

**Report**  
**Market Studies Smart Consumption 2020**  
**RUSSIA**  
**St. Petersburg House Property Owners Association**

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The sharing economy is a socio-economic model that is developing fast in Russia. It is already forming smart consumption market and making a significant contribution to development of the national and regional economy.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The sharing economy (SE) is thriving. According to PwC estimates, by 2025 the global turnover of smart consumption market could reach \$335 billion. It's activity is becoming increasingly important for Russia, especially in light of the development of the digital economy. User communities are central to the business model and longevity of smart consumption market companies.

Worldwide, the SE model and smart consumption market is gradually changing consumer behavior and habits: with more choice and affordability of services, many users are abandoning ownership of things and have started thinking more about the rational use of shared resources rather than traditional consumption.

Despite overwhelming interest in the SE and smart consumption market development, today in Russia there is no common notion of what the sharing economy is. Regulation of the SE sector and smart consumption market in Russia develops from "the particular to the general", i.e. through specific industries (transport, housing, professional services).

## 3. SMART CONSUMPTION TRENDS

### 3.1. REGULATIONS AND STRATEGIES

The framework for the deployment of the sharing economy and smart consumption market development in Russia is defined by the constitutional norm on the right of citizens of the Russian Federation to freely use and dispose of their property in order to carry out activities not prohibited by law.

Russian legislation contains a notion of "joint use" (a situation where several property owners own and use resources jointly). However, this concept does not reflect the essence of the SE and is not applicable to this model.

The rise of the sharing economy in Russia contributes to fulfilling at least half of the objectives enshrined in the Decree of the Russian President dated 7 May 2018 No. 204 "On national goals and strategic objectives of the Russian Federation's development until 2024".

Moreover, collaborative consumption does not just improve figures but also changes economic relations across very different spheres –urban environment, urban and long-distance transportation, hospitality and rentals of commercial real estate and equipment.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SE companies on smart consumption market develop their own quality control system based on horizontal connections and user trust. The basis is user feedback and a system of ratings. Traditional means of consumer protection complement the control system set up by the SE.

SE companies need to constantly improve the rules on smart consumption market and user experience for their community members, while ensuring users comply with legal requirements. This applies to all aspects of their operations – from informing service providers that permits are mandatory, to controlling the quality of service delivery. SE companies providing information services are responsible for the integrity and reliability of the information provided.

Key initiatives.

Amendments to the Federal Law "On Protection of Consumer Rights". The amendments propose a special legal status for market "aggregators" that enable users to obtain information about goods and services and buy them online. It is suggested that such aggregators of goods/services, like

traditional stores, would be liable for losses incurred by the consumer due to the provision of unreliable information.

Status: adopted in 2018. On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 came in force amendments to the Federal Law "On Protection of Consumer Rights". President of Russian Federation Vladimir Putin signed them in July of 2018. According to the document internet-aggregators are liable for information about goods and services they provide.

Amendments to the Federal Law "Road Transport Charter...". The amendments propose a special legal status for aggregators (information intermediaries) of passenger and luggage transport services and for passenger taxis. They would become liable for the provision of unreliable information.

Status: Under review. Project of Federal Law N 481004-7 "On governmental regulation of relations in organizing and performing transportation in form of taxi and performing services of taxi order.

## TAXES

The majority of SE companies on smart consumption market charge a commission on transactions made between the service or goods provider and the purchaser. SE companies' revenues vary depending on the industry, but generally they do not exceed 15% of the total turnover. The remaining 85% are distributed among the users providing the services.

International SE companies operating on smart consumption market in Russia are liable for taxation equivalent to local VAT, under the so-called "Google Tax."

According to statistics, user revenue from SE activities in most cases do not exceed 25% of their annual household income and are mostly spent to meet the costs associated with maintaining the property or goods being shared (fuel, utilities, insurance, etc.).

Meanwhile, there are users on smart consumption market whose SE income represents their main source of income. Such individuals can already be referred to as selfemployed or micro-entrepreneurs. While Russian legislation covers self-employed people, the range of those who today fall under this category is rather narrow. To further develop of smart consumption market, it would be useful to expand the list of activities seen as selfemployment. This would allow citizens drawing their main income from the smart consumption market to obtain a stable official status and continue to contribute to the development of the national economy.

### Key initiatives

Amendments to the Tax Code of the Russian Federation ("Google Tax").

The amendments make foreign companies selling services to individuals in the Russian Federation liable to VAT. Taxable services include IT-based provision to sellers and buyers of the opportunity (information-related, organizational and other) to establish contact and conclude transactions.

Status: adopted in 2016.

Amendments to the law on cash registers. The amendments stipulate that companies selling goods to the population and organizations, as well as services to organizations, must carry out payment transactions by means of certified cash registers that transmit data to the Federal Tax Service via the internet. Since SE companies are information services connecting the customer and the service provider, the amendments do not clearly spell out if the use of such devices is mandatory for them.

Status: Adopted in 2017.

Amendments to the Civil and Tax Codes of the Russian Federation introducing the status of self-employed people.

The amendments introduce a new legal status allowing people to provide certain types of services (tutoring, cleaning, caring for the elderly, etc.) without registering as an individual entrepreneur. This concept reflects the profile of the majority of SE service providers most accurately.

Status: Adopted in 2017

## USER INFORMATION

Since SE companies on smart consumption market often act as aggregators of offers and information about goods and services provided by individuals from all over the world, the requirement to differentiate information on a national basis presents a challenge for them.

SE companies on smart consumption market are extra-territorial. This means that anyone with access to the internet can become a member of an SE company's community on smart consumption market and exchange goods and services with users from all over the world. Interaction with community members from different countries without physical presence in those countries helps minimize the cost of services for users – this is one of the advantages of the sharing economy model.

Attempts to “tie” user and transaction data to a specific location and the inconsistency of norms regulating storage and transfer of personal information in different countries make life more difficult and generate additional costs for SE companies on smart consumption market. This, in turn, can lead to an increase in the cost of services for consumers and deprive SE companies on smart consumption market of their main advantage – offering services at low prices. Moreover, conflicting regulation in this area may cause barriers to the expansion of platforms internationally, including Russian platforms internationally.

Key initiatives.

Law on the localization of personal data. The law stipulates that companies operating in Russia must store personal data of Russian citizens on the territory of the country.

Status: adopted in 2014

Initiative to regulate big user data.

The initiative calls for the introduction of a legal definition of big user data (potentially any user data collected by information systems and devices, including profiles on various internet resources, information on geolocation, biometrics and user behavior) and regulating the use of such data by Russian and international companies.

Status: Under review. Amendments to Federal Law “On information, information technologies and protection of information”.

## LICENCING

According to Russian legislation, a number of activities are subject to licensing (for example, maintenance of medical equipment, fire safety equipment, passenger transport services, medical services, waste handling, etc.).

Working with service providers holding the necessary permits gives SE companies a level of assurance that the services will be provided properly and users will be satisfied. This, in turn, allows SE companies on smart consumption market to attract more users to their online platforms, i.e. to develop their business.

A number of SE companies operating in Russia have already faced the need to obtain permits at the regional level. For example, in Moscow, Uber only works with drivers who have a taxi license.

Due to their nature, platforms often rely on their users to ensure that they are in compliance with local licensing rules. SE companies can impose sanctions (for example, block user accounts) in case community members do not fulfill the established requirements, but due to differing regulations, it is difficult for them to police this area effectively.

## 3.2. INSTITUTIONS, PROGRAMS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Online maps and geolocation services are an essential condition for the existence and development of the sharing economy. Precise and up-to-date maps are intrinsic to carsharing. Thanks to geolocation, users can easily find a vacant vehicle, and the built-in navigation app helps find an optimal route. Geolocation platforms such as the one based on Yandex.Maps solve both consumer and business problems. They make it possible to offer services (delivery errands, rentals, etc.) that are truly mobile and convenient.

Trust between parties in a deal is another crucial aspect of collaborative consumption advancement. Sharing transactions are usually made remotely between strangers. This is why tools for screening users and providing financial guarantees are especially relevant to sharing communities.

## Crowdfunding in Russia

Estimates of the Russian crowdfunding market vary up to 11 billion rubles (Central Bank data for 2017). Most of that sum, however, is comprised of high-risk investment, made exclusively from financial interest and involving acquisition of securities (for example, stock) of the company that is raising funds.

According to global statistics, most projects raising money through crowdfunding fall in the category of game development and designer or tech startups. However, in Russia, crowdfunding platforms are mostly used for projects in the social sphere and the arts (especially the film and music industries).

The monetization model of major platforms envisages a commission on collected funds (about 5-10%, excluding payment systems' commissions). If donations do not reach a certain target or, in some cases, 50% of the target, pledges are returned to the funders.

Key initiatives.

The bill envisages a ceiling amount of money that an unqualified investor may invest per year, and a limit on the amount one can raise in a year. Both values would be determined by Central Bank by-laws.

Status: adopted in 2019. Federal law of August 2, 2019 N 259-FZ "on attracting investments using investment platforms and on amendments to certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation

Key platforms:

planeta.ru <https://planeta.ru/>

- 983 757 PEOPLE, 735 CAMPAIGNS, 282 445 000 RUB. REWARDS

BOOMSTARTER <https://boomstarter.ru/>

- 213 907 PEOPLE, 1 997 successful projects, 412 776 487 RUB attracted.

Main areas for fundraising: Social (community) projects. Music. Filmmaking. Charity. Literature and journalism

## 3.3. MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Smart consumption market is growing:

- 2017 year – 392 billion rubles
- 2018 year - 511 billion rubles +30%
- 2019 year - 769,5 billion rubles +50%

Transaction volume per SE sectors:

NAME	2017 billion rubles	2018 billion rubles	2019 billion rubles
C2C sales of things	295	370	566
Online labor exchange (P2P service)	73	98	140
Carsharing	5,1	13	20,5
Carpooling	8,1	13,7	17,8
Short property rent	5,8	9,8	15,6
Office sharing	4,3	5,7	8,5
Personal mobility	-	-	0,46
Crowdfunding	0,3	0,4	0,43
Rent of things	-	-	0,22

C2C-commerce

Increase of goods flow due to international delivery.

Geography change:

- increase of sales share in regions (from 14 to 28%)
- decrease in Moscow and St. Petersburg (from 37% in 2017 to 24% in 2019)

Number of C2C sellers increases faster than number of buyers.

Online labor exchange (P2P services).

Contractors actively switch to professional income tax (selfemployment taxation)

Transport

Carsharing is more popular than carpooling. Attraction of new strategic investors by carsharing operators. Verification of documents in carpooling (carsharing and online labor exchange have it).

Property.

Flow of clients from over-regulated hostels to rooms and apartments (flats). Increase of incoming tourism is expected due to e-visas. \

Office sharing: massive launch of WeWork on Russian market (4<sup>th</sup> place on sq. meters).

Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is stagnating as crowd financing in general.

In crowd financing:

Decrease of volume and p2p-credits

Positive like-for-like dynamic in p2b-credits.

Food sharing

17 million tons of food waste = 1.6 trillion Rubles

Development of commercial and non-commercial services.

With its help 7 000 tons of food was saved in a year.

Criteria of smart consumption market

Operates online. Allows consumers to use, rather than buy. Based on communities of people who: 1) own resources; and, 2) those who use them

Positive benefits of smart consumption market

Effective and environmentally friendly use of resources.

Smart consumption market helps to use food close to expiry date and to decrease food waste volume.

For example, Smart consumption allows you to make more use of your car while at the same time reducing the number of cars on the road.

Cheaper goods and services and possibilities for additional income.

The Smart consumption cuts costs for users making travel and home improvements, for instance, cheaper. It also allows accommodation owners or handymen to generate additional income.

Faster access to services and more flexibility and mobility. Sharing economy companies on smart consumption market provide access to goods and services 24/7 and significantly reduce waiting times for services such as taxis.

Building and fostering a horizontal system of relations between users on smart consumption market.

The SE companies on smart consumption market are based on user feedback and reviews, meaning that users themselves ensure and control quality.

SE companies on smart consumption market facilitate the rational use of resources or their exchange, reducing the burden on the environment. They help

generate additional income for a great number of people, thus fulfilling an important social function. The income of the companies themselves does not usually exceed 15% of turnover. The rest goes to the users.

SE companies on smart consumption market provide savings not only to individual users of online services, but also to entire communities. They help significantly ease the burden on urban resources (especially transport infrastructure) and simplify access to a whole range of goods and services.

As a rule, SE users on smart consumption market receive additional income – some 25% of their annual household income. It is mostly spent to meet the costs associated with maintaining the property (fuel, utilities, insurance, etc.).

User, whose main income comes from smart consumption market, are self-employed or micro-entrepreneurs, contribute to economy development. It is advisable to increase number of activities types available for self-employed citizens – for better coverage of activities types in SE.

## ENGAGING ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE CONSUMERS

Users aged 25-44 make up the largest and most active group of sharing economy participants on smart consumption market.

Key sectors. Transport. Accommodation. Services. Knowledge. Tech/goods

Examples of smart consumption market

Transport

### **Carsharing in Russia**

Like in the rest of the world, shared cars in Russia are mostly provided by companies that own fleets and allow users to leave a car any place within a designated zone.

In 2018, the number of players in the Moscow market reached fifteen, which, judging by global experience, might be considered excessive. In the coming years, market consolidation is expected in Moscow.

Beyond Moscow, mass adoption of carsharing is yet to happen. It is usual for a Russian city to have just one or two operators with small fleets. The only exception is St Petersburg with five operators.

User portrait:

80% are men. 25-35 years old. Above average income 5 years of driving experience. 62% already have one car in their family

Why people choose carsharing:

- Saving in comparison with a personal car and taxi,
- Privacy and a sense of security in comparison with public transportation or taxi,
- Mobility and freedom when combining carsharing with public transportation and taxi (it is not always easy to find where to park).

What discourages people from using carsharing:

- Less privacy, feeling of comfort and safety in comparison with a personal car,
- There might be no car available "here and now," especially during rush hours,
- Fear of damaging others' property and being held responsible.

Today in Russia there are 25 carsharing companies that operate in 20 cities. Approximately 25 thousand vehicles are used in the process.

The P2P model (when a private car owner allows others to use their automobile) has not earned popularity so far.

Key operators:

Yandex Drive <https://yandex.ru/drive/msk/>

In 2018 revenue of Yandex.Drive was 1,13 billion rubles and net loss 550,6 million rubles

By the end of 2019 года Yandex.Drive became second world biggest carsharing in the world by number of cars.

BELKA Car <https://belkacar.ru/>

Delimobil <https://delimobil.ru/>

### **Carpooling in Russia**

In Russia and globally, carpooling (ridesharing) platforms are mainly focused on long-distance rides, complementing trains and buses.

Today Russia is the largest carpooling market in Europe: the Russian community includes 16 million members. About 100,000 Russians use carpooling daily.

Carpooling has not yet been integrated into in-city rides. The practice of shared daily commutes is chiefly based on long-term offline agreements between neighbors and colleagues. However, platform solutions for short-distance ridesharing is being tested in various countries.

Different monetization models exist for carpooling platforms. The most popular ones are commission on transactions and subscription for access to the platform.

User portrait: 60% are male (the share of men is even higher among drivers).

25-35 years old. Average income. Within the community, 30% of drivers also become passengers.

Why people choose carpooling:

- Opportunity to save in comparison with driving their own car or public transit
- A more comfortable ride in comparison with public transit
- Flexibility in terms of time and place of boarding (a chance to ride with a last mile included, “from door to door”)

- For drivers: opportunity to cover gas expenses

What discourages people from using carpooling:

- Low awareness of the existence of carpooling
- Trust issue: travelling with a stranger might seem risky
- Low traffic (supply and demand) for small towns

Key operators: BlaBlaCar <https://www.blablacar.ru/>

Real estate rentals

### **Short-term rentals of accommodations in Russia**

Sharing accommodations (shared rooms, private rooms and apartments) has been growing rapidly in Russia in the last several years (55% CAGR in 2014-2017). In 2018, the growth rate is expected to be 70%, linked to the FIFA World Cup.

The practice of lodging at locals’ apartments during global events reduces environmental impact, as the need for construction of new hotels, whose occupancy rate after such events leaves much to be desired, is decreased. This practice also facilitates inter-cultural dialog.

Russia is characterized by a high share of domestic tourism in short-term rentals. Even on Airbnb, specializing in an international audience, the portion of domestic trips among bookings in Russia reached 63% by 2017.

Platforms for renting out residential estates usually monetize through commissions on transactions, paid listing or promotion of ads.

Guest portrait: Gender-nonspecific (50/50). 25-35 years old. Average income.

Host portrait: 60% are women. 30-45 years old. Average income.

Why people choose P2P rentals:

- Opportunity to save on accommodation and meals in comparison with hotels,
- Immersion into local atmosphere, communication with the host,
- When renting the entire apartment or house, more privacy, as compared to a hotel.

What discourages people from using P2P rentals:

- Trust issue: fear of staying at a stranger’s,
- Lack of hotel services,
- Possible dissatisfaction with cleaning.

Key platforms:

Avito <https://www.avito.ru/>

CIAN.ru <https://www.cian.ru/>

### **Office sharing in Russia**

With respect to commercial real estate, collaborative consumption approaches are embodied in mainly two models: coworking and office as a service (OaaS). In coworking individual workers and companies use common spaces and pay for individual work stations and services (cleaning, communications, etc.). In OaaS facilities, a firm rents one or several rooms and acquires access to common office spaces and administrative support. These two models are frequently combined in a single business center.

Another model of joint use of commercial real estate involves several small companies teaming up in a pool to find a relatively big office. Likewise, a tenant who rents an entire office may sub-rent extra space or rent it during hours when the office is not needed via an online marketplace. These models can be found on the Office Sharing and Place for Work platforms, for example.

Users of OaaS:

- Startups,
- Small and medium-sized businesses,
- Project teams.

Coworking users:



- Freelancers,
- Remote employees,
- Creative professionals.

Number of coworking spaces by region as of 2020: <https://www.kovorkingi.ru/>

- Moscow – 241,
- Saint Petersburg-75,
- Yekaterinburg-25,
- Novosibirsk-20,
- Samara-16.

Key OaaS players:

Regus <https://www.regus.ru/>

SOK <https://sok.works/ru>

Деловой <https://www.delovoy.su/>

Key coworking networks:

COWORKING START <https://coworking-start.ru/>

### **C2C sales in Russia**

In Russia, every year approximately 8 million people become sellers and 10 million people become buyers on C2C platforms. About 10% of buyers account for almost 50% of sales. Just 18% of sellers sell goods on C2C platforms regularly.

C2C commerce platforms in Russia usually make money on additional services, mainly paid promotion of listings, in lieu of charging commissions on all deals.

Main categories: Electronics. Furniture. Children's products. Fashion.

Key platforms:

AVITO <https://www.avito.ru/>

YOULA <https://youla.ru/>

### **Item rentals in Russia**

In Russia, development of the P2P item rentals market is so far at an initial stage. Whereas in C2C commerce mass products dominate, on P2P rental platforms premium and niche goods are more likely to enjoy high demand: among electronics –virtual reality headsets and high-end gaming systems; among apparel –cocktail dresses; as well as expensive sports equipment and camera lenses. Such sharing services cooperate not only with individual lessors but also with conventional rental firms.

Lessor portrait: 55% are men. 25-39 years old. Above average income.

Lessee portrait: 55% are women. 18-39 years old. Average income.

Main product categories of consumer goods (C2C, B2C): Electronics. Apparel. Sports equipment.

Why people choose P2P item rentals:

- Opportunity to save when it is expected that the item will be used rarely,
- Opportunity to use an item here and now instead of saving up for purchase,
- In order to test an item before purchase.

What discourages people from borrowing and lending goods:

- Low awareness of such services,
- Owners fear that lessees will damage their goods,
- Lessees themselves fear damaging the property of others.

Key platforms:

Avito <https://www.avito.ru/>

RENT MANIA <https://rentmania.com/>

NEXT2U.ru <https://next2u.ru/>

### **P2Pservices in Russia**

One of the sharing economy's manifestations is the gig economy –a labor market characterized by broad adoption of temporary and/or part-time employment.

Estimates of the number of self-employed citizens in Russia varies between 13 and 20 million people. However, only a minority of them use sharing platforms. According to the Federal Tax Service,

the number of self-employed workers using online freelance marketplaces to find orders is about 2.5 mln people,<sup>1</sup> and for about half of them, online orders are not their primary income.

Flexible opportunities to make some extra money, enabled by the internet, reduce factual unemployment and are especially useful to students and parents of small children.

Freelance marketplaces are usually monetized by offering premium options for listings or commissions on transactions.

Service provider portrait: 55% are men. 18-39 years old. Below average income.

Client portrait: Gender-nonspecific (50/50). 25-44 years old. Above average income.

Principle service categories: Beauty and health. Cleaning Education.

Computer support. Services for pets.

Why people choose self-employed service providers:

- Opportunity to save,
- Provision of service at a convenient time,
- Transparent provider rating system (based on customer reviews).

What discourages people from engaging a peer worker:

- Low awareness of marketplaces,
- Fear of inadequate qualifications of the service provider,
- Fear of inadequate accountability for the results (risk of having services rendered improperly or past the deadline).

Key platforms:

Avito <https://www.avito.ru/>

ЮЛА <https://youla.ru/>

you DO <https://youdo.com/>

### **Food sharing in Russia**

A way to save up to a million tons of food every year is by providing food to 1.3 million in need, by doing business on food with expiring date worth total of 85 billion rubles, by preventing 143,000 tons of methane emissions.

## **4. TWO PERSPECTIVES: SMARTUPS AND EXPERTS – KEY RESULTS OF MARKET STUDIES**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

SE companies on smart consumption market allow people around the world to come together and share resources. Even small SE companies can go global. Interaction with community members from different countries without actual presence there helps minimize the cost of services for users. The costs of country segmentation and localization of information flowing through SE companies on smart consumption market may exceed revenues generated by the service.

#### **SELECTED SOURCES**

- Draft laws and by-laws
- Draft federal law No. 419090-7 “On alternative ways of raising investment (crowdfunding)”
- Draft federal law No. 551845-7 “On carrying out an experiment on establishment of the special fiscal regime “Tax on professional income in the city of federal importance Moscow, the Moscow and Kaluga regions as well as in the Republic of Tatarstan”
- The activity plan under the regulatory line of the “Digital Economy of the Russian Federation” program, approved by the Government Commission on Use of IT for Improvement of Quality of Life and Environment for Entrepreneurial Activity on 18 December 2017
- The Decree of the Russian Federation President dated 7 May 2018 No. 204 “On national goals and strategic objectives of the Russian Federation’s development until 2024”
- The program “Digital Economy of the Russian Federation” approved by the government order dated 28 July 2017 No. 1632-r

•The Russian Construction Ministry's order dated 31 October 2017 No. 1494/pr“On approval of the Methods for calculating the urban environment quality index for municipal units of the Russian Federation”

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