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BEYOND THE WELFARE STATE: A PROACTIVE FRAMEWORK FOR INEQUALITY, DEMOGRAPHICS, AND DIGITALIZATION

Обновление общественного договора: ответ на вызовы неравенства, старения и цифровизации

There's a strong feeling in today's conversations that the old social contract – the one that defined the relationship between the state and its people for generations – isn't working anymore. This model, mostly shaped after the Second World War, was built on a world of steady factory jobs, a young population, and national economies that operated within their own borders. That world is fading. Today, three major, interconnected forces are shaking its foundations: deep and widespread economic inequality, the slow but unstoppable aging of our societies, and the whirlwind of digital change. The aim of this study is to build a new social contract that ensures fairness, lifelong security, and managed technological change for an inclusive society.

Of these forces, unfairness is the most urgent danger to our community spirit and trust in public institutions. While global trade and technology have created huge amounts of wealth, failing to manage their effects has damaged our social deal. The pay for workers with fewer skills has been held down by machines and global competition, leading to social stress and a desire to close off from the world. However, the answer is not to hide within our own countries. Instead, we must redesign our social contract to help people adapt. This means going beyond traditional ways of sharing wealth, which are still important but only help after the problem exists. We must adopt the idea of «pre-distribution», where the state actively works to make market results fairer from the beginning.

Demographic aging strains the old system. A shrinking workforce must support a growing retired population, threatening the intergenerational pact. A new social contract must replace the obsolete «learn, work, retire» model with one built on lifelong learning and flexible work, enabling people to remain economically active later in life.

Digitalization offers great opportunities but also risks job displacement, a worsening digital divide, and concentrated corporate power. A passive state risks cementing new inequalities. Therefore, actively managing the digital shift is essential. The state must become a strategic investor and regulator, treating internet access as a utility and digital skills as core education. We must consider new safety nets and strong digital rights laws to protect personal data. The goal is to steer digital change toward societal benefit, ensuring it empowers and includes.

Therefore, a key part of the new social contract must be the active and smart management of the digital shift. The state's job grows to become a strategic investor and a strong rule-maker. This means treating internet access as a basic need, like water or electricity, and making digital skills a core part of learning from a young age. As machines change the job market, we must also think about new safety nets for our time, such as a basic income with conditions or social payments funded by taxes on technology company profits. Just as important, the state must act as a protector of digital rights, creating strong laws to keep personal data and private life safe from both company and government misuse.

In conclusion, the problems of unfairness, an aging society, and digital change are not separate issues. They are deeply linked parts of one, complex shift in our society. The strain on healthcare from an older population is directly connected to the promise of digital health tools and the problem of unequal access. This mix of forces requires a complete and forward-thinking state – one that acts as an investor in human potential, a designer of lifelong security, and a wise manager of technological change. The final goal is to rebuild a feeling of shared future and mutual duty among people, making sure that the great wealth and new ideas of our time are used to build a society that is not only wealthier, but basically fairer, stronger, and open to everyone.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF TATARSTAN SINCE 1995

Социально-экономическое развитие Татарстана с 1995 года

The Russian Federation is a country with a rich geographical, economic, and cultural diversity. It is an incredibly large state, comprising the East European Plain, the Eurasian Steppe, the Caucasus Mountains, Karelia, the Urals, the vast expanses of Siberia, the Far East, and many other geographical regions.

The Republic of Tatarstan is our particular interest. It's a federal subject located in the European part of Russia in the Volga Federal District on the Volga River, with its capital in Kazan. The country has a long history dating back to ancient times. In modern history, the most interesting aspect is Tatarstan's leap from an underdeveloped region of Russia in the early 1990s to one of the most economically and socially successful subjects at present.

The aim of our work is to study the socio-economic level of the country and analyze economic growth since 1995, because that year the economy of Tatarstan began to develop actively.