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## Innovation-Driven Evolution of the Sharing Economy in a Russian Region: The Case of Sverdlovsk Region

E. Popov , A. Veretennikova, D. SeleznevaUral Institute of Management, RANEPa, Ekaterinburg, Russia;  [epopov@mail.ru](mailto:epopov@mail.ru)**ABSTRACT**

**Relevance.** The sharing economy, an emerging sector, encounters obstacles such as intricate regulations, insufficient funding, constraints in data collection infrastructure, and uncertainties in evaluation methodologies. For the best results, it is crucial to thoroughly examine risks and find effective ways for the sharing economy to grow in the region.

**Research objective.** This study aims to examine trends in sharing economy development in a major Russian area, using the case of Sverdlovsk region as an example.

**Data and Methods.** The study relies on scientific publications from Scopus, EBSCO, and RSCI databases, alongside proprietary indicators and websites of 19 representative companies. It introduces a methodology utilizing SimilarWeb and Yandex WordStat services to collect consumer behavior metrics from online sharing economy platforms in Russia and Sverdlovsk region.

**Results.** Results reveal escalating interest in sharing economy transportation services, suggesting potential funding reallocations in the public sector. Additionally, the popularity of freelance exchanges in Sverdlovsk region indicates a substantial remote work talent pool. Although the labor market's sharing economy is in its nascent stage, it demonstrates future growth potential. Notably, the rental of goods and equipment holds considerable promise for growth in Russia's industrial regions.

**Conclusion.** The study identifies a research challenge centered on the formulation of methodological principles for evaluating essential parameters within innovative sharing economy economic models at the regional level. Methodological guidelines are outlined, encompassing empirical assessments via SimilarWeb and Yandex WordStat services, with proposed indicators for analysis. Recommendations to support shared economy companies are also provided, serving as a potential blueprint for the government of Sverdlovsk region in their future planning endeavors.

**KEYWORDS**

sharing economy, regional economy, development trends, methodological tools, SimilarWeb, YandexWordstat

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## Инновационное развитие долевой экономики в регионе: опыт Свердловской области

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**Актуальность.** Долевая экономика является относительно новым сектором экономики, и ее развитие может столкнуться с различными препятствиями, включая законодательные и регуляторные проблемы, нехватку финансирования и слабую инфраструктуру сбора данных, а также отсутствие методологических рекомендаций по оценке долевой экономики. Однако, для достижения максимальных положительных результатов необходимо глубокое исследование данной темы, чтобы учесть все возможные риски и определить наилучшие способы развития долевой экономики в регионах. Исследование об инновационном развитии шеринг экономики может помочь определить тенденции и перспективы развития данного сектора экономики в конкретном регионе, выявить факторы, влияющие на ее развитие и оценить вклад в экономический рост и устойчивое развитие региона.

**КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА**

долевая экономика, региональная экономика, тенденции развития, методологический инструментарий, SimilarWeb, YandexWordstat

**Цель исследования.** Целью данного исследования является систематизация тенденций развития долевой экономики в крупном российском регионе на примере анализа параметров деятельности компаний сферы услуг в Свердловской области.

**Данные и методы.** Информационной базой данного исследования стали научные публикации в открытом доступе баз данных Scopus, EBSCO, РИНЦ, авторские разработки по показателям развития долевой экономики, а также сайты 19 компаний, выбранных для репрезентации каждой из сфер. В данном исследовании предлагается способ сбора метрик поведения потребителей на онлайн - платформах долевой экономики в России и Свердловской области с помощью сервисов SimilarWeb и Yandex WordStat.

**Результаты.** Растущий интерес к долевой экономике в сфере транспортных услуг может привести к перераспределению финансирования в общественном секторе. Также, в Свердловской области пользуются популярностью фриланс-биржи, что говорит о большом количестве специалистов удаленных профессий. Долевая экономика в сфере рынка труда находится в начальной стадии развития, но имеет потенциал для роста в будущем. Сфера аренды товаров и оборудования имеет большой потенциал для роста в промышленных регионах России.

**Выводы.** Сформулирована научная проблема, заключающаяся в необходимости разработки методологических положений оценки базовых параметров экономических моделей инновационного развития долевой экономики в регионе. Разработаны методологические рекомендации оценки инновационного развития долевой экономики, такие как эмпирическая оценка результатов, полученных в результате компьютерной обработки данных с помощью сервисов SimilarWeb и Yandex Wordstat, предложены показатели для анализа. Предложены рекомендации мер поддержки компаний долевой экономики, которые могут быть использованы правительством Свердловской области при составлении дальнейших планов.

#### БЛАГОДАРНОСТИ

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#### ДЛЯ ЦИТИРОВАНИЯ

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## 地区共享经济的创新发展：以斯维尔德洛夫斯克州为例

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#### 摘要

**现实性:** 共享经济是一个相对较新的经济领域，其发展可能面临各种障碍：包括立法与监管问题、缺乏资金、数据收集系统薄弱，以及缺乏衡量共享经济的指南。然而，为了取得最大的积极成果，有必要对此主题进行深入研究。文章应考虑到所有可能的风险，并确定在该地区发展共享经济的最佳方式。研究共享经济创新发展，有助于判断特定地区经济领域的发展趋势和前景，识别影响其发展的因素，并评估共享经济对该地区经济增长和可持续发展的贡献。

**研究目标:** 本研究的目的是通过对斯维尔德洛夫斯克州服务业公司活动参数的分析，系统阐述俄罗斯大型地区共享经济的发展趋势。

**数据与方法:** 本研究信息基于开放数据库 Scopus、EBSCO、RSCI 中科学出版物中的关于共享经济发展指标的研究成果，以及被选中代表各领域的 19 家公司的官方网站。本研究提出了一种使用 SimilarWeb 和 Yandex WordStat 服务来收集俄罗斯和斯维尔德洛夫斯克州在线共享经济平台消费者行为指标的方法。

**研究结果:** 人们对交通服务领域的共享经济越来越感兴趣，这可能会导致公共部门资金的重新分配。此外，自由职业者市场在斯维尔德洛夫斯克州也很流行，这表明存在有大量远程工作专家。劳动力市场领域的共享经济正处于初步发展阶段，但未来仍有增长潜力。在俄罗斯工业地区，商品和设备租赁业具有巨大的发展潜力。

**结论:** 文章建立了评估地区共享经济创新发展模式基本参数的方法。并提出了评估共享经济创新发展的建议，如利用 SimilarWeb 和 Yandex WordStat 服务对计算机数据处理结果进行实证评估，还提出了分析指标。斯维尔德洛夫州政府在制定下一步计划时可以利用这些建议来支持共享经济公司的发展。

#### 关键词

共享经济、区域经济、发展趋势、方法工具、SimilarWeb、YandexWordstat

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## Introduction

The innovation-driven development of the sharing economy in regional contexts plays a pivotal role in both augmenting economic growth and fostering sustainable advancements in regional economies. Innovative progression in the sharing economy entails the application of novel methodologies, technologies, and business paradigms to facilitate the exchange and dissemination of resources through digital platforms. This not only leads to a shift from traditional consumption patterns to more thoughtful resource use, but also stimulates the creation of new business models and collaborative frameworks. The sharing economy, as a systemic construct, facilitates the communal sharing of resources and amenities among individuals and enterprises, culminating in the optimization and streamlining of resource consumption, along with the mitigation of adverse ecological ramifications.

In the academic discourse, defining the precise boundaries of activities encompassed by the sharing economy remains an issue of contention. Various disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, business and management, and politics, use terms like “sharing consumption” and “access-based consumption” to define the area now commonly referred to as the “sharing economy”. Furthermore, these activities are intricately interwoven with the concepts of the “circular economy” and the “collaborative economy”, with discernible delineations between consumer-centric and production-related activities notably absent (Codagnone & Martens, 2016).

The sharing economy’s trajectory continues to exhibit an accelerated momentum, permeating diverse spheres ranging from transportation to gastronomy. A salient advantage inherent in the sharing economy is its ability to alleviate issues related to excessive production and unnecessary consumption. Conventional market-driven economies often result in resource squandering and redundant purchases, thus engendering detrimental ecological and macroeconomic effects. On the other hand, the sharing economy enables the smart use of existing resources, reducing unnecessary consumption, promoting waste reduction, and preserving resources for future generations (Midgett et al., 2018).

Taking into account different perspectives, sharing economy business models that create lasting value can be sorted into environmental, societal, and economic benefits, that is, they lead to

more efficient use of resources, prevent harm to society, and improve overall well-being. From an economic perspective, such business models concurrently enhance economic efficiency, bolster profits, and create new opportunities for businesses (Boar et al., 2020).

The sharing economy serves as a catalyst for the advancement of novel technologies and business models. Enterprises in the sharing economy perpetually seek fresh strategies to optimize their operations, thereby instigating a fertile milieu for pioneering advancements. Evident outcomes encompass the proliferation of online sharing platforms, the advent of innovative financial practices like crowdfunding and the rise of carsharing ventures. The sharing economy’s growth has led to the emergence of different business approaches, which are ready to evolve alongside technological advancements and changing behaviors (Standing et al., 2019).

Moreover, the model of the sharing economy has the potential to bring about significant socioeconomic changes for regions. The adoption of sharing economy practices can particularly stimulate the growth of employment, thereby improving the economic situation in the region. At the same time, the gains in resource utilization efficiency resulting from sharing economy mechanisms offer the possibility of reducing inequality and enhancing the well-being of the population. This is especially relevant in countries dealing with issues like corruption and lack of social cohesion. In such contexts, sharing initiatives and the platforms that support their reputation can become promising strategies to coordinate efforts and reshape societal norms (Hira et al., 2017).

It is worth noting that the sharing economy is still a relatively new aspect of the economic landscape, which makes it susceptible to various challenges. These challenges include complex legislative and regulatory issues, limited funding, weaknesses in data collection infrastructure, and a lack of clear guidelines for measuring the extent of the sharing economy. Given this ever-changing environment, it’s necessary for public policy to adapt alongside shifts in market conditions and the influence of emerging technologies or competitors that might render current regulations obsolete (Koopman et al., 2014). However, for the best possible outcomes, a thorough examination of this landscape is essential, taking into account potential risks and mapping out the most effective pathways for the growth of the sharing economy in specific regional contexts.

An investigation into the progress of the sharing economy in specific regions help us unveil trends and potential for growth in this economic sector. Thus we are able to identify the factors that shape its evolution and assess its role in fostering economic expansion and sustainable development. Therefore, the aim of this study is to systematically analyze the trajectory of sharing economy development in a large Russian region, which will be shown by looking at how service companies in Sverdlovsk region are operating. To this end, several tasks need to be undertaken, including conducting a comprehensive review of existing research, the formulation of a methodology to evaluate economic models within the sharing economy framework, an appraisal of the sharing economy's progress in Sverdlovsk region, and the identification of emerging trends in various sectors of the sharing economy.

### Theoretical framework

The rise of the sharing economy has resulted from a combination of intricate changes across technology, economy, society, and the environment on a global scale. From a technological perspective, the progression of payment systems and the expansion of social networks have played a significant role. Societal factors include the increase in social inequality and a shift in consumption patterns. On an economic level, new business models have emerged, while the pandemic's impact on the economy has also been influential. Additionally, environmental considerations encompass heightened human-caused pressures and the initiation of a shift towards more responsible production and consumption practices (Lyaskovskaya et al., 2021).

The sharing economy is “a new consumption model that describes a marked trend in consumer values from ownership to access, in which individuals and communities around the world rent, borrow, trade, gift and share resources on a scale that was not previously possible” (McAlpine, 2014). Hamari, J et al. (2016) define the sharing economy as a peer-to-peer activity of obtaining, providing or exchanging access to goods and services, coordinated through community-based online services.

Currently, there is a lack of a universally agreed-upon definition for the sharing economy, which gives rise to various challenges when it comes to gauging the extent of this model and determining its regulatory framework. However, in order to anticipate the sharing economy's future

trajectory, it becomes imperative to first evaluate its present scope. Notably, a comprehensive study conducted by R. Basselier et al. (2018) highlights the absence of a unified centralized database within statistical authorities, and the available administrative data falls short of facilitating thorough analysis. The ambiguity surrounding the terminology leads to estimation complexities; for instance, the Institute of National Accounts chose to exclude Airbnb from GDP estimations for now, awaiting guidance from the official Eurostat management for further direction.

Data for sharing economy research is often collected through a survey. For example, in the article by Hamari et al. (2016), the data consist of responses received from 168 registered users of the Sharetribe service, which were obtained through the official mailing list<sup>1</sup>. Hamari et al. (2016) used the data to investigate the motivation of people to participate in the sharing economy and showed that participation is motivated by many factors, such as sustainability, enjoyment of the activity, and economic benefits. However, survey data collection has a number of assumptions that can bias the results, including the subjectivity of the answers, the limited sample of respondents and questions.

Zervas et al. (2017) examine the impact of the Airbnb service on hotel stays, employing a regression analysis approach. They assembled a comprehensive dataset encompassing all Airbnb properties in Texas alongside a panel of quarterly tax revenue for all Texas hotels spanning a decade. Their findings unveil that a 1% surge in Airbnb listings in Texas corresponds to a 0.05% reduction in hotel quarterly revenue, an effect amplified by Airbnb's swift expansion. However, it's crucial to note the constraints of the presented data collection method, which limit the scalability and applicability of outcomes to a broader context. The study's sample pertains to one state, hence the results might not accurately represent other geographical regions.

Furthermore, the integration of sharing platforms can significantly impact the acquisition of durable goods. Gong et al. (2017) assess the influence of Uber adoption on new car ownership, employing an innovative dataset encompassing new car registrations in China spanning from 2010 to 2015. They sourced Uber activity data from the company's official blog and social media channels. In addition to macroeconomic and demographic indicators, they incorporated data from the Baidu

<sup>1</sup> Sharetribe Ltd. is a social business enterprise registered in Finland.

index, a search volume metric provided by China's primary search engine, akin to Google Trends in the US, widely used as a demand proxy. Their findings indicate that Uber's emergence correlates with a notable upswing (8%) in new vehicle ownership, implying that consumers are proactively reallocating their accessible resources to capitalize on the surplus value offered by these platforms.

Examining the operational data of companies can improve the individual reputation of sellers on platforms, which in turn can result in increased revenue. Abrate and Viglia (2019) introduce a revenue model that factors in vendor and product reputations, alongside an upper boundary determined by total assets. This investigation focused on the Airbnb platform across five European cities, revealing that personal reputation profoundly influences revenue optimization. The dataset is sourced from the Airbnb website and encompasses details about room and apartment prices, availability, features, and reputation attributes. While revenues from specific properties are not directly stated, they are computed by multiplying the price by the average monthly occupancy.

A qualitative evaluation approach to assessing the sustainability of sharing economy business models is presented by Daunorienè et al. (2015). This methodology employs sustainability circles to pinpoint key sustainability facets. Using a peer-to-peer company assessment in Lithuania as an example, the study demonstrates how to gauge the present level of company stability and identify priority areas. Technological prospects and environmental impact are evaluated on a nine-point scale, where 1 signifies "critical" sustainability necessitating immediate alterations, while 9 indicates the highest level of sustainability. Nevertheless, it's essential to acknowledge that qualitative assessments can be heavily influenced by experts' subjective opinions, potentially yielding varying conclusions and introducing heterogeneity in assessment outcomes, thereby complicating decision-making.

Presently, there are several indicators for evaluating the growth of the sharing economy. The prominent Timbro Shared Economy Index relies on traffic data and web-scraped information. This index incorporates data from 286 services across 213 countries, albeit exclusively for 2018. It constitutes a staple in sharing economy research; for instance, Yin et al. (2021) explore the correlation between carbon emissions, the eco-efficiency index, and the Timbro index. Leveraging a Bayesian regression model, their findings indicate that a heightened

sharing economy level corresponds to a negative correlation with carbon emissions and a positive association with overall environmental performance, thereby underscoring the environmentally considerate nature of the sharing economy.

Another indicator used to assess the development of the sharing economy is the number of users of the sharing economy from Statista<sup>2</sup>. This index is the number of U.S. adults who used a community-based online service that coordinates peer-to-peer access to property, goods, and services at least once during a calendar year. There is also an indicator from the statistical service of the European Union - the percentage of individuals who have used sharing economy projects. This indicator is presented in a database of 28 EU countries for the period from 2017 to 2019. The indicators of the statistical service of the European Union are actively used to study the sharing economy. Karobliene et al. (2021) proved the positive impact of the sharing economy on the economic sustainability of countries in terms of sustainable development goals using the above indicator. To determine the impact of the sharing economy, a cluster analysis of the EU countries was carried out. However, Timbro's Sharing Economy Index only has a single year result, Statista's Sharing Economy user count is limited to US residents, and sample limitations in the European Union Statistical Service database are also a problem.

Generally, two indicators are employed to examine the proliferation of the sharing economy on a regional scale. The first, the Sharing Economy Index, is used to measure the development level of the sharing economy in cities based on the availability of relevant services. This index was formulated by the Consumer Choice Center, an advocacy group for consumers. The second indicator is the Smart City Index, which assesses the accessibility of technological applications and structures for urban residents and gauges residents' perceptions of these aspects. This index is compiled by the Institute for Management Development, an independent academic institution headquartered in Switzerland. Baculakova (2020), for example, utilizes this index to assess the transport system's development and environmental concerns using the example of Bratislava.

Currently, the assessment of the sharing economy has the following primary challenges:

<sup>2</sup> Number of sharing economy users in the United States from 2016 to 2021 (in mln). Statista (2017). Source: [//www.statista.com/statistics/289856/numbersharing-economy-users-us/](https://www.statista.com/statistics/289856/numbersharing-economy-users-us/)

a lack of universal metrics due to its diverse service spectrum, ranging from apartment rentals to carsharing, where evaluation might hinge on a chosen metric that isn't always universally applicable; and data inaccuracy — incomplete or imprecise data about sharing service usage hampers the assessment of economic activity and social benefits in the sharing economy. The absence of a standardized definition impedes the development of dependable statistical measurements for both financial value and participation in the sharing economy (Codagnone et al., 2016).

The path of sharing economy growth can differ from one region to another, influenced by factors such as how many people live there and their economic situation. For example, there are cases where the sharing economy has been successful in places with fewer minority residents, but it hasn't been as effective in areas where Black and Hispanic communities live (Thebault-Spieker et al., 2017).

Establishing methodological guidelines to assess key parameters within innovative sharing economy economic models in a given region is an important task for multiple reasons. Firstly, it fosters a standardized approach for evaluating and contrasting diverse segments of the sharing economy, which is especially crucial for governmental and municipal entities entrusted with regulating this domain. The evolution of policies and regulations concerning the sharing economy must progressively broaden to unlock its complete potential (Liu & Chen, 2020). Secondly, it enhances the quality of the data about the sharing economy, thereby augmenting decision-making and business strategy formulation for entrepreneurs and investors. Thirdly, these methodological provisions can establish safety and consumer protection standards and recommendations, benefiting all market participants. Furthermore, they contribute to a deeper comprehension of the sharing economy's scope and its overall impact on society and the economy.

### Method and data

The foundation of this study rests upon scientific publications available in open-access databases such as Scopus, EBSCO, and RSCI. Additionally, it encompasses the authors' own advancements regarding the indicators of shared economy development as well as an examination of selected companies' websites, chosen to represent distinct areas. Our approach is to gather

consumer behavior metrics from online sharing economy platforms in Russia and Sverdlovsk region through the utilization of SimilarWeb and Yandex WordStat services.

The study's focus is on the economic interactions that foster the innovative development of the sharing economy.

SimilarWeb, a marketing analytics tool, employs a range of methodologies and technologies to collect and analyze data pertaining to web traffic and user interactions on internet resources. The service scrutinizes diverse data sources, encompassing partner data, public information, and statistics derived from user panels. What sets SimilarWeb apart is its extensive data collection capabilities, processing a billion digital signals daily, analyzing two terabytes of data each day, and engaging more than two hundred data scientists (Jansen et al., 2022). The outcomes of SimilarWeb's data processing culminate in statistical models, predictive trend analyses, and assessments of internet resource performance. The platform enables the examination of audience behavior on internet resources, including data on visitor demographics, interests, and site interactions. A more comprehensive overview of the practical applicability of chosen indicators is presented in Table 1. It should be noted that the resources from SimilarWeb were accessed within the timeframe of 01/03/2023 to 15/03/2023.

Yandex Wordstat functions as an accessible platform to retrieve search query statistics within the Yandex system. This platform enables prospective internet users to dissect queries based on their qualitative attributes (such as subject and word form) and quantitative aspects (like monthly query frequency and historical yearly query frequency) (Kazak et al., 2019). It facilitates the evaluation of demand for specific subjects and provides insights into the most frequently input queries by users. The procedure for utilizing Yandex Wordstat encompasses entering keywords, selecting a timeframe, acquiring data, analyzing findings, and leveraging the results. A notable advantage of Yandex Wordstat lies in its capacity to examine query frequencies across diverse Russian regions. Users can choose their region of interest to obtain data on keyword request frequencies in that specific area. The availability of such regional data enhances the precision of assessing demand for particular subjects in distinct geographical areas.

Table 1

## Description of indicators

Indicators	Source	Content	Function
Rating in the country	SimilarWeb	This indicator reflects the company's position in the market in terms of user activity on the site.	This indicator facilitates the analysis and evaluation of the progression in specific sectors of the economy, including the shared economy. It aids in pinpointing prominent market participants and discerning overarching development patterns.
Traffic (mln visits per month)	Calculated by the authors based on SimilarWeb	The average number of users who visit the site per month. This indicator is calculated as an average based on the data for three months.	This indicator signifies the company's popularity and the efficacy of its business model.
Company marketing channels	SimilarWeb	Channels or means used by the company to reach its target audience and attract customers.	This indicator illustrates the promotional strategies employed by the company, offering an avenue for scrutinizing the competitive landscape.
Impressions per month	Yandex Wordstat	The number of times a certain search query was entered into the search box on the Yandex platform in a month.	This indicator enables the evaluation of the audience's engagement with specific services or products offered by these companies. It can be harnessed to ascertain the potential magnitude of demand for a particular product or service within a specific region.
Level of expressed interest	Calculated by the authors based on Yandex Wordstat	The number of people who show interest in a particular service or product in a particular region. It is the ratio of impressions per month to the total population of the region.	This indicator enables the assessment of the potential market for services and goods within a specific region.
Regional popularity	Yandex Wordstat	The percentage of queries in the Yandex search engine related to a certain region, relative to the total number of queries on this topic in Russia.	This indicator facilitates the identification of the region where a specific service or product enjoys the highest popularity.

Source: compiled by the authors.

Table 2

## Analysis of companies in the field of transport services

Companies	BlaBlaCar	Delimobil	Whoosh
Rating in the country	831	18678	78285
Traffic (million visits per month)	3,3	0,1	0,06
Company marketing channels (in %)	Direct (43.69) and Organic Search (42.63)	Direct (43.90) and Organic Search (39.65)	Organic (72.94) and Direct (17.79)
Impressions per month in Sverdlovsk region (number of visits)	26130	5423	554
Level of expressed interest in Sverdlovsk region (in %)	0,62	0,13	0,01
Regional popularity in Sverdlovsk region (in %)	127	158	102

Source: compiled by the authors by using information from the official websites of digital platforms using SimilarWeb, retrieved from: <https://www.similarweb.com/> (Accessed 01/03/2023); YandexWorstat, retrieved from: <https://wordstat.yandex.ru/> (Accessed 08/03/2023).

## Results

This section showcases the outcomes of a study concerning sharing economy companies across different sectors. The analysis was conducted using data from these companies' platforms, supplemented by SimilarWeb and Yandex Word-

stat services, giving us insights into company performance. To study and juxtapose various sharing-focused companies, tables were assembled featuring pertinent indicators.

Table 2 shows that the BlaBlaCar application holds the dominant position in the transporta-

Table 3

## Analysis of companies in the field of tourism and hotel business

Companies	Airbnb	Ostrovok
Rating in the country	2478	176
Traffic (million visits per month)	1,5	8,8
Company marketing channels (in %)	Direct (77.50) and Organic Search (16.68)	Referral (48.09) and direct (24.32)
Impressions per month in Sverdlovsk region (number of visits)	955	17731
Level of expressed interest in Sverdlovsk region (in %)	0,02	0,42
Regional popularity in Sverdlovsk region (in %)	53	95

Source: compiled by the authors by using information from the official websites of digital platforms using SimilarWeb, retrieved from: <https://www.similarweb.com/> (Accessed 01/03/2023); YandexWorstat, retrieved from: <https://wordstat.yandex.ru/> (Accessed 08/03/2023).

tion services sector, significantly outpacing its competitors Delimobil and Whoosh by margins of nearly 30 and 55 times, respectively. Across the transportation industry, direct channels<sup>3</sup> and organic search<sup>4</sup> emerge as the prevailing marketing channels for all applications, signifying their primary role in attracting new users through advertising and search engine optimization. In Sverdlovsk region, the degree of expressed interest in various transportation service applications shows variations. Particularly noteworthy is the considerable percentage of interested users in the region for BlaBlaCar (0.62%), while Whoosh lags significantly behind, with the lowest percentage (0.01%). Furthermore, the popularity of these applications also diverges. Delimobil stands out as the most popular, with a popularity rate of 158%, while Whoosh exhibits the lowest rate (102%).

<sup>3</sup> Direct traffic is a marketing channel that describes the flow of users who enter a website's URL directly into the browser's address bar or use bookmarks in their browser. Such traffic is considered "direct" because the user consciously chooses to visit a particular site, rather than going to it through a search engine, social networks or advertising campaigns. Users who access a site through direct traffic are often repeat customers or are already familiar with the brand. They may use bookmarks in their browser to quickly find the site or navigate to it through links in email or instant messengers.

<sup>4</sup> Organic search is a marketing channel that is based on the fact that users are looking for information in search engines such as Google or Yandex. The essence of organic search is that sites that rank high in the search results get a free source of traffic to their site. However, in order to appear on the first lines of search results, the site must meet certain requirements that are taken into account by search engines. Organic search has a number of advantages, among which there is a high efficiency in attracting targeted traffic to the site. However, its use requires time and effort to optimize the site for the requirements of search engines, as well as to analyze the results and adjust the promotion strategy.

In a broader context, BlaBlaCar maintains its position as the most favored transportation service app throughout Russia. Meanwhile, Delimobil and Whoosh cater to more specific audiences, potentially targeting smaller regions or distinct consumer segments. In Sverdlovsk region, Delimobil stands out as the preferred car sharing service when compared to carpooling<sup>5</sup> and personal mobility equipment rental services. However, it should be noted that the user base relative to the region's population remains below 1%. Additionally, the relatively elevated regional popularity of online transport service platforms in Sverdlovsk region suggests that this percentage might even be lower in many other parts of Russia.

Analysis of the data presented in Table 3 reveals a substantial disparity in traffic between Ostrovok and Airbnb. Notably, Ostrovok experiences significantly higher traffic with 8.8 million monthly visitors, in contrast to Airbnb's 1.5 million visitors. In terms of marketing channels, Airbnb predominantly leverages direct channels and organic search, whereas Ostrovok finds its most effective channels to be referrals and direct access.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, the level of expressed interest in Sverdlovsk region for both Airbnb and Ostrovok

<sup>5</sup> Carpooling is a form of travel in which several people travel in the same vehicle to save on fuel costs and reduce environmental pollution.

<sup>6</sup> A referral channel is a marketing channel in which users go to the site through unique links that are distributed by other users or partners of the company. When a user clicks on such a link and goes to the site, the analytics system records this transition as referral traffic. Referral traffic can come from various sources such as social networks, bloggers, affiliate programs, etc. This marketing channel allows you to attract targeted users who are already interested in a product or service and can become potential customers or partners.



remains relatively modest, at 0.02% and 0.42% respectively. However, it's worth highlighting that Airbnb's popularity in Sverdlovsk region stands at 53%, while Ostrovok enjoys a higher level of 95%. This divergence could be attributed to Airbnb's international orientation, catering to a global audience, while Ostrovok, a Russian platform, concentrates on domestic accommodations.

Factors such as Ostrovok's broader regional advertising campaign, along with the presence of numerous hotel reviews and ratings on the platform, might also influence this discrepancy. It's important to acknowledge that these results could be skewed due to Airbnb's current lack of support for payments from Russian bank cards.

Looking at the popularity of online labor market platforms, it is evident that the leading

role is played by Profi.ru, which outshines competitors like Toloka, YouDo, and FL in terms of traffic. A more in-depth examination of the level of expressed interest for each platform, particularly in Sverdlovsk region, shows FL's slight advantage over its rivals.

Direct channels and organic search stand as the prevailing marketing avenues for all these platforms, indicating that users predominantly seek out specific job-related information on these websites. In terms of popularity in Sverdlovsk region, FL and Toloka emerge as the preferred choices, while YouDo and Profi.ru lag behind in this regard. However, when accounting for the percentage of the interested population, it can be deduced that Profi.ru demonstrates a higher conversion rate of visitors into engaged users.

Table 4

#### Analysis of companies in the labor market

Companies	FL	Toloka	YouDo	Profi.ru
Rating in the country	1944	18368	2295	322
Traffic (million visits per month)	1,6	0,5	1	7
Company marketing channels (in %)	Direct (66.82) and Organic Search (21.71)	Direct (42.53) and Organic Search (40.50)	Direct (53.47) and Organic Search (36.24)	Organic Search (42.73) and Direct (42.45)
Impressions per month in Sverdlovsk region (number of visits)	25954	1290	2483	4930
Level of expressed interest in Sverdlovsk region (in %)	0,61	0,03	0,06	0,12
Regional popularity in Sverdlovsk region (in %)	114	94	78	74

Source: compiled by the authors by using information from the official websites of digital platforms using SimilarWeb, retrieved from: <https://www.similarweb.com/> (Accessed 01/03/2023); YandexWorstat, retrieved from: <https://wordstat.yandex.ru/> (Accessed 08/03/2023).

Table 5

#### Analysis of companies in goods and equipment rental

Companies	Next2U.ru	Polka.rent
Rating in the country	36810	58258
Traffic (million visits per month)	0,04	0,02
Company marketing channels (in %)	Organic (81.95%) and Direct (15.74%)	Organic Search (51.04%) and Social Media (17.53%)
Impressions per month in Sverdlovsk region (number of visits)	4	3
Level of expressed interest in Sverdlovsk region (in %)	0	0
Regional popularity in Sverdlovsk region (in %)	58	176

Source: compiled by the authors by using information from the official websites of digital platforms using SimilarWeb, retrieved from: <https://www.similarweb.com/> (Accessed 01/03/2023); YandexWorstat, retrieved from: <https://wordstat.yandex.ru/> (Accessed 08/03/2023).

Table 6

## Analysis of resale companies

Companies	Basco Party	Avito	Youla
Rating in the country	26035	11	170
Traffic (million visits per month)	0,3	355,3	17,0
Company marketing channels (in %)	Direct (57.02) and Organic Search (38.94)	Direct (58.20) and Organic Search (28.01)	Direct (64.81) and Organic Search (25.10)
Impressions per month in Sverdlovsk region (number of visits)	37035	1530327	103134
Level of expressed interest in Sverdlovsk region (in %)	0,87	36,1	2,43
Regional popularity in Sverdlovsk region (in %)	2606	87	172

Source: compiled by the authors by using information from the official websites of digital platforms using SimilarWeb, retrieved from: <https://www.similarweb.com/> (Accessed 01/03/2023); YandexWorstat, retrieved from: <https://wordstat.yandex.ru/> (Accessed 08/03/2023).

As Table 5 illustrates, in the sectors under consideration, the domain of goods and equipment rental garners the least attention from Russian internet users. The traffic observed on both platforms remains relatively modest, with user interest primarily directed towards seeking information about goods and services, rather than the rental offerings themselves.

However, it is important to emphasize the notably higher regional popularity of Polka.rent in Sverdlovsk region in comparison to Next2U.ru. This discrepancy can be explained by distinct regional demands, including an elevated requirement for construction materials and specialized equipment due to the region's active infrastructure development. Furthermore, distinct variations in marketing channels are noteworthy: organic search and direct channel dominate for Next2U.ru, whereas organic search and social networks<sup>7</sup> are prevalent for Polka.rent. This discrepancy might signify diverse promotional strategies and the necessity to tailor approaches to the distinct interests and behaviors of the audience on each platform.

If we look at the data in Table 6, we see that Basco Party has the least amount of traffic among the featured companies, with a monthly visitor count of 0.3 million. In contrast, its counterparts such as Avito and Youla draw significantly larger audiences, recording 355.3 million and 17 million

monthly visitors, respectively. This means that Avito stands as the most favored resale service in Sverdlovsk region, engaging 36.1% of the local population.

However, both Basco Party and Youla have cultivated their own distinct audiences with interests specific to particular goods and services. Remarkably, Avito enjoys substantial traffic nationwide, which likely contributes to its heightened prevalence compared to other platforms in Sverdlovsk region. Additionally, Basco Party's exceptional regional popularity can be attributed to its geographic presence and the elevated interest in the resale sector in this specific region.

By looking at the data in Table 7, several notable insights come to the forefront. Kinopoisk boasts a substantial monthly user traffic of over 206 million, with Yandex.Music following suit by attracting more than 80 million visitors. Skillbox records a user count of 5.8 million, Getcourse registers 7 million, and Rutube garners a substantial audience of 61.8 million. In terms of marketing channels, direct access and organic search remain dominant avenues for all companies except Getcourse, which relies more on direct and referral channels. From these findings, we can conclude that Kinopoisk and Yandex.Music have established themselves as more popular choices among users in Sverdlovsk region. Despite lower interest percentages, platforms such as Skillbox, Getcourse, and Rutube cater to a specific user demographic due to their niche offerings. The regional popularity assessment, however, underscores the overarching demand for all these platforms in Sverdlovsk region.

<sup>7</sup> Social networks are platforms that allow people to communicate, share information, content and opinions in an online format. They are also a marketing channel that allows companies to connect with their target audience, increase brand awareness and promote their products or services. They provide the ability to create and distribute content, communicate with consumers, analyze their interests and preferences, and use paid advertising to increase audience reach.

Table 7

## Analysis of information resource companies

Companies	Kinopoisk	Yandex.Music	Skillbox	Getcourse	Rutube
Rating in the country	15	38	551	524	56
Traffic (million visits per month)	206,4	80,7	5,8	7,0	61,8
Company marketing channels (in %)	Direct (51.11%) and Organic Search (32.10%)	Direct (72%) and Organic Search (13.40%)	Direct (46.89%) and Organic Search (37.83%)	Direct (56.45%) and Referral (13.67%)	Direct (54.68%) and Organic Search (27.31%)
Impressions per month in Sverdlovsk region (number of visits)	115546	75805	2826	2982	31822
Level of expressed interest in Sverdlovsk region (in %)	2,73	1,79	0,07	0,07	0,75
Regional popularity in Sverdlovsk region (in %)	106	111	89	89	104

Source: compiled by the authors by using information from the official websites of digital platforms using SimilarWeb, retrieved from: <https://www.similarweb.com/> (Accessed 01/03/2023); YandexWorstat, retrieved from: <https://wordstat.yandex.ru/> (Accessed 08/03/2023).

### Trends in the development of the sharing economy

The development and popularity of the sharing economy in Sverdlovsk region exhibit variations across distinct sectors. In the domain of transport services, noteworthy trends emerge. BlaBlaCar, a carpooling service, garners substantial interest, reflecting a demand for budget-friendly travel, particularly for extended journeys. In contrast, Delimobil, a carsharing service, enjoys heightened popularity in the region, signaling elevated demand. On the other hand, the Whoosh app, which serves individual transportation needs, isn't catching on as much in the region, implying a subdued demand. Overall, the transportation services sector in the region shows a rising trend of interest in the sharing economy. This trend holds the potential to impact the allocation of public funds.

Conversely, the sphere of tourism and hospitality exhibits distinct dynamics. Ostrovok, a Russian firm specializing in hotel reservations, shows peak regional recognition, implying pronounced interest vis-à-vis other locales. However, global platforms like Airbnb have lower popularity in the region and attract fewer interested residents. This points to an ongoing preference for traditional hotel booking approaches and travel agency services. Nevertheless, as sharing services gain prominence through heightened awareness and user-friendliness, the sector's allure in the region might surge over time.

The nascent state of the labor market sharing economy in Sverdlovsk region has a unique land-

scape. FL, a service for finding short-term jobs, is particularly well-recognized in the local area and resonates with residents. On the national level, Profi.ru holds the top position, but its popularity is not as strong in Sverdlovsk region. Services such as Toloka and YouDo exhibit a modest percentage of interested inhabitants in this area. The particular makeup of the region's workforce, which might involve a significant number of remote professionals using freelance platforms, could explain why FLs services are popular. Even though the labor market sharing economy is just starting in the region, there is considerable potential for growth in the future.

The rental of goods and equipment in the sharing economy is still in its early stages of development in Sverdlovsk region. Companies like Next2u and Polka.rent have relatively low monthly impressions, indicating limited visibility. However, Polka.rent demonstrates high regional popularity, pointing to a growing market potential. The establishment of trust and potential demand from local industrial enterprises could contribute to the advancement of this sector within the sharing economy.

In the resale of goods sector, intriguing patterns emerge in the given region. Avito maintains its position as the leader in terms of the interested population, but its regional popularity is modest, hinting at market saturation. Conversely, Youla enjoys greater regional popularity, indicating its appeal to residents. Notably, Basco Party, a second-hand clothing store, stands out with high regional popularity despite a lower percentage of the interested population, mainly due to its physical presence. Overall, the resale of goods in the

Table 8

## Analysis of company life cycle stages across various sectors in Sverdlovsk region

Spheres	Peculiarities	Development stage
Transport services	Stable interest in carsharing and carpooling services. Potential for the development of individual mobility services	Growth stage
Tourism and hospitality	Preference of domestic companies, traditional methods of booking prevail, travel agency services	Growth stage
Labor market	Increased interest in freelance exchanges, increase in the number of specialists in remote professions	Growth stage
Rental of goods and equipment	Potential for development, but no user response	Origin stage
Resale	Popularity of services among the audience, market saturation	Growth stage
Informational resources	Popularity of entertainment services, low interest in educational services, preference for traditional ways of acquiring knowledge	Growth stage

Source: compiled by the authors according to the model of Miller and Friesen (1984)

sharing economy seems to be saturated, yet it remains popular among the region's residents.

An examination of trends in the development of the sharing economy in the information resources sector shows a preference for entertainment services among the region's audience. Kinopoisk and Yandex.Music demonstrate significant interest and regional popularity, highlighting a preference for consuming entertainment content. In contrast, educational services such as Skillbox and Getcourse exhibit lower interest and regional popularity, suggesting relatively reduced enthusiasm for online learning and a preference for alternative knowledge acquisition methods. Consequently, the region's audience tends to gravitate toward entertainment content, rendering online platforms providing such content highly favored.

To assess the current developmental stage in each sphere of the shared economy in Sverdlovsk region, the organizational life cycle model proposed by Miller and Friesen (1984) was employed. This model delineates distinct phases of an organization's evolution.

In the initial "birth" phase, firms strive to formulate a viable market strategy. As they progress into the "growth" stage, they expand in size, extend their market presence, and develop a more structured organizational framework. Subsequently, during the "maturity" stage, firms tend to be less innovative and refrain from significant alterations to their products and services. The "revival" phase is characterized by substantial changes in product strategy and heightened overall company innovativeness. Finally, organizations in the "decline" phase focus on conserving dwindling resources and often avoid innovation due to their outmoded product lines (Shirokova et al., 2006).

### Managing the development of the sharing economy

Considering the growth stage of companies operating in the sharing economy in the transport services sector, the government of Sverdlovsk region can implement supportive measures to foster their development. Collaborative efforts with companies to enhance and ensure the reliability of intercity and long-distance travel systems are crucial. We recommend that joint verification systems for drivers should be introduced through *gosuslugi.ru* - the Portal of Public Services of the Russian Federation - to enhance service reliability and security. To stimulate sectoral growth, the government could allocate grants for the study of transport route development and sectoral enhancement, positively influencing the progress of companies in the sharing economy. Moreover, facilitating financing for these companies could be considered. Government contracts can provide cities with more influence over sharing companies, enabling the enforcement of stronger consumer protection, enhanced economic redistribution, or other policy objectives (Rauch & Schleicher, 2015).

Sharing economy companies could contribute to the implementation of the region's development strategies until 2030 in the area "Development of Transport and Logistics Potential". A designated task is the establishment and advancement of an urban passenger traffic control center in Yekaterinburg. Sharing companies could aid in this endeavor by providing insights into route popularity, facilitating more efficient urban transportation planning. Additionally, focusing on modern transportation technologies and trends, such as electric and autonomous vehicles, and

eco-friendly modes of transport is important. Encouraging innovative transport technologies can attract more sharing economy companies to the sector, ensuring its stable growth in the future.

For the advancement of sharing economy companies in the tourism and hotel business sector in Sverdlovsk region, it would make sense to foster collaboration between domestic services and local tourism companies to devise new tourist routes and promote domestic tourism. Organizing events like forums and conferences can facilitate the exchange of experiences and ideas among companies. A key objective of the region's development until 2030 is to present the region's tourism potential in international, national, and regional tourism exhibitions, conferences, and forums.

To support companies in the tourism and hotel business, the government could create favorable conditions such as tax rate reductions, preferential loans, or subsidies for business growth. Supporting the improvement of tourism infrastructure, including the construction of new hotels and renovation of existing facilities, can boost tourist numbers and satisfaction levels. Additionally, the creation of a dedicated website to aggregate all tourist routes and information about recreational areas in the region can address another goal of the region's strategic plan – promoting regional tourism products online. In the modern travel industry, the internet serves as a potent tool for promotion and sales, reaching millions of online users (Irgashevich et al., 2022).

The success of the labor market and information resources to a large extent hinges on the advancement of online education. Investments in this domain can yield positive outcomes such as skill improvement, process efficiency enhancement, and heightened company competitiveness. While some educational institutions remain wary of online learning models, there is a growing recognition of the potential of new technologies to enhance or replace more labor-intensive methods (Bishop, 2007). One strategy could involve companies placing educational orders with state universities for targeted training that meets labor market needs. Encouraging diverse forms of public-private partnerships in technical education and employment, including internships with local enterprises in Sverdlovsk region, aligns with government tasks outlined in the action plan for implementing the socio-economic development strategy until 2030. Ensuring widespread access to online education is essential for fostering sectoral growth. Additional-

ly, the government can support local information resources like job portals, resumes, and innovative HR technology projects to enhance recruitment and personnel management efficiency.

To bolster companies in the sharing economy engaged in goods and equipment rental, issuing subsidized loans at their initial stages is recommended. This could be implemented as part of the above-mentioned action plan, addressing the tasks like establishing a system of state loan guarantees for SMEs and preferential lending systems for their investment projects. Notably, many startups, including high-tech ones in China, heavily rely on government funding for their successful launch (Chandra & Fealey, 2009). Marketing research support is crucial to identify market needs and ascertain the most sought-after types of goods and equipment in the region. Creating a startup incubator for this domain, potentially supported by the Sverdlovsk Regional Fund for Entrepreneurship, could provide budding entrepreneurs with essential resources and knowledge for successful business initiation and growth.

The sharing economy can significantly contribute to the sustainable environmental development of the region. By reducing the number of cars on the road, it can lower pollution levels and improve air quality. Additionally, the sharing economy can facilitate efficient municipal waste collection through optimal resource utilization and waste reduction. In sectors like personal services, sharing economy development can decrease waste volume by enhancing item utilization efficiency, consequently curbing production. However, alongside its benefits, the sharing economy raises concerns about negative impacts. The potential displacement of traditional workers is a notable concern, as sharing platforms might decrease demand for conventional employment, affecting job stability and income for those reliant on traditional jobs. Furthermore, the prevalence of part-time work in the sharing economy can lead to worker exploitation, with limited employment benefits, inadequate wages, and insufficient workplace safeguards. Inconsistent regulations in the sharing economy may exacerbate these issues, resulting in imbalanced power dynamics between workers and platforms, insufficient worker rights, and challenges in ensuring job security and fair treatment.

Our recommendations concerning sharing economy development in Sverdlovsk region can be applied to other regions. Proactive support and development of sharing economy sectors, such as transport, tourism, hotels, and equipment rental,

are recommended. This can be achieved through financial and marketing aid to companies, alongside granting support for research and sectoral growth. Consideration should be given to tax rate reduction and startup incubator establishment to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with necessary resources for successful initiation and growth. Collaboration and partnerships between sharing economy entities and other local businesses or services are also highly encouraged. Such collaborations can lead to new business models, joint promotion of tourism routes and services, and overall sectoral advancement. Tailoring strategies to specific regional conditions and goals will pave the way for sustainable and inclusive sharing economy development across various regions.

### Conclusion

This study aimed to systematize the developmental trends in the sharing economy of a large Russian region, illustrated through an analysis of service company activities in Sverdlovsk region. The study yielded both theoretical and practical outcomes, outlined below.

Drawing from critical evaluations of prior research, the study identified the need to establish

methodological guidelines for evaluating essential parameters in the innovative economic models driving shared economy development in a region. The existing methods for appraising shared economy parameters were systematically examined.

Methodological recommendations were formulated to assess the innovation-driven development of the shared economy. These encompassed empirical evaluations achieved through computer data processing using services such as SimilarWeb and Yandex Wordstat. Indicators for analysis were defined, including traffic and audience engagement metrics, the percentage of the region's population displaying interest, and the regional popularity relative to other parts of Russia. As part of our assessment of Sverdlovsk region's shared economy development, we identified trends and developmental stages in each given sector. Furthermore, recommendations were offered to support shared economy companies, potentially informing the future strategies of the region's government.

The study's novelty lies in the systematic delineation of the region's shared economy development, thus augmenting existing research on regional sharing economy.

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