


# Chapter 8

## Socio–Economic Drivers of Sustainable Agrobusiness Development: Implications for Responsible SME Practices

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Focusing on Ukraine as a country undergoing profound economic and institutional transformation, the study analyzes demographic shifts, migration patterns, regional*

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*disparities, investment limitations, and global market volatility as key factors influencing the performance and resilience of agricultural SMEs. A comparative assessment of major international agro-industrial models demonstrates significant differences in state support, technological advancement, resource utilization efficiency, and the social role of SMEs. The analysis shows that Ukraine's current agro-raw material model remains vulnerable due to low processing capacity, limited diversification, and weak institutional incentives. The findings form a conceptual foundation for adapting international best practices in responsible management to the Ukrainian context. By strengthening human capital, fostering innovation, and promoting sustainable rural development, agricultural SMEs can reinforce their social mission while contributing to long-term economic growth and integration into global agro-food value chains*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Ukraine has significant strategic advantages due to its natural resources, geographical location, and quality of human capital, which, in general, can become the basis for the state's rapid economic growth. Instead, several obstacles stand in the way of realizing one's potential. Ukraine should strengthen its position in the world and regional arena, which will contribute to increasing the level of welfare of the population, which is the primary goal of state policy.

One of the main obstacles to strengthening Ukraine's position in the world market is the lack of incentives for modernization and a far-sighted policy, which has led to a critical state of transport infrastructure, energy, electricity, and gas networks, as well as a high content of goods with low added value in the country's exports.

As a branch of Ukraine's economic complex, agriculture plays a vital role in the country's economic growth. Entering the TOP 5 sectors of the national economy in terms of the share of the country's gross domestic product (hereinafter referred to as GDP), agriculture makes Ukraine one of the global centers of food security, the world leader in the supply of food products with high added value and technologically intensive services for the agro-industrial sector as a whole. Research by scientists indicates negative trends in the development of agriculture, which include lack of skilled labour, the current state of elevator, transport, and irrigation infrastructure, the low potential of the industry due to underuse of material and technological resources, low productivity of crop and animal husbandry areas due to the unbalanced structure of the agro-industrial sector, the advantage of low-margin crops in the structure of crop production, etc. In our opinion, the primary step for the country's rapid economic growth is the purposeful development of agriculture, and the

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