

Implementation of Socio-economic Policy in the Framework of the Sustainable Development of the Territory based on the Reduction of Alcohol Consumption

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Abstract: The article shows the connection between alcohol consumption by the population and the decline in the quality of human capital, which should be involved in the development of society in the new conditions of economic management. It is concluded that society's focus on innovation, including environmental and the solution of problems from the pool of targets of regional economy sustainable development, is necessary to comprehensively solve the increasing quality of human capital. This actualizes adaptive and preventive regional socio-economic policy issues, contributing to the reduction of alcohol consumption in Russian society. Based on analytical comparisons, it was demonstrated that the standard of living and unemployment rate does not always mediate the propensity to drink alcohol. The conclusion is made about the effective role of promoting healthy lifestyles and values instilled in the family and society. It also substantiates a set of justifiable measures in the field of regional socio-economic policy, designed to control the situation and to help reduce the consumption of alcoholic beverages.


1 INTRODUCTION

At present, reducing the purchase of socially undesirable goods, such as alcoholic beverages, by the population is part of the regional socio-economic policy implemented in Russia. This is mediated by the efforts of the Government and authorities in the regions to improve the quality and life expectancy of the population and the health of future generations. Thus, in July 2020, President of Russia V.V. Putin signed Decree No. 474, "On National Development Goals of the Russian Federation until 2030", which pool of targets includes the preservation of population, its health, and well-being, as well as increasing life expectancy to 78 years (Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 474, 2020).

This focus predetermines the need to reduce alcohol consumption among adult citizens who are planning to become parents, as the presence of addictions will harm their health and the health of their children, and there is a need to switch to other stereotypes of behavior and forms of leisure for families with children. The negative habits of parents

are subject to being copied by their children, who transfer this scenario of behavior and consumption to their future. Note that in the formation of the health of the individual, up to 50% of the influence falls on the factor of lifestyle, 20% - heredity, and up to 30% has to do with the environment (Onishchenko, 2015).

The concept of sustainable development focuses on the formation of a conscious attitude to the quality of life, living society in harmony with the surrounding landscape, focusing on innovation, including "green" initiatives, the consumption of environmentally friendly goods, and reducing the anthropogenic impact on the environment in the regions. To understand the relevance of the pressure reduction issue, here are data characterizing the degree of conservation of natural ecosystems in several countries (Figure 1).

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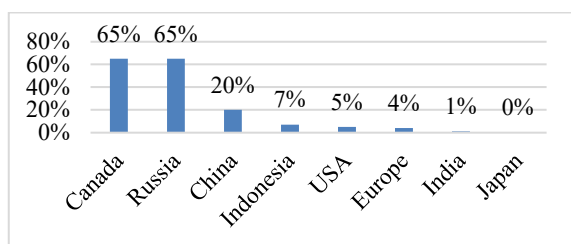


Figure 1: Conservation of natural ecosystems in selected countries of the world, %

A number of researchers emphasize the importance of transition from the "brown" to "green" model of economic management (Bondarenko et al., 2020). The problem of development of Russian regions with the focus on digital solutions that take into account social and environmental effects in addition to economic ones is updated (Meskhi et al., 2020), and examples of the development of the regional economy and its individual sectors in terms of following these principles are given (Meskhi et al., 2020). The issues of quality of life, saving resources, solving social problems - are explored in the "smart city" model (Arkin et al., 2020). Consideration of social and environmental effects, strengthening the digital platform in territorial development, focus on innovations within a sustainable scenario of life of territories (Arkin et al., 2020) are possible in the presence of adequate human capital, which implies the need to improve the health of the nation. This is associated with a decrease in alcohol consumption and actualizes the assessment of the current situation concerning the Russian conditions, as well as the implemented measures of regional socio-economic policy.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the study of the implementation of socio-economic policy for sustainable development of the territory based on reducing alcohol consumption, we analyze the values of sustainable development, the role of human capital in this process. A list of leading countries by alcohol consumption is reviewed, and risks of alcohol consumption for Russian citizens are identified. The average per capita income and unemployment rates in the federal districts of the country were analyzed. The statistical data were compared with the crime rate in the regions and the level of consumption of alcoholic beverages. Existing federal and regional policy measures to prevent alcohol consumption by the country's population, as well as the most pragmatic initiatives within the

framework of regional socio-economic policy, are analyzed.

3 RESEARCH RESULTS

The amount of alcohol consumed is influenced by the established lifestyle, consumption stereotype, lack of exercise habits, association of holidays with alcohol consumption, formed in children in the family, as well as broadcasted in movies, TV series, etc. The lack of accessible sports infrastructure in convenient locations to engage the population in different leisure activities plays an important role. Alcohol consumption increases in areas with low income and high unemployment.

Within the existing international rankings on alcohol consumption, Russia ranks 16th, while the leaders in this indicator in 2020 are Moldova, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Germany, Nigeria, Ireland, Luxembourg, Latvia, Bulgaria, and Romania (Figure 2).

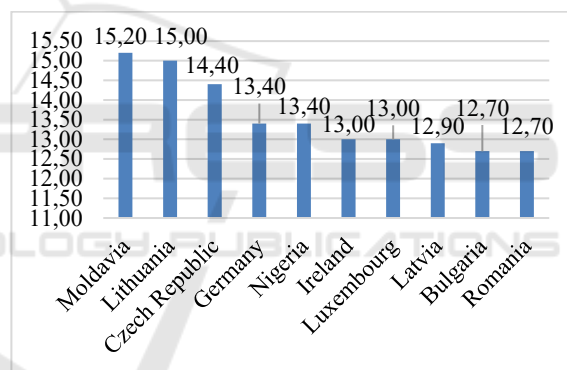


Figure 2: Leading countries in alcohol consumption (litres of alcohol per capita per year) (10)

However, the problem of reducing alcohol consumption for Russia remains acute. Experts suggest implementing measures of socio-economic policy to reduce the consumption of alcoholic beverages by 2030, as well as to reorient the population from strong drinks (which should not exceed 15% of the total volume), to wine (50%) and beer (30%). Describing the situation in Russia, as a whole, let us note that about 85% of the population of working age consume alcoholic beverages at least once a week, about 70% of deaths are associated with the abuse of alcoholic beverages.

The increase in the number of young people involved in alcohol consumption can be considered an alarming signal identified by experts. The proportion of young people who drink alcohol is

about 69% (age 18-23). In addition, more than 50% of young people systematically purchase and consume alcohol.

According to the respondents themselves, overt and covert advertising of alcohol, as well as its affordability and availability in places of purchase, are the motivating factors.

Experts cite data on the sharp deterioration in the health of the Russian population, the expansion of the spectrum of deviant behavior leading to crime (Figure 3).

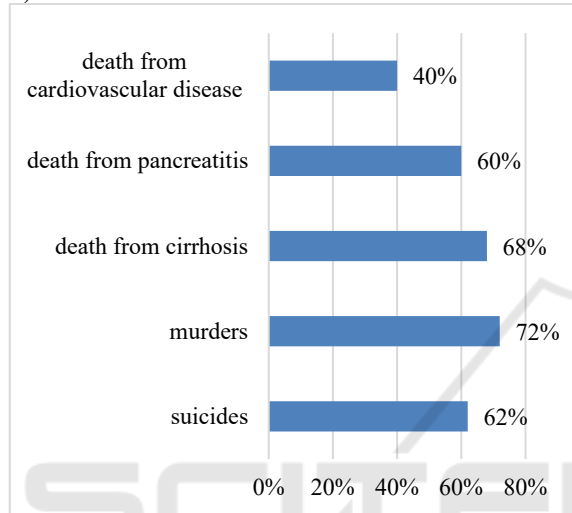


Figure 3: Negative consequences of alcohol consumption in Russian society.

Alcohol abuse increases the burden on health care and law enforcement, and reduces opportunities for human capital growth.

The regions of Russia are not homogeneous in terms of the criteria contributing to the growth of alcohol consumption, namely unemployment and income levels. The following data can be illustrated by the level of income in terms of federal districts of Russia (figure 4).

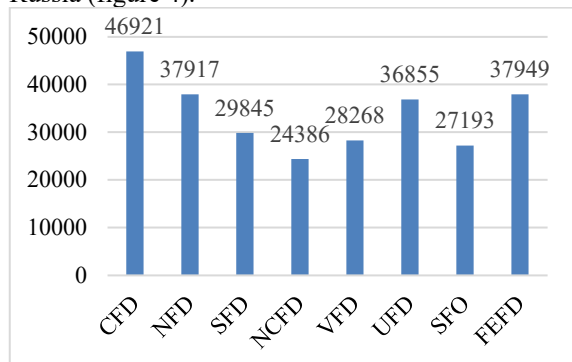


Figure 4: Average per capita income of population, by federal districts of Russia in 2019, rubles per month (Stat. sb., 2020).

Income levels are lowest in the NCFD, SFD, and PFD, followed by the SFD, and the regions within these federal districts should have higher rates of alcohol consumption than, for example, in the CFD, NWFD, and FEED.

According to the assessment of the unemployment rate, the following data were obtained in the federal districts of the country (figure 5).

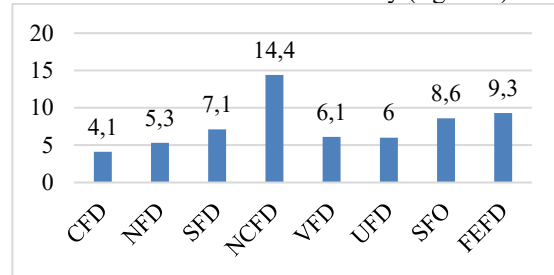


Figure 5: Unemployment rate in Russia's federal districts in 2019, %.

By this indicator, the North Caucasian Federal District is an obvious anti-leader, followed by the Far Eastern Federal District, the Northern Federal District, and the Southern Federal District, which suggests that it is in the regions that make up these federal districts of Russia that the situation with alcoholic beverages consumption should be tense.

However, based on large-scale empirical studies characterizing the amount of alcohol consumed in different regions of Russia, there is no correlation with living standards and unemployment rates for all territories of the country. The findings demonstrate the high role of upbringing, religious beliefs, and family values (Figure 6).

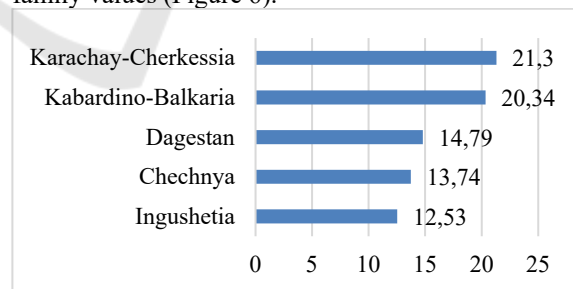


Figure 6: Russia's regions with the highest level of sobriety.

The most "sober" regions of the country are those that are part of the North Caucasus Federal District, where there is a difficult situation with unemployment and one of the lowest average per capita incomes.

The following five regions are considered to be the anti-leaders in terms of alcohol consumption (Figure 7).

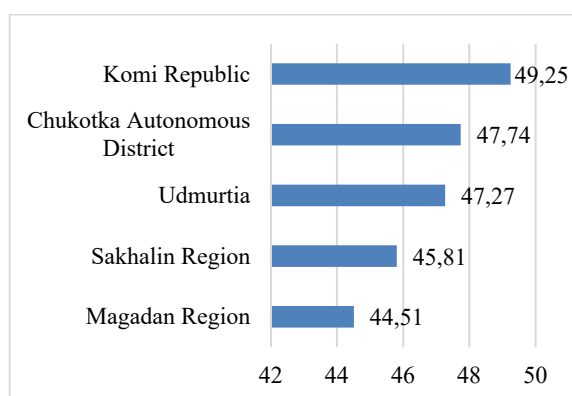


Figure 7: Russia's regions with the lowest level of sobriety.

These regions are part of the FEFD, NWFD, and NWFD and should not be included in this "alarming" group regarding living standards and unemployment.

It is important to note that the regions leading in sobriety are characterized by lower rates of crimes per 1,000 inhabitants, including serious crimes. The regions leading in alcohol consumption are among the anti-leaders by this criterion.

We believe that the rehabilitation of the economic situation in the regions, the revival of industries, and the growth of living standards are undoubtedly of great importance. However, within the regional socio-economic policy framework, cultural and educational work, education, and behavior change are of great importance. This involves promoting healthy lifestyles and active family leisure time while demonstrating the harmful effects of alcohol consumption. Such activities should be accompanied by a range of restrictive measures to prevent youth involvement in alcohol use.

In this context, we consider it appropriate to analyze the set of initiatives proposed for implementation in the framework of federal and regional socio-economic policy by such an organization as "Sober Russia". According to the experience of other countries, the specialists of this organization propose to limit alcohol sales to 21-year-olds to delay the youths getting acquainted with these products and to prevent the formation of negative habits. Experts justify the need for stricter penalties for the entrepreneurs involved in the activities of illicit alcohol trafficking. Another initiative is the necessity to equip vehicles rented out with alcohol locks on a mandatory basis. The same measure is proposed to be applied to car owners who have a history of drink-driving violations. No less justified in this context would be an increase in liability for drunk driving, regardless of the adverse consequences of this act (harm to health, property damage, death of

the injured persons). Liability of passengers for their, in fact, participation in the act of drunk driving appears to be an effective measure. As such offences often occur with the support and even encouragement of passengers.

As a pilot project in the regions leading in the acquisition and consumption of alcohol, it is proposed to implement the concept of restricting access to alcohol by placing it only in designated places in stores, that is, to minimize the "point of contact" of these products with consumers. It also seems advisable to move the sale of alcoholic beverages outside cities and towns to also limit access to them and create additional difficulties in finding them.

Equally important are comprehensive policies to stop the promotion of alcohol consumption among children and adolescents. This, for example, implies the need to prohibit the production and presentation in retail outlets of products bearing the name of "children champagne" and other imitators of alcohol consumption by children who play as adults and simulate their behavior. In conjunction with these restrictions, prohibit the sale of non-alcoholic beer and wine-based drinks to minors. Also as part of the promotion of a sober lifestyle it is advisable to conduct appropriate preventive education in schools, providing knowledge about the dangers of alcohol and the unacceptability of its regular use for people who want to be healthy and realize a successful career trajectory, combined with well-being and a high quality of life. It is also advisable to combine these actions with the promotion of various accessible sports and the presence of sports infrastructure in places of study, work and residence of young people.

For social advertising to discourage the consumption of alcohol, it is necessary to increase the font on each unit of such products about the negative consequences of alcohol consumption, as well as to provide inscriptions with appropriate infographics about alcohol-induced crimes and diseases, statistics of deaths associated with alcohol abuse.

Restrictions related to the temporary regime of sale of alcoholic beverages are already being implemented in the country's regions. The reduction of these temporary windows and their complete elimination during school holidays and public holidays is also advisable. Timely detection, interdiction of production and destruction of counterfeit goods are also important.

There is also a need to expand the range of assistance for people who have become dependent on alcohol, with the possibility of full rehabilitation and assistance in finding employment and necessary foster care as part of engaging in healthy lifestyles.

In addition, it is necessary to support children's sports, which will mediate an increase in the number of free children's and youth sports sections, and it is also advisable to invest in socially oriented projects promoting family values and healthy lifestyles.

4 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

It can be stated that the acquisition and consumption of alcohol by the population has been investigated in several scientific and practice-oriented works in many countries of the world. This issue remains relevant for Russia, even though our country is not among the leading countries in per capita consumption. Given the significant impact on the health of current and future generations of Russian citizens, this issue should be fully analyzed since alcohol addiction and the consequences of alcohol consumption harm population growth and the increase in human capital (especially intellectual capital), which is necessary for innovative solutions and management within the framework of sustainable development targets. Several scientific papers prove that the index of health and social problem-solving orientation capabilities is leveled by the use of hard alcohol (Nemtsov and Kostenko, 2015). Russia has a tradition of strong alcoholic beverages (vodka) consumption, which suggests the need for federal and regional socio-economic policy interventions in the regions to remedy the emerging negative consequences (Kossova et al., 2017). In this connection, we should note that in Russia, the Concept to Reduce Alcohol Abuse and Prevent Alcoholism among the Population of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2020 has been implemented.

In addition to federal measures, regional socio-economic policy decisions are being implemented. One such example is the alcohol reduction programme in the Republic of Tuva. These targets are aimed at improving the demographic situation, reducing crime and improving social health.

Let us also note that several foreign researchers estimate the level of income, per capita GDP, employment indicators as factors influencing such inclinations (Gilligan and Skrepnek, 2015). Many domestic researchers also note the importance of the mentioned indicators and relate them to individuals' quality and longevity capabilities (Koloslitsyna et al., 2019). In addition, the expert community has noted that the potential for human capital gain or degradation is linked to the amount of alcohol

consumed, nutrition, and the presence or absence of sport in society (Kossova et al., 2017).

5 CONCLUSION

We believe that the volume of alcohol consumption should be analyzed in Russian society concerning the situation in the country as a whole and each individual region. In this regard, the rating of "sobriety" of the Russian regions has a certain usefulness and meaning.

Such monitoring is necessary because the quality of public health in the current and long-term depends on reducing alcohol consumption by the population and/or transition (at the first stage) from strong alcoholic beverages to conditionally light ones. We have found that, despite the importance of indicators of income level and unemployment in assessing the propensity to drink alcohol, in the current Russian conditions, such dependence does not fully justify itself because the North Caucasian Federal District, with the lowest per capita income and the highest unemployment rate, has the lowest alcohol consumption in the country. This circumstance emphasizes the importance of upbringing, family traditions, promotion of correct life stereotypes.

These circumstances make it necessary to launch an advocacy campaign to minimize the proportion of young people in Russia involved in alcohol consumption. It is also advisable to take integrated measures within the framework of regional socio-economic policy that allow the introduction of adaptive restrictive measures and educational solutions to ensure the growth of human capital, which is necessary for the management of the regions within the framework of the targets of the concept of sustainable development.

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