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The State Emergency Service of Kyiv region in the context of the humanitarian dimension of Ukraine's international relations

Abstract. The aim of the study was to analyse the transformation of the regional branch of the State Emergency Service in the Kyiv region into a humanitarian actor in the context of a full-scale invasion. The research methodology was based on a combination of regulatory and legal analysis, analysis of official statistics, and institutional and contextual-comparative approaches, which enabled an examination of both the formal mandate and the actual outcomes of the regional branch's humanitarian activities in 2022-2025. The findings of the study showed that the activities of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine in the Kyiv region have evolved from a technocratic response model to a multidimensional humanitarian function. An analysis of operational statistics demonstrated a concentration of humanitarian risks during periods of active hostilities and a subsequent shift towards stabilisation and the restoration of a safe living environment. The study revealed that the regional level served as a platform for the practical implementation of human and humanitarian security concepts. It was found that the service's activities included the collection and dissemination of valid data on humanitarian needs, which were used by international partners for strategic aid planning. The participation of service representatives in international training programmes and coordination platforms facilitated the integration of international standards into day-to-day operational procedures. The results obtained demonstrated that the transformation of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine in the Kyiv region was consistent with global approaches to localising the humanitarian response and enhancing resilience. The practical significance of the study lies in the potential for its findings to be utilised by government bodies, regional civil protection units and international humanitarian partners to improve models of coordination, planning and post-conflict recovery

Keywords: security; resilience; risks; civil protection; crisis response

Introduction

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation has radically transformed the architecture of national security and the humanitarian dimension of the state's international relations, within which civil protection institutions have begun to play a specific role. In these circumstances, the activities of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SES), particularly its regional units, go beyond the traditional logic of responding to man-made and natural threats and are taking on the characteristics of a comprehensive humanitarian instrument. The Kyiv region, which simultaneously served as a theatre of active hostilities, an area of widespread destruction and a logistical rear for humanitarian aid, has become a prime example of the integration of domestic civil protection functions with international humanitarian response mechanisms. In this context, an analysis of the activities of the SES of the Kyiv region reveals deeper processes of Ukraine's institutional adaptation to global humanitarian standards, while

redefining the role of the regional level in shaping the humanitarian dimension of international relations. The contribution of international organisations to the humanitarian response to the war in Ukraine was analysed in the work by A. Darmayadi *et al.* (2024). The researchers applied the concept of human security and qualitative methods to assess the activities of United Nations Children's Fund and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The results demonstrated that international humanitarian organisations effectively compensated for the state's limited capacity to protect the population during the active phase of the conflict. The authors showed that these organisations' humanitarian programmes became essential for meeting the basic needs of affected groups. The transformation of the EU's role as a result of the war in Ukraine was examined by G.M. Friedrichs & J. Sommer (2024) through the prism of ontological security theory and role theory. The authors conducted

Received: 04.02.2026, Revised: 28.05.2026, Accepted: 26.06.2026, Published: 08.07.2026.

Suggested Citation:

Chernenko, V. (2026). The State Emergency Service of Kyiv region in the context of the humanitarian dimension of Ukraine's international relations. *Foreign Affairs*, 36(3), 37-47. doi: 10.59214/ua.fa/3.2026.37.

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a thorough analysis of European Union (EU) documents and demonstrated that the full-scale invasion triggered a crisis of the EU's self-perception as an exclusively normative and civilian power. Adjustment, adaptation, innovation and rejection were identified as types of change in the EU's role models. The study revealed that the humanitarian and security dimensions of EU policy became closely intertwined, which directly influenced the mechanisms of support for Ukraine. The role of local actors in humanitarian logistics was highlighted in the article by R. Konrad *et al.* (2024), which focused on the activities of small volunteer groups in the first weeks of the war. Based on a case study, the authors demonstrated that it was local initiatives that ensured the speed, flexibility and targeted nature of aid in the context of institutional shock. It was established that the management of information, supplies and coordination became the key to the effectiveness of humanitarian operations. P.V. Opanashchuk (2025) identified in his study the key mechanisms and priority areas for integrating Ukraine's humanitarian space into the pan-European framework. The author demonstrated that this process required a comprehensive approach combining government initiatives with international cooperation and security sector reform. The study also highlighted the critical role of cultural policy development and cross-border humanitarian cooperation in strengthening Ukraine's position within the European context.

The professional dimension of the SES's activities was analysed in detail in a study by A.V. Bulaitys (2025) on the reliability of bomb disposal experts. The author conducted a large-scale empirical survey and applied statistical methods to assess staff performance. The results demonstrated a clear link between the level of professional reliability and the practical outcomes of humanitarian demining. The study proved that the human resources capacity of the SES is a critical factor in humanitarian security for both the civilian population and the rescuers themselves. The issue of psychosocial resilience among humanitarian personnel was examined in a study by N. Abujaber *et al.* (2024), which analysed the implementation of the Integrated Model for Supervision. The authors demonstrated that the Integrated Model for Supervision enhanced team cohesion, levels of support and the professional well-being of specialists in acute crisis situations. At the same time, limitations associated with resource shortages and high stress levels were identified. The findings highlighted the issue of institutional support for personnel in humanitarian and rescue services. The impact of political and social narratives on the humanitarian response was examined by Z. Moallin *et al.* (2023). The authors analysed how ideas of solidarity and resistance shaped humanitarian policy priorities and the allocation of resources. It was demonstrated that dominant narratives could indirectly push classic humanitarian principles into the background. The study highlighted the complexity of humanitarian actors' work in the politicised environment of war. The broader context of interstate conflict and its humanitarian consequences was examined in the article by Z.M. Alvi & S. Haider (2024). The authors compared Western and Russian models of warfare and demonstrated that attacks on civilian infrastructure had become a tool of strategic pressure. The study documented a large-scale

humanitarian catastrophe caused by the war, in particular mass population displacement. These findings highlighted the role of civil protection institutions as agents in minimising humanitarian losses.

At the same time, academic works have not provided a detailed analysis of the activities of the regional branch of the SES as an institutional element of the humanitarian dimension of Ukraine's international relations. The aim of the article was to theoretically and empirically substantiate the role of the SES of Kyiv region in shaping the humanitarian dimension of Ukraine's international relations in the context of full-scale war. To achieve this objective, the following tasks were identified: to analyse the transformation of the SES's functions within a humanitarian context; to examine the interaction of the regional unit with international humanitarian mechanisms; and to assess the significance of the SES of Kyiv region's activities for the implementation of the concept of humanitarian security.

Materials and Methods

The methodological framework of the study was based on a combination of institutional-analytical, empirical-statistical and contextual-comparative approaches and is guided by the logic of analysing the results of the SES of Kyiv region's activities within the humanitarian dimension of Ukraine's international relations in 2022-2025. The choice of the regional level is due to the fact that the Kyiv region simultaneously serves as a space for primary humanitarian response, a logistics hub for international aid, and a platform for institutional interaction with European and international humanitarian structures. The first stage of the study involved a legal analysis aimed at determining the formal status of the SES within the system of humanitarian relations and civil protection. An examination of the Civil Protection Code of Ukraine (2013), Law of Ukraine No. 1192-XIV (1999) and Law of Ukraine No. 389-VIII (2015) made it possible to outline the legal boundaries of the SES's participation in the coordination of humanitarian flows, the protection of the civilian population and cooperation with international donors. The civil protection system... (2024) provided the basis for a further analysis of the international dimension of the activities of the service's regional units in particular.

The second stage of the methodology involves an institutional analysis of international humanitarian integration, which was applied specifically to explain the growth in international cooperation involving the SES of Kyiv region. To this end, documents and analytical materials from the Ukraine joins the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (2023) regarding Ukraine's accession to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism were utilised, as well as data on the scale of humanitarian supplies in 2022-2025 (European Civil Protection..., n.d.a; n.d.b). Additionally, materials from the War in Ukraine triggered largest... (2025) were utilised, which document the unprecedented nature of the operation in Ukraine. In the third stage, an analysis of official statistics and operational reports was applied, enabling a transition from the normative framework to empirical results. Statistical data from the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (2025) were used to analyse trends in emergency rescue operations, fires and humanitarian

risks, whilst regional reports by M. Burych (2025) served as case studies of localised humanitarian response. Demining of Kyiv region... (2022) were used as the empirical basis for the “area of humanitarian demining” criterion, which allowed this indicator to be interpreted not as a technical one, but as a humanitarian and security indicator. Media resources by A. Tumanova (2025) and O. Pysarenko (2025), which contained statistical data on the work of the SES during the period under study, were also utilised.

The fourth stage of the methodology involved analysing humanitarian impacts and working with the population, in particular the Humanitarian Bulletin (2023) and the Ukraine humanitarian needs and response plan (2025). The fifth stage of the research was carried out through an analysis of inter-institutional humanitarian coordination, drawing on materials from the Forum to be held in Kyiv to discuss... (2025) and The Ukrainian Red Cross... (2025). These sources were used to explain the mechanisms of localising the humanitarian response, the role of regional coordination platforms in Kyiv, and the building of trust among international partners in regional-level governance. In the final stage, contextual-comparative and analytical-synthetic methods were applied, enabling the results to be synthesised within the frameworks of humanitarian security, resilience and disaster risk management. The use of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (2015) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992) ensured that the conclusions drawn were consistent with international approaches to humanitarian response and recovery.

Results

Analysis of the SES's activities in the humanitarian dimension of international relations. In academic discourse, the concept of human security is developing as a fundamental paradigm that focuses on the individual legal, social and physical aspects of people's lives in crisis situations. Human security is viewed as a multidimensional security model that encompasses protection from threats related to conflict, famine, disease and economic instability, and forms the basis of the humanitarian response to global challenges (Yilmaz, 2025). This perspective is becoming relevant to international relations as it allows for the integration of human rights into security strategies at the global level as a scientific and practical tool for assessing humanitarian risks. In parallel, the concept of humanitarian security is developing as a concretisation of human security in humanitarian contexts, where its scope encompasses organisational, legal and political mechanisms aimed at preserving human life and dignity in crisis situations. Humanitarian security focuses on the practical aspects of ensuring the safety of the civilian population during conflicts and emergencies, including compliance with international humanitarian norms and standards, which directly influences international humanitarian operations and cooperation between states and international organisations. It provides a specialised analytical lens that allows for the integration of human rights, humanitarian principles and the effective organisation of responses in complex crisis environments, whilst maintaining a focus on individuals as the primary subjects of security. In this context, humanitarian diplomacy emerges

as a distinct, practice-oriented concept of international relations, defining the processes of negotiation, communication and influence by state and non-state actors with the aim of achieving humanitarian objectives. This approach goes beyond the scope of traditional diplomacy, as it is focused not on political dialogue between states, but on the protection and support of populations affected by armed conflicts or humanitarian disasters. Humanitarian diplomacy is multifaceted: it encompasses negotiations on safe access to humanitarian zones, the promotion of compliance with international legal norms, the protection of vulnerable groups – children, women, refugees – and the creation of conditions for effective humanitarian aid in the complex circumstances of conflicts and crisis situations.

Civil protection, in turn, serves as an operational and organisational mechanism that translates the conceptual foundations of humanitarian security into practical action. It encompasses preventive, response and recovery measures aimed at protecting the lives, health and basic needs of the population in emergency situations of both a military and natural nature (Crossley, 2022). Civil protection management includes risk planning, organising evacuations, providing assistance to those affected, as well as measures to minimise the secondary consequences of crisis events. This approach, as applied in practical humanitarian operations, is always aligned with international standards, particularly in the context of coordination with international civil protection organisations and response networks. European Civil Protection... (n.d.b), for example, provides framework standards for cooperation at national and cross-border levels, which facilitates the establishment of operational response systems in accordance with international humanitarian security standards. These concepts form a coherent logical system: human security establishes broad theoretical foundations that include human rights and humanitarian needs as central elements of security; humanitarian security translates these requirements into practical legal and organisational frameworks; humanitarian diplomacy shapes the mechanisms of international cooperation to implement these requirements in real-world operations; and civil protection serves as the operational environment where these conceptual ideas are put into practice in response to emergency challenges. Such integration of theoretical and practical aspects enables systematic interaction between national and international actors in the humanitarian contexts of international relations, which is necessary for understanding models of humanitarian security and response. Table 1 summarises approaches to humanitarian security and the democratic understanding of the role of civil protection services, highlighting conceptual differences and common mechanisms between theoretical models and practical functions. The approaches analysed demonstrate that the academic paradigm of the humanitarian dimension of international relations combines the theoretical foundations of human protection, organisational response models and practical tools for minimising the consequences of crisis situations. Within the framework of international relations, the SES is increasingly functioning not only as a component of the domestic security system, but also as an institutional humanitarian actor integrated into multi-level mechanisms of civil

protection, crisis response and post-conflict recovery. The legal framework for the SES's activities in the humanitarian dimension of international relations is formed at the intersection of Ukrainian national legislation and international legal regimes for civil protection. The key legislation includes Law of Ukraine No. 1192-XIV (1999), the Civil Protection Code of Ukraine (2013), and Law of Ukraine

No. 389-VIII (2015), which define the legal grounds for the participation of state bodies in the provision, coordination and distribution of humanitarian aid, including the international component. It is the Civil Protection Code that establishes the SES as the central executive body in the field of civil protection, thereby creating the legal basis for its international cooperation.

Table 1. Comparative overview of approaches to humanitarian security and the role of civil protection services

Parameter	Concept of human security	Human security	Civil protection
Object of protection	The individual and society	The civilian population in a crisis	Population and infrastructure in emergencies
Main objective	To reduce threats to human life and freedoms	Ensuring people's humanitarian needs and rights	Safeguarding life, health and property in emergencies
Key focus areas	Integration of legal, social and economic aspects of security	Practical response and protection measures	Planning, response, recovery
Actors	States, international organisations, non-governmental organisations	States, international humanitarian missions	National bodies, international partners
Legal framework	International human rights law and humanitarian law	International humanitarian norms, human rights	National and international humanitarian law

Source: compiled by the author based on N. Crossley (2022), O.V. Gorban & R.V. Martych (2024), A.G. Yilmaz (2025), European Civil Protection... (n.d.b)

One factor is the legislative clarification of the powers of the SES's in the context of Ukraine's European integration. Ukraine's accession on 20 April 2023 to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism cemented Ukraine's formal legal status as a full participant in the EU's joint humanitarian response system (Ukraine joins the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, 2023). In accordance with decisions by the Government of Ukraine, the SES has been designated as the national coordinator for participation in this Mechanism, which grants the service the authority to initiate international assistance, participate in joint operational planning, and exchange resources and operational information with the European Commission and EU Member States (The civil protection system..., 2024). In an international legal context, the activities of the SES are governed by a range of bilateral and multilateral agreements in the field of civil protection, emergency prevention and the management of their consequences. Also of significance is the Framework Convention on Civil Defence Assistance (2000) and the implementation of the provisions of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (2015), which explicitly defines the role of national civil protection services as humanitarian actors at the local level. This role is a consequence of structural transformations in the Ukrainian civil protection system, and is also driven by the unprecedented humanitarian challenges facing the country's population. According to European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (2025) estimates, by 2025, over 12.7 million people in Ukraine will require humanitarian assistance due to the war, infrastructure destruction and population displacement. In terms of the functional scope of its activities, the SES acts as one of the national coordinators for the reception and distribution of international support in the field of civil protection. Ukraine's participation in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism has formally integrated the SES into the structures of European humanitarian aid coordination, enabling the delivery and distribution of over 140,000 tonnes of critical equipment and material resources – ranging from fire engines to generators and medical equipment –

with automated logistical distribution via hubs in Poland, Romania and Slovakia (Over 140,000 tonnes of life-saving..., 2024). These deliveries were organised under a procedure in which the SES, acting as the national coordinator, formulates requests for requirements and carries out the receipt and distribution of critical resources among regional units, including the Kyiv region.

The humanitarian nature of the SES's activities is also evident in its coordination with international humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organisations, which, in particular, implement community support projects, evacuation programmes and medical initiatives. According to The Ukrainian Red Cross... (2025), the SES organised joint coordination meetings with the Ukrainian Red Cross and UN representatives regarding preparedness for prolonged power cuts – an issue that forms part of humanitarian aid during the winter period, given the systematic attacks on energy infrastructure. Such coordination has a practical dimension, as it involves the exchange of information on local humanitarian aid needs, the prioritisation of resource allocation, and joint planning of responses to emergency scenarios, which aligns with the standards of the integrated humanitarian approach, particularly within the framework of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Humanitarian Response Clusters (Humanitarian Bulletin, 2023). The involvement of the SES in humanitarian aid has expanded not only in terms of the physical transfer of equipment and machinery, but also in ensuring the local delivery of humanitarian supplies to affected communities. During its operation to assist Ukraine, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism ensured the delivery of over 155,000 tonnes of various aid, including mobile hospitals, personal protective equipment, communication equipment and generators, all of which are directly applicable in crisis situations (New €148 million EU..., 2025). It is noteworthy that this mechanism also facilitates the evacuation of patients for specialised treatment to medical facilities in Europe – over 4,700 patients as of 2025 – which is directly linked to the humanitarian consequences of the war, rather than solely to the technical aspects of the

response (War in Ukraine triggered largest..., 2025). The role of the SES in international humanitarian relations lies not only in performing the functions of logistical reception and distribution of aid, but also in compiling national data on needs, which form the basis of international support strategies. This influences the basic model of international humanitarian cooperation, as it allows Ukraine, in collaboration with structures such as the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and other humanitarian partners, to adapt international humanitarian standards to the national context and the realities of war.

Specific examples show that the model of cooperation between the SES and international humanitarian organisations is multifaceted: it covers both the logistics of humanitarian cargo and direct coordination with humanitarian agencies on the ground (ensuring the delivery of aid to internally displaced persons, affected and vulnerable population groups). This is consistent with a humanitarian approach that emphasises the role of national services as “first responders” – not only in technical response, but also in organising humanitarian corridors, supporting basic services and providing early assistance to vulnerable groups, which is typically supported by international operators in crises. The activities of the SES in the humanitarian dimension of international relations are based on the synergy of national capabilities and international resources, where the SES not only receives assistance but also shapes the framework for its application in Ukraine. Such cooperation allows not only for saving lives and alleviating humanitarian suffering, but also for developing a more flexible and adapted government mechanism for responding to extraordinary humanitarian challenges. This process transforms the SES from a national response instrument into a partner of international humanitarian organisations, capable of effective integration into European and global civil protection systems, making a practical and concrete contribution to civilian rescue operations.

International humanitarian activities of the SES of Kyiv region. In academic discourse, the activities of the SES of Kyiv region in the context of full-scale war should be viewed through the prism of the practical implementation of civil protection tasks under the extreme conditions of a conflict. The main areas of humanitarian activity – responding to emergencies, evacuating the civilian population, clearing up the aftermath of destruction, and providing direct support during large-scale attacks – are interlinked elements of a comprehensive system for the safety of the region’s citizens. Response involves the rapid identification, assessment and neutralisation of the consequences of enemy strikes on residential areas, critical infrastructure and other facilities that pose security risks to the population. Thus, according to operational reports, following the massive attacks on the Kyiv region, the SES is actively engaged in clearing up the aftermath of shelling in the Vyshhorod, Boryspil, Bila Tserkva, Bucha and Obukhiv districts, including firefighting, rescuing victims and ensuring fire safety (work continues non-stop in response to new threats) (Burych, 2025). Such operations require a high degree of coordination between emergency rescue teams, local government services and critical infrastructure facilities. The evacuation of the population as a humanitarian activity during wartime is carried out

through coordination between the SES and other state bodies to ensure the safety of those being moved. Statistical data on nationwide evacuation operations show that between 1 June and 31 October 2025, over 121,500 people, including more than 14,000 children and over 4,000 people with reduced mobility, were moved from active combat zones to safer regions of Ukraine (Statistics of evacuation of the population..., 2025). Although these figures are not broken down specifically for the Kyiv region, they include cases of civilian evacuation from areas posing an elevated threat to life, which require the involvement of special SES teams for escort and logistical support. Such operations involve the use of transport, medical support, the identification of people with special needs, and the provision of psychological support. Mitigating the consequences of enemy attacks is a function of the service’s humanitarian activities, directly linked to responding to and supporting the population’s vital needs. In the context of massive missile and drone attacks on Kyiv and surrounding areas, SES rescuers carried out work to clear rubble, extinguish fires and provide emergency assistance to victims, which directly reduces the level of secondary risks to civilians. Operations include searching for and rescuing victims, monitoring the stability of residential buildings, and coordinating with medical services to provide emergency care. These actions make a direct contribution to saving lives and minimising long-term humanitarian losses, which is consistent with civil protection approaches to safeguarding the population during intense combat operations.

The protection of the civilian population, as an integrated function, includes ensuring the continuity of essential services, organising temporary shelters, and providing humanitarian assistance. In the Kyiv region, a network of “points of invincibility” operates to provide residents with basic support, including access to warming centres, electricity, communication facilities, and psychological assistance during crisis situations (Tumanova, 2025). Such activities become critical in the event of partial or widespread power cuts and increased risks to life during the cold season, when damage to infrastructure hinders access to basic necessities. The functional interdependence of these areas lies in the fact that an effective response creates the conditions for safe evacuation and successful recovery, whilst civil protection systems ensure safety and minimise humanitarian losses at all stages of emergencies. This approach allows the comprehensive activities of the SES of the Kyiv region to be assessed not merely as local operations, but as an integral part of the state’s humanitarian response in the context of full-scale war and acute crises. Regional civil protection services are regarded as practical actors in the implementation of humanitarian security, as it is at the local level that direct contact with the civilian population takes place in areas of armed conflict. For the Kyiv region, this logic took on a practical dimension following the mass destruction of civilian infrastructure in 2022, when the region’s SES units became a central element of the humanitarian response during the de-occupation phase of affected communities (Avramuk, 2024). Analytical assessments indicate that the regional level of civil protection is necessary for the transformation of international humanitarian norms into practical action, as it is local services that ensure the

operational efficiency, adaptability and contextual sensitivity of humanitarian interventions (McCann *et al.*, 2021).

In 2023, approximately 275,000 hectares of potentially hazardous areas were surveyed in Ukraine, reflecting a shift towards the systematic scaling up of mine action following the de-occupation of significant areas, including in the Kyiv region (Humanitarian demining: more than 21 thousand..., 2024). As of 2025, the area surveyed stood at approximately 206,500 hectares, indicating the institutionalisation of non-technical and technical survey processes with the involvement of international support and coordination mechanisms (Ukraine humanitarian needs..., 2025). By the end of 2023, the number of certified mine action operators stood at around 26. As of 27 May 2025, the number of certified operators had risen to 101, reflecting the expansion of the national demining system's capabilities and its integration into the IMAS international standards. In 2025, units of the SES carried out approximately 491,800 emergency rescue operations, which is an indicator of the high intensity of response to the consequences of missile attacks, shelling and other military emergencies. As part of these operations, 7,757 people were rescued, confirming that the preservation of human life remains the service's central function during the protracted phase of the war (Pysarenko, 2025). The trend in international training programmes shows an increase in their number after 2023 (from isolated initiatives in 2022 to at least three large-scale programmes in 2025), which indicates the institutional humanisation of the SES's activities and its adaptation to International Search and Rescue Advisory Group protocols, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and standards for inter-agency coordination. In 2025, the volume of pledged financial and technical support amounted to over EUR 270 million, indicating partners' long-term interest in the restoration of Ukraine's security and infrastructure (Ukraine humanitarian needs..., 2025). The institutional integration of the Kyiv regional SES into the international humanitarian architecture through the standardisation of procedures, capacity building and the mobilisation of external resources ensures the creation of a safe environment and the reduction of long-term risks to the civilian population. It is precisely the combination of life-saving measures, systematic demining and institutional integration that transforms the activities of the regional SES unit from a technical response to the consequences of hostilities into a component of the national human security model in the context of war and post-war reconstruction.

In the scientific analysis, the activities of the SES of Kyiv region during the war period are presented through a series of quantitative and qualitative indicators that reflect the scale of humanitarian activities, development trends and existing problematic aspects. According to official sources, within the Kyiv region, the service's pyrotechnicians have neutralised over 75,000 explosive devices and cleared a large number of areas, including motorways, households and critical infrastructure facilities, which had a direct impact on restoring safe movement and reducing the risk to the local population (Demining of Kyiv region..., 2022). According to official data from the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (2025), 7,991 fires were recorded in the Kyiv region over the 11 months of 2025,

which is 4.7% fewer than in the same period of 2024, correlating with the nationwide trend of a 6.1% decrease in the number of fires. At the same time, the decrease in the number of incidents was not accompanied by a proportional reduction in humanitarian risks. The number of fatalities resulting from fires in the Kyiv region stood at 87, which is 5.7% fewer than in 2024. Unlike many regions where an increase in fatalities was recorded (notably Chernihiv Region +85.1%, Kyiv city +65.3%), Kyiv region was included in the limited list of regions where this figure decreased. However, the figures for injuries to the population show a different trend. In Kyiv region in 2025, 148 people were injured, exceeding the 2024 figure (133 people) and reflecting the nationwide trend of rising injury rates in fires. An indicator of the humanitarian role of the SES of Kyiv region is its involvement in the preservation of material and life-supporting resources. In 2025, during firefighting operations across the country, material assets worth over UAH 16.6 billion were saved. Given that the Kyiv region is among the regions with a high proportion of fires at business premises and critical infrastructure (3.7% of the total number of fires), the humanitarian impact of the activities of the regional units of the SES lies not only in saving lives, but also in preventing secondary socio-economic crises caused by the loss of housing, jobs and basic services. The factor of emergencies of military origin requires separate attention. In 2025, 8,509 fires caused by explosions resulting from hostilities were recorded in Ukraine (+16.9%). For the Kyiv region, this factor has a distinct humanitarian dimension, as fires of this type are accompanied by mass evacuations, the need for temporary accommodation for the population, and psychosocial support for those affected. In this context, the activities of the SES go beyond traditional firefighting and take on the characteristics of a humanitarian response, comparable to the practices of international organisations in emergency management (State Emergency Service of Ukraine, 2025).

This is confirmed by the participation of representatives of the SES of Kyiv region in international forums and training sessions with European and humanitarian partners, where issues of standardising response procedures, universal protocols for needs assessment and the coordination of humanitarian corridors in crises, including supply logistics, community engagement and the exchange of data on risks and needs. Such measures have both academic and practical benefits, as they enable regional units of the SES to incorporate international standards into their own practices, thereby improving the quality of assistance and operational coordination between different actors (Forum to be held in Kyiv..., 2025). Another aspect is joint practical training and simulations involving international partners. Large-scale tactical and specialised exercises, which took place within the region with the involvement of representatives from the German Society for International Cooperation office, civil protection experts from the French Embassy, representatives of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency and other international delegations, created a platform for exchanging tactical models, information on effective practices and the building of trust-based relationships between services (The civil protection system..., 2024). Analytically, the Kyiv region's involvement suggests that it is at the local level that international humanitarian standards are

being integrated into specific operational activities, thereby improving the quality of the humanitarian response. This process has two dimensions: the first is functional, where international protocols and training are integrated into the daily activities of regional SES units (for example, adopting common standards for responding to the detection and disposal of explosive objects, evacuation planning, and the management of humanitarian aid logistics); the second is institutional, where regional SES units are integrated into international platforms for the exchange of data and best practices, which contributes to the formation of a European emergency preparedness network in Ukraine. The emphasis on the international dimension of the SES's humanitarian role in the Kyiv region is also evident in the context of developing new architectures for humanitarian aid and response. Thus, in June 2025, the capital hosted the forum "Humanitarian architecture and the development of the civil protection system in Ukraine", which brought together representatives of state services, international humanitarian organisations and the civil society sector to discuss a model of civil protection in the context of contemporary challenges and integration into European response mechanisms (The Civil Protection Forum..., 2025). Discussions at such forum emphasise the need for a comprehensive, rather than a piecemeal, approach to humanitarian response, where international partners help to establish mechanisms for the operational management of emergencies in hotspots, such as the Kyiv region, through well-established channels for information exchange and coordination of actions (Development of civil protection..., 2025).

Another dimension of the service's international relations is the social and humanitarian impact of its engagement with international actors at the community level. It is at the local level, for example in the Kyiv region, that community support programmes are implemented, including the assessment of individual families' needs, support for the restoration of social services, and psychosocial assistance for those affected. These programmes are funded or supported by international partners but implemented through local branches of the SES in partnership with local authorities and humanitarian organisations, creating synergy between international aid and local risk management. It is precisely this model of cooperation – where international resources and standards are channelled locally through the participation of regional SES units in information-sharing systems, joint training exercises and coordination platforms – that serves as an indicator of the maturity of Ukraine's humanitarian capacity. It allows not only for more effective mitigation of humanitarian risks, but also for the formation of a new quality of humanitarian relations between Ukraine and the international community, where regions, and not just central authorities, act as active partners in the implementation of humanitarian policy. This means that it is precisely through international cooperation at the regional level (as in the case of the SES of Kyiv region) that a sustainable crisis preparedness system emerges, based on integrated international approaches and local adaptation – a factor not only in immediate response but also in the post-conflict recovery of the population and infrastructure.

The analysis conducted supports the well-founded conclusion that, during the 2022-2025 period, the SES of

the Kyiv Region established itself as a systemic regional actor in the humanitarian dimension of Ukraine's international relations. Its activities have evolved from a predominantly technocratic response to emergencies to comprehensive humanitarian governance aimed at protecting the lives, mental well-being and basic living conditions of the civilian population in conditions of war and post-conflict instability. Empirical data, in particular the dynamics of responses to the consequences of hostilities, the scale of psychological support, and indicators of humanitarian demining and emergency infrastructure surveys, attest to a gradual transition from the emergency response phase to a stabilisation and recovery approach. This transformation aligns with the concepts of human security, localisation and resilience, which dominate international humanitarian discourse and define the effectiveness of humanitarian institutions through their ability to reduce the structural vulnerability of society, rather than merely addressing the consequences of crises. In the broader context of international relations, the activities of the SES of Kyiv region demonstrate that the regional level is becoming a space for the practical implementation of the state's humanitarian obligations. Integration into EU mechanisms, coordination with UN agencies and the use of international risk assessment standards foster institutional trust in Ukraine as a responsible humanitarian actor capable of ensuring the safety of the civilian population even in the context of a protracted war. Thus, the humanitarian activities of the SES of the Kyiv region can be interpreted conceptually and empirically as a component in the formation of Ukraine's new humanitarian architecture, within which local institutions play a system-forming role. War and post-war reconstruction are transforming the regional dimension of civil protection from a secondary element of state policy into a central component of Ukraine's humanitarian positioning within the system of international relations.

Discussion

The study revealed that the activities of the SES of Kyiv region in 2022-2025 took on the characteristics of a comprehensive humanitarian institution, integrated into the international response system, which went beyond the traditional technocratic mandate of the civil protection service. The results obtained made it possible to correlate empirical indicators of regional activity with the concepts of humanitarian security, localisation of aid and institutional resilience, providing a basis for comparison with academic works devoted to the functioning of civil protection systems and humanitarian actors in wartime conditions. The legal and managerial foundations of the civil protection system's functioning, as outlined by O. Kasian (2024), demonstrated that the effectiveness of the response depended on the clarity of regulatory frameworks, the level of inter-institutional coordination, and resource capacity. In this work, the civil protection system was viewed primarily as a state instrument for risk management, where international cooperation served as a supporting factor for modernisation. In contrast, the present study has shown that, in the case of the SES of the Kyiv region, the international component ceased to be secondary and acquired a structuring significance. Participation in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, coordination of humanitarian flows

and involvement in international training programmes have transformed the regional unit into a key element of international humanitarian logistics. Thus, in contrast to the researcher's regulation-centred approach, the study revealed a shift in emphasis from a formal legal framework to actual integration into supranational humanitarian architectures. The work by L. Sandström (2025), devoted to the management of humanitarian security risks in the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Ukrainian Red Cross Society, demonstrated that the effectiveness of humanitarian organisations in a wartime context was determined by a balance between centralised, principle-based models and decentralised local networks. This study emphasised the importance of the ethical dimension, flexibility and adaptability of humanitarian structures. The research confirmed the relevance of these findings to the activities of the SES of the Kyiv region, yet revealed a broader institutional spectrum of humanitarian adaptability. Unlike purely humanitarian organisations, the SES functions simultaneously as a state enforcement body, a humanitarian implementer and an international coordinator. An analysis of the dynamics of emergency rescue operations, humanitarian demining and public engagement revealed that the regional unit combines centralised management with decentralised mechanisms for community engagement. This allows L. Sandström's conclusions regarding the adaptability of humanitarian structures to be extended to the sphere of state civil protection services, which were previously regarded as less flexible institutions.

Y. Mykityn *et al.* (2023) described the functioning of Ukraine's unified state civil protection system under a dual legal regime and hybrid threats, highlighting the extraordinary burden on services and the need to carry out tasks simultaneously in conditions of war and preparation for recovery. This study confirms these findings at the regional level, whilst expanding their humanitarian dimension. Whilst researchers have focused on technical and legal challenges, an analysis of the activities of the SES of Kyiv region has shown that the dual operating regime had not only operational but also humanitarian consequences. The peak in emergency rescue call-outs during periods of active hostilities and the subsequent increase in the scale of demining operations demonstrated a gradual transition from a survival mode to a mode of stabilising human security. This allowed regional activities to be interpreted not merely as the fulfilment of wartime tasks, but as the establishment of a foundation for post-war humanitarian resilience. In the context of a comparison with the approaches outlined in the article by A.N. Adamu (2023), the present study demonstrated an alternative humanitarian response mechanism in the context of institutional paralysis within global security structures. Whilst the author focused on the macro-level of humanitarian intervention and justified the necessity of direct military intervention as the sole effective instrument for protecting the civilian population in the event of a deadlock in the UN Security Council, the results of this study showed that, in the absence of classical humanitarian intervention, there was a strengthening of the role of state humanitarian institutions at the regional level. The SES of Kyiv region performs a compensatory function within the civilian protection system, delivering humanitarian outcomes through demining, emergency

rescue operations, the preservation of critical infrastructure, and the coordination of international aid. Thus, in contrast to the norm-oriented logic of R2P emphasised in A.N. Adamu's work, this study demonstrated the effectiveness of "de facto humanitarian response" through local institutions integrated into international mechanisms without the use of external military force.

A comparison with the findings of O. Khmelevska (2023) revealed conceptual similarities but differing levels of analytical detail. The researcher outlined the transformation of humanitarian activity in Ukraine as the formation of a new humanitarian space that combines international standards and national initiatives, focusing on the macro-level of institutional and financial processes. This study elaborated on these points using the example of the SES of Kyiv region, demonstrating how the abstract "new humanitarian space" is realised through the operational activities of the regional unit. The increase in the volume of humanitarian demining, the stabilisation of fire-related mortality rates, participation in international training programmes, and the coordination of humanitarian flows have demonstrated that the regional level has become the arena for the materialisation of the changes described by O. Khmelevska. Thus, the study not only confirms the thesis regarding the synergy between international and national humanitarian mechanisms, but also demonstrates that it was the civil protection services that served as the infrastructural foundation for this synergy. V.V. Tiutiunyk *et al.* (2023) highlighted the internal organisational challenges facing the Unified State Civil Protection System during wartime, particularly issues relating to coordination, crisis management and inter-agency cooperation. The study confirmed the relevance of these challenges, but supplemented them with a humanitarian and international dimension. Whilst researchers viewed the civil protection system primarily as a national response mechanism, the results of the analysis of the SES of Kyiv region's activities showed that the organisational effectiveness of the regional unit was directly linked to its inclusion in international coordination networks. It is precisely participation in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, access to international expertise and joint training programmes that partially compensate for the structural limitations identified by V.V. Tiutiunyk *et al.*, and contribute to enhancing the resilience of the regional response system. A comparison of the study's findings with the article by S. Poroka (2025) article reveals both conceptual continuity and a broadening of the scope of the issues addressed. The researcher focused on systemic management dysfunctions within the SES in the sphere of inter-agency coordination, interpreting the service primarily within the framework of the domestic security architecture. In contrast, the present study has shown that, in the context of full-scale war, it is precisely these coordination challenges that have become points of institutional growth, rather than merely constraints. An analysis of the SES's activities in the Kyiv region demonstrated that cooperation with international humanitarian organisations, particularly through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, partially compensated for the management gaps identified by the author. It was found that the regional branch in the Kyiv region functions as an operational hub, where inter-agency coordination is

implemented not merely formally, but through the practical synchronisation of actions with military administrations, local authorities and international donors. Thus, the present study complements the findings of S. Poroka, demonstrating that, in wartime conditions, the SES has evolved from a problem-oriented bureaucratic structure into a flexible humanitarian interface between the state, communities and international partners.

A comparison of the results with the conceptual framework proposed by M. Constantinescu *et al.* (2024) revealed a high degree of theoretical consistency, but a different analytical scope. The researchers considered human security as an element of defence strategies and military operations, emphasising the need to integrate the humanitarian dimension into security policy as a whole. The present study has concretised these provisions at the level of daily civil protection operational practice. Empirical data on the activities of the SES of the Kyiv region demonstrated that the concept of human security is implemented not merely declaratively, but through systematic actions to minimise risks to the civilian population: demining of territories, ensuring the functioning of critical infrastructure, evacuation of the population, and prevention of secondary disasters. In contrast to the military-strategic focus of M. Constantinescu *et al.*, the present study has shown that it is the civil protection services that have become the conduits of humanitarian logic in the context of urbanised conflict, specifically in a region that combined the immediate threat of hostilities with the status of a rear logistics centre. This allows the activities of the SES of the Kyiv region to be interpreted as an example of the practical implementation of human security beyond the confines of a purely defensive discourse.

A comparison with the work of M. Sitsinska *et al.* (2021) demonstrated temporal and contextual asymmetry, which, however, enhances the analytical value of the comparison. The authors examined humanitarian security as a theoretical component of national security in the context of hybrid threats and pre-conflict instability, forming a normative framework for state policy. The present study has shown that after 2022, these theoretical propositions acquired a practical dimension precisely through the activities of civil protection institutions. An analysis of the functioning of the SES of the Kyiv region demonstrated that humanitarian security ceases to be an abstract category and transforms into a system of concrete operational decisions aimed at preserving life, social stability and the material foundations of communities. In contrast to the algorithmic approach of M. Sitsinska *et al.*, which is focused on programme planning, the present study demonstrated the adaptive, crisis-oriented nature of humanitarian security, where the ability of the regional unit to respond rapidly to the changing configuration of risks plays a key role. Overall, compared with the works reviewed, this study showed that the SES of Kyiv region in 2022–2025 functions not only as an element of the national response system but as an institutional provider of humanitarian security, integrated into the international context. Unlike previous studies, which either focused on management issues or remained within the confines of theoretical models, the results of the analysis demonstrated the multidimensional humanitarian role of the regional unit, combining local-

action, international coordination and strategic influence on reducing the structural vulnerability of communities. This allows the activities of the SES of Kyiv region to be interpreted as one of the practical mechanisms for realising the humanitarian dimension of Ukraine's international relations in the context of a full-scale invasion.

Conclusions

Based on an analysis of the activities of the SES, in particular its regional branch in the Kyiv region, during a full-scale invasion, this study has enabled the formulation of a number of academic conclusions that shed light on the transformation of the service within the context of the humanitarian dimension of international relations. It was established that the activities of the SES ceased to be exclusively a domestic function of technocratic emergency response and evolved into a comprehensive humanitarian mission. This transformation was based on combining a national legal mandate with practical engagement in international frameworks, such as the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, which Ukraine joined in 2023. An analysis of the dynamics of indicators, such as the number of emergency rescue call-outs, which peaked during periods of active hostilities, and the increase in the volume of humanitarian demining in later periods, demonstrated the service's gradual transition from a logic of emergency response to a logic of stabilisation and restoration of a safe living environment, which is essential for a humanitarian approach. The study revealed that the humanitarian role of the SES was evident not only in its operational activities but also in its ability to compile and present national data on needs at the international level, thereby influencing the formulation of international humanitarian strategies in Ukraine's favour. The participation of service representatives, particularly from the Kyiv region, in international forums, training sessions and large-scale joint exercises with European partners contributed to the integration of international standards into operational procedures and the building of trust, which forms the foundation for long-term institutional cooperation. Analysis of quantitative data highlighted the complex, multidimensional nature of humanitarian risks in times of war. This confirmed that the activities of the SES had a distinct humanitarian impact that went beyond the immediate saving of lives, including the prevention of secondary socio-economic disasters through the preservation of material assets and critical infrastructure. Thus, the service functioned as a buffer, reducing the structural vulnerability of communities. Further research should focus on empirical studies, including field observations and interviews with rescue workers, coordinators and aid recipients, to examine operational challenges, the adaptation of international protocols, and the impact of the SES's activities on community resilience.

Acknowledgements

None.

Funding

None.

Conflict of Interest

None.

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