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**TRANSFORMATION OF ETHNO-ECONOMICS IN RUSSIA IN THE DIGITALIZATION ERA:
WAYS DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES**

Lic. Betal Muratovich Bizhiov

Southern Federal University, Russia
Electronic University of Sberbank-AST JSC, Russia
ORCID: 0000-0002-7106-2220
bizhiovbetal@mail.ru

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Abstract

The article analyses the impact of global processes on the activity of ethnic entrepreneurs, as well as the opportunities it creates. With that goal in mind, the conceptual analysis of ethno-economic studies is conducted. The conclusions regarding the development of ethnic businesses are systematized and generalized. The interactive models of the development of ethnic enterprises are created. The strategies used by ethnic entrepreneurs are identified. The dominant trends in the digitalization of the economy are substantiated. Based on that, the mechanism for Russian ethnic entrepreneurs' participation in the new innovative development trajectory – ethnic trading. Cases of successful ethnic trading are provided.

Keywords

Ethno-economics – Development – Support – Ethnic trading – Digitalization – Transformation

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Introduction

At the modern stage, ethnic problems are increasingly drawing the attention of the scientific community due to the actualization of studies on the ethno-economic processes in the conditions of digitalization of the economy and on the features of development in the context of changes in the technical and technological foundations of social production. Special attention is attracted by the reaction of the ethnosphere on the corresponding global processes, serious contradictions emerging in the economic modernization and, and the difficulties of social and economic adaptation. As scientists rightfully note, “the problems of human survival and preservation of natural forms of their existence: nature-related, national, economic, cultural, etc., are becoming more relevant” in the post-industrial world and the innovation-based economic system¹.

We attempted to focus our attention on the impact of global processes on the activity of ethnic entrepreneurs, as well as the opportunities emerging in that context. The evaluation of the effect produced on such micro-institutional structures as an ethnic economy requires conceptual and empirical analysis. First, as Immanuel Wallerstein indicates in his work “Race, nation, class”, this owes to the fact that, methodologically, there is only one way of knowing – through studying the uniqueness of historical situations from the point of the specifics of their contradictions and the way they are influenced by global structures they are part of². Second, this relates to the fact that empirical material allows forming recommendations on improving the institutional environment for the functioning of ethnic economy enterprises.

Ethnic economy: a conceptual analysis

At the meso-level, the ethnic economy is viewed as a segment of the economy, a sphere of social reproduction, and the set of subjective factors of the economy of an ethnic region³. The understanding of the phenomenon of ethno-economics examined At present article is based on the works of Russian researchers who define this sphere as the traditional types of labor developed in the corresponding ethnic communities and closely related to the traditional lifestyle, economic orientation, and family and everyday life of the population in a given territory⁴.

In his works on the interrelation of the economic, social, and institutional phenomena, G. Myrdal views ethno-economics as “special local zones of the global economy the development of which relies on their own economic models”⁵. This position is reflected in E.G. Kochetov’s works on geoeconomics. According to the author, ethno-economic systems play the role of foci of global stability⁶ and the central attributes of the

¹ S. Boldyreva y T. Aksenova, “Some Theoretical Problems of Studying of Ethnoeconomics”, *Oriental Studies* Vol: 4 num 113 (2013).

² E. Balibar y I. Wallerstein, *Rasa, natsiia, klass. Dvumyslennye identichnosti* (Moscow: “Logos” Publishing House, 2004).

³ B. M. Bizhiov, “Etnoekonomika kak resurs modernizatsii ekonomiki periferiinykh territorii (na primere Rostovskoi oblasti)”, *Regionalnaia ekonomika i upravlenie: electronic scientific journal* Vol: 4 num 48 (2016): 717-730

⁴ A. Kh. Tambiev, *Region v sisteme natsionalnoi ekonomiki: ekonomicheskie modeli i mekhanizmy regulirovaniia* (Rostov-on-Don, 2000).

⁵ G. Myrdal, *Sovremennye problemy “tretego mira”* (Moscow: Progress, 1972).

⁶ E. G. Kochetov, “Etnoekonomicheskie sistemy – ochagi globalnoi ustoychivosti?”, *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia* num 9 (1997).

neo-economic civilization model and can be defined as “economic populations created in the world system on the basis of ethno-economic transnationalization”⁷.

Ethno-economics is also defined as ethnic self-employment and ethnic entrepreneurship in which the development of entrepreneurial ability in such conditions is promoted by the historically formed ethnic environment⁸. This can manifest “in the style of doing business, the choice of the sphere to apply one’s entrepreneurial skills in, the choice of the main partners and contractors, establishing economic connections, choosing the target audience of consumers of goods and services”⁹. From this angle, the ethnic economy is viewed as a subsystem of the economy able to reflect the unique ways in which ethnic communities adapt to specific life conditions¹⁰.

The systematization and summarization of various ethno-economic approaches are presented in Figure 1.

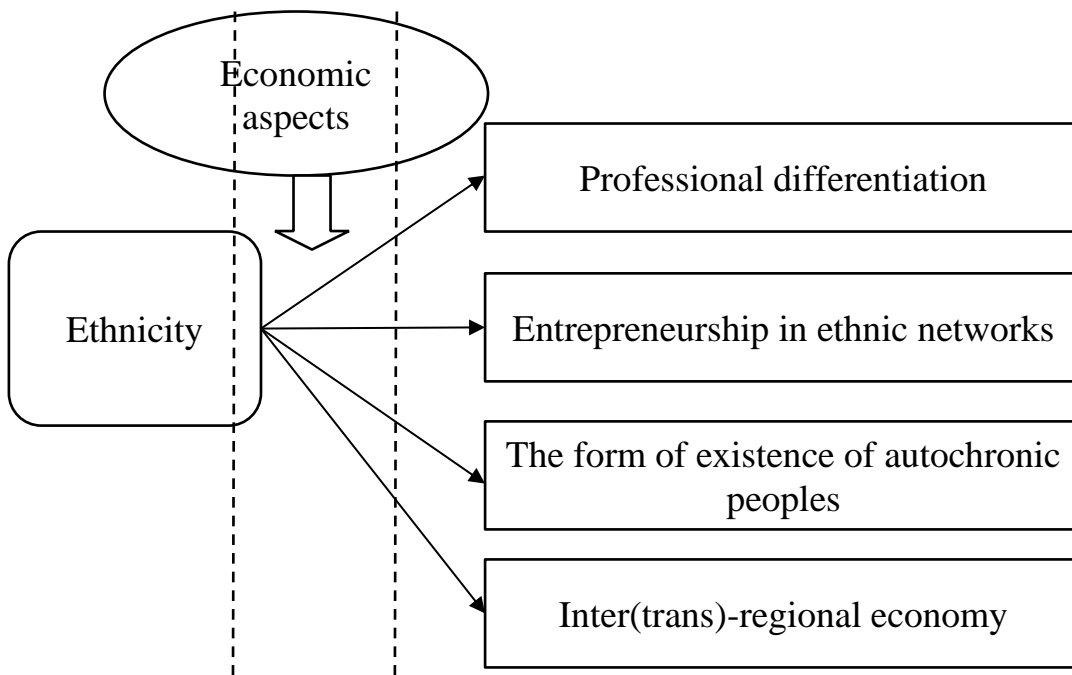


Figure 1
Generalization of types of ethnic economies

Concurrently, in his analysis of the informal economy of modern Russia, T. Shanin indicates the existence of the so-called autonomous nature of the economy or survival economy based on labor-intensive work in unregulated high-risk markets, family rather than hired labor, mutual support and lending (based on trust rather than formal contractual

⁷ E. G. Kochetov, *Vneshniaia politika i bezopasnost sovremennoi Rossii* (Moscow: “Izdatelskii tsentr nauchnykh i uchebnykh programm”, LLC, 1999).

⁸ T. V. Vizer, “*Ekonomika. Etnos. Kultura*”, *Regionalnaia ekonomika i upravlenie: electronic scientific journal* Vol: 3 num 5 (2008). Retrieved from: <http://region.mcnp.ru>

⁹ G. M. Avetov, “*Vliianie etnicheskogo faktora na formirovanie rossiiskoi sistemy predprinimatelstva: osnovnye aspekty*”, *Ekonomicheskie nauki* Vol: 72 num 11 (2010): 51.

¹⁰ M. A. Bagomedov, “*K voprosu ob osobennostiakh spetsializatsii sel na regionalnom rynke Dagestana*”, *Regionalnye problemy prognozirovaniia ekonomiki* num 3 (2008).

agreements), kinship, neighborhood, and, last but not least, ethnicity. According to the author, such a mode of life that incorporates many (if not all) of the aforementioned characteristics forms “the expolar economy”¹¹. In its essence, ethno-economy studies the use of a person representing a certain ethnos as an economic resource and a factor of production while the ethnic resource itself can be considered a means of production.

Therefore, ethno-economy is, on the one hand, a scientific discipline studying the specific characteristics of the economic activity of ethnoses and, on the other hand, an important component of the regional economy (or a subsystem of the economy characterized by a set of distinctive features).

Modern ethno-economic studies highlight the topic of evaluation of the influence of ethnic minorities and their role in economic development. For instance, in the article “Ethnic networks in Ex-USSR”, the authors indicate that the formation of market relations depends on informal institutes (such as ethnic networks) and examine their special role in a transitional period when the institutional frameworks are still weak¹². The first reaction preceding the establishment of formal business and trade relations is turning to the resource of ethnicity¹³.

However, the processes of integration of ethnoses demonstrate a range of problems in economic interaction between racial and ethnic groups and the incomplete exercise of their rights even in developed countries. Although in some regions of the developing countries such as China the proportion of ethnic minorities is predominant (on average, 51.76% of the population of minority areas belong to ethnic minorities while in some provinces the proportion reaches 84.82% of the population)¹⁴. In Turkey, approximately 20% of the population is an ethnic minority¹⁵. Some regions of Russia also have ethnic minorities as the titular nation.

Ethnic entrepreneurs use low market entry barriers, high labor intensity, and low capital intensity to enter the spheres of social production that traditionally had various market restrictions. The examples of that are the “small shops in the city center”, “convenience stores”, “tailoring”, “taxis”, “sale of exotic and specific goods”, and “catering services”. The ethnic strategies created by the structure of opportunities of ethnic entrepreneurs and the market conditions are presented in Figure 2.

¹¹ T. Shanin, *Ekspoliarnye struktury i neformalnaia ekonomika sovremennoi Rossii. Neformalnaia ekonomika. Rossiia i mir* (Moscow: Logos, 1999), 11-32.

¹² G. Gokmen; E. Nickishina y P-L Vezina, *Ethnic networks in Ex-USSR*. 2017. Retrieved from: <http://freepolicybriefs.org/2017/11/06/ethnic-networks-ex-ussr/>

¹³ G. Gokmen, “Clash of civilizations and the impact of cultural differences on trade”, *Journal of Development Economics* num 127 (2017): 449-458.

¹⁴ C. Textor, *The proportion of ethnic minorities in the population of China in 2017 by minority areas*. 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/278556/share-of-ethnic-minorities-in-the-chinese-population-by-region/>

¹⁵ H. Plecher, *Turkey: Ethnicities in 2016*. 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/255490/distribution-of-ethnicities-in-turkey/>

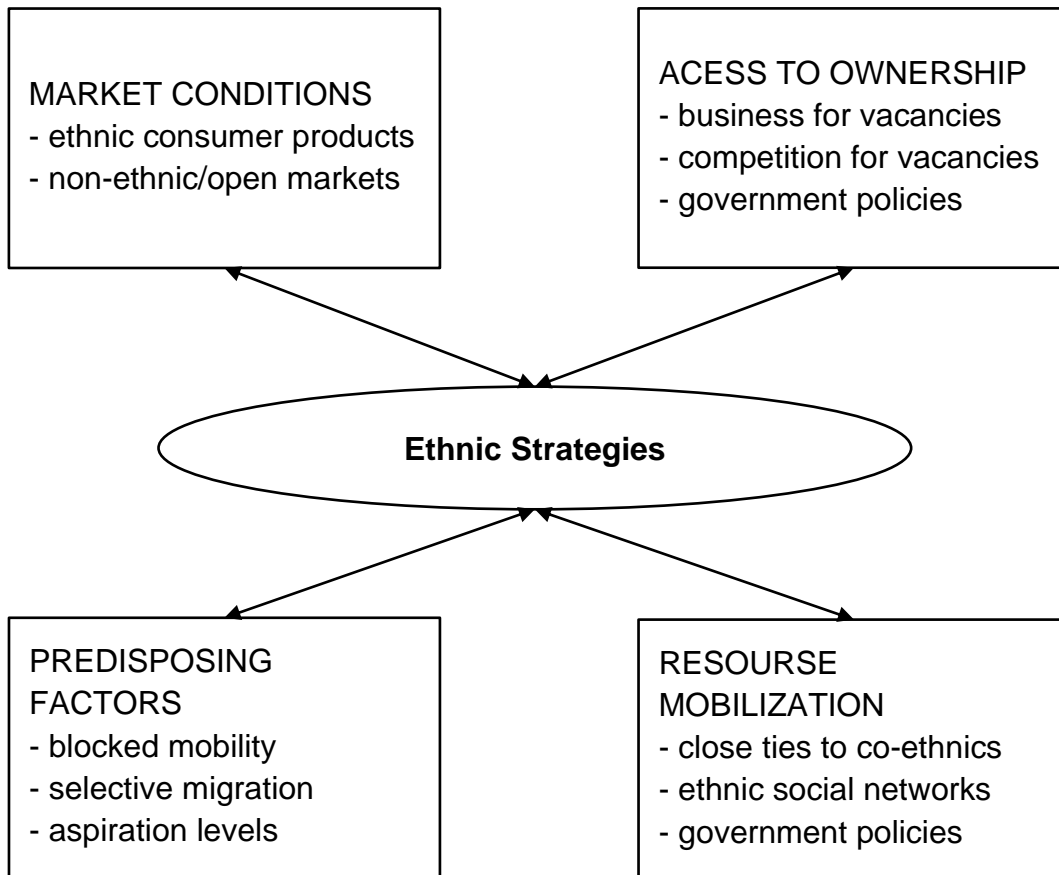


Figure 2
An interactive model of ethnic business development¹⁶

Ethnic processes are relevant for the whole world, but regions where the role of ethno-economy is predominant still demonstrate objective prerequisites for ethno-social stratification that both roots in the specific characteristics of ethnic communities and presents the result of the stage of development of the ethnos which determines the lingering dependence of ethno-social communities on the landscape they reside on.

The above-mentioned limitations are characteristic not only of the developing countries but also of the developed ones. A set of interrelated statistical data additionally illustrates the present state of racial and ethnic inequality in the United States. The real median household income for US households of all racial and ethnic groups in 2016 was \$56,516. Asian and caucasian households (white, non-Latino) had relatively high median income while the households of black and Hispanic families were lower than average national income¹⁷.

Thereby, over 60% of the world workforce are employed in the informal sector where most rules and regulations are not in place and, according to the International Labor

¹⁶ R. Waldinger, H. Aldrich, R. Ward. Ethnic Entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship. The Social Science View (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 356-388.

¹⁷ E. Duffin, Median household income in the United States in 2018, by race or ethnic group (in U.S. dollars). Retrieved from: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/233324/median-household-income-in-the-united-states-by-race-or-ethnic-group/>

Organization, such employment is often forced¹⁸. The emergence of ethnic communities and networks creates infrastructure and resources needed for small ethnic businesses. As the proportion of entrepreneurs and self-employed people in the ethnic group growth, the protection and development of ethnic businesses start to reflect the interests of the group and, therefore, become closely tied to this ethnicity (Figure 3).

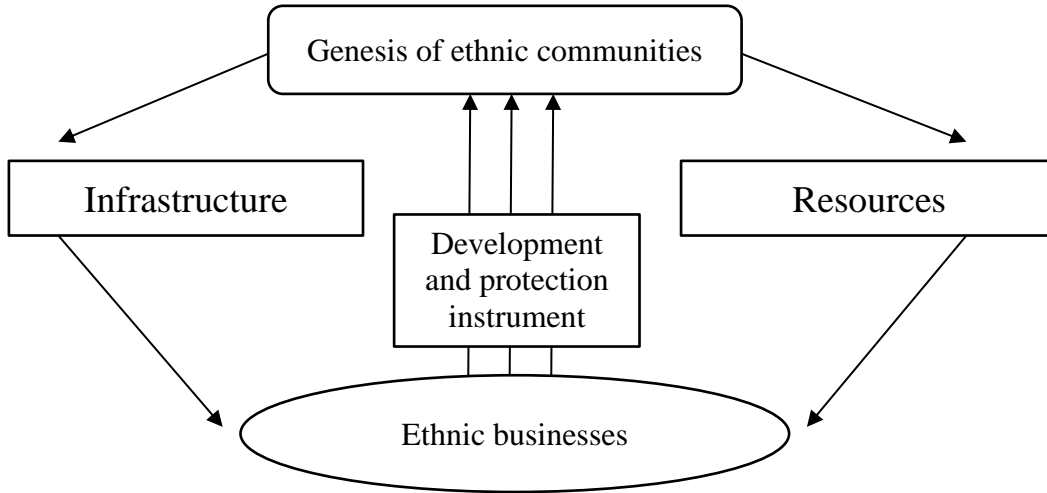


Figure 3
An interactive model of the genesis of ethnic business

Therefore, it can be concluded that basic institutes (in this context, those related to ethnicity) of the society determine its possible development trajectories. This was indicated by K. Polanyi¹⁹ and D. North²⁰.

The influence of globalization and digitalization

Globalization changes the structure of ethnic economies. Classical forms of ethnic employment and niches such as small shops in big cities are increasingly often replaced by firms and sectors that are transnational, large in scale, and included in global networks of goods, finance, and information²¹. Much like past technological transformations similar to it in its social and economic significance (industrialization, electrification, etc.), digitalization of the economy brings a set of changes. It impacts society and the economy as a whole²².

¹⁸ Women and men in the informal economy: A statistical picture. Third edition. Geneva: International Labour Office. 2018. Retrieved from: https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_626831/lang--en/index.htm

¹⁹ K. Polanyi, *The Livelihood of Man* (New York: Academic Press, 1977)

²⁰ D. North, *Instituty, institutsionalnye izmeneniia i funktsionirovanie ekonomiki* (Moscow: "Nachala" economic book fund, 1997), 147-148

²¹ K. S. Chin; I. J. Yoon y D. Smith, "Immigrant Small Business and International Economic Linkage: A Case of the Korean Wig Business in Los Angeles, 1968–1977", *International Migration Review* Vol: 30 num 2 (1996): 485-510 y W. Li y G. Dymski, "Globally Connected and Locally Embedded Financial In-stitutions: Analyzing the ethnic Chinese banking sector", in: Eric Fong (ed.) *Chinese Ethnic Economy: Global and Local Perspectives* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007), 35-63.

²² Competition Committee of Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development: *The Digital Economy*. 2012. Competition Law & Policy. Retrieved from: <http://www.oecd.org/daf/competition/The-Digital-Economy-2012.pdf>

For instance, the Government of the Russian Federation states that due to the continuing robotization and decrease in employment the authorities will have to prepare for mass retraining and identifies the change in the situation on the labor market due to the acceleration of these processes as one of the most serious challenges for the authorities²³.

Experts from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development estimated the median risk of workplace automation in OECD countries at 48%. Although new technologies mostly affect the structure of employment rather than its level, the literature on the employment effects of technological change shows that a strong and positive relationship between innovations and employment growth in firms exists at the micro-level²⁴. Analysis of the effect produced by the increase in industrial robot usage between 1990 and 2007 on US local labor markets shows that one more robot per thousand workers reduces the employment to population ratio by about 0.18-0.34 percentage points and wages by 0.25-0.5%²⁵.

Meanwhile, the degree of automatization, the introduction of robotic technologies, and the sales of industrial robots increase while the average cost of an industrial robot unit is lowering²⁶. According to the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA), the distribution of the portion of workers subject to the risk of automatization by the types of activity is the following:

1. Hospitality and catering – 73% of employees;
2. Manufacturing industries – 60%;
3. Agriculture and forestry – 58%;
4. Retail (53%);
5. Mining (51%).

Ethnic trading as an innovation

We shall focus on the spheres in which entrepreneurs can benefit from the transformation of the instruments of production and distribution of goods. The structure of the aspect section of ethno-economics includes the differentiation into the traditional (related to the way an ethnos inherits the forms and ways of management) and innovative (determined by the need to adapt to modern geoeconomic conditions) components of management²⁷.

²³ Medvedev prizval gotovitsia k perekvalifikatsii iz-za uskoreniia robotizatsii. Vesti finance. October 22, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.vestifinance.ru/articles/127027>

²⁴ R. Kapeliushnikov, "Is technological change a devourer of jobs?", Voprosy Ekonomiki num 11 (2017): 70-101.

²⁵ D. Acemoglu y P. Restrepo, Robots and Jobs: Evidence from US Labor Markets. NBER Working Paper 23285 (2017). Retrieved from: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w23285>

²⁶ Sberbank robotics laboratory. Analytical review of the global robotics market num 11 (2019): 111-140. Retrieved from: http://www.sberbank.ru/common/img/uploaded/pdf/sberbank_robotics_review_2019_17.07.2019_m.pdf

²⁷ M. O. Shandirov, Etnoekonomika v sisteme regionalnogo vosproizvodstva (na materialakh Kabardino-Balkarskoi respublikii) (Rostov-on-Don, 2002), 21

Some researchers assume that ethnic trading can become one of the directions of ethnoses' activity that would correspond to the new ethno-economy²⁸, i.e. be successfully integrated into the globalized world of the digital economy.

Indeed, the creation of new mechanisms and the use of e-marketing models may leave some potential for the development of ethnic entrepreneurs. In its essence, this form of adaptation for new conditions of functioning corresponds to the modern type of economic development. The perspectives of ethno-economic households are related to the increase in demand for authentic ethnic products, its skillful advertising, the growing interest for agrotourism, etc. This allows us to believe that ethnic entrepreneurship and the support of small business development by special state programs have a chance for further development²⁹.

The number of people using e-commerce platforms has risen by 8% globally with almost 1.8 billion people in the world buying online. About 45% of all Internet users are now using e-commerce platforms but the level of its pervasion differs largely across countries (Figure 4) with Russia, in particular, being lower than the world average level.

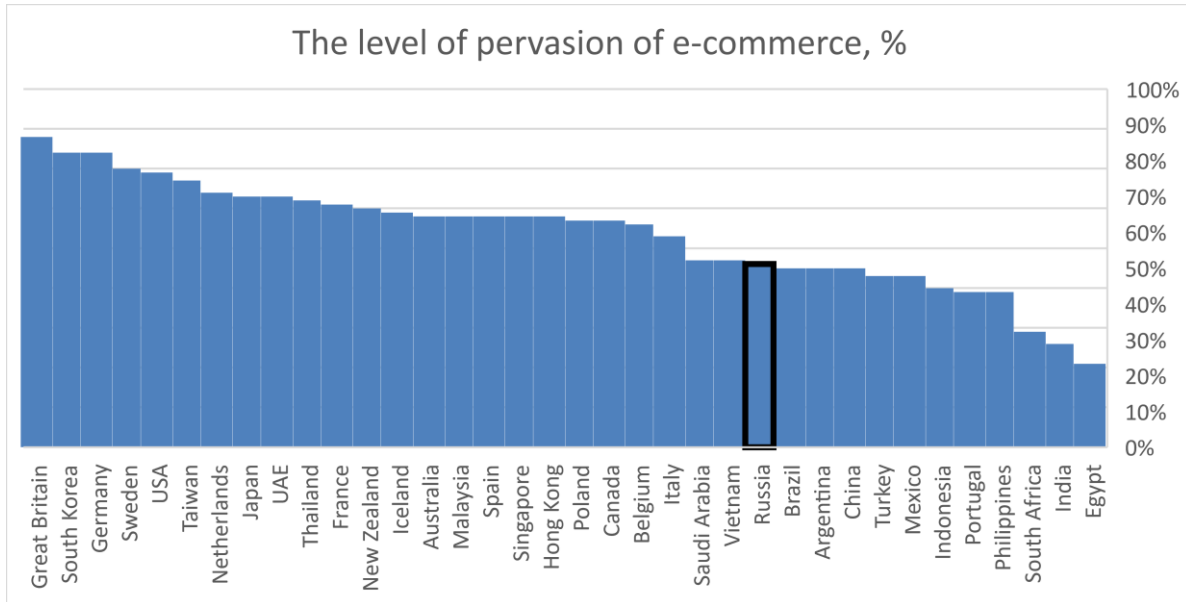


Figure 4
E-commerce pervasion across countries³⁰

Such a deep pervasion of new information technologies and the development of e-commerce resulted in the emergence of an entire virtual world complementing and duplicating the social and economic interactions between people. The basis for the creation of this “digital world” was formed by the fact that the Internet and information networks have now reached every corner of the Earth.

²⁸ T. E. Khorolskaia, “Vektor novoi etnoekonomiki kak novoe napravleniia ekonomicheskoi teorii”, *Ekonomicheskie issledovaniia i razrabotki* num 4 (2019): 175-177.

²⁹ Iu. S. Kolesnikova y V. N. Ovchinnikov, *Traditsionnye khoziaistvennye praktiki narodov Severnogo Kavkaza: etnoekonomika – vek XXI: Monografiia*. Rostov-on-Don: Sodeistvie – XXI vek. 2017.

³⁰ Global Digital report from Weg Social and Hootsuite. 2018 <https://wearesocial.com/us/blog/2018/01/global-digital-report-2018>

Some researchers studying the World-System concept proposed by Wallerstein indicate the need to account for and implement a more soft criterion of an “information network”³¹ for the classification of the economic world order which would allow examining the World-System as a single developing whole³². Researchers’ assessments converge at the point that the World-System has reached “such a level of integration that has already allowed the spread of fundamentally important technologies over the periods of time that are noticeably less than a millennium”³³. Examining the society as an information system, A.G. Rumiantsev concludes on the “large-scale transformation of the world political system” and identifies the “link between the concept of globalization and the change in the nature of information processes”³⁴.

The Internet is currently used by over 4 billion people worldwide. More than half of the world population is currently “online” via various social networks, messengers, and chats (Figure 5), while almost a quarter of a billion new users first entered the web in 2017.

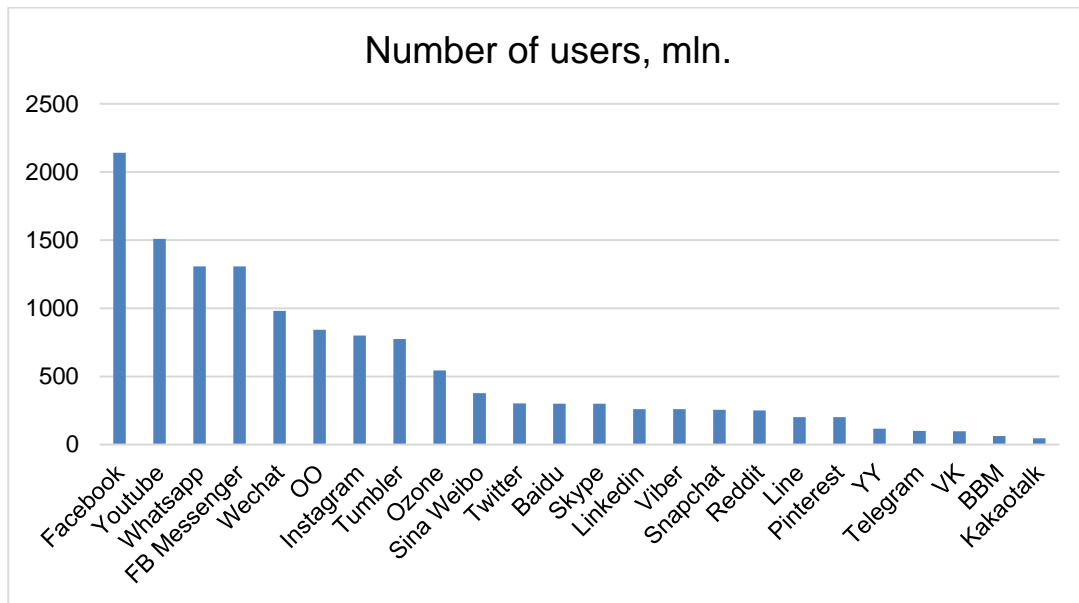


Figure 5
Active users of the leading global social networking platforms³⁵

A significant part of the growth in the number of Internet users was determined by the appearance of more accessible smartphones and mobile tablets. The most recent data from the “Digital market” report demonstrates that the total value of the e-commerce

³¹ C. Chase-Dunn y T. D Hall, *Rise and Demise: Comparing World-Systems* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997)

³² B. Dolgonosov y V. Naidenov, “Informatsionnaia kontseptsia dinamiki chislennosti chelovechestva”, *Problemy ekologicheskogo modelirovaniia i monitoring* Vol: 198 num 3-4 (2006): 375-386

³³ L. E. Grinin; I. V. Ilin y A. V. Korotaev, *Universalnaia i globalnaia istoriia (evoliutsiia Vselennoi, Zemli, zhizni i obshchestva)*. Khrestomatiia, ezhegodnoe izdanie. Library of the Global Processes faculty of the Moscow State University (Volgograd: Uchitel, 2012)

³⁴ A. G. Rumiantsev, *Sovremennoe gosudarstvo i vyzovy postindustrialnogo obshchestva*. Retrieved from: http://www.law.net.ru/stat_is/index.htm

³⁵ N. McDonald, *Global Digital report from Weg Social and Hootsuite*. 2018. Retrieved from: <https://wearesocial.com/us/blog/2018/01/global-digital-report-2018>

consumer goods market has grown by 16% over the past year, with the total annual spending in 2017 reaching nearly \$1.5 trillion³⁶.

According to the analytical agency “Statista”, the share of e-commerce in total global sales almost doubled over four years: from 7.4% in 2015 to 13.7% in 2019. More consumer groups join e-commerce each year. At present, 1.9 billion of almost 4.4 billion Internet users make online purchases which is 45% more than in 2014. The Top-5 leading countries in retail and e-commerce (b2c) for 2018 include:

1. China — \$629.5 billion
2. USA — \$501 billion
3. Great Britain — \$86.2 billion
4. Japan — \$81.6 billion
5. Germany — \$70.3 billion

In general, the Asia-Pacific region accounts for 80% of the global volume of e-commerce and the geography of distribution of shares is unlikely to change in the near future. Russia can not yet be spoken about as a significant player in the Internet sales market. According to Data Insight, in 2018, the volume of the Russian Internet sales market was \$23.8 billion which is 26 times less than in China. However, the restrictions caused by the spread of Covid-19 predetermined the increase in these indicators in 2020.

Support for ethnic economy

The analysis of the current situation indicates that stable development calls for a strategy of accounting for and including the ethno-economic processes in the complex plans of socio-economic development the need for which is determined by the necessity of compensating negative effects.

The experience of China in the integration of ethnic groups through investing in the transport sphere along with the deployed renovation program, in general, have only aggravated the inequality between the northern regions (historical Dzungaria) and the southern regions (Alttyshakhar) and between the Uyghurs and the Han people³⁷. The actions of authorities benefited certain companies but caused the destruction of the familiar environment for local residents which became one of the reasons for the inter-ethnic conflict in Urumqi in 2009. The Uyghurs were excluded from the network of social exchanges and were deprived of their usual social ties and habitual employment. Researchers in ethno-economics note that the realization of competitive potential of ethno-economics may be ensured by stimulating the sales of unique products, searching for sales markets for ethno-economic products, supporting the preserved art crafts, creating a system of measures to promote folk art and crafts, etc.³⁸. In general, as indicated by the

³⁶ Statistical portal “Statista”. Retrieved from: <https://www.statista.com/>

³⁷ R. Steenberg y A. Rippa, “Development for all? State schemes, security, and marginalization in Kashgar, Xinjiang”, *Journal Critical Asian Studies*. Vol: 51 num 2 (2019).

³⁸ S. V. Panikarova, *Transformatsiia etnoekonomiki regiona v sovremennykh usloviakh (na materialakh regionov luzhnoi Sibiri)* (Saint Petersburg, 2013), 151.

journal “Inc”, “small manufacturers can access customers around the world thanks to the digital transformation”³⁹, which is also accurate for capital and financial investment. Sales of self-made products in social networks are increasingly gaining momentum.

For instance, foreign world trade markets are now available for all players and not just transnational corporations. As was noted at the Davos economic forum, the ethno-economic subjects mostly represented by micro-businesses and the subjects of small and medium enterprises “have access to customers around the world thanks to the digital transformation – the emergence of new services on the basis of technological platforms”⁴⁰.

High-quality goods produced by ethnic craftsmen (folk arts and crafts) are not presented online. Meanwhile, there is a group of consumers showing demand for high-quality art products within the framework of interaction and cooperation with the countries of Latin America and Southeast Asia in the format of BRICS (Figure 6). At the present moment, a product does not factually exist if it is not represented online. It is important to show the product at its best, a customer has to be able to see its pictures, touch it, and buy it.

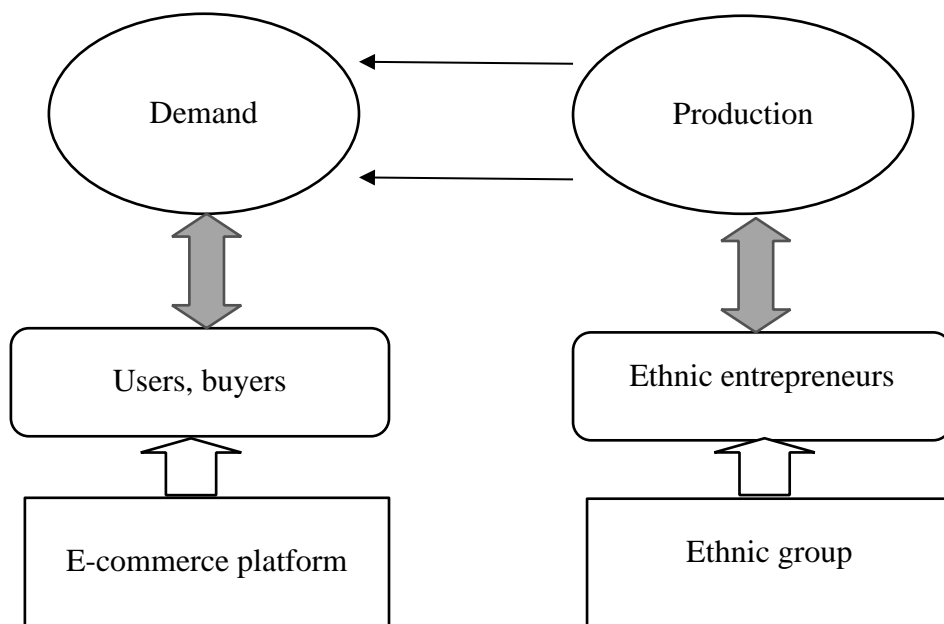


Figure 6
Model for meeting the demand for ethnic goods

The regular presentation of folk arts and crafts products at exhibitions and fairs organized by regional executive authorities in Russia has a range of disadvantages in terms of strategic product promotion. Exhibitions are held for a limited amount of time and the product presentation expenses become a necessity.

³⁹ N. Suvorova, *Novye i derzkie: kak demokratichnye iuvelirnye marki zadaiut trend na padayushchem rynke*. 2018. Retrieved from: <https://incrussia.ru/understand/novye-i-derzkie-kak-demokratichnye-yuvelirnye-marki-zadayut-trend-na-padayushhem-rynke/>

⁴⁰ D. Shushkin, *Vazhnee elektrichestva i ognia: 5 novostei Davosa o tekhnologiiakh, kotorye izmeniat biznes*. Retrieved from: <https://incrussia.ru/understand/vazhnee-elektrichestva-i-ognya-5-novostej-davosa-o-tehnologiyah-kotorye-izmenyat-biznes/>

Meanwhile, the production does not stay put but develops. The search for new sales channels and new consumers interested in certain folk art crafts products must be continuous. Information and telecommunication support also has to be provided. The digital economy opens the perspectives of future development through e-commerce for handicrafts, folk arts and crafts, and ethnic and exotic goods among other things. The degree of pervasion of IT distribution channels will inevitably increase.

At present, a group of socially important products is allocated as a part of a project supported by the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation within the framework of the promotion program of the “Association of Folk Arts and Crafts” and folk arts and crafts are one of the main groups of such products. A project for increasing the demand for the products of artisans is carried out. Marketplaces allow entering the international market and focusing on the production of local goods including special cultural folk crafts.

The need to enter world markets and ensure the export potential requires electronic trading platforms operating in different countries of the world, as well as the availability of multilingual services. Promotion on such platforms should mainly be focused on promoting national players and manufacturers including the manufacturers of folk arts and crafts. The experience of studying over 100 manufacturers all over the world demonstrates that foreign manufacturers actively use digital channels to promote their products in foreign markets. They register their company, lay out a showcase of products, and are excellent at describing their product and the service they are ready to offer. Russian manufacturers are, however, either unaware of such possibilities or do not understand how to use them. Meanwhile, successful cases accentuate various promotion channels. There are success stories about entrepreneurs posting information on the marketplace without having their own online-shop or social media presence and increase their sales both on the foreign market and within the country. Most marketplaces are free in their basic form meaning that they provide basic instruments for manufacturers free of charge.

Even if a person does not possess any special skills and competencies or speak foreign languages, marketplaces present them with an opportunity to upload the groups of products the manufacturer is willing to provide in the national language for the system to provide an automatic high-quality translation of all the content to several languages. Using this instrument further on and having the necessary information in a foreign language the manufacturer can upload their products to other international e-commerce platforms.

Only 3% of Russian manufacturers currently export their products to foreign markets⁴¹. The activities of subsidiary development institutions and responsible executive authorities should be focused on increasing this percentage for the manufacturer to have the information and digital skills necessary to find a partner abroad or within the country.

Digital electronic instruments allow accumulating data specifically focused on a particular product, and combining this data increases search results. If a manufacturer does not engage in SEO-promotion of their website, uploading to it, or SMM-promotion, online shops usually end up higher in the search results than the largest marketplaces.

⁴¹ Asociacija «Narodnye hudozhestvennyye promysly Rossii». According to Global Rus Trade. Retrieved from: <https://nkhp.ru/dlya-predpriyatij/delovoy-forum-2018/>

Due to that, responsible consumers may not find the product they are interested in if the information from manufacturers and the landing page are lower in the search results. The advantage of using electronic marketplaces is apparent since it is not necessary to hire professional marketers who work with this data.

It is also necessary to conduct educational seminars and training sessions on the opportunities of using marketplaces and improving digital skills, among other things, on popular electronic trading platforms. However, one should not dwell on national players only but look at everything. The manufacturer should be able to present their product to the world and find a partner if they face some difficulties in transaction support. Due to the fact that all companies conduct export activities, connection with the development programs created by the Russian export center is required including the support of a manufacturer to the final stage of product sales.

The difficulty of using digital instruments is leveled out due to the fact that every marketplace has a universal registration form that does not take more than 5-10 to complete. Call-centers that are ready to help and answer the questions of manufacturers who face difficulties in uploading information, photographs, video recordings, or product descriptions also work in a timely fashion.

It should be noted that product descriptions and video recordings create additional consumer trust in the product and the company. If the information about the product, pictures from the right angles, description, characteristics, and certificates of conformity are not uploaded in the correct form the level of trust in the search result is lower, and one's products will appear a little lower in the catalog than those of conscientious, responsible entrepreneurs.

It is also possible to use promotion through influencers. Analysts of the Russian division of Admitad report that according to the results of the first half of 2019, the volume of product sales through bloggers and "opinion leaders" in messengers and social networks reached 600 billion rubles in the Russian Federation⁴². This market assessment is comparable to the turnover of classic online retail in Russia. The applied CPA (Cost per Action) model and influence marketing that increase sales through messengers indicate stable growth and medium-term perspective.

The practice of institutional and legal mechanisms for identifying and protecting regional brands (ethnic brands) that has recently emerged in Russia is worth special attention in this context. The concept of "geographical indication" as a new object of intellectual rights linking a product to a specific region and ethnicity which should guarantee its quality and the manufacturer's reputation was introduced into the Civil Code through a newly adopted Law. The exclusive right to a geographical indication is valid for 10 years and its registration is simplified⁴³.

There are also successful cases of applying innovations in the ethno-economics of the Russian Federation. In the Pushkino village, Tvar region, there is a factory producing the Russian folk musical instrument Gusli⁴⁴.

⁴² Admitad Annual Report 2018/2019. Retrieved from: <https://info.admitad.com/report2018-2019/ru>

⁴³ Federal Law of the Russian Federation №230-FZ. July 26, 2019, Retrieved from: <https://rg.ru/2019/07/31/azakony-dok.html>

⁴⁴ Mir guslei. Retrieved from: <https://mirusley.com/>

The factory sells these handicrafts all over the world producing up to 150 pieces per month. A well-made website contributes to the high level of sales and wide sales territory. The successful development of an enterprise based on the ethnic economy is promoted by skillful ethnic trading.

There are also some examples of effective interaction between state development institutions and ethnic economy enterprises. For instance, the specially created “Russian Export Center” (REC) JSC presents a state institution for the support of non-resource exports which consolidated a group of companies providing Russian exporters with a wide range of financial and non-financial support measures, develops and evolves along with the changing state of the world economy, and offers Russian exporters financial and non-financial products accounting for their current needs, segment policy, and based on the need to ensure a synergistic effect from the efforts of all development institutions including export support centers in the regions of Russia. With the participation of the Export Support Center of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, the manufacturer of shaman tambourines entered the international online trade market and received the first four foreign orders for their products. All orders were placed on the electronic trading platform etsy.com focused on selling handicrafts, applied arts, vintage items, and goods related to folk crafts. In the course of two months, buyers from all over the world showed interest in unique products. The orders came from Norway, USA, and Italy, two export deliveries have already been made⁴⁵.

Tambourines are popular among people engaging in spiritual practices and some demand is demonstrated by IT specialists. In collaboration with the Russian Post, the Russian Export Center provided the exporter with help in logistics organization. Moreover, the REC in Naryan-Mar formed a package of “boxed” support for companies which includes assistance in the formation of a commercial offer, as well as assistance in creating a YouTube channel and developing an Instagram profile. Further on, the Center plans to assist in the launch of products on the ebay.com marketplace.

REC is aimed both at limited operational support of exporters and systematic work together with the regions of Russia on leading companies on the export market. In 2019, REC developed a partnership project with local export support centers within the framework of which small and medium-sized enterprises could receive financial support of up to 1 million rubles for the placement and promotion of their products on international electronic trading platforms. By the end of 2019, more than 400 companies in the small and medium-sized business segment received said support and entered the global online trading markets. This instrument gains critical importance in 2020 since many countries are fighting the spread of coronavirus and e-commerce practically becomes the only way to continue the development of export. This refers to both retail export and working on B2B sites.

Conclusions/recommendations

Digitalization changes the approaches in the regulation of ethno-economic entrepreneurship. The structural shifts taking place in the global economy, the amplification of the role of the innovation and information factor, and robotization and

⁴⁵ Shamanskíe bubny vyshli na eksport po kanalam elektronnoi torgovli. Rossiiskii eksportnyi tsentr. May 19, 2020. Retrieved from: https://www.exportcenter.ru/press_center/news/shamanskíe-bubny-vyshli-na-eksport-po-kanalam-elektronnoy-torgovli/

automatization of workplaces dictate the dramatic changes in the ethno-economic development of regions. Modernization processes management calls for the development of mechanisms accounting for the ethno-economic sector resources and the development and realization of the policy of institutional ethno-economic adaptation for the changing conditions of economic development and the labor market transformation.

The technologies forming in the new institutional environment in the context of ubiquitous digitalization concurrently present the representatives of an ethnic economy with an opportunity to implement new marketing strategies. The objective of state institutions regulating the relations in the ethnic sphere is to coordinate their actions with authorities in the sphere of economy and contribute to the formation of added value in ethno-economics.

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