

ECOLOGICAL DOMINANTS IN CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS OF EUROPEAN BUSINESS: THE IMPACT OF THE GREEN DEAL

Veronika Chala¹, Svitlana Morozova², Liudmyla Borovyk³

Abstract. The *subject of the study* is the identification of cross-cultural features of European business under the influence of the implementation of the Green Deal as the main EU development strategy until 2025. *Methodology.* The research used general logical and theoretical methods of cognition. The method of analysis and synthesis was used to evaluate the components of intercultural competence for the successful development of eco-business in the EU. The method of analogy was used to find out what is similar and what is different in traditional and environmentally oriented business, which affects the specifics of cross-cultural communication. The theoretical method of generalisation is used to substantiate the content and essence of intercultural competence of environmental business. The method of system analysis was used to construct the author's conceptual model of the formation of intercultural competence of European environmental business. *Purpose.* The purpose of the article is to substantiate the peculiarities of environmental cross-cultural management in the activities of European business and the role of cross-cultural competencies in the success of European environmental companies, including Ukrainian business. *Results.* The article has proved the role of green growth as a dominant concept and concrete policy of the European Union, embodied in the strategy of the EU Green Deal Strategy (GDS). The main sectoral determinants of green growth, reflected in the Green Deal, are defined as forming the field of development of environmental business in the EU. It has been shown that this tendency affects the specifics of cross-cultural communication. The need to build effective cross-cultural communications in the European environmental business under the influence of the Green Deal determinants was analysed and addressed through the strategy of green cross-cultural management. *Conclusion.* European companies implementing eco-innovative developments are faced with expanding the range of cooperation with various partners, including in the multinational environment of creation, approval, implementation and monitoring of implementation effectiveness. The need to build effective intercultural communication in European eco-business under the influence of the determinants of the Green Deal, taking into account cultural differences in business relations and using the tools of effective intercultural management has been emphasised. The list of criteria for effective communication and structuring of relations in cross-cultural management was determined. The positive relationship between the integration of different cultures in EU enterprises and the growth of their competitiveness is emphasised. The prerequisites for the formation of sustainable cross-cultural competence of a business process participant are proved. Prospects for the development of "green" cross-cultural competences in the European business space are outlined. The cross-cultural competences of the European environmental business are considered from the point of view of ethno-relativism formation. The basic elements of the green intercultural management strategy for European business are proposed and the main obstacles to the implementation of such management mechanisms in the Ukrainian business environment are identified.

Key words: cross-cultural communications, European business, Green Deal, environmental companies, cross-cultural competence, cross-cultural management.

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¹ Prydniprovsk State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Ukraine (*corresponding author*)

E-mail: chala.veronika@pdaba.edu.ua

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2233-2335>

² Prydniprovsk State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Ukraine

E-mail: morozova.svitlana@pdaba.edu.ua

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0118-3502>

³ International University of Economics and Humanities

named after Academician Stepan Demianchuk, Ukraine

E-mail: milabogush@mail.com



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1. Introduction

Globalisation and the international division of labour are forcing people to look at the world as a whole, to seek more commonalities and to standardise life. People, their social and business communities find themselves immersed in the same systems of measurement, styles, brands, services, etc. At the same time, the world continues to retain a significant number of cultural differences. They become obstacles in negotiation and other foreign economic processes, as well as in the work of company employees. Accordingly, the success of a company in a foreign market largely depends on how well professional communications with a foreign business partner are built; how well the manager has studied the peculiarities and laws of doing business in the country of the partner; whether the manager knows the specifics of the local culture well enough to promote the product on the market; how carefully the peculiarities of the social life of potential customers and the psychology of consumer behaviour in that country are taken into account. When it comes to green business, its development is influenced by an even more complex system of values, barriers, standards, experiences and beliefs.

In view of Ukraine's future membership in the EU, Ukrainian environmental business will soon face an increase in organisational, legal and intercultural challenges from the expansion of international business interactions. National managers and business owners need to understand the main trends in new markets for environmental innovations, relevant products and types of economic activity that will provide impetus for development within the framework of the EU's main development strategy until 2050 – the Green Deal (EU). This long-term and ambitious EU development strategy creates a new coordinate system both at the macro level and at the level of development of individual companies, affecting external and internal interactions as well as the quality and success of cross-cultural communication. Therefore, early modelling of the possible consequences of the EU Green Deal on the development of cross-cultural interactions and the corresponding success of environmental enterprises in the European common business space is an urgent problem of European and national cross-cultural management.

2. The Impact of the Green Deal on European Business Development

Green growth as a practical strategy and concrete policy of the European Union was also loudly proclaimed during the crisis of the real sector of the economy in 2008–2010, when efforts were intensified to overcome the consequences of the recession and at the same time to create a new basis for socio-

economic development. The inclusion of environmentally friendly investment projects was an important element of the anti-crisis plans adopted in many EU countries at that time.

The implementation of the Green Growth Strategy over the next 10 years has made the EU a world leader in this process. In 2018, the European Commission presented scenarios on how the EU and its Member States can lead the transition to sustainable development for the benefit of all and how Europe can achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

It should be noted that much has already been done: sustainable development priorities are included in major cross-cutting programmes, as well as sectoral policies and initiatives. It should be emphasised that the European Union played a leading role in the adoption of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the EU and its member states are among the best implementers of the SDGs worldwide.

The *concept of green growth as a dominant approach* to achieving sustainable development goals, which is being implemented by EU countries, is yielding tangible results. Eurostat data show that green sectors are generating an increasing turnover and creating more jobs, as they are labour-intensive (e.g., organic agriculture).

The sectors that provide green growth and are the most promising for green businesses include the following: 1) renewable energy; 2) low-emission transport; 3) energy-efficient construction; 4) clean technologies; 5) improved waste management; 6) sustainable agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and others. The success of these companies depends on their ability to find new ways to generate productivity that will provide new competitive advantages and new innovative opportunities associated with environmental management investment projects.

Such environmental investment projects are now being actively developed as part of the EU's modern green growth strategy – the European Green Deal (EGD). Launched by the European Commission in December 2019, the European Green Deal is the current growth strategy of the European Union and aims to achieve the ambitious goal of "climate neutral" economic development by 2050.

The EGD's objective is twofold: first, "to transform the EU into a just and prosperous society with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy, where there are no net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use"; second, "to protect, conserve and enhance the EU's natural capital and to protect the health and well-being of citizens from environmental risks and impacts" (European Commission, 2019).

The Green Deal recognises as the main sectoral "pillars" of the green growth policy the tasks of developing circular (waste-free) production, which will have a direct impact on the development of eco-companies; the task of saving energy (mainly through building renovation programmes); and the task of developing sustainable (environmentally friendly) transport. It is in these areas that a significant increase in business activity and a leap in environmental and economic growth are expected.

Modern scientists point out (Skorokhod, Horbach, 2019) that the ideology of "green" business fits well with the need to improve the state of the environment while ensuring economic development. In EU countries, there are already examples of the use of various effective forms of conducting green business, as well as examples of successful policies supporting such business: formation of green clusters, green energy programmes, ecological modernisation of transport, production of organic products, etc.

It is believed that over time, these areas of development and support for green business will expand, and the potential for consumer demand will grow, which is important for Ukrainian businesses to understand from the perspective of the single markets after Ukraine's accession to the EU. Below are some examples of effective forms of green business, along with successful policies to support such businesses.

An effective form of doing green business in the EU is the formation of green clusters. An example of a regional green cluster in Europe is the Green Tech Cluster, located in the Green Tech Valley near the capital of Styria, Graz (Austria). Within the cluster, about 200 companies and research institutes are currently working on clean and green technologies of the future (Lozova, Cheberyako, 2017).

Another successful example is the Green Net Finland cluster, which brings together the experience and resources of Finnish green technology companies, research and education institutions, and government authorities. Since 2001, Green Net Finland has implemented more than 50 development projects at the national and international levels. These projects are aimed at saving energy and resources, creating an efficient low-carbon urban environment, promoting Finnish innovations and green technologies, and ensuring the growth of local businesses (Lozova, Cheberyako, 2017).

Green energy, in particular, renewable energy production, should be considered a promising and already successful area of green business in the EU. The long-term payback of renewable energy sources is expected to be achieved through innovations that are purposefully supported by EU governments. For example, Germany has been implementing the Energy Concept for more than 10 years, which has

established the main role of green energy, and the concept covers the period until 2050.

The elements of the Concept are the following: development of renewable energy sources, construction of power grids and expansion of energy storage capacities, improvement of energy efficiency (solid energy savings, for example, savings through building insulation), development of technologies that are competitive in terms of price and quality. The introduction of green technologies in the energy sector is accompanied by active propaganda. Classes on alternative energy are organised on a wide scale, including in kindergartens, schools and universities. The topic of renewable energy has taken an important place in public political discussions, and so forth (Yamchuk, Kurguzenkova, 2013).

An important direction in the development of the green economy in the EU countries is the ecological modernisation of transport, and accordingly the market for electric cars has begun to develop quite actively in recent years. In order to stimulate companies in this field, various EU countries are also introducing their own support measures. Norway, for example, has chosen fiscal incentives as a method of support: electric cars in Norway are exempt from high transport taxes, which can amount to 50% of the cost of conventional cars. The annual toll for electric cars has been reduced by a factor of seven (from 50 EUR to 350 EUR). In addition, local owners of electric vehicles can use toll roads and park their vehicles in municipal car parks free of charge, and use public transport lanes (Turlikyan).

The development of the green economy in the EU countries is facilitated by the production of organic products. The state regulation of organic products is carried out through Directives that define the general framework and principles of organic agriculture, requirements for the production of agricultural products, their processing and food production, signs and labelling of organic products, and open the market for organic products to imports from "third countries". Today, more and more land in the EU is being allocated for organic farming, with more than 5.1 million hectares currently used for it, and this area is constantly increasing.

Significant amounts of green growth have also been achieved thanks to implemented green building projects in the EU and the corresponding European environmental business. In general, speaking about the growth rate of environmental business in the EU, it is worth noting that about 37 of the world's top 100 environmental companies are based in Europe, accounting for 20 to 30% of the total capitalisation of the global cleantech market (9th European Forum on Eco-Innovation, 2010).

At the same time, not only European manufacturing companies, but also service companies and

organisations are showing an increasing tendency to develop and commercialise eco-innovative developments and inventions. For example, a comprehensive survey conducted in Spain among top management and employees of more than 5,500 companies showed that there are no significant differences in the eco-innovative behaviour of companies and firms from different economic sectors (Segarra-Oña, Peiró-Signes, Mondéjar-Jiménez, Vargas-Vargas, 2014). In terms of business communications, eco-innovation and environmental friendliness should be perceived as common values that unite employees of both national and international multinational companies.

It is particularly important to have such unifying values in production networks that are carried out by companies in different countries. As the *development and implementation of eco-innovations involves all links in the production and distribution chains*, and as the value of goods is created during the transition from one link in the production chain to another or from one stage of the life cycle to another (Life cycle management), the companies and firms that implement them *always go beyond their own institutional framework and actively cooperate with their partners at all links in the production and distribution chains*.

International experience shows that such partners include, first of all, large corporate companies, multinational enterprises, technical institutes, research laboratories and centres that open up wide opportunities for eco-innovative companies to use their knowledge, scientific and technical developments and professional experience.

In this regard, the expert opinion of Ghisetti C., Rennings K., seems to be quite correct that effective and long-term inter-firm cooperation for the purpose of implementing eco-innovation and achieving sustainability has significant benefits for all its participants in the form of reducing transaction costs and risks of innovation processes, increasing the efficiency and profitability of eco-production, increasing the level of wages of employees, as well as creating more valuable offers for consumers (Ghisetti, Rennings, 2014), based on sharing knowledge, experience and skills with partners, strengthening the resource potential in the field of research and development, developing the creative potential of employees of eco-innovative enterprises and their greater involvement in green research.

In summary, it should be emphasised that any eco-innovation is always associated with the implementation by business entities of modifications to products, business processes or organisational structures *agreed with business partners* at all stages of the value chain that can significantly improve their competitive position in the global market.

Successful coordination with business partners depends on participation in processes based on shared values, business and life beliefs, habits, etc. In this respect, it is important to achieve effective business communication, which is also intercultural communication, especially in the context of the multinational links of European business (both within individual business structures and within branches of transnational corporations; both global and European).

Although ecological domination of consumer and production values is largely unified as are international standards of business operations, attention should not be diverted from possible country-specific features of conducting business nor from significant differences in national culture and social institutions. Failure to separately research and take these into account may significantly impact the coherence of business activities and ought to be considered in the practice of European companies' international management.

3. Investigation of the Role of Cross-Cultural Communications in the Formation of Successful International Business

In the context of deepening integration processes in the EU, due to the enlargement (including the future membership of Ukraine) and new challenges of internationalisation of business in the "old" and "new" member states, the problem of effective intercultural communication between employees and employers, counterparts of foreign economic activity, participants of international organisations, subjects of international economic relations, whose activity is directly or indirectly regulated by established norms and international practice of economic activity, has arisen.

Accordingly, it can be expected that the number and closeness of economic and cultural ties will increase, that information asymmetries will increase, and that tensions will increase in terms of the quantity and quality of business communication between companies in different countries, as well as between European branches of multinational companies. Therefore, it is important to take into account the intercultural peculiarities of different countries, and also the peculiarities of representatives of certain national or supranational cultures in the day-to-day functioning of European businesses that involve a foreign element.

In the theory of international business, social and cultural factors of the environment play the role of one of the most influential factors that determine the nature and characteristics of financial, operational, investment and human resource management. Therefore, in order to build effective cross-

cultural communication, it becomes increasingly important to correctly assess different approaches to defining cultures, to adequately understand them and to effectively manage them in a multicultural environment.

Therefore, it is important to take into account the cross-cultural characteristics of different countries, and also the characteristics of representatives of certain national or supranational cultures in the day-to-day functioning of international business. As Khmara M., Pilipenko B. note, in international business social and cultural factors of the environment play the role of one of the most influential factors determining the nature and features of financial, operational, investment and human resources management.

In view of the above, the need to build effective cross-cultural communication in European business, the correct assessment of different approaches to defining cultures, their adequate understanding and effective management in a multicultural environment is becoming increasingly important. Such effective communication will predictably minimise differences in the perception of communication, with the use of different contextual messages each time, as well as being the main basis for misunderstandings and cultural differences of the "expectation-reality" type.

Khmara M., Pilipenko B. (2020) emphasize that in terms of international management, culture is acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and generate socially acceptable behaviour. They form the basis of values, shape certain types and forms of attitudes and influence behaviour in general. Accordingly, when developing a strategy for international management in corporations and small businesses, certain issues of cross-cultural communication in the processes of production and sales management arise. There is a dilemma of basic ideas about corporate culture, mostly among its organisers and the most influential stakeholders, called "I don't know, but I can't ignore the problem". Cultural researcher Hans Gullestrup sees this as a possible ethical dichotomy for a "cultural actor" – a person who seeks intercultural understanding when interacting with people from other communities (Gullestrup, 2006).

According to Arefieva O. (2018), effective communication is communication that meets criteria such as credibility, timeliness, objectivity, transparency (accessibility), availability of feedback, addressability, as well as criteria of spatiality, tolerance and flexibility. Consequently, in the context of intercultural management, the structuring of relationships takes place by broadening the perception of the meaning, nature and necessity of creating unique competitive advantages in strategic and corporate management.

In order to increase the competitiveness of the company in the conditions of modern processes of internationalisation and globalisation of business, it is necessary to take into account the peculiarities of the management of personal values and the corresponding influence on the processes of intercultural interaction, which in turn are one of the main conditions for the development and successful functioning of a unique intercultural environment, which is a complex task.

As aptly noted by Yevtushenko V. et al. (Yevtushenko, Lisenyi, Vu Zieu Lin, 2022), a cross-cultural business environment is a source of many problems. Different aspects of culture are subject to the influence of technological and economic changes, so modern companies in European markets operating in a global economy need effective solutions. Such mechanisms and basic elements as cross-cultural management and ethics help to take preventive measures, solve existing problems and often anticipate them.

At the same time, it is difficult to overestimate the economic potential of a unique intercultural environment. According to Evans S. (1992), the integration of different cultures in European companies helps to increase their competitiveness. It makes it possible to attract employees with different cultural orientations, which contributes to the development and growth of Europe's global markets, as companies have the opportunity to work in different corporate environments.

The successful development of European environmental companies through the creation of a unique cross-cultural environment requires strategies and tools for creating such an environment. Kostenko D. (2018) highlights the following strategies used specifically in situations of intercultural contacts: 1) strategies aimed at the successful course of such interaction, motivation for linguistic action, search for common cultural elements, readiness to understand and identify signals of misunderstanding, use of previous contacts, etc., and 2) strategies aimed at replenishing knowledge about the partner's cultural identity.

The authors suggest that achieving competent intercultural communication skills necessitates comprehension regarding what, when, and how to express oneself. To successfully implement these attitudes, they need *socio-cultural knowledge, communication skills, and language skills*.

Socio-cultural (contextual) knowledge is formed as a result of an individual's social and personal experience and constitutes background knowledge about the world. Communication skills and abilities are a set of ways of expressing ideas, thoughts, feelings, experiences, ways of influencing partners and interlocutors used in the process of communication to achieve communication goals. This type of

knowledge is the result of all previous experience of communicating with representatives of other cultures.

Knowledge of language is a tool for understanding both one's own and other cultures, so knowledge of the language of another culture is a prerequisite for intercultural competence, as it provides an adequate understanding of the cultural characteristics of the country concerned.

Knowledge of a language allows a person to adapt his or her behaviour to that of partners, which means that he or she develops a higher ability to intercultural communication, i.e., to adequately understand the participants of communication belonging to different cultures. Proficiency in a language also shapes the personal qualities of the communicator, such as openness, tolerance and readiness to communicate with representatives of other cultures.

As a result of achieving life and professional goals, any employee of the company must have the ability to communicate cross-culturally:

- Adequately perceive and interpret different cultural values; consciously overcome the boundaries that separate cultures;
- recognise not only common but also distinctive features in other cultures; view different cultural phenomena and representatives of other cultures with empathy;
- correlate existing ethno-cultural stereotypes with their own experience and draw adequate conclusions;
- ability to review and change their assessments of another culture in accordance with the expansion of skills and experience in intercultural communication;
- changing self-esteem as a result of understanding another culture and rejecting unfounded stereotypes or prejudices;
- perceive new knowledge about another culture for a deeper understanding of their own; systematise the facts of cultural life;
- synthesise and summarise personal experience of intercultural dialogue.

As a result, an employee's sustainable cross-cultural competence can be formed. International experience proves that the most successful strategy for achieving intercultural competence is integration – preserving one's own cultural identity along with mastering the culture of other nations.

All the conceptual approaches and systemic assessments analysed above should form the basis for building a model for the development of sustainable cross-cultural competences of a successful European green business.

4. Prospects for the Development of Green Cross-Cultural Competences in European Business

According to the research carried out by Yevtushenko V. et al. (Yevtushenko, Lisenyi, Vu Zieu

Lin, 2022), misunderstandings represent one of the primary hindrances to communication in a multicultural workplace operating in European markets. This is usually the primary issue faced by individuals with diverse cultural heritages as their beliefs and values vary significantly.

Differences in cultures lead to high levels of anxiety and uncertainty and, ultimately, to misunderstandings. The resulting misunderstandings can last for the duration of the intercultural business interaction. Organisational culture provides the greatest help and support in such circumstances.

According to authors, multinational companies in the environmental business in European markets need to use modern technologies that allow them to take into account and effectively use cross-cultural features in the work of modern global organisations.

The inadequate perception of information about people from other cultures by employees of international environmental companies in European markets, which is shaped by their own value judgements about people, leads to unreasonable choices in intercultural communication. Relevant cultural stereotypes exaggerate or overgeneralise the way people from other cultures are perceived, and this perception is a cause for concern. Stereotypes as a product of the media, which once formed the image of a representative of a particular country, are built on fear due to lack of knowledge. These stereotypes remain the main reasons for rejection of the opposite culture and lead to misunderstandings.

Cultural norms are the cultural rules of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour that people set for themselves and expect others to do the same. According to Laurent A. (1986), each culture in Europe has its own norms, and they determine the behaviour of their speakers. Such employees in the cross-cultural environment of a particular company in European markets often do not understand the norms of another culture and the corresponding behaviour.

The manifestation of cultural norms results in social roles, which are a set of norms that apply to specific groups. In particular, different national corporate cultures in European markets assign different roles to men and women, children and parents/guardians, husbands and wives. These roles vary from culture to culture, and sometimes several different roles can be found in a cross-cultural team. Be aware that for some, certain roles may be a manifestation of intolerant behaviour and cause difficulties in the communication process.

Therefore, building sustainable and successful business communication skills should take into account the importance of developing effective intercultural communication while clearly communicating intended information to employees of different cultural orientations and ensuring unity of purpose. From an organisational point of

view, it is clear that the HR department should play an active role in managing the cultural diversity of the company, and that the top management of the company should be committed to developing a strategy for successful intercultural management.

The aim of such a strategy is to ensure the acquisition of sustainable cross-cultural competencies, i.e., the skills and qualities necessary for professionals to succeed in an international environment.

Among the skills of employees of European environmental business, the following should be considered as priority: 1) an awareness of cultural values that may affect cross-cultural environmental business; and 2) the ability to adjust one's style of negotiation, communication, presentation, team leadership, etc. to avoid cross-cultural misunderstandings. Traditional differences in European governance based on cultural differences should also be taken into account. In particular, summarising scientific research on the influence of cultures on the peculiarities of doing international business, Korzhenko, Pisarenko et al. (2009) speak of three models of management based on cultural differences. Korzhenko, Pisarenko et al. (2009) speak of three models of management based on cultural differences: American, Japanese and European, and write about the latter as characterised by collective decision-making and delegated responsibility, narrow specialisation of employees and personal professionalism of management.

Kostenko D. (2018) draws attention to the fact that human behaviour can be understood only taking into account specific situations, and there is no single standard of correctness in cultural behaviour. D. Kostenko calls these basic provisions for the formation of sustainable cross-cultural competences *ethnorelativism* (as opposed to *ethnocentrism*). Thus, cultural differences are recorded by cultural relativism, but it refrains from evaluating them.

Based on the approach of D. Kostenko, the formation of cross-cultural competence of European green business should be seen as *overcoming ethnocentrism through the purposeful study of ethnorelativism, which does not arise in an individual in a monocultural environment, but is purposefully formed in an intercultural environment under the influence of an appropriate intercultural management strategy.*

In addition to the above-mentioned knowledge and skills, the list of cross-cultural competencies of European environmental business should include: the ability to reflect on one's own and other cultures (forms a friendly attitude to manifestations of other cultures); a deep understanding of the diachronic and synchronic links between one's own and other cultures; knowledge of the conditions of socialisation and inculturation in one's own and other cultures, social stratification, socio-cultural forms of interaction, etc.

In this way, cross-cultural communication in environmental business can maximise the positive features of the national cultures involved, making such communication understandable to all, as well as the values of the Green Planet, which is objectively a unifying factor. This will have important consequences in the form of predictability of such communication, which is a very important condition for successful business (in business, it is very important that people operate with the same concepts and are predictable).

Therefore, the challenge of building effective cross-cultural communications is to build communications that are understandable to all participants. At the same time, this will help each employee to pay attention to the team's common, rather than distinctive, work.

The authors propose to consider such communications as an object of "*green cross-cultural management*" to form a unique cross-cultural environment. The appropriate format of cross-cultural communication can go through a certain stage of testing and changes as a natural process of development of the European environmental business.

Green cross-cultural management should be understood as a process of managing an eco-innovative company that takes into account cultural differences between employees and customers from different countries. The appropriate targeted development of cross-cultural competencies of employees, with the dominant influence of the requirements of environmentally sound economic growth) allows such companies to operate more efficiently in the context of international business development and globalisation, by supporting effective interaction between different cultures in one company.

Romanukha O. (2017) notes that communication barriers can become the main constraints to the transformation of the cross-cultural communication format due to the dominant factors of the external environment. Although the number in each individual company depends directly on the specifics of the company's work, the following communication barriers are common to all organisations: 1) the level of tolerance in the team; 2) the use of verbal and non-verbal means of communication; 3) the tendency to see the world through cultural filters (ethnocentrism); 4) stereotypes of perception and behaviour, errors in interpreting behaviour that create barriers to effective intercultural communication; 5) a feature of intercultural communication that is uncertainty or ambiguity regarding the basic rules by which cross-cultural integration will be carried out.

Thus, overcoming such barriers is an important task of green cross-cultural management, which relies on existing strategies for overcoming cross-cultural challenges. It is better to use several such strategies at once.

1. *Cross-cultural learning strategy.* Gaining relevant knowledge about cultural diversity in business will allow employees to better understand the nuances of different cultures, leading to better communication and fewer misunderstandings.

2. *Cultural sensitivity development strategy.* This strategy involves promoting understanding and respect for cultural differences within the organisation. This can help to reduce conflict and foster better relationships between employees.

3. *Strategy for creating communication channels.* This strategy is aimed at overcoming the language barrier in general by testing different methods of interaction that are comfortable for employees.

4. *Strategy for forming common positions.* Finding common ground can help build trust and foster better relationships between employees from different cultures. Identifying shared values and interests can help bridge cultural differences.

Despite the fact that such strategies work quite effectively in the real European cross-cultural field and can be more effective when applied in a comprehensive manner, the study identified obstacles to the implementation of green cross-cultural environment mechanisms in the Ukrainian business environment, especially in small- and medium-sized businesses. First of all, these obstacles are related to the complexity of regulating domestic business in the field of sustainable development.

These are the difficulties of environmental balance (sustainability) of domestic business:

- Significant differentiation of business activities (especially of SMEs), which creates a corresponding diversity and complexity of environmental issues and relevant internal policies of companies;
- limited capacity for small businesses to absorb and comply with environmental sustainability (sustainable development) regulatory requirements – insufficient resources, time and professional knowledge;
- low level of awareness among small businesses of the need to eliminate negative environmental impacts and, accordingly, to comply with relevant regulations.

In this regard, it should be noted that these environmental and economic difficulties, which are not a direct consequence of communication difficulties (but certainly accompany them), can be largely resolved through green cross-cultural management mechanisms.

It should also be borne in mind that in the post-war period of Ukraine's economic recovery, which is expected to have features of a green economy (Chala, 2023), the difficulties described above may either increase (due to economic problems) or decrease (due to the digitalisation of many areas of communication between companies and regulators). Nevertheless, in the near future, Ukrainian business, especially in the field of eco-

innovation, will become the object of green organisational and communication potential management and the formation of sustainable mechanisms for *green cross-cultural management*.

5. Conclusions

Modern European business is developing under the dominant influence of the EU's ambitious development plan – the implementation of the Green Deal strategy as an environmentally friendly economic growth. This trend is creating promising markets for innovative environmental products and services and is contributing to the growth of the market presence of both European and foreign companies, branches of multinationals and other environmental business entities from around the world.

Accordingly, not only market business communications become more complex, but also communications between employees of large and small eco-innovative companies that take place in a complex multinational environment. The success of such communications is possible only if there are developed cross-cultural competencies and the process of developing these competencies is managed within the framework of cross-cultural management strategies.

The use of cross-cultural management in the process of managing an environmentally friendly European business allows solving a number of important management tasks, including negotiating and establishing mutually beneficial relations with contractors; improving the coherence of staff in a multinational team; reducing the number of conflicts; building an effective system of personnel management, motivation and leadership.

The *green cross-cultural management* of environmental (green) companies operating in European markets should demonstrate the active development of relevant cross-cultural competencies of employees, including the skills of cooperation with representatives of other cultures, recognition of their interests in developing common priorities, and maximum tolerance to cultural diversity (religious, professional, age and other differences). Taking into account and using the cultural differences of staff in the management process and using them to improve the effectiveness of communications both within the organisation and in international relations of a European environmental company *are the main tasks of green cross-cultural management*.

European integration trends in the development of Ukrainian business help to strengthen contacts between representatives of different nations and cultures. This has a positive impact on business development, the intensification of intercultural dialogue and the overall progress of humanity. Cross-cultural communications play an important

role in this, as they help to form common values in a multinational team, intensify contacts, and eliminate language, cultural and religious barriers.

The use of green cross-cultural management mechanisms for Ukrainian environmental business, which in the near future will cooperate in a single

regulatory field with the European one, is seen as an effective way to overcome obstacles both in supporting the environmental requirements of domestic companies and in developing effective communications of such companies in a single transnational European business space.

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