

PUBLIC POLICY OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION AS A FACTOR IN SOCIETY'S ADAPTATION TO THE GREEN AND DIGITAL ECONOMY

Liubov Kvasnii¹, Oleg Gatskov², Oresta Shcherban³

Abstract. The rapid transformation of the Ukrainian economy due to digitalisation and the transition to a green economy has created new challenges and opportunities for social integration. This study examines public policy mechanisms that support social integration, which is a critical factor in helping society adapt to these transformative economic conditions. This study examines the process of social integration in Ukraine through the lens of digital and green economic development. Particular attention is given to vulnerable social groups, including internally displaced persons, rural populations, and the elderly. The study emphasises the interconnectedness of technological advancement, environmental sustainability, and social cohesion, and highlights the role of public policy in mediating these dynamics. This study employs a multidisciplinary methodology that combines several analytical approaches. A systematic, structural-functional analysis was used to examine the social processes underlying integration, and a comparative analysis was used to evaluate national and international practices for promoting social inclusion. Additionally, a content analysis of legal frameworks, policy documents and scientific literature was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of existing mechanisms. This methodological approach provides a thorough understanding of how digitalisation, green economic initiatives and social integration policies interact with each other. The study aims to identify effective public policy mechanisms that facilitate social integration and enhance Ukrainian society's adaptability to digital and green economic transformations. To this end, the study will address the following research objectives: analysing theoretical frameworks of social integration; identifying the challenges and opportunities of integrating citizens into digital and green economic activities; examining existing public policy mechanisms in Ukraine; and formulating recommendations to improve the effectiveness of these policies. The results of the research demonstrate that social integration is a multidimensional process combining social, economic, technological and environmental aspects. While digitalisation provides opportunities for access to education, employment, and public services, it also risks exacerbating inequalities among different social groups. At the same time, the green economy promotes sustainable development, environmental responsibility and social equity, highlighting the importance of inclusive policies to ensure equal participation in emerging economic sectors. Effective public policy mechanisms include legal regulations, economic incentives, educational programmes and community initiatives, which collectively enhance society's capacity to adapt to structural economic transformations. The study emphasises the importance of providing targeted support to vulnerable groups and establishing mechanisms that promote equitable access to digital and green resources. In conclusion, the research confirms that integrating digital and green economic strategies into public policy is essential for achieving social cohesion and sustainable development. Further studies should focus on developing monitoring tools, evaluation metrics and practical frameworks to enhance social integration, particularly for vulnerable populations. These studies should also aim to strengthen the synergy between technological innovation, environmental sustainability and social policy.

Keywords: social integration, public policy, digital economy, green economy, sustainable development, social cohesion, Ukraine.

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¹ Drohobych Ivan Franko State Pedagogical University, Ukraine (*corresponding author*)

E-mail: lg_k@ukr.net

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5248-544X>

² Private Joint-Stock Company "Higher education institution

"Interregional Academy of Personnel Management", Ukraine

E-mail: oleghatsuk@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-2147-6449>

³ Lviv Polytechnic National University, Ukraine

E-mail: mppjavir@ukr.net

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5422-4032>



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1. Introduction

In the context of contemporary global changes, digitalisation of the economy and the transition to a green development model have become pivotal factors in the shaping of socio-economic policy. Digital technologies have a pervasive influence on all spheres of social life, engendering novel mechanisms for communication, work, and governance. In addition, these technologies provide opportunities for enhanced resource utilisation and sustainable development. Concurrently, the green economy aspires to ensure social equity, economic growth, and the mitigation of environmental risks, in accordance with the principles of inclusive development.

The relevance of this topic is determined by the fact that economic digitalisation and the implementation of green economy principles create new challenges and opportunities for the social integration of the population, which requires modern approaches in public policy. In order to achieve these objectives, public policy must demonstrate a capacity to respond to changes in social structures, ensure equal access to digital services and social benefits, facilitate the integration of vulnerable groups into digital and green economic processes, and support the sustainable development of society.

This study's scientific novelty lies in its comprehensive analysis of social integration through the lens of the interaction between digital transformation and the green economy. This allows new mechanisms of state regulation in the field of social policy to be identified. This interdisciplinary approach combines the study of social processes, technological transformations and political strategies, all of which are under-explored in contemporary scientific literature.

This study *aims* to identify effective public policy mechanisms that can facilitate social integration and improve Ukrainian society's ability to adapt to the conditions imposed by digital and green economic transformations.

To achieve this aim, the study addresses the following *research objectives*:

1. To analyse theoretical and methodological approaches to studying social integration in the context of digitalisation and the transition to a green economy.

2. To identify the main challenges and opportunities for social integration arising

from technological and environmental transformations.

3. To examine existing public policy mechanisms in Ukraine aimed at supporting social integration, particularly in the digital and green sectors.

4. To develop recommendations for improving the effectiveness of public policies in promoting social integration under the conditions of digital and green economic transformation.

The *methodology* of the study is based on a combination of approaches, including systematic and structural-functional analysis of social processes, comparative analysis of national and international practices, and content analysis of legal acts and scientific publications. This approach facilitates a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of digitalisation and green economy initiatives on social integration and the effectiveness of public policy mechanisms.

The *structure and logic of the study* involves a sequential presentation of the material. Firstly, the theoretical foundations of social integration in the context of digital and green economy transformations are explored. Secondly, practical mechanisms of public policy in Ukraine and internationally are analysed. Finally, the effectiveness of existing solutions is evaluated, and practical recommendations are formulated for government authorities and stakeholders.

2. Theoretical Foundations of Social Integration in the Context of Digitalisation and Green Economy

In the aftermath of the full-scale invasion, Ukraine has been confronted with substantial social and economic ramifications, encompassing considerable population displacement, widespread destruction of buildings and infrastructure, and an escalation in civilian casualties. In 2022, the country's real gross domestic product declined by 29.2%. In this regard, the research of B. Tsymbal is devoted to the characteristics of social mechanisms within the system of personal security management (Tsymbal, 2022). The war also resulted in a reduction of jobs and household incomes, a decrease in purchasing power, and a decline in accumulated assets (Bohdan, 2023). Nevertheless, the most critical consequences remain the loss of human life and the ongoing humanitarian crisis (Zhyla, 2023). The war has had a considerable impact on social policy in

Ukraine, compelling both the state and civil society to adapt mechanisms of population support in conditions of high social and economic instability. Massive population displacement, infrastructure destruction and reduced economic activity have created additional challenges in ensuring social guarantees and access to essential services. Against this backdrop, it is particularly important to align the restoration of social policy with the development of a green economy, since the transition to an environmentally sustainable production and energy model can create new jobs, boost energy efficiency and reduce social inequality. Integrating green approaches into social policy provides an opportunity to address economic recovery and social stability simultaneously, thereby promoting societal development during the period of post-conflict transformation.

The issue of ensuring public participation in the context of implementing public social policy in Ukraine is examined in the research of I. Matsola (Matsola, 2022).

Social integration is defined as a process that ensures the inclusion of all segments of the population in the socio-economic, political, and cultural processes of society (Liashenko & Vyshnevskiy, 2018; Ramazanov, 2018). In the contemporary context, characterised by the ascendancy of digital technologies and the principles of the green economy, social integration assumes novel characteristics. Digitalisation has the potential to unlock opportunities for knowledge access, online services, distance learning, and employment. However, it can also serve to amplify existing digital inequalities, particularly among vulnerable groups such as the elderly, internally displaced persons, and rural residents.

The numerous explosions caused by the war have had a significant negative impact on Ukraine's ecological situation. The demolition of industrial facilities, residential buildings, and transport and energy infrastructure has resulted in the release of toxic substances into the soil, water, and atmosphere, contamination of the environment with debris and remnants of munitions, and disruption of natural ecosystems. The repercussions of these actions are twofold, manifesting not only in the exacerbation of the ecological crisis but also in the direct impact on public health and the capacity for economic recovery. In the context of post-conflict reconstruction, the implementation of green economy principles assumes particular relevance.

Such principles encompass environmentally safe technologies, sustainable resource utilisation, and the restoration of natural environments. The transition of the economy towards sustainable development has the potential to reduce the harmful impact of human activity on the environment, create new employment opportunities, increase energy efficiency, and contribute to social stability.

In turn, the green economy is oriented towards sustainable development, efficient use of resources, and social responsibility. In the context of the green economy, public policy aimed at social integration should combine environmental, economic and social components to ensure equal access for citizens to "green" jobs, innovative technologies and social benefits. This integrated approach promotes sustainable development, strengthens social cohesion, and enhances community resilience in the face of economic and environmental challenges.

Theoretical approaches to the study of social integration can be divided into three groups (Zlobina, 2016; Scheff, 2007; Shulga, 2016):

1. Classical sociological concepts (E. Durkheim, T. Parsons), which define integration as the maintenance of social solidarity and norms.
2. Modern approaches to digital integration, which consider the inclusion of citizens in the digital space as a key factor in adapting to new economic conditions.
3. Green integration concepts, which emphasise the interconnection between environmental sustainability and social equity.

Thus, integration processes become a complex, multi-level system combining social, economic, technological and environmental aspects. Scholars emphasise that public administration in the social sphere involves implementing tasks that aim to achieve Ukraine's sustainable socio-economic development, which is a key priority for both the state and civil society in the implementation of social policy (Orlova & Mirko, 2023).

3. Challenges and Opportunities of Social Integration in the Context of Digitalisation and Green Economy

The transition to a digital and green economy in Ukraine is accompanied by a number of social integration challenges. The key issues include:

- Digital divide among the population due to unequal access to technology and digital skills.
- Socio-economic inequality arising from unequal participation in green economic initiatives.

Table 1

Theoretical approaches to social integration in the context of digitalisation and green economy

| Approach | Key principles | Application in digital and green economy | Sources |
|---------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Classical sociological concepts | Social solidarity, maintenance of norms | Establishing rules for digital interaction, ensuring social equity | Durkheim, 1893; Parsons, 1951 |
| Digital integration approach | Inclusion in the digital space, access to online resources | Access to digital education, e-governance, online services | OECD, 2020 |
| Green integration approach | Social equity and environmental sustainability | Creation of green jobs, environmental education | UNDP, 2021 |

Source: developed by the authors

- Vulnerability of certain social groups to labor market changes, particularly those requiring retraining in new technological sectors.

- Insufficient institutional support, which complicates the implementation of social integration policies.

At the same time, digitalisation and the green economy offer significant opportunities:

1. Enhanced access to education and training through digital platforms, online courses, and open educational resources.

2. Expansion of the labour market through the creation of green jobs and professions related to digital technologies.

3. Improved citizen participation in social processes, including e-governance, digital consultations, and civic information-sharing platforms.

4. Reduction of environmental risks, which enhances social equity and improves quality of life.

Ukraine's transition to a digital and green economy presents major challenges for social integration, arising from profound structural changes to economic and social systems. While digitalisation and green technology offer opportunities for increased productivity, greater resource efficiency and new job creation, they also heighten the risk of social exclusion due to unequal

access to digital infrastructure, education and green innovations. Vulnerable population groups are particularly at risk of being excluded from emerging economic processes, which undermines social cohesion. In this context, public social policy plays a critical role in mitigating integration risks by promoting inclusive access to digital skills, supporting environmental education and ensuring equal opportunities during the transition towards sustainable development. Therefore, social integration in the modern era is a multidimensional process involving the population's adaptation to new technologies and sustainable economic models.

4. Mechanisms of Public Policy for Social Integration in Ukraine

The state plays a key role in ensuring social integration by developing and implementing the right policies. Given the binding international frameworks for sustainable development and climate change policy in both the EU and Ukraine, scholars emphasise the importance of closely monitoring the transitional period and the mechanisms that support it. Such oversight is instrumental in ensuring the effective implementation of green and sustainable initiatives, facilitating the alignment of national policies with international standards,

Table 2

Challenges and opportunities of social integration in digital and green economy

| Category | Challenges | Opportunities | Examples |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| Digital economy | Digital divide, limited access to technology | Improved digital literacy, access to online education | Government digital platforms, e-learning courses |
| Green economy | Socio-economic inequality, insufficient infrastructure | Creation of green jobs, environmental education | Energy efficiency programmes, ecological startups |
| Social integration | Vulnerability of certain groups, low participation in social processes | Increased citizen participation, development of community initiatives | E-governance platforms, civic initiatives for IDPs and the elderly |

Source: developed by the authors

and enabling the identification of challenges and opportunities arising during the shift towards a low-carbon, sustainable economy (Lukashuk, 2023; Bashynska & Leshchukh, 2025). The main mechanisms include:

1. Legal and regulatory frameworks, which encompass laws, regulations, and standards. These frameworks ensure citizens' rights and regulate participation in digital and green economic sectors. For example, the Laws of Ukraine "On Fundamentals of Social Policy" and "On Electronic Communications" create legal frameworks for citizen integration into digital and green economic spaces.

2. Economic instruments. Government grants and subsidies for green enterprises, financial support for digital education and retraining programmes, and tax incentives for socially responsible companies.

3. Educational and informational programmes, aimed at developing digital skills, environmental literacy, and participation in green initiatives. These programmes reduce inequalities and create conditions for active citizen engagement in emerging economic processes.

4. Social and community initiatives, which involve non-governmental organisations, businesses, and local communities to support vulnerable groups and facilitate their integration into social life.

International experience demonstrates that effective social integration requires a synergy between digital technologies, green economy principles, and social policy. This integrated approach enables Ukraine to enhance social cohesion, reduce social inequality, and establish a foundation for sustainable development.

A synthesis of international experience demonstrates that effective social integration necessitates the synergy of digital technologies, green economy principles, and public policy. An integrated approach has been demonstrated to be a catalyst for enhancing social cohesion, mitigating social inequality, and establishing a foundation for sustainable development in Ukraine.

5. To Develop Recommendations for Improving the Effectiveness of Government Policy in the Field of Integration Processes, Taking into Account Digital and Environmental Transformations in the Economy

Firstly, it is recommended that the institutional capacity of public integration policy be strengthened by means of a systematic embedding of digital and environmental priorities into national development strategies. This necessitates enhanced coordination among public authorities responsible for social, digital, and environmental policies, as well as alignment of national programmes with international sustainable development commitments. It is imperative to prioritise the expansion of access to digital infrastructure, the enhancement of digital competencies, and the promotion of environmental education. These measures have the potential to mitigate social disparities and enhance civic engagement in integration processes during periods of economic transformation.

Secondly, the implementation of inclusive policy mechanisms aimed at supporting vulnerable social groups during the digital and green transition is essential. Such measures may include targeted

Table 3

Main mechanisms of public policy for social integration in Ukraine

| Mechanism | Key components | Purpose | Examples in Ukraine |
|--|---|---|--|
| Legal and regulatory frameworks | Laws, regulations, standards | Ensure citizens' rights and regulate participation in digital and green economy | The Law of Ukraine "On Fundamentals of Social Policy", the Law of Ukraine "On Electronic Communications" |
| Economic instruments | Grants, subsidies, tax incentives | Support green enterprises, develop digital skills | Government programmes for energy efficiency and digital education |
| Educational and informational programmes | Online courses, training, educational platforms | Improve digital literacy and environmental awareness | Prometheus, EdEra, green educational initiatives |
| Social and community initiatives | NGOs, volunteer programmes, community organisations | Support vulnerable groups and social integration | Civic platforms, initiatives for IDPs and the elderly |

Source: developed by the authors

reskilling and upskilling programmes, incentives for the creation of green jobs, the development of social entrepreneurship, and the expansion of partnerships between government, business, and civil society. The introduction of digital-based monitoring and evaluation systems would enable timely identification of social exclusion risks and facilitate evidence-based policy adjustments, thereby contributing to stronger social cohesion and sustainable development.

Drawing upon the findings of scholarly research (Fadeiev, 2023), it can be concluded that the armed confrontation and its catastrophic consequences have contributed to a nationwide consolidation among Ukrainians, thereby neutralising sociocultural differences that had long served as sources of political divisions and electoral fragmentation.

6. Conclusions

This study's findings suggest that public policy on social integration in Ukraine is a vital mechanism for adapting to the dynamics of the digital and green economy. The principal conclusions can be summarised as follows:

1. *Multidimensional nature of social integration.* Social integration is increasingly recognised as a complex, multidimensional process that encompasses social, economic, technological and environmental factors. Digitalisation and the green economy create new opportunities for population participation in societal processes, while simultaneously presenting challenges relating to digital divides and unequal access to green resources.

2. *Comprehensive policy mechanisms.* The effectiveness of social integration depends largely on the coordinated application of various public policy instruments, such as regulatory frameworks, economic incentives, educational and informational programmes, and community-based initiatives. Approaches that address technological and environmental transformations simultaneously are observed to be the most effective.

3. *Targeted support for vulnerable groups.* Vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, internally displaced persons and rural residents, require deliberate measures to enhance digital literacy and environmental education. These interventions are vital for ensuring equitable access to economic, social and cultural opportunities.

4. *Synergy of international best practices.* Experience around the world highlights the importance of integrating digital technologies, green economy principles and social policy. Such integrated strategies can strengthen social cohesion, improve the effectiveness of social integration and promote sustainable societal development.

Prospects for Further Research

1. *Development of tailored integration models.* Digital and green integration models need to be developed for vulnerable groups, taking into account regional disparities within Ukraine. This would allow for the creation of targeted social policies and improve their overall effectiveness.

2. *Evaluation of digital and green initiatives.* Further research should examine the impact of specific digital platforms and green programmes on social integration and cohesion. Such studies would provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of government and community initiatives.

3. *Comprehensive monitoring frameworks.* It is recommended that integrated tools for monitoring and evaluating social integration are created, combining indicators of digital literacy, economic activity and environmental engagement.

4. *Cross-sectoral partnerships.* Investigating potential collaborations between the government, businesses and civil society organisations is crucial for implementing integration strategies in the digital and green economies, especially with regard to job creation and promoting corporate social responsibility.

In light of the realities of the war and the associated humanitarian challenges, there is an urgent need to transform Ukraine's public social integration policy mechanisms. In order to provide more effective support for affected population groups, maintain social cohesion and promote the restoration of societal stability, existing approaches require substantial adaptation to new conditions. In this context, the implementation of green economy principles assumes strategic importance, as the development of environmentally sustainable technologies and renewable energy sources has the potential to create new employment opportunities, enhance regional economic resilience, and simultaneously ensure a safe and healthy environment for the population. The integration of green approaches into social policy facilitates the alignment of humanitarian assistance with long-term

sustainable development objectives, thereby reducing social inequality and fostering citizen participation in post-war recovery and economic modernisation. Consequently, further research in this field is expected to facilitate the effective

convergence of digital and green transformations with social integration policies, thereby ensuring the sustainable development of Ukrainian society and improving the quality of life for its citizens.

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