
Preface

The Russian Federation has a history of more than 20 years of transformation to a market economy as well as a knowledge society to look back on. From an economic point of view, many would agree that Russia has finished its transformation to a market economy some years ago. Its transformation to a full-fledged knowledge society comparable to Western European countries or the United States however is far from over.

While the large brain drains taking place in the beginning of the 1990s are no longer the main problem for the Russian Federation and it still possesses one of the largest shares of its population with a university degree worldwide, it is still in no way comparable considering, for example, international patenting activities to countries like Germany, France or the United Kingdom not to mention the United States or Japan.

While some policy makers in the Russian Federation realize this problem and the consequences it will lead to in the long term, still, only a select few actually try to act upon it – the best known being the late president and now prime minister of Russia Dmitry Medvedev. However, in a society where most of the population, industry, legislation and politicians are rather conservative or even opposed to innovations and maintain harvesting the benefits of the still abundant natural resource sectors, it becomes increasingly harder to establish the Marshallian spirit of innovativeness and the basic ideas of a knowledge society.

In economic theory and especially in economic growth theory it has long since been established that knowledge be it in the form of human capital, patents or otherwise disembodied technological knowledge plays an essential role in the development of nations. However along the same lines it has been argued that knowledge and innovations do not act as input factors alone but in developed knowledge societies a complex system of knowledge generation, transmission and usage exists. This system has been termed national innovation system or if observed on a regional level regional innovation system.

This study takes up the idea of the knowledge society or rather the idea of the national innovation system and studies in detail the knowledge generation, knowledge transmission and knowledge use inside the Federation since the early 1990s. The study encompasses approaches on all three aspects as its goal has been to paint a picture of the Russian Federation's innovation system as complete as possible. While still some minor issues had to be disregarded due to data availability

all of the three major aspects are tackled some even from more than one perspective. This study furthermore combines descriptive with empirical analyses to generate as much insights on the Russian knowledge society and its innovative potential as possible.

In the course of analyzing the use of knowledge and in light of the high dependence of the Russian economy on natural resources this study tries to establish that while the exploitation of natural resources might be the core driver of its regions' economic growth knowledge related factors still have an – however minor – effect as well. This study is thereby following in the footsteps of Schumpeterian growth theory – establishing a link between the innovative potential on the one hand and the economic output on the other.

From a practical point of view the major aim of this study lies in taking stock of the developments inside Russia and in offering researchers and politicians alike a possibility to get an understanding of the underlying dynamics and the situation of the Russian national innovation system.

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