

REGIONAL POLICY AS A COMPONENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION INTERACTION OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT BODIES WITH THE PUBLIC: THE EXPERIENCE OF EU COUNTRIES

^aKATERINA KOMAROVA, ^bIRYNA DYNNYK, ^cLINA SHCHUREVYCH, ^dIRYNA LAZEBNA, ^eELLA SERHIENKO

^{a,e}*Dnipro University of Technology, 19, Vladimir Vernadsky Str., 49005, Dnipro, Ukraine*

^{b,d}*State University of Trade and Economics, 19, Kyoto Str., 02000, Kyiv, Ukraine*

^c*Kyiv Regional State Administration, 13/1, Velyka Vasylkivska Str., 01024, Kyiv, Ukraine*

e-mail: ^akaterina.komarova@gmail.com, ^bdynnik.i@gmail.com,

^clina.shchurevych@gmail.com, ^di.lazebna@knute.edu.ua,

^eella.sergienko@ukr.net

Abstract: The article analyzes the features of EU regional policy, especially in relation to the phenomenon of Euroregions, which is unique for the European Union. Structures, processes, functions, and relationships of information and communication interaction of self-government bodies with the public, based on participation paradigm and ecosystems capabilities are outlined. Conceptually, regional development is presented as a process of resolving local and regional problems and contradictions based on communication and interaction between participants and stakeholders. A number of cases of the EU countries' good practice regarding the formation and implementation of regional policy within the framework of Cohesion Policy are considered.

Keywords: Cohesion Policy; Euroregion; regional policy; self-government; territory.

1 Introduction

Having originated in the form of 'emergency' measures practiced during periods of economic crises, regional policy in the developed EU countries in the post-war period acquired the character of a permanent factor. The approach to solving regional problems has also changed: regional policy has come to be regarded not as a secondary moment, only supplementing the activities of other areas of economic and social policy, but also as one of the most important and necessary conditions for accelerating economic development. Currently, regional policy has become an independent direction of the general socio-economic policy.

The formation of regional relations represents an evolving process. Therefore, the regional policy itself does not remain unchanged, and the scientific study of its dynamics is an urgent task. At the same time, the experience of implementing regional policy in the countries of the European Union is important and relevant not only for a better understanding of the processes taking place in this region of the world, but for other countries.

For a long time, the regional policy of the EU has been under the close attention of researchers. This interest is easily explained: the indicated sphere, both real relations and their legal basis, to a certain extent serves as an example of building a system of both local self-government and relations at the federal level in many countries. On the other hand, the very policy of the EU in this direction is changing and improving, which is primarily due to the expansion of the composition of the European Union member states [2, 3]. At the same time, the institutional structure of policy implementation remains virtually unchanged, which allows speaking of a fairly successful interaction between the level of the union (various funds) and the level of local self-government (the Committee of the Regions, representing regional and local bodies).

Meanwhile, in modern political and economic science, public-power relations are increasingly viewed through the prism of a communicative approach [7]. In the context of research in this area, of particular interest is the understanding of regional development as a process of resolving local (regional) problems by power groups, the search for agreed and mutually beneficial ways to resolve conflict situations between the leading actors of the political process. The theoretical constructs are based on the position according to which the regional community consists of numerous groups whose interests intersect, and this fact

actualizes the critical importance of communications and harmonization of the interests of all stakeholders at the level of the region and local government, including the information and communication interaction of local governments with the public.

This is all the more important given the fact that the implementation of the strategy of continuous interaction between the authorities and civil society institutions in the issue of territorial development contributes to the formation of civil society and strengthening its position at the local level, facilitates the formation of a favorable living environment for representatives of the local community, the effective development of all spheres of public life of the city or other territory, as well as the development of the city's economy and increasing investment attractiveness as a result of the implementation of the plan for the strategic development of the territory and the local community.

2 Materials and Methods

The study uses a number of general scientific methods: the unity of the historical and logical methods, the structural-functional method. Also, the research employs the following methodology toolkit: the method of system analysis, which made it possible to consider regional policy as an integral part of a more complex and global system of political and socio-economic processes and activities within the framework of an integrating Europe; the method of comparative analysis was used in considering the historical phases and stages of the formation of regional policy, as well as in identifying its local features at the present stage; the typology method is used to hierarchize the characteristics and specifics of regional policy implementation.

3 Results and Discussion

Promoting a harmonious and balanced development of the territory of the entire European Union involves, in particular, the exchange of experience, knowledge, technologies, and best practices between regional and local authorities in two priority areas: "innovative economy" and "environment and risk prevention".

In particular, Spain is administratively divided into 17 autonomous communities, to which two autonomous cities (Ceuta and Melilla) located on the northern coast of Africa are equated. The "State of Autonomies" is multinational and heterogeneous in its economic development, it also has the "North-South" problem known to many European countries, where the more developed regions of the north (Catalonia, the Basque Country) often have no desire to provide assistance for the lagging southern regions (Extremadura, Murcia). The regional policy of the Spanish government itself and the European Union are aimed at equalizing regional development and smoothing out regional disproportions.

In fact, until the thirties of the 19th century, there was no policy of regional development in Spain - the Kingdom of Spain of that time did not take any special measures and did not make any investments for this. In agrarian Spain, large-scale industry was just emerging. The appearance of the first state programs for the development of regions was a forced step of the "Francoist" government and dates back to the beginning of the 60s of the 20th century. It was associated with the urgent need to break the economic and political blockade of the country by Europe and the world as a whole and the conditions put forward by the IBRD (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) and the UN conditions for breaking [4].

The first step on this path was the Stabilization Plan of 1959, aimed at liberalizing the country's economy - it was called the "Spanish economic miracle" [5-7]. As a result of the measures taken, large investments from abroad came to the country,

especially in the tourism sector, and this ultimately allowed Spain, being a backward agrarian country, one of the poorest in Western Europe, to become one of the most highly developed European economies.

A special increase in the economic indicators of Spain fell on the period 1960-1974 - higher than that of other countries of the world, 6.6% per year, second only to Japan, Spain entered the top ten largest industrial countries in the world.

The next important step in the development of the country and its regions is associated with 1978 - the year of the Spanish Constitution adoption [13]. Regionalization processes supported by the king began to develop (as it is known, these processes, as a rule, are reflected in the Constitutions and other legislative acts of states through the establishment of certain rights and guarantees of autonomies (regions)).

The state regional policy pursued by Spain, in addition to the European structural funds, also applies other financial instruments: the Interterritorial Compensation Fund (ICF), uses state aid for regional purposes, and implements local state cooperation. Of these instruments, the European Structural Funds are the most important due to their financial dimension.

The uneven development of the regions of Spain is a consequence, first of all, of significant differences in the starting resources available to the regions, as well as the history of the regions themselves, influencing regional policy and, ultimately, the state of the regions as a whole [8-10, 12]. The main tasks of the state regional policy are the development of measures to prevent social conflicts, overcome differences in the standard of living of the population of individual regions, rational territorial division of labor between regions, economic cooperation, to reduce unemployment, and in general - ensuring economic well-being and maintaining the integrity of the state.

The active development of regional policy in Germany became an urgent need in the post-war period, when regional disparities reached significant levels [17-19]. Moreover, the stable state of the national economy, which allowed the government to allocate large funds, also caused the attention of the leadership to the solution of regional problems.

The regional policy of Germany is an integral part of the national economic policy, the purpose of which is to ensure equal participation of weak regions in the economic development of the country. In 1969, a national instrument was formed - the Joint Task - with the aim of improving regional economic structures (Gemeinschaftsaufgabe (GA) "Verbesserung der regionalen Wirtschaftsstruktur") [20]. The Joint Task, which is the result of an agreement between the federal government and the Länder (lands), aims to provide an institutional framework for a common and coordinated regional development policy in Germany. The GA gives the Länder full responsibility for the implementation of regional policies, limited only by national rules. Assistance provided by GA is directed only to certain areas that have been pre-allocated for support. A map of such areas is agreed by the GA Planning Committee and approved by the European Commission. The Planning Committee, in turn, provides a detailed annual Framework Plan, which indicates: the areas marked on the aid map, aid measures, aid conditions and regional development priorities.

Over the past two decades, a sufficient number of measures have been taken in Germany to stimulate initiative 'from below', from the states (lands) [21]. Such achievements have been due to the development of the concepts of integrated regional development, which involves the participation of all relevant authorities in the region. The bottom line is that the lands themselves must choose those activities that most need funding [24]. The concepts of integrated regional development are flexible tools that promote regional development and better prioritization of goals. The programs include the allocation of subsidies from both the federal and land budgets for the development of industry and

infrastructure, which, in turn, creates the prerequisites for a wide deployment of the investment process.

As for the Federal Government, it offers additional assistance to weak regions, provides a unified scheme for land development, and creates aid systems that exclude competition between the Länder.

Swedish local self-government is based on a rich centuries-old tradition of solving issues of local importance directly on the ground. Already at the beginning of the 14th century, guarantees of the personal and economic freedom of peasants, as well as their right to influence the decision of state issues, were enshrined in the first Swedish constitution, proclaimed by King Magnus Eriksson. Special legislation on local government, adopted in Sweden in 1862, provided for the separation of ecclesiastical and secular affairs [26-30]. Since that time, the Lutheran Church continued to solve its problems within the boundaries of the old church parishes, and new special urban and rural municipalities - communes (kommun) were established for public administration. At the regional level, legislation introduced the institution of landstings, which had a fairly wide range of powers, including the representative function of the electors of the first chamber of the Riksdag - the Swedish parliament. The powers of the landstings were mainly exercised within the boundaries of the fiefs - regional administrative units into which the entire territory of the country was divided for the implementation of state administration [20].

As a result of the reform of 1862, 2400 rural communes, 89 rural communes and 10 communes-chepts (something in between a city and a rural commune) were formed [4]. During the period of industrial development in Sweden, there was a constant outflow of the population from the countryside to the cities. Many rural communes turned into sparsely populated municipal units, began to experience economic problems and could no longer independently solve the main issues of a local nature, mainly due to a decrease in tax revenues to local budgets. At the same time, the differences in the basic functions of rural and urban communes gradually smoothed out, which became especially noticeable after the Second World War. For these and a number of other reasons, in the mid-1940s, the Riksdag decided to reform the communes. As a result of the first stage of reforms, which affected mainly rural communes, in most of which the question of voluntary unification had long been discussed, in 1952 the total number of municipalities in Sweden decreased by almost 2.5 times. Then came the stage of reduced activity in the process of consolidation of communes. However, in the early 1970s, the municipal reform intensified again, largely due to the decision of the Riksdag to abolish the principle of voluntary association, and in 1974 the number of communes was again sharply reduced - to 278 units [4].

Since the mid-1970s, the emphasis in the transformation of Swedish municipalities has been mainly shifted from quantitative to qualitative changes related to improving legislation, organization, as well as strengthening the economic and financial foundations of local self-government, searching for new forms, methods and tools for managing the municipal economy, developing partnerships between municipalities, landstings, government agencies and the private sector, strengthening the authority of Swedish local government bodies in the international organizations, etc. [16].

Overall, the most common instruments for the development and implementation of regional economic policy in the EU are international funds, programs, as well as specialized regional development agencies (RDA) and public enterprise corporations (PEC). The operators and coordinators of all significant regional projects are RDAs, which are the link between the central government of the country, regional and local authorities, business and the public [31-35]. RDAs can be formed by both governmental and non-governmental structures at the level of regional or local authorities and act as independent semi-autonomous bodies in cooperation with other organizations representing local and regional interests.

In Western Europe, RDAs usually operate as semi-autonomous organizations functioning at the regional level in close cooperation with central and local governments. RDAs with some strategy implementation functions are protected from political pressure, although they usually report to a ministry in a central or regional government [36-39]. Development agencies can operate within the legal framework of the private sector and thus avoid some of the bureaucratic hurdles associated with the public sector. This status enables them to take risks, make quick decisions, and negotiate in a way that effectively responds to business needs and attracts private capital. Since employees in such agencies tend to try to stay at the position longer than in public service, they usually acquire significant training, organizational experience and knowledge.

One of the most important components of the process of development and implementation of regional policy is a reasonable choice of regions in which economic growth will be stimulated or, conversely, limited. The process of selecting regions - objects of regional policy consists of several stages [23]:

- 1) Selection of a grid of regions that can become objects of regional policy (such regions can be units of one of the levels of administrative-territorial division or specially allocated areas);
- 2) Selection of indicators of the socio-economic development of the regions, on the basis of the analysis of which a decision is made to classify certain territories as objects of regional policy;
- 3) Typology of regions, which is necessary for the correct choice of instruments of regional policy;
- 4) Highlighting growth poles (in cases where regional policy is based on the concept of growth poles);
- 5) Determining the number of supported regions, more precisely, the optimal proportion of the population living in areas of financial incentives.

The redistribution of funds between regions always causes dissatisfaction: the territories receiving financial support consider its 'size' (amount) insufficient, while those deprived of support usually consider the scale of redistribution excessive. Therefore, the process of selecting areas for financial incentives is sought to be made as objective as possible, which is achieved primarily through the use of various socio-economic indicators. Although some experts believe that a truly open mechanism for selecting districts exists only in Denmark, Portugal, and partly in Germany, a particular degree of formalization of this process exists in almost all countries [22].

The main indicator used to identify problem regions is the unemployment rate. Considerable attention is paid to this factor in the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, France, and also in Hungary. When comparing the EU countries with each other, it turns out that the unemployment rate is emphasized in more developed countries, GDP per capita - in less developed countries (due, in part, to the lack of reliability of data on unemployment associated with part-time employment and high level of migration) [40, 41]. Along with the unemployment rate, in many European countries (according to EU standards), GDP per capita is used as an indicator. In a number of countries, GDP indicators are replaced or supplemented by indicators of household income (in Germany, since 1969, this is wages; in the Czech Republic - per capita cash income).

Despite the simplicity and transparency, the definition of regions - objects of regional policy based on statistical indicators has its drawbacks: the objectivity of formalized approaches is relative, and the indicators themselves are not always reliable and often do not reflect real problems [43]. Subjective one in the formalized methods of selecting regions is, firstly, the choice of socio-economic indicators used (depending on which indicators are preferred, certain territories win). Secondly, the calculation of complex (integral) indicators - neither the use of the method of transforming single indicators for their comparability with each other, nor the giving of weights to single indicators are

usually motivated in any way. In Germany, when compiling a grid of financial incentive areas, the integral indicator is calculated according to about 20 options (with the inclusion or exclusion of particular indicators, their standardization or normalization, giving them different weights). At the same time, the decision of the question of which calculation option to use is largely political in nature [25].

It is known that three groups of actors participate in the political and economic process and determine the political dynamics: 1) federal and regional state authorities and local governments; 2) structures of civil society; 3) business community. Three groups of actors are formed and function, guided by different motives and solving different problems. Let us emphasize, however, that the state, civil society, and business act as relatively integral and, to a certain extent, opposition to the other two, but inextricably linked with them political institutions and political subjects [45, 46]. Namely they (and various groups within them) appear as relatively independent actors who act as objects of security and subjects of its provision.

In the policy of regional building aimed at the goals of territorial development, two most important areas can be distinguished: the capitalization of the territory in the systems of national and global economic balance, which means all the assets of this territory, including economic infrastructures, human capital, natural resources, etc., and improving the quality of life, that is, the redistribution, by the "even layer", of the results of capitalization on the social structure of a given society. Because of this, in the new political context, the state authorities (both federal/national and regional, as well as municipal self-government) should build special ways of meaningful partnership with the second and third sectors: with business, they should discuss and implement a strategy for the capitalization of the territory; with civil society and small business - to form a policy aimed at improving the quality of life [23]. Thus, communications become critically important, playing the role of system connections, without which the risk of system entropy is inevitable.

Today, as part of the optimization of the public affairs management system (this concept includes both public administration issues and the implementation of industrial and economic projects and tasks at all levels), many European countries, such as France, Germany, Spain, Belgium, are actively resorting to the policy decentralization, transferring a number of state powers (including through budgetary and financial mechanisms) to the local level [50-52]. As a result, local self-government plays an ever-increasing role in solving the whole range of socio-economic and political tasks facing the central authorities, helping the state to more quickly respond to emerging problems and challenges, in the first place - on a regional scale. To assess the scale of the contribution of local self-government to the process of managing public affairs, we will give a few examples. Thus, in France, the expenditures of territorial authorities today account for 20% of the expenditures of the national budget, that is, 244 billion euros [15]. In Germany, the indicator of expenses of territorial authorities is much higher and amounts to 41% in recent years, in Spain - more than 47%, in Belgium - 46%, and on average in the EU countries - 32% [42].

Local self-government, being the level of government closest to the population, makes a significant contribution to the implementation of state policy, which is especially noticeable in the social sphere, providing socially significant services to the population. Thus, in most EU countries, local self-government is actively involved in helping citizens who find themselves in a difficult socio-economic situation, in a situation of "social inconsistency" (discrepancy between the level of education and available work, removal from the process of making managerial decisions, non-recognition by the community of the citizen's contribution in achieving common goals), in a position of isolation and self-removal from society. In France, 22% of citizens today are in a position of "social inadequacy", and in the

countries of the European Union as a whole, this figure is about 25% [61].

Although the fight against unemployment is a national task, municipal authorities at their level are also making efforts to solve it, creating new jobs, stimulating the development of small and medium businesses, investing independently, as well as jointly with regional and central authorities in infrastructure projects. Thus, in France, about 1.4 million people work in local governments and structures affiliated with them. In Marseille, 60% of the jobs in the city are created by local authorities. Although the number of employed at the municipal level is only 4% of the total working population, however, the number of jobs created at the local level is constantly growing [63].

Municipal authorities are actively working to solve another important socio-political problem facing the EU states today, namely, the problem of alienation of citizens from the decision-making process by authorities at various levels. This is a complex socio-political task, because as a result of the "social feeling" of the detachment of citizens from government, they have dissatisfaction with the work of government bodies both at the local and state levels. As a result, all this negatively affects the level of citizens' trust in public authorities and the recognition of the legitimacy of the latter. Thus, about 50% of the French respondents could not answer positively the question "do they trust their authorities" [67]. At the same time, local governments are a level of public authority, which citizens trust to a greater extent than central authorities, due to the constant interaction of citizens and municipal authorities and the involvement of local authorities, as the level of government closest to the population, in solving the pressing problems of the population of municipalities or rural communities. In France, 26% of respondents believe that municipalities should prioritize improving the system of interaction between the population and local governments, strengthening control over the decision-making process and stimulating participation in management based on broad public representation [67].

To solve the problem of "social exclusion" and the wide involvement of the population in the management of local affairs, France, Belgium, and Spain are actively using the practice of creating public structures with the participation of the population and local authorities, such as civil councils, intra-city district councils, city bureaus, etc. which assume obligations to fulfill part of the powers of local authorities [53, 54]. According to the experts of the Council of Europe, such forms not only stimulate the participation of citizens in the work of municipalities, but also harmoniously complement the democratic mechanisms of governance and the formation of local bodies, which generally contributes to the strengthening of democratic institutions in the country [47].

The experience of the EU countries shows that stimulating the participation of the population in the management of public affairs contributes to an increase in the efficiency and optimization of the management of public affairs, including the public sector, both at the local and central levels of government. For example, the mayor of Paris believes that the participation of citizens in the management of the city of Paris and its urban districts made it possible not only to rationalize the system of urban management, but also to increase the efficiency ratio of the use of the city budget by 4-5% [11].

All this is possible, of course, only if there is effective communication interaction, a communication mechanism, one of the defining components of which is regional policy.

It is also interesting to note a unique entity, inherent in the EU – the Euroregion. This is a modern form of cross-border cooperation, which consists in uniting border areas with the aim of further developing mutual (primarily economic) integration and the most effective solution to common existing problems [56]. The Euroregion is primarily a form of regional and municipal cross-border cooperation. A characteristic feature of the Euroregions is the presence of common bodies that jointly solve the problems existing on both sides of the border in the

field of the economy, the development of cultural and humanitarian ties. There is no single legal form corresponding to the concept of "euroregion". This can be a "general partnership agreement", "community with the rights of a legal entity", "community of interest", etc. At present, Euroregions play an important role in creating favorable conditions for the development of the European Union on its external borders, especially its relations with countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). An analysis of the activities of Euroregions both in the European Union and in the CEE states shows that these border communities are by far the most "advanced" form of cross-border cooperation between European states [59, 60]. Members of Euroregions are mainly regional and municipal entities or their associations. However, according to experts, Euroregions actually "do not work" in the absence of interstate agreements on cross-border cooperation between the countries concerned. The main areas of Euroregions' activity are: economy and employment, transport and communications, culture and education, tourism, health care, social services, infrastructure and environmental protection [62]. The problems of arrangement of the joint border, interaction in emergency situations, cooperation of law enforcement agencies, water supply, and migration of the population of border areas are also being solved. The issues of financing the activities of joint bodies and various projects are usually resolved by the interested parties on a parity basis. If the Euroregion includes a territorial entity of an EU Member State, it receives additional funding from Brussels, part of which is also allocated to partners in the Euroregion. Euroregions play a positive role as a tool for smoothing out differences in the levels of economic development of cooperating territories, jointly solving environmental problems, as well as removing cultural and language barriers, various stereotypes and phobias [1].

An example of a Euroregion created on the periphery of the European Union is the Bulgarian-Greek Euroregion Mesta-Nestos. At the time of its creation - in 1997 - the external border of the EU ran along the Bulgarian-Greek border (Greece has been a member of the EU since 1981, and Bulgaria joined the EU during its last "eastern enlargement" in 2007). The Bulgarian-Greek Euroregion "Mesta-Nestos" was the first registered Euroregion in Southeast Europe. It got its name from the name of the river (in Bulgaria it is called Mesta, and in Greece - Nestos). The Mesta River originates in the Rila Mountains in Bulgaria, and then, under the name Nestos, crosses Greece and flows into the Aegean Sea. The creation of this territorial community was initiated back in 1990 by two associations - the Bulgarian Border Association of Mesta and the Greek Border Association of Nestos, created in cooperation between the inhabitants of the city of Drama in Greece and the inhabitants of the cities of the Blagoevgrad region of southern Bulgaria, located in the valley of the river Mesta. Already in 1998, this territorial community joined the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) and received the status of Euroregion. On the Bulgarian territory, this Euroregion includes 8 municipalities of the Blagoevgrad region - Bansko, Razlog, Belitsa, Gotse Delchev, Garmen, Satovcha, Khadzhidimovo and Yakoruda with a population of more than 130 thousand people and a territory of more than 3 thousand square kilometers, and on the Greek side - also 8 municipalities, including Drama, Doxato, Kalambaka, Kato Nevrokopi, Nikiforos, Paranesti, Prosotsani, and Sitagroi. This is the territory of historical Macedonia, the inhabitants of this part of southern Bulgaria have always gravitated more to the neighboring regions of Greece than to the central parts of Bulgaria. Only during the first 10 years of existence in the Euroregion "Mesta-Nestos", 492 projects were implemented in 7 different areas, including 135 projects in the field of communication and information exchange, 120 projects in economic cooperation, transport and infrastructure, 96 projects in the field of tourism, 110 in the field of culture and civil society, 15 in environmental protection, agriculture and technology transfer [14, 55].

Northern Europe is a wide field for Euroregional policy. Among the northern Euroregions, "Øresundsregionen" stands out, or, as it is also called, "Greater Copenhagen", which is currently the

standard of cross-border agglomeration. Despite the fact that each Euroregion has its own list of topical issues and programs, they set themselves a common goal - to ensure sustainable economic growth and increase their own competitiveness [64-66]. This formulation of the question forms the concept of the northern cumulative benefit, which makes it possible to achieve a higher positive effect than in the disparate actions of individual national initiatives. However, the councils of the northern regions also enjoy a high degree of autonomy, since all decisions are developed by local municipalities and national ministries. They also have their own identity and administrative, technical and financial resources. Therefore, the policy of the European Union is considered as an addition to the regional policy of the Scandinavian countries.

It is important to note that in the communications business, the relationship between the region and business has long been an integral part of the policy of development, and now these mechanisms are gradually being embodied in regional policy [16]. Relations with real and potential investors in the region are especially important here.

Speaking about the peculiarities of the approach to regional policy in the European Union, it should be noted that this policy is closely related to the definition of the essence of the very concept of region (district). According to the definition given in the Charter of Regionalization adopted by the European Parliament in 1988, a region is understood as a homogeneous space that has a physical and geographical, ethnic, cultural, linguistic community, as well as common economic structures and historical destiny [42]. Thus, the European understanding of the region determines the international nature of the functions of the region, on the one hand, and the functions performed within the framework of decisions of supranational bodies, on the other.

An example of the phenomenon of regionalization as a manifestation of the patterns of socio-economic systems' development in modern conditions is the concept of "Europe of regions", the essence of which is to reduce the role of state authorities and simultaneously increase the role and authority of supranational and regional structures [1]. The modern Regional Policy of the European Union (often called the Cohesion Policy) is a system of measures aimed at improving the welfare of the EU regions and at reducing the inter-regional economic gap. This policy is implemented since 1975 (the date of the establishment of the European Regional Development Fund).

The new public management, which today has become the basis for the functioning of public management at all levels in the EU countries, is naturally also characteristic of the regional level and local self-government. Accordingly, marketing concepts and tools are used. In turn, the consideration of the region in the objectification of marketing implies the use of marketing communications tools.

The legitimacy of using marketing theory in territorial management is due to the real conditions in which the functioning of regional economic systems is set today, namely: the conditions of business uncertainty regarding the prospects for investment development of home territories, fierce competition for investments, for financial injections from internal and external investors, uneven infrastructure provision of regional territories, interregional differentiation in terms of the level of general economic development, etc. In this regard, it is natural to raise the question of the use of modern marketing technologies in territorial administration, the basis of which could be the effective use of the potential and competitive advantages of the region.

The regional economy is saturated not only with a variety of objects, but also with connections and relationships between them, which makes it possible to single out institutional, organizational, and informational components in its structure that have a systemic impact on the region' development. Thus, not the territory, but the regional economic space acts as a 'commodity' and object of investment. Its comprehensive development and optimal use constitute the main content of

regional marketing. The regional economic space should be understood as an open, multi-level and heterogeneous system formed by the interaction of transformational and transactional factors continuously evolving in the natural and social environment [44].

The regional marketing complex may include ten main integral tools (10 P): Product (the main types of products produced in the region); Place (geographic location of the region); Price (price level prevailing in the region); Promotion (a communication set of measures to promote information about the region and create its positive image); People (standard of living, quality of human potential, main consumer segments); Production (composition and dynamics of development of basic industries); Personell (competencies, motivation, degree of retention of labor resources); Patterns (norms and patterns of behavior adopted in the region, the influence of basic regulatory institutions); Placement of Funds (volume of investments and investment potential of the region); Pollution (level of pollution, ecological comfort, 'quality' of the environment).

Regional marketing as a concept of territorial management includes, on the one hand, the activities of individual economic entities for market self-regulation, and, on the other hand, expresses the interests of the state as an institutional agent of society. Marketing is implemented in the form of a specific policy that ensures an effective division of labor in conjunction with the integrated development of the territory.

The implementation of the regional marketing concept forms a new mode of action for the region in market conditions, a new management methodology is being developed in a constantly changing external and internal environment, and prerequisites are being created for maintaining and increasing its competitiveness. Obviously, strengthening the competitiveness of the region implies an increase in its attractiveness for various consumer groups [68-70]. The use of a marketing approach in this context seems to be quite relevant and effective. Definition, classification and, ultimately, satisfaction of the specific needs of target audiences are key factors in the interaction with private business and the socio-economic development of the region as an integral goal of the subjects.

In this regard, special attention in the system of marketing activities of the regions began to be paid to the creation and development of brands of territories. Both in theory and today practice, the brand of the territory is a set of stable values shared by the local society, reflecting the unique, original consumer characteristics of the region and community, which have received public recognition and fame, and are in stable consumer demand [71]. The brand of the territory is formed on the basis of a pronounced positive image of the territory, that is, on the totality of emotional and rational ideas arising from the comparison of all the signs of the territory, personal experience and rumors that influence the creation of a certain image.

In modern conditions, issues of local importance, the solution of which lies with the local governments of urban and rural areas and contributes to their sustainable development, cannot be solved through traditional technologies of municipal government. Recently, the issues of the application of municipal marketing have been actively discussed. Due to the fact that municipal marketing is essentially a market-oriented concept of management, it can be considered as a tool for sustainable development of the region. The role of marketing communication policy instruments, including the formation of public opinion, is especially relevant. Many researchers consider municipal marketing through the formation of the image of individual municipalities, including rural settlements, as well as through attracting investments and new economic agents to the municipality, which is closer to such a concept as territory marketing. However, the possibilities of municipal marketing in practice are much wider. Since municipal marketing is a type of regional marketing, it is possible to adapt the basic principles of regional marketing to municipal specifics.

The strategic orientation of the territory makes it possible at any given moment to direct efforts and resources precisely in line with the general vector of development, try to solve numerous small current tasks. In addition, strategic planning represents a key mechanism for the development of a territory in the information space due to the fact that the strategy determines how the government itself sees its place, and also identifies target audiences in establishing communication with which the territory is most interested.

Strategic market planning is based on a marketing approach, which consists in the development and implementation of a long-term marketing program for the development of a specific territory using territorial marketing tools. When developing the strategic concept of territory marketing, various marketing tools are used that contribute to socio-economic development, increase investment attractiveness and the formation of a favorable image of the territory.

One of the defining tools of territory marketing is territory positioning [57]. In essence, a well-designed positioning strategy allows embodying the image of the future as it is seen by the territorial community: namely the desire for an ideal makes the territory move forward, attracts 'consumers'. The territory positioning strategy must be comprehensive, continuous, and relevant to changes in the external environment [58]. Only in this case, the unique programs developed by the community will provide it with critical information about consumers, competitors, and the changing external environment, and contribute to the effective allocation of available resources for an adequate response to diverse external challenges.

The development of a territory positioning strategy involves conducting in-depth marketing research aimed at understanding how consumers of the territory product perceive the proposed unique properties of the place, and which parameters, in their opinion, are the most important. In this context, namely communications are an essential tool.

The implementation of the territory positioning strategy is inextricably linked with the development of a promotion plan. The territory promotion plan is a communication system that, by identifying all the competitive advantages of the territory in the process of developing a positioning strategy, is aimed at conveying to the target group of consumers of the place all the advantages that the authorities can offer, based on their capabilities and resources, to increase the well-being of the territory subjects. By and large, the promotion of the territory can be very close in meaning and action to the promotion of a commercial company and its products. Depending on the chosen target group of consumers, the tools for promoting the chosen position are determined. Mostly these are communication tools, which are the main methods of informational impact on the target segment of consumers, and image tools aimed at creating a positive image of the territory.

At the same time, communication channels are used not only to promote the territory and its products, but also to ensure the openness and availability of information for internal consumers of the territorial product (that is, residents, employees, resident companies, citizens who come to study or work on a long-term basis) and external ones (investors, non-resident companies, representative offices of administrations of other regions, tourists, business travelers, guests, migrants). Consumers have the ability to select available channels, submit their requests, and receive feedback.

Today, digital technologies make it possible to create platforms and ecosystems that multiply and improve communication capabilities. At the same time, the qualitative development of the network environment has a rigid regional differentiation associated with the spread of practices of the involvement of a structurally differentiated network community in the process of developing public decisions. Studies show that the network environment in the online public space, which is developing in a quantitative and qualitative format, is a system-forming component of the ecosystem of network public administration

[6]. The network environment becomes a source of structural, axiological, and technological components of the ecosystem of network public administration, contributing to the following:

- The emergence of institutional structures ready to integrate into the process of developing socially significant problems;
- The formation and dissemination of value and behavioral orientations of a new culture of participation and engagement of citizens, which are necessary for the actualization of various forms of civil solidarity, cooperation between public-state and private-state partnerships;
- Creation of innovative synthetic in origin (based on the synthesis of knowledge from various branches of science and practice) technologies for developing solutions to socially significant problems.

At the same time, institutional innovative changes are possible with a programmatic approach, when the state creates institutional conditions for civic participation and co-public socio-political reflexivity on the problems, goals, and methods of development both on a national scale and at the level of local communities.

Regional marketing is becoming a kind of tool for developing and making strategic decisions for the socio-economic development of the region. At the same time, contrary to the prevailing opinion that the definition of priorities for the socio-economic development of the region requires only an analysis of the dynamic statistical base to understand the development trends of the region's industries, the use of regional marketing allows forming the necessary foundations for the use of management tools in the region, such as clusters, public-private partnerships, diversification.

Communications of various kinds, acquiring a network character, significantly modify the feedback of government institutions with the population and local communities. The system of territorial administration is increasingly becoming a two-way process. There is an opportunity for more complete political monitoring and effective electoral campaigns at a level that would ensure the formation of a truly legitimate government. The question, however, is exactly what model increments are needed here so that the communicative dialogue in this field of communication does not expand formally, but would give the expected and real social result. Communication in this plane is interpreted as a systemic process of cognition and action, connecting, by means of communication and information exchange, all the structures of society with the aim of reproducing the life of people, managing the social order, relaying sociocultural experience, maintaining and developing the humanistic principles of cooperation, partnership, broad public and civil dialogue. Based on this understanding, it becomes evident that communication is a necessary prerequisite for the functioning and development of all social systems and society as a whole. It provides connection of people, allows them to successively reproduce the cumulative social experience, broadcast cultural patterns and values, helps the division of labor and organization of joint activities, coordination of institutions of power and management. Because of this, a communicative dialogue between civil society and public authorities becomes possible and relevant as a real prerequisite for creating a new conceptual model of social and managerial relations, which can find differentiated application at different levels of the management system.

In particular, the above mentioned Cohesion Policy "relies on the fact that regions may differ not just in terms of their territorial characteristics but, also, in the mix of policies they decide to implement. Regions are likely to adopt different growth strategies, investing the Cohesion Policy funds received in those territorial assets which they hope will maximize the local growth potential" [14, p. 30]. "The assumption on the association between territorial capital and Cohesion Policy is that specific territorial characteristics foster the effectiveness of

the EU regional policy” [14, p. 31]. The taxonomy is reported in Figure 1 below, showing how territorial capital includes very different assets, from physical infrastructures (box a) to human capital (box f) to social capital (box d).

Rivalry	↑	(high)	<i>c</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>f</i>
		Private goods	Private fixed capital stock Pecuniary externalities Toll goods	Relational private services operating on: - external linkages of firms - transfer of R&D results	Human capital and pecuniary externalities
		Club goods	Proprietary networks and collective goods: - landscape - cultural heritage	Cooperation networks Governance on land and cultural resources	Relational capital
	↓	(low)	<i>a</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>d</i>
		Public goods	Resources: - natural - cultural Social overhead capital: infrastructure	Agglomeration and district economies Agencies for R&D transcoding Receptivity enhancing tools Connectivity	Social capital: - institutions - behaviors - trust - reputation
			Tangible goods (hard)	Mixed goods (hard + soft)	Intangible goods (soft)
			Materiality		
			(high)	→	(low)

Figure 1. Territorial capital: A taxonomy [14]

Thus, namely regional policy in such conditions represents a crucially important component of information and communication interaction of local self-government bodies with the public.

Modern science often operates with the concepts of “digital economy”, “digital ecology”, “business ecosystem”. However, the definition of these terms is very diverse, and therefore it should be clarified that the “information ecosystem” is understood as a complex dynamic structure that includes productive models of interaction between communicants, communication tools and has the ability to vary the methods of interaction depending on the communicative supertask [48].

Recently, urban communication platforms have become very popular, which implement the idea of involving residents in public administration processes. In recent years, there has been a transition from a model of informing and providing public services in a digital format to a model of active involvement of citizens through the so-called public platforms. At the same time, efficiency is expressed in reducing the transaction costs of interaction and increasing the availability of information for all participants in the management system at the regional and local levels, for stakeholders and citizens, increasing the level of convenience and quality of their participation in government decision-making (by providing timely access to the necessary information) [49]. The logic of the model lies in the transformation of public administration processes using information and communication technologies for the provision of public services in accordance with such requirements of the public sector as efficiency, transparency, accountability, and customer focus [42]. Mostly this interaction is carried out with the help of electronic platforms and web technologies, which is associated, on the one hand, with financial pressure on budgets (cost reduction) and the need to reduce the size of governments (staff), and on the other hand - with the increasing opportunities for using web technologies when interacting with citizens, business, and public organizations and involving them in solving socio-economic problems [47]. In this case, electronic platforms and support from the media provide the proper level of coverage and involvement of stakeholders in solving these problems, forming an open ecosystem. Also, there is an integration of public platforms with private platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.). Communications in such ecosystems are at the highest level of quality.

The introduction of Web 2.0 technologies into the management process makes it possible to increase its efficiency and

transparency, enables providing feedback in the “power-society” communication, and not only ensures efficient and flexible (‘Agile’) development and implementation of regional policy and municipal development programs, but also contributes to the further development of participatory democracy.

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Primary Paper Section: A

Secondary Paper Section: AD, AE