

Analytical Communities in the Local Policy Process: Creating Self-identity

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Abstract

In this paper the author argues that we can identify three types of intellectual communities that participate actively in the policy process: analytical communities, experts' communities and communities of consultants. The distinguishing features of these communities are both an analytical tool and a manifestation of their different identities. These policy actors are distinguished from each other by several criteria: the focus of their political activity (policy analysis, expert reports / remarks or political advise / PR); referent groups (academic, professional or business communities); principles of interaction with decision makers (self-autonomy, contract, clientelism); ethical principles, civic values and attitudes.

According to the author's empirical research of analytical centers and communities in Moscow¹ and Russian regions (Karelia, Tatarstan and Saratov region)² we can make the conclusion that the identity of analytical communities can take three forms: analytical structures (think tanks, public policy centers etc.); "analytical spaces" (recurrent seminars, club meetings, forums etc.), informal intellectual groups.

The empirical research that was conducted by the author and the Committee on Public Policy and Governance of the Russian Association for Political Science allows us to point out several factors that influence the identity of analytical communities and their capacity to be autonomous and powerful policy actors and to put these factors into hierarchical order according to their importance for development of analytical communities. The first group of factors is infrastructure for analytical communities; actors with strategic vision i.e. leaders that have organizational, communicational, project work capitals and skills in analytical communities; Human recourses and its mobility ("revolving door system", academic and scientific traditions, quantity and quality of intellectuals and researchers, etc.). These three factors are vital and the most important for the emergence of analytical community's identity.

Another group of factors: the level of political competition and pluralism (political actors, their goals, diversity of strategies, the strength of political opposition etc.); institutionalization level of the political processes (efficiency of democratic institution and decision making procedures etc.); the capacity of analytical communities to build coalitions with other political actors and social groups (with interest groups, business associations, political parties, civil society organizations, local authorities). These three factors are vital and the most important for the development of analytical communities as influential and autonomous political actors. For Eastern European countries, where political competition and pluralism are not widespread and civil society institutions are weak, the capacity of analytical communities to build coalitions with other political actors and social groups is the most promising strategy for democratic development. Additional factor to this group is inclusiveness and transparency of policy process. It correlates with capacity to build coalitions factor.

Legal prerequisites (liberal NGO regulation etc.) and philanthropy recourses (from the development of philanthropic culture to the amount of philanthropists) are the cultural factors which depend on long-term features of the civilization or a group of states with similar historical paths.

According to the theory of political science and policy practice, in political process we can identify two types of political activities. Activities of the first type are connected with state strategy and program implementation, decision making practices, political management, and problem-solving.

¹ The research were conducted in 2008 and was based on the interdisciplinary approach of case studies (more than 60 think tanks), content analysis of think tanks' representation in mass- media and experts' interviews.

² The research is being conducted since 2009 and combines quantitative and qualitative methods of studying and assessing the influence of analytical communities and their participation in policy process in Russian regions.

The second type of activities are related to the analysis of challenges which decision makers face, with developing programs and strategies of addressing social, economic and political issues. The first type of activities or functions are delegated to **politicians** (decision makers, political elites etc.) the second ones are related to the work of the **intellectuals** (analysts, experts, consultants etc.).

The demand for the intellectual support of policy implementation is high and even growing in modern diverse and dynamic societies. We can say that this function in contemporary political systems is carried out by **intellectual communities**.

Intellectual communities: classification and identity criteria

Intellectual communities are not homogeneous. We can divide them into two big groups – functional intellectual communities and reflective intellectuals. Functional intellectual communities participate in political processes and decision-making by conducting applied research and promoting their research findings and recommendations to decision-makers, this way providing support to the state's problem-solving efforts. Reflective intellectuals perform analysis which is not focused on policy process and which relates to a broader socio-cultural area. Their findings can be implemented by politicians only if they are first “translated” by representatives of functional intellectual communities. To clarify the relations of decision makers, functional intellectual communities and reflective intellectuals we can compare them with the captain, navigator and cartographer on the «state ship». Politicians rule the state ship. Functional intellectual communities show the way using the maps made by cartographers. And the cartographers reflect upon political and socio-cultural landscape³.

This way, we can make the first research specification: the function of intellectual policy support is carried out not by all intellectuals but only by the **functional intellectual communities**. In this research we are interested only in this part of a broader mass of intellectuals.

In modern societies we can find different types of functional intellectual communities and their organizational forms: academic organizations, think tanks, public policy centers, analytical departments of state official bodies and business corporations, analytical structures in intelligence agencies, PR companies etc. Interactions of such organizations with political elites are more institutionalized than in traditional societies, they are based on professional skills and scientific knowledge rather than on interpersonal relations of rulers and advisers. In addition to providing support to the state's policy, in modern political systems functional intellectual communities can be influential also as autonomous policy actors. We can divide functional intellectual communities into three sub-types: analysts (analytical communities), experts (expert communities), and consultants (consultant communities).

The following criteria help us to distinguish different types of functional intellectual communities:

1. The focus of political activity;
2. Referent groups
3. Principles of interaction with decision makers or social and political institutions;
4. Ethical principles, values and attitudes, views about their social role or mission
5. According to these criteria analytical communities differ from expert communities and consultants in their identity (see table 1).

6. Table 1.

Identity criteria	Analysts	Experts	Consultants
Focus of political activity	Applied policy research and public policy analysis	Narrow-purpose professional expertise (legal, civic etc.)	Support to the client's activity
Referent groups	Academic, university, research communities	Professional communities (lawyers, NGOs etc.)	Business communities
Principles of interaction with decision makers	Political autonomy from all parts of society	Objectivity and proclaimed impartiality, contract-based relations	Patron-client and/or contract-based relations with clients, and pragmatism
Ethical principles	Civic, Public	Professional, Functional	Legitimizing the political status quo, entrepreneurial

³ Salmin A. A la recherche du sens perdu. Russian intellectual elite find post-soviet power // Selected works. Moscow. 2010. P. 226-300.

7. Representatives of analytical communities conduct applied policy research and public policy analysis which gives the stakeholders a deep and full understanding of the social issues and of the ways to address them. Such analysis provides decision makers with policy alternatives and recommendations which increase efficiency of policy implementation.
8. Analysts support decision-makers' activities on all stages of policy process (from interest articulation to policy assessment, and feedback mechanism). Alternatively, experts' and consultants' activities are narrower in purpose. Experts are not included on all stages of policy process, their participation is limited to the time when they are addressed mostly to confirm the decision of the stakeholders. Consultants are addressed for providing a feedback mechanism when the decision makers need to anticipate the public's reaction or to shape this reaction beforehand.
9. Referent groups of the analytical communities' are university and academic communities. As a rule, analysts have an academic background, and the analytical structures maintain close ties with academic sphere. This situation is determined by the skills necessary for analytical activities – the ability to embrace the whole political situation in analysis (systematic knowledge) and the ability to structure the problems in both detailed and generalized ways (analytical competence). Experts, according to their specialization, have more narrow referent groups, for example, professional communities like lawyers or NGO activists. Consultants are mostly oriented on profit maximization can be compared with business communities.
10. The first two criteria related to the activities of the intellectual communities, while the next ones concern their attitudes, principles and values. The communities try to stay true to their attitudes, principles and values, but it is a struggle depending on their political environment. Usually their value declarations stay on paper rather than get implemented in reality.
11. Types of intellectual communities differ in their principles for working with the decision-makers. Analytical communities seek to rely on the principles of partnership and self-autonomy in their interactions with decision-makers and political institutions seek to form up on. Experts declare their objectivity and independence from decision-makers and political structures. That is why they try to develop contract-based relations with political elites. Consultants for relation with the decision-makers on patron-client principles or contract-based relations, but they always stay pragmatic or even egoistic in regard to other institutions and social groups.
12. As regards the self-image and the view of their role, intellectual communities are again different. Analysts believe their role in political and social process is to be autonomous and influential political actors. They try to act according to "civil ethics" attitudes, to act in the public interest, promote public good. The analysts declare that educating both the elites and the public is their mission. Experts are oriented on "professional ethics": they put emphasis on doing high quality work and expertise, and doing their job properly. Consultants try to support current political situation, concentrating on providing legitimacy to the status quo . They are guided by the "entrepreneurial ethics", with profit maximization being the dominant concern ("Work done, have your fun").
13. In conclusion to this part we can make the second specification – ***analytical communities are a separate part of functional intellectual elites*** which conduct applied policy research and public policy analysis. Their distinguishing features include having close ties with academic, university, and research communities. Analytical communities try to keep political autonomy and to be influential political actors. They also declare their preference for "civil ethics", public interests and public good.
14. It is very important to identify each type of intellectual communities because they have different functions in policy process, different attitudes, values and capacity to influence the decision-making. The decision-makers who do not differentiate between the types on functional intellectual communities can make a wrong decision, and implement an inefficient policy alternative, which will result in a deadlock.
15. In addition, analytical communities can contribute to the democratic development⁴ which is why it is very important to be able to single them out among other parts and types of intellectual communities.

⁴ Zaytsev D. Intellectuals' role in democratic development: European experience and Russian practice // Russia-Europe Relations: a Look from Sweden. Academic Papers of the 8th International session of the HSE "Baltic Practice" which took place at the Stockholm Research center, Sweden, from August 1st to 8th, 2008. Moscow: INTEL CORP, 2009.

In his previous works the author reached a conclusion that Russian think tanks take upon themselves some functions of democratic institutions and actors (e.g. political parties, opposition, civil society) because the other actors and institutions were weak. Also, this way think tanks can promote themselves as one of the drivers of democratic transformations⁵.

16. One of the main features of analytical communities is political autonomy from all parts of society and political actors, and we can study it not only as a part of their analytical identity, but also as their capacity to be autonomous and influential actors.
17. In this research paper we will present results of the project “Regional analytical communities in Russia as public policy actors”. The research project was conducted by Research Committee on public policy and governance of Russian Association of Political Science. In the framework of this project we held several seminars and polls with participation of local intellectual communities of three Russian regions: Saratov, Kareliya, and Tatarstan.
18. The research question to be addressed is what conditions and factors contribute to the development of analytical communities’ identity and to their capacity to be autonomous influential political actors.
19. *Factors of identity development for analytical communities*
20. The author has been conducting a lot of research on Russian think tanks and analytical communities, and it shows that on the federal level in Russia analytical communities emerged around certain place/space, person or structure. There are three main organizational forms of analytical communities: **“analytical spaces”, informal intellectual groups, and analytical structures**.
21. By “analytical spaces” the author defines places where intellectual ideas are generated, places which hold recurrent events (seminars, workshops, conferences) with participation of intellectuals, politicians, journalists, businessmen. Analytical communities can emerge and form around a certain “analytical space” which holds recurrent seminars and workshops. Russian examples of such “analytical spaces” are “Politeia” seminars, “Hodorkovsky’s readings”, “4th of November” Club, et. al.
22. As for the informal intellectual groups, they can form around authoritative leaders of “research schools” in social sciences or can be created on purpose. The examples of informal intellectual groups in contemporary Russia are “Salmin’s school”, “Diligensky’s school”, “Liberals around Gorbachev”
23. The third type - the analytical structures – comes in different varieties in Russia on the federal level: think tanks (e.g. Moscow Carnegie Center, Center of Political Technologies, Effective Politics Foundation), public policy centers (e.g. Expert Institution of Russian Union of Entrepreneurs, Interlegal Foundation), academic institutions (e.g. Institute of Social Science of Russian Academy of Science), governmental analytical departments etc.
24. As a rough approximation, we can argue that think tanks have more capacity to develop the identity of analytical communities and the capacity to be influential autonomous political actors in comparison to “analytical spaces” and informal intellectual groups. Influence and power consist of the actor’s inclusion in policy process and of its position (quality, quantity and diversity of recourses). According to the definition, think tanks have an organized structure and are included into political processes⁶. That is why think tanks initially have more capacity for being autonomous policy actors than “analytical spaces” and informal intellectual groups.
25. Analytical community stabilizes when several organizational forms develop in connection and support one another. For example, Salmin’s followers in Russia for a long period of time worked in the think tank “Russian Public Policy Center” and also provided support to the “analytical space” known as the “Politeia” seminar.
26. We can make the first conclusion: diversity of organizational forms and structures in which analytical communities can exist is very important exogenous factor for the formation of analytical community’s identity. It is an important feature to be considered when studying analytical communities on a certain territory (state, region etc.). of analytical communities identity creating. We can define this factor the level of infrastructural development for analytical communities.

⁵ Zaytsev D. Think Tanks in political process. Main features and assessment of influence on decision-making. LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany, Saarbrücken. 2010.

⁶ Think tanks are autonomous organizations which conduct applied policy research and development, which are oriented on scientific and objective principles in their work, and are included into the political process and make interdisciplinary intellectual product.

27. On the federal level in Russia the infrastructure for analytical communities is quite well-developed: there are a lot of think tanks of different types (research and academic organizations, contract think tanks, advocacy tanks)⁷, “analytical spaces” and intellectual groups. These structures and organizations often overlap and support each other (think tanks can be “analytical spaces” for discussions and represent certain intellectual group, developing their own “scientific school”). Their cooperation and interaction helps to establish “analytical networks”. Moreover, we can see that these large “analytical networks” overlap (analyst can represent different “analytical networks”). That is why we can make a conclusion about a high potential for consolidation of analytical communities on the federal level in Russia.
 28. Research of think tanks as policy actors that was made in the author’s recent work⁸ made it possible to specify the following factors that boost the development of analytical communities as influential autonomous political actors:
 29. Level of political competition and pluralism (diversity of political actors, no limitations for opposition’s activity etc.);
 30. Level of institutionalization of political process (effective democratic institutions, public spaces for public debates etc.).
- We can also list the following conditions contributing to the development autonomous think tanks
31. Legal prerequisites that include open and public access to information, social responsibility of corporations, liberal laws for non-profit organizations;
 32. Philanthropic recourses, specifics of philanthropy traditions;
 33. Quality of human recourses and high level of social mobility which gives an opportunity for exchange of people between universities, analytical structures and authority bodies (administrations)⁹.

In modern Russia all the above-listed factors are in a configuration which prevents the development of analytical communities as autonomous and influential political actors. The only exception concerns the level of infrastructure development for analytical communities which is favorable. Political competition and pluralism in Russia are quite limited, democratic political institutions are very weak and ineffective¹⁰. NGO regulation laws are not transparent, they are complicated and confusing, and encourage arbitrary decisions by bureaucracy¹¹. Philanthropy traditions have just started to form. Social mobility channels are very limited.

But the situation with both the external conditions (factors) and analytical communities is unstable and has an interesting dynamic. In 1990s some think tanks were autonomous political actors and in 2000s all of them lost their positions (like Effective Politics Foundation or Center of Strategic Studies). This situation and further analysis allow us to make several conclusions about the dynamics of think tanks position and factors which influence it.

Think tanks (and analytical communities, generally speaking) in political systems with poor diversity, weak democratic political institutions, and with lack of political competition and pluralism lose their political position, autonomy and capacity to influence the political process, as it happened in Russia in the 2000s.

If the political system is not very diverse, and has weak democratic institutions BUT is competitive and pluralistic, in such case the think tanks (and broader analytical communities) take upon the functions of democratic institutions and actors (political parties, opposition, civil society etc.) and act as boosters of democratic reforms (as it happened in Russia in the 1990s).

⁷ Zaytsev D. Think Tanks in political process. Main features and assessment of influence on decision-making. LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany, Saarbrücken. 2010.

⁸ Zaytsev D. Think Tanks in political process. Main features and assessment of influence on decision-making. LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany, Saarbrücken. 2010. Zaytsev D. Institutional environment influence on non-governmental political actors development (case study of evolution think tanks’ political status in USA and Russia) // Law and policy. №11, 2008. P. 2757-2769.

⁹ Thinking about unthinkable: from idea to policy. Think tanks role in policy strategies development. Experience of Central and Eastern European states. Ed. Murberg I., Bondarenko A. 2004. P.87.

¹⁰ Public Policy in modern Russia: actors and institutions. Ed. Belyaeva N. Moscow, 2006..

¹¹ Belyaeva N. Constitutional regulation of freedom of associations in 2000s in Russia: civil participation in the clutches of “Amendments-2006” // Constitutional development in Russia: goals of institutional designing. Collection of articles Moscow. 2007. P. 215-243.

Weakness of democratic political institutions results in the lack of institutionalization in relations between political elite and think tanks. That is why the major resource (capital) of Russian think tanks which allows them to influence the decision making is having informal ties with politicians or high ranking officials. Therefore in Russia interactions between analysts and politicians are built on patron-client principles¹².

Regional analytical communities: opportunities and challenges for creating identity

In this part of the article the author presents some of the results obtained during a pilot research of analytical communities in 3 Russian regions: Saratov, Karelia and Tatarstan. Research was conducted within the project “Regional analytical communities as policy actors: models of political participation in decision making” which was carried out jointly by Research Committee of Russian Association of Political Science and by Public Policy Department of National Research University Higher School of Economics¹³.

When studying analytical communities on the federal level in Russia and factors influencing their identity, we found out that the level of infrastructure development and multiple organizational forms of analytical communities play an important role in this process.

Among the three regions studied, Saratov region has leading positions on infrastructure development. (See table 2). According to the polls in Saratov there are 64 leading structures, spaces and groups of analytical communities and they are quite diverse (19 structures, 14 spaces, 31 groups or leaders). Infrastructure for analytical communities in Karelia is well-developed too. In Tatarstan the situation is different: there are very few organizational forms of analytical communities, and the number of think tanks is small.

Table 2. Quantity of leading analytical structures, spaces and groups (according to the polls of representatives of regional intellectual communities, numbers)

	Saratov region	Karelia Republic	Tatarstan Republic
Analytical structures	19	14	6
Analytical spaces	14	12	6
Intellectual groups, leaders	31	23	13
Total	64	49	25

More information can be obtained from distribution of analytical structures, spaces and groups by referent groups (by those spheres of socio-political activity to which analytical communities are strongly attracted). (See table 3).

According to this indicator analytical communities are diverse in Saratov region and Karelia Republic. In Saratov governmental and academic analytical structures are represented in similar proportions. Commercial analytical centers are less present in Saratov, but still significantly. In Karelia the sector of commercial analytical structures, spaces and groups is missing (at least according to the respondents) BUT civil, governmental and academic sectors are considerable. Situation in Tatarstan is not so diverse as in Saratov and Karelia. In Tatarstan governmental and academic structures dominate.

Table 3. Quantity of leading analytical structures, spaces and groups by referent groups (according to the polls of representatives of regional intellectual communities, %)

	Saratov region	Karelia Republic	Tatarstan Republic
Government	33	31	42
Business	24	-	17
Civil society	9	35	-
Academic university community	33	35	42
Total	100	100	100

¹² Zaytsev D. Think Tanks in political process. Main features and assessment of influence on decision-making. LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany, Saarbrücken. 2010.

¹³ Collection of articles of series “Regional analytical communities in Russia development” Ed. Belyaeva N. // Analytical communities in Saratov region. Ed. Kakabadze Sh. Moscow, 2010; Analytical communities in Karelia. Ed. Kakabadze Sh. Moscow, 2011; Analytical communities in Tatarstan. Ed. Kakabadze Sh. Moscow, 2011.

Political pluralism and competition are other factors which influence the formation of analytical communities' identity and their capacity to be autonomous political actors. The situation with political competition and pluralism in the analyzed regions is unfavorable. – Respondents' assessments of these conditions do not exceeded the average score. (See table 4).

Moreover, when we compare polls' grades with experts assessments of the specialists in regional politics and policy, we will see a different picture. By this alternative assessment, the respondents' grades of institutional development level in Saratov and Tatarstan are overrated, and in Karelia – underrated. Level of political competition in Karelia exceeds the one in Saratov and is much higher than in Tatarstan.

Table 4. Factors of analytical communities' development (according to the polls of representatives of regional intellectual communities, grades on 5-points scale, where 1 – the lowest grade, 5 – the highest grade)

	Saratov region	Karelia Republic	Tatarstan Republic
Level of political competition and pluralism	2,5	2,6	2,0
Level of institutionalization of political processes	3,0	2,6	3,3
Average score	2,7	2,6	2,6

Why the assessments of respondents from the regional analytical communities and of experts on regional politics turned out to be so different is a question for an additional study. However, in this paper it is important to look at the final picture in the three regions. (See table 5).

Table 5. Factors of analytical communities' development (level assessment)

	Saratov region	Karelia Republic	Tatarstan Republic
Level of political competition and pluralism	middle	high	low
Level of institutionalization of political processes	low	high	low
Conclusion	Limited political competition without stable institutions	Political competition according to the rules	Uncompetitive regime with imitations of democratic institutions

Political situation in Saratov region is characterized by middle level of political competition (governor is not an influential politician, on the contrary, the “United Russia” party has strong positions, especially its leaders Volodin and Sliska). Political competition is happening not in the framework of democratic institutions, but by the rules of factions struggle. There is a lack of strong democratic actors (mass-media, civil society structures, oppositional political parties are weak). Formal institutions have little weight in decision-making; decisions are made on the bases of informal procedures and practices, patron-client relations. Analytical communities are included in these clan struggles, patron-client relations (and act as a client in them); they are executive officers who legitimize their patron's will and decisions. Situation in Saratov region is similar to the federal one during the first term of Putin's government when restrictions on political competition began. At that time mass-media, opposition, political parties, and business corporations were losing their autonomy and capacity to influence on decision making BUT the level of political competition could be regarded as middle, at least before M. Khodorkovsky was sent into prison and the authoritarian reforms of 2004 began. In this period (2000-2003) semi-autonomous think tanks began to dominate on the federal level: new ones (like Council for national strategy) an old ones (like Effective Politics Foundation). However, they were anyway included in patron-client relations as ‘clients’, and their purpose was to legitimize the actions of a clan which recruited them (“hawks” and “doves” or “liberals”).

In Karelia political situation is more favorable for the development of analytical communities – there is a comparatively high level of political competition and institutionalization of political process. Also mass-media, business and civil society structures have quite independent positions. As a confirmation illustration of well-developed decision-making institutions in Karelia we can give an interesting example: according to Karelian constitution, high-ranking official (governor) within half of a year after his nomination should present a program of socio-economic strategic development of republic to the regional parliament.

Since 1998 these tasks of program development and monitoring of its implementation have been providing a permanent space for analytical communities (first of all, for the economists) where they can interact with governmental officials.¹⁴ However, now the vector of political changes in Karelia is changing towards restrictions on political competition and democracy. That is why we can see certain skeptical attitudes in the grade given by regional intellectuals for the situation in Karelia today.

In A. Suhorukov's opinion, which he gives in his analysis of the analytical communities' position in Karelia, the most important factors of analytical communities development in Karelia are: permanent demand for analytical work from regional authorities and high-ranking officials in different spheres (strategic planning, development of ethnic-cultural identity, regional economy and finance, education, tourism development) OR presence of leaders who take upon themselves functions of project management, who are ready to present their research results and recommendations in the public sphere, to make them a part of a public debate etc. (Suhorukov named several such leaders in Karelia: N.Ruzanova, A.Shishkin, Z.Strogal'shikova, A.Tsigankov, T.Sachuk, A.Mihailov etc.)»¹⁵.

Thereby, in spite of the high level of political competition, analytical communities in Karelia are connected with regional authorities and their research is made conditional on governmental contract. We also see that there are no business-oriented analytical structures in Karelia. Such absence is a very serious limitation for analytical communities' development. But competitiveness and the resulting transparency of policy process allow leaders of analytical communities to influence the decision making. Also should be noted the presence of analysts - leaders in Karelia that have organizational and communicational skills, knowledge of project work, civil position and ethics, of analysts that are ready to be responsible for their decisions and results, to stand up for their positions. Existence of such leaders according to the new institutional theory¹⁶, is a token of analytical communities and of the institutional development of analytical support. It is a sign of distancing from the patron-client practices in decision-making, it shows that relations between analysts and authority become partner-like and based on democratic practices and institutions. Successful development of analytical communities in Karelia depends on broadening the circles of their partners, on inclusion of business communities in collaboration and partnership, on building stronger relations with political parties, civil society structures, and local governance.

Political situation in Tatarstan is a demonstration of the way in which uncompetitive regimes with imitation of democratic institutions renders analytical communities needless and makes them dependant. Analytical communities and independent analytical work have a very low level of inclusion into regional political processes, their autonomous role and position are narrowed down to legitimizing the decisions of the government or to the technical work (expertise, increasing informational efficiency of bureaucracy's office work, etc.)¹⁷. According to the research results in Tatarstan, analytical communities there face problems with forming a self-identity. Analytical communities in Tatarstan are at an initial point of their formation and development¹⁸. To study the situation with regional analytical communities in more detail we will turn to the transcripts of seminars with the representatives of intellectual communities which were held within the framework of the project. During these seminars several questions were raised:

1. *What kind of analytical communities and centers function in the region: main characteristics and types (academic, governmental, contract etc.)?*
2. *What capacities do the regional analytical communities have to provide intellectual policy support of decision-making on regional/local levels (opportunities and threats)?*
3. *What is the position (role and place) of analytical communities in regional decision-making?*
4. *Are the analytical communities autonomous and influential political actors?*

¹⁴ Suhorukov A. Regional analytical communities as policy actors: criterion, stages of development, conditions (case study of Karelia) // Polis. №2. 2011.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Fligstin N. Spaces, power and social skills: critical analysis of new institutional theories // Economical sociology Volume 2, № 4 // <http://www.ecsoc.msses.ru>.

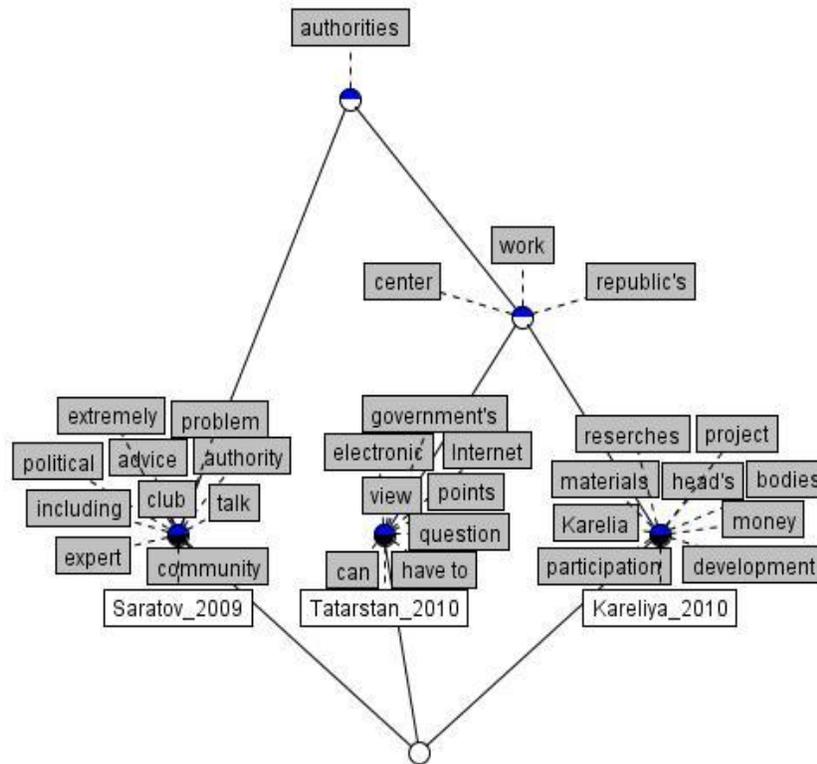
¹⁷ Salagaev A., Sergeev S. Expert community in Tatarstan: think tanks and specialists // Analytical communities in Tatarstan. Ed. Kakabadze Sh. Moscow, 2011. P. 73-88.

¹⁸ Zaytsev D. Identity characteristics of regional analytical communities: comparative analysis of Saratov region, Karelia and Tatarstan // Identity as a subject of policy analysis. Collection of articles of All-Russian scientific conference (IMEMO, 21-22 October 2010). Ed. Semenenko I., Fadeeva L., Lapkin V., Panov P. Moscow, IMEMO, 2011. P. 263-267.

5. What is the level of consolidation of analytical communities for promoting and lobbying their political positions?

On figure 1 we can see the results of data analysis of these transcripts. The data was analyzed with use of Formal Concept Analysis (FCA) framework¹⁹ and special computer programs that allow us to build “lattices” (see figure 1). To build a lattice we single out the most frequent words (not counting the prepositions etc.) that appeared in all of the three texts (three transcripts of seminars in the regions). Lattice show us these words and shows connections: which of these words appear in two of three texts (transcripts). So on figure 1 we can see that the word “authorities” is the most frequently used term for all three transcripts. The words “center”, “work”, “republic’s” are among the most frequent words for discussions in Tatarstan and Karelia.

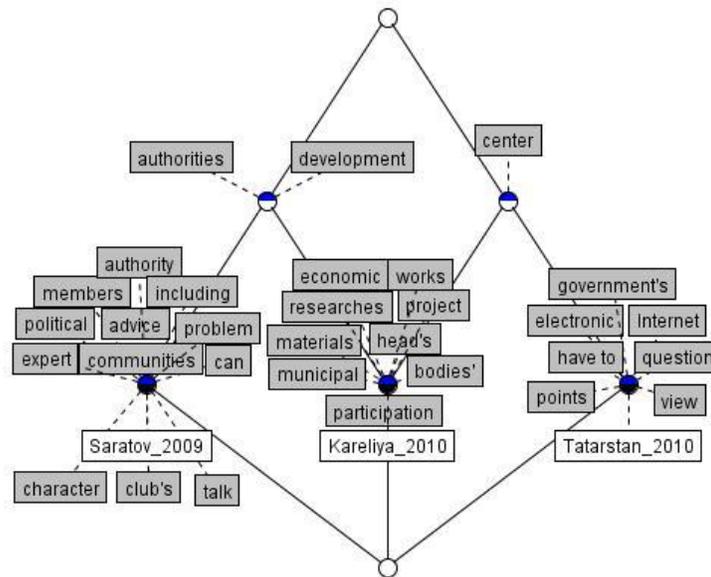
Figure 1.



On figure 2 we can see the data analysis of the same transcripts but in a different method . In this case lattice is built on the base of the most frequent words that are unique for each text (transcript). The computer software chose the most frequent words that appeared in all of the three texts and then compared them to the list of words which characterized this specific text (transcript). For example such unique concepts for Saratov’s and Kareliya’s transcripts are “authorities” and “development”, and for Kareliya and Tatarstan – the word “center”.

¹⁹ See e.g. M. Kryszkiewicz, S. Obiedkov (Eds.), CLA 2010: Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Concept Lattices and Their Applications, University of Sevilla, Sevilla, Spain, 2010.

Figure 2.



Methods of Formal Concept Analysis and traditional qualitative data analysis allow us to draw several conclusions from this lattice and its representation of the transcripts.

Analytical communities in all the three regions share a similar feature: they are oriented on one major client, i.e. authorities, specifically, regional authorities. This is both the main resource and the main threat for the development of analytical communities as autonomous and influential political actors. Widespread informal ties with regional authorities (decision-makers, political elites or politicians, preferably with the governor) give analytical communities resources and channels to influence the decision-making. At the same time such close ties damage the capacity of analytical communities to be autonomous influential political actors. They begin to support such ties, which evolve into patron-client relations undermining the autonomous political status of analytical community. Analytical communities in regions of research lack the capacity to build coalitions with alternative clients such as civil society organizations, business associations and corporations, local governance structures.

Another interesting “node” (marked by a round point on the lattice) in first “lattice”, which combines the words “center”, “work”, and “republic’s” in case of Karelia and Tatarstan, shows us that analytical communities are oriented not only on regional authorities but on the center (federal authorities). Karelia and Tatarstan were autonomous national republics in Russian Federation back in the 1990s and thus had a specific political status. That is why the issue of the center - periphery relations was very relevant and sensitive for political and intellectual elites in national republics. Federal authority paid specific attention to the political situation in national republics in its effort to take regional interests into consideration. That is why federal authorities were clients for analytical communities. And analytical communities still consider federal authorities as a potential client. Moreover the issue of center – periphery relations is still relevant for intellectual discourse in national republics (e.g. about federalism, former autonomy etc.).

Also in Saratov and Karelia where analytical communities are more developed in comparison with Tatarstan, we witness a unique discourse about regional development and participation of intellectual and political elites in this process. Indeed, more developed analytical communities in Saratov and especially in Karelia are concerned with issues of strategic development and with generating innovations. Moreover, they feel that it is vital for the region’s development, but regional authorities can’t address these issues on their own. That is why analytical communities seek other partners (clients), first of all on federal level. Applying methods of Formal Concept Analysis in combination with qualitative analysis helped to reveal new insights about analytical community of each region.

In Tatarstan analytical communities have very weak political status and their identity is undeveloped. An exception to this rule is the analytical community in governmental structures which works on the implementation of electronic government project and provides support for making public services available in electronic format.

In Saratov the identity of analytical communities initially was built around clubs that were created by the authority (the governor). These clubs didn't not survive until the present day, that is why analytical communities are very fragmented and are more concentrated in academic structures working on governmental contract.

In Karelia analytical communities are the the most developed in the three regions.. Increasing their inclusion in political processes is a serious (and realistic) concern for them, alongside increasing the participation of analytical communities in decision-making to raise the policy efficiency ,

Therefore, it is visible that factors which were singled out in our study of Russian analytical communities on the federal level proved relevant for the research of regional analytical communities, and the challenges they face in developing as policy actors . Particularly it concerns such factors as political competition and institutionalization of political process. It should be noted that such factors as liberal laws for non-profit organizations, philanthropic recourses, and philanthropy traditions do not have much influence on the regional level. There is no regional differentiation by these factors, as they are determined by more general situation in the country, and poor conditions in this sphere do not have significant regional specifics.

There are other factors relevant on the regional level: the mobility of political and intellectual elites, the system of analytical exchange between the universities, and relations among business, analytical and governmental structures. However, there is a correlation between this group of factors and political competition: high level of mobility is accompanied by high level of political competition.

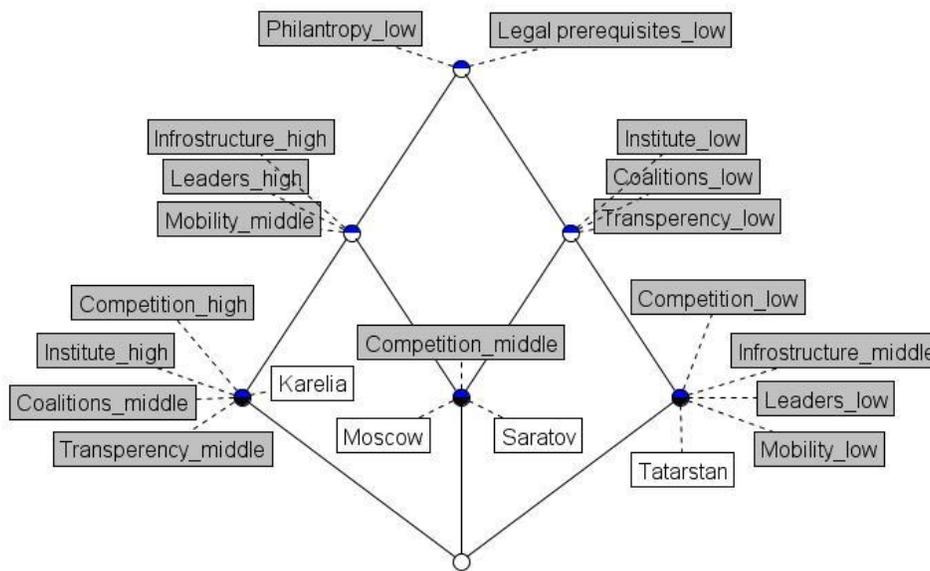
According to the research results we can name additional important conditions for the development of regional analytical communities and their identity:

1. Level of transparency of regional political processes.
2. Presence of leaders in analytical communities who have organizational and communicational skills, knowledge of project work, a strong civil position and ethics. Such leaders among analysts are ready to be responsible for their decisions and results, and to stand up for their positions.
3. The capacity of analytical communities to create coalitions with other public policy actors. It includes broadening circles of partners, joining the existing coalitions, collaborating and building partnerships with analytical representatives of business communities, political parties, civil society structures, and local governance.

* * *

To summaries situations with analytical communities in four cases (federal level – Moscow, Saratov region, Karelia and Tatarstan) we can conclude that factors for analytical communities' development are more favorable in Karelia, less – in Moscow and Saratov, unfavorable in Tatarstan (see figure 3).

Figure 3.



From the figure we can see that analytical communities with well-developed and clear identity not always lead to capacity to influence on and contribute to decision-making. For this another group of factors is needed: political competition, institutionalization and transparency of policy process, building coalitions. In Karelia we have all these factors that is why analytical communities there in comparative perspective more developed. That is why analytical communities can make contribution to regional development. Karelia is leading region in Russia in strategic program of region creation and implementation; in developing educational system and educational reforms, policy; in regional budget process transparency and development; in economy of tourism; culture development and local ethnic cultures support etc.²⁰

Political competition not automatically leads to institutionalization and transparency of policy process, building coalitions. In Moscow and Saratov analytical communities with formed identity have to work as client of patrons – federal or regional authority. In Tatarstan we have not even factors of analytical communities' development we have problems with analytical communities identity.

Also these analyses allow us to put these factors into hierarchical order according to their importance for development of analytical communities.

Conclusion

In conclusion the author will sum up several findings about the factors and conditions influencing the development of the analytical communities as powerful policy actors and about the hierarchy of such factors.

The most important factors are the level of political competition and pluralism in political process. It is the driver of analytical communities' formation as autonomous political actors. Analytical communities can emerge in an environment with diverse political actors (business communities, civil society structures, mass-media, opposition), with high political competition and contestation, and it should not be reduced to the competition between high-ranking officials (e.g. Putin-Medvedev).

²⁰ Suhorukov A. Some aspects of project work development in Karelia // Analytical communities in Karelia. Ed. Kakabadze Sh. Moscow, 2011. P. 80-89. Suhorukov A. Regional analytical communities as policy actors: criterion, stages of development, conditions (case study of Karelia) // Polis. №2. 2011.

The second in importance is the level of political process institutionalization. It influences not only the formation of analytical communities' identity but also affects their further stable development as powerful political actors. Because of the inclusion of analytical communities in democratic procedures and institution of decision-making, analytical communities' influence and power become irreversible and their political positions remain stable. Efficient work of democratic institutions promotes quality growth of analytical communities' political participation.

If the above-mentioned two factors reinforce each other, conditions are favourable for the development of analytical communities. In the opposite cases the situation is characterized by low level of policy institutionalization and low or middle level of political competition. Under such unfavourable conditions the third factor becomes very important – it is the capacity of analytical communities create coalitions with other political actors and social groups. Moreover, analytical communities cannot refrain from creating coalitions with other policy actors in stable democratic systems if they want to change social reality by their recommendations, because they are limited by the role of the “navigator of state ship”.

In situation in Russia of the 1990s and in some other Eastern European states (e.g., in Bulgaria) analysts took upon themselves functions traditionally attributed to other actors. These functions were connected with changing social reality and included articulation and aggregation of interests, agenda-setting, development of policy alternatives, policy implementation, policy evaluation, “feedback” support, opposition, mobilization of elites and citizens. Such a situation was possible in condition of weak democratic institutions and lack of competence of all other political actors and institutions.

To keep carrying out functions of social reality change in other conditions, when there is at least one strong political actor, analytical communities have to make coalitions if they want to achieve a change. Political competition allows analytical communities to be freer in choosing partners, to build genuine partnerships instead of patron-client relations.

These three factors are vital and the most important for the development of analytical communities as influential and autonomous political actors.

For Eastern European countries, where political competition and pluralism are not widespread and civil society institutions are weak, the capacity of analytical communities to build coalitions with other political actors and social groups is the most promising strategy for democratic development. Additional factor to this group is inclusiveness and transparency of policy process. It correlates with capacity to build coalitions factor.

Another three factors are vital and the most important for the emergence of analytical community's identity: infrastructure for analytical communities; actors with strategic vision i.e. leaders that have organizational, communicational, project work capitals and skills in analytical communities; Human resources and its mobility (“revolving door system”, academic and scientific traditions, quantity and quality of intellectuals and researchers, etc.).

Next group of factors: legal prerequisites (liberal NGO regulation etc.) and philanthropy resources (from the development of philanthropic culture to the amount of philanthropists) are the cultural factors which depend on long-term features of the civilization or a group of states with similar historical paths.

Taken together, such conditions (groups of factors) can create very stimulating environment for the development of analytical communities.

However, in all cases “navigators” (analytical communities) are need to seek, educate or even create “captains” (politicians and decision-makers) to change social reality, to develop democratic institutions and political participation, and to increase efficiency of policy process. Understanding this can help analysts to walk the tight rope without falling down into the chaos of anarchy and promoting only their selfish interests; and without falling under somebody's influence and taking a depended position of a powerful patron's client.

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