

**LEPL - DAVID AGHMASHENBELI
NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY OF GEORGIA**

**„The New Architecture of the European Union: Challenges
for 2024 and the Effects of the War in Ukraine“**

**International Student Conference
Gori, 2024**



**LEPL - DAVID AGHMASHENEBELI
NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY OF GEORGIA**



**„The New Architecture of the European Union: Challenges for
2024 and the Effects of the War in Ukraine“**

International Student Conference

Gori, 2024

Editorial Board

Head of the Editorial Board

Brigadier General Mamia Balakahdze

Rector of LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Deputy Head of the Editorial Board

Colonel Giorgi Laghiashvili

Head of the Scientific Research Center of LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Members of the Editorial Board

Colonel Irakli Uchadze

Head of MA Program of LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Lieutenant Colonel Arkadi Antia

Head of Defence Analysis Program of MA, LEPL – David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Nikoloz Samkharadze

Professor of Defense Analysis Program of MA,, LEPL – David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Archil Chachkhiani

Associate Professor of Defence Analysis Program of MA, LEPL – David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Nino Okhanashvili

Assistant Professor of Defence Analysis Program of MA, LEPL – David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Lieutenant Colonel Levan Gozalishvili

Head of the Security Studies Program of MA, LEPL – David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

**© ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
PUBLISHING:**

**LEPL - DAVID AGHMASHENEBELI
NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY OF
GEORGIA 2024
ISBN-978-9941-8-7203-7**

Levan Nikoleishvili	Professor of Security Studies Program of MA, LEPL – David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Shadiman Bitsadze	Associate Professor of Security Studies Program of MA, LEPL – David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Ketevan Chakhava	Assistant Professor of Security Studies Program of MA, LEPL–David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Colonel Jaba Zaloshvili	Head of State Resource Management Program of MA, LEPL–David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Giorgi Kbiltsetskhilashvili	Professor of State Resource Management Program of MA, LEPL – David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Lieutenant Colonel Nikoloz Khachidze	head of the Baccalaureate at LEPL – David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Lieutenant Colonel Zviad Abutidze	Acting Chief of the Baccalaureate program in informatics at LEPL – David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Aleksi Burduladze	Professor of Informatics Program of Baccalaureate, LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Nani Arabuli	Associate Professors of Informatics Program of Baccalaureate of LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Romeo Galdava	Associate Professor of Informatics Program of Baccalaureate, LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Giorgi Kakashvili	Associate Professor of Informatics Program of Baccalaureate, LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Levan Cholikidze	Associate Professor of Informatics Program of Baccalaureate, LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Lieutenant Colonel Ioseb Turashvili	Head of Management Program of Baccalaureate, LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Ketevan Chiabrishvili	Professor of Management Program of Baccalaureate, LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Rusudan Dalakishvili-Chichinadze	Associate Professor of Management Program of Baccalaureate, LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Tinatin Jorjoliani	Associate Professor of Management Program of Baccalaureate, LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Shalva Kvezereli	Associate Professor of Management Program of Baccalaureate, LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Givi Duchidze	Associate Professor of Management Program of Baccalaureate, LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Levan Gegeshidze	Professor of Defence and Security Program of Baccalaureate, LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Nikoloz Esitashvili	Chief Scientist of Scientific-Research Center of LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Tinatin Kropadze	Chief Scientist of Scientific-Research Center of LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Zurab Samkharadze	Chief Scientist of Scientific-Research Center of LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Ketevan Kveselava	Chief Scientist of Scientific-Research Center of LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Editor/Corrector Zurab Mchedlishvili	Editor-in-Chief of the Scientific-Research Center of LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia
Computer Designer Tamar Kandelak	Chief specialist of the Scientific-Research Center of LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Contents

David Partsvania	
Strategic Rivalries in the Black Sea: The Russia-Turkey Nexus and Global Power Interests	8
Nino Tsikhelashvili	
The Implications of the War in Ukraine on EU's Space Strategy	25
Gagi Bibiluri	
The impact of the war between Russia and Ukraine on the national security of Georgia from a socio-economic point of view	35
Kakha Pavlenishvili	
Georgia's Potential To Transforming the Economic Architecture of the European Union.....	43
Daviti Gugunava	
Terrorism Threats to the EU in terms of Russian-Ukrainian military conflict	65
Rati Asatiani	
Fortifying Europe: Combating FIMI and the Russian Menace in Georgia's Path to EU Membership	77
Nino Samadashvili	
Redefining Priorities of Europe in the Wake of the War in Ukraine: From Green Deal Towards Armament and Military Industrialization	89
Nugzari Kvariani	
The impact of russian-Ukraine's war on the European economy	103
Tornike Samakashvili	
European security against Russian hybrid warfare	115
Eter Bakhturidze	
"Guardians of the Sky: Analyzing the Strategic Significance of Air Defense Systems in the Russia-Ukraine War"	126
Tamar Khaduri	
"Geopolitical Transformation as a Result of the Russia-Ukraine War and China's Strategic Interests in the South Caucasus"	133
Dorota Zembik	
Make Europe Great Again“ What does the Hungarian Presidency of the EU Council stand for? ..	146
Senior Corporal Cadet Klaudia Wyrzykowska, Senior Corporal Cadet Jakub Zwierzchowski	
The Development of Shorad and Vshorad Systems as a Key Element of European Defense Architecture in the Face of Geopolitical Challenges and the War in Ukraine: the Case of Poland	163
Pvt. Cad. Jakub Tutka	
EU Energy Sector and the Russo-Ukrainian War, Europe's Quest for Energy Independence from the Russian Federation.....	184
Martyna Brzeznicza	
The impact of Hungarian and Slovak foreign policy on the communicational cohesion of the European Union.	210

Salome Sachaleli	
The Role of Cyber Threats in the Russian War Against Ukraine; Impacts for the Future Conflicts	221
Nata Sachaleli	
The Future of European Union and NATO Enlargement and Threat from Russia.....	227
Giorgi Saghinadze, Nika Mghebrishvili	
From Blitzkrieg to Stalemate: Analyzing Russia’s Strategic Changes in Ukraine.....	233
Mariam Sopromadze, Zurab Dzagania	
Security of the European Union and NATO, against the background of the Russia-Ukraine war	246
Beka Shaishmelashvili, Aleksandra Barbakadze	
The Russian-Ukrainian war and its impact on the Baltic states	261
Irakli Beridze, Nika Gogoberishvili	
Germany's defense and security policy after the war in Ukraine	270
Tarash Guledani	
Energy Security in Europe after the Russo-Ukrainian War	291
Giorgi Shatirishvili	
Influence of Russo-Ukrainian war on south Caucasus.....	303
Gigi Tskhomelidze, Demetre Chkhaidze	
The Russia-Ukraine war and its impact on the security of the European Union.....	316
Ana-Maria Keadze	
Warfare in the Digital Age: Navigating Truth and Deception in the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict	332
Beka Kapatadze	
The Role of Telegram in the Ukraine Conflict.....	340
Mangia Tchintcharauli, Rati Kukuladze	
Russia-Ukrainian war’s influence over Europe’s energetic security	353
Davit Takashvili	
Russia-Ukraine war effects on IT field.....	366

Strategic Rivalries in the Black Sea: The Russia-Turkey Nexus and Global Power Interests

David Partsvania

Student of Master's Program in State Recourse Management of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Abstract

The Black Sea region, with its trading routes serving for centuries, represents a critical strategic nexus, regarded as a "bridge" connecting Europe and Asia. In the context of European sanctions on Russia, the export of gas and oil from the southern Black Sea has increased significantly, transforming the region into a key transportation hub. Additionally, the Black Sea plays a key role in China's "One Belt One Road" initiative, linking the trade routes to the Mediterranean, Europe and North Africa. These trade routes intersect with Russia's gas and oil pipelines, further amplifying the region's strategic importance. Since February 24, 2022, cooperation between the West and Russia has been almost limited across all European maritime spaces. Although the West has imposed economic and political sanctions on Russia for violations of international law, the situation in the Black Sea region is still distinct. Here, the ambitions and views of the "Great Powers" regarding the positioning of the region are aligned. From Ankara's and Moscow's standpoint, the Black Sea is considered to be an informal "condominium." Both countries have shared a common vision for the region's organization since the Cold War ended. Both sides consider the Black Sea as an area of privileged interests, where external actors' interference is undesirable. Consequently, the Black Sea has become a "closed zone," where Russia and Turkey jointly control and dominate. This cooperation serves the interests of both nations, preventing the influence of NATO from growing in this strategic space.

Keywords: Black Sea Region, Ukraine, Turkey, Russia, NATO, US, China, Montreux Convention.

Introduction

The Black Sea region is a focal point of geopolitical tensions, serving as a stage for the competing regional ambitions of both Russia and NATO, as well as Russia and Turkey. The strategic importance of this region is underscored by its historically pivotal role in global trade routes.

The role of Turkey, as a key actor in the Black Sea, primarily stems from the Montreux Convention (1936),¹ which grants it control over the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits, regulating the passage of military vessels and maintaining the power balance in this region. This convention enables Turkey to exert significant influence over the region, often limiting the non-regional states', particularly NATO ally's involvement. Turkey has increasingly leveraged the Montreux Convention for its strategic purposes, particularly since Russia's invasion in Ukraine.

Russia's activities in the Black Sea, starting with the annexation of Crimea in 2014, demonstrate its intent to dominate the region. The militarization of Crimea and the strengthening of the Black Sea Fleet have bolstered Russia's position, making the Black Sea a critical component of its military strategy. Its "anti-access/area denial" (A2AD)² strategy involves integrating advanced weaponry and surveillance systems, ensuring Russia to respond threats even beyond its borders.

Given the Black Sea's pivotal role in global energy and trade dynamics, its strategic importance continues to grow, particularly as a key artery for Russia's energy exports amidst European sanctions. Additionally, the Black Sea is a vital part of China's "Belt and Road Initiative",³ positioning it as a critical linking power between Europe, Asia, and Africa.

In the context of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, NATO's presence in the Black Sea has been significantly constrained by Turkey's restrictions, including its control over the

¹ ზურაბ ბატიაშვილი, „მონტროს კონვენცია და მისი მნიშვნელობა.“ საქართველოს სტრატეგიისა და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა კვლევის ფონდი, 2021 წ.

² Kathleen Weinberger, "Russian Anti-Access and Area Denial (A2AD) Range", *Institute for the Study of War*, 2016y.

³ ვლადიმერ პაპავა, „ერთი სარტყელი - ერთი გზის ინიციატივა“ და საქართველო.“ საქართველოს სტრატეგიისა და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა კვლევის ფონდი 2017 წ.

passage of military ships through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits. While NATO has increased its military presence in Eastern Europe, the absence of allied naval forces in the Black Sea represents a critical gap in the alliance's "deterrence and defence" capabilities.⁴ As a result, Turkey's role within NATO has become even more significant, as its actions in the Black Sea are crucial to the alliance's broader strategy.

The relationship between Turkey and Russia is complex, marked by both cooperation and rivalry. Despite collaborating on various regional issues and sharing common interests, Turkey's military cooperation with Ukraine and its membership in NATO still remain points of contention, reflecting broader geopolitical dynamics.

The Black Sea region is a battleground for global power struggles, with Turkey and Russia playing pivotal roles. Their relationship in the region is shaped by both historical legacies and contemporary strategic interests, forming the security architecture not only of the Black Sea but of the surrounding areas as well. **Ankara and Moscow view the Black Sea as critically important and oppose the involvement of external powers. For them, the Black Sea functions as an informal condominium, where both nations collaborate to establish regional order.** The ongoing conflict in Ukraine and the evolving geopolitical landscape are influencing the power balance in the Black Sea, making it a region of critical importance for global stability.

Main Part

The Importance of the Black Sea Region

The Black Sea region, situated between Europe and Asia, plays a critical geopolitical and strategic role. The countries in this region, including Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, and Georgia, significantly influence both regional and global politics. Due to its geographical location, the region serves as a bridge between the West and the East, making it a strategically important transit zone.

⁴ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO 2022 Strategic Concept*, Madrid, 2022.

The Black Sea also represents a point of intersection between NATO and Russian interests, making it a particularly sensitive area in international relations. The presence of NATO member states and their allied countries, along with the protection of their interests, enhances the region's importance from both military and security perspectives.

Moreover, the Black Sea region functions as an energy corridor, linking the energy resources of the Middle East and the Caspian Sea to Europe. Control over this corridor is of particular significance, as it limits Russia's influence on the energy market at the same time it provides Europe with alternative sources of energy.

One of the region's key assets is its transportation connections, positioning it as a crucial transit hub between Europe and Asia. The region's ports are crucial for international trade, with the Black Sea serving as a key route for the shipment of grain, oil, gas, and other strategic resources, thereby enhancing the region's economic potential.

The economic interests of both the European Union and China further underscore the region's significance. The "New Silk Road," presenting part of China's "Belt and Road Initiative",⁵ passes through the Black Sea, fostering the development of infrastructure projects in the region and strengthening economic ties. As a result, the economic relationships in the region are becoming even more robust.

The Black Sea region plays a decisive role in both global politics and the economy. Its geopolitical location, strategic importance, and economic potential attract significant attention from both regional and global powers. However, fully harnessing its economic potential requires to ensure both security and stability in the region. The ongoing war in Ukraine and Russian aggression have severely disrupted transportation links and economic development, posing threats not only to regional but also to global economic interests.

⁵ ვლადიმერ პაპავა, „ერთი სარტყელი - ერთი გზის ინიციატივა“ და საქართველო.“ საქართველოს სტრატეგიისა და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა კვლევის ფონდი, 2017წ..

Energy Security and Supply Chain Disruptions

The war in Ukraine has dramatically altered global energy markets and supply chains, presenting significant energy challenges for Europe. Prior to the conflict, Europe was heavily dependent on Russian gas and oil, but the war prompted Russia to use its energy resources as a tool for political pressure. The restrictions on gas and oil supplies from Russia triggered an energy crisis in Europe, leading to sharp price increases and significant economic losses.

European countries were forced to quickly transition to alternative energy sources, such as liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the United States and Norway, as well as oil from the Middle East.⁶ This shift significantly increased energy supply costs, causing substantial economic harm not only to Europe but to other parts of the world as well. Additionally, Ukraine's critical energy infrastructure, including pipelines and power plants, has been severely damaged by the war, further complicating the region's ability to ensure a stable energy supply.

The changes in supply chains are driven by European countries' efforts to diversify and achieve energy independence through the development of new infrastructure projects, such as LNG terminals and renewable energy facilities. The war has also fostered the creation of energy partnerships and alliances, particularly between the United States and the European Union in the field of energy security. These shifts have far-reaching implications for global energy markets, as Europe's security and defence strategies are closely tied to energy stability.

Russia's Strategic Interests in the Black Sea

Due to its geographical location and strategic importance, the Black Sea serves as both a key defensive line and Russia's shortest route to the world's oceans. The Black Sea connects

⁶ საბა გუჯაბიძე, "რა ბედი ელის ევროპაში რუსული გაზის უკრაინის გავლით მიწოდებას?" *ამერიკის ხმა* 2024წ..

to the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits, linking it to the Mediterranean Sea, and through the Suez Canal and the Strait of Gibraltar, to global waters. Historically, Russia has sought to control these routes as they provide the shortest connection between the Middle East and Europe. For Russia, the Black Sea has long served as a "window" to the world's oceans, facilitating the easy transport of its trade goods via the Mediterranean to Western European markets, which is crucial for Russia's economy.

The strategic interests of Russia regarding the Black Sea have developed over centuries. During the Russo-Turkish Wars of the 18th century, Russia aimed to secure a foothold in the region and enhance its influence. The Black Sea became a major battleground between Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and Western European powers during the Crimean War (1853–1856).⁷ During the Soviet era, the Black Sea Fleet became an essential part of the Soviet Navy, playing a defensive and offensive role during World War II and the Cold War, a legacy that continues today.

Russia remains one of the dominant powers in the region, with its influence extending across military, economic, and diplomatic spheres. In this geopolitical space, Russia's primary objectives are to limit NATO and EU influence and to consolidate its hegemony. The annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the war in Ukraine, which began in 2022, have dramatically worsened the security situation, demonstrating that Russia is not hesitant to use military force to protect its interests.

Economically, Russia exerts significant influence over the region. Major pipelines running through the Black Sea deliver gas from Russia to Europe, forming an important lever of economic and political pressure. Russia aims to maintain Europe's dependence on its energy resources, which grants it leverage over EU policies. However, Russia's actions have also spurred greater resistance from NATO and the EU, leading to increased involvement by these organizations in the region. This has resulted in regional military

⁷ Andrew Lambert, "Crimean War, 1853–1856", *Oxford Bibliographies*, 2023y..

buildups and the imposition of sanctions, which have somewhat constrained Russia's economic capabilities.

The Black Sea is also a critical component of Russia's defence strategy. Its connection to the world's oceans offers a key military advantage, allowing Russia to swiftly deploy its naval forces to the Mediterranean and, if necessary, link up with other military bases globally. Russia's military strategy in the Black Sea includes not only naval forces but also the strengthening of air and land-based defence systems. The region has historically been viewed as a "front" of maritime defence, protecting Russia's southern borders from hostile forces. The Black Sea Fleet, still based in Crimea, remains crucial for securing Russia's southern borders and ensuring national security. Russian military bases in and around Crimea form a robust defence system that enables Moscow to rapidly respond to any potential threats.⁸

With the annexation of Crimea, Russia solidified its control over the Black Sea and secured dominance over key maritime routes to global markets. Consequently, the security situation in the region has significantly deteriorated. Russia's increased military presence has heightened tensions and hindered NATO and Western powers from operating freely in the Black Sea. Russia has invested heavily in developing Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2AD)⁹ capabilities, strategically deploying these systems in critical locations. The range of these systems extends from the Arctic in the north to Syria in the south, particularly around Kaliningrad and Crimea. Their presence effectively covers the entire Black Sea region, including the Dardanelles and Bosphorus Straits,¹⁰ giving Russia a considerable military advantage.

Russia's strategic goals in the Black Sea are not limited to regional interests. Russia's strong desire for access to global waters and the ability to reach global markets through the

⁸ კახა ესებუა, „რუსეთის სამხედრო გაძლიერება შავ ზღვაზე ალტერნატიული კონტრსტრატეგია ნატოსთვის.“ საქართველოს სტრატეგიისა და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა კვლევის ფონდი 2017წ..

⁹ Ian Williams, *The Russia – NATO A2AD Environment*, 2017y..

¹⁰ Kathleen Weinberger, "Russian Anti-Access and Area Denial (A2AD) Range." *Institute for the Study of War*, 2016y..

Black Sea is a core element of Russia's broader geopolitical strategy. This route is not only a mechanism for Russia's economic and military superiority but also a tool for exerting political influence. Russia's military and economic strategies concerning the Black Sea have global implications, as they limit Western influence in the region and strengthen Russia's position on the global stage.

Turkey's Strategic Position in the Black Sea Region

The Black Sea, where Western and Russian interests converge, holds significant strategic importance for Turkey. Despite the fact that Turkey is a member of NATO, it seeks to act as an independent player, influencing the region's security dynamics. Turkey's strategy involves cooperation with Russia while maintaining relations with the West.¹¹ On the one hand, Ankara strives to find a balance between Russia and the West and on the other hand, it aims to strengthen its influence in the region.

The Montreux Convention¹² grants Turkey a special role in the Black Sea security system. This convention gives Turkey the authority to regulate the movement of military ships through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits, making it a crucial strategic player. After the start of the war in Ukraine, Turkey invoked the Montreux Convention to limit the military activities of non-littoral states in the Black Sea. It should be underlined the above-mentioned action was significant for both the Kremlin and the West.

Turkey's evolving position during the Ukraine war reflects its broader strategy of balancing between the West and Russia. Turkey supports Ukraine's territorial integrity, as evidenced by its military aid, including the supply of "Bayraktar TB2" drones.¹³ Simultaneously, Turkey maintains a dialogue with Russia and has not joined Western sanctions against Moscow. Ankara's key role in the Black Sea Grain Initiative further

¹¹ Daria Isachenko, "Turkey in the Black Sea Region." *SWP Research Paper*, 2023y..

¹² ზურაბ ბატიაშვილი, „მონტრუს კონვენცია და მისი მნიშვნელობა.“ *საქართველოს სტრატეგიისა და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა კვლევის ფონდი*, 2021წ..

¹³ Reuters, „Ukraine Using Turkish Drones in Donbass Conflict in Self-defence, Zelenskiy Says, 2021y..

demonstrates its capacity to mediate in the conflict,¹⁴ particularly in ensuring grain exports crucial for Ukraine's economy. However, the fact that raises concerns in the West is the following, Turkey assist Russia to avoid sanctions, and at the same time it obtains economic benefits.

In the Black Sea region, Turkey's leadership through the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)¹⁵ organization has been curtailed as a result of the geopolitical rivalry between the West and Russia. In response, Turkey has sought to leverage its geographical position "to establish itself as an indispensable partner to both Russia and the West in the energy sector".¹⁶

Turkey's energy policy and its geopolitical awareness have shifted since the 2000s, when Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu introduced the concept of Turkey as a "central country" in geopolitics.¹⁷ The foundation of this concept is Turkey's favourable geographic location. Turkey is simultaneously a country of the Middle East, Central Asia, the Persian Gulf, the Balkans, the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, the Caucasus, and the Caspian region. In the energy sector, Turkey's objective has been to transition from a transit country to a gas "hub".¹⁸ This policy underscores Turkey's strategic objectives of influencing both sides, where the country's economic priorities play a decisive role. Despite the continuing confrontation between Russia and the West, Turkey believes cooperation is feasible with both.¹⁹

Turkey's energy policy demonstrates that "while Turkey cannot escape the influence of other actors, it can use its geographical position to set its own rules."²⁰ This is evident from the number of natural gas pipelines passing through Turkey, making "both Russia and

¹⁴ Reuters. *Turkey in talks with Russia, Ukraine over grain-export corridor*, 2022y..

¹⁵ BSEC. *Organization of The BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATIO*. Istanbul, 1992y..

¹⁶ Daria Isachenko, "Tukey in the Black Sea Region." *SWP Research Paper*, 2023y..

¹⁷ Emre Erşen, Seçkin Köstem, *Turkey's Pivot to Eurasia*. London, 2019y..

¹⁸ Isachenko, Daria. "Tukey in the Black Sea Region." *SWP Research Paper* 2023y..

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

the European Union dependent on it as a transit country.”²¹ Since 2003, Ankara has been importing Russian natural gas through the "Blue Stream" pipeline, with the "TurkStream" pipeline added in 2020. TurkStream also functions as a transit route, delivering gas to Southern and Southeastern Europe. In addition, Turkey plays a critical role in the EU's energy diversification through the "Southern Gas Corridor," which links the Caspian region to Southern Europe. This corridor includes the "Trans-Adriatic Pipeline" (TAP), the "Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline" (TANAP) and the "South Caucasus Pipeline". Another major initiative, the "Nabucco" project, initiated by the European Union, was ultimately cancelled due to “competition“ from Russia's "South Stream" project, which also was not implemented.²²

In the Black Sea region strategy of Turkey is defined by regional security concerns as well as by its economic interests. Ankara aims to maintain and enhance its impact on the Black Sea while continuing dialogue with Russia. This complex policy, based on various factors, often runs counter to the strategies of its Western allies. The ongoing war in Ukraine presents both challenges and opportunities for Turkey, as it seeks to bolster its influence and role in the region. While Ankara endeavours to balance between the West and Russia, its strategy does not fully align with the interests of its Western allies. Nevertheless, Turkey remains a NATO member and plays a crucial role in maintaining stability and security in the region.

NATO and the United States in the Black Sea Region

The Black Sea region holds significant strategic importance also for NATO. Countries in the region, such as Turkey, Romania, and Bulgaria, play key roles in the Alliance's security strategy. NATO's primary objectives in the region include ensuring the security of

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

its member states, fostering cooperation with partners, and balancing Russia's growing military power.

Before the conflict in Ukraine, Western policy toward the Black Sea region often appeared ineffective. This was partly because of challenges in reaching a consensus within NATO and due to its member states' energy and economic dependencies on Russia, complicating the formation of a unified strategy. Turkey's unique role and position also limited NATO's actions, providing Moscow with additional room to manoeuvre. Russia found it easier to implement its Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2AD)²³ strategy, which allows it to control maritime and airspace zones.

In the Black Sea, the role of the US focuses primarily on ensuring security and supporting NATO. The U.S. actively assists Ukraine with military, financial, and humanitarian aid, aimed at countering Russian aggression and preserving Ukrainian sovereignty. The strengthening of U.S. military presence in the region, support for NATO's strategic plans, and the development of military infrastructure in Eastern Europe are all part of the U.S. strategy to limit Russia's influence and bolster regional security. Additionally, the U.S. is engaged in enhancing European energy security. In response to the reduction of energy supplies from Russia, the U.S. has increased its exports of LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) to Europe, promoting energy independence and reducing the influence of Russia in the region. These actions aim at diversifying regional energy markets and weakening Russia's grip.

Since 2014, the intensity of NATO military exercises in the region has increased, alongside the rotational deployment of NATO and U.S. naval forces and the installation of air and maritime defence systems in Black Sea coastal states. However, these actions face certain limitations. The limitations imposed by the Montreux Convention directly have been affecting NATO's ability to operate in the region. As the primary enforcer of the Montreux Convention and the largest littoral state in the Black Sea, Turkey plays a central

²³ Kathleen Weinberger, "Russian Anti-Access and Area Denial (A2AD) Range," *Institute for the Study of War*, 2016 y..

role in these processes. At the same time, tensions between Turkey and the West, especially in recent years, further have been complicating NATO's freedom of action in the region. Nonetheless, NATO and U.S. efforts remain focused on maintaining stability, although this approach is often criticized for lacking a comprehensive and long-term strategy.

China – One More Actor

China is one more actor in this region which has primarily economic interests. China is actively advancing its "New Silk Road" initiative, mainly focused on developing both transport and infrastructure projects. The Black Sea, its strategic location, makes the region attractive as well to China, as a gateway to Europe.²⁴ Through its "Belt and Road Initiative",²⁵ China has emerged as a more influential actor in the Black Sea region, and its involvement is expected to continue growing. China collaborates with all Black Sea countries at various levels and invests in ports and infrastructure projects. As economic investments increase, China's influence over the region's countries also grows. However, China's activities in the region have caused some concern in the West, where it is believed that China's strategy could intensify global "competition" and expand its political influence.

Both the U.S. and China are actively operating in the Black Sea region to secure their strategic, as well as economic interests. Russia's aggressive policies and attempts to expand its influence have led to increased Western engagement in strengthening security in the region. China, at the same time, seeks to boost its economic influence through investments and infrastructure projects. The above-mentioned "competition" and the diverse interests at play will influence the future of the Black Sea region and its significance in global politics.

²⁴ Deborah Sanders, "Can China promote stability in the Black Sea." *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 2021y..

²⁵ ვლადიმერ პაპავა, „ერთი სარტყელი - ერთი გზის ინიციატივა" და საქართველო. " საქართველოს სტრატეგიისა და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა კვლევის ფონდი, 2017.

Conclusion

Russia has lost significant trust due to the war initiated in Ukraine. Cooperation between the West and Russia in European maritime zones has been almost entirely restricted. In reaction to Russia's international law violations, political and economic sanctions from the West were implemented.²⁶ This is particularly evident in areas such as climate change, territorial disputes, and arms control. Resolving these issues with the Eurasian region's largest state is not expected in the foreseeable future in the Arctic and the Baltic Seas.²⁷ Though, there is a different situation in the Black Sea. Here, the ambitions of "Great Powers" intersect regarding regional order. Western analysts often view the Black Sea as a "Black Hole."²⁸ For both Ankara and Moscow, the region is critically important, and they do not welcome interference from external powers. They consider that the Black Sea represents an informal condominium where both countries cooperate to establish regional order. Since the Cold War ended, Russia and Turkey have established a shared perspective on the regional order. Both nations view the Black Sea as a special interest zone, where external powers are not welcome. Together, albeit unofficially, they have established a regional agreement that effectively turns the Black Sea into a "Mare Clausum" (closed sea).²⁹ Through mutual understanding and the consistent alignment of their interests, the Black Sea has evolved into an isolated zone under the control of Russia and Turkey, where both nations dominate and manage the region's affairs.

Currently, relations between Ankara and Moscow are largely based on personal relations, particularly between Erdoğan and Putin. Their communications often play a decisive role in resolving regional issues. For example, the March 2022 phone call concerning the movement of Turkish ships through the Azov Sea intended to prevent a shortage of sunflower oil in Turkey. For Putin, these relations are very important under

²⁶ Daria Isachenko and Swistek Göran, "The Black Sea as Mare Clausum." *SWP Research Paper*, 2023y..

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ben Hodges, "The Black Sea ... or a Black Hole?" *CEPA Strategy Paper*, 2021y..

²⁹ Daria Isachenko and Swistek Göran, "The Black Sea as Mare Clausum." *SWP Research Paper*, 2023y..

conditions of his isolation from the West, further strengthening his desire for closer cooperation with Erdoğan.

However, in the region, long-term factors are more significant than individual relations alone. Control over the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits has historically been a source of constant conflict in Russian-Turkish relations. Nevertheless, since the 20th century, this so-called “competition“ has no longer been a struggle for dominance. Both countries prioritize maintaining a power balance in the region, safeguarded by the Montreux Convention. They also aim to restrict the Western military involvement in the region. The aspiration of Ukraine to reshape the Black Sea into a NATO-controlled zone appears unrealistic in the nearest future, as Turkey is likely to maintain its vision of regional order and intends to reduce Western military influence in the Black Sea.

In the future, “competition” between Turkey and Russia in the Black Sea is likely to continue. The outcomes of the ongoing war will definitely have an impact on the distribution of power in the region. If Russia manages to solidify its influence over Ukraine, it will further strengthen its position in the Black Sea. However, Turkey’s role in NATO’s strategy, along with its military and economic capabilities, allows it to bolster its hegemonic position here.

The relationship between Russia and Turkey regarding hegemony in the Black Sea represents one of the most complex and significant geopolitical issues, heavily being influenced by the Ukraine war. Despite historical conflicts and ongoing “competition”, both countries strive to maintain a balance while simultaneously increasing their influence. This rivalry is likely to intensify, positioning the Black Sea region as a focal point of global geopolitical tension.

Bibliography

- Bechev, Dimitar. 2023. „Türkiye’s Black Sea Strategy amidst the Russian-Ukrainian War.“ Sailing through the Storm. Accessed August 25.
[https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief_1_Turkey%20in%20the%20Black%20Sea %20%282%29.pdf](https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief_1_Turkey%20in%20the%20Black%20Sea%20%282%29.pdf) .
- BSEC. 1992. Organization of The BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION. Istanbul, 25 June. <https://www.bsec-organization.org/>.
- Çelikpala, Mitat, and Emre Erşen. 2023. "Turkey’s Black Sea Predicament: Challenging or Accommodating Russia?" International Affairs. Accessed August 27, 2024. chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/549667>.
- Doroshko, Mykola, and Iuliia Tsyryfa. 2021. Baltic – Black Sea Area as a Geopolitical Reality: Does It Exist? Kyiv, March. Accessed August 14. doi:10.14746/ssp.2021.1.7.
- Emre Erşen, Seçkin Köstem. 2019. Turkey's Pivot to Eurasia. London. Accessed August 15, 2024. doi:<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429023064>.
- Eurostat. 2024. "China-EU - international trade in goods statistics," Statistics Explained. February. Accessed August 2024. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=China-EU_-_international_trade_in_goods_statistics#EU_and_China_in_world_trade_in_goods.
- Hodges, Ben. 2021. "The Black Sea ... or a Black Hole?" CEPA Strategy Paper. Accessed August 26, 2024. <https://www.swp-berlin.org/10.18449/2023RP12/>.
- Isachenko, Daria. 2023. "Turkey in the Black Sea Region." SWP Research Paper. Accessed August 2024. doi:10.18449/2023RP12.
- Isachenko, Daria, and Göran Swistek. 2023. "The Black Sea as Mare Clausum." SWP Research Paper. Accessed August 27, 2024. doi:10.18449/2023C33.

- Lambert, Andrew. 2023. "Crimean War, 1853–1856." Oxford Bibliographies. April.
<https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780199791279/obo-9780199791279-0228.xml>.
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization. 2022. NATO 2022 Strategic Concept. Madrid, 29 May. Accessed August 18. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_56626.htm.
- Ortmann, Stefanie. 2023. "Russian spatial imaginaries and the invasion of Ukraine: Geopolitics and nationalist fantasies." *Political Geography*. Accessed August 30, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2022.102784>.
- Resources, Conciliation. 2022. „UNDER THE PALL OF WAR: IMPLICATIONS OF RUSSIA’S INVASION OF UKRAINE FOR PEACE PROCESSES IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS.“ Conciliation Resources. Accessed August 15. chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://rc-services-assets.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/Under_the_Pall_of_War.pdf.
- Reuters. 2021. Ukraine Using Turkish Drones in Donbas Conflict in Self-defence, Zelenskiy Says. 29 October. <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/kremlin-says-turkish-drones-risk-destabilising-situation-east-ukraine-2021-10-27/>.
- Routers. 2022. Turkey in talks with Russia, Ukraine over grain-export corridor. May 26. <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/turkey-talks-with-russia-ukraine-over-grain-export-corridor-senior-official-2022-05-26/>.
- Sanders, Deborah. 2021. "Can China promote stability in the Black Sea.?" *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*. Accessed August 2024.
doi:10.1080/14683857.2021.1935771.
- STEIN, AARON. 2021. "FROM ANKARA WITH IMPLICATIONS: TURKISH DRONES AND ALLIANCE ENTRAPMENT." *War on the Rocks*, December 15. Accessed August 18, 2024. <https://warontherocks.com/2021/12/from-ankara-with-implications-turkish-drones-and-alliance-entrapment/>.

Weinberger, Kathleen. 2016. "Russian Anti-Access and Area Denial (A2AD) Range." Institute for the Study of War. August. Accessed August 2024.
<https://www.iswresearch.org/2016/08/russian-anti-access-and-area-denial.html>.

Williams, Ian. 2017. The Russia – NATO A2AD Environment. 3 January. Accessed August 2024. <https://missilethreat.csis.org/russia-nato-a2ad-environment/>.

ბატიაშვილი, ზურაბ. 2021. „მონტროს კონვენცია და მისი მნიშვნელობა.“ საქართველოს სტრატეგიისა და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა კვლევის ფონდი. წვდომილი 2024 წლის 20 აგვისტო.
<https://gfsis.org.ge/files/library/opinion-papers/160-expert-opinion-geo.pdf>.

გუჯაბიძე, საბა. 2024. „რა ბედი ელის ევროპაში რუსული გაზის უკრაინის გავლით მიწოდებას?“ ამერიკის ხმა. 14 აგვისტო. წვდომილი 2024 წლის 15 08.
https://www.amerikiskhma.com/a/is-it-the-end-for-russian-gas-supplies-to-europe-via-ukraine-/7742602.html?utm_source=fb&utm_medium=paid-ads&utm_campaign=Georgian+Website+Traffic+Campaign+-+May+2024+to+April+2025&utm_content=LandingPageViews&fbclid=IwZXh0b.

ესებუა, კახა. 2017. „რუსეთის სამხედრო გაძლიერება შავ ზღვაზე ალტერნატიული კონტრსტრატეგია ნატოსთვის.“ საქართველოს სტრატეგიისა და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა კვლევის ფონდი.
<https://gfsis.org.ge/files/library/opinion-papers/92-expert-opinion-geo.pdf>.

კინწურაშვილი, ანი. 2023. „საქართველოს გასასვლელი აბრეშუმის გზაზე.“ სამოქალაქო იდეა. წვდომილი 2024 წლის 24 აგვისტო. chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://civicidea.ge/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/%E1%83%A1%E1%83%90%E1%83%A5%E1%83%90%E1%83%A0%E1%83%97%E1%83%95%E1%83%94%E1%83%9A%E1%83%9D%E1%83%A1-%E1%83%92%E1%83%90%E1%83%A1%E1%83%90%E1%83%A1%E1%83%95%

პაპავა, ვლადიმერ. 2017. „ერთი სარტყელი - ერთი გზის ინიციატივა“ და საქართველო.“ საქართველოს სტრატეგიისა და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობათა კვლევის ფონდი. წვდომილი 2024 წლის 21 08.
<https://gfsis.org.ge/files/library/opinion-papers/93-expert-opinion-geo.pdf>.

The Implications of the War in Ukraine on EU's Space Strategy

Nino Tsikhelashvili

Student of Master's Program in Security Studies of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defense Academy of Georgia

Supervisor: Professor Zurab Agladze

Abstract

The objective of this paper is to explore and evaluate the repercussions of the Russo-Ukraine war on the European Union's Space Strategy. The other accompanying tendencies during and after the war are also mainly covered and critically analyzed. The breakout of the confrontation significantly influenced the global security landscape and attitudes towards defensive/offensive methods from contemporary and evolving multi-domain threats.

The paper discusses both the EU's normative perspectives and policy dynamics on space deliverables, including ways, means, and ends, prior to and after the invasion. In the light of comparative analyses of the European Union's space concepts, legal frameworks, and strategies, it is obvious, to what extent the war in Ukraine has been impacting European regional security. The paper identifies the capabilities, potential, and vulnerabilities of the European Union facing space threats. Also, it considers the advantages and shortfalls of satellites, and the benefits of integrating space-enabled data into the management process at a variety of levels.

Also, the paper considers Union's outlook on preventive/defensive and deterrence methods in space, as well as the organization's perception of the operational environment, priorities, existing gaps in space, and roadmap for enhancing the organization as a global space power. The study addresses the issues of the EU's approach toward space management and services in the context of cross-sectoral security on different levels.

Keywords: EU's Space Strategy before and after the Russo-Ukraine War; Space Domain Awareness (SDA); Global space power, EU's Space priorities, capabilities, and deliverables; Civil-Commercial use of satellites.

Introduction

The Implications of the War in Ukraine on EU's Space Strategy

“Space is for everybody. It’s not just for a few people in science or math, or for a select group of astronauts. That’s our new frontier out there, and it’s everybody’s business to know about space.”

Christa McAuliffe, NASA Teacher in Space Project, 1985.

The multidimensional consequences of the war in Ukraine on various aspects and sectors, especially, in security and defense-related fields, are still in the process of analysis. But, one of the immediate outcomes after the conflict started, was in the series of reviewing procedures to find viable defense approaches, means, and ends of the contemporary war, as well as, reconsidering traditional understandings of cooperation in mutually beneficial areas, etc.

As every war is a unique occurrence with its subjective and objective characteristics, the same applies to the case of Ukraine. In this sense, the space system with its composing elements shifted the entire European states' previous perception of the cosmos from an emerging domain to a battlefield between several peer competitors. The space aspect of the Russo-Ukraine war is an all-encompassing package, including space infrastructure, constellations, diversity of consumers, multifactorial engagement, public-private sector partnership, and unparalleled intensity of space tech's application throughout the crisis for different purposes.

The emergence of the conflict on the European continent in the 21st century, where the majority of the community thought the issue of war was at some point, had been overcome by decades-long discussions, multilateral agreements, and certain types of guarantees. Despite close interdependency – the armed conflict still happened. In response to that, the European Union, as a main leading actor, which is responsible for maintaining the homeland's stability came to an awakening stage. EU embarked on a retrospective of

available options for response, and how to cope with and recover from the armed crisis with numerous repercussions in the foreseeable future.

The timeline, efforts, and undertaken policies have proved that European countries began to more critically evaluate the strategic environment. After being cut off organization's space logistics, lack of alternatives to provide self-sufficient security and shortages of tangible defense mechanisms encouraged the localization of solutions and distribution of resources. Based on the EU's efforts in advancing its space capabilities strengthen the statement that the outbreak of the War in Ukraine revitalized the European Union's positioning in its space domain.

The presented paper attempts to explore the consequences of the Russo-Ukraine war on the European Union's Space approaches, and suggests comparative analyses on space security, dynamics, and management issues before and after the conflict.

Noteworthy, the relevance and actuality of the research theme as it broadly deals with space affairs and narrowly - EU's posture in space progressing - are essential but less studied areas of concern. Additionally, both are inseparable components of contemporary security system's complex architecture and comprehensive analysis. Familiarity with the pros and cons of space capabilities underpins advanced operational design. Also, it is a necessary factor for relevant stakeholders to consider in devising a multi-layered and feasible course of action. From the scientific and academic innovation perspective, findings in the writing facilitate and bridge the gap between space, civil-military, and national security practitioners. Consequently, it helps the existing scarcity of accessible materials, especially for the EU.

Main Part

First and foremost, due to the war, space security regained vital recognition as an integral part of the European Union's strategic environment, and a range of risk assessments activated previously overlooked dimensions. At the outset of Russia's full-scale invasion of

Ukraine accompanied by the digitalization of battlefield and consistent connectivity. There should be an underlined, straightened command and control system in civil-military-governmental affairs, real-time exchange of data, and dynamic monitoring in the areas of operation to multiply the synergy and probability of success in defensive/offensive efforts. Consequently, this tendency further stimulated the necessity of the employment and securitization of space services within the EU and its individual member states.

The European Union's leadership identified space as a strategic domain, which is defined as "any element relevant for the functioning of space systems and the delivery of space-based services in the EU and the Member States"¹. Accordingly, the EU started to act more cautiously and strategize space-enabled services.

Complementing the acknowledgment the Union adopted the concept of Space Domain Awareness (SDA)² which combines detecting, tracking, identifying, and characterizing space objects in real-time, analyzing their behavioral trajectory and operationalizing received data. For example, it might be included in military doctrines, guidebooks, warfighting simulations/documents, etc. What sets the SDA apart from other similar terms, such as space situational awareness, derives from its pragmatic value, integrating both military and non-military threats through space surveillance capabilities and directing inputs for military requirements. In practice, it implies that SDA simultaneously uncovers space collisions, debris, fragmentation, newly originated risks, forecasts, ballistic missiles, and so on. In other words, SDA constitutes a unified operational context. This ability is fundamental in modern/next-generation force construction, defense resource management and development of deterrence means.

Another distinguished feature of the SDA is its principal function as it generates multi-domain data, which enables access to the full spectrum of threats/risks, while other devices (space/ground-based sensors, radars, satellites, and telescopes) monitor partial segments of

¹ European Union Space Strategy for Security and Defence, 2023, p.7.

² Fiott, 2023.

surroundings. Thus, this peculiarity lays the solid foundation for gaining information advantage, winning in time, and making optimal choices.

Upon the Russo-Ukraine war and delicate analysis of tendencies in space, arrangement revealed several sources of threats within/from outer space, endangering the global/European community's well-being. Threat categories frequently attributed to technical incidents, natural hazards, intentionally hostile activities aimed at degrading, disrupting, or denying the availability of space infrastructure (orbital, ground) as well as freedom of movement. Hence, as Europe asserts itself as a global space power, the safety of its assets is at stake. For instance, the EU possesses and operates satellite technologies for positioning, navigation, and timing (PNT - Galileo), earth observation (EO - Copernicus), and several other constellations are in the working stage, such as the Union Security Connectivity Program.³ Even more, the EU Satellite Centre (SatCen), provides important geospatial intelligence analysis capacity to support decision-making and execution of policies by the EU. The Union's current material space arsenal surpluses 400 satellites, that is maintained at the expense of 40 network-based stations⁴. Given model opened the floor for discussions on the EU's protection tools for its space in turbulent situations, unlike from previous cases where these subjects were absent from the EU's space agenda.

Noteworthy, the outcomes of the war not only raised the significance of the space domain but also revealed security/defense capability gaps within the EU. Surely, this heightened the aspirations for greater sovereignty, autonomy, and development of self-reliant space cells. For illustration, the cyberattack conducted against a commercial satellite (ViaSat company) negatively influenced stakeholders involved in war and damaged civilian terminals across Europe. The incidents of hard power projection in space before/during the conflict undermined the collaboration formats by the Western partners together with their Russian counterparts over the years.

³ EU Secure Connectivity Program (2023–2027), 2023y..

⁴ Fiott, 2023 y..

Prior to the intervention several projects of the EU were underway to be launched, but conflict erupted and tense conditions brought to an end the processes. The European Union heavily relied on Russian support in space ventures and after the invasion, this interdependency had a serious spillover effect on the EU's space sector. Particularly, the Soyuz launches were canceled by the Guiana Space Center by Roscosmos and disapproved of sending off some European commercial satellites.⁵ The procedures continued by the delay, until 2026 or even later, of the ExoMars rover mission, initially planned to launch in 2023. Those setbacks compelled the European Space Agency (ESA) to search for alternative/portable instruments to conduct the mission. ESA terminated its cooperation with Russia on forthcoming lunar expeditions. The European launchers namely, Vega and Vega-C, utilize Ukrainian-built engines, whereas the destruction of factories and constrained stockpiling of much-needed elements disrupted manufacturing and hindered the progression of the rockets' program. All of these obstacles caused by reliance on external suppliers outside the Union exposed vulnerabilities and paved the way for strategic autonomy to access and use space.

The Union defined a roadmap that consisted of the series of publishing new strategic/conceptual documents, action plans, and legal frameworks. For instance, in March 2022 a few months later when the war broke out, the EU adopted a document - the Strategic Compass (SC)⁶ As a guiding model of the EU's comprehensive defense strategy. The SC outlines the growing reliability of the Union on space systems and services, as well as, identifies vulnerable areas in the face of strategic competitors and highlights the thresholds in EU's space defense and security matters. Another important step forward was the creation of the first ever EU's "Space Strategy for Security and Defense" in 2023, which described methods on how to counter purposefully hostile activities and broadens the spectrum of space usage, unlike the previous strategy.

⁵ The War in Ukraine and the European Space Sector 2022 y., p.1.

⁶ A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence, 2022 y..

Additionally, the EU issued a regulation and established the European Union’s “Secure Connectivity Programmer for the 2023–2027” period. The program has two main objectives. Firstly, to ensure global access to safe governmental satellite communication services for different tasks (defend critical infrastructure, manage crisis, observe external actors' behaviors and surveil, match operational needs of military end states) and secondly, to authorize the private sector to engage in providing commercial services (high speed and smooth connectivity).

As the private/commercial segments' involvement in the Russo-Ukraine war demonstrated effectiveness and became a driving force in the war, this experience was incorporated into the connectivity project in the long run, which includes strategically crucial geographical areas. In the framework of secure connectivity, the EU intends to deploy its satellites, specifically, IRIS2 (infrastructure for resilience, interconnectivity, and security by satellite), which will allow it to obtain both ultra-fast and secure communication products by 2027. This to a significant degree presents a giant leap for the EU's space stability and technological sovereignty.

The Commission initiated a regulatory mechanism in the form of EU Space Law (SL)⁷, which intends to ensure safety (mitigate space debris, avoid collision), resilience (standardized risk management system tailored for space), and sustainability (evaluation of space activities). The proposal is in the consideration stage, and not finalized yet. Even though, it is a cornerstone for the EU's current and future operations. The SL suggests a template for common control panels.

Another transformative effect of the war on shaping the EU's space strategy was the field's prioritization and geopolitical outlook on space, which resulted in widening the spectrum of its utilization from civil-commercial to political-military objectives. Before the adoption of the EU's renewed Strategy for Security and Defense in 2023, the organization used to address space-related issues as matters of commercial and global community

⁷ Soler, 2024 y..

interests. For instance, the EU has 4 major space initiatives. First, Galileo - a civilian global navigation satellite system (GNSS) that offers a variety of services. Second European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS) – civilian regional. Third, Copernicus – civilian Earth observation system. Fourth, GOVSATCOM⁸ – communication satellite under the subordination of the civil-governmental branch. The above-mentioned aspects substitute national, international, and intergovernmental stakeholder efforts. The EU recognizes outer space as a mutually shared region of interests worldwide and is committed to ensuring transparency in order to avoid misperceptions and prevent miscalculations.

Afterward, the EU started to think about space in political terms, and its added value for military application, as well as, in the global context as a geopolitically contested area. This tendency accelerated the risks for escalation and the necessity for developing self-defense/responsive space capabilities. The EU clarified and even categorized threats into two sets: unintentional (space debris) and intentional (adversarial deployment of anti-space capabilities). In many instances, a purposeful attitude toward space simplified and deconstructed the EU's worldview, and groundwork for advancement, and introduced a joint perspective of the Union's positioning in the long – run. In total, the given scenario marks the paradigm shift, as it is usually cited, in the EU's vision toward space and defense calculus – Europe as a global space force therefore must protect its interests in space.

After the introduction of the above-mentioned strategic frameworks, space became a defining factor in terms of the EU's freedom of action, leading to the recognition of the cosmos as the supreme political subject as an undeniable realm to overlook. Declaration of space as a domain and realization of space-enabled facilities as significant technologies derive from the strategic awareness of space-based devices' unequivocal value, bringing into contemporary battlefields and connectivity services. For example, the Earth observation satellite allowed digitalization of Russia's pre-war military build-ups and tracked the advances, while commercial ones – ensured internet connectivity. Additionally, space-

⁸ European Union Space Strategy for Security and Defence, 2023 y., p.4.

based products proved to be a game-changer for Ukrainians in response to Russia's invasion and empowering resistance effort. Ukraine's civil-military sector heavily relied on Starlink.⁹, which enabled mobile network functioning, and by following the footsteps of occupiers, Ukrainian commanders were able to rapidly locate, coordinate, and neutralize the target.

The proposed EU's space budget for 2021-2027 with the amount of €16 billion¹⁰ is another milestone demonstrating the Union's decisiveness in supporting strategic statements on space, investing in the execution of initiatives, and enhancing regional/global systems.

Conclusion

All the discussed arguments support the statement about the European Union's post-war multi-sectoral awakening. As a result of the conflict, the EU shifted its focus from a relatively passive and dependent role to a more self-contained and sovereign attitude in space affairs. Especially, in terms of space security management, risk assessment, and threat categorization, which previously lacked attention. This retrospective is embodied in space-oriented endeavors, existing programs, and the organization's long-term goals.

Space gained vital recognition as a strategic domain within the European Union and the organization, reasserted itself as a global space power. This outlines the significance of building up and establishing a solid foundation for the Union's positioning in the contested space spectrum. Consistent access to the space assets is critical for storing data in near real-time, maintaining connectivity, conducting dynamic monitoring of strategic environment, etc.

The consequences of the ongoing Russo-Ukraine war still keep revealing insights for the EU in terms of space application beyond the civil-commercial outlook and directed the

⁹ Starlink – “is the world's first and largest satellite constellation using a low Earth orbit to deliver broadband internet”.

¹⁰ The EU Budget for the Future, 2020 y., p.3.

view to approach space geopolitically. Accordingly, when the issues deal with space management, the EU takes into account all the war lessons and challenges in any pre-defense planning process, as well as, in resource allocation. Overall, space became an inseparable component of the EU's security and resilience.

Bibliography

2022. A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence. Strategy Document, Brussels: The European Union.
- Cellerino, Chiara. 2023. EU Space Policy and Strategic Autonomy: Tackling Legal Complexities in the Enhancement of the 'Security and Defence Dimension of the Union in Space'. Report, European Papers.
2023. EU Secure Connectivity Program (2023–2027). Brussels: The European Union.
2023. European Union Space Strategy for Security and Defence. Security Policy, Brussels: European Commission.
- Fiott, Daniel. 2023. In Orbit: The European Union, Defence and Space Domain Awareness. CSDS Policy Brief, Brussels School of Governance.
- Soler, Paula. 2024. Euro news. May 24. Accessed September 7, 2024.
<https://www.euronews.com/next/2024/05/24/key-commission-space-law-proposal-expected-in-weeks>.
- n.d. Starlink. Accessed September 7, 2024. <https://www.starlink.com/technology>.
2020. The EU Budget for the Future. Factsheet, Brussels: European Commission.
2022. The War in Ukraine and the European Space Sector. ESPI Briefs, Vienna: European Space Policy Institute.

The impact of the war between Russia and Ukraine on the national security of Georgia from a socio-economic point of view

Gagi Bibiluri

Student of Master's Program in State Recourse Management of
LEPL-Devid Agmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Abstract

Georgia, a country in the South Caucasus with close historical and geopolitical ties to Russia, has been greatly impacted by the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which broke out in February 2022. This study explores the socioeconomic effects of the conflict on Georgia, paying particular attention to important issues including public opinion, national security policy, trade disruptions, economic sanctions, tourism, foreign investment, and energy security. Russia and Georgia have historically been at odds, especially after the 2008 Russo-Georgian War, which has influenced Georgia's present geopolitical perspective. Georgia's strategic significance as an energy transit corridor between Europe and Asia has rendered it especially susceptible to the spillover consequences of the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. In order to set Georgia's more general geopolitical challenges in context, the research starts by looking at these historical patterns. The effects of the conflict on the economy in Georgia has many facets. Delays in trade with Russia and Ukraine have resulted in lower exports and more instability in the supply chain. Georgia's economy has been indirectly impacted by the economic sanctions imposed on Russia, considering the country's strong commercial connections with the area. A major source of income for Georgia's economy, the tourism industry has suffered a severe fall in Russian and Ukrainian tourists, which has had an effect on nearby companies. In addition, investors are becoming more cautious when it comes to foreign direct investment (FDI) in Georgia due to the increased insecurity in the region. Due to pressure from fluctuating global energy prices on Georgia's energy supply and pricing, energy security has become another key problem. Due to its reliance on energy imports, the nation is especially vulnerable to changes in the worldwide market, underscoring the necessity of increased energy resiliency and diversity. On the sociopolitical front, Georgia's housing, healthcare, social services, and infrastructure have all been severely strained by the flood of Ukrainian migrants into the country. This humanitarian crisis has put Georgia's ability to assist displaced people while preserving societal harmony to the test. A change in popular opinion has also been sparked by increased worries about national security, with calls for tighter links with NATO and the EU to counter perceived Russian threats developing. The crisis has brought Georgia's vulnerabilities in an extremely dangerous region to light, highlighting the careful balance Georgia must maintain between security imperatives and economic resilience. Georgia's approach to the current crisis will be as it negotiates the complicated terrain of regional politics and international alliances, it will be vital in deciding its future place in international relations and regional stability. The article overviews that in order for Georgia to reduce risks and emphasize its position on the international scene, it is imperative that it pursue strategic alliances, improve energy security, and strengthen economic stability.

Key words: Russia-Ukraine war, economy, crises, solving the problem, Georgia

Introduction

The Russia-Ukraine conflict, which escalated with a full-scale invasion in February 2022, has far-reaching consequences for neighboring countries. Georgia, located in the South Caucasus, has felt the effects acutely. This essay looks into the socioeconomic impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on Georgia, with a focus on trade interruptions, economic sanctions, tourism, investment, energy, internal displacement, public attitude, and national security policy. We can gain a better understanding of the intricate interplay between regional conflicts and national stability by thoroughly examining these variables. At first what needs to be underline is the historical context and geopolitical significance. As for Georgia's historical relations with Russia let's overview post-soviet Tensions and the 2008 Russian-Georgian war. Since winning independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Georgia has worked to integrate with Western institutions such as NATO and the EU. Russia has strongly opposed Georgia's alignment with the West, perceiving it as a danger to its power in the South Caucasus. The 2008 Russo-Georgian War was a direct result of tensions over South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Russia's military participation led to the recognition of these territories as independent republics, undermining Georgian sovereignty and exacerbating regional instability.

The war revealed Georgia's vulnerability to Russian aggression and foretold the issues it would confront during the Ukraine conflict.

Main part

As for the significant part let's talk about the strategic importance of Georgia. Georgia's geographical location makes it an important transit route for energy supplies from the Caspian Sea into Europe. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) The pipeline and the South Caucasus Pipeline (SCP) are critical infrastructure projects that travel through Georgia, highlighting its significance in the regional energy environment. Georgia's stability is

critical to regional security in the South Caucasus. The escalating ¹confrontation between Russia and Ukraine has raised concerns about the potential spillover effects on Georgia and the wider region. This has ramifications for regional power relations and security plans.

As for economic Impacts. Disruptions to Regional Trade, The conflict has significantly interrupted trade lines throughout Eastern Europe. For Georgia, this means trade disruptions with Russia and Ukraine, both major trading partners. The closure of land routes and difficulties in sea shipping have led to increasing logistics. Challenges, with increased transportation expenses. Georgian exports to Russia and Ukraine include both agricultural and manufactured items. For example, the war has impacted demand for Georgian wine and mineral water exports. The Georgian National Statistics Office announced that exports to Russia fell by 20% in the first half of 2022 compared to the previous year. There also been economic sanctions against Russia which had indirect effects on Georgia. Western sanctions on Russia have caused economic volatility, affecting its currency and purchasing power. The weakening of the Russian ruble has made Georgian exports more expensive in the Russian market. Furthermore, the sanctions have caused financial disruptions between Georgian and Russian enterprises. As for an impact on Georgian businesses, it seems that Georgian enterprises have payment issues and financial losses have been encountered in business interactions in Russia. For instance, businesses in the construction industry have experienced higher expenses and delays as a result of supply chain interruptions. There also been some reduction in traveler arrivals, one of the problems includes the diminishment of important markets, according to the Georgian national tourism administration. Due to the conflict, Georgia has seen a dramatic drop in visitors from Russia and Ukraine, two of its main travel destinations. The number of Russian tourists fell by 35% in 2022 compared to 2021, in this time period the number of Ukrainian tourists fell by 40%, as for economic repercussions for the hospitality sector, Businesses in the hospitality sector have been

¹Georgia's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century: Challenges for a Small State, <https://gip.ge/publication-post/georgias-foreign-policy-in-the-21st-century-challenges-for-a-small-state/>. (verified 30.10.24)

severely impacted by the drop in tourism. Tour companies, hotels, and eateries have all noted a decline in income and employment losses. For instance, Tbilisi's hotel occupancy rates dropped from 75% in 2021 to 55% in 2022, which resulted in a decline in jobs related to tourism. There have been some investment difficulties, due to the war's geopolitical unrest, Georgia is no longer a desirable location for foreign investors. Georgia saw a 15% decline in foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2022 over the previous year, according to the World Bank. The reduction in question is ascribed to the increased risks and uncertainties arising from the conflict. If we look into the impact on important sectors, real estate, infrastructure, and technology are among the industries that have been impacted by investment slowdowns. For instance, a lack of investor confidence and financial uncertainty has resulted in the postponement or cancellation of a number of planned infrastructure projects.

2.4 Impact on the Energy Sector.

There have been some unrest in the energy supply.² Georgia's dependence on energy imports renders it susceptible to disturbances in local energy supply networks, rendering it susceptible to supply outages. Global energy prices have fluctuated as a result of the conflict, and supply disruptions may occur. For instance, Georgia's access to natural gas supplies has been impacted by the closure of energy transit routes via Ukraine. The fluctuation of energy prices has resulted in higher expenses for businesses and individuals. The Georgian Ministry of Energy reports that natural gas prices rose by 25% in 2022 over 2021, which had an effect on industrial production costs as well as household budgets.

On the other hand there were some problems with effects on sociopolitics such as refugee inflow which cause management challenges. A flood of Ukrainian refugees has resulted from the violence in Georgia. By mid-2023, Georgia had taken in some 30,000 Ukrainian refugees, according to the UNHCR. The management of this influx has put Georgia's infrastructure and social services under further stress. The Georgian government

² Georgia's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century: Challenges for a Small State, <https://gip.ge/publication-post/georgias-foreign-policy-in-the-21st-century-challenges-for-a-small-state/>, (Verified on 30.10.24)

has put policies in place to help integrate and accommodate refugees, such as offering short-term lodging, medical attention, and educational opportunities. But the rising demand for these services has put a strain on available funding and brought attention to holes in the social safety net. We faced some competition for resources, The influx of refugees has heightened competition for resources, including jobs and housing. This may lead to social problems by escalating tensions between newcomers and locals. For example, there have been instances of conflicts in Tbilisi around housing availability and employment prospects. Policies for Social Integration: Successful Integration In order to maintain social cohesion, policies are essential. To aid refugees in assimilating into Georgian society, the Georgian government has concentrated on offering language instruction, cultural orientation, and employment support.

Genuinely all the ongoing facts increased fears about security, Public worries about national security have increased due to the conflict's proximity and past encounters with Russian aggression. According to National Democratic Institute (NDI) surveys, more than 60% of Georgians are concerned about the conflict's possible aftereffects. There is a growing need for defense capabilities and improved security measures. To protect against possible threats, the public and government are pushing for more collaboration with Western friends and stronger defensive postures.

As for global security, Georgia has stepped up its ambitions to join NATO in reaction to the conflict. This entails raising participation in NATO exercises, bringing military standards into compliance with the alliance's mandate, and requesting security assurances from the group. Georgia has also made an effort to strengthen ties with the EU. This entails taking part in cooperative security projects and pursuing diplomatic measures to deepen relationships with EU member states. As security concerns have grown, defense funding has gone up and military capabilities have been modernized. The Georgian government has set aside more money for defense infrastructure expansion, equipment upgrades, and increased readiness.

Georgia has made an effort to increase defense coordination with partners in the West, such as cooperative military drills and security support initiatives. Georgia's defense capabilities are to be strengthened, and improved interoperability with NATO troops is the goal of these efforts. Also as for attempts to enter NATO, Georgia has made a concerted effort to further its goals of entering NATO. This include taking part in missions overseen by NATO, adhering to NATO standards, and holding formal diplomatic conversations with alliance partners. There have been initiatives for EU integration, Georgia has worked to forge deeper connections with the European Union in addition to NATO. This entails complying with EU laws, taking part in EU-funded activities, and looking for funding for projects aimed at promoting regional stability. Georgia has made an effort to strengthen regional cooperation by implementing initiatives for collaborative security. This involves, taking part in cooperative drills with surrounding nations, cultivating diplomatic ties with significant regional actors, and participating in regional security forums. Georgia also prioritizes regional infrastructure and economic collaborations. Georgia endeavors to enhance stability and lessen the effects of regional conflicts by fortifying economic relations and undertaking infrastructure projects with adjacent nations. Further more we had seen improvements in military and defense. In order to finance military modernization and improvements, Georgia has boosted its defense budget. This entails upgrading defensive infrastructure, obtaining new equipment, and increasing training initiatives. The Georgian Ministry of Defense reports that in 2023, the defense budget climbed by 12% over the previous year, demonstrating the government's commitment to bolstering national security. our cantry has actively taken part in NATO-led military drills as well as bilateral training initiatives with its Western allies. The purpose of these drills is to improve preparedness and interoperability. Georgia has benefited from financial help, equipment, and training supplied by Western friends in the form of security aid programs. The aforementioned programs aim to enhance Georgia's defense capabilities and bolster its security goals.

Conclusion

Georgia has seen significant and varied effects from the Russia-Ukraine war, including changes to its national security, economy, and society. The interruptions to investment, trade, and tourism, in addition to difficulties pertaining to refugees and increased security worries, highlight Georgia's vulnerability in a volatile region. As Georgia navigates these problems, it must strike a balance between economic requirements and national security concerns, while also seeking stability and resilience in the face of continuous regional crises. The war demonstrates the interwoven nature of global geopolitics and its impact on smaller countries like as Georgia. The lessons from this circumstance will be critical in developing future policies and measures to improve national security, economic resilience, and regional stability. Georgia's response to the conflict will have long-term consequences for its involvement in regional and global politics, as well as its capacity to negotiate complicated geopolitical terrain.

This essay examines the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on Georgia, using particular facts, case studies, and analyses to provide a full knowledge of the situation. Each part is intended to explore Specific facets of the conflict's impact on Georgia, with a thorough and nuanced analysis.

Bibliography

- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. (2023). *Playing with fire: Georgia's cautious rapprochement with Russia*. Retrieved from <https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/politika/2023/07/playing-with-fire-georgias-cautious-rapprochement-with-russia?lang=en>
- Civil Georgia. (n.d.). *Georgia's foreign policy in the 21st century: Challenges for a small state*. Retrieved from <https://civil.ge/archives/523658>
- Crisis Group. (n.d.). *Europe & Central Asia: Caucasus*. Retrieved from <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/caucasus>

- Econstor. (n.d.). *Economic impact of the Russia-Ukraine crisis on Georgia*. Retrieved from <https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/296629/1/1890392634.pdf>
- European Investment Bank. (2023). *Georgia: Economic impact report*. Retrieved from https://assets-global.website-files.com/6329bc97af73223b575983ac/647f1e38cd1ff43efcdc94dc_EIR2023-Georgia.pdf
- Guriev, S. (2023, August). *Ruble decline and growing budget deficit: Funding the Ukraine war*. Project Syndicate. Retrieved from <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/ruble-decline-growing-budget-deficit-funding-ukraine-war-by-sergei-guriev-2023-08>
- International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). (2024). *Global military spending surges amid war, rising tensions, and insecurity*. Retrieved from <https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2024/global-military-spending-surges-amid-war-rising-tensions-and-insecurity>
- JSTOR. (n.d.). *Georgian foreign policy and regional dynamics*. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26936538?seq=14>
- Georgian Institute of Politics (GIP). (n.d.). *Georgia's foreign policy in the 21st century: Challenges for a small state*. Retrieved from <https://gip.ge/publication-post/georgias-foreign-policy-in-the-21st-century-challenges-for-a-small-state/>
- Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). (n.d.). *Europe and Eurasia: Georgia*. Retrieved from <https://www.cfr.org/europe-and-eurasia/georgia>

Georgia's Potential To Transforming the Economic Architecture of the European Union

Kakha Pavlenishvili

Student of Master's Program in State Recourse Management of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Abstract

This paper considers Georgia's strategic potential in reshaping the European Union's economic architecture by enhancing trade routes, diversifying energy supplies, and fostering deep regional integration. The paper shows Georgia's position as a key transit hub within the Middle Corridor offers significant opportunities for the EU to diversify both. Its trade and energy sources, especially in light of shifting global trade dynamics and geopolitical pressures.

The primary objective is to assess how Georgia's growing infrastructural investments, economic reforms, and geopolitical relevance can contribute to the EU's long-term economic resilience. The article attempts to evaluate the existing risks and challenges associated with Georgia's integration into the EU economic framework, including political instability and regional conflicts.

Georgia's geographical position at the crossroads of Europe and Asia provides it with significant strategic importance, particularly as a vital component of the Middle Corridor, a trade route that connects Europe to China via the South Caucasus. This corridor bypasses traditional northern routes passing through Russia, making Georgia a key player in EU efforts to diversify trade and transport routes amidst growing geopolitical uncertainties, including sanctions and tensions with Russia. Additionally, Georgia has been actively pursuing economic and political reforms aimed to fostering closer integration with the EU. These reforms have improved Georgia's investment climate, making it an attractive destination for European businesses looking for new markets and manufacturing bases, especially in the context of rising labor costs in East Asia.

Through these developments, Georgia has the potential to transform the EU's economic architecture by enhancing connectivity (between Europe and Asia, reducing logistical costs, and creating new trade opportunities); Supporting energy diversification (critical for the EU's long-term energy strategy), and providing a stable investment environment.

The findings suggest that while Georgia holds considerable promise as a strategic economic partner for the EU, there are significant challenges, including the need for political stability and enhanced infrastructure. The paper supports the idea that both Georgia and the EU should undertake coordinated policy efforts to fully realize Georgia's transformative potential within the broader European economic architecture.

Keywords: Economic Transformation, Trade Corridors, Middle Corridor, Diversification, Regional Integration.

Introduction

The European Union is at a critical juncture in its economic development, facing growing challenges such as geopolitical tensions, energy dependence, and the need for more stable trade routes. As the global economic landscape evolves, the EU must look beyond its traditional economic partners to ensure future stability and growth. One country that stands out in this regard is Georgia, a strategically located nation in the South Caucasus, at the intersection of Europe and Asia. Despite its relatively small size¹, Georgia has the potential to play a transformative role in the EU's economic architecture, particularly through its participation in the Middle Corridor - a vital trade route linking Europe and China.

Georgia's geographic location and its active engagement in economic and infrastructure reforms make it a key transit hub in a region where East-West connectivity is becoming increasingly important. The **Middle Corridor**² offers the EU an alternative to traditional northern routes, bypassing Russia and providing greater trade security and diversification. Additionally, Georgia's role as an energy transit country, particularly through pipelines like the **Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline**³, holds significant promise in helping the EU diversify its energy supplies away from Russia and toward the Caspian region.

This paper attempts to assess the strategic importance of Georgia in shaping the future of the EU's economic structure and what positive effect is expected for both parties. It discusses how Georgia's geopolitical position, economic reforms, and infrastructure developments can contribute to enhancing EU trade routes, energy security, and regional economic integration.

¹ n.d. An official website of the European Union. Accessed 09 30, 2024. https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-and-monetary-union/what-economic-and-monetary-union-emu_en.

² n.d. An official website of the European Union. Accessed 09 30, 2024. https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-and-monetary-union/what-economic-and-monetary-union-emu_en.

³ n.d. An official website of the European Union. Accessed 09 24, 2024. https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide/european-regional-development-fund-erdf-and-cohesion-fund_en.

The paper attempts to find a proper answer to the most important question: **what strategic steps are necessary for Georgia together with the EU to fully realize the potential of transforming the economic architecture?**

In order to fully realize its potential in transforming economic architecture, Georgia together with the EU must enhance trade agreements, invest in infrastructure, strengthen digital connectivity, and align regulatory frameworks to support Georgia's transit role and the EU's diversification goals.

The findings will have implications not only for EU policymakers but also for global trade networks seeking to navigate an increasingly complex geopolitical environment.

It is important to understand how Georgia's strategic position and economic reforms can contribute to contribute to the EU's economic architecture, especially in terms of trade union and energy diversification. Therefore, the role of Georgia in the Middle Corridor, the diversification of EU energy supply by ways of reducing dependence on traditional energy routes, the impact on EU-Asia trade routes, and the main challenges of converging interests of Georgia's strategic economic partnership with EU. By analyzing these topics, we will answer the main question of the article and hypothesis.

The current economic architecture of the European Union (EU)

There is a complex system designed to promote economic integration, stability, and growth among its 27 member states. It rests on several key pillars:

The Single Market: Free Movement of Goods, Services, Capital, and People: The EU's single market is its most defining feature, allowing for the seamless movement of goods, services, capital, and people across member states without internal barriers. This integration has significantly increased intra-EU trade and investment. **Competition and Harmonization of Standards:** The single market relies on harmonized regulations and standards to ensure fair competition across the EU, while also protecting consumers and the environment.

The Economic and Monetary Union (EMU): **The Eurozone:** 20 of the EU member states use the euro as their currency, forming the Eurozone. The euro is managed by the **European Central Bank (ECB)**⁴, which controls monetary policy for the euro area, aiming for price stability. **Fiscal Coordination:** While monetary policy is centralized for the Eurozone, fiscal policies (taxation and government spending) remain largely the responsibility of individual member states. However, fiscal coordination mechanisms like the Stability and Growth Pact set limits on budget deficits and public debt to ensure fiscal discipline (An official website of the European Union n.d.).

Trade Policy - **Common External Tariff and Trade Agreements:** The EU operates a customs union, meaning it applies a common external tariff to goods imported from outside the EU (The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) n.d.). The EU negotiates trade agreements as a single entity, maintaining a unified stance in global trade forums like the **World Trade Organization (WTO)** (World Trade Organization (WTO) n.d.). The EU has numerous trade agreements with countries worldwide, contributing to its position as one of the largest global trading blocs.

Cohesion Policy and Regional Development - The EU actively redistributes funds to promote economic convergence between wealthier and less-developed regions through mechanisms like **Cohesion Funds** and the **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)**⁵ (An official website of the European Union n.d.). These initiatives are aimed at reducing disparities across regions and fostering balanced economic growth across member states.

Energy and Environmental Policies - The EU has a **Green Deal**⁶ and a common **Energy Union framework**⁷ to promote sustainability and energy independence (Defard 2023). It is

⁴ C.Crelo. 2024. Overview. Informational, Organization, 6a Circuit de la Foire Internationale: web page. Accessed 09 25, 2024. https://www.esm.europa.eu/about-us#headline-who_we_are.

⁵ Churchelauri, Ia. 2016. "The Significance of Southern Gas Corridor ." Journal of Social Sciences 6.

⁶ Defard, Camille. 2023. Energy Union 2.0. to deliver the European Green Deal. 127, report proposes an Energy Union, 18 rue de Londres, 75009 Paris, France: Jacques Delors Institute. Accessed 09 24, 2024. https://institutdelors.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/R127-Energy_Union_2.0_European_Green_Deal_EN-1.pdf.

⁷ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development." www.oecd.org. 06 24. Accessed 09 25, 2024. [https://one.oecd.org/document/SDD/DOC\(2024\)4/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/SDD/DOC(2024)4/en/pdf).

working to transition to a carbon-neutral economy by 2050, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, especially from external sources like Russia, and promoting renewable energy.

External Economic Relations - The EU is a major global economic player and aims to diversify its external economic relations. It engages with neighboring regions through initiatives such as the Eastern Partnership (which includes Georgia) and is involved in global economic governance through organizations like the WTO and the G7⁸.

The EU has developed mechanisms to deal with financial crises, such as the **European Stability Mechanism (ESM)**, designed to provide financial assistance to Eurozone countries in economic distress (C.Crelo 2024). In response to crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, the EU adopted the NextGenerationEU⁹ recovery fund to support economic recovery and resilience. There are challenges facing the Current Architecture:

- **Geopolitical Pressures:** The EU's reliance on energy imports from Russia and other external dependencies poses significant risks, as seen in recent crises.
- **Economic Disparities:** Differences in economic development between northern and southern or eastern and western EU members create challenges for cohesion.
- **Global Competition:** The rise of economic powers such as China and increasing protectionism worldwide challenge the EU's position in the global economy.

Georgia's Strategic Role and Economic Potential

Georgia's geographical position makes it a vital transit hub between Europe and Asia, connecting trade, energy, and transportation routes. Situated at the crossroads of Europe, Central Asia, and the Middle East, Georgia plays a crucial role in global supply chains and energy security, especially as part of the Middle Corridor, which links China to Europe.

⁸ DIRECTORATE, STATISTICS AND DATA. 2024. "Offers research papers and articles on global trade and geopolitical developments, including the Middle Corridor." Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development 35.

⁹ EUR-Lex. 2024. "REGULATION (EU) 2021/1058 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL." Official Journal of the European Union.

Middle Corridor (Linking East and West) - Georgia is central to the **Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR)**¹⁰, or the Middle Corridor, which connects China to Europe via Kazakhstan, the Caspian Sea, and Georgia, continuing through Turkey. This route serves as a strategic alternative to Russia and southern maritime routes like the Suez Canal. A key part of this corridor, **Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK) railway**¹¹, has been operating since 2017, reducing travel times for goods and strengthening Georgia's role as a transit point.

Geopolitical shifts, such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict, have increased the Middle Corridor's importance, as businesses seek alternative trade routes that bypass Russia and volatile regions like Iran.

Black Sea Access and Maritime Trade - Georgia's Black Sea ports - Poti, Batumi, and the Anaklia Deep-Sea Port¹² - serve as gateways for goods moving between Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. These ports enhance Georgia's logistics network by connecting rail, road, and maritime routes, making it a key player in diversifying global supply chains.

Energy Transit Role in the Southern Gas Corridor - Georgia is also a vital energy transit hub. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline and the Southern Gas Corridor¹³, including TANAP and TAP pipelines¹⁴, transport Caspian oil and gas to Europe, assisting to reduce Europe's dependency on Russian energy.

Infrastructure Development - Georgia has made significant investments in its transportation and logistics infrastructure. The Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK) railway, capable of

¹⁰ Foreign investors in Georgia. 2024. Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline spanning three countries from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean coast. Tbilisi, 01 01. https://www.bp.com/en_ge/georgia/home/who-we-are/btc.html#accordion_P.

¹¹ Georgia, EU -. 2018. "Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part." eur-lex.europa.eu. 06 01. Accessed 09 25, 2024. http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/2014/494/2018-06-01.

¹² Group, The World Bank. 2023. Middle Trade and Transport Corridor. for noncommercial purposes, Washington, DC: 3 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank. Accessed 09 25, 2024. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/6248f697aed4be0f770d319dcaa4ca52-0080062023/original/Middle-Trade-and-Transport-Corridor-World-Bank-FINAL.pdf>.

¹³ Guliyev, Vusal. 2022. The Rise of Trans-Caspian Routes amidst Russia's Isolation. Situation Report, Geopoliticalmonitor Intelligence Corp.

¹⁴ Jr., Elliott Davis. 2024. "EXPLAINER: Why Did Russia Invade Ukraine?" www.usnews.com. 02 23. Accessed 09 25, 2024. <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/explainer-why-did-russia-invade-ukraine>.

transporting 6.5 million tons of cargo annually, and the East-West Highway¹⁵ Project, linking Black Sea ports with neighboring countries, is central to its strategy of becoming a key transit hub.

Strategic Importance Amid Geopolitical Shifts - Georgia's role as a transit hub has grown with increasing geopolitical tensions, particularly due to Western sanctions on Russia. The Middle Corridor has emerged as a critical link in EU-Asia connectivity, making Georgia's role both economically and geopolitically significant. By offering stable trade routes, Georgia is becoming a key player in global trade networks, especially post-pandemic and post-Ukraine invasions.

Georgia's involvement in the Middle Corridor, officially known as the **Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR)**, is a pivotal aspect of its growing influence in EU-Asia trade relations (Guliyev 2022). Fiscal The Middle Corridor serves as an alternative to northern routes passing through Russia, offering a vital land and sea connection for goods traveling between China and Europe via "Central Caucaso-Asia" (Papava 2010). It means Central Asia, the Caspian Sea, and the South Caucasus. Georgia's participation in this initiative strengthens its position as a transit hub and contributes to the reconfiguration of global trade networks amid shifting geopolitical realities.

The Middle Corridor connects China to Europe through a series of railways, highways, and maritime routes, bypassing Russian territory. Georgia is a central node in this corridor, linking Central Asia to the European market by offering a direct transit path through the South Caucasus. The Trans-Caspian Segment: The Middle Corridor starts in China and crosses Central Asia via Kazakhstan before reaching the Caspian Sea. Goods are then transported by ferry across the Caspian Sea to the Georgian port of Poti on the Black Sea, from where they continue by ship to **Romania, Bulgaria**, or via the **Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK) railway** to Turkey and further into Europe. This railway, which has been operating since

¹⁵ Kornely Kakachia, Agnieszka Legucka, Bidzina Lebanidze. 2021. "Can the EU's new global strategy make a difference? Strengthening resilience in the Eastern Partnership countries." *Democratization* (Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group) 20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2021.1918110>.

2017, connects Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey, significantly enhancing the corridor's efficiency by reducing travel time and creating a seamless land connection between Central Asia and European markets. By serving as a key transit country, Georgia facilitates the flow of goods between China and Europe, enhancing its geopolitical significance and increasing trade volumes passing through the region. As tensions with Russia have led to a demand for alternatives to the northern routes, the Middle Corridor has become a preferred choice for many European and Asian businesses.

The Middle Corridor provides the European Union with an **alternative route** for trade with Asia avoiding both, Russia and the Suez Canal, which is often congested and vulnerable to disruptions. This route is especially crucial given the geopolitical risks associated with Russia following the invasion of Ukraine, which has disrupted trade routes and logistics networks passing through Russian territory (Kornely Kakachia 2021). With the Middle Corridor, the EU can lessen its reliance on trade routes passing through Russia, a particularly important consideration given the economic sanctions imposed on Russia by the EU. This strategic shift also supports the EU's broader policy goals of diversifying its trade routes mitigating risks associated with geopolitical instability and reducing dependence on Russia. By Energy and Trade Security - The EU views the Middle Corridor as a key component of its strategy to diversify energy supplies and enhance trade security (DIRECTORATE, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2024). Georgia's strategic role as a transit hub contributes to the EU's energy diversification goals, especially through projects like the Southern Gas Corridor, bringing Caspian gas to European markets via Georgia. In this context, Georgia's active participation in the Middle Corridor not only bolsters its economy but also contributes to the economic development of the EU by providing more reliable and secure trade routes to Asia.

Georgia has made significant infrastructure investments to improve its capacity as a logistics hub for the Middle Corridor. These projects are critical for ensuring that Georgia remains competitive as a transit country and can handle increasing trade volumes.

Investments to upgrade these ports, along with plans to build the Anaklia Deep-Sea Port, will further enhance Georgia's role in global trade. By improving its transportation and logistics infrastructure, Georgia enhances its attractiveness as a transit hub, boosting trade volumes and solidifying its role in EU-Asia trade relations.

Georgia's participation in the Middle Corridor has led to stronger economic and diplomatic ties with the European Union. The EU has recognized Georgia's strategic role as a bridge between Europe and Asia, leading to increased investments and partnerships in the region. Several agreements and initiatives reflect Georgia's growing importance:

- **EU-Georgia Association Agreement:** Through this agreement, Georgia has established closer economic ties with the EU. It includes a **Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA)**¹⁶, which integrates Georgia into European markets and enhances the flow of goods, particularly from Europe to Asia (EU 2018).
- **EU Support for Infrastructure Projects:** The EU has supported several infrastructure projects in Georgia aimed at improving connectivity within the Middle Corridor. The EU's investment in **road, rail, and port infrastructure** is part of its broader strategy to develop sustainable and diversified trade routes that enhance its economic security.
- **Black Sea Connectivity:** The EU has also highlighted the importance of **Black Sea connectivity** as part of its **Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) initiative**¹⁷. Georgia's strategic position on the Black Sea makes it an important player in the EU's efforts to link Europe with Central Asia and beyond.

Georgia's geopolitical and economic aspirations, though challenged by regional conflicts, investment risks, and regulatory barriers, also provide unique opportunities for collaboration and growth in partnership with the EU, China, and other global powers.

Georgia's Potential to Contribute to the Diversification of EU Energy Routes and Supplies

¹⁶ NDC Staff. 2023. pia2023.ndcpartnership.org. Accessed 09 25, 2024. <https://pia2023.ndcpartnership.org/georgia/>.

¹⁷ Papava, Vladimer. 2010. "Central Caucaso-Asia: from Imperial to Democratic Geopolitics." BULLETIN OF THE GEORGIAN NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, 5.

Georgia holds a strategic position in the global energy landscape, particularly in the context of the European Union's energy diversification strategy. As the EU seeks to reduce its dependence on traditional energy suppliers - particularly Russia, which has been the dominant provider of natural gas and oil to Europe - Georgia's role as a transit country for energy becomes increasingly significant. Through existing pipelines and future projects, Georgia has the potential to enhance the Southern Gas Corridor and support the diversification of energy routes and supplies for the EU.

The **Southern Gas Corridor (SGC)** is one of the most important initiatives in which Georgia participates. It is a major pipeline system transporting natural gas from the Caspian Sea region (Shah Deniz field - is expected to transport around 16 billion cubic meters of gas annually with the potential to increase in the future.) Europe, bypassing Russia (DIRECTORATE, Offers research papers and articles on global trade and geopolitical developments, including the Middle Corridor. 2024). The SGC significantly contributes to the EU's efforts to diversify its gas supplies, offering a secure and stable alternative to Russian energy routes.

Georgia's contribution to the **Southern Gas Corridor** strengthens EU energy security by offering an alternative route for natural gas supplies. Given the EU's commitment to reduce its energy dependence (The EU imports approximately 40% of its gas from Russia) on Russia, particularly since its invasion of Ukraine, this corridor provides a stable and secure option for diversifying energy imports. This could involve tapping into other Caspian Sea gas fields and expanding capacity through additional infrastructure. Georgia's role as a reliable transit country makes it critical to the success of this expansion. Georgia also plays an important role in Energy Diversification for Europe and the transit of oil through the **Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline**, which carries crude oil from the Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli field in the Caspian Sea across Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan in Turkey. The BTC pipeline has a capacity of over 1 million barrels per day and is a major component of Europe's diversified energy supply routes. The

BTC pipeline bypasses both **Russia** and **Iran**, providing the EU with access to Caspian oil through a safe and stable transit route. This pipeline has been operational since 2006, and its significance has only grown as Europe seeks to reduce its dependence on Russian energy exports (foreign investors in Georgia 2024).

Georgia's potential contribution to the EU's energy diversification efforts goes beyond fossil fuels. As the EU transitions to a **low-carbon economy**¹⁸, Georgia's abundant natural resources offer opportunities for collaboration in **renewable energy** projects, such as **hydropower** (hydropower resources account for nearly 80% of its domestic electricity production) and there is potential for Georgia to export clean energy to the European market, particularly through future energy infrastructure developments such as interconnections via the Black Sea. In other words, the EU seeks to transition to a carbon-neutral economy by 2050, Georgia's renewable energy potential aligns with EU goals for reducing carbon emissions and diversifying energy supplies. Collaborative efforts in green energy infrastructure could further solidify Georgia's role in Europe's energy landscape (EUR-Lex 2024).

Georgia's Black Sea ports, particularly Poti and Batumi, offer strategic access for energy transit, both for the import and export of **natural gas, oil, and potentially renewable energy**. The development of the **Anaklia Deep-Sea Port** project can become a major hub for energy and trade routes, providing Europe with direct access to the Caucasus and Central Asian energy supplies. It would facilitate increased shipments of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and other energy resources, further bolstering Europe's diversification efforts. It also holds significant promise in enhancing Georgia's role in the EU's energy supply chain.

¹⁸ Rompuy, Herman Van. 2012. "Speech by Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, at the Plenary Meeting of the Committee of the Regions." EUROPEAN COUNCIL. Brussels: EUCO 80/12 , 05 03.

Internal Reforms and Investment Policies in Georgia

Georgia's pursuit of closer ties with the European Union is underpinned by significant domestic reforms and investment policies that have transformed the country into an important partner for the EU. These reforms have not only fostered economic growth and political stability but also enhanced transparency, improved environment for business, and investment climate (Rompuy 2012). By aligning its economic and regulatory framework with European standards, Georgia positions itself as a reliable and strategic partner for the EU, particularly in trade, energy, and regional connectivity.

Since the early 2000s, Georgia has undergone a series of economic reforms aimed at fostering a market-driven economy, reducing corruption, and improving the overall business environment. These reforms have been essential in building Georgia's economic resilience and have increased its importance as an investment place for EU countries.

Georgia has implemented some of the most business-friendly tax policies in the region. It has simplified its tax system, reduced the number of taxes offered low tax rates to attract foreign investors, and streamlined its customs procedures to comply with international standards, simplifying the process for importers and exporters. Georgia has also implemented electronic systems for customs declarations, reducing bureaucratic hurdles and improving efficiency. The Georgian government has pursued an aggressive policy of privatizing state-owned enterprises and reducing regulatory barriers for businesses. This has led to increased **foreign direct investment (FDI)**¹⁹, particularly from EU countries, as investors find the environment more conducive to business growth. These economic reforms have been critical in ensuring that Georgia remains competitive in the global marketplace.

¹⁹ n.d. The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC). Accessed 09 24, 2024. <https://research.hktdc.com/en/article/MzM0NTYwOTQx>.

Georgia's efforts to improve the business environment have been widely recognized by international organizations such as the **World Bank**²⁰, which has consistently ranked Georgia among the top countries for ease of doing business²¹.

Georgia has one of the world's fastest business registration processes, with businesses able to be incorporated in as little as one day. The Georgian government has strengthened legal protections for property rights, which is crucial for foreign investors seeking to ensure that their investments are secure. In addition, Georgia has established independent arbitration courts and created a legal environment that ensures contract enforcement, boosting investor confidence. Georgia has created a flexible labor market allowing businesses to operate more efficiently, with labor regulations that strike a balance between protecting workers and fostering business growth. This makes Georgia particularly attractive for manufacturing and logistics companies operating along the Middle Corridor. By aligning its legal framework with European standards, Georgia offers a predictable and transparent business environment, which is essential for attracting long-term investments from EU countries (Parliament of Georgia 2021).

One of Georgia's most significant achievements has been its fight against corruption. The country has transformed from one of the most corrupt post-Soviet states to a leader in transparency and governance reforms, earning international praise and further enhancing its appeal to European investors. By reducing corruption, Georgia has created a stable and reliable environment for businesses and investors, making it a safer destination for EU investments and a key partner in broader EU governance and rule of law initiatives.

Georgia's open and liberal foreign investment policies have been central to its ability to attract investments from EU countries. The government has made concerted efforts to

²⁰ n.d. World Trade Organization (WTO). Accessed 09 24, 2024.
https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/whatis_e.htm.

²¹ საქართველოს რესპუბლიკის პარლამენტი. 2021. "matsne.gov.ge." Vers. კონსოლიდირებული ვერსია (საბოლოო). საქართველოს საკანონმდებლო მაცნე. 08 02. Accessed 09 25, 2024.
<https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/28408?publication=70>

align its investment framework with European and international best practices, ensuring that foreign investors are granted equal treatment under the law. The government offers investment incentives in key sectors such as energy, manufacturing, and infrastructure, making Georgia a potential hub for green energy investment.

Georgia has signed several Free Trade Agreements with key trading partners, including the EU. The EU-Georgia Association Agreement, which includes a **Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA)**²², provides Georgian products with preferential access to the European market. This has boosted trade between Georgia and EU countries, with significant growth in exports of agricultural products, textiles, and machinery (EU 2018). Additionally, Georgia's FTAs with China and countries in the **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)**²³ make it an attractive location for European companies looking to access markets beyond the EU, especially in Asia.

To enhance its role as a transit hub and bolster its attractiveness to European investors, Georgia has invested heavily in infrastructure development. These projects are particularly significant for the EU, given Georgia's central role in regional connectivity and trade routes like the Middle Corridor and the Southern Gas Corridor.

Georgia has improved its transport infrastructure, including roads, railways, and seaports, to facilitate trade and improve connectivity. Investments in the **Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK) railway** and **East-West Highway** have made it easier for goods to move through Georgia to both EU and Asian markets.

Georgia's participation in the **Southern Gas Corridor** has solidified its role as an energy transit country. Investments in pipeline infrastructure and energy terminals have enhanced its capacity to transport energy resources from the Caspian region to Europe.

²² geopolitical developments, including the Middle Corridor." Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development 35.

²³ The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is a regional intergovernmental organization in Eurasia. It was formed following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and is its legal successor. It covers an area of 20,368,759 km² (7,864,422 sq mi) and has an estimated population of 239,796,010. The CIS encourages cooperation in economic, political, and military affairs and has certain powers relating to the coordination of trade, finance, lawmaking, and security, including cross-border crime prevention.

Through the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, Georgia has undertaken reforms in areas such as trade, environment, competition, intellectual property, and labor standards, all of which contribute to the creation of a level playing field for EU investors.

Georgia's political stability and its long-standing aspiration for EU integration are key factors that make it an attractive partner for European investors. Since 2003, Georgia has consistently pursued a pro-Western foreign policy, emphasizing closer ties with the EU and NATO. This political alignment fosters confidence among EU investors, knowing that Georgia is a stable partner with a clear European trajectory.

Georgia faces several challenges and opportunities in its quest to enhance its role in regional trade and energy networks. Despite regional instability, geopolitical competition, and infrastructure gaps, these issues also present avenues for growth. By investing in key infrastructure projects such as the Anaklia Deep-Sea Port and the **Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK)** railway, Georgia can strengthen its position as a transit hub and global supply chain player.

There are key Challenges: **Regional Conflicts** - Georgia's proximity to conflict zones like Nagorno-Karabakh and its tense relations with Russia pose risks to its stability. To remain a reliable transit hub, maintaining political stability and security is crucial. **Infrastructure Limitations** - While Georgia has made progress, further investment is needed to enhance infrastructure. Projects like the Anaklia Port are vital to maximizing Georgia's maritime potential in the Middle Corridor. **Geopolitical Risks** - Unresolved disputes in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, combined with Russia's regional influence, create vulnerabilities. Russia's opposition to energy routes bypassing its territory could threaten Georgia's long-term ambitions.

Opportunities: **Infrastructure Development** - Expanding pipeline capacity, modernizing transit infrastructure, and completing strategic projects like the Anaklia Port can help Georgia fully realize its potential as a transit hub. **Competition with Other Routes** - Although the Middle Corridor competes with routes like the Northern Corridor (via Russia), the growing geopolitical tensions with Russia enhance the Middle Corridor's

relevance. Georgia can leverage this to grow its prominence. EU Support - Strengthening ties with European institutions through increased investments in infrastructure and energy security projects, especially renewables, can solidify Georgia's role in the EU's energy diversification strategy.

Georgia's integration into EU trade routes contributes to the EU diversifying its markets by offering alternative transit corridors, enhancing access to Asia and the Caspian region, and reducing dependence on traditional and politically sensitive routes, particularly those dominated by Russia.

The EU's reliance on Russian transport corridors has proven risky, particularly during political crises such as the Russia-Ukraine war. By integrating Georgia into its trade networks, the EU gains access to a secure route that bypasses Russian territory, offering a stable alternative (Diversification of Trade Routes) for transporting goods to Asia, especially through the **Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK) railway** and the **East-West Highway**. Georgia's position within the Middle Corridor makes it a key part of China's **Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**, creating a land-sea link between the EU and Chinese markets.

Georgia serves as a gateway to these markets through the **Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR)**, connecting the EU to Central Asia via railway and sea transport.

Georgia's **Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA)** with the EU facilitates greater integration of Georgian goods into the European market. This agreement not only boosts bilateral trade between the EU and Georgia but also enhances Georgia's "attractiveness" as a transit country for European companies looking to trade with the broader Caucasus and Central Asian regions.

Georgia's hydropower potential and future energy collaboration with the EU in renewable energy projects offer opportunities for green energy exports. By developing cleaner energy trade routes, the EU can use easily energy imports from the Caspian and beyond.

The development of rail and multimodal transport systems across Georgia aligns with the EU's efforts to reduce the environmental footprint of its trade networks. The use of efficient rail corridors, as seen in the Middle Corridor, minimizes the environmental impact compared to more traditional routes that rely heavily on road or maritime transport. Georgia's integration into EU trade routes is not just about market access but also about geopolitical strategy. By building closer trade ties with Georgia, the EU strengthens its influence in the South Caucasus region and helps foster greater political stability.

As Georgia seeks closer integration with the West, including aspirations for eventual EU membership, deeper economic ties with the EU reinforce the country's pro-European orientation. This serves as a strategic counterbalance to Russian influence in the region. Strengthening trade links with Georgia also contributes to regional stability by promoting economic development and cross-border cooperation in the South Caucasus. This is critical for maintaining secure and stable trade routes in a region that has historically been prone to geopolitical tensions.

Georgia plays an important role in upgrading regional infrastructure, serving as a bridge between Europe and Asia. Its improved transport networks, trade corridors, and energy transit systems are key to the EU's strategy for diversifying trade routes and ensuring more reliable connections.

Georgia's Black Sea ports, particularly Poti and Batumi, are essential for EU maritime links with the East. As part of the TRACECA²⁴ program, these ports connect the EU to emerging markets in Central Asia. The planned Anaklia Deep-Sea Port will further enhance Georgia's role, allowing larger cargo ships and boosting trans-Eurasian trade by linking to Georgia's rail and road networks.

As part of the **Southern Gas Corridor (SGC)**, Georgia is significant to EU energy security, providing a critical route for Caspian Sea gas, and reducing dependence on Russian

²⁴Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia (TRACECA) - brought together trade and transport ministers from the original eight TRACECA countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Romania, Tajikistan, and Turkey.

supplies. Additionally, Georgia has upgraded its domestic energy infrastructure to support its transit role and align with EU energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives²⁵.

Georgia is also investing in becoming a digital trade hub, enhancing telecommunications and e-governance. As e-commerce grows between the EU and Asia, Georgia's digital infrastructure will play a key role in facilitating trade, particularly for **Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)**²⁶.

The country's multimodal transport systems integrate road, rail, and maritime networks, boosting trade efficiency and enabling faster cross-border movement of goods. Its adoption of **intelligent transport systems (ITS)**²⁷ further improves logistics and traffic management.

Georgia's infrastructure development has attracted significant foreign investment, particularly through **public-private partnerships (PPPs)**. Support from the **European Investment Bank (EIB)**²⁸, the **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)**²⁹, and the **EU's Neighborhood Investment Platform (NIP)**³⁰ has helped Georgia improve regional connectivity and strengthen its ties to the European market.

This integration supports the EU's goals of economic diversification and sustainability, strengthening ties with Georgia and regional markets, while boosting the EU's competitiveness on the global stage.

²⁵ Energy efficiency helps reduce overall energy consumption and is therefore central to achieving the EU's climate ambition, while enhancing present and future energy security and affordability.

²⁶ Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) represent 99% of all businesses in the EU. The definition of an SME is important for access to finance and EU support programs targeted specifically at these enterprises.

²⁷ An intelligent transportation system (ITS) is an advanced application that aims to provide innovative services relating to different modes of transport and traffic management and enable users to be better informed and make safer, more coordinated, and 'smarter' use of transport networks.

²⁸ The European Investment Bank (EIB) works closely with other EU institutions to foster European integration, promote the development of the EU, and support EU policies in over 160 countries around the world.

²⁹ The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) was founded in 1991 to create a new post-Cold War era in central and eastern Europe. They are now doing more than ever before - across three continents - to further progress towards "market-oriented economies and the promotion of private and entrepreneurial initiative".

³⁰ The Neighborhood Investment Platform (NIP) is a mechanism aimed at mobilizing additional funding to finance capital-intensive infrastructure projects in EU partner countries covered by the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) in sectors such as transport, energy, environment, and social development.

Conclusion

To enhance its role in regional and EU economic architecture, Georgia must focus on deepening both economic and political reforms:

- **Strengthen Governance and Rule of Law:** Implement more robust legal and regulatory frameworks to ensure political stability, reduce corruption, and build investor confidence. A transparent legal environment is essential for long-term investments, especially in key sectors like energy and infrastructure.
- **Align with EU Standards:** Continue aligning domestic policies with EU regulations, particularly in sectors like trade, transportation, and energy. This will facilitate deeper integration into EU markets and enhance Georgia's appeal as a reliable partner in the region.
- **Diversify the Economy:** Reduce reliance on a few industries by fostering innovation and supporting sectors like renewable energy, logistics, and technology. Encouraging entrepreneurship and foreign direct investment (FDI) will boost economic resilience.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Invest in modernizing transport and energy infrastructure to support the Middle Corridor and solidify Georgia's position as a regional hub between Europe and Asia.

The EU can enhance integration with Georgia by focusing on strategic collaboration in key areas:

- **Expand Trade Opportunities:** Deepen the scope of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) to cover additional sectors and address non-tariff barriers. This will boost Georgia's integration into EU markets and stimulate trade growth.
- **Invest in Infrastructure:** Increase funding and support for transportation and energy infrastructure that links Georgia with EU member states. Jointly financed infrastructure projects can enhance regional connectivity, making Georgia a significant transit route for both goods and energy supplies.

- **Energy Cooperation:** Support Georgia in becoming a key player in EU energy diversification. This includes investing in Georgian renewable energy projects and strengthening energy infrastructure, such as pipelines and interconnectors, that serve EU energy needs.
- **Provide Technical Assistance:** Offer greater technical assistance and capacity-building support to help Georgia implement necessary reforms, meet EU standards, and improve governance.

By focusing on these suggestions, the EU can enhance its integration with Georgia in trade, infrastructure, and energy. Strengthening trade relations, investing in critical infrastructure, and supporting energy diversification will help Georgia play a more significant role in the EU's economic strategies. Collaboration, technical assistance, and investment will be key to realizing these goals and achieving mutual benefits for both the EU and Georgia.

Bibliography

- n.d. *An official website of the European Union*. Accessed 09 30, 2024. https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-and-monetary-union/what-economic-and-monetary-union-emu_en.
- n.d. *An official website of the European Union*. Accessed 09 30, 2024. https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-and-monetary-union/what-economic-and-monetary-union-emu_en.
- n.d. *An official website of the European Union*. Accessed 09 24, 2024. https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide/european-regional-development-fund-erdf-and-cohesion-fund_en.
- C.Crelo. 2024. *Overview*. Informational, Organization, 6a Circuit de la Foire Internationale: web page. Accessed 09 25, 2024. https://www.esm.europa.eu/about-us#headline-who_we_are.

- Churchelauri, Ia. 2016. "The Significance of Southern Gas Corridor ." *Journal of Social Sciences* 6.
- Defard, Camille. 2023. *Energy Union 2.0. to deliver the European Green Deal*. 127, report proposes an Energy Union, 18 rue de Londres, 75009 Paris, France: Jacques Delors Institute. Accessed 09 24, 2024. https://institutdelors.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/R127-Energy_Union_2.0_European_Green_Deal_EN-1.pdf.
- DIRECTORATE, STATISTICS AND DATA. 2024. "Offers research papers and articles on global trade and geopolitical developments, including the Middle Corridor." *Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development* 35.
- "Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development." *www.oecd.org*. 06 24. Accessed 09 25, 2024. [https://one.oecd.org/document/SDD/DOC\(2024\)4/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/SDD/DOC(2024)4/en/pdf).
- EUR-Lex. 2024. "REGULATION (EU) 2021/1058 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL." *Official Journal of the European Union*.
- Foreign investors in Georgia. 2024. *Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline spanning three countries from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean coast*. Tbilisi, 01 01. https://www.bp.com/en_ge/georgia/home/who-we-are/btc.html#accordion_P.
- Georgia, EU -. 2018. "Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part." *eur-lex.europa.eu*. 06 01. Accessed 09 25, 2024. http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/2014/494/2018-06-01.
- Group, The World Bank. 2023. *Middle Trade and Transport Corridor*. for noncommercial purposes, Washington, DC: 3 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank. Accessed 09 25, 2024. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/6248f697aed4be0f770d319dcaa4ca52-0080062023/original/Middle-Trade-and-Transport-Corridor-World-Bank-FINAL.pdf>.

- Guliyev, Vusal. 2022. *The Rise of Trans-Caspian Routes amidst Russia's Isolation*. Situation Report, Geopoliticalmonitor Intelligence Corp.
- Jr., Elliott Davis. 2024. "EXPLAINER: Why Did Russia Invade Ukraine?" *www.usnews.com*. 02 23. Accessed 09 25, 2024.
<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/explainer-why-did-russia-invade-ukraine>.
- Kornely Kakachia, Agnieszka Legucka, Bidzina Lebanidze. 2021. "Can the EU's new global strategy make a difference? Strengthening resilience in the Eastern Partnership countries." *Democratization* (Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group) 20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2021.1918110>.
- NDC Staff. 2023. *pia2023.ndcpartnership.org*. Accessed 09 25, 2024.
<https://pia2023.ndcpartnership.org/georgia/>.
- Papava, Vladimer. 2010. "Central Caucaso-Asia: from Imperial to Democratic Geopolitics." *BULLETIN OF THE GEORGIAN NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES*, 5.
- Rompuy, Herman Van. 2012. "Speech by Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, at the Plenary Meeting of the Committee of the Regions." *EUROPEAN COUNCIL*. Brussels: EUCO 80/12 , 05 03.
- n.d. *The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC)*. Accessed 09 24, 2024.
<https://research.hktdc.com/en/article/MzM0NTYwOTQx>.
- n.d. *World Trade Organization (WTO)*. Accessed 09 24, 2024.
https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/whatis_e.htm.
- საქართველოს რესპუბლიკის პარლამენტი. 2021. "matsne.gov.ge." Vers. კონსოლიდირებული ვერსია (საბოლოო). *საქართველოს საკანონმდებლო მაცნე*. 08 02. Accessed 09 25, 2024.
<https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/28408?publication=70>.

„Terrorism Threats to the EU in terms of Russian-Ukrainian military conflict“

Daviti Gugunava

Student of Master's Program in State Recourse Management of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Abstract

The events of the last few years - including the COVID-19 pandemic that began in January 2020; The withdrawal of the United States from Afghanistan on August 30, 2021; The withdrawal of the French-led peacekeeping forces from the Central African Republic of Mali in August 2022; The Russian-Ukraine military conflict that started in February, 2022; The attack on Israel by the terrorist groups of Hamas on October 7, 2023 and the Israeli-Hamas military confrontation that developed in this background; The sharp decrease in the economic growth of the EU countries and many more other events of last decade, made the EU member states, and not only these countries, to talk about the problem of the future security system of the EU.

The purpose of this study is to find out that armed conflicts between nations, for this particular case, Russian – Ukrainian armed conflict is a fertile ground and cover for radical terrorist groups to carry out terror in the peaceful countries of the EU. Another issue of this research topic is whether above mentioned countries use state-level terrorism in EU states to achieve their goals.

As the military conflict escalates between those above-mentioned countries and more people die, both civilian and military, it will become more difficult to solve the military conflict between Russia and Ukraine in the peaceful way. Sometimes state government use so called state terrorism method in another third country to achieve their state goals in the fastest, cheapest and easiest way. Both sides of the armed military conflict are able to conduct such terror and threat to another, the third country. Therefore, both of them want other states to stop supporting this armed conflict. This could be achieved by different means and one of them is conducting terrorist acts to threaten peaceful people of those third states, indirectly involved in the military conflict.

Key words: terrorism; Islamist terrorism; modern understanding of terrorism; jihadism; state level terrorism;

Introduction

Terrorism itself has wide range of definition in the scholarly literature. The reasons terrorism act is carried out is different and various. It could be conducted because of achieving different political goals. Terrorism could be planned and executed by different extremist and radical religion groups or by other groups or planned and conducted even by some state government itself. It could be done against some people, against group of people or against person. As we can see the goal of terrorism, the executers of terror, the subjects and the objects of terror is different. Because of that it is almost impossible to set up perfect definition of the term “terrorism”. Though, if terrorism can be defined as using excessive, different kind of violence against innocent people, who has nothing to do with the case, in order to force government one or any specific country, to achieve selfish political goals in the easiest and the cheapest possible way- I assume that most of the readers will agree to that definition of the term terrorism.

There are a lot of different reasons of conducting terrorist violence against peaceful people in EU. States in EU are multi-cultural and densely populated, making European cities attractive targets for terrorism attackers. The EU has an open border policy between its member states promoting and facilitating the free movement of terrorist which allows both of them to give a chance carry out attacks on EU territory wherever they need to. Accordingly, they attempt to spread fear and portray the inability of local governments to ensure both the safety and security environment of their own country’s citizens. The well-developed line of communications and transport infrastructure in EU will facilitate development of good organized networks for terrorist organizations. It is well known that certain segments of population in EU live in social isolations. Their integration into the EU population has not been possible for decades due to language barriers, differences in lifestyle, diversity of religion belief and many other reasons including the fact that they do not share European values. Citizens of these segments of the population, especially Muslim and Islamic citizens, in terms of low level of education, can be easily radicalized by extremist

thoughts due to improper social life and wages. Armed conflicts in the neighboring countries EU, for example Russian -Ukrainian armed conflict most probably will foster different terrorist groups to plan, prepare and conduct violence and terrorist act against peaceful populace of the states in the EU. Based on experience of armed conflicts tend to make arms and ammunition readily available to both gangs and terrorists.

Main Part

So far, we have seen almost every kind terrorism act in the history of Europe starting from Middle Ages until now. Modern understanding of terrorism is based on the process of public killing and numerous executions during the first revolution in France by the end of 18th century when the first Republic country of France was established. After the first revolution in France, the democratic country of France with three governing branches (Legislative, Executive and Judicial) was born. That was the greatest step for mankind and for Europe changing state governing style from the Feudalism into the democratic. Though during the period of the first French revolution, implementation of extreme and radical ideology caused massive bloodshed because of terror and massive massacre of the populace.¹

From 1919 until 1921 during the Irish War of Independence from the Great Britain, the terrorist organization known as Irish Republican Army – “IRA” employed guerrilla tactics – raids and ambushes, kidnaping and sabotage on the English soil and on the Continental Europe. They wanted British government to negotiate. In 1931 and again in 1936 IRA was declared as illegal and terrorist organization. IRA killed more than 1,800 people, including approximately 600 civilians. After the Birmingham pub bombing, in November 21, 1974 – explosion killed 21 people – the deadliest attack on English soil, IRA began a series of terrorist attacks on Britain’s mainland. At one point IRA sought assistance from Adolf Hitler to help remove the British army from Ireland. In 2005 IRA announced

¹ French History of the Five Republics. [French History of the Five Republics - Simply France \(simply-france.com\)](http://www.simply-france.com).
(გადამოწმებულია 30.10.24)

that it had ended its armed campaign, but in 2015 an investigation revealed that at least some of the organizational structure of the Provisional IRA was still in place.²

Political assassinations with national revolutionary goals became a thing of the past when social revolutionary organizations appeared on the scene. In the 1970s, small groups appeared on the territory of Western Europe, whose goal was to eliminate general social inequality. One good example of this is the Red Brigades in Italy. The Red Brigades were formed in 1970 and have existed for almost 20 years. They considered terror as the best way to fight. In 1970, German students announced about the foundation of the Red Army faction, which was linked to the 1968 student protests in West Germany. Their main demand was to remove from the government all those government officials who belonged to the former fascist party or so called “SS”.³

The National Liberal Front of Corsica - FLNC - was formed in 1976, on the island of Corsica, located in the Mediterranean Sea south east of France. The FLNC was founded by the amalgamation of two small paramilitary groups fighting for Corsican independence from France. The main demands of this terrorist organization were: 1. the independence of the island of Corsica from the French government; 2. respect for the national traditions of the Corsicans and 3. Protection of the Corsican language. On September 28, 2023, during the visit of French President Emmanuel Macron to the island of Corsica, he made a proposal to the Parliament of Corsica, with a wide autonomy of the island as part of France.⁴ However, his statement was followed by several explosions from the FLNC the next day, demanding the independence of Corsica. Anti-French graffiti appeared in Corsica, by the FLNC, in 2024.

There are far more numbers to count down of less know terrorist organizations within the EU, beside above mentioned. For example: “Revolutionary Cell”- in Germany, “the

²Irish Republican Army, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Irish-Republican-Army>. (გადამოწმებულია 30.10.24)

³Red Army Faction, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Red-Army-Faction>. (გადამოწმებულია 30.10.24)

⁴France's Corsica rocked by blasts claimed by separatist group, <https://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20231009-france-s-corsica-rocked-by-blasts-claimed-by-separatist-group>. (გადამოწმებულია 30.10.24)

Angry Brigade” - in the United Kingdom, “Socialist Patients”- in Germany, “Direct Action” - in France, “Situationists” (situationist international - SI) – in Germany, “Kommune 1”- in Germany, “The 2 June Movement” – in Germany and many others. The terrorist organizations described above represent the so-called non-Islamist groups that were not motivated by Islamic, Muslim or other religious. However, they were united and combined under political or social motivations.

Speaking of Islamic terrorist organizations, we should remember the most famous terrorist attack on the Munich Olympics in Germany. During the 1972 Munich Olympic Games, the terrorist group "Black September" affiliated with the Palestinian terrorist group "FATAH" broke into the dormitory of the Jewish Olympic athletes, took 11 Jewish athletes' prisoner and demanded the release of the Palestinian fighters captured by Israel. As a result of the counter-terrorist operation, several German police officers and two German helicopter pilots were injured and killed. Unfortunately, the Jewish athletes could not be freed and all eleven sportsmen were killed. Some of the terrorists were destroyed, and some were taken in hostage by the police. The only positive result of the terrorist act of Munich was that the West German authorities, Ulrich Wegener, the security adviser of the Olympic Games, were instructed to form an anti-terrorist unit (State Border Guard). Subsequently, Border Guard Group N9 – GSG 9 has emerged as an effective counter-terrorist force in the world. ⁵

The names of the following terrorist organizations are related to Islamic terrorism: Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and its divisions – Fatah, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade. As well Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda. Another one is Taliban, which has the government power in Afghanistan. Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham - ISIS. Numbering the terrorist acts carried out by them would carry us far away. According to FBI

⁵ Germany expands anti-terror squad GSG 9, <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-expands-anti-terror-squad-gsg-9/a-42148371> , (გადამოწმებულია 30.10.24)

data, 74% of terrorist attacks in Europe in 2015-2018 were carried out by Islamic terrorist organizations.

Islamic terrorist organizations are not characterized by strict vertical governance. They are usually scattered in small independent groups. The peculiarity of their actions is manifested in the organization of terrorism in the name of Islamic religion.

According to the Global Terrorism Index 2022 over 10 000 people were killed in terrorism attacks in a single year in 2015. Increased counterterrorism coordination at both the state and international level have played a role in reducing the impact of terrorism around the world.⁶

The government of the state of Israel have been affective against terrorism during last decade. It has almost defeated the terrorist organization “ Hamas” in the Gaza strip and know is facing another terrorist organization “ Fatah” in Lebanon. According to the Mossad motto “ For by wise guidance you can wage your war”. One good example of this is the terrorist act in Lebanon on September 19, 2024 - the massive and almost simultaneous explosion of pagers and hand-held radios. As a result of this terrorist act, more than 20 people were killed and almost 3000 were injured and maimed. It was an act of terrorism that Israel orchestrated in response to Hezbollah's support for Hamas. The terrorist acts allegedly punished the command ring of the terrorist organization based in Lebanon, whereby the Israeli special services tried to destroy the command-and-control process in the command rings of Hezbollah. On the other hand, the effects of these massive pagers’ explosions, and the explosion of handheld radios and cell phones the next day, caused massive panic and fear among the civilian population. Several members of the terrorist organization - Hezbollah - were killed, but civilians were also killed, including children. ⁷

After 2019 till now Western Allies, NATO and its Allies has withdrawn all the forces from Iraq and Syria, in 2021 from Afghanistan and Pakistan, in 2023 from Africa and all

⁶ Institute for Economics and Peace. „Global Terrorism Index “.Measuring the impact of terrorism, 2022y.. Pg.29

⁷ <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/09/18/world/middleeast/israel-exploding-pagers-hezbollah.html>

other places all over the world where Al-Qaida is operating and growing. Now Al-Qaida and IS have much bigger area to operate than they did before 2019. This makes more difficult to make pressure on these terrorist organizations to prevent them doing and conducting terrifying terrorism acts. While Ukrainians are confronting Russia in the Eastern Europe with the different military and humanitarian aid of Western countries, the terrorism threat from Muslim African Region Sahel is growing day by day. As it appears, Russian -Ukrainian armed conflict is a good opportunity for radical Islamist terrorist groups for distractions in order to strengthen their positions in another part of the world.

According to the Economist (the British weekly newspaper), the Sahel region in Africa has become the epicenter of terrorism actions. An Al-Qaida affiliated terrorist group named as „Jama ‘at Nasar Al-Islam Muslims “is recognized as world’s fastest growing terrorist organization which has contributing 35 % of all global deaths from terrorism by 2021. As the Economist wrote: „A new crop of military juntas, which have booted out Western troops and UN peacekeepers and brought in Russian mercenaries instead, have full the violence. Mauritania and Chad have been forced to disband the G5 Sahel, a five-country anti-terrorist operation, after the military regimes in Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali withdrew. ⁸

The Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need has highlighted the fact that the Sahel has become one of the most dangerous regions in the world for Christians.⁹ In March 2020, US sent a special operations force to the Sahel region to combat the rising violence from terrorist groups. In 2011, terrorist organizations operating in the Sahel, including „BOKO HARAM “, Islamic State and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) have magnified the violence, extremism and instability of the region.

Terrorists have forced the Christian population of Debbe in Burkina Faso to leave their village. Earlier they shot dead two scouts in the village church who resisted their

⁸ ["Mauritania is a beacon of stability in the coup-prone Sahel".](#) *The Economist*. ISSN 0013-0613. Retrieved 10 August 2024y..

⁹ ACN , ["Sahel: ACN comes to the aid of Christians displaced by terror".](#) *ACN International*. Retrieved 26 April 2024.

orders. This incident was reported by Bishop Prosper B. Ky during a visit to the international headquarters of the pontifical foundation Aid to the Church in Need (ACN).¹⁰ We can find many other similar facts committed by Islamist radical terrorists in the Sahel region. These are clear and vivid examples of how dangerous Islamic terrorism can be in vulnerable countries

As DW news reports: on September 7th 2024 „Boko Haram “militant group have killed at least 80 people in northeastern Nigeria. Roughly 150 insurgents stormed into village of Mafa on motorcycles, shooting residents dead and setting building on fire. It appears to be a revenge attack for the killing of two militants by vigilantes from the village. „Boko Haram “have killed more than 40 000 (forty thousand) people in the northeast in the last 15 years. The group has also been terrorizing framers in northeastern Nigeria. The militants steal corps and kidnap agricultural workers for ransom. The government recently deployed a new security force to protect the farmers. But it has not been enough to stop the attacks and to prevent this terrorist group conducting fire arm attack. Nigerian government cannot protect people. That was the aim of the terrorist group and they have achieved their goals in this poor African country of Sahel region. The question is what will be next. From the Middle East example, we know that many Lebanese people view Hezbollah (terrorist organization supported by Iran) as a powerful political force and view as more effective than state forces, particularly in terms of security and political representation. The preference for Hezbollah over state forces is influenced by perceptions of its military capabilities and the failure of the Lebanese Army to provide security in certain contexts.

We have to know that “Boko Haram” is Arabic word and its meaning in English is “forbidden westernization”. This terrorist group is one of the followers of a jihadism – militant Islamic movement. According to the Jihadism armed confrontation against political rivals is a theologically legitimate and efficient method of socio-political change.

¹⁰ „Burkina Faso: New chapter of suffering for Christians – murder of two scouts and expulsion of suffering Christians in the North-West of Burkina Faso “. Aid to Church in Need. ACN international. Retrieved from article of November 21, 2023. [Burkina Faso: New chapter of suffering for Christians | ACN International](#)

It is not questionable that all of the people of EU are suffering from that Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Leading economic country of the EU-Germany is facing lots of problem, including major problem, which is energy problem. As they had abandoned nuclear power plants, they mostly rely on electricity and gas import. Russia has reduced gas supply to EU through Ukraine. The EU supports Ukraine with finance and with supply of military needs. Ukraine itself is not capable of causing so much damage to the Russian army that Russia will not be able to man its own army. This situation on the Russian – Ukrainian front line is lasting process and is still ongoing process more than two and half year since 24 February 2022 with unexpected results. People of the EU are tired and worried about their future security and they do not support the politics of their current government. This was obvious in the parliamentary elections 2024 where the party of the current president Emanuel Macron took only 4th place.¹¹ In Germany in the local government elections ruling coalition party of Olaf Sholts's lost election against far-right political party Alternative for Germany (AFD). On the other hand, there is uprising threat in the middle of Africa, in the Sahel region as it was once in Syria and the coalition forces could hardly solve that existing terrorism problem. Almost 60 % of populace in Germany are worried about their future security. As "Euro news Georgia" reports¹², in the beginning of August 2024, thousands of people took to the streets of UK cities with anti-Islamic and antimigration slogans. The reason for these protests was the stabbing of eleven teenagers in a dance studio, where three of them were killed. The participants of the protest set fire to one of the police buildings and tried to burn mosques in several cities. They set fire to a hotel building where Muslim migrants are sheltering. The situation was so unmanageable that the head of the government decided to hold an extraordinary session of the emergency committee on August 5.

¹¹ Where's Macron? French president disappears amid election crisis, <https://www.politico.eu/article/emmanuel-macron-france-president-elections-2024-marine-le-pen-brussels-national-rally/>, (გადამოწმებულია 30.10.24)

¹² ბრიტანეთში სოციალურ ქსელებში დაწყებული დაპირისპირება რეალურ სამყაროში გადაიზარდა, <https://euronewsgeorgia.com/2024/08/12/britanetshi-sotsialur-kselebshi-datskebuli-dapirispireba-realur-samkaroshi-gadaizarda/>, (გადამოწმებულია 30.10.24)

Conclusion

In my opinion while, there are no direct, significant terrorist attacks specifically because of the Russian – Ukrainian conflict within the EU, there are several potential threats and dynamics leading to increased risks. First and most important is radicalization. The war has been a focal point for various extremist groups, leading to radicalization among certain individuals or communities who may view the conflict as a religious or ideological struggle. This might inspire some to conduct attacks in Europe. Next threat is foreign fighters. The conflict has attracted foreign fighters from various countries, including those with extremist ties. Their return to Europe may pose a risk if they bring back combat experience or radicalized ideology. Beside that existing threat as the war continues, there is a risk of cyberattacks. Though, they are not traditional terrorism, can have significant impacts on critical infrastructure and public safety. Some right-wing extremist groups in Europe may exploit the conflict, rallying around nationalist sentiments or anti-immigrant rhetoric, which could lead to violence or crimes, based on religious misunderstanding. The spread of disinformation and propaganda related to the conflict can exacerbate social tensions and lead to increased hostility, which can become a breeding ground for extremist behavior.

NATO and its allies have to make decision about peacekeeping and peace support operations and to return their peace keeper and peace support forces to those above-mentioned regions, where the Islamist terrorist groups are operating freely. It is most likely that their influence will grow and the terrorist groups will keep to expand operational environment, portraying local democratic governments unable to deal with the terrorism threats. It will attract more and more young people joining and becoming part of terrorist organizations. Besides that, the EU has to set up control measures i.e. Country border control within EU states and to make immigration control measures stricter.

Bibliography

- Chief of Terrorism Branch, Instability and Insurgency Centre, Office of Global Issues.
Approved for release 2008/ 03/04 . *The Red Brigades*. CIA Confidential , Directorate of Intelligence .
- Cowell-Meyers, Kimberly, and Paul Arthur. 2024. *Britannica*. August 31. Accessed Sep 9, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Irish-Republican-Army>.
- Faso, Burkina. 2024. *ACN INTERNATIONAL*. 02 27. Accessed 09 22, 2024.
<https://acninternational.org/sahel-acn-comes-to-the-aid-of-christians-displaced-by-terror/>.
- HORCHEM, H J. 1974. "WEST GERMANY'S RED ARMY ANARCHISTS." *CONFLICT STUDIES Volume: 46* (The Virtual Library houses over 235,000 criminal justice resources, including all known OJP works.) 46. Accessed 9 22, 2024.
<https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/west-germanys-red-army-anarchists>.
2023. <https://simply-france.com/french-history-of-the-five-republics/>. 04 2. Accessed 09 21, 2024. <https://simply-france.com/french-history-of-the-five-republics/>.
- Jenkins, John Philip, ed. 2024. <https://www.britannica.com>. Vers.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Red-Brigades>. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. September 1. Accessed 09 22, 2024.
- Jenkins, John Philip. 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/>. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. August 22. Accessed 9 22, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Red-Army-Faction>.
- Knight, Ben. 2018. *dw.com home politics*. 01 15. Accessed 09 22, 2024.
<https://www.dw.com/en/germany-expands-anti-terror-squad-gsg-9/a-42148371>.
- Muro, Diego. 2013. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/>. January 14. Accessed 09 21, 2024.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470674871.wbespm277>.

2024. *The Economist*. JUN 27. Accessed 09 22, 2024. <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2024/06/27/mauritania-is-a-beacon-of-stability-in-the-coup-prone-sahel>.

Whitfield, Teresa. 2015. *The Basque Conflict and ETA. The Difficulties of an Ending*. Special Report 384, Washington, DC 20037: UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE.

2024. *www.politico.eu*. 07 04. Accessed 09 22, 2024. <https://www.politico.eu/article/emmanuel-macron-france-president-elections-2024-marine-le-pen-brussels-national-rally/>.

Fortifying Europe: Combating FIMI and the Russian Menace in Georgia's Path to EU Membership

Rati Asatiani

Student of Master's Program in Security Studies of
LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Abstract

This article examines the challenges posed by Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) from Russia in the context of Georgia's effort towards European Union (EU) membership. As a post-Soviet state, Georgia has been a key target of Russian hybrid warfare, particularly through disinformation campaigns designed to destabilize its democratic institutions, sow political division, and prevent its integration into Western structures. This study employs a multi-disciplinary methodology, including content analysis of Russian and Georgian media and public opinion surveys, to assess the impact of FIMI on Georgia's political landscape. The results show that Russian disinformation exploits existing social and political divisions, particularly around national identity, EU integration, and traditional values. Public opinion data highlights the vulnerability of rural populations to such campaigns. Drawing on the experience of other post-Soviet states, particularly the Baltic nations, the article attempts to propose recommendations to strengthen Georgia's resilience to FIMI, including enhancing media literacy, bolstering cybersecurity, and fostering regional cooperation. Ultimately, the EU must play a proactive role in supporting Georgia's efforts to counter foreign interference, as its security is inextricably linked to the stability of its neighbors and aspiring candidates for membership.

Keywords: Georgia, European Union (EU), NATO, Russia, Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI).

Introduction

Since gaining independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Georgia has made clear strides toward Western integration, particularly through its efforts to align itself with the norms and values of the European Union (EU). However, the path to EU membership has been fraught with numerous challenges, not least of which is the persistent interference from Russia. Main pillar of this interference is Russia's use of Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI), a potent weapon in the Kremlin's hybrid warfare strategy that seeks to destabilize countries in what it considers its "near abroad"¹ – a concept in Russian political language, meaning Russia's neighboring countries that were once part of the USSR are now supposed to remain within the sphere of influence of the Russian Federation – and prevent their integration into Western structures.

The relevance of FIMI has grown significantly in recent years as the digital revolution has transformed the way information is disseminated, consumed, and manipulated.² FIMI encompasses a broad spectrum of activities, from both disinformation and misinformation campaigns to the manipulation of social media algorithms, cyberattacks, and the fostering of political polarization.³ Russia's use of FIMI is not new, but it has gained greater sophistication in the wake of the 2008 Russo-Georgian War, the annexation of Crimea in 2014, and the ongoing war in Ukraine.⁴ These events have underscored the Kremlin's commitment to using non-military means, including FIMI, to achieve its geopolitical objectives. For example, the RAND Corporation's analysis⁵ highlights that since 2014, Russia has pursued a strategy of hybrid warfare, blending military force with non-military tactics such as disinformation and cyber operations. This approach aims to weaken adversaries, including Ukraine and NATO members, by destabilizing them politically and economically without engaging in open warfare. Similarly, the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) provides insights⁶ into Russia's expansive concept of hybrid warfare, which integrates a range of non-military tools, including economic pressure and information campaigns, into its broader strategic

¹ Valdai Discussion Club. "Russia and Its Near Abroad: Challenges and Prospects." Valdai Club, May 17, 2023.

² European External Action Service. 2nd Report on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference Threats, January 2024.

³ Peter Pomerantsev and Michael Weiss, *The Menace of Unreality: How the Kremlin Weaponizes Information, Culture, and Money*. New York: Institute of Modern Russia, 2014.

⁴ Keir Giles, *Handbook of Russian Information Warfare*. Rome: NATO Defense College, 2016.

⁵ Charap, Samuel, and Khrystyna Holynska, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA2061-6.html.

⁶ "Russian Hybrid Warfare." Institute for the Study of War. <https://www.understandingwar.org/report/russian-hybrid-warfare>.

objectives. All of the above mentioned tactics allow the Kremlin to coordinate military and civilian efforts to shape conflicts to its advantage, with information operations playing a central role in subverting opposing nations. These examples underline the Kremlin's reliance on non-military tactics like FIMI to pursue its geopolitical goals across various regions and countries, including Ukraine, Georgia, and so on.

Georgia, as a candidate for EU membership, is a particularly important object for Russian FIMI. The country has long been a target of Russian disinformation aimed at weakening its democratic institutions, discrediting its government, and fostering societal divisions. Furthermore, Georgia's geographical proximity to Russia and its strategic location in the South Caucasus, along critical energy corridors, make it a key focus of Moscow's efforts to maintain influence there. For Russia, preventing Georgia from integrating into Western institutions such as the EU and NATO is of paramount importance,⁷ as it would signal a further erosion of Moscow's influence in its "near abroad".

The importance of studying FIMI in the context of Georgia's EU accession lies in the need to understand how disinformation campaigns shape public opinion, influence political decisions, and ultimately affect the trajectory of Georgia's integration into Europe. This article seeks to provide an analysis of the ways in which Russian FIMI operates in Georgia, the impact it has on the country's political landscape, and the measures that can be taken to counter these malign influences. Through a review of existing literature and public opinion data, this study aims to highlight the growing importance of information security in the context of EU enlargement and to offer recommendations for strengthening Georgia's resilience to foreign interference.

The central hypothesis of this research is that Russia's use of FIMI in Georgia is part of a broader strategy to prevent further NATO and EU enlargement and to maintain its sphere of influence in the South Caucasus. By weakening Georgia's democratic institutions and fostering political polarization, Russia seeks to undermine the country's aspirations for Western integration. The EU, in turn, must play a proactive role in assisting Georgia in building resilience to FIMI, both through technical

⁷ Svante E. Cornell, *Small Nations and Great Powers: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus*. London: Routledge, 2001.

assistance and by supporting civil society initiatives that promote media literacy and critical thinking.

Main Part

Research Methodology

To investigate the scope and impact of Russian FIMI on Georgia's EU accession process, this research adopts a multi-disciplinary methodology that integrates both qualitative and quantitative results. By combining content analysis and public opinion surveys, this study seeks to capture the complexity of FIMI as it relates to Georgia's political and social environment.

The paper draws on content analysis conducted by EUvsDisinfo⁸ and DFRLab⁹ of Russian state-sponsored media outlets, such as RT (Russia Today) and Sputnik, which have been instrumental in disseminating disinformation in Georgia and other countries. These outlets, along with various social media platforms, are examined to identify recurring themes and narratives designed to undermine Georgia's integration with the EU. This analysis is supplemented by a review of academic literature on Russian hybrid warfare and disinformation tactics in the digital age, providing a broader context for understanding the strategic goals behind FIMI.

In addition, analyses of Georgian media outlets and social media channels are reviewed to track how disinformation narratives infiltrate local discourse.¹⁰ Special attention is paid to online platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, where disinformation campaigns are often amplified through fake accounts, bot networks, and troll farms. By examining the digital footprint of disinformation campaigns, this study seeks to understand how foreign actors manipulate information environments and influence public opinion in Georgia.

This research also incorporates quantitative data from public opinion surveys conducted by organizations such as the National Democratic Institute (NDI)¹¹ and the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC)¹². These surveys provide valuable insights into the attitudes of Georgian citizens toward the EU, NATO, and Russia, as well as their susceptibility to disinformation. By analyzing

⁸ "Understanding Russian Disinformation: EU vs Disinfo." European Union External Action. <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/>.

⁹ Digital Forensic Research Lab. <https://dfrlab.org/>

¹⁰ "Transparency Security Threat Reporting." Meta. <https://transparency.meta.com/en-gb/metasecurity/threat-reporting/>.

¹¹ Public Attitudes in Georgia: Results of the October 2023 Survey. Washington, D.C.: NDI, 2023.

¹² Caucasus Barometer 2024: Public Opinion Survey Results Presentation. Tbilisi: CRRC Georgia, 2024.

changes in public opinion over time, this study seeks to assess the effectiveness of Russian FIMI in shaping perceptions of Georgia's foreign policy orientation.

A comparative historical analysis was conducted to draw parallels between Georgia's experience with FIMI and those of other post-Soviet countries, particularly the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania),¹³ Ukraine, and Moldova.¹⁴ These countries have also been targets of Russian disinformation and have developed various strategies to counter these threats. By examining the successes and challenges faced by these countries in resisting FIMI, this study identifies lessons that can be applied to Georgia's context.

Results

The results of this research reveal that Russian FIMI in Georgia operates on multiple levels, targeting not only the general public but also political elites, civil society, and the media. By leveraging a combination of traditional media, social media, and cyberattacks, Russia has sought to undermine Georgia's democratic processes, foster political polarization, and weaken public support for EU and NATO integration.

Russian Disinformation Tactics

The content analysis of Russian media outlets and social media platforms reveals several key narratives that have been consistently promoted in Georgia. These narratives are designed to exploit existing social and political divisions, particularly around issues of national identity, sovereignty, and traditional values.

One of the most pervasive themes in Russian disinformation campaigns is the portrayal of the West, and the EU in particular, as morally degenerate, corrupt, and intent on undermining traditional Georgian values.¹⁵ Disinformation narratives frequently claim that EU integration will lead to the erosion of national identity, the imposition of "foreign" values such as LGBTQ+ rights,

¹³ "The Secret Battlefield: How the EU Can Help Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine Protect Against Russian Subversion." European Council on Foreign Relations.

¹⁴ "Russia's Adaptation Game: Deciphering the Kremlin's Humanitarian Policy." CSIS.

¹⁵ Yablokov, Ilya. *Fortress Russia: Conspiracy Theories in the Post-Soviet World*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018.

and the loss of sovereignty. These narratives resonate with conservative and nationalist segments of Georgian society, particularly in rural areas, where traditional values are strongly upheld.¹⁶

Another common theme in Russian disinformation is the framing of NATO as an aggressive, expansionist force that seeks to provoke conflict with Russia. Disinformation campaigns often claim that Georgia's aspirations for NATO membership will lead to war with Russia, invoking the 2008 Russo-Georgian War as a cautionary tale. This narrative is designed to instill fear and uncertainty among the Georgian population, particularly among those who have already experienced the devastating consequences of military conflict with Russia.

Russian disinformation also seeks to erode public trust in Georgia's democratic institutions by promoting narratives that depict them as corrupt, incompetent, and controlled by foreign interests. By amplifying political scandals and fostering divisions within the political elite, Russian actors aim to create a sense of instability and chaos. This, in turn, undermines public confidence in Georgia's ability to navigate the path to EU membership. A prominent example is the spread of disinformation during the 2019 protests in Georgia, which were initially sparked by the visit of a Russian MP to the Georgian parliament.¹⁷ Russian media outlets, like Sputnik, manipulated the situation by portraying the protests as an orchestrated Western attempt to destabilize Georgia, pushing the narrative that NATO integration would lead to the loss of Georgia's sovereignty and independence.¹⁸

In addition to traditional media, Russian influence is highly visible on social media platforms, where disinformation is disseminated through fake accounts, bot networks, and troll farms. These accounts often pose as Georgian citizens or activists, spreading false information and amplifying divisive narratives. The use of social media allows Russian actors to reach a wider audience and to tailor their messages to specific demographic groups, making their campaigns more targeted and effective.

¹⁶ "Gayrope: This Is How Russia Uses Disinformation Against the LGBTQ+ Community to Attack Democracies." El País, December.

¹⁷ "'Gavrilov's Night: Multiple Facebook Pages Target Protests in Georgia." DFRLab, July 23, 2019. <https://dfrlab.org/2019/07/23/gavrilovs-night-multiple-facebook-pages-target-protests-in-georgia/>.

¹⁸ "4 Narratives by Kremlin and Georgian Actors About Tbilisi Protests." Myth Detector. <https://mythdetector.ge/en/4-narratives-by-kremlin-and-georgian-actors-about-tbilisi-protests/>.

Impact on Domestic Politics

Russian FIMI has had a profound impact on Georgia's domestic political landscape. Political polarization has increased in recent years, with pro-Western and pro-Russian factions becoming more entrenched in their positions. Disinformation campaigns have played a significant role in exacerbating these divisions, particularly during periods of volatility in domestic politics.

The role of disinformation in shaping public debates around key policy issues, such as Georgia's EU and NATO membership aspirations, or the passing of new legislative initiatives should also be highlighted. Russian-backed narratives have been particularly effective in polarizing debates around foreign policy, with some political parties adopting openly pro-Russian positions in line with disinformation campaigns.

Public Perception and Vulnerabilities

Drawing on the public opinion data analyzed in the studies reviewed for this paper, it can be deduced that although a majority of Georgians continue to support EU and NATO integration, there is a growing divide between urban and rural populations in terms of their susceptibility to disinformation. Surveys conducted by the NDI and CRRC reveal that younger, urban residents are more likely to support Western integration and are generally more resistant to disinformation, while older, rural residents are more likely to be influenced by Russian narratives.

This division is particularly pronounced when it comes to issues of national identity and sovereignty. Rural populations, which tend to be more conservative, are more likely to view EU integration as a threat to traditional values, a narrative that has been heavily promoted by Russian disinformation campaigns. In contrast, urban populations are more likely to view EU integration as an opportunity for economic development and modernization.

The polarization of public opinion presents a significant challenge for Georgia, as it complicates efforts to build a broad consensus around the country's foreign policy goals. Furthermore, the susceptibility of certain segments of the population to disinformation increases the risk of political instability, particularly during periods of electoral competition or major policy debates.

Baltic Countries' Approach to Prevent Russian FIMI

The comparative analysis with other Eastern European and post-Soviet countries provides valuable insights into the strategies that can be employed to counter FIMI. The Baltic states, in particular, offer important lessons for Georgia, as they have successfully navigated similar challenges and have developed robust mechanisms for resisting Russian disinformation.¹⁹

One of the key factors contributing to the success of the Baltic states in countering FIMI has been their investment in media literacy programs. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have implemented comprehensive media education initiatives that teach citizens, particularly young people, how to critically assess information and recognize disinformation. These programs have helped to create a more resilient society that is less susceptible to manipulation.

Another important factor is the strong emphasis on cybersecurity in the Baltic states. Estonia, in particular, has become a global leader in cybersecurity, having developed advanced capabilities to defend against cyberattacks and to protect critical infrastructure. Georgia, which has been the target of numerous cyberattacks, including during the 2008 war, could benefit from adopting similar cybersecurity strategies.

The Baltic states have also benefited from close regional cooperation and coordination with NATO and the EU in addressing the threat of FIMI. Through initiatives such as the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, the Baltic states have been able to share information, pool resources, and develop joint strategies for countering disinformation. Georgia, which has a strategic partnership with NATO and the EU, could enhance its own resilience by strengthening regional cooperation in this area.

Conclusion

The findings presented in this paper attempt to highlight the significant threat posed by Russian FIMI to Georgia's political stability and its aspirations for EU membership. It is argued that through the use of disinformation, cyberattacks, and the manipulation of political discourse, Russia seeks to undermine Georgia's democratic institutions, foster political polarization, and prevent the

¹⁹ Nina Jankowicz, *How to Lose the Information War: Russia, Fake News, and the Future of Conflict*. New York: I. B. Tauris, 2020.

country from fully integrating into Western structures. The results suggest that Russian disinformation campaigns are highly adaptive and tailored to exploit Georgia's social, cultural, and political vulnerabilities.

In order to combat the influence of Russian disinformation, I believe Georgia must prioritize the development of media literacy programs that teach citizens how to critically assess the information they consume. These programs should be integrated into the national education system and supported by public awareness campaigns aimed at debunking disinformation. The EU should increase its support for Georgia's efforts to counter FIMI by providing financial and technical assistance for strategic communications initiatives. Including funding for independent media outlets, civil society organizations, and public diplomacy campaigns that will promote accurate information and counter Russian narratives. I think Georgia must also invest in strengthening its cybersecurity capabilities to defend against cyberattacks that accompany FIMI. Collaborative initiatives with NATO, the EU, and other regional partners should expand so as to provide Georgia with the technical expertise and infrastructure needed for protection of its critical information systems. Building societal resilience to disinformation requires a multi-faceted approach that embraces not only media literacy and cybersecurity but also efforts to foster greater political cohesion and trust in democratic institutions. This can be achieved through initiatives that promote dialogue and understanding between different segments of society, as well as efforts to enhance the transparency and accountability of government institutions. Georgia should explore opportunities for greater regional cooperation in combating FIMI, particularly with other Eastern European and South Caucasus countries that face similar challenges. By sharing information, pooling resources, and coordinating strategies, Georgia and its neighbors can strengthen their collective resilience to foreign interference.

In my opinion, the fight against FIMI in Georgia is likely to intensify as the country continues its efforts to integrate into the EU. While Georgia has made significant progress in building democratic institutions and aligning itself with European values, it remains vulnerable to Russian interference. The EU, for its part, must recognize that the security of its eastern borders depends not only on the defense of its own member states but also on the protection of candidate countries like Georgia from foreign interference. Future research should focus on the long-term impact of FIMI on

democratic governance and political stability in Georgia, as well as the effectiveness of EU policies in mitigating these threats. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, so too will the tactics employed by foreign actors to manipulate information environments. It is therefore essential that both Georgia and the EU remain vigilant and proactive in addressing the challenges posed by FIMI. In conclusion, it is my belief that while the path to EU membership for Georgia is fraught with challenges, including the persistent threat of Russian FIMI, it is not insurmountable. By strengthening its institutions, building societal resilience, and fostering greater cooperation with its regional and international partners, Georgia can overcome these obstacles and secure its place within the European Union.

Bibliography

Cornell, Svante E. *Small Nations and Great Powers: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus*. London: Routledge, 2001.

European External Action Service. 2nd Report on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference Threats, January 2024.

European External Action Service. *2nd Report on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference Threats*, January 2024.

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/2024/EEAS-2nd-Report%20on%20FIMI%20Threats-January-2024_0.pdf.

Giles, Keir. *Handbook of Russian Information Warfare*. Rome: NATO Defense College, 2016. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA2061-6.html.

Jankowicz, Nina. *How to Lose the Information War: Russia, Fake News, and the Future of Conflict*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2020.

Pomerantsev, Peter, and Michael Weiss. *The Menace of Unreality: How the Kremlin Weaponizes Information, Culture, and Money*. New York: Institute of Modern Russia, 2014.

Charap, Samuel, and Khrystyna Holynska. *Russia's War Aims in Ukraine: Objective-Setting and the Kremlin's Use of Force Abroad*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2024.

Valdai Discussion Club. "Russia and Its Near Abroad: Challenges and Prospects." Valdai Club, May 17, 2023. <https://valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/russia-and-its-near-abroad-challenges-and-prospect/>.

Yablokov, Ilya. *Fortress Russia: Conspiracy Theories in the Post-Soviet World*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018.

"Gavrilov's Night: Multiple Facebook Pages Target Protests in Georgia." DFRLab, July 23, 2019. <https://dfrlab.org/2019/07/23/gavrilovs-night-multiple-facebook-pages-target-protests-in-georgia/>.

"Gayrope: This Is How Russia Uses Disinformation Against the LGBTQ+ Community to Attack Democracies." *El País*, December 3, 2023. <https://english.elpais.com/international/2023-12-03/gayrope-this-is-how-russia-uses-disinformation-against-the-lgbtq-community-to-attack-democracies.html>.

"NDI-Georgia: GGF Poll, October 2023." *Civil Georgia*, December 2023. https://civil.ge/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/NDI-Georgia_GGF-poll_October_2023_Eng_VF.pdf.

"Russian Hybrid Warfare." Institute for the Study of War. <https://www.understandingwar.org/report/russian-hybrid-warfare>.

"Russia's Adaptation Game: Deciphering the Kremlin's Humanitarian Policy." CSIS. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/russias-adaptation-game-deciphering-kremlins-humanitarian-policy>.

"The Secret Battlefield: How the EU Can Help Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine Protect Against Russian Subversion." European Council on Foreign Relations. <https://ecfr.eu/publication/the-secret-battlefield-how-the-eu-can-help-georgia-moldova-and-ukraine-protect-against-russian-subversion/>.

"Transparency Security Threat Reporting." Meta. <https://transparency.meta.com/en-gb/metasecurity/threat-reporting/>.

"Understanding Russian Disinformation: EU vs Disinfo." European Union External Action.

<https://euvsdisinfo.eu/>.

"4 Narratives by Kremlin and Georgian Actors About Tbilisi Protests." *Myth Detector*.

<https://mythdetector.ge/en/4-narratives-by-kremlin-and-georgian-actors-about-tbilisi-protests/>.

"Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC) Georgia." <https://crrc.ge/en/>.

National Democratic Institute (NDI). "Public Opinion Poll: Georgia 2023." <http://ndi.org/>.

Redefining Priorities of Europe in the Wake of the War in Ukraine: From Green Deal Towards Armament and Military Industrialization

Nino Samadashvili

Student of Master's Program in Security Studies of
LEPL David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Abstract

The European Union's (EU) Green Deal has long stood as a symbol of its leadership in global efforts toward climate neutrality, targeting net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. This ambitious agenda was framed not only as an environmental necessity but as a cornerstone of Europe's energy security and economic transition. However, the geopolitical landscape shifted dramatically with Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The conflict exposed critical vulnerabilities in Europe's energy dependence on Russian fossil fuels and has prompted a recalibration of the continent's priorities, blending environmental goals with newfound urgency for military preparedness and energy independence. This paper attempts to analyze the significant impact that the Ukraine war has had on Europe's Green Deal objectives, particularly in the context of the EU's broader shift toward militarization.

At the core of this analysis is the question of whether Europe can reconcile its long-term environmental sustainability ambitions with the immediate security imperatives of energy independence and defense strengthening. Using the theoretical frameworks of defensive realism and constructivism, the paper explores how geopolitical shifts have influenced the EU's dual objectives. Defensive realism emphasizes the role of states in ensuring their survival within an anarchic international system, suggesting that Europe's pivot toward militarization and energy security is a rational response to the increasing threat posed by Russia. Constructivism, on the other hand, posits that Europe's identity and values, particularly its commitment to climate change mitigation, continue to shape its policy choices even in the face of external pressures.

This paper's findings suggest that Europe's path forward involves a complex balancing act. The urgency of securing energy independence, demonstrated by initiatives such as the REPowerEU plan, has led to short-term compromises on environmental goals, such as the temporary resurgence of coal and increased natural gas imports. Simultaneously, Europe has accelerated investments in green technologies, with an emphasis on dual-use technologies that serve both civilian and military needs. Innovations in renewable energy, battery storage, and hydrogen power, for example, could enhance energy security while supporting military operations.

The article attempted to show that, while the war in Ukraine has undoubtedly reshaped Europe's immediate priorities, it does not necessarily signal an abandonment of the Green Deal. Instead, it points toward a more nuanced strategy where energy security and military preparedness can coexist with long-term environmental sustainability—though achieving this balance requires significant policy coordination and financial investment.

Keywords: European Union, Green Deal, war in Ukraine, militarization, defensive realism, constructivism, energy security.

Introduction

In December 2019, the European Union launched the European Green Deal, an ambitious project to decarbonize the European economy and achieve climate neutrality by 2050. Central to this project were initiatives aimed at reducing carbon emissions, increasing renewable energy sources, and establishing sustainability as a key priority across the continent. The EU's climate ambitions, however, have been profoundly impacted by Russia's war in Ukraine, started in February 2022. The war has brought immediate concerns about energy security to the forefront, while also raising the need for stronger military capabilities across Europe.

Before the war, Europe relied heavily on Russian natural gas to power its homes, industries, and transportation. As the conflict unfolded, Russian gas supplies were curtailed, creating an energy crisis forcing European governments to rethink their Green Deal commitments, at least in the short term. At the same time, the war has triggered a rearmament drive, with several European countries, notably Germany, significantly increasing their defense spending. This shift raises critical questions about Europe's ability to pursue long-term environmental sustainability while addressing security needs.

Methodologically, the article is considered in the category of qualitative research. Primary sources were analyzed in the research process for data collection and analysis; Also, materials found in foreign media.

The Aim of this paper is to explore how the war in Ukraine has reshaped Europe's priorities and to consider whether the Green Deal and Europe's military strategies can co-exist. By analyzing Europe's policy adjustments, both in terms of energy and defense, this paper seeks to evaluate whether Europe's pursuit of environmental sustainability is compatible with its need for enhanced security and military strength.

The purpose of the article is to answer the following **Research Questions**:

How did the war in Ukraine affect the Green Deal plans of Europe?

How did Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine after 2022 affect Europe's security, safety, and military strategies?

Based on the research question, the following **Hypothesis** was generated:

The war in Ukraine affected Europe's future green plans and reshaped its focus toward militarization and security.

Independent Variable: Russia's war in Ukraine and subsequent aggression.

Dependent Variable: Europe's shift in priorities between environmental sustainability (Green Deal) and military industrialization.

Main Part

Theoretical Framework

The first theoretical lens through which we will examine the topic is **Defensive Realism**. This theory, rooted in the broader realist tradition in international relations, contends that the international system is anarchic, meaning there is no central authority to regulate state behavior. In such a system, the primary goal of states is survival. According to defensive realism, states engage in military build-up and alliances primarily for defensive purposes and in response to perceived external threats. The ultimate aim is to maintain security, balance power, and avoid conflict, rather than expand territory or aggressively seek dominance.

The war in Ukraine presents a case where Europe, in response to Russia's aggression, has shifted focus from long-term projects such as environmental sustainability to immediate security concerns. Defensive realism would argue that Europe's rearmament efforts are not about abandoning the Green Deal but are a necessary response to the security threat posed by Russia. In the realist framework, states act rationally, prioritizing survival over other concerns, which explains why Europe's military spending has surged while environmental policies have been delayed or modified.

Key Theorists like Kenneth Waltz, argued that, in an anarchic international system, prioritize survival through balancing strategies and defensive measures.¹ And Stephen Walt, built on the idea with his "balance of threat" theory, arguing that states respond more aggressively to threats that seem imminent or directly affect their security.²

In Europe's case, the perceived threat from Russia's actions in Ukraine has led to a rapid response, including heightened defense budgets, military collaboration, and rethinking of security frameworks across the continent.

While defensive realism emphasizes material threats and state survival, **Constructivism** offers a different perspective by focusing on the role of ideas, norms, identities, and discourses in shaping state behavior. Constructivism suggests that the way states perceive threats and act upon them is not just a response to material factors (such as military capabilities), also it considers to social constructs—beliefs, norms, and collective understandings shaping the way states interact with the world.

In the context of Europe's response to the Ukraine war, constructivism can help explain how identity and norms are shaping European policies. Since the end of World War II, many European countries, particularly Germany, have adopted pacifist norms and reduced their defense spending, aligning themselves with identities as peacebuilders. However, the Ukraine war has led to a significant shift in these identities. Germany, for example, reversed decades of defense policy by announcing a €100 billion fund to modernize its military. Constructivist theory helps explain how Europe's identities are changing in response to the war, with the continent increasingly adopting the view that military strength and energy security are integral to its stability and values.

Key Theorists, like Alexander Wendt - a leading figure in constructivist thought, argued that "anarchy is what states make of it," meaning that international structures are shaped by the social interactions.³ And shared beliefs of states and Nicholas Onuf

¹ Waltz, Kenneth N. *Theory of International Politics*, Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979 y..

² Stephen M. Walt, „The Origins of Alliances. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press,“ 1987y..

³ Alexander Wendt, „Social Theory of International Politics,“ Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 y..

emphasized the role of language and discourse in the construction of social reality, which in turn influences state actions.⁴

In the case of Europe, the Ukraine conflict is reshaping not only its strategic objectives but also the way in which it views itself. Constructivism suggests that this shift toward militarization is not just about responding to Russia's material power, but also about changing European beliefs and values regarding security, energy, and international order.

Green Deal, Rearmament and War in Ukraine

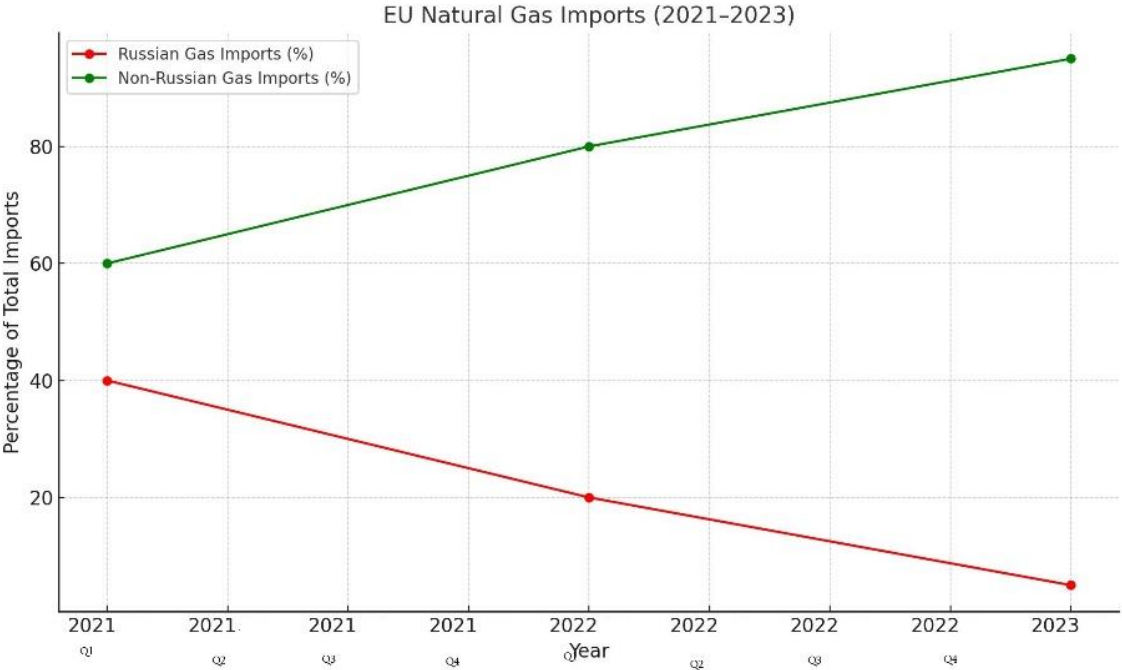
REPowerEU: Impact on the Green Deal Since the Ukraine War: The European Green Deal, launched in 2019, set the tone for Europe's decarbonization efforts with a targeted goal of climate neutrality by 2050. This strategy was built on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting renewable energy, and fostering sustainable industrial practices. Before the war in Ukraine, the European Union (EU) had begun to make notable strides toward these objectives, with significant investments in green energy infrastructure, such as solar, wind, and hydrogen projects, and the establishment of regulations to reduce carbon emissions. However, the war in Ukraine, and more specifically, Europe's dependence on Russian energy, triggered an immediate shift in priorities. Conflict and uncertainty provide an inauspicious backdrop to the new World Energy Outlook.⁵

The EU had long relied on Russia for approximately 40% of its natural gas and a significant portion of its oil. With the onset of the conflict in February 2022, energy imports from Russia became untenable due to both geopolitical concerns and the threat of Russia leveraging its energy exports as a tool of coercion. In response, European nations took immediate measures to reduce their dependence on Russian energy, which led to policy shifts in both energy and environmental strategies.

⁴ Nicholas Onuf, „World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations,“ Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1989 y..

⁵ International Energy Agency (IEA). "The World Energy Outlook 2023." International Energy Agency, 2023 y..
<https://www.iea.org/reports/world-energy-outlook-2023>.

In May 2022, the European Commission launched the **REPowerEU Plan**, aimed at rapidly reducing Europe’s dependence on Russian fossil fuels. The plan proposed diversifying energy sources, increasing energy efficiency, and accelerating investments in renewable energy. While this appears to align with the Green Deal’s broader environmental objectives, it also exposed the short-term compromises Europe had to make in its pursuit of energy security. For example, some European countries increased their use of coal, a fossil fuel with high carbon emissions, to compensate for the loss of Russian gas supplies. As a replication of the ambition of the common vaccine purchasing program, the EU also considered the development of a ‘joint purchasing mechanism’ which would negotiate and contract gas purchases on behalf of participating Member States.⁶



Graph 1: EU Natural Gas Imports (2021–2023): The chart illustrates the dramatic reduction in natural gas imports from Russia post-2022, replaced by imports from other regions, such as the United States, Qatar, and North Africa. Additionally, the chart shows the increased role of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in Europe’s energy mix.

⁶ European Commission. REPowerEU Plan. Brussels: European Commission, 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_3131

Year	Renewable Energy Investments	Defense Spending
2021	160	150
2022	110	200
2023	130	230

Table 1: Investments (in billion €) in Renewable Energy vs. Defense Spending (2021–2023): A comparison of EU member states' budget allocations toward green energy infrastructure and defense spending. The table reveals a notable decline in green investments in 2022, with some states reallocating funds toward defense.

The REPowerEU strategy includes massive investments in renewables to replace Russian fossil fuels. However, the urgency to address energy security challenges in the immediate aftermath of the war has meant that short-term fixes, such as reopening coal plants and increasing natural gas imports from non-Russian sources, have complicated Europe's commitment to decarbonization. Also, Energy transitions bring new risks to energy security. One set of risks relate to supply chains for clean energy technologies and for critical minerals. Supply chains for both are highly geographically concentrated.⁷

Also, while the European Commission has reiterated its commitment to the Green Deal, critics argue that the energy crisis induced by the Ukraine war may delay the continent's transition to renewable energy. Countries like Germany, which initially planned to phase out coal power by 2030, have delayed those plans to meet their energy demands during the crisis. This short-term reliance on coal could have long-term environmental consequences, increasing carbon emissions in the immediate future and risking Europe's climate targets. Also, the situation is aggravated by the fact that almost one quarter of German small and medium-sized industrial companies say the high energy prices endanger their survival. The situation is forcing companies to save on climate neutrality plans.⁸

⁷ International Energy Agency (IEA). "The World Energy Outlook 2023." International Energy Agency, 2023 y..
<https://www.iea.org/reports/world-energy-outlook-2023>.

⁸ Clean Energy Wire. "War in Ukraine: Tracking the Impacts on German Energy and Climate Policy." Clean Energy Wire, February 2023 y..
<https://www.cleanenergywire.org/news/ukraine-war-tracking-impacts-german-energy-and-climate-policy>.

In contrast, there are arguments that Europe's efforts to decouple from Russian energy will ultimately accelerate the green transition. The diversification of energy sources and the emphasis on energy efficiency in the REPowerEU plan may lay the groundwork for a more resilient and sustainable energy system. However, the immediate focus on energy security has led to a recalibration of Europe's environmental priorities, at least in the short term.

Changing Security, Safety, and Military Strategies in Europe: The war in Ukraine has not only exposed Europe's energy vulnerabilities but also highlighted the continent's security weaknesses. For decades, European countries—particularly those in Western Europe—operated under the assumption that large-scale conflict on the continent was unlikely. Comfortable in its reliance on the United States as its security guarantor after the Cold War, it allowed its military forces and defense industries to atrophy to devote greater resources to raising standards of living. As a result, military spending and investments in defense infrastructure remained relatively low compared to other global powers, which led to the fact that European military forces cannot effectively operate without direction and material support from the United States. However, the scale and brutality of Russia's invasion of Ukraine have forced Europe to rethink its military posture.⁹

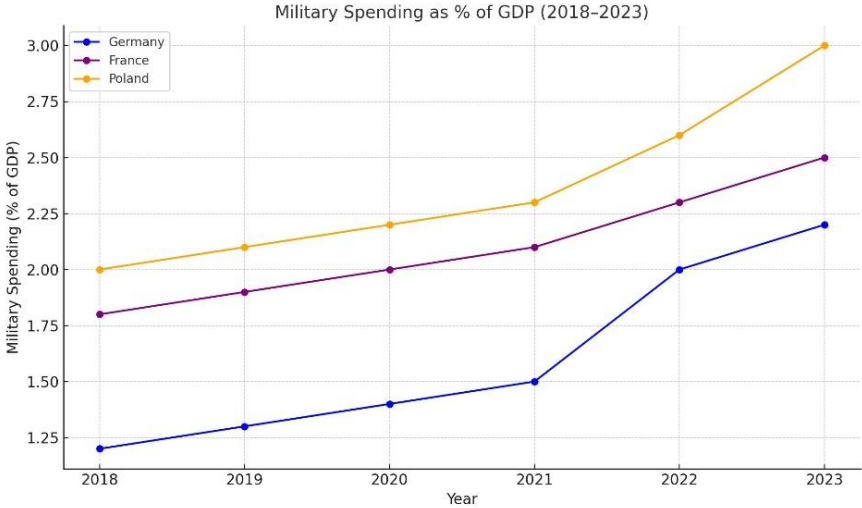
Perhaps the most striking example of Europe's changing military strategies comes from Germany. For decades, Germany had been criticized for its relatively low military spending, which fell short of NATO's target of 2% of GDP. In response to the Ukraine war, however, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced a "**Zeitenwende**" (turning point) in German defense policy. Scholz pledged a €100 billion special defense fund, alongside plans to increase Germany's annual defense budget to more than 2% of its GDP.¹⁰

This shift marks a dramatic departure from Germany's post-World War II defense policy, which prioritized diplomacy, economic cooperation, and restraint over military

⁹ Graham, Thomas. "From the Ukraine Conflict to a Secure Europe". Council on Foreign Relations, September, 2024 y..
<https://www.cfr.org/report/ukraine-conflict-secure-europe>.

¹⁰ North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). "Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2014-2023)." NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 2023 y..
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_216897.htm.

build-up. Germany’s Zeitenwende has reverberated across Europe, with other nations, such as France, Poland, and the United Kingdom, also increasing their defense budgets and emphasizing military preparedness.¹¹



Graph 2: European Military Spending by Country (2018–2023): A visual representation of the sharp increase in defense budgets across European countries since 2022, with Germany, France, and Poland leading the way

Military Industrialization in the EU: A New Era of Arms Production: Beyond increased defense budgets, the Ukraine war has also catalyzed the growth of Europe’s military-industrial sector. Governments have realised their ammunition stocks have fallen too low and the ability to restock needs fixing. With the rising demand for advanced weaponry and equipment—such as tanks, drones, and missile defense systems—European defense contractors have seen a surge in orders. Collaboration between EU member states and NATO allies has also increased, with joint defense projects receiving more support and funding.¹²

One notable example is the European Sky Shield Initiative (ESSI), a joint air defense project aimed at strengthening Europe’s defense capabilities against missile threats.

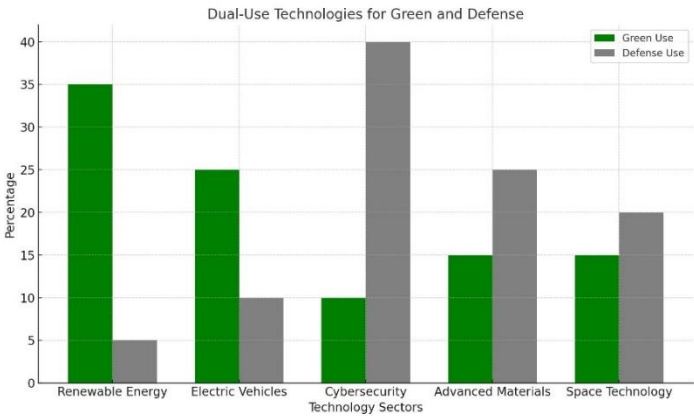
¹¹ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). "Military Expenditure Database: Europe." SIPRI, 2023 y.. <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>.

¹² International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). "The Military Balance 2023: Europe's Defence Capabilities and Industrial Base." IISS Report, 2023 y.. <https://www.iiss.org/publications/the-military-balance>.

Launched by Germany, the initiative includes several other EU and NATO member states and is expected to involve significant investments in defense infrastructure over the coming years.

Balancing the Green Deal and Military Strength: Is it Possible? The war in Ukraine has brought Europe’s energy and military vulnerabilities into sharp relief. While the immediate need to ensure security and energy independence has led to shifts in budgetary priorities, the question remains whether Europe can pursue its Green Deal objectives alongside its newfound focus on militarization. Could this two seemingly competing priorities be reconciled?

There is a growing argument that investments in green technologies could contribute in Europe’s security goals. Dual-use technologies—those that have both civilian and military applications—offer a potential bridge between environmental sustainability and defense. For example, advancements in renewable energy, battery storage, and hydrogen technology could enhance Europe’s energy security while also reducing its carbon footprint. Similarly, innovations in artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics have the potential to benefit both the civilian economy and military applications.¹³



Graph 3: Dual-Use Technologies: Green Energy and Military Applications: A diagram highlighting the intersection of technologies like advanced battery systems, green hydrogen, and AI that have applications in both environmental sustainability and defense.

¹³ Watson, Nicholas, Claudia Ciobanu, Jules Eisenchteter, and Edit Inotai. "Central Europe’s Defence Industry Back with a Bang." Balkan Insight, May 23, 2024. <https://balkaninsight.com/2024/05/23/central-europes-defence-industry-back-with-a-bang/>.

Investing in dual-use technologies allows Europe to address its immediate defense needs without entirely abandoning its environmental goals. However, this approach requires significant coordination between civilian and military sectors, as well as a rethinking of how defense and environmental policies are integrated.

Conclusion

The war in Ukraine has forced Europe to reevaluate its priorities, including security and energy independence emerging as immediate concerns. As a result, the continent has shifted focus from the Green Deal's long-term environmental objectives to addressing the challenges posed by Russia's aggression. Even though the Green Deal is still central to Europe's policy framework, it has been recalibrated to accommodate the urgent need for military readiness and energy security.

However, as this paper's attempt was to show, these priorities do not have to be mutually exclusive. Through the use of dual-use technologies and innovative approaches to energy and defense, Europe can pursue both its environmental sustainability and military strength. The challenge for policymakers will be to strike a balance between these goals, ensuring the fact that Europe can remain both a global leader in combating climate change and a secure actor in an increasingly volatile geopolitical landscape.

Bibliography

Charveriat, Céline, et al. "Russia's War in Ukraine: Why Doubling Down on the Green

Deal Is the Best Strategy." International Institute for Sustainable Development,

March 10, 2022. [https://www.iisd.org/articles/insight/russias-war-ukraine-why-](https://www.iisd.org/articles/insight/russias-war-ukraine-why-doubling-down-green-deal-best-strategy)

[doubling-down-green-deal-best-strategy](https://www.iisd.org/articles/insight/russias-war-ukraine-why-doubling-down-green-deal-best-strategy).

Centre for European Reform. "The Impact of the War in Ukraine: Annual Report 2022."

Centre for European Reform, February 2023. [https://www.cer.eu/about/annual-](https://www.cer.eu/about/annual-report/2022)

[report/2022](https://www.cer.eu/about/annual-report/2022).

- Clean Energy Wire. "War in Ukraine: Tracking the Impacts on German Energy and Climate Policy." Clean Energy Wire, February 2023.
<https://www.cleanenergywire.org/news/ukraine-war-tracking-impacts-german-energy-and-climate-policy>.
- European Commission. REPowerEU Plan. Brussels: European Commission, 2022.
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_3131.
- European Commission. "InfoPoint Conference: The European Green Deal and the Russian War of Aggression Against Ukraine." Directorate-General for International Partnerships, October 11, 2022. https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/news-and-events/events/infopoint-conference-european-green-deal-and-russian-war-aggression-against-ukraine-2022-10-11_en.
- European Defence Agency. "Annual Report 2023", 2024.
<https://eda.europa.eu/publications-and-data/all-publications/annual-report-2023>.
- European Investment Bank. "Europe's Response to Energy Crisis: Accelerating the Green Transition." EIB Report, February 2023.
<https://www.eib.org/en/publications/20220211-investment-report-2022>.
- European Think Tanks Group (ETTg), "The European Green Deal and the War in Ukraine". July 2022. <https://ettg.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/The-European-Green-Deal-and-the-war-in-Ukraine.pdf>.
- European Union Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER). "European gas market trends and price drivers." ACER Report, 2023.
https://www.acer.europa.eu/monitoring/MMR/gas_market_trends_2023.
- Graham, Thomas. "From the Ukraine Conflict to a Secure Europe". Council on Foreign Relations, September, 2024. <https://www.cfr.org/report/ukraine-conflict-secure-europe>.
- International Energy Agency (IEA). "The World Energy Outlook 2023." International Energy Agency, 2023. <https://www.iea.org/reports/world-energy-outlook-2023>.

- International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). "The Military Balance 2023: Europe's Defence Capabilities and Industrial Base." IISS Report, 2023.
<https://www.iiss.org/publications/the-military-balance>.
- International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). "Renewable energy statistics 2023." IRENA Report, 2023. <https://www.irena.org/Publications/2023/Jul/Renewable-energy-statistics-2023>.
- Lee, Sunny. "Europe's Rearmament After the Ukraine War: National Security and Military Cooperation." World Geostrategic Insights, November 9, 2023.
<https://www.wgi.world/europe-s-rearmament-after-the-ukraine-war-national-security-and-military-cooperation/>.
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). "Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2014-2023)." NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 2023.
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_216897.htm.
- Onuf, Nicholas. World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1989.
- Puglierin, Jana. "Turning Point or Turning Back? German Defence Policy After Zeitenwende." European Council on Foreign Relations, March 19, 2024.
<https://ecfr.eu/article/turning-point-or-turning-back-german-defence-policy-after-zeitenwende/>.
- Stockholm Environment Institute. "The European Green Deal and the War in Ukraine: Addressing Short and Long-Term Crises." SEI.org, October 11, 2022.
<https://www.sei.org/events/european-green-deal-war-ukraine-addressing-short-long-term-crises/>.
- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). "Military Expenditure Database: Europe." SIPRI, 2023. <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>.
- Walt, Stephen M. The Origins of Alliances. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987.
- Waltz, Kenneth N. Theory of International Politics. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979.

Watson, Nicholas, Claudia Ciobanu, Jules Eisenchteter, and Edit Inotai. "Central Europe's Defence Industry Back with a Bang." Balkan Insight, May 23, 2024.

<https://balkaninsight.com/2024/05/23/central-europes-defence-industry-back-with-a-bang/>.

Wendt, Alexander. Social Theory of International Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

The impact of russian-Ukraine's war on the European economy

Nugzari Kvariani

Student of Master's Program in State Recourse Management of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia,

Abstract

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has created many challenges for the world, in such significant areas as security, economy and others. Consequently, there was a need to find ways to solve problems, which would allow businesses and states to avoid the challenges arising from the said conflict as much as possible. Attitudes towards issues have changed and new approaches have been sought, starting from the level of the state to the level of the individual citizen. Based on the geography of the conflict, it is logical that the above-mentioned issues had the greatest impact on both the European states and the areas within these states. The paper discusses the economic challenges, the changes made to solve them, and the results gained from the conflict between Ukraine and Russia in general.

The mentioned problems have found a significant reflection on a large part of the society, as you have already mentioned, as a result of the hostilities started by Russia in February 2022, all spheres experienced clear crises and changes. Economic crises and the use of the economy as a political lever for the Russian hybrid war machine are not new, these levers have been refining over time. During the Russia-Ukraine conflict, we clearly saw manipulations of a number of economic topics, for example, such as the supply of oil to the EU states or the problem of withdrawing wheat stocks from Ukraine. However, in addition to deliberately created economic crises, large-scale war by its very nature caused certain crises throughout Europe and the world. The material and monetary resources required by the war are quite large. In order to meet the mentioned requirements, countries have to divert the necessary funds for other states in this direction. Therefore, economic, infrastructural and other projects are stopped, these facts lead to serious crises. In addition to the direct parties involved in the conflict, the European states are spending the necessary resources for the war, in order to provide Ukraine the necessary with supplies. All the above mentioned factors caused the increase in world polarization and tension in general, creating certain shortages as well as made it more expensive to transport products from one country to another. Logically, this chain of events led to an economic crisis.

The aim of the paper is to show the main aspects of impact of Russia-Ukraine war on the European economy. While discussing the mentioned topic, examples of crises in various fields are presented, specific factors that influence the European economy in the conditions of the Russia-Ukraine war are presented and analyzed. At the end of the paper, the ways of solving economic problems are suggested and one of the probable scenarios of the development of the situation is discussed.

Key words: Russia-Ukraine war, economy, crises, solving the problem, Europe

Introduction

After the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, as we have already mentioned, significant changes have been made around the world. Approaches and attitudes have changed in almost all areas. The course of the war made the international community consider changes in many systems, from the economic direction to defense doctrines. It is interesting to consider the specific reasons and actions that had a direct impact on the changes and the established results under the conditions of the Russia-Ukraine war. In general, the entire conflict should be studied systematically in order to make a step-by-step analysis.

Of the ongoing wars on the European continent, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine is the largest one since the World War II. It should not be surprising that its influence on the European economy is very large. Wars are one of the main sources of economic crises, especially in the context and scale of the above-mentioned conflict. Also, the following fact should be noted. In the 21st century, the global economic system makes special bonds between states. Even the failure of one state from this chain leads to vital consequences in the efficiency of the entire chain. The consequences can be especially severe when we are talking about such important countries in the global supply chain as the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

It is necessary to consider such important economic issues as oil pipelines of strategic significance, export of wheat, change of trade routes, switching of financial resources for military needs, etc. A detailed discussion and analysis of the mentioned issues will lead us to the problems faced by today's European economy. A consistent review process will show us the stages of development and management of the crisis, and in the end, this approach will allow us to make a correct analysis of the current economic effects as well as certain predictions regarding the possible situation.

The majority of modern European leaders agree on the significance of logistical and political support for Ukraine, but on the other hand, they agree that any war in the European region affects the economic situation of the countries, reflected in other areas,

primarily in the most sensitive direction for politicians, social issues. Thus, the European Union acts wisely in order to be able to help Ukraine on the one hand, thereby indirectly protecting the EU states from aggression and supporting the sovereignty of the democratic state, and on the other hand to maintain social stability and continue development in economic, technological, or other directions. It is interesting to observe the changes that the member states of the European Union have implemented to mitigate and prevent crises caused by war. They will make even clearer the future aspirations of the European Union to reduce the negative effects of the Russian-Ukrainian war and will show the impact of logistical support to Ukraine on the European economy.

Main part

To start the discussion on this topic, it is important to consider examples of companies that left the Russian market and explored new opportunities elsewhere. In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, shortly after the beginning of the war, as already noted, many leading countries imposed significant sanctions on Russia and provided military support to Ukraine. Public opinion, sanctions and other business interests have pushed companies to leave the Russian market and rethink their supply chain.

Soon after the conflict erupted, major companies across various industries—including consumer goods, fashion, manufacturing, hospitality, accounting, and legal services—announced temporary suspensions of their sales and production in Russia. The businesses founded in the UK, US, and EU then operating in Russia, had to change their business strategies, often resulting in a disconnection or even "decoupling" from Russian operations. The transition caused financial setbacks for these company, but it saved their reputation.

Conversely, many businesses from Brazil, India, South Africa, China, and Turkey kept their trade relations with the Russian market. Some of them even expanded their trade operations, particularly in the energy sector. Local enterprises have also stepped in to replace the multinational companies that already exited. For example, after the departure

of the well-known fast-food chain McDonald's, the local company Vkusnaia Tochka has captured a significant portion of its market share by offering similar food and dining experiences.

Exiting a substantial market or halting logistical operations in the Russian Federation poses significant challenges. Over 2,100 American companies and 1,200 European firms rely on direct suppliers in Russia, while more than 190,000 US companies and over 109,000 European firms have third-tier suppliers in Russia or Ukraine. This scenario has forced businesses to seek alternative supply chains, excluding Russia from their operations as well as devise strategies to handle potential disruptions. It underscores the necessity for well-planned divestment strategies and supply chain adjustments.

Lets discuss few examples of businesses that encountered difficulties in leaving the Russian market:

- Nike's Sales Suspension: Nike decided to suspend its sales and operations in Russia due to the conflict. The company faced logistical challenges in ceasing its activities in a market that had grown increasingly significant. Nike had to navigate issues related to inventory management, employee transitions, and the broader implications for its global supply chain.
- BP's Divestment from Rosneft: one of the first major corporations leaving the market was BP , which announced its decision to divest its stake in Rosneft, a major Russian oil company. BP was the first large international firm to exit the Russian market in response to the Russia-Ukraine war. This move was part of a wider divestment strategy influenced by geopolitical tensions. BP had to address numerous financial, legal, and operational challenges in its exit plan, including managing the sale of shares and restructuring its investment portfolio.

In some cases, companies have experienced supply chain disruptions obtained in conditions of war. For example, disruptions in the German chemical company BASF's supply chain affected the company's ability to source raw materials from the region,

ultimately disrupting production and necessitating changes in shipping routes and suppliers. military operations reduced the impact of negative factors on this company.

Based on the above factors, the structural problems and necessary changes that the organizations faced became clear. It is interesting to consider the specific financial results of companies that produced, transported and sold their products in the territory of the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

Based on a Reuters article dated March 28, 2024, An examination of the company's records and statements reveals that the departure of foreign companies from Russia following its 2022 invasion of Ukraine has resulted in over \$107 billion in write-downs and lost revenue. This figure has risen by a third since the last reported amount in August of the previous year, highlighting the significant financial impact on the corporate sector due to Moscow's aggression.¹

Another significant concern is the "retaliation" threatened by Russia in response to the Western countries' actions regarding the freezing of Russian assets. Following Russia's invasion, Western nations froze approximately \$300 billion of Russian gold and foreign exchange reserves. In retaliation, Russia has issued warnings about severe repercussions, denouncing any attempts to seize its capital or assets as "banditry." Western banks are also apprehensive about the potential legal complexities that could arise from any confiscation efforts.

In response to these sanctions, Moscow has already exercised temporary control over assets held by several US and EU companies, such as "Carlsberg" and "Fortum" Russian analysts suggest that if Moscow takes further retaliatory steps, the West could face a loss of at least \$288 billion in assets and investments. While these actions will undoubtedly have long-term negative effects on the Russian economy, the impact of such substantial financial losses will likely be felt by European economies as well.

¹ Reuters.. *Foreign firms' losses exiting Russia top \$107 billion*, 2024, March 28

The logistics supply chain constitutes “a vital pillar” of the European economy. Recent developments in the Russia-Ukraine conflict have had a pronounced impact on several key trends within Europe’s supply chain. Examining specific examples and perspectives from analysts can elucidate the extent of market changes and provide a comprehensive assessment of the conflict’s overall impact.

The midst of ongoing uncertainty, professionals in the supply chain sector are preparing for a range of possible scenarios and devising alternative strategies to ensure global goods continue to circulate. Conversations with third-party logistics providers, shippers and freight forwarders reveal that they are currently in crisis mode, with their top priority being the safety of personnel, followed closely by identifying potential bottlenecks.

After enduring two years of persistent disruptions, supply chains are now in a fragile state. Any further decrease in capacity—whether related to containers, ships, or transit lanes—could significantly impact the global economy, including EU consumers.

We should closely monitor several key indicators to make clear analysis. According to this report of 2023, rail transport from China to Europe has become increasingly crucial. For instance, in the first half of 2021, the average load per train surged by nearly 60% compared to the same period in 2017, rising from 86 TEUs to 115. The number of trains dispatched also saw an increase, with 2,755 trains operating on Eurasian routes in the first six months—44% more than in 2020 and 99% more than in 2019. The daily average of dispatched trains rose from 10.6 in 2020 to 15.3 in 2021.²

If transit through Russia slows significantly or becomes unfeasible, more shipments will be redirected to ocean carriers. This shift will put additional strain on shipping containers and vessels, worsening existing global delays.

Ocean freight rates have already increased by about 5 times. Two years ago, container rates for shipments from Shanghai to Rotterdam were under \$2000. Recently, spot container

² FourKites. *Ukraine-Russia crisis analysis: What the data reveals*, 2023, February 28

rates for this route have surged to \$13000. Prices are expected to remain volatile, leading shippers to transfer some cargo to air transport, where costs and volatility will also rise.

Sanctions and border controls will lead to more paperwork, approvals, and significant delays for suppliers. Additionally, as borders shift and sanctions are imposed, new routes will need to be established. These delays are likely to ripple through the broader region, increasing distances traveled and fuel costs. A conservative estimate suggests delays could increase by 4 to 6 times.

also, Russia exported over \$200 billion worth of petroleum products annually. It is spoused, disruptions could drive up prices significantly. "Oil and natural gas prices have become the barometer of this crisis," noted Norbert Rücker of wealth management firm Julius Baer. "Any interruption in the flow of these resources from Russia to Europe, due to damage or sanctions, would greatly exacerbate the existing supply shortage."

Russia is a major producer of metals such as aluminum and copper. Analysts from Gartner foresee that the invasion will result in "severe shortages," with prices for these metals expected to surge due to supply disruptions, panic buying, and protective trade measures. This situation will impact both upstream and downstream manufacturing operations, as well as raw material extraction.

The examples and data provided clearly demonstrate the war's profound effect on supply chains, highlighting the economic interdependence of countries. Increased supply chain costs have driven up product prices for both producers and consumers. In some cases, this could lead to product shortages or a significant drop in demand, which ultimately harms the economy of any affected nation. Organizations involved in global logistics hope for a quick resolution to the conflict and a stabilization of conditions, but they are also bracing for potential worst-case scenarios, which present challenges for both European and global economies.

It is crucial to analyze how the European Union has tackled the challenges arising from the research issue at hand. In response to the adverse economic consequences of the

conflict, EU officials have been vigilant and responsive to the situation following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In addition to implementing coordinated sanctions with European Union members, they directed the European Commission to develop important plans. During the summit which held in Versailles, members of the commission highlighted the importance of reinforcing the European unions economic infrastructure and consumer market. They also advocated for increased strategic autonomy to bolster the EU's independence in geopolitical affairs. The ongoing repercussions of Russia's aggressive behavior towards Ukraine continue to be a prominent subject in European Council discussions.

Energy security and inflation are pressing issues that directly impact the public. Before the conflict, Russia was responsible for supplying approximately 25% of the EU's energy, making Europe highly dependent on Russian resources. This reliance gave Russia significant leverage, particularly as energy revenues were used to fund its military operations. Recognizing this vulnerability, EU leaders have made energy concerns a top priority since the invasion, understanding that Russia can no longer be deemed a dependable partner.

In reaction to sanctions and the push for diversification of energy sources, EU imports from Russia, especially natural gas, has decreased. Leaders have called on the European Commission to ensure the availability of affordable energy for the winter of 2022-2023 and have supported initiatives for renewable energy and greater efficiency. Nonetheless, the confluence of rising energy prices driven by the conflict, heightened demand post-COVID-19, and unusually hot, dry summers led to an energy crisis in 2022. This resulted in a sharp increase in annual energy inflation, affecting households and businesses alike, escalating food prices, and contributing to record inflation by October 2022.

European governors immediately focused on reducing demand, ensuring security of supply and protecting the single market. Despite government support, high prices have fueled a household spending crisis, with almost half of household spending going to rising costs in January 2023. Although inflation has eased to 2.8% by January 2024, the economic

outlook remains in doubt due to a looming recession and sluggish growth, particularly in the Eurozone.

Inflation started to rise in 2021 and picked up in 2022 due to energy issues affecting Europeans and businesses. The European Central Bank (ECB) responded with ten consecutive interest rate hikes, which pushed rates to record levels and helped reduce inflation to 2.8% by January 2024. A further decrease started from April. In the month of September 2024, talks have started again regarding a rate cut, which is most likely expected and was implemented in the same month. EU leaders are now focused on restoring economic growth and stability after the impact of the war in Ukraine, in order to strengthen their economies to continue helping Ukraine and promoting stability in their countries.

To mitigate the adverse economic effects of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the European Commission released a European Union Economic Security Strategy prior at European Council meeting (June 2023). EU Commissioner T.Breton characterized economic security as the essential actions required to navigate the crisis effectively

The strategy focuses on strengthening the EU's economic base, reducing risks, and maintaining economic openness. Key measures include identifying critical technologies and assessing risks related to supply chains, infrastructure, technology security, and economic dependencies.

In June 2023, EU leaders emphasized boosting economic resilience and security while keeping the economy open. They called for precise, risk-based responses to security challenges. Experts suggest that economic security will increasingly influence global politics and recommend a European economic security mechanism to set norms rather than follow others.

In October 2023, the Commission proposed risk assessments for key technologies like semiconductors, quantum technologies, AI, and biotechnology. On January 24, 2024, it released an economic security package including white papers on export controls,

investment, and dual-use technology, along with proposals for screening foreign investments and enhancing research security.³

We have already discussed, one of the main challenges for Europe's economic security which is the diversification of the supply chain. We must definitely focus on the Middle Corridor, in which the EU countries are increasingly interested in. The development of the Middle Corridor most likely will make a positive effect the economies of the Caucasus, Turkey and Central Asia. So far low demand from the European Union causes slow development of project. However, the signs of change are clear, Russia war in Ukraine has had a important impact on the European unions supply chain and energy policy. There is an opportunity to further intensify the above-mentioned direction.⁴

Of course, the Russian influence in the region is still high, which prevents the interest of the European Union and the South Caucasus states, although the ongoing negotiations between the European Union and the states of the region give positive expectations. It is likely that with the reduction of Russian influence, the importance and momentum of the above-mentioned road will increase, which will make "healthy" the economies of the European Union and the South Caucasus states.

Conclusion

The Russia-Ukraine war remains an active challenge to this day, which is reflected in the transience of the parties in the conflict. There are different opinions about when and how the conflict will end, but the fact is that the economy of the world and the EU will never be the same. We already see changes, diversification of markets and means, changed approaches, searching for new logistic ways. Despite the problems revealed as a result of the war, new concepts of economic orientation continue to be rethought. Based on the facts presented in the paper, it is clear that it is really painful for the European Union to

³ European Parliament. *The impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on the EU's economy and security* (EPRS Briefing No. 757783) 2024 y..

⁴ Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik. *Title of the document* (SWP Research Paper No. 2022C64), 2022 y..

implement similar economic changes. As we have already mentioned, most of the changes directly affected the well-being of the population, beyond the economic factor, the process of changes (economic changes) is complicated by other facts, for example, the waves of migrants, the increase in the threat of terrorism, the increase in world tension, however, the European Union needs to implement economic changes today and now in order to achieve a stable development, guaranteeing economic or national security for the European Union. Based on this situation, we can conclude that the Russia-Ukraine war has found an important and direct reflection on the economics of Europe, which in the future will find an even sharper reflection in the documents of European security and economic direction in the short term.

Bibliography

Council of the European Union. *Impact of Russia's Invasion of Ukraine on the Markets:*

EU Response. Accessed(15.09.2024)

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-response-ukraine-invasion/impact-of-russia-s-invasion-of-ukraine-on-the-markets-eu-response/>.

European Parliament. *The Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on the EU's Economy and Security*. EPRS Briefing No. 757783. 2024.

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2024/757783/EPRS_BRI\(2024\)757783_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2024/757783/EPRS_BRI(2024)757783_EN.pdf).

FourKites. "Ukraine-Russia Crisis Analysis: What the Data Reveals." February 28, 2023.

<https://www.fourkites.com/blogs/ukraine-russia-crisis-analysis/>.

Reuters. "Foreign Firms' Losses Exiting Russia Top \$107 Billion." March 28, 2024.

<https://www.reuters.com/markets/europe/foreign-firms-losses-exiting-russia-top-107-billion-2024-03-28/>.

Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik. *Title of the Document*. SWP Research Paper No.

2022C64. Accessed (15.09.2024). <https://www.swp-berlin.org/10.18449/2022C64/>.

University of Florida. "The Impact of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict on Global Supply Chains." UF News. February 27, 2023. <https://news.ufl.edu/2023/02/russia-ukraine-global-supply-chain/>.

Zeng, A. Z., and C. Xu. "Title of the Article." *International Journal of Operations & Production Management* 43, no. 6 (2023): 789-804. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOPM-08-2022-0529>

European security against Russian hybrid warfare

Tornike Samakashvili

Student of Master's Program in Security Studies of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Abstract

The conflict in Ukraine has highlighted Russia's deployment of hybrid warfare, combining military action with non-military tactics such as cyber attacks, disinformation campaigns, economic coercion and political manipulation. European countries, especially NATO and EU countries, have developed multifaceted strategies to counter this threat, realizing the complex and unconventional nature of hybrid warfare. These strategies focus on strengthening collective defense mechanisms, increasing cyber resilience, combating disinformation, and promoting political and economic solidarity. NATO has played a central role in Europe's response to Russian hybrid warfare. The alliance has expanded its understanding of security threats to include non-traditional elements, integrating cyber defense, intelligence sharing and rapid response mechanisms. The NATO Cyber Defense Center of Excellence (CCDCOE) has become a hub for member nations to share experiences and best practices in cyber security. Exercises such as Defender Europe simulate hybrid attack scenarios, helping European militaries prepare for a mix of conventional and cyber threats. Moreover, NATO's Article 5, which treats an attack on one ally as an attack on all, has been updated, to cover large-scale cyber attacks or hybrid operations. Meanwhile, the EU has focused on political and economic strategies to counter Russia's hybrid tactics. The EU East StratCom working group, established in 2015, seeks to counter pro-Kremlin disinformation and promote accurate information about EU policy in Eastern Europe. The EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) also strengthens the resilience of member states' digital infrastructure. Economic sanctions against Russia, especially after its annexation of Crimea, have been another powerful tool that weakens Russia's economy and limits its ability to effectively conduct hybrid warfare. Some European countries, especially those bordering Russia, have also taken tough measures. Poland, the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) and Finland have significantly strengthened their defense capabilities and implemented national strategies against disinformation and cyber threats. These countries, aware of their proximity to Russia, have led the advocacy for an increased NATO presence and have been vocal supporters of Ukraine, providing military and economic aid. Finland's accession to NATO in 2023 marked a significant change in European security dynamics, underscoring the growing importance of collective defense. Overall, European countries have developed comprehensive strategies to counter Russian hybrid warfare. These strategies include strengthening cyber and military defenses, strengthening economic sanctions, countering disinformation, and promoting greater solidarity within NATO and the EU. Although these measures have not completely neutralized the Russian threat, they represent a significant evolution in European defense policy in response to the conflict in Ukraine.

Keywords: deployment, hybrid warfare, collective defense mechanisms, political and economic solidarity, defense capabilities.

Introduction

Hybrid warfare is a modern form of conflict that blurs the lines between traditional warfare and modern technological and psychological tactics. It is a multi-pronged strategy that combines conventional military operations with unconventional tactics such as guerrilla warfare, cyber attacks, economic pressure, and information and media manipulation. This combination allows aggressors to exploit a range of vulnerabilities in their targets, often without provoking a full-scale military response. The term "hybrid warfare" reflects the complexity and interconnectedness of these tactics, which are used simultaneously by state and non-state actors to achieve strategic goals.

The multifaceted nature of hybrid warfare makes it a particularly insidious threat. This is why traditional military defenses are often ineffective against such a multidimensional approach. For example, a country may consider its military bases secure, but its financial systems may be under cyber attack, its political landscape destabilized by disinformation, and its social fabric strained by organized civil unrest. Therefore, the complexity of hybrid warfare requires a comprehensive and multidimensional strategy to effectively confront its complex environment. in which each element plays a critical role in protecting and mitigating the diverse threats posed by hybrid warfare.¹ Therefore, we can say that **in today's environment, it is important for the security of Europe to establish a highly flexible strategy adapted to the changing threats coming from the elements of Russian hybrid war.**

As already mentioned, hybrid warfare represents a paradigm shift in conflict strategy, in which the traditional understanding of peace and war is blurred by the simultaneous use of various military and non-military tactics. This tactic is designed to exploit a wide range of vulnerabilities in different areas and create a cumulative effect that can destabilize the adversary. This is why understanding the components and tactics of hybrid warfare is critical to developing effective countermeasures.

¹ Christopher S. Chivvis, "Understanding Russian "Hybrid Warfare". 2017 y..

One of its important challenges in today's Europe is the cyber space, where in the era of digital transformation, the threats arising from it have become an important component of hybrid warfare. As we know, Russia is conducting cyber-attacks against Ukraine's military infrastructure, including communication networks, command systems, and logistical supply facilities. These attacks are aimed at disrupting operations, sowing confusion and reducing Ukraine's military effectiveness.

In response, effective cyber defense strategies play an important role in protecting national security and building resilience against these threats. This section examines key elements of cyber defense, including robust cybersecurity systems, public-private partnerships, and incident response and recovery mechanisms. It is important to develop the existing roads in order to overcome the threats arising from it. These include partnering with technology companies and academic institutions to advance cybersecurity research and develop innovative solutions to combat cyber threats. Modern European countries have begun to implement specific measures aimed at protecting critical infrastructure sectors such as energy, transport, healthcare and finance from cyber attacks. These programs include risk assessment, safety improvements and emergency planning.² In addition, conduct joint cyber exercises to simulate attacks on critical infrastructure and evaluate the effectiveness of response strategies. These exercises help identify gaps and improve coordination between public and private organizations. A comprehensive cyber defense strategy includes robust, collaborative public-private partnerships for cybersecurity and incident response and recovery mechanisms.

Also, in the field of hybrid warfare, intelligence and counterintelligence operations play one of the most important roles in identifying, understanding and neutralizing

² Katarina Kertysova, and Gabriella Cricius. "Countering Russia's Hybrid Threats in the Arctic." 2023y..
irtz J. James, "Cyber War and Strategic Culture: the Russian Integration of Cyber Power into Grand Strategy",2015.
Limnell, Jarno, S. Alatalu, I. Borogan, E. Chernenko, S. Herpig, O. Jonsson, X. Kurowska et al. "Russian cyber activities in the EU." 2018 y., p. 65-74.
Blank, Stephen. "Cyber war and information war a la russe." Understanding cyber conflict: Fourteen analogies 2017 y., p. 1-18.

multifaceted threats. These operations help reduce disinformation from Russia and ensure a consistent response to threats. It is characterized by the use of satellite and drone technologies for real-time monitoring and intelligence. These tools can track troop movements, identify covert operations, and monitor key infrastructure.³ As we know, what is difficult about this part of Russia's hybrid war is that the targets of its propaganda and disinformation campaigns are Ukrainian soldiers and the public. In particular, it spreads false narratives about military operations, casualties and political events. This psychological warfare aims to undermine morale and public support for Ukraine's military efforts.

Taking into account that nowadays social media plays a big role in the exchange of information to strengthen counterintelligence, it is advisable to carry out the necessary public awareness campaigns in a more active way, in order to help raise awareness among citizens about the tactics and dangers of disinformation. This includes workshops, seminars and conducting media literacy programs on a larger scale. In addition, it is possible to partner with civil society organizations present in European countries to disseminate accurate information against false narratives. These organizations can play an important role in various similar types of issues. In countries where the role of the media is very large, it is desirable to work closely with well-known media outlets to provide the public with critically important and verified accurate information, which in itself implies the provision of investigative journalism resources and their support.

When we talk about hybrid war, we should also mention economic and political measures aimed at weakening the capabilities of opponents, strengthening the resilience of political institutions, and fighting against Russian propaganda. This section examines the role of economic sanctions and policies, as well as the importance of strengthening political

³ Francesca Batzella, "Slowly but surely? Assessing EU actorness in energy sanctions against Russia." *Energy Policy* 192 2024 y., p. 114-233.

Media Ajir and Bethany Vaillant *Russian Information Warfare: Implications for Deterrence*.

Anton, Laura-Ştefania. "Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. EU's response to Russian disinformation and propaganda." *European Institute of Romania. Policy Briefs Series 13*, 2023 y..

institutions and the impact of public diplomacy and strategic communication.⁴ As the conflict escalates, Russia is also conducting political sabotage inside Ukraine, specifically supporting pro-Russian political parties and movements, which further complicates the course of the conflict. This includes funding and promoting separatist sentiment in regions such as Crimea and eastern Ukraine. At the same time, it is important for European countries to promote civic education to improve public understanding of democratic processes. Because informed and engaged citizens are less susceptible to manipulation. Public diplomacy and strategic communication are vital to countering adversarial propaganda and creating positive narratives.

As for military power, which represents one of the most insignificant parts of hybrid warfare, it is characterized by a tangible and coercive nature that still offers several advantages in international relations. Military interventions in particular often produce quick and visible results by putting direct pressure on adversaries and forcing them to change their behavior and comply with demands. Its use can decisively change the balance of power and achieve strategic goals in conflict situations. At the same time, the use of military force enables states to protect their territories, their citizens, and vital national interests from external threats and aggression. It acts as a deterrent against competitors and strengthens the country's security position in the international arena.

The events that took place between Ukraine and Russia in February 2014 also illustrate how military force can have a significant impact even today as one of the components of Russia's hybrid war on the overall processes. The damage inflicted by Russia turned out to be so fast and wide-scale for Ukraine that it was necessary for the latter to react as quickly as possible and implement a number of changes in this direction. Russia's hybrid war

⁴ Batzella, Francesca. "Slowly but surely? Assessing EU actorness in energy sanctions against Russia." *Energy Policy* 192, 2024 y., p.114-233.

Quaglia, Lucia, and Amy Verdun. "Weaponisation of finance: the role of European central banks and financial sanctions against Russia." *West European Politics* 46, no. 5 2023 y., p. 872-895.

Kuzio, Taras. *Ukraine and Russia: People, politics, propaganda and perspectives* 2015 y., p.103-116.

Anton, Laura-Ştefania. "Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. EU's response to Russian disinformation and propaganda." *European Institute of Romania. Policy Briefs Series* 13 2023 y..

strategy was aimed at destabilizing Ukraine, increasing Russian influence and disrupting the international order.⁵

In response to Russia's aggressive actions, NATO has significantly increased its military presence in Eastern Europe. NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) initiative involved the deployment of multinational battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. These troops, which were drawn from various NATO member states, served as a deterrent against further Russian incursions. NATO has also increased the scale and frequency of its military exercises in the region. Exercises such as "Trident Juncture" and "Defender-Europe" were designed to demonstrate the alliance's readiness and capabilities to protect its members. These exercises included large-scale troop movements and combined arms tactical maneuvers. The deployment of NATO forces and conducting large-scale exercises was a powerful deterrent to Russian aggression.⁶ The visible presence of NATO troops on the eastern flank reassured member states and demonstrated a strong commitment to collective defense. Enhanced forward and rapid deployment capabilities signaled to Russia that any aggression against NATO members would be met with a swift and decisive military response.

As for the state involved in the conflict itself, it should be noted that Ukraine has embarked on a series of defense reforms to modernize its armed forces. These reforms included restructuring command and control systems, strengthening logistics and supply chains, and improving the integration of the various military branches. Its goal was to create

⁵ Katri Pynnöniemi and Minna Jokela, "Perceptions of hybrid war in Russia: means, targets and objectives identified in the Russian debate." *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 33, no. 6, 2020 y., p. 828-845.

Mykhaylo Zabrodsky, Dr Jack Watling, Oleksandr V Danylyuk and Nick Reynolds, *Preliminary Lessons in Conventional Warfighting from Russian's Invasion of Ukraine: February- July 2022 y.*

Pynnöniemi, Katri, and Minna Jokela. "Perceptions of hybrid war in Russia: means, targets and objectives identified in the Russian debate." *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 33, no. 6, 2020 y., p. 828-845.

⁶ Rühle, Michael. "NATO's Response to hybrid threats." In *NATO*, p. 59. 2019 y..

Clark, Mason. *Russian hybrid warfare*. Washington, DC: Institute for the Study of War, 2020 y..

TREATY, NORTH ATLANTIC. "The NATO STO SAS-161 Research Task Group (RTG)–Military Aspects of Countering Hybrid Warfare: Experiences, Lessons, Best Practices Volume V: Military Implications."

Meissner, Katharina, and Chiara Graziani. "The transformation and design of EU restrictive measures against Russia." *Journal of European Integration* 45, no. 3, (2023 y., p.377-394.

a more flexible and capable force capable of responding to the hybrid threat posed by Russia.⁷ With the military aid and training provided to Ukraine, which continues today, its defense capabilities are significantly improved. Ongoing defense reforms and modernization efforts are increasing the overall effectiveness and resilience of the Ukrainian military, enabling it to better withstand and respond to hybrid threats. Ukrainian forces, bolstered by international support, have been able to achieve several operational successes against separatist forces in eastern Ukraine.

Conclusion

Overall, Russia's hybrid warfare strategy against Ukraine is designed to exploit the latter's vulnerabilities, disrupt its military operations, and create internal divisions. That is why Ukraine, with the great support of the West, is trying to respond to the challenges posed by Russia through various important elements of the hybrid war. It should also be noted that since the Russian hybrid war continues to develop, which makes the situation more complex, it is therefore important that the strategies to fight against it also adapt to it. The rapid advancement of technology and the increasing sophistication of adversaries mean that the innovation environment is an important issue in today's world. It is desirable to regularly update the military and cyber capabilities of European states, for the development of new technologies and methodologies against hybrid warfare. Also, in recent years, it is important to further promote cooperation between the public and private sectors to ensure a rapid and effective response to cyber incidents, so that Europe can better defend itself against the multifaceted cyber threats characteristic of hybrid warfare. In order to eliminate

⁷ Carl Bildt, William Hague, Karel Schwarzenberg, Radoslav Sikorski, Guido Westerwelle, "Ukraine's Slide," *The New York Times*, 05.03.2012,

Fridman, Lawrence. *Ukraine and the Art of Strategy*. Oxford University Press, 2019 y..

Clark, Mason. *Russian hybrid warfare*. Washington, DC: Institute for the Study of War, 2020 y..

TREATY, NORTH ATLANTIC. "The NATO STO SAS-161 Research Task Group (RTG)–Military Aspects of Countering Hybrid Warfare: Experiences, Lessons, Best Practices Volume V: Military Implications."

the propaganda and psychological element of hybrid warfare, it is desirable to implement more active targeted sanctions against specific individuals, organizations and sectors that participate in hybrid warfare. This can include asset freezes, travel bans and restrictions on business dealings. Moreover, it is possible to work with European and international allies to impose coordinated and highly active sanctions, to strengthen their influence and minimize Russian opportunities. By taking these measures frequently, European countries can strengthen their ability to respond to the multifaceted threats emanating from Russia. Along with this, strengthening of alliances and promotion of new partnerships for intelligence and information sharing should be emphasized. Moreover, it is important to preferably increase educational and awareness campaigns to build public resilience against misinformation and cyber threats. In order to strengthen internal forces, it is better to conduct more frequent joint and also internal operations and training exercises, in which both law enforcement and cyber security qualified employees from within the country and from other neighboring European states will participate. Through advanced technologies, enhanced intelligence gathering, robust disinformation campaigns, and fostering interagency cooperation both nationally and internationally, nations can build a comprehensive defense mechanism against the diverse threats posed by Russian hybrid warfare. Successes in the military sphere as a result of the changes on the part of Ukraine and the West include the recapture of key territories, the disruption of supply lines and the neutralization of covert operations. It is for this reason that it can be said that systematically having such capabilities and increasing their number can contribute to greater success of Ukrainian forces on the eastern front. The complex and dynamic nature of hybrid warfare requires a united and proactive European approach. The joint efforts of the military, intelligence, economic, political and international communities enable Western countries to effectively confront the threats coming from Russia in today's reality. By fostering cooperation, embracing innovation and maintaining constant vigilance, the European community can better defend against the

multifaceted challenges of Russian hybrid warfare, ensuring security and stability in an increasingly interconnected world.

Bibliography

- Anton, Laura-Ştefania. "Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. EU's response to Russian disinformation and propaganda." European Institute of Romania. Policy Briefs Series 13 (2023).
- Batzella, Francesca. "Slowly but surely? Assessing EU actorness in energy sanctions against Russia." *Energy Policy* 192 (2024): 114233.
- Blank, Stephen. "Cyber war and information war a la russe." *Understanding cyber conflict: Fourteen analogies* (2017): 1-18.
- Carl Bildt, William Hague, Karel Schwarzenberg, Radoslav Sikorski, Guido Westerwelle, "Ukraine's Slide," *The New York Times*, 05.03.2012,
- Chivvis, Christopher S. "Understanding Russian "Hybrid Warfare"." *Rand Corporation* 17 (2017).
- Clark, Mason. *Russian hybrid warfare*. Washington, DC: Institute for the Study of War, 2020.
- Crowther, G. Alexander. "NATO and hybrid warfare."
- Fridman, Lawrence. *Ukraine and the Art of Strategy*. Oxford University Press, 2019
- Galeotti, Mark. "Hybrid war" and "little green men": How it works, and how it doesn't." *Ukraine and Russia: People, politics, propaganda and perspectives* 156 (2015).
- Galkins, Kaspars. "NATO and Hybrid Conflict Unresolved Issues from the Past or Unresolvable Threats of the Present." PhD diss., Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School, 2012.

- Guerrero, Josías David Valle, and J. David. "Ukraine conflict: Hybrid warfare and conventional military intervention." *Security and Land Power Magazine* 1, no. 1 (2022): 1-8.
- Iancu, Niculae, Andrei Fortuna, and Cristian Barna, eds. *Countering hybrid threats: lessons learned from Ukraine*. Vol. 128. IOS Press, 2016.
- Kertysova, Katarina, and Gabriella Cricius. "Countering Russia's Hybrid Threats in the Arctic." (2023).
- Khorram-Manesh, Amir, Krzysztof Goniewicz, and Frederick M. Burkle. "Social and healthcare impacts of the russian-led hybrid war in Ukraine—a conflict with unique global consequences." *Disaster medicine and public health preparedness* 17 (2023): e432.
- Kuzio, Taras. "The origins of peace, non-violence, and conflict in Ukraine." *Ukraine and Russia: People, politics, propaganda and perspectives* (2015): 103-116.
- Ilin, Illia, and Olena Nihatova. "Exploring Russia's Postponed War Against Ukraine: A Corpus--Based Analysis of Strategic Studies Institutes' Publications from 1991 to 2014." *Central European Journal of International & Security Studies* 17, no. 4 (2023).
- Limnell, Jarno, S. Alatalu, I. Borogan, E. Chernenko, S. Herpig, O. Jonsson, X. Kurowska et al. "Russian cyber activities in the EU." *Hacks, leaks and disruptions: Russian cyber strategies* (2018): 65-74.
- Manko, Oleg, and Yurii Mikhieiev. "DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF 'HYBRID WARFARE' BASED ON ANALYSIS OF RUSSIA'S AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE." *Information & Security* 41 (2018): 11-20.
- Media Ajir and Bethany Vailliant *Russian Information Warfare: Implications for Deterrence Theory*,
https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-12_Issue-3/Ajir.pdf.

- Meissner, Katharina, and Chiara Graziani. "The transformation and design of EU restrictive measures against Russia." *Journal of European Integration* 45, no. 3 (2023): 377-394.
- Mykhaylo Zabrodsky, Dr Jack Watling, Oleksandr V Danylyuk and Nick Reynolds, Preliminary Lessons in Conventional Warfighting from Russian's Invasion of Ukraine: February- July 2022.
- Pynnöniemi, Katri, and Minna Jokela. "Perceptions of hybrid war in Russia: means, targets and objectives identified in the Russian debate." *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 33, no. 6 (2020): 828-845.
- Quaglia, Lucia, and Amy Verdun. "Weaponisation of finance: the role of European central banks and financial sanctions against Russia." *West European Politics* 46, no. 5 (2023): 872-895.
- Rühle, Michael. "NATO's Response to hybrid threats." In *NATO*, p. 59. 2019.
- Ștefănescu, Daniel. "NATO Strategy to defeat enemy forces in the Hybrid War." *INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE* (2015): 113.
- T. S. Allen and A. J. Moore, *Victory without Casualties: Russia's Information Operations*. [https://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/parameters/issues/Spring_2018/9_Allen_Victory WithoutCasualties.pdf](https://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/parameters/issues/Spring_2018/9_Allen_Victory_WithoutCasualties.pdf).
- TREATY, NORTH ATLANTIC. "The NATO STO SAS-161 Research Task Group (RTG)– Military Aspects of Countering Hybrid Warfare: Experiences, Lessons, Best Practices Volume V: Military Implications."
- Wirtz J. James, "Cyber War and Strategic Culture: the Russian Integration of Cyber Power into Grand Strategy", NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, Tallinn, 2015.

“Guardians of the Sky: Analyzing the Strategic Significance of Air Defense Systems in the Russia-Ukraine War”

Eter Bakhturidze

Student of Master’s Program in Defense Analysis of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Abstract

The ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, ignited by the invasion on February 24, 2022, has significantly reshaped the landscape of international security, particularly in Europe. This paper examines the crucial role of air defense in the Russian-Ukrainian war, emphasizing its tactical, operational, and strategic importance. The evolution of Ukraine's air defense systems, particularly following the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and subsequent Western support, has been instrumental in countering Russian aerial assaults. Key developments include the integration of advanced systems such as MANPADS, NASAMS, and Patriot missiles, which have bolstered Ukraine's defensive capabilities and protected both military and civilian infrastructures. The successful coordination of these air defense measures has not only limited Russian air superiority but has also maintained public morale and political stability within Ukraine. By analyzing specific engagements and statistical data, this paper illustrates how effective air defense operations are essential in modern warfare, underscoring their impact on the ongoing conflict and future European security dynamics.

Keywords: Air Defense. Russian-Ukrainian War. Battlefield Dynamics. Strategic Importance.

Introduction

After Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022, fundamental changes began in the international system. European security faced a new challenge. The war is still in its active phase and predicting it in advance is a difficult and complex issue, researchers and military experts are observing the ongoing processes on a daily basis and trying to assess it. Based on the past period and military clashes, it can be said that air defense plays one of the most important and decisive roles in the Russian-Ukrainian war. Air defense, by its very nature, is used at all levels of war, both tactical and operational and strategic. The development of technology and its use in war have further contributed to the advancement of air defense as a military component. The Ukrainian skyguards have a very important function: to prevent enemy aircraft from entering Ukrainian airspace, to prevent them from maneuvering and operating, and to respond in a timely manner. This paper will discuss the strategic importance of air defense in the Russian-Ukrainian war. Based on specific examples and statistical data, we should understand how important it is to have a strong and effective defense of airspace in the conditions of modern warfare.

As early as 2004, Ukraine started preparing for the anticipated confrontation. A 2014 study found that Ukraine possessed around 5,000 anti-aircraft-guided missiles for various air defense systems.¹ The Ukrainian military forces, particularly air defense systems, were significantly impacted by the Russian invasion of Crimea in 2014. Because the systems needed to be updated and modernized, Ukraine was not prepared for a major conflict at that time. Since the West started actively participating in the development of Ukrainian air defense equipment and strategy after 2014, it is possible to argue that this year marked a turning point in the history of air defense. Ukraine started to update its air defense plans and bring them into compliance with NATO requirements after 2014. Airspace protection has emerged as a top priority after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 since it

¹ Hlib Parfonov, The Jamestown Foundation. 06 20. Accessed 10 2024. <https://jamestown.org/program/the-state-of-ukrainian-air-defense-part-one/>

threatened both the military and the civilian populace. Because this would have involved NATO forces in the conflict, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy asked NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg to close the airspace at the start of the war. However, NATO denied his request and provided pertinent justifications for its decision.² NATO members have significantly strengthened Ukraine's air defense, even if an agreement on airspace restriction has not been reached. Initially, there was debate about which type of air defense systems should be provided to Ukraine. Small man-portable air-defense systems (MANPADS) were the first to be donated by nations. By the fall of 2022, medium-range GBAD systems, such as the Norwegian Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System (NASAMS), were sent; soon after, the decision was made to send long-range GBAD systems, such as the MIM-104 Patriot (the first arrived in Ukraine in Spring 2023).* (bronk o. z.)

It should be noted that the Western-supplied air defense system has significantly improved Ukraine's capabilities and made it more secure. At the initial stage, an important place was given to the Javelin and Cert systems, according to official information published by the Pentagon on February 24, 2022, Ukraine received more than 5,500 Javelin anti-tank missiles. At the initial stage, while Russia used reconnaissance and various types of operational equipment, unmanned aerial vehicles have a device for long-range devices. Another special role was played by the United States, which supplied Ukraine with "Stingers", which are considered one of the most effective weapons in portable anti-aircraft missile systems. The use of American Stingers turned out to be important in the fight against the Russian military forces. This type of specific missiles was aimed at long-range targets, which affected the air defense of Ukraine.³

The "air battles" of the first stage of the war, as analysts believe, were successfully completed by Ukraine as a result of a quick response and the involvement of partners. It

² bronk, Dag henrisken and Justin. n.d. THE AIR WAR IN UKRAINE THE FIRST YEAR OF CONFLICT . NEW YORK: Routledge.

³ Anastasia Doroshenko, Suspilne. 02 5. Accessed 10 05, 2024. <https://suspilne.media/donbas/672052-v-osnovnomu-po-pla-ale-buv-i-ka-52-robota-ekipazu-zenitno-raketnogo-kompleksu-strila-10-na-doneccini-reportaz/2024y..>

should be remembered that the implementation of air defense operations is a chain process, because in addition to equipment and weapons, intelligence, technical training of personnel, communications and enemy mistakes play a very important role in it. Given that Ukraine was receiving completely new equipment from Western partners, it was necessary to train technicians. This process took place very quickly. These factors created a complex environment that allowed Ukrainian air defense systems to achieve success against Russia. The success of Ukrainian air defense has become a revolutionary and progressive step.

Effective air defense has already been discussed as being extremely important, but in order to evaluate the effectiveness of weapons and the nation's success, it is also required to properly evaluate the enemy's capabilities. Since the first day of the conflict, the powerful Russian Air Force has been aggressively pressuring Ukrainian airspace. because Russia possesses both war-tested aircraft and skilled, professional pilots. Russian fighters have remained highly effective and lethal against Ukraine near the frontlines throughout the war, especially the Su-35S with the R-77-1 long-range missile and, in recent months, the Mig-31BM with the R-37 very long-range missile.⁴

Early Phases of the Conflict: Ukraine successfully targeted low-flying Russian helicopters in the first few weeks of the invasion with Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS), such as British Starstreak missiles and American-supplied Stinger missiles. Russian Mi-24 and Mi-8 helicopters were susceptible to MANPADS since they frequently flew at low altitudes to evade radar detection. According to reports, Ukrainian forces used these systems to shoot down several Mi-24s in the Kyiv and Kharkiv area in March 2022.

Air defense has not relaxed for a single moment in the war in Ukraine, and the latest data also shows this, as Ukraine is still managing to actively destroy or disable enemy aircraft.⁵

⁴ Justin Bronk with Nick Reynolds and Jack Watling . "The Russian Air War and Ukrainian Requirements for Air Defence." Royal United Services Institute, 2022y..

⁵ TRILL, MARIA. "Ukraine destroys Russian Mi-8 helicopter in Kharkiv Oblast." 10 11, 2024y..

Based on open sources, Due in major part to Ukraine's well-coordinated defense strategies and integration of missile systems given by the West, Russia is thought to have lost about 135 helicopters since the invasion began, including Mi-8 and Mi-24 variants.⁶

We discussed about weapons and emphasized the fact that air defense plays a very important role at the tactical level, but it is necessary to analyze how crucial air defense is at the strategic level of war. Keeping the Battlefield Balance and Refusing Russian Air Dominance is crucial. Ukraine has been able to counter Russian air dominance despite Russia's numerical air advantage thanks to its air defenses, which include S-300s, Buk M1s, and systems provided by the West like NASAMS. Ukraine restricts Russia's ability to carry out tactical air strikes, ground-attack missions, and close air support by making Russian aircraft fly at higher altitudes to avoid detection. Because of this restriction, Ukrainian force movements and locations are maintained, which makes it more difficult for Russia to effectively advance and hold territory.

New technologies have actually turned the methods of warfare upside down, as it has made it easier for the enemy to obtain information and maneuver through drones, while the casualties are lower. Whenever people talk about the Russia-Ukraine war, they mention unmanned aerial vehicles, which the enemy uses for reconnaissance or to carry out certain operations. For example, in September, Russia used more than 100 drones in various regions of Ukraine to attack and damage the country's energy systems.⁷ Such strikes are very harmful to Ukraine, as they pose a threat not only to military success, but also to the civilian population, therefore combating them is the main task of air defense. Ukraine's air defenses have adapted to counter this threat by utilizing radar-guided anti-aircraft systems like Germany's Gepard and laser-guided missiles, effectively neutralizing a substantial portion of drone threats. This approach not only protects infrastructure but also reduces the frequency of costly missile interceptions needed for these smaller, less destructive threats.

⁶ GRAPHIC NEWS. 10 2., 2024y.. <https://www.graphicnews.com/en/pages/45544/ukraine-russian-aircraft-losses>.

⁷ Anna Desmarais, "Ukraine war: How and why Russia is using 'almost undetectable' drones." 09 01. 2024y..

Last but not least, one of the most important is air defense systems, which actively support ground forces' development and combat capabilities in addition to protecting the air. Both radars and anti-aircraft missile systems are always in operation. Officers in charge of air defense maintain control over the airspace and stop enemy strikes on strategically significant targets. Robust air defenses not only physically shield the population and military but also serve as a powerful symbol of resilience. Successful interceptions boost public morale and affirm Ukraine's ability to protect its citizens, which, in turn, reinforces political stability and international support. The continuous reinforcement and effectiveness of Ukraine's air defenses reassure both domestic and international audiences of Ukraine's staying power, encouraging continued assistance and bolstering its position in diplomatic efforts.

As the war has evolved, air defense systems have emerged as a critical component in shaping the battlefield dynamics, enhancing Ukraine's military capabilities, and bolstering national resilience.

Through the integration of Western-supplied technologies and the rapid training of personnel, Ukraine has successfully countered Russia's formidable air force, demonstrated by the destruction of a substantial number of enemy aircraft, including helicopters. The ability to deny Russian air superiority has allowed Ukraine to protect vital military and civilian infrastructures, thus ensuring operational continuity and public morale.

In conclusion, the air defense capabilities of Ukraine represent a pivotal factor in its ongoing struggle for survival and independence. The effectiveness of these systems has not only thwarted immediate threats but has also contributed to a broader strategic balance in the region, underscoring the importance of international support and collaboration in addressing contemporary security challenges. As the war continues to unfold, the evolution and effectiveness of air defense will remain crucial in shaping the outcome of this conflict and the future of European security.

Bibliography

- bronk, Dag henrisken and Justin. n.d. *THE AIR WAR IN UKRAINE THE FIRST YEAR OF CONFLICT*. NEW YORK: Routledge.
- Desmarais, Anna. 2024. "Ukraine war: How and why Russia is using 'almost undetectable' drones." 09 01.
- Doroshenko, Anastasia. 2024. *Suspilne*. 02 5. Accessed 10 05, 2024.
<https://suspilne.media/donbas/672052-v-osnovnomu-po-bpla-ale-buv-i-ka-52-robot-a-ekipazu-zenitno-raketnogo-kompleksu-strila-10-na-doneccini-reportaz/>.
2024. *GRAPHIC NEWS*. 10 25. <https://www.graphicnews.com/en/pages/45544/ukraine-russian-aircraft-losses>.
- Justin Bronk with Nick Reynolds and Jack Watling . 2022. "The Russian Air War and Ukrainian Requirements for Air Defence." *Royal United Services Institute*.
- Parfonov, Hlib. 2024. *The Jamestown Foundation*. 06 20. Accessed 10 2024.
<https://jamestown.org/program/the-state-of-ukrainian-air-defense-part-one/>.
- TRILL, MARIA. 2024. "Ukraine destroys Russian Mi-8 helicopter in Kharkiv Oblast."

“Geopolitical Transformation as a Result of the Russia-Ukraine War and China’s Strategic Interests in the South Caucasus”

Tamar Khaduri

Student of Master’s Program in Defense Analysis of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Abstract

This article encompasses the wide-ranging geopolitical effects of the war between Russia and Ukraine in respect to the global position of shifting power dynamics and strategic interests for rising powers, namely China, over the South Caucasus. Aggressively stimulated hostilities between Russia and the West reached foundation-shaking dimensions reminiscent of pre-Cold War divisions and set a new scene for world trade, energy markets, and security structures. With Europe's quest to find alternatives to Russian energy, Azerbaijan and the other countries of the South Caucasus have become highly important, both in terms of resource provision and transport. China's strategic turn to the Middle Corridor-a route through the South Caucasus to Europe-emphasizes its ambition to increase its influence and access to European markets. Meanwhile, China's balanced approach to the region-with its alliance with Russia and its economic ties with the West-embodies a twin-track approach for advancing China's position in a multipolar world. The article concludes that the war in Ukraine has rewritten not only the immediate European security landscape but also regional and global alliances, while having lasting impacts on Eurasian trade and connectivity.

Keyword: geopolitical effects, power dynamics, hostilities, alternatives, balanced approach, a multipolar world, security landscape, regional and global alliances.

Introduction

The Russia-Ukraine war that has been raging on since 2014 with the occupation of Crimea, and broke into full scale in 2022 with Russian invasion, however has also created an interesting geopolitical turn, the influence of which goes beyond the immediate theatre of the war. This article investigates how this war has transformed the balance of power globally, particularly focusing on the South Caucasus region and China's interests in this area.

The clashes have aggravated already existing Russian-Western conflicts and therefore increased the geopolitical rift. Looking at the situation today, it has not only aggravated relations between Russia and Ukraine but has also shaken the very fundamentals of the world order as was the case before the cold war, which is a threat to trade, economic growth and progress of technology across the globe. Russia's choice to engage in Ukraine stems from a complicated interplay of factors, such as domestic political stability, geopolitical strategy, and the growth of its national defense sector. Through the lens of offensive realism, one could interpret Russia's maneuvers as efforts to uphold its sphere of influence and to avert the further encroachment of Western alliances, like NATO, into its historically significant territories. . This war has not only caused instability in Eastern Europe but has also strained relationships among major global powers, affected energy markets worldwide, and prompted a reassessment of security structures throughout Europe and other regions.

What Russia has done in Ukraine evoked united reactions from the West, building up military capacities in Eastern Europe under NATO umbrella as well Finland and Sweden becoming associate members (NATO 2024). That has helped synch up NATO, but it also contributed to pushing Russia into an adversarial relationship with the West and a new security situation on the continent. To address the Russian aggression, western states have imposed various sanctions targeting its economy, financial sector, and energy exports. For example Ten sets of sanctions against Russia and Belarus have been approved by the European Council since Russia's aggressive and unlawful invasion of Ukraine in February

2022 (European Council 2023). ¹This has disrupted energy markets globally, particularly in Europe, which had been significantly dependent on Russian natural gas. The ensuing energy crisis has accelerated Europe's transition to renewable energy and the search for alternative energy sources, including those from the South Caucasus.

The ramifications of the conflict stretch well beyond the immediate war zone. As an emerging power, China has been attentively observing the developments and is striving to establish itself as a crucial player in the South Caucasus region, which is strategically situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia.

The South Caucasus: A Strategic Region for China

Naturally, South Caucasus — home to Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia continues to be a vital region for major countries due to its energy resource transit role, strategic location, and importance as a buffer zone between Russia, Turkey, and Iran. With continuous global power shifts, the region's future will be formed by how it navigates various interests, making it increasingly important to Eurasia's overall stability and security. Geographical position of South Caucasus allows it to bypass Russian-controlled routes, making it an attractive alternative for energy exports. For example, Azerbaijan provides oil and gas to Europe, decreasing the region's reliance on Russian energy sources. Critical pipelines, including the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline and Southern Gas Corridor are geo-strategic to enhance European energy security.

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan, in particular, is rich in oil and gas resources and has become a key player in supplying energy to Europe as the continent seeks to reduce its reliance on Russian energy sources. Azerbaijan is becoming as a key player in the European energy market, especially as the region looks to minimize its dependency on Russian energy sources. Azerbaijan's plan

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/impact-sanctions-russian-economy/>

to double its gas exports to Europe by 2027 (Ali, n.d.)² emphasizes the strategic importance of its natural gas and oil exports, which have the potential to profoundly alter the energy dynamics between Europe and Russia. As of 2023, Azerbaijan exported roughly 12 billion cubic meters (bcm) of natural gas to the European Union (EU), representing a more than 45% increase from 8 bcm in 2021. (Diplomatic Courier, 2024) This increased trend shows Azerbaijan's strategic turn toward boosting European energy security, coinciding with the EU's efforts to diversify its energy sources in the wake of geopolitical concerns with Russia. Azerbaijan now supplies gas to eight countries: Georgia, Turkey, Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, and Serbia. In 2023, the country's total gas output was around 44 bcm, with exports of 22 bcm, representing a 9.5% increase over the previous year. This strong rise establishes Azerbaijan as a reliable alternative to Russian gas supplies (IEA, n.d.)

China has made significant investments in infrastructure projects in Azerbaijan, with an emphasis on energy corridors that enable the transportation of oil and gas. From 2000 to 2017, Azerbaijan received around \$581 million in Chinese development financing, largely for pipeline construction that serves both Azerbaijani and Chinese interests.

Azerbaijan and China's recent Joint Declaration demonstrates their commitment to improving connectivity through initiatives such as the Middle Corridor (Trans-Caspian International Trade Route). This alliance intends to strengthen Azerbaijan's position as a significant player in global supply chains while also giving China with access to European markets.

Georgia

Geopolitical context Navigating Georgia's foreign policy has generally been pro-Western, with goals of joining the EU and NATO. However, recent geopolitical upheavals have encouraged Tbilisi to look into tighter relationships with China as a counterbalance to

² <https://www.caspianpolicy.org/research/regional-south-caucasus/azerbaijan-strengthens-commitment-to-double-gas-exports-to-europe>

its complicated relationship with Russia. The prolonged Russian occupation of Georgian regions since 2008 has increased Tbilisi's security concerns, prompting it to seek new allies. As Georgia deepens its ties with China, it faces challenges in balancing its aspirations for Euro-Atlantic integration with its growing relationship with Beijing. Analysts express concerns that closer cooperation with China could jeopardize Georgia's EU accession ambitions (freiheit, n.d.).

China's interests in Georgia have been growing significantly in recent years, driven by strategic, economic, and geopolitical factors. **Formalizing Relations** In July 2023, China and Georgia elevated their relationship to a strategic partnership, marking a significant step in bilateral ties. This partnership emphasizes expanded cooperation in various sectors, including infrastructure, trade, and education. The agreement aligns with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which aims to enhance connectivity between Asia and Europe. (carnegieendowment, n.d.) Agreement emphasizes common interests in building the Middle Corridor, a critical transit route connecting Central Asia and Europe via Georgia. (Castillo, n.d.)³As Georgia navigates its foreign policy between the West and East, its relationship with China allows it to maintain a degree of autonomy while seeking economic benefits.

One of the most important projects being considered is the construction of the Anaklia deep-sea port on Georgia's Black Sea coast. This port is ideally positioned to facilitate trade between China and Europe and is viewed as critical to Georgia's role as a transit country in Eurasia. The engagement of Chinese corporations in this project demonstrates China's determination to enhance its influence in the region. (freiheit, n.d.)⁴

³ <https://www.caspianpolicy.org/research/south-caucasus/georgia-is-improving-relations-with-china-can-it-still-balance-with-europe>

⁴ <https://www.freiheit.org/south-caucasus/devil-details>

Armenia

Armenia is part of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEAU) led by Russia and has traditionally looked to Russia for both security and economic support. However by deepening ties, with China Armenia can branch out its connections. Reduce its reliance on Russia. This shift holds importance in light of the geopolitical landscape, in the region especially concerning Azerbaijan. In times, by the end of 2023 China has emerged as Armenias largest economic partner recording a trade turnover exceeding \$ 15 billion in the initial nine months of the year marking a 30 percent increase from the previous years figures. It is anticipated that by early 2024 this amount will reach approximately \$ 193 billion underscoring a consistent uptrend, in bilateral trade Armenia primarily exports minerals and agricultural goods to China while importing machinery electronics textiles and chemicals from the country (caucasuswatch., n.d.)⁵

Chinese firms are actively involved in infrastructure projects in Armenia, such as the North-South Highway that intends to increase communication between Iran and Georgia. Solar energy initiatives aim to increase Armenia's renewable energy capability. These initiatives not only benefit Armenia's infrastructure, but they also correspond with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which aims to improve connectivity across Eurasia.

Between Allies and Markets: China's Dual Approach Amid the Ukraine Crisis

The war in Ukraine has substantially altered China's geopolitical calculations, particularly in its connections with Russia and the West.

China has consistently opposed Western sanctions against Russia since the beginning of the Ukraine conflict. Official Chinese remarks emphasize a commitment to Russian sovereignty while denouncing unilateral sanctions implemented by the United States and its allies. In August 2024, China reiterated its objection to US sanctions against Chinese

⁵ <https://caucasuswatch.de/en/news/china-emerges-as-armenias-second-largest-trade-partner-with-15-billion-turnover.html>

enterprises purportedly related to Russia's war efforts, describing these steps as detrimental to world trade and supply networks (voanews 2024)⁶. China has stepped into the shoes of Europe when the latter was forced to shun Russian energy resources under western sanctions. In 2023, China imported nearly 107 million tons of crude oil from Russia which is 24 percent higher than its imports in 2022. IP finds the increasing look of Russians towards Asia for the energy resources as a global concern. However, they mention that the deepening of economic ties between the two countries is problematic. In 2023 there was an increase in China's dependence on Russia oil due to the ongoing conflict which has resulted in a steady rise in global energy prices. (eastasiaforum., n.d.)⁷

Energy and trade: Increased reliance on Russian resources.

Crisis as it is, Ukraine has triggered a sharp increase in the energy imports from Russia by China. With Western sanctions restricting Russia's access to European markets, China has become a major purchaser of Russian oil and gas. In 2023, China became Russia's main importer of crude, as for this year Russia has already exported 107 million tonnes which is up by 24% from 2022. (jamestown.org, n.d.)⁸ China's increasing share of imports from Russia does make it increasingly hostage to a Russian economy facing international strangulation. In addition, with the outset of the war this trend has strengthened: more and more transactions are made in yuan. The yuan has become more popular among traders on the Moscow Exchange, signaling a move away from traditional currencies like US dollar. (carnegieendowment.org, n.d.)⁹ This trend reflects China's strategic goal to deepen economic ties with Russia and at the same time lessen its exposure to Western banking centers.

⁶ <https://www.voanews.com/a/china-opposes-us-sanctions-on-firms-with-alleged-ties-to-russia-war-efforts/7756545.html>

⁷ <https://eastasiaforum.org/2022/04/18/the-russia-ukraine-crisis-is-bad-news-for-chinas-economy/>

⁸ <https://jamestown.org/program/china-enables-russias-war-of-aggression-against-ukraine/>

⁹ <https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/politika/2024/05/china-russia-yuan?lang=en>

The Fallout on China's Western Relations Beijing is already seeing the first signs of a confrontation by adopting strong stances against Russia during its campaign in Ukraine. The U.S. has cautioned Chinese banks against getting too involved with Russian companies, threatening to implement secondary sanctions in such cases. (gisreportsonline, n.d.) But it leaves Chinese firms in a tricky spot as they try to square the hazards of doing business with Russia alongside continued operations further west.

China well knows its economic dependence on Western markets and technologies, even if it is a rougher ride just now. It will manage rather than rupture relations with Western countries for the sake of its economic interests even as it openly backs Russia. (gisreportsonline, n.d.)¹⁰ China by maintaining economic ties with the West and simultaneously aiding Russia demonstrates such a twin strategy aimed at furthering its long-term geopolitical ambitions.

Updated Diplomatic Neutrality and Global Strategy

China, in theory at least supports a multipolar global order and actively participating within it — is totally consistent with its outlook that Russia remains eased out of the world stage. China is promoting an image for itself as a mediator that appeals to both, supporting Russia but not necessarily endorsing Moscow's policies (jamestown.org, n.d.)¹¹ China's official non-alignment continues, allowing the world to move toward less U.S. dominance and more linkages across global divisions without Chinese political officiousness of any kind helping or hindering a new order facilitating connectivity rather than war among disparate parts in permutation forming one. But to do so, it must balance its economic interests against this moral rebuke and also take into account the ideological nationalist bonds such as anti-Western imperialism that ties Moscow with New Delhi.

¹⁰ <https://www.gisreportsonline.com/r/china-russia-finance/>

¹¹ <https://jamestown.org/program/china-enables-russias-war-of-aggression-against-ukraine/>

In the background of hostilities in Ukraine, China demonstrated an essentially intricate attitude toward maintaining key economic links with both West and Russia as part of its strategic considerations. Navigating this tricky tightrope across an ideological chasm is not easy, at least for a China needing to compromise between its economic interests in Western markets and its alliance of convenience with Moscow. The changing dynamics will greatly shape China's ambitions in the world and its involvement in international affairs down the road.

Shifting Trade Dynamics: The Impact of the Ukraine War on China's Belt and Road Initiative and the Development of the Middle Corridor

China remains aware of its economic dependence on Western trade and technology. Since the Ukraine war began in February 2022, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has changed, with a noticeable shift toward alternative routes to retain connectivity with Europe. One significant change has been a shift from the Northern Corridor, which previously connected China to Europe via Central Asia and Russia, to the Middle Corridor, which runs through the South Caucasus.

The Middle Corridor, also known as the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR), connects China with Europe through Kazakhstan, the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey. It has been operational since 2017 and is a multimodal transportation network that incorporates rail and maritime lines. The corridor is about 2,000 kilometers shorter than the Northern Corridor and provides a more direct route for products transiting between Asia and Europe. The Ukraine war has made the Northern Corridor less viable as a result of Western sanctions on Russia and subsequent counter-sanctions. As a result, there has been a substantial shift toward improving the Middle Corridor. Cargo traffic along this route surged dramatically in 2022, with quantities exceeding 1.5 million tons, a 2.5-fold increase over prior years. This corridor's appeal has grown as countries seek alternatives to Russian channels for shipping products.

In June 2023, Kazakhstan, Georgia, and Azerbaijan inked an agreement to reduce operational delays and streamline tariff processes along the Middle Corridor. This agreement is expected to improve efficiency and speed up cargo movement along the route, This project seeks to alleviate issues arising from conflicting norms and standards, which have historically hampered trade along the corridor. According to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, building the Middle Corridor will cost between \$19 billion and \$21 billion to handle existing infrastructure constraints and boost capacity. (OECD, 2024) ¹²

Despite its potential, numerous obstacles still exist in fully achieving the Middle Corridor's capabilities, current capacity along the Middle Corridor is less than 5% of that of the Northern Corridor. (Meray Ozat, n.d.)To become competitive, the route needs overcome logistical restrictions such as limited port capacity and infrastructure. Despite its potential, numerous obstacles still exist in fully achieving the Middle Corridor's capabilities. Improving both physical infrastructure (ports, trains) and soft infrastructure (customs rules, unified standards) is critical to optimizing Middle Corridor operations. Recent efforts have begun to close these gaps, but regional governments must remain committed.

The future development of the Middle Corridor holds tremendous promise, through its Global Gateway plan, the European Union has set aside almost €10 billion to upgrade Middle Corridor infrastructure. Europe's strategic interest in improving connection with Central Asia and lowering dependency on Russian routes is demonstrated by this expenditure. (Rizzi, n.d.)¹³ More Trade Possibilities: Trade prospects will increase both inside Central Asia and between Asia and Europe as nations along the corridor cooperate to enhance logistics and expedite procedures. More economic integration between these countries may result from this. Goeconomic Influence: If the Middle Corridor is developed successfully, participant nations may be positioned as important actors in the dynamics of

¹² The Context: Growing interest in the Middle Corridor

¹³ <https://ecfr.eu/article/risk-and-reward-why-the-eu-should-develop-the-middle-corridor-trade-route/>

regional commerce. These countries hope to gain substantial geoeconomic power by offering a different path for goods to transit between Asia and Europe.

Conclusion

analyzing the impact of the Russia–Ukraine war that responds directly to the title of this section is that the conflict has far-reaching implications for the world order and is not limited to the geographic area of Eastern Europe. This conflict does not only redraw the political relations between Russia on the one hand and the western states on the other but also trigger strategic reorientations of the emergent powers such as China which on the one hand has a strategic partnership with Russia but on the other hand has extensive economic cooperation with the West. The Western sanctions for Russia has been further helping China enhance its presence in the South Caucasus region through BRI shifting focus from North corridor to the Middle Corridor which acts as a strategic connect between Asia and Europe. Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia have becoming more critical in their intermediary roles of the Middle Corridor since China shifted BRI investments to this line of development. This has made this route even more relevant for Europe to diversify from the Russian energy sources and Azerbaijan has stepped up to the special occasion by becoming one of the suppliers. By investing in infrastructure projects and seeking partners in the region, China has increased its profile to ensure its economic concerns and to diversify its transit from northern Russian-controlled Arctic routes. It is seen, that due to China's increasing interest in the South Caucasus, it desires to become a global power and contribute to the creation of a multipolar world. This shift underscores China's complex balancing act: to provide support to Russia and at the same time keep access to the European and North American markets. Gradually changing the layout of cooperation in the Middle Corridor, China will enhance the focus on the South Caucasus states in the further evolution of Eurasian trade and diplomatic relations geography. The shifts in relations around the BRI,

the Middle Corridor and China's strategic objective show how the Ukraine conflict impacts international relations and global connection outside the current conflict area.

Bibliography

- European Council*. (2023, October 12). Retrieved October 20, 2024, from <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/impact-sanctions-russian-economy/>
- NATO*. (2024, October 03). Retrieved October 20, 2024, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49594.htm
- Ali, T. (n.d.). *Caspian Policy Center*. Retrieved October 21, 2024, from <https://www.caspianpolicy.org/research/regional-south-caucasus/azerbaijan-strengthens-commitment-to-double-gas-exports-to-europe>
- Diplomatic Courier*. (2024, June 13). Retrieved October 21, 2024, from <https://www.diplomaticcourier.com/posts/azerbaijan-benefits-from-eu-russia-energy-decoupling>
- IEA*. (n.d.). Retrieved October 21, 2024, from <https://www.iea.org/reports/azerbaijan-energy-profile/overview>
- Castillo, N. (n.d.). *CPC*. Retrieved October 21, 2024, from <https://www.caspianpolicy.org/research/south-caucasus/georgia-is-improving-relations-with-china-can-it-still-balance-with-europe>
- Carnegie Endowment*. (n.d.). Retrieved October 21, 2024, from <https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/politika/2023/08/whats-behind-chinas-strategic-partnership-with-georgia?lang=en>
- Freiheit*. (n.d.). Retrieved October 21, 2024, from <https://www.freiheit.org/south-caucasus/devil-details>

caucasuswatch. (n.d.). Retrieved october 19, 2024, from
<https://caucasuswatch.de/en/news/china-emerges-as-armenias-second-largest-trade-partner-with-15-billion-turnover.html>

voanews. (2024, august 25). Retrieved october 21, 2024, from
<https://www.voanews.com/a/china-opposes-us-sanctions-on-firms-with-alleged-ties-to-russia-war-efforts/7756545.html>

eastasiaforum. (n.d.). Retrieved october 21, 2024, from
<https://eastasiaforum.org/2022/04/18/the-russia-ukraine-crisis-is-bad-news-for-chinas-economy/>

carnegieendowment.org. (n.d.). Retrieved october 19, 2024, from
<https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/politika/2024/05/china-russia-yuan?lang=en>

OECD. (2024). The Context: Growing interest in the Middle Corridor. *OECD*.

Meray Ozat, H. N. (n.d.). *caspianpolicy*. Retrieved october 20, 2024, from
<https://www.caspianpolicy.org/research/energy-and-economy-program-eeep/the-middle-corridor-the-beginning-of-the-end-for-russias-northern-corridor>

Rizzi, A. (n.d.). *ecfr.eu*. Retrieved october 21, 2024, from <https://ecfr.eu/article/risk-and-reward-why-the-eu-should-develop-the-middle-corridor-trade-route/>

gisreportsonline. (n.d.). Retrieved october 20, 2024, from
<https://www.gisreportsonline.com/r/china-russia-finance/>

jamestown.org. (n.d.). Retrieved october 21, 2024, from
<https://jamestown.org/program/china-enables-russias-war-of-aggression-against-ukraine/>

„Make Europe Great Again“ What does the Hungarian Presidency of the EU Council stand for?

Dorota Zembik

Student of Master's Program in War Studies University

Supervisor: PhD, Assoc. Professor **Iłona Urych**

Abstract

The aim of this article is to present the essence of the presidency of the Member States in the Council of the European Union and to show the priorities set by the Hungarian government for its presidency, which runs from 1 July to 31 December 2024. What is hidden in the slogan invented by Budapest: *Make Europe Great Again*? This article aims to identify the intentions of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, who is seen as a controversial figure through European structures, and to analyse his attitude in terms of leadership. How does he perform as a person leading the state? The article attempts to explain Hungary's convoluted relationship with the European Union and the actions taken by the country, which have an impact on the ongoing war in Ukraine since 2022. The problems Hungary faces, including accusations of rule of law violations and criticism for its pro-Russian position in the context of the Ukrainian conflict, will affect its ability to shape EU policy in line with its vision. Hungary's presidency may therefore not only be an attempt to realise its own agenda, but also a test of the endurance of unity in a European Union whose future will face many challenges. What is the Hungarian Prime Minister trying to achieve with his behaviour, and how does he want to become a decision-maker with significant influence in Europe and beyond? What does it give Hungary to maintain a Eurosceptic approach by the country's ruling party and close relations with the president of the Russian Federation or the People's Republic of China? The article also attempts to analyse the direction of the future of the European Union, where we are currently experiencing growing Euroscepticism and nationalist sentiment. The article uses an analysis of available literature and internet sources and a synthesis of gained knowledge.

Keywords: Hungary, Europe, Council of the EU, Euroscepticism, challenges, presidency.

Introduction

Under the slogan '*Make Europe Great Again*', the Hungarian presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2024 hides a complex vision of Europe that places the sovereignty of nation states at the centre and rejects further European integration in favour of greater autonomy for Member States. Hungary, led by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, seeks to redefine the role of the European Union, promoting a model of Europe centred on conservative values that are often at variance with the liberal ideas that dominate the Union. Viktor Orbán, known for his nationalist and Eurosceptic views, questions the centralisation of power and the EU's migration policy, arguing that strengthening national identity is crucial for the future of the continent. In this context, Hungarian presidency is a period of intense discussion on the direction Europe should take, especially in the face of the challenges of the war in Ukraine, the migration crisis and structural reforms.¹ The aim of this article is to present the essence of the presidency of the Member States in the Council of the European Union and to show the priorities set by the Hungarian government for its presidency. The paper attempts to explain Hungary's convoluted relationship with the European Union and the actions taken by the country, which have an impact on the ongoing war in Ukraine since 2022. It also tries to analyse the direction of the future of the European Union, where we are currently experiencing growing Euroscepticism and nationalist sentiment. Thus, the content of the article responds to the following research problems:

- What is the Council of the European Union and what is the presidency of the Member States about?
- What priorities Hungary has set for its presidency of the Council of the European Union?
- What leadership features and behaviour are presented by Viktor Orbán?

¹Posłowie: Węgierski rząd zagraża wartościom, instytucjom i funduszom <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/pl/press-room/20240112IPR16780/poslowie-wegierski-rzad-zagraza-wartosciom-instytucjom-i-funduszom-ue> (access: 21.08.2024)

- What is the relations between the government in Budapest and the European Union?
- Why is there growing Euroscepticism and nationalist sentiment in Europe – what will the future of the European Union look like?

The article uses an analysis of available literature and internet sources and a synthesis of gained knowledge.

Main Part

1. WHAT IS THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND WHAT IS THE PRESIDENCY OF THE MEMBER STATES ABOUT?

The European Union is characterized as a political and economic organization that has a legal personality. Generally speaking, it means that EU has the capacity to establish and sign international agreements, treaties or negotiate.² EU consists of 27 European countries, which include: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.³ Until 2020 Great Britain was also a member, but with Brexit it left the organization.⁴ The Union is divided into several bodies. Among others, we can distinguish: European Council, Council of the European Union, European Parliament, European Commission, Court of Justice of the EU, European Central Bank, European Court of Auditors.⁵ Each plays an important role in functioning of the European

² The European Union. What it is and what it does, <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/com/eu-what-it-is/en/index.html> (access: 02.08.2024).

³ EU countries, https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/eu-countries_en?page=1 (access: 02.08.2024).

⁴ The EU-UK withdrawal agreement, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-relations-with-the-united-kingdom/the-eu-uk-withdrawal-agreement/> (access: 02.08.2024)

⁵ Search all EU institutions and bodies, https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/institutions-and-bodies/search-all-eu-institutions-and-bodies_en?f%5B0%5D=oe_organisation_eu_type%3Ahttp%3A//publications.europa.eu/resource/authority/corporate-body-classification/EU_INST (access: 13.08.2024).

Union.

The Council of the European Union, often known simply as the EU Council, is one of the main institutions of the European Union. It plays a key role in the community's decision-making process. As opposed to the European Council, which brings together the leaders of the Member States,⁶ the Council of the EU is the body where national government ministers meet to discuss, negotiate and make decisions on a broad range of EU policies. The institution is an important branch of European governance, combining the national sovereignty of Member States with supranational cooperation mechanisms.⁷ The Council of the EU is also the place where Member States can influence the direction of EU policy, trying to balance national interests with the overall objectives of the European Union. It should be remembered that it must not be confused with the European Council or the Council of Europe, which is not an EU entity.⁸



Figure 1 The logo of the Council of the European Union

Source: Council of the European Union, https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/institutions-and-bodies/search-all-eu-institutions-and-bodies/council-european-union_en (access: 13.08.2024).

The Council of the EU works on the basis of the presidency of the Member States. The presidency of the Council of the EU is a crucial role for the stability and functioning of Europe. More importantly, the presidency is held not by a single individual,

⁶ European Council, https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/institutions-and-bodies/search-all-eu-institutions-and-bodies/european-council_en (access: 13.08.2024).

⁷ Council of the European Union, https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/institutions-and-bodies/search-all-eu-institutions-and-bodies/council-european-union_en (access: 13.08.2024).

⁸ Ibid.

but by an entire country. The system of rotating presidencies goes back to the early days of European integration. The role puts each of the 27 Member States at the political center for a period of six months, during which it helps to ensure the efficient running of much of the EU.⁹

Member States that hold the presidency in sequence work closely together in groups of three. This system was introduced in 2009 by the Lisbon Treaty.¹⁰ Each of the three establishes long-term objectives and prepares a joint programme of topics and issues to be dealt with by the Council for 18 months. On the basis of this programme, each of the three develops its own more detailed six-month programme. The current group (as of August 13, 2024.) consists of Spain, Belgium and Hungary.

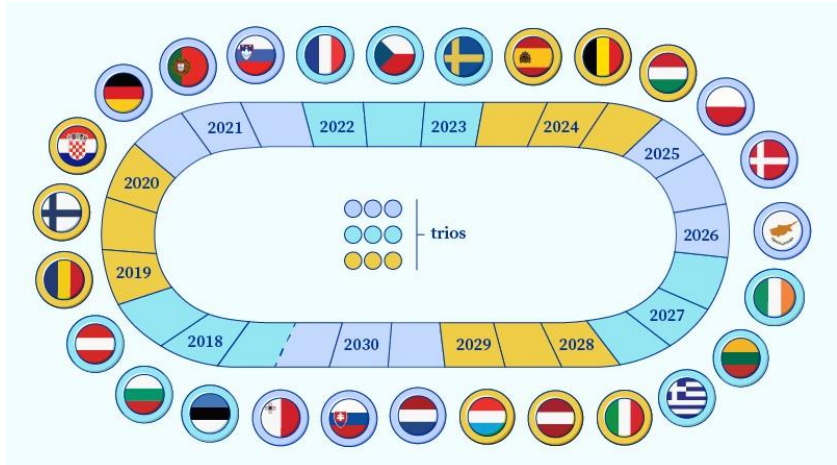


Figure 2 Rotating Presidencies of the Council of the European Union

Source: *What does holding the presidency of the Council of the EU mean?*, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/pl/presidency-council-eu/> (access: 13.08.2024)

2. THE HUNGARIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

From 1 July to 31 of December 2024, Hungary holds the presidency of the Council of the European Union. The government in Budapest has set itself a seven topics that are

⁹ What does holding the presidency of the Council of the EU mean?, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/pl/presidency-council-eu/> (access: 13.08.2024).

¹⁰ Ibid.

priorities for its presidency. Mainly focus on:

- Increasing the competitiveness of the EU
- Strengthening the EU's defence policy
- Consistent and substantive enlargement policy
- Stopping illegal migration
- Shaping the future cohesion policy
- Promote a farmer – centered EU agricultural policy
- Facing up to demographic challenges.¹¹

Looking at the above points, it can be seen that Hungary is focusing on strengthening the EU's competitiveness in the face of global economic challenges. An important element of their policy is to support the Western Balkan countries and other membership candidates that meet the required criteria to join the Community. Hungary emphasises family policy as a key element in solving the problems of a declining population, instead of relying on migration. Importantly, it should be added that the Hungarian Presidency comes at a difficult time for the EU, when the continent is struggling with various crises, making the efficient implementation of these priorities crucial for the future of the Union.¹²



Figure 3 Hungarian Presidency logo

Source: Presentation of the logo of the Hungarian presidency of the Council of the European Union, <https://hungarian-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/en/news/presentation-of-the-logo-of-the-hungarian-presidency-of-the-council-of-the-european-union/> (access: 18.08.2024).

¹¹ Priorities of the Hungarian presidency, <https://hungarianpresidency.consilium.europa.eu/en/programme/priorities/> (access: 14.08.2024).

¹² AmCham Policy Forum: The Key Priorities of the Hungarian EU Presidency, <https://www.amcham.hu/media/amcham-news/amcham-policy-forum-key-priorities-hungarian-eu-presidency> (access: 18.08.2024).

Hungary has chosen the slogan for its Presidency of the Council of the European Union which sounds: '*Make Europe Great Again*'. Why is it controversial in the EU environment? As commentators point out, it makes a direct connection to Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign.¹³ Trump used this slogan to convey the idea of restoring the United States to its former power and relevance, particularly in an economic, political and military context. The slogan '*Make America Great Again*' has become very recognisable as a symbol of Trump's campaign and populist movement, which has been very successful in mobilising voters.¹⁴ Just as Trump used the slogan to criticise globalisation, political elites and government institutions, the Hungarian slogan can be used by populist European politicians in a similar context. It can express opposition to the current structures of the European Union, its bureaucracy and globalist trends, calling for a return to more sovereign, national interests.¹⁵ Moreover, the reference to Trump may also be a deliberate provocation intended to trigger strong reactions, both positive and negative. In Europe, where Trump's policies have often been criticised, the use of this slogan can be seen as controversial and attract media and public attention.¹⁶

'*Make Europe Great Again*' is interpreted ambiguously. It can be seen as a reference to a nostalgic period when Europe was a dominant power, both economically, politically and culturally. The slogan can also express criticism of the current situation in the European Union, pointing to its internal problems, such as: political divisions between Member States (e.g. on migration) a lack of unity in the face of global challenges (such as the crisis in Ukraine) and a decline in the EU's influence on the international stage, where Europe can be seen as a less significant player compared

¹³ Program prezydencji Węgier w Radzie Unii Europejskiej, <https://ies.lublin.pl/komentarze/kies-1154/> (access: 18.08.2024).

¹⁴ MAGA movement, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/MAGA-movement> (access: 18.08.2024).

¹⁵ Hungary takes over rotating EU presidency, <https://www.dw.com/en/hungary-takes-over-rotating-eu-presidency/video-69543141> (access: 18.08.2024).

¹⁶ Make Europe Great Again!: Hungary set for EU presidency, <https://www.dw.com/en/make-europe-great-again-hungary-gears-up-for-eu-presidency/a-69429630> (access: 18.08.2024).

to the US or China.^{17,18}

3. ANALYSIS OF VIKTOR ORBÁN'S LEADERSHIP ATTITUDE

Leadership. What exactly is it? There are many definitions, as well as interpretations of the subject. Leadership is the process of influence/ inspiring people to achieve common goals and objectives. It is not just a formal role or position, but rather the ability to inspire, motivate and lead a team in a way that promotes effective collaboration and goal achievement. It is also important to remember about the leader's role in building trust and motivation within the group. Leadership is a dynamic process that requires the leader to be flexible and able to adapt to the changing needs of the team and circumstances.¹⁹

Prime Minister of Hungary, is a figure whose leadership style is causing much controversy and debate, both in his own country and internationally. Viktor Orbán is often criticised for authoritarian tendencies in his governing style and is accused of weakening democracy in Hungary.²⁰ He is also known for promoting nationalism and national sovereignty. His policies often emphasise the need to protect Hungarian interests from external influences, particularly from the European Union. He often appeals to populist narratives, using public fears and anxieties related to migration, globalisation and economic change. His anti-immigration policies, especially during the 2015 migration crisis, have earned him a lot of domestic support, but also criticism from European

¹⁷ 'Make Europe Great Again': Hungary's new motto for EU presidency has a familiar ring to it, <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/06/18/europe/hungary-make-europe-great-again-motto-intl-latam/index.html> (access: 18.08.2024).

¹⁸ "Make Europe great again" Hungary steals motto from Trump for its six-month EU presidency, <https://www.eunews.it/en/2024/06/18/make-europe-great-again-hungary-steals-motto-from-trump-for-its-six-month-eu-presidency/> (access: 18.08.2024).

¹⁹ I. Urych, *The Need for Leadership in Team Work. Prolegomenon, Person, Nation, State, Interdisciplinary Research in Security Studies*, Akademia Sztuki Wojennej, Warsaw 2021, p. 101-114. ²⁰ Viktor Orbán, Hungary's authoritarian leader and key Putin ally, calls Zelensky an 'opponent' after winning reelection, <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/04/03/europe/hungary-election-results-viktor-orban-intl/index.html> (access: 18.08.2024).

²⁰ Viktor Orbán, Hungary's authoritarian leader and key Putin ally, calls Zelensky an 'opponent' after winning reelection, <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/04/03/europe/hungary-election-results-viktor-orban-intl/index.html> (access: 18.08.2024).

institutions and international organisations.²¹ Despite the controversy, Orbán remains one of the most influential politicians in Europe. Internationally, Viktor Orbán is seen as the leader of a Eurosceptic movement that opposes the federalisation of the EU and promotes the 'Europe of nations' model. His leadership often leads to tensions with other EU leaders, particularly in the context of migration policy and the rule of law.²²

The Hungarian Prime Minister was also strongly criticised by European Union Member States for his visit to Moscow on 5 July 2024. European Council President Charles Michel stated that: '*the rotating EU presidency, which Hungary currently holds, has no mandate to engage with Russia on behalf of the EU.*'²³ More importantly, before this event, the Hungarian Prime Minister had visited Kyiv a few days earlier to talk to President Zelenski. Meanwhile, after his meeting with Putin, he travelled to the People's Republic of China to meet with China's President Xi Jinping.²⁴ Therefore, what is the aim of such actions taken by the Hungarian Prime Minister?

4. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT IN BUDAPEST AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

It would not be surprising about the Hungarian presidency of the Council of the European Union took its turn. However, it has been highly controversial mainly due to the attitude of the government in Budapest towards the war in Ukraine, as well as the pro-EU aspirations of the Ukrainian authorities. Hungary is also the first country in history to head the Council of the European Union subject to the Rule of Law procedure under Article 7. In a resolution adopted in June 2023, the European Parliament stated its '*grave concern at*

²¹ Viktor Orbán's most controversial migration comments, <https://www.dw.com/en/viktor-orban-s-most-controversial-migration-comments/g-42086054> (access: 18.08.2024)

²² Occupy Brussels! Viktor Orbán's plan for Europe, <https://www.politico.eu/article/viktor-orban-plan-europe-hungary-council-presidency-election/> (access: 18.08.2024).

²³ "Jeśli naprawdę szukasz pokoju, nie podajesz dłoni krwawemu dyktatorowi". Echa wizyty Orbana w Moskwie, <https://tvn24.pl/swiat/viktor-orban-w-rosji-spotkal-sie-z-putinem-komentarze-europejskich-politykow-st7991620> (access: 18.08.2024).

²⁴ Orbán arrives in China after Putin meeting, <https://www.politico.eu/article/viktor-orban-arrive-china-vladimir-putin-meeting/> (access: 18.08.2024).

*developments in Hungary in the light of the upcoming Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the EU (the text was adopted with 442 votes in favour, 144 against and 33 abstentions), stressing the important role of the Council Presidency, which contributes to legislative progress, ensures continuity of the EU agenda and represents the Council in its relations with the other institutions’.*²⁵

It can be concluded that a kind of conflict between Hungary and the European Union comes from deep differences over democratic values, migration policy and the management of EU funds. There are mutual accusations and tensions over both the internal issues and international politics. Hungary, for example, accuses the EU of interfering with national sovereignty and criticises the alleged use of different standards in the assessment of Member States, where the EU reportedly ignores problems in other countries while focusing on Hungary, and selectivity in the application of rules. The government in Budapest claims that the EU selectively applies its rules and procedures to punish Hungary for political decisions, while other countries are treated more gently.²⁶ Moreover, according to Hungary, the EU is often perceived as too bureaucratic and inefficient, which does not benefit citizens. Hungary also blames non-transparency and improper management of EU funds.²⁷ The EU is accused of failing to manage migration crises effectively and not putting in place sufficient measures to protect borders and ensure the security of Member States. The Hungarian Prime Minister considers that the EU's migration policy favours countries that take in large numbers of refugees, so that those with a stricter approach to immigration are punished.²⁸ The European Union, meanwhile, accuses Hungary of violating fundamental values such as democratic values and

²⁵ Węgry ogłosiły priorytety, logo i hasło swojej prezydencji w Radzie Unii Europejskiej, <https://kurier.plus/node/5272> (access: 19.08.2024).

²⁶ Węgry: Komisja Europejska stosuje w sprawie Polski podwójne standardy, <https://polskieradio24.pl/artykul/1836360,Wegry-Komisja-Europejska-stosuje-w-sprawie-Polski-podwojne-standardy> (access: 19.08.2024).

²⁷ Europarlament ostrzega von der Leyen w sprawie Węgier, <https://www.dw.com/pl/europarlament-ostzega-von-der-leyen-w-sprawie-w%C4%99gier/a-68024003> (access: 19.08.2024).

²⁸ Hungary's Viktor Orban to defy EU over immigration law, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-59748173> (access: 19.08.2024).

human rights. What is more, the Hungarian government is blamed of corruption and nepotism.²⁹

Hungary has a special position towards the war in Ukraine, which is different from most European Union countries. Under Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, Hungary is trying to balance its loyalty to the EU with close relations with Russia. Orbán's government has frequently opposed sanctions against Russia, arguing that they hit Europe's economy more than Russia's. The Hungarian Prime Minister is concerned about the negative impact of sanctions on the Hungarian economy, especially in terms of energy supply, where Hungary is heavily dependent on Russian gas.³⁰ Hungary refuses to provide direct military aid to Ukraine and blocks the transit of weapons through its territory.³¹ Orbán argues that Hungary should avoid direct involvement in the conflict to protect its own national security. His position is seen as too pro-Russian by many EU members. Hungary has close relations with Russia, which further complicates its position on the war. Viktor Orbán has a long-standing relationship with Vladimir Putin and seeks to maintain these ties, despite tensions in relations with the EU. Hungary's position is causing frustration among other EU and NATO members, who believe that solidarity and a joint response are crucial in the face of Russian aggression. Hungarian policy is often criticised for undermining the unity of the Union in its response to the crisis.³²

5. RISING EUROSCEPTICISM AND NATIONALIST SENTIMENT IN EUROPE - THE FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION?

In the past few years, especially after the outbreak of the full-scale war in Ukraine,

²⁹ Viktor Orban: Hungary 'autocracy' verdict from EU correct, say activists, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-62925460> (access: 19.08.2024).

³⁰ Hungary cannot support any new EU energy sanctions against Russia – govt, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/hungary-cannot-support-any-new-eu-energy-sanctions-against-russia-govt-2022-09-29/> (access: 19.08.2024).

³¹ Hungary blocks EU leaders' statement pledging support for Ukraine, <https://www.politico.eu/article/hungary-blocks-eu-leaders-statement-pledging-support-for-ukraine/> (access: 19.08.2024).

³² Hungary's Orban urges ceasefire on Kyiv visit, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c3gvrzwpw54o> (access: 19.08.2024).

there has been increasing Euroscepticism and growing nationalist sentiment in Europe. Euroscepticism in Europe is a reluctant attitude towards European integration.³³ It is expressed mainly in criticism of the EU's bureaucracy, its migration, regulatory and financial policies. There is also a noticeable nationalist sentiments that focus on the protection of national identity, culture and traditions strengthen Euroscepticism.³⁴ In many EU countries, nationalism has gained popularity as a response to globalisation, migration and EU integration policies that are seen as threatening national sovereignty. Movements such as Brexit in the United Kingdom are an example of the growing nationalism that has led to withdrawal from the Union.³⁵

These trends, driven by a variety of political, social and economic factors, could lead to further fragmentation in Europe and affect the sustainability of the Union itself. The rise of Euroscepticism and nationalism could affect the future of the EU in several crucial aspects. first of all, it is a weakening of integration. If more countries follow the UK's example and decide to leave the Union, European integration could be severely hampered.³⁶ Nationalist and Eurosceptic parties in the EU (among others, such as the Italian League, France's National Unity, Freedom Party of Austria, or Hungary's Fidesz) may interfere with cooperation between Member States, especially on issues such as foreign policy, security and the economy.³⁷ Moreover, under pressure from Eurosceptic governments, the EU may be forced to reform its institutions and policies, which could lead to the decentralisation of power.³⁸

³³ Eurosceptycyzm, <https://sjp.pwn.pl/slowniki/eurosceptycyzm> (access: 21.08.2024).

³⁴ Nacjonalizm, <https://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo/3945094/nacjonalizm.html> (access: 21.08.2024).

³⁵ O brexicie zdecydował angielski nacjonalizm, <https://www.newsweek.pl/swiat/spoleczenstwo/o-brexicie-zdecydowal-angielski-nacjonalizm/47hvckf> (access: 21.08.2024).

³⁶ Rising Euroscepticism in Europe: An Assessment, https://www.icwa.in/show_content.php?lang=1&level=3&ls_id=2495&lid=1872 (access: 21.08.2024).

³⁷ Wyniki eurosceptyków i populistów w krajach Unii, <https://tvn24.pl/swiat/podzial-mandatow-do-pe-w-europie-wyniki-eurosceptykov-i-populistow-w-krajach-unii-europejskiej-ra939303-ls2310727> (access: 21.08.2024).

³⁸ A. Pleśniarska, Integracja europejska w obliczu eurosceptycyzmu, *Zeszyty Naukowe nr 6(996), Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Krakowie 2017*, p. 29-42.

Conclusion

Under the slogan ‘*Make Europe Great Again*’ is the ambition of the Hungarian presidency of the EU Council, which combines a Eurosceptic approach with an attempt to increase its influence on the international stage. Hungary, under Viktor Orbán rule, seeks to promote national sovereignty and resistance to the centralisation of EU power, which is reflected in its stance towards EU policies, including opposition to sanctions against Russia or support for Ukraine.³⁹ Hungary has taken an extremely cautious and different stance towards the war in Ukraine, influenced by its historical, political and economic connections with Russia. Although Hungary formally condemns Russian aggression and has supported some EU sanctions, Viktor Orbán has consistently avoided direct actions that could damage relations with Moscow, such as supplying arms to Ukraine.⁴⁰ Orbán has repeatedly highlighted that his priority is to protect Hungarian interests, which includes maintaining the supply of Russian gas and avoiding direct involvement in the conflict.⁴¹ However, in spite of everything, Europe is trying to unite and work together on goals and the means to achieve them.

Bibliography

- AmCham Policy Forum: The Key Priorities of the Hungarian EU Presidency, <https://www.amcham.hu/media/amcham-news/amcham-policy-forum-key-priorities-hungarian-eu-presidency>
- Council of the European Union, https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/institutions-and-bodies/search-all-eu-institutions-and-bodies/council-european-union_en

³⁹ Węgierska prezydencja w Radzie Unii Europejskiej w 2024 roku, <https://diplomacy.pl/wegierska-prezydencja-w-rue-2024/> (access: 22.08.2024).

⁴⁰ Węgry wobec wojny rok po rozpoczęciu rosyjskiej inwazji, <https://www.pism.pl/publikacje/wegry-wobec-wojny-rok-po-rozpozeciu-rosyjskiej-inwazji> (access: 22.08.2024).

⁴¹ Perspektywy dywersyfikacji źródeł dostaw gazu ziemnego i ropy na Węgry, <https://www.pism.pl/publikacje/perspektywy-dywersyfikacji-zrodel-dostaw-gazu-ziemnego-i-ropy-na-wegry> (access: 22.08.2024).

EU countries, countries_en?page=1 https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/eu-countries_en?page=1

Europarlament ostrzega von der Leyen w sprawie Węgier, <https://www.dw.com/pl/europarlament-ostzrega-von-der-leyen-w-sprawie-w%C4%99gier/a-68024003>

European Council, https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/institutions-and-bodies/search-all-eu-institutions-and-bodies/european-council_en

Eurosceptycyzm, <https://sjp.pwn.pl/slowniki/eurosceptycyzm>

Hungary blocks EU leaders' statement pledging support for Ukraine, <https://www.politico.eu/article/hungary-blocks-eu-leaders-statement-pledging-support-for-ukraine/>

Hungary cannot support any new EU energy sanctions against Russia – govt, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/hungary-cannot-support-any-new-eu-energy-sanctions-against-russia-govt-2022-09-29/>

Hungary takes over rotating EU presidency, <https://www.dw.com/en/hungary-takes-over-rotating-eu-presidency/video-69543141>

Hungary's Orban urges ceasefire on Kyiv visit, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c3gvrzppw54o>

Hungary's Viktor Orban to defy EU over immigration law, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-59748173>

"Jeśli naprawdę szukasz pokoju, nie podajesz dłoni krwawemu dyktatorowi". Echa wizyty Orbana w Moskwie, <https://tvn24.pl/swiat/viktor-orban-w-rosji-spotkal-sie-z-putinem-komentarze-europejskich-politykow-st7991620>

MAGA movement, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/MAGA-movement>

'Make Europe Great Again': Hungary set for EU presidency, <https://www.dw.com/en/make-europe-great-again-hungary-gears-up-for-eu-presidency/a-69429630>

‘Make Europe Great Again’: Hungary’s new motto for EU presidency has a familiar ring to it, <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/06/18/europe/hungary-make-europe-great-again-motto-intl-latam/index.html>

“Make Europe great again” Hungary steals motto from Trump for its six-month EU presidency, <https://www.eunews.it/en/2024/06/18/make-europe-great-again-hungary-steals-motto-from-trump-for-its-six-month-eu-presidency/>

Nacjonalizm, <https://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo/3945094/nacjonalizm.html> O brexicie zdecydował angielski <https://www.newsweek.pl/swiat/spoleczenstwo/o-brexicie-zdecydowal-angielski-nacjonalizm/47hvckf> nacjonalizm,

Occupy Brussels! Viktor Orbán’s plan for Europe, <https://www.politico.eu/article/viktor-orban-plan-europe-hungary-council-presidency-election/>

Orbán arrives in China after Putin meeting, <https://www.politico.eu/article/viktor-orban-arrive-china-vladimir-putin-meeting>

Perspektywy dywersyfikacji źródeł dostaw gazu ziemnego i ropy na Węgry, <https://www.pism.pl/publikacje/perspektywy-dywersyfikacji-zrodel-dostaw-gazu-ziemnego-i-ropy-na-wegry>

Pleśniarska A., Integracja europejska w obliczu eurosceptycyzmu, Zeszyty Naukowe nr 6(996), Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Krakowie 2017.

Posłowie: Węgierski rząd zagraża wartościom, instytucjom i funduszom UE, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/pl/press-room/20240112IPR16780/poslowie-wegierski-rzad-zagraza-wartosciom-instytucjom-i-funduszom-ue>

Priorities of the Hungarian presidency, <https://hungarian-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/en/programme/priorities/>

Program prezydencji Węgier w Radzie Unii Europejskiej, <https://ies.lublin.pl/komentarze/kies1154/>

Rising Euroscepticism in Europe: An Assessment, https://www.icwa.in/show_content.php?lang=1&level=3&ls_id=2495&lid=1872

Search all EU institutions and bodies, https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/institutions-and-bodies/search-all-eu-institutions-and-bodies_en?f%5B0%5D=oe_organisation_eu_type%3Ahttp%3A//publications.europa.eu/resource/authority/corporate-body-classification/EU_INST

The European Union. What it is and what it does, <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/com/eu-what-it-is/en/index.html>

The EU-UK withdrawal agreement, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-relations-with-the-united-kingdom/the-eu-uk-withdrawal-agreement/>

Urych I., The Need for Leadership in Team Work. Prolegomenon, Person, Nation, State, Interdisciplinary Research in Security Studies, Akademia Sztuki Wojennej, Warsaw 2021.

Viktor Orban, Hungary's authoritarian leader and key Putin ally, calls Zelensky an 'opponent' after winning reelection, <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/04/03/europe/hungary-election-results-viktor-orban-intl/index.html>

Viktor Orban: Hungary 'autocracy' verdict from EU correct, say activists, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-62925460>

Viktor Orban's most controversial migration comments, <https://www.dw.com/en/viktor-orban-s-most-controversial-migration-comments/g-42086054>

Węgierska prezydencja w Radzie Unii Europejskiej w 2024 roku, <https://diplomacy.pl/wegierska-prezydencja-w-rue-2024/>

Węgry ogłosiły priorytety, logo i hasło swojej prezydencji w Radzie Unii Europejskiej, <https://kurier.plus/node/5272>

Węgry wobec wojny rok po rozpoczęciu rosyjskiej inwazji, <https://www.pism.pl/publikacje/wegry-wobec-wojny-rok-po-rozpozeciu-rosyjskiej-inwazji>

Węgry: Komisja Europejska stosuje w sprawie Polski podwójne standardy,
<https://polskieradio24.pl/artykul/1836360,Wegry-Komisja-Europejska-stosuje-w-sprawie-Polski-podwojne-standardy>

What does holding the presidency of the Council of the EU mean?,
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/pl/presidency-council-eu/>

Wyniki eurosceptyków i populistów w krajach Unii, <https://tvn24.pl/swiat/podzial-mandatow-do-pe-w-europie-wyniki-eurosceptykow-i-populistow-w-krajach-unii-europejskiej-ra939303-ls2310727>

The Development of Shorad and Vshorad Systems as a Key Element of European Defense Architecture in the Face of Geopolitical Challenges and the War in Ukraine: the Case of Poland

Senior Corporal Cadet Klaudia Wyrzykowska
Student of Master's Program in Engineer of
Polish Air Force University

Senior Corporal Cadet Jakub Zwierzchowski
Student of Master's Program in Engineer of
Polish Air Force University

Abstract

The recent rise in geopolitical tensions, in particular, Russian aggression against Ukraine, has changed the security architecture across Europe considerably. This shift in the nature of the threat has pressed on the need for strengthening air defense, especially SHORAD and VSHORAD. These systems are one of the layers in a multilayer defense system, enabling counteractions to be taken on time with effectiveness against a wide range of air threats, from unmanned aerial vehicles and cruise missiles to low-flying aircraft. The article below provides an overview of the development of SHORAD and VSHORAD systems across the European defense architecture, taking Poland as an example, currently leading among the countries that expand these capabilities.

The article emphasizes that the increased threat from Russia is driving European nations, with Poland at the forefront, toward modernization of their defense systems in ever more flexible, multi-layered, and resilient ways that would better position them to handle new threats. Poland, one of the easternmost countries within the NATO alliance, chose the most aggressive path in terms of modernizing and improving its defense systems, featuring such programs as "Narew" and "Piorun," aimed at national SHORAD/VSHORAD capabilities. In the analysis, a view has been taken of the technological and political factors that accompanied the modernization of the air defense system.

The article also draws on the example of international cooperation in the development of SHORAD and VSHORAD systems, pointing out the principal projects undertaken within NATO and European Union initiatives. On top of this, it analyzes how the lessons learned from the war in Ukraine contributed to the redefinition of defense priorities, including the need for the rapid integration of modern systems with existing infrastructure. The example of Poland, which is actively investing in these technologies, shows how important it is to implement sophisticated solutions without delay in the face of developing threats.

The results of the study indicate, however, that the development of SHORAD and VSHORAD systems is a requirement for ensuring continued effective air defense of Europe. With the fast-changing geopolitical scene, the Polish case shows two important pillars for countering modern threats and deepening European defense architecture against future challenges: investments in technology and international cooperation.

Keywords: Shorad, Vshorad, war, geopolitical challenges, European defense

Introduction

With a rapidly changing geopolitical environment and emerging military threats, SHORAD/VSHORAD systems emerge as one of the most crucial modern defense strategies. While these systems differ in terms of range and role, they are predominantly designed to protect against close-range aerial threats such as missiles, drones, and cruise missiles.

Within the rapidly changing landscape of technologies and techniques, UAVs have become a widespread threat due to their low production cost and relatively compact size, combined with the capability to accomplish missions that require high accuracy. VSHORAD systems are specifically adapted for very close-range defense, typically from a few to several dozen meters. One example is the modified RBS-70 NG, a Swedish project developed by Saab Bofors Dynamics. It uses a guidance system along with an automatic target tracking system. Having detected the hostile object, the operator directs the missile toward the target, tracks it, and sustains the laser beam until it impacts its target thereby increasing the chances of hitting. The solution is effective against UAVs because they usually fly at low altitudes and high speeds.¹

The SHORAD system is designed for use against targets at distances at ranges of several to tens of kilometers. It is optimized to cover especially important areas, like military bases, mobile units, and infrastructure sites. One such example is IRIS-T, developed by the German company Diehl Defense in cooperation with four other countries: Greece, Italy, Norway, and Sweden. It is possible to mount this system on various mobile platforms, including military vehicles. This will enhance its versatility and capability to quickly adapt to changing operational conditions.²

¹ Sayan Majumdar, Vayu Aerospace and Defence Review; New Delhi Iss. 3, “The Saab RBS 70NG: Terminal Challenge”, Military Journal, May/June 2017 y.,

² IRIS-T SL Surface-to-Air Guided Missile, <https://www.airforce-technology.com/projects/iris-t-sl-surface-to-air-guided-missile/?cf-view>

An integrated defense strategy needs both kinds of systems so that the contribution of each system's capabilities effectively addresses modern threats. It is the integration of contemporary SHORAD and VSHORAD that forms a base for Europe's modern defense architecture. These systems are, therefore, considered indispensable for effective close-range air defense, given that the nature of aerial threats, especially unmanned aerial vehicles and guided cruise missiles is rapidly changing. With greatly improved detection, tracking, and threat-neutralization capabilities, they could easily bring much-needed security to regional theaters in an atmosphere of rising geopolitical tensions. The hypothesis assumes that in-country SHORAD and VSHORAD system development and integration in Poland and other European nations are vital to the reinforcement of regional air defenses. The effective implementation of these systems could form a principal component of defense strategies in light of the conflict in Ukraine and the rising challenge from modern military technologies, enhancing resilience against a range of aerial threats and supporting regional stability.

Main Part

1. GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION IN 2024

Since February 2022, Europe has experienced the most striking security crisis since the end of World War II. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine changed the geopolitical landscape of the entire continent and had repercussions beyond regional boundaries. An outcome of this conflict was not only instability in Eastern Europe but also thorough changes in international relations concerning cooperation between Ukraine and the West.

The beginning of the Russian invasion assaulted Ukraine with a brutal and destructive military campaign for the overthrow of the Ukrainian government in order to institute a pro-Russian regime. However, to everyone's surprise, the Russian forces came under unexpectedly strong resistance from both the Ukrainian military and civilian population. One key factor in this resistance is the immense military aid that has been given to Ukraine

by Western countries, which enables Ukraine to mount an effective defense and even conduct counteroffensives.³

Currently, with regard to modern military technologies, drones are key tools both in Ukraine's and Russia's arsenals in conducting this conflict. Reconnaissance and combat drones are used for conducting intelligence, precision-guided artillery, and attacks on enemy targets. The prospect of the prompt and very effective deployment of drones has significantly raised the tactical potential of both sides and increased the intensity of combat actions at the front.

Facing this drone threat, Ukraine, along with its Western allies, has started investing in enhanced air defense systems, SHORAD and VSHORAD. These are designed for detecting and destroying low-flying drones and other projectiles at close range and thus offer an effective defense of key military and civilian installations against aerial attacks. These systems increase Ukraine's chances of reducing losses from drone attacks, enhancing defensive capabilities, and improving the efficiency of offensive operations.

While the nature of the conflict has changed, Ukraine has increasingly carried out offensive operations, taking the fighting into Russian territory. Targeted strikes against the Belgorod region and other areas along the border are conducted to undermine the military infrastructure of Russia and put additional pressure on the armed forces. Such actions, though very questionable, have been a strategic component of Ukraine's response to Russian aggression, aimed at forcing Moscow to reallocate its forces and resources.

The war in Ukraine has shaken the entire European continent, including its energy situation and security. Huge disruptions in energy supply were caused by the sanctions against Russia, by which European countries had to fast-track initiatives aimed at diversifying sources of energy and increasing investments in renewable energies. The alliance has been building up its presence on the eastern flank, particularly in Poland and

³ "Weapons of war: The race between Russia and Ukraine" <https://www.cfr.org/expert-brief/weapons-war-race-between-russia-and-ukraine>

the Baltic states, in response to the rising threat from Russia to underline an apparent message of allied solidarity and readiness to protect member territories.

The future direction of this conflict will be very important not just for Ukraine's further prospects but for the further balance of forces in Europe and the world at large. Security strategies must be revised, and efforts toward more active international cooperation face a new challenge in light of shifting geopolitics.⁴

The conflict has reshaped relations between Russia and the West, regardless of the war's outcome, highlighting the need to build a new security order in Europe capable of addressing future challenges and threats.

2. WAR IN UKRAINE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEFENSE TECHNOLOGIES

2.1. Drone Saturation in the Conflict: Strike and Reconnaissance Drones

The war in Ukraine has dramatically influenced the development of defensive technologies in conditions of saturation of the battlefield with drones. In this conflict, strike drones and reconnaissance drones are critical, changing the nature of military operations and becoming an integral part of modern military strategy.

The saturation of drones in the Ukrainian conflict is unprecedented. Among these strike drones, the Turkish Bayraktar TB2 used by Ukrainian forces has made a significant contribution in the early months of the war by destroying Russian tanks, artillery, and command posts. These unmanned aerial vehicles provided an opportunity for well-aimed strikes against the enemy, often beyond the reach of air defense.

Of equal importance are the reconnaissance drones that supply critical intelligence information to enable prompt and effective responses against enemy movements. Equipped

⁴ "Ukraine Pushes into Russia, DNC Begins, Foreign Hacking Targets Trump and Harris, and More" <https://www.cfr.org/podcasts/twnw/ukraine-pushes-russia-2024-dnc-begins-foreign-hacking-targets-trump-and-harris-and-more>, 2024 y..

with such drones, Ukraine will be able to make real-time monitoring of the battlefield, enhancing the effect of military operations and reducing losses.

The use of drones in Ukrainian military operations has transformed the nature of how wars are fought. Consequently, this has also accelerated the development of defensive technologies against such threats in other countries, especially air defense and counter-drone capabilities. This is evidenced by the advancement of SHORAD and VSHORAD systems. The war in Ukraine underlines the notion that the ability to control the air with drones and protection against them will win future conflicts.⁵

2.2. Russian Reconnaissance-Strike Complex: Effectiveness and Adaptation in the Context of HVT (High Value Targets)

In modern conflict, including the conflict in Ukraine, the Russian reconnaissance-strike complex is very important. Combining reconnaissance and striking capability into one system eases the identification of HVTs and their neutralization, which are considered crucial for the success in contemporary military operations.

It involves a set of reconnaissance drones, more sophisticated radar and satellite systems that are part of this complex. This way, drones, for example, Orlan-10, monitor actions on the battlefield and provide information about the enemy movements and locations of important facilities. Such intelligence is highly valued in planning military operations because it guarantees a high level of accuracy in resource allocation.

As far as strike components are concerned, it makes use of advanced missile and artillery systems, integrated with intelligence data. Systems used to strike HVTs, like command centers, ammunition depots, and installations of critical infrastructure, include the Iskander and self-propelled artillery. The integration of reconnaissance data with strike

⁵ „Relacja z frontu! Jak wygląda wojna dronów na Ukrainie? - st. szer. Sebastian Kuczyński i Zychowicz”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crPsVCzOcKY>

systems assures that important objectives are precisely targeted and neutralized, enhancing operational effectiveness manifold.

This proves that the Russian reconnaissance-strike complex is rather dynamic because it is adaptable to changes in conditions in the battlefield. It was when new threats and technologies specifically, Ukrainian strike drones and counter-drone defense systems created a need for modification among the Russians. The adaptation is reflected in the development of new generations of drones and radar systems aimed at enhancing detection and precision strike capabilities.

Advanced data analysis and close coordination between different components of the system significantly increase the effectiveness of the complex in targeting HVTs. The identification and elimination, with a high degree of accuracy, of high-value targets which are major contributors in gaining strategic advantage weaken opponents' operational capabilities.⁶

The Russian reconnaissance-strike complex exemplifies advanced integration of military technology, increasing the efficiency of military operations through precise targeting and elimination of key objectives. Its ability to adapt to dynamic conflict conditions and evolving opponent technologies underscores the growing role of modern technologies in contemporary military conflicts.

3. CHALLENGES IN AIR DEFENSE

3.1. Issues Related to Destroying Drones: Soft Kill vs. Hard Kill

The growing threat of drones brings new challenges to air defense. Crucial for effective defense is the difference between the "soft kill" and "hard kill" methods for neutralizing unmanned aerial vehicles. Both techniques have their advantages and limitations, and the efficacy of these depends on the nature of the threat and operational conditions.

⁶ Allik, Sten, et al. *The Rise of Russia's Military Robots: Theory, Practice and Implications*. Tallinn: International Centre for Defence and Security, 2021.

Soft kill techniques involve targeting threats without physically destroying them. This includes disrupting drone communication and navigation, as well as misleading them. Typical "soft kill" technologies include electronic warfare tools against drones, capable of jamming communication and navigation signals, which can confuse drones and lead to loss of control. Among the various advantages of "soft kill" methods, they cost a lot less—usually, jammers are cheaper than kinetic ones, but they can be massively fielded and from a distance, allowing defense against independent threats.

However, there are also limitations to "soft kill" methods. Signal jamming can sometimes be circumvented by advanced drones equipped with redundant communication systems or autonomous functions that enable them to continue missions despite interference. Moreover, the effectiveness of jamming systems can be limited in areas of high radio frequency interference.

On the other hand, "hard kill" methods physically destroy drones. The approach employs a number of weapons systems: short-range missiles, anti-aircraft artillery, and also laser and energy systems, directly destroying unmanned aerial vehicles. One of the main benefits of the "hard kill" methods is their effectiveness against drones, particularly if the latter have been well-targeted and shot down. In this case, "hard kill" systems provide real-time elimination of threats, which becomes especially important against sophisticated drones that might be resistant to jamming.

Challenges arise for "hard kill" methods as well. All of them require very accurate targeting, which can be a problem in the case of high-speed changes in drone position or when confronted by a swarm of attacking drones. Additionally, "hard kill" systems are relatively expensive to maintain and operate, and they can have undesirable side effects, such as fragments from destroyed drones that may further endanger the environment. Given the new challenges created by the use of fiber-optic connected drones, there is an urgent call for reviewing strategies on air defense. From intercepted drones, the Ukrainian Armed Forces indicated that Russians have now started using first person view drones fitted

with thin fiber-optic cables as long as 10 kilometers. This solution nearly makes a drone immune to electronic warfare measures, since it uses no standard radio signals that might be jammed. Moreover, fiber optics enable high-quality image transmission that will greatly improve reconnaissance or strike missions.

The introduction of such technology by the Russians creates a need for the integration of both "soft kill" and "hard kill" methods in air defense. While radio signal jamming has been effective against drones, modern solutions fiber optics, for example are immune to this method and require more direct "hard kill" methods that ensure physical destruction.



Figure 4 Drone with fiber optic cables
<https://x.com/UKikaski/status/1765744643180794267/photo/4>

Moreover, technologies that will provide a balance of technological advantage over the adversary must be developed, including the possible introduction of corresponding fiber-optic systems into drones operated by the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Magyar experts have begun processing intercepted drone data which could later be a basis for implementing the same solutions by Ukrainian troops to increase the efficiency of the operations conducted under wartime conditions. The nature of the development of new technologies in defensive actions plays a leading role in modern battlefield conditions, within the scope of the increasing role of electronic technologies.⁷

⁷ OSINT (Uri Kikaski) <https://x.com/UKikaski/status/1765744643180794267/photo/4>

3.2. The Economics of Defense: Why Using Expensive Missiles Against Cheap Drones Is Cost-Ineffective

Modern challenges in air defense, due to the rising number of inexpensive drones, reveal significant issues related to the cost-effectiveness of the defensive systems. It becomes quite impracticable to fire expensive missiles against cheap drones for several reasons.

First of all, the unit cost of missiles and artillery rounds used in air defense is dramatically higher than the cost of the drone itself. Indeed, modern short-range missiles like the Patriot missile system or SM-6 each cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, while commercially available drones may cost just a few thousand dollars or even less. This large difference in cost implies that every expensive missile fired to bring down a rather cheap drone creates huge costs, which rise very fast exceeding the value of the destroyed threat.

Another aspect is efficiency and scalability. If hundreds or thousands of drones are to take part in a mass attack, the unit cost of defense will be of prime importance. If a foe fires hundreds of inexpensive drones, then the defensive systems must rapidly and economically defeat a high number of threats. Attempting to destroy each one with million-dollar missiles is expensive and can quickly deplete resources, straining defense budgets to unsustainable levels.

Moreover, it is the capability of quick and accurate targeting and elimination of several threats that really restrains the effectiveness of the defense systems with costly ammunition. It becomes difficult to guide and target expensive missiles in conditions of many attacking drones simultaneously or weather conditions affecting the performance of the system.⁸

Against the backdrop of such challenges, a lot of military forces and research organizations have already begun to develop cheaper and more efficient defense systems, including laser systems and directed energy weapons. What this presents, though still in

⁸ H. Gonzalez-Jorge, E. Aldao, G. Fontenla-Carrera, F. Veiga-López, E. Balvís., & E. Ríos-Otero, Counter Drone Technology: A Review. 2024 y..

development, is a prospect of negating that cost by providing a low-cost ability to neutralize hundreds or thousands of low-cost drones without firing costly missiles.

4. SHORAD AND VSHORAD SYSTEMS AMONG ALLIES

4.1. Overview of SHORAD and VSHORAD Systems Used by European Union Countries

SHORAD and VSHORAD systems are the most important elements in air defense, ensuring protection within air space against a myriad of dangers. The European Union nations field different advanced technologies to protect their respective countries effectively.

IRIS-T SLM is a German medium-range system combining advanced radar technology with missile capability. It provides defense against aircraft, helicopters, and cruise missiles. Enhanced by modern fire control systems, IRIS-T SLM provides effectiveness in various conditions.⁹

Mistral is a French developed man portable missile air defense system. It is mobile and easy to use, which makes it an ideal solution to provide security against low-flying aerial threats like aircraft and helicopters. Its installation on vehicles also makes it highly mobile.¹⁰

Rapier is a UK-developed, medium-range, radar-guided air defense system against low-flying threats. The power of this weapon system lies in its reliability and efficiency. As such, the Rapier Field Squadron is deployed in a number of configurations according to the requirements of its customers.¹¹

Skyguard is a short-range Italian-developed air defense system that combines radar with artillery systems. Its role is mainly to counter low-flying threats. Therefore, it is significantly spread as a component of air defense strategies of various European countries.¹²

⁹ "Iris- T Slim" https://armyrecognition.com/military-products/army/air-defense-systems/air-defense-vehicles/iris-t-slm-medium-range-air-defense-missile-system-technical-data?utm_content=cmp-true

¹⁰ "Mistral Air Defence Missile System, France" <https://www.army-technology.com/projects/mistral-missile/>

¹¹ "Tactical guided missiles" <https://www.britannica.com/technology/rocket-and-missile-system/Tactical-guided-missiles#ref520970>

¹² "Stationary air defense" <https://www.rheinmetall.com/en/products/air-defence/air-defence-systems/stationary-air-defence>

Each of these systems offers varying capabilities and technology to help support the efforts of the European Union toward security in the skies.

4.2. Development and Innovations in Air Defense Systems Among Allies

NATO allies are investing in advanced technologies that improve their air defense capabilities and adaptability. In fact, a number of innovations introduced during recent years have considerably enhanced the detection, identification, and engagement of air threats.

In the domain of the medium-range systems, systems such as the Patriot of the United States have been developed, and over time, it has undergone many upgrades in order to make it relevant against modern missiles and aircraft. The PAC-3 Patriot is the latest variant in this series, using guided warheads and radar systems to increase its capabilities against all kinds of threats.¹³

MEADS, a modern system developed by Germany, Italy, and the USA, integrates radar and missile systems to provide optimal protection against a wide range of threats.

Many NATO countries are developing new technologies for short-range air defense systems as well. Of course, for other allies, the Iron Dome in Israel has already demonstrated an ideal example because it is able to offer perfect protection for incoming short-range rockets or artillery.¹⁴

The Counter-Rocket, Artillery, and Mortar (C-RAM) system used by the United States employs radar systems and automatic cannons to defend against incoming projectiles and artillery. In Europe, the Skyguard system and its upgraded versions continue to play a vital role in defending against low-flying aerial threats.¹⁵

¹³ DUPONT, Daniel G. 231million shifted from NMD accounts: PENTAGON GRANTS ARMY 900 MILLION FOR MORE PATRIOT PAC-3 MISSILES. *Inside the Army*, 2001

¹⁴ “What is Israel’s Iron Dome missile system and how does it work?” <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-20385306>

¹⁵ Rapidly Deployable Mobile Counter Rockets Artillery and Mortar (C-RAM)
https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2021/10/pdf/2110-factsheet-c-ram.pdf

Innovations also include advancements in radar and sensor technologies that improve target detection and tracking capabilities. Modern phased-array radars, such as AEGIS on American warships, provide precise tracking and fire control in challenging conditions. In the field of artificial intelligence and data analytics, systems are being introduced that automate decision-making processes, increasing the speed of response to threats.

Collaboration and technology exchange among NATO member countries contribute to the continuous development and enhancement of air defense systems.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF SHORAD AND VSHORAD SYSTEMS IN POLAND

5.1. Poland's Strategy for Air Defense

Considering the growing threats to NATO's eastern borders and the war in Ukraine, the strategy related to air defense is one of the deciding factors when it comes to ensuring national security for Poland. Bearing in mind the situation described above, Poland has been modernizing and developing its air defense systems in a way that could raise its potential to protect the country's territory against possible airborne attacks.

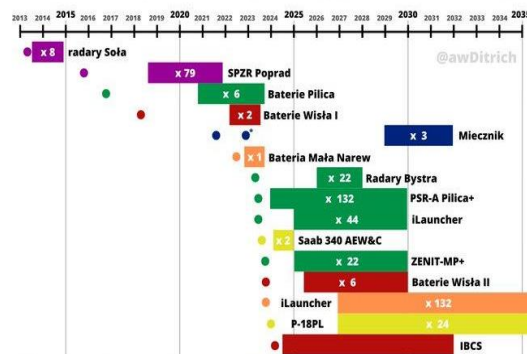


Figure 5. Plans for Modernizing Polish Air Defense
<https://x.com/AwDitrich/status/1780311071871349115/photo/1>

An essential element in this plan is the Pilica system, as the short-range air defense system already in service with the Polish Armed Forces. Its adoption has greatly enhanced the ability of country defense against low-altitude aerial threats, including drones,

helicopters, and cruise missiles. Supplementary Pilica system batteries will be deployed by 2030.

The whole modernization strategy in the sphere of air defense is based on the construction of a multi-layer air defense system with different levels of protection. The "Wisła" system, based on the American Patriot system, constitutes the core of long-range defense and is already being implemented with further phases planned for 2028. The "Narew" system is planned to start in 2027 and will be vital for medium-range defense, ensuring more effective protection from cruise missiles, aircraft, and other aerial threats.

Poland is also pursuing dynamic development with respect to early warning systems, on Bystra radars and Saab 340 AEW&C that enable urgent responses to threats. Moreover, the "Miecznik" program involving the construction of modern frigates is one of the crucial elements of the defense strategy and is expected to be completed in 2029.

This is the strategy toward modern, flexible, and effective air defense capable of responding to contemporary threats and protecting state territory against aerial attacks at different levels. Timelines for the implementation of these projects are predetermined by Poland's approach toward building modern armed forces capable of confronting current challenges in a long-term perspective.

5.2. Examples of Polish SHORAD and VSHORAD Systems



Figure 6 Division of Polish Air Defense Systems
<https://x.com/AwDitrich/status/1780311076300526007/photo/1>

Polish air defense systems are divided into three essential layers: MRAD, SHORAD, and VSHORAD, providing full protection over different ranges. The MRAD or medium-range air defense systems with a range of over 50 km, such as Wisła and Miecznik, represent the highest level of defense. However, in this case, we will focus more on the SHORAD and VSHORAD layers.

SHORAD covers ranges from 10 to 50 km with systems such as Pilica+ and Narew. The Pilica+ system is an integrated system fitted out with guns of 23 mm caliber combined with Piorun and CAMM missile launchers, and it equips Bystra radar. Additionally, the anti-drone system is mounted on a mobile vehicle and has defense capabilities against drones, helicopters, and other aerial threats. On the other hand, Narew is going to be a far more advanced system based on British CAMM missiles, outranking its competitor in intercepting targets at shorter ranges.

VSHORAD means Very Short-Range Air Defense and includes systems reaching up to 10 km, among them SONA, Poprad, and Noteć. Poprad is a mobile system with Piorun missile launchers installed on Jelcz vehicles. Radar, artillery, and missiles are all put together in SONA and Noteć systems, making them able to respond rapidly against low-flying targets like drones or helicopters.

5.3. Integration of Multi-Layered Systems in the Polish Defense System (IBCS System)

This implies that multi-layered systems, with IBCS as the focus, will be integrated into the modernization process of the Polish defense framework. In essence, the IBCS is a configuration of elements built on Northrop Grumman's modern solution, with capabilities that unify the variety of sensors and effectors, such as radars, missile systems, and command posts, within a single, cohesive network. It provides the opportunity for Poland to reach highly advanced, multi-level air and missile defense, which can contribute to a large increase in operational capabilities related to the protection of airspace.

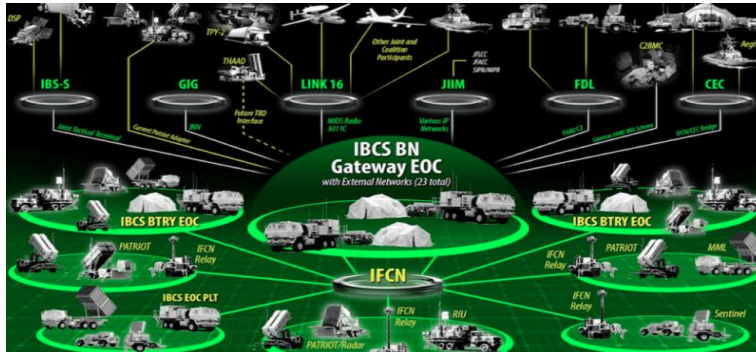


Figure 7 IBCS command-and-control network for air and missile defense
<https://breakingdefense.com/2019/05/ibcs-northrop-delivers-new-missile-defense-command-post-to-army/>

IBCS is a control and command system which allows for fast and highly accurate responses to airspace threats. The system's most significant capabilities include support for various weapon systems, both those currently available to Poland and those to be acquired later. This forms the core of the Wisła air defense system in Poland, incorporating modern Patriot missile systems. In general, IBCS handles multiple data sources to afford better target tracking and more effective application of available firepower through the integration of the data.

Owing to its open architecture, IBCS will be able to interface diverse sensors and effectors, notwithstanding their manufacturer or country of origin. This is very much aligned with the allied cooperation in NATO and promotes the interoperability of different weapon systems. Furthermore, its modularity and flexibility make it very highly adaptable to new needs and threats. The implementation of IBCS in the Polish air defense system is going to be part of the general strategy of modernizing the Polish military. In short, Poland is developing an advanced technological solution to effectively counter modern threats such as ballistic and cruise missiles, as well as unmanned aerial vehicles. The system is not only important for the defense of the national territory but will also provide the foundations for support in international operations by allies.¹⁶

¹⁶ "IBCS "sercem" Wisły. Jaki koszt systemu?" <https://defence24.pl/technologie/ibcs-sercem-wisly-jaki-koszt-systemu-wywiad>

The IBCS integration in Poland is taking place in phases with technology transfer and personnel training. The system will ensure that as the country's defense potential increases, interoperability with NATO forces will improve, setting a new standard in battlefield management. In the long term, IBCS will represent the cutting edge of modern defense architecture, ensuring flexible and effective counteraction to diverse threats.¹⁷

6. POLAND AS AN EXAMPLE OF INNOVATION IN AIR DEFENSE

6.1. Modern Solutions and Technologies in Polish SHORAD and VSHORAD Systems

Poland can be taken as a model of innovation in the area of air defense, specifically in SHORAD short-range air defense systems and VSHORAD very short-range air defense systems as a country that hugely invests in modern defense technologies.

In recent years, much attention has been paid to the development and modernization of air defense systems in Poland, applying advanced technological solutions. Within SHORAD systems, Poland employs modern, very effective radars that allow for the detection and tracking of short-range targets. A system called "Narew" is implemented as the core component of Polish short-range air defense. It uses modern radars and missiles that enable the effective conduct of air threat engagement at close ranges.

Polish VSHORAD systems include solutions like Poprad, which is based on a mobile platform, equipped with advanced radar systems, and missiles. This system is designed to protect military units and strategically important objects at very close ranges, thus becoming an indispensable part of air defense.

Poland is also designing new technologies for the integration of air defense systems with unmanned aerial vehicles and other elements of the national defense system. High-resolution radar technologies, such as AESA radars, allow tracking with classification of such difficult operational conditions. Implementing the most advanced technological

¹⁷ "Northrop Grumman in Poland" <https://www.northropgrumman.com/who-we-are/global-presence/northrop-grumman-poland>

solutions allows for efforts within research and development to materialize, as well as for cooperation with foreign partners. In general, this serves to increase the defensive capabilities of Poland, offering higher protection against various modern air threats.

6.2. International Cooperation and Partnerships in Defense Technology Development

One of the most important factors in Poland's strategy to modernize its defense sector has been international cooperation and partnerships in developing defense technology. Within the Polish Armaments Group, Poland has been participating in numerous initiatives and projects aimed at developing and applying state-of-the-art technologies. Cooperation with foreign partners in the framework of NATO and the European Union makes it possible to take advantage of state-of-the-art solutions and participate in joint research and development work. An example is cooperation in the Eurosam SAMP/T project, the European short- and very-short-range air defense system in which Poland acts as a partner, consequently gaining access to state-of-the-art technologies and radar systems.¹⁸

Cooperation with international defense companies is yet another important element in PGZ's strategy. In cooperation with Raytheon and MEADS International, PGZ participates in the Wisła program for delivering advanced air defense systems. The contract with Lockheed Martin as part of the Homar program involves adapting and implementing, which increases Poland's offensive and defensive capabilities with modern missile systems. In the Kruk program, PGZ cooperates with Bell Helicopter to provide modern attack helicopters. Besides, agreements with Boeing cover the Kruk program and potential projects related to CH-47 Chinook, V-22 Osprey, airborne reconnaissance and intelligence systems, as well as satellite and space technologies. Cooperation with Israel Aerospace Industries is involving the supply of tactical unmanned aerial vehicles, electronic warfare, and air-to-air refueling. There are also agreements that PGZ has signed with MBDA regarding missile systems, air defense, and missile defense, and with Rheinmetall that will supply a prototype

¹⁸ „Kontrakt na system SAMP/T NG” <https://zbiam.pl/kontrakt-na-system-samp-t-ng/>

of a new amphibious armored transporter. Agreements with Kongsberg relate to maritime and space systems and surveillance and reconnaissance. Cooperation with Saab and DCNS concerns the Orka program and surface vessels.¹⁹

Conclusion

In this respect, the development of SHORAD and VSHORAD systems in the coming years will be based on a number of key areas to better respond to the increasingly challenging demands placed on air defense. Another major trend will be the integration of advanced modern technologies, such as cutting-edge radar and sensor systems and artificial intelligence, to enable faster and more precise identification and tracking of threats. Artificial intelligence technologies will also have to be introduced in order to automate real-time decision-making procedures, greatly improving the overall effectiveness of air defense systems. Further development and modernization of sensors will be important for raising the level of detection and recognition of targets. Modern radars especially those with AESA (Active Electronically Scanned Array) antennas will come up with better resolution and a wider range, helping to defend in conditions of heavy atmospheric and electromagnetic interference. Mobility and flexibility of SHORAD/VSHORAD systems will be given more importance to adapt more readily towards altered operational conditions for supporting the military units and important installations in a more effective way. Mobility will help to basically enhance the field deployment of air defense systems, and the role of countermeasure technology will be essential. In conditions of growing unmanned aerial vehicles and short-range missile threats, the technologies of electronic warfare, signal jamming, and modern directed energy-based systems, such as lasers, play an increasingly crucial role in neutralizing.

¹⁹ „Współpraca PGZ z zagranicznymi firmami zbrojeniowymi” <https://zbiam.pl/artykuly/wspolpraca-pgz-z-zagranicznymi-firmami-zbrojeniowymi/>

VSHORAD and SHORAD systems the integration of these different tiers of defense would build a deep defense network that could prove effective against a variety of threats. This would ensure a multi-layered shield for the neutralization of different altitudes and distances in an evolving security environment. Such systems ensure that in case any one layer of defense fails, others are able to take responsibility for protection. An effective multi-layered air defense improves the capability to rapidly respond to emerging threats and offers enhanced protection for critical infrastructure, military forces, and civilian populations. This depth of defense is particularly important given the diverse nature of modern threats, which range from drones and missiles to more advanced aircraft and electronic warfare tactics. Strengthening multi-layered air defense not only safeguards individual nations but also contributes to regional stability by reinforcing collective defense initiatives across Europe. This collective approach is increasingly important in light of global and regional security challenges, including unpredictable geopolitical shifts, the rise of hybrid warfare, and the proliferation of advanced military technologies. By building a cohesive and resilient multi-layered air defense system, European countries can better deter potential aggressors and respond more effectively to any aerial threats, thereby enhancing both national and regional security.

Bibliography

“IBCS "sercem" Wisły. Jaki koszt systemu?” <https://defence24.pl/technologie/ibcs-sercem-wisly-jaki-koszt-systemu-wywiad>

“Iris- T Slim” https://armyrecognition.com/military-products/army/air-defense-systems/air-defense-vehicles/iris-t-slm-medium-range-air-defense-missile-system-technical-data?utm_content=cmp-true

“IRIS-T SL Surface-to-Air Guided Missile”

“Mistral Air Defence Missile System, France”

“Northrop Grumman in Poland”

“Stationary air defense” <https://www.rheinmetall.com/en/products/air-defence/air-defence-systems/stationary-air-defence>

“Tactical guided missiles” <https://www.britannica.com/technology/rocket-and-missile-system/Tactical-guided-missiles#ref520970>

“Ukraine Pushes into Russia, 2024 DNC Begins, Foreign Hacking Targets Trump and Harris, and More”

“Ukraine Pushes into Russia, 2024 DNC Begins, Foreign Hacking Targets Trump and Harris, and More”

“Weapons of war: The race between Russia and Ukraine” <https://www.cfr.org/expert-brief/weapons-war-race-between-russia-and-ukraine>

“What is Israel's Iron Dome missile system and how does it work?” <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-20385306>

„Kontrakt na system SAMP/T NG” <https://zbiam.pl/kontrakt-na-system-samp-t-ng/>

„Relacja z frontu! Jak wygląda wojna dronów na Ukrainie? - st. szer. Sebastian Kuczyński i Zychowicz” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crPsVCzOckY>

„Współpraca PGZ z zagranicznymi firmami zbrojeniowymi” <https://zbiam.pl/artykuly/wspolpraca-pgz-z-zagranicznymi-firmami-zbrojeniowymi/>

Allik, Sten, et al. *The Rise of Russia's Military Robots: Theory, Practice and Implications*. Tallinn: International Centre for Defence and Security, 2021.

DUPONT, Daniel G. 231million shifted from NMD accounts: PENTAGON GRANTS ARMY 900 MILLION FOR MORE PATRIOT PAC-3 MISSILES. *Inside the Army*, 2001

Gonzalez-Jorge, H., Aldao, E., Fontenla-Carrera, G., Veiga-López, F., Balvís, E., & Ríos-Otero, E. (2024). *Counter Drone Technology: A Review*.

Military Journal Majumdar S., (2017) “The Saab RBS 70NG: Terminal Challenge” *Vayu Aerospace and Defense Review*

EU Energy Sector and the Russo-Ukrainian War, Europe's Quest for Energy Independence from the Russian Federation

Pvt. Cad. Jakub Tutka

Student of Master's program in Engineer of
Polish Air Force University

Abstract

The article examines the entire effect of sanctions that were placed on Russian energy sector and reveals the consequences of those sanctions on the Russian energy sector economy, future plans for energy sector expansion, and overall state of Russian Federation budget. It highlights problem of EU's dependency from Russia because of energy dominance and manipulative capabilities that came with that dominance before the outbreak of conflict in Ukraine and downward spiral in that matter after introduction of sanctions since Russian aggression on Ukraine. Before the 2022 invasion, the EU heavily relied on Russian energy imports, with Russia supplying approximately 40% of the EU's natural gas and a significant portion of its oil and coal. This dependency created vulnerabilities, particularly in the face of geopolitical tensions. The invasion prompted the EU to reassess its energy strategy, leading to the implementation of stringent sanctions on Russian carbohydrates. These sanctions included bans on coal imports, phased reductions in oil imports, and efforts to reduce natural gas dependency through diversification of supply sources and increased investments in renewable energy. The sanctions had a dual impact: they accelerated the EU's transition towards energy independence and significantly strained Kremlin's energy sector. The reduction in carbohydrates exports to EU member states led to a substantial decrease in Russia's energy revenues, which constitute a major part of its national budget. Consequently, Russia faced economic challenges, including budget deficits and reduced funding for public services and military expenditures. This article provides extensive analysis of the EU's strategic shift in energy policy, the effectiveness of sanctions in curbing Russian energy influence, and the broader economic implications for Russia. It highlights the critical need for the EU to balance immediate energy security concerns with long-term sustainability goals, while also considering the geopolitical ramifications of its energy policies. The findings underscore the importance of a resilient and diversified energy infrastructure in mitigating the risks associated with geopolitical conflicts.

Key Words: EU's Energy Independence, Sanction's on Russia, Russian Energy Sector, Nord Stream 1, Nord Stream 2, Power Of Siberia, Russo-Ukrainian conflict, Russian Economy.

Introduction

The year 2022 brought forth severe changes in the geopolitical world because of Russia's sudden aggression against the sovereign state of Ukraine. Rising tensions around the world, especially in Europe, have seriously impacted several key aspects of global society, including the energy sector. Economic and personal sanctions imposed on the Russian Federation were a quick first reaction of the Western democratic world, many of which targeted the most significant contributor to the Russian budget, specifically, the country's export of energy resources.

This article aims to show that the sanctions introduced by the European Union (EU) are effective and work in two areas, namely, they move the EU closer to achieving their energy independence from the Russian Federation, particularly hydrocarbons, but also they have had a serious impact on the overall state of Russia's energy sector, its functioning, and most importantly, on the country's state budget.

The hypothesis will be tested by comparing the EU's energy dependence on Russian supplies and Russia's revenue from this trade before the full-scale war that began on 22 February 2022, and approximately two years later, based on available data. The structure of the article methodologically mirrors the main argument. The article consists of five parts. The introduction provides the background, goal, and hypothesis of the article. The second section is dedicated to the overall condition of the EU's energy sector before the launch of Russia's "Special Military Operation" in 2022 against Ukraine. In particular, the Russian infrastructure of oil and gas pipelines across Europe, market shares of Russian hydrocarbons, and how Russian energy dominance was often used as a means of political pressure, both offensively and defensively, against some European countries. The third section covers the topic of sanctions that affected the Kremlin's energy sector, specifically a short review of the Russian conflict since 2022, exact data on the sanctions imposed by the EU on the Russian Federation, and exemptions from these sanctions. The fourth section of the article discusses an essential part of the sanctioning process: the sanctions' impact on the overall

functioning of the Russian energy sector and the state budget. The main focus is on the EU's data concerning the effect of sanctions, the Asian market as a way out for Russian losses caused by sanctions, ways of sanction avoidance implemented by Putin's government, and a view into the current state of the Russian state budget.

For the analysis carried out in the second section, I used sources such as scientific articles covering the EU's energy sector before 2022 and a selection of information provided by specialized websites of well-established institutions. To gather information for the third section, I relied on scientific and academic articles describing and discussing the launch of unprovoked aggression on Ukraine and the EU's data related to sanctions placed on the Kremlin. Furthermore, to complete the fourth section, I used data provided yet again by websites supervised by the EU, scientific articles regarding the increasing value of the Asian market for the Russian Federation and their current financial state, as well as certain verified websites that provided me with information about Russia's ways of avoiding sanctions. The article is closed with the conclusion section, where I bring together the analyzed data and formulate conclusions.

Main Part

1. EU Energy Sector before the Russian Invasion of Ukraine in 2022

1.1 Infrastructure of Russian Oil and Natural Gas Pipelines

Russia's oil and gas pipeline network includes several key pipelines. The country's oil infrastructure features five primary pipelines. The Druzhba pipeline is designed to transport and deliver oil directly to European refineries. The Baltic Pipeline System (BPS-1 and BPS-2) facilitates exports via Russian ports, primarily on the Baltic coast. The Novorossiysk pipeline handles exports through the Black Sea port of Novorossiysk, while the ESPO pipeline caters to sales in Asian markets. These five main pipelines essentially cover the entirety of Russia's crude oil exports, with a combined estimated capacity of 270.5 million tons. Additionally, Russia can export more crude oil through transit routes to markets via Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and the Baltic states. The Druzhba pipeline, which passes through

Belarus and Ukraine, is a well-utilized transit route. Ukraine's oil pipeline network, managed by Ukrtransnafta (a subsidiary of Naftogaz), is significant for Russia, with an export capacity of 56 million tons.

In 2014, the actual volume of oil transiting Ukraine was just 15 million tonnes, transported via the Southern branch of the Druzhba pipeline. A significant portion of the unused capacity was due to alternative routes bypassing the Druzhba pipeline through Ukraine. Estimates indicate that Russia's oil export infrastructure had the capability to transport 323 million tonnes of crude oil to markets in 2014. Pipeline export capacity, excluding routes circumventing Transneft, was approximately 300.5 mt, which was more than sufficient to manage 194.5 mt of Russian and Caspian oil exports in 2014. The utilization rate of Russia's pipeline network designated for oil exports was equivalent to 65%.¹



Picture 1: Oil Pipeline Routes in Europe, Source: United States Department of Energy, *Oil Pipelines in Europe and North West Asia*, <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Caspian/images/bosporus%20bypass%20map.pdf> [access: 24.08.2024]²

Regarding natural gas pipelines, **Nord Stream** and **Nord Stream 2** were the two main pipelines for Europe before their destruction caused by unidentified explosions. On September 26, 2022, the Nord Stream 1 (NS1) and Nord Stream 2 (NS2) gas pipelines exploded due to a possible sabotage attack.³

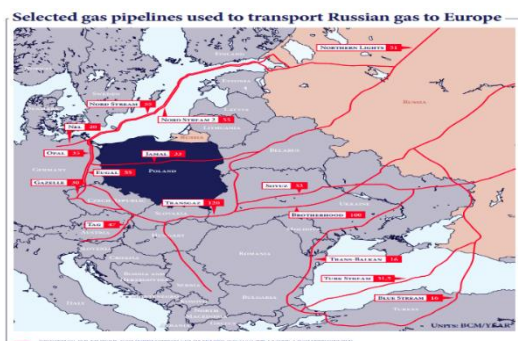
Turk Stream is natural gas transport infrastructure that is very important for Turkish and Russian relations and the Black Sea area, particularly for Russia and Gazprom, as

¹ A. Vatansever, 2017, *Is Russia building too many pipelines? Explaining Russia's oil and gas export strategy*,

² United States Department of Energy, *Oil Pipelines in Europe and North West Asia*, <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Caspian/images/bosporus%20bypass%20map.pdf> [access: 24.08.2024].

³ W. Lorenz, S. Zaręba, 2022, *Consequences of the Nord Stream 1 and 2 Gas Pipeline Explosions*.

Gazprom’s goal is to secure the entire value chain in the European market in the future.⁴ Another pipeline – **the Power of Siberia** – is a crucial project for Russia’s energy market. Due to the EU’s sanctions, the Asian direction for hydrocarbons export, especially China and India, has grown immensely. However, it should be added that the deployment of the Power of Siberia project has encountered several serious difficulties.⁵



Picture 2: Showcase of gas pipelines flowing into Europe. **Source:** M. Zaniewicz, *New Gas Pipeline Geopolitics in Central and Eastern Europe*, <https://warsawinstitute.org/new-gas-pipeline-geopolitics-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>⁶ [access: 24.08.2024]

The Russian coal sector is predominantly situated in Western Siberia, contributing to 80% of the nation’s coal output. Kemerovo Oblast, which produces approximately 60% (2022) of Russia’s coal, primarily extracts it from the “Kuznetsky Coal Basin,” also known as “Kuzbass.” Around 150 companies in this area employ about 90,000 individuals. Nationwide, roughly 150,000 people are employed in 58 underground mines and 133 open-pit mines. Coal revenue, exceeding USD 17.7 billion, represented 3.8% of Russia’s export earnings in 2021, making it the country’s third-largest export commodity and the fifth-largest revenue source. The increased reliance on coal exports has heightened the Russian economy’s susceptibility to fluctuations in global coal demand and prices. For example, Russian coal export volumes slightly decreased between 2018 and 2020 due to a decline in European coal prices, affecting coal producers and the Russian railway sector. Russia

⁴ E. Schislyaeva, I. Evgrafova, N. Butakova, Y. Mishalchenko, 2022, *The EU - Russia - Turkey energy triangle: legal and economic conditions of gas transportation via the TurkStream pipeline*.

⁵ A.E Kontorovich, L.V. Eder, I.V Filimonova., S.M Nikitenko, 2018, *Key Problems in the Development of the Power of Siberia Project*.

⁶ M. Zaniewicz, *New Gas Pipeline Geopolitics in Central and Eastern Europe*, <https://warsawinstitute.org/new-gas-pipeline-geopolitics-in-central-and-eastern-europe/> [access: 24.08.2024].

primarily transports coal via railroads, partially through coal ports.⁷ The map depicts regional coal production output and means of coal transportation throughout the Russian



Federation.⁸

Picture 3: Map showcase of the Russian coal industry, including transportation and coal production. **Source:** I. Overland , J. Loginova, 2023, *The Russian coal industry in an uncertain world: Finally pivoting to Asia?*⁹

The year 2009 was pivotal in the context of Russia's future natural gas exports to Europe. During that time, Russia compelled Ukraine to accept a disadvantageous agreement regarding gas supply and transit, as well as a "fleet-for-gas" agreement that allowed Russia to keep a military presence in Crimea initially involved negotiators considering setting the gas price at \$205–235 per 1,000 cubic meters. However, Russia dismissed this and increased the price to an astonishing \$450 per 1,000 cubic meters, almost twice the original amount. Consequently, Moscow halted all natural gas supplies to Ukraine and, in turn, to Europe.¹⁰

The result of the 2009 natural gas conflict highlighted notable drawbacks of the European pipeline transport network.¹¹ The situation has significantly affected several Central and Eastern European nations, with some experiencing substantial drops in gas pressure within their pipelines, particularly impacting Slovakia. The Slovak government had to declare a state of emergency due to the gas shortage threatening its domestic industry. Ukraine was obligated to commit to 33 billion cubic meters of natural gas, regardless of

⁷ I. Overland , J. Loginova, 2023, *The Russian coal industry in an uncertain world: Finally pivoting to Asia?*

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ S. Pirani, J. Stern, K. Yafimava, 2009, *The Russo-Ukrainian gas dispute of January 2009: A comprehensive assessment.*

¹¹ N. Rodríguez-Gómez, N. Zaccarelli, R. Bolado-Lavin., 2016, *European ability to cope with a gas crisis. Comparison between 2009 and 2014.*

whether it was received, with no option to re-export any surplus. Ultimately, Ukraine paid one of the highest prices in Europe for Russian gas because of its geographic position as the first recipient of the Russian gas route to Europe. Russian gas prices for Ukraine did not decrease until the pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovich was elected president of Ukraine in 2010. As part of the “fleet-for-gas” agreement, Ukraine allowed the Russian Black Sea fleet to remain in Crimea until 2042 in exchange for a 30 percent discount on Russian gas imports, capped at \$100. This arrangement ultimately contributed to the events leading up to the annexation of Crimea in 2014 due to the agreed presence of Russian forces in the Crimea region.¹²

Nord Stream played one of the most important roles in the Russian export of Natural Gas to Europe because natural gas from that pipeline flowed into Germany, which was the largest importer of Russian natural gas, making up 29.14% of Gazprom’s exports in 2018.¹³ The construction of such a pipeline was not easy, but Russia employed every conceivable diplomatic strategy to accomplish it. Gerhard Schroeder, the former German chancellor, played a pivotal role in the European Union to finalize the pipeline agreement between Russia and Germany. After leaving office, he assumed the role of chairman of the Nord Stream AG supervisory board. However, he wasn’t the only political figure influenced by the Russians. Paavo Lipponen, the former Finnish prime minister who was active during the Nord Stream construction, was also compromised. Notably, the newly established pipeline facilitated the entry of Russian products into the Danish market, benefiting companies like Carlsberg and LEGO. This development bolstered the standing of Denmark’s Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen. Consequently, Russia faced no obstacles in obtaining permits for the new Baltic Sea pipeline construction. The first segment of the pipeline became operational in 2011, with the second receiving approval in 2012. Together, both segments were designed to achieve a capacity of transporting 55 billion cubic meters of

¹² S. Pirani, J. Stern, K. Yafimava, 2010, *The April 2010 Russo-Ukrainian gas agreement and its implications for Europe*.

¹³ J. Sharples, 2022, *Falling Like Dominoes: The Impact of Nord Stream on Russian Gas flows in Europe*.

natural gas, although this full capacity has never been utilized.¹⁴ In 2011, a plan appeared to expand the Nord Stream Pipeline under the codename Nord Stream 2; the pipeline was estimated to be able to transport 110 billion cubic meters of gas, which is twice as much as the NS 1. In 2015, the project faced criticism because of concerns about its true economic purpose; for comparison, Poland's demand is only 18 million cubic meters. It is important to mention that Poland's anti-monopoly body, UOKiK, in 2016, stated The Nord Stream 2 project would eliminate competition and terminate the proposed joint venture responsible for constructing and operating the gas pipeline. To postpone further progress on Nord Stream 2, Poland and Denmark agreed to establish an exclusive economic zone, compelling Nord Stream 2 AG to devise an alternative route for the pipeline. Currently, the Nord Stream 2 pipeline is non-operational following an attack involving pyrotechnics aimed at destroying underwater infrastructure. On September 26, 2022, the Danish national seismic network detected two potential explosions, resulting in a gas leak from both the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines, leading to their shutdown.¹⁵ In September 2021, the construction of the project was finalized. By November 2021, the German Federal Network Agency halted the pipeline's certification until Nord Stream 2 AG transferred assets to its German counterpart to adhere to German regulations. On February 22, 2022, Germany ceased the certification process in reaction to Russia's military buildup on the Ukrainian border, preceding the invasion that commenced two days later. On September 26, 2022, gas leaks were identified on Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 due to the aforementioned explosions. The company owning Nord Stream 2 is nearing insolvency due to sanctions imposed on the project and Gazprom by the USA.¹⁶

1.2 Russian Natural Gas, Coal, and Oil and the European Union Energy Market

¹⁴ J. Sharples, 2022, *Falling Like Dominoes: The Impact of Nord Stream on Russian Gas flows in Europe*.

¹⁵ B. Szturomski, R. Kiciński, 2022, *Explosion Effects in the Vicinity of The Nord Stream 2 Pipeline on the Environment – Theoretical Analysis*.

¹⁶ S. Wood, 2023, *Germany and Nord Stream 2: Evolution and end of an incongruous policy*.

When discussing Russia's energy game, we should mention market shares, revenues, and the biggest recipients of oil, natural gas, and coal from Russia. The total volume of crude oil exported to Europe reached 113 million metric tons in 2021, which constituted around 25-30% of the EU's total crude oil import that year. Leading importers of oil from Russia were Germany (24 million metric tons), the Netherlands (22 million metric tons), Poland (18 million metric tons), and Italy (13 million metric tons). Oil was sold at a price ranging from \$67 to \$68 per barrel for Urals crude, with the Brent benchmark averaging \$70 per barrel. The total export volume of natural gas to the European Union reached around 168 billion cubic meters in 2021, representing around 40% of the EU's natural gas imports. Key importers included Germany (55 billion cubic meters), Italy (29 billion cubic meters), the Netherlands (11 billion cubic meters), and France (9 billion cubic meters), with prices ranging around \$250 to \$300 per tcm under long-term contracts; \$200 to \$1,000 per tcm on the spot market. The coal market volume was approximately 223 million tons, making Russia the third-largest exporter of that commodity in the world that year. Key markets were the Asia-Pacific Region and Europe, with key importers being China (53 million tons), Germany (21.7 million tons), the Netherlands (15.5 million tons), Turkey (13.2 million tons), and Poland (8.3 million tons). Revenues from Russian coal exports in 2021 are estimated to be 17.6 billion dollars, which represents about 1 percent of their GDP that year, with an average price of coal ranging from \$79 to \$100 per ton.^{17,18,19}

1.3 Russian Energy Resources Supply as a Means of Political Pressure

It is safe to say that the countries mentioned above were dependent on Russia, especially when it came to natural gas imports. The situation in 2009, when Russians, as a form of putting pressure on Europe, cut off the natural gas supply, shaking Eastern-Central-

¹⁷ IEA, 2022, *Russian supplies to global energy markets*.

¹⁸ V. Yermakov, 2024, *Follow the Money: Understanding Russia's oil and gas revenues*.

¹⁹ Statista, *Russian natural gas industry – statistics & facts*, [Russian natural gas industry - statistics & facts | Statista](#) [access: 24.08.2024].

European countries. Slovakia, which was impacted the most, had to announce a state of emergency because of a lack of natural gas.

Russia was obviously using its energy dominance to put pressure on Europe and force out reactions and decisions that were more favorable to it. We do not have to look far for an example in that matter. In 2022, during the ongoing invasion of Ukraine, the Russian Federation, through Gazprom, cut off its natural gas supply to Europe as a way to put pressure on the European Union to demand the revocation of sanctions and aid plans for Ukraine. To the Kremlin’s disappointment, Gazprom was left with massive financial troubles that will be discussed later in the article.



Figure 4: Russian influence in Europe. Source: M.H Çaşın, S. Kisacik , 2021, *Understanding the New Russian Energy Policy after the Crimean Crisis: A Case Study on Turkstream, Power of Siberia, and Nord Stream 2 Natural Gas Projects.*²⁰

This is one of the main reasons why European Union countries are trying to distance themselves from Russia, as it does not play fair. The Russian energy strategy gives it offensive capabilities, such as pressuring Ukraine to accept the Black Sea Fleet in its territorial waters around Crimea in exchange for lower gas prices, which contributed to the events of 2014. At the same time, they could use the same type of game to defend their own business if a country dependent on their energy was willing to go against them. Russia used its upper hand countless times, threatening other countries with a cut-off if they did not follow Russia’s political game.

²⁰ M. H. Çaşın, S. Kisacik, 2021, *Understanding the New Russian Energy Policy after the Crimean Crisis: A Case Study on Turkstream, Power of Siberia, and Nord Stream 2 Natural Gas Projects.*

It is crucial for all Central-Eastern European nations and the Balkans to address Russian actions to prevent the Nord Stream 2 and Turk Stream pipelines from becoming fully functional before the region formulates a plan to mitigate the impact of halting transit services through Poland and Ukraine and to achieve independence from Russian energy sources.

2. EU Sanctions on Russian Hydrocarbons after the 2022 Invasion of Ukraine

2.1 “Special Military Operation”

On February 24, 2022, Russia started a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which since then has been called by Russian authorities the special military operation and not an invasion.²¹ The initial invasion began with a rapid assault from the Russian Federation but was quickly slowed down by Russian troubles with logistics, which Ukrainian Forces took advantage of and successfully prevented the fall of Kyiv. After the failure to capture Kyiv, the Russian Federation shifted its attention towards eastern regions such as Donbas, which suffered one of the heaviest and most prolonged fights in this ongoing conflict. Ukrainian forces between the late summer of 2022 and early winter of 2023 launched counter-offensive efforts, which have proved harder than initially thought but achieved significant victories like the liberation of Kherson. After the counter-offensive, conflict settled into into a stalemate between the Russian Federation and Ukraine. The stalemate has been holding up since 2023, with minor victories and failures on both sides, and there seems to be no major factor that will decide between the winner and loser at this time.²²

2.2 The Sanctions Imposed on the Russian Federation

Before discussing the sanctions imposed by the EU on the Russian energy sector, it is worthwhile to identify what is meant in this article when the term is used. Sanctions are

²¹ A. Urman, M. Makhorthyk, 2022, *My war is your special operation: Engagement with pro- and anti-regime framing of the war in Ukraine on Russian social media.*

²² S. Sestanovich, 2024, *What Happened to ‘Stalemate’ in Ukraine?*

defined here and understood as forms of measures implemented by a country or group of countries aimed against a certain country, group of countries, or even individuals. They are intended to enforce compliance and punish violations of international law or to achieve political objectives. Sanctions can take different forms and are typically intended to exert economic, political, or diplomatic pressure. This article will focus on economic sanctions imposed on the Russian Federation.

Various sanctions have been forced on the Russian Federation since the beginning of the war. The ones that will be discussed in the article are the sanctions against the energy sector, particularly natural gas, oil, and coal. The sanctions came in successive packages. The ones through which the EU targeted the energy sector of the Russian Federation are described below.

On February 25, 2022, the EU issued the second package of sanctions against the Russian Federation's energy sector, which included the prohibition of the "sale, supply, transfer or export to Russia of specific goods and technologies in oil refining."²³

On April 8, 2022, the fifth package of sanctions was introduced, which banned the import of all forms of Russian coal.²⁴

The sixth package was issued on June 3, 2022. It introduced crude and refined oil embargoes as well as the prohibition of insurance and supporting the transport of oil using maritime paths towards countries outside of EU.²⁵

On October 5, 2022, the EU deployed the eighth package of sanctions, which resulted in implementing the G7 Oil Price Cap.²⁶

²³ Council of EU, *Russia's military aggression against Ukraine: EU imposes sanctions against President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov and adopts wide ranging individual and economic sanctions*, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/02/25/russia-s-military-aggression-against-ukraine-eu-imposes-sanctions-against-president-putin-and-foreign-minister-lavrov-and-adopts-wide-ranging-individual-and-economic-sanctions/> [access: 24.08.2024].

²⁴ Council of EU, *Council Regulation (EU) 2022/576*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32022R0576> [access: 24.08.2024].

²⁵ Council of EU, *Official Journal*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2022:153:TOC> [access: 24.08.2024].

²⁶ Council of EU, *Official Journal*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2022:259I:TOC> [access:24.08.2024].

On June 23, 2023, yet another sanctions were implemented as the eleventh package, which included the cessation of Russian oil imports via pipeline for Germany and Poland, the introduction of precise and specific exemptions to current export bans to allow the upkeep of the CPC (Caspian Pipeline Consortium) pipeline that carries Kazakh oil to the EU through Russia, and the prolongation of the exemption to the oil price cap for Sakhalin oil for Japan (until March 31, 2024).²⁷

The twelfth package entered into force on December 18, 2023. It tightened the earlier oil price cap and banned the import of LPG, affecting yearly imports valued at over €1 billion, with existing agreements being honored for up to 12 months.²⁸

The most recent, relevant to the energy sector, the most recent package of sanctions was issued by the EU on June 24, 2024. This fourteenth package introduced a ban on supplying goods, technology, or services to LNG projects being built in Russia, a ban on the transshipment of Russian LNG through EU harbors, a ban on the import of Russian LNG into specific terminals not linked to the EU gas pipeline network, and the listing of vessels aiding Russian military efforts.²⁹

2.3 Exemptions from Sanctions as a Way to Secure the EU Energy Market

It is worth mentioning the existence of some exemptions from sanctions on the EU's side that are supposed to secure Europe's energy sector from sudden disruptions. For example, a 12-month-long transition period was approved on December 18, 2023, concerning the LPG import ban, which is supposed to save the European energy market from sudden loss and disturbance of the biggest LPG provider before a permanent import

²⁷ Council of EU, *EU adopts 11th package of sanctions against Russia for its continued illegal war against Ukraine*, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_3429 [access: 24.08.2024].

²⁸ Council of EU, *EU adopts 12th package of sanctions against Russia for its continued illegal war against Ukraine*, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_6566 [access: 24.08.2024].

²⁹ Council of EU, *COUNCIL REGULATION (EU) 2024/1745*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32024R1745> [access: 24.08.2024].

ban of the mentioned LPG from Russia.³⁰ Another example comes from sanctions that came into play on June 3, 2022.³¹ For seaborne crude oil, spot market transactions and execution of existing contracts will be available for six months after approval of the mentioned sanctions, while for petroleum products, these will be permitted for eight months after acceptance of sanctions. European Union members with a specific reliance on pipeline deliveries from the Russian Federation can benefit from a provisional exemption, allowing the continued receipt of crude oil via pipeline until the European Council decides otherwise. However, Member States availing of this exemption are prohibited from reselling such crude oil and petroleum products to other Member States or EU countries. Due to certain unique geographical conditions, a significant temporary exception has been granted to Bulgaria until the end of 2024, permitting the continued import of crude oil and petroleum products via maritime transport. Additionally, Croatia has been permitted, until the end of 2023, to import Russian vacuum gas oil essential for the operation of its oil refinery. There have been measures implemented that include oil transportation services, which, after a wind-down period of six months,³² EU Oil Transportation services will be barred from underwriting and funding the shipment, primarily via sea routes, of oil to nations outside the EU. This action will significantly hinder Russia's ability to export its crude oil and petroleum products globally, as EU transportation services are crucial providers for Russia. Additionally, there was an exemption to the G7 oil price cap for Sakhalin oil for Japan until a specified period until March 31, 2024. Russia is not a bystander in terms of sanctions because they are trying to force some pressure on the EU from their side as well. For example, their very good ally, Hungary, gives a relatively large amount of Schengen visas to Russian and Belarussian citizens, which is a protest against EU sanctions. As a member of

³⁰ Council of EU, *EU adopts 12th package of sanctions against Russia for its continued illegal war against Ukraine*, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_6566 [access: 24.08.2024]

³¹ Council of EU, *Official Journal*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2022:153:TOC> [access: 24.08.2024].

³² Council of EU, *Official Journal*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2022:153:TOC> [access: 24.08.2024].

the EU, Hungary is causing disturbances and raising tensions, as every other EU member is trying to have a more significant impact on Russia. It is important to mention another aspect of the Russian-Hungarian alliance, which is an expansion of their already existing Nuclear Power Plant Paks, by signing a deal with Russian Rosatom under the codename of Paks-II. In 2014, Hungary signed an agreement with Russia to finance and build new reactors, with Russia providing a loan of up to €10 billion to fund the project, covering about 80% of the total estimated cost. EU has been very negative towards this project. There are serious concerns about the transparency of the deal with Russia and the potential conflict of interest with EU competition and energy market regulations. Hungary's relationship with Russia regarding that project is very conflicting with the EU's plan of breaking ties with the Russian energy sector. The project is not yet underway, and the planned start of modernization is set back for 2030 since the delay is caused by rapidly rising geopolitical tensions towards Russia. It is safe to say that Russia somewhat pressures Hungary because it is in Russia's business to cause as much pressure on the EU as possible. Since Hungary is trying to secure its own energy independence, it is a fair deal for them.

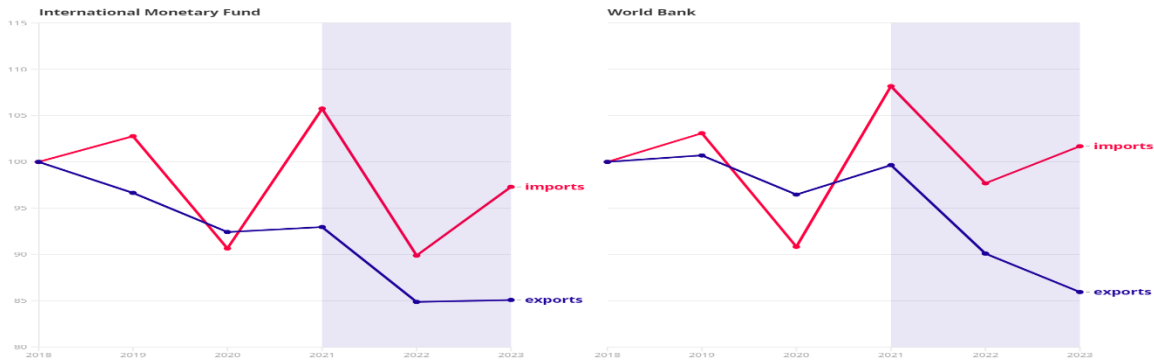
3. The Impact of the EU Sanctions on the Russian Energy Sector and the Country's Budget

3.1 The Current Share of Russian Energy Imports in the EU Energy Sector

It is safe to say that the EU imposed sanctions on the Russian energy sector, which significantly impacted the functioning and overall budget of the Russian Federation.³³ As the European Union states on its own web site, 2022 was a bad year for the Russian economy since its GDP dropped by 2.1 percent, and for 2023, it forecasted a drop of another 2.5 percent.³⁴

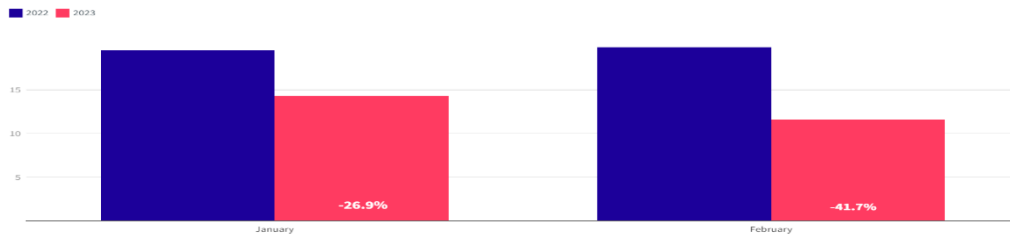
³³ Council of EU, *Impact of sanctions on the Russian economy*, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/impact-sanctions-russian-economy/> [access: 24.08.2024].

³⁴ Council of EU, *Impact of sanctions on the Russian economy*, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/impact-sanctions-russian-economy/> [access: 24.08.2024].



Picture 5: Graph Showcasing Russian Import – Export rates from 2018 till 2023, **Source:** Council of EU, *Impact of sanctions on the Russian economy*, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/impact-sanctions-russian-economy/>³⁵ [access: 24.08.2024].

According to data collected by the EU, sanctions took a serious toll on Russian exports. The graphs in pictures 5 and 6 show that it dropped significantly, around a 15 percent loss compared to 2018. The EU also reported a severe drop in fossil fuel revenues for Russia. According to data they achieved, revenues in January 2023 dropped by over 25 percent, but in February 2023, they fell by an astonishing 41,7 percent.



Picture 6: Sanctions effect on revenues, Source: Council of EU, *Impact of sanctions on the Russian economy*, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/impact-sanctions-russian-economy/>³⁶ [access: 24.08.2024]³⁷

The EU also stated that a staggering €300 billion of Russian Central Bank reserves have been immobilized in the EU, other G7 nations, and Australia (with two-thirds of these

³⁵ Council of EU, *Impact of sanctions on the Russian economy*, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/impact-sanctions-russian-economy/> [access: 24.08.2024].

³⁶ Council of EU, *Impact of sanctions on the Russian economy*, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/impact-sanctions-russian-economy/> [access: 24.08.2024].

³⁷ Council of EU, *Impact of sanctions on the Russian economy*, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/impact-sanctions-russian-economy/> [access: 24.08.2024].

funds frozen in the EU). Additionally, 70% of the assets within the Russian banking sector are subject to sanctions. Approximately €20 billion in assets belonging to over 1,500 sanctioned individuals and entities have been seized.

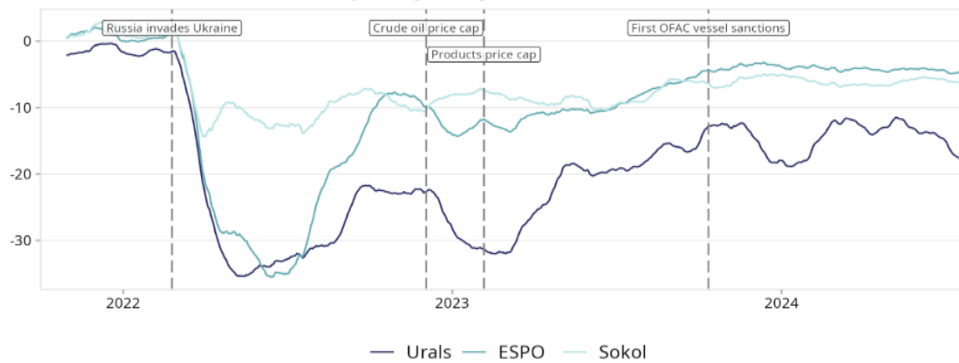
3.2 The Growing Significance of Asian Markets for the Russian Energy Sector

It is a fact that Russia lost its primary energy-selling market, which was Europe, due to the extensive sanctioning process. They decided to shift their attention towards more promising Asian markets, especially China and India. China is a promising route for Russian exports, especially natural gas. Gazprom has not disclosed specific data regarding its natural gas exports to China through the Power of Siberia pipeline. However, Reuters, referencing internal Russian government documents, indicates that the average annual price of piped gas supplied to China was \$297.30 per thousand cubic meters (tcm) in 2023 and is projected to be \$271.60 in 2024. Although the prices for 2023 were not officially published, the reported supply volume was 22.7 billion cubic meters (bcm), with the total cost of Chinese imports of piped gas from Russia amounting to \$6.4 billion. This implies that the average 2023 gas supply price from Russia to China was \$282/tcm (in 2020–2022, the price remained below \$300/tcm). Experts in this field also believe that the pipeline is not yielding significant profits for Russia, as the price has never reached the \$300/tcm mark.³⁸ Russia has offered a very encouraging oil discount so that their product would be more profitable to purchase than, for example, US products.

³⁸ V. Milov, *Oil, gas, and war: The effect of sanctions on the Russian energy industry*, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/content-series/russia-tomorrow/oil-gas-and-war/> [access: 24.08.2024]

Discount of Russian oil prices to Brent over time

Discount of oil (USD/bbl) with 30 day rolling average



Picture 7: Discount of Russian Brent oil prices. Source: P. Katinas, *Russia's fossil fuel export earnings continue to slide for a fourth consecutive month, despite rise in revenues from pipeline gas*, <https://energyandcleanair.org/july-2024-monthly-analysis-of-russian-fossil-fuel-exports-and-sanctions/>³⁹ [access: 24.08.2024].

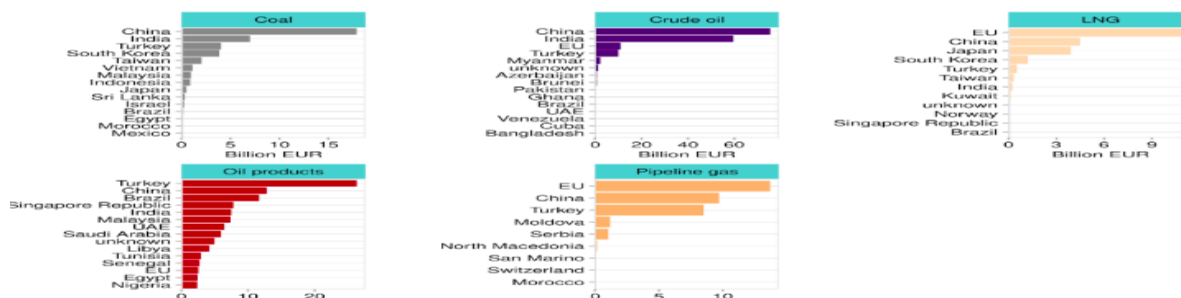
Regarding oil exports to Asia, Russian oil suppliers have successfully minimized discounts in the region. During Q2 2023, Urals crude prices bounced back to \$55–58 per barrel. They surpassed \$60 per barrel in July 2023 and climbed to \$80 per barrel by September 2023. By April 2024, the price of Russian Urals export crude was approximately \$68 per barrel, significantly higher than the G7 oil price cap, highlighting its ineffectiveness.⁴⁰ Particularly during the cap's operational period, ships owned or insured by G7+ nations continued to transport Russian oil from all Russian port regions where the average exported crude oil prices exceeded the price cap. These instances warrant investigation by enforcement agencies for potential sanctions violations.⁴¹ In a report created by CREDA in July 2024, picture 8 show that China is a leader in the purchase of Russian coal, crude oil and is slightly behind the EU with the purchase of LNG and pipeline gas and slightly below Turkey in the purchase of oil products. However, India is just below

³⁹ P. Katinas, *Russia's fossil fuel export earnings continue to slide for a fourth consecutive month, despite rise in revenues from pipeline gas*, <https://energyandcleanair.org/july-2024-monthly-analysis-of-russian-fossil-fuel-exports-and-sanctions/> [access: 24.08.2024]

⁴⁰ V. Milov, *Oil, gas, and war: The effect of sanctions on the Russian energy industry*, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/content-series/russia-tomorrow/oil-gas-and-war/> [access: 24.08.2024]

⁴¹ P. Katinas, *Russia's fossil fuel export earnings continue to slide for a fourth consecutive month, despite rise in revenues from pipeline gas*, <https://energyandcleanair.org/july-2024-monthly-analysis-of-russian-fossil-fuel-exports-and-sanctions/> [access: 24.08.2024]

China regarding coal and crude oil purchases.⁴²⁴³ China has acquired 47% of Russia’s crude oil exports, with India following at 37%. Regarding oil products, Turkey stands as the primary purchaser, obtaining 24% of Russia’s oil product exports, while China accounts for 12%. The European Union predominantly bought pipeline gas, securing 39% of Russian pipeline gas exports, with China purchasing 28%. Similarly, the EU emerged as the leading buyer of LNG, contributing to 50% of Russia’s LNG exports, followed by China at 20%. Between December 2022 and the end of July 2024, China acquired 45% of all coal exports from Russia, with India in second place at 18%.



Picture 8: Share of countries in import of certain commodities from Russia. Source: P. Katinas, *Russia’s fossil fuel export earnings continue to slide for a fourth consecutive month, despite rise in revenues from pipeline gas*, <https://energyandcleanair.org/july-2024-monthly-analysis-of-russian-fossil-fuel-exports-and-sanctions/>⁴⁴ [access: 24.08.2024].

It is important to mention a project named Power of Siberia 2 (PS-2) as a lifeline for Putin’s energy monopoly. Still, it does not come as easily as the Kremlin would imagine. PS-2, with its 50 billion cubic meters of yearly capacity (similar to Nord Stream 1), could offset nearly half of the reduction in Russian pipeline gas exports to the EU between 2021 and 2023 has not prompted China to make any commitments. China has the advantage of time regarding the Power of Siberia 2 (PS-2) pipeline, as it does not require natural gas

⁴² P. Katinas, *Russia’s fossil fuel export earnings continue to slide for a fourth consecutive month, despite rise in revenues from pipeline gas*, <https://energyandcleanair.org/july-2024-monthly-analysis-of-russian-fossil-fuel-exports-and-sanctions/> [access: 24.08.2024]

⁴³ P. Katinas, *Russia’s fossil fuel export earnings continue to slide for a fourth consecutive month, despite rise in revenues from pipeline gas*, <https://energyandcleanair.org/july-2024-monthly-analysis-of-russian-fossil-fuel-exports-and-sanctions/> [access: 24.08.2024]

⁴⁴ P. Katinas, *Russia’s fossil fuel export earnings continue to slide for a fourth consecutive month, despite rise in revenues from pipeline gas*, <https://energyandcleanair.org/july-2024-monthly-analysis-of-russian-fossil-fuel-exports-and-sanctions/> [access: 24.08.2024]

immediately. The Chinese government has determined that it will not need significant amounts of gas until at least the mid-2030s. A crucial factor for Beijing is the price; China aims to secure a lower price for PS-2 gas than it did for PS-1 gas, given its stronger negotiating position with Russia compared to 2014 when the PS-1 supply contract was signed. The future of PS-2 will partly depend on Beijing's evaluation of the relative risks of increased reliance on Russian pipeline gas versus greater dependence on LNG imports. PS-2 would boost Russia's pipeline capacity to China to 98 billion cubic meters per year. If this capacity is constructed and fully utilized by 2030, China's net import dependence on Russian pipeline gas could reach 40 percent by 2030, similar to the EU's dependence before Russia's invasion of Ukraine.⁴⁵ Moreover, that pipeline is considerably shorter than the proposed Power of Siberia 2 pipeline, intended to transport natural gas from western Siberia to China, prompts the essential question of whether Russian gas exports to China will ever be economically viable.^{46, 47}

3.3 Russia's Ways to Avoiding Sanctions

Russia circumvents sanctions primarily through the use of "shadow tankers," which are unregistered and unsupervised vessels transporting oil beyond the reach of sanctions. In July 2024, 36 percent of Russian seaborne crude oil and its derivatives were carried by tankers adhering to the oil price cap. The remainder was transported by "shadow tankers," thus evading the price cap policy imposed by Russia and the G7. A significant 81 percent of the total value of Russian seaborne crude oil was moved via these shadow tankers. These vessels managed 37 percent of Russia's total volume of oil products in July 2024. That month, 424 vessels exported Russian crude oil and oil products, with 229 being shadow tankers, highlighting the extensive scale of this operation. In July 2024, Russian oil worth 674

⁴⁵ E. Dows, A. Losz, T. Mitrova, 2024, *The Future of the Power of Siberia 2 Pipeline*

⁴⁶ V. Milov, *Oil, gas, and war: The effect of sanctions on the Russian energy industry*, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/content-series/russia-tomorrow/oil-gas-and-war/> [access: 24.08.2024]

⁴⁷ E. Dows, A. Losz, T. Mitrova, 2024, *The Future of the Power of Siberia 2 Pipeline*

million euros underwent ship-to-ship (STS) transfers in EU waters. Of these transfers, 65 percent were facilitated by tankers covered by G7+ insurance. STS transfers of Russian oil significantly undermine sanctions by enabling Russia to evade them and price caps by splitting the cargo among multiple buyers and blending lower-priced Russian oil with non-Russian oil.⁴⁸ Overall, the volume of operation is already extensive and seems to be expanding with the flow of time, which poses a threat to the actual effectiveness of sanctions placed on Russia by Europe because if they continue this procedure without any repercussions, their budget is going to slowly rebuild itself to at least a better state where it is going to fuel Russian war machine against Ukraine. It is in total opposition to what sanctions are meant to achieve.⁴⁹

3.4 The Impact of the EU Energy Sector Sanctions on Russia's Budget

The Russian Federation released a report on their budget situation in 2024. Their federal budget deficit is estimated to sit at 929 billion rubles, or 0.5 percent of GDP, in H1 2024. Budget revenues rose 38 percent year-on-year to 17.093 trillion rubles in H1 2024, while budget expenses rose 22.3 percent year-on-year to 18.022 trillion rubles in the reporting period. The ministry said there was a sustained positive trend for critical non-oil and gas revenues for the federal budget, up by 27 percent year-on-year, and the budget system as a whole, up by 24%. Non-oil and gas revenues for the federal budget went up 26.6% year-on-year in H1 2024 to 11.395 trillion rubles. Receipt of sales taxes, including VAT, increased by 17.6% and was above the targeted amount. Oil and natural gas revenues surged 68.5 percent year-on-year to 5.698 trillion rubles, mainly due to rising prices for

⁴⁸ P. Katinas, *Russia's fossil fuel export earnings continue to slide for a fourth consecutive month, despite rise in revenues from pipeline gas*, <https://energyandcleanair.org/july-2024-monthly-analysis-of-russian-fossil-fuel-exports-and-sanctions/> [access: 24.08.2024]

⁴⁹ P. Katinas, *Russia's fossil fuel export earnings continue to slide for a fourth consecutive month, despite rise in revenues from pipeline gas*, <https://energyandcleanair.org/july-2024-monthly-analysis-of-russian-fossil-fuel-exports-and-sanctions/> [access: 24.08.2024].

Russian oil and further reduction of discounts.⁵⁰ The financial situation of one of the largest companies in Russia is dramatic. Gazprom is on its knees, not even because of sanctions but solely because of its decision to cut itself from its largest market, the European Union, in mid-2022 to create issues for EU members during the 2022-2023 winter time. The EU actually managed to secure different natural gas supplies for winter and, in the end, went through it relatively smoothly, to the disappointment of Putin's regime. Ultimately, Gazprom's losses were immense. As per the company's report, its revenue dropped by 41% year-on-year in the first half of 2023, while operating profits plummeted by 71% and natural gas output decreased by 25%.⁵¹ In the first quarter of 2024, Gazprom announced a net deficit of nearly \$7 billion for 2023, its first yearly loss in over two decades. Additionally, Gazprom's upstream gas production base is now cut off due to the absence of infrastructure linking its primary western Siberian fields to alternative Asian markets. The company also did not construct any LNG facilities in western Siberia, which, prior to the sanctions, would have allowed it to redirect natural gas to other markets.⁵²

Gazprom's entire business model has been devastated by its exit from the European gas market. The majority of its profits originated from the EU, and with significantly lower gas prices, Russia's domestic natural gas market cannot anticipate sustainable profits. Constructing a new gas pipeline infrastructure in China would necessitate substantial capital investments without guaranteeing clear profits. Building a pipeline to transport gas to India and other South Asian nations appears unfeasible due to the challenging mountainous terrain and geopolitical issues with potential transit countries like Afghanistan. Additionally, Gazprom halted the construction of planned new LNG projects due to a lack of access to essential Western technology. The domestic gas market and potential alternative

⁵⁰ International Information Group, *Russia posts budget deficit of 0.5% of GDP in H1 2024 vs 1.4% of GDP in H1 2023*, <https://interfax.com/newsroom/top-stories/104131/> [access: 24.08.2024]

⁵¹ International Information Group, *Gazprom reduced gas production by 25% in the first half of the year*, <https://www.interfax.ru/business/923215> [access:24.08.2024]

⁵² V. Milov, *Oil, gas, and war: The effect of sanctions on the Russian energy industry*, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/content-series/russia-tomorrow/oil-gas-and-war/> [access: 24.08.2024]

piped-gas export markets will not be able to compensate for the losses from the EU market, and the development of LNG exports remains obstructed due to the lack of access to critical Western technology, leaving Gazprom in disarray without a promising future.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the primary issue under discussion, namely the European Union's pursuit of energy independence, has seen significant progress largely due to the effective, although not without errors, implementation of sanctions. These measures have been a powerful tool in reducing the flow of hydrocarbons into the EU. Notably, Gazprom, as a consequence of sanctions, has ceased natural gas exports to the EU, oil imports have been subjected to stringent embargoes and price caps, and coal has been entirely banned from the European market. Consequently, Russia has lost its most significant leverage over European countries that were heavily dependent on its energy resources, marking a substantial victory for the EU in its quest for independence from the Kremlin. It is a fact that Russia has endured severe losses due to its aggressive political stance, particularly in the energy sector. The sanctions have drastically reduced revenues, placing Gazprom, one of Russia's largest domestic enterprises, on the brink of bankruptcy. Additionally, Russia has lost the EU as its largest market for hydrocarbons. While the Kremlin attempts to circumvent sanctions through illicit means and seeks alternative markets for its resources, the situation remains dire. A critical project for Russia, the Power of Siberia 2, is facing significant delays as Mongolia, a key participant, has just announced that it will not fund the project for at least the next four years. This delay hampers Russia's potential new revenue streams, and even if the project is eventually realized, Russia will still need to negotiate favorable terms for gas pricing.

The outlook for the European Union appears promising, as Russia no longer holds the same leverage over the energy sector. However, given the ongoing conflict near the EU's borders, uncertainties remain. Should the conflict conclude in Ukraine's favor, it is

imperative that Europe does not revert to previous energy dealings with Russia. The EU has now gained a strategic advantage in the energy sector, which must be maintained. Conversely, Russia faces the arduous task of addressing its revenue shortfalls and rebuilding its budget, a process that will be both difficult and prolonged, especially given its ongoing state of war and the setbacks in its export strategies.

Bibliography

Caşın, M. H., & Kısacık, S. (2021). Understanding the new Russian energy policy after the Crimean crisis: A case study on TurkStream, Power of Siberia, and Nord Stream 2 natural gas projects.

Council of the European Union. (2022). COUNCIL REGULATION (EU) 2022/576.

Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32022R0576>

Council of the European Union. (2024). COUNCIL REGULATION (EU) 2024/1745.

Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32024R1745>

Council of the European Union. (2023). EU adopts 11th package of sanctions against Russia for its continued illegal war against Ukraine. Retrieved from

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_3429

Council of the European Union. (2023). EU adopts 12th package of sanctions against Russia for its continued illegal war against Ukraine. Retrieved from

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_6566

Council of the European Union. (n.d.). Impact of sanctions on the Russian economy.

Retrieved from <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/impact-sanctions-russian-economy/>

Council of the European Union. (2022). Official Journal. Retrieved from [https://eur-](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2022:153:TOC)

[lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2022:153:TOC](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2022:153:TOC)

- Council of the European Union. (2022). Official Journal. Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2022:259I:TOC>
- Council of the European Union. (2022). Russia's military aggression against Ukraine: EU imposes sanctions against President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov and adopts wide-ranging individual and economic sanctions.
- De Mott, F. (2024). One key country is holding up a natural-gas pipeline that would deepen ties between Russia and China.
- Dows E., Losz A., Mitrova T., 2024, *The Future of the Power of Siberia 2 Pipeline*
- Kontorovich, A. E., Eder, L. V., Filimonova, I. V., & Nikitenko, S. M. (2018). Key Problems in the Development of the Power of Siberia Project.
- Schislyaeva, E., Evgrafova, I., Butakova, N., & Mishalchenko, Y. (2022). The EU - Russia - Turkey energy triangle: legal and economic conditions of gas transportation via the TurkStream pipeline.
- Götz, R. (2018). Russian Natural Gas Exports To Europe.
- International Information Group. (2024). Gazprom reduced gas production by 25% in the first half of the year. Retrieved from <https://www.interfax.ru/business/923215>
- International Information Group. (2024). Russia posts budget deficit of 0.5% of GDP in H1 2024 vs 1.4% of GDP in H1 2023. Retrieved from <https://interfax.com/newsroom/top-stories/104131/>
- Katinas, P. (2024). Russia's fossil fuel export earnings continue to slide for a fourth consecutive month, despite rise in revenues from pipeline gas. Retrieved from <https://energyandcleanair.org/july-2024-monthly-analysis-of-russian-fossil-fuel-exports-and-sanctions/>
- Lorenz, W., & Zaręba, S. (2022). Consequences of the Nord Stream 1 and 2 Gas Pipeline Explosions.
- Overland, I., & Loginova, J. (2023). The Russian coal industry in an uncertain world: Finally pivoting to Asia?

- Pirani, S., Stern, J., & Yafimava, K. (2009). The Russo-Ukrainian gas dispute of January 2009: a comprehensive assessment.
- Rodríguez-Gómez, N., Zaccarelli, N., & Bolado-Lavin, R. (2016). European ability to cope with a gas crisis. Comparison between 2009 and 2014.
- Schislyaeva, E., Evgrafova, I., Butakova, N., & Mishalchenko, Y. (2022). The EU - Russia - Turkey energy triangle: legal and economic conditions of gas transportation via the TurkStream pipeline.
- Sestanovich, S. (2024). What Happened to 'Stalemate' in Ukraine?
- Sharples, J. (2022). Falling Like Dominoes: The Impact of Nord Stream on Russian Gas flows in Europe.
- Statista. (n.d.). Russian natural gas industry - statistics & facts. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/topics/5595/russian-natural-gas-industry/>
- Szturomski, B., & Kiciński, R. (2022). Explosion effects in the vicinity of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline on the environment - theoretical analysis.
- Urman, A., & Makhorthyk, M. (2022). My war is your special operation: Engagement with pro- and anti-regime framing of the war in Ukraine on Russian social media.
- Vatansever, A. (2017). Is Russia building too many pipelines? Explaining Russia's oil and gas export strategy.
- Wood, S. (2023). Germany and Nord Stream 2: evolution and end of an incongruous policy.
- Yermakov, V. (2024). Follow the Money: Understanding Russia's oil and gas revenues.
- Zaniewicz, M. (n.d.). New Gas Pipeline Geopolitics in Central and Eastern Europe. Retrieved from <https://warsawinstitute.org/new-gas-pipeline-geopolitics-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>

The impact of Hungarian and Slovak foreign policy on the communicational cohesion of the European Union.

Martyna Brzeznicka
Student of Bachelor's Program
War Studies University

Supervisor: PhD, Assoc. Professor **Ilona Urych**

Abstract

The article presents the research and its results of the analysis of Hungarian and Slovak foreign policies in the face of communicational cohesion in the European Union. In particular, the analysis provides the current state of both the Hungarian and Slovak political stage as well as the historical context regarding Hungary and Slovakia's relations with Russia and Ukraine after the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war in 2014. The conducted research clearly indicates that linkages with Russia are more crucial and beneficial for both states rather than linkages of all kinds with Ukraine. The importance also lies in the ideologies, which can be perceived as different but have the exact same core. The impact on the communicational cohesion of the European Union is crucial since both Slovakia and Hungary present a different perspective of cooperation, which affects the effectiveness of communication and coordination within all the European Union's member states. This certainly creates a small but fringe fraction as well as hinders preparing the perfect, cohesive stance in the face of the given situation. The exact instances of Hungarian and Slovak skeptical activities have been examined and particularly depicted. The article is accomplished with particular conclusions.

Keywords: Hungary, Slovakia, Ukraine, Russia, skepticism, international relations, strategic communication, European Union

Introduction

At the beginning of 2020, the world entered very specific and complex times, when the infosphere as overall is constantly being used as one of the most dangerous weapons – sometimes even more dangerous than the nuclear bomb. While the weapons of mass destruction are something to hear about but hidden for an average individual, information and its network are literal parts of human abstract thinking. The most crucial problem regarding them is that they can be easily manipulated, which produces a whole new, infected infosphere. The international community has been experiencing lots of tension during the last years – the Russian invasion of Ukraine, still escalating Israel-Palestine conflict, civil wars, divesting people of liberty, and political tensions inside the states, are just a few instances. The European Union as the most important regional organization stands for harmonization, convergence, and mutual recognition, since it leads to cohesion that makes this structure function properly. However, there are states that value freedom of stance and full independence over unity. Hungary and Slovakia are states very well-known because of their very controversial prime ministers – Robert Fico (Slovakia) and Viktor Orban (Hungary). Despite the somehow questionable relations, their political identity is not as drifted as perceived – they share quite an outstanding perspective on politics towards the eastern states – the pro-Russian stance. Even though they identify themselves as far different concerning their political options – Fico identifies himself as a leftist leader, while Orban – a rightist leader. As all the affiliated states continue to help Ukraine in many ways, and they try to cut off every single, sometimes even the slightest linkage with the Aggressor, half of the “Visegrad states”¹ are unwilling to follow and implement this activity. The narrative that is openly used by both Slovak and Hungarian Prime Ministers and being cascaded by their political parties as well as societies is something more than using the well-deserved right to

¹ “ Visegrad states” since Hungary and Slovakia are members of the Visegrad Group alongside Poland and Czech Republic

express shared beliefs, doctrines, and opinions – it is passive violence facing other state's integrity, independence as well as regional or international peace.

The aim of this article is to analyze the historical background of the Slovak and Hungarian relations with Ukraine and the Russian Federation since 1993 but primarily since 2014, review the skeptical or praising activities conducted by given states, and the impact of these matters on the European Union's information cohesion. Thus, the content of this article responds to the following research problems:

- What do Hungarian and Slovak political stages look like and how do they function?
- What are states' relations with both Ukraine and Russia primarily since 2014?
- How do societies react to the Russian invasion of Ukraine?
- How do the actions of Hungarian and Slovak governments affect the communicational cohesion in the European Union?

The article is based on available literature as well as internet sources.

Main Part

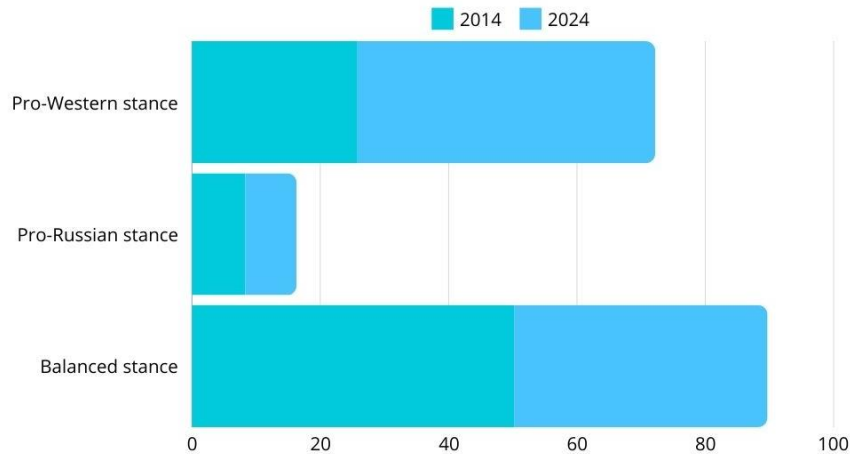
THE SLOVAK DISAGREEMENT

With the fall of the Soviet Union (1991) and the dissolution of Czechoslovakia (1993), Slovakia needed to pay particular attention to the newly revived states on its closest East. The Baltic States and Belarus were never the priority of the Slovak foreign policy, since they are not the direct neighbors. However, the presence of such power as the Russian Federation could and still can affect the relations with the bordering states. Since 2014, as it has been one of the most important dates for European Union countries regarding cooperation with both sides of the conflict, the divided authorities of Slovakia cannot develop a cohesive stance. It is simply caused by the difference on the President-government level. Andrej Kiska (2014-2019), and Zuzana Čaputová (2019-2024) were the nonpartisan heads of the state but as Petr Pellegrini (2024-?) from the HLAS-SD party rose to power the difference got blurred. There were also a few Prime Ministers but the main figure among them all was

(2006-2010, 2012-2018) and still is (as he has been ruling the government since 2023) is Robert Fico. Fico is well-known to be a very controversial persona in the Slovak political world but the one thing that is surely known about him is his pro-Russian stance. Running the government alongside Kiska and Čaputová was quite problematic due to a lack of understanding and different perspectives on internal as well as foreign policy. The conflict got even more heated when Čaputová was elected – her pro-European and trusted position was a huge problem, even though in the final they had been cooperating for not even a year. When Pellegrini rose to power in June 2024, Fico finally got equally the same partner² to develop the pro-Russian perspective on foreign policy. Nevertheless, the office of the president is not as crucial as the prime minister's – the president is more of a ceremonial, theoretical position rather than functioning practically. Clearly one of the most important matters for the Slovak government as overall was the energy import, which has always taken place from Russia through Ukraine. Despite the skepticism, the main goal of foreign policy was to ensure that the situation in its eastern neighbor was as stable as possible. Since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war, they have been trying to make relations with both states secure, although Russia was, is, and will always be the more prioritized partner. The Slovak government is also escalating the tension by openly claiming that “at least since 2014, since Maidan, it has been under total influence and control of the USA”³. Even though they present a pro-Russian perspective, they are aware that fully choosing Russia over Ukraine would make them somehow excluded and lose very important linkages of all kinds in the European Union as well as NATO. The “How are you, Slovakia” survey that is being conducted recurrently presents the following results regarding the societal aspect:

² Since both Pellegrini and Fico were elite members of the SMER party. Given the fact that even after the tragic murder presumably commissioned by Fico and his subsequent demission, he did not want to resign as a leader of the SMER. This affected especially Pellegrini, who eventually established a new party – HLAS-SD.

³ Robert Fico's statement from the interview in national radio, January 2024



Source: Lukovičová M., Seesame, (2024) "Na Slovensku po parlamentných voľbách rastie prozápadná geopolitická orientácia"

As the diagram illustrates, Slovak society in 2024 is more and more favorable towards the pro-Western stance rather than the balanced stance, which was winning in 2014. The Slovak perspective on prioritizing Russia is worth mentioning – the results have slightly changed but not drastically at all. That means the internal cohesion its own deficits.

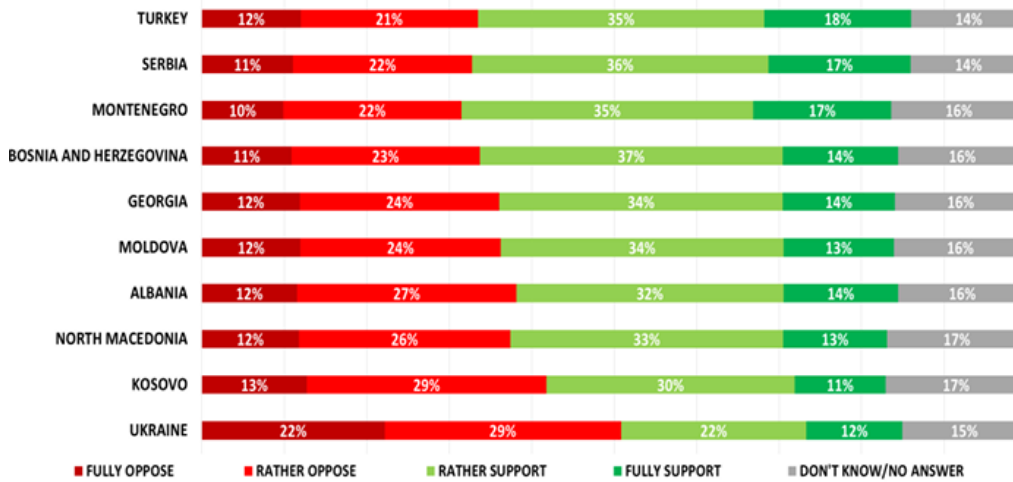
HUNGARIAN STRATEGIC CALCULATIONS

After the Iron Curtain broke in 1991 the Hungarian-Ukrainian relations do not belong to the easiest and calmest ones. There is a lot of pressure building, especially in the face of conflict. The conflict applies to the region in western Ukraine called Zakarpattia, where many nationalities live or have lived such as Romanians, Slovaks, Poles, Romani people, and primarily, Hungarians in the quantity of around 100 000. The main thing that destabilized the friendship of the Ukrainian and Hungarian governments was the Ukrainian education law, which was amended in 2017. According to this amendment, the teaching of the native language at the secondary and upper secondary levels became restricted. In the end, these regulations were never implemented, but they instantly made the relations between these two nations worse. That was one of the reasons, why Orbán's political direction got even

more to Russia rather than the European Union's which is naturally pro-Ukrainian. Hungary's prime minister who has been ruling the position since 2010, quickly transformed this incident into full-scale propaganda saying that Hungarians in the region of Zakarpattia are struggling with serious political persecution and Ukrainians are destroying the Hungarian culture. The Hungarian-Russian relations on the other hand are flourishing as much as they possibly can. However, they are quite difficult to remain maintained because of the European Union's sanctions and the overall stance of the European Union. The main point about Hungarian-Russian relations is the same as Slovak-Russian – energy. 2010 became the year of the official grand opening to the East – Hungarians turned towards Russia and perceived the Eastern power as the guarantor of Hungarian energy security. Moreover, both sides are ready to finish the deal that will have its final effect in building the nuclear power plant on the Hungarian territory. The government stated that they do not need brokers, especially in the shape of Ukraine, since it would most likely emasculate the security of energy imports. Another crucial instance is reactions to the sanctions provided by the EU. As Hungary withdrew financial support, they wanted to impose the removal of the OTP bank from the list of sanctioned companies. The pro-Russian stance is evident in the Hungarian infosphere too. Hungary has been accused of spreading Russian disinformation and propaganda multiple times, especially regarding the migration crisis on the Polish-Belarusian border, which is also the European Union's eastern border. After all, Orbán and his government are not supporting Ukrainian integration with NATO and the European Union, since they are fully aware, that it would definitely cause an enormous tension between Budapest and Moscow as well as possibly make Hungary lose prominent linkages.

Society's opinion mostly overlaps the government's statement – polls conducted by Hungarian non-governmental organization Policy Solutions present the following results:

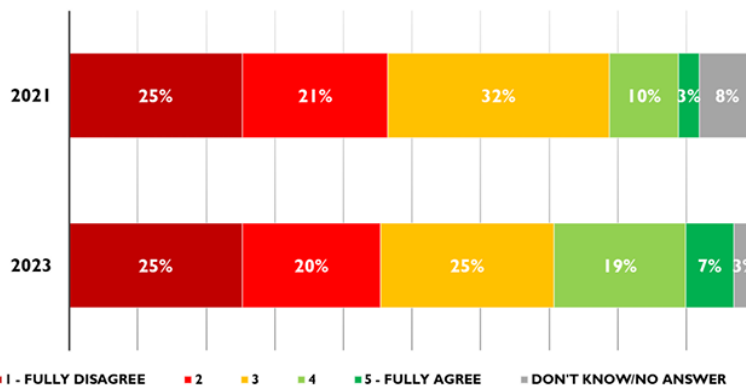
**Would you rather support or oppose the following countries to join the European Union?
(All respondents, %)**



Source: Policy Solutions (2023) “What kind of EU do Hungarians want? Hungarian Society and the European Union in 2023”

The diagram clearly presents that Hungarian society is opposed to Ukraine joining the European Union the most. It is mostly caused by the propaganda produced not only by the authorities themselves but also by the infected information all over social media – primarily X (former Twitter). The difference between opposing and supporting interviewees is not that serious but taking into consideration the results regarding other non-EU states – the difference is significant.

Hungary has interests in moving closer to Russia and away from the European Union (All respondents, %)



Source: Policy Solutions (2023) “The world through Hungarian eyes. Foreign policy attitudes in Hungary in 2023”

The second poll conducted by Policy Solutions presents slightly confusing results. Hungarians are mostly not willing to welcome Ukraine in the European Union, which is a pro-Russian sign in some way, but they do not think that their state is directly shifting towards Russia that much. It is clearly based on the benefits that come with membership in this organization. Living in a European Union member state has many advantages that are crucial not only on the political level but also on the social level.

Conclusion

The political stages of both states are well-known for their controversial perspectives on the war in Ukraine. Fico and Orban openly preach the pro-Russian stance as well as criticize proper actions taken by the European Union in the face of the Russian invasion. These bold statements created a fraction that not only affect the European Union's cohesion but also weakens the relations with other states – primarily the Visegrad ones. Both states prioritize relations with Russia even after the war began since the Eastern power can theoretically give more than Ukraine, especially in the energy security area. The social aspect is definitely the significant one given the fact that even though the opinions of the governments and citizens align, they also grow away from each other. All the skeptical and controversial activities of both governments are clearly weakening the European Union's main goal which is previously mentioned cohesion. Dialogue is needed between all the European Union member states in order to find common ground and compromise solutions and it should be treated as the main priority. Ignoring differences of opinion or insisting on a single line can lead to further divisions. The European Union should definitely develop a more coherent and effective communication strategy that takes into account the diversity of interests of member states as well as guarantees all the member states proper circumstances that will make them feel more secure under the EU's aegis. However, on the other hand, both states should definitely work hard enough to help find the middle ground

– the membership is an enormous privilege but also the necessity to cooperate even in the most inconvenient situation.

Bibliography

Bayer L. (2024) “Slovakia defends Russia ties after Czech Republic suspends talks”

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/mar/07/czech-republic-to-suspend-relations-with-slovakia-over-russia-support> [08.09.2024]

DW (2024) “Slovakia: Fico ally Pellegrini sworn in as president”

<https://www.dw.com/en/slovakia-fico-ally-pellegrini-sworn-in-as-president/a-69374048> [08.09.2024]

Górski M. (2024) “Słowacja ma nowego prezydenta. Zła wiadomość dla Ukrainy?
[KOMENTARZ]

https://defence24.pl/wojna-na-ukrainie-raport-specjalny-defence24/slowacja-ma-nowego-prezydenta-zla-wiadomosc-dla-ukrainy-komentarz?srsId=AfmBOoq7qO5gIBVOnDbtyJ1Ygu67fH93O5z7_rljY5lxxHrgW88hIAE5 [05.09.2024]

Hockenos P. (2024) „The Liberal President Who Has It All—and Is Giving Up”

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/02/15/slovakia-caputova-fico-president-populism/>
[05.09.2024]

Józwiak V. (2023) “Węgry wobec wojny rok po rozpoczęciu rosyjskiej inwazji”

<https://www.pism.pl/publikacje/wegry-wobec-wojny-rok-po-rozpozeciu-rosyjskiej-inwazji> [10.09.2024]

Józwiak V. (2021) „Stosunki Węgier z Rosją”

<https://www.pism.pl/publikacje/stosunki-wegier-z-rosja> [04.09.2024]

Kozioł W. (2024) „Orban i Fico sami na placu boju” [OPINIA]

<https://defence24.pl/geopolityka/orban-i-fico-sami-na-placu-boju-opinia>
[05.09.2024]

- Lukovičová M., Seesame, (2024) “Na Slovensku po parlamentných voľbách rastie prozápadná geopolitická orientácia”
https://www.sav.sk/index.php?lang=sk&doc=services-news&source_no=20&news_no=12071 [09.09.2024]
- Ogrodnik Ł, Żornaczuk T. (2023) “Slovaks' Perception of the War in Ukraine is Changing - a Socio-Political Perspective”
<https://pism.pl/publications/slovaks-perception-of-the-war-in-ukraine-is-changing-a-socio-political-perspective> [08.09.2024]
- Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich (2017) “Sąsiad odkrywany na nowo. Stosunki Czech, Słowacji i Węgier z Ukrainą”
- PAP (2023) „Magyar Nemzet”: pomimo gestów z obu stron stosunki węgiersko-ukraińskie są dalekie od normalizacji”
<https://www.pap.pl/aktualnosci/magyar-nemzet-pomimo-gestow-z-obu-stron-stosunki-wegiersko-ukrainskie-sa-dalekie-od> [13.09.2024]
- Policy Solutions (2023) “What kind of EU do Hungarians want? Hungarian Society and the European Union in 2023”
- Policy Solutions (2023) “The world through Hungarian eyes. Foreign policy attitudes in Hungary in 2023”
- Rumas J. (2023) “A Slovak-Hungarian Alliance?”
<https://www.gmfus.org/news/slovak-hungarian-alliance> [07.09.2024]
- Spike J. (2024) “Orban pushes back on aide's comment that Hungary wouldn't have fought a Russian invasion”
<https://www.ctvnews.ca/world/orban-pushes-back-on-aide-s-comment-that-hungary-wouldn-t-have-fought-a-russian-invasion-1.7054344> [07.09.2024]
- Wolska A. (2020) “Słowacja: Był „Kierunek”, będzie „Głos”. Były premier założył nową partię”

<https://www.euractiv.pl/section/demokracja/news/slowacja-byl-kierunek-bedzie-glos-byly-premier-zaklada-nowa-partie-kuciak-fico/> [15.09.2024]

Zahorakova T. (2016) „Fico: I Don't Want Conflict with Kiska; Some Things Don't Need Saying”

<https://newsnow.tasr.sk/fico-i-dont-want-conflict-with-kiska-some-things-dont-need-saying/> [06.09.2024]

The Role of Cyber Threats in the Russian War Against Ukraine; Impacts for the Future Conflicts

Salome Sachaleli

Student of Master's Program in Law
The Faculty of Law and International Relations of
Georgian Technical University

Abstract

The 21st century is the technological era. The past has taught humanity the values of technological advancement. The role of modern inventions must be distinctly underlined in warfare all around the world. The practical importance of the work derives from the topic relevance.

The Russia-Ukraine War, which started in 2014, sparked a conflict with far-reaching consequences not only for two countries involved, but also for the broader arena of military doctrine and tactics. This paper discusses and shows both the doctrine and tactics of ongoing Russia-Ukraine War in contemporary warfare by examining case studies, analyzing and strategic decisions.

Nowadays the first case of cyber conflict in a large-scale military one involving a major power is the war between Russia and Ukraine. The price of gained information or a damaged system is dramatic.

For Russia, every new attack opportunity is a new attack alternative. Today, the development has led us to artificial intelligence, which is a modern possibility of cyber attack. Development creates other new similar threats that countries have to deal with. The most vulnerable at this time is a small and developing state, which does not have enough strength to fight against given challenges. That is why it is important for small states to cooperate with the above mentioned bodies as, for example, the European Union Cyber Security Agency, which issues recommendations and helps states deal with modern cyber challenges.

It is also important to raise the awareness of the population and introduce teachings in schools, higher education institutions or services so that people know how to protect themselves in the social space and not become victims of disinformation, manipulation or cyber attacks.

Keywords : Russia-Ukraine War, far reaching consequences, newly shaped doctrine and tactics, cyber conflict.

Introduction

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which escalated dramatically in 2022, has not only been fought on traditional battlefields but also in cyberspace. Cyber warfare has emerged as a significant component of this conflict, influencing military strategies, public perceptions, and international relations. This essay explores the nature of cyber threats during the Russia-Ukraine war, the tactics employed by both sides, the impact on civilians and infrastructure, and the broader implications for global cybersecurity.

The Cyber Landscape of the Conflict

Before delving into the current situation, it's essential to understand the historical backdrop of cyber operations in the region. Tensions between Russia and Ukraine have roots that extend back to the 2014 annexation of Crimea, which marked a turning point in cyber warfare. Following this event, both nations began to build their cyber capabilities, leading to a series of attacks that would shape the ongoing conflict.¹

In modern warfare, cyber operations can serve various purposes: disrupting enemy communications, stealing sensitive information, sowing confusion, and shaping narratives. The Russia-Ukraine war exemplifies how these tactics can influence military outcomes and public sentiment.

Main Part

Key Cyber Threats

1. Malware and Ransomware Attacks

One of the most visible aspects of cyber warfare in the Russia-Ukraine conflict has been the use of malware and ransomware. Notable incidents include: NotPetya (2017): Initially targeting Ukraine, this malware spread globally, affecting businesses and infrastructure, resulting in billions of dollars in damage. Its sophistication demonstrated the potential for cyber attacks to reach far beyond the intended targets. Ransomware Attacks:

¹ N.B. The military invasion in Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk regions in 2014.

Cybercriminals and state-sponsored actors have increasingly employed ransomware as a tool of war, demanding ransoms in cryptocurrencies and further destabilizing affected regions.

2. Disinformation Campaigns

Disinformation has become a critical element of the cyber threats faced during the war. Both Russia and Ukraine have engaged in information warfare, using social media and online platforms to manipulate public perception: **Social Media Manipulation:** Russia has leveraged platforms like Facebook and Twitter to spread misinformation about Ukrainian forces, often portraying them as aggressors. Conversely, Ukraine has utilized social media to galvanize international support and counter false narratives. **Deep fakes and Synthetic Media:** The rise of deep fake technology poses new threats, allowing for the creation of realistic but fabricated content that can mislead audiences and create political unrest.

As the new European defense doctrine, approved by the European Council in March 2022, the Strategic Compass² recognizes cyber as a domain of warfare that must be protected through cooperation and close coordination. This is an important fundamental change for European Union policy, which traditionally emphasized cyber sustainability from the position of economic impact, rather than defense

Cyber attacks targeting critical infrastructure have become increasingly common. These operations aim to disrupt essential services and create chaos among civilian populations: **Power Grid Attacks:** In Ukraine, there have been multiple attacks on the power grid, including the infamous 2015 attack that left hundreds of thousands without electricity. Such incidents highlight the vulnerability of critical infrastructure to cyber threats. **Supply Chain Disruptions:** The war has also seen attempts to compromise supply chains, impacting

² Council of the European Union, 'A Strategic Compass for a stronger EU security and defense in the next decade', Press Release, 21 March 2022. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/03/21/a-strategic-compass-for-a-stronger-eu-security-and-defence-in-the-next-decade/>

everything from food distribution to medical supplies, further exacerbating the humanitarian crisis. The consequences of cyber warfare extend beyond military targets, significantly affecting civilian populations and critical infrastructure: The war has led to a severe humanitarian crisis, and cyber attacks exacerbate this situation. Disruptions to essential services, such as healthcare, water supply, and electricity, have had dire consequences for civilians. Hospitals have been targeted, making it difficult to provide care for the wounded and sick. The economic impact of cyber warfare cannot be understated. Businesses, both large and small, have suffered from disruptions caused by cyber attacks. The cost of recovery from such incidents can be astronomical, further destabilizing an already fragile economy. This economic strain can lead to increased unemployment and social unrest.

Ukraine's Cyber Defense Strategies

In response to the escalating cyber threats, Ukraine has implemented various strategies to bolster its cyber defenses:

- Collaboration with International Partners:** Ukraine has sought assistance from NATO and other international organizations to enhance its cyber capabilities. This collaboration has included sharing intelligence and best practices in cyber defense.
- Public Awareness Campaigns:** The Ukrainian government has launched initiatives to educate the public about cyber threats, encouraging vigilance and reporting suspicious activities.
- NATO's Recognition:** NATO has recognized the significance of cybersecurity in modern warfare, adapting its strategies to address these emerging threats.
- Cyber Defense Initiatives:** NATO has expanded its cyber defense initiatives, establishing the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence to enhance member states' resilience against cyber attacks.
- Sanctions and Diplomatic Pressure:** Western nations have imposed sanctions on Russia, aiming to deter cyber operations and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict serves as a case study for the evolving nature of cyber warfare, with significant implications for global cybersecurity: The war has prompted discussions about

the rules of engagement in cyberspace. Traditional concepts of warfare, such as proportionality and distinction, must be re-evaluated in light of cyber capabilities: Attribution Challenges: Identifying the perpetrator of a cyber attack remains a complex issue, complicating the response and accountability. Escalation Risks: Cyber operations can easily escalate, leading to unintended consequences and potential retaliatory strikes in other domains. Countries worldwide are recognizing the need to prioritize cybersecurity as part of their national security strategies. This shift involves investing in cyber defense capabilities, fostering international cooperation, and developing comprehensive cyber policies.

Conclusion

There is no state that has a cyber strategy that can completely protect the state from cyber attacks and guarantee its citizens, but there are chances to reduce cyber security risks and strengthen the measures of self-defense. In cyber security, the impact of artificial intelligence is distinguished by both positive and negative signs. Among its positive features, we can consider that artificial intelligence can identify shady data, and it can easily warn people about potential threats. Artificial intelligence can generate prioritized threats, analyze risks, summarize incidents and reduce vulnerabilities.³ The cyber threats experienced during the Russia-Ukraine war illustrate the increasing significance of cyberspace in modern conflict. As nations continue to navigate this complex landscape, understanding the implications of cyber warfare is essential. The challenges posed by malware, disinformation, and attacks on critical infrastructure require coordinated efforts from governments, private sectors, and international organizations.

In a world where the boundaries of warfare are continually shifting, the lessons learned from the Russia-Ukraine conflict will undoubtedly shape future policies and

³ Americas's Cyber Defence Agency: What is CyberSecurity - <https://www.cisa.gov/news-events/news/what-cybersecurity>

strategies in cybersecurity. As we move forward, it is imperative to foster resilience, enhance cooperation, and develop comprehensive frameworks to address the ever-evolving threats in cyberspace.

Bibliography

¹ N.B. The military invasion in Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk regions in 2014.

Council of the European Union, 'A Strategic Compass for a stronger EU security and defense in the next decade', Press Release, 21 March 2022.
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/03/21/a-strategic-compass-for-a-stronger-eu-security-and-defence-in-the-next-decade/>

Americas's Cyber Defence Agency: What is CyberSecurity - <https://www.cisa.gov/news-events/news/what-cybersecurity>

The Future of European Union and NATO Enlargement and Threat from Russia

Nata Sachaleli

Student of Master's Program in Law
The Faculty of Law and International Relations of
Georgian Technical University

Abstract

The article discusses the relevant issues related to the new architecture of both European Union and NATO. The article also considers the existing threats under on going Russia-Ukraine war and it also suggests future prognoses against the background of the war.

Russia-Ukraine war, which started on February 24, 2022, has put whole the world in front of new challenges. Russia's aggression during its attack on Ukraine disrupted the post-Cold War security architecture in Europe. The events made it clear that it was necessary to review the relations between Russia and European organizations like NATO and the European Union, which were formed over the last 30 years.

NATO is an organization whose membership means security and protection for the country. The European Union with its institutions represents the promotion of the stability of the economy and the strengthening of democracy. Their membership is the greatest desire for post soviet countries, which is categorically opposed by the Russian state. It does not want the member countries of the organization to exist in its neighborhood. For an imperialist country, the danger of expansion is a pretext for war, an example of which is the Russia attack on Ukraine. This article attamps to show what threats there are to the expansion of the alliance or the European Union from the side of Russia.

Keywords: NATO, European Union (EU), Russia-Ukraine War, Enlargement, Disinformation, Cybersecurity.

Introduction

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has undergone significant transformations since its inception in 1949, evolving from a collective defense alliance aimed at countering Soviet aggression to a broader organization that now includes many former Eastern Bloc countries. The expansion of NATO has been a contentious issue, particularly in relation to Russia, which perceives this enlargement as a direct threat to its sphere of influence and national security. This essay explores the historical context of NATO enlargement, its implications for global security, and the responses from Russia. NATO was originally established as a collective defense pact among Western nations to deter Soviet expansion in Europe. Following the Cold War, the alliance faced a new geopolitical landscape. The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 presented an opportunity for NATO to expand eastward, incorporating former Eastern Bloc nations that sought protection against potential Russian aggression.

Main Part

The first major wave of NATO enlargement occurred in 1999 when the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland joined the alliance. This was followed by a second wave in 2004, which included seven additional countries: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. This expansion was framed as a means to promote stability and democracy in Eastern Europe, but it also sowed the seeds of tension with Russia. From Russia's viewpoint, NATO enlargement represents a breach of the assurances given by Western leaders during the negotiations for German reunification in the early 1990s. Many Russian officials argue that the West promised not to expand NATO further eastward, and they view the alliance's growth as a strategic encirclement of Russia. This perspective is rooted in a historical narrative of Russia as a great power, where encroachments on its borders are seen as existential threats.

Any European country can join the EU if it fulfills the membership criteria, also known as the Copenhagen criteria. For example, countries wishing to join must have: “stable institutions that can guarantee democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the protection of minorities; a functioning market economy and the ability to cope with the competitive pressure of the EU market; the ability to take on the obligations of EU membership, including the capacity to implement all EU law and adhere to the aims of the Union.”¹

Russian President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly articulated concerns over NATO's expansion, describing it as a direct challenge to Russian sovereignty and influence. He perceives NATO as not merely a defensive alliance but as a tool for Western interventionism. The 2008 war in Georgia and the 2014 annexation of Crimea marked critical turning points, further deepening Russia's suspicions of NATO's intentions.

The Implications of NATO Enlargement

The enlargement of NATO has inevitably led to heightened tensions in Eastern Europe. Countries that have joined the alliance have enhanced their military cooperation with NATO, leading to increased military presence and exercises near Russia's borders. This has been perceived by Russia as provocative and has prompted a series of military responses, including the modernization of its armed forces and increased military activity in the region. NATO enlargement has altered the security dynamics in Eastern Europe. Countries such as Poland and the Baltic States have bolstered their defenses in anticipation of potential Russian aggression. This has resulted in a military buildup on both sides, raising the stakes for miscalculations or unintended conflicts. The presence of NATO troops in Eastern Europe is seen as a deterrent by these nations but also exacerbates fears of a direct confrontation. The political ramifications of NATO enlargement extend beyond military considerations. Countries within the alliance have experienced a shift in their foreign policies, aligning

¹ Benefits for countries joining the EU - https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/eu-enlargement_en

more closely with Western ideologies and distancing themselves from Russia. Economically, the divide between NATO member states and Russia has widened, with sanctions and counter-sanctions affecting trade relations and energy supplies, particularly in Europe. In response to NATO's eastward expansion, Russia has embarked on a significant military modernization program. This includes the enhancement of its nuclear arsenal, the development of advanced missile systems, and the establishment of new military bases in strategically important regions. The deployment of the Iskander missile system in Kaliningrad, for example, serves as a direct counter to NATO's presence in Eastern Europe.

NATO has “Open Door Policy“ which needs a consensus in favor of countries applying to join NATO, as all member countries must ratify the agreement enabling a new country to become a member of NATO. The open door policy "is aimed at promoting stability and cooperation".

Russia, like the European Union, is also against the expansion of NATO, because it does not want to feel the approach of NATO or the European Union to its borders.²

During the period since Helsinki’s May 2022 NATO application, Moscow has widely limited itself to grumbling about the accession process. “At the same time, Russia has reportedly withdrawn up to 80% of its forces from the Finnish border zone.” “The drawdown we’ve seen from this region in the past seven months is very significant. Russia had this ground force posture facing us for decades that is now effectively just gone,” a senior Nordic defense official told Foreign Policy in September 2022.³

Russia's military actions are also accompanied by strategic posturing in various regions. The Kremlin has leveraged conflicts such as those in Ukraine and Georgia to assert its influence and demonstrate its military capabilities. These actions are framed within a narrative of protecting Russian-speaking populations and countering NATO's encroachment. The United States plays a pivotal role in NATO and has been a driving force

² https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49212.htm

³ [NATO poses a threat to Russian imperialism not Russian security](https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/nato-poses-a-threat-to-russian-imperialism-not-russian-security/)
<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/nato-poses-a-threat-to-russian-imperialism-not-russian-security/>

behind its enlargement. The U.S. commitment to collective defense under Article 5 of the NATO treaty has provided reassurance to member states, particularly those in Eastern Europe. However, this commitment also raises the stakes for the U.S. in terms of military engagement and diplomatic relations with Russia.

The challenge for NATO is to maintain a balance between deterrence and diplomacy. While strengthening military capabilities is essential to reassure member states, it is equally important to pursue diplomatic channels with Russia. Initiatives such as the NATO-Russia Council, established in 2002, aimed to foster dialogue and cooperation, though the effectiveness of such efforts has been undermined by escalating tensions. As NATO contemplates further enlargement, particularly with the aspirations of countries like Georgia and Ukraine, the dilemma intensifies. On one hand, NATO's open-door policy promotes stability and security in Europe. On the other hand, further enlargement risks provoking a stronger Russian response, potentially leading to a security dilemma where both sides feel compelled to enhance their military capabilities.

The situation in Ukraine has underscored the complexities of NATO enlargement. Russia's annexation of Crimea and its support for separatist movements in Eastern Ukraine have created a precarious security environment. While NATO has supported Ukraine through military assistance and training, it has stopped short of granting membership, reflecting the delicate balance between support and escalation.

Conclusion

NATO enlargement remains a contentious and complex issue in international relations, especially in the context of Russia's actions and perceptions. The alliance's expansion has contributed to increased security for member states but has also provoked significant tensions with Russia, leading to a multifaceted security landscape in Europe. As NATO navigates future enlargement decisions, the balance between deterrence, diplomacy, and regional stability will be critical. The evolving geopolitical dynamics necessitate a

nuanced approach that considers the legitimate security concerns of all parties involved, aiming for a stable and peaceful European security environment. Russia is trying to prevent post-Soviet countries from becoming EU and NATO member states, for this it is resorting to both direct attack and hybrid warfare. The Soviet Union in the past and Russia in the 21st century relied on hybrid warfare and reflexive control. Disinformation is a critical tool for these strategies.

Today, Russia is a threat to the post-Soviet states and we often face pressure from them. States should constantly try to be close to organizations such as NATO and the European Union to be as safe as possible from Russian threats.

Bibliography

https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/eu-enlargement_en

https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49212.htm

[NATO poses a threat to Russian imperialism not Russian security](#)

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/nato-poses-a-threat-to-russian-imperialism-not-russian-security/>

From Blitzkrieg to Stalemate: Analyzing Russia's Strategic Changes in Ukraine

Giorgi Saghinadze

Junker of Defense and Security program of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Nika Mghebrishvili

Junker of Defense and Security program of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Supervisor: Professor **Levan Gegeshidze**

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to review the Russia-Ukraine war and its consequences. However, since this topic is broad, it is impossible to talk about it in depth. That is why the focus here is mainly on the factors, the combination of which made Russia change its strategy and bring the war from blitzkrieg to stalemate. First, Russia tried to score a blitzkrieg-style victory-high-intensity attacks rapid enough to overwhelm Ukraine. The failure of this plan was driven by miscalculations in underestimating Ukrainian resistance and logistical failures. Key events included the botched airborne operation at Antonov airfield and the infamous 65 Kilometer convoy north of Kyiv, epitomizing a whole spate of tactical and operational mistakes for which Russia committed. Where the blitzkrieg approach sputtered, decidedly Russia turned to a war of attrition against Ukraine, focusing on sustained attacks to wear down Ukraine and consolidating gains in the Donbas and southern Ukraine.

This change of approach brought its own challenges. This included advanced weapon systems, such as HIMARS, Western military aid, and increased sanctions against Russia's defense industry that wore down Russia's capacity to sustain a prolonged conflict. Equally weighed in the article is the significant role of international diplomacy that has been representative, especially NATO support for Ukraine and the diplomatic isolation of Russia. Besides the strategic and operational analysis, it is also admitted in the paper that the human cost of the war has been immense: destruction everywhere, heavy casualties, and a big refugee problem.

In this respect, the resilience of Ukraine, strengthened by its national unity and strong international support, has denied Russia the attainment of its initial goals. It concludes by emphasizing how the conflict has refashioned global alliances, made NATO far stronger, and brought into sharp focus the continuing struggle between democratic and authoritarian regimes, with major implications for future global security. This thus makes for a far-reaching analysis that offers insights not only into the complexity of modern warfare but also into the wider geopolitical implications of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

Keywords: Blitzkrieg, Stalemate, Strategy, Defence, war.

Introduction

The world has been witnessing, with horror, the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces that began on 24 February 2022—the largest military conflict on European territory since the Second World War. From what was foreseen by most analysts as a quick operation that would last for some days or weeks, it turned into a very long and entangled war that will definitely reshape the geopolitical situation and test long-held assumptions about modern combat.

First of all, it is necessary to analyze Russia's original campaign. A scheme that tended to use blitzkrieg methods of trying to break the Ukrainian defenses quickly and to secure the most essential goals.

Ironically, the most technologically and numerically advanced Russian military had to face unprecedentedly intensive resistance from both Ukrainian forces and the commoners. This strength did not only discourage the immediate plans of Russia but sparked a nationalistic surge of pride and determination within the Ukrainians. One of the weird phenomena happened to be that while the faltering of Russian troops continued, their morale continued to see a rise—a psychological advantage of great importance when it came to months.

As we look at how Russia's attack failed on the ground, we need to think about the bigger problems these mistakes caused. Russia made many small errors that added up to big trouble. They didn't gather enough information, had problems moving supplies, and thought Ukraine would be easier to beat than it was. All these small mistakes piled up and turned into major problems for Russia's overall plan. The series of intelligence failures, logistic challenges, and underestimation of Ukrainian capabilities, followed a path from tactical mistakes to strategic mistakes.

Furthermore, after analyzing the failure of Russia, we should elaborate on the extraordinary transformation in Russia's approach when it became evident that the conflict would be far from short. It is the turn from a strategy based on rapid conquest to one of

attrition and territorial consolidation that marks the real turning point in the war. But this strategic realignment not only reflects the adaptability of military planning; it more importantly underlines the evolving nature of modern conflicts where information warfare, economic pressures, and international diplomacy feature alongside or even more important than kinetic operations.

This comprehensive examination will be incomplete and a bit inhumane if it does not recognize the human cost of this conflict. Besides these strategic analyses and operational assessments lies a sea of stories relating to heroism, sacrifice, and tragedy. The determination shown by the Ukrainian people against an adversary many times their size caught the attention of the world while rewriting the narratives of national identity and international solidarity.

This article looks closely at how the war has changed over time. We start with the shock of the invasion and end with today's standstill. We'll examine the plans, mistakes, and changes made by both Russia and Ukraine. This will help us understand the complicated factors that have shaped the war and continue to affect it. In the process, we begin not only to understand the outlines of this particular Russia-Ukraine War but also the broader lessons that come with the nature of contemporary conflict, the resilience of nations at bay, and the anarchic direction of history in real-time.

Main Part

The beginning of Blitzkrieg

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 was launched with high intensity and at great speed, similar to the principles of blitzkrieg employed by Germany during World War II. Blitzkrieg, a strategy involving rapid, high-intensity assaults, was employed by Russia with the hope of a swift victory. By targeting key infrastructure and aiming to install a regime in Kyiv, Russia believed that quick dominance would suppress Ukrainian

resistance. This was seen as most effective in guaranteeing the capitulation of Ukraine without an extended conflict.

However, the performance of this blitzkrieg by Russia was full of flaws. The Russian military leadership overestimated the speed with which victories would be achieved and miscalculated Ukraine's determination. The failed attack on the Antonov airfield near Kyiv was representative of the overstress on speed and surprise. In this respect, the Russian airborne troops tried to seize the strategic airfield but were confronted with a furious Ukrainian defense, which slowed their momentum and made it impossible to send reinforcements.

Russia's initial campaign plan was predicated on the assumption that speed and surprise would enable a rapid seizure of Kyiv, leading to regime collapse before organized resistance could be mounted. This fundamental miscalculation shaped all subsequent operational failures.¹

Another major miscalculation was Russia's Intelligence judgment regarding Ukraine's resistance capability. The Russian leadership wished for an immediate implosion in the Ukrainian military and, subsequently, the civilian population, just like it did the annexation of Crimea in 2014. It was the failure in judgment of Ukraine's political and military resolve, that added to confidence in their own military capability, that worked against the completion of the blitzkrieg approach.

Tactical and Operational Failures

Thus, the debacle of Russia's early campaign in Ukraine was precariously set up to unfold its eventual transformation from blitzkrieg into attrition warfare. Probably the most surreal of these early failures was the failure of the airborne operation at Antonov airfield near Kyiv. With only negligible expectations of opposition, Russian forces, including elite

¹ Watling, Jack and Nick Reynolds. 2022. "Operation Z: The Death of an Imperial Delusion." *Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) Special Report*.

airborne units such as the 11th and 31st Guards Air Assault Brigades, were supposed to use the facility for a flying-in of reinforcements. Instead, a motley mix of Ukrainian National Guard personnel, rapidly assembled local defense, and volunteer forces-civilians-launch an intense counterattack. It was an unexpected resistance that decimated the Russians' plans and compelled them to flee the airfield-throwing off their timeline for the entire operation. Antonov had represented a wider failure: one of intelligence overconfidence, which had underestimated Ukrainian will to resist and actual preparedness.²

The Russian military's force design proved inadequate for the operation it attempted to execute. Battalion Tactical Groups (BTGs), while effective in limited operations in the Donbas, proved unable to conduct large-scale maneuver warfare across multiple axes of advance. The resulting coordination failures contributed significantly to the collapse of the initial offensive.³

Compounding all these problems was the fact that Russia had chosen a single, tenuous axis of attack on which to base its advance toward Kyiv. The 40-mile convoy that formed north of Kyiv-a noisome procession of tanks, armored vehicles, and supply trucks-became iconic of Russian logistical snafus. Repeatedly stalled by fuel shortages, ambushes, and Ukrainian drone and artillery strikes, the convoy-indeed Russia's entire military effort in the north-was seemingly incapable of advancing or retreating. By resting on a narrow, centralized line of attack, the Russians opened themselves to Ukrainian counterattacks and ambushes, further dissipating any gained momentum.

Russian command and control systems demonstrated significant weaknesses in coordinating multi-domain operations. The lack of unified command structure and poor integration between ground and air forces severely hampered operational effectiveness, particularly during the critical first phase of the invasion.⁴

² Luttwak, Edward. 2022. "Vladimir Putin's Failed Strategy." November 1

³ Kofman, Michael, Rob Lee. 2022. "Not Built for Purpose: The Russian Military's Ill-Fated Force Design." *War on the Rocks*.

⁴ Bartles, Charles K. 2023. "Russian Armed Forces in Ukraine: Building a New Military Theory." *Parameters* 21-38.

Logistical failures were another crippling factor against the Russian military. Long, vulnerable supply lines-especially in the north-mean any Russian gain was promptly hampered; a lack of fuel, food, and ammunition saw large numbers of troops stranded, demoralized. As Edward Luttwak noted, this collapse of the operational thrust underlined the really poor logistic planning and underestimation of the geographic scale of Ukraine.⁵ Although Russia enjoyed numerical superiority in manpower and hardware, such advantages were offset by a lack of coordination, supply problems, and a very unclear concept of an operational strategy.

Furthermore, the failure of these opening encounters had a profound impact on the morale of Russian troops. Reports started coming in of desertions, low morale, and a lack of clear leadership at the front lines. Although numerically superior, the inability to sustain momentum, in addition to unexpected high casualties, finally marked a sharp decline in the morale of the Russian troops. Defeats in tactical and operational realms in the initial phase of invasion forced Russia to rethink its strategy and adapt to a possible prolonged conflict

From blitzkrieg to stalemate

Following the failure of its initial blitzkrieg strategy, Russia shifted toward a war of attrition, a significant strategic pivot. Initially, Moscow aimed for a quick and decisive victory, but the robust Ukrainian resistance, combined with Russia's tactical failures, forced a reassessment. As it became clear that Ukraine would not collapse swiftly, Russia concentrated on consolidating gains in the Donbas and southern Ukraine, regions critical for controlling economic and logistical hubs.

Attrition warfare involves wearing down the enemy by causing sustained losses in personnel, equipment, and morale. Russia's strategy in this phase was to exploit its advantages in artillery, manpower, and resources, intending to exhaust Ukraine's ability to

⁵ Luttwak, Edward. 2022. *Edward Luttwak, A Military Adviser To Presidents, Explains How The Ukraine War Began And How It Might End* (june 11).

continue the fight. The heavy use of artillery, missile strikes, and bombardments on Ukrainian cities was a hallmark of this new approach. However, Russia's ability to maintain this strategy has been hampered by several factors.

Russia's shift to attrition warfare exposed critical personnel shortages, particularly in specialized roles. The increasing reliance on poorly trained conscripts and Wagner Group mercenaries reflected a desperate attempt to maintain operational tempo despite mounting casualties and declining military effectiveness.⁶

First, despite Russia's attempts to leverage its larger military resources, the strain on its manpower and logistics became increasingly apparent. Poorly trained conscripts and the reliance on irregular forces like Wagner mercenaries reflected this strain. Additionally, Western military aid to Ukraine has gradually shifted the balance. Advanced weapons systems such as HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems) and anti-tank missiles provided by NATO countries enabled Ukraine to counter Russian forces more effectively, making Russia's attrition strategy less viable.

International sanctions also played a key role in limiting Russia's long-term ability to wage an attritional war. The degradation of its defense industry due to sanctions, particularly in acquiring advanced technologies, began to erode the effectiveness of Russian military operations. Moreover, Ukraine's growing drone capabilities, particularly in targeting Russian logistics, further complicated Russia's attempt to grind down Ukrainian forces.

The Role of International Diplomacy and Sanctions

International diplomacy and economic sanctions proved two vital factors that shaped the war's path, with Western countries rallying in the cause of Ukraine and continuing to apply costs to Russia. Sanctions, introduced by the G7 and the European Union, reached

⁶ Massicot, Dara. 2023. "The Russian Military's People Problem: Why Kremlin Troops Are Increasingly Short on Skilled Soldiers." *Foreign Affairs* 114-128.

some of the most sensitive parts of the Russian economy: energy, finance, and technology. The sanctions cut access to various crucial technologies, financial systems, and international markets with the purpose of starving Russia's military activity.

Sanctions have hit particularly hard at Russia's defense industry, which relies on imported technologies to produce modern weapons. Unable to replace these crucial components, Russia has grown increasingly unable to sustain its war effort. Self-sufficient in energy and food, the isolation from the global financial markets and technological embargo have weakened Russia's long-term economic outlook.⁷

Whereas Russia is self-sufficient regarding energy and food, its isolation from global financial markets and a technological embargo made it weaker in the longer run and less capable of producing state-of-the-art military equipment. Restrictions in the acquisition of critical technologies have restricted the sustainability of Russia's advanced military operations.⁸

NATO has played the leading role regarding the changing strategic landscape. For instance, initially cautious, NATO nations, mainly the U.S., the UK, and Eastern European countries, had been ramping up military supplies to Ukraine. Supplied equipment included anti-tank weapons, artillery, drones, more recently advanced air defense systems, and tanks. Finally, NATO nations had lifted restrictions on Ukraine's ability to strike Russian targets inside Russia using Western-supplied weapons. This did more than build up Ukraine's defenses; it shifted the balance on the battlefield. But this international involvement did not stop with military aid: the war also became a field of information war and international diplomacy. Whereas Russia tried to cling on to the support of non-Western powers such as China and India, its international reputation was significantly bruised in the face of widespread reporting of atrocities committed by Russian forces.

⁷ Berman, Noah. 2024. *Two Years of War in Ukraine: Are Sanctions Against Russia Making a Difference?* February 23. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/two-years-war-ukraine-are-sanctions-against-russia-making-difference>.

⁸ Hodges, Ben, interview by Robert Hamilton. 2024. *Ukraine: Where are we now and what's at stake?* (June 11).

Western unity in supporting Ukraine, particularly through coordinated sanctions and military aid, has proven more resilient than Moscow anticipated. The combination of economic pressure and military assistance has fundamentally altered Russia's strategic calculus, forcing abandonment of its initial objectives in favor of more limited goals.⁹

Meanwhile, Ukraine's diplomatic efforts-parallel to its successful defense against field advances-consolidated international support and isolated Russia on the international arena. On the other hand, China's stand on this war has been particularly nuanced in that, while it has not directly supported the invasion of Russia, it maintains its economic ties and refuses to join in on the sanctions laid down by the West. Yet, China also avoids antagonizing the West, being equally aware of the possible repercussions of allying itself too closely with Russia. Other third-country non-NATO actors-like Turkey-have also played out their balancing game: giving some support to Ukraine but keeping on good terms with Russia diplomatically.

The Human Cost and Long-Term Consequences

The human cost of the war in Ukraine has been monstrous, with both sides suffering from great casualties.¹⁰ Its cities-Mariupol, Bakhmut, Kharkiv-lie in ruins; tens of thousands are killed and displaced. Several millions of Ukrainians have had to leave the country so far, provoking one of the most extensive European refugee crises since World War II. It destroyed infrastructure, houses, and industries, leaving much of Ukraine's economy in tatters. Yet, in spite of these losses, Ukrainian resilience has remained consistent as a defining factor within this conflict. The population, unified around a strong national identity and resistance to Russian aggression, has doubtless played a big role in sustaining the war effort. The leadership of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, marked by his

⁹ Pifer, Steven. 2023. "Ukraine, Russia, and the West: Conflict and Consequences." *Survival* 7-32.

¹⁰ 2023. *Human Rights Watch*. January 12. Accessed October 3, 2024. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/01/12/ukraine-russian-invasion-causing-widespread-suffering-civilians>.

refusal to flee Kyiv and appeals to the international community, has proved instrumental in preserving morale and international support.

This war has a huge, long-term effect on both Ukraine and Russia. For Ukraine, the road to recovery will be very long and meandering, but indeed, it is true that the country needs massive reconstruction everywhere. On the other hand, the war accelerated Ukraine's pivot towards the West. Closer ties with NATO and the European Union are given. Today, Ukraine's military is widely assessed as one of the most battle-hardened militaries in Europe, and pressure for its entry into NATO grows.

The challenge for Russia is quite another thing. The economic strain of sanctions, combined with heavy losses of life and failure to achieve key military objectives, has eaten away at public confidence in President Vladimir Putin's regime. While sheer scale and resources can sustain Russia's war effort for quite some time, its long-term sustainability is in question. As Edward Luttwak pointed out, poorly trained Russian conscripts and contract soldiers have been used in heavy fighting, particularly from places like Buryatia, thereby adding to heavy losses among ethnic minorities and further fraying internal cohesion.¹¹ Geopolitically, the war has rewritten alliances and upended the balance of power. The revitalized strength and expansion of NATO—presaged by Finland and Sweden moving closer to membership—heralds a new European security landscape.

Whereas once countries had been more reluctant to challenge Russia, now it has committed itself to a far more impressive defense policy, especially in Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, Russia's influence has weakened in its traditional sphere of power, as former Soviet republics increasingly seek to distance themselves from Moscow. These consequences of the war will not be confined to Europe alone. It has underlined the worldwide struggle between democratic and autocratic states, and China is watching to see what the West does about Russian aggression. Failure to check Russia would embolden China with regard to her

¹¹ Luttwak, Edward. 2022. "Vladimir Putin's Failed Strategy." November 1.

own territorial ambitions, above all with regard to Taiwan. Equally, a clear-cut Ukrainian victory could act as a salutary deterrence against further aggression because it would demonstrate convincingly the consequences of Western military and economic support.

Conclusion

What was initially conceived as a quick military operation against Ukraine has turned into an extremely costly, drawn-out war by Russia, replete with serious tactical, operational, and strategic failures. The blitzkrieg pursued initially came to nothing almost right away because of the underestimation of Ukrainian resistance on the level of intelligence, logistics, and politics. Further attempts at attrition have not brought any decisive result yet because, together with sanctions and diplomatic isolation, Western support for Ukraine continuously whittles down Russia's military and economic potential.

The humanitarian cost has been immense: millions of people suffered, cities destroyed, hundreds of thousands of casualties on both sides. Ukraine's resilience and national cohesion, supported by international assistance, frustrated the goals that Russia laid out for this war, as well as taking an internal toll on Russia and undermining its international position.

In the long run, the war has rewritten global alignments, solidified NATO, and etched new lines of fissure in the international order. The longer this conflict drags on, the more real such basic questions will be pertaining to the future of security in Europe, the role of global powers like China, and the sustained struggle between democratic and authoritarian systems. In the end, the outcome of the war will have far-reaching consequences for both Ukraine and Russia, as well as for a greater geopolitical universe.

Bibliography

- Bartles, Charles K. 2023. "Russian Armed Forces in Ukraine: Building a New Military Theory." *Parameters* 21-38.
- Berman, Noah. 2024. *Two Years of War in Ukraine: Are Sanctions Against Russia Making a Difference?* February 23. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/two-years-war-ukraine-are-sanctions-against-russia-making-difference>.
- Hodges, Ben, interview by Robert Hamilton. 2024. *Ukraine: Where are we now and what's at stake?* (June 11).
2023. *Human Rights Watch*. January 12. Accessed October 3, 2024.
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/01/12/ukraine-russian-invasion-causing-widespread-suffering-civilians>.
- Kagan, Frederick W. 2023. "Russian Military Performance and the Evolution of Russian Military Strategy and Operations in Ukraine." *Institute for the Study of War*.
- Kofman, Michael, Rob Lee. 2022. "Not Built for Purpose: The Russian Military's Ill-Fated Force Design." *War on the Rocks*.
- Luttwak, Edward. 2022. "Vladimir Putin's Failed Strategy." November 1.
- Luttwak, Edward. 2022. *Edward Luttwak, A Military Adviser To Presidents, Explains How The Ukraine War Began And How It Might End* (June 11).
- Mackinnon, Amy and Jack Detsch. 2023. "How Western Military Aid Transformed the Ukraine War." *Foreign Policy*.
- Massicot, Dara. 2023. "The Russian Military's People Problem: Why Kremlin Troops Are Increasingly Short on Skilled Soldiers." *Foreign Affairs* 114-128.
- Pifer, Steven. 2023. "Ukraine, Russia, and the West: Conflict and Consequences." *Survival* 7-32.
2024. *Why Russia's Invasion into Ukraine Failed on Arrival*. Directed by Daily Mail. Performed by Chris Pleasance.

Radin, Andrew. 2023. "The Future of the Russian Military." *RAND Corporation Report*.

Watling, Jack and Nick Reynolds. 2022. "Operation Z: The Death of an Imperial Delusion."

Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) Special Report.

Security of the European Union and NATO, against the background of the Russia-Ukraine war

Mariam Sopromadze

Junker of Defense and Security of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Zurab Dzaganian

Junker of Defense and Security of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Supervisor: Professor **Levan Gegeshidze**

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to outline the security issues and challenges of the European Union and NATO against the backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine war. Russia represents a state that is one of the actors of illegal war, the clear examples are the invasion of Georgia in 2008, the invasion of Crimea in 2014, and the ongoing actions on the territory of Ukraine from 2022 to the present day. The action of this aggressor state not only threatened the security of Ukraine, but also the European Union and NATO. Russia is trying to influence the geopolitical space and the international system. It threatens and undermines the transatlantic space. Like NATO, the European Union also took preventive decisions against Russian aggression. They have imposed certain restrictions and sanctions on the state that is the actor of aggression, they are also involved in military-political and economic aid to Ukraine. In addition to the danger of violating the borders of the member states of the alliances, there is also the danger of manipulating energy resources and starting a nuclear war. The dependence of the European Union on Russian energy resources was quite high, therefore Russia was easily able to use it as a lever against sanctions. The West changed its dependence on energy resources and significantly reduced Russian influence. Regarding the nuclear threat, Putin used the term "joint attack" and this means that Putin does not welcome the union of non-nuclear-weapon states and nuclear-weapon states. In fact, he "warns" and threatens NATO not to interfere in the ongoing processes in Ukraine. It is trying to find leverage to increase its influence on the West, which is directly related to the security challenges of the European Union and NATO.

Keywords: Unjust, State war, Security challenges, EU, NATO

Introduction

All states have the right to wage a defensive war to protect state interests such as population, territorial integrity, sovereignty, and so on. It is impermissible and unacceptable to invade the territory of another state, violate its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and achieve one's own political or economic interests. The Russian Federation has repeatedly used its military forces to invade another country. On August 8, 2008, the Russian Federation started the invasion of Georgia. That was the start of Europe's first 21st-century war. It caused a changing geopolitical environment for Georgia.¹ On February 27, 2014, Russian troops attacked to Crimea. They took control of all the important and strategic points and then unfortunately they annexed the territory, of course, their action was illegitimate. That was the period when destabilization was launched in eastern Ukraine. Russian armed groups supported demonstrators calling for independence. De facto entities of the "Donetsk People's Republic" and the "Luhansk People's Republic" held a referendum and took independence. However, these votes exceeded the framework defined by Ukrainian legislation. These referendum results were not recognized by the international community and were considered illegal by Ukrainian legislation.² Each of the above events had an impact on international relations. Similar changes can be observed in the world today.

On 24 February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine and started unjust war. The latter represents one of the largest military confrontations on the European continent after WW II. As might be expected, the world, the European Union, and NATO also had certain reactions and responses to the current events. Against Russian aggression, both international organizations made some restrictions and sanctions. This has also changed the defense

¹ Dickinson, Peter. 2021. Atlantic Council. 08 07. Accessed 09 16, 2024.

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/the-2008-russo-georgian-war-putins-green-light/>.

² Diplomacy, France. 2022. Understanding the situation in Ukraine from 2014 to 24 February 2022. June. Accessed 09 17, 2024. <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/ukraine/situation-in-ukraine-what-is/understanding-the-situation-in-ukraine-from-2014-to-24-february-2022/>.

strategy of NATO and the EU. To give an instance, NATO adopted a "back to the future" strategy of forward defense and deterrence, in response to the aggressive action of one of the world's largest states. To implement this project, the Allies took responsibility to act according to the problem and to be able to provide deterrence-defense. These issues were discussed at the 2022 Madrid Summit. Each action of the alliance was due to the fact that Russia violated the principles of international law. According to this system, it is prohibited to interfere in the internal affairs of another state and it also controls the principle of inviolability of borders. This paper tries to answer the following research questions:

1. What security challenges the European Union and NATO are facing today?
2. What was the response of NATO and EU to Russian aggression, and how are they assisting Ukraine?

Main Part

NATO's security challenges in today's perspective (war in Ukraine)

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization's creation was part of an effort to serve three purposes: 1. deterring Soviet expansionism 2. forbidding the revival of nationalist militarism in Europe through a strong North American presence on the continent and 3. encouraging European political integration. NATO's security challenges and strategic concepts are divided into several periods. Priorities change based on needs. NATO's strategic concept of 2010 is different from the concept of 2022, and this is due to the fact that the needs, political, and, most importantly, geopolitical spaces are changing. After 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 against the USA changed NATO's priorities. An important task for them was to protect their own citizens inside and outside the alliance. It therefore underwent major internal reforms to adapt military structures and capabilities. They led the UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.³ The

³ ORGANIZATION, NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY. 2022. Strategic Concepts. 07 18. Accessed 10 03, 2024. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_56626.htm.

geopolitical environment has changed. In 2014 Russia invaded Ukraine, and again in 2022 large-scale military operations began in this country.

Soon after the tension of the political atmosphere in Eastern Europe and the declaration of martial law, it became necessary to review the concept of the alliance's security and strategy. According to the "NATO 2022 STRATEGIC CONCEPT", because of Russian aggression, the Euro-Atlantic area is not at peace. The sub-chapter of this strategic concept, "Strategic environment", tells us that there is a possibility of violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the alliance, although NATO will not allow this. Their main goal is to provide collective defense based on a 360-degree approach. The latter includes: 1. deterrence and defense, 2. crisis prevention and management, 3. cooperative security.⁴ Russia poses a threat to the Euro-Atlantic area. It is characterized by aggression and coercive influence, cyber and hybrid attacks on the member states of the alliance. To put it simply, it undermines the international order to achieve his political goals. NATO's Secretary General Mark Rutte said in his first press conference, that he had three priorities. 1. "Ensure we have the capabilities to protect against any threat" 2. "Support Ukraine in fighting back against Russian aggression" 3. "Addressing the growing global challenges to Euro-Atlantic security". He also mentioned, "Supporting Ukraine is the right thing to do. And it is also an investment in our own security". Mark Rutte also emphasized that by increasing cooperation with their allied alliance, they will take sides in Ukraine and fight against a hybrid war.⁵

Russia manages to influence the West by using energy resources and also uses the threat of nuclear weapons as one of the means of manipulation. In 2024 Putin changed and offered to the world new rules on the use of nuclear weapons. In his speech he used the term "joint attack", in that term he considered the cooperation work of non-nuclear states

⁴ NATO. 2022. "NATO 2022 STRATEGIC CONCEPT." 06 29. Accessed 10 03, 2024.
file:///D:/Users/User/Downloads/290622-strategic-concept%20NATOE.pdf.

⁵ Rutte, ncoming NATO Secretary General Mark. 2024. "NATO." Press conference. 10 01. Accessed 10 02, 2024.
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_229150.htm.

and nuclear-armed states, From that perspective there is a threat to use nuclear weapons in the war in Ukraine.⁶ Based on the fact that the US supports Ukraine and opposes Russia's illegal actions in Ukraine (a nuclear state supports and helps a non-nuclear state), according to Putin's nuclear doctrine, the US as a NATO member state faces a nuclear threat from Russia. In 2024, Russian nuclear warnings are likely focused on deterring NATO involvement in Ukraine and asserting its military capabilities. Putin warns the US and other NATO allies, that if they allow Ukraine to use Western long-range weapons to hit Russian territory would mean, that Russia and NATO are at war. Russia emphasizes its readiness to use nuclear forces in response to perceived threats, aiming to influence geopolitical dynamics and reinforce its deterrence strategy. This approach highlights ongoing tensions and the potential for escalation in a highly volatile security environment. If we consider Russia's nuclear threat in general terms, it is a problem not only for NATO's security, but also for the whole world. Nevertheless, the danger of starting a nuclear war is a future prospect, since the possession of such powerful weapons creates a "threat of guaranteed mutual destruction" among the states that possess them. Therefore, it is likely that countries with nuclear weapons will avoid its use.

To summarize, we can say that NATO's security challenges today, particularly due to the war in Ukraine, include bolstering collective defense, stop the hybrid threats, and managing relations with Russia. The alliance faces the ultimate test of its cooperation and deterrence capabilities. In addition to all this, it is important that the alliance is able to further improve its military readiness and adaptability to the situation since the conflict is still in a heated phase. It is also important to add, that Today's Russian aggression may turn into a significant threat to NATO at its eastern borders, this is the reason why the unequal war between Russia and Ukraine is one of NATO's security challenges.

⁶ Mao, Frances. 2024. "BBC." Putin proposes new rules for using nuclear weapons. 09 26. Accessed 10 05, 2024. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5yjej0rvw0o>.

EU's security challenges in today's perspective (war in Ukraine)

Russia's illegal war in Ukraine has changed the security challenges of both NATO and the EU. Today, Russia actively uses the method of hybrid warfare. They are not only using their military forces, which are illegally fighting on the territory of Ukraine, but they are also using energy manipulation, cyber-attacks, nuclear threats against the West, and trying to force the Western powers to change their policies. Shortly after the start of the war in Ukraine, the European Union imposed certain sanctions on Russia, which had a positive effect on the fight against Russia and hindered it, although the above-mentioned action brought both difficulties and dangers to the European Union. It is interesting how the sanctions affected the EU itself.

Like Russia, Ukraine is one of the biggest players in the world trade system, they produce staples such as oil, wheat, and grain and more importantly, they have many energy resources. The outbreak of war certainly blocked certain trade routes, which made the supply of products difficult and caused prices to rise. The European Union is one of the largest and strongest economic alliances in the world, where many European countries are united, therefore the negative effect of the sanctions, and economic difficulties, spread to the member states of the EU in a chain. Inflation is one of the biggest and foremost challenges of the European Union. EU member countries enjoy socio-economic well-being and a high standard of living, however, the increase in product prices has reduced the purchasing power of the population, which, if neglected, will lead to the loss of the above benefits. The situation is aggravated by the fact that the war started shortly after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, and therefore, in the post-pandemic period, the economy of the European Union did not have time to return to the old regime. According to 2022 Eurostat data „EU annual inflation reached the highest level ever measured at 9.2%”.⁷

⁷ eurostat. 2023. "Annual inflation more than tripled in the EU in 2022." eurostat. 03 09. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/w/DDN-20230309-2#:~:text=In%202022%2C%20EU%20annual%20inflation,2013%2D2022%20was%202.1%25.>

The European Union was largely dependent on Russian energy resources, and Russia was well aware of this fact. He decided to use this advantage and create a kind of leverage to influence EU political decisions, such as sanctions. By 2022, the dependence of the European Union on Russian gas was 40%.⁸ Russia significantly reduced its natural gas exports to the EU, particularly through major pipelines like Nord Stream 1. This was partly a response to sanctions and European support for Ukraine. The reductions led to energy shortages and increased prices across Europe. Russia used the controversial Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline project to strengthen its influence over EU energy markets. By promoting it as a means to secure energy supply, Russia aimed to deepen EU dependency on Russian gas, despite concerns about geopolitical risks. Despite Russia's strong efforts, Nord Stream 2 was closed at the request of the US and several member states of the European Union. Against the background of the fact that the European Union wanted to reduce dependence on Russian energy resources and get rid of its political influence, they certainly began to look for preventive ways. Today, Russia is no longer the main actor in supplying the European Union with natural resources. This includes increasing imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from countries like the United States, Qatar, and Norway. By 2023, the U.S. became one of the top suppliers of LNG to Europe.

The illegal action of Russia and the initiation of an illegal war forced many Ukrainian citizens to leave their place of residence. The refugee crisis in Europe following the war in Ukraine has become one of the most significant humanitarian challenges since World War II. As of early 2024, approximately 6 million Ukrainian refugees have sought shelter across Europe, with millions more internally displaced within Ukraine. The EU activated its "Temporary Protection Directive", allowing for immediate protection and rights for Ukrainian refugees. By September 2023, approximately 4.2 million refugees were under this scheme across EU member states, providing them with access to housing, education, and

⁸ შატაკიშვილი, დავით. 2022. ექსპერტის აზრი. Georgia: GEORGIAN FOUNDATION FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

healthcare.^{9,10} Although most states offer many opportunities to Ukrainian refugees, they still face problems such as unstable housing conditions. Long-term solutions are urgently needed to provide stability and facilitate integration into local communities. Despite a relatively high employment rate among Ukrainian refugees (ranging from 11% to over 50% in various countries), barriers remain. Access to labor markets and public services such as healthcare and childcare is crucial for their societal inclusion.¹¹

Western response to Russian aggression and military, political-economic support to Ukraine

The response of NATO and the European Union (EU) to Russian aggression in Ukraine has marked a pivotal moment in European security dynamics, characterized by unprecedented military support and strategic cooperation. Following Russia's invasion in February 2022, both organizations swiftly condemned the aggression, recognizing the profound threat it posed not only to Ukraine but also to the stability of Europe as a whole. NATO reaffirmed its commitment to collective defense, enhancing its military presence in Eastern Europe and providing substantial military assistance to Ukraine. Concurrently, the EU mobilized extensive financial resources, implemented sweeping sanctions against Russia, and initiated comprehensive humanitarian aid programs. This coordinated response reflects a significant evolution in the roles of NATO and the EU, blurring traditional boundaries between military and civilian responsibilities. As both entities work together to bolster Ukraine's defense capabilities and address the humanitarian crisis resulting from the conflict, their actions underscore a unified commitment to uphold international law and support Ukraine's sovereignty in the face of ongoing aggression.

⁹ Elspeth Guild, Kees Groenedijk. 2023. The impact of war in Ukraine on EU migration. June 02. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/human-dynamics/articles/10.3389/fhumd.2023.1189625/full>.

¹⁰ Awareness, Migration. 2024. Ukrainian refugee crisis: the current situation [EN/CS]. Jan 25. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukrainian-refugee-crisis-current-situation-encs>.

¹¹ Fóti, Klára. 2024. Social impact of migration: Addressing the challenges of receiving and integrating Ukrainian refugees. 03 28. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/en/publications/2024/social-impact-migration-addressing-challenges-receiving-and-integrating-ukrainian>.

The collaboration between NATO and the EU has been unprecedented, with both organizations recognizing the need for a unified approach to counter Russian aggression. They have signed joint declarations reaffirming their complementary roles in ensuring Euro-Atlantic security. This partnership allows for more effective coordination of military and civilian efforts, addressing both immediate defense needs and long-term stability in the region. As the conflict continues, NATO and the EU remain committed to supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Their combined efforts reflect a significant shift in European security policy, emphasizing unity among allies and a proactive stance against threats to peace and stability. Since the onset of the conflict in 2022, NATO has taken several key actions. NATO allies have provided unprecedented military support to Ukraine, amounting to approximately EUR 40 billion annually. This includes advanced weaponry, training for Ukrainian forces, and logistical support through initiatives like the NATO Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine (NSATU). The alliance has trained tens of thousands of Ukrainian troops and coordinated the supply of essential military equipment. In response to heightened security concerns, NATO has reinforced its military presence in Eastern Europe. This includes deploying additional troops and enhancing defense capabilities in member states bordering Ukraine. The alliance aims to deter further aggression while ensuring the security of its eastern flank. At the 2024 Washington Summit, NATO leaders reaffirmed their long-term commitment to Ukraine's defense by pledging continued military assistance and support for Ukraine's sovereignty. This includes a focus on enhancing Ukraine's defense capabilities and ensuring interoperability with NATO forces. NATO's military assistance has significantly bolstered Ukraine's defense capabilities, particularly in the context of ongoing Russian aggression. This support has evolved through various initiatives aimed at enhancing Ukraine's military readiness and interoperability with NATO standards. At the 2024 Washington Summit, NATO members pledged a minimum of EUR 40 billion in military assistance over the next year. This commitment aims to ensure sustained support for Ukraine, enhancing its ability to deter further aggression.

from Russia. The establishment of the NATO Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine (NSATU) has formalized the coordination of military training and equipment provision. This initiative is designed to create a more predictable and coherent support structure for Ukraine, enhancing its operational capabilities on the battlefield. NATO's assistance has included transitioning Ukraine from Soviet-era military practices to NATO standards. This modernization effort is vital for improving Ukraine's defense infrastructure and operational effectiveness. The combination of training, strategic advice, and modern equipment has significantly improved Ukraine's ability to respond to Russian military actions. Reports indicate that Ukrainian forces have effectively utilized this support to maintain defensive lines and reclaim territory. NATO assistance has also focused on countering hybrid threats, such as cyber-attacks and disinformation campaigns, which are integral to modern warfare. This comprehensive approach strengthens Ukraine's overall resilience against multifaceted aggression.¹²

In summary, NATO's military assistance has had a profound impact on enhancing Ukraine's defense capabilities, enabling it to better withstand Russian aggression while laying the groundwork for long-term security and stability in the region.

The European Union (EU) has faced a significant challenge in responding to Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, which escalated dramatically with the full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022. This conflict not only threatens Ukraine's sovereignty but also poses a broader risk to European stability and security. In response, the EU has enacted a multifaceted approach that includes economic sanctions, military assistance, humanitarian aid, and diplomatic efforts aimed at supporting Ukraine and holding Russia accountable for its actions. This essay explores the comprehensive response of the EU to Russian aggression and details how it is assisting Ukraine in various capacities. In the immediate aftermath of the invasion, the EU moved swiftly to implement a series of sanctions aimed at crippling

¹² NATO. 2024. NATO's response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. 10 03. Accessed 10 15, 2024. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_192648.htm.

the Russian economy and signaling its disapproval of Moscow's actions. The first set of sanctions was agreed upon just one day before the invasion, demonstrating a proactive stance. These initial measures focused on: 1) Financial Restrictions: The EU targeted major Russian banks, disconnecting them from the SWIFT international payment system, which severely limited their ability to conduct transactions globally. 2) Asset Freezes: High-ranking officials and oligarchs associated with the Kremlin faced immediate asset freezes and travel bans. As the conflict progressed, the EU expanded its sanctions to cover broader sectors of the Russian economy. Key developments included: Energy Sector Sanctions: Given that oil and gas exports are vital to Russia's economy, the EU imposed restrictions on imports of Russian oil and coal. A phased ban on Russian crude oil imports was initiated, aiming to reduce dependency on Russian energy sources. Trade Restrictions: The EU implemented bans on exporting dual-use goods that could be utilized for military purposes. This included restrictions on high-tech equipment and components critical for Russia's technological advancements.

The EU has taken unprecedented steps to provide military assistance to Ukraine. Historically, the EU had been cautious about supplying lethal aid to non-member states; however, the urgency of the situation necessitated a shift in policy. Key components of this military assistance include the European Peace Facility (EPF). The EPF was established as a financial instrument enabling the EU to fund military support for third countries. Initially, €450 million was allocated for lethal equipment such as ammunition, anti-tank weapons, and air defense systems. The EU has initiated training programs for Ukrainian forces within member states. These missions aim to enhance Ukraine's military capabilities through specialized training in tactics and operations.

Recognizing that many Ukrainian refugees have sought refuge in neighboring countries like Poland and Romania, the EU has coordinated efforts with these nations. Financial Support: The EU has provided financial assistance to member states hosting large numbers of Ukrainian refugees to help them manage increased demands on public services.

Resource Allocation: Efforts have been made to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently among member states facing challenges related to refugee influxes. The EU's response extends beyond immediate actions; it encompasses significant diplomatic efforts aimed at isolating Russia internationally while reinforcing support for Ukraine. The EU has consistently condemned Russia's actions as violations of international law: United Nations Involvement: The EU has worked closely with allies in international forums like the United Nations (UN) to pass resolutions condemning Russia's aggression. Support for International Criminal Court (ICC): The EU supports investigations into war crimes committed during the conflict and has backed efforts by the ICC to hold perpetrators accountable. EU leaders have reiterated their commitment to supporting Ukraine "for as long as it takes," indicating readiness for long-term engagement: Reconstruction Plans: Discussions are ongoing regarding utilizing frozen Russian assets for funding Ukraine's reconstruction efforts post-conflict. Integration into European Structures: The EU has expressed its willingness to integrate Ukraine into European structures more closely, including discussions about potential future membership.

The European Union's response to Russian aggression against Ukraine marks a pivotal moment in European security policy. Through extensive sanctions aimed at crippling Russia's economy, unprecedented military assistance bolstering Ukraine's defenses, comprehensive humanitarian aid addressing urgent needs, and robust diplomatic efforts isolating Russia internationally, the EU has demonstrated a unified stance against violations of international norms. As this conflict continues into an uncertain future, the commitment of EU member states to support Ukraine will be crucial not only for regional stability but also for upholding democratic values across Europe. The ongoing evolution of this response will likely shape geopolitical dynamics well beyond the immediate crisis at hand.

Conclusion

The European Union and NATO are facing some security challenges. It is mainly due to Russian aggression and its illegal actions. Alliances support Ukraine and provide it with military-political and economic assistance. Although the war is not taking place in the territory of the alliances, however, due to the risk of violation of their eastern border, they still have to take preventive measures. There are many threats coming from Russia today, and the most dangerous and thought-provoking of them is the indirect threat of nuclear weapons. Russia has repeatedly tried to influence the European Union and NATO to reduce the imposition of sanctions and restrictions. At the beginning of the war, the dependence of the European Union on Russian natural gas was quite high, but the attempt at manipulation made the West realize that it should change its dependence on energy resources. Today, Russia is no longer the main supplier of gas to Europe.

Simply put, both the European Union and NATO are able to respond quickly and rationally to security challenges. If necessary, they intervene in the conflict and take the side of the affected country, and also ensure the introduction of preventive measures in order to balance and stop the aggressor actor.

Bibliography

- Alhajji, Anas. 2023. "EU Gas Imports in 2023 and Outlook for 2024." *ADVISORS ENERGY OUTLOOK*. 12 29. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://anasalhajjieoa.substack.com/p/eu-gas-imports-in-2023-and-outlook>.
- Awareness, Migration. 2024. *Ukrainian refugee crisis: the current situation [EN/CS]*. jan 25. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukrainian-refugee-crisis-current-situation-encs>.
- Dickinson, Peter. 2021. *Atlantic Council*. 08 07. Accessed 09 16, 2024. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/the-2008-russo-georgian-war-putins-green-light/>.

- Diplomacy, France. 2022. *Understanding the situation in Ukraine from 2014 to 24 February 2022*. june. Accessed 09 17, 2024.
<https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/ukraine/situation-in-ukraine-what-is/understanding-the-situation-in-ukraine-from-2014-to-24-february-2022/>.
- Elsbeth Guild, Kees Groenedijk. 2023. *The impact of war in Ukraine on EU migration*. june 02. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/human-dynamics/articles/10.3389/fhumd.2023.1189625/full>.
- eurostat. 2023. "Annual inflation more than tripled in the EU in 2022." *eurostat*. 03 09. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/w/DDN-20230309-2#:~:text=In%202022%2C%20EU%20annual%20inflation,2013%2D2022%20was%202.1%25>.
- Fóti, Klára. 2024. *Social impact of migration: Addressing the challenges of receiving and integrating Ukrainian refugees*. 03 28. Accessed 10 10, 2024.
<https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/en/publications/2024/social-impact-migration-addressing-challenges-receiving-and-integrating-ukrainian>.
- Mao, Frances. 2024. "BBC." *Putin proposes new rules for using nuclear weapons*. 09 26. Accessed 10 05, 2024. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5yjej0rvw0o>.
- NATO. 2022. "NATO 2022 STRATEGIC CONCEPT." 06 29. Accessed 10 03, 2024.
<file:///D:/Users/User/Downloads/290622-strategic-concept%20NATO.pdf>.
- NATO. 2024. *NATO's response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine*. 10 03. Accessed 10 15, 2024. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_192648.htm.
- ORGANIZATION, NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY. 2022. *Strategic Concepts*. 07 18. Accessed 10 03, 2024. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_56626.htm.
- Rutte, incoming NATO Secretary General Mark. 2024. "NATO." *Press conference*. 10 01. Accessed 10 02, 2024.
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_229150.htm.

შატაკიშვილი, დავით. 2022. *ექსპერტის აზრი*. Georgia: GEORGIAN FOUNDATION
FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES.

„The Russian-Ukrainian war and its impact on the Baltic states“

Beka Shaishmelashvili

Junker of Defense and Security program of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Aleksandra Barbakadze

Junker of management program of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Supervisor: Professor **Levan Gegeshidze**

Abstract

The research aims to determine what kind of threats the Russia-Ukraine confrontation poses for the geopolitical arena and specifically for the Baltic states. This issue has been one of the main questions on the world stage for the past decade, given both its substantive nature and consequential state.

The impact of the Russia-Ukraine war covers a broader area than it appears at first glance. The outcome of the war can completely change the geopolitical situation and put the world into a new, colossal regime. With Russia's victory, Europe and more specifically the Baltic states face the greatest threat. That is precisely why the EU and NATO countries are conducting an active assistance campaign for both Ukraine and the Baltic states to avoid such a dramatic change in politics and disruption of the European family's peace.

The research results and the political course of states do not guarantee objectivity, since the Baltic states and the European Alliance itself are taking steps in international politics hoping for Ukraine's victory. Nevertheless, despite everything, the Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia) are also trying to reform their internal state systems so that in case of an undesirable outcome, they are ready to give an appropriate response and resistance to the enemy.

Keywords: threats, geopolitical arena, The outcome of the war, colossal regime, political course, internal state systems.

Introduction

The Russia-Ukraine war is the main challenge of today's international security. The confrontation, the result of which will be the main factor of geopolitical changes, is entering the epilogue phase of the conflict day by day. The changing nature of war transcends the scale of its borders. The confrontation between these two largest states is the main source of danger for the Baltic states, which is the subject of great discussion both within the states and in the parliamentary hall of the European family.

The results of the Russia-Ukraine war have a great influence on the formation of the defense and security system of the European Union. The fall of the Ukrainian state poses a threat to the Baltic post-Soviet states: Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the declaration of independence, the Ukrainian state embarked on the path of European integration. European geopolitics actively tried to transform the post-Soviet states into democratic and developed countries confirmed by the entry of the Baltic states (Lithuania, Lithuania, Estonia) into NATO or the European Union. Ukraine was approaching the membership of the big European family, but in 2014, the anti-European decisions of the pro-Russian ruler of the state, Viktor Yanukovich, and the internal unrest that started in Ukraine. The war that started in 2022 put the European Union and its member states in the greatest danger. The perspective of the Baltic States, analyzing the current situation of the war, is very noteworthy and serious. A few months before the war, Kremlin leader Vladimir Putin's statement that "this (the destruction of the Soviet Union) was the collapse of a historic Russia" sent a warning signal to Europe that Putin's main goal was to restore and realize the "glorious" Soviet Union.¹

The purpose of the article is to study the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on the Baltic countries. What changes has the current conflict in Ukraine caused in their

¹ " Putin rues Soviet collapse as demise of "historical Russia" <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/putin-rues-soviet-collapse-demise-historical-russia-2021-12-12/> 10/13/2024

defense and security policy? What is the role of the European Union and NATO in this process? The article answers the following research questions:

1. What changes have been made in the Baltic States for the purpose of defense and security since the beginning of the war until now?
2. What kind of economic/material aid does Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia provide to Ukraine?

Main Part

1. Estonian policy during the Russia-Ukraine war

After the Russia-Ukraine conflict reached the peak of escalation, the Baltic states took important steps in terms of security, which were limited to economic assistance, political sanctions and domestic military reforms. This has played a major role in the stability of the modern geopolitical situation. The main goal of the opponent was to restore Russia's influence in the region. This included Russia's cyber-attack against Estonia and 9 other states, which has been active since 2020 (attacking government websites and taking them out of order). Accordingly, Europe and especially the Baltic states have moved to a new, relatively large-scale stage of defense and security. The Estonian state played an active role during the conflict. As the Estonian government put it: "If Ukraine falls, President Vladimir Putin will shift his interests to the Baltics and bring a state like Estonia back under Moscow's control." That is why the Baltic states and Estonia are actively helping Ukraine, which was expressed by their transfer of 1% of Estonia's gross domestic product (GDP) to Kyiv.² The main signal of Estonia is material aid to Ukraine. As the Prime Minister of Estonia, Kaia Kalas, said: "There is no Plan B for us if Russia wins, because then we will stop working on Plan A, which means helping Ukraine."³

² „Estonia joins 9 other nations in exposing Russia’s cyber tactics “ <https://www.npr.org/2024/09/12/nx-s1-5105974/estonia-joins-9-other-nations-in-exposing-russias-cyber-tactics> “ 10/13/2024

³ “We have no plan B if Ukraine falls, says Estonia” <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c722zxi0kyro> 10/13/2024

Estonia's main message to the European Parliament was that the European states should limit as much as possible any kind of trade relations with Russia (which in this case was limited to the purchase of gas, oil and electric energy). It is for this purpose that the Estonian government made a decision to reduce trade relation with Russia as much as possible in the form of sanctions and not to use the occupier's resources, which in itself would affect the Russian economy and thus give a small but still certain privilege to the defense of Ukraine⁴.

In the periodization of the war, the Estonian state fully understands the importance of the situation in Ukraine and its impact not only on the Baltic region, but also on the geopolitical arena as a whole. That is why Estonia, as a member state of NATO and the European Union and a partner of Ukraine, was conducting an active military aid campaign.

Based on the dangers of war and the political interests of the Kremlin, the Estonian government, with the help of its NATO ally, has made significant changes in its country's defense forces. "After the start of the war, the budget of the Estonian Defense Forces increased from 633 million euros to 1.103 billion euros. From 2023, the Estonian government has increased the number of conscripts to the annual national military service to 4,000, which is a record number since 1991. Also important is the cooperation between Estonia and Great Britain, which involves the creation of a divisional command level that will eventually be integrated with a NATO-standard military unit, although the date of its completion is not yet known."⁵

⁴ "Polarization, Shifting Borders and Liquid Governance".

<https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/86920/978-3-031-44584-2.pdf?sequence=1#page=334> ,Page 341. 10/13/2024

⁵ "On the warpath: the development and modernisation of the Baltic states' armed forces"

https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2024-05-10/warpath-development-and-modernisation-baltic-states-armed?fbclid=IwY2xjawGAP2NleHRuA2FlbQJxMAABHeoa2JRTgUgmHj7XkGBGv4MIUZtpICySM4uwqJ8qFcBe3ik5RcSNiShO9A_aem_vTIPtC_GozaQJfo00byI4A 10/19/2024

2. Lithuania's policy during the Russia-Ukraine war

Lithuania's policy during the Russia-Ukraine war is one of the most active and difficult, especially in the context of the European Union and NATO. Lithuania offers support to Ukraine, which considers military and financial assistance, including, provision of armored vehicles, weapons and humanitarian aid. In terms of foreign policy, Lithuania actively participates on international platforms, including the European Union, NATO and various Ukrainian support events⁶. Lithuania's defense minister has announced plans to create a "civilian force," implying that the government wants to recruit civilians who will be trained in the use of firearms. Their next goal is to return to the Defense Forces those former military personnel who had to leave the Defense Forces of Lithuania due to age and/or various honorable reasons. They also need medics in the Civilian Force and other individuals willing to help them defend the state. Lithuania supports the sanctions against Russia and calls on other countries to increase pressure on Moscow. Lithuania supported Ukraine with the start of the Ukraine-Russia war. Civil society, business and government came together, which leading to the creation of a large number of projects with large donations⁷. A day before a full-scale Russia's invasion in 2022, Lithuania has provided Ukraine with military aid, which consider body armor and a Stinger anti-aircraft system that includes 24 missiles⁸.

Along with military aid, Lithuania helps Ukraine in the field of energy. The private energy holding in Lithuania allocated 12 million euros to Ukraine for infrastructure⁹.

As for the aftermath of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, it is safe to say that fears of potential open conflicts between Moscow and NATO have intensified.

⁶ „Lithuania to set up wartime civilian force as Russia-Ukraine war continues“
<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/lithuania-to-set-up-wartime-civilian-force-as-russia-ukraine-war-continues/321057>
10/10/2024

⁷ „Major government and business support“ “ <https://lithuania.lt/future-of-ukraine/turining-sentiments-into-actions/>
10/11/2024

⁸ „Major government and business support“ “https://lithuania.lt/future-of-ukraine/turining-sentiments-into-actions/”
10/11/2024

⁹ „Lithuania preparing evacuation plans in case of war“ „https://kyivindependent.com/lithuania-preparing-evacuation-plans-in-case-of-war/, 10/11/2024

3. Latvia's policy during the Russia-Ukraine war

During the Russia-Ukraine war, Latvia was one of the strongest supporters of Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity. The country actively participated in international support to Ukraine, both within the European Union and NATO. During the Russo-Ukraine war, Latvia strengthened its defense capabilities¹⁰.

In addition to military support, Latvia continues to support the civilian population by helping children and women affected by the war, providing generators for homes, solar panels, and especially the Chernigov region. The President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, thanked the Allies for their attendance at the Crimea Summit and their unwavering support. ¹¹Three Baltic foreign ministers say a complete victory for Ukraine is essential for peace in Europe and NATO's security. At the same gathering, Estonian Foreign Minister Nargus Tsahkana also announced that "Ukraine is not fighting for its own freedom, Ukraine is fighting for us."¹².

According to the foreign ministers of the Baltic countries, only a strong power "containment" strategy can contain Vladimir Putin's imperial ambitions. But there is no prospect of a complete defeat of Russia by Ukraine. Kiev suffered heavy losses. The Ukrainian military experienced an average shortage of 25% of brigade personnel, during which Russia has no difficulty in mobilizing troops and is able to quickly replenish the losses. Despite all this, there is an alternative option. Washington and Kiev should turn to diplomatic ways to avoid a conflict between Russia and NATO.

In the last two years, the people of Latvia have collected 650 million euros to help Ukraine. During this period, the Latvian government contributed more than 370 million euros to Ukraine's military support, including the supply of drones, helicopters, anti-

¹⁰ „Latvia pledges new military aid package for Ukraine, including armored vehicles“
“<https://kyivindependent.com/latvia-pledges-new-military-aid-package/>“ 10/11/2024

¹¹ „The 'we win, they lose' mentality is alive and well in Northern Europe“ <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/pentagon-budget-2669380895/> 10/10/2024

¹² „The 'we win, they lose' mentality is alive and well in Northern Europe“ <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/pentagon-budget-2669380895/> 10/10/2024

aircraft missiles and other military equipment. The National Armed Forces of Latvia also trained the soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Prime Minister of Latvia Evika Silina emphasizes the importance of tireless support of Ukraine. And he says that, "Ukrainian people have shown great heroism, self-sacrifice and endurance in defense of their beloved country and people. Ukraine taught us that if you love your country, you can conquer everything."¹³

Conclusion

In conclusion , we can say that the Baltic states have been helping Ukraine in military, financial, and humanitarian ways since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war. The following research questions were asked at the beginning of the article.

1. What changes have been made in the Baltic States for the purpose of defense and security since the beginning of the war until now?
2. What kind of economic/material aid does Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia provide to Ukraine?

We can conclude that, that each of the Baltic countries of Ukraine are doing their best and sending all the necessary resources that Ukraine can use for the well-being of its country. The Baltic states strongly condemn Russia's criminal actions against Ukraine against the background of Russia's last full-scale and unprovoked war of aggression. Moreover, the article published by the Latvian government states that all Baltic states will support Ukraine's legitimate rights under Article 51 of the UN Charter.

¹³ „Ukraine can count on Latvia's tireless support“ „https://www.mk.gov.lv/en/article/ukraine-can-count-latvias-tireless-support?utm_source=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F„, 10/18/2024

Bibliography

. “ Putin rues Soviet collapse as demise of “historical Russia’

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/putin-rues-soviet-collapse-demise-historical-russia-2021-12-12/> 10/13/2024

„Estonia joins 9 other nations in exposing Russia’s cyber tactics “

<https://www.npr.org/2024/09/12/nx-s1-5105974/estonia-joins-9-other-nations-in-exposing-russias-cyber-tactics> “ 10/13/2024

“We have no plan B if Ukraine falls, says Estonia”

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c722zxj0kyro> 10/13/2024

"Polarization, Shifting Borders and Liquid Governance”.

<https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/86920/978-3-031-44584-2.pdf?sequence=1#page=334> ,Page 341. 10/13/2024

“On the warpath: the development and modernisation of the Baltic states’ armed forces“

https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2024-05-10/warpath-development-and-modernisation-baltic-states-armed?fbclid=IwY2xjawGAP2NleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHeoa2JRTgUgmHj7XkGBGv4MIUZtpICySM4uwqJ8qFcBe3ik5RcSNiShO9A_aem_vTIPtC_GozaQlfo00byI4A
10/19/2024

„Lithuania to set up wartime civilian force as Russia-Ukraine war continues“

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/lithuania-to-set-up-wartime-civilian-force-as-russia-ukraine-war-continues/321057>” 10/10/2024

“Major government and business support” “ <https://lithuania.lt/future-of-ukraine/turining-sentiments-into-actions/>” 10/11/2024

“Major government and business support” “<https://lithuania.lt/future-of-ukraine/turining-sentiments-into-actions/>” 10/11/2024

„Lithuania preparing evacuation plans in case of war“

„<https://kyivindependent.com/lithuania-preparing-evacuation-plans-in-case-of-war/>„ 10/11/2024

„Latvia pledges new military aid package for Ukraine, including armored vehicles“

“<https://kyivindependent.com/latvia-pledges-new-military-aid-package/>“
10/11/2024

„The 'we win, they lose' mentality is alive and well in Northern Europe“

<https://responsiblestatecraft.org/pentagon-budget-2669380895/> 10/10/2024

„The 'we win, they lose' mentality is alive and well in Northern Europe“

<https://responsiblestatecraft.org/pentagon-budget-2669380895/> 10/10/2024

„Ukraine can count on Latvia's tireless support“

„https://www.mk.gov.lv/en/article/ukraine-can-count-latvias-tireless-support?utm_source=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F„ 10/18/2024

Germany's defense and security policy after the war in Ukraine

Irakli Beridze

Junker of Defense and Security of
LEPL - David Agmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Nika Gogoberishvili

Junker of Defense and Security of
LEPL - David Agmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Supervisor: Professor **Levan Gegeshidze**

Abstract

This article discusses the significant transformation in Germany's security and defense policies following Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Historically, Germany adopted a pacifist foreign policy after World War II, relying heavily on NATO and European Union partnerships for defense. The policy, influenced by the legacies of both World Wars, focused on disarmament and avoiding military conflict, while fostering economic ties with Russia, particularly through the doctrine of "Ostpolitik." Ostpolitik, introduced during the Cold War, emphasized economic cooperation with Russia to promote peace and mutual understanding.

However, the invasion in Ukraine marked a pivotal moment for German security strategy, as it exposed the risks of energy dependence on Russia and shattered the illusion of European stability. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz responded by announcing the "Zeitenwende" - a turning point in German defense policy. This new strategy emphasized increased military spending, modernizing the Bundeswehr (German Armed Forces), and a shift toward a more assertive role in NATO and European security.

The article considers the questions related to how Germany's defense priorities have changed in the two years since Zeitenwende was announced, focusing on key areas such as military reforms, foreign policy shifts, and energy independence from Russia. Scholz's government has allocated substantial funds for military modernization, increasing Germany's defense budget to meet NATO standards, while also enhancing partnerships within NATO and the European Union. Additionally, Germany has actively supported Ukraine militarily, breaking from its previous cautious stance.

Despite all the above mentioned efforts, the article highlights ongoing challenges, including bureaucratic inefficiencies and public resistance to militarization, complicating Germany's ability to fully implement its strategic ambitions. As Germany navigates this major policy shift, the long-standing pacifist sentiments within its society continue to shape its evolving strategic culture, raising questions about the future of Germany's role in European and global security.

Keywords: Ostpolitik, Zeitenwende, Bundeswehr, Energy, Strategic Culture, Foreign Policy.

Introduction

On February 24, 2022, Russia's invasion in Ukraine and the start of the war caused significant changes in the European security architecture, most notably Germany, which for decades pursued a pacifist foreign policy and relied on NATO and the European Union for defense. However, the war in Ukraine forced Germany to revise its security priorities and dramatically increase defense spending. Historically, Germany's post-war security policy has been heavily influenced by the legacy of World War II and the subsequent division of the country into East and West Germany. After the defeat of Nazi Germany, the Federal Republic of Germany was established as a democratic and peaceful country, oriented towards peace and European integration. The security policy of the Federal Republic of Germany was closely combined with the policy of the United States of America and NATO. The Federal Republic of Germany was a supporter of the European Union. However, German security policy reflected a strong inclination towards disarmament and a desire to avoid military conflict. The constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany asserted the pacifist principle, which prohibited the maintenance and increase of the country's offensive military capabilities.¹ Germany maintained this policy in the post-Cold War period as well - the country continued to keep defense spending at a relatively low level and focused on economic cooperation. The German government argued that Germany's pursuit of European integration and economic power were more effective tools for ensuring security than military power.²

The above mentioned situation changed after Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022 and started a full-scale war, which led to radical changes in the security policy of Europe including Germany. The outbreak of war in Ukraine shattered the illusion of European security, which had been due to the relative stability of the post-Cold War era, and exposed the German Energy dependence on Russia as a threat to the security of whole

¹ Helferich, John. 2023. "The (false) promise of Germany's *Zeitenwende*." *European View Vol. 22(1)* 85-95.

² Bunde, Tobias. 2022. "Lessons (to be) learned? Germany's *Zeitenwende* and European security after the Russian invasion of Ukraine." *Contemporary Security Policy, 43(3)*, 516-530.

Europe, especially Germany. Because of all this, the German government was forced to accept a new reality, according to which Germany's traditional approach to security was no longer sufficient to protect the country's interests. At the same time, the conflict highlighted the need for Germany to strengthen its military capabilities, alliances, and also to assume an even stronger and more important role in the defense and security of Europe.

Taking into account all the above mentioned aspects, in the article we discuss what was Ostpolitik, which was founded during the Cold War, and what kind of relations did Germany have towards Russia before its the large-scale invasion in Ukraine. In addition, we will touch upon the announcement of the "Zeitenwende" by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, which radically changed the German defense and security policy and the German approach to Russia. We will consider the steps taken within the framework of this policy in the field of energy, military and foreign policy. We have also discussed the issues related to what extent it has been fulfilled during next 2 years after the announcement of this policy. In addition, we also consider the strategic culture of Germany - what it was before and whether it has changed since the Zeitenwende. Finally, according to all above mentioned issues, we can say that Germany's defense and security policy has undergone a major transformation as a result of the war in Ukraine.

Main Part

Historical context - Ostpolitik

After World War II, pacifism was the main part of German foreign policy. Germany was opposed to pursuing its foreign policy based on military strength and preferred political, economic and social relations to protect its interests in the international arena.³ The basis of all this was the German foreign policy doctrine - "Ostpolitik," initiated by the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Willy Brandt, in the late 1960s. The latter radically

³ Tian, Huiyi. 2023. "The foreign policy transition of the German Scholz government in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and its causes." *Highlights in Business, Economics and Management* 216-217.

changed relations with both former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Ostpolitik was a departure from US policy of containment. Brandt explained the implementation of Ostpolitik by the fact that relations with the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were needed to reduce tensions and improve the prospects for peace. Ostpolitik was based on the belief that economic cooperation and cultural relations could promote greater understanding and mutual respect between the two sides. One of the important aspects of this policy was the recognition of the legitimacy of the German Democratic Republic, aimed at improving relations with the Soviet Union, ensuring peace in West and East Germany. The foreign policy pursued in the name of Ostpolitik included the implementation of economic and cultural measures, such as the signing of trade agreements, the implementation of infrastructure projects that would connect East and West Germany. The purpose of all this was to create a web of interdependence that would make it difficult for these two sides to engage in conflict.

German policy towards Russia before the war in Ukraine

Ostpolitik and its ideas persisted even after the reunification of Germany and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 began a slow process of revision of this policy, radically accelerated by Russia's February 24, 2022, outbreak of full-scale war in Ukraine. Until then, Germany relied on the principles of modern Ostpolitik with Russia, encouraging Russia to first invade Georgia in 2008, and then Crimea in 2014. Germany's modern Ostpolitik included these principles, such as:

Russia in the first place - Germany subordinated its relations with other post-Soviet states to the interests of Russia, thereby de facto undermining the sovereignty of both its own and other states. Thus, German security policy did not sufficiently or equally encompass the security interests of other post-Soviet states.⁴ Georgia and Ukraine fell victim

⁴ Tejkl, Bc. Jakub. 2023. *The Influence of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine on German Security Policy*. Master's Thesis, Brno: Masaryk University, Faculty of Social Studies.

to this policy in 2008, when German Chancellor Angela Merkel blocked the NATO Membership Action Plan for Georgia and Ukraine, the so-called "Map" program. The latter gave the green light to Russia and 6 months after the summit Russia invaded Georgia in August 2008. German Chancellor Angela Merkel explained her decision as follows: "The extension of the NATO membership action plan to Ukraine at the NATO conference in Bucharest in 2008 would be tantamount to a declaration of war for Putin."⁵

At the same time, German politicians believed that economic cooperation, interdependence would increase trust, reduce the likelihood of conflict and promote democratic and liberal processes that would have a transformative effect on Russian society and creating at least a partially democratic Russia. However, the business relationships helped enrich the Russian elite and destroy their competitors. It should be noted here that German officials thought that the security of Europe and Germany could only be achieved through both friendship with Russia and discussions related to security issues. In the end, they had only limited influence, Putin's regime used it to its advantage and threatened the national security of Germany and Europe as a whole, but despite all this, the administration of former German Chancellor Angela Merkel still kept Russia in the European security system as one of the main actors and justified all this by the fact that it was necessary to have relations and trade with the second largest nuclear power in the world.⁶

Along with the above, the German government prioritized economic profits and cheap energy resources, while ignoring the negative impact of these actions on Germany's security and its geopolitical situation. The relations related to energy resources between Germany and Russia were an "echo" causing the following challenges, which in fact, turned out to be the greatest security problem for Germany and the whole Europe as well. It is worth noting that in Europe, Germany was the largest importer of cheap Russian energy

⁵ Tejkl, Bc. Jakub. 2023. *The Influence of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine on German Security Policy*. Master's Thesis, Brno: Masaryk University, Faculty of Social Studies.

⁶ Tejkl, Bc. Jakub. 2023. *The Influence of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine on German Security Policy*. Master's Thesis, Brno: Masaryk University, Faculty of Social Studies.

resources, as evidenced by projects such as Nord Stream 1, officially opened on November 8, 2011, and Nord Stream 2, opened in September 2021, further increasing the level of imports of Russian energy resources into Europe. It is worth noting that Germany continued to increase its dependence on the import of Russian energy resources to such an extent that at the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, 55% of the gas supply, 50% of the coal and 35% of the oil supply were filled with imports from Russia.⁷ All this had an impact on Germany's foreign policy and did not allow it to conduct a more necessary, harsh policy and impose appropriate sanctions on the Russian Federation against the latter's aggressive actions.

Finally, we can say that the Ostpolitik was a “double-edged sword”, which, on the one hand, was useful for Germany, but on the other hand, it posed a great threat to both Germany itself and Europe as a whole.

A big turning point - "Zeitenwende" and its consequences

The start of the Russia-Ukraine war on February 22, 2022 had a major impact on Germany's defense and security policy and, in general, on its overall foreign policy. It was a momentous event that officially began on February 27, 2022, with a speech by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in the Bundestag in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. During this meeting, Chancellor Scholz made a speech in which he argued that the world is no longer what it used to be as a result of Russia's actions. In response to all this, he announced to develop the new policy: "Zeitenwende." In his speech, Scholz declared Russia to be an aggressor and the biggest threat to European security. At the same time, he said that Germany will be more actively involved in the issues of Europe and NATO and will actively contribute to strengthening NATO and the European Union, increasing security and maintaining peace in Europe. It should be noted here that in this very speech he officially

⁷ Tejkl, Bc. Jakub. 2023. *The Influence of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine on German Security Policy*. Master's Thesis, Brno: Masaryk University, Faculty of Social Studies.

announced the decision to supply weapons to Ukraine and impose the toughest sanctions on Russia: termination of technology exports to Russia, the financing of Russian banks and businesses, the exclusion of small Russian banks from the banking communication network “Swift,” sanctions against Putin and his close circle, etc. Along with the above mentioned issues, he outlined several important points that should influence the future direction of German foreign policy and other measures that will ultimately contribute to the strengthening of Germany's security policy.⁸

The first and foremost objective of the "Zeitenwende" was to strengthen and transform the armed forces of the Federal Republic of Germany as the main pillar of European security. But this task is quite difficult to accomplish, as the German armed forces have been secondary concern to the politicians for the last 30 years, due to which it has been greatly weakened. The budget of the Bundeswehr, which did not meet the 2% standard of "NATO" and fluctuated between 1.2% and 1.4%, spoke of all this. In 2005, it was a record low and constituted 1.1% of Germany's GDP.⁹ In addition, the 2018 government report noted a very low level of operational readiness of the Bundeswehr's main systems: the old equipment in the report of the armed forces was approaching the operational limit, and modern systems did not approach the set goal of the level of readiness, for example: in 2017, the "Marder" type infantry fighting vehicle reached 66% readiness level, while its modern version "Puma" did not even reach 50%. The Luftwaffe's Tornados and Eurofighter's were below 50% readiness. All this meant that only 39 of the 128 Eurofighters in the German Armed Forces are ready for operations. Only 105 out of 224 Leopard 2 tanks are in operational readiness.¹⁰ In addition, it should be noted here the problem of ammunition stocks in the Bundeswehr,

⁸ Scholz, Olaf. 2022. "Policy statement by Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany and Member of the German Bundestag." *Federal Government of Germany*. 27 February. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/news/policy-statement-by-olaf-scholz-chancellor-of-the-federal-republic-of-germany-and-member-of-the-german-bundestag-27-february-2022-in-berlin-2008378>.

⁹ Tenenbaum, Élie, and Léo Péria-Peigné. 2023. "Zeitenwende: the Bundeswehr's Paradigm Shift." *Focus stratégique*, No 116, *Ifri* 13, 23, 27.

¹⁰ Tenenbaum, Élie, and Léo Péria-Peigné. 2023. "Zeitenwende: the Bundeswehr's Paradigm Shift." *Focus stratégique*, No 116, *Ifri* 13, 23, 27.

which is quite inappropriate at the time: according to reports, the Bundeswehr only has ammunition for 1 day or at least a few hours.¹¹ The problem of personnel shortage in the Bundeswehr should also be mentioned here. Today, 180,215 soldiers are enrolled in the Bundeswehr, which is the smallest figure after the data of 2018 and is quite small compared to other neighboring states. For example, France, which has 270,000 active personnel in the armed forces and owns twice as much equipment as Germany, and it manages all this with almost the same defense budget as the German armed forces before the special one-time fund: 51.95 billion euros. France is only 5 billion euros behind Germany.¹² It should also be noted here that the Polish Armed Forces are far behind Germany in terms of gross domestic product, but with a defense budget of 14 billion dollars, they are not inferior to the German Armed Forces and in some aspects even surpass them, for example, Germany has 226 tanks, while Poland has 863. Germany's armed forces are better than Poland only in aviation and the number of infantry fighting vehicles.¹³ Considering the above, we can say that the Bundeswehr does not have a financial problem, but rather another, bureaucratic problem, which we will discuss below. Ultimately, the situation of the German armed forces is quite dire, with only one third meeting operational readiness.¹⁴ Because of all this, Germany's armed forces are only 15th in strength in the world. All above mentioned aspects were not appropriate to the country, which possesses the fourth place in the world economy, and the first in Europe. Based on these facts and aspects, if Germany wants to play a more important role in international politics, it is necessary to strengthen its military forces. That is why, within the framework of the "Zeitenwende" policy, a special one-time fund of 100 billion euros was allocated for the modernization of the Bundeswehr. The latter

¹¹ Gasper, Felix. 2024. *The Zeitenwende, Two Years On*. 10 May. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://icds.ee/en/the-zeitenwende-two-years-on/>.

¹² Zhang, Yichuan. 2023. "Germany's Rearmament Plan: A Problem of Bureaucracy." *Proceedings of the International Conference on Interdisciplinary Humanities and Communication Studies*. Ann Arbor: EWA Publishing. 418-425.

¹³ Zhang, Yichuan. 2023. "Germany's Rearmament Plan: A Problem of Bureaucracy." *Proceedings of the International Conference on Interdisciplinary Humanities and Communication Studies*. Ann Arbor: EWA Publishing. 418-425.

¹⁴ Zhang, Yichuan. 2023. "Germany's Rearmament Plan: A Problem of Bureaucracy." *Proceedings of the International Conference on Interdisciplinary Humanities and Communication Studies*. Ann Arbor: EWA Publishing. 418-425.

was supported by all parties represented in the Bundestag. But all this is not enough for the German armed forces to become the main pillar of European security. It will only lay the groundwork for addressing the problems left by 30 years of underfunding, such as staff, material and infrastructure shortages.¹⁵ This 100 billion euro special one-time fund was followed by an increase in defense spending from 51.95 billion euro to 72 billion euro, which is already 2% of Germany's GDP as of today. But the aforementioned one-time fund will be enough until 2027, after which the German authorities will have to fill a large gap of 20.5 billion euros to maintain the 2% financing.¹⁶ The latter is quite a big challenge, which the government could not agree on. Along with all this, German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius states that Germany should be "ready for war" in 5 years, and for this it is necessary to spend 3-3.5% of the gross domestic product on the defense budget - and this will increase the defense budget to 120 billion dollars from 72 billion in 2024 compared to the euro. Unfortunately, this request of Pistorius was not met, and instead of an annual increase of 6.5 billion euros in the defense budget, he received only 1.2 billion euros,¹⁷ which Pistorius expressed concern and said: " It means I can't initiate certain things as quickly as 'Zeitenwende' and the threat situation requires."¹⁸ It is worth noting that according to the "Zeitenwende" policy, the defense budget should be extended not only to the Bundeswehr, but also to other institutions that should strengthen technological and social sustainability. For example, 29.34 billion euros have been allocated for the air sector, with which 35 F-35 fighter jets, 60 Chinook Helicopters, etc. are to be purchased.¹⁹ In addition, EUR 0.4 billion

¹⁵ Puglierin, Jana. 2024. *Turning point or turning back: German defence policy after Zeitenwende*. 19 March. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://ecfr.eu/article/turning-point-or-turning-back-german-defence-policy-after-zeitenwende/>.

¹⁶ Tenenbaum, Élie, and Léo Péria-Peigné. 2023. "Zeitenwende: the Bundeswehr's Paradigm Shift." *Focus stratégique, No 116, Ifri* 13, 23, 27.

¹⁷ Tallis, Benjamin. 2024. *The End of the Zeitenwende*. 30 August. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://dgap.org/en/research/publications/end-zeitenwende>.

¹⁸ Martinez, Maria. 2024. *German defence budget for 2025 'significantly' less than sought, minister says*. 8 July. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/german-defence-budget-2025-falls-significantly-short-request-minister-says-2024-07-08/>.

¹⁹ Tallis, Benjamin. 2024. *The End of the Zeitenwende*. 30 August. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://dgap.org/en/research/publications/end-zeitenwende>.

is earmarked for research and development of artificial intelligence and cyber security, as increased cyber security will better prevent cyber attacks, disinformation campaigns, and the possibility of attacks on critical infrastructure and communication systems. The budget of this fund covers ground forces, military fleet and individual equipment. As part of the latter, the Bundeswehr also ordered 123 Leopard 2A8 tanks, various missiles and new communications systems that will increase the Bundeswehr's capabilities. Along with all above mentioned information, it should be underlined that the acquisition and implementation of all these armament need certain time, which will further delay the Bundeswehr's achievement of full operational readiness. Despite all this, the fact is that these purchases are only the tip of the iceberg and can be considered as a little improvement of given circumstances.

As we have already mentioned, Germany is the largest economy in Europe and has a fairly large defense budget compared to neighboring countries, but despite all this, why do the above-mentioned problems exist in the Bundeswehr? The answer to this question is given by a specific agency in the German state bureaucracy: "The Federal Office of Bundeswehr Equipment, Information Technology, and In-Service Support" (BAAINBw) - this is the agency responsible for purchasing all materials, equipment, and ammunition for the Bundeswehr. The main problem of this agency is extreme bureaucratization, that's why it works rather slowly. Purchases, repairs either require too much money, or the process takes too much time. The agency follows hundreds of regulations and protocols to ensure everything is working within the prescribed limits, but the latter, as mentioned above, is dragging everything down. A good example of all this is the purchase of new helmets for the Bundeswehr, which took 10 years because the agency had to be sure that the helmet would fit the German soldier and protect him effectively. At this rate, according to Eva Högli, the Parliamentary Commissioner of the Armed Forces, the Bundeswehr will be fully equipped in 2031. Based on the above mentioned aspects, we can say that in order to strengthen the Bundeswehr and achieve the highest operational level, it is necessary to have

both the largest finances, as well as the urgent reorganization, modernization and reform of this agency, because pouring more money into a broken system in the hope of getting the desired result is not the most ideal choice of action.²⁰

Accordingly, one of the main directions of "Zeitenwende" was active foreign policy and cooperation with partners. As part of the latter, the Bundeswehr stepped up its support for the Eastern Allies: additional troops were stationed in Lithuania in the form of a tank brigade of the Bundeswehr,²¹ where they lead the NATO combat group: "With this combat-ready brigade, we are taking on leadership responsibility within the Alliance here at NATO's eastern flank," German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius announced.²² At the same time, active participation in air patrols in Romania was further strengthened. Also, within the framework of the "Zeitenwende" policy, Olaf Scholz expressed his desire to actively support the formation of a new NATO unit in Slovakia. At the same time, the concentration of the navy in the North, Baltic and Mediterranean Seas has increased to better protect these regions. He also expressed readiness to protect the airspace of the eastern partners. Besides, one of the most important goals was to increase cooperation with European partners and, in particular, with France, in order to produce a new generation of combat aircraft and tanks in Europe. Within the framework of this policy, on April 26, 2024, an agreement was signed between France and Germany on the production of a new generation tank, which should be ready by 2040.²³ It should be noted that such steps further contribute to the strengthening of NATO and bringing the member states closer together. Within the framework of the

²⁰ Zhang, Yichuan. 2023. "Germany's Rearmament Plan: A Problem of Bureaucracy." *Proceedings of the International Conference on Interdisciplinary Humanities and Communication Studies*. Ann Arbor: EWA Publishing. 418-425.

²¹ Scholz, Olaf. 2022. "Policy statement by Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany and Member of the German Bundestag." *Federal Government of Germany*. 27 February. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/news/policy-statement-by-olaf-scholz-chancellor-of-the-federal-republic-of-germany-and-member-of-the-german-bundestag-27-february-2022-in-berlin-2008378>.

²² Wilke, Sebastian. 2024. *The Bundeswehr in Lithuania: Major steps towards the German manoeuvre brigade*. 17 August. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://www.bundeswehr.de/en/news/bundeswehr-lithuania>.

²³ Ruitenbergh, Rudy, and Sebastian Sprenger. 2024. *France and Germany sign off on future battle tank system*. 26 April. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2024/04/26/france-and-germany-sign-off-on-future-battle-tank-system/>.

above-mentioned policy, Germany was no longer cautious about maintaining the balance of power with Russia, and as a result actively supported the expansion of NATO and the European Union. An example of all this is the strong support for Finland and Sweden to join NATO. German support was stronger than that of the other states of the alliance, especially in the negotiations with Turkey and Hungary, which objected to the admission of these two countries into the alliance. Germany actively pressured these two countries to speed up negotiations and force a compromise.²⁴ As for the European Union, Olaf Scholz expressed Germany's commitment to the further expansion of the Union in the Western Balkans and Eastern European countries, despite possible risks . Scholz stated all this in his speech delivered at Charles University in Prague in August 2022: "Firstly, I'm committed to the enlargement of the European Union to include the countries of the Western Balkans, as well as Ukraine, Moldova and, down the line, also Georgia."²⁵ Another important aspect of active foreign policy was military support to Ukraine . Before the war, Germany limited its military aid to Ukraine to only 5,000 helmets , which drew lots of criticism. At the same time, he forbade other countries to send German equipment to Ukraine, but the implementation of the "Zeitenwende" policy led to a gradual transformation of these aid measures, and today Germany is the second largest supporter of Ukraine after the USA. But the latter shouldn't come as a surprise, as Germany is the leading economy in Europe and has the finances to match.²⁶ In addition to domestic pressure, when the Biden administration decided to supply Ukraine with Abrams tanks, Germany began actively supplying military equipment such as Leopard 1 and Leopard 2 tanks, armored personnel carriers, infantry fighting vehicles, anti-

²⁴ Tejkl, Bc. Jakub. 2023. *The Influence of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine on German Security Policy*. Master's Thesis, Brno: Masaryk University, Faculty of Social Studies.

²⁵ —. 2022. *Speech by Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz at the Charles University in Prague*. 29 August. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/news/scholz-speech-prague-charles-university-2080752>.

²⁶ Tallis, Benjamin. 2024. *The End of the Zeitenwende*. 30 August. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://dgap.org/en/research/publications/end-zeitenwende>.

tank and anti-aircraft weapons, in addition, Patriot type systems, etc.²⁷ It should be noted that Germany urged the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Greece and other European countries that had old Soviet equipment to transfer the latter to Ukraine, and in return they would receive German equipment such as Leopard 2 A4 and Marder type armored personnel carriers.²⁸ The latter contributes to rearming and modernization of NATO and European armies. In total, the Federal Republic of Germany has so far given or committed around €28 billion worth of military aid for the coming years, but as a percentage of GDP, Germany's aid ranks 10th, behind the top 3 countries: Estonia (3.55%), Denmark (2.41%) and Norway (1.72%)

Accordingly, the speech of "Zeitenwende" was followed by the most important event in the German history, namely, the adoption of the first national security concept. The mentioned document was published 1 year after the Zeitenwende speech, in 2023, where Germany for the first time officially names today's Russia as currently the biggest threat to peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. The reason for all this is Russia's conscious and thought-out destabilization efforts aimed at weakening the European democratic society, the European Union and NATO.²⁹

We should underline another priority of "Zeitenwende" which is related to the changes in energy policy. One of the most important parts of the speech of "Zeitenwende" was related to the provision of energy security. One of Olaf Scholz's main goals was to ensure Germany's secure energy supply. In order to achieve all this, it was necessary to give up Russia's energy resources - which was done. The latter is confirmed by the fact that on February 22, 2022, 2 days before the war, Scholz announced that Nord Stream 2 would not be put into operation. Germany aimed to be completely free from Russian dependence in

²⁷ Gasper, Felix. 2024. *The Zeitenwende, Two Years On*. 10 May. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://icds.ee/en/the-zeitenwende-two-years-on/>.

²⁸ Tejkl, Bc. Jakub. 2023. *The Influence of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine on German Security Policy*. Master's Thesis, Brno: Masaryk University, Faculty of Social Studies.

²⁹ The Federal Government. 2023. *Robust. Resilient. Sustainable. Integrated Security for Germany - National Security Strategy*. Berlin: Federal Foreign Office.

energy resources. For this reason it began to take active steps. Initially, coal imports from Russia fell from 50% to 8%, and oil imports fell from 36.5% to 0.1%. Finally, all of this was followed by the 2022 EU embargo on Russian energy resources and the sabotage of Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2, which completely stopped natural gas imports from these pipelines. Germany completely stopped importing natural gas from Russia by 2023 and chose Norway as the main natural gas supplier, from which up to 43% is imported.³⁰ In addition, Germany is going to import natural gas from Qatar from 2026. It should also be noted here that the mentioned period is quite difficult for Germany, which is why the "Energy Efficiency Act" was adopted in Germany, the purpose of which is to reduce energy consumption and instead increase its efficiency. Finally, in order to achieve energy security and energy independence, Olaf Scholz in his speech focused on the even wider introduction of renewable energy and set a goal to become carbon-neutral by 2045.³¹

German strategic culture after *Zeitenwende*

Germany's strategic culture is complex and evolving, shaped by historical experiences, collective memory, and contemporary geopolitical realities. The latter was greatly influenced by World War II and its aftermath, when Germany struggled with the consequences of its militaristic past. The Holocaust and the devastating consequences of the war instilled a deep aversion to militarism in German society, leading to the formation of a strategic culture characterized by pacifism, multilateralism, and a preference for diplomatic solutions over military intervention.³² This historical context had a significant impact on German foreign policy, resulting in a cautious and restrained approach to military

³⁰ Iqbal, Hafsa. 2023. "Germany Response towards Russia-Ukraine Conflict." *Global Foreign Policies Review*, VIII(IV) 37-52.

³¹ Scholz, Olaf. 2022. "Policy statement by Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany and Member of the German Bundestag." *Federal Government of Germany*. 27 February. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/news/policy-statement-by-olaf-scholz-chancellor-of-the-federal-republic-of-germany-and-member-of-the-german-bundestag-27-february-2022-in-berlin-2008378>.

³² Staun, Jørgen. 2020. "The Slow Path Towards 'Normality': German Strategic Culture and the Holocaust." *Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies*, 3(1) 84-99.

engagement. During the Cold War, Germany's strategic culture was influenced by its division into East and West. This period further strengthened the culture of caution as both sides were well aware of the potential consequences of military conflict. The legacy of this era continued to influence Germany's strategic decisions even after German reunification, as the country sought to redefine its role in a changing Europe.

At the end of the 1990s, the Kosovo war marked a significant turning point in German strategic culture - Germany took part in a military intervention under the auspices of NATO for the first time since World War II. This involvement created the basis for Germany's gradual transition to a more active role in international security issues. It is after this event that Germany slowly becomes more active in the military field and takes part in the war in Afghanistan. However, all this was implemented slowly, with great caution and public debate.³³

Ultimately, it was Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 that had the greatest impact on Germany's strategic culture. This event led to a revision of Germany's defense position and, in general, the role of the state in the international arena. All of this was followed by the *Zeitenwende* speech, in which, as discussed above, Chancellor Olaf Scholz began to increase defense spending, find new energy resource suppliers, and free himself from dependence on Russian energy resources. At the same time, military support for Ukraine has also begun, indicating a shift towards a more assertive policy directed against Russia. Despite these developments, challenges remain in implementing a more proactive strategic culture. Domestic political dynamics complicate Germany's ability to take decisive action. Scholz's cautious leadership style has drawn criticism both domestically and internationally. A good example of the latter was the fact that Germany restricted other countries from supplying German equipment to Ukraine, until the Biden administration directly began to pressure and supply Ukraine with such heavy equipment as Abrams tanks. Accordingly, we can say

³³ Staun, Jørgen. 2020. "The Slow Path Towards 'Normality': German Strategic Culture and the Holocaust." *Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies*, 3(1) 84-99.

that Germany is slowly, cautiously trying to establish a stronger and more active strategic culture. One example of this is Germany's decision: it allows Ukraine to use German weapons to strike targets inside Russia,³⁴ when the United States of America has not yet made a decision on this matter.

According to all above mentioned facts, public sentiment plays a crucial role in shaping German strategic culture. Historically, there has been significant opposition to militarism and military action in general among the German population. Although recent events have led to increased support for collective defense measures, old sentiments remain in the public. For example: a poll shows that two-thirds of German citizens now fear being involved in a direct military conflict with the Russian Federation, and only 45% say they want Germany to help another NATO member state if it is attacked . At the same time, this 45% indicator drops to 30% in East Germany. All this is alarming, both for Germany and for NATO as a whole.³⁵

In conclusion, German strategic culture is at a critical juncture, influenced by historical mortality and contemporary geopolitical challenges. Although recent world events point toward greater military involvement on the part of Germany, domestic political dynamics and public attitudes will continue to play a crucial role in shaping Germany's future strategic culture. During these changes, Germany must overcome past complexes related to the military in the face of an increasingly complex global security environment. Because the outcome will not only define Germany's role, but will also affect the future stability of Europe amid rising tensions.

³⁴ Ahmatović, Šejla, and Jürgen Klöckner. 2024. *Germany allows Ukraine to strike targets inside Russia with German weapons*. 31 May. Accessed October 10, 2024. <https://www.politico.eu/article/germany-ukraine-government-russia-strike-war-weapons-territory-announcement-washington/>.

³⁵ Semonsen, Robert. 2023. *Poll: Less Than Half of Germans Support Defending NATO Allies*. 9 February. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://europeanconservative.com/articles/news/poll-less-than-half-of-germans-support-defending-nato-allies/>.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Germany's security and defense policies have undergone a profound and historic transformation in response to the Russia-Ukraine war, marking a clear departure from its traditional pacifist stance that had shaped its foreign policy for decades. The "Zeitenwende," announced by Chancellor Olaf Scholz, symbolizes the recognition within Germany's leadership that the old ways of securing national interests—through economic ties, diplomatic engagement, and reliance on NATO for defense—were no longer sufficient in the face of growing global instability. Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 shattered Europe's sense of security and exposed Germany's deep dependency on Russian energy, which had long been viewed as a stabilizing factor in its relationship with Moscow. This crisis forced Germany to confront the limitations of its previous policies and spurred a fundamental rethink of its approach to security and defense.

Germany has since taken significant steps toward redefining its defense and foreign policy. Under the "Zeitenwende," defense spending has seen a dramatic increase, meeting NATO's 2% target and modernizing the Bundeswehr, which had long been underfunded and undersupplied. This financial investment, combined with Germany's active role in NATO and its leadership in European security matters, signals a shift toward assuming greater responsibility in the defense of Europe. Germany has also demonstrated unprecedented military support for Ukraine, breaking from its previously cautious approach to military engagements and arms exports.

In addition, energy policy has seen radical changes, with Germany swiftly moving to reduce its dependence on Russian gas and oil. This diversification of energy sources, including the expansion of renewable energy, reflects not only an attempt to ensure national security but also a long-term strategy for achieving greater energy independence and sustainability. The "Zeitenwende" has, therefore, impacted not just defense policy but has driven reforms across multiple sectors, including foreign policy, energy, and technological innovation.

However, despite these important strides, Germany faces considerable challenges in fully realizing the ambitions set out under “Zeitenwende.” One major obstacle is the bureaucratic inertia within the country’s defense procurement system, which has slowed the modernization of the Bundeswehr. The long-standing issues with outdated equipment, underfunding, and personnel shortages, which have persisted for decades, cannot be solved overnight. In addition, Germany’s traditionally pacifist strategic culture, deeply ingrained in both its political institutions and society, continues to influence public attitudes toward military engagement. While there is now greater support for collective defense and military spending, there remains significant public resistance to Germany’s increased involvement in military conflicts and defense commitments.

Moreover, Germany’s leadership style, particularly that of Chancellor Scholz, has been criticized for being overly cautious and slow to act in the face of urgent international crises. This was evident in Germany’s initial hesitation to send heavy weaponry to Ukraine or permit other countries to transfer German-made arms, a position that only changed after external pressure, particularly from the United States. The balance between maintaining public support for a more assertive defense policy and navigating the country’s complex political dynamics presents a continuous challenge for Germany as it seeks to reshape its strategic culture.

In conclusion, Germany’s “Zeitenwende” represents a pivotal moment in its post-World War II history, signaling a shift away from its pacifist traditions toward a more robust and proactive security policy. While significant progress has been made, the country must overcome substantial internal challenges to fully adapt to its new role in European and global security. Success in implementing the “Zeitenwende” will not only redefine Germany’s role on the world stage but also have profound implications for the stability and security of Europe as a whole. Germany’s ability to transform itself in response to these challenges will ultimately determine whether it can emerge as a leading force in maintaining peace and security in an increasingly uncertain international landscape.

Bibliography

- Ahmatović, Šejla, and Jürgen Klöckner. 2024. *Germany allows Ukraine to strike targets inside Russia with German weapons*. 31 May. Accessed October 10, 2024.
<https://www.politico.eu/article/germany-ukraine-government-russia-strike-war-weapons-territory-announcement-washington/>.
- Bunde, Tobias. 2022. "Lessons (to be) learned? Germany's Zeitenwende and European security after the Russian invasion of Ukraine." *Contemporary Security Policy*, 43(3), 516-530.
- Gasper, Felix. 2024. *The Zeitenwende, Two Years On*. 10 May. Accessed October 5, 2024.
<https://icds.ee/en/the-zeitenwende-two-years-on/>.
- Helferich, John. 2023. "The (false) promise of Germany's Zeitenwende." *European View* Vol. 22(1) 85-95.
- Iqbal, Hafsa. 2023. "Germany Response towards Russia-Ukraine Conflict." *Global Foreign Policies Review*, VIII(IV) 37-52.
- Martinez, Maria. 2024. *German defence budget for 2025 'significantly' less than sought, minister says*. 8 July. Accessed October 5, 2024.
<https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/german-defence-budget-2025-falls-significantly-short-request-minister-says-2024-07-08/>.
- Puglierin, Jana. 2024. *Turning point or turning back: German defence policy after Zeitenwende*. 19 March. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://ecfr.eu/article/turning-point-or-turning-back-german-defence-policy-after-zeitenwende/>.
- Ruitenbergh, Rudy, and Sebastian Sprenger. 2024. *France and Germany sign off on future battle tank system*. 26 April. Accessed October 5, 2024.
<https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2024/04/26/france-and-germany-sign-off-on-future-battle-tank-system/>.
- Scholz, Olaf. 2022. "Policy statement by Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany and Member of the German Bundestag." *Federal Government of*

- Germany*. 27 February. Accessed October 5, 2024.
<https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/news/policy-statement-by-olaf-scholz-chancellor-of-the-federal-republic-of-germany-and-member-of-the-german-bundestag-27-february-2022-in-berlin-2008378>.
- . 2022. *Speech by Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz at the Charles University in Prague*. 29 August. Accessed October 5, 2024. <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/news/scholz-speech-prague-charles-university-2080752>.
- Semonsen, Robert. 2023. *Poll: Less Than Half of Germans Support Defending NATO Allies*. 9 February. Accessed October 5, 2024.
<https://europeanconservative.com/articles/news/poll-less-than-half-of-germans-support-defending-nato-allies/>.
- Staun, Jørgen. 2020. "The Slow Path Towards 'Normality': German Strategic Culture and the Holocaust." *Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies*, 3(1) 84-99.
- Tallis, Benjamin. 2024. *The End of the Zeitenwende*. 30 August. Accessed October 5, 2024.
<https://dgap.org/en/research/publications/end-zeitenwende>.
- Tejkl, Bc. Jakub. 2023. *The Influence of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine on German Security Policy*. Master's Thesis, Brno: Masaryk University, Faculty of Social Studies.
- Tenenbaum, Élie, and Léo Péria-Peigné. 2023. "Zeitenwende: the Bundeswehr's Paradigm Shift." *Focus stratégique*, No 116, Ifri 13, 23, 27.
- The Federal Government. 2023. *Robust. Resilient. Sustainable. Integrated Security for Germany - National Security Strategy*. Berlin: Federal Foreign Office.
- Tian, Huiyi. 2023. "The foreign policy transition of the German Scholz government in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and its causes." *Highlights in Business, Economics and Management* 216-217.

Wilke, Sebastian. 2024. *The Bundeswehr in Lithuania: Major steps towards the German manoeuvre brigade*. 17 August. Accessed October 5, 2024.

<https://www.bundeswehr.de/en/news/bundeswehr-lithuania>.

Zhang, Yichuan. 2023. "Germany's Rearmament Plan: A Problem of Bureaucracy." *Proceedings of the International Conference on Interdisciplinary Humanities and Communication Studies*. Ann Arbor: EWA Publishing. 418-425.

Energy Security in Europe after the Russo-Ukrainian War

Tarash Guledani

Junker of Defense and Security program of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Abstract

This paper aims to discuss the long-ignored problems of energy security, before the war broke out, taken and must be taken measures, during, and after the war for improving and if possible, eradicating vulnerabilities. Article will discuss the examples of Germany, their approach to crisis and practices which proved wrong or turned out to be successful, new sources which has been found or is open to use, their potential and the price Europe has to pay in exchange of stability, their effectiveness and the compromises of Europe for not very democratic countries. Paper analyses different policies, and behaviors which happened to be unpredictable. compares pre-war energy dependencies to current situation, historical context, and different views of political leaders. The dependence on Russia will not be missed out in terms of oil and natural gas as well as the influence of war on prices of everyday products and effect of conflict on European manufactures, renewable energy and its capabilities to cover all the shortages, expectations of EU citizens and the stake which the citizen wagers. Study will answer the questions which are: what made Germany to change its position in such a short time, the rise in its confidence which we saw in its support for Ukraine overtime starting from helmets to main battle tanks and high-tech Anty-aircraft systems. The role of United States of America in gathering new energy sources for Europe, to weaken its dependence on Russia and make them able to make decisions.

Keywords: Energy security, Russo-Ukrainian war, Renewable energy, U.S. support, Energy independence

The ongoing war in Ukraine has demanded a thorough reevaluation of energy security throughout Europe, highlighting vulnerabilities that may have previously been underestimated. This paper intends to investigate the complex challenges encountered by various European nations in the aftermath of the conflict, concentrating on the actions undertaken, those presently underway, and future strategies essential for bolstering energy resilience. While the response of Germany to this situation has attracted considerable attention, it exemplifies a case study within a wider European framework. Nations such as France, Italy, and Spain have also faced their own challenges regarding reliance on Russian energy resources and are proactively pursuing alternatives. The paper will assess how these countries have navigated the crisis, pinpointing both effective strategies and errors that have influenced their contemporary energy policies. The discussion will include the advent of new energy sources and technologies throughout Europe, evaluating their potential effects on stabilizing supply and diminishing reliance on non-democratic regimes. Furthermore, it will analyze the economic ramifications of these transitions, encompassing the increasing costs of energy and their repercussions on everyday goods and manufacturing sectors. A significant emphasis will be placed on the role of the United States in assisting European nations in diversifying their energy sources. The U.S. has emerged as a key provider of liquefied natural gas (LNG), contributing to the alleviation of some immediate pressures resulting from diminished Russian imports. This collaboration is vital not only for energy security but also for empowering European nations to make autonomous decisions free from external pressures. The paper will also investigate historical dependencies on Russian oil and gas, contrasting them with current realities influenced by geopolitical tensions. It will examine the perspectives of various political leaders on energy security, public expectations regarding renewable energy capabilities, and how these elements impact policy formation. Ultimately, this analysis aspires to address critical inquiries: What elements have propelled swift changes in energy policies throughout Europe? How has this transformation influenced national confidence in supporting Ukraine? By exploring these dynamics, the

study seeks to enhance understanding of Europe's changing energy landscape in response to unprecedented challenges.

Main Part

Russian Energy Dominance in Europe

Russia's energy dominance in Europe has been a defining feature of the continent's geopolitical situation for decades. This relationship, characterized by significant reliance on Russian oil and gas, has tied not only economic ties but also political environment. The Russo-Ukrainian War, which escalated dramatically in February 2022, has once more shown us the vulnerabilities in this dependency and demanded urgent actions for rebuilding and strengthening energy security across Europe. Historically, Europe has depended heavily on Russian energy exports, particularly natural gas. Prior to the war, Russia supplied approximately 40% of the EU's natural gas and was the largest supplier of oil and coal as well. Countries such as Germany and Austria were particularly reliant on Russian energy, with some nations sourcing over 80% of their gas from Russia.¹ This dependence was often framed as mutually beneficial; Europe needed a stable energy supply, while Russia sought revenue from its vast natural resources. However, this perception began to shift following several gas supply crises in the mid-2000s, where disputes between Russia and Ukraine led to significant disruptions. These events raised concerns about the reliability of Russia as an energy partner and highlighted the geopolitical risks associated with such dependence.² Despite these warnings, many European countries continued to deepen their energy ties with Russia, believing that economic interdependence would ensure stability.

¹ Europe's messy Russian gas divorce. June 18, 2024

² The Ukraine war and European energy dependence. 2023

The invasion of Ukraine marked a turning point in European energy policy. The immediate aftermath of the invasion saw a dramatic reassessment of energy security, as European nations recognized that their reliance on Russian energy could be used against them. In response to the invasion, the EU called for an immediate embargo on Russian oil, coal, and gas imports while also moving to abandon projects like the Nord Stream pipelines.² This was not merely reactive, it represented a long-overdue recognition that energy security must be prioritized over economic convenience. In 2022 alone, Russia's share of EU natural gas imports fell significantly from 36% to about 15% by late 2022. However, despite these efforts, reports indicate that certain EU countries have increased their imports of Russian gas post-war due to logistical challenges.³ This contradiction underlines the complexity of transitioning away from Russian energy dependence.

Russia's strategy during the conflict has involved using its energy exports as a geopolitical tool. By curtailing supplies to certain countries or threatening to do so, Russia aimed to sow discord within Europe and undermine support for Ukraine. This tactic proved counterproductive; rather than deterring opposition, it galvanized European nations to seek alternatives.⁴ The Kremlin's reliance on its energy sector for funding its military operations further complicates the situation. Revenues derived from oil and gas exports have been crucial for sustaining its war efforts against Ukraine. As European countries have sought to reduce their purchases from Russia, they have also faced rising prices for alternative sources of energy, leading to economic strain across the continent.⁴ These challenges as a background, European nations are increasingly focused on diversifying their energy sources. The REPOWEREU plan outlines strategies for reducing dependency on Russian fossil fuels through increased investments in renewable energy and infrastructure improvements.⁵ The transition

³ EU's Energy dependence on Russia. April 7, 2022

⁴ How American energy helped Europe beat Putin. February 23, 2023

⁵ The Ukraine war and European dependence. 2023

towards renewables is seen not only as a means to enhance energy security but also as an essential step toward achieving climate goals. many EU nations are investing in solar and wind power technologies as part of a broader strategy to achieve energy independence. The invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 accelerated a rapid reassessment of energy dependencies and security strategies within Germany, leading critical changes in both domestic energy policy and broader geopolitical state. Germany's energy policy has undergone significant transformations in response to the Russo-Ukrainian war, particularly due to its heavy reliance on Russian fossil fuels prior to the conflict.

Germany's energy policy in context of Russo-Ukrainian war

Before the war, approximately 60% of Germany's natural gas, 34% of its mineral oil, and 50% of its hard coal were sourced from Russia. This dependency posed a considerable risk, as highlighted by the Russian government's ability to influence European politics through energy supply manipulations. Following the invasion, Chancellor Olaf Scholz declared a decisive changes in policy, emphasizing the need to end reliance on Russian fossil fuels. This included a commitment to phase out imports of coal and oil by the end of 2022 and a rapid transition towards alternative energy sources.⁶ In response to the immediate threat posed by potential gas shortages, Germany implemented several measures: Reactivation of Coal Power Plants: To mitigate short-term energy shortages, Germany temporarily reopened decommissioned coal-fired power plants. This decision was controversial but necessary for maintaining energy security during winter months when demand peaks.⁷ Investment in LNG Infrastructure: The German government expedited plans to construct liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminals, which had previously been deemed unnecessary due to the availability of Russian gas. This infrastructure is crucial for diversifying supply

⁶ "Putin's war against Ukraine and its implications for the German and EU energy transition." October 12, 2024.

⁷ "Energy Without Russia: The Case of Germany." August 28, 2023.

sources and enhancing energy security.⁶ Increased Renewable Energy Initiatives: Despite the short-term reliance on fossil fuels, Germany has continued its commitment to renewable energy expansion. The government aims to ensure that the transition to renewables can compensate for any losses from traditional energy sources, thereby stabilizing electricity supply without Russian imports.⁸ The war has had intensified economic implications for Germany. Initially, there were fears that a complete cut-off from Russian gas could lead to severe economic downturns, including job losses. However, as of early 2023, Germany managed to secure alternative gas supplies from countries like Norway and through new LNG terminals, soothing some immediate concerns about supply shortages.⁷ Despite these measures, energy prices have remained elevated, approximately 12% higher than pre-war levels, impacting household budgets and industrial competitiveness. Nonetheless, the overall economic impact has been less severe than initially anticipated due to proactive government measures and a decline in wholesale prices following peak levels experienced in late 2022.⁹

Germany's response to the Russo-Ukrainian war marks a significant point in its energy strategy and foreign policy. The country has not only detached from Russian energy but has also emerged as a leading supporter of Ukraine within Europe. This shift reflects a broader recognition that energy security is intrinsically linked to national security and geopolitical stability.¹⁰ Furthermore, Germany's approach emphasizes collaboration with other EU nations in developing a unified strategy against reliance on authoritarian regimes for energy supplies. This includes discussions around sustainable practices and investments in green technologies as part of the EU's long-term climate goals.¹¹ In conclusion, Germany's energy policy has been profoundly changed by the Russo-Ukrainian war. The challenges posed by this conflict have

⁸ "War in Ukraine: Tracking the impacts on German energy and climate policy." October 12, 2024.

⁹ "The Impact of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict on the German Energy Industry." 2023.

¹⁰ "Germany and Russia's War of Aggression against Ukraine." February 16, 2024.

¹¹ "Putin's war against Ukraine and its implications for the German and EU energy transition." October 12, 2024.

accelerated efforts to diversify energy sources, enhance security measures, and commit to sustainable practices—all while moving through complex economic consequences.

The role of Norway in supporting Europe to reduce Russian influence

Norway has played a crucial role in supporting Germany and the European Union (EU) in energy security during the Russo-Ukrainian War. Norway has emerged as the second-largest supplier of natural gas to the EU, following Russia. In 2022, Norway exported approximately 117.7 billion cubic meters of gas to Europe, marking a 3.3% increase from the previous year. This volume was critical in improving the energy crisis triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which had led to significant reductions in Russian gas supplies. In June 2022, Norway and the EU signed a joint statement aimed at strengthening energy cooperation. This agreement focused on increasing gas supplies from Norway to EU member states and developing long-term partnerships in renewable energy, hydrogen, and carbon capture technologies.¹² This collaboration was essential for addressing high energy prices and ensuring a stable supply.

Germany, which previously relied heavily on Russian natural gas (about 45% of its imports), has found a vital alternative in Norwegian gas. As part of its strategy to diversify energy sources and reduce reliance on Russia, Germany has increased imports from Norway significantly since the onset of the war. The establishment of new contracts and infrastructure, such as the Baltic Pipe connecting Norway to Poland, further enhances this diversification effort. Norway's role is not just limited to immediate supply, it is also viewed as essential for long-term energy security in Europe. The country is investing in renewable energy technologies and aims to maintain its position as a key player in Europe's energy market while supporting initiatives that promote sustainability. Norway's emergence as a critical energy supplier to Europe highlights the importance of strategic partnerships in addressing geopolitical

¹²“ EU energy partnerships: Norway” - European Parliament.

challenges. During the Russo-Ukrainian War, the need for energy diversification has become top, causing European nations to seek reliable alternatives to Russian supplies. Norway's commitment to increasing its natural gas exports plays a significant role in this transition, enhancing the continent's energy security. The collaboration between Norway and EU member states illustrates a forward-thinking approach to energy management. By promoting long-term partnerships, Norway is not only addressing immediate supply needs but also contributing to the development of sustainable energy solutions. This focus on cooperation enables Europe to build a more resilient energy framework that lessens the risks associated with dependency on a single supplier. In addition to meeting current demands, Norway is investing in innovative energy technologies, including renewables and hydrogen production. This strategic emphasis on sustainability positions Norway as a key player in Europe's energy field, supporting the continent's climate objectives while ensuring a stable supply. Furthermore, enhancing infrastructure to facilitate energy flow strengthens regional cooperation and integration. Such developments create a network that allows for greater flexibility and responsiveness to changing energy needs. Ultimately, Norway's role in supporting Europe's energy security reflects a logical response to the evolving geopolitical context. Through diversification, investment in renewables, and collaborative efforts, Norway contributes to shaping a stable and sustainable energy future for the continent. This stance underlines the necessity of cooperation in overcoming energy challenges and ensuring long-term resilience.

The role of united states of America in gathering new energy sources for Europe

The role of the United States in gathering new energy sources for Europe has become increasingly significant, especially in the wake of geopolitical tensions growing from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This crisis has forced both Europe and the U.S. to reevaluate their energy strategies, leading to a concerted effort to enhance energy

security and diversify energy sources. In response to the drastic reduction of Russian gas supplies, down by approximately 80%, the U.S. has significantly increased its liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports to Europe. In 2022, U.S. LNG exports to Europe surged by 141%, making the U.S. the largest supplier of LNG to the continent, accounting for nearly 50% of total imports.¹³ This shift was facilitated by the establishment of the U.S.-EU Task Force on Energy Security, created in November 2022, which aimed to ensure stable LNG supplies and support Europe's transition away from fossil fuels. Key Initiatives and Agreements U.S.-EU Task Force on Energy Security: Formed to reduce reliance on Russian energy and diversify supply sources. LNG Supply Commitments: The Biden administration pledged at least 15 billion cubic meters of LNG to Europe in 2022, with expectations for further increases.¹⁴ By 2023, U.S. exports exceeded these targets, reinforcing Europe's energy resilience. Renewable Energy Collaboration: Both the U.S. and Europe are focusing on expanding renewable energy capacities to achieve long-term energy independence. This includes investments in wind and solar power, aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on imported fossil fuels.¹⁵ Despite these efforts, there are challenges ahead. The Biden administration's decision to pause new LNG project approvals raises concerns about long-term supply security for Europe as it moves towards renewable sources.¹⁶ Additionally, there is a risk that as Europe reduces its dependence on Russian gas, it may inadvertently become reliant on Chinese supply chains for renewable technology components.¹⁷ The decline in Russian energy exports has weakened its leverage over European nations, allowing for greater solidarity among EU countries in support of Ukraine.¹⁸ As Europe accelerates its investment in sustainable energy projects, it aims

¹³ "US and European Energy Security amid Great-Power Competition." July 28, 2023.

¹⁴ "Geopolitical Significance of U.S. LNG." February 7, 2024.

¹⁵ "US and European Energy Security amid Great-Power Competition." July 28, 2023.

¹⁶ "USA as Energy Exporter: How Willing to Support Europe with Low Prices?" June 5, 2024.

¹⁷ "How American Energy Helped Europe Best Putin." Politico, February 23, 2023.

¹⁸ "Ninth U.S.-EU Energy Council." European Commission, February 7, 2022.

to achieve a self-sufficient energy future that minimizes external dependencies.¹⁸ anticipated decline in European gas demand post-2030 may lead the U.S. to prioritize LNG exports to regions with higher growth potential, such as Asia, potentially complicating future transatlantic energy cooperation.¹⁴

Conclusion

In summary, it is essential to recognize that the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian War has served as a significant catalyst for initiating critical measures in the field of energy security throughout the entire European continent, with the response from Germany standing out as an exceptionally pivotal case study that advantages detailed inspection and analysis. The pressing and urgent necessity to effectively reduce and ultimately lessen the heavy reliance on Russian fossil fuels has provoked a series of swift, decisive, and strategic actions, which include not only the gradual phasing out of imports but also extensive and significant investments in liquefied natural gas (LNG) infrastructure, alongside an accelerated and comprehensive transition towards the adoption of renewable energy sources. While it is important to acknowledge that these measures have undeniably presented a range of economic challenges and difficulties, the practical and forward-thinking approach adopted by various European nations has significantly fostered greater resilience, collaboration, and unity in confronting and addressing the complex geopolitical threats that have arisen. Furthermore, it is crucial to highlight that the role played by the United States in providing essential support for Europe and their efforts in diversifying its energy sources, thereby underscoring the top importance of transatlantic cooperation in successfully achieving long-term energy security that is both strong and sustainable. As Europe actions to direct this increasingly complex and complex scene, the invaluable lessons gathered from the current crisis will undoubtedly inform and shape future energy policies, thereby reinforcing the critical necessity of sustainability and the imperative for independence from non-

democratic regimes that may pose risks to energy stability. Ultimately, it is worth noting that the ongoing conflict has not only fundamentally reshaped Europe's energy dependencies but has also profoundly underscored the important and tricky connection that exists between energy security and the broader national security concerns that are of utmost importance. As European nations persist in their efforts to adapt, innovate, and evolve in response to these challenges, the continuing commitment to diversifying energy sources and making significant investments in renewable technologies will prove to be absolutely crucial in securing a stable, resilient, and independent energy future that can withstand the test of time

Bibliography

"Geopolitical Significance of U.S. LNG." Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), February 7, 2024.

"Geopolitical Significance of U.S. LNG." Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), February 7, 2024.

"How American Energy Helped Europe Best Putin." Politico, February 23, 2023.

"Ninth U.S.-EU Energy Council." European Commission, February 7, 2022.

"USA as Energy Exporter: How Willing to Support Europe with Low Prices?" ISPI Online, June 5, 2024.

"USA as Energy Exporter: How Willing to Support Europe with Low Prices?" ISPI Online, June 5, 2024.

Clean Energy Wire. "Putin's war against Ukraine and its implications for the German and EU energy transition." Accessed October 12, 2024.

Clean Energy Wire. "War in Ukraine: Tracking the impacts on German energy and climate policy." Accessed October 12, 2024.

EU energy partnerships: Norway - European Parliament.

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. "Energy Without Russia: The Case of Germany." August 28, 2023.

German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP). "Germany and Russia's War of Aggression against Ukraine." February 16, 2024.

Willis, Col Shawn M., Lt Col Anthony P. Rizzuto, and Dr. Svetla Ben-Itzhak. "US and European Energy Security amid Great-Power Competition." July 28, 2023.

Willis, Col Shawn M., Lt Col Anthony P. Rizzuto, and Dr. Svetla Ben-Itzhak. "US and European Energy Security amid Great-Power Competition." July 28, 2023.

Xiao, Yunlong. "The Impact of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict on the German Energy Industry." PEER 2023 Volume 13 (2023).

Influence of Russo-Ukrainian war on south Caucasus

Giorgi Shatirishvili

Junker of Defense and Security program of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Abstract

The South Caucasus, encompassing Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, has gained increasing geopolitical significance due to its strategic location and energy resources, especially amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict. The region serves as a critical transit hub between Europe and Asia, with key energy pipelines like the Southern Gas Corridor linking Azerbaijan to European markets. Western powers, particularly NATO and the EU, have intensified their engagement in the area, seeking to reduce dependence on Russian energy and counterbalance Russia's historical influence. Georgia, a NATO-aspiring country, seeks deeper Western ties to enhance its security, while Armenia faces growing disillusionment with Russia's inability to assist in conflicts with Azerbaijan, especially after Azerbaijan's recent occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh. Turkey, a rising regional player, has strengthened its military and political influence, particularly through its support of Azerbaijan, challenging Russia's dominance in the region. The shifting balance of power presents both opportunities and risks, with growing Western involvement, Turkey's assertiveness, and Russia's diminished focus creating a more complex and competitive environment. As the Ukraine crisis unfolds, the South Caucasus will remain a vital focus for both regional and global actors, influencing the broader geopolitical landscape.

Key words: Caucasus, Russia, Ukraine, NATO, EU, War.

Introduction

The maidan protest in the Ukraine is considered as a beginning of Russo-Ukrainian conflicts, which started by the Ukrainian government's decision to revoke its association agreement with EU. In 2014 these protests ended with overthrowing of Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich. In March 2014 Russia annexed Crimea and used protection of Russian-speaking population as a justification for the action.

Pro-Russian separatist organizations have grown in strength at the eastern regions of Ukraine Donetsk and Luhansk, Following the declaration of independence by these regions, rebels backed by Russia and Ukraine engaged in violent combat. Cities got destroyed and there were large scale civilian losses.

The situation worsened in 2022, with Russian forces starting full scale war against Ukraine. This was major escalation of the conflict that drew strong attention of the world and hit with massive sanctions towards Russia. This conflict caused more casualties and altered world geopolitical views.

During the conflict between Russia and Ukraine the importance of South Caucasian countries increased significantly, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Being a significant transit route for trade, transportation, and energy sources adds to its significance. These countries are also considered great countries to avoid Russian influence on western countries, as western countries seek for new safe routes. At this point the south Caucasus plays a vital role in the safety of western countries.

The Geopolitical Importance of the South Caucasus and Western Alliance Involvement in the Region's Geopolitics

The south Caucasus is located at the important meeting point of Europe and Asia, giving its important geopolitical significance. This area where, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan are located at has been used as a vital passage of natural gas, oil and trade hubs that connects central Asia to Europe and beyond. Due to its location along important energy

and transportation lines, like the Southern Gas Corridor and the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline. It has a capacity to export one million barrels of oil a day, designed to meet the export requirements of the full field development of the ACG field (Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline spanning three countries from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean coast 2024)¹. It is a very significant territory for world powers. Considering the continuing crisis between Russia and Ukraine, the South Caucasus has become even more significant as Western nations search for alternate energy sources and transit routes that avoid Russian territory.

The European Union and NATO have become more and more involved in the region's geopolitics in recent years. They aim to create closer political, economic and security ties with South Caucasian nations. Georgia has long wished to join NATO and has been loyal to western powers, this nation seeks for deeper connection with western countries as a means of getting help with its security and territorial integrity, especially considering its previous wars with Russia and the occupation of 20% Georgian territory.

The West is getting more involved not only with Georgia but also with Armenia and Azerbaijan, two countries that are vital for region's energy supply and security. Although Russia has always been allied to Armenia, there is growing discontent in Armenia regarding Russia's incapacity to offer help, particularly considering recent disputes with Azerbaijan. Armenia is now looking to forge closer connections with the European Union and other Western nations as a result.

As Europe seeks for new gas supply, Azerbaijan's importance has grown significantly on the world's energy scene. The EU has been making effort to create its energy alliances with Azerbaijan, a vital natural gas supplier via Southern Gas Corridor.

The aim to balance out Russia's influence in the South Caucasus is a major contributing factor to the growing Western engagement in the area. Due in large part to its military installations in Armenia and its function as a peacemaker in the Nagorno-Karabakh war, Russia has historically maintained a strong presence in the South Caucasus. But Russia's

¹ (Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline) Retrieved from tradineconomics.com 10/10/24

strong participation in the Ukrainian conflict has diminished its influence and taken its focus and resources away from the South Caucasus. Western nations now have more opportunities to expand their influence in the area by supporting local governments militarily, diplomatically, and economically.

Lastly, there are a lot of chances for Western countries to diversify their energy supply in the South Caucasus. The area has grown in importance as a substitute for energy transportation as Europe seeks to lessen its reliance on Russian gas and oil. One of the most important components of Europe's energy policy is the Southern Gas Corridor, which carries natural gas from Azerbaijan to Europe via Georgia and Turkey. Western alliances can guarantee the security and stability of these energy routes—which are essential for ensuring European energy independence—by fortifying their relations with South Caucasus nations.

In conclusion, the South Caucasus' strategic location, abundant energy supplies, and function as a hub for transit between Europe and Asia have all contributed to its growing geopolitical relevance. Western alliances, like the European Union and NATO, are getting increasingly involved in the geopolitics of the area as a means of reducing dependency on Russian energy, solidifying ties with neighboring nations, and offsetting Russia's influence. The South Caucasus will become even more important as the Russia-Ukraine crisis rages, becoming a major area of interest for both regional and international powers.

Influence of Russo-Ukrainian war on south Caucasus

Since Russo Ukrainian war, Russian military power has decreased in the Caucasus region, and the balance of the powers has shifted. Western nations now have the chance to deepen their diplomatic relations with Caucasian nations like Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan because of this shift.

Russian ability to retain influence in the south Caucasus has decreased due to its attention being pointed at Ukrainian war. The BBC studied data and found that "More than 70,000 people fighting in Russia's military have now died in Ukraine" (Ivshina 2024)²

In the past, Russia has remained a major military influence in the south Caucasus. Since the 2020 war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Russia has operated the 102nd military post in Armenia and had Russian peacekeeping personnel in Nagorno-Karabakh. But the conflict in Ukraine made it harder for Russia to control and retain its military might in the area. As a result of the Russian peacekeepers lost role, there have been many flare-ups, which Azerbaijan used to take advantage and gain more control on Armenia. Following Azerbaijan's lightning offensive and occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh on September 19, 2023, the ethnic Armenian enclave was officially dissolved on January 1, 2024. Faced with the prospect of rule by Azerbaijan, more than one hundred thousand people, almost all of Nagorno-Karabakh's population, fled to Armenia in one week. (Action, cfr.org 2024)

The diminished Russian interest has two drawbacks for Georgia. On the one hand, it presents Georgia with an opportunity to strengthen its ties to the West and NATO. However, as these separatist regions are strongly dependent on Moscow, a weaker Russia could not necessarily result in an easier resolution to the unresolved crises in Abkhazia and Ossetia.

Opportunities and Challenges for Turkey's Growing Military-Political Influence in the South Caucasus and the Modernization of the South Caucasus Armies

Every country in south Caucasus has decided to modernize their military powers, in accordance to meet their security requirements. Azerbaijan's large portion of riches comes from oil and gas revenues, Azerbaijan has developed the most in this area. Azerbaijan has spent billions of dollars to modernize its armament. Military Expenditure in Azerbaijan

²(loss of Russian troops) Retrieved from macrotrends.net: https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/countries/GEO/georgia/military-spending-defense-budget#google_vignette 10.11.24

increased to 3561.70 USD Million in 2023 from 2991 USD Million in 2022. Military Expenditure in Azerbaijan averaged 1308.73 USD Million from 1992 until 2023, reaching an all-time high of 3561.70 USD Million in 2023 and a record low of 11.10 USD Million in 1992. (tradineconomics.com 2024)³.acquiring cutting-edge weaponry and retraining its troops since the early 2000s. Azerbaijan is the country in the South Caucasus with the biggest military spending, with an estimated \$2.6 billion allocated to defense in 2020, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). These expenditures paid off in the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war, as Azerbaijan defeated Armenian forces handily thanks to its employment of cutting-edge drones and precision-guided weapons, many of which were provided by Turkey and Israel.

However, because of its weaker economy and dependence on Russian military assistance, Armenia has had great difficulty upgrading its military. Armenia tried to improve its military since the 2020 conflict and to modernize its armed forces by acquiring weapons from Russia. The nation has raised its defense budget, which is over \$670 million in 2021. It is also looking into forming new defense alliances with nations like India, which has given Armenia weaponry. But compared to Azerbaijan, Armenia has modernized more slowly.

Modernizing its military has also been a top priority for Georgia, particularly after its 2008 clash with Russia. Georgia's government has concentrated on developing a more proficient and professional armed force through training initiatives with the United States and NATO. Georgia spends between \$300 and \$400 million a year on defense Georgia military spending/defense budget for 2022 was \$0.36B, a 19.92% increase from 2021. (macrotrends.net 2024), and the United States provides a large amount of financial, material, and training support to the state. Georgia's main objective is to get closer to Western norms while fortifying its military to fulfill its long-term dream of joining NATO.

³ (budget of Azerbaijan's military)C. f. (2024, 4 20). Retrieved from cfr.org: <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/nagorno-karabakh-conflict> 10.12.24

Turkey's Increasing Political and Military Power

Turkey has been gaining ground in the South Caucasus region, especially after its leading role in backing Azerbaijan during the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war. Drones, among other modernized weapons that Turkey gave Azerbaijan, were important in the war's balance of power. 2020 saw a 600% growth in Turkey's military shipments to Azerbaijan, and the two nations' defense accords and cooperative drills have reinforced their military ties.

Turkey has multiple strategic interests that motivate its participation in the South Caucasus. First and foremost, Turkey wants to increase its power in an area that is essential to the connection between Europe and Central Asia. Turkey may gain access to crucial energy corridors, including the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, which carries oil from the Caspian Sea to Europe,⁴ by strengthening its relations with Azerbaijan and Georgia. Furthermore, Turkey sees the South Caucasus as an essential component of its larger geopolitical plan to balance off Russia's dominance in the area.

Opportunities and difficulties are presented by Turkey's expanding military presence and sway in the South Caucasus. The partnership with Turkey has been very advantageous for Azerbaijan, giving it access to cutting edge military hardware and political backing. Additionally, Azerbaijan has been able to exert more authority over Nagorno-Karabakh and fortify its position in the ongoing conflict with Armenia because to Turkey's involvement.

Georgia views Turkey as an important ally in its endeavors to fortify security connections with NATO and the West. Georgia benefits from Turkish cooperation in areas like military training and joint exercises as both nations have extensive military ties. But Georgia needs to tread carefully when it comes to Turkey and other Western allies, especially when it comes to trying to avoid stirring up trouble with Russia while pursuing its NATO ambitions.

⁴ (Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline spanning three countries from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean coast). (2024, 10 20). Retrieved from bp.com: https://www.bp.com/en_ge/georgia/home/who-we-are/btc.html 10.12.24

Armenia views Turkey's increasing sway as a significant obstacle. Armenia's foreign policy is still shaped by the historical hostilities between Turkey and Armenia, which have their roots in the Armenian Genocide. Armenia's sense of vulnerability has increased because of Turkey's strong support for Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh war, making Yerevan even more dependent on Russia for military assistance. But given Moscow's attention to the Ukrainian conflict, Armenia is unsure if Moscow can continue to offer the same caliber of security assurances.

Possibilities and Difficulties

There are advantages and disadvantages for the South Caucasus region associated with Turkey's expanding military and political influence in the area. On the one hand, Georgia and Azerbaijan benefit from Turkey's engagement as they modernize their armed forces and strengthen their security. Turkey's power could potentially contribute to regional stability by counterbalancing Russia's hegemony. Azerbaijan's recent military victories have been attributed to its partnership with Turkey, and additional collaboration could improve its security and prestige in the area.

On the other side, worries about possible regional instability are heightened by Turkey's expanding power. Particularly, Armenia sees Turkey's backing of Azerbaijan as an immediate danger to its security as a nation. The strengthening military relationship between Turkey and Azerbaijan may cause tensions in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to worsen, particularly if Armenia believes that its military might is becoming increasingly unequal. Furthermore, Russia, which has historically dominated the region, may find it more difficult to maintain good relations with Turkey as its influence in the South Caucasus increases. Although Turkey and Russia have worked together in other contexts, like Syria, their goals in the South Caucasus do not always coincide.

Furthermore, the expanding importance of Turkey in the region will require careful navigation by Western countries, especially the US and NATO. Turkey is a vital ally and a

member of NATO, but if it pursues policies in the South Caucasus that run counter to larger Western objectives in the area, tensions with other Western nations may arise.

Issues Concerning the Operation of Security Organizations Under Russian Leadership: The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Situation and the Turkey-Russia Conflict

A military alliance headed by Russia, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) was established in 1992 and consists of several former Soviet republics, including Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. Ensuring collective defense and security among its member states is the CSTO's primary objective. But the organization has had a lot of trouble carrying out its duties, particularly considering the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The relationship between Russia and Turkey, two important regional powers, has become even more complex because of this circumstance.

The CSTO's history

The goal of the CSTO's creation was to help its members with security issues in the post-Soviet era. The group seeks to provide a foundation for collective security and to promote military and political collaboration. An attack on one member is deemed an attack on all, as stated in the CSTO Charter, indicating that collective defense must be ensured. Though, the CSTO has had trouble staying cohesive and handling crises, especially in the South Caucasus.

One of the most important tests for the CSTO has been the long-running territorial dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan, known as the Nagorno-Karabakh war. Azerbaijan began a military effort in 2020 to recover areas that it had previously conceded to Armenian forces in wars. After a protracted battle, Azerbaijan emerged victorious, taking control of a sizable portion of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The Response of CSTO to the Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

Armenia invoked the collective defense agreement to request aid from the CSTO when the 2020 war broke out. But the organization's reaction was noticeably insufficient. Yerevan was left feeling let down and frustrated when the CSTO chose not to launch a military intervention on Armenia's behalf. There were concerns about the CSTO's dependability as a security guarantor because many Armenian leaders and civilians believed that the organization had not lived up to its promises.

The CSTO's inaction throughout the conflict was caused by several factors. Russia has always had tight ties with both Armenia and Azerbaijan as the dominant nation in the CSTO. Its attempt at striking a balance has made it more difficult for Russia to declare its position when its member states are at odds. There was a sense that Russia was not entirely committed to aiding Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabakh issue since it was more concerned with preserving its power in the area than taking direct aim in Azerbaijan.

In addition, there have been issues with internal cohesion among the member states of the CSTO. A few CSTO countries were reluctant to back military participation in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, especially Kazakhstan and Belarus. This disunity made it harder for the organization to handle the crisis and highlighted how challenging it is to put collective security agreements into practice.

Russia-Turkey Rivalry

The increasing antagonism between Turkey and Russia is further highlighted by the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh. Turkey has been a steadfast ally of Azerbaijan, offering political support, cutting-edge weaponry, and military support. Turkey's engagement in the 2020 conflict enhanced Azerbaijan's military power, allowing it to win the conflict handily. Modern drones and other innovative weapons were sent by Turkey as part of its assistance, and these weapons were instrumental in Azerbaijan's win.

On the other hand, Russia has historically been seen as Armenia's ally, offering security assurances and military backing. But the nuanced nature of Armenia's relationship with Russia has been apparent, particularly considering Armenia's dissatisfaction with the CSTO's inability to step in and resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. Due to the current circumstances, Armenia is reevaluating its security alliances, and some authorities are looking into developing stronger connections with Western nations, which would further impede Russia's influence in the area.

There is more to Turkey and Russia's rivalry in the South Caucasus than merely the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. Russia's long-standing hegemony in the area is under threat from Turkey's expanding military presence and influence. Russia wants to hold onto its historical connections and control over its former Soviet neighbors, while Turkey sees the South Caucasus as a crucial region for securing energy routes and growing its geopolitical influence.

Consequences for Local Security

Regional security is significantly impacted by the issues the CSTO is facing considering the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the rivalry between Turkey and Russia. Concerns over the dependability of the CSTO have been voiced by its member nations due to its incapacity to provide Armenia with effective support. As the region's countries move away from the CSTO framework and toward alternative security arrangements, the security environment may become more complex and multipolar.

Russia's power may be challenged increasingly by Turkey as it forges closer military and political connections with Azerbaijan and other nations in the area. This change can lead to increased competition as nations compete for more authority and sway over the South Caucasus. Furthermore, heightened tensions with Armenia could result from the expanding cooperation between Türkiye and Azerbaijan, thereby intensifying regional disputes.

Conclusion

The South Caucasus region's circumstances have significantly changed because of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Because it links Europe and Asia, this region—which encompasses Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan—is crucial. The region's importance has increased because of the prolonged conflict, which has forced Western nations to search for new energy and commercial routes that bypass Russia.

Consequently, the South Caucasus is receiving more attention from NATO and the European Union. To enhance their security and lessen their need on Russian energy, they seek to establish solid alliances with neighboring nations. Georgia has been actively pursuing deeper relations with the West to fulfill its goal of joining NATO. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan are important players in the region's security; Azerbaijan is emerging as Europe's primary energy supplier, while Armenia is looking to the West for further help because of doubts about Russia's dependability.

Due to Russia's concentration on the conflict in Ukraine, Western nations now have more opportunity to expand their influence in the South Caucasus. But there are drawbacks to this change as well. A regional power that can benefit Georgia and Azerbaijan but threatens Armenia is Türkiye, which is stepping up its military and political influence in the region.

In general, regional, and global forces are starting to see the South Caucasus as a crucial territory. As the crisis in Ukraine continues, the dynamics between neighboring nations, Russia, and Western allies will also change, making the situation in this region crucial to the peace and security of the entire world.

Bibliography

(2024). Retrieved from tradineconomics.com.

(2024). Retrieved from macrotrends.net: https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/countries/GEO/georgia/military-spending-defense-budget#google_vignette

Action, C. f. (2024, 4 20). Retrieved from cfr.org: <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/nagorno-karabakh-conflict>

Action, C. f. (2024, 04 20). Retrieved from cfr.org: <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/nagorno-karabakh-conflict>

Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline spanning three countries from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean coas. (2024, 10 20). Retrieved from bp.com: https://www.bp.com/en_ge/georgia/home/who-we-are/btc.html

Ivshina, O. (2024, 9 20). *Volunteers dying as Russia's war dead tops 70,000.* Retrieved from bbc: [bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com)

The Russia-Ukraine war and its impact on the security of the European Union

Gigi Tskhomelidze

Junker of Defense and Security program of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Demetre Chkhaidze

Junker of Defense and Security program of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Supervisor: Professor **Levan Gegeshidze**

Abstract

This study intends to examine the multifaceted impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on the security of the European Union (EU). By analyzing the strategic responses of Poland and Germany to the conflict, assessing the implications for the future of European security architecture, and exploring the challenges and opportunities facing the EU in strengthening its collective defense capabilities, this research aims to offer an in-depth insight into the changing European security landscape.

The war has irrevocably altered the European security environment, forcing the EU to confront a new era of geopolitical uncertainty. As a direct neighbor to Ukraine, Poland has experienced a dramatic increase in its security concerns, leading to a significant surge in defense spending and a more assertive stance towards Russia.

Germany, traditionally reluctant to engage in active military roles, has undergone a notable shift in its security policy, bolstering its defense capabilities and playing a more assertive role in European defense. The study will explore the implications of these strategic responses for the future of European security. It analyzes the challenges and opportunities facing the EU in strengthening its collective defense capabilities, including the need to address divisions among member states, improve military cooperation, and reduce dependence on external security guarantees. Additionally, the research will examine the impact of the war on other EU member states, particularly those in Eastern Europe, and assess the potential for increased regional cooperation on security issues. The study will also consider the broader implications of the war for European security, such as the potential for increased tensions with Russia and the impact on the EU's relationship with other key global actors. It will examine the role of non-military factors, such as economic interdependence and energy security, in shaping the EU's security environment.

The essay acknowledges readers about the profound influence of the Russia-Ukraine war on the security landscape of the European Union (EU). It highlights how the conflict has forced EU member states to confront vulnerabilities in their political, economic, and defense frameworks, leading to significant shifts in military preparedness, energy policies, and geopolitical strategies.

Key words: Security, Defense Modernization, Economic Independence, Strategic Autonomy, Military Spendings.

Introduction

The Russia-Ukraine war, an ongoing conflict that began with the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and escalated significantly in 2022, has emerged as a defining challenge for European security. This conflict, unfolding on the EU's eastern frontier, has exposed vulnerabilities in the bloc's political, economic, and defense frameworks, forcing member states to confront critical questions about military preparedness, energy dependence, and foreign policy. The war has had a profound impact on Europe's defense posture, leading to a renewed emphasis on military spending, cooperation within NATO, and the development of independent European defense capabilities. It has also tested the EU's capacity to respond to hybrid threats, such as cyberattacks and disinformation campaigns, which have been a significant part of Russia's strategy. Economically, the war has disrupted trade routes and initiated a continent-wide energy crisis, as the EU has struggled to reduce its dependence on Russian oil and gas. Beyond immediate military and economic concerns, the war has raised questions about the EU's strategic autonomy and its ability to act as a unified geopolitical force. The conflict has also deepened divisions between member states, particularly regarding the extent of military aid to Ukraine and the scope of sanctions against Russia.

In this context, the EU's future role in global security and its relationships with both Russia and the United States are being reevaluated. This essay will explore the key developments in the EU's security landscape since the outbreak of the war, examining the military reforms undertaken by member states, the enhanced cooperation with NATO, and the EU's evolving geopolitical role. This article has such research questions: How has the Russia-Ukraine war reshaped the European Union's security architecture and its ability to respond to future challenges?. This essay will also study How has Poland's proximity to the Russia-Ukraine conflict influenced its defense policies and role within the European Union's security framework? and What impact has the war had on Germany's defense

strategy and its shift in military and energy policies within the context of the EU's collective security efforts

Main Part

The Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on EU's Defense policy and strategy

The ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which intensified significantly with Russia's large-scale invasion in February 2022, has fundamentally reshaped the European Union's (EU) security architecture. This war has not only exposed the vulnerabilities within Europe's existing security frameworks but has also catalyzed significant shifts in policy, defense strategies, and geopolitical alignments. As a result, the EU is now navigating a complex landscape characterized by heightened military readiness, increased defense spending, and a renewed focus on strategic autonomy.

The invasion has revealed the inadequacies of traditional security mechanisms in Europe, such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and various arms control agreements, which have proven ineffective against aggressive state actions. The EU's response has been marked by unprecedented unity among member states, leading to a collective condemnation of Russian aggression and a commitment to support Ukraine through military aid and sanctions against Russia¹ ². This shift signifies a departure from previous policies that prioritized diplomatic engagement with Russia. In the wake of the conflict, EU member states have significantly increased their defense budgets to meet NATO commitments and enhance their military capabilities. The Versailles Declaration of March 2022 exemplifies this trend, as EU nations collectively agreed to bolster their defense postures against potential threats from Russia³. Countries like Denmark have actively

¹ Ditrych, Ondřej, and Martin Lary. 2024. *What can European security architecture look like in the wake of Russia's war on Ukraine?* / Institute of International Relations Prague - Expertise to impact. June 3. Accessed October 6, 2024. <https://www.iir.cz/en/what-can-european-security-architecture-look-like-in-the-wake-of-russia-s-war-on-ukraine-1>.

² Maurice, Eric. 2023. *Robert Schuman Foundation*. October 3. Accessed October 2024. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-response-ukraine-invasion/>.

³ Puglierin, Jana. 2024. *Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung*. April 10. Accessed October 07, 2024. <https://www.boell.de/en/2024/04/29/russias-invasion-ukraine-turning-point-eu-foreign-and-security-policy>.

participated in the EU's Common Security and defense Policy (CSDP), while Finland and Sweden have sought NATO membership—an indication of shifting security paradigms within Europe⁴. Moreover, the conflict has prompted discussions around the concept of strategic autonomy, where the EU aims to reduce its dependence on external powers, particularly the United States, for its defense needs. This ambition includes developing independent military capabilities and fostering deeper defense cooperation among member states⁵ ⁶. The war has underscored that achieving security in Europe may require a more integrated approach to defense that transcends traditional alliances. The war has also reshaped how the EU perceives future challenges. With an increasingly multipolar world where threats may arise from various fronts—be it state actors like Russia or non-state actors—the EU is now compelled to adopt a more proactive stance in its foreign policy. This includes enhancing resilience against hybrid threats such as cyber warfare and misinformation campaigns⁷. We should point out EU's support towards Ukraine. The EU's support for Ukraine goes beyond immediate military assistance; it encompasses economic aid, humanitarian relief, and political backing. The establishment of mechanisms to channel funds from frozen Russian assets towards Ukraine's reconstruction efforts reflects a commitment to long-term stability in the region⁸. This multifaceted approach is crucial for addressing not only the immediate consequences of the war but also for laying the groundwork for a stable European neighborhood. We will talk about more specifically about certain countries in other chapters of this essay.

⁴ Impact of the Russian war in Ukraine on European Security Architecture and EU's Eastern Neighborhood. n.d. *Fondation Robert Schuman*. Accessed october 06, 2004. <https://www.robert-schuman.eu/en/news/4628-impact-of-the-russian-war-in-ukraine-on-european-security-architecture-and-eu-s-eastern-neighborhood>.

⁵ Nosenko, Silvester. 2024. *Atlantic Council*. september 12. Accessed october 6, 2024. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/why-ukraine-will-remain-central-to-the-future-of-european-security/>.

⁶ Dijkstra, Hylke. 2022. *The War in Ukraine and Studying the EU as a Security Actor*. april. https://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/joint_b_15.pdf.

⁷ Dijkstra, Hylke. 2022. *The War in Ukraine and Studying the EU as a Security Actor*. april. https://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/joint_b_15.pdf.

⁸ n.d. *Consilium.europa.eu*. Accessed october 07, 2024. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-response-ukraine-invasion/>.

The Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on Germany's Defense Strategy and Energy Policies

The invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022 marked a watershed moment not only for Ukraine but also for Europe, particularly for Germany. This conflict has catalyzed profound changes in Germany's defense strategy and energy policies, reshaping its role within the European Union (EU) and altering its approach to collective security. This chapter examines these transformations, emphasizing the implications for Germany's military readiness and energy independence, while situating these developments within the broader context of EU security efforts. In response to this existential threat, Chancellor Olaf Scholz declared a *Zeitenwende* (turning point) in his government's approach to defense and security policy⁹. One of the most significant shifts in Germany's defense policy has been the commitment to substantially increase military spending. Following Scholz's speech, Germany pledged to allocate 2% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to defense by 2024, a target long deemed unrealistic by previous administrations. This commitment is accompanied by a €100 billion special fund aimed at modernizing the Bundeswehr, Germany's armed forces, which had suffered years of underfunding and neglect¹⁰. Germany is trying to aid Ukraine with military forces. While it has become one of the largest suppliers of arms to Ukraine after the United States, it remains cautious about providing certain advanced weaponry, such as long-range missiles. This reflects an underlying commitment to avoiding escalation while still supporting Ukraine's defense efforts¹¹. The dual focus on strengthening national defense capabilities while maintaining alliances with both NATO and EU partners is indicative of Germany's strategic recalibration in light of the war.

The Russia-Ukraine war has fundamentally altered Germany's energy landscape. Prior to the conflict, Germany was heavily reliant on Russian gas, importing approximately half

⁹ O'Neal, Molly. October 7, 2024. *The Risks to Germany and Europe of a Prolonged War in Ukraine*. Molly O'Neal.

¹⁰ MOULSON, GEIR. 2024. *AP News*. April 4. Accessed 1 october, 2024. <https://apnews.com/article/germany-military-command-reform-bundeswehr-0e848006e5751a0dd7594bac21133a62>.

¹¹ MOULSON, GEIR. 2024. *AP News*. April 4. Accessed 1 october, 2024. <https://apnews.com/article/germany-military-command-reform-bundeswehr-0e848006e5751a0dd7594bac21133a62>.

of its natural gas and over a third of its oil from Russia. However, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, this dependency became untenable. In response, the German government undertook rapid measures to diversify its energy sources. By early 2023, Finance Minister Christian Lindner announced that Germany had successfully eliminated its reliance on Russian energy imports, sourcing gas from global markets instead¹². Germany's strategy included reopening coal-fired power plants and delaying the shutdown of its remaining nuclear facilities to ensure energy security during the crisis¹³. The swift construction of liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals exemplified this urgent pivot. In just eight months, new infrastructure was established to facilitate LNG imports from countries like Norway and the United States¹⁴. This diversification not only mitigated immediate supply shortages but also positioned Germany to accelerate its transition towards renewable energy sources¹⁵. The war has also prompted a broader discussion about energy independence within the European Union. As countries grapple with the implications of reduced Russian gas supplies, there is a concerted effort to enhance collective energy security through shared resources and infrastructure development¹⁶. This shift aligns with Germany's long-term goals of achieving climate neutrality by 2045, as the government views the transition to renewable energy as essential for reducing vulnerability to external shocks¹⁷.

Poland's Defense Transformation: Adapting to the Russia-Ukraine Conflict

The current conflict between Russia and Ukraine has profoundly impacted the security landscape of Eastern Europe, particularly for Poland. As tensions escalated, Poland

¹² 18. *BBC*. January 2023. Accessed October 2024, 10. <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-64312400>.

¹³ MOULSON, GEIR. 2024. *AP News*. April 4. Accessed 1 October, 2024. <https://apnews.com/article/germany-military-command-reform-bundeswehr-0e848006e5751a0dd7594bac21133a62>.

¹⁴ 18. *BBC*. January 2023. Accessed October 2024, 10. <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-64312400>.

¹⁵ 2023. *Clean Energy Wire*. Feb 24. Accessed October 2024, 10. <https://www.cleanenergywire.org/news/ukraine-war-tracking-impacts-german-energy-and-climate-policy>.

¹⁶ 2023. *Clean Energy Wire*. Feb 24. Accessed October 2024, 10. <https://www.cleanenergywire.org/news/ukraine-war-tracking-impacts-german-energy-and-climate-policy>.

¹⁷ 18. *BBC*. January 2023. Accessed October 2024, 10. <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-64312400>.

recognized an urgent need to modernize its military capabilities in order to deter any potential aggression from its eastern neighbor. The country embarked on a comprehensive modernization program that aims to elevate its military budget to 2.5% of GDP by 2030, exceeding NATO's minimum requirement¹⁸. This ambitious initiative is not merely about numbers; it reflects a deep-seated commitment to ensuring national security in an unpredictable environment. The modernization efforts encompass a wide range of initiatives, from procuring advanced weaponry to upgrading existing military infrastructure and expanding the armed forces. Poland has placed particular emphasis on acquiring modern equipment, including combat aircraft, tanks, and missile defense systems¹⁹. A noteworthy aspect of this strategy is the signing of contracts with the United States for the purchase of Patriot missile systems, a move that underscores Poland's desire for cutting-edge technology to bolster its defenses. In addition, Poland has sought to enhance its naval capabilities, particularly in response to increased Russian naval activities in the Baltic Sea. This focus on rearmament signals a strategic shift aimed at ensuring a credible defense posture capable of responding swiftly to emerging threats. Poland's commitment to strengthening alliances has also been reinforced by the war. The conflict has solidified Poland's ties to NATO and enhanced its partnerships with other Eastern European nations facing similar security concerns. Through active participation in NATO exercises, Poland is not only improving its military readiness but also fostering regional collaboration that is crucial for creating a united front against potential Russian aggression. The sense of solidarity among these nations has grown stronger, as they recognize the need to support one another in a time of heightened uncertainty²⁰. A critical element of Poland's security strategy has been its strengthened relationship with the United States. Poland views the

¹⁸ Heckmann, Laura. 2024. *National Defense Magazine*. september 24. Accessed october 1, 2024. <https://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2024/9/24/politics-of-war-color-polands-record-defense-spending>.

¹⁹ Poland Military Modernization Plan. 2020. *International Trade Administration*. April 3. <https://www.trade.gov/market-intelligence/poland-military-modernization-plan>.

²⁰ Dmitruk, Tomasz. 2024. *European Security & Defence*. september 3. Accessed october 3, 2024. <https://euro-sd.com/2024/09/articles/40091/polands-future-armed-forces-take-shape/>.

U.S. as a vital ally in ensuring stability in Eastern Europe, and this perception has led to significant developments, such as the establishment of a permanent U.S. military presence in Poland. This presence serves multiple purposes: it enhances Poland's defensive capabilities while simultaneously acting as a deterrent against Russian expansionism. The presence of American troops not only reassures the Polish populace but also sends a clear message to potential aggressors about the commitment of NATO allies to mutual defense. In light of the changing security environment, Poland has crafted a new National Defense Strategy that emphasizes resilience and preparedness. This strategy recognizes that modern conflicts may not conform to traditional notions of warfare. As such, Poland has prioritized the protection of critical infrastructure and invested in cybersecurity measures to safeguard against digital threats²¹. The importance of intelligence capabilities has also been underscored, particularly in countering disinformation campaigns that can destabilize societies from within. Moreover, Poland is focusing on strengthening its territorial defense forces, which are designed to engage in asymmetric warfare and provide support to regular military units in times of crisis. This grassroots approach not only empowers local communities to participate in national security but also enhances societal resilience against potential threats. By involving civilians in defense initiatives, Poland is fostering a culture of preparedness that is essential in an era where hybrid warfare and unconventional tactics may dominate the battlefield. The war in Ukraine has served as a catalyst for Poland's defense transformation, compelling the nation to act decisively in the face of uncertainty. The accelerated military modernization, strengthened alliances, and new strategic emphasis on resilience illustrate Poland's commitment to securing its sovereignty and protecting its citizens. As the conflict continues to unfold, Poland remains vigilant, fully aware that its security depends not only on robust military capabilities but also on solid partnerships and a united front within the NATO alliance. In this complex and evolving geopolitical

²¹ Carbonaro, Giulia. 2023. *Euronews*. september 6. Accessed october 5, 2024. <https://www.euronews.com/2023/09/06/poland-said-its-army-will-soon-be-the-strongest-in-europe-but-is-that-possible>.

landscape, Poland is positioning itself not just as a defender of its own territory but as a crucial player in ensuring stability across Eastern Europe²². Poland's defense strategy has recently included several high-profile acquisitions from South Korea, significantly enhancing its military capabilities in response to the evolving security landscape following the Russia-Ukraine war. Among these acquisitions is the K2 Black Panther tank, for which Poland signed a framework agreement to purchase 1,000 units, with the first batch of 180 tanks arriving from South Korea in December 2022²³. The Polish government plans to manufacture some of these tanks domestically, thereby enhancing local defense capabilities and fostering technological transfer. Another critical component of Poland's military modernization is the K9 Thunder self-propelled howitzer. Poland has ordered over 300 units of this artillery system, which is designed for high mobility and rapid deployment. The K9 howitzer is particularly valuable for providing effective fire support in dynamic combat situations, boasting a maximum rate of fire of up to six to eight rounds per minute and a range that can exceed 52 kilometers with rocket-assisted projectiles. Complementing these ground capabilities is the acquisition of 48 FA-50 light combat aircraft, which enhance Poland's air capabilities. These versatile jets are designed for both air-to-air and air-to-ground missions, making them suitable for various operational scenarios. Together, these acquisitions not only modernize Poland's military arsenal but also signify a strategic alignment with South Korea amidst increasing regional tensions²⁴ ²⁵.

²² Topic: NATO's role in defence industry production. 2024. *NATO*. July 15. Accessed October 5, 2024. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_222589.htm.

²³ Poland, South Korea defense partnership grows with weapons procurements – Indo-Pacific Defense Forum. 2024. *Indo-Pacific Defense Forum*. May 11. Accessed October 7, 2024. <https://ipdefenseforum.com/2024/05/poland-south-korea-defense-partnership-grows-with-weapons-procurements/>.

²⁴ Adamowski, Jaroslaw. 2024. *DefenseNews*. Feb 15. Accessed October 7, 2024. <https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2024/02/15/polands-ex-defense-chief-pushes-to-max-out-south-korean-arms-deals/>.

²⁵ Ptak, Alicja. 2024. *Notes From Poland*. October 3. Accessed October 7, 2024. <https://notesfrompoland.com/2024/10/03/polish-and-korean-firms-sign-deal-to-create-missile-factory-in-poland/>.

The Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on NATO's Defense Strategy

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has sparked a significant reassessment of defense priorities among NATO member states, particularly across Europe. As the threat of Russian aggression looms ever larger, many nations are taking a hard look at their military capabilities and their commitments to collective security. At the center of this shift is NATO's guideline that encourages member states to allocate at least 2% of their GDP to defense spending. This guideline was established back in 2014 during a NATO summit in Wales, primarily in response to Russia's annexation of Crimea²⁶. The intention behind this benchmark was clear: to enhance military readiness and ensure that NATO could effectively address emerging security challenges. However, before the conflict in Ukraine escalated, many European nations struggled to meet this target, often prioritizing domestic spending and social welfare over military investment. For instance, Germany has historically adopted a restrained defense posture, a stance shaped by its post-World War II pacifist principles and the lingering influence of the Cold War. With defense spending lingering around 1.2% of GDP for years, Germany faced criticism for its reluctance to engage militarily, reflecting a broader European sentiment favoring economic stability as the best path to peace. The full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 marked a dramatic turning point in this narrative. The stark reality of military aggression on European soil jolted many nations into recognizing the urgent need for enhanced defense capabilities. This invasion served as a wake-up call, prompting a collective reevaluation of security threats and highlighting NATO's critical role in maintaining peace and stability in the region. In light of the shifting geopolitical landscape, several European countries have pledged to significantly increase their military spending in alignment with NATO's 2% guideline. This commitment goes beyond mere reaction; it signals a deeper understanding that robust defense capabilities are essential for protecting national sovereignty and ensuring regional stability²⁷. Meeting

²⁶ 2014 . *NATO*. 09 5. Accessed 10 2, 2024. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm.

²⁷ 2024. *European security and defence*. 10 10. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://euro-sd.com/2024/05/articles/38401/enhanced-resolve-how-the-putin-factor-has-rejuvenated-nato/>.

NATO's 2% guideline carries broader implications for European security and defense policy. As nations boost their military spending, several key trends emerge. Increased budgets pave the way for the modernization of military equipment and capabilities. Countries are focusing on advanced technologies, including cyber warfare, unmanned systems, and missile defense, to ensure that their forces remain effective in today's complex combat scenarios. As NATO member states invest in similar technologies and systems, interoperability among allies improves, enabling their forces to work seamlessly together during joint operations and enhancing the alliance's collective defense posture. This unity sends a powerful deterrent message to potential aggressors, underscoring the solidarity among NATO members and their readiness to respond collectively to threats²⁸. As nations ramp up their defense spending, there is also a growing emphasis on collaborative defense initiatives. Joint exercises, shared procurement programs, and research partnerships are becoming more common, further integrating NATO forces and enhancing their collective capabilities. While this commitment to increased defense spending is a positive development, several challenges remain on the horizon. Sustaining this momentum requires continued political support and public backing. Defense spending is often a contentious issue, and governments must navigate competing priorities, including social programs and economic recovery. Additionally, rapid increases in defense budgets must be matched by effective supply chain management and logistical capabilities. As countries rush to modernize their forces, ensuring efficient and responsive procurement processes will be crucial²⁹. Moreover, nations must develop comprehensive long-term strategies that address not only immediate security concerns but also lay the groundwork for sustainable defense capabilities in the future. This includes planning for personnel, training, and the integration of new technologies. The focus has shifted towards enhancing military readiness and

²⁸ 2024. *voanews*. 02 14. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://www.voanews.com/a/nato-s-european-allies-collectively-at-2-gdp-defense-spending-for-1st-time-ever/7489447.html>.

²⁹ 2024. *intereconomics*. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://www.intereconomics.eu/contents/year/2024/number/4/article/defence-spending-for-europe-s-security-how-much-is-enough.html>.

resilience, which means investing in supply chain security for defense industries and ensuring that armed forces are adequately equipped and trained to tackle emerging threats. Many European countries have initiated upgrade programs for existing military hardware, modernizing tanks, armored vehicles, and artillery systems to extend their operational life and improve effectiveness on the battlefield. The conflict has underscored the importance of investing in new military technologies. Nations are increasingly concentrating on developing capabilities in areas such as cyber warfare, electronic warfare, and unmanned systems. For instance, countries like France and the UK are making substantial investments in next-generation combat systems that incorporate advanced technologies like artificial intelligence and autonomous systems. This war has also prompted greater collaboration among European nations in defense initiatives. Programs such as the European Defense Fund and Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) are facilitating joint research, development, and procurement of military capabilities. These initiatives enhance interoperability and reduce duplication of efforts, creating a more efficient and effective defense posture across Europe. A notable outcome of the conflict is the push for greater strategic autonomy within Europe. This shift entails reducing dependency on external suppliers, particularly for critical defense technologies and systems. Countries are actively seeking to strengthen their domestic defense industries to ensure a sustainable supply of military equipment in times of crisis. By fostering a more self-sufficient defense infrastructure, European nations can better safeguard their interests and respond effectively to future threats³⁰.

Conclusion

In conclusion we can say, that The Russia-Ukraine war has fundamentally altered the EU's security framework, exposing vulnerabilities and prompting a reevaluation of defense

³⁰ 2024. *NATO*. 07 27. Accessed 10 10, 2024. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_80925.htm.

strategies among member states. The conflict has catalyzed a shift towards increased military readiness, higher defense spending, and a focus on strategic autonomy. In response to the perceived threat from Russia, EU countries have collectively committed to enhancing their military capabilities. This includes significant increases in defense budgets, with Germany pledging to allocate 2% of its GDP to defense by 2024. Poland aims to elevate its military budget to 2.5% of GDP by 2030, reflecting a broader trend among Eastern European nations to modernize their armed forces. The war has highlighted the EU's dependence on Russian energy supplies, leading to urgent measures for diversification. Germany, for example, has successfully eliminated its reliance on Russian gas by sourcing from global markets and investing in renewable energy infrastructure. This shift is crucial for enhancing energy independence and resilience against future geopolitical shocks. The EU's support for Ukraine extends beyond immediate military aid; it includes economic assistance and political backing aimed at ensuring long-term stability in the region. This multifaceted approach is essential for addressing both immediate consequences and future challenges.

Bibliography

Adamowski, Jaroslaw. 2024. *DefenseNews*. feb 15. Accessed october 7, 2024.

<https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2024/02/15/polands-ex-defense-chief-pushes-to-max-out-south-korean-arms-deals/>.

18. *BBC*. january 2023. Accessed october 2024, 10. <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-64312400>.

Carbonaro, Giulia. 2023. *Euronews*. september 6. Accessed october 5, 2024.

<https://www.euronews.com/2023/09/06/poland-said-its-army-will-soon-be-the-strongest-in-europe-but-is-that-possible>.

2023. *Clean Energy Wire*. Feb 24. Accessed October 2024, 10.

<https://www.cleanenergywire.org/news/ukraine-war-tracking-impacts-german-energy-and-climate-policy>.

- n.d. *Consilium.europa.eu*. Accessed october 07, 2024.
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-response-ukraine-invasion/>.
- Dijkstra, Hylke. 2022. *The War in Ukraine and Studying the EU as a Security Actor*. april.
https://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/joint_b_15.pdf.
- Ditrych, Ondřej, and Martin Lary. 2024. *What can European security architecture look like in the wake of Russia's war on Ukraine? | Institute of International Relations Prague - Expertise to impact*. june 3. Accessed october 6, 2024.
<https://www.iir.cz/en/what-can-european-security-architecture-look-like-in-the-wake-of-russia-s-war-on-ukraine-1>.
- Dmitruk, Tomasz. 2024. *European Security & Defence*. september 3. Accessed october 3, 2024. <https://euro-sd.com/2024/09/articles/40091/polands-future-armed-forces-take-shape/>.
2024. *European security and defence*. 10 10. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://euro-sd.com/2024/05/articles/38401/enhanced-resolve-how-the-putin-factor-has-rejuvenated-nato/>.
- Heckmann, Laura. 2024. *National Defense Magazine*. september 24. Accessed october 1, 2024. <https://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2024/9/24/politics-of-war-color-polands-record-defense-spending>.
- Impact of the Russian war in Ukraine on European Security Architecture and EU's Eastern Neighborhood. n.d. *Fondation Robert Schuman*. Accessed october 06, 2004.
<https://www.robert-schuman.eu/en/news/4628-impact-of-the-russian-war-in-ukraine-on-european-security-architecture-and-eu-s-eastern-neighborhood>.
2024. *intereconomics*. Accessed 10 10, 2024.
<https://www.intereconomics.eu/contents/year/2024/number/4/article/defence-spending-for-europe-s-security-how-much-is-enough.html>.
- Maurice, Eric. 2023. *Robert Schuman Foundation*. october 3. Accessed october 2024.
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-response-ukraine-invasion/>.

- MOULSON, GEIR. 2024. *AP News*. April 4. Accessed 1 october, 2024.
<https://apnews.com/article/germany-military-command-reform-bundeswehr-0e848006e5751a0dd7594bac21133a62>.
- 2014 . *NATO*. 09 5. Accessed 10 2, 2024.
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm.
2024. *NATO*. 07 27. Accessed 10 10, 2024.
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_80925.htm.
- Nosenko, Silvester. 2024. *Atlantic Council*. september 12. Accessed october 6, 2024.
<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/why-ukraine-will-remain-central-to-the-future-of-european-security/>.
- O'Neal, Molly. October 7, 2024. *The Risks to Germany and Europe of a Prolonged War in Ukraine*. Molly O'Neal.
- Poland Military Modernization Plan. 2020. *International Trade Administration*. April 3.
<https://www.trade.gov/market-intelligence/poland-military-modernization-plan>.
- Poland, South Korea defense partnership grows with weapons procurements – Indo-Pacific Defense Forum. 2024. *Indo-Pacific Defense Forum*. may 11. Accessed october 7, 2024. <https://ipdefenseforum.com/2024/05/poland-south-korea-defense-partnership-grows-with-weapons-procurements/>.
- Ptak, Alicja. 2024. *Notes From Poland*. october 3. Accessed october 7, 2024.
<https://notesfrompoland.com/2024/10/03/polish-and-korean-firms-sign-deal-to-create-missile-factory-in-poland/>.
- Puglierin, Jana. 2024. *Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung*. April 10. Accessed october 07, 2024.
<https://www.boell.de/en/2024/04/29/russias-invasion-ukraine-turning-point-eu-foreign-and-security-policy>.
- Topic: NATO's role in defence industry production. 2024. *NATO*. july 15. Accessed october 5, 2024. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_222589.htm.

2024. *voanews*. 02 14. Accessed 10 10, 2024. <https://www.voanews.com/a/nato-s-european-allies-collectively-at-2-gdp-defense-spending-for-1st-time-ever/7489447.html>.

Warfare in the Digital Age: Navigating Truth and Deception in the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict

Ana-Maria Keadze

Junker of Informatics program of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Supervisor: Associated professor **Levan Tcholikidze**

Abstract

The Russia-Ukraine conflict is a prime example of a modern war where it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish truth from deception. Views of Individuals are shaped by the media or country's official narratives. This has improved over time and with the rise of social media platforms people can share their opinions instantly to billions of users via social networks like Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok, which have apparently become more active than the traditional ways of communicating. This paper discusses the milestones in the use social communications as a tool for warfare, starting with the famous posters (ex: 'The Motherland is Calling' during the Great Patriotic War), including the great influence of TV broadcasts and cases of manipulation during the Vietnam War. With the advent of social media, the Russia-Ukrainian conflict was named as the most 'online' wars in history, labeled as the 'First TikTok War'. Videos, memes, and changed images were not just a way of exchanging ideas but both the weapon of information and disinformation, generating and altering people's perception about the war. This essay examines how these digital battlefields have reshaped public opinion and offers strategies to protect against the pernicious impact of disinformation. By examining the impact of these deceptive tactics, the essay will discuss how history is being rewritten in an era where every post, like, and share influences the course of events.

Key Words: Russian-Ukrainian war, networks, perception, propaganda, Tik-Tok War, digital falsehoods, forgeries, information war.

Introduction

As Winston Churchill once said, "In wartime, truth is so precious that she should always be attended by a bodyguard of lies." This statement is more relevant than ever in the digital age, where public opinion plays as critical a role in warfare as the physical battlefield. Public perception is shaped by the information people consume, therefore, may affect the direction or outcome of the conflict. Basically, public sentiment has a vast impact altering and influencing political will, alliances, and even troop morale. In cases where there is

overwhelming support or opposition for or against a war by the populace, the pressure put upon policy makers can significantly affect the resources and commitment they pledge to the war effort.

Throughout history, leaders have sought to sway public opinion to rally support for war. Of all the visual displays to galvanize a whole nation, only Soviet "Motherland Calls" and American "Uncle Sam Wants You" propaganda campaigns can be put as representatives. The described posters were not symbols at all but some form of manipulation to move people's feelings, to instill in them a sense of duty, and consolidate them around one idea. There, messages were clear and unequivocal; however, their impact was immense in morphing the people into ardent patriots for their country's war efforts.

Today, the battlefield of public opinion has shifted from posters to social media. The power of TikTok, Facebook, and Twitter has bestowed on the ordinary individuals an unprecedented capability to shape and mold perceptions around the globe. Governments and their militaries are not oblivious to this development and have evolved similarly, leveraging the platforms to galvanize and dupe in equal measure. If public opinion is captured with the right message or manipulated through disinformation, it proves a difference-maker in gaining support or losing it for a particular conflict. In an instant-communication age where fact and fiction are increasingly difficult to separate, understanding and controlling that narrative becomes of high priority.

Main Part

Public opinion has, for centuries, played a huge part in success or failure of war efforts. Most governments, recognizing this, have employed various technique imaginable throughout history to control and sometimes even manipulate how their citizens perceive war. The notable example of this was when the British government, during World War I in 1917, set up a Ministry of Information that regulated the flow of information with the aim of eliciting support for the war, both domestically and abroad. They did this by forming

messages that dealt with German atrocities, many of which were exaggerated or fabricated. Stories of these tales ran rampant in newspapers and in pamphlets, creating a widespread belief that the British were fighting against a barbaric and immoral enemy, thus managing to sway public opinion at home and abroad.

Another strong example of propaganda and the influence of public opinion involves the Spanish Civil War,¹ 1936-1939. This Republican government opposed the Nationalists under Francisco Franco, utilizing radio broadcasts and international news outlets to frame their cause as one of a global fight against fascism. Probably the most famous was the international outcry in response to the bombing of Guernica by German and Italian aircraft, allies of Franco. It was a disaster publicized worldwide, partly through Pablo Picasso's iconic painting *Guernica*, which became a symbol of anti-war sentiment. Although the Republicans lost the war, with their media efforts, the world came to see Franco's forces as brutal aggressors. This struggle to win the sympathies of foreign public opinion became vital in dramatizing the war before an international audience and influencing foreign attitudes toward the Fascist rise.

Going further into the 20th century, one can extrude one of the most innovative and subtle usages of propaganda in the Cold War. It is the government of the United States, through structures such as the CIA, embarks on a covert effort to mold public opinion in the home country as well as abroad. One popular manifestation of this was the Cold War cultural war², in which the CIA subsidized exhibitions, books, and concerts that propagated the American notion of freedom and democracy as the antidote to Soviet communism. The CIA-run Congress for Cultural Freedom promoted intellectuals, magazines, and events across Europe and throughout the Third World to inculcate anti-communist values. These initiatives tended to carry more weight as spontaneous cultural movements, all the more effective since they did not carry the marks of overt government propaganda. This device

¹ <https://alba-valb.org/lesson/spanish-civil-war-summary/>

² <https://blog.nationalmuseum.ch/en/2022/05/culture-during-the-cold-war/>

of mingling culture and politics underlined how subtle and pervasive propaganda could be in dictating public opinion without the public actually realizing it.

While earlier examples of propaganda relied heavily on state-run media and tightly controlled cultural outlets, today's information landscape is shaped by decentralized platforms like social media. Unlike the slow and measured flow of information through pamphlets or official broadcasts, narratives can be reshaped in a matter of hours thanks to platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter.

For instance, one of the most viral videos during the early days of the conflict depicted a Ukrainian drone operator targeting Russian military vehicles, garnering millions of views. What made this video particularly impactful was its ability to blur the lines between military action and social media entertainment. In this new era, viral culture transforms how propaganda is disseminated and consumed.

A striking example is the viral photo of Ukrainian soldiers defending Snake Island in the first weeks of the Russian invasion. Their refusal to back down in the face of a Russian warship, immortalized by a viral radio transmission, turned them into symbols of Ukrainian defiance. Early reports suggested that the soldiers had died during the attack, and although this was later proven false, the narrative had already gained traction, shaping public opinion regarding their bravery and resolve.

The rapid spread of misinformation highlights how quickly false narratives can influence perceptions, especially when they resonate emotionally. One notable instance involved a viral video that appeared to show a Ukrainian fighter jet shooting down a Russian aircraft. This footage circulated widely on Twitter and TikTok, racking up millions of views as it was believed to showcase Ukraine's air defenses. It was later revealed that the video was actually from a video game simulation called **Digital Combat Simulator**. By the time fact-checkers debunked the footage, it had already been shared and accepted by countless viewers, distorting their understanding of the conflict.

These examples underscore how easily misinformation spreads on social media, with users often neglecting to verify sources before sharing. As a result, the potential for fake content to shape public perception has become a defining feature of modern warfare in the digital age.

Another sensational case of fake news was that of a doctored video apparently showing a detachment of Russian soldiers surrendering to the Ukrainians. The grainy footage was on Telegram and Tik-Tok, showing men in Russian military uniform laying down their weapons with captions declaring this as evidence of a mass defection. It later emerged that the footage had, in fact, been manipulated: it was partially filmed during a previous military exercise and was partly staged to make some kind of point. The video nevertheless received heavy attention from pro-Ukrainian accounts, among others, as further evidence that Russian morale was breaking down. The speed at which this fabricated story spread bears witness to how emotionally well-manipulated fake content can be, especially during wartime, for use in manipulation of public opinion.

One of the most complicated layers of this information war has included the usage of fake news by state actors and other third-party groups with their own agendas. In various reports on a number of social media platforms, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky had fled his country following the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.³ There was even a deepfake video created to make it sound as if he told Ukrainian soldiers to give up. It had by now been quickly disproven and scrubbed from most platforms, but the damage was complete: many viewers-most especially in those hours right after the video had first published-had been allowed to question the stability and resolve of Ukraine's leadership. Deepfake technology, meaning technology that allows users to manipulate videos such that they could be made to be seemingly realistic, opens new avenues on how information may be passed down. This example underlines the growing sophistication of disinformation campaigns and the ways in which they could be used to undermine trust in reality.

³ <https://www.dw.com/en/ukraine-zelensky-rejects-rumors-he-has-fled-country-as-it-happened/a-60908297>

The implications of this misinformation do not lie totally in the field of public perception but also extend towards the sphere of international relations. Examples of such fake videos include the bombing of a Russian civilian convoy by Ukrainian forces that emerged this March 2022. The video was made from old footage and pieces of conflicts that had nothing to do with this, whereas the information went viral through Russian social media channels, creating outrage among citizens. Afterwards, it became a tool to justify more serious military aggression by Russia, in addition to the narratives that Ukraine was fighting not only military targets but also committing war crimes against civilians. This viral video fired up anger and confusion among people; this has been a textbook example of how misinformation can raise tension at national and international levels.

But this misinformation has very real consequences on the ground. In early 2022, phishing schemes in the form of evacuation orders on Telegram channels stated that certain Ukrainian cities were facing an imminent threat of Russian attack, thus putting people into a panic state. The reports were immediately dismissed by local authorities but caused chaos among people, who fled their homes for no valid reason. This was perceived as part of the psychological war-mongering goals directed at the depletion of Ukrainian resources in addition to undermining civilian morale. In a war where both sides are hugely dependent on public opinion and international support, these tactics show just how dangerous the line is between misinformation and psychological operations.

Great, committed jobs are done by fact-checking organizations and freelance journalists, but the racing for speed and quantity makes the disinformation thrive in cases of going viral. Snapping the chain of misinformation on social media is hence going to require different facets of approach. First of all, users have to develop media literacy in order to question sources and check facts before sharing. This would be a great improvement for algorithms on social platforms that flag potentially false content, explain context, and point to trusted sources. This is where fact-checking organizations come into quick action, with their debunking going viral; their efforts can thus be more powerfully amplified with

collaboration provided by social media platforms. The awareness about this should be provided as a part of public awareness by the governments and NGOs so that the users understand the risk of misinformation and the responsible act of sharing. Clarity is also required to come from social media companies themselves, as content moderation rules need to be much clearer. Lastly, empowering individuals to critically engage in information- not just passively consumes it- will foster a culture of accountability. This can be partly reduced through the spreading of correct information by way of education, technology, and policy to help dissipate the false narratives.

Conclusion

The Russian-Ukrainian crisis has made one thing clear: in modern warfare, information is as critical as any weapon. Nowadays, in every sense of the word, social media has transformed into both a tool of truth and a weapon of deception through its influence on the formation of public opinion and sometimes even war action. While TikTok and Twitter make real-time information flow possible, they also open conduits for misinformation where manipulated content easily gains traction in perceptions. From faked video surrenders to staged attacks, the digital era is making every differentiation between fact and fiction even more elusive.

This underscores the need for greater media literacy and a more critical approach to information, helping people understand the power of media and not fall prey or victim to propaganda. As conflicts increasingly play out in the digital sphere, the ability to separate truth from deception will be crucial in shaping the future of warfare and public discourse, where battles may be fought not with bullets, but with bytes and chips.

Bibliography

Keating, Joshua. *Invisible Countries: Journeys to the Edge of Nationhood*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018.

Rid, Thomas. "Cyber War Will Not Take Place." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 35, no. 1 (2012): 5-32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2011.608939>.

Mackintosh, Eliza. "How Tik-Tok Became the Frontline of Russia's Information War." CNN, March 20, 2022. <https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/20/europe/tiktok-russia-ukraine-disinformation-intl/index.html>.

BBC News. "Ukraine War: Russia's Fake War on Facebook, Twitter and Tik-Tok." BBC News, May 5, 2022.

Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab. "Ukraine Under Attack: Digital Propaganda and the War for Public Opinion." Atlantic Council, March 2022. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/report/ukraine-under-attack-digital-propaganda/>.

The Role of Telegram in the Ukraine Conflict

Beka Kupatadze

Junker of Informatics program of
LEPL – David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Supervisor: Associated professor **Levan Cholikidze**

Abstract

The given paper explores the multifaceted role of Telegram in the Ukraine conflict, emphasizing its significant impact on military operations, intelligence gathering, and information warfare. Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Telegram has become a critical platform for both Ukrainian and Russian forces, providing a secure, real-time communication tool that supports military coordination and information dissemination.

Telegram's encryption features allow it to be used for sensitive communications, and its multimedia sharing capabilities enable swift transmission of vital data, including situational awareness and military orders. The app's rapid adoption in Ukraine, particularly with an 89% download increase in the first month of the conflict, underscores its importance. However, concerns over privacy and security have emerged, as both sides leverage Telegram for propaganda and misinformation. The Ukrainian government's decision to restrict its use on official devices highlights the risks of surveillance, particularly in a war zone.

The paper also discusses the broader implications of Telegram in shaping public perception, both domestically and globally. By bypassing traditional media channels, the app facilitates both the spread of factual updates and the amplification of false narratives. This dual role as an information tool and a battleground for narratives raises ethical concerns about privacy, propaganda, and the use of civilian platforms for military purposes. Ultimately, Telegram's role in this conflict demonstrates the evolving nature of digital communication in modern warfare and sets a precedent for future conflicts where information technology will play a central role.

Keywords: information technology, military operations, amplification of false narratives, risks of surveillance, privacy, propaganda.

Introduction

The situation in Ukraine, which intensified significantly with Russia's large-scale invasion in February 2022, has altered not only the geopolitical dynamics but also the communication methods between the parties involved. As Ukrainian and Russian forces partake in a complicated information battle, Telegram has emerged as an essential communication platform, enabling immediate updates and coordination. The application is widely utilized by both military members and civilians to exchange information, alert about impending attacks, and spread propaganda.

Telegram was established in 2013 by Pavel Durov, a Russian entrepreneur known for advocating user privacy and freedom of speech. Originally created as a secure messaging platform, Telegram has expanded considerably, reaching over 1 billion downloads and an estimated 900 million active users by mid-2024. Durov's history includes founding VKontakte, a well-known Russian social networking service, from which he was removed due to government pressure. After leaving Russia in 2014, Durov set up Telegram's headquarters in Dubai, enabling the company to function independently from Russian government control. As the war progressed, Telegram's significance spiked, particularly in Ukraine, where app downloads surged by 89% during the first month of the conflict.

This swift uptake demonstrates Telegram's role as both a crucial information source and a platform for misinformation. The platform's dual function—serving as a means of military coordination while also becoming a battlefield for conflicting narratives—has rendered it essential in the ongoing struggle. Mikhail Zvinchuk, a former military officer, remarked, "Telegram has nearly become the primary method of commanding units on both sides of the front."⁽¹⁾ This underscores how both Ukrainian and Russian forces depend on the platform for strategic communication amid the tumult of war. Additionally, Clint Watts, a former FBI agent, stressed that "whoever can sustain their information campaigns on Telegram stands the best chance of influencing public perceptions about what's taking place in Ukraine."⁽²⁾ However, this dependence also raises critical issues regarding security and

misinformation; pro-Russian channels often propagate false stories aimed at weakening Ukrainian morale. In response to these issues, Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council recently banned government officials from utilizing Telegram on state-issued devices due to worries about Russian surveillance capabilities. Kyrylo Budanov, head of Ukraine's GUR military intelligence agency, mentioned that "the worry about Telegram extends beyond freedom of expression—it is a matter of national security."⁽⁴⁾ This paper will investigate the multifaceted role of Telegram in the Ukrainian conflict, analyzing its impact on military operations, information spread, and the broader implications for both sides involved.

Main Part

Impact of Telegram on Military Operations

Telegram has enhanced an essential form of command and control within the armed conflict in Ukraine, speeding opportunities for communication and arrangement between military wholes on two sides of the conflict. The terraces encrypted to foreshadow facilities allow for secure facts exchanges, that is detracting in a conflict place traditional ideas channels can be negotiated. Christine Dugoin-Clément, a researcher at the Sorbonne Business School, famous that "it's not just a revelation beginning, but it's a somewhat key messenger that is to say secondhand for arrangement of operation at different levels"⁽⁷⁾. This use authorizes military rulers to make nimble resolutions establish new intelligence and functional renews. Both Ukrainian and Russian forces take advantage of Telegram to scatter orders and share situational knowledge with the military. The platform supports the differing combined use of several media layouts, admitting users to transmit videos, countenances, and big files, which may be important for functional preparation. As Mikhail Zvinchuk, a former appointed military officer, indicated, "Telegram has nearly enhanced the main way of superior parts on two together sides of the front"⁽⁸⁾. This competence reinforces the speed and influence of armed conflict, as commanders can quickly transmit

detracting facts to their units engaged. However, confidence in Telegram also presents risks. The Ukrainian National Security and Defence Council has forbidden government administrators from utilizing Telegram on state-circulated schemes due to concerns over Russian facilities. Kyrylo Budanov, chief of Ukraine's GUR military knowledge agency, established that "the concern accompanying Telegram surpasses exemption of expression—it pertains to civil protection"(4). On the Russian side, the Kremlin has achieved organizing requiring well-known channel proprietors to support user dossier to Roskomnadzor, that confuses functional security for those utilizing the podium for military arrangements.

In addition to aiding command and control, Telegram plays a meaningful duty in intelligence accumulation for two together edges of the conflict. Ukrainian forces have leveraged the plank to accumulate information from citizens in busy regions, utilizing unknown chatbots that allow consumers to report sightings or doubtful actions outside of disclosing their identities. This grassroots data-assemblage approach has substantiated persuasive; Budanov uttered that "we are using each finish at our transfer to question"(11). Conversely, Russian forces utilize Telegram for acumen purposes. The principle admits the ruling class to monitor public emotion and gather news about Ukrainian troop campaigns through open channels. As eminent by an investigator from the Institute for the Study of War, "Telegram is the main alternative to official media for Russian military personnel in Ukraine"(11), permissive bureaucracy to stay cognizant about growths on the ground. This activity creates a complex arena place two together parts are not only writing but more surveilling each other through the mathematical method. However, specialists talk out of overestimating Telegram's function in intelligence movements. While it serves as a main form of real-occasion updates, established data procedures still play an essential act in military strategy. Pro-Kremlin commentators have demanded that Telegram links miscellaneous military arms into a united administration system; nevertheless, this declaration is frequently visualized as overstated by analysts who stress that many movements still depend on settled military ideas networks.

Security and Privacy Concerns

The use of Telegram for ideas during the Ukraine conflict raises meaningful risks for consumers on two sides. While Telegram advances itself as a secure to foreshadow terrace, allure encryption obligations have fatigued analysis from cybersecurity masters. Unlike end-to-end encryption secondhand by apps like Signal or WhatsApp, Telegram's default encryption, famous as MTProto, encrypts ideas only between the consumer's tool and Telegram's servers. These resources while ideas are encrypted along the way, can conceivably be achieved by Telegram itself, lifting concerns about management following and dossier solitude. As noted in current reasoning, "the exclusive type of the encryption code wealth we don't experience what takes place on the attendant-side, and for all it matters Telegram commit conceivably decrypt and visualize your ideas"(14). For Russian consumers, this risk is complicated apiece management's far-reaching following capacities. The Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) has existed to have direct access to Telegram's dossier through allowable interrupt methods. A Russian Duma appendage established that Telegram acquiesces to accompanying FSB demands for the dossier on "terrorists or one under review"(15), which raises alarms about the security of consumers and the conceded possibility be considered as governmental dissidents or adversaries of the United States of America. Conversely, Ukrainian consumers face their own set of risks; Russian forces have existed popular to exploit Telegram to monitor communications in busy domains, utilizing the podium to path and restrain dissent with local cultures.

In answer to these following risks, two together users and governments have selected differing countermeasures to embellish protection while utilizing Telegram. Users are encouraged to allow two-determinant confirmation, resort to secret chats for delicate conversations, and prevent giving private facts that could be used by hackers or state players. Additionally, many consumers engage in essence private networks (VPNs) to mask their IP addresses and further protect their identities while dealing with the policy. Governments have to execute procedures to mitigate protection risks guiding Telegram. For instance,

Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council has limited the use of Telegram on state-circulated ploys due to concerns about Russian following skills. Moreover, Ukrainian executives energetically reassure citizens to report doubtful ventures by way of official Telegram channels while experiencing bureaucracy about potential misinformation campaigns bred through the app. On the Russian side, experts have constricted requirements encircling social television terraces, containing Telegram, to monitor and control facts flow in a more excellent manner. This includes needing a standard channel holder to register to accompany the government and support the consumer dossier upon request. However, these measures frequently bring about a cat-and-mouse game betwixt consumers pursuing solitude and experts trying to invoke agreement.

The use of Telegram for military purposes and facts struggles raises significant righteous concerns. On individual help, the platform specifies a lively wealth of ideas for military coordination and wit accumulation; in other way, it facilitates the spread of falsity and hype that can infuriate conflict movement. As Dr. Ian Garner noted, "Telegram has enhanced this legitimately key battlefield in the facts war"(2). Both Ukrainian and Russian forces utilize the principle not only for functional ideas but also as a tool for forming stories about the conflict. The ethical suggestions offer further military use; they further encompass issues that have a connection with consumer solitude and dossier security. Critics discuss that by depending on a manifesto with doubtful safety practices for impressionable means, both military troops and noncombatants reveal themselves to important risks. The potential for misuse of data by Telegram raises concerns about responsibility and transparency in utilizing what user news is controlled. Moreover, the conception of disinformation on Telegram poses righteous crises concerning the right to speak freely versus public security. While the floor admits various voices to be heard—including those furthering for equality or human rights—it again enables zealot groups and state-promoted publicity works that can undermine friendly unions and encourage intensity. In conclusion, while Telegram serves as crucial idea finish in the continuous conflict in Ukraine, allure use carries

hereditary protection risks that influence both Ukrainian and Russian consumers. The need for productive countermeasures is superior as two together sides guide along the route, often watering the complicatedness of up-to-date rivalry intertwined with accompanying mathematical ideas and strategies. The moral associations of utilizing the aforementioned platform climax the challenges confronted by associations grabbing with issues of solitude, safety, and facts and honor in times of conflict.

Broader Implications

Telegram has considerably changed the geopolitical landscape and the action of news competition all during the Ukraine conflict. As a platform that expedites complete ideas, it has enhanced a crucial form for two together Ukrainian and Russian tales. The app allows consumers to avoid state-reserved radio, providing a space for liberated newsgathering and basic activism. As famous by Clint Watts, a departed FBI power, "person of fame can sustain their facts campaigns on Telegram has a high-quality chance of forming planet views around what's continuing inside Ukraine"(2). This underlines the policy's role in doing public understanding and worldwide belief about the conflict. For Russia, Telegram serves as a vital channel for distributing state publicity while together allowing obstructing voices to arise, although under continual threat of ban. The Kremlin's works to control facts flow have severed, particularly following Pavel Durov's arrest in France, which bred concerns about the app's future as a liberated source of revelation in Russia. The app's broad appeal across governmental lines creates it a sarcastic sword; while it specifies a principle for disagreeing voices, it also authorizes the management to breed allure narratives efficiently. On the Ukrainian side, Telegram has existed assisting in reviving international support and organizing inhabitants. President Volodymyr Zelensky appropriates the platform to ideas straightforwardly accompanying two together domestic and worldwide hearings, giving updates on armed conflict and demanding help. This direct line enhances Ukraine's political works and helps assert confidence among taxpayers and military alike. Technological

Implications The impact of Telegram goes beyond the next military ideas; it too influences the growth and use of communication sciences contradictory zones. The app's design allows for infinite group chats and smooth giving of combined use of several media content, making it an attractive alternative to usual military ideas plans. As one investigator pointed out, "Telegram has enhanced this literally key battlefield in the information war"(17). Its convenient connection allows hasty dissemination of facts, which is critical in fast-paced military surroundings. However, confidence in a civilian to foreshadow an app raises questions about freedom and reliability in armed conflict. While Telegram is popular for its allure and privacy benefits over principles like WhatsApp, allure vulnerabilities have been emphasized by specialists, who caution against utilizing it for delicate publicity. The absence of a strong end-to-end encryption method that ideas manage potentially be interrupted or achieved by illegitimate bodies. Moreover, both hands have suitable their actions based on Telegram's skills. For instance, Ukrainian forces use unknown chatbots to question citizens in occupied domains. Conversely, the Russian military has appropriated Telegram for logistical arrangements and within the route, even though pro-military bloggers frequently exaggerate its function in frontline movements. This compliance represents by what method civilian technology can shape military operations but more focal points the restraints inherent in specific confidence.

The use of Telegram in the Ukraine conflict offers various communication for future conflicts concerning communication designs and news strife. One meaningful takeaway is the significance of adaptability in adopting new electronics that help real-occasion ideas. As Mykhailo Fedorov, Ukraine's Minister of Digital Transformation, established, "When the war detonated, we went back to Telegram and evoked entirety that we experienced"(1). This changeability allowed Ukrainian officials to influence existing information on the plank for effective wartime ideas. Another communication applies to the risks guide over-reliance on a alone ideas plank. While Telegram has justified priceless for both hands, occurrence to a degree momentary bans on certain looks climax exposures that may be

exploited by opponents or accompany mechanics wrongs. Future military planners should believe diversifying ideas forms to lighten risks guide potential failures or limits on some sole plank. Finally, the ethical associations of utilizing civilian podiums for military purposes must be painstakingly weighed. While Telegram facilitates main ideas channels, it also serves as a bicycle for misstatements and propaganda that can increase conflicts further. As noticed by Dr. Ian Garner, "this news war has existed outsourced to a private company"(19). Understanding these actions will be critical for policymakers and military commanders as they guide along the route, often over water future conflicts where mathematical ideas play a progressively main role. In conclusion, Telegram's versatility affects geopolitical action, mechanics reworking in warfare, and communication well-informed from allure use all the while the Ukraine conflict underscores allure meaning as two together a finish for communication and a battlefield for new fighting.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Telegram has arisen as a important communication finish in the continuous conflict in Ukraine, considerably jolting various facets of armed conflict, perception gathering, and news distribution for two together Ukrainian and Russian forces. Its part as a platform for real-occasion ideas has transformed command and control constructions, admitting military parts to coordinate efficiently amidst the discord of war. As eminent by Mikhail Zvinchuk, "Telegram has nearly become the main habit of superior parts on two together sides of the front"(1). These climaxes allure significance not only for operational effectiveness but also for upholding specific awareness. The policy's serviceableness longers beyond military ideas; it serves as an essential beginning of perception and news for citizens. Ukrainian experts have efficiently employed Telegram to gather news from all, permissive citizens to report rebel drives through unknown chatbots. Conversely, Russian forces still rely on Telegram for operational arrangements and to distribute state propaganda, revealing the allure of two-fold character as both a finish for

military operations and a battlefield for competing stories. However, the use of Telegram is not outside allure challenges. Surveillance risks pose important threats to consumer solitude, accompanying both governments fit listening route. The Ukrainian administration has even prohibited leaders from utilizing Telegram on state-circulated devices on account of concerns over Russian following capacities. This emphasizes the complex ethical associations encircling the use of civilian science in military contexts. The fuller geopolitical suggestions of Telegram's function in the Ukraine conflict cannot be exaggerated. It has reshaped facts combat action, allowing two together edges to undertake narrative forming while providing a platform for free newsgathering that challenges state-reserved media stories. As Clint Watts noticed, "importance can endure their information campaigns on Telegram has the best choice chance of forming realm views around what's continuing inside Ukraine"(2). Ultimately, Telegram's importance in the Ukraine conflict serves as a record of what happened in future conflicts place digital ideas play a progressively principal role. The communication is well-informed concerning the allure impact on armed conflict, judgment accumulation, and the ethical concerns of utilizing civilian principles climax the need for careful traveling of science in discord. As this conflict resumes to evolve, Telegram will likely be an important component in forming the landscape of new struggle and facts distribution.

Bibliography

Agence France-Presse. "Telegram has almost become the main way of commanding units on both sides of the front." South China Morning Post. September 1, 2024.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/world/russia-central-asia/article/3276727/ukraine-war-after-telegram-founder-arrest-russians-fear-loss-main-information-source>.

Time Magazine. "How Telegram Became the Digital Battlefield in the Russia-Ukraine War." March 21, 2022. <https://time.com/6158437/telegram-russia-ukraine-information-war/>.

Walt, Vivienne. "The Ukraine war made Telegram's app more popular and important than ever." Fortune. January 31, 2023. <https://fortune.com/2023/01/31/ukraine-war-telegram-app-users-downloads-profitability/>.

Al Jazeera. "Ukraine bans officials from using Telegram on state-issued devices." September 21, 2024. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/9/21/ukraine-bans-officials-from-using-telegram-on-state-issued-devices>.

Chaika, Anna. "Is Telegram a threat to Ukraine's national security?" DW News. April 5, 2024. <https://www.dw.com/en/is-telegram-a-threat-to-ukraines-national-security/a-68732966>.

Genovese, Vincenzo. "Telegram and the war: Durov's arrest could complicate Russia's war in Ukraine." Euronews. August 26, 2024. <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2024/08/26/telegram-and-the-war-durovs-arrest-could-complicate-things-for-the-russian-military-in-ukr>.

Genovese, Vincenzo. "Telegram has almost become the main way of commanding units on both sides of the front." South China Morning Post. September 1, 2024. <https://www.scmp.com/news/world/russia-central-asia/article/3276727/ukraine-war-after-telegram-founder-arrest-russians-fear-loss-main-information-source>.

Dugoin-Clément, Christine. "Telegram is widely used by the Russian armed forces." Euronews. August 26, 2024. <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2024/08/26/telegram-and-the-war-durovs-arrest-could-complicate-things-for-the-russian-military-in-ukr>.

Business Standard. "Ukraine restricts use of Telegram amid Russian surveillance concerns." September 21, 2024. https://www.business-standard.com/world-news/ukraine-restricts-use-of-telegram-amid-russian-surveillance-concerns-124092100160_1.html.

Meduza. "Telegram has become a key tool for the Russian military." August 28, 2024. <https://meduza.io/en/feature/2024/08/28/telegram-has-become-a-key-tool-for-the>

[russian-military-why-does-moscow-continue-to-rely-on-a-dubai-based-civilian-messaging-app.](#)

Institute for the Study of War. "Telegram is the main alternative to official communications for Russian military personnel in Ukraine." Various Reports.

StartADAM Blog. "Real-Time Chat for Operation Teams." September 28, 2023.

[https://startadam.com/blog/communication-in-logistics/.](https://startadam.com/blog/communication-in-logistics/)

EUToday.net. "How Telegram Became a Communication Aid in the Russian Military."

August 28, 2024. [https://eutoday.net/how-telegram-became-a-communication-aid-in-the-russian-military/.](https://eutoday.net/how-telegram-became-a-communication-aid-in-the-russian-military/)

About Cookies. "Is Telegram Really Safe? - Potential Risks and Safety Tips." Accessed

October 17, 2024. [https://www.aboutcookies.org.uk/is-telegram-safe.](https://www.aboutcookies.org.uk/is-telegram-safe)

Just Security. "Telegram's Security Sham." September 9, 2024.

[https://www.justsecurity.org/99869/telegrams-security-sham/.](https://www.justsecurity.org/99869/telegrams-security-sham/)

Forbes. "Yes, Telegram Is A Very Serious Threat To Your Phone." February 2, 2024.

[https://www.forbes.com/sites/zakdoffman/2024/02/02/apple-iphone-google-pixel-and-samsung-galaxy-telegram-app-warning/.](https://www.forbes.com/sites/zakdoffman/2024/02/02/apple-iphone-google-pixel-and-samsung-galaxy-telegram-app-warning/)

Membit.io Blog. "Is Telegram Safe - An Organizational Communication Perspective."

Accessed October 17, 2024. [https://membit.io/blog/is-telegram-safe-an-organizational-communication-perspective/.](https://membit.io/blog/is-telegram-safe-an-organizational-communication-perspective/)

Agence France-Presse. "After Telegram founder arrest, Russians fear loss of 'main information source'." South China Morning Post. September 1, 2024.

[https://www.scmp.com/news/world/russia-central-asia/article/3276727/ukraine-war-after-telegram-founder-arrest-russians-fear-loss-main-information-source.](https://www.scmp.com/news/world/russia-central-asia/article/3276727/ukraine-war-after-telegram-founder-arrest-russians-fear-loss-main-information-source)

CEPA.org. "Has Ukraine Become Too Dependent on Telegram?" Accessed October 17,

2024. [https://cepa.org/article/has-ukraine-become-too-dependent-on-telegram/.](https://cepa.org/article/has-ukraine-become-too-dependent-on-telegram/)

Time Magazine. "The Man on Ukraine's Digital Frontline." March 12, 2022.

CEPA.org. "Has Ukraine Become Too Dependent on Telegram?" Accessed October 17, 2024. <https://cepa.org/article/has-ukraine-become-too-dependent-on-telegram/>.

Russia-Ukrainian war's influence over Europe's energetic security

Mangia Tchintcharauli

Junker of Defense and Security program of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Rati Kukuladze

Junker of Defense and Security program of
LEPL-David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Supervisor: Associated professor Kaxa Phutkaradze

Abstract

This study examines Russo-Ukraine war influence over Europe's energy security, its dependence on Russian energy such as: gas, oil, electricity and etc. It focuses on key aspects of energy sources in the region and discusses how this conflict influenced Europe's energy policies and geopolitical relationships. Additionally, the study considers various changes in energy strategies after the ongoing war, efforts to diversify energy sources - such as solar, wind, natural gas- and the important steps to achieve energy independence from the aggressive north. This paper highlights the importance of reevaluating energy systems in the context of geopolitical conflicts and the need for a stronger and more sustainable energy infrastructure in Europe. Prior to the Russo-Ukrainian war, Europe heavily relied on Russian energy, with some countries sourcing up to 90% of their gas from supplier. Such significant dependencies originated vulnerabilities, as geopolitical tensions could interrupt supply chains and lead whole continent to potential energy crises.

After the Russo-Ukrainian war began, Europe faced serious challenges due to its dependency on Russian energy. The Nord Stream 2 pipeline, which was intended to double the capacity of gas delivered from Russia to Germany, became a major point of debate. Its completion was suspended after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, leaving Europe in a difficult position. After the construction of Nord Stream 2 was postponed, and Nord Stream 1 later damaged, Europe started to diversify energy sources, reducing reliance on Russian gas. Countries turned to alternative suppliers and invested more heavily in renewables, reshaping the region's energy strategies and heavily reducing Russian influence.

Keywords: Europe, Russia, Ukraine, energy, security, gas, oil, war.

Introduction

Energy security was once not considered an important geopolitical issue. Since the 1990's it has been given special importance globally. Nowadays, existing fears about energy security includes not only issues of oil and its supply, but also the reliability and stability of natural gas and electricity supply. Meaning of energy security has been given significant changes, it has become political tool or more likely a “weapon”.

According to the organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) energy security means stable supplement and usage of energy resources, so the security threats of energy resources are in the interest of as for the producers but as for the customers too (Alexander Barnes 1965). According to International Energy Agency (IEA) *energy security is the rational and reliable supplement of energy.*

Just as oil consumers need a stable supply, oil producers rely on stable demand. Consequently, sudden changes in demand significantly affect oil producers' capabilities, their economic resources, and the overall well-being of their societies.

As we mentioned before, energy security has a strong bond with politics. After the dissolution of the USSR, Russia leveraged its energy resources as a political tool to maintain influence over former Soviet states. Many of these countries remained dependent on Soviet-era energy infrastructure, making it difficult to diversify away from Russian fossil fuels. This reliance allowed Russia to use energy as a weapon, exerting political and economic pressure on nations such as Ukraine, Georgia, and the Baltic states.

Notably, in the early 1990's, Russia limited oil and gas supplies to the Baltic states after they requested the Russian military to leave. The Ukrainian gas crisis of 2006 coincided with pro-European President Viktor Yushchenko's administration in office. In 2006 Gazprom also more than doubled the gas prices for Georgia shortly after the country expressed its desire to join NATO. Additionally, Lithuania experienced gas-price spikes related to its diversification plans before opening its LNG terminal 'Independence' in 2014. In 2021, Gazprom limited gas supplies to Moldova, causing an energy crisis that coincided with the

election of pro-EU President Maia Sandu. These events highlight how Russia strategically used energy to influence political developments in the region.

Access to energy resources is the main key for a country to gain its national security and to increase its role globally. Ex-president of USA - Jimmy Carter said that important energy decisions decide USA's will to keep socially and politically strong community, to take global responsibility to successfully react on modern challenges and to help countries that struggle economically.

The Russian Federation, among others, defines energy security in terms of national well-being. According to the Russian perspective, energy supply security means the guaranteed, reliable protection of the country, its citizens, society, state, and economy from threats related to fuel and energy supply – it is Russians main priority. According to Natalia Kuznetsova before Russo-Ukrainian war Russia's energy security was consisting from two main elements. At the same time Russia was biggest producer and a consumer of energy. Because Russia is highly dependent on energy this field should still be kept as “working area” to strengthen their economy even harder – says Natalya.

Main Part

Europe's energetic securities main aspects

The entry of Russian armies into Ukraine on February 24, 2022 changed both regional and global balances. Russia is the EU's main supplier of natural gas and generally fossil fuels. Their strategy of using energy as a manipulation tool in geopolitics is viewed by many countries as a significant threat to global security.

Conflict made EU to start caring about their energy security. In search of alternative energy resources and ways around the world European Union made diplomatic contacts with other energy supplier countries such as Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, but these diplomatic missions were not any successful, because SA is a swing country, Iran is Russia's supporter and Russia has high influence over Turkmenistan and

Uzbekistan. Also, we need to mention USA, which significantly increased its liquified natural gas (LNG) exports to Europe, but with highly increased prices - if in 2021 price for per thousand cubic feet on average was 7.85\$, in 2022 it become 16\$ (Trading economics 2022-2024). The war has completely changed how the EU gets its gas. Unfortunately, LNG is more expensive source of energy compared to piped natural gas it is processed, shipped, and cooled, so we can definitely say that utility bills on EU will not decrease in near future.

The war increased usage of cleaner energy, by cleaner energy we mean renewable energy sources R.E.S. like solar and wind energy, with this EU can reduce dependence on Russian energy. Investing in green energy became nearly as a patriotic act, in Poland, for example, many people installed solar panels and heat pumps after the war started to lessen their reliance on Russian energy. EU has new repower plan to increase its share of renewable energy up to 42.5-45% by 2030. Germany has raised its goal to 80% renewables in its power mix by 2030 from this we can clearly see how Germany tries to get out of Russian energy claws.¹

According to European Commission press, in march 2022 EU has funded project “Repower EU” by 225 billion euros to build eco-friendly energy resources, which may cause Russia’s “isolation” from European countries and has introduced five-step plan to solve energy crisis:

- Saving electricity.
- Ceiling the revenues of companies that produce electricity at a low cost.
- Obtaining mandatory contributions from fossil fuel companies.
- Implementation of ceiling price on Russian gas.
- Help energy companies overcome their liquidity problem.

¹ [The Effects of The Russia-Ukraine Conflict on European Energy Security pdf 231336a4-b568-4f97-b04b-a3e8c49786e3.pdf](#)

Energy plan, “Repower EU” may work in future but for a short-range period there is nothing EU could do, despite to restart old coal reactors, use nuclear power plants, to buy American LNG – The US and EU reached an agreement that the US will supply 500100 million cubic meters to the EU annually by 2030 – and still use Russian energy (which has been averagely 20.5% of whole energy).

On June 15, 2022, the European Union, Israel, and Egypt signed a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding to export natural gas to Europe. This initiative aims to reduce reliance on Russian gas and support the REPowerEU plan. Under this agreement, the EU will encourage European companies to invest in natural gas exploration and production in Israel and Egypt. This includes participating in competitive bids for exploration licenses that align with EU climate goals and the REPowerEU strategy (EU, Egypt, Israel sign gas deal to curb dependence on Russia 2022). The parties involved are urging public and private organizations to work together to meet the EU's green energy objectives and address climate change through projects related to hydrogen, renewable energy, and energy efficiency. This cooperation will enable the transport of natural gas from Israel and Egypt to Europe using LNG infrastructure, but it will not be enough to fully meet the energy needs of all of Europe.

In June 2022, a coalition of countries, including the United States, EU, and several others, launched the Global Methane Pledge Energy Pathway. This initiative aims to reduce methane emissions in the oil and gas industry, supporting climate goals and energy security. The Energy Pathway is a key part of the Global Methane Pledge, focusing on effective and affordable strategies to cut methane emissions, with the goal of ending routine combustion practices by 2030. Participating countries are committed to providing technical and financial support, with nearly \$60 million pledged to assist in various programs, such as the World Bank's Global Gas Flaring Reduction Partnership. The International Methane Emissions Observatory will also work with partners to create a system for detecting methane emissions using satellite technology. In response to the disruptions in Russian gas

supplies, the EU introduced a collaborative strategy in March 2022 with G7, G20, OPEC, and IEA member states to tackle challenges in the oil market.²

Just days after Russia invaded Ukraine, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced that Germany would use any energy source, including nuclear power, to ensure energy security. This was surprising since Germany had previously committed to closing its nuclear plants after the Fukushima disaster and was planning to increase coal use instead (Basrian Giegerich 2023). In July 2023 the UK government announced plans to allow hundreds of new oil and gas projects in the North Sea.

As we have already mentioned the war in Ukraine has had a major impact on global energy politics, especially for countries like Germany that were dependent on cheap Russian gas. The war made Russian fossil fuels unreliable and undesirable because oil, gas, and coal prices increased worldwide. Crude oil prices rose by 350% between April 2020 and April 2022, while coal and gas prices also hit historic highs. This has forced countries to rethink their energy strategies and reduce dependence on Russian energy. Nowadays EU countries support joint gas purchases, before the war it was unimaginable and undesirable. Joint gas purchasing is when multiple countries, like those in the European Union, work together to buy gas from suppliers as a group. By doing this, they can negotiate better deals, ensure a more reliable supply.

Countries with more developed economies usually have higher energy demand due to the scale of industry and higher living standards. Germany is the largest energy consumer in Europe, with primary energy consumption reaching 11,769 Petajoules in 2022. Over 75% of this energy comes from fossil fuels, while about 17.2% is from renewable sources. In contrast, developing countries like Romania and Bulgaria use less energy. For example, Bulgaria consumed about 1,678 Petajoules in 2020, which is much lower than that of more

² *G7 agrees oil price cap: reducing Russia's revenues, while keeping global energy markets stable*. London: European Commission.

developed Western European countries. This highlights the differences in energy consumption between countries at various economic development levels.

Higher energy prices in 2022 and in early 2023 put a lot of pressure on national economies, while inflation reduced people's spending power. In EU household energy costs nearly doubled in the first year of the war. skyrocketing energy prices also hit businesses too. Despite billions spent by governments to shield consumers, the prices for electricity and natural gas paid by households are higher than ever, and the winter makes the situation it even worse. National governments are implementing various policies to address an energy crisis, including price caps, regulated tariffs, and support for companies. However, these measures may have significant downsides, particularly if actions taken by different member states are uncoordinated, which could harm the EU as a whole. For example, energy subsidies in one country can lead to increased use of energy, resulting in higher wholesale prices across the EU, which negatively affects consumers in other countries. Therefore, recent expert analyses indicate that the best approach is for member states to work together to reduce energy demand and increase supply, while also keeping internal energy markets open and protecting the most vulnerable consumers.

Europe's energetic dependencies on Russia before war

Before the war in Ukraine, Europe was heavily dependent on Russia for its energy needs, particularly natural gas and oil. Russia supplied around 40% of the EU's natural gas imports and a third of its oil supply were of Russian origin, making it important energy partner for the continent, EU became dependent on Russian imported fossil fuels and dependence is increasing yearly because EU is using Russian gas and oil not only for heating and electricity but also for their industrial sectors, which led to concerns about the vulnerability of Europe's energy supply in the event of geopolitical tensions. (wilks 2022) This dependency created a complex relationship between Europe and Russia, where energy security and geopolitical concerns were closely intertwined.

In EU fossil fuels will remain the most important source of energy, especially as there is not any desire to switch on nuclear energy. In fact, Europe’s leaders have chosen to rely on gas as the main source of energy in the future. By 2030, the EU's dependency on natural gas imports is projected to rise to 74%. Nowadays many EU countries are fully dependent on imported gas, including Portugal and Sweden. Unfortunately, effort to find alternative of energy sources and imported Russian gas was unsuccessfully, as the majority of global natural gas trade occurs via pipelines, nearly 95%.

Europe’s dependence on imported natural gas is 90% from which 41% is imported from Russia. European countries like Slovakia and Bulgaria rely on imported Russian gas more than 75%, Finland and Hungary more than 95%, Czech 100%, Germany, Italy, Greece and Sweden are dependent on more than 50%.

Eu is not only dependent on Russian gas also it is dependent on other fossil fuel such as oil and coal. We think is is necessary to mention that Russia is exporting uranium in EU too and in addition it provides electricity to many EU countries.

Table 1. Dependence on imported gas for selected EU countries

COUNTRY	DEPENDENCE ON IMPORTED GAS, 2006
Germany	83.6%
Spain	101.3%
Italy	91.2%
France	80.0%
Denmark	-101.3%
Netherlands	-61.6%
Portugal	100%
Sweden	100%
UK	11.8%

(Source: ecipe.org)³

From imported oil in EU 30% comes from Russia. The Netherlands and Poland are all more than 35% dependent on Russian oil, and Germany by 45%.

³ <https://ecipe.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/europe2019s-energy-dependency-and-russia2019s-commercial-assertiveness-what-should-the-eu-do.pdf> 10/18/2024

In coal, the EU is dependent on Russia for about 46%. The most dependent countries on Russian coal are Germany, Italy and Netherlands with more than 65% of their total coal imports.

As we have already mentioned Russia plays an important role in the operation of nuclear power plants in Europe. In 2020 of the uranium delivered to the EU about 20% will come from Russia.

In addition, in 2021, Russia exported 12.89 billion KWH of electricity to the EU, this much electricity is enough to fully provide small country such as Georgia with electricity for one year. From imported Russian electricity 9.228 billion KWH uses Finland, 1.881 billion KWH uses Lithuania and 669.9 million KWH uses Latvia.

Germany is one of the most dependent countries on Russian gas. Before war in 2021 Germany's biggest gas supply source was Russian pipeline, estimating 32%. To decrease this amount Germans started restarting its coal plants despite the high damage to nature. Regardless of unwillingness it is also planned to extend the operation of nuclear power plants, which were supposed to close, moreover German government asks its citizens to save energy as well as other European countries such as Netherlands, France, Belgium and so on. People were asked to take measures such as not heating spaces that are not used regularly, banning gas heating of pools in houses, and turning off the lights of buildings.

Nord Steam 2

Nord Stream 2 is a controversial natural gas pipeline that runs from Russia to Germany through the Baltic Sea, it is bypassing countries like Ukraine and Poland. This plays important role for Russia because without the transit route through Ukraine, it would lose income and strategic importance in Europe's energy supply chain.

It was built to increase capacity of gas, that Russia could sent to Germany and to other EU states. the main idea behind Nord Stream 2 was to make EU more dependent on Russian gas, that strengthens Russia's ability to manipulate gas flows in EU, in addition Nord stream 2 would increase Russia's income. EU states like Germany prefer to increase usage of Russian

gas because it is cheaper than gas from other regions. For Germany, in particular, the pipeline was seen as a way to secure a reliable energy source.

However, Nord Stream 2 has been at the center of political tensions, especially concerning its impact on Ukraine and Europe's energy security. The pipeline covers 1,230 kilometers and was completed in 2021. Many European countries, especially those in Eastern Europe like Poland and the Baltic states, opposed Nord Stream 2. They feared it would make Europe more dependent on Russian gas, increasing Russia's political leverage over the continent. The United States also opposed the pipeline, arguing that it would give Russia too much control over European energy and reduce the power of alternative energy sources. United States even sanctioned Nord Stream 2 several times, which delayed completion of Nord Stream 2.

On September 26, 2022, explosions occurred that caused significant damage to the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. At that time, the pipeline was not operational due to heightened tensions between Russia and Europe following Russia's invasion of Ukraine earlier that year. The blasts were severe and resulted in leaks that released gas into the sea. (Vakulenko 2022)⁴

Who might have destroyed it? Initially, there are several theories about who was responsible of its destruction. Some pointed fingers at Russia, claiming that main idea was to create chaos in Europe, because winter was coming and EU was not prepared. However, German investigations later identified potential Ukrainian involvement, including suspicions that a Ukrainian group used a yacht to plant explosives on the pipeline. Despite these accusations, Ukrainian officials have denied responsibility, and investigations continue.

⁴ <https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/politika/2022/09/shock-and-awe-who-attacked-the-nord-stream-pipelines?lang=en> 10/19/2024

Conclusion

Russia has long used and still uses its energetic resources as a political tool to increase its influence as well as on ex-soviet states but also on much developed Europe too, but geopolitical landscape of Europe's energy security has changed dramatically since Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022. This conflict revealed Europe's heavy reliance on Russian fossil fuels, exposing the vulnerabilities of such dependencies. Before the war, Russia supplied about 40% of the EU's natural gas imports. This reliance created a risky situation where energy security was closely linked to political stability. But this dependence has decreased four times to 10% in 2024.

As we saw EU has taken several steps to improve its energy security. Efforts to seek alternative energy sources have become essential. The EU has engaged diplomatically with other Asian countries. However, these efforts have faced serious challenges, additionally, the U.S. has increased its liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports to Europe, but at significantly higher prices, adding to the financial burden on European households, businesses and fueled inflation, prompting governments to implement measures like price caps and subsidies.

The war has also accelerated the EU's commitment to renewable energy. Initiatives like the "Repower EU" plan aim to significantly raise the share of renewable energy by 2030. However, this transition is not straightforward. The immediate need for energy security has led some EU nations to temporarily increase their use of coal and nuclear power, revealing the tension between energy independence and environmental commitments.

In the end we need to mention Nord Stream 2 pipeline, which serves as a "symbol" of the Europe's energy dependency on Russia, which intended to increase European reliance on the north. The pipeline became a focal point of political tension. Its destruction in September 2022 further complicated the energy landscape, leaving Europe to confront both the physical and psychological impacts of reduced Russian energy supplies.

The only way forward is together, cooperation and solidarity among EU member states are essential to effectively address the ongoing energy crisis caused by the war in Ukraine.

Bibliography

- Alexander Barnes, I. C. (1965). energy security. *Hisham Khatib*, 21.
- Baiq Tiara Lovysamina Zahir 1*, H. S. (2024). EU Energy Security Strategy: The Impact Of The Russia-Ukraine . *International Journal of Educational Research & Social Sciences* , 16.
- Basrian Giegerich, B. S. (2023). *online analysis*. Berlin: IISS.
- Birnbaum, M. (2022, February 9). *washingtonpost.com*. Retrieved from [washingtonpost.com: https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2023/06/06/nord-stream-pipeline-explosion-ukraine-russia/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2023/06/06/nord-stream-pipeline-explosion-ukraine-russia/)
- D., B. (2022). “The destruction of Nord Stream 2 pipeline: Why it's bad news for everyone.”. *Atlantic Council*.
- EU, Egypt, Israel sign gas deal to curb dependence on Russia*. (2022, 06 15). Retrieved from DW: [dw.com](https://www.dw.com)
- FERRIE, D. (2022). *G7 agrees oil price cap: reducing Russia's revenues, while keeping global energy markets stable*. London: European Commission.
- Jorjoliani, T. (2024). *Security challenges and prospects in the south caucasus against the backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine*. Tbilisi: Universal.
- KILIÇ, B. (2022). THE EFFECTS OF THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT ON EUROPEAN ENERGY . *THE EFFECTS OF THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT* (pp. 6-7). Istanbul: eia.
- Oli Brown, A. F. (2023). The consequences of Russia's war on Ukraine for climate action, food supply, and energy security. *Environment and*, 9-13.
- Putkaradze, k. (2024). *security challenges and prospects in the south Caucasus against the backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine war*. Tbilisi: Universal.
- SURWILLO, I. (2023). “Energy as a weapon”. *progressive yearbook* (p. 7). Berlin: BIG ISSUES.

- Trading economics*. (2022-2024, october 16). Retrieved from Natural gas:
<https://tradingeconomics.com/commodity/natural-gas>
- Vakulenko, S. (2022, September 30). *carnegieendowment.org*. Retrieved from
[carnegieendowment.org: https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-
eurasia/politika/2022/09/shock-and-awe-who-attacked-the-nord-stream-
pipelines?lang=en](https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/politika/2022/09/shock-and-awe-who-attacked-the-nord-stream-pipelines?lang=en)
- wilks, J. (2022). *Russian energy in Europe*. rambaud: Euronews.
- Wilson, L. B. (February 2023). *EU energy security and the war in*. Warshaw: EPRS |
European Parliamentary ResearchService.
[https://ecipe.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/europe2019s-energy-dependency-
and-russia2019s-commercial-assertiveness-what-should-the-eu-do.pdf](https://ecipe.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/europe2019s-energy-dependency-and-russia2019s-commercial-assertiveness-what-should-the-eu-do.pdf)

Russia-Ukraine war effects on IT field

Davit Takashvili

Junker of Informatics program of
LEPL – David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

Abstract

The ongoing Russia-Ukraine war has significantly impacted the global IT field, with far-reaching effects on semiconductor manufacturing, satellite operations, and cybersecurity. This paper delves into the direct and indirect consequences of the conflict, highlighting the vulnerability of the IT supply chain and the increasing militarization of space-based technologies.

One of the most immediate disruptions stems from the halting of neon gas production in Ukraine, a country responsible for over 50% of the world's supply. Neon is crucial for the excimer lasers used in semiconductor manufacturing, particularly in photolithography processes. The conflict led to the shutdown of key Ukrainian neon producers, such as Ingas and Cryoin, causing a reduction of up to 50% in global neon production. This exacerbated the already fragile semiconductor industry, which was recovering from supply chain disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Neon shortages pushed prices up by as much as 500%, severely impacting semiconductor manufacturing and the global electronics industry.

The war has also brought attention to the vulnerability of satellite infrastructure. On the day of Russia's invasion, a major cyberattack targeted Viasat's KA-SAT satellite network, leading to significant communication disruptions across Europe. This attack highlighted the growing role of cyber warfare in targeting space-based assets, with both civilian and military communications increasingly dependent on satellite technology. The conflict also saw the rapid deployment of SpaceX's Starlink system in Ukraine, providing crucial internet connectivity despite Russian attempts to jam satellite signals. The quick adaptation of Starlink's anti-jamming capabilities underlined the importance of resilient satellite networks in modern warfare.

Furthermore, the war has accelerated the militarization of space. With satellites playing a pivotal role in communication, navigation, and surveillance, the conflict has emphasized the need for robust space defense systems. This paper examines how the war has redefined the IT landscape, from manufacturing to cybersecurity, with lasting implications for future technological conflicts.

Keywords: global IT sphere, far-reaching effects, direct and indirect consequences, photolithographic processes, satellite infrastructure, technological conflicts.

Introduction

In the modern world, every field is getting developed very fast. It is because that every human has its own interests and determines their time and energy for that. So nowadays changes are part of the everyday life of a modern person. That applies to the military as well. Wars are part of human nature, it exists from the day humans started existing. It is the most primitive way of discussing over some inconvenience, but it is also part of the modern world and it will never fully disappear from the universe. It might change form in some way, for example, instead of hiring humans for the military, there might be created robots to replace live soldiers, but it will always be the last option for human disagreement. In this day and age most focused subject area in the military, as well as in every domain, is electronics. The IT field is evolving at lightning speed, and its importance rises more and more as the years go by. Partly because it works on electricity, which can be acquired more easily and in more quantities than gasoline, that will eventually run out, especially when it is abused as much as in the modern world. But more importantly because it has dominated the whole range, starting from ordering food to sending rockets and satellites into the space. So that improvement in the IT sphere applies to the military too, as we know the best teacher is practice and at the moment there is no better example of using cyberattacks, satellites and other highly constructed technologies than the Russia-Ukraine war. In the following event, a lot of things became clear to the world. First of all, the war showed us that trenches are not part of the past and we can still use them for their objective, to protect soldiers from direct fire and also give them some type of shelter, in contrary to a lot of countries that were already thinking that phenomenon of trenches died after the world war 2. Conflict also revealed how important it is to have a good cybersecurity team, regarding the fact that the same day that Russia started invading Ukraine, they attacked Viasat's ¹KA-SAT network, and because of that majority of Ukraine did not have internet, and information transfer

¹ (2022, May 10). *UK blames Russia for satellite internet hack at start of war*. Retrieved from [bbc.com: https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-61396331](https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-61396331)

froze. Over the course of the war, we saw specifically which parts of the IT field needed to be more worked on, and what kind of tools needed to be evolved and designed differently. Moreover, most importantly, we witness how tactics transformed and how distinct it is now, than it was just about 20 years ago. So in this paper, we will talk about which parts of the IT sector were affected by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which parts of the military technology suffered consequences of being taken for granted, things that were not even considered to play an important role to the military but got involved in it really deeply and what type of technologies devised and evolved to match the today's standard of really complex tactics.

Main Part

Drone gun

The rise of drones has transformed industries but also introduced new risks, including illegal surveillance, smuggling, and airspace violations. And even more for the military. To address these threats, drone guns have emerged as an effective, non-destructive tool that disrupts the drone's communication with its operator. This allows for a safe neutralization of the drone, which is often forced to land or return to its origin. In conflict zones, drone guns prevent enemy drones from gathering intelligence or launching attacks. Drone guns primarily operate by jamming radio frequencies (typically 2.4 GHz, 5.8 GHz, and 1.5 GHz) used by drones for communication. This cuts off the control link, forcing the drone to lose its operational capacity. In some models, GPS spoofing is employed to mislead the drone with false location data, leading it to land or fly off-course.

Russian-Ukraine war made it clear that anti-drone systems should be more developed and evolved because even though they work well with airport security or prisons it is way different in military operations.

²Drone guns before the war were big and heavy, they were mostly considered to be used as a mounted weapon and everyone will accept that for infantry battalions it will not always be an option to have mounted guns. Even one of the later versions, like ³drone gun tactical is not the best choice, by reason of the fact that when it is ready to use, including batteries, it weighs 7.3kg and is 120cm long, which is too much for regular ground troops. After the war, the situation started to change and is still changing today. They started working to reduce the load and dimensions of the drone gun and after more than a year, on April 11, 2023, they created DroneGun MK4. It is the best drone gun that has ever been made, it is shaped like a pistol, battle-ready weights 3.2kg, so it is exactly like the fully loaded normal m4 carbine, it is 64cm long, shorter than the standard m4, and it needs 3 seconds to start up. That are the reasons that make it the best drone gun that's ever been created and this war was one of the main factors of its development.

Neon Gas

Neon gas is a **colorless, odorless, inert noble gas** that is found in trace amounts in the Earth's atmosphere. It is primarily produced as a byproduct of air separation units that separate atmospheric gasses like oxygen, nitrogen, and argon.

⁴neon gas plays an important role in the semiconductor manufacturing process. Neon is crucial for the production of **excimer lasers**, which are used in photolithography, a key step in making semiconductor chips.

Excimer lasers are a type of ultraviolet (UV) laser that uses a mixture of a noble gas (like argon, krypton, or xenon) and a halogen (fluorine or chlorine) to generate short-

² (2024). Retrieved from droneshield.com: <https://www.droneshield.com/sectors/military>
Chris Vallance.

³ *DroneGun Tactical*. (2024). Retrieved from droneshield.com: <https://www.droneshield.com/c-uas-products/dronegun-tactical>

⁴ Jonathan Arias, Phillip Meng. (2023, March 20). *Understanding CHIPS, Part One: The Semiconductor Manufacturing Challenge*. Retrieved from bipartisanpolicy.org: <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/understanding-chips-part-1/>

wavelength laser light. They are known for their precise control and high-energy UV light, making them especially useful in applications requiring minimal heat damage and fine detail (for example, semiconductor chips).

The main applications are:

- LASIK Eye Surgery - correcting vision problems like myopia and astigmatism,
- Semiconductor Manufacturing - etching tiny patterns onto semiconductor wafers to create microchips,
- Micromachining - creating tiny structures in materials like plastics, polymers, and ceramics,
- Surface Treatment - used in industries to modify the surface properties of materials, improving adhesion, cleaning, or modifying surface texture.

So it is used not only in the industrial field but in medicine too.

neon gas is commonly used in excimer lasers, but not as the active lasing medium.

it is included to **stabilize the discharge** within the laser and help maintain the proper pressure and ionization environment for the creation of the excited dimer (excimer). For example, in **argon-fluoride (ArF)** excimer lasers, the noble gases argon or krypton react with fluorine to form the excimer, while neon serves to support the efficient formation of this excited state. It helps facilitate the energy transfer and allows for the efficient operation of the laser.

There are 5 main producers of neon gas: Ukraine, Russia, China, USA, South Korea. Out of these five producers Ukraine manufactures **more than 50%** of the world's neon gas and Russia produces **around 30%** of what's left. It is notable that neon made in Ukraine is the purest, which is one of the main problems in USA produced neon.

So the fact is that today, two of the biggest producers of one of the most important components in semiconductor chip manufacturing are at war. Did that have a significant impact on the global supply? Yes. Two of Ukraine's largest neon gas suppliers, **Ingas** (based in Mariupol) and **CryoIn** (based in Odessa), were forced to halt production due to the

conflict. After the Russian invasion, neon production globally fell by **about 50%**, with some estimates suggesting it was even higher. Given Ukraine's pivotal role in the supply chain, this created a significant bottleneck for industries dependent on neon, particularly the semiconductor industry, which was already facing shortages due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the production falling drastically, the price of neon gas skyrocketed. In some cases, the price of neon surged by **500%**.

⁵In summary, the Russia-Ukraine war caused a sharp decline in neon gas production, with an estimated 50% reduction in global supply, severely impacting the semiconductor industry and driving up prices globally.

Cyber-attacks

A cyber-attack is a deliberate attempt to damage, disrupt, or gain unauthorized access to computer systems or networks. Cybersecurity breaches can result in hackers making their way into bank accounts, medical records, social media accounts, and more. When it comes to how dangerous a cyber-attack is, the answer is potentially devastating. And the problem is only growing.

⁶The frequency of cyber-attacks in the Russia-Ukraine war has been high and continuous since the conflict began in 2014, with a notable increase during the full-scale invasion in 2022. Thousands of attacks have targeted Ukrainian government websites, critical infrastructure, and private sector organizations. In Ukraine, cyber-attacks include ransomware that encrypts data for payment, denial-of-service attacks that overwhelm websites, and malware that disrupts operations. Phishing attempts trick users into revealing

⁵ Gabrielle Athanasia, Gregory Arcuri. (2022, March 14). *Russia's Invasion of Ukraine Impacts Gas Markets Critical to Chip Production*. Retrieved from csis.org: <https://www.csis.org/blogs/perspectives-innovation/russias-invasion-ukraine-impacts-gas-markets-critical-chip-production>

⁶ Werner, Debra. (2022, April 14). *Russian invasion of Ukraine exposes cybersecurity threat to commercial satellites*. Retrieved from spacenews.com: <https://spacenews.com/russian-invasion-of-ukraine-exposes-cybersecurity-threat-to-commercial-satellites/>

sensitive information, while supply chain attacks target third-party vendors. Disinformation campaigns spread false information to manipulate public perception.

In the war, key technologies include drones for surveillance and attacks, cyber tools for hacking and disrupting systems, and electronic warfare systems to jam communications. Artificial intelligence is used for data analysis and targeting, while satellites provide real-time imagery and secure communications. Long-range missiles and advanced weapon systems enhance military capabilities, and mobile apps facilitate coordination among troops and civilians.

If Russia continues its cyber-attacks on Ukraine, we could see increased disruption to critical infrastructure, such as power grids and communication networks, leading to widespread chaos. This could also escalate military tensions, provoking retaliatory measures from Ukraine or its allies. Economically, ongoing disruptions might severely harm Ukraine's economy, impacting businesses and public services and leading to long-term challenges. The international community may respond with stronger sanctions or cyber retaliation, further heightening geopolitical tensions. In response to these attacks, Ukraine and its allies are likely to enhance their cybersecurity measures, fostering greater cooperation in defense strategies.

Additionally, continued aggression could shift public sentiment against Russia, damaging its global standing and diplomatic relationships. Overall, the situation could result in significant humanitarian, economic, and geopolitical consequences.

Satellites

Satellites play a pivotal role in modern warfare, serving as the unseen eyes and ears of military operations. The space around Earth is no longer a neutral domain; it has become a battleground where nations vie for supremacy, utilizing satellite technology to gain an edge over adversaries. From providing intelligence and reconnaissance to guiding missiles, satellites are instrumental in shaping the outcome of conflicts.

The Russia-Ukraine war has indeed had a significant impact on satellite operations and the broader space domain. Both directly and indirectly, the conflict has altered the dynamics of satellite usage and raised concerns about the potential militarization and vulnerabilities of space assets. Here's an exploration of how the war has affected satellites:

1. Satellite Cyberattacks:

One of the most immediate impacts of the Russia-Ukraine war on satellites was a massive cyberattack targeting Viasat, a U.S. company that provides satellite communications. On the very day Russia launched its invasion (February 24, 2022), hackers, believed to be linked to Russian state actors, attacked ⁷Viasat's KA-SAT satellite network. The disruptions led to the loss of communication for thousands of internet users across Europe, including wind turbines in Germany and other critical systems that relied on Viasat.

The attack exposed the vulnerability of satellite infrastructure to hacking and cyber warfare,

while highlighting that cyberattacks on space assets could become a key feature of future conflicts, especially when satellite networks are vital for both civilian and military communications.

2. Increased Satellite Usage for Intelligence:

As a result of the war, the demand for satellite imagery and data surged dramatically. Companies like Maxar Technologies, Planet Labs, and BlackSky have played a key role in providing real-time satellite imagery to Ukraine, its allies, and even the general public.

The war has pushed these commercial satellite companies to expand their capacities and improve their capabilities.

⁷ Corera, G. (2022, March 25). *Russia hacked Ukrainian satellite communications, officials believe*. Retrieved from bbc.com: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-60796079>

This high reliance on private-sector satellites also created a new **hybrid model** of military operations, where governments and private companies collaborate in real-time, something that will likely become a staple of future conflicts.

3. Starlink and Russia's Attempted Disruptions:

Starlink, the satellite internet service operated by SpaceX, quickly became essential for Ukraine's war efforts. As Russian forces targeted ground-based communications and internet infrastructure, Starlink terminals provided Ukraine with resilient internet access, allowing both military and civilian units to stay online.

⁸Russia attempted to jam Starlink's satellite signals, but SpaceX countered by boosting its anti-jamming capabilities. This sparked a form of "satellite warfare," with Russia targeting commercial satellite services in its electronic and cyber efforts. SpaceX's quick response demonstrated how adaptable and resilient commercial satellite networks can be under direct threat.

The war has accelerated discussions about the militarization of space. With satellites playing a crucial role in communication, navigation, and surveillance, space has become a strategic domain that could be targeted in future conflicts. The U.S. Space Force, as well as NATO, have acknowledged the growing importance of space, and the war has emphasized the need for space defense capabilities to protect vital satellite networks. NATO has declared space an operational domain, meaning that an attack on member nations' satellites could be considered an act of war, potentially triggering Article 5, the mutual defense clause. This raises the stakes for any nation considering targeting satellites in future conflicts.

⁸ Jonathan Beale. (2022, October 6). *Space, the unseen frontier in the war in Ukraine*. Retrieved from bbc.com: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-63109532>

Conclusion

The Russia-Ukraine war has reshaped how we understand modern warfare, demonstrating the deep interconnection between military tactics and technology. It has revealed that advancements in IT, cybersecurity, and other technologies are no longer optional enhancements, but essential pillars of military strength. The integration of tools such as drone guns, satellites, and advanced communication networks has shown how swiftly warfare has evolved from just trench battles to a battlefield defined by cyberattacks and digital innovations. From the rapid development of lighter and more efficient drone guns to the critical shortage of neon gas affecting the semiconductor industry, the war has influenced global industries in unexpected ways. The disruption of neon gas production, a cornerstone in chip manufacturing, underscored how fragile the global supply chain is when key regions are engulfed in conflict. At the same time, the increased use of satellites for intelligence gathering and communication, such as Starlink's role in maintaining Ukraine's internet connectivity, signals that space has become a critical frontier in modern conflict. Cyberattacks, perhaps the most insidious weapon in the conflict, have shown their potential to paralyze a nation's infrastructure in an instant. The assault on Ukraine's digital networks, including the hacking of the Viasat satellite network, illustrated the growing importance of cybersecurity in warfare, which transcends physical borders and has global consequences. This war has also highlighted vulnerabilities in the current military structure, forcing governments to rethink their reliance on certain technologies and resources. The need for stronger cybersecurity measures, faster adaptation to changing drone technologies, and more robust defenses against satellite disruptions will shape the future of warfare. Ultimately, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has proven that modern wars are not just fought with guns and tanks. As technology continues to advance, the face of war will only become more complex, requiring innovative strategies and unprecedented levels of collaboration across industries. The lessons learned from this conflict will undoubtedly influence the evolution of military tactics and technology for decades to come.

Bibliography

- Retrieved from droneshield.com: <https://www.droneshield.com/sectors/military>
- Chris Vallance. (2024).
(2022, May 10). *UK blames Russia for satellite internet hack at start of war*. Retrieved from
bbc.com: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-61396331>
- Corera, G. (2022, March 25). *Russia hacked Ukrainian satellite communications, officials believe*. Retrieved from bbc.com: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-60796079>
- DroneGun Mk4. (2024). Retrieved from droneshield.com:
<https://www.droneshield.com/c-uas-products/dronegun-mk4>
- DroneGun Tactical. (2024). Retrieved from droneshield.com:
<https://www.droneshield.com/c-uas-products/dronegun-tactical>
- Gabrielle Athanasia, Gregory Arcuri. (2022, March 14). *Russia's Invasion of Ukraine Impacts Gas Markets Critical to Chip Production*. Retrieved from csis.org:
<https://www.csis.org/blogs/perspectives-innovation/russias-invasion-ukraine-impacts-gas-markets-critical-chip-production>
- Jon Simkins. (2021, June 23). *This enormous drone gun can pluck UAVs right out of the sky*. Retrieved from militarytimes.com: <https://www.militarytimes.com/off-duty/military-culture/2021/06/22/this-enormous-drone-gun-can-pluck-uavs-right-out-of-the-sky/>
- Jonathan Arias, Phillip Meng. (2023, March 20). *Understanding CHIPS, Part One: The Semiconductor Manufacturing Challenge*. Retrieved from bipartisanpolicy.org:
<https://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/understanding-chips-part-1/>
- Jonathan Beale. (2022, October 6). *Space, the unseen frontier in the war in Ukraine*. Retrieved from bbc.com: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-63109532>

Kari A. Bingen, Kaitlyn Johnson, Zhanna Malekos Smith. (2022, november 10). *Russia Threatens to Target Commercial Satellites*. Retrieved from www.csis.org:
<https://www.csis.org/analysis/russia-threatens-target-commercial-satellites>

Miriam McNabb. (2023, April 5). *DroneShield Launches a Portable, Pistol-Shaped Drone Jammer: DroneGun Mk4*. Retrieved from dronelife.com:
<https://dronelife.com/2023/04/05/droneshield-launches-a-portable-pistol-shaped-drone-jammer-dronegun-mk4/>

Werner, Debra. (2022, April 14). *Russian invasion of Ukraine exposes cybersecurity threat to commercial satellites*. Retrieved from spacenews.com:
<https://spacenews.com/russian-invasion-of-ukraine-exposes-cybersecurity-threat-to-commercial-satellites/>

Werner, Debra. (2023, April 19). *Ukraine's lessons for military space*. Retrieved from [Spacenews.com](http://spacenews.com): <https://spacenews.com/ukraines-lessons-for-military-space/>



**LEPL - DAVID AGHMASHENEBELI
NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY OF GEORGIA**

**WEB www.eta.edu.ge
MOBILE: +995 5 77 19 92 05
E-MAIL: nda@mod.gov.ge**

**CIRCULATION: 50
ISBN-978-9941-8-7203-7**