



Theoretical Foundations and Practice of Business-Government Interaction: Ukrainian Context of the European Choice

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Abstract: The purpose of the study is to investigate the genesis and key characteristics of existing models of interaction between business and government and determine the risks and prospects of their implementation in Ukraine. A comprehensive methodological approach was applied that combines historical and institutional analysis of the development of state-business relations (1991-2024), analytical and synthetic procedures for the construction of methodological tools for comparative analysis of interaction models, as well as methods of logical abstraction. Matrix game formalization is used as an analytical tool for assessing strategic alternatives of public and private actors in differentiated states of the socio-economic environment. It is substantiated that the evolutionary trajectory of Ukrainian state-business interaction is characterized by a tendency towards a hybrid institutional configuration, within which elements of pluralistic competition of interest groups with institutionalized channels of neocorporatist dialogue are combined. The author identifies key dysfunctional elements, such as the lack of the rule of law, instability of regulatory policy, fragmentation of the representativeness of small and medium-sized enterprises, and asymmetric access to consultative procedures. An integrated conceptual model of coordination of interests is proposed, which transforms classical theoretical models into operational tools through a matrix game formalization with explicit performance criteria. The innovation of the study lies in the rejection of investment-oriented analytical optics in favor of a procedural and institutional methodology that provides a direct measurement of the quality of state-business interaction. The results of the study provide government agencies and business associations with a verified analytical toolkit: a standardized system of indicators of interaction quality, scenario rules for selecting strategies in variable environmental states, and an accountability matrix to minimize the risks of latent impact.

Keywords: civil society organizations, communication, government, integration of the state, politics

Introduction

Cooperation between government and business is the driving force behind the development of any democratic country that implements its functions through the rule of law. In recent years, there has been a trend towards improving interaction and cooperation between government and business around the world. Each country has its own differences in this process, which depend on the very culture of management, economic system and historical form of relations between government and business. The basis of understanding and interaction between business and government in a particular country is formed on a significant change in the role of business in the functioning of the political system. Such interaction could not remain unnoticed by scientists.

According to K. Lindblä, “businessmen cannot be left outside the doors of the political system – they must be invited inside” [1]. It is because of this that in many countries of the world there is a practice of involving business representatives in various consultation programs and in the work of state bodies. Business community leaders systematically meet with heads of state bodies in roundtables or are invited to certain state positions. The process of interaction between business and government is complex and requires a separate comprehensive approach at the legislative level to determine the positions of each party. The process of communication between government and business in Ukraine is complicated by a number of serious problems, including the imperfection of the legal framework that defines the rights and obligations of each party; imperfection of the ways and methods of implementing partnership relations; lack of conditions for effective competition and cooperation for the implementation of investment projects [2]. In many cases, business elites significantly impede the achievement of partnership relations with government representatives, and also demonstrate the dominance of personal interests over public ones. In this context, the need to study the existing experience of government and business interaction in other countries and the presence of different models of interaction in the context of the course for European integration and post-war recovery becomes relevant.

Literature Review

The paper examines the role of Biru et al. [3], Kvitka [4], Ordoñez-Ponce et al. [5]. They highlighted the specific features of entrepreneurship, as well as the competitive and regulatory environment, and emphasized the need to form high-quality and stable welfare through public policy. Such generalizations contribute to the process of interaction between business and public authorities beyond market rules. In particular, in areas that promote transparency and consulting. Despite political turmoil, the question of transforming the norms of “effective regulation” into processes of participation and reproduction remains open for Ukraine.

The Ukrainian academic discourse by Sedovs et al. [6], Yefimenko et al. [7], systematized the transition from administrative to market logic, outlined the phenomenon of “state capture” and the gradual institutionalization of business-government dialogue. These studies cover macro-level indicators and do not allow for the comparison and correct assessment of the effectiveness of state regulatory instruments from the perspective of different areas of economic activity.

Studies focused on European governance integration [4, 8, 9] have demonstrated the relevance of European standards of public administration, identified the framework of social dialogue and the role of business associations as institutional mediators between the state and the market. The problem lies in the gap between regulatory templates and their practical implementation. Also, the conclusions lack an assessment of the compliance of Ukrainian procedures with specific EU directives/recommendations on building the quality of the state mechanism and business.

A critical organizational perspective explored in Hamann [10], Kulinich and Obushok [11], Pasinovych and Myskiv [12] highlighted “dynamic disinvestment”, when mutual references of the state and business to external constraints blur responsibility for the consequences. Recent empirical work on “new” government-business relations and environmental performance, such as Guo et al. [2], Makedon et al. [13], and Shynkarenko [14], captures the ambivalence: cooperation can both increase performance and generate regulatory capture. The question remains what kind of co-regulatory mechanisms are needed to minimize the risk of capture in the Ukrainian context and at the same time not to stifle innovation.

The “economic push” of innovation as a way of cooperation between the state and business, studied by scholars Bai et al. [15], Budnyk et al. [16] and Tymokhova et al. [17], determines the possibility of determining the priorities of the state and corporate governance, contributing to the alignment of campaigns in strategic directions of development. However, this direction requires additional careful research on validity. However, these results require external validity for Ukraine, and it is unknown how the combination of national priorities, military risks and market fragmentation affects the actual ability of the state to coordinate business without excessive bureaucracy or favoritism.

Practically oriented research findings from Beisengaliyev and Kossymbayeva [18], Ji et al. [19], Oerlemans and Langenhuijzen [20] present findings on business trust in the state, corruption risks, and business expectations of policy. These papers clearly show the “pain points” –unpredictability, weak dialog, regulatory barriers – but usually do not offer operational models and calculations for determining the quality of interaction [5]. Analysis of available scientific research and literature allows us to identify a certain range of unfinished and rather narrow practices that allow us to develop practical skills in establishing relations between business and the state. Such areas of work are not always available and imperfect for Ukraine. However, this is what forms the practice of expediency, both theoretical and practical.

Aims. Based on theoretical and practical materials, to investigate the process of development and formation, as well as the main key characteristics of existing models that facilitate interaction between business and government, and to identify direct and indirect risks that may arise during their implementation in Ukraine.

Materials and Methods

In order to build a methodology and flexible models of forecasting and risks and the prospects for their implementation, the method of analysis and synthesis was used in the work. With the help of a chronological review of economic transformations in the territory of Ukraine, using information from official sources and statistical reports of Transparency International and Opendatobot to obtain information about business owners. Quantitative methods were used to process the information, in particular the business activity index of Ukraine. To facilitate the development of recommendations, the method of logical presentation of information was used in the work.

Results

Formation and development of models of interaction between the state of Ukraine and business in Ukraine in the period 1991–2024

In Ukraine, the interaction between business and government in different periods had different goals and content. After gaining independence, changes began in Ukraine in the process of formation of various institutions and state formation. The main place in this process was given to the economy as a component of the successful functioning of the state. The transition from a command-administrative to a market economy required the formation of a relationship between the government and business. In 1992, the non-state sector of industry accounted for 29.8% of the total number of all enterprises in the state register and 18.2% of industrial. Mostly, these enterprises were in mixed state-private ownership and owned by labor collectives [21].

The economic transformation of Ukraine was transformed under the influence of a deep financial crisis and the institutional foundations of the formation of a new market infrastructure. The long-term processes of stagnation of the national economy during 1991–1998 became part of the decline in gross domestic product and a change in the architecture of relations between state institutions and business entities. The key problem of this period is the decline in the profitability of newly created private enterprises, which in the absence of a guaranteed state order do not have the opportunity to actively grow.

In the 1990s, Ukraine began to form new models of interaction between business and government: rental and infrastructure. As experts argued, in those regions where there were no significant resources, none of the models could give significant results [22]. Those who accumulated their resources in the late 1980s through party ties felt best. Those who did not have savings felt significant pressure from the state during the reform, and their activities did not bear any signs of “free enterprise” [23].

As a result, Ukraine received a constant struggle between individual business groups that had privileges in power and business groups that actually competed with each other.

The “state separately” strategy looked attractive, but in reality it was an illusion. It was at that time that a new type of earnings “shuttle business” appeared, which gave the opportunity to adapt to new economic conditions to broad segments of the population. However, such free entrepreneurship had its significant limitations for development. The combination of various factors led to the restoration of a kind of administrative model of economic management [24].

According to Transparency International, at the end of 2024, Ukraine ranked 105th among 180 countries in the world according to the Annual Corruption Perceptions Index. Shadow lobbying of personal interests in budget formation and property privatization had a huge impact on this indicator and the consequences for Ukraine [25].

During the first two decades of Ukraine's independence, institutional systems became formal and did not really correspond to the models of cooperation between government and business that exist in the world. The strategy of government-business relations itself was formed and implemented in the context of economic and political changes, as well as under the influence of various factors. The main features of the state's development are described in more detail in Table 1.

Table 1: Evaluation of the transformation of state-business relations in Ukraine in terms of historical component

Period	Characteristics of the economy	Model of interaction	Key features	Challenges and results
1991–1998	Transition from command and control to market economy, financial crisis, economic stagnation	Hybrid (with elements of pluralism and neo-corporatism)	Formation of the private sector (29.8% of enterprises in industry in 1992), privatization, denationalization	Decline in GDP, weakness of newly privatized enterprises, creation of large business groups
1990s (early)	Dominance of state ownership, emergence of the private sector	The “state capture” model	Use of personal connections with the authorities, access to resources (lease, infrastructure)	Formation of large business groups, struggle for rent, destabilization of the balance sheet
1990s (middle)	Development of “shuttle business”, growth of small and medium-sized businesses	The “free enterprise” model	Distancing from the state, tax avoidance	Restrictions on development due to weak state institutions, informal administrative influence
2000s	Strengthening of large business groups, integration into global markets	Hybrid model	Creation of business associations, shadow lobbying	Corruption (134th place in Transparency International index in 2010), competition between business groups
2010s	Institutionalization of social dialogue, strengthening of business associations	Neo-corporate model with pluralistic elements	Law “On Social Dialogue” (2010), activities of advisory bodies (Council of Entrepreneurs, Business Ombudsman)	Formation of institutional mechanisms, growing role of business associations
2020s	Further development of market infrastructure, digitalization	Hybrid model with increased pluralism	Active participation of business associations in the dialogue with the government, increasing the role of CCI	Corruption challenges, need to protect property and contracts

Source: developed by the authors

The Law “On Social Dialogue in Ukraine”, which was adopted in 2010, defines the legal basis for organizing dialogue between different social strata through modern means of communication for the implementation of state socio-economic policy, and improving the level and quality of life of citizens and stability in society [26].

Elements of the pluralistic model are gradually becoming more noticeable. There are dozens or hundreds of business associations representing different areas, industries and companies. It is the associations that act as the “voice of business” in Ukraine. Interaction with the authorities occurs through participation in the activities of consultative and advisory bodies. In particular, the Council of Entrepreneurs under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the relevant regional councils of entrepreneurs, the Business Ombudsman Council, the Coordination Council for the Development of Entrepreneurship, public councils, etc. [27].

According to the current legislation of Ukraine, business associations in Ukraine currently operate in accordance with the requirements of non-profit organizations. The procedure for membership in them and property relations in such associations. The Commercial Code also contains rules regulating the creation and activities of chambers of commerce and industry (CCI).

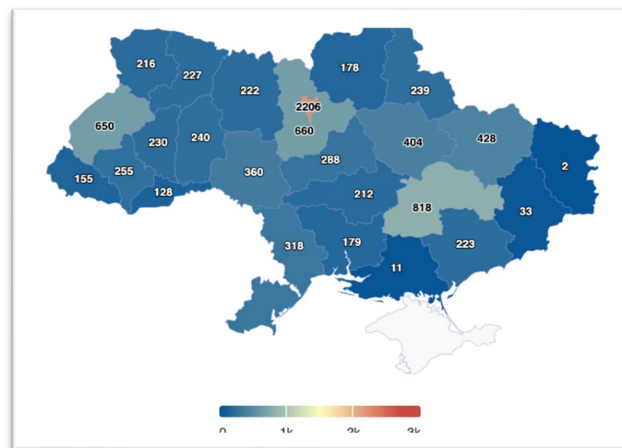
Challenges and problem areas of business-state cooperation in Ukraine in the context of the European choice

The results of the comprehensive study “Lessons of War. Business. Pain Points in the Interaction of Government and Business”, which was implemented in 2023, made it possible to identify systemic defects in communication between state institutions and the business sector of Ukraine during the period of independence. The modern format of communications is rather declarative in nature and uses mainly common platforms for one-sided information (reporting), while ignoring feedback [28].

Further decomposition of the problem field highlights a number of critical aspects that make it impossible to transition to a partnership model of management: the lack of inclusive readiness of all parties for parity dialogue makes the existing potential and adequate interaction impossible [29]. Corrupt practices act as a fundamental destabilizer of trust and the main derivative of demotivation of people. The role of confusion and the lack of clear functional identification form the prerequisites for a conflict of interests. The scale of this phenomenon is confirmed by statistical data based on information from the Opendatabot platform and others. In particular, more than 2.6 million citizens of Ukraine are identified as owners or co-owners of 1.5 million business entities. This indicates a deep integration of the entrepreneurial element into the social structure and at the same time a complex structure of individual parts and groups representing the parties in the dialogue.

A characteristic feature of this list (Figure 1). is that the largest part of its participants is concentrated in the field of wholesale and retail trade, as well as in car repair (22%). This is explained by the dominance of such activities in the structure of the country's economy. A significant share of enterprises belongs to the processing industry (16%), agriculture, forestry and fisheries (14%), which correlates with the priority sectors of the national economy integrated into the EU common market.

Figure 1: Distribution of the White Business Club members by regions of Ukraine as of 2025

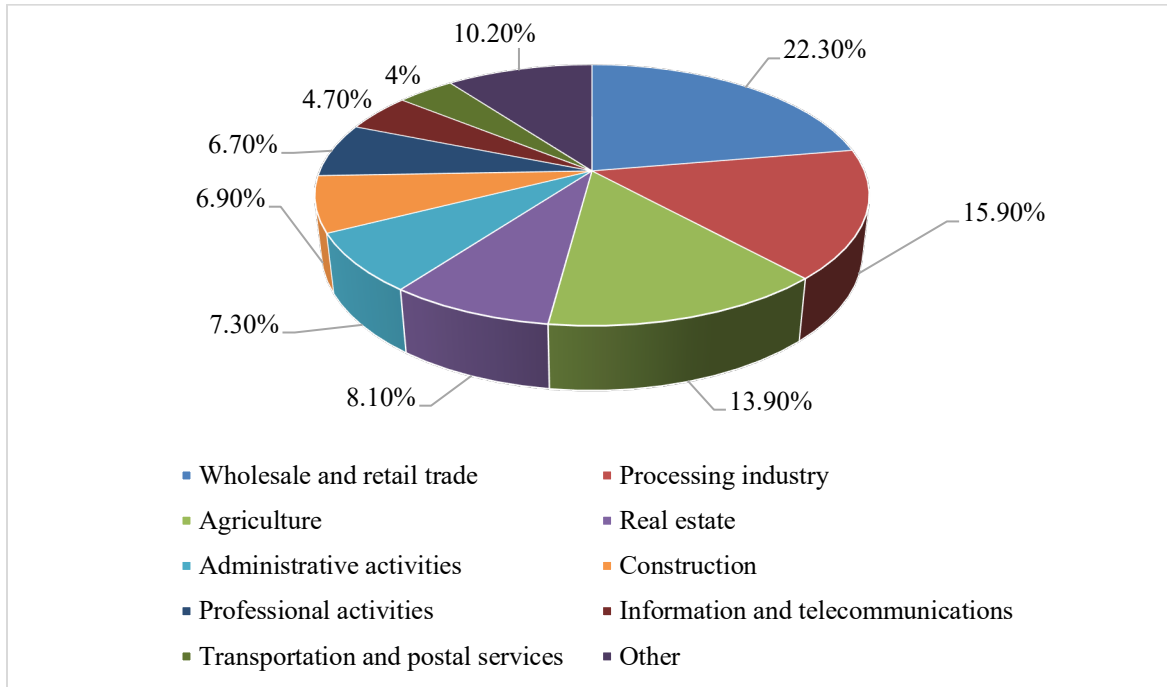


Source: based on Opendatabot [30]

At the same time, the membership structure also reflects other segments, such as real estate operations (8%) and administrative services (7%), which confirms the gradual expansion of coverage of various sectors of the economy in the system of transparent interaction with government institutions (Figure 2) [30].

The largest amount of business activity is concentrated in Kyiv, where about twenty-five percent of all enterprises operate, which confirms the leading role of the capital as a center where financial resources, administrative decisions, and institutional initiatives that can transform public-business relations are concentrated. At the same time, Dnipro region, which covers nine percent of enterprises, as well as Kyiv and Lviv regions, where seven percent of business is concentrated, are significant centers of economic development, while Kharkiv region represents 5 percent, indicating the multi-vector location of business activity and the presence of regional centers of influence [31].

Figure 2: Areas of business interests of companies that actively cooperate with the state

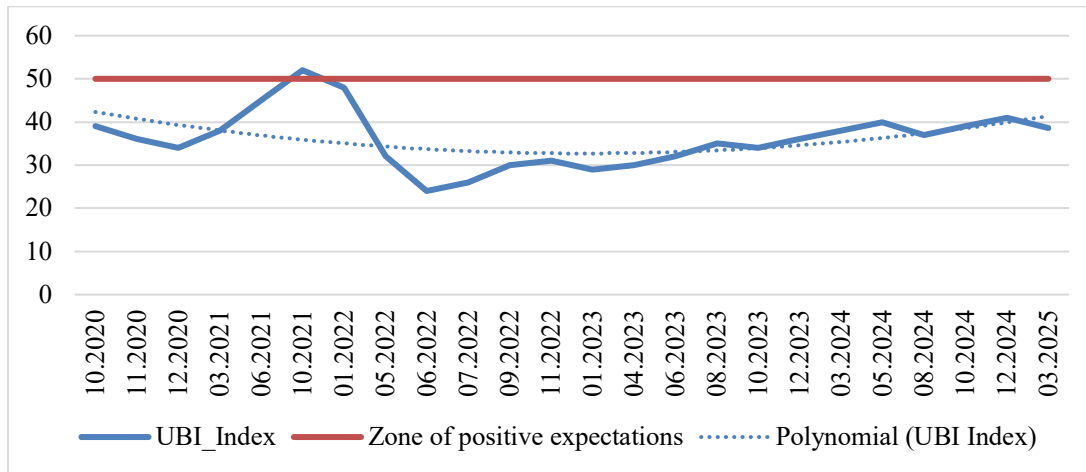


Source: based on Opendatabot [30]

The economic situation in the first quarter of 2025 is moderated by positive dynamics, which intensifies the recovery processes and scaling the order portfolio. This trend has a representative indicator of the success and implementation of strategies for adapting domestic enterprises to the conditions of the European economic space and is converted into an increase in institutional and consumer confidence in Ukrainian business in both the domestic and foreign economic segments (Figure 3). The combination of various indicators (a total of 50% of enterprises with positive or stable dynamics) allows us to note a high level of adaptive resilience of the national economy. The ability of business structures to function effectively within the framework of a transitive economic model allows us to synchronize operating cycles with regulatory requirements and standards of the European Union (according to analytical materials of the Razumkov Centre [32]).

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Figure 3: Dynamics of the business activity index (UBI) in Ukraine in 2020-2025 in the context of business expectations

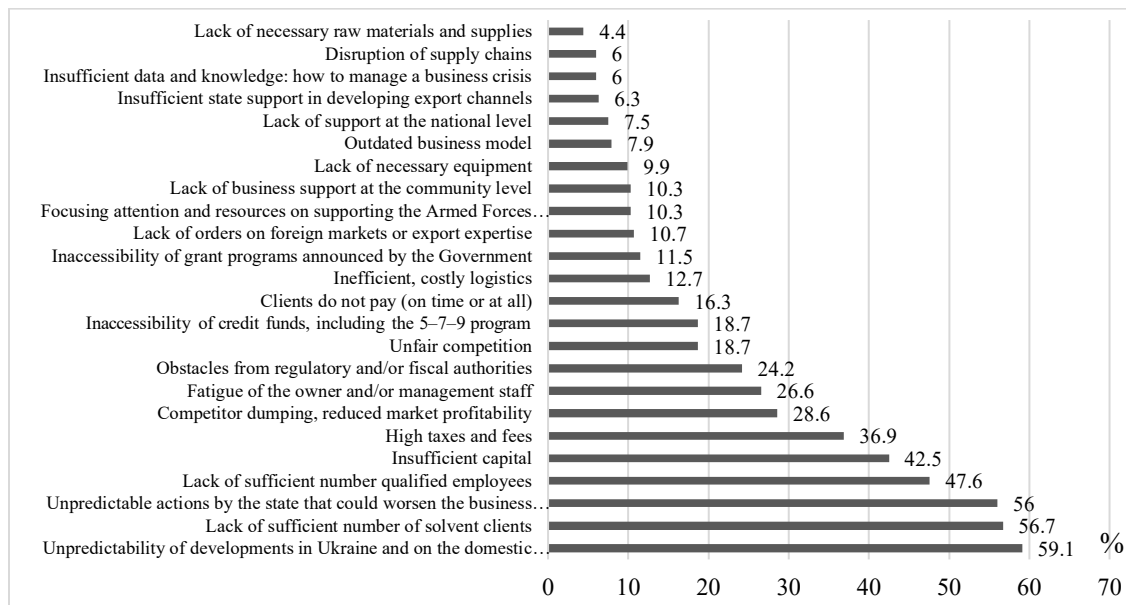


Source: based on data from the Razumkov Centre [32]

In the context of the European choice, real cooperation between business and government plays an important role. In the current study of business and government cooperation in Ukraine as a component of the European choice, the analysis of factors that hinder the development of small, medium and micro businesses is extremely important, since these segments of entrepreneurship are the basis for innovative growth, employment and the formation of a competitive market environment (Figure 4).

The survey results show that more than 59% of respondents named the unpredictability of the overall situation in Ukraine as one of the main barriers, which makes strategic planning impossible and hinders long-term investment initiatives, which are considered in European practice to be the basis for sustainable development.

Figure 4: Main challenges of business development and cooperation with government agencies in Ukraine in 2025 (according to entrepreneurs), %



Source: based on data from Diia Business [33]

The results of the surveys also demonstrate another important fact that affects the involvement of businesses, especially the SME sector, in the activities of business associations. Representatives of small and medium-sized businesses are most interested in protecting interests, coordinating and combining joint efforts; a somewhat smaller

but clear request among entrepreneurs is for trainings and consultations, information services, legal assistance, and assistance in finding trade partners [8]. In the eyes of heads of Ukrainian business associations, the situation looks somewhat different: their priority is information and educational services, while advocacy and legal assistance services are the least common services of business associations [34].

Game model of decision-making in the system of state-business relations

In order to ensure effective, coordinated and organized interaction between government institutions and business in the Ukrainian context, the authors will use a mathematical decision-making model that takes into account the multivariate nature of pluralistic scenarios of social relations determined by both political and economic factors. Based on the conceptual provisions of game theory, the model is not only able to reflect the structure of mutual interests of the state and business, but also to formalize the algorithm for their reconciliation [35]. This act is based on the use of a set of strategic options that can reflect different levels of government intervention, business activity, and the degree of social responsibility for business (Table 2). Mathematically, the model is presented in the following format:

$$M = (X, Y, F) \quad (1)$$

where:

X is a set of management decisions made by government agencies to regulate interaction with business;

Y is the set of states of the socio-economic environment, which can vary from stable to crisis;

$F/X \times Y \rightarrow R$ is the evaluation functional (decision matrix) defined on X and Y and will take on all values in the space of real numbers, while:

$$F = \{f_{ij}\}, \quad f_{ij} \geq 0, \quad (2)$$

where f_{ij} is an indicator of the effectiveness of the i -th management decision under the condition of realization of the j -th state of the environment.

Given that the evaluation functionality is used to optimize the results of business-government interaction, the authors present it as:

$$F = \max\{f_{ij}\}, \quad (3)$$

that is, the functionality is a positive indicator, since the authors have:

$$f_{ij} \geq 0. \quad (4)$$

Table 2: Matrix model of reconciliation of interests of the state and business for conditions of turbulent socio-economic environment

Management decision/ Interaction strategy	Option 1: stable state	Option 2: transitional state	Option 3: crisis condition
Strategy 1: Partnership in the field of regulatory policy	$f11$	$f12$	$f13$
Strategy 2: Fiscal incentives	$f21$	$f22$	$f23$
Strategy 3. Development of public-private dialog	$f31$	$f32$	$f33$
Strategy 4. Institutional support for business associations	$f41$	$f42$	$f43$

Source: developed by the authors

At the second stage, the authors will forecast possible scenarios of economic functioning depending on the coherence of management decisions and the reaction of business (Table 3).

Table 3: Projected indicators of business-government interaction under different economic scenarios in 2025-2029 (UAH million)

State of the economic environment	Indicators	Years				
		2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Stable	Operating expenses of the business	6400	6550	6700	6800	6900
	Tax revenues to the budget	520	540	555	570	580
	Total costs of the business environment	6920	7090	7255	7370	7480
	Revenues from sales of products	8800	8950	9100	9200	9350
	Regulatory costs of the state	150	155	160	165	170
Progressive positive	Operating expenses of the business	6000	6150	6250	6400	6500
	Tax revenues to the budget	560	590	610	625	640
	Total costs of the business environment	6560	6740	6860	7025	7140
	Revenues from sales of products	9000	9200	9400	9550	9700
	Regulatory costs of the state	140	145	150	155	160
Crisis negative	Operating expenses of the business	7000	7200	7350	7500	7650
	Tax revenues to the budget	480	495	505	520	530
	Total costs of the business environment	7480	7695	7855	8020	8180
	Revenues from sales of products	8600	8750	8900	9050	9200
	Regulatory costs of the state	170	175	180	185	190

Source: developed by the authors

The developed scenarios include the following conditions: a stable scenario is characterized by a gradual recovery of economic activity; a progressive-positive scenario reflects the growth of entrepreneurial initiative and the effectiveness of public policy; and a crisis-negative scenario aimed at highlighting problematic phenomena and reducing the level of trust between business and government. In this model, tax revenues, regulatory initiatives and the level of government support are interpreted as structural components of the resource base for the formation of the socio-economic environment, which determine the final resulting economic effect.

Discussion

As a result of this study, it was found that the results obtained correlate with the conclusions of Yefimenko et al. [7]. In particular, regarding the need to adapt global practice and regulatory policy in accordance with national specifics.

The proposed approach significantly expands analytical capabilities through the integration of the forecasting process into management decisions. Transparent dialogue and asymmetry of small business representation make it possible to confirm the results that are certified by the European Liberal Forum [36].

However, this study goes beyond descriptive analysis by proposing an operational model for overcoming the identified problems.

A fundamental difference from the generalizations of Guo et al. [2], who focus on the phenomenon of “regulatory capture” and demonstrate the ambivalence of the effects of new models of government-business relations, is the emphasis of the model developed by us on algorithmic balancing of interests. The proposed matrix structure shows that it is possible to minimize the risks of capture under conditions of institutional support of business associations and standardization of feedback procedures, which outlines the prospects for practical reform.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the shift from a purely investment-oriented paradigm [15, 16] to a procedural and institutional one that provides a direct assessment of the quality of interaction. In contrast to Beisengaliyev and Kossymbayeva [18], who analyzed the role of public investment strategies in overall development, the authors present a formalized toolkit for modeling the effects of cooperation for variable environmental scenarios, which enriches the scientific discourse at the intersection of game theory and public administration.

The results of the study are in line with the work of Pasinovich and Myskiv [12], who emphasized the importance of sustainable development through partnership between the state and business. At the same time, a quantitatively formalized component has been added – the ability to forecast operating costs, tax revenues, and regulatory costs in different economic scenarios. Thus, the study not only confirms the theoretical positions of previous works, but also offers practical models for government institutions and business associations.

The contribution of the paper to the scientific discourse is the creation of an analytical framework that integrates macro-historical analysis of the evolution of business-government relations with a mathematical game formalization. This provides a combination of descriptive characteristics with operational forecasting tools, and creates value for the academic community and practitioners in the field of public policy and business management.

Conclusions

The analysis of the evolutionary trajectories of the models of state-business interaction in Ukraine during 1991–2024 showed that the processes of transformation of political and economic relations took place in the context of systemic disintegration, institutional insufficiency of the state and the prevalence of patrimonial ties between government and business circles. The study demonstrates that the gradual denationalization of the economy, consolidation of big capital into oligarchic structures, and the development of the small and medium-sized enterprise sector have led to the formation of a hybrid institutional architecture that synthesizes elements of pluralist and neocorporatist paradigms. It is established that these processes have created structural prerequisites for further institutionalization of public-private partnerships and formed the foundation of the modern hybrid model of interaction.

A comprehensive analysis of the dysfunctions and problematic aspects of public-business interaction in Ukraine has identified the factors that impede the effective development of partnerships. Among the key destructive factors are institutionalized corruption, lack of the rule of law, lack of systematized public dialogue, and unpredictability of public policy, which generate erosion of trust in the business environment and increase transaction costs of strategic planning. The fragmentation of the business environment, insufficient articulation of the interests of small and medium-sized enterprises through associated structures, and the problem of delimiting the interests of the state, the private sector, and employees have become of format importance.

The developed mathematical model of decision-making, based on the provisions of game theory, provided a formalized algorithm for coordinating the interests of public and private actors in a variable socio-economic environment. The proposed matrix structure of strategic alternatives demonstrated that the application of partnership regulatory policies generates differentiated effects depending on the parameters of macroeconomic stability or crisis fluctuations. The results of scenario modeling show that stable and progressive-positive development options contribute to maximizing private sector profitability and expanding the fiscal base of the state, while the crisis-negative scenario is characterized by escalating regulatory costs and degradation of mutual trust.

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Ethics statement. Ethical review and approval were not required for this study, as it does not involve human participants, personal data, or experiments on humans or animals. The research is based exclusively on the analysis of open statistical data, analytical reports, and publicly available sources.

AI usage statement. The authors used OpenAI's ChatGPT (version 2026) to assist in improving the clarity and grammar of the manuscript. All scientific content, analysis, interpretations, and conclusions were developed and verified by the authors. The authors take full responsibility for the final content of the article.

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