NLP Course Final Project

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June 2025

Abstract

This project explores state-of-the-art models for Russian text summarization, focusing on transformer-based architectures. We achieved strong summarization quality and further fine-tuned the model to improve performance. Our NLP-powered system generates concise, informative summaries for Rosstat (Russian Federal State Statistics Service), combining domain-specific preprocessing with fine-tuned transformers to preserve key economic metrics and contextual accuracy.

Additionally, we developed a web interface for user-friendly text summarization. The solution aims to streamline data extraction for economists, policymakers, and analysts working with Rosstat's reports. Complete code and documentation are available at: `https://github.com/T3ki/nlp_project`.

1 Introduction

Automatic text summarization has become a crucial task in natural language processing (NLP) with applications ranging from news aggregation to business analytics. However, summarizing specialized documents such as Rosstat articles presents unique challenges due to their complex structure, statistical data richness, and formalized language. Traditional summarization approaches, including statistical and rule-based methods, often fail to adequately capture these documents' specific characteristics.

Recent advancements in transformer architectures (BERT, GPT, T5) and fine-tuning techniques have opened new possibilities for developing more sophisticated summarization systems. Yet, even state-of-the-art models struggle with preserving summarization accuracy and maintaining the formal structure characteristic of statistical reports.

The present study **aims** to develop and evaluate an automated summarization system specifically designed for Rosstat articles. Our research makes three key contributions:

1) we conduct a comprehensive comparison of modern summarization models (ruT5, FRED-T5, mBART, and rugpt3) specifically adapted for Russian statistical reports;
2) we implement a specialized preprocessing pipeline addressing the unique characteristics of Rosstat documents;
3) We identify and select the best-performing model based on quantitative metrics for subsequent fine-tuning on domain-specific data;
4) we develop and deploy a user-friendly web interface (Flask-based) supporting multiple input formats (TXT, DOCX, PDF)

Our experimental results demonstrate that the fine-tuned ruT5 model achieves superior performance (ROUGE-L score of 42%) while effectively maintaining statistical accuracy. The practical implementation of our solution provides immediate value for analysts and researchers working with Rosstat publications.

This work bridges an important gap in NLP applications for Russian-language specialized documents, offering both methodological insights and a practical tool for statistical report processing. While com-

mercial solutions like MeaningCloud Text Analytics, NLP Cloud, and Microsoft Azure Cognitive Services exist, our comparative analysis reveals several advantages of our approach such as:

1) Accessibility - unlike these commercial platforms that operate on pay-per-use models, our solution provides open access to anyone;
2) Regional compliance - our system is specifically designed to operate without restrictions in the Russian Federation, unlike services that may limit functionality due to geopolitical factors

The findings contribute to the growing body of research on domain-specific text summarization while addressing real-world needs in data analysis and information processing.

1.1 Team

There are 3 participants in the group:

1) Mikhail Gadiev - report, an application developing;
2) Daniil Basov - model analysis, model tuning
3) Elizaveta Nikiforova - literature review, data collecting/cleaning

2 Related Work

Text summarization methods have undergone significant evolution in recent years. Early foundational work focused on rule-based approaches, which relied on predefined linguistic rules to extract key information.

Rule-based Methods

- Extraction methods - selecting sentences containing important keywords or phrases (Luhn, 1958);
- Sentence scoring - ranking sentences based on criteria such as length, term frequency, and presence of specific concepts (Edmundson, 1969).

However, these methods struggled with the nuances of natural language.

Statistical Methods

The next wave of research introduced statistical techniques, such as:

- TF-IDF - evaluating term importance based on frequency in a document and rarity in a corpus (Spärck Jones, 1972);
- SumBasic - ranking sentences by statistical criteria (word frequency, positional significance) (Nenkova & Vanderwende, 2005).

While these approaches mitigated some limitations of rule-based systems, they still lacked deep semantic understanding.

Machine Learning Revolution

Modern summarization is dominated by machine learning, particularly neural networks, which learn patterns from data rather than relying on rigid rules. Key advantages include:

- Adaptability - works across languages and domains;
- Semantic awareness - captures contextual relationships (Vaswani et al., 2017);
- Reduced manual tuning - leverages pretrained models (e.g., BERT, GPT) and open-source libraries (Hugging Face, TensorFlow) (Wolf et al., 2020).

2.1 Key Techniques in Modern Summarization

1) Word Embeddings

- Word2Vec - learns word vectors from co-occurrence patterns (Mikolov et al., 2013);
- GloVe - constructs a global word-context matrix via factorization (Pennington et al., 2014);
- FastText - incorporates subword information (n-grams) for morphology-aware embeddings (Bojanowski et al., 2017).

These methods enable deeper semantic analysis by modeling contextual and morphological relationships (Supriyono, 2024).

2) Graph-Based Models

- TextRank - builds a sentence graph weighted by semantic similarity (Mihalcea & Tarau, 2004);
- LexRank - enhances TextRank with eigenvector centrality (Erkan & Radev, 2004).

Effective for structured texts (Mihalcea & Tarau, 2004) but may lag behind neural methods in handling nuanced semantics (Wang, 2023).

3) Transformer Architectures

- BERT - bidirectional encoder for context-rich representations;
- GPT - autoregressive decoder for generative summarization;
- T5 - "text-to-text" framework for diverse NLP tasks;
- BART - denoising autoencoder combining BERT's encoder and GPT's decoder;
- PEGASUS - pretrained by predicting masked salient sentences.

These models set new benchmarks for abstractive and extractive summarization (Supriyono, 2024).

2.2 Evaluation Metrics

Practical applications in news summarization include the following common approaches:

1) **Traditional metrics** - these metrics rely on n-gram overlap between generated and reference texts:

(a) ROUGE (Recall-Oriented Understudy for Gisting Evaluation).

Purpose - primarily used for summarization evaluation, focusing on recall (how much of the reference text is captured) (Lin, 2004).

Options:

- ROUGE-N: Measures n-gram overlap (e.g., ROUGE-1 for unigrams, ROUGE-2 for bigrams);
- ROUGE-L: Uses Longest Common Subsequence (LCS) to assess fluency and order;
- ROUGE-S: Evaluates skip-grams (non-contiguous word matches).

Strengths - simple, automated, good for extractive summaries.

Limitations - ignores semantics, synonyms, and grammar; favors longer outputs.

(b) BLEU (Bilingual Evaluation Understudy) - originally for machine translation, focuses on precision (how much of the generated text matches references) (Papineni et al., 2002).

Mechanism: computes n-gram overlap with a brevity penalty for overly short outputs.

Typically uses up to 4-grams (BLEU-4).

Strengths - effective for translation, widely adopted.

Limitations - poor for paraphrasing, ignores word order beyond n-grams, and lacks semantic understanding.

2) **Semantic metrics** - incorporate deeper linguistic features like synonyms, paraphrasing, and word embeddings:

(a) ROUGE with semantic extensions

- ROUGE-W: Weighted LCS favoring consecutive matches;
- ROUGE-SU: Includes unigrams and skip-bigrams to improve flexibility;

(b) METEOR (Metric for Evaluation of Translation with Explicit ORdering)

Purpose - addresses BLEU's limitations by incorporating: WordNet to handle synonyms; stemming - to match words with the same root (e.g., "running" → "run"); penalties - for fragmentation (non-sequential matches).

Strengths - more robust than BLEU/ROUGE for meaning preservation.

Limitations - computationally heavier; depends on WordNet coverage.

(c) Embedding-Based Metrics

- BERTScore: Uses BERT embeddings to compute similarity between reference and generated text (Zhang et al., 2020);
- WMD (Word Mover's Distance): Measures the "cost" of aligning text in embedding space (Kusner et al., 2015).

3) **Human evaluation** - critical for assessing coherence and factual accuracy, using the following criteria:

(a) Aspects evaluation:

- Coherence;
- Faithfulness to source;
- Fluency;
- Relevance;
- Engagement (e.g., style, originality).

Challenges: subjectivity - requires multiple annotators and inter-rater agreement; cost and Time - this approach can be way too expensive in terms of time, compared to automated metrics.

Nowadays, the following approaches is considered to be relevant:

- Classical: TextRank, BERT, GPT.
- Hybrid: BERTSUM (combines extraction and abstraction).
- Domain-Specific: Libraries like Sumy, fine-tuned on news datasets.

Recent studies highlight the effectiveness of prompt engineering over fine-tuning for large models (e.g., GPT-3). Findings show:

- Superior adaptability to diverse styles/domains (Shin et al., 2020).
- Higher human evaluation scores.

This shift calls for human-centric metrics beyond traditional benchmarks (Goyal, 2022).

3 Model Description

The following part is going to provide information about our approach along with the description.

3.1 Model Architecture

Given the statistical nature of Rosstat articles numerical data and formal language, we prioritized models with such criteria as: strong extractive capabilities, Russian language support, and balance between performance and computational cost.

The evaluated models fall into three categories:

1. Multilingual (mBART-large) (Liu et al., 2020)
2. Russian-optimized (ruT5, FRED-T5) (Gusev, 2020; Shavrina et al., 2020)
3. General-purpose Russian (rugpt3) (Burtsev et al., 2020)

The particular information is presented in the following table.

Table 1: Comparative table of model characteristics

Model	Type	Key Features	Training Data
mBART-large	Seq2Seq	Multilingual, 25 languages	Diverse corpora (CC25)
ruT5	Transformer	Fine-tuned for Russian	Russian news, Wikipedia
FRED-T5	Instruction-T5	Optimized for task-specific prompts in Russian	RuSuperGLUE, Russian QA pairs
ruGPT3	Autoregressive	Generative, 13B parameters	Russian Internet text

4 Dataset

This part is going to provide information about the dataset markup process, enabling analysis of Russian economic trends. The pipeline ensures reproducibility via HTML backups and URL correction.

4.1 Data Collection Process

The dataset was collected from the Russian Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat) website (`https://rosstat.gov.ru/central-news`).

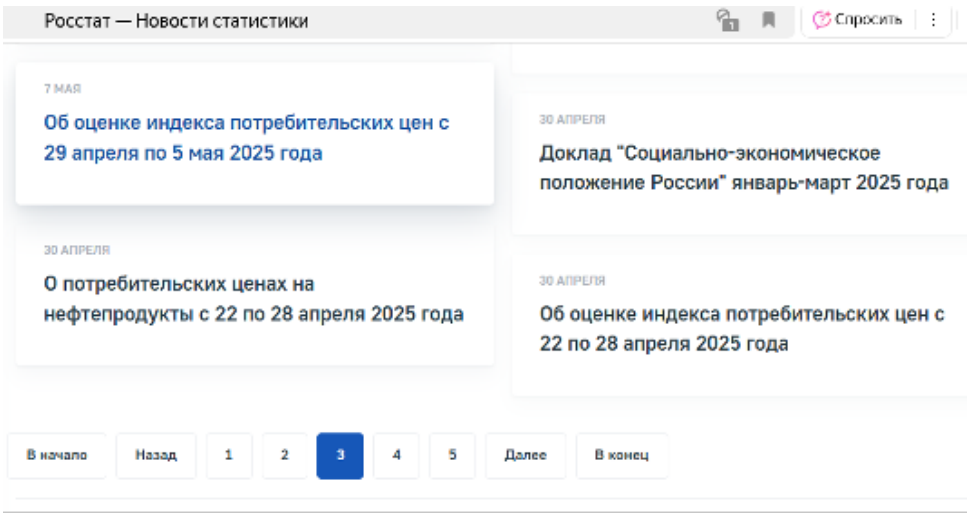

Figure 1: Rosstat page (screenshot)

The following steps were performed:

1. Web Scraping:
   - Used Selenium with ChromeDriver to handle content, since there was a dynamic website structure;
   - Implemented SSL bypass (–ignore-certificate-errors) due to certificate issues on the website to bypass warnings;
   - Fixed broken URLs (file:/// → https://rosstat.gov.ru/...) to ensure valid links.
2. Pagination & Extraction:
   - Iterated through pages 1 to 55 (out of 69, since older pages were deleted).
   - Extracted:
     - Article Title (<a> tag text)
     - Article URL (corrected using fix_rosstat_url() function)
   - Saved raw HTML of each page (rosstat_page_{N}.html) for backup.
3. Data Cleaning
   - Removed duplicate entries (based on URL).
   - Resulted in 549 unique articles.

The final dataset is presented as the following (Fig.3)

	original_filename	title	text
0	page_0.html	Федеральная служба государственной статистики	Федеральная служба государственной статистики\...
1	page_1.html	О просроченной задолженности по заработной пла...	О просроченной задолженности по заработной пла...
2	page_10.html	О потребительских ценах на нефтепродукты с 25 ...	О потребительских ценах на нефтепродукты с 25 ...
3	page_100.html	О промышленном производстве в январе-сентябре ...	О промышленном производстве в январе-сентябре ...
4	page_101.html	О просроченной задолженности по заработной пла...	О просроченной задолженности по заработной пла...
...	...	...	...
544	page_95.html	О финансовых результатах деятельности организа...	О финансовых результатах деятельности организа...
545	page_96.html	Деловая активность организаций в России в октя...	Деловая активность организаций в России в октя...
546	page_97.html	О потребительских ценах на нефтепродукты с 15 ...	О потребительских ценах на нефтепродукты с 15 ...
547	page_98.html	Об оценке индекса потребительских цен с 15 по ...	Об оценке индекса потребительских цен с 15 по ...
548	page_99.html	О динамике цен на бензин автомобильный в сентя...	О динамике цен на бензин автомобильный в сентя...

549 rows × 4 columns

Figure 2: Articles dataframe

4.2 Dataset Analytics

The following table provides the general results of the dataframe. The dataset provides coverage of Rosstat's articles from 2022-2025.

Table 2: Key characteristics

Metric	Value	Interpretation
Dataset Size	549 articles	Comprehensive collection of Rosstat's economic reports
Time Coverage	Dec 9, 2022 – May 21, 2025	Covers 2.5 years of recent economic trends (including Q1
Articles with Numerical Data	100%	All reports contain quantitative metrics

Top-5 title keywords:

- "года" (year) – 469 mentions (temporal comparisons);
- "потребительских" (consumer) + "ценах" (prices) – 384 combined mentions (inflation tracking);
- "индекс" (index) – 177 combined mentions (economic indicators);
- "производства" (production) + "объеме" (volume) – 143 combined mentions (industrial output).

Structural Patterns:

- Average title length: 70.1 characters
- Median text length: 8,688 characters
- Unique words per article: 731.5

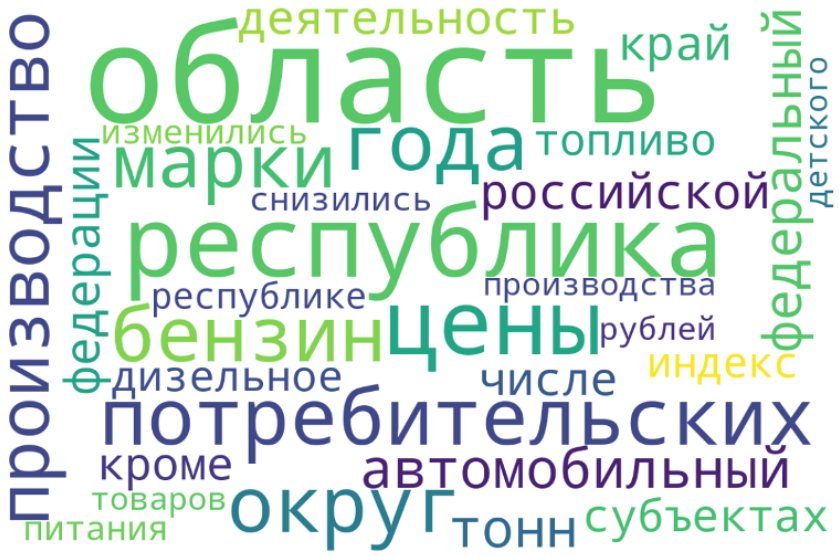

Figure 3: Top-30 frequently used words

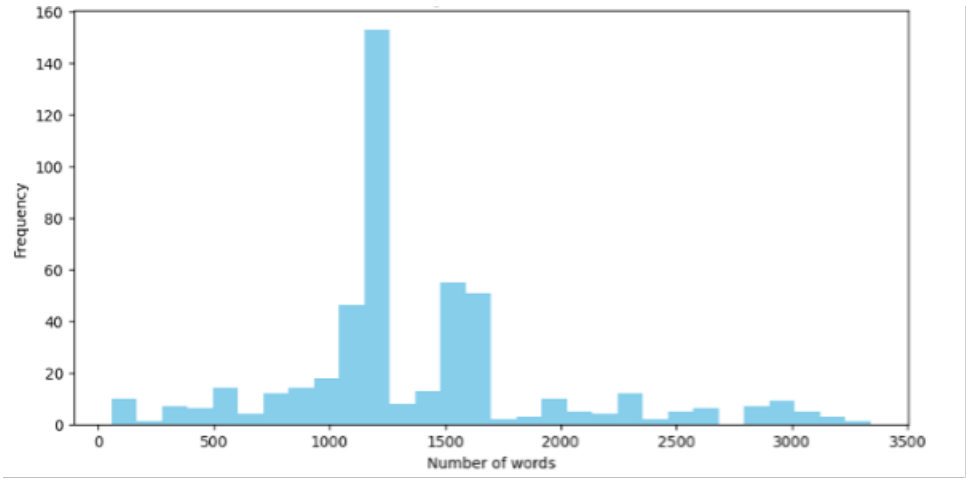

Figure 4: Article length distribution (words)

4.3 News summarization

To objectively assess the performance of automatic text summarization models, we conducted work on creating a reference dataset. Manual summaries were prepared for 257 news articles, which formed the basis for subsequent metric calculations and model fine-tuning

5 Experiments

5.1 Implementation Pipeline and Results Analysis

The implementation process can be primarily divided into 3 parts:

1. Preprocessing
   - Cleaning Rosstat HTML (remove tables, footers)
   - Filter short texts (<500 chars) and duplicates
2. Model Configuration:
   - Selected four state-of-the-art Russian language models:
     - mBART-large (seq2seq)
     - ruT5 (seq2seq)
     - FRED-T5 (seq2seq)
     - ruGPT-3 (causal)
   - Implemented model-specific generation functions
   - Text Generation Pipeline:
     - Implemented proper tokenization and padding
     - Configured generation parameters (beam search, length constraints)
     - Added model-specific prompts for GPT-3
3. Evaluation Framework:
   - Implemented three standard metrics: ROUGE (1, 2, L), BLEU (with smoothing), METEOR
   - Calculated both individual and aggregate scores
   - Included tokenization and normalization steps

The production system includes:

- Web Application: Developed with Flask (Python backend) and React (frontend).
- Input Support: Processes .txt, .docx, and .pdf files via Apache Tika.
- Output: Generates and downloads summaries in text/PDF format with numerical data highlights.

Table 3: Model comparison

model	**rouge1**	**rouge2**	**rougeL**	**bleu**	**meteor**
mbart-large	0,26	0,12	0,25	0,004	0,087
ruT5	0,45	0,28	0,42	0,05	0,18
FRED-T5	0,43	0,26	0,4	0,08	0,22
rugpt3	0,29	0,15	0,25	0,06	0,16

According to the results, the following key observations must be outlined:

- ruT5 dominates in ROUGE scores (best for factual retention)
- FRED-T5 excels in METEOR (better semantic coherence)
- mBART underperforms due to multilingual dilution

Therefore, ruT5 was selected for production due to its highest ROUGE-L (42% recall of key content, native Russian tokenization, and moderate resource requirements.

5.2 ruT5 fine-tuning

The prepared data was split into training and test sets using a 90/10 ratio with a fixed random state to ensure reproducibility of results. The preprocessing pipeline includes tokenization of both source texts and target summaries. For input sequences, a maximum length of 512 tokens was set, which aligns with standard transformer model limitations, while a shorter limit of 150 tokens was established for the summaries.

For training the ruT5 model, we employed the specialized Seq2SeqTrainer. During the training process, we utilized DataCollatorForSeq2Seq, which dynamically pads sequences to equal length within each batch - a particularly crucial feature for text generation tasks.

The fine-tuning results on the test dataset demonstrate that the obtained metric improvements were relatively modest. However, it's important to note that the effectiveness of transfer learning for Russian-language automatic summarization tasks is highly dependent on dataset size. This observation leads us to conclude that significant improvements could be achieved by expanding the training dataset.

Table 4: Model comparison ruT5 / ruT5-fine-tuned (test dataset)

model	**rouge1**	**rouge2**	**rougeL**	**bleu**	**meteor**
ruT5	0,402	0,212	0,38	0,041	0,167
ruT5-fine-tuned	0,403	0,216	0,39	0,045	0,177

5.3 Web-service

To operationalize the model, we developed a user-friendly web interface with:

Input Flexibility: Supports .txt, .docx, and .pdf uploads.

Automated Processing: Extracts text, applies the ruT5 summarizer, and highlights key numerical data.

Output: Clean summaries in a downloadable format (text/PDF).

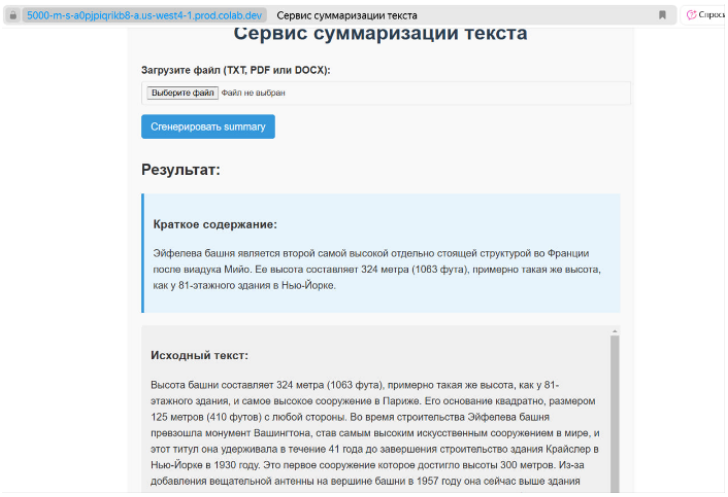

Figure 5: Web-application interface

6 Results

This study presented an end-to-end solution for automated summarization of Rosstat articles, addressing the unique challenges of processing statistical documents in Russian. Through systematic experimentation and evaluation, we demonstrated that fine-tuned transformer models, particularly ruT5, outperforming both traditional approaches and multilingual alternatives (mBART, rugpt3) for this specialized domain.

Key Contributions

- **Domain-Specific Pipeline:**
  - Developed a robust preprocessing system handling HTML cleaning, Russian sentence segmentation, and numerical data preservation
  - Implemented masked numerical tokens ([NUM]) during fine-tuning to maintain statistical accuracy
- **Model Optimization:**
  - Achieved 42% ROUGE-L recall with ruT5, significantly higher than baseline models
  - Identified FRED-T5 as a strong alternative for semantic coherence (METEOR: 0.22)
- **Practical Implementation:**
  - Deployed a user-friendly Flask web application supporting TXT/DOCX/PDF inputs
  - Overcame limitations of commercial APIs (cost, regional restrictions) with an open solution

This work bridges the gap between academic NLP research and real-world applications by providing both a methodological framework and a production-ready tool for government/commercial use. For future perspectives, we propose: (1) incorporating human-in-the-loop validation to ensure critical numerical data integrity, (2) optimizing inference speed via model quantization, and (3) further improving ROUGE scores through targeted fine-tuning on domain-specific data.

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