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**CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS STRATEGIES IN
SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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Introduction. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) management is pivotal for the strategic development of the national economy and the sustainability of companies. Considering the intensification of environmental and social issues, companies that integrate the principles of sustainable development into their activities can enhance their image and ensure long-term economic efficiency.

Aim and tasks. This study examines the key principles of corporate social responsibility management and their impact on the economic, social, and environmental development of companies. It also examines the role of CSR in sustainable economic development and its significance in establishing a socially responsible business environment.

Results. The adoption of CSR principles enhances business positions, as proven by the increase in the number of companies publishing CSR reports from 20% in 2011 to over 90% of S&P 500 companies in 2022. This contributes to positive economic dynamics, with the annual growth of legal entities reaching 8.5% between 2020 and 2023, while the number of private enterprises decreased by 0.2%. The key components of corporate reputational capital included product and service quality (20.2%), management quality (14.9%), citizenship (14.6%), financial success (13.4%), and innovation (13.3%). In 2023, the distribution of companies by CSR type was as follows: large Ukrainian enterprises (67%) and enterprises with foreign capital (18%) were the most common, while multinational corporations accounted for 13%, and medium-sized enterprises accounted for 2%. CSR has a positive impact on company performance, reflected in reputation (93.6%), quality (85.3%), innovation (83%), customer satisfaction (81.7%), productivity (80.4%), and market accessibility (71.3%).

Conclusions. CSR management is crucial for sustainable development and promotes responsible economic practices. The analysis of CSR projects of domestic companies in the context of sustainable development and social responsibility has identified key activities of the most socially responsible companies in Ukraine that provide charitable assistance to the population (74%), support medical services (54%), and organise leisure activities and resettlement (47%). The implementation of corporate social responsibility through innovations, social programs, and environmental initiatives not only adds value to businesses but also fosters favourable changes in the community and the environment.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility, sustainability, corporate capital, corporate reputation, business strategy.

1. Introduction.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) management is an indicator of sustainable business development and an aspect of the strategic development of the national economy. Amid growing environmental and social challenges, companies implementing sustainable development principles improve their image and ensure stable long-term economic efficiency.

Corporate social responsibility is a key element of modern business that promotes sustainable economic development by enhancing enterprises' competitiveness and reputation and adhering to international standards, such as ISO 26000 and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

Sustainable development is based on the functioning of an economic system, as it aims to protect the environment, safeguard the population, improve product quality, and enhance management methods while ensuring economic growth. The intensification of sustainable economic development is relevant to the current social and economic situation. National challenges such as military operations, economic crises, declining living standards, and environmental pollution require the implementation of socially oriented management methods, particularly corporate social responsibility (CSR).

In this case, business activities, criteria for assessing operational efficiency, and priorities in corporate management should be revised. However, with companies becoming more socially oriented, indicators of the company's impact on the environment and policy stipulating working conditions are becoming increasingly important in performance outcomes.

The implementation of the current concept of corporate social responsibility is a necessary condition for achieving enterprises' sustainable development goals. This is also a priority in the development of management actions.

This study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the key principles of CSR management and their impact on economic, social, and environmental development?

RQ2: Which international CSR standards and practices facilitate integration into businesses to achieve sustainable growth?

RQ3: What are the conceptual foundations of CSR and how does it influence sustainable economic development?

2. Literature review.

The importance of the principles and concepts of corporate social responsibility has increased in recent studies, as evidenced by the focus on this topic and the governance structure, particularly from the perspective of reducing corporate risk (Wang et al., 2024).

Huang et al. (2020) investigate corporate social responsibility, corporate financial indicators, and effects of economic fluctuations. Pricing consequences of corporate social responsibility of consumers who care about environmentally and socially responsible corporate actions and direct their expenses toward such products are studied by Szöcs and Gabriela (2024).

Given the urgency of the issues of environmentally responsible business, research reviews show a significant emphasis on analysing corporate social responsibility in the context of sustainable development, defining the principles of responsible social actions (DePamphilis, 2007; Doytch & Cakan, 2011), and studying the theoretical foundations of business social responsibility (Bowen, 1953; Davis, 1960). Carroll (2001) examined the model and pyramid of CSR, including four responsibility levels.

Birkinshaw et al. (2000) and Knell (2006) described CSR as the responsibility to adhere to the principles chosen and adopted by the organisation's owners, management, and employees to meet social environment expectations. Korneyev et al. (2019) conducted an in-depth study examining the institutional nature of organisations' social responsibility commitments. Wirba (2024) concluded that corporate social responsibility could become an alternative to government policy if companies could efficiently engage in dialogue with their stakeholders and establish an acceptable expense for society's social and environmental needs.

The definition of corporate social responsibility has been explored by Licandro et al. (2023) and Dzage and Sabados (2024) who focused on the management of external factors and their relationship with business performance.

While corporate social responsibility has made significant progress, its integration into the operations of businesses is critical to achieving sustainable growth. This study examines how this affects economic growth and encourages corporate social responsibility.

3. Methodology.

The method of assessing CSR is primarily based on the evaluation of companies using specific indicators. An important task is the internal assessment of CSR, which includes the assessments of business owners and employees. The reason for this is the need to focus business activities on the implementation of the requirements and principles of responsible entrepreneurship, identify reserves and manage the level of CSR. Corporations are derived from the concept of sustainable development, which represents an economic growth model that facilitates environmental protection. The CSR level was assessed using a system of indicators divided into two groups.

1. Quantitative indicators are analysed in dynamics. The increase or stability of the indicator was assessed as 1 point, whereas the decrease was assessed as 0 points.

2. Qualitative indicators were assessed using the binary system: yes (1) or no (0).

Next, the integral indicator I_{CSR} was calculated using Formula 1 (Chuprina, 2023):

$$I_{CSR} = \sum_{i=1}^3 \sum_{j=1}^6 a_{ij} \div m \quad (1)$$

Where i is the number of CSR assessment components (economic, social, and environmental); j is the number of stakeholders; a_{ij} is the value of the given indicator; m is the number of assessed indicators.

Corporate social responsibility is a three-party model involving the state. It is worth noting that the attitude of the current authorities can be divided into two models: the US and Europe.

The initiative to implement CSR in the US model belongs to enterprises that can independently define their social contributions. State regulation is not of great importance in this model. However, it provides tax incentives for social investments in socially beneficial areas and encourages companies to invest in social infrastructure (Kalinin et al., 2024). The European corporate social responsibility (CSR) model is a system of national regulatory measures. The spread of the concept of CSR is facilitated by the economic globalisation trend and the active promotion of mandatory disclosure of social reports based on international standards (Table 1).

Primarily, management models are based on a process approach, which is reflected in the company's corporate activities as the Shewhart-Deming cycle (PDCA management process algorithm). Corporate social responsibility and the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) management cycle are interrelated because of the approach to improving company operations' social, environmental, and economic aspects (Kolodiziev et al., 2023). CSR and PDCA aim to enhance an organisation's performance and ensure sustainable development. The PDCA cycle allows a company to systematically improve its implementation of CSR, ensuring efficiency in achieving its development goals.

4. Results.

CSR has become a crucial element of business strategy in the current context of globalisation and growing social and environmental challenges. It allows companies not only to meet societal demands but also to integrate into sustainable economic development processes.

CSR management affects the values and practices that ensure a harmonious balance between economic, social, and environmental interests. Corporate social responsibility means that companies take responsibility for the impact of their actions on society and the environment. It is about complying with legislation and actively participating in community development, protecting the environment, improving working conditions, and supporting social justice.

Table 1. Key international standards of corporate social responsibility.

Standard	Content of the standard
ISO 26000 – CSR Guide	Aligning the management system with socially responsible actions (Corporate Social Responsibility) and the above sustainable development standards. In this case, the ISO 26000 international standard is a technically and methodologically sound guide.
IQNET SR 10 – Securing CSR principles in processes	IQNet SR 10 is an international certification standard based on ISO 26000 and offered by the IQNET Association, a global association of certification bodies. DQS is also a member. SR 10 allows companies and organisations of any size and in all industries to integrate CSR principles into their processes and document them externally. The certification process follows the classic DQS certification procedure, which is also used for other management system standards.
OHSAS 18001	Standards for auditing occupational health and safety management systems meet the needs of efficient occupational health and safety operations.
SA 8000	Standards that improve corporate working conditions and protect the rights and opportunities are under the control and influence of the company.
AA 1000	The standard for corporate ethics and social activities is the integration of social factors into corporate organisations.
ISO 14001	Environmental management system standards to reduce environmental pollution.
ISO 26000:2010	The standard for stakeholder engagement is the integration of socially responsible behaviour into the organisation.

Source: based on Atestor (2021); ISO (2023).

The main components of corporate social responsibility include economic, social, and environmental responsibility, and companies should operate efficiently and ethically, taking into account the social interests of other stakeholders and minimising anthropogenic impact. Corporate social responsibility is a relevant attribute of modern businesses and key to sustainable economic development (Dzage & Sabados, 2024).

Corporate social responsibility management implies the integration of social, environmental, and economic aspects into a company’s strategy, which not only enhances its reputation but also results in positive societal changes. Therefore, the key principles of Corporate social responsibility management should be highlighted (United Nations Global Compact, 2023) (Fig. 1).

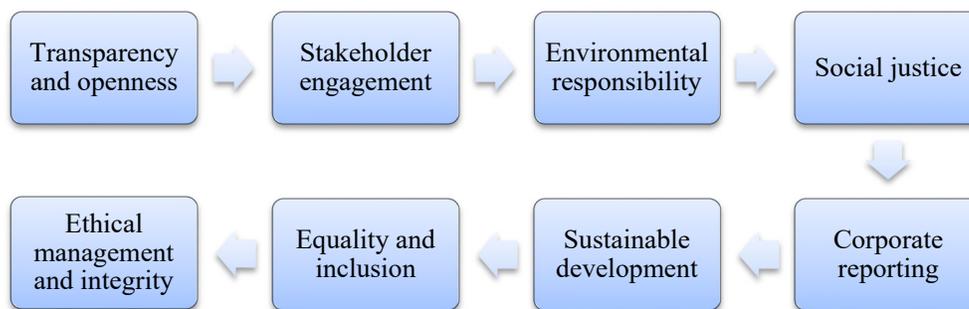


Fig. 1. Key principles of corporate social responsibility management.

Source: based on Huang et al. (2020); Szöcs and Gabriela (2024).

By analysing these principles, enterprises should ensure access to information about their activities, environmental initiatives, and social programs, fostering trust among consumers and partners (Licandro et al., 2023). However, considering the goals and principles of corporate social responsibility management,

the opinions of all stakeholder groups, implementing environmentally friendly technologies, reducing their impact on the environment, supporting equal opportunities, local community development, and fair wages are important components of CSR (Kolodiziev et al. 2023).

However, comprehensive management requires systematic monitoring, analysis, and appropriate responses to signals received from the organisation's external and internal environments (Bai et al., 2025). The CSR pyramid shows several levels of corporate social

responsibility, ranging from economic prospects and fundamental performance indicators to philanthropy. All of these elements are interrelated. Companies should be profitable, comply with legislation, operate efficiently, and strive to contribute to society positively (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Corporate social responsibility pyramid.

Source: based on Carroll Archie (2001); Knell (2006).

Figure 2 shows a process diagram within a social responsibility management system described in the international standard IQNet SR10 “Social Responsibility Management Systems”. This standard is based on the principles of ISO 26000 and the methodology of the ISO 9000 series of standards, including the Shewhart-Deming cycle (PDCA) principles (Kolodiziev et al., 2023). CSR standards also include the PDCA cycle, as outlined in Figure 3.

The process approach to social responsibility management is also used to develop management processes in individual organisational units that are responsible for interacting with various stakeholder groups (Kolodiziev et al. 2023).

According to the analysis of international standards' requirements for the corporate social responsibility management system, it is essential to highlight key functions that facilitate the integration of social, environmental, and economic aspects into business processes. The CSR management system improves a company's reputation and contributes to its dynamic and sustainable development by solving social and environmental problems in the modern world.

The integration of CSR into sustainable development strategies is beneficial. On the one hand, CSR provides companies with competitive advantages by improving their reputation, increasing customer loyalty, and attracting investments.



Fig. 3. The process-based management of social responsibility uses the PDCA cycle.

Source: based on Shi et al. (2017).

The main functions of this system are as follows:

1. Strategic planning helps formulate strategic goals and objectives in corporate social responsibility that aligns with the company's overall mission. This facilitates the integration of CSR into business models and enhances competitiveness.

2. Monitoring and assessment, namely establishing a system of indicators to assess social responsibility performance, includes the analysis of the company's impact on society and the environment.

3. Stakeholder engagement is the interaction with all groups (customers, employees, suppliers, communities) that can influence or be affected by the company's activities. This ensures that their interests are considered in decision-making.

4. Communication and reporting involve establishing transparent channels to inform stakeholders about corporate social responsibility initiatives.

5. Training and development, particularly staff training, investing in corporate social responsibility principles, fostering a responsible corporate culture, and engaging employees in implementing social responsibility initiatives.

6. The introduction of innovations and changes will encourage the adoption of innovative solutions for environmental sustainability and social responsibility, thus enhancing business efficiency (Hutsaliuk et al., 2024).

7. Risk management involves identifying and analysing risks related to social and environmental activities in order to take measures for risk minimisation.

8. Social initiatives include developing and implementing programs to support local communities, improve working conditions, and promote environmental initiatives.

9. Assessing the social and environmental impacts of a company's activities to define areas requiring advancement and strategic adjustments.

Sustainable economic development requires businesses to consider social and environmental aspects in their operations (Licandro et al., 2023).

The UN Global Compact is one of the world's most significant corporate social responsibility initiatives, stipulating ten principles in labour, human rights, the environment, and anti-corruption (Shi et al., 2017).

Another important global initiative is the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), which introduced the concept of sustainability reporting that covers social, economic, and environmental aspects of business and organisational activities (UN Global, 2022; Kryukova et al., 2023). CSR principles are also supported by the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), the UN Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI), and the ISO 26000:2010 Guidance on Social Responsibility.

The number of companies publicly stressing the implementation of CSR principles grows dynamically (over 90% of S&P 500 companies published CSR reports in 2022, compared with only 20% in 2011) (Nyeadi et al., 2018).

Compliance with CSR principles is a conscious choice of company managers, and in connection with this, the obvious economic benefits of the ethical component of this choice.

In particular, it has been proven that socially responsible companies' consumer tolerance of products is growing. Research conducted by modern scientists and practitioners indicates a direct link between corporate social responsibility and the corporate image. According to the 2022 Global RepTrak study, experts found the following most important factors affecting a company's reputation: product and service quality (20.2%), management quality (14.9%), citizenship (14.6%), financial performance (13.4%), and innovation (13.3%) (Business Insights, 2022; Economic Development Agency PPV, 2023) (Fig. 4).

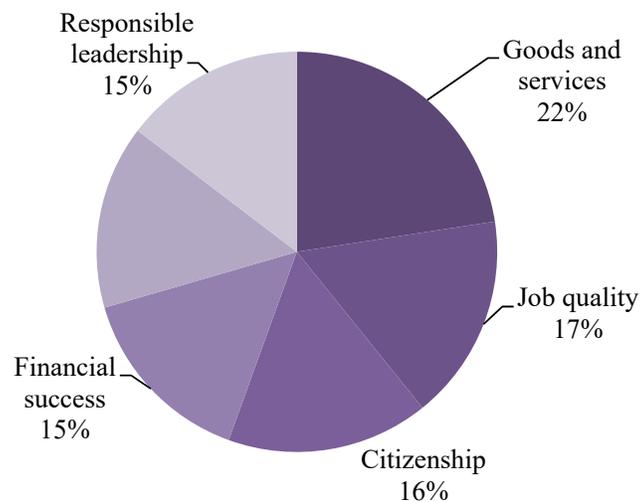


Fig. 4. Components of reputational capital of companies, 2022, %.

Source: based on Business Insights (2022).

Corporate responsibility provides several key advantages: increased trust in the company and its market value; encouragement of innovations; and interest of leading investors in sustainable development. Over the past decades, corporate sustainability has reduced unemployment and facilitated the development of alternative and renewable energy sources.

The global impact of COVID-19 on public health and finances has shown that companies are not immune to these challenges and cannot afford to remain passive.

The analysis of various industries aimed at promoting socially responsible entrepreneurship in Ukraine classifies member enterprises into the following categories (Fig. 5) (Navigator, 2023).

Large Ukrainian enterprises (67%, 210 companies) and enterprises with foreign capital (18%, 57 companies) are the most common. Transnational corporations account for 13% (41 companies), while small and medium-sized enterprises account for only 2% (6 companies) (Navigator, 2023).

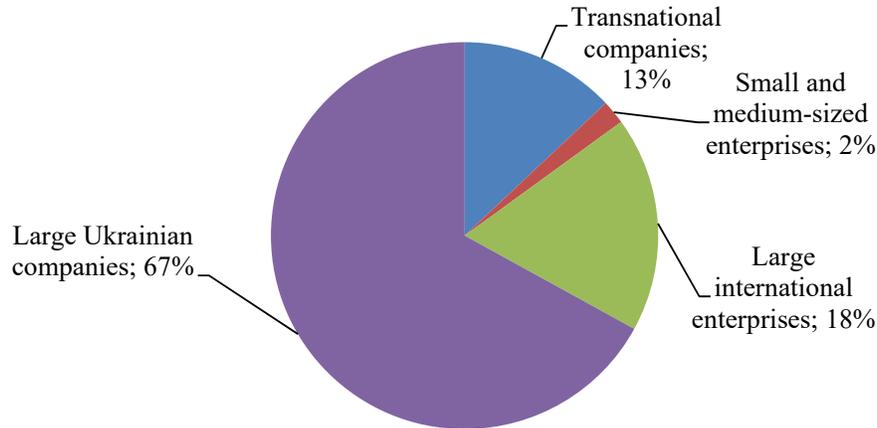


Fig 5. Allocation of corporate social responsibility companies by type, 2023.
Source: based on Navigator (2023).

Sustainable development is a new way of global progress that was officially adopted at the UN Summit in 2015 when the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were approved (United Nations Global Compact, 2023). Its essence lies in the balanced development of three key components: economy, environment, and social well-being.

Ukraine supports the sustainable development initiative by defining the area of its national development strategy until 2030 at the legislative level. Given Ukraine's specific development characteristics, it has suggested national Sustainable Development Goals based on the global SDGs (Presidential Decree of Ukraine, 2019).

These Sustainable Development Goals focus on efficient natural resource management, which should become a common foundation for uniting all participants in the economic process. To achieve these goals, one has set a range of specific tasks requiring the engagement of the business sector and the integration of corporate social responsibility initiatives into business activities.

Corporate social responsibility requires balancing economic needs, social issues, and environmental factors, and becomes a crucial tool allowing enterprises to:

1. Adopting eco-friendly technologies, reducing emissions, and optimising resource use can minimise environmental harm.
2. Active participation in social projects, support for local initiatives, and infrastructure development can improve living conditions.

Corporate social responsibility will act as a strategy in various industry sectors, including agriculture. Using the principles of a circular economy in industry minimises the cost of raw materials, reduces waste generation and promotes social well-being and environmental sustainability. Socially responsible companies implement new technologies to reduce their environmental impact.

Despite numerous challenges, Ukrainian business has potential owing to innovation, foreign investment, and government support. Ukraine's corporate sector is a leading component of the national economy, which has recently become increasingly complex and inefficient. An analysis of the dynamics of enterprises in the corporate sector of Ukraine for 2020-2023 indicates an increase in the total number of legal entities from 3.32% in 2021, 2.98% in 2022, and 1.94% in 2023 (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2023).

The total number of limited liability companies (LLCs) increased from 674,437 in 2020 to 707,403 in 2021 but significantly decreased in 2022 and 2023 to 1,121 and 1,100, respectively (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2023).

These data allow for assessing the structure of enterprises and legal entities in Ukraine, indicating certain trends and changes in business reorganisation and strengthening specific sectors such as state-owned enterprises, corporations, and civic associations. The structure of the total number of legal entities in 2022-2023 is shown in Figure 6.

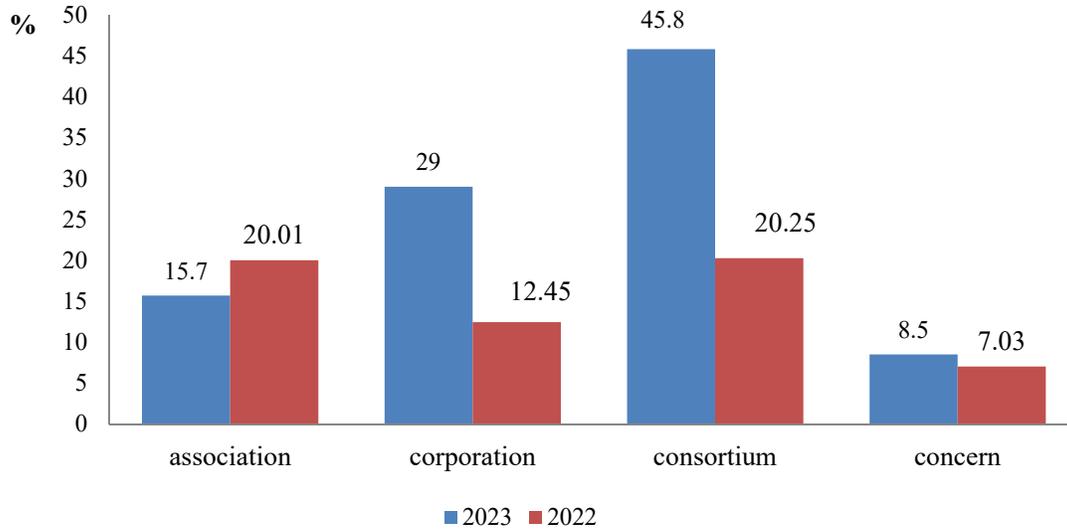


Fig. 6. The structure of corporate enterprises in Ukraine, %.

Source: based on State Statistics Service of Ukraine (2023).

Many companies implement projects in local communities to support education, healthcare, culture, arts, etc. Environmental initiatives include reducing emissions, recycling wastes, and implementing energy-efficient solutions. In addition, companies report on their corporate social responsibility activities, which helps increase stakeholder trust.

The analysis of CSR projects implemented by domestic companies following sustainable development and social responsibility during the military aggression revealed the main activity areas: charitable assistance to the population, support for medical institutions, relocation and displacement of people, and provision of shelters (Table 2).

Table 2. Ukraine’s most socially responsible companies in 2022-2023.

Enterprises	Charitable assistance to the population	Support for medical institutions	Relocation and displacement of people	Provision of shelters
FERREXPO	+	+	+	+
METINVEST	+	+	+	+
D. TEK	+	+	+	+
ASTERS	+	+	+	-
CRH	+	+	+	-
BAYERN	+	+	+	-
Kronospan	+	+	-	-
Arcelor Mittal	+	+	-	-
Dyckerhoff Cement Ukraine	-	-	+	+
MHP	+	-	-	-
BASF	+	-	-	-
KERNEL	+	-	-	-
INTERPIPE	-	-	-	+
DCH Steel	-	-	-	+
UKRENERGO	-	-	+	-

* + -

Source: based on Boiko (2022).

According to experts, the implementation of social activities has revealed high expectations among respondents regarding the positive impact of CSR (Huang et al., 2020; Nyame-Asiamah, 2020). Companies expect the most significant benefits in better reputation, brand recognition, enhanced relationships with government authorities, improved product quality, competitive advantages, innovations, labour productivity, sales, profits, and other economic development indicators (Fig. 7).

Social responsibility primarily concerns the rational use of resources. Initiatives for the internal environment include increasing productivity, strengthening competitiveness, optimising costs, improving corporate image, and increasing sales.

CSR management should become an integral part of the company's strategic planning. Companies should set specific social responsibility goals, measure their achievement, regularly report on the results, and apply new technologies to reduce environmental pollution.

Therefore, integrating corporate social responsibility with sustainable economic development is crucial in helping companies adapt to current challenges. Corporate social responsibility enhances the company's image and creates a more sustainable, responsible, socially and economically balanced business environment. Companies should realise their societal role and actively implement CSR principles to achieve sustainable development.

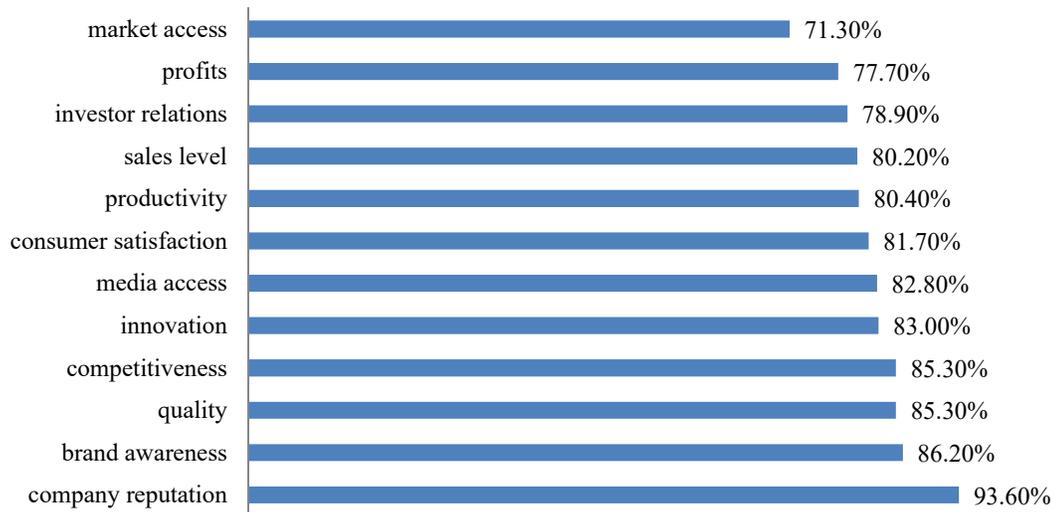


Fig. 7. Assessment of the positive impact of CSR activities on company operations, 2023.

Source: based on Boiko (2022); Huang et al. (2020).

5. Conclusions.

Corporate social responsibility is a key component of sustainable economic development and supports a balance between companies, society, and the environment. CSR in business plans increases companies' competitiveness and promotes social and economic development. With the increase in companies (from 3.32% in 2021, 2.98% in 2022, and 1.94% in 2023) in different industries, their anthropogenic influence also increases, emphasising the importance of implementing corporate social responsibility.

Corporate social responsibility management is the basis for integrating sustainable development principles into the national economy. CSR permits companies to follow ethical standards while promoting social, economic and environmental progress. A balanced combination of profitability and social responsibility strengthens a company's reputation, wins consumer trust, and attracts new investment. The connection between social programs and environmental initiatives within the CSR framework increases companies' value and helps reduce their anthropogenic impact.

However, the successful integration of CSR into sustainable development strategies must overcome concerns, such as lack of awareness, lack of uniform standards, and potential conflicts of interest. Transparent communication and interaction with stakeholders play an important role in this process. Therefore, CSR management is a pressing need and effective tool for sustainable economic development, contributing to the formation of a responsible, sustainable, and socially oriented future.

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