



County-level Administrative Division and Economic Growth

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Abstract

As the reform and opening-up policy enters deeper waters, adjustments to administrative divisions have shifted from sweeping changes to cautious fine-tuning. Administrative divisions are fundamental to national governance, significantly affecting spatial governance and optimizing regional development patterns. Considering the current insufficiency and uneven distribution of urban administrative regions in China, which fail to meet the demands of new urbanization developments, as well as the unreasonable hierarchy and scope of administrative regions, the "14th Five-Year Plan for New Urbanization" states that the transformation of counties into districts or cities must be strictly controlled, promoting the optimization and appropriate scaling of municipal districts. Urbanization is a major strategy and a significant issue in China's modernization process. As China's economy rapidly develops and urbanization progresses steadily, the contradictions between administrative divisions and regional economies that lead to regional barriers are urgent issues to address. Opinions among scholars vary on whether changes in county-level administrative regions result in economic growth or decline. This paper attempts to analyze the fundamental mechanisms of how changes in county-level administrative regions affect economic growth by examining more micro-level changes—those at the township administrative level—ultimately elucidating the relationship between the two.

Keywords

Administrative Division Splitting; Nighttime Light Data; Economic Growth; DiD

1. Research Background

Current changes in county-level administrative regions primarily include the following aspects: institutional changes, administrative division splitting, administrative division merging, elevation of status, and the establishment of new administrative regions. Zhu Jianhua categorizes the evolution of county-level administrative divisions into four main phases: 1978-1982, 1983-1996, 1997-2003, and 2004-2013 (Zhu Jianhua et al., 2015). From 1978 to 1982, the administrative divisions experienced minor changes, with only a slight increase in the number of county-level cities and municipal districts. Between 1982 and 1996, the number of county-level administrative regions decreased significantly, while the number of county-level cities and municipal districts increased rapidly. Starting from 1997, the number of county-level cities gradually declined, while the number of municipal districts continued to grow steadily. After 2004, the administrative division pattern stabilized. Current literature largely focuses on the transformation of counties into districts, primarily divided into two categories:

Firstly, the public service aspect. The "county-to-district" reform, as a comprehensive reform involving

administrative and fiscal systems, has had a profound impact on the allocation of public resources and local socio-economic development. Fan Ziyang and Zhao Renjie point out that this reform transforms county governments into district governments, achieving a progressive shift of fiscal revenue and expenditure responsibilities (Fan Ziyang et al., 2020). Zhang Li and others, from a political-economic perspective, argue that the "county-to-district" reform reduces the number of counties, weakens competition among local governments, and thus alters the pattern of local fiscal and public resource allocation (Zhang Li et al., 2018). Shao Chaodui and others note that the reform promotes the rapid accumulation of capital, labor, and other productive factors through resource redistribution, but it may also lead to decreased production efficiency and exacerbated resource misallocation (Shao Chaodui et al., 2018). Zhang Keyun discussed the role of the reform of "abolishing counties and establishing districts" in enhancing the modernization of the local governance system and governance capacity (Zhang Keyun, 2021). Related literature is not exhaustively listed.

Secondly, in terms of economic development. The policy effects of the county-to-district reform are manifested in the following aspects: (1) by leveraging the agglomeration effects of central cities, it promotes regional economic integration (Zhang Keyun, 2021); (2) by securing more construction land quotas, it enhances land-based fiscal revenue and supports the restructuring of industrial layouts (Shao Chaodui, 2018); (3) it improves the production efficiency and employment rates of the merged counties (cities), mitigating the negative impacts of boundary effects on district and county development (Tang Wei et al., 2015); (4) it enhances the efficiency of resource allocation for production factors, alleviating local government biases (Lu Shengfeng et al., 2017); (5) Promote the modernization level of local governance system and governance ability, promote the allocation of entrepreneurial talents to production and operation activities, and improve the local business environment (Zhong Yujun et al., 2021); (6) Promote local economic growth (Wang Xianbin et al., 2010). However, several scholars have also pointed out the drawbacks of the county-to-district reform, such as its failure to change the extensive development model that heavily relies on expanding economic inputs, which intensifies dependence on land finance; the instrumental use of the reform leads to resource and environmental degradation, affecting agriculture, including grain production (Zhang Chen et al., 2017). Additionally, there is controversy over the economic growth effects of the county-to-district reform, such as the findings of Li Xun and Xu Xianxiang, who noted that the reform only boosted local economic growth in the short term, with this impact largely dissipating after five years (Li Xun et al., 2015). Lu Xianxiang and others also found that although the establishment of districts has improved the economic resilience of cities to some extent, this promotion effect only has a short-term effect (Lu Xianxiang et al., 2023). Overall, scholars hold differing views on the economic impacts of the county-to-district reform.

The academic community has produced a wealth of research on administrative division reform, all of which is of certain value. However, there are still deficiencies, as the current literature does not sufficiently focus on the micro-level details of administrative adjustments, often concentrating on county-level administrative regions as a whole without drilling down to lower levels. Based on this, given the varied conclusions about the economic impacts of the county-to-district reform, this paper attempts to analyze the economic effects of changes in administrative divisions from the perspective of county-level administrative division splitting. For ease of description, the part of a split county-level administrative region that remains independent post-split will be referred to as the "retained area," and the portion merged into other administrative regions will be called the "merged area", with the corresponding other administrative regions referred to as the "merging areas."

2. Data Sources

Economic growth metrics such as GDP are generally measured using county or township administrative boundaries to calculate the gross domestic product within those areas. Current literature focuses primarily on the county level because data at the township level is hard to obtain, making it challenging to calculate corresponding metrics for administrative division splits. To address this issue, this paper utilizes nighttime light data. Original files can be downloaded from the following links: <https://ngdc.noaa.gov/eog/dmsp/downloadV4composites.html> and VIIRS Night Lights (mines.edu) The processing of DMSP data follows the methods of Cao Ziyang et al. (Cao Ziyang et al., 2015), and the processing of VIIRS data follows the methods of Hu Weian (Hu Weian et al., 2021). The merging principle for both datasets is as previously described. This results in a comparable time series of nighttime light data from 1992 to 2023. For the complete county-level administrative divisions, with the help of professors, the author has accessed "China Urban Statistical Yearbook" county-level city panel data and "China County-level City Statistical Yearbook", using relevant variables from this panel data as corresponding control variables.

3. Hypotheses and Mechanism Analysis

3.1 Hypotheses 1

Han Yi's research indicates that eliminating regional barriers contributes to economic growth (Han Yi et al., 2024). Removing administrative barriers is crucial for a country or region's economic development and social progress, having a significant and far-reaching impact. Administrative barriers refer to various administrative procedures, regulations, or policies set by government departments or bureaucracies, which may have a negative impact on the normal operation, market access, and competitive environment of enterprises, individuals, or other organizations. This phenomenon is not limited to a single industry, but covers various aspects of the entire economic system. Therefore, eliminating these administrative barriers and simplifying governmental procedures is one of the key measures to promote economic development and enhance competitiveness. We can see that the elimination of administrative barriers has a direct impact on the promotion of market competition. A competitive economy is an important manifestation of economic vitality, it can promote companies to be more efficient, lower costs, and improve the quality of service. However, administrative barriers often make market access complicated and expensive, creating a significant barrier for startups and small businesses. These enterprises may be unable to cope with cumbersome administrative procedures because of a lack of resources, leading to a larger monopoly in the market, thereby reducing the intensity of market competition. The elimination of administrative barriers can lower the threshold of market access, give more enterprises the opportunity to enter the market, and promote the diversity and dynamism of market competition. However, is regional merging always the best approach? According to Krugman's core-periphery model, the CP model involves three forces: two diverging forces—the domestic market effect and the price index effect, and one converging force—the degree of competition in the local market. Administrative barriers hinder the free formation of market regions, indeed having a negative impact on economic development. If the converging effects are strong in the region, breaking down administrative barriers is very effective; however, if the diverging effects are strong, breaking these barriers may lead to excessive costs, such as the need for industrial restructuring and counter-market population movements. Thus, this paper considers from another angle: establishing reasonable regional barriers, such as splitting county-level administrative regions, can aid economic growth in that area. Additionally, in economically developed areas, regional economic integration is already mature. Adjustments in administrative divisions have a minimal impact on economic influences. Therefore, the effect of county-level administrative division splitting on economic growth has a threshold.

Hypothesis 1: Splitting county-level administrative regions aids economic growth, positively fluctuates with the regional economy, and has a threshold.

3.2 Hypotheses 2

Li Bo's research shows that the county-to-district transformation increases the industrial linkage between merging and merged areas. The presence of industrial linkage greatly amplifies the siphoning effect. The swelling effect refers to the phenomenon of the rich getting richer, i.e., the ability of individuals or areas that already have a certain resource or advantage to acquire more, while those who are relatively poor or disadvantaged may find themselves in deeper trouble. First, the sucking effect usually leads to the loss of resources and capital. Rapidly growing regions attract large amounts of investment and businesses because of their market size, innovation capabilities, or policy advantages, often with capital and talent coming from other regions. For example, under the trend of globalization, the financial centers of developed countries have attracted a large number of international capital inflows, which makes some developing countries and regions face capital outflows and Arrested Development. This loss not only affects the economic growth potential of the sucked areas, but may also exacerbate economic inequalities between regions. Next, the siphon effect may bring about the distortion of the economic structure of the region by siphoning. With the outflow of resources and capital, some traditional industries may face a recession because they cannot compete with regions that have attracted a lot of capital and technology. This phenomenon may lead to the transformation of the economic structure of the local industry to serve the external investment or market demand, resulting in the diversification of the local economy and the ability to resist risks. Social inequality is also a major negative effect of the sucking effect. The concentration of resources and opportunities makes it impossible for some regions or social groups to enjoy the same development opportunities and benefits. For example, during urbanization, high-paying jobs and high-quality educational resources in some developed cities have attracted a large number of young talents,

while rural areas are facing brain drain and poor infrastructure. Such inequalities not only increase tensions and instability in society, but can also lead to long-term obstacles to economic and social development. Pressure on public services and infrastructure is another problem that is often faced in areas sucked by flooding. With the exodus of population and economic activity, local government revenues are reduced, making it more difficult to provide adequate public services and infrastructure such as education, health care, transportation, etc. For example, some rural areas with severe population loss face the challenge of a lack of medical resources and ageing infrastructure, which affects the quality of life and health status of residents. Finally, the siphon effect could lead to uneven growth in the overall economy. While some regions have grown rapidly because of the concentration of capital and resources, this growth is often partial and may lead to increased regional imbalances in the overall economy. For example, large cities in some emerging market economies have attracted large amounts of foreign investment and highly skilled workers due to their high-quality educational and technological resources, while others have been mired in low growth or stagnation. The enhancement of industrial linkages, on one hand, results from the merging areas relocating outdated capacities to the merged areas. Under the administrative leadership of the merging areas, this relocation may not necessarily align with the economic conditions of the merged areas, leading to a dilution of the economic growth effects induced by the split. On the other hand, it also establishes a channel for the siphoning effect.

Hypothesis 2: The splitting of county-level administrative regions exhibits a significant siphoning effect, which positively fluctuates with the regional economic conditions.

4. Empirical Analysis Process

4.1 Econometric Model

This paper intends to employ the Difference-in-Differences (DiD) approach to explore whether the policy of merging and splitting counties has an economic impact on both the retained and merged areas and to analyze the mechanisms and transmission channels of its effects. In conducting the differences, this paper uses the retained areas and merging areas as the control group, which significantly controls for local factors, achieving a far better comparative effect than using other county-level administrative regions as the control group. To validate the hypotheses of this paper, a double DiD method will be employed. To test Hypothesis 1, the retained areas will serve as the control group, and the merged areas as the treatment group. Specifically, if a county-level administrative region is split, the part inheriting the original county administrative structure will be the control group, and the other part will be the treatment group; to test Hypothesis 2, the merging areas will be the control group, and the merged areas will be the treatment group. Specifically, the treatment group in Hypothesis 1 will still serve as the treatment group in this hypothesis, while the control group will be the areas merged into after the splitting of the county-level administrative region.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

	Num	Mean	Standard	Min	Max
Regional Area	385	1,252	1,661	14	7,716
Total Value	385	2,935	3,525	50	21,402
Average Nighttime Light Data	385	9.945	13.54	0.0283	52.13

This paper treats the reform of splitting county-level administrative regions as a policy shock and plans to use the multiple Difference-in-Differences (DiD) approach. It selects the average nighttime light data from 2013 to 2023 as the dependent variable, with 2016 designated as the policy intervention point. The specific econometric model is as follows (Equation 1):

$$LD_{it} = \alpha + \beta(D_i * T_t) + X_{it} + A_{it} + B_t + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

In the equation, *i* represents the region, and *t* represents the year. LD represents the average nighttime light data for region *i* in year *t*. *D_i* is a dummy variable assigned the value 1 for the treatment group and 0 for the control group. *T_t* is a time dummy variable that takes the value 1 after the policy shock of splitting county-level administrative divisions, and 0 otherwise. *X_{it}* represents a series of control variables that may affect the values of nighttime light data. *A_{it}* represents fixed effects by region, *B_t* represents fixed effects by time, and the coefficient β is the focus of

this paper, ε represents the error term. Descriptive statistics for the data are as follows: The model used is shown below:

4.2 Empirical Test Results and Evaluation

4.2.1 First Part of Empirical Testing

Table 2. Segmentation and Economic Growth

Variable Name	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
DiD	0.0802 (0.14)	0.2154*** (2.93)	1.6909** (2.11)	0.2599*** (9.97)	0.3501*** (6.00)	-0.1451 (-0.14)
Constant	5.4488*** (11.50)	0.8409*** (14.32)	8.8078*** (13.84)	0.3662*** (17.62)	1.2853*** (27.60)	13.1287*** (15.79)
Observations	176	110	99	22	44	66
R-squared	0.3879	0.8116	0.4787	0.9990	0.9478	0.7629

Notes. t-statistics in parentheses; *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

In the previous section, this paper proposed that splitting county-level administrative regions reduces the extent to which market forces are hindered, and that decreasing barriers aids economic growth. Furthermore, for more developed regions, the obstructive effect of barriers gradually diminishes, thus the policy effect positively correlates with regional economic conditions and has a threshold. To test Hypothesis 1, this paper conducts regression analysis comparing retained areas with merged areas, using retained areas as the control group. Regression results are presented in Table 2. Column (2) conducts regression analysis using the retained and merged areas in the central and western regions. Although the policy has effects on both areas, the effects differ. Based on the principles of Difference-in-Differences (DiD), we can still derive the differential policy effects, which represent the economic impacts due to differences at the county level. The coefficients for the splitting of county-level administrative regions range between 0.21 and 2.22, and are significant at the 1% level, indicating that compared to the unmerged parts, the merged parts experienced an economic growth of 0.21-0.22 following the policy shock. This leads to two interpretations: the splitting of county-level administrative regions is detrimental to economic growth, and compared to the merged parts, it has a greater adverse effect on the unmerged parts; alternatively, the splitting is beneficial to economic growth, and compared to the unmerged parts, it has a greater beneficial impact on the merged parts. Thus, it remains uncertain whether the policy effects are positive or negative. Column (3) involves a difference analysis between the retained areas and their surrounding county-level regions, designating the retained area as the treatment group and the surrounding areas as the control group. Regression results show a policy coefficient between 1.69 and 1.7, significant at the 5% level, indicating that compared to parts not impacted by the policy, the economically affected areas grew between 1.69 and 1.7. This partially validates Hypothesis 1: that splitting county-level administrative blocks aids economic growth in that area. Columns (4) to (6) perform regression analyses on the merged and retained areas in the western, central, and eastern regions, respectively. In the database, the central region's economy is generally better than the western region's, and the eastern region's economy is better than the central region's. In the western region, the policy effect ranges between 0.25 and 0.26, in the central region between 0.35 and 0.36, and in the eastern region, the policy effect is not significant, validating Hypothesis 1: that the policy of splitting county-level administrative regions promotes economic growth, which positively correlates with regional economic conditions and has a threshold. Column (1) shows the overall regression, where the relatively better economy of the eastern region causes its data values to be too high, significantly affecting the policy results due to the threshold effect. This confirms Hypothesis 1: that splitting county-level administrative regions aids economic growth, correlates positively with the economic conditions of the region, and has a threshold.

4.2.2 Second Part of Empirical Testing

As discussed in the previous section, the splitting of county-level administrative regions exhibits a significant siphoning effect, which also positively fluctuates with regional economic conditions. The argument in this section is based on designating the merged areas as the treatment group and the merging areas as the control group. In the empirical

process, if the economic growth of the treatment group is significantly slower post-policy compared to pre-policy relative to the control group, this confirms the hypothesis. The corresponding econometric model is as described above (Equation 2). In Table 3, Column (1), using the overall merged areas as the treatment group and the overall merging areas as the control group, after adding time-fixed effects and regional-fixed effects, the policy effect coefficient ranges between -0.95 and -0.96, significant at the 1% level. This indicates that relative to the merging areas, the merged areas experienced an economic decline of 0.95-0.96 following the policy shock. This demonstrates that there indeed exists a siphoning effect, which weakens the economic growth effects brought about by the splitting of county-level administrative regions, confirming the significant presence of a siphoning effect in administrative region reform. Column (2) includes samples from the merged and merging areas in the central and western regions, with coefficients ranging from -0.86 to -0.87. The absolute values of the coefficients are smaller than those in the overall regression. Since Column (2) excludes samples from the eastern region, it is inferred that its regional economy is weaker than that in Column (1). This indicates that the siphoning effect induced by the splitting of county-level administrative regions positively correlates with the economic strength of the regions. Columns (3) to (5) represent samples from the eastern, central, and western regions, respectively. The absolute values of the coefficients decrease sequentially, further demonstrating that the siphoning effect experienced by the treatment group significantly correlates positively with the economic conditions of the respective regions. This validates Hypothesis 2: that the splitting of county-level administrative regions exhibits a significant siphoning effect, which varies positively with the economic conditions of the region.

Table 3. Segmentation and Siphon Effect

Name	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
DiD	-0.9550*** (-4.28)	-0.8608*** (-4.46)	-1.4140*** (-4.28)	-0.9031*** (-4.02)	-0.8053** (-2.10)
Constant	7.8731*** (44.37)	1.7703*** (11.55)	24.6558*** (93.65)	2.3168*** (13.05)	0.8140** (2.65)
Observations	165	121	44	77	44
R-squared	0.6858	0.6923	0.9361	0.7575	0.6295

Notes. t-statistics in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

5. Parallel Trends Test

A prerequisite for applying the Difference-in-Differences (DiD) model is that the economic growth trends of the control and treatment groups must be the same before the policy shock. The county-to-district reform aims to promote socio-economic development; in fact, it is possible that such changes in trends had already begun before the reform. Therefore, the first step in policy evaluation is to ensure the parallel trends assumption is met. This paper conducts a parallel trends test according to Equation (2) and analyzes the dynamic effects of the county-to-district policy shock.

$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1(D_i * T_t)^{-5} + \beta_2(D_i * T_t)^{-4} + \dots + \beta_3(D_i * T_t)^4 + A_{it} + B_t + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (2)$$

Here, $(D_i * T_t)^n$ is a dummy variable. In the n^{th} year following the splitting of a county-level administrative region in the merged areas, $(D_i * T_t)^n$ is assigned a value of 1, while at all other times, it is assigned a value of 0. Other metrics are the same as in Equation (2). Utilizing the derived coefficients, a time trend graph is illustrated in Figure 1. Figure 1 depicts the dynamic effects of county-level administrative reform on both the merged and retained areas. As the policy was implemented gradually, this paper identifies 2016 as the year of implementation, but 2018 as the year when policy effects became apparent. It is evident that, prior to 2018, there was no significant difference in economic growth between the treatment and control groups. This confirms the assumption of parallel trends, validating the use of the Difference-in-Differences model. Moreover, from Figure 1, it is observable that after the splitting of county-level administrative regions, compared to the control group, the economic condition of the treatment group, i.e., the merged areas, shows a significant and sustained increase, supporting the conclusions of this study. Similarly, for testing Hypothesis 2 involving the merging and merged areas, the corresponding parallel trends test is illustrated in Figure 2, which also satisfies the parallel trends test. Additionally, from Figure 1, it is clear that after the splitting

of county-level administrative regions, compared to the control group, the economic condition of the treatment group, i.e., the merged areas, experiences a significant and sustained decline, further supporting the findings of this paper.

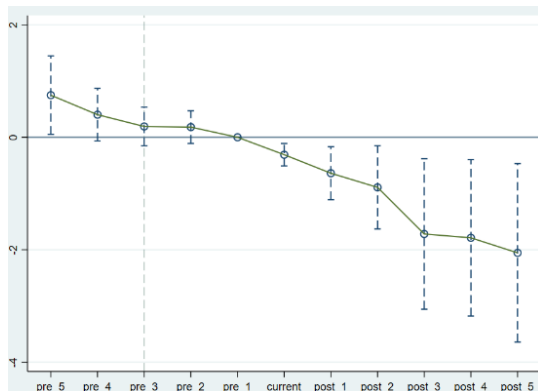


Figure 1. Parallel trend one.

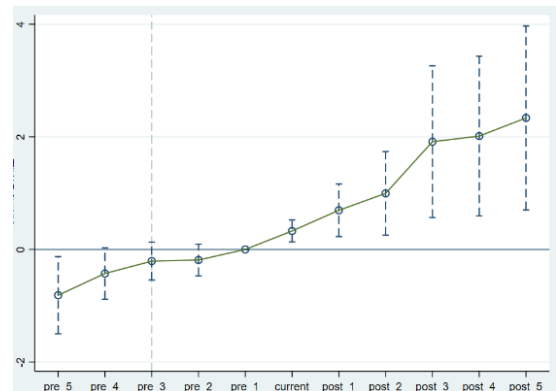


Figure 2. Parallel trend two.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

Firstly, the splitting of county-level administrative regions aids economic growth, correlates positively with regional economic conditions, and has a threshold. The division of county-level administrative boundaries can stimulate local economic growth. By dividing larger regions into smaller administrative units, governments can formulate and implement economic policies with greater precision. This localized management approach helps to mobilize local resources more effectively, foster industrial development, and enhance infrastructure construction levels. The economic impact of county-level administrative divisions depends on the economic foundations and potential of the region. In areas with better economic conditions, the subdivision of county-level administrative regions can further stimulate local innovation and competitiveness, accelerating economic growth. However, in regions with poorer economic conditions, premature division of administrative regions might lead to resource dispersion and reduced management efficiency, thereby hindering healthy economic development. There is a threshold effect in the impact of county-level administrative divisions. This means that the effectiveness of splitting administrative regions varies with changes in regional economic conditions. For mature administrative boundaries in eastern regions, adjustments should be made with a focus on optimizing government services and reducing government expenditures.

Secondly, the splitting of county-level administrative regions exhibits a significant siphoning effect, which varies positively with the economic conditions of the region. In a large country like China, adjustments to administrative divisions are often made to better manage and develop local economies. County-level administrative units, as the core of grassroots administrative management, their division and adjustment enable the government to respond more precisely to local needs, enhancing governance efficiency and promoting economic development. However, the division of county-level administrative regions is not without its challenges, accompanied by a complex array of social and economic impacts. One prominent manifestation of the siphoning effect is the movement and redistribution of resources. When a new county-level administrative unit is created, it is typically accompanied by a reallocation of government resources, funding, and public services. Newly established administrative units often receive priority in government support and investment, which can lead to a centripetal loss of resources from the original administrative areas. Additionally, the siphoning effect also involves the mobility of talent and population. Economically better-off new counties tend to attract more population influx, especially those seeking improved employment and living conditions. This influx of population can drive local economic growth and societal development but may also impact the economic structures of the areas experiencing out-migration. In regions with better economic conditions, new administrative units tend to attract surrounding resources and talent more quickly, exacerbating the economic damage to the merged areas. If the economic conditions are poorer or resources are relatively scarce, the siphoning effect may lead to further depletion of resources in the original areas, intensifying regional development imbalances and social instability. Governments need to enhance inter-regional coordination and cooperation, promoting resource sharing and mutual benefits.

Thirdly, optimize the boundaries of administrative districts. The optimization of the boundaries of administrative

districts should be evaluated accurately according to the needs of economic and social development. Considering the local population structure, economic activity distribution, infrastructure construction, and other factors, the boundaries should be reasonably drawn to improve the efficiency of administrative management and the level of service. In cases where the administrative division of existing county-level administrative boundaries is not conducive to economic and social development, administrative barriers can be eliminated by merging or adjusting the boundaries. This will help integrate resources, optimize the allocation of public services, and promote the coordinated development of the regional economy. Reasonable administrative boundaries can improve the effectiveness of government management. By optimizing the boundaries, it is possible to reduce administrative overlaps and overlapping management, simplify administrative procedures, and reduce administrative costs, making the government more efficient and transparent. For areas with adjusted administrative boundaries, the government should provide corresponding policy support and transitional measures. For example, adjusting tax policies, financial subsidies, and infrastructure construction can help the new area adapt to the new administrative management and development needs as soon as possible.

Fourthly, conduct social impact assessments. A comprehensive social impact assessment must be carried out before a decision is made to cut off county-level administrative districts. This includes assessing the impact of basic services such as livelihood, employment, education, health care, and the stability of local cultural and social structures. Maintain transparency of the information and adequately explain the need for and impact of the adjustment to local residents and stakeholders. At the same time, we will actively guide and promote public participation, listen to the views and suggestions of the residents, and enhance the legitimacy and fairness of decision-making. The adjustment of administrative divisions should not ignore local cultural traditions and local characteristics. When dividing county administrative districts, it is necessary to respect and protect the local cultural heritage and promote cultural diversity and social cohesion. After the adjustment of administrative divisions, it is necessary to strengthen legal and security safeguards to ensure public order and social stability. This includes strengthening police deployment, improving the public security administration system, preventing and timely handling of social unrest, and other measures.

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