

Enabling Social Innovation in Ukraine



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Country Snapshot

Social innovation: "the processes and outcomes of developing novel approaches to address societal challenges facing people and planet." ¹

This snapshot represents a descriptive, non-exhaustive overview of key highlights from Indonesia's social innovation ecosystem.

✓ Direct focus on social innovation 🔗 Connected but indirect focus on social innovation ✗ No focus on social innovation

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK



Official Definition of Social Innovation 🔗

- **No legal definition** of social innovation or social entrepreneurship exists in Ukrainian law.
- The concept is used informally by civil society and donors, largely aligned with EU understandings. ²



Government Body for Social Innovation ✓

- **No dedicated government body** for social innovation.
- Responsibilities are fragmented across ministries (Social Policy, Economy, Digital Transformation).
- State support for social enterprises remains **limited and indirect**. ²



Government Strategy for Social Innovation ✓

- **No national social innovation strategy**.
- The **WINWIN 2030 National Innovation Strategy** focuses on technological and economic innovation, not explicitly on social innovation. ²
- The **Civil Society Development Strategy 2021–2026** indirectly supports social entrepreneurship through fiscal and regulatory improvements. ³



Policies, Laws & Regulations ✓ 🔗

No SI-specific legislation, but key indirect enablers include:

- **Law on Social Services (2019)**: Allows public authorities to contract NGOs and businesses for social services, enabling social enterprise participation. ⁴
- **VAT exemption for social service providers (2025)**: Applies regardless of ownership form, reducing operating costs. ⁵
- Tax incentives for charitable activity and volunteering.
- Veteran entrepreneurship support laws (post-2022) indirectly encourage social-impact businesses.



Official Statistics 🔗

- **No official statistics** on social innovation or social enterprises.
- Civil society estimates range from **~150 to ~1,000** social enterprises, reflecting definitional ambiguity. ⁶



Government Programs

- **No dedicated national programs** for social innovation.
- Support primarily delivered through **donor-funded initiatives** (EU, USAID, UNDP).
- Local authorities increasingly use **social procurement** mechanisms enabled by the 2019 law.

ECOSYSTEM



Stakeholders

Key ecosystem actors include:

- **SILab Ukraine** – Core platform for social entrepreneurship development, ecosystem building, and impact investment promotion. ⁷
- **Ukrainian Social Venture Fund (USVF)** – Venture philanthropy fund providing grants and blended finance to social enterprises. ⁸
- **Ukrainian Social Academy** – Education and incubation for social entrepreneurs.
- International actors (EU, WNISEF, British Council, UN agencies) play a central enabling role.



Support Initiatives

- **Incubators & accelerators:** SILab programs, Social Academy incubators, donor-supported accelerators.
- **Focus areas:** business models, impact measurement, financial readiness, regional capacity building.
- Support is **NGO- and donor-led**, not government-run.



Collaboration

- **SpivDiia platform:** Nationwide volunteer coordination model linking civil society, government, and business during wartime (5,000+ volunteers; 24 regional hubs). ¹⁰
- Growing use of **local public–civil partnerships** for service delivery.
- Collaboration remains **project-based**, not institutionalized.



Events & Awards

- No dedicated government-run national flagship social innovation award was identified; however, the ecosystem includes prominent award/prize-style programmes such as Social Impact Award Ukraine and national prize initiatives for social school enterprises.
- Ecosystem convened through **forums, accelerators, and grant competitions** (e.g. SILab Impact Investment Conference).
- Recognition mainly through donor programs rather than formal awards.

FINANCE



Financing Schemes

- **No dedicated public SI funding.**
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- Main funding sources:
 - **International donors** (EU, USAID, UNDP).
 - **Impact philanthropy** (WNISEF, USVF).
 - **Crowdfunding and community investment** (e.g. Urban Space 100 model).
 - Limited CSR and bank involvement.
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- Access to finance remains a **major constraint** for social enterprises. ⁸



Financing Inclusivity

- Funding frequently targets:
 - **Veterans and conflict-affected populations.**
 - **People with disabilities.**
 - **Internally displaced persons (IDPs).**
- Rural and small grassroots initiatives face **access barriers**.
- Overall inclusivity: **moderate and uneven**, driven largely by donor priorities.

SOCIETY



Public Awareness of Social Innovation

- **Low general awareness** of social innovation and social entrepreneurship.
- The term “social” has historically carried negative or charitable connotations. ²
- Awareness increased post-2022 through volunteerism and community-led solutions, but remains fragmented.



Research

- Academic and practitioner research exists but remains fragmented and project-based; Ukraine has multiple institutions contributing research and thought leadership on social innovation/social entrepreneurship, though no single dedicated national research centre coordinates the field.
- Practitioner-led mapping and policy analysis by NGOs and international organizations.
- Data gaps constrain evidence-based policymaking.



Education & Human Capital

- Formal education offerings exist but are limited in scale and unevenly distributed; these include accredited master’s-level and certificate/course offerings that integrate social innovation and social entrepreneurship (e.g., Kyiv Mohyla Business School and other universities).
- Social entrepreneurship included sporadically in business and public policy curricula.
- Strong **non-formal education ecosystem** (NGO trainings, incubators, mentoring).
- War-time civic engagement has significantly expanded practical SI skills.



Entrepreneurship



Business Environment

Business environment remains challenging due to war impacts.



Innovation Capacity



Social entrepreneurship prevalence

Entrepreneurial activity is high; social entrepreneurship remains a **small but growing niche**.

Digital public services (e.g. Diia) reduce administrative barriers for all entrepreneurs.

Social & Environmental Consciousness



Solidarity

Post-war recovery discourse increasingly emphasizes “**build back better**” principles.



Political participation

Strong trust in civil society organizations.



Volunteering

Exceptional levels of solidarity and volunteerism since 2022:

~42% of citizens volunteered; 61% were first-time volunteers. ¹¹



Sustainability

Environmental awareness growing, but secondary to urgent social needs.