

The Impact of the Spread of the Novel Coronavirus Infection on the Economy of the Russian Far East and the Prospects for Russia’s “Pivot to the East” Policy (Summary)

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This paper aims to examine the impact of the spread of the novel coronavirus infection (COVID-19) on the economy of the Russian Far East, and to survey the prospects of Russia’s “Pivot to the East” policy. Although COVID-19 has been sweeping across the Russian Far East since June 2020, at the time of writing (August 2020) impacts on the region’s economy have been inconsequential, with the service industry one of few exceptions. More time is required before a clearer overall picture of the COVID-19 disaster in the Russian Far East takes shape. In addition, judging from the statements made by the heads of the Russian government, there has been no clear shift in the “Pivot to the East” policy with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is difficult to envisage the strategy being immediately frozen from a financial standpoint. At the same time, however, the focus of the “Pivot to the East” policy appears to have become bolstering the economies of the Far East region, while the initial objective, to integrate the Russian Far East into the Northeast Asian value chain, is likely to be set back.

Keywords: Novel coronavirus, COVID-19, Russian Far East, Northeast Asia, regional economy, “Pivot to the East” policy

JEL Classification Codes : O20, R11, R58