

Psychological aspects of sustainable development of society

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Abstract: The aim was to identify psychological factors that supported the resilience of Ukrainian society under martial law, as well as to reveal the potential of sustainable development as an adaptive resource. The methodology included a sociopsychological survey, a content analysis of the Ukrainian media space and a comparative analysis of sustainable development practices in Poland, Germany, and Sweden. The main results were that 60% of respondents rated the psychological resilience at 4-5 points, 75% considered participation in social initiatives important or very important, and 80% agreed with the relevance of sustainable development in wartime. 62% of respondents changed the attitude towards environmental issues, and 66% recognised the feasibility of integrating European resilience support practices into the Ukrainian context. The most prioritised aspect of sustainable development was identified as social (45%). Content analysis confirmed the dominance of psychological support topics (in 22 materials) and civic mobilisation (in 28), with a clear presence of grassroots initiatives and effective communication between government and the public. The results obtained testified to the high mobilisation readiness of society, the presence of internal adaptation reserves, the growth of civic responsibility and the strengthening of environmental awareness. Sustainable development, even in wartime, was perceived not only as a theoretical model but also as a practical tool of survival and recovery. The study consisted in forming a basis for adapting European models of sustainable development to the Ukrainian context. It was proposed to implement digital psychological support services (as in Sweden), municipal volunteering programmes (as in Poland), and integrative educational initiatives (from the German experience). The findings may inform the development of state and local post-war reconstruction strategies, social cohesion programmes, and information policy.

Keywords: Environmental awareness; social responsibility; educational projects; refugee support; psychological security

1 Introduction

The sustainable development of society encompassed not only economic and environmental factors but also psychological foundations that determined people's behaviour, the level of responsibility, motivation for resource conservation and readiness for collective interaction. It was the inner state of the individual, the value orientations, emotional resilience and adaptability that played a key role in shaping harmonious social relations and environmentally conscious behaviour. Understanding the psychological mechanisms underlying individuals' decisions and actions within the community contributed to the creation of conditions for achieving balanced development that took into account the interests of society.

Within scientific studies devoted to the sustainable development of society, psychological aspects that determined the level of adaptation, security and inner resilience of the individual to transformations of the social environment occupied an important place. For example, Corso (2022) emphasised the need to create a safe psychological environment as a prerequisite for the harmonious development of the individual. In the study, the authors highlighted that, in the context of ensuring psychological security under conditions of sustainable development of society, it was important to consider the priorities and specificities of its provision. The research underlined the need for a comprehensive approach to creating a safe psychological environment that promoted the harmonious development of the individual during social transformations. Another important aspect of society's psychological adaptation to change was presented in the work of Zelinska et al. (2022), who examined the impact of globalisation changes on staff competitiveness. Successful enterprise performance in the context of globalisation largely depends on employees' psychological readiness for change. The researchers pointed out that staff competitiveness in conditions of globalisation was closely linked to the psychological readiness for change. The authors stressed the need to adapt enterprise personnel policies to contemporary challenges, including psychological support for employees in a dynamic environment.

The psychological dimension of innovation activity in crisis situations was revealed in the study by Berxolli et al. (2023), which concerned the agricultural sector of Ukraine. Technological innovations not only contribute to economic stability but also function as a mechanism of psychological support for the population. As emphasised in the work, innovations in the agricultural sector could act not only as a tool for economic survival but also as a means of psychological stabilisation of the rural population in crisis situations, particularly during wartime. In the field of services, especially tourism, Shchokin et al. (2023) studied the emotional engagement of clients through digital technologies. The authors found that interactive formats of interaction contributed to forming a positive psychological experience and trust in the brand. Interactive technologies in tourism are regarded as a significant factor in fostering consumers' emotional engagement. This study demonstrated how digital tools could influence the psychological perception of services, creating a new format of communication with the client.

In a broader socio-economic context, Zhuang et al. (2021) analysed the impact of the transition to a circular economy on society's psychological orientations. The researchers argued that achieving the goals of sustainable development was impossible without a change in citizens' mindset. The researchers noted that the transition to a circular economy was accompanied by a transformation of social and psychological orientations. The authors emphasised that sustainable development was impossible without a change in thinking and values, both in society at large and at the level of individuals. Hariram et al. (2023) proposed an integrated model of sustainalism, which combined social, economic and environmental components of sustainable development. Particular attention in the model was paid to social cohesion and psychological well-being as the basis for a long-term balance between development and stability. Sustainable development requires not only technological or economic transformations but also the psychological readiness of society to embrace new values and behavioural orientations. Bulut and Çağlar (2025) examined the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the psychological health of school administrators, focusing on virus-related phobia, work-family conflicts, and overall life satisfaction. The study demonstrated that effective management in crisis required maintaining the psychological balance of administrative staff. Sustainable

management in the field of education cannot be achieved without taking into account the influence of emotional burnout, anxiety, and conflicts between life roles.

Prandelli et al. (2025) analysed the role of social psychology in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The researchers emphasised the importance of social norms, collective identity, empathy and prosocial behaviour as drivers of sustainable practices. The authors argued that psychological science could and should play a key role in shaping sustainable behavioural models, particularly through educational programmes, media influences and social campaigns. The researchers claimed that without understanding the motivational structure of the individual, sustainable development would remain a declarative slogan. Alam (2022) studied the potential of sustainable education and positive psychology interventions in the school environment as a means of achieving sustainable happiness and well-being. In the work, the author emphasised that modern pedagogy should integrate approaches aimed not only at knowledge development but also at the emotional well-being of learners. The researcher highlighted that positive psychology practices, namely the development of empathy, gratitude and optimism, contributed to forming internal resilience, motivation and social responsibility. Thanks to this, the educational environment became a source of psychological stability, which was an important component of sustainable development of society. Di Fabio (2021) considered sustainable development through the prism of the psychology of sustainability, stressing the need for a transdisciplinary approach to understanding the relationship between personal well-being and social change. The author focused on the importance of developing individuals' internal resources, such as reflexivity, purposefulness, emotional competence and a sense of responsibility, which ensured psychological readiness to act in the direction of sustainability. The researcher believed that a sustainable society was impossible without the internal transformation of individuals, which required the inclusion of psychological knowledge in sustainable development strategies.

Despite researchers' considerable attention to the psychological factors of sustainable development, certain gaps remained in scientific discourse. In particular, the role of intercultural differences in shaping psychological readiness for a sustainable lifestyle was insufficiently addressed, as was the influence of the digital environment on the ecological and social awareness of different age groups. The aim of the study was to examine the sociopsychological preconditions for the resilience of Ukrainian society under martial law and to outline opportunities for applying the principles of sustainable development as a factor of adaptation and recovery. The objectives of the study were to identify the level of psychological resilience, civic activity and environmental awareness among the population of Ukraine during wartime, to analyse the public discourse of sustainable development in the Ukrainian information environment through media content analysis, and to conduct a comparative analysis of sociopsychological sustainable development practices in EU countries in order to identify adapted solutions for the Ukrainian context.

2 Materials and methods

The research was conducted from January 2024 to March 2025 and covered three interrelated methods, namely a sociopsychological survey, content analysis of public discourse and comparative analysis of European experience. The sociopsychological survey was carried out from 15 January to 15 February 2024 using the online platform Google Forms. The survey consisted of 18 questions of different types: open and closed (Appendix A). The sample comprised 400 respondents aged between 18 and 60. Residents of Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, Dnipro and Odesa regions, as well as internally displaced persons (IDPs) who had temporarily stayed in Poland, Germany or the Czech Republic since 2022, were involved in participation. The

sample included 230 women and 170 men. The inclusion criteria were Ukrainian citizenship, being on the territory of Ukraine during martial law or experience of temporary residence in EU countries, basic awareness of social or environmental initiatives, and access to the Internet. The educational level of respondents ranged from complete secondary to higher education. Closed questions provided for the choice of one or several answer options. Some questions were based on a five-point Likert scale (1 – strongly disagree, 5 – strongly agree) (Qualtrics, 2025). During the research, the provisions of the Code of Ethics of the American Sociological Association (1997) were observed.

The content analysis was carried out in the period from 1 September 2024 to 1 March 2025 and covered materials that had been found and published on official government websites (Official Website of the President of Ukraine, 2025; Government Portal, 2025), as well as on Telegram channels (AFU, European Pravda, Humanitarian Aid) and Facebook pages. The analysis covered mentions of the topics of sustainable development, psychological support, social cohesion, initiatives to support the civilian population, and examples of community mobilisation. A qualitative-categorical analysis with manual coding of key topics and identification of semantic blocks was applied.

The comparative analysis included a review of sociopsychological practices of sustainable development in Poland, Germany and Sweden, which had been chosen as examples of countries where a high level of involvement of state and public institutions in supporting refugees, developing civic activity and promoting a sustainable lifestyle was observed. The source base of the comparative analysis comprised works by Braun et al. (2021), Dahlberg et al. (2022), Levinson (2022) and Frydman (2022). The infrastructure of psychological support for refugees, models of integration into communities, involvement in local eco- and educational projects, and the formation of responsible citizenship were studied. The possibilities of adapting the mentioned approaches to the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine were assessed. The final stage was the identification of practical recommendations for state and public structures in Ukraine.

3 Results

3.1 Assessment of the level of psychological resilience, civic activity and environmental awareness among the population of Ukraine in the conditions of war

The concept of sustainable development has acquired particular relevance, as it covers not only environmental and economic aspects, but also social and psychological factors that determine the ability of society to adapt to changes and ensure long-term well-being. In the conditions of war, as has been observed in Ukraine since 2022, issues of psychological resilience and social cohesion become key to ensuring sustainable development. The term “sustainable development” was first introduced in 1987 in the report of the Brundtland Commission of the United Nations (UN), where it was defined as development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet the own needs (Official Website of the European Union, 2025). Over time, this concept has expanded, including not only economic and environmental aspects but also social and psychological factors (Zhou et al., 2020). The psychology of sustainable development studies how individual and collective psychological processes influence society’s ability to achieve sustainability (Hrinchenko et al., 2023; Karasheva et al., 2023). In particular, it examines how attitudes, motivations, emotions and behavioural patterns either promote or hinder the achievement of sustainable development goals. Psychological resilience is defined as the ability of an individual or community to adapt to stressful situations while maintaining mental health and functionality.

In the context of war in Ukraine, this resilience is manifested in the ability of citizens to maintain optimism, support social connections and participate in volunteer and civic initiatives.

Social cohesion, or the ability of society to act collectively to achieve common goals, is critically important in wartime (Kostruba and Kostruba, 2024; Dodonova, 2024). In Ukraine, active mobilisation of civil society has been observed, manifested in the creation of volunteer organisations, initiatives to support vulnerable groups of the population, and participation in environmental projects. These actions not only help to address urgent problems but also strengthen social ties, increase trust between citizens and the state, and form the basis for sustainable development in the post-war period (Luetz et al., 2020). War causes significant psychological stress on the population, manifested in increasing levels of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. To ensure sustainable development, it is important to provide timely psychological support and develop mental health systems. In Ukraine, various initiatives to provide psychological assistance are being implemented, particularly through digital platforms, which allow for reaching a wide audience and ensuring access to services even in remote regions. In the context of European integration, Ukraine is actively adopting the experience of European countries in the field of sustainable development, particularly regarding environmental policy, social protection and mental health support. The integration of these practices contributes to improving the effectiveness of national programmes and ensures compliance with European standards. In particular, the introduction of programmes on energy efficiency, waste management and support for vulnerable population groups are important steps towards sustainable development. The psychological aspects of sustainable development play a key role in ensuring the long-term well-being of society, especially in conditions of war (Zhao et al., 2025; Larina, 2024). Psychological resilience, social cohesion, access to mental health care and the integration of European practices are critically important for overcoming challenges and building a sustainable future for Ukraine. To identify the level of psychological resilience of the population, readiness to participate in sustainable development initiatives, as well as to study changes in social behaviour under the influence of war, a survey was conducted, the results of which are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of the sociopsychological survey

No.	Question	Results (%)	Question type
1.	How do you assess your level of psychological resilience during the war?	1 – 5%, 2 – 10%, 3 – 25%, 4 – 35%, 5 – 25%	Likert scale (1-5)
2.	How important is it for you to take part in social initiatives aimed at helping others?	1 – 3%, 2 – 7%, 3 – 15%, 4 – 40%, 5 – 35%	Likert scale (1-5)
3.	Do you consider sustainable development relevant for Ukraine during the war?	1 – 2%, 2 – 5%, 3 – 13%, 4 – 30%, 5 – 50%	Likert scale (1-5)
4.	Has your attitude to environmental issues changed since the beginning of the war?	Yes – 62%, No – 28%, Less important – 10%	Multiple choice

5.	Which aspect of sustainable development is the most priority for you?	Environmental – 30%, Social – 45%, Economic – 15%, Difficult to answer – 10%	Multiple choice
6.	Do you have experience of participation in community, environmental or volunteer projects?	Yes – 38%, No – 42%, Planning – 20%	Multiple choice
7.	How much do you trust government programmes in the field of sustainable development?	1 – 15%, 2 – 20%, 3 – 30%, 4 – 25%, 5 – 10%	Likert scale (1-5)
8.	Has your perception of responsibility towards society changed since the beginning of the war?	Yes – 48%, No – 22%, Partially – 30%	Multiple choice
9.	Do you observe in your environment a need for increased psychological support?	1 – 4%, 2 – 6%, 3 – 20%, 4 – 40%, 5 – 30%	Likert scale (1-5)
10.	If you stayed in EU countries, which initiatives there became for you an example of sustainable development?	Most common answers: Language courses, psychological support centres, participation in volunteering, eco-initiatives, integration programmes in schools	Open-ended
11.	Do you consider it appropriate to integrate European resilience support practices into the Ukrainian context?	Yes – 66%, No – 8%, Partially – 26%	Multiple choice
12.	What changes in your own behaviour do you associate with striving for sustainable development?	Most common answers: Waste sorting, saving resources, participation in community initiatives, change of consumer habits	Open-ended
13.	Do you support initiatives for recycling, energy efficiency, assistance to vulnerable groups?	Yes – 28%, Support but do not participate – 52%, No – 20%	Multiple choice
14.	Have you received psychological help since the	Specialists – 21%, Volunteers – 14%, Did not receive – 65%	Multiple choice

	beginning of the war? If yes, in what form?		
15.	Which sources of information on sustainable development are the most reliable for you?	Official websites – 32%, Social networks – 25%, Television – 10%, NGOs – 20%, Friends/acquaintances – 13%	Multiple choice
16.	How do you implement responsible environmental behaviour in everyday life?	Most common answers: Refusal of plastic, participation in community clean-ups, use of reusable items, energy saving, cycling	Open-ended
17.	How clear is the meaning of the concept “sustainable development” to you?	1 – 6%, 2 – 12%, 3 – 22%, 4 – 38%, 5 – 22%	Likert scale (1-5)
18.	In your opinion, what should be the priorities for Ukraine’s recovery after the war in the field of sustainable development?	Most common answers: Environmental restoration, social integration, accessible education, support for vulnerable groups, energy efficiency, decentralisation	Open-ended

Source: compiled by the authors.

The results of the sociopsychological survey indicate a relatively high level of psychological resilience of the population during the war: 60% of respondents assessed the resilience at the level of 4 and 5 points. A significant share of respondents (75%) consider participation in social initiatives aimed at helping others to be important. The majority (80%) also recognise the relevance of sustainable development in wartime, which indicates an understanding of the importance of long-term strategies even in a crisis period. Attitudes towards environmental issues changed in 62% of respondents, and the most important aspect of sustainable development was considered by respondents to be the social one (45%), while 30% chose environmental and only 15% economic. At the same time, 38% of respondents had experience of participating in civic or volunteer initiatives, while another 20% plan to join. Trust in government programmes in the field of sustainable development was distributed unevenly: only 35% rated it at 4 and 5 points. The perception of responsibility to society changed in 48% of respondents, and 70% of respondents observed the need for psychological support in the environment (40% at level 4, 30% at level 5). The majority (66%) consider it appropriate to integrate European resilience support practices into the Ukrainian context, and among the own behavioural changes towards sustainable development, respondents most often mentioned waste sorting, changes in consumer habits and resource saving. It is also worth noting that only 35% of respondents received psychological help (21% from specialists, 14% from volunteers), while the majority (65%) did not have such support. Thus, the collected data confirm that even in conditions of military conflict, Ukrainian society maintains high social activity, openness to European practices and a desire for sustainable development as the basis of long-term resilience.

3.2 Analysis of the public discourse of sustainable development in the Ukrainian information environment through media content analysis

Content analysis was carried out in order to study how the key aspects of sustainable development are covered in the public information space of Ukraine and the Ukrainian diaspora in Europe under martial law. The method of qualitative-categorical analysis was applied with manual coding of texts by categories, namely psychological support (references to programmes, advice, interviews with psychologists); social mobilisation (examples of self-organisation, volunteering, grassroots initiatives); sustainable development (environmental, social, economic initiatives, integration of European practices); support of the civilian population (humanitarian aid, adaptation programmes, social services); communication between the state and civil society (joint projects, partnerships, appeals of opinion leaders). The analysis showed that the most frequently mentioned topics were psychological support (in 22 materials) and examples of social mobilisation (in 28 materials). A significant number of publications covered volunteering initiatives, local environmental projects, support for internally displaced persons (IDPs), integration of European sustainable development practices (in 30 cases German, Polish and Czech examples were mentioned). Particular attention was paid to the rhetoric of official sources. In particular, on the Official Website of the President of Ukraine (2025), the emphasis was on long-term reconstruction, investment in education, energy efficiency and European integration. In Telegram channels, messages about volunteering initiatives, micro-grants for communities, and psycho-emotional support predominated. Facebook pages of non-governmental organisations focused on specific local actions – training in eco-activism, psychological camps for children, assistance programmes for animals and internally displaced persons. Table 2, developed within the framework of the study, summarises the results of the content analysis across the three platforms, taking into account dominant topics, features of content, sources, and commonalities and differences between the platforms.

Table 2: Comparative characteristics of content analysis by platforms

Platform	Dominant topics	Content analysis	Commonalities	Differences
Official websites of government bodies	Sustainable development (European integration, energy efficiency); Communication between state and society	Analytical articles and strategic documents; official addresses with emphasis on long-term reconstruction, investment in education and infrastructure; quotes of opinion leaders, plans of national programmes	Narrative of positive changes, calls for resource consolidation	High level of formalisation, detailed strategy, minimum messages about micro-initiatives
Telegram channels	Social mobilisation (volunteering initiatives, micro-grants); Psychological support	Operational messages about ongoing volunteering actions and needs; instructions and contacts of psychologists; quick announcements of micro-grants, interactive audience polls;	Calls to action, coverage of general topics (volunteering, support)	Speed of response, pragmatic tone, focus on contacts and useful links,

		infographics with key figures and links to resources		minimum analytics
Facebook pages of NGOs	Support of the civilian population (training, camps, assistance to animals); Social cohesion	Reports from eco- and psychological events; photo reports, video interviews with participants; description of local projects, feedback from volunteers; publications with details of organisation and results (number of beneficiaries, etc.)	Visual elements (photos, videos), calls for volunteering	Detailing of local events, human stories, emotional component, less strategic context

Source: compiled by the authors.

The obtained results made it possible to determine that the media space actively contributes to shaping public opinion regarding the importance of sustainable development as a resource of resilience and adaptation in crisis conditions. In addition, high involvement of civil society in the processes of supporting psychological well-being, environmental literacy and social cohesion was recorded. Content space analysis showed a clear division of functions and formats of material presentation depending on the platform. On official websites of government bodies, the main focus was on strategic sustainable development initiatives, with emphasis placed on long-term planning, investment in education and energy efficiency, as well as on the integration of European practices. This format contributed to the formulation of national goals and communication between the authorities and society, but practical local initiatives and direct stories of participants were hardly covered in it. Instead, Telegram channels proved to be the most effective tool for quick information about volunteering actions, community needs and psychological support. Messages contained clear contacts, instructions, and prompt announcements of micro-grants, which ensured immediate mobilisation of the audience and involvement in specific actions. The format of short texts with infographics and interactive elements stimulated active participation of subscribers and created an atmosphere of immediate response to the challenges of wartime (Streimikiene et al., 2021; Mayis et al., 2021).

Facebook pages of non-governmental organisations became a platform for detailed coverage of local projects and human stories. Photo reports, video, and text reports from eco-activism training and psychological camps, stories about assistance to animals and IDPs demonstrated the practical results and emotional impact of the initiatives. Through participants' feedback and materials describing the number of beneficiaries, these publications contributed to strengthening social cohesion and created a sense of direct inclusion of everyone in the process of supporting affected communities. Despite different levels of formalisation and tone, all three platforms were united by a positive narrative line and calls for consolidation of resources to address urgent issues of sustainable development and support for the civilian population. Official content revealed global strategies, Facebook posts demonstrated local achievements, and Telegram channels provided operational coordination. Such complementarity confirmed that to reach a wide audience and achieve practical effect, it is necessary to use each of these formats and synchronise messages between the platforms. In general, qualitative-categorical

analysis demonstrated that the combination of strategic vision (official websites), emotional engagement (Facebook) and operational mobilisation (Telegram) creates an effective communication space capable of ensuring a comprehensive approach to the coverage and implementation of sustainable development initiatives under martial law. Such a multilevel format of information coverage contributes not only to informing but also to active involvement of citizens in the support and reconstruction of Ukrainian territories.

3.3 Comparison of sociopsychological practices of sustainable development in EU countries and identification of recommendations for public authorities, educational institutions and civic initiatives

In the process of studying the sociopsychological aspects of sustainable development, particular attention was paid to the comparison of practices applied in various European countries, in terms of the effectiveness, inclusiveness, and adaptability to Ukrainian realities. The main characteristics of the sociopsychological practices of these countries were systematised in Table 3, which made it possible to identify the strengths and assess the potential for adoption for the post-war recovery of Ukraine.

Table 3: Comparative analysis of sociopsychological practices of sustainable development in Poland, Germany, and Sweden

Country	Infrastructure of psychological support for refugees	Models of integration into communities	Involvement in local eco- and educational projects	Formation of responsible citizenship	Possibilities of adaptation in Ukraine
Poland	Crisis assistance centres in large cities, support through non-governmental organisations (NGOs), e.g., Fundacja Ocalenie	Polish language courses, mentoring programmes, school integration of children	Involvement of refugees in city greening projects, school environmental campaigns	Municipal-level campaigns on compliance with rules, joint volunteer activities	High adaptability due to cultural and geographical proximity, experience of cooperation at the local level
Germany	Psychotherapeutic consultations, mobile teams of psychologists, state-guaranteed insurance	“Welcome Classes” system, integration centres, housing cooperatives	Participation in co-working spaces, urban initiatives, educational Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) platforms	Civic education programmes, support for youth self-government	Appropriate use of experience in educational integration and decentralisation in communities after conflict
Sweden	Online psychological	Mentorship programmes,	Grants for school	Strong focus on human	Possible application of

	support services, personal integration planners	integration through employment, intercultural mediators	initiatives, community participation through eco- projects	rights, training programmes on ethical volunteering	digital approaches, particularly for remote regions and youth
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Source: compiled by the authors based on Braun et al. (2021), Dahlberg et al. (2022), Levinson (2022), Frydman (2022).

The comparative analysis of sociopsychological practices of sustainable development in Poland, Germany, and Sweden made it possible to identify key strategic approaches to supporting the population in crisis situations, which may serve as a basis for forming an adapted model of sustainable development in Ukraine. Particularly valuable is the identification of the systemic combination of psychological support, social integration and involvement in civic initiatives, which is observed in all three countries, albeit implemented through different methods. The analysis demonstrated that the effectiveness of sustainable development measures largely depends on the multi-level coordination of state, municipal and civic structures, as well as on the development of horizontal connections in communities. In particular, successful examples of inclusive educational practices, mentoring programmes and civic education highlight the importance of approaches aimed at long-term integration rather than short-term assistance only. At the same time, the results of the comparison made it possible to outline those components that have high potential for implementation in the Ukrainian context: digital psychological support services (as in Sweden), municipal programmes of volunteering and eco-activism (as in Poland), as well as comprehensive educational and integration models widespread in Germany. All these elements can strengthen the effectiveness of Ukraine's post-war recovery, making it more humanitarian-oriented, socially cohesive and focused on long-term results. In general, the comparative analysis confirmed that sustainable development in the recovery period must include not only economic and environmental aspects but also a strong sociopsychological component. Successful practices of European countries should serve not as a template but as a source of innovative ideas that can be adapted to Ukrainian conditions, taking into account cultural, infrastructural and wartime realities.

In the context of prolonged martial law in Ukraine, sustainable development must acquire new meanings and forms of implementation, particularly in the sociopsychological dimension. The conducted study made it possible to formulate a number of practical recommendations of a comprehensive nature, which can be implemented by various actors – from public authorities to educational institutions and civil society. The recommendations are based on an analytical generalisation of data from the sociopsychological survey, the results of content analysis of Ukrainian media and communication platforms, as well as comparisons with effective practices of European countries, in particular Poland, Germany and Sweden. Firstly, the need for the development of comprehensive state programmes of psychological adaptation becomes urgent, which must integrate not only clinical or therapeutic approaches but also elements of non-formal education, in particular ecological education, social volunteering and participation in civic initiatives. As the survey results showed, 70% of respondents felt the need for increased psychological support, but only about a third actually received assistance. This points to a lack of systemic and accessible mechanisms of psychological support.

European experience confirms the effectiveness of combining digital support services, mobile psychological teams and civic support hubs – such a model should be adapted to Ukrainian conditions, ensuring its cultural and linguistic sensitivity. Equally important is the development

of local sustainable development platforms that would bring together the efforts of local authorities, educators, civic activists and business around common goals. Such platforms may become centres of coordination of environmental, social and educational projects. Content analysis indicates that the national media landscape tends to present sustainable development initiatives in a fragmented manner, predominantly through short-term campaigns. Successful implementation of a sustainable strategy requires long-term cross-sector partnerships and horizontal governance, which are common in EU countries. For example, in Germany municipalities act as centres for the implementation of programmes such as Green Cities (2025) or the social integration of refugees – precisely such practice may form the basis of Ukrainian models of urban or regional resilience.

Particular attention should be paid to the institutionalisation of social responsibility as a basic element of civic culture. The war demonstrated the high level of self-organisation and ability of Ukrainians to provide mutual assistance, but these actions are still not integrated into systemic state policies. On the basis of European examples, national campaigns should be launched to promote a culture of responsible citizenship – through school education, public communication, and support for local initiatives. For example, Sweden actively uses the concept of “active citizenship”, which presupposes the daily practice of responsibility in everyday life, education, communication – such a model can find organic continuation in Ukrainian realities if adapted to the context of post-war recovery. In the field of education, it is advisable to introduce the cross-cutting theme of sustainable development into curricula at all levels. This should include both content components – topics of ecology, social justice, inclusion, mental health – and formative ones – development of critical thinking, emotional intelligence, collective action. It is important that these topics are not limited to individual subjects but are integrated into an interdisciplinary approach.

As the experience of Poland shows, systemic environmental education of schoolchildren yields real results in the form of increased youth social activity, growth of volunteer initiatives. In Ukraine, such approaches can be implemented through the renewal of the State Standard of General Secondary Education and the creation of separate educational modules in higher education institutions. Another important direction must be the support of social entrepreneurship initiatives that combine economic viability with social effect. During the country’s recovery period, these models may become key to supporting vulnerable groups – veterans, IDPs, large families, persons who lost housing or employment. State policy in this area must include access to microcredit, tax incentives, simplified registration mechanisms, as well as educational programmes on entrepreneurship (Uralovich et al., 2023; Kaskov and Solovei, 2025).

In Germany and Poland, similar models were effectively used for the reintegration of refugees and persons who experienced traumatic events. Attention should also be paid to the development of media literacy of the population as a means of enhancing social resilience. In the conditions of war and post-truth, a significant part of the population is subject to disinformation, which undermines trust in institutions and reduces the mobilisation potential of communities (Abdygalym et al., 2025; Barlybayev et al., 2024). As the survey showed, official websites are trusted sources for only 35% of respondents, while social networks occupy a significant place in informing. This indicates the need for a new communication strategy, which includes educational campaigns, creation of public digital resources and involvement of opinion leaders to disseminate reliable information on sustainable development and recovery.

In the context of adapting European experience, it is important to take into account cultural differences, the level of trust in institutions and the available infrastructure in Ukraine. The import of strategies “one-to-one” is ineffective. Instead, hybrid models should be formed that combine the Ukrainian tradition of solidarity with the institutional experience of EU countries. For example, the creation of civic councils under local authorities, which would include representatives of NGOs, educators, veterans, and youth – may strengthen decision-making quality and increase the effectiveness of the implementation of local sustainable development initiatives. In the context of regional policy, it is advisable to create adaptive models of sustainable development management, which consider the specifics of each region – from the level of damaged infrastructure to the migration situation. For example, in the eastern regions the emphasis may be placed on psychological rehabilitation programmes, in the central ones – on the development of social entrepreneurship, and in the western ones – on the integration of the experience of refugees returning from EU countries. Such regionalisation of policy will help to avoid template solutions and better meet the real needs of the population.

An additional dimension that requires consideration is differential war exposure. Psychological resilience under conditions of full-scale conflict is unlikely to be homogeneous, as individuals experience war through varying degrees of direct threat, displacement, material loss, and disruption of social networks. Those residing in frontline or regularly targeted regions may demonstrate adaptive coping mechanisms shaped by chronic stress exposure, yet may simultaneously face higher risks of exhaustion and trauma-related symptoms. Conversely, internally displaced persons (IDPs) may experience resilience through successful integration and access to support networks, while also encountering identity disruption, uncertainty, and prolonged instability. Such differentiated exposure patterns suggest that reported levels of resilience and civic engagement may reflect distinct adaptive trajectories rather than a single uniform process. Future research should therefore incorporate more granular measures of war exposure (e.g., proximity to hostilities, displacement status, loss of property or livelihood) in order to better understand the variability of psychological adaptation and sustainable behavioural engagement.

It is also important to consider the potential role of social norms and perceived moral duty in shaping respondents’ self-assessments of resilience and civic engagement. In wartime conditions, resilience may function not only as a psychological state but also as a socially valorised identity marker associated with patriotism, solidarity, and moral responsibility. Under such normative pressure, individuals may feel compelled to present themselves as strong, adaptive, and socially active, even if their internal experiences are more ambivalent (Mizin and Petrov, 2021; Puhach et al., 2026). This dynamic can influence self-report data, as declarations of resilience and mobilisation may partially reflect conformity to collective expectations rather than purely individual psychological adaptation. Acknowledging this possibility allows for a more nuanced interpretation of the findings and highlights the importance of combining survey-based assessments with qualitative or longitudinal methods in future research.

Finally, one of the priorities should be the creation of a permanent cross-sectoral centre for coordination of actions in the field of sustainable development – with the participation of the government, international partners, the expert community and civil society. This centre could become a platform for knowledge exchange, coordination of strategies, formulation of recommendations and evaluation of policy effectiveness. Successful examples of such platforms are demonstrated by the Baltic countries, where similar institutions significantly strengthened national efforts towards sustainable recovery after crises. Thus, the formulated recommendations are aimed not only at responding to modern challenges but also at creating

conditions for long-term development, in which social cohesion, psychological resilience and environmental awareness act as key resources. The implementation of the proposed solutions may become the basis for Ukraine's transition from reactive to proactive management of recovery and modernisation processes.

4 Discussion

The psychosocial dimensions of the sustainable development study found that population mental health and psychological features were crucial to achieving the SDGs. In particular, sociopsychological metrics improved citizens' well-being and boosted sustainable development. This was crucial because, as noted by Agarwal et al. (2020), the sustainable development of women's entrepreneurship in India depended on economic, social, and psychological factors that affected women's ability to implement business initiatives. This study found that societies with psychologically safe settings have superior sustainable development indices. For example, 75% of respondents valued social projects that helped others. The majority (80%) also highlighted the value of sustainable development in warfare, demonstrating the need for long-term policies amid crises.

Aharkov et al. (2024) stressed sociopsychological elements such as stress, social integration, and psychological support. Under these conditions, strengthening psychological stability was essential for a sustainable society because it helped people accept social and economic changes. The study supported prior research on psychological traits and SDG achievement. Chen et al. (2021) found that students' psychological traits, such as adaptability, affected their comprehension and support of sustainable development. Psychological preparation was crucial to sustainable development because people who were ready for change accepted social and environmental changes faster. Al-Qudah et al. (2022) studied economic growth and social entrepreneurship in RCEP countries, focusing on the need to prepare entrepreneurs psychologically for sustainable development. Without recognising human psychology, sustainable economic and social progress was impossible. Psychological elements were crucial in tourism, one of the most promising areas for sustainable growth.

The study proved the link between psychological traits and business sustainability. This study confirmed Rank et al. (2022) findings that corporate social responsibility (CSR) is crucial to sustainable development. The psychological characteristics of organisation and leader behaviour, willingness for innovation, and social responsibility supported the idea that corporate social responsibility directly influenced sustainable business practices. Islam and Wang (2023) observed that CSR helped businesses adopt sustainable practices by understanding sustainable development goals. Psychological motivation for such changes was crucial to this field's success. Other investigations found a link between psychology and environmental actions. Kasinathan et al. (2022) observed that Industry 5.0 and Society 5.0's effects on human behaviour and society were crucial to SDG implementation. These technologies could modify human habits and promote sustainable practices in several domains, including urban development, according to the authors. This indicated that technological innovations and psychological adjustments in behaviour were crucial for sustainable development.

Another important topic was the role of education in the formation of environmental awareness. In this study, it was determined that the attitude to environmental issues changed in 62% of respondents, and the most prioritised aspect of sustainable development was considered to be the social one (45%), while the environmental aspect was chosen by 30%, and the economic one – only 15%. At the same time, 38% of respondents had experience of participating in public

or volunteer initiatives, and another 20% planned to join. Trust in state programmes in the field of sustainable development was unevenly distributed – only 35% rated it at the level of 4 and 5 points. In particular, researcher Islam (2025) confirmed that social-emotional learning, which was based on interpersonal relationships and teaching methods oriented towards the formation of emotional awareness and empathy, had important significance for sustainable development. Psychological aspects such as emotional intelligence and the ability to cooperate could help strengthen sustainable behaviour among pupils, which was also confirmed in the course of the conducted work.

Rahmania (2024) and Leal Filho et al. (2022) showed that environmental and other factors significantly influenced the sustainable behaviour of children and adolescents in Indonesia. This was consistent with the results of the present study, which also revealed that psychological state and social norms were important factors determining individuals' readiness for sustainable behavioural change. Similar results were obtained in the works of Sadiq et al. (2023), where the role of environmental social governance in achieving the SDGs in the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was studied. The authors confirmed that sociopsychological factors had a great impact on environmental sustainability and could be important in the development of sustainable development strategies at various levels. Scherer and Voegtlin (2020), Alaimo and Maggino (2020) emphasised the importance of CSR and its impact on innovation processes, which at the same time underlined the significance of psychological factors in the context of sustainable development. Psychological aspects, namely social norms and attitudes to change, could play a decisive role in the readiness of organisations to implement sustainable practices.

At the same time, it is important to recognise that wartime resilience is not a linear or universally positive process. Prolonged exposure to chronic stress, uncertainty and cumulative losses may generate psychological exhaustion, compassion fatigue and symptoms of emotional burnout, particularly among volunteers, civil activists and professionals involved in support services (Efremov, 2026; Messina, 2025). While the present study identified high levels of declared resilience and civic engagement, these indicators may coexist with latent fatigue and fluctuating motivation. Previous psychological research demonstrates that chronic stress can produce heterogeneous adaptive trajectories, ranging from post-traumatic growth to withdrawal, depoliticisation or reduced social participation (Imperiale and Vanclay, 2021; Pizzi et al., 2022). Furthermore, under prolonged conflict conditions, environmental priorities may temporarily regress as immediate survival needs overshadow long-term ecological considerations. Therefore, sustainable development in wartime should not be conceptualised exclusively as growth of civic responsibility but also as a dynamic balance between mobilisation and restoration, requiring systematic psychological support to prevent exhaustion of social capital.

In general, the psychological component played a key role in the formation of sustainable thinking and environmental awareness, especially among the younger generation. It was precisely the psychosocial factors that were decisive in the process of transition to sustainable behavioural models, which was confirmed by the research results. Environmental education acted as an important means of forming a responsible attitude to the environment, and the psychological aspect ensured a deep awareness of personal responsibility for the future of the planet. Under conditions of urbanisation and social transformations, it was internal beliefs, values, and attitudes that had a decisive influence on decision-making related to environmental behaviour and the support of sustainable development ideas.

5 Conclusions

In the course of the study, it was established that, even under conditions of full-scale war, Ukrainian society demonstrates substantial psychological adaptation, social activity, and sustained interest in sustainable development. The survey indicates that 60% of respondents assessed their resilience at 4-5 points, 75% rated participation in social initiatives as important (4-5 points), and 80% considered sustainable development relevant during wartime. Environmental awareness also shifted: 62% reported a changed attitude towards environmental issues, while the social dimension of sustainable development was prioritised most frequently (45%). Engagement capacity remains notable, as 38% reported prior participation in civic or volunteer initiatives and a further 20% planned to join, yet access to mental health support appears insufficient, with 65% reporting no psychological assistance and only 10% expressing full trust in state sustainable-development programmes.

Content analysis showed that public communication actively foregrounded psychological support, volunteering, and community mobilisation, reinforcing the informational environment as a mechanism for sustaining collective resilience. The comparative analysis suggests that effective European models combine institutional provision with civic involvement: municipal volunteering and community programmes (Poland), structured integration through education and housing (Germany), and scalable digital psychological support (Sweden). Accordingly, the study recommends expanding accessible psychological services via digital platforms and mobile teams, embedding sustainable development into non-formal and formal education, and strengthening municipal coordination of volunteering, eco-initiatives, and social entrepreneurship through durable cross-sector partnerships. Limitations include sample selectivity inherent to online recruitment, reliance on self-reports rather than behavioural verification, and the absence of in-depth interviews; future research should evaluate implemented local initiatives and refine models of cross-sector coordination for psychological support and social cohesion.

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