

**ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTIONS OF  
REGIONAL INVESTMENT ATTRACTIVENESS IN THE CONTEXT OF  
GLOBALIZATION**

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**Abstract.** *In the era of globalization, the competitiveness of national economies is increasingly determined by the investment attractiveness of their regions. Regional investment attractiveness is not only a measure of financial inflows but also a reflection of a region's socio-economic stability, institutional efficiency, and innovation capacity. This thesis examines the main criteria for assessing regional investment attractiveness and proposes strategic directions for its development under the conditions of global integration. The study emphasizes that the transformation of the global economic environment, the digitalization of production processes, and the transition toward a green economy require a new, comprehensive approach to regional investment policy.*

**Keywords:** *globalization, regional development, investment attractiveness, institutional reform, infrastructure, innovation, sustainable growth.*

Globalization has intensified the competition between regions for investment resources, making the concept of regional investment attractiveness a key indicator of sustainable economic growth. In emerging economies such as Uzbekistan, regions are becoming important drivers of modernization, industrial diversification, and integration into global value chains. The effective management of investment attractiveness is therefore crucial for ensuring balanced socio-economic development across territories. However, despite ongoing reforms aimed at liberalizing the investment climate, significant disparities remain between regions in terms of infrastructure, institutional support, and business environment. These differences hinder the optimal distribution of foreign direct investments and limit the capacity of lagging regions to attract sustainable projects. Hence, a comprehensive evaluation of investment attractiveness, coupled with the identification of targeted development strategies, is essential in the current globalized context.

The assessment of regional investment attractiveness is based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators that reflect both the economic potential and the institutional environment of a region. The main evaluation criteria can be grouped as follows:

**Economic and Financial Indicators:** These include GDP growth rate, gross regional product (GRP) per capita, level of industrialization, FDI inflows, and the ratio of private investment to total capital formation. A high degree of economic diversification and stable financial performance are considered strong indicators of regional attractiveness.

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**Infrastructural Development:** The quality of transport, logistics, energy, and digital infrastructure significantly affects investors' decisions. Empirical studies show a strong correlation ( $r = 0.82$ ) between infrastructure development and FDI inflows in developing economies. Regions with advanced communication networks and industrial parks tend to attract more long-term investments.

**Institutional and Administrative Environment:** The efficiency of regional governance, transparency of administrative procedures, property rights protection, and the presence of "one-stop investment centers" determine institutional reliability. Bureaucratic barriers and weak enforcement mechanisms remain key deterrents to investment growth in many regions.

**Human Capital and Labor Market:** The level of education, skill diversity, labor productivity, and demographic potential are among the most decisive factors for investors. A region's ability to provide a skilled workforce aligned with technological innovation is a competitive advantage in the global market. Innovation and

**Technological Capacity:** The degree of R&D activity, digitalization level, and support for start-ups and high-tech sectors define a region's long-term attractiveness. Innovation-oriented regions demonstrate higher resilience to external shocks and global market volatility.

**Socio-environmental Sustainability:** Global investors increasingly prioritize environmental standards, social responsibility, and sustainable energy use. Regions that integrate "green economy" principles—such as renewable energy projects and eco-friendly production—enhance their global investment reputation. Comparative analysis of regional data from 2018–2024 reveals a steady upward trend in investment attractiveness in Uzbekistan's leading regions—Tashkent, Navoi, Bukhara, and Samarkand—due to improvements in industrial infrastructure and institutional reforms. However, southern regions such as Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya still face challenges related to insufficient infrastructure and a lack of qualified human capital. The results indicate that the introduction of digital investment platforms, the expansion of special economic zones (SEZs), and the modernization of transport and energy systems have a direct positive impact on investment flows. Moreover, policy efforts to strengthen transparency and streamline administrative procedures have significantly improved the overall perception of the national investment climate. A regional SWOT analysis highlights the following:

**Strengths:** natural resource potential, fiscal incentives, strategic geographic location.

**Weaknesses:** underdeveloped infrastructure, administrative inefficiency.

**Opportunities:** integration into global logistics networks, digital transformation, and green investment projects.

**Threats:** global financial instability, geopolitical risks, and dependence on raw materials. To enhance regional investment attractiveness in the context of globalization, the following strategic directions are proposed:



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**Institutional Modernization:** Strengthen regional governance mechanisms, ensure transparency, and improve coordination between local authorities and investors through digital platforms and e-government tools.

**Infrastructure and Connectivity:** Prioritize investment in transport corridors, logistics centers, and energy systems to improve accessibility and cost-efficiency for investors.

**Human Capital Development:** Introduce targeted training programs in partnership with private enterprises to bridge the skills gap and prepare the workforce for high-tech industries.

**Innovation Ecosystem Formation:** Establish regional innovation hubs, technology parks, and incubators to foster entrepreneurship and attract venture capital.

**Sustainability-Oriented Policy:** Integrate environmental standards into investment planning, encourage renewable energy projects, and promote sustainable land use.

**Regional Diversification:** Develop sector-specific strategies for lagging regions, aligning investment priorities with local comparative advantages such as agriculture, tourism, or renewable energy.

The analysis demonstrates that regional investment attractiveness in the era of globalization depends on the synergy between economic modernization, institutional stability, and human capital development. Balanced regional growth can only be achieved through comprehensive, evidence-based policies that address both infrastructural and governance-related constraints.

In this regard, strengthening the institutional framework, advancing digital transformation, and promoting sustainable investment practices represent key factors for ensuring regional competitiveness in the global economic system. By implementing these strategic directions, Uzbekistan and similar developing economies can enhance their regional investment climate and achieve long-term, inclusive growth.

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