

## REFLECTION OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS ON YOUNG RURAL FAMILY AS A PROBLEM OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT. A STUDY CASE - THE REPUBLIC OF BASHKORTOSTAN

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### **Abstract**

*This article analyzes the situation prevailing in recent years with young families. The family today has become almost the sole cultivator of traditional culture and values. A special role in this process is played by the rural family, as the village, rural lifestyle for centuries performed a stronghold of conservative moral and spiritual ideals and values. However, negative changes also affect the rural family, change its structure, composition, functions, the attitude of family members to each other, which leads to social problems of rural development. Based on the studies conducted, the main problems related to the migration of rural youth to cities or larger and more developed rural settlements are considered in the article. The paper updates the rural population aging, the village devastation, the orphan lands, the threat to the national security of the country. New data on the population census reveals the ongoing changes in the structures of rural and urban families. As a consequence of the research results, it was found that the principal problem of the state policy in relation to the rural young family, today, is the uncertainty of the Russian authorities on the future of rural areas.*

**Key words:** rural family, optimization, social infrastructure, urban family, social problems of rural areas, the future of rural area

### **INTRODUCTION**

At present the family being the only source of population reproduction, is one of the main society institution and its role cannot be overestimated. The family, possessing great economic and intellectual potential, performs not only reproductive, economic, educational, recreational functions, but it is also a source of accumulation, preservation, transfer of human and labor capital, norms of behavior, values, culture, lifestyle. The family is a powerful factor of preservation of ethnic identity of the population.

Currently, modern socio-cultural and socio-economic factors, controversial and complex processes lead to such negative phenomena as

the family size reduction, the family children number, the increase of divorces, unmarried young people, unregistered families and births, weakening of intra-family communications, destruction of value foundations and others. As a whole the changing forms and functions of the family don't correspond to its essence, historical role and place in the society. Rural young families are acutely affected by these processes. The problem is aggravated by the fact that under existing conditions of globalization, urbanization and wide spread of Internet the rural young family wants to live "like in the city". This desire is explainable, because large urban centers give more opportunities for self-realization.

Thus, there is a contradiction between the objective needs and interests of young people and lagging behind social conditions in rural areas. Young people are trying to leave a modern village, characterized by narrow areas of application of labor, low income, underdeveloped forms of social protection, lack of opportunities and places for spending free time.

As noted by the authors of the article "Socio-Cultural aspects of modernization processes in the Republic of Bashkortostan" "nowadays modern Bashkir society is going through a very painful social transformation caused by transition from agricultural traditional way of life to the society of urban culture. It is known, a huge historical period, began with the Soviet modernization and ended (conditionally) in 2010 dismantling "authoritarian regime of M. Rakhimov". The lagging character of the urbanization transition makes the process not only painful but also conflicting. This process requires special attention due to fact that Bashkirs are the fourth numerous people in the Russian Federation (after Russians, Tatars and Ukrainians).

Socio-economic conditions and global transformation of society value orientations [9, 16], systemic economic crisis in the rural areas lead to gradual changing family, marriage, reproductive values and aims of villagers, their attitude to marriage, children, parents, relatives. Moreover, the problem is that the minds and behavior of rural young families change. So, first, in the rural family compared to the urban one, the adoption of the traditional values is dominant, and secondly these values are significantly transformed, which leads to divorces, unregistered cohabitation and unregistered births, and the decline of the family number of children. The structure of the rural young family, its composition, lifestyle and values, the distribution of gender roles in the family are gradually approaching to the urban family model. The problem is that living environment, occupation and peasant farming peculiarities contradict the urbanizing style and mode of the rural life.

Moreover, the gradual decline of the traditional big family, young people's desire to live separately from their parents led to misunderstanding its functions, since the problem of unemployment, low living standards, providing with kindergartens and schools is much more acute than in the city.

Scientific research of the family development has passed several stages. In the middle and the second half of the nineteenth century, in the period of formation of sociology as a science, the family as a micromodel of society was represented in the theories of classics M. Weber, G. Simmel, O. Comte, K. Marx, H. Spencer, and others [5]. At the same time, anthropological and ethnographic studies of the family are in the focus of social scientists. The main regularities of historical development of the family and marriage are analyzed in the works by E. Vesterbacka, M. M. Kovalevsky, J. Laboca, D. F. Mac-McLennan, G. Mayne, L. G. Morgan, F. Engels etc. [6].

In the middle of twentieth century, the family was studied within the framework of structural-functional analysis (E. Durkheim, R. Merton, T. Parsons, A. Radcliffe-brown, P. Sorokin) [3, 1]. The transformation of the family structure and functions as a social institution was the focus of research.

In the twentieth century, foreign research of the family developed various approaches and directions, so we can distinguish: evolutionary; functional; interactionist; empirical; ethological; socio-psychological; sociobiological; economic; feminist. Evolutionary approach (J. Bachofen, John.Labbok, L. G. Morgan, I. Kohler, M. M. Kovalevsky, L. Sternberg, F. Engels, S. I. Golod) [4, 19], emphasizing historical predetermination, influence of social environment and society on the family, considers the evolution of family relationships in a progressive direction.

Functional approach (A. I. Antonov, E. Burgess, E. Westermarck, E. Durkheim, B. Malinowski, R. K. Merton. U. Ogborn, P. Sorokin) analyzed changes in the structure and functions of the family under the influence of global changes in the society [1, 23, 25].

The subject matter of interactionists' research (G.M. Andreeva) is the processes of family members' social interaction [7]. The economic approach (J. Homans, G. Becker) considers the family and family-marriage relations through the prism of economic categories "utility", "marriage market", "profit", "costs", etc. [8]. Choosing a marriage partner, creating the family, giving birth to children are analyzed through a balance of costs and rewards. The feminist approach focused on gender issues.

The scientific works by T.I. Zaslavskaya, R.I. Kapelyushnikova, Z.I. Kalugina, V.I. Nechaeva, A.A. Paptsova, V.I. Perevedentseva, A.N. Petrikova, L.L. Rybakovsky, V. I. Staroverova are devoted to various aspects of socio-economic and socio-demographic analysis, rural development from the point of view of food security of the state and to factors of significant impact on the current state of rural areas [2, 11].

The main research direction of the rural youth and the rural young families are socio-demographic, socio-economic problems, migration, unemployment, living standards and quality of life, value orientations. It should be pointed out works by V.V. Paciorkovsky among the young family researchers. He paid special attention to the transformation processes of rural households composition and structure of [20].

The research of rural families, including rural young families, represents a special group of studies. Thus, a significant contribution to the rural family research was made by T. Shanin. A project aimed at studying the history of rural families and villages, analyzing the budget of incomes and expenditures as well as the budget time of village population [21].

Peculiarities of the family institution and marriage in the ethnic, regional sections became the object of study by A.V. Artyukhova, V.N. Arkhangelsky, A.S. Barashkova, A.I. Kuzmina, A.R. Mikheeva [17, 18]. The research works by A. Galina, F. B. Burkhanova, R. M. Valiakhmetova, S. A. Laraway, F. A. Mostovoy, R. R. Salakhutdinov, G. F. Hilario are devoted to the analysis of the rural population problems,

the youth and the family in the Republic of Bashkortostan [2].

Thus, we know scientific researches of the family as a social phenomenon, its structure, historical development and transformation of its functions. There are researches devoted to the young rural family in various areas of Russia. However, these studies don't fully reflect modern realities [13]. The rural young family as an object of sociological study requires additional researches of its development in modern socio-economic conditions in concrete areas of the Russian Federation [14, 15].

The main object of the article is to establish necessity of providing all necessary social infrastructure facilities for comfortable young families living in rural areas in the Republic of Bashkortostan.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The population of the Republic of Bashkortostan ranks first in the Volga Federal District and the seventh among the subjects of the Russian Federation. There are representatives of more than 160 nationalities in the republic according to the population census of 2010. Three nationalities (Russians, Bashkirs and Tatars) account for 90% of the republic's population [2].

The quota of rural people in the population structure is relatively high in the Republic of Bashkortostan. According to the 2010 population census, the quota of the rural population in the region was 1,610.6 thousand people, or 39.6%, of urban residents, respectively, 2,461.7 thousand people, or 60.4%. The weight of the Republic of Bashkortostan is 2.3% of the urban and 4.3% of the rural population of Russia, 11.6% and 18.5%, respectively, of the Volga Federal District population (Fig. 1).

Majority of rural households (58.3%) consist of spouses with or without children, corresponding to the type of nuclear family.

Approximately one in five households (21.3%) consists of one person. Another 13.1% of households correspond to incomplete or mixed family - parents with a

child or one of the parents with a child or one of the grandparents.

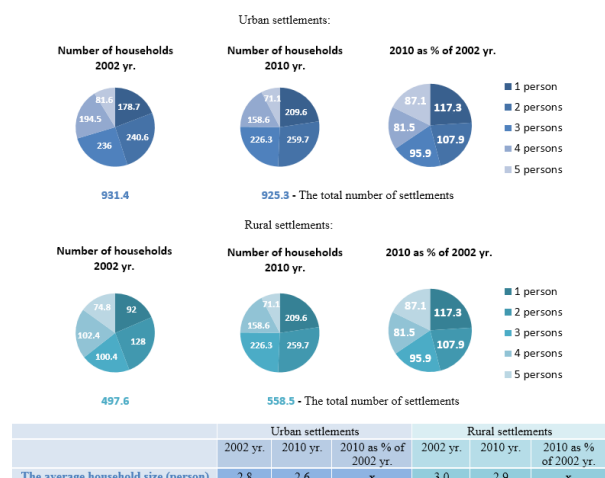


Fig.1. Number and composition of urban and rural households

Source: Data from Brief results of the census of 2010 in the Republic of Bashkortostan [10]

Only 3.2% of households can correspond to so-called extended or complex (multicultural) family. The family consists of spouses (with or without children, with one of grandparents, other relatives or without them). Thus, many rural families, including young ones, are a nuclear family type.

The object of our research is rural young families living in the Republic of Bashkortostan. The subject of our research is the respondents' subjective estimation taken from sociological survey. The main part of the analyzed empirical base of the research was collected by means of questioning:

1. Questioning of rural young families in the Republic of Bashkortostan (research topic: "Young rural family: problems and characteristics"). More than 750 spouses aged 18 to 30, living in the villages and urban-type settlements were studied in 2014-2015. The sample is random, representative by age, place of residence, socio-economic zones of the region. Questioning of young urban and rural families in the Republic of Bashkortostan (research topic: "Young family in modern conditions"). The questioning was conducted in 2016.

2. In addition to urban young families, 870 representatives (one of the spouses) of rural young registered and unregistered spouses

were included. The sample is multi-stage, territorial, quota. By questioning we conducted a comparative analysis of life quality and lifestyle of rural and urban young families.

The statistical data taken from the state committees collections of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Bashkortostan statistics; doubled analysis of all-Russian researches results and sample survey of the population - "Russian monitoring of the economic situation and health of the population", "Comprehensive monitoring of population living conditions" were used in the article as well.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The most important function of the family is giving birth to children and upbringing. This function is partially replaced by children's educational organizations (kindergartens) and schools in modern conditions of high economic activity of women. Despite the statements of regional authorities that the problem with kindergartens is gradually being solved in the republic, statistics show that it becomes more complicated in rural areas.

In whole, there were 1,333 pre-school educational institutions (PSEI) in the Republic of Bashkortostan at the end of 2015. Over the past two years the number of pre-school educational institutions has decreased significantly from 1,630 to 1,333 in 2015. More than half of pre-school educational institutions (723) are located in the rural areas. Over the past fifteen years, there has been a tendency for a gradual reduction of pre-school educational institutions number in the rural areas. There has been even a slight increase pre-school educational institutions number in the city over the past five years. Their number has begun to decrease again since 2014. (Fig. 2).

There are about 400,000 pre-school children in the region. By the end of 2015, the number of children in pre-school educational institutions was 213.3 thousand, while in urban areas - 156.2 thousand, in the rural areas - 77.6 thousand.

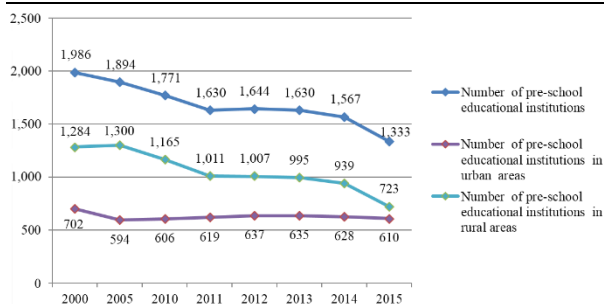


Fig. 2. Number of pre-school educational institutions (at the end of the year)

Source: Bashkortostanstat Data, 2016. pp. 25 [12]

There has been a significant increase of children number in pre-school educational institutions (PSEI) in both urban and rural areas since 2000. It may be explained as a consequence of large generation born in the late 1980s entering into reproductive age and socio-demographic policy of the state.

The republic is actively working on solving the problem of kindergartens queuing. However, the emergency in pre-school educational institutions remains high, there is a deficiency of pre-school educational organizations: there are 114 pretenders to 100 places in pre-school educational organizations (PSEO), 120 in urban areas, and 104 in rural areas. Only 69.2% of corresponding age children, 74.6% in urban areas, 60.4% in rural areas are embraced by pre-school educational organizations. Thus, about 40% of children of the corresponding age are not provided with pre-school educational organizations in the village. (Fig. 3).

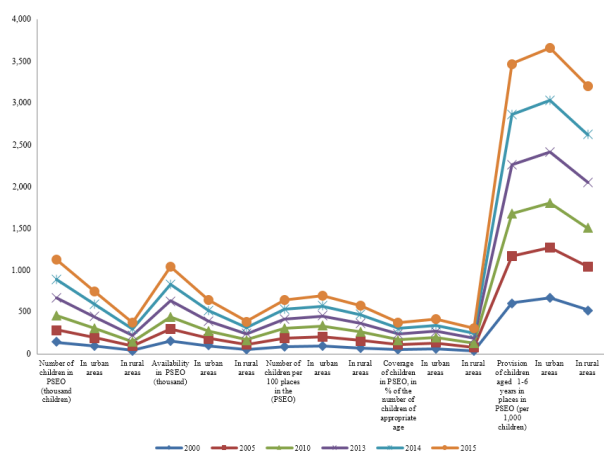


Fig. 3. Number of children in pre-school educational organizations (at the end of the year)

Source: Bashkortostanstat Data, 2016. pp. 28 [12]

As for general educational institutions, their number has also been gradually decreased in the last quarter of a century. This trend is typical as for rural so as to urban regions. The general educational institutions reduction is due to decline of trainees number in them.

As statistics show, in recent years, despite even a slight fluctuation of students number in general educational institutions, the number of schools has declined significantly. So at the beginning of the 2010/2011 academic year there were 1,840 general educational organizations, their number was reduced to 1,375 (reduction by 465 units) in the republic at the beginning of 2015/2016 academic year. At the same time, students number in daytime general educational institutions in 2015/2016 was 444,442 people (625 more than in 2010/11 academic year) (Figure 4-7).

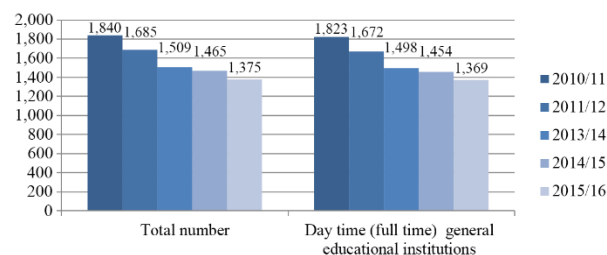


Fig. 4. Number of general educational institutions at the beginning of academic year

Source: Bashkortostanstat Data, 2016. pp. 29 [12]

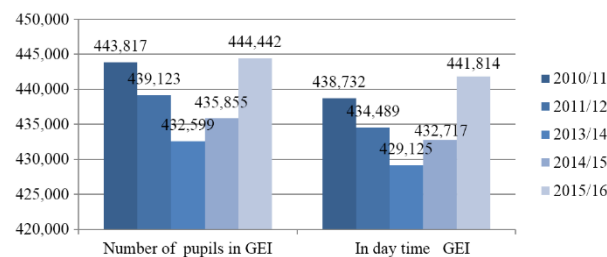


Fig. 5. Number of pupils in general education institutions at the beginning of academic year

Source: Bashkortostanstat Data, 2016, pp.29 [12]

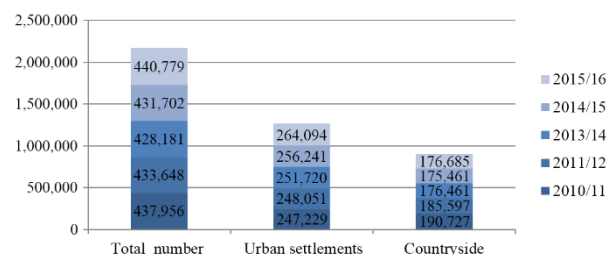


Fig. 6. Number of pupils in day time municipal and state general education institutions at the beginning of school year

Source: Bashkortostanstat Data, 2016, pp.29 [12]

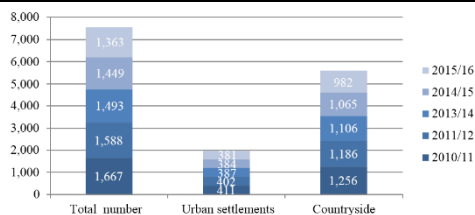


Fig. 7. Number of day time municipal and state general educational institutions at the beginning of academic year

Source: Bashkortostanstat Data, 2016, pp.29 [12]

In rural areas, in contrast to urban, there is a significant reduction of daytime state and municipal general education organizations number against the students decline. At the same time, there is a tendency of commercialization of these institutions. As noted J. A. Skryabina, due to the reduction of schools number "there is a massive and widespread destruction of education in rural areas. Tomorrow there won't be a single young family in the village ..." [20]. A young family needs not only kindergartens and schools, but also cultural and recreational facilities (Table 1).

Table 1. Institutions of cultural and recreational type

	2000	2005	2010	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Total number</b>							
Number of institutions	2,556	212	2,371	2,330	2,269	2,204	2,114
per 10,000 people	6	6	6	6	6	5	5
Number of places in institutions	451.7	439.3	411.2	401.8	384.6	335.6	322.2
per 1,000 people	110	108	101	99	95	82	82
Number of cultural and recreational establishments (thousand)	14.9	18.1	19.1	19.4	19.1	18.9	18.3
Number of participants in them (1,000 people)	222.8	265.2	276.0	283.8	276.2	271.3	263.8
children in them (thousand)	6.2	7.7	8.7	8.4	8.2	8.1	7.7
participants in them (thousand)	94.3	109.7	121.7	119.8	116.3	115.2	110.6
<b>Urban areas</b>							
Number of institutions, (units)	100	93	84	86	78	70	67
for 10,000 people	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Number of places in them (thousand)	47.0	39.3	33.1	32.7	28.3	26.0	25.4
for 1,000 people settlement (units)	18	16	13	13	11	10	10
<b>Rural areas</b>							
Number of institutions (units)	2,456	2,419	2,287	2,244	2,191	2,134	2,047
For 10,000 people settlement	17	15	14	14	14	14	14
Number of places (thousand)	404.6	400.0	378.1	369.1	356.3	309.6	296.8
per 1,000 population	274	245	235	234	227	198	198

Source: Bashkortostanstat Data, 2016. pp.86 [12]

According to the Bashkir State Committee on Statistics data (Bashkortostanstat), there is reduction of cultural and recreational facilities in the region. Their number has decreased by 227 units (from 2,114 to 2,341 units); accordingly, the number of places in them has also decreased from 404 to 322.2 units, as well as the number of cultural and leisure groups (from 19.4 to 18.3 thousand units) from 2011 to 2015. The number of participants in cultural and leisure

establishments has also declined (from 277.1 to 263.8 thousand people), children (from 8.4 to 7.7 thousand people). Significant reduction of cultural and recreational facilities is going on in rural municipal areas. These trends have the most negative impact on rural young families. The sociological research results also affirm rural young families' limitations in satisfying their cultural requirements.

So, for the last six months before the survey, 82.4% respondents said that they had never attended theaters, concerts, museums, exhibitions, half of the young families spent their vacations at home - 49.8%, 21.8% had no vocations at all, and 9.7% had to work during the holiday. As a consequence of the research results, it was found that representatives of rural young families are less satisfied with their recreational and cultural facilities compared to their urban peers (Figure 8).

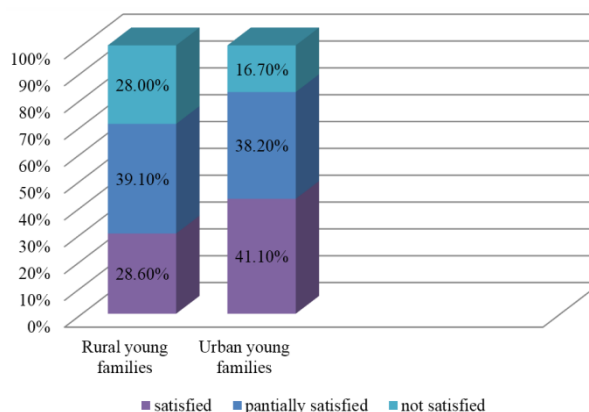


Figure 8. Satisfaction of respondents with opportunities for recreation, entertainment, cultural leisure, in%

Source: Bashkortostanstat Data, 2016. pp.86 [12]

The structure of leisure activities reflects young families' interests and needs structure, among which we can distinguish two main components.

The first is household (68.1%), which includes the work in the garden or in the kitchen garden (54.2%), since in rural areas the maintenance of a personal subsidiary farm (PSF) is not only a traditional occupation, but also a source of products and additional earnings in case of selling products. The second and the most popular way of free time spending is communication and getting information, including watching TV (51.5%),



spending time in the Internet (35.1%), reading newspapers, magazines and books (31.4%). Other common way of spending free time, but requiring more activity than watching TV is visiting friends (32.7%), and going in for sports (16.1%). The considerable dissatisfaction with the opportunities for leisure and entertainment is partly connected with the fact that there is mismatch the real possibilities and respondents' desires to spend their leisure time [22, 24].

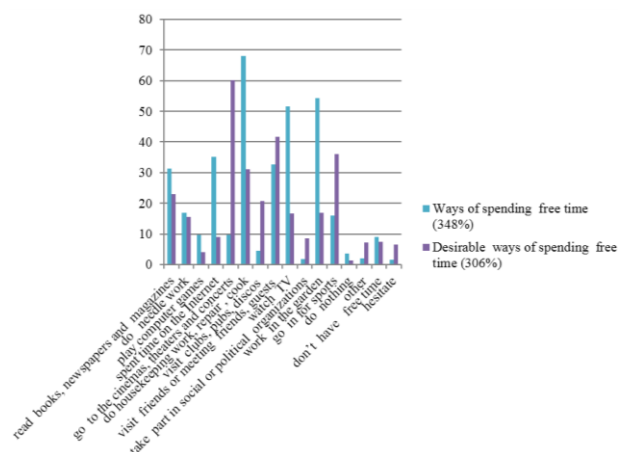


Figure 9. Ways of spending free time: real and desirable in %  
 Source: Field survey, 2016

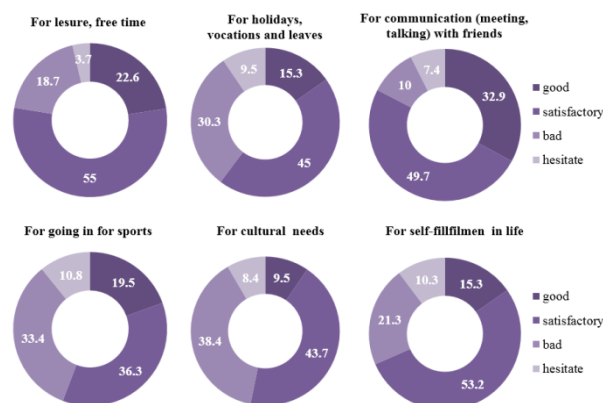


Figure 10. Assessment of conditions for recreation and leisure  
 Source: Field survey, 2016

It can be noted that much less number of respondents would like to continue to do household duties (31.1%) and to work in the garden (16.9%), to watch TV (16.7%). There is a significant desire to spend leisure time more actively, to go to the cinema, theater or to concerts (60.1%), to visit friends or meet

guests (41.8%), to go in for sports (36.1%) (Figure 9).

In general, rural young families appraise the conditions for leisure as good (22.6%), satisfactory (55%) (Figure 10).

## CONCLUSIONS

The reduction of social infrastructure significantly worsened rural residents' social services, which contributed the growth of young rural families migration from small villages to regional centers. So, first, statistical data point to a significant reduction of pre-school educational institutions compared to their considerable enlargement. This process is not due to the construction of new modern educational organizations, often thanks to concentration of kindergartens so creating additional loads on their infrastructure. According to opinion of rural young families representatives, the least satisfactory conditions are formed in the sphere of realization of cultural needs, physical education and sport, taking holiday, self-realization in life. It should be noted out that not only the deficiency of social infrastructure facilities, but also low material standards is an obstacle to satisfy requirements in recreation, entertainment, development in rural regions.

Summarizing the research results, the following conclusions are drawn. Nowadays, to our mind, one of the main problems in the formation of the state policy towards rural young families is the uncertainty of the Russian authorities over the future of rural areas. The indefinite position is expressed in the contradiction between the declared statements and real acts. So, in words we can hear the revival of the village and population well-being, but the statistical data and the results of sociological studies state the opposite. The limited financial and budgetary resources compel the state to follow social infrastructure optimization. The closing of inefficient educational and medical institutions, clubs, etc. violates the existing optimal settling of rural population and declines life standards.

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