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System Diagnostics and Monitoring of Socio-Economic and Tourist Potential of Peripheral Territories of the Region

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Abstract

The paper defines a heuristic task to formulate and approve methodological provisions on the system diagnostics and monitoring of the socio-economic and tourist potential of peripheral territories in the regions which are the basis for planning and implementing spatial and economic transformations. This area of scientific and methodological research and development is relevant because of the need for searching reserves for the advancement of territories based on the inventory taking and the fullest use of available resource opportunities. In this regard, the article has improved the organizational and methodological approaches to conduct monitoring as a part of a comprehensive system diagnostics of peripheral territories of the region based on analytical criteria for socio-economic and tourist potential. The authors formulated a semantic and economic interpretation of the findings and outlined the prospects for using them when forming socio-economic development policy of regions and their economy sectors. The scientific novelty of the present article consists in development of elements of system research and diagnostic methodology with respect to development potential of peripheral areas, based on the analysis of the socio-economic and tourism factors. The combination of results and recommendations represents a contribution to the scientific substantiation of spatial and sectoral analysis.

Keywords: economy; diagnostics; monitoring; peripheral territories; tourism potential; socio-economic sphere; region

JEL Classification: O10; L83.

Introduction

In recent years, the development of peripheral territories in the regions of the South of Russia is highly unstable due to several socio-economic problems (Dzhukha and Sinyuk 2012). The devastating consequences of the

reforms in the key economy sectors have led to crisis in the outlying areas, the decline in living standards of the rural population, increased urbanization, fall of the prestige of certain types of economic activity, and the outflow of personnel from peripheral territories.

In this regard, the main objective of the public socio-economic development policy of Russian regions and their territorial entities (municipal districts) consists in formation of a sustainable and effective development model for peripheral territories. Contemporary peripheral municipalities are faced with the search for a new ideological base, whose conceptual provisions would allow diversifying the economy and improving the qualitative parameters of functioning of rural municipalities using the internal resources of the area. In this regard, searching, substantiating, and mainstreaming domestic resource components of the territorial potential can be considered as a kind of "driver" of their sustainable development.

At the same time, such a task requires not only the search of related promising types of economic activities, that would allow more comprehensive use of the available resource potential of territories of municipal areas but also the development of appropriate instrumentation and methodological support for conducting comprehensive diagnostics and monitoring of the elements of socio-economic sphere. This determines the relevance of the study, outlines the problem scope and range of tasks under consideration.

1. Methods

Forming the methodological basis of the study, the authors used the results of recent research (Aralbaev 2008, Bunchikov 2012, Yashin 2006 and Popov 2015), and proceeded from the differentiation of information and diagnostic array into two blocks: the block of system diagnostics of socio-economic sphere of municipal areas, and the block of monitoring the tourism potential of the territories. In particular, the authors proposed an original approach to the distinction between diagnostic procedures for monitoring parameters of socio-economic and tourist resource development basis of territories, formulated methodological requirements for its implementation, as well as formed the scoring and reporting system reflecting territorial dynamics trends.

The authors effectively used a set of existing basic techniques for economic research (Fujita, Krugman and Venables 1999), including a multidimensional economic and statistical analysis toolkit, as well as projective graphic transformation of the original space of multidimensional data, while preserving the basic space-topographic and grouping characteristics (Kostyukova 2013). General diagnostics of the socio-economic sphere of the municipal districts was conducted from the standpoint of assessment of quality of living of economic space (Arbia 2001, Karlsson 2001, Head and Mayer 2004) and infrastructure security (Litvin *et al.* 2015). The analysis was conducted based on consideration of criteria characterizing landscaping, average birth rate and mortality, quality of medical services provided, level of education, provision of the rural population with dwellings and creative jobs (Davis and Weinstein 1999, Edwards 2007, Shibusaw 2001, Davis and Weinstein 1999, Edwards 2007, Shibusaw 2001).

Monitoring of tourist potential of municipal districts was conducted according to a special methodology, which made it possible obtaining expert assessments on the quality of the tourist sector infrastructure, using the accessibility criteria, market attractiveness, security, and development prospects. In the end, this gave the authors opportunity to suggest the formation of a tourism network in the region (Roberts 2002) with the favorable socio-economic and tourist potential.

2. Results

2.1 Results of the system diagnostics of socio-economic sphere of peripheral areas in the region

2.1.1 Quantitative assessment of the spatial and ethnic parameters of the regional development

At the initial phase, we have performed diagnostics and monitoring of the socio-economic sphere of peripheral territories in the Republic of Crimea. According to the Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), as of January 1, 2017, the population of the Crimea Peninsula amounted to 2 340 921 permanent residents (together with the city of Sevastopol). At that, the population of the Republic of Crimea accounted for 1 912 168, and the population of Sevastopol - 428 753 permanent residents. The population density was 78 persons per sq. km. Since the all-Union 1989 census, rural population of the Crimea has increased considerably due to the resettlement in the countryside of the Crimean Tatars returning to the peninsula. The urban population of the Republic amounted to 1 274.3 thousand people (62.2%), while the rural population was 759.4 thousand people (37.8%). Quantitative data on the spatial structure of the region are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of municipal units in constituent entities of the Russian Federation (RF) as of January 1, 2017

RF entities	Municipal units (including differentiation by types)						
	Total	Municipal districts	Urban districts	Intra-urban municipal district	Settlements		
					Total	Urban	Rural
Southern Federal District	1994	157	41	10	1786	96	1690
Republic of Adygea	60	7	2	-	51	3	48
Republic of Kalmykia	127	13	1	-	113	2	111
Republic of Crimea	279	14	11	-	254	4	250
Krasnodar Territory	426	37	7	-	382	30	352
Astrakhan Region	154	11	2	-	141	11	130
Volgograd Region	475	32	6	-	437	29	408
Rostov Region	463	43	12	-	408	17	391
City of Sevastopol	10	-	-	10	-	-	-

Russians are the predominant ethnic nationality of the Republic of Crimea. However, in rural areas their proportion is lower, since among the villagers the proportion of Ukrainians and especially Crimean Tatars is higher. The distribution of urban and rural population of the Republic of Crimea in terms of ethnic nationality (represented as a proportion of those who indicated their ethnic nationality) according to the 2014 census is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Structure of urban and rural population of the Republic of Crimea in terms of ethnic nationalities

Ethnic nationality	Total population of a certain ethnic nationality, % to the total population	Proportion of urban population, %	Proportion of rural population, %
Russians	65.2	74.2	56.2
Ukrainians	16.0	13.8	18.2
Crimean Tatars	12.6	6.6	18.6
Tatars	2.3	1.5	3.1
Belarusians	1.0	0.9	1.1
Armenians	0.5	0.6	0.4
Other	2.4	2.4	2.4

The conditions for the sustainable development of rural peripheral territories of the Republic of Crimea are provided by strategic directions of the general economic policy of the state, and are aimed at ensuring conditions for improving the population's welfare and standard of living, reducing unemployment, etc.

In the Republic of Crimea, the birth rate in 2014-2015 was 12.9 per 1,000 of population. The mortality rate was 15.3 per 1,000 of population, *i.e.* exceeded the birth rate. The natural decline was noted at the rate of 2.4 per 1,000 of inhabitants. In 2015, Russian Federation accounted for 13.3 births and 13.0 deaths per 1,000 of population. The birth rate in the Republic of Crimea is lower than the national average, while the mortality rate, on the contrary, is much higher. Considering the birth and death indicators in the context of urban districts and municipal regions of the Republic of Crimea, the natural increase was noted in the Simferopol municipal district (1.8), city of Sudak (1.8), Bakhchisarai (0.1), and Sovetsky municipal districts (2.1).

2.1.2. The results of the housing provision monitoring of the population in the region

Housing security is one of the key indicators of well-being of socio-economic sphere of the region. Information on housing facilities' fund includes not a full range of housing owners. The dwelling of rural population in the Belogorskiy, Leninskiy, and Chernomorskiy areas has significantly reduced by more than 30% for recent six years. A slight increase in housing security in the Republic of Crimea has been noted in the Krasnogvardeyskiy, Nizhnegorskiy, Saksy, and Sovetskiy districts. The lowest housing provision in rural areas of the Republic, namely 15.4 sq. m. was noted in 2014 (Table 3). The quality of living of people in rural peripheral territories of the Republic of Crimea depends on the provision of the population with living quarters. The conducted analysis allows concluding about reducing the size of the living area per one resident.

Table 3. Housing provision of population of municipal districts in the Republic of Crimea, thousand square meters

Municipal districts	2012		2014		2015		2016		% ratio of 2016/2012
	Total, thousand m ²	Including per capita, m ²	Total, thousand m ²	Including per capita, m ²	Total, thousand m ²	Including per capita, m ²	Total, thousand m ²	Including per capita, m ²	
Bakhchisarai	1987.5	21.5	1510.0	16.6	1676.1	18.5	1668.2	18.7	85.7
Belogorsky	1127.4	16.9	737.6	12.2	745.0	12.3	750.9	12.4	67.8
Dzhankovsky	1394.4	18.6	1250.2	18.2	1250.8	18.4	1266.4	18.8	91.8
Kirovsky	1052.9	19.1	796.3	15.6	830.4	16.2	834.0	16.3	81.2
Krasnogvardeysky	1673.1	18.1	1621.0	19.5	1622.0	19.2	1819.5	21.5	109.3
Krasnoperekopsky	525.9	17.6	519.2	20.9	519.2	21.1	521.8	21.3	99.2
Leninsky	1552.1	24.3	1109.6	18.2	1099.2	18.2	1099.5	18.3	71.0
Nizhnegorsky	970.7	18.6	955.8	21.2	955.1	21.2	989.2	22.0	102.1
Pervomaysky	665.5	16.5	498.1	15.1	543.3	16.7	545.2	16.8	82.0
Razdolnensky	642.8	17.8	408.4	13.3	624.4	20.3	632.2	20.6	98.4
Saksky	1594.8	20.1	1630.2	21.3	1722.8	22.5	1738.3	22.8	112.8
Simferopolsky	2773.0	17.2	2451.3	16.1	2517.8	16.1	2514.8	16.0	91.9
Sovetsky	627.9	16.9	397.4	12.4	431.6	13.5	640.1	20.1	103.8
Chernomorsky	764.5	23.6	506.4	16.6	504.5	6.5	511.2	16.8	69.2
Republic of Crimea	40580.1	20.3	29185.3	15.4	31143.7	16.3	32654.8	17.1	82.1

An assessment of the level of improvement of the housing stock allows concluding that the Bakhchisarai, Krasnogvardeysky, Krasnoperekopsky, and Saksky districts are the most well-organized municipal districts in the Republic. More than 50% of the total area is equipped with water, drainage, heating, hot water, and gas supply. The remaining municipalities need to improve living conditions in terms of improving modern conveniences.

2.1.3 The results of the health service monitoring in the municipal districts of the Republic of Crimea

Public health service development is characterized by multidirectional trends. The conducted analysis has revealed an increase in nursing staff by 10.2% over six years. However, the number of doctors has declined by almost 12.5% or 700 professionals. Reducing the number of inpatient hospital organizations and clinics has caused a reduction in the number of hospital beds.

Significant changes have been noted in the outpatient organizations. Until 2014, their number dropped from 334 to 229 institutions, while in 2016, due to actively pursued social policy in the health sector, the number of these organizations had reached 324. At that, the number of outpatient clinics has decreased by 10 units (Table 4) for six years.

Table 4. Dynamics of health care development indicators in the Republic of Crimea

Indicator	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% ratio of 2016/2011
Total number of doctors, thousand people	9.6	9.1	9.1	8.0	8.2	8.4	87.5
including per 10 thousand of population	49.2	46.7	46.6	42.5	42.9	44.2	89.8
Total nursing staff, thousand people	18.6	17.8	17.9	17.8	19.5	20.5	110.2
including per 10 thousand of population	95	90.9	91.3	94.6	102.4	107.3	112.9
The number of inpatient hospital organizations and clinics provided with hospital beds, units	87	88	84	65	62	58	66.7
The number of hospital beds, thousand	16.7	16.8	16.7	16.3	14.8	14.5	86.8
including per 10 thousand of population	85.5	85.8	85.2	86.6	77.9	76.1	89.0
The number of outpatient organizations	334	320	394	229	328	324	97.0
Outpatient clinic size, total visits per shift, thousand	34.6	34.4	34.2	24.9	33.3	33.8	97.7

2.2 Results of systematic diagnostics of tourist potential of municipal districts of the Republic of Crimea

2.2.1 Overall assessment results of the tourist potential of the region

Crimea is a unique region of the Russian Federation, which combines powerful natural-climatic and historical-cultural potential, which is the basis for the development of the tourism industry.

The favorable geographical location of the Crimean Peninsula, well-developed transport and tourist infrastructure, diverse landscape, favorable climate, and natural resources (the Black Sea and the Azov Sea, water and forest resources), rich historical and cultural heritage (total number of architectural, historical, and cultural monuments in the Crimea amounts to about 11 500 objects), as well as available recreational potential (100 sources of mineral waters, 14 deposits of therapeutic mud), and historical experience determine the main development pathways of tourism in Crimea.

On the territory of the Republic of Crimea, 825 collective accommodation facilities (sanatoriums and hotels) are located, of which 151 institutions provide specialized spa treatment, 316 objects provide health-improving services, and the rest of the 358 establishments render temporary accommodation services. Thus, the number of Crimean health-centers involved in both the treatment and rehabilitation accounts for 467 objects. A large part of the sanatorium-and-spa resorts did not operate due to the absence of legal status, lack of funds to carry out works on reconstruction of rooms and updating the material-technical base, as well as the complicated political situation in Ukraine.

A distinctive feature of the territorial arrangement of specialized sanatoriums is their concentration in the Yalta district. At that, the majority of children's sanatoriums are concentrated in Yevpatoria.

Note that 126 sanatoriums (including 77 collective accommodation facilities having republican form of ownership) and 195 hotel facilities are designed for year-round operation.

In addition, on the territory of Crimea there are about 5 thousand households, providing temporary accommodation services, and 14 thousand householders (in recent years private sector has adopted more than 80% of tourist traffic (about 4 million tourists per year)).

The total length of the beaches in the Republic of Crimea is 517 km split into 563 bathing beaches for mass recreation of people on water. The Sevastopol region offers 49 km of bathing beaches, more than 200 sanatorium-resort facilities, including 5 disease prevention centers, 10 corporate venues, 6 recreation centers, 19 children's health camps, over 80 recreational centers performing simultaneous reception of more than 13.3 thousand of organized holidaymakers. Sevastopol is annually visited by more than 100 thousand foreign tourists from more than 45 countries.

The number of tourists served in the Crimea nowadays is still significantly different from the maximum limits of the Soviet times. In 1988, the resorts of the Crimea hosted 8.2 mln people, including 2.1 mln people in the organized sector (sanatoriums and hotels), and 6.1 mln unorganized tourists. At that, the actual reduction in the tourist flow in comparison with the Soviet period is much higher; now the average length of stay in the Crimea is 10-14 days versus 20-24 days that was typical for twenty years ago.

The duration of the high season has reduced from 4-5 months (May-September) to 1-1.5 months (July-August) that affects negatively the profitability of tourism businesses and related industries.

In regional terms, the tourist flow is still focused mainly on the beach holiday. The largest number of tourists are visiting Yalta (about 2 mln people annually), Yevpatoria (1.1 mln people annually), and Alushta (more than 1.0 mln persons per year).

Also, many tourists visit Saki and the Saksy region, Kerch, the Leninsky district, and Sevastopol (more than 200 thousand people annually).

In recent years, investments in tourism industry of Crimea have increased significantly; in 2013, about 4.8 bln rubles were invested in the hotels' construction and renovation, however this is still 3 times lower than gross indicators of the Krasnodar Territory (13.3 bln rubles). Therefore, currently Crimea significantly lags behind the resorts of the Krasnodar Territory in terms of infrastructure quality.

2.2.2 Diagnostics of the territorial features of localization of the tourist potential elements of municipal districts in the Republic of Crimea

Along with the solution to the mentioned problems, characteristic of each region, one of the central issues when forming a regional network of tourism industry is the substantiation of the spatial localization of its major zones on the basis of comparative assessment of the municipal districts of the Crimea based on a set of significant criteria, such as market development prospects, consumer appeal, infrastructure security, and transport accessibility.

Practical sense of this methodological approach consists in allocation of several types of territories based on the set of the above criteria that allow determining the priority for inclusion of localities in the regional network of agro-tourism industry.

Practical approbation of methodical recommendations was carried out based on materials of the Republic of Crimea. For the comparative assessment of rural territories of the region in accordance with the methodological approach we have identified objects of the tourist industry in the context of each district. To do this, we used public information contained in the official documents at the regional level (passports and the socio-economic development programs of the Republic of Crimea, regional concepts and development programs, business portals, online sources, reference and presentation information, as well as regulatory database of market participants involved in recreation and tourism services).

For the evaluation of rural areas in the context of the agricultural tourism development and the availability of proper potential, we have formed a focus group of experts that allowed us to obtain integral estimates for each territory based on the set of above substantiated criteria.

First and foremost, it is necessary to select key developed territories, characterized by the relevant specialization with favorable natural-climatic and recreational resources, and advanced infrastructure. The activity of this type of territory has traditionally been combined with various kinds of actors of creative industry or focused on them. These types of territories fully represent the species diversity of objects of agro-event-driven and nature-based demonstration industry. These areas should be considered on a priority basis as a spatial foundation for the formation of agro-tourism zones. These are the Bakhchisaraysky, Belogorsky, Simferopolsky, Kirovsky and Leninsky districts.

Secondly, we should note the secondary (rapidly developing) basic territories, which can be identified as loci that are actively using the availability of natural and resource prerequisites for tourism development. However, this type of economic activity is one of the diversification directions of sustainable development of municipal economy. These territories should be considered as segments complementary to the developed supporting territories when forming a regional tourism network. These are Chernomorsky, Krasnogvardeisky Saksy, Dzhankoisky, and Razdolnensky districts.

And the third group is represented by the territories with emerging signs of tourism potential. In this case, under the implementation conditions of proposed network project, these territories can be used as transit corridors with the emphasis made on the development of associated transport, auxiliary, and communication infrastructure. This group includes Krasnoperekopsky, Pervomaisky, and Sovetsky districts. At that, it should be noted that in our opinion, the districts of only the first two groups of territories should be viewed as nodes of the tourist zones.

3. Discussion

The obtained results were critically correlated with the opinion of the experts and scientific community through conferences and discussions, as well as with the results of several studies (Batten 2001, Ersoy and Taylor 2012, Fukuchi 2000, Garretsen and Martin 2010, Quigley 2001).

In consequence of the research it was found that the application of a set of diagnostic and monitoring tools in practice, when carrying out diagnostics of the socio-economic and tourist potential of the region, was performed rather rarely due to the quite low level of testing and the lack of trust in the competence of the experts carrying out the diagnostics. The analysis conducted in the course of the research employing a set of methods suggested the presence of aggregate potential elements, which allowed planning large-scale spatial-economic transformation in the regions.

According to scientific and expert community, it is indisputable that the following measures should be taken: firstly, ensuring information support and timely updating of methodological recommendations for implementation of existing approaches to conduct system diagnostics and monitoring of socio-economic and tourist potential of the territories; secondly, providing extension of the information sources for carrying out the monitoring procedures and improving channels for dissemination of the diagnostic results; and thirdly, establishing specialized repositories and databases in structured and archival form that will allow increasing relevance of the analytical insights in real-time mode.

Conclusion

The results of comprehensive diagnostics and monitoring of socio-economic and tourism potential of peripheral territories (municipal districts) in the Republic of Crimea have shown that it is possible to distinguish three types of districts by the level of development prospects of tourist potential and favorableness of the socio-economic sphere.

Presented results of system diagnostics and monitoring of the socio-economic environment and the tourist potential of the region (evidenced from the Republic of Crimea), obtained based on the application of the developed analysis framework, can be useful to regional and federal bodies of power and administration when developing strategic plans, target programs and concepts of regional growth and development.

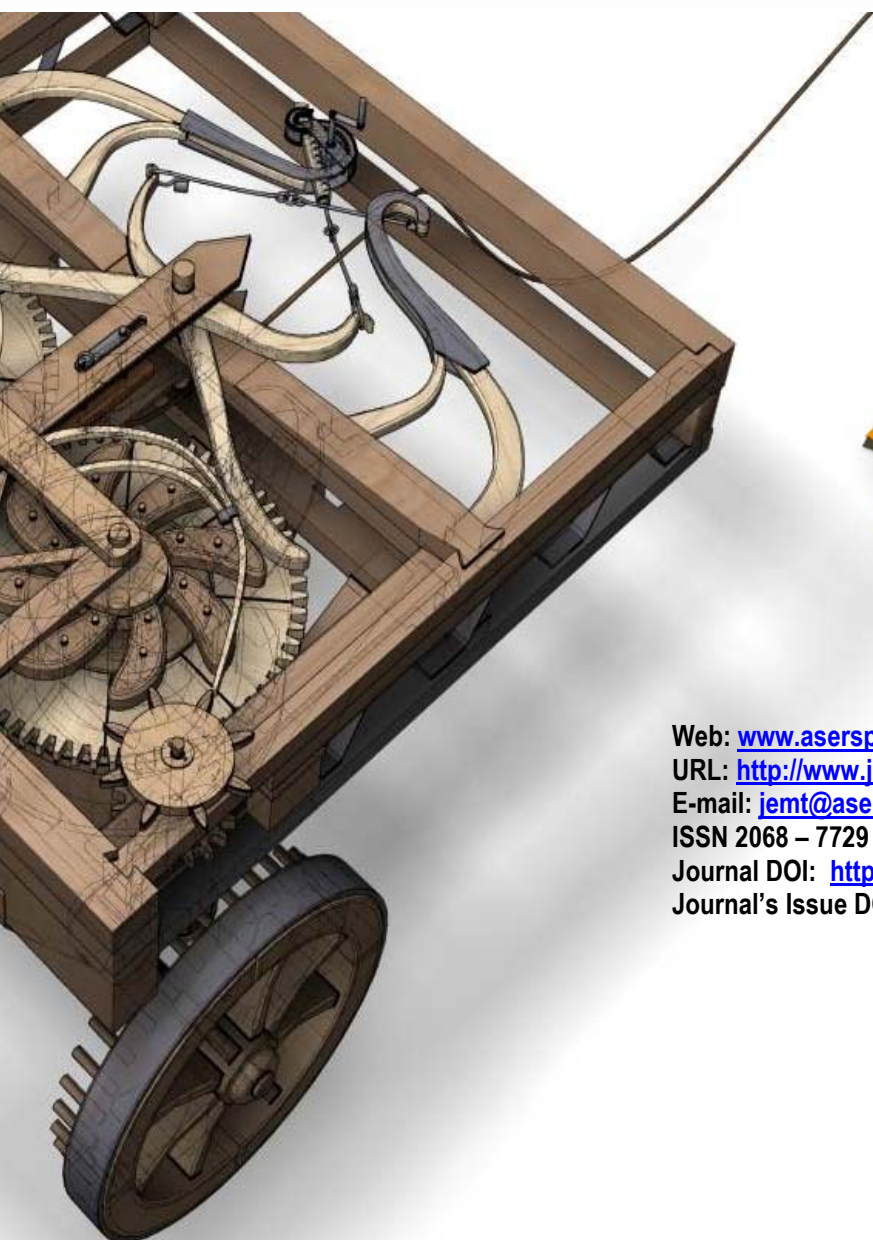
Regions of the Southern Russia have traditionally agricultural specialization. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the development of coherent activities, and particularly, those related to agro-tourism. Paying attention to the agro-tourism potential of rural areas, we note that this research avenue is just beginning to emerge in the industry aspect. Firstly, this is due to the development of the tertiary sector of the economy, as well as due to increase in the entrepreneurial activity of the population, as a response to the negative effects of the succession of economic and political crises. In addition, the specificity of the Republic of Crimea, which has a special political and administrative status in the federal structure of Russia, defines business attractiveness of the leisure, as well as tourist and recreational sector with agricultural potential of rural areas.

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