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## Sustainable Development Strategy Implementation: International Experience

**Abstract. Introduction**. The article is focused on current issues of sustainable development for Ukraine in connection with the conclusion of the Association Agreement between Ukraine, on the one hand, and the European Union, on the other.

**Purpose.** The purpose of the article is to analyze the peculiarities of the process of transition to sustainable development of some countries of the European Union, to define a group of countries were determined on the basis of indicators of readiness and participation in the development of sustainable development measures. The authors believe that it is impossible for European countries to deviate from the path of sustainable development.

**Results.** The subject of the research are sustainable development strategies. The main areas of progress towards sustainable development in some countries are considered, along with the specific goals and measures to achieve these goals, as well as the coordinating bodies responsible for issues related to sustainable development policies in some developed countries around the world. The strategy of sustainable use of natural resources provides the basis for reducing the environmental impact of industrial production and consumption without compromising economic development.

The article presents an action plan for the adoption and implementation of seven thematic strategies covering air pollution, the marine environment, the sustainable use of resources, waste prevention and treatment, the sustainable use of pesticides, soil protection and the sustainable urban environment. The main EU directives will be analyzed as they contain certain thematic strategies.

**Conclusions.** The results obtained can be used for further prospective studies of capacity building mechanisms to increase the ability of governments to transform regional processes and instruments into national governance mechanisms.

Keywords: strategy; policy; implementation; sustainable development; sustainable development goals; integration.

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## Реалізація стратегії сталого розвитку: міжнародний досвід

Стаття присвячена актуальним питанням сталого розвитку для України у зв'язку з укладенням Угоди про асоціацію між Україною, з одного боку, та Європейським Союзом, з іншого. Пріоритетом політики сталого розвитку є забезпечення гідних умов життя та праці у власній країні.

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Метою статті є аналіз особливості процесу переходу до сталого розвитку окремих країн Європейського Союзу, визначення групи країн за показниками готовності та участі в розробці заходів сталого розвитку. Автори вважають, що європейським країнам не можна відхилятися від шляху сталого розвитку.

Предметом дослідження є стратегії сталого розвитку. Розглянуто основні напрями розвитку на шляху до сталого розвитку в окремих країнах разом із конкретними цілями та заходами для досягнення цих цілей, а також координаційні органи, відповідальні за питання, пов'язані з політикою сталого розвитку в деяких розвинених країнах світу. Стратегія сталого використання природних ресурсів закладає основу для зменшення впливу промислового виробництва та споживання на навколишнє середовище без впливу на економічний розвиток.

Автори запропонували план дій, який спочатку передбачав ухвалення та реалізацію семи тематичних стратегій, які охоплюють наступні сфери: забруднення повітря, морське середовище, стале використання ресурсів, запобігання утворенню та перероблювання відходів, стале використання пестицидів, охорона ґрунту та середовище сталого розвитку міст. Проаналізовано основні директиви ЄС, які містять певні тематичні стратегії. У ході роботи були розглянуті перспективні напрями розвитку на шляху до сталого розвитку окремих країн, а також конкретні цілі та заходи щодо їх досягнення.

Отримані результати можуть бути використані для подальших перспективних досліджень механізмів розбудови потенціалу для збільшення здатності урядів трансформувати регіональні процеси та інструменти в національні механізми управління. Лише інституційні реформи в державному управлінні здатні привести до системних змін.

Ключові слова: стратегія; політика; впровадження; сталий розвиток; цілі сталого розвитку; інтеграція.

IEL Classification: R11, R13, R15

Formulation of the problem. Globalization processes and rapid development of high-tech production of postindustrial society bring not only high quality and standard of living for the countries, leaders of world economic development, but also negative consequences in the form of growing man-made burden on the natural environment, depletion of non-renewable natural resources, which in the long term causes limitation of opportunities for stable economic growth for future generations. An alternative way to maintain high rates of economic growth based on the principles of ecological production is the concept of sustainable development proposed at the end of the 20th century, the integral components of which are the "green" economy and "green" business, the development of renewable energy, the greening of industrial production, the development of organic agriculture, the rapid spread of electric cars, "smart" houses and "smart" cities. Such sustainable development priorities are closely related to the structural and innovative changes in the economies of the world's leading countries in the 21st century.

Today, the concept of circular economy [1] is more common, which is a kind of tool for achieving the goals of sustainable development, providing for the improvement of people's well-being and social equality, and reducing the negative impact on the environment, reducing the risks of ecological degradation. The main idea is zero waste production (waste becomes resources/goods).

Equalizing the quality of life in different countries and ensuring the growth of prosperity in the future are fundamental conditions for sustainable development. Therefore, poor countries must increase their efforts to catch up with more developed countries. But the improvement of the quality of life should be based on new scientific achievements, especially in the conditions of the 4th industrial revolution. Modern conditions require everyone to reduce the consumption of resources, switch to alternative types of materials and energy sources, implement advanced resource-intensive and waste-free

technologies, and reduce the burden on the environment and human health [2].

A leader in the practical implementation of sustainable development ideas in the 21st century is the European Union, which in 2010 adopted and is currently implementing the "Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth". Summarizing the positive experience of European countries in the implementation of a sustainable development strategy is extremely important for Ukraine, which after the signing of the Association Agreement with the EU has entered into a complex process of structural transformation of all spheres of the national economy. This formulation of the problem testifies to the relevance and significant practical importance of the subject of the article. After all, reforming the economy of Ukraine in accordance with the strategic sustainable development priorities (generally recognized in the EU) will allow our state to follow the path of anticipatory, and not catch-up socio-economic development, which will have a positive impact on the pace and quality of economic growth of the Ukrainian

Analysis of recent research and publications. The problems of sustainable development of the countries of the world are actively studied by foreign and domestic scientists. Approaches and directions of implementation of sustainable development at the national level, in particular, taking into account the international experience, have been studied in the works of such scientists as B. Burkynskyi, I. Bystryakova, T. Galushkina, V. Trofymova, S. Gerasimova, M. Kyzym, V. Kravtsiva, L. Kruglyakova, V. Kuhar, B. Danilyshyn, S. Doroguntsova, M. Dolishnyi, M. Zgurovskyi, O. Osaulenka, S. Makosii, H. Gardner, L. Braun, N. Carter, D. Korten, D. Meadows and others.

The main features of the national concept of sustainable development, which are based on the disclosure of the specifics of the formation of social relations, in particular, in the philosophy of postmodernism, are considered by I. Bystryakov. In his

opinion, the strategy of further sustainable development is connected with the mechanisms of corporatization of the economic space and capitalization of natural resources, which ensure the reproduction of a harmonious environment [3]. V. Trofymova [4] emphasizes the fact that there are objective and subjective factors that make it impossible to implement this concept in the conditions of an industrial production The institutional method. component of implementation of the concept of sustainable development in the countries of Northern Europe is considered in the article of A. Yanshina [5].

Despite the significant number of scientific works and the long existence of Ukraine as an independent state, the opportunities for implementation of international experience in the introduction of sustainable development policy for the formation of an effective state policy remain uncertain.

Formulation of research goals. The main goal of this work is to analyze the international experience of implementing the sustainable development strategy and identify groups of countries based on indicators of readiness and participation in the development of sustainable development measures.

Outline of the main research material. Issues of sustainable development became relevant for Ukraine in connection with the conclusion of the Association Agreement between Ukraine, on the one hand, and the European Union, on the other hand (ratified by the Law of Ukraine No. 1678-VII of 16.09.2014). According to it, the promotion of sustainable development is considered one of the main principles of strengthening cooperation between the Parties, which recognize the importance of fully taking into account the economic, social and environmental interests not only of their respective populations, but also of future generations, and ensure that economic development, environmental and public policies are mutually supportive.

In 2015, the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko signed the Decree No. 5/2015 on the approval of the Sustainable Development Strategy "Ukraine-2020". The document defines the purpose, directions of movement, top priorities and indicators of proper defense, socioeconomic, organizational, political and legal conditions for the formation and development of Ukraine. Thus, the goal of the "Ukraine-2020" strategy is the implementation of European standards of living in the country and its rise to the leading positions in the world. The implementation of this goal is carried out according to vectors [6]:

- Development vector ensuring the sustainable development of the state, carrying out structural reforms and, as a result, raising the standard of living;
- Security vector ensuring the security of the state, business and citizens, security of investments and private property:
- Responsibility vector providing guarantees that every citizen, regardless of race, skin color, political, religious and other beliefs, gender, ethnic and social

origin, property status, place of residence, language or other characteristics, will have access to quality education, health care system and other services in the public and private sectors; Pride vector - providing mutual respect and tolerance in society, pride in one's own state, its history, culture, science and sports.

During the years of Ukraine's independence, the term "sustainable development" has been mentioned in various variations (sustainable development; sustainable, ecologically balanced development; sustainable socioeconomic development; sustainable development of the economy/territories; sustainable economic development; sustainable, balanced development) in separate regulatory - legal acts as a basis, goal, direction, prerequisite, principle, guideline of development without a clear unified definition, but these definitions are quite inconsistent among themselves. Current legal acts, developed national programs, finally laws, do not cover all aspects of this multifaceted and complex problem - transition of Ukraine to sustainable development.

Europe was one of the founders of the concept of sustainable development, starting in the 70s of the 20th century. After 1992, many programs were adopted here, unions and other organizations were created to develop measures for the transition to sustainable development.

According to the indicators of readiness and participation in the development of measures for sustainable development, 4 groups of countries are distinguished [7]:

- 1. Early high activity;
- 2. Late high activity;
- 3. Delayed average activity;
- 4. Late low activity.

The first group includes Sweden, Great Britain and the Netherlands, which have some positive experience in this field, although they have certain differences among themselves. In these countries, state and local government bodies, non-governmental organizations work together, and funds are allocated for the implementation of relevant nature protection, promotional and educational programs and events. The population behaves actively and controls the authorities in matters of environmental protection.

The National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Sweden [8] describes the current situation in the field of sustainable development and the future prospects of the country. The main issues considered in this document are

- Organization of effective interaction between economic, social and environmental development;
  - Global problems of sustainable development;
- Analysis of international and national activities in the field of sustainable development.

This document contains a list of implemented measures for transition to sustainable development and scenarios of future projects. The strategy highlights the main areas of sustainable development, as well as specific goals and measures to achieve them (Table 1).

Table 1 Content of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Sweden

Main areas	Goal		
The future	A non-toxic environment, a balanced marine	Effective use of energy and transport, policy of	
environment	environment, thriving coastal areas and key	complex products and efficient production cycles,	
	biodiversity conservation groups	effective management of water and land resources	
Reducing climate	In the period from 2008 to 2012, reduce CO2	Approve a program of cooperation with machine	
change	emissions by 4% compared to 1990, and by 2050 -	manufacturing companies, in accordance with the	
	the total CO2 emissions per capita per year should	existing structure of energy and transportation,	
	be lower by 4.5 tons	increase taxes on carbon dioxide emissions and	
		lower labor taxes, raise public awareness.	
Population and	To motivate the work of people of the older	Consider the proposals of the parliamentary	
healthcare	generation, to announce labor mobility and	committee to ensure the possibility of continuing to	
	opportunities to find a job. Guarantee economic	work for people of retirement age, to approve the	
	security in case of loss of income.	action plan for health and work.	
Social justice, well-	Halve income between 1999 and 2004. Reduce	New Social Code approved by the Parliament in	
being and security	crime and increase personal security. Promote	2001: an integrated approach to reduce the level of	
	youth education policies in a good and safe	crime, including priorities for reducing tender	
	environment. Proclaim the policy of tender	inequality and declaring equal rights of national	
	equality	minorities in all spheres of politics. The Convention	
		on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 2002	
Employment and	Become a leading nation in the field of research	Implement an action plan for education in	
learning in an	contributing to sustainable development, by	sustainable development, support scientific projects	
experienced society	allocating financial resources, ensuring more	and research in the fields of innovation,	
	social recruitment and supporting interdisciplinary	employment, social research, the environment,	
	courses on sustainable development at the	agriculture and spatial planning.	
	academic level.		

Source: compiled and supplemented by authors based on materials [8]

A similar sustainable development strategy was approved in the Netherlands [8], which contains general directions of regulation of sustainable development (Table 2), purpose and specific measures. At the same

time, the selection of sustainable development goals and measures for their implementation is carried out using a matrix of compromises.

Table 2 Directions of sustainable development of the "State action program for sustainable development of the Netherlands"

Main areas	General purpose	
Water	Increase the efficient use of water resources, prevent flooding, ensure good drinking water	
	quality	
Biodiversity	Improve this aspect by 50% by 2015	
Energy	Reliable, affordable and clean energy resources	
Rural	Sustainable and competitive production	
Transport	Reduce transportation costs, transition to a sustainable transportation system	
Consumption and	Stimulate entrepreneurship, motivate the implementation of the Sustainable Consumption and	
production	Production Programme at European level for a period of 10 years	
Knowledge	Develop a knowledge-based economy, stimulate innovation, integrate sustainable development	
	into the education system, develop research on the relationship between knowledge,	
	innovation, and sustainable development	
Health	Reduce the impact of chemicals on public health by 2020, reduce the negative impact of	
	environmental factors on public health	
People	Proclaim social harmony, the participation of 70% of the population in the labor market,	
	highlight the positive and negative aspects of migration, determine the consequences of	
	population aging on consumption	
Recreational resources	Project in the future	
Tools for Government	Better governance through the development of policy impact assessment tools, research,	
Behavior Change	forecasting and analysis, and the introduction of sustainable development principles into policy-	
	making.	
Poverty	Create economic, political and social opportunities for all, every citizen must meet their basic	
	needs, support initiatives to reduce the debt of poor countries.	

Source: compiled and supplemented by authors based on materials [8]

This matrix includes social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development. The second group includes Denmark, Finland and Norway, which started active actions to implement the concept of sustainable development only in 1997, believing that they had already done a lot in the 80s of the 20th century. However, in these countries the strategy of sustainable development is reflected in the national policy and has received the necessary legal basis. In these countries, local authorities have to report to the central authorities on their results in the transition to sustainable development, especially in the areas of increasing the supply of resources, reducing pollution, increasing biodiversity, etc. [7].

Denmark, Finland, Norway, Iceland and Sweden implemented the "Scandinavian Sustainable Development Strategy" in 2005-2008, which emphasizes the following issues

- Climate change;
- Conservation of biodiversity; Development and preservation of the natural and cultural environment;
  - Marine resources and their protection;
  - Ensuring product quality and food safety;
- Activities of the chemical industry, energy, transport, agriculture from the perspective of sustainable development;
- Organization of interaction between business and production;

- public participation in the problems of sustainable and harmonious development.

The third group includes: Austria, Germany, which even later joined the implementation of global programs of sustainable development, and after Rio-92 there was a long period of "silence", only since 1997 they began not only to actively participate in international conferences on sustainable development, but also to significantly intensify their work in this direction. The activity of the population is growing here, projects and programs are being developed, legislative acts are being adopted, etc. However, the bottleneck in the implementation of the concept of sustainable development is the issue of broad participation of the population and the establishment of local priority aspects of development according to the "Agenda for the 21st Century" [8]. In the German Sustainable Development Strategy, adopted in 2012, sustainable development is defined as a guiding policy principle of the German Federal Government; the need to observe this principle is declared as a goal and criterion for evaluating government activities [9]. The strategy is based on four main guidelines: equality between generations; quality of life; social cohesion; international responsibility.

The tasks of sustainable development of Germany, starting from 2013, are fiscal sustainability, economic activity, climate and energy, etc. (Table 3).

Table 3 Strategic tasks of sustainable development of Germany

Task	Content	
Fiscal stability	Consolidate state budgets. Establish a new permissible debt limit for the federal government and the states, limiting the growth of public debt. Create the basis for long-term stabilization of the euro. Improve economic and political governance and ensure the reliability of the EU's public finances	
Sustainable economic activity	Transition to low-carbon products with efficient use of raw materials. Creating new economic opportunities and jobs Support the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility	
Climate and energy	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 21% in 2008-2012 compared to 1990 levels. Increasing the EU's climate protection target by 30% (if no additional emission reduction requirements are imposed on Germany). Widespread introduction of renewable energy sources under the right conditions (e.g. establishment of a green tariff). Increasing energy efficiency, saving electricity and other energy.	
Permanent water policy	Clean water is an irreplaceable basis for human life and one of the most important resources.  Sustainable water management is an interdisciplinary task. Strengthening the links between global issues of the future in the field of water, energy and food security (Conference "Interconnection of Water, Energy and Food Security", 2001, Bonn)	
Sustainable development is the "engine" of progress	Sustainable development as a criterion for making economic and social decisions, a guiding principle in all spheres of life	

Source: compiled and supplemented by authors based on materials [8]

The German Sustainable Development Strategy also contains indicators for individual areas of sustainable development. Similar indicators have been developed for the following areas of sustainable development: "quality

of life" (14 indicators); "social cohesion" (6 indicators); "international responsibility" (2 indicators).

Thus, the most common areas of sustainable development in the EU are

- Control over the preservation of the natural environment;
  - Conservation of biodiversity;
- Improvement of environmental policy: control of waste and emissions, reduction of greenhouse gases, etc.

Let's consider which coordinating bodies in some countries of the world are responsible for issues related to sustainable development policy, as well as the limits of their powers (Table 4).

Table 4 Coordination of issues related to the sustainable development in some countries

Country	The body responsible for sustainable development	Powers
Austria	Committee on sustainable development	Coordination of activities to ensure sustainable development between different ministries
Sweden	Coordinating Group on Sustainable Development	Coordination of sustainable development within the framework of government institutions, performs the function of an analytical center and contributes to the further development of governmental institutions, performs the function of an analytical center and contributes to the further development of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development
Norway	Cabinet for sustainable development	Responsible for ensuring policy coherence on sustainable development policy
Finland	National Commission for Sustainable Development	Promotion of strategic goals of sustainable development within the framework of national and administrative policy, as well as activation of dialogue between various social forces.  Encouraging and clarifying implementation processes contributes to the coherence of sectoral policy and administration
Great Britain	Working Group on Sustainable Development Subcommittee on Environment and Energy	Joining the efforts of government officials and ministers in order to stimulate actions on certain issues of sustainable development
Germany	Committee of State Secretaries on Sustainable Development	Responsible for the development and implementation of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Germany

Source: compiled and supplemented by authors based on materials [10]

In December 1997, the National Commission for Sustainable Development of Ukraine was established under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated October 8, 1997 <sup>1</sup> 1123) as a consultative and advisory body on the development of the national strategy for sustainable development. Unfortunately, this Commission proved to be ineffective, as it did not prepare either the National Strategy for Balanced Development or the National Report of Ukraine on the state of implementation of the provisions of the "Agenda for the 21st Century" for the ten-year period (1992-2001). The Commission did not fulfill the tasks assigned to it, and in 2003 its activities were terminated. During the 6 years of its existence, the Commission held only a few meetings, and almost all of them were held in the absence of its chairman, the first vice-prime minister of Ukraine.

During the war, business focused its attention on the social component of sustainable development. Thus, the first priority of the company is to support employees and their family members in matters of relocation, payment of

wages in case of forced shutdown, compensation to the families of those injured as a result of military operations (97%). The second priority is to support the military in the ranks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Territorial Defense Forces (84%). In third place is the provision of humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons. Support for medical institutions covers the four main areas of sustainable business development in war-torn Ukraine.

It is interesting to note that in 2021 environmental issues were prioritized in the field of sustainable development. At the same time, despite the apparent predominance of the social component in companies' sustainable development programs, the level of support for the most vulnerable groups in the labor market, particularly people with disabilities, the elderly, students and young professionals, has significantly decreased. At the same time, the share of companies with projects related to women's leadership or gender equality increased slightly to 32%.

As of the end of December in Ukraine, only 8 companies out of 200 largest taxpayers reported on sustainable development in non-financial or integrated reports for 2021. These are companies and groups of companies such as Naftogaz of Ukraine, MHP, Ferrexpo, Auchan, Metinvest, Kernel, Carlsberg, Farmak. This is a third less than last year. Overall, the IT industry will show the most progress in sustainability reporting in 2022. Investments in sustainable development projects have increased significantly compared to 2021. The IT and telecommunications, retail, and consulting, audit, and legal sectors in particular have increased their budgets. As in 2021, IT and telecommunications, heavy industry and healthcare remain the largest investors.

Incentives for improving progress in the implementation of sustainable development goals in Ukraine, in our opinion, can be grants and targeted non-refundable aid from international organizations, support (financial, organizational, advisory and informational) of innovative projects, tax benefits and regulatory changes (including reduction of bureaucratic procedures and a temporary moratorium on strengthening control and raising standards).

It should be noted that since the introduction of martial law, the state has already implemented a number of deregulation measures in the field of economic activity during the period of martial law - the declarative principle of obtaining certain permit documents was introduced, a moratorium on the implementation of planned state control measures was imposed, the introduction of increased technological standards for metallurgy and glass industry was postponed, conditions for exemption from payment of environmental tax were created, etc.

Businesses improved their assessment of the level of integration of sustainable development goals into government policy.

Businesses highly appreciated the efforts of the state to take into account environmental, social and economic components, in particular in the National Recovery Plan of Ukraine. However, environmental issues remain the least taken into account in state policies, as in the previous year, while progress in taking into account economic components amounted to 21%.

It is also necessary to note the presence of barriers in the implementation of sustainable development goals at the state level. First of all, as last year, there is a lack of funding and resources. Currently, the focus of the state has shifted to ensuring defense capability, which is obvious in the conditions of martial law.

As a result, companies have directed their sustainable development programs to support the state, and the social component has come to the fore in sustainable development projects. Corporate budgets for sustainable development projects have increased several times, and companies are talking about plans to increase them further. Despite the war, the number of companies that see barriers to their implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals has decreased. If there are barriers, they are mostly internal. Companies have improved their assessment of the state's efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals in strategic documents, particularly in the National Recovery Plan. The 2022 Sustainable Development Goals are in line with the goals of developing countries. In fact, in some areas, business performs the function of the state.

**Conclusions.** The study of international experience shows that the development and adoption of strategic documents that would determine effective measures to implement the principle of sustainable development, the organization and coordination of activities in this direction is an important component of the national policy of developed countries.

The basis of modern state policy is the concept of sustainable development, therefore there is a need for structural changes in the construction of an effective policy in Ukraine, which would ensure a steady pace of economic growth, solving social problems, improving the environment and ensuring the country's successful integration into the global socio-economic space.

Each state has its own direction on the way to sustainable development, taking into account the positive experience of the state policy of developed countries that have achieved success on the way to sustainable development.

The main achievements and approaches contributing to the integration of the three vectors of sustainable development have been made at the European level. They have supported the integration of sustainable development into the decision-making process at all levels, played an important role in the formation of regional strategies, political structures and legal instruments, with the help of which national governments have succeeded in developing their own policies and legal frameworks. In addition, these organizations provide advisory services and concrete capacity-building support to enhance the ability of governments to translate these regional processes and instruments into national governance arrangements.

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