

TRENDS, PROBLEMS, AND MECHANISMS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN RURAL TERRITORIES IN THE EUROPEAN RUSSIA

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Abstract

The article presents the results of the analysis of trends and issues of socio-economic development of the Russian Federation's rural territories and subjects, situated in Russia's European North. It reveals that the key problems of territorial development are unfavorable demographics; poor housing improvement regarding all improvement types; high share of the population provided with bad-quality drinking water; noticeable income difference between rural and urban population, etc. The authors propose a typology of rural territories according to the size of rural population, periphery, and their economic specialization. We reveal that the territories adjacent to large and major towns, as well as ones having agro-industrial and extractive specialization, are developed the most. We substantiate a mechanism for managing Russia's rural territories in current conditions and propose recommendations for updating their state development policy: 1) to ensure a complete implementation and achievement of goals of the RF state program “Integrated development of rural territories”; 2) to provide an equal availability of state support measures to rural developers; to help provide state support measures for the development of small- and medium-sized businesses in rural areas; 3) to create conditions for attracting non-budget financing investment sources to socio-engineering countryside infrastructure; 4) to develop different forms of agricultural cooperation; 5) to establish professional teams of experts, specialists, and activists, interested in developing rural territories, in each subject of the Russian Federation, etc.

Keywords: rural territories, European North of Russia, socio-economic development, typologization, control mechanism.

JEL classification: R1, R5

The author declares that this article is original, its materials have not been published anywhere before.

1. Introduction

Rural territories (territories outside urban settlements) are a special and priority management object and a subject of scientific studies. These territories are the basis for the development of agricultural production, food security, and, to a certain extent, national security, and they play a crucial role in the sustainable development of the country, its regions, and municipalities. Rural territories' primary national economic functions are the following: production, socio-demographic, cultural and ethnic, eco-logical, re-creation, spatial and communication, political functions, as well as the function of a territory's social control.

Despite a remaining steady trend of increasing the share of urban population among most countries' total population, it is still relevant for several states to maintain a noticeable number of rural residents. Thus, among European countries, the highest value of this indicator was recorded in late 2019 in Slovakia, Romania, Slovenia, Macedonia, Austria (42–46%); among Asian countries – in Tajikistan, India, Kyrgyzstan, Vietnam, Pakistan, Egypt, the Philippines (53–74%); among American countries – in Mexico (19.8%) (Russia and Countries of the World, 2020). In the Russian Federation, 25% of the country's population live in rural areas.

Since the 2000s, Russian authorities have been approving special state programs to create conditions for rural areas' sustainable, balanced development and to solve existing problems of their development: federal target program “Rural social development until 2013” (RF Government Decree no.858, dated December 3, 2002); federal target program “Sustainable rural development for 2014–2017 and until 2020” (RF Government Decree no. 598, dated

July 15, 2013); state program of the Russian Federation “Integrated development of rural territories” with the implementation period until 2020–2025 (RF Government Decree no. 696, dated May 31, 2019). Besides, the Strategy of sustainable development of rural areas of the Russian Federation for the period till 2030 was approved (RF Government Decree no. 151-p., dated February 2, 2015). However, it was not possible to significantly improve the situation in rural areas everywhere due to the lack of a necessary integrity, consistency of these state programs, these programs’ limited focus, and an obvious lack of funding.

The best way to assess the quality of life and comfort of living in rural areas, as well as to identify existing problems of their development, is to analyze the assessments of these aspects by residents of such localities. The Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation conducts comprehensive monitoring of the living conditions among population every 2 years on the basis of a survey (sample observation) of 60 thousand households in all the Russian Federation’s subjects. Certain results of this study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Russian residents’ assessment of certain aspects of living conditions in localities

Indicator’s title	Urban localities	Rural localities
Share of households intending to improve their housing conditions	14.8	21.5
Share of respondents who said that housing conditions are generally satisfactory	71.1	66.6
Share of households that rated the quality of water, coming from the most accessible water source, as poor	15.3	24.3
Share of households that indicated that the disposal of wastewater in their house is carried out in a centralized sewer system	89.6	25.2
Share of households that use:		
- network gas	67.1	65.4
- imported liquefied gas	2.2	1.2
- liquefied gas in cylinders	2.2	17.3
- do not have an opportunity to use domestic gas	4.0	6.6
- do not need to use household gas	24.5	9.5
Share of people employed in the economy who rated their main job as difficult and very difficult	19.7	25.8
Share of people aged 15 years and above who rated their health status as very good and good	44.9	38.0
Share of people aged 15 years and above with a professional degree	77.2	62.7
Share of people aged 15 years and above who use Internet	76.5	62.3
Share of parents with the desire that their children, studying in general educational organizations, continue their education in educational organizations of primary or secondary vocational education	15.3	24.6
Share of people aged 15 years and above who mentioned the problems related to living conditions in their locality	72.7	81.7
Share of people aged 15 years and above who mentioned the following problems related to the living conditions in their locality (area of residence):		
- unavailability of state and municipal healthcare services	22.9	37.5
- unavailability of state and municipal preschool and school education services	8.2	17.3
- great remoteness of retail locations	7.1	23.6
- great remoteness of pharmacies	9.1	49.9
Share of people aged 15 years and above who are not satisfied with trade services	6.7	19.5
Share of people aged 15 years and above who are not satisfied with household services	8.9	34.3

Source: Comprehensive monitoring of population’s living conditions – 2018. *Federal State Statistics Service*. Available at: https://gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/KOUZ18/index.html

This table clearly shows that residents of rural localities are noticeably worse at assessing living conditions. Thus, nearly a quarter of the respondents indicated a poor quality of consumed water, the same number use liquefied gas in cylinders or do not have the opportunity to use household gas at all; only a quarter of households are provided with centralized sewerage; there is a significantly higher share of those, in comparison with urban areas, who reported the unavailability of healthcare and education services, the greater remoteness of retail facilities and pharmacies, and dissatisfaction with trade and household surveys. Simultaneously, 25% of respondents want their children to continue their education in institutions of primary and secondary vocational education (a significant part of which is in municipal areas).

Therefore, an important scientific task is to analyze trends and identify key problems in the development of the country’s rural areas and its regions. It is also necessary to scientifically

substantiate recommendations for improving the federal and regional socio-economic policy in terms of rural development on this basis. These circumstances determine the relevance of the study, and its main results are presented in this paper.

2. Methodological aspects of studying rural areas

It should be noted that there is no unified definition of the term “rural territories”, “rural area” in domestic and foreign science and practice. To classify a territory as rural, several countries use the following criteria: density and number of population, characteristics of a settlement, density of development, specialization in agriculture, etc.

The state program of the Russian Federation “Integrated development of rural territories” describes rural territories as: 1) rural settlements or rural settlements and inter-settlement territories united by a common territory within the boundaries of a municipal district; 2) rural localities that are a part of urban settlements, municipal districts, urban districts (with the exception of urban districts that include administrative centers of subjects of the Russian Federation); 3) rural localities that are a part of the inner-city municipal formations in Sevastopol; 4) workers’ comp settlements with the status of urban settlements; 5) workers’ comp settlements that are a part of urban settlements, municipal districts, urban districts (with the exception of urban districts that include administrative centers of subjects of the Russian Federation). In this case, it is about nearly all localities – except for urban localities (towns and urban-type settlements). We adhere to this definition in the reported study. In accordance with the Federal Law no. 131-FZ “On the general principles of the organization of local self-government in the Russian Federation”, a rural settlement is defined as one or more rural localities united by a common territory (settlements, localities, stanitsas, villages, hamlets, kishlaks, auls, and other rural settlements), where local self-government is carried out directly by population and (or) through elected and other local self-government bodies.

Foreign (Battino, 2019; Cei, 2018; Chen, 2019; Konecny, 2019; Michalcewicz-Kaniowska, 2019; Li, 2018; Nardi, 2007; Plummer, 2018; Schiller, 2013; Stoyanets, 2018; Zasada, 2018; Mantino, 2010 etc.) and Russian scientists and researchers (Bondarenko, 2020; Gumerov, 2019; Ivanov, 2019, 2020; Kostyaev, 2018; Leyzerovich, 2008; Adukov, 2019; Morozova, 2015; Mukhametova, 2016; Nefedova, 2013; Nikolaeva, 2019; Panteleeva, 2012; Polushkin, 2017; Pryazhnikova, 2020; Tyurin, 2007; Uzun, 2019; Trotskovsky, 2013; Ushachev, 2019; Shulepov, 2020, etc.) analyze main areas and implementation mechanisms of the policy for developing rural territories, substantiate ways of its improvement. The work (Li, 2018) emphasizes that conditions for sustainable development of rural territories in current knowledge-based economy are: 1) development of new economic activities that can meet potential urban demand; 2) local entrepreneurship that can create and expand such new activities; 3) social capital that can support entrepreneurship in new areas of activity with access to credit, labor, human capital, external markets, and external knowledge for learning and innovation. In this regard, it is important to have a state policy in the country aimed at creating conditions for the development of basic economic activities and the diversification of the rural economy, ensuring favorable financial and institutional conditions for the development of rural areas, and comfortable living conditions for population.

The analysis of global experience shows that the European Union implements the most comprehensive and integrated policy for the development of rural areas (at the supranational and country level). The development of rural areas in the EU is carried out within the framework of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), a new stage of which is 2021–2027. It will include nine target areas, which are supposed to ensure that farmers receive a fair income; to increase competitiveness of the industry; to balance energy consumption in the food production and supply chain; to take measures that prevent climate change and promote environmental protection; to ensure the preservation of natural landscapes and biodiversity; to support the generational change process in the farming community; to help preserve local identity of rural areas; to maintain a high quality of food (Pryazhnikova, 2020). Each EU country will develop its own strategic plan for this policy. The policy is financed by two funds: the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF; funding – 291.1 bil. euro for 2021–2027) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD; 95.5 bil. euro) (Future of the common agricultural policy). Moreover, the European Network for Rural

Development (ENRD) was established. It is a structure that unites all interested parties and aims to achieve better results in the development of rural areas. One of the key technologies for implementing rural development projects is the LEADER project, which is a local development method that has been used for 20 years for involving local subjects in the development and implementation of strategies, decision-making, and resource allocation for the development of their rural areas (Cork 2.0 Declaration, 2019; Leader Local Development Strategies).

In the United States, in addition to life-support issues (environmental quality, health, infrastructure, housing, etc.; provision of rural residents with the same level and number of services as urban residents) and solving general socio-economic problems, introduction of renewable energy sources and creation of viable and sustainable rural communities are urgent tasks of rural development (Mukhametova, 2019). The US Department of Agriculture and its Rural Development Division (USDA Rural Development) implement the following areas of state support: rural business cooperatives (support for agricultural innovation, infrastructure development programs, intermediary lending, loans, and grants for rural economic development, assistance to rural micro-entrepreneurs, investment in rural businesses, grants for the development of rural businesses, rural cooperatives, and socially vulnerable groups, etc.); rural housing construction (direct loans and grants for public organizations, grants for rural community development initiatives and housing preservation, direct loans for multi-family housing, direct housing loans for single-family housing, etc.); rural utilities and services (financing of distributed energy generation projects, loans for energy efficiency and energy conservation, grants for distance learning and telemedicine, rural decentralized water supply systems, solid waste management, financing of water supply and sanitation projects, pre-planning of water supply and waste disposal systems).

Since 2007, Chinese Ministry of Agriculture has been implementing “ten programs” of rural development. Funds are mostly allocated for the development of rural infrastructure (construction of reservoirs, provision of clean drinking water to population), construction of socially significant facilities in rural areas, development of specific local industries, as well as environmentally safe agricultural production, repayment of interest on bank loans, increase in subsidies (for elite varieties of rice, wheat, corn and the purchase of agricultural machinery). The experience of setting up village-volost enterprises in China, which should become the most important element of the cooperative sector in rural areas (Panteleeva, 2012), is also interesting. The programs “Rural Revitalization” (until 2022), “Rural Rejuvenation” (until 2020), “Agricultural Modernization” (until 2035) and “Creation of a strong agricultural sector and achievement of full self-realization of farmers” (until 2050) (Naumov) are also being implemented.

In general, we should mention that, currently, neo-endogenous approach to the formation of rural areas is forming in the world. According to RAS Academician A. I. Kostyaev, the key principle of such approach is the knowledge economy; the key development force – human and social capital within the “network” of enterprises, practical workers and institutions, working in rural areas; the functions of rural territories are the increase of the importance of functions of living places (counter-urbanizations), leisure, tourism, employment in “networks”, etc.; the main development problems are heterogeneity of rural areas by the development of human capital and intellectual assets, attraction of universities as development agents; development direction is the creation of institutional potential aimed at the mobilization of internal resources and external factors active in a region. Development of rural territories in Russia is still conducted within exogenous-industrial approach (Kostyaev, 2018).

Several scientists also develop different typologies of rural territories (Leyzerovich, 2008; Nefedova, 2013; Trotskovsky, 2013). Besides, issues of developing typologies and analysis of features of socio-economic development of rural territories, including case-studies of large macro-regions, are not sufficiently explored. In the research, the results of which are presented in this article, we used the typology of rural territories by periphery (remoteness from large towns; Table 2) and economic specialization.

Table 2. Structure within a regional space of rural periphery

Close periphery			Average periphery		Far periphery
1 order	2 order	3 order	1 order	2 order	
Rural territories, included in agglomerations. Rural territories that have large and major towns as centers	Rural territories, situated in an influence zone of a large or major town	Rural territories that have small or average towns as their centers	Rural territories that are outside a zone of active influence of a town and neighboring rural territories of the I order	Rural territories that are outside a zone of active influence of a town and neighboring rural territories of the II order	Rural territories that are far from region's towns

Note: it is common to distinguish between the following classifications of towns: towns with population of up to 50 thousand residents are usually classified as small ones, from 50 to 100 thou. – medium ones, from 100 to 250 thou. – to large ones, from 250 thou. to 1 mil. – to major ones, exceeding 1 mil. – to metropolises. An area of a town's influence is defined by the following radii: for a city with population exceeding 1 mil. people – 70–80 km.; 250 thou. – 1 mil. people – 50–60 km.; 100–250 thou. people – 30–40 km.; less than 100 thou. people – 20–25 km.

Source: Sustainable development of rural territories of the Altai Territory: socio-economic and spatial aspects: Coll. Monograph. Ed. by Trotskovskii A.Ya. Barnaul: Altai University Publishing, 2013. 330 p.

To define industrial (or economic activity type) specialization of territories (municipal formations) the following indicators are used: localization coefficient, per capita production coefficient, index method, calculated by gross commodity output, main industrial funds, number of industrial and production personnel, number of employees. Coefficient values that are equal or exceed 1 show the presence of specialization by the given activity type. In the presented research, we calculated localization coefficients according to the indicator “average list number of employees of organizations according to the economic activity types”.

3. Current state and problems of development of rural territories in the European North of Russia

The study of rural territories in Russia was conducted using the materials of a large macro-region of the European North of Russia (ENR) that is the biggest economic region of Russia's European part. Its area is 1466 thou. sq. km, which is 9% of the whole country's territory. It includes: Republic of Karelia (administrative center is Petrozavodsk), Komi Republic (Syktyvkar), Arkhangelsk Oblast (Arkhangelsk), Nenets Autonomous Okrug (Naryan-Mar), Vologda (Vologda) and Murmansk (Murmansk) oblasts. The key development factors of ENR rural territories are unfavorable natural and climatic conditions (that limit the possibilities of highly efficient rural economy), focal settlement, and predominance of sparsely populated rural settlements (with a population of less than 1,000 people).

The key development problem of most rural areas in Russia is an unfavorable demographic situation: a significant reduction of population due to a natural decline and high migration outflow. All of this leads to the “extinction” of entire settlements and the loss of territorial manageability. As for the regions of the European North of Russia, size of rural population decreased the most in the Komi Republic and in the Arkhangelsk Oblast – by 30–37% in 2000–2019 (Table 3).

Table 3. Average annual number of permanent population, thou. people

Territory	Urban population			Rural population		
	2000	2019	2019 to 2000, %	2000	2019	2019 to 2000, %
Russia	107245,6	109508,0	102,1	39351,3	37256,7	94,7
Republic of Karelia	544,4	498,1	91,5	187,7	118,0	62,8
Komi Republic	791,6	645,6	81,6	258,8	179,8	69,5
Nenets Autonomous Okrug	25,6	32,3	126,5	15,5	11,6	75,1
Arkhangelsk Oblast (without Autonomous Okrug)	1006,9	862,4	85,6	331,8	234,0	70,5
Vologda Oblast	890,2	845,4	95,0	404,8	318,7	78,7
Murmansk Oblast	859,7	686,7	79,9	72,3	58,0	80,3

Source: here and in tables 4–8 and in the image 1 calculated by: Unified Interdepartmental Statistical Information System (UISIS). Available at: <https://www.fedstat.ru/>

In 2019, all ENR regions, with the exception of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug and the Murmansk Oblast, were characterized by a natural decline of rural population (Table 4). The most unfavorable situation is in the Republic of Karelia. The largest migration outflow of rural population was recorded in the Arkhangelsk Oblast and the Nenets AO (11–14 per mille). In turn, a positive balance of migration growth in 2019 was recorded only in the Vologda Oblast.

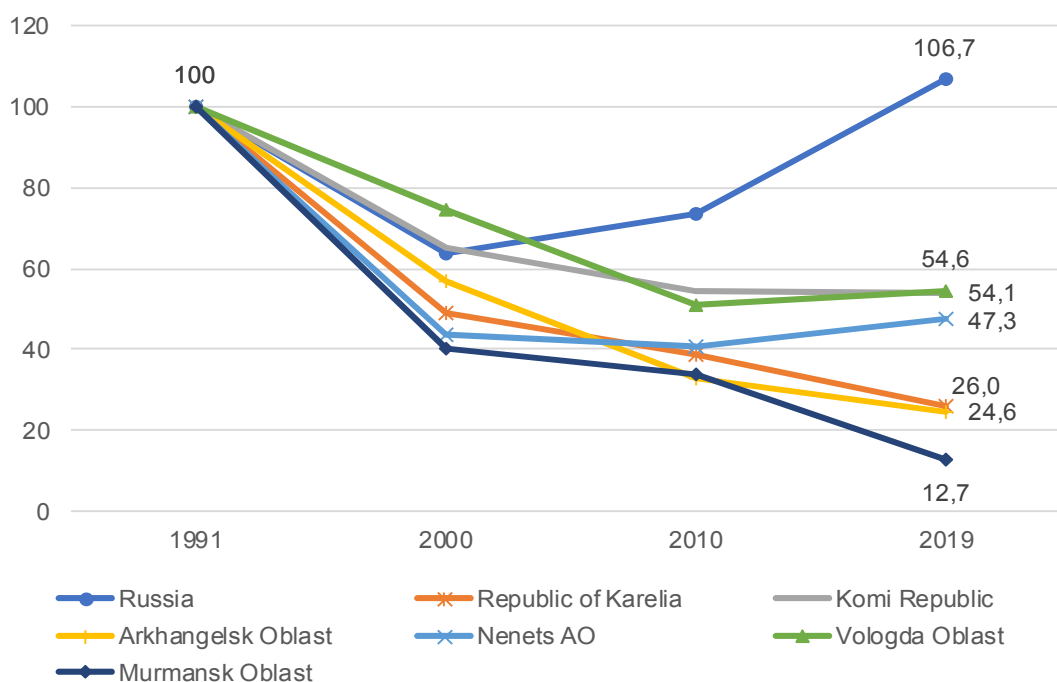
Table 4. Coefficients of natural and migration population growth, per mille (per 1,000 residents)

Territory	Natural population growth				Migration population growth	
	Urban population		Rural population		Urban population	Rural population
	2000	2019	2000	2019	2019	2019
Russia	-6.3	-1.7	-7.3	-3.5	2.5	0.3
Republic of Karelia	-6.8	-3.7	-10.7	-12.2	0.7	-9.0
Komi Republic	-2.5	-1.7	-6.7	-5.0	-10.3	-6.3
Nenets AO	-0.2	5.9	0.9	1.3	7.4	-14.0
Arkhangelsk Oblast (without Autonomous Okrug)	-	-3.1	-	-9.1	-0.6	-10.9
Vologda Oblast	-5.3	-2.6	-11.4	-9.3	-2.8	1.0
Murmansk Oblast	-3.1	-2.7	-1.9	1.6	-6.8	-3.2

The basis of the economic development of most rural areas is agriculture, which provides most jobs in rural areas. The overall level of development of a territory, including infrastructure, and the attractiveness of an area for living depends on the state of agricultural production. The territory of the Northern Economic Region is characterized by unfavorable farming conditions: severe climatic conditions (several territories of the district are the regions of the Far North and the areas equated to them), low quality of the fertile layer, swampiness, and high forest cover of most territory. At the end of 2019, the volume of agricultural production in value terms in the ENR regions amounted to only 1.1% of the total Russian volume. In 2019, 53.8% of the ENR agricultural output was produced in the Vologda Oblast; 17.0% – in the Arkhangelsk Oblast; 17.5% – in the Komi Republic; 7.3% – in the Republic of Karelia; 2.8% – in the Murmansk Oblast; 1.5% – in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug.

While Russia's physical volume of agricultural production exceeded the level of 1991 by 6.7% in late 2019, all ENR regions saw a decrease in this indicator's values: by 45% – in the Vologda Region and the Komi Republic, by 87% – in the Murmansk Region, by 74–75% – in the Arkhangelsk Oblast and the Republic of Karelia (Image 1).

Image 1: Index of the physical volume of agricultural production, in % to 1991



The key development problem in most rural areas of Russia is an extremely low level of improvement of settlements with basic communal goods. Thus, in 2019, only 36% of rural housing stock was equipped with all types of amenities (Table 5). A high value of this indicator (80%) was recorded in 2019 in the Murmansk Oblast (79%); the lowest values appeared in the Republic of Karelia and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug (less than 5%).

Table 5. Share of the housing stock area provided with all types of improvement in total area of the housing stock of a subject of the Russian Federation, %

Territory	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2019 to 2013, p.p.
Russia	26.0	28.3	30.8	31.5	32.6	34.2	36.3	10.3
Republic of Karelia	10.1	3.3	4.1	4.2	4.7	4.7	4.7	-5.4
Komi Republic	6.3	6.2	6.1	6.3	6.1	5.9	5.9	-0.4
Nenets AO	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.7	3.7	4.0	1.0
Arkhangelsk Oblast (without Autonomous Okrug)	6.6	6.5	6.6	6.6	6.4	6.6	6.6	0.0
Vologda Oblast	11.8	12.4	12.8	13.2	13.3	13.4	13.7	1.9
Murmansk Oblast	82.4	79.9	80.1	82.9	82.1	79.8	78.9	-3.5

Another important problem is the poor quality of road infrastructure in municipalities. In 2019, 48% of local roads (most are in rural areas) did not meet the regulatory requirements, in the Arkhangelsk and Vologda oblasts – 96 and 73%, respectively (Table 6).

Table 6. Share of public roads of local significance that do not meet regulatory requirements, %

Territory	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Russia	45.0	44.6	41.7	43.9	43.4	44.8	46.5	46.8	47.2	48.0
Republic of Karelia	18.4	18.5	22.7	28.8	29.4	26.6	39.5	47.0	46.4	48.0
Komi Republic	63.2	58.2	60.0	58.3	56.5	54.8	52.7	51.1	53.8	55.7
Nenets AO	88.2	88.8	96.4	96.7	96.7	98.8	93.3	91.5	92.8	93.2
Arkhangelsk Oblast (without Autonomous Okrug)	98.1	98.0	98.7	97.6	96.9	96.4	96.2	96.1	96.3	96.0
Vologda Oblast	7.9	51.5	39.9	51.4	63.6	64.8	74.2	72.8	72.0	72.5
Murmansk Oblast	3.8	5.6	19.6	15.0	17.6	19.7	18.3	20.2	29.1	21.2

According to the results of 2019, available resources of rural households were, on average, only 64% of the level of the country's urban settlements (Table 7). In all ENR regions, the value of this indicator was higher than the national average: the highest value was recorded in the Arkhangelsk and Murmansk oblasts in 2019 (91–93%), the lowest – in the Komi Republic (77%).

Table 7. Ratio of household disposable resources in rural and urban areas, %

Territory	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2019 to 2014, p.p.
Russia	62.3	65.3	63.5	67.3	64.9	63.8	1.4
Republic of Karelia	69.5	76.7	92.0	92.5	87.3	82.5	13.0
Komi Republic	83.1	88.3	88.0	76.3	76.9	71.7	-11.4
Nenets AO	89.9	81.9	82.3	88.5	90.3	67.0	-23.0
Arkhangelsk Oblast (without Autonomous Okrug)	81.8	74.8	94.4	83.9	92.8	79.5	-2.3
Vologda Oblast	66.6	67.2	86.3	84.0	80.4	83.7	17.1
Murmansk Oblast	106.3	92.4	84.7	90.2	91.1	93.1	-13.2

Rural territories (rural municipalities) differ significantly in a variety of parameters that characterize objective natural and climatic conditions and resources (potential) available in the territory, as well as an achieved level of socio-economic development. In this regard, while implementing federal and regional social and economic policies for the development of rural areas, it is important to consider the features and conditions of different types of territories.

Next, we explore socio-economic development features of designated (Tab. 8) types of rural territories. To do this, it is advisable to conduct an analysis in accordance with the following approach. 9 key indicators were selected (presented in the note to table 8) that

characterize the development of municipalities. For each district, we calculated the ratio of the value in a region (urban district) with the average value for a corresponding subject of the Russian Federation. Then we calculated an arithmetic mean of corresponding ratios for municipalities belonging to each type (the results of the values obtained are presented later).

Thus, the authors proposed a typology of rural territories in the European North of Russia (70 municipal regions and urban districts, where the share of rural population is higher than 25% among total population) for the following reasons (Table 8): by the share of rural population among total population of a municipality; by the periphery – remoteness from large towns; by economic specialization.

Table 8. Average ratio of indicators of socio-economic development of rural municipal regions and urban districts by type of a territory with average values of these indicators for the subjects of the NWFD at the end of 2019, %

Type of territory	PD	VA	PH	I	OR*	R	MS	VS	CA
Typology by rural population share									
Completely rural (share of rural population is 100%) – 40% of total number of analyzed rural territories (25.2% of total number of municipal regions and urban districts of the ENR)	52.5	233.5	132.2	39.7	23.9	147.7	88.5	21.3	126.8
Mostly rural (share of rural population is 50-99%) – 20% of total number of analyzed rural territories (12.6% of total number of municipal regions and urban districts of the ENR)	57.2	234.6	117.9	213.5	27.6	123.9	97.5	201.1	76.0
Mostly urban (share of rural population is 25-49%) – 40% of total number of analyzed rural territories (25,2% of total number of municipal regions and urban districts of the ENR)	81.8	122.5	118.0	77.8	25.4	118.3	94.8	50.4	65.8
Type of territory by periphery									
Close periphery of the 1 order (7.2% of its total number)	104.3	625.3	111.4	87.8	30.9	117.4	102.4	52.8	254.8
Close periphery of the 2 order (8.7%)	116.5	213.1	113.7	92.6	29.7	118.6	94.6	55.8	118.8
Close periphery of the 3 order (33.3%)	80.3	152.6	116.7	79.3	24.7	119.0	95.4	51.5	67.6
Average periphery of the 1 order (10.1%)	47.2	182.9	132.3	20.2	21.1	129.1	82.7	10.4	94.2
Average periphery of the 2 order (4.3%)	39.6	79.3	125.0	16.3	31.1	128.8	87.7	35.0	89.6
Far periphery (36.2%)	39.7	143.5	132.0	129.3	23.9	149.7	91.8	113.5	74.5
Type of territory by economic specialization									
Mostly agricultural specialization (23.2% of its total number)	72.7	174.7	125.6	51.1	20.8	134.9	85.3	15.3	87.3
Agro-industrial (26.1%)	76.2	343.6	120.3	58.5	26.6	122.3	88.5	28.6	122.1
Depressive agro-industrial (18.8%)	34.7	118.0	135.7	17.1	20.8	146.9	83.7	14.7	71.0
Extracting (11.6%)	98.6	180.5	104.7	357.6	35.5	118.6	107.7	357.4	71.2
Mostly industrial (13.0%)	60.1	92.2	126.4	41.3	27.8	132.7	108.6	92.8	90.1
Service (7.2%)	38.9	46.6	122.0	182.8	25.4	125.6	105.0	30.9	86.6

The symbols in the table are as follows: PD – population density; VA – volume of agricultural production per 1 resident; PH – provision of population with houses; I – investment volume per 1 resident (excluding small businesses); OR – share of own budget revenues; R – local budget revenues per 1 resident; MS – average monthly salary; VS – volume of shipment of own-production goods per 1 resident; CA – commissioning of apartment buildings per 1 resident.

* Absolute average value for a group of municipalities is presented, not the ratio with the region's average, %.

It is established that the most developed territories are those adjacent to large and major towns (a near periphery of the 1st and 2nd order) and ones with agro-industrial and extracting specialization; a lower level of development is typical for municipalities of the far periphery. Specific features of the development of each territory type are revealed.

Next, we explore the main characteristics of the state program of the Russian Federation “Integrated development of rural areas” (approved by the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation no. 696, dated May 31, 2019). This state program is currently a key mechanism for the development of rural areas. The program implementation period is 2020–2025. A responsible executor of the program is the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation. The objectives of the state program are:

- 1) to maintain the share of rural population in the total population of the Russian Federation at the level of at least 25.1% in 2025 (in the 2017 base year – 25.7%);
- 2) to achieve the ratio of average monthly available resources of rural and urban households to 75.5% in 2025 (in the 2017 base year – 67.0%);
- 3) to increase the share of total area of comfortable residential premises in rural settlements to 43.2% in 2025 (in the 2017 base year – 32.6%).

The state program “Integrated development of rural territories” includes 5 directions (subprograms) that implement 3 departmental target programs (DTP) and 5 departmental projects (DP) using the following mechanisms and tools: social payments, social hiring, compact construction, housing (mortgage) credits (loans), consumer credits (loans); development of a network of highways leading from the network of public roads to socially significant objects of settlements located on the RT, objects of production and processing of products; projects for integrated rural development; compensation of costs for apprenticeship contracts concluded with employees, costs for practical training, preferential lending for infrastructure development; projects for the improvement of rural territories; development of gasification and water supply, projects of complex arrangement of sites for compact housing development; formation and annual update of a database and indicators of the level of socio-economic state of rural territories (rural agglomerations); training of authorities on the development and implementation of projects, holding annual events aimed at promoting and encouraging achievements in the field of integrated rural development.

People are the main source of power in any democratic and social state, and they implement their power directly or by forming/participating in the formation of various levels of government. For Russia, the largest country in the world, it is always important to efficiently manage the vast space of the country, considering the specifics of different types of territories and interests of the country’s residents.

In recent years, federal authorities pay significant attention to the necessity to purposely manage the country’s spatial development, to form, and to implement the state policy of regional development. In accordance with the Presidential Decree no. 13 “On the approval of the fundamentals of the state policy of regional development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025”, dated January 16, 2017, the goals of this policy are to ensure equal opportunities for the realization of the economic, political, and social rights of Russian citizens established by the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws throughout the country, to improve their quality of life, to ensure sustainable economic growth and scientific and technological development of the regions, to increase the competitiveness of the Russian economy on world markets on the basis of balanced and sustainable socio-economic development of the subjects of the Federation and municipalities, as well as to maximally involve population in solving regional and local problems. One of the priority tasks of this policy is to clarify the powers of federal state authorities, state authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation, and local self-government bodies, to improve their financial support, and to organize the effective execution of these powers (with the maximum involvement of population in state and municipal management), including the introduction of additional mechanisms for attracting citizens of the Russian Federation to the participation in state and municipal management, increasing their civic responsibility in addressing issues of territories’ socio-economic and political development, as well as mechanisms for taking into account population’s opinion in addressing these issues.

There are great opportunities for involving the population in the direct solution of local issues and problems at the settlement level (in rural settlements and rural localities).

In practice, effective forms of population’s public participation are territorial public self-government, self-taxation of citizens and local referendums, initiative budgeting, participation of residents in the development and implementation of development strategies for municipalities, including rural settlements. Next, we explore them in detail.

1. Territorial public self-government

In accordance with the Federal Law no. 131-FZ “On the general principles of the organization of local self-government in the Russian Federation”, dated October 6, 2003, territorial public self-government is understood as the self-organization of citizens at their place of residence in a territory of a settlement, inner-city territory of a federal significance city, urban district, or an inner-city district for an independent and responsible implementation of their own initiatives on local issues. TPS can be organized within such territories of citizens’ residence: entrance of an apartment building, an apartment building, a group of apartment buildings, a residential micro-district, a rural locality that is not a settlement, or other territories of residence.

Activity areas of modern Russian TPS include: protection of the rights and interests of residents; implementation of social projects; work with children and adolescents; control over trade and quality of various services; coordination of land use; participation in the protection of public order; organization of leisure activities of residents; maintenance and improvement of a territory; repair and operation of housing stock; organization of charitable and volunteer events, etc.

The TPS activity, if regional and district authorities are interested in it, can have a significant economic and social impact. In the Arkhangelsk Oblast, with the support of the Institute of Public and Humanitarian Initiatives and allocation of financial resources for the TPS activities from the regional budget, local population implemented 54 projects worth 1.75 million rubles over four years (the early – mid-2000s), which produced an economic effect of nearly 30 million rubles. (Tyurin, 2007).

According to the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation (Report on the results...), as of March 2020, approximately 32.0 thousand TPS operate within the borders of 6.7 thousand municipalities across the country. The TPS institute is distributed extremely unevenly, but it is more or less represented in 84 of the 85 constituent entities of the Russian Federation (with the exception of the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug). However, in order to expand the geography of the TPS activities and achieve the greatest social and economic impact, the state support for TPS is required through specially formed state programs of the subjects of the Russian Federation that provide co-financing of TPS projects. It is also advisable to create a Council for the TPS Development under a head of a municipal region, municipal district, or urban district, which will include the heads of TPS bodies and their representatives, head of a municipality, administration specialists, and representatives of public organizations.

2. Self-taxation of citizens and local referendums

With the adoption of Federal Law no. 131-FZ of October 6, 2003 “On the general principles of the organization of local self-government in the Russian Federation” and its entry into force throughout the country on January 1, 2009, self-taxation of citizens became common in many subjects of the Russian Federation. This law understands the means of citizens’ self-taxation as their one-time payments to solve specific local issues. The amount of payments in the order of citizens’ self-taxation is set in an absolute value equal for all residents of a municipality (a locality that is part of a settlement, an inner-city district, an inner-city territory of a city of federal significance, an urban district, or located on an inter-settlement territory within the boundaries of a municipal district) with the exception of certain categories of citizens, whose number cannot exceed 30% of the total number of residents of a municipality and for whom the amount of payments can be reduced. Issues of introduction and use of one-time payments of citizens are decided at a local referendum and at a meeting of citizens in cases when less than 100 people live in a municipality.

An approximate list of activities, which funds of residents’ self-taxation can be spent on, of a settlement includes the following (based on the experience of introducing self-taxation in municipalities of various subjects of the Russian Federation): improvement of settlements of a municipality; repair and reconstruction of roads, bridges, baths, paramedic and midwifery stations, sports facilities, housing and communal services, kindergartens, libraries, clubs, and other cultural and educational, medical and preventive institutions in settlements; construction and reconstruction of monuments, recreation areas, wells, bathing places, springs within the boundaries of a settlement; other measures to develop the socio-cultural and engineering infrastructure of a settlement.

According to the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation (Information on the results), in 2019, the volume of citizens' self-taxation funds amounted to 287.5 million rubles (compared to 2013, its volume increased by 11.2 times). The geography of self-taxation includes 35 regions. Self-taxation of citizens was introduced in 2019 in 2,787 municipalities, which is 13.4% of the total number of municipalities. The largest volume of self-taxation revenues in 2019 (95.5%) was received on ten subjects of the Russian Federation: Republic of Tatarstan (246.6 million rubles; 85.8% of the total volume of all self-taxation funds in the country), Kirov Oblast (9.2 million rubles; 3.2%), Perm Oblast (4.9 million rubles; 1.7%), Samara Oblast (2.8 million rubles; 1.0%), Lipetsk Oblast (2.3 million rubles; 0.8%), Kaluga Oblast (2.1 million rubles; 0.7%), Republic of Mordovia (2.0 million rubles; 0.7%), Altai Krai (1.5 million rubles; 0.5%), Republic of Bashkortostan (1.5 million rubles; 0.5%), Udmurt Republic (1.5 million rubles; 0.5%).

Several Russian regions use a mechanism for encouraging local self-government bodies and population to introduce self-taxation by providing inter-budget transfers from the budget of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation to local budgets to resolve local issues, carried out with the participation of self-taxation funds of citizens. Thus, in the Penza, Vladimir, and Ulyanovsk oblasts, 1 ruble is provided from the regional budget for each ruble of citizens; in the Kirov Oblast, 1.5 rubles are provided from the regional budget for each ruble raised by self-taxation of citizens.; in the Tomsk Oblast, 3 rubles are allocated for each ruble of self-taxation funds from the regional budget; in the Perm Oblast – 5 rubles, in the Republic of Tatarstan – 4 rubles.

3. Proactive budgeting

Proactive budgeting is a form of direct participation of population in the implementation of local self-governance by putting forward initiatives for spending a certain part of budget funds. Two main practices (technologies) of proactive budgeting exist in Russia: program for supporting local initiatives (PSLI) and participatory budgeting (PB) (Proactive Budgeting, 2017).

As practice shows, the project "People's Budget", which has been implemented in the Vologda Oblast since 2015, is an example of the implementation of proactive budgeting and an efficient tool for involving the population in local management processes. Within the framework of this project, the ideas that are formed locally are financed through the joint participation of population, business, regional and local budgets. The purpose of a competitive selection is to determine the municipalities of a region, whose budgets will be provided with subsidies from the regional budget for the implementation of projects. In 2015, 60 projects were implemented within the framework of this project, and 976 projects in all 26 districts of the region in 2020 (the total amount of subsidies from the regional budget for co-financing projects in 2020 amounted to 210 million rubles).

Issues that are solved by projects within the framework of the "People's Budget" in the Vologda Oblast: 1) housing and communal services (construction of wells, repair of water pipes, gas pipelines, construction of heating networks, etc.) – 23% of all projects in 2017; 2) providing population with services of cultural organizations (repair of cultural centers, purchase of equipment for cultural centers, tailoring of stage costumes, development of tourism in the settlement) – 15%; 3) construction and repair of playgrounds – 13%; 4) other landscaping (construction of pedestrian bridges, purchase of containers, repair of rafts and rafts for rinsing, cutting down emergency trees, etc.) – 12%; 5) development of physical culture and sports (construction of sports grounds, repair and construction of rinks, stadiums, repair of FOK (sports and recreation complex), purchase of sports equipment) – 11%; 6) repair and maintenance of street lighting – 9%; 7) improvement of places of mass recreation – 6%; 8) construction and repair of monuments – 6%; 9) fire safety issues – 4%; 10) provision of public communication services – 2%.

4. Involvement of population, experts, and professionals in the processes of strategic development of rural areas

Success of the development of rural areas and rural settlements is now largely determined by the presence of heads of municipalities, population, and business representatives of a strategic vision of the prospects, opportunities, and mechanisms for the development of certain territories. According to the global and Russian practice, when forming an efficient system of strategic management and a team of professionals and stakeholders, it is possible to

attract funds effectively and sufficiently (from higher budgets, businesses, population, various funds) for advancing territories, to develop and implement effective and successful projects for the development of a municipality, to involve a maximum size of population and business representatives in the territorial development processes.

Smetanino locality, situated in the Verkhovazhsky District of the Vologda Oblast, is a striking and successful example, where it was possible to achieve a lot in a short period of time with an active initiative and support of a deputy of the RF State Duma and a team of experts and activists. “Experience shows that in places where the residents unite for the future of their locality, everything turns out better than expected. Over one year, we achieved the following results: began gasification of the locality, opened a new farm, built a new FAP (a paramedic and midwife station), modernized a sports base, revived a destroyed temple, created landscaped green areas, and so on. We did not need major budget expenditures to implement all this: we based our activities on the resources of local residents and businesses. People voluntarily invested time, effort, and money in their locality” (From the hinterland...).

It is also important to organize professional teams of experts, specialists, and activists interested in the development of rural areas in each subject of the Russian Federation (following the example of the project of the All-Russian People’s Front “Locality. Development territory”). More information about this project is available on the website of the All-Russian People’s Front (<https://onf.ru/project/81716/news/>) and in the VK group (https://vk.com/proekt_pro_selo). The purpose of this project is to analyze the implementation of national projects in rural areas and to form new approaches to rural development. The project aims at monitoring the implementation of national projects and state programs that affect the development of rural areas, developing proposals to improve the quality of life in rural areas, and involving local residents in the development of their settlements.

4. Prospects for the development of rural areas in Russia

The situation that has developed since 2020 and is associated with the coronavirus pandemic, as well as the manifestation of a number of crisis phenomena in the economy, has predetermined many challenges for all countries. Adequate and effective countermeasures will largely determine the success of any country’s development in the coming years.

In 2020, various Russian experts *identified trends in the development of rural areas* that will determine the transformation of localities in the near- and long-term perspective (Russian Agricultural Bank...): robotization and automation of the agricultural sector; growth in demand for organic products and local agricultural products, opening of online stores selling farm products; transition to a rational use of natural resources; development of ecological and rural tourism; return migration and development of eco-settlements; expansion of a territorial area suitable for agriculture and living; increased requirements for rural residents’ education level and technical literacy. According to data of the Center for Industry Expertise of Russian Agricultural Bank, 2–3 million people may return to the countryside within a few years (Center for Industry Expertise...) due to the threats of the coronavirus pandemic and consequences of the global economic crisis. In order to meet the demand for moving to rural areas and to secure/preserve residents in these territories, starting from 2020, Russia is implementing a preferential mortgage at a rate not exceeding 3% per annum for the purchase and construction of housing in rural areas.

In the Spatial Development Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2025 (approved by the Decree of the RF Government no.207-p., dated February 13, 2019), *the solution of the problem of increasing the stability of the settlement system due to the socio-economic development of rural areas* (taking into account population density, different nature of the development and use of such territories, natural conditions, distance from major cities) is planned through:

- improving the living conditions of residents of rural localities, including the ensuring of a sustainable reduction in the share of uninhabitable housing stock, increasing the level of rural localities improvement, providing communal infrastructure; boosting their transport accessibility to the nearest inter-municipal service centers through the development and bringing to a standard state of the network of regional and local roads, stimulating the development of public transport;

- promoting the development of small and medium-sized towns and large rural settlements as inter-municipal service centers for rural areas, providing the population and entrepreneurs with various types of services;

- improving their economic competitiveness by promoting unique local brands, encouraging the development of consumer, credit, and other forms of cooperation, farming, increasing the availability of agricultural markets for small and medium-sized producers, supporting the development of specialized infrastructure for storing agricultural products, introducing technologies and equipment for deep processing of agricultural raw materials, and promoting the development of land reclamation facilities, involvement in the agricultural turnover of unused land and arable land in rural areas suitable for conducting effective agriculture;

- encouraging the diversification of employment and expanding support for initiatives of population in the field of entrepreneurship, not related to agriculture too; assisting the development of tourist and supporting infrastructure (transport, energy, utilities, engineering protection facilities) in rural areas and promoting their tourist resources on the domestic and international tourist markets, etc.

We have developed an organizational and economic mechanism that provides conditions for the integrated and sustainable development of northern rural areas, and it is aimed at creating conditions for the diversification of the rural economy, increasing the efficiency of using the existing potential of rural areas, advancing the comfort of living in them (development of engineering and social infrastructure), creating favorable institutional conditions (development of local self-government, cooperation, inter-municipal cooperation, business support institutions, public-private and municipal-private partnerships).

The authors substantiate conceptual provisions of implementing the authorities' differentiated approach to the development of various types of rural areas in the European North of Russia. On the basis of the proposed typologies of rural territories, we identified their types for management purposes ("successful", "restructuring", and "problem" territories). For each one, the tasks and directions (tools) of socio-economic development policy are defined. Thus, for the first type, it is important to create incentives for their self-development and further sustainable economic growth; for the second type – to diversify economic activities in the territories, identify and implement strategic priorities for their development, activate the development of small and medium-sized businesses; for the third type – to ensure the provision of a necessary level of services to population, preserve and develop necessary social and engineering infrastructure in order to prevent a significant migration outflow of population from these territories.

During the coronavirus pandemic and after the end of an active phase of the fight against it, the *key tasks, measures, and events for the development of rural areas in Russia are the following.*

1. To ensure the complete implementation of measures and achievement of the goals of the RF state program "Integrated development of rural areas" in accordance with the amount of financial support for this program, specified in its original version. In addition, it is advisable to expand the scope of the state program's activities in terms of solving the tasks of diversifying rural economy and creating new jobs, reducing the significant migration outflow from rural areas, more extensively developing a centralized water supply and sewerage in rural areas, attracting and securing qualified personnel in rural areas, etc. Within the framework of the state program for the development of agriculture and regulation of markets for agricultural products, raw materials and food (implementation period – 2013–2025), approved by the Decree of the RF Government no.717 dated July 14, 2012 (ed. on May 28, 2020), it would be advisable to provide subsidies to agricultural producers for the introduction of robotic systems, systems and mechanisms based on precision farming technologies, artificial intelligence, and other modern information and innovative technologies.

2. In terms of the economic diversification and employment of rural population, it is necessary to ensure equal access of agricultural producers to the means of state support; to provide measures of state support for the development of small and medium-sized businesses in rural areas, including rural tourism (ecological, event, ethnographic, gastronomic, etc.), which has significant potential in the coming years, taking into account possible remaining restrictions on international movement.

It is advisable to approach the development of tourism and encourage urban residents to move to rural areas from a marketing point of view, including the formation of local brands (for example, gastronomic ones), introduction of a full-time specialist in the development of tourism and recreation in the economic departments of municipal districts.

3. To create conditions for attracting extra-budgetary sources of financing for investments in the social and engineering infrastructure of the countryside, including the introduction of the practice of implementing projects on the basis of public-private and municipal-private partnerships.

4. To ensure the development of various forms of agricultural cooperation, for example, through the measures of its state support like grant support directed to the development of the material and technical base of agricultural consumer cooperatives; co-financing from the federal budget for the development of cooperative infrastructure in the regions (regional funds for financial support of cooperatives, centers of competence and advanced training of cooperative personnel, cooperative distribution network).

In general, the development of Russian rural areas may be successful, in our opinion, only if all authorities use a comprehensive and systematic approach to their development, and if there is the provision of effective interaction between authorities, business, population, scientific community in these processes, introduction of modern innovative technologies in the agro-industrial complex, and management of municipalities, as well as an active dissemination and support of successful and effective forms of public participation in the development of rural areas described earlier.

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