

### **Youth Support in Times of rf's war aggression against Ukraine as an Investment for Local Economies Development**

In the context of martial law and global challenges such as mass people displacement, disrupted supply chains, and the need for rapid economic adaptation, youth have become a key strategic resource for the development of local communities. Investing in youth potential today is not a social expense, but investment that ensures resilience now and rapid recovery in the future. Through their innovativeness, flexibility, and technological literacy, young people are creating new economic models under crisis conditions.

Investment in youth is the targeted allocation of resources into developing their entrepreneurial, professional, and innovative capacities to achieve a specific economic effect. It is important to recognise that in times of rf's war aggression against Ukraine, such investments yield a quick return: job creation, increased local budget revenues, import substitution, and the development of export potential. According to the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, in 2023-2024, over 40% of all startups receiving state support were founded by young people under 35 [1]. Regions with developed IT clusters and strong communities are the most active in attracting youth investment.

Effectiveness of the main directions of investment in youth during times of rf's war aggression against Ukraine: the most visible results are coming from programs supporting youth entrepreneurship in IT and cybersecurity, where the average investment payback period is 1.5-2 years, and the employment rate for graduates of relevant educational programs reaches 85%. Another promising direction is support for agri-tech startups and local production, where the payback period is 6-12 months due to pre-order systems and support from local communities.

The experience of creating youth innovation hubs based on higher education institutions deserves special attention. Such centers allow for the combination of educational potential, scientific developments, and practical business needs. For example, according to the Ukrainian Startup Fund, 70% of graduates of such hubs create their own business projects or find employment in local companies, helping to retain qualified personnel in the regions [2].

The social capital of youth is evident in volunteer initiatives, which, under conditions of rf's war aggression against Ukraine, have transformed into effective systems of logistics, coordination, and mutual aid. This experience is a unique managerial resource for the country's future recovery. According to expert estimates, every hryvnia invested in the development of youth initiatives brings up to 2.5 hryvnias in economic effect through the creation of new jobs, the development of local production, and the reduction of social costs [3].

Therefore, based on the analysis, we can draw the following conclusions: investing in youth during times of rf's war aggression against Ukraine is a strategically important direction for the development of local economies; the most effective are programs that combine educational components with practical business support; the social capital of youth and their volunteer experience represent a unique managerial potential for the country's reconstruction; to maximize the effectiveness of such investments, an integrated approach is necessary, including financial support, mentorship, and the creation of appropriate infrastructure.

#### **References:**

1. Report on Entrepreneurship Support under Martial Law (2024). Ministry of Economy of Ukraine. URL: <https://www.me.gov.ua/>
2. Report on the Effectiveness of Youth Innovation Hubs (2024). Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. URL: <https://mon.gov.ua/>
3. The Economic Potential of Youth: Analysis and Prospects (2024). Ukrainian Institute for the Future. URL: <https://uifuture.org/>

