

## Russian and Foreign Experience of Placement for Orphans

*Experiencia rusa y extranjera de colocación de huérfanos*

### Authors

Evgeniya M. Bronnikova<sup>1</sup>, Olga S. Kulyamina<sup>2</sup>, Marina V. Vinogradova<sup>3</sup>, Mariya I. Tarasova<sup>4</sup>, Viktoriya A. Vishnyakova<sup>5</sup>, Sergey V. Babakaev<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> PhD in Economics, Senior Researcher of the Interdisciplinary Research Laboratory, Russian State Social University, Moscow, Russia. E-mail: [BronnikovaEM@rgsu.net](mailto:BronnikovaEM@rgsu.net). ORCID ID: 0000-0002-5409-9726

<sup>2</sup> PhD in Economics, Head of the Interdisciplinary Research Laboratory, Russian State Social University, Moscow, Russia. E-mail: [KuljaminaOS@rgsu.net](mailto:KuljaminaOS@rgsu.net). ORCID ID: 0000-0001-7715-5551

<sup>3</sup> Doctor of Economics, Vice-Rector for Research, Russian State Social University, Moscow, Russia. E-mail: [VinogradovaMV@rgsu.net](mailto:VinogradovaMV@rgsu.net). ORCID ID: 0000-0002-5051-9404

<sup>4</sup> PhD in Economics, Senior Researcher of the Interdisciplinary Research Laboratory, Russian State Social University, Moscow, Russia. E-mail: [TarasovaMI@rgsu.net](mailto:TarasovaMI@rgsu.net). ORCID ID: 0000-0003-2179-9336

<sup>5</sup> PhD in Economics, Head of the Department of Scientific and Technical Information, Russian State Social University, Moscow, Russia. E-mail: [VishnjakovaVA@rgsu.net](mailto:VishnjakovaVA@rgsu.net). ORCID ID 0000-0001-5986-2498

<sup>6</sup> PhD in Politology, Senior Researcher of the Interdisciplinary Research Laboratory, Russian State Social University, Moscow, Russia. E-mail: [BabakaevSV@rgsu.net](mailto:BabakaevSV@rgsu.net). ORCID ID: 0000-0001-9332-9347

\*corresponding author email: [BronnikovaEM@rgsu.net](mailto:BronnikovaEM@rgsu.net)

*Fecha de recibido: 2020-11-07*

*Fecha de aceptado para publicación: 2020-12-10*

*Fecha de publicación: 2020-12-15*



### Abstract

Children are the main value of the country, they need care and special attention. The government is obliged to ensure the implementation of children's rights to upbringing, education and development. The family education of children is the priority form. However, there is a problem of orphanage and social orphanage, children left without parental care. There are various forms of placement for orphans. The family form of the placement, foster families, are priority in the world. In this regard, it is relevant to study foreign experience, the advantages and disadvantages of various forms of placement for orphans in order to identify the most effective elements that can be applied in Russia. The results of the study can be used in the practice of social services, while improving regulations governing the problems of orphanhood.

**Keywords:** orphanhood, social orphanhood, placement of orphans, orphanage, patronage, foster care, foster family.

### Resumen

Los niños son el principal valor del país, necesitan cuidados y atención especial. El gobierno está obligado a garantizar la implementación de los derechos del niño a la crianza, la educación y el desarrollo. La educación familiar de los niños es la forma prioritaria. Sin embargo, existe el problema del orfanato y el orfanato social, los niños se quedan sin el cuidado de sus padres. Hay varias formas de colocación para huérfanos. La forma familiar de la colocación, las familias de acogida, son una prioridad en el mundo. En este sentido, es relevante estudiar la experiencia extranjera, las ventajas y desventajas de varias formas de colocación para huérfanos con el fin de identificar los elementos más efectivos que se pueden aplicar en Rusia. Los resultados del estudio se pueden utilizar en la práctica de los servicios sociales, al mismo tiempo que se mejoran las regulaciones que rigen los problemas de la orfandad.

**Palabras clave:** orfandad, orfandad social, acogida de huérfanos, orfanato, mecenazgo, acogimiento, familia de acogida.



## **Introduction**

The orphanhood is a social problem in the modern world. The essence of the problem is the presence in the society of children left without parental care. Currently, measures taken to solve the problem of social orphanhood are insufficient and do not reduce its prevalence. The causes of social abandonment include a decline in morality among young people, a decrease in the role of the family in raising children, the spread of alcoholism and drug addiction, the criminalization of society, lack of support and a decrease in government attention to problems of motherhood and childhood (Bronnikova et al., 2020).

There are various forms of placement of orphans, both in state shelters and in families (Levina et al., 2019). There are institutions and social services have been established to deal with the placement of children. The most common form of orphan's placement is state institutional arrangement in Russia. The most common forms of accommodation in the world are family placement, which in some countries subsequently transformed into the institution of a professional family.

According to foreign experts, the system of orphanages cannot provide education on the proper level, the function of orphanages reduced to the satisfaction of the minimum physiological needs, they are not considered personal needs and socialization of children.

Researchers note the difficulty in determining the directions for solving the problem due to the influence of many economic, social, cultural, administrative, and confessional factors. The problem of social orphanage is under the patronage of various departments related to health care, education, and social protection. This necessitates the coordination of various government agencies (Vinogradova et al., 2020). The absence of a single Federal law on patronage and foster care is a big problem, the patronage and foster care are regulated by the legislation of Russian regions. In this regard, there is a need to develop a unified policy, taking into account the experience of foreign countries in the placement of orphans and national characteristics and mentality of Russia. This determines the relevance of the study.

## **Materials and Methods**

The methods of comparative analysis were used in the study. They have identified the elements of the system of placing children left without parental care, their total features and differences of each country. The methods have allowed to identify the

flaws of the system, areas of improvement and assess the prospects for the application of foreign experience in Russian practice. Additionally, a graphical and dynamic method were used to represent the change in the number of orphans transferred to different placements in 2015-2018.

The article is an analysis of Russian and foreign authors who study the problems of orphanhood and similar problems. Foster care examined foreign scientists (Ainsworth & Hansen, 2014; Bass, 2017; Bergström et al., 2020), especially the short-term and long-term foster care represented in the study (Van Hoen et al., 2018), support the family covered in study (Edwin et al., 2017). Foster care problems considering (Vanderfaeillie et al., 2018), the problems of school adaptation of orphans are given in the study (Mihalec - Adkins, Christ & Day, 2020). Russian scholars are also exploring issues related to the placement of children, in particular, they are exploring the basic forms of placement of children left without parental care (Savenko, 2015); the practice of working with them in foreign countries is described in (Larin & Konopleva, 2013). The influence of the teacher on the personality of orphans in orphanages is investigated by (Aksenov, 2014), the features of working with orphans are given (Altyntseva, 2015). The relationship of the parents' value system and their interaction with children is studied in (Isaeva & Mazurova, 2018), the activities of non-profit organizations are considered by (Kataeva & Fomicheva, 2017). We should also highlight the particular patronage in Russia (Rezyapova, 2018), the reasons of social orphanhood (Babakaev et al., 2020; Bronnikova et al., 2020), research on the dynamics of the situation with social orphanhood (Vinogradova et al., 2020).

The main goal of the study is to analyze the foreign experience in placement of orphans to identify areas for improving work with children left without parental care in Russia.

## **Results**

The practice of placing children in foster families is being introduced in the USA and other countries. The foster care is an emergency or temporary placement program for children in foster families. First of all, blood relatives are considered for the role of foster parents. If it is impossible to transfer the child to his blood relatives, people associated with the child are accepted for consideration (teachers, trainers, closest associates). These measures are designed to minimize the impact of negative changes on the child's life. If transfer to these people is not possible, independent candidates are selected. The candidates must satisfy the



requirements of the program of Foster care. If it is impossible to select foster families, state authorities carry a child into a foster home, family type of orphanage in accordance with the program Other Planned Permanent the Living Arrangement. In the USA there are no classic orphanages as in Russia.

The Department of children and family services is looking for family, which the child will be in up to the moment of adoption. The most organizations of caring for orphans are non-governmental, they are required to pass the state accreditation to carry out such activities.

In the difficult life situation, the death or imprisonment of parents, drug addiction, the child is transferred to the foster family. Many children get into Child Protective Services due to parents' neglect of the child's needs, unwillingness to perform the duties of a parent, inability to take measures to protect children, inability to take care of them, negligence in providing for the child's basic needs. The main reason for removing children from the family is abuse or neglect and the influence on the child's psyche. Moving to a foster family is based on a court order.

Until the decision is made, the child is in a special institution, the Russian equivalent of an orphanage, but the duration of his stay is usually not more than several days. The foster family is selected during this time period. Initially, it is assumed that being in such a family will not be long, then there will be adoption or foster care in a family. However, in practice, a stay in a foster family may last for a long period, the average period is about one year. The child may also be moved to different families many times if, for a number of reasons, the family is not suitable for the child. Many children reach adulthood while staying in a "temporary" home.

Often children are adopted in the foster family where they are raised. But this is hindered by US legislation on adoption rights, biological parents are priority. They can return the child through the courts, for example, after being released from prison. It is quite common to return children to their blood parents after their treatment, rehabilitation, and release from prison.

According to American law, children are transferred to the foster family by a contract, it is possible to conclude an employment contract between foster parents (educators) and the state, the child welfare service. The foster education is considered as a profession with qualification assessment and a training system. The health, financial situation, age, and income are not important on making a decision to transfer a child to a family.

The compensation from the government is often the main source of income for these families, the amount of government compensation is enough for the family and child. The government returns taxes to adoptive families. The orphans are studying at colleges, universities and institutes for free.

There are no orphanages in *Germany*; they have transformed into small family homes. Social workers often live together with children. To reduce stress, a child or teenager can stay in the house of deceased parents, a social worker attaches to him in the usual environment. There are "family villages", where one foster family can have several orphans, educators (social workers) are assigned to them. The accommodation in a dormitory or a children's commune is provided for adolescents. They have a personal room; they provide their needs for governmental stipend. The adolescents meet with a mentor every week, discuss news and issues, mentor gives them the sum of money for the next week. Most of children living in such shelters have one or both parents, but due to various difficult life situations they are forced to live separately, and some of them return to their parents for weekend. The family reunion after rehabilitation and solving the problems of parents is priority. The psychological assistance and social support are provided for children and parents.

*The Australian system* of orphan's placement is similar to the American one, with the main emphasis on placing children in families - home-based care. There are state and non-governmental organizations for the placement of children. In case the children are placed under guardianship at home, everything possible is done to reunite the children with their families. Also in Australia, Respite care is common - short-term placement of children in foster families in case of illness of the parents or their temporary inability to fulfill their parental duties. In Australia, the issue of training and support for parents to minimize the removal of children from families, especially children with disabilities, is being raised (Ainsworth & Hansen, 2014).

In *the Japanese system*, placement in Foster family is not so common. Many children live in orphanages. There is a temporary placement of a child in an orphanage with the preservation of parental rights (Larin & Konopleva, 2013). The Japanese system also has "specialized foster parents". There are organizations for foster parents training, they must obtain a guardianship permit, have at least 3 years of experience raising foster children and 3 years of experience working in social welfare services for children. The government of Japan pays salary for such parents,

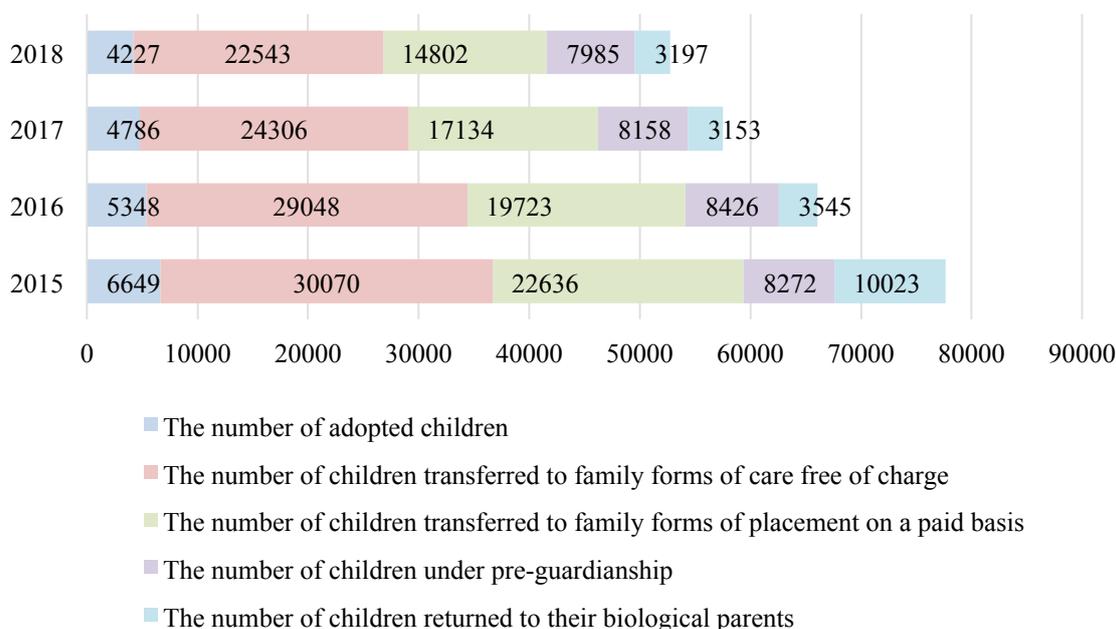


pays the costs of maintenance, upbringing, education, treatment, nutrition in educational institutions and recreation. However, this system is not very popular in the country (Savenko, 2015).

In the UK, there are several types of Fostering: Emergency Placements for 24 hours in case of an emergency, short-term accommodation pending permanent placement in a foster family, a placement for orphans with children, taking into account the specifics of caring for a baby, placement of children with disabilities and others. The temporary residence is practiced (respite care), permanent residence (residential care). The permanent residence is used extremely rarely, the efforts of social services are aimed at finding a foster family. The most of the orphanages are non-governmental organizations, the quality of child custody is monitored based on compliance with foster care standards.

The Canadian system calls children in foster families permanent wards (crown wards). The similar system of temporary custody is also common in Israel, there are no orphanages there. Cambodia, for which foster care is new, has also adopted the practice of placing children in foster families. Many orphans and the fullness of orphanages necessitated a review of the placement of children. Placement is carried out by both governmental and non-governmental organizations.

In Russia, the placement of orphans has several forms (institutional and family) and represents placement in various types of orphanages and adoption, guardianship and trusteeship on a paid basis (foster and adoptive families) or free of charge, including return to blood parents.



**Figure 1.** The number of children without parental care transferred to various forms of placement in the Russian Federation in 2015-2018 (The forms of statistical observation RIC-103, 2019)

There is a decrease of the number of children transferred to various forms of placement in 2015-2018 (figure 1). This is due to a general decrease in the number of orphans. At the moment, Russia has registered 44 421 orphans in the bank data, the total number of orphans has decreased by 46% compared to 2015 (The Ministry of Education of Russia, 2020a). The Russian orphans are placed in state orphanages and residential institutions. The child rearing is often carried out by teachers who do not have special professional social and psychological training. For children placed in orphanages, the teacher gains high importance, combining the functions of a teacher and a parent. The teacher

gives the norms and values of society to the child, influences the formation of the worldview of children, prepares them for socialization. However, at the state level, there is no system for training narrow-profile teachers in relation to work in orphanages and boarding schools. The education system does not meet the qualification requirements presented to these specialists (Aksenov, 2014).

There is a tendency to prioritize family forms of arrangement, and the institution of patronage has been formed in the last 10 years. Today, about half of the Russian regions place children in foster care (patronage families). This form of placement is



regulated by law at each region, legislation is not fixed at the federal level. As well as foster care, the patronage implies the division of rights and duties of protecting the child between the guardianship and the foster care provider, and the absence of the status of the legal representative of the child from the foster care provider.

The patronage implies a temporary family placement of children without parental care in a family that professionally provides educational services without formalizing the status of legal representatives of the child. This form is characterized by flexibility, the ability to provide professional assistance by specialists to the child and the family. The patronage helps to reduce alienation in childhood, provides the opportunity to be placed in a family at any age and health condition for different periods (short-term or long-term patronage) (Rezyapova, 2018).

There is a foster care in order to place the child on a family form of education; social patronage to assist parents in raising a child; post-residential care for persons aged 18 to 23 at the end of their being in an orphanage or foster family (patronage family). The post-residential care is necessary because there is a problem of adaptation to the social life of orphans. This is due to their living and growing up in orphanages (Kataeva & Fomicheva, 2017).

The basis for the patronage is an agreement on foster care, an employment contract between the institution and the educator (foster parent), in some cases an additional civil law contract of services. The contract may be tripartite (the institution for patronage, guardianship authority, foster parents) or bilateral (the institution of patronage, foster parents).

The Ministry of Education of Russia, supervising the problems of orphans, launched an all-Russian portal in February 2020. This portal is for people who want to adopt orphans. This resource contains children's profiles and information on guardianship authorities, where you can draw up documents, find information about forms of family placement, samples for filing documents, collect official documents on the topic of adoption, guardianship, a school for foster parents (The Ministry of Education of Russia, 2020b).

Despite the advantages, there are a number of disadvantages of the foster system. Often there is a transfer of children to various foster families for many times, an escape from the family before reaching the age of completion of fostering. The orphans in foster families are often characterized by the illegal behaviour, a high percentage of

unemployed and homeless people are from foster families.

Often there is a violation of children's rights, non-compliance of their living conditions with norms, psychological problems of children and their foster parents (Vanderfaeillie et al., 2018).

Despite the placement in foster families, orphans have difficulties in adaptation and have lower academic performance. This is due to frequent relocations, change of schools, the court sessions. It is also noted lower security ratings as the basic requirements, lower level of stability in life (Mihalec - Adkins, Christ & Day, 2020).

At the end of the foster care period, there are fewer opportunities for self-development and self-realization, lower level of education, lack of opportunities to study in the higher education system, early start of work, low-paid work, low labor qualifications are noted.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

At the state level, the need to reform the Russian system of institutions for orphans is understood. It is important to take into account the experience of the foreign countries. Taking into account the Russian mentality, it is possible to bring orphanages closer to the family type, reduce the average number of children per orphanage, and equip small comfortable group homes.

The postinternational support is an important area of improvement. It promotes adaptation in society, obtaining a profession and subsequent employment, solving housing issues. This support is designed to create the most comfortable conditions, to find the meaning of life outside the orphanage or foster family, to form competencies, self-realization skills. The main purpose is to prevent of the secondary orphanhood to the future children of orphans, parasitism, alcoholism and drug addiction, illegal behavior (Altyntseva, 2015).

It is necessary to create a unified federal law of the Russian Federation on patronage, foster care. It is necessary to unify the main issues governing the placement of children in professional foster care (Rezyapova, 2018).

Another key element is the definition of the requirements, selection criterion, assessment system for foster careers at the federal level and taking into account the needs of the regions. It is necessary to determine the requirements for the living conditions of the child in the foster family, the composition of the family, health status of members and other criteria (Rezyapova, 2018). There is a need to develop criteria for the selection and control of



foster families in order to minimize of probability to get into a dysfunctional family (Bergström et al., 2020).

It is necessary to improve the learning of pedagogical skills of foster parents, to ensure the preparation of foster parents for the placement of children, professional and psychological training of the foster family (Bass, 2017). This will help to reduce the probability of abandonment and return of the child to an orphanage.

Both Russian and foreign scientists recognize the need to support the family by government (Edwin et al., 2017). It is necessary to develop the legal framework for providing social support and legislative regulation of the sphere of social support of maternity and childhood. This requires legal elaboration of mechanisms for interaction between state, municipal, non-profit organizations and social entrepreneurs. The decisions to provide social assistance to families with children in need should be taken promptly.

It is necessary to carry out an active work on financial and psychological support, education and training of families with children with disabilities in order to reduce the exclusion of children from the family (Ainsworth & Hansen, 2014).

It is necessary to develop staff capacity of the social protection authorities, to improve the system of professional training of educators of orphanages and residential institutions.

It is necessary to raise awareness among families about the benefits and the measures of state support, to increase the value of family relationships, motherhood and childhood at the state level (Babakaev et al., 2020).

It is necessary to develop a system of social mechanisms for the participation of families in the guardianship of orphans, to form behavioral guidelines for the adoption of children without parental care (Vinogradova et al., 2020). These directions can provide positive dynamics in the development of the situation of social orphanhood in Russia.

The article analyzed foreign systems of placement of children left without parental care. The priority of family forms of placement is given. There is a need to improve the Russian system of placement of orphans, taking into account the experience of other countries. Successful practices must be adopted, however, the Russian mentality should be taken into account.

Thus, it was revealed that the creation of a unified federal law on patronage, the determination of the criteria that the foster family should meet, and the

expansion of opportunities for participation in guardianship and trusteeship will be effective. It is necessary to move from institutional forms of orphan placement to family ones. It is also necessary to prevent the situation with orphans and social orphans. This can be facilitated by active state support for motherhood and childhood. The practical significance of the study is the possibility of applying the results of the study in the practice of improving the forms of placement for orphans in Russia.

## References

- Ainsworth, F. & Hansen P. (2014). Family Foster Care: Can it Survive the Evidence? *Children Australia*, 39(2), 87-92.
- Aksenov, A.M. (2014). Teacher-educator as a subject of socialization of the personality of an orphan in organizations for orphans. *21st Century University: Research in Science Schools*, 1, 3-6.
- Altyntseva, E.N. (2015). *Social work with orphans and children left without parental care*. Minsk: BSU.
- Babakaev, S.V., Kulyamina, O.S., Bronnikova, E.M., Vinogradova, M.V. & Leonova, V.P. (2020). Methodological aspects of assessing the efficiency of regional social policy in overcoming of social orphanhood. *Revista de Investigación Apuntes Universitarios*, 10, 4-16. URL: <https://apuntesuniversitarios.upeu.edu.pe/index.php/revapuntes/article/view/508> (accessed 22.08.2020)
- Bass, G. (2017). *The role of foster parents in improving educational outcomes for youth in foster care*. Doctoral Dissertation. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Amherst.
- Bergström, M., Cederblad, M., Håkansson, K., Östlund, P. & Sundell, K. (2020). Interventions in Foster Family Care: A Systematic Review. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 30(1), 3-18.
- Bronnikova, E.M., Kulyamina O.S., Babakaev S.V., Vinogradova M.V., Larionova A.A. (2020). *Connection of Social Policy Implementation with the Dynamics of Social Orphanhood in Russian Regions*. URL: <http://revistas.usil.edu.pe/index.php/pyr/article/view/644> (accessed 20.08.2020)
- Edwin, N.G., Mireia, J., Carles, M. & O'Campo, P. (2017). Family support policies and child outcomes: a realist-scoping review Community. *Work & Family*, 20(3), 292-306.
- Isaeva, O.V. & Mazurova, N.V. (2018). Interconnection of value-semantic attitudes



- of parents and features of parent-child interaction in the family. *Scientific notes of the Russian State Social University*, 2(147), 39-50.
- Kataeva, V.I. & Fomicheva, T.V. (2017). Socially-oriented non-profit organizations for family and children in Russia: systemic problems of development. *Social policy and sociology*, 6(125), 45-53.
- Larin, A.N. & Konopleva, I.N. (2013). The practice of working with children without parental care in developed foreign countries. *Psychological science and education*, 3, 161-169.
- Levina, I.D., Ukolova, L.I., Lavrentyeva, E.Yu., Akhilogova, M.T., Zharikov, Yu.S., Popova, O.V., Semyanov, E.V. & Malanov, I.A. (2019). Elderly people social and psychological adaptation to nursing home conditions. *International Journal of Applied Exercise Physiology*, 8(2.1), 223-232.
- Mihalec-Adkins, B.P., Christ, S.L. & Day, E. (2020). An exploration of placement-related psychosocial influences on school engagement among adolescents in foster care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 108, 104616.
- Rezyapova, G.F. (2018). On the issue of foster care in the Russian Federation. *Problems of the status of modern Russia: historical and legal aspect*, 1, 3-11.
- Savenko, O.E. (2015). Forms of placement of children without parental care in foreign countries. *Bulletin of the University named after O.E. Kutafina*, 2, 126-135.
- The forms of statistical observation RIC-103. (2019). URL: <https://minobrnauki.rf> (accessed 03.08.2019).
- The Ministry of Education of Russia. (2020a). *In Russia, the number of orphans is decreasing*. URL: <https://edu.gov.ru/press/1186/v-rossii-umenshaetsya-kolichestvo-detey-sirot/> (accessed 10.03.2020)
- The Ministry of Education of Russia. (2020b). *The Ministry of Education of Russia has launched an all-Russian portal for those wishing to accept orphans into the family*. URL: <https://edu.gov.ru/press/2131/minprosvesc-heniya-rossii-zapustilo-vserossiyskiy-portal-dlya-zhelayuschih-prinyat-v-semyu-detey-sirot/> (accessed 10.03.2020)
- Van Holen, F., Belenger, L., Carlier, E., Potoms, B. & Vanderfaeillie, J. (2018). Short-term family foster care in Flanders: An exploratory study into the factors associated with family reunification decisions. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 94, 699-708
- Vanderfaeillie, J., Van Holen, F., Carlier, E. & Fransen, H. (2018). Breakdown of foster care placements in Flanders: incidence and associated factors. *European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 27(2), 209-220
- Vinogradova, M.V., Kulyamina, O.S., Leonova, V.P., Bronnikova E.M., Babakaev, S.V., Volkov, D.V. & Afanasyeva, N.V. (2020). *Research of the situation of dynamics with social orphanhood: approaches, methods, tools*. Moscow: Publishing house RSSU, 169