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Article

Evolution of Regional Strategic Management Under Contemporary Economic Transformations

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Abstract: The article examines the formation and evolutionary development of the concept of regional strategic management in the context of contemporary economic transformations. The theoretical foundations underlying the transition from traditional territorial planning to results-oriented, adaptive, and differentiated strategic management are systematized. Particular attention is given to the role of digital transformation, institutional changes, interregional disparities, economic resilience, and the efficient utilization of resource potential within the regional strategic management framework. The study substantiates conceptual directions for advancing regional strategic management as an integrated system that ensures effective coordination between a region's endogenous potential, external economic changes, and targeted development outcomes.

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1. Introduction

The technological, environmental, demographic, and institutional transformations currently unfolding in the global economy necessitate a reconsideration of the theoretical and methodological foundations of regional strategic management. Digital transformation, the restructuring of global value chains, the transition towards a green economy, demographic shifts, and external economic shocks exert differentiated effects on regional development trajectories. OECD studies emphasize the heterogeneous territorial impacts of these structural transformations and substantiate the need for a transition towards place-based policies that take into account regions' economic potential, institutional capacities, and existing constraints [1].

The evolution of the regional strategic management concept is characterized by a shift from a universal and centralized planning model towards a results-oriented, differentiated, and adaptive management paradigm. Within its regional development policy framework, the OECD identifies as key priorities the establishment of differentiated objectives for individual regions, the alignment of sectoral policies with territorial priorities, the mobilization of endogenous development factors, the effective use of high-quality territorial data, and the strengthening of institutional coordination between national and subnational levels of governance [2]. At the same time, the incorporation of the concept of economic resilience into regional governance has broadened the conventional approach whereby strategic effectiveness is assessed

primarily through economic growth indicators. A region's capacity to adapt to technological, economic, and environmental shocks, anticipate structural risks, and restore its development potential is increasingly becoming an important outcome-based criterion of strategic management [3].

In Uzbekistan, the institutional model of strategic management is also undergoing a transformation towards a system based on long-term objectives and measurable outcomes. While Presidential Decree No. PF-158 of 11 September 2023, which approved the *Uzbekistan – 2030 Strategy*, established the country's long-term development goals and strategic priorities, Presidential Decree No. PF-21 of 16 February 2026 strengthened the mechanisms for advancing strategic reforms to a new stage, monitoring progress towards established objectives, and improving strategic planning documents [4]. Furthermore, the task of developing regional development strategies through 2030 for all 14 administrative-territorial units of the country further enhances the practical significance of regional strategic management. Regional strategies are envisaged not as a mere aggregation of investment and infrastructure projects, but as long-term development models grounded in each region's economic potential, geographical characteristics, human capital, existing development challenges, and competitive advantages [5].

These processes necessitate a renewed interpretation of the economic substance of regional strategic management. Under contemporary conditions, strategic management should not be confined merely to defining a region's future development objectives. Rather, it should encompass the identification and assessment of resource potential, the selection of strategic priorities, the mobilization and allocation of available resources in accordance with established objectives, the consideration of internal and external risks, the systematic evaluation of achieved outcomes, and the continuous adaptation of strategic measures to changing economic, institutional, technological, and environmental conditions.

The evolution of the concept of regional strategic management is increasingly examined in contemporary economic literature through the interrelationship between place-based development, endogenous growth, economic specialization, and institutional capacity. F. Barca, P. McCann, and A. Rodríguez-Pose demonstrate the limited effectiveness of universal policy instruments that fail to account for the economic, social, and institutional specificities of individual regions. Within the place-based approach, they advocate incorporating underutilized regional potential and local knowledge into strategic management processes [6]. D. Foray, through the concept of smart specialization, argues that rather than distributing limited regional resources across all sectors, they should be concentrated in economic activities with the greatest potential for knowledge creation, innovation, and the development of competitive advantages [7].

M. Coffano and D. Foray emphasize the importance of the entrepreneurial discovery process in defining strategic priorities. They argue that promising economic activities should not be determined exclusively by public authorities but should instead be identified through the integration of knowledge generated by businesses, research institutions, and other regional stakeholders [8]. P.A. Balland, R. Boschma, J. Crespo, and D.L. Rigby further develop this perspective by demonstrating that the relatedness of emerging activities to a region's existing knowledge and technological base, together with their level of complexity, constitutes an important determinant of strategic diversification [9]. R. Boschma, A. Minondo, and M. Navarro, drawing on the concept of related variety, establish that regional economic growth is influenced more strongly by the presence of activities interconnected through knowledge and competencies than by sectoral diversity per se [10]. These scholarly perspectives indicate the need for regional strategic management to move beyond the subjective selection of priorities towards an

approach grounded in existing regional competencies, technological relatedness, and the capacity to generate new economic activities.

In the contemporary evolution of regional strategic management, particular importance is also attached to historically established regional development trajectories and the capacity of regions to adapt to external economic changes. R. Hassink and H. Gong, within the framework of evolutionary economic geography, demonstrate that the future development of regions is shaped by their existing production structures, knowledge bases, institutional configurations, and historically formed development trajectories [11]. R. Martin and P. Sunley further develop the concept of regional economic resilience, identifying a region's capacity to withstand external shocks, adapt to them, and reconfigure its development trajectory as a fundamental characteristic of strategic development [12]. These approaches suggest that assessing the effectiveness of strategic management solely in terms of achieving predetermined economic targets is insufficient. Regional strategies should also enhance the capacity of territories to adapt to structural transformations and generate new economic opportunities.

M. Grillitsch and B. Asheim associate the emergence of new regional development paths with the renewal of existing industries, the creation of new economic activities, and the inflow of external knowledge into regional economies [13]. This perspective broadens the function of strategic management from preserving the existing economic structure towards creating the economic and institutional conditions necessary for the formation of new development trajectories. L. Coenen, J. Moodysson, and H. Martin, in turn, connect regional development with global production and innovation networks, arguing that the strategic prospects of regions depend not only on endogenous resources but also on their capacity to absorb external knowledge, investment, and technologies into the local economy [14]. Consequently, regional strategic management is evolving from a relatively closed system focused primarily on managing resources within a territory into an open and adaptive governance system that coordinates endogenous potential with external economic opportunities.

However, the existing literature has not yet sufficiently systematized the integration of regional strategic objectives, resource potential, institutional capacity, structural transformation, and achieved outcomes within a unified strategic management framework.

2. Materials and Methods

The research methodology is based on a systematic examination of the evolutionary development of the concept of regional strategic management under contemporary economic transformations. The study employs systemic, institutional, evolutionary, and comparative approaches, together with the methods of scientific abstraction, analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction. The transition of regional governance from centralized planning towards place-based, results-oriented, differentiated, and adaptive strategic management is theoretically systematized, while the principal economic and institutional factors underlying this transformation are identified.

The empirical and methodological framework incorporates indicators reflecting regional economic potential, structural transformation, investment activity, per capita economic performance, and differentiation in strategic development. Using dynamic and interregional comparative analysis, disparities in the effectiveness of strategic management are assessed, and a methodological principle for determining the degree of alignment between regional resource potential, strategic priorities, and achieved outcomes is substantiated.

3. Results

The Analysis and Results section examines the strategic development processes of Uzbekistan's regions under contemporary economic transformations using a system of indicators covering the period from 2016 to 2025. The analysis systematizes indicators reflecting the dynamics of Gross Regional Product (GRP) and GRP per capita, the scale of strategic resource mobilization, the volume of attracted investment, the investment activity of small businesses, and the extent to which these resources are transformed into economic outcomes. Alongside a comparative assessment of Uzbekistan's regions, a ten-year strategic development trajectory for the Namangan region is examined separately. At the final stage of the analysis, a comprehensive diagnostic matrix is developed to provide an integrated assessment of the degree of resource mobilization and economic performance. [15]

The empirical database of the study is derived from official regional statistics provided by the National Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, supplemented by the authors' calculations based on these data. The selection of the 2016–2025 period makes it possible to capture long-term economic and structural changes in regional strategic management within a unified analytical time frame, compare the initial and final conditions of individual regions, and systematically identify their strategic development trajectories. Integrating interregional comparisons with the dynamic indicators of an individual region provides an empirical basis for examining the evolution of the regional strategic management concept in relation to economic outcomes, resource mobilization, and processes of regional structural transformation.

Table 1. Comparative Dynamics of Strategic Economic Development Outcomes across the Regions of Uzbekistan

Regions	GRP 2016, UZS billion	GRP 2020, UZS billion	GRP 2025, UZS billion	GRP Growth, times	GRP per capita 2016, UZS thousand	GRP per capita 2025, UZS thousand
Republic of Karakalpakstan	10 524.5	26 136.6	54 076.9	5.14	5 833.0	26 489.5
Andijan	18 376.6	44 097.9	107 717.6	5.86	6 258.0	30 852.1
Bukhara	16 594.9	36 621.6	86 608.1	5.22	9 071.2	41 399.1
Jizzakh	8 719.4	20 871.6	52 956.7	6.07	6 767.1	34 116.8
Kashkadarya	23 743.4	42 298.6	98 783.4	4.16	7 766.4	26 856.9
Navoi	12 739.3	60 326.4	167 964.6	13.18	13 620.6	152 238.2
Namangan	15 062.1	34 169.1	85 419.0	5.67	5 731.6	27 020.6
Samarkand	25 429.8	49 635.9	121 489.5	4.78	7 029.1	28 001.8
Surkhandarya	13 878.7	28 533.6	66 186.5	4.77	5 695.0	22 223.4
Syrdarya	6 802.1	14 676.8	35 794.4	5.26	8 536.8	38 137.2
Tashkent Region	26 724.2	74 685.6	180 177.4	6.74	9 504.6	57 480.2
Fergana	21 206.6	45 653.1	111 305.3	5.25	5 999.1	26 603.6
Khorezm	11	24 668.3	62 987.5	5.44	6 566.4	30 713.5

Regions	GRP 2016, UZS billion	GRP 2020, UZS billion	GRP 2025, UZS billion	GRP Growth, times	GRP per capita 2016, UZS thousand	GRP per capita 2025, UZS thousand
Tashkent City	568.7 42	111 465.3	367 222.3	8.68	17 564.6	116 747.3
Republic of Uzbekistan	307.8 290 213.4	705 076.5	1 849 650.0	6.37	9 112.5	48 816.4

Source: Author's calculations based on data from the SIAT database of the National Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

During 2016–2025, the strategic economic development outcomes of Uzbekistan's regions demonstrate an overall growth trend while simultaneously revealing the persistence of substantial interregional disparities. At the national level, GDP increased from UZS 290,213.4 billion to UZS 1,849,650.0 billion, representing a 6.37-fold increase in nominal terms, while GDP per capita rose from UZS 9,112.5 thousand to UZS 48,816.4 thousand, equivalent to a 5.36-fold increase. The most pronounced dynamics were observed in the Navoi region, where GRP increased 13.18-fold and GRP per capita rose 11.18-fold. In Tashkent City, the corresponding increases amounted to 8.68-fold and 6.65-fold, respectively, while in the Tashkent region they reached 6.74-fold and 6.05-fold. In the Namangan region, GRP increased from UZS 15,062.1 billion to UZS 85,419.0 billion, representing a 5.67-fold rise, while GRP per capita grew from UZS 5,731.6 thousand to UZS 27,020.6 thousand, or 4.71-fold. At the same time, GRP and GRP per capita increased by 4.16-fold and 3.46-fold, respectively, in Kashkadarya, and by 4.77-fold and 3.90-fold in Surkhandarya. These findings indicate that regional economic growth rates and the extent to which aggregate value creation translates into per capita economic outcomes vary considerably across regions.

Such interregional disparities substantiate the methodological limitations of organizing regional strategic management on the basis of uniform objectives and standardized policy instruments. Although GRP growth represents an important outcome indicator of strategic development, its joint assessment with GRP per capita provides a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between economic expansion, population size, and the distribution of economic outcomes across territories. The relatively strong performance of the Navoi region, Tashkent City, and the Tashkent region indicates the existence of distinct strategic development trajectories associated with production specialization, capital intensity, and the spatial concentration of economic activity. By contrast, in highly populated regions such as Namangan, Samarkand, Surkhandarya, and Kashkadarya, improving the capacity to translate aggregate economic growth into stronger per capita outcomes emerges as a strategically important priority.

Table 2. Indicators of Strategic Resource Mobilization and Economic Transformation across the Regions of Uzbekistan

Regions	GRP Growth, times	GRP per Capita Growth, times	Share of Mobilized Investment Resources, 2016, %	2025, %	Change, percentage points
Republic of Karakalpakstan	5.14	4.54	64.8	83.8	+19.0
Andijan	5.86	4.93	32.4	85.9	+53.5
Bukhara	5.22	4.56	60.5	81.8	+21.3
Jizzakh	6.07	5.04	37.1	85.4	+48.3
Kashkadarya	4.16	3.46	46.5	82.5	+36.0
Navoi	13.18	11.18	50.0	85.4	+35.4
Namangan	5.67	4.71	49.1	85.8	+36.7
Samarkand	4.78	3.98	23.7	83.1	+59.4
Surkhandarya	4.77	3.90	41.3	77.9	+36.6
Syrdarya	5.26	4.47	58.8	87.8	+29.0
Tashkent Region	6.74	6.05	41.4	75.5	+34.1
Fergana	5.25	4.43	38.2	75.7	+37.5
Khorezm	5.44	4.68	29.5	75.2	+45.7
Tashkent City	8.68	6.65	43.9	66.5	+22.6
Republic of Uzbekistan	6.37	5.36	45.6	78.7	+33.1

Source: Author's calculations based on data from the SIAT database of the National Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

During 2016–2025, the pace of strategic resource mobilization across the regions of Uzbekistan and its alignment with economic outcomes was characterized by substantial territorial differentiation. At the national level, GDP increased 6.37-fold and GDP per capita 5.36-fold, while the share of mobilized investment resources rose from 45.6% to 78.7%, representing an increase of 33.1 percentage points. Over the same period, small business investment increased from UZS 20,944.2 billion to UZS 362,910.0 billion, or 17.33-fold. At the regional level, the Navoi region recorded a 35.30-fold increase in small business investment, accompanied by a 13.18-fold rise in GRP and an 11.18-fold increase in GRP per capita. In the Namangan region, the share of mobilized investment resources increased from 49.1% to 85.8%, or by 36.7 percentage points, while small business investment expanded 32.53-fold; however, GRP and GRP per capita increased by 5.67-fold and 4.71-fold, respectively. In the Samarkand region, despite a 59.4-percentage-point increase in the share of mobilized investment resources, GRP grew 4.78-fold and GRP per capita 3.98-fold. These relationships indicate that the intensity of strategic resource mobilization has not translated into proportionate economic outcomes across all regions.

These findings highlight the need for the concept of regional strategic management to evolve from a resource-mobilization-oriented model towards a framework focused on managing the efficiency with which mobilized resources are transformed into economic outcomes. Rapid growth in investment and entrepreneurial capital expands the resource base required for strategic development; however, regions differ considerably in their capacity to translate these resources into structural modernization of the regional economy, higher value-added creation, increased labour productivity, and improved per capita economic outcomes. Therefore, within contemporary regional strategic management, resource mobilization indicators should not be regarded as final measures

of strategic performance but rather as intermediate determinants contributing to the achievement of long-term strategic objectives.

Table 3. Strategic Economic Transformation Trajectory of the Namangan Region

Indicator	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
GRP, UZS billion	15,062.1	18,609.5	22,956.4	29,384.4	34,169.1	41,993.6	50,668.2	61,074.9	71,869.1	85,419.0
GRP per capita, UZS thousand	5,731.6	6,954.2	8,420.6	10,562.7	12,035.2	14,484.6	17,092.8	20,144.6	23,191.8	27,020.6
Share of mobilized investment resources, %	49.1	50.1	70.3	70.6	58.1	63.3	61.6	60.1	86.3	85.8
Small business investment, UZS billion	1,573.2	1,811.7	3,044.0	6,303.2	8,476.6	8,606.0	9,637.9	13,010.3	44,061.2	51,178.8
GRP base index, 2016=100, %	100.0	123.6	152.4	195.1	226.9	278.8	336.4	405.5	477.2	567.1
GRP per capita base index, 2016=100, %	100.0	121.3	146.9	184.3	210.0	252.7	298.2	351.5	404.6	471.4
Small business investment base index, 2016=100, %	100.0	115.2	193.5	400.7	538.8	547.0	612.6	827.0	2,800.7	3,252.9

Source: Author's calculations based on data from the SIAT database of the National Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

During 2016–2025, the strategic economic development trajectory of the Namangan region was characterized by substantial growth in both resource mobilization and final economic outcomes. The region's GRP increased from UZS 15,062.1 billion to UZS 85,419.0 billion, representing a 5.67-fold increase, while GRP per capita rose from UZS 5,731.6 thousand to UZS 27,020.6 thousand, or 4.71-fold. Over the same period, the share of mobilized investment resources increased from 49.1% to 85.8%, equivalent to an increase of 36.7 percentage points, while small business investment expanded from UZS 1,573.2 billion to UZS 51,178.8 billion, representing a 32.53-fold increase. The base indices further demonstrate the divergence in the dynamics of these indicators: relative to 2016, the GRP index reached 567.1% in 2025, the GRP per capita index amounted to 471.4%, while the small business investment index reached 3,252.9%. Particularly noteworthy is the sharp increase in small business investment from UZS 13,010.3 billion in 2023 to UZS 51,178.8 billion in 2025, indicating that the intensity of investment resource mobilization in the region entered a qualitatively new stage.

These dynamic relationships demonstrate that the effectiveness of strategic management in the Namangan region cannot be adequately assessed solely on the basis

of economic growth rates or the volume of attracted investment. The substantially faster growth of small business investment relative to GRP and GRP per capita indicates a strengthening of the region's capacity to mobilize investment resources; at the same time, it highlights the need for a separate assessment of the efficiency with which these resources are transformed into final economic outcomes.

Table 4. Diagnostic Matrix of Strategic Development Efficiency across the Regions of Uzbekistan in Terms of Resource Mobilization and Transformation into Economic Outcomes

Regions	GRP Growth, times	GRP per Capita Growth, times	Change in the Share of Mobilized Investment, p.p.	Small Business Investment Growth, times	Level of Resource Mobilization	Level of Economic Performance
Republic of Karakalpakstan	5.14	4.54	+19.0	20.64	Medium	Medium
Andijan	5.86	4.93	+53.5	19.07	High	Medium–High
Bukhara	5.22	4.56	+21.3	23.29	Medium–High	Medium
Jizzakh	6.07	5.04	+48.3	21.10	High	High
Kashkadarya	4.16	3.46	+36.0	10.09	Medium	Low–Medium
Navoi	13.18	11.18	+35.4	35.30	High	Very High
Namangan	5.67	4.71	+36.7	32.53	High	Medium–High
Samarkand	4.78	3.98	+59.4	10.28	High	Medium
Surkhandarya	4.77	3.90	+36.6	11.98	Medium	Medium
Syrdarya	5.26	4.47	+29.0	20.04	Medium–High	Medium
Tashkent Region	6.74	6.05	+34.1	24.57	High	High
Fergana	5.25	4.43	+37.5	16.59	Medium–High	Medium
Khorezm	5.44	4.68	+45.7	15.53	High	Medium–High
Tashkent City	8.68	6.65	+22.6	11.68	Medium–High	High
Republic of Uzbekistan	6.37	5.36	+33.1	17.33	—	—

Source: Author's calculations based on data from the SIAT database of the National Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The comprehensive diagnostic assessment for 2016–2025 reveals substantial disparities between the intensity of strategic resource mobilization across regions and the extent to which these resources are transformed into economic outcomes. In the Navoi region, GRP increased 13.18-fold, GRP per capita 11.18-fold, and small business investment 35.30-fold, indicating that a high level of resource mobilization was accompanied by very strong economic performance. In the Tashkent region, the corresponding increases amounted to 6.74-fold, 6.05-fold, and 24.57-fold, respectively, indicating a relatively balanced transformation of mobilized resources into economic outcomes. In the Namangan region, although the share of mobilized investment

increased by 36.7 percentage points and small business investment expanded 32.53-fold, GRP and GRP per capita increased by 5.67-fold and 4.71-fold, respectively. In the Samarkand region, despite a 59.4-percentage-point improvement in the investment mobilization indicator, GRP increased 4.78-fold and GRP per capita 3.98-fold. In Kashkadarya, meanwhile, a 10.09-fold increase in small business investment was accompanied by a 4.16-fold increase in GRP and a 3.46-fold increase in GRP per capita.

The methodological significance of the identified regional differentiation lies in demonstrating the need to shift the assessment of strategic management effectiveness from the principle of "mobilizing more resources" towards the principle of "generating greater economic returns from mobilized resources." Cases in which rapid investment growth has not been accompanied by a proportionate increase in GRP and per capita value creation indicate the existence of internal reserves for improving the efficiency of strategic resource utilization. From this perspective, regional strategic management should incorporate systematic diagnostics of the alignment between resource potential, mobilized resources, economic transformation, and final development outcomes. This is particularly relevant for the Namangan region, where the strong dynamics of investment resource mobilization should be complemented by measures aimed at improving the transformation of these resources into higher value added, increased labour productivity, technological upgrading, and stronger per capita economic outcomes.

4. Conclusion

The analysis of the development dynamics of family entrepreneurship in the Namangan region during 2017–2024, its contribution to employment, and the factors influencing gross income formation clearly demonstrates the strategic importance of this sector in strengthening regional economic stability. The empirical findings provide evidence not only of the role of family entrepreneurship as a source of income at the microeconomic level, but also of its broader transformative contribution to poverty reduction, labour market diversification, greater equality of economic opportunities, and the mitigation of territorial disparities.

First, the more than twofold increase in the number of family entrepreneurship entities over the eight-year period indicates that economic activity across the region has entered a new stage of development. Differences in growth dynamics between central and peripheral districts confirm the importance of territorial determinants, including infrastructure availability, market capacity, demographic structure, and access to credit. These findings provide a basis for considering family entrepreneurship as an important driver of regional development.

Second, the increase in employment generated through family entrepreneurship from approximately 40,000 to 82,000 persons reflects structural changes in the labour market, the expansion of self-employment, and the gradual integration of informal employment into the formal economy. New employment opportunities created for the population, particularly young people and women, have become an important factor in strengthening socioeconomic resilience in areas characterized by relatively high levels of poverty. The territorial differentiation of employment outcomes also indicates the need for more targeted and spatially differentiated policy interventions.

Third, the increase in the gross income of family entrepreneurship from UZS 793 billion to UZS 1.99 trillion demonstrates an expansion of the regional economic base, greater stability of household incomes, and stronger economic diversification across the region. The relatively rapid growth of income is closely associated with the effectiveness of access to credit resources, broader market access, and the emergence of new economic segments. These developments contribute to weakening the mechanisms through which poverty may be reproduced over time.

Fourth, the analysis also identifies a number of territorial constraints affecting the development of family entrepreneurship, including disparities in access to credit, logistical bottlenecks, insufficient market capacity, shortages of skilled human resources, and infrastructure deficiencies in certain districts. Addressing these constraints is essential for reducing interterritorial disparities, achieving a more balanced geographical distribution of economic activity, and ensuring sustainable regional growth.

Fifth, based on the results of the analysis, several scientific and practical recommendations are proposed: (1) develop differentiated support packages for each district in accordance with its territorial potential for family entrepreneurship; (2) improve access to credit and expand guarantee mechanisms, particularly for households with insufficient collateral; (3) introduce targeted grants, training programmes, and business incubation centres for women and young entrepreneurs; (4) promote the establishment of cooperative production clusters in rural areas; and (5) modernize regional market infrastructure, expand digital trading platforms, and strengthen the integration of family entrepreneurship into the digital economy. The implementation of these measures can contribute to the establishment of sustainable mechanisms for poverty reduction and inclusive economic development in Namangan region.

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