

**PROSPECTS FOR MODERNIZATION AND GROWTH OF STRATEGIC SECTORS OF UKRAINIAN INDUSTRY****Serhii Pavlovskiy<sup>1</sup>, Olga Mohylevska<sup>2</sup>, Agnieszka Kopec<sup>3</sup>**

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**ABSTRACT.** The article examines the features of modernization and growth in Ukraine's strategic industrial sectors and identifies promising directions for their development. The authors analyze the consequences of the full-scale invasion for Ukraine's real economy, which manifested in significant losses of production capacities, destruction of logistics chains, and a reduction in the sector's share of GDP. The necessity of transitioning from a raw-material-based development model, reliant on resource advantages, to a structural transformation grounded in innovation is substantiated. Based on the analysis of the experience of developed countries (the USA, the EU) and the "Asian Tigers," the article highlights the importance of state policies aimed at targeted support for a narrow set of strategic sectors (semiconductors, biotechnology, microelectronics) as a key factor for economic growth. It is demonstrated that Ukraine's attempts to define priorities were too broad, indicating the absence of a clear industrial strategy and leading to underutilization of its resource potential. At the same time, the article emphasizes the pivotal role of digital transformation as a driver of recovery. EU financial instruments ("Digital Europe," Ukraine Facility, CEF) and national initiatives ("Community 4.0") are examined as mechanisms supporting Ukraine's integration into the European digital market, the development of 5G infrastructure, and the strengthening of cybersecurity even under wartime conditions. The study argues that a post-war growth strategy should combine macroeconomic stabilization measures with structural reforms focused on job creation. Priorities include the development of the defense-industrial complex, localization of production, energy security, and technological modernization of industry based on the principles of sustainable development and the circular economy. The article stresses that the success of transformation depends on systematic state policy, institutional maturity, and effective use of international assistance.

**Keywords:** Industrial policy, post-war recovery, structural transformation, strategic sectors, digital transformation, innovative development, defense-industrial complex (DIC), European integration, macroeconomic stabilization.

**INTRODUCTION**

**Problem statement.** Industry continues to play a leading role in the economy of Ukraine, because it is the development of this sector that provides the strongest multiplier effect: it forms a significant share of GDP, stimulates innovation and provides a significant part of export revenues. The process of deindustrialization, which lasted until the beginning of the war and led to a reduction in the share of the processing industry in GDP to approximately 20%, became one of the factors of the state's vulnerability. With a developed military-industrial complex, the production of modern equipment and larger budget resources for the army, the probability of aggression from Russia would be much lower. Therefore, the strategic task of the state should be the restoration and priority development of industry through the creation of a set of tools to support high-tech production.

Historical experience proves that no country has managed to build a competitive processing industry relying solely on market mechanisms: all successful examples involved state incentives. Victory in the war will be a powerful impetus for economic growth, but measures to support industry should be implemented today.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The issues of industrial policy transformation and post-war economic recovery in Ukraine are in the focus of attention of many scholars. In particular, S. Ishchuk and L. Sozanskyi investigated methodological approaches to a comprehensive assessment of the industrial sector, while M. Shtan focused on the globalization dimension of economic policy. The theoretical foundations of macroeconomic forecasts of post-war recovery were developed by M. Skrypnychenko. The issues of innovative development of technological sectors of industry were analyzed by I. Pidorycheva and V. Antoniuk. The research of E. Sheludko and M. Zavorodnia concerned changes in the state policy of industrial development strategy, and the works of O. Hutorova and T. Kupriianova were devoted to the formation of innovation and investment potential. Regional features of industrial development in the context of globalization were studied by Y. Poliakova and N. Rushchyshyn. O. Iliash, L. Smoliar, M. Duchenko and I. Dzhadan outlined strategic priorities for stimulating industrial and technological development through marketing tools. Planning for post-war recovery on European principles was considered by O. Kushnirenko and N. Hakhovych, while the directions and reserves of economic reconstruction were analyzed by N. Kaziuka and E. Sheket. The methodology for implementing industrial policy to strengthen economic potential was proposed by S. Oneshko. Structural and technological changes in the regional economy and the prospects for smart specialization were studied by S. Shults, O. Lutskiv, A. Oleshko, Z. Shatska and O. Rovniahin.

**The purpose** of the article is to study the current state of strategic industries in Ukraine, identify the main problems of their functioning, and determine the prospects for modernization and growth.

**Presentation of the main research material.** Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine, the real sector of the economy has suffered significant losses: production facilities, logistics and supply chains, infrastructure facilities, agricultural resources and human capital have been destroyed. According to the KSE Institute ("Russia Will Pay"), as of September 2023, Ukraine's direct losses amounted to 151.2 billion USD, of which 36.6 billion fell on the transport sector, 11.4 billion on industry, and 8.7 billion on Industrial agriculture and land [4].

Despite this, a recovery trend has emerged in 2023 due to the growth of domestic demand (in particular, for products for the Armed Forces of Ukraine and infrastructure reconstruction), stabilization of energy supply, relocation of enterprises, trade liberalization and export diversification. However, the development of the real sector is still based mainly on resource and geographical advantages, rather than on scientific and technological potential. Such a model preserves the raw material nature of the economy, limits the possibilities for deep processing of resources, the introduction of innovations and the creation of added value within the country [2].

Further development of the Ukrainian economy in wartime conditions requires the elimination of existing barriers and restrictions, as well as the dissemination of successful anti-crisis strategies and practices of enterprises that have already proven their effectiveness in adapting to new conditions. At the same time, the task of post-war recovery is the formation of the real sector based on modern technologies capable of ensuring the structural transformation of the economy with an emphasis on the development of processing industries [2]. The best practices of European economic policy should be integrated into this process, in particular, the focus on energy efficiency, the principles of sustainable development and the circular economy, resource-saving and environmentally friendly technologies.

Abandoning the raw material model of growth requires a systematic state policy aimed at forming a new industrial structure, in which the share of mechanical engineering, high-tech sectors of the food, pharmaceutical, chemical and petrochemical industries, as well as those subsectors of the mining sector and non-ferrous metallurgy that produce raw materials for technological

production will significantly increase [3]. One of the key tools in global practice is state support for strategic sectors and critical technologies, which ensures the creation of added value and the development of innovation.

Defining strategic priorities and their targeted support became key factors in the “economic miracle” of the countries known as the “Asian Tigers.” For example, in Taiwan, those industries that had close inter-industry ties, significant market potential, high technological capabilities, the ability to create significant added value, low energy intensity, and environmental safety were considered strategic [10, 11].

In the United States, the Supply Chain Resilience Plan focuses support on the semiconductor, high-capacity battery, critical minerals and materials, pharmaceutical, and active pharmaceutical ingredient industries. In particular, it includes 50 billion USD in investments to develop domestic semiconductor manufacturing, introduce credit and grant programs for battery manufacturing, expand government procurement preferences from the military to other critical industries, increase funding for pharmaceutical ingredient technology, and implement investment and technical support programs for small and medium-sized businesses in strategic sectors [1].

In 2009, the European Union identified a list of six key enabling technologies (KETs), which are considered the foundation for the development of many industries and socio-economic progress in general. They included advanced manufacturing technologies (robotics, 3D printing, computer modeling, etc.), new materials, biotechnology, micro- and nanoelectronics, photonics, as well as artificial intelligence, digital security, and telecommunications [4]. However, increasing dependence on imports of strategic materials and technologies and insufficient development of domestic advanced sectors became the basis for a review of industrial policy in 2021. Since then, the emphasis has shifted to clarifying sectoral priorities and strengthening support to increase the resilience of supply chains in key industries.

In 2021, the strategic sectors included critical raw materials, active pharmaceutical ingredients, lithium-ion batteries, “clean” hydrogen, semiconductors, and cloud technologies. Already in 2022, the list of critical raw materials and materials was refined and expanded to include new areas: the production of photovoltaic panels and related technologies, cybersecurity, and software [9, 13].

In Ukraine, in November 2020, the Ministry of Strategic Industries (Minstrategprom) presented a draft resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers “On Some Issues of the Development of the Industrial Complex of Ukraine.” The document proposed approving a list of 17 strategic industries, which were defined as “spheres of economic activity that are critically important for the economy and security of the state, encompassing enterprises capable of providing the full life cycle of homogeneous products, works or services using standard technologies and having a limited range of consumers, including business entities of various forms of ownership.” This list includes: the defense-industrial complex, the fuel and energy complex, the agro-industrial complex, the mining and metallurgical industry, the transport industry, the communications and telecommunications sector, the aviation and rocket and space industries, mechanical engineering, the chemical, food, light, glass and porcelain and faience, furniture and woodworking, printing, geological exploration, pharmaceutical industries, as well as construction and production of building materials.

However, the overly broad coverage of industries in this list indicates the lack of a clear vision of Ukraine's specialization in domestic and international markets, unclear definition of technological development priorities, and insufficient consideration of real opportunities for state support, taking into account the country's resource base.

The lack of a state policy for the rational use of critically important raw materials hinders the development of high-tech industries and contributes to the uncontrolled export of resources. The main consequences of this are:

1. Lack of a systematic approach in defining industrial development objectives in post-war recovery strategies.

2. Underutilization of the potential of Ukrainian subsoil: 117 out of 120 types of minerals in the world have been discovered in Ukraine, but the country continues to import critical resources, in particular rare earth metals. It is necessary to introduce modern mining and processing technologies and create internal production chains in cooperation with the EU.

3. Underestimation of industry in international aid programs: most of the funding is directed to the defense, humanitarian and infrastructure sectors. At the same time, the experience of post-war countries shows that the low share of support for the manufacturing sector (less than 3% in the Balkan countries) slows down recovery, causes an increase in deficits, unemployment and shadow economy [4-12].

Therefore, at the present stage, it is important for Ukraine to identify strategic industries at the state level, which will become the basis for their targeted support and will contribute to transformational changes in the economy under conditions of limited resources. When forming a list of such industries, it is necessary to take into account the needs of the war economy and the tasks of post-war reconstruction. It should be based on the results of interdisciplinary research and cover only a limited range of promising areas of industrial specialization of Ukraine in the domestic and foreign markets. Given the resource deficit, the development of strategic industries and the use of critical raw materials will largely depend on international assistance and cooperation.

In October 2023, the attraction of additional financial resources for the technological development and recovery of Ukraine, as well as the deepening of international cooperation in the field of digital transformation was carried out in accordance with Section V "Economic and sectoral cooperation" of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, the European Atomic Energy Community and the Member States of the European Union (Chapter 2. "Macroeconomic cooperation") [14].

As part of this agreement, the European Commission has proposed the creation of a new financial instrument, the Ukraine Facility, for the period 2024-2027, worth 50 billion euros in grants and loans. The Ukraine Facility establishes the Fund to Assist Ukraine in the Recovery, Reconstruction and Modernisation of the Country. The Fund will support structural reforms and investments that increase Ukraine's economic potential and contribute to the integration of digital markets [14].

Ukraine's participation in the program «Digital Europe» allows domestic researchers to receive grants for technological projects with a total budget of 6 billion euros. The program supports projects in the field of high-performance computing, artificial intelligence, the development of digital skills and the application of technologies in the economy and society [8].

The new wave of European Commission competitions within the digital component of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) program opens up access to 190 million euros in project funding for the development of Internet infrastructure and 5G: 100 million euros for research and 5G coverage along transport corridors, 90 million euros for backbone connectivity for global digital gateways (submarine cables, terrestrial and satellite infrastructure) [7].

The European Executive Agency for Health and Digital will co-finance projects to develop Gigabit and 5G networks, contributing to Ukraine's integration into the European digital ecosystem. To increase the resilience of electronic communications, the Verkhovna Rada in October recommended a draft law on amendments to the Law on Electronic Communications, which will stimulate the deployment of high-speed networks and ensure stable access to digital systems.

The USAID Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity Project, together with the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, has launched a \$500,000 grant program to support innovation in cyber defense; developers will receive about \$50,000 to implement their projects [12].

In October 2023, 23 out of 52 selected territorial communities presented digital solutions in the final of the program «Community 4.0 Digital Resilience Accelerator», including electronic document management systems, public electronic services, land management, educational platforms, and tools for attracting investment [6].

The program «Community 4.0 Digital Resilience Accelerator» is implemented in Ukraine by the international organization SocialBoost with the support of the Ministry of Digital

Transformation and the U-LEAD with Europe program. In times of war, it provides a digital resilience foundation for economic recovery and technological progress, mobilizing financial resources, deepening international cooperation, and attracting grants and investments to strengthen the economy and digital integration [6].

Active participation in the program «Digital Europe» gives Ukrainian researchers access to grant funding for projects in the areas of high-performance computing, artificial intelligence, digital skills, and other technologies. This contributes to the development of infrastructure, digital transformation, strengthening of technological potential, and integration of Ukraine into the European digital market even during martial law.

Successful economic recovery requires a clear state strategy, where the key elements are systematic policy and focus on specific qualitative results. Modernization of the economy, development of industry, the military-industrial complex, the processing sector and small and medium-sized businesses will ensure employment of the population and strengthen Ukraine's position as a strong European state [15].

The priorities of state economic policy should remain the restoration of production potential and job creation, as well as strengthening the balance of payments and currency stability. Job creation preserves the population's savings and labor potential, and the state can stimulate this through:

- investments in priority activities;
- public-private partnerships, especially in infrastructure;
- supporting businesses in creating jobs;
- state guarantees and compensation of interest on loans;
- government orders for goods and services;
- nationalization of systemically important businesses under threat of bankruptcy;
- stimulating import substitution and localization of production;
- moving production to safe regions;
- production conversion;
- solving logistical and energy problems.

Particular attention should be paid to the development of the military-industrial complex and the production of dual-use goods. Military needs determine the priorities of industrial policy: missile technology, portable complexes, unmanned aerial systems, ammunition. The restoration and modernization of large industrial facilities not only creates jobs, but also stimulates demand for related services, supporting small businesses in nearby regions.

At the same time, it is important to develop innovative technologies and modernize production processes to increase the productivity and competitiveness of Ukrainian industry in the international market. This includes the implementation of digital solutions, automation and intelligent production management systems. A combination of incentives for job creation, support for the military-industrial complex, and innovative development will allow Ukraine not only to rebuild its economy after the war, but also to lay the foundation for long-term sustainable growth, integration into European and global value chains, and strengthening national security.

The restoration of national industry must be based on technological modernization, as market incentives alone are insufficient in high-risk areas, especially under conditions of constant military threat. Ukraine has significant natural resource potential, and its effective use, as well as the development of industries with a high degree of processing of raw materials and agricultural products, will contribute to the technological renewal of the economy and the creation of powerful production clusters with a large number of jobs, including related industries, which will help solve the employment problem.

Ukraine's energy security is of strategic importance and requires active state support through increased coal production, construction of processing plants, and development of energy logistics. Military operations have radically changed the transport map of foreign trade, which requires adaptation of transport infrastructure to maximize export potential and meet the needs of the defense complex.

Simplification of border and customs control procedures (in particular, thanks to intergovernmental agreements, such as between Ukraine and Poland) is an important factor in the growth of trade and transport operations. Ukraine's agricultural sector has significant development potential, and increasing the level of raw material processing is a key direction for its modernization. Domestic agricultural enterprises are quite competitive and are able to independently expand production capacities and invest in processing, however, the limited sales markets and the high cost of loans force them to use state financial support.

An important factor in economic development is institutional maturity, which implies the rule of law, overcoming corruption, and the development of democratic institutions that open up opportunities for active investment attraction. At the same time, in wartime conditions, priority belongs to direct state incentives, while institutional reforms play a supporting role. Along with structural policy measures, it is necessary to ensure macroeconomic stability, in particular by strengthening the balance of payments, which should become a medium-term strategic priority.

Stabilization policy can be realized in two directions: administrative and structural. Administrative measures include temporary tightening of controls over capital movements, foreign exchange transactions, and imports, which should be implemented promptly and under constant monitoring. Structural measures include supporting import substitution, developing localized production, and improving logistics and transport infrastructure for exports. Exactly they ensure the long-term stability of the economy to currency risks.

During wartime, it is important to avoid focusing too much on inflation alone, ignoring unemployment, and to avoid prematurely returning to a free-floating exchange rate regime. The use of high interest rates as an anti-inflationary tool has limited effect, as the economy is in a state of structural crisis.

Therefore, the strategy for structural transformation of the Ukrainian economy should be based on an active state policy of job creation and cover the following areas:

- development of localization and import substitution;
- arms production and conversion of the military industry;
- ensuring energy security;
- development of logistics and transport infrastructure;
- nationalization and financial rehabilitation of strategic enterprises that are under threat of bankruptcy.

The launch of new production facilities will contribute to the locking of the money supply in the created added value and the formation of additional tax revenues, which is especially relevant in conditions of increasing emission volumes. Increasing the speed of money circulation and developing competitive industries will reduce the risks of a currency crisis and inflationary spiral. Job creation will also be an incentive for the return of citizens who were forced to leave the country due to military operations.

Thus, the strategic transformation of the Ukrainian economy in the context of war must combine short-term stabilization measures with long-term structural reforms. It should be aimed not only at supporting macro-financial stability, but also at creating the prerequisites for sustainable economic growth after the end of military operations.

The key factor will be the formation of a new industrial base capable of generating high-tech products and ensuring the domestic market and competitiveness in foreign markets. Particular attention should be paid to the development of human capital, as the return of labor resources and their effective integration into production processes will be the key to accelerated recovery.

In perspective, such a strategy will reduce dependence on external financial support, increase the country's investment attractiveness, and lay the foundation for integration into the European economic space.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Summarizing the above, it can be argued that the structural transformation of the Ukrainian economy in the face of military challenges should be carried out on the basis of a combination of

short-term anti-crisis measures with long-term modernization programs. The defining priorities in this process are the preservation and creation of new jobs, the development of high-value-added industries, strengthening energy security, improving logistics and transport infrastructure, and preserving the functional capacity of enterprises of strategic importance. The realization of the import substitution policy, the launch of new production facilities, and the introduction of innovative technologies will contribute to increasing tax revenues, minimizing currency risks, and ensuring the financial stability of the state. The formation of a favorable environment for the return of labor resources who were forced to leave the country is also of particular importance, because human capital is a key factor in sustainable economic growth. In future perspective, the realization of a comprehensive structural adjustment strategy will allow not only to overcome the crisis caused by the war, but also to integrate the national economy into the European economic space on the basis of competitiveness, innovation, and institutional stability.

Thus, the strategy for modernizing the Ukrainian economy in the context of war and post-war recovery should be based on a balance between operational stabilization measures and long-term structural changes. In the short term, it is important to ensure financial and macroeconomic stability, minimize social risks, support critical industries, and create conditions for maintaining employment. In the medium and long term, emphasis should be shifted to the development of innovative industries, technological modernization of industry, building energy independence, and integration into global production and logistics chains.

The successful implementation of such approaches will not only help restore the economy after the devastating consequences of the war, but also ensure its high-quality growth based on new competitive advantages. This, in turn, will contribute to strengthening Ukraine's economic sovereignty, expanding its role in the global economic system, and improving the well-being of the population.

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