# Methodology of Stratification Research of Modern Civil Society in Russia*

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**Abstract.** The subject matter of the research is the genesis of the methodology of stratification of modern civil society in Russia.
The objective of the research is to analyze the methods of studying socium and isolating the strata of modern civil society.
The methodology of the research is based on general and special methods of scientific knowledge: generalization, comparison, structural-functional (system) analysis.
This article considers a wide range of parameters, combined in the factors of stratification such as political loyalty, economic well-being of the region and social tension.
The stratum of modern civil society is treated as a form of classification of civil society, graded by focal features, characterizing the form of the state and its social structure: social, economic, cultural needs, political priorities; educational level; types of elitism; social guarantees of the state; gradation of consumption balance; activity in the protection of legitimate interests, rights and freedoms; conflictogenity of the socium [1, 2].
Social stratification is considered from the point of view of differentiation of large elements of the social structure of society into strata (layers), expressing their social ranking by income, education, status, social prestige and other objective and subjective criteria.
The novelty of the research is determined by:
Correlation of groups of factors (social, political, economic) and their weight significance in the formation and the conciliation of civil society strata interests;
The introduction of the concept into the scientific use, the definition of the structural elements of the modern Russian socio-political public formation; presentation of its interdisciplinary evaluation in the context of analysis of socio-political problems of aligning the interests of strata of modern civil society in the Russian Federation;
Study of the genesis of the stratification of civil society on the basis of the current characteristics of its strata for developing an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing the forms and intensity of social and political conflict, the problems of reconciling interests.
**Keywords:** civil society institutions; interests of civil society strata; conflict nature of civil society strata; social formation (socio-political); protest activity of citizens; political activism of the electorate; strata of modern civil society; stratification.

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# Методология исследования стратификации современного гражданского общества в России*

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**Аннотация.** Предметом исследования является генезис методологии стратификации современного гражданского общества в России.
Цель исследования — анализ методов изучения социума и выделение слоев современного гражданского общества. Методология исследования основана на общих и специальных методах научного познания: обобщение, сравнение, структурно-функциональный (системный) анализ. В статье рассматривается широкий спектр параметров, сочетающихся в таких факторах стратификации, как политическая лояльность, экономическое благополучие региона и социальная напряженность. Слой современного гражданского общества рассматривается как форма классификации гражданского общества, классифицируемая по фокусным признакам, характеризующая форму государства и его социальную структуру: социальные, экономические, культурные потребности, политические приоритеты; образовательный уровень; виды элиты; социальные гарантии государства; градация потребительского баланса; деятельность по защите законных интересов, прав и свобод; конфликтогенность социума [1, 2].
Социальная стратификация рассматривается с точки зрения дифференциации крупных элементов социальной структуры общества на страты (слои), выражающие их социальное ранжирование по доходам, образованию, статусу, социальному престижу и другим объективным и субъективным критериям.
Новизна исследования определяется путем:
— корреляции групп факторов (социальных, политических, экономических) и их весовых значимостей в формировании и согласовании интересов слоев гражданского общества;
— введения концепции в научный обиход, определения структурных элементов современного российского общественно-политического формирования; представления ее междисциплинарной оценки в контексте анализа социально-политических проблем согласования интересов слоев современного гражданского общества в Российской Федерации;
— исследования генеза расслоения гражданского общества на основе современных характеристик его слоев для разработки междисциплинарного подхода к анализу форм и интенсивности социально-политического конфликта, проблем примирения интересов.
**Ключевые слова:** институты гражданского общества; интересы страты гражданского общества; природа конфликта страты гражданского общества; социальная формация (социально-политическая); протестная активность граждан; политическая активность электората; страта современного гражданского общества; стратификация.

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The socio-political problems of matching the strata interests of modern civil society in the Russian Federation are important to ensure social agreement, to create effective mechanisms for interaction between existing social institutions and authority structures, social organizations that have power (quasi-institutions of civil society), to ensure the legitimate interests of citizens, and also to elaborate the scenario parameters of the socio-political development of the country by the public authorities and regional, municipal government to prevent the growth of protest activity and conflictogenity in the society.

The world experience of scenario analysis to forecast the processes of matching the strata interests of modern civil society is relevant for determining the key factors for matching the interests of strata of modern civil society, taking into account the limitations imposed by the demographic, educational and production processes of the future economy [3, 4, 5, 6,7, 8, 9,10,11,12,13,14].

An important theoretical and methodological approach of the research is a sociological approach based on theories and conceptual approaches in the field of the sociology of political relations, social structure and stratification, economic and regional sociology, the sociology of power and elites as private sociological theories, as well as the conceptual principles of social conflictology in the sphere of economics and finance, the sociology of social institutions and organizations, as well as the conceptual foundations of social risk and the sociology of security.

The methodological concepts of social stratification are covered in numerous studies and works by Russian and foreign authors whose scientific developments can be combined into several groups:

1. Revealing sociological approaches. In the framework of the development of the methodology concept of social stratification, their results are represented in the works of the classic scientists of sociology M. Duverger, R. Merton, P. Sorokin, E. Giddens, and others [12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18]. T.I. Zaslavskaya played a crucial role in the studies of this group. The researcher substantiated and implemented the modern concept of social stratification of Russian society [19, 20].

2. Substantiating economic approach to stratification. The scientific works of this group introduce the notion of economic stratification, calculated stratification [21], problems of inequality and poverty [22], processes of changing social and economic status [23, 25].

3. Based on a political approach to understanding stratification and identifying its various aspects: at the macro-political level, revealing the genesis of economic interest groups and regional interest groups, the problems of criminalization of the initial stage of capital accumulation, carried out at the Institute of Criminology under the Russian Prosecutor General's Office and the Association of Criminologists (1996–2016). It was covered in scientific sources [25, 26, 27] including the processes of changing the political regime; problems of formation of the lytic elite [28, 29]; understanding political risks [30, 3, 32].

4. Devoted to the development of the methodology of ethnic conflictology, as a social phenomenon, closely associated with social stratification [31, 32, 33].

5. Associated with the substantiation of the constitutional approach to understanding this social phenomenon [36].

6. Research problems of inequality of regional development, inter-budget relations, population concentration in large cities, phenomena of population reduction and pauperization of large rural areas [37].

While researching social stratification, it is reasonable to use the notion of social space, in which the vertical and horizontal distances are not equal. The outstanding sociologist and culturologist P. Sorokin believed that within this approach the starting point in stratification is social status [13]. In his opinion, the distance inequality between statuses is the main feature of stratification. The basis for stratification is income, power, education, prestige. At the same time, people occupying the same positions belong to the same stratum in all parameters.

Rimashevskaya N.M. proposed a stratification structure based on the class approach: 1) 'elite groups', ranged according to the property capital and its power influence in comparison with the largest foreign counterparts; 2) 'regional and corporate elites', distinguished by the social impact at the level of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and sectors of the economy; 3) the 'upper middle class' in Russia—close in property value to the world living standards, with the potential for economic growth; 4) the national socially 'dynamic middle class', whose legitimate revenues allow it to

meet middle-to-high standards of consumption; 5) Russian 'outsiders' with low social and adaptive potential and social activity, legal incomes below the average level; 6) 'marginals' that are not adapted to the social and socioeconomic environment, prone to antisocial ideologemes; 7) 'criminals' actively acting outside the legal field and integrated into the national economic system and latently affecting the social structure [38, 39].

The vertical stratification system was developed by T. Zaslavskaya. [40]. The 'top stratum' is small in economic state. According to the scientist's point of view, this stratum is the driving force of state-political, economic transformations. It figures prominently in the power structures of the country. The «middle stratum» unites representatives of small and medium-sized businesses, bureaucracy, qualified specialists and workers.

According to Zaslavskaya's hierarchy marginal groups are represented by the 'bottom stratum' of low-skilled and unskilled workers, unemployed, and refugees; as well as 'the social bottom' which consists of criminals and the individuals with an antisocial behavior.

Zaslavskaya introduced the concept of the 'transformational structure of society' into scientific use, substantiating the role of cognitive potential in terms of the specific social quality of society — its ability to self-development and constructive impact on the development of the state.

O. Kislitsyna considered the index of social progress to determine the place of the Russian Federation in the world life quality rating [46]. In her opinion, social progress is the ability of society to satisfy basic human needs of citizens, to establish a basis that will allow population groups to raise or permanently maintain a high quality of life, and, accordingly, life expectancy, to create conditions for achieving their maximum personal potential.

M. Galas, M. Rylskaya consider the problem of matching the interests of civil society strata as one of the causes of conflict situations. Stratification conflict is interpreted as a factor in the development of social relations. While developing the socio-economic and political situation of the strata also change. Conflict in this aspect is an indicator of the relevance of social transformations in order to maintain a balance of strata interests [42].

The analysis determines the following scientific schools and the results of empirical studies of the stratification of modern Russian society.

The National Research University "Higher School of Economics" has made a fairly successful attempt to stratify the society on the basis of 'trust-distrust' to the main social institutions [43].

The School of Science by L. Tretyakova based on the Belgorod State National Research University researches the stratification of civil society in the system of economic relations [44]. When identifying and describing social strata, the representatives of this approach use the criteria of 'quality of life', access to 'authoritative resources', the existence of structures for 'representing interests', characteristics of 'labor potential' and the conditions for its use.

Property relations are the basis of the concept of gender stratification by Professor G. Sillaste [45]. The concept is based on the division of society into socio-class, national, socio-demographic, socio-professional and socio-territorial structures. Each subclass of the social structure consists of a set of social groups classified according to the criteria of size, status, density of communication links and sustainability.

The scientists of the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences introduced the scientific concept of stratification of Russian society into scientific use [46]. The problem of social stratification: a real social status of individuals in any case is only a consequence of their being in the framework of certain social fields (power, economic, cultural etc.), characterized by a definite set of status positions.

Serious scientific developments in the social stratification field were made by the team of the Center for the Study of Social Structure and Social Stratification, headed by Professor Z. Golenkova [47]. They perform the stratification of society, singling out strata and groups of the population with the whole system of social conflicts and contradictions, united according to regional, social, professional, age characteristics.

This article treats the genesis (system analysis of processes) of stratification and socio-political formatting of the civil society of Russia in accordance with the structural and synchronic study of objects from 2005 to 2016 using the available data for the first half of 2017. The system analysis was accomplished on the basis of the sociological research "Conflictogenity of the Stratification Process of Civil Society and Social Interests as a Risk Factor and Threats to Regional Stability" according to the methodology by G. Sillaste.

*Most successful* **social groups in promoting their interests (% of respondents)**

| Social groups | Total | Donors | Subsidized |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Government | 70.5 | 61.5 | 79.2 |
| 2 Large business | 60.0 | 53.8 | 66.0 |
| 3 Small and medium-sized business | 48.6 | 30.8 | 66.0 |
| Defence and law enforcement agencies | 43.8 | 34.6 | 52.8 |
| 4 High-qualified specialists | 28.6 | 30.8 | 26.4 |
| 5 Mass media and show business | 11.4 | 9.6 | 13.2 |
| Employees | 11.4 | 17.3 | 5.7 |
| 6 Ethnic groups outside the historical territories | 10.5 | 15.4 | 5.7 |
| 7 Students | 8.6 | 11.5 | 5.7 |
| Different confessions | 6.7 | 7.7 | 5.7 |
| 8 Different spheres of the shadow economy | 4.8 | 7.7 | 1.9 |
| 9 Retiree | 1.9 | 0.0 | 3.8 |

The differentiation of the indicators measured in the research was accomplished according to economic success of the region, i.e. subsidy or economic independence).

Social changes and processes of the 1990s radically changed the social structure of the population of Russian regions. The stratification of the social structure has brought a new group into the arena of social actions. These are owners. They differ not only with their living environment, but also in their property segmentation: from the oligarchic cohort of the super-rich and wealthy to the wealthy, from the middle segment to the poor and the indigent.

Table 2 will clarify how different strata and groups of people managed to promote their interests, depending on the type of donor and subsidized regions. There are nine social interest promotion groups.

Social interests, as a reflection of the real causes, actions formed in social groups due to their differences in position and role in the life of the regional society, generate the diversity of social groups on this basis.

The social interests of different social and social-role groups (producers, employees, managers, investors, creditors, savers, etc.) will diverge due to developing social and political contradictions, as well as the desire for access to the allocation of material resources (including property) in the region.

The process of the society stratification in general and in regional communities, in particular, has various forms and in different spheres of life. At present, stratification has taken different forms. The most popular of them are as following:

- property (in terms of property security)
- political (in terms of the depth of discrepancies between political views and preferences among the population)
- economic (stratification of owners and employers)
- class
- confessional (different confessions)
- national-ethnic (different nationalities and ethnic groups).

The reason for the disagreement of the interests of the social formation strata may be its long-standing, but not resolved problems. These include, in particular, socio-political tension, economic instability, the level of social inequality (differentiation of stratification) and, as a result, an increase in the trend of deviant behavior in society.

In addition, the situation may be exacerbated by the dependence on funding of the center (subsidization) and low subsistence level of the population, the sense of historical injustice of repatriated peoples, uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources, hostility towards migrants, growing crime, deterioration of the ecological situation in the places of residence.

When internal regional problems are recognized by a significant part of the population, the conflict potential is accumulating in the region. That leads to an increase in the general discontent and aggressiveness of some groups and individuals.

If, in the general social plan, the growth of potential conflict is associated with a loss of trust and a loss of authority, then at the regional level its indicators are determined by the activation of various socio-political parties and movements while struggling for power and influence among the masses. At the same time, the state of dissatisfaction and anxiety, which has been lasting for quite long time, is usually the cause of protest actions as rallies and demonstrations, the emergence of extremist manifestations and deviant behavior. It is significant to note that estimating the mismatch of the strata of the existing social formation is also an indicator of the emergence of deviance.

Summarizing the results of the research, we can draw conclusions.

1. There is a deformation of stratification processes, stratification of population groups according to income and lifestyle, destruction of general public relations, moral foundations and values. Stratification destruction undermines the confidence of citizens in authority and public institutions, initiates the restructuring of the political regime, the state system. These terms create risks for social stability.

The modern socio-political formation can be interpreted as a pluralistic, multi-vector, mentally antagonistic, transforming into a class, latently and/or actually conflictogenic, which forms an emerging civil society with sustainable social, political, and legitimized quasi-civil institutions, with a tendency to the protest activity growth and social tension, of the strata of civil society in the regions of the Russian Federation.

2. The demostructure of the stratification Russian model is impossible without the research of the effectiveness of government measures to ensure the balance of the budgets of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, the distribution of inter-budgetary transfers from the federal budget to the budgets of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation in the context of matching the interests of the civil society of Russia; as well as the implementation of Federal Targeted Programs and the implementation of the Federal Targeted Investment Program; allocation of subventions, provided from the Federal budget to the budgets of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation to exercise delegated powers of the Russian Federation to provide certain categories of citizens with Government social assistance. The influence of the state monetary, customs and tariff, tax policy is significant on the stratification and social formatting of the civil society of Russia.

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