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Foreign policy strategy of Ukraine in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war

Стратегія зовнішньої політики України в умовах російсько-української війни

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Abstract

The military invasion of the aggressor state into Ukraine is one of the most relevant topics in the recent Ukrainian and world academic literature because the results of the conflict will affect not only national interests but also the security and well-being of other states. Ukraine's foreign policy strategy plays a significant role in the further development of the conflict. It improves relations with other states, obtaining support in the fight against the aggressor, restoring Ukraine's integrity and citizens' safety, counteracting the food crisis, etc. The study aims to determine the main strategic directions of Ukraine's foreign policy, the characteristics of its legislative support, and its current state. The research used the following methods: economic and statistical analysis, the establishment of causal relationships, and the comparative method. The study identified and described six main directions of Ukraine's foreign policy. Legislative documents that enshrine the outlined directions were identified. The government's steps in specific directions were described. The statistical characteristics of individual areas of

Анотація

Воєнне вторгнення держави-агресора в Україну є однією з найбільш актуальних тем сучасності в українській та світовій науковій літературі, адже результати конфлікту впливатимуть не лише на національні інтереси, а і на безпеку та добробут країн світу. Значну роль у подальшому розвитку конфлікту відіграє стратегія зовнішньої політики України. Вона впливає на поліпшення взаємовідносин з іншими державами, отримання підтримки у боротьбі проти агресора, відновлення цілісності України, безпеку її громадян, протидію продовольчій кризі тощо. Метою дослідження є визначення основних стратегічних напрямів зовнішньої політики України, характеристика їх законодавчого забезпечення та сучасного стану. У ході дослідження було використано такі методи: економіко-статистичний аналіз, встановлення причинно-наслідкових зв'язків, порівняльний метод. В результаті дослідження було охарактеризовано шість основних напрямів зовнішньої політики України. Визначено законодавчі документи, що

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Ukraine's foreign policy were outlined. The state of some aspects of Ukraine's foreign policy before the war and after the full-scale invasion was compared. Ukraine's prospects for achieving the desired results in the specified areas were assessed.

Keywords: export, foreign policy, protection of citizens' rights, Russia-Ukraine war, territorial integrity.

Introduction

A full-scale invasion of Ukraine requires decisive action of the Ukrainian government and the entire world community. The issue of Ukraine's victory in the war goes beyond a national scale - it affects the interests of the whole world in the context of guaranteeing the independence and security of states. The foreign policy of Ukraine in the wartime impacts the results of the conflict in terms of establishing mutually beneficial relations with the states to achieve victory over the invaders. The improvement of diplomatic relations with the EU countries and the world ensures increased support for Ukraine in the wartime, creates prerequisites for the post-war recovery of the country, stimulates investment in Ukraine, etc.

This study is based on the Foreign Policy Strategy of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as "the Strategy") adopted on August 26, 2021 (Decree No. n0054525-21, 2021). Adopting the Strategy means that Ukraine has got a strategic document on foreign policy for the first time in the history of the state (Government portal, 2021). The main guidelines of the Strategy are valid even during martial law, despite the fact that it was adopted before the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation (RF) of the sovereign territory of Ukraine. The Russian Federation used acts of aggression against Ukraine even before the full-scale invasion, and the Strategy provides for countering such aggression and restoring the territorial integrity of the state as one of its main directions. This and other areas of the Strategy are considered in this article in the context of their legal support and main achievements at the time of writing a paper.

The aim of the study is to determine the main strategic directions of Ukraine's foreign policy, outline their legislative support and current state.

забезпечують окреслені напрями. Охарактеризовано кроки уряду стосовно руху у визначених напрямках. Окреслено статистичні характеристики за окремими напрямками зовнішньої політики України. Порівняно стан деяких аспектів зовнішньої політики України до війни і після повномасштабного вторгнення. Оцінено перспективи України стосовно досягнення бажаних результатів за визначеними напрямками.

Ключові слова: стратегія, зовнішня політика, російсько-українська війна, територіальна цілісність, суверенітет, ЄС, НАТО, експорт, захист прав громадян, позитивний імідж.

The objectives to be fulfilled in the course of the research correspond to the six main directions of the Strategy:

- 1) study the main legal aspects of ensuring the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine;
- 2) determine the main factors affecting the success of Ukraine in countering the aggressive policy of the Russian Federation, as well as countering such aggression at the international level;
- 3) outline the current state and prospects of Ukraine regarding its accession to the EU and NATO;
- 4) identify the state and prospects of Ukrainian exports during the wartime;
- 5) provide statistics on the number of Ukrainians abroad during the war and the main aspects related to the protection of their rights and interests;
- 6) describe the content of the strategic direction regarding the promotion of a positive image of Ukraine in the world.

Literature Review

Analysing the Strategy, Pashkov (2021), singles out three key provisions to which he refers: the course towards the European and Euro-Atlantic integration, counteraction to the aggressor state, and the economic component of foreign policy. Besides, the researcher notes that the Strategy identifies five countries that are strategic for Ukraine. These countries include the USA, Great Britain, Canada, Germany and France. Moreover, the Strategy defines other strategic partners of Ukraine: Poland, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Lithuania, Romania, China, Brazil. It emphasizes the importance of developing relations with Japan, India, and Moldova.

Sarakhman (2022) examined the aspects of ensuring the territorial integrity and inviolability of Ukraine. The researcher approached the problem from a theoretical and legal perspective, and described the main legislative documents that ensure the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine in a historical sequence.

Kresin (2022) studied the legal aspects of countering Russian aggression and restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity. The researcher explored the results of the international expert round table — Deoccupation. Legal Front — concerning the analysis and development of proposals regarding legal and political issues of countering aggression, de-occupation, and restoring the integrity of Ukraine. Considerable attention in the research was paid to the qualification of the annexation of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, the qualification of the status of the Separate Districts of Luhansk and Donetsk Regions (ORDLO) and other important issues, including the importance of holding the Russian Federation (from 2014) and the Republic of Belarus (from 2022) liable for war crimes.

Melnyk (2021) outlined the meaning and significance of enshrining the provisions on the EU and NATO membership course in the Constitution of Ukraine. The researcher notes that the issue of Ukraine's accession to the EU and NATO concerning economic, cultural, geopolitical conditions in the country is complex and multifaceted. The legislative enshrinement of Ukraine's course towards the accession to the said organizations promotes the government's relevant actions and measures in that direction.

The course of the Russia-Ukraine war, in particular the Ukraine's foreign policy in the wartime, affects not only national, but also global interests. Many researchers focus on the issue of Ukraine's membership in the EU and NATO in the context of a military invasion. Van Elsuwege and Van der Loo (28 March 2022) note that Ukraine's EU membership application caused mixed reactions – eight European countries expressed support, while Germany, France and others expressed doubts and suggested that Ukraine is not ready for the process. Bélanger (16 March 2022) also outlines Ukraine's prospects for becoming a candidate country for EU membership, and examines the motives of European countries supporting this course of Ukraine. Ukraine is mostly supported by its close neighbours — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. The researcher explains this by the greater interdependence between Ukraine and

neighbouring countries, security considerations — extending the EU border further to the East, a more even distribution of influence in the EU with the accession of a new country from the eastern side. Sapir (2022) assesses Ukraine's chances of joining the EU before the war and in the wartime. The researcher also notes that joining the EU depends not only on the country's fulfilment of all the requirements, but also on the readiness of the EU itself to accept new members.

The impact of the war in Ukraine on world food security, in particular in the context of the export of Ukrainian grain, is another relevant issue studied by the researchers from different countries. Stimulating exports in general is one of the strategic directions of Ukraine's foreign policy, and grain is one of the key export commodity. In this context, Ben Hassen and El Bilali (2022) define the Russian-Ukrainian confrontation as a “conflict between two major agricultural powers” that has significant negative consequences for global food security. Jagtap et al., (2022) note that stopping the war and restore agricultural production in Ukraine is a quick solution to the problem of the risk of a food crisis. They also underline that the countries of Europe and Africa will suffer the most from disruptions in exports. Hellegers (2022) also focused on the consequences for some African countries that are most vulnerable to such shocks, and emphasized the need to develop programmes and measures to absorb such shocks.

Summing up the literature review, it is worth noting that the Foreign Policy Strategy of Ukraine adopted in 2021 outlines the main directions of the state's foreign policy, which are relevant both before the full-scale invasion and in the wartime. Such directions promote the realization of the main national interests of Ukraine and improve the well-being and security of its citizens. The strategic directions of Ukraine's foreign policy play an important role not only for the country itself, but also affect the economic and political conditions of other countries. Therefore, an important issue is the study of the legal support of the strategic directions of the foreign policy and the steps of Ukraine in the specified directions.

Methodology

Research design

The research design is based on the six priority directions of the Foreign Policy Strategy of Ukraine defined by the Minister of Foreign

Affairs of Ukraine. The structure of this study was built according to these directions. These include: ensuring the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, opposing the aggressive policy of the Russian Federation, the course towards membership in the EU and NATO, promoting Ukrainian exports and attracting foreign investment, protecting the rights and interests of Ukrainian citizens abroad, promoting a positive image of Ukraine in the world.

The first stage of the study involved outlining the main legal aspects related to ensuring the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. The main legislative documents establishing the state sovereignty of Ukraine were determined.

The second stage of the study provided for identifying the factors that contribute to effective countermeasures against Russian aggression. The main international documents condemning the aggressive actions of the invaders were described. In particular, the main provisions of three UN resolutions on countering Russian aggression were considered.

The third stage of the study involved identifying the current state and outlining prospects for Ukraine's membership in the EU. The main content of the EU Commission's Recommendations for Ukraine's EU candidate status was revealed. It is noted that Ukraine is waiting for an European Commission's opinion regarding its compliance with the Recommendations at the end of 2022.

The fourth stage of the study provided for the description statistics on Ukrainian exports, which is also one of the strategic directions of Ukraine's foreign policy. The geographical structure of foreign trade in goods with EU countries was presented, the growth of Ukraine's exports in 2021 was established, and the commodity structure of Ukraine's exports to EU countries was built. The changes in Ukraine's exports for the months of 2021 compared to the corresponding periods of 2022 (in the course of the military invasion) were also revealed. Besides, the total amount of investment in Ukraine and the shares of the investing countries in this amount are presented. The prospects of investment in Ukraine after the beginning of the war are outlined.

The fifth and sixth stages briefly describe the content of such strategic areas of foreign policy as protecting the rights and interests of Ukrainian citizens abroad and promoting a positive image of Ukraine in the world.

Information background of the research

The information background of the research is academic periodicals of Ukraine and other countries, as well as a number of national and international legislative documents, in particular:

Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine No. 55-XII dated 16 July 1990;
UN Refugee Convention dated 28 July 1951;
Constitution of Ukraine Decree No. 254k/96-VR dated 28 June 1996;
EU Commission's Recommendations for Ukraine's EU candidate status;
Law of Ukraine on National Security of Ukraine No. 2469-VIII dated 21 June 2018;
Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada on the Declaration of Ukraine's Independence No. 1427-XII dated 24 August 1991;
Decree of the President of Ukraine No. 392/2020 dated 14 September 2020 on the decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine dated 14 September 2020 "On the National Security Strategy of Ukraine";
Decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine dated 30 July 2021 on the Foreign Policy Strategy of Ukraine;
Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees dated 16 December 1966.

Besides, the article involved publicly available statistics from the following resources: Voice of America, State Statistics Service of Ukraine, Diia.Business, National Bank of Ukraine, Bankchart.

Research methods

The research involved the following scientific methods:

- economic and statistical analysis to determine the structure and dynamics of the studied indicators;
- establishment of causal relationships to compare the strategic goals of Ukraine's foreign policy and their impact on the realization of national interests and the interests of other countries;
- comparative method to assess the state of certain economic and political aspects before the start of the war and upon the invasion.

Results

Guaranteeing the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine

The state sovereignty of Ukraine was proclaimed in 1990 by the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine. The document states that the Verkhovna Rada of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) declares “as supremacy, independence, integrity, and indivisibility of the Republic’s authority within the boundaries of its territory, and its independence and equality in foreign relations.” The Declaration also enshrines the provision that “any violent actions against the national statehood of Ukraine undertaken by political parties, non-governmental organization, other groups or individuals shall be legally prosecuted” (Decree No. 55-XII, 1990).

The following year 1991 in the history of Ukraine was marked by Ukraine’s gained independence, which was established by the Act of Declaration of Independence of Ukraine. This document states that “the territory of Ukraine is indivisible and inviolable” (Decree No.1427-XII, 1991). In 1996, the Constitution of Ukraine was adopted, where Article 2 also states: “The territory of Ukraine within its present border is indivisible and inviolable” (Decree No. 254к/96-VR, 1996).

However, less two decades have passed since the establishment of this provision, when the territorial integrity of Ukraine was violated. Since 2014, the world has been watching the Ukraine’s struggle against the aggression of the Russian Federation and violations of numerous norms of international law in relation to Ukraine. In 2018, the Law on National Security of Ukraine was adopted, which defines “state sovereignty and state integrity, democratic constitutional system, non-interference in the internal affairs of Ukraine” as the first of the fundamental national interests of Ukraine (Decree No.2469-VIII, 2018). The 2020 National Security Strategy of Ukraine recognizes “the establishment of peace, restoration of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized state border” as the highest priority of the state (Decree No. 392/2020, 2020).

Guaranteeing the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine was listed first among the priorities of the Strategy, which is the basis for this study. This and the following sections of the article reveal information on each of the priorities of the Strategy in the context a military invasion.

As a summary of the first section, it should be noted that the sovereignty of Ukraine is enshrined in a number of regulatory documents, although the aggressor state continues to violate the norms of international law on the territory of Ukraine. This determines the second priority direction of the Strategy, which is related to counteracting the aggression of the Russian Federation.

Counteracting the aggressive policy of the Russian Federation

It is known since the beginning of the war that the political leadership of the aggressor state intended to capture Ukraine “in three days” (Ukrinform, 2022). However, more than nine months had passed since the beginning of the war at the time of the study, and the last period was characterized by remarkable combat successes of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) in the de-occupation of numerous settlements in the country.

Ukraine’s success in counteracting the aggression of the Russian Federation is explained by a number of both internal and external factors. The main directions (factors) of counteracting aggression include:

- military training of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, in particular veterans, their loyalty to the national idea, positive influence on the morale of citizens;
- strengthening the unity of Ukrainians in the face of the enemy, active participation in various actions and donations in favour of the Armed Forces;
- the activities of the Ukrainian authorities, the authority of the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyi as a recognized leader both among compatriots and among foreign partners;
- reforming the legislative framework to adapt to current realities;
- intensity of political and diplomatic relations, significant international support for Ukraine;
- imposing sanctions against the aggressor state, etc.

The activities of the United Nations (UN) in countering Russian aggression deserve special attention. In this context, it is appropriate to note the main provisions of the resolutions adopted by the UN Human Rights Council:

- Aggression against Ukraine No. A/RES/ES-11/1 dated 2 March 2022 (United Nations Digital Library, 2022);
- Resolution on the situation of human rights in Ukraine stemming from the Russian aggression No. 49/1 dated March 4, 2022;
- The deteriorating human rights situation in Ukraine stemming from the Russian aggression. Resolution No. S34/1 dated 12 May 2022.

In the mentioned documents, the UN Human Rights Council strongly condemns the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, and also expresses serious concern about documented numerous violations of human rights, in particular the right to life, education, and the to the highest attainable standard of health. The UN Human Rights Council condemned the high number of victims among the civilian population caused by shelling and bombing by the Russian Federation, as well as numerous cases of extrajudicial killings of men, women and children, sexual and gender-based violence, torture and other offenses committed on the territory of Kyiv, Chernihiv, Kharkiv and Sumy regions controlled by the armed forces of the Russian Federation in February and March 2022. An important decision is the adoption by the UN Human Rights Council of the immediate establishment of an independent international investigative commission to investigate human rights violations and abuses, collect evidence of these violations, document them, and perform other related tasks (Rabinovych, 2022; Vykhoanets, 2016).

So, it can be noted that the military successes of Ukrainians are determined by both internal factors (human potential, actions of the authorities, the introduction of appropriate changes in the legislative framework), and external factors (in particular, significant international support, including financial, military and humanitarian).

EU and NATO membership course

The EU and NATO membership course is a strategic goal of Ukraine's foreign policy. This is enshrined in Article 85(5) of the Constitution of Ukraine, which states that the powers of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine include "determining the principles of domestic and foreign policy, implementing the state's strategic course for Ukraine's full membership in the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization" (Decree No. 254к/96-VR, 1996).

Ukraine's EU candidate status opens up new unique opportunities and experience for the state, and will also testify to the rejection of the post-Soviet system, the pursuit of well-being for citizens, as well as a change in their values and mentality. NATO membership would ensure the independence, sovereignty, security and integrity of Ukraine.

Ukraine is waiting for an opinion from the European Commission to be delivered at the end of 2022 on its compliance with the recommendations regarding the country's status for EU membership (Perun, 2022). These recommendations are summarized in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Recommendations of the European Commission regarding the EU membership status of Ukraine (Source: Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine (2022))

Ukraine's course towards the EU and NATO membership is irreversible, but this does not exclude a number of problematic issues along the way. The process is complex and multifaceted, and it is impossible to introduce all the necessary changes at the same time. It is necessary to follow the chosen direction gradually but steadily. Ukraine has already gone through a difficult path to reach the current level of development — and the military invasion confirmed its achievements. Cooperation of the state with international partners, citizens, as well as coordinated and effective actions of the government regarding the implementation of further reforms are necessary for further effective steps.

Promotion of Ukrainian exports and attraction of foreign investment

Ukraine has a high export potential, in particular, the main groups of exported commodities include cereals, oils and fats, ferrous metals, etc. The development of exports in Ukraine can be

hampered by such factors as the non-compliance of individual products with international standards, the ignorance of producers regarding activities on international markets, insufficient development of communication with consumers, lack of financing, etc. However, these obstacles apply only to individual producers: in general, Ukraine's export prospects are high, and the rejection of the Russian market became an impetus for producers to focus on European and other world markets. Among other things, this contributes to the improvement of the quality of Ukrainian products, because the high standards of the EU and some other countries accept only high-quality products at their market.

Figure 2 shows the geographical structure of Ukraine's foreign trade in goods with EU countries in 2021. The EU is the largest export direction of Ukraine, because its share in national exports is about 62% (Center for Innovations Development, 2022).

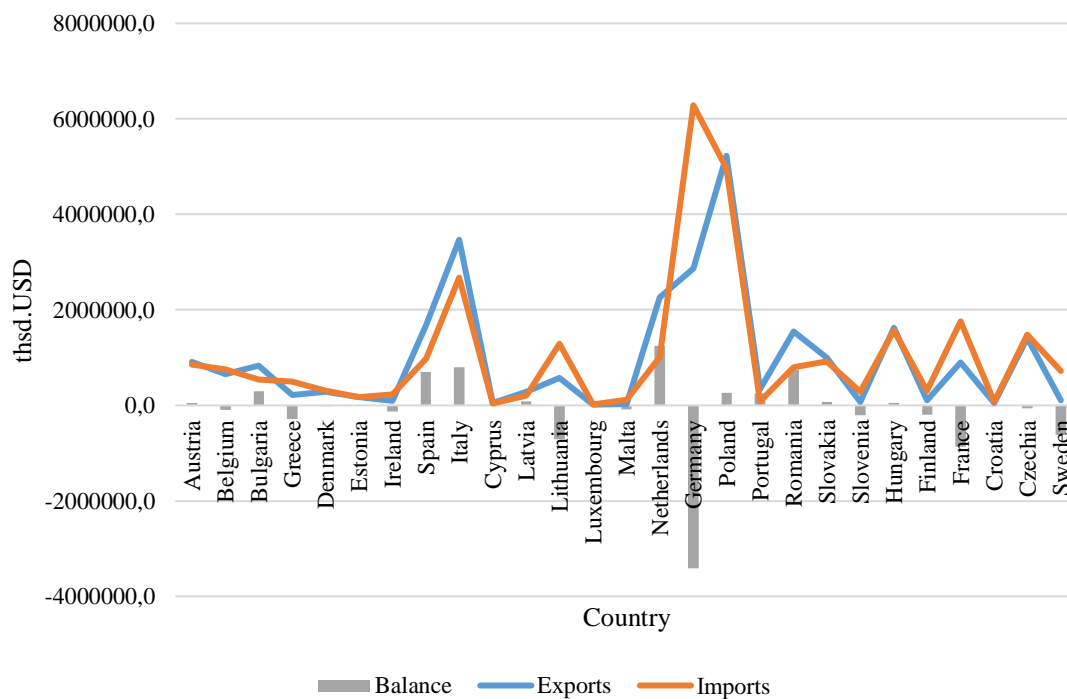


Figure 2. Geographical structure of foreign trade in goods with EU countries in 2021 (this \$) (Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine (2022))

As Figure 2 demonstrates, many European countries had a negative balance, but almost all

countries (except Luxembourg) had a significant increase compared to 2020 (Figure 3).

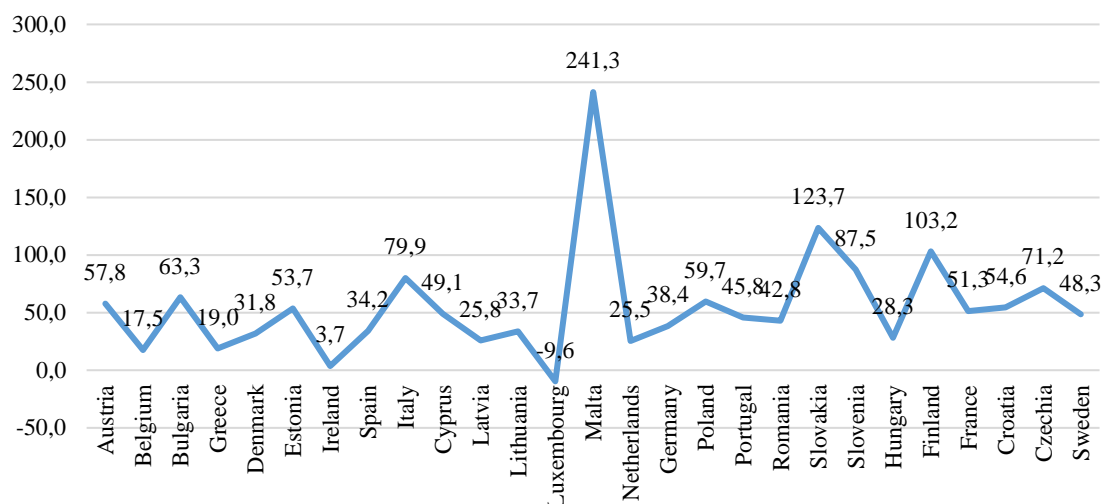


Figure 3. Ukraine's export growth in 2021 (in % to 2020) (Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2022)

Figure 4 illustrates the commodity structure of Ukraine's exports to EU countries in 2021.

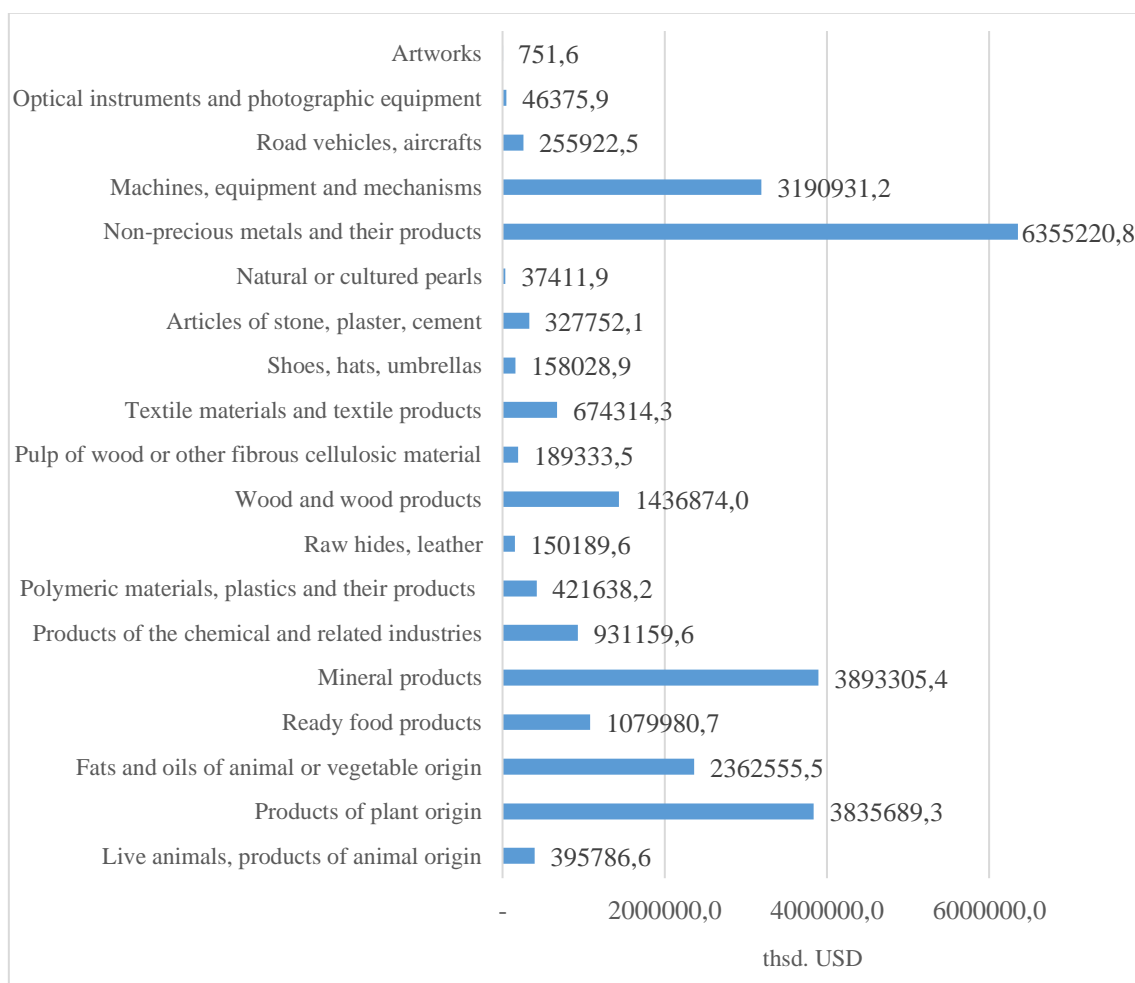


Figure 4. Commodity structure of Ukraine's exports to EU countries in 2021 (thsd \$) (Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine (2022))

As Figure 4 demonstrates, non-precious metals and their products, mineral products, products of

plant origin, machines, equipment and mechanisms have the largest shares in the

structure. High volumes of exported fats and oils, wood and its products, ready food products, products of the chemical industry are also notable.

The mentioned trends were characteristic of Ukrainian exports during the period close to the war. However, according to the state portal Diia. Business, Ukraine’s exports decreased in 2022

by 32.4% compared to 2021. By product category, grain crops (\$ 7,094 million) rank first among exported goods, fats and oils, prepared food fats and waxes (\$ 4,859 million) rank second, and ferrous metals (\$ 4,155 million) rank third (Diia. Business, 2022). Figure 5 presents the change in export volumes in the months of 2022 compared to the same periods in 2021.

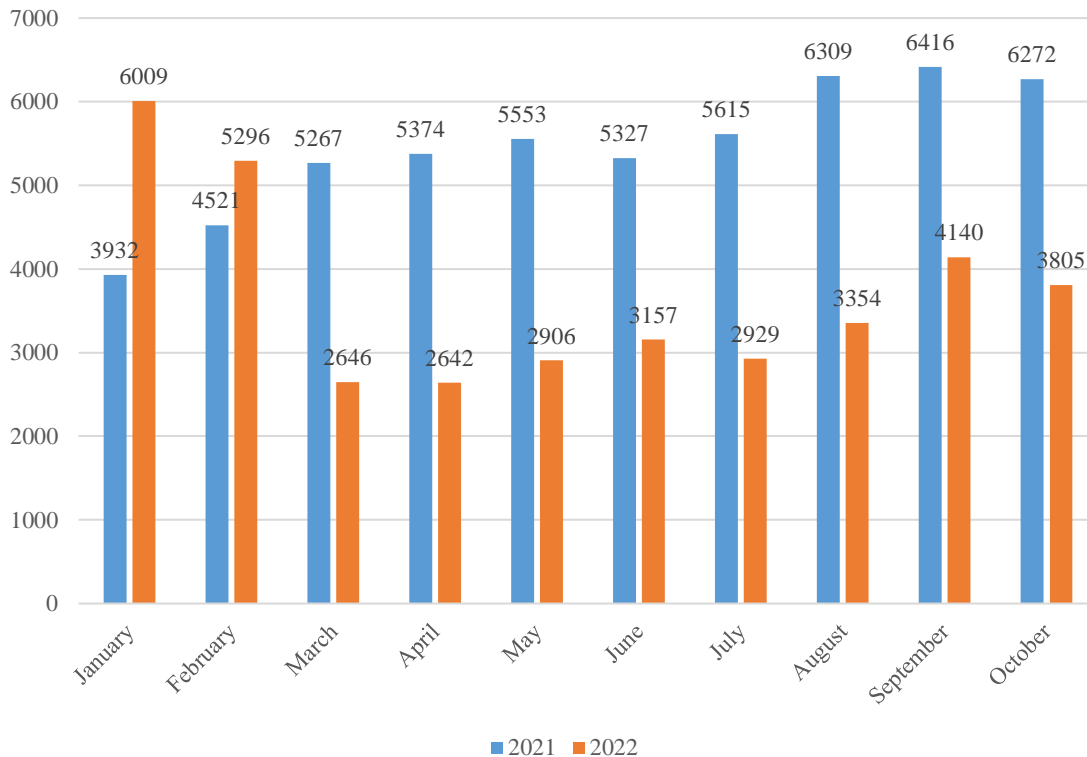


Figure 5. Exports of Ukraine by month (2022 compared to 2021, mln \$) (Source: Diia. Business (2022))

As Figure 5 shows, in January and February 2022, export volumes significantly exceeded the volumes for the previous period. However, exports fell sharply with the invasion: the reduction exceeded 50% in some months. In August, export volumes began to gradually increase, which is associated with the unblocking of Ukraine’s Black Sea ports (Center for Innovations Development, 2022).

In view of the foregoing, it should be emphasized that Ukraine takes initiatives to improve life in other countries even in the extremely difficult conditions of Ukraine’s development at the current stage, the impossibility of increasing the export volumes to the pre-war level and in view of other obstacles. The Grain from Ukraine Initiative provides for supplying grain to more

than 5 million people in African countries (Shypulia, 2022). First of all, the initiative helps in solving the problem of hunger in the target countries. Besides, it meets the first goal of the sustainable development concept — zero hunger, and also significantly improves the image of Ukraine in the eyes of the world community.

The attraction of foreign investment is another important strategic direction of Ukraine’s foreign policy. Foreign investment enables implementing large projects, use the latest technologies and management methods, and are also an important source of financing for the post-war reconstruction of the country. Figures 6 and 7 illustrate the structure by countries and the total volume of investment in 2021.

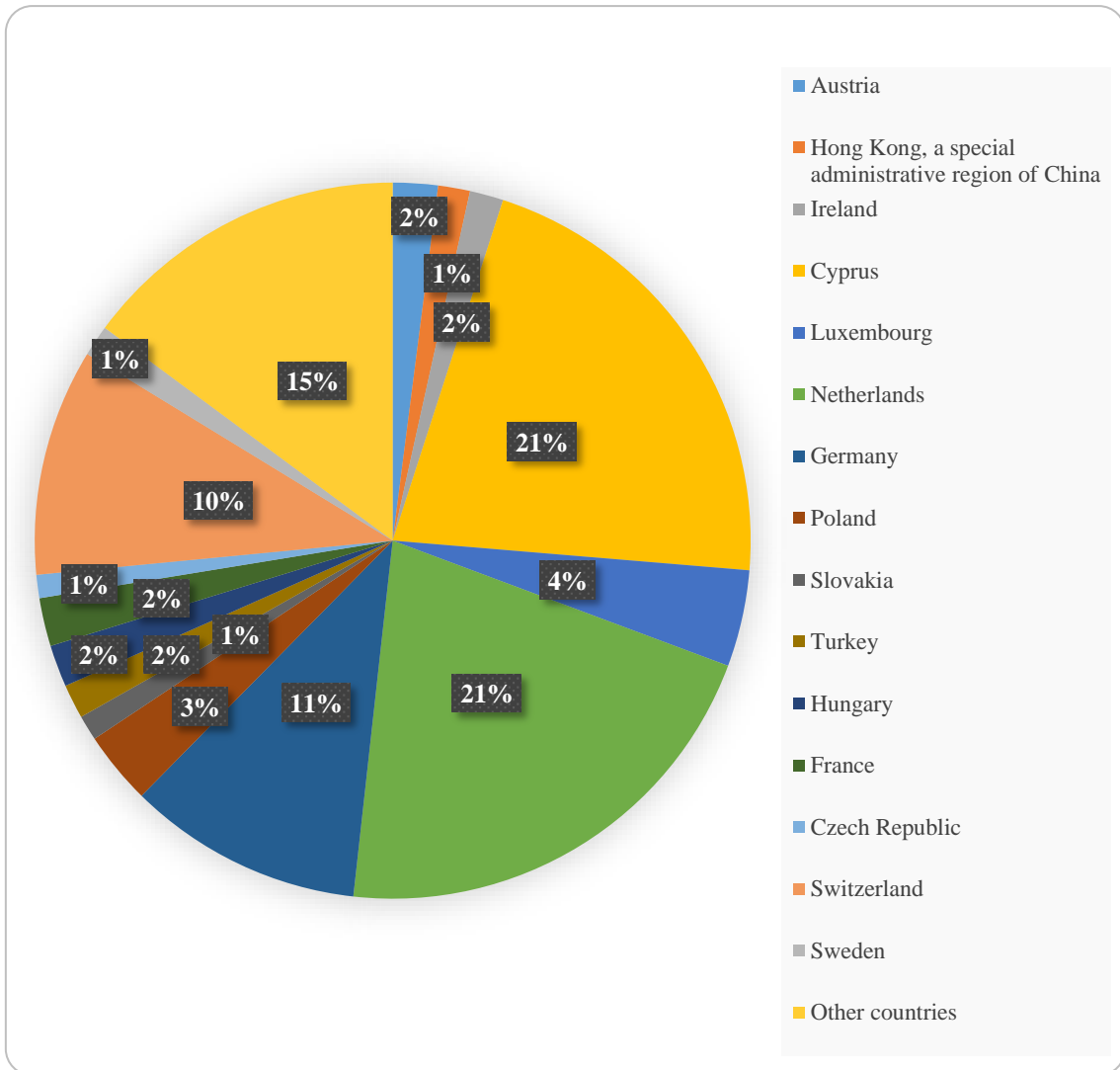


Figure 6. Direct investment of the countries in Ukraine in 2021, % (Source: National Bank of Ukraine (2022))

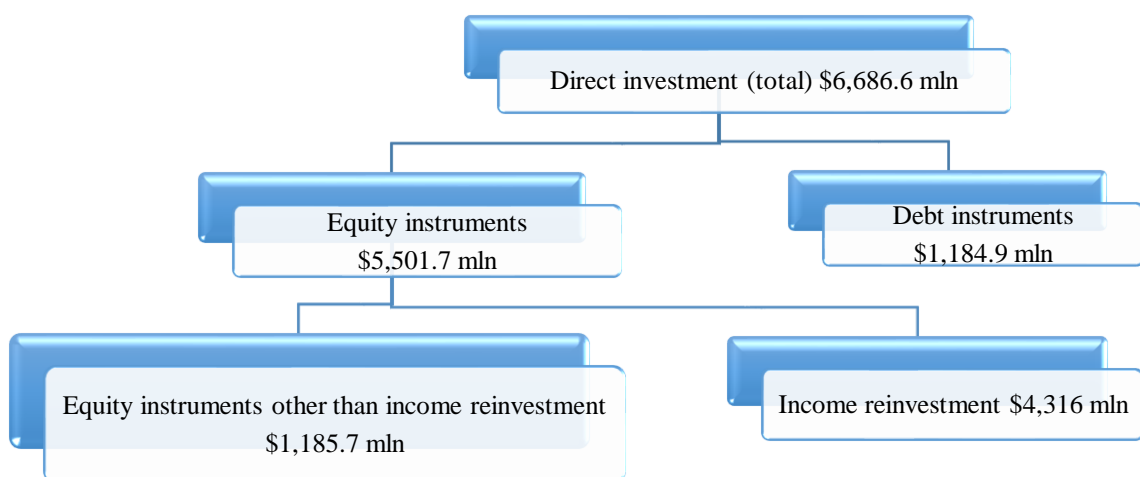


Figure 7. Direct investment in Ukraine in 2021, mln \$ (Source: National Bank of Ukraine (2022))

As Figure 6 demonstrates, Cyprus, the Netherlands, Germany, and Switzerland are the

largest investors among the countries of the world in Ukraine. The total volume of foreign

investments (Figure 7) in Ukraine in 2021 amounted to more than \$6,686.6 mln.

According to Bankchart (2022) data, in Q1 2022, when the large-scale military invasion began, investment in Ukraine decreased by 133% (-\$470 million). However, in Q2 2022, the growth rate was positive and amounted to 155% (\$260 million) (Bankchart, 2022). According to the Ministry of Economy, the government received about 250 applications regarding future investment in Ukraine at the beginning of October. Therefore, the state remains a promising destination for foreign investors (Epravda, 2022).

Protection of the rights and interests of Ukrainian citizens abroad

As Article 3 of the Constitution of Ukraine provides, “An individual, his life and health, honour and dignity, inviolability and security shall be recognised in Ukraine as the highest social value” (Decree No. 254к/96-VR, 1996). Therefore, ensuring the protection of the rights and interests of Ukrainian citizens abroad is one of the most important strategic areas of Ukraine’s foreign policy.

Ukraine ranks eighth in the world by the number of emigrants. The total number of citizens who left Ukraine for the period 2011 to 2021 is 3.3 million citizens (Yavorovych, 2021; Gerasymova et al. 2021). However, after the military invasion, the number of refugees leaving Ukraine more than doubled. The number of refugees registered in Europe is more than 7 million people. More than 6.9 million people have been forcibly displaced (Voice of America, 2022, September 8).

The strategic direction regarding the protection of the rights and interests of citizens abroad becomes even more important in the wartime, especially given that most of the displaced persons are women and children. The main legislative documents regulating the status of refugees are the 1951 UN Refugee Convention (Decree No. 995_011, 2022) and the 1967 UN Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (Decree No. 995_363, 2002). Ukraine joined these acts in 2002.

Promoting Ukraine’s positive image in the world

Creating the positive image of Ukraine in the world is a strategic goal of Ukraine’s foreign policy. The Strategy states that building a

positive image of the country will be facilitated by the use of “soft power” — cooperation rather than coercive methods — through the public diplomacy tools. The creation of a positive image is also discussed when determining the goals of Ukraine’s foreign policy, which include countering disinformation that harms the country’s image.

First of all, strengthening the positive image of Ukraine provides for its vision by foreign partners as a “democratic, multicultural and people-centered state.” Besides, creating a convenient system for issuing visas for foreigners, as well as attracting the potential of citizens who have left Ukraine to implement the goals of the state’s foreign policy (On the Foreign Policy Strategy of Ukraine) will also contribute to building a positive image.

Discussion

The conducted research identified the main strategic directions of Ukraine’s foreign policy, in particular, ensuring the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, countering the aggression of the Russian Federation, the country’s EU and NATO membership course, promoting Ukrainian exports and attracting foreign investment, protecting the rights and interests of Ukrainian citizens abroad, promoting a positive image of Ukraine in the world. These areas are legally enshrined in the Foreign Policy Strategy of Ukraine, and are a relevant issue for Ukrainian and foreign researchers.

Pashkov (2021) notes clarifying conditions for the transition from confrontation with the Russian Federation to peaceful coexistence as an important position contained in the Strategy. However, the author believes that this is impossible under current realities. The development of mechanisms for bringing the aggressor state to justice for illegal actions committed on the territory of Ukraine, as well as determining the procedures for compensating it for losses and damages should be considered more important directions. In this context, Sarakhman (2022) states that the Resolution “Aggression against Ukraine” adopted on March 2, 2022 is an important international document condemning the invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine. The document contains a demand for the immediate withdrawal of troops from the territory of Ukraine and condemnation of the decision of the Russian Federation on the status of certain territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Kresin (2022) outlines a number of changes that Ukraine should initiate for building the security system of the EU and the entire world. These changes relate to the adoption of the UN Convention that prohibits aggression against a sovereign state, and establishes punishment for this crime; creation of a security system based on security guarantees and appropriate diplomatic and military response to its violations; amending the Charter of the International Court of Justice of the United Nations; creation of a permanent UN peacekeeping contingent to respond to threats to the population and infrastructure; inclusion of measures to counter non-military threats, such as propaganda, terror, intimidation, etc. in the security.

Melnyk (2021) notes in the context of the EU and NATO membership requirements that Ukraine cannot change instantly — changes require a long time. This statement is true at the time of writing the researcher's work — 2021, however, the situation has undergone certain changes with the military invasion, as the results of this study testify. The world got convinced of Ukraine's ability to resist the aggression of a much larger country in terms of area and population, which apparently had been planning an attack a long time ago. In turn, Ukraine received significant support for its confrontation efforts from the countries of the world — financial, military, humanitarian, etc. At the end of 2022, Ukraine is waiting for a decision from the European Commission on its compliance with the recommendations regarding the Ukraine's EU candidate status. This fact alone indicates that Europe is open to perceive Ukraine as a strong and equal partner, so there are high chances that Ukraine's path to the EU and NATO membership will be shorter.

However, some studies show that not all European countries believe that Ukraine is ready and is entitled to start the process of preparing for EU accession. Van Elsuwege and Van der Loo (28 March 2022) emphasize that Ukraine has made significant progress in implementing the Association Agreement, but the expected catastrophic economic consequences caused by the war may overturn these efforts and hamper the implementation of the reform agenda. A slightly different opinion was expressed in this article: while agreeing with the authors on the devastating consequences of the war, it should be, however, noted that this view considers only one side of the issue. First, all European countries will feel and already feel the consequences of the war. Second, it is necessary to take into account that Ukraine continues to move along the chosen

course even in the most difficult times, and fulfils the necessary requirements despite the obstacles. Third, it is worth reminding that Ukraine is currently a kind of “shield” for Europe in the face of the aggressor. This struggle requires cooperation of efforts, and Ukraine's approximation to the EU and NATO membership could provide certain security guarantees to the country, which is crucial for the security of the EU as a whole, among other things.

This opinion may seem somewhat discrete in contrast to the economic collapse caused by the war, which is an objective reality. However, some studies focus on the ideological side of the issue. Bélanger (16 March 2022) notes that the EU would probably not ignore the symbolism behind supporting Ukraine — one of the last non-EU countries — at times when it is attacked by an aggressor. Otherwise it may affect the confidence of other countries in the EU as a regional power because of its uncertainty about expanding its borders. Sapir (2022) notes that Ukraine had little chance of obtaining the EU candidate status before the invasion of the Russian Federation, let alone becoming a EU member in the near future. However, the heroic struggle of Ukrainians against the aggressor gained the respect of all EU countries, which became the reason for granting Ukraine, as well as the neighbouring country Moldova, the candidate status. The researcher states two main obstacles on Ukraine's way to the EU membership: partially occupied territories and the low quality of governance. However, these obstacles should be ignored in the event of Ukraine's victory in the war, because Ukraine will return its territories, and the quality of governance, strengthened by the spirit of victory, will be beyond question. If the victory is not complete, the EU membership prospects will be less favourable because of the constant conflict with the aggressor.

Many researchers express concern about the state of global food security in the context of the reduction of exports from Ukraine, especially grain crops described in the article. Some studies, for example, the article by Ben Hassen and El Bilali (2022), provide positive aspects in this regard. The reduction of grain exports will contribute to the intensification of agriculture in other countries, as well as the development of innovations in the field. Jagtap et al., (2022) found that the biggest reduction in Ukrainian grain exports will adversely affect Europe and Africa. The researchers recommend that these regions to consider alternative grain suppliers. Some researchers even propose sanctions relief packages for affected third countries in the

absence of alternatives (Hellegers, 2022). So, the studies are mostly focused on the ways out of the crisis for countries affected by the reduction of Ukrainian exports. However, as this study found, Ukraine does not avoid the issue of combating the global food crisis and comes up with an initiative to provide African countries with grain even in difficult conditions, which emphasizes its participation in combating the food crisis and promotes the country's positive image.

Conclusions

The conducted research found that Ukraine received a strategic document on foreign policy for the first time in its history — the Foreign Policy Strategy — just before the military invasion. The article discusses six main directions of the Strategy, which are relevant in view of the Russia-Ukraine confrontation, namely: ensuring the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, countering the aggressive policy of the Russian Federation, the course towards EU and NATO membership, promoting Ukrainian exports and attracting foreign investment, protecting rights and interests of Ukrainian citizens abroad, promoting a positive image of Ukraine in the world.

The article identifies the main regulatory documents that guide certain directions of Ukraine's foreign policy, and also focuses on the results achieved in each of the directions at the time of the study. It was established that the outlined strategic directions affect not only the national interests of Ukraine, but also the interests of other countries. Therefore, Ukraine's EU member status would increase security guarantees for both Ukraine and the Member States by moving the EU border further to the East, increasing the export of Ukrainian grain would contribute to counteracting the food crisis, and the fight against the aggression of the Russian Federation would enhance the guarantees of security, independence and freedom for all countries of the world to develop progressively.

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