

# Reproduction of Labor Potential in the Republic of Karelia (Russia)

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*The article examines the reproduction of labor potential in the Republic of Karelia. Particular attention in the research is given to the effects of the main types of social and labor mobility (territorial, educational, professional and medical). The article stems from theoretical explorations of this subject by Russian researchers and the results of an economic and sociological survey of the working-age population of the Karelia region. It was conducted with the participation of the author in 2012 in the three municipalities of the Republic of Karelia. The research surveyed 450 respondents. The survey and statistical analysis of demographic data helped to establish the information base, which allowed performing a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the reproduction of labor potential while evaluating the impact of social and labor mobility.*

**Key words: reproduction of labor potential, social and labor mobility, border region, Republic of Karelia.**

## Introduction

In the current context of the intensification of global migration there is an urgent need to understand the effects of social and labor mobility on the reproduction of labor potential in border regions of Russia. The scientific objective of the present article is to evaluate the reproduction of labor potential in the Republic of Karelia while taking into consideration the issue of social and labor mobility.

Specific methods allow studying social and labor mobility in the reproduction of labor potential in cross-border resource-burdened areas using empirical data obtained through an economic and sociological survey of the working-age population in the Republic of Karelia.

## Theoretical background

The study of the region's labor potential is closely connected with the study of the labor potential of

the individual. It was developed to employ three primary approaches:

- A resource-based approach, where labor potential is understood as the capacity of human resources;
- Factor-based approach, according to which the labor potential is treated as a form of realization of the personal factor of productivity;
- Integral (resource-factor) approach, considering the labor potential as the potential of the labor itself (The modern concept of labor potential 1990).

The representative of the first approach, B. Genkin understands the potential of human labor as part of the individual's personal potential, formed on the basis of the inborn abilities, education, training and life experience. According to B. Genkin the labor potential describes the possibility of human involvement in the production and exchange of

goods, so the labor potential can be treated as one of the economic resources types (Genkin 2007).

Other representatives of the resource approach equate the essence of the labor potential concept to the essence of the labor resources concept. Academician L. Abalkin understands the labor potential of the region as the characteristic of a collective labor related to place and time. His views are shared by V. Kostakov and A. Popov, who considered the labor potential as “labor forces in their quantitative and qualitative unity” (Kostakov and Popov 1982). By the quantitative basis of the labor potential they mean the working-age population, and by the qualitative basis - the sex-age structure, education, professional training and social mobility (territorial and occupational). The similar approach was adopted by G. Sergeyeva and L. Chizhova, who defined the labor potential concept for the country, as “labor, which the society has” (Sergeyeva and Chizhova 1982).

The factor-based approach is presented in the works of A. Pankratov. He treats the labor potential as “an integral form, which quantitatively and qualitatively characterizes the society ability to provide the human factor of production in accordance with the requirements of its development in dynamics” (Pankratov 1988).

The representative of the integral approach, I. Maslova, considers the labor potential of the region as the general characteristic of quantity and quality of cumulative human abilities of different groups of employees. It includes the total working-age population, defining the potential of their participation in socially useful activity for a given level of development of productive forces and corporate relations (Maslova 1987).

The majority of the researchers in the structure of the labor potential reproduction focus on the quantitative and qualitative components.

There is no disagreement in understanding of the quantitative indicators, which include the manpower, the economically active population, the employed and unemployed, the number of the working-age population, etc.

As for the quality indicators, the resource-based approach representatives consider the population sex-age structure, the education level, professional skills, qualification level, etc.

The factor-based approach representatives tend to view quality indicators of the labor potential through performance motivation, work values, personal characteristics of employees, social and economic conditions, corporate relations, etc.

The most common approach to the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of labor potential reproduction is the analysis of labor market statistics and the amount of labor resource in the region. However, the reproduction of the labor potential is also influenced by migration (inflow and outflow of the working population), other types of mobility (educational, professional) as well as the population activities in strengthening their state of health.

## Methods

Peculiarities of the research methods of the mobility role in the labor potential reproduction of the region are the following: there are certain difficulties in evaluating the migrants count (especially outflow), their goals, geography, travel time, changes in the education level and state of health. In the present research the great importance is given to the economic, social and institutional factors of social and labor mobility (Mikhel and Morozova 2010).

The study analyzes the data of the official statistics, the economic and sociological survey of working-age population aimed at assessment of the social and labor mobility influence on the reproduction of labor potential in the border region Karelia. The territorial quota survey included 450 units, the statistical method, economic and sociological analysis methods were applied to the study.

## Results

The statistical population data analysis allows us to conclude that reduction in number of working-age population in the Republic of Karelia is mainly due to the natural population decrease, as well as the migration of Karelian population. The most significant processes are the growing death rate among the men of working age, which is three times higher than the death rate of the same age women and out-flow migration of population into other regions of Russia and abroad.

According to the official statistics, the migration processes in the Republic of Karelia do not play an important role in the labor potential reproduction, as there is just a slight loss of population in the territory of the region. However, existing methods of migration control do not cover all migrants: they do not estimate the number of school leavers entering higher education institutions in other regions and countries; leaving the Republic of Karelia the young might not return back to the Republic after they get a degree in the future, which weakens the labor potential of the territory.

Along with demographic and migration processes that affect the labor potential reproduction of the region there are other types of mobility (changing the level of education and professional skills, change of a job) and population's actions to improve their state of health in the framework of positive models of self-preserving behavior.

According to the survey conducted in the Republic of Karelia, the migratory history of the working-age population was identified. Among the total population 39 % have no migration experience, 36 % changed residence within Karelia, 22 % within the Russian Federation, 3 % of the population have the experience of international migration. This indicates a high role of territorial mobility of the population in the labor potential reproduction in the region. Reasons for changing the place of residence are shown in Figure 2.

An important result was obtained in defining the role of the educational mobility of the population in the labor potential reproduction: 38.3 % of the population of Karelia have

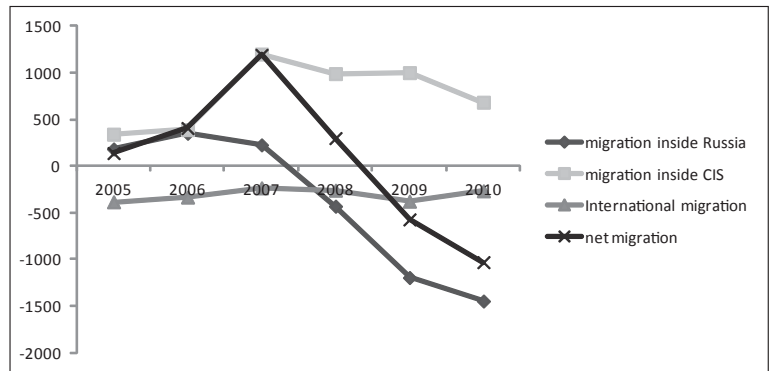


Figure 1. Dynamics and geography of migration in the Republic of Karelia (Demographic Yearbook of the Republic of Karelia, 2011).

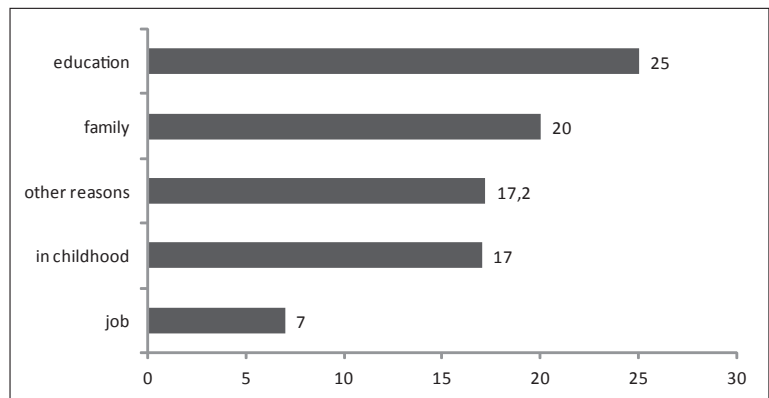


Figure 2. Reasons for change the place of residence, %.

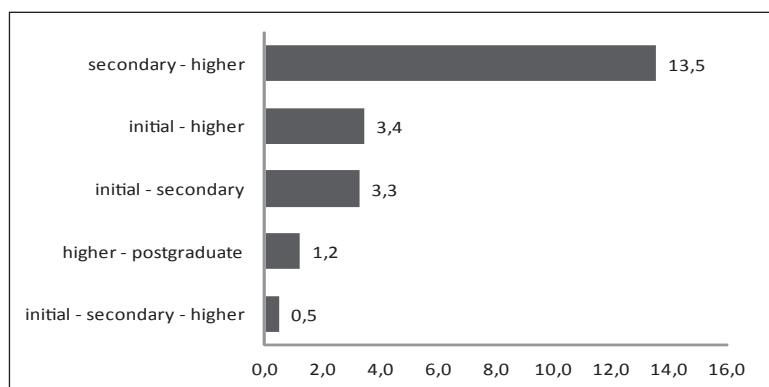


Figure 3. The educational mobility of population in Karelia, %.

higher education, secondary vocational education – 28.8%, elementary professional education – 12.1%. Figure 3 shows the educational mobility of the pop-

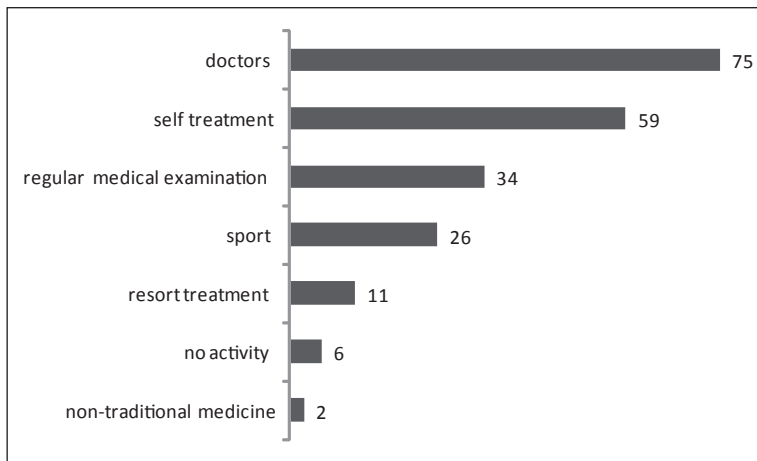


Figure 4. Activities of the population for supporting, strengthening and preserving the state of health, %.

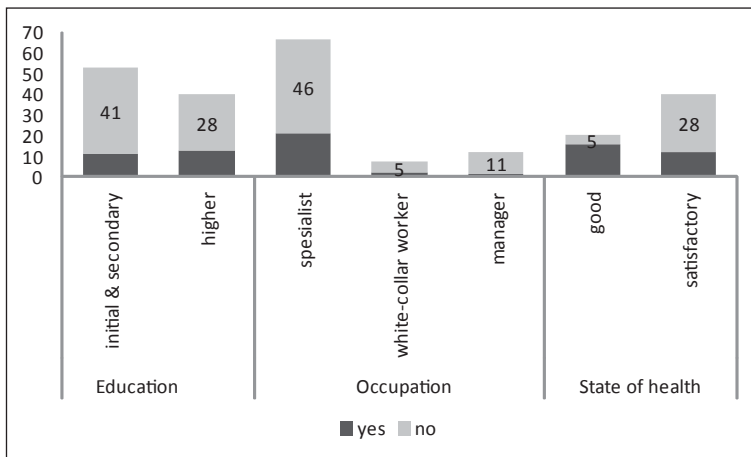


Figure 5. "Would you like to change the job?", %.

ulation, reflecting the amount of steps to the final level of professional education.

More than 20% of the population have the growing educational mobility, which can be attributed as the one of the major factor of the population labor potential reproduction.

The next type of mobility is the occupational mobility of the working population. In the last 5 years 55% of respondents did not change the main place of work, 39% changed jobs once, 6% - two times or more. The occupational mobility is caused by the desire to increase the income level (48%

of respondents) and to improve working conditions (33%), the lack of opportunities for self-realization (20%) and other factors. This distribution corresponds to the data obtained in the Vologda Institute of Social and Economic Development of RAS in the study of human capital and labor potential in the Vologda region (Leonidova et al. 2013).

The state of health and the models of self-preserving behavior have the particular importance in the study of the processes of the labor potential reproduction (Molchanova 2012). 58,9% of population claimed they have a very good state of health; 38,5% stated it satisfactory, 2,6% claimed it as poor. The activities to improve the population state of health are presented in Figure 4 as the most typical ways to preserve their health.

Studying the activity of the population to improve the state of health, we revealed high frequency of methods used to cure the diseases, including the forms of self-treatment. That could mean low efficiency of the healthcare system in the opinion of the respondents and their overestimation knowledge and skills in the treatment of disease. Preventive measures are not viewed by the population as necessary.

In the final part of the study the intention of the working population for the possible implementation of social and labor mobility was evaluated. We categorized the respondents according to their education level, occupation and state of health. Figure 5 shows the distribution of responses, related to the intentions to change the current job.

Among the main reasons for changing the current job we identified the following: low income – 17%, poor working conditions including interpersonal relations in the working team – 16%, the lack of opportunities for self-realization – 9%.

Figure 6 shows the distribution of responses to the question, related to the identification of the need to change the professional status: to get a new profession, to learn the related professions, to improve professional qualification.

Graphical presentation of the respondents' willingness to change the place of residence for a perspective job within the Republic of Karelia, Russia or abroad is shown in Figure 7.

Along with the low level of social and labor mobility the study allowed to identify different groups of the workforce. The most mobile population groups are the qualified specialists with higher education and a good state of health. They tend to change the current job, improve their skills and occasionally migrate to another region of Russia or abroad more than other groups. Less mobile are the population groups with primary and secondary professional education, employees and managers, as well as respondents with a satisfactory state of health.

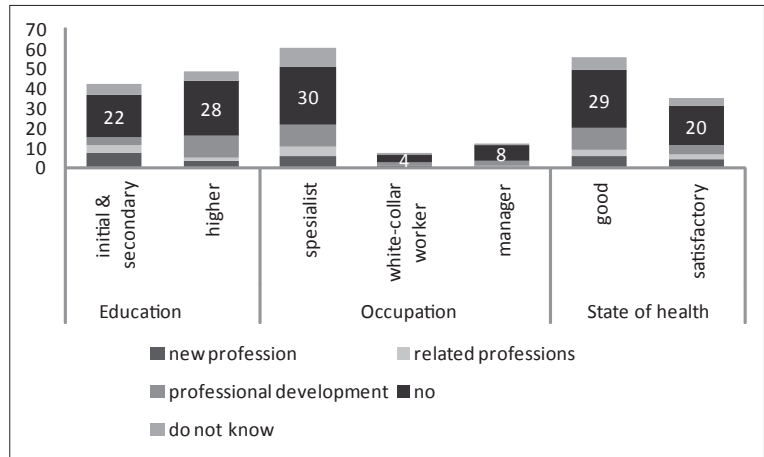


Figure 6. "Do you need to change the professional status?", %.

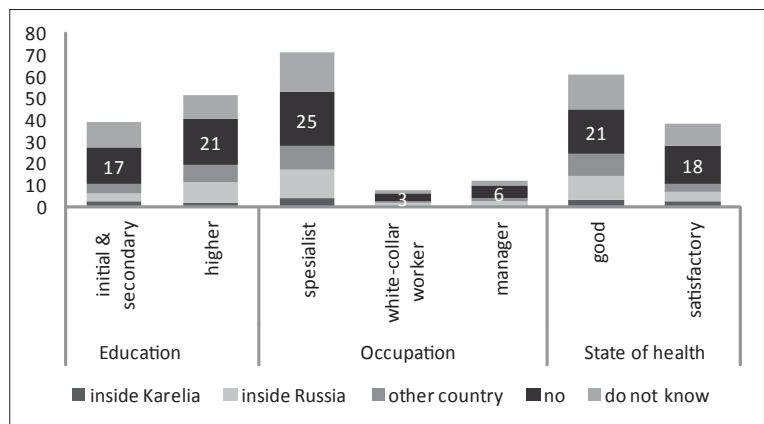


Figure 7. "Are you ready to change the place of residence for a perspective job?", %.

### Conclusions

The generated data base allowed to reveal the peculiarities of labor potential reproduction in border resource-burdened region, considering the effects of different types of social and labor mobility.

These features of labor potential reproduction in the Republic of Karelia are caused by the institutional transformation of the socio-economic space in the region, coupled with the change of industrial specialization and social reform in the region, enhancing the migration outflow from the territory.

The foregoing results of the research lead to the conclusion that there is a decline of the labor potential of the region, mainly due to the natural and migration loss of population caused by unfavorable

tendencies in socio-economic development of the Republic of Karelia.

The results will be useful for future modeling the labor potential reproduction in the Republic of Karelia, which will help to form the various approaches to improve the efficiency of labor potential reproduction management in the region.

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## Stereotyyppioita suomalaisista

### Aikidoo Tanskassa

Kun muutin Odenseen Tanskaan, menin harjoittelemaan paikalliseen aikidokerhoon. Jossain vaiheessa meille opetettiin, miten hyökkääjältä otetaan veitsi pois. Ohjaaja valitsi minut hyökkääjän osaan, koska "olet suomalainen ja tiedät miten käyttää puukkoa". Minä luonnollisesti protestoin moisia ennakkoluuloja vastaan. Ohjaaja rupesi sitten tenttaamaan minua tyyliin "oliko sinulla puukko lapsena, oletko kantanut puukkoa vyössä, käytätkö puukkoa, kun olet maalla..." yms. Pakkohan minun oli vastata myöntävästi, ja ohjaaja sanoi "niinpä, useimmat tanskalaiset eivät edes tiedä miten päin puukkoa pidetään". Sitten hän lätkäisi harjoitusveitsen käteeni ja käski hyökkäämään.

*Krister Björklund*

### Pohjoismaista työnjakoa Amerikoissa

Olimme juuri muuttaneet Yhdysvaltoihin. Yliopistokaupunki kuhisi kansainvälistä elämää. Oli tulossa Skandinavia days – ilmeisesti jonkin suuren viikkipäällikön kunniaksi. Sain kutsun järjestelytoimikunnan kokoukseen. Vaikka me suomalaiset emme ole skandinaaveja, olimme lämpimästi tervetulleita mukaan. Puheenjohtaja jakoi rutiinilla tehtäviä. Tanskalaiset hallitsivat kahvitukset, ruotsalaiset leikkisät matkamuistot ja norjalaiset erilaiset urheiluvempaimet. Sitten katseet kääntyivät minuun, suomalaiseen tulokkaaseen. Puheenjohtaja antoi minulle luottotehtävän. ”Pidä huolta jääkaappiin varastoiduista tuotteista”. En oikein saanut selvää sortimentista. Ajattelin, että kylläpä se selviää siten itse tilaisuudessa. Kun juhlat alkoivat, istahdin jääkaapin viereen. Kurkkasin sisään. Se oli täynnä alkoholia, etupäässä ruotsalaista Absolut- ja suomalaista Finlandia-vodkaa. Pohjoismaisessa työnjaossa suomalaisille tulivat alkoholiasiat. Aikani istutuani jääkaapin vierellä lähdin kotiin.

*Ismo Söderling*