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**EVALUATION OF STRATEGIC PLANNING OF THE REGIONAL  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN RUSSIA**

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**Abstract**

The article assesses the quality of seven documents of strategic planning of the socio-economic development on the example of the Chechen Republic. The socio-economic development strategy for the period up to 2025 does not take into account the influence of external and internal factors on the national economy; in the long-term socio-economic development forecasts, there are difficulties in predicting the structure of the gross regional product, the structure of investment in fixed assets, as well as the level of employment and wages; the long-term budget forecast shows that the forecasting mechanism is based on different growth rates of the regional economy (linear growth models), and does not take into account the cyclical nature of economic development under the influence of external and internal factors; many measures provided for in the social economic development plan have not been implemented yet; there are no program-targeted instruments. Regional territorial planning schemes were adopted in a number of Russian regions. The strategic planning documents for the socio-economic and scientific-technological development of the Russian region are not interrelated. The need for a long-term forecast of the scientific and technological development of the Russian region is substantiated. It should be a strategic plan for the balanced development of the region that provides a link between science and production in a territorial context, and between federal and regional scientific and technological centers of Russia. Conclusions, proposals and recommendations for improving the methodology of strategic planning for the balanced development of the Russian region are formulated.

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*Keywords:* Strategy, forecast, time horizon, state program, action plan, technological development



## **1. Introduction**

Economic actors, including federal, regional and municipal bodies strive to have the clearest picture of the future. This applies to both the Russian Federation and its regions. The issues of strategic planning of the socio-economic development are the subject of study by scientists in Russia (Babkin, 2015; Babina, 2017; Magdanov, 2014; Petrova, 2017; Risin, 2016; Zakharchuk, 2013 and others) and abroad (Alden, 2016; Baducci, 2010; Colomb, 2016; Cremer-Schulte, 2014; Edwards, 2012; Hermelin, 2009, etc.).

Until January 1, 2015, in market Russia, a system of indicative management measures was used. It was based on forecasts of the socio-economic development in the context of the main macroeconomic indicators based on the federal law (State Duma of the Russian Federation, 1995). The new federal law on strategic planning in the Russian Federation (State Duma of the Russian Federation, 2014) laid the foundation for the transition to the predictive life planning based on the strategic planning system. The regions are far from synchronizing the transition to strategic planning. In accordance with the strategic planning, the Chechen law was adopted only in July 2018 (Parliament of the Chechen Republic, 2018). The strategic plan of socio-economic development of the Chechen Republic includes seven documents.

## **2. Problem Statement**

Opportunities for the effective modernization and more sustainable development of the economy of modern Russia are associated with the problems of strategic planning of the development of its regions. It is the quality of the seven documents of strategic planning that is the main problem in implementing the strategic planning system. Therefore, it is very important to assess and analyze the state of development of all these strategic planning documents.

## **3. Research Questions**

### **3.1. The SED strategy of Russia**

According to Federal Law No. 172-FZ of June 28, 2014, the SED strategy of the Russian Federation is being developed for a period not exceeding the long-term forecast of development (State Duma, 2014). Proceeding from this federal law, the SED strategy of the region should be developed within these boundaries. The first attempt to solve the problem of economic and social development in the Chechen Republic was undertaken with a coverage horizon of 2012–2025. According to the order of the Government of the Chechen Republic of June 20, 2012 N 185-r, the Strategy for the Social Development of the Chechen Republic up to 2025 was approved (Government of the Chechen Republic, 2012). It includes the following four sections: the Strategic Diagnostics of the Chechen Republic – characteristics, position assessment, spatial analysis, and strategic factors of development; Strategic doctrine for the development of the Chechen Republic – a tree of strategic goals, scenarios and stages of development, development indicators, resource provision; Mechanisms for the implementation of the SED Strategy in the social, economic, innovation, and infrastructural areas. The system of measures for the implementation of the SED Strategy, including projects, events and initiatives.

The Chechen SED Strategy for the period up to 2025 provides for two scenarios – baseline and optimistic (target) ones. The absence of a pessimistic (conservative) version indicates that the Ministry of Economic and Territorial Development and Trade of the Chechen Republic did not take into account the influence of negative factors, causes and sources on the SED and negative consequences of Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization and other external shocks, as well as exacerbation of internal problems: a rise in prices, a depreciation of the currency, an increase in the unemployment rate, etc. It was envisaged that the SED Strategy will be implemented in five steps. At the first stage (2012–2013), the institutional foundations and conditions for the security and legalization of business will be laid; within the second stage (2014–2015), system investment projects will be launched and implemented, which will lay the foundations for better living standards; at the third stage (2016–2017), the foundations of the industrial development of the region will be laid; at the fourth stage (2018–2020), the transition to a new post-industrial model of the regional development will be carried out; at the fifth stage (2021–2025), the positions of the region will be consolidated with high development rates. At each stage, the regional executive bodies planned specific measures and targeted actions to achieve these results. The Chechen Republic has to become a region with a high quality of life, a low unemployment rate, a donor of the budgetary system of the Russian Federation with a modern developed infrastructure and a high-quality institutional management system.

The accuracy of calculations in any planning and forecast document is confirmed by practice. The complete inconsistency of the Strategy became obvious to all external and internal stakeholders in 2017, when the GRP was projected at 212.5 billion rubles and tax revenues of the consolidated budget of the Chechen Republic were planned to be 28.5 billion rubles. (Government of the Chechen Republic, 2012). The developers ignored the possibility of intensifying external shocks on the socio-economic development of Russia and its regions, such as the coronavirus pandemic, cryptocurrency expansion, trade wars, economic and other sanctions against Russia and its residents – physical and legal entities. Secondly, in all three scenarios, they laid down a continuous increase in the quality of life (but with different growth rates). Events of December 2020 indicate the need for both radical revisions of the SED Strategy parameters and development of a Strategy for a more distant period – until 2035.

The draft strategy for the period up to 2035 posted on the official website of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Chechen Republic on August 13, 2020 (MEDT, 2020) was developed by the Strategy Partners Group. The most significant disadvantages of this Project are as follows: Section “1.1 The Chechen Republic at the Present Stage” provides an assessment of the SED of the Chechen Republic as of 2017, and there is no assessment of the situation for 2018, 2019 and the first half of 2020. In particular, in the SWOT analysis applied in the draft Strategy, the section of threats does not indicate COVID-19, the sanctions regime, cryptocurrency expansion, trade wars, and other external shocks. The same problem is with the applied PEST analysis, which does not take into account both the intensification of external shocks and internal problems – a growth of the unemployment rate, a fall in real incomes of the population, etc. Section “2.1. Strategic goals, tasks, directions” lacks a hierarchical approach to short-term and long-term goals. Section “2.2. Stages of implementation, development scenarios, results” contains only three stages: the first stage, 2021–2024, provides for the “capitalization of the existing advantages of the Chechen Republic; the second stage, 2025–2027, involves the-

transformation of reference points of an economic growth in the Chechen Republic; the third stage, 2028-2035, involves the international integration of the Republic. Four scenarios were formulated: Target scenario “Best conditions for growth” – cancellation of mutual sanctions and inflow of investments; Scenario “Growth through the internationalization of Russia” – cancellation of sanctions and strengthening of the integration processes; Scenario “Growth due to the internal efficiency” – import substitution while maintaining sanctions; Scenario "Stagnation" – increased sanctions and capital outflows.

### **3.2. Long-term forecast of the SED**

The SED forecast for the period up to 2035 (MEDT, 2018) was analyzed in terms of the structure of the gross regional product and investment in fixed assets, as well as the level of employment and wages. Among the serious omissions in the long-term forecast is the lack of the forecast of the GRP structure in the context of economic types; there is no account / table for forecasting GRP by years, but there is only a final indicator.

The second omission is the lack of the structure of investments in fixed assets by economic activities, and their share in the GRP. Thus, according to the conservative version of the forecast, over the next five-year period it is planned to invest 441.40 billion rubles in fixed assets of the Chechen Republic, and according to the basic version of the forecast – 467.43 billion rubles. But there are no predictive estimates of job growth and GRP growth by economic activity, and, therefore, there is no basis for calculating both tax bases by type of taxes and GRP growth for each economic activity. In the accompanying table of the medium-term forecast, only the implementation of 50 investment projects for the amount of 243643.73 million rubles and the creation of 16363 jobs are provided (MEDT CR, 2018).

The third omission in the long-term forecast is the employment and wage forecast quality. The level of registered unemployment in 2019 was 7.8 %. But if we proceed from the data presented by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Chechen Republic on the number of labor force and the average annual number of employed, in 2019 the number of unemployed labor force was 100.0 thousand people and in 2024, according to the conservative option, it will be 83.0 thousand people, and according to the baseline – 83.5 thousand people, i.e. the level of unemployed in 2019 was 15.7 %; by 2024, according to the conservative version, it will decrease to 12.3 %, and according to the basic version – to 12,2 %. The level of the average nominal wage per employee was 26,176.9 rubles in 2019; the average monthly income was 22,647.0 rubles. Based on these figures, it turns out that in 2018 the taxable base for personal income tax ranged from 141.3 to 163.3 billion rubles. According to the personal income tax, the consolidated budget of the Chechen Republic for 2018 should have amounted to 18.4–21.2 billion rubles, but only 9.8 billion rubles were received. In addition, there is a discrepancy in the reporting data for 2018 in terms of: the average nominal wage; average monthly accrued wage (average monthly income). When developing a mid-term forecast, there are no estimates of growth (+) or reduction (–) in the number of jobs. From the beginning of 2020 to the end of 2024, according to the Ministry of Economic Development of the Chechen Republic, the working-age population will increase to 806.8 thousand people, that is, by 33.05 thousand people or 8263 people per year, and the number of labor force will increase from 637.0 to 677.2–682.4 thousand people or by 40.2 thousand people;

according to the basic forecast, it will increase up to 839.85 thousand people or by 45.4 thousand people. The average annual number of people employed, and the number of new jobs will increase by 56.9–61.9 thousand by 2024. At the same time, according to the ILO methodology, the level of unemployment will be 83.4 thousand people, and according to the conservative forecast, it will be 83.5 thousand people, that is, it will decrease by 1.7–1.8 thousand people or 1.97–2.09 % to the 2019 level.

### **3.3. The long-term forecast of the SED for the Chechen Republic**

In accordance with Article 11 of the Federal Law on Strategic Planning in the Russian Federation (State Duma, 2014), the long-term budget forecast of a region refers to the strategic planning documents developed as part of forecasting. In accordance with Art. 34 of Federal Law 172-FZ, the budget forecast of the region is developed in accordance with the Budget Code of the Russian Federation (State Duma, 2014), and in accordance with clause 3 of Art. 170.1 of the Budget Code of the Russian Federation, "the long-term budgetary forecast of a region is developed every 6 years for 12 years or more based on the socio-economic development forecast" (State Duma, 1995, para. 3). Thus, by the Order of the Government of the Chechen Republic No. 91-r dated March 28, 2017, in accordance with the Resolution of the Government of the Chechen Republic No. 272 dated December 29, 2015, the long-term budget forecast was formed for the first time. Unfortunately, only the Order of the Government of the Chechen Republic No. 91-r has been published on the official website of the Government of the Chechen Republic. There is no such document in the public domain and on the websites of the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of Finance.

Meanwhile, it should be noted that within the medium-term forecast and key long-term forecast indicators, in form 2n new, the parameters of budget forecast for the medium and long term are presented. But even these forecasts contain the data of the consolidated budget of the Chechen Republic reflected in the documents of medium and long-term forecasts compiled in 2018 for the first three years: 2019, 2020 and 2021. The forecasting mechanism is based on different growth rates of the regional economy – linear growth models, and does not take into account the cyclical nature of economic development under the influence of external and internal factors. Thus, for 2020, all versions of the medium- and long-term forecast envisaged an increase in the revenues of the consolidated budget of the Chechen Republic. In fact, in 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other external shocks, there was a significant decrease in both tax and non-tax revenues, and a reduction in the financial assistance from the federal budget through grants, subventions and subsidies.

### **3.4. The medium term forecast of the SED for the Chechen Republic**

There is no medium-term SED strategy for 2019, 2020 and 2021 on the website of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Chechen Republic. Only the 2n new form reflecting the main development indicators for 2019, 2020 and 2021 was found. It provides information on two forecast options – conservative and basic ones. There are no parameters for the target variant of the medium-term forecast. The parameters of the basic version of the medium-term forecast indicators differ from the parameters of the basic version of the long-term forecast indicators for 2019, 2020 and 2021, although these parameters were compiled in 2018 by the MEDT CR. At the same time, zero deviations are

observed in the nominal wages for the years under consideration, with a complete and multidirectional deviation of values for the rest of the indicators of the medium and long-term forecast of the ERC for 2019, 2020 and 2021. All this testifies to the problems in the quality of medium- and long-term forecasts. First of all, we are talking about both gross errors in forecast estimates and socio-economic development indicators. This is especially noticeable in the comparative analysis of the forecast and actual data of the NER CR for 2012–2020.

### **3.5. Plan for the implementation of the SED strategy**

By the Order of the Government of the Chechen Republic No. 368-r dated December 30, 2016, the Plan for the implementation of the Strategy was approved (Government of the Chechen Republic, 2016) (Government of the Chechen Republic, 2012). This Plan includes 162 activities divided into 20 economic and social areas. As a significant investment measure, measure 89 "Construction of an oil refinery in the Chechen Republic (Grozny) with a capacity of 1 million tons of oil per year" is planned to be implemented in 2015–2022 in accordance with the Agreement with PJSC Rosneft on the construction of an oil refinery in Grozny. The responsible executor is the Federal Agency for Subsoil Use of Russia. Unfortunately, this measure and many other strategically important activities of the Plan have not been implemented.

### **3.6. State programs of the Chechen Republic**

In order to implement the decree of the Government of the Chechen Republic No. 217 of September 3, 2013 "On the procedure for the development, implementation and evaluation of the effectiveness of state programs of the Chechen Republic", the order of the Government of the Chechen Republic No. 406-r "On approval of the list of state programs of the Chechen Republic" of December 18, 2013 a list of 16 state programs for the development of the Chechen Republic was approved. It covers the issues of the quality of life – 9 state programs; innovative development and modernization of the economy – 5 state programs; balanced development of the republic – 3 state programs.

### **3.7. The spatial planning scheme for the Chechen Republic**

According to the Decree of the Government of the Chechen Republic of September 21, 2010 No. 154, the Territorial Planning Scheme of the Chechen Republic was approved. It was drawn up in the absence of the long-term Strategy and any methodological materials. It includes schemes for the planned development and placement of specially protected natural areas; changes in the boundaries of agricultural land and the boundaries of agricultural land in the composition of agricultural land; the planned location of capital construction projects, including energy systems, transport systems, linear and other objects. The Strategy reflects parameters of long-term planning of development of the regional infrastructure (transport, engineering and social) and planning of territories for the establishment of functional zones, zones of the planned location of capital construction objects for regional needs, zones with special conditions.

A more detailed assessment of the economic and legal aspects of strategic planning is presented in (Tsakaev, 2020).

The methodological recommendations for a mid-term forecast are developed by the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation. There are two versions. The previous version of the guidelines was approved in 2015. In accordance with the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 1234 (Government of the Russian Federation, 2015), there are three forecast options: the basic version – “the main trends and parameters of economic development in conditions of conservative trajectories of changes in external and internal factors”; conservative option – “conservative estimates of economic growth rates, taking into account a significant deterioration in external economic and other conditions”; the target option is “achievement of target indicators of socio-economic development, taking into account goals and objectives of strategic planning under the conservative external economic conditions” (Government of the Russian Federation, 2015). The Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 615 dated May 18, 2019 contains the following adjustments in relation to the three options for the medium-term forecast: the base version of the medium-term forecast characterizes the main trends and parameters of economic development in the context of conservative changes in external conditions. That is, the content of the basic variant has been changed – the “conservative” external conditions have been preserved, but there is no longer any “internal factors”; the conservative option has been developed on the basis of conservative estimates of economic growth rates, taking into account the possibility of a deterioration in external conditions; the target option is also somewhat different – instead of a “significant deterioration” of external economic and other conditions”, “the possibility of deterioration of external conditions” should be taken into account, while changes in internal conditions should not to be considered (Government of the Russian Federation, 2019).

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The quality of strategic planning of the socio-economic development of national-territorial and territorial public-law formations is crucial. The purpose of the study was to assess and analyze the state of development of all seven strategic planning documents for the Chechen Republic. These are the Strategy of socio-economic development; the long-term forecast of socio-economic development up to 2035; the long-term budget forecast; the medium-term forecast of socio-economic development for 2019, 2020 and 2021; the plan for implementing the strategy of socio-economic development; government programs; the spatial planning scheme.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The general scientific methods of cognition – observation and collection of factual material, scientific abstraction, analysis and synthesis of the strategic SED planning – were used. Aggravated internal conditions and growing external factors were analyzed.

## 6. Findings

When analyzing the SED Strategy for the Chechen Republic for the period up to 2025, many questions arise: the lack of accounting for the increased impact of external impacts on the domestic economy and social sphere (the coronavirus pandemic, the cryptocurrency expansion, sanctions and trade wars) and the influence of internal factors, including features and possibilities of digitalization of the economy and social relations, as well as poor quality of life.

Evaluation and analysis of the long-term SED forecast identified inconsistencies in forecasting both the structure of GRP and investment in fixed assets, and the level of employment and wages. Assessment and analysis showed that there are problems in the development of the strategy by the regional executive authorities, including the Ministry of Finance of the Chechen Republic. Assessment of the activities of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Chechen Republic in terms of medium-term forecasting showed that the medium-term SED forecast is presented only in the form 2n new, which reflects the main indicators of development of the Chechen Republic for the next three years. As for the Plan for implementing the SED strategy for the period up to 2025, an analysis showed that many planned investment measures have not been implemented, which raises doubts about the feasibility of the strategic planning document.

Evaluation and analysis of the state programs of the Chechen Republic identified the lack of program-targeted instruments. As for the SED strategy, the analysis identified problems in the compilation of maps and schemes and the lack of territorial delimitation between state and municipal public law formations. With regard to the methodological recommendations of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, there is a conflict between the forecast options.

## 7. Conclusion

The relevance of regulatory documents for strategic planning has changed due to the exacerbation of internal factors and intensification of external shocks. External shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic, cryptocurrency expansion, economic sanctions and trade wars have changed the reality. The state of the economy and social sphere of Russia and its regions is being tested for the strength of sovereignty of the Russian state. Significant revisions of both the target guidelines and the methodology of territorial planning of the socio-economic development of the Russian regions are required. It is necessary to implement three scenarios of the mid-term SED forecast.

Evaluation and analysis of the strategic planning in the Chechen Republic identified key indicators in the medium and long-term forecasts of socio-economic development that do not coincide in the conservative and baseline scenarios – even the parameters compiled by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Czech Republic for 2019, 2020 and 2021 are different.

There is an imbalance, non-coincidence of the data of the regional budget forecast for the period up to 2029 with the data of the consolidated budget, reflected in the medium-term regional forecast of development for the period up to 2024.

It is necessary to revise the forecast indicators for the socio-economic development of the region for the period up to 2024, as well as to revise the main indicators of socio-economic development of the

region for the period up to 2035. These documents should take into account structural changes caused by external and internal factors. In addition, there are serious inconsistencies in the forecast calculations undermining the confidence in a medium-term forecast for the development of a region.

It is important to link the parameters of investment growth with the forecast growth of jobs and production volumes for each sector of the regional economy within the forecast of socio-economic development for the current and medium term. It is also important to link the forecast of investment in fixed assets with the forecast of growth in the value and changes in the sectoral structure of the GRP of the region of the Russian Federation.

It is necessary to develop a real strategy for the growth of investment in fixed assets which helps to increase facilities and capacities for economic activities, providing a significant increase in the regional tax potential.

Due to the lack of target-oriented tools for implementing state programs, it is almost impossible to ensure transparency of the implementation process and assess the effectiveness of state programs of the region. In order to ensure the transparency of assessment of the state programs, program-targeted tools should be developed for each regional program.

The events of 2020 indicate the need for a radical revision of the strategy for social and economic development of the Chechen Republic for the period up to 2025 and development and adoption of the SED Strategy for the period up to 2035. These documents should account for external and internal factors, while maintaining three scenarios for the regional development.

Among the internal and external factors are the state of scientific and technological development of the region. Therefore, the "The long-term scientific and technological development of the region" document should be included in the number of the main documents of strategic SED planning.

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