

Zigern-Korn, Natalia

Conference Paper

Regional development potential: the evolution of methodological approaches in the Russian Federation domestic regional studies

52nd Congress of the European Regional Science Association: "Regions in Motion - Breaking the Path", 21-25 August 2012, Bratislava, Slovakia

Provided in Cooperation with:

European Regional Science Association (ERSA)

Suggested Citation: Zigern-Korn, Natalia (2012) : Regional development potential: the evolution of methodological approaches in the Russian Federation domestic regional studies, 52nd Congress of the European Regional Science Association: "Regions in Motion - Breaking the Path", 21-25 August 2012, Bratislava, Slovakia, European Regional Science Association (ERSA), Louvain-la-Neuve

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/120662>

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Regional development potential: the evolution of methodological approaches in the domestic (Russian Federation) regional studies

Perhaps, nowadays, there is not so popular in regional studies and such undeveloped category like – “potential”. The lack of system-structural conceptions of it is obvious. However, research and estimation of regional potentials for regional development forecasting and strategic planning goal remain actual. This is especially true for long-term predictions of structural shifts in the economy, both at national and regional level. Undeveloped methodologies and doubtful methodical toolkit leads to incorrect forecasts, promotes inefficient management decisions in regional policy.

Russian scientists have accumulated extensive data on the analysis of regional potentials. Moreover, while interpreting the category “potential” in regional studies some evolutionary stages can be traced. The works of 1970 - 90 years were devoted to the study of individual potentials as individual factors of territorial development. The recent studies attempted to use this extensive experience in identifying the potential of integrated regional development. At the same time researchers have raised a number of methodological problems caused by borrowing conceptual schemes and ideas about the regional development potential from the past.

The identification of "resources" and "potential" terms is a typical methodological position of the Soviet period regional studies.

One of the first for the "estimation of the whole complex of natural conditions and resources" category of the potential used Y.D. Dmitrevsky (1968). He introduced the concept of *general natural potential of the territory* as a combination of its natural resources [1]. The lack of a general indicator for comparison of heterogeneous resources in 1973 was solved by A.A Mintz [2]. He suggested translation of the original size of resources in terms of value and developed a method of assessment. Natural resource potential is regarded by him as the total national economic value of a combination of resources, i.e. all its constituent natural resources, calculated in terms of value. To determine the potential the most important and enlarged types of resources have been selected. Only the sources that is suitable for development in 10-15 years was taken into consideration. The value was determined by their likely annual output or productivity. Data on the distribution of natural-resource potential of the country by major economic areas and areas of regional rank were obtained.

Continuing to develop the idea of A.A Mintz, G.A. Privalov and T.G. Runova (1977) [3] studied the geography of natural-resource potential and identify areas of greatest richness of resources to provide a secure base of the industrial clusters formation.

For the development of the industrial economy of the country under tight central planning, where the region was only a territorial cell in common national economic complex, these studies were clearly useful and adequately reflect the essence of the "potential for regional development" category.

It should be noted that researchers of a period of centralized economy did not have special reflection on the definition and content of the "potential" category. In this sense the work of N.G. Ignatenko and V.P. Rudenko (1986) [4] is remarkable. Today it's often mentioned by scholars of regional potential. The authors presented in it the results of a thorough analysis of the concept of "potential" interpretation in the domestic regional studies. Over 70 phrases been used in the economic and geographic literature were analyzed. The selected phrases were compiled by the authors in the six sense groups, combining the terms most frequently used in the sense: the set, power, opportunity, power, potency, performance. While noting the most frequent use of the term to mean "set" the authors also developed the idea of natural-resource potential (NRP) as an indicator of the natural resources set. The authors argued that the term "natural-resource potential of the area" includes only explored natural resources been previously studied. Considering the NRP as an objective reality, the authors note its key features - and the emergence of complexity, which means that the overall performance of its constituent natural resources is not equal to the sum of their individual performance. However, on the authority of A.A. Mintz and experience of previous researchers in the total NRP, this synergistic effect was not considered by the authors. From the perspective of today, it is clear that this conclusion is valid only for static determined systems, which were regions in the Soviet economy.

The representation of the functional significance of natural resources, their role in industrial complex formation that underlies the analysis of the functional structure of the integrated NRP been developed by scientists of this period is still actual.

For domestic Soviet-era research domination of fundamental importance of natural resources in the 'regional potential' category is typical. Step by step, as the representation of economic content enriched geosystem approach, a meaningful sense of the natural-resource potential have been changing as follow: from the set of resources - up to a total value of the national economy - to the performance of all resources. However, the constructive understanding of potential learning in the context of identifying underutilized resources came in the post-perestroika period.

In 1989, while studying agricultural potential, V.P. Rozhkov [5] notes the historicity and dynamism of the category of "potential." Being go even further, K.M. Misko (1992), who analyzed the genetic origin of the term "potential" insist that its original content is more in line with functions such as the ability, as they characterize the hidden, non-realizable reserves of the object which in changing environmental conditions may be possible to move in reality [7].

Since the first regional potentials studies the significant changes in economic and socio-political structure of the country have been revealed. In the last few years the concept of "potential" appears and develops in the context of regional development. Today it is especially obvious that this concept without task of regional development forecast and analysis becomes meaningless.

However, the identification of the "potential" essence, with a simple set of events has continued to dominate in the study of our compatriots. At the same time, most of the works

devoted to the study of particular potentials as individual factors of socio-economic development, or as a set of specific functionality resources (such as recreational potential).

Another area of current research relates to finding an integral index as an aggregate capacity of resources and opportunities for regional development. This is the most relevant and least developed area, the complexity of which is the parallel study of regional development modern interpretation and goal setting [7].

As it known, regional development comes in the coordinates of the functional trinity "nature - people - economy" that make up the natural-territorial, socio-demographic and economic blocks or subsystems of a common eco-socio-economic system, for which the region should be regarded as an object of control. However, so popular among our countrymen geosystem approach assumes that the interactions of elements of the territorial system create its new properties that are not at the individual elements, which are called emergent. The phenomenon of emergence is irreducibility properties of the system to the properties of its elements. Hence, the integral potential for regional development can not be expressed by a set of partial potentials (e.g. natural resources, socio-demographic, economic, or industrial, budget), as it seems at first glance. The sources of such errors are associated with the assumption that if the factors of socio-economic development of regional systems implemented through the appropriate types of potential site (socio-demographic, natural resource, logistical, etc.), then the integrated socio-economic potential of the area can be through the collection of the latter.

From the standpoint of a systems approach, the objective existence of the system and its development is the realization of its functional capacity. That is, every system performs external "mission" in relation to its supersystem. Indeed, any territorial system is part of the territorial system of higher taxonomic levels. This "mission" – function, of course, is mediated by internal factors in the development of the system, which can be regarded as some of its subsystems and their functions, but not identical to their totality, as a result is not identical to those resources that are used to obtain it. Hence, in the context of regional development (eco-region as a socio-economic system) is of fundamental importance to functional capacity, and not "integral". At the same time it becomes apparent misconception of "potential" concept through "a set of resources." Functional capacity determines the ability of a regional system to implement a specific mission, and this feature is due not so much the quantity of various resources, as this feature of the territorial system structure. In general terms - it is the proportions and relationships between elements in the triad "nature – people–economy." The specifics of socio-economic development, and its function in relation to outer space depends from the structural features of the territorial system The region's place in the territorial division of labor is determined in the same way.

The region functional mission, on the one hand, is determined by competitiveness and ability to meet the needs of national economic and social complex, according to their specific resource, on the other - the need to maintain standards of life quality in the region. Resource opportunities in the region (in the broad interpretation - geostructural) ensure that mission are

its functional capacity, and its degree of implementation causes in the long term strategic development vector.

By virtue of continuity and discontinuity of geospace, the diversity of regional systems is described in the same variety of their functional capacities. The structure of the latter, on the one hand, it is one, since there is always represented by a triad of factors of regional development (economic, social, environmental), on the other – is unique because of the different quantitative and qualitative "weight".

One of the problematic areas in the development of regional potential is to find an indicator of their condition and use. In the case of strategic goal-setting case of identifying a single indicator, which characterizes the state of the territory as a control object. The indicator is defined parameters within which the system can stably operate and develop.

In the modern arsenal of concepts of regional diagnosis in such a widely used indicator of "economic potential", which is due to the potential reserve capacity in the region to socio-economic growth using the whole complex of available resources [6].

The assessment of this indicator consists of two components: its immediate evaluation and degree of involvement. This indicator is difficult to identify susceptible. In some cases, may establish a degree of potential been involved, without measuring its value. Meanwhile, the difference between economic potential and the extent of its use defines the so-called "corridor" of regional development – range, within which can be a strategic goal-setting. The basis of the objective function is to ensure long-term competitiveness, which is responsible for the strength and sustainability of the region as a control object in the marketplace.

With all the dignity and the progressive approach to this strategic goal-setting should be noted that the concept of economic potential does not exhaust the complexity of the potential for regional development, since the region is positioned as an economic system is territorial. However, from the standpoint of geosystem approach, regional development is carried out in the trinity of functional natural resources (ecological), social and industrial (economic) units that make up the triad as a human being.

There is a very original approach to solving this problem. The most interesting are the interpretation and suggestions for measuring socio-economic potential of the territory of the MD Sharygina and V.A.Stolbova, [8]. In their view, has a complex content, and includes as essential components, all three referred to the block, the potential can be measured by indicators of national or regional wealth in monetary terms is proposed to consider as capital. The big advantage of this concept is the combination of the regional capital and the reproduction geosituatsionnogo approaches. But this sense of lost potential, even as the original ("... the ability to object to perform the necessary work"), which the authors first introduced through borrowing from the "social physics". After all, the national wealth, which is made up of property, natural resources and intangible benefits is the result of the system, and the category was not measured potential escapes again.

If the goal of regional socio-economic systems be seen as the realization of its functional capacity, if the functional potential of the territory to determine the specifics of its structural characteristics for a specific "mission", the conclusion is that the further development of regional capacity-building complex topic does not lie only in the plane search integral indicators as a measure of.

The above methodological approaches record time. In them there is only the spatial dynamics of physical resources and other factors of production. In this case, the prediction of the increment of capacity is meaningless. It's as if we identify an increase in volume of assets to their potential. However, this situation would mean stagnation of innovation in regional development.

Constructibility geosystem approach that can integrate natural and social systems of early territorial obvious, but is not sufficient to study the dynamic characteristics of regional systems. Consistency includes only known, but the integrity of the aspects studied, which corresponds more to the category as a set of potential resources. Clearly, to study the potential for regional development requires an evolutionary approach. In the study of cyclical patterns in the development of complex systems is evident by the fact that the category of resources is changing in the process of development of productive forces, and the cyclical nature of development - one of the main mechanisms of formation of the inhomogeneity of the space

In the temporal aspect of the dynamics of economic systems visible to the evolution of regional goals and objectives of public policy. During the period of centralized management goal of state policy towards the region - territorial unit of the national economy - defined as every kind of its industrialization and urbanization. In reforming the economy of decentralization and integrates into world economic relations, when the region becomes an independent subject of economic relations, the goals of the state regional policy and regional development are determined by the competitiveness of the region at national and sub-national economic space.

Domination and the importance of natural resources for regional development rooted in the past, along with the industrial structure, they are replaced by information resources, intellectual and spiritual. It is not natural-resource potential determines the development and innovation. In particular, the multi-structural economy of most countries will continue in the future, but because of limited practical and depletion of natural resources and reduce the quality of biotic resources, possession of raw materials secures the region's place in the international division of labor.

The industrial economy of the Soviet type of state with the weighted sectoral structure, made worse by the transition of raw materials export-oriented, today in a global transformation of the economic and social structures gradually enriched with innovative content.

According to the concept C. Perez and K. Freeman, represented in the national mind the so-called technological structure S.Y. Glazyev (1993 S. Glaziev "Theory of long-term technical and economic development"), each change in technology is based on certain "key"

factor - the product, commodity, energy price changes which can affect the whole system of prices in the economy and determine the future evolution. From this position it is evident that with the change of technological structures undergoing a change in the concept of resources. Because each has its own way of leading technologies, each technological system sets its own standards of production and consumption in the economic system and has its power base, resources, change its relative price and the share of social production and consumption. According to a post S. Glaziev transition stage of social development also marks a change of the industry division of the national economy by dividing the technology.

These processes are the dominant technologies are changing and the spatial dimension, which appears in the interaction of center - periphery.

A significant factor in changing the paradigm of "potential for regional development" is a distinction between the concepts development and growth, which in light of new approaches and theories can not be regarded as synonyms. Development of qualitative changes in the records system, and only quantitative growth. "Comparison of results of operations and resources makes it possible to examine the contents of regional development and regional growth, makes it possible to get an idea of the emerging trends in economic growth and development and the possible trajectories of inertial

The concept of regional development and growth of both production while maximizing the use of regional resources together is replaced by the concept of regional development that takes innovation.

New concepts of regional development requires a new theoretical framework, or paradigm-building for regional development. The evolution of the concept of regional development of the region, "generating their own resources" to the region, "the host of innovation" implies that the forecast (as extrapolated) is replaced by the forecast growth in the susceptibility of the territory to innovate. What is important is the possibility of prediction in the region, due to the specifics of the regional structure, to participate in the "new" territorial division of labor.

The value of spatial socio-economic and natural environmental differentiation for regional forecasting and goal setting is further increased.

If in the period preceding the establishment of market relations in the topic of regional potentials more enlightened and developed by geographers, from the late 90's, she attracts the attention of economists.

However, not only from the standpoint of geosystem approach, nor with the help of new research concepts for domestic regional economy (reproduction approach and new concepts in the region) to create a logical system of views on the issue of socio-economic forecasting by assessing the potential for regional development was not possible. Taking into account the complexity of the region as a socio-ecological-economic system, the solution of this problem is seen not only in sharing geosystem and reproduction approaches, but also the need for an evolutionary approach, the essence of which - in the study of cyclic patterns of development

of complex systems - one of the main mechanisms of formation economic heterogeneity of space.

The geosystem approach is constructive to analyze the spatial dynamics of regional factors for development. To analyze the temporal (time) dynamics of economic systems the relevance of an evolutionary approach, studying the cyclical patterns of development of complex systems is proved. Due to the cyclical patterns of complex systems development this approach emphasis on the evolution of the regional policy goals and objectives according different stages of social development and in different technological structures.

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