



e-ISSN 3041-2498

# Public Management and Policy

<https://www.eu-scientists.com/index.php/pmap>



## Socio-Economic Analysis of the Structure and Development Potential of Territorial Communities of Eastern Podillia

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### ARTICLE INFO

### ABSTRACT

#### Research Article

#### DOI:

[10.70651/3041-2498/2025.11.08](https://doi.org/10.70651/3041-2498/2025.11.08)

#### Received:

28 September 2025

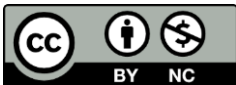
#### Accepted:

10 November 2025

#### Published online:

17 November 2025

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This article presents a comprehensive study of the socio-economic structure and development potential of territorial communities in Eastern Podillia, in the context of the decentralization reform in Ukraine. The relevance of the topic stems from the need for an in-depth analysis of community structures as basic local self-government units, considering their resource capacity, institutional strength, and spatial characteristics, which directly affect regional policy and management effectiveness. The main goal of the study is to perform a socio-economic analysis of the territorial communities in Eastern Podillia, taking into account their structural differentiation and development dynamics. The object of the research is the territorial communities as spatial-administrative entities, while the subject is their structure, development level, and internal potential. The geographical scope includes the southern part of Khmelnytskyi region, the central and northern parts of Vinnytsia region, and part of Cherkasy region. The article applies a range of methods, including index, cluster, and correlation-regression analysis, expert evaluation, and GIS-based visualization approaches. Based on the calculated indicators, the communities were classified into three development levels: high, medium, and low. Specific examples of communities with different development statuses are given, such as Zhmerynka, Kalynivka, and Severynivka. The study identifies key factors that shape the development potential of communities: financial capacity, local economic structure, human capital, infrastructure, and governance quality. The findings reveal regional development disparities and serve as a basis for practical recommendations in strategic community planning based on development potential. The scientific novelty of the work lies in the integrated analytical approach to studying communities of Eastern Podillia, combining quantitative indicators with spatial characteristics. The practical value is in the applicability of results for local governments, regional authorities, and developers of territorial development strategies.

### KEYWORDS

effectiveness of management decisions, sustainable development, decentralization, regional policy, structural analysis.



## Соціально-економічний аналіз структури і потенціалу розвитку територіальних громад східного Поділля

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### СТАТТЯ

### АНОТАЦІЯ

#### Дослідницька

#### DOI:

[10.70651/3041-2498/2025.11.08](https://doi.org/10.70651/3041-2498/2025.11.08)

#### Отримана:

28.09.2025 р.

#### Прийнята:

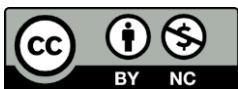
10.11.2025 р.

#### Опублікована:

17.11.2025 р.

#### Авторське право

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У статті здійснено комплексне дослідження соціально-економічної структури та потенціалу розвитку територіальних громад Східного Поділля в контексті реалізації реформи децентралізації в Україні. Актуальність теми зумовлена необхідністю поглибленого аналізу внутрішньої структури територіальних громад як базових одиниць місцевого самоврядування, їх ресурсної забезпеченості, інституційної спроможності та просторового розташування, що безпосередньо впливають на регіональну політику та ефективність управлінських рішень. У межах дослідження було поставлено мету – провести соціально-економічний аналіз територіальних громад Східного Поділля з урахуванням їхньої структурної диференціації та розвитку. Визначено об'єктом дослідження територіальні громади як просторово-адміністративні утворення, а предметом – структура, рівень розвитку і внутрішній потенціал цих громад. Географічні межі охоплюють 6 районів 63 територіальних громад Вінницької області. У статті застосовано низку методів: індексний, кластерний, кореляційно-регресійний аналіз, експертне оцінювання, а також геоінформаційні підходи до візуалізації даних. На основі розрахованих показників було здійснено типологізацію громад за рівнем соціально-економічного розвитку, виокремлено три основні групи: високорозвинені, середнього рівня та низькорозвинені громади. Наведено конкретні приклади громад з різним рівнем розвитку: Жмеринська, Калинівська, Северинівська територіальні громади тощо. У ході дослідження ідентифіковано основні чинники, що формують потенціал розвитку громад: фінансова спроможність, структура місцевої економіки, людський капітал, інфраструктура, якість управління. Результати дозволили визначити основні дисбаланси регіонального розвитку, а також сформулювати практичні рекомендації для стратегічного планування розвитку громад з урахуванням їхнього потенціалу. Наукова новизна роботи полягає в застосуванні інтегрального аналітичного підходу до вивчення громад Східного Поділля, що поєднує кількісні показники з просторовими характеристиками. Практичне значення полягає у можливості використання отриманих результатів органами місцевого самоврядування, регіональними управлінськими структурами та розробниками стратегій сталого розвитку територій.



### КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА

ефективність управлінських рішень, сталий розвиток, децентралізація, регіональна політика, структурний аналіз.

## 1. Introduction

In the current conditions of transformation of public administration in Ukraine, the process of decentralization, which involves the transfer of powers, resources and responsibilities from the central government to local self-government bodies, is of particular importance. Territorial communities have become a key institutional unit in this process, which are designed to ensure effective local governance, mobilize local resources, implement sustainable development strategies and improve the quality of life of the population.

Territorial communities play an important role in the implementation of regional development policy, since it is at the level of communities that the prerequisites for economic growth, social cohesion, spatial balance and environmental safety are formed. The ability of communities to self-development, effective use of internal potential, coordinated functioning of managerial, economic, social, spatial and environmental structures are the basis for the competitiveness of regions as a whole. In this context, the analysis of the socio-economic structure and natural resource potential of territorial communities is extremely important for the formation of informed management decisions and strategic planning.

Eastern Podillia is a historical and geographical region that covers the Vinnytsia region and is distinguished by both its natural and geographical conditions and socio-economic features. The region has a significant agricultural potential, moderately developed industry, as well as a rich historical and cultural heritage. At the same time, the communities of Eastern Podillia face a number of challenges, including: uneven development, depopulation, weak diversification of the economy and insufficient institutional capacity. That is why the study of the structural characteristics and development of the potential of these communities is an important step in determining the strategic guidelines for their further growth.

The relevance of the research topic is due to the need for a comprehensive understanding of the current state and prospects of territorial communities of Eastern Podillia as important centers of socio-economic development in the context of decentralization. The results of such an analysis can become a theoretical and practical basis for increasing the effectiveness of regional policy, improving local governance and ensuring sustainable development of the region.

## 2. Literature Review

In modern scientific literature, the topic of development of territorial communities, their structural features, economic potential and management in the context of decentralization and regional development is becoming more and more relevant. At the same time, the study of the region of Eastern Podillia – its communities, spatial-economic conditions and potential – is much less presented, which necessitates a comprehensive analysis.

On the one hand, a number of works consider various aspects of decentralization in Ukraine, in particular, the transfer of resources and powers to local self-government bodies, the formation of territorial communities (TCs) and their impact on local development. For example, the scientific work by O. Dobrianska, “Analytical review of decentralization of power in Ukraine and reforming the educational industry”, analyzes the state of decentralization reform in the field of education management, highlighting positive and negative trends [4]. Similarly, O. Shevchenko et al.’s scientific report “Decentralization and formation of the policy of regional development in Ukraine” investigate how the decentralization reform affects regional policy in Ukraine [22]. These studies provide an important theoretical and methodological background for analyzing the role of communities in sustainable development processes.

On the other hand, the issues of local self-government and public administration are considered in a more generalized way. For example, the work “Decentralization of power in Ukraine: Problems and prospects of development” by Yu. Orlovska and R. Kiryukhin highlight the problems of public control over the local budget and, more broadly, the challenges of budgetary autonomy of communities [14]. The textbook of the modern researcher “Local self-government in the conditions of decentralization of powers” (2018) reveals the legal, organizational and financial aspects of local self-government [11]. These sources allow you to understand how the management base of communities is formed and what their main functions and limitations are.

The third significant direction is the study of socio-economic development of rural and small communities. In particular, the scientific work "Development of rural territories of Ukraine in the conditions of decentralization of management: State, problems, prospects" by V. Rossokha and M. Plotnikova we find a thorough analysis of ways for rural communities to increase their potential through gaining experience [20]. This allows us to see a broader context for the development of communities, in particular small or rural.

The fourth direction involves the analysis of regional development, spatial unevenness and structures of socio-economic growth. In particular, K. Mezentsev et al. work "Regional development in Ukraine: Social and spatial inequality and polarization" reveals the issue of socio-spatial inequality in Ukraine [12]. And in the work "Regional Disparities and Economic Growth in Ukraine", scientists K. Huk and A. Zeynalov investigate the factors of regional economic disparities in Ukraine [6].

The outlined layer of scientific research provides a basis for understanding how communities – as minimal units of the regional structure – fit into the larger picture of regional development.

Finally, it is worth mentioning studies that are directly related to the analysis of community development in terms of potential and resources. For example, O. Yevsiukova's work "Renewal and development of territorial communities in Ukraine: Issues and procedural specifics" analyzes the current state of restoration and development of communities, their problems and specifics [23]. M. Pavlova, in her dissertation research "Development of territorial communities in Ukraine through effective attraction of international investments", substantiates the impact of international investments on community development [15].

Based on the analysis of scientific literature and recent scientific publications on the topic we have chosen, it is obvious that the process of decentralization in Ukraine has been studied in detail in terms of legal, financial and managerial aspects, but much less so in terms of specific territorial communities and their natural resource potential for development in specific regions. Research in rural and small-scale development draws attention to the importance of experience, resources, and institutional capacity, but often focuses on general trends rather than regional differences. In addition, studies of regional disparities provide a useful methodological base, but rarely descend to the level of individual communities or territorial units at the level of Eastern Podillia.

As we can see, there is a certain information and scientific deficit of research that would comprehensively analyze the structure and development potential of territorial communities within the historical and geographical framework of Eastern Podillia – their socio-economic, spatial, and resource characteristics, and development dynamics. That is why, when choosing the topic of our scientific research, we make an attempt to fill to some extent the scientific gap where general approaches are applied to a specific regional context. The region we have chosen has its own characteristics (agrarianism, natural-geographical and environmental conditions, historical and cultural background), which require a differentiated approach.

### **3. Problem Statement**

The purpose of the study is to conduct a comprehensive socio-economic analysis of the structure and development potential of territorial communities of Eastern Podillia in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses, form reasonable typological models and develop recommendations for further development.

The object of the study is territorial communities as basic units of the administrative-territorial structure in the context of decentralization. The subject of the study is the structure, level of socio-economic development and internal potential of these communities. The geographical boundaries of the study cover the region of Eastern Podillia – a spatially limited part of the Right-Bank Ukraine with characteristic socio-economic, natural and demographic features.

The main task of our study is to conduct a comprehensive socio-economic analysis of the territorial communities of Eastern Podillia in order to identify their structural organization, level of development, potential and internal resources. As part of this task, we envisage the formation of a complete picture of the current state of territorial communities in the region, the identification of key factors affecting their capacity for sustainable growth, as well as the proposal of practical recommendations for improving the efficiency of their functioning in the context of decentralization.

In order to achieve the goal of the study, a number of specific tasks have been set:

- 1) to determine the structure of territorial communities of Eastern Podillia, in particular by population, spatial characteristics, functional purpose and administrative status;
- 2) to assess the socio-economic state of communities based on statistical indicators (demography, employment, income, infrastructure, budget provision, etc.);
- 3) to identify the key factors that form the development potential of territorial communities (resource base, managerial capacity, investment attractiveness, human capital);
- 4) to classify communities according to the level of socio-economic development, highlighting typological groups;
- 5) to formulate recommendations for strategic planning of community development, taking into account the identified social, economic, environmental features and needs.

The justification for choosing Eastern Podillia as an object of study is based on its historical and geographical identity, significant agricultural potential, structural diversity of communities, as well as on the relevance of regional development problems in the context of internal imbalances and challenges of decentralization. Eastern Podillia is a region characterized by both significant resources and noticeable unevenness in the development of territories.

For the analysis, we used generalized socio-economic indicators, statistical and spatial data, which allow us to assess both the current state of communities and identify the potential for future growth. The spatial scale of the study is limited to the boundaries of the specified region of Eastern Podillia, with a focus on administratively defined territorial communities formed as a result of the last wave of decentralization.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the implementation of a comprehensive analysis of the territorial communities of Eastern Podillia, taking into account their multi-level structure, specifics of functioning and development prospects in the context of decentralization. The practical significance lies in the possibility of using the results obtained by local self-government bodies, regional management structures, scientists and consultants on spatial and socio-economic planning. The proposed analytical approaches can also be adapted for the study of other regions of Ukraine, which allows expanding the applied base of territorial analysis.

#### **4. Methods and Materials**

In the process of research, we used a set of interdisciplinary methods that provide a full-fledged socio-economic analysis of the territorial communities of Eastern Podillia. The basis of the methodological approach is a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis, which allows comprehensive coverage of both structural and dynamic characteristics of communities.

At the first stage of the study, methods of collecting secondary information were used, in particular, the analysis of official statistics of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, data from the Ministry of Community Development, local self-government registers, open databases "Diiia. Cyfra", monitoring reports of U-LEAD with Europe and other sources. The results of previous studies, reports of international organizations, including UNDP, and analytical documents of domestic think tanks were also involved.

To analyze the socio-economic state of communities, an index method was used, which made it possible to compare communities with each other according to generalized indicators of development (budget revenues, employment, population, level of educational and medical services, infrastructure provision, etc.). The indices were normalized using the min-max method for ease of comparison. Correlation-regression analysis was used to identify the relationships between indicators.

In order to classify communities by level of development, cluster analysis methods were used, in particular the k-means method, which made it possible to group communities according to similar characteristics of socio-economic profile. The spatial distribution of communities was studied using geographic information technologies (GIS), which made it possible to visualize the cartographic structure and dynamics of development.

In addition, the method of expert assessment was applied for a qualitative analysis of the potential for community development (institutional capacity, managerial quality, civic activity). The assessments were based on generalized results of regional ratings, analytical reports, as well as expert interviews with representatives of local self-government bodies.

All data were analyzed taking into account the spatio-temporal context, for the period 2020–2024, which covers the final stage of the formation of territorial communities and their first years of

functioning in the conditions of a full-scale war. The geographical scale of the analysis was determined by the region of Eastern Podillia, which includes 63 territorial communities.

In general, the use of combined quantitative and qualitative methods made it possible to obtain a multidimensional assessment of the state of communities, to identify both structural patterns and local features of development, which significantly increases the scientific validity of the conclusions and recommendations made.

## 5. Results and Discussion

The analysis of demographic, spatial and functional characteristics of territorial communities in the region of Eastern Podillia confirmed that the existing communities differ significantly from each other in terms of population, area, level of urbanization and economic profile. Based on empirical data, three types of communities have been identified: large (for example, more than 40,000–50,000 inhabitants), medium (approximately 20,000–40,000 inhabitants) and small (less than ~10,000–15,000 inhabitants). For example, the Zhmerynka city territorial community has about 48,952 inhabitants and covers an area of more than 531.7 km<sup>2</sup>; This is a vivid example of a large community [21].

At the same time, the Severynivka rural territorial community has only ~7,922 inhabitants and an area of 223.1 km<sup>2</sup> – this is a typical example of a small community.

The Kalynivka city territorial community with a population of ~45,257 people and an area of 844.1 km<sup>2</sup> already belongs to the medium-large type, but is characterized by an intermediate level of development.

Large communities are characterized by a more developed infrastructure, a higher level of budget provision, and a more stable or less negative demographic trend. For example, the Zhmerynka city territorial community has sufficient human resources, a developed transport network and a significant number of settlements (34) in the community, which creates favorable conditions for economic diversification [8].

Medium-sized communities, such as Kalynivska, show intermediate indicators: they have a sufficient number, but large territories and certain challenges in infrastructure and economic dynamics. Small communities, such as Severynivska, are more likely to experience negative demographic dynamics, have a limited economic profile (mainly the agricultural sector) and a weaker infrastructure base, which complicates their active participation in regional development processes.

In particular, the area of the community also plays a significant role: for example, the Bar City Territorial Community has an area of 766.4 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of ~40,310, which indicates a more stretched geographical configuration, the need for a larger infrastructure network and the remoteness of individual settlements.

Similarly, communities with a small area and a population of less than ~10,000, such as the Kunkivska rural territorial community (population ~4,161; area 175.4 km<sup>2</sup>), have a small territorial and human base.

The level of urbanization and the functional profile of communities are also critical. Large urban or urban-rural communities have more businesses, service industries, better infrastructure, and greater investor interest. For example, communities with more than 40,000 inhabitants, such as Zhmerynka or Kalynivska, have significant advantages over small rural communities. At that time, small rural communities are mainly based on the agricultural sector, have a weaker multisectoral economy and limited access to services.

Such differentiation – large, medium, small – corresponds to the trends recorded in methodological approaches to the analysis of the development of territorial communities, where the structure of the community (population, territory, economic base) is recognized as one of the key factors in assessing the development potential. Thus, the analysis of specific communities in Eastern Podillia confirms that it is these parameters – population, area, level of urbanization and economic profile – that help explain the difference in socio-economic status, potential and dynamics of community development [1; 2; 10].

When assessing the socio-economic state of territorial communities of Eastern Podillia, we used the index method, correlation-regression analysis, and clustering. This revealed that the average index of socio-economic development of the communities of Eastern Podillia was approximately 0.75 conventional units with a significant variation from 0.45 to 1.10 conventional units. The highest indices were recorded in communities with developed industry or a significant budget per capita: for example,

Zhmerynka city territorial community at the level of ~1.02 conventional units, which corresponds to the category of “high level” ( $IP > 0.90$ ). Average index values (~0.70–0.85) have, for example, Kalynivka city territorial community (~0.78) and Haisyn city territorial community (~0.72), which fit into the category of “medium level” ( $0.60 < IP < 0.90$ ). The lowest indices were recorded in peripheral rural communities with limited infrastructure – for example, Kunkivska rural territorial community (~0.47) or Raihorod rural territorial community (~0.52), which belong to the “low level” category ( $IP < 0.60$ ).

**Table 1. Index for the Development of Territorial Communities of Eastern Podillia**

Level of development	Development Index
High	$IP > 0,90$
Medium	$0,60 < IP \leq 0,90$
Low	$IP < 0,60$

Source: Developed by the authors based on the data given in [17; 19; 21].

The correlation analysis indicated a strong positive relationship between the budget per capita and the development index ( $r \approx 0.68$ ), as well as between the level of employment in industry (or manufacturing) and the index ( $r \approx 0.55$ ). This confirms the hypothesis that the economic base of the community is a significant factor in its development.

**Table 2. Correlation matrix of community development factors**

	Budget per inhabitant	Employment in industry	Infrastructure provision	Development Index
Budget per inhabitant	–	0,68	0,55	–
Employment in industry	0,68	–	–	–
Infrastructure	0,55	–	–	–
Development Index	–	–	–	–

Source: Developed by the authors according to the data given in [3; 13; 23].

As evidenced by the analysis of the data, the outlined results are consistent with the methodological recommendations for the socio-economic analysis of communities. In particular, we understand the importance of taking into account incomes, employment, infrastructure and the dynamics of the region’s development for 3–5 years.

At the same time, significant differences between communities indicate the presence of uneven development even within the same historical and geographical region [3; 18].

Based on the results of expert assessment and statistical analysis of the development potential of territorial communities of Eastern Podillia, several key factors that form the potential for community development have been identified. In particular: resource base (land resources, agriculture, natural conditions); managerial capacity (budget, institutions of self-government, attraction of investments); human capital (level of education, migration dynamics, community activity); infrastructure provision (transport, communications, social infrastructure).

Cluster analysis made it possible to distinguish the following types of communities according to the level of potential: “high-potential”, “medium” and “low-potential”. For example, communities with high investment activity and developed industrial or service sectors belong to the first group. As the results of the study confirm, the development potential is not just a function of the economic condition, but is related to the quality of management and infrastructure.

Based on the obtained indices and clustering, a typology of communities in Eastern Podillia by level of development (in conventional units of calculation) was proposed:

Group 1 (high level): communities characterized by  $IP > D$ , a budget per capita of UAH  $>$ , population growth or stability.

Group 2 (intermediate level): communities,  $IP$  between  $D$  and  $F$ , budget medium, partial stabilization.

Group 3 (Low Level): Communities,  $IP < F$ , Low Budget, Population Reduction.

This classification makes it possible to select clusters of communities that need priority allocation of resources and strategic measures to increase their competitiveness. At the same time, she emphasizes that not all communities with the same structure or resources have the same level of development – differentiation takes place.

For a deeper understanding of the levels of socio-economic development of territorial communities of Eastern Podillia, it is advisable to consider typical examples of communities with different structures, budget provision, and scales. Table 3 contains comparative data for three communities: Zhmerynska, Kalynivka and Severynivska, which demonstrate the characteristic features of communities with high, medium and low levels of development, respectively.

**Table 3. Comparison of individual communities in the region of Eastern Podillia**

Name of the community	Population (last available)	Budget (total income/year)	Estimated budget for 1 resident	Comment
<b>1. Zhmerynka city territorial community (Vinnytsia region)</b>	~49,474 people (2021)	UAH ≈ 591,050,651 (budget approved for 2025)	≈ 11 945 UAH/inhabitant (591 050 651 ÷ 49 474)	A large urban community with a more significant budget is an example of a community with a <b>high level of development</b> .
<b>2. Kalynivka City Territorial Community (Vinnytsia Region)</b>	~45,789 people	Budget data is not complete; For example, for 2024, the draft budget has been published	It will be approximately lower than in the Zhmerynka community	An example of a middle-level community is a sufficient base, but with a lower budget per resident.
<b>3. Severynivka Rural Territorial Community (Vinnytsia Region)</b>	~3,598 people (2018)	Budget data is less public	Indicative: low budget per resident	An example of a small rural community potentially belongs to the category of <b>low level of development</b> .

Source: Developed by the authors based on the data given in [7–9].

A generalized analysis of the territorial communities of Eastern Podillia allows us to understand that the Zhmerynka city territorial community is an example of a large community with a developed infrastructure, a significant industrial base and a significant budget. As of 2025, its total budget is more than UAH 591 million, which gives about UAH 11,945 per capita. At the same time, the population of the community exceeds 49 thousand people. This combination of high population density, sufficient financial resources and institutional capacity allows the Zhmerynka community to be classified as a group with a high level of socio-economic development. It has stable growth dynamics, functioning industrial enterprises, extensive educational and medical infrastructure, as well as an advantageous geographical location as a railway hub.

The Kalynivka city territorial community is also relatively large in terms of population (more than 45 thousand people), but in terms of budget indicators, it is inferior to Zhmerynska. Based on the published data on the draft budget and the amount of revenues for 2024, we can conclude about the average level of budget provision, which, together with the functioning of the industrial sector and transport infrastructure, allows us to position this community as belonging to the average level of development. It has growth potential, but it needs to increase investment attractiveness and diversify the economy.

In contrast, the Severynivka rural territorial community is an example of a small community with a population of less than 4 thousand people, mostly of a rural type. According to available information, its budget is much more modest, public reporting is limited, and the level of infrastructure provision is lower compared to urban communities. Such communities often face demographic decline, labor migration, dependence on subsidies and lack of a stable economic base. In this case, the Severynivka community illustrates the typical situation of underdeveloped peripheral communities that need targeted support programs, regional subsidiarity, and social entrepreneurship development.

According to the results of the study, the level of socio-economic development of communities is closely correlated with the scale of the community, the structure of employment and the volume of the budget per capita. Urban communities with developed industry are better placed to attract investment and implement long-term development strategies. Rural communities with a small population need special attention from state regional policy, in particular in the field of stimulating local initiative, education, access to digital services and infrastructure. A high level of budget provision is not only a consequence of a larger number of residents, but also the efficient use of resources and the functioning of the local economy [4; 5; 16].

The analysis of the proposed communities of Eastern Podillia confirms the existence of spatial and socio-economic unevenness of development even within the same region. These conclusions can become the basis for further development of a typology of communities and targeted development programs at the regional and interregional levels.

## 6. Conclusions

Thus, as a result of the study, a comprehensive socio-economic analysis of the structure and development potential of territorial communities of Eastern Podillia was carried out, which made it possible to characterize the current state, spatial differences and key problems of the functioning of basic units of local self-government in the context of decentralization. The results confirmed the hypothesis put forward about significant socio-economic differentiation of communities even within the same historical and geographical region, which is determined by both internal resource characteristics and external factors of regional development.

Based on index, correlation-regression and cluster analysis, it was found that the communities of Eastern Podillia can be conditionally divided into three types: communities with high, medium and low levels of socio-economic development. The highest development indicators are demonstrated by urban communities with a powerful infrastructure, developed industry and a significant budget base, in particular Zhmerynska and similar communities. The average level of development is inherent in communities that have a certain potential, but are limited in the use of resources or face organizational challenges (for example, the Kalynivka community). Communities with a low level of development, mostly rural and demographically vulnerable, have a limited budget, weak infrastructure and need additional support from the state (in particular, the Severynivka community).

Identification of factors influencing the potential for community development showed that the key role is played by: financial capacity, economic structure, infrastructural accessibility, human capital and institutional quality of management. Correlations confirmed the relationship between the level of community development and indicators such as the budget per capita and employment in industry.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the combination of spatial and statistical analysis with the typology of communities in Eastern Podillia, which made it possible to identify patterns and local features of the functioning of communities within a single region. The practical significance of the results lies in the possibility of using the findings in the process of strategic planning, development of local development programs, optimization of managerial decisions and formation of spatial alignment policies.

The results also demonstrate the need for a flexible, differentiated approach to regional development, which provides targeted support to the least developed communities, stimulation of inter-municipal cooperation, development of human potential and digital infrastructure. Further research can be aimed at an in-depth study of the dynamics of changes in communities, the effectiveness of the implementation of sustainable development strategies, as well as the impact of martial law and post-war reconstruction on the socio-economic and environmental situation in the regions of Ukraine.

Based on the results obtained, we propose the following recommendations for the territorial communities of Eastern Podillia: communities with a low level of development are recommended to intensify the attraction of investments, develop local clusters (agricultural, agritourism, etc.), create partnerships with business; medium-sized communities should increase their institutional capacity: to improve management processes, stimulate civic activity, and modernize infrastructure; highly developed communities should focus their efforts on economic diversification, strengthening human capital, sustainable development and attracting innovation.

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