

STATE POLICY OF SOCIAL PROTECTION OF PENSIONERS OF DONBAS IN THE PERIOD OF DEVELOPED SOCIALISM

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Abstract. *One of the most important forms of social protection in the Soviet Union was the pension provision of citizens. There were various types of pensions: in connection with old age, disability, loss of a breadwinner, etc. Expenditures on pensions, as well as on various types of assistance, were carried out at the expense of the state budget and funds from state, cooperative enterprises, collective farms, trade unions and other organizations. The article analyzes the directions of state planning in the field of pension provision of the population, changes in pension legislation, methods for encouraging pensioners to continue working in the sectors of the national economy after retirement. The average size of monthly pensions, the number of pensioners and the amounts of monthly pensions paid to them in Donetsk and Luhansk regions, the number of working pensioners by age in the indicated regions are also determined. In general, it can be concluded that pension provision in Donbas during 1965-1985, compared to previous years, has significantly improved. The amount of pension payments to both urban and rural pensioners was significantly increased, which had a positive effect on their material well-being and reduced the difference between the average pension and the average salary. The pension received by a former employee depended on several factors: length of service, position, salary level. A negative point was the establishment of a pension threshold, above which the employee was not paid benefits, even in the case of a very high salary.*

Key words: Donbas, pension provision, social policy, social protection, developed socialism, benefits.

The social protection system of the Soviet state included pensions, assistance to the disabled, and protection of motherhood and childhood. Each of these areas had certain characteristics and tasks, which were implemented through the mediation of social security bodies. The authorities claimed that it was the most socially oriented in the world, but in fact there were enough problems in the industry. This study will analyze the main forms of social protection of pensioners in Donbas.

One of the most important forms of social protection in the Soviet Union was the pension of citizens. There were different types of pensions: in connection with old age, disability, loss of a breadwinner, etc. Expenditures on pensions, as well as on various types of assistance, were carried out at the expense of the state budget and funds from state, cooperative enterprises, collective farms, trade unions, and other organizations. The size of pensions varied greatly - from 50 to 100 percent of the wages of workers, employees, and members of collective farms. Pension provision was a major independent social problem, because the number of pensioners was significant. Therefore, the relevant legislation was constantly developing and improving. An important feature of pension provision was that it was implemented without any contributions or deductions from citizens' incomes.

Cash benefits were divided into one-time (retirement, birth of a child) and periodic (pensions, illness) [Raikevych A., 1977] The state system of pension provision and social

insurance for workers, employees and collective farmers was enshrined in the Constitution of the USSR, where Article 43 stated: «Citizens of the USSR have the right to material security in old age, in case of illness, full or partial loss of working capacity, as well as loss of a breadwinner» [Pogrebnyak Ya.P., 1985]. Pensioners made up a significant part of the country's population and in the mid-1960s amounted to 14 % [Acharkan V., 1967]. With the growth and strengthening of the country's economy, the level of pension provision was increased in three directions: the size of pensions increased and their ratio to wages improved; the necessary ratio between the pension amounts of different categories of pensioners was ensured, in particular, the level of pension provision for workers, civil servants and collective farmers was brought closer together; the amounts of pensions established at different times for workers of similar professions and qualifications were equalized. A significant improvement in pension provision began in 1956, playing an important role in streamlining the pension allocation system in the mid-1950s. But despite its significant importance, the law on pensions concerned only workers and civil servants. The transition to universal pension provision was delayed for another ten years.

In 1967, pensions for military personnel and collective farmers were increased, and the retirement age for women – members of collective farms – was reduced to 55 years, and for men – to 60 years [4, p. 610-613]. In the 1970s, a number of resolutions were adopted to improve the pension provision of the population. Thus, since 1971, the minimum size of the old-age pension was 45 rubles, and the maximum – 120 rubles. [5, p. 533]. And on August 3, 1972, in order to eliminate numerous discrepancies between many decisions of the USSR government on the procedure for assigning and paying state pensions, a resolution of the USSR Council of Ministers «On Approval of the Regulation on the Procedure for Assigning and Paying State Pensions» was adopted. It was about establishing a retirement age (60 years for men and 55 years for women) and a preferential retirement age for workers in hazardous industries (55 years for men and 50 years for women). Pensions in case of loss of breadwinner and pensions on preferential terms were also established [6, pp. 173-203]. In 1975, the retirement age for female machine operators was lowered to 50 years [7, p. 308]. In the same year, pensions paid to families of deceased servicemen and disabled servicemen were increased from 27 to 33 rubles. [8, p. 314-315]. The state took special care of workers in the coal industry. In 1976 their maximum pension increased depending on length of service from 140 to 160 rubles per month [9, p. 338-339.]. The following year, the maximum pension for ferrous metallurgy workers was increased - also from 140 to 160 rubles [10, p. 412-413].

In 1977, a list of jobs was established that gave the right to receive an old-age pension in increased amounts. Among these enterprises were coal and shale mines, metallurgical enterprises, organizations for the construction and maintenance of coal and shale mines, as well as dismissed party, trade union and Komsomol workers [11, pp. 304-305]. During 1965-85, miners' pensions doubled - from 83 to 160 rubles. For pensioners of other categories, the maximum pension was 120 rubles. [Shevchenko N.M., 2005]. There were pension supplements for non-working spouses, children and other dependents of a pensioner [Mykul'sky I., 1978].

During the 1980s, pension legislation continued to be improved. Thus, in 1980, pension supplements for continuous work experience at one enterprise were increased by 20 % [14, p. 306-307]. In the same year, pensions were increased for military personnel, due to the loss of a breadwinner-military personnel, and for disabled veterans of the Great Patriotic War [15, pp. 289-291]. In 1981, the amounts of minimum disability benefits were increased, in case of loss of a breadwinner - up to 75 rubles per month, by age - up to 50 rubles, in case of loss of a breadwinner to families of deceased military personnel - up to 38 rubles per disabled person, to families of workers and employees who had disabled people - up to 28 rubles [16, p. 176-177]. In 1983, the abolition of the 20 % pension supplement for continuous work experience at one enterprise was established in the event of the employee's voluntary dismissal. In the event of dismissal for good reason, the supplement was preserved [17, p. 151-152]. The authorities also showed concern for lonely elderly people. In 1985, a resolution was adopted that established additional payments from the local budget for lonely pensioners who needed additional assistance. This pension supplement was not to exceed 50 rubles. per month. Also, pensioners who received minimum

pensions were granted a half discount on prescription drugs [18, p. 593-595].

According to the law of July 15, 1964, the right to an old-age pension was granted to members of collective farms and former members of collective farms who had the required age and length of service. Men were entitled to a pension from the age of 60 with at least 25 years of service; women from the age of 55 with at least 20 years of service. Disabled military personnel and mothers with many children had privileges when granting collective farm pensions [Andreev V.S., 1987]. The minimum size of a collective farm old-age pension was 12 rubles. No allowances for old-age pensions were accrued to members of collective farms, and no preferential old-age pensions were established. This was a very important law, because before its adoption, each collective farm decided on social security issues independently, depending on its capabilities. The capabilities of collective farms were different, so material assistance to pensioners was also different and very small, even in wealthy collective farms.

Based on the decisions of the September Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the USSR on September 26, 1967, adopted a resolution «On measures to further improve the well-being of the Soviet people». It defined measures to improve the pension provision of collective farmers. The retirement age of collective farmers was equal, according to the resolution, to the retirement age of workers and employees [Aleksanov P. A., 1974]. This was a significant positive step in equalizing the social security of urban and rural pensioners. In the 1970s, the improvement of pension provision for peasants and the improvement of pension legislation continued. Thus, in 1971, a decision was made to increase pensions for collective farmers: the minimum pension was 20 rubles. per month, and the maximum was 120 rubles. Pensions were also increased for disabled collective farmers and families of collective farmers who died from an occupational disease or work injury [21, p. 534-536]. In 1978, a law was passed, according to which the minimum pension for collective farmers was increased by age - up to 28 rubles. Benefits for disabled collective farmers were also increased [Baran V.K., Danilenko V.M., 1999]. A significant outflow of young people from the villages in the 1970s - mid-1980s led to an increase in the share of pensioners among the rural population [23, p.381-383]. Therefore, these resolutions had a significant positive impact on improving the material security of collective farmer pensioners.

Attention was also paid to encouraging pensioners to work. In 1969, a resolution was adopted on expanding the use of pensioners' labor at enterprises producing consumer goods and in the field of public services. It obliged the republican and local authorities to organize enterprises, workshops and sites that would use their labor [24, p. 528-530]. The same resolution ordered the payment of pensions in full to pensioners who worked as foremen on collective farms and at enterprises of household services. At the end of the same year, a resolution was adopted on further increasing the material interest in the work of pensioners by age, according to which postal workers, construction foremen, employees of the State Bank, household services, junior and middle medical personnel, and teachers in rural areas were paid a full pension if they continued to work. Other categories of workers received from half to 75 % [25, p. 236-238].

The issue of expanding measures to encourage pensioners to work was raised at the 24th, 25th, and 26th Congresses of the CPSU. Material incentives were especially common among single pensioners. Collective farmers had a much lower material interest in work than workers and employees, because income from household farms played a significant role in their budget. Moral incentives came in second place: the need to work, the desire to be in a team, a sense of one's own significance, etc. In order to increase the role of moral incentives, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, by special orders dated January 18, 1974, established the Orders of Labor Glory of three degrees and the medal «Veteran of Labor» [Zhiromskaya V., 1988]. And material incentives for work continued throughout the 1970s. Thus, in 1972 A resolution was issued that obliged local authorities to increase the requirements for fulfilling the tasks of employing pensioners, to require business managers to create more jobs for them [27, p. 612-613].

he measures proved insufficient, since the resolution of September 14, 1973 noted shortcomings in the employment of pensioners. Enterprises were given the right to direct from a

third to a half of the profit (depending on the number of working pensioners) to the expansion and improvement of production, material incentives for their employees, and improvement of socio-cultural and housing conditions. At the same time, reduced norms were established for pensioners [28, p. 796-799]. The scope of application of pensioners' labor was expanded. On September 20, 1973, a Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was issued on reducing the tax on profits that citizens received from handicrafts [Zhiromskaya V., 1988]. And in 1979, the authorities even went so far as to introduce a pension supplement for work after reaching retirement age in the amount of 10 rubles. for each year of work, provided that the total amount of the allowance does not exceed 40 rubles, and the amount of the pension with the allowance is 150 rubles per month [30, p. 136-138].

During the 1960s and 1970s, pensions were increased repeatedly for different categories of workers. Let us consider how this affected the pensioners of the Donetsk region. In 1956, there were 288,5 thousand pensioners in the Donetsk region, and in 1976, there were 933,3 thousand. Along with the increase in the number of people who were paid pensions, the funds allocated for their payment also increased. Expenditures on the payment of pensions during this period increased more than eightfold and amounted to over 500 million rubles per year. After the increase in pensions for coal industry workers in 1976, In the Donetsk region, pensions were increased for 11,117 workers. Of these, 4,400 pensioners began to receive up to 140 rubles per month, and 6,717 - up to 160 rubles. [Pavliy A., 1977].

The size of monthly pensions differed significantly not only in the sectors of the national economy, but also in the regions of the country, which can be seen from Table 1. The largest pensions were received by employees of the Donetsk region, the lowest figures - on average in Ukraine. If we take the pensions paid on average in Ukraine as 100 %, we will see that in the Voroshilovgrad region the pension was higher by 14 %, and in Donetsk by 15,5 %. A greater annual growth in pensions was observed in the republic as a whole, in the Voroshilovgrad region – 3,3 %. Approximately the same situation was in the Donetsk region. Despite the lower growth rates of pensions, in the Donetsk region, the average pension in the Donetsk region was still the largest. This can be explained by the higher salary received by workers in the coal, metallurgical and machine-building industries, which dominated here, and, of course, by the higher pensions accrued from these salaries. It is also necessary to take into account the constant increase in pensions for workers in the above-mentioned industries to stimulate their work.

Table 1

Average monthly pensions assigned under the law on state pensions [32, p. 70]

Regions	Years						
	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
Ukrainian SSR	43,2	45,3	46,6	48,3	52,4	54,1	55,5
Voroshilovgrad. region	50,4	52,0	53,1	54,2	58,4	60,3	63,3
Donetsk region	51,6	52,9	54,2	55,4	59,4	61,6	63,4

In the early 1980s, signs of an economic crisis began to appear, and the authorities tried to save the pension fund. But, despite repeated increases, the size of pensions in the 1970s-80s was significantly lower than the size of the wages of workers and employees, since the growth rates of earnings were much higher. During the 1960s-80s, as can be seen from Table 2, the number of all categories of pensioners in the Donetsk region increased, except for pensioners by length of service, which decreased by almost half. The number of pensioners by age increased by 3,6 times, pensioners by loss of breadwinner by 1,5 times, personal pensioners by two times, and pensioners by loss of breadwinner from among military personnel by 0.8%. In comparison, the amount of pensions paid to them increased much more. It decreased only among pensioners by years of service - by 15,2 %, but this was natural due to the decrease in their number. In all other categories of elderly people, it increased significantly: among pensioners by age by five times, among pensioners from the loss of a breadwinner - by 2,3 times, among personal pensioners - by almost four times, and among pensioners from the loss of a breadwinner - by 85,2 %. In the 1970s, they stopped allocating a separate category of pensioners from workers of science and art,

so data on them is available only until 1970. Over the five years mentioned, their number and the amount of pensions did not increase much: by 15 % and 11 %, respectively. Thus, the number of almost all categories of pensioners in the Donetsk region and the amounts of pensions paid to them increased significantly. Moreover, the amounts paid increased much more than the number of their recipients. As we can see, the authorities tried to increase the amount of pensions. The largest increase was in the amounts of pensions paid to pensioners for old-age and personal pensions, and the smallest increase was in the amounts paid to survivors.

Table 2

Number of pensioners and the amount of monthly pensions paid to them in Donetsk region

		[33]					
		Pensione rs by age	Pensione rs by years of service	Survivor s' pensioners	Pensione rs for the loss of a breadwinner from military personnel	Personne l Personal	Pensione rs from workers of science and art
1965	Number of pensioners	235340	5047	87521	32196	1328	20
	The amount of their pensions (thousands of rubles)	15324,6	182,7	2751,6	807,2	56,9	1,8
1970	Number of pensioners	356459	2757	110078	25374	1403	23
	The amount of their pensions (thousands of rubles)	23385	110,1	3501,7	632,9	63,6	2
1980	Number of pensioners	650595	3085	126146	29225	2072	no data
	The amount of their pensions (thousands of rubles)	54389,6	159,6	5197,9	997	144	no data
1985	Number of pensioners	851987	2607	134065	32452	2647	no data
	The amount of their pensions (thousands of rubles)	82092,7	154,8	6406	1495,1	212,6	no data

During the 1960s-80s, pensions in the Luhansk region increased significantly. As can be seen from Table 3, they increased most for pensioners by age – 5,4 times, also significantly – 2,2 times for pensioners by years of service, and twice for personal. Pensions for pensioners for the loss of a breadwinner from military personnel increased by half, and this was with a reduction in their number by 16,5 %. The number of pensioners by years of service increased by almost half, the amount of pensions paid to them decreased by 20 %. The situation with pensioners - workers of science and technology was the same as in the Donetsk region - they were allocated to a separate category in calculations only until 1970. Over the five years under review, their number and the pensions paid to them decreased by 40 %. In general, the amounts of pensions paid to all types of pensioners during the twenty years under review have been constantly growing, while their number has increased more slowly. In general, the number of pensioners by age in the region has increased by 3,6 times, with the loss of a breadwinner by 41,6%, and personal pensions by only 21,4 %. The largest number of pensions began to be paid to old-age pensioners.

Most elderly people, leaving the economically active population, having reached retirement, retained their mental and physical abilities and had enough energy and health to lead an active lifestyle. The authorities attached great importance to encouraging pensioners to work, because the number of older people in the country was constantly growing. In fact, pensioners were an important source of replenishment, and in some industries, also of eliminating the shortage of workers, and skilled and experienced ones, which was very important. Since the 1970s, due to a significant increase in pensions, material incentives for most pensioners have become weaker. And it has become increasingly difficult to fill positions with unattractive working conditions with retired workers. Therefore, since the beginning of the 1970s, a system of benefits has been introduced in the country aimed at stimulating the work of pensioners in the national economy. The main part of working pensioners was paid 50, 75 or 100 % of the pension amount. This measure led to an increase in the number of working pensioners.

Table 3

Number of pensioners and the amounts of monthly pensions paid to them in Luhansk region [34]

		Pensione rs by age	Pensione rs by years of service	Survivor s' pensioners	Pensione rs for the loss of a breadwinner from military pensioners	Personne l Personal	Pensione rs from workers of science and art
1965	Number of pensioners	130771	3030	47392	26613	895	5
	The amount of their pensions (thousands of rubles)	8299,4	105,7	1516,7	683,4	41,4	0,5
1970	Number of pensioners	199384	1853	59987	21185	760	3
	The amount of their pensions (thousands of rubles)	12795,6	1472	1946,9	540,9	35,6	,3
1980	Number of pensioners	365065	1645	67703	22212	992	no data
	The amount of their pensions (thousands of rubles)	29972,7	83,1	2868,3	765,3	68,5	no data
1985	Number of pensioners	468490	1539	67107	22215	1087	no data
	The amount of their pensions (thousands of rubles)	44776,1	84,4	3279,9	1030,1	84,1	no data

Table 4

Number of working pensioners by age in regions (thousands of people) [35, p. 73]

Regions	Years						
	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
Ukrainian SSR	452,8	517,8	589,9	655,3	706,4	744,9	802
Voroshilovgrad. region	24,8	29,7	32,8	37,6	39,2	44,3	50,5
Donetsk region	50,6	57,5	64,9	76,5	81,5	88,6	98,1

In the 1970s, as can be seen from Table 4, there was a trend of increasing the number of working pensioners both in Donbas and in Ukraine as a whole. The absolute growth rate of the number of working pensioners for the studied period was: in Ukraine – 77,1 %, in Voroshilovgrad region – 103,6 %, in Donetsk – 93,8 %. The average annual growth rate of the

number of working pensioners was: in the republic – 10 %, in Donetsk region – 11,7 %, and the largest was in Voroshilovgrad – 12,6 %. As we can see, in Donbas the number of working pensioners in the 1970s significantly exceeded the average indicators for the country as a whole.

In the 1980s, the policy of employment of pensioners continued. A particularly low proportion of pensioners among employees in Donetsk region was observed at enterprises providing household services to the population – in 1985 only 7 %, utilities and trade – 11 %, local industry – 12 % [36, p. 5]. This shows that the government's policy of encouraging pensioners to work did not have significant success. Pensioners, especially highly qualified and educated ones, did not want to work in low-skilled jobs for low wages, not having the respect, status and income that they had before they retired.

In general, it can be stated that pension provision in Donbas during 1965-1985, compared to previous years, improved significantly. The amount of pension payments to both urban and rural pensioners was significantly increased, which had a positive effect on their material well-being and reduced the difference between the average pension and the average salary. The pension received by a former employee depended on several factors: length of service, position, salary level. A negative point was the establishment of a pension threshold, above which the employee was not paid any benefits, even in the case of a very high salary. Former employees of industries important to the government – fuel, metallurgy, machine building – had an advantage, receiving higher pensions and benefits. A positive phenomenon was the lowering of the retirement age for both men and women, as well as for workers in hazardous industries. Of great importance was the establishment of pensions for collective farm workers, their constant increase. This, although not sufficiently, brought the level of material well-being of urban and rural pensioners closer together.

Thus, social protection of one of the most disadvantaged segments of the population, pensioners, took place throughout the entire period under study. But the level of benefits and privileges provided was very low and did not meet the basic needs of their recipients. The state constantly increased the level of pensions, cash benefits, provided more and more privileges, but their growth did not keep up with the increasing salaries of the general population and inflation. In addition, these privileges and privileges were very limited, so pensioners often lacked the necessary goods. The state guaranteed, constantly, although not enough, provided a certain level of social assistance and support to the least protected segments of the population.

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