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ENHANCEMENT OF THE METHODOLOGICAL AND SYSTEMATIC FOUNDATION FOR MONITORING SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN LATVIAN REGIONS

Summary: The article is concerned with the problem of managing the regions on the grounds of using economic instruments, including: territorial development index. The meaning of these instruments in the use of the potential of the regions with the goal of overcoming unwelcome differences between them is analysed on the example of regions and cities of Latvia. Suggestions about the ways of improving the management of territorial development on the grounds of brand strengthening have been expressed. In order to re-enforce the methodological and systematic foundation as to the calculation of the composite index of territorial development, the use of the indicator of levelled tax revenue per resident in municipalities has been proposed. Additionally, an opinion has been provided about a possible modelling of the regional potential based on different options of combining the three types of capital: economic, social and natural for the development of territorial grouping typology, which might be useful for the purposes of planning and monitoring.

Keywords: brand, monitoring, territorial development index.

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1. Introduction

Latvia's National Development Plan for the period 2014-2020¹ contains a course of action drawn up for the purpose of achieving a balanced regional development and economic prosperity. The document emphasises the society's awareness of the negative impact of social and regional inequality on the employment rate and the level of productivity. This is why it mentions among its main priorities such important issues as: 1) the growth of the national economy, 2) the strengthening of the human ability to adapt, and 3) the development of territories which foster the growth of the

¹ *Latvijas nacionālais attīstības plāns 2014–2020 gadam*, Apstiprināts ar 2012.gada 20. decembra Saeimas lēmumu, p. 14. Further referred to as: Latvia's Development Plan 2020.

national economy, i.e. the territories which sustain Latvia's economic development. All three aforementioned priorities are interconnected.

The issue of improving the management of strategic transformations as regards the regional territories is therefore becoming particularly topical. The aim of the present article is to explore the goals, the focus of the activities and the economic instruments of the regional management. The object of the study is Latvia's planning regions.

The general goal of the territorial development comprises taking into account the substantial diversity of Latvia's natural and human resources, strengthening the regional power, ensuring the efficient use of regional advantages and resources as well as minimising unwelcome differences between the regions as well as within the regions. For these purposes, it is necessary to step away from the homocentric structuring of the living environment and "develop a balanced polycentric approach, which presupposes the creation of subordinate interconnected development centres on various territorial levels".² Such centres will be provided with the support of the government in terms of enhancing the infrastructure of the entrepreneurial activity, transportation and tourism as well as with the provision of public services by the means of integrated territorial approach. At the same time, Riga retains its position as a metropolitan city.

2. The development centre model

The **development centre model (9+21)** has been taken as a foundation, which anticipates the concentration of the investments within the development centres of the national and regional importance. The centres of national importance comprise **9 cities**, while those of regional importance – **21 cities**. It will serve as grounds for involving the municipalities of smaller territories and districts into the realised investment projects, ensuring the synergetic development effect among all the settlements. The centres of national and regional importance are envisaged as the driving force for the attraction of the investments in order to create new jobs.

The aim of strategic management is to modify objects by means of completion of semi-functional elements, or the replacement of dysfunctional elements with new elements.³ A vast investment into the development theory was made by the German-American scientist K. Lewin (Kurt Lewin, 1890-1947) who created a *three phase change management model* in the first half of the XX century, extensively employed to this day.

According to Lewin's concept, in order to realise strategic developments, during the first phase, it is necessary to "unfreeze" the outdated paradigm, i.e., to overcome the resistance of the internal groups, obsolete traditions, dogmas, etc. In other

² Latvia's Development Plan 2020, p. 60.

³ Томпсон-мл., А. Артур, А. Дж. Стрикленд, *Стратегический менеджмент: концепции и ситуации для анализа*, 12-е изд.-М.: Издательский дом «Вильямс», 2011, p. 32-34.

words, the situation should be assessed and measured because weakening the resistance should be developed. The second phase is about “ensuring transition” – elaborating new requirements and implementing changes. Finally, the third phase involves “freezing” the desired result – institutionalising changes.⁴ The rational substantiation of the transformations is not enough for changing the paradigm, that is overcoming people’s disbelief as to the favourable result of the changes which are taking place. The emotional and symbolic aspects are equally significant. This is why it is important to simultaneously carry out culturological events and PR campaigns, which demonstrate and establish new values, create favourable opinions in the society and reinforce trust into the changes which are currently in effect.⁵ Forming an attractive image of Latvia’s regional territories on the basis of PR and promotion, as well as the creation and strengthening of the brands of Latvian cities and territories, appear to be the most important tasks of the second phase – the phase of “transition”.

Let us return to the economic model of the adjustment of Latvia’s **9+21 development centres**, included in the plan. The issue presents itself in the form of development of the instruments for realisation of the aforementioned model, which will require the coordination of the normative documents for territorial planning on all levels – the national, the regional and the local; coordination of financial possibilities, subsidies and the normative base; a long-term balanced development, cooperation and participation; transparency, control and evaluation; normative regulation and others.

3. Indicators of goal achievement progress

Each course of action is reflected in the appropriate indicators of goal achievement progress. One of the important instruments is “the territorial development index in the planning regions” – TDI, which in its original as well as its current form is recommended only for research purposes, since it has a number of drawbacks and requires enhancement.⁶

The initial TDI was calculated according to the methodology of the year 2000 and is nowadays considered to be too static as it does not reflect the rate of the ongoing changes in the regional development. It presupposes an integral evaluation of the

⁴ A. Kritsonis, *Comparison of Change Theories*, „International Journal of Scholarly Academic Intellectual Diversity”, 8:1, 2004-2005, available from: http://currentnursing.com/nursing_theory/change_theory.html.

⁵ М.Р. Душкина, *PR и продвижение в маркетинге: коммуникации и воздействие, технологии и психология: Учебное пособие-СПб*, Питер, 2010, p. 251.

⁶ Informatīvais ziņojums “Par risinājumiem teritorijas attīstības indeksa pilnveidošanai, kā arī turpmākai pielietošanai ES fondu 2014.-2020.gadam plānošanas periodā”. Informatīvā ziņojuma projekts “Par risinājumiem teritorijas attīstības pilnveidošanai, kā arī turpmākai pielietošanai ES fondu 2014.-2020. gadam plānošanas periodā”, 2013. Further referred to as: Informatīvais ziņojums VARAM 040413.

differences in the level of socio-economic development of the country's regions and is calculated according to a range of indicators.⁷ From the year 2007 to 2011, municipalities acquired budget subsidies in the amount of 11.37 million lats. The distribution of subsidies was carried out based on the values of TDI. Thus, the Riga region received the least subsidies – 6.2% from the subsidy amount, and the Kurzeme and Latgale regions received the most – 25.8% and 38.0%, respectively.⁸

Figure 1 below shows the use of TDI for making decisions concerning the amount of the subsidies allocated from the government budget to the municipalities according to the regions. TDI may have both positive and negative values. The lower its value, the lower the level of the socio-economic development in the region. Figure 1 depicts the values of the TDI in the form of a broken line, while the percentage of the overall amount of the government budget subsidies according to the regions is presented as a column graph.

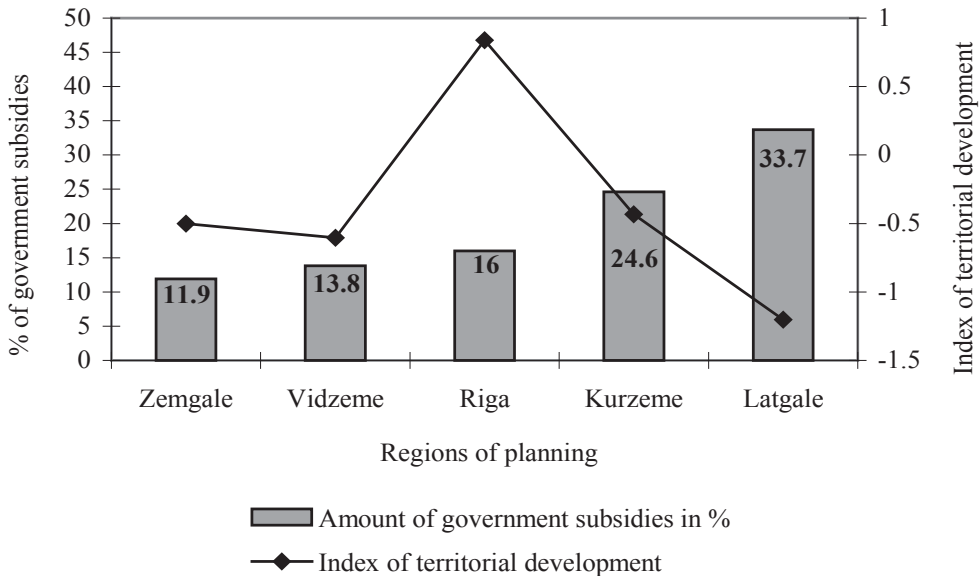


Figure 1. Impact of the territorial development index (2012) on the allocation of the government budget subsidies to Latvia's planning regions from 2007 to 2012

Source: Informatīvais ziņojums VARAM 040413, p. 14.

To replace the TDI, which used to be calculated by drawing on the obsolete methodology and system developed in 2000, a modified alternative territorial development index is put forward. Table 1 shows more precise values which are proposed

⁷ Ministru kabineta 2009.gada 7.aprīļa noteikumi Nr.319 "Noteikumi par teritorijas attīstības indeksa aprēķināšanas kārtību un tā vērtībām".

⁸ Reģionu attīstība Latvijā 2011. Valsts reģionālas attīstības aģentūra. – Rīga: VRAA, 2012, p. 67.

for the inclusion into the alternative “composite” TDI as well as the weight of these values.

Table 1. Factors which are used for the calculation of the alternative territorial development index and their weight

N°	Indicator	Weight of the indicator
1	Number of economically active individual merchants and societies of merchant venturers per 1000 residents	0.200
2	Registered number of the enterprises per 1000 residents	0.100
3	Unemployment level, %	0.100
4	Unit weight of the impoverished individuals in the general population, %	0.050
5	Number of crimes committed per 1000 residents*	0.025
6	Balance of the natural increase of the population per 1000 residents	0.200
7	Balance of the long-term migration per 1000 residents	0.100
8	Number of residents over the working age per 1000 residents in the working age (demographic pressure or demographic dependence)	0.025
9	Income tax of the residents per one resident	0.100
10	Levelled municipality budget tax revenues in monetary units per one resident	0.100
Total		1.000

Source: Informatīvais ziņojums VARAM 040413, p. 28.

Thus, a new indicator is included into the alternative TDI, which characterises the comparative financial consistency of the municipalities and is the most appropriate for the detection of the intensity of the co-financing from the government budget – **levelled municipality budget tax revenues per one resident** – or more precisely, resident income tax revenues plus real estate and land tax revenues minus the payments into the municipality financial levelling fund for those who are carrying out these payments, or adding the subsidies from the said fund.⁹

The alternative TDI which includes the “levelled municipality budget tax revenues” characterises the capabilities of the municipalities considerably more precisely than the previous TDI. It is more objective, understandable for those employing it, requires accessible data for its calculation, and is easy to check. Furthermore, the index is possible to calculate not only for each municipality, but also for each planning region based on the summarised data of the municipalities.

Nevertheless, comparative calculations by means of the new methodology have shown that the development of the alternative TDI should be continued, and it is currently undergoing improvements.¹⁰ Thus, it is necessary to further clarify the list

⁹ See Table 1, indicator N° 10.

¹⁰ Z. Hermansons, *Teritorijas attīstības indeksa praktiskā pielietojuma analīze un tā pilnveidošanas iespējas*, *Ekonomika un uzņēmējdarbība*, Rīgas Tehniskās universitātes Zinātniskie raksti, 3. sērija, 22. sējums, Rīga 2012.

of the indicators which are comprised by the TDI, to carry out their correlational analysis, to invite the experts for the evaluation of the importance of the significance of the indicators and determination of their weight values.¹¹

Last but not the least, one more instrument should be mentioned – the territorial development typology, which is based on the widely known economic “model of the three types of capital”. According to this model, economic development in and of its own is linked to the development of the social, economic and natural capital. The indicator of the capital can also be employed as a territorial development factor.¹²

4. Territorial grouping typology

On the basis of the modelling of the possible options for combining the three types of capital, a territorial grouping typology might be created, which would be useful for the purposes of planning and monitoring.

Table 2. Typology of territories based on the variants of use of their capital’s potential possibilities

	Territorial grouping characteristics and strategies
SNE+	High and balanced development potential. Highly competitive territories. Expected considerable return from entrepreneurship.
SN+E-	Territories with a good natural environment, healthy society, where the development is impeded by an insufficient access to the markets. The advantage is entrepreneurship based on the employment of favourable natural resources.
SE+N-	High development potential, however, the natural capabilities should be improved. Support for entrepreneurship focused on responsible use of natural resources is advised.
NE+S-	High development potential, however, the age structure of the residents is unfavourable. Competitive territories. Expected considerable return from entrepreneurship. A purposeful social policy is required.
S+NE-	Typical agricultural territories concerned with the production of agricultural products. Such specialisation is optimal if no intensive access to the market is necessary since that is not the strong side of these territories. It is advisable to work toward developing the conditions of enhancing the natural environment.
N+SE-	Territories with a good natural environment. Limited access to the markets has caused an economic depression, which resulted in the younger generation leaving the territory. A purposeful social policy is required as well as support for the entrepreneurship based on the employment of favourable natural resources.
E+SN-	Territories with a good access to the markets. Support for entrepreneurship which does not exploit natural resources is advised. Unfavourable age structure – a purposeful social policy is required. Natural resources require improvement.
SNE-	Territories in the state of depression. A long-term natural capital renewal policy and securing of access to the markets are required. An active purposeful social policy is necessary.

Source: Informatīvais ziņojums VARAM 040413, p. 35-36.

¹¹ Informatīvais ziņojums VARAM 040413, p. 28-31.

¹² Reģionu attīstība Latvijā 2010 – Rīga: VRAA, 2011.

Table 2 uses the following labelling: S – social capital, E – economic capital, N – natural capital. The “+” symbol means that the capital of the corresponding group of territories is characterised by a value above the average level. The “–” symbol means that the capital of the corresponding group of territories may be characterised by a value below the average level.

According to this typology, Latgale can be considered as a territory with a favourable natural environment which requires a purposeful social policy and support for entrepreneurship (N+SE–), whereas the Riga region, being a highly competitive territory, corresponds to the first territorial grouping reference (SNE+). The typology of the territories provides framework for the analysis of and can serve as grounds for the development of both a strategic plan and a course of action for municipalities and managers carrying out the regional policy.

5. Conclusions

The problem of the survival of the regions as market subjects is impossible to solve without an attractive infrastructure for the residents, entrepreneurs and tourists, a favourable tax system and investment climate, reinforced by a vivid, memorable brand. It is not always a good idea to imitate the successful geographical brands of the others. If a territory lacks historical traditions and resources, its brand should be built by drawing on its uniqueness according to the branding guidelines. The main modern tendency is the creation of brands of honest communication, truth, relationship brands and “green” brands. The brands able to express real human values are successful.

Resources for building the territorial image and the prosperity of the city may also be drawn from the events which contribute to the budget revenue. Territorial branding is becoming an uncontested marketing move in the management of the regional and city economy.

All in all, it should be noted as a positive tendency that Latvia’s regional development is being carried out on the grounds of methodological and systematic foundation, which is constantly being updated with the employment of new “composite” indexes as well as other economic instruments. Additionally, the municipalities have lately started to employ another marketing instrument – geographical branding – which fosters the territorial image creation, which is called for by the topicality of its economic necessity for Latvia.

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UDOSKONALANIE METODOLOGICZNEJ I SYSTEMATYCZNEJ ORGANIZACJI MONITOROWANIA ROZWOJU SPOŁECZNO-EKONOMICZNEGO REGIONÓW ŁOTEWSKICH

Streszczenie: Artykuł jest poświęcony problemowi kontroli regionów w oparciu o wykorzystanie instrumentów ekonomicznych, w tym wskaźników rozwoju danego terytorium. Znaczenie tych instrumentów dla wykorzystania potencjału regionów w celu przezwyciężenia negatywnych różnic między nimi jest zauważane np. w regionach i miastach na Łotwie. Przedstawione zostały sugestie co do sposobów udoskonalenia zarządzania rozwojem terytorialnym w oparciu o wzmocnienie marki. W celu ponownego wprowadzenia metodologicznych i systematycznych podstaw obliczania złożonego wskaźnika rozwoju terytorialnego zaproponowano wykorzystanie wskaźnika wyrównanych wpływów podatkowych na mieszkańca gminy. Dodatkowo wyrażono opinię o możliwości modelowania potencjału regionu w oparciu o różne opcje łączenia trzech rodzajów kapitału: ekonomicznego, społecznego i naturalnego, na rzecz rozwoju typologii grup terytorialnych, które mogą być użyteczne do celów planowania i monitorowania.

Słowa kluczowe: marka, monitoring, wskaźnik rozwoju regionu.