

SAINT PETERSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

On the rights of the manuscript

Konstantin I. PAKHORUKOV

EXTERNAL ACTIVITY OF THE REGIONS
(ON THE EXAMPLE OF PARADIPLMACY OF TERRITORIAL ENTITIES OF
THE FRENCH REPUBLIC IN THE EARLY XXIst CENTURY)

Scientific speciality:

5.6.7.

History of International Relations and Foreign Policy

Dissertation submitted for the degree of Candidate of Historical Sciences

Translation from Russian

Academic Advisor:

Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor

Irina N. NOVIKOVA

Saint Petersburg

2024

Table of contents

Introduction.....	4
Chapter 1. Regionalisation in the European Union: background and mechanism.....	26
1.1. Conceptual foundations of the European regional policy research: history and terminological aspect of the issue.....	26
1.2. Theoretical aspects of the principle of subsidiarity.....	29
1.3. European funds as a basis for the development of regional policy in Europe.....	35
1.4. Implementation of the EU regional policy at the current stage: challenges and risks.....	40
Chapter 2. Reforming territorial collectives in France as a prerequisite for the development of regional paradiplomacy.....	45
2.1. The emergence of regions as administrative governance actors in France (1919-2012).....	45
2.2. Administrative and territorial reform in 2014: from plans to practical steps for its implementation.....	59
2.3. Decentralisation results (2015-2016).....	68
2.4. Main features of the territorial reform at the current stage (2017-2023).....	74
Chapter 3. French regions as foreign policy actors.....	82
3.1. French regional paradiplomacy as a form of decentralised cooperation: history of the problem.....	83
3.2. Cross-border cooperation: main stages.....	97
3.3. Interaction with the European integration structures at the current stage.....	100
3.4. Participation in international projects and the increasing role of interregional associations.....	117

Conclusion.....	125
List of abbreviations.....	131
Glossary of terms.....	132
References.....	134

Introduction

One of the distinctive features of international relations at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries was the strengthening of regional identities in response to the challenges of globalisation. Traditionally, in Europe, demands for an increased power within the state were made in regions with a certain historical, cultural and economic uniqueness. However, the process of decentralisation, which consists in the transfer of powers to the local level in the internal political area, began to spread gradually also in the states where regions didn't have a particular specificity. As Professor I.M. Busygina, former head of the Centre for Regional Political Studies at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (MGIMO of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia), rightly pointed out, regionalisation is both a response to societies' aspirations for self-government, and the desire of the central government to shift part of its responsibility to the regional authorities, and an attempt to make the system of governance more efficient.¹ Although the field of foreign policy traditionally remained reserved for the central authorities, in the late 20th and early 21st centuries the regions became active participants in foreign policy processes, focusing on cross-border cooperation.

The foreign policy activities of subnational units acquired a new connotation when regional issues began to be discussed at a high level within the framework of pan-European instances. In 1985 an association «Assembly of European Regions» was established to advocate regional issues. And the same year the European Charter of Local Self-Government was adopted within the framework of the Council of Europe. The voice of the regions in the European Union (EU) began to be heard with the emergence of the principle of subsidiarity in 1992 in the Maastricht Treaty and the subsequent establishment of the European Committee of the Regions. Over the three decades of its existence, the Committee of the Regions hasn't only evolved from a kind of forum into an EU institution representing a «cross-section» of the sentiments of

¹Busygina I.M. Regionalisation in the countries of Western Europe: Great Britain and France in comparative perspective // Kazan Federalist. – 2007. – № 1-2. URL: <http://www.kazanfed.ru/publications/kazanfederalist/n21-22/4/> (in Russian)

subnational units, but has also become an active promoter of the idea of decentralisation of powers in the system of governance of the EU and its Member States. The new status of the regional level of power was enshrined in 2007 in the Lisbon Treaty amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community.¹ The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe has also started to implement similar ideas.

Despite the development of regional policy in the EU, one of its founding countries, France, has long been one of the main opponents of decentralisation. Although there have been attempts to introduce regions as structures of administrative-territorial division (ATD) since 1919, regions as administrative units appeared only in 1982. The transition from a system of regions with formal power to a system where regions have power in practice began in France with the 2003 reform, when the concept of «region» was included in the French Constitution for the first time and the structure of the Republic was declared decentralised. The theme of the reform of territorial collectives occupied a special place in the political programmes of Presidents N. Sarkozy and F. Hollande, under whom the system of territorial administration was reformed in France, the geographical boundaries of modern regions were defined as well as the framework for the activities of regional authorities.

According to the author of the thesis the process of strengthening of the role of regions at the European supranational level simultaneously with the strengthening of the role of regions in the EU Member States in general is an external factor that encourages France to implement the reform of the administrative-territorial division. In addition, the internal political process in France is considerably influenced by the active work of representatives of the French regions in the EU and in the Council of Europe structures, by the involvement in cross-border regional projects as well as by participation in specialised associations.

¹Lisbon Treaty amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community or Lisbon International Treaty, signed on 13 December 2007 in Lisbon by representatives of the 27 Member States of the European Union, which changed the institutional architecture of the EU. See: Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union // Official Journal of the European Union. 26.10.2012. Vol. 55. C 326/49. Art. 5. URL: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012M%2FTXT>

This thesis uses the example of France to examine the manifestation of the aforementioned trends in historical perspective, interpreted as foreign policy aspects of regionalisation.

At the same time, as a result of globalisation and regionalisation processes, an importance of non-state actors in international relations, in particular regions of unitary states, is increasing which is the subject of research in the field of paradiplomacy precisely understood as the involvement of sub-national actors of national states in international relations.¹ Concurrently the regionalisation is also taking place forming such a configuration of international relations that allows the interaction between different macro-regions.²

It is worth noting that paradiplomacy programmes are often more successful than classical diplomacy, including processes within the EU. Sub-national entities use paradiplomacy as a tool for problem-solving and sustainable development.³

The relevance of the topic of this study lies, firstly, in the fact that in modern political practice there are serious changes in the legislation and system of governance of the European Union and France concerning the status of regions and the implementation of regional policy.

Secondly, in the need to study the history of decentralisation. Indeed, until recently, France had served a model of a centralised state structure. Nevertheless, the EU membership and the subsequent decentralisation have challenged the country's centuries-old pyramidal organisation of power, as the state has transferred some of its

¹ See: Novikova I.N., Popov D.I. Foreign economic cooperation of St. Petersburg with Denmark in the XXIst century: main trends, problems and prospects // Vestnik SPbSU. International relations. – 2021. – Vol. 14. – Is. 1. – P. 44. URL:

<https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu06.2021.103> (in Russian); Akimov Y.G. French Canadian / Québécois Nationalism and the Beginning of Quebec Paradiplomacy // The Herald of the Diplomatic Academy of the MFA of Russia. Russia and the World. – 2020. – № 2 (24). – Pp. 225-238 (in Russian); Petrasyak M. Application of the theory of paradiplomacy to the study of international activity of the Russian Far East / Buyarov D.V., Kuznetsov D.V. and Kireeva N.V. (eds.). Russia and China: history and prospects of cooperation. Materials of the 5th international scientific-practical conference. Blagoveshchensk: Publishing house of Blagoveshchensk State Ped. university, 2015. Pp. 533-541 (in Russian); Nasyrov I.R. States and regions in the system of modern international relations. Kazan: University of Management Tisby, 2011. Pp. 9-10. (in Russian)

² See more: Leonova O.G. Global regionalisation as a phenomenon of global world development // Century of Globalisation. – 2013. – Is. 1 (11). URL: <https://www.socionauki.ru/journal/articles/153253/> (in Russian)

³ Tatham M. Paradiplomats against the State: Explaining Conflict in State and Substate Interest Representation in Brussels // Comparative Political Studies. – 2013. – Vol. 46 (1). – Pp. 63-94; Joenniemi P., Sergunin A. Paradiplomacy as a Capacity-Building Strategy. The Case of Russia's Northwestern Subnational Actors // Problems of Post-Communism. – 2014. – Vol. 61 (6). – Pp. 18-33.

powers from the national level to regional authorities. As a consequence, regionalisation and the principle of subsidiarity have provoked polemics in French society and in political circles. Finally, the study of the evolution of the regions' external action makes it possible to forecast the future prospects of regionalisation in France and in the European Union.

The topic of this thesis is relevant and demanded by historical science, the need to rethink some assessments of the problems under consideration, taking into account new sources and modern scientific vision of the history of regionalisation within the European Union and France.

In addition, a new stage in Russia – European Union relations is opening today, accompanied by an increase in the hostility of the collective West towards Russia. In this context, the processes taking place within the EU, and in particular in France, require particularly serious reflection not only to understand how to build relations with European states today, but also with an eye to the future in case of changes in their foreign policy course.¹

The object of the thesis is the European policy aimed at regionalisation of the EU countries and the French region as an actor of the domestic and foreign policy of France.

The subject of the study is the main directions and components of the external activity of the regions of the French Republic.

It should be specified that, due to the special status of Corsica² and the French overseas territories, their external activities are, with some exceptions, not covered by this paper. However, it is worth mentioning that the overseas territories are also involved in the work of the European Committee of the Regions, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and various international associations.

¹See Paramonov A.V. Russia against the West: Myth or Reality? URL: <https://telegra.ph/Rossiya-protiv-Zapada-mif-ili-realnost-02-22> (in Russian)

²See e.g.: Pakhorukov K.I. Regional diplomacy: the Corsican case // Relevant Problems of International Relations: Collection of Works of the Student Scientific Society of the Faculty of International Relations of St. Petersburg State University, 2012. Pp. 94-108. (in Russian)

Degree of knowledge of the problem. A significant contribution to the study of France's foreign policy was made by well-known Russian scientists T.V. Zvereva,¹ E.O. Obichkina,² Y.I. Rubinsky³, S.M. Fedorov.⁴ In recent years, a number of comprehensive fundamental studies on the subject have also appeared.⁵ Some aspects of the history of French foreign policy have been analysed in the works of E.A. Narochnitskaya,⁶ R.V. Kostyuk,⁷ E.A. Osipov,⁸ V.P. Smirnov,⁹ A.Y. Chikhachev,¹⁰ V.G. Shadursky.¹¹

In the national historiography, the involvement of non-state actors in external activities is most thoroughly covered in the works of I.M. Busygina,¹² N.V. Eremina,¹³

¹See e.g.: Zvereva T.V. Foreign policy of modern France. Moscow: Canon+, 2014. 343 p. (in Russian)

²See e.g.: Obichkina E.O. Foreign Policy of France from de Gaulle to Sarkozy (1940-2012). Moscow: Aspect Press, 2012. 382 p. (in Russian); Obichkina E.O. France in search of foreign policy orientations in the post-bipolar world. Moscow: MGIMO of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, 2003. 487 p. (in Russian)

³See e.g.: Rubinsky Y. I. The signs of the time. Vol. 3. France on new frontiers: in 3 vol. / Federal State Budgetary Institution of Science Institute of Europe RAS. Moscow: Institute of Europe RAS, 2018. 382 p.

⁴See e.g.: Fedorov S.M. Macron's foreign policy strategy: is the reincarnation of Gaullism possible? // France under President Emmanuel Macron: at the beginning of the way: a collection of articles on the results of the II All-Russian scientific conference of experts on France (Moscow, 13 October 2017) /

M.V. Klinova, A.K. Kudryavtsev, Y.I. Rubinsky, P.P. Timofeev (eds.). M.: IMEMO RAS, 2018. Pp. 147-152. (in Russian)

⁵France. In search of new ways / Ed. by Y. I. Rubinsky. Moscow: Ves' Mir, 2007. 621 p. (in Russian); Modern France: between anxieties and hopes / Edited by M.V. Klinova, A.K. Kudryavtsev, P.P. Timofeev. M.: Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS, 2022. 256 p. (in Russian); France on the threshold of change: economy and politics at the beginning of the XXIst century: a collection of articles based on the results of the All-Russian scientific conference (Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS, 7 December 2015) / Edited by A.V. Kuznetsov, M.V. Klinova, A.K. Kudryavtsev, P.P. Timofeev. M.: Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS, 2016. 284 p. (in Russian)

⁶Narochnitskaya E.A. Foreign policy legacy of Gaullism in modern France // France on the threshold of change: economy and politics at the beginning of the XXIst century: a collection of articles based on the results of the All-Russian scientific conference (Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS, 7 December 2015) / Edited by A.V. Kuznetsov, M.V. Klinova, A.K. Kudryavtsev, P.P. Timofeev. M.: Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS, 2016. Pp. 210-220. (in Russian)

⁷Akimov Y.G., Kostyuk R.V., Chernov I.V. France in the world order of the early XXIst century. St. Petersburg: Publishing house of St. Petersburg State University, 2007, 198 p. (in Russian); Kostyuk R.V., Vlasov N.A. Foreign policy of Germany and France of the XXth – early XXIst century. Comparative Analysis. St. Petersburg: Publishing house of St. Petersburg State University, 2011. 44 p. (in Russian); Kostyuk R.V. Foreign policy of François Hollande: changes within the continuation // Contemporary foreign policy of the Left // Edited by R.V. Kostyuk. St. Petersburg: Poltorak, 2014. Pp. 24-44. (in Russian)

⁸See e.g.: Osipov E.A. Foreign Policy of France: Moving Away from Gaullism // The International Affairs. – 2016. – № 3. – Pp. 22-33. (in Russian)

⁹Smirnov V.P. France in the XXth century. Moscow: Drofa, 2001. 352 p. (in Russian)

¹⁰See e.g.: Chikhachev A.Y. Foundations of modern foreign policy of France in the Indo-Pacific region // MSLU Bulletin. Social Sciences. – 2020. – № 1 (838). – Pp. 111-123 (in Russian); Chikhachev A.Y. Russian-French relations under President Emmanuel Macron: achievements and contradictions // Vestnik SPbSU. International Relations. – 2022. – № 1. – Pp. 86-104. (in Russian)

¹¹Shadursky V.G. Foreign Policy of France (1945-2002): Textbook. Minsk, Publishing house of BelSU. 175 p. (in Russian)

¹²Busygina I.M. Political regionalism. M.: ROSSPEN, 2006. 280 p. (in Russian)

¹³Eremina N.V. Regional policy of the European Union. St. Petersburg: School of International Relations, St. Petersburg State University, 2010. 64 p. (in Russian)

N.M. Mezhevich,¹ G.O. Yarovoy,² monographs by O.N. Bogatyreva,³ I.D. Ivanov,⁴ I.R. Nasyrov.⁵ The articles by N.V. Eremina,⁶ T.V. Zonova,⁷ K.P. Zueva, P.P. Timofeev,⁸ G.T. Sardaryan,⁹ A.A. Sergunin¹⁰ should be particularly noted.

These works contain the fundamental theoretical foundations of the concepts of political regionalism, paradiplomacy, regionalism, and cross-border cooperation.

Regarding the study of the decentralisation process in France and the development of external relations of French subnational units in the Russian historiography, only a few publications touch upon certain aspects of these processes. If in the late 1970s in the Soviet historiography there were several publications by E.I. Domoratskaya, V.V. Maklakov¹¹ and M.A. Pavlova¹² with rather objective approach to the study of some aspects of the French regional policy, in recent years the problem of regionalisation has received attention in the works of I.M. Busygina,¹³ A.N. Dementiev,¹⁴ A.S. Kuznetsov,¹⁵

¹ Mezhevich N.M. Economic analysis of the region. St. Petersburg: Publishing house of St. Petersburg State University, 2007. 166 p. (in Russian)

² Yarovoy G.O. Regionalism and Transboundary Cooperation in Europe. St. Petersburg: Norma. 2007. 280 p. (in Russian)

³ Bogatyreva O.N. European models of regionalism. Ekaterinburg: Publishing house of Ural University, 2018. 168 p. (in Russian)

⁴ Ivanov I.D. Europe of regions. Moscow: International Relations, 1998. 192 p. (in Russian)

⁵ Nasyrov I.R. International cooperation of regions: world practice and experience of Tatarstan. Kazan: Kazan State University, 2007. 329 p. (in Russian)

⁶ See more: Eremina N.V. Paradiplomacy: a new voice of the regions in the modern diplomatic concert? // World Economy and International Relations. – 2012. – № 6. – Pp. 42-51 (in Russian); Eremina N.V. Regional political culture as a factor of state development: integration versus disintegration // Vestnik SPbSU. Series 6. Philosophy. Cultural studies. Political science. Law. International Relations. – 2011. – № 3. – Pp. 70-78. (in Russian)

⁷ Zonova T.V. Paradiplomacy of European regions // All Europe: monthly online edition – 2011. – № 4 (43). URL: <http://www.amberbridge.org/article?id=106> (in Russian)

⁸ Zueva K.P., Timofeev P.P. Foreign policy of the President of France E. Macron: pragmatism behind the mask of atlantism? // World Economy and International Relations. – 2018. – Vol. 62. – № 12. – Pp. 83-91. (in Russian)

⁹ Sardarian G.T. Regionalisation and federalisation in the context of the transformation of forms of political-territorial structure of states // Politics and Society. – 2014. – №6 (114). – Pp. 668-674 (in Russian)

¹⁰ Joenniemi P., Sergunin A. Op. cit. Pp. 18-33; Sergunin A.A. Sergunin A.A. Regional factor in Russian foreign policy: legal aspects // Federalism in Russia / Edited by R.S. Khakimov / Kazan: Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of Tatarstan, 2001. Pp. 100-115 (in Russian)

¹¹ Domoratskaya E.I., Maklakov V.V. Regional policy in France // Pravovedenie. – 1979. – № 6. – Pp. 72-77. (in Russian)

¹² Pavlova M.A. Regional policy of France. Moscow: Nauka, 1974. 271 p. (in Russian)

¹³ Busygina I.M. Op. cit. (Regionalisation in the countries of Western Europe: Great Britain and France in comparative perspective).

¹⁴ Dementiev A.N. A.N. Legislative aspects of territorial reforms at the local level in France and in Russia // Municipal Property: Economics, Law, Management. – 2020. – № 4. – Pp. 33-40 (in Russian); Dementiev, A.N. On the legal conditions for comparing territorial reforms at the local level in France and Russia // Science. Society. State. – 2020. – Vol. 8. – № 2 (30). – Pp. 74-82. (in Russian)

¹⁵ Regional policy of the EU countries / Centre for European Studies IMEMO RAS / Ed. by A.V. Kuznetsov. M.: IMEMO RAS, 2009. Pp. 71-81.

M.L. Lebedeva,¹ A.N. Pilipenko,² T.S. Speranskaya,³ A.P. Tupikin, V.S. Shilov,⁴ E.I. Filippova.⁵ Articles by S.V. Biryukov,⁶ E.V. Viktorova, D.A. Petrenko are devoted to the problems of the foreign policy role of French regions.⁷ Various aspects of paradiplomacy are disclosed in the works of Russian scientists N.V. Eremina,⁸ T.V. Zonova,⁹ A.S. Kuznetsov,¹⁰ I.R. Nasyrov.¹¹

The problematics of paradiplomacy of regions is considered in detail by foreign scholars such as I.D. Duchacek,¹² M. Keating,¹³ R. Soldatos,¹⁴ B. Hocking,¹⁵ C. Maré,¹⁶ S. Paquin.¹⁷ Of particular interest are the works devoted in

¹Lebedeva M.L. The process of regionalisation in France: history and evolution // Gaps in Russian legislation. – 2015 – №5. Pp. 23-26. (in Russian)

²Pilipenko A.N. Administrative and territorial reforms in France // Journal of foreign legislation and comparative law. – 2011. – № 1.

URL: https://nbpublish.com/library_read_article.php?id=58179 (in Russian)

³Speranskaya T.S. Regional development: French experience and Russian prospects // Problems of forecasting. – 2008. – №2. – Pp. 157-159.

⁴Tupikin A.P., Shilov V.S. Centre and Regions in France and Russia: (experience of comparative study). Russian Academy of State Service under the President of the Russian Federation. Moscow: Publishing house of RAGS, 2008. 307 p. (in Russian)

⁵Filippova E.I. State-regions relations and regionalism movements in France // Kazanskiy federalist. – 2007. – №1-2 (21-22). – Pp. 76-84 (in Russian)

⁶Biryukov S.V. Germany – France: the Dispute over the «Europe of the Regions» // World Economy and International Relations. – 2008. – № 10. – Pp. 42-50. (in Russian)

⁷Viktorova E.V., Petrenko D.A. Activity of non-state organisations in the integration policy of France on the example of the Occitania region // Bulletin RUDN. – Journal of Political Science. – 2018. – Vol. 20. – №1. – Pp. 69-75. (in Russian)

⁸See e.g: Eremina N.V. Op. cit. (Paradiplomacy: a new voice of the regions in the modern diplomatic concert?). Pp. 42-51; Eremina N.V. Op. cit. (Regional political culture as a factor of state development: integration versus disintegration) Pp. 70-78.

⁹Zonova T.V. Op. cit.

¹⁰Kuznetsov A.S. Paradiplomacy: interpretations and theoretical models // Discourse-P. – 2006. – № 6. – Pp. 76-78. (in Russian)

¹¹Nasyrov I.R. Op. cit. (States and regions in the system of modern international relations); Nasyrov I.R. Op. cit. (International cooperation of regions: world practice and experience of Tatarstan).

¹²Duchacek I.D., Latouche D., Stevenson G. (eds.). Perforated Sovereignities and International Relations: Trans-Sovereign Contacts and Subnational Governments. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1988, 234 p.; Duchacek I.D. The Territorial Dimension of Politics: Within, among, and across Nations. Boulder, CO: Westview, 1986. 328 p.

¹³Keating M., Aldecoa F. Paradiplomacy in Action. The Foreign Relations of Subnational Governments. London: Routledge, 1999. 240 p.; Keating M. European Integration and the Nationalities Question // Politics and Society. – 2004. – 32(3). – Pp. 1-22.

¹⁴Soldatos R. An Explanatory Framework for the Study of Federated States as Foreign-Policy Actors // Federalism and International Relations: The Role of Subnational Units / H.J. Michelmann. Michelmann, P.Y. Soldatos (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. Pp. 34-53.

¹⁵Hocking B. Patrolling the «Frontier»: Globalisation, Localization and the "Actorness" of Non-Central Governments // Paradiplomacy in Action: The Foreign Relations of Subnational Governments / F. Aldecoa, M. Keating (eds.). Aldecoa, M. Keating (eds.). London: Routledge, 1999. Pp. 17-39; Hocking B. Localising Foreign Policy: Non-Central Governments and Multilayered Diplomacy. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993. 254 p.

¹⁶Maré C. La coopération décentralisée. Paris: Studyrama, 2012. 172 p.

¹⁷Paquin S. Paradiplomatie et relations internationales. Théorie des stratégies internationales des régions face à la mondialisation. Bruxelles: Éditions P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2004. 189 p.; Paquin S. Les nouvelles relations internationales et la paradiplomatie identitaire // Bulletin d'histoire politique. – 2001. – Vol. 10 (1). – Pp. 13-29; Paquin S. Les approches explicatives du développement de paradiplomaties // Bulletin d'histoire politique – 2001. – Vol. 10 (1). – Pp. 73-84.

general to the political phenomenon of French regions and their role in European affairs, in particular the works of P. Martinat,¹ M.-J. Tulard,² G.-F. Dumont,³ F.-O. Seys.⁴ The French expert A. Marin sees the reason for the greater effectiveness and success of regional paradiplomacy in its more informal approach.⁵ It should be stressed that the authors, being experts in the problems of regionalisation, when analysing the issues of decentralisation, often support the official position of the EU structures and their government, leaving no room for a critical approach in the coverage of this issue.

The analysis of Russian and foreign historiography allows to conclude that a number of aspects, in particular, historical prerequisites, decision-making process in the field of decentralisation and regionalisation, have been insufficiently studied, there is a lack of comprehensive studies devoted to the history of the decentralisation process and external activities of the regions and regionalization as well as of comprehensive studies that address the historical component of the issue: causes, premises and evolution of the foreign policy activities of the French regions in the 21st century.

It seems that studying this issue from a historical perspective provides an opportunity to present a new vision of this problem.

The purpose of the dissertation research is to identify the main stages of the regionalisation process on the example of the French Republic and the changes in the legal status of the French regions in close interrelation with their external activities.

In order to fulfill the set goal, the following tasks are planned to be accomplished:

- analyse the main causes of regionalisation processes in Europe;
- explore the process of decentralisation in France;

¹Martinat P. *Les Régions, clefs de la décentralisation*. Paris: LGDJ, 2010. 224 p.

²Tulard M.-J. *La région*. Paris: LGDJ, 2008. 128 p.

³For more details see: Dumont G.-F. *Les régions et la régionalisation en France*. Paris: Ellipses, 2004. 175 p.; Dumont G.-F. *Les régions en France. Géants géographiques, mais nains politiques? // Les Analyses de Population & Avenir*. – 2019. – № 8. – Pp. 1-22; Dumont G.-F. *Régions françaises: petit dictionnaire des idées reçues // Population et Avenir*. – 2014. – № 718. – 1 p.

⁴Seys F.-O. *Les nouvelles régions françaises dans le contexte de l'Union européenne // Pôle Sud*. – 2017/1. – № 46. – Pp. 97-113.

⁵Marin A. *The International Dimension of Regionalism – St. Petersburg's «Para-Diplomacy» // Beyond the Garden Ring. Dimensions of Russian Regionalism / M. Kivinen, K. Pynnöniemi (eds.)*. Helsinki: Kikumora Publications, 2002. Pp. 147-174.

- examine the history of the creation and reform of territorial collectives in France;
- to analyse the process of formation and activity of French regions as actors of administrative and external policy of France;
- to consider the paradiplomacy of the French regions in the XXIst century;
- to identify the main areas of international activity of the French regions;
- to reveal the peculiarities of interaction of the French regions with the structures of the European Union, the Council of Europe, pan-European and international associations;
- to determine the prospects for the development of paradiplomacy of the French regions in the context of the decentralisation process in France.

The chronological framework of the thesis covers the period since the 1980s, when the first attempt was made to introduce regions as structures of administrative-territorial governance in France. The end point of the study is set in 2023, as in practice the regionalisation process seems to be far from being completed.

It is worth making the following reservation. Since the beginning of the Russian special military operation in Ukraine, the French regional authorities have been actively involved in providing material assistance to the Ukrainian regions, but this aspect is a subject for a separate study and is not covered in this paper. It should be also noted that although at present, at the initiative of the French side, cooperation with Russia at the state level is practically «frozen» in almost all spheres, the channel of dialogue at the subnational level remains open. Thus, the prospects for cooperation between French and Russian regions continue to exist. In particular, on 5 December 2023, Rossotrudnichestvo organised the 3rd online forum «Russia-France Twinning» with the participation of representatives of local authorities of the two countries.

The source base of the study is a set of documents, which can be divided by the nature of origin.

The first group of sources is international normative documents, primarily international treaties and agreements that influenced the formation of the European Union, such as the Treaties of Rome, Maastricht and Lisbon, which reflect the place of regions in the EU hierarchy,¹ as well as bilateral treaties, in particular Treaty of Aachen on Franco-German Cooperation and Integration,² and documents of international associations that focus on interregional cooperation.³ In addition, are used as sources reports and recommendations of the European Committee of the Regions and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe describing the situation with the implementation of the principle of subsidiarity in France,⁴ basic documents on partnerships of French regions supported by European authorities,⁵ and cooperation programmes involving French regions, e.g. the «Cross» Year of interregional cooperation between Russia and France 2021.⁶

The second group of sources consists of documents of the French public authorities, such as legislative acts, «white papers», sets of regulations on the powers of regional authorities. Among the legislative acts, by far the most important are the laws of 1982, 2003, 2004, 2010, 2014, 2015, which radically affected the status of

¹Treaty on European Union, signed at Maastricht on 7th February 1992 // Official Journal of the European Communities. 29.07.1992. Vol. 35, C 191/6; Traité instituant la Communauté Économique Européenne 1957.

URL: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:11957E/TXT:FR:PDF>; Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union. Op. cit. Art. 5;

²Le Traité d'Aix-la-Chapelle sur la coopération et l'intégration franco-allemandes.

URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/dossiers-pays/Allemagne/relation-bilaterales/le-traite-d-aix-la-chapelle-sur-la-cooperation-et-l-integration-franco/>

³Retour sur la première conférence des Régions francophones de montagne, à Aix-les-Bains (France). 27.09.2022. URL: <http://www.regions-francophones.org/actualite/8199/5606-retour-sur-la-premiere-conference-des-regions-francophones-de-montagne-a-aix-les-bains-france.htm>; Liste des territoires. Mission opérationnelle transfrontalière. URL: <http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/bdd-territoires/>

⁴EU annual regional and local barometer. 2021. URL: <https://cor.europa.eu/en/our-work/Documents/barometer-fullreport%20web.pdf>; Rapport annuel sur la subsidiarité 2020. 10 mars 2021.

URL: <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/subsidiarity/Publications/Pages/Publicationsandstudies-.aspx>; Résolution 94 (25 mai 2000) sur la démocratie locale et régionale en France.

URL:

<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=836865&Site=COE&BackColorInternet=DBDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864>; Wielen J., Mosler-Tornstrom G. La démocratie locale et régionale en France. Le Congrès des pouvoirs locaux et régionaux. 30e session. Strasbourg, 22-24 mars 2016. Pp. 1-22. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/1680719445>

⁵Accord de partenariat des autorités françaises 2021-2027. Version 1.4. adoptée par la Commission européenne le 2 juin 2022. Pp. 50-51. URL: <https://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/fr/ressources/accord-de-partenariat-france-2021-2027>; 2021-2027 Category of regional status of NUTS 2 regions by country. URL: <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/stories/s/2021-2027-EU-allocations-available-for-programming/2w8s-ci3y/#ijg-categories-of-region->; France. Decentralisation index. - URL: <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/Decentralization-Index.aspx>;

2021-2027 – EU budget interreg ressources. URL: <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/stories/s/2021-2027-EU-allocations-available-for-programming/2w8s-ci3y/>

⁶ «Cross» Year of Interregional Cooperation between Russia and France. 2021. URL: https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/programme_thematique_annee_fr-ru_23.03_ru_cle4d1a82.pdf (in Russian)

the regions in the internal and foreign policy spheres.¹ A harbinger of the increasing role of the regions in French diplomacy has been the «white paper» «Diplomacy and Territory. For Increasing the Resources of Foreign Policy Action» (published in 2017),² its provisions are scrutinised in the study. An important source for the work was the manual for the paradiplomacy of French subnational units, a legal handbook of the external activities of territorial collectives.³ The same category of sources can also include information data, such as the list of territorial cooperation attachés in French embassies abroad available on the website of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁴

The dissertation research also used executive documents and current information materials: summaries of international negotiations and working meetings, in particular, summary of the negotiations of President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin and President of France E. Macron,⁵ report on the Franco-Romanian meetings on decentralised cooperation,⁶ report on the Forum of International Relations of Territorial Collectives⁷ etc.

¹Loi n°82-213 du 2 mars 1982 relative aux droits et libertés des communes, des départements et des régions.

URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000000880039>;

Loi constitutionnelle n°2003-276 du 28 mars 2003 relative à l'organisation décentralisée de la République.

URL:

[http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?sessionId=450BBD77B78EA2258C982B83A87B6AAD.tpdjo04v_3?cidTexte=JORFTEXT0000000000601882&dateTexte=;](http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?sessionId=450BBD77B78EA2258C982B83A87B6AAD.tpdjo04v_3?cidTexte=JORFTEXT0000000000601882&dateTexte=)

Loi n°2004-809 du 13 août 2004 relative aux libertés et responsabilités locales. URL: [http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000804607&dateTexte=;](http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000804607&dateTexte=)

Loi n°2010-1563 du 16 décembre 2010 de réforme des collectivités territoriales. URL: <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000023239624&dateTexte=&categorieLien=id>;

Loi n°2014-773 du 7 juillet 2014 d'orientation et de programmation relative à la politique de développement et de solidarité internationale. URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000029210384/>;

Loi n°2015-29 du 16 janvier 2015 relative à la délimitation des régions, aux élections régionales et départementales et modifiant le calendrier électoral. URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000030109622/>;

Loi n° 2015-991 du 7 août 2015 portant nouvelle organisation territoriale de la République.

URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000030985460/>

²Livre blanc. Diplomatie et territoires. Pour une action extérieure démultipliée. Paris: La documentation française, 2017. 222 p.

³Guide juridique de l'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales / élaboré par P. Pougnaud. Paris: La documentation française, 2019. 146 p. URL: https://www.europedirectpyrenees.eu/wpcontent/uploads/guide_juridique_aect.pdf

⁴Liste des correspondants pour la coopération non-gouvernementale dans les postes diplomatiques. 22 août 2017. Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères. URL:

https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/mise_a_jour_2022_-_correspondants_pour_la_cooperation_non_gouvernementale_cle884d8f.pdf&cd=1&hl=fr&ct=clnk&gl=ru

⁵Negotiations between President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin and President of France E. Macron. 7 February 2022. URL: <http://kremlin.ru/catalog/persons/518/events/67734>

⁶5èmes Assises franco-roumaines de la coopération décentralisée
URL: <https://afccre.org/en/node/3034>

⁷Rencontres de l'AICT 2023.
URL: <https://cites-unies-france.org/-Rencontres-de-l-AICT->

The third group of sources is documents of the French regional authorities related to territorial cooperation and the implementation of their external policy objective. E.g., the report of the Congress of Alsace on the creation of the Alsace territorial collective,¹ report of the representation of the Occitania region in Brussels², etc.

The fourth group of sources is formed by the programmes of the French political parties, the statements of the main candidates made during the 2022 presidential campaign.³

The fifth group of sources is interviews, reports, speeches of French and European politicians, landmark speeches of French presidents on the issue of territorial reform.⁴

The sixth group of sources is the periodical press (mainly French), by means of which it is possible to present public opinion on issues of paradiplomacy, decentralisation, regionalisation and other aspects of this study. These sources encompass both national periodicals,⁵ including digital ones, and regional ones.⁶

¹ Rapport du Congrès d'Alsace. «Vers une nouvelle collectivité territoriale: la collectivité territoriale d'Alsace». 24 novembre 2012.

URL: http://www.region-alsace.eu/sites/default/files/fichiers/actualite/rapport_congres_las_cut_0.pdf

² Rapport d'activité 2020. Occitanie Europe. URL: https://occitanie-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Occitanie_RA21_def.pdf

³ Éric Zemmour: Pour que la France reste la France. URL: https://assets.nationbuilder.com/themes/61c071ce4764e8b1483d1a8c/attachments/original/1648220408/programme_eric_zemmour_presidentielle_2022.pdf?1648220408; Valérie Pécresse. Bâtir une nouvelle France décentralisée. URL: <https://valeriepecresse.fr/projet/decentralisation/>; Emmanuel Macron. Avec vous.

URL: <https://avecvous.fr/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Emmanuel-Macron-Avec-Vous-24-pages.pdf>

⁴Hollande F. Réformer les territoires pour réformer la France. 02.06.2014.

URL: <https://www.leparisien.fr/politique/reforme-territoriale-la-tribune-de-francois-hollande-en-integralite-02-06-2014-3891649.php>; Déclaration de M. Nicolas Sarkozy, Président de la République, sur la réforme des collectivités territoriales, à Saint-Dizier (Haute-Marne)

le 20 octobre 2009.

URL: <https://www.elysee.fr/nicolas-sarkozy/2009/10/20/declaration-de-m-nicolas-sarkozy-president-de-la-republique-sur-la-reforme-des-collectivites-territoriales-a-saint-dizier-haute-marne-le-20-octobre-2009>;

Déclaration de M. François Hollande, Président de la République, sur la réforme des collectivités locales, à Paris le 5 octobre 2012. URL: <https://www.vie-publique.fr/discours/186022-declaration-de-m-francois-hollande-president-de-la-republique-sur-la>

⁵Référendum en Alsace: Le Pen se réjouit. URL:

<http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/2013/04/07/97001-20130407FILWWW00210-referendum-en-alsace-le-pen-se-rejouit.php>; Chemillier-Gendreau M. Le principe de subsidiarité: enjeu majeur, débat confus // Le Monde diplomatique. Juillet. – 1992. – P. 13; Viola A. De quoi la Commission nationale de la coopération décentralisée est-elle le nom? // Pouvoirs locaux. – 2022. – № 120. URL: <https://www.revuepouvoirslocaux.fr/fr/article/de-quoi-la-commission-nationale-de-la-cooperation-decentralisee-est-elle-le-nom-3832#no6>

⁶Buchy F. L'esquisse d'une nouvelle collectivité? Le 9 novembre 2017. URL: <https://www.lalsace.fr/actualite/2017/11/09/l-esquisse-d-une-nouvelle-collectivite>

The methodological basis of the dissertation research is a set of methods of scientific cognition, which were used by the author to achieve the purpose of the dissertation research. It is based on the principles of historicism, scientific objectivity and specific-historical approach. The author tried to achieve the credibility of the factual material identified by himself, for which he applied the methods of critical source analysis, comparison and comparative analysis of data. Using the general mass of sources and factual data, the author relied only on those sources that most fully convey the essence of the processes currently taking place in France.

The method of correlation analysis was used to study French and European legislation, speeches of political figures, analysis of political parties' programmes, as well as to examine the impact of the European integration on changes in the situation of the French regions. The comparative method was applied for monitoring statistical indicators concerning the geographical and economic indicators of the French regions. The case-study method was also used several times.

The author employed the historical-genetic method to study the main stages of the administrative-territorial reform, which led to an increase in the powers of the French regions in the field of foreign policy.

It is also needed to make some terminological clarifications. This dissertation study uses the **categorical apparatus** adopted by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and by the EU structures. «Territorial collectives» is the name for all administrative-territorial units in France and in most countries that are former French colonies. In France, territorial collectives are communes, departments, regions and overseas territories.

Based on the definition adopted by the Assembly of European Regions, the term «region» means a territorial administrative unit of the level of government inferior to the state level with powers of political representation.¹

The concept of «regionalization» in general means the strengthening of regionalism, increasing the status of regions in both internal and foreign policy affairs.

¹Assembly of European Regions Statute. 28 October 2021. Art. 3.3.
URL: <https://aer.eu/aer-statute/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

Regionalisation implies the development of new institutional forms of participation of regions in decision-making both at national and supranational levels through interregional cooperation.¹ However, in the national historiography we can identify two narrower approaches to the definition of the term «regionalization».

In the first approach, regionalisation is understood as the development of economic ties between areas of states or states belonging to the same region with the possibility of combining them into one group.²

In the framework of the second approach, regionalisation means the process of formation of regional institutions of power (sub-state level).³ In this case, the concept of «regionalization» is similar to the concept of «decentralization». In English, the term «regionalism» is also quite often used within the framework of the second approach,⁴ while in French publications, as well as in works by French authors in other languages, the term «regionalization» is applied, and the term «regionalism» is used to refer to bottom-up movements aimed at strengthening the power of regional structures or to describe the manifestation of regionalism in specific sectors.⁵ According to the concept of N.V. Eremina, a representative of the St. Petersburg research school, it is more correct to represent regionalisation as processes and regionalism as a phenomenon that

¹ Busygina I.M. European and Russian regions: survival strategies in the era of globalization. 18.02.2005. URL: <http://www.globalculture.ru/globalizacija-i-kultura/irina-busygina-evropejskie-i-rossijskie-regiony.html> (in Russian)

² Eremina N.V. Regionalism and regionalisation as the basis of European integration // *Social Sciences*. – 2010. – № 3. – Pp. 138-139. (in Russian); Zonova T.V. Op. cit.; Eismond A.G. European regional policy: an analysis of the main directions of research // *Vestnik of Moscow University. Ser. 18. Sociology and Political Science*. – 2008. – № 3. – P. 95 (in Russian)

³ Mezhevich N.M. Op. cit. P. 36; Busygina I.M. Op. cit. (Regionalisation in the countries of Western Europe: Great Britain and France in comparative perspective); Zhukov I.K. Regionalisation as an objective «challenge» to the Russian political system // *Political Expertise: POLITEX*. 2010. Vol. 6. № 4. Pp. 152-153. (in Russian)

⁴ Evans A. Regionalism in the EU: Legal Organisation of a Challenging Social Phenomenon // *Journal of European integration*. – 2002. – Vol. 24. – Is. 3. – P. 219; Kanishka J. Regionalising the State: Political Topography of Regulatory Regionalism // *Contemporary Politics*. – 2008. – Vol. 14. – Is. 1. – P. 21; Popescu A., Nica L. Regionalism in a Europe without Borders. Some Approaches on Bihor County // *Eurolimes*. – 2011. – Vol. 11. – P. 181.

⁵ Kukawka P. Typologie de la décentralisation en Europe // *Rapport du séminaire «Régions, décentralisation et coopération internationale»*. Kinshasa, 3 novembre 2008. P. 2.

URL: <http://www.regions-francophones.com/telechargements/Intervention-PKukawka.pdf>; Giblin B. La région: enjeux de pouvoirs // *Quaderni*. – Hiver 2005/2006. – № 59. – Pp. 97-98; Balme R., Jouve B. L'Europe en région: les fonds structurels et la régionalisation de l'action publique en France métropolitaine // *Politiques et management publique*. – 1995. – Vol. 15. – Tome 2. – Pp. 35-36; Nay O. European Community Policy in France: the State Bounces Back // *Journal of European Integration*. – 2002. – Vol. 24. – Is. 3. – P. 246.

fixes them, while the concepts of «regionalization» and «regionalism» are genetically interrelated.¹

In the dissertation research, the author uses the concept of «regionalization» in the meaning of processes that contribute to the enhancement of the status of administrative regions.

Scientific novelty consists in the fact that in the dissertation research for the first time in the Russian historical science an attempt is made to comprehensively analyse the history and specifics of reforms of territorial collectives in France with a projection on their international activities.

The dissertation study for the first time identifies the most characteristic features of paradiplomacy of French regions in historical retrospective, defines the chronology of the stages of territorial reform in France in correlation with the growth of paradiplomatic activity of French regions.

In contrast to existing studies, this paper comprehensively explores the history of French decentralisation and the main stages of regionalisation in the context of the decisions of the European structures. The thesis not only analyses the role of the European Union and the Council of Europe in making decisions on regionalisation in France, but also examines the specific conditions and consequences of these decisions.

The author sees the scientific novelty of the obtained results in the fact that the thesis highlights the conceptual foundations of the study of the European regional policy, such as the principle of subsidiarity, and the peculiarities of the implementation of the EU regional policy on the basis of the European structural funds. The analyses of regional paradiplomacy and the main forms of regional external action conducted in the dissertation research have been studied in the framework of pan-European instances. The new research results include the analysis of the EU regional policy as an instrument of depriving France its sovereignty. The specifics of the French regions' participation in international projects and the influence of the European regional policy on the relations

¹ See: Eremina N.V. op. cit. op. cit. (Regionalism and regionalisation as the basis of European integration). Pp. 138-140.

between the Centre and the regions within the historically centralised sovereign state have been also studied.

The high degree of novelty and credibility of the results of the dissertation research is ensured by the large source base in French and English, which allowed summarising the facts necessary to assess the French decentralisation process. The thesis makes a significant contribution to the development of the historiography of the French foreign policy and paradiplomacy by examining the latest works related to the subject of the thesis.

The theoretical significance of the dissertation research lies in the fact that it contributes to the study of the history of international relations and the development of relatively young areas of science, such as European Studies or political regionalism. The periodisation of the history of the regions' external activity proposed by the author of the thesis is considered as a component of the history of the French foreign policy.

The materials of the thesis can also be used for further conceptualisation of paradiplomacy in the theory of international relations when considering topical problems of international relations and foreign regional studies/regionalism in the conditions of transformation of the modern world order.

The practical significance of the results of the dissertation research lies in the synthesis of theoretical and applied aspects.

The author for the first time introduces into the scientific turnover a large array of sources in the French language not previously published in the Russian historiography, substantiates and proposes a new approach to the analysis of available sources and in the coverage of the prehistory of the issue. An important part of the dissertation research was the identification, classification, systematisation and scientific treatment of sources.

The large factual material summarised in the thesis can be used for the development of special courses on the history of international relations, the history of the European Union and the history of the French foreign policy. The sources introduced into the scientific turnover for the first time enlarge the factual base for

writing generalising works both on the history of the European Union and the history of the French decentralisation. The peculiarities of the regions' activity in the European states on the new principles are important for instance for the interaction with the Russian Federation subjects.

Approbation of the research. On the problems of the dissertation research 10 scientific articles have been published, 6 of which figuring in the list of scientific journals of the Higher Attestation Commission of the Russian Federation.

- 1) Pakhorukov K.I. Nationalism in Russia and France: a comparative analysis // In the world of scientific discoveries. – 2010. – № 4-12 (10). – Pp. 68-70. – 0,2 p.l.;
- 2) Pakhorukov K.I. Decentralisation in France: the special role of Corsica // All-Russian Journal of Scientific Publications. – September 2011. – Pp. 69-71. – 0,3 p.l.;
- 3) Pakhorukov K.I., Ivannikov, I.V., Decentralisation in France: evolution of French unitarism // Law and Politics. – 2012. – №1. – Pp. 31-39. – 0.5 p.l.;
- 4) Pakhorukov K.I. Regional diplomacy: the Corsican case // Relevant Problems of International Relations: Collection of Works of the Student Scientific Society of the Faculty of International Relations of St. Petersburg State University, 2012. Pp. 94-108;
- 5) Pakhorukov K.I. Russian-French relations in the context of France's return to the military structures of NATO // Russia in the modern world: new challenges and opportunities: Collection of reports of the All-Russian student scientific conference. 1 March 2013 / Edited by Y.G. Akimov, N.A. Dobronravin, N.Y. Markushina, S.L. Tkachenko, E.Y. Treschenkov. St. Petersburg: Publishing Centre of the Faculty of Economics, St. Petersburg State University, 2013. Pp. 81-88.. – 0.6 p.l. (212 p.);
- 6) Ivannikov I.V., Pakhorukov K.I. Problems of UN peacekeeping activities and the role of France in resolving the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

- Côte d'Ivoire // Political Expertise: Politex. – 2013. – Vol. 9. №2. P. 24-40. – 1.1 p.l.;
- 7) Pakhorukov K.I. France – Tropical Africa: a new quality of relations? // Asia and Africa Today. – 2015. – №7 (696). – Pp. 62-66. – 1.1 p.l.;
- 8) Pakhorukov K.I. Enlarging external policy capacities of subnational entities. French regions // Clio. – 2023. – №8 (200). – Pp. 71-76. – 0.6 p.l.;
- 9) Pakhorukov K.I. France – African States: some aspects of decentralized cooperation // RUDN Journal of World History. – 2023. – Vol. 15. – №4. – Pp. 463-477. – 1.0 p.l.;
- 10) Pakhorukov K.I. About some aspects in the activities of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France to support the foreign policy activity of French administrative-territorial formations (late XX – early XXI centuries.) // Modern Scientific Thought. – 2023. – №6. – Pp. 219-224. – 0.7 p.l.

Structure of the work. The work consists of introduction, three chapters, and conclusion.

The introduction substantiates the relevance of the topic, defines the object, subject, purpose and objectives, chronological framework, characterises the current state of historiography, analyses the source base of the thesis, the categorical apparatus, explains the scientific novelty, practical and theoretical significance of the thesis.

The **first chapter** «Regionalisation in the European Union: background and mechanism» deals with the theoretical basis of the study and provides a retrospective of the French regional policy in recent decades. Thus to determine the influence of the foreign policy context on the state of affairs in France, the theoretical aspects of the transfer of the right of decision-making power to sub-national units in the European Union, history and terminological aspects of the study of the European regional policy, in particular the principle of subsidiarity, as well as the activities and the role of the European Structural Funds in the implementation of the European regional policy are considered.

The **second chapter** «Reforming territorial collectives in France as a prerequisite for the development of regional paradiplomacy» shows the difficult process of formation of regions as actors of administrative life in France, the course of administrative and territorial reform in 2014, the results of decentralisation and characteristic features of the territorial reform at the current stage.

The **third chapter** «French regions as foreign policy actors» explores various forms of decentralised cooperation, such as regional paradiplomacy, cross-border cooperation, interaction with the European integration structures, participation in international projects and the role of interregional associations. The paper describes the cooperation of the French regions with the Committee of the Regions of the European Union, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the Assembly of European Regions as well as with associations of regions of a specific character. These examples show the mutual influence of both representatives of the French regions on pan-European processes and European structures on the situation in France.

The **conclusion** summarises the results of the dissertation research, formulates the main recommendations, makes generalisations arising from the content of the dissertation research, determines the directions for further development of the selected problem.

Key scientific results reflected in the author's publications, containing scientific novelty, which are important for the study of the history of the specifics of reforms and external activities of territorial collectives in France in the context of analyzing the conceptual foundations of the European regional policy, are as follows:

1. A new approach is developed to justify the application of the conceptual framework for the study of the European regional policy in France. New knowledges concerning the transfer of decision-making power to sub-national units in the EU are provided;¹

¹ Pakhorukov K.I. Enlarging external policy capacities of subnational entities. French regions // *Clio*. – 2023. – № 8 (200). – Pp. 71-76 (in Russian); Pakhorukov K.I. France – African States: some aspects of decentralized cooperation // *RUDN Journal of World History* – 2023. – Vol. 15. – № 4. – Pp. 472 (in Russian) Pakhorukov K.I. About some aspects in the activities of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France to support

2. The periodisation of the transition from the centralised state to various forms of decentralised cooperation, expressed in the strengthening of paradiplomatic activity of the French regions, is proposed. The main results of regionalisation at the current stage and its possible consequences in the context of decisions of European structures are revealed;¹

3. The mutual influence of both representatives of French regions on the pan-European processes and European structures on the foreign policy of France is considered. The role of the reform of territorial collectives in France as a necessary condition for the development of regional paradiplomacy is proved;²

4. The concept of French regions as foreign policy actors is formulated and substantiated. The large source base in French and in English shows the most characteristic features and specifics of paradiplomacy of French regions. It is proved that regional paradiplomacy, cross-border cooperation, interaction with the European integration structures, participation in international projects should be considered in the retrospective of France's regional policy of the last decades;³

5. It is shown that the multi-branched system of decentralised cooperation is one of the ways to maintain French influence on the African continent that allows levelling certain miscalculations of the French foreign policy.⁴

the foreign policy activity of French administrative-territorial formations (late XX – early XXI centuries.) // *Modern Scientific Thought*. – 2023. – № 6. – Pp. 219-224; Pakhorukov K.I., Ivannikov I.V. Decentralisation in France: evolution of French unitarism // *Law and Politics*. – 2012. – № 1. – P. 35. (in Russian)

¹ Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (Enlarging external policy capacities of subnational units. French regions). Pp. 71-76; Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (France – African States: some aspects of decentralized cooperation) // *RUDN Journal of World History*. – 2023. – Vol. 15. – № 4. – Pp. 466-467; Pakhorukov K.I., Ivannikov I.V. Op. cit. – Pp. 31-39; Pakhorukov K.I. Decentralisation in France: the special role of Corsica // *All-Russian Journal of scientific publications*. – 2011. – № 7 (8). – Pp. 70-71. (in Russian)

² Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (Enlarging external policy capacities of subnational units. French regions) Pp. 71-76; Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (About some aspects in the activities of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France to promote the foreign activities of French administrative-territorial formations (late XXth century – early XXIst century) Pp. 219-224; Pakhorukov K.I., Ivannikov I.V. Op. cit. P. 35..

³ Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (Enlarging external policy capacities of subnational units. French regions) Pp. 71-76; Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (About some aspects in the activities of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France to promote the foreign activities of French administrative-territorial formations (late XXth century – early XXIst century)) Pp. 219-224; Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (France – African States: some aspects of decentralized cooperation) Pp. 463-477.

⁴ Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (France – African States: some aspects of decentralized cooperation) Pp. 463-477; Pakhorukov K.I. France – Tropical Africa: a new quality of relations? // *Asia and Africa today*. – 2015. – № 7 (696). – Pp. 62-66 (in Russian); Ivannikov I.V., Pakhorukov K.I. Problems of the UN peacekeeping activities and the role of France in resolving the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire // *Political Expertise: POLITEX*. – 2013. – Vol. 9. – № 2. – Pp. 24-40. (in Russian)

Provisions for defence:

- the conceptual framework of the European regional policy is characterised by the elimination of economic inequalities between regions, finding a compromise between supranational, national and regional authorities, decision-making process at the lowest possible level;

- among the factors influencing the decentralisation process in France, the most characteristic are: the implementation of the EU principle of subsidiarity; the eradication of asymmetry between the French regions and neighbouring European countries in geographical, demographic and economic terms; the internal political situation accompanying the reforms; the presence of a strong regional character in a number of regions (Alsace, Brittany, etc.);

- the administrative-territorial reform implemented in France since the end of the twentieth century has successively passed through several stages:

- 1) 1982-2007. – Perception of decentralisation as an issue of the country's administrative structure;

- 2) 2007-2017. – change in the parameters of administrative regions accompanied by the growth of their political, economic and social influence and strengthening of the international component in their activities;

- 3) 2017 г. – our days. – suspension of the reform process. Dilemma: to restore the boundaries of the previously existing regions or to increase the autonomy of the current ones;

- the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports the development of paradiplomacy of the regions, despite the centralised nature of the French state so far, the participation of territorial collectives in the implementation of priority activities carried out by the central government is increasing;

- strengthening the role of the regions in France's foreign policy contributes to reinforcing the country's position at the international level;

- France is one of the initiators of the development of cooperation between the regions on European and international platforms;

- there is a growing awareness among the French regional authorities that international cooperation is one of the prerequisites for the development of the region and representatives of the French regions play a key role in Europe in this field.

Chapter 1. Regionalisation in the European Union: background and mechanism

The realisation of the process of the European integration implies a more active involvement of local authorities and, first, regions in the European Union political affairs. The implementation of regional policy became possible due to the introduction of the principle of subsidiarity, which meant the delimitation of powers between European, national, regional and municipal authorities and the delegation of management functions to a lower level of government.

Consideration of the conceptual framework of the European regional policy, the implementation of the subsidiarity principle and the reform of the European Structural Funds will make it possible to analyse the institutional impact of the European integration process on the political-administrative system of France. A comparison of normative documents, reports and recommendations of the EU with the fundamental studies of national scientists allows to identify the main regularities of the process of reorganisation of the functions of government at the level of regions and departments.

1.1. Conceptual foundations of the European regional policy research history and terminological aspect of the issue

In the second half of the twentieth century in the states of Western Europe there was a clear tendency to identify regions as special structures of political and economic activity of states. Thus, in their activities, the structures of united Europe began to address issues of interest not only to national, but also to regional authorities.¹

One of the first measures taken by the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) to address the underdeveloped economies of several regions was the conversion of declining coal mining and metallurgical industries.² The preamble of the 1957 Treaty of Rome, which established the European Economic Community, stated that it was

¹See more: Sardarian G.T. Op. cit. Pp. 668-674.

²Busygina I.M. Structural policy and the role of regions in the European Union // Politics and economy in the regional dimension. Studia politica series. Moscow: IGPI; St. Petersburg: Letnyi Sad, 2000. Vol. 3. P. 32. (in Russian)

necessary «to strengthen the unity of economies and to ensure their harmonious development by reducing the differences existing between the various regions and the backwardness of the less favoured regions». ¹ At the same time, in 1957, the European Social Fund (ESF) was established to promote employment and vocational education policies. In 1968, the Directorate-General for Regional Policy was established under the Commission of the European Community. However, the policy of redistributing funds from rich to poor regions didn't prove particularly effective. Regional policy was generally confined to the search for a harmonised concept based on the experience of different countries. It was believed that the European integration would automatically contribute to the levelling of regional differences.

The supranational aspect in regional policy has begun to appear only since 1975, when the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) was established to finance communitarian (i.e. supranational) regional policy. At the same time, the transition from redistributive regional policy of nation states to an incentivising liberal policy took place. Its priority shifted from levelling regional differences within states to determining the objectives of economic feasibility.² In 1986, after the signing of the Single European Act, the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund was established as a result of which agricultural problems were considered together with other regional policy issues.

A fundamentally new stage in regional policy was the period of 1980-1990s. In 1989, the European Structural Funds system was reformed to include the implementation of a programme approach involving regional and local authorities to create integrated programmes (rather than individual projects in the formulation of a common regional policy) as well as partnership and mobilisation of all levels of government.³ The introduction of partnership and programming concepts into the ERDF activities has resulted in a principle of action for regional policy to compromise between

¹Traité instituant la Communauté Economique Européenne 1957. Op. cit. Préambule. P. 11.
URL: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:11957E/TXT:FR:PDF>

²Busygina I.M. Op. cit. (Structural policy and the role of regions in the European Union) Pp. 32-34; Goffe N.V. Social component of regional policy in the West // World Economy and International Relations. – 2003. – № 4. – Pp. 64-66. (in Russian)

³Busygina I.M. Op. cit. (Structural policy and the role of regions in the European Union) P. 34.

supranational, national and regional levels of government. Thus, when drawing up regional development plans (of an exclusively long-term nature) it became necessary to hold tripartite consultations between the European Commission, Member States and regional authorities.¹

These aspects are best reflected in the concept of multi-level governance. In terms of the concept, the EU is an entity where power is dispersed between different levels of government and actors, and there are significant differences in decision-making methods between sectors. Due to the interaction of sub-national units with Eurostructures, there is a change in systems of governance, national power verticals are «disintegrating» in the integration context. The cooperation of supranational and regional authorities interrupts the hierarchical subordination relations existing within national frameworks.²

The European regional policy has gone through several stages. While initially it was limited to emergency but localised activities, it has evolved into a permanent, large-scale instrument. At the first stage, the European regional policy complemented other social and economic policies; later it became in fact one of the principal conditions for accelerating economic growth. Regional policy has reached out to the entire population of problem areas, not only to specific social groups.³ It is also important that, despite its evolution, the priority of regional policy remains the partnership between different levels of national and the EU authorities, the co-financing of programmes by all Member States, and the programme nature of projects, through which specific rather than abstract problems are addressed in fixed time periods.⁴

¹ Eremina N.V. Op. cit. (Regionalism and regionalisation as the basis of European integration) Pp. 140-141; Castric O. Quel partenariat pour les régions de l'Union européenne? Rennes: Apogée, 2002. P. 41.

² Gromoglasova E.S. Theory and practice of political governance in the European Union. M.: IMEMO RAS, 2009. Pp. 13-16 (in Russian)

³ Busygina I.M. Op. cit. (Structural policy and the role of regions in the European Union) P. 31.

⁴ Regional policy of the EU countries. Op. cit. P. 19.

1.2. Theoretical aspects of the principle of subsidiarity

The next important stage in the formation of the EU governance system was the adoption of the Treaty on European Union (Maastricht Treaty) in 1992. As a result, the policy of equalising regional differences became one of the most important tasks along with the establishment of a common customs and monetary union, with one third of the EU budget now allocated to regional programmes.¹

The Treaty introduced the concept of subsidiarity for the first time. The main initiator of its introduction was President of the European Commission, French Socialist J. Delors (1925-2023). He stated: «I see in the principle of subsidiarity the possibility of reconciling what seems to be largely impossible to reconcile: the emergence of a united Europe and loyalty to our state, to our fatherland; the need for European power because of the magnitude of the problems of our time and the vital obligation to preserve our states and regions, since our roots grow out of them; the decentralised distribution of responsibilities, so as never to hand over to a larger community what can be better realised by a smaller community».² According to Article 3b of the Maastricht Treaty «in areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Community shall take action, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States and can therefore, by reason of the scale or effects of the proposed action be better achieved by the Community».³

According to the famous Russian researcher I.M. Busygina, the principle of subsidiarity has its origins in Catholic social teaching. In particular, the encyclical of Pope Pius XI (1857-1939) of 15 May 1931 states that «it would be unjust ... to disturb the social order by taking away from associations of a lower order the functions that they are capable of performing themselves and entrusting them to a larger group of

¹La politique de cohésion économique: comment est-elle née? URL: <http://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/L-Europe-s-engage/pour-la-cohesion-economique-et-sociale/Comment-est-elle-nee>

²Barroche J. La subsidiarité chez Jacques Delors. Du socialisme chrétien au fédéralisme européen // Politique européenne. – 2007. – № 23 (3). – P. 167.

³Treaty on European Union, signed at Maastricht on 7th February 1992. Op. cit. Art. 3b; Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union. Op. cit. Art. 5.

a higher order».¹ Moreover, in the internal documents prepared for President of the European Commission J. Delors the principle of subsidiarity was outlined on the basis of the ideas of German Calvinist Johannes Althusius (1562-1683), a contemporary of a Europe in which a system of sovereign states had not yet been established, similar to today's Europe, which is experiencing the decline of nation states.²

In general, the meaning of the principle of subsidiarity is that governance takes place at the lowest possible level, with the European level acting as an additional level to the national level.³

In the European Union, even before the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty, discussions on subsidiarity had been initiated by its governing bodies at the initiative of Germany and its federal states. The aim of introducing the principle was to put into practice the concept of a «Europe of citizens» so that decisions would be taken at the level closest to each citizen.⁴ However, the «streamlined» wording of the subsidiarity principle has given rise to various interpretations.

As soon as the principle of subsidiarity was introduced, questions arose: who is responsible for the redistribution of powers between non-exclusive levels of government in the EU? The Council, the European Commission, the European Parliament?⁵ For some nation states, such as the UK, subsidiarity meant an extension of the competences of the nation state and an obstacle to the development of European centralism. Germany's position was that subsidiarity should stop the EU encroaching on the exclusive powers of the Länder. Spain, on the other hand, believed that subsidiarity should not affect the relationship between the state and the autonomous regions.⁶

The expert community was also divided into two groups regarding the principle of subsidiarity. The first group's position was that subsidiarity delimits the powers

¹Busygina I.M. Strategies of European regions in the context of integration and globalisation. M: Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Association of European Studies, 2002. Pp. 38-39 (in Russian)

²Fadeeva T.M. Federalist model of EU: Concepts and Practices // World Economy and International Relations. – 2000. – № 6. – Pp. 27-29. (in Russian)

³European Union. Fundamental Acts in the wording of the Lisbon Treaty with commentaries / Edited by S.Y. Kashkin; author's commentary: S.Y. Kashkin, A.O. Chetverikov; Translator: A.O. Chetverikov. M.: INFRA-M, 2011. Pp. 105-109.

⁴Busygina I.M. Op. cit. (Strategies of European regions in the context of integration and globalisation). P. 39.

⁵Chemillier-Gendreau M. Op. cit. P. 13.

⁶Busygina I.M. Op. cit.. (Strategies of European regions in the context of integration and globalisation). Pp. 40-41.

between Brussels and the national states and that there is no need to enlarge the powers of the regions. The second group argued that the principle of subsidiarity was a step towards federalisation of the EU. The dividing line between the two groups still runs along the question of where the application of the subsidiarity principle ends – at the level of nation states or whether the competences of states and its regions should be specified separately.¹ Nevertheless, it is the broad interpretation of the principle that has ensured its legislative enshrinement.

The possibility of using the subsidiarity principle to derogate from the supranational principle when drafting «inconvenient» legislation, in particular in the area of competition rules, has also contributed to its legislative entrenchment.²

It should also be noted that there is a view that the principle of decentralisation is opposed to the principle of subsidiarity. Decentralisation is a top-down transfer of decision-making, while subsidiarity is bottom-up. Thus, France has a decentralised model, where regional authorities de facto can only test the decisions taken at the top with regard to regional development goals, while in federal Germany there is a subsidiarity model, as the Länder have initially clear competences and make decisions independently.³

Much has changed in the decades since the Maastricht Treaty was adopted. In particular, the regional dimension of politics in Europe has moved from the economic sphere to the sphere of governance, closely linking economic and political trends in the European Union. In general, the principle of subsidiarity outlined the desire for a strict separation of powers between European, national, regional and municipal authorities, and emphasised the expediency of delegating management functions to a lower level of government.⁴

¹Busygina I.M. Op. cit. (Strategies of European regions in the context of integration and globalisation). P. 42.

²Khokhlov I.I. Subsidiarity as Principle and Mechanism of the EU // World Economy and International Relations. – 2004. – № 5. – Pp. 95-96. (in Russian)

³Derosier J.-Ph. La dialectique centralisation/décentralisation. Recherches sur le caractère dynamique du principe de subsidiarité // Revue international de droit comparé. – 2007. – № 59(1). – P. 127; Kössler K. Regional Identities in Europe. Their Manifestations in Constitution and Policy-Making // European regions. Perspectives, trends and developments in the 21st century / Donat E., Meyer S., Abels G. (eds.). // Political science. – 2020. – Vol. 92. – Pp. 85-86.

⁴Chub A.A. Analysis of the EU experience in the sphere of regionalisation processes management // National interests: priorities and security. – 2009. – № 4 (37). – P. 81. (in Russian)

Currently, the main documents of the European Union contain a number of clauses that directly or indirectly reveal the importance of regional democracy for a united Europe. According to the Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union, the use of powers in the EU is based on subsidiarity and proportionality, the details on their enforcement are contained in the Protocol on the Application of the Principles of Subsidiarity and Proportionality (2008).¹ The Article 4 (2) of the Treaty on European Union states that «the Union shall respect the equality of Member States before the Treaties as well as their national identities inherent in their fundamental structures, political and constitutional, inclusive of regional and local self-government». ² A similar provision is fixed in the preamble of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.³ The Article 10 of the Treaty on the European Union also states that «the functioning of the Union shall be founded on representative democracy [...], decisions shall be taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizen». ⁴ The Article 20 (2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU and The Article 40 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU affirm the right of any EU citizen to vote or stand as a candidate in municipal elections in a Member State under the same conditions as nationals of that state.⁵

The abovementioned references to articles from the main EU treaties show, on the one hand, that states are free to choose their own development model, and on the other hand, that local and regional democracy is one of the basic components for the EU activities. Thus, in the Treaty on European Union as a separate word or a part of another word the term «region» is mentioned 6 times, «local» – 2 times. In the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU: «region» – 75 times, «local» – 8 times, in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights «region» and «local» are mentioned once each.

¹Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union. Op. cit. Art. 5; Protocol (No. 2) on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. // Official Journal of the European Union. C 115. 09.05.2008. URL: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A12008E%2FPRO%2F02>

²Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union. Op. cit. Art. 4 (2).

³Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union // Official Journal of the European Union. 26.10.2012. C 326/02. Preamble. URL: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT>

⁴Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union. Op. cit. Art. 10.

⁵Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union // Official Journal of the European Union. C 326/47. 26.10.2012. URL: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT:en:PDF;Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Op. cit. Art. 40>

The aforementioned Protocol on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality is annexed to the Treaty on European Union. The Article 5 of the Protocol provides that draft legislative acts shall be justified with regard to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. The draft legislation should contain data with financial and other assessments of the implications of subsidiarity to be made by Member States and, where appropriate, an assessment of regional legislation. Initiatives should be implemented at the lowest level commensurate with the objective, stipulating that a qualitative analysis should be carried out to confirm that the objective can be better achieved at the level of regional legislation.¹ Hence the conclusion that the EU is not shifting financial and administrative burdens to regional authorities. The text of the Protocol states that when considering an EU legislative project, the national parliament and its chambers may send the EU a reasoned opinion why the draft act does not comply with the principle of subsidiarity. However, the national parliament under the Protocol should consult regional parliaments only with legislative powers.² Therefore, the question may again arise whether the regional authorities have succeeded in transforming the principle of subsidiarity from a potential good to a real factor that enhances the role of the regions.

There is a number of other problems associated with the principle of subsidiarity. In fact, the concept of «subsidiarity» is interpreted depending on the political will of the European Union, which can lead to some setbacks.³ University of California researcher J. Katcherian, citing M. Schroeder, a German official in the European Parliament, gives an example of how the Finns managed to reintroduce the use of exports of wood resin, which was declared a toxic substance in 2003 under an EU directive. Wood resin is Finland's cultural heritage, and the export of products containing it has been a major source of income for Finland. Almost 10 years after the ban, following lengthy negotiations, the EU made an exception for Finland based on the

¹Protocol (No. 2) on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. Op. cit. Art. 5.

²Ibid., Art. 6.

³Barroche J. Discours et pratique de la subsidiarité européenne depuis le traité et de Maastricht et jusqu'à nos jours // Droit et société. – 2012. – № 80 (1). – Pp. 24-27.

principle of subsidiarity, as the ban violated the cultural identity of the lower levels – the country and its regions. This example shows how subsidiarity protects cultural identity, allowing the EU to maintain «unity in diversity».¹ Subsidiarity implies different levels of identity going back to the Middle Ages period of the European history, which is a kind of reservation to the project of a unified European civilisation.²

According to I.M. Busygina, the ideal scenario for the development of the principle of subsidiarity is the emergence of European federal democracy, in which the subjects of the federation can be both national states and individual regions.³ This concept is of interest due to the presence of some regions, which were characterised back in 1993 by the Japanese economist K. Ohmae as «region states». In an article devoted to the inability of the state to effectively manage economic processes, K. Ohmae proposed the following criteria of region states: linkage with the global economy, not with the nation state; the presence of a small enough territory to create of the population of the region a community (from 5 to 20 million people), but at the same time with optimal for development, economically attractive infrastructure. Such examples are Catalonia, the north of Italy, Alsace-Lorraine. These regions may not coincide only with administrative boundaries within the state, but also with external borders.⁴ However, when considering the examples given by K. Ohmae, it becomes obvious that territorial structures have different powers. Nevertheless, «region states» can become growth poles to increase the rate of development of neighbouring backward regions.⁵

The fact that states are not obliged to translate the principle of subsidiarity into internal relations with the regions raises the problem of disproportionate status of subnational units. The lack of unification of power levels in European states makes it difficult to further increase the regional component of the principle of subsidiarity, and also prevents the Committee of Regions from enlarging its powers. According to British

¹Katcherian J. Unraveling the Paradox: Competence and the Failure of Subsidiarity in the European Union // *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*. – 2012. – Vol. 35. – Is. 2. – Pp. 274-275.

²*Ibid.*, R. 275; Fadeeva T.M. *Op. cit.* P. 25.

³Busygina I.M. *Op. cit.* (Strategies of European Regions in the Context of Integration and Globalisation). P. 43.

⁴Ohmae K. *The Rise of the Region State // Foreign Affairs*. – 1993. – Vol. 72. – Is. 2. – Pp. 78-83.

⁵Busygina I.M. *Op. cit.* (Strategies of European Regions in the Context of Integration and Globalisation). P. 61.

paradiplomacy theorist M. Keating, the implementation of supranational initiatives concerning regional development issues in Europe implies the existence of homogeneous sub-state units.¹

However, it should be noted that not everyone is keen to do so. E.g., in the second half of the 1990s, the French central authorities were among the most ardent opponents of enlarging the powers of the Committee of Regions.² A few years later, a change in the political situation in France led to a change of priorities and a rejection of such a position.

1.3. European funds as a basis for the development of regional policy in Europe

Together with the principle of subsidiarity, the basis for the development of regional policy in Europe lays the system of structural funds of the European Union. Professor P. John of Oxford University in his article «Europeanisation of Sub-national Governance» stresses that «the main aspect of relations with the EU that preoccupies local and regional governments is the disbursement of funds».³ The European Union is a classical distributive body that receives financial resources from national states, but at the same time determines the fate of regions by prioritising the funding of certain regional programmes.

At the same time, the progressive development of the EU regional policy is characterised by a constant simplification of its structure, which is expressed not only and not so much in the revision of the directions and a number of its goals as in the simplification of the procedure for financing regional institutions.⁴

Structural and investment regionally oriented funds are the main instruments for implementing regional development programmes. In particular, the European Regional Development Fund was established in 1975 to reduce inequalities in the economic development of states and regions by changing the industrial structure of the region and increasing territorial cooperation. To promote economic and social cohesion (as well as

¹Keating M. Op. cit. P. 27.

²Ivanov I.D. Europe of regions. P. 174.

³John P. The Europeanisation of Sub-national Governance // Urban Studies. – 2000. – Vol. 37. – Is. 5-6. – P. 879.

⁴Yarovoy G.O. Op. cit. P. 45.

to develop the transeuropean transport network), the Cohesion Fund was established in 1994. One of the oldest European funds, the European Social Fund, later to become the ESF+, was established in 1957 to support regions by programmes for the social inclusion of people in difficult circumstances and the reform of education systems.¹ In 2020, the Renewable Energy Transition Fund was added to the abovementioned funds.

The 2021-2027 funds are provided based on the following European regional policy priorities. It is about building a more competitive Europe with a highly mobile population and an economy transitioning towards carbon neutrality. At the same time, such a Europe should become closer to its citizens by strengthening the sustainable and integrated development of all types of territories.²

The allocation of funds to France for the period 2021-2027 is governed by the partnership agreement on an investment strategy between the European Commission and France for the amount of €18.4 bn (including national co-financing). It is worth noting that €392 bn from the EU structural funds are allocated in the period in question for the implementation of the cohesion policy (regional policy).³ The funds are distributed according to the 2021-2027 partnership agreements, with nine of the EU countries set to receive more than France. These are Poland (€76.5 bn), Italy (€42.7 bn), Spain (€37.3 bn), Romania (€31.5 bn), Portugal (€23 bn), Hungary (€22 bn), Czech Republic (€21.4 bn), Greece (€21 bn) and Germany (€20 bn).⁴ However, it should be emphasised that France is in top ten recipients of funds which is also due to the development of sub-state units there. This demonstrates the broad involvement of the EU structures in the country's regional development.

These financial injections are supposed to improve the competitiveness of French regions by reducing inequalities between urban and agricultural areas. The agreement with France covers 23 programmes: 4 national, 19 regional and 18 projects within

¹Eremina N.V. Op. cit. (Regional policy of the European Union) Pp. 19-24 .

²Priorities for 2021-2027. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/how/priorities_en

³Available budget of Cohesion Policy 2021-2027.

URL: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/available-budget_en

⁴Partnership agreements on EU funds 2021-2027.

URL: https://commission.europa.eu/publications/partnership-agreements-eu-funds-2021-2027_en

the INTERREG programme of financial support for border regions in Europe, involving cross-border cooperation.¹

The European Regional Development Fund will invest €3.5 billion in France to improve the economic potential of the regions, e.g., through the digitalisation of small and medium-sized businesses. A total of €2.8 billion is earmarked for sustainable economies and biodiversity conservation, in particular through the creation of a green transport system. €1bn will be allocated to six French regions to finance the transition to renewable energy. €6.7 bn are earmarked for the development of the labour market. In addition, €567 million are allocated for the development of marine fisheries and €620 million for the development of transport infrastructure in overseas territories.² As can be seen from the funding targets, priority is given to the development of a green economy.

It is important to note that in 2014-2020, 40 programmes were financed under the cohesion policy with French participation, but for a smaller amount of €15.1 billion (€8.4 billion under the ERDF; €1.1 billion for territorial cooperation; €5.5 billion under the ESF and €944 million for the Youth Employment Initiative).³

With regard to trans-European cooperation for the balanced development of INTERREG, France is involved in the following joint projects: with Switzerland; with Germany and Switzerland; with Belgium; in a project with Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg; with the European Mediterranean Basin States; with the Mediterranean Basin States; with Spain and Andorra; in two projects with Italy, as well as in the projects «Alpine Space», «Atlantic Area», «North Sea», «North-West Europe», «South-West Europe» and in four other projects involving overseas territories.⁴ It should be emphasised that for the French – Belgian project are allocated €286.9 million, the fourth largest of the 96 INTERREG projects, while France is also

¹ EU cohesion policy: Commission adopts €18.4 billion Partnership Agreement with France for 2021-2027. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/es/ip_22_3368

² EU cohesion policy: Commission adopts €18.4 billion Partnership Agreement with France for 2021-2027. Op. cit.

³ Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion Policy. URL: <https://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/en/european-funds/economic-social-and-territorial-cohesion-policy>

⁴ Accord de partenariat des autorités françaises 2021-2027. Op. cit. Pp. 50-51.

taking part in the North-West Europe project, which has the third largest amount of €310.5 million.¹

Participation in this type of projects has the following objectives. Thus, within the INTERREG France (represented by Burgundy – Franche-Comté) – Switzerland, financed by the ERDF (for 2021-2027 allocated €69.7 million), the Swiss confederal and cantonal authorities, are intended to achieve carbon neutrality and ecological transition, develop innovative technologies, sustainable mobility, culture and sustainable tourism and simplify customs procedures at the French-Swiss border.²

The agricultural funds operating under the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) also play a significant role for regional development within the EU: the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (formerly called the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund), responsible for direct financial payments to farmers under the CAP and for measures to regulate agricultural markets. Also worth mentioning is the European Fisheries Fund, transformed into the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund in 2021.

One of the characteristic features of the EU regional policy is the mechanism for managing the European Funds. The European Commission consults and approves a national strategy to identify key funding priorities for individual countries, as well as an operational programme aligned with the national strategy to transfer the funds to each specific region. Both the strategy and the programme are proposed by the states. Then the programme implementation phase begins.³ The recipient countries of the European funds appoint a responsible authority for each programme and submit an annual report on the implementation of the programme to the European Commission. E.g., in France, until 2014, the prefects of the regions were responsible for

¹2021-2027 – EU budget Interreg resources. Op. cit.

²Interreg France – Switzerland.

URL: <https://interreg.eu/programme/interreg-france-switzerland/>

³Europe en France: le portail des Fonds européens. URL: <http://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/L-Europe-s-engage/pour-la-cohesion-economique-et-sociale>

the programmes financed by the ERDF. In 2003, an exception was made for Alsace, where a regional council took over control.

This state of affairs didn't suit the French regions. Despite the fact that in the 1990s there was a twofold increase in payments through the European funds, at the same time the accession of Eastern European countries to the EU reduced the financial resources of more prosperous Western European states. Moreover, for French regions, the EU funding is extremely important, as the funds compensate the lack of transfers from the state. It is therefore logical that regional authorities demanded new opportunities within the structural funds, such as decentralisation of governance. The regional councils found it unfair that Alsace was excluded and that in Corsica the authorities managed the funds allocated for agricultural development while other territories did not have this possibility. In 2007, the French Senate approved the extension of the Alsace experiment to other regions, but this decision wasn't implemented in practice.¹

The abovementioned dissatisfaction of regional authorities refuted the widespread view that the realisation of structural funds resources didn't depend on the autonomy of subnational units, as its scheme is worked out at the supranational level.²

The issue of structural fund management is also important because it is inextricably linked to the enhancement of the status of regions. As early as 1998, French researchers B. Jouvét and E. Negrioux noted that overcoming barriers to access to funds by the regions would be the basis for the regionalisation of the state, as it is necessary to «take account of the demands of modern managerial practices and the development of the place of the regional level within Europe».³

As part of the decentralisation process in France, the main features of which will be discussed below in Chapter 2, under the Article 78 of the law of January 27, 2014, for the periods 2014-2020 and 2021-2027, the state has given regional councils

¹Martinat P. Op. cit. P. 190.

²De Rynck S., McAleavey P. The cohesion deficit in Structural Fund Policy // Journal of European public policy. – 2001. – Vol. 8. – Is.4. – P. 555.

³Jouve B., Negrier E. Multi-level governance «French style?» The contribution of the European structural funds to redefining intergovernmental relations in France // European planning studies. – 1998. – Vol. 6. – Is. 5. – P. 563.

a possibility to manage structural funds. The management is carried out jointly by France, its regions and other territorial collectives. Thus, the regions manage the resources of the ERDF, the EAFRD and 35% of the ESF. However, Paris is also involved in supervising the use of the abovementioned funds (as well as the regions) and in the state's management of the remainder of the ESF and other funds.¹

The transfer of the funds to the regional authorities was intended to improve control over their allocation. E.g., in Brittany, in 2012, it was recognised that there were difficulties in implementing the resources of the funds for 2007-2013, with the risk of losing part of them due to the expiry of the period of possible use.² However, a certain degree of control has been maintained. Thus largely for this purpose, a national «States-Regions» committee was set up (headed by the French Prime Minister and the President of the Association of French Regions) and in each region – Committees with the participation of representatives of central and local authorities.³

It should be noted that the planning of the EU cohesion policy for 2021-2027 took into account the presence in France of the 21 regions that existed before the 2015 reform, which were classified as «transit regions» (GDP between 75% and 100% of the European average) with the exception of Ile-de-France and Rhône-Alpes (GDP above 100% of the European average), which is important for investment in employment and growth.⁴

1.4. Implementation of the EU regional policy at the current stage: challenges and risks

Meanwhile, in order to better understand the influence of the foreign policy context on the situation in France, it is necessary to dwell on a number of other aspects of the implementation of the EU regional policy at the present stage.

¹Qui gère les fonds européens? URL: <https://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/fr/programmes-europeens-2014-2020/qui-gere-les-programmes-europeens#:~:text=L'Etat%20est%20co-responsable,des%20programmes%20et%20des%20fonds>

²Blanchard G., Maillard M. Pour une meilleure utilisation des fonds européens en Bretagne. Rennes: CESER de Bretagne. Juin 2012. Pp. 18-21.

³Loi n° 2014-58 du 27 janvier 2014 de modernisation de l'action publique territoriale et d'affirmation des métropoles (1). Art. 78. URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000028526298/>

⁴2021-2027 Category of regional status of NUTS 2 regions by country. Op. cit.

Since the early 1990s, there have been a number of reforms in the field of administrative management in many EU Member States. French specialist on the law of territorial collectives M.-J. Tulard believes that two types of states have emerged as a result of the reforms.

The first type is regional (regionalised) states. In them, regions have autonomous status and powers in the legislative and executive fields. These are Italy, Spain and Great Britain. M.-J. Tulard notes that in Italy five regions with the status of special autonomy have powers in almost the same spheres as the French regions – in the areas of social security, health care, education, administration, so there is nothing impossible for enlarging their powers.

The second type of state, according to M.-J. Tulard, is a decentralised state. In it the regions have the competence to deal with regional issues, and in accordance with the national legislation they have an opportunity to make regulatory amendments to the adopted laws and the right to deviate from a number of provisions in the interests of the region, if it is allowed. This is the case in Poland, Portugal, Ireland, the Czech Republic and Denmark. France can also be included here.¹ However, both types of states are united by a rational approach to the system of administrative-territorial management, based on increasing the active participation of representatives of territorial authorities in the political affairs of the state. At the same time, the very fact of reforming the ATD system in European countries encourages France to act following decentralisation tendencies.

It can be said that regionalisation in Europe allows national minorities to self-realise.² The transfer of powers from the Centre restrains separatist tendencies within the country. Identity and culture, previously seen as obstacles to modernisation, become resources for a new stage of territorial development. In addition, the possibility of direct contact with the European authorities, bypassing the state, significantly raises the status of regional authorities, not necessarily representing a region with pronounced

¹Tulard M.-J. Op. cit. Pp. 113-114.

²See more: Pakhorukov K.I. Nationalism in Russia and France: a comparative analysis // In the world of scientific discoveries. – 2010. – № 4-12 (10). – Pp. 68-70.

ethno-national characteristics. Although, e.g., researchers of minority nationalism M. Keating and A. Olsson note that European integration enjoys strong support not only in regions dominated by minority nationalism, but also where there is an ethno-linguistic minority represented by regional parties.¹ European projects provide incentives to reduce the influence of ethnicity, create a civic territorial project, and introduce a system of multi-level governance.² In the endeavour to overcome the state level, supranational structures are allies of the regions.

According to some experts, the concept of a «Europe of Regions» is being realised, saying that in future European states may disappear from the map and be replaced by regions or super-regions. At the same time, the «Europe of Regions» is inseparable from supranational and national levels,³ being an integral part of the multilayered political process in the EU.⁴ Other experts believe that it is more correct to speak rather of a «Europe with regions», in which there is an increasing influence of regions on the European integration agenda due to their growing participation in the political decision-making process.⁵

The regionalisation that has been unfolding in Europe in recent years, as well as the principle of subsidiarity, carry certain risks. A movement of political activists from the Assembly of European Regions has become active in Europe. It has achieved the introduction of the term «subsidiarity» in the Microsoft Word dictionary in different languages, supposing initially that it will then become a universally recognised concept and a principle that works in practice.⁶

One may agree with Professor W. Downs of the University of Georgia that the principle of subsidiarity became one of the stimuli for the manifestation of

¹Keating M. Op. cit. P. 8, 18; Olsson A. Regional Minority Nationalist Attitudes towards European Integration. 28.12.2016. P. 4.

URL: <https://silo.tips/download/regional-minority-nationalist-attitudes-towards-european-integration>

²Keating M. Op. cit. P. 8.

³See more: Biryukov S.V. Op. cit. Pp. 42-50; Smirnov V.P. France between globalism and nationalism // France on the threshold of change: economy and politics at the beginning of the XXIst century: a collection of articles based on the results of the All-Russian scientific conference (Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS, 7 December 2015) / Edited by A.V. Kuznetsov, M.V. Klinova, A.K. Kudryavtsev, P.P. Timofeev. M.: Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS, 2016. P. 182 (in Russian)

⁴Downs W. Regionalism in the European Union: Key Concepts and Project Overview // Journal of European Integration. - 2002. – Vol. 24. – Is. 3. – P. 172; Busygina I.M. Op. cit. (Political regionalism). P. 265.

⁵Yarovoy G.O. Op. cit. P. 9.

⁶Katcherian J. Op. cit. P. 272.

regionalist tendencies, instilled hope in the minds of regional leaders for the assertion of territorial autonomy, making them «sub-heads of state». Thanks to this, information centres of the territories began to develop and high-level agreements were signed between the regions. But at the same time, the limits of decentralisation should be defined, as the overlapping powers and the exorbitant complexity of the ATD system may lead to its blockage.¹

Administrative decentralisation may also give rise to political regionalisation based on regional identity. Moreover, according to Professor A. Evans of the University of Belfast, the desire to satisfy the interests of the regions through decentralist tendencies together with the unclear legal framework of provisions on the role of regions in the EU treaties may result in initiatives to create their own states within the EU. Indeed, the topic of a possible declaration of independence for Scotland and Catalonia is constantly raised by the political circles of these territories.² The author cited the view that decentralisation serves as a deterrent to separatist tendencies, but it is obvious that there is another vision of this issue.

All facts considered allow us to summarise some conclusions. While European treaties address the subject of regionalisation rather vaguely and the principle of subsidiarity can be interpreted in different ways, the European regional policy, and, above all, the implementation of programmes through structural and other EU funds, is in general a well-developed mechanism both in economic, political and legal terms. Regional policy in the EU forms cooperation relations between economic actors and political institutions to increase the competitiveness of regions. However, an obstacle to the realisation of the European integration is the asymmetry between the competences of regional authorities and the increased participation of regions in the European process of European integration. In order to maximise the use of regional policy resources it is necessary to transform one's own national system. We can agree with I.M. Busygina's thesis that this is possible if an adequate institutional environment is formed, which implies cooperation between public and private actors. «Intelligent»

¹Downs W. Op. cit. P. 173.

²Evans A. Op. cit. Pp. 233-235.

regions appear with «regional coalitions, which include regional administration departments, regional development agencies, chambers of commerce, professional training agencies, research institutes and universities, consulting bureaus, private companies, various associations and unions».¹ In this case, regions have an opportunity to play a variety of roles in national and European politics – as business actors, overseers of European initiatives, defenders of cultural diversity, supporters of trade, actors of democratization.²

Thus, the creation of the European political space was accompanied by an active participation of representatives of local and regional authorities, who fulfilled the role of intermediaries between the EU and national authorities. The reform of the European Structural Funds, on which the EU's regional policy is based, reflected the European Commission's intention to contribute to the institution-building of local authorities and, indeed, regions. This process was formally enshrined in the text of the Maastricht Treaty adopted in 1992, which contained a provision for the creation of a Committee of the Regions. The principle of subsidiarity can thus be characterised as a «political offer» made by the EU to elected representatives at sub-national levels of government to enable them to play a more important role than before.

However, the reverse side of the Structural Funds reform in 1989 was the convergence of the interests of the European Commission and the regions. The new prerogatives of decentralisation of the state structure to the detriment of the national administration complicated the relationship between the European Commission, France and the regional authorities.

¹Busygina I.M. Op. cit. (European and Russian regions: survival strategies in the era of globalization.).

²Vos H., Boucké T., Devos K. The Condition Sine Qua Non of the Added Value of Regions in the EU: Upper-Level Representation as the Fundamental Precondition // Journal of European integration. – 2002. – Vol.24. – Is.3. – Pp. 212-215.

Chapter 2. Reforming territorial collectives in France as a prerequisite for the development of regional paradiplomacy

For many years, France had been the archetype of a centralised polity. However, two structural elements have challenged the centuries-old pyramidal organisation of power: decentralisation and the emergence of the European Economic Community and then the European Union.

The aim of decentralisation was for the state to delegate a part of the public power from the national level to regional bodies. As a result, the French model of public policy, in which the state, or rather its administrative elite, plays a central role, was deprived of its usual prerogatives in the process of safeguarding national interests.

The implementation of decentralisation, aimed at giving local authorities powers different from those of the state, began to take place during the reform of territorial collectives in the 1980s. There were territorial authorities, i.e. structures that are separate from the public administration and are designed to take care of the needs of the population of a territory, such as communes, departments or regions. As a result, once the decentralisation process had been completed, local authorities obtained legal personality, their own staff and a budget independent of the state, both to support their activities and to finance their investments and operations. The first tentative steps in implementing the reform were taken after the Socialists came to power in the early 1980s.

The analysis of the reform of territorial collectives and the process of formation of regions as actors of administrative life in France was carried out in the course of work on documents of the French public authorities, such as legislative acts, «white papers», sets of regulations on the powers of regional authorities.

2.1. The emergence of regions as administrative governance actors in France (1919-2012)

The reform of the territorial organisation of the French Republic has a big history. France is a centralised state. Its history is long and rich: from Merovingian king of the

Franks, Chlodwig, who proposed the idea of a kingdom of the Franks, to Charlemagne, creator of the Carolingian dynasty and the German Empire. For a long time, France had been limited to the royal possessions in Ile-de-France. However, in the course of fierce struggles, successive kings expanded their possessions. Gradually, the kings of France, despite some setbacks, not only gained power over territory close to modern France, but also continued to fight various provincial parliaments that challenged the principle of monarchy by divine right. Although the Revolution of 1789 led to the demise of the monarchy, it remained nevertheless a centralising force on the basis of which Napoleon I founded an empire with an administration and legal system that are still in place today.

From Louis XIV to Napoleon I, the history of the country has known a lot of examples of visionary leaders who transformed France into a country centralised around the capital. To be sure, France was divided into regions, but it functioned according to the will of the central authority. Successive leaders shaped the French mentality where all decisions came from Paris and the legitimacy of power was in the hands of one man.

Republican rule during the Second Republic gave way to the Second Empire of Napoleon III, another centraliser and reformer whose power fell as a result of the disastrous consequences of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871.

The first attempt to create regions in France as administrative units mainly on the basis of historical provinces was made in April 1919, when regional economic associations were established. At the next stage during the Second World War, the Vichy government's decision of 19 April 1941 established 17 regions with regional prefects as their heads.¹ After the end of the war, this decision faded into oblivion. Meanwhile, as a result of economic measures implemented in 1956, 1960 and 1964, the French territory was divided into 21 districts of regional action.²

¹Loi du 19 avril 1941 No. 1768 insistant des préfets régionaux // Journal Officiel de l'État français. № 112. 22 avril 1941; Décret № 1769 du 19 avril 1941 attribuant à certains préfets les pouvoirs des préfets régionaux et portant division du territoire pour l'exercice de ces pouvoirs // Journal Officiel de l'État français. № 112. 22 avril 1941.

²Zakharova M.V. Modern French regionalism // Electronic scientific journal «Science. Society. State». – 2016. – Vol. 4. – № 3. URL: https://esj.pnzgu.ru/files/esj.pnzgu.ru/zakharova_mv_16_3_08.pdf (in Russian)

A few years after the war, General de Gaulle (1890-1970) was aware that excessive centralisation of the country could have the opposite effect, so more rights should be given to the territories and local authorities. Consequently, the view that centralisation and unification of the administrative system made it difficult to find compromise solutions to local problems prevailed in French political circles. It should be noted that partial decentralisation did not contradict the Gaullist ideas which, according to the definition of prominent expert on France S.M. Fedorov, can be presented as follows: to defend an independent position of France in the international arena, to ensure the inviolability of its sovereignty, to preserve «greatness of France», which, as is known, de Gaulle considered the most appropriate and accurate definition for his country.¹

The regional reform of 1972, which soon followed, established administrative units in each of the districts of regional action (regions) as a result the regions were formed as public-law structures headed by a regional council.² Each of the 22 French regions was transformed into an institution of economic administration enjoying a certain autonomy, an intermediate body between the state and local collectives for carrying out the most important economic activities.³

However, it took another ten years before the regions acquired the status of local collectives and were given powers of self-government, and France became a country «where the regions finally took their place».⁴ The Socialists who came to power brought with them an idea that life had to change, and therefore the operating mode of public authorities. Although in France, till now, any deviation from the homogeneity of locally specific governance is seen as a threat to the integrity of the one and indivisible state,⁵ the decades since the reforms of the 1980s have seen a genuine evolution in the status of the regions.

¹Fedorov S.M. Op. cit. P. 147.

²See more: Narochnitskaya E.A. Op. cit. Pp. 210-220; Lebedeva M.L. Op. cit. P. 24.

³Domoratskaya E.I., Maklakov V.V. Op. cit. Pp. 72-77; Zakharova M.V. Op. cit.

⁴Mény Y. *The Political Dynamics of Regionalism: Italy, France, Spain*. London: Policy Studies Institute, 1986. Pp. 1-28.

⁵France. In search of new ways. Op. cit. P. 263.

The first decentralisation laws were adopted shortly after the election of F. Mitterrand (1916-1996) as President of the Republic in 1981. They were prepared by Minister of the Internal Affairs G. Defferre (1910-1986) and named after him. Under the Defferre Acts, passed between 1982 and 1983, regions were given the right to form their own budgets, to engage in land improvement, vocational training, transport, culture and scientific research.

The decentralisation process was thus launched in France. In 1986, elections to regional councils were held for the first time. The Article 59 of the law № 82-213 of 2 March 1982 specifically stated that «the creation of regions didn't threaten the unity of the Republic and the integrity of the territory».¹ However, it took another 20 years before the French Constitution was amended in 2003.

The Constitutional law of 28 March 2003 recognised the territorial structure of the Republic decentralized and for the first time established the status of the region as a territorial collective alongside communes and departments.² At the same time, territorial collectives, including regions, were granted the right to deviate, on an experimental basis, from the laws and regulations defining their sphere of competence.³

This fact is of great importance because from that moment on, changes in the status of the region could no longer be made by means of an ordinary law, i.e. it became necessary for it to be approved by referendum or by Congress during a joint session of the National Assembly and the Senate.

In 2004, laws were adopted on the financial autonomy of the territorial collectives and on the transfer of new competences to them. In addition to the traditional competences to consolidate economic development, to develop the territory, to maintain the transport system (railway transport of regional importance, co-financing of roads, ensuring the functioning of sea and river ports and, since 2002, the management of airfields of regional importance), to provide vocational education, to build and supervise

¹Loi n°82-213 du 2 mars 1982 relative aux droits et libertés des communes, des départements et des régions. Op. cit. Art. 59.

²Loi constitutionnelle n°2003-276 du 28 mars 2003 relative à l'organisation décentralisée de la République. Art.1 Op. cit.

³Loi organique n° 2003-704 du 1er août 2003 relative à l'expérimentation par les collectivités territoriales. Art. 1. URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000000239925>

the functioning of lyceums, to develop tourism and to protect the environment, the following powers were transferred to the regions: right of ownership of lyceums' property, hiring of engineers and technical employees in lyceums, right to restore and to be the owner of cultural heritage, organization and financing of artistic professional education, right to vaccinate and to fight diseases.¹ The transfer of powers started on 1 January 2005 and was carried out gradually up to 2008-2009.

Nevertheless, in the years that followed, the debate about the continuation of «devolution in the French way» raged in France. On the one hand, despite the seemingly extensive competences of the regional authorities, their powers continued to be rather formal. On the other hand, the regional councils, dominated by Socialist deputies, expressed dissatisfaction with the discrepancy between the powers transferred under the 2004 reform and the financial capacities of the regions, which often had an adverse effect on the relations between the regional authorities and the Centre.²

After winning the 2007 presidential election, centre-right politician N. Sarkozy initiated the renewal of the French territorial administration system.³

The website of the French Ministry of Internal Affairs cited simplification of the territorial organisation as a key reason for the reform due to: 1) the piling up of administrative-territorial units comprising 36,783 communes, 100 departments, 26 regions, 15,900 communes, 371 pays* (districts) (all data including overseas territories), making the management system confusing and incomprehensible to the population; 2) the confusion of competences; 3) the existence of co-financing, as

¹Loi n°2004-809 du 13 août 2004 relative aux libertés et responsabilités locales. Op. cit.; Quelles sont les nouvelles compétences transférées aux collectivités en 2004? URL: <http://www.vie-publique.fr/decouverte-institutions/institutions/collectivites-territoriales/pouvoirs/quelles-sont-nouvelles-competences-transferees-aux-collectivites-2004.html>

²Martinat P. Op. cit. Pp. 51-52.

³In the national historiography the peculiarities of the foreign and internal policy of France under N. Sarkozy are revealed in the monograph by E.O. Obichkina. See: Obichkina E.O. Op. cit. (Foreign policy of France from de Gaulle to Sarkozy (1940-2012).

*The term «pays» is translated in this context as «district», which refers to a territory with geographical, economic, cultural or social cohesion in the labour sphere that expresses its interests for the implementation of development projects. – Loi n°95-115 du 4 février 1995 d'orientation pour l'aménagement et le développement du territoire. Art. 2. URL: <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000005617704&dateTexte=vig>

25% of the financial resources of the region and 20% of the financial resources of the departments were used for the same projects.¹

Various commissions, both independent experts and those set up on the initiative of the French authorities, prepared reports on the situation in ATD. The Committee for the Reform of Local Collectives, established by presidential decree and chaired by E. Balladur, former French Prime Minister and member of the Council of State, was involved in this project. The Committee comprised of active political and social activists. On the basis of the report submitted by the Balladur Committee, the final version of the act on the reform of local collectives was drafted and legally enacted on 16 December 2010.

According to the law, the institution of «territorial councilors» was to appear, sitting simultaneously in the regional and general councils, since the regional councils were to become in fact an amalgamation of the general councils. It should be noted that with the adoption in 2002 of the law on the special status of Corsica, its regional councilors became known as territorial councilors, i.e. the notion of «territorial councilor» had already entered French legal terminology.² They were to be elected under a majoritarian system in two rounds for six years,³ the first elections were scheduled for 2014. This is why in the 2010 regional elections councilors were elected for four years instead of six years, and in March 2011 general councilors were elected for three years instead of six years.⁴ The reform project thus implied the simultaneous elimination of competition and incoherence between regional and general councils by creating a single «region»-«department» structure.

Once again, a redistribution of competences was envisaged, as the key objective of the reform was to devolve powers of an exclusive nature to the region, which meant

¹ La réforme des collectivités territoriales. 24.12.2009. URL: <http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/sections/reforme-collectivites/questions-plus-frequentes>

²Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (Decentralisation in France: the special role of Corsica) P. 70; The comparative characterisation of territorial reforms in France and Russia is of interest. See more: Dementiev A.N. Op. cit. (On the Legal Conditions of Comparison of Territorial Reforms at the Local Level in France and Russia) Pp. 74-82. See also: Zhukov I.K. Op. cit. Pp. 152-159; Nasyrov I.R. Op. cit. (International Cooperation of Regions: World Practice and Experience of Tatarstan); Tupikin A.P., Shilov V.S. Op. cit. 307 p.

³Loi n° 2010-1563 du 16 décembre 2010 de réforme des collectivités territoriales. Op. cit. Art. 1-7.

⁴ Pour simplifier, ne fallait-il pas commencer par supprimer un échelon? 21.12.2009. URL: [https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/content/search?SearchText=sereinement%20de%20non%20mars&filter\[\]=attr_topics_k:Collectivite%20territoriales&activeFacets\[rubric/topics:Th%C3%A9matiques\]=Collectivite%20territoriales](https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/content/search?SearchText=sereinement%20de%20non%20mars&filter[]=attr_topics_k:Collectivite%20territoriales&activeFacets[rubric/topics:Th%C3%A9matiques]=Collectivite%20territoriales)

that the powers granted to the region were indivisible from anyone else. The Article 75 stated that «in order to rationalise the work of the regional and general councils, their presidents shall have the right to draw up jointly, six months after the election of the territorial councilors, a scheme for the distribution of competences and delimitation of work». ¹ It was also proposed to prohibit different territorial collectives from co-financing the same project to avoid situations of rival competences from 2015 onwards. The implication was that regions and departments would operate within a strictly defined framework. At the same time, the territorial councilors would be able to allocate competences between the region and the departments according to local specificities. This was to be reflected in the regional development plan, taking into account the redistribution of funding between territorial collectives, which was usually drawn up by the regional and general councils in consultation with the communes located on their territories. In addition, the creation of «metropolises» was envisaged as specific management systems for large cities.²

The General Code of Territorial Collectives introduced Chapter IV «Regrouping and changing the territorial boundaries of departments and regions», according to which several departments in the same region, through consultations between the general councils, may request the formation of a single department. The initiative requires the support of 10% of the general councilors and the support of at least a quarter of the voters of the departments in question in order that the proposal to be considered at the national level. The final decision is made by a decree of the Council of State. Similarly, a department can be transferred from one region to a neighbouring region. Finally, a region can be merged with its constituent departments into a special territorial collective (this requires the support of at least a quarter of the voters of each department). In this case, the decision to create a new territorial collective is confirmed by the adoption of a law that defines its structure and powers.³

¹Loi n° 2010-1563 du 16 décembre 2010 de réforme des collectivités territoriales. Op. cit. Art. 75.

²Pour ma région. 11.02.2010. URL: <http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/sections/reforme-collectivites/que-va-t-elle-changer/pour-ma-region>; Daucé S. Les financements croisés après la loi du 16 décembre 2010 - Analyse juridique. URL: <https://www.lagazettedescommunes.com/87292/les-financements-croises-apres-la-loi-du-16-decembre-2010-%E2%80%93-analyse-juridique/>

³Loi n° 2010-1563 du 16 décembre 2010 de réforme des collectivités territoriales. Op. cit. Art. 26-29.

Meanwhile, the Balladur Committee's proposal to merge the departments into larger structures and reduce the number of metropolitan regions from 22 to 15 wasn't implemented. In particular, the regional authorities of Picardy and Poitou-Charentes, that feared their abolition, were active opponents at the time. The Committee clarified its intention to hold local referendums in each case of territorial boundary changes.¹

An important aspect of the reform was financial. It was believed that significant savings could be made as a result of a clear distribution of competences. In addition, the professional tax on business activities, which brought up to 50% of the tax revenues of territorial collectives, was abolished, which, on the one hand, facilitated business activities and, on the other hand, deprived territorial collectives of a significant share of the tax revenues. Instead, a territorial economic contribution consisting of a tax on immovable property of enterprises and a value added tax on enterprises, a tax on network enterprises, a special tax on insurance, a tax on commercial areas, etc. were introduced; however, with the new taxes introduced, only 65% of the former amount of contributions was compensated.²

It should be noted that the author of the dissertation research in the course of personal conversations with the employees of the centre-right mayor's office of the North French city of Cambrai heard the opinion that the reform of 2010 appeared as a concession to the left political forces in order to resolve the conflict between the centre-right executive and legislative power of Paris and the power of the «left» in the regions and departments.

However, left-wing parties described the reform at the time as the first act of recentralisation. In their opinion, the apparent decentralisation hid the strengthening of the power of the Centre. The Socialist Party (SP) opposed the reform. Following the approval of the reform bill by the Senate and the National Assembly on 22 November 2010, its representatives – 60 deputies and 60 senators – initiated a

¹Wienen J., Mosler-Tornstrom G. Op. cit. P. 11.

² Loi n° 2009-1673 du 30 décembre 2009 de finances pour 2010. URL: [http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000021557902&dateTexte=;](http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000021557902&dateTexte=)
Les finances des régions: l'autonomie à un tournant ? URL: <http://www.vie-publique.fr/actualite/dossier/elections-regionales-2010/finances-regions-autonomie-tournant.html>

constitutional review of the text. According to the request submitted, the key shortcomings of the reform were the violation of the freedom to govern territorial collectives, the freedom to vote, the abolition of the general competence of departments and regions, and the creation of «metropolises».¹ Nevertheless, on 9 December 2010, the Constitutional Council ruled that the text of the draft law was in conformity with the Constitution, with the exception of the Article 6 concerning the allocation of territorial councilors to departments. This article was subsequently finalised.²

The position of the Socialist Party during the debate on reform was most fully reflected in the speech of E. Guigou, then national secretary of the SP, responsible for the reform of the state and territorial collectives. The French politician's speech characterised the government's actions as a counter-reform. According to E. Guigou, the reform divided the regional councilors and their electorate, and the introduction of the concept of «territorial councilor» upset the balance between regions and departments. The abolition of the professional tax made life easier for enterprises but increased the financial pressure on the population.³

At the same time, the SP proposed its own reform project. It provided the preservation of the pre-reform territorial structures with a clearer indication in the legislation of their competences, cooperation between the different levels of collectives, the creation of «metropolises» on a voluntary basis, the transfer to communes the right to collect taxes, and the reform of the electoral system of municipal councils. For the territorial collectives, the main source of funding was to be taxes on the activities of enterprises, and the need to redistribute the volume of subsidies and their own sources of financial revenue was also stated.⁴

¹ Saisine par 60 députés. 22.11.2010. URL: http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/root/bank/download/cc-2010618dc_saisinedeputes.pdf

²Loi de réforme des collectivités territoriales. Décision n° 2010-618 DC du 9 décembre 2010. Le Conseil Constitutionnel. URL: <https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/actualites/communiquede/decision-n-2010-618-dc-du-9-decembre-2010-communiquede-presse#:~:text=9%20d%C3%A9cembre%202010-,D%C3%A9cision%20n%C2%B0%202010%2D618%20DC%20du,d%C3%A9cembre%202010%20%2D%20Communique%C3%A9%20de%20presse&text=Le%209%20d%C3%A9cembre%202010%2C%20par,et%20plus%20de%20soixante%20s%C3%A9nateurs.>

³Elisabeth Guigou: «La contre-réforme territoriale est une régression démocratique». 22.11.2010. URL: <http://www.parti-socialiste.fr/articles/elisabeth-guigou-la-contre-reforme-territoriale-est-une-regression-democratique>

⁴ 15 propositions pour une démocratie territoriale plus juste et plus efficace. URL: <http://www.defendonsnoterritoires.fr/article/15-propositions-pour-une-democratie-territoriale-plus-juste-et-plus-efficace>

Indeed, in practice, the region was largely dependent on subsidies. In conversations with the author of the thesis, a member of the regional council of Nord-Pas-de-Calais in 2010-2015 and a representative of the Radical Left Party, noted that the professional tax was replaced by a tax whose basis for calculation and rate are determined by the Centre, which made the territorial collectives even more dependent on the state. Another interlocutor, a member of the SP who had also been a member of the regional council of Nord-Pas-de-Calais until 2010, suggested as early as in 2011 that if the Socialists won the 2012 presidential and parliamentary elections, they would cancel the reform as not being in the interests of the regional councilors, who would simply not have the time to deal with the affairs of both the region and the departments at the same time. He was right – after winning both elections in 2012, the Socialists started drafting their own law even before the provisions of the law of 16 December 2010 were put into practice.

Why has there not been a significant breakthrough in practice in terms of decentralisation? One can agree with the viewpoint of O. Nay, Professor of the University-Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, expressed in 1997, long before the law was discussed and adopted. According to O. Nay, the French administrative-territorial system is a conglomerate of confrontation of different economic and political interests. Regions in France have been artificially constructed, so when faced with European challenges of decentralisation, France cannot find alternatives to them, and at the same time doesn't dare to change its system.

However:

- 1) enlargement of regional powers is necessary, as regional authorities better understand the specifics of the population's demands;
- 2) financial leverage should be transferred to the regions;
- 3) decentralisation in France will take place, but with evident problems due to the entrenched traditions of the centralised state;
- 4) inequality of powers between the French regions and other states does not prevent cooperation. However, if the powers were equal, it would be more effective;

5) the French don't see the possibility of increasing the external policy powers of the regions, but foreign experts believe that the future of European integration lies with the regions.¹

The ideas expressed by O. Nay were confirmed in the reform of territorial collectives implemented under President F. Hollande.²

The new project of the Socialists in the discussions was characterised in the same way as the reform of N. Sarkozy – the third act of decentralisation. This indicated that the Socialists did not recognise the 2010 reform as a step towards decentralisation of powers and started it with a «clean slate». In contrast to the centre-right, the Socialists' main emphasis in their comments on the progress of the reform of territorial collectives was on the pan-European character of decentralisation. Thus, e.g., in N. Sarkozy's speech in Saint-Dizier on 20 October 2009 which launched the «centre-right» decentralisation process, the European experience was mentioned only in the context of the creation of «metropolises» by analogy with the system of governance and the status of the largest cities of other European states.³ If we turn to Hollande's speech delivered two years later on 5 October 2012 at the Sorbonne, during which he proclaimed the beginning of a new stage of decentralisation, the elements of territorial power in France were compared with similar structures in other European states.⁴

It should be noted that a year earlier, in December 2011, the project «General States of Territorial Democracy» was launched by President of the Senate, Socialist J.-P. Bel. In the first phase, which ran from December 2011 to March 2012, on the Senate's website, representatives of territorial collectives could take part in a survey on the efficiency of the system of management of local affairs. The second stage, in September 2012, involved an open debate between senators and members of the general councils from which they were elected. Finally, on 4-5 October 2012, a joint meeting of 900 representatives of all levels of territorial collectives, including senators, presidents

¹Nay O. *La région, une institution. La représentation, le pouvoir et la règle dans l'espace régional*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997. Pp. 313-316.

²Kostyuk R.V. *Op. cit.* (Foreign policy of François Hollande: changes within the continuation) Pp. 24-44.

³Déclaration de M. Nicolas Sarkozy, Président de la République, sur la réforme des collectivités territoriales, à Saint-Dizier (Haute-Marne) le 20 octobre 2009. *Op. cit.*

⁴Déclaration de M. François Hollande, Président de la République, sur la réforme des collectivités locales, à Paris le 5 octobre 2012. *Op. cit.*

of regional and general councils and mayors, was held at the Senate and Sorbonne in Paris. It was at such a meeting that F. Hollande gave a speech on 5 October 2012

The following provisions of Hollande's speech are of interest.

First, the reform of territorial collectives in France must be based on an economic basis. In accordance with the OECD position, it is considered that the states where the regions have full power have better economic performance.¹ F. Hollande pointed out that the development of territorial democracy was a hotbed for economic growth. The competitiveness of the French economy depends on the involvement of the territories. Their economic growth helps to get out of the economic crisis of the whole country. To improve the economic development of the regions, the creation of a Public Investment Bank was announced, with a representative of the regions in the administrative board and the right of the regional councils to recommend to the bank a programme of actions. The bank, financed by the state and by the Deposit and Savings bank, is intended to finance small and medium-sized enterprises related to innovative projects and, importantly, export-oriented enterprises.²

The second significant aspect is the influence of external trends on the French reform. In 2012, French experts noted that the economic crisis was at the heart of the reforms of territorial collectives in Europe, while stressing that, in such a context, these reforms often have the character of recentralisation. The merger of territorial structures in Greece, the liquidation of Regional Development Agencies in the UK, the refusal to continue the decentralisation process in Ireland, the cancellation of decentralisation reforms in Portugal, Finland, Sweden, fears of the regions turning into a purely administrative structure in Denmark indicated that during the crisis the state seeks to retain the levers of economic policy management at the top.³

¹ Why regions matter – developing regional economic growth? URL: <http://www.oecd.org/gov/regional-policy/#d.en.194438>

² Déclaration de M. François Hollande, Président de la République, sur la réforme des collectivités locales, à Paris le 5 octobre 2012. Op. cit.; Discours de Pierre Moscovici, Ministre de l'Economie et des Finances, Conférence de presse pour le lancement de la Banque publique d'investissement. 17 octobre 2012. URL: <http://proxy-pubminefi.diffusion.finances.gouv.fr/pub/document/18/13365.pdf>

³ Herbet M. La crise, un accélérateur de réforme des collectivités en Europe. 04.10.2012. URL: <http://www.euractiv.fr/collectivites-locales/crise-accelereur-reforme-collectivites-europe-16670.html>

At the 25th Congress of the General States of the Communes and Regions of Europe, held on 28 September 2012 in Cadiz, Spain, the final declaration noted that in Europe, central government was taking some public policies away from the regions, or transferring new powers without providing the necessary means for their implementation. A concern was expressed about the future of the principle of subsidiarity in Europe.¹

With his emphasis on strengthening the role of regional authorities F. Hollande characterised the department as an archaic, old-fashioned structure, but said that structures like the department persisted in other European states and he saw no point in abolishing them. It was pointed out that the departments could well be retained, leaving them to deal with social issues, such as drug addiction or the disabled.² Nevertheless, participants in the 2012 political debates repeatedly appealed to the 2008 report prepared by the Commission for Increasing France's Economic Growth, which was set up on the initiative of N. Sarkozy and included politicians and representatives of business circles. The 2008 report envisaged the abolition of the department as an echelon of power. According to the report, the increasing powers of the regions in the context of European trends and with the development of communes make the departments an unnecessary power structure. And within ten years, departments as an intermediate power structure should be abolished.³

F. Hollande also mentioned a possible transfer to regional authorities powers to administer the European Structural Funds. In his speech, he spoke about giving a special status to metropolises, while the French policymakers refused to transfer to the metropolises, whose special status was already noted in the law on decentralisation

¹Déclaration de Cadix: «Décentralisation, Développement, Démocratie, Innover pour une Europe en 3 Dimensions». 25èmes États généraux des communes et des régions d'Europe. 28.09.2012. URL: http://www.ccre.org/docs/declarat_FR_UPD.pdf

²Déclaration de M. François Hollande, Président de la République, sur la réforme des collectivités locales, à Paris le 5 octobre 2012. Op. cit.; Herbert M. Décentralisation: l'étoile des régions monte, celle des départements pâlit. 08.10.2012. URL: <https://www.euractiv.fr/section/all/news/decentralisation-l-etoile-des-regions-monte-celle-des-departements-palit/>

³Rapport de la Commission pour la libération de la croissance française. 28.01.2008. P. 18.

URL: <http://www.vie-publique.fr/rapport/29532-rapport-de-la-commission-pour-la-liberation-de-la-croissance-francaise>

under N. Sarkozy's presidency, the resources from the European regional development funds aimed at the development of cities.¹

Among other facts evoked by F. Hollande, we should pay attention to the statement that the establishment of territorial councilors in France was cancelled because it wasn't necessary, and the elections to regional and general councils were postponed from 2014 to 2015. The French president also mentioned the introduction of a provision banning the overlapping of mandates in different echelons of power.

At the initiative of F. Hollande, a Commission for the Renewal of Political and Public Life in France was established, headed by former Prime Minister L. Jospin. The Commission consisted of political and judicial figures as well as representatives of university circles. The members of the Commission prepared a report stating that ministers were to be banned from holding any positions in territorial authorities and MPs were to be banned from holding leadership positions.² Two years later, France legislated a ban on an MP/senator combining the position of president/vice-president of a regional/departmental (until 2015, general) council or mayor.³ However, the ban on overlapping of ministerial post with a local mandate is tacit.

To demonstrate the seriousness of his intentions, F. Hollande initiated the transfer of the territorial reform process from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Overseas Territories, Territorial Collectives and Immigration to the Ministry of State Reform and Public Service, which was reflected in its name started referring to «decentralization».⁴

It was supposed to create a Supreme Council for Territories enabling cooperation between the Centre, the bodies responsible for allocating funding to the territories and their representatives. It was planned to include representatives of the Parliament, regions, departments, communes and intercommunities, and the Government.

¹Loi organique n°2003-704 du 1 août 2003 relative à l'expérimentation par les collectivités territoriales. Op. cit.

²Rapport de la Commission de rénovation et de déontologie de la vie publique présidée par L. Jospin. Partie 2. Chapitre 1. Pp. 54-62. 09.11.2012. URL: http://www.liberation.fr/politiques/2012/11/09/la-commission-jospin-propose-de-limiter-le-cumul-des-mandats-pour-les-ministres_859295

³Loi organique n° 2014-125 du 14 février 2014 interdisant le cumul de fonctions exécutives locales avec le mandat de député ou de sénateur (1). URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000028600521>

⁴Décret n° 2012-780 du 24 mai 2012 relatif aux attributions du ministre de la réforme de l'Etat, de la décentralisation et de la fonction publique.

URL: <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000025915955&dateTexte=&categorieLien=id>

It was to be chaired by the Prime Minister or the Minister responsible for the affairs of the territorial collectives. A body for territorial affairs – the National Conference of Executive Authorities – already existed during the presidency of N. Sarkozy, but its work was limited to listening to the positions of representatives of territorial authorities on problems. The Council, as an independent body under the government, was called upon to prepare an opinion on each draft law concerning territorial collectives and on the draft law on finances. What is important, in the opinion of the initiator of the Council, at that time head of the Association of Small Towns of France M. Malvy, it was supposed to be financed from the funds allocated by the state for the support of territories, i.e. to be financially sound.¹ However, the Supreme Council for Territories was not created due to the fear of senators that it would nullify their powers of liaising with the regions of the country.²

Eventually, a territorial reform law was drafted, but after its consideration by the Council of Ministers, it was decided to split the document into three separate draft laws before submitting it to the French Parliament.

2.2. Administrative and territorial reform in 2014: from plans to practical steps for its implementation

The transition of the Socialists from plans to practical steps to implement administrative-territorial reform began in 2014.

On 27 January 2014 a law was published granting legal status to metropolitan areas comprising communes, departments and regions (e.g., in the case of Greater Paris, 136 communes, four departments and one region), paving the way for the delegation of powers from the state to them in order to create synergies between the main economic and political forces. However, this decision provoked a competition between metropolises and regions for the right to coordinate innovation and sustainable

¹Déclaration de M. François Hollande, Président de la République, sur la réforme des collectivités locales, à Paris le 5 octobre 2012. Op. cit.; Malvy M., Balligand J.-P. Haut Conseil des territoires: quels contours? URL: <http://www.lagazettedescommunes.com/128277/haut-conseil-des-territoires-quels-contours/>

²Le Sénat rejette la création du Haut conseil des territoires. 03.10.2013.

URL: <https://www.maire-info.com/decentralisation/le-senat-rejette-la-creation-du-haut-conseil-des-territoires-article-16468>

development.¹ It should be noted that the metropolises' establishment was considered to be more promising than regional consolidation, as the drivers of economic growth in regions are in one or in another way large cities, including those attracting people from areas with high unemployment rates.²

Critics of the reform pointed out that the creation of several metropolises in one region didn't have an added value for regional development but also fostered unnecessary rivalries between different authorities, e.g., between Montpellier and Toulouse in Occitania; Grenoble, Saint-Etienne and Clermont-Ferrand in Auvergne – Rhône-Alpes; Strasbourg, Metz, Nancy and Reims in Grand Est.³

At the same time, the law established a territorial conference of state action in each region, bringing together the president of the regional council, heads of departmental councils, representatives of intercommunities, municipal councils and public institutions, with the involvement of the prefect of the region in the meetings.

The aim of such structures was to harmonise competences between regions and departments to avoid conflicts between representatives of territorial collectives. It was envisaged that the conference could be used to coordinate cross-border relations with foreign territorial collectives.⁴ At the same time, the emergence of the conferences was accompanied by the fear of de-facto establishing a «guardianship» of the region over departments, which is not allowed by the Article 72 of the French Constitution.⁵ It is worth noting that in the 1970s and 1980s, while the first stage of decentralization was being prepared, the idea of a hierarchy of territorial structures with the supremacy of

¹Loi n° 2014-58 du 27 janvier 2014 de modernisation de l'action publique territoriale et d'affirmation des métropoles. Op. cit. Art. 4.

²Bonnet-Pineau E. La réforme régionale en France: une occasion manquée? // *EchoGéo*. – 2016. – № 35. URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/echogeo/14506>; Jouen M. The new French regions, from a European standpoint // Jacques Delors Institute Policy paper. Paris. – 2015. – № 150. – P. 16.

³Seys F.-O. Op. cit. Pp. 111-112.

⁴Loi n° 2014-58 du 27 janvier 2014 de modernisation de l'action publique territoriale et d'affirmation des métropoles. Op. cit. Art. 4; Lebranchu M. Il est temps de moderniser l'action publique territoriale. 11.04.2013. URL: <http://www.gouvernement.fr/gouvernement/marylise-lebranchu-il-est-temps-de-moderniser-l-action-publique-territoriale>

⁵La Constitution du 4 octobre 1958. Art. 72. URL: <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/la-constitution/la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958/texte-integral-de-la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958-en-vigueur.5074.html>; Poinard M. Collectivités locales: l'impossible réforme? 24.04.2013. URL: <http://www.lagazettedescommunes.com/164793/collectivites-locales-l%E2%80%99impossible-reforme/>

the region was spread in socialist circles. But the Socialists failed to revolutionise the French system of governance at that time.¹

With the question of the guardianship of the collectives over each other, the problem of shared competence – the possibility of the territorial structure to intervene on an optional basis in areas where the participation of the collectives is necessary for the realisation of a certain programme of action – came again to the surface. Thus, the Article L4221-1 of the General Code of Territorial Collectives provided that «the regional council may complement the actions of the state, other territorial collectives and public institutions located in the region in the areas and under the conditions established by the laws defining the distribution of powers between state, communes, departments and regions».²

The territorial reform project under N. Sarkozy has already attempted to abolish the general competence. The report of the Balladur Committee pointed out that in order to make the territorial structures function more successfully, there was a need to narrow their areas of activity by law.³ The Act of 16 December 2010 amended the General Code of Territorial Collectives, according to which it was assumed that from 1 January 2015, the regional and general councils would act only within the competence established by law and would deal with matters of regional or departmental interest which didn't fall within the competence of any other public institution.⁴ It is worth saying that its application in internal politics has been limited while for international cooperation of territorial collectives it had a specific meaning. Since within its framework they act outside their own territory. The law of 27 January 2014 preserved the general competence of regional and departmental authorities, but a year and a half later, on 7 August 2015, it was finally abolished.

¹Nakano K. The Role of Ideology and Elite Networks in the Decentralisation Reforms in 1980s France // West European Politics. – 2000. – Vol. 23. – Is. 3. – Pp. 104-105.

²Code général des collectivités territoriales. Art. L4221-1. URL: http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.do;jsessionid=1DA36695B8F325AC144E3635C8EC5C6E.tpdjo14v_2?idSectionTA=LEGISCTA000006164693&cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006070633&dateTexte=20130427.

³Rapport du Comité pour la réforme des collectivités locales au Président de la République en date du 5 mars 2009. URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000020347348>

⁴Loi n° 2010-1563 du 16 décembre 2010 de réforme des collectivités territoriales. Op. cit. Art. 73.

An important milestone for decentralisation in France was F. Hollande's statement to the press «On the reform of territories for the reform of France» in June 2014.

The need for reform was argued by the outdated territorial organisation of the country with communes as on the map of the 18th century and regions adapted to the regional development programmes of the 1950s and 1960s. It was indicated that the boundaries of regions should be brought in line with the «geography of growth» generated by urbanisation.¹

Announcing the forthcoming transformations, F. Hollande noted that the reform should introduce a functioning «territorial architecture» for several decades.² Thus, with regard to the regions, the head of the French Republic emphasised their key role for the prosperity of territories while acknowledging that the resources available to regional authorities didn't correspond to the volume of their powers. A pivotal aspect was the question of reducing the number of regions. This proposal was justified by giving them a size comparable to that of European regions. In addition, F. Hollande pointed out that the new territorial map would take into account the established links between regional councils.

It was assumed that regional authorities would be given exclusive competence to support enterprises, employment, vocational education, secondary education and regional transport policy with adequate funding. In the future, F. Hollande did not rule out the abolition of general councils, but no further details were given.³

«A trial balloon» was the attempt to create a single territorial collective in Alsace, where a referendum was held on 7 April 2013 which resulted by failure.

Alsace was to have a territorial collective with a single governing body and budget. Following negotiations between the Alsace regional council and the general councils of the Upper and Lower Rhine, the following decisions were taken:

¹Marcou G. Où va le système français d'administration territoriale? La réforme de trop? Quelle organisation pour les grandes régions en France et en Europe? Paris: L'Harmattan, 2015. P. 25; Lajudie B. Réforme régionale: un enjeu pour la croissance. 11.07.2014. URL:

<https://www.strategie.gouv.fr/publications/reforme-regionale-un-enjeu-croissance>

²Hollande F. Réformer les territoires pour réformer la France. 02.06.2014. Op. cit.

³Ibid.

1) if the project was implemented, the members of the territorial collective would be elected by a mixed electoral system; 2) the capital of the Lower Rhine, Strasbourg, would be the seat of the assembly responsible for decision-making; the capital of the Upper Rhine, Colmar, would be the seat of the executive council, elected by the assembly by majority vote. Other administrative offices were to be in another Upper Rhine city, Mulhouse. The new structure was expected to be in place in 2015.

This initiative was intended to show that Alsace, at the centre of the European integration processes, could play the role of a pilot site in eliminating competition between territorial structures. Besides that, the project aimed at increasing the weight of Alsace in French domestic affairs given its smallest area among all French regions and to reach a new level of cooperation with the regions of Germany and Switzerland. It was therefore no coincidence that representatives of the German state of Baden-Württemberg and the Swiss canton of Basel were invited as advisors to elaborate the project.¹

The project was initiated by the President of the regional council of Alsace F. Richert, who during the presidency of N. Sarkozy held the post of Minister-Delegate for Territorial Collectives. When voting on the adoption of the project report in December 2011 in the general councils, the number of opponents of the project was minimal, although the number of abstentions in the regional council was significant. However, under French law, the creation of a new territorial collective had to be decided by a regional referendum, with a mandatory condition of more than 50% of the votes in favour in each of the two departments. In each of them, this percentage of votes had to correspond to at least 25% of the total number of voters in the department.² According to polls before the referendum, only the turnout in the Upper Rhine was of some concern.

On 7 April 2013, the referendum took place and rather unexpectedly produced a negative result. On the question of approving the creation of a territorial collective of

¹ Rapport du Congrès d'Alsace. «Vers une nouvelle collectivité territoriale: la collectivité territoriale d'Alsace». 24 novembre 2012. Op. cit.

²Loi n° 2010-1563 du 16 décembre 2010 de réforme des collectivités territoriales. Op. cit. Titre II. Ch. 4.

Alsace through the merger of the regional and general councils in the Lower Rhine 67.53% (i.e. 22.90% of all voters in the department) were in favour, with a turnout of 35.11%, while in the Upper Rhine 55.74% were against the merger, with a turnout of 37.18%.¹

The campaign against the referendum was organised by the leaders of the extreme left and extreme right political forces – J.-L. Mélenchon and M. Le Pen, while the Front National (FN) led by M. Le Pen was not initially against the project, but then decided to play on the idea of preserving the «French national identity».²

On 11 March 2013, the head of the FN delivered a manifesto in Mulhouse, stating that the project was created solely to please local political leaders and threatened the integrity of France's governance system. According to M. Le Pen, it was conceived in the corridors of Brussels to satisfy the ambitions of regional authorities and to the detriment of national authorities. According to the politician, «equating» with neighbouring states, the historically established federations, was unacceptable for France, and in case of project's implementation it would be inconsistent with the French ATD system, and the entire system would have to be rebuilt. In the speech in Mulhouse as well as in the statement on the results of the referendum M. Le Pen drew attention to the fact that the period of economic crisis is not the time for territorial reform, which would cost a lot of money. In addition, in the opinion of the FN, the funds were not spent very efficiently by the local authorities, and the unification of the three collectives with the enlargement of the financial autonomy of a single collective could have an even more negative impact on the situation in France. At the same time, the reduction of «regional and general councilors» by 10-20% announced in the text of the project would not have led to significant financial savings in practice.³

Another famous politician J.-L. Mélenchon expressed his dissatisfaction with the concept of Europe of regions, hitting the interests of national states. The creation of

¹ Référendum du 7 avril 2013 concernant l'Alsace. URL: <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Elections/Les-resultats/Locales/Referendum-du-7-avril-2013-concernant-l-Alsace>

²Algalarrondo H. Le Pen et Mélenchon, croisés de l'Alsace française // Le Nouvel Observateur. 06.04.2013 .

³Le Pen M. Je veux l'Alsace française, je vote NON! Référendum 07.04.2013. URL: <http://www.frontnational.com/je-veux-lalsace-francaise-je-vote-non-referendum-7-avril/>; Référendum en Alsace: Le Pen se réjouit. Op. cit.

a unified territorial collective was interpreted as an infringement on the representation of population interests in local authorities. He asked the question: why do the population need this project if it has nothing to do with burning problems for France, such as employment, purchasing power, health care and education?¹ Following the referendum results, J.-L. Mélenchon's Left Radical Party addressed the President of France a request to suspend consideration of the new decentralisation law, as the popular vote showed that the idea of a «France of different speeds» wasn't popular with the population.²

It should be noted that it was no coincidence that the main campaigning of both the FN and the Left Radical Party took place in the Upper Rhine department, as the creation of a new collective would deprive this department of part of its political status due to the concentration of power in Strasbourg (Lower Rhine). The mayor of Colmar feared that the city would become «an appendage to Strasbourg».³

The discussions argued that the establishment of the territorial collective of Alsace destroyed the traditional French ATD system, represented by the «commune-department-state» formula, and is a transition to a European system expressed in the formula «commune-region-European Union» where the region interacts with other structures, including Brussels, directly without the involvement of the state. According to the author of the study, the key reason for the failure of the referendum was that the French population, accustomed to a centralised system of government, may have felt that it was being deprived of a significant number of representatives due to the reduction of electoral authorities. The population was also apathetic towards the project, which did not increase the powers of the Alsace authorities, i.e. there was no breakthrough in the scope of competence.

At the same time, the Alsatian project showed that moderate right-wing and left-wing forces were able to act together in the context of the reform of

¹Le Conseil unique d'Alsace est une arnaque. 25.12.2011. URL: <http://www.lepartidegauche.fr/viedegauche/article/4722-le-conseil-unique-dalsace-est-une-arnaque.>; Morthenas A. Contre le projet de fusion territoriale. 26.02.2013. URL: [http://www.lepartidegauche.fr/viedegauche/article/partis-gauche-d-alsace-67-68-contre-le-projet-fusion-territoriale-21049.](http://www.lepartidegauche.fr/viedegauche/article/partis-gauche-d-alsace-67-68-contre-le-projet-fusion-territoriale-21049)

²Après le vote en Alsace, Hollande doit s'arrêter là. 07.04.2013.

URL: <https://www.humanite.fr/-/parti-de-gauche/apres-le-vote-en-alsace-hollande-doit-sarreter-la-parti-de-gauche>

³Référendum en Alsace: les raisons du «non». 08.04.2013. URL: https://www.bfmtv.com/politique/elections/referendum-en-alsace-les-raisons-du-non_AN-201304080045.html

the territorial administration. Nevertheless, judging by the voting results, the efforts of the far right and far left were more fruitful.

The referendum emphasised the particular importance of the initiatives of regional political forces. This is why supporters of the reunification of historic Brittany, in particular the annexation of the Atlantic Loire department of the Pays de la Loire region to the Brittany region, had high hopes for a favourable result.¹ It should be emphasised, however, that the Brittany reunification project was more of a cultural-historical nature.

In general, the results of the referendum in Alsace eloquently demonstrated the contradictory perception of decentralisation in France. Voters had to answer the question of how to interpret the idea of creating a single territorial collective: as a step towards the formation of fully empowered regional structures or towards the centralisation of power? The results of the referendum revealed that the representatives of the regional authorities adhered to the first interpretation, while the population was more inclined to the second option. Shortly before the referendum, J.-C. Mailly, general secretary of the «Workers' Force» trade union association, sent an open letter to French President F. Hollande. He expressed concern about the emergence of a «balkanised republic» where each region might want to apply the «national rule on the merger of territorial collectives», which could lead to a disorderly system of governance of the French state.² This is theoretically possible under the Article 72 of the Constitution,³ but the General Code of Territorial Collectives (Art. L. 4124-1), based on the Article 29 of Law № 2010-1563 of 16 December 2010⁴ imposed the necessary conditions for a favourable result, which should be formalised by a referendum. The failure of the project in Alsace was a confirmation of this framework.

¹Izambard A. Le Fur: «Le non au référendum alsacien n'arrêtera pas la Bretagne» // Le Figaro. 08.04.2013; Baldeweck Y. Par référendum, l'Alsace dit non à la fusion des collectivités // Le Figaro. 07.04.2013.

² Lettre ouverte de J.-C. Mailly à M. François Hollande. 06.12.2012. URL: <http://static.acteurspublics.fr/all/uploads/file/2013/01/10/lettre-jean-claude-mailly.pdf>

³La Constitution du 4 octobre 1958. Art.72. URL: <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/la-constitution/la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958/texte-integral-de-la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958-en-vigueur.5074.html#titre12>

⁴Loi n° 2010-1563 du 16 décembre 2010 de réforme des collectivités territoriales. Op. cit. Art. 26-29.

It is also worth noting that a referendum like the Alsace referendum has already taken place regarding the special status territory of Corsica with a negative result. However, the Alsatian project, unlike the Corsican one was purely economic and wasn't based on the cultural differences of the region, although they are pronounced. E. Zemmour, a French right-conservative political scientist and journalist who in the 2020s became a well-known politician – a candidate for the French presidency – indicated in the context of the Alsatian referendum that the French wanted to preserve their departments, as a legacy of the Great French Revolution and a true embodiment of democracy, because of their small size they were able to «hear» the demands of the population.¹ In a TF1 TV story, the inhabitants of the Upper Rhine interviewed on the day of the referendum, expressed confusion about the need to form a new collective, as it would be more difficult to communicate their aspirations to higher-level structures.²

The idea of merging departments and forming single territorial collectives has another important side. Indeed, even under the Vichy regime, it was widespread.³ At the same time, during the reign of Ph. Pétain (1856-1951), the emphasis was placed on the development of regional peculiarities, regional cultures were exalted, which in general was aimed at destroying France as a state.⁴

Cultural specificity issues were left out of the socialist government's reform. E.g., proponents of raising the status of regional languages* expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that the draft reform didn't address the issue of regional

¹Éric Zemmour: Le référendum alsacien, un échec de plus pour Hollande le décentralisateur. 12.04.2013. Op. cit.

²Vogel P. Echec du référendum alsacien: les raisons du «non». 08.04.2013. URL: <http://videos.tf1.fr/jt-20h/echec-du-referendum-alsacien-les-raisons-du-non-7917940.html>

³Décret du 30 juin 1941 attribuant à certains préfets les pouvoirs des préfets régionaux et portant division du territoire pour l'exercice de ces pouvoirs // Journal Officiel. 01.07.1941. URL: <http://www.cuab.org/images/decret2727.gif>

⁴Faure C. Le projet culturel de Vichy. Folklore et révolution nationale. Paris: Presses universitaires de Lyon, Presses du CNRS, 1989. P. 202.

*According to a law passed on the proposal of MP M. Deixonne (1904-1987), since 1951 it has been permitted to include local languages and dialects and the study of regional cultures in educational programmes as an elective in lycées, colleges, and institutes and universities may open departments for the study of local languages and culture. – Loi n°51-46 du 11 janvier 1951 relative à l'enseignement des langues et dialectes locaux *Loi Deixonne*.

URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000000886638/>

A few years later, in 1958, Article 75-1 of the French Constitution also stipulated that «regional languages belong to the heritage of France». See: La Constitution du 4 octobre 1958. – Art.75-1. URL: <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/la-constitution/la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958/texte-integral-de-la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958-en-vigueur.5074.html#titre12>

languages at all. As their demands they put forward the possibility of general education in a regional language, its use in interaction with state structures and in public life. Their main argument was that these languages were dying out and should be preserved.¹ These ideas fit well with the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages adopted in the Council of Europe in 1992 which France signed but has not yet ratified since the promotion of regional cultures in all its manifestations threatens its integrity.

2.3. Decentralisation results (2015-2016)

F. Hollande's statement on reducing the number of regions was reflected in the adoption of a law on 16 January 2015, which reduced the number of regions in the French metropolitan territory from 22 to 13 as of 1 January 2016.²

It should be noted that the Socialists have taken up the plans previously laid down by their centre-right political opponents at the time of the report of the Balladur Committee, whose proposals mentioned above.

Six regions retained their boundaries under the law: Île-de-France, Brittany, Pays de la Loire, Centre – Loire Valley, Provence – Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Corsica; five regions resulted from the merger of two regions: Hauts-de-France (Nord-Pas-de-Calais – Picardy), Normandy (Upper and Lower Normandy), Auvergne – Rhône-Alpes, Burgundy – Franche-Comté, Occitania (Languedoc-Roussillon – Midi-Pyrénées); two were the result of the merger of three regions (New Aquitaine included Aquitaine, Limousin, Poitou-Charentes, Grand Est – Alsace, Lorraine, Champagne-Ardenne). Thus, the French regions finally ceased to correspond to the borders of historical provinces.

The fundamental reason for the reform was to give the regions parameters – geographical, demographic, economic – that would allow them to exercise powers comparable to those of the regions of France's neighbouring countries. However,

¹ Des défenseurs des langues régionales dénoncent le «mépris» du pouvoir. 24.04.2013. URL: <https://france3-regions.francetvinfo.fr/auvergne-rhone-alpes/2013/04/26/des-defenseurs-des-langues-regionales-denoncent-le-mepris-du-pouvoir-241385.html>

²Loi n° 2015-29 du 16 janvier 2015 relative à la délimitation des régions, aux élections régionales et départementales et modifiant le calendrier électoral. Op. cit.

the very different history of European regions, which has led to their great diversity, was somehow left out of the picture.¹

Experts suggest that the authors of the reform were guided by the principle: «Everything that is big is beautiful», but there was no serious preparatory work in this regard. Thus, it is pointed out that before the 2015 reform in terms of population only three French regions hadn't been in the top 100 out of 349 European regions, and five hadn't been in the top 100 in terms of area. However, in terms of GDP per capita, only four French regions had been in the top 100, neither employment rates nor the level of investment in R&D had been high.² Therefore, the thesis was put forward that the territories would develop dynamically through enlargement, although in practice the merger process became a very expensive operation.

As a result, the average size of the regions in France turned out to be significantly larger than similar structures in Germany, Italy or Spain (France – 41,813 km², Germany – 22,319 km², Spain – 29,692 km², Italy – 15,066 km²).³ At the same time, French regions remain behind other similar European units in terms of population density.

The misconception that a region's economic development depends on its size and population is also emphasised.⁴ E.g., the number of deputies in the legislative assemblies of German federal states is smaller than that of French regional councils, even though German states are endowed with considerably more powers than French regions. The area of Berlin or Hamburg is smaller than that of any French region, yet they are extremely wealthy territories. In 2015, the combined budget of the German Länder exceeded €280 bn, while that of the French regions was €28 bn.⁵ Still, despite

¹Projet de loi portant nouvelle organisation territoriale de la République, n° 636, enregistré à la Présidence du République Sénat le 18 juin 2014. URL: <https://www.senat.fr/leg/pjl13-636.html>; Projet de loi relatif à la délimitation des régions, aux élections régionales et départementales et modifiant le calendrier électoral (Procédure accélérée), n° 635, enregistré à la Présidence du Sénat le 18 juin 2014. URL: <https://www.senat.fr/leg/pjl13-635.html>; Seys F.-O. Op. cit. P. 112; Dumont G.-F. Op. cit. (Régions françaises: petit dictionnaire des idées reçues) P. 3.

²Florent L. La place des régions françaises dans l'Union européenne: améliorée ou détériorée avec la suppression de 9 entre d'elles? // Population & Avenir. – 2015/ 1. – № 721. – P. 5.

³Dumont G.-F. Op. cit. (Les régions en France. Géants géographiques, mais nains politiques?) P. 10.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Florent L. Op. cit. P. 7.

the possibility of regional taxes, the regions continued to draw the vast majority of their resources by subsidies from Paris, and their own resources accounted for about 6% of revenues.¹

The reform moved all French regions within the European territorial units nomenclature from the second category (population between 800.000 and 3.000.000) to the first category (population between 3 and 7 million). However, the regions within the old administrative boundaries continued to fall under the second category.² The merger of the regions didn't entail the loss of the possibility (for the planning period until 2027) to use additional European structural funds intended for the regions of the second category. This was feared by the regional authorities, also due to the GDP growth in some of these regions exceeding 75-90% (for the period until 2020) and 100% (until 2027) of the average European GDP per capita for the EU (these figures allowed to categorise the region as a «transit» region). This is explained by the EU authorities understanding that in the merged region the GDP per capita figures don't initially reflect their economic realities.³

As a result, the artificiality of the unification of regions without taking into account the views of both the population and the regional authorities is stressed. However, the French Constitutional council has emphasised that the principle of free administration of territorial collectives «doesn't presuppose compulsory consultation with them prior to the submission of a draft law or the adoption of a law modifying their territorial boundaries».⁴

E.g., close cooperation between the regions in the field of higher education was cited as one of the main reasons for the merger of Burgundy with Franche-Comté, but the same fact didn't lead to the merger of Brittany with the Pays de la Loire,⁵ even

¹Dumont G.-F. Op. cit. (Les régions en France. Géants géographiques, mais nains politiques?) P. 12.

²Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques. URL: <https://www.insee.fr/fr/metadonnees/definition/c2112>

³Wilner L. How do citizens perceive centralisation reforms? Evidence from the merger of French regions. Montrouge. INSEE Working Papers Series. – № 2020/07. – September 2020. – P. 11; Jouen M. Op. cit. P. 7.

⁴Décision No. 2014-709 DC du 15 janvier 2015 du Conseil constitutionnel. URL: https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/sites/default/files/as/root/bank_mm/decisions/2014709dc/2014709dc_ccc.pdf;

Règlement délégué (UE) 2019/1755 de la Commission du 8 août 2019 modifiant les annexes du règlement (CE) n° 1059/2003 du Parlement européen et du Conseil relatif à l'établissement d'une nomenclature commune des unités territoriales statistiques (NUTS) // Journal Officiel. L 270 du 24.10.2019. P. 1.

⁵Bonnet-Pineau E. Op. cit.

though a number of politicians referred to the «artificiality» of the Pays de la Loire and the need to merge it with its western neighbour. Nor did the reform involve the transfer of departments from one region to another.¹

The situation was not easy when Alsace and Lorraine merged with Champagne-Ardenne when the first two regions had to «pull» the economic level of the less developed territories, while to some extent sacrificing successful cross-border cooperation with Germany, Switzerland and Luxembourg. At the same time, the regional prefecture of Champagne-Ardenne now found itself in Strasbourg.² The most important task of the regional authorities was to prevent depressive phenomena in other cities following the transfer of the centre of political and economic life to one city.³ Meanwhile, even with the existing economic disparities in the abovementioned example, the «economic profiles» of the regions complemented each other in a very good way, e.g. in terms of approaches to the utilisation of renewable energy sources.⁴

So how have the French regions been affected by the reform beyond territorial perturbations?

On 7 August 2015, the law on the new territorial structure of the Republic was adopted, which abolished the commonality of powers between the regions and departments. There was a transfer of powers from the departments to the regions of e.g. all «global» functions related to the economic development of territories, such as support for small and medium-sized businesses, five-year regional development plans, sustainable improvement of territories, etc., were transferred to the regional authorities. In financial terms, the regions received additional revenues from the value added tax on enterprises. Indeed, before 2015, regions had received 25% of the revenues and

¹Deborde J. Ruggy de F. Réforme territoriale: le sentiment d'appartenance est plus fort en Bretagne qu'ailleurs. 15.07.2014. URL: https://www.liberation.fr/france/2014/07/15/reforme-territoriale-le-sentiment-d-appartenance-est-plus-fort-en-bretagne-qu-ailleurs_1064154; Ayrault J.-M. Réforme territoriale, à l'Ouest que du nouveau. URL: https://www.liberation.fr/france/2014/07/08/reforme-territoriale-a-l-ouest-que-du-nouveau_1059383/; Sierra A., Bonnet-Pineau E. Op. cit.

²Florent L. Op. cit. P. 7; Bonnet-Pineau E. Op. cit.

³Speranskaya T.S. Op. cit. P. 157.

⁴Jouen M. Op. cit. P. 9.

departments had received 50%, now the situation has reversed. At the same time, they were levelled by the reduction of payments from the Centre.

In the field of education, the management of colleges was supposed to be transferred to regions, which were already responsible for lycées, but neither this nor the transfer of management of road infrastructure to regions happened. However, public and school transport was transferred from departments to regions. Also, considering the tendency to consolidate territorial structures, intercommunities should now have at least 15,000 inhabitants (previously 5,000), with the exception of mountainous areas.¹

The French regions thus have four main areas of action: economy and territorial improvement, education, transport and the environment. In practice, however, decision-making is difficult, e.g., there are difficulties in the division of responsibilities between the presidents of the regional councils and the prefects of the regions.² While the regions are responsible for the construction and maintenance of lycées, their teaching staff has the responsibility of the educational structures reporting to the central government.

Analysing the current situation, several researchers believe, that France is following the path of federalism without creating a federal state.³ Others think that regions are essentially political dwarfs with small budgets and instead of decentralisation by transferring powers to the regional level, where they could be better executed, France prefers to implement «centralised regionalization» or «regionalised centralization». Once again, therefore, the territorial reform is incomplete and doesn't clarify the political-administrative system of France.⁴ There is another view that both federal and unitary systems are effective in their own way. France is moving away from the unitary model, which allows the state to minimise the time it takes to make

¹Loi n° 2015-991 du 7 août 2015 portant nouvelle organisation territoriale de la République. Op. cit.

²Dumont G.-F. Op. cit. (Les régions en France. Géants géographiques, mais nains politiques?) Pp. 14-15.

³Zakharova M.V. Op. cit.

⁴Dumont G.-F. Op. cit. (Les régions en France. Géants géographiques, mais nains politiques?) P. 17; Florent L. Op. cit. P. 7; Sierra A., Bonnet-Pineau E. La réforme territoriale en France: parlementaires et géographes face à «l'art de la découpe» gouvernementale. URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/echogeo/14481>; Seys F.-O. Op. cit. P. 112.

decisions and find necessary financial resources and is only creating new problems for itself by shifting to a «hybrid model», often referred to as «decentralised unitarism».¹

In 2020 the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Research conducted a study on the impact of the 2015 reform on the well-being of French citizens. It states that, despite the distance of the decision-making centre from the population, no evidence of a negative impact on the lives of citizens has been found.² «Rich regions» haven't been affected, and in the «poorer regions» life has improved, which was one of the objectives of the reform.³ After the merger of regions, living standards began to improve and unemployment rates began to decrease. Thus, according to the Accounts Chamber data for 2019, investment in sectors accountable to regional authorities increased in the merged regions.⁴

In the view of the author of the thesis, another possible consequence of the reform has been quite high performance of French regions in terms of «creative capital». The opportunities provided for economic development allowed to stimulate sustainable development, creation of innovative companies and start-ups.⁵

Only in 2007, 22 years after its signature, France ratified the Council of Europe's European Charter of Local Self-Government. These facts show that the French authorities are selectively following the European trends. Attempts to make the regions truly full-fledged structures in economic terms must be accompanied by a real increase in the role of the regions in political and cultural terms. The defence of the traditional French values of a united and indivisible France leads to the vagueness and compressed nature of territorial reforms. In addition, the reforms as they are presented aren't fully accepted by the population. Their delayed effect doesn't simplify the situation either. This can often lead to a radical change of their content, which happened after N. Sarkozy was replaced by F. Hollande.

¹Speranskaya T.S. Op. cit. P. 157; Jouen M. Op. cit. P. 1; Pakhorukov K.I., Ivannikov I.V. Op. cit. P. 36.

²Wilner L. Op. cit. P. 2.

³Jouen M. Op. cit. P. 5.

⁴Cour des Comptes. Les finances publiques locales. Fascicule 2: Rapport sur la situation financière et la gestion des collectivités territoriales et de leurs établissements publics. 2019. Rapport. URL: <https://www.ccomptes.fr/fr/publications/les-finances-publiques-locales-2019-fascicule-2>

⁵Rastvortseva S.N., Korbankova A.P. Measuring the Creative Capital and its Development in the Regions of France // Contemporary Europe. – 2021. – № 1. – Pp. 74-85. (in Russian)

2.4. Main features of the territorial reform at the current stage (2017-2023)

After the implementation of the 2014-2015 reforms, interest in this issue in France has somewhat weakened. Thus, while in 2012-2016 there was a Ministry for Decentralisation, Public Administration and State Reform (in 2014, the latter issue was taken over by the separate structure), in 2017 it was transformed into the Ministry of State Action, from 2020 – State Transformation.

Meanwhile the policy aimed at granting territorial collectives including regions competences on an experimental and later on a permanent basis to derogate from laws and regulations in the strict conformity with established limits was being continued. Since then, this right has been applied four times in the socio-economic and educational spheres. Thus, by the law of 19 April 2021, territorial collectives were given the right to experiment by adopting their own decision; previously, this required a decree of the Council of State. Whereas previously the «experiment» had to end without result, or, on the contrary, its results had to be extended to the whole French territory, now «derogations» can only be maintained in a specific territorial collective.¹ In essence, it is a question of «differentiating territories» on the basis of their specificity. In this context, regions with cultural, historical and economic specificities are intended to become «laboratories» for experimentation. Thus, 1 January 2022, Brittany was given for six years some of the powers of the Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sport, for example in the area of international youth mobility.²

In Alsace, political forces across the spectrum didn't welcome the creation of the Grand Est region, which was seen as a voluntaristic decision by Paris without consultation with the regional authorities. In order to calm the heated debate, Grand Est became the only new region to have its regional council legislated to be located in Strasbourg.³ However, discontent with the imposed territorial structure in eastern France continued to grow. As a consequence, for the first time since the end of the Second

¹Loi organique n° 2021-467 du 19 avril 2021 relative à la simplification des expérimentations mises en œuvre sur le fondement du quatrième alinéa de l'article 72 de la Constitution. URL: <https://www.vie-publique.fr/loi/275530-loi-19-avril-2021-experimentations-locales-differenciation-territoriale>

² Megglé C. Jeunesse, vie associative: la différenciation prend forme en Bretagne. 09.02.2022. URL: <https://www.banquedesterritoires.fr/jeunesse-vie-associative-la-differenciation-prend-forme-en-bretagne>

³Loi n° 2015-29 du 16 janvier 2015 relative à la délimitation des régions, aux élections régionales et départementales et modifiant le calendrier électoral. Op. cit. Art. 2.

World War in Alsace, the candidate of the local party «Our Land» which favours the autonomous status of Alsace entered the second round of parliamentary elections in 2017.¹

In this context, E. Macron and the government formed by E. Philippe took very seriously the initiative of the Lower and Upper Rhine authorities in early 2017 to institutionalise and politicise the Alsatian territorial collective, although the possibility of its withdrawal from the Grand Est region was rejected.²

The central authorities based their decision primarily on the conclusions of the report prepared by prefect of the Grand Est region and the Lower Rhine department J.-L. Marx, in June 2018. The prefect confirmed in his conclusions the desire of the population of Alsace to have its own self-identification, as well as the state's recognition of the territory's distinctive historical and cultural characteristics and others. In this regard, the report considered four options: 1) the creation of an interdepartmental cooperation structure; 2) the formation of a departmental syndicate with common management of several areas; 3) the creation of a single department of Alsace; 4) the establishment of a territorial collective with a special status. The possibility of creating a territorial collective with a special status proposed by the presidents of the departmental councils (both centre-right) was negotiated with caution due to the inevitable risks for the French ATD, taking into account the situation in Brittany and in the Basque country. Earlier on 17 April 2018, E. Macron spoke in favour of the creation of a single department of Alsace.

In practice, a compromise option was realised, which received the approval of both the authors of the initiative and its opponent, the president of the Grand Est regional council, which was confirmed by the signing, together with the French Prime Minister, of an agreement on the creation of the European Territorial Collective of Alsace. The name «European» was chosen for the Collective because of the presence on

¹Perreaut A. Les 5 informations à retenir de ces législatives en Alsace. URL: <https://france3-regions.francetvinfo.fr/grand-est/alsace/5-points-retenir-ces-legislatives-alsace-1279421.html>

²Buchy F. L'esquisse d'une nouvelle collectivité? Op. cit.

its territory of numerous EU and Council of Europe structures, as well as because of its geographical position, which favours cross-border cooperation with foreign regions.¹

In contrast to the 2011-2013 reform, the departments were now administratively preserved together with the central government structures located on their territory. Strasbourg was designated as the seat of the territorial collective authorities. Colmar, on the other hand, became the second location for the meetings of the Council. Importantly, in addition to the competence of the departmental authorities, the European collective was given supplementary powers in the areas of language policy, cross-border cooperation, transport and professional institutions. In legal terms, the creation of the new structure was approved by the Council of State and formalised by law on 2 August 2019. The territorial collective itself was created on 1 January 2021,² and the first election of 80 Alsatian councilors took place on 27 June 2021 (whereas previously 38 councilors were elected to the Lower Rhine Departmental Council and 34 to the Upper Rhine).

Like last time, the reforms were criticised by the extreme left and extreme right political forces. But, while J.-L. Mélenchon was outraged by the launch of differentiation of territories, M. Le Pen emphasised the need to abandon temporary variants of administration and to recreate the region of Alsace.³

Meanwhile, the theme of Alsace's withdrawal from the Grand Est remained topical. Thus, in December 2021, ahead of the presidential elections of 2022, the territorial collective of Alsace, led by F. Bierry, a member of the centre-right party «Republicans», launched a non-legally binding «popular vote» via the Internet, mail or «live» in the places where ballots were collected on the question of whether Alsace should withdraw from Grand Est and regain its status as a full-fledged region. 92.4% of

¹Déclaration de M. Edouard Philippe, premier ministre suite à la rencontre avec les élus d'Alsace, 29 octobre 2018.

URL:

https://www.gouvernement.fr/upload/media/default/0001/01/2018_10_declaration_de_m_edouard_philippe_premier_ministre_-_rencontre_avec_les_elus_dalsace_-_29.10.2018.pdf

²Loi n° 2019-816 du 2 août 2019 relative aux compétences de la Collectivité européenne d'Alsace.

URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000038872957/>

³ Mélenchon ne digère pas la «différenciation» de l'Alsace. 01.07.2019. URL:

<https://www.lalsace.fr/politique/2019/07/01/chuchotements-melenchon-ne-digere-pas-la-differenciation-de-l-alsace;>

Discours de Marine Le Pen en Alsace, 24 février 2018. URL: <https://rassemblementnational.fr/discours/discours-de-marine-le-pen-a-kintzheim/>

those who voted were in favour of this wording, which was presented by the collective's leadership as a significant victory. However, the leaders of the Grand Est regional council emphasised that 88% of the population of Alsace had shied away from voting, so the results should be viewed with scepticism.¹ Be that as it may, in April 2022 during the presidential election campaign, visiting Alsace, E. Macron didn't rule out the possibility of discussing the withdrawal of Alsace from the Grand Est.²

In addition, the authorities of the territorial collective of Alsace are in active contact with the authorities of Corsica, thinking of granting the territorial collective an administrative status similar to that of Corsica.³

With regard to the positions of political parties on the need for further territorial reforms in relation to regional authorities, in the framework of the presidential and parliamentary campaigns of 2022, the research structure «Factory of alternatives», associated with the opposition left-wing party «France Unbowed» led by J.-L. Mélenchon, prepared a report «Reconstructing the three levels of governance system: communes-department-state».

The main message of the report is that the authorities have «robbed» the population by depriving it of decentralisation. It is argued that the 2014-2015 reform, the main characteristic of which was the enlargement of regions, led to a decline in local interest in regional issues. This, in particular, manifested itself in a low turnout (35%) in the elections to regional and departmental council in June 2021. It is pointed out that the lower levels of government – departments and communes – have been levelled out, even though they bear the main burden of managing the coronavirus pandemic and its consequences. It is emphasised that, according to the national Accounts Chamber, the merger of the regions hasn't led to a reduction in their

¹Costentin B. Consultation sur l'avenir de l'Alsace: 92.4% des votes pour la sortie du Grand Est. 21.02.2022. URL: <https://www.francebleu.fr/infos/politique/consultation-sur-l-avenir-de-l-alsace-92-4-des-votes-pour-la-sortie-du-grand-est-1645431011>

²Hauss J. Sortie de l'Alsace du Grand-Est: Emmanuel Macron favorable à une «réflexion». 12.04.2022. URL: <https://www.francebleu.fr/infos/politique/sortie-de-l-alsace-du-grand-est-emmanuel-macron-favorable-a-une-reflexion-1649794798>

³Mari N. Réforme territoriale: L'Alsace veut sortir de la région Grand Est et lorgne vers le modèle corse. URL: https://www.corsenetinfos.corsica/Reforme-territoriale-L-Alsace-veut-sortir-de-la-region-Grand-Est-et-lorgne-vers-le-modele-corse_a66373.html

expenditure. At the same time, it is noted that regional authorities are as far removed from the population as possible and their main objective is to strengthen their own political position in order to continue their careers in Paris or in European institutions. This is not coincidental, because having obtained the right to manage the European structural funds, the regions have become real intermediaries between the state and Brussels.

Believing that the regions don't add value to the administration of the country the report proposes a return to the «historical» structure of France by abolishing the regions and strengthening the role of the departments, which aren't burdened, unlike the regions, with no attachment to the historical and cultural specificities of the pre-existing provinces. It is understood that the question of the territorial restructuring of the country should be submitted to a referendum in order to remove the concept of «region» from Article 72 of the French Constitution.¹

The programme of another prominent representative of the «left» – candidate from the Socialist Party A. Hidalgo – did not include the subject of changing the status of regions, but in her public statements she emphasised the improvement of coordination between the different territorial entities with granting of fiscal autonomy to territorial collectives, which according to her, is much more important than the abolition of one of the ATD levels.²

In the electoral programme of V. Pécresse, the Republican candidate and the President of the Île-de-France regional council, it was pointed out that France's strength lies precisely in territorial units, in particular in the regions. She suggested that their leaders could be given the right to adapt national legislation to local realities on the basis of agreements with prefects. V. Pécresse also advocated raising of the status of the regions as important players in the economy by giving them

¹Pour une république sociale et écologique: reconstruire le triptyque communes-départements-État. Note 20. Janvier 2022. – Intérêt général. La Fabrique de l'alternative. URL: <https://interetgeneral.net/publications/pdf/20.pdf>

²Gaspard R. Anne Hidalgo: «Je proposerai dès l'ouverture de la législature une grande loi de décentralisation». 07.04.2022. URL: <https://www.lagazettedescommunes.com/800246/anne-hidalgo-je-proposerai-des-louverture-de-la-legislature-une-grande-loi-de-decentralisation/>

the possibility to take full control of the European structures and carry out employment policies.¹

E. Macron's programme document said a few words of simplifying the French ATD by merging regional and departmental councils with the creation of territorial councilors sitting simultaneously in regional and departmental councils, but no further details were given.²

The French president was also echoed by the extreme right-wing candidate E. Zemmour, but he drew attention to the need to increase the role of communes by transferring them some of the powers of regions and departments.³

The idea of territorial councilors was shared by M. Le Pen, who also mentioned the need to provide territorial collectives with sufficient financial resources.⁴ At the same time, the National Rally continued to focus on regional administrative boundaries.

Thus, in February 2023, a faction of the National Rally in the French National Assembly introduced a draft law aimed at dissolving the Hauts-de-France region and restoring the Picardy and Nord-Pas-de-Calais regions, with the expectation that if the proposal received parliamentary support, it would be submitted to the local population for approval. The draft was argued with well-known wordings about the merger of regions by compulsion without consultation with regional councils and the population, creating huge distances between localities. It was pointed out that their merger was to the detriment of the less populated and urbanised Picardy, in particular, a significant number of government agencies, businesses and associations had moved their main activities from Amiens to Lille. Referring to the report of February 2021 carried out by the Directorate General of Local Collectives, the French Ministry of Internal Affairs has noted a 20% increase since 2016 in the costs of

¹Valérie Pécresse. *Bâtir une nouvelle France décentralisée*. Op. cit.

²Emmanuel Macron. *Avec vous*. Op. cit. P. 11.

³Eric Zemmour. *Pour que la France reste la France*. Op. cit. P. 40.

⁴Brivet X., Bonnin L. *Ce que propose Marine Le Pen pour les collectivités territoriales*. 20.04.2022. URL: <https://www.maire-info.com/ce-que-propose-marine-le-pen-pour-les-collectivites-territoriales-article2-26339>

operating the merged regions, compared to only 12% for the regions that remained within the same boundaries.¹

Thus, no fundamentally new ways of further reforming territorial collectives are proposed in France. Meanwhile, the increase of possibilities for derogation from national legislation, as well as the creation of the special European territorial collective of Alsace testifies to the growing autonomy of the French regions.

For his part, the author of the dissertation research believes, that the elimination of one of the intermediate levels of government would help to simplify the system of territorial administration in France and reduce administrative costs. The topic of the sophistication of the French system of governance is constantly raised by local political players, but the confusion of competences is not going anywhere. Radical steps are needed, such as the formation of unified territorial collectives through the merger of regions and departments and the creation of regional authorities with broad powers, albeit without legislative rights, but with independent funding, prevailing over subsidies from the state. Such a development would raise the international status of the regions.

The implementation of the decentralisation reform in France was largely possible thanks to active work with the electorate. While initially the idea of decentralisation was seen as a matter of administrative organisation, decentralisation soon turned into a process of redistribution of roles between local authorities and the state, as well as budget allocation, although, according to some territorial leaders, the real levers of governance still remain in the hands of the executive.

At present, the decentralisation process in France is not yet complete. One possible development appears to be a choice in favour of an economic policy that would emanate from the regions and be driven by voters and local government members. This requires a political vision shared by the state and local authorities, which will avoid many not always far-sighted political decisions. Compliance with all conditions for true decentralisation, with the exception of some functions that should

¹Proposition de loi N 882 portant suppression de la région Hauts-de-France et rétablissant la Picardie et le Nord-Pas-de-Calais comme régions de plein exercice. URL: https://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/dyn/16/textes/116b0882_proposition-loi

remain under the responsibility of the state, implies the possibility of transferring to the regions a large part of the so-called sovereign tasks.

Chapter 3. French regions as foreign policy actors

The international activities of French local and regional authorities have a long history. Historically, they have been in contact with other local authorities since the 19th century.

After the Second World War, the international activities of French local authorities were widely developed through twinning relationships within Europe which represented a model for future public diplomacy. The main purpose of such cooperation of French local authorities with the municipalities of Germany and Italy was to reestablish ties between nations that had been lost because of the war. Later, sister towns ties were established with local authorities in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

At the same time, the French regional authorities were developing relations with the countries of the southern hemisphere. In particular, twinning relationships were established with major cities in the new African states. Since the 1980s, decentralised cooperation has dominated the foreign activities of the French regions. However, it was only in the XXIst century that French regional paradiplomacy became a real form of decentralised cooperation.¹ At the same time, the special role of cross-border cooperation between the regions for the development of international ties should be emphasised.

Such forms of regional paradiplomacy have become possible due to interaction with the European integration structures.² As precisely noted by representative of the St. Petersburg scientific school, Professor N.V. Eremina, the most favourable conditions for the international activities of territorial collectives are formed within the framework of integration groupings. Concurrently the EU is considered as a certain pole of attraction that promotes the formation of regional self-governance and the development of multilevel governance.³

¹ As rightly noted in the scientific study «France. In search of new ways» edited by Y.I. Rubinsky, at the beginning of the XXI century France was faced with the task of adapting its state institutions, which recently seemed to be definitively established to qualitatively new conditions. See: France. In search of new ways. P. 257.

²See e.g.: Zonova T.V. Op. cit.; Kuznetsov A.S. Op. cit. Various aspects of domestic and international regionalism are considered in the monograph by N.M. Mezhevich. See: Mezhevich N.M. Op. cit. 166 p.

³Eremina N.V. Op. cit. (Paradiplomacy: a new voice of the regions in the modern diplomatic concert?). P. 42.

In addition, according to German researcher P. Schmitt-Egner, participation in international projects promotes the interests of regions at the European level and stimulates internal regional development through external cooperation. «The European competence of regions represents the capability of a region and its actors to shape and to use the European integration process as an arena of transnational learning in order to foster internal regional development via external external cooperaion».¹

It should be noted that in recent years, the French regional policy of international solidarity has seemed to be retreating in favour of a policy of regional attractiveness aimed at the economic development of France's regional territories.

Comparison of documents of the French regional authorities related to territorial cooperation, speeches of French and European politicians, programmes of French political parties allow to judge the dynamics of the development of external relations of the French subnational units, the changes that occurred after the regional elections of 2015, to analyse the reasons for these changes and to consider the trends of future external activities of territorial collectives.

3.1. French regional paradiplomacy as a form of decentralised cooperation: history of the problem

The special role of cross-border cooperation between regions for the development of international relations and overcoming «national limitations» was realised by the French authorities as early as the end of the 19th century. In 1875, France and Spain set up a «bilateral commission» for cooperation in the Pyrenees region.² As early as 1913, the French local authorities, in connection with the World Exhibition, took part in the International Congress of Cities in Ghent, which gave rise to the International Union of Cities. The aim of this international action was not only to exchange ideas between

¹Schmitt-Egner P. The Concept of «Region»: Theoretical and Methodological Notes on its Reconstruction // Journal of European Integration. – 2002. – Vol. 24. – Is.3. – P. 197.

²Simon M. Transformation of European nation-states under the influence of regionalisation processes. P. 104. URL: [hse.ru\data/2011/04/16/1210977605](http://hse.ru/data/2011/04/16/1210977605) (in Russian)

cities on models of urban management, but also to give them greater political weight from an international point of view.¹

However, it took almost a century for the possibility of external action in the form of decentralised cooperation to be legally assigned to the French regions. This happened on 26 May 1983, when the French Prime Minister issued a circular to that effect.² It should be noted, however, that in general, the legal establishment of decentralised cooperation between subnational units began in France in 1956 with the issuance of a decree establishing a commission for the coordination of international exchanges between communes.³

It was in France that the first signs of the emergence of regional paradiplomacy were noted, as the term was first applied to the relationship of the Quebec regional government with the French central authorities in the 1980s, but this case was seen as atypical behaviour of a sub-state government.⁴

According to the law № 92-125 of 2 February 1992, French territorial collectives were empowered to sign agreements with the local authorities of foreign countries, while respecting France's international obligations and the limits of their competence. However, the law did not specify the nature of their possible activities, thus failing to provide a full legal basis for such cooperation. Therefore, under the guise of a lack of «usefulness for local interests», the courts were able to cancel various types of partnerships between French and foreign partners.⁵

In 1995, French law introduced the right of the French territorial collectives to enter various associations under foreign law in the framework of cross-border

¹ Premier Congrès International et exposition comparée des villes. Bruxelles. 1913. URL: <https://lib.ugent.be/viewer/archive.ugent.be%3A0539F00A-EC1A-11E1-9343-92518375B242#?cv=3&c=&m=&s=&xywh=-126%2C0%2C6166%2C3952>

² Circulaire n°1789 du 26 mai 1983 relative à l'action extérieure des collectivités locales. URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000000327481>

³Ntotele Bopendia R.V. La coopération décentralisée: regards croisés entre les collectivités territoriales de la France et celles de la RD Congo // Mouvements et Enjeux Sociaux. Revue Internationale des Dynamiques Sociales. MES-RIDS. – 2023. – № 126. – P. 304.

⁴Yarovoy G.O. Op. cit. P. 129.

⁵ Loi n° 92-125 du 6 février 1992 relative à l'administration territoriale de la République. Art. 131. URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000000722113/>;

Communiqué de presse du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères du 25 février 2007. Adoption of la loi Thiollière: a cadre solide et sécurisé pour l'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales. URL: https://www.amf.asso.fr/m/document/fichier.php?FTP=AMF_20070131_Communique_loi_thiolliere.pdf&id=8093

cooperation. It was prohibited, however, to conclude agreements between a French territorial collective and a foreign state, but this restriction was abolished a year later.¹

On 2 February 2007, a law was adopted in France to provide a legal framework for subnational authorities to implement humanitarian initiatives. The law was a response to the mobilisation of the French local authorities to the 26 December 2004 tsunami in South Asia. It also abolished the requirement to prove «usefulness for local interests» when implementing decentralised cooperation.²

As analysed in the first chapter, an important factor in boosting the external relations of the French regions was the possibility for the regional councils to manage the funds allocated from the European structural funds.

In July 2014, the Law on Orientation and Development Planning was adopted. It changed the title of Chapter 5 of Section 1 of the General Code of Territorial Collectives from «decentralised cooperation» to «external activities of the territorial collectives», meaning the interaction between French and foreign local authorities in the areas of cooperation, development aid and humanitarian purposes. Territorial collectives were now able to carry out and support any international activity that didn't contravene France's international obligations, without necessarily having agreements in place for the actions undertaken. Moreover the policy of development and international solidarity was no longer necessarily limited to developing states.³

Although there is no provision in French law for territorial units to coordinate their foreign contacts with the French leadership,⁴ the channels of interaction between the Centre and the regions in the conduct of foreign relations are quite clearly defined. Thus, in 1983, a Prime Minister's circular established the post of Delegate for External

¹Loi n° 95-115 du 4 février 1995 d'orientation pour l'aménagement et le développement du territoire. Op. cit. Art. 83; Loi n° 96-142 du 21 février 1996 relative à la partie Législative du code général des collectivités territoriales (1). Art. 12. URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/LEGIARTI000006340192/1996-02-24/>

²Loi n° 2007-147 du 2 février 2007 relative à l'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales et de leurs groupements (1). URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT00000820338/>; Guide juridique de l'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales. Op. cit. P. 18.

³Loi n° 2014-773 du 7 juillet 2014 d'orientation et de programmation relative à la politique de développement et de solidarité internationale. Op. cit. Art. 14; Présentation du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères de la Développement internationale. Loi d'orientation et de programmation "Politique de développement et de solidarité internationale" en matière d'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales: modifications et conséquences.

URL: www.diplomatie.gouv.fr%2FIMG%2Fpdf%2FPPT_Loi_Orientation_25_novembre_2014__cle08df6f-1.pdf&cliclen=697066&chunk=true

⁴Livre blanc. Diplomatie et territoires. Pour une action extérieure démultipliée. Op. cit. P. 33.

Activities of Territorial Collectives under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to act as an intermediary between the prefects of the regions and the foreign ministry. The circular stated that «the regions, departments and communes can contribute to the expansion and diversification of France's foreign activities in the world».¹

At that period, many feared disastrous consequences for the French foreign policy of the development of decentralised cooperation, but the circular was nevertheless issued, albeit with great difficulty.² However, in the context of the formalisation in 1982 of the new legal quality of the regions, it was inevitable.

Initially, the post of Delegate, which was interdepartmental in nature, was the responsibility of the Secretary General of the Ministry of External Relations, as the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs was then known. It was understood that he would act in close liaison with the Directorate General of Local Collectives of the French Ministry of Internal Affairs, in charge of the legal aspects of the French territorial entities.

Nine years later, in 1992, the National Commission for Decentralised Cooperation was created to serve as a space for dialogue between the state and the territorial collectives and directly between the territorial entities themselves. After several reforms, it is now composed not only of representatives of French ministries and departments, appointed by Prime Ministerial Decree for a period of three years, whose activities related to decentralised cooperation, but also representatives of territorial collectives, including representatives of national associations of regions, departments and communes for their mandates' terms, members of associations of territorial collectives active internationally (United Cities of France, French Association of the Council of Communes and Regions of Europe), as well as representatives of specialised associations (e.g. International Association of French-Speaking Regions,

¹Circulaire n°1789 du 26 mai 1983 relative a l'action extérieure des collectivités locales. Op. cit.

²Maré C. Op. cit. P. 75.

Interregional Conference of Multi-Actor Regional Networks). Representatives of public bodies and territorial collectives have full voting rights, others have a consultative vote.

The National Commission for Decentralised Cooperation has 49 members. The Commission meets under the chairmanship of the French Prime Minister, in his absence under the Minister of Foreign Affairs.¹ According to the legislation in force, the territorial collectives and their associations transmit to the Commission the information necessary for the fulfilment of its missions.²

The main task of the Commission is to formulate proposals aimed at improving opportunities for decentralised cooperation. From 2022 the Commission is also responsible for evaluating the government's annual report to Parliament on the results of the fight against social inequalities in the world in the framework of the implementation of development aid through territorial collectives.³

The abovementioned Delegate is the Secretary of the Commission and at the same time the Head of the Delegation for External Action of Local Government of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In practice, the activities of the Delegation are interdepartmental. In 2015, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French Ministry of the Internal Affairs concluded convention on cooperation which led to the introduction of diplomatic advisors for the regional prefects under the French Ministry of the Internal Affairs.⁴ The advisors were expected to help strengthen the Centre's ties with the territorial collectives, since their tasks included international development of the territories, decentralised and cross-border cooperation and combating illegal immigration. At the same time, the fact that the advisors are attached to prefects rather than to the

¹La Commission Nationale de la Coopération Décentralisée (CNCD). URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/politique-etrangere-de-la-france/action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales/la-commission-nationale-de-la-cooperation-decentralisee-cncd/>; Viola A. Op. cit. (De quoi la Commission nationale de la coopération décentralisée est-elle le nom?).

² Code général des collectivités territoriales. Art. L1115-6. URL: https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/article_lc/LEGIARTI000029212202/

³Loi n° 2021-1031 du 4 août 2021 de programmation relative au développement solidaire et à la lutte contre les inégalités mondiales. Art. 12.

URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000043898536/>

⁴Coopération entre le ministère des Affaires étrangères et du développement international et le ministère de l'Intérieur, Paris, le 25 août 2015. URL: https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/cooperation_maedi-minint_cle81421d.pdf

chairmen of regional councils, in practice means greater control over regional activity in the foreign policy sphere.¹

In the territorial collectives, the prefects, the representatives of the MIA, are personally responsible for safeguarding the national interest and ensuring compliance with the law. In particular, they are responsible for deciding whether to submit the decisions of the territorial collectives to the administrative tribunal, including those relating to external activities. At the same time, prefects now have the possibility to consult diplomatic advisors. There is also an Interregional Support Centre for the Control of the Rule of Law in Lyon associated with the Ministry of the Internal Affairs which works in connection with the Delegation.²

The main task of the Delegation for External Action of Local Government of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to implement national policy in order to support decentralised cooperation while ensuring that it doesn't interfere with the state's foreign policy.³ To this end, since 2005, the Delegation has been publishing an Atlas of Decentralised Cooperation for which territorial collectives are required to provide information on their cooperation with foreign partners. In this way, the Delegation contributes to the fulfilment of the Commission's mission.

The Delegation develops and implements, together with the embassies, strategies for international cooperation of the French territorial units with a focus on countries with which the territorial units have little or no links.⁴

Paris has made no secret of the fact that the Delegation should push the regions to intensify external contacts by allocating subsidies for the implementation of international cooperation programmes. Indeed, as noted by Russian experts on France K.P. Zueva and P.P. Timofeev, the coming to power of

¹Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (Pakhorukov K.I. Enlarging external policy capacities of subnational entities). P. 75.

²Guide juridique de l'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales. Op. cit. Pp. 64-65.

³Viola A. Op. cit. (De quoi la Commission nationale de la coopération décentralisée est-elle le nom?)

⁴La délégation pour l'Action extérieure des collectivités territoriales. URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/politique-etrangere-de-la-france/action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales/la-commission-nationale-de-la-cooperation-decentralisee-cncd/article/la-delegation-pour-l-action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales-daect>

E. Macron symbolised a renewal of the style of French diplomacy, a kind of «revival of the pulse» of Paris's policy in various regions of the world.¹

Of course, this kind of aid is primarily allocated when an administrative unit follows the path of its priorities. Thus, e.g., in 2020 the Delegation initiated, as part of the Commission's work in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, a discussion on aid projects in health area, primarily for African states. As a consequence, projects with traditional partners were reoriented towards sanitary purposes.²

It should be emphasised that each decision by the Delegation to finance a project must be approved by the Commission. In 2021, for the implementation of projects within decentralised cooperation, the Delegation possessed €11.5 million.³

Applications from territorial collectives and their associations are collected to identify projects eligible for funding. They can be triennial, annual or non-temporal and focused on a specific theme.

The amount of co-financing may vary depending on the characteristics of the project, ranging from 25% to 50% of the total amount but mustn't exceed the amount transferred to the project directly to the French territorial collectives. It is important to note, that co-financing by the Delegation does not exclude other sources of funds, whether from the EU, an international organisation or a partner country.⁴

From the point of view of the author of the thesis, the degree of effectiveness of this Delegation is evidenced by the statements of the Head of the Delegation, who recognises certain problems. Thus, according to Ch. Moro, who headed the Delegation until autumn 2021, the difficulties are created by the mixing of external regional activities among the deputy heads of the Delegation. E.g., African countries are distributed among three deputies, while each of them is also responsible for all areas of cooperation of several French regions and for the promotion of specific functional

¹Zueva K.P., Timofeev P.P. Op. cit. P. 89.

²Viola A. Op. cit. (De quoi la Commission nationale de la coopération décentralisée est-elle le nom?)

³Ibid.

⁴Guide opérationnel de la coopération décentralisée / élaboré par P. Pougnaud. Paris: CNCD, 2020. Pp. 65-68.

URL: https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/cncd-guide_operationnel_v4g_interactive_cle87d351.pdf1941 (accessed: 22.12.2023)

projects.¹ E.g., the supervisor of relations with Asia and Oceania coordinates all the vectors of activity of the Centre – Loire Valley and Île-de-France, the scholarship partnership programmes, the promotion of gender equality, interaction with the National Commission for Decentralised Cooperation and public relations of the Delegation.²

The existing system of assigning responsibilities has not yet been revised, but the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs is taking steps to adjust the scheme of interaction between Paris and the regions. For example, in 2016, a diplomatic advisor was assigned to each regional prefect as a supplementary link between the foreign ministry and regional authorities. The expectation was that the diplomatic advisors, in addition to organising visits of foreign partners to the regions, would accumulate all the information on their external relations, as well as ensure that «sensitive» foreign policy issues were to be resolved through the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs rather than directly by the regional authorities. However, in practice, the diplomatic advisors began to focus mainly on cross-border cooperation.³

Starting in 2016, diplomats in charge of international cooperation at the non-state level have been recruited at French embassies abroad. In a number of major countries, such as Russia, the posts of «attachés for cooperation» were established. Their corefunctionality included the following tasks: 1) tracking modalities of decentralised cooperation in the host state; 2) promoting relations between French and local territorial collectives; 3) formulating an opinion on the feasibility of co-financing the project through the Delegation for External Action of Local Government of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs; 4) transmitting information on French territories; 5) coordinating different French territorial collectives when they have a common local partner.⁴

¹Ledoux V. Rapport au Premier-Ministre et Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Etrangères "Ouvrir nos territoires à la priorité africaine de la France du citoyen au Chef de l'État". Paris, 31.07.2019. P. 12. URL: <https://agir-ladroitconstructive.fr/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/RAPPORT-LEDOUX.pdf>

²Contacts de la DAECT. URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/politique-etrangere-de-la-france/action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales/la-delegation-pour-l-action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales-daect/article/contacts-de-la-daect>

³Ledoux V. Op. cit. P. 12.

⁴Guide juridique de l'action extérieure des collectivités. Op. cit. P. 74.

Diplomats in charge of international cooperation at the non-state level work for the most part under the authority of cultural and cooperation advisors at embassies, which is a consequence of the Delegation's functioning within the Directorate-General for Globalization, Culture, Education and International Development with 43 countries having responsibilities directly assigned to advisors.

In the opinion of the author of the dissertation study, the mere fact that the Delegation for External Action of Local Government is subordinated to the aforementioned department, while abroad territorial cooperation coordinators work mainly within the cooperation and culture units, indicates that decentralised cooperation has become an essential element in the spread of French soft power.¹

It is worth mentioning, however, that in French diplomatic missions abroad, economic and technical cooperation is often assigned to the Cooperation and Cultural Services. Sometimes the authority is delegated to diplomats in charge of political affairs (for example, in Italy, China, Saudi Arabia, Japan). In embassies with small staffs, the ambassador or his deputy (e.g., in Zambia and Bahrain) may fulfil such functions.²

Of course, the head of the diplomatic mission in the host country decides on the assignment of duties to a particular staff member. At the same time, the specifics of relations with a particular state are also relevant.

As an example, it is worth considering the vectors of the most developed, decentralised cooperation between France and Senegal, where 126 partnerships of different levels are represented. First, the Embassy in Dakar provides advice and technical support to representatives of the French territorial collectives – local governments. It manages tools available for decentralised cooperation between the French and Senegalese central authorities and collects applications for specific projects with French local authorities. In addition, the Embassy provides political and institutional monitoring of the implementation of decentralisation in Senegal

¹Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (About some aspects in the activities of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France to promote the foreign activities of French administrative-territorial formations (late XXth century – early XXIst century). P. 224.

²Liste des correspondants pour la coopération non gouvernementale dans les postes diplomatiques. Version 2022. Op. cit.

as a part of the French-supported plan for the country's economic and political development until 2035.¹

As can be seen, in practice, the diplomatic mission acts not only as a coordinator of interaction between various levels of power in France and Senegal, but also as a kind of supervisor of internal political processes in this West African country. And it is the model of decentralisation implemented on the territory of France that spreads to another state.

Other structures operating under the auspices of the MFA, such as the French Development Agency, Agence Française d'Expertise, Business France, Atout France, Institut Français, Campus France, France Volontaire, also work closely with the territorial collectives. They contribute to attracting investments to the regions, exporting regional products, carrying out educational, professional, cultural and tourist exchanges, etc.

In the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the development of interregional cooperation is also the responsibility of the Ambassador for Intergovernmental Commissions, Cooperation and Border issues, who oversees cross-border cooperation. His activities are rather related to specific issues of cross-border cooperation, but the issue of duplication of functions between the two ambassadors has been raised from time to time.

The French Foreign Ministry also relies on multi-actor regional networks involving various associations of both local authorities and professional structures of the public administration and private sector.

Since 2009, the Forum of International Relations of Territorial Collectives has been held annually on the French territory at the initiative of the French United Cities Association and the French MFA. While initially it was orientated mainly towards French-speaking countries in Africa and Mediterranean countries but in 2015 it was already attended by representatives of Japan, Mexico and Russia. Since 2017 the Forum has been transformed into the Meetings on the international relations of territorial

¹La coopération décentralisée. Ambassade de France au Sénégal. URL: <https://sn.ambafrance.org/XXX-3194>

collectives». In September 2023, the XIV edition of the Meetings was held in Paris, with more than 500 participants – representatives of more than 30 countries.¹

In 2016, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the National Commission for Decentralised Cooperation, prepared a «white paper» «Diplomacy and Territory. More resources for foreign policy action», including 21 proposals to improve the partnership between the state and territorial collectives.

Thus, according to the vision of the French foreign policy leadership, territorial collectives should be increasingly involved in the implementation of the priority areas of the Centre's activities. In particular, the regions should be more actively engaged in the realisation of programmes to assist the African continent or contribute to the implementation of Paris' climate policies. In case of Africa, this includes the prevention of natural risks, humanitarian assistance and post-crisis management.²

In order to avoid economic risks, the territorial collectives are urged to cooperate with the French economic missions abroad and Business France. At the same time, for the economic and tourist attractiveness of the regions to be increased, the French diplomatic missions are asked to develop direct transport links between foreign and French regions. The need to increase the number of regional mobility programmes for students and researchers is also pointed out. It is noted that the Delegation for External Action of Local Government could join Institut français and together with it co-finance cultural projects in the framework of decentralised cooperation.³

The provisions of the «white paper» included the abovementioned proposals to establish the posts of diplomatic advisors of the French regional leaders and «attachés for cooperation» in French diplomatic missions, as well as the creation of a legal guide (handbook) of the external activities of the territorial collectives.

Such a guide was published in 2019 by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with the National Commission for Decentralised Cooperation. It included, among other things, clarifications on the restrictions for territorial collectives in their

¹Rencontres de l'AICT 2023. Op. cit.

²Livre blanc. Diplomatie et territoires. Pour une action extérieure démultipliée. Op. cit. P. 46.

³Livre blanc. Diplomatie et territoires. Pour une action extérieure démultipliée. Op. cit. Pp. 118-134.

external activities. Thus, the obligation to use in all documents the official names recognised by France is underlined and it is prohibited to misuse the ranks (e.g. ambassador or high representative), which could lead to the confusion of terms, flags and emblems not recognised by France, contacts with territorial entities which are not recognised by Paris, interaction with persons and organisations that are under French, the EU or the UN sanctions.¹

The guide emphasises the need to coordinate external activities with the French embassies: 1) to avoid the coincidence of the schedule of contacts of territorial collectives with the national and local electoral calendars and visits of official delegations; 2) to prevent the exchange of visits, the usefulness of which isn't only questionable, but may also be detrimental to the external activity of the territorial collectives.²

The French Foreign Ministry appeals to territorial collectives to actively assist foreign countries in case of humanitarian crises: both natural disasters and conflicts of all kinds. Thus, in 2013 the French Foreign Ministry's Crisis and Support Centre set up a fund for the External Action of Territorial Collectives.

The MFA of France gives the following reasons for the transfer of funds through the Fund for the External Action of Territorial Collectives: 1) the distribution of funds is managed by civil servants who are experts in the field of humanitarian emergencies and work closely with international organisations and French NPOs; 2) the funds are used appropriately, contributing to a consolidated French response; 3) the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reports on the actions taken with the funds received.³

However, Paris doesn't prohibit territorial collectives from subsidising specialised international organisations (e.g. the International Committee of the Red Cross) or allocating funds directly to their partners.⁴

¹Guide juridique de l'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales. Op. cit. Pp. 75-76.

²Ibid., P. 77.

³Fonds d'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales (Faceco). URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/politique-etrangere-de-la-france/action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales/article/fonds-d-action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales-faceco>

⁴Guide juridique de l'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales. Op. cit. P. 78.

Territorial collectives are increasingly involved in helping foreign partners achieve the Sustainable Development Goals for the period up to 2030. In view of the Paris general line, about 54% of development aid from the French regions goes to the African continent.

This amounts to approximately €29.3 million, of which €19.3 million is earmarked for sub-Saharan States. The East Africa and Indian Ocean zones account for about €5.8 million, North Africa – €3 million, regional projects – €1.2 million. In comparison, the Middle East region, which is next in line, receives only 9%.¹

As rightly noted by one of the leading Russian experts on France, Professor E.O. Obichkina of the MGIMO, promoting the economic development of African states has traditionally been one of the pillars of France's policy of «solidarity» towards the African continent.²

According to the 2021 report on the allocation of the French local government funds for development aid (excluding refugee aid), the leading regions were Auvergne – Rhône-Alpes with €3.7 million, followed by New Aquitaine with €2.7 million, and then Île-de-France with €2 million.³ It should be noted that the financial participation of an individual region is a prerequisite for obtaining project funding from the Delegation for External Action of Local Government of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Over the period from 2019 to 2020, the allocation has increased from €9.5 million to €10.5 million. From 2022 onwards, the state has committed to doubling the amount of funds allocated to support development assistance programmes through decentralised cooperation.⁴

In the opinion of the author of the thesis, the French state, thanks to the existing mechanisms, primarily manages to ensure that territorial collectives, in particular regions, do not contradict the diplomatic course of Paris, but, on the contrary, help in its implementation. We can probably speak of a partnership between the state and

¹L'aide publique au développement des collectivités territoriales. Rapport annuel 2021. Paris, 2021. Pp. 40-41.

URL: https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/rapport_apd_2022_sur_montants_2021__cle0c93af-1.pdf

²Obichkina E.O. Op. cit. (Foreign policy of France from de Gaulle to Sarkozy (1940-2021)). P. 296.

³L'aide publique au développement des collectivités territoriales. Rapport annuel 2021. Op. cit. Pp. 40-41.

⁴Viola A. L'actualité de la coopération décentralisée en France // Pouvoirs locaux. – 2019. – № 118. URL: <https://www.revuepouvoirslocaux.fr/fr/article/l-actualite-de-la-cooperation-decentralisee-en-france-3788>

the territories. It is no coincidence, e.g., that the main geographical vectors of external cooperation of territorial collectives are Africa or the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.¹

Moreover, the top three countries with which France has the most decentralised cooperation are Senegal, Burkina Faso followed by Germany.²

French territorial collectives can act as agents of Paris guidelines and directly conclude agreements with the public authorities of foreign countries. This is a manifestation of such a track of regional paradiplomacy as internationalisation.³

This format of interaction is provided for in the General Code of Territorial Collectives, in Article L1115-5. First, if the agreement to be signed makes it possible to give effect to an international treaty previously approved by the state. Furthermore, if the purpose of the agreement is to implement a regional cooperation programme under the auspices of an international organisation in which France participates. The region has the right to conclude an agreement with the central authorities of a foreign state if it establishes a cross-border, regional or international cooperation structure accession to which has been previously approved by the representative of the state.⁴

On this basis, in February 2021, the President of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur regional council signed a memorandum of intent for cooperation with the Djiboutian authorities in the field of environmental protection and combating climate change. In October 2022, during the visit to Djibouti, the president of the regional council approved a series of framework agreements on this subject between regional entities and the African authorities, thus implementing the Paris Climate Agreement.⁵

¹Livre blanc. Diplomatie et territoires. Pour une action extérieure démultipliée. Op. cit. P. 20.

²Atlas français de la coopération décentralisée et des autres actions extérieures, et Bourse partenariats de la coopération décentralisée. URL: <https://pastel.diplomatie.gouv.fr/cncdext/dyn/public/atlas/rechercheAtlasMonde.html>

³Yarovoy G.O. Op. cit. Pp. 133-134.

⁴Code général des collectivités territoriales. Art. L1115-5.

URL: https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/section_lc/LEGITEXT000006070633/LEGISCTA000006164470/

⁵Le président du Conseil Régional de la Région Sud, Renaud Muselier, en déplacement à Djibouti. 09.11.2022. URL: <https://dj.ambafrance.org/Le-president-du-Conseil-Regional-de-la-Region-Sud-Renaud-Muselier-en; Liogier R. La Région Sud signe un accord de coopération avec Djibouti. 16.02.2021. URL: https://gomet.net/accord-region-sud-djibouti/>

3.2. Cross-border cooperation: main stages

Cross-border cooperation is an essential component of the external activities of the French territorial units. Its role was highlighted as early as in law № 82-213 of 2 March 1982 on the creation of regions.¹ Two years later, on 5 March 1984, France ratified the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities of 21 May 1980. On 29 January 2013, France ratified the Protocol No. 3 to the Convention concerning Euroregional groupings for Co-operation.

In order to promote cross-border cooperation, the French government initiated the creation in 1997 of an association called the «Transfrontier Operational Mission» (TOM), which currently accumulates various structures: associations of cross-border territorial collectives, regions, departments, communes, intercommunities, various associations of legal entities and individuals, urban agencies. The TOM notes that border spaces are peripheral territories and therefore remain «on the margins» of national policies. Although the border should be a source for exchanges, in practice the coexistence of different political, legal and cultural systems makes it difficult to organise this kind of cooperation even in the EU, where border areas serve laboratories for the implementation of European construction. Meanwhile, more than 20% of the 2 million people working in border areas in the EU live in France and 11 of the 37 European border agglomerations involve French territorial collectives. The task of the TOM is to accompany cross-border cooperation at all three levels – local, national and European.²

Paris has signed a number of agreements regulating cross-border cooperation with Italy, Spain, Andorra, Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Belgium.³

In 2018, France was one of the initiators of the cross-border cooperation mechanism proposed by the European Commission.¹ This mechanism envisaged

¹Loi n°82-213 du 2 mars 1982 relative aux droits et libertés des communes, des départements et des régions. Op. cit. Art. 65.

²La MOT, au service des territoires transfrontaliers, l'Europe concrète. URL: http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Documents_MOT/PLAQUETTE_MOT_FR.pdf

³Guide juridique de l'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales. Op. cit. P. 94.

the application of the legislation of another EU Member State to a border region of one EU Member State if the implementation of the legislation of the first state would create a legal obstacle for the implementation of a joint project limited to a specific timeframe. However, the consideration of this proposal in the EU institutions was frozen in September 2021.²

At the same time, the introduction of cross-border cooperation in the text of the Treaty on Franco-German Cooperation and Integration of 22 January 2019 was precisely due to the desire to smooth out the differences between the legal systems of the neighbouring states. In particular, a cross-border cooperation committee was set up to coordinate the selection of priority projects, monitor emerging difficulties in the border areas and make proposals for their elimination.³

It should be said that one of the most prominent players in the work of the Association of European Border Regions is the French region of Grand Est. This region and administrative units located on its territory are involved in various projects. E.g., a study on patient transport, commissioned by the Association of European Border Regions on behalf of the European Commission at the height of the coronavirus pandemic, considered the cooperation between Grand Est and Luxembourg as one of the main examples and Luxembourg.⁴ The French experience was also presented in studies on cross-border youth cooperation⁵ and the implementation of the joint initiative

¹Audition de Son Exc. M. Philippe Voiry, ambassadeur pour les commissions intergouvernementales, la coopération et les relations transfrontalières. 11.03.2021.

URL: <https://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/15/les-groupes-d-etudes/les-comptes-rendus/comptes-rendus-ge-statut-des-travailleurs-mobiles-en-europe/audition-de-son-exc.-m.-philippe-voiry-ambassadeur-pour-les-commissions-intergouvernementales-la-cooperation-et-les-relations-transfrontalieres>

²Gel par le Conseil du processus législatif relatif au mécanisme de coopération transfrontalière.

URL: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/O-9-2021-000061_FR.html

³Audition de Son Exc. M. Philippe Voiry, ambassadeur pour les commissions intergouvernementales, la coopération et les relations transfrontalières. 11.03.2021. Op. cit.; Le Traité d'Aix-la-Chapelle sur la coopération et l'intégration franco-allemandes. Op. cit.

⁴Mullan C., Wilson P., Guillermo-Ramirez M. Cross-Border Patient Mobility in Selected EU Regions. Final report. December 2021. Pp. 77-105. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/health/system/files/2022-02/crossborder_patient-mobility_frep_en.pdf

⁵Stories of European Cooperation – France, its neighbours and the Mediterranean area.

URL: <https://www.interregyouth.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2022/09/Stories-cooperation-France-its-neighbours-and-the-Mediterranean-area.pdf> ; Stories of European Cooperation – France, Spain, Portugal and UK - co-operation across borders!

URL: https://www.interregyouth.com/_files/ugd/8f68c1_0b1a87c575fa47b0bd89cab029fc8b57.pdf

of the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy of the European Commission and the Association «B-solutions, solving border obstacles».¹

Grand Est is also a part of the Franco-German-Belgian-Luxembourg Greater Region. Since 1995, the project has had an institutional dimension. Its fields of action include mobility and regional development, education and training, economy and competitiveness, society and security, tourism and culture, environment and sustainable development. The project is funded by the INTERREG programme and the European Regional Development Fund.²

Grand Est and the European collective of Alsace participate in the Franco-German district of PAMINA, which was launched in 1988. The secretariat of the association is located in the French commune of Lauterbourg.³

The French regions are actively involved in various institutionalised forms of cross-border cooperation at the sub-state level. At the end of 2023, these are: Jurassic Franco-Swiss Arc (Burgundy – Franche-Comté), Vosges du Nord – Pfälzerwald Transfrontier Biosphere Reserve (Grand Est), PAMINA Eurodistrict (Grand Est), SaarMoselle Eurodistrict (Grand Est), European Development Pole Longwy (Grand Est), Ardennes Regional Nature Park and Viroin-Hermeton Nature Park (Grand Est), Basel Trinational Eurodistrict (Grand Est), Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict (Grand Est), Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine (Grand Est), Franco-German-Swiss Upper Rhine Conference (Grand Est), The Bonifacio Strait International Marine Park (Corsica), Euroregion (New Aquitaine-Euskadi Navarre), Pyrenees National Park and Ordesa y Monte Perdido National Park (New Aquitaine, Occitania), Working Community of the Pyrenees (New Aquitaine, Occitania), Territory of the Basque Eurocity (New Aquitaine), Greater Geneva (Auvergne – Alpes-Côte d'Azur), France-Geneva Regional Committee (Auvergne – Rhône-Alpes), Dunkirk-West Flanders – Arch La Manche (Hauts-de-France, Normandy, Brittany), the Opal

¹B-solutions: solving border obstacles. A compendium of 43 cases.

URL: https://www.b-solutionsproject.com/_files/ugd/8f68c1_4ce87ef8407445839b3b19c392c5a2a2.pdf

²The Greater region at a glance. URL: <https://www.granderegion.net/en>

³Eurodistrict Pamina. URL: <https://www.eurodistrict-pamina.eu/fr/>

Coast (Hauts-de-France), the Plains of the Scarpe-Scheldt European Nature Park (Hauts-de-France), the Regional Nature Park «Caps et Marais of d'Opale» – «Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty» (Hauts-de-France), Eurorégion Pyrénées-Méditerranée (Occitania), the Franco-Italian-Monaco Riviera (Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur).¹ French regional authorities are thus involved in 23 cross-border projects. in 23 cross-border projects.

Examples of disconnection of Euroregions should also be noted. E.g., in 1987, a cooperation agreement was signed between the regional council of Nord-Pas-de-Calais and the British county of Kent for the construction of the Channel Tunnel, that led to the creation of the Euroregion Nord-Transmanche in 1991 in which cooperation has taken place in a wide range of areas. Belgian regions also joined the Euroregion. However, although cross-border Franco-British cooperation continued, it was not institutionalised and the Nord-Transmanche Euroregion ceased to exist in 2004.²

3.3. Interaction with the European integration structures at the current stage

Through the parallel processes of European integration and decentralisation of European administration, the French regions have become actors in supranational and European politics seeking to influence European institutions' political decisions on regional development and putting into practice a type of regional paradiplomacy called «regional lobbying».³

At the current stage, there is a new trend in the activities of French regions, in which the European integration allows them to use supranational experience to strengthen the status of regions through external cooperation. E.g., representatives of Brittany participate in the work of the European Committee of the Regions,

¹Liste des territoires. Mission opérationnelle transfrontalière. Op. cit.

²Perrin T. La coopération culturelle dans l'eurorégion Nord-Transmanche: une institutionnalisation sans institution? // Fédéralisme-Régionalisme. – 2012. – Vol. 12.

URL: popups.ulg.ac.be/federalisme.htm

³Yarovoy G.O. Op. cit. P. 136.

the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the Assembly of European Regions, the Assembly of European Regions producing Fruit, Vegetable and Ornamental Plants, the Association of European Regions for Products of Origin, the Network of European Regions to Promote Linguistic Diversity, the Association of Regional and Authorities for Lifelong Learning, the European Regions Research and Innovation Network, the Network of European Regions for Competitive and Sustainable Tourism, Network of European Regions using Space Technologies, etc.

It is of interest to analyse the main aspects of the interaction of French regions with the European regional structures and its impact on the process of regionalisation in France.

As Professor E.O. Obichkina notes, in the context of the formation of a post-bipolar world and the «qualitative decline in the international weight» of France during the presidency of E. Macron, the geopolitical foundations of foreign policy have been revised. Henceforth, «sovereignty has been transferred to the European level (EU), and strategic identity – from the national/European level to the European/Atlantic level. In this dual ensemble, France intends to play the role of a leader capable of promoting national interests through the assertion of the EU as an independent centre of power».¹

Primarily, an increasing role of regional representations (offices) should be noted. As one of the classics of paradiplomacy theory I.D. Duchacek emphasised, the diplomacy of territorial structures manifests itself *inter alia* in the fact that they establish information offices and representative offices in the capitals of other states.

E.g., since 2019 there has been a Grand Est office in Berlin, and, e.g., in 2020, a representative office of the Hauts-de-France was opened in London.

The establishment of regional offices in Brussels, the «capital of united Europe», is also one of the vectors of subnational diplomacy.² The tasks of the regional offices in Brussels are to keep track of changes in European regional policy, assisting regional

¹Obichkina E.O. Emmanuel Macron's foreign policy: the search for a geopolitical strategy in a broken world hierarchy // Current problems of Europe. – 2021. – № 3. – Pp. 235-236 (in Russian)

²Duchacek I.D. Perforated Sovereignities: towards a Typology of New Actors in International Relations. // Federalism and International Relations: The Role of Subnational Units / Michelman H., Soldatos P. (eds.). Oxford: University Press, 1990. P. 32.

authorities in submitting dossiers for participation in European projects, providing permanent liaison between the French territorial collectives and the European authorities, assuring consultative assistance to local small and medium-sized businesses. In this way, the interests of the territorial collectives are protected while facing the European institutions.

The first French regional office in Brussels was that of Alsace, now being a part of the Grand Est region. It was opened in 1990. Today, Brussels hosts offices of all 13 French regions.

The offices are united into a single network. Within this network, monthly meetings of office directors take place. Moreover, between 2005 and 2014, a structure coordinating all French territorial collectives – the European House of French Local Authorities – operated in Brussels.

Most offices represent exclusively regional authorities, but some of them – Île-de-France, Occitania, Grand Est – have opted to create structures that bring together different administrative and public authorities located within the region.¹

Thus, the Occitania-Europe association includes representatives of metropolises, departments, communes, the University of Toulouse, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the regional Chamber of Craftsmen, and the public transport trade union.² It is worth noting that only a few offices have their own internet portals, most of them only have sections on regional websites.

The report on the activities of the Occitania-Europe association for 2020 cites as key indicators 61 meetings within the thematic working groups of the offices of the French regions in Brussels, 46 meetings within the framework of contacts with other European networks to which the association's members belong, and finally 14 meetings with representatives of the European Commission.³ Noteworthy was the participation in the traditional meeting of the French regions' representatives with European officials in charge of the allocation of resources from the European funds, and the reception of

¹Les antennes des autorités locales et régionales françaises à Bruxelles. URL: <https://ue.delegfrance.org/les-antennes-des-autorites-locales>

²Occitania Europe. Nos membres. URL: <https://occitania-europe.eu/membres-2/>

³Rapport d'activité 2020. Occitania Europe. Op. cit. P. 6.

delegations from Occitania. The active contacts with European officials with regard to the region's participation in European policies aimed at combating climate change (in particular, the association was represented at the Conference on Innovative Ecosystems. ecosystems') are specially highlighted.¹

The tasks assigned to the regional offices are carried out as follows.

Here are some examples from the activities of the Occitania-Europe association for 2020. By monitoring planned changes in European legislation, Occitania-Europe prepared economic calculations and managed to convince the French authorities to prevent the EU from adopting a decision to drastically reduce the number of days at sea for fishing vessels in 2021 in order to preserve Mediterranean biodiversity.² This example shows that the green agenda takes a back seat to the need to maintain the region's good economic performance.

Liaising between the French territorial collectives and the European authorities, Occitania-Europe worked on the preparation of the region's proposals for the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2021-2025.³

An example of concrete assistance in the region's application for funding is the H2 Corridor project, which aims to launch hydrogen transport to carry goods and passengers from the Mediterranean to the North Sea. It was in Brussels, in cooperation with the offices of other French regions, where Occitania-Europe managed to bring it into compliance with the requirements of the European Commission. In December 2020, it received a loan of €40 million from the European Investment Bank.⁴

Priority is given to cooperative work between offices of other French regions. E.g., in 2020 «Occitania-Europe» coordinated the activities of three thematic groups bringing together the offices: education and culture, research and innovation, environment and energy.⁵

¹Rapport d'activité 2020. Occitanie Europe. Op. cit. Pp. 16-17.

²Ibid. Op. cit. Pp. 17-18.

³Ibid. Op. cit. P. 19.

⁴Rapport d'activité 2020. Occitanie Europe. Op. cit. P. 20.

⁵Rapport d'activité 2020. Occitanie Europe. Op. cit. P. 26.

Thus, given their proximity to the population, the regions serve as a link between citizens and the higher echelons of power, helping, in particular to overcome the EU's democratic deficit by connecting with territories far from Brussels, and to offset the often expressed discontent caused by the devolution of political decision-making to the supranational level.¹ «Legislative assemblies» of the regions are an essential element of the EU's «participatory democracy».²

It is obvious that within the framework of the representative office, the region acts as an independent foreign policy actor, which, of course, significantly enhances its image. However, in this case we are talking about promotion of specific projects of a particular region rather than advocating political and economic projects to improve the situation of regional authorities as a whole. These issues are addressed primarily within the framework of the Committee of the Regions of the European Union.

The Committee of the Regions currently consists of 329 members. All of them are approved by the Council of the EU for a 5-year term on the proposal of the Member States, taking into account gender equality. France is represented in the Committee of the Regions by 24 delegates (12 from the regions, 6 each from the departments and communes). Germany and Italy have the same number of delegates due to the size of their populations. The members of the national delegation are appointed by the Prime Minister on the proposal of the national associations of regions, departments and mayors. The delegates include the principal members and their alternates who take part in the work of the Committee of the Regions in the case of the principal member's employment or if the subject under discussion is of particular importance to the alternate.³

¹Donat E., Meyer S. *European Regions. Perspectives, Trends and Developments in the 21st Century* // *European regions. Perspectives, trends and developments in the 21st century* / Donat E., Meyer S., Abels G. (eds.) // *Political science.* – 2020. – Vol. 92. – P. 12.

²Panara C. *Deconstructing and Reconstructing Good Governance in Relation to Regional and Local Participation in EU Decision-Making Processes* // *Regional Governance in the EU* / Abels G., Battke J. (eds.). London: Cheltenham 2019. P. 38.

³Une nouvelle délégation française très présente parmi les fonctions clés au sein du Comité européen des Régions. 13.02.2020. URL: <https://cor.europa.eu/fr/news/Pages/nouvelle-delegation-francaise-Comite-europeen-des-Regions.aspx>

From the point of view of some researchers, the «half-way» division of representatives of territorial structures generates heterogeneity, and multidirectional interests in the Committee of Regions.¹ However, other researchers think that, e.g., in case of France, the Committee of Regions provides an opportunity to harmonise the positions of representatives of different levels of local government.² This situation is precisely characterised by the Latin term *aequilibrium indifferentiae* – the balance of two opposite motives.

All members are grouped by political views. As of the end of 2023, nine delegates belong to the Party of European Socialists, eight to the European People's Party, one to the European Alliance (a mix of regional and independent candidates), and six to Renew Europe (supporters of the leading French party «Renaissance»³). As can be seen, this arrangement allows a quite even representation of the interests of different political forces.

It is worth noting that members of the French delegation formed in February 2020 took up a number of important positions within the Committee of the Regions. Thus, vice-president of the New Aquitaine region, I. Boudineau, was re-elected chairman of the Commission for Territorial Cohesion and EU Budget, and F. Sessoni, a member of the Île-de-France regional council, not only continued his work in the Committee, but was also elected its vice-chairman. In addition, French representatives headed the political groups of the Socialists (Mayor of Coulaines Ch. Rouillon) and Renewal Europe (Regional councilor of Hauts-de-France F. Decoster). The Contact Group of the Committee of the Regions on Engagement with the UK was headed by the president of the Brittany regional council – L. Chesnais-Girard.

The continuity between the compositions of the national delegations should be emphasised. Thus, 13 members of the 2020-2025 delegation were members of the previous one. However, members leave the delegation as soon as they lose their electoral mandates within the country.

¹Busygina I.M. Op. cit. (Strategies of European regions in the context of integration and globalisation). Pp. 32-33.

²Martinat P. Op. cit. P. 187.

³National delegation of France. URL: <https://cor.europa.eu/EN/members/Pages/Delegation.aspx?country=France>

French representatives have been very active in the work of the Committee. The French have chaired the Committee twice since 1994. Between 2015 and 2020, they participated in the formulation of recommendations on the Common Agricultural Policy, the Horizon Europe research programme, cohesion policy, security of public spaces and the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.¹

I. Boudineau supervised the preparation of one of the most important reports of the Committee in recent years. In 2017, she dealt with the issue of the EU budget reform, emphasising the need to minimise the increase in the financial burden imposed on taxpayers. In 2018, she was in charge of the report on the interconnectedness mechanism in Europe, lobbying for the removal of legal and administrative obstacles for the implementation of cross-border projects and the allocation of funding for them. She repeatedly pointed out that this would create jobs and support economic growth.² F. Decoster holds the record for the number of reports prepared among the current members of the French delegation: since joining the Committee in 2012, he has been responsible for the preparation of seven documents, primarily related to the migration and education agendas.³

In 2013, J.-P. Denanot, a member of the regional council of Limousin (now a part of New Aquitaine), submitted a report to the Committee of the Regions on the development of a new concept of assistance to underdeveloped regions, with an aim to establish a programme for their financing for 2014-2020. At that time, the prevailing view in the European Commission was to abolish aid to regional areas with GDP per capita between 75% and 90% of the European average and to transfer it to areas with GDP less than 75%. The report strongly advocated the view that aid should be given to all territories being in the process of development. In this way, the interests of the ten French regions with GDPs between 75% and 90% would be respected

¹Une nouvelle délégation française très présente parmi les fonctions clé au sein du Comité européen des Régions. 13.02.2020. Op. cit.

²Boudineau I. Rapporteuse. – Mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe. CDR 3598/2018. URL: <https://cor.europa.eu/fr/our-work/Pages/OpinionTimeline.aspx?opId=CDR-3598-2018>

³Decoster F. Rapporteur.

URL: <https://memberspage.cor.europa.eu/Search/Details/Person/2029189?isMinimal=False&onlyActiveMandate=True>

because there are no regions with a GDP below 75% in France.¹ Subsequently, the position taken by the Committee of the Regions favoured the preservation of aid to all the abovementioned territories.

According to French experts, one of the major benefits of participation in the Committee of the Regions is the possibility of transferring the experience of other countries to France i.e. borrowing specific features of more decentralised states.² Back in November 2010, speaking in front of the congress of the French association of Regions, the then president of the Committee, the Italian M. Bresso, urged the presidents of the regional councils to attend the Committee's sessions in person as part of national delegations, rather than sending their deputies, in order to «better fight the battle between regions and states and achieve a higher level of decentralization».³ Just over a decade later, the French delegation included only the president of the Brittany regional council and the four vice-presidents of the regional councils – Burgundy – Franche-Comté, Centre – Loire Valley, Pays de la Loire, Occitania. Thus, the situation has not changed in the intervening time. For comparison, it should be stressed, that at the end of 2023, e.g., Spain is represented by the heads of 13 of 17 regions – autonomous communities.

The Committee of the Regions doesn't remain aloof from the implementation of the decentralisation process in the states of Europe. Every year it issues a report on the application of the subsidiarity principle in the EU Member States. Since 2021, the Committee has published a regional and local Eurobarometer assessing the participation of the regions in the pressing tasks of central authorities, although the Eurobarometer was originally dedicated to measures to combat Covid-19 and its consequences. The French experience is assessed as quite successful.⁴

¹ PIB régionaux par habitant en 2009: sept régions-capitales aux dix premières places. 38/12. 13.03.2012. URL: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/1-13032012-AP/FR/1-13032012-AP-FR.PDF; Kis M. «Il faut maintenir les aides à finalité régionale». Entretien exclusif avec Jean-Paul Denanot. 01.11.2012. URL: <https://www.courrierdesmairies.fr/article/il-faut-maintenir-les-aides-a-finalite-regionale-entretien-exclusif-avec-jean-paul-denanot.2697>

²Bassot É. Le Comité des régions: Régions françaises et Länder allemands face à un nouvel organe communautaire // Revue du Marché commun et de l'Union européenne. –1993. – № 371. – Pp. 729-731.

³ La France appelée à renforcer sa présence au Comité des régions. 08.11.2010.

URL: <http://www.euractiv.fr/france-appelée-renforcer-presence-comite-regions-article>

⁴Rapport annuel sur la subsidiarité 2020. Op. cit.; EU annual regional and local barometer. 2021. Op. cit.

A special application on the website of the Committee of the Regions makes it possible to determine the level of the decentralisation index in EU countries. Thus, France ranks 13th of 20 in terms of the overall decentralisation index at regional level (as seven EU Member States have no regional level of government), with an index of 1.7, which takes into account political, administrative weight and fiscal powers of regional authorities. In comparison, the index of Germany, which is ranked 1st, is 2.9. France ranks 9th in terms of political decentralisation, with an index of 2. This index is made up of the following indicators: legal basis for self-government – 2 (recognised in the Constitution, but not detailed), representation at national level – 1 (informal representation through the association of sub-national authorities), ability to influence policymaking – 2 (not prescribed by law, but systematically applied), direct relations with the EU – 3 (one point each for membership in the Committee of Regions, presence of regional offices in Brussels, participation in the associations of regional authorities), implementation of the principle of subsidiarity – 2 (principle clearly fixed at national level but regional parliaments are only formally consulted).

France has the 11th revenue autonomy in terms of taxation. The revenues of subnational units in France are very low in relation to the tax revenues of the state.

France ranks 17th on the administrative index scope of competences – 1.91 (regional authorities undertake several initiatives jointly with central authorities), autonomy – 1 (state representatives exercise control at sub-national level, central authorities can disavow decisions of sub-national units), availability of human resources – 1.3 (very few officials working at regional level).¹

The Committee of Regions is trying to create conditions for further decentralisation in Europe. Characterising the current situation, Professor N.V. Eremina of St. Petersburg State University rightly notes that the efficiency of the activities of the representatives of the regions directly depends on their national status.² The opinion of J. Hopkins, a specialist in European law is also worth mentioning. According to him after the enlargement of the European Union to the East, two poles were formed in the EU –

¹France. Decentralization index. Op. cit.

²Eremina N.V. Op. cit. (Regional Policy of the European Union). Pp. 26-27.

with a strong and a weak regional basis. France, which before enlargement had demonstrated a vivid example of weak regionalism, was forced to «take measures» in order to preserve the place of representatives of its territorial collectives amidst the powerful Western European regions.¹

The interaction of the French regions with the Council of Europe structures and, above all, with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities deserves special consideration. The Congress was established in 1994 as a result of the evolution of the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities. The first Conference was held in 1957. It is worth noting that the Conference was initiated in the second half of the 1950s by J. Chaban-Delmas, one of de Ch. Gaulle's prominent associates who held different positions in the government. Although this structure was institutionalised in 1961 with the adoption of the Constitution of the Conference, it was not fully operational until 1961. Although institutionalised in 1961 with the adoption of the Statutes of the Conference, it was not until 1994 that a full-fledged consultative body was established by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities consists of 636 members, who are appointed by the states according to national procedure for 5 years, meet three times a year and represent different levels of sub-national units. The Congress is divided into two chambers: the chamber of local authorities and the chamber of regions.

From the late 1950s to the present, the Conference and then Congress have been chaired five times by Frenchmen.² As of the end of 2023, France is represented in Congress by 18 persons (there are also 18 alternates), nine in each chamber. France has the largest delegation along with Germany and Italy. There is one French citizen in the bureau of Congress: Mayor of Saint-Gérand-Le Puy (Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes) X. Cadoret. He is vice-president of both the Congress and the chamber of local authorities.

¹Hopkins J. A tale of two Europes: European Regions from Berlin to Lisbon //Australian and New Zealand Journal of European Studies. – 2010. – Vol. 2. – Is. 1. – Pp. 56-57.

²Présidents of the Congrès des pouvoirs locaux et régionaux de l'Europe.

URL: https://www.cvce.eu/obj/presidents_du_congres_des_pouvoirs_locaux_et_regionaux_de_l_europe-fr-90025149-8e53-4098-b63e-908e044ffb81.html

The French observe the selection criteria stipulated for national delegations – equal representation of different political movements in the territorial collectives, but there are no members and alternates of E. Macron's Renaissance party in national delegation to the chamber of regions.

With regard to the correlation between the participation of French representatives in the Congress and the Committee of the Regions, three persons are members of the main delegation of both the chamber of the regions and the Committee of the Regions, one alternate in the chamber of regions is a member of the delegation to the Committee of the regions, two members of the delegation to the chamber of regions are alternates in the delegation to the Committee of the Regions, one alternate in the chamber of regions delegation is also a alternate in the delegation to the Committee of Regions.¹ There is clearly a deliberate coordination of the activities of French regionalists in Eurostructures, aimed at increasing the «result» of their work.

Initially, one of the tasks of the Congress was to monitor the implementation of the Charter of Local Self-Government adopted by the Council of Europe in 1985 and designed to promote the idea of local autonomy, the development of decentralised governance through the implementation of the principle of subsidiarity. Therefore in most European states, which were admitted to the Council of Europe only after the end of the Cold War, the Charter became a premise for the implementation of the decentralisation process. France was one of the first to sign the Charter, but didn't ratify it for a long time, because it contradicted the unitary character of the French state. It was only after adopting a constitutional law on the decentralisation of the state in 2003 that France ratified the Charter in 2007. However, without ratification, the French representative presided the Congress: from 1998 to 2000, it was Socialist A. Chénard.²

The Congress supervises the development of local and regional democracy in each of the Member States of the Council of Europe and prepares special reports

¹Délégation nationale au Congrès, Chambre des régions: France.

URL: <https://www.coe.int/fr/web/congress/country?id=5>; Comité des régions. Délégation nationale française. -

URL: <https://cor.europa.eu/fr/members/Pages/delegation.aspx?country=France#1>

²Delcamp A. La charte européenne de l'autonomie locale et son système de contrôle // Anuaire des collectivités locales. – 1999. – Vol. 19. – Pp. 139-140.

on this issue. In case of France, the first report was produced in 2000. It stated that the decentralisation process launched in this country in the 1980s was not over. It stressed the need to recognize the right of territorial collectives to organise themselves including the decision to merge between different territorial collectives, to resolve the conflict between the transfer of powers to territorial structures and the existence of their joint competence, to transfer new powers simultaneously with granting of financial possibilities, since in France the autonomous financial resources of the territorial collectives are in practice diminishing with the development of decentralisation. The wish was expressed to prohibit the combination of local or regional mandates with those of higher levels of government. With regard to the regions, it was pointed out that they shouldn't remain structures that simply manage the areas delegated by the state, and Corsica should be granted a special status, including competence in those areas where island's specificity was most reflected and the possibility of adapting national legislation to local realities.¹

Also emphasised was the need for greater participation of territorial collectives in decision-making on territorial development, clarification of powers in the light of the very sophisticated French system, rearrangement of the financial capacity of collectives, and the adoption of legislative acts to raise the status of territorial authorities.²

In March 2016, a new report was published, showing progress in decentralisation. The cross-border cooperation of French territorial collectives was set as an example for other Council of Europe Member States.³

Meanwhile, it was indicated that one of the key problems in reforming territorial collectives is that the region is essentially assigned «strategic» areas (economic development, transport, vocational education, part of secondary education), but each of the territorial levels of government is given freedom of action in its own

¹ Recommandation 78 (25 mai 2000) sur la démocratie locale et régionale en France. URL:

<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=830603&Site=COE&BackColorInternet=DBDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864>

²Résolution 94 (25 mai 2000) sur la démocratie locale et régionale en France. Op. cit.

³Wienen J., Mosler-Tornstrom G. Op. cit. P. 3.

areas, as reflected in the French Constitution. ¹De facto, there is no hierarchy of territorial collectives. Regions don't control the lower levels of government and depend on the successful cooperation between the territorial units within them to implement their policies.²

Concerns were also expressed about the new map of regions. The authorities were called upon to consult again with representatives of local and regional territorial collectives due to their lack of involvement in decision-making. As in 2000, the importance of a clear distribution of competences between different levels of government and of increasing the regions' own financial resources in the budget of the territorial collectives, including through a more equal distribution of taxes was reemphasized.³

It is worth paying attention to the observation of the authors of the report about the resistance of the French political and administrative elite to the decentralisation process, although they are gradually accepting the transfer of powers to regional and local authorities.⁴

It appears that France has only to a certain extent followed the recommendations of the Congress, they are still relevant. However, the Congress has no special «remarks» to Paris, as its main focus is on the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. France is therefore quite free to pursue its territorial policy.

At the same time, French representatives are actively assessing the experience of decentralisation in Council of Europe Member States. French representatives have 30 times acted as co-reporters on the implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, in 21 countries were observers at local elections, taking part in missions to Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, North Macedonia, Moldova, Norway, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Czech Republic, Romania, Russia, Ukraine.

¹La Constitution du 4 octobre 1958. Art. 72.

URL: <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/la-constitution/la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958/texte-integral-de-la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958-en-vigueur.5074.html>;

²Wienen J., Mosler-Tornstrom G. Op. cit. P. 10.

³Ibid. P. 1.

⁴Wienen J., Mosler-Tornstrom G. Op. cit. P. 22.

Only the United Kingdom has more quantitative indicators than France: participation in 34 Charter implementation reports and 40 electoral missions, while Germany and Italy have indicators – 12, 12 and 10 and 8 respectively.¹

The criteria for French participation in the preparation of the abovementioned reports were the high experience of French political culture together with a big role of Paris in European affairs. At the same time, it is fair to say that it is easier to teach the decentralisation process to others than to implement it within one's own country.

During the 43rd session of the Congress on 25 October 2022, French national M. Mori was elected its new Secretary-General, responsible for the day-to-day operations of the body. He had served as Secretary General of the Assembly of the European Regions from 2014 to 2020 and then curator of the INTERREG programme for North-West Europe.²

In addition to the Committee of Regions and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, where the interests of local and regional authorities are represented, there are various pan-European «non-governmental» associations, in which representatives of the French regions, among others, take part. As the Russian researcher G.O. Yarovoy notes, these organisations have a smaller resource of influence on the authorities, but they are very influential among their members, which is already an important factor for promoting ideas and projects in the field of regionalisation.³

In the context of this thesis research, it is worth considering the main associations through which the interests of France's regions are lobbied.

First, it is worth mentioning the Association «Assembly of European Regions. When the Assembly was called the Council of European Regions, its first president in 1985-1988 was a prominent French politician, Prime Minister of France (1952, 1955-1956), President of the National Assembly (1973-1978) E. Faure (1908-1988). Also in 2008-2013 the Assembly was chaired by M. Sabban, vice-president of

¹Rapports de monitoring et de l'observation des élections.

URL: [https://www.coe.int/fr/web/congress/congress-reports#%2254213415%22:\[46\]](https://www.coe.int/fr/web/congress/congress-reports#%2254213415%22:[46])

²Election de M. Mathieu Mori au poste de Secrétaire Général du Congrès des pouvoirs locaux et régionaux. 25.10.2022. – URL: <https://www.coe.int/fr/web/congress/-/mathieu-mori-elected-secretary-general-of-the-congress-of-local-and-regional-authorities-of-the-council-of-europe>

³Yarovoy G.O. Op. cit. P. 173.

Île-de-France. In 2014-2020, as mentioned above, the Frenchman M. Maury was the head of the General Secretariat of the Assembly in Strasbourg. Currently, the Assembly of European Regions from the metropolitan regions includes Burgundy – Franche-Comté, Corsica and Grand Est.

The Assembly was intended to become a forum for discussing topical issues and a supplementary instrument for defending the interests of the regions in various institutions of pan-European power. The Association considers the establishment of the Committee of Regions and the Congress as its main political achievements. The advantage of this structure is its relatively independent character. At the same time, the role of the Association in introducing the principles of subsidiarity and territorial cohesion into European treaties, developing interregional and cross-border cooperation in Europe, drafting the Declaration on Regionalism in Europe (1996). The Association publishes thematic dossiers on the problems of European regions, helps young people to find a decent place on the labour market within the framework of the Eurodissey programme, organises «summer universities» to exchange experience between people planning to deal with regional development in Europe, etc.

The Association is also engaged in assessing the regional policy situation in different European countries. Thus, the report of 2017 on regionalisation in France, carried out following the accomplished reform, noted the inconsistency and «timidity» of the regional policy pursued by the French authorities. It argues that regional councils don't have a proper set of regulatory powers, central authorities don't allow the regions to substitute for them in the implementation of local policies. in implementing local-centred policies and emphasises the mismatch between regional taxation powers and the theoretically increasing competence of the regions and the chaotic positioning of issues of regional interest at the national level due to the competition between different levels of ATD.¹

Meanwhile, representatives of the French regions have repeatedly become authors of main reports within the framework of the Assembly. E.g., in 2012, A. Reichardt,

¹Regionalisation in France: developed but incomplete. 17 July 2017.
URL: <https://aer.eu/regionalisation-france-developed-incomplete/>

vice-president of the regional council of Alsace, authored a paper on the regions' access to the EU funding. The report was largely devoted to the task of better informing potential beneficiaries of the EU regional programmes. It was based on the premise that when regions capable to allocate funds independently the efficiency of their use increases. It also stressed the importance of such autonomy in decision-making in the light of the need to correlate funds allocated through the EU sectoral programmes and structural funds. As can be seen, two years after its release, the French regions were indeed given this possibility.¹

Some insight into the contribution of the French regions to the Association's activities can be gained by referring to its 2020/2021 report. E.g, on 27-29 April 2021, Burgundy – France-Comté organised an online seminar on the role of local democracy in the construction of European identity and citizenship at the Institute of Political Science in Dijon. On 17 June 2021, representatives of Grand Est participated in a conference on «Mobility as a Service». On 28-29 October 2021 in Strasbourg, the Strasbourg Eurometropolis and Grand Est co-organised with the Assembly a two-day conference on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. «Transforming Regions, Changing the World».²

About a thousand French territorial collectives (exact figures aren't available on the organisation's website) take part in the activities of the French association of the Council of Communes and Regions of Europe, which was created with the participation of French politicians in 1951 to develop partnerships between territorial collectives.³

Thus, on 22 March 2023, at the initiative of the Auvergne – Rhône-Alpes region, the «France-Serbia» meetings were held in Dijon in the context of discussions on

¹Reichardt A. Rapport politique. Information et accès aux financements européens. Assemblée des Régions d'Europe Octobre 2012.

URL: http://www.aer.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/PressComm/Publications/OtherPublications/.dam/110n/fr/FR-Rapport%20Reichardt.pdf

²Regions bouncing back. Activity report 2020/2021. Assembly of European Regions.

URL: www.habilestudio.com/assets/client/aer/report2020_full_final.pdf

³Pour une Europe des territoires proches des citoyens.

URL: <https://www.afccre.org/en/node/4077>

the European prospects of the Western Balkans region.¹ The same region organised, in April 2019, the fifth meetings of decentralised cooperation between France and Romania, bringing together some 250 representatives of local and regional authorities of the two countries.²

Based on the above, several conclusions can be drawn.

The French central authorities have taken deliberate steps to develop the regions' external activities. However, despite quite wide margin for manoeuvre, the external activities of the regions are subject to a rather strict control of the central authorities. The regional authorities de facto must report on all matters to the Centre.

The lack of significant powers compared to the territorial structures of other European countries hasn't prevented the French representatives from initiating the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the Assembly of European Regions. After the enlargement of the EU and the Council of Europe to include the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, French representatives didn't lose their positions in the European Committee of the Regions and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, not only nominally, but continued to participate in the preparation of fundamental documents of these structures.

Although both the Committee and the Congress assess that the level of development of regional democracy in France isn't very high and that the recommendations of the European structures aren't fully implemented by Paris, this doesn't prevent the French representatives from taking an active part in assessing the implementation of decentralisation by other countries. In addition, the French experience of cross-border cooperation is set as an example for other states.

There is a paradox: the representatives of regions without significant powers (primarily legislative) compared to other Western European states are among the leading ones in the development of regional policy in Europe. This is probably due,

¹Rencontres France-Serbie, le 22 mars 2023 à Lyon – à l'invitation de la Région Auvergne – Rhône-Alpes. -
URL: <https://www.afccre.org/fr/actualites/rencontres-france-serbie-le-22-mars-2023-%C3%A0-lyon-%C3%A0-1%E2%80%99invitation-de-la-r%C3%A9gion-auvergne>

²5èmes Assises franco-roumaines de la coopération décentralisée. Op. cit.

first, to the primordial role of France in the process of European integration, the considerable experience of French officials, as well as to the shift the focus of the European authorities to the problems of the new members of both of the EU and the Council of Europe. At the same time, the participation of representatives of French regions in pan-European structures allows them to adopt the experience of regions of other countries.

3.4. Participation in international projects and the increasing role of interregional associations

French regional authorities aren't only involved in European associations. They are members of the international organization «United Cities and Local Governments», established in 2004, the European structure of which is the association «European Municipalities and Regions». France is represented there by the national association of the Council of Communes and Regions of Europe. In this context, it is worth paying attention to an important characteristic of external activity of regions they often participate in the development of international ties not individually, but through interregional associations.¹

As for the global organisation, the annual meeting of the World Council of the organisation was held in Paris in 2015, and in 2022, the Mayor of Paris A. Hidalgo was appointed as the organisation's Ambassador for the Future of the Planet. In 2017, French territorial collectives made a significant contribution to the organisation's report on decentralisation and local democracy. But the French regions see their main role in this format as participation in foodstuff-related programmes. Thus, in 2016, with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, a working group on territorial management of food security was established within the organisation at the initiative of the French regions. Within its framework, the key objectives of the regional authorities were to reform food chains to make them correspond to global ones as well as to raise

¹Sergunin A.A. Op. cit. P. 109.

consumers' awareness of food quality and nutrition, starting with education on this topic in preschools.

The Santa Fe region (Argentina) was the coordinator of the initiative along with the French Centre – Loire Valley region. Based on their proposal, the international programme «Regions of the World and Food Transition» with the pilot project «10 Regions, 1000 initiatives for responsible and sustainable food» were elaborated. The programme primarily supports African regions, e.g., through the development of African food roadmaps.¹

They also take an active part in the activities of the International Association of French-Speaking Regions (IAFR), created in 2002 at the initiative of the authorities of the Rhône-Alpes region and representatives of Morocco and Mali. It is therefore no coincidence that its headquarters is in Lyon and as of 2023 is headed by president of the regional council of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes. L. Wauquiez. The organisation includes all French regions except Hauts-de-France and Occitania, the regional and local authorities of 18 African countries, three Asian countries, three regional councils of the Auvergne – Rhône-Alpes and three African countries, four European countries as well as diverse national associations with a regional focus. The purpose of the Association is to promote Francophonie in various ways, both in the educational and cultural spheres and through the development of economic ties between territories similar in different parameters.

The Association's priorities for 2020-2025 include promoting the Sahel region. The Association operates on the basis of membership fees of local governments, which vary considerably depending on the degree of economic prosperity of the territory.² Financial assistance is also provided by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. E.g., it co-finances the *COOP'R* programme which facilitates interregional cooperation,

¹ Nicolas V. Africities 2018: Gouvernance territoriale, sécurité et transition alimentaires. 26.11.2018. URL: <https://www.old.uclg.org/fr/media/nouvelles/africities-2018-gouvernance-territoriale-securite-et-transition-alimentaires>; Un projet pilote «10 régions, 1000 initiatives locales d'alimentation responsable et durable». 10 décembre 2019. URL: <https://regions-france.org/les-commissions-thematiques/les-strategies-internationales/communaute-pratiques-gouvernance-territoriale-securite-transition-alimentaire/>

²AIRF. Nos priorités.

URL: <https://www.regions-francophones.org/5611-comment-adherer.htm>

economic and social development of French-speaking regions that care about biodiversity. Within the framework of this programme, some €165,000 will be allocated between 2023 and 2025 which is about 50% of the total project amount.

The programme is designed for interaction between the French regions and the territories of Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco and Senegal.¹ The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also involved in the implementation of the 2023-2024 project aimed at exchanging experience on youth employment which comprises 30 French-speaking local authorities and six associations of such entities from nine African countries and France, represented by three regional councils.²

On 8-10 September 2022, the IAFR co-hosted the Forum of African Regions in Morocco.³ At the same time, in September 2022, at the initiative of the Association and the Francophone Business Forum, the first conference of mountain regions was held in the French town of Aix-les-Bains, bringing together representatives of 20 French-speaking territories. The event focused on the development of mountain tourism in the face of climate change.⁴ In June 2023 the IAFR Week was held in Cameroon, with the support of the French MFA on the margins of which numerous meetings were held between entrepreneurs and representatives of French and African NGOs, and plans how to increase interregional cooperation between members of the association were discussed.⁵

When considering associations dealing with specific issues, it is worth noting the «Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions», founded in 1973 at the initiative of the Breton authorities, which brings together more than 150 coastal regions from 24 states.

¹Deux nouveaux projets de coopération inter-régionale cofinancés par le MEAE en perspective.

URL: <http://www.regions-francophones.org/actualite/14616/5606-deux-nouveaux-projets-de-cooperation-inter-regionale-cofinances-par-le-meae-en-perspective.htm>

²Projet PPEPEJ «Plateforme francophone de Partage et d'Emergence de Politiques publiques territoriales favorisant l'Employabilité des Jeunes».

URL: <http://www.regions-francophones.org/5650-les-projets.htm>

³Première rencontre du Forum des Régions d'Afrique.

URL: <http://www.regions-francophones.org/actualite/8028/5606-1ere-rencontre-du-forum-des-regions-d-afrique.htm>

⁴Retour sur la première conférence des Régions francophones de montagne, à Aix-les-Bains (France). Op. cit.

⁵Retour sur la semaine de l'AIRF à Yaoundé.

URL: <http://www.regions-francophones.org/actualite/14592/5606-retour-sur-la-semaine-de-l-airf-a-yaounde-cameroun.htm#:~:text=Les%20membres%20de%20l'AIRF,au%20mercredi%2014%20juin%202023>

The Conference comprises all French coastal regions with the exception of Hauts-de-France, which is nevertheless involved in its work on a case-by-case basis. The members of the Association's political bureau for 2022-2024 include the President of the Brittany regional council L. Chesnais-Girard who was elected President of the Association in November 2023.¹ It should be stressed that the French city of Rennes, as well as Brussels, is home to the secretariat of this organisation.

The conference has a significant impact on the thematic political group «Sea, Rivers, Islands and Coastal Areas», which comprises 107 members of the European Parliament.² Within the framework of the geographical and functional commissions of the Conference, regular meetings are held in Brittany on migration, transport, energy and fisheries.

In February 2022, the association, together with the Brittany authorities, held a Coastal Regions Forum timed to the One Ocean international summit organised in the framework of the French Presidency of the Council of the EU.³

In other associations of European regions, the political dimension is of minor importance, but it should be noted that the French regions participate, among others, in the activities of the Assembly of European Regions producing Fruit, Vegetable and Ornamental Plants (headquartered in Bordeaux, involves Brittany, New Aquitaine, Auvergne – Rhône-Alpes, Provence – Alpes – Côte d'Azur, Centre – Loire Valley, the Association of European Regions for Products of Origin (Brittany, Burgundy – Franche-Comté, Corsica, New Aquitaine, Occitania, Provence – Alpes – Côte d'Azur, Pays de la Loire, Centre – Loire Valley), the Assembly of European Wine-producing Regions (established at the initiative of Aquitaine, no full membership data are available), the Network to Promote linguistic diversity (Brittany, Corsica, some Occitan entities), the Association of Regional and Local Authorities

¹ 50 ans, 1 message: les territoires comptent. URL: <https://cpmr.org/fr/cohesion-fr/50-years-1-message-territories-matter/36713/>

² Intergroup Seas, Rivers, Islands & Coastal Areas. URL: <https://www.searica.eu/intergroup>

³ Results of the One Ocean Summit 2022. URL: <https://maritime-spatial-planning.ec.europa.eu/news/results-one-ocean-summit-2022>

for Lifelong Learning (Brittany), the European Regions Research and Innovation Network (all regions except Corsica), the Network of European Regions for Competitive and Sustainable Tourism (Brittany, Île-de-France, New Aquitaine, Normandy), Network of European Regions Using Space Technologies (French Guiana, Brittany, New Aquitaine, Occitania).

One of the activities of regional authorities is not only to assist governments in hosting migrants and refugees up to the point of clarifying their status. up to the point of clarifying their status. They are also involved in integration policies, inter alia addressing the existing social problems of migrants. E.g., since 2015, the regional council of Occitania has been cooperating with the association «Democracy and Welfare in Syria» (Démocratie et Entraide en Syrie), offering the young generation of refugees the opportunity to start or continue their university studies. Refugees with confirmed status receive €500 a month to cover tuition fees and dormitory costs. Also in Occitania, in cooperation with the Centre for Civic Initiative and Jurisprudence, a free regional educational programme aimed at learning the French legal framework.¹

The empowerment of regional and local French authorities gives them the opportunity to carry out large-scale actions with other countries, in particular with Russia.² Before the current deterioration of the international situation, the French regions were most actively engaged in the organisation of different events, being active participants in public diplomacy.

E.g., the Auvergne – Rhône-Alpes Festival was held in Moscow for ten years, organising sports, cultural and gastronomic events.³

During the coronavirus pandemic, the regional authorities of the region Provence – Alpes – Côte d'Azur region and the mayor's office of Nice tried to negotiate with the Russian side on their own to supply the Russian vaccine «Sputnik V», but they have never succeeded not receiving a consent of the European Medicines Agency.⁴

¹Viktorova E.V., Petrenko D.A. Op. cit. Pp. 69-75.

²It should be noted that some cities in the Russian Federation have previously organised similar events with other countries. See e.g: Novikova, I.N., Popov, D.I. Op. cit. Pp. 41-70. URL: <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu06.2021.103>

³ Chepovskaya A. Scales are smaller» but more human. 07.04.2018. URL: <https://iz.ru/728775/anastasiia-chepovskaia/masshtaby-menshe-no-chelovechnee> (in Russian)

⁴Rof G. En PACA, Renaud Muselier promet des vaccins Spoutnik V à ses administrés. 15.04.2021.

In October 2021, vice-president of the Provence – Alpes – Côte d'Azur region, head of the Nice-Côte d'Azur metropolitan area, mayor of Nice, C. Estrosi was one of the organisers of the business forum «Russia and France: Towards a New Partnership» in Moscow. At the forum, the prominent French politician spoke about the counterproductive nature of anti-Russian sanctions, which have deprived the French economy of tens of billions of euros.¹

Since the Year of Russia in France and France in Russia in 2010, all «cross» bilateral Russian – French actions have been organised with the involvement of the French regions. without the involvement of French regions. At the same time, in September 2010, a seminar on regional democracy was jointly orchestrated by the French and Russian sides in Kirov.² But it should be emphasised that in the French expert community it is traditionally believed, that any attempts of Paris to influence the «democratization» of Russia's political system are not successful.³

In fact, the last «cross» project before the current deterioration of the international situation was the «Cross» Year of Interregional Cooperation in 2021 and early 2022, which included more than 150 events.⁴ The programme of the Year, focused on the development of ties between the regions of the two countries in the fields of economy and tourism, higher education and science, tourism, culture and education, sports, environment as well as the deepening of twinning ties between cities in general, provided a good cross-section of the public diplomacy of the French regions. To this end, among the activities initially planned were the economic webinars between the Grand Est regional council and the Samara region, the implementation of joint programmes in tourism and gastronomy between Auvergne – Rhône-Alpes and Irkutsk,

URL: https://www.lemonde.fr/planete/article/2021/04/15/en-paca-renaud-muselier-promet-des-vaccins-sputnik-v-a-ses-administres_6076844_3244.html

¹Mayor of Nice called anti-Russian sanctions unfair. 14.10.2021.

URL: <https://ria.ru/20211012/sanktsii-1754166562.html> (in Russian)

²Seminar on regional democracy. Kirov, 24-25 September 2010. Year of Russia in France and France in Russia. URL: http://www.france-russia2010.ru/in_russia/20100924/187981211.html (in Russian)

³Pakhorukov K.I. Russian-French relations in the context of France's return to the military structures of NATO // Russia in the modern world: new challenges and opportunities: Collection of reports of the All-Russian student scientific conference. 1 March 2013 / Edited by Y.G. Akimov, N.A. Dobronravin, N.Y. Markushina, S.L. Tkachenko, E.Y. Treschenkov. St. Petersburg: Publishing Centre of the Faculty of Economics, St. Petersburg State University, 2013. P. 83. (in Russian)

⁴Negotiations between President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin and President of France E. Macron. 7 February 2022. Op. cit.

the organisation of the participation of representatives of the Leningrad region in the international tourism exhibition «IFTM Top Resa» in September 2021 in Paris in the framework of cooperation with the Île-de-France region, a forum of university cities from Burgundy – France-Comté and the Novosibirsk and Tomsk regions, participation of representatives of regional cultural institutions in the St. Petersburg Cultural Forum, equestrian master classes between the Pays de la Loire region, St. Petersburg and the Rostov region, installation of a glass recycling container in Kashira near Moscow by the French sister town of Evreux.¹

Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic, many of the events were cancelled or took place online. The Year was supposed to end by the Fifth Russian – French meeting. However poor epidemiological situation and then dramatically negative change in the international situation prevented it from being organised.

The abovementioned examples clearly demonstrate the multidirectional nature of the activities of the French regions, the impetus for which is largely given by the enlargement of the range of opportunities for their implementation.

The political, economic and social weight of the French regions is becoming increasingly important, enabling them to act as a counterweight to the state. This is fuelled by the consolidation of the regions and the reduction of their number to 13. Indeed, the Auvergne – Rhône-Alpes region has more than eight million inhabitants, the same number as Switzerland. As a result, the regions play an important role at the international level, with some regional leaders clearly recognising that international cooperation is one of the keys to the region's development.

The French Foreign Ministry supports the paradiplomacy of the regions. According to the vision of the French foreign policy leadership, territorial collectives should be increasingly involved in the implementation of the priority areas of activity pursued by the Centre. In particular, the regions should be more actively engaged in programmes to support the African continent or contribute to the implementation of Paris' climate policies. Regarding Africa, they should work on natural risk prevention,

¹«Cross» Year of Interregional Cooperation between Russia and France. 2021. Op. cit.

humanitarian assistance and post-crisis management. In line with Paris's guideline, some 54% of development aid from the French regions goes to Africa. Thus, large system of decentralised cooperation is bearing fruit, being one of the ways to maintain French influence on the continent, which makes it possible to offset certain miscalculations with the use of «hard power».¹

At the same time, a growing number of French people shares the idea that sustainable development assistance is necessary for the future of the planet, despite the economic and migration tensions that France has experienced in recent years.

However, the focus of regional activities on the attractiveness of the region, on influence and economic development to improve the well-being of its territory on the one hand often negates the responsibility and on the other hand the ability of territorial collectives to contribute to the solution of global problems.

¹See more: Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (France – African States: some aspects of decentralized cooperation) Pp. 463-477; Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. (France – Tropical Africa: a new quality of relations?) Pp. 62-66; Ivannikov I.V., Pakhorukov K.I. Op. cit. Pp. 24-40.

Conclusion

Consideration of the stages of regional policy implementation in the European Union, the process of regionalisation and reforms of territorial collectives in France, the foreign policy activities of the French regions in the structures of the European Union and the Council of Europe, the participation of French regions in different international associations allows us to draw up the following conclusions.

During the period of European integration, the regional policy of the European Union has undergone significant evolution. The priority task of equalising regional disparities was to redistribute resources from rich to poor regions, both within European states and at the level of the countries themselves. However, in the late 1980s, there was a change in the methodology of regional policy implementation, with the introduction of a common European programme approach based on the principle of economic feasibility and implying a compromise between different levels of government.

This process was legally enshrined in the text of the Maastricht Treaty adopted in 1992, which contained a provision concerning the creation of a Committee of the Regions. Following this, the European Commission contributed to the institution building of the regions by reforming the European Structural Funds, which served as the basis for the EU regional policy. Currently, the European regional policy is a well-developed mechanism, both in economic, political and legal aspects. It can be said that the conceptual framework of the European regional policy is characterised by the elimination of economic inequalities between regions and finding a compromise between supranational, national, and regional authorities and decision-making at the lowest possible level of governance.

Therefore, the creation of the European political space was accompanied by the active participation of representatives of local and regional authorities, who fulfilled the role of mediators between the EU and national authorities. In order to achieve the set objectives and to maximise the use of the EU's regional policy resource, its Member States had to transform their own national systems. However, the streamlined

formulation of the principle of subsidiarity has given rise to different interpretations: from the division of competences between the EU and national states to the empowerment of authorities at the sub-national level. Despite the current view that the full implementation of the principle of subsidiarity in the EU is possible only if the administrative and territorial systems of the Member States are unified or if the EU system of functioning is based on federal democracy, the application of the subsidiarity principle has already had a significant impact on changes in the system of governance in European states namely in France.

The decentralisation process in France has been influenced by a number of factors. Thus, in the course of the administrative and territorial reforms implemented since the end of the twentieth century, the role of the regions in France's foreign policy has reinforced, which contributed to the strengthening of the country's position at the international level. At the same time, some regional leaders shared the idea that international cooperation was a prerequisite for the development of the region.

France has attempted to redress the asymmetry between French regions and neighbouring European countries in geographical, demographical and economic aspects. In the decentralisation process the internal political situation and the presence of strong regionalism in a number of regions (Alsace, Brittany, etc.) were important factors.

France is currently among top ten recipients from the European Structural Funds, including within the INTERREG cross-border cooperation programme, and the current procedure for their distribution in the European Union has been achieved largely thanks to the activities of the French delegation to the European Committee of the Regions.

The new powers of the regional authorities, in particular the ability to independently manage the European Structural Funds, have complicated the relationship between the EU, the French state and the regional authorities. Meanwhile the purpose of the EU regional policy remains the same: the formation of cooperation relations between economic actors and political institutions in order to increase the competitiveness of the regions. Under the influence of an external factor –

the impact of pan-European trends – France, originally a centralised state, has taken measures to preserve a special place for representatives of its territorial collectives among Western European regions.

While, between 1982 and 2007, the idea of decentralisation in France was initially seen as a question of administrative organisation of the country, it soon turned into a process of redistribution of roles between local authorities and the state. This was reflected in the implementation of territorial reforms during the presidencies of N. Sarkozy and F. Hollande. in 2007-2017. The implementation of decentralisation in France was largely possible thanks to the support of both right-wing and left-wing political forces.

The emergence of new regions comparable in geographical and economic parameters, in terms of population to neighbouring countries, allowed them to have similar competences in the future and promoted the dynamics of economic development and interregional cooperation.

In addition, the consolidation and reduction of the number of regions has increased their political, economic and social influence and enabled them to act as a counterweight to the centralised state apparatus. However, the reform of territorial administration is rather incomplete and hasn't clarified the political-administrative system of governance in France.

At the current stage, which began in 2017 with E. Macron's being the French President, the interest in reforming the governance system of territorial collectives has somewhat waned in France. Meanwhile, in the framework of the 2022 presidential campaign, the candidates mostly returned to the idea of the presidency of N. Sarkozy, that it is necessary to unite regional and departmental councils through the establishment of territorial councilors sitting simultaneously in both bodies. Today, the possibility of restoring the previously existing regions is not ruled out. In the meantime, compromise options are being implemented that don't imply withdrawal from the «big region» (the European collective of Alsace and Grand Est).

The system of granting regions derogations from national legislation is developing which indicates an increase in the autonomy of the regions.

A detailed analysis of the «white paper» on the diplomacy of territorial entities that appeared in 2016 and of the legal handbook of 2019 that regulates it, allows to consider the measures for the development of the regions' external action. Indeed, the French leadership has adopted a course to develop the paradiplomacy of the regions, contrary to the centralised nature of the French state. However, external activities are largely bureaucratised by the control of the Centre. Thus, it must be coordinated with the Delegation for External Action of Local Government of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs through a diplomatic advisor assigned to the prefect of the region. At the same time, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs facilitates the regions' access to funding for international projects with the participation of the structures reporting to it. At the same time, regional cooperation projects must meet the current priorities of Paris. It can be argued that the French MFA supports the development of regional paradiplomacy and the strengthening of the participation of territorial collectives in the implementation of priority activities carried out by the central government.

France is also one of the initiators of the development of cooperation between regions on European and international platforms. Currently, French regions are involved in 23 cross-border European projects. France is one of the proponents of the cross-border cooperation mechanism, which implies the application in one EU state of the legislation of another state if the application of the legislation of the first state creates an obstacle to the implementation of a joint project.

French regional authorities serve as a link between ordinary citizens and the highest echelons of power, in particular by helping to overcome the EU's democratic deficit by establishing connection with territories far from Brussels. Thus, the capital of united Europe hosts the offices of all thirteen French regions.

Despite the less important status of territorial units in France compared to other countries, the French were at the origins of the Assembly of European Regions and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. French

representatives actively use these platforms, along with the Committee of the Regions, to promote their interests and make a significant contribution to their work.

The Committee of the Regions and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, for their part, oversee the decentralisation reforms in France. At the same time, even before the ratification of the Charter of Local Self-Government in 2007, France had been very active in monitoring decentralisation in the Council of Europe Member States and local elections.

French regions participate in relevant European and international associations, and a number of them have their headquarters in France. In general, it can be said that French regions occupy one of the key positions in Europe in matters of regional development. The thesis demonstrates that all French regions are involved in international activities. However, the cross-border location of some regions favours their greater engagement in foreign affairs compared to other territories. As a fundamental difference between the interaction of French regions with the regions of the European Union countries from cooperation with subnational units of non-EU countries is less bureaucratic, as the latter relations are regulated mainly by bilateral agreements.

Thus, the success of paradiplomacy of the regions and the support of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs have enabled the French regions to become active actors at the international level and carry out large-scale actions with other countries, such as the «Cross» Year of interregional cooperation between Russia and France. With regard to the implementation of programmes of assistance to the African continent, decentralised cooperation makes it possible to support attempts to maintain French influence there.

The active participation of representatives of the French regions in pan-European structures gives them the opportunity to learn from the experience of other regions and has a direct impact on the internal political context. At the same time, representatives of the French regions not having considerable powers in comparison with similar structures in European states, manage to hold important positions in pan-European

structures for the following reasons. First, due to the leading role of France in the process of European integration. In addition, the high level of French political culture allows representatives of French regions to occupy high positions in international structures. The shift of the focus of European organisations to the administrative and territorial problems of the new members also makes it possible for regional representatives to occupy dominant positions in pan-European associations.

Based on the abovementioned facts, the paradiplomacy and international policies and practices of the French regions testify to the commitment of the French Foreign Ministry to the European directives aimed at further European integration. Today, the decentralisation process in France is not yet complete. One possible development appears to be a choice in favour of a policy that will come from the regions and be managed by members of local authorities which implies the possibility of transferring to the regions a significant part of the so-called sovereign tasks. Steps to simplify the French territorial system that aren't excluded by the French political forces could further strengthen the position of regional authorities.

List of abbreviations

ATD – administrative-territorial division

BSU – Belarussian State University

CAP – Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union

EAFRD – European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

ECSC – European Coal and Steel Community

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund

ESF – European Social Fund

EU – European Union

FN – National Front

IAFR – International Association of Francophone Regions

IMEMO RAS – Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences

MSLU – Moscow State Linguistic University

MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MGIMO – Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

MIA – Ministry of Internal Affairs

NGOs – non-governmental organisations

NPOs – non-profit organisations

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

RAS – Russian Academy of Sciences

RUDN – Peoples' Friendship University of Russia named after Patrice Lumumba

SP – Socialist Party

SPbU – Saint-Petersburg State University

TOM – Transfrontier Operational Mission

Glossary of terms

white paper: A reference book that provides information on a complex issue and serves to further decision-making.

devolution: A political process characterised by the transfer of some powers from the political centre to the local level.

decentralisation: The process of devolution of powers from central authorities to subnational units.

INTERREG: The main financial support programme for regional cooperation in the European Union.

cohesion policy: The EU regional policy, i.e. a set of measures aimed at improving the welfare of the EU countries regions.

region: A territorial administrative unit of the level of government inferior to the state level, with self-government powers.

regionalisation: Increasing of the administrative status of regions in both domestic and foreign policy affairs.

regionalism: Strengthening of regional specificity.

subsidiarity: The ability to address issues at the lowest level commensurating with the objective.

territorial collectives: A diplomatic term for all administrative-territorial units, both in France and in most former French colonial countries. In France, territorial collectives are communes, departments, regions, overseas territories.

References

Sources

International legal documents, documents of international associations activities of which are focused on interregional cooperation

1. «Cross» Year of Interregional Cooperation between Russia and France. 2021. [Перекрестный год межрегионального сотрудничества России и Франции. 2021]
[Available from].
URL:
https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/programme_thematique_annee_fr-ru_23.03_ru_cle4d1a82.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023) (in Russian)
2. 2021-2027 Category of region status of NUTS 2 regions by country. [Available from] URL:
<https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/stories/s/2021-2027-EU-allocations-available-for-programming/2w8s-ci3y/#ijg-categories-of-region-> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
3. 2021-2027 – EU budget interreg ressources. [Available from].
URL: <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/stories/s/2021-2027-EU-allocations-available-for-programming/2w8s-ci3y> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
4. 5èmes Assises franco-roumaines de la coopération décentralisée. [Available from].
URL: <https://afccre.org/en/node/3034> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
5. 50 ans, 1 message: les territoires comptent. [Available from]
URL: <https://cpmr.org/fr/cohesion-fr/50-years-1-message-territories-matter/36713/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
6. Accord de partenariat des autorités françaises. 2021-2027. Version 1.4, adoptée par la Commission européenne le 2 juin 2022. [Available from] URL:
<https://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/fr/ressources/accord-de-partenariat-france-2021-2027> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
7. AIRF. Nos priorités. [Available from].

- URL: <https://www.regions-francophones.org/5611-comment-adherer.htm>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
8. Assembly of European Regions Statute. 28 October 2021. [Available from].
URL: <https://aer.eu/aer-statute/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
9. Available budget of Cohesion Policy 2021-2027. [Available from].
URL: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/available-budget_en
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
10. B-solutions: solving border obstacles. A compendium of 43 cases. [Available from].
URL:
https://www.bsolutionsproject.com/_files/ugd/8f68c1_4ce87ef8407445839b3b19c392c5a2a2.pdf (accessed: 10.12.2022)
11. Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union // Official Journal of the European Union. 26.10.2012. C 326/02. Preamble. [Available from] URL:
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
12. Comité des régions. Délégation nationale française. [Available from].
URL:
<https://cor.europa.eu/fr/members/Pages/delegation.aspx?country=France#1>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
13. Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union // Official Journal of the European Union. 26.10.2012. Vol. 55. C 326/49 [Available from] URL:
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012M%2FTXT>
14. Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union Official Journal of the European Union. C 326/47. 26.10.2012. [Available from] URL:
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT:en:PDF>
(accessed : 22.12.2023)

15. Déclaration de Cadix: «Décentralisation, Développement, Démocratie, Innover pour une Europe en 3 Dimensions». 25^{èmes} États généraux des communes et des régions d'Europe. 28.09.2012. [Available from].
URL: http://www.ccre.org/docs/declarat_FR_UPD.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023)
16. Délégation nationale au Congrès, Chambre des régions: France.
[Available from]
URL: <https://www.coe.int/fr/web/congress/country?id=5> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
17. Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion Policy. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/en/european-funds/economic-social-and-territorial-cohesion-policy> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
18. Élection de M. Mathieu Mori au poste de Secrétaire Général du Congrès des pouvoirs locaux et régionaux. 25.10.2022. [Available from]
URL: <https://www.coe.int/fr/web/congress/-/mathieu-mori-elected-secretary-general-of-the-congress-of-local-and-regional-authorities-of-the-council-of-europe> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
19. EU annual regional and local barometer. 2021. [Available from].
URL: <https://cor.europa.eu/en/our-work/Documents/barometer-fullreport%20web.pdf> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
20. EU cohesion policy: Commission adopts €18.4 billion Partnership Agreement with France for 2021-2027. 02.06.2020. [Available from].
URL: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/es/ip_22_3368 (accessed: 22.12.2023)
21. Eurodistrict Pamina. [Available from].
<https://www.eurodistrict-pamina.eu/fr/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
22. Europe en France: le portail des Fonds européens. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/L-Europe-s-engage/pour-la-cohesion-economique-et-sociale> (accessed: 10.12.2022)
23. France. Decentralization index. [Available from].

- URL: <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/Decentralization-Index.aspx> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
24. Gel par le Conseil du processus législatif relatif au mécanisme de coopération transfrontalière. [Available from].
- URL: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/O-9-2021-000061_FR.html (accessed: 22.12.2023)
25. Interreg France – Switzerland. [Available from].
- URL: <https://interreg.eu/programme/interreg-france-switzerland/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
26. Intergroup Seas, Rivers, Islands & Coastal Areas. [Available from].
- URL: <https://www.searica.eu/intergroup> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
27. La France appelée à renforcer sa présence au Comité des régions. 08.11.2010. [Available from].
- URL: <http://www.euractiv.fr/france-appellee-renforcer-presence-comite-regions-article> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
28. La MOT, au service des territoires transfrontaliers, l'Europe concrète. [Available from].
- URL: http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Documents_MOT/PLAQUE_TTE_MOT_FR.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023)
29. Le Traité d'Aix-la-Chapelle sur la coopération et l'intégration franco-allemandes. [Available from].
- URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/dossiers-pays/allemande/relation-bilaterales/le-traite-d-aix-la-chapelle-sur-la-cooperation-et-l-integration-franco/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
30. Le Traité instituant la Communauté Économique Européenne 1957. [Available from].
- URL:

<http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:11957E/TXT:FR:PDF>(accessed: 22.12.2023)

31. Mullan C., Wilson P., Guillermo-Ramirez M. Cross-Border Patient Mobility in Selected EU Regions. Final report. December 2021. 170 p. [Available from].
URL: https://ec.europa.eu/health/system/files/2022-02/crossborder_patient-mobility_frep_en.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023)
32. National delegation of France. [Available from].
URL:
<https://cor.europa.eu/EN/members/Pages/Delegation.aspx?country=France>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
33. Partnership agreements on EU funds 2021-2027. [Available from].
URL: https://commission.europa.eu/publications/partnership-agreements-eu-funds-2021-2027_en (accessed: 22.12.2023)
34. PIB régionaux par habitant en 2009: sept régions-capitales aux dix premières places. 13.03.2012. [Available from].
URL:
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/1-13032012-AP/FR/1-13032012-AP-FR.PDF(accessed: 05.10.2021)
35. Pour une Europe des territoires proches des citoyens. [Available from] URL:
<https://www.afccre.org/en/node/4077> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
36. Premier Congrès International et exposition comparée des villes. Bruxelles. 1913. [Available from].
URL: <https://lib.ugent.be/viewer/archive.ugent.be%3A0539F00A-EC1A-11E1-9343-92518375B242#?cv=3&c=&m=&s=&xywh=-126%2C0%2C6166%2C3952> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
37. Première rencontre du Forum des Régions d'Afrique. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.regions-francophones.org/actualite/8028/5606-1ere-rencontre-du-forum-des-regions-d-afrique.htm> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

38. Présidents du Congrès des pouvoirs locaux et régionaux de l'Europe. [Available from].
URL:
https://www.cvce.eu/obj/presidents_du_congres_des_pouvoirs_locaux_et_regionaux_de_l_europe-fr-90025149-8e53-4098-b63e-908e044ffb81.html (accessed: 22.12.2023)
39. Priorities for 2021-2027. [Available from] URL:
https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/how/priorities_en
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
40. Projet PPEPEJ «Plateforme francophone de Partage et d'Émergence de Politiques publiques territoriales favourisant l'Employabilité des Jeunes». [Available from].
URL: <http://www.regions-francophones.org/5650-les-projets.htm> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
41. Protocol № 2 on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality // Official Journal of the European Union. C 115. 09.05.2008. [Available from] URL: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A12008E%2FPRO%2F02> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
42. Rapport annuel sur la subsidiarité 2020. 10.03.2021. [Available from] URL:
<https://portal.cor.europa.eu/subsidiarity/Publications/Pages/Publicationsandstudies-.aspx> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
43. Rapports de monitoring et de l'observation des élections. [Available from].
URL: [https://www.coe.int/fr/web/congress/congress-reports#{%2254213415%22:\[46\]}](https://www.coe.int/fr/web/congress/congress-reports#{%2254213415%22:[46]}) (accessed: 22.12.2023)
44. Recommandation 78 sur la démocratie locale et régionale en France. 25.05.2000. [Available from].
URL:
<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=830603&Site=COE&BackColorInternet=D>

- BDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864 (accessed: 22.12.2023)
- 45.Regionalisation in France: developed but incomplete. 17.07.2017. [Available from].
URL: <https://aer.eu/regionalisation-france-developed-incomplete/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
- 46.Regions bouncing back. Activity report 2020/2021. Assembly of European Regions. [Available from].
URL: www.habilestudio.com/assets/client/aer/report2020_full_final.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023)
- 47.Règlement délégué (UE) 2019/1755 de la Commission du 8 août 2019 modifiant les annexes du règlement (CE) No. 1059/2003 du Parlement européen et du Conseil relatif à l'établissement d'une nomenclature commune des unités territoriales statistiques (NUTS) // Journal Officiel. L 270 du 24.10.2019
- 48.Reichardt A. Rapport politique. Information et accès aux financements européens. Assemblée des Régions d'Europe Octobre 2012. [Available from].
URL: http://www.aer.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/PressComm/Publications/OtherPublications/.dam/110n/fr/FR-Rapport%20Reichardt.pdf (accessed: 05.10.2021)
- 49.Rencontres de l'AICT 2023. [Available from].
URL: <https://cites-unies-france.org/-Rencontres-de-l-AICT-> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
- 50.Rencontres France-Serbie, le 22 mars 2023 à Lyon - à l'invitation de la Région Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.afccre.org/fr/actualites/rencontres-france-serbie-le-22-mars-2023-%C3%A0-lyon-%C3%A0-1%E2%80%99invitation-de-la-r%C3%A9gion-auvergne> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

51. Résolution 94 sur la démocratie locale et régionale en France. 25.05.2000. [Available from].
URL:
<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=836865&Site=COE&BackColorInternet=D BDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
52. Results of the One Ocean Summit 2022. [Available from]
URL: <https://maritime-spatial-planning.ec.europa.eu/news/results-one-ocean-summit-2022> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
53. Retour sur la première conférence des Régions francophones de montagne, à Aix-les-Bains (France). 27.09.2022. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.regions-francophones.org/actualite/8199/5606-retour-sur-la-premiere-conference-des-regions-francophones-de-montagne-a-aix-les-bains-france.htm> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
54. Retour sur la semaine de l'AIRF à Yaoundé. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.regions-francophones.org/actualite/14592/5606-retour-sur-la-semaine-de-l-airf-a-yaounde-cameroun.htm#:~:text=Les%20membres%20de%20l'AIRF,au%20mercredi%2014%20juin%202023> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
55. Stories of European Cooperation – France, its neighbours and the Mediterranean area. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.interregyouth.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2022/09/Stories-cooperation-France-its-neighbours-and-the-Mediterranean-area.pdf> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
56. Stories of European Cooperation – France, Spain, Portugal and UK - Cooperation across borders! [Available from]
URL:
https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/brochures/202

0/stories-of-european-cooperation-france-spain-portugal-and-uk-cooperation-across-borders (accessed: 22.12.2023)

57.The Greater region at a glance. [Available from]

URL: <https://www.granderegion.net/en> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

58.Treaty on European Union, signed at Maastricht on 7th February 1992 // Official Journal of the European Communities. 29.07.1992. Vol. 35, C 191/6

59.Un nouvelle délégation française très présente parmi les fonctions clés au sein du Comité européen des Régions. 13.02.2020. [Available from] URL: <https://cor.europa.eu/fr/news/Pages/nouvelle-delegation-francaise-Comite-europeen-des-Regions.aspx> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

60.Why regions matter – developing regional economic growth? 27.04.2013. [Available from].

URL: <http://www.oecd.org/gov/regional-policy/#d.en.194438>

(accessed: 05.10.2022)

Documents of the French public authorities, executive documents and current information materials

61.Negotiations between President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin and President of France E. Macron. 7 February 2022. [Переговоры Президента Российской Федерации В.В. Путина с Президентом Франции Э.Макроном. 7 февраля 2022 г.] [Available from]

URL: <http://kremlin.ru/catalog/persons/518/events/67734> (accessed: 22.12.2023) (in Russian)

62.Seminar on regional democracy. Kirov, 24-25 September 2010. Year of Russia in France and France in Russia. [Семинар о региональной демократии. Киров, 24-25 сентября 2010 г. Год России во Франции и Франции в России.] [Available from].

URL: <http://www.france-russia2010.ru/inrussia/20100924/187981211.html>
(accessed: 11.03.2023)

63. Atlas français de la coopération décentralisée et des autres actions extérieures, et Bourse partenariats de la coopération décentralisée. [Available from] URL: <https://pastel.diplomatie.gouv.fr/cncdext/dyn/public/atlas/rechercheAtlasMonde.html> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

64. Circulaire n°1789 du 26 mai 1983 relative à l'action extérieure des collectivités locales. [Available from].

URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000000327481>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)

65. Code général des collectivités territoriales. [Available from] URL: https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/texte_lc/LEGITEXT000006070633/2023-12-22/ (accessed: 22.12.2023)

66. Communiqué de presse du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères du 25 février 2007. Adoption of la loi Thiollière: la cadre solide et sécurisé pour l'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales. [Available from].

URL: https://www.amf.asso.fr/m/document/fichier.php?FTP=AMF_20070131_Communique_loi_thiolliere.pdf&id=8093 (accessed: 22.12.2023)

67. Contacts de la DAECT. [Available from]

URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/politique-etrangere-de-la-france/action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales/la-delegation-pour-l-action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales-daect/article/contacts-de-la-daect>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)

68. Coopération entre le ministère des Affaires étrangères et du développement international et le ministère de l'Intérieur. Paris. 25.08.2015. [Available from].

URL: https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/cooperation_maedi-minint_cle81421d.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023)

69. Cour des Comptes. Les finances publiques locales. Fascicule 2: Rapport sur la situation financière et la gestion des collectivités territoriales et de leurs établissements publics. 2019. Rapport. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.ccomptes.fr/fr/publications/les-finances-publiques-locales-2019-fascicule-2> (accessed: 11.03.2023)
70. Décret N° 1769 du 19 avril 1941 attribuant à certains préfets les pouvoirs des préfets régionaux et portant division du territoire pour l'exercice de ces pouvoirs // Journal Officiel de l'État français. N°112. 22 avril 1941
71. Décret du 30 juin 1941 attribuant à certains préfets les pouvoirs des préfets régionaux et portant division du territoire pour l'exercice de ces pouvoirs // Journal Officiel. 01.07.1941. [Available from]
72. Décret n° 2012-780 du 24 mai 2012 relatif aux attributions du ministre de la réforme de l'État, de la décentralisation et de la fonction publique. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000025915955&dateTexte=&categorieLien=id> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
73. Décision No. 2014-709 DC du 15 janvier 2015 du Conseil constitutionnel. [Available from].
URL: https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/sites/default/files/as/root/bank_mm/decisions/2014709dc/2014709dc_ccc.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023)
74. Deux nouveaux projets de coopération inter-régionale cofinancés par le MEAE en perspective. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.regions-francophones.org/actualite/14616/5606-deux-nouveaux-projets-de-cooperation-inter-regionale-cofinances-par-le-meae-en-perspective.htm> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
75. Fonds d'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales (Faceco). [Available from].

URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/politique-etrangere-de-la-france/action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales/article/fonds-d-action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales-faceco> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

76. Guide juridique de l'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales / élaboré par P. Pougnaud. Paris: La documentation française, 2019. 146 p.

[Available from].

URL:

https://www.europedirectpyrenees.eu/wpcontent/uploads/guide_juridique_aect.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023)

77. Guide opérationnel de la coopération décentralisée /

élaboré par P. Pougnaud. Paris: CNCD, 2020. 128 p. [Available from].

URL:

https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/cncd-guide_operationnel_v4g_interactive_cle87d351.pdf1941 (accessed: 22.12.2023)

78. La Commission Nationale de la Coopération Décentralisée (CNCD). [Available from].

URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/politique-etrangere-de-la-france/action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales/la-commission-nationale-de-la-cooperation-decentralisee-cncd/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

79. La Constitution du 4 octobre 1958. [Available from].

URL: <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/la-constitution/la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958/texte-integral-de-la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958-en-vigueur.5074.html> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

80. La délégation pour l'Action extérieure des collectivités territoriales. [Available from].

URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/politique-etrangere-de-la-france/action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales/la-commission-nationale->

de-la-cooperation-decentralisee-cncd/article/la-delegation-pour-l-action-exterieure-des-collectivites-territoriales-daect (accessed: 22.12.2023)

81.L'aide publique au développement des collectivités territoriales. Rapport annuel 2021. Paris: Ministère de l'Europe et des affaires étrangères. 2021. 56 p. [Available from].

URL:

https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/rapport_apd_2022_sur_montants_2021__cle0c93af-1.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023)

82.La coopération décentralisée. Ambassade de France au Sénégal. [Available from] URL: <https://sn.ambafrance.org/XXX-3194> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

83.Lajudie B. Réforme régionale: un enjeu pour la croissance. 11.07.2014. [Available from].

URL: <https://www.strategie.gouv.fr/publications/reforme-regionale-un-enjeu-croissance> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

84.La politique de cohésion économique: comment est-elle née? [Available from].

URL: <http://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/L-Europe-s-engage/pour-la-cohesion-economique-et-sociale/Comment-est-elle-nee> (accessed: 10.12.2022)

85.La réforme des collectivités territoriales. 24.12.2009. [Available from] URL: <http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/sections/reforme-collectivites/questions-plus-frequentes> (accessed: 05.11.2022)

86.Le président du Conseil Régional de la Région Sud, Renaud Muselier, en déplacement à Djibouti. 09.11.2022. [Available from].

URL: <https://dj.ambafrance.org/Le-president-du-Conseil-Regional-de-la-Region-Sud-Renaud-Muselier-en> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

87.Le Sénat rejette la création du Haut conseil des territoires. 03.10.2013. [Available from].

URL: <https://www.maire-info.com/decentralisation/le-senat-rejette-la-creation-du-haut-conseil-des-territoires-article-16468> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

88. Lebranchu M. Il est temps de moderniser l'action publique territoriale. 11.04.2013. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.gouvernement.fr/gouvernement/marylise-lebranchu-il-est-temps-de-moderniser-l-action-publique-territoriale> (accessed: 05.10.2019)
89. Les antennes des autorités locales et régionales françaises à Bruxelles. [Available from].
URL: <https://ue.delegfrance.org/les-antennes-des-autorites-locales> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
90. Les finances des régions: l'autonomie à un tournant? [Available From]
URL: <http://www.vie-publique.fr/actualite/dossier/elections-regionales-2010/finances-regions-autonomie-tournant.html> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
91. Liste des correspondants pour la coopération non gouvernementale dans les postes diplomatiques. Version 2022. [Available from].
URL: https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/mise_a_jour_2022_-_correspondants_pour_la_cooperation_non_gouvernementale_cle884d8f.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023)
92. Liste des territoires. Mission opérationnelle transfrontalière. [Available from]
URL: <http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/bdd-territoires/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
93. Livre blanc. Diplomatie et territoires. Pour une action extérieure démultipliée. Paris: La documentation française, 2017. 222 p.
94. Loi constitutionnelle n°2003-276 du 28 mars 2003 relative à l'organisation décentralisée de la République. [Available from].
URL: http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do;jsessionid=450BBD77B78EA2258C982B83A87B6AAD.tpdjo04v_3?cidTexte=JORFTEXT0000000000601882&dateTexte= (accessed: 22.12.2023)

95. Loi organique n° 2003-704 du 1er août 2003 relative à l'expérimentation par les collectivités territoriales. [Available from].
 URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000000239925>
 (accessed: 22.12.2023)
96. Loi organique n° 2014-125 du 14 février 2014 interdisant le cumul de fonctions exécutives locales avec le mandat de député ou de sénateur. [Available from].
 URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000028600521>
 (accessed: 22.12.2023)
97. Loi organique n° 2021-467 du 19 avril 2021 relative à la simplification des expérimentations mises en œuvre sur le fondement du quatrième alinéa de l'article 72 de la Constitution. [Available from].
 URL: <https://www.vie-publique.fr/loi/275530-loi-19-avril-2021-experimentations-locales-differenciation-territoriale> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
98. Loi de réforme des collectivités territoriales. Décision n° 2010-618 DC du 9 décembre 2010. Le Conseil Constitutionnel. [Available from].
 URL: <https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/actualites/communiqu%C3%A9/decision-n-2010-618-dc-du-9-decembre-2010-communiqu%C3%A9-de-presse#:~:text=9%20d%C3%A9cembre%202010-,D%C3%A9cision%20n%C2%B0%202010%2D618%20DC%20du,d%C3%A9cembre%202010%20%2D%20Communiqu%C3%A9%20de%20presse&text=L%209%20d%C3%A9cembre%202010%2C%20par,et%20plus%20de%20soixante%20s%C3%A9nateurs.> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
99. Loi du 19 avril 1941 No. 1768 instituant des préfets régionaux // Journal officiel de l'État français. № 112. 22 avril 1941. [Available from].
 URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000000571797>
 (accessed: 22.12.2023)
100. Loi n°51-46 du 11 janvier 1951 relative à l'enseignement des langues et dialectes locaux *Loi Dexonne*. [Available from].

- URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000000886638/>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
101. Loi n°82-213 du 2 mars 1982 relative aux droits et libertés des communes, des départements et des régions. [Available from] URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT0000008880039>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
102. Loi n° 92-125 du 6 février 1992 relative à l'administration territoriale de la République. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000000722113/>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
103. Loi n°95-115 du 4 février 1995 d'orientation pour l'aménagement et le développement du territoire. [Available from].
URL:
<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000005617704&dateTexte=vig>
104. Loi n° 96-142 du 21 février 1996 relative à la partie législative du code général des collectivités territoriales (1). [Available from] URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/LEGIARTI000006340192/1996-02-24/>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
105. Loi n°2004-809 du 13 août 2004 relative aux libertés et responsabilités locales. [Available from].
URL:
<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000804607&dateTexte=> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
106. Loi n° 2007-147 du 2 février 2007 relative à l'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales et de leurs groupements. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000000820338/>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)

107. Loi n° 2009-1673 du 30 décembre 2009 de finances pour 2010. [Available from].
URL:
<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000021557902&dateTexte=> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
108. Loi n° 2010-1563 du 16 décembre 2010 de réforme des collectivités territoriales. [Available from].
URL:
<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000023239624&dateTexte=&categorieLien=id> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
109. Loi n° 2014-58 du 27 janvier 2014 de modernisation de l'action publique territoriale et d'affirmation des métropoles.
[Available from] URL:
<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000028526298/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
110. Loi n° 2014-773 du 7 juillet 2014 d'orientation et de programmation relative à la politique de développement et de solidarité internationale. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000029210384/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
111. Loi n° 2015-29 du 16 janvier 2015 relative à la délimitation des régions, aux élections régionales et départementales et modifiant le calendrier électoral. [Available from]
URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000030109622/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
112. Loi n° 2015-991 du 7 août 2015 portant nouvelle organisation territoriale de la République. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000030985460/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

113. Loi n° 2019-816 du 2 août 2019 relative aux compétences de la Collectivité européenne d'Alsace. [Available from] URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000038872957/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
114. Loi n° 2021-1031 du 4 août 2021 de programmation relative au développement solidaire et à la lutte contre les inégalités mondiales. [Available from]. URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000043898536/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
115. Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques. [Available from]. URL: <https://www.insee.fr/fr/metadonnees/definition/c2112> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
116. Pour ma région. 11.02.2010. [Available from]. URL: <http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/sections/reforme-collectivites/que-va-t-elle-changer/pour-ma-region> (accessed: 15.10.2019)
117. Pour simplifier, ne fallait-il pas commencer par supprimer un échelon? 21.12.2009. [Available from]. URL: [https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/content/search?SearchText=sereinement%20de%20non%20mars&filter\[\]=attr_topics_k:Collectivit%C3%A9s%20territoriales&activeFacets\[rubric/topics:Th%C3%A9matiques\]=Collectivit%C3%A9s%20territoriales](https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/content/search?SearchText=sereinement%20de%20non%20mars&filter[]=attr_topics_k:Collectivit%C3%A9s%20territoriales&activeFacets[rubric/topics:Th%C3%A9matiques]=Collectivit%C3%A9s%20territoriales) (accessed: 22.12.2023)
118. Présentation du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères de Développement international. Loi d'orientation et de programmation «Politique de développement et de solidarité internationale» en matière d'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales: modifications et conséquences. [Available from]. URL: www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/FIMG/Fpdf/FPPT_Loi_Orientation_25_nove

- mbre_2014__cle08df6f-1.pdf&clen=697066&chunk=true (accessed: 10.12.2022)
119. Projet de loi portant nouvelle organisation territoriale de la République, n° 636, enregistré à la Présidence du Sénat le 18 juin 2014. [Available from] URL: <https://www.senat.fr/leg/pjl13-636.html> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
120. Projet de loi relatif à la délimitation des régions, aux élections régionales et départementales et modifiant le calendrier électoral (Procédure accélérée), n°635, enregistré à la Présidence du Sénat le 18 juin 2014. [Available from] URL: <https://www.senat.fr/leg/pjl13-635.html>
121. Proposition de loi No. 882 portant suppression de la région Hauts-de-France et rétablissant la Picardie et le Nord-Pas-de-Calais comme régions de plein exercice. [Available from] URL: https://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/dyn/16/textes/116b0882_proposition-loi (accessed: 22.12.2023)
122. Quelles sont les nouvelles compétences transférées aux collectivités en 2004? 03.12.2009. [Available from]. URL: <http://www.vie-publique.fr/decouverte-institutions/institutions/collectivites-territoriales/pouvoirs/quelles-sont-nouvelles-competences-transferees-aux-collectivites-2004.html> (accessed: 15.11.2019)
123. Qui gère les fonds européens? [Available from]. URL: <https://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/fr/programmes-europeens-2014-2020/qui-gere-les-programmes-europeens#:~:text=L'Etat%20est%20co-responsable,des%20programmes%20et%20des%20fonds> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
124. Rapport de la Commission de rénovation et de déontologie de la vie publique présidée par L. Jospin. [Available from].

- URL: http://www.liberation.fr/politiques/2012/11/09/la-commission-jospin-propose-de-limiter-le-cumul-des-mandats-pour-les-ministres_859295
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
125. Rapport de la Commission pour la libération de la croissance française. 28.01.2008. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.vie-publique.fr/rapport/29532-rapport-de-la-commission-pour-la-liberation-de-la-croissance-francaise> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
126. Rapport du Comité pour la réforme des collectivités locales au Président de la République en date du 5 mars 2009. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000020347348>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
127. Référendum du 7 avril 2013 concernant l'Alsace. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Elections/Les-resultats/Locales/Referendum-du-7-avril-2013-concernant-l-Alsace> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
128. Saisine par 60 députés. 22.11.2010. [Available from] URL: http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/root/bank/download/cc-2010618dc_saisinedeputes.pdf
(accessed: 22.12.2023)

**Documents of the French regional authorities relating
to territorial cooperation**

129. Malvy M., Balligand J.-P. Haut Conseil des territoires: quels contours? 11.09.2012. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.lagazettedescommunes.com/128277/haut-conseil-des-territoires-quels-contours/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
130. Occitanie Europe. Nos membres. [Available from].
URL: <https://occitanie-europe.eu/membres-2/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
131. Rapport d'activité 2020. Occitanie Europe. [Available from].

URL:

https://occitanie-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Occitanie_RA21_def.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023)

132. Rapport du Congrès d'Alsace. «Vers une nouvelle collectivité territoriale: la collectivité territoriale d'Alsace». 24.11.2012. [Available from].

URL:

http://www.regionalsace.eu/sites/default/files/fichiers/actualite/rapport_congres_las_cut_0.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023)

133. Un projet pilote «10 régions, 1000 initiatives locales d'alimentation responsable et durable». 10.12.2019. [Available from].

URL: <https://regions-france.org/les-commissions-thematiques/les-strategies-internationales/communaute-pratiques-gouvernance-territoriale-securite-transition-alimentaire/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

134. Viola A. De quoi la Commission nationale de la coopération décentralisée est-elle le nom? // Pouvoirs locaux. 2022. № 120. [Available from].

URL: <https://www.revuepouvoirslocaux.fr/fr/article/de-quoi-la-commission-nationale-de-la-cooperation-decentralisee-est-elle-le-nom-3832#no6> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

135. Viola A. L'actualité de la coopération décentralisée en France // Pouvoirs locaux. 2019. №118. [Available from].

URL: <https://www.revuepouvoirslocaux.fr/fr/article/l-actualite-de-la-cooperation-decentralisee-en-france-3788> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

Programmes of French political parties and statements of the main candidates for the French presidency

136. 15 propositions pour une démocratie territoriale plus juste et plus efficace. [Available from].

URL: <http://www.defendonsnosterritoires.fr/article/15-propositions-pour-une-democratie-territoriale-plus-juste-et-plus-efficace>

(accessed: 05.12.2019)

137. Après le vote en Alsace, Hollande doit s'arrêter là. 07.04.2013. [Available from].
 URL: <https://www.humanite.fr/-/parti-de-gauche/apres-le-vote-en-alsace-hollande-doit-sarreter-la-parti-de-gauche> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
138. Brivet X., Bonnin L. Ce que propose Marine Le Pen pour les collectivités territoriales. 20.04.2022. [Available from].
 URL: <https://www.maire-info.com/ce-que-propose-marine-le-pen-pour-les-collectivites-territoriales-article2-26339> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
139. Discours de Marine Le Pen en Alsace, 24 février 2018. [Available from]
 URL: <https://rassemblementnational.fr/discours/discours-de-marine-le-pen-a-kintzheim/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
140. Élisabeth Guigou: «La contre-réforme territoriale est une régression démocratique». 22.11.2010. [Available from].
 URL: <http://www.parti-socialiste.fr/articles/elisabeth-guigou-la-contre-reforme-territoriale-est-une-regression-democratique> (accessed: 20.02.2022)
141. Emmanuel Macron. Avec vous. [Available from]
 URL: <https://avecvous.fr/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Emmanuel-Macron-Avec-Vous-24-pages.pdf> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
142. Éric Zemmour. Pour que la France reste la France. [Available from].
 URL:
https://assets.nationbuilder.com/themes/61c071ce4764e8b1483d1a8c/attachments/original/1648220408/programme_eric_zemmour_presidentielle_2022.pdf?1648220408 (accessed: 22.12.2023)
143. Gaspard R. Anne Hidalgo: «Je proposerai dès l'ouverture de la législature une grande loi de décentralisation». 07.04.2022.
 [Available from]

- URL: <https://www.lagazettedescommunes.com/800246/anne-hidalgo-je-proposerai-des-louverture-de-la-legislature-une-grande-loi-de-decentralisation/>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
144. Hauss J. Sortie de l'Alsace du Grand-Est: Emmanuel Macron favorable à une «réflexion». 12.04.2022. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.francebleu.fr/infos/politique/sortie-de-l-alsace-du-grand-est-emmanuel-macron-favorable-a-une-reflexion-1649794798> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
145. Hollande F. Réformer les territoires pour réformer la France. 02.06.2014. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.leparisien.fr/politique/reforme-territoriale-la-tribune-de-francois-hollande-en-integralite-02-06-2014-3891649.php>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
146. Le Conseil unique d'Alsace est une arnaque. 25.12.2011. [Available from]
URL: <http://www.lepartidegauche.fr/viedegauche/article/4722-le-conseil-unique-dalsace-est-une-arnaque> (accessed: 10.10.2019)
147. Le Pen M. Je veux l'Alsace française, je vote NON! Référendum 07.04.2013. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.frontnational.com/je-veux-lalsace-francaise-je-vote-non-referendum-7-avril/> (accessed: 20.02.2017)
148. Mélenchon ne digère pas la «différenciation» de l'Alsace. 01.07.2019. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.lalsace.fr/politique/2019/07/01/chuchotements-melenchon-ne-digere-pas-la-differenciation-de-l-alsace> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
149. Morthenas A. Contre le projet de fusion territoriale. 26.02.2013. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.lepartidegauche.fr/viedegauche/article/partis-gauche-d-alsace-67-68-contre-le-projet-fusion-territoriale-21049> (accessed: 10.10.2019)

150. Pour une république sociale et écologique: reconstruire le triptyque communes – départements – État. Note 20. Janvier 2022. – Intérêt général. La Fabrique de l'alternative. [Available from].
URL: <https://interetgeneral.net/publications/pdf/20.pdf> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
151. Valérie Pécresse. Bâtir une nouvelle France décentralisée. [Available from]
URL: <https://valeriepecresse.fr/projet/decentralisation/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

**Speeches, interviews, reports, statements of the French
and European politicians and trade unionists**

152. Audition de Son Exc. M. Philippe Voiry, ambassadeur pour les commissions intergouvernementales, la coopération et les relations transfrontalières. 11.03.2021. [Available from].
URL: <https://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/15/les-groupes-d-etudes/les-comptes-rendus/comptes-rendus-ge-statut-des-travailleurs-mobiles-en-europe/audition-de-son-exc.-m.-philippe-voiry-ambassadeur-pour-les-commissions-intergouvernementales-la-cooperation-et-les-relations-transfrontalieres> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
153. Boudineau I. Rapporteuse. – Mécanisme pour l'interconnection en Europe. CDR 3598/2018. [Available from].
URL:
<https://cor.europa.eu/fr/our-work/Pages/OpinionTimeline.aspx?opId=CDR-3598-2018> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
154. Déclaration de M. Edouard Philippe, premier ministre suite à la rencontre avec les élus d'Alsace, 29 octobre 2018. [Available from].
URL:
https://www.gouvernement.fr/upload/media/default/0001/01/2018_10_declarati on_de_m._edouard_philippe_premier_ministre_-_rencontre_avec_les_elus_dalsace_-_29.10.2018.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023)

155. Déclaration de M. François Hollande, Président de la République, sur la réforme des collectivités locales, à Paris le 5 octobre 2012. [Available from]
URL: <https://www.vie-publique.fr/discours/186022-declaration-de-m-francois-hollande-president-de-la-republique-sur-la> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
156. Déclaration de M. Nicolas Sarkozy, Président de la République, sur la réforme des collectivités territoriales, à Saint-Dizier (Haute-Marne) le 20 octobre 2009. [Available from]
URL: <https://www.elysee.fr/nicolas-sarkozy/2009/10/20/declaration-de-m-nicolas-sarkozy-president-de-la-republique-sur-la-reforme-des-collectivites-territoriales-a-saint-dizier-haute-marne-le-20-octobre-2009> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
157. Decoster F. Rapporteur. [Available from].
URL:
<https://memberspage.cor.europa.eu/Search/Details/Person/2029189?isMinimal=False&onlyActiveMandate=True> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
158. Discours de Pierre Moscovici, Ministre de l'Économie et des Finances, Conférence de presse pour le lancement de la Banque publique d'investissement. 17.10.2012. [Available from].
URL:
<http://proxy-pubminefi.diffusion.finances.gouv.fr/pub/document/18/13365.pdf> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
159. Ledoux V. Rapport au premier-ministre et au ministre de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères «Ouvrir nos territoires à la priorité africaine de la France du citoyen au Chef de l'État». 31.07.2019. [Available from].
URL:
<https://agir-ladroiteconstructive.fr/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/RAPPORT-LEDOUX.pdf> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
160. Lettre ouverte de J.-M. Mailly à M. François Hollande. 06.12.2012. [Available from].

URL: <http://static.acteurspublics.fr/all/uploads/file/2013/01/10/lettre-jean-claude-mailly.pdf> (accessed: 20.02.2022)

161. Wielen J., Mosler-Tornstrom G. La démocratie locale et régionale en France. Le Congrès des pouvoirs locaux et régionaux. 30e session. Strasbourg, 22-24 mars 2016. [Available from].

URL: <https://rm.coe.int/1680719445> (accessed: 22.12.2023)

Literature

Monographs

162. Akimov Y.G., Kostyuk R.V., Chernov I.V. France in the world order of the early XXIst century. St. Petersburg: Publishing house of St. Petersburg State University, 2007. 198 p. [Акимов Ю.Г., Костюк Р.В., Чернов И.В. Франция в мировом порядке начала XXI века. СПб: Изд-во С.-Петербургского университета, 2007. 198 с.] (in Russian)
163. Bogatyreva O.N. European models of regionalism. Ekaterinburg: Publishing house of Ural University, 2018. 168 p. [Богатырева О.Н. Европейские модели регионализма. Екатеринбург: Изд-во Уральского университета, 2018. 168 с.] (in Russian)
164. Busygina I.M. Political regionalism: textbook. M.: ROSSPEN, 2006. 280 p. [Бусыгина И.М. Политическая регионалистика: учеб. пособие. М.: РОССПЭН, 2006. 280 с.] (in Russian)
165. Busygina I.M. Strategies of European regions in the context of integration and globalisation. M: Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Association of European Studies, 2002. 75 p. [Бусыгина И.М. Стратегии европейских регионов в контексте интеграции и глобализации. М: Институт Европы РАН. Ассоциация европейских исследований, 2002. 75 с.] (in Russian)
166. Gromoglasova E.S. Theory and practice of political governance in

- the European Union. M.: IMEMO RAS, 2009. 116 p. [Громогласова Е.С. Теория и практика политического управления в Европейском союзе. М.: ИМЭМО РАН, 2009. 116 с.] (in Russian)
167. European Union. Fundamental Acts in the wording of the Lisbon Treaty with commentaries / Edited by S.Y. Kashkin; author's commentary: S.Y. Kashkin, A.O. Chetverikov; transl. by A.O. Chetverikov: A.O. Chetverikov. M.: INFRA-M, 2011. 696 p. [Европейский союз. Основопологающие акты в редакции Лиссабонского договора с комментариями / Отв. ред.: С.Ю. Кашкин; авт. коммент.: С.Ю. Кашкин, А.О. Четвериков; пер.: А.О. Четвериков. М.: ИНФРА-М, 2011. 696 с.] (in Russian)
168. Eremina N.V. Regional policy of the European Union. St. Petersburg: School of International Relations, St. Petersburg State University, 2010. 64 p. [Еремина Н.В. Региональная политика Европейского Союза. СПб: Факультет международных отношений СПбГУ, 2010. 64 с.] (in Russian)
169. Zvereva T.V. Foreign policy of modern France. Moscow: Canon+, 2014. 343 p. [Зверева Т.В. Внешняя политика современной Франции. М.: Канон+, 2014. 343 с.] (in Russian)
170. Ivanov I.D. Europe of regions. Moscow: International Relations, 1998. 192 p. [Иванов И.Д. Европа регионов. М.: Международные отношения, 1998. 192 с.] (in Russian)
171. Kostyuk R.V., Vlasov N.A. Foreign policy of Germany and France of the XXth – early XXIst century. Comparative Analysis. St. Petersburg: Publishing house of St. Petersburg State University, 2011. 44 p. [Костюк Р.В., Власов Н.А. Внешняя политика Германии и Франции XX – начала XXI века. Сравнительный анализ. СПб: Изд-во С.-Петербургского университета, 2011. 44 с.] (in Russian)
172. Mezhevich N.M. Economic analysis of the region. St. Petersburg: Publishing house of St. Petersburg State University, 2007. 166 p. [Межевич

- Н.М. Экономический анализ региона. СПб: Изд-во С.-Петербургского университета, 2007. 166 с.] (in Russian)
173. Nasyrov I.R. States and regions in the system of modern international relations. Kazan: Tisby University of Management, 2011. 400 p. [Насыров И.Р. Государства и регионы в системе современных международных отношений. Казань: Ун-т упр. Тисби, 2011. 400 с.] (in Russian)
174. Nasyrov I.R. International cooperation of regions: world practice and experience of Tatarstan. Kazan: Kazan State University, 2007. 329 p. [Насыров И.Р. Международное сотрудничество регионов: мировая практика и опыт Татарстана. Казань: Казанский государственный университет, 2007. 329 с.] (in Russian)
175. Obichkina E.O. Foreign Policy of France from de Gaulle to Sarkozy (1940-2012). Moscow: Aspect Press, 2012. 382 p. [Обичкина Е.О. Внешняя политика Франции от де Голля до Саркози (1940-2012). М.: Аспект Пресс, 2012. 382 с.] (in Russian)
176. Obichkina E.O. France in search of foreign policy orientations in the post-bipolar world. Moscow: MGIMO of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, 2003. 487 p. [Обичкина Е.О. Франция в поисках внешнеполитических ориентиров в постбиполярном мире. М.: МГИМО МИД России, 2003. 487 с.]
177. Pavlova M.A. Regional policy of France. Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Institute of World Economy and International Relations. Moscow: Nauka, 1974. 271 p. [Павлова М.А. Региональная политика Франции. АН СССР. Ин-т мировой экономики и междунар. отношений. М.: Наука, 1974. 271 с.] (in Russian]
178. Rubinsky Y. I. The signs of the time. Vol. 3. France on new frontiers: in 3 vol. / Federal State Budgetary Institution of Science Institute of Europe RAS. Moscow: Institute of Europe RAS, 2018. 382 p. [Рубинский Ю. И. Приметы времени. Т. 3. Франция на новых рубежах: в 3-х т. / Федеральное

- госбюджетное учреждение науки Ин-т Европы РАН. М.: Ин-т Европы РАН, 2018. 382 с.] (in Russian)
179. Smirnov V.P. France in the XXth century. Moscow: Drofa, 2001. 352 p. [Смирнов В.П. Франция в XX веке. М.: Дрофа, 2001. 352 с.] (in Russian)
180. Modern France: between anxieties and hopes / Edited by M.V. Klinova, A.K. Kudryavtsev, P.P. Timofeev. M.: Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS, 2022. 256 p. [Современная Франция: между тревогами и надеждами / Отв. ред.: М.В. Клинова, А.К. Кудрявцев, П.П. Тимофеев. М.: ИМЭМО РАН, 2022. 256 с.] (in Russian)
181. Tupikin A.P., Shilov V.S. Centre and Regions in France and Russia: (experience of comparative study). Russian Academy of State Service under the President of the Russian Federation. Moscow: Publishing house of RAGS, 2008. 307 p. [Тупикин А.П., Шилов В.С. Центр и регионы во Франции и России: (опыт сравнительного исследования). Российская академия государственной службы при Президенте Российской Федерации. М.: Изд-во РАГС, 2008. 307 с.] (in Russian)
182. France. In search of new ways / Ed. by Y. I. Rubinsky. Moscow: Ves' Mir, 2007. 621 p. [Франция. В поисках новых путей / Отв. ред.: Ю.И. Рубинский. М.: Весь Мир, 2007. 621 с.] (in Russian)
183. France on the threshold of change: economy and politics at the beginning of the XXIst century: a collection of articles based on the results of the All-Russian scientific conference (Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS, 7 December 2015) / Edited by A.V. Kuznetsov, M.V. Klinova, A.K. Kudryavtsev, P.P. Timofeev. M.: Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS, 2016. 284 p. [Франция на пороге перемен: экономика и политика в начале XXI века: сборник статей по итогам Всероссийской научной конференции (ИМЭМО РАН, 7 декабря 2015 года) / Отв. ред.: А.В. Кузнецов, М.В. Клинова, А.К. Кудрявцев,

- П.П. Тимофеев. – М.: ИМЭМО РАН, 2016. 284 с.] (in Russian)
184. Regional policy of the EU countries / Centre for European Studies Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS; Ed. by A.V. Kuznetsov. М.: Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS, 2009. 230 p. [Региональная политика стран ЕС / Центр европейских исследований ИМЭМО РАН; Отв. ред. А.В. Кузнецов. М.: ИМЭМО РАН, 2009. 230 с.] (in Russian)
185. Shadursky V.G. Foreign Policy of France (1945-2002): Textbook. Minsk, Publishing house of BelSU. 2004. 175 p. [Шадурский В.Г. Внешняя политика Франции (1945-2002): Учебное пособие. Минск, Изд-во БГУ. 2004. 175 с.] (in Russian)
186. Yarovoy G.O. Regionalism and Transboundary Cooperation in Europe. St. Petersburg: Norma. 2007. 280 p. [Яровой Г.О. Регионализм и трансграничное сотрудничество в Европе. СПб: Норма. 2007. 280 с.] (in Russian)
187. Blanchard G., Maillard M. Pour une meilleure utilisation des fonds européens en Bretagne. Rennes: CESER de Bretagne, Juin 2012. 309 p.
188. Castric O. Quel partenariat pour les régions de l'Union européenne? Rennes: Apogée, 2002. 424 p.
189. Duchacek I.D., Latouche D., Stevenson G. (eds.). Perforated Sovereignities and International Relations: Trans-Sovereign Contacts and Subnational Governments. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1988. 234 p.
190. Duchacek I.D. The Territorial Dimension of Politics: Within, among, and across Nations. Boulder, CO: Westview, 1986. 328 p.
191. Dumont G.-F. Les régions et la régionalisation en France. Paris: Ellipses, 2004. 175 p.
192. Faure C. Le projet culturel de Vichy. Folklore et révolution nationale. 1940-1944. Lyon, Paris: Presses universitaires de Lyon, Presses du CNRS, 1989. 336 p.

193. Hocking B. *Localizing Foreign Policy: Non-Central Governments and Multilayered Diplomacy*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993. 254 p.
194. Keating M., Aldecoa F. *Paradiplomacy in Action. The Foreign Relations of Subnational Governments*. London: Routledge, 1999. 240 p.
195. Maré C. *La coopération décentralisée*. Paris: Studyrama, 2012. 172 p.
196. Martinat P. *Les Régions, clefs de la décentralisation*. Paris: LGDJ, 2010. 224 p.
197. Nay O. *La région, une institution. La représentation, le pouvoir et la règle dans l'espace régional*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997. 337 p.
198. Paquin S. *Paradiplomatie et relations internationales. Théorie des stratégies internationales des régions face à la mondialisation*. Bruxelles: Éditions P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2004. 189 p.
199. Tulard M.-J. *La région*. Paris: LGDJ, 2008. 128 p.

Scientific articles

200. Akimov Y.G. French Canadian / Québécois Nationalism and the Beginning of Quebec Paradiplomacy // *The Herald of the Diplomatic Academy of the MFA of Russia. Russia and the World*. 2020. № 2 (24). Pp.225-238. [Акимов Ю.Г. Франко-канадский / квебекский национализм и зарождение квебекской парадипломатии // *Вестник дипломатической академии МИД России. Россия и мир*. 2020. № 2 (24). С. 225–238] (in Russian)
201. Biryukov S.V. Germany – France: the Dispute over the «Europe of the Regions» // *World Economy and International Relations*. 2008. № 10. Pp. 42-50. [Бирюков С.В. Германия – Франция: спор о «Европе регионов» // *Мировая экономика и международные отношения*. 2008. №10. С. 42-50] (in Russian)
202. Busygina I.M. Regionalisation in the countries of Western Europe: Great Britain and France in comparative perspective // *Kazan Federalist*. 2007, №1-2. 44-52. [Бусыгина И.М. Регионализация в странах Западной Европы:

- Великобритания и Франция в сравнительной перспективе // Казанский федералист. 2007, №1-2. С. 44-52] [Available from]
 URL: <http://www.kazanfed.ru/publications/kazanfederalist/n21-22/4/> (accessed: 20.02.2022) (in Russian)
203. Busygina I.M. European and Russian regions: survival strategies in the era of globalization. 18.02.2005. [Бусыгина И.М. Европейские и российские регионы: стратегии выживания в эпоху глобализации 18.02.2005.] [Available from] URL: <http://www.globalculture.ru/globalizacija-i-kultura/irina-busygina-evropejskie-i-rossijskie-regiony.html> (date of access: 22.12.2023) (in Russian)
204. Busygina I.M. Structural policy and the role of regions in the European Union // Politics and economy in the regional dimension / International Institute for Humanities and Political Studies, Centre for Research in Eastern Europe at Brem. East Europe Research Centre at Bremen University; ed. by V. Klimanov, N. Zubanova. Klimanov, N. Zubarevich. (Studia politica / ed. by G. Luchterhandt-Mikhaleva and S. Ryzhenkov; vol. 3). Moscow: IGPI; St. Petersburg: Letnyi Sad, 2000. Pp. 31-41. [Бусыгина И.М. Структурная политика и роль регионов в Европейском Союзе // Политика и экономика в региональном измерении / Междунар. ин-т гуманитар.-полит. исслед., Центр исслед. Вост. Европы при Брем. ун-те.; под ред. В. Климанова, Н. Зубаревич. (Studia politica / ред.: Г. Люхтерхандт-Михалева и С. Рыженков; вып. 3). М.: ИГПИ; СПб: Летний сад, 2000. С. 31-41] (in Russian)
205. Viktorova E.V., Petrenko D.A. Activity of non-state organisations in the integration policy of France on the example of the Occitania region // Bulletin RUDN. Journal of Political Science. 2018. Vol. 20. №1. Pp. 69-75. [Викторова Е.В., Петренко Д.А. Деятельность негосударственных организаций в интеграционной политике Франции на примере региона Окситания //

- Вестник РУДН. Серия: Политология. 2018. Т. 20. №1. С. 69-75] (in Russian)
206. Goffe N.V. Social component of regional policy in the West // *World Economy and International Relations*. 2003. №4. Pp. 63-70. [Гоффе Н.В. Социальная составляющая региональной политике на Западе // *Мировая экономика и международные отношения*. 2003. №4. С. 63-70] (in Russian)
207. Dementiev A.N. Legislative aspects of territorial reforms at the local level in France and in Russia // *Municipal Property: Economics, Law, Management*. 2020. №4. Pp. 33-40. [Дементьев А.Н. Законодательные аспекты территориальных реформ на местном уровне во Франции и в России // *Муниципальное имущество: экономика, право, управление*. 2020. №4. С. 33-40] (in Russian)
208. Dementiev A.N. On the legal conditions for comparing territorial reforms at the local level in France and Russia // *Science. Society. State*. 2020. Vol. 8. №2 (30). Pp. 74-82. [Дементьев А.Н. О правовых условиях сравнения территориальных реформ на местном уровне во Франции и в России // *Наука. Общество. Государство*. 2020. Т. 8. №2 (30). С. 74-82.] (in Russian)
209. Domoratskaya E.I., Maklakov V.V. Regional policy in France // *Pravovedenie* 1979. №6. Pp. 72-77. [Доморацкая Э.И., Маклаков В.В. Региональная политика во Франции // *Правоведение*. 1979. №6. С. 72-77] (in Russian)
210. Eremina N.V. Paradiplomacy: a new voice of regions in the modern diplomatic concert? (On the example of Scotland and Wales) // *World Economy and International Relations*. 2012. №6. Pp. 42-51. [Еремина Н.В. Парадипломатия: новый голос регионов в современном дипломатическом концерте? (На примере Шотландии и Уэльса) // *Мировая экономика и международные отношения*. 2012. №6. С. 42-51]. (in Russian)

211. Eremina N.V. Regionalism and regionalisation as the basis of European integration // *Social Sciences*. 2010. № 3. Pp. 138-149. [Еремина Н.В. Регионализм и регионализация как основа европейской интеграции // *Общественные науки*. 2010. № 3. С. 138-149] (in Russian)
212. Eremina N.V. Regional political culture as a factor of state development: integration versus disintegration // *Vestnik SPbSU. Series 6. Philosophy. Cultural studies. Political science. Law. International Relations*. 2011. № 3. Pp. 70-78. [Еремина Н.В. Региональная политическая культура как фактор государственного развития: интеграция versus дезинтеграция // *Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета. Серия 6. Философия. Культурология. Политология. Право. Международные отношения*. 2011. № 3. С. 70-78] (in Russian)
213. Zhukov I.K. Regionalisation as an objective «challenge» to the Russian political system // *Political Expertise: POLITEX*. 2010. Vol. 6. № 4. Pp. 152-159. [Жуков И.К. Регионализация как объективный «вызов» российской политической системе // *Политическая экспертиза: Политэкс*. 2010. Том 6. №4. С. 152-159] (in Russian)
214. Zakharova M.V. Modern French regionalism // *Electronic scientific journal «Science. Society. State»*. 2016. Vol. 4. № 3 [Захарова М.В. Современный французский регионализм // *Электронный научный журнал «Наука. Общество. Государство»*. 2016. Т. 4. № 3] [Available from] URL: https://esj.pnzgu.ru/files/esj.pnzgu.ru/zakharova_mv_16_3_08.pdf (accessed: 22.12.2023) (in Russian)
215. Zonova T.V. Paradiplomacy of European regions // *All Europe: monthly online edition*. 2011. №4 (54). [Зонова Т.В. Парадипломатия европейских регионов // *Вся Европа: ежемесячное интернет-издание*. 2011. №4 (54). [Available from] URL: <http://www.amberbridge.org/article?id=106> (accessed: 22.12.2023) (in Russian)

216. Zueva K.P., Timofeev P.P. Foreign policy of the President of France E. Macron: pragmatism behind the mask of atlantism? // *World Economy and International Relations*. 2018. Vol. 62. №12. Pp. 83-91. [Зуева К.П., Тимофеев П.П. Внешняя политика президента Франции Э. Макрона: прагматизм под маской атлантизма? // *Мировая экономика и международные отношения*. 2018. Т. 62. №12. С. 83–91] (in Russian)
217. Ivannikov I.V., Pakhorukov K.I. Problems of UN peacekeeping activities and the role of France in resolving the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire. Côte d'Ivoire // *Political Expertise: Politex*. 2013. Vol. 9. №2. Pp. 24-40. [Иванников И.В., Пахоруков К.И. Проблемы миротворческой деятельности ООН и роль Франции в урегулировании конфликта в Кот д'Ивуаре // *Политическая экспертиза: Политэкс*. 2013. Т. 9. №2. С. 24-40] (in Russian)
218. Kostyuk R.V. Foreign policy of François Hollande: changes within the continuation // *Contemporary foreign policy of the Left* // Edited by R.V. Kostyuk. St. Petersburg: Poltorak, 2014. Pp. 24-44. [Костюк Р.В. Внешняя политика Франсуа Олланда: изменения в рамках продолжения // *Современная внешняя политика левых* / Отв. ред.: Р.В. Костюк. СПб: Отв. ред.: Р.В. Костюк. СПб: ООО «Полтора́к», 2014. С. 24-44.] (in Russian)
219. Kuznetsov A.S. Paradiplomacy: interpretations and theoretical models // *Discourse-P*. 2006. № 6. Pp. 76-78. [Кузнецов А.С. Парадипломатия: трактовки и теоретические модели // *Дискурс-Пи*. 2006. № 6. С. 76-78] (in Russian)
220. Lebedeva M.L. The process of regionalisation in France: history and evolution // *Gaps in Russian legislation*. 2015. №5. Pp. 23-26. [Лебедева М.Л. Процесс регионализации во Франции: история и эволюция // *Пробелы в российском законодательстве*. 2015. №5. С. 23-26] (in Russian)

221. Leonova O.G. Global regionalisation as a phenomenon of the global world development // *Century of Globalisation*. 2013. Is. 1 (11). [Леонова О.Г. Глобальная регионализация как феномен развития глобального мира // *Век глобализации*. 2013. Вып. 1 (11).] [Available from] URL: <https://www.socionauki.ru/journal/articles/153253/> (accessed: 22.12.2023) (in Russian)
222. Narochnitskaya E.A. Foreign policy legacy of Gaullism in modern France // *France on the threshold of change. Economics and Politics at the Beginning of the XXI Century: a collection of articles based on the results of the All-Russian scientific conference (IMEMO RAS, 7 December, 2015) / Edited by A.V. Kuznetsov, M.V. Klinova, A.K. Kudryavtsev, P.P. Timofeev. M., IMEMO RAS, 2016. С. 210-220. [Нарочницкая Е.А. Внешнеполитическое наследие голлизма в современной Франции // *Франция на пороге перемен. Экономика и политика в начале XXI века: сборник статей по итогам Всероссийской научной конференции (ИМЭМО РАН, 7 декабря 2015 года) / Отв. ред.: А.В. Кузнецов, М.В. Клинова, А.К. Кудрявцев, П.П. Тимофеев. М., ИМЭМО РАН, 2016. С. 210-220]* (in Russian)*
223. Novikova I.N., Popov, D.I. Foreign economic cooperation of St. Petersburg with Denmark in the XXIst century: main trends, problems and prospects // *Vestnik SPbSU. International relations*. 2021. Vol. 14. Is. 1. Pp. 41-70. [Новикова И.Н., Попов, Д.И. Внешнеэкономическое сотрудничество Санкт-Петербурга с Данией в XXI веке: основные тенденции, проблемы и перспективы // *Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета. Международные отношения*. 2021. Т. 14. Вып. 1. С. 41-70] [Available from] URL: <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu06.2021.103> (accessed: 22.12.2023) (in Russian)
224. Obichkina E.O. Emmanuel Macron's foreign policy: the search for a geopolitical strategy in a broken world hierarchy // *Current problems of Europe*.

2021. № 3. Pp. 235-274. [Обичкина Е.О. Внешняя политика Эммануэля Макрона: поиски геополитической стратегии в разладившейся мировой иерархии // Актуальные проблемы Европы. 2021. № 3. С. 235–274] (in Russian)
225. Osipov E.A. Foreign Policy of France: Moving Away from Gaullism // *The International Affairs*. 2016. №3. Pp. 22-33. [Осипов Е.А. Все дальше от голлизма: внешняя политика современной Франции // *Международная жизнь*. 2016. №3. С. 22-33.] (in Russian)
226. Pakhorukov K.I. Decentralisation in France: the special role of Corsica // *All-Russian Journal of Scientific Publications*. September 2011. Pp. 69-71. [Пахоруков К.И. Децентрализация во Франции: особая роль Корсики // *Всероссийский журнал научных публикаций*. Сентябрь 2011. С. 69-71] (in Russian)
227. Pakhorukov K.I. Nationalism in Russia and France: a comparative analysis // *In the world of scientific discoveries*. 2010. № 4-12 (10). Pp. 68-70. [Пахоруков К.И. Национализм в России и во Франции: сравнительный анализ // *В мире научных открытий*. 2010. № 4-12 (10). С. 68-70] (in Russian)
228. Pakhorukov K.I. About some aspects in the activities of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France to support the foreign policy activity of French administrative-territorial formations (late XX – early XXI centuries.) // *Modern Scientific Thought*. 2023. №6. Pp. 219-224. [Пахоруков К.И. О некоторых аспектах в деятельности Министерства Европы и иностранных дел Франции по поддержке внешнеполитической активности французских административно-территориальных образований (конец XX – начало XXI вв.) // *Современная научная мысль*. 2023. №6. С. 219-224] (in Russian)
229. Pakhorukov K.I. Enlarging external policy capacities of subnational entities. French regions // *Clio*. 2023. №8 (200). Pp. 71-76. [Пахоруков К.И.

Расширение внешнеполитических ресурсов субнациональных единиц. Регионы Франции // Клио. 2023. №8 (200). С. 71-76.] (in Russian)

230. Pakhorukov K.I. Regional diplomacy: the Corsican case // Relevant Problems of International Relations: Collection of Works of the Student Scientific Society of the Faculty of International Relations of St. Petersburg State University, 2012. Pp. 94-108. [Пахоруков К.И. Региональная дипломатия: корсиканский случай // Актуальные проблемы международных отношений: сборник работ Студенческого научного общества факультета международных отношений Санкт-Петербургского государственного университета. СПб: СПбГУ, 2012. С. 94-108] (in Russian)
231. Pakhorukov K.I. Russian-French relations in the context of France's return to the military structures of NATO // Russia in the modern world: new challenges and opportunities: Collection of reports of the All-Russian student scientific conference. 1 March 2013 / Edited by Y.G. Akimov, N.A. Dobronravin, N.Y. Markushina, S.L. Tkachenko, E.Y. Treschenkov. St. Petersburg: Publishing Centre of the Faculty of Economics, St. Petersburg State University, 2013. Pp. 81-88. [Пахоруков К.И. Российско-французские отношения в контексте возвращения Франции в военные структуры НАТО // Россия в современном мире: новые вызовы и возможности: Сборник докладов Всероссийской студенческой научной конференции. 1 марта 2013 г. / под ред. Ю.Г. Акимова, Н.А. Добронравина, Н.Ю. Маркушиной, С.Л. Ткаченко, Е.Ю. Трещенкова. СПб, Издат. центр эконом. факультета СПбГУ, 2013. С. 81-88] (in Russian)
232. Pakhorukov K.I. France – African States: some aspects of decentralized cooperation // RUDN Journal of World History. 2023. Vol. 15. №4. Pp. 463-477. [Пахоруков К.И. Франция – государства Африки: о некоторых аспектах децентрализованного сотрудничества // Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов. Серия: Всеобщая история. 2023. Т. 15. №4. С. 463-477] (in Russian)

233. Pakhorukov K.I. France – Tropical Africa: a new quality of relations? // *Asia and Africa Today*. 2015. №7 (696). Pp. 62-66. [Пахоруков К.И. Франция – Тропическая Африка: новое качество отношений? // *Азия и Африка сегодня*. 2015. №7 (696). С. 62-66.] (in Russian)
234. Pakhorukov K.I., Ivannikov, I.V., Decentralisation in France: evolution of French unitarism // *Law and Politics*. 2012. №1. Pp. 31-39. [Пахоруков К.И., Иванников, И.В., Децентрализация во Франции: эволюция французского унитаризма // *Право и политика*. 2012. №1. С. 31-39.] (in Russian)
235. Petrasyak M. Application of the theory of paradiplomacy to the study of international activity of the Russian Far East / Buyarov D.V., Kuznetsov D.V. and Kireeva N.V. (eds.). *Russia and China: history and prospects of cooperation. Materials of the 5th international scientific-practical conference. Blagoveshchensk: Publishing house of Blagoveshchensk State Pedagogical University, 2015. Pp. 533-541.* [Петрасьяк М. Применение теории парадипломатии к исследованию международной активности российского Дальнего Востока / Буяров Д. В., Кузнецов Д.В. и Киреева Н.В. (отв. ред.). *Россия и Китай: история и перспективы сотрудничества. Материалы 5-й международной научно-практической конференции. Благовещенск: Изд. Благовещенского гос. пед. ун-та, 2015. С. 533-541.*] (in Russian)
236. Pilipenko A.N. Administrative and territorial reforms in France // *Journal of foreign legislation and comparative law*. – 2011. – № 1. [Пилипенко А.Н. Административно–территориальные реформы во Франции // *Журнал зарубежного законодательства и сравнительного правоведения*. 2011. № 1.] [Available from URL: https://nbpublish.com/library_read_article.php?id=58179 (accessed: 22.12.2023)] (in Russian)
237. Rastvortseva S.N., Korbankova A.P. Measuring the Creative Capital and its Development in the Regions of France // *Contemporary Europe*. 2021. №1. Pp. 74-85. [Растворцева С.Н., Корбанкова А.П. Оценка и перспективы

- развития креативного капитала в регионах Франции // Современная Европа. 2021. №1. С. 74-85.] (in Russian)
238. Sardarian G.T. Regionalisation and federalisation in the context of the transformation of forms of political-territorial structure of states // Politics and Society. 2014. №6 (114). Pp. 668-674. [Сардарян Г.Т. Регионализация и федерализация в контексте трансформации форм политико-территориального устройства государств // Политика и общество. 2014. №6 (114). С. 668-674] (in Russian)
239. Sergunin A.A. Regional factor in Russian foreign policy: legal aspects // Federalism in Russia / Edited by R.S. Khakimov / Kazan: Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of Tatarstan, 2001. Pp. 100-115. [Сергунин А.А. Региональный фактор в российской внешней политике: правовые аспекты / Хакимов Р.С. (ред.) Федерализм в России // Казань: Ин-т истории Академии наук Татарстана, 2001. С. 100-115] (in Russian)
240. Simon M. Transformation of European nation-states under the influence of regionalisation processes P. 1-21. [Симон М. Трансформация национальных государств Европы под влиянием процессов регионализации С. 1-21] [Available from] URL: [hse.ru>data/2011/04/16/1210977605](https://hse.ru/data/2011/04/16/1210977605) (in Russian)
241. Smirnov V.P. France between globalism and nationalism // France on the threshold of change: economy and politics in the early XXI century: a collection of articles based on the results of the All-Russian scientific conference (ИМЭМО РАН, 7 December 2015) / Edited by A.V. Kuznetsov, M.V. Klinova, A.K. Kudryavtsev, P.P. Timofeev. M., ИМЭМО РАН, 2016. Pp. 181-187. [Смирнов В.П. Франция между глобализмом и национализмом // Франция на пороге перемен: экономика и политика в начале XXI века: сборник статей по итогам Всероссийской научной конференции (ИМЭМО РАН, 7 декабря 2015 года) / Отв. ред.: А.В. Кузнецов, М.В. Клинова, А.К. Кудрявцев, П.П. Тимофеев. М., ИМЭМО РАН, 2016. С. 181-187] (in Russian)

242. Speranskaya T.S. Regional development: French experience and Russian prospects // Problems of forecasting. 2008. №2. Pp. 157-159. [Сперанская Т.С. Развитие регионов: опыт Франции и перспективы России // Проблемы прогнозирования. 2008. №2. С. 157-159] (in Russian)
243. Fadeeva T.M. Federalist model of EU: Concepts and Practices // World Economy and International Relations. 2000. №6. Pp. 24-33. [Фадеева Т.М. Федералистская модель Европейского Союза: концепции и практика // Мировая экономика и международные отношения. 2000. №6. С. 24-33] (in Russian)
244. Fedorov S.M. Macron's foreign policy strategy: is the reincarnation of Gaullism possible? // France under President Emmanuel Macron: at the beginning of the way: a collection of articles on the results of the II All-Russian scientific conference of experts on France (Moscow, 13 October 2017) / M.V. Klinova, A.K. Kudryavtsev, Y.I. Rubinsky, P.P. Timofeev (eds.). М.: ИММО RAS, 2018. Pp. 147-151. [Федоров С.М. Внешнеполитическая стратегия Э. Макрона: возможна ли реинкарнация голлизма? / Франция при президенте Эммануэле Макроне: в начале пути: сборник статей по итогам II Всероссийской научной конференции франковедов (Москва, 13 октября 2017 г.) / Отв. ред.: М.В. Клинова, А.К. Кудрявцев, Ю.И. Рубинский, П.П. Тимофеев. М.: ИМЭМО РАН, 2018. С. 147-151] (in Russian)
245. Filippova E.I. State-regions relations and regionalism movements in France // Kazanskiy federalist. 2007, №1-2 (21-22). Pp. 76-84. [Филиппова Е.И. Взаимоотношения государства и регионов и регионалистские движения во Франции // Казанский федералист. 2007, №1-2 (21-22). С. 76-84] (in Russian)
246. Khokhlov I.I. Subsidiarity as Principle and Mechanism of the EU // World Economy and International Relations // World Economy and International Relations. 2004. №5. Pp. 95-101. [Хохлов И.И. Субсидиарность как

- принцип и механизм политики Евросоюза // *Мировая экономика и международные отношения*. 2004. №5. С. 95-101] (in Russian)
247. Chikhachev A.Y. Foundations of modern foreign policy of France in the Indo-Pacific region // *MSLU Bulletin. Social Sciences*. 2020. № 1 (838). Pp. 111-123. [Чихачев А.Ю. Основы современной внешней политики Франции в Индо-Тихоокеанском регионе // *Вестник МГЛУ. Общественные науки*. 2020. № 1 (838). С. 111-123] (in Russian)
248. Chikhachev A.Y. Russian-French relations under President Emmanuel Macron: achievements and contradictions // *Vestnik SPbSU. International Relations*. 2022. № 1. Pp. 86-104. [Чихачев А.Ю. Российско-французские отношения при президенте Эмманюэле Макроне: достижения и противоречия // *Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета. Международные отношения*. 2022. № 1. С. 86-104] (in Russian)
249. Chub A.A. Analysis of the EU experience in the sphere of regionalisation processes management // *National interests: priorities and security*. 2009. № 4 (37). Pp. 79-82. [Чуб А.А. Анализ опыта Евросоюза в сфере управления процессами регионализации // *Национальные интересы: приоритеты и безопасность*. 2009. № 4 (37). С. 79-82] (in Russian)
250. Eismond A.G. European regional policy: analysis of the main directions of research // *Vestnik of Moscow University. Ser. 18. Sociology and Political Science*. 2008. №3. Pp. 95-99. [Эйсмонд А.Г. Европейская региональная политика: анализ основных направлений исследования // *Вестник Московского университета. Сер. 18. Социология и политология*. 2008. №3. С. 95-99.] (in Russian)
251. Barroche J. Discours et pratique de la subsidiarité européenne depuis le traité et de Maastricht et jusqu'à nos jours // *Droit et société*. 2012. №80 (1). Pp. 24-27.
252. Barroche J. La subsidiarité chez Jacques Delors. Du socialisme chrétien au fédéralisme européen // *Politique européenne*. 2007. 23 (3). Pp. 153-177.

253. Bassot É. Le Comité des régions: Régions françaises et Länder allemands face à un nouvel organe communautaire // *Revue du Marché commun et de l'Union européenne*. 1993. №371. Pp. 729-739.
254. Balme R., Jouve B. L'Europe en région: les fonds structurels et la régionalisation de l'action publique en France métropolitaine // *Politiques et management public*. 1995. 13 (2). Pp. 35-58.
255. Bonnet-Pineau E. La réforme régionale en France: une occasion manquée? // *EchoGéo*. 2016. №35. [Available from]. URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/echogeo/14506> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
256. Delcamp A. La charte européenne de l'autonomie locale et son système de contrôle // *Anuaire des collectivités locales*. 1999. Vol. 19. Pp. 139-172.
257. De Rynck S., McAleavey P. The cohesion deficit in Structural Funds Policy // *Journal of European public policy*. 2001. Vol. 8. Is.4. Pp. 541-557.
258. Derosier J.-Ph. La dialectique centralisation/décentralisation. Recherches sur le caractère dynamique du principe de subsidiarité // *Revue international de droit comparé*. 2007. № 59(1). Pp. 107-140.
259. Donat E., Meyer S. European Regions. Perspectives, Trends and Developments in the 21st Century // *European regions. Perspectives, trends and developments in the 21st century* / Donat E., Meyer S., Abels G. (eds.) // *Political science*. 2020. Vol. 92. Pp. 11-22.
260. Downs W. Regionalism in the European Union: Key Concepts and Project Overview // *Journal of European integration*. 2002. Vol. 24. Is. 3. Pp. 171-177.
261. Duchacek I.D. Perforated Sovereignities: towards a Typology of New Actors in International Relations // *Federalism and International Relations: The Role of Subnational Units* / Michelman H., Soldatos P. (eds.). Oxford: University Press, 1990. Pp. 1-33.

262. Dumont G.-F. Les régions en France. Géants géographiques, mais nains politiques? // *Les Analyses de Population & Avenir*. 2019. №8. Pp. 1-22.
263. Dumont G.-F. Régions françaises: petit dictionnaire des idées reçues // *Population et Avenir*. 2014. №718. 1 p.
264. Evans A. Regionalism in the EU: legal organisation of a challenging social phenomenon // *Journal of European integration*. 2002. Vol. 24. Is. 3. Pp. 219-243.
265. Florent L. La place des régions françaises dans l'Union européenne: améliorée ou détériorée avec la suppression de 9 entre d'elles ? // *Population & Avenir*. 2015/ 1(№721). Pp. 4-7.
266. Giblin B. La région: enjeux de pouvoirs // *Quaderni*. Hiver 2005/2006. №59. Pp. 97-108.
267. Herbet M. Décentralisation: l'étoile des régions monte, celle des départements pâlit. 08.10.2012. [Available from].
URL:
<https://www.euractiv.fr/section/all/news/decentralisation-l-etoile-des-regions-monte-celle-des-departements-palit/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
268. Herbet M. La crise, un accélérateur de réforme des collectivités en Europe. 04.10.2012. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.euractiv.fr/collectivites-locales/crise-accelerateur-reforme-collectivites-europe-16670.html> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
269. Hocking B. Patrolling the «Frontier»: Globalisation, Localization and the «Actorness» of Non-Central Governments // *Paradiplomacy in Action: The Foreign Relations of Subnational Governments* / F. Aldecoa, M. Keating (eds.). Aldecoa, M. Keating (eds.). London: Routledge, 1999. Pp. 17-39.
270. Hopkins J. A tale of two Europes: European Regions from Berlin to Lisbon // *Australian and New Zealand Journal of European Studies*. 2010. Vol. 2. Is. 1. Pp. 56-68.

271. Joenniemi P., Sergunin A. Paradiplomacy as a Capacity-Building Strategy. The Case of Russia's Northwestern Subnational Actors // *Problems of Post-Communism*. 2014. Vol. 61 (6). Pp. 18-33.
272. John P. The Europeanisation of Sub-national Governance // *Urban Studies*. 2000. Vol. 37. Is. 5-6. Pp. 877-894.
273. Jouen M. The new French Regions, from a European standpoint // Jacques Delors Institute Policy paper. 2015. № 150. Pp. 2-18.
274. Jouve B., Negrier E. Multi-level governance «French style?» The contribution of the European structural funds to redefining intergovernmental relations in France // *European planning studies*. 1998. Vol. 6. Is. 5. Pp. 555-572.
275. Kanishka J. Regionalising the State: Political topography of regulatory regionalism // *Contemporary Politics*. 2008. Vol. 149(1). Pp. 21-35.
276. Katcherian J. Unraveling the Paradox: Competence and the Failure of Subsidiarity in the European Union // *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*. 2012. Vol. 35. Is. 2. Pp. 271-288.
277. Keating M. European Integration and the Nationalities Question // *Politics and Society*. 2004. 32(3). Pp. 1-22.
278. Kössler K. Regional Identities in Europe. Their Manifestations in Constitution and Policy-Making // *European regions. Perspectives, trends and developments in the 21st century* / Donat E., Meyer S., Abels G. (eds.) // *Political science*. 2020. Vol. 92. Pp. 83-97.
279. Kukawka P. Typologie de la décentralisation en Europe // *Rapport du séminaire «Régions, décentralisation et coopération internationale»*. Kinshasa, 03.11.2008. [Available from] URL: <http://www.regionsfrancophones.com/telechargements/Intervention-PKukawka.pdf> (accessed: 20.02.2022)

280. Marcou G. Où va le système français d'administration territoriale? La réforme de trop? Quelle organisation pour les grandes régions en France et en Europe? Paris: L'Harmattan, 2015. Pp. 25-32.
281. Marin A. The International Dimension of Regionalism – St. Petersburg's «Para-Diplomacy» // Beyond the Garden Ring. Dimensions of Russian Regionalism / M. Kivinen, K. Pynnöniemi (eds.). Helsinki: Kikimora Publications, 2002. Pp. 147-174.
282. Megglé C. Jeunesse, vie associative: la différenciation prend forme en Bretagne. 09.02.2022. [Available from] URL: <https://www.banquedesterritoires.fr/jeunesse-vie-associative-la-differenciation-prend-forme-en-bretagne> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
283. Mény Y. The Political Dynamics of Regionalism: Italy, France, Spain // Morgan R. (Ed.) Regionalism in European Politics. London: Policy Studies Institute, 1986. Pp. 1-28.
284. Nakano K. The Role of Ideology and Elite Networks in the Decentralisation Reforms in 1980s France // West European Politics. 2000. Vol. 23. Is. 3. Pp. 97-114.
285. Nay O. European community policy in France: the state bounces back // Journal of European Integration. 2002. Vol. 24. Is. 3. Pp. 245-260.
286. Nicolas V. Africities 2018: Gouvernance territoriale, sécurité et transition alimentaires. 26.11.2018. [Available from] URL: <https://www.old.uclg.org/fr/media/nouvelles/africities-2018-gouvernance-territoriale-securite-et-transition-alimentaires> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
287. Ntotele Bopendia R.V. La coopération décentralisée: regards croisés entre les collectivités territoriales de la France et celles de la RD Congo // Mouvements et Enjeux Sociaux. Revue Internationale des Dynamiques Sociales. MES-RIDS. 2023. №126. Pp. 301-308.

288. Ohmae K. The rise of the region state // Foreign Affairs. 1993. Vol. 72. Is. 2. Pp. 78-87.
289. Olsson A. Regional Minority Nationalist Attitudes towards European Integration. 28.12.2016. [Available from].
URL: <https://silo.tips/download/regional-minority-nationalist-attitudes-towards-european-integration> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
290. Panara C. Deconstructing and Reconstructing Good Governance in Relation to Regional and Local Participation in EU Decision-Making Processes // Regional Governance in the EU / Abels G., Battke J. (eds.), London: Cheltenham, 2019. Pp. 31-51.
291. Paquin S. Les approches explicatives du développement de paradiplomaties // Bulletin d'histoire politique. paradiplomaties // Bulletin d'histoire politique. 2001. Vol. 10 (1). Pp. 73-84.
292. Paquin S. Les nouvelles relations internationales et la paradiplomatie identitaire // Bulletin d'histoire politique. 2001. Vol. 10 (1). Pp. 13-29.
293. Perrin T. La coopération culturelle dans l'eurorégion Nord-Transmanche: une institutionnalisation sans institution? / Fédéralisme-Régionalisme. 2012. Vol. 12. [Available from] URL: <https://popups.ulg.ac.be/federalisme.htm> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
294. Popescu A., Nica, L. Regionalism in a Europe without borders. Some approaches on Bihor county // Eurolimes. Journal of the Institute for Euroregional Studies "Jean Monnet" European Centre of Excellence. 2011. Vol. 11. Pp. 179-193.
295. Schmitt-Egner P. The Concept of "Region": Theoretical and Methodological Notes on its Reconstruction // Journal of European Integration. 2002. Vol. 24. Is. 3. Pp. 179-200.
296. Seys F.-O. Les nouvelles régions françaises dans le contexte de l'Union européenne // Pôle Sud. 2017/1. №46. Pp. 97-113.

297. Sierra A., Bonnet-Pineau E. La réforme territoriale en France: parlementaires et géographes face à «l'art de la découpe» gouvernementale // *EchoGéo*. 2016. №35. [Available from] URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/echogeo/14481> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
298. Soldatos R. An Explanatory Framework for the Study of Federated States as Foreign-Policy Actors // *Federalism and International Relations: The Role of Subnational Units* / H. J. Michelmann, P. Y. Soldatos (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. Pp. 34-53.
299. Tatham M. Paradiplomats against the State: Explaining Conflict in State and Substate Interest Representation in Brussels // *Comparative Political Studies*. 2013. Vol. 46 (1). Pp. 63-94.
300. Vos H., Boucké T., Devos K. The Condition *Sine Qua Non* of the Added Value of Regions in the EU: Upper-Level Representation as the Fundamental Precondition // *Journal of European integration*. 2002. Vol. 24. Is.3. Pp. 201-218.
301. Wilner L. How do citizens perceive centralisation reforms? Evidence from the merger of French regions. Montrouge: INSEE Working Papers Series. No. 2020/07. September 2020. 57 p.

Periodicals, materials of news agencies

302. Mayor of Nice called anti-Russian sanctions unfair. 14.10.2021. [Мэр Ниццы назвал антироссийские санкции несправедливыми. 14.10.2021.] [Available from] URL: <https://ria.ru/20211012/sanktsii-1754166562.html> (accessed: 22.12.2023) (in Russian)
303. Paramonov A. V. Russia against the West: myth or reality? 22.02.2024. [Парамонов А.В. Россия против Запада: миф или реальность? 22.02.2024.] [Available from]

- URL: <https://telegra.ph/Rossiya-protiv-Zapada-mif-ili-realnost-02-22>
(accessed: 22.02.2024) (in Russian)
304. Chepovskaya A. Scales are smaller, but more human. 07.04.2018.
[Чеповская А. Масштабы меньше, но человечнее. 07.04.2018.] [Available from]
- URL: <https://iz.ru/728775/anastasiia-chepovskaia/masshtaby-menshe-no-chelovechnee> (accessed: 22.12.2023) (in Russian)
305. Algalarrondo H. Le Pen et Mélenchon, croisés de l'Alsace française // Le Nouvel Observateur. 06.04.2013.
306. Ayrault J.-M. Réforme territoriale, à l'Ouest que du nouveau. [Available from].
- URL: https://www.liberation.fr/france/2014/07/08/reforme-territoriale-a-l-ouest-que-du-nouveau_1059383/ (accessed: 22.12.2023)
307. Baldeweck Y. Par référendum, l'Alsace dit non à la fusion des collectivités // Le Figaro. 07.04.2013.
308. Buchy F. L'esquisse d'une nouvelle collectivité? 09.11.2017. [Available from].
- URL: <https://www.lalsace.fr/actualite/2017/11/09/l-esquisse-d-une-nouvelle-collectivite> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
309. Chemillier-Gendreau M. Le principe de subsidiarité: enjeu majeur, débat confus // Le Monde diplomatique. Juillet 1992.
310. Costentin B. Consultation sur l'avenir de l'Alsace: 92.4% des votes pour la sortie du Grand Est. 21.02.2022. [Available from].
- URL: <https://www.francebleu.fr/infos/politique/consultation-sur-l-avenir-de-l-alsace-92-4-des-votes-pour-la-sortie-du-grand-est-1645431011> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
311. Daucé S. Les financements croisés après la loi du 16 décembre 2010 - Analyse juridique. [Available from] URL: <https://www.lagazettedescommunes.com/87292/les-financements-croises-apres->

- la-loi-du-16-decembre-2010-%E2%80%93-analyse-juridique/ (accessed: 22.12.2023)
312. Deborde J. Ruggy de F. Réforme territoriale: le sentiment d'appartenance est plus fort en Bretagne qu'ailleurs. 15.07.2014. [Available from].
URL: https://www.liberation.fr/france/2014/07/15/reforme-territoriale-le-sentiment-d-appartenance-est-plus-fort-en-bretagne-qu-ailleurs_1064154
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
313. Des défenseurs des langues régionales dénoncent le «mépris» du pouvoir. 24.04.2013. [Available from].
URL: <https://france3-regions.francetvinfo.fr/auvergne-rhone-alpes/2013/04/26/des-defenseurs-des-langues-regionales-denoncent-le-mepris-du-pouvoir-241385.html> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
314. Éric Zemmour: Le référendum alsacien, un échec de plus pour Hollande le décentralisateur. 12.04.2013. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.lebreviairedespatriotes.fr/2013/04/12/eric-zemmour-le-referendum-alsacien-un-echec-de-plus-pour-hollande-le-decentralisateur/>
(accessed: 20.02.2022)
315. Izambard A. Le Fur: «Le non au référendum alsacien n'arrêtera pas la Bretagne» // Le Figaro. 08.04.2013.
316. Kis M. «Il faut maintenir les aides à finalité régionale» – Entretien exclusif avec Jean-Paul Denanot 01.11.2012. [Available from].
URL: <https://www.courrierdesmaires.fr/article/il-faut-maintenir-les-aides-a-finalite-regionale-entretien-exclusif-avec-jean-paul-denanot.2697>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
317. Liogier R. La Région Sud signe un accord de coopération avec Djibouti. 16.02.2021. [Available from].
URL: <https://gomet.net/accord-region-sud-djibouti/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
318. Mari N. Réforme territoriale: L'Alsace veut sortir de la région Grand Est et lorgne vers le modèle corse. 17.08.2022. [Available from]

- URL: https://www.corsenetinfos.corsica/Reforme-territoriale-L-Alsace-veut-sortir-de-la-region-Grand-Est-et-lorgne-vers-le-modele-corse_a66373.html
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
319. Perreaut A. Les 5 informations à retenir de ces législatives en Alsace. [Available from].
URL: <https://france3-regions.francetvinfo.fr/grand-est/alsace/5-points-retenir-ces-legislatives-alsace-1279421.html> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
320. Poignard M. Collectivités locales: l'impossible réforme? 24.04.2013. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.lagazettedescommunes.com/164793/collectivites-locales-1%E2%80%99impossible-reforme/> (accessed: 22.12.2023)
321. Référendum en Alsace: Le Pen se réjouit. [Available from].
URL: <http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/2013/04/07/97001-20130407FILWWW00210-referendum-en-alsace-le-pen-se-rejouit.php>
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
322. Référendum en Alsace: les raisons du «non». 08.04.2013. [Available from]
URL: https://www.bfmtv.com/politique/elections/referendum-en-alsace-les-raisons-du-non_AN-201304080045.html (accessed: 22.12.2023)
323. Rof G. En PACA, Renaud Muselier promet des vaccins Spoutnik V à ses administrés. 15.04.2021. [Available from].
URL: https://www.lemonde.fr/planete/article/2021/04/15/en-paca-renaud-muselier-promet-des-vaccins-spoutnik-v-a-ses-administres_6076844_3244.html
(accessed: 22.12.2023)
324. Vogel P. Echec du référendum alsacien: les raisons du «non». 08.04.2013. [Available from] URL: <http://videos.tf1.fr/jt-20h/echec-du-referendum-alsacien-les-raisons-du-non-7917940.html> (accessed: 10.12.2022)