

Vilgin, Y. A., & Avedyan, L. Y. (2025). Conceptual approaches to understanding territorial development management in modern conditions. *Actual Issues of Modern Science. European Scientific e-Journal*, 40, 48–63. Ostrava.

DOI: 10.47451/man2025-10-01

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Article history:

Received: October 14, 2026

Revised: November 20, 2026

Accepted: December 1, 2026

Published: December 14, 2026

Conceptual Approaches to Understanding Territorial Development Management in Modern Conditions

Abstract:

This article is devoted to the study and analysis of various theoretical and practical approaches to understanding and implementing territorial development management in the context of global challenges and transformations of modernity. It encompasses the understanding of the essence of territorial development as a multifactorial, dynamic and complex process that requires effective and adaptive management. Particular attention is paid to the evolution of management concepts — from traditional, linear models to integrated, strategic, “smart”, participatory and sustainable approaches. Factors shaping new management requirements, such as digitalization, decentralization, climate change, demographic shifts, globalization and the need to achieve sustainable development goals, are analyzed. The object of the study is the processes of territorial development management at different levels (local, regional, national). The subject of the study is a set of theoretical and methodological principles, concepts and models of territorial development management, their evolution, features and possibilities of application in modern conditions of Ukraine and the world. The study aims to systematize, analyze, and substantiate the leading conceptual approaches to territorial development management in modern conditions, identify their advantages and disadvantages, and develop recommendations for their integrated and adaptive application to increase the effectiveness of territorial management. The article explores the theoretical foundations and practical implementation of concepts that allow for balanced socio-economic, environmental, and spatial development of territories. It aims to identify the most effective paradigms and management tools that contribute to increasing the competitiveness, sustainability, and well-being of territorial communities in conditions of uncertainty and constant change.

Keywords: territorial development management, united territorial communities (UTC), effective management, organizational support, e-governance, public sphere, decentralization.

Abbreviations:

EDP is Entrepreneurial Discovery Process,

KPI is key performance indicator,

NPG is New Public Governance,

NPM is New Public Management,

PBM is Partnership-Based Management,

RBM is Resilience-Based Management,

R&D&I is research, development and innovation,

S3 is Smart Specialisation Strategy,

SDG is Sustainable Development Goal,

UTC is united territorial communities.

Introduction

Territorial development management in modern conditions is one of the key challenges and priorities for both developed countries and those in the process of transformation. Globalization, digitalization, urbanization, climate change, geopolitical shifts, and increasing public demands for quality of life and sustainability create unprecedented complexity for traditional models of territorial management. In Ukraine, this issue is becoming particularly acute in the context of ongoing decentralization, the need for post-war recovery and reconstruction, as well as integration into the European space. Effective management of developing communities, districts, and regions requires not only the adaptation of best global practices, but also a rethinking of the fundamental conceptual principles on which management decisions are based. Existing approaches often turn out to be fragmented, insufficiently flexible, or unable to adequately respond to dynamic changes and multi-vector challenges. Therefore, there is an urgent need to systematize, analyze, and critically evaluate various conceptual approaches, which will allow us to form a holistic understanding of territorial development management and substantiate new, more adequate, and adaptive models for modern Ukraine.

The object of the study is the processes of territorial development management at different levels (local, regional, national).

The subject of the study is a set of theoretical and methodological principles, concepts and models of territorial development management, their evolution, features and possibilities of application in modern conditions of Ukraine and the world.

The study aims to systematize, analyze, and substantiate the leading conceptual approaches to territorial development management in modern conditions, identify their advantages and disadvantages, and develop recommendations for their integrated and adaptive application to increase the effectiveness of territorial management.

Following the Research objectives.

- identify and summarize the main challenges and opportunities that shape the modern environment of territorial development management;

- characterize the leading conceptual approaches to territorial development management (e.g., sustainable development, smart specialization, new public management, management based on sustainable partnerships, management using the concept of resilience, etc.);
- perform a comparative analysis of conceptual approaches, assessing their methodological basis, practical applicability, and potential for solving modern problems;
- develop proposals and recommendations for the adaptive application and integration of selected conceptual approaches into the practice of territorial development management in Ukraine, in particular in the context of decentralization and post-war reconstruction.

The research results described in the article are intended for a wide range of stakeholders:

- State authorities and local governments of Ukraine: for the justification and development of strategies, programs and plans for territorial development, especially in the context of decentralization, reconstruction and European integration.
- Research institutions and higher education institutions: for further development of the theory and methodology of territorial development management, as well as for use in the educational process.
- International organizations and expert communities: dealing with issues of regional development, cross-border cooperation and support for Ukraine.
- Representatives of civil society and business: for active participation in the planning and implementation of territorial development projects, as well as for understanding the prospects and opportunities opened up by new approaches to governance.

Conceptual approaches to territorial development management include a systems approach that considers the territory as a complex system, as well as project-based, situational, socially-oriented and sustainable development. These approaches emphasize goal-oriented management, adaptation to circumstances, harmonization of environmental, social and economic needs, as well as the transformation of communities into management subjects.

Sustainable development of territorial communities involves creating conditions for long-term and self-sufficient development at the local level, which ensures an improvement in the quality of life of the population. Such development includes the integration of economic, social and environmental aspects, effective management of natural and human resources, as well as a rational distribution of powers between state and local authorities.

Methods

The study employed a comprehensive methodology combining general scientific and specific analytical methods.

The dialectical method was fundamental for understanding territorial systems as evolving structures subject to contradictions between socio-economic development and institutional capacity. This dynamic view enabled the authors to identify how globalisation and decentralisation interact within Ukraine's territorial context.

The systemic approach was applied to interpret territorial development as a holistic process involving economic, social, environmental, and administrative subsystems. This approach provided the analytical framework for assessing how governance mechanisms influence

sustainable development outcomes and for mapping interdependencies between actors of different governance levels.

The methods of analysis, synthesis, and generalisation were used to examine and categorise conceptual models of territorial management—from sustainable development to resilience governance. These methods made it possible to synthesize theoretical insights and to formulate conclusions on their practical applicability in the Ukrainian context.

The comparative analysis method was employed to evaluate key conceptual approaches—Sustainable Development, Smart Specialisation, New Public Management, Partnership-Based Governance, and Resilience Management—according to their methodological foundations, advantages, limitations, and relevance. By comparing international and domestic experiences, the study identified the potential for integration and adaptation of these approaches in Ukraine's territorial policy.

The historical method allowed the tracing of the evolution of scientific thought in the field of regional management, from centralised planning systems to decentralised and participatory governance models. Through this lens, the authors assessed the transformation of governance paradigms under global and national reforms.

The methods of classification and typology were used to systematise the diversity of conceptual frameworks, enabling a structured understanding of how each model contributes to achieving sustainable territorial development. These classifications helped define the theoretical boundaries between managerial paradigms while recognising their potential for hybridization.

The method of abstraction and idealisation facilitated the creation of generalised models that integrate theoretical and empirical data, serving as conceptual prototypes for future management systems. This abstraction helped to identify universal principles such as adaptability, inclusivity, and inter-sectoral cooperation.

In addition, the research relied on empirical synthesis of Ukrainian decentralisation practices and post-war reconstruction strategies, allowing the verification of theoretical propositions against real-world governance cases. By triangulating theoretical insights with policy analysis, the authors achieved both methodological rigor and practical relevance, ensuring that the proposed conceptual framework aligns with the complex realities of contemporary Ukraine.

Literature Review

The problem of territorial development management in contemporary conditions is widely discussed in global and Ukrainian academic discourse, reflecting transformations in public administration, spatial planning, and sustainable development. Territorial management is increasingly perceived as a multifactorial process that integrates socio-economic, environmental, and institutional dimensions (*Barca et al., 2012; Ivanov et al., 2021*). Within the European framework, territorial governance has evolved toward decentralization, partnership, and smart specialization, which together ensure the adaptability of regional systems to global challenges (*Doloreux et al., 2019; Boschma et al., 2017*).

The theoretical foundations of territorial development were established by the concepts of regional and evolutionary economic geography, emphasizing endogenous growth and local resource utilization (*Bellandi & Storai, 2021*). The paradigm of sustainable development, rooted in the Brundtland Report, serves as a unifying theoretical platform that connects social justice,

environmental sustainability, and economic efficiency (*Petrovska, 2019*). In Ukraine, this paradigm has been reflected in regional development strategies and community-level spatial planning, aligning national policies with the EU Sustainable Development Goals (*Chernykhivska, 2014; Lytyshenko & Pavlenko, 2023*).

Modern management of territorial development also incorporates the principles of NPM and NPG, which have transformed the role of the state from a regulator to a facilitator of participatory governance. The NPM model introduced performance-oriented budgeting, e-governance, and decentralization of functions (*Alcantara & Nelles, 2014*). In contrast, the NPG model emphasises co-creation, partnership, and shared responsibility among public authorities, businesses, and communities, thereby increasing social trust and legitimacy (*Storonyanska & Zalutskyi, 2022*).

A significant contribution to the modern discourse on territorial management is made by the concept of S3, developed within the EU regional policy. It promotes innovation-driven growth by concentrating resources on competitive advantages and integrating research, education, and entrepreneurship (*Boschma et al., 2017*). S3 supports local economies in identifying strategic priorities through the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process, contributing to diversification and sustainable competitiveness (*Doloreux et al., 2019*).

Recent research highlights the need to integrate *resilience-based management*, which focuses on the capacity of territories to adapt to crises and recover effectively. This approach has gained particular relevance for Ukraine under the conditions of war and reconstruction (*Khrustovskiy & Slobodyanyuk, 2022*). Resilience entails proactive risk management, the strengthening of institutional frameworks, and the development of social capital that enables communities to withstand shocks and transform sustainably (*Kyzym et al., 2022*).

Thus, the synthesis of sustainable development, smart specialisation, public–private partnerships, and resilience forms the basis of modern territorial management models. These hybrid frameworks emphasize flexibility, inclusiveness, and innovation as strategic prerequisites for ensuring sustainable growth and spatial cohesion of territories (*Bezgin, 2022; Berdanova et al., 2017*).

Results

Challenges and Opportunities Shaping the Modern Territorial Development Management Environment

The modern environment of territorial development management is characterized by high dynamism, uncertainty, and interdependence of processes.

Main challenges are:

1. Globalization and increased competition: Territories compete for investment, human capital, and access to markets. Global economic crises and changes in supply chains can have devastating consequences for local economies.
2. Demographic changes: Population aging, migration processes (both urbanization and depopulation of rural areas), and changing household structures create pressure on social infrastructure and the labor market.

3. Climate change and environmental threats: The increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, the degradation of natural resources, and environmental pollution require the integration of environmental aspects into all development decisions.
4. Social inequality and polarization: Growing gap between rich and poor, lack of equal access to quality services (education, healthcare), growing social tension.
5. Technological changes (digitalization, automation): Rapid technological developments create new opportunities, but also challenges related to the need to adapt the workforce, develop digital infrastructure, and bridge the digital divide.
6. Inefficiency of public administration: Bureaucratization, corruption, lack of proper coordination between different levels and sectors of government, insufficient public involvement.
7. Geopolitical instability and conflicts: Wars, conflicts, hybrid threats that destroy infrastructure, cause mass population displacements, and radically change development priorities (especially relevant for Ukraine) (*Barva et al., 2012; Berdanova et al., 2017; Ilchenko & Zhilenko, 2006*).

Features are:

1. Digital transformation: Introduction of e-government, smart solutions for cities, use of Big Data for decision-making, development of digital platforms for citizen participation.
2. Transition to a green economy: Development of renewable energy, energy efficiency, circular economy, eco-tourism, which creates new jobs and improves the quality of life.
3. Activation of civil society and volunteerism: Increasing the role of public organizations, local initiatives, and volunteer movements in solving local problems and shaping the development agenda.
4. International cooperation and access to financial resources: The possibility of attracting international technical assistance, grants, and investments for the implementation of development projects.
5. Decentralization: Transfer of powers and resources to the local level, allowing for a more effective response to local needs, development of local democracy and initiatives.
6. Innovation and human capital development: Creating conditions for the development of innovation ecosystems, supporting start-ups, investing in education and advanced training.
7. Post-war reconstruction (for Ukraine): A unique opportunity to “build back better” using modern technologies, sustainable development principles and European standards, as well as to mobilize national and international resources (*Alcantara & Nelles, 2014; Sturiale & Trovato, 2015; Zabedyuk, 2021*).

Leading Conceptual Approaches to Territorial Development Management

Among the variety of conceptual approaches that have emerged in response to contemporary challenges and opportunities, the concept of Sustainable Development occupies a central place and is the cornerstone of many contemporary strategies. It offers a comprehensive view of development that balances human needs, economic progress, and the preservation of natural systems.

It is from the report of the UN World Commission on Environment and Development “Our Common Future” (1987), known as the Brundtland Report, that the most widely used

definition of sustainable development comes. The essence of this concept is to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (*Bellandi & Storai, 2021*). This fundamental position emphasizes the need for a balance between the current needs of humanity and the preservation of resources and opportunities for future generations, which is the essence of intergenerational justice.

A key aspect of sustainable development is the integration and harmonization of three interrelated dimensions (pillars): economic growth, social justice and environmental protection. Unlike previous models, which often focused on one aspect (e.g., only on economic growth), sustainable development requires their simultaneous consideration and mutual support. None of these pillars can be fully implemented without taking into account the others (*Bezgin, 2022*).

The most prominent and comprehensive example of the implementation of the concept of sustainable development is the UN SDGs, or the 2030 Agenda. The SDGs consist of 17 interrelated goals and 169 targets, covering a wide range of global challenges—from eradicating poverty and hunger to ensuring quality education, gender equality, clean energy, preserving ecosystems and building peaceful institutions (*Doloreux et al., 2019*). They serve as a universal roadmap and global framework for developing national and local strategies, programs and policies aimed at achieving a balanced and sustainable future for all, embodying all three pillars of sustainable development.

The S3 is an innovation-driven approach to regional economic development that has gained considerable popularity as a powerful tool for transformation and stimulating growth based on knowledge and innovation (*Schiavone, 2021*). It is not a universal recipe, but a flexible framework that allows regions to unleash their unique potential.

The idea behind S3 is that to achieve sustainable economic development, regions should not try to compete in all areas at once, but instead focus on identifying and developing their unique strengths and competitive advantages. This involves a deep analysis of existing potential—from scientific research and innovative enterprises to a skilled workforce and natural resources.

The main goal is to focus investment (both public and private) in R&D&I on these priority areas, rather than scattering resources across a multitude of projects. This prioritization is not done through centralized top-down planning, but through an inclusive, interactive process known as the EDP.

Thus, S3 is not just another strategy, but a holistic framework for shaping innovation policy that helps regions realize their potential, focus efforts, build effective partnerships, and use innovation as a key lever for sustainable and inclusive economic development (*Ivanov et al., 2021*).

Next, we will consider the following approach. NPM is a paradigm of public sector reform that emerged in the 1980s and became widespread in the 1990s. Its central idea is to apply the principles, methods and tools of the private sector (management, results orientation, efficiency, competition) to public administration to improve its functioning, reduce costs and improve the quality of public services provided. NPM viewed traditional bureaucracy as inefficient, overly centralized and focused on processes rather than results (*Lytynenko & Pavlenko, 2023*). Despite criticism, NPM has fundamentally changed public administration around the world. It has forced states to rethink their role, focus on efficiency, quality of services and the needs of citizens. Many of its principles, such as results orientation, decentralization, and the use of IT, remain relevant

today, even in the context of the development of newer concepts, such as NPG, which recognizes the need for broader cooperation with non-state actors and a comprehensive approach to solving social problems.

PBM/NPG, this management paradigm goes beyond traditional public administration, emphasizing broad cooperation and interaction between various actors: public authorities (government, local government), the private sector (business, enterprises), civil society (non-governmental organizations, public associations, activists) and, where necessary, international organizations. The main goal is to achieve common, often complex, development goals that cannot be effectively solved by a single entity (*Storonyanska & Zalutskyi, 2022*). This approach is seen as an evolutionary step from NPM, which, although focused on efficiency, often remained within the state apparatus. NPG instead emphasizes decentralized, horizontal “network” forms of management, where decisions and responsibilities are distributed, and the interdependence of actors is key to solving “wicked” problems that require integrated approaches.

Key ideas are:

- Co-production/Co-creation: Moving from unilateral decision-making to an inclusive process where all stakeholders are actively involved in shaping policies, strategies, and implementing services, increasing their legitimacy and effectiveness.
- Risk and resource sharing: Pooling financial, human, technical and knowledge resources, as well as sharing potential risks between partners, makes projects more sustainable and realistic.
- Trust and mutual understanding: Fundamental elements for effective and long-term cooperation, built through transparency, openness, mutual respect and consistency of action.
- Co-responsibility and shared responsibility: All participants are responsible for the results and quality of implementation of joint initiatives, as well as for maintaining sustainable relationships in the network.
- Synergy: Achieving an effect when the joint efforts of partners produce a significantly greater result than the sum of individual contributions, thanks to the complementarity of competencies, process optimization, and innovation (*Sturiale & Trovato, 2015*).

RBM, this approach focuses on developing and maintaining the capacity of a system—whether it is an individual organization, a city, a community or an entire territory—to respond effectively to unforeseen events and challenges. It is about the ability not only to “absorb shocks” (such as natural disasters, economic crises, pandemics, social conflicts, cyberattacks or technological failures), but also to quickly recover from them, adapt to new conditions and even transform into a more stable and functional state (*Kyzym et al., 2022*). The key is to preserve the basic functions, identity and basic structure of the system, even when it undergoes significant changes. Resilience-based management involves not only responding to a crisis, but also proactively planning, minimizing vulnerabilities and building internal resilience to future unknown threats.

Key ideas are:

- Development of social capital: Formation and strengthening of networks of interaction, norms of trust and reciprocity, which contributes to the consolidation of the community/society and increases its ability to take collective action and solve problems.
- Innovation and adaptation: Partnerships often stimulate the search for new, creative approaches to solving problems and allow for faster adaptation to changing conditions through the exchange of knowledge and experience. Proactive planning and risk assessment: Early identification of potential threats, vulnerability analysis, development of possible crisis scenarios and response plans, rather than just reacting after the event. This includes the creation of early warning systems.
- Flexibility and adaptability: The ability to quickly change strategies, processes, organizational structures, and resource allocation in response to changing circumstances, avoiding rigidity and rigid hierarchy.
- Redundancy: Duplication of critical functions, resources, or infrastructure (e.g., multiple power sources, alternate transportation routes, data backups) to ensure uninterrupted operation in the event of a failure of one element. This allows the system to continue to function even when partially damaged.
- Diversity: The presence of different approaches, methods, sources, and performers to perform the same functions, which reduces dependence on a single, potentially vulnerable element and promotes the search for alternative solutions.
- Social cohesion and trust: Strong social ties, shared values, and a high level of trust in a community/society, which are the basis for effective communication, collective action, and mutual assistance during a crisis.
- Learning and innovation: Constant analysis of past experience, willingness to experiment, rapid learning of lessons and implementation of new solutions to increase resilience to future challenges.
- Robustness: The ability of key elements of a system (e.g., critical infrastructure, core institutions) to withstand significant external influences and loads without complete destruction or loss of functionality.
- Modularity: Dividing the system into independent but interconnected modules, allowing for damage isolation and ensuring the functioning of other parts (*Garcia-Alaniz et al., 2017; Ivanov et al., 2021; Petrovska, 2019*).

Thus, these approaches form an integrated vision of modern management and development that goes beyond purely administrative or market paradigms. They indicate the need to form a comprehensive model of governance, which is:

1. Strategic and visionary: Based on the principles of sustainable development, ensuring a balance between economic, social and environmental needs for the well-being of current and future generations.
2. Innovative and competitive: Applies the principles of smart specialization to stimulate innovation, efficient use of resources, and increase regional and national competitiveness.
3. Efficient and result-oriented: Maintains the new public administration's emphasis on process optimization, transparency, and achieving measurable results in the provision of public services.

4. Inclusive and collaborative: Actively engages in sustainable partnerships between the state, business, civil society, and academia (NPG principles) to jointly solve complex problems, build shared responsibility, and increase the legitimacy of decisions.
5. Adaptive and resilient: Develops the ability of systems to anticipate, absorb shocks, adapt and transform in the face of unforeseen challenges, ensuring viability and stability of development in conditions of constant change (*Schiavone et al., 2021*).

Therefore, these approaches, in their synergy, form the architecture of multidimensional, dynamic and flexible governance aimed at achieving comprehensive well-being, innovative growth and stability in the face of global uncertainty and constant change.

Comparative Analysis of Conceptual Approaches

In today's world, characterized by rapid change and increasing complexity of problems in various fields - from science and technology to social governance and international relations—their effective solution requires not only a deep understanding of the essence, but also the use of adequate conceptual tools. Conceptual approaches are theoretical frameworks that shape our vision of the world, guide research and determine the logic of practical actions. However, the diversity of existing approaches often poses the question of choosing the most appropriate for a particular context for researchers and practitioners.

It is with the aim of ensuring such an informed choice that this section is devoted to a comparative analysis of key conceptual approaches. We will systematize and evaluate each approach according to a number of criteria that cover its fundamental aspects and practical significance (*Table 1*).

Thus, the comparative analysis of conceptual approaches revealed not only their diversity, but also profound differences in fundamental principles, methodology, and expected results.

One of the key findings is that there is no universal “best” approach that would be effective in all situations without exception. Instead, the effectiveness of each approach depends largely on the specifics of the context (industry, problem, goals), available resources, and even corporate culture or philosophy.

The analysis also revealed the potential for synergy. In many cases, the optimal solution may not be to choose a single approach, but to integrate elements of several of them, creating hybrid models that allow to compensate for the shortcomings of one approach with the advantages of another. This emphasizes the need for flexibility and adaptability in the application of conceptual knowledge.

A deep understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of each conceptual approach is critical for making informed decisions, formulating strategies, and developing innovative solutions. Ultimately, success in applying conceptual approaches lies not so much in blindly following a single doctrine, but in the ability to flexibly adapt and combine different ideas based on real needs and environmental dynamics.

Proposals and Recommendations for the Adaptive Application and Integration of Selected Conceptual Approaches into the Practice of Territorial Development Management in Ukraine

In the context of ongoing decentralization, which is transforming the architecture of governance at the local level, Ukraine faces an urgent need not simply to implement, but to organically integrate and adaptively apply advanced conceptual approaches to territorial development management. Such a process requires a comprehensive understanding of the territorial space as a holistic, dynamic system, where each element—social, economic, environmental, cultural—is inextricably linked and interdependent. Flexibility and adaptability become key, since the developed strategies and plans must function as “living” documents, capable of promptly responding to dynamic internal and external challenges, constantly adjusting and evolving. Inclusivity is of fundamental importance—the maximum involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, from community and business representatives to the expert environment and government bodies, to all stages of decision-making and implementation, which ensures legitimacy and sustainability.

Sustainable Development as a Cross-Cutting Paradigm

The sustainable development paradigm should become a cross-cutting basis for all management decisions at the local and regional levels, ensuring a balance between economic growth, social justice and environmental protection. In practical application, this involves conducting a deep inventory of existing competitive advantages at the regional and community levels, such as human capital, natural resources, industrial traditions and geographical location, followed by a process of entrepreneurial discovery. This approach will allow identifying priority sectors for targeted investment, stimulating innovation, creating sustainable clusters and new value chains, contributing to the diversification of the local economy and increasing its competitiveness ([Zabedyuk, 2021](#)). At the same time, it is necessary to integrate the principles of the circular economy, energy efficiency and responsible consumption of resources into all stages of project planning and implementation. For Ukraine, this is crucial in the context of rebuilding after the destruction, creating new export-oriented and environmentally friendly industries, accelerating European integration through compliance with EU standards in innovation and environmental policy, and ensuring resilience to future challenges.

Combining Elements of New Public Management and Partnership-Based Management

The integration of the principles of NPM into the activities of local governments involves the systematic implementation of criteria for efficiency, transparency and effectiveness. This includes the development and monitoring of KPIs for municipal enterprises, optimization and digitalization of administrative services, as well as the development of e-government to simplify the interaction of citizens with the authorities and minimize corruption risks. In parallel, it is critically important to actively use the partnership-based management model, which involves the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in the decision-making process and project implementation: business, public organizations, scientific institutions and international donors. The formation of effective coalitions and platforms for dialogue will contribute to the joint determination of priorities, distribution of responsibilities and mobilization of resources, which is indispensable for comprehensive territorial development. For Ukraine, in the context of decentralization, which has provided local governments with significantly more powers and resources, such a combination of approaches is the need of the hour. It will not only improve the quality of management decisions, but also ensure maximum synergy between all actors in the

post-war reconstruction process, overcome mistrust, and effectively mobilize the huge resources needed to rebuild the country.

Resilience Management as a Strategic Goal

Resilience management as a strategic goal involves the ability of territorial systems—from individual communities to regions—to adapt to shocks and stresses, to recover quickly from them and, where possible, to transform to increase future resilience. In practice, this means developing and implementing multi-level emergency response systems, diversifying the local economy to reduce dependence on one sector, strengthening critical infrastructure—energy, transport, water supply—using modern technologies and decentralized solutions. An important component is also the formation of social cohesion and mutual aid networks, the development of a system of psychological support for the population and increasing the level of digital security (*Kbrustovskiy & Slobodyanyuk, 2022*). For Ukraine, which has experienced and continues to experience the unprecedented challenges of war, resilience management is not just a goal, but an existential need. This means rebuilding not just what was destroyed, but creating qualitatively new systems that are more resilient to any threats, including the development of decentralized energy, ensuring food security at the local level, integrating rapid response mechanisms into everyday management practices, and preparing communities to adapt to potential future climate and security risks.

Integrated Recommendations

Strategic spatial planning should become an integrated tool that combines the principles of sustainable development, smart specialization and resilience. This involves the development of comprehensive territorial development strategies based on in-depth data analysis—including satellite imagery, information on destruction, migration flows, socio-economic indicators—in order to form a balanced and forward-looking vision of the country's spatial development. Such strategies should reflect long-term goals, coordinate actions of different levels of government and ensure the coherence of investment projects with national priorities, in particular European integration and the green transition.

At the same time, an integral part of adaptive management is large-scale and targeted investments in human capital. This includes reforming the education and vocational training system in accordance with the needs of the labor market, developing retraining and advanced training programs to adapt to new economic realities, supporting entrepreneurial initiative, forming an innovative culture and attracting qualified specialists. In addition, special attention should be paid to psychological and social support for the population, integrating internally displaced persons and veterans, creating conditions for self-realization of youth and their active involvement in local development processes, which will ensure not only economic growth, but also social cohesion and stability in the long term.

Thus, modern territorial development management requires not choosing one “correct” conceptual approach, but their intelligent integration and adaptation to specific conditions. For Ukraine, in the context of decentralization and large-scale post-war reconstruction, this means the need to combine the principles of sustainable development as a general goal, smart specialization for economic transformation, effective public administration and broad partnerships as implementation mechanisms, and resilience as a fundamental quality of all systems. Such an integrated approach will allow Ukraine not only to recover, but also to build

modern, competitive and sustainable territories that meet European standards and the challenges of the 21st century.

Discussion

The conducted study confirmed that the management of territorial development in modern conditions is a multidimensional process shaped by global transformations, technological shifts, and the growing demand for participatory governance. The main theoretical contribution lies in the systematisation and comparative evaluation of conceptual approaches that collectively form the architecture of contemporary territorial governance. The findings emphasise that the sustainable development paradigm, integrated with smart specialisation, resilience management, and partnership-based governance, provides the most balanced framework for territorial transformation in Ukraine.

The relevance of this research stems from Ukraine's decentralisation reform and post-war reconstruction, which require adaptive and integrated governance mechanisms. The study revealed that while traditional administrative models remain useful for coordination, they are insufficient for addressing complex challenges such as demographic decline, resource depletion, and geopolitical risks. Instead, hybrid governance systems that combine strategic planning, digitalisation, and community participation show greater efficiency and legitimacy.

Several methodological and practical challenges were identified. First, the absence of unified criteria for evaluating resilience and sustainability indicators complicates the implementation of integrated strategies. Second, institutional fragmentation and uneven capacity across local governments hinder the realisation of smart specialisation principles. Third, the limited involvement of civil society and business in governance processes reduces the inclusivity of development models.

Nevertheless, the research highlights substantial opportunities for further evolution of territorial governance. The synergy of sustainable development and smart specialisation can drive regional innovation ecosystems, stimulate green transitions, and strengthen economic resilience. The inclusion of resilience management introduces an anticipatory dimension, enabling communities to adapt not only to economic but also to climatic and social challenges. Furthermore, the NPG model opens new horizons for cross-sectoral cooperation, trust building, and co-responsibility in decision-making.

Future research directions should focus on developing quantitative indicators for assessing the adaptive capacity of territorial systems and evaluating the effectiveness of hybrid governance models. Comparative studies across EU countries could provide valuable insights for harmonising Ukrainian policy with European standards. In addition, interdisciplinary research integrating public administration, digital governance, and spatial economics would help design evidence-based models for post-war recovery and sustainable growth.

In conclusion, the article demonstrates that effective territorial development management depends on an adaptive synthesis of conceptual approaches rather than adherence to a single paradigm. The integration of sustainable development, smart specialisation, partnership governance, and resilience ensures flexibility, inclusivity, and long-term sustainability. For Ukraine, this approach represents not only a methodological framework but also a strategic

vision of building modern, competitive, and resilient territories within the European integration process.

Conclusion

The study was devoted to a comprehensive analysis of conceptual approaches to understanding and implementing territorial development management in modern conditions, which is critically important for the formation of effective strategies and policies.

At the initial stage, key challenges and opportunities that define the dynamic and often unstable environment of territorial development were identified and summarized. This allowed us to realize the multi-vector nature of modern processes, ranging from global trends (digitalization, climate change, urbanization) to specific national contexts (decentralization, military conflict, post-war reconstruction), emphasizing the need for adaptive and flexible management.

A detailed study and characterization of the leading conceptual approaches (sustainable development, smart specialization, new public management, governance based on sustainable partnerships, the concept of resilience, etc.) demonstrated their methodological diversity and different focus. Each of the approaches offers a unique set of tools and principles for achieving certain territorial development goals.

A comparative analysis of conceptual approaches revealed that none of them is a universal “silver bullet” that can solve all problems. Instead, their effectiveness depends on the context, the specifics of the territory and the tasks set. The analysis showed that the approaches often complement each other, and their integration can create a synergistic effect, enhancing the potential for solving modern problems. Approaches that emphasize cooperation, innovation, adaptability and resilience turned out to be especially valuable.

Based on the analysis and taking into account the specifics of Ukraine, in particular the processes of decentralization and the urgent need for post-war reconstruction, proposals and recommendations were developed for the adaptive application and integration of the selected conceptual approaches. The key conclusion is the need not to choose one dominant approach, but to form an integrated model of territorial development management. This model should be flexible, multi-level, focused on sustainable partnerships between the state, business, communities and civil society, prioritizing sustainable, inclusive development, smart specialization, innovation and strengthening the resilience of territorial units.

It is such a comprehensive, integrated and adaptive approach that will allow Ukraine to effectively manage its territorial development, turning challenges into opportunities for sustainable growth, increasing competitiveness and ensuring the well-being of its citizens in the context of decentralization and reconstruction.

Funding

No external funding was received.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgements:

Not applicable.

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Appendix

Table 1. Comparative analysis of conceptual approaches

Conceptual approach	Methodological basis	Practical applicability	Potential for solving modern problems	Limitations / Criticism
Sustainable development	Innovative economy, regional science, cluster theory, entrepreneurial discovery.	Development of regional strategies for innovative development, cluster initiatives, support for R&D, attraction of investments in priority sectors.	Increasing the competitiveness of regions, creating new jobs, stimulating innovation and diversifying the economy.	Requires strong institutional capacity and trust between actors. May exacerbate regional inequalities if focused only on successful sectors
New public administration	Private sector management, transaction cost economics, rational choice theory.	Reforming the state apparatus, introducing contracts, KPIs, outsourcing services, result-oriented budgeting.	Increasing the efficiency and economy of public services, improving the quality of service to “clients” (citizens). Reducing bureaucracy.	Risk of ignoring social justice and societal values. May lead to fragmentation of services, complexity of control and accountability.
Partnership-based Governance (NPG)	Sociology of organizations, network theory, stakeholder theory, social capital theory.	Creation of public-private partnerships, public councils, coalitions, joint projects between local governments, businesses and NGOs.	Effectively solving complex problems that require the involvement of many resources and competencies. Increasing trust, legitimacy of decisions, mobilization of social capital.	The complexity of managing diverse interests, slow decision-making, the risk of dominance by stronger partners, the need for a high level of trust.
Resilience management	Theory of complex adaptive systems, ecology, catastrophe theory, risk theory.	Development of crisis response plans, diversification of the economy, implementation of risk-informed infrastructure solutions, development of local self-organization.	Ensuring the survival and recovery of territories after shocks (natural disasters, economic crises, conflicts). Ability to adapt and transform in conditions of uncertainty.	Difficult to measure and operationalize. May lead to excessive “preparation” costs. Potential trap of “reverting to a previous state” that may be undesirable or unviable.