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Establishing the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation as a factor of the regional development: raising questions (the case of the Arkhangelsk region) *

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Abstract. The article describes the impact of the Russian Arctic policy activation on the development of the Arkhangelsk region. In 2013, the formation of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation (AZRF) as an object of state administration was launched. The Arkhangelsk region was partly included in the Russian Arctic. Now, we observe the establishment of the regulatory field and the organizational framework of the macroregion. The article analyzes the current stage of this process in the Russian Arctic. The author highlights the main opportunities and risks for the region associated with the activation of the Arctic policy of the country. The most serious opportunities are emerging in politics (the Arctic status, external relations and external image) and economy (infrastructure, investments, new enterprises and organizations, and tourism). These areas are experiencing some changes. The changes in the social space are hardly noticeable but, in this area, cardinal changes are possible. They are associated with the renewal of the regional image, strengthening the regional identity, changes in the social composition of the population and the potential of municipalities. At the same time, risks associated with incomplete entry of the Arkhangelsk region into the Russian Arctic, the implementation of major investment projects and inefficient management.

Keywords: *The Arctic Zone of Russia, social space, a factor of development, social risks, the regional identity, the Arkhangelsk region.*

Introduction

The influence of the federal policy on the situation in the regions is quite discussed in the Russian and foreign social science [1, Huskey L., pp. 140-155]. In addition to theoretical relevance, it has a serious practical aspect. Indeed, in modern Russia, the vector and the pace of the regional development largely depend on the coherence of regional policy with the federal agenda, on the ability of regions to “fit” to the federal trends [2, Mikheeva N.N., p. 157-159; 3, Zamyatina N.Yu., pp. 126-155].

Several regions, incl. the Arkhangelsk region, for some years has been working on a development strategy, largely based on the Arctic policy of the federal authorities [4, pp. 14-45]. In connection with these processes, we will discuss and answer some of the relevant questions in this article:

- “What is the specific of the Russian Arctic policy and may it change?”;
- “What impact does/can the Arctic policy of the Russian state have on the Arkhangelsk region?”;
- “How can it affect the development of individual municipalities, industries, spheres, spaces of the region?”;

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- “What opportunities and risks does/can the Russian Arctic policy form for the Arkhangelsk region?”.

Specifics of the Russian Arctic zone establishment

Since the structure of the country's Arctic policy and the formation of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation are in an active phase, the answers to these questions will be more of a staged or debatable nature. At the same time, it seems that the very formulation of these issues, especially the scenarios of the Arctic policy development, the opportunities and risks in connection with its implementation, as well as discussions on these topics are extremely important for the strategy and tactics of the region's management.

The issues of the structuring of the Arctic zone of Russia became the subject of scientific and management activities relatively recently, in the second half of the 2000s, [5, Ivanter V.V., pp. 8-20]. It was when the term “Arctic zone of Russia” (hereinafter — the Russian Arctic) was introduced into regulatory circulation, and the discussions on management and development of this territory began. Over the past 5 years, this process has intensified [6, Lukin Yu.F., pp. 174-179]. Thus, this was clearly illustrated by the formation of the microregion's regulatory field. Since 2013, several federal acts on the social and economic development of the Russian Arctic have been adopted or prepared (Fig. 1).

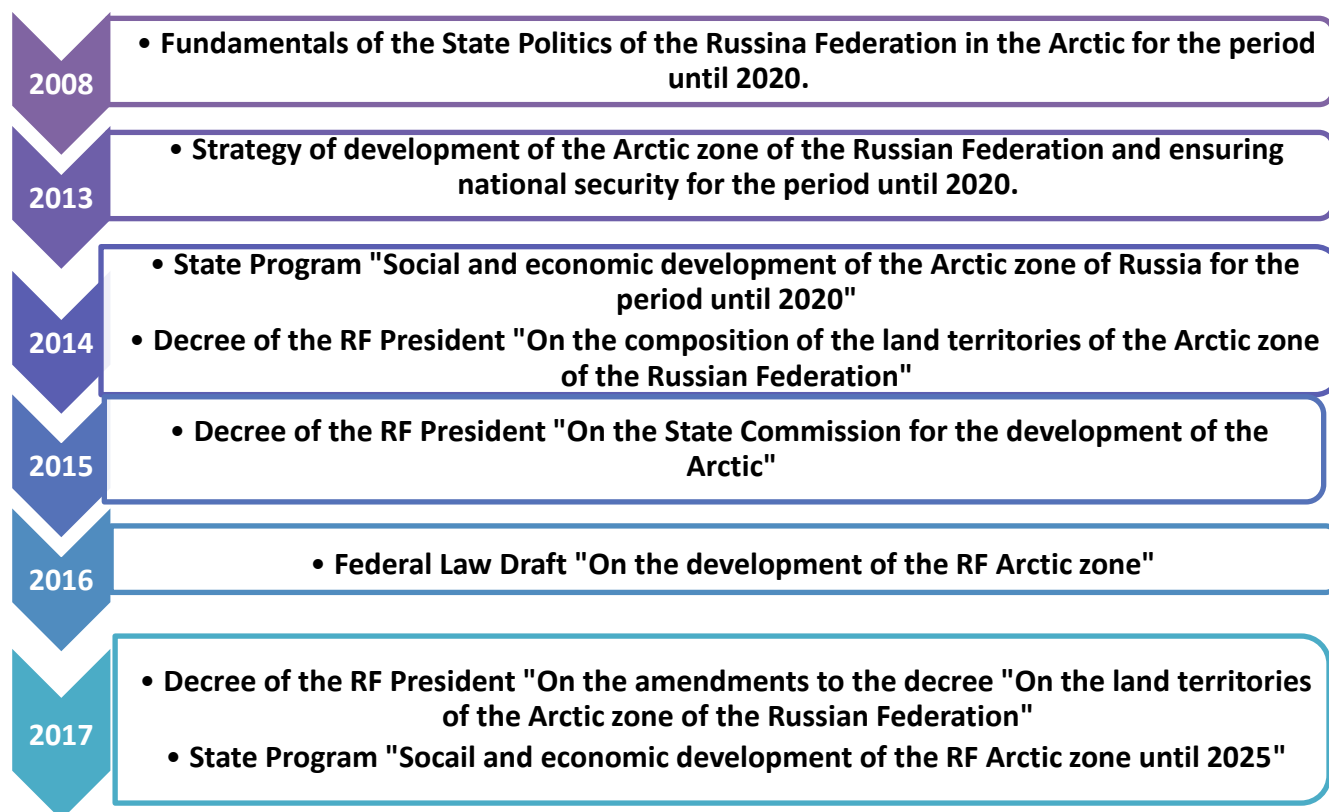


Fig. 1. Making the regulatory field of the Russian Arctic.

Currently, the land borders of the Russian Arctic are normatively fixed, projects for the development of this territorial formation are being worked out, a federal structure has been set up

to coordinate activities in the Arctic, the content of the federal law draft is being discussed, and a new version of the state program for the development of the Arctic zone of the country has been adopted.

At the same time, the formation of the Arctic zone of Russia is far from being complete. The nature and direction of Russia's internal Arctic policy is rather weakly crystallized and can change under the influence of both external and internal factors [7, Sentsov A.]. Now, the formation of the Russian Arctic can be characterized by the following features:

- External conditionality of the RF Arctic zone establishment. The beginning of the Russian Arctic formation relates to the need to protect national interests in high latitudes. In the early 2000s, the Arctic became an object of geopolitical and geo-economic interests. The rise in energy prices attracted attention to the Arctic oil and gas deposits, and the warming of the climate stimulated interest in the Northern Sea Route as an alternative route between Asia and Europe;
- pronounced downward character of the formation of the Arctic zone of Russia, domination of the state. The main actor is the state represented by the federal and regional authorities and state corporations. Municipal authorities, private business and non-profit sector are excluded from the discussion and decision-making. A striking example of this is that the state Commission for the Development of the Arctic does not include representatives of the Russian Arctic municipalities; it contains very few representatives of private business and no representatives of influential public organizations;
- technocratic approach. The priority objectives of the Arctic territories development are the resource development and national security. The secondary importance of humanitarian and social issues is clearly manifested in the content of the state program and the agenda of the state Commission for the Development of the Arctic;
- project approach. It is expressed in the fact that, on the one hand, the expression “the Arctic is a megaproject of the country” has become quite common, and on the other hand, the regional part of the state program, the “main activities” section, consists of poorly interconnected projects, often;
- irregularity of the AZRF development. Irregularity has territorial and substantial aspects. From the social and economic point of view, the macroregion is very heterogeneous. The West and East sectors of the Russian Arctic are markedly different. In the composition of the Russian Arctic, there are regions-donors and regions-recipients, which have unequal opportunities to different tasks. The informative aspect of the Arctic policy has a clear bias in the direction of the discussion and declarative events;
- priority of “coastal” criteria for the territories to be a part of the RF Arctic zone. The composition of the land territory of the Russian Arctic demonstrates that it is the access to the seas of the Arctic ocean basin that the developers of regulatory documents have put at the forefront in determining the composition of the Russian Arctic;
- uncertainty of funding mechanisms for the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation, especially for regional projects. In the strategic documents of 2008 and 2013, the relevant state program was specified as the main mechanism for the development of the Russian Arctic. However, its first edition did not contain independent sources of funding, and the second was significantly cut. Recently, as a measure to stimulate the development of regions and municipalities of the Russian Arctic, the creation of support zones in these territories was started. This supposed to give impetus to the development of some regional economic projects. However, a clear understanding of the mechanisms of identi-

fication, support, sources of funding for projects does not exist in minds of many stakeholders;

- strong inter-regional competition, which is due to both the initial stage of the formation of the macroregion, and the indistinct position of the federal center on its territorial development. The most intense competition between the Arctic regions is for getting informal “Arctic” statuses (primarily through the organization of prestigious “Arctic” events) and support of the regional and interregional investment projects at the federal level [8, Katorin I.V., pp. 73-78].

Features of the Arkhangelsk region’s position in the AZRF

Before considering the impact of the establishment of AZRF on the development of the Arkhangelsk region, it is necessary to identify some features that characterize the starting position of our region as a part of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation. These features include:

- the partial inclusion of the region in the composition of the Russian Arctic. Only 7 of the 21 municipalities of the Arkhangelsk region are recognized as Arctic (*the cities of Arkhangelsk, Severodvinsk and Novodvinsk, Primorsky, Mezensky and Onezhsky districts and Novaya Zemlya*). At the same time, for many demographic, economic, scientific and educational indicators, these municipalities have a significant share in the region;
- according to the physical and geographical and climatic criteria, our region cannot be classified as Arctic. Its territory is located to the south of the 66th parallel, the average temperatures in the Arkhangelsk region are much higher than required for inclusion in the Arctic climatic zone;
- rich history of the region related to the Arctic studies and exploration;
- developed transport, scientific and educational infrastructure of the Arctic part of the region;
- according to many social and economic indicators, the Arkhangelsk region is not among the leaders in the Russian Arctic.¹

In general, these features form both positive and negative prerequisites for using the Arctic factor in the development strategy of the region. The “non-Arctic” physical, geographical and climatic features of the region are not left without attention from the authorities, business and scientific community of other regions. Their neutralization requires representatives of the Arkhangelsk region to explicitly or covertly demonstrate the validity of the inclusion of the region in the Russian Arctic.

The influence of the formation of the Russian Arctic on various spheres of the Arkhangelsk region

In our opinion, the opportunities associated with the formation of the Arctic zone of Russia are most closely associated with the three spheres of life in the region:

- political (“Arctic” statuses, external connections and image);
- social space (regional identity, prestige of branches and professions, development or stagnation of territories);

¹ Рейтинг регионов РФ по качеству жизни – 2016.[Rating of Regions of the Russian Federation for Quality of Life - 2016] URL: http://vid1.rian.ru/ig/ratings/life_2016.pdf (accessed: 13 May 2018) [In Russian]

- economic (infrastructure, investments, new corporations and organizations and tourism).

The greatest opportunities are currently concentrated in the political sphere. And this is natural. The Arctic zone of Russia is designated as an object of state administration primarily to protect national political and economic interests in high latitudes as a reaction to the increased activity of other Arctic countries in the second half of the 2000s. Therefore, it is political goals and methods that are, in fact, dominant at the initial stage of the AZRF formation. Not without a reason, the most animated “Arctic” activity was observed in the politics. According to many experts, for several years there has been a struggle between regions, between agencies for a place in the “Arctic” processes, which allow to count on additional funds from the federal budget. Since the end of the 2000s, the Arkhangelsk region has been actively involved in the struggle for the “Arctic status”. Moreover, as the Arctic policy of Russia was activated, the Arctic claims of the region were modified. Currently, the Arkhangelsk region is actively claiming 3 status positions:

- center of the Arctic events and forums;
- scientific and educational center of the AZRF;
- transport and logistics center of the AZRF.

It is worth noting that the competition for Arctic statuses was carried out, as a rule, in several ways: working on the information field, holding large-scale profile events of different levels, attracting relevant state and non-state structures to the region.

The most successful, in our opinion, “status” direction is scientific and educational. Success is associated, with the activities of the Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov. The University has become the site of many Arctic activities, the initiator and the administrator of the National Arctic Science and Education Consortium (NANOC), a participant in many expert and advisory structures at the federal level².

It is necessary to recognize the successful positioning of the region as the center of Arctic events. Over the past 3 years, the Arkhangelsk Region has hosted more than 30 major international and federal conferences, meetings, forums on Arctic topics. The most significant event was the International Forum “Arctic: Territory of Dialogue” with the participation of the Presidents of Russia, Finland and Iceland. The forum has become the most representative event in Russia on Arctic topics over the past 10 years. It, in our opinion, allowed to consolidate the position of the region as a center of the Arctic events and forums. Carrying out such events is not only a direct return from business tourism and renovation, it is a good opportunity to strengthen contacts with the decision-makers at the federal level for the promotion of projects and programs.

² Elena Kudryashova: Arktiku nevozmozhno osvivaivat' v odinochku [Elena Kudryashova: The Arctic cannot be explored alone]. URL: https://narfu.ru/life/news/media_about_us/internet/306425/ (accessed: 13 May 2018) [In Russian]

Table 1

The Arctic activities in the Arkhangelsk Region in 2015-2017

Status	Events
Center for international Arctic dialog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International meeting of the Arctic Council member states, the Arctic Council observer states and the scientific community (September 2015) • Celebrating the 75th anniversary of the first convoy in Arkhangelsk (August, 2016) • International conference “Arctic: Territory of Dialogue” (March, 2017) • 16th Ministerial Session of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) (October, 2017) • I International Arctic Film Festival “Arctic open” (December, 2017)
Scientific and educational center of the AZRF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session “Human Resources and Scientific Potential for Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation” at the International Forum “Arctic Projects - Today and Tomorrow” (2014-2017) • International scientific conference “State policy for the protection of national sovereignty and the controversial problems of international relations in the European North and the Arctic in the first quarter of the twentieth century: historical experience and lessons for the present” (2015) • International Scientific Conference “Competitive Potential of Northern and Arctic Territories” (2015) • International Conference “Problems of the Prevention and Elimination of Emergencies in the Arctic, Including the Issues of Training Professionals for Work in the Northern Conditions” (2015) • All-Russian Conference with International Participation “Comprehensive Scientific Research and Cooperation in the Arctic: Interaction of Universities with Academic and Branch Scientific Organizations” (2015) • International Scientific Conference “Natural Resources and Integrated Development of Coastal Areas of the Arctic Zone” (2015) - International Conference “Ensuring the Security and Sustainable Development of the Arctic Region, Conservation of Ecosystems and Traditional Lifestyle of Arctic Indigenous People” (2016) • All-Russian scientific conference “Arctic — national megaproject: personnel and scientific support” (2016) • Session “Arctic — Area of Professionals” of the international conference “Arctic: Territory of Dialogue” (2017)
Transport and logistics center of the AZRF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Forum “Arctic Projects — Today and Tomorrow” (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017) • Joint meeting of the Maritime Board under the Government of the Russian Federation and the Presidium of the State Commission for the Development of the Arctic (2016) • Meeting of the State Commission for the Development of the Arctic (2017) • Session “Arctic: Territory of Transport Opportunities” of the international conference “Arctic: Territory of Dialogue” (2017)

The economic sphere can feel the positive changes later than the political one. We will not dwell on the possible economic consequences of the inclusion of the region in the Russian Arctic, as representatives of the regional government often argue about this. We only note that, in our opinion, the success of economic changes depends on the effectiveness of lobbying regional projects at the federal level, on the interest of big business to the opportunities of the region, on the conjuncture in the national and international markets. The region already has certain successes, e.g., the company MRTS — terminal on the left bank of Arkhangelsk, improvement of the NArFU infrastructure before the international forum, the opening of the Novotel hotel etc. At the same time, the development of many projects, especially such ambitious ones as Belkomur and the deep-sea area of the commercial port, are still under question.

The social space of the Arkhangelsk region is the most inert sphere. In recent years, negative trends, typical for the Russian North, have been observed there: demographic losses of the population, desertification of territories; crisis of social infrastructure; the destruction of the social and economic space; increasing disparities in the level and quality of life of the population; an increase in the proportion of young people leaving the North; a decline in the birth rate; deterioration of health; catastrophic mortality rate of the population; family breakdown; low level of official marriages, high divorce rate; the appearance of signs of another “demographic hole” [9, Dregalo A.A., pp. 135-145]. At the same time, in the long term, the AZRF formation may have a significant impact on the changes in this area, especially on regional identity, social, professional and ethnic structure of the population, and spatial-territorial localization.

Regional identity is often defined as “the result of a cognitive, value, emotional process of awareness of belonging to a regional community, manifested in a certain type of identification behavior of subjects of a regional society” [10, Tumakova K.E., p. 49]. This component of individual and collective consciousness largely determines the cohesion of the regional community, the cognitive and emotional attractiveness of the territory, forms the migration settings of the population.

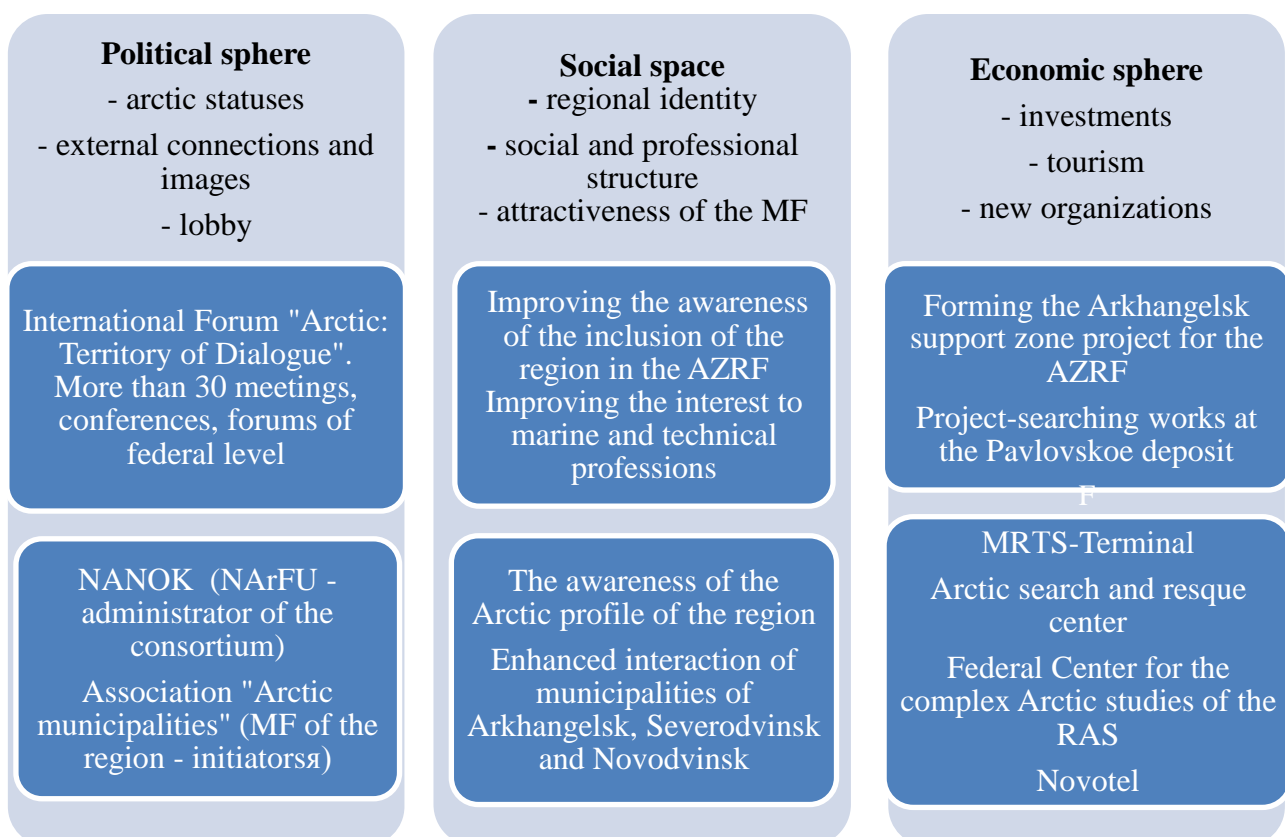


Fig. 2. Priority “arctic opportunities” for the region and their preliminary evaluation

Recent years, social scientists record the increase in the number of people wishing to leave the region, reducing estimates of life satisfaction in the Arkhangelsk region, the attractiveness of the native region [11, Dregalo A.A., pp. 87-145]. In social networks and the media, more and more

often one can read the arguments that “northern allowances and benefits” do not make the region attractive from an economic point of view, and the region is increasingly perceived as the Northern province, the periphery. This indicates a crisis of regional identity, which is one of the indicators of the region's development.

In this regard, the formation of the AZRF, accompanied by information activity at the federal and regional level, can “breathe” a new life into the regional identity of the Arkhangelsk region, give the regional image attractive features. It is worth noting that our colleagues from the Murmansk region believe that the Arctic discourse certainly strengthens the regional identity on the Kola Peninsula and it is favorable for the development of the region [12, Sharova E.N., p. 152].

At the same time, it should be noted that it is difficult to renew regional identity. An individual and collective image of the region, spontaneous and purposeful process of their formation make it complicated. In addition, the individual attitude to the region is formed in the mind under the influence of heterogeneous factors of both communication and content. Therefore, in our opinion, the change of attitude to the region depends on the coordination of communication actions of various actors (government, business and media), and the connection of virtual (claimed) and real (perceived) picture of changes in the region. In this regard, we can specify two possible undesirable results of this process. The first is the disappointment of the regional community in the Arctic status, which may occur in the case of hyperactive promotion of the Arctic theme in the absence of obvious changes in the social and economic situation of the region's residents. The second is the different attitude to the Arctic status of the region in different groups of the regional community, which contributes to the soft or hard social and cultural split of the region. The North — South split is most likely, since only the Northern municipalities are part of the AZRF, plus this part of the region is where organizations and enterprises are concentrated, and they are most closely related to the Arctic projects (NArFU, Sevmash, Zvezdochka, NSMU, Sea trade port and others).

At present, in our opinion, the initial phase of the renewed identity of the region is coming to an end. After the international forum “Arctic: Territory of dialogue”, attended by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin, the primary awareness of the regional population of the Arctic status of Arkhangelsk and the region reached a possible maximum. At the same time, the understanding of the Arctic mission of the region is very limited, and the expectations of the regional community from the Arctic status are very cautious.

The social structure of the population of the Arkhangelsk region may also undergo changes. First, this applies to the professional and industry structure. There is a high probability of a certain revival of marine industries and related professions in the region. After all, the development of the Northern Sea Route (NSR) is a clear priority of the Russian strategy for the development of the Arctic. One of the first markers is the growth of the competition of students in AMU named after

Voronin³. Also, higher demand for mining and logistic specialists is possible in connection with the implementation of several projects in the Arkhangelsk support zone. In the regional center and in the adjacent territories, the share of employed in the service sector is likely to increase because of the growth of business and cognitive tourism.

It is noteworthy that such a professional-sectoral bank sensitively caught the population. According to the telephone survey of residents of the northern urban settlements of the Arkhangelsk region, it is the marine and resource-producing industries and professions that, in their opinion, are heading the list of possible beneficiaries from the activation of Russia's Arctic policy.

Table 2

What professions, industries, in your opinion, will benefit most from implementation of Arctic projects?⁴ (N=907)

<i>Open question, the answers of the respondents</i>	<i>% of respondents</i>
Oil and gas industry employees	36.2
Marine transport, seamen, port	22.6
Shipbuilding and its employees	18.6
Extraction of solid minerals	14.3
Geology, geologists	12.7
Fishing, fishermen	11.5
Pulp and paper industry	9.5
Universities, science, scientists, lecturers	5.7
Working professions	5.6
Construction and its employees	4.5
Militaries and army	2.6
Officials, deputies, authorities	2.4
Tourism, travel companies	2.3
Education, teachers	2.2
Healthcare, medicine, physicians	1.9
Managers	1.7
Environmental protection, ecology	1.1

Certain changes in the national and ethnic composition of the north of the region are possible with the implementation of major investment projects, such as the construction of ODC at the Pavlovskoye deposit (Novaya Zemlya Island) and especially the construction of the deep sea port in the Primorsky region. In our opinion, it is very likely to attract migrants from the CIS to build economic efficiency of implementation. The experience of implementing similar projects in the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District has similar examples. In this case, the regional community should be ready for a new quality of the ethnic environment in the north of the Arkhangelsk region.

³ Direktor Arhangelskoj morekhodki: "Mne ochen legko prinimat resheniya" [The head of the Arkhangelsk Marine college: "I make decisions easily"]. URL: <http://ami-voronina.ru/direktor-arhangelskoy-morehodki-mne-ochen-legko-prinimat-resheniya.html> (accessed: 13 May 2018) [In Russian]

⁴ The telephone survey by the CATI method was conducted in October 25 – December 12, 2014 within the framework of the project "Status and Prospects of Social and Economic Development of Arctic Regions of Russia in the Representations of the Population of the European North", a sample in the Arkhangelsk Region – 907 people.

The features of spatial-territorial localization can also undergo changes in connection with the formation of the Russian Arctic. Introduction of additional benefits for residents of municipalities included in the Russian Arctic, or preferences for the business of this territory, intraregional migration to the north of the region, especially in the towns of Arkhangelsk-Severodvinsk-Novodvinsk agglomeration, can dramatically intensify. This trend may also occur if the residents of the Russian Arctic do not receive additional benefits and guarantees, while in the remaining MF, primarily located to the south, these benefits and guarantees will be fully or partially revoked.

Conclusion

Since the mid-2000s. Russia is stepping up its Arctic policy. Starting in 2013, the formation of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation as an object of state administration was launched. Now, the normative field and the organizational framework of the macroregion are forming. In this process, several trends are clearly traced, such as external conditionality, state dominance, a technocratic and project approach, unevenness and priority of the “coastal” criterion for the development of the Russian Arctic, the uncertainty of financial mechanisms, and the severity of interregional and interagency competition. Inertial, modernization, innovative scenarios for the development of the Russian Arctic are possible.

The Arkhangelsk region occupies a special place in the Russian Arctic. Specific arctic features create both positive and negative prerequisites for using the Arctic factor in the development of the region.

In general, the formation of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation opens for the Arkhangelsk region a whole cascade of opportunities for positive changes in a variety of areas. At the same time, this process can catalyze social risks, especially those related to the incomplete entry of the region into the Russian Arctic, and risks connected with the implementation of large investment projects.

The most serious opportunities are associated with the activation of the Arctic policy, appeared in the region in the political (arctic status, external relations and image) and economic (infrastructure, investment, new businesses and organizations, tourism) sectors. It is there but some changes are seen. The changes in the social space are still minimally visible. But this sphere has a great potential for development, related to the renewal of the regional image, the strengthening of regional identity, the changing social composition of the population, and the increase of the human and economic capital of municipalities. However, in certain scenarios, in the Arkhangelsk region of the Russian Arctic. Negative effects may be catalyzed. They are associated with the partial entry into the Russian Arctic region and the implementation of major investment projects.

Efficiency of using the opened opportunities and neutralization of possible risks largely depends on the coordinated work of different actors of the regional community, such as provincial and municipal governments, business, academia and the media community.

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