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## Prosperous Old Age: From Scientific Theories to the Fundamentals of Its Programming



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**Abstract.** In most countries, due to changes in the age structure of their population caused by the global process of demographic aging, discussions have been held for many decades about the essence of the aging process itself and the mechanisms of adaptation of society to the ongoing changes. The multidimensional nature and complexity of aging, in which biological, age-related, socio-cultural, economic and psychophysiological transformations are intertwined, are repeatedly emphasized. A universal understanding of aging cannot be developed, but each country needs its own aging concept in order to provide for a full-fledged and decent life of older adults. The aim of the study is to generalize conceptual approaches to understanding aging and systematize its factors; this will allow us to conceptualize prosperous old age as a basis for effective public policy in the field of aging. Theoretical basis of the study includes foreign and Russian works on demographic aging. We elaborate on the conceptual framework used in the research and on the relations between key categories; generalize relevant aging concepts and highlight a theoretical basis for our approach; systematize factors contributing to the process of successful aging; provide our own view of the term “prosperous old age” and the conceptual framework of governmental policy on its basis. Scientific novelty of the research consists in the fact that we elaborate on the concept of prosperous old age and substantiate ways to formalize it in modern institutions and tools of social policy. The results obtained can provide a theoretical basis and contribute to the further development of Russian research on successful aging.

**Key words:** aging, old age, prosperous old age, successful aging, concept, successful aging factors, programming old age.

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### Introduction

The demographic situation in the world has undergone significant changes since the second half of the 20th century. The vast majority of developed and developing countries have experienced a number of qualitative transformations in their population structure in addition to the tremendous growth of the global population. One of the most important and pronounced has been demographic aging, which is manifested in an increase in the share of older people. Similar processes are typical for the Russian Federation. According to many classifications (the demographic aging scale of J. Beaujeu-Garnier – E. Rosset, the UN aging scale, etc.) Russia is among demographically old countries, and the process of demographic aging is increasing, while depopulation is deepening (Dobrokhleb, 2022). On January 1st, 2022, the

share of the population above working age in the country was 24% (or 35.2 million people), and the number of people aged 65+ reached 23.4 million people (or 16%)<sup>1</sup>.

Old age is a natural and organic stage of the human life cycle, so it is no surprise that everyone wants to live it with dignity and fullness. At the same time, modern scenarios of life “after 60” are much wider and more diverse than 10–20 years ago because the rapid development of medical technologies, the spread of new forms of employment and social activity (Grigoryeva et al., 2023), widespread digitalization, the lengthening of the period of both labor activity and life outside

<sup>1</sup> Demographics. Population size and composition (showcases). Rosstat. Available at: <https://rosstat.gov.ru/folder/12781> (accessed: March 11, 2024).

of labor relations today form wider opportunities and high claims of the population regarding a prosperous life at an older age. Essentially, well-being is the main component of the value system in modern society. According to sociological surveys, the majority of Russians (57%) consider well-being to be their life priority, even more important than starting a family (48%) and being able to travel the world (36%). Well-being is especially valued among people over the age of 40, i.e. those who had a conscious experience of life in the USSR<sup>2</sup>. However, the understanding of the essence and criteria of prosperous and (or) successful aging and old age, despite decades of research on this topic, remain rather vague and are the subject of scientific debate. Recently, both the extreme breadth of the definition of successful aging and the ignoring of structural inequalities that do not allow all population groups to “age equally successfully” have been criticized (Evseeva, 2020b). This reflects the complex combination of physiological, social, economic, and personal changes that occur at this stage of human life. However, studying aging and identifying the problems faced by older people will allow the best adaptation of public administration and the population’s own life strategies for a prosperous old age.

The aim of the research presented in the article is to summarize the conceptual approaches to understanding aging and systematize its factors, which will allow defining the vector of research of this process and conceptualize its final result – successful aging as a basis for effective public policy in the field of aging. It is worth noting that this review is not exhaustive, but, in our opinion, it can become a theoretical basis and contribute to the further development of Russian research on the subject of prosperous (successful) aging. The

<sup>2</sup> Financial well-being has surpassed the creation of a happy family in the list of life goals of Russians. Available at: <https://www.gazeta.ru/social/news/2023/11/13/21700447.shtml?updated> (accessed: March 11, 2024).

paper consistently reveals the used conceptual framework and the correlation of key categories; summarizes the relevant concepts of aging, identifies the theoretical basis for our approach; systematizes the factors contributing to the process of successful aging; substantiates our view of the concept of “prosperous aging” and defines the conceptual framework for building public policy on its basis. The scientific novelty of the study consists in the elaboration of our own concept of prosperous old age, relevant to the emerging demographic, socio-economic and socio-cultural trends, and the substantiation of ways to formalize it in modern institutions and tools of social policy.

### *Conceptual framework*

One of the important issues in studying the old age and the development of public policy in the field of healthy aging is the definition of the target group – the circle of persons to whom regulatory measures are addressed. In practice, there is no unanimity in this issue, as evidenced by numerous studies on the boundaries of the onset of old age (Antonov et al., 2023; Kozlova, Sekitski-Pavlenko, 2022). Let us turn to the essence of the concepts that are most often used in scientific works and major program documents and define both the aging process itself and the relevant population groups.

Aging at the biological level is a gradual, continuous and irreversible process of change in the organism under the influence of damaging effects of various external and internal factors, leading to a decline in physical and mental capabilities of the organism; in the context of society, aging is associated with changes in labor, leisure, social and other spheres of human life.

Old age is the final stage of an individual’s life cycle; “a legitimate final period of age-related individual development” (Sadykova, 2017).

Older persons (people of old age) are people whose age corresponds to the generally recognized (in a given society or within a particular study) boundaries of older age, encompassing persons

with different levels of cognitive and physical ability (active and energetic or requiring support and care).

Population above working age are persons whose chronological age exceeds the legally established upper limit of working age.

The elderly are a part of the population of older age, encompassing persons at the initial stage of old age, who by psycho-physiological and socio-economic characteristics are mostly different from people at later stages of life (old-age and long-lived persons); the boundary itself may shift under the influence of changing public opinion, accepted measurement frameworks, etc.

Pensioners are persons who have and exercise their statutory right to receive pension benefits on one or more grounds.

Older generation is a community of people changing in its composition over time, united by close or identical calendar (chronological) boundaries of the onset of old age as the final stage of the life cycle.

The basis for distinguishing such categories as “older generation”, “elderly”, “older persons” is a conditionally chosen age boundary. The classification attribute in distinguishing the categories of “pensioners” and “population above working age” is the compliance of the characteristics of individuals with the legally established norms: in the first case, it is the presence of pension payments among the sources of an individual’s income, and in the second case – the compliance of the chronological age of an individual with the officially established boundary of working age.

If we talk about the correlation of the above categories, the concept of “older generation” is the most general one, reflecting chronological, generational, normative and socio-cultural facets of the phenomenon. The other categories should be regarded as more specific, which are more often used in socio-economic research. The category “older persons” is more extensive than the others, as it intuitively combines different classification

bases (primarily age and normative status). The category “elderly” often characterizes quite a certain period of life – from 60/65 to 75 years and allows separating the old and long-livers proper from the initial period of old age. The category of “population above working age” is in many respects a terminological analog of the category of “older persons”. At the same time, they overlap, but do not coincide completely with the category of “pensioners” because, on the one hand, a pension can be granted not only upon reaching a certain age, but also on other grounds, and on the other hand, not all citizens who have reached the upper limit of working age immediately apply for pension payments and, accordingly, do not immediately acquire the status of pensioner.

The coexistence of these categories, perhaps, does not contradict the research logic due to the complexity and multilayered nature of the aging process itself. Since the research is supposed to focus on regulatory influences, it seems promising to focus on chronological and normative boundaries of old age (which does not exclude the possibility of in-depth study of cultural and social aspects of aging).

#### **The concept of “aging” in scientific discourse**

The academic community has been focused on studying the problems of aging and its consequences, well-being of the older generation for quite a long time. Accordingly, this term is considered from the position of various sciences. For instance, *from the point of view of demography*, the key theory is the concept of demographic transition, according to which the aging process is an objective result of changes in the nature of population reproduction due to a decrease in mortality and high birth rate (Notestein, 1945; Vishnevskii, 1976). In this case we are talking about demographic aging.

*In economic science*, aging is studied through the prism of the concepts of generational economics and the second demographic dividend (Barsukov, 2019). The theory of generational economics is

based on the concept of demographic dividend as a phenomenon when there is a decline in fertility and growth of the working-age population (the first dividend). The emergence of the second dividend becomes possible when the older age groups of the working-age population have a significant incentive to accumulate assets. Thus, the benefit of this dividend is prolonged and transformed into an even more significant amount of assets, leading to an increase in national income. The adaptation of the economy to the consequences of the aging process has led to the formation of the concept of the “silver economy”, focused on the production of goods and services for the older generation (Goroshko, Patsala, 2021).

The problems of aging are most widely studied in the context of *sociological and gerontological concepts*. In the first case, the objects of attention are the structure of the elderly population, inter-generational interaction, social roles and status of older people, their lifestyles, etc.<sup>3</sup> In the second case, the lifestyle and living conditions, mental processes, the situation of older people in relation to the biology of aging are brought to the forefront.

For several decades, the socio-gerontological literature has been dominated by the ageist view of old age, as a result of which researchers focused on the negative aspects of aging (deteriorating health, discrimination in labor due to age, reduced social ties, additional social costs, etc.). The proposed theories (modernization theory, theory of decreasing obligations by E. Cumming and W. Henry, activity theory by B. Newgarten, R. Havighurst and S. Tobin, theory of socio-psychological continuity by R. Atchley) considered the possibilities of adaptation of older people to the ongoing losses to achieve life satisfaction in old age (Sergeeva, 2012). Subsequently, under the influence of the

processes of global population aging, the entry into the active phase of life of the demographic explosion generations and the increase in their requirements to the quality of life, there was a change of rhetoric from old age as “loneliness”, “pre-retirement survival period”, “period of loss of opportunities”, “deserved rest” to understanding it as a special social resource and the need to ensure active and engaged aging (Vidyasova et al., 2024).

A large number of theories and concepts have emerged that try to answer the question of what conditions are necessary to improve the quality of life in old age and how to use them fruitfully (Table). Most of these socio-gerontological concepts are based on the provisions of functionalism of T. Parsons and the “activity theory” (Evseeva, 2011). The essence boils down to the following: effective aging consists in preserving the social activity of the elderly through adaptation as conscious adjustments in lifestyle as life circumstances change.

One of the most discussed is the paradigm of “successful aging”. This concept was introduced in 1961 by R. Havighurst, who focused on the “natural” scenario of relationships between an elderly individual and society and defined “successful aging” as an inner feeling of happiness and satisfaction with present and past life (Havighurst, 1963).

Subsequently, successful aging was paired with other variations of “good” aging that predominantly emphasized the need to prevent disability and a high level of physical functioning as requirements for well-being, namely “healthy aging” (emphasis on physical health), “active aging” (long-term employment and involvement in society), “productive aging” (long-term employment as a benefit to society), “positive aging” (perception of aging and old age as positive phenomena full of positive meanings), etc. (Evseeva, 2020b). In particular, J. Rowe and R. Kahn’s model of successful aging is based on three components: absence of disease and related disability, high

<sup>3</sup> Evseeva Ya.V., Yadova M.A. (Eds.). (2020). *Successful Aging: Sociological and Socio-Gerontological Concepts: Collection of Scientific Works*. Moscow: Tsentr sotsial. nauch.-inform. issled. otd. sotsiologii i sotsial. psikhologii.

cognitive and physical functioning, and active participation (involvement) in community life. In a situation where all three components overlap, successful aging is fully realized (Rowe, Kahn, 1987). The model of selective optimization and compensation of M. Baltes and P. Baltes determines successful aging as the result of adaptation to the reduction of biological, mental and social resources (Baltes, Baltes, 1990). The proactive model of successful aging by E. Kahana and B. Kahana suggests that older people on the basis of active behavioral adaptation should use internal (personal) and external (social) resources to mitigate the adverse impact of normative stressors (chronic illnesses, reduced social contacts, reduced work capacity) on their quality of life (Kahana, Kahana, 1996).

In 1990, J. Curb and colleagues proposed the term “effective aging” as an alternative to “successful aging” to emphasize the adaptation and rehabilitation that can occur even as older adults develop health deficits (e.g., chronic illness,

disability) (Curb et al, 1990; Strizhitskaya, Petrash, 2017). The concept of “optimal aging”, which reflects an individual’s psychological flourishing and well-being, has also become widespread (Ryff, Singer, 2008). Close to this direction is the concept of “positive aging”, the essence of which is to maximize the benefits of old age and maintain a good attitude toward life (Bowling, 1993). At the same time, the role of various components of positive functioning in the period of aging is ambiguous, the most significant characteristics include the spheres of health and occupational satisfaction (Golovei et al., 2014).

The concept of “productive aging” encompasses the various activities that older persons engage in. The productive aging model emphasizes the participation of older people in paid work, volunteering, education, physical activity, leisure and travel, political action, consumption, etc. (Kerschner, Pegues, 1998). Some researchers note the limitations of such activist concepts and models, as they limit prosperous (successful) aging to as long as

Major theories studying aging

Theory	Authors	Essence
Successful aging	R. Havighurst, J. Rowe, R. Kahn, M. Baltes, P. Baltes, E. Kahana, B. Kahana, E.A. Sergienko, N.E. Kharlamenkova, K. Tatarko, et al.	Absence of chronic diseases, ability to participate effectively in life processes from a physical, mental and social point of view
Effective aging	J. Curb, J. Guralnik, A. LaCroix, S. Corper, O.Yu. Strizhitskaya, et al.	Focus on what is possible to age effectively and in the presence of health deficits through adaptation and rehabilitation
Optimal aging	C. Ryff, B. Singer, K. Brummel-Smith, T.A. Nemchin, et al.	Ability to function in many areas to be satisfied despite health conditions
Positive aging	A. Bowling, T. Pocock, L. Golovei, A. Kriulina, et al.	Maximizing the positive effects of old age and a good attitude to life
Productive aging	H. Kerschner, J.A. Pegues, S. Devis, E.G. Kalabina, et al.	Aging effectively by optimizing the realization of opportunities for older people
Active aging	WHO, A. Wolker, K. Aspalter, I.A. Grigoryeva, K.A. Galkin, et al.	Optimizing opportunities for health maintenance to improve quality of life and well-being
Harmonious aging	J. Liang, B. Luo, R. Hopkins, et al.	Aging as a balance based on differences rather than sameness
Conscious aging	H. Moody, R. Dass, M. Schlitz, et al.	Aging as a stage of life with its own purpose, vitality and meaning
Healthy aging	WHO, K. Stevens, M. Menassa, R.V. Vorob’ev, A.N. Il’nitiskii, et al.	Developing and maintaining functional capacity to ensure well-being in old age
Active longevity	L. Foster, A. Sidorenko, A. Zaidi, M.G. Kolosnitsyna, E.V. Vasil’eva, et al.	Formation of an active life position, maintenance of health, labor and social activity
Source: own compilation based on review of scientific literature.		

possible employment, i.e. they focus on maximizing the economic contribution of the elderly (Evseeva, 2020a; Boudiny, 2013).

Another notion related to aging is the concept of “active aging”. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) definition, “active aging is the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation, and security in order to enhance the quality of life as people age”. This model retains the condition of socially beneficial activity and introduces the need to maintain health. However, it is not clear how old age will be perceived among those older people who have health limitations, are not inclined to work, prefer passive leisure activities and communication with loved ones.

Influenced by philosophy and cross-cultural experiences, a discourse of “harmonious aging” has also emerged, which characterizes a balanced attitude toward old age (maintaining a calm mind, cultivating a sense of harmony with oneself and one’s environment, gaining wisdom in problem solving, and adapting accordingly) (Liang, Luo, 2012). There is a similar concept of “conscious aging”, according to which people should not ignore or fight physical aging, but recognize it and adapt to it (Moody, 2005).

The term “healthy aging” has been used at academic and policy levels to distinguish between sick and healthy older people based on their physical and mental characteristics. In 2015, WHO defined healthy aging as “the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables well-being in older age”<sup>4</sup>. This concept explores the transformation of attitudes and behaviors in the context of age and aging, providing conditions for enhancing the realization of potential and providing comprehensive care taking into account the needs of the older generation (Golubeva, Soloviev, 2023).

<sup>4</sup> World Health Organization. World Report on Aging and Health. 2015. Available at: [https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/186463/9789240694811\\_eng.pdf?sequence=1](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/186463/9789240694811_eng.pdf?sequence=1) (accessed: April 11, 2024).

A related theory to the problem of aging is the concept of active longevity, which is similar in meaning to “active aging”, but has a more positive connotation (Sidorenko, Zaidi, 2013). In 2020, the team of the National Research University Higher School of Economics prepared a draft Concept of Active Longevity Policy<sup>5</sup> and defined the fundamental principles, priorities, mechanisms, stages and expected results of the implementation of this Concept.

The approach of “delayed aging” has become widespread in Russian science, based on the fact that the quality of life of the elderly largely depends on the ability to maintain autonomy in meeting needs and participation in society (Vidyasova, 2023). This concept is based on the theory of late adulthood and subjective perception of age (Galkin, 2023), when people, maintaining socio-economic independence, prolong their adulthood and postpone aging (Greve, Staudinger, 2015). This idea is consistent with the current realities, when the real aging of the population is constantly shifting, for example, by 15–20 years compared to the generation of the first post-war decades (Grigoryeva, Kesalev, 2017). Research in the field of “active aging and longevity” is developing, which emphasizes the importance of taking into account the differences of older persons in terms of their resource potential and, consequently, the need to develop differentiated regulatory measures and mechanisms in accordance with the capabilities and motivations of different groups of elderly and old people (Dobrokhleb, 2022).

Since the early 2000s, the most dominant gerontological concept of “successful aging”, which promotes health and functionality, absence of disease and disability, active involvement in social

<sup>5</sup> Ovcharova L.N., Morozova M.A., Sinyavskaya O.V. (Eds.). (2020). *Concept of Active Longevity Policy: Scientific and Methodological Report to the 21st April International Scientific Conference on the Problems of Economic and Social Development*. Moscow: Izd. dom Vysshei shkoly ekonomiki.

interactions as key components of successful old age, “has been criticized for the risk of marginalization of broad layers of elderly and old people who, due to various circumstances” do not meet these criteria (Dobrokhleb, 2022; Liang, Luo, 2012; Nizamova, 2020). Some researchers express the opinion that the paradigm of successful aging is a kind of “form of oppression” of “wrong” older people (Nizamova, 2020). In particular, H. Gibbons believes that “successful old age” imposes the standards of “mandatory youth” on people of all ages because the mandatory preservation and realization of working capacity, absence of disability, high cognitive and physical functions does not redefine old age as a time of health and functionality, does not remove ageism, eibism and handicapism from it, but rather imposes new social standards of proper and good life in older age on people (Gibbons, 2016). In this logic, the presence of diseases and/or disabilities in older people, reduction and/or absence of labor and social activity is perceived as a personal choice and individual responsibility for their vulnerability, rather than as a result of biological changes, economic, political, socio-cultural factors (Gibbons, 2016; Rubinstein, de Medeiros, 2015). However, in our opinion, it is necessary to remember that serious illnesses and disabilities can occur at any stage of life, that people with disabilities, thanks to the creation of a “helping environment” for them, can fully participate in society, and that, in general, people in older age, taking into account their limitations, focusing on their own preferences and desires, using the resources available to them and the possibilities of the external environment, can live well in this period of life.

To summarize, we note that each of the above concepts describes the mechanisms for achieving well-being in old age and/or its components, is focused on both the process and the result, and reflects the relationship between subjective and objective perception of the aging process. All the

considered concepts are similar in many respects and describe the best scenario of aging. In our opinion, successful aging is a multidimensional phenomenon that integrates the characteristics reflected in the content of other concepts. Its elaboration and adaptation taking into account Russian realities and challenges of socio-economic development will help to level the dichotomy of “normal” and “abnormal” aging, to harmonize the desires, opportunities and limitations of life activity of the population, to become the basis for an effective state policy on aging.

#### **Successful aging factors**

For the programming of successful old age, it is crucial to determine the list of its factors that can be corrected through management interventions. In Russian and foreign literature there are more widely presented works aimed at the study of factors promoting successful aging and active longevity. Taking into account the abovementioned relationship between successful aging, successful old age and active longevity, we can consider the classification of factors proposed in such works as a starting point for defining the list of determinants of successful old age.

According to the criterion of the ability to control the influence of factors, they can be divided into controllable and uncontrollable. For example, in the work of O.Yu. Strizhitskaya and M.D. Petrash devoted to the problem of constructing *productive old age*, factors are divided into easily modelable, conditionally modelable, complexly modelable and unmodelable (Strizhitskaya, Petrash, 2022). The first group includes lifestyle factors, cognitive factors and some health-related factors. The second group includes social factors based on personality traits. The third group includes sex, individual genetic and personality factors. Justifying their approach, the authors of the study note that they understand old age construction as a set of strategies for creating and realizing the image of the desired old age. It is in this context that they consider all factors from



the point of view of modelability. Modelability, in turn, is understood as the possibility of creating, managing or excluding certain mechanisms depending on their role in the construction of aging. However, the approach used in this study is applicable only at the level of individuals, and it is rather difficult to adapt it for use at the macro level.

Since it is possible to assess the degree of changeability of various factors under the influence of managerial impacts only by calculation, based on the data of mass sociological and statistical measurements, at the stage of developing the conceptual framework for the programming of healthy aging it is advisable to refer to the classification of factors by the nature of their sources. It is important to understand which factors of healthy aging depend on the characteristics of individuals themselves and fall within their “zone of responsibility”, and which factors are derived from the established institutions of society and fall within the “zone of responsibility” of the state.

From the point of view of assessing the contribution of individual efforts of a person and the influence of environmental conditions on the achievement of a prosperous old age, all factors can be divided into *internal* and *external*. A similar approach was used in the study of active longevity factors, carried out at RAS Vologda Research Center in 2020–2022. The internal factors promoting active longevity included attitudes regarding the desired life span and life expectancy, motives and practices of longevity; the external factors promoting active longevity included infrastructure, social attitude and standard of living (Korolenko, 2022). Internal factors, in turn, are also interrelated with each other. In particular, it is shown that attitudes toward life expectancy and the expression of motivation for longevity are influenced by people’s subjective feeling of their own usefulness for the family, society and the state as a whole (Natsun, 2022). To a large extent, the identified active longevity factors coincide with the favorable aging factors.

In Russian studies, the works characterizing the influence of individual-level factors on the achievement of active longevity and successful aging prevail. For instance, *behavioral factors* of a prosperous old age can be singled out as a special group, since at the level of individual behavioral strategies it is determined how people manage available resources and what results they achieve with regard to their own well-being in different spheres of life. Individual life scenarios form the actual collective image of old age. According to the results of the sociological study of the experience of long-livers of the Vologda Region, the preservation of activity until deep old age is associated with a number of *behavioral factors*. Among them, physical activity, balanced nutrition, proper daily regimen, absence of bad habits, involvement in social life, scope of social ties, high labor activity, absence of “welfare mentality”, purposefulness, stress resistance come to the forefront (Kalachikova et al., 2016). Interpreting the obtained data in the context of the results of Russian and foreign studies, we can note that they confirm the correctness of the assumption about the higher (selective) survival rate of the most prosperous representatives of older generations. Among them, physical activity, balanced nutrition, proper daily regimen, absence of bad habits, involvement in social life, wide range of social ties, high labor activity, absence of “welfare mentality”, purposefulness, stress resistance come to the forefront (Kalachikova et al., 2016). Interpreting the obtained data in the context of the results of Russian and foreign studies, we can note that they confirm the correctness of the assumption about the higher (selective) survival rate of the most prosperous representatives of older generations.

*Demographic factors*, such as sex, age, and the presence of other family members, influence not only the satisfaction of individuals with various aspects of their life, but also objective indicators characterizing individual components of active

longevity and quality of life in old age (Kasyanova et al., 2023). Demographic factors are practically impossible to adjust. As a rule, one can only reduce the risks that accompany their influence. For example, age is a risk factor for an increase in the number of chronic diseases. It is impossible to eliminate the influence of this factor, but it is possible to provide measures aimed at more timely detection of the first symptoms of dangerous diseases and their more effective treatment.

The psychological approach to the study of aging emphasizes the role of *personal factors* in achieving a prosperous old age. For example, we propose to consider successful aging as a result of realization by an individual of a strategy of adaptation to old age, including a range of supporting factors. These include social support, participation in joint activities, communication with friends and relatives, having common goals with other family members, acceptance of old age and conscious choice of ways to live this age stage, the ability to control one's life (Chereneva et al., 2021). The influence of personal factors on the psychological component of well-being is considered separately. For instance, the work of G.I. Borisov reveals the following factors promoting psychological well-being in old age: manifestation of a person's subjectivity, positive attitude toward other people and the surrounding world, desire for personal development, presence of life meaning, value of interaction (Borisov, 2019). We should note that in the framework of psychological research, the concept of "successful aging" is directly correlated with the concept of "subjective well-being" and is considered as the experience of an individual's positive experience of their own significance, satisfaction with the life they live and with themselves (Aleksandrova, 2000).

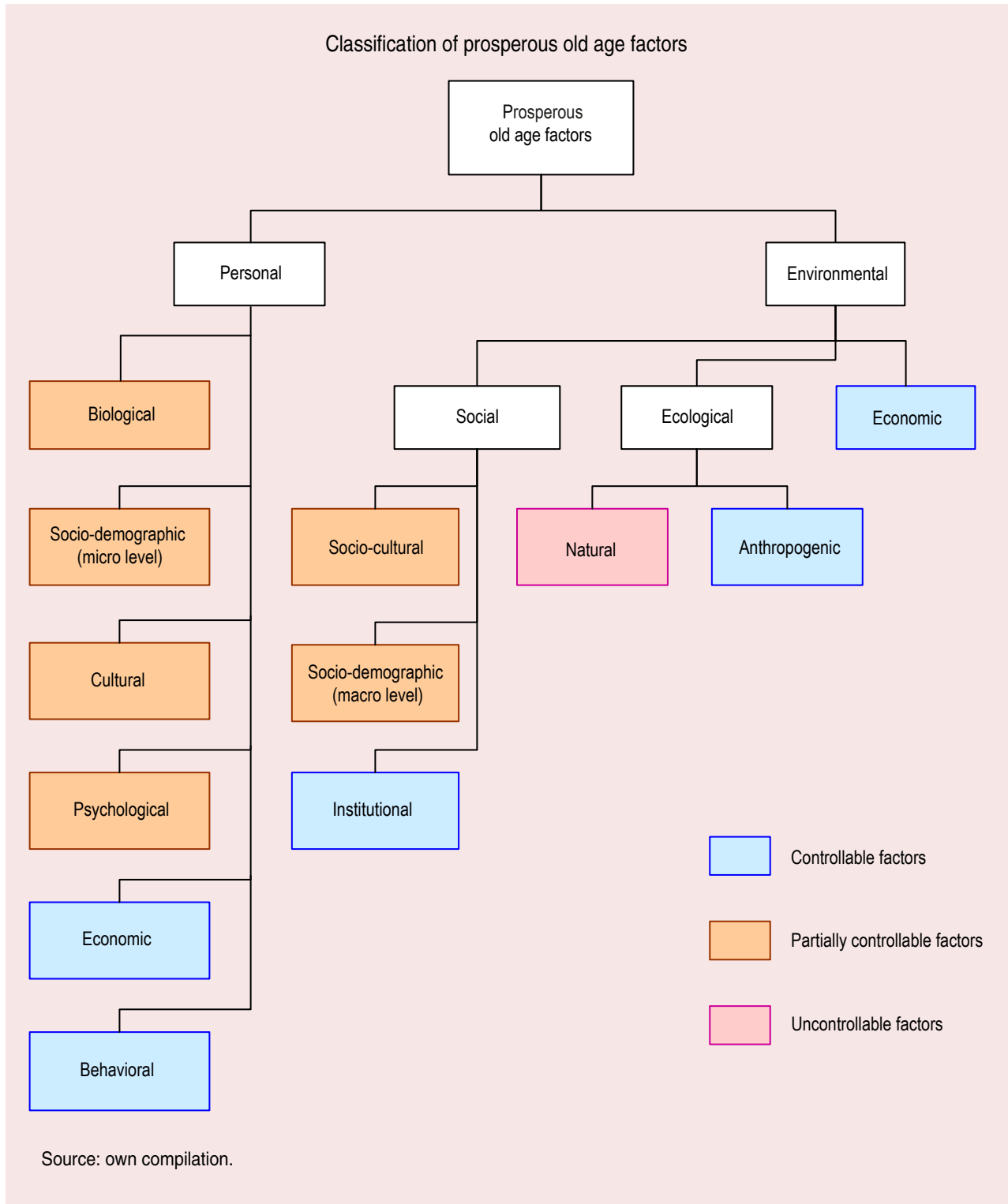
Despite the wide discussion of individual factors promoting active longevity and successful aging, only a few works by Russian authors are aimed at

systematizing data on the strategies of active longevity implemented by individuals. Thus, the work of N.N. Chausov and N.Yu. Chausov proposes a situational matrix of active longevity strategies, developed on the basis of the provisions of the theory of management decisions and institutional approach, the practical application of which is possible within the framework of the implementation of the state policy of active longevity (Chausov, Chausov, 2020).

Correlations can also be observed between individual indicators of healthy aging. In particular, gerontological studies pay attention to the correlation between the *elderly's health* status and the *labor activity continuation* after reaching retirement age. Foreign authors have obtained empirical data on the positive relationship between labor activity and health of older workers (Minami et al., 2015). On the other hand, Russian sociological research shows that among pension-age workers self-assessments of health are higher compared to their non-working peers (Korolenko, Barsukov, 2017). This indicates that health determines the level of working capacity and preservation of professional skills, which directly affects the possibility of continuing labor activity after reaching retirement age (Anishchenko et al., 2022). Therefore, it is more correct to consider the state of health as a factor promoting the prolongation of labor activity in older age.

Based on the review of Russian and foreign studies, it is possible to classify the prosperous old age factors by their sources into individual factors, i.e. those that depend on the characteristics of specific individuals, and environmental factors, which include all external influences in relation to individuals (*Figure*). *Individual factors* include biological characteristics (current objective state of health and heredity), socio-demographic characteristics (sex, age, marital status, place of residence, level of education), psychological

characteristics (attitudes toward life expectancy, longevity motives, personality traits), behavior (medical activity, lifestyle, financial behavior), and cultural characteristics (learned values and traditions), economic characteristics (sources of income), economic characteristics (sources of life expectancy, personal characteristics), and social and cultural characteristics (learned values and cultural characteristics).



*Environmental factors* include economic, social and environmental factors. *Economic factors* include the available jobs, organizations' demand for workforce, stratification of the population by income groups, development of consumer market sectors focused on the demand of older citizens, availability of infrastructure that takes into account the needs of older citizens, availability of products and services that facilitate the use of digital technologies by the older generation, budget (its sufficiency), inflation (availability of services). *Environmental factors* can be conditionally divided into natural (climatic and geographical conditions in the place of residence) and anthropogenic (construction development and landscaping in cities, noise level, quality of drinking water and atmospheric air in settlements). *Social factors*, in turn, include *institutional* (quality of the legal and regulatory framework governing social policy, quality and accessibility of services for the population in the areas of health care, social protection, education, employment promotion, sustainability of the pension system and the financial system as a whole), *socio-cultural* (society's attitude toward older citizens, social norms regarding the assessment of the contribution of the older generation to society) and *socio-demographic* (current ratio of population age groups, gender gap in life expectancy).

### **Prosperous old age concept**

Before describing our concept of "prosperous old age", we should say a few words about well-being itself. The concept of "well-being" includes elements that ensure an individual's ability to live a life that is meaningful for them (Ryazantsev, Miryazov, 2021). It is common to distinguish five aspects of well-being: physical (physical health), material (income and well-being), social (social relations), emotional (absence of depression), development and activity (work and free time) (Kislitsyna, 2016). The filling of the concept of "well-being" will vary significantly from person to person.

"In modern society, aging becomes not only a socially conditioned process, but also to a large extent individually constructed" (Grigorieva et al., 2023). Therefore, the basis of our concept of "prosperous old age" is the allocation of two levels – prosperous old age of an individual and prosperous old age of society, i.e. the separation of personal and state responsibility. In this understanding, an individual's prosperous old age (micro level) is associated with satisfaction and realization of those spheres that are important for them (for one – it is work and recognition in society, for another – health and own hobbies, for another – life for the sake of family and relatives, sometimes to the detriment of their own condition). Prosperous old age is a person's life goal and implies not formal prolongation of life and surviving, but its qualitative filling with activities and meanings important for them.

Prosperous old age for society (macro level) consists in the effective use of "resources" for the benefit of public socio-economic development (continued labor activity of the elderly to produce an additional product; longer healthy life and, as a consequence, optimization of costs for social services and medical care; stimulation of active consumption of the elderly through the development of credit programs and special financial products, etc.). In this case, prosperous old age is the result of social policy. It is important to understand that prosperous old age at the macro level is not a direct identification of the sum of individual states; rather, it reflects the success/failure of the government's regulatory actions with regard to ensuring conditions for implementing people's opportunities in their life course.

Management of the process of achieving a prosperous old age at the individual level should be based on the efficient use of available resources. In this regard, the most appropriate model is the SOC model proposed by M. Baltes and P. Baltes (SOC – selection, optimization, compensation).

Baltes' model of selective optimization and compensation emphasizes that proactive activity aimed at preventing potential threats to life goals is a valuable strategy for healthy aging. Prosperous aging from the perspective of this approach is a "level of life activity that allows an individual to strive to achieve personal goals and maintain certain standards, which is largely the result of successful management of internal and external resources throughout their life" (Freund, 2008).

According to the model, a person selects the areas of life that are of priority importance for them and concentrates (evaluates, acquires, accumulates) their resources, maximizing their benefits and compensating for current losses to ensure optimal functioning. At the same time, goal setting (selection) plays a key role, since the choice of goals aimed at reconciling the available resources and needs in the conditions of reduction of the former and transformation of the latter determines the subsequent behavioral strategies for achieving a prosperous old age. A significant aspect of the optimization stage is the acquisition of new or activation of unused external or internal resources that contribute to the achievement of goals. Then strategies are used to compensate for losses in selected areas to adapt to the changes and create a favorable environment for life activity (Freund, Baltes, 2002). At the same time, the state and society make a major contribution to providing these conditions that facilitate optimization processes by providing opportunities for acquiring the resources people need and compensating for losses (Baltes, Carstensen, 1996).

The category of "healthy aging" is complex, as it includes not only ideas about extending the period of active, productive life of individuals, about their preservation of opportunities to realize their own human potential, but also assessments of individuals' satisfaction with various other aspects of their life in old age. The result of successful aging is the achievement of a prosperous old age.

Prosperous old age is the state of the most complete well-being in old age, which is determined by the ability of older generation representatives to optimally realize their life potential in the economic, social, socio-cultural and personal spheres of life in accordance with their own interests and taking into account the availability of necessary resources and opportunities of the external environment. This state is characterized by the preservation of the ability and possibility of social functioning and realization of human potential by individuals (when considering this concept at the individual level) or the older generation as a whole (when considering this concept at the macro level). The components of a prosperous old age are material well-being, physical well-being (good health and disease control in older age), social well-being (inclusion in social interactions), activity well-being (availability of abilities and opportunities to develop and realize one's human potential in various types of activities), psychological well-being (constructive perception of oneself and the surrounding reality, presence of a positive attitude toward longevity, feeling of control over one's own life, internal locus of control). The core of the concept of prosperous old age should be individuals' perceptions of their life and projective view of the future, which will allow taking into account the changing socio-economic context and the needs of the new generation of elderly citizens. This will ensure the synergy of individual responsibility and personal strategies in achieving their own well-being with the structural factors produced by public policy and determining the opportunities and resources for the implementation of these strategies.

#### **Conceptual framework for policies on successful aging**

Ensuring a prosperous old age for its citizens is one of the fundamental obligations of the Social State. Policies in the field of healthy aging should be evolutionary in the sense that they should ensure the possibility of long-term sustainable development

of socio-economic systems while preserving guarantees of well-being in old age for present and future generations. In turn, individuals' perceptions of well-being in old age are largely shaped by their expectations of state guarantees which they are entitled to upon reaching old age. At the same time, the "ideal" image of a prosperous old age, formed in the ideas of each new generation, is based on the experience of previous generations. Thus, the population's ideas about a prosperous old age are largely inertial. Therefore, any reduction in the volume of state guarantees in the sphere of healthy aging, as a rule, will meet a negative reaction from the population. This circumstance explains why it is necessary to avoid sharp and insufficiently substantiated reduction of state guarantees in this area.

To avoid possible costs associated with revision of the state policy in the field of healthy aging, it should include mechanisms for sharing responsibility for achieving healthy aging (between the state and citizens), tools that allow for flexible adjustment of the system of ensuring basic guarantees in the field of healthy aging, as well as elements of civil (public) control over the quality of public administration.

*The programming of a prosperous old age as a process of ensuring prosperous aging of the country's population.* The cycle of managing healthy aging can be divided into four stages. *The first stage is conceptualization of the state policy in the sphere of healthy aging.* At this stage, the goals of the state policy are formulated and its main objectives are set for the short-, medium- and long-term period, the list of target indicators for monitoring their fulfillment is defined, and the planned values of the selected target indicators are set. With regard to the topic of healthy aging, target setting implies selecting the criteria for healthy aging (and healthy old age) that will be acceptable not only for the country, but also for its citizens. This requires theoretical and methodological support of this process, which will be aimed at identifying the

current social demand (in the context of individual generations and socio-demographic groups) for a prosperous old age, as well as at assessing whether the real situation of the modern older generation corresponds to it.

*The second stage of management is the actual programming of a prosperous old age.* If we talk about this process at the level of the population as a whole, then, within the framework of public policy, the programming of healthy aging involves the development of a step-by-step algorithm of actions aimed at a certain socio-demographic group achieving the most complete well-being in old age by regulating the impact of managed factors of healthy aging on it. The programming stage includes the preparation, public discussion and adoption of state programs in the field of prosperous aging at the federal and regional levels. The developed program documents should be aimed at the creation (or improvement) of mechanisms, environment and tools to correct the influence of factors of different nature on the target indicators of healthy aging.

Theoretical and methodological prerequisites for realizing this stage are identification of key controllable factors of healthy aging, development of a theoretical (conceptual) model of the impact of specific factors on the indicators of healthy aging, forecast of the response of controllable factors to corrective management actions, development of methodological tools for the comprehensive assessment of the main indicators of healthy aging.

Individuals carry out the programming of their own prosperous old age by themselves to a greater or lesser extent. The main differences are that individuals are guided by their own idea of the desired image of a prosperous old age, and they can react more flexibly to changing external conditions and more quickly reorganize their own line of behavior.

Obviously, target benchmarks in the programming of a prosperous old age at the national level and at the level of an individual can be radically different. Accordingly, there will be differences

in the programs themselves, which may create conditions for a conflict of interests. Potentially, there is a risk that none of the parties will receive the result of the implementation of their program that they had hoped for. For the state, the consequences of such an outcome can be economic and political costs, and for the individual – a decrease in subjectively perceived well-being due to dissatisfaction with various aspects of their life. In this regard, the most important condition for the effectiveness of public policy in the field of healthy aging is to take into account the desired image of a prosperous old age, which is formed by representatives of different generations.

*The third stage of successful aging management is the implementation of previously developed state programs.* The key objectives of this stage are to ensure the implementation of measures of state programs and achievement of the planned values of indicators of the population's prosperous aging, including ensuring the fullest coverage of its target categories by the relevant targeted measures of state programs. Analytical support of the discussed stage involves identification of the most demanded measures of state policy, identification of the reasons for the deviation of the level of coverage of the population by the measures of state policy from the set planned values, assessment of the relevance of the implemented measures to the current social demand in the field of healthy aging.

*The fourth stage of management is control over the achievement of the set goal and fulfillment of the objectives of state programs.* The main content of work at this stage is reduced to comparative assessment of planned and current values of target indicators of healthy aging, the result of which allows us to judge the success and effectiveness of the state policy. Based on the results of the current control, not only adjustments can be made in the process of implementation of state programs, but also the programs themselves can be subjected to substantive revision.

In our opinion, policies to manage the aging process (in the direction of ensuring a prosperous old age) should create conditions and opportunities for the realization of those needs that are important for older citizens, provide working mechanisms to improve living conditions and provide an alternative for those who for some reason are disadvantaged in health, employment, communication, etc. In addition, policies should not construct an unambiguous image of older people as either active, energetic individuals with a large number of activities and excellent health, or as passive recipients of social assistance. An important aspect is to take into account the human need to adapt to age-related changes, hence a forward-looking solution would be to develop aging management policies targeting all age groups. As K. Boudiny points out, there is a difference between “a policy agenda focused on aging and an agenda focused only on older people” (Boudiny, 2013).

### **Conclusion**

Aging as a result of increasing life expectancy and declining birth rate is the main global demographic trend of our time and one of the key challenges for the economy and social development. Moreover, the rate of population aging is currently increasing. As a result, all countries face serious problems related to the growing burden on health care, social protection and pension systems, shrinking labor supply, slowing economic growth, etc. Globalization, urbanization, migration and other trends have a direct and indirect impact on the lives of older people. This, in turn, leads to the need for additional adaptation of this population category to both traditional and new challenges (epidemiological, digital, geopolitical, etc.).

Despite the fact that there are currently many different theories of aging, the discussion of the essence and criteria of aging in academic discourse continues. It seems that one of the most promising in terms of studying this phenomenon is the theory of healthy aging. It is in great demand by

international organizations and governments of different countries, as one of the consequences of its implementation in practice is the optimization of expenditures in the social sphere. In addition, successful aging is considered by experts as a fruitful modern methodology in terms of the level of tolerance and social culture. At the same time, given the new challenges, as well as the fact that in the near future the modern elderly population will differ significantly from the future older generations (in socio-cultural and professional senses), the theory of successful aging and the corresponding practical mechanisms and tools of social policy need further improvement.

The category of “successful aging” (and its target reference point – successful old age), introduced into scientific circulation in the second

half of the 20th century, serves as a kind of organizing concept linking the economy, social support system, medicine, public health and gerontology, culture and society. At the same time, neither research nor managerial practice can deny the dual nature of the term “well-being”; it is a psychological side, reflecting the subjective perception of a person’s place in the social structure, and the socio-economic side, reflecting the objective assessment of the population’s life situation and formed as a result of the action of various institutions. In this regard, the development of appropriate social policy, taking into account modern aging scenarios and the conceptual framework of its construction outlined in the study, seems to be significant for managing the process of successful aging.

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