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ON THE “ETHNIC CERTAINTY” OF THE SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN RUSSIA



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Russia is a multi-ethnic country with a stable, multi-speed trend for individual regions and their municipalities to change the ethnic structure of the population, as well as the general predominance of mono-ethnic territories. The spatial development of the Russian Federation requires a focused consideration of ethnostructural and ethnoterritorial conditions and factors. In the article, they are considered and conceptualized as an “ethnic certainty” of spatial development, understood as a multicomponent conjugation of territorial, economic and residential dynamics with the reproduction of specific ethnic groups (in interaction with other ethnic groups) in the areas of their primary localization, and with the established ethno-territorial structure as a whole. The work focuses on the fact that this kind of “certainty” is due to the following reasons: specifics of ethnic geography (a combination of mono- and multiethnic areas); economic and cultural features of specific ethnic groups projected onto the economy, the scale of reproduction of traditional areas of management (ethnoeconomics) for ethnic communities; functioning of “national” subjects of the federation and “titular” municipalities in the central-peripheral residential and territorial-economic architecture of the country; asymmetric (multi-scale and multi-speed) spatial development in the “section” of the areas of predominance localization (concentration) of one or another ethnic group. Extensive municipal statistics (municipal districts and okrugs, urban okrugs, 2,297 units in total) show that economic activity is shifted to municipalities with Russian mono-ethnicity (1,696 units, including 485 urban okrugs), which is explained by the localization of the vast majority of regional capitals and their suburbs in these territories. A pronounced asymmetry in the scale and level of economic activity between poly- and monoethnic territories, as well as monoethnic areas (clusters of municipalities with a homogeneous ethnic structure of the population) with different “ethnic coloring” has been revealed (based on materials from the South of Russia). It is proved that neither poly-ethnicity nor mono-ethnicity directly affect economic activity, while the latter, being concentrated in the largest cities and their agglomerations, favors the growth of poly-ethnicity.

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Introduction

Russia is commonly identified as a *multi-ethnic* state. This fundamental characteristic is not only directly fixed in the current Constitution of the country (Art. 68, paragraph 1)¹, but also has a clear statistical justification (the 2020 All-Russian Population Census covers data on 197 separate ethnic groups). A clear confirmation of the understanding of the poly-ethnicity of the state, rooted in public discourse (Tishkov, 2013), is the grid of political and territorial division, which took shape in the first half of the 20th century, when the "national factor" was considered extremely important in economic zoning, to which, in turn, the management system was "tied" (Knipovich, 1921). An indication of a special ("titular") status of a specific ethnos (ethnic groups) is found in the official names of 25 modern regions of the Russian Federation, ten of which are now classified as "geostrategic territories".

Nevertheless, when considering the spatial realities in more detail, multinational Russia appears as an integrated mosaic of poly- and *mono-ethnic territories*, and it is the latter that significantly prevail in size, demographically and economically. Among 85 Russian regions covered by the 2020 All-Russian Population Census², the proportion of Russians exceeds the national average in 58 regions (80.8% of those who indicated their ethnicity), and in 15 regions the proportion of Russians varies from 50 to 80%. It is less than half in only

12 regions of the Russian Federation, which account for 21.3% of the country's territory, 12.2% of its demographic potential and 7.9% of the total GRP³.

Russian mono-ethnicity, which is diagnosed with a proportion of Russians in the population of 75% and above (Druzhinin, 2024a), 49% of its territory, where 80.3% of the country's population and 90.6% of ethnic Russians live, is associated with a more fractional analysis (in the context of urban districts, municipal districts and municipal okrugs, a total of 2,297 units).

Russian mono-ethnicity, being spatially asymmetric, is blurred along the periphery and partly complemented in its urban cores by multiple localized groupings of municipalities with a numerical predominance of other ethnic groups. In particular, in the Irkutsk Region, where the proportion of Russians is 92.2%, of the 42 municipalities of the "second level", five are numerically dominated by Buryats, and there is also a more fractional differentiation. For example, in Olkhonsky Municipal District (mainly inhabited by Buryats), out of seven rural settlements, Buryats outnumber Russians in three, Russians outnumber Buryats in three, and ethno-demographic parity is observed in one. A similar kind of complicated ethno-geographic mosaic is typical for the vast majority of the so-called "national" subjects of the federation.

The ethnic diversity of Russia thus has a pronounced territorial specificity, which

¹ Constitution of the Russian Federation. Available at: http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/constitution/item#chapter_start (accessed: 02.05.2025).

² Results of All-Russian Population Census-2020. Volume 5. Ethnic composition and language proficiency. Rosstat. Available at: https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladienie_yazykami (accessed: 02.05.2025).

³ All data in this article are for 2021, the year the All-Russian Population Census was actually conducted, and therefore does not include data for newly incorporated regions. The source of all statistical data is Rosstat, including its regional branches.

Table 1. The number of uses of some basic categories of spatial analysis in spatial development strategies of the Russian Federation (SDS), adopted in 2019 and 2024

Category	SDS-2025	SDS-2036
Region (regional)	77	98
Center	68	26
Backbone (settlement)	-	56
Agglomeration	50	40
Spatial	40	85
Municipal	25	20
National (nationwide)	16	42
Ethno- (ethnic, ethno-cultural)	2	1
People (peoples)	5	1

Source: own compilation based on a semantic analysis of SDS-2025 and SDS-2036.

ultimately determines the stable conjugation of the development of ethnic groups (in economic, socio-cultural, demographic aspects) with the problems of spatial development, understood according to the “Spatial Development Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025” (hereinafter – SDS-2025), as “improving the settlement system and territorial organization of the economy, including through the implementation of an effective state policy of regional development”⁴. It is symptomatic that in the text of SDS-2025 itself, as shown by semantic analysis, the categories “ethnicity”, “ethnic”, as well as “people” as a synonym for “ethnicity” occupy an almost peripheral place. To an even lesser extent are they used in the “Spatial Development Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030 with a forecast up to 2036” (hereinafter referred to as SDS-2036), effective as of the end of December 2024 (*Tab. 1*).

SDS-2025 mentions “taking into account the ethnocultural factor in ensuring the socio-economic development of the Russian Federation” (along with “preserving the national identity of the peoples of the Russian Federation”, “ensuring guarantees of the rights of small indigenous peoples, including support for their economic, social and cultural

development”, “promoting the preservation, revival and development of folk art crafts” and “environmental management of indigenous small-numbered peoples”)⁵, while SDS-2036 focuses only on “preventing the emergence of ethnic enclaves”, and also on the “development of folk art crafts” (the latter is applied to the North Caucasus Federal District)⁶.

Such an indicative lack of attention to ethnicity, observed in the basic federal regulatory document in the field of spatial development reflects, we believe, the extreme complexity and independent significance of the age-old “national issue” for Russia, which has been increasingly coming to the fore in recent years due to growing geopolitical turbulence, international migration, and multidirectional ethno-demographic dynamics. It illustrates the parallel lack of understanding in the management system and the relevant scientific community of the place and role of the “ethnic component” in the structures and processes currently being studied “at the junction” of spatial economics and socio-economic geography. However, back in 1941, it was noted that “the consideration of economy in national regions and republics in our courses is completely impersonal and is not specifically related to the peoples inhabiting them” (Kabo,

⁴ Spatial Development Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025. Available at: <http://static.government.ru/media/files/UVAIqUtT08o60RktoOXI22JjAe7irNxc.pdf> (accessed: 02.05.2025).

⁵ Spatial Development Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025. Available at: <http://static.government.ru/media/files/UVAIqUtT08o60RktoOXI22JjAe7irNxc.pdf> (accessed: 02.05.2025).

⁶ Spatial Development Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030 with a forecast up to 2036. Available at: <http://government.ru/docs/all/157308> (accessed: 02.05.2025).

2016, p. 135). This thesis, we believe, remains relevant to this day.

There are, however, multiple substantive issues in understanding the interdependence of "ethnic" and "economic". First, it is the invariably highlighted ethnic aspect (factor) of economics in the works of such leading economists as L. Waltman, M. Weber, J.S. Mill, H. Schridder and J. Schumpeter, which was previously shown in detail in special reviews (Pechura, 2009; Popkov, Tyugashev, 2018; Minat, 2022). This intellectual trend is currently being developed by evolutionary-genetic and institutional approaches to economic analysis (Arkhipov et al., 2020; Auzan, Nikishina, 2021).

The specular aspect of the problem under consideration (the economic component of ethnology) is related to the concepts of "economic and cultural types" (Levin, Cheboksarov, 1955), the interdependence of ethnicity and economics (Kozlov, 1994), and approaches in the field of so-called "economic ethnology" (Semenov, 1993).

In the first post-Soviet years, against the background of radical structural changes in the economic system and the escalation of regionalism with accompanying ethnopolitical activity, the actual result of the synthesis of the two above-mentioned approaches was the idea of an "ethnic economy" or "ethno-economy" – a reality that is difficult to diagnose, variously interpreted and identified primarily with Russian "national" territories (Ovchinnikov, Kolesnikov, 2006; Rimashevskaya, Vershinskaya, 1999).

A little earlier, the problem of "ethnic economy" was stated in the West (Waldinger, 1986; Light, 2000), where the logic of globalization focused on taking into account the projection of increasing ethnic diversity in a variety of localities on economic development (Easterly, Levine, 1997; Collier, 2001; Montalvo, Reynal-Querol, 2021), a kind of "cultural diversity economy" (Bellini et al., 2013; Nijkamp et al., 2015). This topic has also aroused interest in the Russian Federation, resulting in studies of the economic effects of national heterogeneity (Tsapenko, 2016; Bufetova, Kolomak, 2021), the impact of

international migration on labor productivity (Nesena, 2015), and the economic "risks of mono-ethnicity" (Tarbastaeva, 2018). Against this background, the perception (characteristic and significant) of the economy itself as "multicolored" and ethnically "colored" was symptomatic (Kryukov, 2017). Attempts have been made to conduct a combined study of the ethnic structure of the territory, including in the municipal "section", and the parameters of its economic development (Druzhinin, Potapenko, 2024).

The accumulated positive effect of a multidimensional understanding of the mutual influence of "ethnic" and "economic" is limited, however, by insufficient consideration of the actual spatial processes and structures both in the localization of ethnic groups (ethno-geography) and in economic activity and settlement. This article is an attempt to form a conceptual framework for further intensification of research efforts in this important area. Its main objective is to develop an idea of a special phenomenon, designated as "ethnic definiteness of spatial development", about its determinants, specifics and formats of manifestation. In proposing this terminological construct, the author took into account the already established practice of applying the category of "ethnic certainty" in anthropology and ethnology in the sense, first of all, of ethnic identity, attribution to a certain ethnic group (Alekseev, 1989; Arutyunov, Ryzhakova, 2004), as well as the need (practical and theoretical) for a similar kind of identification and parameterization of structures and processes studied by spatial (regional) economics, socio-economic (social) geography, and ethno-geography at their fundamentally significant substantive interface.

Localization of Russian ethnic groups: the universal and the specific

The basis of the "ethnic certainty" of spatial development is the localization of ethnic groups, which is subject to uniform structural features and patterns, but at the same time, in each specific case, depends on a unique "set" of historical, demographic, natural, economic and socio-cultural circumstances.

In the logic of the dichotomies “concentration – dispersion”, “center – periphery” and “core – border”, the localization space of any ethnic group unites:

- mono-ethnic area of settlement;
- main area of localization, which along with the mono-ethnic area includes residential and socio-economically significant multi-ethnic territories, primarily urbanized;
- foci of localization outside the main area;
- area of predominant dispersion;
- dispersion space (Druzhinin, 2024b).

At the same time, a multi-ethnic country, as well as one or another of its regions, presents complex multi-scale mutual stratifications and intersections of spaces “mastered” by ethnic communities. The effects of “ethnic certainty” in this situation arise mainly in connection with the actual formation of a mosaic of mono-ethnic areas (differing in economic conditions and in general life), complemented by the “gathering” of representatives of certain ethnic groups into leading urban centers and urban agglomerations organized by them.

Areas with pronounced mono-ethnicity are multiple and of different sizes. In the Russian situation, they are not reducible to “national” subjects of the federation, especially to those republics and autonomous districts in whose population the Russian ethnic component prevails (in the Republic of Karelia, for example, the share of Karelians proper is 4.9%, and only in Olonetsky Municipal District it slightly exceeds 40%; in all others it is significantly lower). But even in regions where Russians are numerically inferior to the “titular” nation, not the entire territory can be identified as “mono-ethnic”. Thus, in the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic, in two of the 13 municipalities (Maysky and Prokhladnensky municipal districts), more than half of the population are Russians. A similar situation is observed in Mozdoksky District of North Ossetia. In the Karachay-Cherkess Republic, the majority of Russians live in Urupsky and Zelenchuksky municipal districts (the share of Russians is 73.7% and 56.3%, respectively). In the structure of this republic, there are two mono-national and “titular”, but non-ethnic, municipal districts

in relation to both Karachays and Circassians: Abazinsky Municipal District (88.5% of the population are Abazins) and Nogaisky Municipal District (Nogais – 84.9%). Strictly speaking, within the Russian Federation, it is appropriate to consider only the Republic of Ingushetia and the Chechen Republic (in the municipal context) as compact mono-ethnic areas.

The areas of mono-ethnicity inherent in some of the largest ethnic groups demonstrate an interregional character. They are such not only for Russians, but also for Tatars, who are numerically predominant in 31 municipalities of Tatarstan and four in Bashkortostan. Predominantly “Buryat” municipalities are typical for both the Republic of Buryatia and the Irkutsk Region. Some ethnic groups, deprived of their “own” mono-ethnic municipalities (and their clusters), also form areas (including very extensive ones) of their priority location. These are, in particular, Armenians, distributed to a large extent between the Krasnodar and Stavropol territories (22 and 15% of all Armenians in the country), the Rostov Region (9%) and Moscow and the Moscow Region (15%).

Village-city ethnic systems as a component of spatial development

A significant part of Russian ethnic groups (Bashkirs, Chechens, Avars, Dargins, etc.) are characterized by a predominant permanent residence in rural areas and, accordingly, the agrarian specifics of their inherent mono-ethnic territories. But in the structure of modern settlement, these ethnic groups are inevitably associated with urban centers. And cities, as Vladimir Lenin emphasized back in 1913 in his work “Critical Notes on the National Question”, “are distinguished by the most diverse national composition of the population. It is absurd and impossible to separate cities from economically gravitating villages and districts because of the “national” aspect” (Lenin, 1973, p. 149). The unity of urban settlements with adjacent agricultural territories, which we previously designated as the village-city ethno-system (Druzhinin, 2024b), has priority socio-economic significance for the ethnic

Table 2. The largest "ethnic clusters" of municipal districts and associated urban centers of the Republic of Dagestan

Indicator	"Ethnic clusters" of municipal districts		
	Avar	Dargin	Lak
Mono-ethnic municipal districts (number of ethnic representatives, thousand people / share of ethnic group, %)	Akhvakhsy (24 / 99.6), Botlikhsky (58 / 99.0), Gergebilsky (19 / 96.3), Gumbetovsky (21 / 99.6), Gunibsky (28 / 96.2), Kazbekovsky (43 / 87.3), Kizilyurtovsky (63 / 84.9), Tlyaratinsky (23 / 99.4), Untsukulsky (31 / 99.3), Khunzakhsky (30 / 95.6), Tsumadinsky (26 / 99.1), Tsuntinsky (21 / 98.6), Charodinsky (14 / 98.0), Shamilsky (30 / 98.6)	Akushinsky (52/96.6), Dakhadaevsky (36/99.6), Kaitagsky (30/91.2), Levashinsky (62/78.2), Sergokalinsky (26/99.0)	Akhtynsky (31/98.5), Dokuzparinsky (14/94.6), Magarametkentsky (53/95.3), Suleyma-Stalsky (57/99.1)
Multi-ethnic urban districts (number of ethnic representatives, thousand people / share of ethnic group, %)	Makhachkala (190 / 25.6), Buynaksk (25 / 39.1), Kizilyurt (36 / 73.4), Khasavyurt (73 / 47.9), Yuzhno-Sukhokumsk (4 / 44.4)	Makhachkala (115/15.5), Izberbash (37/66.1)	Derbent (44/36.4), Kaspiysk (37/31.3), Makhachkala (103/13.9)
Total number of ethnic representatives within the "village-city" ethno-system, thousand people	759	358	339
Proportion of representatives of an ethnic group localized within the "village-city" ethno-system to the total number of representatives of the ethnic group in Dagestan, %	79.3	339	81.5
Compiled based on data from All-Russian Population Census-2020.			

groups prevailing in rural areas, while the entire corresponding rural-urban continuum acquires "ethnic certainty". The most obvious example here is the Republic of Dagestan (Tab. 2), although a similar situation can be traced in a number of other regions of Russia.

The Tabasarans (Tabasaransky and Khivsky municipal districts + Dagestanskies Ogni urban district, in which the share of Tabasarans is 51.2%), Kumyks (Makhachkala and adjacent municipal districts), Laks (Laksky and Novolaksky districts + Makhachkala), as well as the Azerbaijani diaspora, which is very numerous on the territory of the Republic of Dagestan (of the 117 thousand Azerbaijanis living in Dagestan, 43 thousand are concentrated in Derbent and another 50 thousand in Derbentsky Municipal District).

The "ethnic definiteness" of spatial development is determined, as a result, by the peculiarities of ethno-geography, adjusted and set by political and geographical circumstances (corresponding municipalities, subjects of the federation, their "titularity"), formatted by the structure of settlement. No less inherent is the "ethnic certainty" of the economy, which also shows large-scale differences "from place to place", including in the "context" of the areas of priority localization of certain ethnic groups.

Ethnically "colored" economy: spatial determinants and features

Economic development is invariably confined to certain structures of space. As P.A. Minakir rightly emphasized, "when making any decision in economics ... one has to answer not only the question "what" and "how

much”, but also the question “where” (Minakir, 2005). Latently, of course, there is also the equally significant question of “who”, which, like “where”, has its own distinct national (ethnic) parameters and characteristics.

Territories with a certain ethnic (ethno-confessional) structure can, in particular, “attract” certain types of economic activity, acquiring properties, the totality of which is appropriate to delineate the category of an ethno-economic area.

It is significant, in particular, that 38% of the sheep population in modern Russia is located in regions with a numerical predominance of representatives of ethnic groups traditionally committed to Islam, and another 29% is localized in neighboring territories (Stavropol Territory, Rostov Region, Republic of Kalmykia, etc.), where the role of relevant ethnic communities in sheep breeding is also significant, which generates the specifics of the ethnic structure of municipalities specializing in pasture husbandry (in Remontnensky Municipal District of the Rostov Region, 16% of the population are Dargins and 7.3% – Chechens; in Levokumsky Municipal District of the Stavropol Territory, 29% of the population are Dargins; in Iki-Burulsky District of Kalmykia – 18%, etc.).

More than 90% of the total reindeer population in Russia is located in the Arctic zone⁷, making up an exclusive sphere of economic activity on a federal scale for the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, as well as some of the Yakuts living in the appropriate natural and economic conditions. As a result, the natural factor is embodied in the economic and cultural tradition, and its economic use turns out to be associated with the ethno-demographic features of the territory.

In the same context, it is appropriate to talk not only about ethnic traditions and preferences in the economic sphere, but also about certain “niches” (sometimes conditional, situationally opportunistic) occupied by a particular ethnic group in the economy (certain crafts, trade, catering, construction, etc.). A significant part

of such “niches” can be realized exclusively in inter-ethnic interaction, which initiates the growth of poly-ethnicity (in the largest cities and their suburbs, in places of large-scale industrial and infrastructure construction, hotbeds of resource development in the north and east of the country), supported not only by irrevocable migrations, but also by the invariants of “otkhodnichestvo”. The resulting elements of ethnic enclave – a direct result of socio-territorial contrasts – determine, in turn, the “secondary”, already directly related to society, its territorial organization, the isolation of new ethnic and economic areas.

Another aspect of an “ethnically colored” economy is the proximity not only of individual industries and industries, but also of economic activity in general to certain territories characterized by the numerical predominance of a particular ethnic group.

In the Russian Federation, in particular, historically, as well as due to natural circumstances, the entire economic system and, consequently, the settlement are significantly “shifted” to territories with Russian mono-ethnicity. Russian population density in municipalities with a share of Russians of 75% or more is 2.9 times higher than in municipalities with a share of Russians of less than 25%. A similar ratio is observed in terms of per capita taxable money incomes of individuals and individual entrepreneurs, the indicator of which, making it possible to most fully identify localized economic activity, is 2.5 times, and their “density” (per unit of territory) is 7.3 times, which highlights both the “development” vectors of spatial development and its central and peripheral gradients.

The spatial aspect of the “ethnic certainty” of the economy is most clearly illustrated by the so-called “promising centers of economic growth of the Russian Federation” (which were identified and prioritized in SDS-2025). According to the author’s analysis, of the 101 “promising centers” mentioned in the text of SDS-2025, 78 have a share of Russians in the population exceeding the 75% threshold, only three (Grozny, Magas and Kyzyl) have

⁷ Agriculture in Russia. 2023: Statistical collection. Rosstat. Moscow. 104 p. P. 29.

Table 3. Promising centers of economic growth in the Russian Federation: grouping by ethnic structure

Main groups	Total number	Including		
		With "Russian mono-ethnicity" (proportion of Russians is 75% or higher)	Poly-ethnic	Mono-ethnic, with a small percentage of Russians in the population
Promising major centers of economic growth in the Russian Federation that will contribute more than 1% to the economic growth of the Russian Federation annually				
cities that form large urban agglomerations and the largest urban agglomerations	20	17	3	–
Promising centers of economic growth in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation that will contribute 0.2 to 1% annually to the economic growth of the Russian Federation				
cities and adjacent municipalities with a total population of more than 500 thousand people	25	22	3	–
cities with a total population of less than 500 thousand people	25	23	2	–
Promising centers of economic growth in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation that will contribute up to 0.2% to the economic growth of the Russian Federation				
cities that are administrative centers of constituent entities of the Russian Federation and adjacent municipalities with a total population of less than 500 thousand people	31	16	12	3
Compiled based on data from All-Russian Population Census-2020 and SDS-2025.				

mono-ethnicity of other ethnic groups, in the remaining 20, most of which are not economic leaders nationwide, the population structure is characterized by poly-ethnicity (*Tab. 3*).

It is also significant that of the 20 "promising centers of economic growth, which have the conditions for the formation of world-class scientific and educational centers", only two (Kazan and Ufa) have a different ethnic structure than the "Russian mono-ethnicity".

The established "ethnic certainty" in spatial development is generally quite stable and is provided not only by the circumstances of the historical track, but also by the process of "pulling together" Russian ethnic groups into "their own" territory, which preserves and strengthens its mono-ethnicity, characteristic of the entire post-Soviet period (Streletsky, 2011; Manakov, 2019). Some spatial rebalancing is associated with the implementation of major investment projects, with geopolitical reasons and, to an even more obvious extent, with ethno-territorial differences in demographic trends. For example, Dagestan, in particular,

accounted for 1.5% of Russia's population and 0.3% of its GRP in 1995, while by now these figures have increased to 2.2% and 0.65%, respectively⁸.

The factor of mono- and poly-ethnicity in territorial and economic development

The question of the degree and vector of the impact of the features of an ethnostructure, primarily the phenomenon of poly-ethnicity, on spatial development has been repeatedly voiced in Russian discourse (Tsapenko, 2016; Bufetova, Kolomak, 2021; Minat, 2022) and, we believe, does not have an unambiguous answer.

Considering the connection of the "mono-/poly-ethnicity" dichotomy with the economic development of territories, it is important to distinguish, first of all, the poly-ethnicity of cities (and adjacent territories), as well as the poly-ethnicity of extra-urban spaces. Taking into account the situation in the latter does not allow us to speak confidently about the presence of some positive economic "poly-ethnicity effect". Thus, in the Rostov Region, the multi-ethnic Martynovsky District is

⁸ Regions of Russia. Socio-economic indicators. 2024: Statistical collection. Rosstat. Moscow. 1 081 p.

Table 4. Distribution of the parameters of the territorial, demographic and economic potential of the South of Russia in the context of mono- and multi-ethnic municipalities, 2021, %

Territory (grouping of municipalities) of the South	Share of municipalities, %			
	in area	in population	in taxable cash income of individuals	in social and other payments
Mono-ethnic "Russians" (the share of Russians in the population is 75% or more), including	52.4	63.9	80.2	66.4
territories with 95% or more Russians in the population	14.2	15.9	15.8	17.5
other mono-ethnic "Russian" territories (with significant "inclusions" of other ethnicities)	38.2	48.0	64.4	48.9
Other ethnic groups with a numerically predominant ethnic group share of 75% or more), including	9.5	13.9	5.6	13.5
Chechen	2.6	5.7	2.8	6.7
Avar	1.3	0.9	0.3	1.3
Dargin	0.5	0.9	0.3	0.8
Ingush	0.4	2.0	0.4	1.9
Kabardian	0.8	1.2	0.5	1.0
Ossetian	0.9	0.7	0.2	0.8
Karachai	1.0	0.4	0.1	0.3
Poly-ethnic	38.1	22.2	14.1	20.1
Compiled according to: All-Russian Population Census-2021, Rosstat, and the Federal Tax Service.				

almost 1.5 times lower in per capita taxable income than the neighboring mono-ethnic (86.4% Russian) Semikarakorsky District. In the Astrakhan Region, the multi-ethnic Kharabalinsky District has a similar indicator as the mono-ethnic (Russian) Chernoyarsky District, and the sharp economic leadership of Krasnoyarsky Municipal District (52.2% of the population are Kazakhs) is predetermined by the localized activity of Gazprom Dobycha Astrakhan LLC.

Cities, especially large ones, which act as regional centers, attracting non-ethnic migration, are not always "more multi-ethnic" than the surrounding countryside, but they invariably lead the way in terms of economic activity. According to municipal analysis (Southern and North Caucasian federal districts), it is the factor of large cities and their continuing industrial functionality that determines increased per capita incomes in territories with Russian mono-ethnicity,

especially where the proportion of Russians varies from 75 to 95%, that is, it is somewhat "blurred" by prolonged non-ethnic migration. (Tab. 4).

In the North Caucasus republics, apart from Ingushetia and Chechnya, the leading cities are also the centers of two or more village-city ethno-systems (Kabardian, Balkar, and Russian in Nalchik, etc.), which in itself determines poly-ethnicity. Of course, there are also pronounced differences between multi-ethnic urban centers and clusters of mono-ethnic municipalities that are actually linked to them into a single whole. But in any case, it is the concentration of the economy and population in the leading cities and their agglomerations that produces elements of poly-ethnicity, and not vice versa.

Conclusion

The multiplicity of ethnic groups, typical for the Russian Federation, with their respective

areas of localization that are diverse, combine concentration with dispersion, and sometimes overlap, generates not only widespread manifestations of the “mono-ethnicity – poly-ethnicity” dichotomy, but also “ethnic certainty” in socio-economic development characteristic of vast territories. It is advisable to understand the latter as a multicomponent relationship of territorial, economic and residential dynamics with the reproduction of specific ethnic groups in interaction with other ethnic groups in their areas of primary localization, as well as with the established ethno-territorial structure as a whole. This kind of “certainty” arises in almost universally occurring situations where spatial development is “colored” by the structural realities of ethno-geography, and vice versa, the latter creates territorial and institutional frameworks that delimit and partially determine economic activity and settlement.

Taking into account “ethnic certainty” is extremely important in modern Russia for improving state regulation of spatial development, in particular for clarifying (and expanding) the list of so-called “anchor settlements” with corresponding “adjacent territories”. The actual mosaic of poly- and mono-ethnic territories in their interconnectedness and dynamics must also be taken into account as one of the factors and aspects in the multi-scale socio-economic zoning of the country, which still remains relevant (Kuznetsova, 2019). Spatial development itself is designed not to promote the growth of poly-ethnicity in a few centers, not segregation and separation of peripheral

territories subject to “mono-ethnization”, but in a multi-ethnic and complexly geographically structured country to promote its economic and residential unity based on the integration (industrial, infrastructural, etc.) of the totality of actually existing mono- and poly-ethnic areas. The stability of the Russian State in the long term is also linked to the preservation of pronounced “Russian definiteness” in the territorial, economic and residential structure of the country, with the socio-economic development of areas of Russian mono-ethnicity, many of which, unfortunately, are rightly characterized by geographers and social scientists as “inner periphery” (Kagansky, 2012).

While solving the tasks of territorial socio-economic “alignment” and necessarily taking into account the ethno-demographic features “from place to place” in this regard, it is important at the same time to prevent any kind of state preferences based on “ethnicity”. More than a century ago, Vladimir Lenin noted: “The problem of protecting the rights of a national minority can be solved only ... in a consistently democratic state that does not deviate from the principle of equality” (Lenin, 1973, p. 143). The necessary “national equality in all its forms” (Stalin, 1946), which was previously clearly articulated at the highest state level, should be achieved not by ignoring and silencing the “ethnic factor” (including in such a complex and comprehensive area as spatial development), but by a focused account of both the ethnic structure of a particular territory, as well as the trends and potential of its economic and residential development.

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