Measurement of poverty and inequality in the Republic of Belarus

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Abstract

The paper presents the national experience in measurement of poverty and inequality in the Republic of Belarus. The main source of information about poverty and inequality in the country is a sample household living standards survey. The paper presents organizational and methodological aspects of the survey. The definition of the national poverty line (an absolute poverty line determined as the official criteria of poverty) is given; the methodology of calculation of the main indicator of wellbeing – average per capita disposable resources of households, including the use of national equivalence scale – is provided. There are relative and subjective approaches to poverty assessment, as well as major indicators of income inequality: the Gini coefficient and the ratio of funds. The study of material deprivation of the population is the upcoming trend in poverty measurement in the Republic of Belarus. Methodological issues associated with the list of material deprivations are reviewed. Further areas of the use of the theory of material deprivation, including the construction of multidimensional poverty estimates and analysis of inequality in access to basic goods, are identified.