

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS**N. N. Flyachinskaya***Postgraduate student of the Department of Management, Brest State Technical University,
Brest, Belarus, e-mail: nataliyafly17@gmail.com***Abstract**

Theoretical approaches to revealing the content of the region's competitiveness are outlined, summarized and analyzed. Interpretations of the concept of competitiveness of the region by groups are ordered. The signs of the competitiveness of the region as a system are given. The author's interpretation of the concept of regional competitiveness is proposed.

Keywords: competitiveness, region, competitive advantages, competition, enterprise competitiveness, population competitiveness.

**ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКИЕ ПОДХОДЫ К ИЗУЧЕНИЮ
РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЙ КОНКУРЕНТОСПОСОБНОСТИ****Н. Н. Флячинская****Реферат**

Изложены, обобщены и проанализированы теоретические подходы к раскрытию содержания конкурентоспособности региона. Упорядочены трактовки понятия конкурентоспособность региона по группам. Приведены признаки конкурентоспособности региона как системы. Предложена авторская трактовка понятия региональной конкурентоспособности.

Ключевые слова: конкурентоспособность, регион, конкурентные преимущества, конкуренция, конкурентоспособность предприятия, конкурентоспособность населения.

Introduction

Against the background of increasing interdependence and interconnectedness among economic processes, an important step in the hierarchy is the competitiveness of the region. The regions, being independent market entities, directly implement the goals and objectives aimed at meeting the socio-economic needs of the population.

The growing competition of regions for investments, which is observed at the present stage of economic development, creates ever higher requirements for meeting the growing needs of the population, identifying the essence and competitiveness of the region [1]. Note that the competitiveness of the region in the form of an economic process is understood as a set of complex, unrelated processes that are influenced by various conditions:

- factors of production;
- conditions for the implementation of activities;
- factors of demand for goods of the main industries of the region;
- political;
- socio-cultural;
- organizational and legal, etc.

Due to new economic trends, the competition of regions becomes a theoretical and practical problem, regardless of regional development.

Theoretical approaches to the competitiveness of the region

Even a cursory analysis showed that territorial competitiveness remains one of the most debatable categories in economics. The world has not even developed a single definition or at least an understanding of the essence of this phenomenon, there are no general criteria for evaluating it.

The results of comparing various definitions of the concept of «competitiveness of the region» made it possible to notice that the authors in the formulations most often identify the criteria that are the basis of this category, for example:

- realization of the economic potential of the region;
- organization of favorable conditions for creating business entities and maintaining competitive positions in the market;
- growth of gross regional product per capita;
- production of goods and services resistant to internal and external competition;
- creation of investment attractiveness of the region;

- high standard of living in the region;
- use of innovations in the business life of the region.

According to these criteria, the opinions of scientists and economists are considered, which can be divided into four groups. For example, adherents of the first approach associate the competitiveness of the region with the opposition to competition in the commodity markets. However, here you can see the subject of competition – the enterprise. However, the high level of competitiveness of the entire region is not always confirmed by the achievement of the competitiveness of enterprises in the market.

The second approach links competitiveness with the ability of the economy to improve the welfare of the region's population. Here the subject of competition is the population. It can also be considered that the supposed opinion that the region is able to achieve competitiveness only by improving the standard of living of the population is limited.

Representatives of the third approach under the regional competitiveness understand the possibility of identifying, creating, using competitive advantages to improve competitive positions between competing regions. In our opinion, this approach is closest to reality. Under the competitiveness of the region, we mean the ability to withstand competition from other regions in the struggle for resources that are required for the development of the territory and the solution of socio-economic problems on this basis. A more detailed example of the definition of the concept of "competitiveness of the region" is presented in Table 1.

According to the fourth approach, competition between regions includes not only an economic component, but also a political, environmental, social, cultural and legislative one. At the same time, the different interests of the regions, together with their potentials and capabilities, lead to certain achievements in certain areas.

Regional competitiveness is the only type of competition in which the imitation of experience and the use of the results of other regions is convenient and desirable. Since the competitiveness of the region is not built on the deterioration of the rating positions of the competing regions, but involves the improvement of a wide range of indicators of the region and their retention. To some extent, it can be argued that this competition is common for all participants, with the aim of achieving individual success, which is fundamentally different from other subject competitiveness (goods, enterprises, countries).

Table 1 – The essence of the concept of «competitiveness of the region»

The essence of the economic category	Author
Competitiveness as the ability to withstand competition in product markets (competitiveness of enterprises)	
Competitiveness of the region – the ability of the region to sell its own products that meet international standards based on the results of a diagnostic assessment	R. Mason [2]
The competitiveness of the region lies in the ability of the region to produce goods and provide services that meet the requirements in foreign markets, as well as maintain a high level of income of the population	D. N. Kolkun [3]
The competitiveness of the region lies in the efficiency of the use of regional products, firstly, labor and capital, in comparison with other regions, in their dynamics, in the amount of gross regional product per capita	M. Porter [4]
Competitiveness – the ability of a region to compete with similar regions in a particular (domestic or foreign) market	R. A. Fatkhutdinov [5]
Competitiveness as the ability to improve the quality of life of the population (competitiveness of the population)	
The competitiveness of the region lies in the ability of regional bodies to improve the standard of living of the population by attracting investment in the business environment, developing more promising sectors of the economy, infrastructure and small business	M. V. Vinokurov [6]
The competitiveness of the region is the role and place of the region, depending on the ability of other regions of Russia to maintain a high standard of living for the population and develop the existing economic potential (in production, finance, labor, investment, innovation, raw materials and other components)	A. Vorotnikov [7]
Regional competitiveness is the ability to offer attractive conditions and a sustainable environment for the operation of enterprises and the life of the population	EU Directorate-General for Regional Policy [8]
Regional competitiveness can be measured on the basis of a number of indicators of socio-economic development that reflect the development of the region in dynamics; thus, it is possible to assess the change in regional competitiveness	B. Catalin [9]
Competitiveness as the ability to find, create, use competitive advantages	
The competitiveness of a region primarily means the presence and implementation of the competitive potential of this region. However, competitive opportunities are multifaceted and are formed as different signs of the region's ability to participate in competitive relations through interaction with other countries. Competitiveness in the above words is due to the following features: the competitive advantages of the region in various industries and sectors of the economy, the social sphere, climatic conditions, geographical location, the availability of natural resources, the intellectual level of development of the population	V. I. Vidyapin, M. V. Stepanov [1]
Competitiveness of the region – the ability to find, create, use competitive advantages to maintain or improve the position among the regions	N. Ya. Kalyuzhnov [10]
The competitiveness of the region can be realized only by managing the competitive advantages of participants in the market activity of the region (enterprises, organizations)	M. N. Nagorskaya [11]
The competitiveness of the region is aimed at ensuring a higher level of economic and social life in the region. It represents the successful implementation of a complex of competitive advantages in the process of tough struggle (competition) for resources (human, financial, natural, etc.)	E. N. Tikhomirov [12]
Comprehensive interpretation of the region's competitiveness	
The competitiveness of the region includes three main areas: – the need of the population to achieve a high standard of living (competitiveness in the labor market); – the efficiency of the functioning of the economic mechanism of the region (competitiveness in the commodity market); – investment attractiveness (competitiveness in the capital market)	V. N. Parakhina [13]
Competitiveness of the region – the ability of the region to attract investments, labor resources, create goods and services that can compete in domestic and foreign markets, by using existing opportunities, ensuring a high quality of life for the population and creating potential for future generations	I. N. Rusak [14]
The competitiveness of the region is a set of economic relations associated with the sustainable development of the region, reflecting the efficiency of using the current and prospective competitive advantages of the region to ensure a high standard of living for the population	A. A. Shashko [15]
Competitiveness of the region – the ability of the region, taking into account the existing innovative and investment potential of the region, to ensure a high level and quality of life for the population, the production of competitive products (works, services), attracting investments, creating sustainable and long-term advantages in all areas of activity and creating potential for new generations	O. P. Sovetnikova [16]

The results of the analysis of literary sources allow us to draw some conclusions, namely:

1. Among scientists dealing with the problems of the competitiveness of the region, there is no unity in the interpretation and content of this category.
2. Interpreting the concept of regional competitiveness, almost all authors focus on the presence of competitive advantages, however, there are disagreements about the understanding of their list and priority.
3. Some authors closely link the concepts of «regional competitiveness» and «industry competitiveness», which is incorrect, since the competitiveness of the industry at the regional level is only an integral element of the region's competitiveness.
4. When interpreting the category «competitiveness of the region», some authors give a meaningful description, others – a functional one.

We define the competitiveness of a region as a systemic concept that reflects the competitive advantages of a particular region over others in terms of a set of parameters (economic, financial, production, market, investment, innovation, etc.), which are combined in a certain way and form a priority uniqueness and consolidate positions in a certain area. and in a period of time and under a certain influence of the operating environment.

The study of the essence of the region's competitiveness is necessary for a meaningful understanding of the mechanisms of formation of competitiveness processes. In addition, the disclosure of the objective content and essence of theoretical concepts makes it possible to scientifically substantiate and effectively solve the problems of competitiveness.

The study can be built through system analysis, since competitiveness can be represented as a system with relevant elements: structure, hierarchy, communication, multi-level, etc. Such an analysis is characterized

by considering the relevant elements in a certain order, which are dictated by a causal relationship and lead to a systemic result. At the same time, a logical chain is observed: the goal – the means to achieve the goals – the necessary resources.

The results of the study, the study of theory and practice on the problem make it possible to identify the main properties of the category «competitiveness of the region», namely:

- comparability: the competitiveness of the territory in relation to real competitors is determined and studied;
- spatiality: the competitiveness of a region is determined within a certain market, a specific field of activity, since under equal conditions a region can be identified as competitive in one market and non-competitive in another;
- dynamism: the concept of competitiveness is limited in time, since a region can be competitive in one period and lose these positions in another period, so the competitiveness of a region cannot be a constant value;
- subjectivity: involves the selection of a list and a set of parameters that form the competitiveness of the region;
- attributiveness: determination of a unique feature that primarily forms the competitive advantage of the region;
- integrality: the assessment of the competitiveness of the region cannot be carried out according to one criterion, but is necessarily based on the use of an integral indicator that accumulates the most representative indicators;
- taking into account internal and external conditions of functioning: when assessing or forecasting the competitiveness of a region, it is necessary to take into account all the factors that have or may have an impact on its formation;
- relevance: means that the competitive position of the region can only be determined within the framework of the relevant operating environment;
- consistency: implies taking into account the entire set of parameters and conditions that make up the competitiveness of the region, the relationship between them and their mutual influence.

The selection and systematization of criteria can be carried out on the basis of the methodology of system analysis, which determine the essence of the category «competitiveness of the region». It is characterized by the orderliness and logic of the study of the difficulties that arise in the system, when considering an object. The competitiveness of the region not only carries the properties of the economic system, but is also an independent and integral system with the appropriate properties and purpose. This category allows the region to compete effectively to achieve economic, social, environmental and other goals.

The competitiveness of a region as a system has all the features of a system, which include:

- purposefulness – the competitiveness of the region has its own goals, objectives, their predecessors and a vision of obtaining results. The behavior of the system is subject to control;
- complexity – a set of elements, components that are intertwined with influencing factors and create patterns of external and internal relationships. Moreover, this sign directly depends on constant external factors, such as the economic development of the country, the territorial location of the region, the presence of historically developed industries, and more;
- divisibility of the system presupposes the existence of subsystems of territorial competitiveness, identified according to individual characteristics. For example, on a territorial basis, a system of districts, social groupings is distinguished; by the nature of the goals – economic, social, environmental, institutional and others;
- integrity means the presence of integral, emergent qualities that are in the system as a whole and are absent in its individual elements or subsystems;
- the diversity of the system is associated with its various autonomous elements of regional competitiveness;
- structuredness is determined by the presence of stable links between the elements of the system and their distribution by hierarchy levels;
- the hierarchy arises on the basis of decomposition, representing a relatively constant order of spatio-temporal relations between its elements and the external environment.

Conclusion

Based on the study and analysis of literary sources and taking into account the above characteristics, the interpretation of the category «competitiveness of the region» has been clarified as: a systemic concept that reflects the competitive advantages of a particular region over others in terms of a set of parameters (economic, financial, production, market, investment, innovation, etc.), which are combined in a certain way and form a priority uniqueness and consolidate positions in a certain area and in a period of time and under a certain influence of the functioning environment.

The proposed definition differs from the existing ones, is characterized by complexity and takes into account spatial, temporal, subject, attributive, relative and other properties.

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