

DOI <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-045-2-32>

**METHODOLOGICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ASPECTS  
OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY'S DESIGN  
AND IMPLEMENTATION: A CASE OF DNIPROPETROVS'K  
REGION STRATEGY 2027**

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In modern Ukraine, as in any civilized market economy and developed self-government, the primary responsibility for the level of satisfaction of key living needs and the quality of life of the residents of each territory relies both on public authorities and local governments located there, and on the population itself (the territorial communities living there). A systematic tool for realizing such responsibility is strategic planning for the territory development, which necessitates the development of an appropriate strategy and effective management of its implementation. In the current context of reform, strategic planning is more needed than ever before. Planning should be based on a qualitatively new methodological and methodological and technological base, in particular:

– smart specialization, which implies innovative development of region priority economic activities and economic sectors transformation into more efficient ones, increasing the level of competitiveness of the region, close contact with the public;

– new tools to achieve the goals and highly professional trained management and professional experts' involvement in the strategy development and implementation processes.

Integrated results of amalgamated territorial communities' development strategies design were used to identify the main problems of region development and to build a system of strategic goals (priorities) in addition to such traditionally used tools as SWOT-analysis and classical sociological surveys (surveys of region residents and entrepreneurs) – there were already 72 amalgamated territorial communities in the Dnipropetrovs'k region in December 2019. During the strategic planning of their development for the period until 2022 – 2023, residents and entrepreneurs in most communities were interviewed (from 250 to 350 questionnaires were processed for each community). The survey identified key issues for each amalgamated territorial community. On this basis, the strategic priorities of their further development were formed [1].

Two types of questionnaires were developed and proposed for conducting the questionnaire. The first general type questionnaire was for the community as a whole (all stratum and categories of the population, including entrepreneurs, were involved). The second questionnaire was for entrepreneurs only. Traditionally, by the number of respondents, we got a ratio somewhere around 10: 1, that is, for example, in one community about 357 questionnaires of general type and 34 questionnaires from entrepreneurs were received.

To solve the problems of the research and conduct of SWOT analysis, the method of expert assessments was also used – to determine the quantitative characteristics of qualities by interviewing highly qualified specialists and maximizing the objectification of their answers using modern mathematical methods and tools that exclude random judgments. The expert survey included the views of 108 experts. Among the experts, the largest share was occupied by practitioners – civil servants, local government officials, and opinion leaders.

An individual method was chosen from among the possible variants of peer review, which is that each expert gives his or her estimate independently of the others, and then combines these estimates with statistical methods into a common one. In this case, a correspondence questionnaire was selected, which allows to involve a large number of

experts from different cities with minimal expenses, eliminating the influence of the group members' opinions on the expert's judgment. The main stages of the questionnaire method were: development of a system of indicators and questionnaire formation, formation of the expert group, conducting of questionnaires (sending questionnaires and receiving answers), mathematical processing of data and evaluation of the consistency of expert judgments.

The results of the survey provided an opportunity to identify the main barriers to the development of the region. For example, respondents' answers to the question, «What do you think hinders development?» Were distributed as follows (Table 1):

Table 1

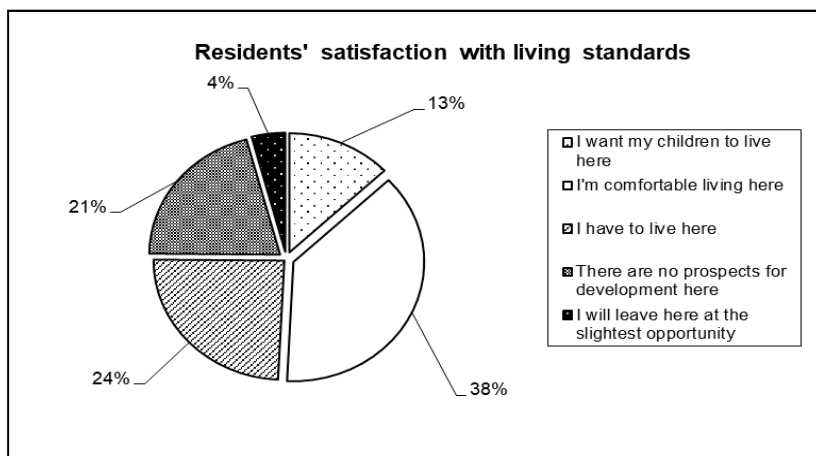
**Dnipropetrovs'k region development barriers**

Competitive advantages of the region	%	Rank
Lack of public and entrepreneurial activity	10	V
A large proportion of the elderly	3	VII
Unfavourable conditions for entrepreneurship development, lack of quality jobs for people of working age	18	II
Poor quality of medical, municipal, educational and other services	11	IV
Environmental, sanitary, household problems	9	VI
The spread of crime, alcoholism, drug addiction	14	III
Lack of external and internal investment	11	IV
The local government's inactivity, corruption, population distrust	24	I
The other	< 1	-

Thus, it can be seen that in the first place among the answers – low activity of the government, corruption, mistrust of the population – so almost every fourth expert thinks; unfavourable conditions for business development take second place – every fifth, third barrier is the spread of crime, alcoholism and drug addiction. An important part of the regional strategies is priorities, which determine the directions of regional socio-economic sphere development in the medium term. The strategic priorities for the Ukraine regions' development are formulated by the State Strategy for Regional Development for the period up to 2020, which actualises the need for the modernization of regional strategies by applying new approaches to formulating strategic priorities for regional development.

Regional development priorities updating requires clear understanding the «concept of priority» and developing approaches to identify those priorities in each regional development strategy. In order to formulate priorities, questions were raised about the sequence of Dnipropetrovsk region strategic development priorities. Respondents referred to the strategic development priority priorities as reducing unemployment, developing the labour market, developing small and medium-sized businesses – supporting manufacturing enterprises, farms, holdings, clusters, other business associations, attracting investment in the regional economy and developing foreign economic activity. The dispersion of experts' opinions and the absence of clearly defined priorities (more than 30 % of opinions) are evidence that the situation in the region is more or less calm, with no explicit centres of social tension.

This is confirmed by the distribution of answers to the question: «Which of the following statements would you describe as a standard of living in your community?»



**Fig. 1. Respondents' answers to the question: «Which of the following statements would you describe as a standard of living in your community?»**

Almost 40 % of the respondents feel comfortable in their place of residence and only 4 % are ready to leave the area with the least opportunity. The optimism of this finding is diminished by the fact that one in four says

that they are forced to live here and only 13 % want their children to live here.

This may be due to the poor quality of public service delivery that respondents were asked to rate on a 5-point scale. In general, the level of assessment ranges from 3,61 points – services of television and internet communication, communications to 2,46 points – the state of roads. The survey also identified region main (basic) competitive advantages of the (Table 2). It should be noted that 75 % of the respondents positively assessed the need to develop and implement the Regional development strategy.

According to the results of the questioning and expert evaluation, the region key problems were identified, on the basis of which strategic goals and projects of its further development were formed.

Table 2

**Region basic competitive advantages**

Region competitive advantages		Rank
Industrial potential	108	I
Convenient geographical location	97	II
Unique natural and other resources within the community	64	III
Agriculture	61	IV
Intellectual potential	69	V
Water resources	35	VI
Leadership, activity of the authorities	25	VII
Activity of residents and entrepreneurs	16	VIII

The method of scenarios was used to determine the motion vector and to form a strategic vision for the region development. Development scenarios crafting is one of the key elements of strategic planning, occupying an intermediate position between expert assessment methods and mathematical modelling methods [2].

Three main development scenarios were proposed: pessimistic; inertial (or trending – maintaining the so-called «status quo» situation); optimistic, demonstrating a positive dynamic that will be supported by the region's strengths and successful combinations of external opportunities. According to experts, the probability of such a scenario is 20 %.

The results of sociological research and the analysis of the situation in the region determined the strategic choice of Dnipropetrovs'k region on the basis of an optimistic scenario, which is reflected in its mission and strategic vision.

Mission – to ensure the increase of human capital through the creation of comfortable and safe living conditions, natural resources preservation, regional economic and scientific potential growth. Focus of the Strategy – to create, at the level of advanced European standards, within the framework of smart specialization and strategic vision (by the end of 2027) appropriate conditions, basic objects and elements of infrastructure to ensure the investment attractive and environmentally correct image of the territory through the cluster development model implementation and regional innovative potential effective utilization.

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