

VIII International research-to-practice conference “Strategy and Techniques of Socio-Economic Reforms: Regional Aspect”

According to the “Strategy of economic security of the Russian Federation up to 2030”, one of the challenges to the country’s economic security is uneven spatial development and increasing differentiation of regions and municipal units in terms of the level and pace of socio-economic development. In order to overcome the challenges it is necessary to better disclose the potential of each region, create a favorable social climate taking into account their advantages and profile.

The VIII International research-to-practice conference “Strategy and Techniques of Socio-Economic Reforms: Regional Aspect” held in Vologda (December, 12–14th, 2018) at the Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences was devoted to the search for opportunities and mechanisms for creating such conditions. The main focus of the conference supervisors was to find ways and effective tools for implementing socio-economic reforms that will ensure that Russia achieves sustainable development goals. In their opinion, much of this development depends on Russian regions.

The conference included 4 sections, a plenary session and the XVIII International research-to-practice conference “Young scientists for region’s economy”. In total, 111 people from 13 regions of Russian, from Belarus, Armenia and Donetsk People’s Republic presented their research reports at the conference.

The key event of the conference was the plenary session which was attended by 300 people – leading Russian researchers, representatives of universities and academic institutions, managers and experts of federal, regional and local governments, teachers, students and graduate students. Well-known Russian economists and sociologists made a speech at the Government of the Vologda Oblast, including RAS academician V.M. Polterovich, RAS Corresponding Member V.N. Lazhentsev, Doctor of Economics D.B. Kuvalin, Doctor of Sociology V.V. Lokosov, and Doctor of Sociology V.V. Markin. The conference was supported by the Government of the Vologda Oblast, the Vologda City Administration, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, and the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The Oblast’s Deputy Governor Vitalii Valer’evich Tushinov noted at the opening of the plenary session that creating and developing applied science is impossible without the development of fundamental science; and without the development of applied science an economic breakthrough is unachievable. He stressed that the conference can become a platform for beneficial cooperation between public authorities and the scientific community.

The first part of the plenary session covered the problems of regions’ sustainable development and improving the quality of public administration. RAS Academician, Deputy

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Director of Lomonosov Moscow State University, *Viktor Meerovich Polterovich* made a report on “The Institutions of Catching-up Development and the Problems of Regions’ Economy Modernization”. In his opinion, the goal of Russia’s long-term development strategy is to catch up with Western European countries in terms of well-being, technology and human capital, development of civil society; to achieve the same level of GDP (GRP) per capita taking into account the purchasing power parity of at least 50% of per capita US GDP. Polterovich stressed that few developing countries have achieved such success. Among them are the countries of the so-called “economic miracle”, whose experience should be adopted, yet taking into account the fact that direct adoption of Western phenomena is not always useful and the needs of developing and developed countries can be very different from each other.

According to V.M. Polterovich, all of these “miracle” countries used indicative planning and had a specialized agency for strategic planning. In his opinion, the key to a reform could be the creation of such a federal agency for development headed by a talented leader. He explained that the role of institutions of catching-up development lies in stimulating the development of a region based on one of the most advanced regions of Russia – the Republic of Tatarstan.

RAS corresponding member, *Vitaly Nikolaevich Lazhentsev* (Institute of Socio-Economic and Energy Problems of the North Komi Science Center, Ural Branch of RAS) spoke about the natural resource economy and its role in the strategic development of Northern regions. He stressed that the challenges in environmental management are not in “to mine or not to mine”, but in a variety of ways to assess resource capacities and their correct use. Lazhentsev believes that the leading position, especially in the Arctic and Northern regions, should be given to bio-resource economy, first of all, to the land fund. He highlighted several priority objectives in this field: the distribution of the entire land fund and all agricultural land by ownership and use; increasing the role of municipal units in land

use management; arranging forestry according to international regulations, and restoration of forestry enterprises as organizers of forest resource reproduction.

The main problems of Russia’s spatial development and their possible solutions were covered in the report of *Dmitry Borisovich Kuvalin*, Doctor of Economics, Deputy Director at Institute of National Economic Forecasting of RAS. He highlighted the strong inequality in regions’ development and the associated outflow of able-bodied and skilled population to the most developed economic centers. In his opinion, lack of sources in the regions is determined by controversial shares of tax income redistribution in favor of the federal center. D.B. Kuvalin proposed to leave more resources to regions, to ease bureaucratic pressure in terms of regulations on the use of funds, and to establish an agency that would be responsible for the development of the regional policy.

The second part of the plenary session was devoted to contemporary problems of the socio-economic development of in Russian regions. Director of the Vologda Research Center of RAS, *Alexandra Anatol’evna Shabunova*, who presented the report “Socio-demographic challenges of regional development”, noted that the demographic challenges include the transformation of the demographic structure, in particular the ageing of the world population. Moreover, the basic social institutions of family and marriage are being transformed: family relations are becoming more unstable, single- and two-child families are becoming more widespread. The problems of resettlement – compression of developed space of rural territories of Russia, concentration of the rural population in certain zones – are mounting.

An important aspect of modern development is the transformation of the information and communication space. The development of telecommunications can help increase the connectivity of space, as well as the availability of services (including education and health) both at the personal level and from the point of view of social development, which is especially

important for Russia with its vast territories. At the same time, Russia's lagging behind the world's leading states in the development of digital technologies and the widening gap between urban and rural areas in the coverage of modern technologies exacerbate the existing problems. The introduction of new digital technologies entails changes in professional knowledge and skills. This determines the need to improve the system of vocational education.

Concluding her speech, A.A. Shabunova stressed that in order to form a harmonious society it is important to take into account both social and technological challenges, otherwise the balance in the functioning of system elements is disturbed, which in turn leads to its deformation and destabilization and the growing social tension.

Doctor of Sociology, Director of Institute of Socio-Economic Studies of Population of the Russian Academy of Sciences (ISESP RAS), *Vyacheslav Veniaminovich Lokosov* spoke about the possibilities of applying the method of extreme critical indicators to implement national priorities. As he noted, weak scientific justification of target strategic priorities leads to problems in their implementation. He gave an example of the situation with a number of targets set by 2012 May decrees of President of Russia (May 7th, 2012), according to which by 2018 the working hours were to grow by half, but in fact this parameter increased by only 6%. The reason for the stagnating social sphere, in his opinion, lies in several factors: the stagnation of wages around the world with continuously growing corporate income; the reduced share of economically active population; the reduced number of new jobs and the prolonged unemployment; rapidly growing inequality and polarization; increased part-time employment; the declining income and the growing unemployment among college graduates. Vladimir Lokosov briefly described the method of using extreme critical indicators, which, in his opinion, can be used in regional strategies for socio-economic development.

Vyacheslav Nikolaevich Bobkov, Doctor of Economics, Head of the Laboratory for the

Standard of Living and the Quality of Life at ISESP RAS focused on the results of the pilot project to strengthen the targeting of social support and economic sustainability of low-income families with children. Together with the Department of Social Security of the Vologda Oblast, the project developed a new model of support for low-income families that would help them increase their income to a higher level than the level of the existing social support system. According to him, the experience of the Vologda Oblast in social security makes it one of the pilot regions of the Ministry of Labor of the Russian Federation to continue the strengthening of targeted social support and economic stability of this category of families.

Lyudmila Sergeevna Siluanova, Candidate of Sciences (Economics), Director of the Higher School of Economics, Management and Law at Northern (Arctic) Federal University (NArFU), made a report “Involvement of Young People in the Strategic Management of a Region as a Response to Migration Risks of Northern Territories” and focused on the prospects of increasing the migration attractiveness of Northern Russian territories, especially for the younger generation. In her opinion, it is necessary to provide young people with opportunities for self-development: participation in socially important volunteer projects and key projects in a region, acquire modern education in demand in the labor market. Siluanova spoke about the experience of NArFU in the implementation of network programs to provide world-class education, educational programs based on an “enterprise-university” model and practice-oriented training of students, as well as examples of young people's involvement in the processes of change management at the regional and municipal level.

Doctor of Sociology, Professor *Valerii Vasil'evich Markin* (Institute of Sociology of the Federal Research Center for Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences) analyzed the strategies and political and managerial practices of spatial development in Russia. He believes that after harsh criticism of the draft

spatial development Strategy of the Russian Federation, the content of this document has been significantly improved but it can work only if regional strategies are developed based on its conceptual provisions. According to the researcher, however, the analysis of current regional practices shows the inertial, reduction-administrative understanding of the problem of spatial development in Russia. The mechanisms to address this problem are public-municipal-private partnership on a high-tech basis, small and medium businesses, inter-regional and inter-municipal cooperation, social capital, comfortable environment, etc.

Mikhail Vladimirovich Morev, Head of the Laboratory for Social Processes and Public Administration Efficiency of the Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences, in his report “Regional Trends of Institutional Trust” focused on the increasing role of trust in the modern world. He noted that Russia does not possess a high level of institutional and interpersonal trust. In his opinion, the problem of low trust is caused by factors related to historical, socio-cultural characteristics of the country, with the transformation that took place in recent decades, as well as with modern problems of public administration efficiency. Against the background of increased tensions between the society and the authorities, the level of trust can serve as an indicator of how long-term and systemic this crisis will be.

The report of *Sergey Aleksandrovich Kozhevnikov*, Candidate of Sciences (Economics), Head of the Laboratory of Spatial Development and Productive Forces of the Vologda Research Center of RAS, touches upon the prospects of participation of the regions of the European North in the development of the Russian Arctic zone. The researcher believes that a huge natural resource potential of the European North and the Arctic (ENR) is not fully used as post-Soviet transformations have disrupted economic ties with other regions and destroyed the infrastructure and human capital of ENR. The problems of these territories

include the reduction of local population, the “primitivization” of their economy and the predominance of low redistribution production, crisis phenomena in agriculture, the reduction of cargo turnover, etc. It was concluded that there is a need for technological modernization of the Northern and Arctic territories, as well as competent management of transport and logistics infrastructure development.

Four sections were organized within the framework of the conference.

Section 1 “Problems of economic growth and sustainable development of territories” included a very wide range of issues, including the most acute problems of economic growth, economic security and spatial development of regions in the post-transformation period; the potential of Russian territories; various aspects of sustainable development; methodology and tools for managing socio-economic processes at the territorial level, etc.

The section was attended by the representatives of 12 institutions of science and higher education from various Russian regions and neighboring countries. Twenty-one reports were presented. Tamara Vitalievna Uskova, Deputy Director for Science of the Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Doctor of Economics, highlighted the key challenges for Russia’s economic security. Maria Aleksandrovna Pechenskaya, Senior Researcher, Head of laboratory, Candidate of Sciences (Economics), spoke about the development of the budget potential of Russian territories in the context of ensuring the country’s economic security. The reports of Yulia Georgievna Lavrikova (Director of the Institute of Economics of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Ural branch)); Maxim Vital’evich Fomin (senior researcher at the Department of Urban Geography and Spatial Development of the Institute of Socio-Political Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Candidate of Sciences (Political Science)); Marina Vital’evna Moroshkina (researcher at the Institute of Economics of the Karelian Research Center of

RAS), and Elena Sergeevna Gubanova (Head of the Department of Finance and Credit of Vologda State University, Doctor of Economics, Professor) were focused on spatial development.

Various aspects of economic growth and its contributing factors were presented in reports of Lyudmila Mikhailovna Rozanova (senior researcher at Institute of Economics of Karelian Research Center of RAS, Candidate of Sciences (Economics) and Yulia Mikhailovna Pasovets (associate professor at the Department of Sociology and Political Science of Kursk State University, Candidate of Sciences (Sociology)). The tools for assessing the average position of Russian regions in the value chains were reviewed by Evgenii Vladimirovich Lukin (deputy head at the Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences (VoIRC RAS), leading researcher, Candidate of Sciences (Economics)).

Anna Ivanovna Povarova (VoIRC RAS researcher) and Aleksei Yevgenevich Mel'nikov (junior researcher at VoIRC RAS) spoke about economic problems of regional development.

The issues of territories' sustainable development, various factors hindering this process were focused on by Aleksandr Borisovich Doveiko (associate professor at the Department of Sociology and Political Science at Voronezh State University, (Candidate of Sciences (Sociology)), Valerii Kuz'mich Egorov (Head of the International Department of Institute of Socio-Economic Studies of Population of RAS, Candidate of Sciences (History)); Pavel Mikhailovich Sovetov (Professor at the Department of Production Management at Vologda State Dairy Farming Academy by N.V. Vereshchagin, Candidate of Sciences (Economics)); Inna Mikhailovna Shneiderman (head of laboratory at Institute of Socio-Economic Studies of Population of RAS, Candidate of Sciences (Economics), associate professor) and Alla Konstantinovna Guzanova (senior researcher); and Elvira Olegovna Orlova (associate professor at Vologda State University, Candidate of Sciences (Economics)).

Section 2 “The Socio-Demographic Development of Regions: Problems and Prospects” covered

the following topics: civilizational potential of local territories' development in the North-West of Russia; demographic aspects of Russia's spatial development; regional features of the process of demographic aging in Russia; transformation of an institution of family and its role in the formation of children's human potential; the standard of living of retirees in Russia; the quality of working life; economic priorities of a young family; index approach to studying Russia's social potential, etc.

Among the most significant results of the section is a new view on the development of local territories and its civilizational potential proposed by Director of RAS Institute of Sociology – branch of the RAS Federal Research Center for Sociology – Doctor of Philosophy, Vladimir Vyacheslavovich Kozlovskii. Vadim Aleksandrovich Bezverbnyi (Deputy Director for strategic development at Institute of Socio-Political Research of RAS (ISPI RAS), head of the Department of Urban Geography and Spatial Development, Candidate of Sciences (Economics), associate professor at the Department of Demographic and Migration Policy at MGIMO University (Moscow)) put an emphasis on the correlation between demographic and territorial development of Russian regions, especially in the context of the Concept of spatial development of the country. As for the development of the theory of studying the performance of the age composition of the population, V.N. Barsukov (researcher at VoIRC RAS) proposed an understanding of population aging as a holistic, structural and systemic “phenomenon” caused by a set of processes of changes in the demographic, economic and social space. The definition of ageing as “an increase in the share of elderly people” narrows down the perception of ageing to a cause without the consequences. T.A. Guzhavina (leading researcher at VoIRC RAS, Candidate of Sciences (Philosophy)) presented the methodology and results of assessing social capital, according to which one third of the population has social capital above the average level. During the discussion it was recommended that it be

considered in the context of the concept of population quality. The report of Z.A. Hotkina (leading researcher of the laboratory of gender problems of ISEPN RAS (Moscow), Candidate of Sciences (Economics)) was devoted to the problem of gender differences in social status, in particular, health and wages, which remains relevant in Russia and globally. According to her, significantly weaker health status of men compared to women is a major challenge to the socio-economic development of the country. S.V. Kroshilin (associate professor at the Department of Economics and Management of the Faculty of Economics of State Socio-Humanitarian University (Kolomna)) spoke about the need to take into account the changes in the labor market in the system of training in the era of robotics, about the focus on the development of professional soft skills. The situation with the development of school education is also severe. M.A. Golovchin (senior researcher at VolRC RAS, Candidate of Sciences (Economics)), presenting the results of the study of reforms, noted the divergence existing in the socio-professional community of teachers, which is manifested in varying degrees of adaptability to the transformations taking place in school, different attitudes to changes in education, low activity in professional associations. The section included the issues of mental and social health, trends in educational migration, development of social infrastructure, quality of life, and the development of civil society. One of the general conclusions of the section was the recognition of the need to improve statistical accounting and monitoring system of socio-economic development, create accessible databases on the results of regional studies conducted on a single methodological basis.

The main objective of *Section 3 "Scientific and technological development of territories: regional trends and practices"* was to find and substantiate ways to develop scientific and technological space, trigger innovative processes in the regions to improve the competitiveness of the national economy and create conditions for improving the quality of life and human development.

15 reports were presented at the section. It was attended by M.S. Sokolov (Candidate of Sciences (Economics), associate professor at the Department of State and Municipal Administration at Plekhanov Russian University of Economics), A.A. Kobylko (Candidate of Sciences (Economics), leading researcher at Central Institute of Economics and Mathematics of RAS), V.N. Makoveev (Candidate of Sciences (Economics), academic secretary at Vologda State University), A.I. Metlaykhin (Candidate of Sciences (Economics), associate professor at the Department of Economic Theory, Accounting and Analysis at Vologda State University), I.M. Gulyi (Candidate of Sciences (Economics), associate professor at the Department of Transport Economics at Emperor Alexander I St. Petersburg State Transport University), S.N. Mishchuk (Candidate of Sciences (Economics), head of laboratory at Institute for Complex Analysis of Regional Problems of ERIFER RAS), and V.S. Uskov (Candidate of Sciences (Economics), senior research at the Laboratory of Innovation Economy at VolRC RAS).

The practical focus of the session confirms the interest of the real sector of economy. Thus, S.E. Elgaev, Director General at ZAO Mezon, spoke about the experience of creating a high-tech machine-building production in the region, as well as the difficulties and prospects of its development.

The participants of the event highly acknowledged him, noting that they had the opportunity to summarize their own research experience, get acquainted with the results of the research works of their colleagues and representatives of the real sector of economy.

Section 4 "Agricultural science and its role in ensuring the socio-economic development of the region" included discussion of the following issues: the impact of agriculture on the economic development of the Vologda Oblast; approaches to managing the development of rural areas in Russia; the role of cooperative forms of agriculture in the region; the development of feed production based on modern technologies; modern methods of sampling feed; the

development of dairy cattle breeding in the European North of Russia; food security in the regions, the development of agricultural production; problems and prerequisites for the development of biotechnology in the Vologda Oblast. The program of the section included a discussion of problems of promoting new scientific achievements and finding ways to develop the industry of dairy farming and feed production.

This section organized by Northwestern Dairy Farming and Grassland Management Research Institute – branch of VolIRC RAS – was attended by 45 researchers and experts from ten organizations: Northwestern Dairy Farming and Grassland Management Research Institute, Yaroslavl Yaroslavl Scientific Research Institute of livestock breeding and forage production – Federal State Budget Scientific Institution “Federal Williams Research Center of Forage Production and Agroecology”, the Department of Agriculture and Food Resources of the Vologda Oblast, Vologda Advisory Center for Agriculture, Vologda Dairy Farming Academy named after Vereshchagin, Vologda State University, Vologda Agro-Economic College, and breeding enterprises of Vologda and Cherepovets districts.

17 reports were presented at the section. The reports of Northwestern Dairy Farming and Grassland Management Research Institute presentations were presented by: Director K.A. Zadumkin, Candidate of Sciences (Economics) (report “On the need to reconsider

approaches to managing the development of rural territories in Russia”); N.Yu. Konovalova, head of the Department of Plant Production (“The development of forage production based on modern technologies of forage crops cultivation in conditions of the Russian European North”), P.A. Fomenko, senior researcher at the Department of Forage and Feeding of Farm Animals (“The chemical composition of feed harvested in the Vologda Oblast”), M.O. Selimyan, laboratory researcher at the Department of Farm Breeding (“The influence of exterior features of Ayrshire cows of first calving on milk producing ability”), I.V. Gusarov, head of the Department of Feed and Feeding of Farm Animals, Candidate of Sciences (Biology) (“The main arguments in favor of bison preservation”), and N.I. Abramova, head of the Department of Farm Animal Breeding, Candidate of Sciences (Agriculture). (“The development of dairy cattle breeding in the European North of Russia”).

The materials were discussed by: A.N. Naliukhin (associate professor at the Department of Plant Breeding, Agriculture and Agricultural Chemistry at Vologda Dairy Farming Academy named after Vereshchagin, Doctor of Economics), E.V. Balagurova (consultant at the Department of Animal Husbandry and Breeding of the Agricultural Production Office of DSKhiPR VO), L.L. Shabanova (chief livestock specialist at OAO Plempredpriyatie “Vologodskoe”, N.Yu. Konovalova (head of the Department of Crop



Plenary Session
A.A. Shabunova and V.M. Polterovich



At the Plenary Session



Participants of Section
 “Socio-Demographic Development of regions: Problems and Prospects”

Production at Northwestern Dairy Farming and Grassland Management Research Institute), and Alexei Vasil’evich Maklakhov (acting director at Institute of Management, Economics and Law of Vologda State University, Doctor of Economics).

Throughout the conference, academic representatives spoke about the importance of socio-economic reforms in conditions where Russian economy is in a difficult situation due to unfavorable political environment and lack of previously existing growth opportunities. The researchers stressed that reforms are needed, primarily aimed at consolidating the public, administration, business, civil society and science. Activities held in the framework of such

large-scale conferences help develop new ideas for the implementation of advanced research. In order to achieve the country’s sustainable development conference participants expressed their readiness to share the research results not only with each other, but also with the regions’ authorities, entrepreneurs and the public.

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The table demonstrates the results of a survey held among the participants of the VIII International research-to-practice conference to assess their satisfaction with its progress and results, as well as the level of organization of plenary and breakout sessions.

Results of express survey (on a ten-point scale: 1 point – low degree ... 10 – high degree)

Conference participants	No. of questionnaires	Satisfaction with progress and results	General organization
Section 1	19	9.8	9.8
Section 2	19	9.8	9.9
Section 3	19	9.6	9.6
Section 4	38	8.7	9.1
Total for all sections	95	9.5	9.6
Plenary session	64	9.2	9.3
Total for conference	159	9.4	9.5

The material was prepared by the VoIRC RAS staff:
 Deputy Director for Science, Candidate of Sciences (Economics) Lubov’ V. Babich
 Deputy Director for Science, Doctor of Economics Tamara V. Uskova
 Deputy Director for Science, Candidate of Sciences (Economics) Olga N. Kalachikova
 Director of NWDFGMRI, Candidate of Sciences (Economics) Konstantin A. Zadumkin
 Department head, Candidate of Sciences (Economics) Evgenii A. Mazilov
 Junior Researcher Svetlana L. Neustroeva