Proskurnia, O., Cherepanova, V., Veriutina, V., & Proskurnia, Y. (2026). Innovative approaches to ensuring social responsibility in Ukrainian and Polish startups. Management and Entrepreneurship: Trends of Development, 3(37), 29-42. https://doi.org/10.26661/2522-1566/2026-3/37-02

ECONOMICS AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS

RECEIVED:
18 August 2026
ACCEPTED:
24 September 2026
RELEASED:
20 October 2026

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UDC 334.722:005.35:338.24(477+438)

DOI 10.26661/2522-1566/2026-3/37-02

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO ENSURING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN UKRAINIAN AND POLISH STARTUPS

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Abstract. This article explores modern, innovative approaches to ensuring social responsibility in Ukrainian and Polish startups. The **object of research** is socially responsible start-ups in the economic environments of Ukraine and Poland. It establishes that startup social responsibility extends beyond traditional corporate social responsibility, increasingly integrating with innovative business models, digital transparency tools, ESG metrics, community partnerships, inclusive employment practices, and social entrepreneurship. Examples of innovative approaches are presented: impact-by-design, digital reporting, ethical HR, circular models, community engagement platforms, impact investing, and social impact measurement. The **subject of research** is innovative approaches to ensuring social responsibility among Ukrainian and Polish startups. **The research aims** to provide a comprehensive analysis of leading Ukrainian and Polish startups from 2020 to 2025, examining their roles in the global economy and sustainable development. Through a comparative analysis of innovative approaches and startup development in both countries, the authors conclude that the Polish startup ecosystem is characterized by a higher level of institutional support, access to EU funding, and more structured mechanisms for integrating social missions into business processes; in contrast, Ukrainian startups demonstrate high adaptability, a volunteer-driven orientation, resilience amidst the war, and the ability to rapidly integrate socially significant solutions into their products and services. The **research methodology** involves a comparative analysis of publicly available statistical data, academic articles and market forecasts. Key areas for further research have been identified, such as the development of a system for assessing the economic and social impact of start-ups, the study of mechanisms for state support for start-ups, and the development of an institutional framework for

eISSN 2522-1566
ISSUE 3 (37), 2026

social entrepreneurship. The **findings** may assist marketers, regulators and researchers in making strategic decisions relating to the digital economy. The **scientific significance** of the study lies in systematizing data and identifying the social risks of startups entering the global economic development level. The **value** of the research lies in providing practical recommendations for strengthening the social responsibility of Ukrainian startups. The **prospects** of the research are in further collecting information, developing specific actions and algorithms to ensure social responsibility in Ukrainian small and medium-sized businesses.

Keywords: global economy, innovation, strategy, start-ups, social responsibility, corporate social responsibility, social entrepreneurship, ESG, Ukraine, Poland, sustainable development, comparative analysis.

JEL Classification L20, M29, O31, O57.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern economy, startups are becoming not only a source of technological innovations, but also carriers of a new model of social interaction. While for big business social responsibility has traditionally been associated with charity, compliance with labor standards and environmental policy, for startups it is increasingly integrated into the very logic of product creation. This means that innovation is manifested not only in technology, but also in the way value is created for employees, customers, local communities, investors and vulnerable social groups.

The topic is particularly relevant for Ukraine and Poland. Poland is developing a startup ecosystem in the context of integration with European institutions, access to grant and venture instruments, orientation on ESG policy and inclusive growth models. Ukraine, despite the war and economic losses, demonstrates examples of startups that combine commercial goals with solving social problems: supporting veterans, digitalization of education, telemedicine, employment of vulnerable groups, volunteer logistics and community restoration. In such conditions, the social responsibility of startups becomes not an addition to the strategy, but its core.

Thus, socially responsible startups should be analyzed simultaneously in three dimensions: as an innovative business, as a tool for social integration, and as a factor of economic sustainability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many contemporary researchers interpret social capital as an integral intangible resource of territorial communities - formed through social interaction networks, trust, solidarity, and civic engagement - that determines a community's capacity for sustainable, inclusive development.

Within this conceptual framework, the article of A. Revko (2022) proposes a clearly structured model of social capital, distinguishing between its resource component (human capital, as well as individuals' knowledge and skills) and its institutional component (state and legal institutions, civil society organizations, sociocultural institutions, and the system of norms and rules); the institutional dimension is viewed as the key factor in creating a favorable environment for the emergence and development of social entrepreneurship.

I. Novyk (2022) provides a systematic review of theoretical approaches to defining social entrepreneurship and formulates a generalized characterization of its fundamental features, which are crucial for correctly identifying startups as social entrepreneurial entities. The researcher draws a clear distinction between social entrepreneurship and traditional philanthropy, state social programs, and classical corporate social responsibility, emphasizing that social entrepreneurship incorporates a social mission as the core basis of its operations, with profit serving as a tool to achieve social impact rather than as a self-sufficient goal of economic activity.

The work by L. Boiko (2024) expands upon and practically deepens the aforementioned theoretical framework, demonstrating social entrepreneurship as an effective tool for addressing specific social issues – primarily unemployment, the social isolation of vulnerable groups, and the shortage of high-quality, accessible social services. The author analyzes cases of successful social enterprises across various countries, showing that their impact is measured not only by economic indicators but also by transformations in the life trajectories of target groups, changes in the structure of local communities, and the strengthening of social cohesion.

Research by H. Zavadskykh and O. Vasylchenko (2025), A. Skrylnyk (2025), and a number of related studies outlines the contemporary institutional environment for social entrepreneurship in Ukraine as a foundation for the emergence and development of socially responsible startups. Zavadskykh and Vasylchenko analyze the role of social entrepreneurship in fostering sustainable regional development amidst the full-scale war and post-crisis recovery, emphasizing that social enterprises create jobs for veterans, internally displaced persons, and people with disabilities, while also strengthening social integration and supporting the local economy.

A. Skrylnyk (2025) complements this perspective by focusing on the emergence of the social entrepreneurship and social (impact) investment ecosystem, demonstrating how a combination of legal, financial, and institutional factors shapes the opportunities and constraints for the development of innovative social practices.

The article by N. Dovbysh (2025) proposes a conceptually significant update to R. Putnam's classic social capital model, adapting it to the realities of wartime and post-war transformations within Ukrainian territorial communities. The study emphasizes that civic engagement should be viewed as a dynamic, adaptive process-shifting under the influence of context (war, migration, de-occupation, and the reception of internally displaced persons)-rather than as a static institutional practice; consequently, the configurations of bonding, bridging, and linking social capital differ substantially across various types of communities, necessitating differentiated approaches to strengthening them.

The work of I. Romanova and T. Tovstyi (2022), focused on social entrepreneurship in Poland, provides a concise yet conceptually significant description of the Polish social economy model. The authors demonstrate that social entrepreneurship in Poland draws upon the long history of the cooperative movement and a modern regulatory framework that institutionalizes social enterprises as distinct entities within the social policy and labor market systems. An important conclusion is that the state and local self-government bodies are actively integrating social enterprises into the social services and employment markets by utilizing instruments such as subsidies, tax and legal incentives, employment programs, and partnership projects with civil society organizations.

The article by I. Strelchenko, V. Pysarkova, and I. Arakelova (2025) focuses directly on socially oriented startups in Ukraine and abroad, viewing them as hybrid business models that combine commercial activity with the systemic resolution of socially significant problems. The researchers analyze the main types of such startups and their role in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals, while outlining global and national development trends in this segment; they demonstrate that socially oriented startups are becoming a vital link connecting social entrepreneurship, the creative economy, and innovative technological solutions.

A study by I. Pryimak (2025) demonstrates that social entrepreneurship functions as a "mission-driven business" with an embedded social purpose, whereas corporate social responsibility (CSR) is viewed as a voluntary strategic practice aimed at balancing economic, social, and environmental priorities. The author emphasizes that, amidst war, environmental crises, and structural imbalances, there is a growing need for comprehensive models that combine the strengths of both approaches – specifically, organizational forms in which the mission-driven, social-entrepreneurial component is integrated with systemic CSR strategies.

In turn, T. Zaiats, H. Kraievska, and O. Diakonenko (2022), Patytska, Kh. (2022), Yevtushenko, O. N., Lushahina, T. V. (2022) illustrate the socioeconomic conditions under which rural territorial communities form and operate as environments for the emergence of social enterprises and startups: a landscape characterized by low institutional trust and limited public participation in local

governance, yet one that simultaneously holds potential for horizontal cooperation networks (such as cooperatives, local initiatives, and inter-community partnerships). The authors convincingly argue that any innovative socially responsible initiatives (particularly startups) in a rural context must simultaneously deliver economic results and foster social capital – specifically, trust, interaction, and the residents' identification with their own community.

The study by Shpykuliak et al. (2024) clearly demonstrates how social entrepreneurship functions as a mechanism for ensuring employment, based on a comparative analysis of data from Ukraine and Poland. We (Proskurnia Ye. (2026)) also analyzed the implementation of social responsibility standards at Ukrainian and Polish enterprises. It was determined that the adoption of these standards creates prerequisites for attracting investment, enhances the competitiveness and international integration of Ukrainian enterprises, and boosts trust in these enterprises among employees and consumers. The presented overview demonstrates that social capital and social entrepreneurship form a shared theoretical and practical framework for analyzing the social responsibility of Ukrainian and Polish startups. Consequently, it is appropriate to conduct further analysis of innovative approaches to ensuring social responsibility in Ukrainian and Polish startups within the following framework of interaction: "social capital – social entrepreneurship – socially oriented startup – corporate social responsibility."

PAPER OBJECTIVE

Research into the social responsibility of Ukrainian and Polish startups is aimed at analyzing trends and identifying its role in the economy of these countries. The research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of leading Ukrainian and Polish startups from 2020 to 2025, examining their roles in the global economy and sustainable development. To achieve the stated goal, the following tasks have been set: to analyze theoretical approaches to ensuring social responsibility in startup development; to analyze and systematize innovative tools for ensuring the social responsibility of startups; to compare the economic, social, and environmental impact of startups of various scales, using Ukrainian and Polish case studies. Analysis of social responsibility of Ukrainian and Polish startups is based on data from open sources, official statistics, analytical reports and expert publications.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The social responsibility of startups has several conceptual dimensions. First, it is grounded in the idea of business accountability to stakeholders. Second, it is linked to sustainable development, where economic outcomes coexist with social and environmental value. Third, within the startup ecosystem, it intersects with the logic of rapid scaling, data utilization, the construction of digital platforms, and the testing of new business models.

Unlike established corporations, startups have limited resources but greater flexibility. That is why their social responsibility is often implemented through innovative formats: "responsible product design," inclusive interfaces, transparent algorithms, remote and hybrid employment models, volunteer partnerships, digital micro-donation tools, and open impact dashboards.

In our view, it is appropriate to apply three levels of startup analysis:

• Micro-level – local family-run, veteran-led, and inclusive businesses: coffee shops, workshops, farms, and service enterprises.

• Meso-level – small and medium-sized social enterprises that work with multiple target groups and have a tangible impact on the city or community.

• Macro-level – IT companies, accelerators, platforms, and network-based programs that generate scalable impact through technology, funding, and partnerships.

A comparative analysis of Ukrainian and Polish startup cases, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

Comparative analysis of Ukrainian and Polish startup cases

Level	Country	Case	Social Responsibility Model	Economic Impact	Social/Environmental Impact	Innovative tool
Micro-level	Ukraine	Veteran-owned micro-businesses in the Vinnytsia region	Grant support for local entrepreneurial initiatives of veterans and their family members	Creating self-employ-ment opportu-nities, supporting small local service providers and manufacturing businesses, and generating jobs within commu-nities.	Veteran reintegration, economic support for families, and revitalization of rural and small-town communities.	Micro-grants, mentorship, local partnerships
Micro-level	Ukraine	Veterano Pizza	Veteran-owned restaurant business providing employment and social support for veterans.	Asustainable commercial model in the service sector; the develop-ment of employees' professional competen-cies.	Professional and social adaptation of veterans, support for the families of fallen service members	Social franchising: combining entrepreneurshi p and philanthropy.
Micro-level	Poland	PERS Social Café, Foundation Studio M6	A social café providing inclusive employment for individuals facing challenges in the labor market.	Revenue from the coffee shop's operations is combined with employees gaining their first professional experience.	Employment of people with disabilities, migrants, refugees, young people, and individuals at risk of social exclusion.	On-the-job training, inclusive HR
Meso-level	Ukraine	ObriyUnity	Digital employment platform for people affected by the war	Expanded access to job vacancies, reduced job-search costs, potential for scalable employ-ment.	Support for veterans, IDPs, and people with disabilities; career counseling and psychological support.	AI-powered job matching, digital career support services
Meso-level	Poland	Ekoinbud	Inclusive "green" enterprise in the field of prefabricated timber construction	Job creation, employee training, and the development of compete-tive, eco-friendly production.	Integration of migrants, refugees, women, and youth; reducing the environmental impact of construction.	Low-carbon technologies, circular model, inclusive career paths
Macro-level	Ukraine	SoftServe – Veterans at SoftServe	Corporate program for the professional reintegra-tion of veterans in the technology sector	Retraining and development of IT competen-cies, expansion of the industry's talent pool	Creating a veteran-friendly work environment, psychological support, and reintegration into civilian professional life.	Digital learning, mentoring, adaptive HR practices
Macro-level	Poland / ЦенСen tral-East-ern Europe	IKEA Social Entrepreneurs hip – NESsT Accelerator	Acceleration model for the develop-ment of social enterprises and formal employment	Scaling up enterprises, creating formal jobs, and accessing finance and markets.	Employment of people with disabilities, youth, women, migrants, refugees, and other vulnerable groups	Acceleration, impact finance, expert support, social impact assessment

Source: compiled by the author based on open sources: the official websites of startups and social enterprises, programs such as NESsT, IKEA Social Entrepreneurship, SoftServe, Social Impact Award Ukraine, and the Ukrainian Veterans Fund, as well as research materials.

eISSN 2522-1566
ISSUE 3 (37), 2026

The proposed typology demonstrates that social responsibility is implemented at all levels of entrepreneurial activity: the micro-level ensures targeted and profound impact on specific individuals and communities; the meso-level creates the prerequisites for the technological scaling of inclusive practices; and the macro-level drives ecosystem-wide changes through corporate programs, acceleration, investment, and institutional support.

Innovative approaches to the social impact of startups should be seen not only as ethical and reputation-added to the business model, but as a tool for increasing stability and access to financing, human capital and competitiveness. For startups in Ukraine and Poland, it is especially important because social responsibility is more often integrated into product management, team management, community work, environmental solutions and results measurement systems.

Below is an expanded analysis of six innovative approaches with specific applications and estimates of their economic benefits. Cost-effectiveness in this context understands the potential of the model to generate income, change costs, increase access to investment or grants, scale up employment and promote long-term value of the company.

The impact-by-design approach means that the social or environmental effect is built into the architecture of the product at the stage of its development, and is not added later as a backbone of a beneficial initiative. It is economically beneficial for a startup, since the social mission becomes a source of differentiation in the market, simplifies access to impact investors and increases the chances of grant support.

An example of such a model in the Ukrainian context is the ObriyUnity platform, which was designed from the outset as an AI-driven employment solution for people affected by the war, rather than as a general-purpose job board. Under its publicly stated development plan, the project aims to attract 30,000 users and facilitate 10,000 successful job matches over three years; this translates to an average performance of approximately 3,333 placements per year, or roughly 0.33 placements per registered user. For investors or donors, setting goals in this manner enhances the project's economic transparency, as it allows for the immediate assessment of the cost per placement and the social return on investment.

In the Polish and Central European context, this principle is implemented through enterprises that integrate a commercial model with inclusive employment or "green" products – as seen with Ekoinbud. The company does not separate its environmental goals from its business operations; the digital design of modular wooden houses, the reduction of construction's environmental impact, and the employment of marginalized groups are all embedded in a unified business model. Its economic appeal stems from the fact that sales growth is directly linked to a planned 75% increase in employment and the professional training of 300 individuals over a three-year period.

Digital transparency and micro-reporting are far more realistic for startups than the cumbersome corporate ESG reports typical of large companies. Instead, a startup can utilize dashboards, quarterly impact updates, pages displaying key KPIs, and concise, open reports for investors, partners, and users.

The economic value of this approach lies in three aspects. First, transparency reduces information asymmetry for donors and investors, thereby increasing the likelihood of follow-on funding. Second, in the early stages of a business, a dashboard model is less costly than comprehensive non-financial reporting and allows for the tracking of critical indicators without a significant administrative burden. Third, transparent metrics simplify the management of scaling, as the team can see the relationships between costs, user reach, staff turnover, customer retention, and social impact.

For startups, it is practical to use the following groups of indicators: emissions or energy intensity per unit of product; the proportion of employees from vulnerable groups; average training hours per employee; staff turnover; employee satisfaction; and the share of suppliers vetted for ethical standards. For digital companies, indicators regarding service availability, data protection, system

response time, and the completeness of ESG data uploaded to the monitoring dashboard are of particular value.

Inclusive and Ethical HR for startups, HR is no longer merely a social gesture; it is becoming an economically rational tool for retaining talent and expanding the talent pool. This is particularly evident in Ukraine, where the labor market is under pressure from the war, migration, a talent shortage, and the need to reintegrate veterans.

The "Veterans at SoftServe" program is a prime example of how ethical HR practices translate into a strategic advantage. Since the start of the full-scale invasion, over 400 company specialists have joined the Armed Forces of Ukraine, more than 70 have been demobilized and returned to civilian life, and the program boasts a 98% satisfaction rate. Additionally, around 1,000 service members, veterans, and their family members have received IT training through EmpowerU courses.

The economic appeal of this model is evident in at least three quantitative dimensions. The first is the retention of existing human capital: the more than 70 returning veterans represent not new hires from the open market, but the retention of individuals already familiar with the company's culture and processes. The second is the scale of the external talent pool: nearly 1,000 training program participants form a pipeline of future candidates or partners. The third is the 98% satisfaction rate, which indicates high-quality onboarding and, consequently, a lower risk of employees leaving again after their return.

For smaller startups, inclusive HR does not necessarily require large budgets; it can take the form of flexible employment, mentorship programs, role adaptation, psychological support, anti-discrimination selection algorithms, and digital team security. In the Polish context, such approaches are often implemented through social cafés, small inclusive enterprises, and accelerator programs that provide initial formal work experience for people with disabilities, migrants, or the unemployed.

Ecosystem Partnerships. A startup's social responsibility is amplified when it operates as part of a broader ecosystem – comprising incubators, funds, universities, business associations, local authorities, civil society organizations, and international programs. The economic advantage of the partnership model lies in the leverage effect: the startup does not bear all costs alone but instead utilizes an external infrastructure of knowledge, capital, and distribution networks.

The most notable example is the IKEA Social Entrepreneurship and NESsT program in Poland, Romania. The supported enterprises created 1,735 jobs, representing 144% of the initial target of 1,200 jobs. This amounts to exceeding the target by 535 jobs and reflects an average actual performance of approximately 173.5 jobs per enterprise, based on the ten supported cases featured in the program.

For startups, this demonstrates that partnerships not only mitigate risks but also enhance the productivity of invested resources. The fact that the program exceeded its targets by 44% highlights the high economic efficiency of the ecosystem approach compared to isolated support models. For Ukraine, this experience is particularly valuable given that institutional gaps are being partially bridged by international donors, IT clusters, veteran-focused funds, and volunteer networks.

Circular and Green Models. For climate-tech, agri-tech, food-tech, and related sectors, social responsibility is increasingly being realized through circular business models: resource reuse, waste reduction, short supply chains, eco-design, and carbon footprint monitoring. Such models are economically attractive not only due to the environmental reputation they foster but also because of improved resource efficiency and the potential to enter markets where sustainability is already a requirement for customers or investors.

Ekoinbud is a prime example of a business that combines environmental and social appeal. The company employs digital design and modular timber construction to reduce the construction sector's environmental impact while simultaneously planning to train 300 marginalized individuals over three years and secure employment or job placements for more than 180 of them – with over half being refugees or migrants. The ratio of 180 people employed to 300 trained represents an estimated 60% conversion rate from training to employment or placement, a strong indicator for a social market model.

eISSN 2522-1566
ISSUE 3 (37), 2026

For Ukrainian startups, similar logic applies to the processing of agricultural waste, local food-tech, energy-efficient solutions, and the reuse of materials in reconstruction. The economic appeal lies in reduced costs through resource efficiency, better positioning for grants and recovery programs, and access to customers for whom environmental criteria are a deciding factor in choosing a supplier.

Impact Metrics and Social Return. The most innovative approach involves shifting from evaluating solely financial returns to measuring social return–such as the number of people employed, resources saved, users reached, and individuals who have gained new skills, as well as changes in access to services. This is significant for investors because it allows them to see not only the revenue trajectory but also the relationship between invested capital and the social impact generated.

For ObriyUnity, impact metrics can be structured from the outset as a set of simple indicators: 30,000 registered users, 10,000 job placements, and a 5% targeted reduction in unemployment among vulnerable groups over three years. In the case of SoftServe, these include the number of mobilized employees, the share of those who have returned, a 98% satisfaction rate, and nearly 1,000 individuals who completed training programs. For Ekoinbud, the figures include 300 people reached by vocational training and over 180 who were employed or placed in jobs.

The economic appeal of impact metrics lies in their ability to shift a social mission from the realm of mere declarations to that of manageable indicators. This simplifies negotiations with foundations, impact investors, and corporate partners, while also enabling a startup to justify why its model is worth scaling.

A summary of the preceding analysis of innovative approaches, as shown in Table 2.

To compare various tools – such as impact-by-design, digital transparency, inclusive HR, ecosystem partnerships, or circular models – it is advisable to use an economic attractiveness index:

$$IA_j = \frac{NPV_j + \lambda SROI_j + \mu ESG_j}{I_{0j}},$$

where:
IAj – the economic attractiveness index of the j-th instrument;
NPVj – the net present value of the economic effect;
SROIj – the social return on investment coefficient;
ESGj – the standardized ESG result;
I_{0j} – the initial investment in the implementation of the instrument;
λ and μ – the weighting coefficients for the social and ESG effects.

A comprehensive analysis reveals that innovative approaches to startup social responsibility are driven not only by social considerations but also by a clear economic rationale: investment appeal is enhanced through a transparent social impact model; digital transparency reduces reporting costs and boosts trust; inclusive HR practices help retain and expand the talent pool; ecosystem partnerships scale results; green models combine resource efficiency with access to new markets; and impact metrics enable a substantive discussion of social return, moving beyond merely symbolic social missions.

Polish startups operate within a more stable institutional environment. They benefit from better access to accelerators, innovation support programs, European funds, mentorship networks, and reporting tools. Consequently, social responsibility is more frequently formalized through ESG policies, inclusion programs, environmental standards, and systematic collaboration with public authorities and universities.

Table 2.

Comparative analysis of innovative approaches

Approach	Essence of the approach	Example	Key figures	Economic attractiveness
Impact-by-design	Social impact is embedded into the product at the ideation stage	ObriyUnity	30,000 users; 10,000 job matches; 5% reduction in unemployment among target groups over 3 years.	It enables the immediate calculation of social return and increases appeal to donors and impact investors.
Digital transparency and micro-reporting	Dashboards, ESG updates, concise impact reports	ESG dashboard practice	KPI: diversity, turnover, training hours, energy use, supplier	A cheaper and faster alternative to extensive ESG reports; reduces information asymmetry.
Inclusive and ethical HR	Equality, mental health, a safe environment, veteran programs	Veterans at SoftServe	approximately 400 mobilized; approximately 70 demobilized and returned; 98% satisfaction; around 1,000 participants	Preserves human capital, builds a talent pool, and reduces turnover risks.
Ecosystem partnerships	Collaboration with foundations, accelerators, universities, and communities	IKEA Social Entrepreneurship NESsT	1,735 jobs created against a target of 1,200, or 144% of the target achieved.	Increases the efficiency of invested resources and unlocks financing and market access.
Circular and green models	Eco-design, resource reuse, and low-carbon solutions	Ekoinbud	300 people in training; over 180 employed/placed; 75% increase in employment.	A combination of sales growth, "green" positioning, and inclusive employment.
Impact metrics and social return	Measuring not only revenue but also social impact	ObriyUnity, SoftServe, Ekoinbud	10 thousand job matches; 98% satisfaction; more than 180 placements	Enables the calculation of social return, justifies scaling, and builds investor trust.

Source: compiled by the author based on open sources: the official websites of startups and social enterprises, programs such as NESsT, IKEA Social Entrepreneurship, SoftServe, Social Impact Award Ukraine, and the Ukrainian Veterans Fund, as well as research materials.

Ukrainian startups demonstrate a distinct type of innovation – characterized by high flexibility and adaptability in the face of crisis. Amid the war, many teams have integrated social missions into their business operations, ranging from supporting the Armed Forces of Ukraine and assisting local communities to relocating employees, providing psychosocial support, and developing digital services for education and healthcare, as well as solutions for security and logistics. Consequently, the Ukrainian approach is often more empathetic and agile, even if less formalized.

At the same time, a shared feature of both countries is the growing role of social entrepreneurship and investor expectations regarding responsible management. For Polish startups,

this often means aligning with European regulatory trends, whereas for Ukrainian ones, it entails combining business resilience with the social mission of the country's recovery.

Despite the positive trends, a number of barriers remain. First, startups often lack the resources to formalize social responsibility and collect impact data. Second, early-stage investors frequently prioritize rapid growth over systemic social practices. Third, some teams lack the skills to develop ESG approaches, non-financial reporting, and stakeholder management.

For Ukraine, additional constraints include war-related risks, business relocation, labor shortages, team burnout, and infrastructure instability. For Poland, challenges may include the bureaucratic complexity of certain support programs, unequal access to funding outside major urban centers, and the risk of a "check-the-box" approach to ESG implementation rather than a substantive one.

CONCLUSION

Innovative approaches to ensuring social responsibility in Ukrainian and Polish startups reflect an evolution in the very understanding of entrepreneurship. Social responsibility is no longer a secondary business function; instead, it is becoming an integral part of the architecture of the product, the team, partnerships, and the scaling process.

Polish startups possess advantages such as institutional maturity, access to European instruments, and a greater formalization of ESG approaches. Ukrainian startups are distinguished by high social sensitivity, adaptability, and the ability to rapidly transform societal demands into innovative solutions. Combining these approaches could form the basis for a new regional model of responsible startup entrepreneurship in Central and Eastern Europe.

In our view, the following steps are important for the development of Ukrainian startups:

1. Integrate a social mission into the startup’s value proposition during the product development stage.
2. Utilize concise digital reporting formats: impact dashboards, transparency pages, and open metrics.
3. Define 3–5 key social performance indicators that can realistically be measured at an early stage.
4. Implement ethical HR policies, such as non-discrimination, inclusive recruitment, and mental health support.
5. Establish partnerships with universities, communities, civil society organizations, and social funds.
6. Leverage grant and accelerator programs where social impact serves as a competitive advantage.

Research of the experience in Poland and Ukraine show that socially oriented enterprises contribute to employment, the integration of vulnerable groups, local community development, and the dissemination of sustainable practices. At the same time, the quality of social capital, institutional support, innovative approaches significantly influence the scale and sustainability of such initiatives.

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MANAGEMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: TRENDS OF DEVELOPMENT
eISSN 2522-1566
ISSUE 3 (37), 2026

ІННОВАЦІЙНІ ПІДХОДИ ДО ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ ВІДПОВІДАЛЬНОСТІ В УКРАЇНСЬКИХ ТА ПОЛЬСЬКИХ СТАРТАПАХ

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У даній статті розкрито сучасні інноваційні підходи до забезпечення соціальної відповідальності в українських та польських стартапах. Об'єктом дослідження є соціально відповідальні стартапи в економічному середовищі України та Польщі. Обґрунтовано, що соціальна відповідальність стартапів виходить за межі класичної корпоративної соціальної відповідальності і дедалі більше поєднується з інноваційною бізнес-моделлю, цифровими інструментами прозорості, ESG-метриками, партнерством з громадами, інклюзивними трудовими практиками та соціальним підприємництвом. Наведено приклади інноваційних підходів: impact-by-design, цифрова звітність, етичний HR, циркулярні моделі, платформи взаємодії з громадами, імпакт-інвестування та вимірювання соціального ефекту. Предметом дослідження є інноваційні підходи до забезпечення соціальної відповідальності українських та польських стартапів. Метою дослідження є комплексний аналіз провідних українських та польських стартапів за 2020-2025 рр, та їх ролі в глобальній економіці й сталого розвитку. Автори при проведенні порівняльного аналізу інноваційних підходів та розвитку стартапів України та Польщі дійшли до висновків, що польська екосистема стартапів характеризується вищим рівнем інституційної підтримки, доступом до фондів ЄС та більш структурованими механізмами інтеграції соціальної місії в бізнес-процеси, тоді як українські стартапи демонструють високу адаптивність, волонтерську орієнтацію, воєнну стійкість і здатність швидко інтегрувати суспільно значущі рішення в продукти та послуги. Методологією дослідження є порівняльний аналіз відкритих статистичних даних, наукових статей, ринкових прогнозів. Визначено ключові напрями подальших розробок таких, як створення системи оцінювання економічної та соціальної ефективності стартапів, дослідження механізмів їх державної підтримки, формування інституційного середовища соціального підприємництва. Отримані результати можуть допомогти маркетологам, регуляторам, дослідникам у стратегічних рішеннях цифрової економіки. Наукова значимість дослідження полягає в систематизації даних та визначення соціальних ризиків виходу стартапів на глобальний економічний рівень розвитку. Цінність дослідження полягає в тому, що запропоновано практичні рекомендації щодо посилення соціальної відповідальності українських стартапів. Перспективи дослідження полягають у подальшому зборі інформації, розробки конкретних дій та алгоритмів для забезпечення соціальної відповідальності в українському малому та середньому бізнесі.

Ключові слова: глобальна економіка, інновації, стратегія, стартапи, соціальна відповідальність, корпоративна соціальна відповідальність, соціальне підприємництво, ESG, Україна, Польща, сталий розвиток, порівняльний аналіз.