Tatarstan: rural-urban development under the spatial trends of 1990–2020[1]

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Abstract. The article examines the main trends in the economic development of the Republic of Tatarstan from 1990 to 2020 and identifies some consequences of the 2022 sanctions for these trends. The author stresses the role of Tatarstan in the life of European Russia, showing the spatial structure of its settlements and economy. The article outlines the differences in the Tatarstan industrial production, trade and agriculture by district and presents the key trends in their changes over thirty years on maps and figures. The author identifies the features of rural areas under study based on the ethnic composition of their population, distance from cities and economic transformations in agriculture. The author pays special attention to agroholdings that play an important role in the social-economic development of Tatarstan and provides examples from the history of some agroholdings to prove their impact on the economic development of rural areas. However, the role of small business in the development of rural areas is also explained, and the issues of rural development in some areas are examined in detail. The author concludes with a list of main problems in the development of the Republic of Tatarstan.

Key words: Republic of Tatarstan, settlement, agglomeration, ethnic composition of the population, industry, agriculture, agroholdings, small business

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The Republic of Tatarstan compared to other Russian regions

The Republic of Tatarstan has been one of the key Russian regions: its share in the national industry and agriculture significantly exceeds the share in the country's population and territory (Fig. 1); its gross regional product per capita is comparable to the leading Moscow, Leningrad, and Belgorod Regions (Fig. 2). Tatarstan has its own source of income — oil, attracts foreign investments, for instance in the auto industry, its agriculture is one of the most advanced in the country due to the increased federal support for programs for the development of the agro-industrial complex and social development of the village. Ta-

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tarstan's specific feature is its authorities' ability to reach agreements with the federal center on redistribution of taxes and attraction of investments. A striking example is the new IT-center built in an open field — the city of Innopolis near Kazan, founded in 2012, still with 4 thousand residents but already with a university, a special economic zone, residential buildings, driverless taxis and robots.

Even during difficult years at the turn of the 20th — 21st centuries, Tatarstan remained attractive to the population, although in the 2010s its migration balance per one thousand people began to decline as in the country in general. Tatarstan case, including transformations in agriculture compared to national changes in economy and its territorial structure, allows to understand many Russian problems in the past thirty years.

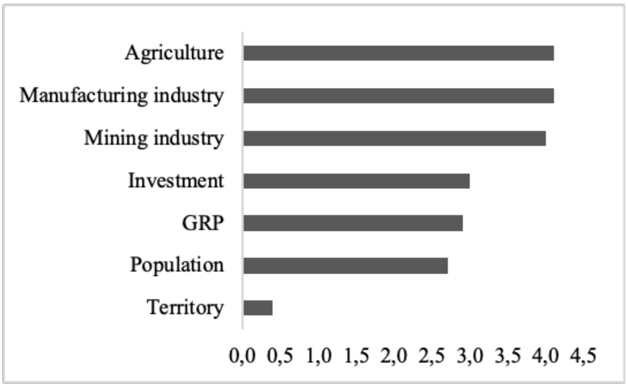

Fig. 1. Share of Tatarstan in the territory, population and economy of Russia in 2020 (in %)

All calculations and figures in the article are based on the data from the statistical collections for municipal districts for 1990–2020, published by the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Tatarstan. The author participated in the development of the express diagnostics as a part of the Development Strategy of the Republic of Tatarstan until 2030 (Express Diagnostics, 2013), which allowed to get access to the data for the 1990s — 2010s and to conduct interviews with the heads of districts and enterprises when traveling around Tatarstan. Calculations were continued until 2020, which is reflected on the presented maps and figures. New trips to some regions of Tatarstan were made in 2023[2] — to conduct interviews with the heads of enterprises and population, to see and explain the latest trends.

2. The author expresses gratitude to Svetlana Khusnutdinova, Associate Professor of the Department of Theory and Methodology of Geographical and Environmental Education at the Kazan Federal University, for organizing trips to the Arsky and Alekseevsky districts of Tatarstan in 2023.

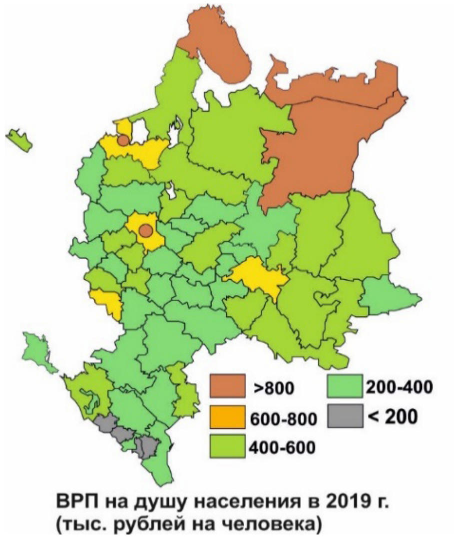

Fig. 2. GRP per capita in 2019 (thousand rubles per person)

Spatial settlement structure and economic transformations of Tatarstan

Tatarstan has a polycentric spatial structure of the economy with a metropolis (Express Diagnostics, 2013) consisting of three agglomerations — Kazan, Kama and Almetyevsk, in which the industry is concentrated (Fig. 3). During the economic crisis of the 1990s, the Kazan agglomeration, especially city Kazan, and the Kama agglomeration (cities Nabererznye Chelny, Nirznekamsk, Elabuga) practically did not lose population, and later it constantly grew, concentrating in the capital. The Almetyevsk agglomeration survived in the 1990s but in the last decade began to lose population (Fig. 4). Even greater outflows to Kazan or other regions of Russia were typical for non-agglomeration areas.

In the Strategy for the Social-Economic Development of the Republic of Tatarstan until 2030, more than 44% of investment are planned for infrastructure, primarily for Innopolis near Kazan (Strategy, 2015), then comes the petrochemical complex and the machine-building complex, primarily the auto industry, while the agro-industrial complex ranks fourth in the strategic investment portfolio.

Tatarstan remains an important industrial region producing 30% of Russian polyethylene, 46% of synthetic rubber, 56% of tires and 37% of trucks. There are three industrial nodes (Fig. 5): the first and the oldest one is the Kazan chemical and machine-building hub, which in 2020 accounted for about 16% of the regional industrial production (Summary Report, 2021). It consists of many enterprises — from the oldest Powder Plant and the Vakhitov Plant (now Nefis Cosmetic) to KazanOrgSinez, TatchemPlast, leader in polymer production, and many others. However, the role of Kazan in industrial production has gradually decreased in recent decades (Fig. 6), especially in 2022 due to the negative consequences of sanctions.

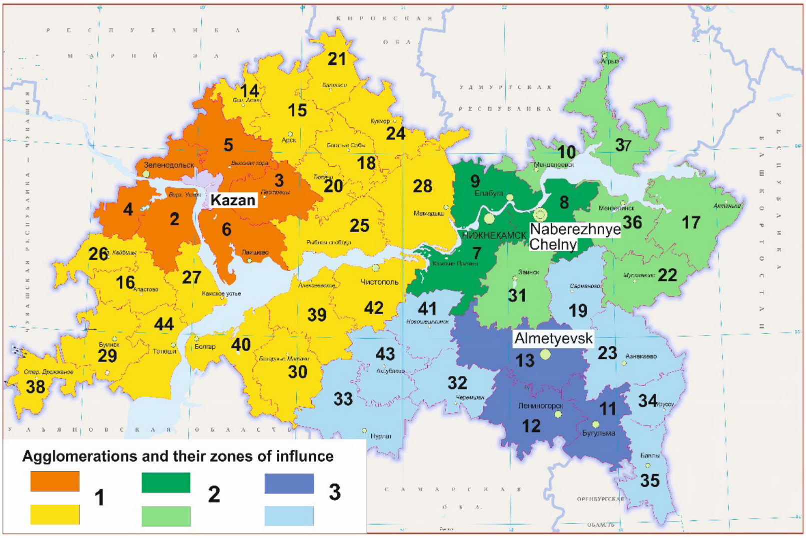

Fig. 3. Three agglomerations of Tatarstan:
1 — Kazan (number of dictricts 2–6),
2 — Kama (districts 7–10), 3 — Almetyevsk (districts 11–13) and their zones of influence (Strategy, 2015).

The second industrial hub — Kama Machine-Building and Chemical — concentrated 36% of industrial production in 2020 and, on the contrary, has been on the rise in recent years, although in 2022 the most famous KAMAZ with 15 thousand employees experienced a shortage of components. At the same time, sanctions led to the departure of foreign competitors and to the entry of China into the Russian market and in the production of electric vehicles. The same applies to the Yelabuga Sollers-Ford Plant that, after being idle, switched to the Sollers-Alabuga production, but continued to produce the traditional Russian UAZ car.

The third industrial hub is formed by the TATNEFT Oil Company in Almetyevsk, which in 2020 accounted for about a third of the industrial output of Tatarstan, although in per capita production this hub exceeds the other two by two–three times. In addition to oil production which increased by 5% in 2022, there are also petrochemical and tire enterprises.

In recent years, significant organizational changes have been taking place in the industry, leading to a redistribution of financial and physical flows. Since 2023, TATNEFT has been on the sanction list, which has led to a change in export flows of oil and petroleum products and to a greater focus on the Russian market and oil refineries. On the other hand, after the withdrawal of the Finnish company Nokian Tyres from the Russian market, TATNEFT became the owner of a 100% stake in a tire plant in Vsevolozhsk in the Leningrad Region.

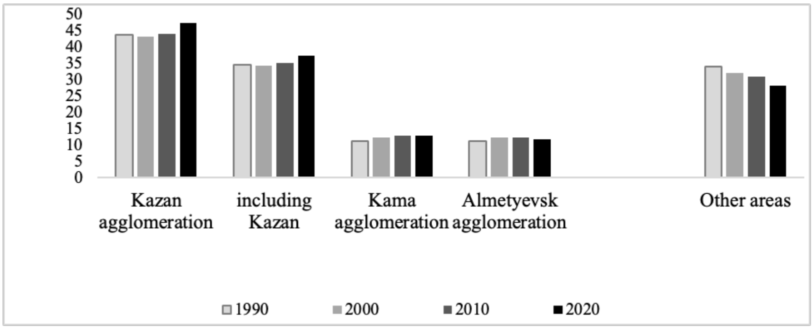

Fig. 4. Changes in shares of population in three agglomerations and other areas from 1990 to 2020 (in %)[3]

Since 2005 in Tatarstan, there are more than 100 industrial-technology parks in different districts, including those providing alternative types of employment in villages, although such leading districts (in terms of number of parks and wages) are suburban areas of large cities.

A noticeable increase in Kazan's trade turnover, while the shares of other regions decreased (Fig. 7–8), indicates gentrification of the capital, which literally catches the eye when visiting the city — there are construction sites, shops, improvement of public spaces, cafes and restaurants everywhere. The same partly applies to the Kazan agglomeration, although the differences in trade volumes between Kazan and its suburbs are still large. The shares of other two agglomerations in trade turnover have decreased; however, a greater dispersion of industry and relatively high wages contributed to the increased trade turnover in a much larger territory.

The expansion of trade to the suburbs of large cities is also determined by the growing popularity of *dachas* in rural areas for summer vacations of city dwellers. Such zones of noticeable excess of the summer *dacha* population over the permanent rural population are typical not only for the suburbs of Kazan but also for the Kama agglomeration (Fig. 9). For instance, in the Verkhneuslonsky district the average increase in summer population is 2.5 times, while in places with concentrations of seasonal garden, *dacha* and cottage settlements — more

3. Figures 4–8 and 10–12 are based on the data from the statistical collections "Republic of Tatarstan", "Cities and Regions of the Republic of Tatarstan in Numbers" and "Agriculture of the Republic of Tatarstan" published by the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Tatarstan.

than 5 times. In terms of the number of *dacha* settlements, the Laishevsky district (several dozen villages, from 100 to 700 plots each) and the Zelenodolsky district stand out, especially along the Volga banks. However, suburban areas receive little but garbage from city-dwellers. Even the trade turnover in the suburbs of Kazan is less than it could be, since there are large supermarkets at the outskirts of the capital.

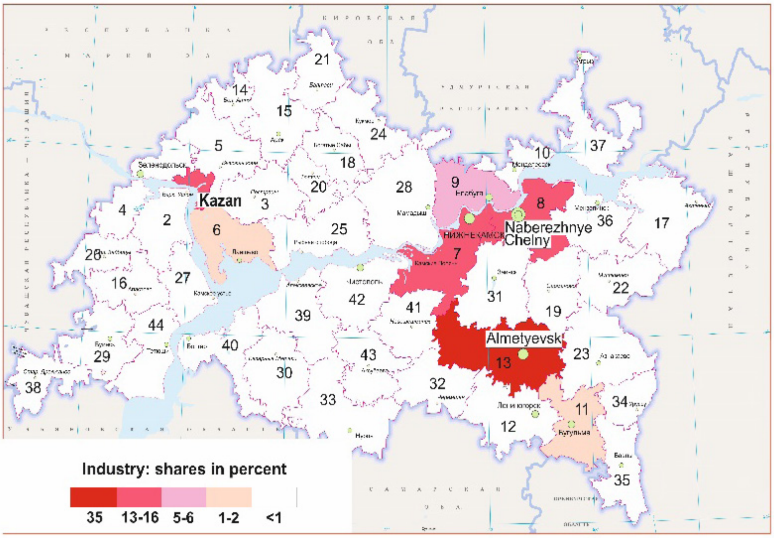

Fig. 5. The shares of Tatarstan districts in industrial production in 2020 (in %)

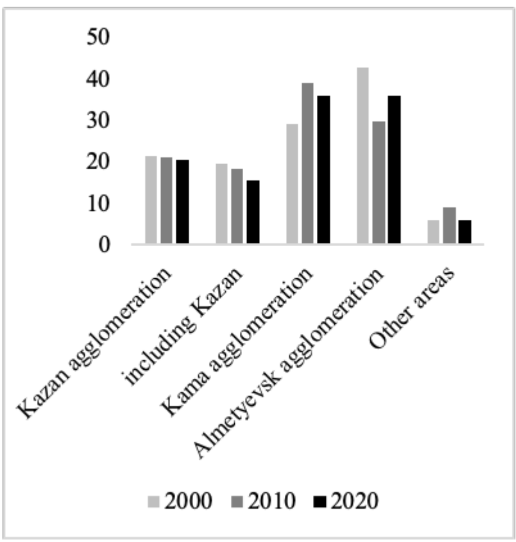

Fig. 6. Changes in shares in industrial production (in %)

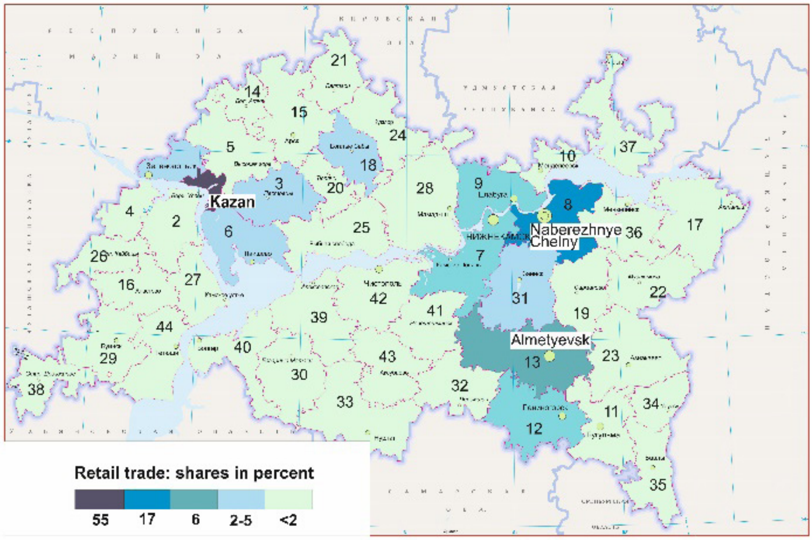

Fig. 7. The shares of Tatarstan districts in trade turnover in 2020 (in %)

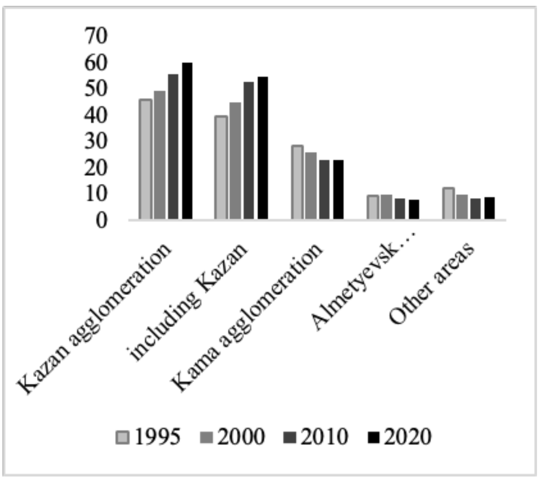

Fig. 8. Changes in shares in trade turnover (in %)

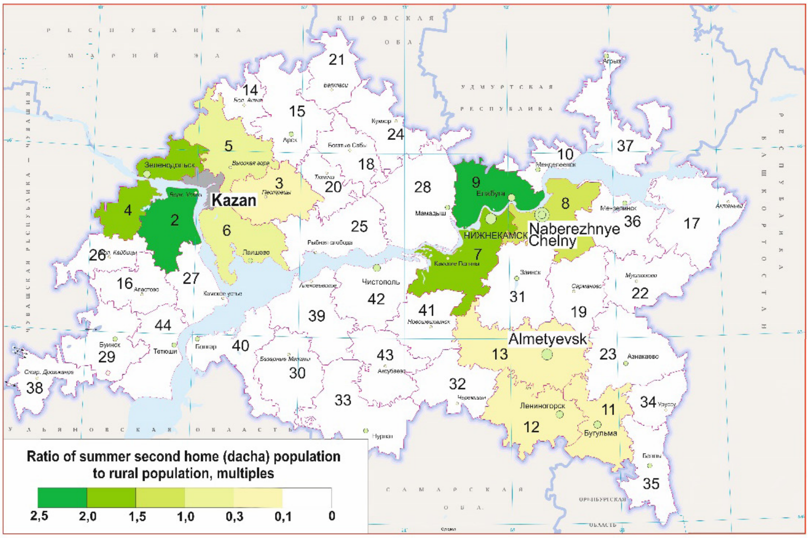

Fig. 9. The ratio of the summer *dacha* population to rural population (times) (according to the 2016 agricultural census on the number of plots in garden and *dacha* associations, based on the average of two people per plot in summer)

Changes in rural settlement and agriculture in Tatarstan in 1990–2020

Tatarstan is located in a zone of mixed and deciduous forests with a forest-steppe in the south, which are not the most favorable natural conditions for agriculture; however, its agro-industrial complex is one of the most promising and priority for regional development. In 1991, Tatarstan ranked only 7th in Russia in terms of gross agricultural output, by 2009 took 2nd place after the Krasnodar Region, and in 2020 — 4th place after the Krasnodar, Rostov and Belgorod Regions (Agricultural Production in 2020). If we compare the livestock dynamics in Tatarstan with its neighbors, its situation is much more stable. In terms of the dynamics of sown area, Tatarstan is also comparable to southern regions with the most favorable natural conditions and a powerful grain business. All this became possible due to the three main factors characterizing the specifics of Tatarstan: (1) a high level of financial and organizational support for the agro-industrial complex; (2) the increased role of large modernized agroholdings; (3) features of rural population.

In the 1960s–1970s, urbanization in Tatarstan was lagging, but subsequently its rural population declined rapidly. Moreover, the growth of cities, including Kazan, did not stop even in the 1990s, which happened to many large cities in Russia, and accelerated in the 2000s. Thus, urbanization in Tatarstan is not complete, it is more active than in many other regions of Russia, which is reinforced by the rural population's desire to get education, and the rural youth, as a rule, do not return to villages after graduating from universities. Nevertheless, compared to many other regions of Russia, especially to the Non-Black-Earth ones, Tatarstan looks better in terms of rural depopulation — like southern regions (Nefedova, 2022). We should also mention consolidation of the Tatar population in the region since the 1990s.

However, the migration outflow damaged the system of rural settlement, although there are fewer abandoned and pensioner villages than in neighboring regions (except for Bashkortostan) and much less than around the Moscow Region. The distribution of rural population depends largely on its ethnic composition: according to the 2020 census, in cities the share of Tatars was only half and of Russians — 45%, in rural areas two thirds are Tatars, about 10% — representatives of other Volga nationalities. Tatars predominate to the northeast of Kazan, outside the agglomeration, and in the east (See Fig. 11). Russians usually predominate in rural areas close to the rivers Kama and Volga. In the south and southwest, the share of Chuvash is higher, in the northeast — the share of Udmurts.

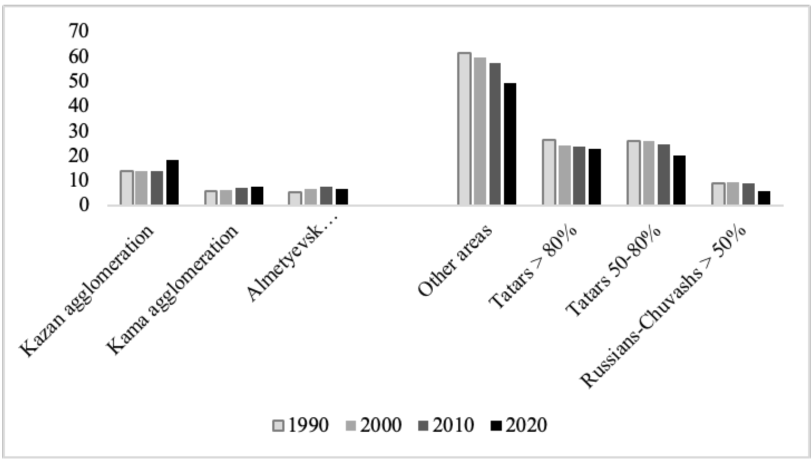

Fig. 10. Changes in the share of rural population in agglomerations and other areas; depending on ethnic composition (1990–2020, in %)

Ethnic composition determines the density and dynamics of rural population (Fig. 10). The aging of rural population, the reluctance of the youth to work in agriculture and their desire for education and the outflow to cities are widespread in Russia (Karachurina, Mkrtchan, 2018; Nefedova, Mkrtchan, 2018), and Tatarstan experiences a severe rural population decline outside the Kazan and Kama agglomerations. However, the traditional Tatar areas remained more stable, while the Russians areas, even located in favorable natural conditions (Fig. 11), suffered the greatest migration losses. In general, the advantages of human capital in Tatarstan are as follows:

- less depopulated rural areas, especially inhabited by Tatars and Chuvash, better preservation of rural communities and traditions of farming in Tatar villages, readiness for self-employment and less alcoholism;
- the diversity and neighborliness of different ethnic groups, the positive example effect, various occupations;
- regional support for entrepreneurial initiatives and rural development, contributing to the preservation of rural population, including with social programs.

Thus, in addition to agglomerations, the Tatar-dominated areas in the north and northeast stand out for the increased density of rural population; the share of such areas in the gross agricultural output of Tatarstan is higher and has increased recently (Fig. 11–12).

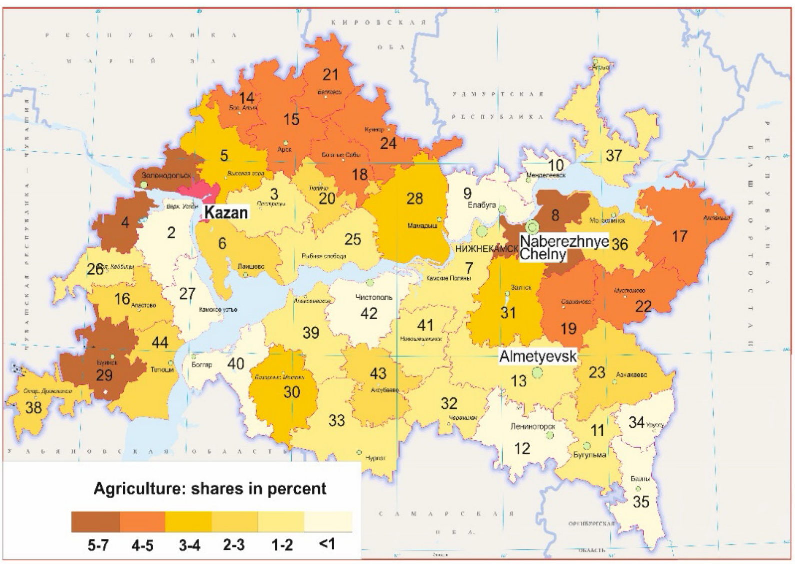

Fig. 11. Shares of Tatarstan districts in the gross agricultural output (2020, in %)
Ethnic composition of population in districts outside of agglomerations: 14 — 24 — Tatars are more than 50% of the population; 25 — 38 — Tatars are 50-80%; 39 — 44 — more than 50% are Russians and Chuvash

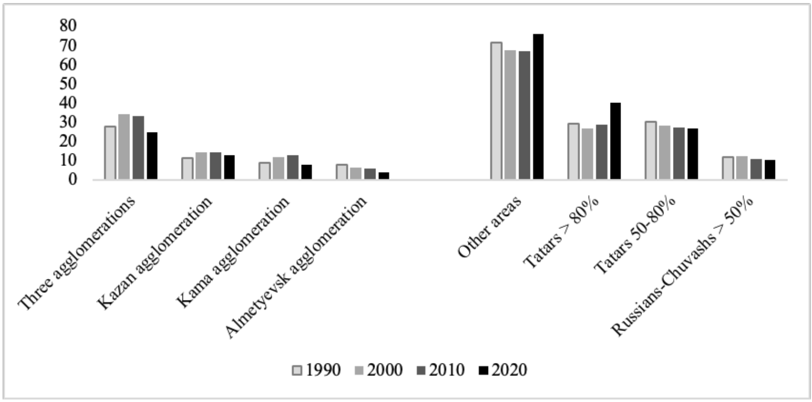

Fig. 12. Changes in shares; depending on ethnic composition (1990–2020, in %)

Concentration of capital and agricultural holdings in Tatarstan

The imbalanced institutional reforms of the 1990s and a sharp decrease in government support for agriculture required the concentration of capital to reduce risks and to improve organization of production and management. The most important reasons for the concentration of production were the accumulation of capital by private structures and individuals, the need to maneuver costs and profits, which is possible only with diversified production, the standardization of food demands and the need to compete with food imports. Moreover, by the end of the 1990s, there was a class of new highly qualified managers at large food enterprises, while the former Soviet agricultural enterprises, the number of which had decreased in all regions of Russia, had mainly weak management.

The specific feature of Tatarstan is a combination of large agroholdings and small commercial farms. By 1990, there were more than 300 state farms and about 700 collective farms. By 2010, due to the financial (loans from the banks of Russia and Tatarstan, subsidies) and administrative support of the regional government, 70% of agricultural land were controlled by 20 agroholdings, and the three largest ones — VAMIN Tatarstan, Ak Bars-Agro and Red East-Agro — controlled 30%. Former Soviet enterprises were either absorbed by agroholdings or disintegrated into commercial farms which were also supported by the regional government. The regional support of agroholdings slowed down the reduction of land and livestock and increased the productivity and reliability of supply to cities but ‘washed out’ the middle management of even relatively capable enterprises. Agricultural employment decreased under the higher mechanization in large agroholdings. In other areas, without the majority of rural population willing to start commercial farming, this increased the outflow to cities and their suburbs. Regional authorities focused on preserving animal husbandry at both large enterprises and small farms: Tatarstan, like the Belgorod Region, became a leader of livestock production by 2020. Today in Tatarstan agroholdings control 37% of agricultural land, provide 46% of the regional revenue and jobs for 39% of those employed in agriculture (Uzun et al., 2022).

Some cases of problems and successes in agricultural development

In Tatarstan, regional autarky and protectionism had negative consequences, and agroholdings were not a panacea (even successful poultry factories). The problems of super-concentration of animal husbandry in Tatarstan became clear in the history of the largest agroholding VAMIN-Tatarstan which collapsed in 2012–2013. In 1994, the former Soviet association *Tatmolagroprom* was transformed into the Tatarstan Sete holding under the leadership of Vagiz Mingazov. By the 2000s, he controlled about 500 thousand hectares, his family owned the controlling stake, and the holding was renamed after the first syllables of his name. With the support of the regional government, the holding bought up dairies and agricultural enterprises, increasing its debt load and pushing out 'foreign' business (owned by representatives of neighboring regions). Problems with creditor banks began before 2010, because the payback period for dairy production is 8–10 years, and debts kept growing. There were also new challenges under the changes in the structure of support for the national agro-industrial complex such as the federal deregulation of prices for fuel and fertilizers. Russia's accession to the WTO and the milk expansion of Belarus increased cheap imports, which kept prices for Russian dairy products down. In addition, there were difficulties in managing agricultural giants and the lack of competition between units of agroholdings. Working capital shortage and the desire to make a profit at any cost made agroholdings increase the sale of grain. As a result, there was not enough feed, milk quality and yield began to decline. The last straw was the drought of 2010, which affected many areas of European Russia and aggravated problems with feed for livestock: agroholdings wanted to slaughter 'extra' cows, but were stopped by the powerful administrative resource — the strict control over livestock in Tatarstan.

VAMIN's problems with creditor banks began in 2010, but the regional authorities helped. In 2012, the debt was about 20 billion rubles, which did not stop Mingazov from building two huge castles — in Kazan and in the Arsky district (Fig. 13). Five banks, including federal ones, filed lawsuits, because money and property had been withdrawn from VAMIN. In 2013 there was a trial, then a bankruptcy and the sale of enterprises, the remaining part of which was transferred to the new company “*Prosto Moloko*” [“Just Milk”] (Nefedova, 2013). This was very painful for Tatarstan since its stores were filled with VAMIN products, and some districts depended fully on one or two VAMIN divisions (jobs, salaries, etc.). This example shows that over-lending, gigantism and ‘pupation’ can lead to the collapse of even such a giant supported by the authorities.

Fig. 13. Castle of Vagiz Mingazov in the Arsky district of Tatarstan (photo by the author)

However, the story continued. In 2014, Vagiz Mingazov’s son Mintimer, having got a financial-economic education abroad during the VAMIN’s heyday, decided to restore the family business. He leased two former VAMIN dairy plants and an agricultural enterprise in the Arsky district and opened a new company to restore the name VAMIN in Tatarstan. In 2017, he bought out the Arsky and Baltasarsky dairy plants (the former VAMIN’s dairy plant in Kazan was bought by another company) and added milk collection sites in these and other districts of Tatarstan. Mintimer Mingazov admits that his father’s mistake was republican autarky and specialization in low-profit milk and tries to diversify his business. The 2014 countersanctions sharply reduced the import of milk products, which stimulated the new owner to master the production of butter and various types of cheese for the Russian market.

As a rule, there is rather competition than cooperation between large agricultural enterprises. For instance, in the Arsky district in the north of Tatarstan, in addition to the reviving VAMIN, there is Ak-Bars holding that has poultry farms, pig farms and cattle breeding sites in four other districts. The supply and delivery channels of two agroholdings do not overlap — each enterprise has its own chains.

Moreover, there are six other independent agricultural enterprises in this district, each with 2–3 thousand heads of cattle, two dozen Ltd companies and farms, and many family economies that keep livestock. To process milk from agricultural enterprises and numerous small producers, the Arsky Industrial Park was opened to clean and cool milk and send it to dairy plants in Tatarstan and in neighboring regions (the park does not work with the Arsky dairy plant of VAMIN); the park also processes potatoes.

The third large agroholding "*Krasny Vostok*" ["Red East"] also operates in several districts — in crop, milk and meat production. In the Alekseevsky district to the south of the Kama River, it keeps 6 thousand heads of cattle in three agricultural complexes, builds feed shops and has a dairy plant. This agroholding sells its production not only in Tatarstan but also in the Samara, Ulyanovsk and Voronezh Regions. In the Alekseevsky district, there are two other agricultural enterprises (former collective farms) and farms, including several large ones.

The main problem of the Alekseevsky district on the other bank of the Kama River opposite Kazan with a mixed Russian-Tatar population (Russians dominate) is that there are not enough workers in agriculture. The population is aging, the youth leave for Kazan and other cities, which makes owners invite workers from Central Asia; however, old machines and equipment do not allow to increase productivity. A significant part of income came from the sale of grain, but in 2022–2023 its cost was higher than the purchase price, and the cultivated area decreases. The construction of a cargo port on the Kama in the Alekseevsky district and of a road hub between Kazan, Nizhnekamsk and Samara (there is no railway) will give the district a new impetus for development but hardly agricultural due to the nonagricultural employment of a significant part of rural population.

There are other giant holdings in Tatarstan: the "*Agrosila*" ["Agro-Power"] holding owns the Chelny-Broiler Ltd. and Naberezhnye-Chelny dairy plant; the suburban Zelenodolsky plant processes a fifth of all milk in Tatarstan; there is the well-known Kamsky bacon, the "*Maysky*" ["May"] greenhouse plant in the suburbs of Kazan, one of the largest producers of closed-ground vegetables in Russia, agroholding "Food Program" in Yelabuga and others. Some of them are in one way or another connected with representatives of the regional government agencies or their relatives.

Despite the regional support for agricultural organizations (subsidies per liter of milk, subsidies for crop production and construction of storage facilities, joint federal-regional subsidies for purchase in livestock); in Tatarstan, as in Russia in general, agroholdings have become extremely vulnerable under the 2022 sanctions due to the strong dependence on imported seeds, plant protection products, genetic material in animal husbandry and poultry production, equipment and parts for it (Nefedova, 2023). In Tatarstan, as in other regions, some contracts for the supply of seeds and equipment were broken due to sanctions. In 2022, some workarounds were found, but the supply of sunflower seeds, sugar beet and corn seeds remains in question. In 2022–2023, young animals and spare parts were purchased through third countries, which increased the delivery time and the price of goods by 30%–40%, thus, increasing the cost of agricultural products. Regional authorities strive to ensure at least the production of spare parts for foreign equipment, but their shortage makes local products more expensive. Foreign markets for Tatarstan's agricultural products changed to Asia, Persian Gulf and China, and today their key consumers, albeit for lower prices, are Kazakhstan, Belarus and Uzbekistan. As a result, the disparity in prices for agricultural products and for their inputs has increased, which is the main problem of the last two years (What was 2022 like..., 2023).

Social-economic development of rural areas in Tatarstan

Having bought out land shares of rural population (one share is 4–6 hectares), agricultural enterprises maintain the system of relations with employees that developed in the 1990s (Pallot, Nefedova, 2007): for renting out land shares villagers receive feed for livestock and bull-calves at reduced prices, and veterinary care from the district. However, in 2021, the salary of more than 70 thousand workers in the agro-industrial complex was 32.5 thousand rubles, which was a quarter lower than the average salary in Tatarstan (Field pocket, 2022).

As a rule, large agroholdings have no interaction with farmers; moreover, there is a struggle for land shares. Although Tatarstan lagged behind many regions of Russia in the development of grain production, it stands out for the active development of family livestock farms, being second only to the North Caucasus and Siberia (Agricultural Production, 2021). These farms are supported in the construction of premises and with annual subsidies. The share of households in livestock production in Tatarstan is 37%, the share of farmers — 9%, while in the Belgorod Region, known for the highest share of agroholdings in gross agricultural output (76%) (Uzun, Shagaida et al., 2022), farmers produce less than 1% of livestock products and households — 3.7% (Agricultural Production, 2021).

The program for the development of family livestock farms was launched in 2010, and in 2012 it reached the federal level (Russian Government Decree No. 165 of February 28, 2012). By 2012, there were about 300 farms (each with at least 24 heads of livestock), and their number was growing. Those willing to engage in livestock farming applied for and received grants and additional support from municipalities which supplied farmers with building materials almost for free (often they counted as district taxes of brick factories) and, what is more important, built asphalt access roads as farms are usually located far from villages. At the same time, cooperation of farmers 'from below', as cooperation of commercial farms, develops in Tatarstan and in Russia in general with great difficulty.

It should be noted that an increased support for family farms is not always a panacea. In the Arsky district, with a predominance of Tatars (higher population density and preserved traditions of animal husbandry), villagers have a lot of livestock, their houses look neater and richer. This is largely the result of certain national patterns and of the reverent attitude towards one's home (every respected man should maintain his household with dignity and have a beautiful house), which affects the appearance of Tatar villages and even houses when the village consists of the Russian and Tatar parts. In the Alekseevsky district (large outflow and mixed population), villagers have less livestock and half-abandoned houses are more common.

In addition to agriculture, the most widespread small business in rural areas is trade rather than household services, and crafts are even more rare (for instance, the hand-made artistic weaving factory in the Alekseevsky district, which is 85 years old). There are many regional social programs that received a lively response in the countryside, such as a social mortgage for public sector workers: on the outskirts of small towns, urban-type settlements and some villages, cottages or low-rise houses are built with a social mortgage based on an affordable first payment and regional subsidies. The same applies to the housing programs for veterans and for relocation from dilapidated houses. There is also the regional program "Housing for young families with children": in the 2010s, families received money to buy a house. Unlike many other Russian regions, 100% of rural areas in Tatarstan are gasified. There are renovation programs for schools, kindergartens, clubs, paramedic stations and sports complexes; even in the depopulating Russian villages small primary schools are not closed, as in many Non-Black-Earth regions (which makes parents take children to schools tens of kilometers aways, thus, forcing families to leave for cities) (Old-Developed Regions, 2021: 68–78). In the villages of Tatarstan, if it is impossible to maintain empty school buildings, small houses with several rooms are used for primary schools, even if there are only two or three children left. However, in recent years there has been an increasing shortage of teachers and doctors in rural areas.

Conclusion: features and key problems of spatial development in Tatarstan

Tatarstan is a striking example of the temporal-spatial development according to the idea of the equality–efficiency tradeoff (Okun, 1975). However, not so much the concentration of population and production is dangerous (centers grow, but the periphery remains relatively stable) as the spatial polarization, when an increase in one place is accompanied by a decline in another (Treivish, 2022), which is typical for many Russian regions (Old-Developed Regions, 2021). Due to such factors as the availability of natural resources, preservation of human capital, specific management and relations with the federal authorities, Tatarstan managed to avoid strong contrasts in its social-economic development. Its economic engines are still the oil and gas complex, auto industry and its capital Kazan, despite the single-industry status of its industrial centers (except for Kazan). However, Kazan does not have strong advantages compared to other million-plus cities, including the nearby ones (Nizhny Novgorod, Samara, Perm, not to mention Moscow and Yekaterinburg). At the same time, except for large cities, the most important development factor in Tatarstan is still agriculture (more broadly, the agro-industrial complex).

The long-standing strategy of a ‘closed’ system (except for specialized enterprises like KAMAZ) and the focus on self-sufficiency in the region with high internal competition have consequences. As the role of oil gradually declines, Tatarstan needs a wider access to the Russian market and, perhaps, to the international market for other industries, including agriculture. A high level of social trust with the partial preservation of clan relations, on the one hand, contributed to the success of individual entrepreneurs. On the other hand, it hindered the comprehensive economic development and reduced the diversity and competitiveness of business compared to neighboring regions, which seems to be admitted by entrepreneurs much faster than by the regional government.

In addition to the oil and chemical-engineering complex, Tatarstan can position itself as a major Russian producer of dairy and agricultural products due to its powerful agro-industrial complex and rural population that preserved national traditions and experience in animal husbandry. Regional authorities should not support agriculture only in its extreme manifestations (large agroholdings and family farms) but should increase the diversity of producers and promote the expansion of their connections and various types of cooperation both in Tatarstan and other regions.

The increased regional support for agroholdings led to their seizure of land and accumulation of debts and to the closure of sometimes capable medium-sized farms. A decrease in the diversity of enterprises affects the sustainability of agriculture when market conditions fluctuate. Regional support for both enterprises and family farms, including in marketing, contributes, on the one hand, to an increase in economic activity, on the other hand, to the habit of waiting for instructions and help 'from above'.

The specific feature of Tatarstan is its better preservation of human capital in rural areas compared to many regions of central Russia, which can be explained by the ethnic factor that increases entrepreneurial activity in agriculture. Variations in the ethnic composition of population together with the location in relation to large cities influence both the rural outflow to cities and the outputs of agriculture. To keep the youth in the village, agricultural support is not enough — it is necessary to stimulate non-agricultural types of employment in rural areas to preserve the unique human potential that is already lost in many rural areas of the Non-Black-Earth region (except for the suburbs of large cities).

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Татарстан: сельско-городское развитие республики в контексте пространственных трендов 1990–2020 годов[4]

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Аннотация. В статье рассмотрены основные тенденции экономического развития Республики Татарстан с 1990 по 2020 год, отмечено влияние на эти тенденции введенных в 2022 году санкций, показана роль республики в жизни европейской части России с учетом пространственной структуры ее расселения и экономики. Автор обозначает различия промышленного производства, торговли и сельского хозяйства по районам республики, а ключевые тенденции их изменения за тридцать лет отражены на картах и в графиках. Специфика сельской местности охарактеризована в статье, исходя из особенностей этнического состава населения, удаленности от городов и экономических преобразований в сельском хозяйстве. Особое внимание автор уделяет агрохолдингам, которые играют важную роль в социально-экономическом развитии Татарстана, и приводит примеры из истории отдельных предприятий, чтобы показать их воздействие на экономическое развитие сельской местности, однако охарактеризована и роль малого бизнеса. Статья заканчивается перечнем главных проблем в развитии Республики Татарстан.

Ключевые слова: Республика Татарстан, расселение, агломерации, этнический состав населения, промышленность, сельское хозяйство, агрохолдинги, малый бизнес

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