

The cover features a futuristic cityscape with a prominent glass capsule in the foreground. The capsule has a white top with a red stripe and a black panel with the word 'Ursula' and a star symbol. The background is a dense urban landscape with a river. The top half of the cover is overlaid with a geometric pattern of overlapping triangles in shades of blue, purple, and teal.

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**METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF SOCIAL SERVICES MARKET IN RURAL SETTLEMENTS**

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Abstract

The scientific problem solved in the framework of this article is to identify effective tools to stimulate competition in the rural social services market. The theoretical justification of tools to stimulate competition in the social services market is carried out as part of a study of causal relationships with factors that determine the behavior of entrepreneurs. The first logical construct, reflecting the provisions of the theory of the company, involves an explanation of the result of stimulation by the market structure that has developed under the influence of fundamental factors. The second logical approach, reflecting the reaction of entrepreneurs to incentive measures, is based on the theory of performance and notes the presence of weak reactions to changes in the market structure and a stronger reaction when declaring improved performance due to special institutional and infrastructural conditions for the functioning of the business.

Keywords

Social services market – “Quasi market” – Government assignment – Infrastructure

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Introduction

The specifics of the social services market in rural settlements consists in the presence of significant pent-up demand, the satisfaction of which causes difficulties for two reasons. The first is due to the divergence of the functions of the customer (person paying for services) and the consumer. An additional difficulty for the formation of a competitive market for rural social services is the low population density. The second reason is the lack of a developed competitive environment for market participants providing these services.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the forms of stimulating competition among participants in the social services market in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk region.

Differentiation of the fulfillment of the functions of social services in rural settlements is carried out as part of the formation of social services market provided in the public sector of the economy. The basis for the consumption of social services is the rights of Russian citizens, as enshrined in the Constitution of the Russian Federation, in particular, article 7 states: "The Russian Federation is a social state whose policy is aimed at creating conditions that ensure a decent life and free human development." Social services are an essential component of the living standard of the population, social stability and sustainability of the state model, which characterizes its high social significance. The specificity of social services demand is due to the state guarantee of free or partially paid consumption and the availability of an appropriate compensation mechanism. Significant issues in the formation of social services demand include the independence of consumption from the current solvency of the consumer; accordingly, demand is formed in the context of the state's ability to compensate for consumption.

The theoretical justification of competition stimulation tools in the social services market is carried out as part of a study of causal relationships with factors that determine the behavior of entrepreneurs¹. The literature presents two logical constructs explaining the reaction of market participants to incentive events.

The first, presented in the works of E. Mason² and J. Bain³, involves an explanation of the stimulation result by the market structure, which developed under the influence of fundamental factors of socio-economic policy. A number of authors, in particular G. Kleiner⁴ is of the opinion that "... a real socio-economic policy, the formation of a regulatory and legislative base of the economy, decisions made at the micro-, meso- or macroeconomic level are based explicitly or implicitly on certain premises regarding the reaction of the enterprise, its internal and "external behavior in certain situations, in other words, on one or another theory of the enterprise." Following this idea of the entrepreneurs' reaction to the activity conditions, at the given time, in Russia have been formed programs to stimulate competition, including significant transformations regarding the institutional environment and infrastructure support of entrepreneurship.

¹ N. Nunn y D. Trefler, "The structure of tariffs and long-term growth", American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics. Vol: 2 num 4 (2010): 58-94.

² E. S. Mason, "Price and production policies of large-scale enterprise", The American Economic Review. Vol: 29 num 1 (1939): 61-74.

³ J. S. Bain, "The impact on industrial organization", The American Economic Review. Vol: 54. num 3 (1964): 28-32.

⁴ G. B. Kleiner, "From the Theory of an Enterprise to a Theory of Strategic Management", Russian Management Journal. Vol: 1 num 1 (2003): 31-56.

The materials for assessing the institutional environment using the example of the Sverdlovsk region were considered in previous works of the authors of this article⁵.

The second logical construct of the cause-and-effect relationships of the entrepreneurs' reaction to incentive measures involves the movement from assessing promising performance. This approach was considered and analyzed in the work of F. Scherer, D. Ross⁶, who noted the presence of weak reactions to changes in the market structure and a stronger reaction when declaring improved performance due to the special institutional and infrastructural conditions for the functioning of the business. In the works of W. Baumol⁷ and P. Reynolds⁸, the directions of state stimulation of competition by improving the institutional environment are indicated.

A similar opinion is presented in the work of J. Lerner⁹, who believes that as the main directions of stimulating entrepreneurship, it is necessary to use infrastructural security and improve institutional conditions. This methodology for the competition development lies at the heart of the Competition Standard Development in the subjects of the Russian Federation - the main document regulating the activities of public authorities in the direction of competition development. The implementation of this Standard is aimed at promoting the development of fair competition in socially significant markets of the Sverdlovsk Region in the interests of consumers of goods, works and services, as well as other business entities.

At the same time, the properties of the "quasi market" given above expand the tools for stimulating competition in the market of social services in rural settlements. The dependence of demand on the compensation mechanism allows the use of competition stimulation models that go beyond stimulating the activity of entrepreneurs with the infrastructural and institutional conditions for the formation of superprofits. Since "the number of suppliers of a given product on the market and its market price depend on demand"¹⁰, these tools allow to create a competitive environment on the one hand by determining the volume of demand, and on the other by controlling the quality of services using standardization methods.

Methodology

The methodology for studying the factors of competition development in the market of social services of rural settlements within the framework of the Competition Development in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation is based on the

⁵ A. Yu. Kokovikhin; E. S. Ogorodnikova; D. Williams y A. E. Plakhin, "Institutional factors in the entrepreneurial evaluation of in the investment climate, "The region's economy Vol: 13 num 1 (2017): 80–92.

⁶ F. M. Scherer y D. Ross, Industrial market structure and economic performance (Illinois: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Academy for entrepreneurial leadership historical research reference in entrepreneurship, 1990).

⁷ W. J. Baumol, The free-market innovation machine: Analyzing the growth miracle of capitalism (Princeton: Princeton university press, 2002).

⁸ P. D. Reynolds, "Understanding business creation: Serendipity and scope in two decades of business creation studies" Small Business Economics. Vol: 24. num 4 (2005): 359-364.

⁹ J. Lerner "Boulevard of broken dreams: why public efforts to boost entrepreneurship and venture capital have failed--and what to do about it" (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

¹⁰ A. G. Demieva, "Competition as an incentive for entrepreneurial activity", Commercial law. Scientific and Practical Journal, Vol: 3 num 22(2016): 32-37.

presentation of the general objectives of the Standard in blocks for assessing the competitive environment. The authors compared the tasks of the Competition Development Standard on the territory of the Sverdlovsk Region and the integrated units for assessing the competitive environment (table 1).

Objectives of the Competition Development Standard in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation in the Sverdlovsk Region	Enlarged blocks for assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of the Standard objectives
contributing to the reduction or elimination of administrative and economic barriers that impede the development of competition	assessment of government activities to reduce administrative barriers
optimization of public procurement in the interests of business entities	competition assessment
organization of activities of consumer councils at resource-supplying organizations as an element of development of a public control system	assessment of the possibility of connecting to technological networks
ensuring the availability of information and increasing the level of information transparency of the executive bodies of the Sverdlovsk region on the results of the work carried out and decisions made regarding the development of the competitive environment in the region	activities of public organizations on business development

Compiled by the authors

Table 1

The directions for studying the objectives of the Competition Development Standard in the social services market in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk Region

The research methodology is based on interrogation methods for obtaining information on the results of the Standard implementation¹¹. Methods of this kind have the disadvantages of subjective assessments, reflecting the perception of the entrepreneurs and consumers taking the survey on the state of the competitive environment of the social services market¹². The subjectivity of assessments makes it very difficult to determine the effectiveness of the Standard measures in the formation of the competitive environment of socially significant and priority markets in the region.

This drawback can be reduced by introducing a mechanism for grouping institutional problems depending on the tasks of developing competition specified in the Standard. Such a grouping will provide an unambiguous description on the part of entrepreneurs and determine areas of improvement for regional authorities of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation.

The information base of the study includes respondents participating in the annual monitoring of the competition development in the Sverdlovsk region¹³. This monitoring is systematically carried out by the executive authorities of the Sverdlovsk region.

¹¹ Yu. A. Kitsai, "Legal regulation of socially significant markets", *Interactive Science*, num 10 (2017): 48-51.

¹² T. F. Timofeeva y V. V. Timofeev, "The Standard for Developing Competition in the Subjects of the Russian Federation (on the example of the Chuvash Republic)", *Bulletin of the Russian University of Cooperation* num 2 (2016): 137-139.

¹³ Monitoring satisfaction with the quality of goods and services and competition in the Sverdlovsk region <http://mir.midural.ru/razvitie-konkurencii-na-territorii-sverdlovskoy-oblasti>

Results

The primary characteristic of the social services market in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk Region contains data from a quantitative analysis of organizations engaged in relevant activities, the information is presented in Figure 1.

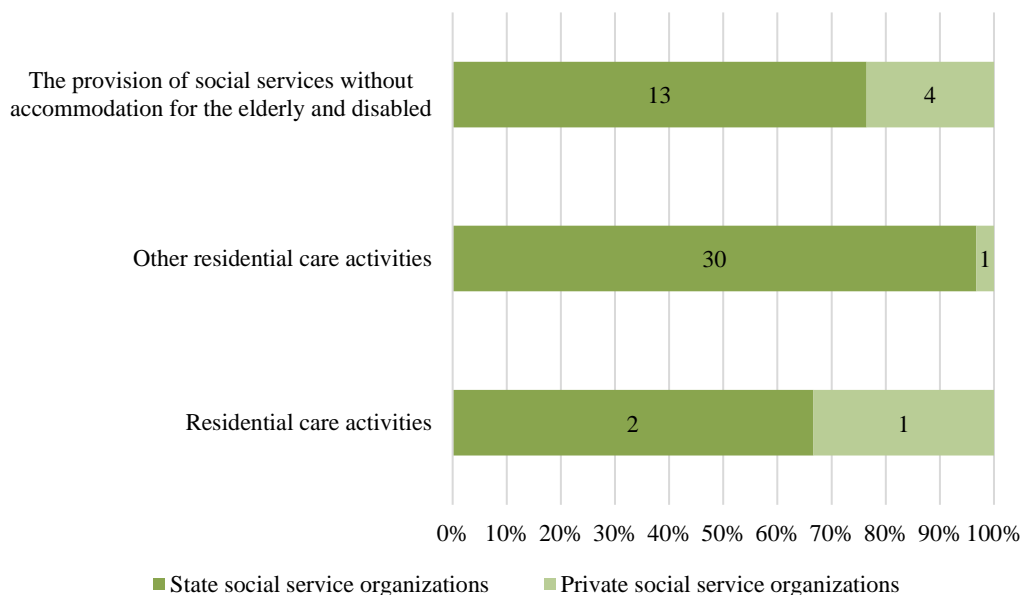


Figure 1
Ownership structure of organizations providing services in the social services market in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk region, % 2017¹⁴

At the end of 2017, 6 non-governmental organizations providing social services were operating in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk region, while at the same time, according to the data of the Ministry of Social Protection of the Sverdlovsk Region, the target indicator “The proportion of non-governmental organizations of social services from the total number of social services providers of all forms of ownership” was 10,3 percent or 19 non-governmental organizations in the social services market. According to the data presented, we can conclude that the social services market in the Sverdlovsk region cannot be called competitive. This information is also confirmed by consumer assessments in terms of satisfaction indicators given in table 2.

	Estimate the number of organizations providing social services in the settlement	Rate social services pricing	Evaluate the quality of social services	Evaluate social services options	Assess changes in the number of organizations providing social services over the past 3 years
Bazhenovskoe rural settlement	Few	Difficult to answer	to Rather satisfied	Difficult to answer	to Decreased

¹⁴ According to the System of Professional Analysis of Markets and Companies "SPARK-Interfax". Access mode: <http://www.spark-interfax.ru/>

Kuznetsovskoe rural settlement	Enough	Rather satisfied	Rather satisfied	not	Rather satisfied	not	Not changed
Kalinovskoe rural settlement	Few	Difficult answer	to	Satisfied	Rather satisfied	not	Increased
Sladkovskoe rural settlement	Enough	Rather satisfied	not	Difficult answer	to	Rather satisfied	not
Slobodo-Turinskoe rural settlement	Few	Satisfied	Difficult answer	to	Rather satisfied		Not changed
Ust-Nitsinskoe rural settlement	Few	Rather satisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied			Not changed

Table 2
Consumer assessments of supply on social services market in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk region

The analysis shows a generally negative assessment by consumers of the supply parameters in the social services market in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk region. Most of the respondents note the insufficient number of social service organizations, the lack of choice of social services and the lack of dynamics in the number of organizations in this market. Such a situation leads to a lack of social development in rural areas and a corresponding deterioration in the socio-demographic situation. The consequences are the outflow of the able-bodied population and the shortage of qualified personnel in agriculture in the Sverdlovsk region.

The lack of competition is also confirmed by a survey of representatives of organizations operating in the social services market in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk region. Figure 2 shows the data on the assessment of the competition intensity of organizations providing social services.

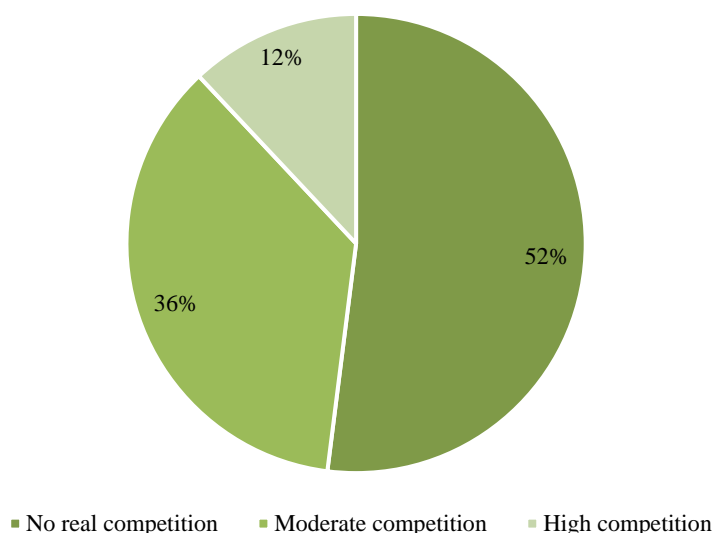


Figure 2
Competition assessment by representatives of organizations in the social services market in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk region,%, 2017

Most respondents assess the social services market in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk region as a market with moderate and no competition. Of additional interest is the information on the ranking of administrative barriers that exist in socially significant markets, presented in Figure 3.



Figure 3

Assessment (barrier mention rate) by representatives of organizations of the administrative barriers impact on the social services market in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk region, %, 2017

It can be concluded that for the participants in the social services market, the main problem is to provide their activities with appropriate facilities. 9% of respondents noted difficulties in transferring premises to non-residential status, 6% of respondents had difficulty obtaining building permits, and 5% had difficulty acquiring buildings and premises. These data confirm the relevance of the search for investment support mechanisms of the subjects' activities on the social services market in rural settlements.

In general, more than half of the respondents positively assess the dynamics of the administrative barriers impact, noting that the barriers are completely removed or significantly weakened. At the same time, 48% of respondents acknowledge the deterioration of the situation, linking the complexity of activities with the need to go through licensing procedures, paying taxes and the inability to form an investment base for their activities. Participants in the social services market in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk Region generally positively assess the possibility of connecting to engineering networks, putting this barrier in last place in the ranking.

A detailed assessment of this barrier is shown in Figure 4.

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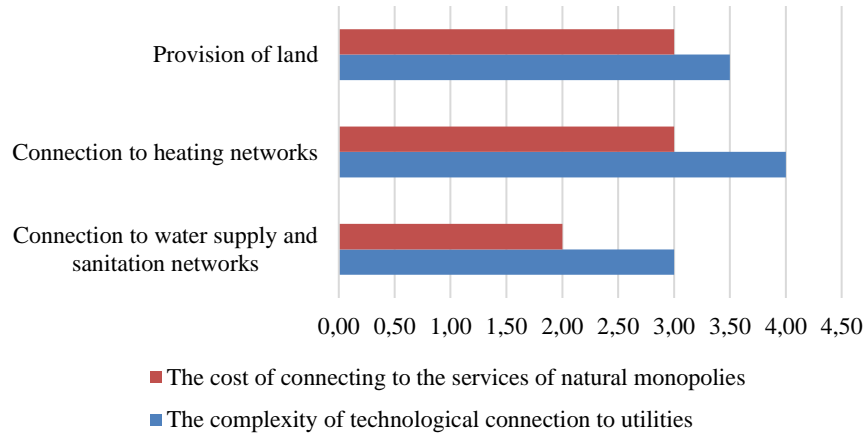


Figure 4

Assessment by representatives of organizations of the complexity of technological connection to engineering networks for participants in the social services market in rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk region, %, 2017

The greatest difficulty is experienced by entrepreneurs when connecting to heating networks, this problem was noted by 4% of respondents. Analysis of the institutional and infrastructural conditions for the existence of the market revealed significant difficulties in providing entrepreneurs with the necessary buildings. At the same time, the state and municipal authorities, performing the functions of the customer, have the opportunity to formulate proposals in the social services market using the social partnership tool. Figure 5 presents a possible scheme for financing the costs of building construction for the purpose of providing social services to the rural population.

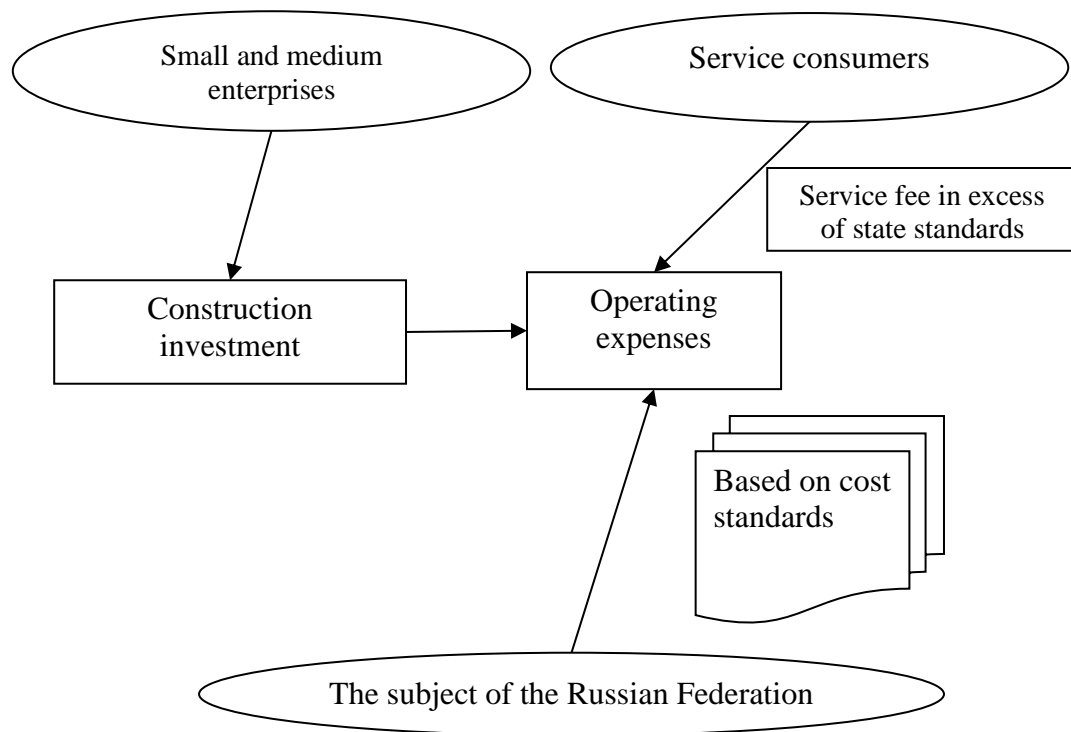


Figure 5

Schematic diagram of social partnership in the provision of social services

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PH. D. TATIANA I. GUSEVA / PH. D. MARIA V. SELEZNEVA

Under the proposed scheme, a private business can invest in the building construction. After the start of the operation of a new enterprise in the sphere of social services, it is proposed to allocate funds from the regional budget to finance current expenses for the provision of services on the basis of standards for the cost of providing services and requirements of standards for the quality of services.

To open funding from the regional budget, a commercial organization will have to provide a number of documents, including:

- a) copies of the registration certificate and constituent documents;
- b) a draft budget of the institution for the upcoming fiscal year, subject to funding from the regional budget;
- c) a draft agreement on joint activities in the field of social services.

A non-governmental social services institution will be able to provide services on a commercial basis. The main requirement is that only those services that are not financed from the regional budget, for example, stay in superior wards, should be provided for a fee. To calculate the cost of paid services, one can use the data on the calculation of the standard and the indicator of profitability of services.

Thus, the presented mechanism will allow providing services to consumers free of charge, since their provision will continue to be financed from the regional budget. At the same time, consumers will be able to pay only those services that exceed free services in quality and comfort. Their payment will be made only by those citizens who are able to pay them.

For the regional budget, the implementation of such a scheme will significantly reduce the capital expenditures of the budget for the construction and equipment of institutions. However, in order to attract investors, a set of measures is needed to increase the investment attractiveness of this area. In particular, such measures include the allocation of land for construction, the provision of tax benefits, the conclusion of long-term partnership agreements on financing non-governmental institutions after putting them into operation, and so on.

Under these conditions, the main advantages for private business will be the predictability of doing business, since revenues after putting the facility into operation will not depend on the low solvent demand of the population for such services. Financing the provision of services at the expense of the budget guarantees the return on the project, since a certain percentage of profit will be included in the standards for the cost of the service.

Conclusion

The study confirms the use of the methodology of infrastructural and institutional stimulation of entrepreneurial activity in the procedures of the Competition Development Standard in the Russian Federation. In this regard, it is proved that the standard does not take into account the properties of the “quasi market” characteristic of the social services market. At the same time, taking into account the peculiarities of the distribution process when paying for social services provides additional tools to stimulate competition.

The authors of the article proposed a model of using the properties of the “quasi market” to solve the main barrier for entrepreneurs of rural settlements of the Sverdlovsk region operating in the social services market. The compensation mechanism will create a steady demand for the services of organizations investing in the building construction for the implementation of their activities. We can recommend the inclusion of a “demand creation” mechanism for the social services market in the Competition Development Standard.

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