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# Analysis of the state of Ukraine's economic security: From external factors to rare-earth metals and political confrontation with the United States

**Abstract.** The relevance of this study stems from the ongoing transformation of global security dynamics, intensified by military conflicts, economic dependencies, and geopolitical realignments. The study aimed to explore the impact of Ukraine's geopolitical position and external influences on its national security, emphasising the role of economic security, military threats, and integration processes. The research employed a multidisciplinary approach, combining legal analysis, economic assessments, and geopolitical evaluations to provide a holistic understanding of the subject. The study adopted an interdisciplinary approach that integrated legal, economic, and geopolitical methods to examine Ukraine's national security within the context of its geopolitical position and external influences, using system analysis to assess it as a multifaceted phenomenon, content analysis to study international legal documents, and forecasting to evaluate potential future threat scenarios while considering geopolitical trends and economic risks. Ukraine's national security is significantly influenced by three main external factors: globalisation, the Russian-Ukrainian war, and European integration, while economic security is identified as a critically important component, with the country's financial stability and industrial resilience directly linked to its ability to maintain sovereignty and democratic development. International legal procedures and diplomatic efforts are emphasised as key mechanisms for countering threats and ensuring territorial integrity. Ukraine's natural resources hold strategic importance for global powers, attracting international interest while exposing the country to potential external interference, and its geopolitical position plays a pivotal role in national security, as its location between major centres of influence creates both opportunities and risks. The findings of this study offer practical value for policymakers and academic researchers, who can utilise the results to develop strategies for enhancing Ukraine's national security, strengthening global diplomatic efforts, and guiding academic research on geopolitical and economic stability in the context of hybrid warfare and resource management

**Keywords:** national security; geopolitical situation; Russian-Ukrainian war; European integration; international law; territorial integrity; sanctions

## Introduction

The issue of national security has always been at the centre of academic and practical discussions, especially in the context of a state's geopolitical position and external influences. In the 21st century, global politics focuses on addressing challenges caused by globalisation processes. One of the key aspects of the contemporary international order is ensuring security in a globalised world, as threats increasingly take on a transnational nature. In this context, the international community pays special attention to global security issues, which encompass both traditional challenges (military conflicts, terrorism) and emerging ones (cybersecurity, environmental crises, pandemics) (Alekseienko *et al.*, 2021). In the modern globalised world, national security is increasingly influenced by external factors such as economic interdependence, international conflicts, and geopolitical rivalries. The case of Ukraine exemplifies how national security is shaped by both internal stability and external pressures, including military threats, economic vulnerabilities, and strategic partnerships. The scientific problem analysed in this article is the interrelation between a state's geopolitical position and its national security.

The analysis of national security in the context of geopolitical positioning and external influences has been widely explored in contemporary research. The authors referenced in this study provide insights into the impact of geopolitical factors on national security, addressing both theoretical and practical dimensions. The

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research incorporates the studies of M. Mouel & N. Poitiers (2023), who examined the relationship between geopolitical positioning and national security resilience, highlighting how geographical location and strategic alliances shape state stability.

The influence of external actors, including regional and global powers, is a recurring theme in the studies cited in this article. The reviewed literature delves into economic and military pressures exerted by external states and their implications for national security (Attinasi *et al*., 2023). K. Suzuki (2023) focused on hybrid threats and asymmetric challenges, emphasising the growing significance of cyber threats, economic coercion, and information warfare as critical elements affecting national security. Case studies by F. Steinberg & G. Wolff (2023) comparing different national security models provide valuable insights into best practices and vulnerabilities in various geopolitical contexts. These comparative analyses contribute to a deeper understanding of how nations adapt to emerging threats and adjust their security strategies accordingly.

The research of S.R. Tagliapietra *et al*. (2023) collectively underscores the complexity of national security in the modern world. By integrating geopolitical theories, external influence assessments, and contemporary security challenges, these studies contribute to the development of strategic policies. The existing literature highlights the necessity of adaptive and resilient security measures to mitigate risks associated with geopolitical instability and external interventions (Hackenbroich *et al*., 2022).

This article aimed to analyse the impact of geopolitical position and external factors, including the deterioration of political relations between Ukraine and the United States, on Ukraine's economic security.

## Materials and Methods

The study used various legal documents and theoretical approaches, examining the relationship between the geopolitical situation and national security (Mouel & Poiters, 2023), studying the impact of external actors on national security (Attinasi *et al*., 2023), examining the role of technology in security (Suzuki, 2023), assessing the importance of globalisation for Ukraine's economic security (Khaustova, 2013), and presenting the strategic vision of the United States and Europe regarding the importance of Ukraine in the context of geopolitical conflicts (Bzhezinskyi, 2000).

A comprehensive set of scientific research methods was applied in the study, ensuring a systematic and thorough analysis of the impact of Ukraine's geopolitical position on its national security, with the primary tools being analysis and synthesis, which enabled the decomposition of the problem into its components, identification of key threats affecting the country's security, and integration of the obtained data into a unified conceptual framework, thus creating a holistic picture of the interrelationship between geopolitical factors and the level of national security. Comparative analysis was used to evaluate the effectiveness of security strategies in global practice, examining the approaches of various countries, particularly those in Eastern Europe, the Baltic, and Western Europe, which helped identify the most successful protection mechanisms and assess their potential adaptation to Ukrainian realities. Additionally, structural-functional analysis facilitated the examination of security as a complex system, where each component – military, economic, and informational – performs a specific function, and their interrelationship influences the overall resilience of the state against threats.

The application of a systemic approach enabled the assessment of the influence of international actors and organisations on Ukraine's security, particularly their role in either stabilising or exacerbating the security situation. The case study method facilitated a detailed analysis of specific events, such as Russian aggression against Ukraine, allowing for an evaluation of the effectiveness of international assistance and domestic response measures. Retrospective analysis helped trace the dynamics of security challenges since Ukraine's independence, identifying recurring mistakes and formulating lessons for future policy based on these findings.

The study started with an analysis of the overall national security situation, focusing on its relationship with the geopolitical position of the state and external factors, and emphasised that national security depends not only on internal factors but also on external influences such as geopolitical rivalries and international conflicts, using the case of Ukraine to illustrate how external threats (military, economic, and strategic partnerships) interact with the internal stability of the country. The study separately examined the three main external factors affecting Ukraine: globalisation, the war with Russia, and the process of European integration, noting that territorial losses have significant economic consequences, affecting Ukraine's integration into the global economy and its national security. The final section of the study emphasised the importance of adapting the national security strategy to new challenges and recommends developing mechanisms to protect against external threats, especially in the context of high dependence on external factors such as economic interdependence and global geopolitical tensions.

## Results

According to Article 1 of the Law of Ukraine No. 2469-VIII (2018), state security is defined as the protection of state sovereignty, territorial integrity, the democratic constitutional order, and other vital national interests from real and potential non-military threats. Ukraine's national interests encompass the vital interests of individuals, society, and the state, the realisation of which ensures Ukraine's state sovereignty, progressive democratic development, as well as safe living conditions and the wellbeing of its citizens. Thus, the national interest reflects the core values and aspirations of the Ukrainian people (Medvid, 2017). Z. Hbur (2018) notes that a necessary condition for the security of the national interests of the state is economic security, that is, the state of the economy and institutions of power, which ensures guaranteed protection of national interests and sufficient defence potential.

O. Marchenko *et al*. (2020) interpret security in a broad sense as the state of protection of individuals, society, and the state from external and internal dangers and threats. This protection is based on the activities of individuals, society, the state, and the global community of nations in identifying, preventing, mitigating, and eliminating threats that could cause unacceptable damage and obstruct survival and development.

The country's security primarily depends on the state of its economy, as a strong economy underpins a strong democracy, the maintenance of armed forces, and other vital aspects (Tsvihun, 2017). Therefore, a fundamental condition for ensuring the national interests of the state is economic security, which refers to the state of the economy and government institutions that guarantee the protection of national interests as well as sufficient defence potential (Hbur, 2018). The Strategy for the Development of Ukraine's Defense-Industrial Complex highlighted that this development relies, among other factors, on the national economic potential (Decree of the President of Ukraine No. 372/2021, 2021). Moreover, the state's financial and economic capabilities determine planning in the field of national security (Law of Ukraine No. 2469-VIII, 2018). The economic security of the state depends on safeguarding national interests, fostering economic growth, maintaining economic independence, and achieving sustainable development, while reducing the impact of internal and external threats on the socio-economic sphere (Tyshchenko & Yenina-Berezovska, 2011).

The three most significant external factors affecting Ukraine are globalisation, the RussianUkrainian war, and the process of European integration, which represents a strategic development vector for the Ukrainian state (Khaustova, 2013). Unfortunately, Ukraine's prospects for NATO membership remain weak. Ukraine's high dependence on external factors is determined by its geopolitical position (Vonsovych, 2012), as geopolitical confrontation between the West and Russia worsens the international climate (Kopotun & Rudyk, 2023), placing Ukraine at the crossroads of this struggle. According to Z. Bzhezinskyi (2000), the loss of Ukraine's independence would have a negative impact on Central Europe. On the other hand, Ukraine's independence challenges the very essence of Russia's imperial ambitions (Reznikova, 2022).

Ukraine holds a strategically advantageous geopolitical position at the intersection of Western and Eastern interests, making it a key player in regional and international politics. Its vast territory, large population, rich natural resources, as well as significant scientific, economic, and technological potential, create the preconditions for Ukraine to establish itself as an influential European state, granting it not only the opportunity but also the right to shape its own geopolitical strategy, focused on strengthening democratic institutions, economic integration with European and global structures, and active participation in international processes that shape the global agenda (Levenets, 2022).

As Z. Bzhezinskyi (2000) emphasised, Ukraine is a linchpin whose strength will determine whether the historic expansion of Europe occurs or not, suggesting that, from Europe's perspective, the mission assigned to Ukraine surpasses the country's own significance, as a democratically oriented and European-oriented Ukraine is essential for the creation of a historically transcontinental Europe (Kotovych, 2009). However, designating Ukraine as the "linchpin" upon which Europe's future depends is problematic, both in terms of the country's internal development and its security, as this concept, while highlighting Ukraine's importance in the geopolitical space, imposes excessive expectations and obligations that often contradict the state's real interests, especially given the critical need to prevent Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, and Syria from becoming points of division in geopolitical spheres of influence and the emergence of new dividing lines in Europe and other regions (Kondratenko, 2019). Defining Ukraine's mission as an instrument for Europe's expansion reduces it to a tool in broader geopolitical processes rather than recognising it as a self-sufficient subject of international politics, positioning Ukraine primarily as a buffer zone or a mechanism for regional transformation rather than a state with its own national priorities. This creates significant risks: firstly, Ukraine's internal development becomes secondary to external objectives; secondly, security challenges intensify as Ukraine is forced to act as a frontier between major powers rather than as a subject pursuing its own strategic autonomy, potentially contributing to the crisis in the eastern vector of Ukraine's foreign policy (Kondratenko, 2022).

Moreover, the concept of a "historical transcontinental Europe" implies an expansion of the European space but does not specify the role Ukraine should play in this process beyond serving as a bridge or a foothold, which may lead to the country's real needs – such as stability, economic growth, and social development – being overshadowed by external expectations and global geopolitical projects, ultimately depriving Ukraine of the opportunity to independently shape its strategic perspective and ensure sustainable security on its own terms.

Despite the evident advantages of Ukraine's geopolitical location between the West and the East, this position also carries significant drawbacks, as historically, it has not only opened opportunities for cooperation with various centres of power but also turned the country into an arena of competing geopolitical interests, repeatedly resulting in external pressure, interference, and even loss of sovereignty. Its large territory and population, though considered factors of strength, simultaneously pose challenges in governance, infrastructure, and national security, while its natural resources, although a potential advantage, have become a source of corruption and oligarchic control without effective management, hindering the development of a market-based economy. Furthermore, the assertion of Ukraine's potential as a major European democratic state overlooks real challenges related to internal stability, reforms, and the level of political culture, as democratic institutions remain weak, the influence of oligarchic groups is significant, and the rule of law is still a matter of debate. It should also be noted that geopolitical status is not granted automatically but requires active implementation of a foreign policy strategy – a task Ukraine has faced previously, not always successfully – meaning that positioning the country as a geopolitical player must be based not only on its potential but also on its real capabilities and its ability to effectively utilise its resources and strategic position.

According to Z. Bzhezinskyi (2000), Ukraine is a state whose importance is determined by its "vulnerable location" and its ability to play a special role in the lives of geostrategic players by either providing them access to key regions or denying them resources (Kotovych, 2009).

Although this statement was made quite some time ago, the resource factor has become particularly relevant today: the information space is filled with analyses regarding Ukraine's resources, particularly rareearth metals and claims over them. "U.S. President Donald Trump stated that his administration seeks to negotiate with Ukraine for access to its valuable natural resources – rare-earth metals. According to Trump's logic, this could serve as "payment" for continued U.S. support for Ukraine in its war with Russia" (Trump wants control..., 2025).

However, the issue of rare-earth metals also concerns Europe, although its dependence on imported critical raw materials differs significantly from its reliance on Russian fossil fuels. Unlike fossil fuels, which are widely consumed across the economy, critical raw materials are required in smaller quantities but contain essential components needed for specific production processes. For example, lithium, cobalt, and manganese are key materials for the production of batteries for electric vehicles (Mouel & Poitiers, 2023) and other high-tech industries.

K. Suzuki (2023) emphasised that technology plays numerous important roles in modern society. It drives business and industrial development and can also transform the military and security sectors. Given the increasing tension in the global security environment in recent years, the issue of technological competitiveness has become a key concern in international affairs. While geopolitical risks and their impact on global production and trade are subjects of ongoing debate, there is now substantial empirical evidence indicating increased fragmentation of global value chains. Disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia's war against Ukraine, and escalating geopolitical tensions are generally viewed as signs of a trend towards deglobalisation (Attinasi *et al.*, 2023).

Therefore, enhancing economic security and achieving strategic autonomy are two key components of the new economic governance within the EU (Steinberg & Wolff, 2023). Such autonomy, among other things, is ensured by creating a necessary security buffer against monopolistic suppliers. While materials already form the foundation of the European economy, serving as the physical basis for most economic goods, the transition to a "green" economy will further increase their importance. It is expected that batteries, for example, will drive global demand for lithium up by 500-800 per cent by 2030 (Bonfanti & Garicano, 2022).

As a result, the declared goal of the European Commission's new industrial strategy, introduced in March 2020, was to manage the transition to green and digital technologies while avoiding external dependence (Tagliapietra *et al.*, 2023). J. Hackenbroich *et al.* (2022) noted that the economic weight of the European Union is decreasing compared to other states, marking the beginning of a new phase of globalisation characterised by an increased use of economic tools for geopolitical purposes. Consequently, there is a growing interest from the European Union in Ukraine's critical raw materials. In this unstable global environment, economic security must be one of the key transformations that Europe undertakes. Therefore, achieving greater economic security involves developing mechanisms for protection against aggression (e.g., Russia's war against Ukraine), leveraging economic tools and diplomacy in global conflicts, and establishing a renewed hard security sector (Zulig, 2023; Galaziuk & Zelinska, 2024).

A distinctive feature of the modern global economy is the rapid development of liberalisation and integration, leading to openness and interdependence among national economies. However, this also raises the issue of safeguarding the national interests (economic, political, and social) of individual states (Rohach, 2013). Thus, achieving economic security requires long-term efforts and cooperation with the EU, which is also linked to Ukraine's territorial losses. The principles of territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders hold a central place in the modern international legal system, serving as democratic regulatory sources of international law and norms of a universal nature. At the same time, in the interconnected system of international relations under globalisation, it is difficult to expect the isolation of conflicts, even in bilateral relations, without the greater or lesser involvement of third parties (Tymchenko & Kononenko, 2021).

Following the events of 2014 in southern and eastern Ukraine, issues of annexation, occupation, and state succession gained particular significance, with the Russian-Ukrainian war pushing them to the forefront (Kononenko *et al.*, 2022). The economic consequences of such territorial loss depend on the productivity of these regions and the degree of their integration with the rest of Ukraine. Nevertheless, Ukraine's economy will eventually adapt to any situation; the question is how painful this adjustment will be (Charap & Priebe, 2023). To analyse Ukraine's potential for adapting to the outlined foreign policy and economic challenges, it is useful to examine the experiences of Georgia following the 2008 war and the Baltic states after the collapse of the USSR. Georgia faced territorial losses after the 2008 war with Russia, when South Ossetia and Abkhazia became de facto separated regions under Russian influence, leading to significant economic consequences such as the loss of access to resources and markets in these regions, as well as an influx of refugees that strained the budget; however, Georgia adapted quickly by focusing on reforms aimed at Western integration, actively pursuing European integration through economic reforms and the attraction of foreign investment, as noted in a study (Kakachia & Minesashvili, 2015).

Similarly, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, after gaining independence in 1991, encountered economic challenges due to the disruption of ties within the Soviet economy and the need to adapt to market conditions, choosing a rapid path towards European integration by reforming their economies and political systems. Estonia, for instance, became a leader in digitalisation, which attracted foreign investment and fostered economic growth – while their swift integration into the EU and NATO in 2004 ensured security and economic stability, according to research (Mole, 2012).

Like Georgia and the Baltic states, Ukraine after 2014 has faced the need to adapt to new geopolitical realities (war, territorial losses) and economic challenges (disruption of trade ties with Russia), with all these countries opting for integration with global structures (EU, WTO) as a means of adaptation; however, Georgia and the Baltic states experienced smaller-scale conflicts and received faster Western support, whereas Ukraine grapples with a prolonged conflict and slower reform progress.

The analysis of the experiences of Georgia and the Baltic states confirms that Ukraine's economy will eventually adapt to new conditions, but highlights that the difficulty of this process depends on the speed of reforms, external support, and internal stability. Unlike other countries, Ukraine faces a unique combination of war and economic challenges, complicating adaptation; yet the experience of other nations suggests that integration into global markets and reforms can significantly ease this process.

A significant factor that has emerged recently is the political tension between Ukraine and the United States, despite their strategic partnership based on shared interests in security, democracy, and economic development; however, analysing potential political conflicts and their implications for Ukraine's economic security reveals risks and vulnerabilities that may arise from escalating tensions. In the event of political confrontation, Ukraine could face serious economic challenges, as the United States is a key partner providing financial, military, and humanitarian aid, and a reduction or cessation of this support could adversely affect Ukraine's macroeconomic stability, particularly amid the ongoing war with Russia. The United States is also a leading investor in Ukraine's economy, so deteriorating relations could reduce Ukraine's investment attractiveness and lead to capital outflows.

Moreover, Ukraine's cooperation with international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank heavily depends on the United States, which holds significant influence in these organisations, and any suspension or delay in financial assistance programmes could weaken the hryvnia, increase inflation, and deplete the National Bank of Ukraine's reserves. Trade and economic relations would also suffer, as the United States is an important market for Ukrainian products, particularly in metallurgy, agriculture, and the IT sector; the introduction of trade restrictions, tariffs, or sanctions against Ukrainian companies could reduce export revenues, a critical source of foreign currency income.

Additionally, technological dependence poses another risk, as Ukraine actively collaborates with American companies in digital technologies, energy, defence, and medicine, and restricted access to these technologies could slow economic modernisation and reduce the competitiveness of Ukrainian enterprises. In the political context, confrontation with the United States could weaken Ukraine's international standing, diminish support within European structures, and complicate its Euro-Atlantic integration, ultimately increasing Ukraine's political and economic vulnerability to other global players, such as Russia and China.

## Discussion

M. Mouel & N. Poitiers (2023) emphasised in their research that a state's geopolitical position determines its resilience to external threats, while strategic resources, such as rare-earth metals, become objects of international interest. Their findings align with the results of the present study, which also highlighted the strategic importance of Ukraine's natural resources and geopolitical position. However, the analysis conducted above reveals a different perspective on the role of resources: while M. Mouel & N. Poitiers (2023) focus on economic benefits; this study indicates that resources can become a source of external pressure, particularly due to the interest of the USA and the EU, thereby increasing Ukraine's vulnerability. These arguments are worth supporting regarding the importance of geopolitical positioning, but this study disagrees with their overly optimistic view of economic opportunities, as, in the context of war, resources complicate security rather than solely fostering development. The reason for these discrepancies may lie in the authors' focus on a broader European context, whereas this study accounts for Ukraine's specific circumstances, particularly its ongoing military conflict.

M.G.D. Attinasi *et al*. (2023) investigated the impact of external actors on national security, focusing on economic and military threats, as well as the fragmentation of global supply chains due to Russia's war against Ukraine. Their results partially coincide with the current findings, as they also noted the impact of the war on Ukraine's economic security, particularly through its dependence on external financial support. However, the authors' claim that deglobalisation is the dominant trend appears debatable, as this study demonstrates that, for Ukraine, integration into global structures (e.g., through European integration) remains a key adaptation pathway, as seen in the cases of Georgia and the Baltic states. The pessimistic view of globalisation is not supported, as it is considered to offer Ukraine opportunities for economic recovery despite associated risks. The divergence in perspectives may result from differing focuses: M.G.D. Attinasi *et al*. (2023) analysed global trends, while the emphasis here is on Ukraine's specific case, where integration is considered essential for survival.

K. Suzuki (2023) highlighted the rise of hybrid threats, particularly cyberattacks and information warfare, as well as the role of technology in security. These findings are partially supported, acknowledging Ukraine's technological dependence on the United States as a potential risk in the event of political conflict. The analysis is expanded through the inclusion of economic and geopolitical aspects, such as the impact of war and integration, which were not the primary focus of Suzuki. His conclusions on the importance of technology are supported, although it is argued that, in Ukraine's context, cyber threats constitute only a part of a broader issue shaped by war and external pressure. The difference in interpretations may stem from K. Suzuki's (2023) focus on the technological aspect, in contrast to a systemic approach that considers all components of security.

F. Steinberg & G. Wolff (2023), in their comparative studies of national security models, emphasise the importance of economic autonomy and resilience in countering external threats. Their findings align with the present study in emphasising economic security as a foundation of national security, which is supported by the current analysis of the role of financial stability in Ukraine's sovereignty. It is reasonable to support their conclusions, as economic security is indeed crucial, especially in wartime. However, this study adds Ukraine's specific context, particularly the impact of a prolonged conflict, which makes achieving autonomy more challenging compared with the countries analysed by the authors. This difference can be explained by the fact that F. Steinberg & G. Wolff (2023) examine more stable economies, while Ukraine is in the midst of an active conflict.

J. Hackenbroich *et al*. (2022) noted that globalisation is increasingly used as a tool of geopolitical influence, creating new security challenges. This observation aligns with the present findings, which also highlight Ukraine's dependence on external partners, such as the United States, and the risks linked to political tensions. Their conclusions are supported, as economic dependence indeed heightens Ukraine's vulnerability. At the same time, it is emphasised that, for Ukraine, globalisation represents not only a threat but also an opportunity for integration – an aspect not explored in detail by the authors. The discrepancies may arise from J. Hackenbroich *et al*. (2022) focusing on global trends, while the present analysis considers Ukraine's specific context.

K. Kakachia & S. Minesashvili (2015) and R. Mole (2012) analysed the experiences of Georgia and the Baltic states after conflicts and the collapse of the USSR, highlighting integration into Western structures (EU, NATO) as a key factor in their adaptation. This argument is confirmed by the present study, which also identifies European integration as a vital pathway for Ukraine. At the same time, Ukraine's unique challenges – including a prolonged conflict and slow reforms – are noted as complicating its trajectory compared with Georgia or the Baltic states. The authors' conclusions on the importance of integration are supported, while it is also emphasised that, in Ukraine's case, the process demands more time and external support. These differences can be attributed to the scale of conflict: Georgia and the Baltic states experienced shorter conflicts and received more immediate Western support.

The study's results share both similarities and differences with the findings of other authors. Common ground is found in the recognition of geopolitical positioning (Mouel & Poitiers, 2023), economic security (Steinberg & Wolff, 2023), and integration (Kakachia & Minesashvili, 2015) as central components of national security. Divergences arise from Ukraine's specific circumstances: prolonged conflict, slow reforms, and a unique geopolitical role complicate the applicability of general models. The conclusions regarding the importance of economic autonomy and integration are supported, while excessive optimism about globalisation (Attinasi *et al*., 2023) or resource potential (Mouel & Poitiers, 2023) is challenged, as these factors often become sources of vulnerability for Ukraine. Such discrepancies result from the differing focuses of the studies: broader trends and more stable regions versus Ukraine's singular context.

## Conclusions

The subject of this article was the impact of Ukraine's geopolitical position and external factors on its national and economic security in the context of contemporary challenges such as war, globalisation, tensions with the United States, and European integration. The article presented a thorough, interdisciplinary analysis combining legal, economic, and geopolitical perspectives. It examined both internal and external threats, with a focus on three major challenges: the war with Russia, globalisation processes, and integration with the EU. The study emphasised the foundational role of economic security for national resilience and highlighted Ukraine's dependence on external resources and financial assistance. The risks posed by strained United States-Ukraine relations, which could negatively affect investment, trade, and technological advancement, were assessed. The strategic importance of rare-earth elements and other natural resources was also addressed. A comparative analysis with Georgia and the Baltic states illustrated how small states can navigate similar external pressures.

The findings provided a significant contribution to understanding national security as a multidimensional and dynamic system shaped by internal and external pressures. The study conceptualised security not as a static domestic issue but as a flexible, interconnected structure involving the economy, international law, and foreign policy. This approach enhanced the current academic discourse by stressing the interdisciplinary nature of national security analysis. The study expanded the notion of economic security, urging a reconsideration of its role amid hybrid warfare, import dependencies, and global supply chain disruptions. By demonstrating that strategic resources such as rare-earth metals are both assets and potential vulnerabilities, the research introduces a crucial dimension to economic and geopolitical debates.

The analysis also clarified how integration can simultaneously serve as a tool for adaptation and a source of external constraints, limiting policy flexibility. These findings refined the conceptual framework of security as a balance between sovereignty and cooperation. The comparative component reinforced the applicability of EU integration as a strategy for resilience, though Ukraine's unique context – warfare, reform needs, and institutional fragility – requires tailored application. The research underlined the strategic role of Ukraine's natural resources in international relations, as increased interest from global powers brings both opportunity and risk. Political tensions, particularly with key allies, could undermine financial stability and weaken Ukraine's position in global markets. Therefore, the findings stressed the importance of strategic dialogue, diversification of foreign policy, and the reinforcement of domestic economic capacity.

Future studies should explore targeted mechanisms for mitigating external threats to economic security under global and regional uncertainty. Special attention should be paid to developing tools for cooperation with international organisations in the field of security and identifying modern economic instruments to safeguard national interests.

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## Conflict of Interest

None.

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