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Composition of Arctic Territories for State Support: Which Way to Choose? *

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Abstract. Due to the fact that currently there are several lists of Arctic territories for state support, the article describes possible options for changing their composition in the forecast period of the next decade: from complete unification of all lists to, on the contrary, extreme diversification (each list has its own tasks of state support). The research question of the article is to determine the benefits and costs of each scenario for the “set” of Arctic territories for government support. Main results: 1) four scenarios of evolution of the current system of state support of the Arctic and northern territories according to the geographical factor (composition of territories for support) — a) optimal-administrative; b) anti-district; c) polyphonic; d) limited diversity; 2) radical anti-district and optimal-administrative scenarios, comfortable for federal executive authorities, carry the highest integral risks. The polyphonic “evolutionary” scenario carries minimal risks, when, simultaneously with the preservation of the institution of northern regional guarantees and compensation, institutions of the multifaceted Arctic are established — for resident investors, geostrategic, and entrepreneurial. But it also turns out to be the most expensive for the federal budget; 3) for the integral scenario, it is advisable to take into account the following elements of the described scenarios: multiple lists of Arctic regions for different forms of state support; preservation in a limited form of the former regional institution of social support for the northern and Arctic territories; full support for small and medium-sized manufacturing entrepreneurs in the Arctic and North, primarily in areas with limited delivery times for goods; gradual transformation of support for localities equated to regions of the Far North, from northern and Arctic institutions to all-Russian regional ones; introduction of institutions that encourage the technological transformation of the previous industrial structure and the formation of a new digital structure throughout the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation.


Keywords: *state support of the Northern and Arctic regions, list of Arctic territories of the Russian Federation, forecast up to 2035, scenario approach*

Introduction

In the modern Russian regulatory reality, there are several simultaneous definitions: the “presidential” Arctic, defined by the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation “On the land territories of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation” of 2014 No. 296 (as amended by the decrees of the President of the Russian Federation of 27.06.2017 No. 287, of 13.05.2019 No. 220, of 05.03.2020 No. 164) — hereinafter referred to as the “Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 2014”; the “new” Arctic — according to the Federal Law “On state support for entrepreneurial activity in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation” of 13.07.2020 No. 193-FZ — hereinafter referred to as “FZ-193”; and a revised, but existing since Soviet times, list of regions of

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the Far North and equated areas — the Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 16.11.2021 No. 1946 — hereinafter referred to as “Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 1946” (Fig. 1). Obviously, the question arises regarding how these three lists of state support should be combined in the future.

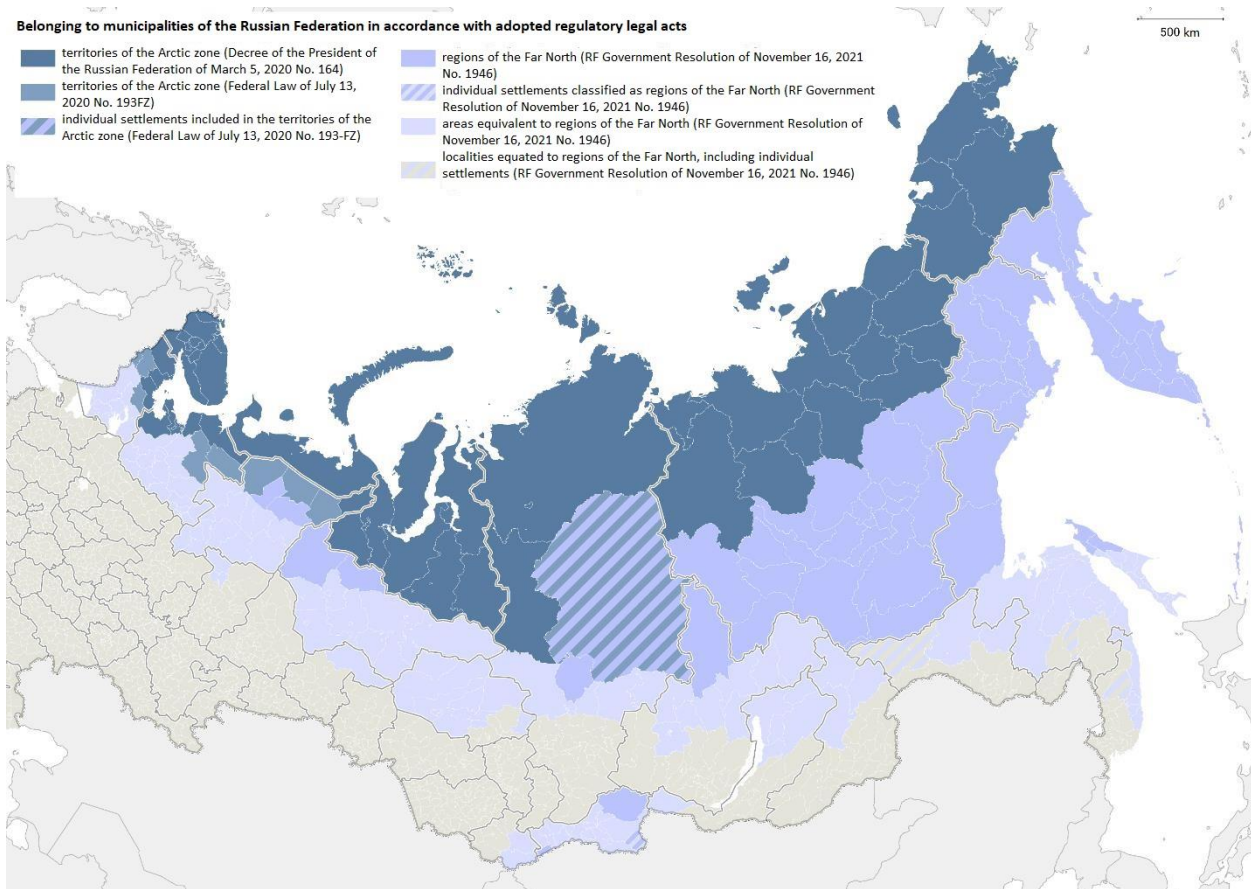


Fig. 1. Ratio of “Arctic” and “North”: the composition of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation according to the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation and FZ-193 of 2020 and the composition of the regions of the Far North and equated areas according to the Government Resolution of 2021¹

An additional complication arises due to the fact that in recent years, the previously clearly differentiated social northern (to encourage employees to live there) and Arctic economic (to encourage employers to work there) legislations have gradually lost their former clarity of differentiation. Arctic legislation, being young and more adequate to the realities of the modern selective development of the Russian Arctic, is acquiring some of the social functions from northern legislation. Apparently, this process will continue, the Arctic legislation and its institutions will also be social, and not just economic.

There is a need for research into the issues of correlation between the lists of Arctic and Northern territories for future state support, which should be solved using a scenario approach.

The subject of the study is a variant forecast of the composition of the list of Arctic territories for state support. The object of the study is the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation. The goal is to determine the benefits and costs of each scenario for the “set” of Arctic territories for state

¹ Cartography is made by postgraduate student of the Faculty of Geography of Moscow State University named after M.V. Lomonosov B.V. Nikitin.

support. It is revealed as a result of solving the following tasks: 1) specification of possible scenarios of harmonization of the existing lists of Arctic and northern territories for state support; 2) comparative analysis of all four scenarios from the perspective of their acceptability for practical implementation; 3) formation of proposals for choosing the optimal scenario for determining the boundaries of the territory for state support measures.

The information basis for the study is the existing federal regulatory framework for the regions of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation, the regions of the Far North and equated areas, and state support measures in these territories. The novelty of the study is related to the attempt to make a variant forecast of the spatial contours of the future system of state support for the Arctic and the North of Russia — theoretical and applied discussions are often focused on institutions, forms and directions of support, but not on the list of territories receiving it.

Methodology and methods

The research methodology was formed by three sources. Firstly, the school of geographical expertise, including institutions (norms and rules) and forecasting documents, developed since the Soviet time. This tradition began to be formed with the pioneering work of K.P. Kosmachev [1], which was reapplied in the 2010s and 2020s in Russia [2–4].

Secondly, the tradition of scenario forecasting (including the development of the world, countries and regions) of domestic and foreign sociologists, including that applied to the specific conditions of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation [5–8]. Thirdly, our own experience of the last decades in the field of “northern futurology” in preparing dozens of strategies and programs for the medium-term and long-term development of the northern and Arctic regions and cities of Russia, which was reflected in several published works [9–12].

The problem “field” of forecasting the development of the system of state support for the Arctic territories of the Russian Federation may include the variability of state priorities, institutions, structures, volumes and directions of state support. However, in this work we are primarily interested in the territorial composition of the recipients of support, that is, the Arctic territories that will be involved in the near future in the federal Arctic policy regarding the economic and social development of these territories. Therefore, we assume that only this parameter of the composition of the Arctic territories can change, all other things being equal. This will allow us to determine more precisely the impact of the factor of the Arctic territories composition on the further development of the system of state administration and support for the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation.

This “geographical” approach also has its own problem field, more narrowly defined, which determines the essential content of each scenario. These are issues of developing the list of Arctic territories; issues of further geographical (spatial expansion or narrowing?) development of Arctic benefits for investors-Arctic residents; issues of the future status of the regions of the Far North

and equated areas, the future of the entire system of northern guarantees and compensations associated with this institution.

The main method for forecasting the geographical development of the system of state support benefits was the scenario approach. Each scenario is based on its own criteria for the concept of the “Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation” from the perspective of providing federal social and investment benefits. These criteria are described in detail in each scenario, and then contrasted when comparing scenarios with each other. The time horizon of scenario forecasting is 2035, which allows experiencing the future as very close and tangible today.

Main results

The basis for forming a set of four scenarios (3.1–3.4) was the idea of the variability of future lists of Arctic territories for state support depending on the specific choice in four alternative options: 1) unified or “multiple” Arctic in state support measures? 2) what will be the form of interaction between Arctic and Northern legislation — complete isolation, partial integration, complete integration? 3) is it expected to preserve the previous system of benefits and guarantees for entrepreneurs and workers, will it be expanded or narrowed? 4) will the composition and boundaries of the Arctic territories, the Far North and equated areas be preserved or changed (narrowed, expanded)?

Characteristics of the “unified Arctic” scenario for all forms of state support in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation while maintaining the separation of the categories “Arctic” and “Far North regions”

In this scenario (it can be conditionally called “optimal management”), there is a complete synchronization of the composition of the Arctic territories according to the Decree of the President of 2014 and FZ-193, and in the future, the unity of the list is strictly maintained for all regulatory legal acts that relate to state support for the development of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation. All current documents, state programs, plans of measures for the implementation of the Strategy for the development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation are brought into line with the list of Arctic territories.

Simultaneously with the unification of the list of Arctic territories, decisions on the “entry” of northern non-coastal territories into the Arctic are cancelled. The approach of “equating” parts of the Far North and equated areas to the Arctic is recognized as erroneous. As a result, the territory of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation is narrowed down to the municipalities of the Arctic facade, with a few exceptions — Murmansk Oblast, Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Norilsk Industrial District, which are included in the Arctic entirely for the convenience of state administration.

These measures make it possible to clearly separate the northern and Arctic lines of development of federal legislation, which is in full compliance with the general course of the federal government to strengthen the spatial and regional policy of the Russian Federation to reinforce its

integrity in the face of increasing external threats. Northern legislation continues to develop with strengthening, as a social and labor one, aimed at preserving the critical backbone of professional personnel in the North. Therefore, the institution of northern guarantees and compensations, tied to the institution of the regions of the Far North and equated areas, is fully preserved. Minor changes are made to the list of these regions in order to correct the mistakes of the decisions of the 1990s, dictated by lobbying and election considerations. But basically the composition and borders of these territories are preserved according to the laws of the Soviet era. Federal and regional tax exemptions are established for northern entrepreneurs in areas with limited terms of delivery of goods.

Narrowing the list of Arctic territories to the frontal ones, that is, strategically significant and resource-attractive oil and gas and mineral deposits at the junction of land and sea, allows providing these territories with greater support per unit of area than at the present stage. New forms of targeted support for Arctic resident investors, as well as Arctic entrepreneurs, are established, including enhanced support for Arctic entrepreneurs in areas with limited terms of delivery of goods: unlike northern ones, they receive not only tax benefits, but also targeted support as “Arctic residents”.

At the first stage of implementing this scenario in 2025–2030:

- the narrowed list of Arctic territories is synchronized for all federal regulatory legal acts;
- the northern “regional”, mainly social and labor, and the Arctic “point”, by municipalities, land plots and growth poles, mainly geostrategic and economic (pro-corporate and pro-entrepreneurial) legislations are separated in their development;
- Arctic entrepreneurs in areas with limited terms of delivery of goods receive an enhanced set of federal benefits — in the form of direct transfer and indirect support, through tax deductions — against northern ones, who receive only tax deductions.

At the second stage in 2031–2035 of the implementation of this scenario, the need for compensatory measures for the northern territories increases, because the contrasts in the level and tone of economic development, in some social indicators, are growing between the Arctic and non-Arctic northern territories. Therefore, during this period the federal northern policy is implemented with strengthening: additional benefits may be established for economic entities in the non-Arctic areas of the Far North and the remaining (but narrowed in the list) areas equated to them; additional support for the social development of areas, districts and regions equated to the Far North.

The advantages of this scenario are the extreme clarity of preserving the contours of the state policy that emerged at the end of the 2000s, but from which “hybrid” changes subsequently occurred, associated with the emergence of two Arctics — the list of Arctic territories by the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 2014 and the list by FZ-193, with the interception of social policy directions from the northern legislation by the Arctic legislation (in matters of supporting the indigenous peoples of the North, housing subsidies, etc.). All these measures,

which irritate managers with their inconsistency and contradictoriness, are “cleaned up” in order to clearly distance the “distilled” coastal Arctic, organically connected with the Northern Sea Route — as an arena of activity of the Rosatom State Marine Administration and resource companies — and the continental North with a minimum of quasi-northern localities equivalent to it as a buffer zone between the Arctic and the main zone of Russian settlement.

In addition to the clarity of the designated object of management of the state Arctic and northern state policy, in this scenario, some budgetary savings are expected due to the narrowing of the list of “really” Arctic territories and the composition of localities equated to the regions of the Far North. Therefore, it can be said that the main beneficiary of this scenario is the federal executive authorities, which, as a result, form a more understandable, distinct and less expensive to support object of state management.

The costs and risks of this scenario are associated with a very radical rejection of the existing support scheme, withdrawal of several districts, municipalities (possibly, regions) from the Arctic and equated to the Far North. It is possible to mitigate the risks by compensating the “affected” subject of the Russian Federation for part of the funds through additional federal transfers and/or channels of state programs and projects implemented in the territory.

Characteristics of the “unified Arctic” scenario for all forms of state support in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation while harmonizing the categories “Arctic” and “Far North regions”

In this scenario (it can be conditionally called “anti-regional”), the list of Arctic territories is unified, that is, the current phenomenon of two Arctics is eliminated — according to the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 2014 and according to FZ-193, all norms and rules of federal support for the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation are guided by one list. The fundamental difference from the previous scenario is that this list is not narrowed against the existing one, but on the contrary — extremely expanded. This is due to the fact that there is not only a unification of the Arctic lists, but also a harmonization of Arctic and northern legislation, in terms of expanding the list of Arctic territories to all areas of the Far North and, individually, some localities equated to the Far North, which are also part of the Arctic.

The aim of these measures is to gradually abolish the institution of the Far North and areas equated to the Far North, and at the same time to freeze the existing system of guarantees and compensations of the Far North for current workers in the regions of the North, and to transfer this system to a contractual basis for new labor migrants to the North and the Arctic (there are no regional coefficients and bonuses — there is a contract with the employer, on the terms of which the invited migrant agrees for an initial three-year period).

In this scenario, the state policy in the field of spatial and regional development does not contain the “excesses” of the previous version: the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation is proclaimed a sphere of permanent state interests and support, the northern policy, even in its reduced social component, is de facto absent — the dampener is the expansion of the Arctic zone to new northern quasi-arctic territories. The sphere of geostrategic interests of the state becomes

not only the coastal, as in the previous scenario, but also the continental “northern” Arctic, where a number of significant new mining projects are also launched in the forecast period. That is why the composition of the Arctic territories that receive economic incentives for investors and economic entities moves further south in this scenario (albeit contrary to natural and climatic logic): Yugra as a whole, the Magadan Oblast, new regions of Yakutia, a significant part of the Komi Republic acquire Arctic status in this scenario.

“Tying” the coastal Arctic territories to the continental northern ones, which together form a single Arctic zone of the Russian Federation, is objectively forced in this scenario by climate change: as a result of warming, the service life of northern winter roads is reduced, as a result of which the northern continental territories become more inaccessible than the coastal territories of the Arctic. Therefore, new transport schemes for delivery are being developed not from the southern settlement zone, but from the northern sea routes and Arctic coastal territories inward, into the continental North. This is how a new unity of the Arctic and northern territories of Russia is being formed.

At the first stage of the scenario implementation in the 2025–2030s:

- the list of Arctic territories is unified and expanded to include all areas of the Far North and partially areas equated to the Far North;
- the institution of the Far North and equated areas is being abolished, regional coefficients and seniority supplements for modern workers in the North are being frozen;
- the institution of a three-year labor contract for new labor migrants to the Arctic territories is being established;
- economic benefits for new projects and investors in new Arctic territories are being launched (under the status of “Arctic resident”, for entrepreneurs and corporate structures).

At the second stage of the scenario implementation, in 2031–2035, there is an internal differentiation of the territories of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation with its division into the coastal zone, the Arctic front and the mainland zone, with further differentiation of the former and the latter into places on the year-round transport network and places with limited delivery time. Some social guarantees and compensations are being revised according to the criteria of “coastal-continental”, “on the year-round transport network or in areas with limited delivery times”. For the territories formerly equated to the North, which were not included in the Arctic, compensatory measures are being developed — incentives for entrepreneurs, investors, and regions (for example, in the form of additional federal transfers).

The advantage of this scenario is that it abandons the already clearly archaic system of regional benefits and compensations, developed for another era in another demo-economic reality. But this abandonment is being carried out extremely carefully, with numerous damping mechanisms. That is, what was discussed as a necessity back in the 1990s by the Russian State Committee for the North is finally being implemented, as a recognition that the new stage of economic

development in the Arctic will require different social (excluding the regions of the Far North) and economic (not continuous, but selective, targeted) state support institutions. It is important to emphasize that such a decisive transition is becoming possible precisely in the conditions of a “unified” expanded Arctic, to which both the frozen old northern benefits and the new Arctic economic benefits are now linked.

The risks and costs of this scenario are associated with:

- the abolition of the previous system of northern regional guarantees and compensations, which existed for almost a hundred years;
- the suspended status of some localities that were not included in the Arctic, equated to the regions of the Far North and lost their previous benefits;
- the inevitable polarization and contradictory nature of the internal development of the “excessive” Arctic zone itself, primarily its coastal and continental parts.

Very precise work by federal managers is required to prevent internal “cracks” and to preserve the integrity and unity of the new “big” Arctic.

Characteristics of the “multiple Arctic” scenario for various forms of state support while maintaining the separation of the categories “Arctic” and “Far North regions”

This scenario (it can be conditionally called “polyphonic”) recognizes the super-value of the diversity of institutions of federal northern and Arctic policy. Not only the regional institutions of modern social northern policy are preserved here, but the range of Arctic institutions is also significantly expanded — it is proposed to use several “arctics” — lists of Arctic territories — each for its own federal policy purposes: the first one — for geostrategic, defense tasks of protecting state borders and monitoring navigation along the Northern Sea Route; the second one — to support corporate investors-Arctic residents; the third one — to support “folk” Arctic small and medium businesses. The current separation of state policy in the North and in the Arctic is being preserved and strengthened: social and labor issues of attracting and retaining labor migrants are addressed by traditional institutions of northern policy — district coefficients, seniority supplements, etc.; economic and geostrategic issues are resolved by various institutions of Arctic policy.

The multiplicity of “arctics” is consolidated through regulatory legal documents: the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 2014 defines a “narrow” geostrategic list of Arctic territories that are important for strengthening the country’s defense capability on Arctic land and on Arctic sea routes; FZ-193 with new amendments, including a broader composition of Arctic territories, consolidates the list of territories for the deployment of new investment projects in the Arctic, including by corporate structures; the new Federal Law “On supporting entrepreneurship operating in extreme conditions” establishes the broadest possible list of Arctic territories, with partial coverage of areas equated to the Far North, in which tax benefits (possibly direct federal subsidies) are implemented for Arctic entrepreneurs, including enhanced benefits for entrepreneurs working in areas with limited delivery time.

Thus, there are three (perhaps even more) Arctic areas in federal legislation at the same time, in different regulations, according to the “matryoshka” principle — the first list, which is minimal, is part of the second, expanded list, which, in turn, is part of the broadest final list. Each list performs its function, based on the priorities of the federal Arctic policy, ensures the convenience of implementing the declared tasks in each direction.

At the same time, the regional institutions of federal northern policy and the entire list of the Far North and equated areas are fully preserved. It can be said that this scenario emphasizes the differences between northern and Arctic policies while maintaining the structure and composition of the northern territories, taking into account the dynamics in the composition of the lists of Arctic territories, their existing composition is reduced for geostrategic purposes, while expanded for entrepreneurial purposes at the expense of northern and equivalent localities.

This scenario becomes possible due to the significant institutional diversity within the entire spatial and regional policy of the Russian Federation: the new version of the Spatial development Strategy emphasizes the need for significant differentiation of federal institutions of regional and spatial policy. A similar idea is given in the new version of the Federal Law “On regional policy in the Russian Federation”.

At the first stage of implementing this scenario in 2025–2030:

- the list of three “arctics” (or even more) is legally ensured: geostrategic, closed administrative-territorial unit CATU–Arctic; Arctic of corporate projects and Arctic of “folk” entrepreneurship;
- the autonomy of the existence and operation of traditional regional social and labor northern legislation and the Arctic, economic and investment legislations is consolidated.

At the second stage in 2031–2035, depending on the results of the initial and final correlation of the dynamics of development of the Arctic and northern territories, either the northern legislation will be strengthened in terms of extending to the North those measures of state support and economic benefits that the Arctic territories already have; or — in the case of successful development of the northern territories in the previous period — on the contrary, further isolation of the Arctic and northern legislation will occur: the new economic regulations for the areas equated to the Far North differ significantly from those for the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation.

The advantages of this scenario are that it finally ensures recognition of the fundamental impossibility of “breaking a butterfly upon the wheel” — solving complex and multi-purpose tasks of state management of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation with one list of Arctic territories. And this recognition materializes in several lists, the peaceful coexistence of several “arctics” simultaneously. At the same time, the former institutions of northern policy are carefully preserved, i.e. there is no destructive competition between Arctic and northern institutions, with Arctic institutions taking over the powers of northern institutions (as we observe today). Respect for previously formed traditions and values of institutional diversity — this is how this scenario can be characterized positively.

The risks and disadvantages of this scenario are that it requires very clear, disciplined work of federal executive officials, federal legislative officials, in order to clearly isolate the three “arctics”, to ensure conflict-free coexistence of Arctic and northern policies. Modern practice shows that it is much easier for a federal official to unify institutions than, on the contrary, to support their diversity, which always creates difficulties in management procedures and increases their transaction costs.

Characteristics of the “multiple Arctic” scenario for various forms of state support while harmonizing the categories “Arctic” and “Far North regions”

This scenario (it can be conditionally called “limited diversity”) clearly indicates the dominance of Arctic legislation, which is developing towards significantly greater diversity due to the approval of various lists of Arctic territories — geostrategic, corporate and entrepreneurial Arctic (in the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation, the new version of Federal Law FZ-193 and the new law “On support of entrepreneurial activity in the Arctic territories”, respectively). This is similar to the previous scenario.

At the same time, the regional institutions of social northern policy “collapse” — their functions are taken by Arctic territories in an expanded list. The long-standing idea of transforming regional coefficients and seniority bonuses due to their inconsistency with the realities of the social and market development of the Russian North and the Arctic is being implemented under the complete elimination of northern (even social) legislation as archaic and its replacement with modern Arctic legislation, which is forced to take on social functions, but in the new form of an Arctic contract with new labor migrants arriving in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation (which in the social list basically coincides with the regions of the Far North).

For current workers in the Arctic, the entire package of existing benefits for regional coefficients and seniority bonuses is frozen. For workers in areas equated to the Far North, the entire previous package of social guarantees and compensations is preserved. For new workers and labor migrants in areas equated to the Far North, the decision on guarantees and compensations is made individually for each region (and for each category of public sector employees) depending on the average annual indices of consumer basket price increase and transport isolation of the place.

This scenario is being implemented against the background of a clear Arctic vector in federal regional and spatial policy and the elimination of previous elements of the northern regional social and labor policy as archaic.

At the first stage of implementing this scenario in 2025–2030:

- the list of three (four) Arctics is fixed — geostrategic, corporate, entrepreneurial, social;
- the institution of regional coefficients and seniority bonuses is cancelled due to their freezing for current employees in the Arctic territories (regions of the Far North) and for areas equated to the Far North;

- the rest of the current package of northern legislation is redirected to the Arctic territories;
- each region of areas equated to the Far North is offered its own compensatory measures on a targeted basis outside the framework of the traditional northern “district” policy, within the all-Russian regional policy, that is, through federal transfers and subsidies to the budgets of the regions.

At the second stage of the scenario implementation in 2031–2035, the depth of contrasts in the development of the Arctic and former areas equated to the Far North is determined in order to promptly strengthen, if necessary, compensatory measures due to the cancellation of benefits for workers under northern guarantees and compensations.

The advantage of this scenario is its comparative simplicity of management (especially in comparison with the previous one) while simultaneously taking into account the specifics of different Arctics and the measures necessary for state support for each of them. There is no duality in this scenario — the Arctic territories are unconditionally chosen as a priority for state support, and all measures of the previous northern policy are cancelled. The clear priority of the regional “Arctic” policy allows achieving the effectiveness of state policy measures that are not dispersed between the Arctic and the North.

The disadvantages and risks of this scenario are related to the cancellation of the regional institutions of northern policy and the suspension of the places equated to the Far North, for which no systemic unified compensatory measures are proposed — due to the abolition of the northern policy, in which they were recipients of federal support, and the limited possibility of their participation as recipients of resources of the federal Arctic policy (due to objective geographical limitations). The transformation of previous targeted measures of state support due to the “northern status” into regular measures of federal regional policy carries the risks of underestimating the geographical and transport specifics of these territories.

Comparative assessment of all four scenarios from the perspective of acceptability for practical application, using a unified algorithm

Let us assess in detail the managerial risks of each scenario for federal executive authorities. Within the managerial risks, we will single out social risks, which are related to the possible mass dissatisfaction of the residents and local authorities of the Northern and Arctic regions with the radical reform of the lists of the Arctic and Northern territories due to the costs associated with the conversion of the existing system of guarantees and compensations and other social protection measures for the Arctic and the North; economic risks, which are related to the rapid growth of internal polarization (contrasts) of development between the Arctic and the North, within the expanded Arctic; political risks, which are associated with new tensions in relations between the federal executive authorities and the Northern/Arctic regions; budgetary risks, which are associated with escalating expenditures on new (or expanded old) measures of state support for the population and economic entities operating in the North and Arctic zone (Table 1).

Table 1

Comparative assessment of managerial risks at the federal level of four scenarios

Characterization of risks from a federal governance perspective	Scenarios			
	Optimal management	Anti-regional	Polyphonic	Limited diversity
	Unified (“narrow”) Arctic + Far North and equated areas	Unified (“broad”) Arctic = Far North regions	Multiple Arctic + Far North regions	Multiple Arctic = Far North regions
Social risks	++	+++	+	++
Economic risks	+++	+ ?	+	++
Political risks (centre-regions)	++	+++	+	++
Budgetary risks	+	+	+++	+
Sum of risks	8	8	6	7

+ minimal risks

++ medium risks

+++ extreme risks

The “anti-regional” scenario carries the greatest *social risks*, and this is understandable. The radical cancellation of the system of northern guarantees and compensations tied to the institution of district coefficients and seniority bonuses, which had existed for a hundred years, is, of course, almost a revolution. Therefore, even in the case when the material losses of workers are minimal, the inertia of thinking is such that people living in the North and the Arctic will feel deprived.

The “narrow” Arctic scenario, when the status of the Arctic is preserved only at the narrow frontal seaside edge of municipalities along the coast with some exceptions, carries fewer risks, because social benefits today are tied to the district institutions of northern social and labor policy, and all of them are preserved in this (first) scenario. Also, the scenario is characterized by an average level of social risks when the abolition of the regional institute is simultaneously accompanied by a damping introduction of various arctics, including a social one, which, although it does not completely cover the previous list of regions of the Far North and equivalent areas, but basically duplicates the previous regional benefits, freezing them now as expanded “arctic” benefits.

The scenario of multiple Arctic, “polyphonic” in terms of management institutions, with the preservation of the Soviet regional institute of northern state social policy, carries minimal social risks. However, it is absolutely logical that this scenario carries the greatest budgetary risks, because budgetary expenditures will really escalate due to the retention of all the old northern benefits and the establishment of new Arctic benefits for residents.

As for the *economic risks* of escalation of inter-district and inter-regional contrasts, including between the northern and arctic territories, the optimal management scenario paradoxically carries the greatest risks (the simplicity of federal management of the northern and arctic territories of Russia is very expensive!): in this case, the probability of intensifying contrasts between the prosperous Arctic facade and the depressive wide continental North is very high. The limited diversity scenario, in which the district institution is cancelled (the Arctic is equated with the Far

North), has a medium level of economic risks, and due to the formation of lists of multiple arctics, simultaneously with the withdrawal of areas equated to the Far North, from the federal northern and arctic policy in general, also creates the preconditions for provoking new inter-regional and inter-district contrasts. The minimum level of economic risks is characteristic of the “polyphonic” Arctic scenario, when Arctic institutions (multiple Arctic) receive maximum development, while the Soviet legacy of regional institutions of northern guarantees and compensations is fully preserved. Apparently, economic risks are also minimal in the “anti-regional” scenario, because it is characterized by the full-fledged development of institutions that encourage the arrival of new investors, the emergence of growth poles, etc. The disappearance of the status of areas equated to the Far North from the federal northern policy is dangerous to a greater extent due to social than economic risks (it is not obvious that this measure will entail the growth of inter-regional and inter-district economic contrasts).

The distribution of *political risks*, which are understood as tensions in the relations between the federal center and the northern/Arctic regions, replicates the distribution of social risks. The author had no special intention to obtain this particular result: it was revealed after a comparative risk assessment in each direction, and such “synchronization” came as a surprise.

However, given that in the current conditions of social and market development of the resources of the North and the Arctic, regional authorities are primarily responsible for the social environment of their population and only a few of them dare to pursue their own industrial or economic policy (“let it be left to investors”), this is quite understandable. The maximum political risks are characteristic of the “anti-regional” scenario, when the institution of the Far North regions (which are equated to the Arctic territories in terms of social benefits) is abolished, the institution of areas equated to the Far North disappears, which awakens lobbying in the center of the regions “defeated” in their rights. In addition, the process of assignment to different arctics will certainly stir up lobbying by the regions for preferential statuses in the federal center (it will not be easy to calm the regions when various attractive Arctic statuses appear).

There are fewer political risks in the optimal management scenario, when the Arctic is compressed to the facade edge, but at the same time the population of the North and the Arctic is weakly affected by this fact, because the entire package of regional benefits and guarantees is preserved, and the lobbying of regional authorities is aimed at damping the lost economic benefits for resident investors (but so far their number is very small). In addition, the all-Russian preferential regimes of priority development areas and special economic zones can partially dampen the loss of the status of Arctic residents. There are also average political risks in the limited diversity scenario, when the institution of the Far North and equated areas is cancelled, but the list of Arctic territories is expanded, and this makes it possible to neutralize the losses for a significant part of the regions of the North and the Arctic (except for equated areas).

Finally, the “polyphonic” scenario has minimal political risks, when all regional benefits are preserved and economic and investment benefits are simultaneously added due to the appearance of many lists of Arctic territories.

The budgetary risks are to some extent “mirrored” to the social and political risks: the scenario that preserves or even increases the volume of Arctic benefits through channels of different lists of Arctic territories (“polyphonic” scenario) has the largest budget risk. On the other hand, the other three scenarios, which streamline existing guarantees, compensations and benefits for resident investors, carry significantly lower budget risks.

Comparing all four scenarios with each other (Table 1), we can see that the radical “anti-regional” and the “optimal management” scenarios, which are comfortable for federal executive authorities, carry the highest integral risks: both social radicalism and the desire for management simplification are expensive. The risks of the “limited diversity” scenario are lower, when the institutions of the multiple Arctic partially dampen the abolition of the district northern institutions. The polyphonic “evolutionary” scenario carries minimal risks, when simultaneously with the preservation of the institute of northern regional guarantees and compensations, the institutes of the multifaceted Arctic are established — for resident investors, geostrategic, entrepreneurial. It also turns out to be the most expensive for the federal budget.

Proposals for choosing the optimal scenario

Each of the described scenarios — even the “polyphonic” one, which became the best as a result of integrating private risks — has its own extreme private risks. Therefore, it is more reasonable in the practice of real, rather than game, management of state development of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation (with an eye on the Far North as well) to rely on the selection of individual elements from different scenarios, rather than the selection of one scenario from the four listed. Apparently, this will be done in an ad hoc manner, in the real process of public administration.

What elements of the described scenarios, in our opinion, should be preserved during the “selection” in the integral scenario?

1) Multiplicity of lists of arctics. We have already seen that the optimal scenario for management of the “unified Arctic” simultaneously carries the greatest risks. That is, the convenience of unified management turns out to be expensive in terms of the risks of instability and conflict potential. On the other hand, the lists of different arctics (geostrategic defense, closed administrative-territorial unit-Arctic; corporate; entrepreneurial; social) flexibly dampen contradictions by “fine-tuning” each list to its function and target task (for example, support for a resident investor, support for an entrepreneur, support for an employee, etc.).

2) Preservation, but in a significantly reduced form, of the regional institute of social support for northern and Arctic territories. It should be recognized that it was in the North of Russia that this institute has survived decades of radical reforms and its complete abolition in other natu-

ral zones. The North paradoxically became the last refuge of this Soviet management institution (just as the Old Believers in Latin America preserved the Russian language of the early 20th century, which is now lost in Russia). The author is convinced that without a certain transformation, the preservation of the status quo will not solve the problem of its archaism. But it is also true that a decisive, radical abolition of the regional institute is impossible for political reasons. There should be a compromise of partial preservation, but in a form that stimulates the inflow (not necessarily massive!) of young talented and qualified personnel to the North and the Arctic — this should be the most important task in the reform of this institution.

3) Comprehensive support for small and medium (especially manufacturing) entrepreneurs in the Arctic and the North, in an enhanced form in areas with limited delivery times (Fig. 2). The list of territories in which entrepreneurs have such state support should be extremely broad, Arctic-northern, with priority attention to the Asian Arctic and the North.

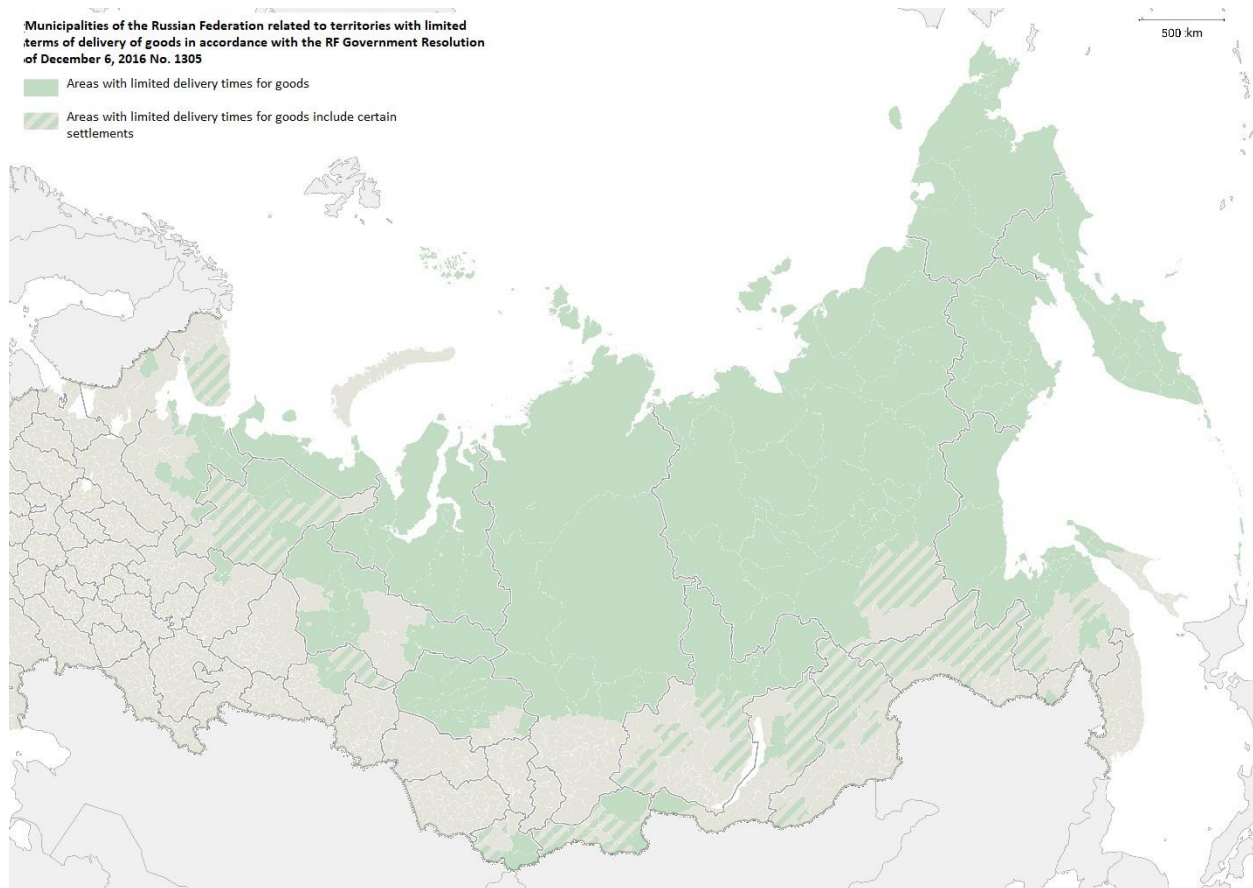


Fig. 2. Regions of the Russian Federation with limited terms of delivery of goods ².

4) Gradual transformation of support for areas equated to the Far North, from northern and Arctic institutes to all-Russian regional ones.

5) There should be institutions that encourage the technological transformation of the previous industrial order and the formation of a new digital one throughout the entire Arctic zone of the Russian Federation, because this process will ensure the growth of equalization, mitigation of

² Cartography is made by postgraduate student of the Faculty of Geography of Moscow State University named after M.V. Lomonosov B.V. Nikitin.

the economic contrasts that have been observed between the northern and Arctic territories in the last decade.

Discussion and conclusions

The vulnerability of the presented approach to forecasting the system of state support for the Arctic territories of the Russian Federation is that the main driving factor of changes is the geographical list of territories receiving support. It affects the composition of state support measures (for example, to strengthen or weaken support for entrepreneurship in the Arctic and northern regions with limited terms of delivery of goods).

Meanwhile, for those who make decisions on the evolution of the current system of state support for the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation, the composition and volume of support measures are of no less importance. That is, the choice is made while simultaneously taking into account the factors of the composition of the support measures and the composition of the territories that receive it (and our logic is not simultaneous, but sequential — first the decision is made on the list of territories, and then on the composition of support measures).

That is why the main result of comparing the scenarios is not the selection of the best one (it is difficult to do in the accepted “geographical” logic), but the selection of elements constructive for real management practice from all four described scenarios. Recognizing the existing contradictions in the system of state support along the lines of “the Arctic according to the Decree of the President of 2014 — the Arctic according to Federal Law 193”, “Arctic territories — regions of the Far North”, “regions of the Far North — localities equivalent to them”, “regions with limited terms of delivery of goods — Arctic territories” and others, the art of federal Arctic and northern policy is to proactively extinguish them, not allowing them to grow. Further research development of this topic can follow a specific step-by-step algorithm of transition from the current status quo in the system of state support to a better forecasted state in terms of taking into account the interests of all parties involved, in which both the geographical (the composition of territories receiving support) and institutional (the composition of support measures themselves) factors will be equally important.

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