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POINTS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AS AN INSTRUMENT
OF STATE REGULATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VITEBSK REGION

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The article dwells on the concept of points of economic growth in the region. The characteristic of growth points presented in regulatory legal documents is given. The tools for overcoming the infrastructure and institutional barriers in the socio-economic development of regions are considered.

The current stage of development of the Republic of Belarus and its regions is characterized by rapidly changing environmental conditions, which necessitates the search for new methods and methods of management at all levels. In this regard, the formation of regional growth points, the development of which will contribute to the creation in the regions of an economic system with mechanisms for adapting and responding to environmental challenges, becomes an important tool.

The growth point (at the regional level) is understood as an urban center, which, in addition to providing services to the population, has a differentiated industrial structure capable of continuous development and improvement. On this basis, the center has the potential to increase economic activity, employment, number and income of the population [1].

The center of economic activity can also be called a growth point. The center is able to develop independently to the level when it becomes necessary to spread growth to the adjacent territories, and later on to less developed areas [2].

The need to form points of economic growth in the Republic of Belarus and its regions is reflected in the following regulatory documents:

1. National strategy for sustainable socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus for the period up to 2030 [3].
2. The program of socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus for 2016-2020 [4].
3. Sustainable development strategy of the Vitebsk region for 2016-2025 [5].

In this case, the growth points in these documents are considered individual regions, regional innovation and production clusters, business entities.

We give a characteristic of the growth points specified in the documents.

1. Regional growth points.

As stated in the Sustainable Development Strategy of the Vitebsk Region for 2016-2025, the key role in ensuring strategic priorities belongs to the points of growth of sustainability of regional development. The growth point is understood as a production / enterprise / complex of enterprises / branch of a regional economy or a project that can provide the maximum socio-economic and / or environmental effect that has a system-forming, including leveling nature for the territory [5].

The achievement of this kind of regionally oriented effects is associated with the introduction of innovative production technologies, the use of new management methods, the search for additional resources (natural, industrial, human, including local initiatives), as well as the choice of location taking into account the most pronounced competitive advantages of the territory.

The main points of growth of the Vitebsk region are considered existing and emerging complexes and clusters of 10 positions. Their development will ensure the strengthening of the main economic centers of the region - the cities of Vitebsk, Polotsk, Novopolotsk, Orsha, Glubokoe with the sub-center Pastavy, will give impetus to the development of regional centers that complement the basic planning framework of the region (Braslav, Verkhnedvinsk, Lepiel, Novolukoml) and rural areas. The new growth center will be the city of Miory due to the construction of a plant for the production of metal sheet and tinplate [5].

Note that as leading subjects, in addition to enterprises and organizations, educational institutions, including universities, are indicated. This is due to the fact that, as noted in [6], the transition to new business conditions implies an increase in the competitiveness of the country and regions through the effective use of knowledge, its generation, preservation and transfer, the creation of high-tech products and new technologies based on them.

Economics

Determination of growth points was carried out on the basis of a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis with the involvement of experts of high skill level. Based on the requirement of continuity of regional development, the most significant investment projects implemented in the region within the framework of state measures or on the basis of private initiative were also taken into account.

2. Business entities.

In the National Strategy for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for 2030 there are directions for the development and allocation of productive forces for the period 2021–2030. In addition to the formation and development of regional innovation and production clusters, it is planned to develop new “growth points” with their effective integration into the regional and local economy with the integrated use of natural resources, scientific and technological potential, small and medium-sized businesses and non-profit structures [3].

In this regard, the specified strategy provides for the creation of favorable conditions for the development of entrepreneurial activity:

- small business development in the regions on the basis of franchising and subcontracting;
- formation of regional and local infrastructure for the support and development of entrepreneurship, including creation of a network of cluster development centers as its main element;
- introduction of forms of financial incentives for the priority areas of development of small and medium-sized businesses in the areas of production and the provision of social services;
- the development of new forms of organizational and technological interaction between small and medium-sized businesses (outsourcing, insourcing, crowdsourcing, etc.), which will significantly reduce the costs of production and circulation, increase the competitiveness of their products on the market, including external ones.

3. In *some regions*, the National Strategy for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for 2030 envisages the formation and support of regional development centers by [3]:

- creation in cities, acting as promising growth centers for regional economies, industrial sites for organization by small and medium-sized business entities (SMEs) to produce goods (works, services);
- stimulating the cluster development of the regional economy, which will speed up the process of introducing new organizational forms of integration and cooperation of business entities engaged in various types of economic activity.

Also, this document assumes the *overcoming of infrastructural and institutional barriers in the socio-economic development of regions on the basis of* [3]:

- 1) development of public-private partnership in the form of combining public and private resources within the framework of socially significant regional projects, concluding special agreements (production sharing agreements, concession agreements, government contracts, investment contracts, etc.);
- 2) delegating part of the functions of local government and self-government bodies to the private sector and non-state non-profit organizations (public associations, foundations, institutions);
- 3) attracting business to solve social problems of the regions (health, education, culture);
- 4) further formation of regional infrastructure for the implementation of investment projects;
- 5) granting privileges, non-financial incentives, creating conditions for the inflow of investment resources;
- 6) the creation of regional structures to support investment activities, assist in the development, examination and support of investment projects;
- 7) expanding the practice of applying state grants and guarantees to investors participating in the implementation of regional programs and investing in the creation of new organizations of priority economic activities;
- 8) formation of investment openness and attractiveness of the region, its investment image.

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