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## STATE SECURITY OF UKRAINE IN THE FACE OF MODERN CHALLENGES AND THREATS

*The article emphasizes that modern challenges to national security are complex, multidimensional, and largely hybrid in nature. These challenges concern not only the military sphere, but also the information space, energy system, cyberspace, financial stability, political stability, and social cohesion of society.*

*The study found that threats to Ukraine's national security are both external (military aggression, cybercrime, information warfare) and internal (corruption, political instability, weak institutions). Of particular importance is the effectiveness of the state's response mechanisms to challenges, its capacity for strategic planning, coordination of all security sectors, and interaction with international partners. Therefore, effective state security in Ukraine in the current environment requires: a systematic approach to identifying and neutralising threats; improvement of the regulatory and legal framework; strengthening the resilience of state institutions; introduction of modern technologies, particularly in the field of cyber defence; and enhancement of strategic communication and international cooperation.*

*Keywords: state security, levels of state security, security, challenges and threats, digital security, national security.*

**Statement of the problem.** The essence of state security lies in the state's ability to ensure the stable functioning of the political system and to protect its sovereignty, territorial integrity, constitutional order, and national interests from external and internal threats. It encompasses a range of legal, organizational, managerial, informational, and coercive measures aimed at preserving the stability of the state as an institutional and political-legal entity. At the same time, state security is a fundamental element of national security, but it has a specific focus and is primarily oriented toward protecting state power, its legitimacy, and its ability to perform managerial functions. The essence of state power is defined by such basic categories as statehood, legality, control, national interest, legitimacy, and political stability.

In the current environment, the issue of ensuring Ukraine's national security is becoming particularly relevant given the transformation of the global security environment, the escalation of the geopolitical situation in Eastern Europe, and the ongoing armed confrontation with russia. The full-scale aggression against Ukraine, which began in 2014 and escalated sharply in February 2022, has radically changed approaches to understanding national security, expanded the range of current threats, and revealed vulnerabilities in critical areas of public administration, the economy, defense, cyberspace, and the information space.

In such conditions of transformation, national security is viewed not only as a system of measures aimed at protecting sovereignty, territorial integrity, and constitutional order, but also as a complex multidimensional category encompassing political, social, energy, environmental, information, and cyber security. Modern threats are increasingly becoming asymmetric, hybrid, and transnational in nature, requiring the state to develop adaptive, preventive, and systemic response mechanisms.

The relevance of the research topic is also determined by the need to comprehend new strategic approaches to ensuring Ukraine's national security in the context of constant military threats, external political pressure, internal socio-economic problems, and the need for profound institutional transformation. Particular attention should be paid to cooperation with international partners, integration into Euro-Atlantic security structures, and strengthening the internal stability of state institutions.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Today, Ukraine's state security system is undergoing a difficult test due to the growing scale and complexity of modern challenges and threats. The russian federation's open armed aggression, active use of hybrid tools (information warfare, cyber threats, sabotage and subversive activities), political destabilisation and economic pressure have created unprecedented challenges for the functioning of key state institutions. It should be emphasized that a separate challenge is the need to update conceptual approaches to understanding state security in the context of postmodern warfare and global instability. Traditionally focused on the military aspect, the national security system today must take into account the growing importance of cybersecurity, energy independence, information resilience, food security, and critical infrastructure protection.

At the same time, contemporary research on this issue leaves open the question of effective interaction between state institutions, civil society, and international partners in the process of security policy formation. The lack of a comprehensive strategy focused on Ukraine's long-term security autonomy significantly weakens its position in confronting external threats. Individual issues related to state security are reflected in the works of I. Yakovuk [1, 3, 10–14], N. Pitgion [2], E. Kobko [4], V. Lomaka [5], H. Markovich [6], O. Dzoban [7], M. Savchyn [8], V. Gorbulin [9], and others. The dynamic development of the global space allows for a more detailed examination of certain aspects of this issue in light of today's changing conditions.

**The purpose of the article** is to identify the characteristics of contemporary challenges and threats to Ukraine's national security, analyze countermeasures, and develop strategic guidelines for strengthening national security in the long term.

**Summary of the main material.** In the context of contemporary global and regional transformations accompanied by growing instability, armed conflicts, terrorist threats, cybercrime, and information aggression, the issue of establishing an effective national security system has become one of the key priorities for any sovereign state. That is why the issue of state security is particularly important for Ukraine, which is currently in a state of prolonged military confrontation and at the same time is implementing profound internal reforms.

The category of "national security" is multifaceted and dynamic, which necessitates its in-depth scientific understanding and clarification. It is closely related to the categories of "national security", "public security", and "personal security", but has its own specific characteristics, as it primarily concerns the state's ability to ensure the stable functioning of the political system and to protect the constitutional order, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and strategic interests of the nation. Based on the categorical theoretical basis of the study [1–14], we will formulate the author's definition of this category for a more detailed understanding in further research. Thus, in our opinion, state security can be understood as the state and process of ensuring the stable functioning of government bodies, protecting the institutional integrity, sovereignty, and constitutional order of the state from threats of any nature through the implementation of a comprehensive security policy, legal mechanisms, and effective activities of the security forces.

It should be noted that contemporary challenges and threats to Ukraine's national security are complex, hybrid, and dynamic in nature, which significantly distinguishes them from traditional forms of threats in previous decades. They manifest themselves both in the form of open military aggression and in the form of covert influence on the political, informational, economic, and social spheres. Table 1 presents the key features of contemporary challenges and threats to Ukraine's national security.

Table 1 – Characteristics of contemporary challenges and threats to Ukraine's national security

| Feature | Characteristics |
|---|---|
| Hybridity | Combination of military, informational, cybernetic, economic, and political instruments of influence by the enemy |
| High intensity and consistency | Constant, large-scale, and targeted threats that are strategic in nature and aimed at undermining statehood as such |
| Cyber and information aggression | An increasing number of attacks on state information resources, attempts to manipulate public opinion, and disinformation campaigns |
| Political destabilization | Attempts to incite internal strife, divide society, undermine democratic institutions, and exert destructive influence by pro-Russian and anti-state political forces |

End Table 1

| Feature | Characteristics |
|---|---|
| Energy and infrastructure vulnerability | Intentional destruction or blocking of critical infrastructure (power plants, power systems, transport), which threatens the basic functions of the state |
| Foreign policy pressure | Attempts to influence the country's course through sanctions, blackmail, economic exhaustion, and undermining international support for Ukraine |
| The transnational nature of threats | Threats that often extend beyond Ukraine's borders and originate externally are frequently linked to the activities of other states, private military companies, special services, etc. |
| Intensity of threat transformation | Modern threats are rapidly changing their forms and instruments of influence, requiring the state to constantly update its response strategies and protection mechanisms |

Therefore, a distinctive feature of contemporary threats to Ukraine's national security is their multi-level, cross-sectoral, and adaptive nature, which requires a systematic, integrated, and proactive approach to developing the security system.

Let us identify the main challenges to Ukraine's national security (Table 2).

These challenges are interrelated and reinforce each other, requiring a systematic, cross-sectoral, and strategic approach to ensuring national security.

The next step in the study is to systematize contemporary threats to Ukraine's national security. Thus, referring to the theoretical basis [1–14], we provide a list of contemporary threats to Ukraine's national security (Table 3).

Table 2 – Main challenges to Ukraine's national security

| Call | The essence of the challenge |
|---|---|
| Full-scale military aggression by the russian federation | Continued hostilities in eastern and southern Ukraine. Depletion of defense resources and threat of territorial loss. Massive missile strikes on critical infrastructure |
| Hybrid warfare | A combination of military, informational, diplomatic, economic, and cyber pressure |
| Cyber threats | Large-scale hacker attacks on government and energy systems. Disinformation, manipulation of facts, fake news |
| Political destabilization | Increased political polarization and populism. Interference in electoral processes |
| Corruption and institutional weakness | Erosion of trust in government, law enforcement, and the judicial system. Slowdown in reforms in critical sectors |
| Energy vulnerability | Destruction of energy facilities. Dependence on external energy supplies. Threat of mass blackouts and humanitarian crisis |
| Economic instability | Decline in GDP due to war, destruction of infrastructure, decline in investment. Inflation, growth of external debt, restrictions on social programs |
| Migration | Millions of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Loss of labor and intellectual potential |
| Threats from the international environment | Declining support for Ukraine in some countries. Changes in political courses in the US and EU. Global instability |
| Psychological and moral exhaustion of society | War fatigue, declining motivation, growing anxiety. Spreading disbelief in victory or the effectiveness of the state |

Table 3 – Current threats to Ukraine's national security

| Threat | The nature of the threat |
|---|---|
| Military threat | Continued armed aggression by the russian federation.<br>Temporary occupation of part of Ukraine's territory.<br>High probability of escalation of hostilities, use of missile weapons, drones, and the threat of use of weapons of mass destruction.<br>Constant shelling of critical infrastructure |
| Cyber threats | Massive attacks on state registries, the energy system, and the banking sector.<br>Planned interference in electoral processes and the activities of government bodies |
| Information and psychological aggression | Disinformation campaigns.<br>Spreading panic, despair, and hostile narratives through social media and the media.<br>Provocations aimed at inciting interethnic or interregional hostility |
| Political threats | Destructive activities of pro-russian political forces and agents of influence.<br>Undermining trust in state institutions |
| Terrorist and sabotage activities | Increased threat of terrorist acts on the territory of Ukraine.<br>Sabotage at strategically important facilities |
| Economic threat | Destruction of industrial capacity due to the war.<br>Decline in investment attractiveness and dependence on external financing.<br>Energy crisis, inflation, threat of social unrest due to rising prices and unemployment |
| Corruption | Systemic corruption in government agencies and law enforcement agencies.<br>Undermining of the rule of law and citizens' trust in the state |
| Social tension | Growing fatigue among the population due to the war.<br>Internal migration crises, problems with the integration of internally displaced persons.<br>Psychological exhaustion |
| Threats of foreign policy isolation | Possible reduction or change in the format of military and financial assistance from allies.<br>Deterioration of support for Ukraine in the international arena due to changes in governments or political courses in the US and EU |
| International transnational threats | The spread of organized crime, illegal weapons, and drugs.<br>Smuggling, human trafficking, transnational terrorism.<br>Global conflicts |

Therefore, contemporary threats to Ukraine's national security are also systemic, multidimensional, and long-term in nature. Overcoming them requires an integrated strategy that involves simultaneously strengthening the security and defense sector, enhancing international partnerships, institutional resilience, and social cohesion.

It should be noted that in response to increasingly serious challenges and threats to national security, Ukraine has intensified the process of developing and implementing countermeasures that include both military components and legal, institutional, diplomatic, and informational instruments. The effectiveness of these mechanisms is determined not only by their existence, but also by their ability to adapt to a changing security environment. Table 4 presents the main countermeasures currently in place.

In response to new challenges, Ukraine's system for countering threats to national security continues to develop. This is facilitated by social cohesion, the combat capability of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, international support, and strategic mobilization of resources. However, it should be emphasized that the effectiveness of such mechanisms depends on the state's ability to act systematically, promptly, and predictably, as well as on the completion of key reforms in the areas of security, governance, and law (Table 5).

Table 4 – Main mechanisms in place to counteract imbalances in Ukraine's national security

| Mechanism | Components of the mechanism |
|---|---|
| Security and defense sector | The Armed Forces of Ukraine are the main guarantor of national security in conditions of full-scale war.<br>Implementation of NATO standards, digitization of management, improvement of interaction between branches of the military.<br>Territorial defense |
| Legal support | Adoption and updating of strategic documents |
| Cybersecurity system | Cooperation with international partners (NATO CCDCOE, EU, US) in the field of cyber defense.<br>Creation of specialized units of the SBU, State Special Communications Service, and Armed Forces to respond to cyber threats |
| Information policy and countering disinformation | Monitoring and blocking destructive information resources.<br>Engaging public initiatives and volunteer projects |
| International support and strategic partnership | Receiving financial, military, and humanitarian aid from the EU, the US, the UK, and other allies.<br>Joint training, intelligence sharing, and political support at the UN, NATO, and EU levels.<br>Promoting Euro-Atlantic integration as a guarantee of long-term security |
| Institutional reforms | Activities of anti-corruption bodies: NABU, SAPO, NACP.<br>Introduction of e-governance and open data |
| Social mobilization and psychological resilience | Revitalization of volunteer movements and civic initiatives.<br>Support programs for veterans, military personnel, and internally displaced persons.<br>Campaigns to raise national consciousness, unity, and motivation to resist |

Table 5 – Analysis of the main mechanisms in place to counter challenges and threats to Ukraine's national security

| Mechanism | Components and analytical assessment of effectiveness |
|---|---|
| Security and defense sector | The Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) are the main element of defense, demonstrating a high level of combat capability in repelling armed aggression.<br>The implementation of NATO standards promotes operational compatibility with allies.<br>Improving command efficiency through digitalization of management |
| Territorial defense | Mobilization of citizens, formation of territorial defense units in communities.<br>Increasing the level of public involvement in ensuring security at the local level |
| Legal and regulatory framework | Continuous updating of national security, cybersecurity, military doctrine, and other strategies.<br>Legislative consolidation of new approaches to responding to modern threats |
| Cybersecurity system | Providing technical and expert support in cooperation with NATO, the EU, and the US.<br>Improving the level of national cyber defense by creating cyber units in the Security Service of Ukraine, the State Special Communications Service, and the Armed Forces of Ukraine |
| Information policy | Active fight against disinformation: blocking pro-russian resources, verifying sources.<br>Cooperation with volunteers, fact-checkers, IT initiatives.<br>Rapid response and formation of a unified information narrative |
| International support | Strengthening defense capabilities through financial, military, and humanitarian assistance.<br>Joint training, intelligence, diplomatic support |
| Anti-corruption and institutional reforms | Ensuring legal mechanisms for cleaning up public administration.<br>Open data and e-governance, which strengthen trust in the state.<br>The need for sustained political will and guarantees of institutional independence |
| Social mobilization | Volunteer movement, community initiatives that enhance social cohesion.<br>Restoring psychological resilience by supporting veterans, internally displaced persons, and military personnel |

The analyzed mechanisms for countering threats to Ukraine's national security are multi-component, systemic, and focused on long-term sustainability. Their effectiveness largely depends on coordination between state institutions, civil society, and international partners. In order to strengthen national security in the long term, we consider it necessary to develop strategic guidelines. It should be emphasized that in the context of a protracted hybrid war, an unstable international situation, and internal challenges, the development of clear strategic guidelines in the field of national security is becoming a key factor in the stability and viability of the Ukrainian state. It is important not only to respond to current threats, but also to create a long-term, sustainable security architecture that will enable effective action in a changing environment. The systematization of strategic guidelines is presented in Table 6.

Table 6 – Key strategic guidelines for Ukraine's national security

| Strategic guideline | Ingredients |
|---|---|
| Institutional stability of the security sector | Establishment of effective vertical management in the security and defense sector. Strengthening civilian democratic control over law enforcement agencies. Professional transformation of the Armed Forces in accordance with NATO standards |
| Euro-Atlantic integration | A clear focus on joining NATO as a guarantor of collective security. Strengthening bilateral defense partnerships |
| Digital and cybersecurity | Creation of a unified national cyberspace with powerful protection. Integration of digital security and defense management systems |
| Information sovereignty | Building a system of strategic communications for the state. Developing domestic media and digital platforms. Countering external information aggression, media literacy |
| A stable economy as the foundation of national security | Diversification of the economy and export markets. Energy independence through the development of green energy |
| Social cohesion and psychological resilience | Formation of national identity as an element of security. Creation of reintegration programs for veterans, internally displaced persons, and war victims |
| Anti-corruption and legal reforms | Ensuring the rule of law and justice. Ensuring the independence and transparency of judicial and anti-corruption bodies |
| Coordination with international security structures | Deepening participation in EU, NATO, and UN security programs. Active diplomatic efforts. Creating regional alliances to counter hybrid threats |

The strategic guidelines for strengthening Ukraine's national security should be based on a long-term vision, institutional continuity, technological modernization, and national unity. Without clear priorities and their consistent implementation, Ukraine will remain vulnerable to both external and internal threats.

**Conclusions**

Therefore, in the current conditions of global development, Ukraine's national security is a multidimensional system covering the political, military, economic, informational, social, and legal spheres. National security in general and state security in particular are under unprecedented pressure from both external and internal factors. The main threat remains the full-scale armed aggression of the Russian Federation, accompanied by hybrid influences: information warfare, cyberattacks, political manipulation, and energy blackmail.

Among internal risks, the following should be highlighted: imperfect legislation in the field of security, insufficient coordination between government agencies, residual corruption, political polarization, and weakening public trust. In addition, in wartime, critical infrastructure becomes more vulnerable and socio-economic problems intensify, which also affects the overall level of state security.

An analysis of countermeasures has shown that Ukraine has taken significant steps to strengthen its security and defense sector, cyber defense, and strategic communications, and has also intensified international cooperation in the security sphere. At the same time, it seems necessary to develop a unified strategic planning system that would cover

not only short-term military needs but also long-term tasks of building a sustainable democratic state.

In the long term, effective state security requires: a shift from tactical response to strategic forecasting; profound institutional transformation of the security sector; ensuring the stable functioning of the civilian control system; developing a national risk management system; strengthening internal unity and national identity; systematic development of digital, energy, and information security. Developing models for strategic forecasting of security threats at an interdisciplinary level will increase the state's ability to proactively manage crises. It is also important to study the psychological resilience of society as an element of state security.

Ensuring Ukraine's national security in the face of modern challenges and threats is a complex problem that requires inter-sectoral, inter-agency, and public cooperation.

Further scientific research will focus on studying the process of improving the strategic complex of security policy management, examining mechanisms for countering hybrid threats, and ways of integrating the national security system into the European and global security space.

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## ДЕРЖАВНА БЕЗПЕКА УКРАЇНИ В УМОВАХ СУЧАСНИХ ДИСБАЛАНСІВ

*Акцентовано увагу на тому, що сучасні виклики державній безпеці мають комплексний, багатовимірний і здебільшого гібридний характер. Такі виклики стосуються не лише військової сфери, а й інформаційного простору, енергетичної системи, кіберпростору, фінансової стабільності, політичної стійкості та соціальної згуртованості суспільства. Тому виникає потреба у переосмисленні підходів до формування й реалізації державної політики безпеки, яка має ґрунтуватися на принципах адаптивності, системності, інтегрованості та стійкості до багатофакторного впливу.*

*Установлено, що загрози державній безпеці України мають як зовнішній (військова агресія, кіберзлочинність, інформаційна війна), так і внутрішній характер (корупція, політична нестабільність, слабкість інституцій). Особливої значущості набуває ефективність механізмів реагування держави на виклики, а також її здатність до стратегічного планування, координації дій усіх секторів безпеки і взаємодії з міжнародними партнерами. Досвід країн-членів НАТО та ЄС свідчить, що для побудови дієвої системи безпеки необхідні не лише модернізація інституцій, а й глибокі реформи, прозора політика безпеки, розвиток демократичного контролю та участь громадянського суспільства.*

*Висновлено, що ефективне забезпечення державної безпеки України у сучасних умовах потребує: системного підходу до виявлення та нейтралізації загроз; удосконалення нормативно-правової бази; підвищення стійкості державних інституцій; упровадження сучасних технологій, зокрема у сфері кіберзахисту; посилення стратегічної комунікації та міжнародної взаємодії.*

*Успішна реалізація зазначених напрямів становить ключову умову збереження суверенітету, незалежності, демократичного устрою та сталого розвитку України в умовах довготривалої зовнішньої агресії та внутрішніх викликів.*

*Ключові слова: державна безпека, рівні державної безпеки, безпека, виклики й загрози, цифрова безпека, національна безпека.*

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