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## Special Economic Zones: Challenges and Opportunities for Territorial Development

*Michele Pigliucci (Ed.)*

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### 1. Special Economic Zones as a tool for territorial development: a literature review

*Michele Pigliucci<sup>1</sup>*

#### ***Abstract***

Special Economic Zones are geographically defined territories wherein some special conditions are provided for attracting investment: in this sense, this is an advanced tool for territorial development. This chapter aims at providing a literature review on this role of SEZs in territorial development, tracing the evolution of SEZs and analysing their role in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI). The chapter reviews some literature on the topic, highlighting the conditions through which SEZs can contribute to socio-economic growth, like infrastructure quality, governance, localization strategies, and policy coherence, while considering common challenges such as social inequality, environmental degradation, and policy misalignment. By highlighting both success factors and limitations, the chapter provides a conceptual framework for understanding how SEZs can support balanced

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territorial development, offering critical insights for policymakers in designing SEZs to be aligned with national sustainable development goals.

### ***Keywords***

*Special Economic Zones, regional development, lagging regions, FDI, territory.*



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