

Inequality of Opportunities in the Health of the Adult Population of Russia

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Abstract : In our work, we estimate the contribution of inequality of opportunity to inequality in the health of the Russian population aged 25 to 74 years. The empirical basis of the study is the nationally representative data of the RLMS for 2018. Individual health is measured using a self-reported status on five-point scale. The startconditions are characterized by parental education and place of birth (country, type of settlement). Personal efforts to maintain health include the level of education, smoking status, and physical activity. To understand how start opportunities affect an individual's health, we use the methodology proposed in (Trannoy et al., 2010), which takes into account both direct and indirect (through the influence on efforts) effects. Regression analysis shows that all other things being equal, the starting capabilities of individuals have a significant impact on their health. In particular, parental education has a positive effect on self-reported health. Birth in another country, in another settlement, and in an urban area, on the contrary, reduces self-reported health. This allows to conclude that there exists an unfair inequality in health, namely inequality caused by factors that are independent of a person's own efforts. We estimate the contribution of inequality of opportunity to inequality in health using a nonparametric approach (Cecchi, Peragine, 2010; Lazar, 2013). According to the obtained results, the contribution of unfair inequality as 72-74% for the population as a whole, being slightly higher for women (62-74% and 60-69% for men and women, respectively) and for older age (59- 62% and 67-75% for groups 25-44 years old and 45-74 years old, respectively). The obtained estimates are comparable with the results for other countries and indicate the importance of the problem of inequality of opportunities in health in Russia.

Keywords : inequality of opportunity, inequality in health, self-reported health, efforts, health-related lifestyle, Russia, RLMS

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