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**Development tools for the Far East and the Arctic: ways to improve[[1]](#footnote-1)**

The study of the problems of the Arctic and the Far East development has always been relevant due to the specific features of these territories associated with a lag in economic development, extremely low population density with a continuing long-term migration outflow, underdeveloped social and backbone infrastructure, low spatial connectivity, limited economic conditions, etc.

All this predetermines the need to develop a special state policy with a northern and eastern orientation. The foundations of such a policy are an agreed system of strategic planning documents at all levels of government, a system of governing bodies and institutions, as well as specific instruments to stimulate economic growth and support citizens.

The analysis revealed that the tools for stimulating the socio-economic development of the Far East and the Arctic are universal, which is the same for the whole country; universal, but which separately take into account the specifics of the Far East and the Arctic; specific for the considered macroregions. Most of the tools are usually specific (table 1).

Table 1 - Classification of tools for the implementation of the Far Eastern and Arctic socio-economic policy of Russia

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Universal | Universal, taking into account the specifics of the macro-region development | Specific for the macroregion |
| Sectoral state programs of the Russian Federation | State programs "Socio-economic development of the Far Eastern Federal District" and "Socio-economic development of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation" | National program of socio-economic development of the Far East until 2035 |
| Special economic zones | Federal target program "Socio-economic development of the Kuril Islands (Sakhalin region) for 2016 - 2025" | Special economic zone in Magadan region, residency of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation, Free Port of Vladivostok |
|  | Territories of Advanced Social and Economic Development in the Far East and in the Murmansk Region | Far Eastern and Arctic hectares |
|  | Far Eastern mortgage | Equalization of electricity tariffs to the average Russian level |
|  | Subsidies for ensuring the availability of air travel for passengers | Special administrative regime on Russky Island (Primorsky Territory) |
|  | Non-price zones of the wholesale electricity market |  |

Based on an inventory of existing instruments, it was revealed that they are more focused on increasing investment attractiveness than on creating conditions for attracting people to the Far East and the Arctic. A retrospective analysis shows that the tools used did not give the expected social effects: the population in the Far East and the Arctic continues to decline steadily: from 1990 to 2020, the reduction occurred by 20%, in some regions the population has decreased by three times.

In addition to the low population, the Arctic and the Far East are characterized by an underdeveloped internal transport connectivity of the territory and low transport accessibility. The density of highways here is 5 times less than the national average, and, in some regions, railways are completely absent. Social infrastructure is also underdeveloped, which limits the population's access to basic social benefits.

An analysis of strategic planning documents for the development of the Far East and the Arctic indicates that these problems are not fully taken into account in the formation of goals, objectives and development tools. In this regard, the purpose of the study was to make recommendations for improving the policy of socio-economic development of the Far Eastern and Arctic regions.

The primary task is to form a unified system of strategic planning at all levels of government. This process is hindered by the fact that these programs and strategies are not synchronized with each other. Thus, the priorities for the development of the Far East fixed at the federal level - accelerated economic development, consolidation of the population and improving the quality of life - are not always reflected in the Far Eastern regions’ strategic plans.

There is also a partial discrepancy between the planning horizons. “The Strategy for the development of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation and ensuring national security for the period up to 2035” is synchronized with “The Fundamentals of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the period up to 2035”. However, the State Program “Socio-Economic Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation” is weakly coupled with goal-setting documents - it almost completely lacks a social orientation, which is a priority for the macroregion.

A limiting factor in the implementation of a coherent policy is also an incompletely formed system of government departments and institutions of the macroregions - it was formed relatively recently and is still the subject of administrative reforms.

Thus, it is necessary to transform the current development policy of the Far Eastern and Arctic regions by synchronizing key strategic planning documents, completing the formation of a unified system of governing bodies and institutions, updating individual instruments of economic and social development.

1. The report was prepared as part of the implementation of the state task of the RANEPA for 2022. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)