

RUSSIA

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GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

As a country the Russian Federation presents a large variety of geographic features, climatic conditions, type of natural landscapes, ethnical and cultural diversity, nevertheless preserving at the same time its identity and unity as a whole on the global scene.



Map 1: Location

Presented in numbers, Russia looks as follows at present:

INDICATORS	DATA	GLOBAL POSITION
Surface area	17, 075, 400 km ²	1st
Total population	145,3 million inhabitants ¹	7th ²
Total GDP	432.9 billion USD ³	16th ⁴
GDP per capita	8 377 USD ³	57th ²
GNI per capita	2 610 USD ³	97th ⁴

¹ National census 2002, Report of Federal Service of State Statistics
² www.manalemix.boom.ru with a reference to CIA data on July 2003 (population) and UN 2000 (GDP per capita).
³ World Development Indicators (WDI) Report, World Bank, 2005, data on 2003
⁴ www.izvestia.ru with a reference to WDI Report

- Population

The following factors are also important:

- negative population growth accompanied with high level of immigration and appearance of a differentiation between declining and growing regions (Fig.1,2,3).

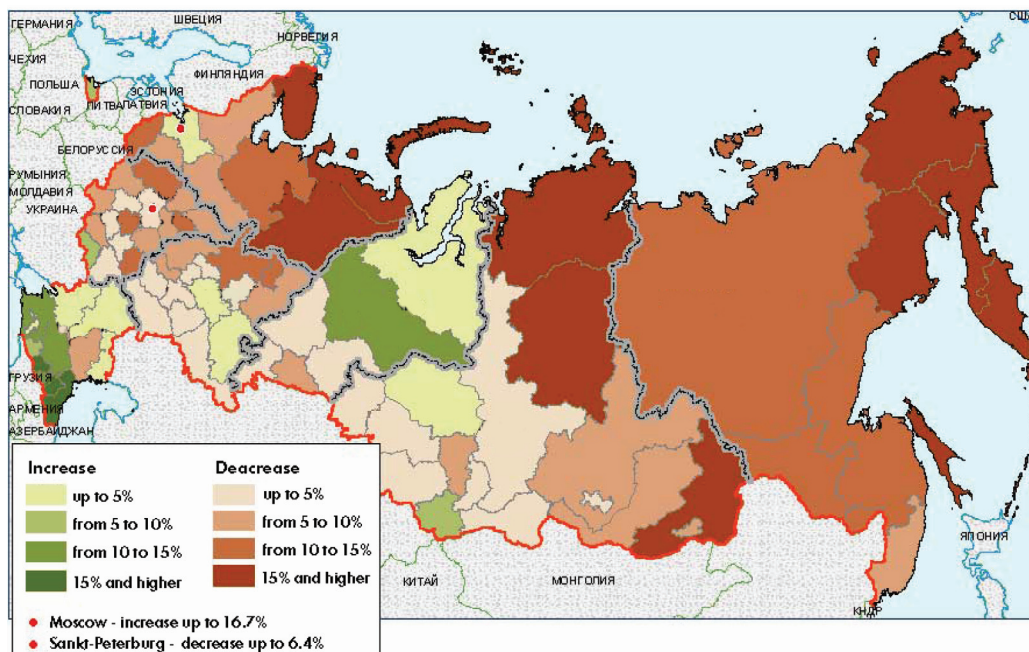
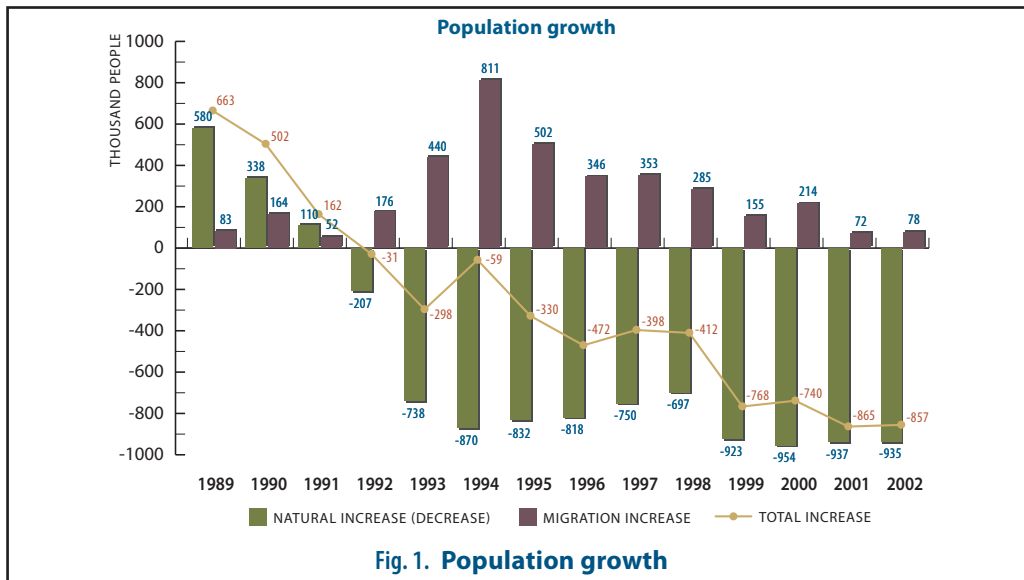


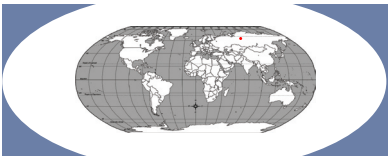
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- Imbalance of economic development of different regions (Fig.4)
- slowing down of the rapid urbanisation process with continuing concentration of population in the rapidly growing largest cities and partly in smaller cities (Fig.5, 6, 7)
- Russia remains one of the most cosmopolitan countries in the world and its population consists of 160 different nations.





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Fig. 3: Migration flows



Fig. 4: Average Monthly Paid Salary (January-November 2004)

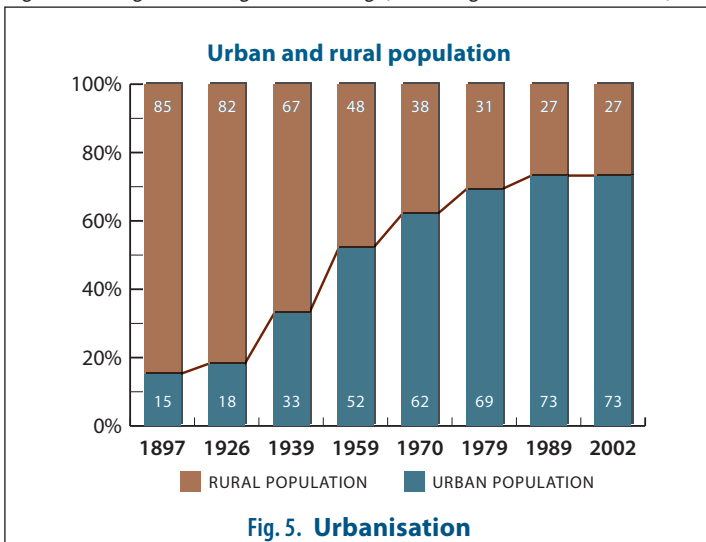




Fig. 6: Largest cities

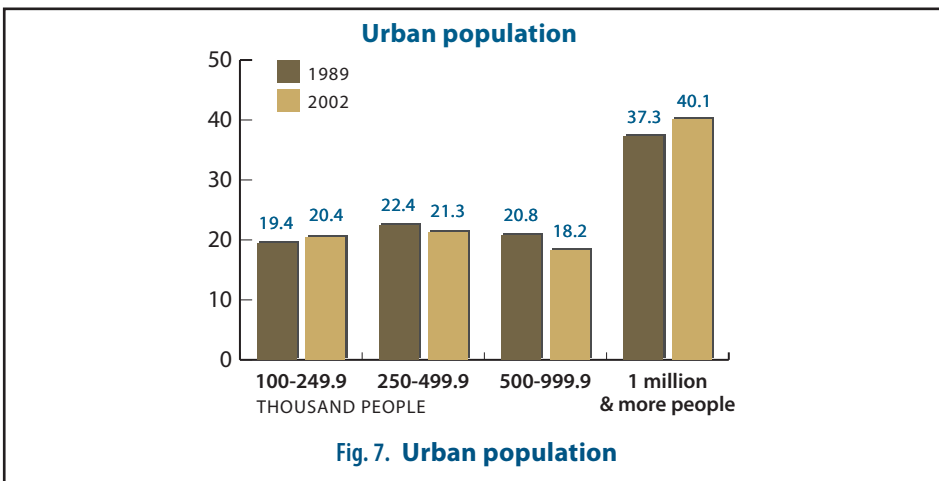


Fig. 7. Urban population

Notes:

- The thematic maps are based on the Report of the Federal Service of State Statistics and on the results of the National census 2002
- numbers on fig.7 shows population migration in thousands for recent 10 years
- graphic on fig.11 shows the distribution (percentage) of total urban population among the main group of cities.

PART I: PLANNING FRAMEWORK

- **Administrative structure**

The administrative structure of the country includes three levels: federal (Federal Districts and economic regions), regional (oblasts and other forms of regions) and municipal.

Accordingly to the Constitution of 1993, Russia is a Federation consisting of 89 regions (Fig.8): 21 republics, 49 oblasts (provinces), 6 krajs (territories), 10 autonomous districts, 1 autonomous oblast (province) and 2 federal cities (Moscow and St.-Petersburg). In spite of these various types of titles, inherited from the Soviet

time, all regions have the same rights and status: local constitution (charter) and legislation; local parliaments, elected by citizens; a governor (president, etc.). Accordingly to the new law brought into force in 2005 the latter is appointed by the President and approved by local legislature (parliaments or councils) instead of elected by people as it had been since 1993.

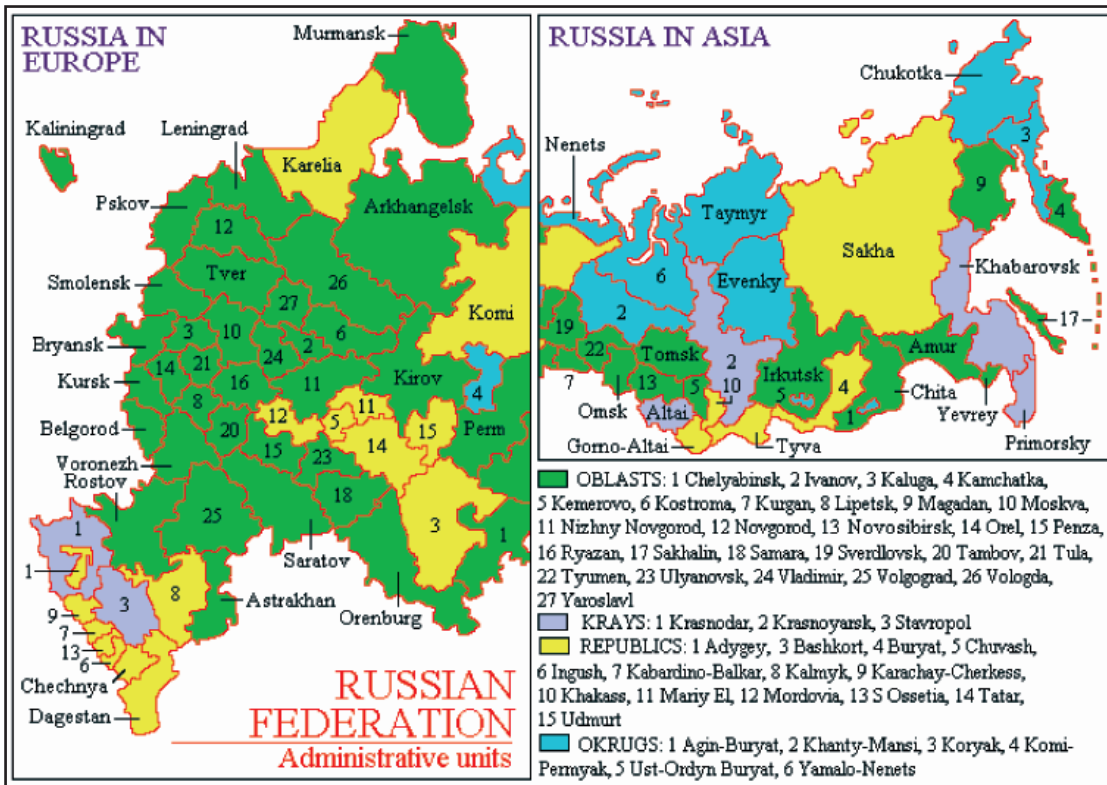


Fig. 8: Administrative subdivision

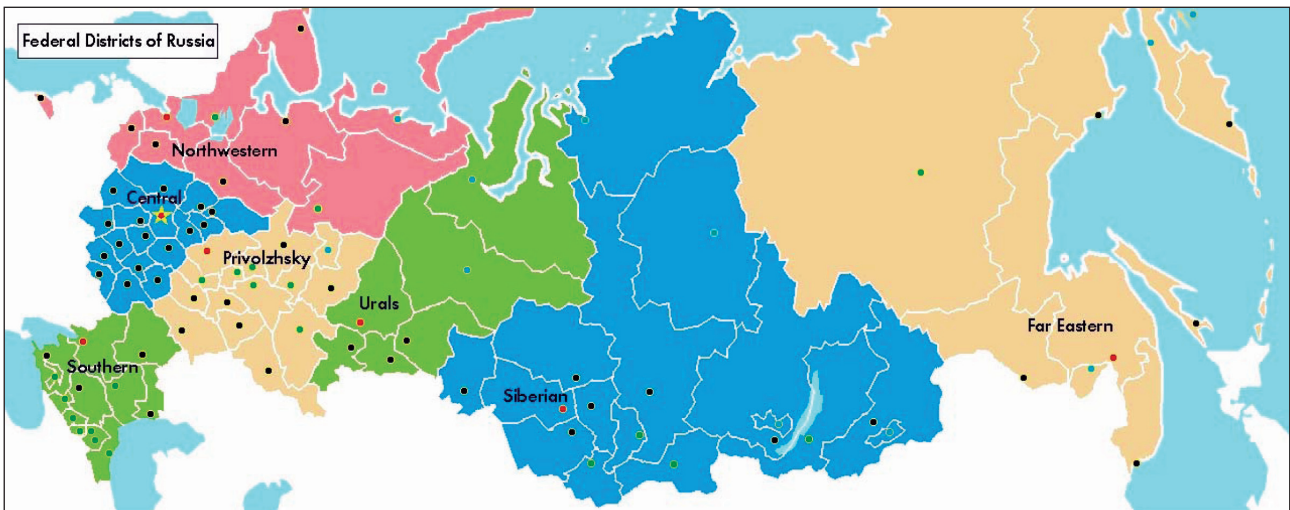
Although legally equal the regions are very different in area, size of population and level of economic development and thus in terms of their importance for the national economy and internal policy. Some data below illustrates this fact:

INDICATORS	THE HIGHEST RATES	THE LOWEST RATES
Surface area (km ²)	3 103 200 km ² (Yakutia)	600 km ² (St. Petersburg)
Population (inhabitants)	8 376 000 (Moscow)	18 000 (Evenk autonomous district)
Density of population (inh. per km ²)	8 630,40 (Moscow)	0,02 (Evenk autonomous district)

Source: www.georus.by.ru

As both the present structure and boundaries were established during the existence of the USSR there is a growing discussion on the effectiveness of such a system. At the moment several groups of regions are going through the procedure of merging into a bigger one by means of local referendums. It is necessary to note that a federal structure of the country was first proposed during the Soviet era and did not exist previously in the history of the state.

The 2000 Presidential Decree complemented the system of regions with 7 Federal Districts (Fig.9) in order to reach a better performance of the local branches and divisions of the central administrative bodies and to enhance coordination between regional and federal authorities. Other 'economic regions' are used mainly for



economic planning and statistics (Fig. 10).



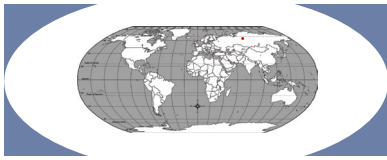
Fig. 9: Federal districts
 Fig. 10: Economic regions

The new Federal Law on basic principles of local governance, which is being introduced gradually since 2005, requires a clear subdivision of the municipalities in each region into urban and rural settlements, municipal counties (combination of several settlements which are municipalities themselves and areas between them or inter-settlement territories), and urban counties - cities not included in any municipal county. Local governments do not form part of the state administration and have full powers over local affairs which are defined in a specific law.

- **Planning legislation**
- **Main planning legislation**

The legal basis for planning is constituted by several types of legislation in which lower level laws are not allowed to contradict those of the upper level:

- Federal codes (Planning, Land-use, Water, Forest, etc)
- Federal laws
- Regional laws
- Local government decrees and acts
- Building standards and regulations.



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The Land-use Code states that all land in state property is divided either on a regional or municipal basis. Any territory regardless of its property status belongs to one of following categories:

- agricultural land
- land of settlements
- land of any kind of industrial or special usage, including space not yet designated for specific land use and space for military purposes
- protected areas (natural, cultural, etc.)
- land covered by forests
- land covered by hydro-graphic objects and adjoining areas
- land reserved for future usage.

The category of land determines the procedures and requirements for its use. The Land-use Code defines basic principles of land market and property rights, including the procedure for the allocation of the state and municipal land for construction. The use of agricultural land, forests, water areas and protected zones is regulated by respective legislature, with the exception of aspects covered by the Planning Code and corresponding federal laws.

The new Planning Code adopted in 2004 which is gradually implemented since 2005, introduced three types of planning activities: spatial planning; zoning regulations and layout documentation.

For each level of governance – federal, regional and municipal - this Code prescribes respective levels of responsibility with correspondent types of planning documentation, rules of approval, procedures of negotiation between authorities, requirements and procedures for public participation, as well as penalties and responsibilities for violation of planning regulations and obligations.

The issuing of building permits, establishment and control of zoning regulations, and territorial planning of settlements are under the jurisdiction of local authorities, save for the following exceptions: federal and regional land and properties, alteration of functional usage of agricultural land, forests, protected areas of natural landscapes and historical and cultural heritage, naturally or technologically hazardous zones. Nevertheless the main principle of the new system of planning documentation is to allow each level of power to develop land under its jurisdiction with the obligation of providing adaptations only in cases when activities of one authority can interfere or directly affect activities of another.

• **Planning and implementation instruments**

The newly introduced planning system allows significant freedom for each level of governance, either state or local, to produce their own plans. Coordination between them is to be provided by negotiations or by means of development and implementation of joint planning documents in cases of mutual interests.

Federal planning policy is the responsibility of the Federal Agency of Construction and Housing which also implements a broad spectrum of other state services in the realm of spatial planning: state expertise of planning documentation, organisation of architectural and planning education, elaboration of federal planning documentation. The competence of local and regional administrative bodies responsible for planning is determined by legislation for the respective level. This can range from one person, usually the city or county “chief architect” to the architectural and planning department of a city or the regional Ministry of Construction. Planning administrations of a lower level are not directly subordinated to the ones of a higher level and act within the respective jurisdiction of the federal, regional or municipal administration.

Therefore the provision of planning is highly dependent on the financial and human resources available in each municipality or region. In many cases it proved difficult to find a fully competent civil servant to undertake the necessary duties and services, which has a negative effect on the quality of planning and regulation.

Professional planning services are provided by various types of private and state organisations and in the majority of cases they are subject to market competition. The exceptions are the municipal planning institutes



affiliated to corresponding local and regional administrative departments responsible for planning and construction.

- **Detailed development control mechanisms**

So far most of the regulations include different zones, either focusing on the definition of future land-use or on requirements of special care for existing values of a given area. In many cases, these guidelines fail to determine clear rules for the development of particular land parcels as they apply at the scale of a district or a part of the urban fabric. Usually, detailed documentation is only produced for areas assigned to new construction, thus leaving the relation between the owners of older land and property and the authorities without a sound basis for resolving any legal disputes.

The most common measures in use are different types of urban or regional “frameworks” or “structural elements”. They deal with environmental, transportation, engineering, functional and other “potential” characteristics of a given territory. They highlight the advantages of its development as well as the “planning limitations”. They also identify the influences and interplay of factors which impose restrictions on the alteration of current types of land-use: sanitary zones of industry, hazardous zones, areas with high level of air and water pollution, etc., and compatibility between different planning zones (see above). Also popular is the idea of a “complex approach” which attempts to predict the future needs of the population as much as possible through planning tools. Although well intentioned as an idea this approach led very often to authorities dictating those needs, which did not correspond to reality.

In many aspects the planning profession and its practice is strongly associated with architecture and the construction industry. This is expressed sometimes in the excessive attention to architectural appearance of particular buildings or “visibility analysis” as well as in the great interest of authorities in the overall amount of new construction, instead of paying attention to urban quality.

PART II: PLANNING PROCESS

- **Planning system**

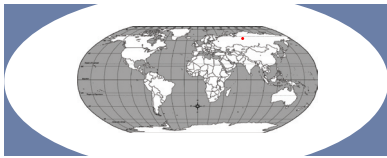
- **Plan making**

The Federal Planning Law of 1992 defines planning as the spatial organisation of settlements and settlement systems. The aim of planning is to provide the conditions for territorial development, formation of social capital, manufacturing, engineering and transportation infrastructure, realisation of various construction activities and delimitation of land plots.

In practice it means dealing with any change of functional usage and mode of land use and providing regulations for real estate development by any actors of any economic sector in order to reach sustainable development of built-up territories and a balance between environmental, economic and social factors of their development.

The arrangements themselves (plans, maps, calculations, etc) are being undertaken by any organisation licensed to carry out professional services in the field of planning (see above). The civil servants responsible for development and approval of plans control and coordinate this work and give necessary comments and politically defined goals. Therefore the description of the planning duties given below does not so much relate to those who are making the documents but to the ones who have the obligation to issue the documents according to the Planning Code.

Federal and regional authorities are responsible for preparing schemes of territorial planning and technical norms and regulations related to their level of competence as well as layout documentation for land assigned to federal or regional property development (buildings, engineering and transportation infrastructure, etc)



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The responsibility of local executive authorities of settlements and municipal counties is to develop master plans, local technical requirements, zoning regulations and layout documentation within the limits of their respective settlements or for the inter-settlement areas allocated to the placement of local infrastructure.

In cases when land-use alteration is proposed for land not included in the settlements or an industrial category (see above), layout documentation can be developed by persons or organisations which initiate such development which has to be approved by the administrative body responsible for use of the given land.

- **Development control**

The definition of the category of land and the right to change it depends upon which Land-Use Code it falls under:

- federal government in cases of federal land property
- regional government in cases of regional property and agricultural land in municipal or private property
- municipal authorities in cases of private and municipal land plots which are not agricultural.

Spatial planning schemes for the Russian Federation and for the regions are subject to approval by the Federal and regional governments respectively.

The master plans and zoning regulations of municipalities are approved by local legislative powers. All documents of spatial planning can be submitted to state expertise by authorities of any level or non-governmental organisations. A negative or critical response is not an obstacle to giving consent for planning documentation and can be contested in court.

Layout documentation is produced and approved by administrative bodies of related powers.

The Planning Code prescribes sophisticated procedures for the coordination between different levels of spatial planning and zoning regulations, as well as between neighbouring municipalities through discussions of issues of overlapping interests and the organisation of conciliatory commissions.

Building permits are to be issued by local authorities on the basis of zoning regulations. For categories of land that are not subject to such regulations (forests, agriculture, etc), decisions are taken by respective federal, regional or local authority, depending on the status and category of the land concerned.

- **Participation and appeal**

There are three main possibilities to object to change proposed by the planning documentation:

- objections of authorities of another level of power or neighbouring municipalities or regions during development of a document of spatial planning. Conflicts have to be resolved during the adaptation procedure. Otherwise planning documentation may be approved with the exclusion of the questioned issues.
- public debates are compulsory for any planning documents, zoning regulations and layout documentation produced at the local level. In all cases results of disputes have to be submitted to local legislature with the proposed planning documents. The discussions on the regional and all-Russia planning documents are not subject to formal consultation procedures but the drafts and final version of these papers are to be published to enable any person to give suggestions and objections.
- any planning document can be challenged in court.

The recently introduced Planning Code has set certain limitations on the range of issues which are subject to an adaptation procedure of authorities of different levels or neighbouring regions (municipalities) and



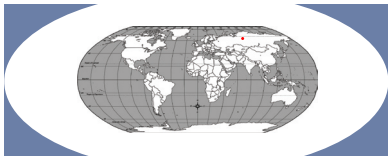
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timeframe available for it. This is aimed to allow effective differentiation of power and responsibilities and to keep planning process more flexible and focused on the needs of people rather than bureaucratic interactions.

Administrative structure and planning implementation			
NAME AND SCALE	TERRITORY/ POPULATION	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	DESCRIPTION
1 Schemes of territorial planning of Russian Federation 1: 5 000 000 1: 2 500 000	All country, 145,3 million people	Federal Agency of Construction and Housing	One or several documents showing intentions of federal power in such strategic domains as transportation, defence, energy engineering, forests and water developments, etc. Include written statement with goals and main activities and maps. The latter indicate planned distribution of structures and systems under federal responsibility and limits of zones of regulations under jurisdiction of federal government (lands of forests, protected areas, military and space activities, etc).
2 Regional schemes of territorial planning 1: 500 000 1: 300 000 1: 100 000	Territory of a region, population from hundreds of thousands to several millions	Regional authorities	One or several documents indicating planned development of protected natural landscapes under regional jurisdiction; alterations of boundaries of agricultural land and placing of regional infrastructure or buildings for which the regional authorities are responsible. Consist of appropriate maps and written statement defining goals and expected activities.
3 Municipal county master plan 1: 50 000 1: 10 000 1: 5 000	Municipal county, up to one hundred thousand inhabitants	To be approved by county authority, representative body (elected by inhabitants or formed by authorities of settlements constituting given county)	Explanatory statements with goals and agenda of proposed development; maps demonstrating distribution of planned buildings and structures under municipal county responsibility across the given, mostly inter-settlement area.
4 Master plan of a settlement (city county) 1: 50 000 1: 10 000 1: 5 000	Urban or rural settlement, city county; from 1000 to more then million inhabitants	Responsibility of head of local administration, to be approved by local legislature	Explanatory statements with goals and agenda of proposed development and maps demonstrating distribution of planned buildings and structures under responsibility of settlement (city) authority, including main local transportation and engineering infrastructure and functional zones.
ZONING REGULATION			
5 Zoning regulation guidelines	Territory of settlement or fragments of inter-settlements areas to be built-up	Developed by commission summoned by head of administration, to be approved by local legislature.	Decree prescribing application and alterations of zoning regulations, zoning maps and description of allowed development within each zone. The latter defines main and complimentary functional usage, restrictions on land parcel size, built-up ratio, built-up density, maximum number of floor, etc. Zoning regulation guidelines applied for part of the settlement (city) can be developed without producing of master plan of given municipality.



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Administrative structure and planning implementation			
NAME AND SCALE	TERRITORY/ POPULATION	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	DESCRIPTION
LAYOUT DOCUMENTATION			
6	Layout plan	Existing or proposed built-up areas of settlements and cities or their parts	Federal, regional or local administration accordingly to status of given land
7	Land subdivision plan	Existing or proposed built-up areas within elements of city plan (districts, blocs, etc)	
8	Site regulation plan	Specific site	
<p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some schemes of territorial development can be focused only on a particular part of the country or the region. • different levels of territorial development are not consequent detailed elaboration of one general policy but rather independent plans conforming each other in most important issues. • any document of territorial planning has to be supplemented with substantiated analytical papers and maps as well as with an action plan including timing and financial grounds for development of layout and design documentation for construction of proposed buildings, structures and infrastructure. • zoning regulations are not applied for areas which are not assigned to be built-up. • all the scales are just assumptions based on existing documents of the same range as no document mentioned above has yet been realised in practice. 			

PART III: EVALUATION

• Application of the planning system in practice

In view of the fact that the planning system described above has only recently been adopted it is not possible to evaluate its effectiveness. At this juncture it is only possible to examine the issues which have resulted in this radical change to the status quo.

• Distance between planning legislation and physical development

Recent years have confirmed that the previous planning system was unable to cope with the major land use changes which sprung from rapid economic growth of the emerging new economic system. The construction boom and rapid suburbanisation significantly increased pressure on planners' performance as well as on the regional and above all local authorities. It has challenged their ability and, in some cases, willingness to regulate the development of the spatial structure of settlements. For example there is frequent intrusion of second home zones into protected forest and river areas and violation of requirements for preserving of cultural heritage. Meanwhile it is not possible to say that this was always due to lack of documentation. It often reflected a lack of understanding of social and market forces. In many cases, results of implementation of planning policies were that the bureaucracy often stopped rather proven modes and forms of development on the one hand whilst approving outrageous projects on the other hand.



Although this was not the fault of the planning system itself it highlights the problems of governance as a whole. The absence of clarity about land, finances and responsibilities and how they are shared is the source of many deficiencies that one can witness in spatial and social development of Russian settlements and cities. Besides, in many cases no “vision of success”, nor any clearly stated strategy were proclaimed by the authorities which were overloaded with the day-to-day problems or were simply not competent for that. As an example, there does not exist a single spatial development perspective at the national scale - with the exception of Russia’s participation in the Trans European transportation corridors - which would affect the country as a whole. Nor are there national programmes which deal with the movement of the inhabitants from northern areas to the ones with better climatic conditions with a support of the World Bank, although this trend contradicts the thousand year long historic tradition of Russia which has proved its use. And this happens in the largest country of the world!

To avoid too gloomy a picture it is pertinent to note that many cities and regions have managed to invest greatly in the development of their transportation infrastructure, educational and sport facilities, and public health care. Many big cities which were the bulwarks of old ways of planning are developing and implementing their new strategic master plans, notwithstanding recent economic trends.

- **Future prospects of the planning system**

The Federal Government is starting several interrelated reforms in order to foster new positive trends and also for political reasons to some extent. They are aimed at the improvement of governance at all state levels. The main goals were stated as follows:

- clear distribution of financial resources and responsibilities among different levels of power
- limitation of freedoms at regional level with simultaneous enlargement of opportunities and tools of both local and federal authorities
- reduction of bureaucratic procedures thereby encouraging the involvement of the private sector, primarily in new housing construction.

Due to the recent reforms of the planning system, the professionals are facing a completely new organisation of spatial development. These changes become very apparent if they are compared with contributions on Russia in previous editions of the IMPP. These planning reforms encounter serious objections by planners. Their central point of criticism is driven by their fear of losing any possibility to plan and coordinate urban and regional development properly, as the majority of planning issues are being left increasingly to market forces. The opposite opinion states that the old planning system was hiding bureaucracy and corruption while issues which really needed to be planned and run by the government were neglected.

Nevertheless the new system is gradually coming into force and will soon become clear who was right and who was wrong.

Fedor Kudryavtsev
2005

Note: in spite of an attempt to summarise current trends and problems of the national planning system the evaluation provided here includes personal views of its author and thus cannot be considered fully objective and comprehensive