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# Transformation of Youth Value Orientations in Modern Society

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## Abstract

The article examines the transformation of youth value orientations in the context of modern social changes. The theoretical foundations of value formation are examined, and the impact of globalization, digitalization, socio-economic instability, crisis and military events, and the social environment on changing the life priorities of the younger generation is analyzed. It was found that the transformation mainly takes the form of a reconfiguration: traditional values of family, security, stability and social support do not disappear, but are combined with autonomy, self-realization, professional mobility, cultural openness and civic activity. In the professional priorities reported for Generation Z in Ukraine, income and salary (79%) are among the main orientations, followed by career growth (64%), the opportunity to learn something new (52%), personal development (51%) and a pleasant social atmosphere at work (43%). The results also confirmed the significant influence of the social environment on the formation of value priorities. A longitudinal study of 903 adolescents from 34 classes across six waves over a period of 2.5 years provided evidence of convergence in peers' value orientations through interpersonal interaction. It was found that the importance of trust, partnership, civic activity and a conscious national identity is increasing. The review indicates that the value system of youth becomes more flexible and adaptive, integrating traditional and new models of behavior depending on the sphere of life and social context. The practical value of the results lies in their applicability to youth, educational and social policy.


**Keywords:** value orientations, youth, value transformation, traditional values, basic secondary education, design of educational content

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Modern society is experiencing rapid social, economic, cultural and technological changes that have a strong impact on the worldview, life priorities and behavioral patterns of young people. Globalization, digitalization, the spread of social networks, changes in education and professions, as well as social instability create new conditions of socialization for the younger generation and encourage a rethinking of traditional ideas about family, work, education, personal success, self-realization and civic responsibility.

Value orientations are a significant part of the structure of personality, as they influence the direction of behavior, the nature of decision-making and the choice of life strategies. Young people warrant particular attention because social changes intersect with important transitions in their education, employment, relationships, and identity. Their responses to these changes also contribute to the future direction of the society in which they live.

The transformation of youth value orientations is ambiguous. Along with the growing importance of freedom, self-realization, mobility, tolerance, and openness to innovation, the influence of individualization, increasingly pragmatic approaches to life planning, the information environment, and the instability of socio-economic conditions is increasing. Digitalization has a significant impact on these processes, changing the ways of communication, access to information, and the development of social connections.

The relevance of the study arises from the need to identify the main directions of value transformations in youth, the factors of their formation, as well as possible consequences for social behavior, civic activity, professional self-determination, and social development.

Modern studies of youth value orientations analyze them as a dynamic system that is formed as a result of individual development, socialization, and changes in social contexts. Vecchione et al. [1, 2] and Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3] emphasize the combination of the relative stability of core values with the potential for gradual change in the hierarchy of these values throughout adulthood. Bacchini et al. [4] also show that the development of values in adolescence depends on life experiences and the specific social context. Thus, the transformation of values can be viewed not as a complete replacement of existing orientations, but as a change in their priority and content.

Considerable scholarly attention is paid to intergenerational and sociocultural differences in youth value systems. Nagorniak [5] explores the differences between generations X, Y, and Z in the context of Ukraine and identifies the specifics of their general and work values. Boretska [6] and Chernysh and Boretska [7] explore the axiological space of contemporary Ukrainian youth, focusing on the coexistence of national, European, individual and civic vectors. Bondarenko [8] explores the change of values in Ukrainian society in the context of socio-cultural transformation in general, while Mockaitis et al. [9] emphasize the importance of considering the coexisting influences of age, historical period, and generational characteristics.

Another area of research includes the influence of the social environment and interpersonal interaction on the formation of value priorities. Cieciuch et al. [10] emphasize the role of peers and social networks in the processes of convergence of value orientations of adolescents. Rybak [11] focuses on the relationship between values and ethnic identity of college students, and Benish-Weisman et al. [12] and Nazarenko and Chasnikova [13] reveal the connection between individual values and national identity. Thus, the value system of a young person is formed not only as a result of individual choice, but also in constant interaction with family, peers and socio-cultural communities. The impact of digitalization, globalization, and crisis contexts on young people's values is another important subject of contemporary research. Smith et al. [14] and Tsouparopoulou et al. [15] link the digital world to new forms of socialization and civic participation, while Daniel et al. [16, 17] suggest that crisis events can increase the importance of security, stability, and support.

The transformation of professional and personal priorities is explored separately. Twenge et al. [18] and Nagorniak [5] observe changes in work values among younger generations, where material well-being is increasingly combined with career development, self-fulfillment, education, and work-life balance. Karvonen et al. [19] and Bichi and Riniolo [20] emphasize the cultural and social contextual dependence of these orientations.

The objective of the study is to investigate the features of the transformation of value orientations of young people in the context of modern social changes; to identify the main factors that influence the formation of life priorities of the younger generation, and those that lead to a rethinking of these life priorities, as well as to describe the key areas of change in the system of personal, social, professional and national values.

## 2. METHODS

The study is a literature-based synthesis; the numerical findings discussed below are drawn from previously published studies rather than from a new survey conducted by the authors. The study used a combination of general scholarly and specialized methods, which allowed us to consistently analyze the formation and transformation of value orientations of young people in the context of modern social changes. To generalize approaches to understanding the essence of values, their formation, prioritization and rethinking in young people, a theoretical review of scholarly literature was conducted.

A systemic approach was used to analyze value priorities as a multi-level structure that is formed under the influence of personal, social, cultural, economic and generational factors.

Comparative analysis made it possible to compare traditional and new value orientations of the younger generation and outline the specifics of their manifestation in the areas of self-realization, career, personal relationships, civic activity, and national identity. To systematize the main factors of value transformation, such as globalization, digitalization, socio-economic instability, crises and military events, as well as the influence of the social environment, generalization, classification, and structural-functional analysis were used.

Longitudinal studies available in the scholarly literature were reviewed, which allowed us to consider age and generational differences, value priorities under the influence of crisis conditions, digital socialization and interpersonal interaction. The methods of synthesis and scientific generalization allowed us to identify the main trends in the transformation of youth values and support the conclusion concerning the predominantly reconfigurational nature of these changes, in which traditional guidelines do not disappear, but are supplemented by the values of autonomy, self-realization, professional mobility, cultural openness and civic activity.

The results of the study showed that the change in the value orientations of young people mainly involves a reconfiguration of existing priorities and is expressed not in the displacement of traditional values, but in a change in their relationship with new life guidelines. It was found that under the influence of globalization, digitalization, socio-economic instability, crisis and military events, as well as the social environment, the importance of autonomy, self-realization, professional mobility, cultural openness and civic activity is increasing. At the same time, the importance of family, security, stability, social support and a sense of national belonging remained. In professional choice, interpersonal relationships, civic activity and national identity, hybrid value constellations are formed that combine traditional and new orientations and give greater flexibility and adaptability to the life priorities of young people.

## 3. RESULTS

Value orientations are key elements of the structure of the self, as they represent a cognitive framework for understanding what is meaningful, desirable, and socially acceptable, and serve as the basis for choosing life goals, behaviors, and patterns of interaction with the social environment (Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]; Vecchione et al. [1]). Unlike situational positions or discrete assessments, values are relatively stable in nature and create a certain hierarchy on the basis of which a person prioritizes needs, interests and actions (Vecchione et al. [2]; Bichi and Riniolo [20]). At the same time, the value system is not immutable: its organization can change as a result of aging processes, life experience, changing social roles and societal influences (Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]; Bacchini et al. [4]). It is the combination of stability and potential for transformation that allows us to consider value orientations as one of the means by which individuals adapt to social changes (Vecchione et al. [1, 2]). Longitudinal studies confirm that values are already somewhat stable in adolescence, but their relative importance continues to change as individuals enter adulthood (Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]; Bacchini et al. [4]).

The issue of forming value orientations is all the more relevant for young people, since this stage of the life cycle is associated with active personal, professional, and social self-determination (Karvonen et al. [19]; Bichi and Riniolo [20]). Young people experience a gradual transition from accepting mostly normative models imposed by the family and immediate social environment to a more autonomous choice of life principles and priorities, which involves a reassessment of the belief system they already have (Vecchione et al. [1]; Cieciuch et al. [10]). There is a rethinking of previous experience, the formation of one's own views on education, work, family relationships, material well-being, civic activity, interpersonal relationships and individual self-realization (Nagorniak [5]; Boretska [6]; Chernysh and Boretska [7]). Studies of young Ukrainians also indicate that the value space of youth is formed as a result of the simultaneous interaction of personal aspirations, socio-cultural coordinates and generational characteristics, as well as social changes (Babenko [21]; Nagorniak [5]; Bondarenko [8]). In this regard, it is useful to consider the formation of values not as a one-time assimilation of social norms, but as a continuous process of their internalization, critical reflection, acceptance, rejection or rethinking in accordance with personal experience and the type of social interaction (Cieciuch et al. [10]; Benish-Weisman et al. [12]).

In personal development, value orientations connect needs and motives with life goals and behavioral decisions [2, 3]. They help young people relate their aspirations to social expectations and identify acceptable ways of achieving desired outcomes while maintaining relative autonomy in personal choices [19, 20]. The importance of a value is expressed not only through a person's declared commitment to it, but also through its influence on choices between alternative behaviors, social roles, and opportunities for self-realization [1, 18]. The value system can therefore be understood as a framework for interpreting social reality. It enables individuals to evaluate events, relationships, and personal beliefs and to position themselves in relation to social groups and forms of identity [11, 12]. Research on basic personal values indicates that their hierarchy is actively organized during adolescence and early adulthood. The relative importance of particular orientations may change as autonomy, social experience, and the range of roles undertaken by the individual increase [1–3]. These

changes are shaped not only by age but also by historical circumstances, cultural conditions, and generational context. Studying youth values therefore requires attention to age, cohort, and wider social influences rather than attributing every difference to a single developmental process [5, 9].

The formation of value orientations in youth occurs at several interconnected levels. Psychological processes associated with identity development include the emergence of personal agency, the definition of goals, the organization of time, and the capacity to translate aspirations into action. These processes are experienced and interpreted by young people within their own social circumstances. Comparing these dimensions makes it possible to trace how individual life priorities relate to the immediate social environment and to broader societal changes, as summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1.** *Main Dimensions of the Formation and Transformation of Youth Value Orientations in the Context of Personal Development, Socialization, and Social Change*

| Dimension | Content | Expression in Young People's Value Systems | Significance for Personal and Social Development |
|---|---|---|---|
| Personal | Development of personal ideas about what is desirable, meaningful, and acceptable | Definition of individual life priorities, goals, beliefs, and principles | Enables individuals to make independent life choices and develop a coherent personal position |
| Motivational | Connection of values with needs, motives, and long-term aspirations | Orientation towards self-realization, professional development, independence, prosperity, or public recognition | Influences the choice of life strategies and the means used to achieve personal goals |
| Socialization | Learning social norms and values through interaction with the surrounding environment | Influence of family, education, peers, and other significant social groups | Integrates the young person into a wider system of social relationships and shared expectations |
| Educational and professional | Formation of attitudes towards education, work, career, and professional self-realization | Reassessment of the importance of education, professional success, material security, and work-life balance | Informs professional self-determination and the selection of a long-term path for development |
| Interpersonal | Development of values through friendship, family relationships, and other close social ties | Changes in the importance of trust, support, reciprocity, autonomy, and group belonging | Contributes to social competence and the development of patterns of interaction with others |
| Identification | Relationship between personal values and belonging to particular social and cultural communities | Development of personal, ethnic, civic, and national identities | Shapes a sense of belonging, social responsibility, and individual self-identification |
| Sociocultural | Influence of culture, traditions, social norms, and established patterns of behavior | Combination of traditional orientations with autonomy, freedom, tolerance, and openness to change | Supports the adaptation of a person's value system to the surrounding cultural environment |
| Generational | Development of value orientations under historical conditions and socialization experiences associated with a particular generation | Differences in attitudes towards freedom, security, work, material success, self-realization, and community participation | Helps explain differences between the value profiles of generations without assuming uniformity within them |
| Crisis-adaptive | Reconsideration of priorities in response to war, economic instability, pandemics, and other crises | Greater importance of security, stability, family support, solidarity, and cooperation with others | Supports individual adaptation to uncertainty and changes in the circumstances of everyday life |
| Dynamic | Changes in the balance between values during maturation and the accumulation of experience | Adjustment of priorities without necessarily rejecting values established earlier in life | Explains value transformation as reorganization of an existing system rather than its complete destruction |

Source: systematized and conceptually supplemented by the authors based on the results of a comparative analysis of theoretical and empirical approaches to the development of youth values, presented in Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3], Vecchione et al. [1, 2], Nagorniak [5], Chernysh and Boretska [7], Bacchini et al. [4], Cieciuch et al. [10], Benish-Weisman et al. [12] and Mockaitis et al. [9].

Note: The presented dimensions organize the main aspects of the formation and transformation of youth value orientations, identified on the basis of the scholarly sources reviewed. In real processes of value development, they may intersect and interact with each other.

A comparison of the dimensions in Table 1 shows that the change in value orientations cannot be explained by a single mechanism: individual transformations occur in conditions of continuous interaction between family, educational, professional and peer environments. Basic ideas about acceptable behavior and important life goals develop within the family, but education, peers, professional settings, and other agents of socialization gain influence as young people's social lives expand (Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]; Cieciuch et al. [10]). Peer interactions become particularly important because both the selection of socially similar others and subsequent mutual influence in interactions can influence value similarity (Cieciuch et al. [10]). Therefore, the development of values occurs in the social space of interaction, where individual life orientations are linked to the positions of significant others (Bacchini et al. [4]; Cieciuch et al. [10]).

The social nature of values does not mean their mechanical reproduction. As personal autonomy increases, young people become more selective in their perception of normative models and move from external guidelines to an internally accepted belief system (Vecchione et al. [1]; Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]). Some values learned in early socialization are retained, while others shift in their ranking in the individual's personal hierarchy. The findings of Vecchione et al. [1] showed striking stability of core personality values in early adulthood, but also indicated the potential for gradual change through participation in new social roles and life transitions.

Changes in value orientations should be understood not as a complete replacement of one set of values by another, but as a change in priorities, content, and mechanisms of practical implementation (Vecchione et al. [2]; Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]). For example, professional activity may retain a high level of importance, but is increasingly associated not only with material security, but also with self-fulfillment, autonomy, and work-life balance. Generational studies in Ukraine also record differences in general and work values between generations X, Y and Z, which, according to the authors, emphasize the connection of the value structure with the socio-historical conditions of socialization (Nagorniak [5]; Chernysh and Boretska [7]). At the same time, young people should not be treated as a uniform social group. Their value orientations depend on personal experience, social position, cultural background, and educational environment, the nature of social relations and the context of the generation (Bichi and Riniolo [20]; Mockaitis et al. [9]). Therefore, value change can be studied simultaneously at the individual, group, and societal levels.

An important theoretical question concerns the relationship between values and identity. By establishing life priorities, a young person simultaneously determines his or her belonging to social and cultural communities, which connects the value system with personal, ethnic, civic, and national self-identification (Rybak [11]; Chernysh and Boretska [7]). Benish-Weisman et al. [12] also confirm the connection between personal values and national identity among young people. Thus, value orientations perform not only a regulatory function, but also an identification function, determining how an individual integrates into the social environment. The assimilation of socially approved norms does not mean the completion of the construction of a value system: the acquired orientations are the subject of assessment, prioritization, internalization and practical implementation, and with the acquisition of new experience they can be revised (Table 2).

**Table 2.** *Stages in the Transformation of Socially Learned Values into Individual Behavioral Orientations among Young People*

| Stage | Content of the Process | Expression among Young People | Result |
|---|---|---|---|
| Encountering values | Familiarization with social norms, attitudes, and patterns of behavior | Encountering the orientations communicated by family, education, peers, and wider society | Formation of an initial set of value orientations |
| Evaluation | Comparison of external expectations with personal experience and individual needs | Acceptance, critical consideration, or rejection of particular social norms | Selection of values that hold personal significance |
| Prioritization | Determination of the relative importance of different values | Choices between self-realization, security, family, career, freedom, and other orientations | Formation of an individual hierarchy of values |
| Internalization | Transformation of socially learned values into personally endorsed beliefs | Development of individual principles and positions concerning everyday life | Strengthening of personal autonomy and commitment |
| Decision-making | Use of values as criteria for choosing between alternatives | Definition of educational, professional, social, and interpersonal strategies | Movement from general beliefs towards specific choices |
| Behavioral expression | Expression of value priorities through practical activities | Actions undertaken in accordance with personal beliefs and chosen goals | Integration of values into everyday patterns of behavior |
| Reassessment | Review of an established hierarchy in light of new experience | Changes in priorities during maturation or wider social transformation | Further development and reorganization of the value system |

Source: structured and supplemented by the authors based on the results of a theoretical synthesis of the approaches presented by Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3], Vecchione et al. [1, 2], Bacchini et al. [4] and Cieciuch et al. [10].

Note: The sequence provides a conceptual summary of the principal steps in the transition from the acquisition of social values to their stabilization as individual beliefs and practices among young people. The revaluation of values can be viewed as the variability of a stable system under the influence of life experiences and societal changes.

The sequence in Table 2 demonstrates a cyclical pattern of transformation of value orientations of young people. However, values acquired through socialization also undergo a process of evaluation, prioritization, and internalization, after which they become criteria for decision-making and are reflected in specific behavioral patterns. At the same time, the established system is not fixed, since new life experiences, changes in social roles, or in wider social circumstances can lead to a revision of already established priorities (Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]; Vecchione et al. [2]). Therefore, reappraisal is not a terminal stage, but rather a mechanism for the constant adaptation of the value system to changes in

individual experience and social context.

Particular importance in this process is given to the ability of the value system to respond to volatility, social crises and threats. Under these conditions, values that do not occupy leading positions in a stable environment can be activated. Daniel et al. [16], studying the development of adolescent values in the context of war, found a shift in the priority of certain values under the influence of external threat. Similarly, a study of changes in personal values during a pandemic demonstrates the susceptibility of their hierarchy to extreme social upheavals (Daniel et al. [17]). This suggests that changes in values can occur not only gradually during adulthood, but also be accelerated by abrupt changes in life circumstances.

At the same time, the influence of social context is nonlinear. The four-year longitudinal study by Bacchini et al. [4] examined value systems in a sample of adolescents and identified variation across individual components alongside relative stability in the broader organization of values. This means that external conditions do not automatically determine values, since the way they are transformed is conditioned by prior beliefs, previous experiences, personal autonomy and the characteristics of social interactions (Bacchini et al. [4]; Vecchione et al. [1]). Thus, young people are not passive objects of social influence, but active agents in choosing, interpreting, and rethinking value orientations.

The contemporary context of value socialization is further expanded by digitalization. The Internet, social networks, and digital communication offer access to diverse cultural models, lifestyles, and normative expectations, thereby increasing the number of alternative orientations for young people. Smith et al. [14] demonstrated that attitudes toward and meanings of the digital environment change during the transition from adolescence to early adulthood. The digital space expands traditional agents of socialization and offers additional opportunities for the formation and rethinking of life priorities. At the same time, its influence operates in interaction with family, educational, and peer environments, creating a multi-level system of value socialization (Smith et al. [14]; Cieciuch et al. [10]).

Thus, a theoretical understanding of the value orientations of young people requires understanding these orientations as a dynamic multi-level system, influenced by the interaction of personal development and social influence. It is values that provide relative stability to life choices, which are then applied to specific contexts as criteria for assessing aspects of social reality that guide educational, professional, and interpersonal decisions, and which contribute to the construction of personal and social identity (Rybak [11]; Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]; Benish-Weisman et al. [12]). At the same time, their hierarchy is also subject to reassessment under the influence of life transitions, changes in social roles, interaction with peers, social crises and digitalization. Thus, the transformation of value orientations should be viewed not as the destruction of an established system, but as a change in the relationships between its components, their importance and the ways in which they are practically applied (Vecchione et al. [1, 2]; Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]). The combination of relative stability and reorganization potential determines the special place of value orientations in the personality structure and social development of youth and serves as the basis for further analysis of the factors of their transformation in modern society.

The value orientations of young people in modern society are changing under the influence of a complex set of interconnected social, cultural, economic and technological factors. Their influence is not reduced to a simple replacement of traditional values with new ones, but is reflected in a change in the priority of certain guidelines, in the ways of their interpretation and implementation in practice. Particular attention is required to the simultaneous influence of globalization, digitalization, socioeconomic instability, crises, and war, together with the more immediate influence of family and the surrounding social environment. Together, these processes create an environment where young people habitually compare and contrast previously accepted normative models with new social requirements, as well as with their individual experience (Karvonen et al. [19]; Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]; Bondarenko [8]). Therefore, changes in values should be viewed as an interaction between transformation processes at the macro level and socialization mechanisms at the micro level.

Globalization significantly expands the cultural and information space within which young people develop their value orientations. The rapid circulation of information, mobility, the spread of global cultural models and the strengthening of international social ties create a situation in which young people have access to a much wider range of life strategies and normative guidelines. This leads to an increase in the importance of autonomy, freedom of choice, self-realization, cultural openness and tolerance, but at the same time does not mean an automatic rejection of local, family or national values (Karvonen et al. [19]; Boretska [6]). Studies in Ukraine reveal the coexistence of different value models, suggesting that the central process is less one of uniformity than of the emergence of a complex axiological space in which traditional and modern vectors of orientation interact with each other (Chernysh and Boretska [7]; Bondarenko [8]).

In this respect, globalization increases the possibilities of individual choice, but at the same time makes the value system of young people more open to rethinking. Young people have the opportunity to compare different cultural models and adapt them to their own life situations, which leads to a combination of local and global orientation systems. That is why the same person can simultaneously attach great importance to family stability, nationality, professional mobility, freedom of expression and international openness. Boretska [6] and Chernysh and Boretska [7] reveal the complexity of the value system of Ukrainian youth, while Karvonen et al. [19] emphasize that the value orientations of young people depend on the broader cultural context. Thus, globalization does not eliminate national specificity; rather, it creates a new

space for rethinking already acquired values.

No less important is the factor of digitalization, since digital platforms today act not only as a means of communication, but also as a separate environment of socialization. Social networks, digital communities and online communications increase the intensity of contacts with different lifestyles, behavioral patterns and belief systems. Smith et al. [14] view digital socialization as the transformation of young people's attitudes towards the possibilities of using the Internet as they move from adolescence to young adulthood. This allows us to consider the digital space as one of the channels for the transformation of value orientations, along with family, education and the immediate social environment (Smith et al. [14]; Cieciuch et al. [10]).

Digitalization increases the importance of quick access to information, self-presentation, communicative mobility and participation in social life regardless of physical location. At the same time, the digital environment can lead to an increase in the importance of personal autonomy and self-expression, as young people have more opportunities to create their own social networks and choose their information communities. Tsouparopoulou et al. [15] link young people's digital engagement with civic practices and participation, suggesting potential relationships between digital competence and the development of new ways of civic engagement. However, digitalization should not be seen as a an entirely independent factor: the way it affects young people depends on the types of social connections, information practices and prior values that young people have (Smith et al. [14]; Tsouparopoulou et al. [15]). Comparison of studies on globalization, digital socialization, generational differences, the impact of the crisis, the interaction of youth and the social environment allows us to outline the transformation of value orientations as a consequence of the parallel influence of several interrelated groups of factors (Figure 1).

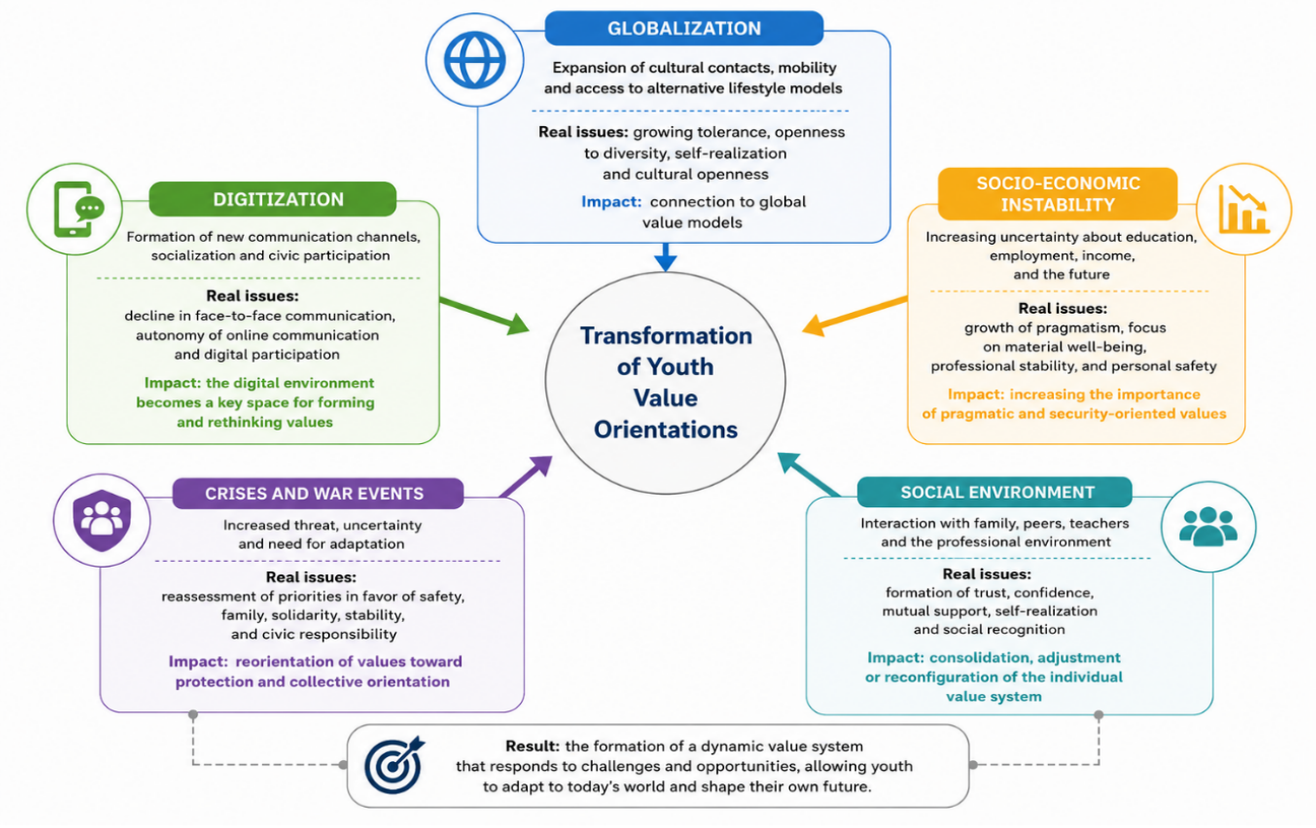



**Figure 1.** *Interconnected Factors Shaping the Transformation of Youth Value Orientations in Contemporary Society. Source: conceptualized and structured by the authors based on a comparative analysis of studies by Boretska [6], Smith et al. [14], Nagorniak [5], Daniel et al. [16] and Cieciuch et al. [10].*

Note: The diagram shows the general directions and relationships of the factors of value transformation; it does not describe the quantitative strength of the influence of each factor and does not suggest that they can be considered in isolation.

As shown in Figure 1, the transformation of youth values occurs under the simultaneous influence of globalization, digitalization, socio-economic instability, crisis and war events, as well as their social environment. It is noteworthy that the above-mentioned interrelated factors do not act in isolation, but interact dynamically, reinforcing or moderating one another according to the social context. Globalization expands youth's access to alternative cultural models and ways of behaving, while digitalization accelerates their dissemination and integration into their everyday practices. As a result, young people

have broader opportunities to compare life strategies, develop individual preferences, and challenge established normative guidelines (Karvonen et al. [19]; Smith et al. [14]; Boretska [6]). This contributes to the increase in the value of autonomy, freedom of choice, self-realization and openness to change, but does not lead to a clear replacement of traditional values (Nagorniak [5]; Chernysh and Boretska [7]).

A feature of today's transformation is the simultaneous strengthening of values that seem to point in different directions. Along with the desire for autonomy and individuality of choice, the need for stability and security, as well as support from a close social network, has been preserved or reactivated. This coexistence reflects the different functions that values perform: autonomy supports individual choice, while security and social support provide resources for managing uncertainty and maintaining meaningful relationships. This indicates the establishment of a hybrid value system, where individual and collective orientations are not mutually exclusive, but rather combined with each other depending on life circumstances and social context (Nagorniak [5]; Daniel et al. [17]; Bondarenko [8]). Thus, the transformation is expressed primarily in a change in the ratio between specific values, and not in a simple shift from one type of orientation to another. In professional terms, this is expressed in a combination of material, self-actualization and autonomous motives. Generational studies show that younger generations tend to differ from previous generations in the structure of values in work, especially in their attitude to freedom, leisure, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic rewards (Twenge et al. [18]; Nagorniak [5]). All this justifies considering professional activity for young people today not simply as a source of economic stability, but as a space in which they can realize themselves, achieve autonomy and control their life path. At the same time, Mockaitis et al. [9] warn against attributing these differences exclusively to belonging to a certain generation, since the structure of values is influenced, on the one hand, by age characteristics, and on the other hand, by historical conditions and the social environment of personality formation.

The consequences of digitalization go beyond simply changing forms of communication. The digital environment creates a wider space for civic participation, social representation, and access to different normative models. Smith et al. [14] show that young people's attitudes towards the Internet change with the transition to early adulthood, while Tsouparopoulou et al. [15] link digital interaction with new forms of civic participation. In this sense, digitalization can contribute to the transfer of certain social activities to the network space and create new opportunities for expressing civic positions, interacting with different communities, and, ultimately, for the formation of one's own public identity.

Although global and digital openness does not prevent the strengthening of national and civic identification, research on young people in Ukraine shows that their European, individual and civic identification can be integrated into a single system, rather than viewed as separate models (Boretska [6]; Chernysh and Boretska [7]). The connection between personal values and national identity is also confirmed by the longitudinal studies by Benish-Weisman et al. [12]. This allows us to view the contemporary transformation not as a weakening of belonging to a particular community under the influence of globalization, but as a complication of the identity structure in which local, national and global orientations can interact.

It is also important to realize that the degree and direction of value transformation depend on which values already occupy leading positions in the individual system of orientations of a young person. Longitudinal studies show that core values remain relatively stable (Vecchione et al. [1, 2]; Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]), and therefore external changes more often lead to reorientation than to the complete dismantling of the established value system. A distinctive feature of contemporary value transformation is that new social conditions do not generate a value system "from scratch", but interact with the formed attitudes, experience and identities. It is advisable to supplement the qualitative analysis of the directions of value transformation with some empirical indicators of the professional priorities of the younger generation and the influence of the social environment on the formation of values (Figure 2).

Note: The values entered were the result of several studies with different designs and samples and are considered for analytical comparison of trends, not for direct statistical comparison. The study by Cieciuch et al. [10] included 903 adolescents from 34 classes and included six waves of data collection over a period of 2.5 years.

Comparing the indicators in Figure 2 allows us to highlight two related aspects of the transformation: the expansion of the criteria for choosing a profession by young people and the importance of the social environment for the development and convergence of value priorities. For Generation Z in Ukraine, the reported priorities include income and salary (79%), career growth (64%), opportunities to learn something new (52%), personal development (51%), and a pleasant social atmosphere at work (43%). These percentages describe distinct work-related priorities within the cited study; they should be interpreted within that study's sample and question format rather than as a distribution across mutually exclusive choices. Income and salary are therefore prominent alongside career growth, learning, and personal development (Nagorniak [5]). The findings of (Cieciuch et al. [10]), based on six waves of observation of 903 adolescents from 34 classes over 2.5 years, further confirm the importance of social context in the development and convergence of value priorities.

Thus, the combined effect of globalization, digitalization, economic uncertainty, and societal change is to foster a much more flexible and differentiated structure of value priorities among young people. A distinctive feature is that the orientation towards autonomy, self-realization, and openness to change is combined with the need for stability, social support, civic belonging, and the preservation of meaningful social connections (Nagorniak [5]; Boretska [6]; Chernysh

and Boretska [7]; Bondarenko [8]). Such a configuration indicates a complication, rather than a simplification, of the value space of youth and provides a basis for identifying the main trends in the relationship between traditional and new value orientations.

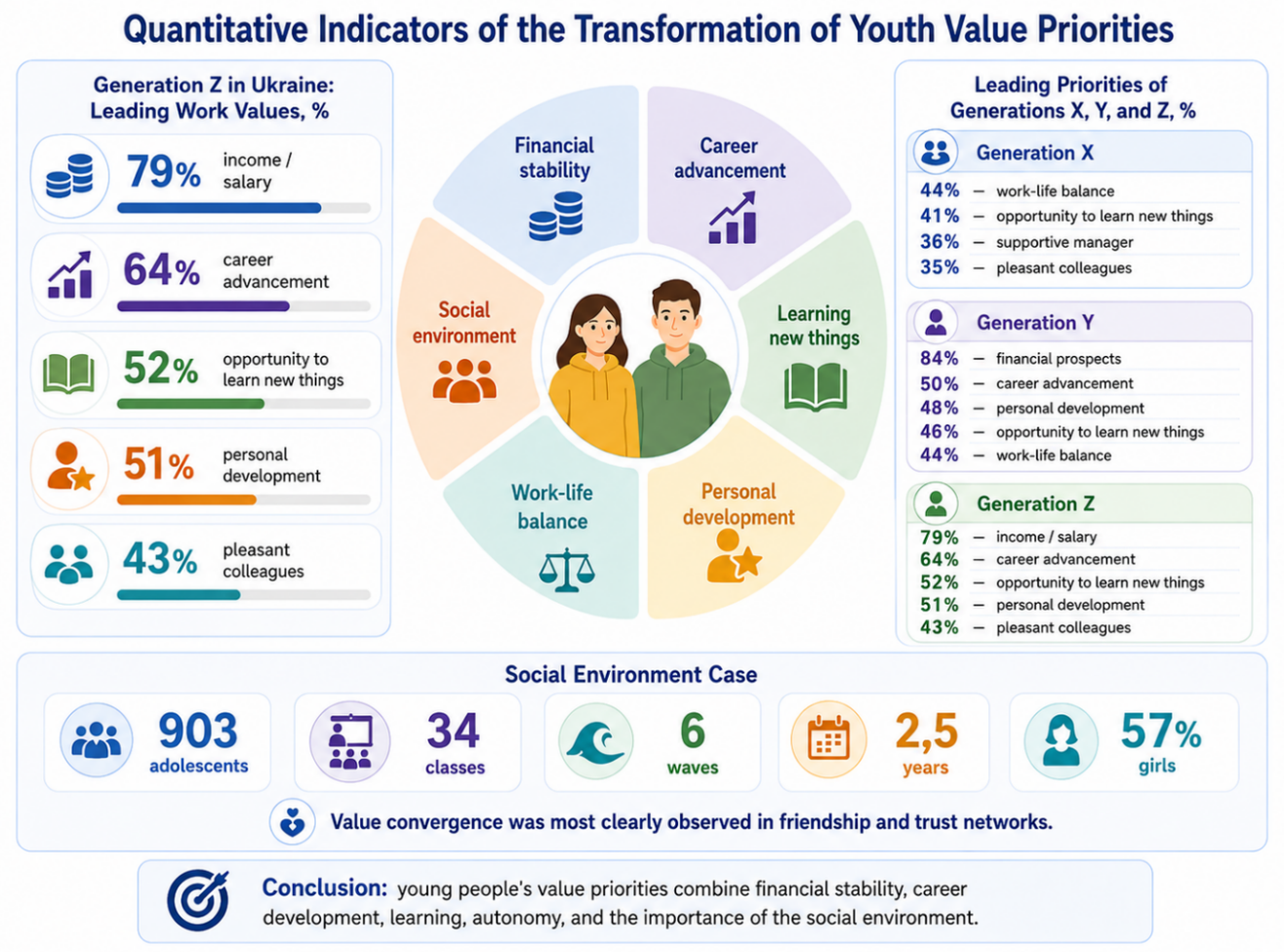



**Figure 2.** *Selected Indicators of Young People's Professional and Social Value Orientations Reported by Nagorniak [5] and Cieciuch et al. [10]. Source: systematized by the authors based on published empirical results of Nagorniak [5] and Cieciuch et al. [10].*

The modern shift in the value orientations of young people is characterized rather by a change in their place in the general system of life priorities and a combination of value systems with new ones adapted to the conditions of high social mobility, individualization and cultural openness, than by a rejection of traditional values. The importance of family, stability, interpersonal support, and community belonging coexists in youth discourse simultaneously with autonomy, self-realization, freedom of choice, individual development and openness to change (Nagorniak [5]; Boretska [6]; Chernysh and Boretska [7]). Therefore, this trend allows us to talk about the formation of a mixed value system in which traditional and new orientations do not necessarily compete, but can complement each other depending on the situation in the life and field of activity of the young person (Bondarenko [8]; Bichi and Riniolo [20]).

A clear trend is the increasing emphasis on personal autonomy and self-realization. Young people increasingly identify success in life with the ability to determine their own educational, professional and personal path, to develop their skills and gain experiences that match their interests. However, autonomy does not necessarily mean social isolation or rejection of social ties and collective values. It implies greater freedom of action in deciding which social norms and patterns of behavior an individual is willing to adopt as their own (Vecchione et al. [1, 2]; Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]). In the Ukrainian context, the trend towards autonomy and openness to change is particularly evident when comparing younger and older generations (Nagorniak [5]).

Orientations towards self-realization are becoming stronger and more differentiated. They are expressed not only in the pursuit of professional success, but also in the desire to develop competence, expand available choices, and maintain control over one's life. Accordingly, contemporary understandings of success extend beyond an exclusive emphasis on material benefits to include personal development, satisfaction at work, mobility, and balance between different areas of life [5, 18]. Material prosperity nevertheless retains its importance and becomes part of a broader system of goals, providing

a basis for autonomy and the pursuit of other life strategies. Bringing these trends together helps clarify how traditional value orientations interact with new approaches to self-realization, professional development, social relationships, civic participation, and identity. The patterns identified do not indicate a consistent replacement of traditional orientations by new ones. Instead, they suggest the emergence of more complex combinations in which stability, belonging, and social support coexist with autonomy, self-realization, and openness to change. Figure 3 presents these relationships as a conceptual synthesis of the reviewed literature.

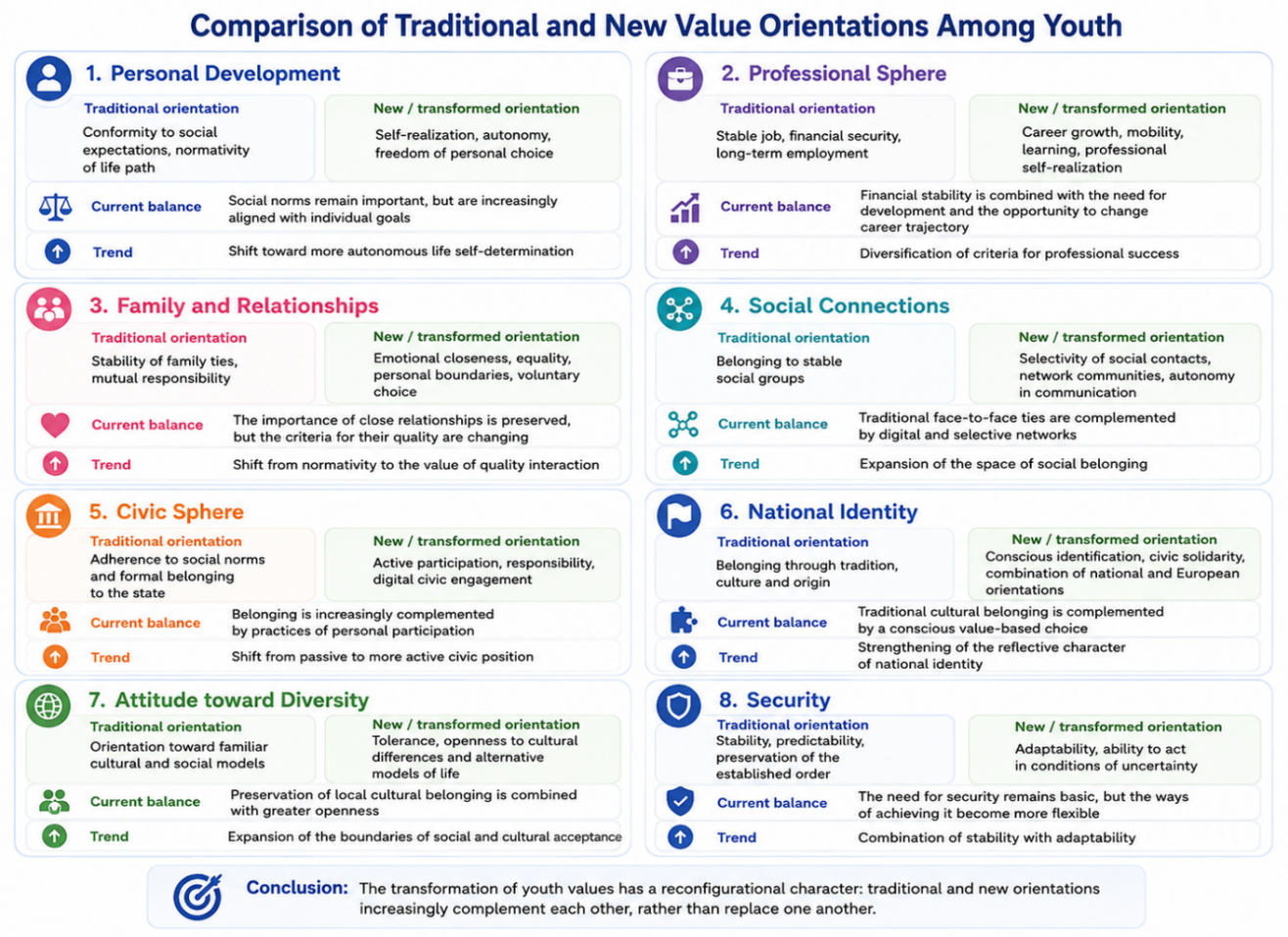



**Figure 3.** *Relationships between Traditional and Emerging Youth Value Orientations under Contemporary Social Change. Source: conceptually summarized and structured by the authors based on a comparative analysis of studies by Nagorniak [5], Boretska [6], Chernysh and Boretska [7], Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3], Twenge et al. [18], Smith et al. [14], Benish-Weisman et al. [12] and Bondarenko [8].*

Note: Traditional and new value orientations are not considered as mutually exclusive categories, but as components of a single system in which their ratio may vary depending on the sphere of life, social context, and individual experience of the young person.

The conceptual comparison in Figure 3 illustrates how transformation occurs mainly through changes in the meaning and practical expression of values that are already important. Traditional orientations can retain their significance while acquiring new features in the context of increasing autonomy, digitalization, and social mobility. The importance of family, for example, may remain high, while expectations concerning the quality of close relationships increasingly emphasize trust, psychological comfort, voluntary commitment, and the preservation of personal autonomy. Similarly, professional stability continues to be valued, but it is considered alongside opportunities for development, mobility, and self-realization [5, 20]. These combinations show how continuity and change can operate together within the same area of life.

In professional choice, the combination of instrumental and self-realization motives is particularly evident. Income, financial independence, and prospects for professional stability remain important to young people. At the same time, opportunities for learning, career development, personal growth, and balance between work and personal life also receive attention [5, 18]. This combination reflects a more complex understanding of career success. Whereas a traditional model associates a profession primarily with stability and material security, contemporary young people may evaluate employment through economic, psychological, and developmental criteria simultaneously. The relative importance of these criteria can vary with educational opportunities, personal circumstances, and the conditions under which career decisions are made.

Changes in interpersonal relationships follow a comparable pattern. Close relationships remain important, but expectations concerning their quality become more demanding. Trust, reciprocity, emotional support, and the preservation of personal autonomy become significant criteria for evaluating social relationships. The long-term association between peer interaction and value development emphasizes that young people's social networks provide more than channels for communication: they also contribute to the formation and reconsideration of life priorities [10]. Digital communication further expands the range of social environments available to young people, allowing group membership and participation to become more selective and to operate across several interconnected settings [14].

Another trend concerns changes in the forms of civic participation available to young people. Participation is increasingly able to extend beyond traditional institutional channels through digital communication, information campaigns, online communities, and other forms of public expression. Tsouparopoulou et al. [15] connect the digital engagement of young Europeans with civic practices and participation, drawing attention to the expansion of the settings in which civic activity occurs. In this respect, digitalization provides more than an additional technical channel for participation. It can also influence how young people understand active membership in society, how they encounter public issues, and how they communicate their positions to other people.

Changes in civic orientations are closely connected with national identity. For young people, national belonging may rest not only on cultural background and inherited traditions, but also on the conscious acceptance of values associated with civic responsibility, solidarity, and participation. Rybak [11] examines the relationship between value orientations and ethnic identity among students, while Benish-Weisman et al. [12] identify relationships between personal values and national identification. In Ukraine, these patterns are accompanied by the coexistence of national and European orientations within young people's value systems [6, 7]. Such findings direct attention to the ways in which inherited affiliations and personally endorsed commitments can interact rather than simply displace one another.

**Table 3.** *Expressions of Changing Youth Value Orientations in Key Areas of Life and Their Implications for Life Strategies*

| Area of Life | Key Trend | Practical Expression | Combination of Values | Implications for Life Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Self-realization | Strengthening of personal autonomy | Independent definition of goals and selection of educational and personal pathways | Freedom, responsibility, and development | More individualized planning of life priorities |
| Professional choice | Expansion of the criteria for success | Evaluation of work in terms of income, development, mobility, and work-life balance | Material stability, career development, and self-realization | More flexible trajectories of professional development |
| Interpersonal relationships | Greater emphasis on the quality of interaction | Orientation towards trust, reciprocity, emotional support, and personal boundaries | Closeness combined with personal autonomy | More selective relationships based on mutual partnership |
| Civic activity | Expansion of active forms of participation | Online and offline participation, public expression of opinions, and engagement with communities | Belonging, responsibility, and participation | Greater personal agency in social and civic life |
| National identity | Strengthening of consciously endorsed belonging | Connection of personal beliefs with civic and national values | Tradition, solidarity, and conscious choice | Development of more reflective forms of identity |
| Cultural interaction | Greater openness to cultural diversity | Engagement with alternative cultural models and intercultural communication | Local identity combined with tolerance | National belonging alongside openness to the wider world |
| Life stability | Combination of security and adaptability | Search for predictability together with readiness to adjust strategies | Stability combined with mobility | Greater capacity to adapt to an unstable environment |

Source: Systematized and conceptually developed by the authors based on a comparative analysis of the studies by Twenge et al. [18], Smith et al. [14], Nagorniak [5], Boretska [6], Chernysh and Boretska [7], Cieciuch et al. [10], Benish-Weisman et al. [12] and Tsouparopoulou et al. [15].

Note: The categories "key trend", "value mix" and "life strategy outcome" were formed as a result of a generalization of the analysis of the studies under consideration; they indicate the prevailing directions of change and are not intended to describe all youth in a particular country.

Strengthening national identity does not necessarily contradict cultural openness. A contemporary value system can combine membership in a national community with acceptance of cultural diversity, international mobility, and interaction with people from other cultures. This combination suggests that young people are not always choosing between two mutually exclusive systems of orientation. Instead, they may develop more complex relationships between identity, belonging, and life priorities [6, 8]. Comparing changes in self-realization, professional choice, interpersonal relationships, civic activity, national identity, and cultural openness helps identify both the principal trends and their practical expression in everyday decisions. Table 3 brings these areas together and shows how different combinations of values can inform young people's

life strategies.

A comparison of the three tables shows that the decisive characteristic of the modern transformation is the emergence of interrelated combinations of values, rather than the dominance of one universal reference point. Self-realization is combined with responsibility, professional ambition with the need for stability, closeness with autonomy, and national belonging with cultural openness. Such a structure corresponds to the conditions that a young person must take into account in order to simultaneously maintain a relative stability of the life path and be ready to adapt their behavioral strategies to changes in the social environment (Vecchione et al. [2]; Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]; Bondarenko [8]).

Thus, the main vector of value transformation in modern youth is shifting from a relatively normative and one-dimensional model of life orientations to a more flexible, individualized, yet socially integrated system. Traditional values of family, security, stability, and community commitments do not disappear, but their importance is being reinterpreted in connection with autonomy, personal development, professional mobility, tolerance, and active citizenship (Nagorniak [5]; Boretska [6]; Chernysh and Boretska [7]; Benish-Weisman et al. [12]). In the areas of self-realization and professional choice, this is reflected in the desire for independence and growth; in interpersonal relationships - in the growing importance of trust and partnership; in the civic sphere - in the spread of forms of participation; and in the area of national identity - in the transition to a more conscious and value-based sense of belonging. Thus, the transformation of value priorities in youth is not destructive, but reconstructive, in which traditional and emerging orientations form new combinations in accordance with the conditions of modern society.

## 4. DISCUSSION

The results of the study confirm that value shifts in young people should be viewed not as an exchange of traditional values for new ones, but as a change in their ratio, priority, and methods of implementation. Traditional orientations, such as family, security, stability, social support, and belonging to the community, continue to be significant and are increasingly complemented by the values of autonomy, freedom of choice, self-realization, personal development, and openness to change (Nagorniak [5]; Boretska [6]; Chernysh and Boretska [7]; Bondarenko [8]).

The results are consistent with the approach that the value system of a young person is characterized by relative stability and the possibility of gradual reorganization. Previous values do not disappear automatically, but their place in the hierarchy of a person can change with growing up, new experiences, changes related to roles and the social environment (Vecchione et al. [1, 2]; Daniel and Benish-Weisman [3]; Bacchini et al. [4]).

It was found that the transformation of values is significantly influenced by factors such as globalization, digitalization, socio-economic instability, crisis and military events, as well as the social environment. Globalization and the digital environment provide young people with wider access to alternative cultural models and opportunities for self-realization (Karvonen et al. [19]; Smith et al. [14]; Tsouparopoulou et al. [15]), while crisis situations are likely to make security, stability, care and solidarity more important (Daniel et al. [16, 17]). There is an increase in autonomy and the desire for competence, learning and self-determination in self-fulfillment and professional choice. Material stability and income continue to be important, but are increasingly combined with career development, professional mobility, self-fulfillment and work-life balance (Twenge et al. [18]; Nagorniak [5]).

In the interpersonal sphere, the importance of close social ties remains, but trust, reciprocity, emotional support, and personal autonomy play an increasingly important role (Cieciuch et al. [10]). At the same time, digitalization expands the forms of civic participation and also provides new opportunities for public expression of opinions (Smith et al. [14]; Tsouparopoulou et al. [15]). National identity of youth is becoming more conscious and can be combined with civic responsibility, European orientation and cultural openness (Rybak [11]; Boretska [6]; Benish-Weisman et al. [12]).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The study showed that the value orientations of young people are a dynamic system influenced by the development of the individual, their sociocultural context and social changes. They shape life priorities, behavioral strategies, and patterns of social interaction, and retain the ability to be rethought under the influence of new experience and changes in living conditions.

It has been established that the values of young people are most influenced by globalization, digitalization, socio-economic instability, crisis and military events, as well as the social environment. Globalization and digitalization strengthen values related to autonomy, freedom of choice, self-realization and openness to change, while instability and crisis situations bring to the fore the values of security, stability, care and solidarity. The defining trend is not the replacement of traditional values with new ones, but their combination. Family, security, stability, and social belonging remain important, but is complemented by an orientation towards personal development, professional mobility, tolerance and civic activity. In professional life, material well-being is combined with the desire for career growth, education and self-realization, and in interpersonal relationships the role of trust, partnership and personal autonomy is increasing. In the

civic and identity spheres, there is an expansion of forms of youth participation, as well as an increase in conscious national belonging, which can be combined with a European orientation and cultural openness. Therefore, the transformation of youth value orientations takes the form of reconfiguration and consists in the development of a more flexible and adaptive value system, which is able to combine traditional orientations with the new requirements of modern society.

**Author Contributions**

Svitlana Oksamytna: Conceptualization, methodology, investigation, formal analysis, writing – original draft, writing – review and editing, visualization, and project administration. Liliia Tishko: Conceptualization, investigation, formal analysis, writing – original draft, and writing – review and editing. Valentyna Shakhrai: Methodology, investigation, validation, writing – original draft, and writing – review and editing. Tetiana Nazarenko: Investigation, data curation, formal analysis, visualization, and writing – review and editing. Olena Chasnikova: Validation, supervision, writing – review and editing. All authors contributed to the development of the study, critically reviewed the manuscript, approved the final version, and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

**Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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**Data Availability**

Data are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

**Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process**

In the course of preparing this manuscript, the authors employed ChatGPT to improve the linguistic quality and readability of the content. After utilizing this AI tool, the authors conducted a comprehensive review and necessary revisions to ensure the accuracy, integrity, and scientific rigor of the manuscript. All authors bear full responsibility for the final content of the published work, including any errors or inconsistencies that may arise.

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