

System of Strategic Planning for Social and Economic Development of Russian Regions: New Objects, Methods and Organizational Solutions

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ABSTRACT

The article discusses the main problems of the current system of strategic planning in the Russian Federation, existing at the federal, macro-regional and regional levels. The substantive limitations of planning documents, their insufficient interconnection and hierarchy, the emergence of new strategic documents not provided for by law (doctrines, policy frameworks, national projects, development initiatives, complex investment projects) are noted. The congestion of the planning system with program documents is shown, which reduces the effectiveness of the use of program-target planning methods. The article raises the question of the ratio of directive and indicative elements in the strategic planning documents being developed. The measures proposed by Russian specialists to improve the system of planning documents, in particular, to develop five-year plans for socio-economic development at the federal and regional levels, were assessed. The authors proposed to expand the horizon and the range of objects of territorial strategic planning, including new objects – urban agglomerations, mineral resource centers, macroregions, closely integrated economic complexes of cities-subjects of the federation (Moscow, St. Petersburg) and the surrounding regions. Recommendations have been developed for the formation of specialized territorial planning authorities in them, formed on a collegial multilateral basis. The expediency of including representatives of public organizations, the business community, and independent experts in the development procedures for all types of planning documents is shown. The article focuses on the need to apply technical capabilities in planning procedures and calculations, which are provided by rapidly developing information technologies, computers, and communications. They ensure the processing of large arrays of initial information, the complexity and multifactorial nature of analytics, prompt adjustment of plans, online control over the implementation of planned tasks, etc.

Keywords: *management, strategic planning, region, concept, planning, forecasting, modeling, information technology*

1. INTRODUCTION

Over a long historical period, the directions, rates and proportions of the development of the

economy of our country were determined and substantiated by the methods of directive planning. For this work, a special national body was created

– the State Planning Commission (Gosplan of the USSR).

On the centenary of its creation (February 1921), it is more appropriate than ever to recall the historical experience, assess the current state and determine the prospects for the application of planned methods of economic management in our country.

The processes of planned economic management in the USSR in specific historical periods had various forms and methods. During the heyday of the planned economy (1950-1970s), the country's economy was managed on the basis of five-year directive plans. By the early 1980s the effectiveness of the five-year plans declined, and they were supplemented by a new planning instrument, with an even higher level of directivity – targeted comprehensive programs. The programs provide for the concentration of the resources of the state (region) for solving a limited number of the most important economic problems, the formation of special program management bodies, a clear time frame for solving problems and a sequence of actions.

With the liquidation of the USSR, the transition from a planned economic system to a market one that took place in our country in the early 1990s, directive plans and programs ceased to exist. Over the next three decades, planning documents (concepts, strategies and programs) of an indicative nature were developed in Russia at the federal and regional levels of government, which

did not provide for the mandatory implementation by economic entities.

At present, Russia is faced with the need to overcome a number of existential challenges, to solve large-scale, fateful tasks. This is the need to ensure an innovative breakthrough, the development of import substitution, the diversification of the structure of the national economy, the intensification of interregional ties, the growth of incomes and the standard of living of the population.

The practice of the development of advanced countries of the world, the assessment of national historical experience, the results of scientific research by foreign and Russian scientists and specialists have put an end to discussions about the feasibility of planning in the system of a market economy (both at the national and regional levels) [1-4]. The answer is unequivocal: to solve the large-scale socio-economic problems faced by our country, it is necessary to use planning mechanisms, a significant increase in the level of planning of the market economy, comprehensive planning coverage of all territorial levels of the economy.

During the 1990s – at the beginning of the 21st century, the issues of planning the socio-economic development of the country and regions were practically outside the field of interests of the Russian scientific society. The attention of domestic scientists was focused mainly on the study of issues of intrafirm planning on the scale of individual economic entities – enterprises, firms

and corporations. Planning at the national and regional levels was seen as a vestige of the command economy system that was being dismantled at that time. Suffice it to say that the federal law defining the foundations of the strategic planning of the economy of our country was adopted only in 2014, i.e. more than 20 years after the start of market transformations.

A positive exception during this period was the study of methods of territorial planning and forecasting carried out by specialists of the Council for the Study of the Productive Forces of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 2000-2005. The research of this research team made it possible to actualize, develop and expand the traditional concepts of territorial development, which were formed during the period of a directive planned economy. The preparation and adoption in 2014 of the law on strategic planning initiated the growth of scientific interest in the problem of economic planning, both at the national and regional levels.

However, most of the works published at that time and research conducted (including very large-scale and high-quality ones) concerned the development of long-term strategic indicative documents – concepts and strategies that liberal economic thought considers quite acceptable and useful in a market economy as a tool that provides interrelation of national tasks with the practice of daily economic activities.

At the same time, the issues of medium-term planning at the regional level, the improvement of

its forms and methods associated with the new realities of the innovation and information economy, as well as the foreign economic challenges facing Russia in the 21st century, are completely insufficiently studied. At present, the methodological and theoretical basis of medium-term planning, including target-oriented planning, in our country, as before, remains the works of such specialists as B.A. Raisberg, A.R. Leibkind, L.S. Pekarsky, O.M. Yun dating back to the 1980s.

In these conditions, the search for new methods and planning tools, deep and comprehensive research to improve the planning of socio-economic development at the regional level seem to be necessary.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Scientific methods used to study the problem posed include: complex, synthetic analysis, expert assessment, search for analogies, logical modeling of hierarchical systems. In the course of the work, the assessment of the regulatory framework for planning socio-economic development, created in the regions of Russia over the past ten years, was carried out. The empiricism of planned activities carried out in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation (for the period 2015-2021 in 85 constituent entities of the Russian Federation) is critically examined and generalized. This made it possible to ensure the combination of actual theoretical developments on the problem under study with the results of practical planning activities in the regions of the country. During the

preparation of conclusions and practical recommendations, the authors used their personal experience of participation in the development of regional strategic planning documents in the city of Moscow, the Moscow region, the Irkutsk region, the Kaluga region.

3. RESULTS

Let us consider the current state of the strategic planning system in our country, in the light of the challenges facing the economy and society. In accordance with the Law on Strategic Planning in the Russian Federation, since 2014, a hierarchical system of documents for strategic planning of socio-economic development has been in effect as part of concepts, strategies, forecasts and government programs. Strategic planning is carried out at the federal level, at the level of federal subjects (regions) and municipalities. Work begins to include urban agglomerations in the planning system (the draft law on urban agglomerations prepared in 2020 provides for the development of ten-year comprehensive development plans for them).

Implementing the requirements of the law on strategic planning, federal and regional authorities have developed to date a large array of long-term planning documents. Russian experts, assessing the progress of the implementation of the law, point to the target lack of clarity of planning documents, their insufficient interconnection and hierarchy, the introduction of new strategic documents into the planning practice at the federal level that are not provided for by the law

(doctrines, policy frameworks, national projects, socio-economic development initiatives, complex investment projects) [5-6]. At the same time, there are unresolved issues and problems at every level of planning.

So at the federal level, for a long time there is no strategy for the country's socio-economic development. In fact, it is the initial document of the entire system of long-term goal setting. Presidential decrees on national goals, concepts and forecasts of the Ministry of Economic Development cannot be considered as a full-fledged substitute for a national strategy. Due to this, the system of strategic planning documents, even at the federal level, cannot be considered complete and complete.

Shifts in this issue took place in January 2021. The Government of the Russian Federation made a decision to develop, by May 14, 2021, the Strategy for the social and economic development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030. It is more concrete, substantive and public in nature. The developers promise to concentrate on topical issues of increasing the well-being of the population, to clearly show the ways and terms of solving the social problems of Russian society. For this, it is envisaged to use new methods of document development and informal organization of work (brainstorming sessions, open discussions, parallel work of expert groups are envisaged). The formation of the strategy is entrusted to the research and analytical centers of the National Research University Higher School of Economics (NRU HSE) and the Russian Academy

of National Economy and Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation (RANEPA). As of October 2021, work on the strategy has not yet been completed.

It seems important to note that in the course of work on the formation of the Strategy for the Social and Economic Development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030, it is necessary to seriously analyze the reasons for the failure to meet the goals and objectives of the previous national strategic document – Strategy 2020. In our opinion, one of them is the shortcomings in as goal-setting within the framework of Strategy 2020 (blurred goals and objectives, unrealistic quantitative parameters), as well as the limited economic instruments for its implementation. During the development of the 2030 Strategy, it is fundamentally important to ensure a broad public discussion of the targets of this planning document, to reach a certain civil consensus on the pace and methods of achieving the set goals. In this case, it will be possible to count on public support and enthusiasm in the process of implementing Strategy 2030. The new strategy should reflect national strategic interests, development priorities of individual industries, and improving the quality of life of the country's citizens as goals. The openness of the implementation of Strategy 2030 will help reduce the level of corruption and shadow economic activity.

In September 2021, the Security Council of the Russian Federation considered and approved a draft of a new basic document in the field of

planning – “Fundamentals of State Policy in the Sphere of Strategic Planning”. The drafters of the document aim to form a balanced, unified and integral system of strategic planning in the Russian Federation. Such a system will rely on a single digital analytical platform for strategic management and include an optimized limited number of planning documents at various levels (regional, municipal). The draft State Policy Framework for Strategic Planning is expected to be finalized and approved in November 2021.

Finally, in October 2021, the Government of the Russian Federation approved a list of initiatives for the socio-economic development of the Russian Federation until 2030. The place of this document in the hierarchical system of national strategic planning, the degree of its interconnection with other goal-setting documents at the national level is not yet clear.

The system of strategic planning at the regional level also requires serious improvement. In particular, there is a substantial gap between the strategies of socio-economic development of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and target programs designed to implement the strategies. Strategic documents are not being developed for a number of large territorial elements of the country's economy – 12 macroregions, single economic complexes of closely integrated constituent entities of the Russian Federation (the city of Moscow – the Moscow region, the city of St. Petersburg – the Leningrad region, the city of Sevastopol – the Republic of Crimea), and also, mineral resource

centers (hereinafter – MRC) and urban agglomerations. With regard to the latter, the need for comprehensive development planning has been convincingly substantiated by foreign and Russian experts [7-9].

MRCs currently act as one of the drivers of economic growth of the national economy. MRC occupy the territory within which a set of developed and planned for development deposits is located, connected by a common infrastructure and having a single point of shipment of extracted raw materials or products of its enrichment.

Currently, Russia has four largest MRCs located in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the Sakhalin region, the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Yugra, each of which provides more than one percent of the total increase in the gross regional product of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. In the realities of economic life, Russian MRCs are isolated from the surrounding regional economic space, are weakly connected with the economic complexes of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, on the territory of which they are located. In our opinion, in order to make the most of the opportunities of the MRC, their development should be coordinated on a planned basis with the development of the surrounding territories. Strengthening the coordination of the development of the MRC and the surrounding territories will give a tangible economic and social effect for the Siberian and Far Eastern regions of the country, increase the pace and level of their development.

Fulfilling the requirements of the law on strategic planning, the regions – subjects of the federation have developed a huge array of long-term programs by 2021, the content of which is characterized by formalism, standard approaches, and the lack of innovative ideas that are so necessary for our country in modern conditions. Now, in each subject of the Russian Federation, a dozen or more targeted programs are being implemented simultaneously (for example, in Moscow – 14, in the Irkutsk region – 20, in the Rostov region – 23, in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug – 26, etc.). The overwhelming part of the federal budget and regional budgets of the subjects of the federation (in some regions up to 90%) is distributed through targeted programs.

Meanwhile, the use of the programmed target method (hereinafter – PTM) in economics has its own objective boundaries. Its widespread use, as noted by experts, contradicts the very essence of the target-oriented approach [10]. PTM are methods of emergency management, temporary concentration of resources on the most important tasks and purposes of economic development at the expense of others, less relevant. Targeted programs imply the creation of special management bodies, with a limited time frame for implementation. The extension of software mechanisms to all existing problems, all resources, and without the creation of special program management bodies (as is the case at the present time), is theoretically erroneous and practically ineffective. This does not allow the expected management result to be obtained. The

administrations of Russian regions need to streamline the use of PTM, reduce the number of programs being developed, and more actively use other methods of implementing planned decisions. These include, in particular, the project approach and contract management.

As a result, to date, the planning system in the country at all its levels is overloaded with a large number of insufficiently coordinated indicative strategies, concepts, programs and national projects, the final efficiency of which (judging by the low rates of development of the country's economy and the lack of qualitative changes in its structure) is small.

In these conditions, the regions of the Russian Federation are looking for new forms of planning socio-economic development, improving and developing the system of regional planning documents. For example, in the Irkutsk region in 2018, a new type of strategic long-term document at the regional level was developed – the Complex of Strategic Investment Initiatives [11].

This document, without duplicating the regional strategic planning documents already available in the Irkutsk region, supplements them, revealing and specifying the process of implementing the Strategy for the socio-economic development of the region. This is achieved by selecting and justifying large investment projects in the field of industrial production, ecology, social policy, and interregional cooperation.

Within the framework of the Set of Strategic Investment Initiatives, the goals and objectives of

each specific project are fixed, its contribution to the region's economy, to increasing budget revenues and improving the living standards of the population is assessed. At the same time, the approximate volume of investments for the entire time horizon – 12 years – is determined, the circle of potential investors is outlined. The content of the work carried out within the framework of this new strategic document can be characterized as a combination of scientific research, long-term forecasting, business analytics, technical and economic calculations, information support, expert support for the management activities of regional authorities.

A number of Russian specialists propose to supplement the existing planning system, both at the federal and regional levels, with the development of five-year plans for socio-economic development [11]. They consider it insufficient to develop long-term target-setting documents for our economy only in the form of concepts and strategies, as is the case at present. A practical attempt to develop a regional five-year plan for socio-economic development was carried out in 2018 in the Irkutsk region.

Considering the issue of returning to the development of five-year plans within the national economy of the country and regions, it is necessary to understand that in a market economy, or even a mixed economy, plans for the socio-economic development of the country and regions can be, in general, only indicative. Only sections related to the activities of the defense sector, state-owned enterprises and budgetary

investments can be directive. For private business entities, such plans should offer a clear set of attractive incentives and benefits that can ensure voluntary and conscious participation of the private sector in coordinated actions to develop certain types of production and new technologies.

It can be assumed that the five-year national plans for socio-economic development, as well as plans for the socio-economic development of the constituent entities of the Federation, could consist of two blocks: indicative – for the private sector and directive, including production targets and investment volumes for defense industries, state corporations, the sphere science and social complex. As a separate section of the plan, there should be a targeted investment program of public investment.

The creation of a full-fledged system of strategic planning at the national and regional levels of management is impossible without the formation of specialized bodies capable of efficiently developing planning documents. Currently, such bodies are practically absent in our country. At the federal level, indicative strategies, concepts and programs are currently being prepared by the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, at the regional level the same workload is being done by the economic divisions of the administrations of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. As part of improving management processes to increase the level of systematic development of the economy of the country and regions, it is

necessary to consider the formation of specialized planning bodies.

At the macro-regional level, the only existing authority for management and planning is the Ministry for the Development of the Far East and the Arctic. The initiative to create the Eastern Center for State Planning, put forward in 2017, did not receive further practical development. The Planning Center was conceived as an expert and analytical structure providing the development of proposals for increasing the efficiency of state planning in the Far Eastern macroregion. Within the framework of such a body, it was proposed to create two work centers: in the city of Khabarovsk for working with the regions and in Moscow for interaction with federal executive bodies.

At the level of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation, an attempt to create a specialized body for regional planning was carried out in the Irkutsk region. In 2018, to coordinate all the planned work of the sectoral and functional units of the government of the Irkutsk region, a special body was created under the governor of the region – the Committee for Planning the Social and Economic Development of the Irkutsk Region [11]. This structure led the development of a five-year plan for the socio-economic development of the region for 2019-2023.

The Planning Committee was created as a coordinating advisory structure under the governor of the Irkutsk region. In 2018-2019 the Committee, along with the heads of the executive authorities of the Irkutsk region, included

representatives of business, higher educational institutions, public organizations, authoritative scientists and experts. It is fundamentally important that they included specialists from other regions of the country.

The short term of the Planning Committee in the Irkutsk region (a little over a year) does not allow making deep and well-grounded conclusions about its effectiveness as a coordinating planning and management structure. Despite the creation of the Committee, in fact the entire complex of work on the preparation of the five-year plan for the Irkutsk region was carried out in the branch divisions of the regional administration. However, in any case, the appearance of a specialized planning body in a constituent entity of the Russian Federation is very symptomatic.

Improving the quality of planning decisions, expanding the range of economic objects covered by planning is impossible without increasing the level of information support based on computer technology, large databases, and mathematical methods.

In modern practice of strategic planning, information and communication technologies play an increasing role [12], significantly affecting the processing speed of the initial data arrays, the efficiency of decision-making and the provision of feedback. Although it is generally accepted that the majority of modern IT management solutions are imported by Russia from abroad, the domestic experience in the field of information processing automation is very extensive. Already in the Soviet

period, significant computing power was available at the level of ministries and departments. This was due to the very essence of centralized planning, when in order to provide the decision-making centers with the necessary data, it was necessary to process and systematize gigantic arrays of primary information. In addition, the task of centralizing information about available resources and the directions of their distribution dictated the need to create complex logistics schemes.

In the new realities of the market economy, the existing base allowed the domestic management system to quickly incorporate technical and technological solutions and practices of using modern electronics. The accumulated experience in processing large-scale volumes of information has already made it possible to create a number of very effective systems for ensuring management decisions in various fields, which has significantly expanded the possibilities of using methods of strategic and current planning.

In the field of statistical information, these are the Rosstat systems: the Unified Interdepartmental Information and Statistical System (UIISS) and the Database of indicators of municipalities, which makes it possible to form a "passport" of almost any settlement, including an impressive set of indicators in all spheres of its existence. A wide range of information resources are supervised by the Russian Treasury. Some of them are: State Information System on State and Municipal Payments (SIS SMP), the official website of the Russian Federation on the Internet for posting

information on placing orders for the supply of goods, performance of work, provision of services (OOS, zakupki.gov.ru), State automated system (SAS) "Management", the official site for posting information about state (municipal) institutions (SMI, bus.gov.ru), portal "Electronic Budget". In the activities of the Russian Government and regional authorities, the capabilities of situational centers are used, integrating algorithms for instant correlation of departmental information arrays and their analysis with visualized data arriving in real time.

At the same time, quite, from our point of view, technically feasible, but still not adequately solved task, is the possibility of prompt processing of information on strategic, forecast, program documents, documents of territorial planning of the national, regional and municipal levels. An example of a promising approach to solving this problem is the section "Strategic Planning System" of SAS "Management", which accumulates a significant array of the above data and has a module for information and analytical support for the planned activities of state and municipal structures.

The use of information and communication technologies in the strategic planning system should move forward in the direction of reducing the analysis time of measures integrated into program documents, as well as indicators and indicators. It is necessary to provide an operational grouping of planned and actual information and its comparison in the context of activities, as well as territories, including individual populations, points,

regions and macroregions. To improve the quality of strategic and planning documents, it is advisable to gradually expand access (of course, while maintaining state secrets) of the expert and scientific community to the resources of the closed parts of state information systems.

4. DISCUSSION

An assessment of the system of strategic planning that has developed to date in the Russian Federation at various levels of territorial stratification of the economy makes it possible to formulate the following proposals and recommendations for improving the system of planning documents, methods of planning calculations, the structure and composition of planning bodies:

1) The process of strategic planning should be carried out at all levels of territorial stratification of the Russian economy – on the scale of macroregions (6-10 constituent entities of the Russian Federation), on the scale of economically closely integrated constituent entities of the Russian Federation (2-3 neighboring constituent entities of the Russian Federation), municipalities.

2) The system of strategic planning should include new territorial elements that have arisen in the national economy, but have not yet become independent planning objects. We are talking about urban agglomerations, MSCs, special economic zones, special administrative regions, priority development areas, science cities, technopolises, etc.

3) It is necessary to continue work on improving the hierarchy and typology of the system of strategic planning documents at all levels of economic management, enriching it with new types of planning documents. At the same time, the composition, structure, tasks and place in the planning system of such documents as doctrines, policy frameworks, development initiatives, national projects, complex investment projects should be clearly enshrined in legislation. It is very important to continue the development of the system of indicators used in planning documents. It is advisable to introduce more broadly into them indicators characterizing the sustainable development of territories, interregional ties, the state of the environment, the degree of innovativeness of the economy and society, and the processes of import substitution.

4) The methodology of macro-regional and regional planning needs further development. Updating should comprehensively cover all stages of the planning process, from goal setting to monitoring the implementation of planned targets. It is necessary to clarify the relationship between program-target and project planning methods, to apply more broadly advanced methods of goal-setting, analysis of the state of the economy and social sphere of regions and macro-regions (SWOT analysis, ratings, etc.). Notable among the range of possible methods are: Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA), Cost-Effectiveness Analysis (CEA), Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA), analysis of "impact on the economy" (Economy Impact Analysis, EIA), etc.

5) In the modern conditions of a high-tech economy and rapid computerization of society [13], the process of strategic planning should be carried out using the opportunities provided by information technology. Electronic exchange of information, processing large amounts of data, interaction of specialists in electronic networks, management and control in real time – all this allows to radically expand the range of planning objects, time horizons and volumes of planning decisions, while maintaining a reasonable sufficiency of the number of planned parameters, indicators and indicators, to improve the soundness of decisions and the efficiency of the planning process.

6) The final effectiveness of the planning process (achievement of the set goals) is ensured only in the case of using effective mechanisms for the implementation of planned targets. In a market economy, these mechanisms should represent levers of influence on the economic interests of private producers. Therefore, a set of effective financial, credit, tax incentives, preferences and privileges should be developed that would make participation in the implementation of indicative strategies, programs and plans formed by the state profitable from a commercial point of view for Russian enterprises and firms.

7) It is necessary to form in macroregions, at the interregional level, in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, in municipalities capable and responsible bodies of strategic planning, capable of carrying out this work at a new technical and methodological level. At the same

time, maximum flexibility in the organizational forms of planning structures is important. These can be temporary or permanent structures, state or public bodies, regional or interregional formations.

5. CONCLUSION

In modern Russia, the need has matured to strengthen the degree and scale of coordination of economic decisions of the state and business in order to solve existential, in nature, tasks and challenges. This can be achieved, *inter alia*, by coordinating managerial actions and improving long-term goal-setting within the national economy and economic complexes of macroregions and regions – constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

Of course, the expansion of the scale of the use of planned methods of management in modern Russia will and should take place in other forms than was the case in the historical past. The system of national and regional planning in the modern global market economy will acquire its own specificity.

In our opinion, it will consist of the following:

- mixed indicative-directive nature of planning documents;
- coverage of all the most important elements of the economy (industry, territory, corporation);
- the widest application of planning methods and tools based on the capabilities of information technology, computer

technology;

- democratization of all stages of the planning process from the formation to the implementation of planning documents.

In general, the planning system necessary for solving the problems facing our country can be defined as a democratic planning-market system.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Petr I. Burak – assessment of the state of the economic planning system at the federal level, preparation of conclusions and recommendations. Viktor G. Rostanets – general edition of the text, assessment of the state of the economic planning system at the macro-regional and regional levels, preparation of conclusions and recommendations. Anatoly V. Topilin – analysis of the problem and preparation of conclusions and recommendations for improving the methodology of planned calculations. Irina A. Rozhdestvenskaya – development of issues of application of target-oriented planning methods, identification of problems of PTM application in the conditions of the Russian economy. Aleksey I. Kabalinsky – analysis of an array of regional planning documents, preparation of conclusions and recommendations on the use of information technology in the planning process.

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