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## INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ETHICS IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL TRANSFORMATIONS

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In the contemporary world, international business is one of the key drivers of economic development, the integration of national economies, and the formation of a global market environment. Processes of globalization, digital transformation, the rapid development of information technologies, intensifying international competition, and growing interdependence among countries significantly change the conditions of doing business. At the same time, alongside economic and technological aspects, the ethical foundations of corporate activity are becoming increasingly important, as they determine the level of social responsibility, reputation, and trust from partners, consumers, and society as a whole. Recent global transformations have been accompanied by the emergence of new challenges for international business. The global economy is affected by geopolitical instability, military conflicts, environmental crises, pandemics, migration processes, and economic shocks. Under such conditions, the issue of adherence to ethical principles in the activities of international companies becomes particularly relevant. Modern consumers, investors, and international organizations increasingly evaluate enterprises not only by their financial performance but also by their attitude toward employees, the environment, human rights, and society in general.

International business ethics encompasses a system of moral norms, principles, and values that regulate the behavior of business entities in international markets. It establishes standards of fair competition, responsible business conduct, transparency in managerial decision-making, and the prevention of corruption, discrimination, and

other negative practices. A distinctive feature of international business is that companies operate in different countries with diverse cultural, legal, religious, and social traditions. This creates additional challenges in developing common ethical standards and requires consideration of intercultural differences when making managerial decisions. In the context of global transformations, the role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a practical tool for implementing ethical principles is growing significantly. Leading international companies are increasingly integrating sustainable development principles into their operations, implementing environmental and social programs, complying with international labor protection standards, and ensuring transparency in business processes. The widespread adoption of the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) concept demonstrates that ethical considerations have become an integral component of strategic management and an important factor in maintaining competitiveness in international markets. The issue of international business ethics has become particularly important in the era of economic digitalization. The use of artificial intelligence, big data, digital platforms, and e-commerce creates new ethical dilemmas related to personal data protection, cybersecurity, algorithm transparency, and accountability for automated decisions. At the same time, digital technologies provide new opportunities for increasing business transparency, enhancing corporate accountability, and strengthening compliance with ethical standards.

For Ukraine, the issue of international business ethics is especially important in the context of European integration processes, economic recovery during wartime, and the attraction of foreign investment. The establishment of high standards of business ethics contributes to improving the country's investment attractiveness, fostering international cooperation, and integrating Ukrainian companies into global value chains. Adherence to ethical business principles becomes a crucial prerequisite for building a positive international image of the country and ensuring its sustainable socio-economic development.

Thus, international business ethics in the context of global transformations serves not only as a moral category but also as an important strategic resource that ensures the long-term effectiveness of companies, strengthens trust among participants in international economic relations, and contributes to achieving sustainable development goals. Therefore, the study of current trends, challenges, and prospects for the development of ethical foundations in international business is an important scientific and practical task.

The purpose of this article is to investigate the essence and role of international business ethics in the context of global transformations, as well as to identify contemporary challenges and prospects for the development of ethical standards in international entrepreneurial activity.

The issue of international business ethics has gained particular relevance in recent years due to the deepening of globalization processes, the digital transformation of the economy, the proliferation of artificial intelligence technologies, and increasing demands for corporate social responsibility. An analysis of recent scientific

publications indexed in the international scientometric databases Scopus and Web of Science indicates a shift in scholarly interest from traditional aspects of business ethics toward issues related to the responsible use of digital technologies, sustainable development, and the management of international companies under conditions of global uncertainty.

One of the key directions of contemporary research is the study of the relationship between international business activities and corporate social responsibility. In particular, Xie and Zeng conducted a bibliometric analysis of scientific studies devoted to the interaction between business internationalization and corporate social responsibility. The authors concluded that expanding business operations into international markets increases the requirements for compliance with ethical standards, as international stakeholders increasingly evaluate companies not only by their financial performance but also by their social and environmental impact. At the same time, corporate social responsibility has become an important tool for creating competitive advantages and strengthening corporate reputation at the global level [1].

Contemporary scholars also devote significant attention to the impact of digitalization on the ethical aspects of international business. The rapid spread of digital platforms, big data, and automated management systems creates new opportunities for improving business efficiency, while simultaneously generating numerous ethical risks. In the study by M. Fülöp, C. Ionescu, and D. Topor, it is emphasized that digital transformation changes the nature of interaction between companies and consumers, raising concerns related to data privacy, business process transparency, cybersecurity, and accountability for the use of digital technologies. The authors highlight the necessity of developing the concept of digital corporate responsibility as a new element of modern business ethics [2].

A separate area of contemporary research is associated with the use of artificial intelligence in international business. Studies by J. Menzies, B. Sabert, R. Hasan, and P. Mensah demonstrate that artificial intelligence is increasingly being applied in international marketing, supply chain management, demand forecasting, international human resource management, and strategic decision-making. However, alongside numerous advantages, concerns arise regarding algorithm transparency, the fairness of automated decisions, personal data protection, and accountability for errors made by AI systems. Researchers emphasize that the effective use of AI is possible only under conditions of compliance with clear ethical principles and appropriate control mechanisms [3].

The further development of this research area can be observed in studies dedicated to the influence of artificial intelligence on the transformation of international business. Researchers argue that AI is gradually becoming not only a technological tool but also an important factor in creating competitive advantages for multinational corporations. At the same time, the automation of managerial decision-making requires enhanced ethical oversight, as algorithmic errors may lead to discrimination, violations of human rights, and a loss of public trust [4].

An important place in contemporary research is occupied by the issue of responsible business conduct and sustainable development. In the work of G. Dorfmueller and co-authors, the concept of Responsible Business Conduct is examined as an approach that integrates social, environmental, and governance principles into the activities of international companies. The authors demonstrate that responsible business behavior contributes to reducing social risks, increasing investor confidence, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of companies in the global environment. Particular importance is attached to the protection of human rights, compliance with environmental standards, and adherence to integrity principles within international supply chains [5].

Contemporary researchers also draw attention to the phenomenon of "ethicswashing," where companies declare their commitment to ethical principles without actually implementing them in practice. According to M. Schultz and colleagues, such practices are particularly widespread among technology companies that actively promote the responsible use of artificial intelligence while failing to establish adequate control mechanisms. This undermines public trust in business and necessitates the development of more effective systems for monitoring corporate ethics [6].

Another important research direction concerns the impact of deglobalization processes and geopolitical instability on the ethical foundations of international business. Scholars note that increasing political conflicts, economic sanctions, and trade restrictions compel companies to reconsider their approaches to managing international activities. Under such conditions, ethical principles become an important tool for maintaining trust among business partners and ensuring the stability of international cooperation [7].

Therefore, the analysis of contemporary scientific research allows us to conclude that international business ethics is currently viewed as a complex interdisciplinary concept that combines issues of corporate social responsibility, sustainable development, digital transformation, and the use of artificial intelligence. Most contemporary studies focus on finding a balance between economic efficiency and corporate social responsibility. At the same time, issues related to the development of unified international ethical standards for digital business, the regulation of artificial intelligence, and the adaptation of ethical principles to new conditions of global transformation remain insufficiently explored, thereby defining promising directions for future scientific research in this field.

International business ethics represents a system of moral principles, norms, and rules of conduct that regulate relationships among business entities at the global level. It establishes standards of business behavior and defines companies' responsibilities toward employees, consumers, partners, investors, and society as a whole. Unlike the national business environment, international entrepreneurial activity takes place within the interaction of different cultures, legal systems, social norms, and values, which necessitates adherence to universal ethical principles. The fundamental principles of international business ethics include honesty, integrity, transparency, accountability, fairness, respect for human rights, non-discrimination, compliance with legislation, and social responsibility. Their implementation contributes to building trust among

participants in international economic relations and ensures the stable functioning of companies in the global marketplace.

Globalization contributes to intensified international competition, the expansion of trade and economic relations, the integration of capital and labor markets, as well as the active dissemination of innovative technologies. At the same time, it imposes new requirements on the ethical conduct of companies. Today, multinational corporations operate in different countries characterized by diverse social, cultural, and legal norms. This creates complex conditions for establishing unified business standards. Whereas maximizing profit was previously considered the primary objective of companies, increasing importance is now placed on addressing the interests of all stakeholders. Under the influence of globalization, international standards of ethical conduct have emerged, including the United Nations Global Compact, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, ESG standards, and other international initiatives in the field of corporate social responsibility.

An important factor in the transformation of ethical standards in international business is the digitalization of the economy. The development of digital technologies, e-commerce, big data, cloud services, and artificial intelligence has significantly changed approaches to business operations. Alongside new opportunities, new ethical challenges have also emerged. One of the most pressing issues is ensuring the protection of users' personal data. Companies gain access to substantial amounts of customer information, which requires responsible approaches to its collection, processing, and storage. Failure to comply with privacy principles may result in the loss of consumer trust, financial losses, and reputational risks.

Particular attention should be paid to the use of artificial intelligence in international business. AI systems are increasingly applied to automate managerial decision-making, forecast consumer behavior, manage personnel, and optimize production processes. However, the use of such technologies is accompanied by risks of discrimination, algorithmic bias, lack of transparency in decision-making, and insufficient accountability for their consequences. Therefore, modern international companies are compelled to develop ethical codes for AI usage and establish mechanisms to monitor its functioning.

Modern geopolitical changes also exert a substantial influence on the ethics of international business. Military conflicts, economic sanctions, trade wars, migration processes, and political instability create new challenges for international companies. Under such conditions, businesses increasingly face the need to make complex moral decisions regarding the continuation of operations in certain countries, the selection of business partners, ensuring employee safety, and adhering to principles of social responsibility. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has become an example of how international companies are forced to consider not only economic but also ethical aspects of their activities. Many multinational corporations have revised their strategies, suspended operations in certain markets, or allocated significant resources to support humanitarian initiatives.

Under contemporary conditions, the concept of sustainable development has become an important component of international business ethics. It involves achieving a balance between the economic, social, and environmental objectives of enterprises. Companies are increasingly integrating sustainable development principles into their corporate strategies by focusing on reducing environmental impacts, ensuring the rational use of natural resources, developing environmentally friendly technologies, and supporting social projects. The widespread adoption of the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) concept demonstrates that financial performance is no longer the sole criterion for evaluating business success. Investors, partners, and consumers increasingly consider companies' social responsibility and environmental awareness.

One of the most important mechanisms for ensuring ethical behavior among international companies is corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR involves the voluntary commitment of businesses to consider social, environmental, and ethical aspects in their operations. Corporate social responsibility encompasses a wide range of activities, from providing decent working conditions and employee development opportunities to participating in charitable programs, supporting local communities, and implementing environmental initiatives. Through the implementation of CSR principles, companies build a positive image, strengthen consumer trust, and enhance their competitiveness.

The significance of ethical principles for international business extends far beyond the moral aspects of corporate activities. The experience of leading global companies demonstrates that a high level of ethical culture directly influences organizational efficiency and market performance. Compliance with the principles of honesty, transparency, and responsibility contributes to the establishment of long-term partnerships, increases consumer loyalty, and enhances investment attractiveness. Reputation becomes one of the company's most valuable intangible assets, and its loss may have far more serious consequences than short-term financial losses. In today's information society, any violation of ethical norms quickly becomes public knowledge and may negatively affect a company's position in international markets.

The further development of international business requires the improvement of existing ethical practices and mechanisms for their implementation. First and foremost, it is necessary to strengthen the integration of ethical principles into corporate governance systems, develop modern codes of business conduct, and implement effective compliance monitoring mechanisms. An important area of development is enhancing the ethical competence of managers and employees through corporate training and professional development programs. Particular importance is attached to establishing international regulatory mechanisms for digital technologies and artificial intelligence that would ensure a balance between innovation and the protection of human rights. In addition, expanding cooperation among businesses, governments, civil society organizations, and international institutions is a promising direction for creating a unified ethical framework within the global economy.

Table 1 Contemporary challenges and directions for improving ethical practices in international business

Area of transformation	Key ethical challenges	Consequences for business	Directions for improving ethical practices
Globalization	Cultural differences, diverse legal systems, varying social standards	Reputational risks, stakeholder conflicts	Harmonization of corporate codes of ethics, intercultural staff training
Digitalization	Personal data protection, cybersecurity, algorithmic discrimination	Loss of customer trust, legal risks	Development of ethical standards for digital technologies and AI
Artificial Intelligence	Lack of algorithm transparency, automated decision-making	Human rights violations, biased decisions	Implementation of responsible AI principles and independent algorithm audits
Geopolitical Changes	Sanctions, military conflicts, political instability	Supply chain disruptions, financial losses	Development of ethical risk management and market diversification
Sustainable Development	Environmental problems, climate change, resource depletion	Rising costs, increased investor requirements	Integration of ESG principles into corporate strategies
Corporate Governance	Corruption, conflicts of interest, lack of transparency	Reputational and financial losses	Strengthening corporate control and compliance mechanisms
Social Responsibility	Violation of labor rights, social inequality	Reduced employee and consumer loyalty	Expansion of CSR programs and protection of employee rights

As shown in Table 1, most contemporary ethical challenges are directly associated with global transformations of the economic environment. At the same time, overcoming these challenges is possible only through a comprehensive approach that combines the development of corporate culture, the improvement of management mechanisms, and the implementation of international standards of responsible business conduct.

Compliance with ethical principles positively affects enterprise competitiveness and the formation of corporate reputation. Under modern conditions, the trust of consumers, investors, and partners has become one of the most important intangible assets of a company. Ethical behavior contributes to brand strengthening, increased customer loyalty, attraction of investments, and the establishment of long-term partnerships. Moreover, companies with high standards of corporate ethics have greater

opportunities to enter international markets and successfully integrate into global value chains.

Thus, contemporary international business ethics extends far beyond the traditional understanding of business conduct and is transforming into a strategic instrument for ensuring sustainable corporate development. The successful functioning of international enterprises under conditions of global transformation requires the integration of ethical principles into all areas of activity, ranging from corporate governance to the application of advanced digital technologies. The formation of a culture of responsible business behavior becomes a crucial prerequisite for enhancing competitiveness and ensuring long-term development within the global economic environment. Of particular importance is the ability of businesses to respond promptly to emerging challenges associated with digital transformation, artificial intelligence development, environmental issues, and changes in the international regulatory framework. Under these conditions, effective ethical mechanisms make it possible to minimize risks, ensure transparency in managerial processes, and maintain a balance between corporate economic interests and societal expectations.

An important finding of this study is the confirmation that business ethical responsibility today extends far beyond mere compliance with legal requirements. It encompasses issues of social justice, environmental protection, human rights, the responsible use of digital technologies, and the achievement of sustainable development goals. The successful integration of these principles into corporate practice contributes to improved management efficiency, enhanced business reputation, and the creation of long-term value for all stakeholders. The combination of economic performance and ethical principles forms the foundation for stable corporate operations and competitiveness under conditions of global transformation.

Future research should focus on examining the ethical aspects of artificial intelligence and digital platform utilization in international business, analyzing ESG implementation practices within multinational corporations, and assessing the impact of ethical management on investment attractiveness and corporate resilience under conditions of global uncertainty. Significant scientific interest also lies in investigating the mechanisms of ethical culture formation in international organizations and their role in ensuring sustainable economic development.

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## СОЦІАЛЬНИЙ ЗАХИСТ ВРАЗЛИВИХ ВЕРСТВ НАСЕЛЕННЯ ЯК ЧИННИК ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ СТАЛОГО РОЗВИТКУ СУСПІЛЬСТВА

Глушко Тетяна

ст. викладач

Качка Олеся

здобувачка вищої освіти

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**Анотація.** У роботі досліджено роль соціального захисту вразливих верств населення як одного з ключових чинників забезпечення сталого розвитку суспільства. Розглянуто сутність соціального захисту, основні категорії вразливих груп населення, форми та механізми державної підтримки в Україні. Проаналізовано значення соціальних послуг, пенсійного забезпечення, державної соціальної допомоги та цифровізації соціальної сфери. Визначено основні проблеми та перспективні напрями вдосконалення системи соціального захисту в сучасних умовах.

**Ключові слова:** соціальний захист, вразливі верстви населення, соціальна політика, сталий розвиток, соціальні послуги, соціальне забезпечення, цифровізація, соціальна справедливість.