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THE ROLE DEFINITION OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN ENSURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ENTERPRISE

The relevance of this paper is due to the close connection between corporate social responsibility and ensuring sustainable development of enterprises to achieve the long-term goals of the economy and society in the post-war recovery of Ukraine. The paper is aimed at studying corporate social responsibility of enterprises with a focus on customer commitment and developing a mechanism for implementing a system of corporate social responsibility of enterprises based on certain principles of sustainable development. The paper considers the main approaches to defining corporate social responsibility, its impact on society and business, as well as the prospects for development in the context of global challenges. The object of research is the processes of formation and implementation of corporate social responsibility at enterprises in the context of ensuring their sustainable development. The development of the concept of corporate social responsibility can be traced from an ethical approach that emphasizes the moral obligations of companies to a strategic approach that considers social responsibility as a tool for creating long-term value. It is emphasized that integration of corporate social responsibility into the business strategies of leading companies contributes to sustainable development, competitiveness and formation of a positive image. The results indicate that managers of enterprises should pay special attention to the implementation of the corporate social responsibility system during crises and military conflicts and coordinate its implementation with the principles of sustainable development. It is determined that social responsibility of business is a prerequisite for maintaining social cohesion, helping vulnerable groups of the population and strengthening national resilience. The study provides companies with the opportunity to develop their own mechanism for the formation of a corporate social responsibility system according to the proposed step-by-step algorithm. The practical application of the research results allows enterprises to determine specific strategies for implementing corporate social responsibility, adhering to the principles of environmental balance, economic sustainability and social justice.

Keywords: business strategy, implementation mechanism, efficiency, corporate culture, social responsibility, management.

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1. Introduction

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is an important part of modern business. It goes beyond the traditional pursuit of profit. CSR covers environmental, social and governance aspects. It is of particular importance at the regional level. CSR contributes to the sustainable development of enterprises in the economic, environmental and social environment. In this context, CSR can be viewed as a strategic approach to doing business aimed at creating long-term value for society and is a fundamental principle of any enterprise, especially in the face of global crises such as a pandemic or war. During Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, social responsibility is of particular importance. It becomes a necessary tool for maintaining social unity, protecting vulnerable groups and ensuring national resilience. Social responsibility is defined as the willingness of every member of society, organization or state to participate in joint efforts. These efforts are aimed at overcoming the challenges faced by the country, society and individuals. CSR is an integral part of sustainable development, promoting a harmonious combination of

economic, social and environmental interests. Implementing CSR allows companies not only to improve their reputation but also to create long-term competitive advantages. In the future, the role of CSR will only grow, encouraging companies to conduct business more responsibly and ethically. Corporate social responsibility CSR is one of the key concepts of modern management, which views business as an important factor in sustainable development. Scientists, practitioners and international research organizations have studied this phenomenon, developing conceptual frameworks, models and practical tools for CSR implementation. Ukrainian researchers have analyzed approaches to defining the concept of "social responsibility" and identified its types and nature of manifestations. They proposed two groups of factors that influence the formation and development of a company's social responsibility, namely: factors of action and factors of provision. The need for financial and economic support of social responsibility was also emphasized.

The scientists considered the stages of development of the concept of "corporate social responsibility", factors, strengths and weaknesses that contribute to or hinder the sustainable development of the enterprise,

proving the existence of direct parallels in the relationship between CSR and sustainable development. The positive impact of CSR on socially responsible business and improvement of the image of domestic business entities on this basis is considered in scientific works [1, 2].

Modern directions of CSR development are presented in the work of Ukrainian scientists who have identified the connection between digitalization processes and social responsibility of business and determined their impact on sustainable development. The results of the study indicate that digital technologies can become an effective tool for increasing corporate social responsibility. And the study [3] proved that at the enterprises that implement CSR, employees go through the adaptation period faster and remain committed to the company, showing the best results.

Modern scientific works of foreign scientists show considerable interest to the problems of CSR development. In [4], the author investigates the relationship between CSR and sustainable development in compliance with ethical and regulatory principles, describing the relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainable development in Sierra Leone. The paper argues that CSR initiatives and policies can lead to sustainable development, especially in countries with weak corporate governance systems, weak institutions, and leadership problems [5].

Researchers in [6] consider the relationship between CSR and earnings management behavior, which is more pronounced for companies in countries with high press freedom and high public trust.

In [7], it is argued that CSR is not mandatory, but there are good reasons why CSR implementation is a priority. The author names such reasons as attracting and retaining employees, better customer perception of the company's brand, transparency and accountability to investors, and saving money for better customer relations.

According to the author of [8], there are certain features and conditions for implementing CSR in various sectors of the economy. An example is provided by the functioning of the heat and power industry in Poland and the formation of CSR in heat supply companies, where successful social responsibility practices are considered on the basis of CSR in heat supply companies, where successful social responsibility practices are considered on the basis of the activities of selected enterprises in this industry [9].

Studies by other scholars have shown that the state should also spend money on CSR implementation, and the amount of CSR spending by Indian state-owned companies on sustainable development, focusing on economic, social and environmental aspects, should be carefully assessed [4].

Despite the scientific achievements of scientists, the topic of CSR in the context of sustainable development of enterprises remains relevant. There is a problem of substantiation of conceptual principles of CSR implementation. Also, mechanisms for CSR implementation at the micro level are not sufficiently developed. This is especially important in the context of modern business, which combines economic, social and environmental aspects.

The aim of research was to investigate corporate social responsibility of enterprises with a focus on customer commitment and to develop a mechanism for implementing a system of corporate social responsibility of enterprises based on certain principles of sustainable development.

To achieve this aim, the following objectives were set:

- to determine the requirements and expectations of society from corporate social responsibility of business;
- to consider the dependence of business efficiency and social development on the introduction of a social responsibility system;
- to study the principles of sustainable development of enterprises and CSR;
- to analyze the degree of CSR implementation in the activities of foreign companies;
- to develop a mechanism for implementing a system of social responsibility of enterprises.

2. Materials and Methods

The object of research is the processes of formation and implementation of corporate social responsibility at enterprises in the context of ensuring their sustainable development. Both general scientific and special research methods were used in the study. Research methods include analysis of literature sources, study of statistical data on the degree of CSR implementation in the activities of foreign companies, as well as empirical methods. Based on the method of morphological analysis, the main structural elements (morphological features) of the concept of social responsibility were identified.

The theoretical level of the study was associated with a more detailed analysis of the facts that influence the relationship between the parameters of sustainable development of enterprises and CSR, with the cognition and formulation of the content of the parameters of sustainable development and CSR. Based on the abstract and logical method, the main issues on which Ukrainian and foreign scholars have studied CSR issues in the context of sustainable development of enterprises have been identified. An important aspect of the scientific method is the requirement of objectivity, which excludes subjective interpretation of the results; no statements should be taken on faith, even if they come from reputable scientists. To ensure the objectivity of approaches to CSR research with a focus on sustainable development, the research literature of Ukrainian and foreign scholars was analyzed. This allowed to obtain additional confirmation of the relevance of the topic and critically assess the degree of scientific results of previous studies.

The method of analysis and synthesis was used to study and identify internal trends and opportunities for the formation of a CSR system. In addition, a comparative analysis of the experience of successful companies that integrate CSR principles into the sustainable development of enterprises was used. The comparison method was used to study the comparison of indicators characterizing the dynamics of commitment of customers, investors and employees to companies that implement CSR in their activities (according to statistical studies [10–12]).

To determine the principles of sustainable development of enterprises, a systematic approach was applied, which includes general scientific methods that are universal in nature, namely: trend analysis, induction and deduction, analysis, synthesis, methods of generalization and systematization. The system of principles has a general, universal character, is not strictly regulated, cannot be formalized and mathematized [13].

The mechanism for implementing the social responsibility system at the enterprise was formed using the method of cognition “synthesis” as a method of studying an object in its integrity, in a single mutual relationship of its parts [1]. In the process of scientific research, synthesis was related to analysis, as it made it possible to combine the parts of the mechanism, establish their connection and form the structure of the mechanism as a whole. Along with analysis and synthesis, the method of abstraction in the system of logical thinking was also used [14, 15].

To establish the relationship between the number of companies that adhere to the principles of CSR and the percentage of consumers who choose products because of CSR, it is possible to use correlation analysis, a method of studying the interdependence of features in an empirical population [16]. The “correlation” function of the Excel spreadsheet processor was used (a relationship between random variables in which a change in one characteristic causes a change in the mathematical expectation of another characteristic), and the closeness of the relationship between the studied parameters was determined to be 0.986. Given that the correlation coefficient takes a value in the interval $[-1; 1]$, the obtained value indicates a close direct linear correlation between the factor and the resultant traits. Graphical methods were used to display certain indicators, which provided clarity and greatly simplified the process of perceiving the results of the analysis. Illustrative graphs (bar charts) were used to compare the results of the analysis obtained using the Excel software and the analytical tabular tools available in it.

3. Results and Discussion

The current conditions of society's development: the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war have caused serious losses, which has led to an irreversible transformation of the characteristics of Ukraine's labor potential [17]. The factors of formation and development of labor potential have turned into threats: rising unemployment, deepening poverty, deteriorating psychological health of the population, critical state of the social sphere, environmental pollution, etc. The responsible attitude of companies towards employees, consumers, partners, and society as a whole is a powerful mechanism for partially solving social and economic problems. An active social position of business is the basis for the formation of conceptual provisions of social responsibility. However, the lack of effective tools for implementing the principles of social responsibility may lead to a decrease in social activity and business reputation. Therefore, socially responsible behavior, especially in today's environment, is a key to the prosperity of business structures, a decent standard of living and the efficient functioning of the market economy. The realization that sustainable development of enterprises requires solving the problems of forming a social society gives a new vision of the phenomenon of social responsibility as a promising management concept that takes into account the turbulence of modern society, globalization, socialization and innovation of Ukraine's development.

The establishment of international standards for sustainability disclosures is proceeding at a rapid pace, which is of great importance for both researchers and practitioners. In addition to theoretical research, global economies have adopted international standards and regulations in the field of CSR, including a number of regulatory legal acts. An example is the standards that regulate CSR, in particular: International Organization for Standardization, which is designed for businesses and organizations that want to operate in a socially responsible manner. This legal act provides guidance for those who recognize that respect for society and the environment is a critical success factor [18, 19].

Thus, social responsibility of business will be considered from the standpoint of voluntary obligations or voluntary initiatives, which it is not possible to agree with, since social responsibility consists not only of voluntary but also of mandatory components, such as compliance with applicable law, etc. The reasoning behind this statement is clearly demonstrated by the pyramid shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 2 shows a visualization of the dependence of business efficiency and social development on the implementation of the social responsibility system.

In economic theory, the definition of corporate social responsibility has a multidimensional character, but there is no single vision of the concept's content. This necessitates the analysis of scientifically based definitions and identification of the one that would best characterize the essence and meet the current realities of society development.

CSR involves voluntary actions of companies aimed at solving social and environmental problems. It covers such areas as ethical management, environmental responsibility, ensuring decent working conditions, social partnership and philanthropy [20]. Based on the analysis of literature, it is possible to identify the main models of CSR, namely: the philanthropic model (voluntary support of social projects, charity); the integrated model (incorporation of social responsibility principles into business strategy); the regulatory model (compliance with national and international standards and norms). All of these models are based on the basic principles of economic agents' responsibility to society, but differ in the sources of funding and levels of responsibility.

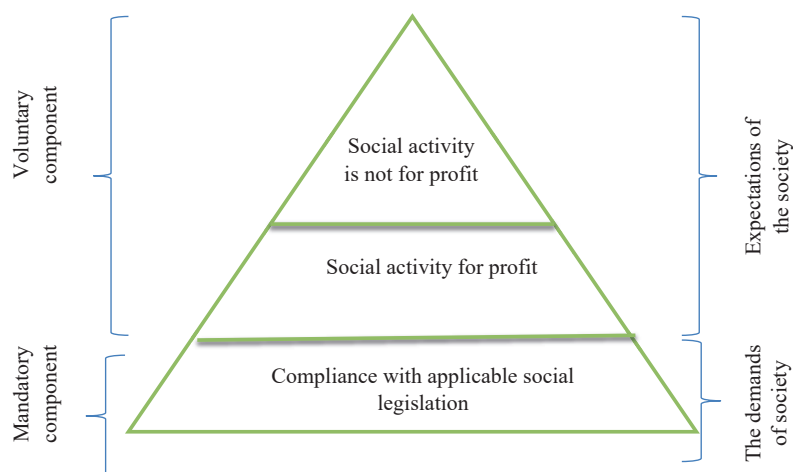


Fig. 1. Requirements and expectations of society from corporate social responsibility of business

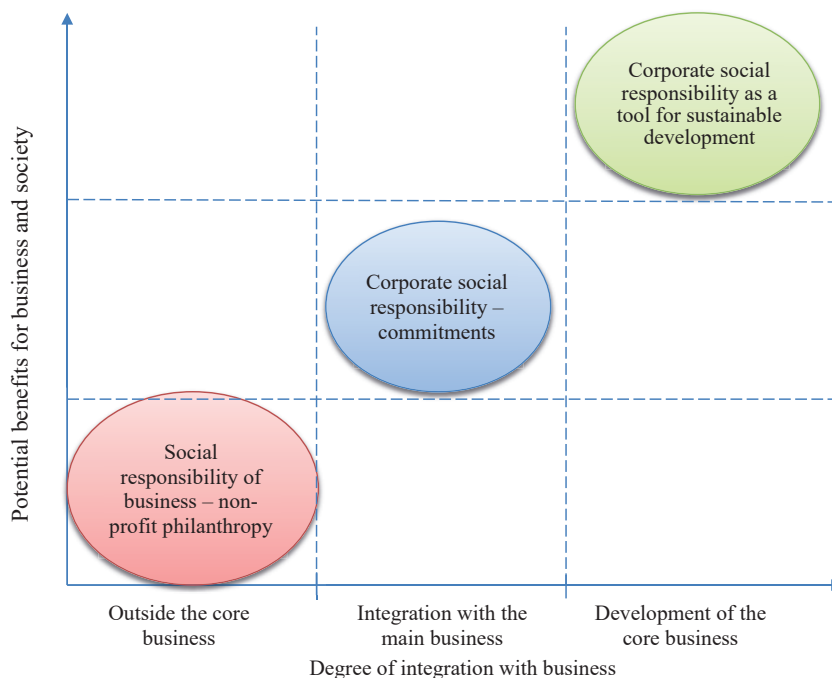


Fig. 2. Dependence of business efficiency and development of society on the introduction of a social responsibility system

To achieve a long-term social and economic effect, the implementation of the concept of corporate social responsibility of enterprises should be based on the principles of sustainable development. A summary of the content and essence of the basic principles of sustainable development is grouped in Table 1.

Table 1

Principles of sustainable development

Principles of sustainable development	Essence of the principle	Role of scientists in formulating the basic principles
Ecological balance	conservation of natural resources; rational use of water, energy, forests and other natural resources; prevention of ecosystem depletion and climate change	development of technologies to reduce the negative impact of human activity on the environment
Economic sustainability	long-term benefit, not short-term profit; implementation of a green economy; implementation of a circular economy; application of innovative technologies without harming the environment	development of environmentally friendly technologies and cost-effective resource management models
Social justice	equal access to resources; socio-economic education; effective health care; access to goods regardless of social or economic status	creating the foundations for building a just society; researching the problems of poverty and inequality and developing strategies to overcome them

Summarizing the role of science in creating a socially responsible business for sustainable development of the economy and society, it should be noted that scientists should conduct research in the field of renewable energy, resource conservation, environmentally friendly technologies and social innovations, popularize scientific knowledge, explaining to society the importance of sustainable development and ways to achieve it, implement the principles of sustainable development in their own practice, reducing their own environmental footprint and maintaining ethical standards [21].

Among the global multinationals that actively implement CSR and adhere to the principles of sustainable development are Coca-Cola (implementing water conservation and packaging recycling programs), Tesla (promoting renewable energy through the production of electric vehicles), Unilever (implementing programs to reduce its carbon footprint and responsibly source raw materials). In these companies, there is a close connection between CSR and sustainable development, which is considered by three traditional parameters, namely economic, social, and environmental (Table 2).

To understand the CSR phenomenon, it should be considered at all socio-economic levels: personal, corporate, and government.

Despite the obstacles, socially responsible business has a number of advantages, such as strengthening reputation, increasing customer loyalty, and attracting investment. It also contributes to solving global

problems such as climate change, poverty, and inequality. The prospects for CSR development are associated with the growth of public awareness and the expansion of international standards such as ISO 26000 [4].

A statistical study [6] convincingly proved that CSR in the context of sustainable development plays a significant role in the commitment of investors, consumers and employees to companies that implement it. According to the researcher, 77% of consumers are motivated to buy from companies that strive to make the world a better place, while 73% of investors say that efforts to improve the environment and society contribute to their investment decisions.

41% of investors are making significant efforts to implement corporate social responsibility practices, and 55% of consumers believe that it is important for companies to take a stand on key social, environmental and political issues.

95% of employees believe that business should benefit all stakeholders, not just shareholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and the communities in which they operate. The advantages and disadvantages of implementing a CSR system in the activities of enterprises can also be analyzed on the basis of on the basis of Statista statistics and studies [4], which conducted surveys on investments, social programs, standardization, and consumer commitment to companies that adhere to CSR principles (Table 3).

Table 2

Linkage between the parameters of sustainable development of enterprises and CSR

Sustainable development parameters	Content of sustainability parameters
Economy	Sustainable development contributes to the long-term competitiveness of enterprises. CSR helps to improve the company's image, attract investment, and build trust among consumers and partners
Society	One of the key aspects of sustainable development is ensuring decent working conditions, developing local communities, and supporting educational initiatives. CSR includes measures such as ethical working conditions, investing in employee welfare, charity and support for social projects
Environment	Sustainable development requires the rational use of resources and minimization of negative environmental impact. CSR is implemented through environmental initiatives: switching to renewable energy sources, reducing CO ₂ emissions, and environmentally friendly waste disposal

Table 3

The degree of CSR implementation in the activities of foreign companies

No.	Indicator	2021	2022	2023
1	Number of companies that include CSR in their strategy (%)	55%	70%	74%
2	Investments in social programs (USD billion)	18	25	31
3	Companies reporting according to ESG* standards (%)	40%	60%	72%
4	Percentage of consumers who choose products because of CSR (%)	65%	72%	76%

Note: developed by the author on the basis of studies [4, 16]

To build a mathematical model based on the data in Table 3, the linear regression method was used. Since it was considered a time series of three years (2021, 2022, 2023) and the corresponding percentage values of the indicators, a linear dependence model was chosen.

Notation: The variable x corresponds to time in years (where $x = 0$ for 2021, $x = 1$ for 2022, $x = 2$ for 2023), and $y(x)$ is the percentage value of the corresponding indicator.

The linear regression model was as follows

$$y = ax + b.$$

The least squares method was used to calculate the coefficients a and b . The input data are shown below:

$$\sum x = 3,$$

$$\sum y = 199,$$

$$\sum x^2 = 5,$$

$$\sum xy = 218.$$

The coefficients a and b were calculated using the following formulas:

$$a = \frac{n \sum xy - \sum x \cdot \sum y}{n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2}, \quad (1)$$

$$b = \frac{\sum y - a \sum x}{n}. \quad (2)$$

For each of the three indicators, it is possible to calculate the coefficients a and b according to Table 1 and determined the regression equation:

1. *Number of companies that include CSR in their strategy*

$$y_1(x) = 9.5 \cdot x + 56.83.$$

2. *Companies reporting on ESG standards*

$$y_2(x) = 16 \cdot x + 41.33.$$

3. *Percentage of consumers who choose products because of CSR*

$$y_3(x) = 5.5 \cdot x + 65.5.$$

The model allows forecasting future values, for example, for 2024 ($x = 3$), then the forecast for 2024 ($x = 3$) for all three indicators will be as follows

$$y_1(3) = 85.33\%; y_2(3) = 89.33\%; y_3(3) = 82.0\%.$$

Thus, a linear model was built to describe the change in socially responsible business practices and consumer behavior over time.

The graph (Fig. 3) illustrates the forecast of the dynamics of the three CSR indicators for the period of 2021–2024 based on the built models.

Based on the built linear models, there is a steady growth of three key CSR indicators in business practices. The forecast for 2024 shows that more than 85% of companies will include CSR in their strategy, which confirms the shift in companies' focus towards long-term social responsibility.

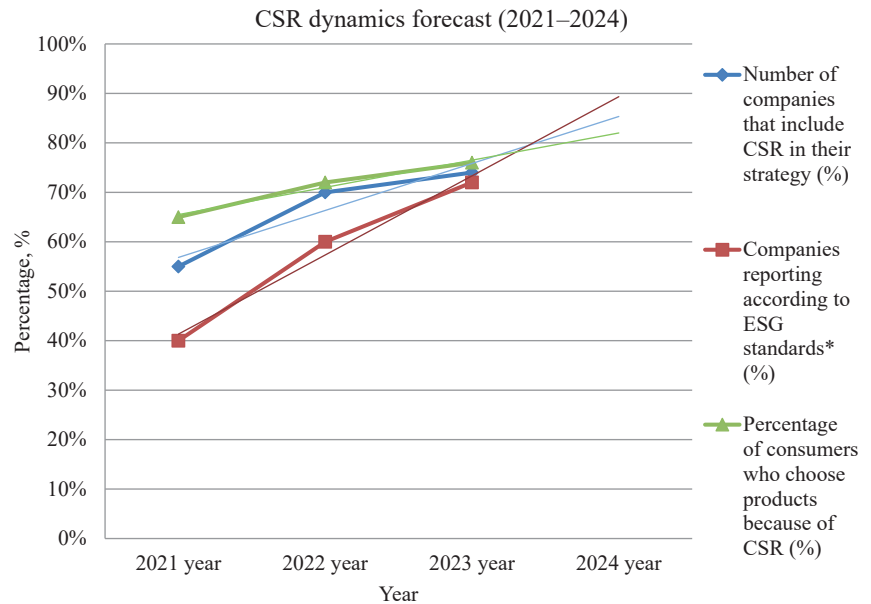


Fig. 3. Forecast of CSR indicators dynamics for 2021–2024

Given that attracting customers and making a profit is the main goal of business, it is possible to assess the correlation between customer loyalty and the presence of CSR implementation in companies' activities. There is a need to specify the stages and determine the mechanism of implementation of the social responsibility system at the enterprise, which is shown in Fig. 4.

The implementation of the social responsibility management mechanism can be carried out through the HR department. To do this, it is necessary to identify and appoint persons responsible for the implementation of programs and projects for the implementation of the social responsibility system, who will be responsible for the design, development, management of programs and personnel.

It should be noted that the social responsibility system at the enterprise can be implemented through measures that either do not require or have insignificant financial investments [22]. Such measures include the development of a social responsibility strategy that provides for the implementation of programs and projects of the social responsibility system and the timeframe for their implementation.

Approval of the strategy should be coordinated with measures to adapt employees to new working conditions, create a transparent information and communication environment (regular meetings of employees to discuss current issues and key issues to improve communication).

The adaptation program should provide certain benefits for employees to positively perceive the additional workload on labor processes, namely flexible work schedules, additional free time, delegation of tasks and powers, motivation through involvement in management (implementation of participatory management principles) [23].

The practical significance of the results lies in the possibility of using the proposed mechanism by companies in various industries. In particular, according to the results of the survey of 112 middle managers, 72% noted the positive impact of CSR initiatives on the company's reputation, and 58% – on the level of customer loyalty. In addition, companies that systematically implement CSR practices have demonstrated 12–18% higher growth dynamics of social capital compared to competitors that do not implement such approaches [10].

Thus, companies that implement a CSR system have an opportunity for long-term sustainable development, the parameters of which are the growth of economic, social and environmental sustainability indicators.

Economic sustainability involves increasing competitiveness, attracting investments, and optimizing costs in the long run. Social sustainability improves the company's reputation and image, increases employee motivation and productivity, and reduces staff turnover.

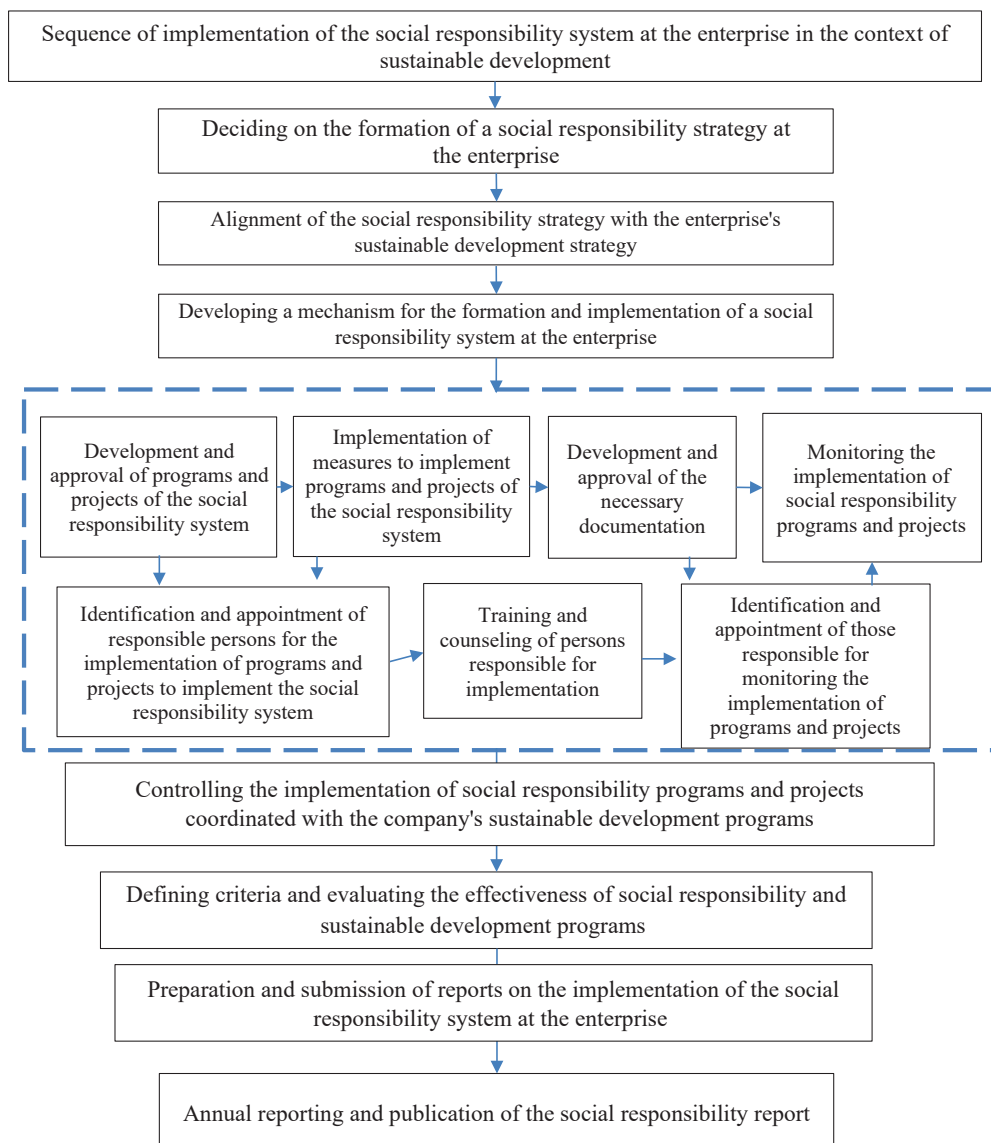


Fig. 4. Mechanism of implementation of the social responsibility system at the enterprise

Environmental sustainability leads to rational use of resources, reduction of harmful environmental impact, introduction of environmental technologies, innovative approaches (green energy, eco-friendly materials), and helps to preserve natural resources. Among the limitations of this research are the limited sample of respondents, which may affect the representativeness of the results, as well as the focus on the domestic Ukrainian context without taking into account global practices. Promising areas for further research include an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of CSR initiatives in various sectors of the economy, studying the impact of crisis conditions (including martial law) on social responsibility of business, and adapting international CSR standards to the specifics of the national regulatory field.

Further research should be focused on analyzing the implementation of CSR principles during the war, international cooperation and adaptation of global standards to Ukrainian conditions. In general, the study proved that CSR is not only a moral duty of business, but also a strategic tool for the long-term development of companies and society.

4. Conclusions

In the current context of global changes, environmental threats and socio-economic crises, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is

a tool for ensuring sustainable development of enterprises. The study allows to formulate the main conclusions. The requirements and expectations of society from corporate social responsibility of business are determined. It is established that society expects companies to be transparent, adhere to ethical principles, protect the environment and participate in solving socially important problems. In times of war, the role of CSR is especially important, in particular in supporting social unity and vulnerable groups.

The article considers the dependence of business efficiency and social development on the introduction of a social responsibility system. The positive impact of CSR on the image of companies, the level of customer loyalty and social capital is proved. According to the results of the survey, 72% of managers confirmed the growth of reputational advantages, and 58% – the increase in customer loyalty.

The principles of sustainable development of enterprises and CSR are studied. It is established that the implementation of the principles of sustainable development is possible through a balanced combination of economic, environmental and social components of CSR. The developed mechanism involves stages, employee participation and the creation of an information and communication environment.

The degree of CSR implementation in the activities of foreign companies is analyzed. A review of international practices has shown that there are direct links between CSR and company sustainability. Foreign studies point to the role of digital technologies, press freedom and corporate governance in enhancing the effectiveness of CSR.

The study substantiates the mechanism of CSR implementation, which includes: identification of those responsible for social initiatives, development and implementation of corporate programs, adaptation of employees to changes, support of social and environmental actions. The main problems of CSR implementation include high costs, difficulty in reconciling the interests of stakeholders and difficulties in evaluating efficiency. The author outlines key challenges and enablers of implementation, such as increased regulation, growing consumer awareness, and innovation.

In general, the regression model has confirmed the upward trend in the integration of CSR into business practices. By 2024, it is expected that 85% of companies will integrate CSR into their strategies, and 89% will report according to ESG standards. Further research should focus on analyzing sectoral and regional differences in CSR implementation.

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Conflict of interest

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Data availability

Manuscript has no associated data.

Use of artificial intelligence

The authors confirm that they did not use artificial intelligence technologies when creating the current work.

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