

Geographical aspects of regional policy (decentralization)

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Modern Georgia faces many challenges. An important part of them is geopolitical, social, economic and environmental problems. Because of this, the Georgian Geographic School should further intensify action towards integrating its separate fields (directions), regionalization of geographical surveys and integrated research on sustainable development issues. Geography should be properly involved in the implementation of regional socio-economic or ecological policies of the State, thereby strengthening its scientific or applied purpose.

We have dedicated numerous publications to the topical issues of Georgian geography [1,2], ways and ideas for solving them. However, the rapid dynamics of environmental factors and the interests of the country raise new issues, which are a major challenge for the Georgian Geographic School. Such tasks include the use of geographic (space-time) research and its methodology to address issues such as regional development (decentralization), prevention of negative demographic trends (creation of centers of attraction, regionalization of higher education systems), optimization of nature resource use (Potential Assessment, Education Ecology), Farm Transformation (Revision of Zonal Specialization in Agriculture), Contemporary Ecological Challenges (Climate Change Trends, Ecological Scenarios), etc.

In recent decades, the imbalance between the individual demographic centers (Tbilisi, Batumi, Kutaisi) and the socio-economic development of the regions has increased. Such a situation has a negative impact not only on internal migration processes, but also on the social demands and economy stability of the population. The importance of decentralization is a notable addition, for which the government has developed a similar name strategy to be implemented by 2025.

Reference:

- [1] N. Elizbarashvili, G. Meladze, M. Meladze, D. Svanadze, L. Gadrani, J. Lazarashvili. Some Urgent Issues of Georgia's Geography. Earth Sciences, Special Issue: Modern Problems of Geography and Anthropology. Vol. 4, No. 5-1, pp. 1-7, (2015).
- [2] N. Elizbarashvili, N. Sulkhanishvili, R. Elizbarashvili. Main concepts of Sustainable Development Mountainous Regions (On the example of the Caucasus). Human Geography Journal, vol. 25, pp. 66-74 (2018).