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ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ РОЛИ И ВЛИЯНИЯ ЕЖЕМЕСЯЧНЫХ ДЕНЕЖНЫХ ВЫПЛАТ НА СОЦИАЛЬНУЮ ЗАЩИЩЕННОСТЬ ИНВАЛИДОВ

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Предметом исследования выступают ежемесячные денежные выплаты инвалидам, устанавливаемые и выплачиваемые территориальным органом Фонда пенсионного и социального страхования Российской Федерации.

Целью работы является выявление значимости ежемесячных денежных выплат инвалидам и разработка рекомендаций по повышению доходов инвалидов за счет системы предлагаемых мер.

Актуальность исследования обусловлена необходимостью повышения социальной защищенности инвалидов в современных условиях.

Научная новизна состоит в разработке авторского подхода к решению проблемы повышения социальной защищенности инвалидов на основе обобщения и систематизации российского и зарубежного опыта, а также использования результатов проведенного среди инвалидов социологического исследования.

В исследовании использовались методы научной абстракции и системного подхода, анализ законодательной базы и научных публикаций российских и зарубежных авторов по данной теме, а также экономико-статистический анализ и социологические исследования. Результаты исследования показали необходимость разработки мер, включающих создание условий для дистанционной работы инвалидов в трудоспособном возрасте, совершенствование порядка их трудоустройства на малых и средних предприятиях, повышение эффективности системы профессионального образования граждан с ограниченными возможностями, имеющих разные виды заболеваний; ежеквартальной индексации ежемесячных денежных выплат инвалидам для компенсации повышения уровня инфляции; пересмотр стоимости набора социальных услуг в натуральной форме (лекарственные препараты для медицинского применения по рецептам, медицинские изделия по рецептам, специализированные продукты лечебного питания для детей-инвалидов; путевки на санаторно-курортное лечение для профилактики основных заболеваний; бесплатный проезд на пригородном железнодорожном транспорте, а также на междугородном транспорте к месту лечения и обратно).

Сделан вывод о необходимости применения комплексного подхода при разработке мер, направленных на повышение социальной защищенности инвалидов, учитывающих современный российский и зарубежный опыт, и предполагающих корректировку законодательной базы.

Ключевые слова: ежемесячные денежные выплаты; набор социальных услуг; социальное обеспечение инвалидов.

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THE STUDY OF ROLE AND INFLUENCE OF MONTHLY CASH PAYMENTS ON SOCIAL SECURITY OF THE DISABLED

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The article examines monthly cash payments to the disabled that are established and disbursed by territorial body of the Pension and Social Insurance Fund of the Russian Federation. The purpose of the study is to identify significance of these payments and to develop recommendations to increase income of the disabled at the expense of system of proposed measures. The actuality of the study is conditioned by necessity of improving social security of the disabled in modern conditions.

To resolve mentioned problem, original approach was applied, based on generalization and systematization of both Russian and foreign experiences and on application of results of sociological survey of the disabled. The methods of scientific abstraction, systemic approach, analysis of legislative base and publications, economic statistical analysis and sociological survey were applied.

The results demonstrated necessity to develop such measures as organization of conditions for remote work of the disabled of able-bodied age, improvement of employment procedures in small and medium-sized enterprises, enhancing efficiency of vocational training of the disabled with various diseases, quarterly indexation of monthly cash payments to compensate inflation level, revision of cost of social services in natural form (medications, specialized products of diet therapy for disabled children, sanatorium treatment to prevent main diseases, free travel on commuter trains). The conclusion is derived about necessity of applying comprehensive approach in enhancing social security of the disabled considering both modern Russian and foreign experience and surmising adjustment of legislative base.

Keywords: monthly cash payment; social services; social security; the disabled; legislation.

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Introduction

In accordance with Article 1 of the Federal Law No. 181-FZ dated November 24, 1995 (as amended on May 29, 2024) "On Social Protection of Disabled Persons in the Russian Federation" (with amendments and additions effective from September 1, 2024), the term "disabled person" is defined as "an individual who has health impairments with a persistent disorder of bodily functions caused by diseases, consequences of injuries, or defects, leading to limitations in life activities and necessitating social protection"¹.

The limitation of vital activity is considered as a complete or partial loss of an individual's ability or opportunity to perform self-care, move independently, navigate, communicate, control their behavior, learn, and engage in work activities. Depending on the degree of dysfunction of bodily functions, individuals recognized as disabled are assigned a disability group, while individuals under the age of 18 are classified as "disabled children". The recognition of an individual as disabled is carried out by a federal institution for medical and social expertise, and the procedure and conditions for recognizing an individual as disabled are established by the Government of the Russian Federation.

The second article of this law reveals the essence of social protection for disabled individuals as a system of guaranteed economic, legal measures, and social support measures provided by the state, ensuring conditions for disabled individuals to overcome or compensate for limitations in vital activity and aimed at creating equal opportunities for them to participate in public life alongside other citizens.

According to Article 27 of the law in question, the material support for disabled individuals includes monetary payments based on various grounds (pensions, allowances, insurance payments for health impairment risks, compensation payments for harm caused to health, and other payments), as well as compensations in cases established by the legislation of the Russian Federation.

Social and household services for disabled individuals, in accordance with Article 28, are provided in a manner and on the grounds determined by the authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation with the participation of public organizations for disabled individuals, as well as by bodies and organizations author-

ized in accordance with the regulatory legal acts of the Russian Federation to address issues related to the organization and provision of support and assistance to disabled individuals. Article 28.1 provides for a monthly cash payment to disabled individuals in the amount and procedure established by this article:

For disabled individuals of Group I — 2,162 rubles;
for disabled individuals of Group II and children with disabilities — 1,544 rubles;
for disabled individuals of Group III — 1,236 rubles.

Moreover, if a citizen is simultaneously entitled to a monthly cash payment under this Federal Law and under another federal law or other regulatory legal act, regardless of the basis on which it is established (except in cases where the monthly cash payment is established in accordance with the Law of the Russian Federation "On Social Protection of Citizens Exposed to Radiation Due to the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant Disaster" (as amended by the Law of the Russian Federation dated June 18, 1992, No. 3061-1) or the Federal Law dated January 10, 2002, No. 2-FZ "On Social Guarantees for Citizens Exposed to Radiation Due to Nuclear Tests at the Semipalatinsk Test Site"), they will receive one monthly cash payment either under this Federal Law or under another federal law or other regulatory legal act at the citizen's choice.

The amount of the monthly cash payment is subject to indexing once a year from February 1 of the current year based on the consumer price index for the previous year. The monthly cash payment is established and paid by the territorial body of the Pension and Social Insurance Fund of the Russian Federation.

Part of the amount of the monthly cash payment may be allocated for funding social services provided to the disabled individual. The regulatory and legal framework for providing state social assistance to individuals with disabilities has interested many authors, as it serves as a tool for improving their material well-being [1–3]. The essence and main types of social support for individuals with disabilities in the Russian Federation, along with the regulatory framework governing these relations and the amounts of benefits provided on various grounds, are examined by Russian scholars [4]. In particular, the forms, amounts and procedures for providing this assistance are analyzed, as well as the bodies authorized to provide such social assistance, including to disabled people from childhood and disabled children [5]. Thus, the review and analysis of the legal regulation of social security for disabled people in the Russian Federation, the definition of the subject, subjects, goals, elements and sources of legal regulation allowed us to formulate a conclusion regarding the completeness of the regulatory regulation of relations on social security for

¹ Federal Law No. 181-FZ dated November 24, 1995 (as amended on May 29, 2024) "On Social Protection of Disabled Persons in the Russian Federation" (with amendments and additions effective from September 1, 2024). Available at: https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_8559/811cf203f0728b302646e28f490eedc3d3d20cd0/ (accessed 10.11.2024).

disabled people in the Russian Federation, which we fully share, considering it necessary to adjust the legislative and legal framework [6]. In addition, based on the results of a sociological study of the problems of implementing the social and labor rights of disabled people, their social protection in the field of labor and employment, difficulties in implementing individual social and labor guarantees for disabled people were identified: quotas for jobs, creation of special jobs, creation of appropriate working conditions [7]. The presence in the social structure of society of a significant number of people with signs of limitation of life activity determines the importance of the problem, since the inalienable right of any person, including a disabled person, is the right to free and accessible social security. Therefore, we share the position of the authors, who prove the need to consider the problem of social security for disabled people, which is one of the priority areas of the state social policy and propose ways to solve this problem [8]. We consider it important to focus the attention of a number of authors on the characteristics of the process of transition from the existing system of social protection of disabled people in the country to a policy of eliminating barriers and obstacles that hinder their full and effective participation in the life of society on an equal basis with other people [2]. The problem of social protection and social security of disabled people, conditions created for people with disabilities in our and other countries; features of healthcare financing in Russia and abroad are considered by us both based on Russian and foreign sources [9, 10].

Social security plays a key role in improving the situation of people with disabilities and their integration into society. Social benefits and payments help individuals with disabilities meet basic needs such as housing, food, and medical services, which is especially important for those who cannot work or have limited employment opportunities.

The crucial role of healthcare and social service provision by the state is emphasized by research from foreign colleagues, convincingly demonstrating how the social organization of care for children with disabilities undervalues the caregiving work performed by mothers and exposes children with disabilities to the risk of receiving inadequate and unequal services [11]. In foreign countries, as in Russia, the issue of insufficient pension income to pay for care and support services for elderly people with disabilities is also relevant [12, 13], therefore, receiving social security benefits for persons with disabilities is a recognized need, and their inadequacy limits their access to resources and opportunities for a full life in society [14].

In foreign countries, just like in Russia, measures of social support for the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities vary depending on the country and its social policy. In Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Norway, Denmark), there is a comprehensive social protection system that includes access to medical services, rehabilitation programs, and psychosocial support. People with disabilities can receive funding for housing and transportation adaptations, as well as employment services.

In Germany, individuals with disabilities have access to specialized rehabilitation institutions that provide medical and social services. There are programs for integrating people with disabilities into society, including vocational training and employment support.

In the United States, various programs such as Medicaid and Medicare provide medical assistance to individuals with disabilities, along with employment and vocational rehabilitation programs like Vocational Rehabilitation Services. In Australia, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides funding for services and support for people with disabilities. The program includes rehabilitation, assistance with daily living, and employment support. Japan offers various forms of social support for individuals with disabilities, including medical rehabilitation and employment programs. The government also finances housing and transportation adaptations for people with disabilities.

The experience of the United Kingdom is particularly interesting as an example of a socially oriented approach to citizens with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities in the UK have access to various social benefits, such as Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Attendance Allowance (AA), which helps cover additional expenses for those requiring care, and Universal Credit (UC), which assists with living costs. There is also a benefit for caregivers (Carer's Allowance).

The amount of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is tax-free and does not depend on income or savings. It is based on how difficult it is for the individual to perform daily activities ("daily living" tasks) and mobility tasks. In 2024, the weekly payment amount for "daily living" tasks is £72.65 at the lower rate and £108.55 at the higher rate. The weekly amount for the lower mobility rate is £28.70 and £75.75 at the higher rate. Therefore, over a month (4 weeks), a person with a disability in the UK can receive a minimum of £1,277.20 (£72.65 x 4 + £28.70 x 4) and a maximum of £2,039.80 (£108.55 x 4 + £75.75 x 4).

The Attendance Allowance (AA) is paid at two different rates: £72.65 or £108.55 per week for personal support if both of the following conditions are met: the individual has a disability, mental disorder, or illness, and the person has reached retirement age or is older².

Universal Credit (UC) is a payment that helps with living costs, and the basic standard rate of Universal Credit for the 2024/2025 year for adults over 25 is now £393.45 per month for singles and £617.60 per month for couples³.

Particular attention should be drawn to the Carer's Allowance, which amounts to £81.90 per week (or £327 per month, corresponding to the minimum wage rate of £9.50 per hour), provided that the person is caring for a disabled individual for at least 35 hours a week, and the

² Attendance Allowance. GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance> (accessed 10.11.2024).

³ Universal Credit Rates 2024 .What You're Eligible For. Lottie. Available at: <https://lottie.org/fees-funding/universal-credit-rates/> (accessed 10.11.2024).

disabled person is already receiving certain benefits, such as PIP and AA⁴.

A significant difference from the Russian equivalent lies not only in the amount of the payment (10,000 rubles per month for caring for children with disabilities or individuals with childhood disabilities of Group I, which does not correspond to the minimum wage of 19,242 rubles per month in Russia in 2024, and even more so to the 1,200 rubles paid monthly until the end of 2024 to unemployed able-bodied citizens caring for elderly people and individuals with disabilities. Starting from January 1, 2025, this system will change, and pensions for citizens with Group I disabilities or those who have reached the age of 80 will automatically increase by 1,200 rubles), but also in the fundamental principle that a person caring for an individual with disabilities has the right and opportunity to work, rather than living on the social pension of the disabled person, as often happens in Russian reality.

Materials and Methods

The theoretical foundation of the research is based on regulatory legal documents governing social security, works by domestic authors examining the results and trends in the development of social security [1–10], as well as foreign authors who have investigated various aspects of the socio-economic status of people with disabilities [11–14].

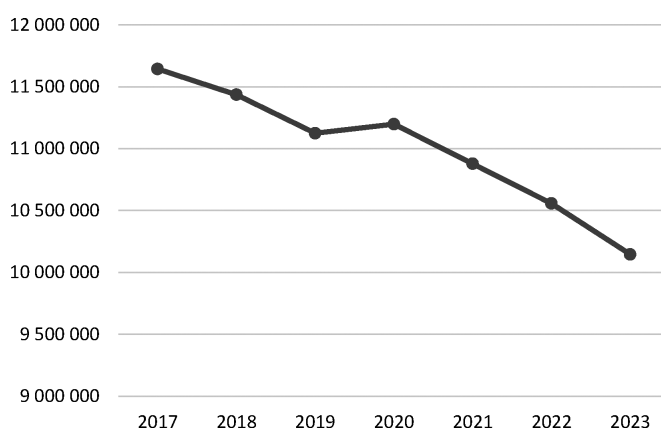
The practical part of the research relies on statistical data from Rosstat, as well as the results of an online survey conducted by the authors using Google Forms⁵, involving one hundred and fifty respondents categorized as “disabled” and residing in Russia. During the study, the author employed methods of systemic and comparative analysis.

Results

According to data from Rosstat, the total number of people with disabilities (excluding children with disabilities) in Russia has decreased by 13% since 2017 (an average of 1–2% per year), and as of December 31, 2023, it amounted to 10,285,405 individuals (see Fig. 1).

Overall, the dynamics of the number of people with disabilities by groups mirror the general picture across Russia. The largest cohort consists of individuals in Group I. In 2023, the number of Group I disabled individuals decreased by 17% compared to 2017, from 1,496,246 people in 2017 to 1,277,029 people in 2023. The number of Group II disabled individuals decreased by 23% in 2023 compared to 2017.

However, the number of Group III disabled individuals decreased only slightly during this period: from 4,412,783 people in 2017 to 4,397,549 in 2023. The deviation was 1%. It is important to note that Group III disability refers to individuals with moderate health impair-



Dynamics of the number of disabled people of groups I–III in the Russian Federation 2017–2023, people. Source: compiled by the authors based on Rosstat data

Number of disabled people by disability group in the subjects of the Russian Federation. Rosstat. Available at: https://rosstat.gov.ru/storage/mediabank/pi_1.3.xlsx (accessed 9.12.2024).

ments that moderately affect their ability to work; thus, a person in Group III is someone who can integrate well into society, be capable of working, and not be a burden on their family or the state.

The material situation of disabled individuals in the regions depends on the conditions and opportunities of the pension system, as the main source of income for disabled individuals consists of disability pensions. Overall, forecasting the level of material support for disabled individuals receiving both insurance and social pensions is determined by the conditions of the existing pension provision system.

According to our calculations based on data from Rosstat⁶, the number of disabled individuals receiving a pension and classified as low-income (with income below the poverty line in their region) varied between 1.3% and 1.6% of the total low-income population from 2013 to 2019, and since 2020 it has remained at 1.4%. It is also important to consider the following: according to Rosstat⁷, the average amount of pensions awarded to disabled individuals in 2023 is 18,839 rubles, while the average monthly cash payments (EDV including NSU) amount to only 2,393 rubles⁸. The poverty line presented by Rosstat in the second quarter of 2023 was 14,184 rubles⁹. (In the first quarter of 2024, Rosstat clarified that the poverty line is considered to be an income of 15,096 rubles¹⁰.) At first glance, this means that the av-

⁶ Statistical indicators: Distribution of low-income population by main groups. Rosstat. Available at: <https://rosstat.gov.ru/storage/mediabank/tab%2024.xlsx> (accessed 10.11.2024).

⁷ Statistical indicators: average size of assigned pensions for disabled persons. Rosstat. Available at: https://rosstat.gov.ru/storage/mediabank/pi_3.1.docx (accessed 11.11.2024).

⁸ Statistical indicators: Average monthly cash payments per person. Rosstat. Available at: https://rosstat.gov.ru/storage/mediabank/pi_3.2.doc (accessed 11.11.2024).

⁹ Statistical indicators: Data on the number of population with incomes below the poverty line, Q2 2023. Rosstat. Available at: <https://rosstat.gov.ru/folder/313/document/216796> (accessed 11.11.2024).

¹⁰ Rosstat presents data on the number of people with cash incomes below the poverty line in the first quarter of 2024. Rosstat. Available at: <https://rosstat.gov.ru/folder/313/document/238606> (accessed 9.12.2024).

⁴ Carers Allowance. GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/eligibility> (accessed December 20, 2024).

⁵ A study of the opinions of citizens with disabilities on monthly cash payments. Questionnaire. Available at: <https://forms.gle/YaoyJBnhXdYE44vDA>

erage monthly income of a disabled individual, which amounts to 21,232 rubles (18,839 + 2,393), exceeds the specified poverty line by 50%. However, “according to a survey conducted by the All-Russian Organization of Parents of Disabled Children among families raising disabled children and individuals over 18 years old,” two-thirds of mothers in such families do not work due to caring for a person with a disability (68%), and another 6% are retired. Among the two main sources of family income are the child disability pension (95%) and/or the father's salary (61%)”¹¹. Based on the provided data, we can conclude that the average income of a disabled individual at 21,232 rubles in a household of two people, where, for example, one person is a child with a disability and the other provides care for the disabled person or child, receiving 10,000 rubles as a care allowance, the income per person will amount to 15,616 rubles. The number of two-person households that include a disabled individual constitutes 27% of the total number of families with disabilities [15]. Therefore, it can be concluded that currently, nearly 2 million households with first-group disabled individuals (which accounts for 18% of all first-group disabled individuals) who require constant care live with incomes at the poverty line. To improve this situation, it is essential to recognize that caring for a disabled person is work that should be compensated at a level not lower than the regional minimum wage. Additionally, a personalized approach is necessary when determining the need for social support for families of two or more people that include a disabled individual to prevent the existence of people living on the brink of poverty who already face difficulties in ensuring their livelihoods.

Certain categories of pensioners receive One-time cash payments (EDV), specifically: war veterans, first, second, and third group disabled individuals, among others¹². EDV is assigned and paid by the territorial bodies of the Social Fund of the Russian Federation. If a beneficiary is eligible for EDV based on multiple grounds, they will receive EDV based on one ground that provides a larger amount or according to the beneficiary's choice.

Moreover, these categories of citizens are entitled to a Set of social benefits (NSU), which includes: purchasing medications and medical devices, treatment, and recreation¹³. If desired by the beneficiary, NSU can be replaced with a single cash payment (EDV).

To understand the adequacy of the EDV amounts concerning the needs they are intended for disabled individuals, we conducted a survey using questionnaire in Google Forms. The survey involved 151 disabled individuals, over 80% of whom live in urban areas within the Central Federal District and 20% in rural areas.

Among the respondents, 69% were men and 31% were women; 72.5% were aged between 18 and 45 years, 21.6% were aged between 46 and 55 years, and only 6% were older than 65 years. Notably, 96.1% of respondents are first-group disabled individuals, indicating that their physical capabilities are such that they cannot care for themselves and require full support and assistance. Additionally, 31% of respondents have higher education, while 55% have secondary vocational education; however, only 23.5% of those surveyed are employed, primarily remotely, which means they have an additional source of income besides pensions and EDV.

According to Federal Law No. 122-FZ dated August 22, 2004 (as amended on November 21, 2022) “On Amendments to Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation,” the Law on Social Protection No. 181-FZ was supplemented in part 2 by Article 28.1, which establishes the right for disabled individuals and children with disabilities to receive a monthly cash payment in the amount and manner established by this article. In 2023, the EDV amounts to: for first-group disabled individuals — 4,957.95 rubles; for second-group disabled individuals — 3,540.76 rubles; for third-group disabled individuals — 2,834.40 rubles; for children with disabilities — 3,540.76 rubles. Starting from February 1, 2024, EDV will be indexed by 7.4%. The size of the indexation is determined based on the inflation rate for 2023.

The monthly cash payment is established and paid by the territorial body of the Pension and Social Insurance Fund of the Russian Federation. Part of the monthly cash payment may be allocated for financing the provision of social services to the disabled individual in accordance with Federal Law No. 178-FZ dated July 17, 1999 “On State Social Assistance”¹⁴.

Upon establishing EDV, a citizen automatically acquires the right to receive a set of social services (NSU) in kind, which includes:

- medications for medical use prescribed by doctors, medical devices prescribed by doctors, specialized dietary products for children with disabilities;
- vouchers for sanatorium-resort treatment for the prevention of major diseases;
- free travel on suburban rail transport, as well as on intercity transport to and from the place of treatment. In this case, the citizen can choose to receive social services in kind or their monetary equivalent.

100% of respondents in our study consider the amount of the one-time cash payment (EDV) to be insufficient. 39% of those surveyed spend the entire amount of EDV on purchasing medications, 25.5% spend the entire amount and add their own funds to buy medications that exceed the EDV amount by 1–2 times, while 29.4% of respondents spend the entire EDV amount on medical devices.

¹¹ Statistical indicators: Disability in the regions of Russia. Tochno.st. Available at: <https://static.tochno.st/files/analytical/05c3fdafc32769a66ab02c5623fb7481.pdf> (accessed 11/11/2024).

¹² EDV 2024. Consultant. Available at: https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_278745/687008c49624d050dfe64f26d3414a7feaf237c6/ (accessed 11/11/2024).

¹³ NSU 2024. Consultant. Available at: https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_159180/ (accessed 11/11/2024).

¹⁴ Federal Law of 17.07.1999 No. 178-FZ “On State Social Assistance”. Available at: https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_23735/ (accessed 09.12.2024).

Starting from February 1, 2024, the monetary equivalent of the NSU amounts to 1,578.50 rubles per month, including the provision of necessary medications — 1,215.80 rubles, sanatorium-resort treatment — 188.08 rubles, and free travel on suburban rail transport and intercity transport to and from the place of treatment — 174.62 rubles.

After studying the opinions of respondents on each item from the set of social services, the authors reached the following conclusions. Disabled individuals often require expensive medications. The state provides free medications; however, only 23.5% of respondents use the provided free medications and only 3% of them consider the set of provided free medications sufficient to maintain their physical condition. Therefore, 77% of respondents refuse to receive free medications and have to purchase medications themselves, with 33% of them stating that they completely lack funds to buy the necessary medications. According to established rules, disabled individuals who refuse to receive free medications in 2024 can receive a monthly amount compensating for the refusal of medications for 1,215.80 rubles; 88.2% of respondents claim that this amount is insufficient for purchasing the necessary medications.

Regarding vouchers for sanatorium-resort treatment, 41% of respondents exercise their right to provided treatment; however, only 28% of them do so annually, while the remaining 13% utilize their right to sanatorium-resort treatment not every year. 11% of all respondents require sanatorium-resort treatment more than once a year. 100% of respondents consider the amount of 188.08 rubles compensating for the refusal of sanatorium-resort treatment to be insufficient.

35% of respondents do not purchase vouchers for treatment due to lack of funds. 65% of respondents purchase vouchers for sanatorium-resort treatment themselves. The minimum amount for a voucher, excluding travel costs, is 45,000 rubles. 54% of those who buy a voucher for treatment (but not annually) spend over 100,000 rubles on its purchase, excluding travel costs. It is evident that the compensation amount for refusing sanatorium-resort treatment cannot be even remotely equivalent to the amounts spent by disabled individuals on treatment at sanatoria.

Regarding travel to and from the place of treatment, we find the following picture. 35% of all respondents utilize the opportunity provided by the state. However, 100% of those surveyed consider the monthly amount compensating for the refusal of this right (174.62 rubles) to be insufficient.

Thus, we can summarize the survey results, which convincingly demonstrated the inadequacy of EDV funds and the included NSU to meet the needs of disabled individuals for medications, sanatorium-resort treatment, and travel to rehabilitation places and back.

Discussion

It is proposed by the authors to increase the income of disabled individuals through:

- Creating conditions for remote work for disabled individuals of working age, improving the em-

ployment process for them in small and medium enterprises, and enhancing the effectiveness of vocational education systems for citizens with disabilities who have various types of illnesses.

- Quarterly indexing of the one-time cash payment (EDV) for disabled individuals to compensate for rising inflation levels, in order to avoid a loss of purchasing power.
- Revising the cost of the social services package (NSU) included in the EDV.

Let's consider the areas for utilizing these mechanisms.

a) Providing daily assistance or reimbursement for expenses related to caring for a disabled person at home (for group I disabled individuals and children with disabilities who require constant care).

The issue of reimbursing the cost of labor for caring for a disabled person is acute, as if this labor is taken on by a family member of the disabled individual, it is unpaid, which violates Article 37 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, which states that all labor must be compensated without any discrimination. A person caring for a disabled individual often cannot work fully, and the household of the disabled person is forced to live on the brink of poverty, as the disability pension barely meets the needs of a household that requires constant care for the disabled individual. The solution to this situation lies in compensating caregivers at a level not lower than the minimum wage in the region or providing social worker services (daily) at state expense, so that family members of the disabled individual can work and independently meet their household needs.

Currently, a family member's labor caring for an adult disabled person is compensated at 1,200 rubles per month, provided that the caregiver is not employed, which leads to a decrease in the standard of living for families with disabled individuals who need assistance. The allowance for caring for children with disabilities and individuals with childhood disabilities amounts to 10,000 rubles per month and is only available to unemployed parents and guardians who are of working age¹⁵. This creates a situation where it is impossible to live decently on the funds allocated by the state to a parent or guardian of a child with disabilities, as this amount is below the subsistence minimum, and one cannot officially be employed without losing the allowance.

The medical and social examination provided by Federal Law No. 181-FZ "On Social Protection of Disabled Individuals in the Russian Federation" dated November 24, 1995, which individually assesses the condition of the disabled individual, can also provide its conclusion regarding the number of hours and types of services needed to assist a specific disabled person. Subsequently, the Social Services Organization Center (COSO) provides a social worker free of charge to the disabled individual. If this labor is undertaken by a fam-

¹⁵ Payments for care of disabled citizens, disabled children and disabled persons from childhood of group I. Social Fund of Russia. Available at: https://sfr.gov.ru/grazhdanam/invalidam/soc_vip_inv/viplati_po_u_hody/ (accessed 09.12.2024).

ily member, it should be compensated by the state based on the minimum wage (either federal or regional). Such a measure would significantly optimize expenses related to meeting the basic needs of households with disabled individuals.

b) Compensation for taxi travel expenses for citizens who are unable to use public transportation (wheelchair users).

c) Quarterly indexing of EDV for disabled individuals to timely compensate for rising inflation levels. Indexing benefits based on changes in prices, wages, or their combination is crucial for low-income individuals, including those with disabilities. Such practices are currently widespread in OECD countries, which has improved income protection for retirees against inflation¹⁶. In Russia, indexing of EDV for disabled individuals currently occurs once a year on February 1st, with the indexing coefficient determined based on inflation levels from the previous year. This means that starting from the month following indexing, the amount of EDV lags behind the current inflation level. It is necessary to conduct quarterly indexing of EDV, taking into account the projected inflation level set by the Central Bank of Russia.

d) It is necessary to revise the cost of the social services package (NSU) included in the one-time cash payment (EDV) upwards. The amounts allocated for the NSU do not correspond even to the minimum market prices for the specified services, and their cost should be increased. An individual approach is required for the quarterly determination of the costs of necessary medications, medical devices, and therapeutic nutrition products provided to disabled individuals, based on the prescriptions from doctors for specific individuals and in accordance with their market value.

As of February 1, 2024, the monetary equivalent of the NSU is 1,578.50 rubles per month, which includes the provision of necessary medications — 1,215.80 rubles, sanatorium-resort treatment — 188.08 rubles, and free travel on suburban rail transport and intercity transport to and from the place of treatment — 174.62 rubles.

- **Provision of medications, medical devices, and therapeutic nutrition products (1,215.80 rubles).** The cost of medications, medical devices, and therapeutic nutrition products provided to disabled individuals should be calculated quarterly (taking inflation into account) and individually, based on prescriptions from doctors for specific individuals and their market value.
- **Sanatorium-resort treatment.** Annually, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Russian Federation approves the cost of one day of stay for citizens with disabilities in a sanatorium; in 2023, this amount is 1,635.2 rubles¹⁷. By law, the duration of sanatorium-resort treatment within the social services package provided to citizens

in a sanatorium organization is 18 days for adults, 21 days for children with disabilities, and from 24 to 42 days for individuals with spinal cord and brain injuries. Thus, the amount allocated for sanatorium-resort treatment for a disabled individual should be no less than 29,433.6 rubles ($1,635.2 \times 18 = 29,433.6$) per year, while the 2,101.44 rubles per year ($175.12 \times 12 = 2,101.44$) specified in the NSU cannot serve as an equivalent compensation amount as it does currently.

- **Travel to and from the place of treatment.** The cost of travel once a year on intercity transport to the place of treatment and back, based on current NSU tariffs, amounts to: $162.59 \times 12 = 1,951.08$ rubles, which corresponds to a train ticket in a compartment car from Moscow to Yaroslavl (300 km) one way. It is proposed to double this amount so that it is at least 4,000 rubles per year to account for the cost of a return ticket based on average rail transport fares.

Thus, the amount allocated in the NSU for sanatorium-resort treatment for a disabled individual per year should be no less than 29,433.6 rubles. The travel cost in the NSU once a year on intercity transport to and from the place of treatment should be at least 4,000 rubles for the year 2024 and should be indexed to the inflation rate quarterly.

Conclusion

Economic development in the context of labor shortages is only possible through the active utilization of all available reserves, one of which is the activation of the labor participation of individuals with disabilities [16]. However, addressing this issue is directly linked to the social protection of this population group, as only in this case can we expect a positive outcome from involving individuals with disabilities in the labor sphere while ensuring their social well-being.

The problem of social protection for individuals with disabilities, through the study of the role and impact of monthly cash payments, is being addressed by many countries, as reflected in this research. As a result, a number of analogies have been identified in the legislative frameworks currently implemented concerning the social protection of individuals with disabilities, as well as in the tools used to address the identified issues.

The characteristics of both Russian and foreign practices regarding unified cash payments, along with economic-statistical and sociological methods, and expert

¹⁶ How inflation challenges Pensions. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/pensions/How-inflation-challenges-pensions.pdf> (accessed 09.12.2024).

¹⁷ On providing vouchers to a sanatorium for disabled people — experts from “Oblastnaya”. OBLASTNAYA. Available at: <https://www.ogirk.ru/2023/03/01/o-predostavlenii-putevok-v-sanatorij-invalid-am-jeksperty-oblastnoj/#:~:text=%E2%80%93%D0%95%D0%B6%D0%B5%D0%B3%D0%B4%D0%BD%D0%BE%20%D0%BC%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B5%D1%80%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%BE%20%D1%82%D1%80%D1%83%D0%B4%D0%B0%20%D0%B8%20%D1%81%D0%BE%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%B0%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B9,%D0%B8%20%D1%82%20%D1%81%D0%BE%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%B5%D1%82%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BD%D0%BE> (accessed 09.12.2024).

evaluations used in this study, have confirmed the hypothesis that enhancing the social protection of individuals with disabilities is achieved by altering the level and structure of unified cash payments.

Thus, within the Russian social security system, significant positive results have been achieved over the years of implementing regional projects such as “Accessible Environment” and others. However, there are still relevant issues within the social security system, the main ones presenting certain challenges and requiring a systematic approach to management and the implementation of effective practices for creating infrastructure and maintaining the income of individuals with disabilities

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