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**THE INVOLVEMENT OF
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This paper investigates how households of various demographic compositions are involved in private intergenerational transfers in Russia. The authors provide a descriptive analysis of private exchanges using household surveys. The Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey—Higher School of Economics (RLMS-HSE, 2004, 2008, 2013), The Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions (KOUG, Rosstat), The Survey of the Population Income and the Participation in Social Programs (VNDN, Rosstat). The study demonstrates that the demographic composition of households is an important predictor of household involvement in private exchanges of different goods and services. Single-person households and households represented by couples without children show their particular donor capacity in private intergenerational transfers. The recipients of private material transfers are primarily one-parent families and couples with under-age children. Multigenerational households and other households are also recipients of private material transfers. This paper demonstrates that the role of a household's private exchange is related to their financial situation, but the role of private intergenerational transfers is not limited to giving assistance to the poor.

JEL Classification: J1, D64, J18.

Keywords: private intergenerational transfers, households, family support system, government transfers.

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Introduction

Countries with a poor quality welfare system show a high level of informal exchanges between relatives, friends and neighbors. Private material transfers constitute a significant component of income and expenses in virtually all developing countries. In these countries, the majority of private intergenerational flows run from children to parents [Cox, Jimenez, 1990]. In countries with strong welfare systems, private transfers are not as significant and are usually directed towards younger generations [Albertini et al., 2007].

The study of private transfers is important for designing social policy, as the social and economic benefits provided by private transfers are similar to public transfers (i.e. pensions, unemployment insurance, healthcare). Private transfers could enhance or reduce the effect of social transfers on the recipient's well-being. For example, an increase in pensions will not contribute to the well-being of older people if they give this money to their children. Private transfers, however, can help the government save on social costs. In Russia, people who take care of elderly relatives (80 years and over) are eligible for subsidies from the government. For the government, it is more efficient when people take care of their elderly relatives than to provide social services to the elderly.

The role of families in providing for the needs of individuals depends on the type of welfare state. Lohmann and Zagel [2016] distinguish two types of social policy regarding private intergenerational support – familization and defamilization. Defamilization policies appear in welfare states which reduce dependencies and the need for the exchange of different goods or services between family members (e.g., by providing free public childcare, free public care for older people). Familization policies include regulations to reduce the negative social and economic impact of dependencies between family members (e.g., cash payments for family care at home).

The trend towards nuclear families and the emergence of public welfare systems are considered parallel and mutually enhancing processes. In this modernization approach, government transfers replace private ones as the welfare state develops [Becker, 1974; Barro, 1974]. This hypothesis has been studied and tested [Reil-Held, 2006], but some sociological studies show that government transfers do not replace private transfers. Their only effect on private transfers is that the latter adapt to new conditions but retain their significance [Kohli, 1999; Künemund, Rein, 1999; Künemund, 2008; Lowenstein, Ogg, 2003; Albertini, Kohli, 2013]. With the development of the welfare state, material transfers are replaced by instrumental ones, including moral support [Albertini, Kohli, 2013]. Hence, the development of the welfare state does not replace intra-family solidarity, but contributes to its growth.

This paper studies the involvement of different types of households in the private intergenerational transfer system in Russia. We consider the following questions:

1. How does the strategy of household involvement in private exchange vary depending on the demographic composition of the household?
2. Does the type of parental aid (material transfers, services) differ from that of children?
3. How does the share of private and government transfers correlate in household budgets?

Theoretical background

Chayanov, a Soviet economist, was the first to identify the private intergenerational transfer problem, which he described in his paper *Farm Management* [1989³] on the economy and demographic cycle of peasant families. Chayanov noted that at various stages of family life (having the first child, having subsequent children, children reaching adolescence), peasant families had different ratios of the number of mouths to feed and the number of farmhands, which could be defined by their age and gender. The economic stability of families was ensured by a balance between production and consumption by the representatives of various generations.

Thereafter, Sauvy [1977] studied the private intergenerational transfer system as a source of the support for the elderly under the conditions of in an aging population. He assumed that the role of private transfers is important only at the for family-based stage of support ofing the elderly, which is typical for patriarchal societies.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Caldwell developed his theory of wealth flows [1976, 1981] relating demographic transition theory to changes in intergenerational transfers within the family. Caldwell argued that the decline in birth rates could be explained by the direction of intergenerational wealth flow. In traditional societies, such flows go from children to parents. Hence, parents are *economically interested* in having more children. Yet modern societies are characterized by parent-to-child flows. Therefore, it is not economically beneficial to have many children.

In the early 1990s, Lee and Mason [Lee, 1994; Lee, Mason, 2011] developed a methodology to analyze aggregate intergenerational transfer flow, consisting of both private and government transfers, for an aging population. According to this approach, the direction of the aggregate intergenerational flow depends on the population age structure. In young societies, intergenerational flow is directed `downwards` or from parents to children, as most of the dependency burden comes from the younger generation. In older societies, such a flow is directed `upwards`, or from the younger generation to the older.

³ First published in 1925.

Contemporary research often focuses on the social and demographic factors of intergenerational solidarity. It has been found that daughters provide more personal care to their parents than do sons [Shuey, Hardy, 2003]. Moreover, parents of wives are more likely to be looked after than parents of husbands. However, no such difference has been found in terms of financial transfers. Marital status also influences intergenerational exchange. Men are usually net donors of money, but women are net donors of services [Rentería, 2016]. Furstenberg, Hoffinan and Shrestha [1995] have shown that divorce reduces the intensity of intergenerational exchange with children. Divorces are especially negatively correlated with relations between children and fathers. Widowers are more involved in exchange with their children than divorced parents. Leopold [2012] shows that the later children leave their parents, the closer their relationship. Numerous studies of private intergenerational transfers have implications for social policy. Parents who have lost contact with their children have a higher demand for social support in later life. Consequently, an increasing number of such parents are of special concern to policy makers [Albertini, Kohli, 2017]. Grandparents also play a significant role in intergenerational relations. Provision of childcare by grandparents leads to greater labor force participation of young mothers [Compton, 2015; Compton, Pollak, 2014].

Studies of private intergenerational transfers in Russia are rare. They are still the prerogative of sociologists and economists, while the demographic aspects of this phenomenon remain almost unexplored.

Since the late 1990s research on private transfers in Russia has developed as a separate field. Before that, the issues of private transfers were discussed in some family studies (e.g. *Family group structure and functions* by Ruzze, Kadibur and Yeliseyeva [1976]). Due to the social and economic transformation of Russia at that time, these works generally regarded private transfers as a way to overcome poverty [Rimashevskaya, 1997; Cox at al. 1998; Denisenko, 1999; Kabalina, Clark, 1999; Yakubovich, 1999; Shanin, 1999; Ovcharova, Prokofieva, 2000]. Further studies of this topic covered general sociological aspects of private exchanges [Gradoselskaya, 1999; Barsukova, 2005; Korchagina, Prokofieva, 2007; Sinyavskaya, Gladnikova, 2007; Gladnikova, 2007; Belokrylova, Filonenko, Fursa, 2013] and the role of the elderly in the system of private transfers [Denisenko, 1999, 2001; Krasnova, 1999; Ivanova, 2003].

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. The demographic structure of a household is associated with the role of the household in the private exchange system.

In terms of the household's role in the system of private intergenerational exchanges, we consider the following household types: one-parent families with minor children; couples without children (the head of the family of working age); couples without children (the head of the family over working age); couples with minor children; multigenerational households; single-person households of working age; single-person households over working age; "other" households.

The proposed typology takes into account the lifecycle stages of families. In this typology, the older generation may theoretically be represented by single people over working age, or by couples without children (where the household head is over working age). The younger generation is represented by couples with children, by couples without children (the head of the household of working age) or by one-parent families. Single-person households of working age can play the role of both the older or the younger generation. Multigenerational households and other households do not fall into this classification. The main characteristic of a multigenerational household is that it includes more than one family nucleus (spouses without children, spouses with children or one parent with children) or one family nucleus and other household members (relatives or not). A household of one parent with a minor child (or children) residing together with his (her) own parents or household of two married couples (with or without children) residing together are examples of multigenerational households. "Other" households are largely households with no family nucleus, among them are households of brothers and sisters (without parents), grandparents with grandchildren, aunts or uncles with nephews or nieces.

Studies report that wealthier households usually act as donors, while poorer ones are recipients [Cox, Jimenez, 1990]. They also argue that the household's demographic structure is an important factor in the well-being of its members. In the US, families headed by single mothers are five times more likely to be poor than two-parent families [Martin, 2006]. According to Russian studies, there is a high risk of poverty for families with children – primarily for large and single-parent families [Alexandrova, Ovcharova, Shishkin, 2003; Ovcharova et al., 2014]. This is further proved by the authors estimates based on the Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey—Higher School of Economics. According to these estimates, single-parent families and families with minor children are among the households in greatest need – the income of more than 80% of such households is not more than 1.5 times the minimum subsistence level. Multigenerational households and "other" households are in a better position. Single-person households and couples without children have relatively high incomes. The income of 49% of single-person households over working age, 33% of single-person households of working age is twice the minimum subsistence level. Income of 24% of couples without children with the head

of the family over working age and 21% of couples without children with head of working age is also twice the minimum subsistence level.

Assuming that private material intergenerational transfers are redistributed from higher-income households to the less well-off, it is expected that single persons of both age groups, as well as couples without children of both age groups, will act as donors. One-parent families with minor children, couples with minor children, multigenerational households and “other” households will act as the recipients.

Hypothesis 2. Older generations will more often act as donors of material transfers, while the younger generation will act as donors of instrumental transfers.

According to European studies, parents are more likely to be the donors of material transfers than the recipients. Moreover, such patterns do not usually depend on the age of the parents [Albertini et al., 2007]. The prevalence of the downward direction of material transfers is a general tendency for developed countries. According to the estimates based on the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe, 21% of European parents provided material assistance to their children living apart from them, while only 3% of parents received similar assistance from their children [Albertini et al., 2007]. Children usually support their parents by performing various services [Kohli, 1999; Hoff, 2007].

Hypothesis 3. The contribution of private transfers to household budgets is larger than the contribution of instrumental transfers.

Studies show that the countries of the former USSR (including Russia) are characterized by lower social standards and guarantees, lower social public expenditure and a weaker social security system [Whelan, Maître, 2010; Gryaznova, 2014]. There is an emphasis on personal responsibility for material well-being while state participation in social issues is minimized [Ferge, 2008; Gryaznova, Magun, 2012; Gryaznova, 2014]. Since the level of state participation in social support is low, family assistance has an important role [Cox, Jimenez, 1990].

Data and method

In this paper, private intergenerational transfers are gratuitous exchanges of various goods and services between relatives of different generations living in separate households. There are two types of private transfers depending on the type of aid: material and instrumental. Material transfers are financial and material goods. Instrumental transfers refer to the redistribution of time between generations expressed in the exchange of services.

The study used the following 3 datasets:

– The Russia Longitudinal Monitoring Survey—Higher School of Economics (RLMS-HSE, 2004, 2008, 2013) is a series of nationally representative surveys designed to monitor the effects of Russian reforms on the health and economic welfare of households and individuals in

the Russian Federation. RLMS-HSE is conducted by the National Research University Higher School of Economics and ZAO Demoscope. We selected three time points to consider the dynamics of household involvement in private material exchanges – 2004, 2008 and 2013. At the first time point (2004), there was a relatively good economic situation in Russia. The second time point (2008) was a year of economic crisis. The third time point (2013) also represents the relatively good economic situation preceding the economic recession which started in 2014.

– The Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions (KOUG, 2011, 2014) is a sample survey of living conditions organized by Rosstat in all constituent territories of the Russian Federation.

– The Survey of the Population Income and the Participation in Social Programs (VNDN-2012) is a survey by Rosstat in 2012 in all constituent territories of the Russian Federation.

Since Russia has no database for a comprehensive overview of private intergenerational transfers, our analysis is based on several data sources. The main database for our study is RLMS-HSE. The other two sources were used to fill gaps in the RLMS-HSE data. Of course, these databases are not an exhaustive list of data sources about private intergenerational transfers in Russia (for example, Gender and Generation Survey (GGS) also includes a broad range of questions about private intergenerational transfers) but information about private transfers collected in GGS largely overlaps with information in RLMS-HSE. We chose RLMS-HSE because it has a longer data series and more recent data. More detailed information about data sources on private intergenerational transfers in Russia is available in Mironova (2015).

This study is based on the methods of descriptive statistics. Our results are obtained by analyzing the involvement of Russian households of different types in the private exchange system, including the scope and directions of transfer flows. In our analysis, we chose the method of descriptive statistics for two reasons: this method is consistent with the objectives of our research, and the quality of available data does not allow us to use more complicated methods. One of the main reasons for the poor quality of the available data is missing values. Respondents often refused to answer questions about private intergenerational transfers. One of the reasons could be the sensitivity of questions about family relations. A lot of missing values on this topic also could be explained by the complexity of the wording of the questions. Some questions have many missing values, for example, in the questions requiring parental estimates in rubles of the material assistance from children (in money and in kind) there are 6031 missing values out of a total of 6145; in the question about the frequency of aid for grandparents there are 6078 missing values out of 6145. These missing data give poor quality models and shift the estimates when using more complicated methods.

Results

1. Material and service exchange: prevalence, intensity, direction

Table 1 shows the distribution of households by demographic types and type of settlement in all databases which were used in this study.

Table 1- Distribution of households by demographic types and type of settlement

Type of households	VNDN (2012)			RLMS-HSE (2013)			KOUG (2014)		
	city	country	total	city	country	total	city	country	total
Single-person household at working age	12.0	8.2	10.7	10.1	9.5	9.9	9.7	6.7	8.8
Single-person households over working age	13.1	15.1	13.6	15.7	19.0	16.7	20.3	22.6	21.0
Couples without children (head at working age)	13.6	12.3	13.2	7.4	5.7	6.9	7.7	6.5	7.4
Couples without children (head over working age)	7.4	9.6	8.0	9.1	12.5	10.1	14.4	17.7	15.4
Couples with minor children	18.5	16.7	18.0	16.0	12.3	14.9	17.4	14.6	15.0
One-parent families with minor children	4.5	3.7	4.3	5.6	3.6	5.0	5.0	3.6	4.5
Multigenerational households	20.4	25.3	21.7	22.2	25.5	23.2	17.4	21.1	18.5
Other households	10.5	9.1	10.5	13.9	11.9	13.3	8.1	7.2	9.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

In general, informal exchanges are common in Russia. 45% of households participated in the exchange of material transfers (money or goods) in 2013. 54.5% of households involved in material exchanges only provided assistance (did not receive it), 34.3% of households only received such assistance (did not provide it), and 11.2% of them were both donors and recipients. The proportion of households supporting their relatives exceeds the proportion of households receiving assistance from their relatives. This might be explained by the tendency to remember providing assistance rather than receiving it.

According to RLMS-HSE, in 2013, 27.7% of Russian households received aid from relatives and friends (within the last 30 days of the survey date). One of the main characteristics of the involvement in private exchanges is the frequency of contacts (e.g. personal contacts or

remote telephone contacts). This indicator describes how often the family members interact with each other, including exchanges of emotional and psychological support [Motonishi, 2012]. According to RLMS-HSE, the frequency of contact between relatives in Russia is high. In 2013, the vast majority of Russians visited their relatives every day (26%) or several times a week (18%); less than 4% of Russians visit their relatives rarely (less than once a year), or do not keep in touch at all. The main reason for such a lack of contact is distance (60% of answers). Other studies report close contacts between parents and their adult children in Russia. Sinyavskaya and Gladnikova [2007] show that 30% of adult children visit their fathers more than once a week, and 40% of them visit their mothers more than once a week.

Informal material exchanges are more common in rural regions than in urban areas (47.0% of rural and 44.2% of urban households are involved in partial exchanges), which may be explained by rural lifestyles. In rural areas, the share of households that only provide help is bigger than the share of households only receiving help.

The type of participation in the private exchange system varies depending on the household demographic type. Couples without children (head of working age), single-person households of working age, and one-parent families with minor children are the most active in private exchanges. Multigenerational households and other households are the least active, probably because all the important exchanges happen within these households. Couples without children (head over working age), couples without children (head of working age) and “other” households largely play the role of donors of material transfers. Single-person households of working age and single-person households over working age also frequently act as net donors. Material transfer recipients are chiefly represented by one-parent families with minor children and couples with minor children. Multigenerational households can be identified either as donors or as recipients of private transfers. There is a small number of households who act as donors and recipients at the same time compared to the other household types (Table 2).

Some researchers define co-residence of different generations as a special form of intergenerational transfer [Lee, Parish, Willis, 1994; Albuquerque, 2014]. For the younger generation co-residence with older parents reduces the costs of institutional (formal) childcare services and to allows them undertake paid employment. For the older generation co-residence with their adult children is a way of receiving instrumental support for the activities of daily living. Living together allows the most vulnerable members of household to overcome difficulties.

Table 2 – Participation in private exchanges depending on the household type, the percentage of the corresponding household type.

Type of households	Participated in exchanges	Among them (% of households participated in exchanges):			Not participated in exchanges
		Only provide help	Only received help	Both provide and receive help	
Type of settlement:					
City	44.2*	53.4*	35.8*	10.8	55.8*
Country	47.0*	57.0*	31.3*	11.7	53.0*
Type of households:					
Single-person household at working age	64.3*	47.2	37.6	15.2*	35.7*
Single-person households over working age	47.2	54.8*	33.0*	12.2	52.8
Couples without children (head at working age)	54.4*	67.2*	19.7*	13.1*	45.6*
Couples without children (head over working age)	48.1	75.1*	12.9*	12.0	51.9
Couples with minor children	47.6	22.1*	66.8*	11.1	52.5
One-parent families with minor children	51.4*	21.5*	69.8*	8.7*	48.6*
Multigenerational households	31.5*	42.0*	45.3*	12.7*	68.5*
Other households	39.7*	62.3*	28.5*	9.2*	60.3*

Source: RLMS-HSE, 2013.

Note: * the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), significant difference means that the differences between the observed and expected values are significant, sample size – 6145 households.

The extent to which households of different demographic types are involved in private material exchanges is quite stable, but there are some dynamic changes (Table 3). The involvement in private material exchanges among single-person households of working age increased from 2004 to 2013; there was a slight decrease of the involvement rate of single-person households over working age, couples without children (the head of the family over working age), couples with minor children and multigenerational households. A oscillatory pattern of the change in the involvement rate is typical for couples without children (head of working age), one-parent families with minor children and “other” households. The dynamic of the involvement rate is statistically insignificant for couples without children (head of working age), one-parent families with minor children and “other” households.

Table 3 – The evolution of household participation in private material exchanges

Type of households	Participated in private material exchanges. % of the corresponding type of households		
	2004	2008	2013
Single-person household at working age	58.5	59.6	64.3*
Single-person households over working age	53.0	45.1*	47.2*
Couples without children (head at working age)	56.9	58.8	54.4
Couples without children (head over working age)	59.4	52.8*	48.1*
Couples with minor children	53.1	48.2*	47.6*
One-parent families with minor children	53.7	54.8	51.4
Multigenerational households	38.4	31.6*	31.5*
Other households	36.2	33.6	39.7

Source: RLMS-HSE

Note: * the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), sample size: 2004 – 3375 households, 2008 – 3816 households, 2013 - 6145 households.

The most active exchange of material transfers is observed between relatives, mostly from parents to children. Typically, the receivers of material transfers from parents and grandparents are couples without children (the head of the family of working age), couples with minor children, one-parent families with minor children. Couples without children (the head of the family over working age), single-person households over working age and multigenerational households usually receive assistance from their children. It is uncommon for grandparents to be financially supported by their grandchildren. Assistance from other relatives and friends is common. It is usually received by multigenerational households, “other” households and one-parent families with minor children (Table 4).

Table 4 – The distribution of households - recipients of material transfers by the help source (over the last 30 days), %

Type of households	From parents	From children	From grand parents	From grand children	From other relatives	From friends
All households. among them	47.4*	27.4*	6.7*	2.2*	15.3*	11.0*
Single-person households at working age	85.2*	5.2*	20.2*	-	10.1*	9.9
Single-person households over working age	-	82.1*	-	9.3*	10.1*	4.2*
Couples without children (head at working age)	93.5*	-	17.3*	-	6.5*	5.1*

Couples without children (head over working age)	-	86.5*	-	3.7*	12.9*	2.4*
Couples with minor children	91.2*	-	13.1*	-	15.1	7.1*
One-parent families with minor children	68.0*	8.6*	9.4*	-	21.9*	18.8*
Multigenerational households	69.7*	5.6*	11.8*	-	24.2*	18.0*
Other households	41.8*	25.8	7.2	1.5	27.8*	22.4

Source: RLMS-HSE, 2013

Note: * the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), sample size – 6145 households.

Material assistance in cash or in kind is often directed to children. Parents are less likely to receive material transfers. But this does not mean that children do not support their parents. The point is that the structure of the upward flow is different from the structure of the downward flow. Unfortunately, it is impossible to make a complete estimate of the intergenerational downward and upward flow structure using RLMS-HSE data. However, if we refer to the data of KOUG-2014, material transfers dominate in the downward flow, while instrumental transfers prevail in the upward flow [Mironova, 2014], which confirms the results of existing studies on Russia [Denisenko, 1999; Ovcharova, Prokofieva, 2000; Ivanoa, 2003, Gladnikova, 2007]. The most common type of parent-to-child transfer is monetary support, or in the case of grandparents, assisting in bringing up children. Parents often help their children by providing them with food and other goods. Parents look after their children when they are sick, help them with domestic chores, pay living costs and provide other assistance. Children mostly help their parents with domestic chores and when they are sick. They less often buy food and goods for their parents or support them financially (Figure 1).

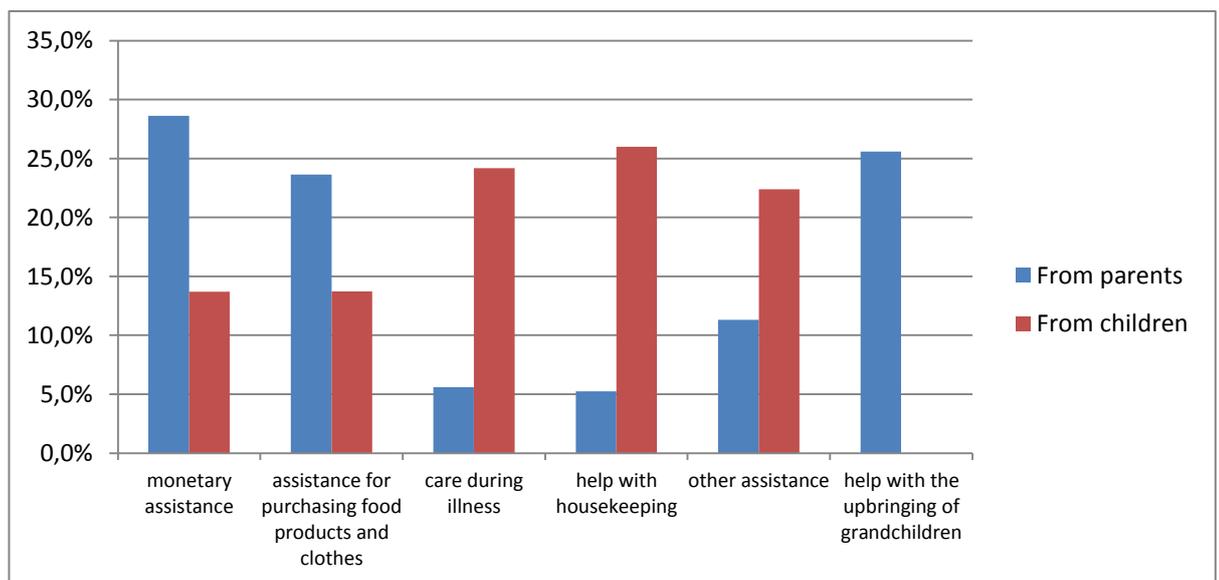


Figure 1 – The distribution of transfers from children and parents by type, %

Source: KOUG, 2014

Note: the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$, 95% CI)

According to KOUG (2011, 2014), the following changes have been observed in the structure of the downward flow: the share of “other assistance” has significantly increased; assistance in the form of providing food and other goods decreased slightly; other types of assistance are generally unchanged. No significant changes occurred in the structure of the intergenerational upward flow (Table 5).

Table 5 – Changes in the structure of descending and ascending intergenerational flows, 2011, 2014, %

Type of the aid	From parents		From children	
	2011	2014	2011	2014
monetary assistance	29.3	28.6	12.5	13.7
assistance for purchasing food products and clothes	27.5	23.6*	12.8	13.7
care during illness	6.3	5.6	24.5	24.2
help with housekeeping	6.0	5.2	26.5	26.0
other assistance	4.4	11.3*	23.7	22.4
help with the upbringing of grandchildren	26.4	25.6	-	-

Source: KOUG, 2011, 2014

Note: * the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), sample size: 2011 year - 7850 individuals, 2014 year – 48257 individuals.

In Russia, monetary support is mostly provided by parents of all ages. According to the estimates based on KOUG data, parents of all ages have a larger share of those who help their children than of those who receive monetary support from their children. Only at the age of 70 or older, are there more parents who receive monetary support from their children (32.2%) than those who support their children financially (31.6%) (Figure 2). Studies reveal that 70 is considered a critical age. Before this age, the elderly give their younger relatives more than they receive from them [Denisenko, 2001]. In Japan, with the highest life expectancy in the world, the elderly are more likely to help their children up until 80 [Beard et al., 2012]. In Germany and Israel, this critical point is also approaching 80 [Litwin et al., 2008]. These examples describe the overall balance of transfers of different types, both material and instrumental.

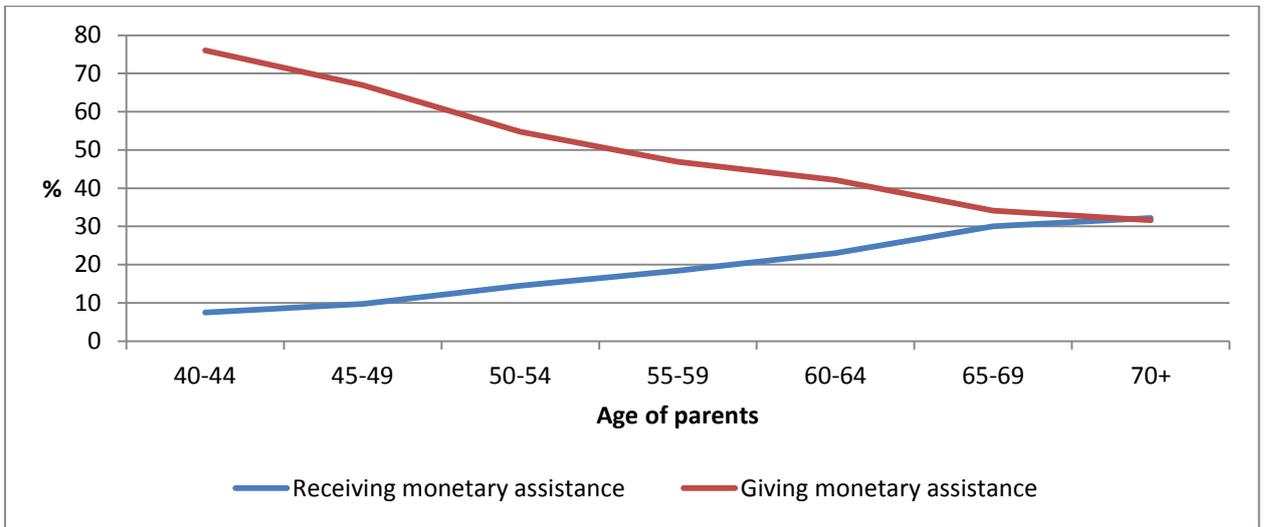


Figure 2 – The share of parents who receive monetary assistance from children and who help their children in every age group of parents, 2011

Source: KOUG, 2011

There is a pattern in the subjective assessment of a household’s financial situation and the support it receives from relatives and friends: the worse the family's financial situation, the more support it receives. This is consistent with the research, according to which private transfers are commonly targeted at low-income [Yakubovich, 1999] and vulnerable populations (large families, one-parent families, the unemployed) [Cox, 1998, p. 252]. However, even well-to-do households receive support from their relatives (Figure 3).

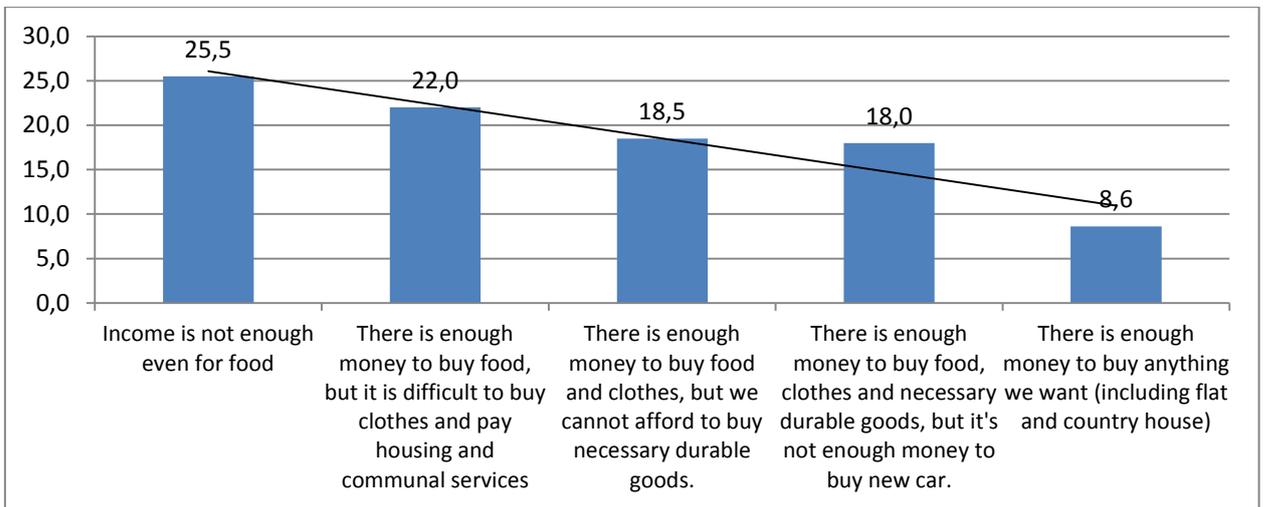


Figure 3 – The share of households that act as the recipients of private transfers depending on the subjective assessment of the family’s financial situation, 2012, %

Source: VNDN, 2012

Material assistance from relatives and friends can take a variety of forms. According to estimates based on VNDN, material transfers in the form of money are typically targeted at couples without children (the head of the family of working age), multigenerational households and “other” households. Single-person households over working age and couples without children (the head of the family over working age) usually receive assistance in the form of payments for medical treatment and other service fees. Couples with minor children, multigenerational households, “other” households and one-parent families receive more assistance in buying clothes and other types of aid (Table 6).

Table 6 – Material transfers from relatives and friends by type of assistance

Type of households	Received the material transfers from relatives and friends in form of...			
	Material (financial) assistance	Payment of the cost of medical treatment and other service fees	Acquiring clothes and other types of aid	Total
Single-person households at working age	67.7*	6.2*	26.1	100
Single-person households over working age	61.1*	17.4*	21.5*	100
One-parent families with minor children	59.4*	11.2*	29.4*	100
Couples without children (head at working age)	70.7*	5.4*	23.9*	100
Couples without children (head over working age)	61.6*	11.6*	26.8	100
Couples with minor children	63.7	4.3*	32*	100
Multigenerational households	63.7	5.7*	30.6*	100
Other households	70.7*	7.0	22.3*	100
All households	64.3	8.0	27.7	100

Source: VNDN, 2012.

Note: * the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), sample size – 1956 households.

The form of material support depends on the subjective assessment of the family’s financial state. The poorest and the wealthiest households receive help in the form of money. However, households that can afford everything but expensive goods (e.g. a new car) are the least likely to receive financial support from their relatives. These, as well as the wealthiest households, usually receive support in the form of clothes and other types of aid (Table 7).

Table 7 – The distribution of material transfers by type, depending on the subjective assessment of the family financial situation, %

Subjective assessment of the family financial situation	Received the material transfers from relatives and friends in form of...			
	Material (financial) assistance	Payment of the cost of medical treatment and other service fees	Acquiring clothes and other types of aid	Total
Income is not enough even for food	71.4*	5.7*	22.9*	100
There is enough money to buy food. but it is difficult to buy clothes and pay housing and communal services	64.1*	9	26.9*	100
There is enough money to buy food and clothes. but cannot afford to buy necessary durable goods.	64.1*	8	27.9*	100
There is enough money to buy food. clothes and necessary durable goods. but there is not enough money to buy new car.	63.1*	6*	30.9	100
There is enough money to buy anything we want (including a flat and a summer house)	65.6*	5.7*	28.7	100
Total	69.9	8.6	30.1	100

Source: VNDN, 2012.

Note: * the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), sample size – 3722 households.

According to RLMS-HSE (2013), 16.5% of the households requiring practical support received it in the form of instrumental transfers. The most popular form of instrumental support was assistance with domestic chores and work on the farm (54% of the responses). Among other forms of instrumental transfers were assistance with childcare (30% of the responses) and looking after the elderly, the sick or disabled relatives (16% of the responses). Among the rural population the most common type of instrumental transfer was assistance with domestic chores and work on the farm (65% of the responses). In urban areas, assistance with domestic chores is also a common form of instrumental transfer (48% of the responses). However, the urban population receives more assistance with childcare than the rural population (35% of urban respondents and 21% of the rural respondents).

Households with elderly members (both single-person households and households of couples) tend to receive instrumental support in the form of help with domestic chores and work on the farm (41% and 33%, respectively). Families with children usually receive instrumental support in the form of assistance with children upbringing (Table 8).

Table 8 – The share of households that received instrumental transfers in various forms, %

Type of households	Assistance with the housework and work on the farm	Assistance with childcare	Assistance with looking after elderly, sick or disabled relatives
All households	19.6	13.9	7.5*
Single-person households at working age	4.9*	-	0.0*
Single-person households over working age	40.3*	-	23.0*
Couples without children (head at working age)	3.1*	-	1.1*
Couples without children (head over working age)	32.5*	-	15.4*
Couples with minor children	15.1*	50.1*	0.3*
One-parent families with minor children	16.5*	45.5*	0.7*
Multigenerational households	8.2*	16.1*	1.8*
Other households	12.5*	4.4*	5.7

Source: RLMS-HSE, 2013

Note: * the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), sample size – 6145 households.

2 The role of private transfers in household budgets

Private transfers make a considerable contribution to the rise in living standards of the Russian population. According to the data of RLMS-HSE (2013), the average monthly amount of private material transfers received in 2013 is estimated at 7,854 rubles, which is about 22% of the total budget of households that receive such transfers. The contribution of private transfers to the household income is larger than, for instance, the contribution of unemployment benefits (13.6%), state allowances for children (7.6%), state subsidies and additional payments (6.9%). Assistance from relatives is the second most popular form of how households adapt to a difficult financial situation, after a reduction in spending (on clothes and footwear, entertainment and nutrition). For Russian households in such a situation (for example, job loss or sudden illness), receiving support from an informal network is much more common practice (10.6%) than receiving assistance from social protection agencies or other government organizations (2%). Therefore, for Russian households, private transfers are an important safety net. While dealing with difficult situations, Russians rely primarily on their relatives and only after that, on public authorities.

The household structure is a differentiating factor regarding the contribution of private material transfers to household budgets. According to RLMS-HSE, single-person households of

working age and one-parent families have the highest share of private material transfers in household income. The smallest contribution corresponds to couples without children (the head of the family over working age) (5.4%) and multigenerational households (11.4%) (Table 9).

Table 9 – The share of private material transfers in the disposable household income⁴ by household's types, %

Type of households	The share of private material transfers in income of households-recipients
Single-person households at working age	43.6*
Single-person households over working age	28.3*
Couples without children (head at working age)	21.4
Couples without children (head over working age)	26.4*
Couples with minor children	16.7*
One-parent families with minor children	33.2*
Multigenerational households	11.4*
Other households	16.9*
All households	21.3

Source: RLMS-HSE, 2013

Note: * the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), sample size – 6145 households.

Support from relatives and friends is one of the main three sources of livelihood for 18% of one-parent families and for 14% of parents with minor children (Table 10).

Table 10 – Households that named private transfers as one of the main livelihoods, %

Type of households	The share of households which indicated private transfers as one of the main livelihoods in the total number of corresponding households' type
One-parent families with minor children	17.9*
Couples with minor children	13.7*
Other households	7.0
Multigenerational households	6.7
Single-person households over working age	5.3*
Couples without children (head over working age)	5.2*
Couples without children (head at working age)	4.3*
Single-person households at working age	4.0*
All households	7.6

Source: VNDN, 2012.

Note: * the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), sample size – 1642 households.

⁴ Disposable household income was measured as the amount of money that household has available after income taxes have been accounted for.

Private transfers are one of the main sources of household income along with wages and the government. Resources received by households through private exchanges are often similar to those provided by the public welfare system: material support for low-income families, the care of elderly persons etc. How do public and private transfers correlate to each other? Do private transfers act as a substitute for government transfers?

According to VNDN-2012, 74.5% of households that did not receive government transfers were financially supported by their relatives, as opposed to only 16.4% of those who received government transfers. This may indicate that private transfers can compensate for the failures of the public welfare system.

The public welfare system clearly supports a large number of households in Russia. However, the level of support is clearly not adequate. Studies show that the significance of family support has not declined even in societies with an extended public welfare system. Vishnevsky [1979] says that the emergence and the development of public institutions taking over tasks that have been traditionally performed by families cannot fully replace family support. In other words, government transfers cannot substitute private transfers. Vishnevsky argues that "there has been no such institution in the history that could be even compared to a family by the variety of applicable functions" [Vishnevsky, 1979].

Compared to government transfers, the contribution of private material transfers in the budgets of Russian households is considerable. If we define the term *social transfers* as a set of allowances, subsidies, government payments and scholarships, then the average share of social transfers in the income of the recipient family is 10%, half the share of private transfers (Table 11).

Table 11 – The share of social transfers¹⁾ in the income of recipient households (over the last 30 days), %

Type of households	Social transfers	Including...		
		Allowances ²⁾	Scholarships	Subsidies and government additional payments ³⁾
All households	8.7	8.9	8.0	7.0
Single-person households at working age	24.4*	-	25.3*	22.5*
Single-person households over working age	10.0*	-	-	10.0*
Couples without children (head at working age)	7.0*	5.0*	6.3*	8.4*

Couples without children (head over working age)	6.1*	-	-	6.1
Couples with minor children	7.9	8.4	3.0*	8.3*
One-parent families with minor children	12.3*	11.4*	6.0*	13.0*
Multigenerational households	5.0*	6.0*	3.2*	4.7*

1) without pensions

2) unemployment benefit and all child allowances

3) allowances and additional payments for buying fuel, payments for housing and community services, tax deductions

Source: RLMS-HSE, 2013.

Note: * the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), sample size – 6145 households.

The recipients of public and private transfers vary depending on the household demographic. Compared to other socio-demographic groups, public assistance is mostly provided to the elderly, who receive allowances, subsidies, and additional payments (Figure 4). Multigenerational households, often including aged relatives, also receive public support frequently. More than a third of families with children are the recipients of child benefits. This may be related to the social protection policy for families with children introduced in 2007. This policy has affected the share of families with minor children who receive private and social transfers. Nevertheless, social transfers made a smaller contribution to the budgets of households with minor children than material transfers provided by relatives (Table 8 and Table 10).

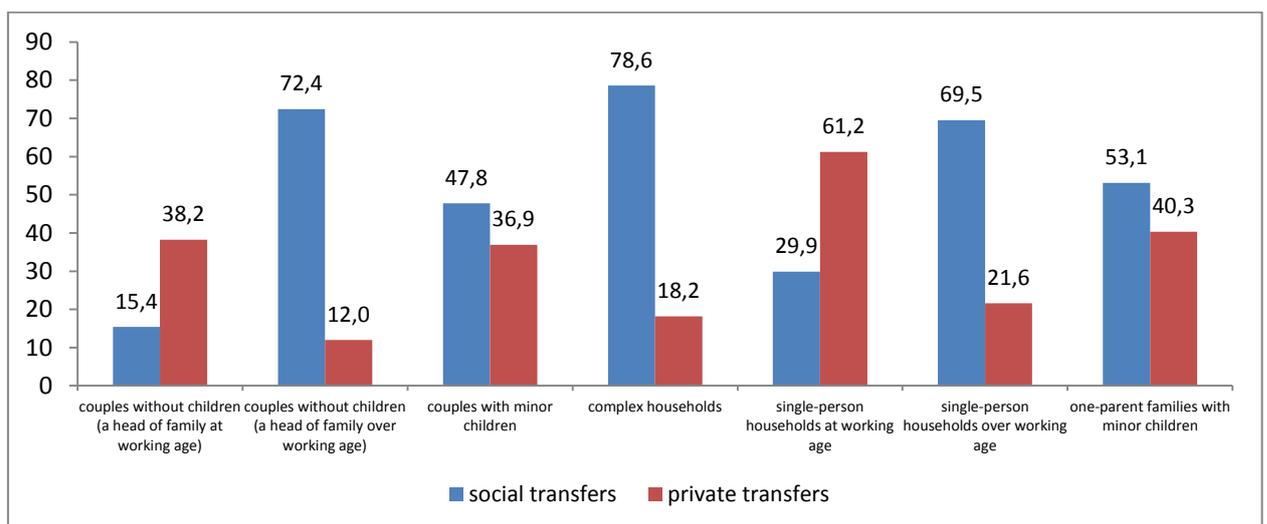


Figure 4 - The share of social and private transfers in the income of different types of households, %

Source: RLMS-HSE, 2013.

Note: the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$, 95% CI)

Young single people of working age living separately from their parents and couples without children (the head of the family of working age) are among the households that receive private transfers much more frequently than social transfers. These households are just starting their life cycles and their incomes are not yet large enough to meet their minimum requirements. Naturally, they need support, but social protection for these groups of people is poorly developed.

Our analysis identifies some key strategies as to how households participate in private intergenerational exchange. Below are the criteria underlying the typology:

- the level of household involvement in private material exchange (“50% of households and more” – high level; “40-49%” – medium level; and “less than 40%” – low level) and instrumental exchanges (“30% and more” of one assistance type – high level; “10-29%” of one assistance type – medium level; and “less than 10%” of each assistance type – low level);
- the role of households in material exchange (donor/recipient) (“over 50% of households only provide/receive assistance” – donor/recipient; 50% and below” – medium position (receive and provide aid));
- the share of material transfers in the household budget: “30% and over” – high level; “15-29%” – medium level; and “less than 15%” – low level;
- the type of instrumental support received by the household (functional/domestic chores/assistance with childcare).

These groupings were based on the group fill rate. Choosing these criteria we focus on equal distribution among groups. We did not conduct special statistical testing.

Based on these criteria, we outlined four strategies that households use to participate in private intergenerational exchange:

- 1) the recipient of both material and instrumental transfers;
- 2) the donor of material transfers and the recipient of instrumental transfers;
- 3) an active participant in material exchange who rarely receives instrumental transfers;
- 4) a participant with weak involvement in private exchanges.

The first strategy is used by couples with minor children and one-parent families with minor children; the second strategy is used by couples without children (the head of the family over working age) and single-person households over working age; the third strategy is used by couples without children (the head of the family of working age), single-person households of working age; the fourth strategy is used by multigenerational households and “other” households (Table 12).

Table 12 – The estimates of households participation in private exchange based on the selected criteria

Type of households	Level of households' involvement in...		Role in material exchanges	Type of received instrumental aid	Share of received material transfers in the household's budget
	<i>material transfers</i>	<i>instrumental transfers</i>			
Couples with minor children	Medium	High	Recipient	assistance with childcare, housework	Medium
Single-person households at working age	High	High	Recipient	assistance with childcare, housework	High
Couples without children (head over working age)	Medium	High	Donor	housework, functional assistance	Medium
Single-person households over working age	Medium	High	Donor	housework, functional assistance	Medium
Single-person households at working age	High	Low	Both receive and provide aid	housework	High
Couples without children (head at working age)	High	Low	Donor	housework	Medium
Multigenerational households	Low	Medium	Both receive and provide aid	assistance with childcare	Low
Other households	Low	Medium	Donor	housework	Medium

Conclusions and discussion

Until now the study of private intergenerational transfers mainly remained the prerogative of sociologists or economists, who mostly considered the system of private transfers in a socio-economical context. The demographic framework of private intergenerational transfers has received insufficient attention. This study focuses on the correlation between household demographic structures and the system of private intergenerational transfers. In this case the demographic structure of households mediates the influence of macro-level demographic determinants (fertility and mortality rates, marriage and divorce rates etc.) on the system of private intergenerational transfers. This research perspective is new in studies of Russian private intergenerational transfers.

Our study demonstrated that private intergenerational transfers are an important element of household budgets in Russia. The public welfare system does not replace the network of kin support. Moreover, for Russian households, the informal support from relatives and friends is often much more significant than the social support.

The study mostly confirmed the hypotheses that the role of different household types in the system of private exchanges depends on the household income. The group of low-income households (e.g. one-parent families) typically represents the recipients of material transfers; the households with comparatively high income (e.g. households of single persons and couples without children) usually act as donors. It has been proved that multigenerational households receive material transfers more often than provide them, yet they are less involved in private exchanges than other types of households. In regards to “other” households, our assumption has not been proved. Contrary to our hypothesis, “other” households typically act as donors of material transfers. It is rather difficult to interpret the behavior of “other” households due to the heterogeneity of this group.

Our results are interesting for the development of social policy. The effects of any social program could be overstated by ignoring the response of private exchanges. Not all social monetary support goes directly to the intended beneficiaries, as these beneficiaries may share their earnings with relatives. According to our study, private material transfers are more often directed from elderly family members towards younger family members. Children prefer to support their parents by providing services (caring for the sick, domestic chores). Hence, if we want to improve the state of the elderly we need to reduce poverty among the working population and relieve the elderly of the need to redistribute their income to younger generations.

The research was limited by the absence of a more detailed analysis of possible socio-economic and demographic factors that explain the variation in private intergenerational transfers. Nor did our study analyze how being part of the system of private transfers is affected by the demographic type of the household. For example, young people could move out of their parents’ household thanks to parental support. We hope that future studies on the current topic will pay more attention to these aspects.

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