ASSESSMENT OF THE LEVEL OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION

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Abstract. *In this article, the sustainable development of any country or region today directly depends on the level of social and economic development being implemented in its territories. In particular, in order to effectively solve such priority tasks as reducing regional disparities, rational use of resources, and improving the living standards of the population, there is an increasing need for in-depth study and assessment of the level of socio-economic development of regions.*

Keywords: *socio-economic, development, level, assessment, territory, opportunity, problem, resources, distribution, infrastructure, employment rate, investments, volume, indicators of population well-being, state policy, adaptation to local conditions, strategic decision, interregional imbalance.*

The methodology for assessing the socio-economic development of regions, key indicators, assessment methods, international experience and practical analysis on the example of Uzbekistan are considered. The main goal of the article is to develop scientific and practical recommendations for studying and improving the methods used in assessing regional development.

The concept and theoretical foundations of territorial development. The concept of territorial development. Territorial development means the harmonious development of social, economic, demographic and ecological processes in a given geographical area. This development is closely related not only to economic growth, but also to the well-being of the population, living conditions, the state of the education and healthcare system. The concept of territorial development indicates that economic achievements should be achieved not only in large centers, but also in all regions.

The concept of territorial development in economics has developed rapidly since the second half of the 20th century. In this direction, the theoretical developments of such scientists as A. Lösch, W. Christaller, F. Perroux, G. Myrdal have gained significant importance. In particular, the center-periphery model (G. Myrdal) and the theory of growth points (F. Perroux) have created scientific foundations for analyzing and reducing differences between regions.

Factors influencing territorial development.

Factors influencing regional development include:

Economic factors: production potential, investment volume, industrial and agricultural development, availability of infrastructure;

Social factors: population size, labor resources, employment level, quality of education and healthcare system;

Geographical factors: location, availability of natural resources, transport and communication links;

Administrative and political factors: territorial governance system, territorial orientation of state policy;

Innovative factors: research and development activities, level of technology introduction.

Territorial imbalance and the need to reduce it

One of the problems observed in most countries is territorial imbalance. That is, some regions are developing economically at a rapid pace, while others remain at a slow development stage. This situation creates social inequality, migration pressure and economic imbalances in society.

To reduce interregional imbalance, it is important to take the following measures:

- sustainable development of infrastructure;
- strengthening local production potential;
- distribution of state investments in priority areas;
- support for regional economic specialization.

Key indicators of socio-economic development.

The indicators used to assess the level of socio-economic development reflect factors such as the standard of living of the population in the region, economic activity, infrastructure, and the quality of social services. These indicators are important in determining overall economic stability, formulating state policy, and analyzing disparities between regions.

Economic indicators.

The following main indicators are used to assess economic development:

Gross regional product (GRP): the total value of goods and services produced in the region.

This indicator reflects the economic potential of the region.

Volume of industrial and agricultural output: indicates the level of development in the main sectors of production.

Volume and composition of investments: direct foreign and domestic investments, their distribution by sector.

Foreign trade turnover: the volume and structure of export-import operations.

Small business and private entrepreneurship: the number of newly established entities, their share in production.

Social indicators.

The level of social development is assessed by the following criteria:

Employment and unemployment rate: the ratio of the employed population to the total population.

Average wages and real incomes: an important factor in determining the purchasing power and well-being of the population.

Health system status: number of doctors, number of medical institutions, life expectancy, maternal and child mortality rates.

Educational indicators: number of preschool, general secondary and higher education institutions, coverage rate, literacy rate.

Provision of social services: availability of drinking water, electricity, gas, road and transport infrastructure.

Integrated indicators.

In many countries, integrated indices are also used to assess the level of socio-economic development. They include:

Human Development Index (HDI): determined on the basis of life expectancy, education level and per capita income.

Sustainable development indicator: based on a combination of environmental, economic and social factors.

Competitiveness index: the economic innovative potential of the region and the level of attractiveness for foreign investors.

Assessment methods and indicator system.

The system of methods and indicators used to assess socio-economic development is an important tool for effective regional analysis. Each methodology is based on its own approaches, statistical indicators and mathematical modeling methods. Their main task is to identify and compare trends in the development of regions based on available data.

Assessment methods.

The following are the main methods widely used in assessing regional development:

Rating method.

In this method, each region is assessed based on certain indicators and a rating is compiled based on the total points. Rating points are calculated using special weighting coefficients for each indicator. This method helps to identify the relative advantages and lagging areas between regions.

Integrated assessment method.

In the integrated method, various indicators are combined into a single index. In this case, all indicators are normalized (for example, from 0 to 1), and then their generalized value is calculated. This approach allows you to obtain a general indicator of the socio-economic situation.

Cluster analysis.

Using the clustering method, regions are divided into groups based on their similarities.

This method makes it convenient to visually depict regional differences and manage resources in groups.

Dynamic analysis.

This approach studies changes that occur over time. For example, the development rate is assessed based on the 5–10-year change in regional indicators. This method is useful in determining the direction of development of the region.

When selecting indicators for the assessment, their relevance, measurability, availability and balanced impact are taken into account.

Indicators in the experience of Uzbekistan.

There is a system of indicators developed for regions by the Ministry of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the State Statistics Committee. They are based on the following areas:

employment and income of the population;

investment activity;

production volume;

level of use of social services.

Based on these indicators, an analysis is carried out annually by regions, districts and cities.

International experience: the example of the European Union, the USA and Asian countries.

Studying international experience in assessing territorial socio-economic development is an important basis for adopting advanced methodologies in this area and improving the national system. Developed and developing countries have their own approaches in this regard. The experience of the European Union, the USA and some Asian countries is analyzed below.

European Union experience.

The European Union (EU) takes a strategic approach to territorial development. They use the NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) system, which involves grouping territories for statistical purposes. At each level (NUTS 1, 2 and 3), an assessment is carried out based on specific indicators.

The EU uses the following indices to assess regional development:

Regional Competitiveness Index (RCI): determines the economic competitiveness of the region.

Regional Innovation Scoreboard: analyzes innovation activity.

Human Development Index (HDI): shows regional differences in health, education and income.

The EU also supports underdeveloped regions through funds (for example, the Cohesion Fund). The allocation of funds depends on the results of the rating.

US experience

In the US, statistical systems at the federal and state levels are widely used to assess regional development. One of the important approaches is the analysis based on County Business Patterns (CBP) and the American Community Survey (ACS).

Assessment indicators:

job creation rate;

per capita income;

industrial production volume;

employment rate;

housing, transport and health infrastructure.

In the USA, economic regions are often assessed through clustering and analysis of regional innovation systems. Each state has its own economic strategy, which is coordinated with the Federal Government.

Experience of Asian countries (China and South Korea)

China:

In China, the development balance and regional differential policy are the main factors in assessing the development of regions. The state assesses the western, central and eastern regions with separate indicators.

While eastern China (cities such as Beijing and Shanghai) have high growth rates, inland regions have low growth rates. Therefore, the government has implemented the "Go West" strategy to reduce this imbalance.

South Korea:

South Korea assesses regional innovation systems. The following indicators are prioritized for them:

number of technological startups;

R&D (research and development) spending;

share of youth with higher education;

export-oriented production.

In South Korea, the government is gradually moving from a "densely centralized" policy to a "decentralized development" model.

Conclusions and lessons learned.

International experience shows that successful regional development depends on:

a high-quality statistical system, a system of integrated indicators, a development-oriented state policy, and an approach that takes into account the specific characteristics of the regions.

Based on these experiences, it is important for Uzbekistan to:

strengthen the regional rating system, introduce innovative development indicators, and create a comparative assessment system for regional infrastructure.

Level of socio-economic development of the regions of Uzbekistan (practical analysis).

In recent years, fundamental reforms have been implemented in the regions of the Republic of Uzbekistan in terms of socio-economic development. As a result of these reforms, economic activity has increased in some regions, new jobs have been created, and infrastructure is developing rapidly. At the same time, some regions are still characterized by slow development rates. This section provides a practical analysis of the level of socio-economic development in the main regions of Uzbekistan.

Sources of information and indicators.

The analysis was conducted based on the following main sources:

Data from the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan;

Reports of the Ministry of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction;

Open sources in the field of investments, employment, education and healthcare.

The main indicators used in the assessment are:

Gross regional product (GRP);

Volume of industrial and agricultural output;

Per capita income;

Unemployment rate;

Investment volume;

Coverage of education and healthcare;

Housing and road infrastructure.

Results of territorial analysis,

Tashkent city and region

Tashkent city is the leader in the republic in terms of GRP.

It is the most active region in terms of investments, industrial production and services.

The education and healthcare system has high indicators of quality.

Per capita income and employment rates are higher than the national average.

Navoi region.

High share of industrial production (mainly mining and metallurgy).

Although per capita income is relatively high, the development of the service sector and infrastructure is limited.

Labor migration is high.

Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya regions,

Agriculture and the oil and gas sector are the leading sectors.

The quality of social services is low, there are employment problems. Despite the large population, the level of HYuM is low.

Andijan, Fergana, Namangan regions (Fergana Valley)

There are large industrial clusters. The unemployment rate is relatively high, especially among young people. Problems with the provision of infrastructure and utilities remain.

Republic of Karakalpakstan,

The ecological situation is difficult (the problem of the Aral Sea). One of the lowest regions in the republic in terms of social development indicators. The state supports it with separate socio-economic programs.

Conclusions from the analysis.

There are significant socio-economic disparities between regions.

Large industrial centers (Tashkent, Navoi) are developing rapidly, but rural and remote areas lag behind in development.

It is necessary to differentiate investment and infrastructure policies.

It is urgent to develop a development strategy based on the specialization of each region.

Recommendations based on the results of the analysis.

A number of important conclusions can be drawn based on the assessment of the socio-economic development of the regions of Uzbekistan and the analysis of international experience.

This section offers scientific and practical recommendations to eliminate existing problems and reduce interregional disparities.

Improving the assessment system.

Updating the indicator system: It is necessary to develop a single, but flexible set of indicators for each region. It should cover education, healthcare, ecology and infrastructure, along with economic indicators.

Introduction of an annual regional rating system: Ratings should be developed for each region, district and city, and state resources should be allocated based on their results.

Monitoring of regional reforms should be carried out based on normalized and integrated assessment models.

Regional differentiation of state policy.

Development of regional development strategies: A separate development plan should be developed, taking into account the socio-economic potential, resources, and demographic situation of each region and district.

Implementation of preferential regimes for remote regions: It is necessary to stimulate economic activity in underdeveloped regions through tax breaks, subsidies, and state-guaranteed investments.

Improving the investment climate.

Development of a regional investment attractiveness index: An open rating system should be created that reflects the conditions for investors in each region.

Strengthening private sector participation: The volume of domestic investment can be increased by developing local businesses.

Developing infrastructure and social services.

Improving transport and communication networks: It is necessary to invest in roads, railways, and internet infrastructure connecting remote regions with centers.

Ensuring equal access to education and health services: The availability of quality schools and hospitals directly affects the standard of living of the population.

Digitalization and introduction of information technologies.

Creation of a territorial digital analysis platform: The platform that automates statistics, assessment and analysis processes will increase accuracy and speed.

Improving governance through the e-government system: The convenience and openness of public services will reduce inter-regional disparities.

Conclusion. Analyzing the level of socio-economic development of regions is one of the main factors in ensuring stable and balanced development of the country. The theoretical approaches, indicator system, assessment methods, and analysis of international and local experience presented in this article have shown that by identifying, analyzing territorial differences and conducting effective policies in relation to them, the state can achieve its strategic goals faster.

Practical analysis shows that some regions in Uzbekistan (Tashkent, Navoi, Fergana Valley) occupy leading positions in socio-economic development, while other regions (Karakalpakstan, Surkhandarya) are not fully realizing their potential. This situation is explained by the uneven distribution of resources, insufficiently developed infrastructure, and low local governance capacity.

The study concluded the following important conclusions:

The system of indicators for assessing regional development should be accurate, modern, and dynamic;

Ratings and indices assessing the level of development should become the main tool for political decisions;

Separate strategic approaches should be developed for each region;

The equal development of infrastructure, social services, and the investment environment will reduce interregional disparities.

Also, based on international experience, it is proposed to digitize the territorial assessment system in Uzbekistan, implement a clustering approach, and analyze development based on integrated indices. In the future, it is advisable to expand research and development based on regional innovation potential, green economy indicators, and sustainable development criteria.

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