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**V.N. Leksin, B.N. Porfiriev**

## **LEGAL ENVIRONMENT AND REGIONAL REALITY**

*The specificity of the existing socio-economic situation and development prospects of municipalities and regions in Russia is largely determined by the legal environment. It means, on the one hand, lawfully established implementation and limitation procedures for all activities of natural, legal persons and authorities, and, on the other hand, legal culture and mentality, the state of law and order, public sentiment and moods in its locations of displacement. In general, a spatially mediated legal environment is formed under the strongest impact of the «federal presence» phenomenon which implies actual centralization of federal governance in a decentralized state. The cases involving deliberations of the region's legislative initiatives in the State Duma, «federalization» of the regional legislation and power redistribution between the federal, regional, and municipal levels discussed in the article are vivid illustrations of the point above.*

*The legal field of the activities of Russian municipalities is, in fact, completely federal: a list of responsibilities and legislative powers is closed, types of municipal entities are unified, activity arrangements and resources for local governments are established by the federal laws. Despite the numerous innovations constantly introduced by the Russian federal and regional authorities into the real life of a local government, its every hotspot remains almost intact.*

*The spatial fragmentation of the single national legal space is proposed as the most important characteristic of the socio-political and socio-economic heterogeneity of Russia's territory. The article discloses the prevalence of the main types of such fragmentation within the country. We critically evaluate suggestions on perspectives to solve the country's spatial development problems primarily by organizing the local «points (areas) of growth».*

*The greatest concentration of peculiarities and problems of the regional and municipal systems functioning within specific conditions of the Russian legal field is typical for the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation (AZRF). This macroregion should become a particular target of state governance through specific regu-*

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*latory and legal tools. The bulk of the AZRF development issues are common to every region of Russia and thus are shaping up inside the national legal environment. Within the context of the authors' views on Russia's spatial fragmentation, the article considers policy solutions for using a new type of special legal regime, mainly «development support zones» in Arctic territories.*

**Keywords:** legal environment; federal presence; regions; local government; fragmentation of the legal space; the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation

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