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Chimeras of the Past and Navigation through the Latest Development Conditions, Risks and Opportunities for Managing the Russian Arctic *

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Abstract. The uniqueness of today's social processes triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic determines the lack of insights into the transformation of the socio-economic space of the Russian Arctic. The purpose of this article is to review the past, recent, and future conditions for development and management of the Russian Arctic, considered in the context of the unfolding crisis of a non-economic nature and its consequences. The methodological peculiarity of the review is presentation of the phenomenon of the current crisis in the context of interrelated fundamental problems of the development of the Russian Arctic, the new economic reality, which makes it difficult to reliably predict the future. This naturally led to the substantiation of a series of contradictions and difficulties in implementing the declared development goals of the Russian Arctic, that are specifically reflected in the title of the article — "chimeras", which in biology means an organism consisting of genetically heterogeneous cells. A statistical description of the specifics of socio-economic development of the Arctic regions under the COVID-19 pandemic has been carried out in the context of review of the support measures, examination of the economic structure and the corresponding scale of "disconnection" of the regions' economies during the period of isolation and the subsequent recovery. It is revealed that the Arctic regions demonstrate greater economic resilience compared to the overall Russian situation, which is associated not so much with the strengthening of stabilization measures at the federal level with the support of the regional level, but with the fundamental reasons — the relative simplicity of the Arctic extractive economy, higher population incomes, low level of small and medium business development. Navigation on the risks and opportunities of governing the Russian Arctic has been carried out, linking the fundamentals and the practical implications of the study through the traditional rationale for navigating and considering the practice of managing an object, in our case, the Arctic, as well as routing, which is, choosing the path to follow. In particular, it makes a strong case that the pandemic has deepened the problems and risks that are also major management targets for the "precursor" period and creates a new hypothetical risk — the diminishing scale of the Arctic's social and economic development goals, including practices for securing conditions for increased standards of living and quality of life for its people.

Keywords: *COVID-19 pandemic, Russian Arctic, social and economic development, risk, opportunity, management.*

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Introduction

This paper continues a series of review articles in the journal “Arctic and North”, the appearance of which was initiated by implementation of the key event “Supporting expansion and strengthening of the international authority of national knowledge bases (banks), including journals and their collections” of the state program of the Russian Federation “Scientific and technological development of the Russian Federation”. As part of this event, the Russian Foundation for Basic Research, for the second year in a row (since 2019), has been holding a competition for financial support for the preparation and publication of scientific review articles in order to “strengthen the international authority of Russian scientific journals and increase their rating in international scientific citation systems by creating conditions for the preparation of original scientific review articles for publication in Russian scientific journals” (from the RFBR announcement about the “Expansion” competition).

In 2019, a review article “Transformation of the Socio-Economic Space of the Russian Arctic in the Context of Geopolitics, Macroeconomics, and Internal Factors of Development” was published in the journal “Arctic and North” No. 41 with the support of the RFBR grant No. 19-110-50269 within the framework of the “Expansion” competition [1, Skufina T.P., Mitroshina M.N.]. The fundamental importance of this review was dictated by the sense of crisis in the theory of development and management of the North and its Arctic component, repeatedly manifested in articles, conferences, scientific and practical works [2, Kryukov V.A., Kryukov Ya.V., p. 26–29; 3, Serova N.A., Gutov S.V., p. 77–80; 4, Samarina V.P., Samarin A.V., p. 91–94; 5, Skufyina T.P., p. 268; 6, Tolvanen A., Eilu P., Juutinen A., Kangas K. et al., p. 832–834, 842; 7, Kryukov V.A., Kryukov Ya.V. et al., p. 59, 98–128, 154–155, 204–214, 149–152]. This includes an inability to cover and solve such significant problems for the Arctic as the balance between the requirements of ecology and economics (the problem aptly described by Heininen Lassi as “political incapacity” [8, Heininen L., p. 195; 9, Markkula I., Turunen M., Rasmus S., pp. 95–197]) between the increased costs of the economy and the need for large-scale development of natural resources of the Russian Arctic, including associated transport and infrastructure facilities, etc. [10, Zaikov K.S., Kondratov N.A., Kudryashova E.V., Lipina S.A., Chistobaev A.I., pp. 6–7; 11, Minakir P.A., Krasnopolskiy B.Kh., p. 12–13, 22; 12, Serova N.A., Serova V.A., p. 42–43; 12, Features and scenarios..., p. 26–35, 236–237; 13, Larchenko L.V., Kolesnikov R.A., p. 370–373]. The consequence of this inability was the frequent appeal of researchers and politicians to the declarative goals of the Arctic development with a bias towards a “pure” concept of sustainable development. We believe that, to a large extent, the theory's “incapacity” has delayed the emergence of a comprehensive regulatory framework for the development of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation (AZRF), which actually appeared in the form of a package of interrelated documents only in 2020 [14, Krutikov A.V., Smirnova O.O., Bocharova L.K., p. 255–257; 15, Skufyina T.P., p. 19; 16, Kudryashova E.V., Lipina S.A., Zaikov K.S., Bocharova L.K., p. 446–456].

The set of ideas about the transformation of the socio-economic space of the Russian Arctic is becoming clearly insufficient in today's reality. The radical change in the world economy caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has qualitatively changed the current conditions of development and, probably, the prospects of the AZRF. Changes in social processes turned out to be so significant that economic thought today can become a springboard for resolving a number of controversial issues in the development of the Arctic. Fundamentally new conditions make it possible not only to pose, but also to solve those problems of the socio-economic development of the Arctic that were impossible to discuss within the framework of the previous development trajectory. In other words, the main subject of Arctic regional studies — the conditions for development, risks and opportunities for managing the Russian Arctic — has again come to the surface, and any previous publication of a theoretical and methodological nature, including the discussed review article [1], requires development and modernization.

Problem, purpose and objectives of the scientific review

The uniqueness of today's social life prompts new forms of presentation of scientific results, including review articles. It is possible to survey not only a complex of classical and newest publications that reveal any problem, but also a phenomenon. This review article reflects the phenomenon of the current unique crisis, which initiates fundamentally new topics and aspects of scientific understanding of the development and management of the Russian Arctic.

What are the consequences for the AZRF? How might policy and governance priorities change? But the main question is: when will we return to the former way of life? Forecasts of the world crisis development of international organizations, the strongest states in the world, famous scientists allow us to agree with the answer given in the book by B.D. Medico "Tsunami Coronavirus. When Will We Go Back to Normal?": "There is only one possible answer ... When the tsunami passes, nothing will be the same. We are experiencing a prelude to a new social organization" ¹.

The purpose of this article is to review the past, recent and promising conditions for the development and management of the Russian Arctic, considered in the context of the deployment of a crisis of a non-economic nature and its consequences. But the achievement of this goal in modern conditions will have its own specifics, determined by a unique combination of, on the one hand, fundamental, hereditary problems of the AZRF development, on the other, a fundamentally new economic reality and a future, which is difficult to predict reliably.

Therefore, the first task is to critically review of the declared goals, objectives, conditions for the development of the Russian Arctic in the context of modern opportunities and restrictions on their implementation, generated by the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹ Medico B.D. Tsunami Coronavirus. When Will We Go Back to Normal? 2020, 157 p. URL: <https://ru.scribd.com/book/454192592/Tsunami-Coronavirus-When-Will-We-Go-Back-to-Normal> (accessed 20 January 2021).

The contradictory and difficult development goals of the AZRF received a specific reflection in the title of the article — “chimeras”, which means an organism consisting of genetically heterogeneous cells. This heterogeneity lies in the disclosure of a whole complex of fundamental contradictions and a set of problems: 1) the theory of the Arctic managing, including the experience of managing the North during the USSR period, taking into account the limitations of state management in the development of the Arctic under the conditions of a capitalist formation, etc. ; 2) systemic factors of the Arctic development — a harsh climate, a “northern” rise in prices, the legacy of the USSR — monotowns, a large sector of state industry, etc. ; 3) restrictions on the development of economy and social sphere of the Russian Arctic, caused by the global crisis, changing the political configuration and rhetoric, the priorities of the economy, the demand for the basic export products of the Arctic regions, etc.

The second task is to statistically describe the specifics of the socio-economic development of the AZRF regions during the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of a review of support measures, the structure of the economy and the corresponding scale of the “shutdown” of the regional economy during the period of isolation and subsequent recovery.

The third task is to review the likely risks and opportunities for optimizing the management of the Russian Arctic. The solution to this problem will be presented as a generalized conclusion and development of the polemics presented in the solution of the first two problems.

The second and third tasks are designated in the title of the review as “navigation through the latest development conditions, risks and opportunities for managing the Russian Arctic”. This is prompted, again, by the fundamental novelty of management in a pandemic, which has no analogues in recent history. The term “navigation”, that is, the process of controlling some object (which has its own methods of movement) best describes the fundamental specificity and at the same time the practical relevance of the proposed review.

Navigation traditionally includes two components:

- theoretical substantiation and practical application of management methods, in our case — AZRF;
- routing, that is, the choice of the optimal route for the AZRF. These two components of navigation connect the fundamentality and practical meaning of this review to clarify the scientific basis for managing the social and economic development of the Russian Arctic.

On the declared goals, objectives and conditions for the development of the Russian Arctic

The relevance and significance of review and critical understanding of the declared goals and objectives of the AZRF development in the context of modern opportunities and limitations of their implementation, generated by the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, is due to the need to solve a large-scale, complex fundamental task. This task is related to the formulation of

the goals of the socio-economic development of the Russian Arctic, presented in state priorities, programme and strategic documents, requiring the formation of a mechanism that can ensure an increase in the level of socio-economic development of the AZRF by managing this territory as a single object of territorial planning [15, Skufiyina TP, p. 18; 17, Gagiev N.N., Goncharenko L.P., Sybachin S.A., Shestakova A.A., p. 116–118; 18, Samarina V.P., Skufina T.P., Samarin A.V., Baranov S.V. p. 2–6].

Arctic researchers have repeatedly described the specifics of transformation of the AZRF legal regulation, noting that such a large-scale task is posed for the first time in the world practice of managing the state of a capitalist formation [14, Krutikov A.V., Smirnova O.O., Bocharova L.K., p. 254–260; 19, Skufiyina T.P., Korchak E. A., Baranov S.V., p. 11–13; 20, Bazhutova E.A., Biev A.A. et al., p. 20–22]. At the same time, generalizing scientific research concentrates on the contradictions, identified by us in the previous section when setting tasks [21, Fauser V.V., Smirnov A.V., p. 4–5; 22, Healy A., p. 30–31; 23, Heleniak T., Bogoyavlenskiy D., p. 54–56, 103; 24, Kudryashova E.V., Zarubina L.A., Sivobrova I.A., p. 39–40]. In fact, these studies confirm the fundamental nature of the basic contradiction: on the one hand, social processes that determine the effect of the “northern rise in prices”, which means that they limit economic and social activity; on the other, the goals of management aimed at ensuring the development of the Arctic economy to fill the budget and to ensure social development for the necessary synchronization with world processes [1, Skufina T.P., Mitroshina M.N., p. 89–90]. It is obvious that the conditions of the current large-scale crisis only increase the depth of contradiction.

The essence of this basic contradiction adjusts to a pragmatic position of forming the management of AZRF socio-economic transformations, based on:

- objective attitudes of economic theory, which determines the conditions, factors, sustainable patterns of functioning of different-level objects of the North and a specific object of the Arctic in the system of relations between the capitalist economy of the country and the world [25, Leksin V.N., Porfiryev B.N., p. 641–655];
- taking into account objective risks and opportunities for the development of the northern territories of Russia [7, Kryukov V.A., Kryukov Ya.V. et al., p. 214–217; 26, Laverov N.P.; 27, Skufiyina T.P., Korchak E.A., Baranov S.V., p. 5–65];
- taking into account subjective influence, in particular, the global and national rhetoric of the sustainable development goals of the Arctic, since ideas have their own driving force, influence and ensure transformation processes in the Arctic (for example, the ecological policy vector is clearly ensured, which is actually taken into account in the activities of all Arctic countries and enterprises working in the Arctic) [28, An Industry for the Future ...; 29, Mustonen T., p. 20–22, 25; 30, Padrtovaab B., p. 38–44].

It should be noted that the gradual approval of this pragmatic position transforms the legal and regulatory support for the socio-economic development of the Russian Arctic. Thus, the Arctic emerged as an independent object of territorial policy in 2008 with the President's approval of the document "Fundamentals of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the Period up to 2020 and beyond". The Arctic emerged as an independent management entity in 2014 with the President's approval of the Decree designating its land territories. Since 2015, a large-scale work of specialized authorities, management, scientists and the public has begun on the creation of a draft law "On the development of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation". This law was conceived as a kind of charter for the integrated development of the AZRF, which was reflected in the first 4 versions of the draft law. However, the last version of the draft law of November 2017, which was never adopted, is devoted only to support zones without positioning the task and prospects for the integrated development of the Arctic, reflected in the relevant targets. We believe this is due to the insufficiency of the modern theory of development of the North and its Arctic component, which was shown in the previous survey study [1, Skufina T.P., Mitroshina M.N., p. 99–103]. Obviously, as we noted above, this is a consequence of the essence of economic relations in the capitalist formation, unable to create conditions for reducing the objective costs of "northernness" in an open economy. Therefore, no real mechanism was proposed to reduce the increased costs of economic and social functioning, which would ensure the comprehensive development of the Arctic. In fact, the discussed versions of the draft law were based on the principle that the state was decisive in ensuring an increase in the socio-economic level of development of the AZRF, and not as a creator of conditions, for example, for investments, but as the main investor. Obviously, the scale of the tasks of the development of the AZRF cannot be provided mainly by the forces of the state, which distinguishes the current reality of capitalism from the more complex socialist formation. This is confirmed by the economic theory, indicating the expectations of low efficiency of public investment without linking with the competitive processes of the business environment [31, Blaug M., p. 362, 548–553; 32, Bloom N., Bond S., Van Reenen J., p. 392–394; 33, Orhangazi O., p. 884].

In 2020, a system of documents was formed, which actually indicated a fundamentally new basis and conditions for achieving the strategic goals and objectives of the AZRF development.

Firstly, the basic principle has been changed from the state as the main investor in the socio-economic development of the AZRF to the state as the creator of institutional conditions that provide support for investors (from small enterprises to corporations), including a series of preferences and tax incentives, which will ensure the development of the territory's economy and then — social development, an increase in the level and quality of life of the population.

Secondly, the new conditions for the development of the Russian Arctic are regulated not by separate documents (which often demonstrate significant gaps for the effective functioning of

a business until 2020), but by an interconnected system of documents, which includes the following basic elements:

- a new platform for the Arctic strategy — Presidential Decree of October 26, 2020 No. 645 “On the Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation and Ensuring National Security for the Period up to 2035”;
- a guarantee of a special economic regime for the AZRF — Federal Law dated July 13, 2020 No. 193-FZ “On State Support for Entrepreneurial Activity in the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation”;
- politics and national interests in the Arctic — Presidential Decree of March 5, 2020 No. 164 “On the Fundamentals of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the Period up to 2035”;
- a specific mechanism for the development of the AZRF — RF Government Decree dated April 21, 2014 No. 366 (as amended on June 05, 2019, with changes to the passport dated April 15, 2020 — RF Government Decree dated March 31, 2020 No. 381) “On Approval of the State Program of the Russian Federation “Socio-Economic Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation”.

Thirdly, the main goals of the AZRF development were confirmed: ensuring the quality of life and well-being of the population of the Russian Arctic, development of the Russian Arctic as a strategic resource base and its rational use in order to accelerate the economic growth of the Russian Federation, including the associated tasks of developing the NSR, solving environmental problems. However, the specificity is determined by the fact that the increase in the socio-economic development of the Russian Arctic, the level and quality of life of its population, infrastructure development is provided only as a result, coupled with the economic effect of business investment in a certain territory. At the same time, the infrastructure support of the state for large investment projects is provided by strict conditions: the cost is more than 300 million rubles, tax revenues from the project implementation must pay back state investments in no more than 10 years, the state subsidy cannot exceed 20% of private investments for the creation infrastructure required for the investment project.

Fourthly, according to the approved national plan for the recovery of the Russian economy, a specific instrument for redistributing income from the implementation of large investment projects to ensure the tasks of recovery growth and socio-economic development of the AZRF is outlined — the Arctic Development Fund, which redirects 50% of federal taxes from the implementation of new Arctic projects on the territory of the Arctic region. The creation of this fund is envisaged at the beginning of 2021.

Fifthly, attention is drawn to the focus on specific mechanisms and institutional conditions for ensuring the socio-economic development of the Russian Arctic, including associated economic

decisions. This is fully consistent with the difficult economic conditions caused by the impact of the COVID-19 crisis.

However, it is worth noting that a number of changes and crisis phenomena that researchers and managers often associate with the modern crisis of a non-economic nature, have been initiated and discussed by specialists for a long time. For example, forecasts and plans for the development of the NSR, elaborated from the standpoint of ensuring existing and promising projects for the development of the raw material base of the Arctic, but at the same time realistic installations for the insignificant possibilities of transit prospects for the development of the NSR [34, S. Kudiyarov, p. 18]². In particular, at the meeting on the development of the NSR in Murmansk on October 21, 2020, M. Mishustin identified the most acute problems and tasks of the NSR development, which are related not to the system of strategic planning, but to ensuring the decisions and development plans that have already been made³. At the same time, it is emphasized: “The infrastructure that we are creating today for Russian cargo is the basis for increasing international transit traffic in the future. The state is investing in infrastructure development projects. Port terminals and a railway network are under construction. The total volume of public investments exceeds 110 billion rubles”. The development of the NSR is directly related to a virtually new springboard for investment projects in the Russian Arctic, which is based on the Federal Law “On Tax Incentives for the Search and Evaluation, Exploration and Production of Hydrocarbons in Certain Territories of the Arctic Zone of Russia” signed by the President of Russia on March 18, 2020. The special geopolitical significance of this law, which increases the profitability of Arctic fields, is manifested at least in connection with two factors: firstly, the current state of the global oil market caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, expected to increase in volumes and prices; secondly, the relatively low investment activity of Russian oil companies expected by experts [35, Ogorodnikov E., p. 38–39; 36, Epryntseva E., Popov S., p. 27–28]. According to this law, more comfortable tax conditions have been established for the development of new fields in the Russian Arctic by reducing the severance tax on the basis of assigning a number of offshore and onshore fields to a higher category of complexity. For example, MET rate is 5% for oil for 15 years and 1% for natural gas for 15 years from the date of commercial production, which has considerably enhanced the profitability of new deposits in the offshore waters of the AZRF and the Sea of Okhotsk. Significant benefits are also provided for production in the mainland of the Russian Arctic. For new development areas of the AZRF, located north of 70° north latitude, there are benefits: for the complexity category of the fifth group, the right to voluntary transition to the application of the additional income tax (AIT), within which a preferential coefficient K_g to MET for oil is 0 for 12 years from the start of production, then within 5 years there is an annual growth of 0.2 until reaching 1; if a regional law is adopted by the AZRF subject, a preferential rate of income tax will be applied. For areas located

² FGBU SPM Administration website. URL: <http://www.nsra.ru/> (accessed 20 January 2021).

³ Russian Government website. URL: <http://government.ru/news/40660/> (accessed 25 March 2021).

within 67°–69° north latitude (applicable for the Vankor group of fields), within a 10-year period, there is a 10-year deduction from MET for the creation of infrastructure used for oil production. In the context of expected growth in LNG demand and the declared possibility of the LNG and petrochemical clusters formation in the Russian Arctic, it is extremely important to provide support for new Arctic LNG production projects. The law provides for zero MET rates for 250 billion m³ of produced natural gas and 20 million tons of gas condensate processed into LNG or oil and gas chemistry products within 12 years from the shipment of the first batch [36, Eprytseva E., Popov S., p. 27–28].

Another significant example from the standpoint of required balance of interests of the state and business, initiated for rapid implementation in terms of the need to overcome the COVID-19 crisis and ensure recovery economic growth, is the 2020 amendments to the Tax Code. Thus, according to the Federal Law “On Amendments to Chapters 254 and 26 of Part Two of the Tax Code of the Russian Federation (in terms of clarifying and adjusting certain parameters for calculating the tax on additional income from the extraction of hydrocarbon raw materials and mineral extraction tax)”, signed by the President of Russia on October 15, 2020 (hereinafter referred to as the Law), a significant increase in MET (coefficient 3.5 to the current rate) for the extraction of potash salts, apatite-nepheline ores, apatite and phosphorite ores, non-ferrous metal ores, iron ore, etc. is envisaged from January 1, 2021. The Law concerns the main export products of the Russian Arctic and at the same time is a budget-forming document. When discussing the need to increase MET, the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation provides data confirming an increase in the fairness of the tax burden on the mining sector: “Today the effective MET rate in Russia for oil is from 40 to 50%, for gas — 15%, for precious stones — 8%, for precious metals — about 6%, and for solid minerals only 0.5–0.6%. The corresponding tax rates in other countries vary from 2% to 6%. When the coefficient 3.5 was determined, we wanted to keep the levels of tax exemptions for precious stones and precious metals at 8% and 6%, respectively, and raise all the rest to the level of 4% of the effective MET rate to revenue” (data of the Ministry of Finance of Russia, cited in speech A G. Siluanov⁴). Experts confirm the fairness and admissibility of increasing the tax burden in the extraction of metal ores and chemical production [37, Obukhova E., p. 38–39]. Experts also substantiate that MET increase will provide not only the withdrawal of surplus profits by the typical mechanism of capitalism — tax redistribution of raw materials income in favor of society, but also initiates investment in deeper processing [11, Minakir P.A., Krasnopol'skiy B.Kh., p. 12–15; 37, Obukhova E., p. 38–40]. It should be noted that MET increase will not affect new investment projects for production in the Russian Arctic. Thus, the Law provides for a five-year postponement for the application of the multiplying factor for new projects. Thus, the sever-

⁴ Minfin Rossii obsudil s biznesom izmenenie NDPI dlya mayninga [The Ministry of Finance of Russia Discussed Changes in the Mineral Extraction Tax for Mining with the Business]. URL: https://minfin.gov.ru/ru/press-center/?id_4=37193-minfin_rossii_obsudil_s_biznesom_izmenenie_ndpi_dlya_mayinga (accessed 20 January 2021).

ance tax increase will not be a significant limiting factor in the implementation of planned investment projects in the Arctic, which is especially important in the context of necessary provision of recovery growth. At the same time, the adopted adjustments are significant for enhancing the participation of mining companies in solving national tasks, including supporting the population and business obligations of the state during the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring infrastructure development in the Arctic, etc. It should be noted that MET increase is taken into account in the macro-forecast and planned budget in the form of additional revenues: in 2021 in the amount of 52.8 billion rubles, in 2022 — 53.5 billion rubles, in 2023 — 54.3 billion rubles. The regional budgets of the Russian Arctic will receive 17% of additional income from the mineral extraction tax increase.

Returning to the development of crisis processes, it is interesting to note that the extractive industries not only provided a significant contribution to the decline of industrial production in Russia in 2020, but also slowed down industrial growth that was outlined in the 4th quarter of 2020 due to external reasons. Obviously, the production dynamics in the regions of the Russian Arctic is determined and will be determined mainly by two main external factors: firstly, the speed of the world economy recovery, and secondly, the strength and direction of the sanctions pressure, which significantly and multidimensionally affects the development of new projects in the Russian Arctic.

Thus, it can be noted that the pandemic has not changed the strategic objectives of the Arctic development associated with the development of natural resources and the associated provision of the socio-economic development of the territory. The sustainability of these tasks during the COVID-19 pandemic not only proves their strategic nature, but also confirms the importance of the Russian Arctic development from the standpoint of Russia's social priorities.

At the same time, the question arises: why, when analyzing the specifics of the current crisis impact on a number of components of the AZRF socio-economic development, researchers often talk about qualitative changes? These qualitative changes are associated not only with the collapsing characteristics of the small and medium-sized businesses of the consumer market, tourism, etc. in the AZRF regions, which only repeat global and national trends. Qualitative changes are also associated with the fact that the COVID-19 crisis has significantly accelerated a number of existing processes and marked the beginning of new trends. For example, the global focus on green economy and production ecologization, intensified in 2020, are organically intertwined with the policies of large Russian mining companies in the Arctic, confirming and strengthening investments in environmental projects (including due to major environmental disasters in 2020). Increased attention to the quality of workplaces in the Arctic and to the provision of medical care raises the standards of social responsibility of business to employees and the population. Results of 2020 indicate that the mining companies in the regions of their presence in the Russian Arctic have completely focused on public expectations during the COVID-19 crisis. An effective system was quickly built in the regions of the Russian Arctic, including a set of programs aimed at directly combating

the pandemic and mitigating the negative social consequences [38, Antivirus ..., p. 48–49; 39, Blagov Yu., p. 15].

At the same time, the conditions of the crisis indicated the possibility of solving the problems of high costs, reduction the profitability of products, solving the problems of outdated industries that do not meet modern environmental standards, by means of initiating the threat of unemployment increase for the local population of the Russian Arctic. In 2020–2021 the tendency to switch to a rotational method of work has been strengthened, low-profit production facilities that were maintained in the pre-COVID period are being closed, including due to the achievement of a certain contractual balance between corporations and the state. For example, in the Murmansk region, the city-forming enterprise JSC Kovdor Mining and Processing Plant (one of the largest producers of apatite and iron ore concentrates, the only producer of baddeleyite in the world) announced the introduction of a rotational work method. The shift work started on October 15, 2020: 40 shift workers were recruited in 2021, another 200 employees are planned to be recruited in 2021. Further shift workers' numbers are planned to increase every year. As part of the environmental program implementation, the city-forming enterprise of Monchegorsk, the Kola Mining and Metallurgical Company (Kola MMC), announced the closure of the metallurgical shop in Monchegorsk from March 1, 2021, explaining the shutdown of production by inconsistency with modern environmental requirements. The complete shutdown of the 74-year-old metallurgical production affects more than 700 staff members. As part of the environmental program of the Kola MMC, in December 2020, the oldest smelting facility at the subsidiary of PJSC MMC Norilsk Nickel (the town-forming enterprise in the city of Nickel) was also completely liquidated in the town of Nikel, Murmansk Region. This eliminated sulfur dioxide emissions in the Norwegian transboundary area. According to the plans of Kola MMC to implement the environmental program, it is planned to reduce sulfur dioxide emissions in 2020 by 50%, in 2021 — by 85%. The employees of the Kola MMC, affected by the shutdown of the smelting facilities of the city-forming enterprises, are treated within the framework of the company's social programs. The programs include a powerful social package — an employment program with the preservation of average earnings throughout the year, a program of compensation of relocation expenses both for an employee and for family members, and a release program.

Thus, during the COVID-19 crisis, a certain balance of interests has been achieved. The state confirms the strategic development goals of the Russian Arctic, providing business with favorable development opportunities. In turn, the business implements the expectations of the population and the state during the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular, in the field of corporate social responsibility. However, there are grounds to talk about the accumulation of factors capable of ensuring shifts in relations between business, the state, and the population in the Russian Arctic in favor of strengthening the interests of big capital, mainly adapted to international standards, including non-financial reporting. Thus, the preserved obsolete production in the pre-COVID peri-

od becomes a chimera of today's reality, focused on the greening and digitalization of production by formulating the tasks of the ecological transformation of the Arctic industrial zones, the creation of green industries and high-tech jobs. In turn, this may lead to a change in the planned socio-economic and demographic dynamics of the AZRF regions.

Specificity of social and economic development, shutting down the economy and a set of support measures during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Russian Arctic

Our navigation through the newest conditions, risks and opportunities for managing the Russian Arctic has its own specifics, determined by the internal connection of a range of issues, within which there are global, national factors of influence, political consequences, management responses at all levels of government, as well as historical context that determines the extractive structure of the economy, the strategic goals and objectives of the AZRF development. Thus, as noted in the statement of the research problem, our studied object — the Russian Arctic — has its own specifics, its own mechanisms of movement, but the state navigation determines the route to follow. Lockdown identified the commonality of the economy shutdown dynamics, a certain similarity in the reaction of the social sphere of the Russian regions, and outlined all-Russian large-scale support measures. Therefore, it is not possible and expedient to consider the AZRF routing outside the all-Russian context.

Thus, the COVID-19 pandemic has distorted economic processes in Russia. The consequences of these distortions are the rupture of logistics ties, changes in cash flows, deflation of assets, increase in debt burden, decrease in profits, decrease in income, decrease in the volume of insurance and tax revenues, and, as a result, threat of financial instability and increasing uncertainty of the future economic situation. The most catastrophic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic turned were in the service sector, the subject of small and medium-sized businesses [40, Epanchintseva A.V., p. 21], whose revenue in 2020 decreased compared to 2019 by almost 80% [41, Zimovets A.V., Sorokina Yu.V., Khanina A.V., p. 1341]. The COVID-19 pandemic affected more than 4 million small and medium-sized businesses (almost 70% of their total number) [42, Andreeva O.V., Kurinova Ya.I., Sukhoveeva A.A., p. 7]. Against the background of the current economic situation, the Government of the Russian Federation identified specific types of economic activities (OKVED)⁵ most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and presented a set of measures aimed at reducing the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on key indicators of the economy [43, Asaliev A.M., Stepanov A.A., Oborin M.S., Gordeeva E.V., p. 69]. Specific support measures were developed for small and medium-sized businesses, developers, road carriers, catering, culture and leisure activities, retail and tourism facilities, and air transportation. In particular, as support for developers (Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of 02.04.2020, No. 423, Decree

⁵ Mery podderzhki biznesa i prakticheskie rekomendatsii dlya kompaniy v usloviyakh pandemii [Business Support Measures and Best Practices for Companies in a Pandemic]. URL: <https://roscongress.org/materials/mery-podderzhki-biznesa-i-prakticheskie-rekomendatsii-dlya-kompaniy-v-usloviyakh-pandemii/> (accessed 20 January 2021).

of the Government of the Russian Federation of 23.04.2020, No. 566), it was planned to subsidize the interest rate on loans to construction companies (upon condition of keeping the number of employees and commitments to complete the construction of houses planned for commissioning in 2020–2021). Tour operators were granted the right to receive subsidies for compensation of expenses connected with tourists' return of money (citizens of the Russian Federation) in the sphere of outbound tourism at non-refundable rates of air carriers and with the taking tourists out of states with an unfavorable situation in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic (Resolution Of the Government of the Russian Federation of 03.04.2020 No. 428, Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of 03.04.2020 No. 434, Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of 08.04.2020 No. 461, Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of 25.04.2020 No. 583, Order of the Government of the Russian Federation from 18.03.2020, No. 660-r).

The main part of state measures consisted of tax instruments [44, Ternopolskaya G.B., Tyutyuryukov N.N., p. 291]. So, in April 2020, as measures to support business, deferrals in taxes and insurance premiums were proposed in cases of a decrease in income by more than 10%, income from the sale of goods, works, services by more than 10%, income from the sale of goods, works, services subject to VAT at a zero rate of more than 10%, as well as losses from income tax (Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 02.04.2020 No. 409, Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 03.04.2020 No. 434). For small and medium-sized businesses operating in the most affected sectors of the economy, the deadlines for the payment of a number of mandatory payments (income tax, single tax under the simplified taxation system and the single agricultural tax, personal income tax for individual entrepreneurs 2019) and the deadlines for the payment of advances on transport tax, tax on property of organizations and land tax have been shifted.

Small and medium-sized businesses from the list of industries affected by the COVID pandemic were offered direct payments from the budget for 2 months from May 2020 for various purposes (Federal Law No. 121-FZ of 22.04.2020, Resolution Of the Government of the Russian Federation of 03.04.2020 No. 434, Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of 24.04.2020 No. 576); deferral of loans (Federal Law of 03.04.2020 No. 106-FZ, Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 02.04.2020 No. 410, Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of 03.04.2020 No. 434) in the form of a 6-month grace period for any loan agreements concluded before April 3, 2020; rental holidays on October 1, 2020 (Federal Law of 01.04.2020 No. 98-FZ, Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of 03.04.2020 No. 434, Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of 03.04.2020 No. 439, Order of the Government of the Russian Federation of 19.03.2020, No. 670-r). Regardless of industry affiliation, small and medium-sized businesses were offered a refinancing program for loans (Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 24.04.2020 No. 582, Resolution of the Government

of the Russian Federation of 02.04.2020 No. 422 ⁶), the implementation of which was the provision of a loan at a rate of 8.5%, concessional loans to pay salaries and other urgent needs for a period not exceeding 12 months (the loan amount is calculated based on the number of employees multiplied by the minimum wage and 6), concessional loans to replenish working capital for strategic enterprises, reduced acquiring commissions for the online sale of goods.

The funds presented within the framework of the financial, tax and administrative measures proposed by the Government of the Russian Federation and the Central Bank of Russia were targeted and urgent (for example, measures to suspend tax audits and the abolition of tax sanctions were introduced until May 31, 2020, and the lease payment was deferred until 1 October 2020, etc.) [45, Shukaeva A.V., p. 217]. The plan to restore the Russian economy from the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic was estimated at 6.4 trillion rubles (almost 6% of the country's GDP) [46, Kolkareva I.N., Nekrug A.V., p. 64].

However, according to a number of Russian experts, the state's anti-crisis measures for the period of the COVID-19 pandemic have a number of drawbacks, the main of which are the lack of direct support measures ⁷; indirect financial assistance, which negatively affects the possibility of obtaining preferential loans under anti-crisis programs for individual entrepreneurs, a narrow range of activities according to OKVED in the list of industries affected by the COVID-19 pandemic ⁸, as well as small and medium-sized businesses applying for state aid [47, Glukhov K.V., Soloviev I.A., p. 86]; insufficient thoughtfulness of financial support measures ⁹ (for example, insufficient subsidies for the payment of wages to employees and the amount of preferential loans to prevent bankruptcies of small and medium-sized businesses). In particular, in the regions of the Russian Arctic the salary system includes a regional coefficient and a percentage bonus. For example, in the Murmansk region, the regional salary regulation system includes a regional coefficient equal to 40% of the salary, and the percentage increment is 80%; the minimum wage in the region is 25675 rubles, and the size of the subsidy proposed by the state for the payment of wages to workers in small and medium-sized businesses is 12130 rubles ¹⁰.

⁶ Consultant Plus. URL: <http://www.consultant.ru/> (accessed 20 January 2021).

⁷ Mirovye praktiki podderzhki biznesa v usloviyakh pandemii COVID-19 vzglyadom «ochevidtsev» [World Practices of Business Support in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic through the Eyes of "Eyewitnesses"]. URL: <https://opora.ru/news/mirovye-praktiki-podderzhki-biznesa-v-usloviyakh-pandemii-covid-19-vzglyadom-ochevidtsev.html> (accessed 20 January 2021).

⁸ Malyy i sredniy biznes: eksperty predlagayut skorrektirovat' sistemu nalogooblozheniya [Small and Medium Business: Experts Suggest Adjusting the Tax System]. URL: <https://www.oprf.ru/press/news/2617/newsitem/55544> (accessed 20 January 2021).

⁹ Soyuz predprinimateley: mery gospodderzhki biznesa v period pandemii i ikh effektivnost' [Union of Entrepreneurs: Measures of State Support for Business during a Pandemic and Their Effectiveness]. URL: <http://kvnews.ru/news-feed/mery-gospodderzhki> (accessed 20 January 2021).

¹⁰ Arkticheskoe predprinimatel'stvo i pandemiya koronavirusa [Arctic Entrepreneurship and the Coronavirus Pandemic]. URL: <https://goarctic.ru/work/arkticheskoe-predprinimatel'stvo-i-pandemiya-koronavirusa/> (accessed 20 January 2021).

Self-isolation, forced by the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to a decrease in the revenue part of regional budgets. Thus, 65 Russian regions experienced a reduction of income tax revenues in the first six months of 2020, 22 of them — by more than a third, 8 — by more than 50% (including Nenets and Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrugs)¹¹: among the regions, fully referred to the AZRF, the budget deficit in the first half of 2020 in the Murmansk region amounted to 2.482 million rubles, in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug — 1.161 million rubles. In this situation, the overwhelming majority of Russian regions began to actively implement levers to suppress the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic in their territories.

In the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, regional business support measures included the restructuring of microloans for small and medium-sized businesses, reduced (3%) rates on microloans for enterprises in industries most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, subsidies to reimburse part of the costs associated with entrepreneurial activities for small and medium-sized businesses operating in priority areas of the regional economy, reduced rates for social insurance of employees (in the amount of 0% for entrepreneurs who paid wages to employees in April–June 2020). The total amount of subsidies for payment of services for small and medium-sized businesses that suspended their activities during the COVID-19 pandemic (10 entrepreneurs) in 2020 amounted to 1.9 million rubles; 3.7 million rubles were allocated for support to reimburse interest on loans and leasing, advanced training and equipment modernization¹².

In the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug¹³ the tax rate for taxpayers applying the simplified taxation system has been reduced from 5% to 1% in 2020–2021; in 2020, small and medium-sized businesses that carry out “transportation and storage” according to OKVED are exempt from paying transport tax, entities associated with the industries most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic are exempt from property tax and rent; for organizations engaged in tour operator or travel agency activities, subsidies for reimbursement of costs are offered; for all borrowers of the regional microfinance fund, a deferral was introduced for the payment of the principal debt and accrued interest under loan agreements. In 2020, the Government of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug expanded the access of small and medium-sized businesses to regional support measures by “clarifying” OKVED in terms of their attribution to industries affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the financial measures in the district in 2020, direct payments were made to socially oriented businesses (up to 200 thousand rubles), one-time payments to individual entrepreneurs in the field of personal services and self-employed (30 thousand rubles), payments to

¹¹ Po schetam pandemii. Kak ekonomiki regionov perezhili slozhnoe pervoe polugodie i kak zakonchat vtoroe [Claims on the Pandemic. How the Regional Economies Survived the Difficult First Half of the Year and How They will Finish the Second]. URL: <https://rg.ru/2020/09/09/kak-ekonomiki-regionov-perezhili-slozhnoe-pervoe-polugodie.html> (accessed 20 January 2021).

¹² God aktivnoy raboty. Pogovorim o pokazatelyakh [A Year of Active Work. Let's Talk about Metrics]. URL: <http://nvinder.ru/article/vypusk-no-142-21056-ot-26-dekabrya-2020-g/86844-god-aktivnoy-raboty-pogovorim-o-pokazatelyah> (accessed 20 January 2021).

¹³ Consultant Plus. URL: <http://www.consultant.ru/> (accessed 20 January 2021).

public catering enterprises (30–200 thousand rubles)¹⁴. In total, during the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 5 thousand entrepreneurs took advantage of regional support measures in the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug¹⁵.

A wide range of regional business support measures during the COVID-19 pandemic is presented in the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug: a special microloan for businesses operating in the fields of passenger and cargo air transport, tourism, hotel and consumer services, catering, healthcare, education, culture, entertainment, physical education and sports at a rate of 1% per annum; deferred payments under current microloan agreements to small and medium-sized businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic; an increase in the amount of support for the payment of interest on loans attracted for investment purposes and in order to carry out northern delivery; reduction of tax rates under the simplified taxation system for all taxpayers and the amount of potential annual income for individual entrepreneurs under the patent taxation system. In 2020, the microcredit company of the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug issued more than 110 million rubles in the form of preferential microloans to support small and medium-sized businesses¹⁶. The measures also included support for social entrepreneurs for material and technical support (up to 200 thousand rubles), as well as grants to entrepreneurs starting in production (700 thousand rubles)¹⁷.

The set of regional measures to support business in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Murmansk Oblast includes the “Governor's Startup” for new and current entrepreneurs (up to 2 million rubles); for small and medium-sized businesses most affected by the spread of coronavirus — an anti-crisis microloan (up to 1 million rubles for up to 2 years at 1% per annum), exemption from transport tax, a reduction in the amount of corporate property tax (by 50%); reduced tax rate under the simplified taxation system (for 2020–2022); increased size of regional subsidies for the payment of wages (27899 rubles)¹⁸.

Thus, the regions of the Russian Arctic significantly expanded the range of support measures proposed by the Government of the Russian Federation, giving an additional impetus to

¹⁴ Vlasti Yamala rasshiryayut dostup biznesa k meram podderzhki iz-za COVID-19 [The Yamal Authorities are Expanding Business Access to Support Measures due to COVID-19]. URL: <https://ria.ru/20200601/1572295060.html> (accessed 20 January 2021).

¹⁵ Bolee pyati tysyach predprinimateley Yamala vospol'zovalis' merami podderzhi v period pandemii [More than Five Thousand Yamal Entrepreneurs Took Advantage of Support Measures during the Pandemic]. URL: <https://nangs.org/news/economics/support/bolee-pyati-tysyach-predprinimateley-yamala-vozpollyzovalis-merami-podderzhi-v-period-pandemii> (accessed 20 January 2021).

¹⁶ Bolee 110 mln rubley l'gotnykh mikrozaymov poluchil biznes na Chukotke [Business in Chukotka Received More than 110 Million Rubles of Preferential Microloans]. URL: <https://go-pevek.ru/vse-novosti/bolee-110-mln-rublej-lygotnykh-mikrozaymov-poluchil-biznes-na-chukotke> (accessed 20 January 2021).

¹⁷ Malyy i sredniy biznes na Chukotke "podros" na 6% [Small and Medium-Sized Businesses in Chukotka "Grew up" by 6%]. URL: https://prochukotku.ru/news/actual/malyy_i_sredniy_biznes_na_chukotke_podros_na_6_11175/ (accessed 20 January 2021).

¹⁸ «Eto ne pro zarobotok, eto pro vyzhivanie»: chto spaset biznes v Arktike? [“This is not about Making Money, this is about Survival”: What will Save Business in the Arctic?]. URL: https://www.dp.ru/a/2020/05/15/Krizis_s_severnoj_nadbavk/ (accessed 20 January 2021).

the economy and social sphere to overcome the consequences of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The extractive nature of the AZRF economy, as shown by studies of previous crises [48, Pavlov K., Selin V, p. 58–67], also allows us to expect a specific reaction of the socio-economic space of the Russian Arctic to the COVID-19 pandemic. To identify this specificity, we used statistical methods to study the comparative reaction of the Arctic regions to restrictive measures caused by COVID-19, in comparison with the general Russian situation.

The study used operational data on the socio-economic situation of the regions of Russia, provided by the Federal State Statistics Service, according to indicators: industrial production index, retail trade turnover, the number of unemployed. In order to eliminate seasonal fluctuations, as well as the possibility of comparison with the pre-COVID 2019, we calculated (monthly) the ratios of the indicators for 2019 and 2020 to the same periods of previous years (in %) (Tables 1, 2, 3).

Table 1
*Industrial production indices, in% to the corresponding period of the previous year for Russia and the regions of the Russian Arctic*¹⁹

Period	Russia	Murmansk Oblast	Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug	Nenets Autonomous Okrug	Chukotka Autonomous Okrug
January-2019	101.1	103.8	117.0	96.4	82.2
February-2019	104.1	101.3	121.0	101.6	89.3
March-2019	101.2	103.0	123.4	100.3	131.8
April-2019	104.6	104.4	137.8	97.2	110.8
May-2019	100.9	111.1	128.9	99.4	97.1
June-2019	103.3	103.2	124.8	98.2	105.5
July-2019	102.8	113.7	117.1	96.9	109.5
August-2019	102.9	107.4	112.8	84.2	111.4
September-2019	103.0	106.3	107.6	108.5	87.6
October-2019	102.6	103.2	106.3	93.5	98.6
November-2019	100.3	95.0	109.9	94.0	115.9
December-2019	102.1	97.9	112.5	96.0	98.8
January-2020	101.1	98.5	101.2	98.0	115.9
February-2020	103.3	102.5	103.1	101.0	120.6
March-2020	100.3	99.3	96.6	98.0	71.0
April-2020	93.4	90.5	97.5	101.0	111.4
May-2020	90.4	95.1	93.1	81.9	112.9
June-2020	90.6	98.4	90.1	79.3	93.0
July-2020	92	103.2	90.2	83.2	96.7
August-2020	92.8	102.6	98.0	98.6	99.9
September-2020	95.0	94.4	98.5	69.6	84.7
October-2020	94.1	94.6	102.5	90.3	99.9
November-2020	97.4	107.1	103.8	88.8	100.3

¹⁹ Authors' calculations based on data from the Federal State Statistics Service. URL: <https://www.gks.ru/> (accessed 10 February 2021).

Analysis of industrial production indices indicates that the consequences of the pandemic began to affect the Russian economy as early as April 2020 (Table 1). Thus, in April 2020, the industrial production index amounted to 93.4% compared to April 2019, and then there was a further reduction, followed by an uncertain growth in July. For the Murmansk Oblast, the Yamalo-Nenets and Chukotka Autonomous Okrugs, the behavior of the indices in 2020 is generally similar to the all-Russian dynamics, but there is also a difference — a smaller reduction in production (observed for most points of the dynamic series). The Nenets Autonomous Okrug not only demonstrates more significant reductions in the industrial production index in comparison with the all-Russian situation and other regions of the Russian Arctic, but also does not show a tendency to improve indicators, which is explained by the reduction in hydrocarbon production.

Table 2

Retail trade turnover for Russia and the regions of the Russian Arctic, in % to the corresponding period of the previous year²⁰

Period	Russia	Murmansk Oblast	Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug	Nenets Autonomous Okrug	Chukotka Autonomous Okrug
January-2019	102.2	99.3	100.8	103.1	104.3
February-2019	102.3	99.5	99.3	102.3	103.5
March-2019	102.4	99.6	100.0	100.5	101.8
April-2019	102.0	99.2	103.6	97.9	103.1
May-2019	101.9	101.4	105.2	95.0	101.1
June-2019	101.8	102.9	104.4	97.0	104.0
July-2019	101.0	99.3	104.3	99.8	100.1
August-2019	100.8	98.6	102.5	97.9	100.7
September-2019	100.7	100.6	102.1	99.3	102.6
October-2019	101.6	101.2	100.1	99.5	103.9
November-2019	102.3	99.7	100.3	101.0	100.7
December-2019	101.9	100.8	97.9	100.6	101.5
January-2020	102.7	99.2	101.6	101.7	100.4
February-2020	104.7	99.3	102.1	104.7	102.4
March-2020	105.7	100.9	100.1	101.5	101.2
April-2020	76.8	89.1	83.0	90.4	100.0
May-2020	80.8	91.9	88.2	92.1	100.2
June-2020	92.3	104.6	97.8	98.2	100.3
July-2020	97.4	97.9	99.4	100.5	101.4
August-2020	97.3	96.4	99.6	97.5	102.4
September-2020	97	93.4	101.9	94.3	102.8
October-2020	97.6	95.4	101.9	95.2	102.9
November-2020	96.9	92.9	101.6	92.5	100.2

The retail trade turnover in Russia, having decreased in April to 76.8%, started to grow in May, but in November 2020 it did not reach the values of 2019 (Table 2). For the Murmansk Oblast

²⁰ Authors' calculations based on data from the Federal State Statistics Service. URL: <https://www.gks.ru/> (accessed 10 February 2021).

in the period April–July, a less significant decrease in the index is characteristic in comparison with the general situation in Russia, and in the period August–November 2020 it is a little more. The Yamalo-Nenets and Nenets Autonomous Okrugs are characterized by a smaller decrease in the index than in Russia as a whole, and for the Yamal-Nenets Okrug, index of more than 100% has been observed since September 2020. Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, during the entire study period of 2020, including the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrates the same (January and April 2020) and higher retail trade turnover (the rest of the studied period of 2020) in comparison with the pre-COVID year of 2019.

Table 3

*The number of officially registered unemployed in Russia and the regions of the Russian Arctic, in % of the corresponding period of the previous year*²¹

Period	Russia	Murmansk Oblast	Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug	Nenets Autonomous Okrug	Chukotka Autonomous Okrug
January-2019	94.2	100.0	90.5	83.3	100.0
February-2019	99.9	102.9	91.3	100.0	87.5
March-2019	104.4	105.8	95.7	100.0	100.0
April-2019	107.8	109.0	100.0	100.0	87.5
May-2019	106.3	108.1	100.0	100.0	100.0
June-2019	105.7	105.1	100.0	100.0	100.0
July-2019	105.3	105.4	100.0	80.0	100.0
August-2019	104.8	98.3	100.0	100.0	120.0
September-2019	102.5	96.6	100.0	75.0	120.0
October-2019	102.2	95.2	93.8	100.0	100.0
November-2019	100.5	98.5	106.3	75.0	100.0
December-2019	99.7	97.1	100.0	60.0	85.7
January-2020	95.4	94.2	94.7	60.0	85.7
February-2020	91.4	91.7	95.2	66.7	100.0
March-2020	88.8	89.0	95.5	57.1	87.5
April-2020	160.5	116.4	163.6	71.4	100.0
May-2020	276.2	159.7	263.2	116.7	100.0
June-2020	373.7	177.4	368.8	160.0	116.7
July-2020	455.4	194.9	478.6	200.0	116.7
August-2020	511.6	203.4	507.1	225.0	116.7
September-2020	553.9	210.5	480.0	300.0	116.7
October-2020	537.6	191.7	473.3	200.0	116.7
November -2020	471.5	165.6	394.1	200.0	116.7

For Russia, a sharp increase in the index of the number of officially registered unemployed was indicated in April 2020, which interrupted the 4-month trend (December — March 2020) of a decrease in this indicator (Table 3). Almost the same dynamics, including a 3–4-month pre-COVID period of reduction in the number of officially registered unemployed, is characteristic of the re-

²¹ Authors' calculations based on data from the Federal State Statistics Service. URL: <https://www.gks.ru/> (accessed 10 February 2021).

gions of the Russian Arctic. A significant difference is observed in the growth rate of this indicator, which is significantly lower for all AZRF regions in comparison with the all-Russian figures.

Thus, the statistical data convincingly indicate that the regions of the Russian Arctic demonstrate a greater economic stability in comparison with the all-Russian situation, passing through many restrictions, obstacles, problems and changes caused by COVID-19. This is not so much due to the strengthening of stabilization measures at the federal level by supporting the regional level, but to fundamental reasons — the relative simplicity of the extractive economy in the Arctic [48, Pavlov K., Selin V., p. 66], higher incomes, correspondingly higher purchasing power and large savings of the population of the Arctic [49, Skufyina T.P., Baranov S.V., p. 22–31], a low level of development of small and medium-sized businesses [50, Skufina T., Bazhutova E., Samarina V., Serova N., p. 1024–1026], including sectors especially affected by the consequences of restrictive measures.

Instead of Conclusion

Potential Risks and Opportunities for Arctic Governance Optimizing

In summarising our review study, we want to avoid the typical presentation of conclusion in scientific articles, consisting of brief conclusions, which, in the opinion of the authors, express the essence of the results in a concentrated manner. Firstly, because the questions of the impact of the crisis of a non-economic nature on the development and management in the AZRF remain open, if only due to the fact that we were observing the phenomenon not only still ongoing, but also in a state of turbulence in a number of components of Arctic socio-economic development. Secondly, the review nature of the article has created a palette of new and “old” facts, from which, we believe, the reader will choose his own vision of contemporary reality, draw a different picture of the future of the Russian Arctic, possibly different from the conclusions that we would draw in summary. And, finally, thirdly, there is a feeling of incorrectness of writing the conclusion, stopping in reasoning, thereby recognizing the completeness of the work, and, let us repeat, about the phenomenon still ongoing, new and not enough studied, but obviously creating risks and new possible development trajectories for the Russian Arctic.

This is a statement of the reasons why we chose to move away from the traditional conclusion, shifting to the statement of risks and opportunities for optimizing governance in the Arctic. Moreover, the uniqueness of the COVID-19 crisis creates visibility of greater freedom from the trajectory of previous development, provoking the formulation of not only qualitative socio-economic changes, but also management changes. However, in fact, the pandemic has only deepened the manifestation of those problems and risks that were characteristic and basic objects of management for the pre-COVID period. Let us focus on the risks most dependent on the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and which are the most pressing challenges for contemporary governance.

Firstly, a set of demographic problems, among which, as shown in our review, traditionally negative are considered to be the following: the migration outflow of the population of the Russian Arctic, a high morbidity rate (respiratory diseases, digestive organs and musculoskeletal system are among the most common groups), a high mortality rate [7, Kryukov V.A., Kryukov Ya.V. et al, p. 153–185; 51, Korchak E.A., p. 5–9]. As noted above, the solution to these problems is laid down in the regulatory and legal framework, including strategic legislation, accompanying the AZRF development. At the same time, the correlation of the short-term forecasts corrections of the socio-economic development of the AZRF regions in 2020 towards the worsening, as well as the actual data provided by Rosstat at the beginning of 2021, indicate that the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic worsened demographic processes for a number of the Russian Arctic regions at the end of 2020. For example, for the Murmansk Oblast — the region with the most diversified economy, the best transport accessibility, the most favorable climate among the regions of the Russian Arctic — the problems of population decline, including migration from the region, are especially urgent. So, in 2005–2020, the population of the region decreased by 13%, including 25% among the employable, and migration was 73% of the region's total population loss between 2005 and 2020. Initial conditions of the Forecast of socio-economic development of the Murmansk region for 2021 and the planning period of 2022 and 2023 set the average annual population, thousand people: in 2020 — 738.0; in 2021 — 731.7; in 2022 — 726.2; in 2023 — 721.5²². According to Rosstat, the actual population of the Murmansk region at the end of 2020 amounted to 733.2 thousand people, accelerating the projected decline in the region's population. The pandemic also poses certain threats, including a decline in production, the use of rotational work method, for an unstable trend of population growth that has emerged in the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug since 2012 and the outlined stabilization of the population in the Nenets and Chukotka Autonomous Okrugs. The forecast of socio-economic development of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug for 2021–2023 determined the average annual population, thousand people: in 2020 — 545.5; in 2021 — 547.8; in 2022 — 550.4; in 2023 — 553.1²³. It should be noted that positive trend was maintained in 2020 due to natural growth (7.3 people per 1.000 population of the district) and the actual population according to Rosstat data at the end of 2020 was 547.1 (an increase by 0.6% relative to 2019). In the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, according to the Revised forecast of the NAO socio-economic development for 2020 and the planning period 2021–2024, according to the base scenario, the average annual population is predicted, thousand people: in

²² Prognoz sotsial'no-ekonomicheskogo razvitiya Murmanskoy oblasti na 2021 god i planovyy period 2022 i 2023 godov [Forecast of Socio-Economic Development of the Murmansk Oblast for 2021 and the Planning Period of 2022 and 2023]. URL: https://minec.gov-murman.ru/783_pp.pdf (accessed 20 January 2021).

²³ Prognoz sotsial'no-ekonomicheskogo razvitiya Yamalo-Nenetskogo avtonomnogo okruga na 2021-2023 gody [Forecast of Socio-Economic Development of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug for 2021–2023]. URL: <https://de.yanao.ru/upload/uf/338/Prognoz-YANAO-do-2023-g..pdf> (accessed 20 January 2021).

2020 — 44.2; in 2021 — 44.5; in 2022 — 44.7²⁴. The actual number, according to Rosstat data at the end of 2020, is 44.4 thousand people, which generally corresponds to the projected insignificant growth, provided by natural population growth due to high birth rates. In the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, the stabilization and even insignificant growth (in 2018, 2020 — due to natural and migration growth) of the population was violated in 2020 (the number decreased by 1.0 thousand people, which is 2% from the total population of 49.3 thousand people)²⁵. In the Nenets, Yamalo-Nenets, Chukotka Okrugs, a reduction in number of women of reproductive age is expected, which, along with poor health care problem, high migration outflow, increased unemployment, uncertainty in the speed and timing of economic recovery in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic, reinforces and enhances the high risks of population decline.

Secondly, a common management challenge, typical for all regions of the Russian Arctic, is a set of imbalances in the labor markets [19, Skufyina T.P., Korchak E. A., Baranov S.V., p. 12]: socio-demographic imbalance (due to the young age of unemployed citizens), professional and qualification imbalance in labor supply and demand (against the background of maintaining a high educational level of the population), territorial and sectoral imbalance in labor supply and demand (produced by a low migration attractiveness of arctic territories due to low-paid employment, territorial remoteness, lack of vacancies with the provision of housing). The basic problem of this complex of imbalances, indicated in all forecast and planning documents for the AZRF development, is the reduction in the size of the working-age population, both due to natural aging of the population and due to migration from the Arctic. Short-term forecasts of the socio-economic development of the Russian Arctic regions predict a decline in the population of working age. Our surveys, continuing in 2020–2021 across all regions of the Russian Arctic, confirm the strengthening of this problem in the coming years [52, Baranov S.V., Skufyina T.P., Gushchina I.A., p. 168–170].

Thirdly, the problem of unemployment in the regions of the Russian Arctic, the main specificity of which is a young age of unemployed citizens (the average age of unemployed citizens is 36 years old, the highest unemployment rate is in the age group 20–29 years old), a high share of qualified citizens in the structure of unemployed (more than 60%), the stagnant nature of unemployment (the duration of job search for a quarter of the unemployed is more than a year) [51, Korchak E.A., p. 5–9].

Fourthly, poverty, including child poverty [20, Bazhutova E.A., Biev A.A. et al., p. 16]: more than 8% of the population of the AZRF regions today live below the poverty line; 30% of house-

²⁴ Utochnennyi prognoz sotsial'no-ekonomicheskogo razvitiya Nenetskogo avtonomnogo okruga na 2020 god i planovyy period 2021-2024 godov [Updated Forecast of the Socio-Economic Development of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug for 2020 and the Planning Period 2021–2024]. URL: http://dfei.admnao.ru/media/uploads/userfiles/2020/01/10/105-%D1%80_zU1zwzu.pdf (accessed 20 January 2021).

²⁵ Chukotskiy avtonomnyy okrug v tsifrakh [Chukotka Autonomous Okrug in Figures]. Khabarovsk, Khabarovskstat, 2020, 85 p.

holds experience multidimensional poverty (43% of such households are classified as poor; the child poverty rate is 28%).

As noted, the main parameters of the state programs of the AZRF regions, forecasts and development plans take into account these challenges and threats as the main object of regulation. However, the existing management mechanisms are clearly insufficient to minimize these risks, including due to the insurmountable fragmentation of the AZRF management between the state and business, the various goals of these participants. The facts of the closure of a number of industries for reasons not related to the pandemic and the strengthening of the rotational work in 2020 are a reflection of the conflict situation. In fact, the essence of the conflict is a chimera, consisting of the legacy of the Soviet period, which provides a social contract in terms of declaring and providing conditions for the socio-economic development of the population of the Arctic; declared in the international arena strategic goals of ensuring the development of the Russian Arctic on the legally non-binding principles developed by the Arctic Council [8, Heininen L., p. 195–196]; the logic of the functioning of socio-economic capitalist formation. The conditions of the pandemic will probably deepen the risks and the associated conflict potential so that they initiate the main risk — a weakening of the scale of the socio-economic goals of the AZRF development, including the practices of business and the state to ensure conditions for an increase in the level and quality of life of the population of this territory. In contrast to this objective process is the policy of “growing” of Russia in the Arctic: “Everything that happens in the north is of particular interest and value to us. I am not even talking now about the development of the Northern Sea Route. In general, this is our future, including in terms of the extraction of natural resources in the long term. Lomonosov once said that Russia would grow with Siberia. In the next decades, Russia will grow in the Arctic and northern territories. These are absolutely obvious things.” (V. Putin) ²⁶.

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²⁶ Website of the Ministry of the Russian Federation for the Development of the Far East and the Arctic. URL: <https://minvr.gov.ru/press-center/mediagallery/?tags=%D0%9C%D0%A2%D0%9A> (accessed 20 January 2021).

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