



IGU 2015 Book of Abstracts

IGU2015 – 3023

Medium-sized cities in the system of settlement of Central Russia*Ilya SMIRNOV, Alexandra FOMKINA (Russian Federation)*

Medium-sized cities (50 000 – 100 000 people) are the units of the settlement framework for the vast territory of the country. They are found in between large cities and small towns. Medium-sized cities are the cores of economic, demographic, social and cultural attraction of the surrounding area. Most of the urban people in non-capital regions of Central Russia live in cities with population size of over 100 thousand people. Some regions differ by high concentration of population in the medium-sized cities (24-31%) - Smolensk, Tver, Tambov, Tula, Ivanovo regions. In these regions, the medium-sized cities adopt a role of the territory organizers, which supply small towns and rural areas. The medium-sized cities perform some functions, which are incidental to large cities. Medium-sized cities also have a high potential for control of the surrounding area, one in three city in this category is the center of economic microregion. Together with submedium cities (20-100 thousand people) medium-sized cities control 46% of the territory, 41% of municipalities and 26% of the population. Non-capital regions of Central Russia can be divided into three groups depending on the types of cities which control and organize the territory. The first group includes the regions where the large cities assume the role of sub-centers. This group includes Vladimir, Tula, Lipetsk and Yaroslavl regions. The second group, the largest one, includes regions where the role of sub-centers belongs to medium-sized and submedium cities (10 regions). The third (the smallest) group is composed by the regions where small towns fulfil a function of sub-centers. About half of municipalities are controlled by the regional centers. Analysis of changes in the urban structure of the non-capital regions in Central Russia demonstrates a trend of polarization of urban settlement: increasing percent of large cities, as well as the number and proportion of small towns. Part of the medium-sized cities are losing their population, there is an "erosion" of this group. In connection therewith, the important research problems are to identify the strengths and development's prospects of medium-sized cities and to work out the special measures aimed to maintaining their demographic and economic sustainability.