

# International experience of public administration in the field of overcoming the consequences of military operations

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## Abstract

The article analyses the international experience of public administration in the field of overcoming the consequences of military operations. Overcoming the consequences of military operations requires effective public administration, including coordination of efforts of the government, international organizations, NGOs and the private sector.

Russia's military aggression against Ukraine has led to significant destruction of productive capital and infrastructure, caused human losses and social upheaval. The article discusses some examples of international experience of public administration in overcoming the consequences of military operations, which may be useful for developing strategies in Ukraine.

The analysis of international experience of public administration in overcoming the consequences of military operations has led to the conclusion that successful overcoming the consequences of military operations requires a comprehensive approach, including reforms of legal mechanisms of public administration, economic development, social reintegration and political stabilization.

International support is critical, but it must be well-coordinated and focused on long-term results. Western countries and international organizations are providing financial assistance to stabilize the economy and rebuild infrastructure. Association Agreement with the EU, which includes political and economic reforms to bring Ukraine closer to the European Union.

Rebuilding state institutions and fighting corruption are key to ensuring sustainable development and stability.

Ensure the development of programmes that promote reconciliation, social reintegration and support for affected communities. Ways to overcome the consequences of hostilities should be flexible and adaptive to changing conditions on the ground, considering cultural and social specificities.

Decentralisation - the transfer of powers and resources to the local level to improve the effectiveness of governance and recovery - may be one of the possible ways to overcome the consequences of hostilities.

International experience shows that overcoming the consequences of war requires a systemic approach, where effective public administration, international cooperation and coordination of efforts across different sectors of society play a key role. The use of these lessons can help Ukraine and other countries facing similar challenges to develop effective recovery and development strategies.

*Keywords:* public administration; mechanisms of public administration; public policy; consequences of military operations.

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## 1. Problem statement

Overcoming the consequences of hostilities requires effective public administration, including coordination of efforts of the government, international organizations, NGOs and the private sector.

The military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine has led to significant destruction of productive capital and infrastructure, caused human losses and social upheaval. According to T.Bohdan [1], the hostilities caused a significant reduction in jobs and incomes, which reduced purchasing power and the amount of accumulated assets. In 2022, the national economy lost 29.2 % of real GDP, and 13.5 million people were forced to leave their homes. More than 7 million people fell below the poverty line, and the poverty rate reached 24% of the population. Experts from the World Bank and the European Commission estimated the damage caused by the hostilities in Ukraine from 24 February 2022 to 24 February 2023 at \$134.7 billion. According to their estimates, the reconstruction needs amount to \$410.6 billion [1].

According to the World Bank, the housing sector (38 % of total damage), transport (26 %), energy (8 %), industry and trade (8 %), and agriculture (7 %) suffered the greatest losses. The transport sector accounts for 22 % of the total recovery needs (\$410.6 billion), the housing sector 17 %, the energy sector 11 %, the social protection and livelihoods sector 10 %, the disaster management sector 9%, and the agriculture sector 7 % [1].

In general, economic losses from hostilities include not only the destruction and damage to infrastructure, production facilities, and public institutions, but also the loss of human capital and the expenditure of resources on military confrontation. In 2022, national defense budget expenditures amounted to 23 % of GDP, and in 2023 – 20 % of GDP. At the same time, military assistance to Ukraine from Western partners by 15 January 2023 amounted to USD 65.4 billion. This is equivalent to 46.5 % of GDP in 2022 [1].

According to the EBRD, on average, hostilities result in a 9 % drop in GDP per capita compared to pre-war levels. However, the most destructive and large-scale wars resulted in a 40–70 % drop in GDP per capita (Transition Report 2022–23).

To compare the losses from warfare in Ukraine with those in other countries, we used the Maddison Project Database of the University of Groningham (Netherlands). Table 1 shows the rate of decline in real GDP in the first year of hostilities.

Real GDP declines of 25–50 % in a single year of conflict usually occurred only in countries that surrendered or were crushingly defeated in the war (Germany, Austria, Japan, Iraq) or in countries where military operations were conducted on more than 50 % of the territory (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Table 1

Annual rate of decline in real GDP in the first year of hostilities on the territory in %

No	Country and year of war	Real GDP growth rate in %
1.	Iraq (1991)	-60,2
2.	Austria (1945)	-58,7
3.	Ukraine (2022)	-29,2
4.	Germany (1945)	-28,9
5.	Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992)	-28,8
6.	Japan (1945)	-24,6
7.	Croatia (1991)	-22,0
8.	France (1940)	-17,5
9.	Iraq (2003)	-16,0
10.	USSR (1941)	-13,9
11.	Netherlands (1940)	-11,9
12.	Italy (1943)	-9,4
13.	Ukraine (2014)	-6,6
14.	Finland (1939)	-4,3
15.	Georgia (2008)	-3,7

Source: developed based on [1]

The average level of cumulative losses of real GDP during the hostilities was 40 %. At the same time, the average drop in real GDP in the first year of hostilities was 20 %. In 2022, Ukraine's real GDP fell by 29.2 %, and the decline in industry was 38 % [1]. This indicates both the cruelty and massive destruction caused by the Russian aggressor, as well as the low adaptive capacity of the Ukrainian economy to martial law and the lack of broad government support.

Steps are already being taken in Ukraine to overcome the consequences of the hostilities, for example, the Draft Recovery Plan for Ukraine [2]. The Recovery Plan for Public Administration is based on the practices and principles of the EU and the SIGMA programme and is aimed at building a capable public administration system as a basis for the sustainable and effective functioning of the state and Ukraine's integration into the EU. The purpose of the Public Administration Plan implementation is to build a capable service and digital state in Ukraine with an effective system of local self-government that protects the interests of citizens, ensures the sustainability and continuity of public authorities, the ability and transparency of measures to restore Ukraine from the consequences of the war, and the implementation of policies aimed at obtaining EU membership [2].

In order to achieve this goal, it is envisaged to implement tasks in four areas: the parliament, central executive authorities and approximation to EU governance standards, local executive authorities and local self-government [2].

Unfortunately, this project does not consider the need to modernize the security sector: the armed forces and other law enforcement agencies, and to strengthen their capabilities.

In order to identify ways to overcome the consequences of military operations, it is necessary to analyse the experience of public administration in overcoming the consequences of military operations in other countries.

## **2. Analysis of the latest research and publications**

The study of problematic issues of public administration in the field of overcoming the consequences of military operations is considered in the works of such scholars as: Bogdan T., Zapatrina I., Shatkovska A., Belai S., etc.

## **3. Objective**

To analyse the international experience of public administration in the field of overcoming the consequences of hostilities.

## **4. Presentation of the main material**

Let's consider some examples of international experience of public administration in overcoming the consequences of military operations, which can be useful for developing strategies in Ukraine.

The experience of Germany. The US contribution to the recovery of Europe after the Second World War was estimated at \$490.5 million during this period. In addition to grants, the United States developed lending opportunities, providing \$399 million in 1948. Funding also included the Marshall Plan, through which Germany received \$1390.6 million from April 1948 to June 1952, which was 11 % of the total cost of the European Recovery Programme. The United Kingdom received 24 % (USD 3189.8 million), France – 21 % (USD 2713.6 million), and Italy – 11 % (USD 1508.8 million) [3, 6–8].

The main criticism of the Marshall Plan concerns its effectiveness, as the funds provided amounted to less than 5 % of the GNP of the recipient countries, so they had a limited economic impact on their economies.

The United Kingdom, the United States and France laid the foundations for Germany's democratic system and economic development. Their financial support, reforms, and stability created the conditions for the successful functioning of the new state. Industrial production grew by 25 % in 1950 and 18.1 % in 1951, and GDP grew by two-thirds. The population of West Germany increased by 9 % from 1946 to 1950. Refugees were actively involved in agriculture, which accounted for 20 % of the population at the time of the 1950 census. By 1960, the unemployment rate had fallen to 1.2 %, compared to 10.3 % in 1950. The labour force grew from 13.8 million in 1950 to 19.8 million in 1960, indicating significant economic growth and stabilisation [3, 6–8].

Thus, the main mechanisms of public administration in the field of overcoming the consequences of military actions in Germany were:

- Financial assistance: The United States provided financial assistance to rebuild the destroyed infrastructure and economy;
- Reforms: Introduction of economic reforms aimed at stabilising the currency and creating conditions for economic growth;
- Federal system: Restoration and development of a federal system of governance that provided regions with autonomy in decision-making;
- Municipal self-government: Strengthening the role of municipalities in restoring local infrastructure and social services.

The experience of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Estimates of financial losses in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war are considered unprecedented since the Second World War. The total losses from the hostilities amounted to about USD 200 billion. By the end of the war in 1995, the country's population had declined by 23 %, industrial production had fallen by 90 %, and unemployment had risen to 90 %. GDP per capita fell from \$1,900 in 1991 to about \$500 after the war. The conflict destroyed 35 per cent of roads and 40 per cent of bridges, and rail transport losses were estimated at \$1 billion. Sarajevo International Airport was completely destroyed. The country's capital city suffered \$18.5 billion in losses. The Bosnian war resulted in more than 100,000 deaths, 40 % of which were civilians. More than 2 million people were internally displaced, and more than 40,000 people went missing [4, 6, 9].

National initiatives to rebuild after the war were few and inconsistent due to internal political problems. Ethnic divisions in the government have hampered the adoption of necessary decisions to rebuild the state and economy. Since 1995, the BiH parliament and entity parliaments have not adopted any laws to regulate the reconstruction process. The behaviour of national institutions was reactive: decisions were made only under pressure from international donors.

When it came to the distribution of financial or material assistance, national authorities were ready to cooperate with the international community. However, political reforms, such as the introduction of judicial and customs reforms, met with strong resistance from national political elites who benefited from corruption, nepotism and patronage. Local authorities were more interested in reconstruction projects, which gave them access to funding [4, 6, 9].

After the war, Bosnia and Herzegovina received significant assistance from the United States and Western European countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom, and France. The international community provided \$9 billion in aid for post-war reconstruction from 1996 to 2005. The reconstruction was coordinated through the Reconstruction and Return Task Force, which has been operating since 1997. Assistance was provided to those municipalities that fulfilled the terms of the Dayton Agreement by facilitating the return of refugees.

The World Bank, IMF, EBRD, European Commission, UNDP, USAID and others have become key players in economic reconstruction. They launched a \$5.1 billion Priority Reconstruction and Recovery Programme for 1996-1999. Building on

post-disaster policies, the priority was economic reconstruction, ignoring the need for political change. This led to fragile economic results. The EBRD has invested €101 million in building new tracks, reconstructing tunnels and installing new signalling systems.

The US initiative «Support for Eastern European Democracy» provided financial assistance and expert support for reforms. Between 1996 and 1999, the United States provided about \$4 billion for reconstruction, which resulted in 25 % economic growth in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, growth became uneven: The Federation outperformed the Republic of Serbia.

The Stability Pact for Southeast Europe provided €1.6 billion for immediate projects, of which only \$30 million was allocated for local government and public administration. While the results of physical reconstruction have been impressive, economic reforms have not been as successful.

Economic growth slowed after the initial reconstruction. As of 2021, more than 27 % of the economy remained in the shadows, and the unemployment rate was 20 %. Corruption remained a significant problem, hindering the development of institutional capacity.

The return of refugees was hampered by a lack of employment opportunities. Despite substantial financial assistance, many refugees did not stay in their newly restored homes due to lack of employment and financial instability. Weak governance capacity and resistance from political elites hindered effective reconstruction and the establishment of sustainable institutions.

The post-war reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina was significantly hampered by political and economic challenges, corruption and resistance to reform. International assistance was critical for the physical reconstruction of the country, but a lack of attention to political and institutional reforms hindered the achievement of sustainable economic results.

Thus, the main mechanisms of public administration in overcoming the consequences of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina were:

- Financial support: Provision of grants and loans to rebuild infrastructure and the economy;
- Coordination of efforts of international organisations to provide humanitarian aid and support for reconstruction (UN and EU);
- Decentralisation: Distribution of powers between the central government and local authorities.

According to The European Review (2003), about 30 % of the economy in Croatia was destroyed by the war. The industrial production index fell from 205.2 in 1987 to 99.7 in 1994. The World Bank estimated total losses at more than USD 161 million, and about 180,000 residential buildings were destroyed. Total losses, including infrastructure damage, production losses, and refugee costs, amounted to US\$37 billion. More than 500,000 people became refugees as a result of the war, accounting for 10 % of the population. Between 1995 and 2005, 240,000 internally displaced persons returned to their places of residence [5, 6].

Croatia allocated \$3.4 billion in budgetary allocations from 1991 to 2004 to restore the affected areas. Regions that suffered less damage were actively involved in economic activity. The authorities over-regulated the reconstruction process, failing to ensure proper enforcement. After the war, the parliament adopted a series of legislative acts to regulate the reconstruction of the affected areas, starting with the Reconstruction Act of 1996. Funding was provided by the state budget, the Croatian Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and economic assistance grants.

Croatia also received assistance from the international community, including the EU, the World Bank, the UN and others. Organisations such as the UN, UNESCO, ICOMOS and the EU provided legal, financial and educational support. In 2004, the European Commission identified Croatia as a candidate country for EU membership. Croatia received assistance through the Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation (CARDS) programme, which coordinated EU support, facilitated the return of refugees and provided resources for economic and social policy development.

The Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland (ASB), a German NGO, has made a significant contribution to the reconstruction of Croatia with projects worth US\$68 million. They have reconstructed more than 3,000 destroyed houses and implemented projects in the field of public, social and economic infrastructure. The EU's European Union Programme for Reconstruction and Return (EUPOP), launched in 1996, has contributed to reconstruction in the Croatian Danube Region and Western Slavonia. The CARDS programme operated in the four affected districts and was estimated to cost US\$20 million in 2001.

From 2009 to 2011, the UN programme 'Closing the Chapter: Social Inclusion and Conflict Transformation in Affected Areas' was implemented in Croatia. The programme cost US\$3 million and was funded by the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF and the International Organization for Migration. The programme was aimed at promoting social and economic integration, engaging citizens in social processes and improving living conditions [5, 6].

Croatia's post-war reconstruction was successful in restoring residential buildings. From 1992 to 2003, 2.4 billion US dollars were spent on the reconstruction of more than 126,000 buildings. Public utilities and social institutions received \$273 million for post-war repairs, including \$98 million for school repairs. The government reconstructed 4,139 buildings between 2004 and 2006. The process of reviewing applications for reconstruction was slow due to a complex bureaucratic procedure, which hampered reconstruction [5].

- Thus, the main mechanisms of public administration in overcoming the consequences of the war in Croatia were
- Financial support: Provision of grants and loans to rebuild infrastructure and the economy;
  - Decentralisation: Distribution of powers between the central government and local authorities.
  - Involvement of international organisations, such as the UN, EU, and NATO, to provide assistance and coordinate recovery efforts. Establishing mechanisms for cooperation with international partners to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of efforts.

The main elements of effective public administration in the area of overcoming the consequences of military operations include:

1. Coordination and cooperation.

- International coordination: Involvement of international organisations such as the UN, EU, NATO to aid and coordinate recovery efforts. Establish mechanisms for cooperation with international partners to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of efforts;

- Interagency cooperation: Ensure effective coordination between the various agencies and ministries responsible for recovery;

- Developing joint action plans and establishing interagency working groups.

2. Transparency and accountability.

- Monitoring and evaluation: Implementation of monitoring and evaluation systems to control the use of resources and the achievement of results. Regular reporting to the public and international donors;

- Anti-corruption measures: Develop and implement anti-corruption measures to ensure transparency and accountability in the use of funds. Establishment of independent bodies to investigate cases of corruption.

3. Inclusiveness and citizen participation.

- Involvement of civil society: Support the active participation of civil society organizations in the recovery process. Conducting consultations with the public to take into account their needs and suggestions.

- Local self-government: Empower local authorities with the authority and resources to implement recovery programs. Support local community initiatives and involve them in decision-making processes.

4. Sustainable development and long-term planning.

Economic development: Stimulating economic growth by supporting small and medium-sized businesses and creating new jobs. Investing in the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and energy facilities;

Social development: Restoring and developing the education and healthcare systems to ensure access to basic social services. Supporting social integration programs for veterans, IDPs and other vulnerable groups.

## 5. Conclusions

The analysis of international experience of public administration in overcoming the consequences of warfare has led to the conclusion that successful overcoming the consequences of warfare requires a comprehensive approach that includes reforms of legal mechanisms of public administration, economic development, social reintegration and political stabilization.

International support is critical, but it must be well-coordinated and focused on long-term results. Western countries and international organizations are providing financial assistance to stabilize the economy and rebuild infrastructure. Association Agreement with the EU, which includes political and economic reforms to bring Ukraine closer to the European Union. Rebuilding state institutions and fighting corruption are key to ensuring sustainable development and stability. Ensure the development of programs that promote reconciliation, social reintegration and support for affected communities. Ways to overcome the consequences of hostilities should be flexible and adaptive to changing conditions on the ground, considering cultural and social specificities.

Decentralisation - the transfer of powers and resources to the local level to improve the effectiveness of governance and recovery - may be one of the possible ways to overcome the consequences of hostilities.

International experience shows that overcoming the consequences of war requires a systemic approach, where effective public administration, international cooperation and coordination of efforts across different sectors of society play a key role. Drawing on these lessons can help Ukraine and other countries facing similar challenges to develop effective recovery and development strategies.

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