

# The System of Monitoring of Entrepreneurial Activities in the Retail Sphere

## El sistema de monitoreo de actividades empresariales en el comercio minorista

Ekaterina L. RALNIKOVA [1](#); Elena A. BRATUKHINA [2](#); Andrey V. KUKLIN [3](#); Aleksei A. NABOKIKH [4](#); Lyudmila K. PROKOPENKO [5](#)

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#### ABSTRACT:

It is generally acknowledged that small entrepreneurship is very important for national economy – in particular, economic security. Topicality of the research is predetermined by the problems and negative processes that take place in this sector of economy in the conditions of recession. At that, retail trade experiences a lot of difficulties; it used to show high rates of development, but recently it has lost its positions in the conditions of deficit of financial resources, peculiar for the crisis economy. In its turn, it negatively influences the level of services for population – not only from the quantitative but from the qualitative points of view – due to which the role of state regulation in this sphere grows. Effectiveness of the latter largely depends on the level of information provision of public authorities on the current situation and tendencies of the regulated sector's development. The purpose of the article is to open the methodological aspects of formation of the system of monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere by public authorities bodies. A leading approach to studying this problem is the systemic approach which allows for complex consideration of structural elements and stages of

#### RESUMEN:

En general, se reconoce que la pequeña iniciativa empresarial es muy importante para la economía nacional, en particular, la seguridad económica. La actualidad de la investigación está determinada por los problemas y procesos negativos que tienen lugar en este sector de la economía en condiciones de recesión. En eso, el comercio minorista experimenta muchas dificultades; solía mostrar altas tasas de desarrollo, pero recientemente ha perdido sus posiciones en las condiciones de déficit de recursos financieros, peculiares para la economía en crisis. A su vez, influye negativamente en el nivel de servicios para la población, no solo desde el punto de vista cuantitativo, sino desde el punto de vista cualitativo, por lo que crece el papel de la regulación estatal en esta esfera. La efectividad de estos últimos depende en gran medida del nivel de provisión de información de las autoridades públicas sobre la situación actual y las tendencias del desarrollo del sector regulado. El objetivo del artículo es abrir los aspectos metodológicos de la formación del sistema de monitoreo de las actividades empresariales en el ámbito minorista por parte de las autoridades públicas. Un enfoque principal para estudiar este

formation and realization of monitoring of the studied sphere of entrepreneurial activities. The article presents and opens the key components of the system of monitoring of the retail sphere, in particular, the complex of indicators that are classified according to sources, with distinguishing the indicators of quality of trade services, for which the recommended normative values are determined; the possibilities of application of the modern information and communication technologies at certain stages of monitoring are determined. The materials of the article pose a practical value for municipal authorities which tasks include provision of the high level of trade services for population.

**Keywords:** monitoring, entrepreneurial activities, retail sphere, small entrepreneurship, information and communication technologies, sociological research.

problema es el enfoque sistémico que permite una consideración compleja de los elementos estructurales y las etapas de formación y realización del monitoreo de la esfera estudiada de las actividades empresariales. El artículo presenta y abre los componentes clave del sistema de monitoreo de la esfera minorista, en particular, el complejo de indicadores que se clasifican según las fuentes, con la distinción de los indicadores de calidad de los servicios comerciales, para lo cual se determinan los valores normativos recomendados; se determinan las posibilidades de aplicación de las tecnologías modernas de información y comunicación en ciertas etapas de monitoreo. Los materiales del artículo presentan un valor práctico para las autoridades municipales, cuyas tareas incluyen la provisión de servicios comerciales de alto nivel para la población. Palabras clave: monitoreo, actividades empresariales, esfera minorista, pequeñas empresas, tecnologías de información y comunicación, investigación sociológica.

## 1. Introduction

Studying entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere showed the necessity for the formation of the system of its monitoring, as, firstly, the system of statistical information provides an incomplete picture of this sphere in view of municipal entities and, secondly, quick reaction to changing internal and external factors that influence the effectiveness of the retail sphere's functioning requires analysis of the problems and tendencies on the constant basis.

From this point of view, monitoring, which is a system of constant observation, evaluation, and forecast of the change of the state of any object and one of the modern and actual approaches to improving the management methods, possesses large potential of the effective tool of increasing the quality of economy's regulation on the whole and decision making by public authorities in regions in particular.

The presented methodological aspects of formation of the system of monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere allow creating a constant information basis for the purpose of increasing the quality of state and municipal regulation of development of the sphere for provision of the high level of services for population.

## 2. Research methods

The methodological basis of the research is the dialectical method of cognition. Besides, the authors used such methods as analysis, synthesis, systematization, and classification. The theoretical basis is the works of various scholars on the problems of formation of the systems of monitoring, organization, and conduct of monitoring activities at various levels of management and in various spheres of activities.

The research was performed in several stages:

- studying and systematizing the theoretical aspects in the sphere of monitoring activities;
- adapting the general principles of formation of the monitoring system to the sphere of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere.

## 3. Literature overview

Analysis of the scientific literature showed that the category "monitoring" is widely applied in different spheres of activities and science – not just economics. Theoretical aspects of organization and conduct of monitoring in the economic sphere are reflected in scientific works in the sphere of the theory of management, marketing, financial analysis, etc. In particular, certain methodological aspects of this problem are viewed in the works by A.V. Korotkov, I.M. Sinyaeva, G.A. Ugolnitsky, A.A. Klimenko, D.P. Petrov, M.V. Puchkin, S.V. Tikhonov, A.B. Usov, N.A. Kazakov, A. Zdunov, P. Kadochnikov, N. Mikheeva, G. Senchen, A.

Sorokina, A. Revaykin, S. Bystritsky, E. Telishkina, P. Kotler, G. Armstrong, et al. The issues of organization and conduct of monitoring in entrepreneurial activities are studied by such scholars as T.A. Dubrova, M.A. Esenin, O.V. Shulaeva, E.A. Agekyan, I.N. Romashkin, A.S. Goloushkin, I.I. Kokhanovskaya, M.N. Isyanbaev, V.N. Arkhangelsky, D.T. Musuralieva, I.V. Butenko, V.Y. Burov, N.S. Nikitina, A.Y. Koleykina, et al.

It should be noted that the methodological tools in the sphere of formation of the monitoring systems possesses is sufficiently elaborated; however, when solving this task in view of a specific sphere of activities, it is necessary to pay attention to a range of issues that are not unified – in particular, development of the parameters of indicators system on which the specific monitoring will be based and the parameters of its mechanism (collection, processing, analysis of information, etc.). It should be noted that development of scientific and technical progress opens more possibilities for solving the latter task with application of modern information and communication technologies, including for the purpose of improving and increasing the effectiveness of state and municipal regulation of economy.

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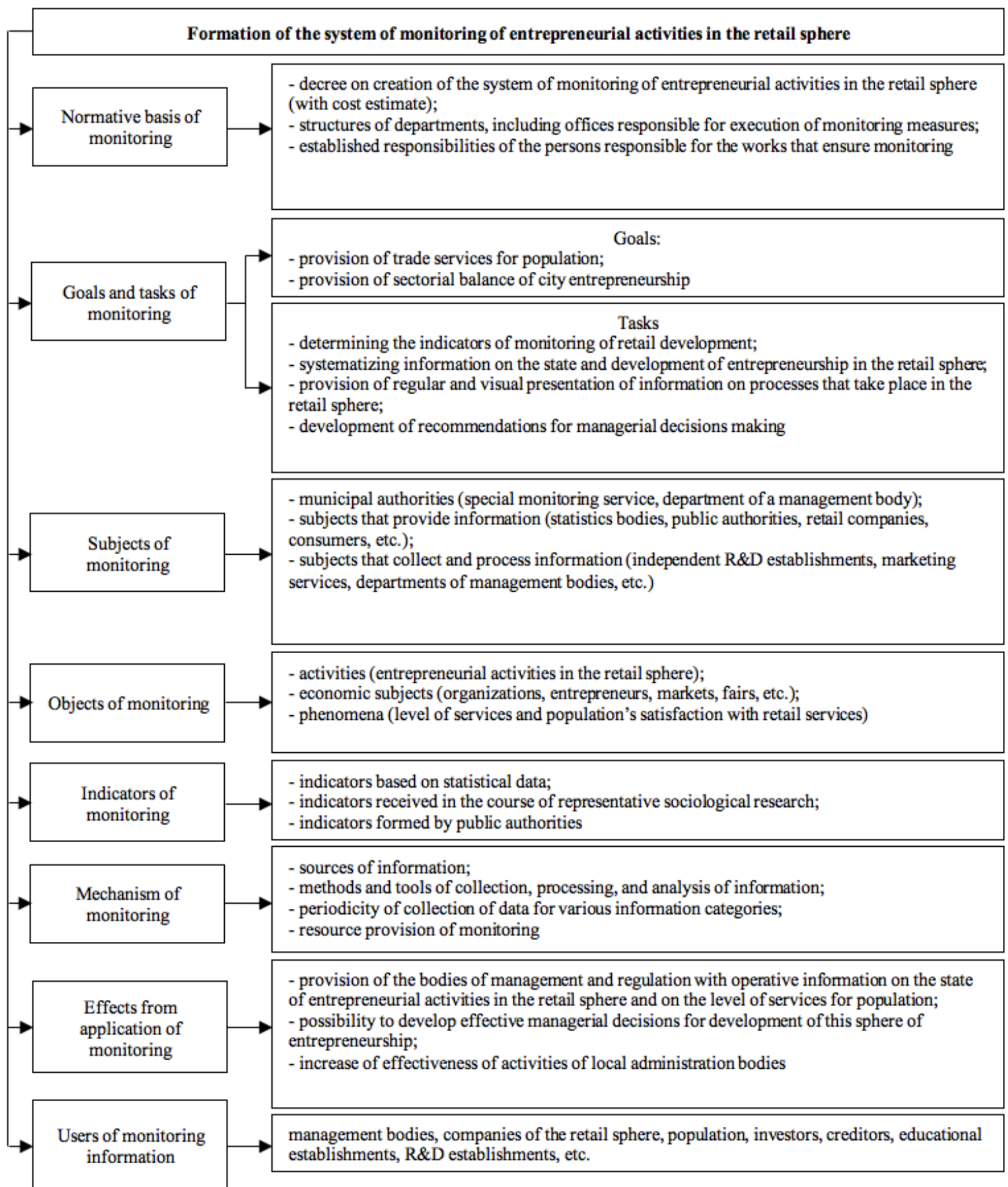
## **4. Research results**

The purpose of the research is to develop methodological aspects of formation of the monitoring system of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere by municipal authorities, as they are close to business in regions and their tasks include solving the problems and development of their territories – in particular, creation of conditions for development of the retail sphere and provision of trade services for population.

The offered structural elements of formation of the monitoring system of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere are presented in Figure 1.

### **Figure 1**

Structural elements of formation of the monitoring system of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere

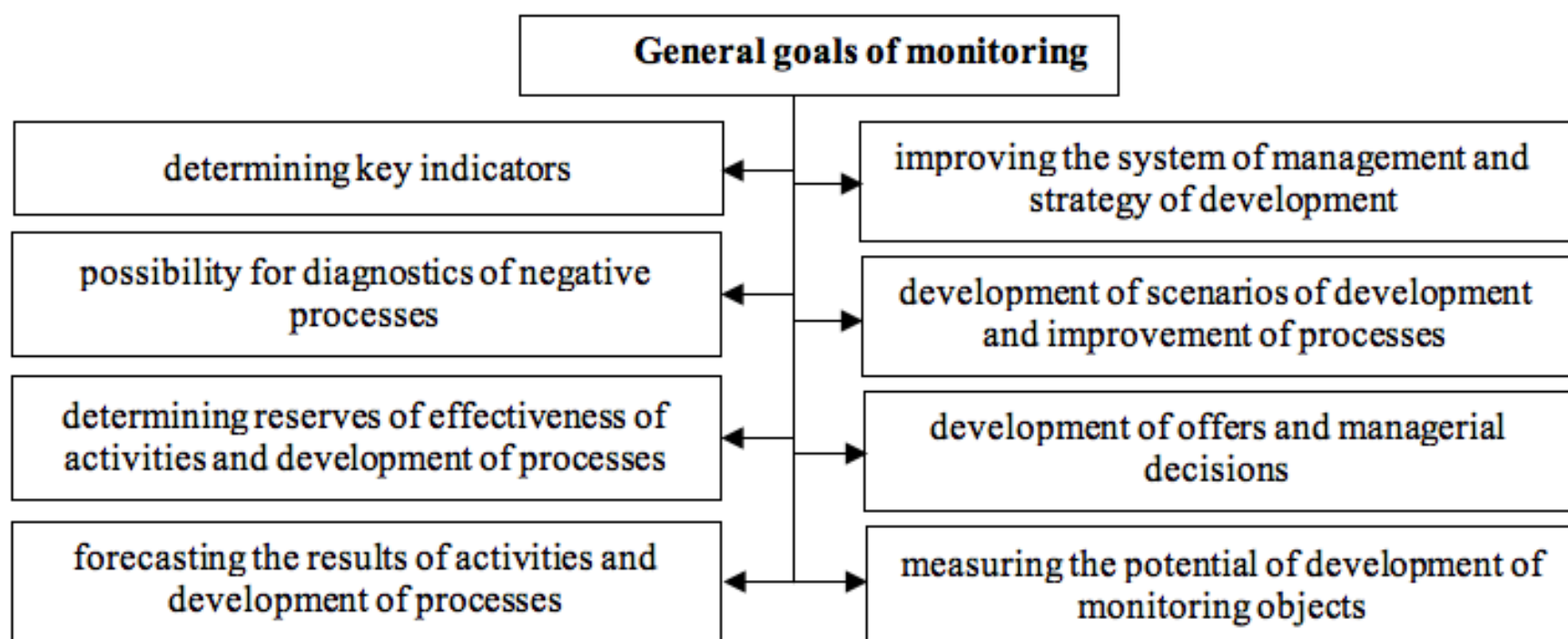


**Formation of the normative base.** Organization and conduct of monitoring are impossible without its normative provision, which determines and establishes the main components of the monitoring system: its goals and tasks, subject and objects, and main indicators that are subject to determination and analysis, determination of works and procedures on organization and conduct of monitoring, distribution of authorities and obligation between its subjects, resource provision, and periodic character of monitoring, etc.

**Determining the key goals and tasks of organization and conduct of monitoring of entrepreneurship in the retail sphere.** On the whole, expedience of organization and conduct of monitoring is predetermined by the possibility of using its results for the purpose of analysis and increase of effectiveness of managing certain activities.

The general goals of any monitoring are presented in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**  
General goals of monitoring.



The key goals of formation and organization of monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere by municipal authorities are provision of trade services for population and provision of sectorial balance in the system of city entrepreneurship. Besides, the system of monitoring is necessary for conducting the information provision in the sphere of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere, which is actual and popular in the modern economic conditions – especially within the state and municipal support for small forms of entrepreneurship.

The main tasks of conduct of monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere are shown in Figure 1. It should be noted that solving these tasks is aimed at provision of conditions for evaluating not only the general state and tendencies of development but also analysis of consequences of the implemented events and solutions of public authorities in the part of regulation and support for entrepreneurial activities on the territory of the corresponding municipal entities, as well as evaluation of the state of competitive environment in the local market.

**Determining the subjects and objects of monitoring.** As was mentioned above, the key subject (“core”) of the system of monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere should be municipal authorities which coordinate the organizational & methodological and program & technical provision of all processes of monitoring.

**Determining the key indicators of monitoring and their normative (potential) value.** Selection of the indicators system depends on peculiarities and specifics of the studied sphere of activities and, accordingly, on the form and goals of the formed monitoring.

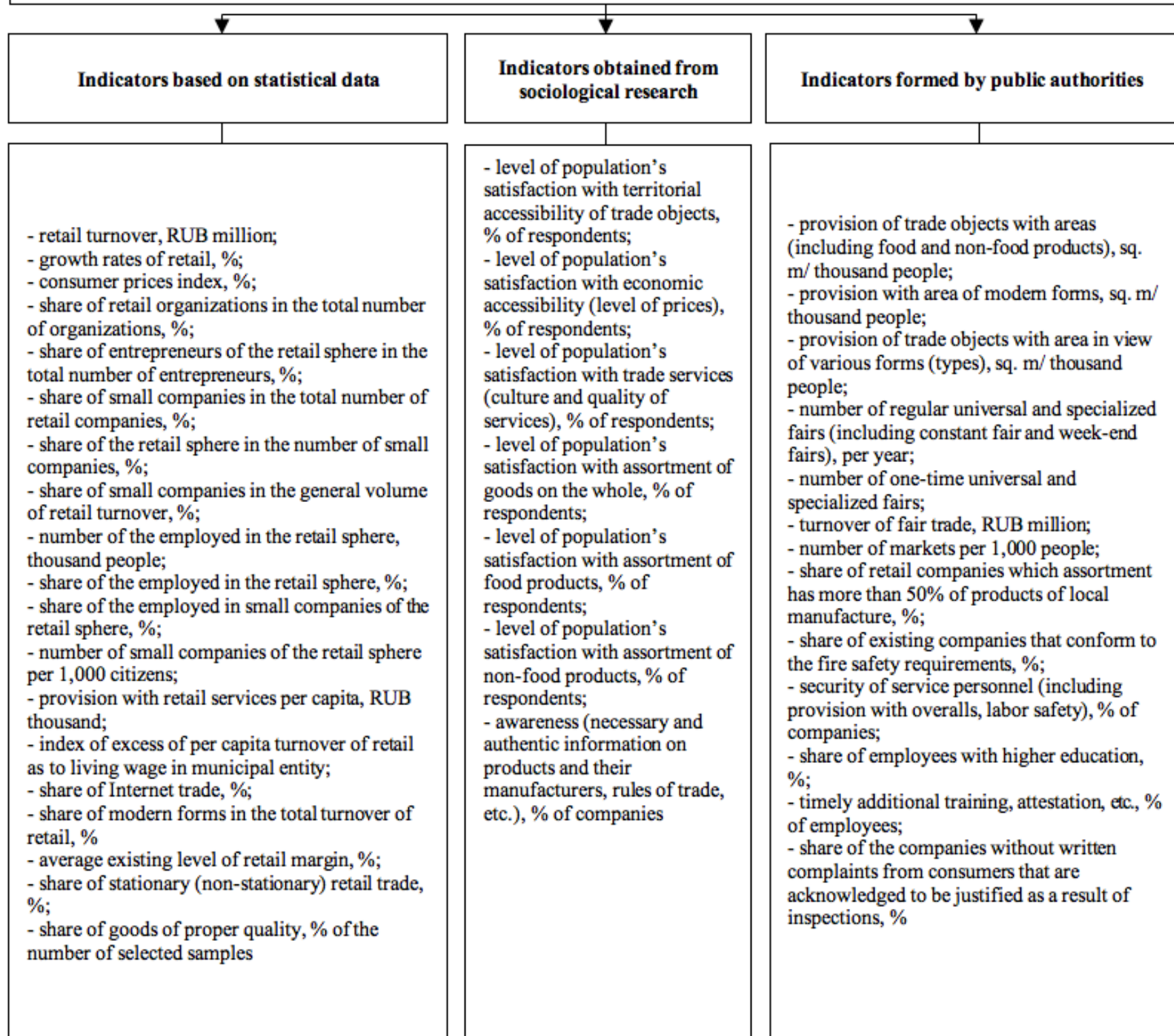
According to multiple studies, it is impossible to obtain full information on the real state of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere on the basis of statistical indicators. That’s why the system of its monitoring should include the data formed by public authorities and the indicators received as a results of organization and conduct of sociological research.

Due to the above, we offer the following system of indicators of monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere (Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

The system of indicators of monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere at the municipal level.

**System of indicators of monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere at the municipal level**



In particular, for implementing the goals of monitoring of the studied sphere of entrepreneurial activities, we deem it expedient to distinguish – from the general system of indicators – the indicator of quality of trade services for population on the territory of municipal entity with determining their normative (potential) values for the possibility of evaluating the quality of such services (Table 1).

**Table 1**  
The system of indicators of the quality of trade services for population.

Indicator	Normative (potential) value
● Level of population's satisfaction with territorial accessibility of trade objects, % of respondents	100
● Level of population's satisfaction with economic accessibility (price level), % of respondents	100
● Level of population's satisfaction with trade services (culture and quality of services), % of respondents	100

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of population's satisfaction with assortment of products, % of respondents including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- food products;</li> <li>- non-food products</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>100</p> <p>100</p> <p>100</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision with trade areas, sq. m./1,000 people including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- for sale of food products;</li> <li>- for sale of non-food products</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>516*</p> <p>157*</p> <p>359*</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share of modern forms in the total turnover of retail, %</li> </ul>	<p>70</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of development of Internet trade (share in turnover), %</li> </ul>	<p>6</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratio of the number of stationary and non-stationary retail objects, times</li> </ul>	<p>5</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of product of proper quality, % of the number of selected samples</li> </ul>	<p>100</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire safety, % of working companies that correspond to the requirements</li> </ul>	<p>100</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security of service personnel (including provision with overalls, labor protection), % companies</li> </ul>	<p>100</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness (availability of necessary and authentic information on the goods and their manufacturers, as well as trade rules, etc.), % of companies</li> </ul>	<p>100</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional level of personnel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- higher education, % of employees;</li> <li>- timely additional training, attestations, etc., % of employees</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>At least 60</p> <p>100</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation of consumers' rights in the retail sphere (absence of written complaints that are acknowledged justified as a result of inspections), % of companies</li> </ul>	<p>100</p>
<p>*By the example of "City Kirov" MO</p>	

## ***Development of the mechanism of organization and conduct of monitoring***

*Sources of information.* The reports on sociological studies, publication sources, and data bases of statistics bodies, indicators of public authorities, etc.

*Methods and tools of collection, processing, and analysis of information.* The main methods of collection of information on entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere could be office research that suppose collection of information from open sources (mass media, the Internet, statistics bodies, etc.); method of expert evaluation; sociological studies in the form of survey and interview (consumers, entrepreneurs), creation of focus groups; registration (observation); cartographic method. Selection of a specific method depends on the character of collected information, quality of state statistical accounting, and the

possibility of municipal entity (primarily, HR and material).

At that, the role of municipal public authorities is brought down to organization of all works on monitoring (including sociological research), and the direct execution of these works could involve other subjects (individuals, organizations, public authorities, etc.).

One of these types of works could be studying municipal entity (with division into micro-districts) for studying and evaluation of territorial placement of the retail sphere companies. The result of such research will be the map of municipal entity with connection of these companies to the main transport flows, residential districts and complexes, and large industrial companies. Also, there could be collection of information on assortment and prices for products and regimes of companies' work.

Implementation of such form of works within monitoring is possible with the usage of modern information and communication technologies. In particular, wide possibilities are provided by such popular cartographic services as Yandex.Maps, Google Maps, Google Earth, geo-information system, and city information directory 2GIS. It should be noted that availability of various options of electronic or interactive maps (online services, autonomous program products) makes them widely accessible to different categories of users.

Special attention should be paid to such aspects of territorial placement of retail companies as:

- determining regions (micro-regions) peculiar for deficit of retail companies that offer everyday goods or their absence within the walking distance;
- determining the types of retail companies that are absent on the studied territory;
- presence/absence of competition in this sphere of entrepreneurship;
- determining the potential places for retail companies, etc.

In view of the necessity for provision of the high level of services for population as the main goal of development and support for entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere, an important form of works within monitoring is representative sociological survey among consumers. On the whole, quality of its preparation and conduct determines the information base of monitoring.

The key tools for determining satisfaction of the population with development of retail services are questionnaires.

It should be noted that the possibilities of this traditional tool of sociological and marketing research grow with development of the scientific and technical progress. In particular, here we speak of online surveys with application of the modern information technologies which become more popular due to their multiple advantages and which suppose collection of information from the respondents via the Internet: web-questionnaires, e-mails, self-downloading questionnaires, etc.

Application of online questionnaires allows conducting automatic collection and analysis of information that is received from respondents. A lot of web-sites support this service (masters/constructors of surveys creation) and allow creating different types of surveys: the ones supposing selection of one or more replies, evaluation of phenomenon (process, object, etc.) according to a certain scale, entering data (open surveys), drop-down menus, etc. with completion of a standard form. Besides, there is a possibility of overview of the results (the data on the received replies) in the schematic or graphical form, as well as export of these data into electronic tables.

For the purpose of monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere, organization of consumers' survey is possible by placing it on the official web-sites of municipal public authorities and other subjects involved in the survey.

The main aspects of population's survey could be evaluation of population's satisfaction with trade services (their quality and culture); evaluation of population's satisfaction with territorial accessibility of retail objects; evaluation of population's satisfaction with economic accessibility of retail objects (level of prices); evaluation of population's satisfaction with the level of assortment of products presented in retail companies of the city (level of



development of assortment of various groups of food and non-food products); evaluation of development of various types of retail stores; determining the consumers' preferences as to manufacturers of food and non-food products. Besides, the survey could include collection of respondents' opinions regarding services in retail companies, popularity of their certain forms and methods, correspondence of products and trade services to expectations and needs of consumers, level of development of trade objects, convenience of regimes of their work and territorial placement, and offers on improvement of their work. The issues of peculiarities of formation of demand in new micro-districts of the city, time and financial expenditures of consumers for goods, and territorial differences in population's consumption as to the structure, volume, etc. could be interesting as well.

For the purpose of determining the factors that hinder the development of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere on the territory of municipal entity, we suggest using – together with the data of statistics bodies, collected with application of the forms of statistical surveys (results of quarterly surveys of retail organizations) – questionnaires and focus groups. Apart from the factors, these tools can include the aspect of determining the entrepreneurs' opinion in the necessary measures for stimulating the development of the retail sphere on the territory of municipal entity.

Implementation of this stage of works in the course of monitoring is possible (as with consumers) with application of not only standard procedures but modern information technologies. Apart from the above types of surveys, conducted via the Internet, there are such effective forms of technologies as online focus groups, Internet forums, teleconferences, chats, etc.

The main principles of preparation and conduct of surveys are general, and a very important stage is analysis of its results which supposes verification of prevision, completeness, and quality of completion of the methodological tools, entering the data (if necessary) and analysis with the help of computer, and preparation of report with provision of conclusions and recommendations.

The main methods of processing and analysis of the information received in the course of monitoring could be mathematical and statistical methods, comparison, method of relative and comparative values, graphic method, grouping, etc. It is also offered to use the program products and means of storage and processing of information – e.g., Microsoft Office Excel, Microsoft Office Access, etc., which allow working with electronic tables, data bases, etc.

*Periodicity of collection of data for various information categories.* Statistical information – annually (in view of periodicity and terms set by the Federal Plan of Statistics. Information from sociological research – at least two times per year. Information formed by public authorities – annually (operative information could be formed with quarterly or semi-annual periodicity).

*Resource provision of monitoring.* On the whole, organization and conduct of monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere are to be done by means of local budget. Besides, conduct of sociological research is possible through the system of municipal order.

### ***Determining the effects of application of the system of monitoring and determining the main users of its results***

Organization of the system of monitoring could be the key tool of information provision for decision making by local authorities in the sphere of regulation of entrepreneurship in the retail sphere that will allow receiving full and wide information on its economic state and tendencies of development, level of trade services for population for a certain list of indicators. Besides, the information base formed on the basis of monitoring could be a source of indicators for evaluation of activities of local administration, stimulating the increase of its effectiveness.

The circle of users of monitoring information could be rather wide (Figure 1).

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## **5. Discussion of the received results**

Monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere is very interesting for a lot of researchers. For example, certain results could be found in the works by R.A. Lugovskaya, O.S. Zybin, V.V. Shishkin, N.S. Nikitina, A.Y. Koleykin, I.A. Kolbashev, etc. In a lot of cases monitoring is seen as analysis of the state of this sphere of economy that reflects the main problems and tendencies of its development or is used as a tool of management at the micro-economic level, when observation and evaluation of development of certain companies are performed. From the methodological position, only certain aspects of this problem are viewed: pricing and assortment satisfaction of consumers, system of indicators, etc.

The article presents a complex approach to formation of the system of monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere at the level of municipal entities which opens the key aspects of the system and the process of its formation. Besides, the system of indicators is developed which is classified according to the following sources: formed by state statistics bodies, in the course of sociological research, and by public authorities. A peculiarity of the presented methodological aspects is development of the normed system of indicators of quality of trade services for population.

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## **6. Conclusions**

At present, monitoring is a popular tool in the system of management of various objects, phenomena, processes; according to various studies, entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere are no exception. Retail services market has a large economic and social importance with provision of services for population being one of its main aspects. This issue belongs to the competence of local authorities which regulate socio-economic development of territories. Effective decision making in this sphere is difficult without proper information provision of activities of public authorities. At the same time, formation and implementation of high-quality system of monitoring requires solving a lot of tasks.

The offered methodological aspects of formation of the system of monitoring of entrepreneurial activities in the retail sphere allow creating the information massive of data and phenomena subject to periodic observation for providing the possibility to conduct regulation, evaluate the effectiveness,

implement measures for managerial decisions, implement corrections, and realize measures for supporting entrepreneurship in the retail sphere in case of necessity for the purpose of improving the competitive environment and increase of the level of trade services for population.

The materials have practical value for public authorities, which tasks include provision of the high level of trade services for population. Besides, they could be interesting for a wide circle of readers: students of universities, scientific officers, scholars, representatives of business society, etc.

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1. Vyatka State University, Kirov, Russia. e-mail: [hel0901@mail.ru](mailto:hel0901@mail.ru)

2. Vyatka State University, Kirov, Russia

3. Vyatka State University, Kirov, Russia

4. Vyatka State University, Kirov, Russia

5. Vyatka State University, Kirov, Russia

