

Process of social and economical transformation after the dissolution of the Soviet Union brought a significant decrease in demographic indicators and deterioration of the health status of Russian population. Among the main problems are:

- Increasing death rate in all age groups
- Decreasing life expectancy, low healthy life expectancy
- High number of infant deaths in comparison with advanced countries.
- Increasing number of cases of infectious diseases

In the first part of this study is given an analysis on health status and demographic indicators of Russian population and their development in the 90's. Statistical data are analyzed in historical prospective and in comparison with indicators for EU and CIS members states. Significant part is also devoted to description of the factors (socialeconomical, health care, healthy life style and environmental), which are believed to have a significant impact on health status on the individual and also national level, according to WHO definition of health and concept of determinants of health.

In second part of this study are discussed the main risk factors and hypothesis, which are explaining the deterioration of health of Russian citizens. There are several theories for this dramatic decrease in life expectancy. One sees a connection between the low life expectancy in the grim economic situation, points to the stress caused by the loss of a sense of security; others see the cause in the deteriorating standards of the Russian healthcare system and another in the unhealthy life style. In detail are mentioned the role of social-economic factors and to „alcohol hypothesis“, which seems to be a good explanation of the increase of mortality rate, especially among the middle-age Russian man. The consequences of the high mortality rates and the ill health and the possible responses to these challenges are briefly touched at the end of the study.