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## **Social activity of elderly Russians and prospects of implementation of the “active ageing” policy**

**Abstract.** The article is devoted to the analysis of the scale and types of social activity of elderly Russians. The urgency of this problem is due to the scale of demographic ageing, which has already become the subject of targeted social policy in Russia and other countries. In implementing the International Plan of Action on Ageing, in particular within the framework of the Strategy for Action for Older Citizens in the Russian Federation up to 2025, it is important to understand to which extent promotion of the ideology of active ageing could be spoken of.

The paper attempts to identify the scope and structure of social activity of elderly Russians based on data from the representative sample survey “A comprehensive survey of living conditions of the population”, conducted by Rosstat in 2016. The use of sample survey data and methods of statistical data analysis enabled substantiating the hypothesis on insufficient social activity and social inclusion of elderly Russians, the significant role of family interaction in the lives of older persons, which should be taken into account in assessing the impact and adjusting the Strategy for Action for Older Citizens in the Russian Federation up to 2025.

**Keywords:** active ageing; ageing of the population; social activity of the elderly; “active ageing” policy

**JEL Codes:** J00, J14

### **Introduction**

Population ageing, as a socio-economic, demographic and cultural phenomenon, is becoming increasingly important in various countries [Ageing in the Twenty-First Century..., 2012]. Changes in the age structure of the population associated with the increase in the proportion of older persons affect the livelihoods of households and countries as a whole. To a large extent, this situation is a result of the increase in life expectancy.

Demographically, ageing is an increase in the relative proportion of older persons. According to studies carried out by the Population Division of the

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Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, the growth rate of the proportion of people over 60 years of age is significantly, over three times above that of the population as a whole, by 2050 the proportion of older persons will be 20% in the structure of the world's population [Profiles of Aging, 2013]. The significant increase in the proportion of older persons in the population is a challenge to the economic, technological and social policies of any state. People's lifestyles are changing and needs are diversifying, which inevitably affects the structure of the market for goods and services, as well as the scope and measures of social policies.

The mainstreaming of ageing led to the adoption of the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing in 1982. In 2002 in Madrid, the Second World Assembly on Ageing adopted the Political Declaration and the International Plan of Action on Ageing [Report of the Second..., 2002], which in fact meant awareness of the need to take into account the interests of older persons in the implementation of social and economic policies. The implementation of these instruments implies the implementation of social policies to address ageing issues in the context of protection of human rights and socio-economic development.

The Madrid Plan aims to achieve a society for all ages, to ensure the well-being and active ageing of older persons, which cannot be achieved without their social inclusion.

The Plan of Action aims to enable the countries of the world to shape their national adaptation programmes to ageing. The results of the ageing policy are presented in the reviews of the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, based on the national reports of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in 2007 and 2012 [Report of the Asian and Pacific..., 2012]. The Regional Strategy for the Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted in 2002, taking into account the specificities of the European region, focused on the implementation of such commitments as promotion of lifelong learning, ensuring the quality of life of older persons and maintaining their autonomy, strengthening intergenerational solidarity and support for families caring for older persons [Regional Strategy..., 2002]. Integration and participation of older persons in society was a priority area for governments to implement the European Strategy of the Madrid International Plan of Action on ageing in this period, as reflected in their national reports.

The population of Russia is ageing rapidly, this process can hardly be called linear, but the trend in increasing of the share of elderly people in the population of the country in a long-term retrospective is evident (table 1). Features of the age structure of the population of Russia, echoes of the demographic wave associated with the loss of population during the Second World War, recession and fertility rises are manifested in the dynamics of the share of the population of older ages. In 2017, almost every fifth Russian was over 60 years old. At the same time, over

the past 15 years, due to the increase in life expectancy, the proportion of older persons increased by 5.6 percentage points. In the future, according to various forecasts, the proportion of the elderly population will continue to increase [Vishnevsky et al., 2003; Vishnevsky, 2009: 55–82; Demographic forecast..., 2018; Shcherbakova, Kozlov, 2017].

**Table 1.** Dynamics of ageing indicators in Russia

Years	Ageing rate (percentage of population aged 60 and over in the total population, %)	Longevity rate (percentage of population aged 80 and over in the population aged 60 and over, %)
1989	15.3	11.8
2002	18.5	9.9
2010	18.2	16.1
2017	21.0	15.5

**Source:** Calculated according to the Demographic Yearbook of Russia, 2017. Digital resource. Access Mode: [http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/B17\\_16/Main.htm](http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/B17_16/Main.htm)

In 2011, Russia submitted a “Report on the implementation of the Regional Strategy for the Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in the Russian Federation.” Structurally, the report provides information on the implementation of all the commitments of the 2007–2011 Regional Strategy for the UNECE Region and is based on official statistics. The relevance of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing for Russia resulted in the development of a Strategy of Action for Older Citizens in the Russian Federation up to 2025 [Order..., 2016], which defines priority areas for the implementation of social policy for the elderly. The implementation of the Strategy implies the development of society taking into account the interests, needs and opportunities of older citizens, the formation of conditions for the organization of leisure of older generation citizens providing access to information and educational resources for older citizens.

In the context of mainstreaming an effective social policy in favour of older citizens aimed at ensuring their inclusion in society through the implementation of the principles of active ageing, it is important to identify the nature and types of social activity of older persons. To a large extent, this provides an opportunity to characterize their lifestyles, values and priorities. Assessment of social activity of older persons enables understanding desirable prospects of policy in favour of older persons in Russia in conditions of implementation of “active ageing” principles. Data from representative sample surveys and statistical analysis methods provide an opportunity to obtain a reliable assessment of the extent of social activity of older persons.

## Social activity of the elderly under the conditions of population ageing

Solving the problem of social exclusion of the elderly is an urgent task of modern society [Saponov, Smolkin, 2012: 83–94]. One of the leading mechanisms aimed at overcoming social exclusion is the development of various forms of social activity of older persons - their activities related to participation in various social processes, leading, *inter alia*, to changes in social conditions. It is leisure, not employment, that is increasingly considered by older persons as a means of self-fulfillment, which causes attention to the social activity of older persons [Higgs et al., 2014: 10–30].

“Social inclusion” refers to the process of integration into society [Dmitrieva, 2012: 103]. N. E. Tikhonova distinguishes three levels of inclusion: inclusion in informal communication with friends and acquaintances; participation of individuals in public organizations, associations, and informal communities; the presence of links with individuals from high strata of society, to whom, if necessary, one can apply for one or another type of assistance [Tikhonova, 2004: 25–34].

The inclusion of older persons in the local community, their degree of integration into different communities, presence of social links beyond their family are one of the most important parameters of the style and quality of life. Life satisfaction in older persons is a complex category and depends on a number of factors. Herzog A. R. and Rodgers W. L. present the results of a study that revealed the variables associated with life satisfaction: along with level of satisfaction with their housing, settlement, work, and income, the quality of leisure also matters [Herzog, Rodgers, 1981: 142–165].

Global population ageing [European Commission 2013, 2014] has actualized the study on the social exclusion of older persons. Researchers attribute this to insufficient information and skills of older persons in the field of information technology. Among the consequences of exclusion of the elderly from the world of modern technologies, researchers point at the loss of communication between young and elderly relatives [Grigoryeva, Chernyshova, 2009: 186–196; Vershinskaya, 2011]. In addition, early retirement, lack of employment can also cause social exclusion [Dmitrieva, 2018: 39].

Analyzing the role of social assistance and support in the lives of older persons, researchers conclude that the formation of a model for solving social problems based on long-term partnerships between older persons and various social support institutions, promotes their social inclusion and leads to the formation of a friendly-to-the-elderly society [Dmitrieva, 2018: 39].

However, a significant part of the elderly tend to accentuate social failures, loneliness, uselessness for the family and society; it impedes adaptation efforts, which could improve their situation. [Shmeleva, 2005: 146–156].

The mentioned features of social behaviour of the elderly and the low standard of living of the majority leads to the fact that in Russia the elderly pay more attention to social issues — healthcare expenditure, payment for housing and utility services, rather than leisure industry, cultural and social activities. Researchers also point at significant commitment of older persons to passive perceptions of assistance and social services, including assistance from religious organizations [Saraliev, Petrova, 2018: 104].

Attention to the social inclusion of older persons is reflected in the integrated indices used to compare the situation of older persons in countries around the world. The authors of calculation methods consider it necessary to take the participation of the elderly in various forms of social activity into account in the assessment of their well-being.

The first integrated index, focused solely on the elderly population, appeared in 2012. [Active Ageing..., 2013] - the Active Ageing Index. It includes 22 indicators grouped in four areas (sub-indices): employment; participation in social life; independent, healthy and safe life; opportunities and an enabling environment for active ageing. The “Participation in Social Life” subindex includes indicators such as “volunteerism”, “care for children, grandchildren”, “care for the elderly” and “political participation”.

The Global AgeWatch Index [Older Americans, 2012] includes the Integral “Enabling Environment” Index, the calculation of which takes the social relationships of older persons into account.

Researchers emphasize importance of indicators that characterize the social activity and inclusion of older persons in the life of society. The behaviour of older persons is rather controversial and does not always fit into any pre-defined, desirable standards. However, it is not often possible to quantify the extent of a particular social activity of older persons.

## **Methods and data sources**

Representative qualitative studies demonstrate the inclusion of older persons in modern social practices [Dmitrieva, 2018; Saraliev, Petrova, 2018: 104; Shmelyeva, 2005: 146-156; Dudchenko, Mytil, 2018: 84-100.]. However, so far such phenomena have been the exception rather than the rule, as evidenced by the results of representative sample surveys of the population.

Sample surveys conducted in Russia give an opportunity to investigate the issue of social activity and inclusion of older persons. The conclusions of this article are based on data from the Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions of the Population, a representative survey conducted by Rosstat in 2016. The sample — the number of persons aged 60 and older — was 33,905 people living in different regions of Russia. In order to confirm hypotheses about the existence or absence of significant differences in the groups of respondents involved in

such forms of activity as the upbringing of grandchildren and participation in the life of a religious community, methods of construction of decision trees and non-parametric criteria (Chi-squared) were used, which are less demanding to the nature of distribution. This is particularly important when qualitative indicators measured on an order or nominal scale are to be analyzed. The use of the classification method based on the decision tree construction enables revealing a set of factors that determine a particular choice of respondents. However, even a large sample did not enable assessing the impact of a number of factors on the choice of forms of social activity of older persons: for instance, income or education: the behaviour of elderly Russians in the area of leisure does not depend on these characteristics. The extent of participation of older persons in Russia in the activities of public organizations, their mobility, active forms of leisure, visits to cultural institutions and educational activities is too little to shape the typological subgroups.

The use of sample survey data and methods of statistical analysis enabled substantiating the hypothesis on low social activity and social inclusion of elderly Russians and a significant role of family interaction in the lives of older persons/ This should be taken into account in assessing the impact and adjusting the Strategy for Action for Older Citizens in the Russian Federation up to 2025.

### Scale and types of social inclusion and activity of elderly Russians

The social contacts of older persons are determined by the presence of a spouse, family, relationships with adult children, inclusion in the local community, leisure activities, friendships and volunteerism.

According to the Comprehensive Survey of the Living Conditions of the Population, 49.8 per cent of Russians over 60 years of age are married (including 2.8 per cent unregistered) and 39.8 per cent are widows and widowers. The proportion of never married persons is negligible — 2.1% (table 2).

**Table 2.** Marriage status of older persons (according to the Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions of the Population)

Marital status	Age, years					Total aged 60 years and older
	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80 and over	
	Men					
Registered marriage	76.6	75.9	68.4	65.3	52.6	71.7
Unregistered marriage	5.1	4.7	3.9	3.2	1.9	4.3
Widower/widow	7.5	12.1	22.9	27.5	43.4	16.6
Divorced	7.6	5.3	3.3	2.9	1.5	5.2
Separated	1.3	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.9

End of table 2

Marital status	Age, years					Total aged 60 years and older
	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80 and over	
Never married	1.9	1.1	1.1	0.7	0.6	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Women					
Registered marriage	48.2	39.6	29.4	20.5	10.7	47.0
Unregistered marriage	3.2	2.3	1.4	0.9	0.6	2.8
Widower/widow	30.9	44.1	59.5	71.7	82.7	39.8
Divorced	13.1	10.1	6.7	4.6	3.1	7.4
Separated	1.4	1.2	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.9
Never married	3.2	2.6	2.2	2.0	2.7	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

With age, the marriage structure of older persons changes rather significantly. Besides, there are serious differences by sex. The proportion of married men is much higher, even at the age of 80 (52.6 per cent of men and only 10.7 per cent of women). This situation is due to the low life expectancy of Russian men. The proportion of widowers increases from 7.5 per cent to 43.4 per cent (by the age of 80) for men and from 30.9 per cent to 82.7 per cent for women.

An older woman is most often a widow, an older man has a much higher chance of living in marriage until his old years. In total, 50.3 per cent of older persons live alone: 24.2% of men (45.8% aged 80 or over) and 64.9% of women (88.8% aged 80 or over) are single.

Most older persons have children (only 7.7 per cent have no children). In most cases adult children live separately from their parents - 78.3 per cent, of which 49.9 per cent live in the same locality as their older parents. This allows children and parents to maintain close bonds. Only 0.6% of elderly Russians do not maintain relations with their children and 5.3% do not help them in any way.

Quite a lot of works of Russian and foreign researchers are devoted to the relationship and interaction of adult children and their parents [Ibragimova, 2007: 623-637; Vovk, 2005; Semyenova, 1996; Prokofieva, Mironova, 2015: 69-86; Gladnikova, 2007; Mironova, 2014: 136-142; Roberts, Richards and Bengtson, 1991; Shelton, Grundy, 2000: 181-195; Michielin, Mulder, 2007: 655-678]. Inter-family transfers play an important role in maintaining the economic and social well-being of Russian families and are an example of intra-family and intergenerational solidarity. Despite significant changes taking place in the area of transformation of the Russian institution of family, family roles, and social policy, quite a large number of elderly people provide assistance to their adult

children. In the first place - assistance in the upbringing of grandchildren (37.8% of elderly people), on the second - financial assistance (21.8%). Assistance in providing food (15.5%) also plays a significant role in the structure of family transfers. Apparently, here there is primarily help of rural residents to their adult children living in cities. Less often older parents assist children in the household, in the garden (summer house) area (8.1 per cent), take care of them during illness (7.8 per cent), buy things for their children (5.6 per cent) and pay for their children's housing (1, 2%).

At the same time, adult children's assistance to their older parents is also common (Table 3). 2/3 of children help their parents in case of their illness, over half assist in the household, almost 40% provide economic support (help with money, buy food or things). Given the group of respondents who responded that assistance is not needed, the large proportion of older persons who cannot count on the help of their children is noteworthy (the answer is "no"). Although it is very likely that they need it.

**Table 3.** Assisting older persons with children who live separately (% of respondents)

Answer options	Financial assistance	Help with housework	Buy products, items	Care for during illness
Yes	36.9	57.5	39.9	62.5
No	38.9	24.9	36.5	21.8
There is no need for assistance	24.1	17.5	23.5	15.6
I find it difficult to answer	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

In today's society, the availability of the Internet and skills for its usage expand the opportunities for social inclusion of older persons (Table 4). However, in practice, only a small proportion of older Russians are Internet users, which is largely due to the lack of skills to use the computer (these skills are mastered by 42.3% of older people in the age group 60-64, 7.5 per cent in the age group 75-79, and 3.1 per cent in the age group 80 and over). As a result, only 14.6 per cent of older persons use the Internet for communication, including 5.4 per cent every day or almost every day, 5.3 per cent one or more times a week. For what else, besides communication, and how often do older Russians use the Internet? In addition to personal contacts (14.6%), 11.0% use the Internet to get to know the news. Other Internet opportunities (use of digital libraries, download of films, conduct of financial transactions, search for information about goods and services) are used by 3-4 per cent of respondents. Despite the need for social and medical services, only 2.2% use the Internet to obtain information and documents on the websites of public authorities.



**Table 4.** Purpose for Internet access, % of respondents

<b>Purposes of Internet access</b>	<b>Proportion of users</b>
Communication in social networks to maintain personal contacts	14.6
Reading news information	11.0
Use of digital libraries, encyclopedias, virtual tours, etc.	4.1
Downloading movies, music, games, etc.	3.7
Execution of financial transactions (payment of services, money transfer)	3.1
Search for information about goods and services	3.0
Obtaining information, registration of documents on public authorities' websites	2.2
Discussion of social and political issues	1.2
Search or performance of a paid job	0.7
Remote learning	0.2
other	2.1

One of the areas of possible social activity of the elderly is leisure and active rest. Respondents over 60 years of age are much less likely to attend events than those of other ages (table 5). More often older people come to theatres or concerts. This is due to the state of health, psychological well-being, lack of company and interest, lack of funds. Religious institutions, the attendance of which only increases with the age of respondents, are an exception.

**Table 5.** Attendance of any entertainment and sports events by older persons

<b>Types of events</b>	<b>All respondents — persons aged 15 or over who attended any event</b>	<b>including at the age of, years</b>	
		<b>60 – 69</b>	<b>70 and over</b>
Total, including regularly visited (in the last 12 months)	100.0	100.0	100.0
cinema	10.3	1.4	0.3
theater	2.6	3.0	1.8
concert	3.0	3.7	3.0
exhibition, museum	2.1	2.5	1.9
restaurant, cafe, bar	10.4	2.1	0.6
religious institution (or meetings of believers)	8.6	17.8	28.9
any sporting event (as a spectator)	4.5	1.9	0.6
Sports activities	Persons aged 15 or over who are able to lead an active life	including at the age of, years	
		60 – 69	60 – 69

End of table 5

Types of events	All respondents — persons aged 15 or over who attended any event	including at the age of, years	
		60 – 69	70 and over
Total, including	100.0	100.0	100.0
engaged in any kind of sport & outdoor activities, of them	56.4	42.0	39.4
attended a sports section	14.7	3.6	6.5
attended fitness club	14.7	4.4	4.1
attended swimming, water sports	22.5	20.3	18.1
participated in outdoor games (hockey, football, volleyball, badminton, etc.)	28.1	13.0	9.5
engaged in sports tourism, participated in walking tours	16.8	17.1	17.0

**Source:** Data of the Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions of the Population, 2016 Digital resource. Access Mode: [http://www.gks.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/population/generation/tab-st-soc\\_akt.htm](http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/generation/tab-st-soc_akt.htm) Date of reference: 01.07.2018

Against the background of low attendance of any cultural or sporting events as spectators, the elderly people are quite often engaged in various active types of leisure. It should be borne in mind that the responses presented in Table 5 characterize the behaviour of those who are able to live an active life (which is 10.5% of all older persons over 60 years of age). The majority of the elderly (81.8%) believe that their age and health will not allow them to live an active life, only 7.4% have no interest or desire, indicating the presence of depressive diseases among the elderly.

To some extent, older persons are interested in water sports, outdoor sports and sports tourism, as well as tourist and sightseeing trips. It is noteworthy that the frequency of swimming and sports tourism for the elderly is not much different from the entire population (unlike attending sports clubs, fitness classes and outdoor games). Among the various types of active leisure activities are those traditionally practised by older persons, and the frequency of activities only slightly reduces with age.

In general, elderly people in Russia are characterized by low mobility. Among elderly Russians, 16.5% made a tourist or excursion trip during the year preceding the poll, including a trip lasting over a day — 9.9%. However, 46.5 per cent have never made such trips, another 34.5 per cent have not travelled in the last 12 months. Lack of funds (32.2%) and state of health (21.2%) are the leading reasons for refusal of excursions and travel. Some elderly people prefer to relax at their summer house, 15.6% - with relatives, to some extent family circumstances

matter for 13.5% and only 13.6% of respondents are simply not interested in such trips. That is, the low mobility of older persons is not always a consequence of their choice and interests.

Older persons have little participation in any public activity: 3.2 per cent of them are members of some public organization, but only 0.4 per cent participate in their activities. Although older persons often visit religious institutions (Table 5), only 0.4 per cent participate in the activities of the religious community. Among voluntary organisations, veteran ones are rather popular: 1.2% of elderly people take part in the activities of the councils of veterans.

In many cases, older persons are reluctant to participate in social activities because of intensive family contacts. 14.9 per cent of older persons replied that their daily activities included childcare (grandchildren). In general, about 40% help in the care for grandchildren. In general, elderly people spend up to 20 hours a week caring for grandchildren (14.4 hours for men, 19.6 hours for women), however, 16% spend more than 30 hours a week with grandchildren (Table 6).

**Table 6.** Distribution of older persons by number of hours per week spent on childcare (% of respondents)

Number of hours per week	Response rate,%
1–5	11.2
6–10	27.5
11–15	15.5
16–20	15.7
21–25	6.1
26–30	7.7
31–35	2.7
36–40	5.3
41 and more	8.0
Total	100.0

The number of hours spent on caring for grandchildren is determined primarily by sex and age of the respondents. Men are less occupied by grandchildren than women. With age, due to health problems, the amount of time that older persons can devote to grandchildren is reduced (by the age of 80 - to 10.2 hours for men and 16.5 hours for women).

To obtain more detailed conclusions on what factors primarily affect the participation of older persons in the upbringing of grandchildren, whether this activity competes with any forms of their social activity, it is reasonable to use the target tree method. CHAID (Chi Squared Automatic Interaction Detection) analysis is a method of finding the relationship between predictive (dependent) variables and categorical response. This is the most popular decision

tree construction method, which uses the Chi-squared categorical variables criterion for obtaining optimal partitioning.

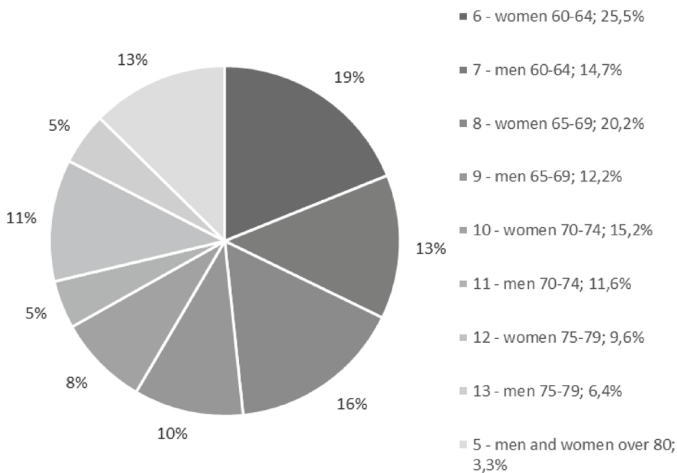
The construction of the target tree by the CHAID method on the population of elderly people aged 60 years and older enabled shaping 9 typological groups (terminal nodes, which are not further divided into other nodes or subgroups).

For the resulting model, the risk assessment is 0.15 (with an 0.2% level of importance), i.e. 85% of respondents are correctly assigned to one of the selected groups. Differences between groups are significant at a level no less than 0.002, testing the hypothesis on the difference in distributions was carried out with the use of the Chi-squared criterion.

The target variable was the answers of 33,905 respondents to the question: “Is childcare included in your daily activities?” The best predictors were gender, age and place of residence (city or countryside).

In general, 14.9% of respondents take part in the care and upbringing of children (their grandchildren) on a daily basis.

First of all, the distribution of the sample was influenced by the age of the respondents, the sex also plays a role. Indicators such as “job availability”, “employment of respondents”, as well as “income level” did not influence the formation of terminal nodes or the allocation of subgroups of respondents (differences in distribution of respondents’ answers to the target question depending on employment and income level on the basis of the Chi-squared criterion were insignificant) and were excluded from further analysis. As a result of the construction of the target tree, the following 9 terminal nodes - groups of respondents were formed (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1.** Target tree terminal nodes: prevalence of participation in the upbringing of grandchildren among older persons (%)

With age, the proportion of older persons taking part in the upbringing of grandchildren on a daily basis decreases. Thus, the largest group (6,407 people, 6 nodes) are women aged 60–64, one in four of whom daily devote time to raising grandchildren. This is even slightly higher than the level of economic employment of women at this age (23.9 per cent of women are employed in the economy).

The 7th terminal node is men aged 60–64 (4,515 people), 13.3% of them are engaged with children on a daily basis.

The 8th terminal node is women aged 65–69 years, 20.2% of whom spend part of their time daily with grandchildren. The 9th terminal node – 3,431 men aged 65–69 years, every tenth of whom is engaged with grandchildren on a daily basis. It must be said that by this age the economic activity of both men and women is almost eliminated, accounting for 16.7 per cent for men and 11.1 per cent for women.

The 10th and 11th terminal nodes characterize women (2,850) and men (1,506) aged 70–74, respectively, 15.2% and 11.6% of whom take care of grandchildren every day.

The 12th node includes 3,820 women of the age of 75–79 years, 9.6% of them take an active part in the care of grandchildren; the 13th includes 1,637 men of the age of 75–79 years, 6.4% of whom look after grandchildren.

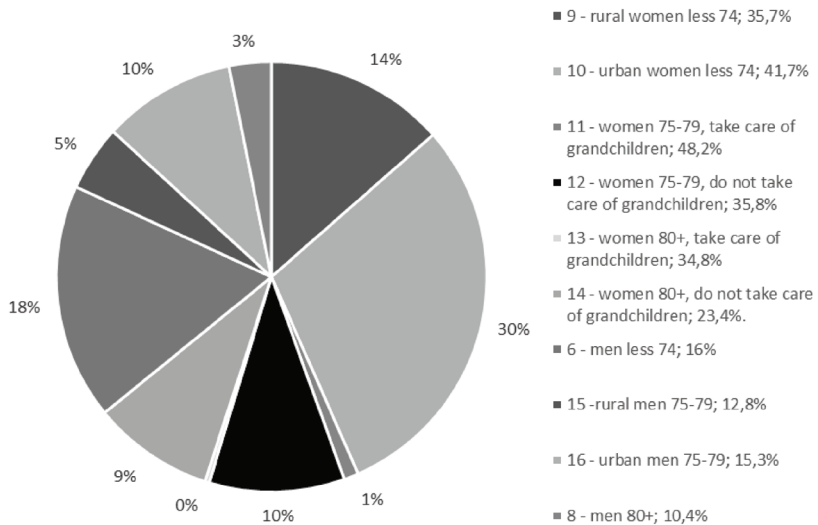
By the age of 80, the differences in time and effort spent by men and women in childcare are erased (the value of the Chi-squared to check differences in the distribution of responses between men and women in the age group of 60–64 years of age was 188.1; in the age group 65–69 years – 97,178 and in the age group 75–79 years – 15.7), 4,278 men and women of 80 years of age and older entered the same terminal node (5). Only 3.3 per cent of them take care of their grandchildren every day.

As has already been discussed, older persons most often visit religious institutions in their free time. Against the background of other activities of the elderly, this activity is very common. Building a target tree for the variable “Have you been to a religious institution or a meeting of believers in the last 12 months?” enabled supplementing the conclusions reached (the risk assessment of the model is 0.29 (with a 0.2% level of significance; differences between groups are significant at a level no less than 0.036, test hypothesis on difference between the distributions was achieved with the help of the Chi-squared criterion).

The breakdown of the population was influenced by the age and sex of the respondents, as well as place of residence (urban or rural). As a result of the construction of the target tree, 10 terminal nodes were formed (Fig. 2).

Social activity does not compete with family responsibilities for the upbringing of grandchildren, but is rather determined by gender stereotypes and the ability to lead an active life at a given age because of health status. For example, the most frequent visits to religious institutions or meetings of believers are made by older persons of the age groups which are most active in the care for grandchildren

(women at the age of up to 74 years as well as older women whose active participation in the life of the religious community is combined with the care for grandchildren). It can be assumed that non-participation in the daily upbringing of grandchildren is not only due to the lack of such a need or opportunity in the family (parents prefer other models of upbringing and care, or live in another city), but also to the state of health of the elderly. At ages up to 74, in women, who are more likely than men to attend religious institutions, such activity differs for urban and rural women. This is probably related to the lack of infrastructure development in rural areas, where, even if they wish, older persons are unable to attend religious institutions because of their remoteness.



**Figure 2.** Target tree terminal nodes: prevalence of religious institution or meetings of believers attendance among older persons (%)

## Conclusions

The analysis of the data from a representative sample survey showed that, despite certain changes in the socio-demographic behaviour of older persons due to the combination of demographic, social and cultural factors, it remains quite traditional – older persons are still have very low involvement in social activities, their leisure activities are largely focused on the family, mutual assistance and support in communicating with adult children plays a greater role in their life. The image of the pensioner, including in the eyes of older persons themselves, is still largely associated with disease and need for support, the role of grandparents, while travelling, self-development and social activities remain exotic occupations

for older persons. Despite the fact that Russia joined the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing and submitted a report to the UNECE in 2011 on its implementation, large-scale changes in the situation of senior people in society and their behaviour patterns have not yet occurred. The result of the implementation of the Strategy of Action for Older Citizens in Russia up to 2025 (adopted in 2016) should be “creating conditions for active longevity.” It is intended to ensure that older persons have access to educational services, information resources, leisure, culture and sports services, to increase their mobility, to promote social inclusion relationships, increasing the length of active life.

One of the problems of ageing Russians is loneliness. Overall, half of the elderly (over 60 years of age) live alone. An elderly woman is most often a widow. Fortunately, the vast majority of older persons have adult children. Although in most cases they live separately, half of the elderly Russians live in the same locality, which allows children and parents to maintain close bonds.

The elderly people in Russia are characterized by low mobility. A number of qualitative studies mention changes in the social participation and inclusion of older persons, but they are not significant. Quantitative analysis methods are not yet able to identify relatively large changes. A certain increase in life expectancy is not yet associated with the spread of so-called “active ageing” in Russia.

Attempts to build target trees for any form of the elderly’s leisure time, other than the upbringing of grandchildren and attending religious gatherings, were unsuccessful. It was not possible to identify statistically significant factors that determine the characteristics of the behaviour of the elderly in the area of leisure and forming typological groups. In some cases (for example, recreational activities), the number and proportion of older persons participating were very small (1.4–3.7 per cent), which did not enable more detailed analysis of their totality.

To a large extent, the low social activity of older persons is associated with their state of health, stereotypes and attitudes about the lifestyle of older persons (including among the elderly themselves), mistrust to the various actors of social policy, the needs of adult children for help and, consequently, the time of their elderly parents. So far, the use of modern technologies, including remote access, is not too widespread among older persons and does not affect their social inclusion. We can assume that the situation will change with entry into old age of a generation that already has the skills to use technological innovations in everyday life. So far, a relatively significant proportion of older people (compared to other characteristics of Internet use) uses the Internet to communicate on social networks (14.6%) and read news (11.0%). Workshops and computer literacy courses are conducted by social services, a number of large companies (e.g. MTS), charitable foundations and non-profit organizations (the “Communication of Generations” fund) and libraries.

In general, however, the emergence of the “active ageing” model, in which older persons themselves and society as a whole are interested, is linked to the need to develop the infrastructure of social institutions (sports, culture, education, leisure) aimed at providing services to older persons, improving the standard of living of older persons and providing quality healthcare services, which provide active longevity. This problem does not have a quick solution.

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