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## Socio-Economic Development of the Country as a Predictor of Its National Security

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**Abstract:**

**Purpose:** The article examines specific factors of socio-economic development in the context of national security. The purpose of the current work is to identify the connections between selected indicators of socio-economic development and the level of national security, in the context of improving the quality of life for all citizens.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** The process of globalization has caused changes that manifest in various spheres of human life. One of the main positive aspects of the globalization process, which affects the quality of human life, is regional development. This can be measured using selected socio-economic indicators.

**Findings:** Regional development is not the only factor that affects the quality of human life. Negative aspects of the socio-economic development process, such as illegal migration and the overall increase in crime, have made the issue of national security extremely relevant for every country.

**Practical Implications:** One of the numerous aspects of national security that negatively affects the quality of human life, as well as the overall perception of the globalization process, is migration and the crimes committed by foreigners in certain countries.

**Originality/Value:** Since the goal of socio-economic development is to improve the quality of human life, it is also necessary in this context to address the security issues of each citizen in a given country, which, overall, is a component of national security.

**Keywords:** Socio-economic development, development factor, aspect of national security, global security threat index, country security management model, national security structure, illegal migration, crime situation.

**JEL codes:** O10, H56, F52.

**Paper Type:** Research article.

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## **1. Introduction**

The process of globalization affects the life of both the individual and society as a whole, since each individual, within the framework of the modern concept of the nation-state, is an integral part of this society (Chernilo, 2020). The manifestations of globalization can be seen in the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres, as well as in the field of security.

However, the most significant impact of globalization can be observed in the socio-economic sphere, where globalization is reflected in the opening of national economies, the creation of new jobs, the opening of the national labor market to foreign workers, and, consequently, in the reduction of unemployment rates. The creation of new jobs and the arrival of foreign workers also highlight the issue of national security for each country.

The crime situation has worsened in several European Union countries after the opening of the labor market to illegal migrants (Tymoshenko *et al.*, 2020). This is confirmed by several studies conducted in various countries of the European Union and North America, including the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the United States.

That is why it is very important to investigate the impact of globalization on socio-economic development in the context of national security. However, it should be noted that according to a member of the Council on Economic Development of Ukraine, E. Libanova, migration is not a threat to national security if it is controlled and managed properly (Libanova, 2020).

Now, following the full-scale aggression initiated by Russia on February 24, 2022, the issue of socio-economic security has intensified for Ukraine as a component of national security. It has become relevant not only at the level of individual economic entities but also at the level of entire markets or sectors. National socio-economic security is defined as a key element of a new level of quality in the strategic development of Ukraine's national security as a whole.

The exacerbation of economic security issues is manifested in new aspects of security theory related to the institutional transformation of the domestic economy, which is a necessary condition for survival in conditions of war of attrition and successful post-war modernization (Dankevich *et al.*, 2024).

Modern trends in institutional support for economic modernization are of significant importance for the country's economic security. Recent research in this area relates to new concepts for developing methods and mechanisms that can protect the economic interests of the state, enterprises, organizations, public and entrepreneurial structures. These findings are reflected in Ukraine's strategy for socio-economic development.

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The multi-vector nature of changes occurring in the modern socio-economic system dictates the necessity of developing and implementing an institutional approach to addressing a complex of economic security issues. At the same time, the transformation of the domestic economic sector is a natural phenomenon resulting from war, globalization, and a series of global economic processes, including the global reorganization of production and the integration of the country into these economic changes.

The impact of transnational corporations on economic, political, and social institutions of states does not lend itself to a straightforward positive or negative assessment (Garcia-Bernardo *et al.*, 2021).

In the modern context, the process of economic reforms manifests in the necessity to satisfy the fundamental interests of society, such as a balanced economy and its dynamic socio-economic development, which allows for competition with other societies and economic models. The formation of ideas about an open society in Ukraine coincides with the development of its economic system (Nalyvaiko and Chepik-Tregubenko, 2021).

The relevance of the issue of socio-economic security, and therefore institutional support for a complex of measures, depends on the current level of development of the national economy of each country. Among the main challenges for sustainable economic and social development in Ukraine in the context of national security are, stable inflationary processes, deficits in the state budget and state debt, ensuring the stability of the national currency, the state of and social protection for the population dependent on demographic indicators, employment and unemployment rates, and the outflow of financial and human capital (Yevtushok and Pendyura, 2023).

## 2. Literature Review

The socio-economic development of a country and its aspects as predictors of national security have long been a relevant topic for study by both domestic and international researchers. The importance and interconnectedness of societal aspects and the economic model by which it lives and develops, as well as questions of its safe existence and competition with populations of other countries, are evident to any thoughtful person. Below, several contemporary works will be presented from both Ukrainian and international researchers who have studied issues related to the chosen topic of the current research.

A group of Ukrainian scientists including A. Yakymchuk, O. Kardash, O. Postelzhuk, and O. Yakymchuk proposed a new system of state governance for ensuring social security in Ukraine within the framework of national security. This system is intended to be based on the conceptual principles they suggested for achieving socio-ecological-economic security in the conditions of hybrid warfare (Yakymchuk *et al.*, 2020).

V. Bilyi and V. Mykhailchuk identified sources of threats to national security in the context of globalization processes. One of the important conclusions of their article is that the prospects for socio-economic development of society largely depend on the state of national security formation of the state (Bily and Mykhalchuk, 2021).

Associate Professor of the Department of Theory and History of State and Law at Western Ukrainian National University, T. Podkovenko, identified that the concept of state policy in the field of national security in Ukraine should be comprehensive and systematic, involving coordination of external and internal components of economic, social, ecological, scientific-technological, cultural, military, and informational policies of the state (Podkovenko, 2021).

V. Pikhotsky and M. Pikhotska emphasize that one of the key components of national security is its socio-economic aspect - economic security, as it serves not only as the foundation for the growth of economic indicators of each state, but also as the basis for its societal development (Pihotsky and Pihotska, 2022).

In their research article, V. Peterman and K. Dubych examined the nature of economic security in Ukraine within the context of state governance, highlighting the necessity to enhance the directions of economic security as a component of national security as a whole (Petreman and Dubych, 2021).

The research team consisting of S. Onyshchenko, O. Masliy, A. Glushko, and A. Chervyak investigated contemporary issues in preventing external and internal threats to socio-economic security at various levels (individuals, society, business, and state) (Onyshchenko *et al.*, 2022).

R. Bondarenko and V. Mykhailchuk demonstrated that ensuring Ukraine's information security is a leading direction of state policy, from which its national security and socio-economic development depend (Bondarenko and Mykhalchuk, 2021).

In the scientific work of A. Nikitishina, it is asserted that the development of conceptual approaches to forming a national security system of the state requires consideration of financial-budgetary and socio-economic aspects of its provision (Nikitishyn, 2022).

In their article, D. Efeurhobo and C. Fredrick argue that addressing socio-economic issues such as ineffective representation, exclusion of individuals from different segments of the population, and religious intolerance, among others, will help promote national security in Nigeria (Efeurhobo and Fredrick, 2020).

P. Nwokwu and G. Ogayi are among the researchers studying national security issues in Nigeria. They identified the main challenges to Nigeria's national security in the context of its socio-economic development (Nwokwu and Ogayi, 2021).

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The research conducted by a group of Indonesian scholars describing the socio-economic aspects of the resilience of the young territorial district of Pidie Jaya against disasters from the perspective of Indonesia's national security is also intriguing (Riskina *et al.*, 2021).

A. Kenneth, S. Udeh, J. Ugwu, and J. Odo identified the following major threats to Nigeria's national security and socio-economic development, the activities of the terrorist organization Boko Haram in the northeast, the crisis between farmers and herders in the southwest and north-central states, and banditry and kidnappings in the southeast and south-south regions (Kenneth *et al.*, 2023).

Pakistani researchers have identified the transition from natural gas to biogas as one of the key directions for improving environmental sustainability and socio-economic conditions in their homeland (Kanwal *et al.*, 2022).

The study by Y. Yahya, J. Widjayanto, and A. Hendra on the threats to national security in the border areas of Indonesia with East Timor is particularly interesting. It identifies the differing levels of socio-economic development between these states as one of the main causes of border conflicts (Yahya *et al.*, 2024).

Indian researcher V. Ahluwalia has identified a series of major threats to India's national security arising from its uneven and sometimes restrained socio-economic development (Ahluwalia, 2021).

Based on A. Singh's research, the main socio-economic reasons contributing to the phenomenon of narco-terrorism in Kashmir include low living standards, unemployment, marginalization, and the disenfranchisement of certain groups, which form the basis for future threats to national security (Singh, 2024).

In the reviewed scientific literature, there is no single approach developed for studying the trends in the interrelationship between social and economic growth and national security. Furthermore, recommendations have not been provided on halting the social and economic growth of a country by potentially hostile states or organizations attempting to undermine national security to eliminate competition or further territorial aggression.

To conduct a thorough and high-quality investigation that will enable achieving the set goal, it is necessary to formulate a research hypothesis, the cessation of the process of economic and social development of a country, or initiating its degradation, serves as the basis for compromising national security in the context of further destruction of the country as an economic competitor or appropriation of its territories.

Based on the findings from the reviewed studies by domestic and international scholars, it is pertinent to note that they require updating due to ongoing changes in

the social and economic spheres and the implementation of advanced systems to ensure the appropriate level of national security. The aim of the research is to identify the connections between selected indicators of regional development to enhance the stimulation of socio-economic aspects and the level of national security, thereby improving the overall quality of life for all citizens.

### **3. Research Methodology**

During the study, the following scientific literature was used within the thematic focus, monographs, scientific-analytical publications by Ukrainian and foreign scholars on the researched issues, results of independent observations by international organizations, and insights from security experts.

To solve the research tasks, a number of general scientific methods were applied:

- *Monitoring method*: Used for gathering, systematizing, and analyzing information on aspects of socio-economic development and components of national security.

- *Comparison method*: Employed during the study to analyze the role of national security issues across different countries.

- *Abstraction method*: Used to highlight key concepts and categories during the investigation.

- *Analysis and synthesis methods*: Utilized in the process of identifying stages and factors of development, as well as the most influential elements of the studied object.

- *Inductive method*: Applied for predictive analysis of the future socio-economic development level of Ukraine.

- *Graphical (visual) method*: Utilized for visually representing the ranking of national security among selected countries.

- *Abstract-logical and dialectical methods of scientific cognition, as well as the method of scientific abstraction*: Employed in the research for forming theoretical generalizations, refining the conceptual framework, and formulating conclusions.

During the writing of the study, according to its purpose and several other factors, the following main tasks were set:

- Definition of the concept of "national security" and its components.
- Brief description of globalization issues as part of the socio-economic development of countries today.
- Identification of main mechanisms and ways to halt socio-economic development in countries using existing examples.

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- Explanation of the specificity of Ukraine, a country currently at war, in the context of the link between its national security and socio-economic development.
  - Providing recommendations to counter attempts to undermine national security by halting the socio-economic development of the country.

The relevance of the researched topic is substantiated by the importance of continuous social and economic development for national security of states, as attempts to halt it are often used as weapons (as in the case of Russia) or to create unfair competition (China).

The object of the chosen study is the process of reviewing the characteristics of socio-economic development of a country as a predictor of its national security, while the subject is defined as the principles of applying sustainable socio-economic development as the basis for national security.

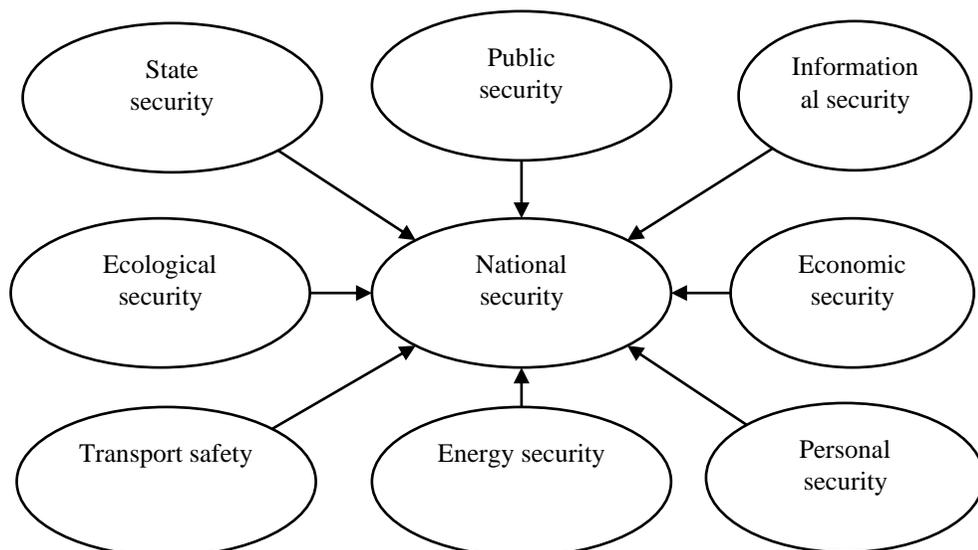
#### 4. Results

All countries around the world strive to maintain their national security in response to existing and anticipated risks and threats. They primarily ensure it through the development and application of a unified system of modern high-tech tools. (Brantly *et al.*, 2017). National security depends on the organization of state structures and the level of societal awareness. Only through unity and interethnic harmony, with a national idea supported by the majority of the population, can a state become strong and developed.

Therefore, the implementation of responsible domestic and foreign policies is the key to national security (Levchenko *et al.*, 2019). To begin with, it is necessary to define the concept of “national security.”

Despite the fact that the meaning of the term “national security” has evolved over many years, its fundamental definition remains the American “umbrella” term, which signifies a range of national efforts aimed at ensuring the security and resilience of the country against terrorism and other threats, where its interests and aspirations can thrive (US EPA, 2024). The main components of national security are presented in Figure 1.

Capacity of the state to protect its national interests, address economic issues, and maintain its international reputation also plays a crucial role in ensuring national security (Ali *et al.*, 2023). Thus, economic security is one of the key components of the national security system, as the concept of national security remains an empty phrase without assessing the viability of the economy, its resilience against potential internal and external threats, since it represents one of the vital aspects of societal, state, and individual activities (Motaylo, 2020).

**Figure 1.** Constituent elements of the state's national security

**Source:** Compiled from (Maryan & Markiyan, 2021)

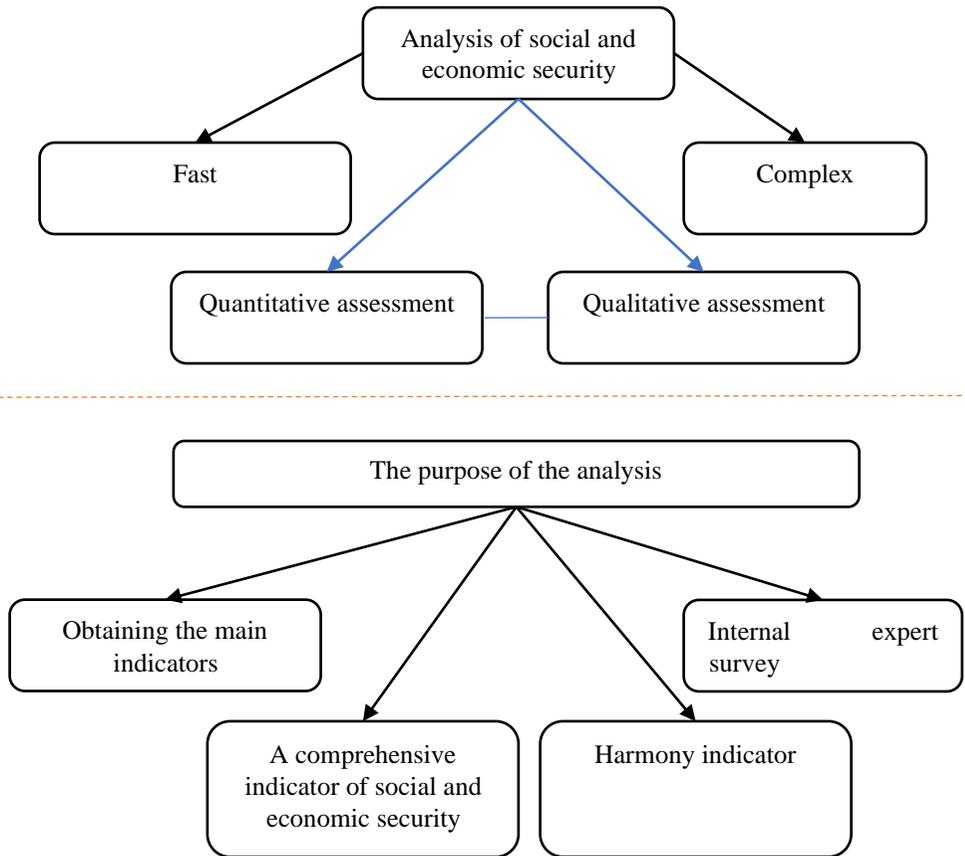
It is impossible to achieve economic development without ensuring the security of society and the state, which are components of national security (Uno *et al.*, 2021). According to the Law of Ukraine "On National Security," the foundation of domestic social security as a component of national security lies in protecting the vital interests of individuals, citizens, and society.

It ensures social progress and economic development by timely identifying, preventing, and neutralizing real and potential threats to national interests in the social sphere. This includes social policy and pension provision, migration policy, healthcare, education, and cultural development of the population (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2023).

Each level of economic security within the hierarchical structure is very important and closely interacts with other levels. However, national economic security is a kind of 'transitional' level that links international security with economic security at micro-levels, such as regions, enterprises, and individuals.

Adherence to the fundamental methodological principles of assessing socio-economic security is crucial for obtaining accurate results and enables rational financial and economic management. It should be noted that the comprehensive methodology for assessing the socio-economic security of sustainable development of economic entities is based on a systematic approach (Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Types of socio-economic security analysis and its purpose



*Source:* Compiled from Pakhucha et al., 2023.

According to the research results of T. Kosmider, national security consists of several levels, where elements that create and manage it are located:

- Social order and stability, maintained through the organization of society and state authority.
- Social equality, ensured by governmental institutions.
- National security strategy, formed based on social, economic, and political capabilities.
- Management of national security, which occurs through the combination of all the aforementioned elements and processes (Kosmider, 2021).

Research on the impact of a region's economic and social development on national security is possible only after determining the values of selected economic-security indicators (Soltés et al., 2020).

To assess this impact, Slovakia was chosen as a case study because, as a former Eastern Bloc country, it has a range of indicators similar to those of Ukraine, and statistical data on these indicators are readily available.

To determine the impact and degree of dependence of economic indicators on security from the perspective of correlation analysis, individual economic indicators can be considered as independent variables. Crime rates, which serve as an indicator of security, can be chosen as the dependent variable for the purposes of correlation analysis.

Among the economic indicators, the chosen region will be analyzed based on regional GDP, regional GDP per capita, net monetary income of households (NMI), net monetary expenditures of households (NME), gross monthly wages (GMW), number of enterprises (NE), number of self-employed persons (S-EP), and unemployment rate. The dependence of these indicators will be considered not only in relation to total crime (TC) but also to economic crime (EC), which may be most closely linked to economic development (Vyrostopova, 2020).

Table 1 contains the correlation matrix of the relationships between socio-economic indicators and national security indicators in the Slovak Republic.

**Table 1.** *Correlation Dependencies Between Socio-Economic Indicators and National Security Indicators of Slovakia*

Indicator	rGDP	rHDP	NMI	NME	GMW	NE	S-EP	NE	EC	TC
rGDP	1									
rHDP	1	1								
NMI	0,992	0,992	1							
NME	0,981	0,981	0,984	1						
GMW	0,994	0,994	0,990	0,969	1					
NE	0,968	0,969	0,968	0,924	0,982	1				
S-EP	0,458	0,455	0,336	0,459	0,338	0,206	1			
NE	-0,815	-0,815	-0,866	-0,908	-0,820	-0,734	-0,489	1		
EC	0,438	0,437	0,279	0,362	0,344	0,223	0,724	-0,335	1	
TC	-0,732	-0,734	-0,803	-0,722	-0,774	-0,850	0,177	0,563	0,254	1

**Source:** *Compiled based on Digitaes Archiv, 2022; Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Slovak Republic, 2022.*

Based on the above facts from the correlation matrix for the entire territory of the Slovak Republic, it can be asserted that there is a strong linear dependence  $\langle 0,6; 0,8 \rangle$  exists between economic crime and the number of individual entrepreneurs (self-employed individuals).

The average linear dependence  $\langle 0,4; 0,6 \rangle$  exists between economic crime and regional GDP, regional GDP per capita, and between overall crime and the unemployment rate. Weak linear dependence  $\langle 0,2; 0,4 \rangle$  exists between economic crime and net household incomes and expenditures, gross monthly wages, and the

number of enterprises. Very weak linear dependence.  $(0; 0,2)$  exists only between overall crime and the number of self-employed individuals. In the correlation matrix, besides positive correlation coefficients, negative values can also be found.

They express an inverse linear relationship between the studied indicators. There is a strong inverse linear relationship  $(-0,6; -0,8)$  between overall crime rate and household net monetary income and the number of enterprises. There is a moderate inverse linear relationship  $(-0,4; -0,6)$  between overall crime rate and regional GDP, regional GDP per capita, household net monetary expenditures, and gross monthly wage. Weak inverse linear relationship  $(-0,2; -0,4)$  exists only between economic crime and unemployment rate.

These facts indicate relatively weak dependencies between indicators of economic development and crime. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that some dependencies are strong, regardless of whether they are direct or inverse linear relationships. However, an important conclusion is that while economic crime directly depends on specific economic indicators, overall crime largely depends indirectly on these indicators.

One interesting case study for examining the impact of socio-economic development factors in the context of national security is Guyana, the only continental country in South America that is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. This country is notable because despite its small territorial size, it has conflicts with two neighboring countries—Suriname and Venezuela. In December 2023, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro threatened to annex Essequibo, a region that constitutes two-thirds of Guyana's territory, escalating a dispute that has been ongoing for 200 years (Bethell, 2024).

Example of Guyana, as a young state, underscores the importance of reforming social and economic institutions to better ensure national security, as its current level does not meet subregional and global challenges. It has been identified that in order to implement extensive security sector reform in the Republic of Guyana, it is necessary to first reform the social and economic spheres to accelerate their development (Nte *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, a crucial factor for Guyana's economic growth is ensuring a high level of information security (cybersecurity) as a component of national security, as the ability to combat cybercrime and strengthen cyber resilience is crucial for improving economic and social development (Fraser, 2021).

The process of globalization signifies the integration of economies, societies, and cultures worldwide across all regions and countries. This has been facilitated by advances in technology, communications, and transportation. From a socio-economic perspective, globalization is viewed as a process that has significant implications for social and economic development. Globalization has led to increased inequality within and between countries.

While some countries have experienced significant income growth, others have lagged behind. This has resulted in wealth concentration among a few and widened income gaps (Saba, 2023).

The main mechanisms for halting the social and economic development of a country include economic sabotage, conducted by special service agents, the spread of panic and conspiracy theories among the population through mass media, and the use of malicious software to corrupt data of companies and regular users.

One example of the use of malicious software to halt the economic development of Ukraine and its partners was the deployment of the NotPetya ransomware virus, first detected in June 2017. The virus rapidly spread across Ukraine and subsequently to other countries, including the United Kingdom and the United States. NotPetya initially masqueraded as software called Petya, which is used to encrypt files on a user's computer. After installation, the virus spread to other computers on the same network.

Unlike other ransomware programs, the NotPetya virus was designed not to permanently encrypt data but to destroy it. This made it significantly more destructive and caused billions of dollars in economic damage to affected countries. It is believed that the virus was created by the Russian Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) (Krasznay, 2020).

The above is just the most well-known case of such an attack on national economic security, although undoubtedly since the beginning of full-scale aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, the number of attacks and their complexity has only increased. Therefore, the issue of training specialists to counter attempts to disrupt national security by halting the country's socio-economic development has become urgent.

The example of Russia's actions against Ukraine, in terms of its economic and social destabilization, confirms the earlier hypothesis that halting the process of economic and social development of a country, or pushing it towards degradation, forms the basis for undermining national security. This is in the context of further destruction of the country as an economic competitor or the annexation of its territories.

Initially, Russian oligarchs, supported by the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation, extensively purchased Ukrainian industrial and power generation facilities, driving them into bankruptcy.

After the degradation of Ukraine's military-industrial complex and the annexation of parts of its territories, they proceeded to unlawfully appropriate property belonging to Ukrainian citizens in the occupied territories controlled by Russian forces.

## 5. Discussion

Although the topic of a country's socio-economic development as a predictor of its national security has gained popularity among domestic and Ukrainian researchers, none of the reviewed sources have explored it to such an extent and in such a comprehensive manner. Additionally, the studies used do not provide recommendations for countering attempts to undermine national security by halting the country's socio-economic development.

The main reasons for this situation have been identified as several factors:

- The absence of a clear connection between the goals and objectives of the research on the socio-economic development of a country as a predictor of its national security;
- Insufficient and limited theoretical basis in some studies, which does not allow for asserting their universal character due to the large number of potential gaps;
- Obsolescence and controversial interpretation of some of the materials used.

At the same time, some studies on the socio-economic development of a country as a predictor of its national security demonstrate specific and interesting results in the context of both Ukraine and other countries:

- A proposal for achieving socio-ecological-economic security in the conditions of hybrid warfare in Ukraine (Yakymchuk *et al.*, 2020);
- Consideration of information security as a factor on which national security and socio-economic development depend (Bondarenko and Mykhalchuk, 2021);
- Identification of migration as a normal social and economic factor, rather than a threat to national security (Libanova, 2020);
- Proposals for transitioning from natural gas to biogas to stimulate socio-economic development in Pakistan (Kanwal *et al.*, 2022);
- Identification of low living standards, unemployment, marginalization, and the humiliation of groups of people as the main causes of the increase in national security threats (Singh, 2024).

Based on the conducted research and its results, the following recommendations can be made to counter attempts to undermine national security by halting the socio-economic development of the country:

- Conduct permanent analysis of the country's key economic and social indicators;
- Involve multiple groups of both domestic and foreign independent experts in this analysis;
- Publish current statistics in specialized and publicly accessible publications;

- Include national security specialists in the team of experts;
- Investigate and determine the origins of anomalies in economic or social development;
- Continuously develop measures to counter economic sabotage at enterprises;
- Utilize special services for the collection and processing of information;
- Establish headquarters and centers to counter economic and social degradation, where responsible national security specialists can be trained and educated;
- Appeal to international organizations to condemn hostile actions aimed at halting economic and social development;
- Conduct operations against hostile countries in response to undermine their economic and social development.

For practical training in countering attempts to undermine national security by halting the socio-economic development of the country, an aspiring specialist can only benefit from active practice in conflict zones between states. If the government or educational institution has the agency and financial capabilities, training trips can be organized where common problems of working under conditions of secrecy, confidentiality, and uncertainty, as well as the cultural diversity of societies in different countries, will arise.

Solving all these non-trivial problems will require the constant use of the necessary skills for a national security specialist. The provided recommendations will help independent experts and state representatives understand the importance of national security skills and master them, which will play a positive role in the social and economic development of the country and all its citizens.

## **6. Conclusion**

In the course of the research, the specific features of national security in several selected countries were identified, allowing for a comparison of their governments' approaches to maintaining it in the context of socio-economic development. The study revealed the impact of globalization and its components, such as migration and the increase in criminal activity, on national security. However, as previously stated, this impact remains debatable and should be further investigated in future studies.

The main mechanisms and methods for halting the socio-economic development of countries have been described based on existing examples, along with recommendations to counter these processes.

The research hypothesis that the cessation of economic and social development, or the initiation of its trajectory towards degradation, is the foundation for undermining national security with the aim of ultimately destroying the country as an economic competitor or annexing its territories, has also been confirmed.

The results of the research can be used by domestic national security experts to counter attempts by Russia and its allies, such as China, North Korea, and Iran, to halt Ukraine's social and economic development by destroying its infrastructure, displacing its population, and conducting ongoing information and psychological operations (IPSO). These results can also be useful for officials from countries that may be potential victims of aggression in the future.

Further research on national security should be conducted in the context of the cultural and physical development of society. The examples of the situations in Ukraine, South Korea, and the brutally occupied regions of East Turkestan (Uyghurstan) and Tibet by China clearly demonstrate that hostile elements attempt to destroy the cultural heritage of the peoples inhabiting these territories and states, as well as to reduce their overall level of physical fitness to prevent effective resistance to the occupation of their lands.

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