



Viktor Vladislavovych Shatrov

Kyjevská slavistická univerzita Zakarpatskej
Uzhgorod, Ukraine

The establishment of the Perm region of the Russia Federation: the causes, course and the results

Abstract

In this article the causes, course and the first effects of unification Perm region and Komi-Perm autonomous region into new subject of the Russian Federation - Perm Region is analyzed. Official and real reasons of association of these regions we were considered. Also, in this analysis we concluded that the consequences of association are controversial for the former Komi-district.

Key words: consolidation, Komi-Perm Autonomous Region, Perm Region, region of the Federation.

The process of reforming the federal structure of Russia took place in the early 2000s. One of the directions of such conversions was the announcement to reduce the number of federation subjects through their enlargement. Perm Region and the Komi-Perm Autonomous District were united first of all and as a result Russian Federation has got a new subject - Perm. Reasons for the choice of this particular state pair as the pioneers of the integration process are clear: 1) the presence of a strong governor who is interested in the “federal career” (March 2004 Trutnev was on a post of federal Minister of Natural Resources) [2, 4], 2) the mentality of title population, peaceful and loyal to the government, and 3) the relative territorial availability, facilitating the “election” campaign, and 4) the success of a region and the presence of significant advantages concerning life quality of the population and level of economic development (it allows us to align the quality of life after the merger at the higher level region). [2]

The decision to unite the Perm Region and the Komi-Perm Autonomous District was adopted on a referendum held on 12 December 2003. About 89.69% of the Komi-Perm Autonomous District population voted for the unification (with a turnout of 64%) and 83.81% of the Perm region (with a turnout of 62%). [6] This decision was confirmed by the Federal Constitutional Law of 25 March 2004

number 1-FKZ "Creation of a new subject of the Russian Federation through unification of the Perm Region and the Komi-Perm Autonomous District" [10]. Analyzing the declared intention of association and the real processes in different spheres of life, we came to the conclusion that the causes of the establishment of the Perm region can be divided into formal and real. Official reasons for are the following: depression and dependence on Komi-Perm Autonomous District; legal conflicts based on the phenomenon of complicated subjects of the Russian Federation, the desire of the central government to reduce outcomes of bureaucracy and simplify governing at the regional level. In our opinion real reasons for consolidation were: the desire of the central government to begin the transition from the national-territorial model to territorial federations, Moscow's desire to shift costs to support Komi-Perm Autonomous District from central government budget to budget of united federation subject. It should be noted that in 2005 according the average income of the population, the Komi-Perm Autonomous District has got the 86th place in the Russian Federation (Perm region - 22 place), social benefits in the income structure of the population accounted 26% (in the Perm region - 12%). In 2005 the average monthly wage of employees throughout the Komi-Perm Autonomous District was 4595 rubles. [7], and it was 40% lower than the average wage in the Perm region [9]. In 2009, the average nominal wage per employee in the Permian Komi District among large and medium organizations was 11,212 rubles and in comparison with the year 2005 it increased in 2.4 times: in the Perm region - in 1.9 times. In 2005 the average monthly nominal wage in the Permian Komi District exceeded the amount of the subsistence minimum in 1.8 times, and in 2009 - in 2.1 times [7]. But in the years 2000-2004 in the Komi-Perm Autonomous District, the average nominal wage increased from 1,180.2 to 3,536.3 rubles., Which is almost 3 times larger [8]. Therefore, we should not exaggerate the positive consequences of the unification. They were not incredible. In 2000-2005 the agricultural production in the Komi-Perm Autonomous District has been decreased to 29%, but in 2009 - it increased to 35% in comparison with 2005. [7] This is evident fact that the crisis was overcome in the area after the merger. Also during 2005-2009, the number of small enterprises increased in the Permian Komi District in 1.5 times [7]. It has played a major role in overcoming the problem of mass unemployment in the county. At the same time, the Perm region in 2009, got 18th place in the state due to the average income (17,572 rubles. Per month), and got up from 22th stage, it had in 2005. [9]

Thus, the Komi-Perm district had not diminishing influence upon the economy of the Perm region and did not cause a significant slowdown in economic growth. The budget of Komi-Perm Autonomous District in 2005 was 78%. Municipal budgets Komi-Perm region in 2009 in comparison with 2005 increased to 2.6 times due to incomes, and the expenditure - to 2.7 times [7]. The same situation continued in the other municipalities of the Perm region. During the period of 2008-2011 the deficit of local municipal budgets of Perm District, increased from 1625 to 1727 million rubles.

Just in 5 years nearly 2 billion rubles were invested to the social sphere of Permian Komi District at the expense of the regional budget with funds from the federal and local budgets. But, despite this, the migration rate of population remained rather high. Migration rate of the population in the Permian Komi District in 2009 amounted to minus 423. [7] And in 2004 this indicator was only minus 133 people. [9] In addition, number of Komi-Perm people decreased from 103505 to 81084 during the period between 2002 and 2010, that is almost 22%. A number of Russian at the same period decreased from 2401659 to 2191423, that is 8.9% [3, 5]. Let us compare the period between years 1989 and 2002. During this period, the number of Russian has decreased to 7.3%, and the number of Komi-Perm people - to 16.1% [11]. Thus, it can be concluded that the rate of reduction of the Komi-Perm people only accelerated after the merger. Their number among the population of the region has been reduced, and the number of Russians – has been growing. Since 2002, the number of Russians in the Perm region increased from 85% to 87%, and the Komi-Perms - decreased from 3.67% to 3.2% [3].

Following ethnic rights and legal interests of the Komi-Perm citizens, especially what concerns the usage of native language is an alarming situation. In 2009, there was a trend to close small schools and kindergartens in the indigenous population. According information provided by the Ministry of the Permian Komi District, the education system of the Perm region gives opportunity to realize constitutional right to educate about 3403 children in their native language and to study Permian Komi language as a school subject (it is 17% of total number of children attending pre-school educational institutions and secondary schools). However, in the 2009-2010 academic year only 768 children followed the program of pre-school education in Komi-Perm language, and it is only 13.1% of the total number of children enrolled in pre-school education (in the 2008-2009 school year, the number was 14.3% , and in 2007-2008 – 14.8%). This indicates a danger of extinction of the language. At the same time, during 2007-2010, the number of school children studying Permian Komi language as a native decreased from 57 to 43 [1], and it is almost for a quarter. This is despite the fact that number of Komi-Perm citizens in the district was the major (59% in 2002). [3] Consequently, the loss of national-territorial autonomy of the Komi-Perm, in practice, has accelerated the assimilation of the local population. This fact is one of the most negative consequences of the formation of the Perm Territory. The implications of this process are, in our opinion, contradictory. On the one hand, the positive results are the following: 1) the implementation of important investment projects with funds from the federal budget, 2) increase of the number of small businesses 1.5 times in, 3) overcoming the crisis situation in the agriculture of the Permian Komi District. On the other hand, the negative effects are: 1) reduction in funding cultural institutions of the Komi-Perm, and a significant decrease in the number of schools with the Permian Komi language of instruction, and 2) temporary financial assistance from the center, and 3) the growth of subsidies to the budget of municipalities in the territory of the Komi-Perm District.

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