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CONCEPTUAL AND CATEGORICAL APPARATUS AND EVOLUTION OF STATE POLICY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEPRESSED TERRITORIES IN THE MILITARY AND POST-WAR PERIOD OF UKRAINE

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Summary. The relevance of the study is determined by the radical change in the development environment of Ukrainian territories, where classical economic problems have faded into the background due to massive military destruction, critical loss of human capital, and infrastructure. The traditional domestic model of compensating for economic lag through financial subsidies has proven incapable of responding to modern exogenous military shocks. In this regard, the purpose of the study is to conceptually differentiate the concepts of regional development and depressed territories, as well as to develop macroeconomic forecasts and a set of strategic measures for the spatial recovery of Ukraine up to 2030, with mandatory consideration of security challenges and European integration. Based on the results of the study, the evolution of state policy from the passive expectation of state aid to modern predictable crisis management is analyzed. Scientific approaches are systematized, and the dialectical contradiction between the gradual development of a region as an evolutionary norm and its depressive crisis state, which requires urgent external intervention, is highlighted. It is proven that the nature of regional decline has changed from classical structural-economic to military-destructive. Based on the analysis of legislative changes, the necessity of a transition from the outdated status of a «depressed territory» to a fundamentally new category of a «recovery territory» is substantiated. A set of strategic macroeconomic development measures up to 2030 has been formed, with the security and infrastructure cluster (humanitarian demining and major logistics reconstruction) defined as the fundamental basis. The study proves the lack of alternatives to abandoning the linear reconstruction of Soviet industrial models in favor of European environmental standards «EU Green Deal», attracting new investment «Ukraine Facility», and the total digitalization of management processes, exemplified by the «DREAM» public investment management system. The theoretical novelty lies in the conceptual disclosure of the fundamental contradiction between the spatial development paradigm and the crisis state of territories, as well as in the scientific substantiation of the change in the nature of their decline under the impact of the war. The practical value is expressed in the development of a clear hierarchy of managerial actions and forecasts. The practical application of these results will allow authorities to formulate an effective hybrid policy, effectively prevent the transformation of affected lands into chronically unviable «grey zones» and guarantee their institutional reintegration into the space of sustainable European growth.

Key words: regional development, depressed territories, recovery territories, state spatial policy, post-war reconstruction, structural modernization, macroeconomic forecasting, security and infrastructure cluster, smart specialization, institutional reintegration.

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ПОНЯТІЙНО-КАТЕГОРІАЛЬНИЙ АПАРАТ Й ЕВОЛЮЦІЯ ДЕРЖАВНОЇ ПОЛІТИКИ РОЗВИТКУ ДЕПРЕСИВНИХ ТЕРИТОРІЙ У ВОЄННИЙ І ПІСЛЯВОЄННИЙ ПЕРІОДИ УКРАЇНИ

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Резюме. Актуальність дослідження полягає у кардинальній зміні середовища розвитку українських територій, де класичні економічні проблеми відійшли на другий план через масштабні воєнні руйнування, критичну втрату людського капіталу та інфраструктури. Традиційна вітчизняна модель компенсації економічного відставання шляхом дотаційних вливань виявилася нездатною відповідати на сучасні екзогенні шоки військового характеру. У зв'язку з цим метою роботи є концептуальне розмежування понять регіонального розвитку та депресивних територій, а також розроблення макроекономічних прогнозів і комплексу стратегічних заходів відбудови простору України до 2030 року з обов'язковим урахуванням безпекових викликів та європейської інтеграції. За результатами проведеного дослідження проаналізовано еволюцію державної політики від пасивного очікування державної допомоги до сучасного прогнозованого антикризового управління. Систематизовано наукові підходи та виділено діалектичну суперечність між поступовим розвитком регіону як еволюційною нормою та його депресивним кризовим станом, що потребує екстреного зовнішнього втручання. Доведено, що природу регіонального занепаду змінено з класичної структурно-економічної на військово-руйнівну. На основі аналізу законодавчих змін обґрунтовано необхідність переходу від застарілого статусу «депресивна територія» до принципово нової категорії «територія відновлення». Сформовано комплекс стратегічних заходів макроекономічного розвитку до 2030 року, де фундаментальним базисом визначено безпеково-інфраструктурний кластер (гуманітарне розмінування та капітальна реконструкція логістики). Доведено безальтернативність відмови від лінійної відбудови радянських промислових моделей на користь європейських екологічних стандартів «EU Green Deal», залучення нових інвестиційних інструментів «Ukraine Facility» та тотальної цифровізації управлінських процесів на прикладі системи управління публічними інвестиціями «DREAM». Теоретична новизна полягає у концептуальному розкритті фундаментальної суперечності між парадигмою просторового розвитку та кризовим станом територій, а також у науковому обґрунтуванні зміни природи їхнього занепаду під впливом війни. Практична цінність виражається у розробленні чіткої ієрархії управлінських дій та прогнозів. Практичне застосування цих результатів дасть змогу органам влади формувати ефективну гібридну політику, дієво запобігати перетворенню постраждалих земель на хронічно неспроможні «сірі зони» та гарантувати їхню інституційну реінтеграцію у простір сталого європейського зростання.

Ключові слова: регіональний розвиток, депресивні території, території відновлення, державна просторова політика, післявоєнна відбудова, структурна модернізація, макроекономічне прогнозування, безпеково-інфраструктурний кластер, смарт-спеціалізація, інституційна реінтеграція.

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Problem statement. The problematic of this research is based on a deep contradiction between outdated theoretical and methodological approaches to managing spatial development and the unprecedented challenges of a full-scale war, which have triggered the state's emergency transition to a phase of strict securitization. The traditional domestic model of managing territorial crises, which has long relied on a passive response to problems and the simple compensation of economic lag through subsidy infusions, has proven completely incapable of responding to the current massive internal shocks of a military nature. Currently, the key problem in spatial management lies in the critical need to conceptually rethink the phenomenon of depressed territories, as the nature of regional decline has drastically shifted

from a classical structural-economic one to a military-destructive one. In line with the new realities, domestic territories have faced catastrophic demographic losses, large-scale destruction of critical infrastructure, and the complete deformation of local labor markets, which requires an immediate abandonment of attempts at a simple linear reconstruction of the outdated Soviet industrial model. At the same time, the scientific and managerial problem is significantly exacerbated by the acute institutional need to develop a hybrid spatial policy that could effectively combine measures of operational security stabilization with the unalterable requirement of full integration of domestic mechanisms into the European cohesion policy on the strict principles of the Green Deal and total digitalization. Solving this multidimensional problem is critically necessary to prevent the affected de-occupied lands from turning into chronically unviable «grey zones» and to ensure their effective transformation into viable spaces with new investment opportunities.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Despite the fundamental nature of the existing scientific approaches to defining «regional development» and «depressed territories» by foreign and domestic scholars Porter M. E. [1], Pike A., Rodríguez-Pose A., Tomaney J. [2], Jackson R. W. [3], North D. C. [4], Balland P. A., Boschma R. [5], Shevchuk T. L. [7], Dorohuntsov S. I. [8], Shevchenko O. V. [9], Kachan Ye. P., Babiak H. P., Zaporozhan L. P. [10], Varnalii Z. S., Pavliuk A. P., Shevchenko O. V. [11], Zakharchenko V. I. [12], Friedmann J. [14], MacKinnon D., Dawley S., Pike A., Cumbers A. [17], Cumbers A., Birch K. [18], Smith N. [19], Zin E. A. [20], Zabarna E. M. [21], Libanova E. M. [25], Shevchenko O. V. [26], most of them were formed on the basis of stable internal and external market conditions, which create significant limitations for their application in the conditions of wartime and infrastructural crisis. Therefore, the author set the task to supplement the existing scientific approaches with the definition of «recovery territory», which has profound security and demographic dimensions, and to determine comprehensive strategic measures and macroeconomic forecasts for the development of the territories of Ukraine up to 2030.

Purpose of the study is the conceptual differentiation of the categories «regional development» and «depressed territories», the study of their conceptual evolution, and the development on this basis of macroeconomic forecasts and strategic measures for the reconstruction of the territories of Ukraine up to 2030, with mandatory consideration of the European integration and security-infrastructural vectors of development.

Statement of the task. In order to achieve the purpose of our research, the author sets the following tasks: 1) to investigate scientific approaches to defining the concepts of «regional development» and «depressed territories» by international and domestic scholars and specialists; 2) to perform a systemic correlation of the concepts of regional development and depressed territories; 3) to outline the key stages in the evolution of the development policy for depressed territories in Ukraine; 4) to formulate strategic measures and macroeconomic forecasts for the development of the territories of Ukraine up to 2030.

Statements of the main material of the study. For a profound understanding of the nature of contemporary spatial transformations, it is primarily necessary to examine the basic terminology and key scientific concepts in detail. In the modern academic environment, the interpretation of basic spatial concepts is distinguished by a significant multidimensionality and a deep polymorphism of theoretical and methodological approaches. Therefore, an acute practical and theoretical need arises to systematize existing views and comprehensively analyze the scientific approaches to defining the concept of regional development by leading international and domestic scholars and specialists.

Let us analyze the scientific approaches to defining the concept of «regional development» by international scholars and specialists (Table 1).

Table 1. Scientific approaches to defining the concept of «regional development» by international scientists and specialists

<i>№</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Definition</i>
1	Porter M. E. [1]	The growth of the competitiveness of territories occurs through the formation of clusters of interconnected industries, which directly affects innovative activity, ensuring a stable increase in the level of employment and income of the local population
2	Pike A., Rodríguez-Pose A., Tomaney J [2]	A holistic and progressive process of improving well-being, encompassing the economic, social, environmental and cultural aspects of a specific space, requiring consideration of the interests of all segments of the population
3	Jackson R. W. [3]	The process of identifying and stimulating new activities that move the regional economy towards specialized diversification
4	North D. C. [4]	A comprehensive change in the institutional structure of a region over a certain period of time, which is capable of forming new rules of the game in society, which directly affects the reduction of transaction costs and the stimulation of investment
5	Balland P. A., Boschma R. [5]	Regional development is viewed through an evolutionary prism as the ability of territories to generate new and complex types of economic activity, which requires diversification based on related technologies that allow avoiding the traps of structural decline
6	OECD [6]	A multidimensional tool for increasing productivity and inclusive growth, requiring open engagement of local communities, digitalization, and strengthening resilience to global climate change
7	Shevchuk T. L. [7]	Regional development – 1) a change in the structure of regions or territorial formations within them (usually, this refers to progressive changes in the structure); 2) complication (effective positive change) of the regional system. If development is associated with destruction, lowering of the level, etc., the term «degradation» is used
8	Dorohuntsov S. I. [8]	Optimization of the territorial organization of production, increasing the efficiency of the exploitation of local resources and eliminating structural crises in regional systems
9	Shevchenko O. V. [9]	A continuous process of strategic regulation of disparities in socio-economic development and stimulation of investment activity in territories
10	Kachan Ye. P., Babiak H. P., Zaporozhan L. P. [10]	Comprehensive socio-economic development aimed at balanced use of the territory's resource potential and spatial alignment
11	Varnalii Z. S., Pavliuk A. P., Shevchenko O. V. [11]	Ensuring regional security by de-shadowing the local economy, creating an institutional environment for entrepreneurship and innovation
12	Zakharchenko V. I. [12]	Regional development after military shocks is considered through the prism of the European principle of restoration «better than before». The author emphasizes that modern spatial policy must be based on the activation of the internal innovative potential of each community
13	Law of Ukraine dated 05.02.2015 № 156-VIII «On the Principles of State Regional Policy» [13]	Regional development is the process of social, economic, environmental, humanitarian and other positive changes in regions

Source: compiled by the author based on the following sources [1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10; 11; 12; 13].

Significant conceptual shifts towards institutionalism are demonstrated by North D. C. [4], who defines regional development as a complex transformation of the institutional structure over time, where the formation of new «rules of the game» becomes a catalyst for reducing transaction costs and stimulating investments (the implementation of transparent local mechanisms for protecting property rights for investors). Such an institutional foundation finds its specific reflection and development in the domestic scientific school, in the works of Varnalii Z. S., Pavliuk A. P., Shevchenko O. V. [11], who conceptualize development through

the security dimension by creating an institutional environment for the de-shadowing of the local economy, and the development of innovations and entrepreneurship. At the same time, the classical paradigm of competitiveness, fundamentally substantiated by Porter M. E. [1], shifts the emphasis to the formation of clusters of interconnected industries as the main driver of innovative activity, which ultimately should convert into a stable increase in income and employment levels of the local population (the unification of local universities, IT companies, and the municipality into a single innovation hub). However, in response to the challenges of globalization, modern foreign researchers are moving away from purely economic determinism; thus, Pike A., Rodríguez-Pose A., Tomaney J. [2] proposes a holistic and progressive approach, where regional development encompasses the economic, social, environmental, and cultural aspects of a specific space, with mandatory consideration of the interests of all strata of the population. This holistic perspective fully intertwines with the official position of the «OECD» [6], which interprets this phenomenon as a multidimensional tool for inclusive growth and productivity enhancement, requiring digitalization, open engagement of local communities, and strengthening resilience to global climate change, which also finds its full normative and legal consolidation in the Law of Ukraine dated 05.02.2015 № 156-VIII «On the Principles of State Regional Policy» [13], where the concept is legalized as a process of comprehensive social, economic, environmental, humanitarian, and other positive changes in the regions. On domestic soil, attempts to synthesize socio-economic and spatial aspects are also clearly traced in the definition by Kachan Ye. P., Babiak H. P., Zaporozhan L. P. [10], who emphasize comprehensive socio-economic development for the balanced use of resource potential and spatial equalization, which is logically complemented by the strategic-regulatory approach of Shevchenko O. V. [9], who defines regional development as a continuous process of strategic regulation of disproportions and stimulation of investment activity (leveling the asymmetry between depressed rural areas and urbanized centers through mechanisms of targeted subvention). Ultimately, under the conditions of contemporary crisis parameters, the concept of regional development acquires a new meaning in the focus of resilience, which is most fully articulated by Zakharchenko V. I. [12], who, analyzing development after military shocks, implements the European principle of building back «better than before», emphasizing the lack of alternatives to basing modern spatial policy on the activation of the internal innovative potential of each individual community.

Next, let us analyze the scientific approaches to defining the concept of «regional development» by international scientists and specialists (Table 2).

Table 2. Scientific approaches to defining the concept of «regional development» by international scientists and specialists

<i>№</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Definition</i>
1	2	3
1	Friedmann J. [14]	These spatial formations are classified as being in a state of permanent decline. They are characterized by rapid depletion of natural resources, an outdated production structure, and complete resistance to innovative technologies
2	World Bank [15]	Territories where the unemployment rate consistently exceeds the national rate and residents' incomes do not reach the minimum established standards
3	OECD [16]	Regions are lagging behind in development due to extremely low labor productivity and demographic decline. Such zones require not just financial injections, but the implementation of targeted territorially oriented policies

End of the table

1	2	3
4	MacKinnon D., Dawley S., Pike A., Cumbers A. [17]	Regions (mostly old-industrial) that are in a state of tension between external pressure for transformation and internal obstruction of social and cultural institutions
5	Balland P. A., Boschma R. [5]	Old industrial regions are in a state of prolonged decline, their development blocked by their own institutional and cognitive «lock-in» that hinders development
6	Cumbers A., Birch K. [18]	Old industrial regions experiencing critical deviations in economic trajectories due to the loss of traditional markets, deindustrialization, and inability to adapt
7	Smith N. [19]	Territories whose profound decline is an inevitable spatial consequence of the success of other locations in the dialectical process of «spatial switching» of global capital
8	Zin E. A. [20]	A region or its administrative part (district, city) where the pace of economic development significantly and consistently lags behind the national average
9	Zabarna E. M. [21]	A negative territorial phenomenon that significantly harms the comprehensive process of economic growth of the state and requires extraordinary support from outside
10	Law of Ukraine dated 08.09.2005 № 2850-IV «On Stimulating the Development of Regions» [22]	The basic document legally establishes the status of depression based on statistical data. The main criterion is the recording of the lowest gross regional product and the highest unemployment rate for several consecutive reporting years
11	Law of Ukraine dated 09.07.2022 № 2389-IX «On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Regarding the Principles of State Regional Policy and the Policy of Regeneration of Regions and Territories» [23]	The legislation radically transformed the approach to spatial planning, introducing four functional types of spaces. Recovery areas include communities that have been destroyed, occupied, or experienced mass population displacement due to war
12	Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated July 18, 2023, № 731 «On approval of procedures for the restoration and development of regions and territorial communities» [24]	The government document approves a clear procedure for determining areas for restoration based on an assessment of damage and socio-economic decline. The procedure involves the formation of a special commission under the relevant ministry to approve the appropriate status of the community
13	Libanova, E. M. [25]	With the onset of full-scale war, the concept was transformed, encompassing territories with catastrophic demographic losses. They are characterized by the destruction of infrastructure, unprecedented migration outflow of the population, and complete deformation of the regional labor market
14	Shevchenko O. V. [26]	The researcher introduces into scientific circulation the category of post-conflict territories, which due to massive destruction are turning into new depressed zones, and emphasizes the critical need to apply special preferential regimes to prevent their irreversible degradation

Source: compiled by the author based on the following sources [14; 15; 16; 17; 18; 19; 20; 21; 22; 23; 23; 24; 25; 26].

The study of the phenomenon of depressed territories and the causes of their decline in modern science has evolved from a narrow economic understanding to a broad inclusion of social, managerial, and security factors. From the perspective of global macroeconomic analysis, the «World Bank» [15] applies a strict quantitative approach, defining depressed territories exclusively through a stable excess over the national unemployment rate and the failure of residents to meet minimum income standards, which noticeably differs from the more comprehensive vision of the «OECD» [16], which shifts the emphasis to demographic decline and critically low labor productivity, asserting the need to introduce not merely financial subsidies, but targeted spatially oriented policies for such zones. This attention to deep structural obstacles finds its development in

the works of representatives of evolutionary economic geography, where Balland P. A., Boschma R. [5] explains the prolonged decline of old industrial depressed territories through their internal managerial and intellectual insularity, which blocks the processes of learning and innovative renewal. This idea is harmoniously complemented by the views of MacKinnon D., Dawley S., Pike A., Cumbers A. [17], who consider such regions through the complex interaction between external pressure for change and internal resistance of socio-cultural institutions, while Cumbers A., Birch K. [18] specify this mechanism as a critical deviation of economic development paths as a result of large-scale deindustrialization and the inability to adapt after the loss of traditional markets. On the other hand, Friedmann J. [14] exacerbates this spatial problem, classifying depressed territories as zones of persistent decline, distinguished by the rapid depletion of resources and a complete inability to absorb innovations (monofunctional mining towns after the closure of city-forming enterprises), while the Marxist view of Smith N. [19] entirely removes the phenomenon of deep decline beyond local responsibility, explaining it as an inevitable, natural spatial consequence of the success of other territories in the global process of spatial capital redistribution. Conversely, in the domestic scientific and legal field, a practical-comparative approach prevailed for a long time; in particular, Zin E. A. [20] defines depressed territories as those where a stable lag in the region's development rates from the national average is observed, and Zabarna E. M. [21] expands this vision, calling them a negative spatial phenomenon that destructively affects nationwide growth and requires extraordinary external support. This comparative-statistical logic found its classical embodiment in the Law of Ukraine dated 08.09.2005 № 2850-IV «On Stimulating the Development of Regions» [22], which legally entrenched the status of a depressed territory exclusively on the basis of the past recording of the lowest indicators of gross regional product and the highest unemployment rate. However, under the influence of the external shocks of the full-scale war, domestic understanding has undergone unprecedented changes, which is reflected in the Law of Ukraine dated 09.07.2022 № 2389-IX «On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Regarding the Principles of State Regional Policy and the Policy of Recovery of Regions and Territories» [23], which radically changed the approach to spatial planning, introducing a division into four types of spaces and transforming the classical understanding of depression into a specific category of «recovery territories» (communities that have suffered destruction, occupation, or mass displacement). This mechanism was officially consolidated by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 18.07.2023 № 731 «On Approval of Procedures for the Recovery and Development of Regions and Territorial Communities» [24], which approved the procedure for granting such status through a special commission at the ministry based on a comprehensive assessment of socio-economic decline and destruction. Reflecting on these new realities, Libanova E. M. [25] asserts a substantive update of the concept of «depressed territories», which now encompasses regions with catastrophic population losses, ruined infrastructure, and the complete destruction of the regional labor market, which directly resonates with the approach of Shevchenko O. V. [26], who describes the emergence of post-conflict territories, warning about the risk of their transformation into new deeply depressed territories due to massive destruction and emphasizing the critical need to apply special preferential regimes (introducing tax holidays or creating special economic zones) to prevent their irreversible decline.

As a next step, let us determine the systemic correlation of the concepts of regional development and depressed territories in Fig. 1.

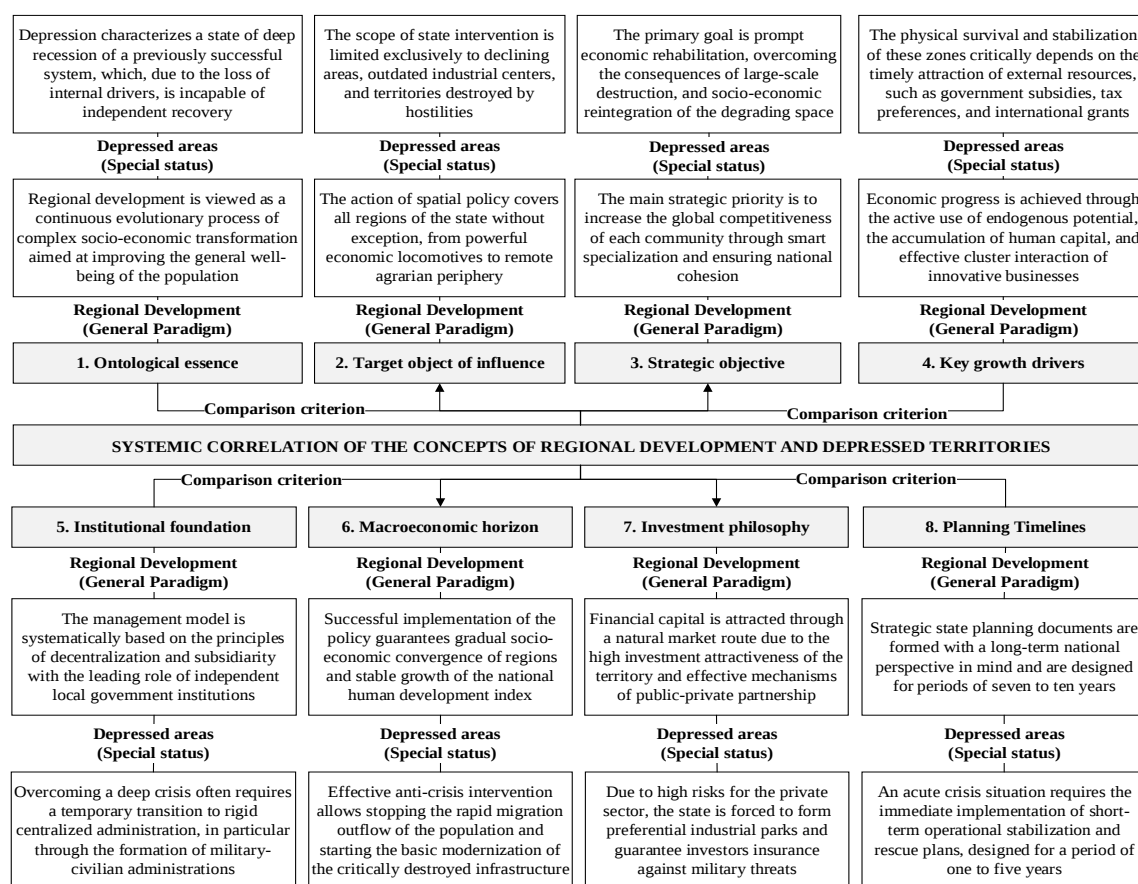


Figure 1. Systemic correlation of the concepts of regional development and depressed territories

Source: compiled by the authors themselves.

Based on the conducted analysis of Fig. 1, it can be concluded that the systemic correlation between the concepts of regional development and depressed territories reveals a fundamental dialectical contradiction between the general evolutionary norm and the specific crisis state of the system. While the general paradigm of regional development is interpreted as a continuous, comprehensive process of accumulating endogenous potential and decentralization, aimed at achieving global competitiveness in the long-term horizon (7–10 years), the phenomenon of «depressed territories» represents a disruption of this evolutionary trajectory. It is characterized by a state of deep recession, the exhaustion of internal growth drivers, and a forced narrowing of the planning horizon to short-term operational stabilization (1–5 years). Thus, the status of a depressed territory acts not as an alternative to development, but as a temporary «emergency mode» under which the mechanisms of market self-regulation fail, which necessitates a transition from soft stimulation to strict external rehabilitation and subsidized infusion of resources. Consequently, the managerial approaches to these two states act as antipodes, because if the general model relies on investment attractiveness and the institutional independence of communities, the management of depressed territories requires a critical dominant of state interventionism, ranging from centralized administration (including military-civilian forms) to the artificial formation of investment demand through preferences and war risk insurance.

Such an analysis confirms that the ultimate goal of the special regime for depressed zones is not merely physical survival or halting migratory outflow, but creating the basic institutional and infrastructural prerequisites for the reintegration of these degraded spaces back into the nationwide paradigm of sustainable development, which transforms the identified oppositions into a consistent logic, as the rapid overcoming of depression is a necessary foundation for the further restoration of strategic competitiveness.

Having determined the systemic correlation of the concepts of regional development and depressed territories (Fig. 1), it is expedient to outline the key stages in the evolution of the development policy for depressed territories in Ukraine (Fig. 2).

The evolutionary trajectory of state policy regarding depressed territories in Ukraine demonstrates a complex dialectical transition from situational regulation to forecasted regional management. At the initial stage of post-Soviet adaptation from 1991 to 2000, a profound institutional vacuum dominated, where the absence of systemic spatial legislation was compensated by ineffective manual intervention, and where the state focused not on the structural modernization of the region, but on the conservation of outdated sectoral specialization and the extinguishing of social explosions in monotowns.

An analytical comparison of this recessionary period with the subsequent phases of basic conceptualization from 2001 to 2004 and primary institutionalization from 2005 to 2014 reveals a critical shift in managerial philosophy. The adoption of the first concepts of regional policy and the basic Law № 2850-IV «On Stimulating the Development of Regions» demonstrated the transition from spontaneous legislative imbalance to attempts at normative and legal regulation. The creation of a specialized ministry and the introduction of subventions became the first steps towards systemic financial equalization, although the policy of this period still remained largely subsidized, concentrating on compensating for economic lag rather than stimulating internal growth points. A fundamental paradigm shift in overcoming territorial depression occurred during the decentralization reform from 2015 to 2019 and the subsequent stage of smart specialization of regions from 2020 to 2021, which radically transformed subject-object relations in regional planning. In contrast to the previous strict centralization, the implementation of European approaches and the adoption of Law № 156-VIII «On the Principles of State Regional Policy» transformed amalgamated communities into independent economic agents with real financial powers.

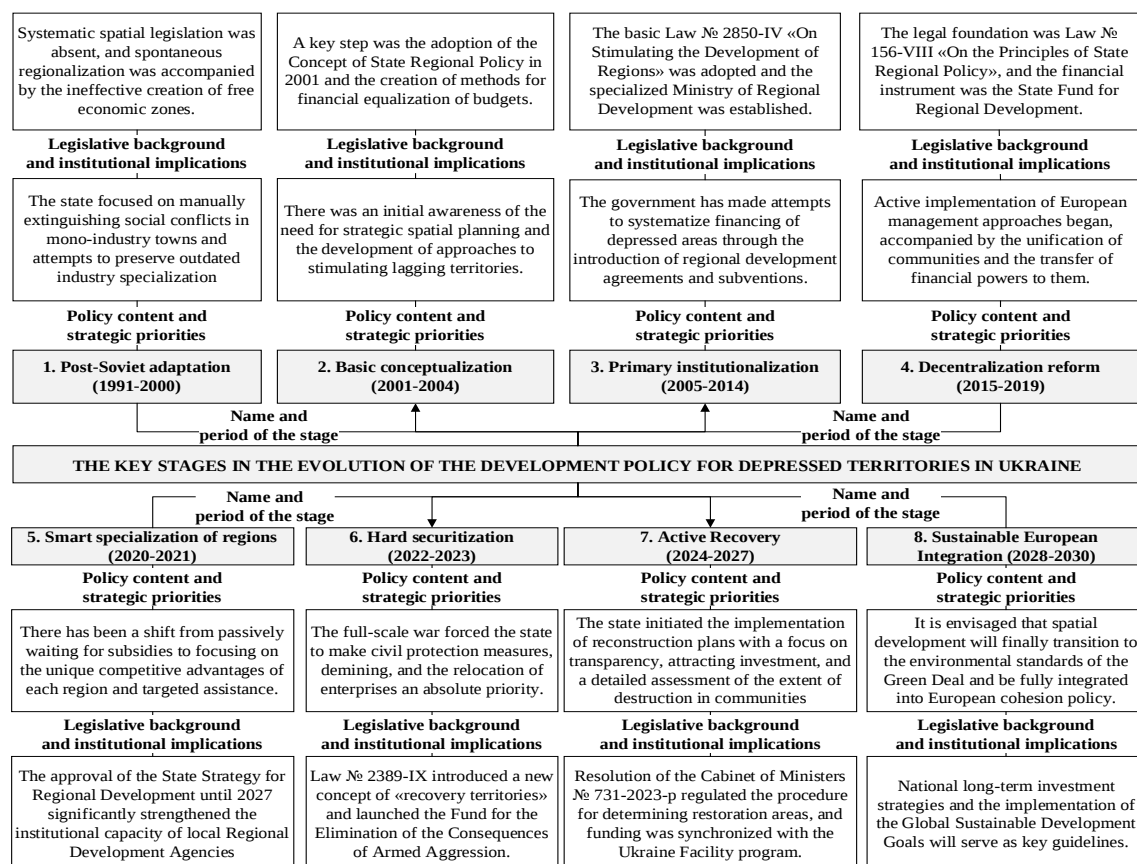


Figure 2. The key stages in the evolution of the development policy for depressed territories in Ukraine

Source: compiled by the authors based on the data [13; 23; 24; 25].

Comparative analysis indicates that it was during this period that a critically important transition took place from a passive rent-subsidized model (expecting state aid for depressed zones) to focusing on the unique competitive advantages of each territory within the framework of smart specialization. The launch of the «State Fund for Regional Development» and the institutional strengthening of local regional development agencies confirmed the managerial maturity of the system, which began to consider problem territories not as an irreversible burden on the budget, but as a promising space for targeted investments and the accumulation of endogenous potential. However, this logical evolutionary progress was sharply deformed by the unprecedented internal shock of the full-scale war, which caused an emergency transition to a phase of strict securitization from 2022 to 2023, which completely reformatted the classical macroeconomic understanding of depression. A forced objective regression occurred from long-term competitiveness planning to the operational provision of physical survival, and the absolute priorities became civil protection, demining, and business relocation.

Legislative transformation through Law № 2389-IX consolidated the institutional transition from the outdated concept of «depressed territory» to the new category of «recovery territory», which proves the change in the nature of regional decline from an economic-structural one to a military-destructive one. The creation of the «Fund for the Elimination of the Consequences of Armed Aggression» and the subsequent transition to the stage of active recovery from 2024 to 2027, regulated by the Cabinet of Ministers Resolution № 731, demonstrate the state's attempt to form a hybrid spatial policy that complexly combines anti-crisis management based on a detailed assessment of the scale of destruction with mandatory synchronization with international institutions (in particular, through the «Ukraine Facility» program), which guarantees an unprecedented level of transparency and external audit. Conducting a comprehensive retrospective and prognostic analysis, one can come to the thorough conclusion that the evolution of the development policy for problem territories in Ukraine is a process of continuous overcoming of post-Soviet institutional inertia and forced integration into the global economic space. The final stage should be sustainable European integration, which will tentatively take place from 2028 to 2030, which will require the transition of regional development to the strict standards of the Green Deal and the implementation of the «Global Sustainable Development Goals», and will act as the logical culminating conclusion of this multi-year macroeconomic transformation. Thus, the domestic model of managing territorial crises has evolved from the isolated manual resolution of local problems to a complex multi-level system, where overcoming spatial disproportions is viewed exclusively through the matrix of full institutional and normative synchronization with European cohesion policy. This indisputably proves that the future ability of Ukrainian territories to overcome depressed states will depend not on the volume of internal state transfers, but on their institutional capacity to adapt to the high environmental, managerial, and investment criteria of the European Union.

The next step is to complete our research by identifying future strategic measures and macroeconomic forecasts for the development of the territory of Ukraine until 2030 (Fig. 3).

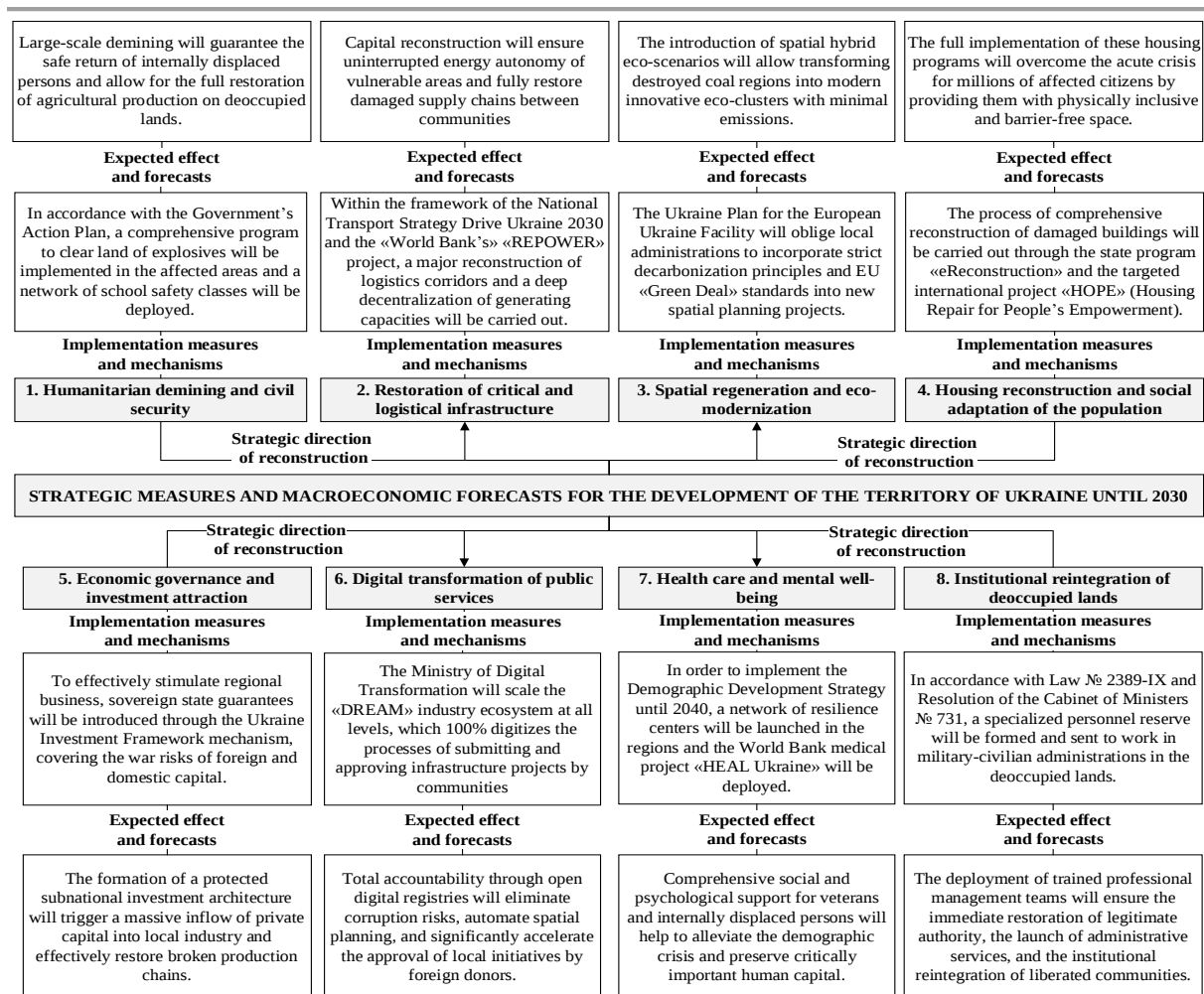


Figure 3. Strategic measures and macroeconomic forecasts for the development of the territory of Ukraine until 2030 year

Source: compiled by the authors based on the data [28–35].

The socio-humanitarian block of the strategy in directions 4, 7, and 8 will demonstrate a profound understanding that a way out of a depressed state is impossible without preserving human capital and restoring manageability. The implementation of the «eRecovery» program and the international «HOPE» project in synergy with the mental health strategy «HEAL Ukraine» will be aimed at leveling the catastrophic consequences of the demographic crisis and the social adaptation of veterans. At the same time, the institutional reintegration of de-occupied lands through the formation of a personnel reserve for military-civilian administrations (according to Law № 2389-IX) is a critical mechanism for returning a legitimate legal framework, without which these territories risk turning into «grey zones» with chronic administrative incapacity. The economic and spatial paradigm of recovery in directions 3 and 5 will be based on a fundamental rejection of reproducing the outdated Soviet industrial model in favor of European standards. The introduction of the implementation requirements of the «EU Green Deal» through the «Ukraine Facility» instruments will foresee the transformation of destroyed industrial zones into innovative eco-clusters that will radically change the specialization of former depressed regions, and the key driver here will be the new investment philosophy of the «Ukraine Investment Framework», which, through the mechanism of sovereign guarantees of war risk insurance, should unblock the inflow of private capital, replacing state subsidies with market development tools. The final element that will allow

consolidating the defined strategic construct will be the total digitalization of management processes in direction 6, thanks to the introduction of the «DREAM» ecosystem, which will ensure unprecedented transparency of the entire recovery cycle, leveling corruption risks and accelerating the verification of projects by international donors.

In the end, the implementation of the eight strategic vectors should ensure Ukraine's macroeconomic transition by 2030 from a state of post-traumatic imbalance to a model of a resilient, inclusive, and European-integrated economy, where the concept of a «depressed territory» is transformed into a space of new development opportunities.

Conclusions. Eventually, the conducted research allows us to assert the implementation of a complex dialectical transition of state spatial policy from situational regulation to forecasted anti-crisis management under the conditions of unprecedented internal military shocks. Systemic analysis has demonstrated the transformation of the classical understanding of depressed territories as a purely economic anomaly into a fundamentally new category of recovery spaces with profound security and demographic dimensions. At the same time, the strategic macroeconomic forecast up to 2030 proves the acute need to abandon the linear reconstruction of the outdated Soviet industrial model in favor of comprehensive structural modernization based on the strict principles of the European Green Deal and the total digitalization of management processes. On this basis, the theoretical novelty of the obtained results lies in the conceptual revelation of the fundamental contradiction between the evolutionary paradigm of regional development and the specific crisis state of a depressed spatial system. The author has successfully scientifically substantiated the change in the nature of regional decline from a traditional economic-structural one to a military-destructive one, and has proven the lack of alternatives to the full institutional integration of domestic management mechanisms into the European cohesion policy. At the same time, the practical significance of the work is directly determined by the development of a comprehensive hierarchy of strategic measures for macroeconomic development, where the security-infrastructure cluster is defined as the fundamental basis in deep synergy with the latest international investment instruments. The presented results will fundamentally help in solving the urgent problems of post-war reconstruction through the formation of an effective hybrid government policy, and the practical implementation of the outlined mechanisms will allow the authorities to indisputably prevent the affected lands from turning into chronically unviable «grey zones» and will reliably ensure the reintegration of degraded territories into a promising space of sustainable inclusive growth and new investment opportunities.

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