transformations in the countries of Modernity at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries become a prerequisite for maintaining a high level of social self-feeling, and high income and economic security indicators cease to be a sufficient factor in this process [21, Welzel C., Inglehart R.].

G. Hofstede, interpreting culture as "the collective programming of consciousness, which distinguishes the members of one group or the type of people from others" [22, Hofstede G., p. 10], based on the data of intercountry comparative studies of cultural differences, developed a six-dimensional system of value coordinates that determine standards and patterns of behavior in a society. Aspects of culture in this system are indicated to them through a set of its dichotomous characteristics: "power distance (large / smaller)", "avoiding uncertainty (more / less)", "individualism / collectivism", "masculinity / femininity", "long-term / short-term temporary orientation", "indulgence / restraint" [22, Hofstede G., pp. 21–33].

Like R. Inglehart, in the center of Schwartz's research there is a correlation of normative value prescriptions mediating and supporting certain models of social relations, and the level of social and economic development of territories (countries, regions). At the heart of his approach is the identification of the basic cultural-conditioned value orientations that prevail in a society, which reflect the way in which this society organizes the resolution of the fundamental problems of regulating human behavior. Among these problems Sh. Schwartz singles out 1) the definition of the nature of relations and boundaries between the individual and the group; 2) ensuring the reproducibility of the social order; 3) regulation of the use of human and natural resources. The scientist a priori introduces for each fundamental problem two polar variants of the cultural "answer" (in the form of a certain basic value orientation), which are Weberian ideal types, whereas the real situation is one or another intermediate variant. The recipe for solving the first problem lies in the choice between the society of the position between the alternative values, identified by Schwartz as autonomy and belonging. The solution of the second problem implies a greater or lesser adherence to either the values of equality, or the value of the hierarchy. Finally, the answer to the third problem lies within the cultural dichotomy, expressed through the opposition of the

values of "harmony" and "skill" [23, Schwartz Sh., pp. 37–67]. In a generalized form, Schwartz's concept is presented in Fig. 1.



Fig.1. Cultural value orientations: theoretical structure. It includes harmony, affiliation, hierarchy, mastership, affective autonomy, intellectual autonomy, equality of rights.

### Conclusion

Empirical studies of the social well-being of the population of the Russian Arctic require the development of a toolkit that would integrate three groups of indicators: 1) reflecting the socio-economic situation of the inhabitants of the Russian Arctic; 2) reflecting their subjective assessments of personal and social well-being; Value orientations that mediate the relationship between the variables of the first and second groups.

In addition to adapted to the specifics of the Arctic Territories methods of measuring social well-being, the appeal to the approaches discussed above in the study of values will allow to enter data on the population of the Russian Arctic in the broad context of international and cross-regional comparative analysis of cultures, and hence determine the socio-cultural typological niche as the Russian Arctic, as well as individual territories included in it.

From the point of view of the development of socio-cultural processes in the Russian Arctic, this methodological orientation seems to be fruitful for determining the interdependence of these processes and the socio-economic dynamics of Russia's Arctic territories.

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